



حبر أبيض  
WHITE INK



**Dr. Ali Al-Bassam**

## **King Abdulaziz and the political movement in the Arabian Peninsula in 1916 AD.**

In light of the rapid events and developments at the regional and global levels as a result of the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 AD, the effects of which reached our Arab region, the Ottoman Empire crumbled and came out defeated in the war, leaving a great political vacuum that was occupied by the victorious European powers led by Britain and its allies. In fact, the Arabian Peninsula was not isolated from these events, developments and political changes, so Britain tightened its control over the waters surrounding the Arabian Peninsula, influenced some local political powers and deceived them with tempting promises, but they reaped nothing but mirage and diaspora. In the face of those different circumstances, King Abdulaziz Al Saud, the man who recaptured Riyadh, unified the Najd region and recovered Al-Ahsa from the Turks in 1913, managed to deal with cunning and political acumen, and even imposed a new political reality on the Arabian Peninsula. King Abdulaziz realized that the emirates of the Arabian Gulf coast had concluded treaties with Great Britain at that time, a power that was important before and after the outbreak of the war, and he wanted to secure his country and avoid the dominance of Britain by balancing his relationship with it. The inescapable fact is that King Abdulaziz was thinking about what would happen after the end of the Great War. Therefore, he obtained what other local powers in the Arabian Peninsula did not obtain, through good behavior and choosing an attitude that is consistent with his strategy, which is to employ global contradictions to serve his national interests, and not the opposite. That was why he remained neutral during the war and attacked the Turks in all his speeches and assemblies. He even stated one of his famous sayings: "No one can hate the Turk more than I do, but I do not want anyone to say that I stabbed a country bearing the name of the Caliphate during its ordeal". He did not fire a single bullet against them, but chose to fight in his own field, so he was preoccupied with uniting the rest of the Arabian Peninsula, especially the northern parts of Najd. His strategy was clearly defined during the war and his calculations were accurate in dealing with local and regional powers. King Abdulaziz was aware of the political situation around him in the world by following the news from newspapers and Reuters. He also realized that the Ottoman Empire was a state on the verge of collapse, and that the great powers had taken control of it in various internal and external aspects. It was a losing bet for anyone who knew the principles of politics. The Ottoman Empire was like a crumbling boat destined to sink and fall, so staying in it while it was in that state was a kind of futility and destruction. He chose neutrality. Despite the British attempts to work in their interest, he did not pay attention to that and was busy focusing on his main goal, the unification of the Saudi state's lands. He also did not pay attention to those Ottoman attempts, which wanted to arouse religious passion and mobilize peoples with it, although many were deceived by them. Britain also realized that King Abdulaziz was the most powerful man in the Arabian Peninsula and the most worthy to deal with compared to others who were either deceived or intimidated by Britain, while we find that King Abdulaziz dealt with shrewdness and cunning that they did not expect. Even in the treaties they signed with him, he used to impose his opinion and change them in the interest of the main objective, which was the homeland in the first place and the preservation of the integrity of its lands. He did this by using a careful policy and a real strategy that takes care of the consequences before they occur in order to complete what he started in his great national project without losing the gains he achieved on the ground. With this policy and strategy, King Abdul Aziz proceeded to unite the rest of the Arabian Peninsula and establish a strong state, achieving his dream of security, safety, stability and good neighborliness with the Arab and global surroundings. After that, King Abdulaziz moved to an important stage, which is the stage of building and establishing the great Saudi Arab entity and preserving his great gains.