

Caliphate of His Eminence, Hasan (‘a)

Imam Hasan (‘a) took the reins of Islamic caliphate in his hands after his father. His Eminence took over the leadership of the community in such a way that mischiefs had created a serious trouble in it. Battles and groupism had created discord in their army and no public department remained immune from the attack of the Umayyads because the general views of the people and nobles had inclined to consider Muawiyah to be of higher rank and before the Imam’s martyrdom as well as after it, they maintained close contact with Muawiyah and played a significant role in dispersing the Imam’s troops at the time of the defeat of the army of Muawiyah.

Anyway, Imam Hasan (‘a) after taking over the caliphate prepared for war and issued orders that a public meeting should be arranged in Kufa Mosque and the armed forces and other people attended the meet. Imam Hasan (‘a) delivered an eloquent and effective sermon. He spoke of creating unity and gathering of forces and warned them of the propaganda of the Umayyad regime that was aimed to disunite the people. He called the people to join the forces to fight against Muawiyah.

When the people heard these words they were terrified and their tongues became dumb. None of them responded except the great warrior, Adi bin Hatim, who stood up and announced his complete support to the Imam and he denounced the stance of the Kufians devoid of their support towards the Imam which would lead to their imminent defeat. It became clear to the Imam and other people that the army was not prepared for war because they had given up obedience and they had stepped in the field of rebellion.

According to Shaykh Mufeed after the efforts of certain sincere supporters of the Imam some people were mobilized to go forward in battle. Most of them comprised of Khawarij, doubters and greedy elements. These elements did not have any regard for the Imam’s aim because they had made embezzlement and disloyalty as their habit.

Narrators say: Imam (‘a) appointed Ubaidullah Ibn Abbas as the commander-in-chief of his forces. Muawiyah had killed two of his sons so that it may make him sincere due to this. However when he faced Muawiyah’s forces Muawiyah threw the rope of deceit towards him and promised him 1,000,000 Dirhams, half of which would be payable upfront and the balance after he had crossed over to him. [1](#)

Ubaidullah's mouth watered and he gave a positive reply to Muawiyah. He deviated from the truth and joined the forces of oppression and injustice while he had 8,000 soldiers with him.² He did not pay any heed to humiliation and embezzlement. He completely disregarded the terrible harm he had brought for the troops of his cousin as a result of which all the unity and stability of the troops was destroyed.

The breach of trust was not limited to Ubaidullah. Other commanders of the Imam's troops also defected to Muawiyah. And they left the Imam crushed in disunited troops and they left him in sorrow and pain.

The Imam's hardships and problems were not restricted to the defection of his commanders because the Imam's problems increased further and regiments of that army committed atrocious acts against the Holy Imam ('a) as follows:

1. Cruelty to the Imam

The filthy character, Jarrah bin Sinan committed cruelty on the Imam and with a spear wounded the Imam's thigh. The Imam was terribly wounded and he fell down and was taken for treatment.³

Another person, during the prayers, attacked the Imam with a sword.⁴ Yet another man shot an arrow at the Imam though it caused him no harm. Imam⁵ became certain that the Kufians were bent on killing and assassinating His Eminence.

2. Associating Infidelity with Imam Hasan ('a)

That army was also sick in its faith and religion in such a way that they alleged the grandson of the Prophet and his darling to have become infidel and left the religion. Thus Jarrah bin Sinan stood up in front of His Eminence and cried, "O Hasan! You have committed polytheism like your father did!"⁶

This was the view of most of the Khawarij and they inculcated this same view among the troops.

3. The Great Breach of Trust

The great breach of trust that the commanders of the army committed was that they wrote to Muawiyah and guaranteed to him that whenever he liked they would hand over the Imam to him as a prisoner or assassinate him.⁷ And this matter made the Imam very cautious that it may not be that he is taken a prisoner and handed over to Muawiyah and then Muawiyah does a favor to him by giving him amnesty. And this matter of Bani Umayyah doing favor to the family of the Prophet may be established as His Eminence has said regarding this in his statements after the treaty.

4. Plundering Sources and Capital of Imam Hasan ('a)

The debased persons from among the people of Kufa busied in plundering the sources and necessities

of life of the Holy Imam (‘a) and they pulled away the carpet from under him just as they had snatched away the cloak of His Eminence.[8](#)

These were some of the terrible blows dealt by that army which had taken up breach of trust as its profession.

Treaty

In front of these dark mischiefs the Imam assumed a stance of farsightedness along with knowledge and observed that depths had been illuminated by wisdom because the Imam understood that there were two options before him, first to begin war against Muawiyah or to make peace with him.

1. He could have initiated war against Muawiyah while the Imam knew that Muawiyah would indeed be victorious. Or that he himself, his companions and members of his Ahlul Bayt who were representations of Islamic values should be eliminated and by their martyrdom Islam would have been deprived of its leaders and missionaries without any advantage accruing to the religion because Muawiyah had with all his capability given this responsibility to the Imam in a very diplomatic way that he should choose either of the two options and he had put a thousand veils on the sacrifices of His Eminence. Or that His Eminence should have become a prisoner of Muawiyah and would have had to bear the favor of Muawiyah which would have become the cause of Bani Umayyah gloating at it.

2. The next option to make peace with Muawiyah and for the sake of Islam defend its warriors and missionaries and by his treaty expose the true face of Muawiyah and tear away the thick veil that he had cast on his evil deeds. The Imam chose this second option inspite of the fact that there was a thorn in his eye and a bone stuck in his throat.[9](#)

Historians say: His Eminence gathered his troops and presented them the options of war or peace. Shouts arose from all sides: “We shall remain where we are.”

They accepted humiliation and were pleased with degradation and deviated from the path of truth. Imam had become certain that they had lost all senses and perception and he was not capable to force them for his obedience and war. On the basis of this he had to accept the treaty with bitterness and displeasure.

That treaty was a bitter and unbearable one that the religious law considered it obligatory and intellect knew that it was necessary and the social conditions which were full of political problems were demanding it because if he had initiated a war his troops would have indeed been defeated and the community as a result of this would have been involved in untold calamities and there would have been no limit to it.

We have discussed in detail the circumstances of treaty, its terms, causes and the useless talks of the critics in our book, Life of Imam Hasan (‘a).

Reaction of Imam Husayn ('a)

What is confirmed is that Imam Husayn ('a) was in principle in agreement with his brother in opting for the treaty and it was with his advice because the conditions were such that necessitated armistice and there was no other option. However there exist fabricated traditions that go against what we have stated. And it is that Imam Husayn ('a) was displeased with the treaty and wanted to oppose it but his brother restrained him and said: I shall put you in a house and seal it with plaster till the treaty is complete. His Eminence, Husayn ('a) saw that loyalty demanded that he should obey his brother and not oppose him. On the basis of this he supported him in this matter. We have completely refuted and disproved this theory supported by proofs in our book, Life of Imam Hasan ('a).

Adi bin Hatim

When the treaty was concluded Adi bin Hatim along with Ubadah bin Umar hurried to Imam Husayn ('a) while his heart was burning in fury and he called the Imam to begin the battle and said, "O Aba Abdillah, have you exchanged honor for humiliation and accepted the minority and closed our eyes from the majority? Today you listen to us and then oppose us forever! Leave Hasan to what he thinks about peace treaty and mobilize your Shias and people of Kufa. I and my companions have taken it as our priority that the son of Hind shall not come of his own accord but that we shall strike his head with our swords."

His Eminence, Husayn ('a) said: "We have accepted it and we have made oath and covenant and there is no way we could break the pledges." [10](#)

If Imam Husayn ('a) had any option to dominate the events he would have opted to fight and confronted Muawiyah in the battle but all the options were closed for him and his brother and he saw that there was no way for them except to make peace.

Transformation of Caliphate

The Islamic caliphate underwent a change from its real function and characteristics that its maker had intended in a tyrannical and despotic rulership that not a shadow of justice existed in it and it had no resemblance to truth.

Despots from the Umayyad regimes were imposed on the community and began humiliating and suppressing them, plundering their wealth and forcing them to slavery. One of the writers says: "The end of a caliphate which was on the right path and its transfer to Bani Umayyah bore important consequences: The Umayyad clan became victorious over the Bani Hashim. Its meaning is that the nobles of Quraish, the rich people and traders became victorious over the people of principles and values.

The victory of Muawiyah brought defeat to all efforts to prevent the evil of the wealth hoarders of Quraish. It was the defeat of *Hilful Fuzool*.¹¹ A defeat for values and principles and victory for deceit and political intrigue from the previous ones and the wealth hoarders. This defeat left a terrible effect on Islam and Muslim generations.”

And also Nicholson says, “Muslims considered the victory of Bani Umayyah under the leadership of Muawiyah to be the great victory of the idol-worshippers who had been inimical to the Prophet and his companions and fought against Allah’s Messenger (S) till the Prophet exiled them. Till the time the Muslims, along with the Prophet fought in Jihad and confronted them with patience till the Almighty Allah rewarded them with victory and the foundation of Islam was laid on their shriveled faces. That was easy religion which understood both the happiness and unhappiness of the people. And the joy of the group that considered poor people as degraded, humiliated the deprived and plundered wealth was destroyed.

In any case after the treaty the Islamic world was involved in a great disaster and from the world of comfort, security and stability it was changed into a world full of injustice and oppression because the Umayyads after coming to power very fast began to commit tyranny and suppress the Muslims and forced them to that which they did not like.

The Kufians also more than others, bore many hardships and terrible calamities because the administration of the ruler made them severely accountable for their support to the Imam in the battle of Siffeen and their cruel ones like Mughairah bin Shobah and Ziyad bin Abih were selected for these functions. They initiated a terrible punishment that continued on the people without any respite. It was a time when Kufians due to their misfortune that they had got as a result of their not obeying and supporting Imam Amirul Momineen (‘a) and his son Imam Hasan (‘a). And their sending delegations and writing letters to His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) to insist him to come and save them from the cruelty of the Umayyads and emancipate them. But it is astonishing that when the Imam responded to them positively their swords were drawn upon His Eminence and they cut up his body and those of his children in the desert of Karbala.

Here comes to an end our chapter on the Demise of the Rightful Government.

¹. Ibne Abil Hadid, Sharh Nahjul Balagha 4/27–29

². Yaqubi, Tarikh, 25/214

³. Al-Irshad, Pg. 2–12

⁴. Life of Imam Hasan (a.s.) 2/106

⁵. Life of Imam Hasan (a.s.) 2/106–107

⁶. Life of Imam Hasan (a.s.) 2/105

⁷. Life of Imam Hasan (a.s.) 2/203

⁸. Yaqubi, Tarikh, 2/214

⁹. Hayatul Islam 1/123

¹⁰. Ahkbaar at-Tiwaal, Pg. 220

¹¹. It is an oath that: Hashim, Zohra and Teema came to Abdullah bin Juda’n and pledged to defend oppression and oppressor and to remain with the truth (Tr.)

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