

Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī

*Tārīkh al-Khulafā'*

History of the

# Umayyad Caliphs

Translated by T. S. Andersson

تاریخ الخلفاء  
الأمويين

History of the  
Umayyad  
Caliphs

From *Tārīkh al-Khulafā'*

by Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī

Translated by T. S. Andersson



Taha Publishers Ltd.

## Contents

Timeline	vi
Preface	vii
Translator's introduction: as-Suyūṭī and his <i>Tārīkh al-khulafā'</i>	xiii
Overview of the work	xiii
Its place in Islamic historiography	xiv
As-Suyūṭī's historical and scholarly context	xviii
Note on translation	xxiv
Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān	1
Section on some accounts of him	6
Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya Abū Khālid al-Umawī	15
Section	19
Mu'āwiya ibn Yazīd	23
'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr	24
'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān	29
Al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	39
Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik	42
'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz	46
Section on his illness and death	65
Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	68
Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik	70
Al-Walīd ibn Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	74
Yazīd an-Naqīs (Abū Khālid) ibn al-Walīd	78
Ibrāhīm ibn al-Walīd	81
Marwān al-Ḥimār	83

## Timeline

Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān	40-60/661-680
Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya Abū Khālid al-Umawī	60-63/680-683
Mu'āwiya ibn Yazīd	64/683-4
'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr	64-73/684-692
'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān	65-86/685-705
Al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	86-96/705-15
Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik	96-99/715-717
'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz	99-101/717-720
Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	101-105/720-724
Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik	105-125 / 724-743
Al-Walīd ibn Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	125-126/743-744
Yazīd ibn al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	126/744
Ibrāhīm ibn al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	126/744
Marwān ibn Muḥammad ibn Marwān	127-132/744-750

## Preface

*That was a community which has long since passed away. It has what it earned. You have what you have earned. You will not be questioned about what they did. (Sūrat al-Baqara 2:134)*

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The leaders (imams) are from Quraysh."

Thus *al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn*, the Umayyads and the 'Abbāsids were a single seamless Qurayshi dynasty until the Mongols extirpated that line, although a small rump caliphate was to endure in Cairo under the Mamluks until the time of our author, Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī, may Allah be merciful to him.

That Quraysh were to succumb for a period to internal rivalries, with the Abbasid revolt against the Umayyads, was inevitable from the perspective of Ibn Khaldūn. That their history has subsequently been interpreted, not least by Abbasid scholars, as two entirely contrary dynasties has not served us well. That it was necessary for them, in order for the Abbasid revolution (*dawla*) to succeed and to endure, to vilify the Umayyads has not made the work of the historian any easier.

In these pages if the reader is of the 'good men/bad men' view of the world, he will discover not embodiments of evil, but good men who sometimes did bad things, as well as bad men who sometimes did good things. As to the latter, the Umayyad general al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf is one of the most notorious governors in the history of the

<sup>1</sup> Imām Aḥmad narrated it from Anas as did aḍ-Ḍiyā'. Al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī narrated it from 'Alī.

## Timeline

Mu'āwiyā ibn Abī Sufyān	40-60/661-680
Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyā Abū Khālid al-Umawī	60-63/680-683
Mu'āwiyā ibn Yazīd	64/683-4
'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr	64-73/684-692
'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān	65-86/685-705
Al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	86-96/705-15
Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik	96-99/715-717
'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz	99-101/717-720
Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	101-105/720-724
Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik	105-125 / 724-743
Al-Walīd ibn Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	125-126/743-744
Yazīd ibn al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	126/744
Ibrāhīm ibn al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik	126/744
Marwān ibn Muḥammad ibn Marwān	127-132/744-750

## Preface

*That was a community which has long since passed away. It has what it earned. You have what you have earned. You will not be questioned about what they did. (Sūrat al-Baqara 2:134)*

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The leaders (imams) are from Quraysh."<sup>1</sup>

Thus *al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn*, the Umayyads and the 'Abbāsids were a single seamless Qurayshi dynasty until the Mongols extirpated that line, although a small rump caliphate was to endure in Cairo under the Mamluks until the time of our author, Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī, may Allah be merciful to him.

That Quraysh were to succumb for a period to internal rivalries, with the Abbasid revolt against the Umayyads, was inevitable from the perspective of Ibn Khaldūn. That their history has subsequently been interpreted, not least by Abbasid scholars, as two entirely contrary dynasties has not served us well. That it was necessary for them, in order for the Abbasid revolution (*dawla*) to succeed and to endure, to vilify the Umayyads has not made the work of the historian any easier.

In these pages if the reader is of the 'good men/bad men' view of the world, he will discover not embodiments of evil, but good men who sometimes did bad things, as well as bad men who sometimes did good things. As to the latter, the Umayyad general al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf is one of the most notorious governors in the history of the

<sup>1</sup> Imām Aḥmad narrated it from Anas as did aḍ-Ḍiyā'. Al-Ḥākim and al-Bayhaqī narrated it from 'Alī.

Muslims, but he was responsible under the direction of his caliph, 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, for the first minting and wide circulation of gold and silver coins in our history and for the vowelling and application of diacritical marks to the written copies of the Qur'ān among other things.

We do find among them men who were sometimes not equal to the challenges they faced, and a few exceptional men who acquitted themselves honourably and well. Only ahistorical people, covert Zoroastrians and people with a defect in their unitary understanding of the Divine decree of good and evil will be satisfied with a childish separation of good and evil into two mutually contending absolute forces.

Why does this history matter? Firstly, it matters because rulership is one of the dynamic transmissions from the last of the Messengers ﷺ, who himself demonstrated how to rule and govern.<sup>2</sup> *al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn* took that from him directly and inherited it from each other in succession, until the fifth of them al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ﷺ passed it legitimately to Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān ﷺ counted by some of the scholars as one of *al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn*. Ibn Khaldūn wrote:

The state [*dawla*] and history [*akhbār*] of Mu'āwiya ought to be appended to the states and history of the (*Rāshidūn*) caliphs, for he follows them in virtue, integrity and companionship [*ṣuḥba*]. And no consideration should be taken of the *ḥadīth* that 'the caliphate after me will last thirty years', for it is not *ṣaḥīḥ*. In truth, Mu'āwiya is counted among those caliphs ... Allah forbid that Mu'āwiya be likened to anyone of those after him. He was one of *al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn*. Those Marwanid caliphs who come after him in *dīn* and virtue also come after him in rank and likewise the later caliphs of Banū al-'Abbās.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Shaykh Abdalhaqq Bewley, "The Prophet ﷺ as Ruler", MFAS Journal Vol.1, no.1, February 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-'Ibar*, Dar al-Fikr 1421 AH/ 2001 CE, Vol.2, p.650;

By slandering the Umayyads in their entirety, we introduce a gap in that transmission in the very early years during the time of the Companions themselves and the generation of the *tābi'īn*, the Followers of the Companions. It calls the whole issue of Islamic governance into question. If two of the best generations that ever lived on Earth were ruled by entirely evil men, what hope is there for the rest of us? Clearly that thesis is untenable.

Secondly, it is clear from the current world situation that humanity in general are succumbing to presentism and are simply losing their history. When that happens we must beware George Orwell's assertion in his dark, visionary novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, that 'who controls the past, controls the future; who controls the present, controls the past'. In other words, we are losing our past to those who control our present, the global financial oligarchy, and, because we have lost the past, we are unable to make our future.

In that sense, it is well to read this text carefully and not with the simple judgemental attitude of those who do not understand power and its predicaments. For that purpose, Ibn Khaldūn is always invaluable since he is that rarity among scholars and philosophers, the man of knowledge who is acquainted with power and its realities.

Even if we concede the existence of this Umayyad sub-dynasty as something separate from the other Qurayshī sub-dynasty, the 'Abbāsids, its first ruler would then have been 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān one of *al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn*, rather than Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān, who was nevertheless himself a Companion. 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz is also counted without controversy as one of *al-Khulafā' ar-Rāshidūn*. Marwān and his son 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān were caliphs, although people differ about the validity of the former's caliphate since it existed in parallel with the prior caliphate of 'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr ﷺ. Many of Marwān's and 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān's legal judgements are transmitted by the scholars,

translation of passage by Abdassamad Clarke and T. S. Andersson.

and Mālik and al-Bukhārī, among others, transmit the hadiths of Marwān. Al-Walīd, Sulaymān and Hishām, three of the sons of 'Abd al-Malik, were great monarchs who extended the realms of Islam, built up the polity in many ways and did much for the *dīn*. As-Suyūṭī writes about al-Walīd, who he says 'was a tyrant and an oppressor':

But al-Walīd undertook *jihād* during his reign and many great conquests took place during his caliphate. He also used to treat orphans well and appoint teachers for them. He appointed people to attend the disabled and to lead the blind. He renovated and enlarged the Prophet's mosque. He provided for the *fuqahā'*, the weak and the poor, and prevented them from begging by allotting them what would be sufficient. He managed affairs with the most thorough administration.

Ibn Abī 'Abla said, "May Allah have mercy on al-Walīd. Where is the like of al-Walīd? He conquered India (al-Hind) and Spain (al-Andalus), he built the mosque of Damascus and he used to give me a *ṣā'* of silver, which I shared among the reciters in the mosque of Jerusalem."

Al-Walīd ruled for ten years. About Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik, as-Suyūṭī writes:

One of [Sulaymān's] merits is that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz was like his deputy and he used to follow his instructions regarding the good. He also deposed al-Ḥajjāj's governors, released the prisoners in Iraq and restored the prayers to their right times, after Banū Umayya had deadened them by deferment.

Ibn Sīrīn said, "May Allah have mercy on Sulaymān who began his caliphate by restoring the prayers to their times and sealed it by the appointment of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz as his successor."

About Hishām, as-Suyūṭī writes:

Hishām was resolute and intelligent. He did not allow any wealth to enter the treasury until forty people had witnessed on oath that what was due on it had been taken and that everyone due some part of it had received their due.

And he says:

Saḥbal ibn Muḥammad said: I never saw any caliph for whom blood-shedding was harder and more repellent than Hishām.

Hishām ruled for twenty years. Great men of knowledge such as az-Zuhrī frequented his gatherings and counselled him fearlessly, indeed az-Zuhrī put himself in some danger by warning him against appointing his son, the second al-Walīd, a licentious profligate, as his successor.

After the time of as-Suyūṭī, the 'Abbāsids were to hand over the reigns of the caliphate to the Osmanlıs when al-Mutawakkil III surrendered the caliphate to Selim Yavuz in Istanbul in 1517, although the Osmanlıs had long laid claim to the caliphate and the remaining Abbasid caliphs had been little more than prisoners of the Mamluk rulers of Cairo.

About the stipulation that the caliph should be of Quraysh, Ibn Juzayy al-Kalbī wrote in his *al-Qawānīn al-fiqhiyya*: "... [among] the pre-conditions of the Imamate are ... that his descent should be from Quraysh, but on this [last] there is a difference of opinion, so that if people agree [on pledging allegiance] to one who does not meet all of the conditions then it is permitted, from fear of causing dissension and sedition."

#### Notes

1. This line of caliphs is not the whole story of Islam. A great deal of Muslim life went on far from the central court and the ruling dynasty with often only nominal acknowledgement of the caliph, if that, in a wide variety of kingdoms, amirates, sultanates, even other empires such as the Mughal and occasionally alternative caliphates

such as the Umayyads of Andalus and Shehu Uthman dan Fodio of Nigeria. The Muslims worshipped Allah, collected and distributed the zakat and adjudicated in the legal disputes that arose between them according to the Book of Allah and the Sunna of His Messenger ﷺ, as much as they were able.

2. Although some of the caliphates are known as empires, even those were light and comparatively modest, showing in comparison the heavy-handed, surveilling and policing régimes we have today to be the Orwellian nightmares they really are.

3. None of this is any basis for the modernist totalitarian 'Islamic state' of popular imagination. Islamic governance is qualitatively entirely different from 'the state', which first emerged out of the Westphalian Treaty, later developed through the French Revolution and then spread across the earth, bringing in its trail the genocide and terror that are intrinsic to it.<sup>4</sup>

\*\*\*

It has been a pleasure to encounter this work of as-Suyūṭī again, may Allah be merciful to him, and to read his deft selection and transmission of texts. It has also been a genuine pleasure to work with the translation of T. S. Andersson and his splendid and insightful introduction and study on the author. He has maintained a calm objectivity in tackling the original texts and the historical material that allows the original Arabic meanings to show through his translation, which is accurate, clear and eminently readable.

Abdassamad Clarke  
Dean, MFAS  
Norwich  
15/1/2015

<sup>4</sup> See MFAS module "The Politics of Power".

## Translator's introduction: as-Suyūṭī and his *Tārīkh al-khulafā'*

In the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, Most Merciful.  
All praise is for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds, and may  
peace and blessings be upon our master Muḥammad  
and his family and companions.

### Overview of the work

The *Tārīkh al-khulafā'* ('History of the Caliphs') of Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī (849-911/1445-1505) has, since its compilation in 9th/15th century Mamlūk Egypt, remained one of the most popular caliphal biographies in many parts of the Muslim world. Its author was one of the most influential scholars of his day, perhaps mainly known for his scholarship in *ḥadīth*, *fiqh*, *tafsīr* and the Arabic language, but with a remarkably prolific output covering most Islamic sciences.

The *Tārīkh al-khulafā'* contains biographies of the caliphs that ruled the Muslim community, from the Rāshidūn ('rightly-guided') caliphs succeeding the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, via the Umayyads, to the 'Abbāsids up until as-Suyūṭī's own day – almost 900 years of Islamic history.<sup>1</sup> The chapters on each caliph are mainly comprised of extracts from earlier collections of *ḥadīth* and *akhbār*

<sup>1</sup> In addition, as-Suyūṭī concludes the work with four short sections on the polities of the Umayyads of al-Andalus, the Fāṭimids ('Ubaydiyyūn) of Egypt and the two 'Alid dynasties of Yemen (Banū Ṭabāṭabā) and Ṭabaristān.

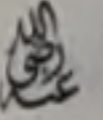


(‘historical reports’), among them the works of Ibn Abī Shayba, Ibn Sa’d, Abū Nu’aym al-Iṣbahānī, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghādī, Ibn ‘Asākir, adh-Dhahabī and Ibn Kathīr to mention a few. Besides as-Suyūṭī’s own introduction, the work is roughly comprised of a third on the Rāshidūn caliphs, an eighth on the Umayyads and a bit more than half on the ‘Abbāsids, most on the early ‘Abbāsids in Iraq before the relocation to Egypt in the mid 7th/13th century. Thus, the Umayyad section, translated in this volume, only makes up a minor part of the *Tārīkh al-khulafā’*, but still provides fairly detailed biographies of the dynasty that ruled the Muslim community for almost a hundred years – from 41/661 to 132/750.

#### Its place in Islamic historiography

As-Suyūṭī’s *Tārīkh al-khulafā’* was far from the first; Muslim historians had begun compiling caliphal histories from an early date. Some of the earliest histories of caliphs (*tārīkh al-khulafā’*) are ascribed to Ibn Ishāq (d. 150/767) and Abū Ma’shar (d. 170/787), although histories in the form of Prophetic biography (*maghāzī*, *sīra*) and histories on single themes (e.g. conquests, civil wars) were compiled before then. This tradition of post-Prophetic history comprising *akhbār* (‘historical reports’) developed in parallel to the increasingly specialised *ḥadīth* tradition, although the two fields sometimes overlapped. Around the late 2nd/8th and early 3rd/9th century, the historians (or *akhbārīyūn*, as they became known) began to construct new frameworks to structure the expanding corpus of historical material. An early example is the *Tārīkh* (‘History’) of the Basran scholar Khalīfa ibn Khayyāṭ al-‘Uṣfurī (d. 240/854) and slightly later the *Tārīkh ar-rusul wa-l-mulūk* (‘History of the Messengers and Kings’) of Abū Ja’far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923). Besides compiling history, both were also major *ḥadīth* scholars – Khalīfa, one of al-Bukhārī’s authorities in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and aṭ-Ṭabarī, a master of most Islamic sciences (especially *ḥadīth*, *fiqh* and *tafsīr*) – who structured their material in the literal sense of the word *tārīkh*: that is, chronologically.

This type of chronological history of the Muslim community continued to occupy scholars for centuries, although it seems to have been slightly less popular among *ḥadīth* scholars until some three centuries after Khalīfa and aṭ-Ṭabarī. Before that, *ḥadīth* scholars were generally more occupied with the two interrelated genres of *ḥadīth* transmitter criticism (*jarḥ wa-ta’dīl*) and biographical dictionaries (*ṭabaqāt*). These genres were crucial to the science of *ḥadīth* and, in the case of the biographical dictionaries, often contained large amounts of Prophetic and post-Prophetic history. Thus, it was not until closer to as-Suyūṭī’s time that an interest in large-scale chronography seems to have reappeared in the *ḥadīth* circles – as evidenced by works such as Abū al-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī’s (d. 597/1200) *al-Muntaẓam fī tārīkh al-mulūk wa-l-umam* (‘The Well-Organised History of the Kings and Nations’) and Ibn al-Athīr’s (d. 630/1233) *al-Kāmil fī at-tārīkh* (‘The Complete History’), but especially adh-Dhahabī’s (d. 748/1348) *Tārīkh al-Islām* (‘History of Islam’) and Ibn Kathīr’s (d. 774/1373) *al-Bidāya wa-n-nihāya* (‘The Beginning and the End’).

However, as-Suyūṭī’s *Tārīkh al-khulafā’* differs in many respects from the earlier historical tradition, although he based it on these aforementioned works and other earlier collections of *ḥadīth* and *akhbār*. First, his *Tārīkh* is essentially a collection of biographies, not a political or social history. As as-Suyūṭī states in the introduction to the work, “this is a brief history that contains the biographies of the caliphs, the commanders of the believers, in charge of the community’s affairs (*al-qā’imīn bi-amr al-umma*) from Abū Bakr  to our time.”<sup>2</sup> This is particularly true for the section on the Umayyad caliphs. Although as-Suyūṭī provides some information about how the Umayyads came to power and summarises key events during their reigns, large parts consist of accounts, or rather

<sup>2</sup> Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-khulafā’*, ed. I. Ṣāliḥ (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 2003), p. 15.

anecdotes, of their character, behaviour, virtues or vices and life at the courts. This is illustrated by the numerous 'court dialogues' between the caliph and certain individuals among his subjects, often involving exchange of poetry. Such biographical material is common in the earlier historical tradition from at least the 3rd/9th century onwards,<sup>3</sup> but usually combined with a greater attention to chronology and political history. But as as-Suyūṭī makes clear in the introduction, "I mentioned in the biography of each caliph the most remarkable events (*al-ḥawādith al-mustaghraba*) during his reign as well as the religious leaders and scholars of the Muslim community."<sup>4</sup> In other words, it is not a complete political history, but a collection of the most noteworthy and unusual events, often involving prominent individuals of the time, whose deaths are also listed at the end of the reign during which they passed away.

Second, in relation to the previous point, it is evident that it was never intended as a meticulous history of the Umayyad period like, for example, Khalīfa ibn Khayyāṭ's *Tārīkh* or Ibn Kathīr's *al-Bidāya wa-n-nihāya*. Rather, as-Suyūṭī points out and summarises the major events under each caliph, but then devotes lengthy sections to anecdotal material, which serves to illustrate the character of the life and times of these rulers. In this sense, it is primarily a source of stories about and perspectives on the Umayyads, circulating among scholars as well as storytellers, rather than a source of historical facts and details, for which other earlier works would need to be consulted. Again, this conforms to his own description of the work as a collection of biographical accounts, including the most 'remarkable events' that occurred during each reign. The focus is not on dry details of, for example, conquests and taxation as in many other histories, but the character, words and actions of individuals

<sup>3</sup> *Ansāb al-ashraf* of Aḥmād ibn Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892) and *Tārīkh ar-rusul wa-l-mulūk* of aṭ-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) are two examples from this period.

<sup>4</sup> as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-khulafā'*, p. 15.

in certain situations. When narrating about these subjects, as-Suyūṭī also allowed himself to include less authenticated, but often compelling and colourful material, because of their pedagogical utility – including numerous *ḥadīths* and *akhbār* that the *ḥadīth* critics would have considered weak, at best.

It does not mean that as-Suyūṭī was not concerned about the reality of historical events or deemed light the circulation of inauthentic material. Rather, he set aside the strictest criteria used in other disciplines (e.g. *fiqh* and *ḥadīth*) and for other subjects (e.g. history of the Rāshidūn caliphs) for the sake of compiling a well-rounded and accessible narrative of the Umayyad caliphs. Using less authenticated material was not an uncommon practice among the classical Sunnī scholars. They generally considered the subject of post-Prophetic history tangential to the core concerns of law and doctrine, and therefore allowed less strict criteria in terms of transmitter and content criticism.<sup>5</sup> As the early Basran pioneer of *ḥadīth* transmitter criticism, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī (d. 198/814), is reported to have said:

If reports are related to us from the Prophet ﷺ concerning rulings and what is permitted and prohibited, we are severe with the *isnāds* and criticise the transmitters. But if reports are related concerning the virtues of actions, rewards, punishments, permissible things or invocations, we are lax with the *isnāds*.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> On this question, see Jonathan Brown's articles 'Did the Prophet Say It or Not? The Literal, Historical, and Effective Truth of Ḥadīths in Early Sunnism,' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 129, no. 2 (2009), 259–85; 'Even If It's Not True It's True: Using Unreliable Ḥadīths in Sunni Islam,' *Islamic Law and Society* 18 (2011), 1–52. For a more accessible format, see his general introduction to *ḥadīth*, entitled *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oxford: OneWorld, 2009), pp. 100–3.

<sup>6</sup> al-Ḥākim an-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak 'alā aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, 5 vols. (Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif an-Nizāmiyya, 1915–16), I, 490 (*kitāb ad-du'ā' wa-t-takbīr wa-t-tahlīl wa-t-tasbīḥ wa-dh-dhikr*). Also cited by Brown in 'Did the

Already from the first generations, Muslim scholars had different standards of verification depending on context and subject matter. Discourses on manners, preaching and history usually allowed for less authenticated material, because of its didactic qualities. This is also true for as-Suyūṭī's time and the history that he treated in his *Tārīkh al-khulafā'*, especially the Umayyad and 'Abbāsid dynasties. The subject was potentially controversial, but in the end tangential to law and doctrine. In that, his methods and approach to the Umayyads are characteristic of a trend among some classical Sunnī scholars: history may serve cultural and didactic functions, for which reason some of the strictest criteria of authentication – *isnād* and *matn* criticism, that is, source and content criticism – may be set aside.

#### As-Suyūṭī's historical and scholarly context

An explanation for the above mentioned characteristics of as-Suyūṭī's *Tārīkh* may be found in his scholarly and social context, where the work was compiled and initially circulated. As-Suyūṭī lived during the waning of the Circassian (*burjī*) Mamlūk sultanate and died only twelve years before the Ottomans seized Egypt in 922/1517. What concerns us here, however, is not so much the politics of the time, but the tensions between different classes and communities in the Mamlūk society.<sup>7</sup> Despite the political and economic problems in the eight/fifteenth century, as-Suyūṭī's hometown Cairo remained one of the most important scholarly

Prophet Say It,' p. 283.

<sup>7</sup> The discussion on the following pages is largely based on S.R. Burge's insightful outline of as-Suyūṭī's social and scholarly context in *Angels in Islam: Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī's al-Ḥabā'ik fī akhbār al-malā'ik* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 16–21, which also contains a translation of as-Suyūṭī's *ḥadīth* collection about angels. However, while Burge relates this context to as-Suyūṭī's work on angels and some of his other '*ḥadīth* encyclopedias', the following discussion relates it specifically to the *Tārīkh al-khulafā'*.

centres of the Islamic world – partially due to the *waqf* system, which secured scholarly institutions and some of their autonomy. However, a characteristic of the late Mamlūk Egypt, like many other societies, was the tension between the scholarly élite and the masses. As-Suyūṭī was one of many scholars who actively opposed the popular preachers and story-tellers (*qāṣṣ*, pl. *quṣṣāṣ*). These preachers were seen as disseminating religious teaching – often based on spurious *ḥadīths* and *akhbār* – among the masses without appropriate training or qualification. He even wrote a treatise attacking their practices and entitled it 'The [Scholarly] Élite's Warning against the Lies of the Story-Tellers' (*Taḥdhīr al-khawāṣṣ min akādhīb al-qussāṣ*).

In addition, as-Suyūṭī was highly critical of the state of scholarship in his own day and became quite unpopular among his contemporary colleagues in Egypt – in part because of his controversial claims to have reached the level of *ijtihād muṭlaq* ('unrestricted independent judgement') and special expertise in a number of sciences.<sup>8</sup> These claims can be illustrated by the following statement, in which as-Suyūṭī identifies himself as the *mujaddid* ('reviver of the religion') of his age:

What caused the man to ask was that he had understood from

<sup>8</sup> For an overview of these controversies around as-Suyūṭī, see M.J. Saleh, 'as-Suyūṭī and His Works: Their Place in Islamic Scholarship from Mamluk Times to the Present,' *Mamlūk Studies Review* 5 (2001), pp. 73–89 (75–81). It must be noted, however, that as-Suyūṭī did not claim to be equal to the four Imāms, but qualified his claim to *ijtihād* by stating that, "When I reached the level of *tarjīḥ* ('distinguishing the best *fatwā* in the school'), I did not depart in giving legal opinions from the *tarjīḥ* of an-Nawawī, even when my own preference differed from his. And when I reached the level of *ijtihād muṭlaq*, I did not depart in giving legal opinions from the school of Imām as-Shāfi'ī." See 'Abd al-Wahhāb ash-Sharānī, *aṭ-Ṭabaqāt aṣ-ṣughhrā*, ed. A.'A. as-Sāyih and A.'A. Wahba (Cairo: Maktabat ath-Thaqāfa ad-Dīniyya, 2005) p. 9. As-Suyūṭī also explained his view on *ijtihād* in his treatise with the unambiguous title *ar-Radd 'alā man akhlada ilā al-arḍ wa-jahila anna al-ijtihād fī kull 'aṣr farḍ* ('Refutation of those who cling to the earth and are ignorant of the obligation of *ijtihād* in every age').

me that I hoped, by the favour and grace of Allah, to be the *mujaddid* at the end of this 9th/15th century, just as al-Ghazālī had hoped for himself. This is because I have mastered all kinds of disciplines, such as *tafsīr* and its principles, *ḥadīth* and its sciences, *fiqh* and its principles, language and its principles, syntax and morphology and its principles, dialectics (*jadāl*), Arabic rhetoric, figurative speech and style as well as history. In addition to all this, there are my outstanding, excellent and unprecedented works now numbering about 500. I have originated the science of the principles of language (*uṣūl al-lughā*) and compiled works on it, and nobody has preceded me in this. It follows the same course as the science of *ḥadīth* and the science of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. My works and contributions to the different sciences have spread to all lands. They have reached Syria, the Roman lands, Persia, Ḥizāz, Yemen, India, Abyssinia, North Africa and Takrūr, from which they spread to the Atlantic Ocean. In all that I have mentioned, I have no equal. Nobody else living today has mastered the number of sciences that I have and, as far as I know, nobody else has reached the rank of unrestricted *ijtihād* except me.<sup>9</sup>

Leaving these claims aside, as-Suyūṭī's criticism of both popular preachers and contemporary scholars provides us with a background to the mission of compilation and dissemination of knowledge that he took upon himself. Although the scholars of as-Suyūṭī's day sought to protect the traditional system of learning, many of them engaged with the masses and displayed their erudition by producing works for a more 'popular' (i.e. literate, but uneducated) audience.

<sup>9</sup> as-Suyūṭī, *at-Tanbī'a bi-man yab'athuhu Allāh 'alā ra's kulli mi'a*, ed. 'A. Shānūḥa (Mecca: Dār al-Thiqa, 1990), pp. 66–7. Also cited by E.M. Sartin in *Jalāl ad-dīn as-Suyūṭī, vol. 1, Biography and Background* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 70–1. The subject of *tajdīd* is also discussed by as-Suyūṭī's in his autobiography, *Kitāb at-Taḥadduth bi-ni'mat Allāh*, ed. E.M. Sartin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 215–227.

As in all times, the late Mamlūk scholars needed to respond to the needs of their people. As-Suyūṭī was one of those who engaged with the non-scholarly community by compiling works accessible to the wider public, beyond the scholarly élite. The purpose seems to have been to encourage sound practice and belief, and perhaps also to limit the influence of the popular preachers and storytellers.

Not all scholars took this approach, however. Some of them attacked popular practices as reprehensible 'innovations' (*bida'*), perhaps not without justifications, but seem to have been less concerned with communicating and encouraging education for the general public. As-Suyūṭī, by contrast, was one of those who combined advanced scholarship and popular dissemination of knowledge. This is evident from his prolific output of scholarly works in many different genres – according to different estimations between five hundred and almost one thousand, including short treatises and *fatāwā*.<sup>10</sup> Thus, besides his works for other scholars, he also produced popular pamphlets, accessible summaries of complex material, short topical *ḥadīth* collections and *fatāwā* to current legal questions. This public engagement served to promote as-Suyūṭī as a scholar and may well have contributed more to his world-wide fame in his own day than his advanced works, many of which became important in Islamic scholarship of the later periods. This public display of knowledge and erudition was an important means of raising the status and respect of classical learning in society, which as-Suyūṭī seems to have been aware of. As one of his biographers, 'Abd al-Wahhāb ash-Sha'rānī (d. 973/1565), writes:

He (as-Suyūṭī) used to display all the blessings that Allah had bestowed upon him with respect to the different branches of knowledge and good character. He did not conceal anything, except that which he had been ordered to conceal. In this, he

<sup>10</sup> See as-Suyūṭī's own list of his books in *Kitāb at-Taḥadduth bi-ni'mat Allāh*, pp. 105–136. See also Saleh, 'as-Suyūṭī and His Works,' pp. 83–6.

acted according to the words of Allah Most High, "As for the blessing of your Lord, speak out!" (Qur'ān 96.11)<sup>11</sup>

This also entailed reaching out to a wider audience, beyond 'academia'. In the introduction to the *Tārīkh al-khulafā'*, as-Suyūṭī alludes to this audience, who would appreciate and welcome the work. He also points out the absence of an accessible history of the caliphs, "despite people's eagerness for their history."<sup>12</sup> He writes:

There are several reasons for compiling this book: among them that a biographical collection of the distinguished and virtuous individuals of this community were sought-after and would be highly appreciated. Some have compiled histories in which they mentioned these prominent individuals, but unsystematically and without giving full accounts. However, a completion of that would entail both tedious length and weariness. Therefore, I decided to outline each type of men in separate works, which would be more beneficial and easier to consult for those who want details about a particular type. I singled out one book on the prophets, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon them; one abridged book about the Companions, may Allah Most High be pleased with them, based on the *Iṣāba* of Shaykh al-Islam Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad ibn Ḥajar, may Allah have mercy on him; one comprehensive work about the generations of Qur'ān commentators; one abridged work about the major *ḥadīth* scholars (*ḥuffāz*) based on the *Ṭabaqāt* of adh-Dhahabī ... and the only distinguished ones left are the caliphs, despite people's eagerness for their history. Therefore I compiled this book specifically about them...<sup>13</sup>

All books that as-Suyūṭī mentions in the lengthy list of his

<sup>11</sup> ash-Sha'rānī, *aṭ-Ṭabaqāt aṣ-ṣuḡhrā*, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-khulafā'*, p. 16.

<sup>13</sup> as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-khulafā'*, p. 15-16.

works about specific types of individuals are typical biographical encyclopaedias, which probably circulated among scholars as well as some parts of the literate masses. It is within this popular and educative tradition that his *Tārīkh al-khulafā'* must be understood, without in any way diminishing the scholarship underlying its compilation. Even so, the *Tārīkh* contains some sections of more advanced material on, for example, the Rāshidūn caliphs. By this combination of accessible and advanced material, as-Suyūṭī encouraged general knowledge among the masses, introduced certain understandings for seekers of knowledge and addressed particular questions among the scholarly élite. This is reflected in the introduction, where he treats subjects that must have been topical to scholars and students as well as the wider public:

1. Clarification why the Prophet ﷺ left no successor and the secret in this.
2. Clarification that the imāms (i.e. caliphs) are from Quraysh and that the caliphate is their prerogative.
3. Duration of the caliphate in Islam.
4. *Ḥadīths* that warn about the Umayyad caliphate.
5. *Ḥadīths* that announce [the good news of] the 'Abbāsīd caliphate.
6. The matter of the Prophetic mantle that the caliphs wore in succession until the end.
7. Some interesting observations (*fawā'id*) scattered throughout the biographies, which are appropriate and useful to mention in one place.<sup>14</sup>

As-Suyūṭī's treatment of these subjects deserves a study in itself, but the titles of the sections are enough here to show that it is not a question of 'dumbing down'. Rather, as-Suyūṭī was aware of the needs and mentality of the people of his time. He provided them with compendious handbooks, rooted in the classical tradition,

<sup>14</sup> as-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-khulafā'*, pp. 21-42.

and encouraged learning for audiences on different levels. Thus, as a promoter and communicator of classical Islamic learning to the wider audience – at a time when religious teaching seemed increasingly appropriated by uneducated preachers – it is perhaps as-Suyūṭī's educative role in late Mamlūk society, as much as his works, that has something to say for our own time.

Tobias Sahl Andersson,  
Director of Studies, MFAS  
Edinburgh  
Muḥarram 1436 / October 2014

#### Note on translation

The translation is based on the Arabic edition of as-Suyūṭī's *Tārīkh al-Khulafā'*, edited by Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ and published by Dār Ṣādir (Beirut, 2003, 2nd edition, pp. 230–303). An earlier translation of as-Suyūṭī's *Tārīkh al-khulafā'* was made by H.S. Jarrett (Calcutta, 1881), which has been helpful in rendering certain passages of the Umayyad section translated in this volume. Because of its rather archaic language and awkward translation of key Arabic terms, however, it seemed that a new translation into modern English would be easier to consult and thus more beneficial for readers in our time. In that, this translation aims to follow the standard set by Abdassamad Clarke's translation of as-Suyūṭī's chapters on the Righty-Guided Caliphs, published under the title *The History of the Khalifahs who took the right way* (London: Ta-Ha Publishers, 2011 [1st ed. 1995]).

## Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān

40-60/661-680

**M**u'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān ibn Ṣakhr ibn Ḥarb ibn Umayya ibn 'Abd Shams ibn 'Abd Manāf ibn Quṣayy al-Umawī, Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān. He accepted Islam with his father on the day of the Opening of Makka [to Islam]. He was present at Ḥunayn and was among those whose hearts were reconciled. Thereafter, his Islam became good and he became one of the scribes of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. It is narrated that he had one hundred and sixty-three *ḥadīths* from the Prophet ﷺ. Among the companions narrating from him were Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn 'Umar, Ibn az-Zubayr, Abū ad-Dardā', Jarīr al-Bajalī, Nu'mān ibn Bashīr and others. Among the followers were Ibn al-Musayyib, Ḥumayd ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān and others.

He was one of those characterised by political finesse (*dahā'*) and forbearance (*ḥilm*). Narrations of his merits have been transmitted, but few of them are well established.

At-Tirmidhī narrated, declaring it good (*ḥasan*), from the companion 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī 'Umayra from the Prophet ﷺ, that he said to Mu'āwiya, "O Allah, make him guiding and guided."

Aḥmad narrated in his *Musnad* from al-'Irbād ibn Sāriya, who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, "O Allah, teach Mu'āwiya the Book and the reckoning and guard him from the punishment."

Ibn Abī Shayba narrated in *al-Muṣannaf* and aṭ-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* from 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr that Mu'āwiya said, "I did not cease to desire the caliphate after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to

me, 'Mu'āwiya, when you rule, do it with excellence.'"

Mu'āwiya was a tall, fair, beautiful and awe-inspiring man. 'Umar used to look at him and say, "This is the Khusraw of the Arabs."

It is narrated that 'Alī said, "Do not be averse to the rule of Mu'āwiya. If you lose him, you will see heads falling from shoulders."

Al-Maqbarī said, "You admire the political finesse of Heraclius and Khusraw, yet pass over Mu'āwiya!"

He was proverbial for his forbearance. Both Ibn Abī ad-Dunya and Abū Bakr ibn Abī 'Āsim composed works exclusively about his forbearance.

Ibn 'Awn said: A man said to Mu'āwiya, "By Allah, be upright with us or we will straighten you up." He replied, "With what?" He said, "With a wooden stick." He replied, "Then I will be upright."

Qabiṣa ibn Jābir said, "I accompanied Mu'āwiya and I have not seen anyone weightier in forbearance, slower to folly and more deliberate than he."

When Abū Bakr sent the armies to Syria, Mu'āwiya went with his brother, Yazīd ibn Abī Sufyān. When Yazīd died, he succeeded him over Damascus and 'Umar confirmed him in his position. Then 'Uthmān confirmed him and gathered all of Syria for him. He was governor for twenty years and caliph for twenty years.

Ka'b al-Aḥbār said, "No one will rule this community as Mu'āwiya will rule."

Adh-Dhahabī said that Ka'b died before Mu'āwiya became caliph and Ka'b was right in what he narrated; Mu'āwiya remained caliph for twenty years without anyone on the earth contending for authority with him, unlike others after him. They were all opposed and some dominions went out of their authority. Mu'āwiya arose against 'Alī, as previously mentioned, and declared himself caliph. Then he marched against al-Ḥasan, who transferred the caliphate to him. He became firmly established in the caliphate from Rabī' al-Ākhir or Jumādā al-Ūlā in year 41/661. This year was called the Year of Community (*'ām al-jamā'a*), because of the community's

unification in it under one caliph. In this year, Mu'āwiya appointed Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam over Madina.

In 43/663-4, ar-Rukhkhaj and other lands in Sijistān were conquered, as well as Waddān in Barqa and Kūr in the Land of the Blacks (*bilād as-sūdān*). In it, Mu'āwiya claimed kinship to Ziyād ibn Abīhi and that was the first case in Islam in which the Prophet's ﷺ judgement was altered, as ath-Tha'ālibī and others have mentioned.

In 45/665-6, al-Qīqān was conquered.

In 50/670, Qūhistān was conquered by force. In it, Mu'āwiya called the people of Syria to the oath of allegiance for the succession of his son, Yazīd, and they pledged allegiance to him. He was the first to appoint his son as successor to the caliphate and the first to appoint a successor while in good health. Then he wrote to Marwān in Madina to take the oath of allegiance. Marwān addressed the people, saying, "The Commander of the Believers has decided to appoint his son, Yazīd, as his successor over you, according to the *sunna* of Abū Bakr and 'Umar." 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq stood up and said, "Rather, according to the *sunna* of Khusraw and Caesar; Abū Bakr and 'Umar did not appoint their sons to it, nor anyone from their families."

In 51, Mu'āwiya went on *ḥajj* and took the oath of allegiance for his son. He sent for Ibn 'Umar, recited the testimony of faith and said, "Now, Ibn 'Umar, you used to tell me that you did not want to spend a dark night without a leader over you. I warn you of breaking the staff of the Muslims and striving to worsen the discord among them." Ibn 'Umar praised Allah and said, "Now, there were caliphs before you with sons and your son is no better than their sons. They did not regard their sons as you regard yours. They chose for the Muslims what they knew to be the best. You warn me of breaking the staff of the Muslims, which I would never do. I am only one of the Muslims and when they agree on a matter, I am one of them." Mu'āwiya replied, "May Allah have mercy on you." Then Ibn 'Umar left.

He sent for Ibn Abī Bakr, recited the testimony of faith and began speaking, but he interrupted him and said, "You want us to entrust you to Allah in the affair of your son, but, by Allah, we will not do that. By Allah, return this affair as a matter of counsel (*shūrā*) among the Muslims or we will bring it against you all over again." Then he jumped up and left. Mu'āwiya said, "O Allah, suffice me against him in whatever way You wish," and continued, "Take it easy, man. Don't go close to the Syrians. I fear that they will anticipate me regarding you,<sup>1</sup> unless I announce in the evening that you have pledged allegiance. Afterwards do whatever seems proper to you."

Then he sent for Ibn az-Zubayr and said, "Ibn az-Zubayr, you are a sly fox, who, whenever he emerges from one hole, enters another. You have turned to these two men, breathed in their nostrils and convinced them to alter their view." Ibn az-Zubayr replied, "If you have grown weary of leadership, resign and bring us your son, and let us pledge allegiance to him. Have you not thought about which of you we would hear and obey if we were to pledge allegiance to you and your son? Allegiance to both of you can never be combined." Then he left.

Mu'āwiya ascended the *minbar*, praised Allah and said, "We found what people say is wrong. They claim that Ibn 'Umar, Ibn az-Zubayr and Ibn Abī Bakr did not pledge allegiance to Yazīd, but they did hear, obey and pledge allegiance to him." But the Syrians said, "No, by Allah! We will not be satisfied until they pledge allegiance to him in public. If they don't, we will cut off their heads!" Mu'āwiya replied, "Glory be to Allah, how quick people are to harm Quraysh! I do not want to hear this kind of talk from anyone after today." Then he descended. The people said, "Ibn 'Umar, Ibn Abī Bakr and Ibn az-Zubayr pledged allegiance," whereas they said, "No, by Allah, we did not pledge allegiance. But the people maintained that they

<sup>1</sup> He feared the Syrians would kill Ibn Abī Bakr as is shown in the next quote. Ed.

did (pledge allegiance). Mu'āwiya departed and returned to Syria.

Ibn al-Munkadir said: When Yazīd received the oath of allegiance, Ibn 'Umar said, "If he is good, we will be pleased. If he proves to be a trial, we must be patient."

Al-Kharā'itī narrated in *al-Hawātif* from Ḥumayd ibn Wahb, who said: Hind bint 'Utba ibn Rabī'a was the wife of al-Fākih ibn al-Mughīra, who was one of the youth of Quraysh. He owned a house for hospitality that people could visit without permission. One day the house was empty and al-Fākih arose, while Hind was in it, and went out on some business. A man who used to visit the house came and entered. When he saw the woman, he fled, but al-Fākih saw him. He went up to her and kicked her with his foot and said, "Who was that one with you?" She replied, "I did not see anyone and did not wake up until you woke me up." He said, "Go back to your family." People began speaking about her, so her father took her aside and said, "Daughter, people say many things about you; tell me about it. If the man speaks the truth, I will incite someone to kill him and end the talk about us. But if he is lying, I will summon him before certain soothsayers of the Yemen."

She swore to him, as they used to swear in the Jāhiliyya, that he was lying about her. 'Utba said to al-Fākih, "You have accused my daughter of an enormity. Summon me, therefore, before some soothsayers of Yemen." Al-Fākih went, with a group from Banū Makhzūm and 'Utba, with a group from Banū 'Abd Manāf, along with Hind and other women used to each other's company. When they came near to the confines, Hind's state worsened and her face changed. Her father said to her, "Daughter, I have seen the changes in you. It can only be because of your guilt." She replied, "No, by Allah, father! It is not guilt, but I know that you are going to a human being, who may be mistaken or prove right. I cannot trust him that he does not brand me with a mark that will cause me shame among the Arabs." He said to her, "I will prove him to you before he looks into your affair." He whistled to his horse until it stalled, then inserted



a grain of wheat in the opening of its urethra and bound it with a thong. They went to the soothsayer in the morning. He slew a camel for them and honoured them. When they sat down, 'Utba said to him, "We have come to you concerning an affair. I have concealed from you a hidden thing to test you, so tell me what it is." He replied, "Wheat in a colt." He said, "I want something more specific." He replied, "A grain of wheat in the urethra of a colt." 'Utba said, "You have told the truth. Look into the affair of these women." He began to approach each one of them, striking their shoulders and telling them to stand up, until he came to Hind. He struck her shoulder and said, "Stand up, you undefiled non-adulteress. You will give birth to a king called Mu'āwiya." Al-Fākih looked at her and took her hand, but she withdrew it from him and said, "Go away. By Allah, I will strive for it to happen through someone other than you." Then Abū Sufyān married her and she gave birth to Mu'āwiya.

Mu'āwiya died in the month of Rajab in 60/680. He was buried between Bāb al-Jābiyya and Bāb aṣ-Ṣaghīr. It is said that he lived 77 years. He had some hair and a nail paring from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, which he requested to be placed in his mouth and eyes, saying, "Do that and leave me to the Most Merciful of the Merciful."

#### Section on some accounts of him

Ibn Abī Shayba narrated in *al-Muṣannaḥ* from Sa'īd ibn Jumhān, who said: I said to Safīna, "Banū Umayya claim that the caliphate is with them." He said, "The sons of Zaraqā' are lying. On the contrary, they are the fiercest of kings and the first king was Mu'āwiya."

Al-Bayhaqī and Ibn 'Asākir narrated from Ibrāhīm ibn Suwayd al-Armanī, who said: I asked Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, "Who are the caliphs?" He replied, "Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī." I said, "What about Mu'āwiya?" He replied, "He had less right to the caliphate in 'Alī's time than 'Alī."

As-Silafī narrated in *aṭ-Ṭuyūrīyāt* from 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, who said: I asked my father about 'Alī and Mu'āwiya,

and he replied, "Know that 'Alī had many enemies. They looked for a fault in him without finding it. Then they went to a man who had fought in battle against him. They praised him extravagantly as a conspiracy against him."

Ibn 'Asākir narrated from 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr, who said: Jāriya ibn Qudāma as-Sa'dī went to Mu'āwiya who asked him, "Who are you?" He replied, "Jāriya ibn Qudāma." He said, "And what are you like? Perhaps nothing but a bee?" He replied, "Stop it. You have just likened me to that which protects itself with a sting and has a sweet saliva. By Allah, a *mu'āwiya*<sup>2</sup> is nothing but a bitch, howling to the dogs and an *umayya* is but the diminutive of a female slave (*ama*)."

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from al-Faḍl ibn Suwayd, who said: Jāriya ibn Qudāma went to Mu'āwiya who said to him, "You are the agent of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and the fire kindler in your flames, going around in the Arab villages and shedding their blood." Jāriya replied, "Mu'āwiya, put 'Alī aside. We never hated 'Alī after loving him and never deceived him after being sincere to him." He said, "Alas for you, Jāriya, how despicable you must have been to your family when they named you a *jāriya*<sup>3</sup>." He replied, "You, Mu'āwiya, must have been despicable to your family when they named you a *mu'āwiya*<sup>2</sup>." He said, "You have no mother." He said, "A [free] mother did not give birth to me, but we hold the hilts of the swords with which we met you at Ṣiffīn." He said, "You have threatened me." He replied, "You take not authority over us by subjugation nor conquer us by force, but gave us contracts and covenants. If you fulfil your part to us, we will fulfil ours. But if you desire other than that, [know that] we have left tall men waiting behind us with strong armour and sharp lances. If you stretch out a finger-span of treachery to us, we will meet you with a fathom of deceit." Mu'āwiya said, "May Allah not multiply people like you!"

<sup>2</sup> "A bitch excited by lust, that howls to the dogs when she is in that state, and to which they howl... and a fox's cub." Edward Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, under 'awwa.

<sup>3</sup> a female slave.

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from Abū Ṭufayl 'Āmir ibn Wāthila, the Companion, that he went to Mu'āwīya, who said to him, "Aren't you one of 'Uthmān's murderers?" He replied, "No, but one of those present who did not help him." He said, "What prevented you from helping him?" He replied, "The Muhājirūn and Anṣār did not assist him." Mu'āwīya said, "But his right to help was obligatory on them." He replied, "Then what prevented you, Commander of the Believers, to help him when all the Syrians were with you?" He said, "My seeking retaliation for his blood is helping him." Then Abū Ṭufayl laughed and said, "You and 'Uthmān are as the poet says, 'I will find you mourning me after my death – but during my life, you never provided for me.'"

Ash-Sha'bī said that Mu'āwīya was the first to deliver a *khutba* sitting, when his flesh had increased and his belly grown large. It was narrated by Ibn Abī Shayba.

Az-Zuhrī said that Mu'āwīya was the first to introduce the *khutba* before the 'Īd prayer. It was narrated by 'Abd ar-Razzāq in his *Muṣannaf*.

Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib said that Mu'āwīya was the first to introduce the call to prayer on the 'Īd. It was narrated by Ibn Abī Shayba.

He (Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib) also said that Mu'āwīya was the first to decrease the number of *takbīrs*. It was narrated by Ibn Abī Shayba.

Al-'Askarī says in *al-Awā'il*: Mu'āwīya was the first to establish the postal system (*al-barīd*) in Islam, the first to appoint eunuchs for his personal service, the first with whom his subjects would joke and the first to whom the *mu'adhdhin* said, "Peace be upon you, Commander of the Believers, and the mercy and blessing of Allah. To the prayer, may Allah have mercy on you!"

He was also the first to institute the office of the seal (*dīwān al-khātam*), to which he appointed 'Ubayd Allāh ibn 'Aws al-Ghassānī. He appointed him to take care of the seal and upon its stone was inscribed, "Every deed has its reward." It remained under the 'Abbāsīd caliphs until the end. The reason for its institution was

that Mu'āwīya ordered 100,000 (dirhams) to be given to a man, who then opened the document and made it 200,000. When the account was taken to Mu'āwīya, he disapproved and instituted the office of the seal from that day. He was also the first to adopt an enclosure in the congregational mosque (*al-jāmi'*) and the first to allow the stripping of the Ka'ba. Before that, its covering had been thrown over it, one on top of another.

Az-Zubayr ibn Bakkār narrated in *al-Muwaffaqiyāt* from the nephew of az-Zuhrī, who said: I asked az-Zuhrī, "Who was the first to demand an oath in the pledge of allegiance?" He replied, "Mu'āwīya made them swear by Allah, but 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān later had them swear upon divorce and freeing slaves."

Al-'Askarī narrated in *Kitāb al-Awā'il* from Sulayman ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Ma'mar, who said: Mu'āwīya went to Makka or Madina and when he arrived at the mosque, he sat down in a circle alongside Ibn 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbās and 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr. They welcomed him, but Ibn 'Abbās turned away from him. Mu'āwīya said, "I have more right to this authority than this one who turns away and his paternal cousin ('Alī)." Ibn 'Abbās replied, "Why? For precedence in Islam? For accompanying the Messenger of Allah ﷺ from an early period? Or for close kinship with him?" He said, "No, but for being the paternal cousin of the murdered one ('Uthmān)." He replied, "Then this one has more right to it," meaning Ibn Abī Bakr. Mu'āwīya said, "His father died a natural death." He replied, "Then this one has more right to it," meaning Ibn 'Umar. He said, "An unbeliever killed him." He replied, "That is even worse for your argument, since it was Muslims who blamed your paternal cousin ('Uthmān) and killed him."

'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Aqīl said: Mu'āwīya came to Madina and met Abū Qatāda al-Anṣārī. He said, "Everyone has come to see me except you Anṣār people." He replied, "We have no riding animals." He said, "Where are the camels for drawing water?" He replied, "We had them hamstrung chasing you and your father

on the day of Badr." Then Abū Qatāda continued, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to us, 'You will see selfishness (*athara*) after me.'" Mu'āwiya asked, "What did he tell you to do?" He replied, "He ordered us to be steadfast." He said, "Then be steadfast." That reached 'Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Ḥassān ibn Thābit, who responded,

"Convey to Mu'āwiya, the son of Harb,  
Commander of the Believers, this speech of mine:  
We are steadfast and awaiting you  
until the Day of Overreaching and Contention  
(*taghābun wa-l-khiṣām*)."

Ibn Abī ad-Dunyā and Ibn 'Asākir narrate from Jabala ibn Suḥaym, who said: I went to Mu'āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān during his caliphate. He had a rope around his neck and a child was leading him. I said to him, "Commander of the Believers, is this what you are doing?" He replied, "Keep quiet, ignoramus, for I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, 'Whoever has a child, let him behave in a childlike way with him.'" Ibn 'Asākir said that it is a very unusual narration (*gharīb<sup>4</sup> jiddan*).

Ibn Abī Shayba narrated in *al-Muṣannaf* from ash-Sha'bī, who said: A youth from Quraysh came to Mu'āwiya and addressed him harshly. He replied to him, "Son of my brother, I forbid you to behave like that towards the ruler (*as-sultān*), for a ruler becomes angry like a child but seizes with a lion's grip."

He (Ibn Abī Shayba) narrated from ash-Sha'bī from Ziyād, who said: I appointed a man, but he took some of his land tax (*kharāj*) for himself and then, fearing that I would punish him, fled to Mu'āwiya. I wrote a letter to him, saying, "This is bad behaviour towards me." He replied to me, "Neither you nor I ought to govern

4 A *gharīb ḥadīth* "is that which one person alone narrates (whether he is a trustworthy narrator or not) in whatever point of the chain of transmission he alone occurs..." Zafar Aḥmad al-'Uthmānī at-Tahānawī, *Qawā'id fī 'ulūm al-ḥadīth*, Turath Publishing, London. Such a ḥadīth can be *ṣaḥīḥ*.

people with a single policy. If we are lenient to them all, they will exult in disobedience and if we are harsh to them all, we will drive them to destruction. Rather, you act with severity and harshness and I will act with lenience and gentleness."

He (Ibn Abī Shayba) narrated from ash-Sha'bī, who said: I heard Mu'āwiya say, "No community ever divided without the people of falsehood prevailing over the people of truth, except this community."

It is narrated in *aṭ-Ṭuyūrīyāt* from Sulaymān al-Makhzūmī, who said: Mu'āwiya made a general announcement to the people and when the assembly gathered, he said, "Recite for me three verses by an Arab, each verse complete in meaning." They remained silent until 'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr came. He [Mu'āwiya] said, "This ['Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr] is the most eloquent and learned of the Arabs: Abū Khubayb." He ['Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr] said, "What do you want?" Mu'āwiya said, "Recite for me three verses by an Arab, each verse complete in meaning." He said, "For 300,000 (dirhams)." He said, "Is it worth it?" He replied, "It is your choice. You are free to decide for yourself." He said, "Bring it on." He recited to him from the poetry of Afwah al-Awdī,

"I tested people, generation after generation  
and saw none, but deceivers and talkers."

Mu'āwiya said, "You have spoken truly, go on." He continued,

"I have seen no calamities worse  
or more distressing than the enmity of men."

Mu'āwiya said, "You have spoken truly, go on." He continued,

"I have tasted the bitterness of all things  
but no taste is more bitter than begging."

Mu'āwiya said, "You have spoken truly," and gave him 300,000.

Al-Bukhārī, an-Nasā'ī and Ibn Abī Ḥātim – the latter in his *Tafsīr* from where the wording is taken – narrated through various ways of transmission (*turuq*) that Marwān gave a *khutba* in Madina as Mu'āwiya's governor of Ḥijāz. He said, "Allah has shown the Commander of the Believers a good idea regarding his son, Yazīd. If he appoint him as successor, then surely Abū Bakr and 'Umar also named successors." (Or, in another wording, "according to the *sunna* of Abū Bakr and 'Umar"). Then 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr said, "Rather, the *sunna* of Heraclius and Caesar. Abū Bakr did not appoint any of his sons or his family and 'Umar did not appoint any of his sons or his family. Mu'āwiya has only done it as a favour and an honour to his son." Marwān said, "Aren't you the one who said 'Ugh!' to his parents?" (see Qur'ān 17:23) 'Abd ar-Raḥmān replied, "Aren't you the son of the accursed one, the one whose father the Messenger of Allah ﷺ cursed?" 'Ā'isha ؓ said, "Marwān has lied, it was not revealed about him, but about so-and-so son of so-and-so." However, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ cursed Marwān's father when Marwān was in his loins, so Marwān is a part of someone whom Allah cursed.

Ibn Abī Shayba narrated in *al-Muṣannaf* from 'Urwa that Mu'āwiya said, "There is no forbearance without trials."

Ibn 'Asākir narrated from ash-Sha'bī, who said: The most cunning of the Arabs are four: Mu'āwiya, 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, al-Mughīra ibn Shu'ba and Ziyād. Mu'āwiya shows it in his forbearance and patience, 'Amr in difficulties, al-Mughīra in unexpected situations and Ziyād in both great and small things.

He (Ibn 'Asākir) also narrated from him (ash-Sha'bī) that he said: The judges were four and the cunning ones were four. As for the judges, they were 'Umar, 'Alī, Ibn Mas'ūd and Zayd ibn Thābit. As for the cunning ones, they were Mu'āwiya, 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ, al-Mughīra and Ziyād.

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from Qabīṣa ibn Jābir, who said: I

accompanied 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and I have not seen anyone more versed in the Book of Allah and more discerning in the religion of Allah. I accompanied Ṭalḥa ibn 'Ubayd Allāh and I have not seen anyone more generous in gifts without being asked for them than him. I accompanied Mu'āwiya and I have not seen anyone weightier in forbearance, slower to folly and more deliberate than him. I accompanied 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ and I have not seen anyone purer in nobility and gentler as companion than him. I accompanied al-Mughīra ibn Shu'ba and if there was a city with eight gates, which one could not pass except by slyness, he would get out through all of them."

Ibn 'Asākir narrated from Ḥumayd ibn Hilāl that 'Aqīl ibn Abī Ṭālib asked 'Alī, "I am poor and needy, please give me." He replied, "Be patient until my stipend comes with those of the other Muslims and I will give you from it." He insisted and 'Alī told another man, "Take his hand and go with him to the stalls of the market people. Tell them to break the locks and take what is in the stalls." 'Aqīl said, "Do you take me for a thief?" He replied, "Do you take me for a thief, taking from the wealth of the Muslims and giving it to you, but not to them?" He said, "I will go to Mu'āwiya." 'Alī replied, "As you wish." He went to Mu'āwiya, who gave him 100,000 (dirhams) and said, "Ascend the *minbar* and mention what 'Alī gave you and then what I gave you." He ascended, praised Allah, and said, "People, I tell you that I tried to seduce 'Alī regarding his religion and he preferred his religion, then I tried to seduce Mu'āwiya regarding his religion and he preferred me over his religion."

Ibn 'Asākir narrated from Ja'far ibn Muḥammad from his father that 'Aqīl went to Mu'āwiya, who said, "This is 'Aqīl, whose paternal uncle is Abū Lahab." 'Aqīl replied, "This is Mu'āwiya, whose paternal aunt is the firewood-carrier" (see Qur'ān 111:4)

Ibn 'Asākir narrated from al-Awzā'ī, who said: Khuraym ibn Fātik went to Mu'āwiya. His wrapper was tucked up and he had beautiful legs. Mu'āwiya said, "These are the legs of a woman." Khuraym

replied, "Just like your hips, Commander of the Believers."

Among the prominent people who died during Mu'āwiya's reign were Ṣafwān ibn Umayya, Ḥafṣa, Umm Ḥabība, Ṣafīya, Maymūna, Sawda, Juwayriya and 'Ā'isha – the Mothers of the Believers, may Allah be pleased with them – Labīd the poet, 'Uthmān ibn Ṭalḥa al-Ḥajabī, 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, 'Abd Allāh ibn Sallām the learned Jew, Muḥammad ibn Maslama, Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, Zayd ibn Thābit, Abū Bakra, Ka'b ibn Mālik, al-Mughīra ibn Shu'ba, Jarīr al-Bajlī, Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, 'Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn, Sa'īd ibn Zayd, Abū Qatāda al-Anṣārī, Faḍāla ibn 'Ubayd, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr, Jubayr ibn Muṭ'im, Usāma ibn Zayd, Thawbān, 'Amr ibn Ḥazm, Ḥassān ibn Thābit, Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām, Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās, Abū al-Yasar, Qutham ibn al-'Abbās and his brother 'Ubayd Allāh, 'Uqba ibn 'Āmir and Abū Hurayra in year 59/679 – who used to supplicate, "O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the turn of year 60 and the reign of children," and was answered – among others ﷺ.

## Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya Abū Khālid al-Umawī

60-63/680-683

Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya, Abū Khālid al-Umawī. He was born in the year 25/646 or 26/647. He was stout, corpulent and with much hair. His mother was Maysūn bint Baḥdal al-Kalbiyya. He narrated from his father and his son, Khālid, and 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān narrated from him. His father appointed him as his successor and forced people to accept it, as previously mentioned.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: Two men put disorder into people's affair. First, 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ when he advised Mu'āwiya to raise the copies of the Qur'ān and they were lifted up. He said, "Where are the reciters (*al-qurrā'*)?" Then the Khawārij asserted that judgement only belongs to Allah. This assertion of Allah's judgement will continue until the Day of Rising. Second, al-Mughīra ibn Shu'ba, when he was Mu'āwiya's governor over Kufa and Mu'āwiya wrote to him, "When you read my letter, come to me, dismissed from your office." But he delayed and when he finally came to him, Mu'āwiya asked, "What took you so long?" Al-Mughīra replied, "An affair that I had to settle." He said, "And what was that?" He said, "The oath of allegiance for Yazīd's succession after you." He said, "And did you complete it?" He replied, "Yes." Then Mu'āwiya said, "Return to your post." When al-Mughīra departed, his companions asked him how it went and he replied, "I have placed Mu'āwiya's foot in a stirrup of error, in which it will remain until the Day of Rising." Al-Ḥasan

al-Baṣrī added: Therefore, they have taken oaths of allegiance for their sons and were it not for that, it would have been a matter of consultation (*shūrā*) until the Day of Rising.

Ibn Sīrīn said: ‘Amr ibn Ḥazm went to Mu‘āwiya and told him, “I remind you of Allah with respect to the community of Muḥammad ﷺ and the successor you appoint over it.” He replied, “You have advised sincerely and expressed your view, but only my son and their sons remain, and my son has more right to it.”

‘Aṭīyya ibn Qays said: Mu‘āwiya said in a *khuṭba*, “O Allah, if I appointed Yazīd because of the merit I see in him, then make him achieve what I hoped for and help him. But if it was only a father’s love for his son that made me do it and he does not deserve what I have done for him, then take him away before he reaches it.” When Mu‘āwiya died, the people of Syria pledged allegiance to Yazīd. He sent someone to take the oath of allegiance for him from the people of Madina, but al-Ḥusayn and Ibn az-Zubayr refused to pledge allegiance to him and went to Makka at night.

As for Ibn az-Zubayr, he did not pledge allegiance nor make any claims for himself.

As for al-Ḥusayn, the Kufans had been writing to him, during Mu‘āwiya’s reign, urging him to join them, which he refused. After Yazīd took the oath of allegiance, however, he became preoccupied with these concerns, sometimes determined to stay and sometimes being willing to join them. Ibn az-Zubayr advised him to go, but Ibn ‘Abbās kept telling not to do it. Ibn ‘Umar said to him, “Do not go. Allah gave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ the choice between this world and the next, and he chose the next. You are a part of him and you will not obtain it,” meaning this world. He hugged him and wept, but said farewell to him. Ibn ‘Umar said, “Al-Ḥusayn overcame our objections to his departure even though, upon my life! he had already had a portent in his father and brother.” Jābir ibn ‘Abd Allāh, Abū Sa‘īd and Abū Wāqid al-Laythī told him the same, but he did not yield to any of them and resolved to go to Iraq. Ibn ‘Abbās told

him, “By Allah, I think you will be killed among your womenfolk and children, like ‘Uthmān was killed.” But he did not accept that from him. Ibn ‘Abbās wept and said, “Now Ibn az-Zubayr will be delighted.” When Ibn ‘Abbās saw ‘Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr, he said to him, “What you wanted has come about. Here is al-Ḥusayn departing and leaving the Ḥijāz to you.” Then he cited,

“O you lark of this spacious abode  
the valley is yours, lay your eggs and sing  
and peck at whatever you wish to peck.”

The people of Iraq sent messengers and letters to al-Ḥusayn, inviting him to join them. He left Makka for Iraq on the 10th of Dhū al-Ḥijja along with a group of his household, including men, women and children. Yazīd wrote to his governor of Iraq, ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, to fight him and he sent an army of 4,000 men against him, led by ‘Umar ibn Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ. The people of Kufa deserted al-Ḥusayn, as they had done with his father before him. When they bore down on him with weapons, he offered to submit and withdraw, and go to Yazīd to place his hand in his. However, they refused everything but killing him. He was killed and his head was brought on a plate before Ibn Ziyād, may Allah curse his murderer along with Ibn Ziyād and Yazīd.

He was killed at Karbalā’ on the Day of ‘Āshūrā’. The story of his death is a long one and the heart cannot bear to remember it. We belong to Allah and to Him we will return. There were sixteen men of his family killed with him.

When al-Ḥusayn was killed, the world stood still for seven days, the sun on the walls seemed like safflower-dyed sheets and the stars struck one another. The sun was eclipsed on that day and the horizon of the sky turned red for six months after his death. Its redness continued to be seen after that, but had never been seen before.

It is said that not a stone was turned in Jerusalem on that day,

except that fresh blood was found under it, that the *wars*-plant in their armies turned into ashes and that they slaughtered a she-camel in their army and saw flames in its flesh, which became like bitter colocynth when they cooked it. It is said that a man spoke ill of al-Ḥusayn and Allah launched two meteorites from heaven at him, effacing his sight.

Ath-Tha'ālabī said that the transmitters narrated through various ways from 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr al-Laythī, who said, "I saw in this palace," and pointed towards the governor's palace in Kufa, "the head of al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī on a shield in front of 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. Then I saw the head of 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād in front of al-Mukhtār ibn Abī 'Ubayd. Then I saw the head of al-Mukhtār in front of Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubayr. Then I saw the head of Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubayr in front of 'Abd al-Malik. When I told 'Abd al-Malik about it, he saw it as a bad sign and left the place." It is also said that he ordered its demolition.

At-Tirmidhī narrated from Salmā, who said: I went to Umm Salama and she was weeping, so I asked, "What makes you weep?" She replied, "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in a dream with dust on his hair and beard, so I asked, 'What has happened to you, Messenger of Allah?' He replied, 'I just witnessed the killing of al-Ḥusayn.'"

Al-Bayhaqī narrated in *ad-Dalā'il* from Ibn 'Abbās, who said: I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at midday dishevelled and with dusty hair, holding a glass bottle of blood." I asked, "May my father and mother be your ransom, Messenger of Allah, what is this?" He replied, "This is the blood of al-Ḥusayn and his companions, which I have continued to collect from this day." They calculated the day and found that he was killed on that very day.

Abū Nu'aym narrated in *ad-Dalā'il* from Umm Salama, who said, "I heard the jinn weep for al-Ḥusayn and lament him."

Tha'lab narrated in his *Amālī* from Abū Janāb al-Kalbī, who said: I went to Karbalā' and said to one of the Arab nobles, "Tell me regarding what has reached me, namely, that you hear the

lamentations of the jinn." He replied, "You will not meet anyone, but he will tell you that he has heard it." I said, "Then tell me what you have heard." He said that he had heard them say,

"The Messenger wiped over his forehead,  
so he has radiance on his cheeks  
His parents were the noblest of Quraysh  
and his grandfather the best of grandfathers."

When al-Ḥusayn and his half-brothers were killed, Ibn Ziyād sent their heads to Yazīd. He initially rejoiced at their death, but regretted it when the Muslims despised him for it. The people began to hate him, which they have every reason to do.

Abū Ya'lā narrated in his *Musnad*, with a weak chain of transmitters, from Abū 'Ubayda, who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The affair of my community will remain based on justice until the first to subvert it is a man from Banū Umayya called Yazīd."

Ar-Ruwayānī narrated in his *Muṣnad* from Abū ad-Dardā' ؓ that he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, "The first to alter my *sunna* will be a man from Banū Umayya called Yazīd.

Nawfal ibn Abī al-Furāt said: I was with 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz when a man mentioned Yazīd, saying, "The Commander of the Believers, Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya." He said, "Do you call him Commander of the Believers?" and gave orders regarding him, and he received twenty lashes.

### Section

In year 63/683, it reached Yazīd that the people of Madina had revolted against him and renounced allegiance to him. He sent a large army with orders to attack them and then continue to Makka and fight Ibn az-Zubayr. They set out and the Battle of al-Ḥarra took place by the gate of Ṭayba. What can make you understand what the Battle of al-Ḥarra was? Al-Ḥasan mentioned it once,

saying, "By Allah, almost none of them survived." A large number of Companions, among others, were killed in it ﷺ. Madina was sacked and a thousand virgins were violated. We belong to Allah and to Him we will return.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Whoever causes the people of Madina to be afraid, then Allah will cause him to be afraid and upon him is the curse of Allah, the angels and all of mankind." It is narrated by Muslim.

The reason for the Madinans' renunciation was that Yazīd went too far in his transgressions. Al-Wāqidī narrated through various ways of transmission that 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥanzala ibn al-Ghasīl said, "By Allah, we did not rise against Yazīd until we feared that we would be stoned from heaven. He was a man who would marry slave mothers (*ummaḥāt al-awlād*) as well as their daughters and sisters, drink wine and abandon the prayer."

Adh-Dhahabī said: When Yazīd did what he did to the people of Madina, alongside his wine-drinking and wrongdoing, the people's pressure upon him increased and more than one revolted against him. Allah did not put any blessing in his life. When the army of al-Ḥarra marched towards Makka to attack Ibn az-Zubayr, the leader of the army died on the way and he appointed another general over them. They arrived at Makka and besieged Ibn az-Zubayr, fighting him and launching war engines against him, in Ṣafar 64/683. From the sparks of their fires, the covering of the Ka'ba took fire as well as its roof and the two horns of the ram by which Allah had ransomed Ismā'īl and which were in the roof. Allah ended Yazīd's life in the middle of the month of Rabī' al-Awwal in this year. The news of his death came while the fighting was still going on. Ibn az-Zubayr called out, "People of Syria, your tyrant has perished!" They were defeated and submitted, and the people captured them. Ibn az-Zubayr called to the oath of allegiance for himself and assumed the title of caliph. The people of Syria pledged allegiance to Mu'āwiya ibn Yazīd, but his reign did not last long, as we shall see.

Among the verses of Yazīd are:

This care has returned and drawn near,  
 sleep passed and became impossible.  
 Looking at the stars, I watched them  
 and suddenly a planet appeared.  
 It circled around until I saw  
 that it had fallen to the depths.  
 She has – in the village of Māṭirūn,  
 when the ant has eaten what it stored –  
 a pleasant stroll, until when she came  
 she alighted in Damascus at the temples  
 under domes, in the midst of a palace,  
 around which are ripening olives.

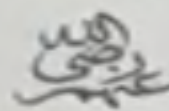
Ibn 'Asākir narrated from 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar, who said: Abū Bakr, the Confirmer of Truth (*aṣ-ṣiddīq*), you got it right with his name; 'Umar, the Discriminator (*al-fārūq*), was an iron horn, you got it right with his name; 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, the Possessor of Two Lights (*dhū an-nūrayn*), was wrongly killed, but given double portions of mercy; Mu'āwiya and his son are the two kings of the holy land (*malikā al-arḍ al-muqaddasa*); as-Saffāḥ, Sallām, al-Manṣūr, Jābir, al-Mahdī, al-Amīn and the Commander of Wrath are all the sons of Ka'b ibn Lu'ayy and all of them are righteous; their likes cannot be found."

Adh-Dhahabī said that this is ascribed to Ibn 'Umar through various ways, but no one has ascribed it directly (*lam yarfa'hu ahad*).

Al-Wāqidī narrated from Abū Ja'far al-Bāqir, who said: Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya was the first to cover the Ka'ba with silk brocade.

Among the prominent people who died during Yazīd's reign, besides those who were killed with al-Ḥusayn and in the Battle of al-Ḥarra, were Umm Salama, the Mother of the Believers, Khālid ibn 'Urfuṭa, Jarhad al-Aslamī, Jābir ibn 'Atīk, Burayda ibn al-Ḥuṣayb,



Maslama ibn Makhlad, 'Alqama ibn Qays an-Nakha'i the *faqih*, Masrūq, al-Miswar ibn Makhrama and others . The number of those killed at al-Ḥarra, from Quraysh and the Anṣar, were 306.

## Mu'āwiya ibn Yazīd

64/683-4

**M**u'āwiya ibn Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya, Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān. It is also said that he was Abū Yazīd and Abū Laylā. He became caliph, according to his father's testament, in Rabī' al-Awwal 64/683. He was a righteous youth, but was ill when he became caliph and remained ill until he died. He never went out to the people, never took part in any affairs and never led the people in prayer. The length of his caliphate was forty days. It has also been said that it was two or three months. He died at the age of twenty-one but it is also said that he was twenty. When he was dying, someone said to him, "Will you not appoint a successor?" He said, "I have not enjoyed its sweetness, so I will not take upon myself its bitterness."

## 'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr

64-73/684-692

**A**bd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām ibn Khuwaylid ibn Asad ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā ibn Quṣayy al-Asadī. His *kunya* was Abū Bakr but it has been said that it was Abū Khubayb, with *ḍamma* (u) on the letter *khā*'. He was a Companion who was a son of a Companion.

His father was one of the ten for whom it was witnessed that the Garden is theirs. His mother was Asmā' bint Abī Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq ﷺ. His paternal grandmother was Ṣafīyya, the paternal aunt of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

He was born in Madina, twenty months after the Hijra, but some have said that it was within the first year. He was the first child born to the Muhājirūn after the Hijra. The Muslims rejoiced at his birth, because the Jews used to say, "We have bewitched them, so no son will be born to them." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ rubbed his palate with a chewed date and named him 'Abd Allāh and gave him the *kunya* Abū Bakr, after the name and *kunya* of his grandfather, Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq.

He fasted and prayed a great deal, and was much given to long prayers. He was close to his kindred and exceptionally brave. He used to divide his time into three nights: one night standing in prayer until morning, one night bowing and one night prostrate until morning.

It is narrated that he had thirty-three *ḥadīths* from the Prophet ﷺ. Those who narrated from him include his brother 'Urwa, Ibn Abī Mulayka, 'Abbās ibn Sahl, Thābit al-Bunānī, 'Aṭā', 'Ubayda as-Salmānī and others.

He was one of those who refused to pledge allegiance to Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya, and he fled to Makka. He made no pretensions for himself, but did not pledge allegiance, which made Yazīd furious at him. When Yazīd died, he received the oath of allegiance as caliph and was obeyed by the people of Ḥijāz, Yemen, Iraq and Khurāsān.

He renovated the structure of the Ka'ba, making two gates upon the foundations of Ibrāhīm and incorporating six cubits of the Ḥijr, because of what his maternal aunt, 'Ā'isha ﷺ related to him from the Prophet ﷺ.

The only regions outside his authority were Syria and Egypt, where Mu'āwiya ibn Yazīd had received the oath of allegiance, but his reign did not last long, and when he died, the people of the two regions obeyed Ibn az-Zubayr and pledged allegiance to him. Then Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam set out and seized Syria and then Egypt. It continued like that until he died in 65/685, after having appointed his son, 'Abd al-Malik, as his successor.

The most sound view is that of adh-Dhahabī, who said that Marwān is not regarded as one of the Commanders of the Believers, but as a rebel (*bāghin*) against Ibn az-Zubayr, and that his appointment of his son was not valid. 'Abd al-Malik's caliphate only became valid when Ibn az-Zubayr was killed.

Ibn az-Zubayr remained in Makka as caliph until 'Abd al-Malik overcame him by dispatching al-Ḥajjāj with forty thousand men to attack him. He besieged Makka for a month and employed engines of war against him. The companions of Ibn az-Zubayr deserted him and escaped to al-Ḥajjāj, who defeated and killed Ibn az-Zubayr, then crucified him. That happened on Tuesday the 17th of Jumādā al-Ūlā, and it has been said Jumādā al-Ākhira, in 73/692.

Ibn 'Asākir narrated from Muḥammad ibn Zayd ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar, who said, "I was standing on [the hill of] Abū Qubays when the war engines were laid against Ibn az-Zubayr. A thunderbolt came down and I saw it circle around like a red veil, burning about fifty men at the war engines."

Ibn az-Zubayr was the knight (*fāris*) of Quraysh in his time and his feats are well attested.

Abū Ya'la narrated in his *Musnad* from Ibn az-Zubayr that the Prophet ﷺ was being cupped and when he finished, he said to him, "Abd Allāh, take this blood and pour it out where no one can see you." But when he went, he drank it. On his return, he asked, "What did you do with the blood?" He replied, "I went for the most secret place and put it there." He said, "Perhaps you drank it?" He replied, "I did." He said, "Woe to the people from you and woe to you from the people." They used to think that his strength came from that blood.

He (Abū Ya'la) narrated from Nawf al-Bikālī, who said, "I find in the revealed Book of Allah that Ibn az-Zubayr is the knight among the caliphs."

'Amr ibn Dīnār said, "I never saw anyone praying more beautifully than Ibn az-Zubayr. He once prayed in the Ḥijr when a catapult struck the edge of his garment but he did not even turn to it."

Mujāhid said, "There was no type of worship, which people were unable to undertake, but that Ibn az-Zubayr took it upon himself. When a flood came and inundated the House, he circumambulated it swimming."

'Uthmān ibn Ṭalḥa said, "Ibn az-Zubayr was unmatched in three things: bravery, worship and eloquence. He had a loud sonorous voice. When he gave a *khutba*, the mountains echoed."

Ibn 'Asākir narrated from 'Urwa that an-Nābigha al-Ja'dī recited these verses for 'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr,

"You cited aṣ-Ṣiddīq to us when you ruled us,  
and 'Uthmān and al-Fārūq, and the poor found ease.  
You made people equal in their rights and so it remained,  
until one morning when the black clouds returned."

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from Hishām ibn 'Urwa and Khubayb, who said: 'Abd Allāh was the first to cover the Ka'ba with silk

brocade, after its covering had been made of haircloth and dressed leather.

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from 'Umar ibn Qays, who said: Ibn az-Zubayr had one hundred slave-boys, each one speaking in a different tongue, and Ibn az-Zubayr used to speak to each one in his own language. When I considered his worldly concerns, I used to think that this man does not turn to Allah for the twinkling of an eye, and when I considered his other-worldly concerns, I used to think that this man does not turn to the world for the twinkling of an eye.

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from Hishām ibn 'Urwa, who said: The first word that my paternal uncle, 'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr, distinctly uttered as a child was "sword" and he wouldn't let it out of his mouth. When his father heard that, he would say, "By Allah, you will have yours day after day and many days ahead."

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from Abū 'Ubayda, who said: 'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr al-Asadī went to 'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām and said, "Commander of the Believers, there is a blood-relationship between us through a certain woman." Ibn az-Zubayr replied, "Yes, it is as you say, but if you think about it, you will see that people's lineages all go back to one father and mother." He said, "Commander of the Believers, my sustenance has run out." He replied, "That which I guaranteed your family should be sufficient for you until you return to them." He said, "Commander of the Believers, my she-camel is foot-sore." He replied, "Help it by cooling its hoof and treat it with dill. Cover it with hair and ride it in the coolness of the morning and evening." He said, "Commander of the Believers, I came to you asking for a riding beast, not for medical consultation. May Allah curse the she-camel that brought me to you!" Ibn az-Zubayr replied, "Indeed, and its rider." Al-Asadī left reciting,

"I see that with Abū Khubayb, needs are  
 unfulfilled and there are no Umayyads in the land  
 of al-ʿAʿyās (the family of ʿĀṣ) or the family of Ḥarb,  
 brilliant like the blaze of a racing horse.  
 I told my friend, 'Bring me my mount,  
 I am leaving the centre of Makka at night  
 and when I pass Dhāt ʿIrq, I will never  
 return to Ibn al-Kāhiliyya again.'"

ʿAbd ar-Razzāq narrates in his *Muṣannaʿ* from az-Zuhrī that no head was ever brought to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, not even after the battle of Badr. It was once brought to Abū Bakr, but he disapproved of it. The first to whom heads were brought was ʿAbd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr.

The revolt of al-Mukhtār, the liar (*al-kadhḥāb*), who claimed prophecy, took place during the reign of Ibn az-Zubayr. He dispatched an army against him. They fought until they defeated him in 67/687 and put him to death, may Allah curse him.

Among the prominent people who died during Ibn az-Zubayr's reign were Usayd ibn Ḥuḍayr, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ, an-Nuʿmān ibn Bashīr, Sulaymān ibn Ṣurad, Jābir ibn Samura, Zayd ibn Arqam, ʿAdī ibn Ḥātim, Ibn ʿAbbās, Abū Wāqid al-Laythī, Zayd ibn Khālīd al-Juhānī, Abū al-Aswad ad-Duʿalī and others.

## ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān

65-86/685-705

**A**bd al-Malik ibn Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-ʿĀṣ ibn Umayya ibn ʿAbd Shams ibn ʿAbd Manāf ibn Quṣayy ibn Kilāb, Abū al-Walīd. He was born in year 26/646.

He received the oath of allegiance according to his father's contract during the caliphate of Ibn az-Zubayr, but his caliphate was not valid and he remained as the usurper (*mutaḡhallib*) of Egypt and Syria. He then seized Iraq and its provinces before Ibn az-Zubayr was killed in 73/692. From that day, his caliphate became valid and his authority firmly established.

In this year, al-Ḥajjāj tore down the Kaʿba and rebuilt it as it is today. He also incited someone to stab Ibn ʿUmar with a poisoned spearhead, from which he sickened and died.

In 74/693-4, al-Ḥajjāj went to Madina where he began to harass the people and treat the remaining companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with contempt. He made them wear seals around their necks and hands to humiliate them, including the likes of Anas, Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh and Sahl ibn Saʿd as-Sāʿidī. We belong to Allah and to Him we will return.

In 75/694-5, the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik led the people in *ḥajj* and sent al-Ḥajjāj to Iraq as governor.

In year 76/695-6, Hiraqla was conquered and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān demolished the *jāmiʿ* mosque of Egypt, enlarging it in all four directions.

In 82/701-2, the fort of Sinān in the region of al-Maṣṣīṣa was conquered, and the campaigns of Armenia and Ṣinhāja in the West took place.

In 83/702-3, the city of Wāsiṭ was founded by al-Ḥajjāj.

In 84/703-4, al-Maṣṣīṣa and Awwaliyya in the West were conquered.

In 85/704-5, the cities of Dabīl and Bardha'a were founded by 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Ḥātim ibn an-Nu'mān al-Bāhilī.

In 86/705, the forts of Būlaq and al-Akhram were seized. The Plague of the Young Women (*ṭā'ūn al-fatayāt*) also occurred. It was called that because it began among women. The caliph, 'Abd al-Malik, died in the month of Shawwāl, leaving seventeen sons.

Aḥmād ibn 'Abd Allāh al-'Ijlī said that 'Abd al-Malik had bad breath when he was a six-month child.

Ibn Sa'd said that he was a man of worship, doing-without and devotion in Madina before he became caliph.

Yaḥyā al-Ghassānī said: 'Abd al-Malik often sat with Umm ad-Dardā' and she once said to him, "It has reached me, Commander of the Believers, that you drink wine (*aṭ-ṭilā'*) after all your devotion and worship." He replied, "Indeed, by Allah, and I drink blood as well."

Nāfi' said: I have seen Madina and there is no youth with more zeal, *fiqh*, devotion and knowledge of the Book of Allah than 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān.

Abū az-Zinād said: The *fuqahā'* of Madina are four: Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib, 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, 'Urwa ibn az-Zubayr and Qabīṣa ibn Dhu'ayb.

Ibn 'Umar said: People beget sons, but Marwān begot a father.

'Ubāda ibn Nusayy said: Someone said to Ibn 'Umar, "You are the elders of Quraysh, but you are about to pass away, so who should we consult after you?" He replied, "Marwān has a son who is a *faqīh*. Ask him."

Suḥaym the *mawlā* of Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه said: In his youth, 'Abd al-Malik went to Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه who said, "This man will rule the Arabs."

'Abda ibn Riyāḥ al-Ghassānī said: Umm ad-Dardā' said to 'Abd al-

Malik, "I have imagined you with this authority since the first time I saw you." He replied, "Why is that?" She said, "I never saw anyone better than you as a *ḥadīth* narrator and more knowledgeable than you as listener."

Ash-Sha'bī said: I have not sat with anyone, but that I found myself superior to him, except 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān. I never mentioned a *ḥadīth* to him, but that he added to it and I never mentioned a verse of poetry, but that he added to it.

Adh-Dhahabī said that 'Abd al-Malik heard *ḥadīth* from 'Uthmān, Abū Hurayra, Abū Sa'īd, Umm Salama, Barīra, Ibn 'Umar and Mu'āwiya. Among those who narrated from him were 'Urwa, Khālid ibn Ma'dān, Rajā' ibn Ḥaywa, az-Zuhri, Yūnus ibn Maysara, Rabī'a ibn Yazīd, Ismā'il ibn 'Ubayd Allāh, Ḥarīz ibn 'Uthmān and a group of others.

Bakr ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Muzanī said: A Jew named Yūsuf became Muslim and used to read the scriptures. He passed by the house of Marwān and said, "Woe to the community of Muḥammad from the people of this house." I asked him, "For how long?" He replied, "Until the black banners come from Khurāsān." He was a friend of 'Abd al-Malik and once struck his shoulder, telling him, "Fear Allah with respect to the community of Muḥammad when you rule over them." He replied, "Leave me. Woe to you. What have I got to do with that?" He said, "Fear Allah in what concerns them." Then Yazīd dispatched an army against the people of Makka and 'Abd al-Malik said, "I seek refuge in Allah, does he send it against Allah's sanctuary?" Yūsuf struck his shoulder and said, "Your army against them will be much larger."

Yaḥyā al-Ghassānī said: When Muslim ibn 'Uqba arrived in Madina, I entered the mosque of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and sat down besides 'Abd al-Malik. He said to me, "Is this your army?" I replied, "Yes." He said, "May your mother be bereft of you! Do you not know against whom you are marching? Against the first-born in Islam, against the son of the disciple of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ,

against the son of the Woman of the Two Girdles (*dhāt an-niṭāqayn*), against the one whose palate the Messenger of Allah ﷺ rubbed with a chewed date. By Allah, if you go to him in the daytime, you will find him fasting and if you go to him at night, you will find him standing in prayer. If all the people on Earth agreed to kill him, Allah would throw them all in the Fire." When the caliphate went to 'Abd al-Malik, he sent us with al-Ḥajjāj and we killed him.

Ibn Abī 'Ā'isha said: 'Abd al-Malik was informed about the affair (of his succession) when he had copy of the Qur'ān in his lap. He closed it and said, "This is the end of the covenant with you."

Mālik said: I heard Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd say: The first ones to pray in the mosque between *ẓuhr* and *'aṣr* were 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān and some youths with him. When the imām had prayed *ẓuhr*, they stood in prayer until *'aṣr*. Someone said to Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib, "If we could only stand in prayer like them." He replied, "Worship is not a lot of prayer and fasting. Rather, worship is reflection on the command of Allah and scrupulousness regarding that which He has made unlawful."

Muṣ'ab ibn 'Abd Allāh said: 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān was the first to be named 'Abd al-Malik in Islam.

Yaḥyā ibn Bukayr said: I heard Mālik say: 'Abd al-Malik was the first to mint *dīnārs* and he inscribed parts of the Qur'ān on them.

Muṣ'ab said: 'Abd al-Malik inscribed on the *dīnārs*, "Say: Allah is One." (Qur'ān 112:1) and on the reverse, "There is no god, but Allah." He encircled it with a rim of silver and inscribed in it "Minted in such-and-such city". Outside the rim, he inscribed, "Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, whom He sent with the guidance and religion of truth."

It is narrated in al-'Askarī's *al-Awā'il*, with its chain of transmission, that 'Abd al-Malik was the first to write at the beginning of letters, "Say: Allah is One" (Qur'ān 112:1), and then mention the Prophet ﷺ and the date. The Roman emperor once wrote back, "You have introduced some mentioning of your Prophet in your letters. Leave

it, otherwise our *dīnārs* will reach you with the mention of what you will dislike."

'Abd al-Malik found it distressing, so he sent for Khālid ibn Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya and sought his advice. He said, "Forbid their *dīnārs* and mint coins for the people that mention Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and do not refrain from what they dislike in your letters." Then he minted *dīnārs* for the people in 75/695.

Al-'Askarī said: 'Abd al-Malik was the first stingy caliph. He used to be called the Giver of Stones (*rashḥ al-ḥijāra*), because of his stinginess and he was given the *kunya* Father of Flies (Abū adh-Dhibbān), because of his bad breath. He was the first in Islam to act treacherously, the first to forbid speaking in the caliph's presence and the first to forbid the commanding of good.

He (al-'Askarī) narrated on the authority of Ibn al-Kalbī, who said: Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam made a contract for 'Amr ibn Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ as successor after his son, but 'Abd al-Malik killed him. His assassination was the first treachery in Islam. One of them said,

"People, do not be overwhelmed in your views,  
for you have experienced the treachery of  
Marwān's sons.

They killed 'Amr and were never rightly guided,  
asserting that breaking the covenant of Allah  
is intelligence.

They openly killed men of sound judgement  
in order to appoint children to the affairs of men.

They played with the Book of Allah and took  
their desire to disobey Allah to be  
a means of drawing near.

He (al-'Askarī) narrated with an *isnād* that includes al-Kudaymī, who has been accused of lying, via Ibn Jurayj from his father, who said: 'Abd al-Malik gave a *khuṭba* to us in Madina after the killing

of Ibn az-Zubayr, at the time of *hajj* in 75/694. After praising Allah, he said, "I am not the weak caliph (alluding to 'Uthmān), nor the flattering caliph (alluding to Mu'āwiya), nor the stupid caliph (alluding to Yazīd). Caliphs before used to eat and feed others from this wealth. I will only heal the ills of this community by the sword, until you raise your spears for me. You enjoin on us the actions of the Muhājirūn, but you yourselves do not act according to their actions. You will only increase in punishment until the sword decides between us and you. This 'Amr ibn Sa'īd; his kinship was what it was and his position was what it was. He said that with his head and we said this with our swords. Now, we can tolerate anything from you, except attacking a governor or raising a banner. I still have the collar that I put on 'Amr ibn Sa'īd's neck. By Allah, if anyone does what he does, I will put it on that person's neck. By Allah, if anyone orders me to fear Allah after this stance of mine, I will strike his neck." Then he descended.

Then al-'Askarī said: 'Abd al-Malik was the first to translate the registries (*ad-dawāwīn*) from Persian to Arabic and the first to raise his hands on the *minbar*.

I (as-Suyūṭī) say: This completes the ten things in which he was first, five of which are reprehensible.

Ibn Abī Shayba narrated in *al-Muṣannaḥ* with a chain of transmission from Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, who said, "Banū Marwān were the first to introduce the *adhān* in the 'Īd al-Fiṭr and 'Īd al-Adḥā. It was either 'Abd al-Malik or one of his sons."

'Abd ar-Razzāq narrated from Ibn Jurayj, who said: I was informed by more than one that 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān was the first to cover the Ka'ba with silk brocade. The *fuqahā'* who were acquainted with it said, "He was correct. We do not know any covering more appropriate than that."

Yūsuf ibn al-Mājīshūn said: When 'Abd al-Malik sat down to judge, men were lined up at his head with swords.

Al-Aṣma'ī said: Someone said to 'Abd al-Malik, "Commander of the

Believers, you are becoming grey-haired very quickly." He replied, "How could it be otherwise when I put my intellect before people every Friday?"

Muḥammad ibn Ḥarb az-Ziyādī said: 'Abd al-Malik was asked, "Who is the best of people?" He replied, "The one who in high rank is humble, in authority is abstinent and in power is just."

Ibn 'Ā'isha said: When someone from a distant land came to 'Abd al-Malik, he used to say, "Spare me four things and then say what you want: do not lie to me, for the liar has no opinion worth considering; do not answer a question I have not asked you, for you will have enough to do answering my questions; do not praise me, for I know myself better than you; do not stir me up against my subjects, for I have more need of being gentle to them."

Al-Madā'inī said: When 'Abd al-Malik knew he was dying, he said, "By Allah, I wish that I had been a porter from my birth until this day." Then he commended his sons to be godfearing and warned them of dissension and disagreement. He said, "Be dutiful and solicitous sons of your mother, be noble in war and minarets of good-doing, for war does not bring the fate of death before its time and the reward and memory of goodness is enduring. Be sweet in bitterness and gentle in severity. Be like the words of Ibn 'Abd al-ʿAlā ash-Shaybānī,

'When the arrows are gathered and a man,  
full of rage and strength, tries to break them,  
they resist, unbroken, but if they are divided,  
breaking and weakness belong to those who are  
divided.'

'Abd al-Malik continued, "Walīd, fear Allah in that over which I leave you as successor." Then he said, "Look to al-Ḥajjāj and honour him. He is the one who subjected the *minbars* to you. He is your sword, Walīd, and your hand against those who oppose you. Do

not listen to anyone's words about him. You need him more than he needs you. Call people to the oath of allegiance when I die. Whoever says that with his head, say this with your sword."

Someone else said: When 'Abd al-Malik was on his deathbed, his son al-Walid visited him and recited,

"How many visitors visit a sick man  
only to know if they will see him die."

Al-Walid wept and 'Abd al-Malik said, "What is this? Do you weep like a slave-girl? When I am dead, tuck up your garment and wrap it up. Then dress in the skin of a leopard and put the sword on your shoulder. Whoever presents himself against you, strike his neck. Whoever remains silent, let him die naturally."

I (as-Suyuti) say: If 'Abd al-Malik's only bad action had been the appointment of al-Hajjaj over the Muslims, including the Companions and the Successors, whom he degraded and humiliated by killing, beating, abusing and imprisoning them – an uncountable number of Companions and the greatest of the Successors, not to mention others, were killed and he put a seal on the necks of Anas and other Companions to humiliate them – then may Allah not have mercy on him nor pardon him.

Among 'Abd al-Malik's verses are:

By my life, I have been made to live for a little while  
and the world drew near me with the clash of swords.  
That which used to delight me has become  
like a glance penetrating enduring remains.  
If only I had not dwelt in kingship for an hour  
and had not been distracted by life's glowing pleasures.  
and that I had been like a tramp, who lives on little  
for a time, until he visits the straitness of the graves.

In Ibn 'Asakir's *Tarikh*, it is narrated that Ibrahīm ibn 'Adī said: One night I saw 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān when he was informed about four matters. He did not react and his face remained the same. They were the killing of 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād in Iraq, the killing of Ḥubaysh ibn Dulaja in the Ḥijāz, the breakdown between him and the Roman king, and the uprising of 'Amr ibn Sa'īd against Damascus.

In it, it is also narrated that al-Aṣma'ī said: Four men never made grammatical mistakes whether they were serious or joking: ash-Sha'bī, 'Abd al-Malik, al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf and Ibn al-Qirriyya.

As-Silafī narrated with its chain of transmission in *aṭ-Ṭuyūrīyāt* that 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān went out one day and a woman came to him, saying, "Commander of the Believers." He replied, "What is your situation?" He said, "My brother died and left six hundred dinārs, but I was only given one dīnār of the inheritance. They told me, 'This is your due.'" The affair was unclear to 'Abd al-Malik, so he sent for ash-Sha'bī and asked him. He replied, "Yes, he died and left two daughters who had two-thirds (400), a mother who had a sixth (100), a wife who had an eighth (75) and twelve brothers who shared twenty-four, so only a dīnār was left for this one."

Ibn Abī Shayba narrated in *al-Muṣannaḥ* from Abū Sufyān al-Ḥimayrī from Khālid ibn Muḥammad al-Qurashī that 'Abd al-Malik said, "He who wants to take a slave-girl for pleasure, let him take a Berber. He who wants to take her to produce children, let him take a Persian. He who wants to take her as a domestic servant, let him take a Roman."

Abū 'Ubayda said: When al-Akḥṭal recited his words before 'Abd al-Malik, in which he said,

"Ruthless toward their enemy until they submit  
but in power, they are the most clement of men,"

'Abd al-Malik said, "Take his hand, boy, and help him out. Heap



robes of honour upon him until they cover him." Then he said, "Every people has its poet, and the poet of Banū Umayya is al-Akḥṭal."

Al-Aṣma'ī said: al-Akḥṭal went to 'Abd al-Malik, who said to him, "Woe to you! Describe intoxication for me." He replied, "Its beginning is pleasure and its end is headache, and between them is a time, the result of which I won't describe to you." He said, "What result is that?" He replied, "That your kingdom, Commander of the Believers, is less valuable to me than the strap of my sandal." Then he recited:

"When my boon companion brought me drink after drink,  
three glass goblets full of bubbling wine  
I went forth with coat tail dragging,  
as if, *Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, I was your amīr."

Ath-Tha'labī said: 'Abd al-Malik used to say, "I was born in Ramaḍān, weaned in Ramaḍān, finished my Qur'ān memorisation in Ramaḍān, reached puberty in Ramaḍān, I became a father in Ramaḍān, I became caliph in Ramaḍān and I fear that I might die in Ramaḍān." When he reached the month of Shawwāl and felt safe, he died.

Among the prominent individuals who died during 'Abd al-Malik's reign were Ibn 'Umar, Asmā' bint aṣ-Ṣiddīq, Abū Sa'īd ibn al-Mu'allā, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, Rāfi' ibn Khadij, Salama ibn al-Akwa', al-'Irbād ibn Sāriya, Jābir ibn 'Abd Allāh, 'Abd Allāh ibn Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib, as-Sā'ib ibn Yazīd, Aslam the *mawlā* of 'Umar, Abū Idrīs al-Khawlānī, Shurayḥ the judge, Abān ibn 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, al-A'shā the poet, Ayyūb ibn al-Qirriyya, who was proverbial for his eloquence, Khālīd ibn Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya, Zirr ibn Ḥubaysh, Sinān ibn Salama ibn al-Muḥabbiq, Suwayd ibn Ghafala, Abū Wā'il, Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya, 'Abd Allāh ibn Shaddād ibn al-Hād, Abū 'Ubayda ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd, 'Utba ibn an-Nuddar, 'Amr ibn Ḥurayth, 'Amr ibn Salima al-Jarmī and others.

## Al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik

86-96/705-15

**A**l-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik, Abū al-'Abbās. Ash-Sha'bī said that his parents surrounded him with luxury, so he grew up without proper education (*adab*).

Rawḥ ibn Zinbā' said: One day I came to 'Abd al-Malik, who was deep in thought. He said, "I was thinking about who to put in authority over the Arabs, but I could not find anyone." I said, "What about al-Walīd?" He replied, "He is not very good at grammar." Al-Walīd heard that and immediately went and gathered the grammarians and sat with them in a house for six months, but came out even more ignorant than before. Then 'Abd al-Malik said, "Well, he is excused."

Abū az-Zinād: al-Walīd made a lot of mistakes in his speech and once said on the *minbar* in the Prophet's mosque, "O, people of Madina (*yā ahlu'l-madīna*, instead of *yā ahla'l-madīna*)."

Abū 'Ikrima aḍ-Ḍabbī said: al-Walīd recited on the *minbar*, "If only it had really been the end (*yā laytuhā kānat al-qāḍiya*, instead of *yā laytahā kānat al-qāḍiya*)." (Qur'ān 69:27) Below the *minbar* sat 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik, and the latter said, "By Allah, I wish it had been."

Al-Walīd was a tyrant and an oppressor.

Abū Nu'aym records in the *Ḥilya* from Ibn Shawdhab, who said: When al-Walīd was in Syria, al-Ḥajjāj in Iraq, 'Uthmān ibn Ḥayyān in Ḥijāz and Qurra ibn Sharīk in Egypt, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz said, "By Allah, the earth has been filled with tyranny."

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrates in his *Tafsīr* from Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Zur'a

that al-Walīd asked him, "Will the caliph be taken to account?" He replied, "Commander of the Believers, are you more honoured by Allah than Dāwūd? Allah united prophecy and caliphate in him, and then warned him in His Book." He recited, "*Dāwūd! We have made you a successor (khalīfa) on the earth so judge between people with truth and do not follow your own desires, letting them misguide you from the Way of Allah. Those who are misguided from the Way of Allah will receive a harsh punishment because they forgot the Day of Reckoning.*" (Qur'ān 38:26)

But al-Walīd undertook *jihād* during his reign and many great conquests took place during his caliphate. He also used to treat orphans well and appoint teachers for them. He appointed people to attend the disabled and to lead the blind. He renovated and enlarged the Prophet's mosque. He provided for the *fuqahā'*, the weak and the poor, and prevented them from begging by allotting them what would be sufficient. He managed affairs with the most thorough administration.

Ibn Abī 'Abla said, "May Allah have mercy on al-Walīd. Where is the like of al-Walīd? He conquered India (al-Hind) and Spain (al-Andalus), he built the mosque of Damascus and he used to give me a *ṣā'* of silver, which I shared among the reciters in the mosque of Jerusalem."

Al-Walīd became caliph according to his father's contract in the month of Shawwāl in 86/705.

In 87/705-6, he started building the *jāmi'* mosque in Damascus, and ordered the enlargement and reconstruction of the Prophet's mosque. In the same year, Bīkand, Bukhārā, Sardinia, Mamṭūra, Qumayqim, and the Persian gulf were conquered by force.

As the governor of Madina, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz led the people in *hajj*, but mistakenly did the standing [on Mount 'Arafa] on the Day of Sacrifice which distressed him.

In 88/706-7, Jurthūma and Ṭuwāna were conquered.

In 89/707-8, the two islands of Minorca and Mallorca were conquered.

In 91/709-10, Nasaf, Kashsh and Shūmān were conquered as well as other cities and forts by the Caspian Sea.

In 92/710-1, the entire region of al-Andalus was conquered as well as the cities of Armā'il and Qannazbūr.

In 93/711-2, ad-Daybul and other places were conquered, followed by al-Kiraj, Barrham, Bāja, al-Bayḍā', Khuwārazm, Samarqand and as-Sughd.

In 94/712-3, Kābul, Farghāna, as-Shāsh, Sandara and Ghazāla were conquered.

In 95/713-4, al-Mūqān and the city of al-Bāb were conquered.

In 96/714-5, Tūs and other places were conquered. In the same year, the caliph al-Walīd died in the middle of Jumādā al-Ākhir at the age of 51.

Adh-Dhahabī: The *jihād* continued throughout his reign and great conquests took place as in the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz said, "When I put al-Walīd in his grave, he kicked in the shroud," meaning that he struck the earth with his foot.

Among the words of al-Walīd there are, "If Allah had not mentioned the people of Lūṭ in the Qur'ān, I would never have thought anyone could act like that."

Among the prominent individuals who died during al-Walīd's reign were 'Utba ibn 'Abd as-Sulamī, al-Miqdām ibn Ma'dīkarib, 'Abd Allāh ibn Busr al-Māzinī, 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Awfā, Abū al-'Āliya, Jābir ibn Zayd, Anas ibn Mālik, Sahl ibn Sa'd, as-Sā'ib ibn Yazīd, as-Sā'ib ibn Khallād, Khubayb ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn az-Zubayr, Bilāl ibn Abī ad-Dardā', Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib, Abū Salama ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, Sa'īd ibn Jubayr – the martyr who was killed by al-Ḥajjāj, may Allah curse him – Ibrāhīm an-Nakha'ī, Muṭarrif, Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf, al-'Ajjāj the poet and others.

## Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik

96-99/715-717

**S**ulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik, Abū Ayyūb. He was one of the best kings of Banū Umayya. He took over the caliphate according to his father's contract in Jumādā al-Ākhir in 96/715. He narrated a little from his father and from 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Hubayra. His son, 'Abd al-Wāḥid, and az-Zuhrī narrated from him.

He was eloquent, fluent, preferred justice and loved military expeditions. He was born in 60/679-80.

One of his merits is that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz was like his deputy and he used to follow his instructions regarding the good. He also deposed al-Ḥajjāj's governors, released the prisoners in Iraq and restored the prayers to their right times, after Banū Umayya had deadened them by deferment.

Ibn Sirīn said, "May Allah have mercy on Sulaymān who began his caliphate by restoring the prayers to their times and sealed it by the appointment of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz as his successor."

Sulaymān forbade singing. He was also one of the famous heavy-eaters; in one sitting, he ate seventy pomegranates, one lamb, six chickens and a *makkūk* of currants from Ṭā'if.

Yaḥyā al-Ghassānī said: Sulaymān once looked into a mirror and, astonished by his youth and beauty, said, "Muḥammad ﷺ was a prophet, Abū Bakr a confirmer of the truth (*ṣiddīq*), 'Umar a discriminator (*fārūq*), 'Uthmān bashful (*ḥayī*), Mu'āwiya forbearing (*ḥalīm*), Yazīd steadfast (*ṣabūr*), 'Abd al-Malik a statesman (*sā'is*), al-Walīd a tyrant (*jabbār*) and I am the young king (*al-malik ash-shābb*)."  
He died less than a month later on Friday the 10th of Ṣafar in 99/717.

During his reign, Jurjān, the Iron Fortress (*ḥiṣn al-ḥadīd*), Sardinia, Shaqqā, Ṭabaristān and the city of as-Saqāliba (Slavs) were conquered.

Among the prominent individuals who died during Sulaymān's reign were Qays ibn Abī Ḥāzim, Maḥmūd ibn Labīd, al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī, Kurayb the *mawlā* of Ibn 'Abbās, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn al-Aswad an-Nakha'ī and others.

'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ḥassān al-Kinānī said: Sulaymān died during a campaign at Dābiq. When he sickened, he asked Rajā' ibn Ḥaywa, "Who will take over this affair after me? Should I appoint my son as successor?" He replied, "Your son is absent." He said, "What about my other son?" He replied, "He is only a child." He said, "Then who do you suggest?" He replied, "I think you should appoint 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz." He said, "I fear that my brothers will not be pleased." He replied, "Appoint 'Umar and Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik as his successor. Write a document and seal it, then summon them to a sealed oath of allegiance." He said, "That is a good idea."

He called for paper and wrote down the contract. Then he gave it to Rajā', saying, "Go to the people and let them pledge allegiance according to that which is sealed in the contract." He went out and said "The Commander of the Believers orders you to pledge allegiance to the one nominated in this document." They said, "Who is in it?" He replied, "It is sealed and you will not be informed until he dies." They said, "Then we will not pledge allegiance." He returned to Sulaymān and informed him. Sulaymān told him, "Go to the commander of the security forces and the guards, then gather the people and order them to pledge allegiance. Strike the neck of anyone who refuses." After that, they pledged allegiance.

Rajā' said, "On my way back, I met Hishām and he said to me, 'Rajā', you know your standing with us. The Commander of the Believers has done something. I do not know what it is, but I fear that he has annulled my succession. If he has turned it away from me, then tell me while there is still time, so that I may look into it.' I replied, 'Glory

be to Allah! How can I reveal to you something that the Commander of the Believer ordered me to conceal? That will never happen.' Then I met 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, who said to me, 'Rajā', a serious thought came to me regarding this man. I fear that he will hand it over to me, but I am not strong enough for this. Inform me while there is still time, so I may escape it while I am still alive.' I replied, "Glory be to Allah! How could I reveal to you a something that the Commander of the Believers ordered me to conceal?"

Then Sulaymān died and when the document was opened, they found the appointment of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. The faces of 'Abd al-Malik's sons changed, but when they heard, "...and Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik after him," they changed their minds. They went to 'Umar and greeted him as caliph. But 'Umar was stunned and unable to get up until they lifted him in their arms and brought him to the *minbar*. They helped him up and he sat a long time without saying a word, until Rajā' said to them, "Will you not stand for the Commander of the Believers and pledge allegiance to him?" They pledged allegiance to him and he stretched out his hand to them. Then he stood up, praised Allah and said, "People! I am not someone who imposes, but someone who implements. I am not an innovator, but a follower. If the people of the lands and cities around you obey as you have obeyed, I am your leader, but if they refuse, I am not your leader." Then he descended.

The one in charge of the stables came to him and 'Umar asked, "What is this?" He replied, "The caliph's horse." He said, "I have no need for it. Bring me my mule." They brought him his mule and he returned to his house. He asked for an ink-horn and wrote to the governors of the provinces with his own hand. Rajā' said, "I thought he would be too weak, but when I saw his style of correspondence, I knew he would be strong."

It is narrated that some disputes occurred between Marwān ibn 'Abd al-Malik and Sulaymān during his caliphate. Sulaymān said to him, "Son of an uncircumcised woman!" Marwān opened his mouth

to answer, but 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz held him back, saying, "I remind you of Allah. He is your leader, your brother and your elder." He became silent and then said, "You have killed me. By Allah, you have held something back inside me that is more intense than fire." He did not even reach the evening before he died.

Ibn Abī ad-Dunyā narrated from Ziyād ibn 'Uthmān that he went to Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik after the death of the latter's son, Ayyūb. He said, "Commander of the Believers, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr used to say, 'Whoever desires to remain alive for a long time, let him prepare himself for calamities.'"

## ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz

99-101/717-720

**U**mar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Marwān, the righteous caliph, Abū Ḥafṣ, the fifth of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs.

Abū Dāwūd narrates in his *Sunan* that Sufyān ath-Thawrī said: “The caliphs are five, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī and ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.”

‘Umar was born in the Egyptian village of Ḥulwān, where his father was governor, in 61/680-1. Some say in 63/682-3. His mother was Umm ‘Āṣim, the daughter of ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

‘Umar had a scar on his face. His horse had kicked him in the forehead when he was a boy and his father wiped of the blood, saying, “If you are the scarface of Banū Umayya, then you are blessed.” It is narrated by Ibn ‘Asākir.

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to say, “A man from my descendants with a scar (*shajja*) on his face will fill the earth with justice.” It was narrated by at-Tirmidhī in his *Tārīkh*. His father’s thought of him proved true.

Ibn Sa’d narrated that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said, “I wish I knew my descendant with the disfigurement, who will fill the earth with justice as it had been filled with tyranny.”

He (Ibn Sa’d) narrated from Ibn ‘Umar, who said, “We used to say that the world will not end until a man from ‘Umar’s family rules and acts according to ‘Umar’s example.”

Bilāl ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar had a birthmark (*shāma*) on his face and they used to think that it was him until Allah brought ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz narrated from his father, Anas, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja‘far ibn Abī Ṭālib, Ibn Qāriẓ, Yūsuf ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sallām, ‘Āmir ibn Sa’d, Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyib, ‘Urwa ibn az-Zubayr, Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān, ar-Rabī‘ ibn Sabra and a group of others. Those narrating from him were az-Zuhrī, Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir, Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd al-Anṣārī, Maslama ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, Rajā‘ ibn Ḥaywa and many others.

He memorised the Qur’ān as a child and his father sent him to Madina for education. He used to frequent ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn ‘Abd Allāh and take knowledge from him. When his father died, ‘Abd al-Malik ordered him to go to Damascus and married him to his daughter, Fāṭima.

He was righteous even before the caliphate, although self-indulgent in luxuries. Those who envied him found no fault in him, except his excesses in luxury and his proud gait.

When al-Walīd took over the caliphate, he made ‘Umar governor of Madina and he remained governor from 86/705 to 93/712, when he was dismissed and returned to Syria.

Then al-Walīd decided to remove his brother, Sulaymān, from the succession and to appoint his son instead. Many of the nobles obeyed him, willingly or unwillingly, but ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz objected and said, “The oath to Sulaymān is upon our necks.” He persisted and al-Walīd detained him in prison. After three days, someone interceded for him and they found him with his neck hanging. Sulaymān recognised this in him and later nominated him as his successor to the caliphate.

Zayd ibn Aslam narrated that Anas ؓ said, “I did not pray behind any imām after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who resembled him more than this youth – meaning ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz – when he was governor of Madina.” Zayd ibn Aslam added, “He used to lengthen the bowing and prostrating, and shorten the standing and sitting.” It has different ways of transmission from Anas and is narrated by al-Bayhaqī in his *Sunan* and by others.

## 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz

99-101/717-720

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Marwān, the righteous caliph, Abū Ḥafṣ, the fifth of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs.

Abū Dāwūd narrates in his *Sunan* that Sufyān ath-Thawrī said: "The caliphs are five, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī and 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz."

'Umar was born in the Egyptian village of Ḥulwān, where his father was governor, in 61/680-1. Some say in 63/682-3. His mother was Umm 'Āṣim, the daughter of 'Āṣim ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

'Umar had a scar on his face. His horse had kicked him in the forehead when he was a boy and his father wiped of the blood, saying, "If you are the scarface of Banū Umayya, then you are blessed." It is narrated by Ibn 'Asākir.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to say, "A man from my descendants with a scar (*shajja*) on his face will fill the earth with justice." It was narrated by at-Tirmidhī in his *Tārīkh*. His father's thought of him proved true.

Ibn Sa'd narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said, "I wish I knew my descendant with the disfigurement, who will fill the earth with justice as it had been filled with tyranny."

He (Ibn Sa'd) narrated from Ibn 'Umar, who said, "We used to say that the world will not end until a man from 'Umar's family rules and acts according to 'Umar's example."

Bilāl ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar had a birthmark (*shāma*) on his face and they used to think that it was him until Allah brought 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz narrated from his father, Anas, 'Abd Allāh ibn Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib, Ibn Qāriḥ, Yūsuf ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Sallām, 'Āmir ibn Sa'd, Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib, 'Urwa ibn az-Zubayr, Abū Bakr ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, ar-Rabī' ibn Sabra and a group of others.

Those narrating from him were az-Zuhrī, Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir, Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd al-Anṣārī, Maslama ibn 'Abd al-Malik, Rajā' ibn Ḥaywa and many others.

He memorised the Qur'ān as a child and his father sent him to Madina for education. He used to frequent 'Ubayd Allāh ibn 'Abd Allāh and take knowledge from him. When his father died, 'Abd al-Malik ordered him to go to Damascus and married him to his daughter, Fāṭima.

He was righteous even before the caliphate, although self-indulgent in luxuries. Those who envied him found no fault in him, except his excesses in luxury and his proud gait.

When al-Walīd took over the caliphate, he made 'Umar governor of Madina and he remained governor from 86/705 to 93/712, when he was dismissed and returned to Syria.

Then al-Walīd decided to remove his brother, Sulaymān, from the succession and to appoint his son instead. Many of the nobles obeyed him, willingly or unwillingly, but 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz objected and said, "The oath to Sulaymān is upon our necks." He persisted and al-Walīd detained him in prison. After three days, someone interceded for him and they found him with his neck hanging. Sulaymān recognised this in him and later nominated him as his successor to the caliphate.

Zayd ibn Aslam narrated that Anas رضي الله عنه said, "I did not pray behind any imām after the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم who resembled him more than this youth – meaning 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz – when he was governor of Madina." Zayd ibn Aslam added, "He used to lengthen the bowing and prostrating, and shorten the standing and sitting." It has different ways of transmission from Anas and is narrated by al-Bayhaqī in his *Sunan* and by others.

Muhammad ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn was asked about 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and replied, "He was the noblest of Banū Umayya and he will be raised up on the Day of Rising as a community in himself (*ummataṅ waḥdahū*)."

Maymūn ibn Mihrān said: Scholars were like students in the presence of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.

Abū Nu'aym narrates with a sound chain of transmission that Rabāḥ ibn 'Ubayda said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz went to the prayer with an old man leaning on his arm and I said to myself, "What a rude old man." After he had prayed and entered, I went to him and said, "May Allah put things right for the governor. Who was the old man leaning on your arm?" He said, "Rabāḥ, did you see him?" I replied, "Yes." He said, "I regard you as nothing but a righteous man. That was my brother, al-Khiḍr, who came and informed me that I will lead this community and bring it justice."

He (Abū Nu'aym) also narrated from Abū Hāshim, who said: A man came to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and said, "I saw the Prophet ﷺ in a dream with Abū Bakr on his right side and 'Umar on his left. You sat in front of him and two men were disputing. He said to you, "Umar, when you govern, govern in the way of these two, Abū Bakr and 'Umar." Then 'Umar asked him to swear by Allah that he had seen it. He swore and 'Umar wept."

As previously mentioned, he received the oath of allegiance as caliph according to the contract of Sulaymān in Ṣafar in 99/717. He remained caliph for two years and five months, just as the caliphate of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq ؓ. He filled the earth with justice, redressed grievances and established good practices (*sanna as-sunan al-ḥasana*).

When the covenant with his name was read out, he was stunned and said, "By Allah, I never asked Allah for this authority." The one in charge of the stables brought him the caliph's horse, but he rejected it and said, "Bring me my mule."

Al-Ḥakam ibn 'Umar said, "I was present when those in charge

of the stables came to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and asked him for fodder and provision for their service. He told them, "Send them to the Syrian provinces and let anyone buy them, then give the profit away for the sake of Allah. This grey mule is enough for me."

'Umar ibn Dharr said: When 'Umar returned from Sulaymān's funeral, his *mawlā* said to him, "Why do I find you distressed?" He replied, "Anyone in my situation would be distressed. There is no one in this community, but that I want to fulfil his rights without him having to write to me or ask me for it."

It is narrated that 'Amr ibn Muḥājir and others said: When 'Umar became caliph, he stood before the people and praised Allah, then said, "People, there is no book after the Qur'ān and no prophet after Muḥammad ﷺ. I am not someone who imposes, but someone who implements. I am not an innovator, but a follower. I am not the best of you, but the one carrying the heaviest burden. The man who flees from an oppressive leader is not a wrongdoer; there is no obedience due to any created being that involves disobedience to the Creator."

It is narrated that az-Zuhrī said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz wrote to Ṣalīm ibn 'Abd Allāh, asking him to describe 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb's practice concerning *ṣadaqa* (*zakāt*). He wrote back in reply to what he had asked about, saying, "If you do in your time and among your people what 'Umar did in his time and among his people, you will be greater before Allah than 'Umar."

It is narrated from Ḥammād that 'Umar wept when he became caliph and said, "Father of so-and-so, do you fear this for me?" He said, "How is your desire for wealth?" He replied, "I have no desire for it." He said, "Don't worry. Allah will help you."

It is narrated that Muḡhīra said: 'Umar gathered the sons of Marwān when he became caliph and said, "The Prophet ﷺ owned the land of Fadak. From its revenues, he provided for the children of Banū Hāshim and for their widows' marriages. Fāṭima asked him to give her some of it, but he refused. It remained like that during the lifetimes of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. Then Marwān assigned it to

people and now it has come to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. I don't think that I have any right to that which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ refused Fāṭima and I call you to witness that I have restored it to what it was in the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."

It is narrated from al-Layth that when 'Umar became caliph, he began with his own relatives and household, taking what was in their possession and declaring their wealth usurped property (*mazālim*).

Asmā' ibn 'Ubayd said: 'Anbasa ibn Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ went to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and said, "Commander of the Believers, the caliphs before you used to give us stipends, but you have withheld them from us. I have a family and an estate; won't you let me to go to my estate and improve my family's situation?" 'Umar replied, "The most beloved of you is the one who spares us the expense of his subsistence." Then he added, "Increase in remembrance of death. If your livelihood is constricted, it will expand it for you and if your livelihood is extensive, it will constrict it for you."

Furāt ibn as-Sā'ib said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz said to his wife, Fāṭima bint 'Abd al-Malik, who had a jewel the like of which had never been seen that her father had given her, "Decide if you want to return the jewel to the treasury or let me take it from you. I dislike it being in the same house as you and me." She replied, "I choose you before it and to multiply its value [by giving it away]." He gave orders and it was taken to the treasury of the Muslims. When 'Umar died and Yazīd became caliph, he told Fāṭima, "I will return it to you, if you want." But she replied, "No, by Allah, I did not care about it in his lifetime and will not take it back after his death."

'Abd al-'Azīz said: One of the governors wrote to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, "Our city has decayed. If the Commander of the Believers see fit to assign some wealth for its restoration, let him do that." 'Umar wrote back to him, "I have read your letter. Fortify it with justice and clean its streets from injustices. That will be its restoration. Peace."

Ibrāhīm as-Sakūnī said that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz said, "I have not lied since I came to know that lying disgraces its people."

Qays ibn Jubayr said, "The simile of 'Umar among Banū Umayya is the believer among the people of Pharaoh."

Maymūn ibn Mihrān said, "Allah used to renew the covenant with people through prophet after prophet and then Allah renewed it with people through 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz."

Wahb ibn Munabbih said: If there is someone rightly-guided (*mahdī*) in this community, it is 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.

Muḥammad ibn Faḍāla said: 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz passed by a monk in al-Jazīra and the monk came out to him, which he had not done for anyone before. He asked, "Do you know why I came out to you?" He replied, "No." He said, "For the sake of your father. We find him among the just imāms to be like Rajab among the sacred months." Ayyūb ibn Suwayd explained that the three consecutive months of Dhū al-Qa'da, Dhū al-Ḥijja and al-Muḥarram mean Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān, and Rajāb, separated from them, means 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.

Hasan al-Qaṣṣāb said: I saw wolves grazing with sheep in the desert during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and I said to myself, "Glory be to Allah! A wolf among sheep without harming them." The shepherd replied, "No harm will come to the body if the head is sound."

Mālik ibn Dīnār said: When 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz became caliph, shepherds said, "Who is this righteous man, leading the people as a caliph? His justice keeps wolves away from our sheep."

Mūsā ibn A'yan said: We used to tend sheep in Kirmān during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. The sheep and wolf grazed in the same place. But one night a wolf went for a sheep. I said, "I can only assume that the righteous man has passed away." They enquired and found out that he had died that night.

Al-Walīd ibn Muslim said: It reached us that a man in Khurāsān said, "Someone came to me in a dream and said, 'When the scarface of Banū Marwān rules, pledge allegiance to him, for he is a just imām.' So I began to look out for him whenever a new caliph



appeared, until 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz became caliph. He came to me three times in my dreams, and then I went out to pledge allegiance to him."

It is narrated that Ḥabīb ibn Hind al-Aslamī said: Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib said to me, "The caliphs are three: Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz." I said, "We all know Abū Bakr and 'Umar, but who is the other 'Umar?" He replied, "If you live, you will know him. If you die, he will come after you." I (as-Suyūṭī) add that Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib died before 'Umar became caliph.

Ibn 'Awn said: When Ibn Sīrīn was asked about grape wine (*aṭ-ṭilā*), he replied, "The imām of guidance prohibited it", referring to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.

Al-Ḥasan said: If there is a *mahdī*, it is 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. If not, then there is no *mahdī* except 'Isā ibn Maryam.

Mālik ibn Dīnār said: People say that Mālik is an ascetic (*zāhid*), but the real ascetic is 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. The world came to him, but he abandoned it.

Yūnus ibn Abī Shabīb said: I once saw 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and the belt of his lower garment was hidden in the folds of his belly. Then I saw him again after he had become caliph and, if I had wanted, I could have counted his ribs without touching them.

His son, 'Abd al-'Azīz said: Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr asked me, "How much was your father's revenue when he became caliph?" I replied, "Forty thousand dīnārs." He asked, "And when he died?" I replied, "Four thousand dīnārs, but if he had lived longer, it would have been less."

Maslama ibn 'Abd al-Malik said: I went to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz to visit him in his illness. He wore a dirty shirt, so I asked Fāṭima bint 'Abd al-Malik, "Don't you wash his shirt?" She replied, "By Allah, he doesn't have any other shirt."

Abū Umayya, the eunuch and 'Umar's slave-boy, said: I once went to my master's wife and she gave me a meal of lentils, so I said, "Lentils every day?" She replied, "My son, this is the food of your master, the Commander of the Believers."

He (Abū Umayya) said: 'Umar once entered the bath-house, inclining his head to one side and leading his donkey by his hand.

He (Abū Umayya) said: When he was dying, he sent me with a dīnār to the people of the monastery, saying, "Sell me a place for my grave. If you don't, I will turn away from you." I came to them and they responded, "Were it not for our dislike of him turning away from us, we would not have accepted it."

'Awn ibn Ma'mar said: 'Umar went to his wife and said, "Do you have a dirham so I can buy some grapes?" She replied, "No. How come that you are the Commander of the Believers, but you cannot afford to buy some grapes?" He said, "At least this is easier for us than tomorrow's treatment of iron collars in Hell."

His wife, Fāṭima, said, "I don't know of him doing *ghusl* because of sexual intercourse or wet-dreams from the moment Allah made him caliph until He ended his life."

Sahl ibn Ṣadaqa said: When 'Umar became caliph, weeping was heard from his house. People asked about and they said that 'Umar had given his slave-girls a choice, saying, "An affair has come to me, which will occupy me. Whoever wants me to free her, I will free her and whoever wants me to keep her, I will keep her, although I have no need of that." Therefore they wept in despair.

His wife, Fāṭima, said, "When he entered the house, he used to throw himself down at his place of prayer. He remained there weeping and supplicating until sleep overcame him. Then he woke up and continued like that throughout the night."

Al-Walīd ibn Abī as-Sā'ib said: I never saw anyone more fearful than 'Umar.

Sa'īd ibn Suwayd said: 'Umar led the people in Friday prayer wearing a shirt with patches on the front and back. A man told him, "Commander of the Believers, Allah has provided for you. If only you would dress properly." He turned around and then raised his head, saying, "The best moderation is while affluent and the best pardoning is while having power."

Maymūn ibn Mihrān said: I heard 'Umar say, "Even if I were to rule you for fifty years, I would not have established complete justice among you. I certainly want that, but I fear that your hearts will be unable to bear it. Therefore, I will leave this world with that ambition. If your hearts reject this thing, they may be content with the other."

Ibrāhīm ibn Maysara said: I asked Ṭāwūs if 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz was the *mahdī* and he replied, "He is rightly-guided (*mahdī*) but not that one, because he did not establish complete justice."

'Umar ibn Usayd said: By Allah, 'Umar had not died before men began to bring us immense wealth and tell us, "Use this as you see fit" but he would not return without taking back all of his wealth because 'Umar had enriched people.

Juwayriya said: We went to Fāṭima bint 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام. She praised 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and said, "Had he remained among us, we would not have needed anyone after him."

'Aṭā ibn Abī Rabāḥ said: Fāṭima, the wife of 'Umar, narrated to me that she went to him when he was in his place of prayer with tears running down his beard. She said, "Commander of the Believers, has something happened?" He replied, "Fāṭima, I have taken over the leadership of the community of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, its Arabs and its non-Arabs. I reflected upon the poor who are hungry, the sick who are destitute, the naked who are overworked, the oppressed who are afflicted, the strangers in captivity, the elders, the ones with large families and small means, and the likes of them in all lands and corners of the earth. I know that my Lord will ask me regarding them on the Day of Rising and I fear that no excuse will be taken into account. Therefore I wept."

Al-Awzā'ī said: Once 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz was sitting in his house with the nobles of Banū Umayya. He said, "Do you want me to appoint each of you to rule a province." One of them said, "Why do you offer us something that you will never do?" He said, "Do you see this carpet of mine? I know that it will decay and fall apart,

but nevertheless I dislike that you soil it with your feet. So how can I put you in charge of Muslim people and their honour? This is unthinkable regarding you! Unthinkable!" They said to him, "Why? Don't we have both kinship and claim to it?" He replied, "In my view, you are equal to the Muslim man who is farthest from this affair, except that the distance keeps that Muslim man away from me."

Ḥumayd said: Al-Ḥasan dictated a letter to me for 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. He used persuasive rhetoric and then complained about his needs and large family, so 'Umar ordered a stipend to be given to him.

Al-Awzā'ī said: When 'Umar wanted to punish a man, he kept him in custody for three days and then punished him, as he disliked to act in the early stages of anger.

Juwayriya ibn Asmā' said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz said, "My self yearns. When it is given what it desires of this world, it wants something better. So when I was given the highest thing in this world (*khilāfa*), my self desired that which is better than it, that is, the Garden."

'Amr ibn Muḥājir said: The expenditure of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz was two dirhams a day.

Yūsuf ibn Ya'qūb al-Kāhilī said: 'Umar used to wear a heavy woollen garment and the lamp in his house stood on three reeds on top of which there was clay.

'Aṭā' al-Khurāsānī said: 'Umar ordered his slave-boy to heat up some water for him, so he went and heated a bottle in the public kitchen. Then 'Umar ordered him to take a dirham's worth of wood and place it in the kitchen.

'Amr ibn Muḥājir said: 'Umar used to light a candle when occupied with the affairs of the Muslims, then extinguish it when he had finished with their affairs and light his own lamp.

Al-Ḥakam ibn 'Umar said: The caliph used to have three hundred guards and three hundred men in the security forces, but 'Umar told the guards, "I have the *décre* (*al-qadr*) as a barrier and my destined

timespan (*al-ajal*) as guard. Whoever stays, will have ten dirhams and whoever wishes to, may return to his family."

'Amr ibn Muḥājir said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz once desired an apple and a man from his household brought him an apple as a gift. He said, "How sweet and beautiful it tastes! Take it back, slave-boy, to the one who brought it. Send him my greetings and tell him that we are pleased with the gift that came to us." I said, "Commander of the Believers, he is your paternal cousin and a man from your own household. Surely it has reached you that the Prophet ﷺ used to accept such gifts of food." He replied, "Woe to you! The gifts for the Prophet ﷺ were gifts, but for us, in these days, they are bribes."

Ibrāhīm ibn Maysara said: I did not see 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz lash anyone during his caliphate except a man who slandered (*tanāwala min*) Mu'āwiya. He gave him three lashes.

Al-Awzā'ī said: When 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz ended the special allowance for the élite that had been given to his family, they spoke to him about that. He replied, "My wealth will never be enough for all of you. But as for this wealth, your right to it is the same as that of a man in the farthest parts of Bark al-Ghimād<sup>5</sup>."

Abū 'Umar said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz wrote to annul some of al-Ḥajjāj's rulings that opposed the people's judgements (*aḥkām an-nās*).

Yaḥyā al-Ghassānī said: When 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz appointed me as governor of Mosul, I went there and found more theft and burglary than anywhere else. I wrote to inform him about the city's condition and asked, "Should I arrest people on suspicion and punish them on the basis of accusations, or arrest them on the basis of clear proofs and the Sunna?" He replied to me, "Arrest people on clear proofs and according to the Sunna, for if the truth does not reform them, Allah will not reform them." I did that and before I left Mosul,

<sup>5</sup> A province in the area of 'Asīr in the remote south-west of Arabia on the Red Sea.

it had become one of the most orderly cities with the lowest rates of theft and burglary.

Rajā' ibn Ḥaywa said: I was conversing one night with 'Umar when the lamp went out. A servant was sleeping next to it, so I said, "Shall I wake him up?" He replied, "No." I said, "Shall I get up then?" He replied, "It is not manly to allow a guest to serve." He went to the oil flask and restored the light. Then he came back, saying, "I went as 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and returned as 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz."

His scribe, Nu'aym, narrated that 'Umar said, "Fear of boastfulness prevents me from talking a lot."

Makhūl said: I would only speak the truth if I were to swear that I did not see anyone more abstemious and god-fearing than 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.

Sa'īd ibn Abī 'Arūba said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz's limbs used to tremble when death was mentioned.

'Aṭā' said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz used to gather the *fuqahā* every night and they would remind each other about death and the Rising. Then they would weep as if there was a funeral before them.

'Ubayd Allāh ibn al-'Ayzār said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz gave a *khuṭba* to us in Syria on a *minbar* of clay. He said, "People! Purify your inward, and your outward will improve. Act for your hereafter and your worldly needs will be met. Know that even a man who has no living father between himself and Adam nonetheless has a hereditary share in death. Peace be upon you!"

Wuhayb ibn al-Ward said: Banū Marwān gathered at the gate of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and said to his son, 'Abd al-Malik, "Tell your father that the caliphs before him used to give us and recognise our standing, but your father has denied us that which is in his hands." He went to his father and informed him, then came back and told them, "My father says to you, 'I fear, were I to disobey my Lord, the punishment of a dreadful Day.'" (Qur'ān 6:15)

Al-Awzā'ī said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz said, "Take as your view that which accords with those before you and leave that which

contradicts them. They were better and more knowledgeable than you.”

He (al-Awzā'ī) said: Jarīr came and stood a long time at the gate of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, but he did not notice him, so he wrote to 'Awn ibn 'Abd Allāh, who was a close companion of 'Umar:

“O reader with a loose turban  
 this is your time, mine has passed.  
 If you meet our caliph, tell him that  
 I stand at the gate, as if tied to a pillar.”

Juwayriya ibn Asmā' said: When 'Umar became caliph, Bilāl ibn Abī Burd went to congratulate him and said, “There were men whom the caliphate ennobled, but you have ennobled it and there were men whom the caliphate adorned, but you have adorned it. You are like Mālik ibn Asmā' says:

‘You add sweetness to the sweetest scent,  
 when you touch it; where is the like of you?  
 For pearls adorns the beauty of faces,  
 but the beauty of your face adorns the pearls.’”

Ja'wana said: When 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz died, 'Umar began to praise him. Maslama asked him, “Commander of the Believers, would you have made him your successor if he had lived?” He replied, “No.” He said, “Why not, when you were just praising him?” 'Umar replied, “I fear that I would have seen in a favourable light in him that which a father sees in his son in favourable light.”

Ghassān narrated from a man from al-Azd, who said: A man asked 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz for advice and he said, “I advise you to fear Allah and always prefer Him. The task of seeking your subsistence will become lighter and relief from Allah will become sweeter.”

Abū 'Amr said: The daughter of Usāma ibn Zayd once went to

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, who stood up and walked over to her. Then he seated her in his seat and sat down in front of her, leaving none of her requests unfulfilled.

Al-Ḥajjāj ibn 'Anbasa said: Marwān' sons gathered and said, “If we went to the Commander of the Believers, perhaps some jokes could awaken his sympathy for us.” They entered and one of them began to talk and joke while 'Umar looked at him. Then another man joined him in the jokes, and 'Umar said, “Is this why you gathered? For the lowest of discourses, which only leads to rancour? When you gather, commit yourselves to the Book of Allah and, if you go beyond that, the Sunna of the Prophet ﷺ. If you go beyond that, then occupy yourselves with the meanings of *ḥadīth*.”

Iyās ibn Mu'āwiya ibn Qurra said: I would only liken 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz to an excellent craftsman without any tools to work with, that is, without anyone to help him.

'Umar ibn Ḥafs narrated that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz told him, “When you hear a word from a Muslim, do not take it to mean anything bad as long as you can find a good interpretation.”

Yaḥyā al-Ghassānī said: 'Umar used to prevent Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik from killing the Ḥarūrīya (i.e. the Kharwārij) and told him to imprison them until they repent. Once a Ḥarurī was brought to Sulaymān and he said to him, “What now?” The Ḥarurī said, “What can I say, profligate son of a profligate?” Sulaymān said, “Bring me 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.” When he came, he told him to listen to the man's words and the Ḥarurī repeated it. Then Sulaymān said to 'Umar, “What do you think he deserves?” But 'Umar remained silent and Sulaymān said, “I command you to inform me what you think he deserves.” He replied, “I think you may revile him as he has reviled you.” Sulaymān replied, “That is not how it is.” Then he gave orders and his head was struck off. 'Umar left, but Khālid, the chief guard went to him and said, “'Umar, why did you tell the Commander of the Believers, ‘I think you may revile him as he has reviled you’? By Allah, I thought that he would order me to strike

off your head instead.” ‘Umar said, “If had ordered you, would you have done it?” He said, “I would, by Allah.”

When ‘Umar became caliph, Khālid came and undertook the position of chief guard. ‘Umar said, “Khālid, put down your sword,” and added, “O Allah, I have humbled Khālid for Your sake, so never raise him again.” Then he looked at the faces of the guards and called ‘Amr ibn Muhājir al-Anṣārī. He said, “‘Amr, by Allah, you know there is no kinship between us, except the kinship of Islam. But I have heard your constant recitation of the Qur’ān and I have seen you praying in places where you thought no one could see you. I have seen your excellence in prayer and you are a man of the Anṣār. Take the sword, for I appoint you chief guard.”

Shu‘ayb said: It was narrated to me that ‘Abd al-Malik ibn ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz went to his father and said, “Commander of the Believers, what will you tell your Lord tomorrow when He questions you and says, ‘You have seen innovation without ending it and *sunna* without reviving it?’” His father replied, “May Allah have mercy on you and reward you with goodness. My son, your people have tied this affair knot by knot and loop by loop. If I was to oppose them by dispossessing them of what is in their hands, I would not be safe from them tearing me apart with great bloodshed. By Allah, the end of this world would be easier for me than a cupping-glass of blood spilled on my account. Are you not content with a single day passing in this world without your father ending an innovation or reviving a *sunna*?”

Ma‘mar said: ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz said, “Successful is the one who is protected from disputation, anger and covetousness.”

‘Arṭā ibn Mundhir said: Someone told ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, “If you would appoint a bodyguard and be careful in your food and drink.” He replied, “O Allah, if You know that I fear anything other than the Day of Rising, then do not give me security from fear.”

‘Adī ibn al-Faḥl: I heard ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz give a *khuṭba*, saying, “Be godfearing, people, and be fair in your quests. Even if

someone's provision is on the top of a mountain or in the depths of the earth, it will reach him.”

Azhar said: I saw ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz give a *khuṭba* to the people wearing a patched garment.

‘Abd Allāh ibn al-‘Alā’ said: I heard ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz give a particular *khuṭba* on Fridays, which he repeated. He began with seven sentences, “Praise be to Allah, we seek His help and ask for His forgiveness. We take refuge in Allah from the evils of our selves and the wrongs in our actions. Whomever Allah guides, no one can mislead and whomever He misleads, has no guide. I witness that there is no god but Allah alone without partner. And I witness that Muḥammad is His slave and messenger. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has taken the right way and whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has gone astray.” After that, he would counsel them to be godfearing and would speak. Then he would conclude the final *khuṭba* with the following *āyāt*, “*My slaves, you who have transgressed against yourselves...*” (Qur’ān 39:53) until the end.<sup>6</sup>

Hājib ibn Khalīfa al-Burjumī said: I saw ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz give a *khuṭba* as caliph, saying, “That which the Messenger of Allah

6. The complete passage (Qur’ān 39:53-62) reads: [53] *Say: ‘My slaves, you who have transgressed against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Truly Allah forgives all wrong actions. He is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.’* [54] *Turn in repentance to your Lord and submit to Him before punishment comes upon you, for then you cannot be helped.* [55] *Follow the best that has been sent down to you from your Lord before the punishment comes upon you suddenly when you are not expecting it;* [56] *lest anyone should say, ‘Alas for me for neglecting what Allah was due, and being one of the scoffers!’* [57] *or lest they should say, ‘If only Allah had guided me, I would have been godfearing,’* [58] *or lest he should say, when he sees the punishment, ‘If only I could have another chance so that I could be a good-doer!’* [59] *‘No, the fact is that My Signs came to you but you denied them and were arrogant and were one of the unbelievers.’* [60] *On the Day of Rising you will see those who lied against Allah with their faces blackened. Do the arrogant not have a dwelling place in Hell?* [61] *Allah will give security those who were godfearing in their victorious Safe Haven. No evil will touch them and they will know no sorrow.* [62] *Allah is the Creator of everything and He is Guardian over everything.*

and his two companions established is the religion that we hold on to and follow through. But that which others have established, we put aside."

Abū Nu'aym narrated all of the above with chains of transmitters in *al-Hilya*.

Ibn 'Asākir narrates from Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abī 'Abla, who said: We went to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz on the Day of 'Īd. The people greeted him, saying, "May Allah accept it from us and you, Commander of the Believers." He responded to them in a similar manner without expressing disapproval.

I (as-Suyūṭī) say: This is a good basis for congratulating one another on the 'Īd as well as annually and monthly.

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrates from Ja'wana, who said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz put 'Amr ibn Qays as-Sakūnī in charge of the summer campaign and said, "Accept from their good-doers and overlook their wrongdoers. Do not be among the vanguard and thus be killed, nor be among the rearguard and a coward, but be in the middle so they can see your place and hear your voice."

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from as-Sā'ib ibn Muḥammad, who said: al-Jarrāh ibn 'Abd Allāh wrote to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, saying, "The people of Khurāsān are unruly subjects and nothing will put them right, except the sword and the scourge. So if the Commander of the Believers see fit, he may give me permission for that." 'Umar wrote back, "I received your letter in which you mention that the people of Khurāsān are unruly subjects and that nothing will put them right except the sword and the scourge. But you lie, because justice and truth will put them right. Spread that among them. Peace."

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from Umayya ibn Zayd al-Qurashī, who said: When 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz dictated to his scribe, he used to say, "O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the evil of my tongue."

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from Ṣāliḥ ibn Jubayr, who said: I have often spoken to 'Umar about a subject that made him angry and then

mentioned that there is a book in which it is written, "Fear the anger of the youthful king and be gentle with him until his anger departs." After that, he used to tell me, "Ṣāliḥ, do not let that which you see in us prevent you from referring a matter to us when you see fit."

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from 'Abd al-Ḥalīm ibn Muḥammad al-Makhzūmī, who said: Jarīr ibn 'Aṭiyya ibn al-Khaṭafī stood before 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and was about to recite when 'Umar stopped him. He said, "I am only about to mention the Messenger of Allah ﷺ." He replied, "If it is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, then mention him." He recited:

He who sent the Prophet Muḥammad,  
granted the caliphate to the just leader.  
He restored wrong to right with certainty,  
against oppression and he straightened deviance.  
Allah revealed the obligatory shares in the Qur'ān  
for the wayfarer and the destitute poor;  
I look forward to a favour from you now,  
for the self is full of love for the now."

'Umar said to him, "I cannot find anything due to you in the Book of Allah." He replied, "Well, Commander of the Believers, I am a wayfarer." So he ordered fifty dīnārs to be given to him from his private wealth.

It is narrated in *aṭ-Ṭuyūrīyāt* that Jarīr ibn 'Uthmān ar-Raḥbī went with his father to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. He asked the father about his son and told him, "Teach him the greater understanding (*al-fiqh al-akbar*)." He replied, "And what is the greater understanding?" He said, "Contentment and abstaining from causing harm."

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated in his *Tafsīr* from Muḥammad ibn Ka'b al-Qurazī, who said: 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz called me and said, "Describe justice to me." I replied, "Well, you have asked about a weighty matter. Be like a father to young people, like a son to older

ones, like a brother to your peers, and similarly with women. Punish people according to the extent of their crimes and strength of their bodies, but never give a single lash in anger and thereby become one of the transgressors."

'Abd ar-Razzāq narrated in his *Muṣannaḥ* from az-Zuhri that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz used to do *wuḍū'* after eating cooked food, to the degree that he did *wuḍū'* after eating sugar.

He ('Abd ar-Razzāq) narrated from Wuhayb that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz said, "He who considers his speech among his actions, is sparing with his words."

Adh-Dhahabī said: Ghaylān proclaimed the doctrine of free-will (*al-qadar*) during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz and he ordered him to repent. Then he said, "I went astray, but you guided me." 'Umar said, "O Allah, accept it if he is sincere, and if not crucify him and cut off his hands and feet." His supplication was realised when Ghaylān was caught proclaiming free-will during the caliphate of Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik. His four limbs were cut off and he was crucified in Damascus.

Someone else said that Banū Umayya used to revile 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib in the *khuṭba*. But 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz ended it when he became caliph. He wrote to his representatives to abolish it and recite instead, "*Allah commands justice and doing good and giving to relatives. And He forbids indecency and doing wrong and tyranny. He warns you so that hopefully you will pay heed.*" (Qur'ān 16:90) This recitation has continued in the *khuṭba* until this day.

Al-Qālī narrated in his *Amālī* from Abū Bakr ibn al-Anbārī from Aḥmad ibn 'Ubayd that 'Umar said before he became caliph:

"Forbid the heart its desires  
and submission to passions.  
By the life of your Lord, there is  
in greyness and baldness  
an admonition for you to take

as those who understand do.

When will you pay heed?

When, when?

After being called a mature man,

you still claim the name of youth.

But youth decays and so do you,

living long in a pledge of decay.

That is enough to restrain

a man from going astray.

Interesting observation (*fā'ida*): Ath-Tha'ālibī said in *Laṭā'if al-Ma'ārif*: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam and 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz were all bald, but then baldness ceased among the caliphs.

Interesting observation. Az-Zubayr ibn Bakkār narrated that a poet said about Fāṭima bint 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, the wife of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, "Daughter of a caliph, her grandfather a caliph – sister of many caliphs, her husband a caliph."

He (az-Zubayr ibn Bakkār) said: No other woman has attained this until this day.

I (as-Suyūṭī) say: It has not been said about anyone up until our day.

#### Section on his illness and death

Ayyūb said: Someone told 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, "If you were to go to Madina and die there, you would be buried in the fourth grave with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ." He replied, "By Allah, I would prefer all Allah's punishments, except the Fire, to Him knowing that I deemed myself worthy of that place."

Al-Walid ibn Hishām said: Someone asked 'Umar during his illness, "Are you not going to take a remedy?" He replied, "I know the moment in which I was given to drink. Even if my cure lay in wiping my earlobe or I was brought a perfume and had only to lift it to my nose, I would not do it."

‘Ubayda ibn Ḥassān said: When ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was dying, he said, “Leave me.” Maslama and Fāṭima sat at the door and they heard him say, “Welcome to these faces, neither from mankind nor jinn.” Then he recited, “*That abode of the Next World – We grant it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the earth or to cause corruption in it. The successful outcome is for the godfearing.*” (Qur’ān 28:83). After that, his voice became calm and, when they entered, they found him dead ۞.

Hishām said: When ‘Umar’s death was announced, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said, “The best of mankind has died.”

Khālīd ar-Raba‘ī said: We find in the Torah that the heavens and the earth will weep for ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz for forty mornings.

Yūsuf ibn Māhik: When we levelled the earth on the grave of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, a parchment fell down from the sky on which was written, “In the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful. Assurance of Allah’s protection for ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz from the Fire.”

Qatāda said: ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz wrote to the designated successor after him, “In the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful. From the slave of Allah, ‘Umar, to Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. Peace be upon you. To you I praise Allah, besides whom there is no god. Now, I write as my illness is getting worse and I know that I will be asked about my rule. The King of this world and the next will take me to account and I will not be able to hide any of my actions. If Allah is pleased with me, I will have succeeded and escaped long-lasting disgrace. But if He is displeased with me, then woe to me because of where I am going. I ask Allah, besides whom there is no god, to protect me from the Fire by His mercy and to grant me His pleasure and the Garden. Be godfearing. And your subjects! [take care of your] subjects. You will only remain a little while after me. Peace.”

Abū Nu‘aym narrated all of the above with chains of transmission in *al-Hilya*.

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ۞ died at Dayr Sim‘ān in the district of Homs, on the 20th of Rajab, and some say the 25th, in 101/720. He was thirty-nine years old and six months. His death was caused by poison. Banū Umayya were fed up with him, because of his severity towards them and his confiscation of much of that which they had usurped. He neglected precautions and they gave him poison to drink.

Mujāhid said: ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz asked me, “What do people say about me?” I replied, “They say that you are bewitched.” He said, “I am not bewitched. I even know the moment in which I was given poison to drink.” Then he called for a slave-boy of his and said, “Woe to you, what made you give me poison to drink?” He replied, “A thousand dinārs which I was given and manumission.” He said, “Bring them.” He brought them and ‘Umar put them in the treasury, then told him, “Go where no one can see you.”

Among the prominent individuals who died during his reign were Abū Umāma Sa‘d ibn Sahl ibn Ḥunayf, Khārija ibn Zayd ibn Thābit, Sālim ibn Abī al-Ja‘d, Busr ibn Sa‘īd, Abū ‘Uthmān an-Nahdī and Abū aḍ-Ḍuhā.



## Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik

101-105/720-724

**Y**azīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, Abū Khālid, al-Umawī ad-Dimashqī. He was born in 71/690-1. He became caliph after 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz according to the contract of his brother, Sulaymān, as previously mentioned.

'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Zayd ibn Aslam said: When Yazīd began to rule, he said, "Follow the conduct (*sīra*) of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz." Forty *shaykhs* were brought to him and they all testified that there will be no reckoning nor punishment for the caliphs.

Ibn al-Mājishūn said: When 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz died, Yazīd said, "By Allah, 'Umar was not in more need of Allah than I am." He followed the conduct of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz for forty days, then abandoned it.

Sulaym ibn Bashīr said: When he was dying, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz wrote to Yazīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik, "Peace be upon you. I only see myself responding to the summons<sup>7</sup>. Allah! Fear Allah with respect to the community of Muḥammad! You will leave this world to those who will not praise you and go to the One who will not excuse you. Peace."

In 102/720, Yazīd ibn al-Muḥallab arose against the the caliphate and Maslama ibn 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān was sent against him. Yazīd was defeated and killed at al-'Aqr, near Karbalā'.

Al-Kalbī said: When I grew up, people used to say that Banū

Umayya sacrificed religion on the Day of Karbalā' and sacrificed honour (*al-karam*) on the Day of al-'Aqr.

Yazīd died in the end of Sha'bān in year 105/724.

Among the prominent individuals who died during his caliphate were ad-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn al-Muzāhim, 'Adī ibn Arṭā, Abū al-Mutawakkil an-Nājī, 'Aṭā' ibn Yassār, Mujāhid, Yaḥyā ibn Waththāb the reciter of Kūfa, Khālid ibn Ma'dān, ash-Sha'bī the scholar of Iraq, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Ḥassān ibn Thābit, Abū Qilāba al-Jarmī, Abū Burda ibn Abī Mūsā al-Ash'arī and others.

<sup>7</sup> *La mulabbī* – saying "*Labbayk* – at Your service", i.e. responding to the summons of Allah to return to Him and leave this life.

## Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik

105-125 / 724-743

**H**isham ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, Abū al-Walīd. He was born around 70/689-90 and became caliph according to the contract of his brother, Yazīd.

Muṣ‘ab az-Zubayrī said: ‘Abd al-Malik had a dream that he urinated four times in the *miḥrāb*. Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyib was asked and he said, “Four sons from his loins will rule.” Hishām was the last of them.

Hishām was resolute and intelligent. He did not allow any wealth to enter the treasury until forty people had witnessed on oath that what was due on it had been taken and that everyone due some part of it had received their due.

Al-Aṣma‘ī said: A man once sang something to Hishām and he said to him, “You there! It is not for you to sing to your caliph.” Another time, he was angry with a man and said, “By Allah, I wanted to scourge you.”

Saḥbal ibn Muḥammad said: I never saw any caliph for whom blood-shedding was harder and more repellent than Hishām.”

It is narrated that Hishām said, “There are no pleasures left in this world that I have not enjoyed except one: a brother with whom I can dispense with precautions regarding the affairs between us.”

Ash-Shāfi‘ī said: When Hishām built ar-Ruṣāfa, near Qinnisrīn, he wanted to retire for a day without any worries coming to him. Not half a day had passed before a blood-covered feather reached him from one of the frontiers. It was brought to him and he said, “Not even a single day.”

Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik

It is said that the following verse is his and that it is the only one preserved:

“If you do not resist your desire, it will lead you  
to something that will cause people to speak ill  
of you.”

He died in Rabī‘ al-Ākhir in 125/143.

In the seventh year of his reign, the Roman city of Qayṣariyya was conquered by the sword.

In the eighth year, Khanjara was conquered by the al-Baṭṭāl, the famous hero.

In the twelfth year, Kharshana near Malatya was conquered.

Among the prominent individuals who died during his reign were Sālim ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar, Ṭawūs, Sulaymān ibn Yassār, ‘Ikrima the *mawlā* of Ibn ‘Abbās, al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, Kuthayyir ‘Azza the poet, Muḥammad ibn Ka‘b al-Quraṣī, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, Abū aṭ-Ṭufayl ‘Āmir ibn Wāthila – the last of the Companions to die – Jarīr, al-Farazdaq, ‘Atiyya al-‘Awfī, Mu‘āwiya ibn Qurra, Makḥūl, ‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāḥ, Abū Ja‘far al-Bāqir, Wahb ibn Munabbih, Sukayna bint al-Ḥusayn, al-‘Araj, Qatāda, Nāfi the *mawlā* of Ibn ‘Umar, Ibn ‘Āmir the reciter of Syria, Ibn Kathīr the reciter of Makka, Thābit al-Bunānī, Mālik ibn Dīnār, Ibn Muḥayṣin the reciter, Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī and others.

Some reports about Hishām: Ibn ‘Asākir narrates that Ibrāhīm ibn Abī ‘Abla said: Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik wanted to put me in charge of taxation (*kharāj*) in Egypt, but I declined. He became so angry that his face shook and his eyes changed. He looked at me disapprovingly and said, “You will take charge, willingly or unwillingly.” I avoided speaking until his anger calmed down and then said, “Commander of the Believers, may I speak?” He said, “Yes.” I said, “Allah says in His Mighty Book, ‘We offered the Trust to the heavens the earth and the mountains but they refused to take it on...’ (Qur’ān 33:72) By Allah,

Commander of the Believers, He was not angered with them when they refused and He did not force them when they rejected. I do not deserve that you become angry when I decline or that you force me when I am unwilling." Then he laughed and pardoned me.

He (Ibn 'Asākir) narrated from Khālid ibn Ṣafwān, who said: I visited Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik. He said, "Give us something, Ibn Ṣafwān?" I said, "One of the kings went on an excursion to al-Khawarnaq. He was a man of knowledge as well as wealth and power. He gazed on it and said to his companions, 'Who does this belong to?' They replied, 'To the king.' He said, 'Have you seen anyone being given the like of what I have been given?' One of the remaining experts of logical proof was there with him and said, 'You have asked about an affair, so will you permit me to reply?' He replied, 'Yes.' He said, 'Have you considered your position? Is it something you have always had or something that became yours through inheritance, which will then pass from you to someone else, like it once came to you?' He replied, 'It is like that.' He said, 'Are you then proud of something insignificant that you will only have for a short while, and which you will travel beyond for a long time and which will be reckoned against you?' He said, 'Woe to you! Where is the refuge and retreat then?' He was seized by a cold shudder. The other replied, 'Either you rule your kingdom in obedience to Allah, whether it pleases or displeases you, or you leave your kingdom and put down your crown, throwing off your old garments and worshipping your Lord.' He said, 'I will reflect tonight and get back to you early in the morning.' Right before dawn, he knocked on his door and then said, 'I have chosen this mountain and these desert lands, and I have put on my old sack-clothes. So if you want you will be my companion, and no one would stop you.' They kept to the mountain until both of them died."

'Adī ibn Zayd al-'Ibādī said about him:

You, malicious blamer of fate,  
are you guilt-free and perfect?

Or do you have an age-old firm covenant?

Rather, you are a conceited fool.

Whom did you see fate make immortal,

and who had a protector from harm?

Where is the king of kings, Kisrā Anushirvān, now,

and where is Sābūr who was before him?

And the noble Banū Aṣfar, the Roman kings,

none of whom are remembered?

And where now is the lord of Ḥuḍr, who built it

and made the Tigris and Khābūr flow to it.

He raised it in marble, adorned with plaster

and in its heights there were nests of birds.

He did not fear the turn of fate;

his kingdom is gone, its gate abandoned.

Remember the lord of al-Khawarnaq, who pondered

one day; right guidance has reminders!

He was pleased with his kingdom and wealth,

with the river showing its width and as-Sadīr.

But his heart turned around and he said,

"What is the joy of living being bound to die?"

And after prosperity, kingdom and dominion,

the graves have concealed them there.

And they have become like withered leaves,

whirling in the winds of the east and west.

Hishām wept until his beard was wet. He ordered the plates to be removed and his bed to be folded up, then remained in his palace. His servants and entourage went to Khālid ibn Ṣafwān and said, "Why did you do that to the Commander of the Believers? You have ruined his enjoyment." He replied, "Leave me! I have made a contract with Allah that I will never be alone with a king without reminding him of Allah Most High."

## Al-Walīd ibn Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik

125-126/743-744

**A**l-Walīd ibn Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam – the profligate caliph – Abū al-‘Abbās. He was born in year 90/708-9. When his father was dying, he could not appoint him, because he was still a child. Therefore he made a contract for Hishām and designated him the successor of Hishām. He assumed authority after Hishām’s death in Rabī‘ al-Awwal in 125/743.

He was a sinner, a wine-drinker and violator of Allah’s ordinances. He wanted to go on *hajj* in order to drink on top of the Ka’ba. The people despised him for his profligacy and arose against him. He was killed in Jumādā al-Ākhira in 126/744.

It is narrated from him that when he was besieged, he said to the people, “Have I not increased your stipends, lifted your burdens and provided for the poor among you?” They said, “We do not avenge you for our own sake, but because you violate Allah’s prohibitions, drink wine, marry the mothers of your father’s children (*ummahāt al-awlād*) and disdain Allah’s commands.”

When he was killed, his head was cut off and brought to Yazīd an-Nāqīṣ, who put it on a spear. His brother, Sulaymān ibn Yazīd looked at it and said, “Away with him! I witness that he was a wine-drinker and an insolent profligate who tried to seduce me.”

Al-Mu‘āfā al-Jarīrī said: I collected some reports about al-Walīd and his verses, which contain the foolishness and nonsense that

he boasted about, as well as the heresies he proclaimed about the Qur’ān and his disbelief in Allah.

Adh-Dhahabī said: Neither disbelief (*kufr*) nor heresy (*zandaqa*) is established about al-Walīd. However, he was well-known for wine-drinking and sodomy, which led people to rebel against him.

Al-Walīd was once mentioned in the presence of al-Mahdī. A man said that he was a heretic (*zindqīq*) and al-Mahdī replied, “No way, Allah’s caliphate is too great that He would give it to a heretic.”

Marwān ibn Abī Ḥafṣa said: al-Walīd was one of the most handsome people as well as the most violent and well-versed in poetry.

Abū az-Zinād said: az-Zuhrī used to always censure and accuse al-Walīd in Hishām’s presence, saying, “The only lawful option for you is to remove him from the succession.” But Hishām was not able to do so. If az-Zuhrī had lived until al-Walīd came to power, the latter would have had him killed.

Ad-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn ‘Uthmān said: Hishām wanted to put aside al-Walīd and appoint his son as successor, but al-Walīd said:

“You were ungrateful to the benefactor  
but had you been grateful  
the All-Merciful, the Possessor of favour and grace,  
would have rewarded you.

I have seen you strenuously building on my plot of land  
but if you were prudent, you would destroy what  
you are building.

Now I see you causing hatred among those that remain.

Woe to them if I had died from your evil work.

It is as if I see them on the day, when their most frequent  
words are,

‘Woe is me!’ when ‘Woe is me’ will be no use.”

Hammād ar-Rāwiya said: I was with al-Walīd once, and two

astrologers came to him, saying, "We have looked into what you have ordered us and found that you will rule for seven years." (Ḥammād said:) I wanted to deceive him, so I said, "They are wrong. We know more about the signs and the different sciences. We looked into this and found that you will rule for forty years." He looked down and then said, "Their words will not defeat me and your words will not deceive me. By Allah, I will gather wealth from its lawful sources like someone who will live forever and I will distribute it rightfully like someone who will die tomorrow."

A *ḥadīth* narrated in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad says, "There will be a man in this community called al-Walīd and he will be worse for this community than Pharaoh was for his people."

Ibn Faḍl Allāh said in *al-Masālik*: al-Walīd ibn Yazīd was a relentless tyrant, a title that does not wrong him. The path he took did not lead him right. He was the Pharaoh of that age which has passed and that time which was full of defects. He will go ahead of his people on the Day of Rising and lead them down into the Fire, and bring about their fall to disgrace. What an evil watering-hole to be led to. What a terrible place of arrival that witnessed standing place is. He shot arrows at copies of the Qur'ān and sinned without hiding his transgressions.

Aṣ-Ṣūlī narrated from Sa'īd ibn Sulaym, who said: Ibn Mayyāda recited his verse to al-Walīd ibn Yazīd, in which he says:

"You surpassed Quraysh, except the family of Muḥammad  
and the sons of Marwān, the people of  
excellence."

Al-Walīd said, "I see that you have put the family of Muḥammad before us." Ibn Mayyāda said, "I do not think anything else is permitted."

This Ibn Mayyāda is the one who said about al-Walīd in another long poem:

I intended to say a sincere word  
and to say it in spite of its enemies:  
I saw al-Walīd ibn Yazīd, blessed and  
strong under the burdens of the caliphate.

## Yazīd an-Nāqis (Abū Khālid) ibn al-Walīd

126/744

**Y**azīd an-Nāqis ('the Reducer'), Abū Khālid, ibn 'Abd al-Malik. He was named the 'Reducer' because he reduced the military allowances. He revolted against the caliphate and killed his paternal cousin, al-Walīd, then seized power.

His mother was Shahfarand, the daughter of Fīrūz ibn Yazdajird. The mother of Fīrūz was the daughter of Shīrawayh ibn Kisrā. The mother of Shīrawayh was the daughter of Khāqān, the king of the Turks. The grandmother of Fīrūz was the daughter of Caesar, the Roman emperor. Therefore Yazīd boasted:

"I am the son of Kisrā<sup>8</sup> and my father was Marwān,  
Caesar is my grandfather and my grandfather  
is Khāqān."

Ath-Tha'ālibī said: He was the noblest in lineage with respect to both kingdom and caliphate.

When Yazīd killed al-Walīd, he stood up and said in a *khutba*, "By Allah, I did not revolt out of insolent ingratitude and pride, nor worldly aspiration or desire for kingship. I would be a wrongdoer to myself, if it was not for the mercy of my Lord. On the contrary, I revolted in anger for the sake of Allah and His religion. I came to

<sup>8</sup> A generic name applied to the king of the Persians just as Caesar is a generic name for the ruler of the Romans.

summon to His Book and the Sunna of His Messenger ﷺ at a time when the signposts of guidance had been effaced, the light of the godfearing people had been extinguished and a tyrant had appeared, who legalised the unlawful and engaged in innovations. When I saw all this, I was afraid that, because of the large number of your sins and the hardness of your hearts, you would be covered by a darkness that would not be removed. I was afraid that he would summon many people to his way and that they would respond. Therefore, I asked Allah for guidance in my affair and summoned those of my family and the people under my authority who responded. Then Allah relieved the lands and the people from al-Walīd. Sovereignty is from Allah. There is no power or strength, except by Allah.

People! If I am given charge of your affairs, I promise that I will not place brick upon brick nor stone upon stone and that I will not transfer wealth from one region to another until I have fortified its frontiers and seen that its military posts are manned to make you secure. If there is any surplus, I will take it to the next region in order the means of livelihood are put in order and you are all equal with respect to it. If you want to pledge allegiance to me according to what I have proposed to you, then I am yours. If I deviate, the oath of allegiance is not binding upon you. If you see anyone more capable than me in this and prefer to pledge allegiance to him instead, then I would be the first to give him my allegiance and obey him. I ask Allah to forgive me and you.

Uthmān ibn Abī 'Ātika said: Yazīd was the first to come out armed on the two 'Ids. He came out between two ranks of armed horsemen, from the gate of the fort to the place of prayer.

Abū 'Uthmān al-Laythī narrated that Yazīd said: Banū Umayya! Beware of singing, for it decreases modesty, increases appetites and destroys manliness. It is a replacement for wine, but has the same intoxicating effect. If you are not able to avoid it, then at least keep women away from it, for singing promotes fornication.

Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam said that he heard ash-Shāfi'ī, may Allah have

mercy on him, say: "When Yazīd ibn al-Walīd came to power, he called the people to the doctrine of free-will. He tried to bring them around to it and honoured the followers of Ghaylān."

However, Yazīd did not enjoy the caliphate for long. He died in the same year, on the 7th of Dhū al-Ḥijja, and his caliphate lasted less than six months. He died at the age of thirty-five, and some say forty-six. It is said that he died of the plague.

## Ibrāhīm ibn al-Walīd

126/744

**I**brāhīm ibn al-Walīd ibn 'Abd al-Malik, Abū Ishāq. He received the oath of allegiance as caliph after the death of his brother, Yazīd an-Nāqīṣ. Some say that he made a contract for him, others say that he did not.

*Burd ibn Sinān said: I was present with Yazīd ibn al-Walīd when he was dying and Qaṭan came to him. He said, "I have been sent as a messenger by those outside your gate, asking in the name of Allah why you have put your brother, Ibrāhīm, in charge of their affairs?" He became angry and said, "Have I appointed Ibrāhīm?" Then he said to me, "Abū al-'Alā', whom do you think I should appoint?" I replied, "I will not advise you about the end of an affair that I told you not to enter in the first place." Then he fainted and I thought he was dead. Qaṭan sat down and forged a document with the contract as if dictated by Yazīd. He summoned people and asked them to bear witness. But no, by Allah, Yazīd made no contract of succession.*

Ibrāhīm remained caliph for seventy days and was deposed when Marwān ibn Muḥammad revolted against him. He received the oath of allegiance and Ibrāhīm fled. Then he came and divested himself of authority and resigned it to Marwān, to whom he pledged allegiance in obedience.

Ibrāhīm lived until 132/750, when he was killed among the other Umayyads in the massacre ordered by as-Saffāḥ.

It is related in Ibn 'Asākir's *Tārīkh* that Ibrāhīm heard *ḥadīth* from az-Zuhrī and narrated from his paternal uncle, Hishām, and that his son, Yazīd, narrated from him.

His mother was an *umm walad* and he was the brother of Marwān al-Ḥimār through that mother.

He was deposed on Monday the 14th of Ṣafar in 127/744.

According to al-Madā'inī, Ibrāhīm's authority was never established, since one group acknowledged his caliphate, while another group only acknowledged his political authority (*imra*) and another group refused to pledge allegiance to him altogether. As one of their poets said:

“We pledge allegiance to Ibrāhīm every Friday,  
but a command with you as its ruler is lost.”

Someone else said that the engraving on Ibrāhīm's seal was, “Ibrāhīm trusts in Allah.”

## Marwān al-Ḥimār

127-132/744-750

**M**arwān al-Ḥimār ('the Donkey') – Abū 'Abd al-Malik – ibn Muḥammad ibn Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam. He was the last caliph of Banū Umayya. He was called al-Ja'dī after his educator, al-Ja'd ibn Dirham, and 'the Donkey', because he never ceased fighting those who revolted against him, making march after march and patiently enduring the hardships of war. As it is said in the proverb, “So-and-so is more patient in war than a donkey.” For that reason he was given the name. It is also said that it was because the Arabs call every hundredth year *ḥimār*, so when Umayyad rule approached a hundred years, they called Marwān the *ḥimār*.

Marwān was born in al-Jazīra (Mesopotamia), where his father was governor, in 72/691-2. His mother was an *umm walad*.

Before becoming caliph, he governed several important provinces and conquered Konya in 105/723-4. He was famous for his horsemanship, bravery, manliness, political finesse and impetuosity.

When al-Walīd was killed and the news reached him in Armenia, he summoned those Muslims who approved of him to the oath of allegiance and they pledged allegiance to him. When the news of Yazīd's death reached him, he emptied the treasuries and set out to fight Ibrāhīm, whom he defeated. Marwān received the oath of allegiance in the middle of Ṣafar in 127/744. At that point, his authority became firmly established.

The first thing he did was to order the exhumation of Yazīd an-Nāqīṣ. He took him out from the grave and crucified him for the



murder of al-Walīd. However, he never found ease in the caliphate because of the numerous revolts from all directions until 132/750.

Then Banū al-‘Abbās revolted against him under the command of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alī, the paternal uncle of as-Saffāḥ. He set out to fight them and the two armies met near Mosul. Marwān was defeated and returned to Syria, but ‘Abd Allāh pursued him and Marwān fled to Egypt. The brother of ‘Abd Allāh, Ṣāliḥ, pursued him until they met at the village of Būṣīr. Marwān was killed in Dhū al-Ḥijja of the same year.

Among the prominent individuals who died in his days were as-Saddī al-Kabīr, Mālik ibn Dīnār the ascetic, ‘Āṣim ibn Abī an-Nujūd the reciter, Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb, Shayba ibn Niṣāḥ the reciter, Muḥammad ibn Munkadir, Abū Ja‘far Yazīd ibn al-Qa‘qā‘ the reciter of Madina, Abū Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī, Abū az-Zinād, Hammām ibn Munabbih, Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’ al-Mu‘tazilī.

Aṣ-Ṣūlī narrates that Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ said: When Marwān al-Ḥimār was killed, his head was cut off and sent to ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alī. He looked at it without being bothered. Then a cat tore out the tongue and began chewing on it, so ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alī said, "If time had shown us no other wonder than Marwān's tongue in a cat's mouth, it would have been enough for us."

### The Book

*Tārīkh al-Khulafā'* is justly famous in Arabic, and rarely out of print. In the original it comprises the histories of all those who have been named as *khulafā'* right up to the age in which as-Suyuti himself lived. For this volume Ta-Ha follow up *The Khalifahs who took the right way* with this volume on the Umayyad Caliphs.

### The Author

His name was Abu'l-Faḍl ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī. He was born on the night of Saturday the 1st of Rajab 849 AH (3rd October 1445 CE.). As-Suyūṭī mastered most of the traditional studies of his day, particularly those relating to knowledge of hadith, and was the author of more than five hundred works on Qur'an, Sunnah, hadith, *fiqh*, *sirah*, and medicine, etc. He is best remembered for his completion of the *tafsīr* of Qur'an known as the *Jalālayn*, which had been left incomplete on the death of Jalāl ad-Dīn al-Maḥallī. He died on Thursday the 18th of Jumādā al-Ūlā, 911 AH (17th October 1505 CE.), may Allah have mercy upon him.