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Majlis 2: Arrival In Karbala'

Surah al-Fatiha

Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem

Today is the 2nd night of Muharram.

On the 2nd day of Muharram, Husayn's caravan reached Karbala'. Thousands of Yazid's soldiers were already there, having arrived long before the Imam.

The small tribe living in Karbala' gathered around Husayn's caravan. Imam Husayn enquired about the price of the land in Karbala'. He then bought the entire land.

Then, he first spoke to the menfolk of the tribe.

"O, menfolk of Karbala'! We have not come here to fight. Yazid's soldiers will fight with us and we will be killed. They will not bury our bodies and our bodies will be left to the wild animals of the desert. I request a favour from you. Please, bury our bodies.

Imam Husayn then turned to the womenfolk of the tribe.

"Ladies of Karbala'! Your menfolk, out of fear of Yazid's soldiers might not bury our bodies. Ladies! When your men are working in the fields, please come out of your houses and bury our bodies.

Somehow Imam Husayn did not feel the men nor the women would carry out his request.

Sadly, he turned to the children who had gathered and spoke gently to them.

Children! If your father or your mother are unable to bury us, I beg you to throw a fistful of sand over our bodies while you are playing in the fields. That way, children, our bodies will slowly get buried."

Then, he turned to everyone who had gathered around and spoke again.

"My second request to you all is to look after the people who will come to visit our graves after our death. They will be my guests so please look after them and feed them for three days."

Imam then ordered the tents to be pitched by the river. It was very hot in Karbala' and the supply of water was absolutely essential for survival.

'Abbas, commander of Husayn's army, with his men, started to pitch the tents by the river. The commanders of Yazid's army ordered their men to pull out Husayn's tents. They stopped Husayn's tents from being pitched by the river.

'Abbas became very angry. He pulled out his sword and wanted to kill the enemies.

'Abbas, the lion son of 'Ali, was like his father. He was very brave and strong. The enemies feared him. If he wanted the tents to be pitched by the river, then Yazid's men even though in thousands, would not be able to stop him.

Husayn saw what was happening and quickly intervened. He knew his brother's temper and strength.

“'Abbas! My brother 'Abbas! Put your sword back. 'Abbas, we have not come here to fight. Later on, people will say that we started the battle for water. 'Abbas! My brother 'Abbas! Calm down and put your sword back! Let us move away from here. We will pitch our tents elsewhere.”

'Abbas considered his brother to be his master and always obeyed his commands. He put his sword back and ordered his men to pitch their tents away from the river.

This was the 2nd of Muharram. As nights and days passed by, the scene in Karbala' changed.

Day by day Yazid's army increased in number. Nearly 20,000 of Yazid's soldiers surrounded Husayn's tents.

Why so many to fight no more than 72 men in Husayn's army?

Despite having so many men in Yazid's army, his commanders were still worried because the 72 men in Husayn's army were no ordinary men. They were brave, faithful and did not fear death.

Yazid's soldiers knew this and therefore thought of a way to weaken Husayn's army.

On 7th Muharram, Yazid's commanders ordered their men to stop water from reaching Husayn's tents.

There were many ladies and children with Husayn and they suffered a lot without water and food.

For three days, one could hear children crying for water

“Al-Atash! Al-Atash! Al-Atash! Water! Water! Water! Thirst! Thirst! Thirst!”

'Abbas could hear this. He could hear his beloved Sakina crying for water. 'Abbas loved Sakina dearly and always got her anything she wanted.

Every time ‘Abbas heard Sakina crying for water, he shook with grief.

‘Abbas! Poor ‘Abbas, could not bear to hear Sakina crying.

“Al-Atash! Al-Atash! Al-Atash!” echoed through the land of Karbala’ for three days and nights. Many little children died from thirst and hunger.

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaih Raja’oon!

We are from Allah and to Him we will return!

Matam Al-Husayn!

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