

Chapter 41: Narration about Lady Narjis Khatoon, mother of al-Qaim (a.s.)

1 – Narrated to us Muhammad bin Ali bin Hatim Naufali: Narrated to us Abul Abbas Ahmad bin Isa Washsha Baghdadi: Narrated to us Ahmad bin Tahir Qummi: Narrated to us Abul Husain Muhammad bin Bahr Shaibani that he said:

“I entered Kerbala in the year 286 A.H. and visited the tomb of the forlorn son of the Messenger of Allah (S) and then returned towards Baghdad, intending to go to the cemetery of Quraish called Maqabir Quraish, the Shrine of the Kazmain (a.s.). It was burning hot, so much so that it seemed that the noontime has been set ablaze and the heavens were burning in flames.

When I reached from there at the shrine of al-Kazim (a.s.) and smelled the breeze of his Tomb that is engulfed in Divine compassion and encircled by gardens of forgiveness, I shed trickling tears and took my grievous sighs which were blocking my eyes from seeing. When my tears ceased and groans stopped and I opened my eyes, I saw an old man whose back was bent and his knees were curved and his forehead and palms had dried like the knees of a camel. Near the tomb, he was saying to another gentleman who was with him: O nephew, through the most esoteric secrets and the noblest of all knowledge, which the two Masters possess, your uncle has reached a nobility the like of which none has carried but Salman.

Your uncle has reached at the end of time and the expiration of his life, yet he does not find in the people of the locality a man to confide his knowledge in. I said to myself: O my soul, unkindness and suffering come from you, inasmuch as I exhaust the foot and the hoof in search of knowledge. Now my ears have caught from this old man a word which alludes to the greatest knowledge and a magnificent affair.

I said to the old gentleman: O Shaykh, who are the two Masters? He replied: The Two Heavenly Stars Treasured on earth in Surre Man Raa. I said: I take an oath by the love and the majestic position of Imamate and succession of these two Masters that I am a searcher of their knowledge and a seeker of

their words. I profess the solemnness of the oaths to protect their secrets. He said: If you are truthful in what you are saying, then present the words from the narrators of their traditions.

As he examined the books and the traditions therein, he said: You are truthful. I am Bishr Ibne Sulaiman al-Nakhkhas from the children of Abu Ayyub Ansari, one of the devotees of Abul Hasan and Abu Muhammad and their neighbor at Surra Man Raa. I said to him: Do favor on your brother by sharing some of the things you have seen from them.

He said: My master Abul Hasan (a.s.) made me knowledgeable about slaves. I would not buy nor sell but with his permission, which helped me avoid dubious occasions, until my knowledge of the subject matured and I could make good distinction between the permissible and the illegal. As such, one night I was at my house in Surra Man Raa and a certain portion of the night had passed, when someone knocked at my door. I ran with speed and saw Kafoor, the servant, the messenger of our Master, Abul Hasan Ali Ibne Muhammad (a.s.) calling me to him. I put on my robes and went to him. I saw him talking to his son, Abu Muhammad (a.s.) and his sister Hakima from behind the curtain.

When I sat, he said: O Bishr, you are from the descendants of the Ansar, and this love has always been in you, with each coming generation inheriting it from the preceding one, and you are trustworthy men of us Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). I am elevating you and ennobling you by an excellence through which you will surpass all Shia in devotion, by sharing a secret with you and sending you to purchase a certain bondmaid. He then wrote a very fine letter in Roman script and Roman language and imprinted his seal on it.

He took out a yellow cloth in which were 200 dinars. He said: Take this and go with it to Baghdad. He told me to go to the crossing of the Euphrates on the noon of such and such day and when I reach the boats of the captives, "You will see bondmaids in them. You will find buyers for the procurers of the Abbasids and a small group from the Arab youths. When you see that, keep an eye on a man called Umar Ibne Yazid al-Nakhkhas from a distance all day long, until a bondmaid is brought to the buyers, who has such and such quality.

Her dress is two thick silks; she refuses to be seen or touched by the examiners; she does not submit to anyone who want to touch her; and you hear a cry in Roman from behind a thin veil. You should know she is saying: Alas from the violation of the veil. One of the buyers says: Mine for 300 dinars; her modesty has ever increased my desire for her. She replies to him in Arabic: Even if you come in the figure of Solomon the son of David and with a kingdom like his, I will not be interested in you. So, save your money.

The slave-dealer says: Then what is the solution? I have to sell you. The bondmaid replies: What is the rush? There must be a buyer that my heart finds rest in him and his fidelity and honesty. At that moment go to Amr bin Yazid al-Nakhkhas and tell him you have a nice letter from a certain man of nobility, which he has written in Roman language and the Roman script. Describing therein his benevolence, his fidelity,

his excellence and his generosity, so she may discern from it the character of its author. Should she be interested in him and choose him, then I am his representative in buying her from you.

Bishr bin Sulaiman says: I performed all that which my Master, Abu Muhammad al-Hasan (a.s.) had ordered me to do with respect to the bondmaid. When she saw the epistle, she cried very profusely and said to Amr bin Yazid: Sell me to the writer of this letter. She took the solemnest of oaths that should he refuse to sell her to him, she will take her life.

I negotiated the price with the dealer until it settled exactly on the amount of dinars my Master had given me. The money being sufficient, I took the bondmaid, who was so very happy and in laughter. I returned with her to the quarters I was residing at in Baghdad. She was very restless until she took out from her pocket the letter of our Master. She would kiss it and put it on her eyes and place it on her cheeks and touch it to her body. Astonished by this, I said: You are kissing a letter you do not know who wrote it.

She said: O incapable and feeble from knowing the position of the progeny of prophets, lend me your ears and empty your heart for my words. I am Malika the daughter of Yashua, son of the Caesar of Rome. My mother is from the descendants of the Disciples of Jesus (Hawariyun) and her lineage goes back to the successor of Jesus, Shamaun.

I will narrate to you the wondrous story. My grandfather the Caesar wanted to marry me to his nephew when I was a girl of thirteen years of age. So he gathered in his palace 300 priests and monks from the descendants of the Hawariyun, and from their men of stature seven hundred men. He gathered four thousand men from commanders of the army and officers of the military and leaders of the armed forces and chiefs of the tribes. He erected a throne from the dearest of his riches, which was adorned with varieties of jewels and was raised over forty steps.

When his nephew climbed, the crosses were fixed about, the bishops took their stands in great reverence, and the pages of the Injeel were opened, suddenly the crosses collapsed from the top and hit the ground. The pillars of the throne crumbled and crashed onto the floor. My grandfather's nephew, who had risen over the throne, fell down unconscious. The colors of the bishops changed and their chests trembled. Their leader said to my grandfather: Please excuse me from facing this evil, which forebodes the demise of this Christian religion and the regal creed.

My grandfather took this as an evil omen and said to the bishops: Erect these scaffolds and raise the crosses and bring the brother of this deceased man, whose dreams have been ruined, so I may marry him to this young girl; and the evil of his dead brother may go away through his fortune.

And when they did that, the same thing happened the second as had happened to the first nephew. People scattered away. My grandfather the Caesar stood in great distress and entered the quarters of the womenfolk. I dropped the curtains and then in the same night saw in my dream that Jesus, Shamaun, and a number of the Hawariyun had gathered at my grandfather's palace. They had installed there a pulpit of light that was defying heavens in height and elevation. It was in the same spot where my

grandfather had installed his throne.

At this, Muhammad, his son-in-law and his successor, the Prince of the Believers (a.s.) and a number of his sons entered. Jesus went forward and embraced him. Muhammad said to him: O Spirit of Allah, I have come to you to propose to your successor Shamaun for his daughter, Malika, for this son of mine, pointing with his son towards Abu Muhammad (a.s.) the son of the writer of this epistle. Jesus looked at Shamaun and said to him: The greatest honor has come to you. Let your relation be bonded with the relation of the house of Muhammad (S).

Shamaun said: It will be my honor to do so. He climbed over that pulpit. Muhammad (S) said the rituals and married me to his son. Jesus bore witness and the sons of Muhammad and the Hawariyun bore witness. When I woke up, I was scared to report this to my father or grandfather, fearing they will kill me. I was keeping this secret and was not revealing it to them. Meanwhile, my heart throbbed with Abu Muhammad's love so much that I forsook eating and drinking.

I became weak and my body grew lean and I became very sick. There was no physician left in the cities of Rome that my grandfather did not bring and ask him to heal me. When despair overwhelmed him, he said to me: O solace of my heart, does any wish occur to your heart in this world, so I may fulfill it? I said: Grandfather, I see the doors of relief shut on me. However, if you save the Muslim captives in your prison torture, and remove their manacles, and do them favors, and kindly release them, I am hopeful that Jesus and his mother will give me health.

When he did that, I made effort to display health and ate a little food. This made him very happy and he became ever intense to confer kindness and respect upon the captives.

I also saw in my dreams for fourteen nights the Mistress of the Women of the worlds, Fatima (a.s.). She visited me along with Mary, the daughter of Imran, and one thousand serfs from the Gardens. Mary says to me: This is the Mistress of the Ladies (a.s.), the mother of your husband, Abu Muhammad (a.s.). So I hold her and cry and complain why Abu Muhammad (a.s.) does not come to visit me.

The Mistress of the Ladies (a.s.) said: My son, Abu Muhammad (a.s.) will not visit you so long as you believe in a partner with Allah in the religion of the Christians. This is my sister, Mary, the daughter of Imran, and she turns to Allah with disdain from your religion. If you want the pleasure of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime and the pleasure of Jesus and his mother, and to have Abu Muhammad (a.s.) visit you, say: I bear witness that a deity other than Allah is not and that my father Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

When I spoke these words, the Mistress of the Ladies (a.s.), pulled me to her chest and my soul was blessed. She said: Now expect the visitations of Abu Muhammad (a.s.). I am sending him to you. I woke up in great excitement and expectation of meeting Abu Muhammad (a.s.). When it was the next night, I saw Abu Muhammad (a.s.) and as if I was saying to him: You have abandoned me, my beloved, while the remedy of your love ruined my soul. He said: My delay was not but for your polytheistic belief. Now

you have embraced Islam and I am going to be visiting you every night until Allah brings us together. Until now, his visitations to me have not ceased yet.

Bishr says: I said to her: How did you fall among the captives? She said: Abu Muhammad (a.s.) told me on one of the nights: Your grandfather will shortly be dispatching an army to fight the Muslims on such and such day, and he will follow them. You have to join them in the entourage of the servants along such and such route.

I did that and the vanguards of Muslims encountered us, which led to my situation that you can see and observe. And no one knew that I am the granddaughter of the Roman Caesar until now except you and that is because I told you. The gentleman in whose share of booty I fell, asked me of my name. I hid my identity from him and said: Narjis. He said: A name of your servants. I said to her: It is amazing that you are Roman and your language is Arabic.

Due to my grandfather's persistence and encouragement that I should increase my learning, he appointed a woman to me, who was his interpreter, to visit me. She would come to me day and night and teach me Arabic until I became fluent and articulate.

Bishr says: When I brought her back to Surra Man Raa, I entered upon my Master Abul Hasan (a.s.). He said to her: How did Allah show you the glory of Islam and the disgrace of Christianity and the nobility of Muhammad and his Household? She said: How would I describe, O son of Allah's Messenger, something which you know better than me. I would like to confer kindness on you. He said to her: Which one is dearer to you, ten thousand dinars or a glad tidings of eternal grandeur? Glad tidings of a son for me.

He said: Rejoice the tidings of having a son who will rule the world from the east to the west and will fill the earth with justice and equity as it will be filled with oppression and corruption. She asked: From whom? He replied in Roman: From the one whom the Messenger of Allah (S) proposed for you on such and such night, in such and such year. To whom Jesus and his successor married you. She asked: From your son, Abu Muhammad? Do you know he visited me since I have embraced Islam on the hands of the Mistress of the Ladies (a.s.)?

Our Master said: Kafoor, call my sister Hakima. And when she entered, he said to her: Here she is. Lady Hakima embraced her long and was very much happy to see her. Abul Hasan (a.s.) said: O daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S), take her to your house and teach her the duties and traditions, for she is the wife of Abu Muhammad and the mother of the Qaim (a.s.).”

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