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In Medina

Al-Sajjad ('a) had no choice except to leave Karbala' and set forth to Medina after having stayed there for three days. It was too much for him to see how his aunts and the other women, as well as the children, were all crying day and night while visiting one grave after another.

She complains about her foes
And his folks does she mourn,
What a condition wherein patience unfolded
And patience did depart.
So we mourn her and complain
With the blood of the insides tears are mixed.
And agony penetrates even a solid stone
So the heart is into bits and pieces torn. [1](#)

Bashir Ibn Hathlam has said, "When we came close to Medina, 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn ('a) alighted and tied his she-camel then set up a tent where he lodged the women. He said to me, 'O Bashir! May Allah have mercy on your father! He was a poet. Can you compose any of it at all?' I said, 'Yes, O son of the Messenger of Allah! I, too, am a poet.'

He ('a) said, 'Then enter Medina and mourn the martyrdom of Abu 'Abdullah ('a).' So I rode my horse and entered Medina. When I came near the Mosque of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny, I cried loudly and recited these verses:

O people of Yathrib! May you never stay therein!
Al-Husayn is killed, so my tears now rain,
His body is in Karbala' covered with blood
While his head is on a spear displayed.

“Then I said, ‘Here is ‘Ali son of al-Husayn (‘a) accompanied by his aunts and sisters; they have all returned to you. I am his messenger to you to inform you of his place.’ People went out in a hurry, including women who had never before left their chambers, all weeping and wailing. All those in Medina were in tears. Nobody had ever seen such crying and wailing.

They surrounded ‘Ali Zayn al-‘Abidin (‘a) to offer him their condolences. He came out of the tent with a handkerchief in his hand with which he was wiping his tears. Behind him was one of his slaves carrying a chair on which the Imam (‘a) later sat, being overcome by grief. The cries of the mourners were loud. Everyone was weeping and wailing. He signaled to people to calm down.

Once they stopped crying, he (‘a) said,

“All Praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, the King of the Day of Judgment, Creator of all creation Who is Exalted in the high heavens, Who is so near, He hears even the silent speech.

We praise Him on the grave events, on time's tragedies, on the pain inflicted by such tragedies, on the crushing of calamities, on the greatness of our catastrophe, on our great, monstrous, magnanimous and afflicting hardships. O people! Allah, the most Exalted One, Praise to Him, has tried us with great trials and tribulations, with a tremendous loss suffered by the religion of Islam.

The father of ‘Abdullah, al-Husayn (‘a), and his family have been killed, and his women and children taken captive. They displayed his head in every land from the top of a spear... Such is the catastrophe similar to which there is none at all. O people! Which men among you are happy after him, or which heart is not grieved on his account?

Which eye among you withholds its tears and is too miserly with its tears? The seven great heavens wept over his killing; the seas wept with their waves, and so did the heavens with their corners and the earth with its expanse; so did the trees with their branches and the fish in the depths of the seas. So did the angels who are close to their Lord. So did all those in the heavens.

O people! Which heart is not grieved by his killing? Which heart does not yearn for him? Which hearing hears such a calamity that has befallen Islam without becoming deaf?

O people! We have become homeless, exiles, outcasts, shunned, distanced from all countries as though we were the offspring of the Turks or of Kabul without having committed a crime, nor an abomination, nor afflicted a calamity on Islam! Never did we ever hear such a thing from our fathers of old. This is something new.

By Allah! Had the Prophet (S) required them to fight us just as he had required them to be good to us, they would not have done to us any more than what they already have.

So we belong to Allah, and to Him is our return from this calamity, and what a great, painful, hard, cruel, and catastrophic calamity it is! To Allah do we complain from what has happened to us, from the suffering we have endured, for He is the Omnipotent, the Vengeful.”

“Suhan Ibn Sa’sa’ah al-’Abdi, an invalid who could barely walk on his feet, stood up and apologized to the Imam (‘a) for not rushing to help his family due to his handicap. He (‘a), responded to him by accepting his excuse, telling him that he thought well of him, thanked him and sought Allah's mercy for his father. Then Zayn al-’Abidin entered Medina accompanied by his family and children.”[2](#)

Ibrahim Ibn Talhah Ibn ‘Ubaydullah came to the Imam (‘a) and asked him, “Who won?” The Imam (‘a), answered, *“When the time for prayers comes, and when the athan and iqama are called, you will know who the winner is.”*[3](#)

As for Zainab, that is, Umm Kulthum, she recited the following verses of poetry:

O city of our Grandfather! Accept us not
For with sighs and griefs we come;
We left you surrounded by kith and kin
And returned with neither sons nor men.

Then she took both knobs of the mosque's door and cried out, “O grandfather! I mourn to you my brother al-Husayn!”

Sukayna cried out, “O grandfather! To you do I complain from what we have been through, for by Allah, I never saw anyone more hard-hearted than Yazid, nor have I ever seen anyone, be he an apostate or a polytheist, more evil than him, more rough, or more cruel. He kept hitting my father's lips with his iron bar as he said, ‘How did you find the battle, O Husayn?!’”[4](#)

The ladies who were born and grew up in the lap of Prophethood held a mourning ceremony for the Master of Martyrs (‘a). They put on the coarsest of clothes; they shrouded themselves in black, and they continued to weep and wail day and night as Imam al-Sajjad kept cooking for them.[5](#)

Once Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq (‘a) said, “No lady who descended from Hashim used any dye, nor any oil or any *kohl*, for full five years; it was then that al-Mukhtar sent them the head of ‘Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyad.”[6](#)

As regarding al-Rubab, she mourned [her husband] Abu ‘Abdullah (‘a) till her eyes were no longer capable of producing tears. One of her bondmaids told her that using a particular type of herb was a tear stimulant, so she ordered it to be prepared for her in order to induce her tears.[7](#) Among the poetry she composed in eulogizing her husband, Abu ‘Abdullah al-Husayn (‘a), is the following:[8](#)

The one that used to be a lantern
Is now at Karbala', killed, unburied.
O grandson of the Prophet! May Allah
Reward you on our behalf and may you
Never fall short of the Scales.
A great mountain you used to be
A shelter, secure, for me,
And a companion in family
And in faith a surety.
Now who shall for the orphans be
Of help, and who shall be for the needy?
Who shall be the resort of the destitute?
By Allah! Never shall I seek
For you at all any substitute,
Till between the sands and the mud is my abode
Wherein I will be hidden from the world.

[1.](#) These lines were composed by Hujjatul-Islam shaikh Muhammad Husayn Kashif al-Ghiṭā', may Allah sanctify him.

[2.](#) Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 116.

[3.](#) Shaikh al-Tusi, Al-Amali, p. 66.

[4.](#) al-Qazwini, Riyad al-Ahzan, p. 163.

[5.](#) al-Barqi, Mahasin, Vol. 2, p. 420, in a chapter dealing with providing food for a mourning ceremony.

[6.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, Vol. 2, p. 215, chapter 94.

[7.](#) al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 10, p. 235, citing Al-Kafi.

[8.](#) Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani, Al-Aghani, Vol. 2, p. 158.

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