

Removing the Harm

From the One Who Dispraises the Son of Abu Sufy n

By
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In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful...

All praise is due to Allah, the Exalted and Majestic; the One who has no partners or associates; the One who provides the light of guidance to His slaves so that they may attain spiritual perfection and illumination by means of it. May Allah send His choicest blessings upon His slave and seal of the Messengers, Muhammad bin ‘Abdullah. May Allah bless his pure Progeny, righteous Companions, and those that follow them in excellence until the Day of Judgment. As to what follows...

There is no discussion or debate among Muslims that is more heated than that of the status of the Prophet’s Companions. Several organisations and associations have been established to defend the Companions from what they believe to be attacks. These defences have manifested themselves in the production of literature as well as violent confrontations.

Of course, no Muslim in his/her right mind would attack the Companions collectively. Those individuals who—during the time of Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny—accompanied him in times of war and peace, benefitted from his sound counsel and silence, and even gained tremendous stations by means of his blessed state are to be admired and emulated. However, that does not mean that all of them were grateful of their unique opportunity. Some of them were labelled “hypocrites” by Allah in the Qur’ n. The Exalted says regarding them: **{...and from those around thee of the desert Arabs are hypocrites, as well as the people of Medina. They are obstinate in hypocrisy. Ye know them not, but We know them...} (Q. 9:101).**

Some of these hypocrites among the Companions were identifiable by way of their dealings with the disbelieving Arabs and certain Jewish tribes at that time. They forged relations with them seeking financial backing. Allah exposed them in numerous verses and commands His Messenger: **{O Prophet! Fight against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be firm against them} (Q. 9:73 & 66:9).** However, as we know, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, refrained from killing any of the hypocrites among his Companions. Even if he knew who they were, he didn’t kill them. When he was asked why he didn’t execute these hypocrites, he cited the famous statement ((...so that it is not said that Muhammad kills his Companions)).

All of that withstanding, Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, was commanded to fight against them. It will logically follow that the one appointed to take the Prophet’s place in his affairs would be commanded to oppose those hypocrites as per the order from Allah. Such a person would have to be the symbol of Islam after the death of Allah’s Messenger just as the latter was the symbol of Islam during his lifetime. The Muslim community needed a sign to identify these hypocrites, for no one can look into the hearts. However, if they were confronted, their hypocrisy would be manifest to all. In an agreed upon hadith narrated by the likes of Imams Muslim, Ahmed, and an-Nis`i, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, declared: ((O ‘Ali, none will love you except a believer, and none will hate you except the hypocrite!))

‘Ali bin Abi Talib—may Allah ennoble his face—was the shining beacon of Islam. He was appointed by Allah as the Guardian (*wali*) of the Believers who was to fulfil the role of Guardianship after the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. In another rigorously authenticated report, Allah’s Messenger said: ((‘Ali is the Guardian of the Believers after me)). Just as the hypocrites manifested covert hostility towards the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, by circumventing his commands and undermining his authority, they showed open hostility towards his Executor by their hatred and opposition to him. They knew that they couldn’t make war against the Prophet during his lifetime, but after his death, their hostility towards Islam took the form of fighting against ‘Ali. After all—they thought—if you can’t destroy a man, you can try to destroy his legacy.

The books of history are replete with examples of those hypocrites who set out to destroy the Prophetic legacy by both their tongues and their actions. The throes of state power and sectarian parochialism have protected the identities of some of these hypocrites simply because they physically accompanied Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. Attempts to dethrone such personalities from the minds and hearts of Muslims have fallen prey to designs of the self-proclaimed 'upholders of tradition' as well as to those would-be 'mystics.' The 'traditionalists' sought to dismiss such attempts in the hope of preserving the status of their despots. The so-called 'mystics' similarly sought to prevent such attempt—citing the virtues of hiding faults and having a good opinion. Nevertheless, the voices of the oppressed and the woes of those who are slaves to truth cannot go unheard for such flimsy reasons!

Some of those lovers of truth and justice have vehemently exposed and dispraised one of these aforementioned culprits. It is unfortunate that such voices have been drowned out by the ardent cries of "sectarian division" by the Generality! The purpose of this piece is to justify such dispraising as religiously lawful with the hopes of quelling the flames of ignorance that have consumed the Muslims. Once the Generality is familiar with what is narrated about this personality, such feeble attempts to defend him will dissipate. Furthermore, the Muslims will be able to come to the table of unity and sincerely discuss their differences based on thorough research and not emotional blind-adherence.

We will now introduce this individual who is no stranger to controversy. He is held as an exemplar ruler by those politically-minded activists seeking to justify the Machiavellian expansion of Arab polity. He is demoted and cursed by those who favour principle over politics. He is **Mu'awiya bin Abu Sufyan bin Harb bin Umayya bin 'Abdu Shams bin 'Abdu Manaf**.

[Who was Mu'awiya]

Mu'awiya was born in Mecca 20 years before the Hijra. He was among the offspring of the enemy of Islam, Abu Sufyan and Hind, the woman who bit into the liver of Hamza bin Abdul-Muttalib. He apparently entered Islam in the year 9 AH after the Opening of Mecca. The records of history do not record any incredible feats from him during the time of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. It was not until the rule of the 2nd caliph, 'Umar, that Mu'awiya became a political leader of Syria. He maintained this post during the caliphate of his cousin, 'Uthman bin 'Affan. He stubbornly held this office with defiance during the caliphate of Imam 'Ali bin Abi Talib—may Allah ennoble his face—until the son of Abu Sufyan ushered in the Umayyad Dynasty. He was declared the "first king in Islam" by the likes of Ibn Kathir.

[The Virtues of Mu'awiya]

One would think that such person would have accumulated virtues that justified his rule of the Muslims. However, as classical jurist and traditionalist Ish'aq bin Rahawayh said, "There is nothing authentic narrated regarding Mu'awiya's virtues."¹ Imam ash-Shawkani stated in his *Fawa'id al-Majmu'a*: "Ibn Hibban [a hadith scholar and compiler of a *Sahih*] said that all hadiths that mention the virtues of Mu'awiya are fabricated."

In a commentary of *Sahih al-Bukhari* known as *'Umdat al-Qari*, Allama Badrudin al-'Aini said:

If you said that there are many *hadiths* narrated about his virtues, I will say "yes". However, none of them have sound chains of narrators. This is explicitly stated by Ish'aq bin Rahawayh, an-Nisai and others. That is why he [i.e. al-Bukhari] named the chapter "What's Mentioned Regarding Mu'awiya" and not "The Virtues of Mu'awiya" or his praises.

Ibn Taymiyya said in his *Minhaj as-Sunnah*:

There was a party who fabricated virtues for Mu'awiya and narrated hadith from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, concerning that. All of them are lies.

¹ Narrated by Imam adh-Dhahabi in *Siyar 'Alman-Nubal*.

As we can see, the scholars specialising in the sciences of hadith dismiss those narrations in which Mu'awiya is praised. Some scholars even suffered because of their refusal to accept such reports. In the *Bidayatun-Nihaya* of Ibn Kathir, he narrated the following account:

Abdur-Rahman as-Salimi said: "I visited al-Hakim [eminent traditionalist who compiled the *Mustadrak*] while he was in hiding from the Karimiya. He could not escape from them. I said to him: 'If you narrate hadith about the virtues of Mu'awiya, you can leave.' He replied: 'I will not do it! I will not do it!'"

Replies to Objections

Even though the statements of the traditionalists are clear regarding the lack of virtues on the part of Mu'awiya, there have been attempts to raise his station amongst the Muslims. One of these attempts is the most persistent, as it is mentioned the most. His supporters list him as one of the scribes of the Qur'an. Placing such responsibility, they say, upon him proves that he had virtue.

The basis of their statement can be found in the books of hadith. One of these narrations appear in the *Dal'il an-Nubuwwa* of Imam al-Bayhaqi, in which he reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas:

I used to play with the children and Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, happened to pass by. I hid myself behind the door. He came and he patted upon my shoulders and said: ((Go and call Mu'awiya for me)). **He** [i.e. Mu'awiya] **used to write the Revelation**. I went to go get him and it was said: "He is eating." I returned to Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, and informed him. Then he said: ((Go and call Mu'awiya for me)). I went to go get him and it was said: "He is eating." I returned to Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, and informed him. He said on the third time: ((May Allah not satiate his belly!)) His belly was never filled.

Another example can be found in *Sahih Muslim* on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas:

The Muslims neither looked to Abu Sufyan nor did they sit with him. He said to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny: "O Prophet of Allah, give me three things." He replied: ((Okay)). He said: "I have with me the most beautiful and the best of the Arabs, Umm Habiba bint Abu Sufyan. Marry her." He said: ((Okay)). And he said: "Make Mu'awiya your scribe. He said: ((Okay)). He said: "Make me a commander so that I should fight against the unbelievers as I fought against the Muslims." He said: ((Okay)).

Regarding the report from *Dal'il an-Nubuwwa*, it cannot be relied because the detail of Mu'awiya writing the Revelation is missing from other narrations of the same incident. For example, the report in *Sahih Muslim*—which we will dwell upon later, *insha-Allah*—does not mention that Mu'awiya was a scribe of Revelation.

Furthermore, Mu'awiya's promoters should not promulgate the idea that he was the Prophet's scribe of Revelation because the above narration presents him as refusing to go to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, when summoned. If Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, had called Mu'awiya to dictate the Holy Qur'an and the latter refused, this would be an explicit demotion of Mu'awiya's character. Such a tell-tale sign demonstrates that his concern was more for his belly than the Word of Allah! Therefore, the Prophet's imprecation ((May Allah not satiate his belly!)) was more than appropriate.

As for the narration in *Sahih Muslim*, we say that the report is rejected due to its chain of narrators and its text. Some scholars of hadith criticism state that one of the narrators, **'Ikrima bin 'Ammar**, is weak—even though Imam Muslim considered him reliable. Ibn al-Jawzi said in his *Kashf al-Mishkal*:

Yahya bin Sa'd weakened his ['Ikrima's] hadiths and said: "They are not authentic." Similarly, Ahmed bin Hanbal said: "His hadiths are all weak." That is the reason why al-Bukhari didn't relate reports from him. Muslim is the only one that related reports from him.

Ibn al-Qayyim said in *Zad al-Ma'ad*: "This hadith is defective and there's no hiding it." Ibn Hazm said: "This is fabricated without a doubt. 'Ikrima bin 'Ammar lied."

Regarding the text of the report, Ibn Taymiyya said in his *Majmu' al-Fatwa*:

Muslim narrated had this knowing that they were defective. For example, he narrated that when Abu Sufyan became Muslim, he said: "I want you to marry Umm Habiba." There's no disagreement among the people that he [i.e. the Prophet] married her before Abu Sufyan entered Islam."

As Ibn Taymiyya rightly stated, it is well-known that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, married Umm Habiba before Abu Sufyan entered Islam. The anachronistic error in this report similarly negates the other aspects of the narration. Therefore, this report from Imam Muslim is not accepted due to weakness in its chain as well as its text.

Even if the report was sound, it would not imply that Mu'awiya was made a scribe of Revelation because the narration says only 'scribe' and not 'scribe of Revelation.' It is conceivable that Mu'awiya was made a scribe of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, in that he wrote letters of correspondence between the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, and others. Imam adh-Dhahabi narrated in his *Tarikh al-Islam*:

Al-Mufaddal al-Ghaffari mentioned: "Zayd bin Thabit used to write the Revelation of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. Mu'awiya used to write for the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, correspondences between him and the Arabs."

Similar is narrated by Ibn Hajar on the authority of traditionalist, al-Madani.

[What the Prophet Said about Mu'awiya]

When we consult the books of hadith and history concerning Mu'awiya, we see statements against him. For example, there is a narration reported by Imam Muslim in his *Sahih*, where he reported the following on the authority of Ibn Abbas:

I used to play with the children, and Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, happened to pass by. I hid myself behind the door. He came and he patted upon my shoulders and said: ((Go and call Mu'awiya for me)). I returned and said: "He is eating." Then he said: ((Go and call Mu'awiya for me)). I returned and said: "He is eating." He said: ((May Allah not satiate his belly!))

Similarly, in *Tarikh al-Fadl*, it is narrated:

Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, sought out Mu'awiya to write something but he [i.e. Mu'awiya] delayed and used the excuse that he was eating. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, then said: ((May Allah not satiate his belly!)) He remained not being able to be satiated. He [i.e. Mu'awiya] used to say: "I swear by Allah, I do not avoid food out of satiation, I only avoid it out of tiredness!"

Furthermore, Imam al-Bayhaqi narrated in his *Dal'il an-Nubuwwa*:

Ibn Abbas said: "I used to play with the children and Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, happened to pass by. He came and he patted upon my shoulders and sent me to Mu'awiya to fulfill a need. I came to him while he was eating. I said: 'I came to him while he was eating.' Then, he said: ((May Allah not satiate his belly!))"

This invocation of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, came to fruition because Mu'awiya was not able to eat his fill thereafter. Ibn Kathir recorded in his *Al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah*:

When he became the ruler of Syria, he used to eat seven times a day. A bowl was brought to him with lots of meat and onions and he would eat from it. He would eat seven helpings of meat a day. He would also eat lots of sweets and fruits. He used to say: "By Allah, I am not satiated, I'm only tired! This is a numbered blessing sought by every king!"

Indeed, the signs of this gluttony could readily be seen on him. Ibn Kathir also recorded in his *Al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah*:

Mughira said on the authority of Shu'bi: "The first to deliver the sermon sitting was Mu'awiya. This was when he was fat and his stomach was huge."

Replies to Objections

Despite the explicitness of this Prophetic statement, there have been attempts by Mu'awiya's supporters to obfuscate its import. These attempts take two forms: concealment and interpretation. We will address each one of these feeble efforts.

Regarding concealment, some narrators have sought to hide the identity of the one who Allah's Messenger imprecated. Abu Shaykh al-Isfahani narrated in his *abaqat al-Muhaddithin*:

On the authority of Ibn 'Abbas who said: "The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, sent for so-n-so (*fulan*). They said: 'He is eating.' Then, he [i.e. the Prophet] said: ((May Allah not satiate his belly!))

In this particular report, the details are abbreviated and Mu'awiya's name is curiously missing. This weak attempt to hide the identity of the perpetrator is countered by the many reports in which his name is mentioned.

Regarding interpretation, some of Mu'awiya's proponents sought to deflect the apparent blow of the Prophet's malediction and miraculously transform it to praise! One notable example is a report narrated in the *Musnad* of at-Tayalisi. He reported the same incident but added the statement of one of the sub-narrators:

On the authority of Ibn 'Abbas who said: "Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, sent for Mu'awiya to write something for him. It was said that he was eating. Then he sent for him again. It was said that he was eating. Then Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said ((May Allah not satiate his belly!))."

'Abdullah bin Ja'far bin Faris, the narrator, said on the authority of Yunus bin Habab: "The meaning—and Allah knows best—is 'May Allah not satiate his belly in this world so that it is not hungry on the Day of Judgment!' This is because of the report on the authority of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny: ((The one who prolongs satiation in this world will prolong their hunger on the Day of Judgment))."

Such misinterpretation allows for the spin-doctors to paint the Prophet's imprecation in a positive light. The Prophet's obvious denigration becomes a blessing by juxtaposing it to another hadith. This gross misreading has also been employed by the medieval and modern defenders of the son of Abu Sufyan. We can respond to such false assertion in various ways.

First, the context of the hadith does not allow it to be other than a curse because Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, uttered it after unsuccessfully summoning Mu'awiya. It is not sensible that one who orders someone to do something, utter a praise for the one who has disobeyed the order. Allah orders the believers: **{O ye who believe, answer the call of Allah and the Messenger when He calls thee to that which gives thee life...} (Q. 8:24)** and **{O ye who believe! Obey Allah and His Messenger, and turn not away from him when thou hear} (Q. 8:20)** and **{The Prophet has more right on the believers than they have over themselves...} (Q. 33:6)**. Therefore, such defiance does not warrant praise or benediction.

Second, the lasting consequence of the imprecation was that Mu'awiya could never eat his fill. This, in turn, caused him to grow large and never be satiated. Mu'awiya saw the effects of this condemnation with him not being able to fill his gut. His increased girth became such a burden that he had to sit during the Friday sermon where it is *Sunnah* to stand. We couple this fact with the well-known statement of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny: ((The believer eats in one stomach but the disbeliever [in some narrations: "the hypocrite"] eats in seven stomachs))².

² Related in *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*.

Third, Mu'awiya did not use the Prophet's statement as an evidence of his own virtue. Surely, if he understood the hadith to indicate a blessing and not a curse, he would have numbered it as a virtue when attempting to prove his worth. The books of Islamic history record the letters and statements of Mu'awiya, but none of them record that he cited this hadith as an advantage or virtue. He could have mentioned it to bolster his claim for the Caliphate, but he didn't.

Fourth, if this was such a virtue and praise for Mu'awiya, we ask: "Why did his supporters make such an effort to conceal his identity?" The reader can refer to the narration in the *abaqat al-Muhaddithin* above where he is conveniently known as 'so-n-so.' If the hadith was meant to be an appraisal, his supporters would joyfully leap at the opportunity to make his identity known.

Fifth, if we accept this hadith as a praise and virtue of Mu'awiya, we should dismiss it altogether. This is because—as we demonstrated above—the scholars of hadith say that any report in praise of Mu'awiya is a fabrication. Therefore, it could not be used as a basis.

Sixth, the supporters of Mu'awiya did not consider the hadith as a virtue in the case of traditionalist Imam an-Nis'i. Imam adh-Dhahabi narrated in his *Tadhkirat al-Huffaz* that Imam an-Nis'i went from Egypt to Damascus and was greeted by a mob. He was asked about the virtues of Mu'awiya and replied:

What can I narrate?! I don't know of any virtue narrated about Mu'awiya except the hadith: ((O Allah, do not satiate his belly!))

Afterwards, the people began beating him until he left the mosque. He was carried on his riding beast until he died. In this case, Mu'awiya's proponents punished Imam an-Nis'i for him relating this hadith. If it was a virtue, they wouldn't have beaten him to death.

[Proofs for Mu'awiya's Condemnation]

Given all of the above, we can fairly conclude that Mu'awiya has no unique virtues afforded to him nor has he been praised by Allah or His Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. Furthermore, we can also say that any report that one can find in praise of Mu'awiya, is immediately dismissed as spurious.

Now that we have established this, we will now attempt to prove that it is permissible to dispraise Mu'awiya. If one were to rely upon just one of these reasons, it would be sufficient.

I. He killed 'Amm r bin Y sir

As is well-known to those familiar with hadith and history, the Prophet's Companion—'Amm r bin Y sir—was killed by the forces of Mu'awiya during the Battle of Siffin in 36 AH. It was prophesied by Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, that 'Amm r would be killed by a rebellious group. He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said in a well-known hadith: ((Alas to 'Amm r! He will be killed by a rebellious group (*fi`at al-baghiya*)! He will call them to Paradise and they will call him to the Fire!))³

The Prophet's statement that Mu'awiya's forces were "a rebellious group" should be sufficient enough to prove that the son of Abu Sufy n should be condemned. Linguistically, the term *baghi* implies a type of transgression by which one is dispraised. Edward Lane in his *Lane's Lexicon* notes the following about the word *baghi*:

Hence, *baghi* signifies the act of acting wrongfully, injuriously, or tyrannically; because the envier acts towards the envied; his endeavour being to cause, by guile, the blessing of God upon him to depart from him.

He also narrated the meaning of *fi`at al-baghiya* as "A company of men revolting from the just Imam."

So, even from a linguistic perspective, the envious Mu'awiya and his party were amongst those from whom the blessing and mercy of Allah departs. His flagrant killing of 'Amm r bin Y sir designated him as a *baghi* and therefore, not deserving of Allah's blessings.

³ Narrated by al-Bukhari in his *Sahih*, Ahmed in his *Musnad*, Ibn Hibban in his *Sahih*, an-Nis'i, al-Bayhaqi, al-Hakim, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, at-Tabarani and others.

Recognising the import of this hadith, there was an attempt by the crafty Mu'awiya to redirect it towards Imam 'Ali and his forces! In the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal, we read:

When 'Ammar bin Yasir was killed, 'Amr bin Hazm entered upon 'Amr bin al-A'as and said: "Ammar was killed and the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said that 'Ammar would be killed by the rebellious group." 'Amr bin al-A'as stood fearing and vomiting until he entered upon Mu'awiya. Mu'awiya asked: "What is the matter?" 'Amr replied: "Ammar was killed." Mu'awiya replied: "So what if 'Ammar was killed?" 'Amr answered: "I heard Allah's Messenger say that 'Ammar would be killed by the rebellious group." Mu'awiya told him: "... Were we the ones who killed him? 'Ali and his group killed him! They brought him here and threw him into our lances!"

Such devious misrepresentation of the Prophet's words only serves to demonstrate the slimy depths that Mu'awiya would go to justify his aggression! Although he and his forces were content with their misinterpretation, it is clear to one with eyes and a heart of truth who the "rebellious party" was. According to the Companion, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, Mu'awiya and his team were the rebellious party. It is narrated in the *I'tisab* of Sunni historian and jurist, Yusuf bin 'Abdul-Barr:

On the authority of Habib bin Abi Thabit from his father, that he was present at the time of death of 'Abdullah bin 'Umar. And he [i.e. Ibn 'Umar] said: "I don't regret anything from my soul in this world except that I did not fight against the rebellious group with 'Ali bin Abi Talib!"

It is clear from Ibn Umar's words that Mu'awiya was the rebellious group. He did not understand from the hadith that 'Ali and his party were guilty, otherwise he wouldn't have sought to fight alongside Imam 'Ali, upon him be peace.

Also, the bulk of Companions who fought on the side of Imam 'Ali, upon him be peace, didn't have the warped understanding that Mu'awiya and his group promoted. According to the same text by Ibn 'Abdul-Barr, 'Abdur-Rahman bin Ubayd said:

We witnessed in Siffin that with 'Ali—may Allah be pleased with him—were the 800 who took the oath of allegiance at Rifwan. Sixty-three of them were killed, including 'Ammar bin Yasir.

In other words, 800 Companions who accompanied the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, during the Battle of Rifwan fought on the side of 'Ali, upon him be peace.

One must not mince the words of Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, regarding the fate of Mu'awiya for killing 'Ammar. One may argue that the hadith does not condemn his killers to Hell. What is even more explicit is the hadith of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, in which he said: ((O Allah, I have attached the Quraysh to 'Ammar. Whoever kills 'Ammar and causes him to be bereaved will be in the Hellfire!)).⁴

II. He innovated in Islamic Law.

The consensus of the Muslims agrees that anyone who innovates in Islamic Law should be condemned. This is based upon authentic hadiths from the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. We shall narrate just a few. Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, is recorded to have said the following: ((Every innovation is deviance. Every deviance is in the Fire)); ((Whoever innovates in this matter of ours shall have it rejected)); ((Whoever innovated in the religion will be responsible for it. Whoever innovates in the religion or gives shelter to someone who innovates, such one will be cursed by Allah, the angels and all people)). These should be sufficient evidence that the innovator in the religion is condemned and cursed.

Furthermore, Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, specified how to identify one of these innovators. He is reported to have said: ((The first to change my Sunnah will be a man

⁴Narrated and authenticated by al-Hakim in his *Al-Mustadrak* and at-Tabarani in his *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*. Shaykh Nasruddin al-Albani authenticated it in *Sahih al-Jami' as-Saghir*.

from the Bani Umayya)).⁵ The context of the hadith is even more instructive. Yazid bin Abi Sufyan was the commander of the armies Syria during the time of Abu Bakr and Umar. During one of the raids, he took a slave-girl for himself from one of the soldiers. Abu Dharr told him three times to return her to the soldier. Abu Dharr then quoted the aforementioned hadith. After hearing it, Yazid asked “Am I the one?” Abu Dharr said ‘O Allah, no.’ Yazid then returned her to the soldier. Although Yazid innovated in the religion, Abu Dharr made it clear to him that the Umayyad commander was not the one referred to in the Prophetic utterance. This dishonour will be given to another Umayyad who would manifest many more innovations in Islam. Although this particular report does not mention Mu’awiya’s name, the following evidences will clearly show that he is the one referred to.

A. Attributing Ziyad to Abu Sufyan

As is well known in the annals of history, Mu’awiya falsely attributed Ziyad bin Abih to his own father, Abu Sufyan. As it was well known that Ziyad was birthed due to unsavoury circumstances, the son of Abu Sufyan sought to relieve Ziyad of the obvious stigma attached to him. His attributed name ‘Abih’ translates into ‘his father.’ This means that Ziyad was unaware of his father’s identity, which gives a lucid hint of his mother’s profession. Imam Jaluddun as-Suyuti narrated in his *Dirasatun ‘ala Muslimin*:

Ziyad was attributed by Mu’awiya to his father, Abu Sufyan. All of this occurred after he was well-known by the name Ziyad bin Abih. This is because his mother gave birth to him on the bed of ‘Ubayd. This was the first principle in Islamic Law that was altered.

Such move violated the terms of Islamic Law because it contradicted the very command of Allah and that of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. Regarding the violation of Qur’anic injunction, Allah says: **{Attribute to them the names of their fathers. This is most just according to Allah} (Q. 33:5)**. The Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, also said: ((The one born belongs to the bed and to the adulterer, the room)). Such was an open and blatant contradiction of Islamic Law.

He was even condemned for that by the Prophet’s Companions and others. Ibn Hajar narrated in his *Fath al-Bari*:

Many Companions and Followers objected to Mu’awiya for that and used as a proof the hadith: ((The one born belongs to the bed and to the adulterer, the room)).

Ibn Kathir related in his *Al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah* regarding what took place in the year 44 AH:

In this year, Mu’awiya bestowed upon Ziyad bin Abih the attribute of Abu Sufyan. This is because a man witnessed that it was Abu Sufyan who committed adultery with Sumayya, the mother of Ziyad, during Pre-Islamic Ignorance. She got pregnant from that.

When Mu’awiya gave him this name, he was called Ziyad bin Abi Sufyan. Hasan al-Basri objected to this attribution and said that Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((The one born belongs to the bed and to the adulterer, the room)).

Ahmed said: “Huthaym related to us on the authority of Khalid—Abu ‘Uthman who said, ‘When Ziyad was called this, I met Abu Bakra and he said, “What are you doing? I heard Sa’d bin Abi Waqqas say: ‘I heard with my own ears that Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((In Islam, whoever attributes a father to one who is not his father, while knowing that it is not his father—Paradise would be prohibited for him)).’” Abu Bakra said, “I also heard this from Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny.”

B. Innovating in the prayer

One of the most salient features known in Islam is the ritual prayer. Despite the fact that no other act of worship had been performed in front of the Companions as many times as the prayer, there is no other act of worship in which there is more disagreements than the prayer. Many of these disagreements can be seen

⁵Narrated by Ibn Asqalanini in his *Tarikh Dimashq*, Ibn Abi Shayba in his *Musannaf*, al-Bayhaqi in his *Ad-Dalailan-Nubuwwa* and Ibn Hajar al-Asqalanini in his *Al-Muhib al-Aliya*. Ibn Hajar declared his chain of narrators as ‘good’ (*hasan*). Shaykh Nasruddin al-Albani also declared the chain ‘good’ in *Sahih al-Jami’ as-Saghir*.

to be a result of politics. The son of Abu Sufy n was not devoid of infiltrating this act of worship with innovations.

His innovations were even evident in the pre-prayer call (*al-iq ma*) and the call to prayer (*al-adh n*). He reduced the wording of the pre-prayer call. Allama as-Sarkhasi related in his *Al-Mabs* :

Ibr h m an-Nakha'i said: "The first to reduce the wording of the pre-prayer call to singular was Mu'awiya." Muj hid said: "The pre-prayer call used to be doubled just like the call to prayer up until the terror of some oppressive governors. They made it singular. The proof is against them."

Imam al-H fiz Muhammad bin Hasan ash-Shayb ni, companion of Abu Han fa and one of the founders of his *madhhab*, said in his *Al-Hujjat 'ala Ahl al-Mad na*:

The first one to make the wording of the pre-prayer call single was Mu'awiya, as has been related to us. Muhammad bin Abb n bin S lih narrated to us on the authority of Ham d that Ibr h m an-Nakha'i said: "The first one to reduce the *takb r* in the prayer, to initiate the prayer before the sermon on the two Eids, to deliver the sermon while sitting, as well as to reduce the pre-prayer call and the final salutations was Mu'awiya bin Abi Sufy n.

It is a universal principle accepted by all Muslims that there is no call to prayer or pre-prayer call for the Eid prayers. Neither the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, nor the Caliphs advocated for a call to prayer for the two Eid prayers. Imam Muslim records in his *Sah h* that J bir bin 'Abdullah said regarding the two Eid days: "He (i.e. the Prophet) performed the prayer before the sermon, without the call to prayer or pre-prayer call." However, Mu'awiya decided that both should be called on the Eid days.⁶ Ibn Kath r related in his *Al-Bid ya wa an-Nih ya*:

Qat da related that Sa' d bin al-Musayyab said: "The first to give the call to prayer and pre-prayer call on the Day of Breaking the Fast (*yawm al-Fi r*) and the Day of Sacrifice (*yawm an-Nahr*) was Mu'awiya."

The son of Abu Sufy n also innovated in the prayer itself by reducing the *F tiha*. As is well known, the recitation of the *F tiha* is an essential part of the prayer. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((There is no prayer without the *F tiha*)) and ((When you stand for the prayer, declare *Allahu Akbar* and recite the Mother of the Qur' n...)). Despite the Prophetic command, the 'first king in Islam' saw fit to exclude one of its verses. Imam Fakhrudd n ar-R zi narrated in his Qur' nic exegesis, *At-Tafs r al-Kab r*:

Imam ash-Sh fi' narrated from his chain of narrators that Mu'awiya came to Medina and led the prayers. He didn't recite *Bismillah ar-Rahm n ar-Rah m* nor did he recite *Allahu Akbar* during bowing and prostration. After he recited the final salutations, the Muh jir n and Ans r called out: 'O Mu'awiya! You have stolen from the prayers. Where were *Bismillah ar-Rahm n ar-Rah m* and the recitation of *Allahu Akbar* during bowing and prostration?" He then repeated the prayer with *Bismillah ar-Rahm n ar-Rah m* and the recitation of *Allahu Akbar* during bowing and prostration.

Some may point out that Mu'awiya's neglecting of the *Basmala* was due to a lapse in judgment or memory. The report—they say—indicates that he later recited the first verse of *F tiha* after being corrected by the Companions. However, this disavowal of the first holy verse of *F tiha* had long-reaching repercussions, and we are sure that Mu'awiya made it public policy to neglect its recitation. Our proof is in the very same book where Imam Fakhrudd n ar-Razi went on to relate:

'Ali bin Abi lib, may Allah be pleased with him, used to recite *Bismillah ar-Rahm n ar-Rah m* aloud in the prayers. It is established by mass-transmitted reports. Whoever followed 'Ali bin Abi lib in religion, has been guided aright. Its proof is his statement, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny: ((O Allah, turn the truth in the direction where 'Ali turns)).

... 'Ali, upon him be peace, was careful in reciting *Bismillah ar-Rahm n ar-Rah m* aloud. However, when the state was governed by Bani Umayya, they were keen in abandoning the

⁶Ibn Hajar related in his *Fath-al-B ri* that there is disagreement regarding which Umayyad introduced the call to prayer and pre-prayer call to the Eid prayers. However, he said that the chains of narrators attributing this act to Mu'awiya are more authentic.

recitation of *Bismillah ar-Rahm n ar-Rah m* aloud for the purpose of invalidating the tradition of ‘Ali.”

Evidently, the Umayyad State carried out the abandonment of the *Basmala*—not on the basis of independent scholarly judgment, not due to the import of a Qur’ nic verse or Prophetic hadith—but simply because it was at variance with the practice of ‘Ali bin Abi lib!

C. Allowing the Muslim to inherit from the disbeliever

Mu’awiya also innovated in the matter of inheritance. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said ((The Muslim does not inherit from the disbeliever nor does the disbeliever inherit from the Muslim)). However, the son of Abu Sufy n decided that the Muslims could inherit from the disbeliever. Ibn Kath r reported in his *Al-Bid ya wa an-Nih ya*:

Az-Zuhri said: “The *Sunnah* was that the disbeliever does not inherit from the Muslim, and the Muslim does not inherit from the disbeliever. The first to allow the Muslim to inherit from the disbeliever was Mu’awiya. The Bani Umayya decreed that after him until the time of ‘Umar bin ‘Abdul-Az z. He returned to the *Sunnah*; however, Hisham came after him and did the same thing that Mu’awiya and the Bani Umayya did before.”

D. Altering the amount of indemnity (*ad-diya*) to be taken

The amount of indemnity that is to be collected for a Muslim and non-Muslim is the same. Allah makes no differentiation in the Qur’ n. He—Exalted be He—says: **{Whosoever slays a believer in error, upon him is the freeing of a believing slave and the paying of indemnity to his [i.e. the slain’s] family unless they forgo it as charity...But, if he was from amongst those with whom thou have a covenant, then thou art to pay indemnity to his family and free a slave}** (Q. 4:92).

Also, when Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, sent a letter to one of his governors in Yemen, he specified that the indemnity be one hundred camels. He did not differentiate the Muslims from non-Muslims, as Yemen had a large Christian population at the time. The Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, was also recorded to have declared that the indemnity of a non-Muslim protected by covenant is 1000 dirhams—the same amount for a Muslim.

Ibn Kath r narrated in his *Al-Bid ya wa an-Nih ya* that az-Zuhri said:

The *Sunnah* was that the indemnity of the non-Muslim protected by contract (*al-mu’ hid*) was the same as the indemnity of the Muslim. Mu’awiya was the first to reduce it to half and take the other half for himself.

Ibn Rushd similarly narrated in his *Bid ya al-Mujtahid* that az-Zuhri said that the indemnity was the same for Muslims and non-Muslims during the time of Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, as well as that of Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthm n and ‘Ali, may Allah ennoble his face. However, it was Mu’awiya who changed it.

Islamic jurists such as Imams Malik bin Anas and Muhammad bin Idr s ash-Sh fi’ have adopted the ruling of half or one-third of the indemnity for non-Muslims. They cited had ths of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, and the actions of ‘Umar and ‘Uthm n to justify their position. However, according to the testimony of az-Zuhri, the practice of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, and the two caliphs was that the indemnity was the same.

III. He instituted the abuse of ‘Ali bin Abi lib.

As we mentioned above, the jurists have consensual agreement that the open reviling and cursing of Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, amounts to disbelief. No one who does so could be called a believer or labelled a Muslim. This is because the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, represents the Divine Favour of Revelation sent to humankind. Such a disavowal of this Divine Favour—whether this comes in the form of rejection, insulting or cursing—results in an unambiguous denial of Divine Revelation. Allah says: **{The Prophet has more authority over the believers than they have over themselves...}** (Q. 33:6). Similarly, the Glorified and Exalted says:

{Verily, those who abuse Allah and His Messenger—Allah has cursed them in this life and the Hereafter. And He has prepared for them a humiliating punishment} (Q. 33:57).

This same curse and malediction would apply to someone who cursed the ‘self’ of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. This ‘self’ of the Prophet was none other but ‘Ali, upon him be peace. Allah revealed the following verse concerning a mutual cursing that was to take place between the Christians of Najr n and the Prophet with his family: **{And if anyone should argue with thee about this [truth] after all the knowledge that has come to thee, say: “Come! Let us call our sons and thy sons, and our women and thy women, and ourselves and thyself; and then let us pray [together] humbly and ardently, and let us invoke Allah’s curse upon the liars.”} (Q. 3:61).** The Qur’ nic exegetes are unanimous in applying this verse to the People of the Prophet’s Household: Ali, F tima, al-Hasan and al-Hussein, upon them be peace. Ibn Kath r related in his exegesis of this verse:

J bir said: **“{ourselves and thyself}** means the Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, and ‘Ali bin Abi lib. **{...our sons}** means al-Hasan and al-Hussein and **{...our women}** refers to F tima.”

Thus, ‘Ali is called the Prophet’s Self as per Divine Revelation. Anything that applies to Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, similarly applies to ‘Ali, upon him be peace. If someone obeys Ali it is as if they have obeyed the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. If someone disobeys Ali, it is as if they disobeyed the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. If someone praises Ali, it is as if they praised the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. If someone curses Ali, it is as if they cursed the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny.

It is well-known in the annals of history that Mu’awiya bin Abi Sufy n cursed and instituted the cursing of Imam ‘Ali, upon him be peace. This is something that even his admirers are forced to acknowledge and admit. It is an aspect of the son of Hind that can’t be denied.

Regarding the practice of Mu’awiya, Ibn al-Ath r narrated in his *Al-K mil at-T r kh*:

In his supplication (*qun t*), he used to abuse (*sabba*) ‘Ali, Ibn Abb s, al-Hasan, al-Hussein and [M lik] al-Ashtar.

Ibn Kath r narrated in his *Al-Bid ya wa an-Nih ya*:

Then he [Sa’d bin Abi Waqq s] sat with him [Mu’awiya] on his cushion. He mentioned ‘Ali bin Abi lib and started to insult him. Then he [i.e. Sa’d] said: “You invite me to your house, have me sit on your cushion and then begin to insult Ali with curses?!”

He didn’t limit his vindictive cursing to just his own personal dwellings and city. He even verbally insulted and abused ‘Ali from the pulpit of the very man who said: ((‘Ali is with the truth and the truth is with ‘Ali))! Ibn Abdur-Rabbih narrated in his *Al-‘Iqdu al-Far d*:

When al-Hasan bin ‘Ali died, Mu’awiya made Hajj. He entered Medina and intended to curse ‘Ali on the pulpit of Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. It was said to him, “Sa’d bin Abi Waqq s is here, and we see that he is not pleased with you doing that.” So he [i.e. Mu’awiya] sent for him to seek his opinion. He came and mentioned it to him.

He [i.e. Sa’d] said: “If you do that, we will leave the mosque and not return!” Mu’awiya refrained from cursing him until Sa’d died. When he did die, he [Mu’awiya] cursed him [i.e. ‘Ali] from the pulpit and wrote to his governors that he is to be cursed on the pulpits. They did so.

Umm Salama, a wife of the Prophet, wrote to Mu’awiya and said: “Verily, you are cursing Allah and His Messenger on your pulpits! This is because you are cursing ‘Ali and whoever loves him! I bear witness that Allah and His Messenger loves him!” But he paid no heed to what she said.

We see that this vile personality had no hesitation to desecrate the mosque and pulpit of the Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, by cursing ‘Ali! He had no qualms in doing so, nor did he see fit to pay attention to what one of the Prophet’s widows had to say on the matter. Umm Salama, may

Allah be pleased with her, was correct in her advice to him. This is because she also narrated that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Whoever abuses ‘Ali has abused me!))⁷.

One may say that Mu’awiya could have repented from cursing Imam ‘Ali, upon him be peace. However, this is highly unlikely as the son of Abu Sufy n ordered others and wrote to his governors to carry on the cursing of the Lion of Allah indefinitely with no evident or expressed withdrawal of that order prior to his death.

It is related in *Sah h Muslim*:

Mu’awiya ordered Sa’d bin Abi Waqq s and then said: “What prevents you from cursing Abu Tur b?”

Abu Tur b was a nickname the Prophet gave ‘Ali, may Allah ennoble his face. In this report, it is clear that Mu’awiya ordered Sa’d to curse ‘Ali. One cannot argue that the wording is ambiguous because the report begins with “Mu’waiya ordered Sa’d bin Abi Waqq s” and afterwards Mu’awiya asks him “What prevents you...?” Such a statement demonstrates that Mu’awiya ordered Sa’d to curse Imam ‘Ali because Sa’d did not act on Mu’awiya’s command. This, in turn, prompted the son of Hind to inquire as to why Sa’d didn’t act upon this order.

The historian, al-Mada`ini narrated in his *Ans b al-Ashraf* that Mu’awiya wrote to Mugh ra bin Shu’ba: “Manifest insults on ‘Ali and belittle him!”

Abu Fid wrote in his *Al-Mukhtasar fi Akhb r al-Bashar*:

Mu’awiya and his governors supplicated for ‘Uthm n [bin A’ff n] in their Friday sermons, and they abused ‘Ali. They continued to do so.

Mu’awiya and the Umayyads defiled the beautiful occasion of the Friday congregational prayer services with their cursing of ‘Ali bin Abi lib, upon him be peace. Such a practice demonstrates their lack of religiosity and scruples. Their wanton display of hatred for the Guardian of the believers knew no bounds as they took advantage of the congregation of the Muslims in order to dispraise him.

This practice of Mu’awiya and his governors, as well as the subsequent ‘caliphs’ continued for almost a century until the time of the righteous Umayyad, ‘Umar bin ‘Abdul-‘Az z. Ibn al-Ath r reported in his *Al-K mil at-T r kh*:

The Banu Umayya used to abuse the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Ali bin Abi lib, upon him be peace, until the time that ‘Umar bin ‘Abdul-‘Az z became the ruler. He abandoned it and wrote to his governors to stop doing that.

It is also related that this is the reason why sermonisers recite the verse **{Verily, Allah commands justice, goodness, and giving towards kin and forbids immorality, evil, and oppression} (Q. 16:90)** in the Friday sermons. ‘Umar bin ‘Abdul-‘Az z instituted the recitation of this verse to take the place of the cursing of ‘Ali.

Mu’awiya manifested open hatred towards ‘Ali and the People of the Prophet’s Household, upon them be peace. This is evident from his institution of abuse and cursing of ‘Ali. Such action in itself disqualifies the son of Abu Sufy n as a believer. Such is proven by the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. Regarding the Book of Allah, He commands the believers to love the Family of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, with the statement: **{Say: “I ask thee for no reward but only affection toward the kin”} (Q. 42:23)**. It is clear that ‘Ali, may Allah ennoble his face, is included in this **{affection toward the kin}**. Al-Muhib at- abari narrated in *Dhakh ‘ir al-A’qba* on the authority of Ibn al-‘Abb s:

When the verse: **{Say: I ask thee for no reward but only affection toward the kin} (Q. 42:23)** was revealed, the people asked: “O Messenger of Allah, who are your ‘kin’ in

⁷ This was related by Imam Ahmed bin Hanbal in his *Musnad*, al-H kim in his *Al-Mustadrak*, at-Tabar ni in his *Al-Mu’jam* and an-Nis `i who authenticated its chain of narrators.

whom affection is obligatory for?" He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, replied: (('Ali, F tima, and their descendants)).

Ahmed related it in *Al-Man qib*. Ibn Hajar al-Haythami related it in his *Majmu az-Zaw 'id*. At-Tabar ni narrated it, and Ibn Hajar mentioned it in his *as-Saw 'iqa*. Al-H kim mentioned it on the authority of Ibn al-'Abb s. This is also on the authority of al-Baghawi in his Qur' nic exegesis.

Anyone who avoids this obligation has committed a major sin and is considered defiantly disobedient. The Exalted says concerning the defiantly disobedient: **{Is the one who believes like the one who is disobedient? They are not the same} (Q. 32:18)**. Therefore, such one should not be deemed as a believer according to the Qur' n.

Regarding the *Sunnah*, the had ths of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, condemn such a person. In a well known had th, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, prayed to Allah regarding 'Ali by saying:

((O Allah, help those that help him and oppose those that oppose him! Assist those that assist him, and abandon those that abandon him!)).

If one showed hostility towards 'Ali, may Allah ennoble his face, it is clear that they are included in the imprecation of the Prophet's supplication. Is it permissible to pray for Allah's mercy and pleasure for such an individual?!

Furthermore, Imam at-Tabar ni related on the authority of Ibn 'Umar that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said:

((Whoever dies while hating you, O 'Ali, will die as if during the days of pre-Islamic ignorance, and Allah will invalidate his actions in Islam)).

Imam Muslim related on the authority of Umm Salama, may Allah be pleased with her, that the Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((A believer will not hate 'Ali and a hypocrite will not love him)). All such proves and demonstrates that Mu'awiya cannot be considered a believer. He is a hypocrite at best. Even if we were to accept that he was the scribe of revelation, such action would be invalidated by his ardent hatred of 'Ali, as evident by the Prophetic had th.

[Conclusion]

Due to the aforementioned proofs, one should have no qualms about dispraising Mu'awiya bin Abi Sufy n. He should be condemned and not emulated as a righteous and just person. His deeds—even after his supposed conversion to Islam—should be placed against the balance of the Holy Qur' n as well as that of the Prophetic Sunnah. Despite his tenure as a governor and 'caliph,' his legacy brings forth nothing but an unapologetic violation of the true message of Islam.

Some apologists have sought to defend the son of Abu Sufy n. They claim that the text of had th and history that denigrate his character and show him to be a degenerate are concoctions engineered by the Abbasids. As we know, the Abbasids were the competing dynasty that overthrew the Umayyads. The Banu Abbaas—they say—did not hesitate to diminish the stature of their rivals and portrayed the rulers of the Banu Umayya as lawless and corrupt hedonists. Mu'awiya—they say—was an innocent victim of the anti-Umayyad propaganda.

We can respond to this in many ways. However, suffice to say that Mu'awiya's corruptions are equally reported by his defenders and pro-Umayyad apologists. Rather than deny them, they have attempted to justify them. For example, his all out war effort against the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali bin Abi lib is not denied; rather, they say that Mu'awiya 'exercised scholarly independent judgment (*ijtihad*)' in waging war against him. Their weak justifications are immaterial; however, the point is that even the lovers of Mu'awiya do not deny what he did. Therefore, the claim that he was a hapless victim of anti-Umayyad misinformation is erroneous at best.

We end our discussion on Mu'awiya by appealing to the intellect and sense of justice. Should a person of

this calibre be honoured simply because he—briefly—accompanied Allah’s Messenger? Should we refrain from mentioning his violations of Islamic Law with the lame excuse of ‘scholarly independent judgment’? Should we continue to praise and pray for a person who implemented religious innovations and odious practices? We leave that for you and your conscience to decide. However, those of us who are slaves to the Truth will continue to condemn and dispraise Mu’awiya bin Abi Sufy n and his cohorts until the Day of Judgment! This is not because of some personal grudge or emotional reason, rather it is because our love for Islam and its inherent purity.

May Allah send his choicest blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad and his Purified Progeny to the number of created things! May Allah send His damnation and punishment against their enemies to the number of created things! May Allah join our hearts to those who have submitted to the Truth for its own sake! May Allah distance our hearts from those who have turned away from the Truth for their own sake! Amen! O Allah, Amen!