

**HISTORICAL STORIES
FOR CHILDREN (2)**

YAZĪD

(son of Mu‘āwiyah)



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*In the Name of Allāh,
the Beneficent, the Merciful*

Our aim for the publication of these series is to introduce some aspects of biography from the history of Islam. These biographies include both types of individuals who either played a good and useful role or a bad and harmful role. We had always cherished the idea that we would be able to produce a short sketch of hard facts from the history of Islam in this field to be written exclusively to capture the interest of young children and teenagers.

We pray to the Almighty Allāh to assist us in proving our present and future efforts to be accomplished facts — thus making a useful contribution to the learning of young children and teenagers and help us in this cause. He is the Best Guide and the Best Helper.

WORLD ORGANIZATION FOR ISLAMIC SERVICES,
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In the Name of Allāh

Yazīd was the wicked son of Mu‘āwiyah who inherited his father's rule. He was the second of the dynastic rulers at the beginning of the Islamic era. His father Mu‘āwiyah had obtained power over the Muslim community through deceit and treachery. During the last days of his reign he made the people pledge their support for his son Yazīd. Thereupon he installed him as his successor at an official ceremony. Yazīd's

mother was Maysun, who like Hind (notorious for having eaten the liver of Ḥamzah) was an impure and unchaste woman. His mother had slept with one of his father's slaves and the despicable, wine-drinking Yazīd who was supposed to be the son of Mu‘āwiyah was really the offspring of that slave.

This has been confirmed by the noble Prophet, *Ṣalla 'llāhu ‘alayhi wa ālihi wa sallam* (s.a.w.a. — may Allāh's peace and blessings be on him and his progeny) who said: "The murderer of my son Ḥusayn, *‘alayhi 's-salām* (a.s.—peace be upon him),

is a bastard" ; which also applies to Shimr, Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Ziyād since all of them were born out of wedlock.

Yazīd had inherited all the qualities of his character and way of behaving from his father, Mu'āwiyah, all that is, except for one thing: whereas, Mu'āwiyah governed by trickery and deceit, compromised with the demands of Islam even to the point of

building mosques, Yazīd however shamelessly committed the most criminal and despicable acts. Throughout his life and especially during his period of rule,

this tyrant, who reigned over the unfortunate unaware Muslims in the name of Islam, became notorious for the following :

- 1. He owned monkeys which would dance for him dressed in gold-embroidered multi-coloured clothes.**
- 2. His racing dogs were renowned the world over.**
- 3. He was passionately fond of gambling.**
- 4. His addiction to wine set a clear example for his successors.**

5. He acted disrespectfully towards the *Haram*, Mosque of the Prophet (s.a. w.a.) and towards other Mosques of the Muslims.
6. He killed the offspring of the Messenger of Allāh (s.a.w.a.) and committed numerous other crimes at the tragedy of Karbala'.
7. He forced the womenfolk to take off their veils (from both the *muhājirun*, that is, those who left Mecca for Medina and also from amongst the *anṣār*, that is, those already living in Mecca).

- 8. He killed countless people of Medina and he and his supporters were responsible for the rape of numerous women of Medina.**
- 9. He arrested and made prisoners the supporters of Ali (a. s.) .**
- 10. He was responsible for damaging the house of Ka'bah and its embroidered covering.**
- 11. He committed many other despicable crimes which are at least as famous as those we have listed.**

Yazīd was the first person who made

debauchery, rape of women and children, corruption, wine-drinking, music and dancing commonplace behaviour within the Muslims lands. Yazīd, in fact was a man who devoted

his life to wine-drinking, luxury, indulgence, racing dogs, gambling and rape of women and young girls. It was Yazīd, the so-called caliph of the Muslims who killed the offspring of the Messenger of Allāh and their faithful supporters. Immediately after killing Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.) it was this same man who sat back to repose in front of a feast of food and wine,

surrounded by musicians, singers and wine-pourers.

Yazīd, like his father had done before him, deliberately and openly changed the divine laws to suit his own wishes. He committed such despicable acts during his rule (which lasted only three years and nine months) that he has been cursed by Allāh and the people until the end of time. The most abominable of these was the murdering of Imām Ḥusayn (a.s.), his family and a group of his supporters, during the first year of his rule. He set fire to their tents, tortured the women and

**baby children and rode over the body of
Imām Ḥusayn (a. s.) and others who**

**had died fighting in Allāh's way
(*shuhadā'*) on horseback. Moreover, in the
second year of his rule an event known as
Ḥarrah took place which was the scene of
further bloody atrocities on his part. Like
Mu‘āwiyah and his bloodthirsty agents,
Yazīd and his corrupt followers did not
shun any criminal act, how-ever
disgusting or tyrannical. It was this event
which clearly demonstrated to the
Muslims and to all men the world over the
extent of his corruption and violation of**

the most basic of human rights.

A group of men from Medina (like others of that time who were forced at spear-point or bribed to make a pledge to Yazīd) made their way to visit this so-called 'Muslim' ruler at his place of government in Syria (or more accurately Shām, a country which roughly corresponds to present-day Syria and parts of Lebanon and Palestine). They were able to see with their own eyes what kind of man was the man who was ruling as a caliph of Islam, namely a man who loved wine, racing dogs, gambling and a

life of ease and luxury and shamelessly violated the honour of men, women and children alike. They returned to Medina in a state of profound unease; when they had told the people of the situation, a large group of men gathered and rose in defiance of the murderous regime.

They expelled the governor of Yazīd and his wicked and blood-thirsty agents from Medina.

From this moment onwards the ranks of those rebellions to the government of Yazīd grew larger day by day; cries of 'death to Yazīd and his corruption' rang

out all around Medina. People spoke out for Islam from the platform (*minbar*) of the mosques, from the streets and squares, and whenever people would gather together, they courageously declared their opposition to Yazīd, saying, "anyone who has killed the progeny of the Messenger of Allāh, anyone who drinks wine, does not fast or pray is addicted to gambling and racing dogs, anyone who indulges in luxurious living, dancing and music, anyone who rules corruptly, thinking only of his own interests and never of the poor deprived people — such a man has no right to such a position of power and

authority over the Muslims; such a man must step down from his position and make way for another man. We, Muslims of Medina have pledged our allegiance to a man called Abdullāh ibn Ḥanzalah who is often called Ghasīl al-Malā'ikah, we cannot bear to live under the tyranny and corruption of the debauched drunkard Yazīd and his agents." News of this rebellion of the Muslims of Medina reached Yazīd's ears. Yazīd ordered his hated agents to go as soon as possible to the scene of the demonstrations: they were to quell the demonstrators and to stop the cry of those seeking truth and justice from

reaching the ears of the rest of the Muslims.

The bloodthirsty Yazīd had a man called Muslim ibn ‘Uqbah (also known as Mushrif, the wanton spendthrift) brought before him, the latter had been a faithful friend of Yazīd's father Mu‘āwiyah. He dispatched Muslim ibn ‘Uqbah at the head of a large army to crush the rebellious Muslims in Medina, after marching for sometime they came to a halt in the rocky area near Medina known as Harrah. The people of Medina set off towards them in order to defend

their lives and honour.

In this place known as Harrah a heavy battle took place between the armies of truth and falsehood, many of the Muslims from Medina were killed. The rest were forced to retire, unable to withstand the sheer size and weaponry of this murderous army of Yazīd, they took refuge in mosques (including the Holy Prophet's mosque) in order to save their lives. It was the custom in those days to respect the sanctity of mosques, the *Ḥaram* of the Prophet and large cemeteries, anyone taking refuge then

would be safe from any harm. The people of Medina, under the impression that even the armies of the usurper caliph Yazīd would respect this custom took refuge in these places. They did not realize that these were the same godless people who had molested the Prophet, breaking his teeth, throwing dirt on his face and committing countless other despicable acts. They were the same people who while claiming to be Muslims placed Ali (a. s.) under house arrest, killed his sons and tortured his faithful supporters. It was these same ignorant people who in the name of the Qur'an and claiming to

defend the rights of every Muslim, disregarded the divine commandments and made corruption a commonplace in the society of the day.

Muslim ibn ‘Uqbah the commander of this army of bloodthirsty men, entered the mosques and the *Haram* sanctuary of the noble Prophet on horseback in search of those who had sought refuge there, in total violation of the ancient custom they put everyone to the sword, the mosque and the *Haram* of the noble Messenger (s.a.w.a.) , were drenched in blood. These godless mercenaries acted as they wished

desecrating and ruining these sanctuaries of Islam, they then attacked Medina itself killing countless inhabitants and violating the honour and property of others; even women youths and young children were not spared the slaughter. The murderous commander acting as his master Yazīd would have done allowed his army the total freedom of the city for three days; taking advantage of this permission, Yazīd's mercenaries gave free rein to their base animal-like instincts. Thousands of women and unmarried girls were raped even within the area of the Prophet's mosque. These savage godless

men acting in accordance with the saying 'the way the common people live is dictated by the behaviour of their kings' imitated the behaviour of Yazīd, following the example of their savage, debauched tyrant king they subjected those who had fled to the mosques to unspeakable atrocities.

After the army-commander and his vicious mercenaries had subdued the rebellion of the Muslims by their slaughter and rape of the inhabitants of Medina they forced those who survived the attack to make a pledge of allegiance

to Yazīd; after exacting this pledge under the threat of death they continued and increased their reign of terror. A group of the surviving Muslims, fearful for their lives and property, swore an oath of allegiance to Yazīd; others however who resisted and refused to accept dictatorial tyranny of Yazīd were killed by the savage mercenaries. Such was the reality of what took place at Harrah, just one atrocity among the thousands committed by Yazīd in the name of Islam and as a so-called 'Muslim' ruler. Another of the despicable acts Yazīd became notorious for, was his destruction and setting fire to

mosques.

Abdullāh ibn Zubayr was one of the rebellious Muslims, whose independence and determination to secure a true Muslim government caused Yazīd considerable trouble; the latter, in order to destroy Abdullāh ibn Zubayr and his supporters sent an army commanded by Ḥusayn ibn Namīr to Mecca.

The army marched towards Mecca, and came to a halt in the hills overlooking the area of the Ka‘bah; they then began to hurl great boulders and fiery missiles from their huge catapults on to the house

of the Ka‘bah, destroying its walls completely and setting on fire the wooden part of the structure and the embroidered drape-covering; then the barbaric mercenaries of the tyrant Yazīd began to attack the town itself with missiles, staffs, cudgels and swords killing, raping and plundering the inhabitants of Mecca.

The people of Mecca were in desperate situation, there was no way open to them but to entrust their fate to Allāh and raise their hands in prayer to plead for the death of Yazīd. They prayed that Allāh may deliver them of this

corrupt dictator who was responsible for all the killing and tyranny. It was not long before news reached Mecca of the death of Yazīd; the commander of the army and his army of brutal mercenaries returned to Shām and as a result the defense-less people of Mecca were delivered of the merciless attackers.

After three years, nine months and twenty-two days of dictatorial government Yazīd left this world. He died of a kind pleurisy (a serious illness with inflammation of the delicate membrane of the thorax and the lungs, marked by pain

in the chest or sides). His grave became a dirty rubbish dump, a fitting end for such tyrant, a fitting end for a man who violated the honour and property of the Muslims, a fitting end for anyone who allows his satanic desires to take precedence over the laws and commandments of Islam and anyone who attempts to change the divine code.

THE SECOND MU'ĀWIYAH A FLOWER FLOURISHES AND BLOOMS IN A HEAP OF DIRT

Before the bloodthirsty, wine-drinking traitor Yazīd died he obtained

for his son Mu‘āwiyah through menace and bribery a pledge of allegiance from the Muslims. At a special ceremony he declared his son to be his successor after his death. Yazīd's son, from his earliest childhood had been trained and educated by a good Muslim teacher, who had faith in Allāh, his teacher had told him that his father and father's father had seized power through deceit, treachery and the use of force against the family of the Prophet ; they had taken control of the affairs of the government claiming to be the true caliphs of the Muslims. This conscientious teacher showed Yazīd's son

the difference between truth and falsehood ; he taught him that only someone who led a perfect life and whose concern was for Islam and for the benefit of the people had a right to the caliphate and the government of the Muslims' affairs; "such persons" he said "were only to be found in the family of the Prophet, that is, Ali and his sons and progeny". The teacher continued : "If you understand this, then refrain, after the death of your father from taking the reins of government into your hands: Oh son of Yazīd, you are responsible in the eyes of Allāh and on the Day of Judgement you

will be questioned as to your actions in front of all the people. You would be questioned why you accepted government of the Muslims while there existed a man perfectly suited to the position Zaynu 'l-‘Ābidīn, son of Imām Ḥusyan (a.s.). Do you not realize that your father seized control of the affairs of the Muslims through deceit, treachery and by plotting and threatening." These words of the teacher had a profoundly good effect in the heart of this receptive pupil and his love for Ali (a.s.) and hate for his grandfather Mu‘āwiyah grew increasingly stronger during his period of learning and

training. It was for this reason that on the death of the despicable Yazīd his son, Mu‘āwiyah the second succeeded him but remained only forty days in power. Conflicting forces were at work in the heart of Mu‘āwiyah the second: the forces of truth versus the forces of falsehood. This inner commotion continued until the day of truth triumphed and he stepped onto the *minbar* of the mosque to make a speech, after cursing his father and father's father he began, "Oh people. My grandfather, Mu‘āwiyah made war on the noble Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Ali (a.s.) and the latter were the most suited to the position

of governing the Muslims. Mu‘āwiyah, through deceit and treacherous scheming usurped the caliphate of the Muslims, which was rightly due to the family of the Prophet. He committed actions during his life which you, better than I, are most familiar with. After Mu‘āwiyah, my father Yazīd seized control of the government, which as before should have been given to the family of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) . He killed the offspring of the Prophet (s. a. w. a.) and manipulated the divine code of living which is Islam; he committed countless crimes and barbaric atrocities which you are better aware of than I. The

truth is that I am ashamed even to speak about them.

"He desecrated the sanctuary of the *Haram* and the mosque of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and destroyed or set fire to other mosques. He violated the honour and the property of the Muslims. I confess I cannot bear to talk about anymore of his horrible actions. Thus I am placing control of affairs into your hands and you are free to choose your owner ruler."

After finishing his speech he returned home and sat crying for a long time. His

mother came to him and said: "Oh son, what a pity you did not die in my womb and I did not hear these poisonous words of yours from the very same *minbar* from which Mu'āwiyah and your father used to speak . . ." Thus she continued until Mu'āwiyah the second replied to his mother: "What a pity that I did not die and was not spared the indignity of having a wine-drinking father and a shameless mother."

Mu'āwiyah lived only a few days longer, dying at the age of twenty-two. After his death, Mu'āwiyah's teacher who

was responsible for awakening the conscience of Yazīd's son was buried alive. They realized that it was he who influenced Mu‘āwiyah the second and had taught him the truth about Islam. Although the influence of the teacher on Mu‘āwiyah's spirit and intellect was considerable, it was not the ultimate cause of his abandoning the position of caliphate.

There was another more important reason; one day while the son of Yazīd was sitting deeply in thought in his home he heard the raised voices of two slave-girls conversing with each other. One of them

had turned to the other who was the more beautiful and charming, saying: "Your beauty is the cause of the pride and arrogance of the Sultans." The beautiful slave girl replied: "What better Sultanate exists than the rule of beauty and charm? — no king in his arrogance can refuse the request of a beautiful woman; thus I hold sway over all the kings of the world." The other slave girl said : "What I ask you, is the good in being a power ruler: every king who wishes to fulfill his duty and responsibility towards the people cannot expect to live a life of ease and comfort. If however a king wants to spend his life in luxury, easy living indulgence in sensual

pleasure and debauchery then he has mined his claim to kingship and has failed to fulfill his duty towards the people. He will be responsible before Allāh and the people: his place will be in hell and he will not be spared the punishment of Allāh. Thus we can see that sultans and kings cannot enjoy both this world and the next." The slave girl's words affected the heart of Yazīd's son and consequently he abandoned the sultanate and delivered himself of its heavy responsibilities and Allāh's punishment in the next world.

