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Relating to Imam Husayn (a.s.)'s departure from Makkah towards Iraq

Imam Husayn (a.s.) left Makkah towards Iraq on the day of Tarwiyah (eighth Zilhajj), before receiving the news of the martyrdom of Muslim bin Aqeel, who had in those very days revolted in Kufa. He was accompanied by his relatives, children and his Shi'ah.

It is stated in Matalibus Su-ool and others, that there were eighty two men in the caravan with Imam Husayn (a.s.).

It is written in Al Makhzoon fi Tasleeyatul Mahzoon, that Imam Husayn (a.s.) gathered his fellow travelers, who had resolved to go with him to Iraq, and gave each of them ten gold Dinars and a Camel for carrying their luggage. Then he left Makkah on Tuesday, the eight of Zilhajj, the day of Tarwiyah, accompanied by eighty two men among his Shi'ah, friends, retainers and his family.

(Irshad) Farazdaq the poet says, that I went for the pilgrimage in the sixtieth year of Hijra. When I reached the sacred precincts driving the Camel, I saw Imam Husayn (a.s.) leaving Makkah equipped with arms and equipment. I inquired as to whose caravan it was, to which they told me that it was of Husayn bin Ali (a.s.). I went towards him, saluted and said, "May Allah grant you your desire and may your desire be fulfilled! May my parents be your ransom O son of the Prophet! What makes you hasten from the Hajj"?

He replied,

"If I do not hasten to leave, I shall surely be arrested",

then he asked me as to who I was. I replied that I was an Arab and then he did not ask me anything more. Then he asked,

"What news do you have regarding the people of Iraq"?

I replied, "Verily you have asked a wise question, the hearts of the people are with you, but their swords are against you. And destiny descends from the heavens and Allah does what He desires."

Imam replied,

"You speak the truth, all matter is from Allah. 'Everyday He is in a (new) splendid manifestation. (Surah al-Rahman, 55:29)' And if His Decree is the same what we desire, we offer thanks to Him for His blessings, and (only) His help should be sought to offer thanks to Him. Then if fate shuts the hopes, the one who has pure intentions and is pious, shall not be violated."

I replied, "Yes, may Allah grant you success in your hope and safeguard you from that which you fear." Then I put forward some questions regarding vows and the rites of Hajj, he answered them and then moved away saluting me, thus we parted away.¹

When Imam Husayn (a.s.) left Makkah, Yahya bin Sa'eed bin As, along with a group of men met him, who were sent by 'Amr bin Sa'eed, and asked him as to where he intended going and ordered him to return back. Imam did not pay any heed to him. There ensued quarrel among them and they started flogging one another. But Imam and his companions resisted them fiercely.

It is stated in Iqdul Fareed that when 'Amr bin Sa'eed received the news of Imam's departure, he said, "Mount upon every Camels between the heavens and the earth and pursue him." The people were astonished by his speech and went in his pursuit but could not reach him.

(Irshad) Imam reached a place called Tan'eem, and met a caravan of revenue coming from Yemen which was sent by Baheer bin Raysan to Yazid. The goods contained green weeds (Yemeni saffron) and clothes. Imam Husayn (being the Imam of the age and Yazid being an usurper of Caliphate) confiscated it and said to the drivers of the Camels that,

"Whoever among you desires to come with us till Iraq can do so, and we shall pay them for it and shall behave well with them. While whoever desires to go back, we shall pay them the cost until here and they can leave."

Thus a few among them took their payment and left, while those who accompanied them were given proper value and clothes.

(Kamil) Then he proceeded further until they reached Safah and met Farazdaq there. Then the contents of their meeting are the same as has been related earlier. There he received a letter of Abdullah bin Ja'far (a.s.) sent to Imam Husayn (a.s.) with his sons Aun and Muhammad. It's contents were as follows:

"Now then! I say to you in the name of Allah, return back as soon as you receive my letter, for I fear that the direction which you go will result in death and the extirpation of your family. And if this happens, the earth will turn dark, for you are the light of guidance and the hope of the believers. Do not make haste for I am following this letter. Salutations."

Tabari says that Abdullah bin Ja'far went to 'Amr bin Sa'eed bin As and said, "Write a letter addressing to Imam Husayn (a.s.) offering him security, promising fairness and favor. Then impress upon him and request him (sincerely) to return back, so that he may be satisfied and thus return." 'Amr bin Sa'eed replied, "Do write as you desire and bring it back to me so that I may affix my seal on it."

Abdullah wrote the letter and brought it back to 'Amr and said, "Send your brother Yahya with this letter, so that the Imam may be assured that the letter is your effort." He did as directed. 'Amr bin Sa'eed was designated as the Governor of Makkah by Yazid.

Yahya and Abdullah bin Ja'far went with the letter to Imam Husayn (a.s.) and gave it to him. Yahya read the letter. When they returned back they said that when we presented the letter to Imam Husayn (a.s.) and requested him to return back, he excused himself saying,

"I saw the Holy Prophet (S) in a dream and he entrusted a task to me, which I shall perform whether it benefits me or not."

I told him to relate to us his dream to which he said,

"I have not related the dream to anyone nor shall I do so, until I reach the presence of my Lord."

It is related in Irshad that when Abdullah failed to dissuade Imam from returning back, he told his sons Aun and Muhammad to remain with him and go with him and safeguard him on his behalf (if the need arises). Then he returned back with Yahya bin Sa'eed to Makkah.²

Tabari says that the contents of the letter of 'Amr bin Sa'eed were as follows: "In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful. From 'Amr bin Sa'eed to Husayn bin Ali. Now then! I request the Almighty to keep you away from that which may cause your destruction, and to guide you to the path of reward. I have been informed that you are proceeding towards Iraq, I offer you in Allah's protection with both hands, and I fear that it may result in your ruination. I am dispatching Abdullah bin Ja'far and Yahya bin Sa'eed to you, hence return back to me. I pledge security, kindness, virtue and favor for you, and Allah is a Witness, Guarantor, Surety and an Attorney over it. And peace be upon you."

Imam Husayn (a.s.) replied to him:

"Now then! The one, who invites towards Allah and performs virtuous deeds and says that he is a Muslim, has not disassociated with Allah and His Prophet (S). And you have invited me towards security, virtue and kindness, while the best security is that of Allah. Then the one, who does not fear Allah in this world, shall not receive His refuge in the Hereafter. We desire from Allah that we may fear him in this world, so as to avail His security in the Hereafter. If your intention through this letter is kindness and virtue, then may Allah reward you favorably in this world as well as the Hereafter."

(Irshad) Imam Husayn (a.s.) hastened towards Iraq and did not look behind until he reached Zatul Irq. Here the prophesy of the Commander of the faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) was fulfilled. Shaikh Al-Tusi in his

Amali has related from Ammarah Dehni, that he says, that Abu Tufayl told me, that Musayyab bin Najabah came to the presence of Imam Ali (a.s.) catching hold of Abdullah bin Saba. Imam Ali (a.s.) asked as to what had happened. He replied, "This man speaks a lie regarding Allah and His Prophet." Imam asked him as to what he said. I could not hear what Musayyab said but I heard Imam Ali (a.s.) saying that,

"Alas! A man (Referring to Imam Husayn) riding a swift and well-equipped Camel shall come to you not having performed the Hajj or Umrah, and will be killed."

And when Imam Husayn (a.s.) reached Zatul Irq (Malhoof) he met Bashr bin Ghalib, who was coming from Iraq, and inquired from him regarding the state of the people therein. He replied that, "I have seen the people in a state that their hearts are on your side, but their swords are with Bani Umayyah."

Imam replied,

"This brother from Bani Asad says the truth, Allah does whatever He desires and orders whatever He wills."

(Irshad) When Ubaydullah bin Ziyad received news that Imam Husayn (a.s.) was proceeding towards Kufa, he sent Haseen bin Tameem, his police officer, towards Qadsiyah. Then he organized an army from Qadsiyah to Khaffan and from Qadsiyah to Qatqataniyah. He then announced to the people that Husayn bin Ali was coming towards Iraq.

Muhammad bin Abu Talib Musawi relates, that when Waleed bin Utba received the news that Imam was proceeding towards Iraq, he wrote to Ubaydullah bin Ziyad: "Now then! Husayn is coming towards Iraq, and he is the son of Fatima (a.s.) and Fatima is the daughter of the Prophet of Allah (S).

Beware lest you behave badly with him and invite commotion for yourself and your relatives in this world, which will never be diminished, while the distinguished people and the commoners will never forget it until the end of this world." But Ubaydullah paid no heed to Waleed's words.

Rayashi, through his chain of transmitters, relates that the narrator said, that I went for the Pilgrimage and became aloof from my companions and started walking alone and lost my way. Suddenly my sight fell upon some tents and mules, I went towards them and inquired as to whose tents they were.

They replied that the tents were of Husayn (a.s.). I asked that was it Husayn the son of Ali and Fatima (a.s.), and they replied in the affirmative. I inquired as to which particular tent he was and they pointed it to me. I went and saw that the Imam was sitting at the door of the tent reclining on a pillow and reading a letter. I saluted him and he answered. I said, "O son of the Prophet of Allah! May my parents be your ransom! Why have you halted at such a barren desert, devoid of population or fortresses"?

Imam replied,

“The people have terrified me and these are the letters of the people of Kufa who will kill me. Then when they have performed this crime, after having left no sanctity being violated, Allah will appoint a man over them, who will slaughter them and dishonor them more than the people of a slave-girl.”

I (the author) say, that we strongly perceive that the ‘people of the slave-girl’ is an error, while the correct one is Faram (menstrual cloth) of a slave-girl, for it is related that Imam Husayn (a.s.) said:

“By Allah! They will not leave me until they spill the blood of my heart, then when they do so, Allah will appoint a man over them, who will humiliate them more than the Faram of a woman.”

(Irshad) When Imam reached Hajir in Batne Ummah, he dispatched Qays bin Musahhir Saydawi to Kufa, while some say that he sent his foster brother Abdullah bin Yaqtoor. He had not yet received the news of the Martyrdom of Muslim bin Aqeel, and he sent a letter with him:

“In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From Husayn bin Ali to his believer and Muslim brothers. I praise Allah Almighty, besides Whom there is no other Deity. Now then! I have received the letter from Muslim bin Aqeel, informing me regarding the fairness of your intentions and the compliance of your noblemen to assist us and seek our rights. I invoke Allah, the Honorable, the Glorified, that we may face fairness and reward you with the greatest reward. I have left Makkah on Tuesday, the eighth of Zilhajj, the day of Tarwiyyah. When my messenger reaches you, speeden up your task and prepare yourselves that I shall reach you within some days. Peace be upon you and Allah’s Mercy and His Blessings”

While Muslim had written a letter to Imam Husayn (a.s.) twenty seven days prior to his Martyrdom, which read as follows:

“Now then! The person, who goes in search of water, does not lie to his family regarding it. Eighteen thousand people (of Kufa) have pledged allegiance at my hands, thus as soon as you receive my letter, hasten to come.”

And the people of Kufa had written to Imam that, “You have a hundred thousand swords here (to assist you), thus do not delay.”

Qays bin Musahhir Saydawi left for Kufa with Imam’s letter. When he reached Qadsiyyah, he was arrested by Haseen bin Tameem, who sent him to Ubaydullah bin Ziyad. Ubaydullah said, “Sit on the pulpit and curse the liar and son of the liar” (referred to Imam Husayn, Allah’s refuge).

(Malhoof) At another place it is related that when he neared Kufa, Haseen bin Nameer stopped him so as to search him. Qays removed the letter of Imam and tore it, thus Haseen sent him to Ubaydullah. When he was made to stand facing Ubaydullah, he questioned him as to who he was. Qays replied, “I am one of the Shi’ah of the Commander of the faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) and his son.” He asked him as to why he tore the letter. Qays replied, “So that you may not be aware as to what was written therein.”

Ubaydullah asked as to who had written it and to whom was it addressed to. Qays replied, "It was from Husayn bin Ali to a group of the people of Kufa, whose names I do not know." Ubaydullah was infuriated and said, "You shall not go away from me until you reveal their names, or ascend the pulpit and curse Husayn bin Ali, his father and his brother, or else I shall separate each of your joints." Qays replied, "I shall not reveal their names but am ready to curse."

Saying this he ascended the pulpit and started praising and glorifying Allah. Then he offered salutations upon the Prophet (s.w.a.s.) and started praising Imam Ali (a.s.), Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.) and asked for Allah's abundant blessings to be bestowed upon them. Then he sent curses upon Ubaydullah, his father and all the oppressors of Bani Umayyah, from the beginning until the end. Then he said, "O people! I have been sent by Imam Husayn (a.s.) towards you and I have left him at such and such place, then respond to his call." When Ubaydullah was informed as to what Qays said, he ordered that he should be thrown from the top of the palace. Thus he was martyred. (May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon him).

(Irshad) It has been related that he was thrown down with his hands bound together and his bones were crushed, and while some life was still present in him, Abdul Malik bin Umayr Lakhmi came and cut off his head. When people ridiculed him for this act he said, "I desired to relieve him of the pain and hence I did that."

Imam Husayn (a.s.) then left Hajir and reached a watering place of the Arabs, where Abdullah bin Mutee' Adawi was residing. When he saw the Imam, he went up to him and said, "May my parents be your ransom! O son of the Prophet of Allah! Why have you come here"? He helped the Imam dismount and took him to his place. Imam said,

"As you must have heard that Mu'awiyah has died, and the people of Iraq have written to me and invited me towards them."

Abdullah bin Mutee' replied, "O son of the Prophet of Allah! I request you in the name of Allah to consider the sanctity of Islam, besides the sanctity of Quraysh and the Arabs. By Allah! If you seek the kingdom, which the Bani Umayyah hold, they shall surely kill you. And when they have killed you they shall not fear anyone else after you. By Allah! Thus the sanctity of Islam, Quraysh and the Arabs will be violated. Hence do not do so, and do not go to Kufa and do not expose yourself to the Bani Umayyah." But Imam did not agree and intended proceeding further.

Ubaydullah had ordered that the roads from Waqisa till Syria and Basra be closed, so that none could enter therein nor leave from there. Imam Husayn (a.s.), unaware of the happenings (in Kufa), proceeded further until he met some nomads. He inquired from them and they replied, "By Allah! We do not know anything else except that we cannot enter therein nor come out." Thus Imam continued to go further.

It is related that when he reached Khuzaymiyah, he halted there for one night and day. In the morning his sister Hazrat Zainab (a.s.) came to him and said, "O dear brother! Should not I relate to you what I

heard last night”? Imam asked her as to what she had heard. She replied, “During night when I came out of the tent for some task, I heard a caller saying: O eyes strive and get full of tears, who shall weep after me over these martyrs, who are being dragged by destiny to fulfill the promise.” Imam Husayn (a.s.) replied,

“O dear sister! Whatever has been decreed shall come to pass.”

Tabari in his Tareekh relates, that Imam proceeded further until he reached the watering place above Zarood.

Abu Makhnaf says that Saddi, a man from Bani Fazara, related to me, that in the days of Hajjaj bin Yusuf, we had taken refuge in the house of Hars bin Abi Rabi’ah, located in the street of the date-sellers. After the death of Zuhayr bin Qayn, it had been snatched away from Bani ‘Amr bin Yashkur, while the Syrians did not come there. Saddi says that I asked the man of Bani Fazara, “Relate to me regarding your accompanying Imam Husayn (a.s.) from Makkah.”

He said, “We left Makkah with Zuhayr bin Qayn Bajali and were traveling alongside Imam Husayn (a.s.). We despised halting alongside the Imam at any place. Whenever Husayn bin Ali would leave from a particular place, Zuhayr would stay behind, and if Husayn would halt at a particular place, Zuhayr would leave from there, until we reached a place where there was no way except to pitch our tents alongside him. Hence we pitched our tents on one side and Husayn on the other. We were having our lunch when the messenger of Husayn came to us, saluted and came inside the tent. Then he said, “O Zuhayr! Abu Abdullah (Imam Husayn) has sent me to you to invite you to come to him.” We dropped whatever (morsel of food) was there in our hands as if birds sat still on our heads.”

Abu Makhnaf says that Dulham bint ‘Amr, the wife of Zuhayr told me that I told Zuhayr, “The son of the Prophet of Allah (S) has sent his messenger to you, so why do you not go to meet him? Glory be to Allah! I desire that you go to him and listen to what he has to say, then return back.” She says that Zuhayr went and after a short time returned back with a brightened face. Then he ordered that his belongings and tent should be shifted to that of Imam Husayn (a.s.). Then he told me, “I have divorced you. Return back to your family, for I desire that you should face nothing except goodness from my side.”

It is related in Malhoof that Zuhayr bin Qayn said, “I have decided to assist Imam Husayn (a.s.) until I sacrifice my life for him.” Then he gave his dower to his wife and handed her over to his cousin, so that he may reach her to her relatives. The woman arose and bade farewell to her husband, with tears in her eyes and said, “May Allah be your aid and send goodness for you. I only desire from you that on the day of Qiyamah you should remember me in the presence of Husayn’s Grandfather (S).

Tabari says that then Zuhayr told his companions, “The one who desires to come with me can do so, or else this is my last covenant with him. And I desire to relate to you an incident, when we had fought the battle of Lanjar and Allah gave us victory. We won a lot of spoils in hand, when Salman Bahili (some say

Salman Farsi) told us: Are you contented with this victory which has been given to you and with the wealth that has come to you? And we replied in the affirmative. Then he said: When you meet the Prince of the youth from the Progeny of Muhammad (referring to Imam Husayn), be more joyful to fight alongside him than you are with the booty that you just received.” Zuhayr continued, “I give you in Allah’s refuge.” Then Zuhayr always remained among the companions of Imam until he attained martyrdom.

It is related that when Zuhayr was martyred along with Imam Husayn (a.s.), his wife sent her retainer to Karbala to shroud his master.

It is written in Tazkirah of Sibt ibn Jawzi, that Zuhayr was martyred along with Imam Husayn (a.s.). When his wife received the news, she told her retainer, “Go and give shroud to your master.” When the retainer came he saw that the body of Imam was lying without shroud, thus he said to himself, “How can I give shroud to my master and leave Husayn without it, by Allah this can never happen.” Then he gave the shroud to Imam Husayn (a.s.) and brought another shroud for Zuhayr.

(Irshad) Abdullah bin Sulayman and Manzar bin Mushma’il Asadi, two men from Bani Asad, relate that we performed our Hajj and we desired nothing else except to meet Imam Husayn (a.s.) so as to be acquainted as to where his matter had reached. We started galloping our horses speedily until we reached Zarood and found him. Suddenly we saw a man coming from Kufa.

When he saw Imam Husayn (a.s.), he tried to change his track. Imam too stopped for a moment as if desiring to meet him, he did not pay any heed and left. We proceeded towards him and one of us told the other, “Come, we should go to that Kufan and inquire from him the state of Kufa.” Saying this we went up to him and saluted. He replied our salutation.

I asked him as to which tribe he belonged to. He replied that he was from the tribe of Bani Asad. We said that we too were from Bani Asad. Then we asked him his name. He replied that he was Bakr bin so and so. We too revealed our ancestry to him and inquired from him the state of Kufa. He replied, “Yes I am aware of the happenings of Kufa. I have not left Kufa until I saw Muslim bin Aqeel and Hani bin Urwah being martyred. I saw that their legs were tied with ropes and their corpses being dragged in the streets of Kufa.”

Then we went towards Imam and started walking with him until he halted at Sa’labiyah at night. We went closer and saluted him. He answered our salutation and we said, “We have got news for you, if you desire we should relate it to you in the open, and if you desire we should narrate it to you in secrecy.” He looked towards us and his companions and said, “There is nothing hidden from them.” Then we said, “Did you see the Camel-rider, who was coming towards us yesterday”? Imam replied,

“Yes, I saw him and I wish I could inquire from him.”

We continued, “By Allah! We asked him in your stead. The person was from our clan and was intelligent,

honest and of a sound judgment, and he said that he had not left Kufa until he saw Muslim bin Aqeel and Hani bin Urwah being martyred, and their corpses being dragged into the streets of Kufa.” Imam replied,

“Verily we are Allah’s and verily unto Him shall we return. May Allah’s blessings be upon both of them.”

He repeated it several times, then we said, “We ask you in the name of Allah regarding yourself and your family to go away from here. You do not have any companions or supporters in Kufa. We fear lest people therein might unite in hostility against you.”

Then Imam turned towards the children of Aqeel and said,

“What is your opinion now that Muslim has been martyred”?

They replied, “By Allah! We shall not return back, until we avenge the blood of Muslim or we might be killed.” Then Imam turned towards us and said,

“There is no goodness in life after them.”

Then we concluded that without doubt he wanted to go, and said, “May Allah bestow fairness upon you.”

Then he said,

“May Allah’s mercy be upon both of you.”

Then his companions said, “By Allah! Surely you hold a more higher status than Muslim. Then if you go to Kufa people will respond to you call.” Then Imam became silent and waited until dawn. Then he told his companions and retainers to take water as much as they could, and proceeded further.

(Malhoof) It is related that when it dawned, a man from the inhabitants of Kufa, named Abu Hirrah, came and saluted Imam Husayn (a.s.) and said, “O son of the Prophet! Why did you leave the Sanctuary of Allah and His Prophet”? Imam replied,

“Woe be to you O Abu Hirrah! The Bani Umayyah confiscated my wealth but I bore it patiently, they insulted me and I tolerated, but then they desired to spill my blood (in the Sacred Sanctuary). By Allah! An oppressive group of people will kill me and Allah will humiliate them and will assign a sharp-edged sword over them. Then Allah will appoint a man over them, who will humiliate them more severely than the people of Saba, whose ruler was a woman, who governed their wealth and lives.”

The Noble Shaikh Abu Ja’far Kulaini relates from Hakam bin Utaybah, that a person met Imam Husayn (a.s.) at Sa’labiyah, when he had intended going to Karbala (or Kufa). He came and saluted the Imam, who answered and asked him as to where he was from. He replied that he was a Kufan. Imam said,

“By Allah O brother from Kufa! If I had met you in Madina, I would have shown you the traces of

Jibra'eel in my house where he brought, the Revelations (Wahy) upon my grandfather. O brother from Kufa! Verily the wise men questioned us and gained knowledge, then it is quite impractical that we should not be knowing this (regarding the martyrdom)."

Then he hastened until he reached Zubalah, where he received the news of the martyrdom of Abdullah bin Yaqtur.

(Malhoof) In another tradition it is related, that he received the news of the Martyrdom of Muslim bin Aqeel there (in Zubalah).

(Irshad, Tabari) Then he removed a letter and read it in the presence of the people:

"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Now then! We have received a heart rending news that Muslim bin Aqeel, Hani bin Urwah and Abdullah bin Yaqtur have been martyred, and the ones claiming to be our Shi'ah have deserted us. Those of you who would like to go away may do so, they shall not be reproached and the allegiance has been lifted off from them."

Thus people started moving away from his midst, until only those remained with him, who had accompanied him from Madina, or those few who had joined him on the way. He took this step, for the nomads accompanying him thought that he would go to the place where people would obey him. Hence the Imam did not desire to keep them in the dark and wanted only those (genuine) men to remain with him who knew what would ultimately happen.

It is because of this that the Imam always remembered Prophet Yahya (the son of Prophet Zakariyyah) and would hint that he too would be killed likewise and his severed head would be taken a token of gift (as that of Prophet Yahya).

(Malhoof) It is related from Imam Ali Zainul Abedeen (a.s.) that

"We accompanied Imam Husayn (a.s.) from Makkah, and he did not halt at any place or left that place, except that he remembered Prophet Yahya (a.s.). Then one day he said, "One of the wretched things of the world in the sight of Allah is that the head of Yahya was taken as a token of gift to one of the adulteress of Bani Israel."

(Irshad) When it dawned, he told his companions to collect water in large quantity and they proceeded further until they reached Batnul Aqbah and halted there. There he met a man from Bani Ikrimah named 'Amr bin Lawzan, and he asked Imam where he intended to go. Imam replied that he intended to go to Kufa.

Hearing this he said, "I invoke you in the name of Allah to return back, for your hosts will be none other than the points of the lances and the edges of the swords. If those people (the Kufans), who have invited you had prepared themselves to face the battlefield and had straightened the affairs for you, then it would have been fine to go to them, but the case is quite averse, as I have informed you. Hence in my

opinion you should abandon going there.” Imam replied,

“O slave of Allah! I am not unaware of what you opine, but none can go against the commands of the Almighty.”

He then continued,

“By Allah! These people will not leave me until they spill the blood of my heart, and when they have done this, Allah will appoint a person over them, who will make them the most humiliated among nations.”

Shaikh Abul Qasim Ja’far bin Muhammad bin Qawlawayh relates from Imam Ja’far as Sadiq (a.s.), that when Imam Husayn bin Ali (a.s.) reached Batnul Uqba, he addressed his companions that,

“I see myself being murdered.”

They asked him, “Why so O Aba Abdillah”? He replied that he had dreamt regarding it and they asked him what it was. To which he replied,

“I saw that dogs have been injuring me, and a pie-bald dog is wretched among them all.”

Saying this he proceeded further until he reached Sharaf, and at dawn he commanded his men to collect water in large quantity, and proceeded further.

1. It is quite strange that let alone the evil and vicious men, even the faithful and devout Muslims were reckless in assisting the Imam (a.s.) and to hasten to his call. Rather they considered Hajj to be more important a duty than assisting the grandson of the propagator of Islam, who himself was a Guardian of Religion, Upholder of Faith, and a Refuge for Humanity.

And who had come out to safeguard the sanctity and honor of Islam, to enjoin good and forbid evil, which he declared every now and then. The Prophet (S) in his lifetime had predicted numerous times the martyrdom of his grandson and the eminence of his companions, yet they let him go his way and later lamented upon this cold attitude of theirs. It is precisely stated in the Qur’an:

“What! Do people imagine that they will be left off on (their) saying: We believe! and they will not be tried”? (Sura al-Ankaboot, 29:2)

2. Abdullah, the son of Ja’far (at Tayyar) bin Abi Talib, nicknamed Bahrus Sakha (the Ocean of Munificence), was a genuine and sincere follower of Imam Husayn (a.s.) and his family. His services to the Imam of his age and obedience can be verified by his rendering assistance to Imam Ali (a.s.) in the battle of Jamal and Siffin. Imam Ali (a.s.) had given his daughter Sayyidah Zainab (a.s.) in marriage to him. His attachment towards his uncle (Imam Ali (a.s.)) and his bold attitude towards his enemies, can be verified through his daring speech with Mu’awiyah in his house, wherein he strongly remonstrated Mu’awiyah for his hostility towards Imam Ali (a.s.) and his evil deeds.

His sincerity towards Imam Husayn (a.s.) can be confirmed from the above narratives wherein he tries all possible means to assist him and render him security. In some narratives it is stated that the reason for him not accompanying Imam

Husayn (a.s.) was due to his ill-health. This may sound a bit unacceptable but an insincere person would never ever send his wife, children and brother along with the one, whom he knows would be killed. Rather he directed his sons to remain with their uncle and safeguard him.

Tabari, in the sixth volume of his Tareekhul Rusool wal Mulook, quotes an incident that when the news of Imam Husayn (a.s.)'s martyrdom was announced, Abdullah bin Ja'far held a mourning assembly, so people came to him to offer their condolences (for the martyrdom of his sons Aun and Muhammad). His retainer Abul Lislal (or Salasil) said to him, "This is what we got from Husayn." Abdullah was enraged and hurled a sandal at him saying, "O son of an adulteress woman! How dare you say something like that about Husayn? By Allah! Had I been with him, I would not have liked to part with him before being killed defending him. By Allah! What consoles me is that both my sons were martyred in his defense, together with my brother as well as my cousin, who all stood firmly on his side."

Then he turned towards those in his presence and said, "Praise to Allah! It is surely very heavy upon my heart to see Husayn (a.s.) get killed, and that I could not defend him with my life, but both my sons have." These being the words of an honest and sincere adherer of the Household (Ahlul Bayt (a.s.)) of the Prophet (S).

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