

Muslim's Uprising

When Muslim came to know about what had happened to Hani, he feared being assassinated; therefore, he rushed to rise prior to the date that he had set with the public. He ordered 'Abdullah Ibn Hazim to call upon his men, who had then filled the houses surrounding him, to gather together. Four thousand men assembled. They were shouting Badr's call that was: "O Supported One! Annihilate them!"

'Ubaydullah Ibn 'Amr Ibn 'Aziz al-Kindi was placed in command of the Kindah and the Rabi'ah quarters. "March ahead of me," said Muslim, "in command of the cavalry." Muslim Ibn 'Awsajah al-Asadi was placed in command of Mathhaj and Banu Asad. "Take charge of the infantry," Muslim ordered him.

Abu Thumama al-Sa'idi was placed in charge of Tamim and Hamdan, whereas al-'Abbas Ibn Ja'dah al-Jadli was given the command of the Medina troops.

They marched towards the governor's mansion. Ibn Ziyad fortified himself inside it, locking all its gates. He could not resist because there were only thirty policemen with him and twenty of his close men and slaves.

But the substance from which the people of Kufa were made was treachery; so, their standards kept disappearing till no more than three hundred men remained out of the original four thousand.¹ Al-Ahnaф Ibn Qays described them as a whore who demanded a different man every day.²

When those inside the mansion called upon the people of Kufa saying, "O Kufians! Fear Allah and do not expose yourselves to Syrian cavaliers whose might you have already tasted and whom you have already tested on the battlefield," the remaining three hundred dispersed, so much so that a man would come to his son, brother, or cousin and tell him to go home, and a wife would cling to her husband till he returned home.³

Muslim offered the evening prayers at the [grand Kufa] mosque accompanied by only thirty men. Then, when he went to Kindah's quarters, only three men accompanied him.⁴ He hardly proceeded for a short

while before finding himself without anyone at all to show him the way.[5](#)

He alighted from his horse and cautiously traversed Kufa's alleys not knowing where to go.[6](#)

When people abandoned Muslim, their noise died down, and Ibn Ziyad could not hear the voice of any of their men. Ibn Ziyad ordered his bodyguards to inspect the mosque's courtyard to see whether there were any men lying in ambush.

They, therefore, kept lowering their lanterns down its walls and lighting reeds then lowering them down with ropes till they reached the mosque's courtyard.

They could not see anyone, so they informed Ibn Ziyad who ordered his caller to call people to assemble at the mosque. When they filled the mosque, he ascended the pulpit and said, “Aqil's son has caused the dissension and disunity with which you all are familiar; so, there is no security henceforth to any man in whose house we find him.

Anyone who captures him and brings him to us will be paid his blood money. O servants of Allah! Fear Allah and safeguard your obedience and oath of allegiance, and do not expose yourselves to peril.”

Then he ordered al-Hasin Ibn Tamim, chief of his police force, to search homes and highways, warning him that he would kill Muslim should the latter succeed in fleeing from Kufa.[7](#)

Al-Hasin stationed his guards at highway crossroads and pursued the dignitaries who had supported Muslim, arresting ‘Abd al-A’la Ibn Yazid al-Kalbi and ‘Imarah Ibn Salkhab al-Azdi. He threw them in jail then killed them. Then he jailed a group of prominent leaders as a safeguard against what they might do. Among them were al-Asbagh Ibn Nubatah and al-Harith al-A’war al-Hamadani.[8](#)

[1.](#) al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 207.

[2.](#) al-Balathiri, Ansab al-Ashraf, Vol. 5, p. 338. Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani, Al-Aghani, Vol. 17, p. 162. Ibrahim Ibn al-Ashtar described them as such to Mis’ab when the latter had asked the first to raise for him an army from among the people of Iraq.

[3.](#) al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 208.

[4.](#) al-Dinawari, Al-Akhbar al-Tiwal, p. 240.

[5.](#) al-Shareeshi, Sharh Maqamat al-Hariri, Vol. 1, p. 192, at the conclusion of the tenth maqam.

[6.](#) Ibn Nama, Al-Luhuf, p. 29.

[7.](#) al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, pp. 209–210.

[8.](#) On p. 169, Vol. 6, of Ibn Sa’d’s Tabaqat, Sadir’s edition, the author says, “Al-Harith al-A’war died in Kufa during the caliphate of ‘Abdullah Ibn al-Zubayr, and his governor over it was ‘Abdullah Ibn Yazid al-Ansari al-Khatmi. He performed the funeral prayers for him according to his own will.”

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