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Incidents of the evening of the tenth of Muharram (Ashura') and dispatching the blessed heads to the accursed Ubaydullah bin Ziyad

(Manaqib, Irshad, Malhoof) Then Umar bin Sa'ad dispatched the head of Imam Husayn (a.s.) with Khawli bin Yazeed Asbahi and Hameed bin Muslim Azdi on the same day of the tenth of Muharram to Ubaydullah bin Ziyad. Then he gathered the heads of Imam's companions and relatives that numbered seventy-two. He then dispatched them along with Shimr bin Ziljawshan, Qays bin Ash'as, 'Amr bin Hajjaj and Uzrah bin Qays, who reached it to Ubaydullah bin Ziyad.

Tabari says that Khawli brought the head of Imam Husayn (a.s.) to the royal palace (in Kufa) and saw that the gate was closed. He took the head to his own house and kept it under a drum of the laundry. He had two wives, one of them was from (the clan of) Bani Asad and another from Bani Hazram named Nawar, the daughter of Malik bin Aqrab, and it was the turn of Nawar that night.

Hisham (bin Muhammad Kalbi) says that my father relates from Nawar, the daughter of Malik, that Khawli brought the head of Imam Husayn (a.s.) and kept it in the courtyard below a drum of the laundry.

Then he entered the room and relaxed upon the bed, I asked him, "What news have you brought?" He replied, "I have brought abundant wealth for you. This is the head of Husayn which lies in the courtyard of your house". I said, "Woe be to you! People bring gold and silver, while you have brought the head of the grandson of the Prophet of Allah (S)? By Allah! I shall never ever lay my head besides you upon the bed". Then I stepped away from the bed and came into the courtyard of the house. Then he

(Khawli) called for his other wife from Bani Asad who entered his bed, while I sat there beholding the head. By Allah! I saw a pillar of light extending like a sheet from the courtyard to the heavens, while white birds were circumambulating it. Then when it dawned, he took the head to (Ubaydullah) Ibn Ziyad.

It is narrated in Matalibus Su'ool and Kashful Ghummah, that Basheer bin Malik brought the head of Imam Husayn (a.s.), and placing it before Ubaydullah bin Ziyad said, "Fill my stirrup with gold and silver for I have killed the King whose door was guarded, and the one who recited the Prayers facing the two Qiblahs in his childhood, and whenever ancestry is discussed he possesses the best ancestry, I have killed the one who was the best with regard to father and mother".

Hearing this Ubaydullah was enraged and said, "If you knew that what you just said, then why did you kill him? By Allah! Nothing will reach you from me and I shall dispatch you to him". Then he pulled him closer and beheaded him.

Shaikh Abu Ja'far Al-Tusi, in his Misbahul Mutahajjid, relates from Abdullah bin Sinan, that I entered the presence of my Master Imam Ja'far as Sadiq (a.s.) and it was the day of the tenth of Muharram. I saw that his color had faded away while grief prevailed upon his cheeks, and tears similar to the royal pearls were falling from his eyes. Seeing this I said, "O son of the Prophet of Allah! Why do you weep?" He replied,

"Have you been negligent? Do you not know on which day Husayn was martyred?"

I asked, "O my Master! What do you have to say regarding fast on this day?" Imam replied,

"Fast on that day without intention and end it without joy and do not fast entirely. Then break your fast one hour after the time of Asr Prayers (nearing sunset) with a drink. For it was at that moment of the day that the battle ended upon the Progeny of the Prophet (S) and their martyrdom concluded. While thirty men from among the family of the Prophet lay (martyred) upon the ground in the midst of the group of their companions. And their martyrdom was unpleasant for the Prophet (S), and if he would have been alive on that day, condolence regarding them would have been offered to him".

Saying this Imam started weeping until his beard was soaked with his tears.

Sayyid Ibn Tawoos in his Iqbal says; know that it was the evening of the tenth of Muharram when the family of Imam Husayn (a.s.) and his daughters and children were captivated by the enemies. And they were besieged with grief, regret and lament. And they spent the entire day in such a state that relating the extent of their anguish and disrespect is beyond the strength of my pen. They spent the night in a forlorn state devoid of aide and their men.

While the enemies loathed them extremely and abandoned them while considering them to be wretched. And by this means they desired seeking nearness to Umar bin Sa'ad, the apostate, the one who orphaned the children of Muhammad (S), and who injured their hearts; and of Ubaydullah bin Ziyad, an atheist; and of Yazid bin Mu'awiyah, a renegade, the apex of heresy and obstinacy.

Then he says that, I have seen in Masabeeh a tradition related from Imam Ja'far as Sadiq (a.s.) that he

said, that my father Imam Muhammad bin Ali (al Baqir) (a.s.) related to me that I asked my father Imam Ali bin Husayn (Zainul Abedeen) (a.s.) regarding the medium of transport sent by Yazid for him, and he replied,

“I was mounted upon a feeble and naked Camel (without a litter), while the head of Imam Husayn (a.s.) was raised upon a bamboo. And the women were behind me mounted upon mules devoid of saddles. While the guards had surrounded us behind our heads and all around with extended lances. And if a drop of tear would fall off from anyone of our eyes, their heads would be beaten with their lances, until they entered us into the city of Damascus. And a caller was announcing, ‘O Syrians! These are the captives of the accursed family’.” (Allah’s refuge)

I (the author) say, that (O reader) has this grief ever fallen upon your parents or anyone of your relatives, then one should not consider it to be unworthy. And no Muslim, who recognizes the position of the sons of noblemen, also should consider it to be unworthy. And I (the author) also say that when the evening of the tenth of Muharram approaches, stand up and offer condolences to the Prophet (S) upon these afflictions, with heartache, tearful eyes and aggrieved tongues.

And seek pardon regarding one’s deficiency in this grief and ask forgiveness, and also that it (the grief) is not similar to the grief when one loses one’s dear ones. For it is far away that a person may fulfill the right of mourning upon this severe grief.

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