

## The Captives Taken To Syria

Ibn Ziyad sent a messenger to Yazid to inform him that al-Husayn (‘a) and those in his company were killed, that his children were in Kufa, and that he was waiting for his orders as to what to do with them. In his answer, Yazid ordered him to send them and the severed heads to him.<sup>[1](#)</sup>

‘Ubaydullah wrote something, tied it to a rock then hurled it inside the prison where the family of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his family, was kept. In it he said, “Orders came from Yazid to take you to him on such-and-such a day. If you hear the *takbir*, you should write your wills; otherwise, there is security.”

The post returned from Syria with the news that al-Husayn's family is being sent to Syria.<sup>[2](#)</sup>

Ibn Ziyad ordered Zajr Ibn Qays and Abu Burda Ibn ‘Awf al-Azdi as well as Tariq Ibn Zabyan to head a band of Kufians charged with carrying al-Husayn's severed head and of those killed with him to Yazid.<sup>[3](#)</sup> Another account says that Mujbir Ibn Murrah Ibn Khalid Ibn Qanab Ibn ‘Umar Ibn Qays Ibn al-Harith Ibn Malik Ibn ‘Ubaydullah Ibn Khuzaymah Ibn Lu'ayy did so.<sup>[4](#)</sup>

They were trailed by ‘Ali Ibn al-Husayn (‘a) whose hands were tied to his neck in the company of his family<sup>[5](#)</sup> in a condition the sight of which would cause anyone's skin to shiver.<sup>[6](#)</sup>

With them was Shimr Ibn Thul-Jawshan, Mujfir Ibn Thu'labah al-'A'idi,<sup>[7](#)</sup> Shabth Ibn Rab'i, ‘Amr Ibn al-Hajjas, in addition to other men. They were ordered to mount the heads on spears and to display them wherever they went.<sup>[8](#)</sup> They hurried till they caught up with them.<sup>[9](#)</sup>

Ibn Lahi'ah is quoted as saying that he saw a man clinging to Ka'ba's curtains seeking refuge with his Lord and saying, “And I cannot see You doing that!” Ibn Lahi'ah took him aside and said to him, “You must be insane! Allah is most Forgiving, most Merciful. Had your sins been as many as rain drops, He would still forgive you.”

He said to Ibn Lahi'ah, “Be informed that I was among those who carried al-Husayn's head to Syria.

Whenever it was dark, we would put the head down, sit around it and drink wine. During one night, I and my fellows were guarding it when I saw lightning and beings that surrounded the head. I was terrified and stunned but remained silent.

I heard crying and wailing and someone saying, 'O Muhammad! Allah ordered me to obey you; so, if you order me, I can cause an earthquake that will swallow these people just as it swallowed the people of Lot.' He said to him, 'O Gabriel! I shall call them to account on the Day of Judgment before my Lord, Glory to Him.

' It was then that I screamed, 'O Messenger of Allah! I plead to you for security!' He said to me, 'Be gone, for Allah shall never forgive you.' So, do you still think that Allah will forgive me?"[10](#)

At one stop on their journey, they put the purified head down; soon they saw a pen made of iron which came out of the wall and which wrote the following in blood:[11](#)

Does a nation that killed Husayn really hope for a way  
His grandfather will intercede for them on the Judgment Day?!

But they were not admonished by such a miracle, and blindness hurled them into the very deepest of all pits; surely Allah, the most Exalted One, is the best of judges.

One farasang before reaching their destination, they placed the head on a rock; a drop of blood fell from it on the rock. Every year, that drop would boil on 'Ashura, and people would assemble there around it and hold mourning commemorations in honour of al-Husayn ('a). A great deal of wailing would be around it.

This continued to take place till 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan ascended the throne. He ordered that the rock should be removed. It was never seen after that, but the spot where that rock stood became the site of a dome built in its honour that they called "al-Nuqta" [the drop].[12](#)

Near the town of Hama and among its orchards stood a mosque called "Masjid al-Husayn." People there say that they escorted the rock and the head of al-Husayn ('a) that bled all the way to Damascus.[13](#)

Near Aleppo there is a shrine known as "Masqat al-Saqt".[14](#) The reason why it was called so is that when the ladies of the Messenger of Allah (S) were taken to that place, al-Husayn's wife had miscarried a son named Muhsin.[15](#)

At some stops, the head was placed atop a spear next to a monk's monastery. During the night, the monk heard a great deal of *tasbeeh* and *tahlil*, and he saw a dazzling light emanating from it. He also

heard a voice saying, "Peace be upon you, O father of 'Abdullah!"

He was amazed and did not know what to make of it. In the morning, he asked people about that head and was told that it was the head of al-Husayn Ibn 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib ('a), son of Fatima ('a) daughter of Prophet Muhammad (S). He said to them, "Woe unto you, people! True are the accounts that said that the heavens would rain blood!"

He asked their permission to kiss the head, but they refused till he paid them some money. He declared his *Shahada* and embraced Islam through the blessing of the one who was beheaded just for supporting the divine call. When they left that place, they looked at the money the monk had given them and saw this verse inscribed on it:

***"And those who oppressed shall come to find how evil their end shall be" (Qur'an, 26:227).<sup>16</sup>***

Is the head of Fatima's son really gifted to the Syrians?

And is it with a rod hit by its killer?

Are the Prophet's virtuous daughters really taken captive

With their heads left without a cover,

Struggling with the pain of loss,

Seeing al-Husayn's head from a distance atop a spear?

They weep, and its sight prohibits patience from coming near,

And his beard with his own blood drenched:

Whatever wind comes teases it and whatever goes.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, pp. 95–97.

<sup>2</sup> al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 266. On p. 96, al-Tabari states that Abu Bukrah was given one week by Bishr Ibn Arta'ah to go to Mu'awiyah. He went back from Syria on the seventh day. On p. 74 of his book Muthir al-Ahzan, Ibn Nama says that 'Amirah was dispatched by 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar to Yazid in order to get him to release al-Mukhtar al-Thaqafi. Yazid wrote a letter in this regard to 'Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyad. 'Amirah brought him the letter to Kufa, crossing the distance from [Damascus,] Syria to Kufa in eleven days.

<sup>3</sup> al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 264. Ibn al-Athir, Vol. 4, p. 34. Al-Bidaya, Vol. 8, p. 191. al-Khawarizmi. al-Mufid, Al-Irshad. l'lam al-Wara, p. 149. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 97.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Al-Isabah, Vol. 3, p. 489, where Murrah's biography is discussed.

<sup>5</sup> al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 254. Al-Maqrizi, Khutat, Vol. 2, p. 288.

<sup>6</sup> al-Qarmani, Tarikh, p. 108. al-Yafi'i, Mir'at al-Jinan, Vol. 1, p. 134. In both references, it is stated that the daughters of Imam al-Husayn son of 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib ('a) were taken into captivity, and Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) was with them, and that he was sick. They were driven as captives; may Allah be the Killer of those who did it. Only Ibn Taymiyyah differed from all other historians when he stated on p. 288 of his book Minhaj al-l'tidal saying that al-Husayn's women were taken to Medina after he had been killed.

<sup>7</sup> On p. 165 of Ibn Hazm's book Jamharat Ansab al-'Arab, it is stated that, "Among Banu 'Aidah are: Mujfir Ibn Murrah Ibn Khalid Ibn 'Amir Ibn Qaban Ibn 'Amr Ibn Qays Ibn al-Harith Ibn Malik Ibn 'Ubayd Ibn Khuzaymah Ibn Lu'ay, and he is the one who carried the head of al-Husayn son of 'Ali, peace be upon both of them, to Syria."

<sup>8</sup> al-Turayhi, Al-Muntakhab, p. 339 (second edition).

<sup>9</sup> al-Mufid, Al-Irshad.

[10.](#) Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 98.

[11.](#) Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Mujma' al-Zawa'id, Vol. 9, p. 199. al-Suyuti, Al-Khasa'is, Vol. 2, p. 127. Ibn 'Asakir, Tarikh, Vol. 4, p. 342. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa, p. 116. Shaikh Muhammad al-Qatari al-Biladi al-Bahrani, Al-Kawakib al-Durriyya, Vol. 1, p. 57. al-Shabrawi, Al-Ithaf bi hHubbil-Ashraf, p. 23. On p. 98 of his book Al-Luhuf, Ibn Tawus attributes this statement to Tarikh Baghdad by Ibn al-Najjar. On p. 108 of his Tarikh, al-Qarmani says, "They reached a monastery on the highway where they stayed for the afternoon. They found the said line written on one of its walls." On p. 285, Vol. 2, of his Khutat, al-Maqrizi says, "This was written in the past, and nobody knows who said it." On p. 53 of his book Muthir al-Ahzan, Ibn Nama says, "Three hundred years before the Prophetic mission, there was some digging in the land of the [Byzantine] Romans, and this line was found inscribed in the Musnad on a rock, and the Musnad is the language of the offspring of Seth."

[12.](#) Shaikh 'Abbas al-Qummi, Nafs al-Mahmum, p. 228. It is stated on p. 23, Vol. 3, of Nahr al-Thahab fi Tarikh Halab that, "When al-Husayn's head was brought with the captives, they reached a mountain to the west of Aleppo. One drop of blood fell from the sacred head above which a mausoleum called Mashhad al-Nuqta [mausoleum of the drop] was constructed." On p. 280, Vol. 3, Yahya Ibn Abu Tay's Tarikh is cited recounting the names of those who constructed and renovated it. On p. 66 of the book titled Al-Isharat ila Ma'rifat al-Ziyarat by Abul-Hasan 'Ali Ibn Abu Bakr al-Harawi (who died in 611 A.H./1215 A.D.), it is stated that, "In the town of Nasibin, there is a mausoleum called Mashhad al-Nuqta, a reference to a drop from al-Husayn's head. Also, there is at Suq al-Nashshabin a place called Mashhad al-Ra's [mausoleum of the head] where the head was hung when the captives were brought to Syria."

[13.](#) The mentor and revered muhaddith. Shaikh 'Abbas al-Qummi, says the following in his book Nafs al-Mahmum, "I saw that stone on my way to the pilgrimage, and I heard the servants talking about it."

[14.](#) On p. 173, Vol. 3, of Mu'jam al-Buldan, and on p. 128 of Kharitat al-'Aja'ib, it is referred to as "Mashhad al-Tarh." On p. 278, Vol. 2, of Nahr al-Thahab, it is called "Mashad al-Dakka." Mashhad al-Tarh is located to the west of Aleppo. In the Tarikh of Ibn Abu Tay, it is indicated that Mashhad al-Tarh was built in the year 351 A.H./962 A.D. according to the order of Sayf al-Dawlah. Other historians have said that one of al-Husayn's wives had miscarried in that place when al-Husayn's children and the severed heads were brought with them. There used to be a useful mineral in that area, but when its residents felt elated upon seeing the captives, Zainab invoked Allah's curse on them; therefore, that mineral lost its useful qualities. Then the author goes on to document the history of its renovations.

[15.](#) In the discussion of the subject of "Jawshan," on p. 173, Vol. 3, of his work Mu'jam al-Buldan, and also on p. 128 of Kharitat al-'Aja'ib, where reference to the Jawshan mountain is made, it is stated that one of al-Husayn's family members taken captive asked some of those who worked there to give him bread and water. When they refused, he invoked Allah to curse them, thus condemning the labour of all labourers at that place to always be unprofitable.

[16.](#) Ibn al-Jawzi, the grandson, Tathkirat al-Khawass, p. 150.

[17.](#) These verses were composed by the 'Allama shaikh 'Abd al-Husayn al-A'sam al-Najafi, may Allah have mercy on his soul.

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