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Imam Husayn’s Revolution: Activities and programs

Imam Husayn (‘a), just as he has himself mentioned, did not initiate his great revolution for something useless or to project his own image. He neither undertook it for creating mischief and oppression. Rather, His Eminence moved out to reform the condition of the country so that he may establish social justice among the people and destroy factors of terrible humiliation the people were subjected to under the yoke of the Umayyad regime. That he may release them from tethers of degradation that the tyrant rulers had tied them in.

Imam (‘a) initiated his mission against the ruling tyrant so that he may restore to the people their capabilities and nature that they had lost. And to get back the respectable nature to its original position so that through it may be established a rule of justice and equity under the leadership of the Imam and every type of social discrimination is destroyed. Also that life may be established on the foundation of love and brotherhood as that is the rule of God, the Creator and giver of all existence and not the regime of Muawiyah which was based on killings, murders and trampling of human values and suppression of social activities and humanity.

Imam (‘a) began his great revolution so that through it he may open the Book of Allah and make his uprising a lesson for people of reason. Thus he illuminated the path and fixed the aim and bestowed enlightenment to the thinking ones. And through that revolution he demolished the obstacles that the Umayyads had installed to prevent the progress of Islam and its followers. Hence after that revolution, no negative effect or dangerous plots of the Umayyad regime remained in the world of Islam. Because, after the slaying of the Imam, the people rose up like valiant lions and they did not give any importance to their life and safety. They all arose with a firm determination to take up arms against the tyrannical regime of Umayyads and one after other, revolts rocked the Umayyad rule till finally the unjust regime was uprooted from Islam and their ego was annihilated.

Imam (‘a) did not initiate his revolution till the time all options had been exhausted for him and no hope

remained for the reform of the community and there was no other way for him. He had become certain that nothing could reform the condition of the community except the sacrifice of his life. This was the only way to transform the life of the nation and to install the standard of truth on the earth.

I believe that the most important thing for the readers is to learn about the causes of Imam's revolution and the program of his mission. And this is what we shall discuss in detail in the coming pages.

Causes of the Revolution

Some religious responsibilities and social duties etc. had surrounded the Imam ('a) and persuaded him for the revolution. They prepared him for sacrifice and staking his life. Some of these responsibilities were as follows:

1. Religious responsibility

Islam has fixed the responsibility of all the disasters and calamities that befall the people of Islamic lands and all those things that are not beneficial for them upon all Muslims. No one is absolved of this answerability and Islam has not accepted such a thing. Muslims cannot be aloof and careless about whatever happens in the Islamic world. While the Holy Prophet (S) has announced this responsibility and said: "Each of you is responsible and each of you is caretaker of all who are under you." Thus Muslims are responsible to God, that they must have concern for the society, defend the advantages of the country and remain aware of their community.

It was due to this great responsibility that the Imams confronted the atrocities of the Umayyads and destroyed their plans of enslaving the community, humiliating the people and usurping their property. His Eminence has spoken in his address to Hurr and his companions about that which was made incumbent on him by Islam and on the basis of which he performed jihad against the tyrant regime of Yazid.

His Eminence said:

"O people! The Messenger of Allah (S) has said: 'One who sees a tyrant ruler considering the unlawful things lawful, ignoring the command of God, opposing the practice of the Messenger of Allah (S) and deals with people in a sinful and oppressive way, but by word or action he does not object to it, the Almighty Allah has the right to convey him to his place.'"

Religious duty made it incumbent on the Imam to rise up against the Umayyad regime. A regime which considered the unlawful things lawful, trampled His laws, and opposed the practice of the Messenger of Allah (S) and a group of Muslim scholars have stated clearly that it was obligatory for the Imam to start a Jihad in defense of Islam. Some of the scholars who mention this are as follows:

A. Imam Muhammad Abduh: Under the discussion of just and unjust rule according to Islam, Imam Muhammad Abduh has alluded to the uprising of the Imam against Yazid's regime and has considered

the Imam's uprising as a religious duty. And he says: "If a just rulership is established in the world that applies the law of Shariah and at the same time there is another regime that does not apply the laws of Shariah, it is incumbent upon all Muslims to support the former and abandon the latter' and in this way was the uprising of Imam Husayn ('a) the Prophet's grandson against the leaders of injustice and oppression. Who had forcibly usurped the affairs of Muslims under the kingship of Yazid Ibn Muawiyah, may Allah degrade him and his supporters also, that is the Caramatees and Nawasib."^{[1](#)}

B. Muhammad Abdul Baqi: Ustad Muhammad Abdul Baqi Sarwar says regarding religious and social duty that it became obligatory for the Imam to take a stand against Yazid's regime. He says: "If Husayn ('a) had given allegiance to Yazid, the transgressor and profligate, who made wine and fornication lawful, degraded the status of caliphate by sitting with singers and women, arranged drinking parties in official places, decorated dogs and monkeys with gold ornaments while hundreds of thousands of Muslims remained starving and deprived, it would have implied the legalization of all these things.

If Husayn ('a) had pledged allegiance to Yazid while he was a successor of the Messenger of Allah (S), this verdict would have decreed all those things lawful in the view of people and Husayn's silence would also have implied his approval of these sinful activities. His silence against these things would have amounted to sin and crime according to Islamic law' The status that Husayn was having during the time of Yazid not only in the Arabian Peninsula, but in all the Islamic lands, his position among the Muslims and his proximity to the Prophet of the Lord of the worlds and on the basis of this after the passing away of the greatest personality of Muslims, from the aspect of knowledge, piety, ancestry and circumstances he was the foremost person of the nation. Because he was having the responsibility of defending the Islamic heritage. On the basis of this he considered it his duty when he was called to help in order to stop the evils. Especially that he stops the evils because they were committed and encouraged by those who were occupying the seat of vicegerency of the Prophet.

Secondly: His Eminence had received allegiance for caliphate in the Arabian Peninsula and thirty thousand letters of support were received by him from Iraq from the people of Kufa and Basra. And they promised the Imam that they would support him in his fight against Yazid bin Muawiyah. Repeated entreaties insisted that the Imam must rise up against the tyrant regime. So much so, that a leader of these petitioners, Abdullah bin Haseen wrote: "O Husayn! We shall complain against you to Allah on the Day of Judgment." How was it possible for Husayn ('a), who had religious modesty and Islamic shame to have continued to witness these terrible things without taking any action? How is it possible for him not to reply to their calls for help? On the basis of this, he answered their call positively just as Islamic Shariah has stated and he moved to Iraq."^{[2](#)}

This view is the final argument as it is with Islamic proofs that makes it incumbent for the Imam to perform Jihad against the tyrant regime of his time.

C. Abdul Hafeez Abu Saud: Ustad Abdul Hafiz Abu Saud says: "Imam Husayn ('a) after that ñ that is the death of Muawiyah ñ realized that it was his minimum duty to announce his denial to Yazid's allegiance

and to take the allegiance of Muslims for himself for the defense of Islam, for removing oppression and Yazid's destruction.[3](#)

D.Dr. Ahmad Mahmood Sabhi: Among those who expressed their views on this subject is Dr. Ahmad Mahmood Sabhi. He says: "In the rising of Husayn ('a) the acceptance of Yazid's allegiance would have been a deviation from the principles of religion because he considered the transformation of religious successorship into dynastic rule as nothing but a Herculean innovation which had entered Islam. And from that aspect the appointment of Yazid, even though he had such vile habits and was addicted to wine and indulged in playing with monkeys, to the post of successorship of the Prophet was the greatest crime in religion of Islam. Such that whoever were party to that crime or pleased at that, would be responsible for that crime. And that also that a person doing this be the son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S)! In such circumstances the rising of Husayn ('a) was a matter that more than propagation and belief he should be concerned with politics and war first."[4](#)

E.*Alaili*: *Alaili* says: Responsibilities are there upon the caliph, such that if he does not fulfill them, it would be incumbent on the people to depose him. The community is obliged to take up arms against him and it is unanimous verdict of all Muslims that making effort in this regard is obligatory. On the contrary if the ruler is not such, it would be wrong to protest against him and the consequences of opposition in this case would be very bad. Moreover one who legislates is more obliged to respect the law, than any other person in every way. His responsibility in this regard is more. And whenever the ruler becomes a transgressor, openly commits evils and ignores God, His Messenger and believers, respect to such a person would tantamount to be respect of a transgressor and evil man and trusting him would be nothing except trusting ego and open transgression. It is the same thing that is mentioned in the solution-giving statement of His Eminence: "Yazid is a corrupt man, who imbibes wine, puts to death the soul which Allah forbids to be harmed and declares his debauchery in public."[5](#)

These were some views that reject the allegation of those who say that the Imam ('a) had no right to take up arms against the tyranny and oppression that Yazid had wrought.

2. Social Responsibility

Imam had a great responsibility on the basis of his social position with regard to the community against the oppression and injustice that the Umayyads had wrought upon it. Who could have been more deserving to defend the nation and to remove calamities from them? He was the grandson and the beloved one of the Messenger of Allah (S). The religion (of Islam) was the religion of his grandfather. The community (Muslims) was the community of his grandfather. He was having the first preference for the responsibility of leading the Ummah.

Imam Husayn ('a) was certain that he had a responsibility with regard to this community and the selection of remaining silent and lack of uprising against the Umayyad regime which was unjust and tyrannical, was in no way effective in changing the society. Therefore His Eminence took up this great

responsibility on his shoulders and fulfilled his duty with trustworthiness and sincerity and sacrificed his life and that of the members of his family and his friends so that he may turn the Islamic justice and Quranic law to the sphere of life.

3. Completion of Argument for Imam Husayn (‘a).

The argument was completed for the Imam to declare Jihad and confrontation against the powers of injustice and apostasy because he continuously received letters and representations from the important Islamic center of the city of Kufa. The people’s letters cast the divine responsibility on His Eminence. If the Imam had not replied positively to the petitions of the people to save them from oppression he would have been indeed answerable to God and its responsibility and completion of argument would have remained on him forever.

4. Defense of Islam

The most important factor that motivated the Prophet’s grandson to undertake an uprising was to defend Islam from the dangers of the Umayyad rule. The regime that wanted to destroy Islam, uproot it completely and annihilate its values. Because when Yazid sat on the seat of caliphate he announced his disbelief and apostasy in the following words:

“The Hashemites played a game to get rulership. Neither came any news nor any revelation.”

The above couplet clearly exposes the infidelity of period of ignorance which Yazid followed. Because Yazid had no faith in revelation, book, Paradise and Hell. And the grandson of the Prophet realized that if he did not take up arms in defense of religion, the grandson of Abu Sufyan would launch an attack on him and Islam would have remained only in name. On the basis of this, His Eminence initiated his great revolution and sacrificed his blood for the religion of Allah. His blood which was imbued with the fragrance of prophethood, became a balm for this religion. It is definite that if His Eminence had not sacrificed his life, neither the name of Islam had survived nor its customs. The religion would have become the disbelief of the period of Ignorance, sensualities and transgression and all the efforts and hardships of the Holy Prophet (S) for the well-being and guidance of the community would have been in vain. Thus the Messenger of Allah (S) had learnt from the unseen knowledge the future turmoils of his nation and its afflictions at the hands of Quraish. He also knew how Husayn (‘a) would rise up in defense of faith and lay down his life for it. That is why he said in his most sublime saying: Husayn is from me and I am from Husayn. Indeed it is a fact that the Prophet was from Husayn because his sacrifice was in defense of Quran and his pure blood would continue to water the tree of Islam for ages and eons.

5. Protecting Islam

The most important factor for which Imam Husayn (‘a) undertook a revolution was to clean up the Islamic caliphate from Umayyad filths that they had usurped unjustly’because the caliphate of that time was not

a medium of establishment of injustice and removal of backwardness and mischief from the world in a way Islam desired.

Islam considers the institution of caliphate as an important agency for spreading truth and justice among the people. Therefore if the caliphate is righteous all the nation shall also be righteous and if caliphate deviated from its responsibility the community shall fall into terrible turmoil and calamities. That is why Islam has issued detailed instruction about the matter of caliphate and decreed that it should necessarily be headed by a person having a good nature and morals and one who possesses good qualities of justice, trustworthiness and knowledge of the needs of the community in the fields of economics, organization and politics. And one who lacks these qualities is prohibited to claim caliphate. Imam ('a) mentioned these qualities in his first letter to the people of Kufa and stated that one who claims the caliphate of Muslims must necessarily have these traits in a sufficient measure. His Eminence said, "I swear by my religion, he is not an Imam that does not act in accordance with Quran, treads the path of equity, believes in truth and guards his self for the sake of God."⁶

So only one who is imbued with these traits has the right to present himself for the leadership of community and their caliphate and one who is not having these qualities has no right to take up this post which is an important position delegated by the Prophet.

Islamic caliphate is not only dominance over the nation. It is the vicegerency of the Prophet and a continuation of his illuminated personal rulership. Imam Husayn (a.s) realized that the position of his grandfather had fallen into the hands of a drunkard who did not recognize anything apart from his sexual desires and selfish desires. On the basis of this His Eminence rose up so that he may restore to it an illuminated existence and brilliant future of the Islamic Caliphate.

6. Freeing the Aspirations of the Nation

During the time of Muawiyah and Yazid the Islamic community did not have its intentions and any kind of freedom. It was like a lifeless body absolutely bereft of any sensation or capability because it was tied up in chains of slavery and suppression. Their thinking and foresight was curbed completely and between them and their intention was the wall of the Umayyad regime.

The tyrannical regime of the Umayyads had succeeded in destroying and paralyzing the feelings of the people and made them absolutely powerless to do anything against the rule. Though they were supportive of Imam Husayn ('a) in their mind they were not capable of following their conscience because the Umayyad regime of that time had taken full control of their destinies. They were like lifeless idols without any feeling and movement. They had no determination or intention to take any step. They were dressed up in raiment of humiliation and suppressed by the lashes of the Umayyads. They were downtrodden and rendered completely valueless.

Imam stepped in the field of Jihad and sacrifice so that he may bestow the spirit of respect and honor to

the community. The martyrdom of His Eminence was the changing point in the history of Muslims and their life. Suddenly there was a complete change in them and they became armed with determination and resolve and all those obstacles that had restrained them were removed and they were released. The clouds of fear and submissions that had enveloped them changed into a revolution and confrontation. They undertook many uprisings one after the other whose slogan was: "O blood of Husayn! we shall take the revenge of Husayn!" These slogans struck like lightning the thrones of the Umayyad regime and destroyed their power.

7. Freeing the National Economy

Economy of the nation, the lifeblood of social and individual life had been completely destroyed. Because the Umayyads in a blatant manner had taken over the full control of Public Treasury and kept all the funds, war booty and other incomes at their own disposal. They had got hold of a great treasure and accumulated such wealth in their houses that they could not think up of enough channels to spend it. Muawiyah declared to the Muslims that the wealth belonged to God and not to the Muslims and that he was more deserving of it. Saeed bin Aas said: "The towns and habitations are the gardens of Quraish."

The Umayyads employed public funds to further their political aims which were in no way related to the well being of the community. Their significant expenditures were in the following instances:

- A) Purchasing consciences and faiths as we have explained many such instances in our discussion on the economic policy of Muawiyah.
- B) The Umayyads also utilized a great part of public funds in forming committees for fabricating traditions of the Prophet that would exalt the position of Umayyads and decrease the status of Ahlul Bayt as we have already explained in detail in the previous chapters.
- C) They made huge grants, gifts and rewards to nobles in order to prevent them from objecting against the unlawful activities of the regime to curb the rights of the people.
- D) The Umayyads spent without any kind of restraint on vices of wine, dance and songs. That is why their houses had become full of instruments of vice and sensuality and professionals of these activities.

These were some of the ways in which public funds were spent in a free and open manner while the general populace was suffering poverty and hunger. Destitution had increased and the shadow of deprivation was seen in all lands of Islam except for Syria where all the luxuries and riches were obvious. For Syria was the strong fort that the Umayyads were defending with their injustice and atrocities.

Imam Husayn (‘a) rose up to support the economy of the nation and to restore to people a life of balanced livelihood.

His Eminence confiscated the land tax that was being transported to Muawiyah. He also took over various funds that were on way to Damascus Treasury during Yazid's rule and distributed all these funds among the poor and needful people. More than anything else what pained him most was that he saw that poverty was prevalent in people while nothing was being spent on them from the Public Treasury.

8. Social Injustice

Social injustice had spread in all the nooks and corners of the Muslim dominions. There was no place that escaped the atrocities of the Umayyads. Following are some examples of their excesses:

A. Absence of peace: Peace had disappeared from all over the country and fear and terror surrounded all the people. Because the Umayyads were in the forefront to unleash their oppressions in such a way that the innocent were punished instead of the offenders and the non-sinners were penalized instead of the sinners. They used to cast into dungeons people who had not committed any crime simply on the basis of doubt or allegations. A large number of people were also put to death. People used to say in the time of Ziyad: "Leave Saad as Saeed has died." None could be found except that he was terrorized of oppression regarding his life and property. On the basis of this, Imam ('a) undertook an uprising in order to save the people from this terrible oppression.

B. Considering the people lowly: The political line of action of the Umayyads was to humiliate the community and to consider the Muslims lowly. One of their signs of their subjugation of people was that they used to brand the necks of Muslims like cattle are branded and which indicated slavery. They also used to brand the palms of Muslims with a sign so that they may be considered slaves, as the slaves of Rome and blacks were considered.⁷ Imam ('a) hastened to the field of Jihad so that he may bestow the Muslims honor and respect and release them from the darkness of oppression that had afflicted them.

9. Terrible Atrocities on Shias

Imam ('a) was aggrieved at the atrocities unleashed on the Shias during Muawiyah's rule because Muawiyah left no stone unturned to oppress and torture them and to have them killed in the worst possible manner. So much so that he told Imam Husayn ('a), "O Aba Abdillah! You know that I kill the Shias of your father and give them funeral bath, wrap them in shrouds, recite funeral prayer and consign them to the grave."⁸

Muawiyah tried his best to annihilate the Shias as we have already discussed in the chapter on Muawiyah's rule:

- A. Executing their important personalities like Hujr bin Adi, Amr bin Hamaq Khuzai, Saifi bin Faseel and others.
- B. Crucifying them on date palms.
- C. Burying them alive.

- D. Demolishing their houses.
- E. Not accepting their witnesses.
- F. Depriving them from the fixed stipend from Baitul Maal.
- G. Terrorizing their ladies and intimidating them.
- H. Spreading murder and terror in their areas.

These and other atrocities that the Shias were involved in, pained Imam Husayn ('a) to such an extent that he was compelled to write to Muawiyah complaining about his acts of oppression against the Shias as we have already explained in the chapter on Muawiyah's rule.

The cruel steps that the Umayyad regime took against the Shias were among the factors that motivated Imam Husayn ('a) to undertake an uprising against Yazid so that he may emancipate the Shias from these terrible circumstances and to defend them from injustice and oppression.

10. Destroying the name of Ahlul Bayt ('a)

The foremost cause of the uprising of the Imam was that the Umayyad regime was trying its utmost to destroy the remembrance of Ahlul Bayt ('a) and to remove their merits and virtues from the minds of the people. In this regard Muawiyah was worst and he resorted to the most dirty means to achieve this, some are as follows:

- A. Fabrication of traditions for reducing the value of Ahlul Bayt ('a).
- B. Employing government machinery and educational institutions to train and bring up their children inculcating them with enmity towards Ahlul Bayt ('a).
- C. Punishing those in the most terrible manner who mention the excellences of Ahlul Bayt ('a).
- D. Imprecating them from the pulpits, minarets and in their Friday Prayer sermons. Imam Husayn ('a) arranged a great political gathering in the Holy Mecca and informed the people about the dangerous program Muawiyah had designed to remove the Ahlul Bayt from the sphere of Islam. His Eminence stepped out for Jihad immediately and he preferred an early death instead of being compelled to hear the name of his father abused from pulpits and minarets.

11. Destruction of Islamic Values

The Umayyads dared to destroy the Islamic values in such a manner so that no sign of it remains in the life of Muslims. Some of their steps were as follows:

- A. Unity of Muslims

The Umayyads spread discord and conflict among the Muslims and enlivened tribal prejudices and fights among clans and Arab tribes so that no unity is created among the Muslims.

Yazid encouraged Akhtal to denounce the Ansars, who had given refuge to the Prophet and in the days of trouble and hard times of Islam they supported the religion of Islam.

The poetry of the Umayyad period was mainly concerned with shameless insults to some people. Some poets devoted their artistic capabilities only to degrade their rival tribes and clans. The Umayyad poetry was devoid of any sort of social or humanistic aim and it was only concerned with abusing and flaying their competitors. In this way it opposed the formation of unity that Islam desired for its followers.

B. Equality:

Umayyads destroyed justice and equity that Islam had announced because they gave preference to Arabs over non-Arabs and promoted an atmosphere of fear full of convulsions and political groupism among the Muslims, the consequences of which was that non-Arabs began to write books against the Arabs and the Arabs wrote books pointing out the defects of non-Arabs. The person who was foremost in inciting such tendencies was Ziyad bin Abih. He was such that he harbored a great malice towards the Arabs and he ordered writers to denounce their opponents in their writings.

This evil policy was opposed to the spirit of Islam which has appointed all the rights and duties among the Muslims without any tribal discrimination and established equitability.

C. Freedom:

Throughout the Umayyad regime there was no sign of freedom in the sphere of people's life. Because they were dealt with very severely if they tried to do anything according to their will but it was not in accordance with the ruler's wish so that no one could demand his or her right or to say anything for general good. So much so that the regime of guillotine and sword was established.⁹

The chief of noble men rose up so that humans, Muslims and other people may be liberated from social injustice and the rights of people that were usurped during Muawiyah's rule may be restored.

12. Trampling of the society

During the Umayyad period the society had sunk into decadence and all Islamic values had disappeared. The most important causes of decadence that appeared were as follows:

1. The society was deprived of spiritual training regarding which no other caliph other than Ali ('a) paid any attention. His Eminence had paid special attention to it but the terrible incidents obstructed his way when he wanted to reform the society and better their morals.
2. The Umayyad regime tried to destroy the fabric of the society and to deviate it. They instead forced

upon the society everything that was far from the reality of Islam and Islamic guidance. These two factors according to our view were responsible for taking the society towards decadence' The signs of that decay and decadence were as follows:

A. Oath breaking: Most people of the society did not consider it sinful to break oaths and promises because such a thing was considered usual in the society of that time. Arab kings encouraged them in this regard. That is why they announced in their statement of Nakhila: "Every oath we had made to Hasan, we shall not fulfill." And they intentionally broke all pledges they had made to Imam Hasan ('a). It was one of the most prominent characteristics of the Kufians. That is why the greatest pledge they had made to help and assist Imam Husayn ('a) was subsequently broken by them. Thus they broke the pledge they had made to the Almighty. They failed to help him. Nay they even became instrumental in his martyrdom.

B. Not refraining from lies: The maladies that afflicted the society included not refraining from lying. Especially the Kufians were more involved in it. That is why when they had surrounded Imam Husayn ('a) to slay him, His Eminence posed a question to the commanders of the army who had previously written to him inviting him to Kufa:"

"O Shabth bin Rabi'! O Hijaar bin Abjar! O Qais bin Ashath! Did you not write that the fruits were ready and the orchards had become green and you shall find an army at your disposal?"

Those filthy people were absolutely unashamed to lie. They all responded. "We never did that!"

The Imam was astounded. He said, "Glory be to Allah! You indeed did so!"

While the fact was that the crimes they had committed were responsible for the society being involved in calamities and disasters. Their leaders used such people as instruments of injustice and oppression on the Muslims.

C. Selling of consciences: The worst condition towards which the society was headed is best seen in the readiness of the people to sell their consciences to the rulers. We have explained this in detail in the chapter on the reign of Muawiyah.

D. Attracting people to vices: The society was fully attracted to vices and vain pastimes. The Umayyads directly promoted a life of waywardness and they openly tried to deviate the beliefs of the people so that they become absolutely against the balance life advised and commanded by Islam.

These were some of the maladies that the society was involved in and decay and waywardness was widespread in the people. Imam Husayn ('a) took up the uprising to destroy that decadence into which the Muslim society of that time was sinking.

13. Defending his own rights

Imam Husayn ('a) rose up to define his own rights that the Umayyads had usurped from him. The most important of these were as follows:

A. Caliphate: Like his father, Imam Husayn ('a) also had faith that the Progeny of Prophet was more deserving of his successorship than others. Because they were the Ahlul Bayt of Prophethood, mine of messengership and the place of the coming and going of Angels. The Almighty Allah began creation with them and ended it on them. On the basis of the statement of His Eminence he was brought up since childhood with this very belief. That is why he rushed to Umar and shouted, "Get down from my father's pulpit and go on the pulpit of your father."

Such a feeling was not unique to only Imam Husayn ('a). It was found in all the Imams of Ahlul Bayt ('a) because they all believed that Caliphate was one of their rights, because they were the closest people to the Holy Prophet (S) and ones most aware of the aims of His Eminence'

Another point worth mention is that according to the terms of the treaty Imam Husayn ('a) should have been accepted as the de facto caliph as he was according to Shariah. Because Muawiyah had agreed not to transfer the caliphate to anyone else after himself. After Muawiyah, the caliphate should have returned to Imam Hasan ('a) and if anything happened to him it would go to Imam Husayn ('a).[10](#)

On the basis of this, the allegiance of Yazid was not lawful and Imam Husayn ('a) did not revolt against a lawful Caliph of Islam as the Umayyads believe and allege. Rather he had risen up against a tyrant who had usurped his right of caliphate.

B. Khums: Khums is the obligatory right for Ahlul Bayt ('a) as clearly explained in Quran and too many traditions have been recorded about it but the previous regime had usurped it and did not pay anything from it so that the Alawites may not muster the power to revolt. Imam Husayn ('a) told this to Abu Huraira when he refrained him from rising up against Bani Umayyah: "Woe be unto you, O Abu Huraira. Bani Umayyah usurped our property and we remained patient on it."

Most probably the Imam meant to denote Khums by this. In the panegyric that Dibil Khuzai recited for Imam Reza ('a) in Khorasan, he has mentioned this point:

"I see that their right has been distributed among others and their hand has become empty of their rights."

Imam Reza ('a) was moved by these lines and spreading his palms said: "By Allah, they are empty."

Denying the Khums funds to the Alawites became the most important cause of their economic difficulties. Probably through his uprising, Imam Husayn ('a) wanted to restore this right to Ahlul Bayt ('a).

14. Enjoining Good

The strongest motive for Imam Husayn (‘a) in his uprising was the establishment of enjoining good which was one of the primary principles of religion and the Imam was the person having greatest responsibility towards it.

Imam (‘a) in his bequest to his brother, Muhammad Ibn Hanafiyah, has explained the aim of his uprising against Yazid. His Eminence said: “I am not taking up arms in order to make merry, or be ecstatic over what I possess. I am not making mischief, nor exercising oppression. But I am ready to fight for the sole goal of seeking reform of the Ummah of my grandfather, the Apostle of Allah (S). I want to enjoin good and forbid evil”

Imam (‘a) rushed to the fields of Jihad so that he may lay the foundation on which Islamic respectable life may be built up. Pillars of foundation that had been demolished during the period of Umayyad regime. Because in their time the good had become evil and the evil had become good. Imam (‘a) objected against them on many occasions. The most well-known of these instances is the speech His Eminence delivered before the Ansar and Muhajireen denouncing their attitude of supporting the tyrants, obstructing the truth and preferring a life of comfort and luxury as we have already mentioned in the first part of this book.

Regarding the matter, His Eminence said the following to his companions on the day of Ashura, “Do you not see that truth is not acted upon and falsehood is not being removed so that a believer creates in himself the love of proximity of his Lord?”

His Eminence preferred death to life because he witnessed that the truth was being destroyed and falsehood was becoming stronger.

15. Uprooting Innovations

Umayyad regime dared to spread innovations among the Muslims and its aim was not but the destruction and defeat of Islam. Imam (‘a) indicated this in his letters to people saying, “The Sunnah is gone and innovation has become alive.”^{[11](#)}

Imam (‘a) rose up so that the innovations that Umayyads had spread may be destroyed and to enliven the Sunnah of his grandfather that they had destroyed. On the basis of this the ever living aim of His Eminence was uprooting ignorance and hoisting the flag of Islam.

16. Order of the Prophet

The Holy Prophet (S) had been informed through the Unseen about dangers that Islam would face at the hands of Umayyads in future. He also knew that the reformation of message and restoring eternality to its principles was not possible except through the sacrifice of his grandson, Imam Husayn (‘a). Therefore

it was incumbent on His Eminence to don the coat of mail and take up arms for the defense of faith. That is why His Eminence had ordered sacrifice. Therefore His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) stated this reply to the sincere advisor refraining him from going to Iraq. Imam Husayn (‘a) told him as follows: “I have been commanded and I am going to fulfill the command””

Historians have said, “The Messenger of Allah (S) prophesied to the people the martyrdom of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) and also informed them about the great calamities that would befall him and he always expressed sorrow at his killing and cursed his killers.”

In the same way Imam Amirul Momineen (‘a) has also spoken about the impending martyrdom of Imam Husayn (‘a) as we have discussed in the previous volume and quoted the widely narrations in this regard’

Imam Husayn (‘a) had perfect knowledge of what was to befall him because he had heard it all from his grandfather and father and he had become certain of his martyrdom. He had no more hope for living and went on the way of sacrifice and fulfillment of the command of his grandfather; he moved towards death with full determination.

17. Respect and honor

Of the most important factors for which the chief of the nobles undertook an uprising were ‘respect and honor’. Because the Umayyads wanted to force him to humiliation and degradation. But His Eminence did not accept it. He continued to live in honor under the shade of swords and spears. His Eminence has himself explained this matter on the day of Ashura: “Know that this man of evil ancestry has given two options. To pull the sword or face humiliation. Never could we accept humiliation. Allah, His Prophet and noble and valiant ones would never accept it for us. That we prefer the obedience of lowly ones to sacrifice in spite of the testimony of these great people””

His Eminence then said: “I don’t see death except success and I don’t see life with oppressors except as deceit.”

His Eminence happily laid himself in the lap of death to bestow respect and honor to humanity and sacrificed everything for his independence and honor.

18. Deceit and tyranny of Umayyads

Imam Husayn (‘a) was certain that the Umayyads would never leave him alone and would leave no stone unturned to conspire against him and make his life difficult till he gives them the pledge of allegiance.

Imam was the most prominent personality of the Islamic world and Muslims had much regard and devotion to him because His Eminence was the grandson of their Prophet and Chief of the Youths of

Paradise. And it is natural that such a thing was unbearable for the Umayyads that someone should, with all his dominance and lofty status be present in all the lands because such a thing posed a great danger to their kingdom.

The Umayyads were sworn enemies of the Prophet because in the Battle of Badr he had eliminated their elders and humiliated them absolutely. Yazid was waiting for an opportunity to take revenge from Ahlul Bayt for the Battle of Badr. Narrators say that he said:

“I am not from Khandaf if I do not take revenge from the descendants of Ahmad.”

When he had taken his revenge and satiated his malice by shedding blood he began to cry and said:

“We have killed their elders of elders and taken revenge for Badr; thus our account is leveled.”

Umayyads were well known for their deceit and oath– breaking. Because Imam Hasan (‘a) made a peace treaty with Muawiyah and surrendered the Caliphate seat to him. In spite of this Muawiyah betrayed his trust and had him poisoned. And they had also given guarantee of security to Muslim Ibn Aqil but again they betrayed the trust. We have mentioned many examples of those whom Muawiyah had put to death because he feared danger from them.

Imam Husayn (‘a) declared that the Bani Umayyah would not leave him. His Eminence told his brother, Muhammad Ibn Hanafiyah: “Even if I enter into the holes of reptiles they would take me out and kill me.” Also His Eminence told Ja’far Ibn Sulaiman Zai-ee: “By Allah, they would not leave me till they do not take out my heart from inside me.”

Imam (‘a) stood up against them and declared war and died an honorable death that was to shake up the throne of their tyranny and destroy their injustice and rebellion.

These were the factors that compelled the chief of the nobles to revolt against Yazid’s regime.

Valueless Opinion

A group of bigoted supporters of Bani Umayyah have considered the Imam’s uprising to be aimed at obtaining rulership and wealth of the country. This view is a sign of their malice towards Imam (‘a). And it is because of the victory that His Eminence achieved with regard to his blessed aim. It was a victory no other reformer of the world had ever achieved.

Probably some of them may be excused for being ignorant of the facts of the mission of Imam Husayn (‘a) because the Imam (‘a) was certain that his revolution would be defeated in the martial field as his enemy was having the support of a huge army and had a lot of power while the Imam had no army to obtain rulership.

If it was as they claimed that his aim was rulership, when he got the news of the martyrdom of Aqil and

the about turn of the people of Kufa, he could have gone back to Hijaz and again started gathering forces to achieve his aim.

Imam ('a) knew that the circumstances were in every way favorable for the Umayyads and nothing was in his favor or benefit.

Ibn Khaldun says: "Husayn's defeat was a foregone conclusion because Husayn ('a) had nothing with which he could have defeated the Umayyads because the Mudhir tribe was bigoted to the Quraish and the Quraish was malicious to the clan of Abde Manaf and the family of Abde Manaf was hateful to the Umayyads. And the Quraish was aware of this and other people also know it." [12](#)

Imam's revolution was aimed at the restoring of their honor and respect that they had lost and which they had never expected. Therefore the Imam's uprising against Yazid's regime was on the basis of Islamic values that had been plundered by the Umayyads and which they were cutting up into pieces and destroying them'

One of the contemporary writers says: "We have the right to ask what was the aim of Husayn ('a) and why he rose up? If this aim was to eliminate Yazid so that he may take up the Caliphate for himself that he had eyes on we have not seen the insistence in His Eminence himself that he try to go to Kufa in spite of the fact that the people had distanced from him and submitted to Ibn Ziyad and they had aimed themselves to confront the Imam. Even those not having a wide view knew that whatever His Eminence was doing was not in any way improper. If Husayn ('a) had lacked perception he would have turned back to Mecca so that he may once again muster up means to achieve the Caliphate. If he had aimed to obtain the seat of caliphate since the beginning and when the news of killing of his cousin reached him he would have marched forward along with his family members to take revenge for it as some historians have claimed. And if their aim had been such, while he had hardly ninety people of them and if he had gone to take revenge they would all have been killed and thus he would have sacrificed his life for an aim which was less in value and based on revenge.

Apart from this, his duty in revenge would have been such that he would have turned back and gone to gather relatives and supporters so that a group of revenge- seeking persons would have come into being.

On the basis of this, the matter was not connected with revenge and he had no personal motive in it. Rather, the matter was concerned with the Ummah and the problem was related to truth. The movement was the movement of sacrifice, such that he desired to establish an example of sacrifice. That Imam Husayn ('a) did not try to enter Kufa when he learnt that people had turned away from him and his giving up the plan of armed opposition was that he may hoist a flag through his sacrifice for the few people who had some regard for faith and who were in search for a leader who moved to struggle against them and make efforts in this regard.

And also that the movement of their human consciousness and their despair from being able to obtain

their rights had become obvious.”

This discussion contains the illuminated reality present behind the mission of Imam Husayn (‘a) because His Eminence had no personal motive in mind. Rather his aim was to reform the Ummah and to keep them safe from the hands of Umayyads.

Charting out the Course of Revolution

Imam Husayn (‘a) studied deeply the aspects of revolution and his methods were based on complete knowledge and faith and he charted out the program in accordance with it. He decided to employ all his powers in confrontation and to sacrifice everything to save the Ummah, which was involved in hardships at the hands of the political rulership. And he wanted to achieve the liberation of their aspirations.

The German Orientalist, Morbin has studied the planning of Imam Husayn (‘a) for his revolution and he believes that the Imam began to expect victory in the first stage itself and he was sure that he would indeed succeed in his aim. Because the movement of Imam (‘a) against Yazid was as he has said: “A firm determination such that it was difficult for him to surrender himself to the demands of Yazid. And immediate victory was also very difficult for him. On the basis of this he marched forward with his family members and companions so that future victory would be achieved in it after he had passed away. By these means he enlivened a matter that had been suppressed and apart from this he had no hope of life for himself.”

The chief of the nobles was certain that the reality of Islam was not possible that it would succeed but with the sacrifice that he presents with greatness. That is why he became determined and with faith decided to present great sacrifices, some of which were as follows:

1. Sacrificing his own life

Imam (‘a) declared his determination to give up his life and he made this clear in Mecca among the Muslims that the parts of his body would be strewn between Nawawis and Karbala and he also spoke of his martyrdom during the journey to Iraq. He dwelt on the similarity between himself and his brother, Yahya bin Zakaria. That is, his severed head shall be presented to the tyrant of that time from the Umayyads just as the severed head of Yahya (‘a) was presented to the tyrant of Bani Israel.

His Eminence was determined to be martyred and he considered life valueless so that the standard of Islam is hoisted and the word of God is exalted on the earth and in the same way he remained firm on his resolve. And when the multitude of soldiers had surrounded him, he was in no way worried while those mercenaries had mercilessly slaughtered his supporters. Such was the horror of the tragedy that human consciousness is shocked by the magnitude of the disaster. However, His Eminence was the most steadfast and valiant among the people in that terrible calamity. None was seen to have had more determination and resolve neither before that or afterwards. History is not able to find a greater example

of such determination and powerful resolve in any period that influenced the life of people with such a sacrifice that it seemed a bolt of lightning had struck the oppressors and its echo is still heard among the unjust people.

2. Sacrificing his family Members

The chief of the nobles initiated his movement with such conviction that no other social reformer had taken such a step in the whole world. It was that he inculcated the sacrifice-giving belief in order to establish justice and spread truth and righteousness among the people.

For this sacrifice, His Eminence charted out a program and he considered it an important duty of his. When he was in Medina and when Umme Salma, the Prophet's wife rushed to stop him from leaving Medina, he mentioned this and informed her about his martyrdom and the martyrdom of his children'

Armed with this faith His Eminence rushed forward to the field of Jihad and saw his chosen companions competing with each other to give up their lives in his service. They were such that humanity has well recognized their loyalty to truth. He was seeing the stars of Ahlul Bayt and his sons that how in the prime of youth their bodies were being cut up by swords and spears and His Eminence was advising them patience and steadfastness and saying: "Be patient O' my nephews. Have patience O' my Ahlul Bayt! After this you shall never face humiliation and degradation." [13](#)

The whole world was shocked by this great sacrifice which has shown nobility of faith, loftiness of aim and greatness of principles for which His Eminence took up confrontation. Without any doubt, this movement will remain for centuries and generations in the same way so that it can illuminate the way for the people and which may offer to them the best of lessons in loyalty and sacrifice.

3. Sacrificing his property

The chief of the nobles sacrificed all his property and whatever he possessed in the path of Quran and the way of religion. For the Umayyad beasts moved to the camps of His Eminence after his martyrdom and plundered whatever they could find over there. So much so that even sheets and head coverings were not left for the ladies. The plunderers took away these also. In this way they exhibited a decadent behavior and their conscience which had been completely transmogrified.

4. Taking the ladies of his family with him

One of the important aspects of his planning for the great revolution was that he took along the ladies of the family of prophethood to Karbala while he knew that they would have to suffer untold hardships. When Ibn Abbas restrained him from this step he told him: "Indeed Allah has desired to see them in captivity" [14](#)

Through this His Eminence wanted to fulfill his everlasting message in liberating the Ummah from the

slavery of the Umayyads' Those exalted ladies had a very significant role in the overall goal of the chief of the martyrs. They awakened the people from a sleep that had overpowered them and destroyed the awe of the Umayyad rule. The door of opposition to that regime was opened by them. If it hadn't been so none would have dared to utter a single word against the tyrants and transgressors. Whoever studied the aim of the Holy Imam ('a) deeply has understood this meaning. Some scholars and writers have pointed out this matter and some of them are as follows:

A. Imam Kashiful Ghita: Imam Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Aale Kashiful Ghita (q.s.) in many of his writings has emphasized that the coming out of Imam Husayn ('a) with his family members towards Karbala was to perfect the aim and to reach his objective of destroying the Umayyad rule and he says: "Have you any doubt that if only Husayn and his sons had been martyred and those noble ladies had not stepped forward in these circumstances to confront those tyrants the killing of His Eminence would have indeed been forgotten and no one would have arisen to take the revenge of his blood. His blood would have been wasted. Husayn knew that there was no other option for him. No one, other than those great ladies, was capable of the tasks they accomplished. Hence it became incumbent for His Eminence to take them along and it was not only to have them made captives in oppression. It was actually because of a political point of view and deep thought, that is the completion of aim and achievement of objective of destroying Yazid's rule and that he rushed to finish them off before the people may apostatize to their former infidelity of the period of Ignorance and that they destroy Islam" [15](#)

B. Ahmad Fahmi: Ustad Sayyid Ahmad Fahmi says, "Husayn ('a) realized that he would be martyred because he was aware of the evil, debauchery and tyranny of Yazid. After the killing of Husayn, Yazid would have got a free hand to torture the progeny of the Prophet (S), kill the innocent children, defile the honor of ladies and take them and remaining children from wilderness to wilderness and from town to town seeing which the people would be shocked that no greater revenge can be taken from women and children after killing their men and youths.

Under such circumstances His Eminence wanted to take revenge from Yazid in his caliphate and to destroy him while he was in full power and position. And in fact it happened in the way His Eminence had desired. What Yazid and his group did had a profound effect on the conscience of the community because he had behaved in such a horrible manner with the progeny of prophethood, put to such disrespect, ladies who had not seen anything but chastity, purity and honor. These actions of theirs motivated the poets to versify the defects and evils of the Umayyads. The majority of Muslims began to despise the Umayyad Caliphate and the hearts of believers were enraged. On the basis of this, Husayn ('a) killed more severely than his own slaying." [16](#)

C. Ahmad Mahmud Sobhi: Dr. Ahmad Mahmud Sobhi says: "At the time he (His Eminence, Husayn) did not accept but that he took his family members along with himself. So that people may see how evil his enemy was such that he neither did anything acceptable to religion nor anything permitted by humanity. Therefore whatever is done to them along with the spilling of his blood in the desert would not go in vain

and that severe allegations are made against him when there was no impartial witness upon everything that passed between them and their enemies.”

Khanam Dr. Binte Ash-Shati says: “Zainab(‘a), Husayn’s sister, destroyed the victory of Ibn Ziyad and Bani Umayyah and she put drops of fatal poison in the goblets of the victors. And all political events that occurred after that like the revolt of Mukhtar, revolt of Ibn Zubair, downfall of Umayyad regime, establishment of Abbaside rule and after that the strengthening of Shia school of thought. The founder and originator of all these was Zainab al-Kubra. (‘a)[17](#)

We wish to ask what would have been the circumstances if Husayn (‘a) had been killed with his men without any witnesses from his side. The enemy would have shown the incident according to their routine and thus the martyrdom of Husayn (‘a) in the desert would have been in vain”[18](#)

These were some of the views in support of our own opinion. That is the aim of Imam Husayn (‘a) in taking his ladies and children along with him to Karbala was only to enlighten the general views and to explain the lofty aims for which he had undertaken an uprising. The chief of these aims being the elimination of the Umayyad rule whose danger was always perceived on Islamic belief.

Another view is also prevalent that Late Allamah Shaykh Abdul Wahid Muzaffar has explained. It is that His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) took his family with him for the fear that the Umayyads would arrest them and put them into their prisons. He says, “If His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) had left the ladies in Medina, the government would have taken them under their control; rather they would have been arrested openly and cast into dark dungeons. In such circumstances, His Eminence would have had to choose one of the two options each of which was alone sufficient to destroy his objective:

One that he surrenders to the enemies and obeys them so that they may release his honored women and children while it was against the reform expected from the Imam that he had considered so necessary that he bore all hardships.

Or that he should continue to propagate his message and leave his family ladies at the mercy of the enemies while the ladies were such that they had always been secure in the veil of revelation, greatness and majesty. This was something that the modest spirit of Husayn (‘a) could never accept and no sort of shame and modesty hindered the Bani Umayyah and no one in the Islamic world was capable of stopping them.

Bani Umayyah had no qualms in committing any kind of evil deed but their efforts were concentrated only for achieving their aims. They tried all means to reach their objectives even if the means were against religion and reason.

Have you not heard that the Umayyads cast into prison the wife of Amr bin Hamaq Khuzai, wife of Ubaidullah bin Hurr Johfi and wife of Kumayt Asadi also?[19](#)

Anyway, Imam (‘a) by his going out with the ladies destroyed the political program of Umayyads and shattered all signs of oppression that Muawiyah had established because the ladies of the family of revelation took upon themselves the active role to enlighten the society and create awareness in the people. They made them cognizant about the true face of the Umayyads and tore away the disguise of religion that the Umayyads had donned. If these ladies hadn’t been there the effects of Imam Husayn’s revolution would have been lost.

The greatest factor which made the revolution of Imam Husayn (‘a) eternal is this very decision of taking along with himself the ladies of the Prophet’s household. This resulted in the spread of social reformation throughout the periods of history which had a prominent role in creating general awareness. They took up the standard of faith that the Imam had hoisted and they propagated the principles for which the Imam (‘a) had given up his life. That is why the granddaughter of the Prophet and sister of Husayn, Zainab binte Amirul Momineen, stepped forward to the field of Jihad. While they were demolishing the forts of oppressors and through his sacrifice her brother was destroying their victories and giving them defeat and humiliation in their fate and was filling up their houses with grief and sadness.

Leader of Husayn’s caravan, lady of the family of prophethood, Her Eminence Zainab (‘a) rushed to the battlefield while she drove away the mercenaries from her brother, the great Imam. She came forward till she came and stood over the mortal remains of her brother. The eyes of the army were fixed on her. All the ears were attentive to hear what Her Eminence had to say regarding the terrible calamities that had befallen her one after another.

Her Eminence, with absolute calmness, without being worried and shaken by the mountains of calamities looked up at the heavens and with the fervor of faith and warmth of belief said:

“O Allah, please accept this sacrifice from us.”

By this statement she threw the first spark of revolution against the Umayyad regime after the passing away of her brother. That army wished it had sunk into the earth. Because they realized what infamy they had committed and how they had destroyed the principles of Islam and centers of knowledge and faith.

When the prisoners of Ahlul Bayt neared Kufa a huge crowd of Kufians came out to see the captives. The chief lady of the Prophet’s family delivered sermons to them that had them shocked and bewildered. People were astonished and neither could they pay attention nor understand how their houses fell into mourning. They were grieving their terrible destiny because of the sin they had committed. When Her Eminence reached the palace of that rebellious tyrant, the big Satan faced her gloating over his success. He tauntingly asked, “How do you consider God has treated your brother?”

The lady of Bani Hashim glared at him and with great daring replied, “Nothing but good! They were a people for whom God had decreed death and they went forward (bravely) to their resting places. God will gather you and us together. You will plead your excuses to Him and we will be your opponents

before Him. At that time you shall see who is successful. May your mother mourn for you, O son of Marjana.”

These statements exposed Ibn Marjana and disgraced him in a way that was worse than a wound caused by spears.

When they reached Syria, through her effective sermon she shook up the throne of Umayyads. In this way she obtained a victory that not even well-armed armies could have achieved.

The decision of Imam Husayn (‘a) to bring along with himself his household was based on a deep knowledge and foresight through which he was able to achieve a stupendous victory.

Here we conclude our discussion on the factors and causes responsible for the rising of Imam Husayn (‘a).

In Mecca

After His Eminence, Imam Husayn (‘a) announced his absolute denial to give allegiance to Yazid. He set out, with his family and children to Mecca which was the sanctuary of God and His Messenger and he took refuge in the sacred house of Allah because the Almighty Allah has granted security and peace to His servants in it.

Imam (‘a) turned to the city of peace so that he may remain safe and secure from the mischief and oppressions of the Umayyads.

Historians say that His Eminence set out on the night of Sunday, 28th Rajab²⁰ while consternation had fallen on the people of Medina because they were seeing that the Prophet’s clan was leaving their town, never to return again.

The caravan left Medina moving swiftly while the Imam (‘a) was reciting the words of God, ***“My Lord, deliver me from the unjust people.”***²¹

The Holy Imam (‘a) has compared his mission to that of His Eminence, Musa (‘a) against Firon. The mission of His Eminence against the tyrant of his time, the Firon of this Ummah was same so that he may establish truth and raise the lofty edifice of justice.

Imam (‘a) selected the route frequented most by travelers and he did not diverge much from it. Some of his friends suggested to His Eminence, like Ibn Zubair that he should leave the general route lest the Umayyad agents may pursue and arrest him. However, the Imam (‘a) replied with perfect calmness and unabashedly, “No, by Allah! I would never leave this route till we decry the houses of Mecca or that Allah brings the command of that which He likes.”

Imam (‘a) was satisfied with all the commands that God had destined and he never weakened in this

resolve. And those terrible disasters that no man could have borne, failed to weaken his determination. During his mission he used to quote the couplets of the poet, Yazid bin Mufragh:

“Neither do I harass the birds in the morning, nor may Yazid summon me.

That day I shall be disgraced with fear of death while it is behind me so that I may run away from it.”[22](#)

His Eminence was sure while he was firm on his great resolve that death was in his pursuit to allow him to live without disrespect and disgrace and that he does not surrender before Yazid. Some narrators say that His Eminence was reciting the following couplets:

“If a person does not support his wives and children he shall be terribly disgraced.

Tomorrow, before Yazid may reach his aim, we would have accepted death in the east and west.

We shall rush forward like blazing fire such that even if a lion sees it, he would not dare to confront.”

These couplets inform us about the determination of His Eminence to accept death and his firm resolve never to accept the allegiance of Yazid.

With Abdullah bin Muti'

On the way, Abdullah bin Muti' Adawi hastened forward to welcome His Eminence and he said, “O Aba Abdillah, may I be sacrificed for you, where do you head?”

“I am going to Mecca. When I reach there I shall seek the advice of Allah what I do after that.”

“O son of the daughter of Allah's Messenger, may Allah destine good for what you have intended. I am making a suggestion to you, please accept it.”

“What is that?”

“When you go to Mecca, beware so that Kufians may not deceive you because your father was martyred there and your brother was attacked and injured in such a way that he almost died. So maintain the honor of the sacred sanctuary as you are the chief of the Arabs in your time. Thus if you are eliminated, your Ahlul Bayt shall also be finished.”

Imam ('a) thanked him and prayed for his well-being.[23](#)

The Imam's caravan moved forward and continued fast without worrying for anything till they reached Mecca. When His Eminence decried the mountains of Mecca he recited the verse of Quran:

“And when he turned his face towards Madayan, he said: Maybe my Lord will guide me in the right path.”[2425](#)

The Hijrat of His Eminence to Mecca was like the Hijrat of Musa (‘a) to Madayan; because both of them had fled from the Fieros of their time and migrated to confront tyranny and rebellion.

Imam Husayn (‘a) in Mecca

Imam Husayn (‘a) reached Mecca on Friday, the third Shaban^{[26](#)} and stayed in the house of Abbas Ibn Muttalib.^{[27](#)} The people of Mecca welcomed him according to his honor and they met him day and night and inquired from him about religious laws and traditions of the Prophet.

Ibn Kathir says, “In Mecca people met him, sat around him and heard his talks and took benefit from whatever they heard from him and whatever they heard him narrate, they used to note it down.”^{[28](#)}

Through spiritual magnetism, His Eminence attracted the hearts of the people towards him. People used to make a circle around him so that they may satiate their souls with the continued light of his grandfather that spread knowledge and effulgence in the earth.

Attention of Hajj Pilgrims and Umrah visitors towards His Eminence, Husayn (‘a)

All those people who came from various provinces for the Hajj and Umrah of the House of Allah, also began to make it a point to pay visits to His Eminence^{[29](#)} and they also called others to the Holy Imam (‘a). They used to sit besides him. One of them used to ask him about knowledge and traditions and other asked him beneficial things and obtained complete information from him so that through those lights they may be guided in the darkness of their life.^{[30](#)} Imam (‘a) did not waste a single second of his time without spending it to spread his view and social awareness. His Eminence used to advise the people to remain awakened and warned them of the Umayyad policy as its aim was to enslave the Muslims and humiliate them.

Consternation of Ibn Zubair

Ibn Zubair had fled from the allegiance of Yazid and taken refuge in Mecca and the frequenting of people in Imam’s company and their devotion and respect to the Imam was very distasteful to him, because he himself was devoid of a pleasing nature and kindness.

Zaid bin Ali Juzani says, “He had such qualities that with them he was unfit for caliphate because he was miserly and inhospitable. He had bad habits and was jealous of others. He expelled Muhammad bin Hanafiyah and exiled Abdullah bin Abbas to Taif.”^{[31](#)}

Among his personal traits were lowliness and miserliness. A poet has said thus about him:

“By your Lord I have seen Ibn Zubair trying to obtain caliphate at the cost of a date fruit.”^{[32](#)}

During his brief rule the people were troubled with hunger and deprivations. They were involved in different types of problems. Their poets have versified their despair and hopelessness in the following way:

“Slaves complain to the caliph and bemoan anger and starvation.

What was our fault and what had distressed us that which king had become dominant on other around us.”[33](#)

Ibn Zubair used to hunt the simple people, deceive the less intelligent ones and made a show of piety and abstemiousness just as Imam Amirul Momineen (‘a) has described him: “He uses the trap of religion to hunt for the world.”[34](#)

It is confirmed that he revolted against the Umayyad regime not for the sake of Allah. Actually he wanted to obtain kingdom and power. Abdullah bin Umar had expressed this reality when his wife insisted on him to pledge allegiance and she reminded him of his obedience and piety. So he said, “Have you not seen those donkeys of Muawiyah on whom he traveled for Hajj and they were grey? Ibn Zubair does not want anything except that.”[35](#)

Anyway, nothing was more unbearable for Ibn Zubair except the matter of His Eminence, Imam Husayn (‘a). Because he knew that in the presence of Imam Husayn (‘a) no one would pledge allegiance to him. Since His Eminence was the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S) and there was no one equal to him on the face of the earth as Ibn Kathir has said.[36](#)

Oakley has also emphasized this matter and he says: Ibn Zubair perfectly knew that as long as His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) remained, all his efforts shall be in vain. But were he to get some harm the way of caliphate would become easy for him.”

Ibn Zubair suggested to Imam Husayn (‘a) to go to Iraq so that he may get relief. He used to ask him, “What hinders you from going to your Shias and Shias of your father? By Allah, if I had such supporters, I would never have left them.”[37](#)

Ibn Zubair was not really sincere to the Holy Imam (‘a) and he was not having any true concern towards the Holy Imam. He only wished that His Eminence may go away and he be relieved of worry regarding his presence in Mecca. However, the Imam was not ignorant of his true intentions. His Eminence told his companions, “This one”, pointing to Ibn Zubair, “Nothing in the world is better for him except that I leave Hijaz. He knows that people do not consider me equal to him. He wishes I go away from here so that he may get a free hand.”[38](#)

The Umayyad regime also did not pay much attention to Ibn Zubair. It focused all its efforts on Imam Husayn (‘a).

Ghazzali's view

Shaykh Muhammad Ghazzali thinks it was unlikely that Ibn Zubair suggested Imam Husayn (‘a) to go to Iraq so that he (Ibn Zubair) may get a free hand. He says: “Abdullah Ibn Zubair was most God-fearing and there was no one more rooted in Islam than him that he could have stooped to such a lowly act.”³⁹

This view is absolutely against reality. Ibn Zubair had no sort of religiosity because it was he who had flamed the fire of Battle of Jamal and who instigated his father to take part in it. He was that same who sacrificed everything to obtain wealth and power. He was the most malicious foe of the Purified Progeny. For someone like this, is it possible that he could be pious and rooted in Islam?

- [1.](#) Tafsir al-Manar 12/183
- [2.](#) At-Thair al-Awwal fil Islam, Pg. 79
- [3.](#) Sibtar Rasool, Pg 133
- [4.](#) Nazaria Imamate Nazd Shia Ithna Ashari, Pg. 334
- [5.](#) Imam Husayn (a.s.), Pg. 94
- [6.](#) Tabari, Tarikh 5/353
- [7.](#) Tarikh Tamaddun Islami
- [8.](#) Yaqubi, Tarikh 2/231
- [9.](#) Leather mat on which beheading is done
- [10.](#) Life of Imam Hasan (a.s.) 2/298, Al-Isabah 1/333
- [11.](#) Tabari, Tarikh 5/357
- [12.](#) Muqaddimah Pg. 171, Qaidah 30
- [13.](#) Biharul Anwar 45/36
- [14.](#) Biharul Anwar 44/364 (With a little difference)
- [15.](#) Imam Kashiful Ghita has discussed this in detail in his book, As-Siyasatul Husayniyah
- [16.](#) Raihaanatur Rasool, Pg. 167
- [17.](#) Batla Karbala, 176–180
- [18.](#) Nazaria Imamat Nazd Shia Ithna Ashari, Pg. 343
- [19.](#) Tauzeeh al-Ghaamiz min Asraarus Sunan wal Faraidh, Pg. 297–298
- [20.](#) Maqrizi, Khatat 2/286 Printed by Ahya al-Uloom–Lebanon. Ibne Jauzi, Munatzim, 5/324 Al Ifada min Tarikhul Aimmatus Saadah. And in Al Futuh 5/34 it has come that: His Eminence departed after three nights of the month of Shaban had passed.
- [21.](#) Surah Qasas 28:21
- [22.](#) Tabari, Tarikh 5/342
- [23.](#) Ibne Jauzi, Muntazim, Part 5, Pg. 327. Al-Futuh 5/34–35. And in Tarikh Ibne Asakir 14/182 it is mentioned: His Eminence, Husayn (a.s.) passed by Ibne Muti’ when they were busy at the well. So he asked His Eminence, “Where are you going, may my parents be sacrificed on you?” His Eminence replied, “I am going to Mecca.” And His Eminence showed him one of the letters he had received from the people of Kufa. Ibne Muti’ told him not to go there. But the Imam did not accept his suggestion.

After that Ibne Muti told him that their work at the well was complete and that they had already struck water. He requested the Imam to pray that the water be potable. Imam (a.s.) told him to get some water from it which was immediately presented to him. He tasted some of it and directed that the remaining be returned to the well. The water of the well became potable.

And in Waseelatul Maal fee idda manaqibul Aal, Pg. 185 it is quoted from Safiuddin that: Abdullah came to His Eminence,

Husayn (a.s.) and said, “May I be sacrificed on you, where are you going?” His Eminence replied, “Right now I am going to Mecca and after that I shall seek divine counsel and do as Allah wills.”

He said, “May Allah keep you all in good health and make us be sacrificed on you. You be the caretaker of the Sanctuary as you are the leader of Arabs and the people of Hijaz do not consider anyone your equal. People shall come to from all over. Do not leave the vicinity of the Sanctuary, may my paternal and maternal uncles be sacrificed on you.”

[24.](#) Al-Futuh 5/37

[25.](#) Surah Qasas 28:22

[26.](#) Ibne Jauzi, Muntazim, Al-Ifada min Tarikhul Aaimmatus Saada

[27.](#) Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/207 and in Akhbarud Daul, Pg. 229 it is mentioned: His Eminence arrived at Sha'b Ali

[28.](#) Al-Bidayah wan Nihayah: 8/151

[29.](#) Ibne Sabbagh, Al-Fusul al-Muhimma, 183, Waseelatul Maal fi ad Manaqibul Aal, 185

[30.](#) Nahzatul Husayn (a.s.), Pg. 57

[31.](#) Fawaatul Wafayaat 2/173

[32.](#) Ibne Qutaybah, Al-Ma'rif, Pg. 225

[33.](#) Muruj az-Zahab 7/48

[34.](#) Sharh Nahjul Balagha 7/48

[35.](#) Al-Mukhtar, Pg. 95

[36.](#) Al-Bidayah wan Nihayah: 8/151. And in Waseelatul Maal, Pg. 185 it is mentioned: The presence of Husayn was unbearable for the son of Zubair, because as long as Husayn (a.s.) was in that area the people would not give allegiance to him and he would not be able to gain from them what he wanted

[37.](#) Dhahabi, Tarikh Islam 4/170, (First events of year 60)

[38.](#) Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/38. Tabari, Tarikh 5/383

[39.](#) Min Ma'alimul Haqq, Pg. 139

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