

Theological Conflicts in Early Islamic Era: The Execution of Ghaylān ibn Muslim al- Dimashqī al-Qadarī

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Abstract: The Ghaylān ibn Muslim al-Dimashqī al-Qadarī incident represented a growing trend towards politicizing theological disputes during the early Islamic history. The belief that man is absolutely free and possesses the ability to act on his own is the central idea of his thought. Although he received the whole concept from his predecessors, he advanced the idea to new heights to such an extent that the credit of establishing and advancing the Qadariyyah School is given to him. When applied to the then political reality of the Umayyad domination, the notion of absolute human free will would have had grave implications. The relations between Ghaylān and the ruling political elite were unhealthy. Ghaylān, despite repeated warnings, refused to relinquish his beliefs or to remain quiet and hence paid dearly with his life.

During the first century A.H., the Muslim community witnessed conflicts of various kinds. One such conflict was in the form of an intense theological dispute between the parties involved. Ghaylān ibn Muslim al-Dimashqī al-Qadarī (105 A.H./723 C.E.), a distinguished theologian of the late first and early second century AH., was one of those who took a leading part in theological disputes. His struggle against the political and theological philosophy of the Umayyads is not accurately documented. So persistent, daring and uncompromising were Ghaylān's assaults that the Umayyads eventually viewed him as a potential threat to the stability of the regime and had him killed. This article details this episode and documents the circumstances that led to his death.

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Ghaylān's Theological Views

Ghaylān is one of the greatest theologians in the *Qadariyyah* (those who believe in human freedom of action) ranks. The founder of the *Qadariyyah* school, however, is Maʿbad ibn Khālid al-Juhānī (b. 80 A.H./699 C.E.) who allegedly was influenced by an Iraqi Christian, a convert to Islam who subsequently reverted back to Christianity.¹ Maʿbad was Ghaylān's mentor whose teachings about man's free will—the doctrine that remained the focal point and the symbol of the *Qadariyyah* school—was further developed by Ghaylān.

Ghaylān and the Qadarites adhered to the following principles. First, man is free and possesses capability to act. He is therefore the author of all his actions, good or bad. On the Day of Judgment, Allah (SWT) will reckon with him, rewarding him for his good actions and punishing him for the bad ones. In their assertion of man's free will, they went so far as to deny that Allah (SWT) possesses any prior knowledge as to whether man will be rightly guided or misguided in this world. Second, *imān* is the consequence of knowledge and comprehension, of devotion, of conformity with what has been revealed from Allah (SWT) through the Prophet (SAS), and hence is related to actions but not necessarily requiring it. Third, the grave sinner remains Muslim, but Allah (SWT) will punish him accordingly on the Judgment Day. Fourth, the attributes that pertain to Allah (SWT) such as hand, sight and hearing are to be taken figuratively so that the transcendence of Allah (SWT) may be preserved. Fifth, the leadership (*imāmah*) of the Muslims cannot be confined only to the clan of Quraysh; any person who is capable regardless of his tribal pedigree, is qualified for the post. The election and the appointment of the leader (*imām*) must be rendered by the consensus of the entire community (*ummah*).² Al-Shahrastānī summed up Ghaylān's theological philosophy in three words: *al-qadr* (assertion of human absolute freedom), *al-irjāʾ* (postponement of ultimate judgment about the grave sinner)³ and *al-khurūj* (promoting revolt against unjust rulers).⁴

Ghaylān and his mentor Maʿbad regarded the Umayyads unfit to rule as they had not been chosen by the consensus of the Muslims. Umayyads were also opposed to the notion of free will as propagated by Ghaylān and Maʿbad. To make matters worse, some members of the ruling Umayyad family, desperate to justify their despotic rule during critical moments, displayed a considerable degree of sympathy with the idea of *jabr* (belief that men's actions are pre-destined by divine power) as well as with the idea of the immoderate exaltation of the position of the caliph.⁵ In addition to the

assertion of free will, Maʿbad was also involved in an unsuccessful revolt against the Umayyads led by ʿAbd al-Rahmān ibn al-Ashʿas (85 A.H./704 C.E.)⁶ and as a result of which Maʿbad was finally killed by either al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī (95A.H./713 C.E.), or the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marvān (86 A.H./705 C.E.).

Gaylān and ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz

Little is known about Ghaylān, his life and his activities. However, his close association with Maʿbad who resided in Baṣrah, was noted. Until ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz became the caliph, there is virtually no account referring to Ghaylān, his movement or his thought. However, during ʿUmar’s rule, Ghaylān was very active promulgating his theological beliefs and criticizing some of the policies of the Umayyads. According to some sources, Ghaylān held the position of the secretary in ʿUmar’s administration in Damascus.⁷ According to other sources, Ghaylān held the position as the supervisor of the state mint in Damascus.⁸ Most likely, he held both positions but at different times.

Gaylān’s activities has definitely something to do with the changes that swept across the entire state in the wake of ʿUmar’s accession to the office of Caliph. ʿUmar differed from his Umayyad predecessors in personal character and behaviour, as well as in his overall policies. He was pious, just and honourable. He took interests of the state very seriously and was much concerned with the peaceful consolidation of the state rather than its territorial expansion. Soon after his accession to office, he stopped all frontier expeditions and recalled the Muslim army which was fighting at Constantinople. Internal affairs became the main focus of his policies. People were encouraged to devote themselves to religion, pursuit of knowledge, trade and industry. The *daʿwah* efforts were redoubled, as a result of which many non-Muslims entered the fold of Islam. He also adopted a policy of reconciliation towards the opposition, the *Khawārij* and the *Shiʿites*. Several reconciliatory measures toward the *Mawālī* (clients) Muslims were undertaken. They were exempted from both *kharāj* and *jizyah* and their names have been registered in the Register of the Pensions of the *Bayt al-Māl*. All these and other *Mawālī* rights had been intermittently violated by previous Umayyad rulers.⁹

Unlike his Umayyad predecessors, ʿUmar allied himself with the mainstream Muslim intellectuals, consulting them regularly on various matters. Similarly, he did not harbour any tendency whatsoever towards

any form of the idea of *jabr* (predestination), or the idea of the excessive exaltation of the post of the caliph.¹⁰

‘Umar’s personality and his Islamic policies heralded a new era in Islamic history. His rule along with that of Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (99 A.H./717 C.E.) may be described as the post-al-Ḥajjāj period. Al-Ḥajjāj ruled over Iraq for about twenty years (75 A.H./694 C.E.- 95 A.H./713 C.E.), and his cruelty and harshness were felt not only in Iraq but also in other provinces, especially in those areas where the voices of the opposition were strong. It is interesting to note that indications of conflict between al-Ḥajjāj (over the philosophy of government) and ‘Umar—should ‘Umar ever come to power—cropped up during the reign of al-Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (96 AH /715 C.E.) when ‘Umar was assigned to govern Ḥijāz. The appointment of ‘Umar was a welcome change which was not liked by al-Ḥajjāj. One of the chief reasons for al-Ḥajjāj’s displeasure was that Ḥijāz, with ‘Umar in control, was increasingly becoming a safe haven for those who were fleeing from the oppression of al-Ḥajjāj in Iraq. Al-Ḥajjāj saw in ‘Umar an obstacle to his policies and hence complained on several occasions to the caliph asking him to remove ‘Umar from Ḥijāz. The caliph complied and replaced ‘Umar with Khālīd ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Qasrī, one of al-Ḥajjāj’s men. After the demise of al-Ḥajjāj and Umar’s accession four years later, a number of radical changes took place. The reversal of the policies introduced by al-Ḥajjāj was one of the charted objectives.¹¹

It is highly probable that Ghaylān in the wake of the execution of his mentor resolved to keep a low profile. He retreated from the public eye and refused to have any interaction whatsoever with the Umayyads. However, when ‘Umar came to power, Ghaylān felt free to propound his doctrine without any fear of reprisal. Thus he wrote to ‘Umar complaining of the deterioration of the state and urging him to initiate policies restoring religious principles. He reminded ‘Umar of his responsibilities towards the Muslims, something that often had been neglected and compromised by his predecessors in favour of other personal and family matters. He advised ‘Umar to fully adhere to the commandments of the Qur’ān and the Sunnah. Ghaylān also emphasized that there could be only two types of leaders: the just and upright ones—apparently alluding to the first four rightly guided caliphs; and the unjust ones—obviously hinting at some of the Umayyad rulers.¹²

Ghaylān also had several meetings with ‘Umar during which he made an oblique reference to the notion of *jabr* by which many people were trying to

exonerate themselves from their evil actions. This was expectedly followed by his eloquent explanation and defense of his own idea that man, as contrary to the idea of *jabr*, is absolutely free and has inherent capabilities to act. Each man is accordingly the author of all his actions and, therefore, fully answerable to Allah (SWT) for his actions.¹³

‘Umar, nonetheless, considered the idea of free will—as Ghaylān and his supporters perceived it—as just another un-Islamic innovation that his reformatory programmess ought to effectively deal with. The first step ‘Umar took was to debate the idea directly with Ghaylān in face-to-face encounters. Probably, ‘Umar detected in Ghaylān the actual cause of the “free will syndrome” of his time and thus resolved to treat him as such, not paying much attention to those who ardently—sometimes blindly—followed him. ‘Umar decided not to let Ghaylān mix freely with the people and preach his ideas to them. Rather, he was in favour of keeping him near and under constant control and surveillance. Ghaylān thus was asked to occupy some positions in the central administration. ‘Umar also wrote to his governors in the provinces urging them to stay away from the Qadarites and their beliefs and assist the government in dealing with them.¹⁴

Thus, ‘Umar engaged in debates in order to persuade Ghaylān to give up his ideas. However, should the adherents of the *Qadariyyah* doctrine refuse to budge, then ‘Umar was willing to deal with them as harshly as required. Once a person asked him about his position on the Qadarites and he replied: “First, I shall ask them to repent; if they comply, that is what we want. But if they refuse, then to sword will they be brought.” Based on another account, he added: “...I shall banish them from the Islamic land.”¹⁵ He also instructed ‘Udayy ibn Arta‘ah, his governor in Baṣrah, to do the same.¹⁶ Interestingly, ‘Umar is also reported to have prayed to Allah to do away with Ghaylān, in case the latter does not give up his beliefs. After ‘Umar had uttered the prayer, he asked Ghaylān, who was present, to say *āmīn* (may it be so) apparently to let Ghaylān realize ‘Umar’s sincerity and determination.¹⁷

Several reports suggest that Ghaylān as a result of his debates with ‘Umar almost gave up his doctrine. He is reported to have repented in the presence of ‘Umar, proclaiming that he was truly blind, deaf and ignorant but he got back his eyesight and his sense of hearing. He was deluded but has been shown the right way; he was ignorant but has been enlightened.¹⁸ However, Ghaylān’s subsequent behaviour shows that his repentance was rather short lived. Ghaylān held ‘Umar in great awe and respected his knowledge, piety

and just and peaceful policies. Ghaylān despite his extensive knowledge and charisma, as well as utmost devotion to mysticism and prayers, was unable to advance his arguments against those of ‘Umar.¹⁹ ‘Umar’s words, as Ghaylān admitted afterwards, sounded to him as if he had been taught from the heavens (through revelation).²⁰ In the course of his debates with Ghaylān, ‘Umar realized that Ghaylān’s beliefs had been fairly shaken and that he might be on the road to abandoning them and was on the “right” path. Unfortunately, ‘Umar’s reign was so short that it impeded the accomplishment of many programmes, one of which related to Ghaylān and the rest of the Qadarites.

Immediately after ‘Umar died, old Umayyad policies resumed. Ghaylān, who had restrained himself, hoping that ‘Umar will bring about a change in society, started preaching his old beliefs thinking that with ‘Umar many of his policies had been buried. Ghaylān saw in the new Umayyad rulers and their policies a clear indication of the system reverting back to that which preceded ‘Umar. Ibn Manẓūr, therefore, wrote: “Ghaylān was silent during the reign of ‘Umar, but spoke (about *qadr*) during the reign of Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik.”²¹

Ghaylān after ‘Umar’s death

Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (105 A.H./723 C.E.) the third son of the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, became the caliph in accordance with the will of his brother Sulaymān. His rule was marred by inter tribal jealousies. Several reasons are given for this, one of which is Yazīd’s preference for the Mudarites (one of the largest and most powerful tribes in ancient Northern Arabia) and his merciless persecution of the Muhallabids (Kinsmen and clients of al- Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrā famed for their numbers and roles in early Islamic history). The two parties were at loggerhead with each other even during the reign of Sulaymān. Sulaymān hated al-Ḥajjāj so much that immediately after capturing power, he began to persecute al-Ḥajjāj’s relatives.

Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab remained the governor of Iraq until he was imprisoned by ‘Umar for misappropriating public money. Then, fearing Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik who replaced ‘Umar as the caliph, he somehow escaped from the prison and fled to Iraq. In Baṣrah, the stronghold of the Muhallabids, he incited people to rebel against the caliph. He misused religion to rally behind him people by claiming that he was summoning people to follow the Book of Allah (SWT) and the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAS), and to take part in the *jihād* against the tyrants. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī

(110 A.H./728 C.E.), the leading religious and intellectual personality in Baṣrah during that time, spoke against him and urged people to stay away from the rebellion, which eventually failed and the Muhallabids and the other tribes that joined them suffered a humiliating defeat.²²

Yazīd faced difficulties because, among others, he was unable and unwilling to follow ‘Umar’s footsteps. People were still yearning for ‘Umar and his just rule. They scrutinized and appraised the conduct of the new caliph and it was not difficult for them to see that Yazīd’s character differed from that of ‘Umar. Yazīd allegedly had strong passions for worldly splendours to the extent that state matters were sorely neglected. The administration of the state was left in the hands of Mudarite administrators, especially in the remote provinces.²³ Yazīd is reported to have publicly pledged to imitate ‘Umar and continue with the implementation of his reformatory programmes. But after only forty days of following him, he succumbed to the pressure of his real self. Soon afterward, he dismissed many high-ranking officers appointed by ‘Umar.²⁴ Al-Ya‘qūbī, has stated that Yazīd had removed them all and appointed new ones.²⁵ Yazīd also assembled forty scholars who proclaimed that the caliphs are exempted from accountability and punishment.²⁶ This signaled the revival of the old Umayyad practice of the exaltation of the caliph’s position.

Ghaylān was adversely affected by the change following Yazīd’s accession to power. However, not much is known about his life or activities during this period—expanding four years—except that he disliked the Umayyads and resumed preaching *Qadariyyah* doctrine. Ibn Manẓūr cites an account in which it is alleged that Ghaylān has been vigorously promulgating his idea of human freedom. Yazīd at last apprehended him and had him executed. However, ibn Manẓūr contends that Ghaylān was killed by caliph Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, Yazīd’s brother and successor, and not by Yazīd as reported.²⁷ In all probability, the primary motive for Ghaylān’s action of renouncing the Umayyads was ‘Umar’s early death along with Yazīd’s inability or unwillingness to step into his shoes. Likewise, Yazīd adopted a system of government which, from Ghaylān’s perspective, was un-Islamic.

When Yazīd died in the year 105 A.H./723 C.E., he was succeeded, in accordance with his wish, by his brother Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. Hishām inherited a number of problems from his brother. He was well aware that he had no choice but to go up against them as swiftly as possible, and as resolutely and emphatically as he could. The resurgent threat of

Ghaylān and his followers was one of the issues that the caliph resolved to tackle foremost. By virtue of his uncompromising propagation of rebellion against unjust rulers, and by virtue of his conviction that any capable person, regardless of his tribal ancestry, is qualified for the post of the caliph, and that the election and the appointment of the caliph must be rendered by the consensus of the entire community (*ummah*), Ghaylān undeniably posed a serious threat to Hishām and his political undertakings. Once, probably before his ascension to power, Hishām accused Ghaylān of dishonouring and vilifying his Umayyad predecessors at which point he pledged if he ever laid his hands on him, he would punish him accordingly.²⁸

Hishām was also facing an increasingly stiff opposition from different quarters in the Khurasānī region. The latest wave of discord was created by the Abbasids who secretly, during the reign of ‘Umar, had embarked on a well organized movement to topple the Umayyad government. This movement, which subsequently erupted into a successful revolution, chose Khurasān as its nucleus. The region’s diverse ethnic groups that disapproved of the Umayyad style government have been principally targeted by the ‘Abbasid propagandists. Ghaylān was also active in Khurasān—perhaps not by chance—preaching his doctrine and spurring the anti-Umayyad sentiments. As a result, many of his followers were from the *Mawālī* (clients) ranks.²⁹ While once visiting Armenia, Ghaylān is reported to have said about Hishām that Allah (SWT) never made him the caliph, obviously hitting out against Hishām’s claim that the caliphate had been given to the Umayyads in general and to himself in particular by Allah (SWT).³⁰

Prior to the arrest of Ghaylān, Hishām dispatched his spies assigning them to follow the former and gather the necessary evidence against him. Finally, Hishām ordered Ghaylān’s arrest. Ghaylān’s close associates who accompanied him to Armenia were also arrested. It is evident that Hishām planned to execute them - as he had vowed earlier - but he needed sufficient evidence and support from scholars and the public alike. Thus, Hishām ordered al-Awzā‘ī (157 A.H./773 C.E.), a celebrated Syrian scholar, to conduct a debate with Ghaylān to refute his arguments and to defeat him. Then, should he refuse to forsake his belief, he could be declared guilty of heresy for which he could be put to death. That was what happened: Ghaylān was apparently defeated, yet he refused to give up his belief. He and his associates thereupon were pronounced apostates and executed.³¹

There are accounts in which other scholars, apart from al-Awzā'ī, are reported to have argued and debated with Ghaylān, some of them even before the caliphate of Hishām. The most prominent of them were: Maymūn ibn Mahrān (117 A.H./735 C.E.),³² Iyās ibn Mu'āwiyah (122 A.H./740 C.E.), the judge of Baṣrah,³³ and Rabī'ah al-Ra'ī (122 A.H./740 C.E.), also a judge.³⁴ It is probable that Hishām and other Umayyad rulers, at different times, employed these loyal scholars for the same purpose, which is an all-out attack on Ghaylān and the *Qadariyyah* theological school. In this campaign many unscrupulous and uninvited individuals took part who deliberately fabricated and forged many of the sayings of the Prophet (SAS).³⁵ This included *aḥādīth* dealing with free-will and predestination (*qaḍā' wa qadar*).

The execution of Ghaylān was approved by many scholars. The judge of Damascus, Numayr ibn Aws al-Ash'arī, is said to have contacted Hishām to congratulate him on his decisive move against Ghaylān and to tell him that Ghaylān's death is one of Allah's great victories for the Muslims.³⁶ Rajā' ibn Haywah is also reported to have written to Hishām supporting his action saying that Ghaylān's execution was better than the execution of two thousand infidels.³⁷ To provide further credence to caliph's action, 'Umar's righteousness and his immensely respected personality were utilized. It was widely propagated that Ghaylān's punishment was, in fact, Allah (SWT)'s response to 'Umar's prayers.³⁸ This propaganda was meant to serve two objectives: first that Almighty Allah answered the prayer of the upright 'Umar and, second, that He (SWT) chose to punish the deluded heretic only in the hands of another equally upright individual, i.e., caliph Hishām.

Conclusion

Ghaylān was one of the most active theologians of his time. He confronted the Umayyads and preached his theological views boldly. He, however, failed to gain acceptance among the public principally because of some extremist heretical aspects of his doctrine, coupled with the nature of his own personality which can be characterized as obstinate, hasty, impulsive and un-compromising. Yet, it may be argued, that Ghaylān, together with his adherents, paved the way for the emergence of Mu'tazilah, which subsequently absorbed and preached central *Qadariyyah* beliefs.

Arguably, the most damaging mistake committed by Ghaylān was to naively launch attacks against the Umayyads, the legitimate political authority of the majority of the Muslims, regardless of the serious errors committed by them. Ghaylān apparently did not realize the heretical

dimensions inherent in his thought and the dangers it posed to the general public. He also did not realize that the public opinion would not be responsive to such heretical preaching. The Umayyads knew exactly what the public opinion was and hence capitalized on it to exonerate them from what they did to Ghaylān and the rest of the Qadarites. For this reason, perhaps, Ghaylān is known in the Muslim tradition as a heretic and caliph Hishām as the one who struggled against heretics and apostates.

Notes

1. Ismā'īl ibn Kathīr Abū al-Fiḍā', *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 9 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1985), 36.
2. 'Abd al-Qāhir Abu Manṣūr al-Baghdādī, *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* (Cairo: Mu'assasah al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa Shurakā'uh, nd.), 125; see Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Al-Milal wa al-Nihal* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1970), 142-143, 146; see also Ismā'īl Rājī al-Fārūqī and Lois Lamyā al-Fārūqī, *The Cultural Atlas of Islam* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986), 284-285.
3. This is one of the reasons why al-Ash'arī regarded Ghaylān and the rest of the Qadarites as one of the *Murji'ah* branches; see Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ismā'īl al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1963), 136. Likewise al-Shahrastānī classified them as *al-Qadariyyah al-Murji'ah*. See al-Shahrastānī, *Al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, 146.
4. Al-Shahrastānī, *Al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, 143.
5. See, for example, Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 5 (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1964), 220, 334; see Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, 134; see Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Maktabah Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa Awlāduh, 1937), 192, 197, 201, 214; see also Aḥmad b. Dāwud 'Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnawarī, *Al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl* (Cairo: Wizārah al-Thaqāfah wa al-'Irshād al-Qawmī, nd.), 226.
6. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk* vol. 6, 202; see Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 9, 36.
7. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf* vol.8 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1996), 390.
8. Muḥammad b. Mukarram b. Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn 'Asākir*, vol. 20 (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1985), 242.
9. In a famous proclamation, 'Umar encapsulated the essence of his policies: "Allah sent His Prophet as a missionary, and not as a tax-collector." See Abū al-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī, *Sīrah wa Manāqib 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1984), 84-113; see Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-*

Nihāyah, vol. 9, 192-197; see al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 6, 553; see also ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1987), 312-316, 323-331. He is also reported to have said: “You are only obliged to obey us as long as we obey Allah.” And also: “I am no better than anyone of you, my burden is just the heaviest; I am not an innovator, I am no more than a follower.” See Muḥammad ibn Sa‘d, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 (Beirut: Dār Sādir, 1958), 343, 368.

10. When once dubbed as “Allah’s caliph on earth,” he protested saying that he is but “the Commander of the Faithful” and that is how he should be called. “Allah’s caliph on earth is Prophet David and they who are on equal terms with him, not me,” was ‘Umar’s response. He then cited the following verse: “O David! We did indeed make thee a vicegerent on earth” (38: 26); see Abū Muḥammad ‘Abdullah b. ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *Sīrah ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz* (Cairo: Maktabah Wahbah, nd.), 46, 76.

11. Umar once depicted al-Ḥajjāj and his rule as “a real affliction to people.” He also said that by al-Ḥajjāj’s departure Allah has “relieved the people’s suffering and cleansed the world from the vice that he had been causing.” See Abū al-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī, *Sīrah wa Manāqib ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-Azīz*, 107-109. It is narrated that ‘Umar was so delighted after the news of al-Ḥajjāj’s death that he prostrated himself thanking Allah. See Aḥmad b. Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Rabbāh, *Al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, vol. 5, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1987), 314.

12. Aḥmad ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal fī Sharh al-Milal wa al-Nihal* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1979), 137-38; see Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī, *Faḍl al-‘Itizāl*, (Tūnis: al-Dār al-Tūnisiyyah li al-Nashr, 1984), 230-231.

13. Ibn Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn ‘Asākir*, vol. 20, 239-247; see al-Balkhī, *Faḍl al-‘Itizāl*, 339.

14. Ibn Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn ‘Asākir*, vol. 20, 242; see Ibn al-Jawzī, *Sīrah wa Manāqib ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-Azīz*, 84.

15. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Sīrah wa Manāqib ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-Azīz*, 83-84; see Ibn Sa‘d, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5, 351-384; see also ‘Abu Bakr Muḥammad al-Ajūrī, *Al-Sharī‘ah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1983), 227; see Muwaṭṭa‘ Mālik b. Anas, “*Al-kitāb al-Jāmī‘*,” Ḥadīth No. 1396.

16. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Sīrah wa Manāqib ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abd al-Azīz*, 85.

17. Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 7, 441; see Ibn Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn ‘Asākir*, vol. 20, 242-243.

18. Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 7, 441; see Ibn Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn ‘Asākir*, vol. 20, 241-242.

19. Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 7, 441; see Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal fī Sharh al-Mīlal wa al-Nihal*, 137; see also Ibn Manẓūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn ‘Asākir*, vol. 20, 243.
20. Ibn Manẓūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn ‘Asākir*, vol. 20, 240. This is not surprising because ‘Umar was indeed a great scholar. What’s more, he is often described as the teacher of the scholars; see Ibn Sa‘d, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5, 368.
21. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 341 - 343.
22. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 6, 556-558, 564-565, 578-589, 590-604; see Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, 319, 325, 334-338; see also Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 9, 228-229; see al-Ya‘qūbī Aḥmad b. al-Ya‘qūb, *Tārīkh al-Ya‘qūbī*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Beirut, 1980), 294-295, 301-302.
23. Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 7, 280-281; see Abū al-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī, *Al-Muntaẓim fī Tārīkh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 7 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1992), 65-66; see also Maẓhar-ul-Ḥaq, *A Short History of Islām* (Lahore: Bookland, 1993), 468.
24. Abū ‘Amr Khalifah ibn Khayyāt, *Tārīkh Khalifah Ibn Khayyāt*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1995), 213-216; see Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 4, 331; see also al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 6, 101.
25. Al-Ya‘qūbī, *Tārīkh al-Ya‘qūbī*, vol. 2, 310.
26. Al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 7, 280; see Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 9, 241; see also Ibn al-‘Imād Abū al-Falāh ‘Abd al-Ḥayy, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbar min Dhabab*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1988), 128.
27. Ibn Manẓūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn ‘Asākir*, vol. 20, 243.
28. Aḥmad ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Al-Munyah wa al-Amal fī Sharh al-Mīlal wa al-Nihal*, 136; see al-Balkhī, *Faḍl al-‘Itizāl*, 231.
29. See the names and the origins of some of the Qadarites in: Ibn Qutaybah al-Dīnawarī, *Al-Ma‘ārif*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1987), 341.
30. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 8, 405-406, 419; Al-Balkhī, *Faḍl al-‘Itizāl*, 233.
31. Ibn Manẓūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn ‘Asākir*, vol. 20, 244-247; see Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, *Al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2, 193; see al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 8, 419; see also Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 4 (Beirut: Mu‘assasah al-‘Alā li al-Maṭbū‘āt, 1986), 424.
32. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 7, 203; see al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 8, 390.
33. He is said to have debated with Ghaylān about the notion of *qadar* during the caliphate of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. See Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 9, 349; see also Ibn ‘Abd Rabbāh, *Al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2, 192.

34. Abū Naʿīm al-Iṣfahānī, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ*, vol. 3 (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Salafiyyah, 1937), 260; see Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Al-ʿIqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2, 191.
35. See some of the fabricated sayings (*aḥādīth*) on Ghaylān and the Qadarites in Abū al-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī, *Kitāb al-Mawḍūʿāt*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1983), 275-278, vol. 2, 47; see Ibn al-Jawzī Abū al-Faraj, *Al-ʿIlal al-Mutanāhiyah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Wūhiyah*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1983), 146-162; see also al-Ḥasanī Hāshim Maʿrūf, *Al-Mawḍūʿāt fī al-Āthār wa al-Akhbār*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1973), 142-143.
36. Abū Jaʿfar al-ʿUqaylī, *Kitāb al-Ḍuʿafāʾ al-Kabīr*, vol. 3 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1984), 437.
37. Ibid., vol. 3, 436; see al-ʿAsqalānī ibn Hajar, *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 4, 424; see also Abū Naʿīm al-Iṣfahānī, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ*, vol. 5, 171.
38. Ibn Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq li Ibn ʿAsākir*, vol. 20, 242; see al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 7, 441.