

Part 1: Husayn And His Foes, Martyrdom

Abu Sufyan

Abu Sufyan was a wealthy and influential man who belonged to the Banu Umayyah clan of the once pagan tribe of Quraish of Mecca, Hijaz, that fought the spread of Islam relentlessly during the time of the Prophet of Islam (ﷺ). He was contemporary to the Prophet of Islam (ﷺ) whom he fought vigorously. His date of birth is unknown, but he died in 31 A.H./652 A.D. "Abu Sufyan" is his kunya, surname; his name is Sakhr ibn Harb ibn Umayyah. He is father of Mu'awiyah and grandfather of Yazid.

Abu Sufyan led pagan Quraish in its many wars against Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his small band of supporters, making alliances with other pagan tribes and with the Jews of Medina against the new rising power of Islam. He kept leading one battle after another till the fall of Mecca to the Muslims in 630 A.D.

It was then that he had to either accept the Islamic faith or face a sure death for all the mischief he had committed against the Muslims, so he preferred to live in hypocrisy as a "Muslim," though only in name, rather than accept death. He was the most cunning man in all of Arabia and one of its aristocrats and men of might and means.

He saw Islam as the harbinger of the waning of his own personal power and prestige and those of his tribe, Quraish, not to mention the decline of his faith, paganism, and the pre-Islamic way of life to which he and his likes were very much accustomed, the life of promiscuity, lewdness and debauchery, with all the wine, women and wealth aristocrats like him very much enjoyed. His likes are present throughout the Islamic lands in our time and in every time and clime... This has always been so, and it shall unfortunately remain so...

Mu'awiyah and Yazid

Mu'awiyah son of Abu Sufyan was born out of wedlock in 602 A.D. during the jahiliyya, the time of ignorance, the period that preceded Islam. His mother, Maysun, was one of his father's slave-girls. Maysan had a sexual intercourse with one of Mu'awiyah's slaves and conceived Yazid by him.

Mu'awiyah, in total disregard for Islamic or traditional Arab traditions, claimed Yazid as his son. A testimony to this fact is the well-documented tradition of the Prophet (ﷺ) wherein he said, "The murderer of my [grand]son al-Husayn is a bastard."

This tradition is quoted on p. 156, Vol. 1, of *Kanz al-Ummal* of al-Muttaqi al-Hindi. The stigma of being a bastard applies actually not only to Yazid but also to both Shimr ibn Thul-Jawshan and Ubaydullah ibn Sa'd, the accomplices about whom the reader will read later; all of these men were born out of wedlock.

Mu'awiyah played a major role in distorting the Islamic creed by paying writers to tailor design "traditions" to serve his interests and support his deviated views. He installed himself as ruler of Syria in 40 A.H./661 A.D. and ruled for twenty long years till his death at the age of seventy-eight. Shortly before his death, which took place in the month of Rajab of 60 A.H./May of 680 A.D., he managed to secure the oath of allegiance to his corrupt and immoral son Yazid as his successor.

He did so by intimidation once and once by buying loyalty and favours, spending in the process huge sums of money that belonged to the Muslims. The weak-minded majority of the Muslims of his time swore allegiance to him. This proves that the majority does not necessarily have to be right. Imam al-Husayn (ع), together with a small band of devotees to the cause of truth, refused to bow their heads to the oppressive forces, hence this tale of heroism.

Mu'awiyah declared himself "caliph" in Syria when he was 59 years old and assumed authority by sheer force. He was not elected, nor was he requested to take charge. He did not hide this fact; rather, he bragged about it once when he addressed the Kufians saying,

"O people of Kufa! Do you think that I fought you in order that you may establish prayers or give zakat or perform the pilgrimage?! I know that you do pray, pay zakat and perform the pilgrimage. Indeed, I fought you in order to take command over you with contempt, and Allah has given me that against your wishes. Rest assured that whoever killed any of us will himself be killed. And the treaty between us of amnesty is under my feet."^{[1](#)}

Mu'awiyah's rule was terror in the whole Muslim land. Such terrorism was spread by many convoys sent to various regions. Historians have narrated saying that Mu'awiyah summoned Sufyan ibn 'Awf al-Ghamidi, one of the commanders of his army, and said to him, "This army is under your command. Proceed along the Euphrates River till you reach Heet. Any resistance you meet on your way should be crushed, and then you should proceed to invade Anbar. After that, penetrate deeply into Mada'in.

O Sufyan! These invasions will frighten the Iraqis and please those who like us. Such campaigns will attract frightened people to our side. Kill whoever holds different views from ours; loot their villages and demolish their homes. Indeed, fighting them against their livelihood and taking their wealth away is similar to killing them but is more painful to their hearts."^{[2](#)}

Another of his commanders, namely Bishr ibn Artah, was summoned and ordered to proceed to Hijaz

and Yemen with these instructions issued by Mu'awiyah: "Proceed to Medina and expel its people. Meanwhile, people in your way, who are not from our camp, should be terrorized. When you enter Medina, let it appear as if you are going to kill them. Make it appear that your aim is to exterminate them. Then pardon them. Terrorize the people around Mecca and Medina and scatter them around."³

During Mu'awiyah's reign, basic human rights were denied, not simply violated. No one was free to express his views. Government spies were paid to terrorize the public, assisting the army and the police in sparing no opportunity to crush the people and to silence their dissent.

There are some documents which reveal Mu'awiyah's instructions to his governors to do just that. For instance, the following letter was addressed to all judges: "Do not accept the testimony of Ali's followers (Shi'as) or of his descendants in (your) courts." Another letter stated: "If you have evidence that someone likes Ali and his family, omit his name from the recipients of rations stipulated from the *zakat* funds."

Another letter said, "Punish whoever is suspected of following Ali and demolish his house."⁴ Such was the situation during the government of Mu'awiyah, Yazid's infamous father. Historians who were recording these waves of terror described them as unprecedented in history. People were so frightened, they did not mind being called atheists, thieves, etc., but not followers of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع), Prophet Muhammad's right hand, confidant and son-in-law.

Another aspect of the government of Mu'awiyah was the racist discrimination between Arabs and non-Arabs. Although they were supposed to have embraced Islam which tolerates no racism in its teachings, non-Arabs were forced to pay *khiraj* and *jizya* taxes that are levied from non-Muslims living under the protection of Muslims and enjoying certain privileges, including the exemption from the military service. A non-Arab soldier fighting in the state's army used to receive bare subsistence from the rations.

Once, a dispute flared up between an Arab and a non-Arab and both were brought to court. The judge, namely Abdullah ibn amir, heard the non-Arab saying to his Arab opponent, "May Allah not permit people of your kind (i.e. Arabs) to multiply." The Arab answered him by saying, "O Allah! I invoke You to multiply their (non-Arabs') population among us!" People present there and then were bewildered to hear such a plea, so they asked him, "How do you pray for this man's people to multiply while he prays for yours to be diminished?!" The Arab opponent said, "Yes, indeed, I do so! They clean our streets and make shoes for our animals, and they weave our clothes!"

Imam al-Husayn's older brother, Imam al-Hassan (ع), was elected in Medina on the 21st of the month of Ramadan, 40 A.H./January 28, 661 A.D. as the caliph, but his caliphate did not last long due to the terrorism promoted by Mu'awiyah who either intimidated, killed, or bribed the most distinguished men upon whom Imam al-Hassan (ع) depended to run the affairs of the government.

Finally, Mu'awiyah pushed Imam al-Hassan (ع) out of power after signing a treaty with him the terms of which were, indeed, honourable and fair, had they only been implemented. Finding his men too weak or too reluctant to fight Mu'awiyah, Imam al-Hassan (ع) had no alternative except to sign the said treaty

with a man whom he knew very well to be the most hypocritical of all and the most untrustworthy. Since there are too many ignorant folks who dare to blaspheme and cast doubt about the integrity of Imam al-Hassan (ع), we have to review the terms of that treaty and leave the reader to draw his own conclusion; those terms, in brief, were:

- 1) Mu'awiyah shall rule according to the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (ص) in the territories under his control.
- 2) Mu'awiyah shall have no right to nominate his successor.
- 3) All people in Syria, Iraq, Hizaj and Yemen shall lead their lives safely and securely.
- 4) The lives and properties of the followers (Shi'as) of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع), wherever they may be, shall remain safe and secure.
- 5) Mu'awiyah shall not try, openly or secretly, to harm or to kill Imam al-Hassan (ع) son of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع), his brother Imam al-Husayn (ع), or any other member of the family of the Prophet (ص), nor shall they be threatened or terrorized.
- 6) The abusive language, the cursing of Imam Ali (ع) during prayer services (ordered by Mu'awiyah and continued after his death for a long period of time) at the Grand Mosque of Damascus shall be stopped.

Mu'awiyah had ordered all Imams who led congregational prayers not to descend from their pulpits before cursing Ali (ع), a practice which they labeled as "Sunnah." It is documented that one such Imam forgot once to curse Ali (ع), whereupon people shouted at him that he had violated the Sunnah. Those who prayed at home and who forgot to curse Ali (ع) after their prayers felt obligated to repeat them, being convinced that such cursing was an integral part of the compulsory prayers without which they would not be accepted by Allah...

Such abominable blasphemy continued from the year when Othman was killed, that is, 35 A.H./656 A.D. till it was terminated by orders of the only righteous Umayyad caliph, namely Omer ibn Abdul-Aziz, one year after his becoming caliph, that is, in 100 A.H./718 A.D., for a total of 62 years. Historians say that the public actually did not stop cursing Ali (ع) even then but continued to do so for at least 18 more years, extending the total to 80 years... Omer ibn Abdul-Aziz was killed in 101 A.H./719 A.D. after having ruled for only two years and five months because he was fair and just and, most importantly, because he was sympathetic to the Prophet's family (Ahl al-Bayt); peace and blessings of Allah be with him.

Shortly after concluding the said treaty, Mu'awiyah lured Imam al-Hassan's wife, Juda daughter of al-Ash'ath ibn Qays, into poisoning her husband with the promise that he would marry her off to his son and heir apparent Yazid. Juda killed her husband who died on Safar 28, 50 A.H./March 30, 670 A.D. She was cursed by the Almighty with an embarrassing ailment for which nobody could find any cure. Mu'awiyah, as expected, did not fulfill his promise.

Having succeeded in getting Imam al-Hassan (ع), Imam al-Husayn's older brother, killed, Mu'awiyah sent letters to one of his Umayyad relatives, namely Marwan ibn al-Hakam, a cousin of Othman ibn

Affan and bearer of his seal, a seal which he used quite often for his own gains and even without the knowledge of the aging caliph, instructing him to obtain the oath of allegiance for his son Yazid as his (Mu'awiyah's) successor.

By the way, the Umayyads succeeded in making this same Marwan caliph in 64 A.H./683 A.D., and his government lasted for seventeen months till it ended in 65 A.H./684–85 A.D. when he died at the age of 63 and was buried in Damascus. Marwan, accordingly, delivered a speech following the prayers and concluded it by saying, "The commander of the faithful (meaning Mu'awiyah) is of the view that he chooses his son Yazid to succeed him as your ruler following in the footsteps of Abu Bakr and Omer ibn al-Khattab..."

He was at that moment interrupted by Abdul-Rahman son of first caliph Abu Bakr. "Nay!," Abdul-Rahman ibn Abu Bakr shouted, "You mean in the footsteps of Kisra (Khosro, emperor of Persia) and Caesar (emperor of Rome)! Neither Abu Bakr nor Omer appointed their sons or relatives as their successors...!"

In 51 A.H./671 A.D., Mu'awiyah performed the pilgrimage then went to Medina where he called to his presence Abdullah son of second caliph Omer ibn al-Khattab. His father, Omer, succeeded Abu Bakr as the caliph in 13 A.H./634 A.D.; he remained caliph for ten years till he was killed by a Persian slave in the month of Thul-Hijja, 23 A.H./November 644 A.D. He was succeeded by Othman ibn Affan who ruled for eleven years (till 35 A.H./656 A.D.). Mu'awiyah said to Abdullah ibn Omer, "O son of Omer! You used to tell me that you never liked to sleep one night without knowing who your Imam (here the word means "ruler") is, and I warn you against spreading the seeds of dissension among the Muslims or corrupting their views."

Abdullah praised Allah then said, "There were other caliphs before you who had sons who were not inferior to yours, yet they did not decide to do what you have decided to do regarding your son. Rather, they let the Muslims make their own choice. You warn me against dissension, and I am not an advocate of dissension. I am just one of the Muslims, and if they are unanimous regarding an issue, I will then add my voice to theirs."

Having said so, Abdullah left. Then Muhammad, son of first caliph Abu Bakr, referred to above, was presented before Mu'awiyah. The latter started his rhetoric but Abdul-Rahman interrupted him by saying, "All you want to say is that you wish we obey your son after obeying Allah, and this, by Allah, we will never do. And, by Allah, we shall settle this issue by mutual consultation among the Muslims; otherwise, we will treat you as you were treated at the dawn of Islam...!" Then he, too, stood up and left

Yazid son of Mu'awiyah was born in 17 A.H./645 A.D. and inherited his father's post in 60 A.H./680 A.D. He ruled for only three years and one month then died in mid-Rab'ul-Awwal of 64 A.H./December 14, 683 A.D. at the young age of 38. He was a playboy, a drunkard, and a man who used to enjoy seeing animals fight. He used to play with animals. Monkeys were dressed in gold-embroidered multi-colored

clothes and trained to dance for him, and he had salaried "officials" to look after his animal collection.

Such collection included monkeys and race dogs. He was fond of gambling and wine drinking, and he demonstrated disrespect towards the Mosque of the Prophet (ﷺ) and towards the Ka'ba itself, causing very serious damages to its structure as the reader will come to know in a later part of this book. He forced women to take their veils off and killed thousands of innocent people and encouraged the rape of women, girls, and children during the uprisings that took place in Hijaz, particularly in the Harra incident, details of which will follow. In short, Yazid did not have one iota of respect for Islamic tenets or moral ethics. Strange enough, there are some ignorant Muslims who sing his praise, justify and defend his barbaric conduct...

This much gives the reader an idea about what type of persons Abu Sufyan, Mu'awiyah, and Yazid were. Now let us review the brief biography of their opponents.

Ali, Husayn's Father

Imam al-Husayn's father, Ali (ع), needs no introduction, but for the benefit of those who do not know much about him, we would like to state the following:

Ali was born in May of 600 A.D. inside the Ka'ba, the holiest of all holy places in Islam, the cubic symbol of "Allah's House" in Mecca, Hijaz, northern part of today's Saudi Arabia, the only country in the world named after its ruling dynasty! No other human being was ever born in the holiest of holies besides him. Ali (ع) was raised and cared for by his cousin Muhammad (ﷺ), the Messenger of Allah, who wished to return the favor Ali's father had done him when he was a child. You see, when Muhammad (ﷺ) was orphaned, Ali's father, Abu Talib, took him in his custody and raised him, so Muhammad (ﷺ) wanted to return the favor especially after seeing how Abu Talib's trade business was not doing well in his old age.

Muhammad (ﷺ)'s upbringing of Ali (ع) polished the lad's personality and prepared him to play a major role in the dissemination of the Islamic creed. He was the first male to believe in Muhammad (ﷺ) and to offer prayers with him. The second was another young man who was also raised and cared for by Muhammad (ﷺ), namely Zaid ibn Harithah who later commanded the army of the Muslims during the Battle of Mu'ta of 629 A.D., and so did his son Usamah in 632 A.D., both proving their military ability, insight and wisdom. The third to embrace the Islamic faith was Muhammad's longtime friend Abu Bakr.

When pagan Meccans wanted to assassinate Muhammad (ﷺ) in 622 A.D., Ali (ع) slept in his (Muhammad's) bed, offering his life as a sacrifice to save his, while the Prophet succeeded in leaving his house safely even under the nose of the infidels, having recited the first eight verses of Surat Yasin (Chapter 36 of the Holy Qur'an) and thrown a handful of dust before their eyes. They could not see him leave.

Muhammad (ﷺ) safely reached Quba, a suburb of Medina where he camped and waited for Ali (ع) to

rejoin him. He did not want to enter Medina triumphantly without Ali (ع). After a few days, Ali (ع) walked all alone the entire distance from Mecca to Medina, about 250 Arabian miles, arriving there with swollen and lacerated feet, bleeding and fatigued.

Ali (ع) defended Islam in the Battle of Badr (624 A.D.) and married Fatima, the Prophet's only surviving offspring, in the same year. He also fought in the Battle of Uhud in the next year, in the Battle of Moat (Khandaq) in 627 A.D., in the Battle of Khayber (against the Jews of Medina) in 628 A.D., and took part in the Conquest of Mecca in 630 A.D.

He also fought in the Battle of Hunain in the same year. On Thul-Hijjah 18, 10 A.H., corresponding to March 19, 632 A.D., and according to divine orders which Muhammad (ص) had received from his Lord in the form of Qur'anic verse No. 67 of Surat al-Ma'ida (Chapter 5), the Prophet of Islam delivered a speech at a place between Mecca and Medina known as Ghadir Khumm in the Juhfa valley wherein he enumerated some of Ali's merits and informed the huge crowd of an estimated 132,000 pilgrims who had accompanied him during his last pilgrimage, the Farewell Pilgrimage, that just as they had accepted him as the Prophet, they were bound to accept Ali (ع) as "Ameerul-Mu'mineen," Commander of the Faithful, title of one who rules the Muslims as the supreme political leader and, at the same time, as the highest religious authority. Details of and references to this historic event are recorded, with the entire original Arabic text (23 pages) of the Prophet's historic sermon, are in my book titled *Ghadir Khumm: Where Islam was Perfected*.

Because of the numerous battles in which Ali (ع) participated and the number of those whom he killed, he was not popular with those who considered blood relations more important than earning the Pleasure of the Almighty; therefore, only a few months after that date did some people promote Abu Bakr, a wealthy Meccan and a very successful businessman, to the post of "Ameerul-Mu'mineen." This took place in 11 A.H./632 A.D. He ruled for two years and a half, dying on a Tuesday, 13 A.H./634 A.D. at the age of 63...

They promoted Abu Bakr to be "Ameerul-Mu'minnen" instead of Ali (ع), forgetting or pretending to forget what they had heard from and pledged to the Prophet (ص) only two months and nine days ago at Ghadir Khumm. This took place immediately after the Prophet's demise on Safar 28, 11 A.H./May 28, 632 A.D. (By the way, like all lunar Hijri years, the solar calendar year 632 of the Christian Era coincided with both the 10th and the 11th Hijri years.)

Imam Ali (ع) did not receive any significant recognition during the reign of the first three caliphs, and even his wife's property, Fadak, was confiscated; thus, his family was deprived of a good source of income. Abu Bakr ordered the confiscation in 632 A.D. The only just and fair Umayyad ruler, namely the last one, Omer ibn Abdul-Aziz, returned Fadak to Fatima's offspring in 718 A.D., 86 years after its confiscation with profound apologies. When Ali (ع) was elected as caliph in 36 A.H./657 A.D., tribalism and racism were as rampant as they used to be during the pre-Islamic era. Islam's teachings were either forgotten or distorted.

In Syria, Mu'awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan had declared himself "caliph" and was buying people's conscience and loyalty. He was, once more, raising one army after another to fight Ali (ع) just as his father Abu Sufyan had raised one army after another to fight Muhammad (ص), causing tens of thousands of Muslims to be killed in the process. Most of Ali's time was spent in defending law and order; he hardly had time to rest and to improve the conditions which he knew were in need of improvement because of the injustices of past regimes that did not protect the Islamic creed from liars and fabricators of traditions, indirectly assisting in the distortion of the Sunnah.

Caliph Ali (ع) had to fight the Battle of Jamal (Camel), which broke out at the end of Rab'i II 36 A.H./June 28, 632 A.D., the forces of dissent which had been herded and led by Aisha daughter of the same Abu Bakr mentioned above and one of the Prophet's wives. She was then nineteen years old and was riding a huge camel named Askar, hence the name of the battle: Harb al-Jamal, battle of the camel. She kept urging her men to fight Ali (ع) and his men. It was the first time that Muslims killed Muslims, and such killing has been going on ever since. Look at Afghanistan, Algeria, Iraq and Iran (during the 1980s when more than a million Muslim lives were lost), and remember the civil wars in Lebanon, Somalia, Yemen, and elsewhere...

History repeats itself. Those who do not learn from the mistakes of past generations are doomed, condemned and destined to repeat them, rest assured. Aisha accused Ali (ع) of having collaborated with those who had killed her Umayyad relative Othman ibn Affan who became caliph in 24 A.H./645 A.D. and ruled till he was killed in 35 A.H./656 A.D. when he was 89. Ali (ع), in fact, had sent both of his sons, Imam al-Hassan (ع) and Imam al-Husayn (ع) (the latter being the hero of this brief report), to defend Othman who was placed by the angry protesters under virtual house arrest and his mansion was twice subjected to a siege.

Water and food supplies were blocked from reaching him. Ali (ع) used to get water and food smuggled to Othman's mansion during the night passed on from one person to another from one flat rooftop to another till they reached Othman's mansion. The public outrage stemmed from Othman's mismanagement of public funds and preference of his own relatives over all others for top government jobs even when such relatives were not fit at all to occupy any government post.

He himself lived in luxury unseen before, getting mansions built for him and for his wife, and silk clothes and exotic perfumes were being imported especially for him and for her. His wife, Na'ila daughter of al-Qarafisah, used to wear so much jewelry that people could hear the jingle from a distance! Such should not be the conduct of successors of Prophets.

While defending Othman, Imam al-Hassan (ع) received a wound on his forehead. But the huge number of the angry crowd finally assaulted Othman's mansion and dealt him blows with their swords, killing him instantly. It was the first time Muslims killed their caliph. Na'ila tried to defend her husband with her bare hands, getting four of her fingers cut off. She sent those fingers together with the copy of the Holy Qur'an which Othman was reciting when he was killed and which was stained with his blood to

Mu'awiyah in Damascus to use them to excite people and to urge them to seek revenge for Othman's murder.

Aisha, ironically, was one of those who had urged the Muslims to kill Othman, making her historic statement which we would like to quote here in its original Arabic text verbatim: **أَقْتُلُوا نَعْتَلًا فَقَدْ كَفَرَ** "Uqtulu Nathal faqad Kufar," that is, "Kill Nathal, for he has committed apostasy." Nathal was a contemporary Jew famous for his untidy and too long beard; hence, Aisha was comparing Othman with a Jew.

She, in fact, was trying to get either Talhah ibn Ubaydullah, her cousin who aspired to marry her after the demise of the Prophet (ص), something which Islam prohibited, or az-Zubair ibn al-Awwam, son of her older sister Asma' daughter of Abu Bakr, become caliph instead of Ali (ع). Az-Zubair ibn al-Awwam did, in fact, succeed in declaring himself as the caliph after rebelling against the Umayyads as the reader will come to know in the chapter dealing with the Harra incident. Aisha disliked Ali (ع) very much despite all the praise lavished on him by her husband, the Messenger of Allah (ع), and although he did not do anything to warrant such an attitude.

There is no room here to detail all the grievances the Muslims raised against their caliph, Othman, in addition to the above, for these would fill an entire volume, and books have, in fact, been already written about this subject. One such book is titled **الفتنة الكبرى** *Al-Fitnatul-Kubra* (the greatest dissension) by the renown Egyptian scholar Dr. Taha Husayn (winner of a Nobel prize for literature) and published in Cairo, Egypt, a book which the author may have modelled after at-Tabari's book bearing the exact title and dealing with the same theme.

One of the best references written about the Battle of the Camel is al-Mas'udi's famous book **مروج الذهب** *Muraj at-Thahab*. Ali (ع) won the battle; 13,000 men from aisha's camp and 5,000 from Ali's were killed, according to p. 177, Vol. 5, of *Muraj at-Thahab*. The heaviest casualty was the loss of thousands who knew the entire text of the Holy Qur'an by heart and whose knowledge, during that critical time, was crucial.

The Prophet of Islam has said: **موت العالم موت العالم** "Mawt al-aalim mawt al-aalam," that is, "The death of a scholar spells the death of the world." What is the world without scholars? It is darkness without light, trees without fruit, river without water... Islam very much encourages scholarship and reveres scholars, writers, intellectuals, researchers, scientists, etc.

After the Battle of Camel, Ali (ع) had to fight the Battle of Siffeen (40 A.H./661 A.D.) against the army of Mu'awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, Yazid's father. Shortly after that, and in the same year, and to be exact on the 19th of the month of Ramadan, 40 A.H./January 29, 661 A.D., Ali (ع) was killed by Ibn Muljim al-Muradi, one of the Kharijites, those who were fed-up with certain Muslim caliphs and with some of the latter's un-Islamic practices.

These Kharijites had been crushed by Ali (ع) in the Battle of Nahrawan, which started on Safar 6, 38 A.H./July 17, 658 A.D., but their remnants scattered thereafter throughout the Islamic lands. When he

was killed, Ali (ع) was leading the morning prayers at Kufa's grand mosque. Ali (ع) was the embodiment of everything Islam stands for. Even his name, Ali (ع), is derived from "Al-Aliyy," one of the Almighty's ninety-nine Attributes known as Asma' Allah al-Husna, Allah's most beautiful names.

Scholars of tafsir, exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, have identified numerous Qur'anic verses praising Ali (ع) and his family, his Ahl al-Bayt أهل البيت. The most widely known of such verses is No. 33 of Chapter 33 of the Holy Qur'an (Ayat at-Tathir, Surat al-Ahzab).

This much should suffice the reader to form an idea about Imam al-Husayn's father, so let us now discuss the hero of our story.

قال رسول الله (ص): "حسين مني و أنا من حسين؛ أحب

"الله من أحب حسيناً

The Messenger of Allah (ص) has said, "Husayn is of me, and I am of Husayn; Allah loves whoever loves Husayn."

السَّلام عَلَى الْحُسَيْنِ ، وَعَلَى عَلِيِّ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ ، وَعَلَى أَوْلَادِ الْحُسَيْنِ وَعَلَى أَصْحَابِ الْحُسَيْنِ

Peace with al-Husayn, with Ali son of al-Husayn, with the offspring of al-Husayn and with the companions of al-Husayn

Imam Husayn Son of Imam Ali

Imam al-Husayn (ع), the Master of Martyrs and the hero of this brief history review, was the greatest spiritual leader of his time in the entire world of Islam. He was an Imam, the brother of an Imam, and the son of an Imam. None in history ever enjoyed such merits. All religious authorities admitted his moral, spiritual and religious superiority over everyone else. They admitted that if there was an individual fit for the spiritual and religious vicegerency of the Holy prophet of Islam (ع), Imam al-Husayn (ع) was the person best suited for it.

Imam al-Husayn (ع) was born in Medina on the 15th of the month of Ramadan, 3 A.H./March 1, 625 A.D. and was named " al-Husayn" which means "Junior al-Hassan," since his older brother is named " al-Hassan." Ali (ع) chose to name both his sons after Shabar and Shubayr, sons of prophet Aaron, older brother of Prophet Moses, peace be with both of them. Even during his childhood, Imam al-Husayn (ع) was known for his brilliance, piety, and lofty upbringing.

His grandfather, the Prophet of Islam, surrounded him with his affection and taught him a great deal,

making him the custodian of Allah's knowledge, and so did Imam al-Husayn's mother, Fatima (ع), the Head of all the Women of the World, and so did his father Imam Ali (ع) whom the Prophet (ص) took as a "brother" when he joined the Ansar and the Muhajiran with the bond of brotherhood following his historic migration from Mecca to Medina.

The Prophet (ص), who never uttered a word out of favoritism or in response to an emotional outburst, called Imam al-Husayn (ع) and his older brother Imam al-Hassan (ع) "Masters of the Youths of Paradise;" all the residents of Paradise are young.

Imam al-Husayn's life and status in the Islamic history are formidable. Fatima (ع), his mother, was the dearest daughter of her father (ع). At-Tirmithi cited Usamah ibn Zaid ibn Harithah (referred to above) saying that the Prophet (ص) had said, "The dearest member of my family to me is Fatima." She was declared by the Prophet as the Head of all the Women of the world. She and her husband were members of the family who were distinguished for their qualities and services to Islam.

They are role models for all Muslim men and women. Their role was an extension of the Prophet's role in leading the great cultural transformation from the darkness of an infidel culture to the light of Islam, the beacon of guidance and the guarantor of happiness in this life and in the one to come.

Historians recorded the birth of Imam al-Husayn (ع) as an exciting event for the Muslims of Medina and especially for the Prophet of Allah (ع). The Muslims congratulated each other for the new child whom the Prophet considered as his own son. The Prophet once declared, "Husayn is of me, and I am of Husayn. O Allah! Be pleased with whoever pleases al-Husayn!" This testimony was not accidental, nor was it the result of emotional expressions. This declaration came from a responsible wise leader, the Prophet of Allah, who would never commit a mistake during the performance of his Prophetic mission.

It is easy to understand the first part of this weighty statement: "al-Husayn is of me," for surely Imam al-Husayn (ع) was of the Prophet's own lineage through his daughter Fatima (ع). But what about the other half, that of "and I am of al-Husayn"? How could the grandfather be of his grandson? If you consider this statement in the light of the role Imam al-Husayn (ع) played in Islam's history, you will understand what the Prophet meant. He simply meant to say, "And my Message is to be continued through al-Husayn's martyrdom."

The Prophet, in this statement, was delivering an important message and foretelling people of who would act as the fountainheads of Islamic guidance and who would guard his divine message in the future. Emotions and sentiments are not loose in a Muslim's life but are controlled by Islamic concepts and principles. There is always a criterion for "like" and "dislike" which evolves from the deeply rooted Islamic concepts.

Although Abu Lahab was an uncle of the Prophet (ص), his infidelity made him cursed till the Day of Judgment. The same applied to another uncle, Abu Jahal. The Prophet of Allah made another statement which leaves no doubt about Imam al-Hassan's and Imam al-Husayn's roles. As indicated above,

he (ع) said, " al-Hassan and al-Husayn are the masters of the youths of Paradise." This was presented as a credential to the Muslim nation so that it would uphold their leadership.

At a certain time, the Muslims in Medina realized and appreciated the Islamic message's glory and sweet tasting fruits, so they intended to reward the Prophet (ص) for his efforts in guiding them out of the darkness of jahiliyya and into the light of Islam. The gift they presented to the Prophet (ص) was some gold which they had collected. The Prophet's answer came not from him personally but, rather, from his Lord on his behalf in the text of the following Qur'anic verses which were revealed during this very incident:

Say (O Muhammad !): "No reward do I ask you for this (conveying of the Message) except that you be kind to those of my kin." (Qur'an, 23:42)

Muhammad Jawad Maghniyyah, author of *تفسير الكاشف Tafsir al-Kashif*⁵, narrates saying that when this verse was revealed, people asked the Prophet (ص), "O Messenger of Allah! Who are these of your kin for whom respect is made obligatory on us by this verse?" The Prophet (ص) answered, "They are Ali, Fatima, and their two sons."

However, this did not imply disrespect for other members of his kinsfolk or companions. Looking objectively at the message of this verse, it will indicate to you, first of all, reluctance to accept material rewards. If a reward is not suitable, it cannot, and it must not, be accepted. Hence, the verse was enjoining respect for specific people, not because they are only the Prophet's relatives. But the real reason behind this respect was to safeguard the Islamic message. The role these holy personalities played in the Islamic history required such respect in order to enable them to perform their duties.

Al-Hakim quoted Au Sa'd al-Khudri saying that the Prophet (ص) once said, "One who dislikes us, we Ahl al-Bayt [ع] (family of Prophet Muhammad [ص]), Allah shall hurl him into the fire of Hell." This implies that those who dislike the Islamic conduct and way of life as personified by these individuals, through their exemplary conduct, shall receive the Almighty's condemnation and shall taste of His torment.

Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari⁶, a maternal relative and one of the greatest of all companions of Prophet Muhammad (ص), narrated once saying that in a speech delivered immediately following the performance of his last pilgrimage, the Farewell Pilgrimage referred to above, the Prophet (ص) said, "O people! I am leaving among you the Book of Allah and my Itrat (Progeny) for your guidance. So long as you hold fast to them both (at the same time), surely you will never stray." This tradition was narrated not only by Jabir but also by at least twenty other eyewitnesses who heard it in person and who participated in that same pilgrimage, and their statements are recorded in numerous references.

Such statements were transmitted by chains of trusted narrators of hadith. In his renown book Sahih, Muslim cites some of them. In another tradition transmitted by Abu Tharr al-Ghifari, the Prophet (ص) is quoted as saying, "O people! Let my family act among you like the head of the body, and like the eyes of the head among you." These traditions are impressive in many respects. First, they were narrated by

different sources of different inclinations; this adds to their credibility. Second, the same content indicates their consistency, underscoring their authenticity.

Imam al-Husayn (ع) was one member of the family of the Prophet (ص). He was brought up in the Prophetic guidance where he received the direct attention of the Prophet (ص). The ideal atmosphere where he had grown up with his grandfather, father, mother, and elder brother, was the highest level ever attained. Thus, he acquired wisdom and learned generosity, bravery, piety while attaining the highest knowledge. He occupied outstanding posts during his father's caliphate. During the terror and corruption which swept the Muslim world at the hands of the Umayyad dynasty that ruled the Islamic world (from 661 – 750 A.D.) with an iron fist, he was the sole hope of the Muslims to restore the Islamic laws and to thus bring them prosperity, peace, and happiness in both worlds.

Having seen how his older brother Imam al-Hassan (ع) was betrayed by his friends and poisoned by his foes, Imam al-Husayn (ع) remained in seclusion from the public for ten years, feeling helpless against the tide of Umayyad corruption and tyranny. Gradually, people realized that none could save them from such tyranny except Imam al-Husayn (ع) himself, so they kept appealing to him to lead them against the Umayyads, and he kept ignoring their pleas due to his knowledge that he could not rely on them to remain steadfast on the battlefield against Mu'awiyah's mighty Syrian army, being convinced that they would betray him just as they had betrayed his older brother and his father. They did exactly so as you will see...

Most of the pleas came from the people of Kufa, Iraq, mostly Shi'as who were subjected to untold atrocities by Kufa's then governor (appointed on behalf of the central Umayyad government in Damascus) Muhammad ibn al-Ash'ath and the top men who supported him and his Umayyad superiors, namely Shurayh, Kufa's judge, a typical preacher of the rulers, by the rulers, and for the rulers, a man who was issuing verdicts according not to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah but to please the Umayyads who were paying his salary and showering him and his likes with gifts from time to time, and Omer ibn Sa'd. The letters those Kufians sent to Imam al-Husayn (ع) numbered ten to twelve thousand, and many of them threatened Imam al-Husayn (ع) of questioning him before the Almighty on the Day of Judgment as to: "Why did you not respond to the people who sought your assistance to put an end to tyranny and oppression?"

Imam al-Husayn (ع) had to oblige despite all the odds against him. He, in fact, knew fully well that he was marching to his death, having already been informed of his martyrdom in the land of Karbala" by none other than his holy grandfather who even named his killer. He was informed of

his women and children taken captive and of the time and day when he would be martyred. Everything was already decreed, and Imam al-Husayn (ع) had no choice except to fulfil a decree by sacrificing himself and all the dear ones with him for the sake of Islam. We only wish here to unveil the startling aspects of the revolution's message which is often neglected in its traditional commemoration.

Confronting all the details of this momentous event, we have to answer many pressing questions such as: Why did this revolution take place? What were its implications and procedures? And what were its conclusive results? The answers may provide a guiding light so that we may form our conclusions. The following account is based on the most popular and trustworthy authorities on the subject.

To understand Imam al-Husayn's personality and the collective culture of the society, a summary of Islam's view of life is necessary.

Islam's Message to Humanity

Islam is a way of life. It gives reasons and sets a purpose for living. We were not placed on earth by accident or without a purpose. Everything in life has a purpose; every being has a role to play; every inanimate object serves an end. Islam elevates the spirit while satisfying the material needs...

Islam considers man as God's vicegerent on earth. This status is a lofty and weighty one, but it is also critical: the requirements must be met, the conditions must be satisfied; the mission must be accomplished. Thus, man is in an envied position and, consequently, his acts and norms of conduct are expected to conform with the high level he is to occupy.

The Islamic concepts and laws are inseparable parts of the Islamic ideology; milk is inseparable from water. They make up the practical expression of Islam in society and in life as a whole. These concepts and laws are essentially to harmonize people's relationships with each other, with other beings, with nature and the environment and, above all, with the Creator.

The basic Islamic outlook of this life is one of an introductory course; the real life is the one to come, not this one. This worldly life is a prelude to another eternal one; therefore, this world is a preparatory stage for people in order to attain the spiritual level which permits them to enter Paradise. It is a microcosm of the real eternal macrocosm. The other side of the picture is the horror of Hell for people who misuse or abuse the power placed at their disposal.

Hence, success and failure are not measured by the known criteria of this world, by, say, materialistic supremacy, wealth and power. The Islamic criteria differ from the materialistic ones; they account for the life hereafter; they take into consideration the next phase of our existence. Death is not the end of everything; it is the beginning of real life. To die is to wake up from a brief dream. To

please Allah is the sublime goal which surpasses all other wishes and desires, or so should it be. This by no account means that we should neglect acquiring materialistic supremacy, wealth and riches, by legitimate means; it only means that we must put such supremacy, or such wealth, in its rightful place: to serve man and to please Allah. What a noble concept! It is with pleasing Allah and with His support that Muslims seek materialistic supremacy.

Alas! The Muslims now do not have any materialistic supremacy at all. Their natural resources are being

sold for less than it costs to produce them; their countries are supermarkets for goods manufactured by those who despise them and look down upon them; their leaders can hardly agree on one common cause, and their nations have no say about who should rule them and who should not, and they are robbed of their freedom of expression, worship, and movement. Turkey, for example, used to be the center of the Islamic world and the source of its pride and glory.

Now its ruling juntas, supported by non-Muslim and anti-Islamic "superpowers," by Zionists and imperialists, are fighting Islam with all their might and means. The same can be said about the rulers of many other countries who are Muslims only in name. The Muslims are now prisoners in their own homes. They are the underdogs of the world. Gone are the days of their supremacy and glory and shall never return unless and until they regret and return to their creed and practice it as it should be.

Origins of Deviation

How did Mu'awiyah ascend to the post of ruler of the Muslims, and how did he dare to claim succession to the Prophet (ﷺ), the irreligious, liar, cheating, cunning and conniving man that he was? What happened to the Muslim world? Why was it silent at seeing the assumption of power by an ignoble person like Yazid? Indeed, it is astonishing to witness the indifference and irresponsibility demonstrated by the vast majority of Muslims.

One is tempted to say that such indifference is present even in our own time. Our time, in fact, can best be described as the neo-jahiliyya. There are already too many Yazids but no al-Husayn to come to the rescue. Islamic values and ideals were as if totally alien to the society. What happened to the dynamic forces that had awakened the world and shaken it like never before? The Prophet's voice had not yet died away regarding the responsibility of the Muslims.

He once said, "One who sees a cruel governor violating Allah's laws, breaking His covenant, acting in contrast to the tradition of the Prophet, committing mischief and intruding upon peoples' rights, without trying to change that governor through his action, or speech, Allah will then reserve a suitable place for him in Hell."

We all may wonder about the causes of deviation which led to this deplorable state of affairs. We know for sure that Islam is a perfect and practical religion, a complete way of life. Islam, no doubt, assured us of guiding us to a secure and prosperous life. The question of deficiency in the Islamic message, however, if there is such deficiency at all, or in the way it was conducted by the Prophet (ﷺ), has no place here.

The only possible shortcomings, therefore, are confined to the subsequent status of the Muslims, to their way of handling their affairs, and to their conformity to the Islamic laws besides the "natural" obstacles encountered in the sequence of events. Following is the major cause that contributed to the deplorable status quo of the Muslims of the time and is still contributing to that of our own and will continue to do so

till the end of time.

Falsification of Hadith and Distortion of The Sunna

The worst mischief upon which Mu'awiyah embarked was the fabrication of hadith, traditions detailing what the Prophet of Islam (ﷺ) said or did. Hadith is one of the two sources of Islam's legislative system, the Sharaa. Selecting Imam Ali (ع) as his lifetime's adversary, Mu'awiyah soon found out that his cause was hopeless. Ali's merits were very well recognized by every Muslim while Mu'awiyah's family and dismal conduct were the objects of their contempt. Mu'awiyah's past record was dark and shameful whereas that of Ali (ع) was glorious and shining, full of heroism in defense of Islam.

In order to sustain his campaign and raise the status of his likes, Mu'awiyah had to attract the remnant of some companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) whose characters were known as weak and who had a genuine interest in this world and in its vanishing riches. He employed them to fabricate traditions custom-designed to his own tailoring.

This trend of fabricating hadith constituted a grave danger to the integrity of the Islamic tenets. Hadith is second in importance to the Holy Qur'an. It was very important to ward off such a danger. To expose such a trend to the Muslims at large was very vital, pivotal, of the highest priority. It would be accomplished by exposing and disgracing those who embarked upon committing and nurturing such a terrible mischief. Imam al-Husayn's revolution broke out in order to undertake this very task.

Let us now review a few samples of fabricated traditions⁷.

Abu Hurayra is supposed to have quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) saying, "Allah has trusted three persons for His revelation: Myself, Gabriel and Mu'awiyah." We wonder what Allah was doing for the revelation when Mu'awiyah was in the camp of the infidels. Abu Hurayra claimed the Prophet (ﷺ) gave Mu'awiyah an arrow then said to him, "Take this arrow until we meet in Paradise."

What a lucky arrow to enter Paradise! Let us stop here to discuss this man, Abu Hurayra, who may have had the lion's share in distorting the Prophet's Sunnah especially when we come to know that he was quoted by a host of tabian who in turn are quoted by hundreds others who in turn are quoted by thousands..., and so on. This is why his name is in the forefront of narrators of hadith.

There is no agreement about what Abu Hurayra's name was, nor when he was born or when he died. He is said as having died in 59 A.H./678 A.D., and some say that his name was Abdul-Rahman ibn Sakhr al-Azdi, while others say it was Umair ibn amir ibn Abd Thish-Shari ibn Taraf. But it is agreed upon that he belonged to the Yemenite tribe of Daws ibn Adnan and that his mother's name was Umaima daughter of Safeeh ibn al-Harith ibn Shabi ibn Abu Sa'd; she, too, belonged to the Daws tribe.

It is said that the Prophet (ﷺ) nicknamed him "Abu Hurayra" after a kitten to which he was attached. He accepted Islam in 7 A.H./628-9 A.D. immediately after the Battle of Khaybar, and he was then more than

thirty years old. He was one of those indigent Muslims who had no house to live in, so they were lodged at the Suffa, a row of rooms adjacent to the Prophet's mosque at Medina. These residents used to receive the charity doled out to them by other Muslims. He used to see the Prophet (ﷺ) mostly when it was time to eat. He missed most of the battles in defense of Islam waged after that date although he was young and healthy and capable of serving in the army.

The time Abu Hurayra spent in the company of the Prophet (ﷺ), that is to say, on and off, is by the most generous estimates three years, yet this man narrated more traditions of the Prophet (ﷺ) than anyone else in history. The total number of "traditions" which he attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) reached the astronomical figure of 5,374 of which only 326 are quoted by al-Bukhari, the most famous compiler of hadith, and who endorses no more than 93 of them! Muslim, another compiler of hadith, endorses only 89 of Abu Hurayra's alleged ahadith. These facts and figures are stated in the famous classic reference titled *Siyar Alam an-Nubala'* by at-Thahbi.

Compare this unrealistic figure of 5,374 "traditions" attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) and compiled during less than three years with the 586 traditions compiled by Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع), the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law who was raised by the Prophet (ﷺ) since his birth in 600 A.D. and who followed the Prophet (ﷺ) like his shadow for 32 years. Compare it with the figure of 142 traditions narrated by Abu Bakr, one of the closest companions and a longtime friend of the Prophet (ﷺ) and one of the earliest to embrace Islam.

Compare it with the figure of 537 traditions narrated by the second caliph Omer ibn al-Khattab and with the 146 traditions narrated by Othman ibn Affan, keeping in mind that all these men knew how to read and write whereas Abu Hurayra was illiterate; he could neither read nor write...

The Umayyads found in Abu Hurayra the right man to fabricate as many "traditions" as they needed to support their un-Islamic practices and then attribute them to the Prophet (ﷺ), hence the existence of such a huge number of traditions filling the books of the Sunnah. And the Umayyads rewarded Abu Hurayra very generously.

When he came from Yemen to Hijaz, Abu Hurayra had only one single piece of striped cloth to cover his private parts. When Mu'awiyah employed Abu Hurayra to work in the factories producing custom-designed "traditions," he rewarded him by appointing him as the governor of Medina. He also married him off to a lady of prestige for whom Abu Hurayra used to work as a servant and built him al-Aqeeq mansion.

Abu Hurayra found himself during the Umayyads' reign of terror and oppression a man of wealth and influence, owning slaves and having servants. Prior to that, Omer ibn al-Khattab appointed him as governor of Bahrain for about two years during which Abu Hurayra amassed a huge wealth, so much so that people complained about him to Omer who called him to account for it. Finding his excuse too petty to accept, Omer deposed him. Omer also questioned him about the unrealistically abundant traditions

which he was attributing to the Prophet (ص), hitting him with his cane and reprimanding him for forging traditions and even threatening to expel him from the Muslim lands.

All these details and more can be reviewed in famous references such as: Ar-Riyad an-Nadira الرياض by at-Tabari, in Vol. 4 of the original Arabic text of al-Bukhari's *Sahih*, where the author quotes Abu Hurayra talking about himself, in Abu Hurayra by the Egyptian scholar Mahmoud Abu Rayyah, in سير أعلام النبلاء *Siyar Alam an-Nubala'* by at-Thahbi, in شرح نهج البلاغة *Sharh Nahjul-Balagha* by Ibn Abul-Hadad, in البداية و النهاية *Al-Bidaya wal Nihaya* by Ibn Katheer, in طبقات الفقهاء *Tabaqat al-Fuqaha* by Ibn Sa'd (also famous as *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd*), in تاريخ الأمم و الملوك *Tarikh al-Umam wal Muluk* by at-Tabari, in تاريخ الخلفاء *Tarikh al-Khulafa* by as-Sayyuti, in فتح الباري *Fath al-Bari* by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, in المستدرک *Al-Mustadrak* by al-Hakim, and in numerous other references. Yet some Muslims label Abu Hurayra as "Islam's narrator," propagating for his fabrications without first studying them in the light of the Qur'an and going as far as invoking the Almighty to be pleased with him....

اللهم أرزقنا شفاعة الحسين

Abdullah ibn Omer (ibn al-Khattab), too, claimed that the Prophet said, "You will see greed after me and things with which you will disagree." People, he went on, asked, "O Messenger of Allah! What do you order us to do then?" The Prophet, Abdullah continued, said, "Give the governor what is his and plead to Allah for yours."

Islam, true Islam, never condones toleration of unjust rulers. Another fabricated tradition is also by Abdullah ibn Omer who quoted the Prophet (ص) saying, "Put up with whatever conduct you do not like of your rulers because if you abandon the جماعة Jamaa (group) even the distance of one foot and then die, you will die as unbelievers."

Surely many despots ruling the Muslim world nowadays can appreciate such "traditions" and will not hesitate to publicize for them and be generous to those who promote them; they would give them generous salaries and build them mansions... Such fabricated "traditions" are not only in total contrast with the Qur'an and the Sunnah as well as with other verified traditions, they invite the Muslims to be the slaves of their rulers.

This is exactly what Mu'awiyah wanted, and this is exactly what so-called "Muslim" rulers like him want in our day and time... Unfortunately for the Muslims and fortunately for their enemies, there are quite a few "Muslim" rulers like this Mu'awiyah. This is why there is poverty, ignorance, dictatorship, injustice, oppression and subjugation to the enemies of Islam throughout the Muslim world nowadays.

Yazid Appointed as Supreme Ruler

Yazid's grandfather, Abu Sufyan, advised and managed the infidel's campaigns against Islam till the

conquest of Mecca, as stated above. His wife Hind (mother of Mu'awiyah and grandmother of Yazid) tried to chew the liver of Hamzah, uncle of the Prophet (ﷺ), because of her burning hatred and cannibalism.

Mu'awiyah, too, was an active opponent of Islam. Indeed, Abu Sufyan's family was performing the strategic, financial and morale boosting in the infidel's campaign against the Muslims for many years. Their efforts, wealth and diplomacy formed a great obstacle in the way of spreading Islam.

Time had lapsed and Mecca was suddenly besieged with the considerably large forces of the Muslims. The unbelievers in Mecca were stunned at seeing the Muslim fighters who had caught them by surprise, thanks to the shrewd military tactics of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Thus, the infidels, including Abu Sufyan, had no choice except to abandon their arrogance and to accept Allah's sovereignty, or so did most of them pretend. Mu'awiyah was then 28 years old. Having seen how his father "accepted" Islam, though reluctantly, he fled for Bahrain where he wrote his father a very nasty letter reprimanding him for his "conversion." It is not clear when Mu'awiyah brought himself to profess adherence to the Islamic creed.

During this incident, i.e. the fall of Mecca to the Muslims, which was accomplished on a Friday, the 20th of the month of Ramadan, 8 A.H., corresponding to January 14, 630 A.D., less than two years before the Prophet's demise, historians recorded some peculiar stories about Abu Sufyan's family; however, there is one thing certain: They accepted Islam unwillingly, and they were treated in a special way on that account.

For instance, they were given more than their share of the treasury in order to gain their hearts and win them over to Islam. But whether this generosity had any effect in producing any change at all in their attitude is quite another story. Indeed, subsequent events revealed the fact that no change at all had taken place in their way of thinking.

Yazid was brought up in such a family whose atmosphere was electrified with emotions of its dead who fought Islam and who were killed mostly during Islam's first major battle, that of Badr which broke out on a Friday, the 17th of the month of Ramadan, 2 A.H., corresponding to March 16, 624 A.D. and to which the Holy Qur'an refers in 8:5–11. Seventy prominent pagan Quraishites were killed in it, half of them at the hands of Imam al-Husayn's father Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع). That, by the way, was Ali's first battle; he was 24 years old.

Among the Umayyads who were killed in it were: Utbah, father-in-law of Yazid's father Mu'awiyah, Utbah's son al-Walid ibn al-Mugharah (father of the famous military leader Khalid ibn al-Walid), and Shaybah, Utbah's brother. Al-Walid ibn al-Mugharah is cursed in the Holy Qur'an in 74:11–30 (Surat al-Muddaththir). Utbah is father of Hind, mother of Yazid, who tried to chew the liver of Hamzah, Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)'s dear uncle and valiant defender of Islam.

Add to this the fact that such family witnessed how those who had killed their kinsfolk received full honour, recognition, and respect by the entire community, not to mention the wasted wealth, the injured pride, and the loss of privileges which they used to enjoy during the pre-Islamic period known as the jahiliyya.

Yet Yazid himself had some unique characteristics in the negative and adverse sense of the word in addition to what we recorded above. He was known as a playboy; he is on record as the first person ever to compose pornographic poetry. He described each and every part of his aunt's body for sensual excitement, doing so without being reprimanded by his father or mother or anyone else. Historians record his being seen drunk in public, his committing adultery, and his leading quite a corrupt life, a life which did not last for long, thank Allah. In one of his poetic verses, Yazid stated, "The family of Hashim (the Prophet's clansmen) staged a play to get a kingdom. Actually, there was neither news from Allah (wahi) received nor a revelation."

Mu'awiyah was not ruling as an individual but was representing a way of thinking which differed in nature from everything Islam stands for. However, he was not satisfied to leave the ruling stage without making sure that it was properly looked after. His pragmatic and materialistic mind drove him to prepare for the crowning of his son, Yazid, as his successor.

Mu'awiyah had made many pledges not to install Yazid when he saw the conditions at the time not conducive to such a plan because Muslims were still politically conscious and desired to see the restoration of the Islamic laws and values. Mu'awiyah, hence, had a difficult job at hand before leaving this world.

He, in fact, tried his best to buy the allegiance for his son from his army's commanders, tribal chiefs and chieftains, and entire tribes as well as men of distinction and influence, spending huge sums of money in the process. But his efforts did not succeed with everyone.

One of his failed attempts was when he wrote Imam al-Husayn (ع) soliciting his endorsement for his appointment of Yazid as the heir apparent to the throne. Imam al-Husayn's answer was a scathing criticism of all what Mu'awiyah and Yazid had committed. Mu'awiyah, therefore, forewarned his son Yazid to beware of Imam al-Husayn (ع).

Yazid eventually succeeded his father Mu'awiyah as the ruler. Yazid now spared no means to secure the submission for his unholy practices, oppression and aggression, from everyone. He knew very well that in reality, he had no legitimate right whatsoever to make claims or to issue demands. On the contrary, he was guilty of having committed many illegal and sacrilegious deeds for which he should have been killed, had there anyone powerful enough to implement the Islamic code of justice.

Once in charge, Yazid took his father's advice regarding Imam al-Husayn (ع) seriously. He wrote the then governor of Medina, al-Walid ibn Utbah, ordering him to secure the oath of allegiance to him as the new ruler from everyone in general and from Imam al-Husayn (ع), Abdullah ibn Omer (son of second

caliph Omer ibn al-Khattab), and Abdullah ibn az-Zubair in particular, being the most prominent personalities. Yazid in an unmistakable language ordered al-Walid to secure such an oath for him by force if necessary, and that if Imam al-Husayn (ع) refused, he should behead him and send his severed head to him in Damascus.

But al-Walid's efforts were fruitless. Imam al-Husayn's reply was exact and direct; said he, "Ameer (Governor)! I belong to the Ahl al-Bayt (family) of the Prophet. Allah has consigned to and charged us with the Imamate (spiritual and political leadership of the Muslims). Angels pay us visits. Yazid is a wicked sinner, a depraved reprobate, a wanton drunkard, a man who sheds blood unjustly, and a man who openly defies Allah's commandments. A man like me will never yield his allegiance to a person like him."

The Noble Motives Behind Imam Husayn's Revolution

Such motives were numerous. Some of them stemmed from the grievances of the general public, while others were ideological in nature and noble in objective. They may be summed up as follows:

1) The most urgent need was to stop the attempts to distort the Islamic concepts and code of conduct, particularly the falsification of hadith as discussed above. This was of the utmost significance; it preoccupied the minds of responsible Muslims at the time. Such fabrication was quite rampant, epidemic in nature, festered by the funds available for those who rushed to please the Umayyads with their pens, those who did not hesitate to sell their religion for a trifling.

Such fabrication was poisonous in effect, and it affected the lives of all Muslims, and it still does. It was giving the Umayyads a free hand to do whatever they desired of unfair and unethical policies in dealing with their subjects. The mask of religion with which they used to hide their un-Islamic conduct was quite dangerous. In the long run, such danger would eventually change the pristine concepts introduced by Islam and substitute them with anything but Islam. Stripping such a mask and exposing the true picture of the Umayyads was the most urgent task of a revolutionary like Imam al-Husayn (ع).

2) The State's structure was built on un-Islamic premises. Quraish was born to rule; non-Arabs were second-class citizens who formed the base of the society's pyramid. That was the general social picture of the Islamic world under the Umayyad's rule. Anyone who dared to express an opinion which did not agree with that of the Umayyads had to be placed under house arrest if not altogether eliminated. His property would then be confiscated and his life would be at stake. He would live in fear for the rest of his miserable life. Nowadays, there are millions of Muslims who live under such conditions. You see, the Umayyads are not dead; they are very much alive and well...

3) The Umayyads considered the Islamic world as their own real estate property. The zakat and other Islamic taxes were levied, but nobody knew where the funds went. Large gifts were doled out from the state treasury (called in Islam bayt al-mal) to governors, government officials, tribal chiefs, army

commanders, and officers who surpassed others in their cruelty and oppression... Large sums of money were spent on activities which Islam prohibits: racing, gambling, wines, slave women to entertain the high class and the people in power, etc.

The majority of Muslims were left on the brink of starvation while the ruling clique enjoyed the social and material privileges. It very much is like what one sees happening nowadays in many Muslim countries. Let us face it; most Muslims are nowadays the laughing stocks of the world; *انا لله وانا اليه راجعون* *Inna Lillah wa Inna Ilayhi Rajioon* (We belong to Allah, and to Him shall we return).

4) The Muslims had apparently become accustomed to the un-Islamic rule of the Umayyads as time passed by. Their resistance gradually slackened, and some people began adjusting to the new realities. The revolutionary spirit of Islam began to disappear little by little from the Muslims' lives and thoughts. A new stimulant to their souls was necessary in order to bring life back to their misled souls and to restore the Islamic conduct and way of life to the society.

The Revolution's Process

Having refused to swear the oath of allegiance to Yazid, Imam al-Husayn (ع) realized that his stay in Medina was becoming impossible, unsafe; therefore, he decided to bid farewell to it. Bidding his people and friends to get ready for the journey, he went at night to the tomb of his grandfather Prophet Muhammad (ص).

Approaching the grave, he greeted him then said, "Assalamo Alaikom, O Messenger of Allah! I am the son of the beloved portion of your heart Fatima. Grandfather! You yourself had bequeathed to our Umma (nation) urging them to look after me and to take care of me, but they have neglected doing so and quite forgotten all of that."

He spent the entire night at the tomb occupied in prayer the entire period, returning after daybreak. He did the same in the following night. One of his prayers in that second night was:

Allah! This is the resting-place of Your beloved Prophet Muhammad (ص) and I am his grandson. You know well the present situation in which I am, and You know what is in the innermost of my heart. I invoke You, Lord, to keep me by the grace of this holy place firmly steadfast in my pursuit of whatever meets Your Pleasure and the Pleasure of Your Prophet.

At-Tabari, Abu Mikhnaf and many other historians record saying that Imam al-Husayn (ع) saw his grandfather the Prophet (ص) in his vision at the end of that same second night calling unto him thus:

Come to me, O Husayn! Come to me going by and passing through the torturous stage of martyrdom and claim the right position reserved for you. The Lord, Allah, will resurrect me, your parents, your elder brother (al-Hassan) and yourself at the same time and gather us all at the same place on the Day of Judgment.

Umm Salamah, the virtuous wife of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), hurried to Imam al-Husayn (ع) as soon as she heard that he intended to depart from Medina. She said to him, "Son! How will I be able to bear your journey to Iraq? I have heard your grandfather (the Prophet [ﷺ]) saying, My son al-Husayn will be murdered on a tract of land people will call Karbala'". "By Allah, mother," Imam al-Husayn (ع) answered, adding, "I know all that. I also know on what day I will be murdered, and the name of the man who will murder me. I know, too, the people who will inter my dead body and the members of my Ahl al-Bayt and friends who will meet their martyrdom along with me. If you desire, I will show you the exact spot of my grave." On Rajab 28, 60 A.D./May 7, 680 A.D., Imam al-Husayn (ع) left Medina for good accompanied by 21 male children in addition to the ladies.

Husayn in Mecca

When Yazid came to know that al-Walid had allowed Imam al-Husayn (ع) and Abdullah ibn az-Zubair to leave Medina for Mecca without taking their oath of allegiance to him, he became very angry and immediately deposed al-Walid from his post and appointed Amr ibn Sa'd in his place. Amr, in turn, appointed Omer ibn az-Zubair as his chief executive officer. Omer began to harass and intimidate the supporters of Abdullah ibn az-Zubair.

The Imam (ع) understood that those were scaring tactics meant to convey the message that he would be next to harass and intimidate; therefore, he felt that it was not safe for him to stay even in Mecca. There, Imam al-Husayn (ع) received thousands of letters, mostly from the people of Kufa, pleading to him to rescue them from the Umayyads' tyranny. According to the renowned writer al-Balathiri, Imam al-Husayn (ع) received as many as six hundred letters in one day and a total of twelve thousands, all requesting the same.

Among those who wrote him were these renowned Kufians some of whom betrayed him then fought him: Shabth ibn Rab'i, Hajar ibn Abjar, Yazid ibn al-Harith, Izrah ibn Qays, Amr ibn al-Hajjaj, and Muhammad ibn Omayr ibn Utarid.

First, Imam al-Husayn (ع) did not respond to any of these letters, then he wrote one letter which he entrusted to Hani ibn Hani as-Subayi and Sa'd ibn Abdullah al-Hanafi wherein he said, *"In the Name of Allah, the Most Benevolent, the Most Merciful.* Hani and Sa'd brought me your letters, and they are the last to deliver such letters to me. I understand what you narrate, and the gist of most of your letters is: "We have no Imam; so, come to us, perhaps Allah will gather us with you on the path of guidance and righteousness."

I have sent you my brother and cousin and the confidant of my Ahl al-Bayt and ordered him to write me with regard to your conditions, views and intentions. So, if he writes me saying that your view is united with that of those of distinction and wisdom from among you and in agreement with what your messengers and letters state, I shall, by the Will of Allah, come to you very soon. By my life, an Imam is one who acts upon the Book [of Allah] and implements justice and follows the path of righteousness; he

dedicates himself to follow Allah's Commandments, and peace be with you."

He handed his letter to his cousin Muslim ibn Aqeel saying, "I am dispatching you to the people of Kufa, and Allah shall deal with you as He pleases. I wish that I and you should be in the company of the martyrs; so, proceed with Allah's blessing and help. Once you get there, stay with the most trustworthy of its people."

Muslim left Mecca on the fifteenth of the month of Ramadan, corresponding to June 22, 680 A.D., via the Mecca-Medina highway. He reached Medina and went to the Mosque of the Prophet (ﷺ), then he bade his family farewell after having hired two road guides from the tribe of Qays. One night the road guides were lost, and they became extremely thirsty, and it was very hot. They said to Muslim (ع) once they recognized some road marks, "Take yonder road and follow it, perhaps you will be saved." He, therefore, left them, following their advice. Both road guides died of thirst. He could not carry them because they were about to pass away. What those road guides had actually seen was not the road itself but some landmarks leading thereto.

The distance between them and water was not known, and they were unable to ride on their own, nor could they ride with someone else. Had Muslim (ع) stayed with them, he, too, would have perished. The most urgent matter was to preserve precious lives and to continue the march till water could be reached, hence his decision to abandon them where they were. Muslim and those serving him barely survived till they reached the highway and the water source where they rested for a short while.

Muslim sent a letter to Imam al-Husayn (ع) with a messenger whom he hired from those who settled near that water source. He told him about the death of the road guides, about the hardship he underwent, and that he was staying at a narrow passage at Batn al-Khabt awaiting his instructions.

The messenger met Imam al-Husayn (ع) at Mecca and delivered the letter to him. Al-Imam al-Husayn (ع) wrote him back ordering him to continue his march to Kufa without any delay. Having read the letter, Muslim immediately resumed his trip and passed by a watering place belonging to the tribe of Tay. He Alighted there then departed. He saw a man shooting and killing a deer, so he took it as a sign of good omen: the killing of his foe.

On the twenty-fifth of Shawwal, 60 A.H./July 27, 680 A.D., Muslim ibn Aqeel entered Kufa and stayed with al-Mukhtar ibn Abu Ubayd at-Thaqafi who was highly respected among his people, a generous man, a man of ambition and daring, one well experienced and determined, and a formidable opponent of the enemies of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be with them. He was a man of great discretion especially with regard to the rules of the battle and the means of subduing the foe. He kept company with the Progeny of the most holy Prophet (ﷺ), so he benefitted from their ethics and virtuous morals, and he sought their advice publicly and privately.

Muslim Swears Oath of Allegiance for Husayn

The Shi'as of Kufa came in groups to meet Muslim as he stayed at al-Mukhtar's house, pledging to him their obedience. This increased his happiness and elation. When he read to them Imam al-Husayn's letter, Abis ibn Shibeeb ash-Shakiri stood and said, "I do not speak on behalf of the people, nor do I know what they conceal in their hearts, nor do I deceive you in their regard. By Allah! I can tell you what I personally have decided to do. By Allah! I shall respond to your call, and I shall fight your enemy. I shall defend you with my sword till I meet Allah desiring nothing except what He has in store for me."

Habib ibn Muzahir said, "You have briefly stated your intention, and by Allah, the One and only Allah, I feel exactly as you do." Sa'd ibn Abdullah al-Hanafi made a similar statement. Other Shi'as came to swear the oath of allegiance to him till his *diwan* counted as many as eighteen thousand men. Some historians say that they were as many as twenty five thousand men. According to ash-Sha'bi, however, the number of those who swore allegiance to him reached forty thousand. It was then that Muslim wrote Imam al-Husayn (ع) a letter which he handed to Abis ibn Shibeeb ash-Shakiri informing him of the consensus among the people of Kufa to obey him and to wait for his arrival.

In it, he said, "A scout does not lie to his people. Eighteen thousand Kufians have already come to me; so, hurry and come here as soon as this letter reaches you." That was twenty-seven days before Muslim's martyrdom. The Kufians, too, added to it their own letter wherein they stated the following: "Hurry and come to us, O son of the Messenger of Allah! A hundred thousand swords are in Kufa on your side; so, do not tarry."

This angered a group of the Umayyads with vested interests. Among them were Omer bin Sa'd, son of the renown Sa'd ibn Abu Waqqas, Abdullah ibn Muslim ibn Rabi'ah al-Hadrami, and Imarah ibn Uqbah ibn Abu Mueet. They wrote Yazid warning him of the arrival of Muslim ibn Aqeel and the rallying of the people of Kufa behind him, adding that an-Numan ibn Basheer, governor of Kufa, was not strong enough to stand in his [Aqeel's] way.

Yazid deposed an-Numan ibn Basheer and appointed Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad in his place. The new governor was a man very well known for his ruthfulness. Yazid ordered Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad to rush to Kufa in the company of Muslim ibn Omer al-Bahili, al-Munthir ibn al-Jarad, and Abdullah ibn al-Harith ibn Nawfal escorted by five hundred soldiers whom he hand-picked from among the people of Basra. Ibn Ziyad rushed to Kufa, paying no attention to anyone who fell off his horse due to exhaustion even if he were one of his own closest friends.

For example, when Shurayk ibn al-A'war fell on the way, and even when Abdullah ibn al-Harith fell, thinking that Ibn Ziyad would slow down for their sake, Ibn Ziyad paid no attention to them, fearing that Imam al-Husayn (ع) might reach Kufa before him. Whenever he passed by a checkpoint, its guards thought that he was Imam al-Husayn (ع), so they said, "Welcome, O son of the Messenger of Allah!"

He remained silent till he reached Kufa via the Najaf highway. When he arrived, people welcomed him and said in one voice: "Welcome, O son of the Messenger of Allah!" This only intensified his outrage. He continued his march till he reached the governor's mansion. An-Numan did not open the gate for him, and he spoke to him from the mansion's roof-top. Said he, "I shall not return the trust to you, O son of the Messenger of Allah!" Ibn Ziyad said to him, "Open the gate, for your night has extended too long!" A man heard his voice and recognized him. He, therefore, said to the people, "He is Ibn Ziyad, by the Lord of the Ka'ba!" They, therefore, opened the gate for him then dispersed, going back home.

In the morning, Ibn Ziyad gathered people at the grand mosque. There, he delivered a speech warning them against mutiny and promising them generous rewards for conforming. Said he, "Anyone found to be sheltering one of those who scheme against the authority of the commander of the faithful [meaning Yazid] and who does not hand him over will be crucified on the door of his own house."

When Muslim ibn Aqeel came to know about Ibn Ziyad's speech and his explicit threats and having come to know about people's conditions, he feared being assassinated. He, therefore, left al-Mukhtar's house after the dark and went to the house of Hani ibn Urwah al-Mathhaji who was a very zealous Shi'a. He was also one of Kufa's dignitaries, one of its qaris of the Holy Qur'an, and the shaikh and chief of the Banu Murad. He could easily raise four thousand troops fully armed and eight thousand cavaliers.

If he includes his tribe's allies from Kindah, the number would swell to thirty thousand. He was one of the closest friends of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع) on whose side he fought in all his three battles. He had seen and was honoured by being a companion of the Prophet (ص).

When he was later killed in defense of Imam al-Husayn (ع), he was more than ninety years old. Muslim ibn Aqeel stayed at the house of Shareek ibn Abdullah al-A'war al-Harithi al-Hamadani al-Basri, one of the main supporters of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be with him, in Basra. He had participated in the Battle of Siffeen and fought side by side with the great sahabi Ammar ibn Yasir. Due to his distinction and prominence, Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad appointed him as Governor of Kerman on behalf of Mu'awiyah. He used to be in contact with and in the company of Hani ibn Urwah.

The Shi'as kept meeting Muslim ibn Aqeel secretly at Hani's house without attracting the attention of Ibn Ziyad, admonishing each other to keep it to themselves. Ibn Ziyad, therefore, could not know where Muslim was. He called Maqil, his slave, to meet him.

He gave him three thousand [dinars] and ordered him to meet the Shi'as and to tell them that he was a Syrian slave of Thul-Kila and that Allah blessed him with loving Ahl al-Bayt of His Messenger (ع), that it came to his knowledge that one of the members of Ahl al-Bayt (ع) had come to that country, and that he had with him some money which he wanted to deliver to him. Maqil entered the grand mosque and saw Muslim ibn Awsajah al-Asadi offering his prayers. Having seen him finish his prayers, he came close to him and made the above claim to him.

Muslim ibn Awsajah prayed Allah to grant that man goodness and success. He then accompanied him to

the place where Muslim ibn Aqeel was hiding. The spy delivered the money to Muslim and swore the oath of allegiance to him. The money was handed over to Abu Thumamah as-Saidi who was a far-sighted and a brave Shi'a dignitary appointed by Muslim to receive the funds and to buy thereby weapons. That man kept meeting Muslim every day. No secrets were kept from him, so he kept gathering intelligence and getting it to Ibn Ziyad in the evening.

Hani Ibn Urwah

When the matter became clear to Ibn Ziyad, who by now knew that Muslim was hiding at the house of Hani ibn Urwah, he had Asma' ibn Kharijah, Muhammad ibn al-Ash'ath and Amr ibn al-Hajjaj brought to him. He asked them why Hani had not been coming lately to visit him at his governor's mansion. They told him that it was due to his sickness, but he was not convinced especially since his informers had already told him that Hani used to sit at the door of his house every evening.

These same men rode to Hani and asked him to meet the sultan, for "He cannot stand you staying away from him," they said, pressuring him till he yielded. Hani, therefore, rode his mule and went. As soon as Ibn Ziyad saw him, he said, "His feet, the feet of the treacherous one, have brought him to you."

Then he turned to his judge Shurayh and cited verses about judges who rush to please their tyrannical rulers who appoint them in their positions rather than implement Islam's legislative system, the Sharaa. Ibn Ziyad turned to Hani and said, "You brought Aqeel's son to your house and gathered weapons for him, did you not?" Hani denied, and when their argument intensified, Ibn Ziyad ordered Maqil to be brought to him.

Hani, hence, understood that that man was actually Ibn Ziyad's spy, so he said to Ibn Ziyad, "Your father had done me great favors, and I now wish to reward him. Why do you not listen to my good advice and safely depart for Syria with your family and wealth? Someone who is more worthy than you and your friend [meaning Yazid] of taking charge has come here." Ibn Ziyad said, "And under the foam is the pure sour cream."

Ibn Ziyad then said to him, "By Allah! You will not stay out of my sight before you bring him to me." Hani said, "By Allah! Had he been under my foot, I would not have lifted it!" Ibn Ziyad then spoke rudely to him and even threatened to kill him. Hani, therefore, said, "In that case, there will be plenty of swords around you," thinking that the tribesmen of Murad would protect him from Ibn Ziyad who then pulled Hani's braids, hitting his face with his sword, breaking his nose and scattering the flesh from his cheeks and forehead on his beard. He then jailed him at his mansion.

Amr ibn al-Hajjaj heard that Hani had been killed. Hani's wife Raw'a, who is well known as the mother of Yahya son of Hani, was the sister of Amr ibn al-Hajjaj. The latter, therefore, rode with a multitude from the tribe of Mathhaj, and they all surrounded the mansion.

When Ibn Ziyad came to know about it, he ordered Shurayh, the judge, to see Hani and then to tell those horsemen that Hani was still alive. Shurayh narrates saying, "When Hani saw me, he said in a loud voice, O Muslims! Should ten persons enter here, you must come to my rescue!' Had Hameed ibn Abu Bakr al-Ahmari, the policeman, not been with me, I would have conveyed his message, but I had to simply say instead that Hani was still alive. Amr ibn al-Hajjaj then praised Allah and went back accompanied by the other men."

Muslim's Uprising

When Muslim came to know about what had happened to Hani, he feared being assassinated; therefore, he rushed to rise before the time he had set with the people. He ordered Abdullah ibn Hazim to call upon his men, who had then filled the houses surrounding him, to gather together. Four thousand men assembled. They were shouting Badr's call which was: "O Supported One! Annihilate them!"

Ubaydullah ibn Amr ibn Aziz al-Kindi was placed in command of the Kindah and Rabi'ah quarters. "March ahead of me," said Muslim, "in command of the cavalry." Muslim ibn Awsajah al-Asadi was placed in command of Mathhaj and Banu Asad. "Take charge of the infantry," Muslim ordered him. Abu Thumamah as-Saidi was placed in charge of Tameem and Hamadan, whereas al-Abbas ibn Jadah al-Jadli was given the command of the Medina troops.

They marched towards the governor's mansion. Ibn Ziyad fortified himself inside it, locking all its gates. He could not resist because there were only thirty policemen with him and twenty of his close men and slaves. But the substance from which the people of Kufa were made was treachery; so, their standards kept disappearing till no more than three hundred men remained out of the original four thousand. Al-Ahnaf ibn Qays described them as a whore who demanded a different man every day.

When those inside the mansion called upon the people of Kufa saying, "O Kufians! Fear Allah and do not expose yourselves to Syrian cavaliers whose might you have already tasted and whom you have already tested on the battlefield," the remaining three hundred dispersed, so much so that a man would come to his son, brother, or cousin and tell him to go home, and a wife would cling to her husband till he returned home.

Muslim offered the evening prayers at the [grand Kufa] mosque accompanied by only thirty men. Then, when he went to Kindah's quarters, only three men accompanied him. He hardly proceeded for a short while before finding himself without anyone at all to show him the way. He alighted from his horse and cautiously traversed Kufa's alleys not knowing where to go.

When people abandoned Muslim, their noise died down, and Ibn Ziyad could not hear the voice of any of their men. Ibn Ziyad ordered his bodyguards to inspect the mosque's courtyard to see whether there were any men lying in ambush. They, therefore, kept lowering their lanterns down its walls and lighting reeds then lowering them down with ropes till they reached the mosque's courtyard. They could not see

anyone, so they informed Ibn Ziyad who ordered his caller to call people to assemble at the mosque.

When they filled the mosque, he ascended the pulpit and said, "Aqeel's son has caused the dissension and disunity with which you all are familiar; so, there is no security henceforth to any man in whose house we find him. Anyone who captures him and brings him to us will be paid his blood money. O servants of Allah! Fear Allah and safeguard your obedience and oath of allegiance, and do not expose yourselves to peril."

Then he ordered al-Haseen ibn Tameem, chief of his police force, to search homes and highways, warning him that he would kill Muslim should he succeed in escaping from Kufa.

Al-Haseen stationed his guards at highway crossroads and pursued the dignitaries who had supported Muslim, arresting Abdul-Ala ibn Yazid al-Kalbi and Imarah ibn Salkhab al-Azdi. He threw them in jail then killed them. Then he jailed a group of prominent leaders as a safeguarding measure against what they might do. Among them were al-Asbagh ibn Nubatah and al-Harith al-A'war al-Hamadani.

Al-Mukhtar Jailed

When Muslim marched out, al-Mukhtar was at a village called Khatwaniyya. He came accompanied by his supporters raising a green standard while Abdullah ibn al-Harith was raising a red one. Having planted his standard at the door of Amr ibn Hareeth's house, he said, "I want to stop Amr."

It became obvious to them that both Muslim and Hani had been killed, and it was suggested to them that they would feel more secure in the company of Amr ibn Hareeth, and so they did. Ibn Hareeth testified that they had both avoided Muslim ibn Aqeel... Ibn Ziyad ordered them jailed after having reviled al-Mukhtar and hit his face with a lance, gouging one of his eyes. They remained in prison till Imam al-Husayn, peace be with him, was martyred.

Ibn Ziyad ordered Muhammad ibn al-Ash'ath, Shabth ibn Rab'i, al-Qaqa ibn Shawr at-Thuhli, Hajar ibn Abjar, Shimr Thul-Jawshan, and Amr ibn Hareeth to surrender and to discourage people from rebelling. A number of men who were controlled by fear responded positively to his call in addition to others who coveted rich rewards and were thus deceived, whereas those whose conscience was pure went underground, waiting for an opportunity to launch an attack on the camp of falsehood.

Muslim at the House of Taw'a

Ibn Aqeel's feet took him to the quarters of Banu Jiblah who belonged to the tribe of Kindah. He stood at the door of a house of a freed bondmaid named Tawa who had a number of sons. She used to be the bondmaid of al-Ash'ath ibn Qays who freed her. Aseed al-Hadrami married her, and she gave birth to his son Bilal who was in the crowd when his mother was standing at the door waiting for him.

Muslim requested her to give him some water, which she did. He then requested her to host him, telling

her that he was a stranger in that land without a family or a tribe, and that he belonged to a family capable of intercession on the Day of Judgment, and that his name was Muslim ibn Aqeel. She took him to a room which was not the same one where her son used to sleep, and she served him some food. Her son was surprised to see her entering that room quite often, so he asked her about it. She refused to answer his question except after obtaining an oath from him to keep the matter to himself.

But in the morning he informed Ibn Ziyad of where Muslim had been hiding. Ibn Ziyad dispatched al-Ash'ath accompanied by seventy men who belonged to the Qays tribe in order to arrest him. Upon hearing the horses' hoofs ploughing the ground, Muslim realized that he was being pursued, so he hurried to finish a supplication which he was reciting following the morning prayers. Then he put on his battle gear and said to his hostess Tawa: "You have carried out your share of righteousness, and you have secured your share of the intercession of the Messenger of Allah. Yesterday, I saw my uncle the Commander of the Faithful in a vision telling me that I was going to join him the next day."

He came out to face them raising his unsheathed sword as they assaulted the house, succeeding in repelling their attack. They repeated their attack, and again he repelled them, killing as many as forty-one of their men, and he was so strong that he would take hold of one man then hurl him on the rooftop.

Ibn al-Ash'ath sent a messenger to Ibn Ziyad requesting additional enforcements. The messenger came back to him carrying the latter's blame of his incompetence. He, therefore, sent him this message: "Do you think that you sent me to one of Kufa's shopkeepers, or to a Nabatean from Heera?! Rather, you sent me to one of the swords of [Prophet] Muhammad ibn Abdullah !" Ibn Ziyad then assisted him with additional soldiers.

Fighting intensified. Muslim and Bakeer ibn Hamran al-Ahmari exchanged blows. Bakeer struck Muslim on the mouth, cutting his upper lip, wounding the lower and breaking two of his lower teeth. Muslim fiercely struck him with one blow on his head and another on his shoulder muscle, almost splitting his stomach, killing him instantly.

Then they attacked him from the house's rooftop, hurling rocks at him. They kept burning reed bales then throwing them at him. He attacked them in the alley. His wounds were numerous; he bled extensively, so he supported his body on the side of the house. It was then that they assaulted him with arrows and stones. "Why do you hurl stones at me," he asked them, "as non-believers are stoned, the member of the household of the pure Prophet that I am? Do you not have any respect for the Messenger of Allah with regard to one of his own descendants?"

Ibn al-Ash'ath said to him, "Please do not get yourself killed while you are in my custody." Muslim asked him, "Shall I then be captured so long as I have some strength in me? No, by Allah! This shall never be." Then he attacked Ibn al-Ash'ath who fled away before him. They attacked him from all directions. Thirst had taken its toll on him. A man stabbed him from the back, so he fell on the ground and was arrested.

Another account says that they dug a hole for him which they covered then fled before him, thus luring

him to fall into it, then they arrested him. When they took his sword away from him, he wept. Amr ibn Ubaydullah as-Salami was surprised to see him weep. A man without his weapon is helpless, defenseless and vulnerable.

Muslim Meets Ibn Ziyad

Muslim ibn Aqeel was brought to Ibn Ziyad. At the entrance of the mansion he saw an urn containing cooled water. He asked to drink of it. Muslim ibn Amr al-Bahili said to him, "You shall not taste one drop of it till you taste of the hameem in the fire of hell." Muslim asked him, "Who are you?" He said, "I am one who knew the truth which you rejected, and who remained faithful to his imam as you betrayed him." Muslim ibn Aqeel said to him, "May your mother lose you! How hard-hearted and rude you are! You, son of Bahilah, are more worthy of tasting of the hameem." Having said so, he sat down, supporting his back on the mansion's wall.

Imarah ibn Uqbah ibn Abu [son of] Mueet sent a slave named Qays to give him water. Whenever Muslim was about to drink of it, the cup became full of his blood. In his third attempt to drink, the cup became full of his blood and both his front teeth fell in it, so he abandoned it saying, "Had it been prescribed in destiny for me to drink it, I would have drunk it."

Ibn Ziyad's guard came out to escort Muslim. Having entered Ibn Ziyad's room, Muslim did not greet him. The guard asked Muslim, "Why did you not greet the ameer?" "Shut your mouth," said Muslim, "he is not my ameer." It is also said that he said to Ibn Ziyad, "Peace be upon whoever followed the right guidance, feared the consequences in the hereafter, and obeyed the Exalted King," so Ibn Ziyad laughed and said, "Whether you greet or not, you shall be killed." Muslim said, "If you kill me, someone worse than you had already killed someone much better than me. Besides, you shall never abandon committing murders, setting a bad example, thinking ill of others, or being mean; having the upper hand will be the doing of anyone else but you."

Ibn Ziyad said, "You disobeyed your imam, divided the Muslims, and sowed the seeds of dissension." Muslim said, "You have uttered falsehood. Rather, those who divided the Muslims are Mu'awiyah and his son Yazid. The seeds of dissension were sown by your father, and I wish Allah will grant me to be martyred at the hand of the worst of His creation."

Then Muslim asked permission to convey his will to some of his people. He was granted permission, so he looked at those present there and saw Omer ibn Sa'd. "There is kinship between me and you," said he to him, "and I need a favour of you which you should oblige, and it is a secret between us." But he refused to listen to it, whereupon Ibn Ziyad said to him, "Do not hesitate to tend to your cousin's need."

Omer stood with Muslim in a way that enabled Ibn Ziyad to see them both. Muslim conveyed his desire to him to sell his sword and shield and pay a debt in the amount of six hundred dirhams which he had borrowed since entering Kufa, to ask Ibn Ziyad to give him his corpse to bury it, and to write al-Husayn

to tell him what had happened to him.

Omer ibn Sa'd stood up and walked to Ibn Ziyad to reveal the secret with which he had just been entrusted by Muslim! Ibn Ziyad said to Muslim, "A trustworthy person never betrays you, but you have placed your trust in a treacherous person."

Then Ibn Ziyad turned again to Muslim and said, "O son of Aqeel! You came to a united people and disunited them." Muslim said, "No, indeed, I did not come to do that, but the people of this country claimed that your father killed their best men, shed their blood, and did what Kisra and Caesar do, so we came to them in order to enjoin justice, and to invite all to accept the judgment of the Book [of Allah]."

Ibn Ziyad said, "What do you have to do with all of that? Have we not been dealing with them with equity?" Muslim said, "Allah knows that you are not telling the truth. You, in fact, kill when angry, out of enmity, and for mere suspicion." Ibn Ziyad then verbally abused him and abused Ali, Aqeel, and al-Husayn, whereupon Muslim said, "You and your father are more worthy of being thus abused; so, issue whatever decree you wish, you enemy of Allah!"

It was then that Ibn Ziyad ordered a Syrian to go to the top of the mansion and to behead Muslim and throw both the head and the body to the ground. The Syrian took Muslim to the flat rooftop of the mansion as the latter kept repeating, "Subhan-Allah! La ilaha illa-Allah! Allahu Akbar!" He also kept repeating, "O Allah! Judge between us and the people who deceived, betrayed and lied to us," then he faced Medina and saluted Imam al-Husayn (ع).

The Syrian struck Muslim's neck with his sword and threw his head and body to the ground and hurried down; he was very, very much startled. Ibn Ziyad asked him what was wrong with him. "The moment I killed him," said he, "I saw a black man with an extremely ugly face standing beside me biting his finger, so I was frightened." "Perhaps you lost your mind for a moment," said Ibn Ziyad.

Hani was taken to an area of the market place where sheep are sold; his arms were tied. He kept saying, "O Mathhaj! Any man from Mathhaj to help me this day?! O Mathhaj! Where has Mathhaj gone away from me?!" Having seen that there was none to respond to him, he somehow managed to get one of his arms out of the ropes and said, "Is there anyone who would hand me a stick, a knife, a rock, or even a bone so that a man may be able to defend himself?"

Guards attacked him and tied him again. He was ordered to stretch his neck so that they might strike it with their swords. "I am not going to give it away to you so generously. I shall not assist you at the cost of my own life." A Turkish slave named Rasheed owned by Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad struck him with his sword, but he missed.

Hani said, "To Allah is my return! O Allah! To Your Mercy do I come and to Your Pleasure!" Rasheed hit him again and killed him. This same slave was killed by Abdul-Rahman ibn al-Haseen al-Muradi after having seen him at the Khazar (Caspian Sea, also the Basque Sea, Tabaristan Sea, and Baku Sea,

bahr baku in Arabic, an area where Islam reached in the early 9th century A.D.) in the company of Ubaydullah.

Ibn Ziyad ordered the corpses of both Muslim and Hani to be tied with ropes from their feet and dragged in the market places. Then he crucified them upside-down at the garbage collection site then sent their severed heads to Yazid who displayed them at one of the streets of Damascus.

He, Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyad, wrote Yazid saying,

"Praise to Allah Who affected justice on behalf of the commander of the faithful and sufficed him for having to deal with his foes. I would like to inform the commander of the faithful, may Allah bless him, that Muslim ibn Aqeel had sought refuge at the house of Hani ibn Urwah al-Muradi, that I assigned spies for them and let men infiltrate their assemblies and plotted against them till I forced them out. Allah gave me the upper hand over them, so I killed them and sent you both of their heads with Hani ibn Abu Hayya al-Wadii al-Hamadani and az-Zubair ibn al-Arwah at-Tameemi who both are from among those who listen to and obey us; so, let the commander of the faithful ask them whatever he pleases, for there is knowledge with them, and there is truth, understanding, and piety. And peace be with you."

Yazid wrote Ibn Ziyad saying,

"You do not cease to be the source of my delight. You have behaved with strictness and assaulted with courage, maintaining your composure. You have done very well and testified to the correctness of my good impression of you. I invited your messengers and asked them and confided in them, and I found their views and merits just as you indicated; so, take good care of them. It has also come to my knowledge that al-Husayn ibn Ali has marched towards Iraq. You should, therefore, set up observation posts, prepare with arms, be cautious for mere suspicion. Kill anyone whom you suspect (of dissent). Your tenure is put to the test by this al-Husayn rather than by anyone else, so is your country and your own self as governor. The outcome will determine whether you will be freed or whether you will return to slavery; so, you have to either fight him or arrest and transport him to me."

Let us now leave Kufa and its Kufian men of treachery and to al-Husayn in Mecca where he was performing the rites of the pilgrimage. As he was thus engaged, Yazid dispatched thirty men disguised as pilgrims with strict instructions to assassinate him. Commenting on this attempt to assassinate him, al-Husayn said, "Even if I were to bury myself in some hideout, they are sure to hunt me out and to try to force me to swear the oath of allegiance to Yazid. And if I refused, they would kill me and would not spare me without inflicting upon me the same torture as the Jews had done to Jesus." There were unsuccessful attempts to prevent him from leaving Mecca.

Imam al-Husayn (ع) did not mask his intentions and determination to fight the Umayyad regime of corruption. The speeches he delivered at Mecca were consistent with those he made elsewhere. So does his will which he wrote and entrusted to his brother Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyya who stayed in Medina when al-Husayn (ع) left it first for Mecca then for Karbala", Iraq.

This said will was, in fact, a formal declaration of his holy revolution. He, peace be with him and upon his Ahl al-Bayt, wrote saying, "I am not campaigning because I am unwilling to accept righteousness, nor do I intend to do mischief or suppress people. Indeed, I have decided to seek to reform my grandfather's nation. I want to enjoin what is right and to forbid what is wrong. If people accept my call for righteousness, Allah is the Master of the righteous people. Those who reject my call, I shall remain steadfast till Allah passes His judgment; surely Allah is the best of judges."

Imam al-Husayn's statements were aiming directly at stripping the "religious" mask behind which the Umayyads were hiding as they ruled the Muslim masses. He was introducing himself to people and explaining his message to the nation. In fact, the very personality of Imam al-Husayn (ع) and his religious devotion and impeccable character were all beyond question or doubt. No wonder, then, that he shouldered such a tremendous task, one which many distinguished personalities were not able to shoulder or even to raise a finger and point at the oppressors.

Let us now follow the Imam on his journey to martyrdom and eternal bliss.

Imam al-Husayn (ع) left Mecca on Thul-Hijja 8, 60 A.H./September 12, 680 A.D. accompanied by his family members, slaves and Shi'as from among the people of Hijaz, Basra, and Kufa who joined him when he was in Mecca. According to p. 91 of *Nafas al-Mahmum* by Shaikh Abbas al-Qummi, he gave each one of them ten dinars and a camel to carry his luggage.

The places (including water places and caravans' temporary tent lodges), cities and towns by which Imam al-Husayn (ع) passed on his way to Taff area, where the famous Taff Battle took place, were: as-Sifah, That Irq, al-Hajir, al-Khuzaymiyya, Zarood, at-Thalabiyya, ash-Shuqooq, Zubala, al-Aqaba, Sharif, al-Bayda, ar-Ruhayma, al-Qadisiyya, al-Uthayb, and Qasr Muqatil.

At as-Sifah, Imam al-Husayn (ع) met the famous poet al-Farazdaq ibn Ghalib and asked him about the people whom he had left behind, since al-Farazdaq had come from the opposite direction and had been in Kufa. Al-Farazdaq, as we are told on p. 218, Vol. 6, of at-Tabari's *Tarikh*, said, "Their hearts are with you; the swords are with Banu Umayyah, and Destiny descends from the heavens."

Qasr Muqatil

When the Imam reached Qasr Muqatil, a place not far from Kufa, he found it like a beehive, full of men and horses with rows of pitched-up tents spread all over, far and wide. Ibn Ziyad had sent a detachment of 1,000 troops (very brave ones!) under the command of Hurr ibn Yazid ar-Riyahi to divert the Imam and his small band to a particular site chosen for them, and not to permit them to go anywhere except to Kufa. At that time, when the Imam reached there, Hurr's army had become thirsty. Its water supply had been fully exhausted, and no water could be seen around for miles.

On becoming aware of this, the Imam at once ordered his men to serve water to the thirsty enemy army

and to their horses as well. When the time of noon prayers approached, the Imam admonished Hurr's army to give up fighting on the side of tyranny and falsehood adding, "But if you disapprove of us, and are wilfully ignoring our claim and reneging from your pledge to support us, a proxy pledge that you expressed in your letters and through your messengers, well, in that case, it does not matter, for I am quite prepared to go back (where I had come from)." But orders had already been issued to Hurr to take the Imam in his custody.

The Imam asked Hurr, "Why have you come here at all?" "In obedience to my imam (meaning Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad, the governor)," answered Hurr. In obeying your imam," responded Imam al-Husayn (ع), "you have committed a great sin against Allah," adding after a short while, "You have lost your all, ruined your life here as well as your life hereafter. You have kindled the fire of hell for your own self and kept it ready for you to be hurled therein on the Day of Judgment. As for your imam, Allah has explicitly said in the Holy Qur'an,

And We made them imams inviting them to the fire, and on the Day of Judgment, no help shall they find. In this world We made a curse to follow them, and on the Day of Judgment, they will be among the loathed and the despised' (Qur'an, 28:41-42)."

Later on, another order to Hurr came from Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad to confine the Imam and his companions to a water land waste at a distance of about 9 – 10 miles from Kufa off the bank of the Euphrates river. This area, known as at-Taff, later came to be called "Karbala'". It is there that the historical battle which stamped and is still stamping the Islamic history and the conduct of all Muslims, took place. As a matter of fact, this battle was already predicted in the Old Testament in the following verse in Jeremiah 46: 10:

... For this is the day of the Lord Allah of hosts, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge him of his adversaries, and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood, for the Lord Allah of hosts has a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.

In his famous book titled الصواعق المحرقة *As-Sawaiq al-Muhriqa* ("the burning thunderbolts), Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani writes saying that when the Imam came to that place, he took a handful of its soil and, having smelt it, he declared, "By Allah! This is the land of karb (affliction) and bala' (trial and tribulation)! Here the ladies of my haram will be taken prisoners! Here my children will be butchered and our men will be slain! Here Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet (ص) will be subjected to indignities! Here my beard will be stained with the blood of my head! And here our graves will be dug."

Historians contemporary to the Imam related that after coming to Karbala', the Imam purchased that lot from its owners for 60,000 dinars, although it was only four miles square, so that it would be the site of his and his family's and relatives' graves.

The Kufian Hosts

Different accounts of the full number of al-Husayn's camp range from seventy-two to a hundred fighters..., but how many were al-Husayn's foes?! Omer ibn Sa'd was dispatched to Karbala'' to fight the Imam with 6,000 strong. Then Shabth ibn Rab'i went there to take charge of the largest fighting force of 24,000 men. The commanders' names and the numbers of their troops are here provided for the kind reader:

1. Omer ibn Sa'd 6,000
2. Shabth ibn Rab'i 24,000
3. Urwah ibn Qais 4,000
4. Sinan ibn Anas 4,000
5. Haseen ibn Nameer 9,000
6. Shimr ibn Thul-Jawshan 4,000
7. Mazar ibn Ruhaynah 3,000
8. Yazid ibn Rikab 2,000
9. Najr ibn KharShi'ah 2,000
10. Muhammad ibn al-Ash'ath 1,000
11. Abdullah ibn Haseen 1,000
12. Khawli ibn Yazid al-Asbahi 1,000
13. Bakr ibn Kasab ibn Talhah 3,000
14. Hijr ibn Abjar 1,000
15. Hurr ibn Yazid ar-Riyahi 3,000

TOTAL: 68,000

The reader can notice that some of these commanders had already written al-Husayn (ع) inviting him to go to Kufa so that they would support him in putting an end to the tyranny of the Umayyads. The details of how those men changed heart and the amounts of money they received are too lengthy to include in this brief account.

Efforts to Secure Water

The access to water was cut off on the seventh day of Muharram and, before the evening of the eighth, the young, the children, and the women grew extremely restless, being overcome by the pangs of thirst. On the morning of the eighth, al-Abbas son of Ali ibn Abu Talib, al-Husayn's brother, who was appointed by al-Husayn (ع) as commander-in-chief of the tiny force, began digging wells assisted by all loyal companions and kinsmen of the Imam. They succeeded in boring a well, but stones were found instead of water. They soon dug another, but no water was found in it.

The Imam then requested his brother al-Abbas to go to fetch water from the Euphrates. Al-Abbas took

thirty cavaliers and twenty footmen and twenty large-size empty water-bags. After a fierce battle at the river's bank, they succeeded in fetching water. Although they themselves were extremely thirsty, they refused to drink before the others. Al-Abbas, hence, was given the title of "Saqqah," the water-bearer, ever since.

When Omer ibn Sa'd came to know about this incident, he reinforced the detachment sent to guard the Euphrates against al-Husayn's people having access to the water. The total force guarding the water now reached 800...! Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad himself sent a letter to Omer ibn Sa'd telling him that, "It is necessary to take more precautions so that they (al-Husayn's folks) may not be able to obtain a drop of water."

Conditional Respite Granted

Imam al-Husayn (ع) knew that war was unavoidable, so he asked his foes to put off the fighting for one night since, he said, he wanted to spend it praying to Allah. It was grudgingly granted. On the other hand, the misery of the prevailing conditions at al-Husayn's camp due to the shortage of water caused by the water supply being intercepted could not be imagined. The only survivor of that tragedy, namely al-Husayn's ailing son Ali, said later on about their suffering, "We, all in all, were twenty children, and we were very thirsty and crying for water, gasping with thirst."

It is also noteworthy that this same survivor's offspring and supporters later on established the Fatimide ruling dynasty in north Africa with its capital first at Qairawan, Tunisia, then at Cairo, Egypt. The Fatimide caliph al-Muizz li Deenillah founded Cairo and built its renown al-Azhar mosque and university.

Another Confrontation at Watering Place

Burayr al-Hamadani, a loyal companion of Imam al-Husayn (ع), tried to fetch water, igniting a fierce battle at the river's bank. He and only three brave warriors had to face the entire 800-strong regiment guarding the watering place. The battle cries reached al-Husayn's camp, whereupon the Imam ordered a rescue mission. Water was miraculously brought in a single water-skin.

All the children rushed to it, frantically trying to quench their thirst therewith. Crowding around it, some were pressing it to them, others falling upon it till, alas, suddenly the mouth of the water-skin flung open by the children's crowding upon it and all the water flowed out on the dusty floor. All the children loudly cried and lamented saying, "O Burayr! All the water you have brought us is gone!"

Firm Resolution

In the eve of the ninth of Muharram, Imam al-Husayn (ع) gathered all his companions together and said to them, "Whoever remains with me will be killed tomorrow; so, consider this opportunity as Allah-sent and take advantage of the darkness and go home to your villages." He then extinguished the light so

that those who wanted to go away might not be too embarrassed when seen by others. al-Husayn's loyal companions burst out in inconsolable weeping and distressfully said to him, "Mawla (master)! Do not thus shame us before the Messenger of Allah, before Ali and Fatima! With what face will we present ourselves to them on the Day of Judgment? Were we to desert you, may the wild beasts of the jungle tear us to pieces."

Having said so, the faithful companions drew their swords out of their scabbards. Then they threw the scabbards in the fire of a ditch dug to protect the tents of the ladies. Holding their naked swords, they offered humble supplications to the Almighty beseeching Him thus: "O Lord of the creation! We are passing through the sea of trouble and sorrow in obedience to Your Prophet (ﷺ) and in defense of the religion. You are the Sustainer of our honour and reputation. You are our Lord and Master. Grant us the strength of will and the spirit of enduring patience and perseverance so that we may remain firm and give our all in Your Path."

Love and Devotion

Al-Qasim son of Imam al-Hassan son of Ali ibn Abu Talib, nephew of Imam al-Husayn (ع), was a 13-year old lad. He sought audience with the Imam in order to inquire whether his name was on the list of martyrs. "Your name," answered al-Husayn (ع), "is also included in the list of martyrs. You will be killed, and so will my suckling baby Ali al-Asghar." After a short while, the Imam continued saying, "I, too, will be killed, but Allah will continue my lineage. How would the cruel oppressors succeed in putting an end to his [Ali Zain al-Abidin's] life when eight Imams are to be born as his offspring?"

In a tent sat Umm Kulthum, sister of al-Abbas, watching her brother polishing his weapons. She wore a woe-begone face, and tears kept trickling down her cheeks. Suddenly al-Abbas happened to look up. Seeing her tears, he inquired, "Honoured sister, why are you weeping?" "How could I help doing so," she replied, adding, "since I am an unlucky childless woman? Tomorrow, all the ladies will offer the lives of their sons for the Imam, whom shall I offer, having no son of my own?"

Tears trickling down his cheeks, al-Abbas said, "Sister! From now on, I am your slave, and tomorrow you offer me, your slave, as a sacrifice for the Imam." Who else, dear reader, would call himself a slave of his sister besides al-Abbas? Such are the Ahl al-Bayt, and such are their manners.

Ashura

The author of *صلاح النشأتين* *Salah an-Nash'atayn* records saying that the tragic and historical battle culminated on a Friday, the tenth of Muharram, 61 A.H., corresponding to October 13, 680 A.D., a day known in Islamic history as Ashura. Imam al-Husayn (ع) delivered two sermons to the misled souls that surrounded him from all directions, trying to bring them back to their senses, but it was to no avail.

ثم دعا براجلته فركبها ، و نادى بصوت عال يسمعه جلّهم : أيّها النّاس اسمعوا قولي ، ولا تعجلوا حتّى أعظّمكم بما هو حقّ لكم عليّ ، وحتّى أعتذر إليكم من مقدّمي عليكم ، فإن قبلتم عذري وصدقتم قولي وأعطيتُموني النّصف من أنفسكم ، كنتم بذلك أسعد ، ولم يكن لكم عليّ سبيل . وإن لم تقبلوا مِنّي العذر ولم تعطوا النّصف من أنفسكم ، فأجمعوا أمركم و شركاءكم ثم لا يكن أمركم عليكم غمّة . ثم أقضوا إليّ ولا تنظروا . إنّ وليّ الله الذي نزل الكتاب وهو يتولّى الصّالحين . فلمّا سمعن النّساء هذا منه صحنَ وبكينَ وارتفعت أصواتهنّ ، فأرسل إليهنّ أخاه العباس وابنه عليّ الأكبر وقال لهما : (سكتاهنّ فلعمري ليكثر بكأوهنّ . ولمّا سكتنّ ، حمد الله وأثنى عليه وصلى على محمّد وعلى الملائكة والأنبياء وقال في ذلك ما لا يحصى ذكره ولم يُسمع متكلم قبله ولا بعده أبلغ منه في منطقته ، ثم قال : عباد الله

اتقوا الله وكونوا من الدّنيا على حذر ؛ فإنّ الدّنيا لو بقيت على أحد أو بقي عليها أحد لكانت الأنبياء أحقّ بالبقاء وأولى بالرضا وأرضى بالقضاء ، غير أنّ الله خلق الدّنيا للفناء ، فجديدها بال ونعيمها مضمحل وسرورها مكفهر ، والمنزل تلة والدار قلعة ، فتزوّدوا فإنّ خير الزاد التقوى ، واتقوا الله لعلّكم تفلحوا . أيّها النّاس إنّ الله تعالى خلق الدّنيا فجعلها دار فناء وزوال متصرفة بأهلها حالاً بعد حال ، فالمرغور من غرته والشقي من فتنته ، فلا تغرّنكم هذه الدّنيا ، فإنّها تقطع رجاء من ركن إليها وتُخيّب طمع من طمع فيها . وأراكم قد اجتمعتم على أمر قد أسخطم الله فيه عليكم وأعرض بوجهه الكريم عنكم وأحلّ بكم نقمته ، فنعِمَ الرّب ربّنا وبئس العبيد أنتم ؛ أقررتُم بالطاعة وآمنتم ، (بالرسول محمّد ص)

ثم إنكم زحفتُم إلى ذريّته وعترته تريدون قتلهم ، لقد استحوذ عليكم الشيطان فأنساكم ذكر الله العظيم ، فتبّاً لكم ولما تريدون . إنّ الله وإنّا إليه راجعون هؤلاء قوم كفروا بعد إيمانهم فبعداً للقوم الظالمين . أيّها النّاس أنسبوني من أنا ثم ارجعوا إلى أنفسكم وعاتبوها وانظروا هل يحلّ لكم قتلي وانتهاك حرمتي ؟ ألسنتُ ابن بنت نبيّكم وابن وصيّهِ وابن عمّه وأول المؤمنين بالله والمصدّق لرسوله بما جاء من عند ربّه ؟ أو ليس حمزة سيّد الشهداء عمّ أبي ؟ أو ليس جعفر الطيّار عمّي ، أو لم يبلغكم قول رسول الله لي ولأخي : هذان سيّدَا شباب أهل الجنّة ؟ فإن صدّقتموني بما أقول وهو الحقّ - والله ما تعمّدتُ الكذب منذ علمت أنّ الله يمقت عليه أهله ويضرب به من اختلقه - وإنّ كذبتُموني فإنّ فيكم من إنّ سألتُموه عن ذلك أخبركم ، سلوا جابر بن عبد الله الأنصاري ، وأبا سعيد الخدري ، وسهل بن سعد الساعدي ، وزيد بن أرقم ، وأنس بن مالك يخبروكم أنّهم سمعوا هذه المقالة من رسول الله لي ولأخي ، أما في هذا حاجز لكم عن سفك دمي ؟

فقال الشمر : هو يعبد الله على حرف إنّ كان يدري ما يقول . فقال له حبيب بن مظاهر : والله إنّني أراك تعبد الله على سبعين حرفاً ، وأنا أشهد أنّك صادق ما تدري ما يقول ، قد طبع الله على قلبك . ثم قال الحسين (ع) : فإن كنتم في شكّ من هذا القول ، أفتشكّون أنّي ابن بنت نبيّكم ، فوالله ما بين المشرق والمغرب ابن بنت نبيّ غيري ! فيكم ولا في غيركم ، ويحكم اطلبوني بقتيل منكم قتلته ؟

أو مال لكم استهلكته ؟! أو بقصاص جراحة ؟! ، فأخذوا لا يكلمونه ! فنادى : يا شبت بن ربعي ، ويا حجار بن أبجر ، ويا قيس بن الأشعث ، ويا زيد بن الحارث : ألم تكتبوا إليّ أنّ أقدم قد أينعت الثمار واخضرّ الجناب ، وإنّما تقدم على جند لك مجنّدة ؟ فقالوا : لم نفعل . قال : سبحان الله ! بلى والله لقد فعلتم . ثم قال : أيّها النّاس ، إذا

كرهتموني فدعوني أنصرف عنكم إلى مأمن من الأرض. فقال له قيس بن الأشعث : أولا تنزل على حكم بني عمك ؟
فإنهم لن يروك إلا ما تُحبّ ولن يصل إليك منهم مكروه

فقال الحسين عليه السلام : أنت أخو أخيك ، أتريد أن يطلبك بنو هاشم أكثر من دم مسلم بن عقيل ؟ لا والله لا .
أعطيكم بيدي إعطاء الذليل ولا أفرّ فرار العبيد ، عباد الله إني عذتُ بربي وربكم أن ترجمون ، أعوذ بربي وربكم من
كلّ متكبر لا يؤمن بيوم الحساب . ثم أناخ وأمر عقبة بن سميان ففعلها

The dumb and stonehearted rogues were not affected by al-Husayn's eloquent sermons. He asked them, "Am I not your Prophet's grandson? Am I not the son of the Commander of the Faithful, cousin of the Prophet and the first male to believe in the divine message of Allah? Is not Hamzah, the head of the martyrs, my father's uncle? Is not the martyr Ja'far at-Tayyar my uncle? Did the Prophet not reach your ears with words spoken in reference to me and to my elder brother (al-Hassan), saying, These (al-Hassan and al-Husayn (ع) are the masters of the youths of Paradise'?"

The renown historian at-Tabari and all other historians unanimously record that when al-Husayn (ع) proceeded so far in his sermon, the audience was moved against their wish, so much so that tears began to flow from the eyes of friends and foes alike. It was only al-Hurr, however, who was truly moved to the extent of stirring to action. Slowly did he walk as he kept saying, "Allah! I turn to You in repentance from the depth of my heart, so do forgive me and forgive my sinful misconduct towards the Prophet's beloved Ahl al-Bayt."

Approaching the Imam with eyes streaming with tears, with his shield turned the other way and his spear turned upside-down, he knelt down and kept crawling on his knees till he reached the Imam and fell on his feet kissing them, begging for his forgiveness. Al-Husayn (ع) accepted his apologies and prayed for him. Meanwhile, al-Hurr's defection alarmed Omer ibn Sa'd, the commander-in-chief of the enemies of al-Husayn (ع) and of Allah. He was afraid such defection might encourage other commanders of his army to do likewise.

Calling his slave, who was bearing the standard, he put an arrow on the string of his bow and discharged it at al-Husayn (ع), signaling the beginning of the battle. Martyrs fell one after another, recording epics of heroism unlike any others in the entire history of the human race. Their names and deeds of heroism are recorded on the pages of history for all generations to come.

خطبة الحسين (ع) الثانية

ثم إنَّ الحسين (ع) ركب فرسه ، وأخذ مصحفاً ونشره على رأسه ، ووقف بإزاء القوم وقال : ((يا قوم ، إنَّ بيني وبينكم كتاب الله وسنة جدِّي رسول الله (ص) . ثمَّ استشهدهم عن نفسه المقدَّسة وما عليه من سيف النَّبي (ص) ولامته وعمامته فأجابوه بالتصديق . فسألهم عما أخذهم على قتله ؟ قالوا : طاعةٌ للأمير عبيد الله بن زياد ، فقال

، عليه السّلام: ((تَبَّأَ لَكُمْ أَيْتَهَا الْجَمَاعَةُ وَ تَرَحَّأَ

أَحِينَ اسْتَصْرَخْتُمُونَا وَآلَهُ يَنْ فَاصْرَخْنَاكُمْ مُوجِفِينَ ، سَلَلْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا سَيْفًا لَنَا فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَحَشَشْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا نَارًا اقْتَدَحْنَاهَا عَلَى عِدْوَتِنَا وَعِدْوَتِكُمْ ، فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ إِلَيَّ لِأَعْدَائِكُمْ عَلَى أَوْلِيَائِكُمْ ، بِغَيْرِ عَدْلِ أَفْشَوْهُ فَيْكُمْ وَلَا أَمَلٍ أَصْبَحَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ . فَهَلَّا- لَكُمْ الْوِيَلَاتُ ! - تَرَكْتُمُونَا وَالسَّيْفَ مَشِيمَ وَالْجَاشَ طَامِنَ وَالرَّأْيَ لَمَّا يَسْتَحْصِفُ ، وَلَكِنْ أَسْرَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهَا كَطِيرَةِ الدِّبَا وَتَدَاعَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهَا كَتَهَافَتِ الْفَرَاشَ ، ثُمَّ نَقَضْتُمُوهَا ، فَسَحَقًا لَكُمْ يَا عِبِيدَ الْأُمَةِ وَشَذَازَ الْأَحْزَابِ وَنِبْذَةَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَحَرَّفِي الْكَلِمِ وَعَصْبَةِ الْإِثْمِ وَنَفْثَةِ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمُطَفِّئِي السَّنَنِ ! وَيَحْكُمُ أَهْؤُلَاءِ تَعْصِدُونَ وَعَنَّا تَتَخَاذِلُونَ ! أَجَلَ وَاللَّهِ غَدْرَ فَيْكُمْ قَدِيمٍ وَشَجْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَسْوَلكُمْ وَتَأَزَّرْتَ فِرْعَوْنَكُمْ فَكُنْتُمْ أَخْبَثَ ثَمَرَةٍ ، شَجَى لِلنَّازِرِ وَأَكْلَةً لِلْغَاصِبِ

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الدَّعِيَّ بْنَ الدَّعِيِّ قَدْ رَكَّزَ بَيْنَ اثْنَيْنِ ؛ بَيْنَ السَّلَّةِ وَالذَّلَّةِ ، وَهِيَهَاتَ مَنَا الذَّلَّةُ ، يَا أَيُّهَا اللَّهُ لَنَا ذَلِكَ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَحُجُورٌ طَابَتْ وَطَهَّرَتْ وَأُنُوفٌ حَمِيَّةٌ وَنُفُوسٌ أَبِيَّةٌ ، مِنْ أَنْ نُوْثِرَ طَاعَةَ اللُّثَامِ مِنْ مِصَارِعِ الْكِرَامِ ، أَلَا وَإِنِّي زَاخَفُ بِهَذِهِ الْأُسْرَةِ عَلَى قَلَّةِ الْعَدَدِ وَخِذْلَانِ النَّاصِرِ). ثُمَّ أَنشَدَ أَبْيَاتَ فِرْوَةَ بْنِ مُسِيكٍ الْمَرَادِي. أَمَّا وَاللَّهِ ، لَا تَلْبَثُونَ بَعْدَهَا إِلَّا كَرِيثَمَا يَرْكَبُ الْفَرَسَ ، حَتَّى تَدُورَ بِكُمْ دُورَ الرِّحَى وَتَقْلُقَ بِكُمْ قَلْقَ الْمَحُورِ ، عَهْدٌ عَهْدُهُ إِلَيَّ أَبِي عَنْ جَدِّي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ، فَاجْمَعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَاءَكُمْ ، ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غَمَةً ثُمَّ اقْضُوا إِلَيَّ وَلَا تُنْظِرُونَ ، إِنِّي تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ ، مَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ آخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ (2). ثُمَّ رَفَعَ يَدَيْهِ نَحْوَ السَّمَاءِ وَقَالَ : ((اللَّهُمَّ ، احْبِسْ عَنْهُمْ قَطْرَ السَّمَاءِ ، وَابْعَثْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَنِينَ كَسَنِي يُوسُفَ ، وَسَلِّطْ عَلَيْهِمْ غَلَامَ ثَقِيفٍ يَسْقِيهِمْ كَأْسًا مُصْبِرَةً ، فَإِنَّهُمْ كَذَبُونَا وَخِذْلُونَا ، وَأَنْتَ رَبُّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ (3). وَاللَّهِ لَا يَدْعُ أَحَدًا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْتَقِمَ . لِي مِنْهُ ، قَتْلَةً بِقَتْلَةٍ وَضَرْبَةً بِضَرْبَةٍ ، وَإِنَّهُ لَيَنْتَصِرُ لِي وَلِأَهْلِ بَيْتِي وَأَشْيَاعِي .

The First Lady Martyr

Wahab ibn Abu Wahab, a Christian, and his wife, also a Christian, were married only a fortnight ago. Having witnessed what went on between al-Husayn (ع) and his foes, they sympathized with al-Husayn (ع) and embraced the Islamic creed at his hands. The words of the Imam's sermons penetrated their hearts and found an echo. Wahab's mother, still Christian, said to her son, "I will not be pleased with you till you give your life away for the sake of al-Husayn (ع)."

Wahab charged at the enemies of Allah like a lion, and when a man from Kufa severed his right arm, he transferred the sword to the left and went on fighting as if nothing at all had happened. Soon his left arm, too, was lopped off by a single stroke of a sword, and the hero fell to the ground. His wife watched the whole scene. She pleaded to the Imam thus as she darted towards his enemies, "O Imam! Please do not ask me to go back! I prefer to die fighting rather than to fall captive in the hands of Banu Umayyah!"

The Imam tried to dissuade her, explaining to her that fighting is not mandated on women, but at seeing her husband martyred, she ran to him and, putting his lifeless head in her lap, she began to wipe it with her clothes. Soon a slave of Shimr ibn Thul-Jawshan put an end to her life while she was thus engaged; may the Almighty shower His blessings on her. It is unanimously agreed on by the historians that she

was the first lady martyred on that day. Wahab's mother was very happy. She said, "Allah! Thank You for saving my honour through my son's martyrdom before the Imam."

Then the old Christian lady turned to the Kufians and said, "You wicked people! I bear witness that the Christians in their churches and the Zoroastrians in their fire houses are better people than you!" Saying so, she seized a stout candle (or, according to other accounts, a tent post) in her hand and fell upon the enemies, sending two of them to hell.

The Imam sent two of his companions to bring her back. When she stood before him, he said to her, "O bondmaid of Allah! Women are not allowed to go to war. Sit down; I assure you that you and your son will be with my grandfather in Paradise." Another martyr to be mentioned here, who was also Christian, is John, a slave of the great *sahabi* Abu Tharr al-Ghifari, may Allah be pleased with both of them. He had been for many years in the service of Abu Tharr, and although he was a very old man (according to some accounts, he was 90 years old), he fought al-Husayn's enemies till he was martyred.

Al-Abbas is Martyred

The story of the martyrdom of al-Abbas is a very sad one. Unfortunately, there is no room here to provide you with all its details due to the lack of space; therefore, we have to summarize it to you in a few words. Al-Abbas ventured to bring water to the wailing thirsty children. He individually had to face the eight hundred soldiers guarding the bank of the Euphrates against al-Husayn (ع) and his small band having access to it. He was al-Husayn's standard-bearer. Both his arms were severed, one after the other, and arrows made his body look like a porcupine. One of those arrows penetrated his right eye...

When al-Husayn (ع) saw his brother fall like that, he wept profusely as he said, "Now I have become spineless..." When al-Husayn (ع) tried to carry him to his camp, al-Abbas pleaded to him not to do so since he could not stand hearing the cries of the thirsty children especially since he had promised to bring them some water. He hated to go back to them empty-handed. Al-Husayn (ع), therefore, honoured his last wish; al-Abbas breathed his last as his brother al-Husayn (ع) was holding to him...

Martyrdom of The Imam

The Imam was also very courageous, so much so that he had already been called "the lion of Banu Hashim." He had participated in the wars waged by his father, the Commander of the Faithful Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع), in defense of the creed against the hypocrites led by the Umayyads and against the Kharijites, proving his military ability and mastership of the art of war. Had the Muslims of today mastered this art, and had they been able to make their own weapons rather than import them from others, they would not have been forced to sell their God-given natural resources, especially oil, dirt cheap to those who do not wish them any good.

Had the rulers of the Muslim world learned how to get along with each other, they would have

cooperated with each other for their own common good. Had the Muslims of the world implemented the commandments of their creed as strictly as they are supposed to, no unjust or tyrannical ruler would have ever ruled them... I think that such rulers, the likes of Yazid, are the main cause of the pathetic situation wherein the Muslims of the world find themselves at the present time, yet these rulers derive their strength from the weakness of their subjects; so, one problem is connected to the other...

Narrators of this incident record saying that there was hardly any place in al-Husayn's body that escaped a sword stroke or an arrow, and the same can be said about his horse as-Sahab which used to belong to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) who, shortly before breathing his last, gave it to his right hand, cousin, and son-in-law Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع). Al-Husayn's older brother, Imam al-Hassan (ع), inherited it; after his martyrdom, it became the property of Imam al-Husayn (ع).

Having become too feeble to fight, he stood to rest. It was then that a man threw a stone at him, hitting his forehead and causing his blood to run down his face. He took his shirt to wipe his blood from his eyes just as another man shot him with a three-pronged arrow which pierced his chest and settled in his heart. He instantly said, "In the Name of Allah, through Allah, and on the creed of the Messenger of Allah [do I die]." Raising his head to the heavens, he said, "Lord! You know that they are killing a man besides whom there is no other son of Your Prophet's daughter." As soon as he took the arrow out of his back, blood gushed forth like a drain pipe. He placed his hand on his wound and once his hand was filled with blood, he threw it above saying, "Make what has happened to me easy for me; it is being witnessed by Allah."

Not a single drop of that blood fell on the ground. Then he put it back a second time, and it was again filled with blood. This time he rubbed it on his face and beard as he said, "Thus shall I appear when I meet my Lord and my grandfather the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), drenched in my blood. It is then that I shall say: O grandfather! So-and-so killed me."

Bleeding soon sapped his strength, so he sat down on the ground, feeling his head being too heavy. Malik ibn an-Nisr noticed his condition, so he taunted him then dealt him a stroke with his sword on the head. Al-Husayn (ع) was wearing a burnoose which soon became full of blood. Al-Husayn (ع) said, "May you never be able to eat or drink with your right hand, and may Allah gather you among the oppressors." Having said so, the dying Imam threw his burnoose away and put on a turban on top of his capuche cap.

Hani ibn Thabeet al-Hadrami has said, "I was standing with nine other men when al-Husayn (ع) was killed. It was then that I looked and saw one of the children from al-Husayn's family wearing a robe and a shirt, and he was wearing two ear-rings. He held a post from those buildings and stood startled looking right and left. A man came running. Having come close to that child, the man leaned from his horse and killed that child with his horse. When he was shamed for thus killing a helpless child, he revealed his last name..."

That child was Muhammad ibn Abu Sa'd ibn Aqeel ibn Abu Talib. His mother, dazed, stunned, and speechless, kept looking at him as the incident unfolded before her very eyes...

The enemies of Allah waited for a short while then returned to al-Husayn (ع) whom they surrounded as he sat on the ground unable to stand. Abdullah son of Imam al-Hassan (ع), grandson of the Prophet (ص), who was eleven years old, looked and saw how his uncle was being surrounded by those people, so he came running towards him. Zainab, al-Husayn's revered sister, wanted to restrain him but he managed to evade her and to reach his uncle.

Bahr ibn Kab lowered his head to strike al-Husayn (ع), so the child shouted, "O son of the corrupt woman, are you going to strike my uncle?" The man dealt a blow from his sword which the child received with his hand, cutting it off. The child cried in agony, "O uncle!" Then he fell in the lap of al-Husayn (ع) who hugged him and said, "O son of my brother! Be patient with regard to what has befallen us, and consider it as goodness, for Allah, the most Exalted, will make you join your righteous ancestors." Then he raised his hands and supplicated saying, "O Allah! Let them enjoy themselves for some time then divide them and make them into parties, and do not let their rulers ever be pleased with them, for they invited us to support us, then they turned their backs to us and fought us."

Harmalah ibn Kahil shot the child with an arrow, killing him as he sat in his uncle's lap.

Al-Husayn (ع) remained lying on the ground for some time. Had those rogues wished to kill him, they could have done so, but each tribe relied on the other to do what it hated to do itself. Ash-Shimr shouted, "What are you standing like that for?! What do you expect the man to do since your arrows and spears have wounded him so heavily? Attack him!"

Zarah ibn Shareek struck him on his left shoulder with his sword while al-Haseen shot him with an arrow which penetrated his mouth; another man struck him on the shoulder. Sinan ibn Anas stabbed him in his collar bone area of the chest then shot him with an arrow in the neck. Salih ibn Wahab stabbed him in the side...

قال هلال بن نافع: كنت واقفاً نحو الحسين وهو يجود بنفسه ، فوالله ما رأيت قتيلاً قطّ مضمخاً بدمه أحسن منه وجهاً ولا أنور ، ولقد شغلني نور وجهه عن الفكرة في قتله . فاستقى في هذه الحال ماء فأبوا ان يسقوه . وقال له رجل : لا تذوق الماء حتّى ترد الحامية فتشرب من حميمها . فقال عليه السّلام : ((أنا أرد الحامية ؟! وإنما أرد على جدّي رسول الله وأسكن معه في داره في مقعد صدق عند مليك مقتدر وأشكو إليه ما ارتكبتم منّي وفعلتم بي)). فغضبوا بأجمعهم حتّى كأنّ الله لم يجعل في قلب أحدهم من الرحمة شيئاً.

Hilal ibn Nafi` has said, "I was standing in front of al-Husayn (ع) as he was drawing his last breath. Never did I ever see anyone whose face looked better or more glowing as he was stained with his own blood! In fact, the light emanating from his face distracted me altogether from the thought of killing him! As he was in such a condition, he asked for some water to drink, but they refused to give him any."

A man said to him, "You shall not taste of water till you reach hell from whose hot boiling water shall you drink." He, peace be with him said, "Am I the one who will reach it? Rather, I will reach my grandfather the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and reside with him in his abode of truth near an Omnipotent King, and I shall complain to him about what crimes you committed against me and what you have done to me." They all became very angry. It is as if Allah did not leave an iota of compassion in their hearts. When his condition worsened, al-Husayn (ﷺ) raised his eyes to the heavens and said,

"O Allah! Sublime You are, Great of Might, Omnipotent, Independent of all creation, greatly Proud, Capable of doing whatever You please, Forthcoming in mercy, True of Promise, Inclusive of Blessings, Clement, Near to those who invoke Him, Subduing His creation, Receptive to Repentance, Able, Overpowering, Appreciative when thanked, Remembering those who remember Him! Thee do I call upon out of my want, and Thee do I seek out of need! From Thee do I seek help when in fear and cry when depressed! Thine help do I seek in my weakness, and upon Thee do I rely! O Allah! Judge between us and our people, for they deceived and betrayed us. They were treacherous to us, and they killed us although we are the Itrat of Your Prophet and the offspring of the one You love: Muhammad (ﷺ) whom You chose for Your Message and entrusted with the revelation. Do find an ease for our affair and an exit, O most Merciful of all merciful ones! Grant me patience to bear Your destiny, O Lord! There is no Allah but You! O Helper of those who seek help! I have no Allah besides You, nor do I adore anyone but You! Grant me to persevere as I face Your decree, O Helper of the helpless, O Eternal One Who knows no end, O One Who brings the dead back to life, O One Who rewards every soul as it earned, do judge between me and them; surely You are the best of judges."

Husayn's Horse

Al-Husayn's horse came circling around him, rubbing his head on his blood. It was then that Ibn Sa'd shouted, "The horse! Get the horse, for it is one of the horses of the Messenger of Allah!" Horsemen surrounded that horse which kept kicking with its front legs, killing forty riders and ten horses.

Ibn Sa'd then said, "Leave him and let us see what he does." Once he felt secure, the horse went back to al-Husayn (ﷺ) to rub his head on the Imam's blood as he sniffed him. He was neighing very loudly. Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (ﷺ) used to say that that horse was repeating these words: "Retribution! Retribution against a nation that killed the son of its Prophet's daughter!" The horse then went to the camp neighing likewise. When the women saw the horse without its rider and its saddle twisted, they went out, their hair spread out, beating their cheeks, their faces uncovered, screaming and wailing, feeling the humiliation after enjoying prestige, going in the direction of the place where al-Husayn (ﷺ) had been killed.

Umm Kulthum, Zainab the wise, cried out, "O Muhammad! O father! O Ali! O Ja'far! O Hamzah! Here is al-Husayn in the open slain in Karbala!" Then Zainab said, "I wish the heavens had fallen upon the earth! I wish the mountains had crushed the valley!" She was near al-Husayn (ﷺ) when Omer ibn Sa'd

came close to her flanked by some of his men. Al-Husayn (ع) was drawing his last breath. She cried out, "O Omer ! Should Abu Abdullah be killed as you look on?!"

He turned his face away. His tears were flooding his beard. She said, "Woe unto you! Is there any Muslim man among you?" None answered her. Then Omer Ibn Sa'd shouted at people, "Alight and put him to rest!" Ash-Shimr was the first to do so. He kicked the Imam with his foot then sat on his chest and took hold of his holy beard. He dealt him twelve sword strokes. He then severed his sacred head...

Al-Husayn Marauded

Those folks now took to maurauding the Imam: Ishaq ibn Hawayh took his shirt. Al-Akhnas ibn Murthid ibn Alqamah al-Hadrami took his turban. Al-Aswad ibn Khalid took his sandals. Jamee ibn al-Khalq al-Awdi, and some say a man from Tameem named al-Aswad ibn Hanzalah, took his sword.

Bajdal came. He saw the Imam (ع) wearing a ring covered with his blood. He cut his finger off and took the ring... Qays ibn al-Ash'ath took his velvet on which he since then used to sit, so he came to be called "Qays Qateefa." Qateefa is Arabic for velvet. His worn out garment was taken by Jaoonah ibn Hawiyyah al-Hadrami. His bow and outer garments were taken by ar-Raheel ibn Khaythamah al-Jufi and Hani ibn Shabeeb al-Hadrami and Jarar Ibn Mas'ud al-Hadrami.

A man among them wanted to take his underpants after all his other clothes had been taken away by others. This man said, "I wanted to take it off, but he had put his right hand on it which I could not lift; therefore, I severed his right hand... He then put his left hand on it which I also could not lift, so I severed it, too, and I was about to bare him and take it off when I heard a rumbling like that of an earthquake, so I became frightened. I left him and fell into a swoon, a slumber. While I was unconscious, I saw the Prophet, Ali, Fatima, and al-Hassan, in a vision. Fatima was saying, O son! They killed you! May Allah kill them!'

He said to her, O mother! This sleeping man has severed my hands!' She then invoked Allah's curse on me saying, May Allah cut your hands and legs, and may He blind you and hurl you into the fire!' Indeed, I am now blind. My hands and legs have already been amputated, and nothing remains from her curse except the fire."

اللهم آرزقنا شفاعه الحسين

[1.](#) Ibn Abul-Hadid, Sharh Nahjul-Balagha شرح نهج البلاغة, Vol. 16, p. 15.

[2.](#) Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 86.

[3.](#) Ibid.

[4.](#) Ibid.

[5.](#) The fourth edition of this famous 7-volume tafsir adorns our library and it was published in Beirut, Lebanon, in Thul-Qida 1410 A.H./June 1990 A.D. by Dar al-Ilm lil Malayeen (P.O. Box 1085, Beirut, Lebanon).

6. Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari is a maternal relative and one of the greatest sahabis of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), a first-class traditionist and a most zealous supporter of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع). When the Prophet (ﷺ) migrated from Mecca to Medina in 622 A.D., he was hosted by Jabir for one week. According to Al-Istiab, Jabir died at the age of 94 in 74 A.H./693 A.D. (some say in 77 and others in 78 A.H./696 or 697 A.D. respectively), and his funeral prayers were led by Aban ibn Othman, then governor of Medina. He was the very last to die from among the Prophet's closest companions.
7. For more information about this man, Abu Hurayra, refer to Shi'as are the Ahl as-Sunnah, a book written in Arabic by Dr. Muhammad at-Tijani as-Samawi and translated into English by myself. It is available for sale from Vantage Press, Inc., 516 West 34th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001, or you may order it through the Internet's worldwide web: www.amazon.com [1]. Its title in the said web is "Shi'as are the Ahl as-Sunnah."

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[1] <http://www.amazon.com>