

Those Whose Conscience is Free

One night before his martyrdom¹, al-Husayn (‘a) went to his companions to say:

“I glorify Allah in the best of glorification and praise Him for both ease and adversity. Lord! I praise You for having honoured us with Prophethood, taught us the Qur’an, made us faqihs in the creed, made for us the hearing, the vision, and the understanding, and You did not let us be among the polytheists.

I know no companions more worthy, nor better, than mine, nor any members of a family more joining of the ties of kinship than my Ahl al-Bayt (‘a); so, may Allah reward all of you on my behalf.² My grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S), told me that I would be taken to Iraq and settle in a land called ‘Amura and Karbala’ where I would be martyred. That very time has come quite close.³

I think that our day of confronting these enemies shall be tomorrow, and I have given you permission, all of you, to freely go. You are not obligated henceforth to stay with me.

The night has already covered you, so ride it as a camel, and let each man among you take with him one man from my Ahl al-Bayt (‘a); so, may Allah reward you all! Disperse to your cities and villages, for these folks are after me, and if they get hold of me, they will not seek others.”

The Imam’s brothers, sons, nephews and the sons of ‘Abdullah Ibn Ja’far said, “And why should we do that? Just to survive you? May Allah never permit us to see that day.” The first to speak from among them to make this statement was al-’Abbas Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Abu Talib (‘a) followed by the offspring of Hashim.

Al-Husayn (‘a) turned to ‘Aqil’s sons and said, “*Suffices you of the loss the killing of Muslim. Go, for I have permitted you to leave.*” They all said, “What would people, in that case, say about us, and what can we say to them?”

Shall we tell them that we left our mentor, master, and the son of the best of our uncles without having shot an arrow or stabbed with a lance or dealt a sword blow in his defense, and that we do not know what they did? No, by Allah! We shall never do anything like that! Rather, we shall sacrifice our lives,

wealth and families for you, and we shall fight on your side till we meet your fate. We loathe life after you.”[4](#)

Souls insisted on upholding their father's legacy
So they are either shot or are shooting.
Their souls are to the battlefield accustomed
Just as their feet are to the pulpits used.[5](#)

Muslim Ibn ‘Awsajah said, “Are we the type of people that would abandon you?! And what excuse shall we produce before Allah for not having carried out our responsibilities towards you?! By Allah!

I shall never part with you till I stab their chests with my lance and strike them with my sword so long as my hand can hold it. And even if I have no weapon to fight them, I shall hurl stones at them till I die with you.”

Sa’id Ibn ‘Abdullah al-Hanafi said, “By Allah! We shall never abandon you till Allah ascertains that we safeguarded our word to His Messenger in his absence with regard to you.

By Allah! Had I come to know that I shall be killed, then I die, then I shall be burnt alive, then my ashes will be strewn, and this will be done to me seventy times, I shall still refuse to part with you till I meet my death defending you. And why should I not do so since it is only one time's killing followed by eternal bliss?!”

Zuhayr Ibn al-Qayn said, “By Allah! I wish I will be killed, then brought back to life, then killed again, and so on for thousands of times, and that Allah, the most Exalted, the Great, will let such fighting keep you and these youths from among your Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) alive.”

The rest of the companions made similar statements, so al-Husayn (‘a) invoked Allah to reward them well.[6](#)

Meanwhile, someone said to Muhammad Ibn Bashir al-Hadrami, “Your son has been captured in the outskirts of Rey.” He said, “I do not like him to be arrested while I survive him.” Al-Husayn (‘a) said to him, “You are relieved from your oath of allegiance to me; so, go and secure the release of your son.”

“No, by Allah,” said he, “I shall never do so; may the wild beasts devour me should I ever part with you!” The Imam (‘a) said to him, “Then give your [other] son these five outfits so that he would utilize them in securing his brother's release,” and their value was estimated at one thousand dinars.[7](#)

A band raced to defend him, one that

Inherited glories, young and aged.
Whoever solicits them for what he dislikes
Will find them lions enraged.
They rushed when a war caller called
Trampling in Karbala' the plains.
Lions whose ornaments are the swords
Whose clothes are the shields.
They took water-bags as their eyes' decoration,
They dyed their hands with ponds,
Leaning as though the deer sang for them
And as though they served them their cups.
Their swords shone, so they rained
With their blood as the ground turned into clouds,
As though they were welcoming the *huris*:
Thus did they welcome the lances and the swords.
They found death in defending Muhammad's offspring
Sweet in taste, yet life after them is pain, unpleasing.[8](#)

Once he realized how sincere they were in defending him, he acquainted them with what they did not know of fate. Said he, "Tomorrow, I shall be killed and so shall you, and none of you will survive,[9](#) not even al-Qasim, nor 'Abdullah, my infant son, with the exception of my son 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin, for Allah will not permit my family line to discontinue should he be killed, and he shall be the father of eight Imams."[10](#)

They all said, "All praise is due to Allah Who has granted us the blessing of being your supporters and honoured us with dying with you! Should we refuse to be in your degree [of divine bliss], O son of the Messenger of Allah (S)?!" The Imam ('a), therefore, wished them well[11](#) then unveiled from their vision what Allah has in store for them of the bliss in Paradise, showing them their mansions therein.[12](#) This is not too much to expect in his regard due to the Divine Will of the most Exalted One, nor was it a strange conduct coming from an Imam. When they believed in Moses ('a) and Pharaoh was about to kill them, Moses the prophet showed them their places in Paradise.[13](#)

In a statement, Imam Abu Ja'far, al-Baqir, peace be upon him, said to his companions, "Good news for you about your entering Paradise! By Allah! We shall stay as long as Allah wills after whatever happens to us, then Allah will bring us and you back to life when our Qa'im reappears, so he will seek revenge against the oppressors.

I and you shall witness them chained and shackled and suffering from various types of pain." He was asked,

“Who is your Qa'im, O son of the Messenger of Allah?” “He is the seventh from among the offspring of my son, [Imam] Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali al-Baqir (‘a); he is al-Hujjah son of al-Hasan Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Musa Ibn Ja’far Ibn Muhammad son of my son ‘Ali; he is the one who will remain in occultation for a long time then shall he reappear and fill the world with justice and equity just as it had been filled with injustice and inequity.”¹⁴

- ^{1.} al-Fadl Ibn Shathan, Ithbat al-Raj’a. This reference ought to be regarded as a book about the occultation, for it contains only one single hadith referring to the raj’a (the return).
- ^{2.} al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, pp. 238–239. Ibn al-Athir, Al-Kamil, Vol. 4, p. 34.
- ^{3.} Ithbat al-Raj’a.
- ^{4.} al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 238. Ibn al-Athir, Al-Kamil, Vol. 4, p. 24. al-Mufid, Al-Irshad. al-Tabarsi, l’lam al-Wara, p. 141. al-Thahabi, Siyar A’lam al-Nubala’, Vol. 3, p. 202.
- ^{5.} These verses are cited on p. 17 of Ibn Nama's book Muthir al-Ahzan.
- ^{6.} al-Mufid, Al-Irshad. al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 239.
- ^{7.} Ibn Nama, Al-Luhuf, p. 53.
- ^{8.} These verses were composed by the ‘Allama Sayyid Riḍā al-Hindi, may Allah have mercy on him.
- ^{9.} Shaikh ‘Abbas al-Qummi, Nafs al-Mahmum, p. 122.
- ^{10.} Sayyid Kaḍīm al-Ha’iri, Asrar al-Shahada.
- ^{11.} Shaikh ‘Abbas al-Qummi, Nafs al-Mahmum, p. 122.
- ^{12.} al-Rawiini, Al-Khara’ij.
- ^{13.} al-Mas’udi, Akhbar al-Zaman, p. 247.
- ^{14.} Ithbat al-Raj’a.

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