

## The Image of Al-Hussein bin Ali bin Abi Talib according to Ibn Kathir in his book “Al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah”

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### Abstract

*This study entitled (The Portrayal of Hussein bin Ali bin Abi Talib according to Ibn Kathir in his book “al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah”) focuses on the depiction of Hussein bin Ali bin Abi Talib as portrayed by Ibn Kathir, and the influence of his political inclinations and sectarian biases on said portrayal. Additionally, it explores the impact of the cultural milieu of his era on the various facets of the aforementioned depiction.*

*The article provides an analysis of the prominent justifications presented in the portrayal of Hussein bin Ali in a painted image. It argues that this image symbolizes the condemnation of Hussein's revolution against Umayyad rule, extending this condemnation to all those who supported him during that time. Furthermore, the article suggests that the image, as depicted by Ibn Kathir, grants artificial legitimacy to the Umayyad rule and any subsequent ruling power that deviates from the principles upheld by Hussein bin Ali. It also highlights the perceived threat posed by the Hussein revolution and its associated slogans. The research has arrived at a significant finding, namely that Ibn Kathir's portrayal of Hussein has distorted the historical reality due to his susceptibility to political biases and sectarian inclinations. Consequently, this display of audacious hypocrisy has elevated him to a prominent position as a preacher favoured by the rulers of that era, exemplifying his exceptional skills in this regard.*

**Keywords:** Ibn Kathir, Umayyad rule.

### Introduction

Hussein bin Ali continues to be a poignant figure that instills fear in the hearts of oppressors. During his lifetime, he posed a significant concern for the Umayyad authority, particularly represented by Muawiyah. Muawiyah recognized Hussein bin Ali as the primary obstacle to his state's stability. Despite this, Muawiyah understood that securing the pledge of allegiance from Hussein's son, Yazid, during his own lifetime would not resolve the issue at hand. He was well aware that the pledge of allegiance obtained from Hussein under duress would yield undesirable consequences. Moreover, Muawiyah possessed a deep understanding that the people of Iraq would not abandon Hussein without revolting alongside him, evidence that Yazid, prior to his demise, advised against such actions saying: "I do not think the people of Iraq leaving him [meaning Hussein] until they take him out" ( ), and actually the evolution took place during the reign of Yazid, the son of Yazid.

Regardless of the nature of the interest, Ibn Kathir in talking about Hussein bin Ali in his book “al-Bidāyah wa-al-nihāyah” paid great attention to the Hussein revolution, a

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word that he did not like to use, as we will see, as he called the Hussein revolution other vocabulary such as fitna, departure from legitimacy, adventure and other words.

We decided to cover the subject through two axes: the first dealt with the image of Hussein before and after his revolution, and the second focused in detail on the portrayal that Ibn Kathir painted of his revolution, because the Hussein revolution enjoys a specificity that does not need to be evidenced by that specificity, because it is a milestone in the history of Islam and humanity together.

First, Hussein's life before the revolution and after the revolution.

In his drawing of the life of Hussein before his revolution, a label that is completely rejected by Ibn Kathir talked about his name, and stated that his title "tribe martyr Karbala" a label did not launch only once and in this place that we will document shortly, and said that his mother Fatima daughter of the Messenger of God, and also talked about his birth, and his name from the Prophet and his previous name from his father, and descriptions, and signs of similarity between him and the Messenger of God, and pointed out that he was dyed with the medal . But he did not talk about his life in the days of the Prophet Muhammad, and how the relationship of the Prophet with him, but it came to him to weaken what came from the sayings of the Prophet about him, for example: When Fatima asked the Prophet to dissolve and have something, and he answered her at the time with, "As for Hassan, he has my prestige and my sovereignty, and Hussein has my audacity and my existence," Ibn Kathir said about this hadith that it is weak and not true, and no one of the owners of the considered books , and this was his deed in dealing with the hadiths of the Prophet Regarding Al-Hasan and Al-Hussein, especially those that did not agree with his vision, it is about the hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas from the Prophet, in which it says: God Almighty revealed to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): "I killed Yahya bin Zakariya seventy thousand, and I fought with your daughter's son seventy thousand and seventy thousand" He said about him: It is very strange ( ), and the hadith of the Messenger of Allah in which it says: "I am war for those who fought you, peace be upon those who gave you peace ." He said about him: it is a hadith not mentioned only by Ahmed bin Hanbal , and narrated other hadiths on Hassan and Hussein said that it was limited to the narration of Ahmed bin Hanbal without the owners of the other hadith also , in an indication of weakening, and the hadith of the Messenger of Allah about Hassan and Hussein, which said: "Whoever loved them has loved me, and whoever hates them has hated me" Ibn Kathir said about him: Hasan Gharib we know only from the hadith of Anas , and the hadith in which he says: "Prayer, O Ahl al-Bayt, {but Allah wants to remove from you the abomination of the Ahl al-Bayt and purify you cleanly} [Al-Ahzab: 33]" He said about him: A stranger we know only from the hadith of Hammad bin Salamah ( ) And the hadith that the Prophet said when he was preaching, and Hassan and Hussein came to him with red shirts, walking and stumbling, and as a result the Prophet came down from the pulpit and carried them, and put them in his hands and then said: "Allah believed: "{But your money and your children are fitna} [Al-Taghabun: 15] "So I looked at these two boys walking and stumbling, but I did not have patience until I cut off my speech and raised them" He said about him: He is a stranger that we do not know except from the hadith of Al-Husayn bin Waqid ( ), and the hadith in which it says: "Fatima is the lady of the women of the people of Paradise, and that Hassan and Hussein are the masters of the youth of the people of Paradise" He said about him: It is a strange hadith, and it is known only from the hadith of Israel, and he also mentioned that the hadith itself has been narrated in several ways: from Ali bin Abi Talib, and from Hussein himself, and from Omar bin Al-Khattab, and from his son Abdullah, and from Abdullah bin Abbas, and from Ibn Masoud and from Anas and others, but he said: The chains of transmission of the hadith are all weak ( ),

In order to draw this unreal portrayal, he used several methods by which he deluded public and private opinion in order to reach his goal, including:

1- Using vocabulary far from the reality of the Hussein revolution:

It is noticeable that all the vocabulary used by Ibn Kathir in his coverage of the Hussein revolution extracts its revolutionary character, as it withholds its legitimacy, for example: the launch of the adjective (sedition) on it, in talking about the rule of Yazid bin Muawiyah titled one of the chapters " the Emirate of Yazid bin Muawiyah and what happened in his days of accidents and sedition" ( ), here he described the revolution of Hussein as (fitna), and in another chapter entitled: B " the description of the director of Hussein and what happened to him "(), described Hussein bin Ali outside the legitimacy and obedience of Muslims, and in another chapter spoke about the issue of Hussein bin Ali entitled:

2 Al-Husayn ibn Ali showed in his departure from the Umayyad rule that he was not satisfied with him from the family, relatives, companions and followers:

One of the other means used by Ibn Kathir in emptying the Hussein revolution of its revolutionary content, is to show Hussein bin Ali appearance unsatisfactory him, and dissatisfaction justified by parties have weight in the Islamic society, namely: family, relatives, companion and followers, and most of those parties asked him to reside in Mecca and not to go out to Iraq ( ), has employed those examples in his own way, so as to extract legitimacy from Hussein and give it to Yazid in particular and the Umayyads in general, and that he mentioned when directed Hussein bin Ali Towards Mecca refused to be accompanied by his brother Muhammad bin Hanafi and advised him not to go to Iraq, ( ), and in another novel also employed to serve his goals, it is mentioned that his brother Ibn Hanafi (d. 81 e) imprisoned his children and prevented them from going out with Hussein ( ), and also mentioned those who prevented him also Ibn Abbas (d. 68 e), a companion known and his relatives as well, and Ibn Kathir pointed out that he prevented him from going to Iraq for more than once ( ), and even extract legitimacy from Hussein, showed Ibn Abbas's request to Hussein in the form of advice ( ),

3- His claim that Hussein demanded power, not reform.

In his talk about Hussein bin Ali showed Ibn Kathir that he was not a rebel in order to reform the nation of his grandfather as he was known ( ), but he saw him as a seeker of authority only, has employed several novels for his purpose and objectives and read them that his exit was for the sake of power only, and knew how to choose and delude the reader, and keen to be attributed to the relatives of Hussein, and well-known people in the community arena, in order to give it credibility, and so as not to raise the attention of the reader, for example: The narration that tells of a dialogue that took place between him and his brother Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyah, in which Ibn Kathir reads the exit of Husayn was for the sake of authority, and it says: "By God, my brother, you are the dearest of the people of the earth to me, and I advise you; Do not enter Egypt from these lands, but inhabit the valleys and sand, and send to the people, if they pledge allegiance to you and meet you enter Egypt, and if you stay but live in Egypt go to Mecca, if you see what you love, otherwise you rise to the sand and mountains" ( ) This saying who claims it to Ibn al-Hanafi, we did not find it in the history books available, has been considered by Ibn Kathir witness that Hussein was not a revolutionary, but went out to demand the rule after the death of Muawiyah, not to change the reality of corrupt, and this justification we also touch from The chapter that has already been mentioned, which is entitled "The story of Hussein bin Ali, may God be pleased with them, and the reason for his departure with his family in the request for the emirate and how he was killed", in reference to the request for authority rather than reform, and other examples that Ibn Kathir justified, and read according to his vision as evidence that Hussein is a seeker of authority and not a reformer: Abdullah bin Omar bin Al-Khattab said to Hussein when he knew that he was going to Iraq, which said: "Where do you want? He said to him, "Iraq." And if he had with him taamir and books. He said, "These are their books and their allegiance." He said, "Do not come to them." Jibril came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon

him) and chose the Hereafter, and did not want the world, and you are a few of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and Allaah will never follow any of you, and Allaah will not distract it from you except for the one who is good for you. He refused to return." ( ), the purpose of Ibn Kathir of Ibn Omar's saying is to prove the legitimacy of Yazid and the Umayyad rule, and that the house by divine order have no rule, and that what Hussein has done is to seek power, in other words Ibn Kathir wants to say is it reasonable that Hussein did not hear this hadith from the Messenger of God or from his father?! Note that the hadith was not narrated until the books of the Sahih?! Ibn Kathir cites another saying of Abdullah bin Omar in the same matter, which said: that Bani Hashim has concluded them the king and that "I saw the Hashemite has reigned, time has gone",

#### 4 Giving artificial legitimacy to Yazid's rule.

Ibn Kathir in his talk about the issue of Hasina, the justification of novels, and gave opinions wanted to give legitimacy to the rule of Yazid and the Umayyads, in return made the exit of Hussein and his followers an infringement on legitimacy, including: he considered the exit of Hussein sedition and not revolution ( ), and that Yazid was right in his dealings with Hussein, and his actions with the Hussein issue were indicative of a smart man not reckless?! ( ), which is something we have already referred to him in our conversation about the nature of the vocabulary used by Ibn Kathir in his description of the Hussein issue, and among the narrations that he justified and in which the exit of Hussein is an infringement on legitimacy are: preventing family, relatives, companions and followers of him as we have passed previously, especially since some according to the narrations mentioned by Ibn Kathir was frank with Hussein in this matter, any departure from legitimacy, for example: He quotes a narration by Abu Sa'id al-Khudri in which he said to Husayn: "I have said to him [i.e., to Hussein]: Fear Allah in yourself and abide by your house, and do not go out against your imam" ( ).

#### 6- Accusing Hussein, his companions, and his followers of not possessing the morals of the rebels.

One of the methods resorted to by Ibn Kathir in emptying the Hussein revolution of its revolutionary and principled content, is to strip Hussein and his companions, and his followers of all the morals of the revolution, for example: He mentioned that when he presented Mecca he was afraid of its prince Amr bin Said bin Al-Aas ( ), and that Hussein was sometimes resorting to insults ( ), as well as portrayal of the Messenger of Hussein Muslim bin Aqeel portrayal far from the morals of the revolutionaries, including that he was a coward ( ), and when he fell into captivity was begging Ibn Ziyad And weeps ( ), and that he is a traitor to his master, as he told Ibn Ziyad the date of the arrival of Hussein to Kufa ( ), and he bargained as he mentioned that when he brought him to Ibn Ziyad asked him guards to greet him, but Muslim said: "If he wants to kill me there is no need for me peace be upon him, and if he does not want to kill me I will greet him a lot" ( ),

#### 7 Images of the Umayyad dynasty with the position of stability, strength and prestige.

One of the methods in which Ibn Kathir wanted to underestimate the Hasina revolution is to exaggerate the power and prestige of the state, for example, he showed that Ibn Ziyad when he presented Kufa with only seventeen men, was able to disperse eighteen thousand uprisings ( ), as he portrayed the power of the state and the firmness of Ibn Ziyad in reaching Muslim bin Aqeel and arresting him quickly without trouble, as well as between the power of the state's intelligence services, which were able to easily send One eye to Muslim bin Aqeel to penetrate his ranks and determine his location and the location of the revolutionaries and all the details about them without realizing ( ).

## Conclusion

What passed in the previous two axes of our research, was intended to show the image painted by Ibn Kathir, according to his political tendencies and doctrine doctrinal agreed intellectual, and a diagnosis of the goals that he sought from behind that image, as well as determine the justifications in providing that image, and we can summarize the condemnation of Hussein and those who stood with him in his revolution, and that condemnation applies to everyone who took Hussein and his revolution as a slogan throughout history on the one hand, and on the other hand give legitimacy For the Umayyad rule and every rule that came after the Umayyads contradicts the approach of Hussein bin Ali and is threatened by the Hussein revolution and its slogans.

It became clear from all this that Ibn Kathir had ignored the historical truth about Hussein bin Ali, as a result of falling under the influence of his political tendencies and sectarian whims, and thus he had shown boldness in hypocrisy, which made him one of the most prominent preachers of the sultans of that time and par excellence. According to that vision to evaluate the portrayal drawn by Ibn Kathir concluded the research to the following results:

1. Ibn Kathir has excessively and deliberately underestimated the status of Hussein bin Ali as a person and a revolution, in order to raise the status of the Umayyad authority and give it a false legitimacy, and in return Hussein and his companions appear people who are outside the legitimacy and deserve the fate they met, and he failed miserably to achieve his goal this matter was revealed by the contradictions in which he occurred.
2. In order to achieve his end and objectives, he used devious methods and justifications that are far from reason and logic, but shameful, and he found no shame in using them. Therefore, he spared no effort in employing anything related to Hussein in the service of his goal, using a method that often does not irritate the reader, and deceives him at the same time, taking into account his style and to cover up his inclinations and whims, and even not accused of bias, he resorted to mentioning things in favor of Hussein as a drop of ashes in the eyes, but nevertheless, on the other hand, he mentioned terrible and shameful things, revealing what he tried to hide, as well as revealing the falsity of his act.
3. He showed the Umayyad state on a high degree of stability and strength, and that its stability comes according to his vision from its legitimacy, and in return the Hussein revolution showed that it did not pose any danger to the state and did not affect it, and that it was a whim of a man who was deceived in power and deceived by those who deceived him and regretted everything he did after he felt that he was in trouble, and this is an estrangement of the truth, because the research revealed that the Umayyad state was violently shaken in front of the Hussein revolution.
4. He failed to empty the revolution of its revolutionary content when he described it and described its leader and his companions with descriptions far from the morals of the revolution and the revolutionaries, despite his manipulation of the facts and in a way that is not interesting for the mentality of that time, and the ignorance of this time.
5. He did not succeed in obliterating the lesson and Hussein lesson that the Hussein revolution provided to every oppressed to emulate them in the face of the unjust ruler, with evidence that Hussein was a slogan raised by every oppressed against every oppressor at the level of the world and not at the level of the Islamic community.
6. He wanted to offend the Hussein revolution by employing fabricated narratives from Hussein's enemies, including the Umayyads, the Abbasids, and those who fall into their circle, when he mentioned that there are superstitious beliefs and legends in those narrations far from reason and logic.

7. In his justifications, Ibn Kathir used tendentious employment, and this caused him to fall into many contradictions, as well as camouflage when he mentions many of his narrations without support and in an ambiguous form.

8. Most of the narrations that he used in his justifications were disputed between the two sides of Islam, Sunnis and Shiites, or they were accepted only by one of the two parties, and this means that the manufacture of these narratives has been subject to political and sectarian dictates that have stripped them of their reality and distanced them from the truth.

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