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The Imam's Journey to Karbala

While in Mecca, Imam Husayn received the news that Yazid had sent 'Umar Ibn Sa'd Ibn al-As as delegate of the caliph to the Hajj pilgrims and that among his duties was to kill Imam Husayn, on the spot, wherever he finds him. Because of this, the Imam decided to leave Mecca before the pilgrimage season. Before he left, he gave a sermon:

"In the name of God. All Praises to God... Death is written on the children of Adam as a necklace is designed for the neck of a girl. I see myself to be torn by beasts between *Karbala* and Nawawis. Whatever God likes, we will do. We are patient with His test. We are not going to deviate from the teachings of the Messenger of God. Whoever wishes to come with us, he may. I am going to leave tomorrow morning."

He left Mecca on the 8th of Dhul-Hijjah, 60 of Hijrah (680 CE). With him were his family, his followers from the Hijaz area, Basrah, and Kufah. Many dignitaries of Mecca tried to change his mind. His cousin 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas asked him to wait, and warned him, "You might be killed, and the people of Iraq are not reliable. At least go some other place, such as Yemen, where your father had followers."

The Imam replied, "O my cousin! I know that you are sincere, but I have decided on this journey."

Ibn 'Abbas said, "Then, do not take your children and your family, I am afraid if you take them, they may see you die."

Imam Husayn replied, "By God, they are not going to leave me. If they leave me, they are going to be victims of someone who would not have mercy on them."

Then, the Imam mentioned that he did not want any blood spilled in Mecca and he wanted the family to be united, and whatever happens would happen to them together. And, if he leaves them, they would not be under anyone's protection.

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