

On Cursing Yazid Bin Muwaiya

Q. What is the Ahlus Sunnah position on Yazeed bin Mu'awiyah and the act of cursing him?

A. There is a difference between a minority of the scholars of Ahlus Sunnah, some said it is impermissible to curse him, while others, particularly those connected with tasawwuf, were of the opinion that he was cursed and a tyrant. People of tasawwuf prefer the later. The following are some of the opinions of the scholars who held Yazeed bin Mu'awiyah in contempt.

1. Hafiz Ibn Kathir's comments on Yazeed:

Ibn Kathir himself writes in the famous 'Al Bidayah':

'Traditions inform us that Yazeed loved worldly vices, would drink, listen to kept the company of boys with no facial hair [civil _expression for paedophilia boys, a form of homosexuality], played drums, kept dogs [civil _expression for bestiality], not a day would go by when he was not in a drunken state.'

2. Ibn Katheer in Al Bidayah Volume 8 page 222 stated:

'Muslim was ordered to ransack Medina for three days. Yazeed committed a major sin. Sahaba and their children were slaughtered openly; other heinous acts were also perpetuated. We have already mentioned that he had Ibn Ziyad kill the grandson of Rasulallah (s) Husayn and his companions. In those three days in Madina, it is difficult to mention the type of acts that were carried out. By doing this act Yazeed wanted to secure his governance, in the same way Allah (swt) broke the neck of every Pharoah, the true King (swt) also broke the neck of Yazeed.'

3. One who attacks Medina is cursed

We read in al Bidayah Volume 8 page 223: 'Rasulallah (s) said whoever perpetuated injustice and frightened the residents of Medina, the curse (la'nat) of Allah (swt), His Angels and all people is on such a person'

4. Ibn Atheer's comments on Yazeed

In Tareekh al Kamil Volume 3 page 450 Ibn Atheer narrates from Munzir bin Zabeer: 'Verily Yazeed rewarded me with 100,000 dirhams but this cannot stop me from highlighting his state, By Allah he is a drunkard...'

5. Ibn Atheer's comments on Yazeed

In 'Siyar A'lam Al-Nubala' Volume 4 pages 37-38, Dhahabi narrates: 'Ziyad Hurshee narrates 'Yazeed gave me alcohol to drink, I had never drunk alcohol like that before and I enquired where he had obtained its ingredients'. Yazeed replied 'it is made of sweet pomegranate, honey

from Isfahan, sugar from Hawaz and grapes from Burdah...Yazeed indulged in alcohol and would participate in actions that opposed the dictates set by Allah (swt).'

6. Ibn Jauzi's comments on Yazeed 'the drunkard'

Ibn Jauzi in Wafa al-Wafa: 'Yazeed appointed his cousin Uthman bin Muhammad bin Abu Sufyan as Governor of Madina. He sent a delegation to visit Yazeed who bore gifts so that they might take the oath of allegiance to him. Upon their return they said 'We have returned having visited a man who has no religion, he drinks, plays instruments, keeps the company of singers and dogs [civil word for bestiality], we declare that we have broken our allegiance to him. Abdullah bin Abi Umro bin Hafs Mukhzumee commented 'Yazeed gave me gifts. But the reality is this man is an enemy of Allah (SWT) and a drunkard. I shall separate myself from him in the same way that I remove my turban [from my head]....'

7. Ibn Hajar's comments on Yazeed

In Sawaiqh al Muhriqa: 'One group have deemed Yazeed to be a kaafir, another has stated he was a Muslim but a fasiq (transgressor), a fajir (one that commits debauchery) and a drunkard. There is consensus over his fisq (transgression). One party of Ulema have stated that you can curse him by name, this includes individuals such as Ibn Jauzi and Ahmad. One group made up of individuals such as Ibn Jauzi deem Yazeed a kaafir, others say he was not a kaafir but rather this is a matter that has caused a difference of opinion.

The majority of Ahl'ul Sunnah all agree that he was a fasiq (transgressor), a fajir (one that commits debauchery) and a drunkard. Waqidi had recorded a narration 'Verily we opposed Yazeed fearing Allah (swt) would reign stones down on us, Yazeed considered nikah (marriage) with mothers and sisters to be permissible and drank alcohol.'

'Dhahabi narrates that when Abdullah bin Kuzai returned from Damascus he stated that Yazeed performs zina with his mother, sister and daughters. We had better start a movement to oppose Yazeed otherwise stones may reign down on us'

This is one reason why Ibn Hajar al Makki calls Yazeed one of the most debased men in history.

8. Muhaddith Shah Abdul Aziz's comments on Yazeed

In 'Sirush Shahadathayn', Shah Abdul Aziz, the great Muhadith states: 'Imam Husayn did not give bai'ah to Yazeed because he was a drunkard, a fasiq and Dhaalim.'

9. Ibn Taymeeya's condemnation of unjust Yazeed

Ibn Taymeeya in Minhajj: 'Yazeed had the sword and hence he had the power to deal with anyone that opposed him. He had the power to reward his subjects with the contents of the treasury, and could also withhold their rights. He had the power to punish criminals; it is in this context that we can understand that he was the khalifah and king. Issues such as Yazeed's piety or lack of it, or his honesty or lack of it, is another matter. In all of his actions Yazeed was not just, there is no dispute amongst the people of Islam on this matter.'

10. The World reknown Muslim Historian Ibn Khaldun states:

‘Yazeed’s time of governance can be seen as fisq and debauchery, and the blame is on Mu’awiya who should have controlled him.’

11. We read in Tareekh Kamil:

‘The narrator states ‘By Allah, Yazeed drinks alcohol and abandons Salat’

12. We read in Tareekh Abul Fida:

‘Yazeed played the tambourine, drank alcohol and raised bears [civil _expression for bestiality].’

13. Hayaath al Haywaan states:

‘Yazeed would hunt with cheetas, play chess and drink alcohol.’

14. People opposed Yazeed due to his atrocious deeds

We read in Tareekh Khamees: ‘The people of Medina broke the baiah to Yazeed on account of his bad acts, he used to drink alcohol’

15. The Famous Hanifa scholar Qadi Thanauallah’s comments on Yazeed’s kufr poetry

We read in most famous Tafseer Al- Mazhari: ‘Yazeed deemed drinking alcohol to be Halaal, and he recited these couplets ‘if the Deen of Ahmad deems alcohol to be haraam...’

16. Shariat Muhammad Majid ‘Ali Shakir stated in Badh Shariat:

‘Some say ‘Why should we discuss such a thing since he [Yazeed] was a King and he [Husayn] was also a King’ - one who makes such comments {refusing to hold opinion on Yazeed and Husayn (R)} is accursed, a Kharijee, Nasibi and hell bound. The dispute is over whether he [Yazeed] was a kaafir. The madhab of Abu Hanifa stipulates that he was a fasiq and fajir, nor was he a kaafir nor a Muslim.’

17. Yazeed’s attack on Harra

We read in ‘au khanar al masalik’ that Shaykh al Hadith Mawlana Muhammad Zakaria stated: ‘The army that Yazeed had sent to Medina comprised of 60,000 horsemen and 15,000 foot soldiers. For three days they shed blood freely, 1000 women were raped and 700 from the Quraysh and Ansar were killed. Ten thousand women and children were made slaves. Muslim bin Uqba forced people to give bayya to Yazeed in such a manner that people were enslaved and Yazeed could sell them as he pleased, no Sahaba who were [with the Prophet (saws)] at Hudaibiya were spared.’ All the Badr Sahaba were killed in this battle.

18. Yazeeds rejection of the Qur’an

Citing Tadhkira, Maqathil and Shazarath al Dhabah. This is also found in the Arabic (non-Leiden) version of the History of Al-Tabari: When the head of Husayn (R), the grandson of the Holy Prophet (saws), was presented before Yazeed he recited the couplets of the kaafir Zubayri:

‘Banu Hashim staged a play for Kingdom there was no news from the skies neither was there any revelation’

19. Imam Alusi In Tafseer Ruh al Maani it is stated clearly:

‘Allamah Alusi stated, Yazeed the impure denied the Prophethood of Rasulullah (s). The treatment that he meted out to the people of Makka, Medina and the family of the Prophet proves that he was a kaafir.’

Point references:

1. Al Bidayah wa al Nihayah Volume 8 page 204 Dhikr Ras al Husayn
2. Minhajj al Sunnah Volume 2 page 249 Dkikr Yazeed
3. Sharh Foqh Akbar page 73 Dhikr Yazeed
4. Sharh Tafseer Mazhari Volume 5 page 21 Surah Ibrahim
5. Shazrah al Dhahab page 69 Dhikr Shahadth Husayn
6. Maqatahil Husayn Volume 2 page 58 Dhikr Shahdath Husayn
7. Tadhkira Khawwas page 148
8. Tareekh Tabari Volume 11 pages 21-23 Dhikr 284 Hijri
9. Tafseer Ruh al Ma’ani (commentary of Surah Muhammad)
10. Ibn Kathir in al Bidaya wa al Nihaya Volume 8 page 231 narrates this hadith on the authority of

20. Yazeed’s own admission that he killed the family of the Prophet (saws)

We read in Sharh Fiqh Akbar: ‘Following the murder of Husayn, Yazeed said ‘I avenged the killing of my kaafir relatives in Badr through killing the family of the Prophet.’

21. The testimony of Shah Abdul Aziz that Yazeed killed Imam Hussain [R]

We read in Taufa: ‘Upon the orders of Yazeed the disgraceful people from Syria and Iraq killed Imam Husayn.’

22. Yazeed ordered his Governor Waleed kill Imam Hussain (R)

We read in Maqathil Husayn: ‘Yazeed wrote a letter to Waleed the Governor of Medina, in which he stated ‘Force Husayn to give bayya. Should he refuse then strike off his head and return it to me.’

23. Yazeed wrote to Ibn Ziyad telling him to kill Imam Hussain (R)

We read in Mutaalib al Saul that: ‘Ibn Ziyad wrote to Husayn ‘I have received information that you have arrived in Kerbala, and Yazeed has told me not to kill you, provided you accept his authority and mine.’

24. Ibn Ziyad's own admission that he killed Imam Husayn on the orders of Yazeed

We read in al Bidayah: 'When Yazeed wrote to Ibn Ziyad ordering him to fight Ibn Zubayr in Makka, he said 'I can't obey this fasiq. I killed the grandson of Rasulullah (sawas) upon his orders, I'm not now going to assault the Kaaba'.

25. Testimony of Ibn Abbas that Yazeed killed Imam Hussain (R)

We read in Tareekh Kamil: Ibn Abbas replied to a letter of Yazeed stating 'You killed Husayn ibn 'Ali as well as the youth from Banu Abdul Muttalib, who were beacons of guidance.'

26. The testimony of Abdullah Ibn Umar that Yazeed killed Imam Hussain (R)

We read in Maqathil al Husayn: 'Ibn Umar wrote to Yazeed, 'Hasn't your heart gone black yet? You murdered the family of the Prophet?'

27. The testimony of Shah Abdul Haqq that Yazeed killed Imam Hussain (R)

We read in Ashiath al Lamaath: 'It is unusual that some say Yazeed did not kill Husayn when he instructed Ibn Ziyad to carry out the killing.'

28. Yazeed's pride at killing Imam Hussain (as)

We read in al Bidayah Volume 8 page 204: 'Ibn Asakir, writing on Yazeed, states then when Husayn's head was brought before Yazeed, he recited the couplets of Ibn Zubayri the kaafir 'I wish my ancestors of Badr were hear to see the severed head of the rebellious tribe (The Prophet (saws's tribe of Hashim).'

Imam Jalaladun Suyuti (ra) records this tradition in Khasais al Kubra, on the authority of Sahaba Uns bin Harith: 'I heard Rasulullah (sawas) say 'Verily my son (Husayn) will be killed in a land called Kerbala, whoever amongst you is alive at that time must go and help him.'
Khasais al Kubra Volume 2 page 125 (Maktaba Nurree Rizvi Publishers, Pakistan)

29. Yazeeds own words noted in Sharh Fiqh Akbar:

'Following the murder of Husayn, Yazeed said: 'I avenged the killing of my kaafir relatives in Badr through killing the family of the Prophet.'

30. The Fatwa of Allamah Baghdadi - Yazeed denied the Prophethood, to curse him is an act of Ibadah

We read in Tafseer Ruh al Ma'ani page 72 commentary of Surah Muhammad: 'The wicked Yazeed failed to testify to the Prophethood of Hadhrath Muhammad (sawas). He also perpetrated acts against the residents of Makka, Medina and the family of the Prophet (sawas). He indulged in these acts against them during their lives and after their deaths. These acts are so conclusively proven that had he placed the Qur'an in his hands it would have testified to his kuffar. His being a fasiq and fajir did not go unnoticed by the Ulema of Islam, but the Salaf had no choice but to remain silent as they were living under threat.'

31. The Fatwas of Qadhi Abu Ya'ala and Abu Husayn deeming it permissible to curse Yazeed

Ibn Katheer in al Bidaya stated: 'Whoever frightens Medina incurs the wrath of Allah, His Angels and all the people - and some Ulema have deemed it permissible to curse Yazeed. This includes individuals such as Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Allamah Hilalee, Abu Bakr Abdul Aziz, Qadhi Abu Ya'ala and his son Qadhi Abu Husayn. Ibn Jauzi wrote a book deeming it permissible to curse Yazeed.'

32. Al Suyuti personally cursed Yazeed

In Tareekh ul Khulafa page 207, Dhikr Shahadath Husayn we read as follows: 'May Allah's curse be upon the killers of Husayn and Ibn Ziyad.'

33. Qadhi Thanauallah Panee Pathee deemed it permissible to curse the kaafir Yazeed

We read in Tafseer Mazhari Volume 5 page 21, under the commentary of Surah Ibrahim verse 28 as follows: 'The Banu Umayya were initially kaafir, then some of them presented themselves as Muslim. Yazeed then became a kaafir. The Banu Umayya maintained their enmity towards the family of the Prophet (sawas), and killed Husayn in a cruel manner. The kaafir Yazeed committed kufr in relation to the Deen of Muhammad (sawas) proven by the fact that at the time of the killing of Husayn he made a pointed reference to avenging the deaths of his kaafir ancestors slain in Badr. He acted against the family of Muhammad (sawas), Banu Hashim and in his drunken state he praised the Banu Umayya and cursed the Banu Hashim from the pulpit.'

34. Allamah Alusi set out the viewpoint of the Shaafi Ulema on this topic as follows

Haseeya Nabraas page 551: 'Amongst the Shaafi's we are in agreement that it is permissible to curse Yazeed'