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The Siege

Ubaidullah bin Ziyad had sent a military division. The number of the division was one thousand horsemen. Its aim was to hinder Imam Husayn's caravan.

It was very hot. Ubaidullah's horsemen used up their water. Imam Husayn [a] took a pity on them, and ordered his companions to give them water.

Imam Husayn [a] camped near River Euphrates. Ubaidullah appointed Umar bin Saad over the division. Umar bin Saad occupied the riverbanks. He prevented Imam Husayn [a] and his companions from drinking water.

Umar bin Saad sent a man called Qurra bin Qais to Imam Husayn [a]. He ordered him to ask the Imam:

Why have you come to Kufa?

When Qurra went to Imam Husayn [a], the Imam asked Habib bin Mudhahir about him:

Do you know him?

Habib answered:

Yes, this is Qurra bin Qais. I know his good opinion. I don't think he'll fight you.

Qurra came and greeted the Imam. He told him about Umar bin Saad's letter. The Imam said:

The people of Kufa have asked me to come. If they hate me, I'll leave them.

Qurra bin Qais kept silent. He wanted to come back to Umar bin Saad. So Habib said to him:

Qurra, woe unto you! Don't come back to the unjust people! Support Imam Husayn!

Qurra said:

I'll tell Umar about Imam Husayn's answer. Then I'll consider your request.

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