Kitāb al-Manāqib wa-l-Mathālib

Book of Virtues and Reproaches

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Introduction to the Critical Edition

Praise and peace be upon the best of God's creation, first and last, Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh, the truthful and trustworthy, and upon his family, his Companions, and those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment.

To proceed:

The title *al-Mathālib* ("Reproaches" or "Faults") has caused sensitivity in some minds, because it may be understood as an attempt to provoke discord and division within the unity of the Muslims, or to expose matters that, for one reason or another, ought not to be exposed.

The truth is that such an understanding is mistaken and incorrect. Titles of this kind, or similar ones, were widely used by earlier scholars. Their intention was to establish facts and bring to light incidents and events that were, and remain, of great importance, yet are hidden from many Muslims.

For this reason, the author—may God have mercy upon him—indicated this meaning in his introduction when he said:

"Had we found any alternative to mentioning them, we would have concealed them. It used to be said: there is no good in mentioning faults except when necessity requires it, while concealing misdeeds where disclosure is obligatory is betrayal. Nor does this conflict with the transmitted saying, 'Do not revile the living by reviling the dead.' That applies only to the dead whom it is impermissible to revile. As for those whose reviling is an obligation and whose faults the Sharīʿa requires to be publicized, they do not fall within the meaning of this tradition."

In other words, today we are in urgent need of such valuable critically edited sources in order to know the origin from which one creed or another was derived.

Those who wrote in this field enriched the Islamic library with a substantial and valuable heritage containing events, reports, evidence, and matters not recorded by others in such an explicit form. Others may have mentioned them only by allusion, or may have attempted to conceal them despite being aware of them.

The earlier scholars and those who came after them composed many works on *mathālib*. By way of example, we may mention:

Kitāb Mathālib al-ʿArab, *Kitāb Mathālib Thaqīf*, and *Kitāb Mathālib Banī Umayya*, all by Abū al-Mundhir Hishām ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī; *Kitāb Iftirāq Hāshim wa-ʿAbd Shams*, by Ibn Abī Ruʾba al-Dabbās, from which Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd al-Muʿtazilī quoted in his *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*; and *Kitāb Faḍl Hāshim ʿalā ʿAbd Shams*, by Abū ʿUthmān ʿAmr ibn Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ, the Basran Muʿtazilī. The latter is also called *Mufākharat Hāshim ʿalā ʿAbd Shams*, though perhaps this is a different work. Shaykh al-Irbilī included it in the introduction to his *Kashf al-Ghumma*, and al-Qandūzī al-Ḥanafī reproduced it verbatim in chapter 52 of his *Yanābīʿ al-Mawadda*. It was also published in the journal *Lughat al-ʿArab*, 9:414–420, under the title "The Superiority of the Banū Hāshim over Others."

There is also *Kitāb al-Mufākharāt* by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār; *Kitāb al-Maʿrifa fī al-Manāqib wa-l-Mathālib* by Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Thaqafī; *Kitāb Mathālib al-Nawāṣib* by Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Shahrāshūb al-Māzandarānī; and many others, including ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Azdī, one of those close to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal; Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Zabāla, who wrote on the reproaches connected with genealogies; Maʿmar ibn al-Muthannā al-Taymī; ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Yūsuf ibn Khirāsh, the ḥadīth scholar; and Ibn al-Rūmī, who composed a poem on the faults of the Banū al-ʿAbbās.

As for the book now before you, dear Muslim reader, it does not differ in essence from the sources just mentioned, though it differs in content, detail, and style of narrating events and incidents.

The author himself said in his *Sharḥ al-Akhbār* (2:98), describing this book:

"I composed a book which I entitled *Kitāb al-Manāqib wa-l-Mathālib*. In it I mentioned the excellence of Hāshim and his descendants, and the virtues belonging to him and them in the Age of Ignorance and in Islam; their superiority in these matters over ʿAbd Shams and his descendants; and the reproaches attaching to ʿAbd Shams and his descendants in the Age of Ignorance and in Islam, balancing man against man."

The Author and the Book

The author is the judge Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥayyūn.

Supporters and opponents alike agreed concerning his excellence, learning, nobility, the great number of his works, and his tenure as judge. Biographers mention both him and his sons, who likewise served as judges.

Ibn Khallikān mentions him in *Wafayāt al-Aʿyān* (5:415), saying:

"One of the eminent and distinguished Imams … He was initially of the Mālikī school and then adopted the doctrine of the Imāmiyya."

He also says:

"Ibn Zūlāq said: al-Nuʿmān was of the utmost excellence, one of the people of the Qurʾān and of knowledge of its meanings. He was learned in the various branches of jurisprudence, in the disagreements of the jurists, in language and poetry, and in the history of peoples; a man of intelligence and fairness. He composed for the People of the House books amounting to thousands of folios, in the finest style and most eloquent rhymed prose. He also produced a fine book on virtues and reproaches."

Al-Yāfiʿī mentions him in *Mirʾāt al-Jinān* (2:278), saying:

"He was one of the great repositories of learning, jurisprudence, and religion."

Al-Ṭihrānī says in *al-Dharīʿa* (9:748), when mentioning the dīwān of ʿAlī ibn al-Nuʿmān al-Maghribī:

“He was the judge Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī, son of the judge Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr al-Maghribī al-Miṣrī. His father, author of *Daʿāʾim al-Islām*, was judge of Egypt under al-Muʿizz the Fatimid until his death in 363. His son Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī was appointed in his place until he died in 364, whereupon his brother Muḥammad ibn al-Nuʿmān succeeded him until his own death in 389. In short, the judgeship remained in the house of al-Nuʿmān until the year 401 AH.”

He also says in 22:336:

“This *Manāqib* is extant. Our master Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan Ṣadr al-Dīn saw it, as he told me orally, and said that it exceeds twenty fascicles. One copy is with Mīrzā Muḥammad al-Ṭihrānī, incomplete at the end; an old complete copy is with ʿĪsā Efendi Jamīlzāda; an incomplete copy is with Shākir Efendi al-Ālūsī; and another is with Shaykh ʿAlī Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ.”

He also mentions a copy in the Imam al-Ḥakīm Library in Najaf and one in the National Library in London.

Al-Dhahabī, in *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ* (16:150, biography no. 106), describes him as a renegade who cast religion behind his back, composed works on virtues and reproaches, refuted the Imams of religion—by whom he means his own Imams, Muʿāwiya and his faction—and departed from Islam.

[Several lines are missing from this page.]

Historians agree that al-Nuʿmān died in 363 AH.

The scholar and critical editor al-Sayyid al-Jalālī, in his introduction to the critical edition of *Sharḥ al-Akhbār*, listed fifty works firmly attributable to the author and noted the locations of manuscripts of each.

Manuscripts of the Book

Al-Sayyid al-Jalālī—may God preserve him—also listed manuscripts of *Kitāb al-Manāqib wa-l-Mathālib* in his introduction to *Sharḥ al-Akhbār*, saying:

“I saw a complete copy of this book in the library of Shaykh Shīr Muḥammad al-Hamadānī al-Jawraqānī. Its copying was completed in Shawwāl 1370 AH from a copy described as good and ancient, except for some folios at its beginning.”

Among the manuscripts are a copy dated 852 AH in the Ṭalʿat collection at Dār al-Kutub, no. 2068/Tārīkh, comprising 124 folios; one dated 1128 AH in the Fayḍ Library, no. 36, comprising 274 folios; one dated 1244 AH, no. 37, comprising 117 folios, as listed by Sezgin; one dated 1256 AH in the Kaykhā Library; one dated 1332 AH in the Qayyūm Library; copies dated 1266 and 1314 AH in the Wakīlī Library, as listed in the Pune catalogue; one dated 1232 AH in the Institute of Ismaili Studies Library in London, no. 543; another dated 1300 AH, no. 545; another dated 1348 AH, no. 544, as listed in the Institute catalogue; and several undated copies in the Samāwī Library in Najaf.

There is also a photographic copy in the Institute of Arabic Manuscripts in Cairo, no. 11548, as listed by Sezgin.

The manuscript on which we based this edition is a photographic copy from the library of al-Sayyid al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī al-Yazdī—may God have mercy on him. It is a good copy comprising 372 pages, though the first four pages are missing. We completed them from the copy belonging to al-Sayyid al-Marʿashī—may God have mercy upon him—in Qom, Iran.

At the end of the manuscript it reads:

"Completed is the *Book of Virtues of the Noble Household of the Messenger of God and Reproaches of the Accursed Banū Umayya*, with the aid of God, the All-Knowing King, and the assistance of His Friend upon His earth, peace be upon him, on Sunday, the twenty-first day of the victorious month of Ṣafar, in the year 1348 [AH], eight-and-forty and three hundred after one thousand from the Hijra of the Chosen Prophet—may God bless him and his pure family—as long as the night grows dark and the day shines, in the handwriting of the least of the least, Muḥammad ʿAlī ibn Mullā Sulṭān ʿAlī…"

The second manuscript is held in the library of al-Sayyid al-Marʿashī in Qom, Iran, no. 653. It is a photographic copy of a manuscript in the Institute of Ismaili Studies Library in London. It was copied in the thirteenth century AH and comprises 397 folios with varying numbers of lines. It contains some marginal notes and corrections.

On its first page is written:

"There is another copy in the Egyptian Dār al-Kutub, written in 852 AH, Ṭalʿat 2068/Tārīkh, and there are two copies in the Ismaili Centre in Karachi."

After examining it, we found that it does not differ greatly from the first manuscript except in certain places.

We established and divided the text, traced the Qurʾānic verses, traditions, poems, sayings, and important events as far as possible, and placed words we added, altered, or substituted within square brackets while indicating in the footnotes what stood in the original. We supplied biographical notes where needed, explained unusual vocabulary, expanded somewhat upon passages where we thought this appropriate, and followed the other recognized principles and procedures of critical editing.

Success comes only from God.

Peace and blessings be upon the noblest of His creation, Muḥammad, the trustworthy guide, and upon his family and loyal Companions.

Our final prayer is: praise be to God, Lord of the worlds.

Mājid ibn Aḥmad al-ʿAṭiyya

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate

Praise be to God, the First, beginningless and without limit, and the Last, everlasting; before the greatness of His power faces are humbled, necks submit to the majesty of His awe, eyes fall short before […], hearts tremble from fear of Him, and limbs quake in dread of Him.

All creatures together are His humbled servants, as are the angels brought near. Before Him, because of their fear of Him, they do not dispute; night and day they glorify and sanctify Him, fearing His punishment though they do not sin. Everything glorifies Him with praise and seeks forgiveness.

May God bless His Prophet Muḥammad, His servant and chosen one from creation, His Messenger to all nations, scriptural and unscriptural, who openly proclaimed what he was sent with and rose to bear the burdens of what he brought; and may He bless ʿAlī, His Friend, father of the Prophet's progeny, his Legatee and successor within his community; and the righteous, pure Imams among his descendants.

Praise be to God, Creator of creation according to what He willed, who employs His servants so as to recompense them on the Day of Return; who made some of them a trial for others, as He mentions in His Book; preferred some over others, as He has informed therein; imposed obedience of some upon others; and raised some, as He, Mighty and Glorious, says, "above others in degrees."

He selected from among them a chosen company with whom He was pleased, saying—and He is the most truthful of speakers:

"Indeed God chose Adam and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of ʿImrān above all beings, descendants one of another; and God is Hearing, Knowing."

He did not include all descendants of the prophets indiscriminately within this chosen status, nor did He make every descendant equal. Rather, He selected from among them one after another for the mission and the Imamate. He made excellence and honor obligatory for whoever submitted to that chosen person's command and obeyed him, while distancing and excluding whoever obstinately opposed him, just as He excluded from Noah's family the son who disobeyed him.

God also honored through nearness to the excellent one those among his relatives who obeyed him and did not obstinately oppose him, benefiting them through their closeness to him and thereby granting them distinction.

He said in His clear revealed Book:

"Those who believed and whose descendants followed them in faith—we shall join their descendants with them and diminish nothing of their deeds. Every person is held in pledge for what he has earned."

The exegetes said concerning this verse: it refers to a believer who attains by his deeds a rank in Paradise which his offspring cannot attain through their own deeds. God, Mighty and Glorious, raises them to his degree so that his eye may be gladdened by them. God thereby increases them in excellence because of him, while not diminishing his own rank by making them equal to him; rather, He increases him thereby in excellence and honor.

Some have said: if this applies to an ordinary believer, then it is still more fitting and necessary that it apply to the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his pure family. Thus the believers among his descendants, who follow his command and submit in every age after him to the excellent one among them, possess a rank in Paradise within his rank.

The descendants of the Prophet, may God bless him and his family, are the descendants of ʿAlī and Fāṭima—may God's blessings be upon them—as they continue through the generations, and no others.

Some ignorant people have denied this and claimed that the Messenger of God has no descendants, repeating the claim of those hostile to him in the Age of Ignorance who said that he was *abtar*, "cut off," meaning without progeny. God, Mighty and Glorious, revealed His refutation of them:

"Indeed We have given you al-Kawthar … Surely your enemy is the one cut off."

We shall mention this in its proper place, God willing.

Those who denied that the Messenger of God had descendants knew the position of Fāṭima and knew that he had no continuing progeny through any child other than her. They nevertheless said:

"The children of Fāṭima are not descendants of the Messenger of God. A man's descendants come only from the male children of his loins. As for his daughters' children, they are the descendants of their own fathers and not of their maternal grandfathers."

The Book of God, Mighty and Glorious, confirms what we have said and nullifies the claim of these ignorant people. For He says—and He is the most truthful of speakers:

"That was Our argument which We gave Abraham against his people. We raise in degrees whom We will. Surely your Lord is Wise, Knowing. And We bestowed upon him Isaac and Jacob; each We guided. And Noah We guided before; and among his descendants David and Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron—thus do We recompense those who do good—and Zechariah, John, Jesus and Elijah; each was among the righteous."

God, Mighty and Glorious, included Jesus among the descendants of Noah and Abraham—peace be upon them and upon Muḥammad His Prophet and his family—through his mother's lineage.

Therefore, whoever denies that the children of Fāṭima are descendants of the Messenger of God gives the lie to the Book of God.

They thus possess the distinction of prophetic descent, which none can deny except one who obstinately resists the truth.

God commanded His Prophet to warn all people generally in verses of His Book, while singling out his nearest clan for special warning as an honor and distinction for them. He said:

“Warn your nearest kindred.”

We shall mention, in its proper place, how he warned them when God commanded him to do so, what he called them to at that time, and which of them then deserved honor and excellence through him, God willing.

This was God’s special distinction for his clan through this virtue, while at the same time warning them against self-admiration, reliance upon their kinship to him, and boasting of descent from him.

He said:

“O sons of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, let not people come to me with their deeds while you come to me with your genealogies.”

God, Mighty and Glorious, distinguished the chosen among his nearest relatives by making love for them obligatory upon all believers, thereby indicating that He had placed the Imamate among them. He said to all believers:

“Say: I ask of you no reward for it except love for the near kin.”

Thus God made love for them an obligation upon all Muslims because of their position in relation to the Messenger of God, and thereby indicated obedience to them and belief in the Imamate of the Imams among them—may God bless them all.

This was an honor from God to His Messenger and a manifestation of his excellence above His other messengers, for He mentioned other prophets in His Book as saying:

“Say: I ask of you no reward for it,”

and:

“I ask of you no wealth; my reward is only with God.”

A group among those of the generality who claimed knowledge of interpretation gave various interpretations of this verse and differed greatly concerning it.

Some said that His words:

“Say: I ask of you no reward for it except love for the near kin”

mean:

“not even love for the near kin.”

This is an extreme degree of ignorance and excessive hostility toward the family of the Messenger.

Were such an interpretation permissible here, it could equally be applied to every other exception in God's Book by which He establishes and imposes something—and such passages are too numerous to mention here.

If all were treated in the manner proposed by these interpreters, lawful things would become unlawful, unlawful things lawful, punishment mercy, mercy punishment, right wrong, and wrong right.

One may say to such a person: Do you think God thereby gave permission to hate and show enmity toward the Prophet's near kin?

If he says no, he contradicts his own interpretation.

If he says yes, he must be asked what could have made hatred and hostility obligatory toward them precisely because of their kinship to the Messenger of God.

I do not think anyone would dare say such a thing.

This is among the remotest interpretations and weakest arguments ever uttered.

Others said that the verse means that the Prophet had relatives among all the Arabs and asked them to love him on account of his kinship with them.

This is the interpretation of one who has failed to reflect upon God's words as commanded.

God did not address the Arabs alone in this statement so that such an interpretation could be valid. Rather, He addressed all believers from among humankind, saying:

"That is what God gives as glad tidings to His servants who believe and perform righteous deeds. Say: I ask of you no reward for it except love for the near kin."

Thus all believers, Arab and non-Arab alike, are included in the address.

This invalidates the interpretation just mentioned.

Others said that this verse was abrogated by His saying:

"Say: Whatever reward I have asked of you is yours; my reward is only with God."

They thereby declared abrogated what God had made an excellence for His Messenger and what He had imposed concerning love for his near kin.

This is audacity toward God, His Messenger, and his family.

Praise be to God, neither of these verses abrogates the other. Both are decisive (*muḥkam*), and God knows best.

It is not proper to declare anything in the Qurʾān invalid on the basis of someone's conjecture or personal opinion when there is a way to establish the matter properly.

His saying:

"Say: Whatever reward I have asked of you is yours"

means: whatever I have asked of you in the form of love for my near kin is for your own benefit—you are rewarded and recompensed for it. It is not for my personal benefit; my own reward lies with God.

This is so if the verse was revealed afterward.

If it was revealed before the verse of love for the near kin, then the later verse does not abrogate the earlier one.

Moreover, God Himself clarified the disputed interpretation through the tongue of the Messenger, whom He charged with explaining what had been revealed to him. This explanation invalidates every contrary interpretation, without disagreement among Muslims as to the authority of the Prophet's clarification.

What we have already stated is further supported by the view of a group among the generality who agree with us.

Some among them said as we do: it is an obligation imposed by God—meaning love for the relatives of the Messenger of God.

They also said that the verse is decisive and not abrogated.

They transmitted from ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbbās, and recorded in his exegesis, that when the verse:

"Say: I ask of you no reward for it except love for the near kin"

was revealed, the people asked:

"O Messenger of God, who are these relatives of yours whose love we have been commanded to observe?"

He replied:

"ʿAlī, Fāṭima, and their children."

This is an explicit determination and clarification by the Messenger of God, which no one is entitled to reinterpret away from its meaning.

This is Ibn ʿAbbās's own transmission and his testimony excluding himself from this particular excellence, despite his own close kinship to the Messenger of God.

There is in this also an indication of the Imamate.

God made kinship to prophethood an excellence that cannot be denied and a right that cannot be rejected for those who preserve what we have already described and recognize in the Imams what we have set forth.

God also made the honor of fatherhood extend to children who preserve the honor of their fathers and follow their path, and He preserves them on account of their fathers.

He said:

“Their father had been righteous.”

Thus He protected the two boys and their wall after the death of their father.

The Messenger of God said:

“God preserves the believing servant in his righteous descendants for seventy autumns after him.”

And the Messenger of God himself, despite all the great excellence God gave him and the immense nobility with which He favored him, said:

“I am the prayer of my father Abraham.”

He took pride in Abraham and acknowledged the blessing of his prayer.

He also mentioned the nobility of his fathers and purity of his mothers, saying:

“I was transferred from noble loins to purified wombs. I came forth from lawful marriage and not fornication. No trace of fornication ever touched me. I continued to be transferred through sound loins free from blemish and defect.”

All of this demonstrates what we intended and with which we began: the superiority of the progeny of the Messenger and their entitlement to distinction through him, and the obligation of the Imamate for them on account of their closeness to him.

This is also supported by his saying:

“The Imams are from Quraysh.”

The Emigrants used this as an argument against the Anṣār when the latter aspired to the leadership and sought to take it.

If the reason for restricting it to Quraysh was their closeness to the Messenger of God, then without doubt it belongs most properly to those of Quraysh who are closest to him.

Most of those who have perished among earlier and later peoples have done so because inferior persons denied the superiority of those superior to them and rejected the rights God had imposed for them upon all beings.

That was the first sin committed in heaven and on earth among jinn and humankind.

God perpetuated His curse upon whoever committed it, and made it a disobedience deserving eternal punishment in the Fire.

Prior excellence and great nobility did not benefit one who committed it, because contesting the excellence of those to whom excellence belongs nullifies every preceding honor.

Thus, when God commanded the angels to prostrate before Adam, the accursed Iblīs acted arrogantly toward him and said:

"I am better than he: You created me from fire and created him from clay."

Likewise, when God accepted the offering of one son of Adam and not the other, the rejected one competed with him over excellence and envied him.

Neither Iblīs's former standing—if he had been among the noble angels—nor the rejected son's descent from Adam benefited them.

Both incurred God's wrath and curse because they contested the excellence of one whom they had been commanded to obey.

Upon this same pattern, after the evil predecessors there arose later people of corrupt character who followed them exactly—"step for step and feather for feather."

We have mentioned and expanded upon all this at the beginning of our book because reports reached us and we heard the Banū Umayya claiming excellence alongside the pure progeny, the family of the Messenger.

Yet the faults of the Banū Umayya are manifest and exposed, while the virtues of the family of the Messenger are clear and well known.

Obedience to the Imams from among them is incumbent upon the Umayyads and their rights are binding upon them.

Nevertheless, the Umayyads acted arrogantly as Iblīs did, rebelled as he rebelled, and claimed superiority over those whom God had preferred above them.

Therefore, with God's granting of success and seeking His assistance, we considered it proper to set forth this book in refutation of their claim, to recount the causes of their hostility, and to describe what their forebears did before the mission of the Messenger of God and after his mission and death; who among them showed hostility to him during his lifetime and denied his prophethood; and what his Legatee and his descendants suffered from them after his death.

We shall mention their reproaches and the virtues of the family of the Messenger so that we may make the truth clear to those among His friends who perceive it, and so that God may thereby guide, if He wills, whoever He wishes to guide and upon whom He graciously bestows success.

Were it not necessary here to mention reproaches and evil deeds, we would not have mentioned them.

Had we found any alternative, we would have concealed them.

It used to be said:

“There is no good in mentioning faults except from necessity, while concealing misdeeds where disclosure is obligatory is betrayal.”

Nor does this conflict with the transmitted saying:

“Do not revile the living by reviling the dead.”

That applies only to those dead whom it is not permissible to revile.

As for those whose reviling is an obligation and whose faults the Sharīʿa requires to be publicized, they do not fall under the meaning of this tradition.

The Messenger of God said:

“Whoever conceals knowledge that he knows will come on the Day of Resurrection bridled with a bridle of fire.”

God and His Messenger know best: this concerns knowledge whose manifestation and dissemination are required for the sake of truth and which it is not permissible to conceal—such as what we have just described and analogous matters, testimony, and the like.

It is not a universal command requiring everyone to speak about everything he knows.

There are also matters that it is obligatory to conceal and keep hidden.

The Messenger of God said:

“When innovations appear in my community, let the scholar make his knowledge manifest”—meaning the truth that cuts them down—“and if he does not, upon him is the curse of God.”

We know of no innovation more harmful to the Muslims, to the upright religious community, and to religion itself than the innovation by which an inferior person lays claim to the rank of one superior to him, and the Imam of rebellion sits in the seat of the just Imam.

Nor, God willing, is there any reward greater than the reward of one who makes the truth clear in such a matter, removes ambiguity from it, crushes falsehood through his words, and exposes the disgrace of the one who falsely claims it.

We ask God to enable us to attain that and to assist us in it.

When we examined the hostility of the Banū Umayya toward the pure and purified progeny, we found it to be an ancient and deeply rooted hostility.

We found that their grudges against them were grudges from both the Age of Ignorance and Islam, and that their blood-feuds were those of men killed among them at Badr and Uḥud.

They clung to tribal zeal on their account.

We therefore wished to uncover this matter for anyone to whom it may have remained hidden, and to clarify it for anyone who may know only part of it.

Their deception of the community when they seized power and the confusion they created after establishing themselves reached such an extent that they claimed before the people kinship to the Messenger of God in order to gain honor through his genealogy.

They alleged that he had no relatives besides themselves and that there was no Household of the Messenger of God other than them.

Even before that, among the common people of Syria who had followed them, matters reached such a point that when the Banū al-ʿAbbās appeared, a group of their elders swore to them that they had never known that the Messenger of God had relatives other than the Banū Umayya, so thoroughly had the Umayyads deceived them.

What, then, is one to think of a people whose falsehood became so dominant and who introduced such confusion into the community?

With God granting success, we therefore resolved to begin by recounting this hostility from the point at which it began; to explain its origin and how it became rooted; how it later branched out; and how it reached the extent to which it eventually came.

We shall mention the nobility of the forefathers of the Messenger of God whose excellence we have come to know, and the baseness of those among the Umayyads and their predecessors who opposed them, according to what has reached us and what we have transmitted.

We shall bring together the account of each of them with the account of the person of his own age who opposed him, describing the virtues of the superior man and the reproaches of the inferior, and adducing testimony and proof for this.

We shall then proceed successively through what follows, one stage after another, down to the time at which this book was composed, with brevity of expression and concision out of a desire to keep it light.

The remainder of what we shall relate is well known and widely recognized in books of biography, genealogy, and reliable reports. We shall omit chains of transmission and excessive detail, preferring brevity and concision. As for those among the forefathers of the Messenger of God—may God bless him and his family—whose virtues and excellence we may mention, we have already cited what he himself said concerning their nobility, purity, and freedom from blemish. That constitutes the highest praise for them. They also adhered to many aspects of the law of their forefather Abraham, peace be upon him, and practiced them.

We shall mention this concerning them, as well as the saying of the Messenger of God—may God bless him and his family—to one of those who, after embracing Islam, had previously been in a condition like theirs: “You remain upon whatever good you possessed when you embraced Islam,” in its proper place, God willing.

Although they held the religious affiliations they did, they were nevertheless distinguished above those of their own times who disputed excellence with them, whether relatives or others, even when those people professed the same beliefs and followed the same practices. Their distinction lay in the fact that the Messenger of God was among their descendants and passed through their loins, and in what he himself related concerning their excellence, together with what we shall mention of their deeds.

Our purpose in mentioning their excellence and nobility is to draw attention to those contemporaries who claimed the same distinction and contested it with them. We do not intend to boast of the Age of Ignorance for one who follows Islam, nor to place all of them together indiscriminately in a single rank of excellence. Rather, we shall pair each one of them with the opponent of his own age who contended with him and envied his excellence and glory.

In God we seek assistance, and from Him we ask success in what pleases Him, grows in worth before Him, and draws us near to Him.

The Virtues, Nobility, and Lineage of ʿAbd Manāf ibn Quṣayy, and Those Before Him among His Forefathers

We begin with ʿAbd Manāf ibn Quṣayy and with the description of his nobility and excellence in himself and through his father before him, because the dispute over excellence which we intend to discuss first arose between two of his direct sons, each of whom laid claim to it and contested the other.

The name of ʿAbd Manāf was al-Mughīra. He was called “the Moon” because of his beauty, and “the Master” because of his nobility and leadership.

The Messenger of God descended from him. He therefore possessed the distinction previously described on account of his place among the Prophet’s forefathers, and he deserved to be called noble by the testimony of the Messenger of God in the statement already cited.

The Messenger of God would not have attributed nobility to one lacking piety, especially since God, Mighty and Glorious, says:

“Surely the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most God-fearing of you.”

Since nobility is thus bound to piety, the Messenger of God could only have attributed it to one worthy of it.

It is related in a tradition that a stone was found in the Ḥijr bearing the inscription:

“I am al-Mughīra ibn Quṣayy. I command fear of God and dutifulness toward kin.”

He would not have commanded fear of God while failing himself to fear Him, given the nobility and excellence he possessed; nor would he have turned away from what he commanded and called others toward.

He was al-Mughīra, but became famous as ʿAbd Manāf ibn Quṣayy ibn Kilāb ibn Murra ibn Kaʿb ibn Luʾayy ibn Ghālib ibn Fihr ibn Mālik ibn al-Naḍr ibn Kināna ibn Khuzayma ibn Mudrika ibn Ilyās ibn Muḍar ibn Nizār ibn Maʿadd ibn ʿAdnān.

His mother was Ḥubbā daughter of Ḥulayyil ibn Ḥubaysha ibn Salūl ibn Kaʿb ibn ʿAmr ibn Rabīʿa ibn Ḥārith ibn ʿAmr ibn ʿĀmir of Khuzāʿa.

It is said that his mother was the one who named him ʿAbd Manāf, and that this name came to predominate.

Manāf was an idol positioned opposite the Black Corner. Yet names do not diminish the worth of an excellent person, nor does the name of one of lower rank confer honor.

It is said that Muʿāwiya once said to Quraysh:

“Come, let us alter the names of our forefathers that were connected with beings other than God.”

He therefore proposed that Banū ʿAbd Manāf be called Banū ʿAbd Allāh, Banū ʿAbd al-Dār be called Banū ʿUbayd Allāh, and Banū ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā be called Banū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.

ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr replied:

“Leave off playing with our genealogies. The Messenger of God left these names as they were, yet you would alter them?”

It is also said that Muʿāwiya asked a Bedouin his name.

He replied, “Naʿāma.”

Muʿāwiya laughed and said:

“Woe to you! Could they find no other name for you?”

The Bedouin replied:

“O Muʿāwiya, it is merely a mark by which one is known, not an honor. If names were themselves honors, everyone would share a single name.”

Although the Messenger of God altered some names among Muslims, he left the names of earlier generations unchanged.

The offices of providing water and convening the assembly belonged to ʿAbd Manāf. Prophethood and wealth were also in his line.

Ibn al-Zibaʿrā said concerning him:

Quraysh was like an egg that split apart,
and the pure yolk was ʿAbd Manāf.
They enrich others when no benefactor is found,
and they are the ones who say, “Come, guests!”

Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī said:

Leadership belonged to Banū ʿAbd Manāf. They wished to take the banner and custodianship from Banū ʿAbd al-Dār. Banū ʿAbd al-Dār therefore entered an alliance with Banū Sahm to defend themselves against Banū ʿAbd Manāf.

Then the woman known as al-Bayḍāʾ, called Umm Ḥakīm, took a large bowl, filled it with perfume, placed it in the Ḥijr, and said:

“Whoever perfumes himself from this belongs with us.”

Banū ʿAbd Manāf, Asad, Zuhra, Banū Taym, and Banū al-Ḥārith perfumed themselves from it, and they were therefore called the *Muṭayyabūn*, “the Perfumed Confederates.”

When Banū Sahm saw this, they slaughtered a camel and said:

“Whoever licks its blood belongs with us.”

Banū Sahm, Banū ʿAdī, Banū ʿAbd al-Dār, Banū Jumaḥ, and Banū Makhzūm did so and were called the *Aḥlāf*, “the Confederates.”

No fighting ultimately occurred between them.

Al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbbās al-Lahabī said concerning this:

We were called the purest of Quraysh
through nobility—how excellent was our purity!
What good deed was there in which we did not precede others,
and what gate did we not first open for mankind?

For this reason ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ṣafwān said to ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbbās:

“What do you think of the rule of the Confederates?”

By this he meant the caliphate of ʿUmar and wished to boast of it.

Ibn ʿAbbās replied:

“The rule of the Perfumed Confederates was better,”

meaning the rule of Abū Bakr.

A poet said concerning ʿAbd Manāf:

No mother ever bore among her children
one nobler in lineage than ʿAbd Manāf.

The Nobility of ʿAbd Manāf through His Father

His father was Quṣayy ibn Kilāb.

Quṣayy’s father, Kilāb ibn Murra, died while Quṣayy was still a small child. His brother Zuhra was older than he.

Their mother was Fāṭima daughter of Saʿd ibn Sulayl. Rabīʿa ibn Ḥizām ibn ʿUdhra ibn Saʿd ibn Zayd of Quḍāʿa came to Mecca and married Fāṭima. He then took her to his people, Banū ʿUdhra, and she took Quṣayy with her, for he had only recently been weaned. She left Zuhra among his own people, as he was already grown.

Quṣayy’s original name was Zayd. His mother Fāṭima called him Quṣayy because he had been taken far from his homeland.

He grew up in Rabīʿa’s household, attributing himself only to him, knowing no other father and believing Rabīʿa to be his father until he grew older.

One day he quarreled with a man from Banū ʿUdhra, who said to him:

“Go back to your people. You are not one of us.”

Quṣayy asked:

“Then who am I?”

The man replied:

“Ask your mother; she will tell you.”

He went to her and asked.

She said:

“You are nobler in spirit, father, and lineage than they. You are the son of Kilāb ibn Murra, and your people are the people of God in His Sanctuary and beside His House.”

Quṣayy then disliked remaining away from Mecca and wished to join his people there.

His mother said:

“My son, I fear for you. Remain until the sacred month arrives, then go with the pilgrims of Quḍāʿa.”

He did so.

When he reached Mecca, he remained there and grew up in nobility, leadership, and noble character.

He was a strong, vigorous, forbearing, intelligent, dignified, chaste, and generous man. God distinguished him through being among the forefathers of the Messenger of God and placed prophethood among his descendants, thereby perfecting for him the qualities of goodness and nobility.

Quṣayy sought in marriage Ḥubbā, daughter of Ḥulayyil ibn Ḥubaysha ibn Salūl al-Khuzāʿī. At that time Ḥulayyil had charge of the Kaʿba and authority over Mecca.

Ḥulayyil recognized Quṣayy's standing and lineage and married his daughter to him.

She bore him ʿAbd al-Dār, ʿAbd Manāf, ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā, and ʿAbd, the sons of Quṣayy.

They were chiefs and nobles, but ʿAbd Manāf was the most excellent among them because God singled him out as an ancestor of the Messenger of God and placed prophethood among his descendants.

Al-Ḥārith ibn Ẓālim said concerning Banū Quṣayy:

When you leave Thaʿlaba ibn Saʿd
and their brothers, you are traced to Luʾayy,
to a noble lineage without corruption,
whose people are the noblest of every clan.
My lineage will never be ashamed through them,
for among them are God's offerings, Banū Quṣayy.

It is said that he called them "God's offerings," meaning those through whom men draw near to God, because they were inhabitants of the House and residents of the Sanctuary, the people of God, custodians of His House, possessors of the offices of watering, feeding, leadership, chieftainship, the banner, the assembly, and the noble institutions of Mecca.

They preserved an inheritance from the religion of their fathers Abraham and Ishmael, peace be upon them: hospitality to guests, provision for pilgrims and visitors performing ʿumra, reverence for the Sanctuary, protection of it from injustice and sacrilege, suppression of the oppressor, and aid to the wronged.

Quṣayy's authority grew great in Mecca, and he became chief over its people. They placed its reins in his hands, and he became the master of its affairs.

He gained control over Mecca and fought Khuzāʿa and Banū Bakr. Quḍāʿa stood with him, and his maternal half-brother Razāḥ ibn Rabīʿa brought his own people from Quḍāʿa to support him.

Quṣayy had first summoned Quraysh to fight Khuzāʿa, but they feared them and were reluctant to support him.

When he called upon his brother Razāḥ for aid, Razāḥ came with his brothers and those of Quḍāʿa who obeyed him, and then Quraysh rose with Quṣayy.

Razāḥ said concerning this:

When a messenger came to us from Quṣayy
and said, “Answer your intimate friend,”
we rose to him, leading the swift horses,
casting off from ourselves the sluggish burden.
We travel with them by night until morning,
and by day we conceal ourselves at the stopping places.

Quṣayy, with Quraysh and those of Quḍāʿa who supported him, fought Khuzāʿa and defeated them.

They then sought reconciliation and appointed Yaʿmur ibn ʿAwf ibn Kaʿb ibn Kināna as arbitrator.

He ruled in favor of Quṣayy concerning the House and authority over Mecca.

Khuzāʿa were more numerous in Mecca than Quraysh, but they had introduced improper practices into the Sanctuary and treated it lightly. Quṣayy expelled Khuzāʿa from the House and assumed authority over it, Mecca, and the pilgrims.

The custodianship, feeding of pilgrims, and provision of water belonged to him.

When authority over Mecca passed to Quṣayy and the pilgrimage season came, he fed and gave drink to the pilgrims and provided them abundant hospitality and honor.

Someone said concerning him:

Father of the pilgrims, feeding them meat,
Quṣayy made their provision abundant with fat,
with pure milk and crumbled bread,
filling great overflowing bowls with it.

Afterward he continued to hold the office of feeding pilgrims. He gave them meat, bread, raisins, and milk.

When Yaʿmur ibn ʿAwf had rendered his judgment against Khuzāʿa, they counted the dead and found that ten more of theirs had been killed.

They refused to relinquish their claim to them.

Yaʿmur said:

“Then I shall crush the heads of your dead beneath this foot of mine. If you refuse, return to war.”

They accepted and submitted.

For this reason Yaʿmur was called *al-Shaddākh*, “the Crusher.”

The House remained in Quṣayy's hands.

He built Dār al-Nadwa, the first house built in Mecca. No matter requiring the collective decision of Quraysh was settled except there, and it remained with his descendants after him.

Muḥammad ibn Jubayr ibn Muṭʿim ibn ʿAdī ibn Nawfal ibn ʿAbd Manāf said:

Quṣayy ibn Kilāb was the first descendant of Kaʿb ibn Luʾayy to attain kingship-like authority to which his people submitted.

He possessed the custodianship, feeding of pilgrims, assembly, banner, provision of water, and complete governance of Mecca.

He levied a tenth upon those entering Mecca who were not its inhabitants.

All the honors of Mecca belonged to him.

He established Dār al-Nadwa with its door opening toward the House.

He divided the quarters of Mecca among Quraysh and settled each clan in its appropriate place.

He was called *Mujammiʿ*, "the Gatherer," because he gathered together the affairs of Quraysh.

Quraysh regarded him as blessed, honored him, and granted him authority.

No man of Quraysh married a woman, no contract was concluded, no matter was discussed, and no banner of war was tied except in Dār al-Nadwa before him, under his supervision.

No girl of Quraysh first put on her adult dress except in his house.

No caravan of Quraysh departed except from there, and no caravan returned without first stopping there.

During his lifetime and after his death, Quraysh followed his ordinances as though they were an established religion.

He expelled Khuzāʿa from Mecca.

When he divided Mecca among Quraysh, they complained of the abundance of trees and said they were reluctant to cut them because they stood within the Sanctuary.

He forbade them to cut the trees and said:

"You have seen what God did to Khuzāʿa when they treated the Sanctuary lightly. Build, then, and whatever trees die within your dwellings involve no blame upon you."

They obeyed and did not go beyond his command.

A poet said concerning him:

Your father Quṣayy was called the Gatherer;
through him God gathered the tribes of Fihr.

The first cause of Quṣayy's war with Khuzāʿa was that the key of the Kaʿba was in the hands of Abū Ghubshān al-Khuzāʿī, who had charge of the House.

Quṣayy met him at Ṭāʾif and purchased it from him for a skin of wine.

He brought it to his people of Quraysh and said:

"This is the key of your father Ishmael. God has restored it to you without treachery or injustice."

Khuzāʿa came to Abū Ghubshān reproaching him.

He denied having sold it and claimed instead that he had merely pledged it to Quṣayy.

People therefore coined the proverb:

"A worse bargain than Abū Ghubshān's."

War arose between Quṣayy and Abū Ghubshān over this, and Quṣayy prevailed.

A poet said:

Abū Ghubshān was more unjust than Quṣayy,
and Khuzāʿa more unjust than Banū Fihr.
Do not blame Quṣayy for purchasing it;
blame your old man because he sold it.

It is also said that Quṣayy purchased the key of the Kaʿba from Abū Ghubshān for a skin of wine and a ram.

Another version states that custody of the Kaʿba and its key belonged to Ḥulayyil ibn Ḥubaysha ibn Salūl.

Quṣayy married his daughter.

When Ḥulayyil grew old, he entrusted the key of the Kaʿba to her.

She said:

"I am unable to open and close the door."

So he entrusted it to Abū Ghubshān—whose name was Sulaym ibn ʿAmr.

Quṣayy then purchased authority over the House from him for a skin of wine and a young camel.

Khuzāʿa opposed him, while Quḍāʿa stood with him.

His maternal brother Razāḥ ibn Rabīʿa supported him with his people, Banū ʿUdhra.

Quṣayy overcame Khuzāʿa.

They had treated the House and Sanctuary lightly, so he expelled them, magnified the sanctity of the House, took charge of Mecca, became chief of Quraysh, and exercised authority over all of them.

ʿAbd Manāf was noble in himself and through his father. His nobility was undeniable and uncontested.

ʿAbd al-Dār was the eldest son of Quṣayy but was weak.

ʿAbd Manāf was the noblest of Quṣayy's sons and had already become distinguished during his father's lifetime.

Thus those among Quṣayy's descendants who possessed no nobility of their own later laid claim through him to an excellence alongside those who were themselves noble and were noble through him.

We have already explained that such a claim is invalid, and we shall mention those who made it and the corruption of their claim.

It is said that when Quṣayy grew old and saw ʿAbd al-Dār falling behind, while disliking the ascendancy of ʿAbd Manāf over him, he felt compassion for ʿAbd al-Dār and wished to confer distinction upon him.

He therefore gave him the key of the Kaʿba and the banner, while he gave ʿAbd Manāf the offices of watering and feeding the pilgrims and Dār al-Nadwa.

God, Mighty and Glorious, bestows excellence upon whomever He wills among His servants.

He placed excellence and nobility in ʿAbd Manāf, transferred prophethood into his loins, and established it among his descendants, in addition to the noble qualities of character and virtues we have already described.

The Virtues of Hāshim ibn ʿAbd Manāf and the Reproaches of His Brother ʿAbd Shams ibn ʿAbd Manāf

ʿAbd Manāf ibn Quṣayy had a son Hāshim, whose name was ʿAmr.

He was called ʿAmr al-ʿUlā because of his nobility.

He came to be called Hāshim because he was the first to crumble bread into broth and feed it to others; thus the name Hāshim predominated over his original name.

Among his distinctions and nobility was that he was an ancestor of the Messenger of God, and he therefore possessed the excellence previously described, in accordance with God's saying:

"Surely the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most God-fearing of you,"

and the saying of the Messenger of God concerning his forefathers:

"I was transferred from noble loins to purified wombs,"

to the exclusion of his brothers ʿAbd Shams and the others.

The Messenger of God also said:

"Whenever people divided into two groups, I belonged to the better of the two,"

and:

"I was sent from the best of Quraysh."

This indicates that excellence and nobility lay in those from whom he descended, rather than in those who separated from them and contested their rank.

Among the transmitted traditions is that one day the Messenger of God ordered Bilāl to call the adhān for the noon prayer before its usual time.

This occurred in Rajab, after thirteen nights had passed.

Bilāl did so.

The people were alarmed and said:

"Something must have happened."

They gathered in the mosque.

The Messenger of God approached on foot until he reached the Gate of the Syrians, one of the gates of the mosque.

He grasped its two doorposts.

Within the mosque was a place called the *ṣuffa*.

He said:

"Do you hear me, O people of the Ṣuffa?"

They replied:

“We hear and obey, O Messenger of God.”

They said:

“Teach us, O Messenger of God.”

The Messenger of God said:

“God created creation in two divisions and placed me in the better of the two. This is His saying, Mighty and Glorious: ‘The Companions of the Right—what are the Companions of the Right?’ and ‘The Companions of the Left—what are the Companions of the Left?’ I am among the Companions of the Right, and I am the best among the Companions of the Right.

“Then He divided the two divisions into thirds and placed me in the best third. This is His saying: ‘The Companions of the Right—what are the Companions of the Right? The Companions of the Left—what are the Companions of the Left? And the Foremost, the Foremost—those are the ones brought near.’ I am among the Foremost, and I am the best of the Foremost.

“Then He divided the thirds into tribes and placed me in the best tribe. This is His saying: ‘O mankind, We created you from a male and a female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another.’ My tribe is the best of tribes. I am the master of the children of Adam and the most God-fearing among them, without boasting.

“Then He divided the tribes into houses and placed me in the best house. This is His saying: ‘God only desires to remove impurity from you, O People of the House, and to purify you completely.’

“Know that God chose me together with three members of my Household. I am the master of the three and the most God-fearing among them, without boasting.

“He chose me from among ʿAlī, Ḥamza, and Jaʿfar.

“We were sleeping at al-Abṭaḥ, each of us covered by his garment. ʿAlī was on my right, Jaʿfar on my left, and Ḥamza at my feet.

“Nothing awakened me except the beating of the wings of the angels and the coolness of ʿAlī’s arm upon my chest.

“I awoke and saw Gabriel among three angels.

“One of them said: ‘O Gabriel, to which of these four have you been sent?’

“He nudged me with his foot and said: ‘To this one.’

“The angel asked: ‘Who is this?’

“Gabriel said: ‘This is Muḥammad, master of the messengers.’

“Then he gestured toward ʿAlī and said: ‘This is his Legatee, master of the legatees.’

“He gestured toward Ḥamza and said: ‘This is the master of the martyrs.’

“Then he gestured toward Jaʿfar and said: ‘This is the Flyer in Paradise; there he shall have two blood-red wings with which he flies.’”

This is among the clearest proofs of what we have stated concerning excellence through closeness to the Messenger of God.

Whoever disputes the excellence of those to whom excellence belongs, claims it together with them, or claims it apart from them, has set himself against God, Mighty and Glorious, and His Friends, and incurs the anger of God and His Messenger.

Hāshim succeeded his father in the offices of providing water and feeding the pilgrims, to the exclusion of his brothers ʿAbd Shams, al-Muṭṭalib, Nawfal, and ʿAbd Abī ʿAmr.

All Quraysh conceded these offices to him, and he alone undertook them.

On the first day of Dhū al-Ḥijja he would stand addressing Quraysh, leaning his back against the door of the Kaʿba, exhorting them to noble character.

He would say:

“People of Quraysh! You are the chiefs of the Arabs, the most handsome of them in countenance, the greatest in forbearance, the most central in lineage, and the closest of the Arabs in kinship with the Arabs.

“People of Quraysh! You are the neighbors of the House of God, Mighty and Glorious. God has honored you with its guardianship and singled you out for proximity to it above the descendants of Ishmael.

“He has preserved for you the finest rights ever preserved for a neighbor by his neighbor.

“Therefore honor His guests and the visitors to His House.

“They come to you dusty and disheveled from every land.

“By the Lord of this House, if my wealth alone were sufficient to bear their expenses, I would spare all of you the burden.

“But I shall bring forth from my best and lawful wealth that in which no kinship has been severed, nothing has been taken unjustly, and nothing unlawful has entered.

“Whoever among you wishes may do likewise according to his ability.

“By the sanctity of this House, I ask you that no man among you contribute from his wealth for the honor and maintenance of the visitors to the House anything except what is pure, not taken through injustice and not gained by severing kinship.”

All the descendants of Kaʿb ibn Luʾayy exerted themselves in this.

When they had brought out their contributions, they delivered them to Hāshim ibn ʿAbd Manāf, who placed them in Dār al-Nadwa.

Even a household of limited means would send a small amount according to its capacity, and through this the pilgrims were fed.

Hāshim ordered leather water-basins to be placed at the site of Zamzam before the well had been dug.

Water was carried to them so that the pilgrims could drink and be supplied with water.

He fed them in Mecca before the Day of Tarwiya, and on the Day of Tarwiya at Minā, ʿArafa, Jamʿ, and Muzdalifa.

He crumbled bread into broth for them and fed them meat, clarified butter, *sawīq*, and dates.

He gave them milk to drink and had water carried for them until the people departed for their own lands.

He did this every year.

For this reason he was called Hāshim.

He was also called "the Moon" because of his nobility and beauty.

Maṭrūd al-Khuzāʿī said of him, when referring a disputant to him for arbitration:

To the traveling moon who remains among them I appealed,
their feeder in years of famine from the choicest slaughtered beasts.

Another poet said:

ʿAmr, who crumbled the broth for his people
when the men of Mecca were gaunt from drought.

Hāshim was the first to secure the routes of Mecca.

Quraysh were merchants, but their commerce had not extended beyond Mecca, nor had they traveled outward from it.

Then Hāshim ibn ʿAbd Manāf journeyed to Syria.

He stayed with Caesar.

Every day he slaughtered a sheep, prepared a great bowl of crumbled bread and broth, and invited those around him to eat.

He was among the most handsome and graceful of men.

His reputation reached Caesar, who summoned him.

When Caesar saw him, he admired him, favored him, brought him near, and accorded him high rank.

Hāshim said to him:

“O king, I have a people who are the merchants of the Arabs. If you would write for them a document of safe-conduct securing them and their trade, they would come to you with the hides and garments of the Ḥijāz which you find desirable and sell them in your lands.”

Caesar wrote him a document of safe-conduct for any of them who came.

Hāshim returned carrying that document.

Whenever he passed a tribe of Arabs along the Syrian route, he made an agreement with them whereby Quraysh would transport their merchandise, sparing them the burden of carrying it themselves, and would return to them their capital together with their profit.

This was the *īlāf*.

Hāshim secured the *īlāf* from those between Mecca and Syria until he reached Mecca.

He brought them something of greater blessing than anything they had previously received.

They then went out with a great commercial caravan.

Hāshim traveled with them, conducting them along the route and fulfilling the covenants of *īlāf* he had secured for them among the Arabs.

He continued bringing Quraysh and the Arabs into such arrangements until he reached Syria.

He died on that journey at Gaza in the land of Syria.

Maṭrūd al-Khuzāʿī said concerning this after seeing a man who had been staying among Banū Sahm with his young daughters and wife in severe hunger.

They forced him to leave and ordered him to move away.

He came out carrying his goods and children, with his wife, and no one would take him in.

Maṭrūd said:

O man whose household has been driven away,
why did you not lodge with the family of ʿAbd Manāf?
May your mother bereave you! Had you lodged in their abode,
they would have protected you from hunger and destitution—
those who take covenants across the horizons,
and who travel upon the journey of *īlāf*.

It is said that the Messenger of God, accompanied by Abū Bakr, once passed a man reciting:

O man whose household has been driven away,
why did you not lodge with the family of ʿAbd al-Dār?

The Messenger of God said to Abū Bakr:

“Is that how the poet said it?”

Abū Bakr replied:

“No, O Messenger of God. Rather he said:
‘Why did you not lodge with the family of ʿAbd Manāf?’”

The Messenger of God said:

“Yes, that is how we used to hear it.”

It is also said that the man whose household was driven away was Aws al-Anmārī.

He came to Mecca and lodged with some of Banū Jumaḥ.

One day he drank with some of them, among whom were Umayya ibn Khalaf and Ubayy ibn Khalaf.

When Aws became intoxicated, he said:

“By the Kaʿba, none of you will ask me for anything today without my giving it to him.”

A young man of Banū Jumaḥ said:

“Then I ask you to give me your wife.”

Aws said:

“Yes.”

He stood, took the youth by the hand, brought him to his house, and killed him.

He then moved his household away from Banū Jumaḥ.

It was concerning him that Maṭrūd al-Khuzāʿī said:

O man whose household has been driven away,
why did you not lodge with the family of ʿAbd Manāf?

Maṭrūd also lamented Hāshim:

Generosity died in Syria on the day he settled there;
Hāshim perished in Gaza—may he not be far removed.

His bowls overflowed for those dwelling in his courtyard,
and aid came from him by tongue and by hand.

Hāshim and ʿAbd Shams were twins born from the same womb, and they were the eldest sons of ʿAbd Manāf.

Their mother was ʿĀtika daughter of Murra ibn Hilāl ibn Fālij ibn Dhakwān ibn Thaʿlaba ibn Buhtha ibn Sulaym ibn Manṣūr ibn ʿIkrima ibn Khaṣafa ibn Qays ibn ʿAylān.

It is said that while giving birth she felt the two of them struggling over which would emerge first, and that this was the first sign of the disagreement between them.

When Hāshim grew up, he developed according to the qualities of generosity, leadership, goodness, and nobility.

God distinguished him through the excellence of being an ancestor of the Messenger of God and by transferring the prophetic line into his loins while depriving ʿAbd Shams and the other sons of ʿAbd Manāf of it.

This demonstrated the excellence belonging to the forefathers of the Messenger of God.

God placed the line of prophethood in Hāshim and granted him broad worldly prosperity.

ʿAbd Shams envied him because of the excellence God had placed in Hāshim rather than in himself.

It is said that Hāshim was the elder because he emerged first at birth.

Those who held this view cited the verse of Ādam ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz:

O trustee of God, I shall speak
the words of a man of intelligence, religion, and lineage:
do not despise ʿAbd Shams, for indeed
ʿAbd Shams is the uncle of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib.
ʿAbd Shams followed after Hāshim,
though the two shared the same mother and father.

Others said that ʿAbd Shams was the elder and that “followed after Hāshim” meant only that he followed him in rank and excellence.

If that is so, it is an even greater boast for Hāshim.

Precedence in age is no proof of superiority.

Adam’s Legatee was his youngest son yet was the most excellent of them.

Likewise, ʿAbd Allāh, father of the Messenger of God, was the most excellent of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib’s sons though he was the youngest.

Al-Muṭṭalib was the full brother of Hāshim and ʿAbd Shams.

He inclined toward Hāshim, while Nawfal inclined toward ʿAbd Shams.

For this reason the Messenger of God said:

“We and Banū al-Muṭṭalib are like these two,”

and he brought two fingers together,

“we did not separate in the Age of Ignorance or in Islam.”

Hāshim possessed the virtues and merits we have described.

ʿAbd Shams, however, possessed no excellence or merit of his own, nor did his descendants.

He was remembered only on account of his father and the descendants of his descendants.

We have already explained how weak a claim to nobility through one’s father is when the sons possess no nobility of their own.

A claim through sons and grandsons is weaker still, especially when the supposed nobility claimed for them is scarcely worthy of description.

We shall later discuss their condition and the nobility claimed for them, God willing.

Among the reproaches of ʿAbd Shams was that he disputed nobility with those to whom it belonged.

We have already explained the deficiency that attaches to one who does this.

ʿAbd Shams was poor or dependent upon others and traveled frequently to Syria because of envy and distress at seeing Hāshim’s nobility and leadership.

Yet he himself turned away from the deeds by which such standing was earned.

He was never renowned by name for them, nor is any notable achievement of his known in this regard.

The Virtues of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim and the Reproaches of Umayya ibn ʿAbd Shams

Hāshim had a son, ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, the paternal grandfather of the Messenger of God.

He possessed excellence through being among the Prophet’s forefathers in proportion to his closeness to the birth of prophethood within his line.

He also possessed such nobility and leadership that his authority prevailed among the people of Mecca and all Quraysh, and his fame spread throughout the Arabs.

His mother was Salmā daughter of ʿAmr ibn Zayd ibn Labīd ibn Khidāsh ibn ʿĀmir ibn Ghanm ibn ʿAdī ibn al-Najjār.

The name of al-Najjār was Taym Allāh ibn Thaʿlaba ibn ʿAmr ibn al-Khazraj.

Hāshim passed through Yathrib and lodged with ʿAmr ibn Zayd.

There he saw his daughter Salmā and asked to marry her.

Her father married her to him on the condition that whenever she became pregnant, Hāshim would bring her back to give birth among her own people.

Hāshim consummated the marriage with her in Yathrib, then took her to Mecca.

She became pregnant.

When the pregnancy became heavy, he brought her back to Yathrib on the journey in which he himself continued toward Syria.

He died there.

Salmā gave birth in Yathrib to ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, whose name was Shayba.

He was called Shayba because he was born with a streak of white hair upon his head.

He grew up in Yathrib with his mother.

One day a man of Banū al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAbd Manāf passed him while he was competing in archery with other boys.

The man saw that Shayba was the most handsome of them and the best shot.

Whenever he struck his target, he would say:

“I am the son of Hāshim! I am the son of the master of al-Baṭḥāʾ!”

The man admired what he saw, approached him, and asked:

“Who are you, my son?”

He replied:

“I am Shayba ibn Hāshim ibn ʿAbd Manāf.”

The man said:

“May God bless you and multiply your like among us.”

Shayba asked:

“And who are you, uncle?”

He replied:

“A man from your people.”

He greeted him warmly and asked after his condition and needs.

The man saw in him much that impressed him.

When he reached Mecca, he did nothing before going to al-Muṭṭalib ibn ʿAbd Manāf, whom he found sitting in the Ḥijr.

He took him aside and told him about the boy and what he had seen.

Al-Muṭṭalib said:

“By God, I have neglected him. I shall not return to my family or property until I reach him.”

He mounted a she-camel and went to Medina, heading for the quarter of Banū al-Najjār.

There he found the boy among other youths.

As soon as he saw him, he recognized him.

He made his camel kneel, approached him, told him who he was, and said that he had come to take him away.

The boy immediately sat behind him upon the camel, with al-Muṭṭalib riding in front, and they departed.

Another report says that his mother knew al-Muṭṭalib had come and disputed with him over the boy.

Al-Muṭṭalib said:

O Salmā, sister of Banū al-Najjār,
enough modesty—cease rebuking me.
By the House with its coverings,
once I bind the camels beneath their saddles,
he shall travel among the noble company
until he sees the houses of ʿAbd al-Dār.

He traveled with him until they reached Mecca, the boy riding behind him.

When people saw al-Muṭṭalib, they rose to greet him and asked:

“Where have you come from?”

He replied:

“From Yathrib.”

They asked:

“And who is this with you?”

He replied:

“A slave I purchased.”

When he reached his residence, he bought the boy a fine garment and dressed him in it.

Then he took him to the gathering of Banū ʿAbd Manāf and said:

“This is the son of your brother Hāshim,”

and told them his story.

They said:

“He is the one whom yesterday you said was your slave.”

Thus the name ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, “the slave of al-Muṭṭalib,” came to predominate over him.

He grew up in noble character, excellence, leadership, and generosity and was called *Shaybat al-Ḥamd*, “Shayba of Praise.”

Ḥudhāfa ibn Ghānim ibn ʿAwf ibn ʿUbayd Allāh ibn ʿUwayj ibn ʿAdī ibn Kaʿb said in praise of Banū ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib:

By Shaybat al-Ḥamd, whose face
illuminated the darkness of night like the full moon;
their elders are the best of elders, and their offspring
are like the offspring of kings, neither failing nor declining;
the giver of water to the pilgrims, then Hāshim of the bread,
and ʿAbd Manāf, the abundant and lordly Fihrī;
whenever you meet one of them in the flower of youth,
you find him running in the tracks of his father;
they filled al-Baṭḥāʾ with glory and lordship,
and they restrained from us the erring Banū Bakr;
they forgive an offense and avenge its like,
and they have abandoned the counsel of folly and abuse;
O Khārij, if I perish, never cease
thanking them until you disappear into the grave.

Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn transmitted from his father—blessings upon them—that the occasion for these verses by Ḥudhāfa was as follows.

A caravan of Judhām was returning from pilgrimage at Mecca.

They lost one of their men, whom they believed had been swallowed up among the houses of Mecca.

They encountered Ḥudhāfa, seized him, bound him, and carried him away.

They then met ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib coming from Ṭāʾif.

By that time he had lost his sight, and his son Abū Lahab was leading him.

When Ḥudhāfa saw him, he cried out.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said to Abū Lahab:

“Woe to you! What is this?”

He replied:

“This is Ḥudhāfa ibn Ghānim, bound with a caravan.”

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

“Catch up with them and ask about his condition.”

Abū Lahab caught them and they told him the story.

He returned and informed ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

“Woe to you! Do you have anything with which to ransom him?”

He replied:

“By God, no.”

He said:

“Then catch them, may you be bereft of your mother! Give them a pledge and redeem him from them.”

Abū Lahab caught them and said:

“You know my trade and my wealth. I swear that I shall give you twenty ounces of gold, ten camels, and a horse. This cloak of mine is a pledge for it.”

They accepted and released Ḥudhāfa.

Abū Lahab returned with him.

When ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib heard Abū Lahab's voice, he said:

"By my father, you are disobedient! Go and do what I commanded you."

Abū Lahab replied:

"Father, I have done it, and I have brought the man back."

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib called:

"Ḥudhāfa, let me hear your voice."

He replied:

"Yes, here I am. May my father and mother be your ransom, O giver of water to the pilgrims—take me up behind you."

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

"Come near me."

He approached, and ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib seated him behind himself until he brought him into Mecca.

Ḥudhāfa then composed the poem beginning:

The sons of Shaybat al-Ḥamd, whose face
illuminated the darkness of night like the full moon.

And Khārij was his son, whom he addressed in the verse:

O Khārij, if I perish, never cease
thanking them until you disappear into the grave.

Abū Ṭālib and the Protection of the House of God

Among the reports of Ibn Shihāb is that the first manifestation of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib's nobility and excellence occurred when Quraysh fled from the People of the Elephant.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib was then a young man.

He said:

"By God, I shall not leave the Sanctuary of God seeking honor anywhere else."

He remained beside the House while Quraysh evacuated the area.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

O God, surely a man protects his own dwelling, so protect Your Sanctuary.
Let not their cross and their might ever overcome Your might.

He remained steadfast in the Sanctuary until God destroyed the People of the Elephant.

Quraysh then returned, and his standing became great among them because of the soundness of his judgment, his insight, and his reverence for the Sanctuary of his Lord.

When the People of the Elephant reached Mecca, they seized camels belonging to ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib.

News of him, of his staying beside the House, and of his nobility reached Abraha, king of the Abyssinians.

Abraha summoned him.

When he saw him and observed his beauty and imposing presence, he seated him beside himself, turned toward him, conversed familiarly with him, and asked whether he had any request.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

“Yes. Your men seized camels belonging to me. Order them returned.”

Abraha turned away from him for a while and then said:

“You have fallen in my estimation. I thought you would ask me to spare this House which I have come to destroy and which holds such a place with you. Instead, you leave that aside and ask me about a few insignificant camels.”

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib replied:

“I asked you only for my property, of which I am the lord. As for this House, it has a Lord who will protect it from you, if He wills.”

His standing became even greater in Abraha’s eyes, and his words made a deep impression upon him.

Abraha ordered that his camels be returned.

God fulfilled ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib’s statement, protected His House from the People of the Elephant, and sent against them birds in flocks.

This was one of the dazzling signs of the prophethood present in his line, and a clear and manifest proof among its signs.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said concerning this:

You have severed ties—why do you not sever them?
Your head has grown white from age.
Gray hair has appeared after youth,
so what hope remains for you in eternity?
Leave aside thoughts of union,
for you are wiser than to dwell upon them.
Turn instead to truthful verses
about the army brought against you by al-Ashram.
On the morning they came like the plains,
they were a people imagining spoils for themselves,
with an elephant they drove toward battle,
which grumbled whenever they urged it on.
With it they advanced toward the House of God,
intending to leave its structure demolished,
the building of one who in his age
had been a Friend honored by his Creator.
But God turned them back from destroying it,
and the elephant refused them and would not advance.
Birds in flocks cast stones upon them,
their beaks appearing crimson.
The stones struck into their skulls
like the stoning of those condemned by the Scriptures.
Vultures settled upon them,
gathering as mourners gather.
God gave us as inheritance the best of lands,
a land in which Zamzam was dug,
through victory from God, Lord of His servants,
despite the humiliation of whoever resents it.

He also said:

I protected from Abraha the Ḥaṭīm,
the sacred markers of Mecca and the Sanctuary.
I was the leader in the matter,
and I spoke to my people a weighty word:
“My people, prove yourselves in a noble stand!”
One who would make the forbearing appear foolish had said it—
Abraha, who vowed to rise
hoping to see your House destroyed.
He came driving his massive elephant,
summoning Yaksūm to what had befallen him,
with the deepest ranks of the Abyssinians.
I went forth neither afraid nor weary
until we met at a known place
between mountain passes that cast off anxieties.
The Lord of the Throne was merciful toward us:
He strengthened us and destroyed the oppressor
with birds that cast them down prostrate,
with missiles marked and designated,
like the stoning of a debauched Jew condemned to punishment.

They and their elephant became ruins;
in the place of encounter you would think them chaff.
I fulfilled my duty, neither reproached nor blamed.
My argument overcame my opponents.

And he said concerning this:

When I heard that the feeble al-Ashram
was driving his cavalry and elephant against us,
with an army rolling like the night,
filling the rough and level ground,
you would think the sound of blows and neighing
the buzzing of bees or a great wail—
whoever saw them descending in assembly
would be terrified by that awesome sight.
I called upon my Lord with the prayer of those people,
the prayer of one fearing he might be swept away.
God answered the plea amid the army,
and the one aided by Him was not abandoned.
He it was who, when they mounted the mighty beast,
poured upon Abraha the stones of baked clay,
while birds hovered above them
and rained down upon them a grievous rain.
They fell with their heads twisted and bent,
like crops whose tops have been eaten away.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib also said:

Praise be to God, the Most Majestic, the Greatest,
who today strengthened us against the hosts of al-Ashram
with victory, wind, and circling birds
casting upon them marked stones.

The Digging of Zamzam

It is said that ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib saw in a dream someone who came to him and said:

“Dig Zamzam, the hidden treasure of the greatest elder.”

The editor notes that “the greatest elder” may refer to Muḍāḍ ibn ʿAmr ibn al-Ḥārith al-Jurhumī, who is said to have buried two golden gazelles and swords in the well of Zamzam after its water had dried up, when Jurhum committed their transgressions in the Sanctuary and the location of the well was concealed and forgotten.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib awoke and said:

“O God, make it clear to me.”

He slept again, and the voice came to him:

“Dig Zamzam: it shall never be exhausted nor disparaged.”

He awoke and said:

“O God, make it clear to me.”

Then he was told:

“Dig Zamzam; it shall give drink to the greatest multitude of pilgrims.”

He said:

“O God, make it clear to me.”

He was told:

“Dig the treasured one, withheld from the people except for you.”

He said:

“O God, make it clear to me.”

Then he was told:

“Dig Zamzam between dung and blood, where the raven pecks at the ant-hill, facing the red idols.”

So he arose.

He went and sat in the Sacred Mosque, waiting for what had been described to him.

While he was sitting there, a cow came running, pursued by people. It escaped from its slaughterer with the last strength of life in it, entered the Sacred Mosque, and fell at the place of Zamzam.

The slaughterer caught up with it, killed it on the spot, skinned it, and carried away its flesh.

Then a raven swooped down and landed in the dung, pecking there beside an ant-hill.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib rose and began digging at that spot.

Quraysh came to him and said:

“What is this you are doing? You dig in our mosque, though we did not think you ignorant.”

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib replied:

“I shall dig a well here and fight anyone who prevents me.”

They left him alone because they knew his excellence and earnestness in religion.

He continued digging until he reached swords and armor that had been buried in Zamzam.

When Quraysh saw this, they said:

“Give us a share of what you have found.”

He replied:

“It belongs to the House of God.”

He continued digging until the water sprang forth.

He then widened the well so that it would not run dry and built a basin over it.

Zamzam had been the well of Ishmael.

When Jurhum departed from Mecca, they buried in it what they buried, filled it in, and concealed its location.

When Quraysh learned that it was the well of their father Ishmael, peace be upon him, and that ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib had been guided to it and distinguished by restoring it and recovering what had been buried within it, their reverence for him increased.

Zamzam was the well of Ishmael, peace be upon him, which God had provided for him when he suffered thirst as a small child.

When ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib reopened it, Quraysh abandoned every other watering place in Mecca and turned toward Zamzam seeking its blessing, drinking from it and washing in its basin.

They damaged the basin and broke parts of it.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib was shown in a dream and told:

“Say: ‘O God, I do not permit it for bathing, but it is lawful and wholesome for drinking.’”

He said this.

Afterward, anyone who bathed in it was afflicted in his body with disease.

When the people saw this, they ceased doing so.

Khuwaylid ibn Asad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā said concerning ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib’s digging of Zamzam:

I speak—and what I say is no reproach to them—
to you, son of Salmā: you are the digger of Zamzam,
the excavation of Abraham in the days of Hagar’s son,
and the stroke of Gabriel from the age of Adam.

It is also said that ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib found in Zamzam a gazelle fashioned from gold.

Another report says there were two gazelles and much jewelry.

Quraysh demanded a share.

He cast lots over the treasure for himself, Quraysh, and the Kaʿba.

The lot of the Kaʿba came out, so he adorned the Kaʿba with it.

This was the first ornament with which the Kaʿba was adorned.

It is transmitted from ʿAlī, blessings upon him, that when Quraysh saw what ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib had brought forth from Zamzam, they gathered around him and said:

“O ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, this is the well of our father Ishmael, and we have a right in it. Give us a share in it and in what you have found within it.”

He replied:

“I shall not do so. This matter has been specially granted to me apart from you and bestowed upon me from among you.”

They refused to accept this and said:

“Submit the matter to arbitration with us.”

They called him to the soothsayer of Banū Saʿd ibn Hudhaym.

He set out with them, and a group from every clan of Quraysh went along.

At that time the land was largely desert.

When they reached a wasteland between the Ḥijāz and Syria, the water of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and his companions ran out.

They asked the Quraysh clans traveling with them for water, but they refused, saying:

“We are in a desert and fear for ourselves what has happened to you.”

When ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and his companions realized this, they dismounted.

Each man dug a shallow grave and sat within it, saying:

“Whoever among us dies, those remaining shall bury him.”

Then ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

“By God, if we simply surrender ourselves to death like this, neither traveling through the land nor seeking deliverance for ourselves, that would be helplessness.”

He rose, went to his mount, and climbed upon it.

As the camel moved, a spring of fresh water burst forth from beneath its hoof.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib proclaimed God's greatness, and his companions did likewise.

He dismounted and drank, and they drank.

They filled their waterskins.

Then he called the Quraysh clans who were with them and said:

"Come to the water! God has given us drink."

They drank and watered their animals and filled their skins.

Then they said:

"By God, judgment has been given in your favor against us, O ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib. By God, we shall never dispute with you concerning Zamzam again. The One who gave you water in this wilderness is surely the One who gave you Zamzam. Return rightly guided to your watering place."

So he returned and they returned with him, leaving him uncontested possession of it.

It is also said that when ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib was commanded in his dream to dig Zamzam, the voice said:

Rise and call forth abundant water, unclouded,
living water, plentiful water,
giving drink to God's pilgrims in every righteous place,
water that is not feared to become intoxicating.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib went out and informed Quraysh of what he had seen, saying:

"Know that I have been commanded to dig Zamzam for you."

They asked:

"Was its location made clear to you?"

He replied:

"No."

They said:

"Return to your bed. If the dream is from God, He will make it clear to you; if it is from Satan, he will not return."

He returned to his bed and slept.

Then he was told:

O ʿAbd Manāf, dig the well of Zamzam;
if you dig it you shall not regret it.
It is an inheritance from your greatest father,
never exhausted through the ages, nor disparaged,
giving drink to the greatest host of consecrated pilgrims,
like startled ostriches not yet dispersed.
A man making a vow shall vow there for one favored,
and it shall become an inheritance and a binding covenant.
It is not like some affair you have not understood;
it is a well between dung and blood.

He asked:

“Where is it?”

The voice replied:

“At the ant-hill where the raven will peck tomorrow.”

It is also said that when Quraysh asked ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib for a share in what he had found in Zamzam, he said:

“Will you agree that we cast lots over it for me, for you, and for the Kaʿba?”

They agreed.

He made two yellow arrows for the Kaʿba, two black arrows for himself, and two white arrows for Quraysh.

They gave them to the keeper of the divining arrows at Hubal.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib stood praying:

O God, You are the praised King,
my Lord; You are the Originator and Restorer.
From You come new possessions and inherited wealth;
if You will, inspire what You desire.

The two yellow arrows fell upon the two gazelles for the Kaʿba.

The two black arrows fell upon the swords and armor for ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib.

The two arrows of Quraysh received nothing.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib then devoted everything to the Kaʿba.

The author adds that some of these events may have occurred separately, or all may have taken place on different occasions; God knows best.

It is said that when ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib dug Zamzam, he vowed to sacrifice one of his sons when it was completed.

Another account says that he made the vow when Quraysh tried to prevent him from digging Zamzam.

At that time he had only one son, al-Ḥārith, and vowed that if ten sons were born to him who could protect him, he would sacrifice one of them.

The author says that this report will be given in full in its proper place, God willing.

Another report states that he already had nine sons and vowed that if a tenth were born, he would sacrifice him.

The author says that this is the sounder report and that it is transmitted from the People of the House, peace be upon them.

Then ʿAbd Allāh, father of the Messenger of God, was born to him.

God cast love for him into ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib's heart, and he could not bear to kill him.

He brought forth ten camels and said:

"I shall sacrifice them and make a vow of them."

Then he said:

"How do I know that God will be satisfied with that from me and that my vow will thereby be fulfilled? Rather, I shall cast lots between the camels and him."

He did so, and the lot fell upon ʿAbd Allāh.

He added ten camels and cast lots again.

The lot again fell upon ʿAbd Allāh.

He continued adding ten at a time, with the lot repeatedly falling upon ʿAbd Allāh, until the number reached one hundred.

Then the lot fell upon the camels.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

"No, by God. I shall not seize this opportunity on the strength of a single casting. The lot must fall upon the camels ten times, just as it fell upon ʿAbd Allāh, otherwise I shall add more."

The lot fell upon the camels ten times.

He said:

“Now I know that my Lord is satisfied.”

He slaughtered them.

Then he said to the people:

“Take them.”

The people seized the meat.

Murra ibn Khalīf al-Fahmī said concerning this:

As the blood-money of Ibn Hāshim was divided as plunder
in its valley, where full-grown camels are seized.

It is said that ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib was the noblest man of Quraysh in his age and their uncontested chief.

The light of prophethood and the awe of kingship were seen in him.

His noble qualities were too numerous to count.

He was called “Lord of the Valley,” meaning Mecca and its surroundings.

The Death of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and the Elegies for Him

It is said that when ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib was dying, he gathered his daughters, who were six in number, and said:

“Lament me so that I may hear you.”

They did so.

ʿĀtika daughter of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

My two eyes, pour forth and do not withhold
your tears before sleepers fall asleep.
My two eyes, overflow and pour them out,
mixing your tears with blood.
Help me, pour forth and flow
for a lord neither weak nor dull,
for the mighty host in calamities,
noble in endeavor and in protection,
for Shaybat al-Ḥamd, kindler of fire,
true and steadfast in his station,
a sword in war, sharp and cutting,
destroyer of adversaries in dispute,

gentle in nature, open-handed,
abundant in noble lineage and lofty ancestry,
established in his exalted house,
high of crest and difficult to attain.

Ṣafiyya daughter of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

I lay awake at night at the voice of a mourner
over a man laid upon the hard earth.
At that my tears poured forth
upon my cheek like a falling string of pearls,
for a noble man without defect,
possessing manifest excellence among multitudes,
for the generous Shayba, possessor of high rank,
your father of goodness, inheritor of every generosity,
truthful in every station, never weak,
neither boisterous nor feeble.

Al-Bayḍāʾ, Umm Ḥakīm daughter of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, said:

O eye, pour forth and stream,
and weep for the possessor of generosity and noble deeds.
O eye, woe to you, assist me
with tears pouring down in torrents.
Weep for the best of those who mounted riding beasts,
your father of goodness, flowing like the Euphrates.

Barra daughter of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

My eyes, pour forth pearls of tears
for the man of good character and firm resolve,
for the noble one of lofty fortune, kindler of fire,
beautiful of countenance, great in rank,
for Shaybat al-Ḥamd, possessor of noble deeds,
of glory, might, and pride.

Arwā daughter of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

My eye has wept, and rightly does it weep,
for an elder whose nature was modesty,
for an Abṭaḥī, generous in disposition,
noble in character, whose intention was loftiness,
for the generous Shayba, possessor of noble rank,
your father of goodness, without equal.

Umayma daughter of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

Behold, the shepherd of the clan has perished, the deeply mourned one,
giver of water to the pilgrims and defender of glory,
the one who welcomed the stranger as guest in his house

when the sky withheld rain from men.
From childhood you acquired the best a youth may acquire,
and you never ceased increasing in excellence, O Shaybat al-Ḥamd.
Abū al-Ḥārith, the bountiful one, has left his place;
be not far removed, though every living one must go far.
I shall weep for you as long as I live and grieve,
for you were worthy of the sorrow I feel.

When he heard them, it is said, he gestured with his head to indicate:

“Weep for me in this manner.”

His sister Ruqayya daughter of Hāshim lamented him:

O eye, pour forth and assist me
with tears from you, not scant.
O eye, send down the tears abundantly,
with a bucketful from your stream, without restraint.
O eye, do not become heedless; pour forth
with gushing, sprinkling, and flooding tears
for the generous Shayba, possessor of noble rank,
your brother of goodness, inheritor of every glory.

Ashfāʾ daughter of Hāshim lamented her brother:

O eye, woe to you, assist me
with pouring, abundant, overflowing tears
for the generous man of noble disposition, possessor of favors,
noble in character, rich in bounty,
far-reaching in generosity, awe-inspiring and mighty,
radiant like the brightness of the shining moon,
for the generous Shayba, possessor of noble rank,
your great brother in this immense calamity.

Al-Ḍaʿīfa daughter of Hāshim lamented her brother ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib:

O eye, pour forth a constantly flowing stream,
and weep for Ibn Hāshim, possessor of good deeds and bounty.
Weep for the youth neither feeble nor miserly,
neither base, weak, nor corrupt,
for a man who bore burdens with strength,
a noble falcon, generous and distinguished,
swift in resolve, advancing toward lofty things,
pure in nature, clear and free from rancor.

Khālida daughter of Hāshim lamented him:

O eye, woe to you, assist me
with tears flowing from your lids.
Pour forth and do not grow weary,

for you have parted from a man of nobility and goodness,
your brother of goodness, Shayba of noble rank,
possessor of pure and sturdy lineage,
far-reaching in bounty, radiant, energetic,
noble himself and son of one nobly chosen.

Subayʿa daughter of ʿAbd Shams lamented her cousin ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib:

My two eyes, pour forth flowing tears
for the best person descended from Luʾayy ibn Ghālib.
My two eyes, shed tear after tear
for a generous man of noble qualities.
My two eyes, do not tire of weeping
for one noble of lineage and pure in his earnings,
Abū al-Ḥārith, the bountiful, possessor of knowledge and judgment,
of great reach and goodness without false claim.

She also said:

My two eyes, pour forth abundant tears
upon my breast like overflowing streams.
Do not grow weary of weeping every night
and day for one of noble qualities,
for even your painful weeping cannot restore
the best of those of Maʿadd who walked barefoot or shod,
for a man pure of obscenity and shameful speech,
noble in endeavor, broad in judgment, excellent,
a man whose grandfather did not bequeath him baseness,
lofty, long-armed, a mighty chief,
my trustworthy brother, firm in resolve and noble,
possessing an inheritance of glory firmly established.

Maṭrūd ibn Kaʿb al-Khuzāʿī lamented ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib:

O man whose household has been driven away,
why did you not lodge with the family of ʿAbd Manāf?
May your mother bereave you! Had you lodged in their dwelling,
they would have protected you from hunger and destitution,
those who bestow favors when the stars change,
and who travel upon the journey of *īlāf*,
those who feed when the winds clash
until the sun disappears amid trembling gusts.
Though Abū al-Afʿāl has perished, no woman
ever gave birth to one like you—
except your father, brother of noble deeds, alone,
and the bountiful al-Muṭṭalib, father of guests.

Umayya ibn ʿAbd Shams

Opposite ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, among those already mentioned, stood Umayya ibn ʿAbd Shams, through whom the descendants of ʿAbd Shams multiplied.

Umayya was deficient in the causes of noble conduct.

He was neither remembered nor described for any of them.

He possessed no known virtue and no celebrated precedence.

His sons, and their descendants, were remembered only for opposing the truth and showing hostility toward its people.

Their reports will be mentioned in their proper place, God willing.

In himself, besides lacking the qualities of nobility, Umayya was sexually immoral and adulterous, and was known and described as such.

He was also weak in intellect and base in aspiration.

It is said that one day he made advances toward a woman of Banū Zuhra.

A man from that clan struck him with a sword.

His sons and paternal relatives rose in tribal zeal for him, and some of Quraysh supported them.

They moved against Banū Zuhra and intended to expel them.

Qays ibn ʿAdī al-Sahmī stood in defense of Banū Zuhra, who were his maternal relatives.

He was a man of formidable position, forceful speech, proud spirit, and intense sense of honor.

He stood before them and cried:

“Morning has come upon the night!”

The phrase became proverbial.

He also proclaimed:

“The one who would depart shall remain,”

meaning Banū Zuhra.

Wahb ibn ʿAbd ibn Manāf ibn Zuhra said concerning this:

Gently, O Umayya, for oppression destroys;
let not its evil one day earn you remembrance.

Its stars become visible even while the sun is risen,
and from its cup are poured bitter poison and gall.

Concerning Umayya's immorality, Nufayl ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā, grandfather of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, said when ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and Ḥarb ibn Umayya came before him in a contest of boasting.

Nufayl was astonished at Ḥarb's audacity in challenging him.

He rebuked and humiliated him, saying:

Your father was an adulterer, while his father was chaste,
and he drove the elephant away from the Sacred City.

It is also said that when Umayya saw the nobility and leadership God had prepared for Hāshim above his father, and saw that his own father had been unable to attain it, he envied his uncle Hāshim and attempted to rival his noble deeds.

He proved incapable.

Some people of Quraysh mocked Umayya for this.

He became angry and went to Hāshim, challenging him to a contest of boasting and judgment.

Hāshim turned away from him out of contempt and disdain.

The leading men of Quraysh said to Hāshim:

"If you withdraw from him, he will have grounds to speak against you."

They continued pressing him until he accepted.

Each man staked fifty camels to be slaughtered in the valley of Mecca, together with exile from Mecca for ten years.

They agreed upon a soothsayer of Khuzāʿa as judge.

The judge decided in favor of Hāshim against Umayya.

Hāshim took Umayya's camels, slaughtered them, and fed those present.

Much was then said against Umayya, and he became the object of criticism.

He departed for Syria and remained there for ten years.

It is said that this was the first event of conflict between Hāshim and Umayya.

The author adds that this itself demonstrates Umayya's weakness: he entered a contest against his own uncle, whom even his father had been unable to rival, though Umayya was lower and weaker than his father.

He challenged his uncle while his own father was still alive.

Hāshim died before ʿAbd Shams.

He was the first of the sons of ʿAbd Manāf to die, followed by ʿAbd Shams, then Nawfal, then al-Muṭṭalib.

Their graves were scattered in different lands.

Hāshim died at Gaza in Syria.

ʿAbd Shams died in Mecca.

Nawfal died at Salmān on the road to Iraq.

Al-Muṭṭalib died at Radmān in Yemen.

It is also said that Umayya did something no Arab or other person before him had done in the Age of Ignorance, bringing disgrace and reproach upon himself.

He gave up one of his wives and married her to his son Abū ʿAmr ibn Umayya, bringing the son together with her while Umayya himself was still alive.

This, the author says, demonstrated the foolishness and weakness attributed to him.

People regarded it as shameful even in the Age of Ignorance for a man to marry his father's wife after his father's death.

Umayya went even beyond this and arranged it during his own lifetime.

Ibn al-Kalbī said that Umayya ibn ʿAbd Shams went to Syria and remained there ten years.

There he had relations with a Jewish slave-woman of Lakhm from Ṣaffūriyya named Thurayyā.

She had a Jewish husband from Ṣaffūriyya.

She bore a child, whom Umayya claimed and attributed to himself.

He brought him to Mecca.

This was Abū ʿAmr.

For this reason, the author says, the Messenger of God said to ʿUqba ibn Abī Muʿayṭ ibn Abī ʿAmr:

“You are only a Jew from Ṣaffūriyya.”

ʿUqba ibn Abī Muʿayṭ had been among the polytheists at Badr and was captured.

When the Messenger of God departed from Badr and reached al-Ṣafrāʾ, he ordered that ʿUqba’s neck be struck.

ʿUqba said:

“O Muḥammad, am I to be killed alone among Quraysh?”

The Messenger of God replied:

“Are you even of Quraysh? You are only a Jew from Ṣaffūriyya.”

ʿUqba said:

“O Muḥammad, who will care for my children after me?”

He replied:

“The Fire will care for them.”

His sons at that time were al-Walīd, ʿUmāra, Khālid, and Hishām, sons of ʿUqba.

The author accordingly says that the Messenger of God testified that they were destined for the Fire.

ʿUqba ibn Abī Muʿayṭ had been a neighbor of the Messenger of God in Mecca and often sat with him.

He once prepared a banquet and invited the Messenger of God.

The Prophet refused to eat from his food unless ʿUqba pronounced the two testimonies of faith.

He did so.

Quraysh then said:

“ʿUqba has abandoned his religion.”

A close friend of his had been absent in Syria and returned at night.

He asked his wife:

“What has Muḥammad been doing?”

She replied:

“His movement is stronger than ever.”

He asked:

“And what has my friend ʿUqba done?”

She replied:

“He has abandoned his religion.”

The friend spent a miserable night.

In the morning ʿUqba came and greeted him.

He refused to return the greeting.

ʿUqba asked:

“Why do you not return my greeting?”

He replied:

“How can I return it when you have abandoned your religion?”

ʿUqba said:

“Have Quraysh really said this?”

He replied:

“Yes.”

ʿUqba asked:

“What would satisfy them if I did it?”

He replied:

“Go to Muḥammad in his gathering, spit in his face, and insult him with the vilest abuse you know.”

ʿUqba did so.

The Messenger of God merely wiped the spittle from his face and turned to him, saying:

“If I find you outside the mountains of Mecca, I shall strike off your head as a captive.”

Afterward ʿUqba became one of the fiercest enemies of the Messenger of God.

He would bring animal dung and throw it at the door of the Prophet’s house.

Al-Walīd among those descendants was the maternal brother of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān.

Their mother was Arwā daughter of ʿĀmir ibn Kurayz ibn Ḥabīb ibn ʿAbd Shams.

The author says that his story will be mentioned in its proper place, God willing.

The Virtues of ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, Father of the Messenger of God, and the Reproaches of Ḥarb ibn Umayya ibn ʿAbd Shams

The author says:

I mentioned in the preceding chapter how God, Mighty and Glorious, inspired ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib to vow the sacrifice of his son ʿAbd Allāh as an act of drawing near to God, just as Abraham, peace be upon him, was shown in a dream and commanded to sacrifice Ishmael.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ransomed his son ʿAbd Allāh with one hundred camels after casting lots between him and them, just as Ishmael was ransomed with a ram.

God thereby joined him to Ishmael in excellence and singled him out as the father of the Messenger of God.

He was the most excellent and noble of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib's sons because of his proximity to the Prophet, in accordance with the saying of the Messenger of God:

"I was transferred through noble loins into purified wombs."

By this saying the Prophet distinguished himself and proudly recalled the excellence of his forefathers.

They were not people who denied divinity, rejected lordship, or invalidated prophethood.

Rather, they adhered to many elements of the law of their father Abraham, peace be upon him, together with noble character, performance of good deeds, and avoidance of evil.

No one can reasonably deny this.

It is reported that Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām said to the Messenger of God:

"O Messenger of God, what do you say concerning things I used to do during the Age of Ignorance—charity, freeing slaves, and maintaining ties of kinship? Is there any reward for me in them?"

The Messenger of God replied:

“You embraced Islam while retaining the good you had previously done.”

Thus the Prophet called the good that he had performed in the Age of Ignorance “good.”

Likewise, what a person did of evil in that period was evil.

Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām performed many acts of generosity both before and after Islam.

Islam came while Dār al-Nadwa was in his possession, and the Messenger of God confirmed him in it.

Muʿāwiya later purchased it from him during the period of his domination for one hundred thousand dirhams, seeking honor through it because possession of it had been a source of distinction in the Age of Ignorance.

Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām gave the entire hundred thousand in charity.

People said to him:

“You have sold the noble distinction of Quraysh.”

He replied:

“Islam has abolished the honors of the Age of Ignorance, and with its price I have purchased from God a house in Paradise.”

He lived sixty years in the Age of Ignorance and sixty years in Islam.

When the polytheists of Quraysh confined Banū Hāshim in the mountain pass, Ḥakīm would bring caravans arriving from Syria loaded with wheat and direct them into the pass for them.

He was present at Badr with the polytheists.

He advised ʿUtba ibn Rabīʿa to withdraw from fighting the Messenger of God.

ʿUtba said:

“Go to Abū Jahl. If he withdraws, I shall withdraw.”

Ḥakīm went to him and conveyed the proposal and ʿUtba’s words.

Abū Jahl said:

“Could he find no messenger other than you?”

Ḥakīm replied:

“No, and I would not have served as messenger for anyone other than him, nor even for him except in a matter such as this.”

Abū Jahl and ʿUtba were killed that day.

Ḥakīm escaped with those who escaped.

He embraced Islam on the day of the conquest of Mecca.

Before that he had corresponded with the Messenger of God.

He purchased the robe of Dhū Yazan for three hundred dinars and presented it to the Prophet.

The Messenger of God returned it and refused to accept it as a gift.

Ḥakīm then sold it, and the Messenger of God purchased it, wore it, and afterward clothed Usāma ibn Zayd in it.

After Ḥakīm had become Muslim, he saw Usāma wearing it and said:

“Congratulations, Usāma, on the robe of Dhū Yazan.”

The Messenger of God said:

“Tell him: Why should I not wear it, when I am better than Dhū Yazan and my father is better than his father?”

The author explains that by “my father” he means the Messenger of God as Usāma’s adoptive father.

Actions of this kind are counted as noble whether performed in the Age of Ignorance or in Islam.

The Light of Prophethood

ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, father of the Messenger of God, grew up possessing noble character, purity, generosity, leadership, and distinction.

He was handsome and striking in appearance.

The light of prophethood was clearly and visibly seen between his eyes because the birth of the Messenger of God was near.

An Arab woman saw this.

It is said that she was the sister of Waraqa ibn Nawfal.

Waraqa had read the scriptures and used to announce the coming mission of the Messenger of God and speak of the nearness of his appearance.

His sister had heard this from him.

When she saw the light in ʿAbd Allāh's face, she concluded that it was the light of prophethood and that the Prophet was in his loins.

She hoped that the child might come through her, so she invited him to herself.

He refused her.

It is also said that the woman was a soothsayer of Khathʿam named Fāṭima daughter of Murra, from Tabāla.

She had read the scriptures and possessed knowledge.

When she saw the light in his face, she hoped to bear a child by him and invited him to herself.

He refused.

She continued enticing him and offering him rewards until she offered one hundred camels.

He refused and said:

As for what is forbidden, death stands before it;
as for what is lawful, the one you seek has not yet come.
How then could I do the thing you desire?

After he had relations with his wife, he passed by the woman again and she did not speak to him.

He asked why.

She replied:

"Young man, by God, I was not a woman of vice. But I saw a light in your face. I know of a prophet whose time of birth has drawn near, and I hoped that it was that light and that I might bear him. I now see that the light has departed from you. What has happened?"

He told her that he had gone in to his wife.

Fāṭima said:

I saw a luminous radiance flash,
sparkling like the gleam of the moon.
In his face was a light illuminating
everything around him like the full moon.
I hoped to gain through it a glory I might claim,
though not every one who strikes a fire-stick makes it blaze.
By God, a woman of Zuhra has taken
a light that has settled in her while she knows it not.

She also said:

Banū Hāshim, Āmina has taken from your brother
what she took while the lions contended;
just as a lamp when extinguished leaves behind
wicks that had burned with oil.
Not everything a young man possesses from inherited wealth
comes through resolve, nor is everything missed through negligence.
Be gracious when seeking a matter, for
two contending fortunes shall suffice you—
either a hand drawn back and clenched,
or an outstretched hand with fingers extended.
When Āmina received from him what she received,
she received a glory to which there is no second.

God protected ʿAbd Allāh as He protected Joseph son of Jacob, peace be upon him.

ʿAbd Allāh entered upon his lawful wife and had relations with her.

God caused that light to settle in its proper place through pure birth and protected him from fornication.

Āmina daughter of Wahb, wife of ʿAbd Allāh, then conceived the Messenger of God.

She was Āmina daughter of Wahb ibn ʿAbd Manāf ibn Zuhra ibn Kilāb ibn Murra ibn Kaʿb ibn Luʾayy ibn Ghālib ibn Fihr ibn Mālik ibn al-Naḍr ibn Kināna.

The author concludes:

These are virtues that none can reject or deny except one who denies and rejects prophethood itself.

The Death of ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib

ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib died in Medina when the Messenger of God was two months old.

His mother Āmina daughter of Wahb, mother of the Messenger of God, lamented his father ʿAbd Allāh:

Ibn Hāshim was a chief among his people,
a mountain whose pillar was sought for refuge in glory,
rain when the clouds withheld their water,
not a hollow wasteland abandoned upon the high plain.
There one would seek whom to shelter beside
in solitude and in the crowded gathering.
Fat boiled for whoever stopped at his camp,
and he melted the frozen stinginess of the noble miser.

She also said:

The side of al-Baṭḥāʾ is emptied of Ibn Ghālib,
and he now dwells in a grave wrapped in clouds.
Death called him with a summons and he answered;
it left among mankind no equal to Ibn Hāshim.
On the evening when they carried his bier away,
his companions passed it between them amid the crowd.
Though death and its calamity have taken him,
he was generous, abundant in noble deeds.

She also lamented him:

Ibn Hāshim has entered a dark wilderness,
into a pit among stones beside the grave.
Ibn Hāshim was among the purest houses,
kindling fire even in hard poverty,
foremost toward their goals in every severe year,
noble and of good report.
If they forget him, I shall not forget
so long as birds sing among branches of trees.
Gentle in disposition, a noble lord and protector,
giving abundantly, steadfast in maintaining kinship.
Generosity and forbearance were of his nature,
and reason, when reason is measured against others.
Though he now lies at the bottom of darkness,
neighboring the grave through the decree of fate,
how many stout, broad-backed riding beasts
crossing thickets in hope upon a journey
did he give, neither hesitant nor weary,
when reason itself feared hardship—
and every strong-limbed mount, high of chest,
sharply built and nourished for strenuous travel.
May rain from dark clouds water the sides
of the grave in which you dwell.

The Glad Tidings of the Birth

It is said that when Āmina, mother of the Messenger of God, became pregnant with him, she saw in a dream someone who came to her and said:

“You have conceived the lord of this community. When you give birth to him, say: ‘I seek refuge for him in the One from the evil of every envier.’”

The visitor named him Muḥammad.

She also saw a light emerge from her that illuminated the palaces of Buṣrā.

She told his father ʿAbd Allāh, who rejoiced.

He informed his own father ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, who was awaiting the child.

When she gave birth, she said what she had been instructed to say.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib came, carried the infant away joyfully, entered the Kaʿba with him, and prayed for him, saying:

Praise be to God who has given me
this boy of pure garments.
Even in the cradle he has surpassed the other boys.
I seek refuge for him in the House with its pillars
until I see him grown to full stature.
I seek refuge for him from every enemy.

Then he returned him to his mother and sought a wet nurse for him.

The Messenger of God was born, according to the reports, in the Year of the Elephant.

What God did in defending Quraysh from the People of the Elephant was through his blessing, so that his enemy would not prevail over them while he was still either an infant or in the womb.

His mother Āmina died when he was four years old, according to one report, and six years old according to another.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib then cared for him.

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib died when he was eight years old and entrusted him to his son Abū Ṭālib, whose name was ʿAbd Manāf.

Abū Ṭālib cared for him well.

It is said that the Prophet was present with him in the Sacrilegious War.

Whenever the Prophet was present, Qays was defeated; whenever he was absent, Kināna was defeated.

Kināna noticed this and would ask Abū Ṭālib to bring him.

Abū Ṭālib stood toward the Messenger of God in the place of a compassionate and devoted father.

None of his own children had the same standing with him.

Abū Ṭālib was one of the chiefs of Quraysh despite possessing little wealth.

This itself was counted among his virtues.

It is said that no one in the Age of Ignorance attained leadership without wealth except Abū Ṭālib ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and ʿUtba ibn Rabīʿa.

The author says that Abū Ṭālib's guardianship of the Messenger of God will be discussed in a separate chapter, God willing.

Ḥarb ibn Umayya

Ḥarb ibn Umayya stood opposite ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib in genealogical proximity and in the comparison being drawn here.

He was the most notable and distinguished among his father Umayya's sons, although neither he nor his brothers were distinguished by any quality of goodness that would establish nobility and piety according to what has already been discussed.

He and his brothers were remembered primarily because of their position in the War of ʿUkāẓ.

After the death of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, Ḥarb attempted to assume leadership and fed people for some days, but the effort did not succeed.

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Judʿān surpassed him.

Quraysh concluded the Pact of the Virtuous in the house of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Judʿān.

Thereafter nobility returned among the descendants of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib through Abū Ṭālib, Ḥamza, and al-ʿAbbās, until God brought Islam and perfected nobility in the Messenger of God.

The Cause of the Pact of the Virtuous

The cause of the Pact of the Virtuous was that a man complained of injustice in Mecca.

Quraysh gathered in the house of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Judʿān and concluded a covenant among themselves that whenever they found anyone wronged in Mecca, they would support him and obtain his right from the one who had wronged him.

The Messenger of God attended this pact while still a young boy.

He later said:

"I witnessed in the house of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Judʿān a covenant for which I would not exchange red camels. If I were called to it in Islam, I would answer."

It is said that al-Walīd ibn ʿUtba ibn Abī Sufyān was governor of Medina during the reign of Muʿāwiya.

He abused his authority against al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī, blessings upon him, concerning a right belonging to al-Ḥusayn.

Al-Ḥusayn said:

“By God, either you give me justice concerning my right, or I shall take my sword, stand with it in the Mosque of the Messenger of God, and call upon the Pact of the Virtuous.”

ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr, who was present, said:

“By God, if he calls upon it, I shall take my sword and stand with him until he receives justice in his right or we die together.”

Al-Miswar ibn Makhrama said the same.

The statement reached ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿUthmān ibn ʿUbayd Allāh al-Taymī, and he likewise said the same.

Al-Walīd ibn ʿUtba became afraid and gave al-Ḥusayn justice in his right and satisfied him.

Some say that this same Ḥarb ibn Umayya depended upon ʿAbd Allāh ibn Judʿān, who fed him, gave him drink, kept his company, bestowed gifts upon him, and treated him generously.

His relation to Mirdās ibn Abī ʿĀmir al-Sulamī was similar.

Mirdās granted him half of al-Qarya, an estate belonging to him.

Mirdās ibn Abī ʿĀmir said concerning this:

I put forward my argument before the people
so that it may be said: “Authority belongs to Mirdās.”
I chose Ḥarb and his brothers for him;
indeed I insert myself into a firmly tied rope.

The author comments that such a condition was regarded among the Arabs as among the most blameworthy and base.

Al-Ḥuṭayʾa said in satirizing a man in a similar condition:

Leave noble deeds; do not journey in search of them.
Sit down, for you are merely the one who is fed and clothed.

Arab reports say that Ḥarb and Mirdās burned trees at al-Qarya.

A jinn was burned among them.

A disembodied voice was heard saying:

Woe to Ḥarb, snatching treacherously,
proceeding with stealth.
Woe to the mother of ʿAmr, the rider,
when they put on their caps.
Both of them, when they engaged in it,
have made me miserable.

It is said that the name of the jinn who was burned was ʿAmr.

They say that the jinn—meaning the supernatural being—then confronted Ḥarb and struck him down immediately.

Those with him were told:

“Hurry to him! The jinn have struck him. Treat him and give him drink, for if he dies your companion will die.”

They treated him and gave him drink, but it did not benefit him and he died.

Those who say that Ḥarb and Mirdās set fire to al-Qarya and burned the jinn there say that both men died because of this, and therefore say that the jinn killed them.

Mirdās was buried at al-Qarya.

For this reason ʿAbbās ibn Mirdās said to Kulayb ibn ʿAyhama when the latter claimed al-Qarya:

O Kulayb, why are you unjust every day?
Injustice has the most ill-omened face and is accursed.
Your people once considered you a chief,
though I think you are a chief struck by the evil eye.
When you return to your women, anoint yourself,
for the one at peace has an anointed head.
Do to your people what was done to Wāʾil
on the Day of al-Ghadīr by your namesake who was stabbed.
I think you too shall encounter its like
in your two sides, its sharpened spear-point.
The matter of al-Qarya has become clear,
if clarification is of any benefit to you,
though you departed unjustly with its portion belonging to me,
while Abū Yazīd lies buried in its soil.

When the Messenger of God emigrated to Medina and the Muslims followed him, they left their houses and property for the sake of God.

Among those who emigrated were Banū Jaḥsh ibn Riʾāb, allies of Banū Umayya.

Abū Sufyān seized their houses and sold them to ʿAmr ibn ʿAlqama, brother of ʿĀmir ibn Luʾayy.

When news reached Banū Jaḥsh of what Abū Sufyān had done to their house, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Jaḥsh mentioned it to the Messenger of God.

The Prophet said:

“Would you not be satisfied, O ʿAbd Allāh, if God gives you in exchange for it a house in Paradise?”

He replied:

“Yes.”

The Prophet said:

“Then that is yours.”

Abū Aḥmad ibn Jaḥsh ibn Riʾāb composed verses concerning Banū Umayya and the bonds of marriage, kinship, and alliance between them.

He was their ally.

His mother was Āmina daughter of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, and his wife was al-Qāriʿa daughter of Abī Sufyān ibn Umayya.

He said:

Banū Umayya, how can your neighbor be wronged,
your ally in hardship and ease?
Do not diminish my right, for I entered your alliance
beside the stone-heaps on the evening of sacrifice.
I tied your rope to mine there
and took from you a binding pledge.
Others called me, but I refused them
and saved you for the calamities of time.
You maintained my kinship and protected my blood
and prevented my bones from being broken.
Faithfulness belongs to you, and you are worthy of it,
while betrayal dwells in the houses of others.
Worry has prevented sleep; I have not closed my eyes for an hour,
and remembrance of it constricts my breast.

They paid him no heed, and Abū Sufyān completed the sale of their house.

Abū Aḥmad then said:

Convey to Abū Sufyān a message from me:
Ḥarb your father was corrupt in eye and forge.
Banū Qayn were a people of evil, known by their furnace;
Umayya was a butcher sitting beside dung.
By my life, you inherited from Ḥarb a disgrace
with which his children are reviled in gatherings.
Remain at shooting arrows and turn away from excellence,
for excellence belongs to the family of Aḥmad.
You inherited disgrace, blame, and meanness,
and the polishing of swords with ʿAmr ibn Ṣārid.
This is what I know and say concerning you,
uncovering remembrance of those disgraces.
You attacked Jaḥsh and sold their house,

though your ally had not been neglectful toward you.
You betrayed him; betrayal belongs to you,
Banū Qayn, base in ancestry.
Thus, by my life, his house became sold cheaply,
and you failed to fulfill the covenant of your ally.

He also said:

Convey to Abū Sufyān from me
a matter whose consequences are regret.
You sold the house of your cousin
to pay your own debt with it.
Your ally swore by God, Lord of mankind,
striving in the oath.
Go with it, go with it—
you have hung it around your neck like the collar of a dove.

When the Messenger of God conquered Mecca, Abū Aḥmad ibn Jaḥsh spoke to him concerning their house.

The Prophet delayed answering him.

People told Abū Aḥmad:

“The Messenger of God dislikes your reclaiming any property that was taken from you for the sake of God.”

So he stopped mentioning it.

The author concludes:

These are the “virtues” of Banū Umayya and their like; but once examined they prove to be reproaches rather than virtues.

Yet despite this they dispute excellence with those to whom it belongs, out of envy, overstepping their proper limits, and ignorance of their own rank.

Here is Ḥarb, with all that attached to him, challenging ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib in a contest before Nufayl because of his envy.

We have already mentioned the story and how greatly Nufayl condemned his presumption, his overstepping of his station, and his aggression, and what he said to him concerning it.

In this, the author says, he was no different from Muʿāwiya—may God curse him—Marwān, and the family of Marwān—may God curse them—in what they presumed to undertake and perform, the limits they exceeded, and what envy and the quest for rule drove them to: fighting the Friends of God, usurping the inheritance of the Messenger of God, dominating his progeny, killing those of the choicest of his family whom they killed, appropriating their rights, and sitting in their seats.

The author says that all this will be related in its proper place, God willing.

The Virtues of Abū Ṭālib ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and His Sons through the Messenger of God and through His Father before Him, and the Hostility of Those among Banū Umayya and Others Who Opposed Him

Abū Ṭālib was the paternal uncle of the Messenger of God and full brother of his father.

The name of Abū Ṭālib was ʿAbd Manāf.

He, ʿAbd Allāh, and al-Zubayr were full brothers, sons of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib.

Their mother was Fāṭima daughter of ʿAmr ibn ʿĀʾidh ibn ʿImrān ibn Makhzūm.

When ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib had made the vow previously mentioned and intended to sacrifice his son ʿAbd Allāh, despite his intense love for him, the love God had cast for ʿAbd Allāh into his own heart and the hearts of those who saw him made him reluctant to kill him.

He took his hand and went to sacrifice him.

Quraysh rose against him, pleading on the boy's behalf and saying:

"If you sacrifice him, men among us will continue following your example and sacrificing their sons."

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

"What am I to do when I have made such a vow?"

They replied:

"Wait and reconsider the matter."

His maternal relatives from Banū Makhzūm also intervened.

Al-Mughīra ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar ibn Makhzūm said:

How astonishing, the killing by ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib
and his slaughter of a youth like an image of gold!
O Shayba, do not hasten upon us in this astonishing matter;
our son is not one to be sacrificed among noble men.

Our son is not one to be abased and seized,
when he can be ransomed with wealth until the matter is settled.
I shall ransom him with my wealth and possessions,
and I shall face bitter destruction before him.

Abū Ṭālib also rose in defense of his full brother and said:

No, by the Lord of the House with its sacred stones,
and the Lord of every mount I have worn down,
whether one dwelling nearby or coming from afar
to visit God's veiled House,
ʿAbd Allāh shall not be slaughtered in jest
from among a clan of vigorous young men,
among women of far-reaching lineage,
radiant among the fair descendants of Kilāb,
and among Makhzūm, possessors of noble lineage,
men of swift horses and lofty pavilions.
You are not lords over this affair.

He also said:

God is my Lord; I shall fulfill His vow.
I fear my Lord if I disobey His command.
This is my son whom I intended to sacrifice.
If He delays it and accepts his excuse,
I shall owe mighty God my gratitude.

Then ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib carried out the procedure with the camels and the lots previously described, until God ransomed ʿAbd Allāh through them and the vow was fulfilled.

Abū Ṭālib's position in that event was praiseworthy and his support manifest.

He rejoiced greatly at his brother's deliverance and salvation.

Abū Ṭālib Takes the Messenger of God into His Care

When ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib was dying and the Messenger of God was an orphan under his care, he entrusted him to Abū Ṭālib and said to him:

I charge you, O ʿAbd Manāf, after me,
with the orphan who became alone after his father,
who left him while he was still lying in the cradle.
I was like a mother to him in affection,
drawing him close to my entrails and liver.
When I feared that my appointed term drew near,
I charged the one who safeguards his family with support—
concerning the son of the one whom I placed in the grave,

unwillingly on my part, not by deliberate choice.
He replied to me, and his word was decisive:
“As long as I live among Maʿadd, my brother’s son
shall be like the dearest of my own children.
Muḥammad is the hope for maturity
and for every matter that tomorrow may bring.
The people of steadfastness already know
that the youth is lord of the people of Najd.”

Abū Ṭālib then sheltered and protected the Messenger of God, treated him as his own son, singled him out, and drew him near.

He was dearer to him than any of his own sons and more beloved.

Abū Ṭālib intended to make a journey to Syria with a group of Quraysh.

He prepared for the journey and readied his provisions.

He saw sadness and dejection upon the Messenger of God.

He asked him what troubled him.

The Prophet complained of the loss he would feel and the loneliness at being left behind and asked to accompany him.

Abū Ṭālib’s heart softened toward him, and he took him along.

They stopped near the monastery of a monk in the land of Buṣrā named Baḥīrā.

Quraysh frequently passed him and camped near his monastery, but he had never previously come down to them or spoken with any of them.

When they stopped there on this journey with the Messenger of God among them, the monk came down to them and asked about their condition.

He was learned in the scriptures and reports concerning future events.

He looked at the Messenger of God carefully, examined him, and asked about his circumstances and story.

They informed him.

He then took Abū Ṭālib aside and said:

“This nephew of yours has a great destiny. He will be sent as a prophet. This is his time and these are his signs. Beware of the Jews concerning him and return him to your country. If the Jews see him, I fear for him.”

While he was still with them, a group of Jews approached.

They saw Baḥīrā with Abū Ṭālib, looked at the Messenger of God, and recognized in him signs of prophethood.

They intended harm against him.

Baḥīrā spoke privately with them, forbade them from touching him, and warned them concerning Quraysh, saying that they would never surrender him.

Abū Ṭālib then returned to Mecca.

He said concerning this:

Muḥammad is possessed of honor and noble forelocks,
and yesterday I was not one to turn away,
hoping that God would make true the monk's words concerning him
and thereby exalt the family of Ghālib.
I heard the most astonishing of wonders
from every rabbi, scholar, and scribe:
that he shall lead like driven mounts
those who dwell in al-Abṭaḥ and among the mountain passes,
and whoever returns to those who return,
whether resident in the Sanctuary or stranger.

Abū Ṭālib also said:

Muḥammad, trustworthy son of Āmina,
holds with me the rank of my own children.
When he clung to the camel's halter, I pitied him,
while the camels had drawn tight with their provisions.
Tears poured from my eyes
like scattered pearls.
I observed in him continuous kinship
and preserved the testament of the forefathers.
I ordered him to travel among his uncles,
radiant-faced, sharp and brave,
who journeyed toward a known distant destination,
though the destination of one who seeks is indeed far.
When the people came in sight of Buṣrā,
they encountered one lying in wait upon the path,
a learned monk who told them a truthful account
concerning the arrival of envious men—
Jewish men who saw him and perceived
prophethood in him, though their hearts burned.
They rose intending to kill Muḥammad, but he prevented them,
exerting himself to the utmost.

It is also said that the monk Baḥīrā saw over the Messenger of God something resembling a cloud of light shading him and moving wherever he moved.

For this reason he came down to them, prepared food, and invited the caravan.

They went to him but left the Messenger of God behind to guard their belongings.

The Jews who confronted him were rabbis of that region named Zubayr, Tammām, and Durays.

Abū Ṭālib said concerning this:

Have you not seen that after their departure I intended
separation from noble men of free parents,
because of Aḥmad, when I tightened my mount
beneath my saddle and bade him farewell in peace?
When he wept as the camels set out with us
and stretched both hands toward the halter,
I remembered his father and a tear glistened,
pouring from my eye in streams.
I said: “Travel rightly guided among uncles
wealthy in hardship, not base.”
We journeyed with the caravan whose riders departed
toward Syria in desire, though our origin was not Syrian.
When we descended upon the land of Buṣrā, they looked down
upon us from houses, great men watching.
Baḥīrā, the pure monk, came eagerly toward us
with drink and food he had prepared.
He said: “Gather your companions for our meal.”
We replied: “We have gathered them all except one boy.”
An orphan. He said: “Call him, for our food
is plentiful and not forbidden to him today.”
When he saw him approaching with above his head
a cloud’s shade protecting him from the heat of the sun,
he bent his back almost like prostration and drew him
to his throat and breast in a close embrace.
Then came a group seeking the one whom Baḥīrā
had seen with his own eyes among the tents.
He rose against them in fear of their violence;
they were men of rancor and tumult together:
Durays and Tammām, and among them
Zubayr; none of those men were heedless.
They came intending to kill Muḥammad,
but he turned them away through fine disputation,
interpreting the Torah until they became certain
and saying to them, “You are not fools.”
This was among his signs and manifestations,
and daylight that reveals is not like darkness.

Abū Ṭālib also said:

Muḥammad wept in fear when we departed,
as though he thought I would never return.
The flow of his tears kept me from sleep,
and his weeping kept me from my bed and pillow.

So he went forth among those returning, accompanied
by one of his kin among the people, not rejected.
I said to him: “Bring your weariness near and travel;
do not fear estrangement from me.
Release the camel’s rein and journey with us together
with firm resolve and right guidance.”
We returned with the caravan whose riders had departed,
heading toward the lands of Iyād.
They did not return until they had seen concerning Muḥammad
reports that removed the anxiety of every heart,
and until they saw the rabbis of every town
bowing before him, in groups and singly—
Zubayr and Tammām, with Durays present,
all of whom had intended corruption.
He spoke to them words by which they became certain
after denial and long estrangement,
just as the group who had become Jews had said,
while he strove against them for God with true striving.
One who could not restrain his sincere counsel said:
“He has watchers among every opponent.
I fear the envious for him,
and he is written in the scriptures in ink.”

The Messenger of God remained with his uncle Abū Ṭālib as one of his own sons—indeed, Abū Ṭālib preferred him over his sons, and his position with him was higher than theirs.

This was out of loyalty to his brother ʿAbd Allāh, who was his full brother; because of the charge entrusted to him by his father ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib; because of the signs God had shown him concerning the boy; because of the prophethood he hoped for him and concerning which he had been informed; and because of what he saw in him of purity, trustworthiness, forbearance, intelligence, piety, and integrity.

He remained the dearest and most beloved of all people to Abū Ṭālib until the Messenger of God reached manhood.

The Prophet’s Marriage and the Beginning of the Mission

The Messenger of God married Khadīja daughter of Khuwaylid ibn Asad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā ibn Quṣayy. She was a merchant woman of considerable wealth and abundance.

Reports concerning him had reached her, so she offered herself to him and he married her. She made her wealth available to him, and through it his circumstances became ample.

He took ʿAlī, peace be upon him, from his father and brought him into his own household, in order to repay Abū Ṭālib for what he had done for him.

When God chose him for the Mission and honored him with prophethood, the first to believe in him was Khadīja—may God have mercy upon her.

Then he spoke privately with ʿAlī and presented Islam to him.

ʿAlī said:

“Give me this day to consider it.”

He intended inwardly to consult his father Abū Ṭālib.

The Messenger of God said to him:

“I shall give you time, but what I have told you is a trust in your keeping.”

ʿAlī replied:

“If that is so, then I testify that there is no god but God and that you, Muḥammad, are the Messenger of God.”

Whenever the time for prayer came, the Messenger of God would go out secretly with ʿAlī to one of the ravines of Mecca, and the two would pray there.

They continued in this condition for eight years, while no one on the face of the earth worshiped God through Islam except the two of them and Khadīja daughter of Khuwaylid.

Abū Ṭālib once passed by them and said to the Messenger of God:

“What is this that you are doing, my nephew?”

He replied:

“Uncle, this is the religion of God with which He has sent me, and this is the religion of our father Abraham. You, uncle, are the most entitled of those with whom I should begin by giving sincere counsel and calling to the religion of God. You are the most entitled to respond to it and openly support it.”

They claim that Abū Ṭālib replied:

“As for abandoning what I am presently upon, I have no way to do that. But as for supporting you, by God, no one shall ever reach you with anything you dislike as long as I remain alive.”

He also said to ʿAlī:

“Follow what Muḥammad tells you, do not leave him, and remain attached to him. He has called you only to the religion of God.”

Then God, Mighty and Glorious, revealed to His Prophet:

“Warn your nearest kindred.”

The Prophet feared that they would reject him and harm him, so he hesitated.

Gabriel came to him and said:

“O Muḥammad, if you do not carry out what you have been commanded, your Lord will punish you.”

It is also said that God revealed concerning this:

“O Messenger, convey what has been sent down to you from your Lord; and if you do not, you have not conveyed His message. God will protect you from the people.”

The Prophet ordered ʿAlī, blessings upon him, to summon Banū ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib.

He prepared for them food from one *ṣāʿ* of wheat and the leg of a sheep and set out for them a large bowl of milk.

ʿAlī brought them, forty men in all.

Any one of them alone could normally have eaten all that food without being satisfied by it.

The Messenger of God put his hand into the food, brought it near them, and said:

“Eat in the name of God.”

They ate until they had had their fill, and none of them needed any more.

Yet the food remained as it had been, except for the places touched by their hands.

Then he said to ʿAlī:

“Give them drink.”

He brought them the bowl and all of them drank until they were satisfied.

When the Messenger of God was about to speak, Abū Lahab anticipated him and said:

“If you had no proof of your companion’s sorcery except what you have just seen him do with this food and milk, that alone would be sufficient.”

He rose and the others rose and dispersed, and the Messenger of God said nothing of what he had intended to say.

The next day he again ordered ʿAlī to gather them.

He prepared for them food like the first meal.

After they ate and drank, the Messenger of God spoke:

“O sons of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, by God, I know of no young Arab who has brought his people anything better than what I have brought you. I have brought you the affairs of this world and the next. God has commanded me to call you to Him. Which of you will support me in this matter, on condition that he be my brother, my Legatee, and my successor among you?”

The people refrained from answering.

When ʿAlī saw this, although he was the youngest among them, he said:

“I, O Messenger of God. I shall be your vizier in this matter.”

The Messenger of God took ʿAlī by the hand and said:

“This is my brother, my Legatee, and my successor among you. Hear him and obey him.”

The men rose laughing and said to Abū Ṭālib:

“Your nephew has ordered you to hear and obey your own son.”

The author comments:

This is the exact account transmitted by Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq, author of the *Maghāzī*, in his narration.

It is a famous report transmitted through many routes and in many forms, some versions containing additional wording, but all sharing the same meaning.

The scholars of ḥadīth transmitted it.

Those who nevertheless gave precedence to someone other than ʿAlī knew this report.

I wish I knew by what justification that could have been permissible for them in light of the authenticity of this tradition and the report of the Day of Ghadīr—quite apart from Muʿāwiya, may God curse him, later claiming what he claimed and presuming to do what he did.

I can only say concerning this what God said in His written Book:

“It is not the eyes that become blind, but the hearts within the breasts become blind.”

And as the tradition says:

“Love of a thing makes one blind and deaf.”

Abū Ṭālib continued steadfast in his determination to support the Messenger of God, strengthen him, and reinforce his cause.

God commanded the Prophet to call openly to Him and proclaim his mission.

The Messenger of God then appeared publicly and summoned Quraysh and the people of Mecca to Islam.

He informed them of what had come to him from God, warned them of His punishment, and condemned their worship and what they worshiped besides Him.

Abū Ṭālib stood against anyone who sought to deny this to him or prevent him.

This weighed heavily upon Quraysh and became a grave matter for them, especially when he spoke against their gods.

They began consulting one another.

The chief instigator—coming and going, repeating the matter, gathering people, inciting, organizing, and stirring them up—was Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb ibn Umayya, may God curse him, together with his paternal relatives among Banū Umayya, may God curse them, along with ʿUtba and Shayba sons of Rabīʿa, Abū al-Bakhtarī ibn Hishām, al-Aswad ibn al-Muṭṭalib, al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra, al-Ḥakam ibn al-ʿĀṣ, al-ʿĀṣ ibn Wāʾil, and Abū Jahl ibn Hishām—may God curse them.

They gathered, considered their course of action, and decided to begin with Abū Ṭālib.

They went to him and said:

“Abū Ṭālib, your nephew has reviled our gods, disparaged our religion, called our minds foolish, and declared our fathers astray. We see that you have set yourself up in his defense. Either restrain him from us or step aside and leave us with him.”

Abū Ṭālib addressed them gently and courteously and sent them away with a gracious response.

The Messenger of God continued his call to God as commanded.

Many individuals from different clans of Quraysh embraced Islam.

This was especially painful to Banū Umayya because of the deeply rooted hostility between them.

They returned with those who had previously joined them and went again to Abū Ṭālib.

They said:

“Abū Ṭālib, we came to you before and complained of what we have suffered from your nephew. You possess honor and standing among us, and we cannot endure what he has done—reviling our gods, diminishing our fathers, calling our minds foolish, and leading a group of Quraysh astray. Either restrain him from us or spare us the matter of him. Otherwise we shall engage both him and you and those who follow him until one side is destroyed.”

Abū Ṭālib again gave them a gracious reply and said:

“I shall consider the matter in whatever way will bring about what is right, God willing.”

He then learned that they had agreed to fight him and judged that acting quickly before the Prophet's movement became established and powerful would be easier for them.

This distressed Abū Ṭālib deeply.

He went to the Messenger of God and said:

"My nephew, perhaps you have heard what your people have done and how they have repeatedly come to me concerning you. I have continued to repel them with what is best, but I see that they turn away from you and me only with evil intent. I do not know how this affair will end. Therefore have regard for me and for yourself, and do not burden me with what I cannot bear."

The Messenger of God thought that Abū Ṭālib's willingness to support him had changed.

This distressed him greatly.

His eyes filled with tears and he said:

"Uncle, if you wish, do not burden yourself with what you cannot bear. But as for me, by God, if they placed the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left, I would not abandon this matter until God makes it prevail or I perish in its cause."

He rose and turned away.

Abū Ṭālib called him back and said:

"My nephew, go and say whatever you wish, and do whatever you wish. By God, I shall never surrender you for anything."

Abū Ṭālib said concerning this:

By God, they shall never reach you with their whole assembly
until I am laid buried beneath the earth.
Proclaim your affair; no blame lies upon you.
Rejoice, and let your eyes be gladdened thereby.
You called me and claimed that you were sincere;
indeed you spoke truth, and you have always been trustworthy.
You presented a religion which I know
to be among the best religions of mankind.
Were it not for reproach, or my fear of disgrace,
you would find me openly generous toward it.

When Banū Umayya and their brethren from ʿAbd Shams learned what Abū Ṭālib had resolved to do, some said to others:

"If you do not deal with this matter while those of Banū ʿAbd Manāf who are with you remain on your side, you should fear that they will become one united bloc, after which you will be unable to do anything against him."

They therefore went to those of Banū ʿAbd Manāf who had joined them and told them what had occurred with Abū Ṭālib and what he had said in his poetry.

They agreed to return to Abū Ṭālib with another proposal.

They brought with them ʿUmāra ibn al-Walīd and said:

“Abū Ṭālib, we have repeatedly spoken to you concerning what your nephew has done to us, and we know your view of him and your affection for him from what we have seen. We have now decided to offer you something. Here is ʿUmāra ibn al-Walīd, whose condition you know: the most vigorous young man of Quraysh and among their finest poets. We shall hand him over to you. Take him, and his blood-compensation and support shall be yours. Adopt him as a son in place of Muḥammad, and leave Muḥammad to us. He has opposed your religion and that of your fathers, divided your people, and declared their minds foolish. He is merely one man for another.”

Abū Ṭālib replied:

“By God, what you propose is evil indeed: you give me your son so that I feed him for you, while I hand over my own son to you so that you may kill him? That will never happen.”

Al-Muṭʿim ibn ʿAdī ibn Nawfal ibn ʿAbd Manāf said:

“By God, Abū Ṭālib, your people have treated you fairly and have gone to great lengths to release you from this difficulty, but I do not see you willing to accept anything from them.”

Abū Ṭālib said:

“No, by God, they have not treated me fairly, nor have you treated me fairly, nor those of Banū ʿAbd Manāf who support them. Had you asked of them what they now ask of you, they would never have agreed, and they would have shown stronger loyalty toward the sons of their father than you are showing toward the sons of yours.”

The men began exchanging hostile words and threats of war.

Abū Ṭālib then composed verses urging Banū ʿAbd Manāf to support him and seeking to draw Banū ʿAbd Shams toward his side:

Say to ʿAmr, al-Walīd, and Muṭʿim:
would that my share of your protection were merely a young camel,
weak and bellowing greatly,
spraying drops of urine upon its legs,
lagging behind the herd and unable to catch up,
so that when it climbs the open desert it is called a weakling.
I see our two brothers from our father and mother,
whenever asked, saying: “The matter belongs to others.”
Yet indeed the matter is theirs, though they deny it,
and if they had abandoned us we would not have feared it.
I single out especially ʿAbd Shams and Nawfal:
the two cast us away as embers are cast aside.

They were the weakest supporters among the people toward their own brothers;
their hands have come away empty because of them.
They brought into the matter men without paternal claim among us
merely because their names could somehow be mentioned.
Al-Walīd's father had been a slave to our grandfather,
born to a blue foreign woman whom sorcery had bewildered.
Taym, Makhzūm, and Zuhra were among them;
they became their allies whenever aid was sought.
Their minds and judgments became foolish,
and they were like a young goat—what an evil thing that goat did.
By God, hostility shall never cease between us and them
so long as an eyelash remains among our descendants.

This speech only caused Banū ʿAbd Shams to persist further because of their ancestral hostility toward Banū ʿAbd Manāf.

Among Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib, however, it had the opposite effect: it turned their hearts toward supporting the Messenger of God, except for the accursed Abū Lahab.

Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib had always been united, as previously mentioned.

Abū Ṭālib said:

How long shall we remain in weakness,
O Hāshim, while the people form a great host,
summoning cavalry against a neck among us
at a time of fear and isolation,
like a black volcanic tract whose swift riders race
across an unknown empty waste,
Turks upon the vanguard
like sandgrouse journeying toward water?
My people, defend your masses
with every noble man drawing his cloak,
sharp and powerful, striking cheeks,
inheriting excellence from the excellent,
broad in frame and blazing at the waist,
preserved by polish in the fortress.
How often have I witnessed war among young men
when battle raised the dust-cloud,
men who do not withdraw when you approach them
and who, in the fury of war, are like lion cubs.

When Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib gathered around Abū Ṭālib, he became confident in his position and even more firmly resolved to defend the Messenger of God.

He openly separated himself in hostility from ʿAbd Shams, Banū Umayya, and those clans of Quraysh who stood with them, saying:

We defended the Messenger, the Messenger of the Sovereign,
with flashing white swords like lightning,

with blows warding off those who plunder,
in fear of blood-feuds and violent assault.
I defend and protect the Messenger of the Sovereign
as a compassionate uncle protects his nephew.
I do not creep toward his enemies
like young camels fearing the stallion;
rather I rise against them towering high,
as a lion rises in a narrow thicket.

He praised Banū Hāshim for their stance and boasted of the Messenger of God:

When Quraysh gather one day to boast,
ʿAbd Manāf is their secret essence and core.
If the nobles of ʿAbd Manāf are counted,
then in Hāshim are their ancient and noble ones.
And if they boast one day, then Muḥammad
is the chosen one from their noblest essence.
Quraysh summoned against us the lean and the fat alike,
but they did not prevail and their judgments went astray.
From ancient times we have never tolerated oppression;
when cheeks were twisted arrogantly, we straightened them.
We defend its protected ground on every grievous day
and strike away from its stones whoever seeks it.
Through us the withered branch revives;
only beneath our shelter does its root become moist and grow.

When the polytheists of Quraysh saw that Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib were united with Abū Ṭālib in defending the Messenger of God, they knew they could not reach him directly.

They therefore agreed that each clan would seize those among its own members who had embraced Islam and force them back to their former religion.

Anyone who refused would be tortured and coerced.

They did this to every weak Muslim who had no protector.

Abū Ṭālib protected the Messenger of God and those who followed him, so no one could harm him.

Those Muslims who were persecuted remained steadfast under the torture of their clans, displaying such endurance that Quraysh found itself unable to devise a way to overcome them.

As the pilgrimage season approached, they gathered around al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra, who was among their elders.

They said:

“Abū ʿAbd Shams, the Arabs are about to arrive. You see what has arisen from Muḥammad’s affair. We fear that he will attract the Arab tribes. What should we say about him to repel them from him? Give us one statement upon which we may all agree.”

He replied:

“Rather, you speak first and let me hear what you propose.”

They said:

“We shall say he is a soothsayer.”

He replied:

“They will not accept that from you. We have heard the speech of soothsayers, and so have they, and his speech does not resemble theirs.”

They said:

“Then we shall say he is a poet.”

He replied:

“We know poetry and so do they, and his words do not resemble poetry.”

They said:

“Then we shall say he is mad.”

He replied:

“We know the mad and their condition, and his state does not resemble theirs.”

They said:

“Then we shall say he is a sorcerer.”

He replied:

“Nor is he that. We have seen sorcerers, and so have they, and he is not one of them.”

They asked:

“Then what shall we say, Abū ʿAbd Shams?”

He replied:

“By God, there is nothing you can say about him whose falsehood will not be recognized. But the closest thing you can say is that he is a sorcerer who separates a man from his wife, a father from his son, and a man from his clan.”

They agreed upon this.

When the Arabs began arriving, they sat along the roads warning every newcomer:

“A sorcerer has appeared among us. Beware lest he destroy you through his sorcery.”

God revealed concerning al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra:

“Leave Me with the one whom I created alone, and to whom I gave abundant wealth and sons present before him, and for whom I made life smooth; yet he desires that I give him more. No! He has been obstinate toward Our signs. I shall burden him with a steep ascent. He reflected and calculated—may he be killed, how he calculated! Again, may he be killed, how he calculated! Then he looked, then frowned and scowled, then turned away and acted arrogantly, and said: ‘This is nothing but sorcery handed down; this is nothing but the speech of a human being.’ I shall cast him into Saqar. And what will make you know what Saqar is? It leaves nothing and spares nothing.”

God also revealed concerning those who had gathered around him:

“By your Lord, We shall surely question them all concerning what they used to do.”

They continued saying this to everyone arriving from every part of Arabia until the pilgrims departed.

They incited them against the Prophet and sought their assistance against him.

Many promised them aid, and news of the matter spread among the Arabs.

Abū Ṭālib feared a mass attack upon the Messenger of God arising from tribal zeal for their religion, especially because of the agitation and incitement of Banū Umayya and their allies among Quraysh.

He became intensely concerned for the Messenger of God and saw no course except to devise a way to repel this danger and reconcile the Arab tribes toward him.

Abū Ṭālib’s *Lāmiyya*

The author explains that Abū Ṭālib’s outward display of attachment to the religion of the Arabs and his professed preference for it—despite everything already mentioned and still to be mentioned of his affirmation of the Messenger of God and acknowledgment of his prophethood, including what appears explicitly in his poetry—was a form of *taqiyya* undertaken for the Prophet’s protection and defense.

Had Abū Ṭālib openly declared Islam as Ḥamza did, the Arabs would have rejected him, paid him no heed, and those who inclined toward him and supported him in defending the Messenger of God because of kinship would not have done so.

Abū Ṭālib was one of the great chiefs of the Arabs.

They recognized his rights and rarely opposed him in anything that would distress him, so long as he remained outwardly upon their religion.

He therefore composed the following poem, seeking to soften the Arabs, win over their chiefs, and turn them away from the Messenger of God, while telling them that he remained upon their religion and had not changed it.

Abū Ṭālib said:

My two companions, my ear does not incline toward the first reproacher
in matters of truth, nor when falsehood is involved.
My two companions, judgment is not jointly owned
nor plundered when grave affairs arise.
When I saw that the people had no affection left,
that they had severed every bond and means,
and openly confronted us with hostility and injury,
obeying the command of the alienating enemy;
when they allied against us with suspicious men
who bite their fingers behind us in rage—
I prepared myself against them with a supple brown spear
and a sharp white sword inherited from kings.
I gathered beside the House my clan and brothers
and grasped its coverings by their attachments,
standing together facing its door
where every pilgrim fulfills his obligation,
where the Ashʿarīs make their camels kneel
at the outflow of the valleys of Isāf and Nāʾila,
their upper arms or necks branded,
detained between six-year-olds and mature beasts.
You see shells there, marble, and ornaments
of dyed wool around their necks like clusters.
I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind from every accuser
who attacks us with evil or persists in falsehood,
and from every spiteful man who strives against us through slander,
and from one who imputes to religion what we never sought.
And by Him who firmly established Thabīr,
as though it were one ascending and descending Ḥirāʾ;
by the House, truly the House in the heart of Mecca;
and by God—God is not heedless;
by the Black Stone when they touch it
as they surround it at morning and evening;
by Abraham’s footprint in the rock,
marked by his bare feet without sandals;
by the circuits between the two Marwas and Ṣafā
and whatever images and forms are there;
by every rider who performs pilgrimage to God’s House,
every fulfiller of a vow, and every traveler on foot;
by the far sacred station when they set out toward it,
toward the valleys and approaching streams;
by the Night of Jamʿ and the stations of Minā—

what sanctities and stations could surpass them?
By their standing upon the mountains in the evening,
holding the breasts of their mounts with their hands;
by Jamʿ when noble camels pass from it swiftly
as though fleeing the impact of heavy rain;
by the great Jamra when they face it,
aiming stones at its summit;
by Kinda when, at al-Ḥaṣāb in the evening,
pilgrims of Bakr ibn Wāʾil sought protection through them;
two allies who tied a covenant they never broke,
restoring through it bonds turned back upon themselves;
and by Ḥaṭam, Samr al-Ṣafāḥ, Sarḥa,
Shabraqa, and the tracks of fleeing ostriches—
after all this, is there any refuge for one seeking refuge?
Is there an ally, God-fearing and just?
Shall enemies be obeyed against us, wishing
that the gates of Turk and Kabul be closed upon us?
You lie! By God's House, we shall not leave Mecca
and depart until your affair is in confusion.
You lie! By God's House, we shall not surrender Muḥammad
until we fight with spear and arrow in his defense,
nor hand him over until we are struck down around him
and forget our sons and wives;
until men clad in iron rise against you
like water-carriers rising beneath great loads;
until we see the man of rancor riding against their blows
under thrusts like one burdened and stooped.
By my life, if what I see becomes earnest,
our swords shall become entangled with fingers
in the hands of youths like blazing stars, noble chiefs,
trustworthy brothers, protectors of what is right, brave men,
from the pure branches of Luʾayy ibn Ghālib,
protectors in battle, not weak or negligent.
Months and days and a sacred year pass over us,
and one pilgrimage season follows another.
No people ever abandoned a chief who protected their honor
except a weak and voracious people.
A radiant man through whose face the clouds are asked for rain,
refuge of orphans and protection of widows,
to whom the perishing among the family of Hāshim turn,
and with whom they live amid bounty and favor.
By my life, Usayd and Bakr have hurried
toward hatred of us and rewarded us badly for what they consumed.
May kinship repay Usayd and Khālid
with the reward of an evildoer, immediate and not delayed.
ʿUthmān did not show us consideration, nor did Qunfudh;
rather, the two obeyed the command of those clans.
They obeyed Ubayy and Ibn ʿAbd Yaghūth,
paying no heed to any word spoken on our behalf.
Such is what we have encountered from Subayʿ and Nawfal,

each turning away and showing us no courtesy.
If God grants us power over those two,
we shall repay them measure for measure.
And there is Abū ʿAmr, whose father hates us,
seeking to drive us away among sheep and camels,
speaking secretly against us every evening and morning—
continue your whispering, Abū ʿAmr, and continue deceiving.
He swears to us by God that he does not deceive us,
yet we see it openly with no veil between.
Hatred of us has made every mountain pass
between Akhshab and Mujādil narrow upon him.
Ask Abū al-Walīd what gift you have given us
through your striving against us while turning away like a deceiver.
You were once a beardless youth whose judgment men followed,
and we hoped for your compassion toward us; you are not ignorant.
ʿUtba, do not listen concerning us to the words of a spiteful man,
envious, lying, hateful, full of treachery.
I care nothing for such a man in himself.
Live comfortably, cousin, and not bereaved.
I fear that if you do not restrain them and draw back,
you shall encounter something like one of the earthquakes.
Abū Sufyān passed me by turning away
as great chiefs before him had passed,
fleeing to Najd and its cool waters,
claiming that I am not heedless of you.
He tells us, acting like a sincere counselor,
that he is compassionate while concealing inner struggles.
Muṭʿim, I did not abandon you on the day of your need,
nor in great affairs;
nor on a day of dispute when opponents came against you,
was there one more capable in argument than I.
Muṭʿim, the people have imposed upon you a course,
and if I am abandoned, I am not one who can be blamed.
May God repay ʿAbd Shams and Nawfal on our behalf
with an evil punishment, swift and not delayed,
upon a just balance that diminishes not a grain,
with a witness from its own self, not unjust.
The judgments of people have become foolish: they exchanged
their own people for Banū Jumaḥ and the Ghiyāṭil.
We are the pure core of Hāshim’s summit
and of the family of Quṣayy in grave affairs.
Among them belonged to us the basin of the watering place
and the loftiest glory from Ghālib and its chiefs.
They neither avenged a blood-feud nor shed blood;
they merely allied with the worst tribes—
sons of a mad slave-woman, Hind Kiyya,
Banū Jumaḥ, ʿAbd Qays ibn ʿĀqil.
Sahm and Makhzūm joined together and incited
against us every base and obscure enemy.
Banū Sahm dragged ʿAdī against us,

ʿAdī ibn Kaʿb, girding themselves with sword-belts.
They bite their hands in rage against us
without any blood-feud after protection and kinship.
They had been intermediaries among Luʾayy ibn Ghālib,
but every mighty falcon cast them against us.
The clan of Nufayl—the worst to tread the pebbles,
among barefoot and shod descendants of Maʿadd.
ʿAbd Manāf, you are the best of your people;
do not admit every outsider into your affair.
I fear that if God does not set your affair right,
you will become like the stories told of Wāʾil.
By my life, you have grown weak and incapable
and brought a matter that misses the joints.
Recently you were merely firewood beneath a pot,
and now you are firewood for great cauldrons and kettles.
Let Banū ʿAbd Manāf rejoice in disobeying us,
abandoning us and leaving us in fortresses.
If we are a people who repay what you have done,
you will milk from it a she-camel that does not yield freely.
Convey to Quṣayy that our affair shall become known,
and give Quṣayy after us the news of abandonment.
Had some great calamity struck Quṣayy at night,
we would never have withdrawn from them at the entrances.
Had they sincerely struck within their houses,
we would have been grief-stricken among nursing women.
If Kaʿb of Luʾayy is weak,
one day abandonment must surely occur.
If Kaʿb consists of many branches,
one day they must surely appear in gatherings.
We were in good condition before people became our masters
who slaughtered us with knives and pickaxes.
Every friend and sister's son whom we counted upon
we found, by my life, of little use when tested—
except for a group from Kilāb ibn Murra
who are innocent before us of the disobedience of an abandoner.
Banū Asad, do not close your eyes upon grit
when no speaker among men speaks the truth.
Excellent indeed is the sister's son of the people, without denial—
Zuhayr, a lone sword drawn from its belts,
lofty among the lofty, tracing himself by night
to noble lineage at the very heart of glory.
By my life, I have become deeply attached to Aḥmad
and his brothers with the constancy of a faithful lover.
May he never cease to be beauty for the people of this world
and an ornament for one whom the Lord of all affairs befriends.
Who among men resembles him? What hopeful one
when judges compare men in excellence?
Wise, rightly guided, just, not reckless,
loyal to a God who is not heedless of him.
The Lord of His servants supported him with His victory

and made manifest a religion whose truth is no falsehood.
By God, were it not that I would incur a reproach
counted against our elders in the assemblies,
we would certainly have followed him in every circumstance
through time, seriously and not in jest.
They know that our son is not considered a liar among us,
nor do we care for the speech of falsehood.
Noble men, not crooked, whom noble fathers
of excellence nurtured toward goodness.
We rose for them until their assembly was scattered
and every oppressor and ignorant man withdrew from us,
young men of the Perfumed Confederates and Hāshim
like white swords in the hands of polishers,
striking so that the youths appear
like predatory lions over chunks of flesh.
Yet we are noble offspring of noble chiefs,
through whom we rise above peoples when they boast.
The spiteful shall soon know which of us and them
will triumph and rise in a few nights,
who among me and them will tire of war
and who will be praised across the horizons in the speech of men.
Aḥmad has become among us within a lineage
beyond which the boasting of the arrogant falls short.
I have risked my own life for him, protected him,
and defended him with shoulders and breasts.

The author comments:

By God—and God knows best—this speech is like that of the believing man from the family of Pharaoh who concealed his faith.

This is especially so in light of Abū Ṭālib's statements and his open struggle in defense of the Messenger of God, his testimony to his prophethood, and his long-standing knowledge of the reports and signs indicating him.

Had Abū Ṭālib openly proclaimed Islam, he would have found none among those Quraysh who allied with and supported him willing to do so.

He would have become like any one of the other converts rejected by his own clan.

Instead, God supported His religion and His Prophet through him and, by means of him, gathered supporters from among the Prophet's people at the very beginning of the religion, when the Muslims were few.

This was part of God's care for His religion and His Prophet.

This poem of Abū Ṭālib spread among the Arabs, together with news of the Messenger of God, of Banū ʿAbd Shams and those who obeyed them rising against him, and of Banū Hāshim and their allies standing in his defense.

The Arabs already knew the old hostility between the two factions and Banū ʿAbd Shams's envy of the excellence of Banū Hāshim, as the author had described earlier in the book.

The Arab tribes whom Quraysh had incited against the Messenger of God therefore hesitated.

Some inclined toward him, while most rejected what Quraysh had said about him.

The people of Yathrib remembered what the Jews had told them: that a prophet was about to arise among them, whose time had drawn near, and what they had related concerning his circumstances.

When news of the Messenger of God reached them, their eyes turned toward him and they believed that he was that prophet.

The polytheists of Quraysh attempted to stir up those who had promised them aid against the Messenger of God, but those men held back.

They magnified the sanctity of the Sanctuary and remembered Abū Ṭālib's words exalting it.

Some sent messages admonishing Quraysh and forbidding them to wage war against their own people.

Quraysh were left frustrated when they saw that their plot had failed and their objective concerning the Messenger of God had not been achieved.

Abū Qays ibn al-Aslat was related by marriage to Quraysh.

Arنب daughter of Asad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā was his wife.

He frequently brought her to Mecca and remained among her relatives for extended periods.

He mixed closely with them and was a poet.

He sent them a poem warning them against war and urging them to follow the Messenger of God:

Rider, if you pass by them, convey
from me a sealed message to Luʾayy ibn Ghālib,
the words of a man whom your internal division has alarmed,
sorrowful from afar and weary because of it.
Worries already had a place to lodge with me,
and I had not finished my need and purpose regarding them,
when your news reached me, divided into two factions,
each tribe with its burden-bearers between kindler and gatherer.
I seek refuge for you in God from the evil of your rancor,
from your mutual oppression and hidden scorpion-stings,
from manifest disagreement and diseased secret counsels
whose wounds strike surely like awls.
Remind them first of God
and of making lawful the sanctuaries of shy gazelles.

Say to them: God rules His judgment—
abandon war, and let it depart from you in the sacred months.
Whenever you kindle it, you kindle something blameworthy,
a ghoul devouring strangers or relatives alike,
severing ties of kinship and destroying a people,
stripping flesh from hump and withers.
You exchange what protects you for it
for corpses and echoes in warriors' garments,
and instead of musk and camphor you receive dust-coated coats of mail
whose rivets resemble locust eyes.
Beware of war; let it not seize you,
a basin of foul water and bitter drinking.
It beautifies itself to peoples, but afterward they see it
clearly revealed as a mother of calamities.
It burns without merely roasting the weak
and seeks out the mighty among you with fatal blows.
Have you not learned what occurred in the war of Dāḥis,
that you might take warning, or in the war of Ḥāṭib?
How many noble chiefs did it strike down,
men of lofty tents whose guests never left disappointed,
men of great heaps of ashes whose conduct was praised
and whose pure dispositions were noble in lineage.
It ground them in its mill
as though the east wind scattered them abroad.
If you do not know war, then ask
about war at its beginning and at its end.
A man truly knowledgeable of it will tell you—
knowledge is knowledge gained through experience.
Sell your spears for the fullness of peace
and remember your reckoning; God is the best reckoner.
Do not rush into oppression against yourselves.
Take account of your own souls; God is the best reckoner.
Let each man choose a religion for himself;
let no watcher over you be other than the Lord of the stars.
Establish for us an upright religion; you are
our destination by which even leaders may be guided.
You are for these people a light and protection,
leaders to whom people turn while sound judgment remains.
When people are refined like precious ore,
the pure essence among you belongs to al-Baṭḥāʾ, lofty of nose.
You preserve noble ancient bodies
with pure genealogies free from mixture.
You see bands of desperate seekers of needs
heading toward your houses, guided by other bands.
Peoples know that your chiefs
are in every circumstance the best inhabitants of the valleys,
most excellent in judgment, highest in practice,
and most truthful in speech amid the caravans.
Rise, then, pray to your Lord and touch
the corners of this House between the two Akhshabs.

You have there a proven sign from Him
on the morning of Abū Yaksūm, leader of the armies,
whose battalion marched upon the plain
and whose infantry stood on lofty watch-posts.
When the victory of the Lord of the Throne came to you, He drove them back
with the armies of the King, striking from every side.
They turned swiftly in flight,
and no army returned to its people except scattered bands.
If you perish, we perish, and the pilgrimage seasons perish
by which men live—this is the word of one who does not lie.

When Banū ʿAbd Shams and their allies despaired of receiving military aid from the Arabs, they could do nothing against the Messenger of God except harm him with their tongues.

Meanwhile he continued calling them to God, reciting to them what had been revealed to him from the Book.

They persisted in unbelief and denial despite the signs he brought and the proofs and indications they witnessed.

News of the Messenger of God reached Jews and Christians throughout Arabia.

Groups of their rabbis and monks came to him and disputed with him.

Each argued with him while recognizing in him signs of prophethood corresponding to what they found in their scriptures.

Quraysh saw among them signs of humility before him and indications that they recognized him.

They returned to their own regions and reported what they had seen.

Yet envy and hostility prevented most of them from openly acknowledging his prophethood.

Islam spread and the report of the Messenger of God became famous throughout the horizons.

The hearts of many Arabs inclined toward him.

The author says that the events connected with this are too numerous to recount within the limits of the present book, since his purpose in this chapter is specifically to describe Abū Ṭālib's defense of the Messenger of God and God's support of His religion.

Abū Ṭālib warned Quraysh of God's punishment for rejecting and harming the Messenger of God:

Awaken, Banū Ghālib, and desist
from oppression in some of your speech.
Otherwise I fear for you calamities
that shall gather in your dwellings,

and you shall become a lesson for those who come after you,
by the Lord of the west and the east,
just as those before you tasted punishment—
Thamūd and ʿĀd; who among them remained?
On the morning when the roaring wind came upon them,
and the she-camel of the Lord of the Throne when she drank;
wrath from God descended upon them
through the blow of al-Azraq,
on the morning when his Indian sword with gleaming edge
struck her at the hock.
More astonishing still in your own affair
are the wonders connected with the adhering stone,
in the hand of the man who, from his wickedness, rose
against the patient, truthful, God-fearing one.
God dried it fast within his hand
despite the fear of that foolish wretch,
the little fool of your Makhzūm, when he went astray
into the error of those who stray and would not believe.

By “the adhering stone,” the author means the following.

When the position of the Messenger of God became stronger, he openly worshiped his Lord and came to the House to pray.

One day Abū Jahl saw him praying.

He lifted a great stone as large as he could carry and approached the Messenger of God while he was prostrating, intending to crush his head with it.

Banū ʿAbd Shams had incited him and sat watching to see what he would do.

When he drew near to the Prophet with the stone, while the Prophet remained prostrating, he suddenly recoiled backward, his color changed from terror, and his hand had dried upon the stone until he cast it away.

They rose toward him and asked:

“What is wrong with you, Abū al-Ḥakam?”

He replied:

“When I approached him, a huge male camel appeared before me. By God, I have never seen a head, neck, or teeth like it. Its mouth was gaping toward me. I thought I would not escape.”

They said to one another:

“By God, something has come upon us from Muḥammad the like of which no people have ever suffered from a single man before.”

They then spoke about what they resented in him and saw no course except to intensify persecution of those among their own clans who had followed him.

Each group seized its converts, tortured them, beat them, and harmed them.

The Muslims complained to the Messenger of God.

He gave them permission to migrate to the land of Abyssinia.

A group departed.

This became the cause, according to the author, of the Negus's acceptance of Islam when they reached him.

The Messenger of God instructed some of those who emigrated to invite him.

The number of Muslim men who migrated to Abyssinia was eighty-three, apart from their women and children.

The Negus received them graciously, treated them well, honored them, and rejected those who came from the polytheists of Quraysh.

To the Land of Abyssinia

It is said that when Banū ʿAbd Shams saw what had happened, their cleverest men became bewildered.

The most notable among them were ʿUmāra ibn al-Walīd and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ—may God curse them.

They collected a great amount of wealth, purchased choice goods from the Ḥijāz and many gifts, and sent them with the two men to the king of Abyssinia and all his officials.

They traveled with the gifts.

When they reached Abyssinia, they distributed their gifts among the patriarchs of the Negus and delivered his gift to him.

The patriarchs spoke to the king on their behalf.

The two men were admitted before him and said:

"O king, foolish young men from among us have come into your country. They have abandoned the religion of their people but have not entered your religion. They have introduced an innovation known neither to you nor to us. The chiefs of our people—from among their fathers, uncles, and clansmen—have sent us to you so that you may return them to them."

The patriarchs, having received their gifts, said:

“They speak truth, O king. Their people know them best, so return them.”

Abū Ṭālib had sent with those who went to Abyssinia his son Jaʿfar.

He wrote through him a letter to the Negus, informing him of the Prophet’s affair, the rise of ʿAbd Shams and its Qurashī allies against him, and what had happened to those who followed him.

He told him that the Muslims had sought sanctuary through the Negus and refuge in his kingdom and asked him to protect and preserve them.

He wrote among other things:

Know, best of men, that Muḥammad
is a counterpart to Moses and the Messiah son of Mary.
He brought guidance like that which the two brought,
and by God’s command he guides and protects.
You read of him in your scripture
as a truthful report, not the speech of astrologers.
No band from among us comes to you
seeking your excellence except after suffering harsh treatment.
Do not set up a rival to God; submit,
for the road of truth is not dark.

Jaʿfar delivered his father’s letter to the Negus.

It made a strong impression upon him and was one of the causes of the good treatment and generous hospitality the Muslims received.

When ʿUmāra ibn al-Walīd and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ spoke as they did, supported by the patriarchs, who advised the Negus to return the Muslim refugees, the Negus became angry and said:

“By God, I will never hand over a people who deliberately came to me, settled in my land, and chose me over everyone else.”

He summoned them and asked what Muḥammad had brought to them.

They described their former condition of idol worship and the practices of the Age of Ignorance, what the Messenger of God had brought them of truth and worship of God, and what they had suffered from their people for accepting it.

The Negus asked Jaʿfar:

“Do you possess any of what your cousin has brought?”

He replied:

“Yes, O king.”

He recited to him the opening part of Sūrat *Kāf-Hā-Yā-ʿAyn-Ṣād*.

The Negus wept until his beard became wet.

His bishops also wept until their scriptures became wet with tears.

The Negus said:

“This and what Jesus, the Spirit of God, brought emerge from one lamp.”

He then said to ʿUmāra and ʿAmr:

“Go away. By God, I shall not surrender them to anyone.”

They left him humiliated.

ʿUmāra despaired of changing the Negus’s mind and ceased speaking about the Muslims.

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, however, said:

“By God, I shall not leave them alone until I destroy them through the Negus himself.”

He went to the patriarchs whom he had won over with gifts and said:

“Seek permission for me to enter before the king. I shall tell him that these people say concerning Jesus something that makes it unlawful for him to leave any one of them alive upon the earth.”

They informed the Negus, who admitted him.

ʿAmr said:

“O king, these men who have come to you make a grave statement concerning Jesus. Send for them and ask them. If you consider it permissible to leave them upon what they say, then you know best.”

The Negus summoned them and asked:

“What do you say concerning Jesus?”

Jaʿfar ibn Abī Ṭālib replied:

“We say concerning him what our Prophet has brought: that he is the servant of God, His Messenger, His Spirit, and His Word which He cast to Mary, the Virgin, the Pure.”

The Negus struck his hand toward the ground, picked up a stick, and said:

“Jesus son of Mary did not exceed what you have said by so much as this stick.”

Then he said:

“Go. You are secure. I would not wish to possess a mountain of gold if in exchange I had to do anything to any one of you that he disliked.”

He ordered that Quraysh’s gifts be returned to ʿUmāra and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, saying:

“I have no need of them. By God, God took no bribe from me when He restored my kingdom to me, so shall I take bribes concerning it? Nor did the people obey others concerning me, so shall I obey them concerning it?”

The author remarks that the kingdom of Abyssinia had previously been taken from the Negus’s father, and the Negus himself had been enslaved before later regaining the kingship, in a long story.

ʿAmr despaired, while ʿUmāra rejoiced at his failure.

When the two had left Mecca for Abyssinia, they traveled by ship.

One night at sea they drank wine.

ʿUmāra became intoxicated.

He was a handsome man, sexually immoral and passionately fond of women.

ʿAmr’s wife was traveling with him.

ʿUmāra began speaking with her until he became infatuated and said:

“Kiss me.”

The woman refused.

ʿAmr, who could hear him, said:

“Kiss your cousin.”

She did so.

ʿAmr then rose to the edge of the ship to urinate.

ʿUmāra went after him and pushed him into the sea.

ʿAmr swam until he caught hold of the ship and climbed back aboard, escaping drowning.

ʿUmāra said:

“I did not know he could swim.”

The author says that ʿUmāra had intended to drown him so that he could gain access to his wife.

ʿAmr suppressed his anger so that he would not ruin the mission for which they had come.

After what occurred with the Negus, ʿAmr learned that ʿUmāra had relations with one of the Negus's women.

He questioned him about it.

ʿUmāra admitted it and gave him perfume that the Negus's wife had given him.

ʿAmr informed the Negus and brought him the perfume.

The Negus recognized it.

He ordered punishment inflicted upon ʿUmāra in such a way that he died from it.

News of the Muslims was slow in reaching the Messenger of God.

Abū Ṭālib said:

Would that I knew how Jaʿfar fares in that distant land,
and ʿAmr, and the nearest of enemies among kin.
Has the Negus's generosity reached Jaʿfar
and his companions, or has some trouble prevented it?
Know—may curses never fall upon you—that you are noble,
generous, and no stranger is made wretched in your presence.
Know that God has increased your breadth of power
and attached to you every means of goodness.
You are a flood with overflowing streams,
whose benefit reaches enemies and relatives alike.

He wrote to the Negus and included these verses.

A reply came back to him.

The Muslims wrote to their families describing what had happened with the Negus, the honor and generous treatment they received from him, and what had occurred with ʿUmāra and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ.

They also composed poems concerning these events, too numerous to mention.

The news reached the Messenger of God and delighted him, and he praised God for it.

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ returned to Banū Umayya, Banū ʿAbd Shams, and their allies with news that distressed them greatly.

They gathered in the Ḥijr.

Some said to others:

“Consider what you are going to do concerning Muḥammad. By God, if you leave him alone, he will surely become the cause of your destruction.”

While they were in this condition, the Messenger of God approached.

They intended evil against him.

He perceived this and saw evil in their faces.

He stopped before them and said:

“Do you hear me? By Him in whose hand is my soul, I have come to you with slaughter.”

These words penetrated their hearts.

They were stunned and said:

“Abū al-Qāsim, we have never known you to be foolish.”

He turned away.

Some began reproaching others for letting him go.

While they were doing so, he approached them again.

They rose against him and harmed him.

He turned away, and Abū Jahl was the most abusive among them.

The Conversion of Ḥamza

Ḥamza ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, paternal uncle of the Messenger of God, returned from a hunting expedition wearing his bow over his shoulder.

He passed the house of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Judʿān at al-Ṣafā.

A female client of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Judʿān said to him:

“Abū ʿUmāra, if only you had seen what your nephew Muḥammad just suffered from Abū al-Ḥakam. He insulted him, harmed him, and treated him in a manner he detested.”

Ḥamza hurried away until he entered the mosque.

His custom whenever he entered the mosque was to circumambulate the House, stop at the assemblies of Quraysh and greet them, then go to the gathering of Banū ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and sit.

This time he entered in anger and paid attention to none of this.

He went straight to Abū Jahl, who was sitting there, raised his bow, and struck him with it, giving him a severe head wound.

He said:

“Do you insult my nephew? I am upon his religion and say what he says. Answer me if you are able.”

Men of Banū Makhzūm rose to defend Abū Jahl.

Abū Jahl said:

“Leave Abū ʿUmāra alone. By God, I insulted his nephew vilely.”

Ḥamza then openly professed Islam and came to the Messenger of God.

He said concerning what he had done to Abū Jahl:

Taste, Abū Jahl, the consequences of what you committed,
through your oppressive behavior when you went forth,
harming the Messenger of God though you had been forbidden
your unjust course when you were called.
May humiliation never leave you for what you have done.
Had you hoped in God, you would not have been wretched,
nor abandoned the truth when you were summoned to it.
You had already fallen before the fall you now suffer,
harming the Messenger of God—you went astray.
As long as I live after your aggression,
you shall taste the humiliation you have encountered.
My soul has been healed now that you have been struck.

When Ḥamza openly declared Islam, Banū ʿAbd Shams realized that he would protect the Messenger of God.

They therefore restrained themselves from some of the harm they had inflicted upon him.

Ḥamza was a formidable man among Quraysh, forceful in speech and proud in spirit.

What had happened with him greatly troubled Banū ʿAbd Shams.

The Offers of Quraysh

Shayba and ʿUtba sons of Rabīʿa, Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb, Umayya ibn Khalaf, al-ʿĀṣ ibn Wāʾil, and a group of leading men of Banū ʿAbd Shams and those of Quraysh who obeyed them gathered and discussed the affair of the Messenger of God.

They considered different schemes and stratagems.

ʿUtba ibn Rabīʿa said:

“People of Quraysh, I think I should go to Muḥammad, speak with him, and offer him various things. Perhaps he will accept one of them from us. We shall give him whichever he chooses, and he will cease troubling us.”

They replied:

“Yes, Abū al-Walīd. Go and speak with him.”

ʿUtba went and sat beside the Messenger of God.

He said:

“My nephew, you know the position you hold among us in strength of kinship and nobility of lineage. Yet you have brought your people a grave matter by which you have divided their community, declared their minds foolish, disparaged their gods and religion, and declared unbelievers both them and their departed fathers. Listen to me. I shall offer you several possibilities. Consider them; perhaps you will accept one.”

The Messenger of God said:

“Speak, Abū al-Walīd. I am listening.”

He said:

“My nephew, if by what you have brought you desire wealth, we shall collect wealth for you until you become the richest among us. If you desire honor, we shall make you our chief and decide nothing without you. If you desire kingship, we shall make you king over us. If what comes to you is merely a vision—that is, a possessing spirit—which you cannot repel from yourself, we shall seek medical treatment for you and spend our wealth until we cure you. Consider whichever of these you prefer—or all of them—and we shall gather it for you or do whatever you wish.”

The Messenger of God asked:

“Have you finished speaking, Abū al-Walīd?”

He replied:

“Yes.”

He said:

“Then listen to me.”

ʿUtba replied:

“Yes, my nephew. I shall listen.”

The Prophet recited:

“In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate. Ḥā Mīm. A revelation from the Most Merciful, the Compassionate. A Book whose verses have been set forth distinctly, an Arabic Qurʾān for a people who know…”

He continued reciting Sūrat al-Sajda [i.e. Fuṣṣilat].

ʿUtba listened silently, leaning back on his hands.

When the Messenger of God reached the place of prostration, he prostrated and then said:

“You have heard, Abū al-Walīd, what you have heard. Now the matter is yours.”

ʿUtba returned to his companions.

When they saw him approaching, some said to others:

“By God, Abū al-Walīd is returning with a different face from the one with which he departed.”

When he sat among them, they asked:

“What happened, Abū al-Walīd?”

He replied:

“I have heard words the like of which, by God, I have never heard before. By God, they are neither sorcery, poetry, nor soothsaying. People of Quraysh, obey me and leave the matter to me. Leave this man alone with what he is doing and keep away from him. By God, what he says will have great consequences. If the Arabs destroy him, others will have spared you the trouble. If he prevails over the Arabs, his kingship will be your kingship and his honor your honor, and you will be the happiest of people through him.”

They replied:

“By God, Abū al-Walīd, he has bewitched you with his tongue.”

He said:

“This is my opinion concerning him. Do whatever seems best to you.”

Abū Jahl, Abū Sufyān, and al-Akhnas ibn Sharīq went out one night to listen to the Messenger of God as he prayed by night in his house.

Each man took a place where he could hear, without knowing that the others were there.

They spent the night listening.

When dawn came they dispersed.

The road brought them together.

They reproached one another, saying:

“Do not return. If some of your foolish people saw you, you would plant something in their minds.”

They separated.

On the second night each returned to his place.

They again spent the night listening, then separated at dawn, only to meet one another on the road and repeat what they had said the first time.

On the third night each again took his place and listened until dawn.

When they met afterward they said:

“We shall not leave until we make a pact never to return.”

They made the pact and dispersed.

In the morning, al-Akhnas ibn Sharīq took his staff and went to Abū Sufyān’s house.

He asked:

“Abū Ḥanẓala, tell me what you think about what you heard from Muḥammad.”

Abū Sufyān replied:

“Abū Thaʿlaba, by God, I heard things I understand and know what they mean, and other things I do not understand and do not know their meaning.”

Al-Akhnas said:

“By the One by whom you swore, so did I.”

Then he went to Abū Jahl’s house and asked:

“Abū al-Ḥakam, what do you think about what you heard from Muḥammad?”

Abū Jahl said:

“What did I hear? They fed people and we fed people. They gave and we gave. We competed over honor and knelt in the contest like two racehorses neck and neck. Then they said: ‘From us comes a prophet who receives revelation from heaven.’ No, by God, we shall never accept this from them.”

The Conversion of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb

Every convert who was weak among his own people and feared them for his safety went to Abyssinia.

Whoever possessed protection among his people remained in strength.

God strengthened the Muslims and frustrated the plotting of the polytheists.

Yet the polytheists continued seeking ways to destroy the Messenger of God and devising schemes concerning him.

One day they were told that the Messenger of God had gathered with some of his companions in a house near al-Ṣafā, teaching them and reciting to them what God had revealed of the Qurʾān.

This enraged them.

ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, who was among them, said:

“I shall go to him, attack him, kill him, and relieve you of him.”

They said:

“You are the man for it, Abū Ḥafṣ.”

They began praising and inciting him.

He took his sword, strapped it on, concealed it beneath his garment, and set out intending to kill the Messenger of God.

Nuʿaym ibn ʿAbd Allāh met him and asked:

“Where are you going, ʿUmar?”

He replied:

“I am going to Muḥammad, this apostate who has divided the affair of Quraysh, declared their minds foolish, disparaged their religion, and insulted their gods.”

Nuʿaym asked:

“What do you intend to do to him?”

He said:

“Kill him.”

Nuʿaym replied:

“By God, your own soul has deceived you concerning yourself, ʿUmar. He belongs to Banū Hāshim. If you do this, do you think they will leave you walking upon the earth for even an

hour after you have killed Muḥammad? Why do you not first return to your own family and put their affairs right, if you are serious?”

ʿUmar asked:

“Which of my family do you mean?”

Nuʿaym replied:

“Your sister Fāṭima daughter of al-Khaṭṭāb. She has believed in Muḥammad, together with her husband Saʿīd ibn Zayd ibn ʿAmr ibn Nufayl. Khabbāb ibn al-Aratt is with them even now. Muḥammad sent him to teach them Islam and recite the Qurʾān to them.”

ʿUmar asked:

“Is that really so?”

He replied:

“Yes.”

ʿUmar turned back toward them.

When they sensed his approach, Khabbāb hid in a small chamber inside Fāṭima daughter of al-Khaṭṭāb’s house.

He left behind a sheet containing Sūrat Ṭā Hā, which he had been reading to her and to her husband Saʿīd ibn Zayd.

Fāṭima took the sheet and placed it beneath her thighs.

ʿUmar entered, having heard Khabbāb’s recitation as he approached the house.

He encountered Saʿīd and Fāṭima and said:

“What was that sheet I heard?”

They replied:

“You heard nothing.”

He said:

“No, by God. I have been told that you have followed Muḥammad and that Khabbāb ibn al-Aratt is here teaching you his words.”

He moved toward the chamber.

Saʿīd ibn Zayd stood in his way.

ʿUmar attacked him.

His sister Fāṭima stepped between him and her husband Saʿīd to protect him.

ʿUmar struck her, splitting her head so that blood covered her.

When he saw this, ʿUmar regretted it.

Saʿīd rebuked him and said:

"ʿUmar, we have indeed embraced Islam and believed in God and His Messenger. Do whatever you wish."

His sister Fāṭima said the same.

They brought Khabbāb ibn al-Aratt out.

This broke ʿUmar's anger and made him draw back.

He saw the sheet in his sister's hand and said:

"Show me that sheet."

She said:

"I will not."

He coaxed her and sought to appease her.

She said:

"We fear you will damage it."

He swore that he would do it no harm.

She gave it to him.

He looked at it.

When he had read part of it, he said:

"How beautiful these words are."

He put it down, left the house, wrapped his sword around himself, and headed toward the Messenger of God, who was with his companions in the house at al-Ṣafā.

He knocked on the door.

When they heard his voice, one of the Prophet's companions rose and looked through a crack in the door.

He saw ʿUmar wearing his sword.

He returned to the Messenger of God in fear and said:

“Messenger of God, this is ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, wearing a sword and knocking at the door.”

Ḥamza, the Prophet’s uncle, was present with the group.

He said to the man:

“What of it? Admit him. If he intends evil, I shall kill him with his own sword.”

The man looked toward the Messenger of God.

The Prophet said:

“Yes, admit him.”

The man opened the door.

The Messenger of God rose after him.

ʿUmar entered.

The Prophet met him in the middle of the room, gathered the front of his cloak in his hand, pulled him violently, and said:

“What has brought you, son of al-Khaṭṭāb? By God, I do not think you will stop until God sends down upon you a calamity from heaven.”

He seized the sword from his hand, and ʿUmar’s face changed color.

ʿUmar said:

“Messenger of God, I have come to believe in God, in you, and in what you have brought.”

The Prophet took him in among his companions, bound him by the covenant, and taught him Islam.

News of this reached Banū ʿAbd Shams and those who had incited him against the Messenger of God, and they were left confounded.

The news also reached some Muslims, one of whom rejected it and said:

“‘ʿUmar will not become Muslim until al-Khaṭṭāb’s donkey becomes Muslim.”

The Document of Quraysh

When Banū ʿAbd Shams saw that those Companions of the Messenger of God who had gone to the Negus had escaped their reach; that Abū Ṭālib had protected the Messenger of God; that his uncle Ḥamza had embraced Islam and had acted as already described; that the remaining Muslims were people possessing protection and could not easily be harmed; that Banū Hāshim had united with Abū Ṭālib in supporting the Messenger of God; and that Banū al-Muṭṭalib had joined them in this—when they further saw that they could not harm them and had despaired of receiving Arab assistance against them—they gathered together with their Qurashī allies.

They debated strategies and turned over different schemes, but found nothing better than to draw up a written pact binding themselves against Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib: they would neither intermarry with them nor buy from or sell to them.

They wrote this agreement upon a document, covenanted together upon its terms, and hung it inside the Kaʿba.

Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib withdrew to Abū Ṭālib ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, entered his mountain pass, and gathered around him.

From all Banū Hāshim, only Abū Lahab—ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib—left them and joined Banū ʿAbd Shams and those who supported them against Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib.

Banū ʿAbd Shams praised him highly.

Hind daughter of ʿUtba met him and praised him graciously.

He said:

“Well then, daughter of ʿUtba, have I supported al-Lāt and al-ʿUzzā, abandoned those who abandoned them, and supported those who defend them?”

She replied:

“Yes. May God reward you well, Abū ʿUtba.”

Abū Ṭālib said concerning their action:

Convey from me concerning what has come between us
to Luʾayy, and especially to the descendants of Luʾayy ibn Ghālib:
Have you not learned that we have found Muḥammad
to be a prophet like Moses, written in the earliest scriptures?
And that love for him has been placed among mankind,
and there is no good in one whom God has singled out for love?
What you stitched together in your document
shall become an ill omen for you, like the cry of the young camel.
Awaken, awaken before graves are dug
and one innocent of sin becomes like the guilty.
Do not follow the command of the misguided and sever
our bonds after affection and kinship,

thereby summoning a mature and bitter war—
how bitter indeed is war to the one who tastes it.
By the Lord of the House, we shall never surrender Aḥmad
because of any hardship of time or distress,
until throats from us and you are laid bare
and arms leave their traces with hard gleaming blades,
in a constricted battlefield where broken spears are seen
and great vultures gather like drinking companies.
Its courtyards will become the field of horses
and the tumult of heroes the very battle of war.
Was not our father Hāshim one who strengthened his resolve
and charged his sons with thrusting and striking?
We shall not tire of war until war tires of us,
nor complain of the calamities that befall us.
Rather, we are people of honor and sound judgment
when the souls of warriors fly from terror.

Abū Ṭālib also said concerning this:

Convey from me to Luʾayy a message of truth—
though what can the message of a messenger avail?
To our nearest cousins among those I single out,
and to our brothers from ʿAbd Shams and Nawfal:
Have you openly supported against us people
who follow a misguided course born of error and ignorance?
They say: “If we kill Muḥammad,
the forelocks of Hāshim will submit in humiliation.”
You lie! By the Lord of guidance, throats shall bleed
in Mecca beside the Ancient Corner kissed by pilgrims
before you reach him—or else you shall endure, before killing him,
blows that split every bone and joint.
You appeal to kinship while you yourselves have wronged
women hated on a radiant, marked day.
Wait—war has not yet delivered its firstborn,
with a full-grown horse or another hastened before its time.
Whenever we pass it with our swords,
we shall collide with you and crush whatever we wish with our breasts.
You shall find Muḥammad, spring of the two valleys,
upon a lofty height at the summit of a mighty phoenix,
and Hāshim shall seek refuge with him—for Hāshim
are the noble noses of Kaʿb, generation after generation.
If you hope to kill Muḥammad,
then first try moving Mount Yadhbul with all you have gathered.
We shall protect him with every swift mare,
every powerful steed with broad shoulders,
every thirsting Rudaynian spear with hard knots,
every cutting sword like the flash of cloud,
in the hands of lofty men from the summit of Hāshim,
raiders against heroes in every gathering.

Ḥamza ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib also said concerning the document and the hostility upon which the people had agreed:

O people, how astonishing are these affairs
and the changes of time that carry away beloved ones;
and the words of men whose judgments have been led astray
by oppression, aggression, and corrupt character.
They say, “We shall overcome Aḥmad
because of the word of some fool or the gesture of a critic.”
Yet he has brought the manifest truth,
and truthful messages have made clear that their revelation is no lie—
messages from One possessing power, who chooses through them
servants whose right before God is established.
If you accept what has come to you from your Lord
and the words of the noble messengers,
that will be better for you than our spears;
and evil indeed among the courses of war is war between kin.
Do not imagine that we shall surrender Muḥammad to you
so long as an aged she-camel resists its rider.
He has kinship among us whose protection is mighty;
before reaching him lie blows to necks and brows,
and a root from Hāshim whose noble endeavors
Luʾayy ibn Ghālib has long recognized.
So wait, before war erupts between us
in an ugly form blinding every root and branch,
scattering the united clan after its gathering
into tribes exposing the anklets of young women,
and humiliating peoples who had once been mighty,
after time had already struck them with many calamities.

Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib remained in that condition for three years.

No one bought from or sold to them, and nothing of food reached them except secretly and under watch.

Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām ibn Khuwaylid ibn Asad frequently brought food to Banū Hāshim generally and especially to the Messenger of God because his paternal aunt Khadīja daughter of Khuwaylid was married to the Messenger of God.

Ḥakīm possessed wealth, standing, and protection among Quraysh.

He would bring one line of loaded camels after another by night and drive them into the mountain pass of Banū Hāshim.

On one occasion Abū Jahl caught him doing this, seized him, and said:

“Are you taking food to Banū Hāshim? By God, I shall not release you until I disgrace you before Quraysh.”

Abū al-Bakhtarī ibn Hishām ibn al-Ḥārith arrived while Abū Jahl was holding him.

He asked:

“What is your affair with him?”

Abū Jahl said:

“He is carrying food to Banū Hāshim.”

Abū al-Bakhtarī replied:

“What of that? It is food belonging to his aunt which was entrusted to him to deliver to her. Would you prevent him from taking her own food to her? Let the man go.”

Abū Jahl refused.

Abū al-Bakhtarī attacked him, struck him with the jawbone of a camel, split his head, and trampled him severely.

Abū Jahl endured this and did not publicize it, fearing that Banū Hāshim would hear and rejoice at his humiliation.

Throughout all this the Messenger of God remained protected and of unassailable standing, as did the Muslims, whose numbers continued to grow.

Banū Hāshim and their allies suffered no harm beyond being prevented from commercial dealings.

Abū Ṭālib addressed Abū Lahab because of his separation from Banū Hāshim, trying to win him back:

I marvel at a judgment newly arisen in you, son of Shayba,
and at the foolish judgments of those around you.
They say: “Support whoever intends evil toward Muḥammad,
and oppose him in his affair.”
They are either hardened men, envious and treacherous,
or relatives of yours lacking sincerity.
Do not abandon his covenant as long as time remains,
while you are a man from the best of ʿAbd Manāf.
Do not abandon him as long as you live; feed him,
and be a man of courage and chastity.
Repel enemies from the Hāshimite summit—
surely they are the best companions among mankind.
He has close kinship with you,
and is neither a mere confederate nor an outsider.
Rather, he is from the very core of Hāshim,
an ocean moving above the oceans.
Strive against all people on his behalf and be
his vizier against enemies, fearing none.
If Quraysh become angry with him, say to them:
“Our cousins, are your people truly weak?”

Why do you seek oppression from us,
and why have kinship bonds there become harsh?
Our people are not a people who fear our injustice,
nor are we careless concerning whatever harms them.
Rather, we are people of honor and sound judgment
and of abundant might in the valley of the smashed stones.

Abū Salama ibn ʿAbd al-Asad sought Abū Ṭālib's protection from his own clan Banū Makhzūm, who wished to persecute him.

Abū Ṭālib protected him.

They came to Abū Ṭālib and said:

"Abū Ṭālib, what is this? You prevented us from dealing with your nephew Muḥammad; what business do you have protecting our own man from us?"

He replied:

"He sought my protection, and he is my sister's son. If I will not protect my sister's son, then I will not protect my brother's son."

They argued with him.

Abū Lahab rose and said:

"By God, you have gone too far against this old man. You constantly rise against him concerning those whom he protects among his people. By God, either you stop harassing him or we shall stand with him in whatever he undertakes until he reaches what he seeks."

They replied:

"We shall withdraw from what you dislike, Abū ʿUtba."

They feared that Abū Lahab might unite with Abū Ṭālib, making the situation even more difficult.

Nothing good had previously come from Abū Lahab.

When Abū Ṭālib heard what he had said, he became hopeful concerning him and said:

A man whose uncle is Abū ʿUtba
is surely in a garden where he is not subjected to injustice.
I say to him—and how far from him is my counsel?—
Abū Muʿattib, keep your dark figure standing firm.
As long as you live, never accept a course
by which you would be reviled whenever you descend at the pilgrimage seasons.
Leave the path of incapacity to others among them,
for you were not created bound to weakness.
Fight—for war has its equal share; if you see

a warrior accepting humiliation, it is only until he can make peace.
How could you do otherwise, when they have committed no great offense against you
and did not abandon you in gain or loss?
May God recompense on our behalf ʿAbd Shams, Nawfal,
Taym, and Makhzūm for disobedience and sin,
for dividing after affection and companionship
our united people so that they might reach what is forbidden.
They obeyed Ibn Dhakwān, Qays, and Daysam,
went astray, and all together tasted branding.
You lie! By the House of God, Muḥammad shall not be seized
until you see a day in which we stand firm beside the mountain pass.

By Ibn Dhakwān he means ʿUqba ibn Abī Muʿayṭ; by Daysam, al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra; and by Qays, Qays ibn ʿĀqil.

Nothing further of this kind came from Abū Lahab.

The Failure of the Plot of the Document

After the incident involving Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām, the opposition of Abū Jahl to him, and Abū al-Bakhtarī's defense of him, Hishām ibn ʿAmr ibn al-Ḥārith was stirred to action.

He was the sister's son of Naḍla ibn Hāshim ibn ʿAbd Manāf; Naḍla and ʿAmr were maternal brothers.

Hishām therefore maintained close relations with Banū Hāshim.

He possessed honor among his people and was among those who secretly supplied them with food.

When the boycott had lasted a long time, he went to Zuhayr ibn Abī Umayya ibn al-Mughīra ibn ʿUbayd Allāh ibn ʿUmar ibn Makhzūm, whose mother was ʿĀtika daughter of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib.

He said:

"Zuhayr, are you content to eat food, wear clothes, and marry women while your maternal uncles remain as you know them—no one buys from them or sells to them, marries among them or gives women in marriage to them? By God, if they were the maternal uncles of Abū al-Ḥakam ibn Hishām and he called you to do against them what he has called you to do against your own maternal uncles, you would never agree."

Zuhayr replied:

"Woe to you, Hishām. What can I do? I am only one man. By God, if I had one other man with me, I would rise to annul the document."

Hishām said:

“I have found you such a man.”

He asked:

“Who?”

Hishām replied:

“Me.”

Zuhayr said:

“Find us a third.”

Hishām went to al-Muṭʿim ibn ʿAdī and said:

“Muṭʿim, are you content that two branches of Banū ʿAbd Manāf should perish while you watch and agree with Quraysh against them? By God, if you enable Quraysh to do this to them, you will soon find Quraysh quick to do the same to you.”

Muṭʿim replied:

“Woe to you, what can I do? I am only one man.”

He said:

“I have found you a second.”

He asked:

“Who?”

Hishām said:

“Me.”

He replied:

“Find us a third.”

Hishām said:

“I have.”

He asked:

“Who?”

He replied:

“Zuhayr ibn Abī Umayya.”

Muṭʿim said:

“Find us a fourth.”

Hishām went to Abū al-Bakhtarī ibn Hishām and spoke to him as he had spoken to Muṭʿim.

Abū al-Bakhtarī asked:

“Is there anyone else who will assist in this?”

He replied:

“Yes.”

He asked:

“Who?”

He replied:

“Zuhayr ibn Abī Umayya, al-Muṭʿim ibn ʿAdī, and I am with you.”

He said:

“Find us a fifth.”

Hishām went to Zamʿa ibn al-Aswad ibn al-Muṭṭalib ibn al-Asad, spoke to him, and reminded him of their kinship and rights.

Zamʿa asked:

“Is there anyone with you in this matter to which you call me?”

He replied:

“Yes,”

and named the men.

They arranged to meet by night in the upper part of Mecca.

They gathered there, agreed upon their plan, and covenanted that they would rise against the document until they annulled it.

Zuhayr said:

“I shall begin and be the first to speak.”

The next morning they went to their assemblies.

Zuhayr ibn Abī Umayya came dressed in a fine garment.

He circumambulated the House seven times, then turned toward the people and said:

“People of Mecca! Shall we eat food and wear clothes while Banū Hāshim among us perish, neither buying nor being sold to? By God, I shall not sit until this unjust, severing document is torn apart.”

Abū Jahl, who was sitting at one side of the mosque, said:

“You lie! By the House of God, it shall not be torn.”

Zamʿa ibn al-Aswad said:

“You, by God, are the greater liar. We did not consent to its writing when it was written.”

Abū al-Bakhtarī said:

“Zamʿa speaks truth. We do not accept what was written in it, nor do we acknowledge it.”

Al-Muṭʿim ibn ʿAdī said:

“You both speak truth, and whoever says otherwise lies. We disavow it before God and disavow what was written in it.”

Hishām ibn ʿAmr said something similar.

Abū Jahl said:

“This is a matter arranged by night and discussed somewhere other than this place.”

Abū Ṭālib was sitting at one side of the mosque.

Al-Muṭʿim ibn ʿAdī went to tear the document apart.

He found that termites had eaten it, leaving nothing of the writing except “In Your name, O God.”

The one who had written it was Manṣūr ibn ʿIkrima, whose hand became paralyzed.

Al-Muṭʿim tore up what remained and said:

“In this you have a sign.”

Abū Ṭālib said concerning this, praising the men who rose to invalidate the document:

Has news reached those in Bahrain of what our Lord has done,
despite their distance? God is most gentle toward mankind.

Let it tell them that the document has been torn apart
and that everything God does not approve shall perish.
Falsehood and assembled sorcery alternated upon it,
but no sorcery has ever ascended forever.
Those not themselves involved called one another against it,
while its ill omen kept circling above its own head.
It was equivalent to the incident at Athīma,
when arm and necklace were severed.
The people of the two Meccas would depart and flee,
their sides trembling from fear of evil.
Ḥarrāth would remain turning the matter over,
wondering whether to accuse them or go toward Najd.
Between the two Akhshabs a troop would ascend
equipped with arrow-case, bow, and provision bag.
Whoever forgets the honor of those dwelling in Mecca—
our own honor within Mecca is ancient.
We grew up there while people were few,
and we have never ceased increasing in goodness and praise.
We feed until people leave their surplus
when the hands of generous men are praised.
May God reward the band who pledged themselves at al-Ḥajūn
upon a full understanding that guides toward prudence and right judgment,
sitting upon the broken stones of al-Ḥajūn as though
they were kings—indeed, mightier and more glorious.
Every falcon aided in the affair, appearing
when walking beneath the edges of armor like one angered,
daring against grave calamities as though
a shooting star blazed in the hands of one who kindles fire.
They were among the noblest descendants of Luʾayy ibn Ghālib;
when offered humiliation, his face darkens.
Long of sword-belt, half his shin exposed,
clouds are asked for rain through his face and prosperity comes.
Great of ashes, a chief and son of a chief,
encouraging hospitality to guests and gathering people for it.
He establishes good for the sons of the clan
when we travel through the lands and prepares the way.
He causes many to flourish wherever he is among enemies,
releasing enemies and striving for nothing but that.
Through this reconciliation every innocent man became familiar,
mighty of banner; his affair is afterward praised.
They settled what they settled in their night, then arose in the morning
deliberately while all the other people slept.
They brought Sahl ibn Bayḍāʾ back satisfied,
and through it Muḥammad, the best of mankind, rejoiced.
When did peoples become partners in our greatest affair,
when we had long lived before this in mutual affection?
From ancient times we have not accepted oppression;
we attain whatever we wish without excessive harshness.
O family of Quṣayy, have you concern for yourselves
and for what tomorrow may bring?

I and you are as a poet once said:
“The proof lies with you, if Aswad would only speak.”

Abū Ṭālib also said concerning the document:

Who is there for them at the end of the night, standing firm,
and for the split staff of your divided people?
I see among Luʾayy ibn Ghālib a diseased sore:
whenever sound flesh rubs against it, it becomes diseased.
Whenever a counselor rises among them with a plan,
a tail of blame is attached to him though he is not guilty.
What guilt belongs to one who calls to righteousness and piety
and, if able, seeks to mend the broken clan?
They have already tested the ugliness of their affair,
and one who has experienced a matter is not like one who has not.
In the affair of the document there was indeed a lesson;
whenever an absent man is informed of it, he will marvel.
God erased from it their unbelief and disobedience
and what they resented from the articulate speaker of truth.
What they said became falsehood by morning,
and whoever fabricates what is not true lies.
The son of ʿAbd Allāh therefore remains among us affirmed as truthful
despite any resentful man among our people who refuses satisfaction.
Do not imagine that we shall abandon Muḥammad
through estrangement from us or drawing near to others.
A Hāshimite hand from among us shall protect him,
whose position among mankind is the best position.
No, by Him toward whom every worn-out mount is driven,
exhausted beside Nakhla at al-Muḥaṣṣab:
God, his Lord, shall support him
through the people of al-ʿAfīr or through the inhabitants of Yathrib.
This is an oath in which we have spoken truth before God,
and we shall never abandon a hero beside the veiled Ancient House.
We shall not leave him until we are struck down around him.
What cause is there for rejecting the prophet brought near?
Our people, do not wrong us, for whenever
we fear oppression from men we become angry.
Restrain the excess flow of your milch-camel
and do not pursue every possible opinion.

Throughout this entire period the Messenger of God persisted earnestly and diligently in calling to God, Mighty and Glorious, desiring intensely that God guide His servants through him.

He remained patient before the harm inflicted upon him.

The Qurʾān continued descending upon him, revelation from God came to him continually, and signs and proofs spoke on his behalf and testified to him.

His enemies from ʿAbd Shams and Banū Umayya already mentioned, along with those whom they had won to their side, worked diligently to confront him with harm, sought plots against him, set snares for him, and turned away from him whoever they could among their own people and among outsiders who came after hearing his report and learning of his signs.

His uncle Abū Ṭālib persisted in supporting him and fighting on his behalf.

No one could reach him with physical harm while Abū Ṭālib was present; they were limited to insult, insinuation, and verbal abuse.

Whenever the Prophet's breast became constricted, he found relief with Abū Ṭālib.

Whenever some grave matter from Quraysh overtook him, Abū Ṭālib relieved him of it.

He likewise found substantial aid and great benefit in Ḥamza—may God have mercy on him—and many foolish men of Quraysh avoided the Prophet because of him.

The Year of Sorrow

Whenever the Messenger of God returned to his house and told Khadīja what had happened to him, she strengthened him, gave him comfort, offered him her wealth, and personally served him.

There was no one with whom the Messenger of God found greater relief and consolation than Khadīja and his uncle Abū Ṭālib.

Both died in the same year.

This was a grave blow to the Messenger of God, and his sorrow over them was severe.

After Abū Ṭālib's death, the foolish men of Banū ʿAbd Shams and their Qurashī allies became bolder toward him and harmed him.

The position of Banū Hāshim weakened after Abū Ṭālib.

The Messenger of God used to say:

"Quraysh never inflicted upon me anything I truly detested until Abū Ṭālib died."

After Abū Ṭālib there was no one with whom the Messenger of God could find relief and openly disclose what burdened him except ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.

By then ʿAlī had reached manhood.

God strengthened the Prophet through him and distinguished him through brotherhood with him and through designation as his Legatee.

After his father, the Prophet would find relief with him and rely upon him in his affairs.

The harm of his enemies then increased until God permitted him to migrate, deprived them of his goodness, and removed his blessing from them.

He emigrated to Medina and the believers followed him.

Among the ways in which God supported and aided him was that He gave him power over those who had opposed him and granted victory over them.

Some he killed, some he captured, and some he graciously released.

Some among them took refuge in Islam from him, making it a shield and protection for their lives, until after the Prophet's death opportunity presented itself to them and they seized it, attained power, and exploited it.

Thus hostility and rancor grew among later generations following their predecessors.

They demanded blood-revenge, harbored hatred toward the family of the Messenger, and sought vengeance from them for those of their fathers and kinsmen who had been killed while unbelievers.

The author says that he will mention whatever of their reports is suitable for the purposes of this book, God willing.

It is said that when death approached Abū Ṭālib, Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb ibn Umayya, ʿUtba and Shayba sons of Rabīʿa, Abū Jahl ibn Hishām, Umayya ibn Khalaf, and a group from Banū ʿAbd Shams, Banū Umayya, and their Qurashī associates came to him.

They said:

"Abū Ṭālib, you know your position among us. You see what has come upon you, and we fear for you. You know what stands between us and your nephew. Call him to yourself and take from us something for him and take from him something for us, so that he will cease from us and we shall cease from him."

Abū Ṭālib sent for the Messenger of God.

When he came, Abū Ṭālib informed him of what they had said.

The Prophet replied:

"Yes. One word: if they give it, they shall rule the Arabs through it and the non-Arabs shall submit to them."

They said:

"Yes, by your father—even ten words."

He said:

"Say: 'There is no god but God,' and renounce what you worship besides Him."

They clapped their hands and said:

“Muḥammad wants to make the gods into one God! Is this not astonishing?”

God revealed concerning them:

“Has he made the gods into one God? Surely this is an astonishing thing!”

Then they dispersed.

Abū Ṭālib said to the Messenger of God:

“By God, you have not asked them anything excessive”—that is, nothing remote or unreasonable.

When he said this, the Messenger of God hoped, according to their report, that he would embrace Islam.

He said:

“Uncle, say this word and through it I shall have a means of intercession for you before God.”

Abū Ṭālib replied:

“By God, my nephew, were it not that people would say I became fearful at death, I would say it.”

They say that when death drew very near, his lips moved.

Al-ʿAbbās leaned close to him and said:

“My nephew, by God, Abū Ṭālib has said what you asked him to say.”

They claim that the Prophet replied:

“I did not hear it.”

Then Abū Ṭālib died.

The editor adds that Abū al-Fidāʾ, in *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar* 1:122, reports that after hearing al-ʿAbbās’s statement the Prophet said:

“Praise be to God who guided you, uncle.”

Al-Shaʿrānī, in *Kashf al-Ghumma* 2:144, states that the report of al-ʿAbbās was established as authentic among some possessors of mystical unveiling and that they regarded Abū Ṭālib’s Islam as sound. Al-Subkī and a group followed this opinion.

Ibn Ḥajar, in *al-Iṣāba* 7:198, does not mention the Prophet's reply to al-ʿAbbās but does cite Abū Rāfiʿ as saying:

"I heard Abū Ṭālib say: I heard my nephew Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh say that his Lord sent him to maintain ties of kinship, to worship God alone, and not to worship anything with Him. Muḥammad is truthful and trustworthy."

Abū ʿĀmir al-Hawzanī reports that the Messenger of God went alongside Abū Ṭālib's funeral procession saying:

"You maintained kinship."

It is also transmitted from ʿAlī that when he embraced Islam, Abū Ṭālib told him:

"Remain with your cousin."

From ʿImrān ibn Ḥuṣayn it is related that when Jaʿfar ibn Abī Ṭālib embraced Islam, Abū Ṭālib said to him:

"Stand beside your cousin's wing."

Jaʿfar then prayed with the Prophet.

And Ibn ʿAbbās said that Abū Bakr brought his father Abū Quḥāfa, an old blind man, to the Messenger of God.

The Prophet said:

"Why did you not leave the old man where he was until I came to him?"

Abū Bakr replied:

"I wanted God to reward him. By the One who sent you with the truth, I rejoiced more intensely at Abū Ṭālib's conversion than at my own father's conversion, seeking thereby the delight of your eye."

The editor then lists numerous works devoted to the question of Abū Ṭālib's faith and salvation.

Ḥamza lamented Abū Ṭālib:

I lay awake at the lament late in the night, singing mournfully,
announcing the death of the forbearing, rightly guided chief,
Abū Ṭālib, refuge of the destitute, possessor of generosity
and forbearance, neither a replacement nor one lagging behind.
I think he has left a breach that Banū Hāshim must fill
lest they be violated and wounded.
Quraysh now rejoice at his loss,
though you will never see a living thing made immortal.
Their judgments decorate hopes for them

that will soon bring them to a place of error.
They hope to deny the Prophet and kill him,
fabricating falsehood against him and rejecting him.
You lie! By the House of God, until we make you taste
the points of long spears and Indian swords,
and a terrible sight from us becomes visible
when we clothe ourselves in linked iron armor.
Either you destroy us or we destroy you,
or you shall find peace within the clan more rightly guided.
Otherwise the clan standing before Muḥammad
are Banū Hāshim, the best of mankind in origin.
He has from God against you a helper,
and you will never find the Companion of God alone.
A Prophet who brought from every revelation a decree,
whom my Lord named Muḥammad in the Book,
radiant as the light of the full moon in his face,
whose brilliance disperses clouds and burns bright,
trustworthy concerning what God entrusted to his heart,
and whenever he speaks his speech is rightly guided.

The Night of Sleeping in the Prophet's Bed

The Messenger of God would present himself during every pilgrimage season to the Arab tribes, but none responded to him.

He personally went to Ṭāʾif, but its people did not accept him.

Eventually, during one pilgrimage season, he presented himself to al-Aws and al-Khazraj from Yathrib.

God granted them success in accepting Islam.

A group among them embraced Islam, pledged allegiance to him, and returned carrying news of him.

They had been neighbors of Jews and had heard from them that the appearance of a prophet described in their scriptures was near.

This became one of the causes of their good fortune.

Delegation after delegation came from them to the Messenger of God and embraced Islam.

He gave his Companions permission to migrate to them, and a group of Muslims migrated there.

When Banū ʿAbd Shams saw this and realized that the Prophet now had a faction, supporters, and a refuge, they became afraid.

They gathered in Dār al-Nadwa.

It is said that the accursed Iblīs attended them in the form of an old man.

They did not recognize him and asked:

“Where are you from?”

He replied:

“I am a man from Najd. News reached me of what you have gathered to discuss, so I came to attend with you. You will not lack from me an opinion containing what is sound.”

They said:

“Muḥammad has been believed by the people of Yathrib, and they have granted protection to those of his companions who come to them. We fear that he will join them, his affair will grow against us, his supporters will multiply, and he will wage war upon us through those who answer him. What do you think?”

Some said:

“We shall seize him, bind him, and imprison him.”

The old man said:

“That is no sound plan. His clan will rescue him from your hands and unite around him.”

They said:

“The old man speaks truth.”

Another said:

“Then let us expel him. Let him do whatever he wishes away from us and we shall be relieved of him.”

The old man said:

“That is precisely what you fear and what you are trying to avoid.”

Another said:

“Then let us kill him.”

The old man replied:

“That is the best opinion you have offered. Select one man from every clan among you and give each a sword. Let them all strike him together as one man. Then each clan of Quraysh will protect its own man, his blood will be distributed among them all, and Banū Hāshim will be unable to fight them.”

They agreed upon this and appointed a night on which they would come for him.

Gabriel came to the Messenger of God with news of their plan.

The Messenger of God ordered ʿAlī to sleep in his bed that night.

He left his house and concealed himself.

The men came, saw ʿAlī, and did not doubt that he was the Messenger of God.

They waited until they had all gathered.

When they entered, ʿAlī sprang up against them.

They were stunned and recoiled.

God then permitted His Messenger to migrate to Yathrib.

He emigrated, leaving ʿAlī behind in his house and ordering him to return deposits that people had entrusted to the Prophet and to discharge debts that he owed them.

ʿAlī remained after him for three days until he had completed this, then joined him.

Quraysh pursued the Prophet and offered one hundred she-camels to whoever returned him.

God delivered him from them.

He reached Yathrib, where God strengthened him through His victory.

The Emigrants joined him.

He established brotherhood among the Muslims and said, after gathering them—"we seek refuge in God from attributing to him what he did not say":

"Become brothers in God, two by two."

Then he took ʿAlī by the hand and said:

"This is my brother."

The author says that ʿAlī's support of the Messenger of God and his service beside him go beyond the limits of this book to recount, though he has mentioned and will mention some portions of it, God willing.

Jaʿfar al-Ṭayyār

As for Jaʿfar ibn Abī Ṭālib, "the Possessor of the Two Wings," we have already mentioned his migration to Abyssinia, his support of the Messenger of God, his calling the Negus to Islam until he embraced it, and what occurred there.

He returned from Abyssinia to the Messenger of God on the day Khaybar was conquered.

The Prophet said:

“I do not know which makes me happier: the conquest of Khaybar or Jaʿfar’s arrival.”

He embraced him and kissed him between the eyes.

He later sent him on the expedition to Muʾta against the Byzantines and appointed him commander of the army.

The enemy met the Muslims with a great host while the Muslims were few.

Jaʿfar stood firm and took the banner.

His hand was struck and cut off.

He took the banner in the other hand.

That hand too was struck and cut off.

He embraced the banner against his body and remained standing in his place until he was martyred—may God Most High have mercy upon him.

We have already mentioned that he was with the Messenger of God at the beginning of the revelation and what Gabriel said concerning him.

The Messenger of God used to say:

“People were created from different trees, while Jaʿfar and I were created from a single tree.”

In another report he said:

“We, the family of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, are from one tree, and Jaʿfar and I are from one of its branches. His physical form resembles mine, and his character resembles mine.”

In another report:

“Jaʿfar and I are from one clay.”

Abū Ṭālib once passed by with Jaʿfar while the Messenger of God and ʿAlī were praying.

He said to Jaʿfar:

“Stand beside your cousin’s wing.”

Jaʿfar prayed with the Prophet.

This was, according to the text, the first congregational prayer performed by the Messenger of God.

Jaʿfar was in Abyssinia on the day of Badr.

The Messenger of God nevertheless assigned him his reward and his share.

When news of his death at Muʾta arrived, the Messenger of God said:

“He has gone among a company of angels, possessing two blood-stained wings whose foremost feathers are white.”

He grieved intensely for him and told his family:

“Prepare food for the family of Jaʿfar, for something has come upon them that occupies them from caring for themselves.”

Thereafter this became customary among the people: the friends of a deceased person prepare food for the bereaved family while they remain occupied with mourning.

It is said that after Jaʿfar was killed, more than ninety wounds were found upon him, from sword blows, spear thrusts, and projectiles, because of how steadfastly he had stood that day.

He was killed at the age of thirty, though it is also said that he was twenty-five.

His wife Asmāʾ daughter of ʿUmays lamented him:

Jaʿfar al-Ṭayyār, best place from which horses charge
on the day of spear-thrusting and battle,
you were for me a mountain beneath whose shade I sought refuge;
now you have left me walking exposed upon bare ground.
So long as you lived I possessed protection;
I walked openly while you were my wing.
Whenever a dove called forth its grief
one day upon a branch, I answered its morning cry.
Today I bow before the lowly and fear him,
warding off my oppressor with the palm of my hand.

Ḥassān ibn Thābit lamented Jaʿfar, Zayd ibn Ḥāritha, and ʿAbd Allāh ibn Rawāḥa.

When Jaʿfar was killed, Zayd took the banner and was killed after him; then ʿAbd Allāh ibn Rawāḥa took it and was killed afterward, in accordance with the order established by the Messenger of God.

Ḥassān said:

I saw the best of the Muslims follow one another
into death while those after them remained behind.
May God never make distant those slain who followed one another
at Muʾta, among them Jaʿfar, possessor of two wings,
and Zayd and ʿAbd Allāh when they followed one another
together while the causes of death hovered around them.
He went forth in the morning leading the believers,

auspicious in leadership, mighty and courageous,
radiant like the full moon, from the family of Hāshim,
refusing humiliation when oppression was imposed.
He continued thrusting until he lay long upon the ground without a pillow
in a battlefield where spears were breaking.
His reward became, with the martyrs,
gardens and intertwined green orchards.
In Jaʿfar we used to see something of Muḥammad:
dignity and firmness whenever he commanded.
In Islam, men from the family of Hāshim have never ceased
to be pillars of might and enduring sources of pride.
They are the rope of Islam, and mankind around them
are stones gathered around an awe-inspiring mountain.
Standing firm among them are Jaʿfar and his mother's son
ʿAlī, and among them Aḥmad, the chosen one,
and Ḥamza and al-ʿAbbās among them, and ʿAqīl,
and the essence of the wood from which its sap is pressed.

Kaʿb ibn Mālik also lamented Jaʿfar:

Eyes sleep while the tears of your own eye continue pouring,
streaming like water dripping from a heavy cloud.
It is as though between my ribs and innermost breast,
because of what repeatedly visits me, there is a blazing meteor,
from grief over those men who followed one another
on the day of Muʾta, excused because they never turned back.
May God bless those young men
and may pouring clouds water their bones.
At Muʾta they gave their souls patiently for God,
fearing disgrace and refusing to retreat.
They were guided by Jaʿfar and his banner
at their forefront—and what an excellent leader he was—
until the ranks were scattered and Jaʿfar
lay fallen between the lines amid death.
The luminous moon changed through his loss,
and the sun was eclipsed and almost disappeared.
A people through whom God protected His servants,
and upon whom the revealed Book descended,
bright of face, whose palms you see
moist with generosity when barren time makes excuses.
Through their guidance comes God's pleasure for His creation,
and through their noble striving came victory for the Messenger sent by God.

Ṭālib ibn Abī Ṭālib

Ṭālib was the eldest son of Abū Ṭālib and left no descendants.

He said concerning the Messenger of God:

The glory of Banū Hāshim has taken its place
among the constellations and Venus.
The pure essence of Banū Hāshim is Aḥmad,
Messenger of the Sovereign in an age of interruption.
Great in noble qualities, light of the land,
courageous of heart, a quencher of thirst,
noble in gatherings, generous of hand
when one possessing wealth suspects generosity of excess,
chaste, God-fearing, pure of garment,
pure of trousers and waist-wrapper,
generous, a springtime for supplicants
from the quarter of Rabʿ and from Zuhra,
fierce like a lion, whom no rebuke
from a rebuker restrains in battle.
How many slain men lie because of him,
long in groaning and sighing.

Ṭālib had embraced Islam but did not migrate.

On the day of Badr the polytheists of Quraysh compelled Banū Hāshim to come out with them.

For this reason the Messenger of God told the Muslims that day:

“Whoever among Banū Hāshim you are able to capture, do not kill him. They were brought out unwillingly.”

Ṭālib was among those forced to go.

He said:

O Lord, if they have brought Ṭālib out
in a troop among these troops,
make them the defeated, not the victorious,
and send them back despoiled, not despoilers.

When they had traveled part of the road, this verse was reported from him.

They said:

“By God, we should never have brought with us a man of Banū Hāshim, for we know they desire nothing except Muḥammad’s victory. Ṭālib’s words are enough proof.”

They gathered around him, sent him back from the road, and he returned to Mecca.

ʿAqīl ibn Abī Ṭālib was among Abū Ṭālib’s most beloved sons.

When the Messenger of God and al-ʿAbbās once came to take some of Abū Ṭālib’s children into their households, he said:

“If you leave me ʿAqīl, take whichever of the others you wish.”

The Messenger of God took ʿAlī, and al-ʿAbbās took Jaʿfar.

ʿAqīl was physically weaker than the sons of Abū Ṭālib, but even so, the author says, he was more generous, chaste, and excellent than the later members of Banū Umayya in their own estimation.

The Messenger of God would say to him:

“ʿAqīl, I love you with two loves: love for you yourself and love because Abū Ṭālib loved you.”

He too came with the Qurashī polytheists on the day of Badr among those Banū Hāshim who had been compelled to come.

He was captured.

ʿAlī passed by while ʿAqīl’s hand was tied to his neck with a leather strap.

When ʿAlī saw him, he turned his face away.

ʿAqīl called out:

“Son of my mother! By God, you saw me, but deliberately turned away from me.”

ʿAlī went to the Messenger of God and said:

“Messenger of God, would you like to see Abū Yazīd, his hand tied to his neck with a leather strap?”

The Messenger of God replied:

“Come with me, ʿAlī, and let us see him.”

They went.

When ʿAqīl saw the Messenger of God he said:

“Messenger of God, if you have killed Abū Jahl, then you have prevailed. Otherwise catch the people while their wound is still fresh.”

The Prophet replied:

“God, Mighty and Glorious, has killed him.”

The Prophet told al-ʿAbbās:

“Ransom yourself and ʿAqīl.”

Al-ʿAbbās ransomed him.

ʿAqīl later remained with the Messenger of God, attended battles with him, became prosperous, and remained scrupulous.

It is said that on the day of Ḥunayn he came to his wife Fāṭima daughter of ʿUtba ibn Rabīʿa carrying his bloodstained sword.

She said:

“We know you fought, but what have you brought us from the spoils?”

He replied:

“By God, I have brought you nothing except—may it be cursed—a needle I took to repair a garment of mine. It remained with me. Here it is; take it and use it.”

She took it.

While they were still there, they heard the herald of the Messenger of God calling:

“People! Beware of embezzlement of booty, for embezzled booty is in the Fire. Return even thread and needle.”

ʿAqīl said to his wife:

“By God, I think your needle has escaped you.”

He took it back from her, went to the booty, and threw it into it.

On the day of Muʾta he acquired a gemstone and brought it to the Prophet, who allowed him to keep it.

The author asks:

Where among those of Banū Umayya who outwardly professed Islam could one find scrupulousness like this or restraint of this kind?

As for ʿAqīl’s wit and eloquence despite his physical weakness, it is said that he once came to ʿAlī and asked him for money.

ʿAlī gave him his own stipend.

ʿAqīl said:

“That is not enough for me.”

ʿAlī gave him part of another payment, but he was not satisfied.

He gave him from the stipends of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon them.

ʿAqīl still regarded it as little and said:

“I have debts.”

ʿAlī said:

“We shall write for you to Yanbuʿ so that you may be given something.”

ʿAqīl replied:

“What will Yanbuʿ possibly give me? By God, I shall go to a man who will give me something.”

He went to Muʿāwiya.

Muʿāwiya was delighted by his arrival, assembled the people of Syria, and said:

“This is ʿAlī’s brother. He has turned away from him and come to us.”

He admitted him in their presence and said:

“Abū Yazīd, have you come to us out of love and preference for us? Are we dearer to you than ʿAlī?”

ʿAqīl replied:

“ʿAlī loves himself and prefers what is with his Lord. We were dissatisfied with that from him, so we came to you because we know the opposite exists with you. Thus ʿAlī is better for himself than you, while you are better for us than ʿAlī.”

Muʿāwiya fell silent.

He had thought the words might deceive the people of Syria, but then saw them exchanging glances and smiling and realized they had understood what ʿAqīl meant.

He said:

“Then return, Abū Yazīd, to ʿAlī.”

ʿAqīl replied:

“To someone better than the one from whom I departed! By God, I came to him and received nothing of his religion, and I came to you and received nothing of your worldly wealth.”

Muʿāwiya said:

“We shall give you some of it.”

ʿAqīl replied:

“Whatever you give me from it, what you yourself take from your religion is greater.”

Muʿāwiya became angry and tried to silence him.

He said:

“People of Syria, do you know who this is? This is the nephew of the man concerning whom God revealed, ‘Perish the hands of Abū Lahab.’ Abū Yazīd, where do you think your uncle is today?”

ʿAqīl replied:

“People of Syria, do you know who this is? This is Muʿāwiya, whose paternal aunt is the carrier of firewood.”

Then he said:

“Muʿāwiya, if you ask about Abū Lahab, then when you enter the Fire on the day you enter it, look to your left. You will find Abū Lahab lying upon your paternal aunt, the carrier of firewood. By God, the rider is better than the ridden.”

Muʿāwiya was silenced.

He treated ʿAqīl gently, gave him gifts, and sent him away, since he found in him no concession concerning ʿAlī and nothing by which he could deceive the people of Syria.

ʿAlī, blessings upon him, was the youngest son of Abū Ṭālib.

It is said that there were ten years between each of Abū Ṭālib’s sons and the next: Ṭālib was the eldest; ten years separated ʿAqīl from Jaʿfar, and ten years separated Jaʿfar from ʿAlī.

All of them remained in their love for the Messenger of God in accordance with the covenant they had undertaken with their father Abū Ṭālib.

Those Who Waged War and Enmity against the Messenger of God

Among Banū Umayya, Banū ʿAbd Shams, and the Qurashī Clans Allied with Them, and What Occurred after the Hijra

The author says:

We have already mentioned in the preceding chapter the plots of Banū Umayya and the Qurashī clans allied with them against the Messenger of God from the time God sent him until his migration to Medina.

In this chapter we shall mention the wars they waged against him, those among them whom God killed at his hands, what they inflicted upon the Muslims, and their plotting against the religion and the believers.

When the Messenger of God became established in Medina and Banū Umayya and their Qurashī allies learned of the unity God had created between the Emigrants and the Helpers, the gathering of the believers, and the manifest rise of the religion, they were distressed and deeply grieved.

They bitterly regretted that the Messenger of God had escaped their hands when they had been unable to seize him.

The Messenger of God sent his uncle Ḥamza ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib in a detachment toward the seacoast near al-ʿĪṣ with thirty mounted Emigrants.

He tied a banner for him over them.

This was the first banner ever tied for Ḥamza ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, the Prophet's uncle.

News reached Quraysh, who came out against him with three hundred riders under Abū Jahl.

The two groups met.

Muḥammad ibn ʿAmr al-Juhanī, who had a treaty relationship with both parties, intervened between them.

They separated without fighting.

Ḥamza—may God have mercy upon him—and the Emigrants with him returned.

Ḥamza said concerning this:

O people, what forbearance and ignorance,
what deficiency in men's judgment and reason!
They ride upon oppression, though we have violated
neither their sanctities nor those of anyone else.
Before them we were not like them, nor had we any equal
except a command toward chastity and justice,
and a command toward Islam which they refuse to accept,
treating it as though it were merely a jest.
They did not cease until I volunteered for a raid
against them wherever they encamped, seeking peace of mind,
by command of the Messenger of God, beneath the first banner
that ever fluttered, one never previously seen.
A banner beneath which victory comes from One possessing nobility,
a mighty God whose deed is the best of deeds.
In the evening they advanced gathered together, while within us
the cauldrons of rage against his companions boiled.
When we came within sight of each other, they made their mounts kneel and hobbled them;
we too prepared ourselves within arrow-range.

We said to them: “The rope of God is our helper;
you possess no rope but error.”
Abū Jahl rose there in aggression,
but he failed and God turned back Abū Jahl’s scheme.
We were only thirty mounted men,
while they were two hundred and one besides.
O Luʾayy, do not obey your misguided men.
Return to Islam and the easy path.
I fear that punishment will be poured upon you,
bringing regret and bereavement.

The Great Battle of Badr

Abū Sufyān and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ then set out with a group of Quraysh for Syria on a trading journey. News of their return reached the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his family, and he went out to intercept them. Those of the Emigrants and Helpers who were able to depart went with him. They did not expect to encounter any stratagem or armed opposition, since the caravan contained only about forty men of Quraysh.

Three hundred and fourteen men from the Emigrants and Helpers went out with the Messenger of God, sharing camels among themselves in turns, and they had two horses.

News reached Abū Sufyān, so he turned aside from the main road and sent a messenger to Mecca to call its people to arms.

Most of them came out. None of their prominent and well-known men remained behind except Abū Lahab, who stayed back. They also forced Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib to come out with them.

Most of the Meccans had commercial interests in the caravan. When Abū Sufyān’s alarm reached them—“Muḥammad and his companions have intercepted your property”—they rose en masse out of the tribal zeal within them. Those men from Banū ʿAbd Shams and Banū Umayya spurred them on.

They numbered close to one thousand men, mounted and on foot, among them one hundred cavalrymen and six hundred men wearing armor. The Aḥābīsh accompanied them with spears.

They left no notable person in Mecca without bringing him out.

They said to Abū Lahab:

“Come out with us.”

He replied:

“I shall send another man in my place.”

He sent al-ʿĀṣ ibn Hishām ibn al-Mughīra in his place.

Al-ʿĀṣ ibn Hishām was the brother of Abū Jahl and was counted among the fools of Quraysh. He had gambled with Abū Lahab and lost until Abū Lahab had stripped him of his property. He then said, “Gamble with me over my family,” and lost them as well. Then he said, “Gamble with me over myself,” and lost himself. Abū Lahab therefore sent him out in his stead on the day of Badr, and he was among those killed there.

They met at Badr after the caravan had already escaped the companions of the Messenger of God and Abū Sufyān had saved it.

The remaining men of Banū ʿAbd Shams and Banū Umayya, together with the Qurashīs who had come out with them, advanced to fight the Messenger of God and his Companions.

They regarded the Muslims with contempt because of their small number, thought them to be in their hands, and called for single combat.

ʿUtba and Shayba, sons of Rabīʿa, and al-Walīd ibn ʿUtba came forward and challenged them.

ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, blessings upon him, Ḥamza, peace be upon him, paternal uncle of the Messenger of God, and ʿUbayda ibn al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib came out against them.

ʿUbayda was elderly and on that day went out leaning upon a staff.

ʿUtba fought ʿUbayda, Shayba fought Ḥamza, and al-Walīd fought ʿAlī.

Concerning them God, Mighty and Glorious, revealed:

“These are two adversaries who disputed concerning their Lord.”

ʿAlī killed al-Walīd, and Ḥamza killed Shayba.

ʿUbayda and ʿUtba exchanged blows, each severely wounding the other.

Ḥamza and ʿAlī then turned toward ʿUbayda, rescued him, and killed ʿUtba.

ʿUtba had cut off ʿUbayda’s leg.

ʿUbayda died after the Messenger of God had departed, at al-Ṣafrāʾ—may God have mercy upon him.

The Muslims charged the polytheists and routed them.

God caused many of them to be killed, permitted the Muslims to take their spoils, and allowed them to capture a number of prisoners.

Some Muslims were martyred.

Among the leading Qurashīs killed that day were Abū Jahl ibn Hishām; ʿUtba and Shayba sons of Rabīʿa; al-Walīd ibn ʿUtba, whom ʿAlī killed; Ḥanẓala ibn Abī Sufyān, whom ʿAlī killed; ʿUbayda ibn Saʿd ibn al-ʿĀṣ, whom al-Zubayr killed; al-ʿĀṣ ibn Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ,

whom ʿAlī killed; ʿUqba ibn Abī Muʿayṭ, whom ʿAlī executed as a prisoner; ʿĀmir ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Anmārī, whom ʿAlī killed; Ṭuʿayma ibn ʿAdī, whom ʿAlī killed; Zamʿa ibn al-Aswad, al-Ḥārith ibn Zamʿa, ʿAqīl ibn al-Aswad, Abū al-Bakhtarī ibn Hishām, and Nawfal ibn Khuwaylid, whom ʿAlī killed; and al-Naḍr ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Kalada, whom ʿAlī executed as a prisoner.

Umayya ibn Khalaf and ʿAlī ibn Umayya were also killed, together with fifty men of Quraysh, among whom were twelve men from Banū ʿAbd Shams.

The Messenger of God ordered that the slain be thrown into one of the wells of Badr.

Then he stood over them and said:

“People of unbelief! Shayba ibn Rabīʿa, ʿUtba ibn Rabīʿa, Abū Jahl ibn Hishām…”

He continued naming them individually and said:

“Have you found what your Lord promised you to be true?”

Someone said to him:

“Messenger of God, are you addressing dead men?”

He replied:

“You do not hear me better than they do. If they were permitted to answer, they would answer.”

Forty-two men from among them were taken prisoner.

It is also said that seventy were killed and seventy captured.

Abū Ḥudhayfa ibn ʿUtba ibn Rabīʿa had embraced Islam, emigrated, and attended Badr.

When he saw his father slain, his face changed.

The Messenger of God perceived his grief and said:

“Has what happened to your father distressed you?”

He replied:

“No, by God, Messenger of God. But he was an intelligent man, and I had hoped that God would guide him.”

The Messenger of God had said to the Muslims on the day of Badr:

“Banū ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib were brought out only under compulsion. Whoever among them you are able to capture, do not kill him.”

Abū Ḥudhayfa said:

“He orders us to kill our fathers, sons, and brothers, while forbidding us from killing his own relatives! By God, if I meet al-ʿAbbās, I shall strike him down with my sword.”

His words reached the Messenger of God, who said to ʿUmar:

“Have you heard what Abū Ḥudhayfa said? He swears that if he meets my uncle he will strike his face with a sword.”

ʿUmar said:

“Messenger of God, he has become a hypocrite. Permit me to strike off his head.”

The Messenger of God remained silent.

The author comments:

This is among what we have already mentioned concerning deeply rooted ancestral hostility and firmly established hatred in their hearts.

Among the events of that day was the capture of al-ʿAbbās and ʿAqīl.

We have already mentioned that although ʿAqīl was a prisoner with his hand tied to his neck, when he saw the Messenger of God he said:

“Messenger of God, do not let Abū Jahl escape you if you have not killed him. Pursue him while the wound is still fresh.”

Al-ʿAbbās heard the Messenger of God and his Companions deliberating, after the defeat of the polytheists, about pursuing the caravan, which was then near Badr.

As God Most High says:

“When you were on the nearer side and they on the farther side, while the caravan was below you.”

The author explains that “you” means the Prophet and his Companions on one side of Badr; “they” means the polytheists on the opposite side; and “the caravan below you” means the Qurashī caravan which the Muslims had originally gone out to intercept.

Al-ʿAbbās, hearing their discussion while himself bound as a prisoner, said:

“Messenger of God, God has granted you victory and given you what He promised you. He promised you one of the two groups.”

He meant God’s words:

“When God promised you that one of the two groups would be yours, while you wished that the unarmed one should be yours.”

That is, the Muslims had originally wanted the caravan.

The author says that it contained about eighty men, and the Muslims had not thought they would fight anyone.

Al-ʿAbbās continued:

“This is the group He promised you. If you proceed toward something He did not promise you, you may not obtain it and defeat may come upon you. Be satisfied with what God has allotted you.”

The Messenger of God accepted his advice when he recognized that al-ʿAbbās had counseled him sincerely.

The author comments:

These too were the intentions of Banū Hāshim toward Banū ʿAbd Shams, even though outwardly they were with them and within their faction, because of the longstanding beliefs and hostility existing between the two groups, ancient and recent. According to the author, this continued “down to the present day.”

When the Messenger of God had killed those prisoners whom he ordered killed, he said to those remaining:

“Whoever among you wishes ransom may ransom himself.”

The people of Mecca sent money and ransomed their relatives.

Some of the prisoners embraced Islam and remained; others departed.

The Messenger of God said to his uncle al-ʿAbbās:

“Ransom yourself, your nephew ʿAqīl ibn Abī Ṭālib, Nawfal ibn al-Ḥārith, and your confederate ʿUtba ibn ʿAmr ibn Jaḥdam, for you are a wealthy man.”

Al-ʿAbbās said:

“Messenger of God, I was already a Muslim, but the people forced me to come out.”

The Prophet replied:

“God knows best concerning your Islam. If what you say is true, God will reward you. But outwardly your position was against us.”

The Messenger of God had taken twenty ounces of gold from him.

Al-ʿAbbās said:

“Messenger of God, count that toward my ransom.”

He replied:

“That is something God has granted us.”

Al-ʿAbbās said:

“I have no money.”

The Prophet replied:

“Then where is the money you left in Mecca with Umm al-Faḍl daughter of al-Ḥārith when you set out? No one was with you. You said to her: ‘If I am struck down during this journey, then so much is for al-Faḍl, so much for ʿAbd Allāh, so much for Qāsim, and so much for ʿUbayd Allāh.’”

Al-ʿAbbās said:

“By the One who sent you with the truth, no one knew of that except her and me. I testify that you are the Messenger of God.”

He then ransomed himself, his two nephews, and his confederate.

Ḥanẓala ibn Abī Sufyān had been killed at Badr by ʿAlī, blessings upon him.

His brother ʿAmr ibn Abī Sufyān was captured.

A message was sent to his father asking him to ransom him.

Abū Sufyān replied:

“I am not one who will suffer both loss of blood and loss of wealth. They killed Ḥanẓala; am I now to ransom ʿAmr from them? Let them do with him whatever they wish.”

The Messenger of God therefore kept him.

Quraysh had previously undertaken not to molest anyone who came to Mecca as a pilgrim or performer of ʿumra.

Saʿd ibn al-Nuʿmān ibn Akāl, a brother of Banū ʿAmr ibn ʿAwf and an elderly man, came to perform ʿumra.

Abū Sufyān attacked him in Mecca, detained him, and said:

“You will not leave until my son is released and his fetters removed.”

Saʿd sent word to his people.

Abū Sufyān said:

Clan of Ibn Akāl, answer his call
on the morning he calls; do not surrender your aged chief.
Banū ʿAmr are base and humiliated
if they do not release their prisoner from his shackles.

Saʿd's people went to the Messenger of God and informed him.

He released ʿAmr, and Abū Sufyān released Saʿd.

Fourteen Muslims were martyred at Badr: six of the Emigrants and eight of the Helpers.

The Messenger of God returned to Medina with the spoils and prisoners after God had granted him victory over the polytheists.

The defeated Qurashīs returned to Mecca.

Abū Lahab had remained behind.

Seven nights after the defeated men returned to him, God struck him with an ulcer called *al-ʿadasa*, and he died from it.

The editor explains that *al-ʿadasa* is a pustule resembling a lentil that appears in various parts of the body and is considered a form of plague which usually kills the afflicted person.

ʿAlī, blessings upon him, said concerning the day of Badr:

Have you not seen that God tested His Messenger
with the trial of One mighty, powerful, and bountiful,
when He brought down the unbelievers into an abode of humiliation
and they encountered degradation through captivity and slaughter?
By evening the Messenger of God had become mighty through His victory,
and the Messenger of God had been sent with justice.
He brought a Criterion sent down from God,
whose signs are clear to people of intelligence.
Some believed in it and became certain,
and by God's praise they became united together.
Others denied it, and their hearts deviated,
so the Lord of the Throne increased their corruption upon corruption.
At Badr He gave His Messenger power over them
together with angry men whose deed was the best of deeds,
in whose hands were light white swords with tight straps,
which they had renewed through polishing and sharpening.
How many proud young men they left fallen,
and how many mature men of courage among them!
The eyes of mourning women spend the night over them
pouring forth tears in showers and torrents,
women lamenting ʿUtba of error and his son,
lamenting Shayba and lamenting Abū Jahl,
lamenting Dhū al-Rijl and Ibn Judʿān among them,
stripped and burning with manifest bereavement.

A band of them lies in the well of Badr,
men of courage in war and council.
Error called whom it called among them and they answered,
and error possesses links joined one to another.
They awoke beside the abode of Hell,
removed from error and aggression in the lowest depth.

Al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām answered him:

I marvel at people whose fool sings
of an affair of foolishness, objection, and falsehood.
He sings of those killed at Badr one after another,
men noble in endeavor, young and old,
white swords from the summit of Ghālib,
thrusting in battle and feeding during famine.
They fell noble, never selling their own clan
for another people remote in homeland and kin,
as Ghassān has now become your inner circle,
replacing us—what a deed this is!
Disobedience, manifest sin, and severing of kinship
in which those of judgment and reason perceive your injustice.
If a people have gone upon their path,
the best deaths are deaths in battle.
Do not rejoice that you killed them, for your killing of them
shall become a lasting corruption added to corruption,
through the loss of Ibn Judʿān, praised in deeds,
and ʿUtba, and the one among you called Abū Jahl,
and Shayba among them, and al-Walīd,
and Umayya, refuge of pilgrims, and Dhū al-Rijl.
Those are the ones whom you should lament and none besides them,
mourning women calling out in disaster and bereavement.
Tell the people of the two Meccas: gather yourselves,
all of you, against the fortresses of palm-filled Yathrib.

Ḥamza ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib—may God be pleased with him—said:

I remained awake, and a long night afflicted me,
with anxiety lodged between my ribs,
because of a reproaching woman who censured me foolishly—
though some reproaching women have grounds to speak.
She blamed me while sincerely concerned,
and sincere counsel may come from a reproacher.
She blames you because she saw in the valleys of Badr
battles among which blood was flowing.
They wronged the Messenger and denied him;
thus injustice becomes swollen and grievous.
We had spoken to them and warned them,
but speech did not benefit them there,
in Mecca when they transgressed and oppressed us,
and the days have turns that alternate.

They traveled deliberately toward the valley of Badr,
with horses led alongside Makhzūm.
We swore an oath which became binding upon us,
with a trustworthy guarantor from Hāshim:
“Leave Aḥmad alone or abandon him,
so that after ignorance the ignorant may become forbearing.”
They met our assembled host openly,
like lions of the forest, with the Messenger before us.
We fought them until they turned away,
while ʿUtba lay slain beneath our banner.
Shayba too was struck in a place we rendered desolate,
with a polished cutting sword above his brow,
by God’s command—for the Merciful decrees
whatever He wills and there is no substitute for us.
What befell the clan weighed heavily upon it
in Mecca when wailing rose among them.

Hind daughter of ʿUtba lamented her father, paternal uncle, and brother:

Who will bring me news of the two brothers,
like two branches—or who has seen them?
Two lions in a thicket, from whose attack
men would turn aside;
two great chiefs who suffered no injustice
and whose protected ground could not be approached;
two swords whose sharpened edges
met the limits of their blades;
two Khattian spears whose tips
reached the very liver of the sky.
Woe to me for my two fathers
and the grave that covered them.
There was no elder like my elder among old men
and no youth like their youth.
O sons of Rabīʿa, men shall never tire
of remembering the two of you.
They neither feared what they faced nor said farewell,
but followed their equals.
They were created for every calamity;
in misfortunes you would see them there.
They attained lordship without pretension,
naturally, through the overflowing abundance of their generosity.

Hind also said concerning her father ʿUtba, when ʿUbayda fought him and then Ḥamza and ʿAlī turned against him:

My two eyes, pour forth freely streaming tears
for the best of Khindif who did not return.
His clan gathered against him in the morning:
Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib.

The Messenger of God had sent ʿUbayda ibn al-Ḥārith forward for single combat.

When his leg was severed, the Messenger of God caught up with him at al-Ṣafrāʾ while returning.

The marrow of his shin had flowed out, and he was suffering severely.

The Messenger of God came and sat beside him.

ʿUbayda said:

“Messenger of God, we are as Abū Ṭālib said:

‘We shall not surrender him until we are struck down around him
and forget our sons and wives.’”

ʿUbayda said concerning what happened to him:

News from us shall reach the people of Mecca of a battle
from which even one far away will recoil.
Of ʿUtba when he turned away, and Shayba after him,
while Bakr, son of ʿUtba, was not pleased with what occurred.
If you cut off my leg, I am still a Muslim,
hoping through it for an abundant life from God,
with houris like statues, purified,
together with the highest Garden because it was lofty.
I sold for it a life whose purity I had tasted
and struggled through until I lost the things nearest to me.
The Merciful honored me through His bounty
with a garment of Islam covering faults.
Fighting them was not hateful to me
on the morning when whoever called for equals made his call.
We met them like lions, striding with spears,
killing for the Merciful whoever disobeyed.
Our feet did not leave our position,
the three of us, until they were made to visit their graves.

He died—may God have mercy upon him—at al-Ṣafrāʾ.

After ʿUbayda died, the Messenger of God killed those prisoners whom he ordered killed.

He then returned to Medina.

The other prisoners ransomed themselves, and most of them embraced Islam.

The Battle of Uḥud

When the defeated remnants of Quraysh returned to Mecca, Abū Sufyān vowed that water would not touch his head until he had raided Muḥammad.

He set out with two hundred riders in order to fulfill his vow, since he found no one willing to lighten the burden with him.

He reached al-ʿArīḍ, encountered a man of the Helpers and one of his confederates, killed them, and immediately returned.

News reached the Messenger of God, who went out pursuing him, but Abū Sufyān escaped and the Prophet returned to Medina.

Abū Sufyān then remained in Mecca for some time, inciting the Meccans and drawing Banū ʿAbd Shams and those of Quraysh who obeyed him into alliance.

He reminded every person who had lost a relative at Badr of his slain kin and rebuked them for leaving their blood unavenged.

He called upon everyone who had had commercial property in the caravan to contribute, saying:

"Those killed at Badr went out only to save this property of yours. Use it now to assist in seeking your vengeance. I shall contribute everything of mine to this."

They did so.

It is said that concerning him and them God revealed:

"Those who disbelieve spend their wealth to bar people from the path of God. They shall spend it, then it shall become a source of regret for them, and then they shall be defeated."

They also sent to Kināna asking for assistance in the war against the Messenger of God.

They gathered in force, prepared themselves, and advanced with a large host against him, bringing women and slaves with them.

News reached the Messenger of God.

He gathered the Emigrants and Helpers and consulted them.

Opinions differed.

He himself considered remaining in Medina and not leaving it until the enemy came to them.

Some supported this, while a group rejected it.

The majority favored going out.

The Messenger of God entered his house, put on his armor, took up his weapons, and emerged.

When they saw him, those who had favored going out said:

“Messenger of God, perhaps we have compelled you to leave. Remain if you wish.”

He replied:

“It is not fitting for a prophet, once he has put on his armor, to remove it until he meets the enemy.”

He went out.

Those who had favored remaining behind then withdrew from him, saying:

“He listened to the opinion of those men, so we shall leave him and them to what they chose.”

The Messenger of God reached Abū Sufyān and the Quraysh at Uḥud.

They numbered three thousand men, including two hundred cavalrymen.

The Messenger of God had nine hundred men at Uḥud.

He arranged them and stationed the archers in a position, ordering them not to leave it.

He commanded them to fight.

When the polytheists saw the Muslims, they became fearful.

Abū Sufyān feared that what happened at Badr might happen again.

He said to Banū ʿAbd al-Dār:

“You carried the banner at Badr and were defeated. People are struck through their banners: when the banner falls, they fall. Either spare us the banner or leave it to us.”

They became angry and answered him harshly.

This was exactly what he wanted—to incite them.

Hind and the women stood beating tambourines.

Hind chanted, urging the polytheists on:

We are daughters of Ṭāriq,
walking upon cushions,
pearls upon our necks
and musk upon our hair-parts.
If you advance, we shall embrace you
and spread cushions beneath you;
but if you turn away, we shall leave you
with the departure of one who does not love.

Battle was joined.

ʿAlī and Ḥamza—may God have mercy upon him—fought with great valor.

Ṭalḥa ibn Ṭalḥa, bearer of the polytheists' banner, called out:

"Companions of Muḥammad! You claim that whoever among us is killed goes to the Fire and whoever among you is killed goes to Paradise. Which of you will come out against me so that he may hasten me to the Fire or I hasten him to Paradise?"

ʿAlī, peace be upon him, came forward and said:

"By God, I shall not leave you until, God willing, I hasten you to the Fire."

The two charged one another in full armor.

Ṭalḥa's armor slipped away from his shin.

ʿAlī struck him with his sword and severed his leg.

He stood over him to kill him, but Ṭalḥa appealed to him by God and by kinship.

ʿAlī left him.

Someone later asked ʿAlī about this.

He replied:

"I felt ashamed when he appealed to me by kinship, and I saw that he would not live, so I refrained from him."

Ṭalḥa died.

Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī Ṭalḥa then took the polytheists' banner, and Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ killed him.

ʿUthmān ibn Abī Ṭalḥa then took it, and Ḥamza killed him.

Māniʿ ibn Abī Ṭalḥa took it, and ʿĀṣim ibn Thābit killed him.

The Muslims fought earnestly and inflicted many deaths and wounds upon the polytheists until the polytheists fled.

When the archers saw their flight, they abandoned the position where the Messenger of God had ordered them to remain and pursued the enemy seeking spoils.

They said:

"The spoils escaped us on the day of Badr."

When the archers left their position, Abū Sufyān, Khālid ibn al-Walīd, and a group with them wheeled around.

A woman from Banū al-Ḥārith named ʿAmra daughter of ʿAlqama saw the banner lying on the ground and raised it.

The polytheists rallied.

Ḥassān ibn Thābit said concerning this:

No—when ʿAḍal was driven toward us
like a young goat marked upon the brows,
we met them with thrusting and terrible blows
and drove them by striking from every side.
Had it not been for the banner of the Ḥārithī woman,
they would have been sold in the markets like captives.

The Muslims' formation broke.

Ḥamza stood firm and fought fiercely until Waḥshī concealed himself from him and hurled a spear from a place where Ḥamza could not see him.

It struck and killed him.

The Muslims fled and became separated from the Messenger of God.

The Prophet remained standing upon a rock at Uḥud, wearing two coats of armor, while ʿAlī stood before him protecting him.

The Messenger of God was wounded, one of his front teeth was broken, and the helmet upon his head was smashed.

The people had moved away from him, thinking he had been killed.

The polytheists surrounded him from every direction while ʿAlī remained before him.

Then Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ came to him and, being an archer, protected him with arrows.

Ubayy ibn Khalaf advanced resolutely toward the Messenger of God and said:

"Muḥammad, I shall not survive if you survive!"

He charged him.

The Messenger of God took a spear from the hand of one of his Companions, surged out from among them so suddenly that those around him scattered, and struck Ubayy ibn Khalaf with the spear, killing him.

He then took a handful of pebbles and threw them into the faces of the polytheists.

They turned away.

The Muslims rallied, and the polytheists withdrew.

It was a day of trial and ordeal.

Ḥamza—may God be pleased with him—was killed and his body mutilated.

Hind cut open his abdomen, removed his liver, and chewed it.

When the Messenger of God saw this, it grieved him.

He said:

"If God gives me power over them, I shall mutilate seventy of them."

God then revealed:

"If you punish, then punish only with the like of that with which you were punished…"

The Muslims were distressed by what had befallen them.

God revealed:

"When a calamity befell you, although you had inflicted twice its like, you said, 'From where is this?' Say: 'It is from yourselves.'"

The author explains this as referring to their disobedience of the Messenger of God in going out from Medina and to the archers abandoning their assigned position.

The Messenger of God ordered that the slain be buried where they had fallen.

Hind daughter of ʿUtba—whom the author curses—said:

At Uḥud I healed my soul through Ḥamza,
when I split open his abdomen for the liver.
That removed from me what I had felt
from the sting of deeply rooted grief.

She also said:

We repaid you for the day of Badr,
and war after war is a blazing thing.
I could not endure the loss of ʿUtba,
nor my brother, his uncle, and Bakr.
I healed my soul and fulfilled my vow;
Waḥshī healed the burning in my breast.
I shall thank Waḥshī throughout my life
until my bones are enclosed in my grave.

Hind daughter of Athātha ibn ʿAbbād ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ibn ʿAbd Manāf answered her:

You are disgraced at Badr and elsewhere,
daughter of one who plunged deep into unbelief.
May God greet you at dawn
with the tall, radiant Hāshimites,
each with a cutting sword that cleaves—
Ḥamza my lion and ʿAlī my falcon.
When Shayba and your father sought treachery against me,
the visible parts of their throats were dyed with blood.
Evil was your vow—what an evil vow!
You gave Waḥshī the innermost secret of your breast.
Waḥshī tore open the veil of concealment;
after that, what pride remains for prostitutes?

The text then alleges that Hind had offered herself to Waḥshī if he would kill Ḥamza and describes her as one of the sexually immoral women who marked themselves openly, adding that Black men were particularly beloved to her.

The author then quotes Ḥassān ibn Thābit, after he had asked the Messenger of God for permission to satirize Quraysh and was told:

“Speak, for God Most High has strengthened you with the Holy Spirit.”

Ḥassān said concerning Hind:

May God curse her and her husband with her—
Hind of the Hinds, long of clitoris.
She came out dancing toward Uḥud
because of your father and your son on the day of Badr,
and because of your uncle, the one who offered his backside,
to the young men of Mecca without concealment.

The author explains that “her son” here means Ḥanẓala ibn Abī Sufyān, though he was actually the son of her husband and his mother was Rayḥāna daughter of Abī al-ʿĀṣ, and that “her uncle” means Shayba ibn Rabīʿa.

The text then transmits a series of hostile reports alleging passive homosexual behavior against several Qurashī men, including Abū Jahl ibn Hishām, Abū Umayya ibn al-Mughīra, Ubayy ibn Khalaf, Shayba ibn Rabīʿa, and ʿAffān ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ, father of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān. These are presented polemically in the source as *mathālib* and should be understood as such rather than as independently established biographical facts.

The author says that the remainder of Hind’s reports concerning sexual immorality will be mentioned when discussing Muʿāwiya, God willing.

The Messenger of God returned to Medina.

He heard the women of the Helpers weeping over those of their men who had been killed and said:

“But Ḥamza has no women to weep for him.”

When the women of the Helpers heard this, they lamented Ḥamza.

The Prophet praised them and then dismissed them.

After Abū Sufyān withdrew, the Messenger of God ordered the Muslims to go out in pursuit.

Abū Sufyān had gone only a short distance when he said:

“By God, we accomplished nothing. We defeated the people, but why did we not finish the matter once and for all and destroy Yathrib? When shall we ever assemble such a force again?”

He turned back.

Then news reached him that the Messenger of God had gone out in pursuit with the Emigrants and Helpers gathered around him.

The people with Abū Sufyān became disturbed when they heard this and withdrew.

The Messenger of God then returned to Medina.

On the day of Uḥud, Abū Sufyān had engaged in single combat with Ḥanẓala ibn Abī ʿĀmir, known as “the one washed by the angels.”

Ḥanẓala threw him down.

Ibn Shuʿūb came to Abū Sufyān’s aid, enabling Abū Sufyān to kill Ḥanẓala and escape.

Abū Sufyān said concerning this:

Had I wished, my swift dark-red mare would have saved me,
and I would not owe gratitude to Ibn Shuʿūb.

ʿAlī had killed Abū Sufyān’s son Ḥanẓala at Badr.

At Uḥud, Abū Sufyān called:

“Exalt Hubal! Ḥanẓala for Ḥanẓala!”

The Messenger of God replied:

“God is higher and more majestic, and there is no equality. Our slain are in Paradise and your slain are in the Fire.”

The Prophet saw angels washing Ḥanẓala and said:

“Ask his wife what his condition had been.”

She said that he had left after intercourse with her without performing ritual purification.

The total number of Muslims martyred at Uḥud from among the Emigrants and Helpers was sixty-five.

Twenty-two polytheists were killed.

ʿAlī, peace be upon him, said concerning Uḥud:

I saw the polytheists transgress against us
and persist in error and misguidance.
They said, “We are more numerous,” when they marched out
in the morning of maneuvering with thirsting spears.
If they transgress and boast over us
through Ḥamza—while he is in the lofty chambers—
he brought down ʿUtba at Badr
and fought and strove without weariness.
I shattered their cavalry at Badr
and pursued their flight with men.
I left their ram lying finished off
by God’s praise—Ṭalḥa in the field.
He fell upon his face, and I lifted from him
a sharp-edged sword polished to brilliance,
as though salt had mixed into it
whenever it blazed like red carnelian in shadow.

He also said:

God is Living, Eternal, Powerful, Self-Sufficient;
none shares with Him in His judgment.
He is the One who knows the unbelievers in their unbelief,
and the believers He shall reward according to what He promised.
If there was a turn of fortune, it became a lesson for us;
perhaps guidance may yet be seen within their error.
God supports whoever befriends Him, for He has
victory, and He schemes against the unbelievers when they rebel.
If you boast—may you have no father—
concerning our brothers whom the grave contains,
then Ṭalḥa we left fallen,
while swords between us blazed like fire.
And ʿUthmān too our spears struck down,
and his wife’s garment was torn when she heard the news,
together with nine others when they turned among them;
they did not recoil from the pools of death when they entered them.
They were the summit of Fihr and its noblest men,
high-nosed, possessing branch and number.
And Aḥmad the Good swiftly struck down
Ubayy beneath the dust-cloud as he strove.
Birds and hyenas remained mounting him,
one carrying away a piece and another sitting upon him.

As for those of us whom you killed, despite the wonder of it,
they encountered good and attained felicity.
Theirs are pleasant gardens of Paradise,
where neither heat nor biting cold touches them.
May God bless them whenever they are remembered,
for many truthful stations had they witnessed before.
A people who fulfilled their covenant with the Messenger of God,
seeking reward—among them Ḥamza the lion, lofty of nose,
and Muṣʿab, who remained a lion before him, enraged,
until a fox-like enemy wrapped his body.
They are not like the slain unbelievers whom He admitted
into the Fire of Hell, whose gates are guarded.

When ʿAlī returned, he handed his sword to Fāṭima, blessings upon her, and said:

Fāṭima, take this sword, unblamed;
I am neither cowardly nor deserving of reproach.
By my life, I fought out of love for Aḥmad
and obedience to a Lord merciful toward His servants.
My sword in my hand was like a meteor; I shook it,
drawing it from shoulder and very core,
and I did not cease until my Lord broke their assembly
and healed the soul of every forbearing man.

The Lesser Badr

When Abū Sufyān withdrew from Uḥud, he said:

“Muḥammad, our appointed meeting between you and us is Badr at this same time next year.”

The Messenger of God replied:

“Yes.”

When the time came, the Messenger of God went out from Medina with the Emigrants and Helpers until he reached Badr for his appointment with Abū Sufyān.

He remained there eight nights waiting for him.

News of the Prophet’s presence reached Abū Sufyān.

He went out from Mecca with a group of its people until he reached ʿUsfān.

Seeing little enthusiasm among his companions, he turned back and said:

“People prosper only in a fertile year when they can graze their animals on vegetation and drink milk.”

News of his withdrawal reached the Messenger of God, who returned to Medina with his Companions.

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Rawāḥa—may God be pleased with him—said:

We appointed Badr with Abū Sufyān but found
no truth in his promise; he was not faithful.
By God, had you kept the appointment and met us,
you would have returned disgraced and lost your allies.
There we left the limbs of ʿUtba and his son,
and ʿAmr Abū Jahl we left lying dead.
You disobeyed the Messenger of God—fie upon your religion
and upon your evil, misguided affair.
Though you rebuke me, I shall surely say:
my family and wealth are ransom for the Messenger of God.
We obeyed him and set no other beside him among us,
a meteor guiding us through the darkness of night.

The Trench

Before this, the Messenger of God had dealt with Banū al-Naḍīr among the Jews, and Islam had spread.

After returning from Badr at the appointed meeting with Abū Sufyān, the Messenger of God remained in Medina for a year and entered the following year.

Then a group of Jews went to Abū Sufyān and allied themselves with him against the Messenger of God.

He sent them among the Arab tribes to summon them against the Prophet, warning them of his affair and frightening them with the prospect that it might reach them.

The confederate armies gathered and advanced against the Messenger of God.

Quraysh came under the leadership of Abū Sufyān.

Ghatafān came under ʿUyayna ibn Ḥiṣn ibn Ḥudhayfa ibn Badr.

Al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAwf al-Murrī led Banū Murra.

Masʿūd ibn Rukhayla led his people from Ashjaʿ.

Ṣafwān ibn Umayya was chief of all the Aḥābīsh.

News reached the Messenger of God and he dug a trench around Medina.

Banū Qurayẓa among the Jews had a covenant with him but broke it.

The confederate armies descended upon the Messenger of God in great numbers.

When they saw the trench they said:

“This is a stratagem unknown among the Arabs.”

They camped beside it.

The Messenger of God remained in position and did not go out to them, and there was no general battle between the two armies.

Then ʿAmr ibn ʿAbd Wudd—one of the champions of Quraysh—came with a group including ʿIkrima ibn Abī Jahl, Hubayra ibn Wahb al-Makhzūmī, Nawfal ibn ʿAbd Allāh, Ḍirār ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, and Mirdās, brother of Muḥārib.

They forced their horses across the trench toward the Messenger of God and called for single combat.

No one came out against them.

ʿAmr began reciting:

My voice has become hoarse from calling
among their assembled host: “Is there any challenger?”

ʿAlī, peace be upon him, rose toward him and said:

“ʿAmr, you used to covenant with God that if anyone offered you one of two things you would accept one of them.”

He replied:

“Yes.”

ʿAlī said:

“I call you to God and His Messenger.”

He replied:

“I have no need of that.”

ʿAlī said:

“Then I call you to single combat.”

ʿAmr replied:

“My nephew, by God, I do not wish to kill you.”

There had been a relationship between him and Abū Ṭālib.

ʿAlī said:

“But by God, I wish to kill you.”

ʿAmr became angry, dismounted from his horse, and advanced toward ʿAlī.

They met and circled one another.

Dust rose between them.

The Muslims stood watching but could no longer see them.

When the dust cleared, ʿAlī was wiping his sword over ʿAmr, having killed him.

His companions fled on horseback back toward their army.

Nawfal ibn ʿAbd Allāh fell into the trench.

The Muslims pelted him with stones.

He said:

“Arabs, grant me a better death than this.”

ʿAlī went down to him and killed him.

The polytheists came seeking his corpse and offered money for it.

The Messenger of God said:

“Leave them and his corpse. We have no need of it or of its price.”

ʿAlī said concerning this:

Shall horsemen charge against me like this?
Tell my companions concerning me and them.
Today my honor prevents me from fleeing,
together with a sword resolved against heads and not blunt.
Did you know ʿUmayr when its polish became pure?
Here in iron it strips away my garments.
I went out seeking combat with a sharpened blade,
a cutting sword together with al-Batrāʾ at my side,
toward Ibn ʿAbd when he charged me,
and I swore—listen now to which of us is the liar—
that he should neither turn away nor proclaim God’s unity.
The two men met, exchanging every blow.
I returned after leaving him fallen beneath me
like a tree trunk among hills and rises.
I abstained from his garments, though had I
been the one fallen, he would have stripped mine.

Do not imagine that God will abandon His religion
and His Prophet, O confederate armies.

Nuʿaym ibn Masʿūd al-Aswad al-Aslamī had entered into alliance with the Messenger of God and had come among the confederate armies.

He secretly slipped away and said:

“Messenger of God, I have embraced Islam but my people do not know of my Islam. I came with them. What do you think I should do?”

The Prophet said:

“You are only one man. If you can weaken them on our behalf, do so, for war is deception.”

Nuʿaym went to Banū Qurayẓa.

There had been longstanding relations between them.

They were in their fortresses.

He made it appear that he had merely come to visit them.

They honored and received him.

When he was alone with them he said:

“Banū Qurayẓa, do you doubt my sincerity toward you?”

They replied:

“No, by God.”

He said:

“I have come only as a sincere adviser. You have fallen into a grave affair. You broke your covenant with Muḥammad and did not secure yourselves against these people. If they withdraw and abandon you, will Muḥammad and his Companions not kill you?”

They replied:

“By God, you speak truth. What is the solution?”

He said:

“Ask the confederates to give you prominent men from among them as hostages”—and he named men from Quraysh, Ghatafān, and others—“who will remain with you inside your fortresses. Their clans will then hardly abandon you.”

They thanked him.

He asked them to keep the matter secret.

Then he went to Abū Sufyān and said:

“I have momentous news.”

Abū Sufyān asked:

“What is it?”

Nuʿaym said:

“I went to Banū Qurayẓa, with whom I have an old relationship. Some of them secretly informed me that they regret breaking their covenant with Muḥammad and asked him to renew it. He refused unless they hand over to him certain men from among you.”

He named the same men.

Abū Sufyān asked:

“How could they obtain them?”

He replied:

“They will ask you to give those men to them as hostages so that you do not abandon them.”

Abū Sufyān remained silent and decided to test the report.

He sent to Banū Qurayẓa:

“Come out, for we intend to engage Muḥammad and his Companions decisively.”

They replied:

“By God, we shall not do so until you secure us by giving us men from among you to remain with us.”

They named the very men Nuʿaym had named.

Abū Sufyān became certain that Nuʿaym’s report was true and was confounded.

God then sent the wind described in His Book:

“We sent against them a wind and hosts that you did not see.”

Ḥudhayfa al-Yamān said:

“During one of the nights of the Trench I was watching the Messenger of God standing in prayer during the night. He turned toward us and said:

‘Which of you will go and discover the condition of the enemy for us?’

By God, none volunteered because of the severity of the cold, wind, and fear of the enemy.

He then prayed for a while and said:

‘Who will do this, and I guarantee him Paradise from God?’

No one stood.

He prayed for another period of the night and said something similar:

‘Whoever does this will be my companion in Paradise, and I guarantee his safe return.’

Still no one stood.

When he saw this he called me and said:

‘Ḥudhayfa.’

I stood and could not hold back.

He said:

‘Go and observe the enemy’s condition, but do nothing until you return to us.’”

Ḥudhayfa continued:

“I took my bow and quiver and went until I entered the edge of the camp.

They had drawn in upon one another.

Not a tent-peg remained secure and no cooking-pot could remain upright.

I had barely sat down when I saw a man rise, place his foot upon his mount, saddle it, and make it stand.

He said:

‘People of Quraysh, let every man look at whoever is beside him.’

It was Abū Sufyān.

By God, had the Messenger of God not commanded me to take no action, I would have shot him with an arrow and hoped to kill him.

I quickly turned first to the man beside me and asked:

‘Who are you?’

He replied:

‘So-and-so.’

The people called to Abū Sufyān, ‘We recognize you.’

He said:

‘People of Quraysh, this is no place in which to remain. Camels and horses have perished, Banū Qurayẓa have failed us, reports concerning them have reached us that we dislike, and this wind has struck us as you see. Depart, for I am departing.’

They departed.”

Ḥudhayfa said:

“I returned to the Messenger of God while he was standing in prayer.

I could not restrain myself from sitting beside him.

He threw over me the extra portion of a cloak belonging to one of his wives in order to cover me.

He bowed, prostrated, testified, and gave the salutation.

I informed him of the news and he praised God.”

In the morning the Prophet returned to Medina and put down his weapons.

Gabriel came to him and said:

“Muḥammad, have you put down your weapons?”

He replied:

“Yes.”

Gabriel said:

“The angels have not yet put down theirs. God commands you to go against Banū Qurayẓa.”

The Messenger of God summoned the Muslims and went out to Banū Qurayẓa.

He besieged them.

They agreed to submit to the judgment of Saʿd ibn Muʿādh.

Saʿd ruled that their fighting men be killed and their offspring taken captive.

The Messenger of God said:

“You have judged them with the judgment of God from above the seven heavens.”

This was carried out against them.

The author says that God revealed concerning this what appears in Sūrat al-Aḥzāb.

The women of Banū ʿAbd Shams mourned ʿAmr ibn ʿAbd Wudd, and Qurashī poets composed many elegies for him.

After Abū Sufyān and the confederates withdrew from the Trench, the Messenger of God said to the Muslims:

“Quraysh will not attack you after this year. Rather, we shall attack them.”

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ had accompanied Abū Sufyān in all these engagements.

He was with him at Uḥud and the Trench and had also been in the caravan.

When he saw the Muslims advancing and the unbelievers retreating, he went to the Negus in Abyssinia and remained there until the Negus embraced Islam and called him to Islam.

He feared for himself, embraced Islam at the Negus’s hands, and afterward came to the Messenger of God.

Then, in Dhū al-Qaʿda of the sixth year after the Hijra, the Messenger of God set out intending to perform ʿumra and visit the House, not intending to fight anyone.

Seven hundred men from the Emigrants and Helpers went with him.

News reached Abū Sufyān, who summoned Quraysh and came out with them to prevent the Messenger of God.

The Prophet informed them that he had not come for war but merely to visit the House, intending pilgrimage and ʿumra, and had brought sacrificial animals.

They refused him.

Messengers passed between the two sides.

He reached an agreement with them that he would return that year and perform ʿumra the following year.

He slaughtered the sacrificial animals and returned.

God revealed:

“They are the ones who disbelieved and barred you from the Sacred Mosque and prevented the offering from reaching its place of sacrifice…”

and the verses following it in Sūrat al-Fatḥ.

The Messenger of God gave the people glad tidings concerning the victory God had promised him.

He then conquered Khaybar.

Jaʿfar ibn Abī Ṭālib and his companions returned from their migration in Abyssinia on the day Khaybar was conquered.

The Prophet said:

“By God, I do not know which makes me happier: the conquest of Khaybar or Jaʿfar’s arrival.”

God strengthened Islam, the Muslims became numerous, and God granted them spoils and expanded their wealth.

The Messenger of God remained until the same time of year in which Quraysh had prevented him from the House.

The following year he went out with his Companions intending ʿumra, entered Mecca, performed it, and returned.

The Messenger of God wished to conciliate Abū Sufyān.

Abū Sufyān’s daughter Ramla, Umm Ḥabība, had been married to ʿAbd Allāh ibn Jaḥsh.

He had become Christian after emigrating with her to Abyssinia and died there while she was still with him.

The Messenger of God wrote to the Negus asking him to propose marriage to her on the Prophet’s behalf.

Umm Ḥabība said:

“One day I was in my house in Abyssinia when suddenly Abraha, a slave-girl of the Negus, stood asking permission to enter.

I admitted her.

She said:

‘The king has sent me to tell you that the Messenger of God has written to him concerning you. What do you say?’

I replied:

‘May God give you glad tidings of good.’

Out of joy at what she had brought me, I gave her two silver bracelets, two anklets, and silver rings that were upon my toes.

She said:

‘The king tells you to appoint someone to contract your marriage.’

I sent to Khālid ibn Saʿīd and appointed him as my representative.”

The Negus contracted her marriage to the Messenger of God and gave her on his behalf a bridal due of four hundred dinars.

He also fed those who witnessed the marriage that day.

The Messenger of God sent Shuraḥbīl ibn Ḥasana to bring her, and she came and the marriage was consummated.

News reached Abū Sufyān.

He was told:

“Muḥammad has married your daughter.”

According to the author, this did nothing but make him persist further in his hostility toward the Messenger of God.

The most he said concerning it was:

“He is a stallion whose nose cannot be struck.”

Abū Sufyān’s Fear and His Conversion to Islam

When Abū Sufyān and Quraysh concluded the truce with the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his family, at al-Ḥudaybiyya, they stipulated that whoever wished might enter into the Prophet’s covenant and whoever wished might enter into the covenant of Quraysh.

There had previously been bloodshed between Banū Bakr ibn ʿAbd Manāt ibn Kināna and Khuzāʿa, but the matter had quieted because of the affair of the Messenger of God.

When the truce was concluded, Quraysh inclined toward Banū Bakr. Banū Bakr entered their alliance and attacked Khuzāʿa. Khuzāʿa entered the covenant of the Messenger of God.

Quraysh then supported Banū Bakr against Khuzāʿa, fighting alongside them and attacking Khuzāʿa by night, killing some of them.

This constituted a violation of the agreement they had made with the Messenger of God, since Khuzāʿa had entered his covenant.

Khuzāʿa sent a man called ʿAmr ibn Sālim to the Messenger of God in Medina.

He came upon the Prophet while he was in the mosque among a group of Emigrants and Helpers and said:

O God, I appeal to Muḥammad
by the covenant of his father and ours of old.
You were a son and we were fathers,
then we embraced Islam and never withdrew our hand.
Support, O Messenger of God, a mighty support,
and call God's servants to come as reinforcements.
Among them let the Messenger of God advance,
if oppression is imposed upon him his face darkens,
in an army like a foaming sea.
Quraysh have broken their appointment with you
and violated your solemn covenant.
They set an ambush for me at Kadāʾ.
They attacked us at al-Watīr by night while we slept
and killed us while bowing and prostrating.

The Messenger of God said:

"You have been supported, ʿAmr."

Then Budayl ibn Warqāʾ came with a group of Khuzāʿa and informed the Messenger of God of what had happened, the losses they had suffered, and Quraysh's support of Banū Bakr against them. Then they departed.

The Messenger of God said:

"It is as though Abū Sufyān has already come to you, seeking to strengthen the treaty and extend its term."

It was not long before Abū Sufyān arrived in Medina.

He went to his daughter Ramla, who was married to the Messenger of God.

He moved to sit upon the Prophet's bedding, but she rose and folded it away from him.

He said:

"My daughter, do you consider me unworthy of this bedding, or the bedding unworthy of me?"

She replied:

"It is the bedding of the Messenger of God, and you are a filthy polytheist. I ought not let you sit upon it."

He said:

"By God, daughter, evil has befallen you since I left you."

He left her and went to the Messenger of God.

He explained that he had come to strengthen the treaty and increase its term, pleaded with him, and asked him to agree.

The Prophet gave him no answer.

Abū Sufyān went to Abū Bakr and asked him to speak to the Messenger of God on his behalf.

Abū Bakr refused.

He went to ʿUmar and made the same request.

ʿUmar refused and spoke harshly to him.

Then Abū Sufyān went to ʿAlī, blessings upon him, in his house and said:

“Abū al-Ḥasan, you are the closest of these people to me in kinship. I have come concerning a matter known to Quraysh, and I do not wish to return unsuccessful. Ask your cousin on my behalf.”

ʿAlī replied:

“Woe to you, Abū Sufyān. The Messenger of God has resolved upon a matter, and I am not one who would oppose him concerning it.”

Abū Sufyān then addressed Fāṭima, peace be upon her, while al-Ḥasan was before her as a small child just beginning to walk:

“Daughter of Muḥammad, if only you would command this son of yours to grant protection among the people, it would be an everlasting source of pride for you.”

She replied:

“No, by God, Abū Ḥanẓala. My son has not reached an age at which he could grant protection against the will of the Messenger of God.”

Abū Sufyān then said to ʿAlī:

“Advise me, Abū al-Ḥasan. I see that matters have become difficult for me.”

ʿAlī said:

“I see no course for you except that, if you wish, you yourself proclaim protection among the people. You are today the chief of Kināna. Stand and proclaim protection among the people, then return to your land.”

Abū Sufyān asked:

“Do you think that will benefit me in any way?”

ʿAlī replied:

“No, by God, I do not think so, but I find nothing else for you.”

Abū Sufyān stood in the mosque and said:

“People, I hereby proclaim protection among the people.”

Then he mounted his camel and departed for Mecca.

Quraysh asked him what he had accomplished.

He told them that ʿAlī had instructed him to do what he had done and that he had found no course except to follow that advice.

They asked:

“Did Muḥammad ratify it?”

He replied:

“No.”

They said:

“Then ʿAlī did nothing but play with you and your judgment.”

The Messenger of God prepared for war and ordered the people to prepare, without telling them where he intended to go.

God had greatly increased the number of Muslims.

The Prophet set out intending to attack Mecca with ten thousand Muslims, saying:

“O God, withhold reports and intelligence from Quraysh until we surprise them in their own land.”

No news of him reached Quraysh until he was already close to Mecca.

Al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib met him along the road, having embraced Islam.

Then Abū Sufyān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and ʿAbd Allāh ibn Abī Umayya ibn al-Mughīra met him and sought permission to enter upon him.

The Prophet refused.

Umm Salama spoke to him concerning them, saying:

“Messenger of God, your cousin”—meaning Abū Sufyān—“and the son of your paternal aunt and your brother-in-law”—meaning ʿAbd Allāh.

The Prophet said:

“I have no need of either of them. As for my cousin, he violated my honor.”

Abū Sufyān ibn al-Ḥārith had been a poet and had composed many poems concerning what occurred between the Messenger of God and the Meccans, mentioning the Prophet therein.

“As for the son of my paternal aunt and my brother-in-law, he is the one who said to me in Mecca what he said.”

He too had harmed and insulted the Prophet in Mecca.

When this reached them, Abū Sufyān said:

“By God, if the Messenger of God does not admit me, I shall take this child by the hand”—he had a young son with him—“and wander out into the earth until we both die of hunger.”

The Messenger of God was moved to compassion and admitted them.

Abū Sufyān recited verses concerning his conversion and apology:

By your life, when I carried the banner
that the cavalry of al-Lāt might defeat Muḥammad’s cavalry,
I was like one lost and bewildered whose night had grown dark.
Yet now the time has come for me to be guided, and I am guided.

The text says he composed a long poem and many other verses of this meaning.

News of the Messenger of God remained hidden from Quraysh until he came close to Mecca and camped nearby for the night intending to enter in the morning.

Al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib said:

“What an evil morning for Quraysh! If the Messenger of God enters Mecca by force before they seek protection from him, it will mean the destruction of Quraysh until the end of time.”

He went out by night toward Mecca hoping to meet someone whom he might send with news to them.

That same night Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb, Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām, and Budayl ibn Warqāʾ had gone out scouting, hoping to find or hear some report, for news had reached them that the Messenger of God had departed, but they did not know where he intended to go.

As al-ʿAbbās traveled, he heard Abū Sufyān and Budayl ibn Warqāʾ speaking to one another.

They had seen the fires of the Prophet’s army.

Abū Sufyān said:

“I have never seen fires like these tonight.”

Budayl replied:

“Those are the fires of Khuzāʿa.”

Abū Sufyān said:

“By God, Khuzāʿa are too few and too weak for these to be their fires.”

Al-ʿAbbās recognized Abū Sufyān’s voice and called:

“Abū Ḥanẓala!”

Abū Sufyān replied:

“Who is that? Abū al-Faḍl?”

He said:

“Yes.”

Abū Sufyān said:

“What is it? May my father and mother be your ransom.”

Al-ʿAbbās said:

“Woe to you, Abū Sufyān! These are the fires of the Messenger of God and his Companions. What an evil morning for Quraysh! I have come only as a warning.”

Abū Sufyān asked:

“What is the solution, may my father and mother be your ransom?”

Al-ʿAbbās replied:

“By God, if he gains power over you he will strike off your head. Ride behind me and I shall take you to the Messenger of God and seek protection for you.”

Al-ʿAbbās was mounted on the mule of the Messenger of God.

Abū Sufyān mounted behind him and they entered the camp.

Whenever they passed one of the Muslims’ fires, the men recognized the mule of the Messenger of God and al-ʿAbbās.

Eventually they passed ʿUmar’s fire.

He recognized Abū Sufyān and rushed to inform the Messenger of God.

He entered upon him, while al-ʿAbbās entered at the same time.

ʿUmar said:

“Messenger of God, here is God’s enemy Abū Sufyān. God has brought him without covenant or treaty. Command me and I shall strike off his head.”

Al-ʿAbbās said:

“Messenger of God, I have granted him protection.”

The Messenger of God told al-ʿAbbās:

“Take him to your lodging. In the morning bring him back to me.”

The next morning al-ʿAbbās brought him.

When the Messenger of God saw him, he said:

“Woe to you, Abū Sufyān. Has the time not yet come for you to know that there is no god but God?”

Abū Sufyān replied:

“May my father and mother be your ransom. How forbearing, noble, and mindful of kinship you are! By God, I have indeed come to know that if there were another god beside God, he would have availed me something by now.”

The Prophet said:

“Woe to you, Abū Sufyān. Has the time not yet come for you to know that I am the Messenger of God?”

He replied:

“May my father and mother be your ransom. How forbearing, noble, and mindful of kinship you are! As for this, by God, there is still something of hesitation within my soul.”

Al-ʿAbbās said:

“Embrace Islam, woe to you! Testify that there is no god but God and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God before your neck is struck.”

The source states:

“Abū Sufyān embraced Islam out of fear of being killed.”

Al-ʿAbbās then said:

“Messenger of God, Abū Sufyān is a man who loves distinction. Give him something today of which he can boast.”

The Prophet said:

“Let it be proclaimed in Mecca: whoever enters the Sacred Mosque is safe, whoever shuts his door upon himself is safe, and whoever enters the house of Abū Sufyān is safe.”

Abū Sufyān began saying:

“My house! My house, Messenger of God?”

as though magnifying its standing before him.

Then the Messenger of God told al-ʿAbbās:

“Hold him at the narrow pass of the valley so that the armies of God may pass before him and he may see them.”

Al-ʿAbbās held him there.

The tribes passed under their banners.

Whenever one passed, Abū Sufyān asked:

“Who are these?”

Al-ʿAbbās would say:

“The banner of such-and-such tribe.”

Abū Sufyān would reply:

“What have I to do with such-and-such tribe?”

Then the tribes continued passing.

Finally the Messenger of God approached in the Green Battalion, surrounded by the Emigrants and Helpers, so heavily armored that nothing of them could be seen except their eyes amid the iron.

Abū Sufyān said:

“Glory be to God! Who are these, Abū al-Faḍl?”

He replied:

“This is the Messenger of God among the Emigrants and Helpers.”

Abū Sufyān said:

“By God, no one has the power to withstand these people. This morning your nephew’s kingship has become immense.”

Al-ʿAbbās said:

“Woe to you! Do not say that. He is the Messenger of God, and this is prophethood.”

Abū Sufyān replied:

“Then yes.”

Al-ʿAbbās told him:

“Save yourself, Abū Sufyān. Reach the people of Mecca before they are destroyed.”

He hurried away.

When he reached Mecca he shouted at the top of his voice:

“People of Quraysh! Muḥammad has come against you with something you have no power to resist. Whoever enters my house is safe.”

His wife Hind rushed toward him, seized him by the moustache, and said:

“Kill this fat, useless old man! What a miserable scout for a people!”

Abū Sufyān said:

“Woe to you! Do not let this woman deceive you about your own lives. By God, he has come with a force you cannot withstand. Whoever enters my house is safe.”

They said:

“What good can your house do us? How many people can it hold?”

He said:

“Whoever enters the Sacred Mosque is safe.”

They asked:

“How can we abandon our women and property?”

He said:

“Whoever closes the door of his house upon himself is safe.”

The people dispersed to their houses.

The Messenger of God entered Mecca.

Some Qurashīs took up positions in one quarter of the city.

Khālid ibn al-Walīd encountered them with the Muslims under his command and killed more than ten of them.

The rest scattered.

Everyone who knew that he had inflicted some blood-feud upon the Messenger of God fled or hid.

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, however, had already fled with a number of Qurashīs to Abyssinia.

The Messenger of God had commanded the commanders of his forces not to kill anyone in Mecca except those who fought them.

He nevertheless ordered that certain named men be killed.

Among them was ʿAbd Allāh ibn Saʿd ibn Abī Sarḥ.

He had embraced Islam, emigrated, and served as a scribe of revelation for the Messenger of God.

Then he apostatized, returned to polytheism, fled to Mecca, and claimed:

“I too revealed Qurʾān.”

The source explains that when the Messenger of God dictated to him expressions such as “Mighty, Wise,” he would write instead “Knowing, Powerful” or “Mighty, Wise,” whereupon the Messenger of God would say:

“It is so.”

The author says that concerning ʿAbd Allāh ibn Saʿd God revealed:

“And who is more unjust than one who says, ‘I shall send down the like of what God has sent down’?”

He fled to ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, who sheltered him even though the Messenger of God had declared his blood forfeit.

He was ʿUthmān’s foster-brother.

When affairs had settled, ʿUthmān brought him before the Messenger of God and pleaded for him.

The Prophet remained silent for a long time without replying.

Then he said:

“Yes.”

Afterward he said to those present:

“I remained silent hoping that one of you would rise and strike off his head.”

They said:

“Why did you not signal to us, Messenger of God?”

He replied:

“It is not fitting for a prophet to make a secret signal.”

The Prophet also ordered the killing of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥanẓal, who had embraced Islam, killed a Muslim, then apostatized and became a polytheist. He was found and killed that day.

He also ordered the killing of al-Ḥuwayrith ibn Nufayl.

The text says that a man of the Helpers had accidentally killed his brother, after which al-Ḥuwayrith came to the Messenger of God and embraced Islam, then killed the Anṣārī and apostatized. He was killed that day.

ʿIkrima ibn Abī Jahl fled to Yemen.

His wife embraced Islam and later obtained protection for him from the Messenger of God.

Al-Ḥuwayrith ibn Nufayl ibn Wahb had also harmed the Messenger of God; ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him, killed him.

A singing-girl belonging to Ibn Ḥanẓal had sung satires against the Messenger of God.

He ordered her killed, and she was killed.

The Conversion of Hind daughter of ʿUtba

The Messenger of God had ordered Hind daughter of ʿUtba to be killed because of what she had done to Ḥamza.

This reached Abū Sufyān, who concealed her until she came before the Messenger of God together with Muʿāwiya.

They embraced Islam.

The Messenger of God did not kill anyone who came to him as a Muslim before he had gained power over that person, even if he had previously declared his blood forfeit.

It is said that when Hind came to embrace Islam, she came disguised, fearing that the Messenger of God would kill her.

After she had embraced Islam, he recognized her and said:

“Hind?”

She replied:

“Yes. Pardon what has passed.”

He remained silent.

Then the Messenger of God declared Mecca sacred and said:

“It was not made lawful for anyone before me and will not be made lawful for anyone after me. It is sacred as it was.”

Those of Quraysh who embraced Islam then did so.

The Prophet’s Disavowal of Khālid’s Deed

The Messenger of God sent Khālid ibn al-Walīd to call the people around Mecca to Islam.

He did not command him to fight or kill anyone.

He sent with him men from various Arab tribes.

Khālid reached Banū Khuzayma at al-Ghumayṣāʾ.

They had killed, during the Age of Ignorance, ʿAwf ibn ʿAbd ʿAwf, father of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, and al-Fākih ibn al-Mughīra.

When they saw Khālid ibn al-Walīd, they took up their weapons.

He said:

“Put down your weapons.”

A man among them called Jaḥdam said:

“Woe to you! This is Khālid. By God, after putting down weapons comes captivity, and after captivity comes the striking of necks. By God, I shall not put down my weapon.”

His people seized him and said:

“Jaḥdam, do you want our blood to be shed? The people have embraced Islam and war has laid down its burdens.”

They continued until he put down his weapon, and the others likewise laid down theirs at Khālid’s instruction.

Once they had done so, Khālid ordered them bound and killed some of them.

News reached the Messenger of God.

He raised his hands toward heaven and said:

“O God, I declare myself innocent before You of what Khālid has done.”

Then he summoned ʿAlī, blessings upon him, gave him money, and said:

“Go to these people, examine their affair, and place the practices of the Age of Ignorance beneath your feet.”

ʿAlī went to them.

He paid blood-money for their slain and compensation for what had been plundered from their property according to their claims.

He satisfied them and asked:

“Does anything remain due to you?”

They replied:

“No.”

He said:

“There remains with me a portion of what the Messenger of God sent with me.”

He gave that remainder to them and returned to the Messenger of God.

He informed him of what he had done.

The Prophet said:

“This is dearer to me than red camels.”

Then he stood facing the qibla and raised his hands until the whiteness of his armpits could be seen and said three times:

“O God, I declare myself innocent before You of what Khālid has done.”

Selected Reports concerning the Banū Umayya and Those of Quraysh Who Supported Them

After the Conquest

The author says that among the things proving that their Islam was only out of fear and as *taqiyya* against being killed, and that they remained inwardly upon the beliefs of the Age of Ignorance and their original hostility toward the Messenger of God and his Household, is what has already been described in this book.

He says that the hostility of Banū ʿAbd Shams as a whole toward Banū ʿAbd Manāf and specifically that of Banū Umayya toward the Messenger of God and his Household has already been recounted, together with their opposition, warfare, exertion to kill him, attempt to extinguish God's light, and effort to cut off the religion which God had decreed would prevail over all religion.

Their conversion, he argues, occurred only once domination overtook them, they became certain of destruction, heard the striking of swords, and saw the causes of death before them.

Thus, in the author's polemical formulation:

"They submitted (*istaslamū*) but did not truly become Muslims (*lam yuslimū*)."

They concealed unbelief and hostility toward the Messenger of God and his Household and retained the hatred upon which they had been united.

Their tongues manifested Islam before the Muslims, while their deeds, according to the author, disclosed the unbelief they continued inwardly to hold.

He says that he will relate some of their reports in accordance with the scope established for the book.

The Reality of the Conversion of Abū Sufyān and Muʿāwiya

Among them was Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb ibn Umayya.

The author says that what has already been related concerning the circumstances of his conversion demonstrates the point intended in this chapter.

Among the reports transmitted concerning him after his conversion is that one day, while with the Messenger of God in the house of his daughter Umm Ḥabība, he said jokingly—or pretending to joke:

"By God, it is only that if you abandoned the Arabs, they would abandon you, whether hornless or horned beasts butted one another."

The Messenger of God laughed and said:

"You say that, Abū Ḥanẓala?"

The author says that he treated him diplomatically because of the condition he was in, and that Abū Sufyān remained in such a state until the Messenger of God died.

The Prophet once saw him approaching with his son Muʿāwiya behind him and said:

“O God, curse the follower and the one followed. O God, deal with al-Uqayʿis,”

meaning Muʿāwiya.

The source also reports that the Prophet once saw Abū Sufyān riding while Muʿāwiya led the mount and Yazīd drove it from behind, and said:

“O God, curse the rider, the leader, and the driver.”

It is also said that concerning Abū Sufyān God revealed:

“Fight the leaders of unbelief, for they have no binding oaths, so that perhaps they may desist.”

The text further reports that after Abū Sufyān had become blind he once entered the mosque when prayer had already begun and found himself compelled to join the people.

When the Imam prolonged the bowing, Abū Sufyān began asking his guide:

“Have they not raised their heads?”

He replied:

“No.”

Abū Sufyān said:

“May they never raise them.”

The author interprets this as contempt for prayer and evidence that he performed it only outwardly and that his earlier belief in polytheism had not left him.

On another occasion he entered upon ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān after he had lost his sight.

He sat and asked:

“Is anyone watching me?”

He was told:

“No.”

He said to ʿUthmān, who was then caliph:

“Do not be like Ḥajar ibn Ḥajar”—meaning ʿUmar—“look to this kingship and pass it among yourselves; seize it from one another like a ball.”

Al-Barāʾ ibn ʿĀzib was present.

ʿUthmān felt ashamed because of him and said to Abū Sufyān:

“You are an old man and your mind has deteriorated.”

On another occasion Abū Sufyān passed by Bilāl, Salmān, and Ṣuhayb while Abū Bakr was with him.

They said:

“There remained places upon the neck of this enemy of God for the swords of the Muslims.”

Abū Bakr heard them and said:

“Do you say such things to an elder among the elders of Quraysh?”

He then went and informed the Prophet.

The Prophet told him:

“Perhaps you have angered them. If you angered them, then you angered your Lord.”

It is also said that Abū Sufyān became ill during the caliphate of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān visited him.

When ʿUthmān was about to leave, Abū Sufyān held him and said:

“I need something from you.”

ʿUthmān asked:

“What?”

He replied:

“If I die, let no one except you handle my burial and let no one except you pray over me.”

ʿUthmān asked:

“How could I do that while ʿUmar is present?”

Abū Sufyān said:

“Then bury me at night and do not inform him.”

ʿUthmān said:

“We shall do so.”

Abū Sufyān said:

“Then swear to me by al-Lāt and al-ʿUzzā that you will do it.”

ʿUthmān replied:

“Your mind has deteriorated, Abū Ḥanẓala.”

Abū Sufyān recovered from that illness and eventually died during ʿUthmān’s caliphate, and ʿUthmān prayed over him.

The author further states that the verse:

“As for those who disbelieve, it is the same whether you warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe”

was revealed concerning the leaders of the Confederates.

He says that God thereby declared that they did not believe in their hearts.

Likewise, he states that concerning them was revealed:

“Have you not seen those who exchanged God’s favor for unbelief and caused their people to dwell in the abode of ruin—Hell, which they shall enter? What an evil dwelling-place.”

The author says that among the leaders of the Confederates only Abū Sufyān and al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ outwardly professed Islam, but argues that this was not based upon genuine conviction.

He then gives another report in which Abū Sufyān supposedly said after the Prophet’s death:

“By God, I did not know that he was truly a prophet until I saw him at ʿArafa during the Farewell Pilgrimage preaching, with all those creatures around him. I said to myself: ‘If I possessed even half as many people as these, I would rise against him.’ He stopped his sermon, turned his face toward me, and said: ‘Then God would cast you upon your face into the Fire.’ I knew then that he was a prophet.”

In another report, Abū Sufyān said that while traveling with Hind he told her:

“Hind, how has this youth from Banū Hāshim overcome me when I am older than he and possess greater honor among my people?”

Later that day he went to the Prophet and greeted him.

The Prophet said:

“By God, God has overcome you, Abū Sufyān.”

Abū Sufyān says that he thought:

“When did Hind meet him after me and tell him? By God, no one except her heard what I said. I shall beat her severely.”

He remained silent and ignored the Prophet's remark.

When he was about to stand, the Prophet said:

"Come now, Abū Sufyān. Did you say to yourself, 'Hind informed me of what you said and so you intended to beat her'? No, by God, she did not inform me."

Abū Sufyān said:

"Then I knew that revelation came to him."

The author says that Abū Sufyān and his son Muʿāwiya belonged to those "whose hearts were to be reconciled" (*al-muʾallafa qulūbuhum*).

Muʿāwiya, he says, embraced Islam in the same manner as his father.

Both were present with the Messenger of God at Ḥunayn and fled among those who fled.

When God granted His Messenger victory and gave him spoils, the Prophet conciliated tribal leaders whose Islam had not yet become firm by giving them gifts from the booty.

He gave one hundred camels each to Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb, Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān, Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām, Ibn al-Naḍr ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Kalada, al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām, Suhayl ibn ʿAmr, al-ʿAlāʾ ibn al-Ḥāritha, Ḥuwayṭib ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā, Ṣafwān ibn Umayya, ʿUyayna ibn Ḥiṣn ibn Ḥudhayfa ibn Badr, al-Aqraʿ ibn Ḥābis al-Tamīmī, and Mālik ibn ʿAwf al-Naṣrī.

Others from Quraysh received less than one hundred.

The author identifies these as among those whose hearts were being reconciled because their Islam was not firm.

The Messenger of God gave them wealth to incline them toward Islam, since God had assigned such people a share in the Qurʾān, knowing that worldly things could sway them.

Some of his people objected.

One man said:

"Messenger of God, you gave to ʿUyayna and al-Aqraʿ but left Jaʿīl ibn Surāqa."

The Prophet replied:

"By Him in whose hand is my soul, Jaʿīl ibn Surāqa is better than the entire earth filled with men like ʿUyayna and al-Aqraʿ. But I conciliated those two for the sake of their Islam, while I entrusted Jaʿīl ibn Surāqa to his Islam."

A man of Banū Tamīm called Dhū al-Khuwayṣira said to the Messenger of God that day:

"Muḥammad, I have seen what you did today."

The Prophet asked:

“What did you see?”

He replied:

“I did not see you act justly.”

The Messenger of God became angry and said:

“Woe to you! If justice is not with me, then with whom is it?”

ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said:

“Shall I kill him, Messenger of God?”

The Prophet replied:

“Leave him. He will have followers who go so deeply into religion that they pass out of it just as an arrow passes through its target.”

Saʿd ibn ʿUbāda came to the Messenger of God that day and said:

“Messenger of God, this group of the Anṣār have found something in their hearts against you because of what you did with this booty. You distributed it among your own people and gave large gifts to the Arab tribes, while the Anṣār received nothing.”

The Prophet asked:

“And where do you stand concerning this, Saʿd?”

He replied:

“Messenger of God, I am merely one man of my people.”

The Prophet said:

“Gather your people for me.”

Saʿd gathered them.

The Messenger of God came to them, praised God, and said:

“People of the Anṣār, what is this statement that has reached me from you, and this resentment you have found in your hearts? Did I not come to you while you were astray and God guided you, poor and God enriched you, enemies and God united your hearts?”

They replied:

“Yes, Messenger of God. Favor and grace belong to God and His Messenger.”

He said:

“Will you not answer me, people of the Anṣār?”

They asked:

“What shall we answer you, Messenger of God? Favor and grace belong to God and His Messenger.”

He said:

“By God, had you wished, you could have said—and you would have spoken truth and been believed: ‘You came to us rejected and we believed you; abandoned and we supported you; expelled and we sheltered you; poor and we shared with you.’

“People of the Anṣār, have you found resentment against me because of a little worldly refuse with which I conciliated people so that they might embrace Islam, while I entrusted you to your own Islam?

“Are you not satisfied, people of the Anṣār, that others return with sheep and camels while you return to your homes with the Messenger of God?

“By Him in whose hand is Muḥammad’s soul, were it not for the Hijra I would be a man of the Anṣār. If all people traveled through one mountain pass and the Anṣār through another, I would travel through the pass of the Anṣār.

“O God, have mercy upon the Anṣār, the children of the Anṣār, and the children of the children of the Anṣār.”

They wept until their beards were wet and said:

“We are satisfied with the Messenger of God as our share and portion.”

They dispersed with their hearts content.

That same day ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd came to the Messenger of God while the Prophet was distributing those gifts and said:

“Messenger of God, I heard a man of the Anṣār say: ‘By God, these are gifts by which the face of God is not sought.’”

The Messenger of God’s face changed.

He lowered his head for a while, then said:

“May God have mercy upon Moses. He was harmed with worse than this and remained patient.”

The author repeats that Abū Sufyān and Muʿāwiya belonged to those whose hearts were being reconciled and, in his view, were among those whose Islam was not genuine but who embraced it only from fear of being killed.

He then cites Ibn Isḥāq as having listed those Meccan converts whose Islam became good: Qays ibn Makhrama, Jubayr ibn Muṭʿim, al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām, Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām, Ḥuwayṭib ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā, and Suhayl ibn ʿAmr—saying that Ibn Isḥāq did not name anyone else.

When the people of Ṭāʾif embraced Islam, they asked the Messenger of God to leave al-Lāt and al-ʿUzzā standing for a period and not destroy them, saying:

“We fear what our foolish people may do if they are demolished.”

He refused and sent Abū Sufyān to destroy them, together with al-Mughīra ibn Shuʿba.

Abū Sufyān hesitated to destroy them and remained at his property in Dhū al-Harām, regarding their demolition as a grave matter, and refused to enter Ṭāʾif.

He told al-Mughīra:

“Go yourself to your people.”

Al-Mughīra went and destroyed them.

When Abū Sufyān saw them being demolished, he kept saying:

“Alas for al-Lāt! What sorrow over her destruction.”

It is also said that he went with the Messenger of God to Ḥunayn carrying divining arrows in his quiver and using them for divination.

When the people fled from the Messenger of God that day, those with unbelief in their hearts spoke what was within them.

Abū Sufyān said:

“This defeat will not stop until the sea.”

He was among the first to flee.

By contrast, Abū Sufyān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib remained steadfast that day with the Messenger of God among those who stood firm.

The Transgressor (*al-Fāsiq*)

Among them was al-Walīd ibn ʿUqba ibn Abī Muʿayṭ ibn Abī ʿAmr ibn Umayya.

The Messenger of God killed his father at Badr, as already mentioned.

When ʿUqba had asked:

“Muḥammad, who will care for my children?”

the Prophet replied:

“The Fire.”

Al-Walīd later outwardly professed Islam once domination overtook him, while—according to the author—hostility toward the Messenger of God remained in his heart because the Prophet had killed his father.

The Messenger of God appointed him to collect alms from Banū al-Muṣṭaliq.

He returned and said:

“They withheld the alms from me.”

They had not withheld anything; rather, the text says, he lied about them.

The Messenger of God ordered weapons prepared and intended to go out against them.

God then revealed:

“O you who believe, if a transgressor comes to you with news, verify it, lest you harm a people in ignorance and afterward regret what you have done.”

The author says that God thereby explicitly called him *fāsiq*, “transgressor.”

The Messenger of God therefore refrained from attacking Banū al-Muṣṭaliq.

When they felt the Prophet’s envoy had been delayed, they came themselves carrying their alms.

He questioned them concerning what al-Walīd had said.

They denied it and swore before the Messenger of God that it was false.

The text then says that he cursed al-Walīd.

A dispute later occurred between al-Walīd and ʿAlī, peace be upon him.

Al-Walīd said to him:

“I turn back the battalion and strike the head of the fierce champion more readily than you.”

The author says that God revealed concerning the two:

“Is one who is a believer like one who is a transgressor? They are not equal.”

Thus, according to the author, God called him a *fāsiq* in two places in His Book.

ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān appointed al-Walīd governor of Kūfa.

Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ had held that office before him.

ʿUthmān removed Saʿd and appointed al-Walīd.

When al-Walīd arrived, Saʿd said to him:

“Have you become more intelligent since we knew you, or have we become fools since you left?”

Al-Walīd replied:

“We have not become wiser than you, nor have you become fools after us. The people have merely preferred you less than themselves in the exercise of their authority.”

Saʿd replied:

“You have spoken truth.”

Al-Walīd remained governor of Kūfa and once led the people in prayer while drunk.

After finishing he turned toward them and asked:

“Shall I give you more?”

Al-Ḥuṭayʾa said concerning him:

Al-Ḥuṭayʾa shall testify when he meets his Lord
that al-Walīd has the greatest claim to excuse.
They released your reins when you began to run;
had they left your reins, you would have continued running.

Other verses were added, not by al-Ḥuṭayʾa:

When their prayer was complete he called out,
“Shall I give you more drunkenness?” not knowing what he said.
Had they asked him for more, he would have increased them
until he gave them more than ten.

When news of his behavior reached ʿUthmān and witnesses testified against him, ʿUthmān removed him.

Al-Walīd was ʿUthmān’s maternal brother: his mother was Arwā daughter of Kurayz ibn Ḥabīb ibn ʿAbd Shams, also mother of ʿUthmān.

When al-Walīd reached him, ʿUthmān put him in a house and ordered that the prescribed punishment be carried out, since he had no way to avoid it.

Whenever someone entered to flog him, al-Walīd would say:

“I adjure you by God not to sever my kinship and cause the Commander of the Believers”—meaning ʿUthmān—“to become angry with you.”

Whoever heard this would leave him.

When ʿAlī, peace be upon him, saw this, he became angry at the suspension of God’s prescribed punishment.

He took the whip and entered, accompanied by al-Ḥasan, peace be upon him.

Al-Walīd said the same thing to him.

Al-Ḥasan said:

“He speaks truth, father. Let someone else carry it out.”

ʿAlī pushed al-Ḥasan in the chest, took the whip, and administered the prescribed punishment to al-Walīd himself.

Among the matters for which people reproached ʿUthmān, according to the text, were his appointment of al-Walīd over Kūfa after removing Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, and his appointment of ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿĀmir ibn Kurayz over Baṣra after removing Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī.

ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿĀmir was ʿUthmān’s maternal cousin; his father ʿĀmir was brother of Arwā, ʿUthmān’s mother.

The reason for his appointment is said to have been that Yazīd ibn Kharshaba ibn Ḍirār al-Ḍabbī came as a delegate to ʿUthmān and said:

“Is there no lowly person among you whom you can elevate, nor any poor man whom you can enrich? You deliberately gave half your authority to this Ashʿarī.”

ʿUthmān removed Abū Mūsā and appointed his cousin ʿAbd Allāh.

People then said:

“ʿAbd Allāh has monopolized authority for his kin.”

Al-Walīd ibn ʿUqba also said to some member of Banū Hāshim:

Banū Hāshim, what lies between us and you
is like a crack in solid rock which no repairer can mend.

After the killing of ʿUthmān, his maternal brother, al-Walīd urged his own brother ʿUmāra to seek vengeance for him, saying:

If my expectation of my maternal brother is correct,
ʿUmāra seeks neither blood-feud nor vengeance,
remaining while the sons of ʿAffān are before him
encamped between al-Khawarnaq and the bridge.
Know that the best of men after three
is the slain man of al-Tujīb who came from Egypt.

Abū al-Hayyāj ʿAbd Allāh ibn Abī Sufyān ibn al-Ḥārith answered him—or, according to another attribution, al-Faḍl ibn ʿAbbās ibn ʿUtba ibn Abī Lahab:

You desired a matter to which you neither belong nor have any claim.
Where is the man of Ṣaffūriyya, and where is Ibn Dhakwān beside ʿAmr?
As the daughter of a donkey is joined to her mother
and imagines another to be her father when the stranger casts her away,
so you are among those whose lineage is assigned and claimed
with as much proximity as the elephant has to the offspring of the hyrax.

Al-Walīd also wrote to Muʿāwiya urging him to fight ʿAlī:

Convey to Muʿāwiya ibn Ḥarb:
you are blameworthy despite being a trusted brother.
You have passed the age like one stunned and afflicted,
remaining in Damascus without moving.
Every caravan from Iraq promises you the caliphate
as their camels hasten with their burdens.
You and your correspondence with ʿAlī
are like a tanner working after the hide has already spoiled.
You possess the means of good—carry us against them,
for the seeker of blood-vengeance is harsh.
Your people in Medina have been destroyed
and lie fallen like dry stalks.

When Muʿāwiya eventually entered Kūfa and ascended the pulpit, he asked:

“Where is Abū Wahb?”

meaning al-Walīd ibn ʿUqba.

Al-Walīd rose.

Muʿāwiya said:

“Recite to me what you composed.”

He recited the verses.

Muʿāwiya replied with a line:

Many a man marvels at the patience he sees in us,
though if war were made beautiful to him he would not stir.

The author then says that Abū Muʿayṭ, the grandfather of al-Walīd ibn ʿUqba, was a wine-seller in the Age of Ignorance.

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd was in Kūfa during al-Walīd's governorship.

When reports of ʿUthmān's conduct reached him and he observed what he observed, whenever people gathered around him he would say:

"The truest speech is the Book of God, the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, the worst matters are innovations, every innovation is an innovation in religion, every innovation is misguidance, every misguidance is unbelief, and every unbelief is in the Fire."

When he repeated this often, al-Walīd spoke privately to him:

"ʿAbd Allāh, either stop speaking these words or leave us."

Ibn Masʿūd replied:

"I shall not cease speaking the truth."

Al-Walīd wrote to ʿUthmān concerning him.

ʿUthmān wrote back:

"If he abandons his words, well; otherwise remove him."

Al-Walīd sent ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥubays al-Adhrī and another man to Ibn Masʿūd by night.

Some of Ibn Masʿūd's companions were present.

He positioned them where they could hear and admitted the two men.

They said:

"The governor conveys his greetings and says: your words stir the people against their Imam. Either abandon them or leave us."

Ibn Masʿūd replied:

"I say neither evil nor wrongdoing."

They said:

"That is so. But we have informed you of the governor's position, and a letter from the Commander of the Believers has reached him. He will not leave you alone unless you abandon your words or depart."

Ibn Masʿūd said:

“Then I shall leave.”

The author says that he was therefore expelled from Kūfa for speaking these words—words which, in the author’s view, no Muslim knowing God and His Messenger could condemn—and emphasizes Ibn Masʿūd’s companionship and standing.

According to this account, al-Walīd exiled him precisely because he spoke the truth, called to it, and commanded it.

When the people of Kūfa later came to ʿUthmān complaining of al-Walīd’s conduct, ʿUthmān denied their claims.

They said:

“Then send someone trustworthy from your own side to investigate what we have told you.”

He sent a client of his named Ḥumrān ibn Abān.

Ḥumrān investigated and found the matter to be as they had said.

On his way back to ʿUthmān, he met Ṭalḥa ibn ʿUbayd Allāh, who was leaving Medina for some property.

Ṭalḥa asked:

“What news do you bring, Ḥumrān?”

He replied:

“By God, I found what the people said about him to be true,”

and recounted the matter.

Ḥumrān then entered upon ʿUthmān and reported the same.

ʿUthmān said:

“Conceal this concerning him. If anyone asks you, say: ‘I found nothing of what they alleged. It is all false.’”

Ḥumrān withdrew.

Ṭalḥa then entered while Ḥumrān was still there.

ʿUthmān said to Ṭalḥa:

“We sent this man and he found everything the people alleged against al-Walīd to be false. What punishment should be given to those who lied about him, when no one else reports such things?”

Ṭalḥa exclaimed:

“What a bereavement! Did you not tell me such-and-such, Ḥumrān?”

Ḥumrān replied:

“Yes. It is as I told you. By God, He is more worthy that we prefer Him.”

ʿUthmān became ashamed before Ṭalḥa and angry with Ḥumrān.

He swore that Ḥumrān would not remain with him in the same city.

Ḥumrān therefore moved to Baṣra.

When the men who had complained heard what happened, they returned to ʿUthmān.

He disregarded Ḥumrān’s statement and said:

“You are merely claimants. Produce witnesses other than yourselves.”

They brought witnesses whose testimony he could not reject.

Only then did he remove al-Walīd, order the prescribed punishment carried out, and appoint Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ in his place.

Saʿīd governed Kūfa for six years.

The source says that his conduct was worse than al-Walīd’s.

It was said that the first thing he did upon arriving in Kūfa was to enter the mosque mounted until he reached the pulpit.

He called for a jar of water and said:

“Wash it.”

The pulpit was washed while he remained standing upon his mount.

Then he ascended and addressed the people.

When the people repeatedly complained to ʿUthmān about him, ʿUthmān summoned him.

Saʿīd returned accompanied by men whom he had satisfied so that they would speak well of him, and they did so.

ʿUthmān sent him back.

News of his return reached the people of Kūfa.

Mālik al-Ashtar al-Nakhaʿī rose, ascended the pulpit of Kūfa, praised God, and said:

“You Arabs were once the worst of people in religion, worldly condition, and livelihood. A man among you would feed his dog and kill his child; he would raid his neighbor and return home to find his own family raided.

“Then God sent among you His Messenger Muḥammad, may God bless him and his family, and revealed to him a Book in which He made lawful what is lawful and forbidden what is forbidden, established practices and prescribed laws.

“The Messenger of God acted according to God’s Book until God took him.

“God has made truth known to us through His Book and the Sunna of His Messenger. Shall we now, after knowing this, turn back upon our heels?

“You know the conduct of Ibn al-ʿĀṣ among you, and he has now been sent back to you. Whoever believes God has a right over him should go out against him.”

He descended.

The people of Kūfa went out armed and equipped.

They met Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ at Wādī al-Sibāʿ.

When the advance parties met him they cried:

“Where is the wretched man?”

and sought him out.

Saʿīd turned back to ʿUthmān and informed him of what had happened.

ʿUthmān ordered him to remain there and wrote to the people of Kūfa:

“You shall have what you desire.”

They replied:

“Appoint Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī over us and Ḥudhayfa over al-Madāʾin.”

He granted their request and sought to reconcile them.

The Two Exiles

Among them were **the two exiles** (*al-ṭarīdān*).

The first was al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ ibn Umayya ibn ʿAbd Shams, father of Marwān. The Messenger of God—may God bless him and his family—cursed him while Marwān was still in his loins and banished him to Dahlak, in the land of Abyssinia. He remained in exile throughout the lifetime of the Messenger of God and during the caliphates of Abū Bakr and

ʿUmar. When ʿUthmān assumed power, he brought him back and gave him one hundred thousand dirhams. This was among the matters for which people reproached ʿUthmān.

Al-Ḥakam was among those most openly distinguished by their hatred of the Messenger of God. One day he mocked the Prophet by imitating his manner of walking, whereupon—according to the text—he was afflicted as punishment with dislocation of his limbs and thereafter walked with a contorted gait.

A poet said concerning Banū Umayya:

There is no veil among you—only arrogance,
hatred of the Prophet and of the martyrs,
between a mocking cripple, an exile,
and one slain beneath the curse of the people of heaven.

By "the martyrs" the author means ʿAlī, Jaʿfar, and Ḥamza, peace be upon them; and by "the mocking cripple" he means al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ.

One day the Messenger of God turned around while al-Ḥakam was behind him. The Prophet was speaking, and he saw al-Ḥakam twisting his cheeks and mimicking his speech. He said to him:

"Then remain like that."

The Messenger of God was once heard pronouncing a curse.

He was asked:

"Messenger of God, whom are you cursing?"

He replied:

"Al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ. He came and pressed himself against the wall while I was with my family, and when I looked at him he grimaced in my face."

Then he said:

"It is as though I can see his sons ascending and descending from my pulpit."

For this reason al-Ḥasan, peace be upon him, said to Marwān:

"The Messenger of God cursed your father while you were still in his loins."

ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr likewise said to Marwān while leaning against the Kaʿba:

"By the Lord of this Sacred House and this Sacred City, al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ and his offspring were cursed upon the tongue of the Messenger of God."

When Muʿāwiya wrote to Marwān instructing him to obtain allegiance for Yazīd, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr said:

“By God, you have turned it into a Heraclean monarchy—you pledge allegiance to your own sons.”

Marwān told those present:

“He is the one concerning whom God said: ‘And the one who said to his parents, “Fie upon you both.”’”

When this reached ʿĀʾisha, she said to Marwān:

“By God, he is not the one meant by what you said. If I wished, I could name the one concerned. But God cursed your father through the tongue of His Messenger while you were still in his loins; therefore you are a fragment of God’s curse.”

The text further transmits that when the Messenger of God banished al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ he said:

“If you see him even beneath the curtains of the Kaʿba, kill him.”

The second exile was Muʿāwiya ibn al-Mughīra ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ ibn Umayya ibn ʿAbd Shams, maternal grandfather of ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān.

Thus, the author says, both the paternal and maternal grandfathers of ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān were men banished by the Messenger of God.

This Muʿāwiya ibn al-Mughīra was among those who hated the Messenger of God and openly displayed hostility toward him. The Prophet banished him and gave him three days to depart, declaring his blood forfeit if he remained afterward. He lingered in his error and did not depart, so the Messenger of God sent ʿAlī and ʿAmmār after him, and they killed him.

Among the Causes of the Killing of ʿUthmān

As for al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ, the Messenger of God banished him together with his family and children.

ʿUthmān attempted during the Prophet’s lifetime to persuade the Messenger of God to allow them to return, but the Prophet refused and spoke harshly to him concerning it.

After the death of the Messenger of God, ʿUthmān and Banū Umayya asked Abū Bakr to restore them.

He rejected their request and said:

“I will not be one who gives refuge to someone whom the Messenger of God banished and expelled.”

They then made the same request of ʿUmar.

He answered similarly and rebuked them.

When ʿUthmān became caliph, however, he brought them back and gave them refuge.

When the matters introduced under his rule became numerous, the Companions of the Messenger of God wrote to Muslims in various regions:

“You went out to establish the religion of God, but the religion of God has been changed behind you. Return.”

The first to arrive were the people of Egypt.

They came to the Mosque of the Messenger of God while some of the Companions were still present and explained why they had come and what they held against ʿUthmān, enumerating his actions.

ʿAlī said to them:

“Do not act hastily. Go to him and mention these matters to him first; then afterward decide upon your course.”

They said:

“Come with us so that you may hear what we say and what he says, and know which of us has the stronger claim to truth.”

ʿAlī replied:

“One who knows better than I do will witness between you and him.”

They asked:

“Who?”

He said:

“God is between you and him.”

They replied:

“You have spoken truth, and well have you spoken.”

They went to ʿUthmān.

He welcomed them, although he knew why they had come, and asked about their circumstances.

They began recounting the changes and innovations for which they blamed him, one matter after another.

He would withdraw from each and promise repentance until they came to the affair of al-Ḥakam: the people considered his restoration an especially grave matter because it contradicted the command of the Messenger of God.

On this point ʿUthmān refused to reverse himself.

They left and reported what he had said.

A number of Companions then came to him and said:

"You have brought back these men whom the Messenger of God banished. We remind you of God, Islam, and your return to God—if you believe in a return and resurrection. You will be questioned concerning this and everything else you have done. Expel them as the Messenger of God expelled them and do not oppose his command. You know the position of your two predecessors concerning them, and no one even hoped to have them restored under either of them."

ʿUthmān replied:

"You know their position with me through kinship and right. The Messenger of God has died. He expelled them only because of a statement concerning al-Ḥakam that reached him, and he had given me hope that he might allow them to return. Their presence will not harm you. There are people worse than they are."

The Companions left him. He gave them no concession in the matter and did not change his view.

ʿUthmān then sent to ʿAlī:

"You see why these people have come. They seek only to kill me, and I am your cousin. People have shot at me from a single bow. Deal gently with them and turn them away. I pledge before God that I shall return to whatever you desire."

He sent a similar message to ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, reminding him of their kinship.

ʿAlī met the delegation and said:

"The man has withdrawn from many things for which the Muslims blamed him and has promised to withdraw from the rest. The reward for what you came to accomplish has already been written for you."

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ said something similar.

The delegation therefore departed.

ʿAlī and ʿAmr went to ʿUthmān and informed him that they had left.

ʿUthmān went to the mosque and addressed the people concerning the delegation, claiming that they had come because false reports had reached them, but that once they realized their falsity they departed knowing them to be false.

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ rose from one side of the mosque and said:

“Fear God, ʿUthmān. Abandon this foolish wrangling. Follow the course of truth and repent to God for what you have done, for nothing else will satisfy God with you or satisfy the Muslims with you.”

ʿUthmān replied:

“And you are here, son of al-Nābigha?”

Then he faced the qibla, raised his hands, and said:

“O God, I repent to You for what I have done and seek Your forgiveness.”

The men who had returned from military expeditions then departed again for their posts.

When the Egyptian delegation reached Ayla, a rider approached them whose path seemed suspicious.

They seized and searched him and found with him a letter from ʿUthmān to ʿAbd Allāh ibn Saʿd ibn Abī Sarḥ, his governor in Egypt, ordering him to kill them.

They therefore turned back carrying the letter.

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿUdays al-Balawī, who was among them, said:

They turned back from the uplands,
clothed in rings of iron,
seeking God’s right concerning al-Walīd,
Ibn ʿAffān, and Saʿīd,
and al-Ḥakam, the crippled exile.

The letter was in Marwān’s handwriting.

ʿUthmān had employed him as secretary.

It bore ʿUthmān’s seal and was carried by one of his couriers riding one of his camels.

They informed the Companions of the Messenger of God and the wider population.

They recognized the handwriting, seal, messenger, and camel.

ʿUthmān denied the letter and swore that he had not ordered it.

He ascended the pulpit to address the people and offer an explanation, but they pelted him with stones from every side until he fell unconscious and had to be carried away.

The people turned against him except for a few of Banū Umayya.

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ withdrew to his estate in Palestine when he realized ʿUthmān would be killed.

ʿAlī came to visit ʿUthmān and ask after him, but some of the Banū Umayya who were present made remarks implying that ʿAlī had aided those opposing him.

ʿAlī left angry, saying:

“By God, were it not for my position, I would cut off that in which his two eyes are set.”

He then withdrew from the people.

The source says that the people rose against ʿUthmān collectively, with Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr foremost among them, and he remained besieged until he was killed.

The author concludes that one cause of this was his restoration of al-Ḥakam, his sons, and his family after the Messenger of God had banished them.

Reports Concerning Banū Umayya and Their Partisans as Haters of the Messenger of God

The author says that trustworthy transmitters related through numerous routes—whose chains he omits in keeping with his stated method—that one morning the Messenger of God appeared troubled and sad.

He was asked why and replied:

“Last night I saw in a dream the young men of Banū al-Ḥakam ascending and descending from my pulpit. I said, ‘My Lord, during my lifetime?’ I was told, ‘No, but after you.’”

The text then connects this with the Qurʾānic verse:

“We made the vision We showed you only as a trial for mankind, and the accursed tree in the Qurʾān; We frighten them, but it increases them only in great transgression.”

It is also related from ʿUmar that he spoke of renewed striving at the end of time.

When asked when that would occur, he replied:

“When Banū Umayya are the rulers and Banū al-Mughīra the ministers.”

The Messenger of God is reported to have said:

“When Banū Abī al-ʿĀṣ reach thirty men, they will make the religion of God a means of deception, His wealth something circulated among themselves, and His servants slaves.”

It is also related that he saw Banū Umayya upon his pulpits and was distressed, but was told that it was merely worldly power being given to them.

ʿAlī is reported to have said:

“Everything has a blight that corrupts it, and the blight of religion is Banū Umayya.”

The text continues with a series of reports directed against Banū Umayya.

It states that they were among those most hated by the Messenger of God.

Muḥammad al-Bāqir is quoted as interpreting the Qurʾānic phrase “that you may warn thereby a contentious people” as referring to Banū Umayya.

The Messenger of God is also reported to have said:

“One of the tyrants of Banū Umayya will surely suffer a nosebleed upon this pulpit of mine.”

The text says that ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ later suffered such a nosebleed until blood ran down the steps.

A sermon is attributed to ʿAlī in which he condemns Banū Umayya in extreme terms.

A report from al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī likewise recounts a dispute with an Umayyad man in the Prophet’s mosque, followed by an eschatological condemnation of Banū Umayya.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is quoted as saying:

“There is no household in which God has not placed some noble person or some one who will be saved—except Banū Umayya, in whom God placed neither a noble one nor one who will be saved.”

Abū Bakra is likewise represented as declaring that his criticism of Muʿāwiya and Ziyād concerned not merely their worldly administration but, in his words, that:

“The people openly disbelieved.”

The text also attributes to the Messenger of God:

“The leaders of unbelief are five; among them are Muʿāwiya and ʿAmr.”

And to Ibn Masʿūd:

“Five men of Quraysh are astray and lead others astray,”

among whom he is said to have included Muʿāwiya and ʿAmr.

Ḥudhayfa al-Yamān is then quoted concerning the Night of al-ʿAqaba.

He says that he was leading the Prophet's mount while ʿAmmār drove it from behind when twelve riders appeared above the mountain pass, attempting to startle the Prophet's mount.

Ḥudhayfa began striking at their faces.

The Prophet told him:

"Leave them; God will suffice you against them."

According to this version, the Prophet afterward named them individually and said:

"These are the hypocrites in this world and the next."

The source then claims that among them were Abū Sufyān, Muʿāwiya, ʿUtba, ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, Abū al-Aʿwar al-Sulamī, al-Mughīra ibn Shuʿba, and a group from Banū Umayya.

A report from Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq says that when the Messenger of God returned from the funeral of his son al-Qāsim he passed ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ and al-ʿĀṣ ibn Wāʾil.

One said to the other:

"By God, I hate him."

The other replied:

"Leave him. He has now become cut off,"

meaning because his son had died.

The source connects this with Sūrat al-Kawthar:

"Surely We have given you al-Kawthar. So pray to your Lord and sacrifice. Surely the one who hates you is the one cut off."

It further reports that ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ composed seventy verses of satire against the Messenger of God, whereupon the Prophet said:

"O God, I do not know how to compose poetry, so curse him once for every verse."

The author then introduces a series of hostile genealogical and sexual accusations concerning ʿAmr's mother al-Nābigha. These are transmitted as polemical *mathālib* and should be understood as accusations within the source rather than independently established biographical facts.

Ibn al-Kalbī, Ibn Isḥāq, and al-Haytham ibn ʿAdī are cited as saying that al-Nābigha, mother of ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, was one of the women publicly associated with prostitution in pre-Islamic Arabia, who allegedly raised flags at markets such as ʿUkāẓ, Majanna, and Dhū al-Majāz to advertise themselves.

The source says that al-ʿĀṣ ibn Wāʾil had relations with her and that ʿAmr was born from this union.

Ḥassān ibn Thābit is quoted as satirizing him:

As for the son of al-Nābigha—I mean the mongrel—
I have turned against him a sharp and piercing tongue.
Why did your mother turn away from men of nobility
toward Judhayma after the trace had disappeared?
She spent the night while Milḥān worked upon her
beside al-Ḥajūn, neither tiring nor ceasing.

The author adds that Milḥān was a client of Khuzāʿa and likewise allegedly had relations with al-Nābigha.

A still more elaborate hostile genealogy follows, claiming that several Qurashī men had intercourse with her during the same period, that she conceived ʿAmr, and that al-ʿĀṣ ibn Wāʾil and Abū Sufyān disputed his paternity.

According to the story, she assigned the child to al-ʿĀṣ because he financially supported her daughters.

The author quotes the taunt:

“The freeborn men of Quraysh disputed over him, but their butcher prevailed over them.”

The text then reports that Salmān al-Fārisī said after people gave allegiance to Abū Bakr:

“You have done a thing by which you have emboldened the sons of the accursed.”

ʿAlī is quoted while fighting Muʿāwiya as saying:

“O community of Muslims: ‘Fight the leaders of unbelief, for they have no oaths, so that perhaps they may desist.’ By the Lord of the Kaʿba and the Sacred House, they are these men.”

It is also related that ʿAlī said:

“I saw the Prophet in a dream. I began to weep and said, ‘Messenger of God, what I have suffered from your community after you!’

“He said, ‘Do not weep; raise your head.’

“I raised my head and saw Muʿāwiya and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ suspended while their heads were being smashed with stones. I took a great stone and began smashing their heads with it.”

The author says that ʿAlī related this dream to the people fifteen days before his death.

ʿAlī is also represented as interpreting the verses:

“Have you not seen those who exchanged God’s blessing for unbelief and caused their people to dwell in the abode of ruin—Hell, into which they shall enter? What an evil resting place. And they set up rivals to God to lead others astray from His path…”

as referring to “the two most wicked clans of Quraysh,” Banū Umayya and Banū al-Mughīra.

He is quoted as saying:

“As for Banū al-Mughīra, God cut them off at Badr; as for Banū Umayya, He allowed them enjoyment for a time.”

The Messenger of God is also made to say that Gabriel told him:

“Muḥammad, whenever you planted a banner in any place, Iblīs planted his banner there as well. When I planted my banner among Banū Hāshim, he planted his among Banū Umayya. He continued opposing me at every station until, when I descended among you, he descended among Banū Umayya.”

The Virtues of the Commander of the Faithful ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib and the Reproaches of Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān

The Virtues and Merits of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib

The author says that if he were to enumerate fully everything transmitted concerning ʿAlī’s virtues and expand upon it, the book would exceed the limits he had established because of the quantity and breadth of the material.

The same applies, he says, to the reproaches and disgraces attributed to Muʿāwiya.

He therefore intends to mention only selected aspects sufficient to represent the whole.

He stresses that this claim of abbreviation is genuine: works many times larger than the present book had already been compiled solely concerning the virtues of ʿAlī.

The Conversion of ʿAlī

The author recalls that Abū Ṭālib, paternal uncle of the Messenger of God, took the Prophet into his care after the death of his father and grandfather, acting toward him with protection, upbringing, defense, assistance, and tribal zeal.

When the Messenger of God reached adulthood, he took ʿAlī from his father Abū Ṭālib into his own household, in order to repay Abū Ṭālib for what he had done for him when he himself was young.

The Prophet therefore assumed ʿAlī's care and upbringing and gave him the position of a father toward a son and of a full brother toward his brother.

ʿAlī grew up in the household of the Messenger of God, learned his conduct from him, and received instruction from him.

According to the author, ʿAlī never worshiped an idol and never associated anything with God even for the blink of an eye.

When God honored His Messenger with the prophetic mission, ʿAlī was the first male of his community whom he called to Islam.

The Prophet told him of the matter privately.

ʿAlī said:

"Give me tonight to consider."

He intended to consult his father Abū Ṭālib.

The Messenger of God replied:

"If that is what you wish, do so; but it is a trust with you."

ʿAlī answered:

"If it is a trust, then what have I to wait for? I testify that there is no god but God and that you are His Messenger."

Thus, the text says, he believed in God and His Messenger while the people were still polytheists, and accepted the Prophet while they denied him.

He was therefore "the first of the believers in faith and the foremost of the foremost in precedence."

When the verse:

"Warn your nearest kindred"

was revealed, the Messenger of God assembled Banū ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib—forty men.

The source describes the miraculous sufficiency of a small amount of food and milk for all of them.

Then the Prophet said:

"O sons of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, obey me and you shall become kings and rulers of the earth. God has never sent a prophet without appointing for him a Legatee, an heir, a vizier, and a brother. Which of you will be my Legatee, my vizier, and my brother?"

They remained silent.

He offered it to them one by one and none accepted.

When he came to ʿAlī, who was the youngest, ʿAlī said:

“Yes, I shall, O Messenger of God.”

He replied:

“You, ʿAlī.”

They departed mocking Abū Ṭālib and saying:

“Today your son has been placed above you.”

Abū Lahab said:

“If you had no evidence for his sorcery except what you have just seen, it would be sufficient: he brought you the leg of a sheep and a cup of milk, and it satisfied and filled all of you.”

The Legatee and the Vizier

The author states that ʿAlī was the Legatee (*waṣī*) and vizier of the Messenger of God.

When the Prophet established brotherhood among his Companions but initially left ʿAlī aside, ʿAlī said:

“Messenger of God, I remain without a brother.”

The Prophet replied:

“I held you back for myself. You are my brother in this world and the next, my Legatee and my successor after me, and the best one I shall leave behind from my Household. You are to me in the position of Aaron to Moses, except that there is no prophet after me.”

The author adds that Aaron had been Moses’ legatee and successor among his people.

The text then interprets:

“Is one who stands upon a clear proof from his Lord, followed by a witness from Him…”

as referring first to the Messenger of God and then to ʿAlī as the witness.

The Prophet is quoted:

“ʿAlī is from me and I am from him.”

The author takes this as demonstrating that ʿAlī was the witness over the community after the Prophet.

The text then recounts ʿAlī's role at the Hijra: sleeping in the Prophet's bed when Quraysh intended to assassinate him, remaining in Mecca to discharge his debts and return deposits entrusted to him, and later joining him after completing those tasks.

It also states that while the Prophet remained in the cave, ʿAlī brought him food and news and purchased what he required for the journey.

The source next relates the tradition of the doors opening into the Prophet's mosque.

All were ordered closed except the door of ʿAlī.

When members of the Prophet's family objected, he said:

"By God, I did not close your doors and open ʿAlī's door; God did that."

It then summarizes ʿAlī's martial exploits: Badr, Uḥud, Ḥunayn, and the Trench, emphasizing his defense of the Messenger of God when others fled and his killing of ʿAmr ibn ʿAbd Wudd.

At Khaybar, the text says, the Muslims had been repulsed.

The Prophet sent for ʿAlī although he was suffering from an eye ailment, spat into his eyes, and he recovered.

The Prophet said:

"Tomorrow I shall give the banner to a man who loves God and His Messenger, and whom God and His Messenger love. He will not return until God grants victory at his hands."

He gave the banner to ʿAlī.

The text says that ʿAlī conquered Khaybar and tore the gate of its fortress from its place with his own hand, and that afterward forty men together were required to lift it.

The author then enumerates ʿAlī's judicial knowledge, stating that the Prophet said:

"The best judge among you is ʿAlī."

The Prophet appointed him judge over Yemen and is also quoted as saying:

"I enjoin whoever believes in me and affirms me to accept the *walāya* of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, for his *walāya* is my *walāya*. It is a command my Lord commanded me and a covenant He entrusted to me."

The author next cites the event of *mubāhala* with the Christians:

“Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves…”

The Messenger of God came out with ʿAlī, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn.

The Christian scholars refused the mutual imprecation after seeing what the source calls the signs of prophethood.

The text also links the same group with the Verse of Purification:

“God only desires to remove defilement from you, People of the House, and to purify you completely.”

It then recounts the mission of proclaiming *Barāʾa*: the Prophet first sent Abū Bakr, but according to this account revelation then informed him:

“None shall convey on your behalf except you or ʿAlī.”

He sent ʿAlī to take the proclamation and deliver it at Mecca.

Another episode concerns a dispute over precedence: one man boasted of custodianship of the Kaʿba, al-ʿAbbās of providing water to the pilgrims, while ʿAlī boasted of precedence in faith and striving in God’s path.

The source connects this with:

“Do you make the giving of water to pilgrims and maintenance of the Sacred Mosque equal to one who believes in God and the Last Day and strives in the path of God? They are not equal before God.”

The Prophet married his daughter Fāṭima to ʿAlī.

The text quotes him as saying:

“I did not marry her to him upon earth until God married her to him in heaven.”

It adds that God made the Prophet’s descendants come through Fāṭima and ʿAlī, and that the Messenger of God has no descendants through any other child.

The text further records:

“The first to enter Paradise is ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.”

When someone reminded the Prophet that he had elsewhere said no prophet or community would enter before him, the Prophet replied:

“Yes. ʿAlī is the bearer of my banner in this world and the bearer of the Banner of Praise on the Day of Resurrection. He will enter Paradise before me with it, for the banner-bearer walks before the people.”

The Prophet is also quoted:

“I am the Seal of the Prophets and you are the Seal of the Legatees.”

ʿAlī is then identified as one of the Five Companions of the Cloak: Muḥammad, ʿAlī, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn.

The text relates the celebrated cry at Uḥud:

“There is no youth but ʿAlī and no sword but Dhū al-Fiqār.”

Gabriel is said to have remarked to the Messenger of God:

“Muḥammad, this is true self-sacrifice.”

The Prophet replied:

“He is from me and I am from him.”

Gabriel said:

“And I am from both of you.”

The author then turns to Ghadīr Khumm.

At the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Messenger of God gathered the people, stood to address them, praised God, placed ʿAlī beside him, and said:

“Do you not know that I have a greater claim over you than you have over yourselves?”

They replied:

“Yes, indeed.”

He said:

“Whoever has me as his *mawlā*, ʿAlī is his *mawlā*.”

He took ʿAlī’s hand and raised it until the whiteness of their armpits could be seen, then said:

“O God, befriend whoever befriends him, oppose whoever opposes him, support whoever supports him, abandon whoever abandons him, and cause the truth to turn with him wherever he turns. Have I conveyed?”

They replied:

“Yes.”

He said:

“O God, bear witness.”

The author next says that ʿAlī was commanded to fight the *Nā kithūn* (“those who broke their pledge”), the *Qāsiṭūn* (“the unjust”), and the *Māriqūn* (“those who passed out of the religion”).

He cites the Qurʾānic commands to struggle against unbelievers and hypocrites and to fight the transgressing faction among two groups of believers.

He then states that the majority of Muslim jurists regarded the forces that fought ʿAlī at the Camel, Nahrawān, and under Muʿāwiya as the rebellious party, while ʿAlī and his adherents constituted the party of justice.

The editor cites statements attributed to al-Shāfiʿī, Abū Ḥanīfa, Ibn al-ʿArabī, and al-Bāqillānī to the effect that legal rules concerning warfare against Muslim rebels were learned from ʿAlī’s conduct.

The text then enumerates further merits: ʿAlī’s identifying Dhū al-Thudayya among the slain Khārijites according to a description transmitted from the Prophet; the report of the sun being held back so that he could pray ʿaṣr; his receiving “a thousand gates of knowledge, each opening a thousand gates”; and his statement:

“Whenever I asked the Messenger of God, he answered me; and when I remained silent, he began speaking to me.”

The Prophet is quoted as saying:

“You were the first of people to believe in me, the last to remain with me at my covenant, and the first to shake my hand on the Day of Resurrection.”

According to the source, the Prophet entrusted his testament and weapons to ʿAlī, made him responsible for his family and community, and died while his head was in ʿAlī’s hands.

ʿAlī then washed his body.

The text says that an unseen hand—identified as Gabriel’s—helped turn the Prophet’s body, and that a voice instructed ʿAlī not to remove the Prophet’s shirt and not to place him face downward.

When people did not know how to conduct the funeral prayer, ʿAlī said:

“The Messenger of God is an Imam in death as he was in life.”

He therefore admitted people in groups of ten; they prayed and departed.

Further sayings are cited:

“None loves you except a believer and none hates you except a hypocrite.”

And:

“We used to recognize the hypocrites among us by their hatred of ʿAlī.”

And:

“You are the leader of the believers, while wealth is the leader of the hypocrites.”

And:

“Your war is my war and your peace is my peace. Whoever fights you is as though he fought God and His Messenger. I never asked God for anything for myself without asking the same for you.”

The Prophet is also quoted as telling ʿAlī that during the Ascension every heaven instructed him:

“Muḥammad, take good care of your Legatee ʿAlī.”

He then says he saw written upon the leg of the Throne:

“There is no god but God; Muḥammad is the Messenger of God. I strengthened him through ʿAlī and gave him victory through him.”

The text next recounts a threat made by the Prophet to the people of Ṭāʾif:

“By Him in whose hand is my soul, either you shall submit to God through His religion, establish prayer, and pay the alms, or I shall send against you a man whose obedience is like obedience to me and whose disobedience is like disobedience to me. He is the Gate of God through which one comes, and he will kill you to the last man.”

He then pointed to ʿAlī and said:

“It is this man.”

The Prophet is also quoted:

“My successor among you is the one repairing the sandal,”

while ʿAlī was sitting in the courtyard mending the Prophet’s shoe.

Another report describes ʿAlī counting 366 angels who came to greet the Messenger of God, after which the Prophet told him:

“You have spoken truth, ʿAlī. These are signs of the Legatee.”

The author concludes his enumeration with further sayings attributed to the Prophet, among them a description of ʿAlī on the Day of Resurrection as the one who discharges the Prophet’s obligations, fulfills his promises, and bears the repository of his knowledge and his Banner of Praise.

He also quotes:

“Your honor is part of my honor; whoever insults you has insulted me.”

And:

“After me you will encounter preference being given to others over you,”

for which the Prophet promised him Paradise.

The author then says:

“These are the virtues of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.”

Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān

The author now turns, as promised, to what he describes as some of the *mathālib* of Muʿāwiya.

He says that the earlier chapters have already recounted Muʿāwiya’s hostility and that of his father toward the Messenger of God, together with reports in which the Prophet cursed them.

Muʿāwiya outwardly embraced Islam in the Year of the Conquest together with his father, but the author insists that they did so as men submitting to superior force rather than because they desired Islam or believed inwardly, fearing death after defeat.

Muʿāwiya himself is said to have claimed that he actually embraced Islam at al-Ḥudaybiyya and later met the Messenger of God, who accepted his profession, but the author says this claim was never established.

He further asserts that Muʿāwiya and his father were universally counted among those “whose hearts were to be reconciled” (*al-muʾallafa qulūbuhum*).

Some people, he acknowledges, maintained that Muʿāwiya’s Islam later became sincere; the author rejects this vehemently, arguing instead that his war against the Prophet’s Legatee demonstrates continued unbelief and transgression.

The genealogist Daghfal is said to have entered upon Muʿāwiya during his rule.

Muʿāwiya asked:

“Daghfal, which is superior: we or Banū Hāshim?”

Daghfal replied:

“Commander of the Believers, excuse me from speaking about this.”

Muʿāwiya said:

“You must answer. I shall not excuse you.”

Daghfal replied:

“Banū Hāshim are more eloquent, more beautiful, and more generous; you are more treacherous, more objectionable, and more cunning.”

Muʿāwiya’s expression changed.

The author takes this as further evidence of what he presents as Muʿāwiya’s envy of the Hāshimites.

The source then attributes the poisoning of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī to Muʿāwiya and accuses him of responsibility for the killing of distinguished Emigrants and Helpers, executions carried out after he achieved dominance, and appropriation of public and private wealth.

It cites a report from ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ.

He says:

“I was sitting with the Messenger of God among a group of his Companions when I heard him say: ‘The first man who appears to you from this pass will die outside my religion.’

“I had left my father dressing himself to come to the Messenger of God, and I kept my eyes fixed upon the road like a man holding back urine, fearing that my father might be the one to appear.

“Then Muʿāwiya appeared, and the Messenger of God said: ‘It is this one.’”

The author sarcastically comments that a transmitter once said:

“What an evil opinion ʿAbd Allāh had of his father!”

but that it would have been closer to the truth to say:

“How well ʿAbd Allāh knew his father.”

The author says that ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ was in an even worse condition than Muʿāwiya and calls him Muʿāwiya’s “devil,” through whom his cause was strengthened and his schemes sharpened.

When Ibn ʿAbbās heard the report from ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr, he is said to have asked:

“Where was ʿAbd Allāh in relation to this tradition when he fought ʿAlī alongside Muʿāwiya?”

The source then gives ʿAbd Allāh’s own explanation.

He once saw al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī passing and said:

“By God, he is the most beloved of the people of earth to the inhabitants of heaven. He has not spoken a word to me since Ṣiffīn. If he were to speak to me and become pleased with me, it would be dearer to me than red camels.”

He later sought permission to enter upon al-Ḥusayn.

Al-Ḥusayn said to him:

“You know that I am the most beloved of the people of earth to the inhabitants of heaven, and you heard the Messenger of God say: ‘Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the masters of the youths of Paradise, and their father is better than both of them.’ Yet you fought him?”

ʿAbd Allāh replied that his father ʿAmr once complained to the Prophet that he fasted by day and stood in prayer at night but disobeyed his father’s order to be easier upon himself.

The Prophet had told him:

“Obey your father.”

He therefore claimed that when his father joined Muʿāwiya and ordered him to accompany him, he obeyed this command.

Al-Ḥusayn replied:

“Did you not hear the words of God concerning parents: ‘If they strive to make you associate with Me what you have no knowledge of, do not obey them’? And did you not hear the Messenger of God say, ‘Obedience is only in what is right’?”

ʿAbd Allāh answered:

“By God, son of the Messenger of God, it is as though I had never heard it—though indeed I had.”

The author cites Ṭāwūs as saying:

“Muʿāwiya was not a believer.”

He then claims that many scholars declared Muʿāwiya an unbeliever and cursed him, while others at least held him to be a transgressor and a rebel against ʿAlī.

Aḥmad ibn Shuʿayb al-Nasāʾī is said to have taught the people of Syria traditions concerning the virtues of the Companions but omitted Muʿāwiya.

When pressed repeatedly to recount Muʿāwiya’s virtues, he replied:

“Is it not enough for you that I remain silent about him?”

The editor then recounts the well-known polemical tradition concerning al-Nasāʾī’s mistreatment after refusing to supply virtues for Muʿāwiya, including the report that when asked what he knew in his favor he said:

“What am I to produce? The report, ‘O God, never fill his belly’?”

or:

“I know of no virtue for him except, ‘May God never fill your belly.’”

The text next transmits a series of hostile stories concerning Muʿāwiya’s final illness.

One says that when his condition worsened he asked a Christian physician whether any remedy remained.

The physician allegedly told him of a golden cross which, when hung around a sick person’s neck, had cured him.

Muʿāwiya ordered it brought and hung it around his neck, and the story says he died wearing it.

The source then adds the legendary claim that after death the space between his eyes contracted into the written word “unbeliever.”

Another report claims that the bishop of Najrān requested financial assistance for building a church and that Muʿāwiya sent him two hundred thousand dirhams from the Muslim treasury.

Another alleges that Muʿāwiya sent silver, gold, and copper idols to India to be sold to idol-worshipers there.

When Masrūq heard of it, he is represented as saying:

“By God, if I knew Muʿāwiya would merely kill me, I would sink this ship. But I fear he would torture me and tempt me away from my religion. By God, I do not know which of two sorts of men Muʿāwiya is: a man who has despaired of God’s mercy and therefore cares nothing what he does, or a man whose evil deed has been made beautiful to him so that he regards it as good.”

Abū Shīrīn is then quoted applying the verse:

“We shall draw them on gradually from where they do not know, and I shall give them respite; surely My scheme is firm,”

to Muʿāwiya and his followers.

Another saying attributed to Abū Shīrīn concerns Muʿāwiya’s recognition of Ziyād as the son of Abū Sufyān.

He is described as the first openly to overturn the Prophet’s ruling:

“The child belongs to the marriage-bed, and the adulterer receives the stone.”

The argument is that Muʿāwiya removed Ziyād from the paternity established by the marital bed and attributed him to his own father on the allegation that Abū Sufyān had fornicated with Ziyād's mother.

The author takes this as direct opposition to the Prophet's command.

Abū Shīrīn is also said to have dreamed of Muʿāwiya after his death.

He asked:

"Are you Muʿāwiya? What did God do with you?"

Muʿāwiya replied:

"I am among the bewildered. I left my people bewildered, neither Muslims nor Christians."

Another report says that Muʿāwiya ordered the heads of men with whom he was displeased to be shaved and had them paraded about in humiliation.

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Saʿīd remarked:

"May God disgrace Muʿāwiya. God made shaving a rite for the pilgrims of His House, whereas Muʿāwiya made it mutilation for those he wished to disgrace."

The source then attributes to Muʿāwiya the statement addressed to people of Iraq:

"Do you imagine that I fought you because you do not fast or pray? By God, I fought you only so that I might rule over you—and now I rule over you."

The author comments that this is one statement in which Muʿāwiya spoke truthfully concerning himself.

He then quotes a speech allegedly delivered in Medina after Muʿāwiya had gained supremacy:

"People of Medina, I did not take control of your affair through peaceful agreement. I took it by force of the sword. I tried to compel myself to follow the conduct of Ibn Abī Quḥāfa, but it recoiled from that. I tried to make it follow the conduct of Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, but it would not obey. I tempted it toward the faults of Ibn ʿAffān, but it refused. So I have taken with you a path between these things: it gives me benefit, and it gives you decent food, drink, and some fruits. If you cannot find one who will fulfill your entire affair for you, then accept one who fulfills some of it. Do not consider me the best among you; rather, I am among the best rulers for your worldly interests."

The text also attributes to him a sermon in Damascus:

"God gave ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb authority, and ʿUmar entrusted to me part of what God entrusted to him. By God, I neither betrayed him, lied to him, nor disobeyed his command. Then God gave authority to me without anyone standing between Him and me. I advanced and delayed, acted well and [the transmitted text reads: 'embraced Islam'; a variant reads

‘erred’]. Whoever knows me knows me, and I am not ignorant of myself. I seek God’s forgiveness for my evil deed.”

The author calls this “his testimony against himself and his claim to what was not his.”

When Muʿāwiya became gravely ill, they turned him upon his bed and he reportedly said:

“What an old man you are turning over—if only God saves him from the Fire.”

He is also reported to have said:

“Were it not for my attachment to Yazīd, I would have perceived my right course.”

When people gave allegiance to ʿAlī and the caliphate came to him, he removed every governor appointed or retained by ʿUthmān whom he regarded as wicked or unjust.

Yazīd, brother of Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān, had been governor of Syria.

He died there during ʿUmar’s reign while Muʿāwiya was with him.

ʿUmar confirmed Muʿāwiya in his brother’s place.

When Abū Sufyān offered condolences, he asked:

“Commander of the Believers, what have you done concerning his governorship?”

ʿUmar replied:

“I have entrusted it to his brother Muʿāwiya.”

Abū Sufyān thanked him, saying:

“You have maintained kinship.”

When ʿUthmān assumed power, he left Muʿāwiya in office.

When ʿAlī took control and reviewed the governors, he wrote dismissing him.

Muʿāwiya replied and secretly sent persons to seek ʿAlī’s favor.

When it became clear to ʿAlī that he would refuse dismissal, some who believed they were advising ʿAlī suggested that he first confirm Muʿāwiya in office, allow him to take allegiance from the people under him, and only afterward dismiss him.

ʿAlī refused and recited:

“I would never take those who lead others astray as supporters.”

For this reason he later said:

“By God, if I regarded deceit as something good, Muʿāwiya would not be more cunning than I.”

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, who was in Egypt, likewise feared ʿAlī and went to Muʿāwiya.

The author says that Muʿāwiya’s refusal, domination of Syria, and war against ʿAlī are too extensive to recount fully here and will be treated further in their proper place.

The Killing of ʿAlī

From the moment authority came to ʿAlī, the text says, he endured the trial of Muʿāwiya’s rebellion and his attraction of people through worldly rewards.

The Messenger of God had informed ʿAlī that he would be killed and had identified his killer.

ʿAlī would say to Ibn Muljam:

“When will this be dyed by this?”

pointing to his beard and his head.

Ibn Muljam would reply:

“I seek refuge in God, Commander of the Believers.”

ʿAlī would say:

“By God, I neither lied nor was I lied to.”

People asked him:

“Why then do you not kill him, Commander of the Believers?”

He replied:

“Then who would kill me? And how could you kill him without right? If he does it, then the avenger of blood may decide.”

The text says that Ibn Muljam held the views of the Khārijites and that he met with others among them who agreed that one would kill ʿAlī, another Muʿāwiya, and another ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ.

Ibn Muljam came to the mosque and, when ʿAlī went out to it before dawn, struck him.

The other two failed in their attempts against Muʿāwiya and ʿAmr.

The source also transmits an alternative accusation that Muʿāwiya himself ordered the deed, secretly commissioned Ibn Muljam, and promised him money.

It cites verses attributed to Arwā daughter of al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib:

Convey to Muʿāwiya ibn Ḥarb:
may the eyes of the spiteful never find delight.
In the sacred month you bereaved us
of the best of all mankind.

Al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya

After ʿAlī was martyred, the best of his Companions had been killed, warfare had exhausted those who remained, many of their leading men had died, and the Khārijites had separated from them and themselves largely been killed.

Authority passed to al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī, peace be upon him.

He moved to fight Muʿāwiya, and Muʿāwiya advanced against him.

Most people failed to support al-Ḥasan.

Those who remained with him changed toward him, and even his baggage was plundered.

Muʿāwiya sent asking for peace.

Seeing that he possessed no force capable of sustaining the struggle, al-Ḥasan chose the same kind of patience and endurance which, the author says, ʿAlī had chosen after the Messenger of God.

He accepted peace because he found no alternative and did so as *taqiyya* to preserve himself and those believers remaining with him.

Muʿāwiya gave him solemn promises, covenants, and guarantees.

When they met, al-Ḥasan addressed the people:

“People, this is a right of mine. I have relinquished from it that over which Muʿāwiya has gained power—‘and I do not know; perhaps it is a trial for you and an enjoyment for a time.’”

He gestured toward Muʿāwiya.

The author explains that Muʿāwiya had seized only the worldly aspect of rule.

Al-Ḥasan’s yielding that worldly authority did not, in the author’s Ismaili-Shiʿi understanding, remove the Imamate God had established in him.

He continued to bear the Imamate and fulfill its obligations toward those of the community who adhered to him.

The text argues that Muʿāwiya's subsequent words reveal that even when he outwardly covenanted with al-Ḥasan he inwardly intended to break that covenant.

It recounts that when Muʿāwiya entered Medina he visited the house of ʿUthmān to greet his family.

Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn entered with him.

When ʿĀʾisha daughter of ʿUthmān saw the two of them she cried out:

"Alas for their father!"

After people had departed, Muʿāwiya summoned her privately and said:

"Daughter of my brother, these men have given us sovereignty and we have given them security. We displayed toward them forbearance beneath which lies anger, and they displayed toward us obedience beneath which lies rancor. We purchased this from them in exchange for that. If we give them something other than what they purchased, they will be jealous concerning their right, while their swords are still with them and they see where their partisans stand. If we break faith with them, they will break faith with us, and we do not know whether the turn of fortune will be against us or for us. It is better for you to be the cousin of the Commander of the Believers than merely one woman among the Muslim women."

The meeting between al-Ḥasan and Muʿāwiya took place at Maskin near Kūfa.

Muʿāwiya addressed the people there.

The source says that he intended to say:

"Everything that had been between me and al-Ḥasan is beneath my feet,"

but what came from his tongue was:

"Everything I gave al-Ḥasan is beneath my feet."

The author interprets this slip as exposing his inward intention to violate the treaty.

The source then directly accuses Muʿāwiya of plotting against al-Ḥasan and arranging his poisoning.

It says that Muʿāwiya learned that conflict had arisen between al-Ḥasan and his wife Jaʿda daughter of al-Ashʿath ibn Qays, that al-Ḥasan had come to dislike her and intended to divorce her.

Muʿāwiya allegedly sent her poison with which to poison al-Ḥasan, together with money, and promised to marry her afterward to his son Yazīd.

She accepted, preferring al-Ḥasan's death so that he would not divorce her and leave her with the stigma of divorce.

According to the source, she administered the poison and it took effect.

Al-Ḥasan is reported to have come out to some of his companions while ill and said:

“By God, I did not come out to you until I expelled a piece of my liver, which I lifted with a stick. I have been given poison repeatedly, but none was more severe upon me than this time.”

They asked:

“Who did it, son of the Messenger of God?”

He said:

“What do you want from that?”

They replied:

“We will exact vengeance for you.”

He said:

“You cannot reach him. But God is between me and him, and He knows from where it came.”

The text says al-Ḥasan died from it.

He then entrusted the Imamate to his brother al-Ḥusayn, who assumed it after him.

The source next relates that al-Aswad once entered upon ʿĀʾisha while Muʿāwiya was fighting ʿAlī.

He said:

“Mother of the Believers, are you not astonished that a man from among the *ṭulaqāʾ* disputes the caliphate with a man from the people of Badr?”

She replied:

“Did Pharaoh not rule the Children of Israel for four hundred years? Sovereignty belongs to God; He grants it to the righteous and the wicked.”

It is also reported that ʿUmar once looked at Muʿāwiya and said:

“This is the Chosroes of the Arabs.”

Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh is quoted as saying:

“By God, Muʿāwiya did not oppose ʿAlī except out of hatred for the Messenger of God. ʿAlī fought him and fought his father while saying, ‘God and His Messenger have spoken truth,’

while those two said, ‘God and His Messenger have lied.’ By God, the people of Badr are not equal to hypocrites and freed captives.”

Someone is said to have suggested to Muʿāwiya after he gained supremacy:

“Why not reside in Medina? It is the Abode of Migration, and the grave of the Prophet is there.”

He replied:

“Then indeed I would have gone astray, and I would not be among the rightly guided.”

ʿAlī is quoted as describing Muʿāwiya:

“Muʿāwiya is a hypocrite, son of a hypocrite; a freed captive, son of a freed captive.”

The author adds that the Messenger of God cursed Abū Sufyān, Muʿāwiya, and Yazīd.

A report says that the Prophet heard Muʿāwiya and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ singing together and raised his hands:

“O God, plunge them into tribulation and drive them forcefully into the Fire of Hell.”

Another says that when ʿAlī heard a man cursing the people of Syria he said:

“Woe to you, do not curse them. Curse Muʿāwiya, ʿAmr, and their partisans.”

The text says ʿAlī cursed the two of them in his *qunūt*.

A further report claims that on the day of Uḥud the Messenger of God looked out over the polytheist army and said:

“O God, curse the leaders and the followers. As for the followers, God may accept repentance from whomever He wills among them; but as for the leaders and chiefs, there is neither a noble one nor one who will be saved among them.”

The source counts Abū Sufyān and Muʿāwiya among the leaders that day.

It then transmits highly polemical eschatological sayings attributed to the Prophet, including:

“Muʿāwiya is in a locked chest of fire. Beneath him is none except Pharaoh in the lowest depth of Hell; were it not that Pharaoh said, ‘I am your Lord Most High,’ he would not be below Muʿāwiya.”

And:

“Those of this community who enter the Fire will come out after whatever God wills, but one man will remain beneath a rock for a thousand years crying, ‘O Compassionate One, O Bestower!’”

The source says it was claimed that this man was Muʿāwiya.

Ṣaʿṣaʿa ibn Ṣūḥān is quoted during Yazīd's reign as saying:

"Would that the grave cast Muʿāwiya back out to us, so that we might see how God punished him and he might see how his son has punished us."

The text then gives the report that the Messenger of God once sent for Muʿāwiya.

They said:

"He is eating."

After some time he sent again.

They said:

"He is eating."

The Prophet said:

"May God never fill his belly."

The author adds that afterward he was never satisfied by food.

Further traditions attributed to the Prophet say:

"If you see Muʿāwiya preaching from the pulpit, kill him."

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is quoted as saying:

"They saw him, but they did not do it."

And:

"This man will seek this authority after me. Whoever lives to see him seeking it, let him split his belly with the sword."

And:

"If you see ʿAmr together with Muʿāwiya, separate them, for they will never come together for anything good."

Finally, the source says that Muʿāwiya had water diverted through the burial ground of the martyrs of Uḥud and ordered their graves opened.

The bodies, according to the report, were removed still moist and flexible.

A pick struck the leg of Ḥamza, peace be upon him, and blood flowed from it.

Muʿāwiya had them removed from the places where they had been buried, although the Messenger of God had expressly ordered concerning the martyrs:

“Bury them where they fell.”

The text says that when one of them was carried toward Medina, the Prophet had ordered that he be returned to his original place.

The author therefore presents Muʿāwiya’s action as a deliberate reversal of the Prophet’s command and practice.

Footnotes:

190. [local 2] ʿUthmān appointed him governor of Egypt in the year 25 AH. He conquered Ifrīqiya, and ʿUthmān gave him all that God had bestowed upon the Muslims from the conquest of Ifrīqiya in the Maghrib. He completed his “black record” by joining Muʿāwiya at Ṣiffīn.

219. [local 1] Some historians attempted here to cover up this incident, as is their habit. Yet despite failing to agree with the truth, they did not even agree among themselves upon the falsehood. Ibn Saʿd says in *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/148: “The reason Ḥumrān settled in Baṣra was that he divulged one of ʿUthmān’s secrets.”

316. [local 4] *Maskin*: with fatḥa on the mīm, then sukūn, then kasra on the kāf, followed by nūn. It is a place near Awānā on the Nahr Dujayl.

Sayings concerning Muʿāwiya

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī was asked about Muʿāwiya’s fighting against ʿAlī, peace be upon him, and he replied:

“Muʿāwiya the transgressor contested the truth and its rightful people.”

When Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ heard something Muʿāwiya had said, he remarked:

“How would this transgressor know that?”

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī mentioned Muʿāwiya and said:

“A tyrant and a transgressor.”

It is also related that the Messenger of God saw Muʿāwiya strutting in a patterned cloak, looking proudly at his sides, and cursed him, saying:

“What day could be worse for my community than you, and what day could be worse for my progeny than a whelp who will come forth from your loins, taking God’s signs in mockery and treating as lawful regarding my sanctity what God has forbidden?”

Abū Dharr is also reported to have said that he heard the Messenger of God say:

“My community will come to me at the Pool under five banners.”

The report continues at length until he says:

“Then Pharaoh will come with his followers. I shall take him by the hand, and when I seize it his face will blacken, his legs will tremble, and his entrails will quiver, and the same will happen to his followers.”

Then he said:

“He is Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān.”

The Prophet will say:

“How did you deal with the Two Weighty Things after me?”

They will reply:

“We denied the Greater one, tore it apart, fought the Lesser one, and killed him.”

He will say:

“Take the road of your companions.”

They will then be turned away, thirsty and black-faced, never tasting a drop from the Pool.

The author says that because of this report Abū Dharr suffered exile and accusations of lying, despite the fact that the Messenger of God had distinguished him for truthfulness and testified concerning him:

“Neither the green sky has shaded nor the dusty earth carried anyone more truthful in speech than Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī.”

Yet, the author says, some rejected the Prophet’s statement and nullified his testimony, accused Abū Dharr of lying, sought to kill him, then exiled him to al-Rabadha, where he died banished, driven out, and alone—may God have mercy upon him.

It is also related that Abū Dharr was with the Messenger of God during the expedition to Tabūk. When some people lagged behind, Abū Dharr’s slow camel caused him to remain at the rear.

Someone said:

“Messenger of God, there is a man remaining behind the people.”

The Prophet said:

“Leave him. If there is good in him, God will bring him to you; if not, then you have been relieved of him.”

When the camel showed no vigor, Abū Dharr dismounted, carried his baggage on his back, and hurried forward on foot.

When he drew near, someone said:

“Messenger of God, the man who remained behind has approached.”

The Prophet said:

“May it be Abū Dharr.”

They looked carefully and said:

“By God, it is Abū Dharr, Messenger of God.”

The Prophet said:

“May God have mercy on Abū Dharr. He walks alone, will die alone, and will be resurrected alone.”

When Abū Dharr lay dying at al-Rabadha, he told his family:

“When I die, wash me, shroud me, and place me by the road. When Muslims pass you, tell them who I am so that they may bury me.”

They did so. ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd passed with a group of companions, and the family said:

“Travelers, if you would bury your brother Abū Dharr, then do so.”

Ibn Masʿūd wept, recalled the Prophet’s words, “He will die alone,” then descended, prayed over him, and buried him.

It is also related that Muʿāwiya poisoned Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ.

Mālik ibn Anas is quoted through Saʿīd ibn Dāwūd al-Zubayrī as saying:

“People say, ‘How forbearing Muʿāwiya was!’ But how could he have been forbearing when he sent Busr ibn Arṭāh through all the land between himself and Yemen, and whenever he heard of anyone about whom he feared a report, he killed him? Then, after killing the people, he became ‘forbearing’ toward whoever remained! He was neither forbearing nor blessed.”

The author comments that this was Mālik ibn Anas’s judgment concerning Muʿāwiya and his companions, although people in the author’s own time regarded Muʿāwiya and his son Yazīd as imams of the Muslims and considered al-Ḥusayn’s uprising against Yazīd to have been an extremist departure into falsehood, ignorance of the truth, hatred of God’s friends, and inclination toward His oppressive enemies.

The author concludes:

“Mālik spoke truly in this.”

And asks:

“How can one be forbearing who kills a soul that God has forbidden to be killed except with right?”

The Killing of Ḥujr ibn ʿAdī

The author says that none but God can count the number of people Muʿāwiya killed directly or whose deaths he caused.

He argues that there is no greater folly than killing, usurping the Imamate, overpowering its rightful holders, and seizing the outward prerogatives attached to it.

Al-Shaʿbī is reported to have said of Muʿāwiya:

“He was like a cautious camel: if left alone, it advances; if pressed forward, it retreats.”

The explanatory note defines *al-jamal al-ṭabb* as a camel that carefully watches where it places its hoof.

Sharīk ibn ʿAbd Allāh was asked:

“Was Muʿāwiya forbearing?”

He replied:

“No. How can one be forbearing who treated the truth with foolish contempt?”

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is reported to have said:

“I campaigned along the frontier routes during Muʿāwiya’s reign. Over us was a man from among the Followers, and I never saw anyone better than he. News reached him that Muʿāwiya had killed Ḥujr ibn ʿAdī and his companions. He led us in the noon prayer, then ascended the pulpit and said:

‘Now then: a thing has happened in Islam such as had not happened since the Messenger of God was taken away—Muʿāwiya has killed Ḥujr ibn ʿAdī and his Muslim companions by execution. If the people possess any power to change this, then let them do so; otherwise I ask God to take me to Himself.’”

Al-Ḥasan says:

“By God, we had not yet prayed the afternoon prayer before he died—may God have mercy upon him.”

The author calls Ḥujr one of the distinguished Companions and says that before him no Muslim had been executed in Islam in this manner.

His companions were captured and brought to Muʿāwiya in iron fetters.

When they approached Muʿāwiya, Ḥujr is reported to have said:

“I do not think Muʿāwiya will do anything but kill me. Bury me where I am and do not remove the iron from me, for I shall meet Muʿāwiya upon the road [of judgment].”

The explanatory footnote glosses the fetters as meaning that their hands were fastened to their necks with iron shackles.

It is also said that Muʿāwiya killed Ḥujr and his companions in an orchard, which dried up from the day of their killing.

The note identifies the place as **Marj ʿAdhrāʾ**, a village in the Ghūṭa of Damascus in the district of Khawlān.

It is further related that after killing Ḥujr, Muʿāwiya entered upon ʿĀʾisha.

She said:

“You enter upon me after killing Ḥujr and his companions? Were you not afraid that I might station a man to kill you?”

Muʿāwiya replied:

“I do not fear that, for I am in a house of safety. But how am I in meeting your needs?”

She replied:

“Adequate.”

He said:

“Then leave me and them until we meet before God.”

She answered:

“How can I leave you alone when you have introduced something like this and altered the judgment of the Messenger of God? He said, ‘The child belongs to the marriage-bed,’ yet you removed Ziyād from the man upon whose bed he was born and attributed him to your father; and you appointed Yazīd according to your own judgment.”

Muʿāwiya replied:

“Mother of the Believers, if you insist: had I not killed Ḥujr, many people would have been killed between me and him. As for Ziyād, my father gave me a testament concerning him. As for Yazīd, I considered him the person most entitled to this authority, so I appointed him.”

Al-Mughīra and al-Miswar ibn Makhrama were present.

ʿĀʾisha said to them:

“Do you hear Muʿāwiya’s excuse?”

Al-Mughīra spoke gently to him, while al-Miswar spoke harshly.

They later separated.

When al-Miswar afterward came as part of a delegation to Muʿāwiya, Muʿāwiya admitted the others while excluding him, fulfilled their requests, and delayed him.

Then he admitted him and asked:

“Do you remember what you said in ʿĀʾisha’s presence?”

Al-Miswar replied:

“Yes. I intended nothing by it except God. What did you intend by what you did?”

Muʿāwiya answered:

“Leave that aside and state your needs.”

The author then argues that Muʿāwiya’s own defense amounts to an admission that he killed Ḥujr and his companions unjustly because of something he merely thought might happen.

Even had his suspicion been correct, the author says, it would not have justified initiating the killing of one who had killed no one.

He next condemns Muʿāwiya’s claim that his father had entrusted him with Ziyād, arguing that Muʿāwiya followed his father’s testament while rejecting the judgment of the Messenger of God.

Likewise, the author says, Muʿāwiya’s claim that Yazīd was the person most entitled to govern the Muslims was a corrupt judgment that destroyed and misled him.

He cites the later saying attributed to Muʿāwiya:

“Were it not for my passion for Yazīd, I would have perceived my right course.”

The Claimants to Another Man’s Paternity

As for Ziyād, his mother was called Sumayya.

She was a slave woman belonging to one of the kings of Kinda.

That king became afflicted with a carbuncle, and al-Ḥārith ibn Kalada, physician of the Arabs, treated him and cured him.

The king rewarded al-Ḥārith, clothed him, and gave him slave women, among whom was Sumayya.

Al-Ḥārith was attracted to her and had intercourse with her.

The text describes her as a prostitute.

A black slave of al-Ḥārith named Masrūḥ also had intercourse with her, and she became pregnant by him and gave birth to a black child, Nufayʿ, known as Abū Bakra.

He lived to meet the Prophet, embraced Islam at his hands, and affiliated himself with him.

Al-Ḥārith ibn Kalada said:

“I know of no black man among my ancestors.”

He therefore denied Nufayʿ’s paternity, separated himself from Sumayya, married her to one of his slaves named ʿUbayd, and gave the two of them to one of his daughters.

Sumayya then gave birth to Ziyād upon ʿUbayd’s marriage-bed.

His mistress, daughter of al-Ḥārith, later freed him.

The text describes Ziyād as clever, subtle, cunning, intelligent, and sharp-witted.

Abū Bakra Nufayʿ was attributed to Masrūḥ.

When he was dying, his sons were present and he said:

“I am the client of the Messenger of God. But if these men insist upon attributing me to someone, then I am the son of Masrūḥ.”

Ziyād later met Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī in Baṣra.

Abū Mūsā perceived his ability and energy and employed him as a secretary.

After ʿAlī had finished dealing with the people of the Camel, Ziyād came before him.

ʿAlī recognized his intelligence and administrative capability and appointed him to office, sending him to Fārs.

He remained there until ʿAlī was killed.

Muʿāwiya feared him and sought to win him over.

He wrote to him claiming that Ziyād was his brother, promising and enticing him.

Ziyād initially refused.

Muʿāwiya continued writing to him and treating him gently until Ziyād inclined toward him and eventually came to him after a lengthy correspondence.

Muʿāwiya then prepared al-Mughīra ibn Shuʿba and Abū Maryam al-Salūlī to testify concerning Ziyād's paternity.

When Ziyād was present, Muʿāwiya gathered the people in the mosque and ascended the pulpit.

He praised God, blessed the Prophet, and said:

"Now then: I adjure by God any man who possesses knowledge from Abū Sufyān concerning Ziyād to stand and testify to it. I know that he is truly the son of Abū Sufyān, but I wish two Muslims to stand as witnesses rather than relying merely upon my own knowledge."

Abū Maryam stood and said:

"I testify that Abū Sufyān came to us at Ṭāʾif on his way to Yemen. He first came to us and said to me: 'Do you know where there is a woman I can have intercourse with?'

I replied: 'There is no one here except Sumayya, the prostitute of Banū ʿIlāj.'

He said: 'Go and bring her to me.'

I brought her, and she remained with him. After he had finished with her, I asked, 'How did you find her?'

He replied: 'Not bad, despite her odor and the size of her breasts.'"

Muʿāwiya feared that Ziyād would become angry and reject the whole testimony, so he said:

"May God have mercy upon you. You stood as a witness, not as an abuser. Leave this and confine yourself to what is necessary."

Abū Maryam continued:

"Yes. Abū Sufyān then said to me: 'My son, I have intercourse with this slave woman when she was pure. You owe it to me to keep her with you until her womb is known to be clear.'

So I kept her with me until her cheeks changed, the hair around her eyes thickened, the nipples of her breasts darkened, and her belly protruded. Then she gave birth. I kept her from the day he had intercourse with her until the day of birth, and I found that she bore him at full term."

Al-Mughīra ibn Shuʿba then stood and said:

"I testify that I was once with Abū Sufyān in the courtyard of the Kaʿba before he lost his sight. Ziyād passed us as a plump, flourishing boy in his youth. Abū Sufyān looked at him in a way I found strange.

I said: 'You looked very intently at that boy, Abū Sufyān.'

He replied: ‘Were it not that your Prophet says, “The child belongs to the marriage-bed and the adulterer receives the stone,” I would tell you he is my son. Indeed, he truly is my son.’”

The author argues that, if this statement from Abū Sufyān is authentic, the phrase “your Prophet” rather than “the Prophet” or “our Prophet” demonstrates his rejection of Muḥammad’s prophethood, as does his insistence that Ziyād was “truly my son” immediately after quoting the Prophet’s contrary ruling.

Muʿāwiya then said:

“Your ear has retained it and your tongue has fulfilled it. Ziyād is truly the son of Abū Sufyān.”

The author treats this as another instance of Muʿāwiya denying the Messenger of God, rejecting his statement, and overturning his judicial ruling by attributing Ziyād to Abū Sufyān, whom he calls the adulterer, and removing him from the lineage of the man upon whose marriage-bed he was born.

The author continues that Muʿāwiya uttered this publicly from the Muslims’ pulpit before the people, yet they did not resist him because, in the author’s polemical description, they were the rabble of Syria and the ignorant of the community.

He says that ʿĀʾisha and others rejected Muʿāwiya’s action, and that no one among them considered it lawful to call Ziyād “son of Abū Sufyān”; most called him instead:

“Ziyād ibn Abīhi” — “Ziyād, son of his father.”

The text further says that Muʿāwiya was the first person in Islam to have the severed head of a Muslim brought to him.

It identifies the head as that of ʿAmr ibn al-Ḥamiq al-Khuzāʿī, who was killed and whose head was sent to Muʿāwiya.

When news of the death of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī reached Muʿāwiya, the text says, joy seized him and he pronounced the *takbīr*.

Those around him also pronounced it and the sound spread.

Ibn ʿAbbās, who was in the mosque and had come as a delegate to Muʿāwiya, heard it and asked:

“What is this *takbīr*?”

They replied:

“News of al-Ḥasan’s death has reached Muʿāwiya, and he has admitted the people.”

Ibn ʿAbbās entered and found Muʿāwiya beaming with joy.

Muʿāwiya said:

“Al-Ḥasan has perished.”

Ibn ʿAbbās replied:

“And for that you pronounced the *takbīr*? By God, his death has not hastened for you what you seek, nor lengthened your lifespan, nor filled your grave. If we have been afflicted through his loss, we were afflicted through one better than he—the Messenger of God—and God repaired that calamity.”

Muʿāwiya replied:

“Whenever we speak to you, Ibn ʿAbbās, we find you ready with an answer.”

He then changed the subject.

Hind daughter of ʿUtba

The text next transmits highly polemical accusations concerning Hind daughter of ʿUtba, mother of Muʿāwiya.

Al-Kalbī, through Abū Ṣāliḥ, and al-Haytham, through Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq and others, are cited as alleging that Muʿāwiya was of uncertain paternity and that Hind was among women notorious for illicit sexual relations.

The text says she particularly preferred black men and allegedly killed children she bore from them.

It then recounts her pledge of allegiance after the conquest of Mecca.

When the Prophet told her not to steal, she replied:

“May my father and mother be your ransom, I take from Abū Sufyān’s wealth for the orphans of ʿAbd Manāf.”

He said:

“Do not do so.”

She replied:

“I shall not.”

He said:

“And do not commit adultery or kill your children.”

She replied:

“May you be ransomed by my father and mother—does a free woman commit adultery?”

The source says that the Prophet turned toward some of those present and smiled, because he knew her history. These allegations belong to the polemical *mathālib* framework of the work and should not be treated as neutral biographical fact.

The text then claims that Muʿāwiya's paternity was attributed to three men besides Abū Sufyān: Musāfir ibn Abī ʿAmr ibn Umayya ibn ʿAbd Shams, ʿUmāra ibn al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra, and al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib.

It says that Abū Sufyān associated socially with these men and that, according to the polemical account, anyone close to him was suspected in connection with Hind because her reputation was known.

The editor's footnote expands this allegation.

It says that al-Zamakhsharī counted four alleged fathers for Muʿāwiya and added al-Ṣabbāḥ, a singer associated with ʿUmāra.

It further cites a version explaining al-Ḥasan's taunt to Muʿāwiya—"You know the bed upon which you were born"—as an allusion to these competing paternity claims.

The same footnote recounts a story that Musāfir feared his relationship with Hind would become known, fled to the king of al-Ḥīra, later learned that Abū Sufyān had married Hind, fell gravely ill from love for her, and died.

Again, this is hostile genealogical polemic preserved by the editor, not an established neutral genealogy.

It is also said that during Muʿāwiya's lifetime a dispute arose between Isḥāq ibn Ṭāba and Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiya.

Yazīd said:

"By God, it would be better for you if all the descendants of Ḥarb entered Paradise."

Isḥāq replied:

"And by God, it would be better for you if all Banū al-ʿAbbās entered Paradise."

Yazīd did not understand the allusion.

When Muʿāwiya heard of the exchange, he asked Yazīd:

"What did Isḥāq mean when he told you it would be better for you if all Banū al-ʿAbbās entered Paradise?"

Yazīd answered:

"I do not know."

Muʿāwiya said:

“Then how can you trade insults with men when you do not understand what is being said about you? They say that al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib is my father.”

The author treats this as another attempt by Muʿāwiya to claim entry into Hāshimite genealogy, analogous to his attribution of Ziyād to Abū Sufyān.

The author says that what “they established” was that Muʿāwiya was the son of Musāfir ibn Abī ʿAmr.

Musāfir is described as handsome, and Hind as choosing men on the basis of appearance.

According to the story, she summoned Musāfir, conceived Muʿāwiya by him, and Muʿāwiya later resembled Musāfir strongly in beauty and physical perfection.

Abū Sufyān, by contrast, is described in the polemic as ugly, short, and narrow-eyed.

Thus, says the text, everyone who had seen Musāfir and later saw Muʿāwiya was reminded of him.

The source next alleges that al-Ṣabbāḥ was a handsome young black Yemeni man employed by Abū Sufyān and that Hind had intercourse with him and conceived ʿUtba.

According to the story, when childbirth approached she went away to give birth secretly and intended to kill the infant as she allegedly did with children she bore from black men, but when she saw that the child’s complexion was predominantly light, maternal affection overcame her and she kept him.

Ḥassān ibn Thābit is then quoted in satirical verses asking whose child had been cast beside al-Baṭḥāʾ, describing his noble maternal ancestry but saying that traces of blackness appeared in him.

The text says that when the affair of al-Ṣabbāḥ with Hind became known, ʿUmāra ibn al-Walīd became jealous.

He took al-Ṣabbāḥ on a journey, had a pot of food prepared for him on a hot day, remarked “hot food on a hot day,” then bound him to a tree and shot him with arrows until he died.

The source then quotes further satirical verses by Ḥassān about black infants allegedly abandoned by Hind.

The text also claims that Muʿāwiya was responsible for introducing Persian-style singing into Arab lands.

According to this account, Arabs previously knew only the singing of camel-riders.

Muʿāwiya sent to Persia and brought back two men skilled in the *Khusrawānī* style of singing.

They pretended to be builders while Muʿāwiya was constructing a building, then sang, and this Persian style spread through them.

The author says Muʿāwiya was the first to listen to this form of music.

Someone said to him:

“You admire poetry when it is recited to you by some coarse, rough Bedouin. What if a beautiful, sweet-smelling slave girl recited it to you with the sweetness of her speech?”

Muʿāwiya said:

“Bring her.”

A singing girl was brought.

He told her:

“Recite for me.”

She replied:

“It is better in its melody.”

He said:

“Then give me that.”

She sang it, and he became delighted and moved, rewarded the person who had opened this matter to him, and approved of it.

It is also said that Muʿāwiya once heard a singer performing for Yazīd at night.

He stood behind the door listening until he grew tired, then ordered a chair brought and sat there listening until morning.

Clarification Establishing the Imamate of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib

The author now turns to what he presents as proof of the Imamate of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him, and of those descendants through whom the Imamate returned to him, together with Muʿāwiya ibn Abī Sufyān’s usurpation and transgression and the domination of later Umayyads through him.

He says that in the preceding chapter he already cited the Prophet’s precedence-giving to ʿAlī and his formal establishment of *walāya* for him at Ghadīr Khumm.

For the author, this alone suffices as proof.

He then briefly turns to the succession after the Prophet.

He says that the first caliph was selected by those who claimed mutual agreement and satisfaction, although many prominent Companions, relatives, and leading men did not attend, did not approve, and did not consent.

The first then appointed the second according to his own judgment without consultation.

The author says that many objected to this appointment, telling him:

“We adjure you by God not to appoint over us a harsh and severe man.”

He replied:

“Do you frighten me with God? When I meet the Messenger of God, I shall tell him: ‘I appointed over them the best of your people.’”

Thus, says the author, the second was imposed despite their dislike.

The second, in turn, confined the succession to a council of six men, excluding everyone else from the decision.

The author emphasizes the inconsistency between these three procedures and argues that such contradiction in what he regards as one of the great foundations of religion undermines the doctrine of elective designation.

He argues further that if the Imamate truly depended upon choice and consent, then those absent from the first gathering would have been equally entitled to appoint another imam for themselves.

This would permit every person or subgroup to appoint its own imam, multiplying imams without limit.

Indeed, he says, on that reasoning the electors would possess greater authority than the imam, because he would act by their command and would not be imam without their appointment.

He compares this to legal agency: a person may only appoint an agent over something he himself possesses authority over.

How then, he asks, can people appoint an imam who acquires authority over the blood, sexual relations, and property of others who never authorized them?

If election and consent are the basis, then the elected imam’s authority should bind only those who elected and accepted him.

The author pushes the argument further, saying that if people could appoint an imam by themselves, by the same logic they could appoint a prophet or even a god—an absurdity in his view.

He therefore holds that just as God alone appoints prophets, He also appoints imams through His Prophet.

The author also rejects interpretations of "those vested with authority" as merely commanders of military detachments or the religious scholars generally.

If they were military commanders, he says, those who appointed them would themselves have greater authority.

If they were the scholars, their disagreement in doctrine and legal rulings would make universal obedience impossible, since obedience to one would entail disobedience to another.

The author concludes that what comes from God cannot contain contradiction.

Even if his opponents insist upon the earlier elective model, he argues that they must nevertheless accept ʿAlī's Imamate, because after the killing of ʿUthmān the people collectively gave allegiance to ʿAlī without the same kind of dispute.

Thus, by their own principle, says the author, whoever rebelled against him, broke his allegiance, or fought him was a transgressor.

He says this is why a number of Emigrants, Helpers, and Followers condemned Muʿāwiya as a transgressor, while some declared him an unbeliever on account of his conduct.

The Killing of ʿUthmān

The author says that Muʿāwiya had merely been a governor under rulers before ʿAlī.

When authority passed to ʿAlī—even according to the succession theory of Muʿāwiya's own supporters—ʿAlī dismissed him.

Muʿāwiya therefore had no right to disobey the dismissal or remain in an office from which the imam had removed him.

Instead, he rebelled, opposed ʿAlī, mobilized against him, and raised the claim of vengeance for ʿUthmān, although, says the author, Muʿāwiya was not ʿUthmān's legal avenger.

Even if ʿUthmān had been killed unjustly, his heirs had no right to seek private vengeance outside the authority of the imam.

The author insists that disputes over bloodshed must be adjudicated by the appointed imam, not by individuals taking vengeance into their own hands.

To do otherwise, he says, is to revive the practices of the Jāhiliyya rather than follow Islamic law.

The author says Muʿāwiya revived these pre-Islamic practices and attracted those who preferred worldly gain.

According to the source, the rabble of Syria and those ignorant of Islamic law rallied to him, while the best of the Companions from the Emigrants and Helpers, together with righteous Followers, remained with ʿAlī.

The author says that his purpose here is not to rehearse every argument concerning these events, since that would exceed the scope of the present book; his aim is specifically to invalidate Muʿāwiya's claim to the caliphate and the claims of the Umayyads who followed him.

He says that Muʿāwiya first stirred the Syrian masses by taking a shirt, staining it with blood, raising it upon a spear, and saying:

"This is the shirt of your wrongfully killed caliph."

He ordered it carried through the districts of Syria to inflame the population and offered worldly rewards to those who rallied to him.

The author then claims that Muʿāwiya was more implicated in ʿUthmān's killing than many of those who physically killed him because he had failed to come to his aid.

He cites the account of al-Miswar ibn Makhrama, whom ʿUthmān allegedly sent to Muʿāwiya when people were threatening him.

Al-Miswar said:

"I brought ʿUthmān's message to Muʿāwiya and said: 'Muʿāwiya, rescue your cousin and your caliph, for he will be killed if you abandon him.'"

Muʿāwiya replied:

"Miswar, what am I to do with ʿUthmān? ʿUthmān began by acting as God willed him to act, then he changed, and God changed his condition. Am I now to rise up and reverse what God has changed?"

Later, when Muʿāwiya began demanding vengeance for ʿUthmān, al-Miswar is said to have recounted this conversation while facing the Kaʿba and declared:

"By the front and back of this House, that is what Muʿāwiya said to me. Then the enemy of God went out claiming vengeance for his blood."

The author says ʿĀʾisha's conduct had likewise been hostile toward ʿUthmān before his death.

She was angry, according to this account, because he reduced the allowance ʿUmar had given her.

She told him:

"If you reduce what ʿUmar allotted me, then give me my inheritance from the Messenger of God."

ʿUthmān replied:

“Were you not the witness who denied Fāṭima her inheritance on the grounds that he said: ‘We prophets are not inherited from; what we leave is charity’?”

The author says she remained angry with him until the siege.

When she prepared to go on pilgrimage, Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAttāb came to her and asked her to remain and defend ʿUthmān because the people had risen openly against him.

She replied:

“I cannot. I have already prepared for pilgrimage, and I will not remain behind for his sake.”

Marwān then recited:

Qays set the lands ablaze,
then when the fire flared, he withdrew.

She heard him and called him back.

With luggage sacks before her, she said:

“You have heard what I said. Do you think I am in doubt concerning your companion? By Him in whose hand is ʿĀʾisha’s soul, I wish he were sewn inside one of these sacks of mine so that I could carry him with me and throw him into the sea.”

Marwān replied:

“By God, you have made your position clear.”

She said:

“That is how it is. Go with that.”

When she reached al-Ṣalṣal, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbbās passed her on his way to lead the pilgrimage.

She said:

“Ibn ʿAbbās, you have been given eloquence, intelligence, and knowledge. I adjure you by God: tomorrow, during the pilgrimage season, turn the people against this tyrant when you meet them.”

After she completed the pilgrimage, news reached her that ʿUthmān had been killed.

She said:

“Well done, man of the finger!”

meaning Ṭalḥa.

She then traveled until she reached Sarif.

The explanatory footnotes identify **al-Ṣalṣal** as a place seven miles from Medina and **Sarif** as a location six miles from Mecca, with other estimates of seven, nine, or twelve miles; it was also the place where the Prophet married Maymūna daughter of al-Ḥārith and where she later died.

At Sarif, ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Salama al-Laythī met ʿĀʾisha coming from Medina.

She asked:

“What news do you bring?”

He replied:

“The people have united around ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.”

She said:

“By God, I wish this had fallen upon this,”

meaning the sky upon the earth,

“rather than that happening.”

She then returned to Mecca.

Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr—whom the author accuses of having worked for ʿUthmān’s killing—came to her, and the three set out claiming vengeance for his blood.

The author reiterates that Muʿāwiya and the people of the Camel had no lawful basis for seeking vengeance for ʿUthmān outside the authority of the imam.

He stresses that ʿUthmān was killed in Medina in the presence of Emigrants and Helpers, the very class whose consensus Muʿāwiya’s opponents had earlier treated as binding.

The reports, he says, agree that they were divided between those who actively killed him and those who withheld support.

As for ʿAlī, the author says that no clear statement or action establishing responsibility was ever transmitted from him.

Instead, ʿAlī is quoted as saying:

“I neither commanded nor forbade; I was neither displeased nor pleased; his death neither delighted nor saddened me.”

Some who defended him interpreted the final phrase as meaning:

“His being killed did not delight me, nor did his going to Paradise grieve me.”

The author says that ʿAlī deliberately guarded his words against the arguments of ignorant men.

The author says that the people of the Camel opened this door for Muʿāwiya by first raising the same claim of vengeance and confusing the ignorant with it.

Yet, he argues, they themselves had participated in opposing ʿUthmān, listing his innovations, demanding his removal, besieging him, and even denying him water.

ʿAlī, by contrast, sent water to ʿUthmān with al-Ḥasan.

A saying attributed to Saʿd concerning those responsible for ʿUthmān's death runs:

"ʿUthmān was killed by a sword that ʿĀʾisha drew, Ṭalḥa sharpened, and Ibn Abī Ṭālib poisoned."

When asked about al-Zubayr, Saʿd is reported to have said:

"He remained silent and gestured with his hand. Had we wished, we could have defended him. But we saw that ʿUthmān had changed and confused matters, doing both good and evil. If we sinned, we ask God's forgiveness."

The author says that reports consistently present Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr as principal agitators in the affair of ʿUthmān and among those who besieged him until his death.

When thirst became severe, ʿUthmān allegedly sent to ʿAlī:

"ʿAlī, Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr have killed me through thirst, and death by the sword would be easier for me."

ʿAlī asked them to allow water through, but they refused.

He said:

"I never thought I would ask anyone of Quraysh for something and be refused."

Ṭalḥa replied:

"By God, I will not do it, and you have nothing to do with this matter."

ʿAlī became angry and said:

"You will learn, son of the Ḥaḍramī woman, whether I have anything to do with it or not."

He also said:

"By God, were it not for an oath I previously swore, I would give him water or die doing so."

He then sent water with al-Ḥasan and ordered him to fight in ʿUthmān's defense.

ʿUthmān refused, saying:

“By God, no Muslim blood shall be shed on my account.”

The author says that his purpose is not here to argue the whole case against the people of the Camel.

His concern is Muʿāwiya.

One further claim used to enhance Muʿāwiya’s standing, he says, was the title:

“maternal uncle of the believers,”

because his sister Ramla daughter of Abū Sufyān was one of the Prophet’s wives.

The author rejects this reasoning.

He says that Ramla’s marriage to the Prophet had already been discussed earlier and interprets it as an attempt to reconcile Abū Sufyān to Islam.

He argues that the designation of the Prophet’s wives as “mothers of the believers” did not create literal genealogical kinship.

If Muʿāwiya were truly the believers’ maternal uncle, he says, then marriage between him and believing women should have been forbidden as marriage with actual nieces is forbidden.

Likewise, inheritance would have followed from such kinship, which it did not.

The author compares this with the Qurʾānic expression “the believers are brothers,” which likewise does not produce legal kinship or inheritance.

He understands the motherhood of the Prophet’s wives chiefly as establishing that they could not marry after him.

The author further argues that if this title truly conferred political superiority, then Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr would have possessed a stronger claim than Muʿāwiya, since he was the brother of ʿĀʾisha, whom Muʿāwiya’s own supporters regarded as superior to Ramla, in addition to being the son of Abū Bakr and belonging to an earlier Islamic lineage.

Thus, he says, by that reasoning Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr should have been followed rather than Muʿāwiya.

The Arbitration

The author next discusses the arbitration at Ṣiffīn.

He says that Muʿāwiya initially opposed ʿAlī while claiming merely the governorship appointed to him by ʿUthmān.

The author has already argued that such an appointment expired with the death of the ruler who made it unless the succeeding imam renewed it.

He notes that ʿUmar had originally appointed Muʿāwiya and ʿUthmān later retained him.

Had ʿUthmān dismissed him, Muʿāwiya himself would not have considered it lawful to remain in office.

Likewise, upon ʿUthmān's death, the right to retain or remove governors belonged to the succeeding imam.

When Muʿāwiya and his forces began to lose and defeat overtook them, ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ devised the stratagem of raising copies of the Qurʾān and calling for judgment according to them.

ʿAlī's followers ceased fighting out of religious scruple.

ʿAlī ordered them to continue and warned them that the raising of the Qurʾāns was a trick.

They disagreed with him, lowered their swords, and a group began to split away.

ʿAlī then chose to make the truth clear to them, knowing that the Book itself supported his position.

He therefore agreed to arbitration according to the Book of God.

Muʿāwiya appointed ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ.

ʿAlī appointed Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī.

A written agreement was made stipulating that the arbitrators were to judge only by the Book of God and were not to depart from it.

According to the source, ʿAmr then deceived Abū Mūsā.

He displayed respect, honor, and deference toward him.

When prayer time came, he would put Abū Mūsā forward and say:

"You are a Companion of the Messenger of God, earlier than I in Islam and older than I."

He then proposed:

"Come, let each of us depose his own companion. Afterward we shall agree upon whom to appoint."

He made Abū Mūsā think that he would follow his opinion and appoint whomever Abū Mūsā wished.

Abū Mūsā ascended the pulpit and declared ʿAlī deposed.

He then told ʿAmr:

“Now you ascend and depose Muʿāwiya.”

ʿAmr ascended and instead confirmed Muʿāwiya.

He made those listening think that this had been their agreement.

Abū Mūsā denounced him:

“May God curse you! You are like the dog: whether you attack it, it pants, or leave it, it pants.”

ʿAmr replied:

“Rather you! May God curse you! You are like the donkey carrying books.”

They separated, each cursing the other.

The affair caused division among ʿAlī’s supporters.

The Khārijites, who had themselves initially insisted upon accepting arbitration and had refused to continue fighting when Muʿāwiya called for judgment by the Book of God, now separated from ʿAlī.

They argued that because ʿAlī had originally known arbitration was wrong, he should not have yielded to them when they pressured him.

Muʿāwiya’s position strengthened, and through this stratagem he began claiming the caliphate and styling himself “Commander of the Believers.”

Those whom the author calls the people of truth, knowledge, and insight remained with ʿAlī.

The author argues that even if Abū Mūsā had not been deceived and had intentionally deposed ʿAlī with the agreement of all Muslims, that act still could not have legally bound ʿAlī.

He compares the arbitrator to an agent.

An agent has no right to exceed the authority granted him.

If he acts outside his commission, his unauthorized act does not bind the principal.

Likewise, if an imam appoints a judge or governor and orders him to act according to right, then any departure into falsehood is the officer’s own responsibility and does not bind the imam.

The author compares this to the Prophet’s appointment of Khālid ibn al-Walīd: when Khālid exceeded his command, the Prophet publicly dissociated himself from Khālid’s action.

Similarly, says the author, ʿAlī appointed Abū Mūsā only to debate and judge according to the Book of God.

Once Abū Mūsā departed from that mandate, his act had no legal force against ʿAlī.

The text adds that knowledgeable historians agreed that Abū Mūsā was deceived and mocked.

Some also accused him of inclination toward Muʿāwiya's side.

Either way, says the author, whatever he did contrary to the command of the one who appointed him was invalid.

Yet Muʿāwiya used this deception to style himself Commander of the Believers and mislead the Syrian masses.

The author says that a full treatment of the arbitration would require a separate book.

A footnote preserves poetry attributed to ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ boasting about deceiving Abū Mūsā:

I deceived Abū Mūsā with the deception of a great serpent
tricking a young camel in an empty wilderness.

I said to him: We have come to dislike them both,
so let us depose them before strife and collapse.

The two will never close their eyes upon a mote
of irritation until they settle the matter completely.

He obeyed me until I deposed their brother,
while our own brother remained firmly held in power.

Ibn Ḥarb will never yield authority to them,
nor will the Hāshimite, so long as time endures.

Ibn ʿAbbās is then said to have replied:

You lie. Rather, one like you today is a transgressor,
seeking evil and removal for us in your affair.

You claim the matter came from you by deception,
but every word concerning you is vain.

By the Lord of the House, your religion has become
contrary to the religion of the pure, just Chosen One.

You have opposed the beloved of the Prophet and his very self;
you possess neither precedence nor merit.

By the Lord of the House, you are the foulest who ever walked
the earth, whether shod or barefoot.

You betrayed, and betrayal was always your nature,
as though there had never been cultivation or offspring.

The editor notes that numerous independent works were written specifically on the arbitration, including books titled *Kitāb al-Ḥakamayn* by Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Thaqafī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Jalūdī, Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā ibn Mikhnaf, Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Jāk, Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam, and Abū al-Mundhir Hishām ibn Muḥammad al-Sāʾib.

The author then answers those who objected to arbitration in principle.

He argues that appointing human arbitrators is itself recognized in revealed law, and that the crucial question is whether they judge according to truth.

If two arbitrators between spouses judged contrary to right—separating a husband and wife without valid divorce or reconciliation according to law—their judgment would not be binding.

If they judged according to God's Book and the Prophet's practice, their judgment would stand.

Similarly, he says, the Messenger of God appointed Saʿd ibn Muʿādh as arbitrator concerning Banū Qurayẓa.

Saʿd ruled that their fighting men be killed and their offspring taken captive, and the Prophet accepted his judgment.

Thus, according to the author, arbitration itself is not inherently wrong; an arbitration contrary to divine law is wrong.

If someone asks why ʿAlī initially refused arbitration and ordered his followers to continue fighting while Muʿāwiya's side was calling for it, the author answers that arbitration is not an obligatory demand that must always be accepted whenever an opponent proposes it.

It is a discretionary matter entrusted to the imams and their appointed representatives.

They may choose negotiation, truce, argument, or continued fighting according to what they judge most beneficial.

The author compares arbitration with granting safe-conduct, truce, and peace.

Had the Prophet not appointed Saʿd to arbitrate concerning Banū Qurayẓa and had instead continued fighting them, that also would have been lawful.

Thus, when Muʿāwiya's troops raised the Qurʾāns only after the swords had overwhelmed them and defeat had overtaken them, ʿAlī recognized the act as a stratagem designed to escape destruction and initially refused it.

When his own army would no longer obey, division spread among them, and doubts entered their minds, he accepted arbitration according to the Book of God so that the truth might become clear to those who were confused.

The Khārijites later said:

“We were wrong when we accepted arbitration. Since ʿAlī knew this, he should not have followed us into error but should have continued upon what was right.”

The author rejects this.

He says ʿAlī did not err.

Rather, the Khārijites erred both at the beginning and at the end through disobedience to him.

No one, he says, ever claimed that ʿAlī appointed the two arbitrators with authority to depose him if they wished.

He appointed them only to judge by the Book of God, because it was the Book of God to which Muʿāwiya’s side had appealed and because ʿAlī knew that its judgment favored him.

Thus, ʿAlī himself was neither deceived nor tricked by the raising of the Qurʾāns.

The deception fell upon Abū Mūsā.

The author adds that deception and trickery are not qualities of believers or the righteous and that no truly virtuous religious figure is praised for fraudulent cunning in falsehood.

The author concludes that while deception and trickery may have temporarily achieved Muʿāwiya’s purpose, they are nevertheless a disgrace and deficiency.

The arbitrators’ act protected the rebellious faction from death and battle without bringing it back into obedience.

Anything contrary to the Book of God is rejected.

More serious still, he says, was the supposed deposition of ʿAlī, whom he regards as the imam whose obedience was divinely obligatory.

The judgment of an arbitrator is like that of a judge: it is invalid whenever it contradicts scripture and prophetic law.

Finally, he sets out the underlying Ismaili-Shiʿi principle:

The Imamate is one of God’s commands and one of His obligations. It is not acquired because someone hands it over, nor because another person seizes it by force, nor because someone abandons or renounces it. It is a branch of prophethood. God commanded obedience to His friends just as He commanded obedience to His prophets. Just as prophethood cannot be usurped, stripped away, surrendered, or delegated, neither can the Imamate.

He extends the analogy to lesser offices.

If an imam appoints a governor or judge, and that governor or judge attempts to hand his office to someone else, or if someone simply seizes it by force, the office does not thereby become lawful for the usurper or recipient.

Likewise, an agent appointed for a specific task cannot validly transfer that authority to another unless authorized to do so.

The author concludes:

“Thus the matter has proceeded through the ages and upon this basis judgments have been made. Muʿāwiya therefore had no right to the Imamate through the arbitration, nor through what he later claimed regarding al-Ḥasan’s surrender of authority.”

False Attributes

Among the things Muʿāwiya used to embellish his image—and which others embellished for him—was the claim that he had been **a scribe of revelation**, because he had written down some of the Qurʾān during the lifetime of the Messenger of God.

Writing was uncommon among the Arabs at that time, and whenever someone knew how to write, the Messenger of God would employ him as a scribe. A number of others also wrote in this way without claiming the Imamate or thereby acquiring any special merit connected with it, such as Ḥanẓala ibn Rabīʿa of Banū Tamīm, Zayd ibn Thābit of the Anṣār, and ʿAbd Allāh ibn Saʿd ibn Abī Sarḥ.

The author says that Ibn Abī Sarḥ altered what was dictated to him and then said:

“I too have revealed a Qurʾān.”

The author continues that the Prophet declared his blood forfeit. He was ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān’s foster-brother, and ʿUthmān pleaded for him with the Messenger of God, who initially turned away from him. When ʿUthmān later became caliph, he appointed him governor of Egypt and sent him on the campaign in which Ifrīqiya was conquered.

The author’s point is that being a “scribe of revelation” did not prevent Ibn Abī Sarḥ from incurring divine and prophetic condemnation, just as, in the author’s polemical judgment, Muʿāwiya’s writing did not prevent him from committing acts that ruined him and removed him from Islam.

By contrast, the author says, ʿAlī wrote down the entirety of the revelation during the Messenger of God’s lifetime and was the first to collect it after his death.

He swore that after the Prophet died he would not put on his outer cloak except for Friday prayer until he had collected the Qurʾān. He therefore gathered and wrote it down from the Prophet’s own recitation.

ʿAlī is quoted as saying:

“No verse was ever revealed without my knowing the day on which it was revealed and concerning what it was revealed. If you asked me about what lies between the two covers, I would tell you. Ask me before you lose me.”

The author says no other Companion ever made such a claim.

Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn is also reported to have said concerning ʿAlī’s codex:

“If we could find it, we would find in it a great deal of knowledge.”

The author adds that this codex, written in ʿAlī’s own hand, remained with the Imams from among his descendants; God, he says, caused it to pass to them and restored it to those from whom it had been usurped.

He concludes that he knows of no ancient or later scholar who ever placed ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya together in a contest of merit, balance, or comparison, because the difference between them was too great: ʿAlī stood at the summit of nobility and virtue, whereas Muʿāwiya, in the author’s judgment, represented the opposite.

The Saying of al-Najāshī the Poet

The author says that many earlier writers were astonished by the poet al-Najāshī’s words to Muʿāwiya concerning ʿAlī:

You are an excellent young man, were it not that between you two
there lies the difference between the light of the sun and the moon.

The footnote identifies al-Najāshī as **Qays ibn ʿAmr ibn Mālik al-Ḥārithī**, who was called al-Najāshī because his complexion resembled that of the Abyssinians.

People objected:

“Who could say that the difference between ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya is merely like that between the light of the sun and the moon?”

They asked what virtue Muʿāwiya possessed that would justify placing him even at that level, and what defect had not already excluded him from every virtue.

Accordingly, they sought interpretive ways out of the verse.

Some said that the comparison concerned their ancestors: ʿAlī’s ancestors and Muʿāwiya’s ancestors, such as Hāshim and ʿAbd Shams, ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and Ḥarb ibn Umayya, and Abū Ṭālib and Abū Sufyān—in eloquence, speech, and other qualities in which a righteous and a wicked person can both share.

The author replies that he has already shown the superiority of ʿAlī’s ancestors over Muʿāwiya’s.

Others argued that Arabic idiom allows one to place a superior and an inferior together in a rhetorical comparison without implying equality between them.

They cited lines of poetry to show that a phrase such as:

“He is worse than you”

does not necessarily imply that the person addressed is himself bad.

They also cited the famous verse of Ḥassān ibn Thābit against one who insulted the Prophet:

Do you satirize him when you are not his equal?
The worse of you two is a ransom for the better.

No one understands this as implying that the Prophet possessed some evil merely exceeded by his opponent.

The author says this is a sound way of interpreting al-Najāshī’s verse.

But he offers another explanation he regards as even better.

The phrase:

“You are an excellent young man”

would indeed be praise if it stood alone.

But when followed by:

“were it not that…”

the qualification cancels the praise.

In Arabic, he says, one may say:

“Were it not for such-and-such a defect in so-and-so, he would be virtuous,”

which means precisely that because the defect exists, he is not virtuous.

Thus, in his reading, al-Najāshī’s verse need not praise Muʿāwiya at all.

The author then develops another analogy from the sun and moon.

If one holds that the moon has no light of its own and merely reflects the light of the sun, then the comparison could mean that whatever distinction Muʿāwiya possessed came only through his kinship to ʿAlī.

He compares it to a white object in darkness: it appears luminous only when a lamp shines upon it.

Yet even this, he argues, does not truly entitle Muʿāwiya to virtue through ʿAlī, because one who competes with a virtuous relative and disputes his rank does not acquire merit merely by kinship.

The author speculates that al-Najāshī may also have been influenced by a report concerning Ḥābis ibn Saʿd al-Ṭāʾī.

According to the story, ʿUmar sent Ḥābis as a judge to Syria.

Ḥābis returned, and ʿUmar asked:

“Why have you returned?”

He said:

“I saw a dream in Syria that frightened me.”

ʿUmar asked:

“What did you see?”

Ḥābis replied:

“I saw the sun and moon fighting each other, with some stars on the side of the sun and some on the side of the moon. I seemed to be among one group, and I was killed.”

ʿUmar asked:

“Which side were you on?”

He replied:

“With the moon.”

ʿUmar said:

“Go. You will never perform any work for me.”

He then said:

“This is a man who will die upon error.”

Ḥābis later fought among Muʿāwiya’s forces at Ṣiffīn and was killed there.

The report was then interpreted as meaning that the sun represented ʿAlī, the moon Muʿāwiya, and the stars the Companions on each side.

The author remarks that if this interpretation is accepted, it amounts to testimony against Muʿāwiya and his companions.

He then minimizes al-Najāshī's authority altogether.

Even if al-Najāshī had explicitly said that Muʿāwiya was superior to ʿAlī, the author says, his words would carry no probative weight against what he calls the agreement of the learned community to the contrary.

He only discusses the verse because it became famous.

The author then reminds the reader that ʿAlī once had al-Najāshī brought before him for drinking wine during Ramaḍān.

ʿAlī administered the prescribed punishment, then brought him out the following day and struck him again.

Al-Najāshī asked:

"Commander of the Believers, what is this additional beating?"

ʿAlī replied:

"For your contempt for the fast and your breaking the fast during Ramaḍān."

The author therefore says al-Najāshī was hardly someone whose judgment about ʿAlī should be treated as authoritative, and even speculates that resentment against ʿAlī may have influenced his verse.

Some people, the author continues, praised Muʿāwiya for intelligence.

They said he was clever, won people over, drew their hearts toward himself through accommodation, and handled each person according to what would satisfy him.

The author rejects this as true intelligence.

One who ruins his religion, he says, cannot properly be called intelligent.

Even if worldly cleverness were conceded, intelligence alone would not entitle someone to the caliphate; many intelligent men were never considered eligible for it.

For the author, true intelligence means understanding God's commands and prohibitions and being guided by divine guidance.

A mind that merely leads a person into error is corrupt intelligence and belongs to ignorance.

Others praised Muʿāwiya for eloquence.

The author insists that eloquence belonged preeminently to ʿAlī, whom he calls the mine of eloquence and its spring.

True eloquence, he argues, is eloquence in truth and honesty.

Eloquence used in ignorance and error is worse than speechlessness because it becomes a temptation for the ignorant and increases the sin of the speaker.

A silent misguided person, he says, is safer than an eloquent one who spreads his ignorance.

A report then says that ʿAlī delivered a sermon which eventually reached Muʿāwiya.

Muʿāwiya told ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ:

“By God, I wish this sermon were mine, even if ʿAlī had red camels in exchange for it instead of me.”

ʿAmr replied:

“What prevents you? Deliver it yourself and claim it as your own. The Imamate you dispute with him is greater than a sermon. One man will believe you and another will believe ʿAlī.”

Muʿāwiya accepted the suggestion, delivered the sermon, and claimed it as his own.

The author then turns to the claim that Muʿāwiya was forbearing.

He says this has already been refuted by his killing of believers unjustly, violating their sanctities, and treating what God had forbidden as lawful.

He also reports that Muʿāwiya deliberately exposed himself to insults so that he could then overlook them and acquire a reputation for forbearance.

The response given was:

“A man is not forbearing if he deliberately exposes himself to a fool.”

Muʿāwiya was also praised for cunning and trickery.

The author rejects these as virtues, recalling ʿAlī’s saying:

“Had I regarded deception as good, Muʿāwiya would not have been more cunning than I.”

The author says Muʿāwiya gained much through deception, above all through ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, whom he calls the one who “opened the breach” for him.

Both men, he says, were deeply implicated in opposition to ʿUthmān.

Muʿāwiya later used ʿUthmān’s death as the means by which he pursued the caliphate.

ʿAmr, meanwhile, had actively agitated against ʿUthmān because ʿUthmān removed him from the governorship of Egypt and replaced him with ʿAbd Allāh ibn Saʿd ibn Abī Sarḥ.

When news reached ʿAmr that ʿUthmān was besieged, he reportedly said:

“I am Abū ʿAbd Allāh. By God, I never picked at an ulcer without making it bleed.”

When he then heard that the people had pledged allegiance to ʿAlī, he exclaimed:

“The caliphate and prophethood in one house! By God, we will never accept this.”

He therefore went to join Muʿāwiya, since he knew he would not obtain what he wanted from ʿAlī and feared him because of his past conduct.

Returning to ʿUthmān

The text says that when criticism of ʿUthmān’s conduct increased and he began to fear the consequences, he wrote to his closest provincial officials instructing them to come to the pilgrimage season.

They assembled before him:

- Muʿāwiya, governor of Syria;
- Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ, governor of Kūfa;
- ʿAbd Allāh ibn Abī Sarḥ, governor of Egypt;
- ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿĀmir ibn Kurayz, governor of Baṣra;
- and ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, who at that point held no office.

ʿUthmān told them:

“Advise me, for the people have spoken much against me.”

Saʿīd spoke first:

“The people have dispersed, grown comfortable, become insolent, and begun criticizing you. Mobilize them in military expeditions so that the hardship behind each of them becomes more pressing than criticizing you and occupying themselves with your faults.”

Muʿāwiya said:

“You have raised us among your kinsmen to a rank no one before you granted his family. You gave us the provinces, appointed us to offices, and placed us over people’s necks. Hold each of us responsible for the territory under him and let him suffice you concerning it. Hold me responsible for Syria, and I shall make it for you a ground upon which you may tread.”

ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿĀmir said:

“The people have not criticized you over their prayers, fasting, alms, or pilgrimage. They criticize you over the worldly wealth you have given to those you favored. Give money to their leading men and chiefs and distribute it among the common people, and they will be satisfied with you. Then rely upon whatever course you prefer.”

ʿAbd Allāh ibn Abī Sarḥ said:

“Two men before you acted in a way that satisfied the people. Act as they did, and the people will be satisfied with you as they were with them.”

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ said:

“Commander of the Believers, you yourself drove the people to what you now condemn. You appointed men and they followed your excesses and went astray. Fear God and act justly; otherwise leave them and withdraw.”

ʿUthmān looked at him with displeasure and said:

“Son of al-Nābigha, that was not what you used to say in Egypt. But your udders have dried and bitterness has filled your breast. You have been choking on your saliva ever since I removed you from Egypt.”

ʿAmr replied:

“By my life, that is not so. This is my judgment and the judgment of everyone outside your door. You asked for advice, and I advised you sincerely and truthfully.”

Later, ʿUthmān met privately with ʿAmr and asked:

“Woe to you, son of al-ʿĀṣ. Were you serious in what I heard from you?”

ʿAmr replied:

“No, by God. I was not serious. I knew our words would be reported, and I wanted the people to know what I had said so that they would turn to me and listen to my opinion. If I can benefit you, I shall; if not, I shall ward from you what I can.”

ʿUthmān accepted this explanation, became satisfied with him, adopted Muʿāwiya’s advice, and ordered the governors back to their provinces.

The text says events overtook him before what he planned could be carried out.

The footnote on the reading *wa-khuḍ* simply says:

“Thus in the manuscript.”

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, the Master of Cunning

When ʿAmr saw the extent of the opposition to ʿUthmān, he withdrew to an estate he owned in Palestine.

There he remained until news reached him that ʿUthmān had been killed and that the people had pledged allegiance to ʿAlī.

When he considered joining Muʿāwiya, he consulted his two sons, ʿAbd Allāh and Muḥammad.

ʿAbd Allāh said:

“Father, I advise you to fear God and remain in your house until the people unite upon one matter, then enter into it. You are nothing today or tomorrow but a head soon to perish.”

Muḥammad said:

“You are one of the fangs of the Arabs and one of their nobles. You possess your share and portion among them. I do not think it fitting that the Arabs should dispute over this great matter while you sit withdrawn in your house. Take your share from whoever eventually gains it.”

ʿAmr replied:

“As for you, ʿAbd Allāh, you advised me to what is better and safer for my Hereafter. As for you, Muḥammad, you advised me to what will make my name more prominent and is better for my worldly life.”

He then set out for Muʿāwiya.

The text says Muʿāwiya had meanwhile ingratiated himself with the people of Syria.

He visited their sick, checked on their affairs, attended their funerals, sat with them, exhorted them, and encouraged them to demand vengeance for ʿUthmān.

He told them:

“You are the best of the Muslims. You have risen to avenge your wrongfully slain caliph,”

and promised them reward for this.

ʿAmr stayed with him for several days, waiting to see what he would obtain.

His son ʿAbd Allāh said:

“By God, I do not think Muʿāwiya is even paying attention to you. You have destroyed your religion, and I do not see that you have gained your worldly life either.”

The text says ʿAbd Allāh hoped thereby to separate his father from Muʿāwiya.

ʿAmr replied:

“Leave me until I speak plainly with him.”

So ʿAmr met Muʿāwiya privately and said:

“Muʿāwiya, do not place me in the same rank as the rabble of Syria whom you entice with your stories morning and evening, telling them they are avenging a wrongfully slain caliph of God, and telling them that whoever dies among them enters Paradise and whoever survives remains a righteous fighter in God’s path.

The matter is not like that.

Whoever dies upon what you and we are upon with you is heading for the Fire, and whoever lives upon it lives upon evil.

We seek nothing but this world and compete with one another for it.

Do you imagine that we left ʿAlī because we had some virtue over him or because we were more entitled to authority than he?

By God, the matter is not as you tell them.

Stop deceiving these rabble and flattering them with sayings such as ‘I have no greater right to authority than you’ and similar words by which you draw them to yourself.

I am not one of those who will be satisfied with this nonsense or remain with you under such conditions.

Do you have worldly goods that I can obtain? Otherwise I shall look to my Hereafter.”

Muʿāwiya, fearing ʿAmr would leave him, replied:

“Easy, may God forgive you, Abū ʿAbd Allāh. If I wished to tell you something else, I could. But tell me what you want, and I shall follow you in it.”

ʿAmr said:

“Leave this. By God, if you say anything to me contrary to what we both know, you will only be speaking falsehood that I will not accept. Give me your immediate offer, or leave me to my final end.”

Muʿāwiya replied:

“As for what is presently available, your hand shall be with mine in it. I will not refuse you any request or prevent you from what you desire. And if we prevail, I shall grant you Egypt as a personal estate. It is your place. You will use its revenue to pay the soldiers their stipends and provisions, and whatever remains will be yours.”

ʿAmr asked:

“God is witness against you concerning this?”

Muʿāwiya said:

“Yes. God is witness against me.”

ʿAmr secured the agreement, then went to his son and said:

“Well then—I have taken Egypt for you.”

His son replied:

“What is Egypt?”

ʿAmr pushed him in the chest and said:

“May you have no mother, and may you never be satisfied! If Egypt does not satisfy you, what could your father ever obtain? I have brought Muʿāwiya my sword in addition to the countless swords of the Syrians already with him—and yet you think Egypt too little for him to give me?”

The author says ʿAbd Allāh had actually wanted his father to leave Muʿāwiya altogether.

Another report says that when ʿAlī marched against Muʿāwiya, ʿAmr demanded still more.

He said:

“Egypt for me, and Kūfa for my son ʿAbd Allāh.”

Muʿāwiya replied:

“That is yours and his.”

ʿAmr said:

“God is witness to what you say.”

Muʿāwiya replied:

“God is witness to what we say.”

The author concludes:

“It was upon this basis that ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ followed Muʿāwiya, supported him, gave him allegiance, and sold his Hereafter for his worldly life.”

The author says ʿAmr had long been resentful toward ʿUthmān because he removed him from Egypt.

He explains that ʿUthmān had appointed ʿAbd Allāh ibn Saʿd ibn Abī Sarḥ over taxation and tribute there.

Ibn Abī Sarḥ complained that ʿAmr was diminishing the tribute and ruining the land.

ʿAmr, for his part, complained that ʿAbd Allāh was tying his hands against the enemy.

ʿUthmān then dismissed ʿAmr and combined all authority in Ibn Abī Sarḥ’s hands.

The revenue increased.

When Ibn Abī Sarḥ later came to ʿUthmān, ʿUthmān summoned ʿAmr and said:

“Abū ʿAbd Allāh, have you not learned that the she-camels have begun giving milk after you left?”

ʿAmr replied:

“That is because you have starved their young.”

The author says ʿAmr remained angry with ʿUthmān from the time of his dismissal.

The author then resumes his hostile portrait of ʿAmr.

He recalls his earlier enmity toward the Prophet, his satirical verses against him, and his journey to Abyssinia seeking assistance against him.

He claims that ʿAmr’s conversion was only submission after defeat, like that of Abū Sufyān and Muʿāwiya.

The author also says it was ʿAmr who advised Muʿāwiya to raise the Qurʾāns at Ṣiffīn.

He recounts the familiar polemical report that on one day of Ṣiffīn ʿAlī charged upon ʿAmr, raised his sword over him, and ʿAmr, seeing that he was about to be killed, threw himself on the ground and exposed his private parts.

ʿAlī, out of modesty and nobility, lowered his gaze and withdrew.

Muʿāwiya later mocked ʿAmr about this and said:

“By God, had it been you facing him, you would never have thought of that trick.”

The author then gives a saying attributed to ʿAlī after hearing something ʿAmr had said about him:

“How astonishing is the son of al-Nābigha! He claims to the people of Syria that I am a joker, a man given to play and sport.

He has lied.

What prevents me from such things is remembrance of death, recitation of the Qurʾān, and fear of resurrection and reckoning.

The worst speech is lying.

He speaks and lies; he promises and breaks his promise; he is asked and becomes miserly; he breaks covenants and severs kinship.

When battle comes, he is loud in command and prohibition so long as swords have not begun taking men’s heads.

But once that happens, he turns his backside toward them.

May God disgrace him and cast him into grief."

The author next says that ʿAmr confused the Syrians concerning the killing of ʿAmmār.

The people knew the saying addressed to ʿAmmār:

"The rebellious faction will kill you."

When Muʿāwiya's men killed him, the saying spread and troubled Muʿāwiya.

ʿAmr then said:

"It was ʿAlī who killed ʿAmmār, because he brought him here, threw him into the war, and exposed him to death."

The Syrians accepted the argument.

When ʿAlī heard this, he replied:

"If I killed ʿAmmār, then the Messenger of God killed all the Emigrants and Helpers who were martyred with him! What deficient minds!"

The text says Muʿāwiya and ʿAmr used to compete in boasting about cunning.

A man who had been with ʿAlī fled to Muʿāwiya and entered upon him in a large Syrian gathering while ʿAmr was present.

Muʿāwiya asked:

"Where have you come from?"

The man replied:

"From that inarticulate, miserly coward."

Muʿāwiya asked:

"Whom do you mean?"

He answered:

"ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Muʿāwiya remained silent.

ʿAmr stood and said:

"Muʿāwiya, do not let someone who deceives you please you."

Muʿāwiya replied:

“Sit down, Abū ʿAbd Allāh. You are like the one of whom it was said:

Whatever quality in Tamīm pleases you,
what displeases you in Tamīm is more abundant.”

He waited until the Syrian audience had left and only ʿAmr remained.

Then Muʿāwiya told the man:

“Woe to you. As for your saying that ʿAlī is inarticulate—by God, if this community had no tongue but the tongue of ʿAlī, it would suffice them.

As for your calling him miserly—if ʿAlī possessed two houses, one filled with straw and one filled with gold, he would spend the gold before the straw.

As for your calling him cowardly—have you ever heard of him dueling anyone without killing him?

Are you trying to draw close to me through lies?”

The man replied:

“If he is as you describe him, why did you fight him?”

Muʿāwiya took ʿAmr’s hand and said:

“For this ring—whoever overcomes the other for it controls its seal.”

The author says this resembles Muʿāwiya’s own statement to the Iraqis:

“I fought you only so that I might rule over you—and now I have ruled.”

The author concludes that both Muʿāwiya and ʿAmr admitted the truth: they sought worldly power and enjoyed it for a time.

Muʿāwiya himself, the author says, never claimed superiority over ʿAlī or placed himself on the same level.

So how, he asks, can anyone else claim such superiority for him?

Circumstances That Strengthened Muʿāwiya’s Position and Increased His Followers

The author now explains what, in his view, allowed Muʿāwiya’s cause to grow strong.

First, Muʿāwiya was in Syria.

The author describes the Syrians polemically as an ignorant mass who followed whatever they were told and obeyed whoever ruled them.

Syria, he says, had long been a land of monarchy under the Byzantine emperors, and its people had grown accustomed to obedience to kings.

ʿAlī, by contrast, was based in the Ḥijāz, whose people had no such tradition of submission to monarchs.

Moreover, ʿAlī's supporters included the foremost Arabs and the finest of the Companions among the Emigrants and Helpers—people of intelligence, insight, opinion, pride, and independent spirit.

Each believed he had a judgment and a right to speak.

The author illustrates this with a story.

When ʿAlī was preparing to march against Muʿāwiya, he ordered a man to mount a young she-camel and dress as a traveler.

He told him to go as far as Ḥimṣ, where Muʿāwiya was staying, enter the congregational mosque dressed as a traveler, and tell anyone who asked that he had come from Iraq.

If asked for news, he was to say that ʿAlī had resolved to invade them and was bringing all his forces.

Then he was to return with their response.

The man did so.

The news spread through Ḥimṣ and reached Muʿāwiya.

Muʿāwiya went to the mosque, ascended the pulpit, gathered the people, praised God, blessed the Prophet, and said:

"People, news has reached me—and perhaps most of you have heard it—that ʿAlī and those with him have resolved to fight you and come against you. What do you say? What will you do?"

Every one of them remained silent.

Then a prominent man of Ḥimyar stood and said:

"Prince, you are the king and we are the subjects. You are the commander and we are the commanded. The decision is yours and the execution is ours."

The author explains that in the Ḥimyarite dialect the man substituted *n* for *l* in the word he used for "execution."

Muʿāwiya said:

“Then I think you should all march out together tomorrow, God willing.”

He descended.

The next morning they all marched out.

The messenger returned to ʿAlī and told him what had happened.

ʿAlī summoned the people, ascended the pulpit, praised God, blessed the Prophet, and said:

“People, news has reached me that Muʿāwiya has learned of our intention to fight him. He has marched out with all his forces and prepared for it. What do you say? What will you do?”

One man stood and said:

“Commander of the Believers, my view is such-and-such.”

Another stood and offered a different view.

Then another, and another, until many people had spoken.

The discussion became tumultuous, opinions multiplied, and the assembly disagreed.

ʿAlī descended saying:

“We belong to God and to Him we return. The son of the liver-eater has escaped me. In the obedience of the army lies assistance for the governor and soundness for affairs.”

The author uses the story to contrast Syrian obedience to Muʿāwiya with the independence and disputatiousness of ʿAlī’s supporters.

A second factor, he says, was that ʿAlī never flattered anyone regarding truth.

He did not excuse people from obligations, overlook wrongdoing, favor one person over another, or grant privileges.

He dismissed ʿUthmān’s governors, recovered wealth from them, reversed land grants, restored what had been appropriated, divided wealth equally, and acted justly among the people.

The author says this caused some people to break their allegiance, led the people of the Camel to fight him, and caused others to refuse support or remain behind from his wars.

“Truth is heavy,”

he says,

“except for one upon whom God makes it light.”

Whenever ʿAlī was displeased with someone, he would confront him openly, rebuke him, and speak harshly.

Al-Ḥasan, fearing that such frankness might alienate tribal leaders and prominent men, would sometimes wait until the man left, take him by the hand, bring him aside privately, speak gently to him, and remove the bitterness caused by ʿAlī's reprimand.

The author portrays ʿAlī as prioritizing God's command over political expediency.

Muʿāwiya, the author says, behaved in exactly the opposite manner.

He placated whoever became angry with him.

He gave worldly wealth to whoever asked for it and, in the author's polemical phrase, "gave away his religion" to whoever demanded it.

He overlooked falsehood among his followers, compromised truth for his partisans, and displayed forbearance when they insulted him.

Those who preferred this world therefore inclined toward him.

Tribal chiefs, prominent clan leaders, Arabs from Egypt, Yemen, and the Bedouin tribes came to him when they feared ʿAlī would hold them to account for wealth they had misappropriated or concealed while serving ʿUthmān.

They knew that only those who practiced restraint, purity, and austerity drew near to ʿAlī.

They also saw Muʿāwiya's generosity toward defectors and the worldly ease he offered.

The report of this spread, and those who had joined him wrote back to former companions encouraging them to follow.

The author cites Khālid ibn al-Muʿammar as an example.

Khālid, who had been with ʿAlī but defected to Muʿāwiya, wrote to his former companion ʿAlī ibn al-Haytham:

"ʿAlī, look to yourself and your clan. What do you say about a man whose conduct toward me you saw? One day, seeing the difficult circumstances of his sons al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, I asked him to increase their stipends slightly. He refused, frowned at me, and spoke harshly to me because of it. What benefit can you expect from a man who would not even benefit his own sons?"

The footnote adds that Muʿāwiya allegedly promised Khālid, who commanded ʿAlī's cavalry, the governorship of Iraq if he defected.

The author concludes that only people of piety and insight could endure remaining with ʿAlī—those willing to bear the bitterness of truth whether it pleased or angered them and who renounced immediate worldly gain.

Another factor, he says, was that most of ʿAlī's supporters against Muʿāwiya were Iraqis.

The author characterizes them as discriminating, clever, intelligent, reflective, investigative, and interpretive.

Precisely for that reason, he says, doubts entered among them when the Qurʾāns were raised and during the arbitration, and they disputed with ʿAlī on both occasions.

He claims this remained characteristic of Iraqi and Arab tribes even in his own time.

Muʿāwiya's followers, by contrast, were seekers of worldly gain.

If they obtained it from him, they were satisfied to take it in exchange for everything else.

Most were Syrians, whom the author polemically describes as distant in understanding, deficient in intelligence, limited in comprehension, highly obedient to rulers, and lacking in critical discrimination.

That, he says, is why they placed Muʿāwiya on a level with ʿAlī and fought alongside him.

The author adds that ʿAlī's supporters had been exhausted by constant warfare.

They had barely emerged from the Battle of the Camel before entering Ṣiffīn, and had barely finished fighting Muʿāwiya before being drawn into war against the Khārijites.

Many insightful men were lost in these conflicts.

Muʿāwiya's forces, meanwhile, were fighting close to home, rested and continually reinforced.

Those seeking worldly wealth and ease steadily joined them.

A further factor strengthening the Syrians' conviction came from the behavior of ʿAlī's own followers during the first confrontation.

Muʿāwiya's men called out:

"Hand over to us the killers of ʿUthmān and we will be at peace with you."

Instead of referring the matter to ʿAlī so that he could answer with a reasoned argument, the author says, his followers contemptuously shouted back together:

"We are all the killers of ʿUthmān."

Muʿāwiya's men then concluded that fighting and killing them had become lawful.

The author says Muʿāwiya had already prepared them to see the matter this way.

He concludes that by these and similar circumstances Muʿāwiya's cause grew strong enough for him to oppose ʿAlī, claim authority alongside him, and fight him.

Otherwise, he asks rhetorically, how could anyone's mind have accepted such a comparison when, in his view, the distance between the two was like the distance between heaven and earth?

The Virtues of Our Masters al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, and the Reproaches of Yazīd and Marwān

The author introduces al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn as the sons of the Messenger of God and the closest of his pure and immaculate progeny.

Their virtues, he says, are too numerous for the present book, so he will mention only representative examples that were widely transmitted among both elite and common believers.

Among them is the saying:

"Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the lords of the youths of Paradise, and their father is better than they."

Another saying:

"A child is a fragrant flower from God apportioned among His servants, and my two fragrant flowers are al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn."

The Prophet called them his sons.

When al-Ḥasan was born, he went to Fāṭima's house and said:

"Show me my son."

They brought him out.

He performed *taḥnīk*, pronounced the call to prayer and the *iqāma* in his ear, and named him.

He did the same with al-Ḥusayn and said:

"I have named these two sons of mine al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn after Aaron's sons Shabbar and Shabbīr."

When they were little, they would come to the Prophet while he was praying.

They would pass between his legs, and he would open them for the children so they could emerge on the other side.

When he prostrated, they would climb onto his back.

He prolonged his prostration until they climbed down or were removed, because he loved what pleased them and disliked interrupting or upsetting them.

The Prophet is also quoted as saying:

“O God, I love them both, so love them both; love whoever loves them, and hate whoever hates them.”

Whenever he heard them crying, it alarmed and distressed him, and he reproached whoever had caused them to cry.

One day they wrestled before him.

He called to al-Ḥasan:

“Come on, Ḥasan!”

Fāṭima said:

“Messenger of God, you say ‘Come on, Ḥasan!’ even though he is the older one—as though he were more beloved to you?”

The Prophet replied:

“Neither is more beloved to me than the other. But Gabriel is saying, ‘Come on, Ḥusayn!’”

The Prophet often carried them upon his shoulders.

People would say:

“What an excellent mount you are for them, Messenger of God!”

He would reply:

“And what excellent riders they are.”

If he saw one of them stumble or fall, he would rise in alarm and hurry toward him, saying:

“A child is indeed a trial. I stood up without even being conscious of what I was doing.”

He would also seek divine protection for them, saying:

“I seek refuge for you both in the perfect words of God from every devil and poisonous creature, and from every harmful eye.”

And he would say:

“Thus Abraham used to seek protection for Ishmael and Isaac.”

When the Prophet lay dying, he called the two boys to him, embraced them, kissed them repeatedly, took the hand of each, and placed their hands upon his face.

He then lost consciousness.

ʿAlī moved them away.

When the Prophet regained consciousness, he ordered them brought back and said to ʿAlī:

“Leave them. Let them enjoy me and let me enjoy them, for after me they will suffer preference being given to others over them.”

Umm Salama is also reported to have seen the Prophet in a dream on the night al-Ḥusayn was killed, with dust on his head and beard.

She asked:

“What is this, Messenger of God?”

He replied:

“I have just witnessed the killing of al-Ḥusayn.”

The Prophet was asked:

“Who among your Household is most beloved to you?”

He answered:

“Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.”

He is also reported to have said:

“Gabriel came to me and said: ‘Muḥammad, your community after you will kill al-Ḥusayn. If you wish, I shall show you the soil upon which he will be killed.’”

He then showed him red earth, and the Prophet wept.

The Prophet looked upon ʿAlī, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn and said:

“I am at peace with those with whom you are at peace, and at war with those with whom you are at war.”

Fāṭima asked him:

“Messenger of God, grant gifts to your two sons.”

He replied:

“Yes. As for al-Ḥasan, I have granted him my dignity, my forbearance, and my knowledge. As for al-Ḥusayn, I have granted him my generosity and my courage.”

The author adds:

“And so they were—blessings of God upon them both.”

It is said that only one harsh expression was ever remembered from al-Ḥasan.

A dispute arose between al-Ḥusayn and ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān concerning some land.

Al-Ḥusayn mentioned it to al-Ḥasan, who replied:

“ʿAmr will get nothing from us except what rubs his nose in the dust.”

The author says this was the only such expression preserved from al-Ḥasan, an indication of the forbearance he had inherited.

As for al-Ḥusayn, the author says he was the bravest and most generous of people.

Al-Ḥasan most closely resembled the Messenger of God from the head to the chest, while al-Ḥusayn most resembled him in the lower part of the body.

The Prophet is further quoted as saying:

“Whoever loves al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, I love; whoever I love, God loves. Whoever hates them, I hate; whoever I hate, God hates. Whoever God loves, He admits to Paradise; and whoever God hates, He admits to the Fire.”

When the command to love the Prophet’s near kin was revealed, the people asked:

“Messenger of God, who are your relatives whose love God has made obligatory?”

He replied three times:

“ʿAlī, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn.”

The text then relates the Verse of Purification.

The Prophet was in Umm Salama’s house together with ʿAlī, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn.

Umm Salama stood at the door and asked:

“Messenger of God, am I among you?”

He replied:

“You are upon goodness. You are one of the Prophet’s wives.”

The author says that both al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn performed the pilgrimage fifteen times on foot.

Each twice divided his wealth with God—that is, he gave half of it away in God's path—to the extent that he would give away one sandal and keep one sandal, give away one boot and keep the other.

Al-Ḥasan was older than al-Ḥusayn by the interval of one menstrual purity between pregnancies.

The Prophet accepted a pledge of allegiance from them when they were still children and did not accept such a pledge from any other child of his Household.

The Death of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī

The author says that ʿAlī had entrusted the Imamate to al-Ḥasan, the elder of the two brothers.

After ʿAlī's death, al-Ḥasan assumed leadership of the people.

The author says that the earlier section already explained how Muʿāwiya poisoned him and caused his death.

Before dying, al-Ḥasan entrusted the matter to his brother al-Ḥusayn, who succeeded him.

Al-Ḥusayn wished to bury al-Ḥasan beside the Messenger of God, as al-Ḥasan had instructed.

Al-Ḥasan died in Medina.

According to one report, when ʿĀʾisha was informed, while she was then in al-Biqāʿ, she said:

"There remains in the chamber only the space of one grave, which I had intended for myself, but al-Ḥasan has a greater right to it."

Another report says the opposite: that when the news reached her she refused, mounted a mule, rallied Banū Umayya, and said:

"Am I to be overpowered in my own house and someone buried there without my permission? Only one grave-space remains, and I had reserved it for myself."

The author then quotes satirical verses about her:

One day upon a mule,
another day upon a camel.

Another poet said:

O daughter of Abū Bakr—
may neither he nor you have been!

You rode a camel, then a mule;
had you wished, you might have ridden an elephant.

You possess one ninth of one eighth,
yet you claimed ownership of the whole.

The Banū Umayya said:

“By God, he shall not be buried there.”

The text says that when al-Ḥasan heard of this before his death, he said:

“If this is how matters stand, then bury me in the cemetery beside my mother Fāṭima.”

He died in Rabīʿ al-Awwal in the year 49 AH, at the age of forty-seven.

Al-Ḥusayn, however, said:

“I would not bury him anywhere except beside the Messenger of God.”

News of the dispute reached Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ, who was then governor of Medina.

Banū Umayya came to him and said:

“What are you going to do about these people? They intend to bury al-Ḥasan in the chamber of the Messenger of God, even though ʿUthmān was prevented from being buried there.”

Saʿīd said:

“I will not stand between them and that.”

Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, who was present, became angry and said:

“If you will do nothing, then leave them to me.”

Saʿīd replied:

“You and they are on your own.”

Marwān gathered Banū Umayya, their retainers, and their clients.

Al-Ḥusayn learned of this, gathered his companions, armed them, and carried the bier out.

The people assembled for the funeral prayer, and Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ also came.

The main text says that al-Ḥusayn pushed Saʿīd forward and said:

“Go forward. Were it not the established custom, I would not have put you forward.”

The author explains this according to the outward political order: if the ruler, or someone appointed by the ruler, attended a funeral, he was considered entitled to lead the prayer.

Thus, the main text says, Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ led the funeral prayer.

Banū Umayya and their clients meanwhile stood apart under arms.

Marwān repeatedly said:

“Lord, a fierce battle is better than quiet!”

and:

“Is ʿUthmān to be buried in al-Baqīʿ while al-Ḥasan is buried beside the Prophet? By God, that will never happen while I carry a sword.”

After the prayer, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Jaʿfar took hold of the front of the bier and turned toward al-Baqīʿ.

Al-Ḥusayn asked:

“Where are you going, ʿAbd Allāh?”

He replied:

“I adjure you, Abū ʿAbd Allāh, not to encounter evil. Grant my request.”

He continued pleading with him and reminded him of al-Ḥasan’s instruction that no conflict should be provoked over the burial and that he should be buried in al-Baqīʿ beside his mother.

Eventually al-Ḥusayn agreed, and the groups separated.

The editor adds a substantial corrective note.

He says it is firmly established that historical sources attributed the phrase:

“Go forward; were it not the established custom, I would not have put you forward”

to al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī, but argues that this is a mistake.

He cites al-Mizzī as saying that the part of the report concerning Saʿīd’s leading the funeral prayer is an addition by some transmitters.

The editor then lists sources stating that **al-Ḥusayn himself prayed over his brother al-Ḥasan**.

He also cites a reconciliation proposed by Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh al-Mālikī, who says both Saʿīd and al-Ḥusayn prayed over him.

Al-Zarandī al-Shāfiʿī is said to have called the report about al-Ḥusayn's statement "strange."

The editor then argues that the phrase properly belongs to **Abū Hāshim ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya**, who supposedly said it to the governor of Medina, Abān ibn ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, at the funeral of his father Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya.

Because the circumstances of the two funerals were similar, the editor argues, the saying was gradually transferred and attributed to al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī.

Finally, the editor adds a polemical objection:

since ʿAlī had killed Saʿīd's father al-ʿĀṣ at Badr, how could it be reasonable for al-Ḥusayn to permit the son of his father's slain enemy to lead the funeral prayer over his brother?

The second footnote explains that Marwān's line:

"Lord, a fierce battle is better than quiet"

is the opening of a *rajaz* verse by Labīd which al-Nuʿmān ibn al-Mundhir is said to have recited.

The author says that when Muʿāwiya learned that al-Ḥasan had instructed that he be buried beside the Messenger of God, he said:

"If my judgment of Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam is correct, he will prevent it."

He kept saying:

"Come on, Marwān—you are the man for it."

When news reached him that Marwān had indeed prevented the burial, Muʿāwiya was pleased and praised Marwān highly.

The section then closes and the next heading begins:

The Uprising and Killing of al-Ḥusayn

The Uprising and Killing of al-Ḥusayn

Al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, assumed the Imamate, called people to himself, and the believers acknowledged his Imamate. Muʿāwiya—may God curse him—died, and his son Yazīd—may God curse him—took his place. Reports concerning al-Ḥusayn reached Yazīd, and Yazīd threatened him. News of this reached al-Ḥusayn, as did reports of Yazīd's corruption in Iraq.

Al-Ḥusayn therefore left Medina with his family, his children, and those members of his Household who could travel lightly with him. He first went to perform the pilgrimage. After completing it he set out for Iraq.

Ibn al-Zubayr met him and said:

"Abū ʿAbd Allāh, you are being sought. If only you would remain in Mecca, becoming as one of the pigeons of this House, and seek protection in God's sanctuary."

Al-Ḥusayn replied:

"What prevents me from doing that is the saying of the Messenger of God: 'A man of Quraysh will cause this Sanctuary to be violated on my account.' By God, I will not be that man. Let God do with me whatever He will."

He departed intending Iraq. As he passed the gate of the Sacred Mosque he recited:

May I never startle grazing beasts at break of dawn
as a raider, nor ever be called Yazīd—

on the day when, from fear of death, he accepted humiliation,
while deaths themselves watched me lest I turn aside.

The editor notes that these two verses are by **Yazīd ibn Mufarrigh al-Ḥimyarī**.

Al-Ḥusayn continued toward Iraq. Yazīd learned of his journey and was told that, if al-Ḥusayn reached Iraq, most of its people would rise with him.

Muslim ibn ʿAqīl ibn Abī Ṭālib had already risen in Kūfa calling people to al-Ḥusayn, and its inhabitants had responded to him.

News reached Yazīd's governor there, al-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr al-Anṣārī, who said:

"The son of the daughter of the Messenger of God is dearer to us than the son of the daughter of Baḥdal,"

meaning Yazīd.

Yazīd dismissed al-Nuʿmān and appointed ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād—may God curse him.

ʿUbayd Allāh arrested Muslim, took him to the top of the palace, had his neck struck while the people watched, and crucified him at al-Kunāsa.

When Yazīd learned that al-Ḥusayn had left Mecca, he sent instructions to ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād:

"Attend to al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī. Do not let him escape you. Forestall him before he reaches Iraq."

ʿUbayd Allāh sent al-Ḥurr ibn Yazīd al-Ḥanẓalī with an army. He encountered al-Ḥusayn at Karbalāʾ and confronted him, but al-Ḥurr was reluctant to fight him.

ʿUbayd Allāh therefore reinforced him with ʿUmar ibn Saʿd and a large army, which hemmed al-Ḥusayn in at al-Ṭaff near Karbalāʾ.

When al-Ḥusayn saw them and became certain they intended to kill him, he stood among his companions and addressed them. After praising God, he said:

"You see what has befallen us. The world has changed and become strange; its goodness has turned away and continued to recede, until nothing remains of it except a residue like the residue in a vessel, and a base life like a pestilent pasture.

Do you not see that truth is not acted upon and falsehood is not restrained?

Let the believer long to meet God. I see death as nothing but happiness, and life among oppressors as nothing but weariness."

Al-Ḥusayn—God's blessings be upon him—was killed at al-Ṭaff on the Day of ʿĀshūrāʾ in the year **61 AH**. The text says he was fifty-six years old, though another report makes him fifty-eight.

The source names **Sinān ibn Anas al-Nakhaʿī** as the one who killed him and **Khawlī ibn Yazīd al-Aṣbaḥī**, of Ḥimyar, as the one who finished him off, severed his head, and brought it to ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, saying:

Load my mount with silver and gold,
for I have killed the veiled king;

I have killed the best of mankind
in mother and in father.

The source further claims that after al-Ḥusayn's death the horizon remained red for forty days and that everyone who witnessed his killing was eventually either killed or afflicted by some calamity.

A man is reported to have come to al-Suddī and said:

"I was among those who witnessed the killing of al-Ḥusayn. By God, I did not shoot an arrow, thrust with a spear, or strike with a sword.

Yet in a dream I saw as though the Resurrection had occurred and mankind had been gathered. I passed by the Messenger of God, and he said:

'Were you among those who witnessed the killing of al-Ḥusayn?'

I said: 'Yes, but by God, Messenger of God, I did not assist against him or anyone with him. I neither thrust with a spear, struck with a sword, nor shot an arrow.'

He jabbed his two fingers into my eyes, and in the morning I awoke blind, as you see me."

Al-Suddī reportedly replied:

“Then drink your fill of cold water.”

ʿAbd al-Razzāq is also quoted as saying that an Anṣārī related to Maʿmar:

“I was at Minā on the Day of ʿĀshūrāʾ. That evening I rose during the night and heard the voice of a woman upon Mount Kabkab, on the side facing the Sacred Mosque. It was the middle of the night and everything had become still. She stretched out her voice like a lamentation, saying:

‘Weep! Shall I weep for Ḥusayn? Yes indeed!’

Another voice answered her from Thabīr:

‘Weep! Weep for the son of the Messenger! Yes indeed!’

What I heard frightened me. I recorded the date, and it proved to be the very day al-Ḥusayn was killed.”

Umm Salama is also reported to have said:

“I did not hear the lamentation of the jinn after the death of the Messenger of God until the night on which al-Ḥusayn was killed. In the middle of the night I heard a female voice saying:

O eye, exert yourself fully in weeping—
who will weep for the martyrs after me?

For a band whom deaths are leading
toward a tyrannical and obstinate king.”

Another report attributes to the jinn:

Weep for the son of Fāṭima,
through whose death hair has turned white;

for whose killing you were shaken,
and for whose killing the moon was eclipsed.

And another nocturnal voice is said to have cried:

O you who ignorantly killed Ḥusayn,
receive the tidings of punishment and chastisement!

Every inhabitant of heaven invokes against you—
prophet, angel, and slain martyr.

You have been cursed upon the tongue
of the son of David, Moses, and the bearer of the Gospel.

These are presented by the source as miraculous portents and lamentations associated with Karbalāʾ.

When Zayd ibn Arqam learned of al-Ḥusayn's killing, he said:

"They have done it! I testify that I heard the Messenger of God say concerning al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn:

'O God, I entrust them both to You, and I entrust them to the righteous believers.'"

He then entered upon ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, who seated him beside himself on his couch.

The head of al-Ḥusayn was brought and set before ʿUbayd Allāh, who began striking the teeth with a stick in his hand.

Zayd said:

"Remove your stick! I see you putting it upon a place where I repeatedly saw the Messenger of God place his mouth and kiss."

Zayd then leapt from the couch, placed his forehead upon the ground, and said:

"O God, bear witness! I heard the Messenger of God, while placing his hand upon this head, say: 'O God, I entrust him to You and to the righteous believers.'

By God, you have not safeguarded the trust of the Messenger of God."

He then left.

ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād said:

"You are an old man who has become senile."

ʿUbayd Allāh then sent the head of al-Ḥusayn and the heads of those killed with him from among his sons and Household, together with the women, to Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiya. The author says he will return to the rest of their story later.

Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiya

The author says that he has already related a report in which the Messenger of God curses Yazīd together with his father and grandfather, and he declares this sufficient disgrace.

In the author's polemical theology, one cursed by the Prophet is cursed by God and destined for Hell.

He says Yazīd's condition was so bad as to admit no doubt and attributes to him, like his father and grandfather, outward profession of Islam coupled with inward unbelief.

The source claims that when the Messenger of God was once mentioned before Yazīd, he said:

A Hāshimite played with mankind—
no revelation came to him and no Book.

The author presents this verse as an explicit denial of the Messenger of God.

When Muʿāwiya designated Yazīd as successor during his own lifetime, the text says, people strongly objected.

Some of the Companions are quoted as saying:

“Muʿāwiya has turned it into a Heraclian monarchy.”

Al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī is quoted as saying of Yazīd:

“Yazīd has been placed over the necks of the Muslims while he is a youth who drinks intoxicants and plays with dogs.”

The text next relates that al-Ḥusayn and ʿAbd Allāh ibn Jaʿfar were once with Muʿāwiya. As they left, Ibn Jaʿfar said:

“Son of the Messenger of God, I have a need from Yazīd. Would you come with me to him?”

Al-Ḥusayn replied:

“Yes.”

They went and allegedly found Yazīd drinking wine, with Muslim ibn ʿAmr al-Bāhilī singing for him while playing the *ṭunbūr*.

The source adds that Muslim was said to have been the first person to sing over wine.

Another report says that when people performed the pilgrimage during Muʿāwiya’s reign, Yazīd sat drinking in Medina.

Ibn ʿAbbās and al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī sought permission to enter. He admitted them while still in that condition.

When al-Ḥusayn saw him, he regarded the scene as grave.

Yazīd said to the cupbearer:

“Give them both a drink.”

Al-Ḥusayn gave a disapproving look, and the cupbearer stopped out of awe of him.

Yazīd then said:

“Muslim, sing to me.”

He sang:

O companion, what a wonder!
We called, but he did not answer—

to singing girls, pleasures,
desires and delight,

and to a crowned wine-vessel
around which sit the lords of the Arabs,

among them she who enthralled
your heart and did not repent.

Muʿāwiya had already designated Yazīd as successor.

Al-Ḥusayn said:

“I give God my covenant: if authority ever reaches you while I am alive, I shall give you nothing but swords, after having witnessed you in this gathering.”

He rose and left, and ʿAbd Allāh ibn Jaʿfar departed with him.

Yazīd then told Muslim:

“Sing to me.”

Muslim sang:

Its people carried away from it and departed,
while obliteration passed over the traces of those who had gone.

Al-Ḥusayn retorted:

“Rather, may it fall upon you, accursed one.”

The source says Yazīd possessed no virtue by which either elite or common people could regard him as entitled to the caliphate.

His reign lasted three years, during which al-Ḥusayn was killed—a sin which, in the author’s rhetoric, “filled what lies between heaven and earth.”

The editor adds a long note collecting later condemnations of Yazīd.

Al-Taftāzānī is quoted as saying that scholars agreed it was permissible to curse whoever killed al-Ḥusayn, ordered his killing, permitted it, or approved it, and he adds that Yazīd’s satisfaction at al-Ḥusayn’s killing, his rejoicing over it, and his humiliation of the Prophet’s Household were, in his judgment, established in meaning.

ʿAbd al-Ḥayy ibn al-ʿImād is quoted as saying that what is transmitted concerning al-Ḥusayn's killers and those hostile to him indicates heresy, the disappearance of faith from their hearts, and contempt for the prophetic office.

Al-Munāwī is quoted, in discussing the report "The destruction of my community will be at the hands of young men of Quraysh," as including Yazīd and similar young Umayyad rulers among them. The note accuses the Umayyads of killing members of the Prophet's Household and leading Emigrants and Helpers, taking the Household captive, shedding blood, destroying property, and devastating people in the Ḥijāz and Iraq.

The editor's cited passage concludes that Banū Umayya opposed the Prophet's injunction regarding his Household: they shed their blood, enslaved their women, imprisoned their children, destroyed their homes, denied their nobility and merit, and permitted their captivity and abuse.

The author condemns a faction who claimed that al-Ḥusayn had rebelled against Yazīd and that Yazīd was a legitimate imam.

He argues that such a position amounts to regarding al-Ḥusayn's blood as lawful and thus morally joining his killers.

He recalls the saying addressed to ʿAlī, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn:

"I am at peace with those with whom you are at peace and at war with those with whom you are at war."

And he argues that if mere hatred of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn incurs punishment, killing them is still more grievous.

The source then portrays Yazīd's entire reign as oppression and civil strife.

After al-Ḥusayn and his companions were killed, the women of his Household and his children were taken to Yazīd as captives upon camel-saddles before the gaze of men.

Then, when Yazīd was told that Ibn al-Zubayr opposed him, he prepared armies and sent them under **Muslim ibn ʿUqba** against Medina, the Prophet's sanctuary.

The author says the army killed its inhabitants and permitted the city to be plundered for three days—men killed, women violated or taken captive, and property seized.

Muslim ibn ʿUqba then marched toward Mecca but died on the way.

Yazīd appointed **al-Ḥuṣayn ibn Numayr al-Sakūnī** in his place.

The army reached Mecca, attacked it, and set fire to the coverings of the Kaʿba. Its roof burned and part of its wall collapsed.

The author emphasizes that even the pre-Islamic polytheists had revered the sanctuary and had not dared such acts against it.

The editor identifies this as the **Battle of al-Ḥarra** and gives an expanded account.

A delegation from Medina had visited Yazīd in Damascus. He honored them and gave them gifts, including a large payment to their leader, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ḥanẓala.

When they returned, however, they told the people of Medina about Yazīd's misconduct, especially his drinking, and publicly renounced allegiance to him near the Prophet's pulpit.

Yazīd then sent Muslim ibn ʿUqba against them.

The note says earlier writers called him **Musrif ibn ʿUqba**—"the Profligate ibn ʿUqba"—because of his bloodshed.

The editor cites differing casualty figures: more than ninety Qurashites and a similar number of Anṣār in one account, together with four thousand others; another account gives 1,700 descendants of the Anṣār, 3,500 slaves, clients, and other people, and 1,300 descendants of the Emigrants.

The note also preserves an allegation that a thousand virgin women were violated during the sack, and a report from Mālik that seven hundred bearers of the Qurʾān were killed on the Day of al-Ḥarra.

These figures and allegations are those of the cited historical tradition and are presented by the editor as such.

The author further accuses Yazīd of openly drinking wine, patronizing musical instruments, permitting forbidden acts, and suspending legal judgments.

He says Yazīd's vices were too numerous to count.

He adds that even those who regarded Yazīd as an imam did not deny his moral corruption; instead, they argued that a sinful man could nevertheless be imam.

The author rejects that principle and portrays Yazīd as a leader guiding his followers to divine wrath rather than to God.

Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam

The author says he has already described Marwān as "a portion of God's curse," because, according to reports cited earlier, the Messenger of God cursed his father while Marwān was still in his loins.

When Marwān was born, the source says, he was brought to the Prophet for *taḥnīk*, as Muslim infants normally were, but the Prophet refused and said:

"Bring me their blue-eyed one."

The author recalls Marwān's hostility toward al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, particularly his opposition to al-Ḥasan being buried beside the Prophet and his readiness to fight al-Ḥusayn over the matter.

In the author's polemical interpretation, Marwān thus entered the category of those at war with God and His Messenger.

When al-Ḥusayn's head was brought to ʿ**Amr ibn Saʿīd**, Yazīd's governor of Medina, Banū Umayya were gathered around him.

They heard women crying.

ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd asked:

"What is this?"

He was told:

"The women of Banū Hāshim are weeping after seeing al-Ḥusayn's head."

Marwān—whom the author repeatedly curses—was among those present and recited:

The women of Banū Ziyād raised a cry
like the cry of our own women on the morning of al-Arnab.

The editor explains that **al-Arnab** was a battle in which Banū Zubayd defeated Banū Ziyād of Banū al-Ḥārith ibn Kaʿb, and that the verse is attributed to ʿAmr ibn Maʿdīkarib.

The author interprets Marwān's verse as comparing the lament of Banū Hāshim to the cries of Quraysh after their losses at Badr and as revealing an old Umayyad desire for revenge against the Prophet and his Household.

ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd said:

"By God, I wish the Commander of the Believers had not sent al-Ḥusayn's head to me."

Marwān replied:

"Be silent—may you never be silent! It is not as you say, but as the earlier poet said:

'They struck the head of a noble man with a blow
that fixed the pegs of kingship firmly in place.'"

He then told the bearer:

"Give it to me."

The man handed him the head.

Marwān took it in his hands and began saying:

How delightful is your coolness in the hands
and your red color upon the cheeks.

The author treats this as evidence of old pre-Islamic vengeance and hatred that Marwān could not conceal.

He also recalls that Marwān had earlier urged Muʿāwiya, when the latter entered Kūfa, to **dig up ʿAlī's grave**.

Because al-Ḥasan had concealed its location, fearing desecration, Muʿāwiya questioned people about where it was.

A Kūfan came and said:

"I can show you ʿAlī's grave."

Muʿāwiya asked Marwān:

"What do you say?"

Marwān recited:

They buried their brother in the pit and gave him a pillow,
while they cast down ʿĀmir, their brother, without a pillow.

He thereby urged Muʿāwiya to exhume the grave.

Muʿāwiya then asked ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿĀmir ibn Kurayz for his opinion.

He replied:

"I do not wish you to learn the place of his grave or inquire about it, nor do I wish this act of vengeance to arise between us and our people."

Muʿāwiya accepted his advice and abandoned the plan.

The author further says that ʿAlī had captured Marwān on the Day of the Camel.

ʿAlī's companions advised him to kill Marwān because they knew his character, but ʿAlī pardoned and released him.

Marwān, the author says, did not preserve gratitude for this favor but only increased in hostility.

Yazīd had designated his son **Muʿāwiya ibn Yazīd** as successor.

When Yazīd died, the younger Muʿāwiya assumed power.

One report says that he became scrupulous about the matter, recognized his father's and grandfather's usurpation of the caliphate, and wished to restore it to its rightful possessors.

According to this account, Marwān and Banū Umayya conspired against him and poisoned him.

Other reports say he was killed or stabbed.

The text says he died forty days after his father, though another report says twenty.

Those who maintained that he voluntarily renounced the caliphate say that he ordered a general call to prayer and addressed the assembled people:

“Now then: I have considered your affair and found myself too weak for it.

I sought for you a man like ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb when Abū Bakr turned to him, but I found none.

I sought for you six men like the six of ʿUmar’s council, but I found none.

You therefore have a greater right to your own affair. Choose for it whomever you wish.”

He descended, entered his house, and did not reappear publicly before his death.

Some said poison was secretly administered to him; others that he was stabbed.

His *kunya* was **Abū Laylā**.

A poet said:

I see a civil war whose cauldrons are boiling—
kingship after Abū Laylā belongs to whoever overcomes.

The Caliphate of Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam

The affairs of Banū Umayya fell into confusion.

Ibn al-Zubayr had gained control of Mecca, Medina, Egypt, and Iraq and expelled the Umayyads there to Syria.

Most Syrians began calling for allegiance to Ibn al-Zubayr.

Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam himself initially set out intending to go to Ibn al-Zubayr and pledge allegiance.

Banū Umayya became alarmed.

They decided instead to put forward **Khālid ibn Yazīd**, who was still a young boy but was regarded as eloquent and dignified.

A group of Umayyads gathered at **al-Jābiya**, which the editor identifies as a village in the district of Damascus, also called Jābiyat al-Jawlān.

The people of al-Jābiya assembled in its congregational mosque to select someone to whom they would pledge allegiance.

The Umayyads present initially favored Khālid ibn Yazīd, saying:

“We shall choose a man from among us to govern for him and act as his guardian until he comes of age.”

Marwān secretly planted people in the gathering to mention him, saying:

“Who is there for this affair comparable to Marwān?”

During the night his supporters approached various men and secured their support.

ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ made an agreement with Marwān that he would work to secure power for him in return for Marwān making him successor afterward.

The next day, when the general gathering assembled, ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd stood and said:

“Who is comparable to Marwān for this affair? He is today the elder of Banū Umayya. He has grown so old that even his forearms have turned white.”

The author mocks this, saying that no merit could be found for Marwān besides age, though there were many wicked old men older than he.

Those who had been secretly enlisted the night before then rose one after another saying:

“Yes, he is fit for it.”

When advocacy for Marwān became widespread, one attendee remarked:

“This is an affair that was arranged by night.”

Marwān was nevertheless installed.

Marwān married Khālid’s mother in order, according to the source, to diminish and humiliate Khālid.

Whenever people were gathered and Khālid appeared, Marwān belittled him publicly.

Once he called him:

“Son of the moist woman,”

using language intended to humiliate him.

Khālid complained to his mother.

The source says she took revenge: she came to Marwān while he slept, placed a cushion over his face, sat upon it, and suffocated him to death.

Thus, says the author, Marwān is counted among men killed by women.

The text then returns to ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd.

It says he had been the principal organizer of Marwān's accession because Marwān promised that the succession would pass to him.

But once established, Marwān broke his agreement and designated his own son ʿAbd al-Malik.

When ʿAbd al-Malik eventually took power, he killed ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd despite the latter's earlier service to Marwān.

The source notes that Marwān was ʿAmr's maternal uncle: ʿAmr's mother was Umm al-Banīn daughter of al-Ḥakam.

Marwān also contended with **al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Qays al-Fihrī**, who had gained control of the administration of Damascus and marched with an army against him.

ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd moved into Damascus while Marwān confronted al-Ḍaḥḥāk, defeated him, and killed him.

Marwān is quoted as saying:

When I saw the affair had become difficult,
I summoned Ghassān and Kalb,

and powerful men of al-Saksakīn,
leaping forward upon crooked lances—

men who take kingship only by force.

The author seizes upon the final line as an admission that Marwān **usurped** authority.

He then describes the killing of ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd by ʿAbd al-Malik.

Because ʿAmr had helped establish Marwān and because Marwān had promised him succession, ʿAbd al-Malik feared him.

He summoned ʿAmr privately under the pretense of discussing a secret matter, threw an iron collar around his neck, tightened it, and told his sons and retainers:

"Attend to him and kill him."

ʿAbd al-Malik then went out to lead the prayer in the mosque.

After two *rakʿas*, he became afraid that ʿAmr might kill the men assigned to him.

He put his hand to his nose, pretending to have a nosebleed, appointed someone to continue the prayer, and returned.

Finding that they had not yet killed ʿAmr, he killed him himself.

When ʿAmr's family and retainers learned what had happened, they rose in revolt, and others joined them.

ʿAbd al-Malik opened the treasury to them; they plundered it and were distracted by the wealth until they dispersed.

The author says ʿAbd al-Malik then eliminated through stratagem everyone who had risen against him until no dangerous rival remained.

The author says that this ruthless policy is why some credited ʿAbd al-Malik with firmly establishing Umayyad rule: earlier Umayyad rulers had often pardoned defectors who returned to them, whereas he killed those he feared.

Returning to Marwān, the text says he used to curse and abuse ʿAlī from the pulpit.

It relates that Marwān once came to Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ during Saʿd's final illness.

Saʿd initially refused him entry.

His sons said:

"If you do this, we fear him for ourselves after your death."

Marwān was therefore admitted.

He asked:

"Abū Isḥāq, do you have any need or testament you wish to entrust?"

Saʿd said:

"Sit me up."

They sat him up.

He said:

"Were it not for a saying I heard from the Messenger of God, I would say nothing to you. I heard the Messenger of God say: 'Among the rights a Muslim has over his brother is that he advise him sincerely.'

I therefore forbid you to curse ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib."

Marwān remained silent and rose to leave.

Saʿd put his hand upon him and said:

“Sit. This is not the time to leave.”

Saʿd then began telling him what he had heard from the Messenger of God concerning ʿAlī’s virtues and what he himself had witnessed of ʿAlī’s merits.

Marwān repeatedly tried to get away while Saʿd held him and said:

“Sit.”

The source says Marwān’s face kept changing color.

Eventually Saʿd’s sons interrupted their father, and Marwān departed dragging his feet, his face darkened with anger.

The author concludes that Marwān seized rule without any legitimate cause, pedigree, testament, or genuine consensus—except for the machinations of those at al-Jābiya.

He repeats his earlier argument that even a sound group cannot legitimately impose an imam upon people who did not authorize them, and regards the al-Jābiya faction as still less qualified.

Marwān remained in power for **nine months**, according to one report, or **ten months less three days**, according to another.

He died aged **sixty-three**, though another report gives **sixty-one**.

The Virtues of ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn and the Reproaches of ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān

Amid the Sorrows of Karbalāʾ

Al-Ḥusayn had two sons named ʿAlī, one older and one younger.

The text says that ʿ**Alī al-Akbar** was killed with his father at al-Ṭaff.

His mother was **Laylā daughter of Abī Murra**, whose mother was **Maymūna daughter of Abī Sufyān**.

When al-Ḥusayn’s men and ʿUmar ibn Saʿd’s forces faced one another at al-Ṭaff, al-Ḥusayn asked:

“What do you want from us?”

They said:

“We wish to fight you.”

He asked:

“Why?”

They replied:

“Because you came to corrupt the people of this city”—meaning Kūfa—“against the Commander of the Believers,”

meaning Yazīd.

Al-Ḥusayn said:

“I did not come for that.”

They replied:

“Yes you did. It has reached the Commander of the Believers that a group among them wrote to you pledging allegiance.”

The text adds:

“It is said that this charge was fabricated against them.”

Al-Ḥusayn answered:

“If that is so, then I shall return to Medina.”

They wrote his proposal to ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād.

He replied:

“Now that our hands have caught him, shall we release him? By God, no—unless he comes to me submitting to my judgment, so that I may do with him whatever I decide.”

When al-Ḥusayn was told this, he said:

“Then I shall go to Yazīd and place my hand in his.”

They refused even that.

Al-Ḥurr ibn Yazīd al-Ḥanẓalī had arrived before ʿUmar ibn Saʿd with an army and confronted al-Ḥusayn.

When ʿUmar ibn Saʿd later arrived with a second army, al-Ḥurr said to him:

“By God, if the Turks and Daylamites had requested something like this from us, it would not have been permissible for us to fight them. Accept his proposal.”

ʿUmar replied:

“The governor”—meaning ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād—“has given us an order which we will not disobey.”

Al-Ḥurr then turned his horse toward al-Ḥusayn and joined him. He remained with him until he was killed among his companions.

When the armies prepared to fight, a Syrian called out to ʿAlī al-Akbar:

“You have kinship with the Commander of the Believers,”

meaning Yazīd, because Maymūna daughter of Abī Sufyān was ʿAlī’s maternal great-grandmother.

“If you wish, we will grant you safety and you may come over to us.”

ʿAlī replied:

“The kinship of the Messenger of God has the greater right to be respected.”

He charged against them, reciting:

I am ʿAlī son of al-Ḥusayn son of ʿAlī;
by the House of God, we have the greater claim to the Prophet.

I strike them with the sword defending my father;
by God, the son of the pretender shall never rule over us.

He repeatedly charged, drove men back, and returned to his father saying:

“Father, thirst!”

Al-Ḥusayn would say:

“Be patient, my beloved. Perhaps evening will not come before the Messenger of God gives you drink.”

The text says he was then struck by an arrow in the throat.

Another version says **Murra ibn Munqidh ibn al-Nuʿmān ibn ʿAbd al-Qays** charged and pierced him through with a spear.

Al-Ḥusayn took him in his arms.

ʿAlī is said to have told him:

“Father, here is the Messenger of God saying to you: ‘Hasten your coming to us.’”

He remained upon his father’s chest until he died.

Looking at his dead son, al-Ḥusayn said:

“After you, let dust cover the world.”

Al-Ḥusayn then summoned ʿ**Alī al-Aṣghar**, entrusted the succession to him, and gave him his testament.

At the time ʿAlī al-Aṣghar was severely ill and physically exhausted.

The text gives his age as twenty-three, calling this the commonly accepted account.

It says that specialists in the genealogy maintain that the surviving son was the younger ʿAlī, the one designated by al-Ḥusayn during his lifetime and the Imam after his death, while the elder was the one killed.

A report adds that the slain ʿAlī was wearing a **shanaf** in his ear.

The footnote explains *shanaf* as an ornament worn in the ear—that is, an earring.

After al-Ḥusayn and his companions were killed, the sick ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn was brought before ʿUmar ibn Saʿd.

Seeing his severe illness, ʿUmar left him alone and ordered that no one harm him.

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn is quoted as saying:

“When ʿUmar ibn Saʿd—may God curse him—left me, I remained lying where I was because of my illness.

A Syrian man came to me, carried me away while weeping, and said:

‘Son of the Messenger of God, I fear for you. Stay with me.’

He took me to his house, treated me generously, and wept whenever he entered or left and looked at me.

I said to myself: ‘If there is any goodness in one of these people, it must be in this man.’

But when we reached the stage of being brought before ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, they asked about me and were told I had been left behind.

They searched and could not find me.

His herald proclaimed: ‘Whoever finds ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn and brings him shall receive three hundred dirhams.’

The man entered upon me weeping, began tying my hands to my neck, and said:

‘Son of the Messenger of God, I fear they will kill me if I conceal you.’

He took me out, handed me to them bound, and took the three hundred dirhams while I watched him.”

They took ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn to ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād.

ʿUbayd Allāh asked:

“Who are you?”

He replied:

“I am ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn.”

ʿUbayd Allāh said:

“Did God not kill ʿAlī?”

He replied:

“ʿAlī al-Akbar was my brother, and the people killed him.”

ʿUbayd Allāh said:

“Rather, God killed him.”

ʿAlī replied:

“God takes souls at the time of their death.”

ʿUbayd Allāh ordered him killed.

Zaynab daughter of ʿAlī cried out:

“Ibn Ziyād, enough of our blood! I adjure you by God: if you kill him, then kill me with him.”

He therefore spared ʿAlī and sent him to Yazīd together with the other members of al-Ḥusayn’s household.

They entered upon Yazīd while ʿAlī was gravely ill.

A Syrian stood and asked Yazīd:

“Commander of the Believers, are their women lawful for us?”

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn replied:

“You lie—unless you leave the religion of Islam and declare them lawful under some other religion.”

Yazīd lowered his head for a long while.

He ordered the women taken to his own women.

Then he ordered al-Ḥusayn’s head raised upon the point of a spear.

When the women saw it, they began wailing.

Yazīd entered upon his own women and said:

“Why do you not weep with the daughters of your paternal uncle?”

He ordered them to join the lament.

The source portrays this as further mockery of God and His friends.

Yazīd then recited:

We split open the skulls of men dear to us,
yet they had been the more disobedient and oppressive.

While the women wept and lamented, the text says exhilaration seized him and he recited further verses about one grief-stricken person weeping for another.

The author rejects any suggestion that Yazīd was genuinely saddened by al-Ḥusayn’s death, arguing that had he truly grieved he would not have mistreated the head, raised it upon a spear, paraded it, sent it through the provinces, or ordered al-Ḥusayn’s killing.

For the author, this was the old blood-feud of Banū Umayya for the deaths of the Jāhiliyya.

After Yazīd had accomplished what he wished, he ordered ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn released and offered him the choice of remaining with him or returning home.

ʿAlī chose Medina, and Yazīd permitted him to leave.

The text returns briefly to Karbalāʾ.

When al-Ḥusayn learned that ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād had killed Muslim ibn ʿAqīl, had mobilized armies against him, and that his Kūfan supporters had become frightened and dispersed, he gathered his companions and said:

“Whoever among you wishes to leave may leave.”

Most of those with him departed.

Fewer than seventy men remained, all accepting death with him.

The text says the total number killed from al-Ḥusayn’s companions, brothers, sons, and Household was **seventy-two**, while they killed **eighty-eight** of ʿUmar ibn Saʿd’s men during the battle, apart from those who later died of their wounds.

Among al-Ḥusayn’s sons it names:

- ʿ**Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn**, killed by Murra ibn Munqidh al-ʿAbdī;
- ʿ**Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥusayn**, killed by Hāniʾ ibn al-Ḥaḍramī;
- **Abū Bakr ibn al-Ḥusayn**, killed by ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUqba al-Ghanawī.

Among the descendants of al-Ḥasan it names:

- ʿ**Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan**, killed by an arrow from Ḥarmala al-Kāhilī;
- **al-Qāsim ibn al-Ḥasan**, killed by Saʿd ibn ʿAmr ibn Nufayl al-Azdī.

Among al-Ḥusayn’s brothers, sons of ʿAlī, it names **al-ʿAbbās**, bearer of al-Ḥusayn’s standard.

The text says Zayd ibn Ruqād al-Janabī killed him.

Whenever al-Ḥusayn was denied water, al-ʿAbbās would charge the opposing forces until they opened a path, reach the Euphrates, bring water back, and give it to al-Ḥusayn and his companions.

For this reason he was called **al-Saqqāʾ**, “the Water-Bearer.”

He was killed between the Euphrates and the place where al-Ḥusayn fell, and the text says his grave was therefore located there.

His hands and feet, it says, were cut off that day.

In the Presence of Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn

The Imamate then passed to ʿ**Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn**.

All later descendants of al-Ḥusayn descend from him; the author says al-Ḥusayn had no surviving posterity through any other son.

He describes ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn as pious, devout, virtuous, and acknowledged as such by elite and commoner, supporter and opponent alike.

The editor collects several laudatory assessments:

- Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab: “I never saw anyone more scrupulous than he.”
- al-Zuhrī: “I never saw a Hāshimite superior to ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn, nor anyone more learned in jurisprudence.”
- Ibn Saʿd: “ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn was trustworthy, reliable, prolific in ḥadīth, lofty, eminent, and scrupulous.”
- Mālik: “Among the Household of the Messenger of God there was no one like ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn.”
- Zayd ibn Aslam: “I never saw anyone among them comparable to ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn.”
- Ibn ʿAsākir: “ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn was a man of distinction in religion.”

He was called **Sayyid al-ʿĀbidīn**, “Master of the Worshippers,” and **Dhū al-Thafanāt**, “Possessor of Calluses.”

The latter name came from the calluses that developed at the places of prostration upon his body, like the calluses of a camel, because of his frequent prostration.

Pieces of them would fall away from time to time.

When he died, these were reportedly placed with him in his shroud.

The source says he prayed **one thousand *rakʿas* every day and night** and each night gave away in charity whatever remained after providing for himself and his dependents.

After his death, while washing his body, they noticed a raised mark across his shoulder.

They asked his son Abū Jaʿfar:

“Son of the Messenger of God, what is this mark?”

He replied:

“No one but me knows what it is. Had he not died, I would not have disclosed it.

Whenever night covered him and he rose to pray, he would look at whatever food remained after the needs of himself and his family.

He placed it in a sack, threw the sack over his shoulder, and slipped out without anyone knowing.

Sometimes I knew what he was doing without his knowing that I knew.

He would go to the houses of poor people who knew the time of his arrival but did not know who he was.

When they saw him approaching, they rejoiced and said:

‘The man with the sack has come!’

He distributed what was in it among them and returned to spend the remainder of his night in prayer.

That is the mark of the sack."

The source also reports that he would fast by day and stand in prayer by night.

When all eyes had fallen asleep he would supplicate:

"My God, the stars of Your heavens have set, the eyes of Your creatures have slept, the voices of Your servants have become still, and the kings of Banū Umayya have closed their doors around themselves while their guards patrol them.

They have concealed themselves from anyone who asks them for a need or seeks some benefit from them.

But You, my God, are the Living and Self-Subsisting King. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes You, and nothing distracts You from anything else.

The gates of Your heavens are open to those who call upon You.

Your treasuries are not shut.

Your mercy is not veiled.

Your gifts are not withheld from those who ask You for them; rather, they are freely bestowed.

My God, You are the Generous One who never turns away a believing petitioner who asks You, nor hides Yourself from one who seeks You.

By Your might, their needs are not intercepted before reaching You, nor can anyone besides You restrain them.

O God, You see me standing here and the humiliation of my station before You.

You know my innermost being and see what is in my heart and what will set right my Hereafter and my worldly life.

My God, expectation of death, terror at what I shall encounter, and standing before You have spoiled my food and drink, made me choke upon my saliva, disturbed me upon my bedding, awakened me, and prevented me from sleeping.

My God, how can one sleep who fears the sudden coming of the Angel of Death amid the events of night and day?"

He would then weep until his crying sometimes awakened his family.

They would rush to him and find him with his cheek pressed into the earth, saying:

“Lord, I ask You for rest, relief, security, and safety.”

Ṭāwūs al-Yamānī said:

“I performed the pilgrimage and entered the Ḥijr at night.

I saw ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn praying.

I drew near and said to myself: ‘A righteous man—perhaps I may hear a supplication from him and benefit from it.’

I heard him say while prostrating:

‘Your servant is at Your courtyard.

Your poor one is at Your courtyard.

Your needy one is at Your courtyard.

Your petitioner is at Your courtyard.’

He then asked for what he wished.

I learned these words from him, and afterward whenever I used them in a distress, it was relieved.”

It is also said that one night a beggar went through the streets of Medina calling:

“Where are those who renounce this world and desire the Hereafter?”

A voice from the direction of al-Baqīʿ, whose speaker was unknown, answered:

“That is ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn.”

It is related that **al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī** once stood before ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn and reviled him.

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn remained silent and did not answer a single word.

Some of his companions were present and were distressed by what they heard.

After al-Ḥasan left, ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn said:

“You heard what that man said?”

They replied:

“Yes. We heard it, and we wished that you—or we—had answered him.”

He recited:

“Those who restrain anger, pardon people, and God loves those who do good.”

Then he said:

“I want you to come with me to his house so that you may hear my response. It was not proper for me to answer him in my own gathering.”

They accompanied him, expecting him to demand satisfaction.

When he reached al-Ḥasan’s house, he asked permission to enter.

Al-Ḥasan came out, expecting confrontation.

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn said:

“Gently, my brother.

I heard what you said to me in my gathering.

Now we are in your gathering, so hear what I say to you:

If what you said about me is truly in me, then I ask God to forgive me.

And if what you said is not in me, then I ask God to forgive you.”

Al-Ḥasan became ashamed, rose, kissed his head and between his eyes, and said:

“By God, I said of you what is not in you. I ask His forgiveness.”

Whenever ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn began making ablution for prayer, his complexion changed and he trembled.

When asked why, he replied:

“I am preparing to stand before a mighty King.”

The author says his excellence was universally known.

He tells a story concerning **al-Zuhrī**, who had committed a sin that appeared enormous to him.

Al-Zuhrī became distraught, wandered about, and partly lost his reason from despair.

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn met him and said:

“Zuhrī, your despair of God’s mercy—which encompasses everything—is more serious for you than the sin you fear.

Repent to God for your sin and ask His forgiveness for your offense.

God loves those who repent and forgives sinners.”

The source says al-Zuhrī recovered and said:

“God knows best where to place His message.”

The author explains ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn’s teaching: someone who commits sins must not immerse himself in despair of God’s mercy.

Rather, he must discharge any obligations owed to other people, repent for what lies between himself and God, seek forgiveness, feel remorse for what has passed, resolve never to return to it, and seek access to God through His friends.

The author says God has made doors through which sinful servants may approach His mercy.

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn is quoted as saying:

“Forbearance is humiliation.”

The editor notes that this derives from a saying attributed to ʿAlī: when someone asked him, “Teach me forbearance,” he replied:

“It is humiliation—so endure it if you can.”

The text then relates that a slave girl was pouring water from a pitcher while ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn performed ablution.

The pitcher fell from her hand, struck his face, and wounded him.

He raised his head and looked at her.

She said:

“My master, God says: ‘Those who restrain anger.’”

He replied:

“I have restrained my anger.”

She said:

“And He says: ‘Those who pardon people.’”

He replied:

“I have pardoned you.”

She said:

“And God loves those who do good.”

He replied:

“Then you are free for the sake of God.”

Hishām ibn Ismāʿīl al-Makhzūmī became governor of Medina and, according to the source, caused ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn considerable harm.

Al-Walīd later dismissed him and ordered him exposed publicly so that people might bring complaints against him.

Hishām feared no one more than ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn because of the harm he had inflicted upon him.

Yet ʿAlī said nothing against him and forbade his family, household, and everyone who obeyed him from speaking ill of Hishām.

He then sent Hishām a message while the latter stood near Marwān’s house:

“Consider whatever money you are unable to pay from the claims made against you. We possess enough to cover it for you.

Be at ease concerning us and everyone who obeys us.”

Hishām cried aloud:

“God knows best where to place His message.”

It is also related that ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn called one of his slaves, who heard him but did not answer.

He said:

“My son, I call you and you do not answer me. Are you not afraid that I will punish you?”

The slave replied:

“No, by God, I do not fear you. That is what made me fail to answer.”

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn said:

“Praise be to God who has made my slave feel safe from me.”

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn is also quoted as saying:

“One day during the turmoil of Ibn al-Zubayr, I left my house, distressed by the reports reaching me.

I came to a garden wall of mine and leaned against it.

While I stood there, a man dressed in white stopped before me.

I did not know him.

He looked at my face and said:

‘ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn, why do I see you sorrowful and distressed?

Are you grieving over this world? Its provision is presently available to righteous and wicked alike.’

I said: ‘By God, no. I do not grieve over anything of this world.’

He said: ‘Then do you grieve over the Hereafter? It is a true promise over which a powerful King shall judge.’

I said: ‘By God, no. That is not why you see me like this.’

He asked: ‘Then what grieves you?’

I said: ‘I fear the turmoil of Ibn al-Zubayr.’

He laughed and said:

‘ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn, have you ever seen anyone trust in God and God fail to suffice him?’

I said: ‘No.’

He asked: ‘Have you ever seen anyone fear God and God fail to save him?’

I said: ‘No.’

He asked: ‘Have you ever seen a petitioner ask God and God fail to give him?’

I said: ‘No.’

He fell silent.

I remained thinking about his words.

Then I raised my eyes—and saw no one.”

The editor explains that the “turmoil of Ibn al-Zubayr” refers to ʿ**Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām**.

He refused allegiance to Yazīd and took refuge in Mecca.

Yazīd’s forces besieged him and used catapults against the Kaʿba.

After Yazīd died in 64 AH, the people of the two Sanctuaries pledged allegiance to Ibn al-Zubayr following a period of more than two months without a generally recognized caliph.

People in Iraq and Yemen also pledged allegiance.

In 73 AH, al-Ḥajjāj, acting under ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān’s orders, besieged Ibn al-Zubayr, again used catapults, and bombarded the Kaʿba.

The siege lasted for months and many people were killed.

The editor says this is why ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn feared the consequences of the turmoil for the population.

The editor then makes a polemical observation: some sources relate the story of the mysterious man in white but omit ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn’s name and instead attribute it to an unidentified man in a garden in Egypt.

He asks rhetorically whether a man supposedly visited by al-Khiḍr could really have remained unidentified—or whether his identity was omitted precisely because he was ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn.

It is said that several households in Medina regularly received provisions from ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn without knowing their source.

Only after his death, when the provisions ceased, did they learn he had been their benefactor.

One report counts **one hundred households**, each containing a number of people.

When **Zayd ibn Usāma ibn Zayd** lay dying, he began to weep while ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn was with him.

ʿAlī asked:

“Why are you weeping?”

He replied:

“I leave behind a debt of fifteen thousand dinars, and what I leave will not cover it.”

ʿAlī said:

“Be at ease. I will discharge it for you.”

And he paid the debt.

Another report says a servant of ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn was managing an estate.

ʿAlī came and found something wrong there, struck the man once with a whip, then departed.

Afterward he summoned him.

The servant assumed he was about to be punished further.

Instead he found the whip lying before ʿAlī, who said:

“This man—anger drove me to strike you.

Take the whip and retaliate against me.”

The man replied:

“My master, by God, I thought you wanted to punish me further, and I deserve that. How could I retaliate against you?”

ʿAlī said:

“Woe to you—retaliate against me.”

The servant replied:

“God forbid, my master. You are absolved and free of blame.”

ʿAlī repeated his demand, while the servant continued forgiving him.

When ʿAlī saw that the man would not retaliate, he said:

“The estate is charity to you.”

And he gave it to him.

At the end of winter he gave away his winter clothing, and at the end of summer his summer clothing.

He wore garments of *khazz*.

Someone said:

“You give them to people who do not know their value and for whom such clothing is unsuitable. Why not sell them and give the price in charity?”

He replied:

“I dislike selling a garment in which I have prayed.”

When ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn stood in prayer, the source says, he heard nothing and occupied himself with nothing besides the prayer.

His family knew this about him.

One night, while he was praying, one of his children fell and was injured.

The household cried out, neighbors came, and Abū Jaʿfar sent for a bonesetter.

The child cried from the pain while the bonesetter treated him.

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn heard none of it because of his absorption in prayer.

In the morning he saw the child’s arm bound up to his neck and asked:

“What happened to him?”

They told him.

The source describes him as pious, devout, intelligent, forbearing, dignified, and handsome.

During one pilgrimage, people looked at his beauty and perfection.

Those who did not know him asked those who did:

“Who is this?”

Someone asked the poet **al-Farazdaq**, who answered with the famous verses:

This is he whose footsteps al-Baṭḥāʾ knows;
the House knows him, as do the sanctuary and the land outside it.

This is the son of the best of all God’s servants;
this is the pious, pure, immaculate, eminent one.

The Corner of the Ḥaṭīm nearly grasps his palm
from recognizing it whenever he comes to touch it.

He lowers his gaze from modesty,
while others lower theirs in awe of him;

none speaks to him
except when he smiles.

When Quraysh sees him, one of them says:
“With the noble qualities of this man nobility reaches its summit.”

What tribe is there upon whose neck
his ancestors have not placed some ancient favor?

News reached ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn that **Musrif**—that is, Muslim ibn ʿUqba—had been appointed over Medina and had threatened him.

When Musrif entered Medina, he summoned ʿAlī.

ʿAlī went to him while supplicating.

Among the supplications preserved from him is:

“Lord, how many blessings You bestowed upon me for which my gratitude to You was little, yet You did not deprive me;

and how many afflictions You tested me with for which my patience was little, yet You did not abandon me.

O You whose favor never ceases,

O You whose blessings cannot be numbered,

bless Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad.

Through You I repel him at his throat,

and I seek refuge in You from his evil.”

When he entered, he found Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam there.

Marwān had heard that Musrif had summoned him and had come, according to the source, hoping to incite Musrif against him.

Yet when ʿAlī entered, Musrif welcomed him, stood for him, greeted and honored him, seated him at his side, and treated him well.

Seeing this, Marwān began praising ʿAlī and mentioning his virtues.

Musrif told him:

“Leave us alone. What we have done for him is not because of anything you said.”

Musrif then told ʿAlī:

“Were we not afraid that your family would think badly of us, we would ask you to remain and keep us company. Return to them.”

He ordered ʿAlī’s mount brought.

Someone said:

“He has no mount.”

Musrif replied:

“Give him my mount.”

He insisted that ʿAlī depart upon it.

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn died in the year **94 AH**, at the age of **fifty-eight**.

It is said that after he was buried, his wife erected a tent over his grave.

He had a she-camel named **Durra**, upon which he used to ride and perform the pilgrimage.

One day the animal came from pasture to the tent over his grave.

She knelt down, pressed the lower part of her neck against the tent, and continually groaned.

People gathered to watch.

When Abū Jaʿfar heard of it, he ordered a servant to remove her lest the incident become a public marvel.

The servant took hold of her lip but could raise her only with great difficulty.

As ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn’s virtue became famous—despite his own efforts to hide it—and as people transmitted knowledge from him and came to depend upon him, he became known as **Sayyid al-ʿĀbidīn**, “Master of the Worshippers.”

The author says Banū Umayya tried to kill him and plotted against him, while God continually protected him so that his divinely ordained task might be completed.

After the killing of al-Ḥusayn, ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn used to say after every prayer:

“O God, preserve me until You allow me to attain my hope.”

He was asked:

“What is your hope?”

He replied:

“To see my father’s killer killed.”

When al-Mukhtār had ʿ**Umar ibn Saʿd** and ʿ**Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād** killed, he sent their heads to ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn.

He instructed his messenger:

“He rises during the night. After praying the dawn prayer he sleeps for a while, then rises, uses the tooth-stick, and his food is brought.

Time your entry for when the table has been placed before him, and put the two heads upon it.”

The messenger did so.

ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn prostrated and said:

“Praise be to God who allowed me to attain my hope in this world and delighted my eye through the killing of my enemy.”

ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam

The author begins by recalling how ʿAbd al-Malik’s father Marwān seized what he claimed as the caliphate.

Marwān had promised ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd, who had helped secure the position for him, that authority would pass to ʿAmr after him.

Thus, the author argues, even on Marwān’s own assumptions, if he truly possessed the right to dispose of the caliphate, it should have passed to ʿAmr according to that promise.

Instead, after Marwān’s death ʿAbd al-Malik took his father’s place and later killed ʿAmr.

The author portrays ʿAbd al-Malik’s accession as another usurpation without proof, evidence, or legitimate designation, and reminds the reader that he descended from al-Ḥakam and Marwān, whom the book has already characterized as exiles of the Messenger of God.

A famous report concerning the beginning of ʿAbd al-Malik’s rule says that when his father’s messenger came to announce that Marwān had designated him successor, the messenger found ʿAbd al-Malik reading from a codex of the Qurʾān.

He closed it and said:

“This is the parting between you and me.”

The author says God thereby caused him to pronounce his own judgment: by his own testimony he parted company with the Book of God.

The source describes him polemically as mean and filthy.

It says he was nicknamed **Rashḥ al-Ḥajar**, “the Seepage of the Stone,” because of his miserliness, and given the *kunya* **Abū Dhubāb**, “Father of Flies,” because of severe bad breath.

It is even said that a fly passing by his mouth could fall dead from the odor.

The editor adds a hostile notice claiming that ʿAbd al-Malik was the first to betray Islamic political norms, the first to forbid people from speaking openly in the caliph's presence when earlier caliphs had permitted criticism, the first notable miser among them, and the first to prohibit "commanding right."

It attributes to him, after the killing of Ibn al-Zubayr:

"After I have stood in this position, no one shall command me to fear God without my striking off his head."

A further editor's note reports that ʿAbd al-Malik had severe foul breath.

One story says he bit into an apple and handed it to one of his wives.

She took a knife and cut away the portion spoiled by his bite.

He asked:

"What are you doing?"

She replied:

"Removing the harm from it."

The report says he divorced her.

The note glosses *bakhar* as a foul odor of the mouth or elsewhere.

The author says ʿAbd al-Malik killed **Muṣʿab ibn al-Zubayr**, appointed **al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf**, and sent him against ʿ**Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr** in Mecca.

When Ibn al-Zubayr was overcome, he took refuge at the Kaʿba.

Al-Ḥajjāj established catapults against him.

The text then quotes al-Layth ibn al-Muẓaffar:

"An elder of Banū Shayba in the mosque of Mecca told me:

'I remember clearly when al-Ḥajjāj erected the catapult on Mount Abū Qubays while Ibn al-Zubayr had fortified himself in the House.

He began bombarding it with stones and fire.

Fire caught the curtains of the Kaʿba and rapidly spread.

Then a cloud came from the direction of Jidda, high and swollen like a waterskin.

Thunder could be heard from it and lightning seen within it.

It stopped directly above the House and rained.

The rain did not go beyond the House and the places of circumambulation.

It extinguished the fires and water flowed from the waterspout into the Ḥijr.

Then the cloud turned toward Mount Abū Qubays and struck with a thunderbolt, burning the catapult and those upon it.'"

Al-Layth says he later told this report in Baṣra among a group that included a man from Wāsiṭ.

The man said:

"I heard my father relate the same thing, and he said that when al-Ḥajjāj saw it he became terrified, stopped fighting, and wrote to ʿAbd al-Malik informing him."

ʿAbd al-Malik allegedly wrote back:

"When the Israelites offered a sacrifice which God accepted, He sent fire from heaven to consume it.

God has approved your action and accepted your sacrifice.

Persist in your undertaking."

The author interprets this as obstinate defiance of God even after receiving a warning and says:

"We seek refuge in God from persistence in disobedience to Him."

The author says al-Ḥajjāj was "the skin between ʿAbd al-Malik's eyes"—that is, exceedingly close and dear to him.

The editor notes that ʿAbd al-Malik is reported to have said:

"Al-Ḥajjāj is the skin between my eyes and my nose."

His son al-Walīd allegedly went further:

"I say that al-Ḥajjāj is the skin of my entire face."

The author calls al-Ḥajjāj an enemy of God and describes his oppression, fraud, injustice, and transgression as beyond dispute.

Yet, he says, al-Ḥajjāj was the closest and most favored of ʿAbd al-Malik's men.

The author argues that even if ʿAbd al-Malik had committed no other sin, appointing al-Ḥajjāj over Muslims in the two Sanctuaries and the two Iraqs would suffice against him.

He accuses al-Ḥajjāj of humiliating Muslims, treating them violently, ruling contrary to the Book of God and the Prophet's practice, punishing relatives and namesakes for one another, shedding inviolable blood, and committing major sins—while ʿAbd al-Malik supported him, strengthened him, approved and praised his conduct, defended him with false arguments, attacked those who complained, and punished those who sought redress.

The text further accuses ʿAbd al-Malik of abandoning warfare against non-Muslim enemies in order to destroy Muslim rivals.

It says Byzantine power accordingly grew and Byzantine forces advanced into Syrian territory.

ʿAbd al-Malik therefore made peace with them on the condition that he pay **one thousand dinars every Friday**.

The author condemns this as an unprecedented humiliation: paying tribute to polytheist enemies, making truce with them, abandoning war against them, and devoting himself instead to war against Ibn al-Zubayr.

He says that had ʿAbd al-Malik turned his strength against the Byzantines, Ibn al-Zubayr and others would themselves have joined the common defense.

Yet, the author notes bitterly, despite all this ʿAbd al-Malik was regarded by Umayyad supporters as among their most distinguished rulers and as the man who firmly established their dominion.

The author says that much of the praise later given to ʿAbd al-Malik concerned his conduct **before** he obtained power—behavior the author dismisses as calculated piety in preparation for what he later seized.

His supporters themselves, he says, admitted in effect that the caliphate debased him once he gained it and exposed his hidden faults and injustice.

They praised his cunning, trickery, and severity in oppression.

For the author these are not virtues but among the greatest defects, because one who exceeds God's limits, violates His Book, and alters the Prophet's practice is among the worst of people.

ʿAbd al-Malik's *kunya* was **Abū al-Walīd**.

When his rule had become oppressive, people thought his life excessively long and wished for his death.

Arṭāʾa ibn Shabba al-Murrī composed:

I have seen that nights consume a man
as the earth consumes fallen pieces of iron.

When death comes, it finds
no excess in the life of Adam's son.

Know that it shall return again and again
until it fulfills its vow concerning Abū al-Walīd.

Poets were reportedly so afraid of ʿAbd al-Malik that they warned one another not to compose anything about him.

When these lines reached him, he had Arṭāʾa brought before him.

Arṭāʾa assumed he would certainly be killed.

ʿAbd al-Malik asked:

"What business have you mentioning me in your poetry?"

He replied:

"Where did I mention you, Commander of the Believers?"

ʿAbd al-Malik said:

"Did you not compose these verses?"

and recited them.

Arṭāʾa replied:

"Yes, I composed them—but I did not mean you. I meant myself. I too am Abū al-Walīd."

That was indeed his *kunya*.

ʿAbd al-Malik investigated and found the claim true, so Arṭāʾa escaped punishment and was released.

As he approached his homeland he recited:

When we rise from the pass of Liflif,
give glad tidings to the men who hate my return.

Tell them I have come back in well-being,
sharpening my claws and baring my fang.

I am the son of Ḥarb: the dogs of an enemy
will forever snarl at me, or my dogs will snarl at them.

The editor identifies **Liflif** as a locality before Bard in the Ḥarrat Laylā region.

The author says such fear was enough to silence people—especially poets, who ordinarily spoke freely about the lowly and great alike.

He notes that Arṭāʾa's original verses had said nothing more than the unavoidable truth that death is certain and cannot be escaped.

By the same harshness and intimidation, the author alleges, ʿAbd al-Malik suppressed the public remembrance of ʿAlī's virtues.

He restrained transmitters from mentioning them or circulating books about them.

He allegedly induced some scholars through worldly gifts to fabricate reports concerning virtues of Banū Umayya, openly promoted the cursing of ʿAlī from the pulpits, and pursued those who professed ʿAlī's excellence and Imamate with killing and exile.

As an example of the terror in which he was held, the source quotes a sermon attributed to ʿAbd al-Malik:

"By God, I am not the weak caliph, nor the compromising caliph, nor the caliph accused of passive vice."

The author explains:

- by **"the weak caliph"**, he meant ʿUthmān;
- by **"the compromising caliph"**, Muʿāwiya;
- and by **"the *maʾbūn* caliph"**, Yazīd.

The author turns the insult against the Umayyad claim itself: these were the rulers through whom ʿAbd al-Malik inherited what he possessed. If they were as unfit as he himself described them, then—by the author's reasoning—the chain through which he claimed legitimacy was itself invalid.

Thus, says the author, in attempting to strengthen his own position ʿAbd al-Malik weakened it, and in trying to build it he demolished it.

The author concludes that this demonstrates the corruption and foolishness of his judgment.

ʿAbd al-Malik died in Damascus on **Thursday, the fifteenth of Shawwāl, 86 AH**.

The text gives his reign from the day allegiance was pledged until his death as **twenty-one years, one month, and a half**.

For nine of those years he was fighting ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr.

The source says he was not generally acknowledged as caliph until after Muṣʿab's death, and did not obtain unified rule until ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr was killed.

After that he lived another **thirteen years and four months less seven nights**.

He died aged **sixty**, though another report gives **sixty-three**.

The Virtues of Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī and Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad, and the Reproaches of Those of Banū Marwān Who Ruled During Their Lifetimes

Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī—God's blessings be upon him—was the first person in whom the lines of descent of both al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn were united. His mother was Umm ʿAbd Allāh, daughter of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.

He was the most learned man of his age and was called **Bāqir al-ʿIlm**, "the one who split open knowledge," because he was the first, according to the author, from whom knowledge was extensively unfolded, discussed, classified, transmitted, and publicly associated with him. Leading Shiʿi transmitters narrated from him, as did well-known Sunni figures associated with learning and ḥadīth who lived in his time. Among later scholars he was regarded as an exemplar in knowledge and as supremely trustworthy in what was taken from him and attributed to him.

The author says that even a *mursal* report transmitted from him was treated by some as effectively connected, because of his truthfulness and reliability: when he said, "The Messenger of God said…," they trusted that the statement was established from the Prophet even when he did not state his chain.

The author adds that the Prophet's **Farewell Pilgrimage** was not transmitted in its entirety, with all its rites and reports, except through Muḥammad al-Bāqir from Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh. Later scholars expanded upon the obligations and practices contained in that report until large works were composed around it.

Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh had once asked whether among the descendants of al-Ḥusayn there would be a descendant named Muḥammad.

One day, after his eyesight had failed, he passed by the doorway of ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn's house and heard a servant calling:

"Muḥammad!"

Jābir asked his guide:

"Is this not the house of ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn?"

He replied:

"Yes."

Jābir asked the servant:

“Who is this Muḥammad whom you called?”

She replied:

“Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn.”

He said:

“Bring him near to me.”

She brought the boy to him.

Jābir embraced him, rubbed his face against him, kissed his hands and feet, and said:

“Son of the Messenger of God, your ancestor the Messenger of God sends you greetings of peace.”

When Jābir was asked about this, he said:

“I saw al-Ḥusayn standing before the Messenger of God, and the Messenger of God said to me:

‘Jābir, you will live until you meet a descendant of this one’s descendant whose name will be Muḥammad al-Bāqir. God will grant him light and wisdom. Convey my greeting of peace to him.’”

Al-Quraẓī said of him:

O splitter-open of knowledge for the people of guidance,
and best of those who answer the call upon the mountains.

Mālik ibn Aʿyan al-Juhanī said:

When men seek knowledge of the Qurʾān,
Quraysh become dependent upon him.

And when it is said, “This is the son of the Prophet’s daughter,”
you see before him a lofty branch:

stars gleaming for travelers by night,
mountains inheriting knowledge from mountains.

ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAṭāʾ al-Makkī is quoted as saying:

“I never saw scholars appear smaller before anyone than they did before Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn. I saw al-Ḥakam ibn ʿUyayna before him as though he were a schoolboy learning from his teacher.”

It is also related that **Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik** performed the pilgrimage and entered the Sacred Mosque leaning upon his client Sālim.

Sālim saw Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī sitting in the mosque and said:

“Commander of the Believers, that is Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn.”

Hishām said:

“The man with whom the people of Iraq are infatuated?”

He replied:

“Yes.”

Hishām said:

“Go ask him on my behalf: What will people eat and drink on the Day of Resurrection before judgment is passed among them?”

Sālim went and asked.

Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī replied:

“People will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection upon something like a loaf of pure bread, through which rivers will flow. They will eat and drink from it.”

He then cited the verse concerning the earth being changed into another earth and said:

“God will make their sustenance from that earth until judgment is passed among them.”

Sālim returned and told Hishām.

Hishām exclaimed:

“God is greatest!”

He laughed, thinking he had found a way to defeat him, and said:

“Go back and say to him: surely the terror of that day will be enough to distract them from food and drink?”

Muḥammad al-Bāqir replied:

“Those in Hell will be even more preoccupied than they are then, yet that will not prevent them from saying, ‘Pour some water upon us, or some of what God has provided you.’ They will eat bitter thorn and zaqqūm and be made to drink molten liquid and boiling water. The son of Adam was created hollow; he cannot dispense with food.”

Sālim returned to Hishām with the answer.

Hishām lowered his head and had no reply.

Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir said:

“I did not think I would ever see anyone comparable to ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn until I saw his son Muḥammad.

Once I met him and intended to admonish him, but he admonished me instead.”

He was asked:

“How?”

He replied:

“I met him one extremely hot midday returning from one of his properties. He was between two of his servants, leaning upon them. He was a stout, heavy man, exhausted and covered in sweat.

I considered what I saw inappropriate and said to myself: ‘By God, I shall admonish him.’

I went up to him and greeted him. He returned my greeting while panting, sweat pouring from him.

I said:

‘May God set you right! A notable elder of Quraysh, at such an hour, putting himself through this in pursuit of worldly livelihood! What if death came to you while you were in this condition?’

He replied:

‘If death came to me in this state, it would find me engaged in obedience to God, through which I preserve myself from dependence upon other people. I would only fear death if it came to me while I was committing some act of disobedience to God.’

I said:

‘May God have mercy upon you. I intended to admonish you, but you have admonished me.’”

It is also said that Abū Hāshim, son of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyya, once came upon Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī in the mosque of Medina while people were gathered around him listening.

The source says Abū Hāshim became jealous, insulted him and his father ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn, and said:

“You claim a testament from the Messenger of God through falsehoods and lies.”

Abū Jaʿfar approached without concern and said:

“Say whatever you wish. I am the son of Fāṭima, while you are the son of the Ḥanafiyya woman.”

The people then rushed upon Abū Hāshim, pelting him with pebbles and sandals until they drove him from the mosque.

Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī died in **114 AH**, during the reign of Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, at the age of **fifty-eight**.

Zayd ibn ʿAlī

His brother **Zayd ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn** rose against Hishām.

According to the main text, Muḥammad al-Bāqir warned him:

“Beware lest you become the one who will tomorrow be crucified at al-Kunāsa.”

Zayd did not heed him.

Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī then said:

“The likeness of one of the Household who rises before the appointed time of the rising of our Mahdī is like a fledgling that flies from its nest before its wings are fully grown. Children seize it and play with it.”

The author says what Muḥammad warned him of came to pass.

The editor, however, inserts a substantial corrective note, saying that this characterization conflicts with traditions concerning **Zayd the Martyr**.

The editor cites reports in which his father ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, his brother Muḥammad al-Bāqir, and his nephew Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq are said to have warned him only:

“I seek refuge for you in God from becoming the one crucified at al-Kunāsa.”

The editor then quotes the traditionist al-Khazzāz al-Qummī, who argues that Zayd rose for the purpose of **commanding right and forbidding wrong**, not in opposition to Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad.

According to this defense, later followers misunderstood Jaʿfar’s refusal to rise as disagreement with Zayd and developed the doctrine that an imam must publicly rise with the sword.

Zayd himself is quoted as saying:

“Whoever wants jihād, let him come to me; whoever wants knowledge, let him go to my nephew Jaʿfar.”

And Jaʿfar is quoted as saying:

“May God have mercy upon my uncle Zayd. Had he prevailed, he would have fulfilled his pledge. He called only to ‘the one accepted from the family of Muḥammad,’ and I am that accepted one.”

The editor further cites a report from Yaḥyā ibn Zayd saying that Zayd knew of a prophecy that a man descended from al-Ḥusayn named Zayd would be killed as a martyr and enter Paradise with his companions. Yaḥyā is also quoted as explicitly denying that his father was an Imam:

“My father was not an Imam, but he was among the noble leaders and ascetics and among those who truly struggled in God’s path.”

The main text says the immediate cause of Zayd’s uprising was that Hishām sought him and ordered his arrest.

This occurred after Khālid ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Qasrī was removed from Kūfa and Yūsuf ibn ʿUmar seized him in Mecca, suspecting that Zayd held some of Khālid’s money.

Dāwūd ibn ʿAlī was also arrested with him.

Kathīr ibn Kathīr ibn al-Muṭṭalib ibn Abī Wadāʿa al-Sahmī composed:

Birds and pigeons live in safety,
while the Prophet’s family are unsafe beside the Sanctuary.

Blessed is the House, and blessed are its people—
the Household of the Prophet and of Islam.

God’s mercy and peace be upon you
whenever one who rises rises with peace.

They preserved a signet and dragged a cloak,
but neglected the bonds of kinship.

Yūsuf ibn ʿUmar later released Zayd.

The Shiʿa, angered on his behalf, came and urged him to rise.

He rose with them and said:

“The Imam is only one who unsheathes his sword and rises to carry out God’s command—not one who sits in his house and closes his door.”

The author understands this statement as directed against Abū Jaʿfar al-Bāqir.

He argues that Zayd knew al-Bāqir was the Imam and that his followers knew it as well, but that Zayd confused them with this statement.

The author replies that the Prophet himself spent a substantial portion of his mission without fighting, as did ʿAlī after the Prophet and the Imams descended from him when they lacked the ability to act militarily.

The author next tells a polemical story intended to refute Zayd's claim.

When Zayd's movement became strong and many Shiʿa followed him, Muḥammad al-Bāqir allegedly feared religious confusion.

He therefore instructed a trusted believer to join Zayd and question him publicly.

At a gathering of Zayd's companions, the man asked:

"Son of the Messenger of God, this affair to which you have called—the uprising and your demand for support—did your father designate you for it and appoint you Imam after himself?"

Zayd replied:

"No. God forbid that I attribute to him something he never said. Rather, the Imam among us is the one who unsheathes his sword and rises to undertake the Imamate, not one who sits in his house behind a curtain."

The man asked:

"Then if none of you rises, there is no Imam among you? And if several of you rise, are they all Imams?"

Zayd fell silent and gave no answer.

The man then said:

"Your brother Abū Jaʿfar has told us that your father entrusted the matter to him and appointed him in his place."

Zayd replied:

"Had my father done that he would have told me. By God, he used to extract marrow from a bone, and if he found it hot he would blow upon it to cool it before feeding it to me. Would he protect me from the heat of marrow yet not protect me from the heat of Hell by telling me that he had entrusted allegiance to my brother while informing his Shiʿa?"

The man answered:

"Then why did Jacob tell Joseph, 'Do not relate your dream to your brothers lest they plot against you'? He warned him about his brothers and concealed his affair from them, but did not conceal it from everyone else."

The text says Zayd again fell silent and then rebuked the man.

Those whom the author calls the perceptive among the Shiʿa consequently recognized the weakness of Zayd’s claim and separated from him.

Another account says Zayd initially told them he rose by his brother’s command and that they therefore followed him.

When later asked about Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, however, he expressed allegiance to them.

The Shiʿa then split: those who remained with Zayd became known as the **Zaydiyya**, while those who abandoned and “rejected” him were called the **Rāfiḍa**.

The editor again supplies a corrective note, quoting Shaykh al-Mufīd.

Al-Mufīd says many Shiʿa believed Zayd to be Imam because he rose with the sword calling to “the accepted one from the family of Muḥammad,” and they assumed he meant himself.

But, according to al-Mufīd, Zayd did not intend the Imamate for himself, because he knew of his brother’s right and of his brother’s testament to Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq.

When Zayd was killed, al-Mufīd says, Jaʿfar grieved intensely and distributed one thousand dinars among the dependents of Zayd’s companions who had been killed with him.

The main text states that Hishām ultimately defeated Zayd.

Zayd was killed, crucified, and his body burned.

The text dates his death to a Monday, two nights into Ṣafar **122 AH**, at the age of **forty-two**.

Fragrant Glimpses of Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq

After Muḥammad al-Bāqir, the Imamate passed to his son **Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad**, Abū ʿAbd Allāh.

The text says he transmitted jurisprudence and ḥadīth from his father and that people learned from both father and son.

Among major Sunni jurists said to have studied with Jaʿfar were:

Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān ibn Thābit, Mālik ibn Anas, Sufyān al-Thawrī, Shuʿba, Sufyān ibn ʿUyayna, Ḥayy ibn Ṣāliḥ, Ayyūb al-Sijistānī, ʿAmr ibn Dīnār, and many other scholars of the provinces.

The author describes Jaʿfar as learned, pious, and virtuous, with a rank and excellence no one could deny.

The editor quotes al-Mufīd as saying that ḥadīth scholars compiled the names of **four thousand trustworthy transmitters** who narrated from Jaʿfar despite their differing doctrinal affiliations.

The editor also identifies Abū Ḥanīfa as al-Nuʿmān ibn Thābit ibn Zūṭī ibn Māh, a client of Taym Allāh ibn Thaʿlaba of Kūfa, one of the four Sunni imams, associated with *raʾy* and analogy, born in 80 AH and dying in prison in 150 AH after refusing judicial office under al-Manṣūr.

One day Abū Ḥanīfa sought permission to enter upon Jaʿfar to hear from him.

Jaʿfar came out leaning upon a staff.

Abū Ḥanīfa said:

"Abū ʿAbd Allāh, you have not reached an age at which you need a staff."

Jaʿfar replied:

"That is true, but this is the staff of the Messenger of God, and I wished to seek blessing through it."

Abū Ḥanīfa said:

"By God, if I knew that it was the staff of the Messenger of God, I would kiss it."

Jaʿfar looked at him, uncovered his forearm, pointed to it, and said:

"By God, you know that this hair comes from the Messenger of God and this skin from his flesh, yet you have not kissed it—would you kiss his staff?"

Abū Ḥanīfa realized the error in saying "if I knew" after Jaʿfar had already told him whose staff it was.

He rose and reached for Jaʿfar's hand to kiss it, but Jaʿfar drew it back, stood, entered his house, and taught him nothing that day.

It is also said that whenever Mālik ibn Anas said:

"The trustworthy one related to me…"

he meant Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad.

Sufyān al-Thawrī once heard Jaʿfar say something he admired and exclaimed:

"By God, son of the Messenger of God, this is a jewel!"

Jaʿfar replied:

"God is better than a jewel—and what is a jewel but a stone?"

Al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Ḥayy once asked him:

“Son of the Messenger of God, what do you say about the verse, ‘Obey God, obey the Messenger, and those vested with authority among you’? Who are those vested with authority whom God has commanded us to obey?”

Jaʿfar initially replied:

“The scholars.”

After leaving, al-Ḥasan told his companions:

“We have accomplished nothing. Let us return.”

They returned and asked:

“Son of the Messenger of God, who are these scholars?”

Jaʿfar replied:

“The Imams from us, the People of the House.”

The author says this illustrates how Jaʿfar sometimes gave a deliberately general outward answer under **taqiyya**, which transmitters then took at face value.

Jaʿfar once asked Abū Ḥanīfa:

“Nuʿmān, upon what do you rely when you issue legal opinions?”

He replied:

“The Book of God and the Sunna of His Messenger.”

Jaʿfar asked:

“And what if you do not find an explicit text concerning something?”

He said:

“I analogize it to what I do find.”

Jaʿfar said:

“Woe to you, Nuʿmān! The first to use analogy was Iblīs, and he erred when he said: ‘You created me from fire and created him from clay.’ He considered fire nobler than clay and reasoned that the superior should not prostrate to the inferior. His analogy destroyed him.”

Jaʿfar then asked:

“Which is purer: urine or semen?”

Abū Ḥanīfa said:

“Semen.”

Jaʿfar replied:

“Then why did God require ablution for urine but a full bath for semen, although semen is purer? Does analogy produce the correct answer here?”

He then asked:

“Which is greater: fornication or killing a person?”

Abū Ḥanīfa replied:

“Killing.”

Jaʿfar said:

“Yet God requires two witnesses in homicide and four in fornication. Analogy would require the four witnesses in the greater offense.”

Then he asked:

“Which is greater: prayer or fasting?”

Abū Ḥanīfa replied:

“Prayer.”

Jaʿfar said:

“Yet the Messenger of God instructed the menstruating woman to make up the fast but not the prayer.”

Abū Ḥanīfa remained silent and gave no answer.

Jaʿfar also once asked **Ibn Abī Laylā**:

“ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, do you judge among people?”

He replied:

“Yes, son of the Messenger of God.”

Jaʿfar asked:

“By what do you judge?”

He replied:

“By the Book of God.”

“And if you do not find it in the Book of God?”

“I seek it in the Sunna of the Messenger of God.”

“And if you do not find it there?”

“I adopt the statement of the Companions.”

“Which of them?”

“Whichever of their statements I consider appropriate.”

“Even if they differ?”

“Yes.”

Jaʿfar asked:

“Do you ever oppose something established from ʿAlī?”

He replied:

“Sometimes, if I find a different position from another Companion.”

Jaʿfar remained silent for a while, then said:

“ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, what will your answer be on the Day of Resurrection when the Messenger of God takes you by the hand before your Lord and says:

‘My Lord, a statement of mine reached this man and he opposed it’?”

Ibn Abī Laylā said:

“Son of the Messenger of God, how could I oppose the Messenger of God?”

Jaʿfar replied:

“Has it not reached you that he said, ‘The best of you in judgment is ʿAlī’?”

He said:

“Yes.”

Jaʿfar replied:

“Then if you oppose ʿAlī, have you not opposed the Messenger of God?”

Ibn Abī Laylā had no answer.

During one pilgrimage Jaʿfar sat in the mosque at Minā while people had gathered in circles debating matters of knowledge.

When they saw him, the circles dissolved and everyone gathered around him.

Ibn Shubruma was unable to reach him and called from behind the crowd:

“Son of the Messenger of God, I am Ibn Shubruma. May I ask you something?”

Jaʿfar said:

“Ask whatever you wish.”

The people fell silent.

Ibn Shubruma said:

“I judge among people by what I find in the Book of God. What I do not find there I seek in the Sunna of the Messenger of God. What I do not find there I take from the statements of the Companions. What I do not find among them I analogize to what I do find.”

Jaʿfar asked:

“Which of the Companions of the Messenger of God would you most wish to emulate?”

He replied:

“By God, I would most like to emulate ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib.”

Jaʿfar said:

“But ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib rejects analogy.”

Sufyān al-Thawrī also said:

“I never saw anyone like Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad.”

He relates that once they were sitting with Jaʿfar listening to him, his face appearing like the moon, when a cry arose inside the house.

Jaʿfar said:

“There is no power and no strength except through God.”

He rose, telling them:

“Remain where you are.”

After some time the crying ceased and Jaʿfar returned.

They noticed something altered in his face.

Sufyān asked:

“Is everything well, son of the Messenger of God?”

Jaʿfar replied:

“Everything that comes from God is good.

I had a small child whom a slave girl was carrying. He fell from her hands from the roof and died.

The girl hid herself.

By God, what troubles me is only her terror.”

Someone told him she had appeared.

He said:

“Tell her: there is no blame upon you. You are free for the sake of God, and in addition you shall receive the equivalent of your price—one thousand seven hundred dirhams.”

Those present were astonished:

“She was more deserving of punishment!”

He replied:

“No. We do not punish for what was not intentional. She did not intend it. She was afraid of us, and it is therefore fitting that we make her safe and treat her well.

Everything we possess is only a loan entrusted to us by God. He allows us to enjoy whatever of it He wills and takes back whatever He wills. Praise and gratitude are due to Him both for what He allows us to enjoy and for what He takes back.”

Sufyān said:

“God knows best where to place His message.”

When **Dāwūd ibn ʿAlī** killed al-Muʿallā ibn Khunays and seized his property, Jaʿfar confronted him and said:

“You killed my client and took my property.”

Dāwūd replied:

“I did not kill him.”

Jaʿfar asked:

“Then who killed him?”

Dāwūd pointed to a policeman standing before him:

“This man.”

Jaʿfar turned against the policeman.

The man cried out:

“You order me to kill the man, and when I kill him at your command you say: ‘He killed him’?”

A dispute arose between Jaʿfar and Dāwūd.

Jaʿfar left saying:

“By God, I shall pray against you.”

Dāwūd mocked him:

“He threatens us with his supplication.”

The text says Jaʿfar spent that night standing, prostrating, and praying.

He was heard saying:

“O Possessor of firm strength, O Possessor of severe might, O Possessor of an invincibility before which every creature is humbled—hasten Your seizure of Dāwūd and Your vengeance upon him.”

Before morning a public cry arose announcing that Dāwūd had died during the night.

Someone later denounced Jaʿfar to **Abū al-Dawānīq**, that is, the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Manṣūr, inciting him against Jaʿfar.

Al-Manṣūr told his chamberlain al-Rabīʿ:

“Bring me Jaʿfar. May God kill me if I do not kill him.”

Jaʿfar was brought.

As he approached, he uttered a supplication.

Al-Manṣūr accused him:

“Jaʿfar, you have sought rebellion and wished to shed Muslim blood. You attack my authority and plot against me.”

Jaʿfar replied:

“Commander of the Believers, I did not do this and did not intend it. If such a report reached you, it came from a liar.

Even if I had done so, Joseph was wronged and forgave; Job was afflicted and was patient; Solomon was given dominion and gave thanks. These are prophets of God, and your own ancestry returns to them.”

Al-Manṣūr softened and said:

“Come closer.”

He seated Jaʿfar beside himself upon his couch.

Then he summoned the accuser and asked:

“Were you the one who said such-and-such concerning this man?”

The accuser replied:

“Yes.”

“Did you hear it from him directly or did it merely reach you?”

“I heard it myself.”

“Will you swear to it?”

“Yes.”

The man began swearing by God.

Jaʿfar said:

“Commander of the Believers, let me dictate the oath to him. When a servant glorifies and declares God’s unity, God is too generous to punish him immediately even if he lies.”

Al-Manṣūr said:

“Make him swear however you wish.”

Jaʿfar told the man:

“Say: ‘I renounce God’s power and strength and entrust myself to my own power and strength if Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad did not say such-and-such.’”

The man said it.

Before leaving his place, he collapsed dead.

Al-Manṣūr said:

“Take the accursed man by the leg and drag him away.”

As Jaʿfar left, al-Rabīʿ caught up with him and said:

“Son of the Messenger of God, I saw your lips moving when you entered upon him and think you were supplicating. Teach me what you said.”

Jaʿfar replied:

“I used the supplication of my grandfather al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī:

‘O my provision in hardship, O my aid in distress, guard me with Your eye that never sleeps, and suffice me through Your mercy that can never be reached.’”

On another occasion al-Manṣūr summoned him over something reported about him.

When Jaʿfar entered, his lips moved.

Al-Manṣūr asked:

“What did you say?”

Jaʿfar replied:

“Commander of the Believers, I said:

‘O God, You suffice me against everything, while nothing can suffice me against You. Suffice me against him, O You who suffice against everything.’”

Al-Manṣūr said:

“By God, a man like you should be left alone.”

Jaʿfar replied:

“Commander of the Believers, I have reached an age none of my ancestors in Islam reached. I do not think I shall remain with you much longer; I do not think this year will be completed for me.”

Al-Manṣūr asked:

“And if you survive?”

Jaʿfar answered:

“I do not think I shall.”

Al-Manṣūr felt pity and released him.

The text says Jaʿfar died that same year, **148 AH**, aged **sixty-eight**.

A poet lamented him:

O eye, weep for Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad,
adornment of every sacred site and every mosque.

Mālik ibn Aʿyan al-Juhanī also lamented him:

Would that I had—would that I had—
been present, though I was not there,

so that I might have shared Jaʿfar's grief
and taken my portion of the burden.

Had it been said, "Your life," I would have answered, "A ransom!"
while death's hand lay in wait;

on the evening when generosity itself was buried in you,
and the radiant brow of the descendants of Aḥmad.

The Caliphate of al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik

After ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān, his son **al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik** assumed power.

The author describes him polemically as ugly in conduct, evil in rule, foul-mouthed, and foolish.

Al-Wāqidī is quoted as calling him a tyrannical and obstinate man.

The author says he was the first to alter the Prophet's Mosque from the form in which the Messenger of God had built it.

In Ṣafar 88 AH, al-Walīd, having appointed ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz governor of Medina, wrote ordering him to demolish the Prophet's Mosque and the houses in which the Prophet's wives had lived, incorporate them and surrounding houses into the mosque, and enlarge it to two hundred cubits by two hundred cubits.

He ordered the *qibla* moved forward and told ʿUmar to offer compensation to owners of adjoining houses; if they refused to sell, he was to compel them and pay their assessed value.

ʿUmar carried out the command.

Al-Walīd wrote to the Byzantine emperor requesting assistance in rebuilding the Prophet's Mosque and informed him that he had demolished it.

The author says the Byzantine emperor rejoiced and sent **one hundred thousand dinars**, **one hundred workmen**, and **forty camel-loads of mosaic**.

He also ordered building material from ruined cities to be collected and sent.

The author portrays al-Walīd as delighting in transforming the Prophet's Mosque and rebuilding it with his own money and workmen so that people would regard him as worthy of such a project.

Al-Walīd also had a well dug in Mecca between Ṭuwā and al-Ḥajūn.

Its water was fresh, and people began leaving Zamzam to draw from it.

When al-Walīd heard this, he wrote to his governor of Mecca, **Khālid ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Qasrī**, instructing him to address the people and proclaim al-Walīd's superiority through this achievement.

Khālid mounted the pulpit and said:

"People, which is greater: a man's caliph over his family, or his messenger to them?

By God, if you knew the superiority of the caliph over the messenger only through what you have witnessed, it would suffice:

Abraham, the Friend of the Merciful, asked God for water for his son Ishmael, and God gave him salty, bitter water.

The caliph asked God for water for you, and He gave you sweet, pure water!"

The people regarded this statement as monstrous.

When it reached al-Walīd, however, he was pleased and praised Khālid.

The next morning people went to draw water from the well but found that it had collapsed and disappeared underground.

Its location, the text says, could no longer be identified.

Al-Walīd nevertheless kept Khālid over Mecca until his own death and never censured him for preferring the caliph to the prophets.

The author curses them both and their supporters.

The editor adds a note about Khālid.

His mother was said to have been a Roman Christian who never embraced Islam, and Khālid allegedly built a church for her.

The editor quotes satirical verses of al-Farazdaq:

May the Merciful break the back of the mount
that came swaying to us from Damascus carrying Khālid.

How can he lead the people in prayer
when his mother professes that God is not One?

He built a church in which Christians worship for his mother
while demolishing the minarets of mosques among the unbelievers.

Khālid is also said to have preached from the pulpit of Mecca:

“By God, no one who criticizes the Commander of the Believers—meaning al-Walīd—will be brought before me without my crucifying him in the Sanctuary.

Do not say ‘such-and-such’; there is no opinion concerning what the caliph writes except that it be carried out.

I have learned that some opponents come to Mecca and stay with its inhabitants. Anyone found sheltering one of these opponents will have his house demolished. So take care whom you lodge.”

The text says al-Ḥajjāj had recommended Khālid’s appointment.

Khālid sought out those who had fled al-Ḥajjāj in Iraq, expelled them from Mecca, and sent them back.

Among those sent back was **Saʿīd ibn Jubayr**.

Al-Ḥajjāj said:

“May God curse the son of the Christian woman! Does he imagine that I did not know Saʿīd was in Mecca? By God, I knew it, and I knew the very house in which he was staying.”

The author says al-Ḥajjāj had been reluctant to kill Saʿīd, but once Saʿīd was returned to him he killed him.

According to the text, al-Ḥajjāj then lived only about forty days and could not sleep peacefully.

Whenever he slept, he saw Saʿīd seize him by the front of his clothes and say:

“Why did you kill me, enemy of God?”

He would awaken crying:

“What have I to do with Saʿīd ibn Jubayr?”

Al-Walīd performed the pilgrimage in 91 AH.

He honored Khālid and magnified his status, then went to Medina while the Prophet's Mosque was under construction.

He ordered everyone out and entered alone with ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz to inspect the work.

Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab was still inside and neither rose for al-Walīd nor left with the others.

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz repeatedly tried to divert al-Walīd away from him so the caliph would not notice.

Eventually al-Walīd turned and saw him.

He asked:

"Who is that? Is it Saʿīd?"

ʿUmar replied:

"Yes, Commander of the Believers."

He began praising Saʿīd and excusing him:

"His sight is weak. Had he seen you, he would have come and greeted you."

Al-Walīd walked over to Saʿīd, greeted him, and asked about his condition.

Saʿīd replied:

"I am well, praise be to God, Lord of the worlds."

He neither stood for him nor showed special concern.

Before al-Walīd reached him, someone had told Saʿīd:

"This is the Commander of the Believers. Stand for him."

Saʿīd replied:

"No, by God—and no honor to him."

The author says Saʿīd acted this way because he knew al-Walīd's evil condition.

On another occasion al-Walīd preached the Friday sermon in the Prophet's Mosque and delivered the first sermon seated.

When questioned, he replied:

"Muʿāwiya did the same."

They said:

“But the Messenger of God and the caliphs after him did not.”

Al-Walīd said:

“Whatever Muʿāwiya established for us, we follow as precedent.”

The author remarks that Muʿāwiya had done so only when old and weak and that he nevertheless had no right to violate the Prophet’s practice.

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz wrote to al-Walīd describing reports of al-Ḥajjāj’s oppression, corruption, and treachery and the suffering of the people of Iraq.

Some Iraqis had fled al-Ḥajjāj and taken refuge in Medina.

Al-Walīd ignored ʿUmar’s advice.

When al-Ḥajjāj heard of it, he wrote against ʿUmar.

Al-Walīd dismissed ʿUmar from Medina and appointed ʿ**Uthmān ibn Ḥayyān**, whom al-Ḥajjāj had recommended.

Al-Ḥajjāj had likewise recommended Khālid al-Qasrī for Mecca.

The author emphasizes that despite his later reputation, ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz had been obedient to al-Walīd.

At al-Walīd’s command, ʿUmar had **Khubayb ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr** flogged.

It was a cold day.

After the flogging they poured a waterskin of cold water over him and made him stand at the mosque door until he developed *kuzāz*—a severe cold-induced condition—and died.

The footnote glosses *kuzāz* as an illness caused by extreme cold.

The author says this obedience brought ʿUmar no lasting favor with al-Walīd.

ʿUthmān ibn Ḥayyān then chained Iraqis found in his jurisdiction and sent them back to al-Ḥajjāj.

He addressed Medina, threatening anyone who sheltered Iraqis with severe punishment and demolition of his house.

He said:

“By God, I have never investigated an Iraqi without finding that he says of the family of Abū Ṭālib what he says,”

meaning that they professed loyalty toward them.

ʿUthmān's governorship of Medina was in 94 AH.

Al-Walīd later set out intending the pilgrimage.

At Wādī al-Qurā an argument broke out between him and his brother **Marwān**.

Al-Walīd reviled Marwān with extremely abusive language that wounded him deeply.

Marwān began to answer, but ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz quickly covered his mouth with his hand to silence him.

Marwān said:

"Woe to you! You have killed me—you forced my rage back inside me."

Before the party left Wādī al-Qurā, Marwān was dead and buried there.

A poet said:

The Yemeni caravan, when it departed,
left in Wādī al-Qurā a stout-hearted man buried.

Travel on—for Marwān is no longer among the people when they depart,
nor among the caravan when evening finds them exhausted and hungry.

The author says al-Walīd was described as stupid, foolish, and frivolous, and that this incident illustrates the excess of his foolishness: someone styling himself caliph and Commander of the Believers abused his own brother so viciously that, according to the story, the man died of it.

Al-Ḥajjāj died during al-Walīd's reign.

Al-Walīd himself died in Damascus in **96 AH**, aged **forty-eight**, after ruling for **nine years and eight months**.

The Caliphate of Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik

After him came **Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik**.

The author describes him as gluttonous and excessively devoted to women, concerned chiefly with his belly and sexual appetite and indifferent to how he satisfied them.

He continued the practice of his predecessors by publicly cursing ʿAlī, behaving badly in government, and appropriating Muslim wealth.

He was extremely self-satisfied and proud of his beauty and physical perfection.

One of his slave women once looked at him for a long time while he was watching her.

He asked:

“What are you looking at?”

She improvised:

You would be the best of possessions, if only you remained,
but there is no permanence for man.

Among all that I know in you, I find no defect
except one shared by mankind: you are mortal.

He disliked being reminded of his own death.

He became angry, shook out his turban, and withdrew from her.

A report of his appetite relates that one Friday he called for clothes to wear to the congregational prayer.

He disliked the first garments and called for others. The text then shifts into an anecdote related by his food-provider, Shumardhal.

Sulaymān was fasting.

At the meal he consumed an entire young goat.

Then he said:

“Woe to you, Shumardhal! Have you nothing else?”

Shumardhal replied:

“Yes, I have six chickens like young ostriches.”

Sulaymān said:

“Bring them.”

They were brought, and he ate all six.

The narrator says:

“That was all I had prepared for him.”

Sulaymān then asked:

“Woe to you, Shumardhal, have you anything else?”

He replied:

“Nothing, by God, except a little *jadhīdha* like filings of gold.”

Sulaymān said:

“Bring it.”

A large vessel was brought, big enough for a head to disappear into, and he drank all of it.

Then he belched loudly and asked his cook:

“Boy, have you finished preparing our lunch?”

The cook replied:

“Yes.”

Sulaymān said:

“Show it to me.”

Dish after dish was brought to him, with a platter full of thin breads.

He ate from every pot presented to him, between one and three mouthfuls from each.

There were more than eighty pots.

Then he said:

“Admit the people.”

His table companions entered, and he sat with them and ate like the hungriest among them.

The text further says no garment belonging to him was found without grease stains because of his gluttony.

When ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz succeeded him, he left Sulaymān’s children every garment showing such stains, because this proved Sulaymān had personally worn it, while garments without stains were returned to the public treasury.

The author condemns such conduct as the ambition of wicked men.

The Caliphate of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz

Sulaymān had no adult son.

When he initially wished to appoint one of his young sons, he was told that a boy of that age could not carry the burden of rule.

He was advised:

“Appoint ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, and after him appoint Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik.”

Yazīd was then absent.

Sulaymān said:

“If I do not assign something to the sons of ʿAbd al-Malik that satisfies them, ʿUmar will not be able to accomplish what he wishes among them.”

Hishām became angry and refused to pledge allegiance to ʿUmar, to the point that people nearly killed him.

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz outwardly expressed dislike of the office, but did not relinquish it.

Once in power he ended the public cursing of ʿAlī and prohibited it.

He also returned **Fadak** to the descendants of Fāṭima.

Banū Umayya protested:

“Are you declaring Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, and your predecessors unjust?”

According to the text, he outwardly took Fadak back, but secretly increased its revenues and sent them to Fāṭima’s descendants for distribution among them.

He displayed abstinence and scrupulousness unlike his predecessors, so people praised him as just.

Yet, the author says, when ʿUmar was alone with men he trusted, he admitted the injustice of his predecessors and their usurpation of the authority now in his hands.

His son ʿAbd Allāh once asked:

“Father, then why do you not renounce this affair and return it to its rightful owners among the descendants of the Messenger of God?”

ʿUmar replied:

“My son, if I did that, I would be killed—and they would be killed.”

On another occasion he discussed the injustice of his predecessors with the Khārijite **Shawdhabb**.

Shawdhabb asked:

“Then why do you not curse them and disavow them?”

ʿUmar replied:

“When was the last time you cursed Pharaoh and disavowed him?”

Shawdhabb said:

“I do not remember doing so.”

ʿUmar replied:

“If it is permissible for you to refrain from this regarding Pharaoh, why is it not permissible for me to refrain from doing so regarding my own people?”

The author mocks this as a poor argument.

Shawdhabb, he says, had not used Pharaoh as a means to acquire power, had not accepted his authority, and had not inherited what Pharaoh had usurped.

ʿUmar, by contrast, remained loyal to his own clan, possessed what they had seized, and sat in their seat.

In the author’s argument, admitting their injustice while remaining aligned with them condemned both himself and them.

The author then offers a revisionist explanation for ʿUmar’s good reputation.

His rule, he says, was praised largely because it came immediately after rulers who had altered many religious laws and Islamic practices and had filled people’s lives with oppression, injustice, and disregard for sacred things.

Against that background, even a lesser degree of wrongdoing appeared like piety.

The author cites the earlier incident of **Khubayb ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr**, whom ʿUmar had flogged one hundred lashes on a cold day, drenched in cold water, and left standing until he died.

The author asks how someone responsible for such a death could simply be called ascetic and just.

He further quotes the poet Kathīr ʿAzza praising ʿUmar:

You assumed power without reviling ʿAlī,
without frightening the innocent,
and without following the word of a criminal.

For the author, even this praise inadvertently proves how bad the rulers before him had been: they had indeed cursed ʿAlī, frightened innocent people, violated religious judgments, and ruled according to methods of worldly kings rather than divine law.

The text also recalls that when news of al-Ḥajjāj’s death reached al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, al-Walīd said to ʿUmar:

“Abū Ḥafṣ, how excellent al-Ḥajjāj’s opinion of you was!”

ʿUmar replied:

“Commander of the Believers, was al-Ḥajjāj not one of us, the people of this House?”

The author treats this association with al-Ḥajjāj as enough to stain him.

Another report says that when ʿUmar heard Sulaymān was preparing a testament, he sat along the path leading to Sulaymān’s chamber.

When **Rajāʾ ibn Ḥaywa** passed on his way inside, ʿUmar said:

“I adjure you by God not to mention me for this office or recommend me for it. By God, I cannot bear it.”

Rajāʾ replied:

“May God destroy you—how eager you are for it!”

The author interprets ʿUmar’s supposed reluctance as an indirect way of advertising himself.

He calls it an especially ugly form of ambition and insinuation.

A member of ʿUmar’s family once asked him for money, explaining that he was burdened by a crushing debt and many dependents.

ʿUmar made excuses and gave him nothing.

The man said:

“Why did you not make such excuses to ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan?”

ʿUmar replied:

“Since when have I consulted you?”

The man said:

“Do you take me for an adviser?”

ʿUmar answered:

“Did I give him anything except part of what was already his right?”

The man replied:

“Then why did you give him less than all of his right?”

ʿUmar ordered the man expelled, distanced him, and deprived him thereafter.

The author next criticizes ʿUmar's administrative appointments.

He appointed ʿ**Abd al-Raḥmān ibn** ʿ**Abd Allāh al-Qushayrī**, of Banū al-Aʿwar, over taxation in Khurāsān and ʿ**Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Nuʿaym** over prayer and warfare.

He wrote to the people of Khurāsān:

"I appointed these two over you without personally knowing them. If they are as you wish, praise God. If they are otherwise, seek God's help. There is no power and no strength except through Him."

The author objects that such offices should not be entrusted to men whose character is unknown.

Even more strangely, when ʿUmar appointed ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Nuʿaym he wrote to him:

"Be a servant sincerely devoted to God in dealing with His servants.

Let no critic's blame deter you in God's cause.

God has a greater claim upon you than people do, and His right over you is greater.

Do not appoint over any Muslim affair except one known for sincere concern for them, protection of their interests, and fulfillment of the trust entrusted to him.

Beware that your inclination deviate from the truth, for nothing is hidden from God.

Do not depart from the truth, for there is no refuge from God except with Him."

The author points out the contradiction: ʿUmar ordered his governor to appoint no one without knowing his goodness, while ʿUmar himself had just appointed that governor over religion and lives while admitting he did not know him.

He says ʿUmar later reinforced the same principle when appointing ʿ**Uqba ibn Zurʿa al-Ṭāʾī** over taxation in Khurāsān:

"Authority has pillars without which it cannot stand: the governor is a pillar, the judge a pillar, the keeper of the treasury a pillar, and the fourth pillar is myself.

Among the Muslim frontier regions none is more important to me than Khurāsān.

Collect its taxation fully without oppression. If it suffices for their stipends, order payment from it. If not, write to me and I shall send you money."

The author says ʿUmar thus refuted his own earlier conduct.

ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz died at **Khunāṣira**, a small town in the district of Aleppo near Qinnasrīn, on a Wednesday with five nights remaining in Rajab **101 AH**.

He was thirty-nine years old and some months.

He was buried at **Dayr Simʿān**, a monastery in the Damascus region surrounded by gardens.

The Caliphate of Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik

After ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz came **Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik**.

The author describes him as immersed in frivolity and idleness, famous for his attachment to the singing slave women **Ḥabāba** and **Salāma**, constantly listening to music and entertainment.

Al-Maydānī is quoted as saying that Ḥabāba and Salāma were singing girls in Medina.

Salāma belonged to Suhayl ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.

Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt composed about her:

Rayyā and Salāma have captivated the ascetic,
leaving the ascetic neither mind nor soul.

Two maidens—one resembles the crescent moon,
while the other resembles the sun.

Two sisters: one like the sun rising
upon a cloudy day, the other like the moon.

The “ascetic” in these verses was ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Abī ʿAmmār of Banū Jusham ibn Muʿāwiya.

He had become infatuated with Salāma and said of her:

I revere you too much to utter what is within my soul,
though if I obeyed my heart, it would speak.

The source says this man was devout and scrupulous.

He once heard Salāma singing unintentionally and was deeply affected.

Her owner noticed and asked:

“Would you like to enter and listen?”

He refused.

The owner offered to seat her where he could hear her without either seeing the other.

He still refused.

Eventually the owner persuaded him to enter and listen.

His admiration increased.

The owner then asked:

“Would you like me to bring her out to you?”

Again he refused, but finally she was brought out and seated before him.

She sang.

He became passionately attached to her, and she to him, and he began visiting her.

One day she said:

“By God, I love you.”

He replied:

“By God, I love you too.”

She said:

“I would like to put my mouth upon your mouth.”

He replied:

“I would like that too.”

She said:

“I would like to press my belly against your belly.”

He said:

“I would like that too.”

She asked:

“Then what prevents you? By God, the place is private.”

He replied:

“I heard God say that intimate friends on that day will be enemies to one another except the God-fearing. I dislike that the intimacy between us should become enmity.”

He rose, departed, and returned to his previous ascetic life.

He also composed of her:

She who visited you among the caravan
passed with her lute while you were in pilgrimage sanctity,

seeking to capture your heart—or perhaps as recompense for affection,
for a companion has a claim upon you.

She spent the night beguiling us and thought
that we were awake, though we were asleep.

Then when morning shone for the observer,
behold—all that between us had been dreams.

I used to blame lovers for their passion
and marvel at what the days bring.

Today I excuse them, knowing
that the paths of error and guidance are apportioned.

And:

Do you not see her—may God not distance her abode—
how she acts when she turns within her melody?

She stretches out the ordered words, then returns them
to a ringing reverberation from her voice.

And:

Tell this heart: have you gained sight?
Will you ever cease today from Salāma?

Would that, wherever exile has carried her,
I might sit with Salmā whenever the lute sounds.

And:

Salāma, woe to you—do you love one afflicted,
or can you restore to the grieving man what has passed?

And:

Salāma, do I have among you any helper?
Is there anything to restrain my heart from you?

People have heard of my passion for you:
some blame me, while others excuse me.

The author says he composed many poems for her and became famous through them.

As for **Ḥabāba**, she originally belonged to a man of Medina whom the main text calls Ibn Sīnāʾ.

The editor notes that other sources identify him as ʿUthmān ibn Sahl ibn Ḥunayf.

News of her reached Yazīd before he became ruler.

He offered five thousand dinars for her.

His brother Sulaymān heard about this and objected, so Yazīd asked her owner to cancel the sale and he did.

Her name at the time was ʿ**Āliya**.

A man from Egypt then purchased her and took her away.

When Yazīd later became ruler, he purchased Salāma from her owner Suhayl ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and asked about ʿĀliya.

He was told what had happened and deeply regretted losing her.

Yazīd's wife **Saʿda**, a woman of the family of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān, secretly sent an agent to Egypt, who bought ʿĀliya for four thousand dinars and brought her back.

Saʿda prepared her and seated her in a room.

She asked Yazīd:

"Is there anything left in this world that you still desire and have not obtained?"

He replied:

"Yes."

"What?"

"ʿĀliya."

She asked:

"Would you recognize her if you saw her?"

He replied:

"Yes, by God."

She brought ʿĀliya out.

Yazīd said:

“By God, it is she!”

Saʿda said:

“Then she is yours.”

She handed her over to him and thereby gained great favor in his eyes.

One day Yazīd approached the room where ʿĀliya was staying and stood unseen behind a curtain.

He heard her humming to herself:

Yazīd, once I possessed your love
so strongly that on the day we met it nearly killed me.

He lifted the curtain.

She was lying against a wooden support, facing the wall, and had clearly not known he was there.

He threw himself upon her in delight.

The song affected him profoundly, and because of his love for her he renamed her **Ḥabāba**, “Beloved.”

One day she sang to him.

He exclaimed:

“By God, I am going to fly!”

She replied:

“Then to whom will you leave the people—may I be your ransom?”

He said:

“To you.”

On another occasion she sang:

Between the collarbones and the heart there is a burning heat,
a place of sorrow that never settles enough to cool.

He again made as though to fly.

She said:

“Do not—we still have need of you.”

Ḥabāba and Salāma came to dominate him.

The source says he scarcely ceased reclining, drinking morning and evening with them and other singers, becoming immersed in this and neglecting public affairs.

Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik reproached him and warned him of the consequences:

“You have abandoned attendance at communal prayer, prayer itself, sitting with the people, riding out, and overseeing the welfare of your subjects.”

Yazīd then sat for public business, issued orders and prohibitions, and attended to affairs.

The two women asked:

“What is this coldness toward us?”

He replied:

“I feared that government would fall into disorder.”

They said:

“Then give us a share of you at night.”

He agreed.

The two women sent to the poet **al-Aḥwaṣ**, asking him to compose something suitable.

He wrote:

Life is nothing but what gives you pleasure and what you desire,
even if the hateful man condemns and rebukes it.

I have wept with all my strength for passion—
let whoever wishes blame me, and whoever wishes pity and help me weep.

Even if I am called foolish for pursuing love,
I know that I am not alone in loving.

If you renounce amusement and youthful pleasure,
then become a smooth, hard, solid stone.

They set the poem to music and sang it to Yazīd.

He struck the ground with his cane and exclaimed:

“By God, you two have spoken truth! May the curse of God be upon Maslama and upon what he came preaching!”

The source says that whenever wine began working in Yazīd and his spirits rose, he sang, danced, spun through the rooms, and shouted.

When the women saw that he had reached that state, they sang more of al-Aḥwaṣ's poem:

I love her and love meeting her
as the thirsty man longs for chilled drink.

A bond of love that took root along the path of youth—
it has grown old, yet only grows more renewed.

Yazīd rose and danced through the house.

He asked:

"Whose poem is this?"

They answered:

"Al-Aḥwaṣ."

He ordered a gift and clothing sent to the poet.

When Yazīd sat for entertainment, he placed Ḥabāba on his right and Salāma on his left.

They sang:

You see in her a coyness when she speaks
that leaves the daughters of his heart small and humbled.

The two singers disagreed over the melody.

Yazīd asked:

"Why this disagreement? From whom did each of you learn it?"

They both replied:

"From Maʿbad."

He sent for Maʿbad and asked him.

Maʿbad said:

"Ḥabāba's version is correct."

Salāma cried:

“By God, son of a vile woman, you know that my version is correct! But you know that Ḥabāba is dearer to the Commander of the Believers than I am, so you followed his inclination.”

Yazīd laughed and became ecstatic.

He took a cushion, put it on his head, rose and circled the room dancing and shouting:

“Fresh fish—four pounds!”

After circling the entire room he returned and composed poetry, ordering Maʿbad to sing it:

Convey to Ḥabāba—may rain water the quarter where she dwells—
that my heart knows no news except remembrance of you.

If my companions travel by day, I cannot stop remembering them;
if they camp by night, remembrance of them is my evening conversation.

Maʿbad sang it and other verses, and Yazīd delighted in them and rewarded him.

It is also said that Yazīd once told Ḥabāba:

“I have appointed my client so-and-so over everything beyond my door so that I may be alone with you.”

She replied:

“Then I have dismissed him.”

He became angry with her, but later returned and said:

“I have dismissed him.”

She replied:

“Then I have appointed him.”

Yazīd said:

“The decision is yours.”

Before she belonged to Yazīd, while still in Medina, Ḥabāba had been associated with a man called **al-Baydaq**, who recited the Qurʾān melodiously and also sang.

She praised him to Yazīd, who ordered him brought.

The man entered while Yazīd was reclining upon one couch and Ḥabāba upon another.

He greeted them.

Ḥabāba told him:

“Sit.”

He sat.

She said:

“Go on.”

He thought she meant the Qurʾān and began reciting.

Yazīd became displeased.

Ḥabāba signaled to him to sing instead.

He sang:

You have provisioned him with passion—
evil is the provision you supplied.

Who will aid a lover whose support has failed him,
while the heart itself has become the target?

Had I not continued to hope in you
when my body grew light and weak,

I would have sought refuge beneath a pit,
beside a grave in a barren plain.

Yet I keep consoling my soul
with today and tomorrow.

Yazīd became ecstatic and threw him a golden platter set with jewels.

Ḥabāba signaled that he should take it.

He put it into his sleeve.

Yazīd said:

“Ḥabāba, do you not see what he has done?”

She replied:

“Commander of the Believers, he has great need of it.”

Yazīd laughed and ordered another one hundred dinars given to him.

According to another story, people who hoped to receive gifts or favors from Yazīd became frustrated because he had withdrawn with his singing girls.

They therefore approached an elderly Khurāsānī client of his who had rendered Yazīd great service and persuaded him to admonish him.

The old man advised Yazīd.

Yazīd replied:

“Listen to what you are forbidding me. If you find it ugly, then continue forbidding me. But I shall tell the girls that you are an uncle of mine. Do not speak, or they will discover who you are and may do something to you that you dislike.”

He introduced the old man to the singers as his uncle who wished to hear them.

They were told to behave carefully.

Yazīd gave the old man cup after cup until the wine affected him.

Then he ordered the women to sing together:

I used to come to you using other people as an excuse;
now I have exhausted my excuses—what can I say?

The old man became ecstatic and cried:

“No *kayf*, by God!”

His pronunciation was defective, because of his accent.

The women realized he was not really Yazīd’s uncle.

They rose with their lutes, intending to smash them over his head.

Yazīd intervened and protected him.

Afterward Yazīd asked:

“What do you think? Should we abandon what you heard?”

The man answered:

“No, by God.”

From then on, whenever people reproached Yazīd, he said:

“Ask so-and-so. He will tell you what he heard. If he thinks it should be abandoned, then I shall abandon it.”

The text then returns briefly to the death of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.

When Sulaymān appointed ʿUmar as successor, he had designated Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik to succeed ʿUmar afterward.

During ʿUmar's reign a group of Khārijites rebelled.

ʿUmar sent to them asking for debate:

"Send me someone with whom I may debate. If the truth is with you, I shall adopt it."

They sent two men.

Among the arguments with which they pressed him was this:

"What do you say about Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik? Do you approve of him for the Muslims?"

ʿUmar said:

"No."

They asked:

"Then why did you appoint him caliph after you?"

He replied:

"Someone else appointed him."

They said:

"If someone entrusted you with property that was not yours, and you then handed it over to a person unfit to be trusted with it, would you have fulfilled the trust?"

ʿUmar said:

"Give me three days to consider an answer."

They left him.

The news reached Yazīd.

The source says it was alleged that Yazīd secretly arranged for poison to be administered to ʿUmar, who died before the three days had elapsed. This is presented as a report of the source, not as an independently established fact.

Ḥabāba died during Yazīd's lifetime.

He grieved intensely over her and for several days neither went out nor sat with the people.

He was reproached for this and eventually feared the consequences for government.

He emerged reciting:

If the soul ever ceases grieving for you, or passion becomes distracted,
it will cease only through despair of you, not through endurance.

Salāma survived until Yazīd himself died.

She walked before his funeral bier accompanied by her slave girls, saying:

Do not blame us if we are humbled
or nearly collapse in grief.

By my life, I spent my night
like one afflicted by painful illness.

Then grief spent the night with me,
apart from the one who shared my bed,

because of the dreadful calamity
that has befallen me today.

Whenever I see an empty dwelling,
my tears overflow:

it has become empty of a master
who never neglected us.

Then she cried:

“Alas, Commander of the Believers!”

Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik died on **Friday, with five nights remaining of Shaʿbān, 105 AH**.

He was **thirty-five years old**.

His son al-Walīd, then fifteen years old, led the funeral prayer.

He died in **al-Balqāʾ**.

The Caliphate of Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik

After him came **Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik**, whose reign lasted nearly twenty years. The author describes him as harsh and severe in government, miserly, and cross-eyed. He repeatedly delayed the soldiers’ stipends from one payment to the next until, through these delays, an entire year’s stipend accumulated against him. For this reason, the source says,

people said that he had “stolen a year’s stipend from the soldiers,” and he was nicknamed **“the cross-eyed thief.”**

It is also said that he paid the people of Medina only once over two years while imposing three military levies upon them. A poet said:

How can life remain pleasant for us under him,
or backs grow light from the burden of debt,

when there are three expeditions for one stipend,
and a stipend comes only once in two years?

A poet once recited a panegyric before Hishām containing the line:

My hope in you made me forget remembrance of my brothers,
and your wealth made me forget my wealth at Khurshīn.

Hishām replied:

“That is foolishness on your part.”

Before Hishām became ruler, his brother Maslama had asked him:

“Do you aspire to the caliphate when you are cowardly and miserly?”

Hishām replied:

“Even if I am so, I am forbearing and chaste.”

The author remarks that Hishām thus admitted cowardice and miserliness—both, in the author’s judgment, grave defects—while claiming forbearance and chastity, although his actions disproved both.

Abū al-Najm once recited before him a *rajaz* poem beginning:

Praise be to God, the bountiful Bestower.

Hishām clapped his hands approvingly as the poem proceeded, until the poet described the sun:

There it is upon the horizon like the eye of a cross-eyed man.

Since Hishām himself was cross-eyed, his expression changed and he ordered the poet struck on the back of the neck.

The author says this behavior directly contradicted Hishām’s claim to forbearance and instead revealed weakness and ignorance.

As for Hishām's claim to chastity, the author replies that a man cannot be called chaste if he has "stolen the Imamate," betrayed God in His property, and appropriated the wealth of His servants.

Among the stories used to illustrate his stupidity is one in which a camel-driver sang while Hishām rode upon a Bactrian camel:

Upon you, O Bactrian camel,
rides the noblest man ever carried by camels.

Hishām exclaimed:

"By God, he has spoken truly!"

The author calls this extreme foolishness.

Hishām once quarreled with Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and said:

"By God, on the Day of Resurrection I shall complain about him to the Commander of the Believers, ʿAbd al-Malik!"

The author again treats this as obvious stupidity.

A report says that ʿAbd al-Malik once dreamed that he urinated four times in the prayer niche of a mosque.

An interpreter told him:

"Four of your sons will rule."

ʿAbd al-Malik was pleased.

The author, however, gives the dream a hostile interpretation: urinating in a mosque, especially in the prayer niche, signifies innovation and impurity in religion. Four of ʿAbd al-Malik's sons indeed ruled, Hishām being the fourth, and the author likens them to the impurity their father saw in his dream.

When ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz succeeded Sulaymān, he left Sulaymān's children every garment Sulaymān had actually worn and transferred the rest of his wardrobe to the public treasury.

Hishām, however, acquired from God's wealth and the wealth of the Muslims such quantities of luxurious embroidered silk that, according to the source, it could be carried upon **seven hundred camels**. He deliberately wore every piece so that it could later be inherited by his sons and so that no succeeding ruler could claim it for the treasury.

He paid exorbitant prices for the finest fabrics.

The manufacturers, realizing that he would pay above market value, made increasingly luxurious textiles for him, knowing they could obtain immense profit.

The author regards this as another form of treachery: Hishām accumulated public wealth not merely for himself but in order to transfer it to his descendants.

A later story says that Hārūn al-Rashīd once heard poetry by Kathīr praising a Marwānid and admired it.

Yaḥyā ibn Khālid said:

"Commander of the Believers, what Marwān ibn Abī Ḥafṣa composed in praise of you is better than this."

He quoted:

We recognize the light of the caliphate in al-Mahdī,
and that light is in Mūsā and Hārūn.

Hārūn replied:

"Leave that, Abū ʿAlī. By God, we shall not be praised with poetry like Kathīr's until embroidery like Hishām's is woven for us."

The author says Hishām thus left enormous wealth behind solely to appropriate Muslim property for his sons.

ʿUqāl ibn Shabba said:

"I entered upon Hishām when he was sending me to Khurāsān. I saw him wearing a green cloak which I remembered from before he had become caliph.

I kept looking at it.

He noticed and said:

'You recognize this cloak, ʿUqāl?'

I said:

'Yes, Commander of the Believers. I think it is the one I saw you wearing before you became caliph.'

He said:

'By God, it is. And by God, I own no other cloak.'"

The author says Hishām's personal frugality was not true asceticism; rather, he economized on what he himself wore so that more property could remain for his sons.

Another story says that he entrusted an estate to one of his clients.

The man managed it well and sent Hishām an enormous yield through his son.

Hishām was delighted.

The estate was developed still further and its yield doubled.

Again the man's son brought the revenue.

Hishām praised the man and his son lavishly.

The man then asked for a favor worth ten dinars.

Hishām's expression changed and he became cold:

"One of you sees ten dinars in his stipend as though it were nothing! No, by my life, I will not do it."

His own son Sulaymān once wrote asking for a replacement mount because his animal had become too weak.

Hishām wrote back:

"Your mount's weakness comes from your neglect of it and your failure to keep up its fodder. Attend to your animal yourself and take proper care of it; God willing, it will become fit for you."

One of his officials sent him forty truffles.

When Hishām found some spoiled, he wrote:

"The truffles you sent have arrived—forty in number. Some were damaged, and this was caused only by the way they were packed. Next time you send any, pack them firmly in sand within the container so that they do not move about and strike one another."

Another official sent two attractive birds.

The messenger released them in the palace courtyard at Hishām's command.

Hishām admired them.

The messenger then asked him for a gift.

Hishām replied:

"Woe to you! What am I to give you? Take one of them."

The messenger ran around the courtyard trying to catch one, failed, became exhausted, and finally departed empty-handed.

Muḥammad ibn Zayd ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar once came asking Hishām for a gift.

Hishām said:

“I have nothing for you.”

As the man turned away, Hishām called after him:

“Do not let anyone deceive you by saying, ‘The Commander of the Believers did not recognize you,’ so that you return to introduce yourself. I know exactly who you are: Muḥammad ibn Zayd ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Do not remain here spending what you have. There is no gift for you from me. Go back to your family.”

Hishām died at al-Ruṣāfa on **Wednesday, six nights into Rabīʿ al-Ākhir, 125 AH**. The source gives his age variously as fifty-five, fifty-four, or fifty-two. It says he died of *dhibḥa*, probably an acute throat or chest affliction, and was buried at al-Ruṣāfa.

The Caliphate of al-Walīd ibn Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik

After Hishām came **al-Walīd ibn Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik**.

The author describes him in intensely hostile terms as debauched, shameless, sexually corrupt, foolish, addicted to wine, and constantly immersed in music and entertainment.

He composed songs himself, fitted melodies to his poetry, and sang them.

The source says these songs were still remembered and attributed to him in musical repertories.

He associated closely with singers.

He called ʿ**Amr ibn Dāwūd al-Waddādī**, a singer described in the source as *mukhannath*, “the one who gathers together my pleasures.”

Another effeminate musician played for him.

Al-Walīd admired his playing and said:

“Now listen to mine.”

Al-Walīd played, and the other man praised him.

Al-Walīd replied:

“What would you say if you heard my teacher?”

He also had a Syrian singing slave named **Abū Kāmil al-Ghuzayyil**, who sang al-Walīd’s own poems.

The editor adds a hostile report attributed to al-Dhahabī in which al-Walīd’s brother Sulaymān, after al-Walīd’s death, allegedly said:

“Away with him! He drank wine constantly and lived dissolutely. He even propositioned me sexually.”

This is a hostile report cited by the editor rather than a neutral fact.

Among al-Walīd’s drinking verses was:

Praise the cup and whoever fills it,
and satirize the people who killed us through thirst.

Wine is the delight of the morning;
when it is absent from us, we do not live.

Abū Kāmil once sang another poem of al-Walīd’s:

Keep me away from the dwellings of every base man—
a worthless drinking companion is the worst companion.

If there is baseness in the companion,
then let him taste some touch of delight.

If those excesses ever fall
to a base man, they restore his baseness.

Al-Walīd became intensely delighted and gave Abū Kāmil the patterned cap he was wearing.

Thereafter, when Abū Kāmil was invited to sing for someone before whom he wished to display status, he would wear it and say:

“This is the cap of the Commander of the Believers.”

Al-Walīd composed of Abū Kāmil:

Who will convey from me to Abū Kāmil
that when he is absent, I am like one neglected?

The passage of time has only increased
my longing for his nearness.

Whenever I give him once,
I have wronged him by depriving him of a joyous day.

ʿAmr al-Waddādī related:

“I entered upon al-Walīd ibn Yazīd one day and found him drinking wine with his companions.

I had never drunk it before.

He said:

‘Drink.’

I drank because I could not oppose him.

Then he said:

‘Sing to me.’”

ʿAmr sang:

I have devoted myself to judging them with satisfaction
so that the fearful may feel secure and the seeker attain his goal.

If through your forbearance you do not repair
what your foolishness has damaged, defects will remain among friends.

Al-Walīd exclaimed:

“Woe to you! I have never heard you sing that before. Repeat it.”

He repeated it several times.

Al-Walīd then said:

“Teach it to me.”

ʿAmr taught him until he had mastered it.

Then al-Walīd said:

“Teach it to our companions.”

ʿAmr taught them one by one.

Al-Walīd called for hand-drums, took one himself, and told each man to take one.

They all stood.

He said:

“Beat them together and sing this melody.”

They began moving toward the palace entrance while singing.

The chamberlain hurried toward al-Walīd:

“Commander of the Believers, the people are at the gate! For God’s sake, turn back.”

Al-Walīd said:

“Give him wine.”

The chamberlain protested:

“By God, I have never drunk it.”

Al-Walīd said:

“Lay him down.”

They laid him down.

“Pour it into his mouth.”

A funnel was placed in the chamberlain’s mouth and wine was poured until he became drunk.

Then they gave him a drum, and he stood playing with them.

The narrator says the man became more intoxicated than anyone there.

Al-Walīd then said:

“Come! Let us drink until we become like him.”

They continued drinking and singing while standing until one after another collapsed unconscious around the palace courtyard—one by the latrine, another by a wall, another at a doorway—none aware of how he had fallen.

Ḥammād al-Rāwiya related that while he was with Yūsuf ibn ʿUmar in Kūfa, a letter arrived from al-Walīd ordering that Ḥammād be sent to him upon whatever postal mounts he wished and be given **ten thousand dirhams** for preparation.

Ḥammād went.

He found Maʿbad, Mālik ibn Abī al-Samḥ, and Abū Kāmil with al-Walīd.

Al-Walīd wore two yellow garments brilliant with saffron.

After allowing Ḥammād to settle himself, he said:

“Ḥammād, recite to me: ‘Do you grieve over death and its vicissitudes?’”

Ḥammād recited.

Al-Walīd ordered:

“Shabra, give him drink.”

Ḥammād says he was given three cups that left him unable to distinguish "between the lock of hair and the sandal"—that is, thoroughly intoxicated.

Then al-Walīd ordered Mālik ibn Abī al-Samḥ to sing several songs.

He himself drank from an unusually long, crooked cup and swore "by the Lord of Pharaoh."

A handsome young male singer was admitted.

Ḥammād says he had never seen a more beautiful face, though the young man had a deformity of the feet.

Al-Walīd ordered him to sing.

He sang:

The apparition came by night—welcome!
Welcome to the vision of Zaynab.

Al-Walīd became so ecstatic that he clapped, shouted, and nearly fell from his couch.

Maʿbad became angry:

"Commander of the Believers, we have come to you with our age and rank, yet you leave us for this boy?"

Al-Walīd said:

"By God, Abū ʿAbbād, I did not do so out of ignorance of your age and rank. But this boy threw me onto something like great cauldrons."

Ḥammād later asked who the youth was and was told:

"Ibn ʿĀʾisha."

Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik had arranged the succession so that after him came his brother Hishām and after Hishām his son al-Walīd.

When Yazīd made this arrangement al-Walīd was only eleven years old.

By Yazīd's death he was fifteen.

Yazīd later regretted placing Hishām before his son.

Whenever he looked at al-Walīd he reportedly said:

"God judge between me and the one who placed Hishām between me and you."

The man who had advised Yazīd to do so was Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik.

Maslama's reasoning had been that Yazīd's son was still a minor and that Hishām, Yazīd's brother, therefore had the stronger immediate claim.

When Hishām became ruler, he saw al-Walīd's drinking and debauchery and rebuked him.

Al-Walīd outwardly showed repentance.

Hishām therefore appointed him leader of the pilgrimage in **116 AH**.

The source alleges that al-Walīd took wine and dogs with him hidden in chests.

One chest supposedly fell, broke open, and a dog emerged before the pilgrims.

Hishām then considered removing al-Walīd from the succession and replacing him with his own son Maslama.

He pressed al-Walīd to renounce his claim, but al-Walīd refused.

One day Hishām said:

"By God, Walīd, I do not know what religion you profess. Are you still a Muslim, or have you cast Islam aside?"

Al-Walīd asked:

"Why do you doubt me, Commander of the Believers?"

Hishām replied:

"Because of your immersion in wine-drinking and idleness."

Al-Walīd answered in verse:

O you who ask about our religion—
we follow the religion of Abū Shākir.

We drink it pure and mixed,
sometimes warmed and sometimes bubbling.

"Abū Shākir" was Maslama ibn Hishām, whom Hishām wished to nominate.

The source says Maslama likewise drank wine and amused himself with dogs.

When his father reproached him, Maslama outwardly adopted piety and dignity and began distributing money to win men's hearts.

One recipient responded poetically to al-Walīd:

O you who ask about our religion—
we follow the religion of Abū Shākir:

giver of unsaddled horses with their reins,
neither heretic nor unbeliever.

Hishām continued publicly attacking al-Walīd and preparing supporters to depose him, but not everyone agreed.

Khālid ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Qasrī was among those who refused, saying:

“I dissociate myself from a caliph whose *kunya* is Abū Shākir.”

When Hishām died, al-Walīd was living in one of his country estates.

He immediately ordered Hishām’s treasuries sealed.

The source says that when people sought a vessel in which to heat water for Hishām’s washing, none could be found except a borrowed one, and even a burial shroud could not be found among his property until his client Ghālib provided one.

On hearing of Hishām’s death, al-Walīd composed:

Long was my night as I sat pouring wine,
when the courier came announcing Hishām’s death.

He brought me a robe and a staff,
and he brought me the signet-ring, then stood.

He also composed obscene verses mocking Hishām’s daughters as they mourned their father.

The text preserves a series of al-Walīd’s drinking poems, including:

I love singing and drinking wine,
the company of women, and the lord of the wall.

What are beautiful women and the playing of singing girls,
and their warbling before dawn…

and:

My share today of every livelihood and provision
is wine for which I spend both new wealth and inherited wealth.

In it the heart wanders
lost through every valley.

In that lies my welfare,
my success, and my right guidance.

And:

Entertain me and give me to drink
from the wine of Iṣfahān,

from the wine of old Kisrā
and the wine of Fayruzān…

Another poem says:

Give me wine, for my sins
have surrounded me and have no expiation.

These poems are presented by the source as evidence of his impiety and dissipation.

Al-Walīd continued in debauchery and attempted to designate his two sons, **al-Ḥakam**, the elder, and ʿ**Uthmān**, the younger, as successors.

But al-Ḥakam had not yet reached puberty.

A number of people objected:

“How can we pledge allegiance to someone behind whom prayer is invalid and whose testimony would not be accepted?”

Another said:

“By God, his testimony is not admissible and prayer behind him is not obligatory. How could we follow him while he is as sinful as he is?”

Hostile reports further accused al-Walīd of sexual relations with his father’s concubines and of unbelief and heresy.

The editor quotes al-Dhahabī as saying that people hated al-Walīd for his immorality and rose against him, though al-Dhahabī did not consider accusations of unbelief or heresy securely established.

The editor then polemically objects to al-Dhahabī’s caution and lists accusations of drinking, sexual misconduct, shooting arrows at the Qurʾān, and intending to drink atop the Kaʿba. Again, these are hostile allegations preserved by the editor rather than neutral established biography.

Al-Walīd was passionately attached to **Salmā daughter of Saʿīd ibn Khālid ibn ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān**, who was the sister of his wife Umm ʿAbd al-Malik.

According to the story, he saw Salmā while visiting her father Saʿīd and became infatuated.

He divorced her sister in order to be able to marry her.

Another story says he went in disguise to see Salmā in Qazwīn.

He dressed as an oil-seller, drove a donkey into Saʿīd’s residence, and called:

“Who will buy oil?”

The slave girls came out.

One said to Salmā:

“I have never seen anyone more like al-Walīd than this filthy oil-seller.”

Salmā looked and said:

“Woe to you! By God, it is al-Walīd, and he has seen me. Tell him: ‘Oil-seller, go away. We do not want to see you.’”

He left reciting:

I saw a figure
of handsome, beautiful face,

while I wore wretched garments
of coarse cloak and haircloth,

selling oil at a loss,
a trade without profit.

The source then preserves numerous love poems he composed for Salmā.

One says:

Would that God might bring Salmā—
God indeed does whatever He wills—

and cast her down upon the earth
with her garment fallen away,

and cast me down upon her,
then wake us when destiny had taken its course,

and send upon us a pouring rain
to wash us clean and leave no weariness.

Another:

My poetry about Salmā has spread and become known;
every Bedouin and townsman repeats it.

Maidens pass it among themselves
and sing it until it has spread everywhere.

I spoke to Salmā a wondrous saying
like what Jamīl and ʿUmar once said:

if we saw even a trace of Salmā,
we would prostrate a thousand thousand times before that trace.

We would take her as an approved imam,
and she would be our pilgrimage and our lesser pilgrimage.

The daughter of Saʿīd is nothing but a moon—
is there any blame if we prostrate to the moon?

The author clearly preserves these verses to portray al-Walīd as irreligious.

Other verses include:

May God show me, Salmā, my life
and the Day of Reckoning as He shows me you.

Will you not reward one who has loved you for an age,
one who, if you asked, would fulfill your desire?

And:

Woe to Salmā—if only you could see me
and what has afflicted me because of her:

wasting my wealth in amusement,
loving the dark-eyed maidens.

And:

Whoever spent the night free from pain did so,
but in my affliction I spent my night without sleep.

Rule justly concerning union, since you possess the judgment;
killing men is not justice in judgment.

And:

Salmā has settled at Salmā
in a dwelling filled with enemies…

And:

O Salmā, I found life
in cup after cup;

when the cup circulates
and shakes the scalp,

with young men as drinking companions,
noble and not base…

When rebels rose to depose him, he composed:

Leave me Salmā, wine, and a singing girl,
and a cup—by God, that wealth is enough for me.

If my life is pleasant in the sands of ʿĀlij
while I embrace Salmā, I want no substitute.

Take your kingdom—may God never make your kingdom endure
even as long as a hobble remains tied!

Leave me alone before stumbling and what has happened;
do not rebuke me if I die astray.

He then told ʿAmr:

“O gatherer of my pleasure, sing to me.”

And ʿAmr sang these verses.

The rebels surrounded al-Walīd.

He asked:

“What do you hold against me? Did I not increase your stipends, enrich your poor, provide servants for your disabled, and remove burdens from you? What is your grievance?”

They replied:

“We hold against you your violation of God’s sanctities, drinking wine, having intercourse with your father’s concubines, and treating God’s right with contempt.”

They pelted him with stones and shouted a homophobic insult, demanding that he be killed “as the people of Lot were killed.”

Al-Walīd withdrew, sat down, took up a codex of the Qurʾān, and said:

“A day like the day of ʿUthmān.”

They entered and killed him.

The source continues with still more poems attributed to him, including verses denying resurrection:

Bring near to me, my two companions,
a servant beneath the blanket.

Give me drink, and Ibn Ḥarb,
and cover us with the garment.

I have become certain
that I shall not be resurrected for vengeance,

nor is there an eternal Garden
with meadow and abiding place.

Leave the seeker of Paradise
to be given drink in loss.

I shall train the people
until they mount the religion of the donkey.

The author quotes these verses as proof of the accusations made against al-Walīd.

When members of his family reproached him, he composed:

Give me drink, son of Sālim—the morning star has come,
and dawn has cleared and shone.

Give me wine from the pure saliva of Salmā,
and give this companion a cup of unmixed wine.

A distant man may sometimes delight you,
while a relative may be fire upon fire.

Other poems continue his expressions of longing for Salmā.

When reproached for having grown old, he replied:

Though gray hair has loosened my locks,
I have fulfilled my pleasures despite my enemies—

with full-breasted maidens like statues,
women of middle age, hunting mounts, and intoxication,

among men whose noble faces refuse humiliation,
high-nosed chiefs and lords.

If they demand vengeance, it is granted them;
if vengeance is demanded from them, it cannot be obtained.

The Caliphate of Yazīd ibn al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik

The people then pledged allegiance to **Yazīd ibn al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik**, and with him rose against al-Walīd and killed him.

Al-Walīd was killed on a Thursday with two nights remaining of Jumādā al-Ākhira, **126 AH**. His *kunya* was Abū al-ʿAbbās.

Reports differ concerning his age: thirty-eight, thirty-six, forty, forty-five, or forty-one.

Yazīd ibn al-Walīd then ruled.

The author describes him as a **Qadarite**, treacherous, and wicked.

His reign was too short, the author says, to contain much worth recounting.

It was dominated by revolt and warfare.

He was known as **Yazīd al-Nāqiṣ**, "Yazīd the Diminisher," because he reduced the soldiers' stipends.

A poem mourning Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik says:

Would that you had not died! Let instead be sacrificed for you men
whose groaning the houses would be glad to remove:

the diseased of heart, or the harsh and miserable one,
and another whom no one visits and who visits no one.

The source interprets "the diseased of heart" as Yazīd al-Nāqiṣ, "the harsh and miserable one" as Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, and "the one who neither visits nor is visited" as Marwān ibn Muḥammad.

Yazīd designated his brother **Ibrāhīm ibn al-Walīd** as successor and took allegiance for him.

Yazīd died at Damascus at the end of Dhū al-Ḥijja **126 AH** after a reign of **five months and two nights**, although another report gives ten days before the end of the month.

His age is variously given as forty-six, thirty, or thirty-seven.

The Caliphates of Ibrāhīm ibn al-Walīd and Marwān ibn Muḥammad

After Yazīd came his brother **Ibrāhīm ibn al-Walīd**.

Marwān ibn Muḥammad rose against him.

The source says Marwān had heard verses composed by al-Ḥakam ibn al-Walīd ibn Yazīd.

Banū Umayya reportedly had a prophecy that their rule would end with "the son of a slave woman," and some therefore disliked al-Ḥakam because of his mother.

Al-Ḥakam said:

Will my allegiance be stripped away because of my mother,
when before me you pledged allegiance to one of mixed birth?

Marwān is in the land of Banū Nizār,
like a lion of the forest lying in its den.

If I and my successor perish,
then Marwān is Commander of the Believers.

The author says that because of the final line Marwān began seeking the caliphate.

When Yazīd died and Ibrāhīm succeeded him, Marwān marched with the people of al-Jazīra, Qinnasrīn, and Ḥimṣ.

Ibrāhīm sent Sulaymān ibn Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik against him with Syrian troops.

They met in the Ghūṭa.

Sulaymān was defeated and fled back to Ibrāhīm.

Marwān followed.

Ibrāhīm abdicated and submitted to him.

Once Marwān secured power, he **exhumed Yazīd ibn al-Walīd and crucified the corpse**.

Ibrāhīm's abdication is dated to Rabīʿ al-Ākhir **127 AH**.

His reign lasted only seventy nights and was never fully established.

Sometimes people greeted him as caliph or emir, sometimes not.

After his abdication he lived until the Battle of the Zāb, where he fled with Marwān and drowned in the river on Saturday, eleven days into Jumādā al-Ākhira **132 AH**.

Marwān's affairs then became increasingly unstable.

Revolts multiplied until **Abū Muslim** rose against him, stripped authority from him, and killed him.

Marwān was the son of an *umm walad*, and the Umayyads interpreted their old prediction—that their rule would end at the hands of the son of a slave woman—as referring to him.

When Marwān was defeated, his enemies pursued him from place to place.

He fled to Egypt and eventually reached a village in the Fayyūm named **Būṣīr**, where he was killed on Sunday with three nights remaining of Dhū al-Ḥijja **132 AH**.

His age is variously given as sixty-two, fifty-eight, or sixty-nine.

His mother had been a slave woman belonging to Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ashtar al-Nakhaʿī.

Marwān's father Muḥammad ibn Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam acquired her from Ibn al-Ashtar's baggage when Ibn al-Ashtar was killed and took her as a concubine.

A hostile report says she may already have been pregnant at the time.

The author quotes ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAyyāsh al-Mantūf as saying to Abū al-ʿAbbās:

"Praise be to God who has replaced the ass of al-Jazīra and the son of a Nakhaʿī slave woman with the cousin of the Messenger of God."

The source characterizes Marwān's entire reign as warfare and revolt from every direction until his death.

The author next interprets a report attributed to ʿAlī:

"The destruction of Banū Umayya will be through a cross-eyed man among them."

He identifies the cross-eyed man as Hishām and says "a man" here means his descendants or those following him: their collective destruction unfolded after Hishām.

A remnant of the Umayyads, however, survived in al-Andalus through ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.

The author notes an old saying that their last ruler there would likewise be named ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, just as their first ruler in the East was Marwān and their last eastern ruler was also Marwān.

He cautiously adds:

"God knows best the unseen."

Abū Muslim and the ʿAbbāsid Seizure of the Daʿwa

The author then presents a distinctly Ismaili account of the ʿAbbāsid revolution.

He claims that **Abū Muslim's uprising against Banū Umayya originally took place under the daʿwa of Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn**, the Imam of guidance from the Household of the Messenger of God.

Abū Muslim, he says, publicly proclaimed vengeance for al-Ḥusayn, dyed his banners black, and clothed his men in black as an outward sign of mourning for al-Ḥusayn and of calling people to an Imam from his descendants.

That Imam, the author says, remained hidden and his identity was concealed.

As the daʿwa spread, its missionaries increased, Marwān ibn Muḥammad's territories contracted, and his armies suffered defeat after defeat.

The missionaries, fearing that the movement might fracture unless the Imam appeared, asked him to reveal himself.

He refused while Umayyad rule remained intact and Marwān was still powerful.

Unable to persuade him, the missionaries devised another plan: they would publicly present someone else as the Imam to whom they had been calling, then remove that man and reveal the true Imam once victory was complete.

At this time **Abū al-ʿAbbās ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-ʿAbbās** was in hiding and being sought.

The missionaries knew his location and decided to present him publicly as the intended Imam, since he too was a Hāshimite.

Their plan, says the author, was to establish him temporarily and then replace him with the true Imam.

But once Marwān was killed, Abū al-ʿAbbās's uncles and family rallied around him and prevented his removal.

The missionaries feared causing a rupture at a moment when many Umayyads were still alive and their former power remained recent.

Abū al-ʿAbbās then consolidated his position, winning over some of the missionaries.

After his death his brother **Abū al-Dawānīq**, al-Manṣūr, succeeded him.

When Abū Muslim attempted to restore the affair to its intended course, al-Manṣūr moved first and killed him.

The hidden Imam therefore remained concealed.

The author says the full story lies beyond the scope of the present book.

The Virtues of the Rightly Guided Imams Who Assumed the Imamate, and the Reproaches of the Umayyad Usurpers in al-Andalus

The author says the preceding chapter ended with the virtues of Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad and with the account of the daʿwa made in his name, which the ʿAbbāsids then seized through the means just described.

Once in power, the ʿAbbāsids pursued those whom they suspected of maintaining that the daʿwa had been intended for Jaʿfar.

Abū al-Dawānīq, al-Manṣūr, was foremost in doing so.

Yet before that, the author says, al-Manṣūr himself had attended Jaʿfar's gatherings and regarded himself as one of his intimate followers.

During a discussion of the weakening Umayyad state, one of Jaʿfar's companions said:

"Abū ʿAbd Allāh, how long will you remain heedless of your right and leave the reins of your cause, when your supporters are many and your Shiʿa are in every land?"

Jaʿfar replied:

"This is not its time. By God, it will not come to us until this man and his sons after him have played with it for a long age."

Later, whenever al-Manṣūr heard Jaʿfar mentioned, he would recall this statement and say:

"I know Jaʿfar well. He is not one who will rise for this affair."

The author says God thereby diverted al-Manṣūr's evil from Jaʿfar, even though he attempted more than once to move against him.

The ʿAbbāsids began their state with intense coercion and severity.

Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad went into concealment, and after him the Imam remained hidden except from his descendants and the most intimate Shiʿa.

The matter continued in this state until the appearance of their **Mahdī**, whose signs, says the author, had been foretold in widely transmitted reports from the Prophet.

The Promised Mahdī and Reports Concerning His Appearance

The author says he will mention only selected points.

The Messenger of God is reported to have said:

"If only one day remained of this world, God would prolong that day until He raised up in it a man from my Household who would fill the earth with justice and equity just as it had been filled with oppression and tyranny."

And:

"Receive glad tidings of the Mahdī, for he will be sent amid successive tribulations and the severity of the age."

And:

“The Mahdī is from the descendants of Fāṭima. He will appear from the direction of the West and fill the earth with justice.”

Someone asked:

“Messenger of God, when will that be?”

He replied:

“When judges take bribes and the community acts wickedly. He will be solitary and a stranger.”

They asked:

“How so?”

He replied:

“He will separate himself from his family and become an exile from his homeland.”

The source also quotes:

“The sun will rise from its west at the beginning of the three-hundredth year.”

The author says people understood this literally as the celestial sun.

But since, in his view, that did not occur despite the authenticity and fame of the report, he interprets the “sun” as the Mahdī himself, who was foretold as appearing from the West.

Arabic, he notes, regularly calls noble men “suns” and “moons.”

Hāshim ibn ʿAbd Manāf, for example, was called “the Moon.”

Al-Nābigha said to al-Nuʿmān:

For you are a sun, while kings are stars;
when you rise, no star remains visible.

Al-Farazdaq likewise said:

We have seized the horizons of heaven against you;
ours are its two moons, while the stars rise.

The author explains that Arabs can call the sun and moon together “the two moons,” just as they say “the two ʿUmars” for Abū Bakr and ʿUmar.

He interprets al-Farazdaq’s “sun” as the Messenger of God and the “moon” as the Imam of the age from his Household.

The Prophet is also quoted as saying:

“The Mahdī is a man from my descendants. His face is like a radiant star; his complexion is Arab and his body Israelite. He will fill the earth with justice just as it was filled with oppression. The inhabitants of earth and heaven will be pleased with his caliphate.”

And:

“The Mahdī will emerge from the West. He will have a sign: a mark between his shoulders and a mark upon his leg.”

And:

“When the Mahdī appears in my community, the earth will bring forth its adornment and heaven will pour down its rain.”

ʿAlī is quoted:

“The Messenger of God mentioned the Mahdī, and I asked: ‘Is he from us, Messenger of God, or from others?’

He replied: ‘Rather, he is from us, the People of the House. Through us God will seal the religion just as through us He opened it.’”

And:

“The Mahdī is from us, the People of the House. God will set his entire affair right in a single night.”

Another report says:

“I saw Banū Umayya upon the pulpits of the earth. They will rule over you, and you will find them evil lords. No one will resist them without being butted down.

Wait until their foolish men fall into disagreement. When their foolish men disagree, they will turn back upon their heels. They will not repair one breach without God opening for them one still greater, until our Mahdī appears.”

In another report, addressing ʿAlī before only Banū Hāshim, the Prophet says:

“Abū al-Ḥasan, Gabriel has informed me that you will be killed.”

Then he looked at Banū Hāshim and said:

“I can almost see you afterward, when Banū Umayya rule over you, deliberately subjecting you to hardship and seeking to burden you.

Then will come the state of Banū al-ʿAbbās, who will act with the deeds of tyrants.

Woe to my progeny from them and from Banū Umayya.”

They asked:

“Messenger of God, will this happen while we are alive?”

He replied:

“By Him in whose hand is my soul, those still in the loins of Persians and Romans give me greater hope for my Household than they do.

Then a man from my Household will arise and fill the earth with justice and equity as it had been filled with injustice and oppression.”

The author says many reports describe events associated with the Mahdī.

When asked whether every such event would occur personally during the Mahdī’s lifetime, the Prophet is reported to have said:

“Whatever does not occur in his own age and time will occur in the ages of the Imams descended from him.”

The author explains this through ordinary Arabic usage: an action can be attributed to someone when it was performed by his agents, descendants, adherents, or because it arose from his command.

Thus one says:

“The ruler struck so-and-so,”

even if one of his men carried out the beating at his order.

Likewise the Qurʾān addresses later Israelites with the killing of prophets actually committed by their ancestors.

Similarly, says the author, God promised that the religion of the Messenger would prevail over all religion, although the Prophet died before that complete triumph occurred.

Later victories achieved by his followers are nevertheless attributed to him because he was their source and cause.

So too, events in the reigns of the Imams descended from the Mahdī may properly be attributed to the Mahdī as their first openly rising Imam.

The Appearance of the Mahdī

When the Imamate passed to the Mahdī and his daʿwa had spread through the regions of the earth, the author says, the foretold time of his uprising arrived.

He left in migration toward a daʿwa established for him in the East.

He was prevented from reaching it and therefore traveled to the **furthest West**.

From the moment he left his home he was sought by the authorities.

Messengers and letters were dispatched behind him in pursuit.

God, says the author, protected him from all who intended him harm until he reached the furthest point of his migration in the Maghrib while still concealed.

From there he emerged openly, just as the reports and signs had foretold.

This occurred at the time specified in the prophetic reports.

He arose "solitary," as had been said, and settled as a "stranger," as had been described.

God strengthened his cause, made his victory mighty, manifested the banners of truth through his uprising, and exalted his religion and sovereignty.

The author says the Mahdī possessed miracles, proofs, and signs too numerous for the present book.

He adds that he had already written an entire separate work, roughly equal in size to the present one, describing the Mahdī's migration, uprising, conduct, daʿwa, and signs.

He likewise wrote biographies of **al-Qāʾim** and **al-Manṣūr**, the Mahdī's descendants, including the great civil strife that al-Qāʾim left behind and al-Manṣūr confronted.

He also composed two books concerning **al-Muʿizz li-Dīn Allāh**: one on his reign and conduct, and another on his eloquent sayings and wisdom.

These remarks are important because the author presents himself as an eyewitness or near-contemporary participant in the early Fatimid court tradition.

He summarizes the distinction he wishes to draw between the Imams and the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid rulers.

The Imams, he says, arose calling by the Book of God to revive the Sunna of their grandfather, the Messenger of God.

They possessed proofs from scripture and its *taʾwīl*, because God had entrusted them with knowledge of its interpretation.

Once God granted them power and established their rule, they did not neglect the religious condition of their subjects or leave them free simply to choose whatever doctrines and innovations they wished.

The author contrasts this with the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid "usurpers," whose objective, in his account, was merely possession of worldly government; once people yielded political obedience, the rulers cared little what religion they practiced or altered.

The aim of the Imams, by contrast, was:

- establishing the order of religion;
- making clear the path of the Sunna;
- commanding right and forbidding wrong;
- spreading God's justice throughout the land;
- enforcing His legal limits;
- and suppressing public immorality.

The author condemns Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid kings for openly displaying sins, drinking wine, listening to singing girls and musical instruments, and indulging in prostitutes and youths.

He says the Imams instead combined justice, generosity, beneficence toward their subjects, and suppression of oppression.

No Imam, he claims, had been credibly branded with moral disgrace, while the defects of their rivals were public and undeniable even to those who defended them.

The Rule of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiya ibn Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and His Descendants in al-Andalus

The author then turns to the surviving Umayyad branch in al-Andalus.

When the ʿAbbāsids stripped the Umayyads of their eastern kingdom, they pursued them for execution and drove them from their homes.

The source gives a highly hostile and evidently legendary version of ʿ**Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiya's** escape.

It says that one of the Umayyads' slaves fled westward with a boy whom he claimed was ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muʿāwiya ibn Hishām ibn ʿAbd al-Malik.

The author reports hostile rumors that the boy may have been a supposititious son or illegitimate, but remarks sarcastically that this would scarcely have diminished him, since, in the author's view, the lineage he claimed was itself worse.

The slave said he was fleeing with the boy from the ʿAbbāsids.

He dressed him as a slave.

Whenever someone approached who might recognize him as his master's kinsman, the slave would strike him on the back of the neck so that no one would think him a person of importance.

Eventually they reached al-Andalus.

The Umayyad governor there had learned of the collapse of Umayyad power and, fearing the consequences, surrendered his authority.

The province formally belonged to the governor of Ifrīqiya, but disorders in North Africa cut al-Andalus off from effective supervision.

The slave therefore traveled with the young ʿAbd al-Raḥmān throughout the regions of al-Andalus, begging alms on his behalf and telling people of his alleged Umayyad descent.

Those moved by pity gave to him; others refused.

The source alleges that once ʿAbd al-Raḥmān later became ruler, he kept account of which villages had given him charity and imposed obligations upon them on the grounds that what they had previously given had merely been alms that were already due.

Those who had given him nothing, the story claims, he left alone.

The author cites this as an example of his baseness and ignoble character.

As ʿAbd al-Raḥmān grew older, the officials in al-Andalus became uncertain of their future and feared ʿAbbāsid retaliation.

The slave maneuvered so that authority was surrendered to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.

Because the ʿAbbāsids were preoccupied with repeated military revolts in Ifrīqiya and regarded al-Andalus as too remote to justify the cost of reconquest, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's position became independent.

His descendants inherited his position.

They styled themselves **emirs**, and someone wishing to flatter one of them might call him:

"Son of the caliphs."

The author insists that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān had no legitimate claim whatsoever, not even according to Umayyad rules of succession: his grandfather Hishām had never designated his father, nor had political authority ever passed lawfully through his father.

The source says ʿAbd al-Raḥmān entered al-Andalus in **138 AH**.

A hostile story alleges that after his power became secure, he killed the very slave who had saved him and brought him west because he resented the humiliating blows to the neck he had received during their escape.

Another report says he cut off the slave's hand and that the man died from it.

After ʿAbd al-Raḥmān came:

- his son Hishām;
- then Hishām's son al-Ḥakam;
- then ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥakam;
- then Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān;
- then al-Mundhir ibn Muḥammad;
- then ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad;
- then ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad.

The author launches a sweeping polemical attack on all of them, accusing them collectively of corrupt rule, sexual vice, base ambition, wine-drinking, musical entertainments, association with male youths, libertines and singing girls, consumption of unlawful wealth, and violation of legal judgments.

These accusations should be read as hostile *mathālib* rhetoric rather than neutral biographical fact.

He says that for generations these Andalusian Umayyads called themselves only **emirs**.

They did not claim the caliphate or Imamate.

Their names were not formally invoked as caliphs from pulpits, their names were not originally struck on dinars or dirhams, nor placed upon official textiles or banners.

According to the author, coins continued to be struck according to the older administrative customs inherited from the governors of Ifrīqiya.

This continued into the early reign of ʿ**Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad**.

Then, says the author, this ruler exceeded the limits observed by his predecessors.

The populace of al-Andalus allowed him what earlier generations would not have tolerated.

He took the title **Commander of the Believers**, struck coins in his own name, and placed his name upon official textiles.

The author then unleashes particularly vicious sexual slanders against him, alleging that he was publicly known as the receptive partner in sexual relations with strong young men and that he surrounded himself with such youths.

The source further accuses him of open drinking, patronage of singing girls, lutes and tambours, attracting entertainers from distant lands, showering them with gifts, tolerating sexual license, prostitution, and public same-sex activity among his subjects.

These claims are explicitly part of the author's hostile polemical portrayal and cannot be treated as neutral historical fact without independent evidence.

The author argues that the ruler's defense of toleration was itself presented as "good government": he supposedly allowed subjects to follow whatever doctrines and practices they wished so long as political order remained intact.

The author sees this as precisely the opposite of legitimate Imamate.

He claims that vice therefore became widespread in al-Andalus: open fornication, same-sex conduct, music, public wine-trading, and other forbidden practices.

He further says that many Andalusians emigrated from the land out of disgust or fear of divine punishment, to the extent that communities of Andalusians could be found throughout Muslim lands.

The author then connects this hostile portrait with the Fatimid conflict against the Umayyads of al-Andalus.

He says ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad eventually exposed himself to divine punishment by warring against **al-Muʿizz li-Dīn Allāh**.

God, according to the author, humbled him in his own territory and granted victory to the Fatimid Imam.

He says he has already described those events fully in his separate *Sīrat al-Muʿizz li-Dīn Allāh* and will not repeat them here.

Colophon

The work concludes:

O God, bless Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad, and bless and grant them peace.

Completed is *The Book of the Virtues of the Noble Household of the Messenger of God and the Reproaches of the Accursed Banū Umayya*, by the aid of God, the All-Knowing King, and the assistance of His friend upon His earth.

It was completed on Sunday, the twenty-first day of the blessed month of Ṣafar, in the year **1348 AH**, eight-and-forty and three hundred after the thousand, from the Hijra of the Chosen Prophet—may God bless him and his pure family for as long as night grows dark and day shines—

in the handwriting of the least of the least, **Muḥammad ʿAlī ibn Mullā Sulṭān ʿAlī**, in a time of interruption and an age of bewilderment.

He copied it for himself and those of his kind.

O God, forgive me, its reader, its listener, and whoever prays that I be forgiven. Amen, Lord of the worlds.

God is sufficient for us and the best disposer of affairs, the best Master and the best Helper.

There is no power and no strength except through God, the Most High, the Magnificent.

O God, bless Muḥammad and his family.

May God forgive the sins of this copyist and the sins of its readers and beholders.

Praise be to God—thanks, thanks.

The manuscript then proceeds to the general indexes: Qurʾānic verses, ḥadīths, poetry, sources of the critical edition, and subject index.