

What Did Happen To Thy Sons?

After the martyrdom of Ali and absolute domination of Moawiya over the Caliphate, willy-nilly contacts were taking place between him and the sincere followers of Ali. He tried hard to make them confess that they did not gain anything by their friendship with Ali. Obviously they had lost everything on the altar of that friendship. He longed to hear from their mouth at least some expression of regret and remorse, but this wish never materialized.

The followers of Ali, after his martyrdom, had become more and more aware of his virtues and greatness. Whatever their sacrifices during his lifetime, now they were doing more for his love, for his principles and for keeping his mission alive. They were having all kinds of hardship very courageously. And, as a result, the endeavors of Moawiya sometimes produced opposite results.

Adi son of Hatim, the paramount chief of the Tai Tribe, was one of the devoted, sincere and knowledgeable followers of Ali. He had many sons. He, his sons and his tribe were always ready to sacrifice their all for Ali. His three sons named Tarfa, Turaif and Tarif were martyred in the war of Seffin under the banner of Ali. The time went on; Ali was martyred; Moawiya usurped the Caliphate; and once Adi came face to face with Moawiya.

To revive his sad memories and to make him confess how much harm had come to him in the friendship of Ali, Moawiya said:

"What happened to your three sons, Tarfa, Turaif and Tarif?"

"They were martyred in the battle of Seffin under the banner of Ali"

"Ali did not do justice to you"

"Why?"

"Because he threw your sons in the mouth of death and preserved his own sons in safety"

"I did not do justice to Ali"

"Why?"

"Because he was killed and I am still alive. I ought to have sacrificed myself for him in his life– time"

Moawiya saw that he was not getting what he had aimed at. On the other side, he also wanted to hear about the character and life of Ali from those who had been nearer to Ali and had lived with him day in and day out. Therefore, he asked Adi to narrate to him the character of Ali as he had seen it. Adi asked to be excused; but Moawiya insisted and then Adi said.

"By God, Ali was the most far–sighted and strong man. He talked with righteousness and decided the cases with clarity. He was an ocean of knowledge and wisdom. He hated the worldly pomp and show, and liked the solitude of night. He wept more (in love of Allah) and thought more (about Allah). In solitude, he scrutinized his own self and pitied about the past. He preferred short clothes and simple life. Amongst us he was like one of us. If we requested him for anything he granted our request.

When we visited him he made us sit near him without keeping any distance. In spite of all this humbleness, his presence was so awe– inspiring that we did not dare utter any words before him. He was so majestic that we could not look at him.

When he smiled his teeth appeared like a string of pearls. He respected honest and pious people and was kind to indigent. Neither a strong man had any fear of injustice from him, nor a weak person ever lost hope of his justice. By God, one night I saw him standing in his place of worship when the dark night had engulfed everything; tears were rolling down on his face and beard; he was restless like a snake–bitten person and was weeping like a bereaved man."

"It seems as if even now I am hearing his voice as he was addressing the world: `O World, thou art coming towards me and wantest to lure me? Go deceive someone else. Thy time is not come. I have divorced thee thrice after when there is no return. Thy pleasure is valueless and thy importance insignificant. Alas! the provision is too little, the journey too long and there is no companion'."

Hearing these words of Adi, Moawiya started crying, then wiping off the tears, he said:

"May God bless Abul Hassan (Ali). He was as you have said. Now tell me how do you feel without him?"

"I feel like a mother whose dear one is beheaded in her lap"

"Wouldn't you ever forget him?"

"Would the world allow me to forget him?"

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