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Towards Iraq

Alas for the world! May this life go away and that the world should be constricted for someone like the son of Allah’s Messenger (S) and the waves of sorrows should surround him from all sides, and he could not decide where to go and where to turn to, because he received reports that the tyrant Yazid has commanded his assailants to eliminate the Imam even if they find him clinging to the covering of the Kaaba.

The grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S) became sure that Yazid would never leave him alone and that he would definitely shed his blood and defile his sanctity, and he mentioned this matter a number of times in his statements; some of which were as follows:

1. Ja’far bin Sulaiman Zabi’ has narrated that His Eminence (‘a) said, “They will not leave me till they spill out this blood,” and pointed to his breast ñ “even though by their killing me, the Almighty Allah would impose such a one upon them who would humiliate them to such an extent that they shall become more degraded than an old slave-maid.”1

2. Imam (‘a) told his brother, Muhammad Ibn Hanafiyah “If I enter the hole of a reptile, they would bring me out and slay me.”2

3. Muawiyah bin Qarra has narrated that His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) said, “By Allah! They shall persecute me like the Bani Israel resorted to injustice on Saturday.”3

Anxiety descended upon the Holy Imam and waves of sorrow and grief enveloped His Eminence. The atmosphere around him was concealed by the dark clouds, terrible calamities and horrifying events; because if the Imam remained in Mecca he was expecting to be murdered and if he went towards Iraq he was not trustful of the people of Kufa because they would be disloyal to him and betray his trust. He has mentioned this to someone he met on his way to Iraq. Yazid Rashk has narrated regarding this that someone who happened to meet the Imam said: “I decried tents fixed in an open area in the desert. I asked: “Whose tents are these?”

“They belong to Husayn (‘a),” they replied. So I went towards him and saw an elderly man reciting the Quran while tears were flowing on his cheeks and face. I asked him, “May my parents be sacrificed on you, O son of the daughter of Allah’s Messenger (S)! What has brought you to this desolate desert land?” He replied, “These are the letters of people of Kufa to me. I don’t consider them anything except my killers. When they do this they would not leave any other religious sanctity but that they defile it. The Almighty Allah would also impose upon them one who would humiliate them till they become more degraded than an old female slave.”4

His Eminence was not happy with the people of Kufa because he was aware of their deception and disloyalty that they would become his enemies, and become partisans of his enemies.

Anyway, we shall mention some of the events that occurred with His Eminence before he set out from Mecca, the causes of his flight to Iraq and incidents that happened on the way.

Imam’s letter to Bani Hashim

When the Holy Imam (‘a) decided to set out for Iraq he wrote the following letter to Bani Hashim in which he stated after the name of Allah: “From Husayn bin Ali to his brother, Muhammad and anyone who is with him from Bani Hashim. So to say: Anyone who joins me shall be martyred and one who does not join me, shall not obtain success and peace (be on you all).”5

Imam (‘a) informed the clan of prophethood that anyone who comes with him would be guaranteed martyrdom and all those who do not join him would not be able to achieve success. But what victory did the Imam (‘a) have in mind?

It is that same victory that except for His Eminence no other leader of the world and warrior of history had earned. Because his views became victorious and his value increased and the world became illuminated by his sacrifice. His name became the symbol of truth and justice. His personality was not restricted to one community or tribe, rather it became incomparable in all of humanity in every period of time and in all the places. Thus what victory could be greater and which success could be loftier than this success?

Bani Hashim People join the Imam

When the Imam’s letter reached Bani Hashim in Medina a group of them hastened to join the Holy Imam in order to obtain victory and martyrdom in the company of the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S).6 Among them were his cousins and brothers just as Muhammad bin Hanafiyah also came with them to dissuade the Imam from moving to Iraq however Imam (‘a) did not accept his suggestion. We have already related their conversation in the foregone pages.

Why Imam left Mecca?

In our view, the following factors compelled the Imam to leave Mecca in haste:

1. Safety of the Sanctuary

Imam feared that the sanctified House of Allah, where all those who enter it are granted immunity from harm. This was so because Bani Umayyad did not recognize any of its sanctity and Yazid had ordered Amr bin Saeed Ashdaq to fight the Holy Imam and if he could not do so, he must have him assassinated. And Ashdaq had arrived in Mecca with a large number of mercenaries. When the Imam was informed about this he set out from there[7] and he did not take refuge in the sanctified house so that he may protect its sanctities.

His Eminence ('a) said, "Even if I am killed one hand span outside Mecca, it is more preferable to me."

His Eminence ('a) himself said to Ibn Zubair, "If I am killed at such and such place, it is more preferable to me than that the sanctity of this place (Mecca) be defiled."[8] The succeeding days showed that Bani Umayyads had no regard for the holiness of this Great House, because during their battle against Ibn Zubair they fired burning logs of wood and stones with the help of catapults on the Kaaba, just as before that they had defiled the sanctity of Medina'

2. Fear of being Killed

Imam ('a) resorted to extreme precaution that it should not be that he is killed in Mecca or that he becomes an easy prey for the Umayyads, because Yazid had dispatched assailants to eliminate His Eminence.

Abdullah bin Abbas in his letter to Yazid wrote: "And whatever I may forget I will not forget that you forced Husayn bin Ali from the sanctuary of the Messenger of Allah (S) towards the sanctuary of Allah and after that sent your agents to assassinate him and he had to leave the sanctuary of Allah to go to Iraq in a condition of trepidation and in a precautionary manner. While he was and still is the most liked person in the land of valleys (Hijaz) and among the people of the two towns he is the most obeyed if he had stayed there and considered hostilities in these places lawful.[9]

3. Muslim's Letter

Another factor that prompted the Imam to set out from Mecca was the letter of his emissary, Muslim bin Ail, which urged him to move to Iraq and it had mentioned that all the people of Kufa were with him and the number of people who have pledged allegiance for him exceeded 18,000'

These were some of the factors that impelled the Imam to depart for Iraq and the weakest view is that which claims that the Imam set out from Mecca at the behest of Ibn Zubair because Ibn Zubair did not

command any importance that the Imam should leave Mecca because of him, only the factors that we have indicated were explained. When Mecca became the target of Umayyad attack such a situation was created that it never became a center of any political movement.

Imam's discourse in Mecca

When Imam ('a) decided to exit from Hijaz and set out for Iraq he issued orders to gather the people so that he may deliver among them a historical discourse. A huge crowd of people from Hijaz and residents of Mecca congregated in the Masjidul Haraam to listen to Imam ('a) who stood up amidst the crowd and began his sermon as follows:

"Praise be to Allah! By Allah's will only! There is no power but with Allah! And blessings of Allah be upon His Messenger! Verily death is bound with the sons of Adam as a necklace around the neck of a maiden. How I desire and long to meet my ancestors similar to (Prophet) Yaqub ('a), who was desirous of meeting (Prophet) Yusuf ('a). Verily I proceed towards the place of my martyrdom, which has been selected for me. It is as if I see the wolves of the desert (of Bani Umayyah) separating each part of my body between Nawawis and Karbala, and filling their empty bellies and utricles. There is no escape from that which has been written down by the pen of destiny, and the pleasure of our Household (Ahlulbayt) lies in the pleasure of Allah. Verily we will endure His trials and secure the reward due for the forbearing ones. The cord of the Prophet and his child cannot be separated from him, but will all be united together with him near the Right (Allah). Thereby his (the Prophet's) eyes will be cooled due to us and thus Allah will fulfill what He has promised through them. Then whoever desires to lay down his life for us and strive in the way of Allah should come out with us, for I shall be leaving tomorrow morning, Allah willing."[10]

I have not seen a sermon more eloquent and more astonishing, which called the people to truth and which illustrated the worthlessness of this life in the view of Almighty. The sermon contained the following points of significance:

1. His Eminence predicated his imminent martyrdom and he has welcomed death considering it an embellishment for man just as the necklace adorns the neck of a youthful dame. This simile is extremely touching and the most beautiful of the comparisons in the speech of Arabs. And it is natural that the death which man would consider as an adornment for himself, it must be the death on the path of God and truth.

2. His Eminence has indicated his eagerness to meet his Holy ancestors, who had been martyred in the way of Allah and the Imam's eagerness is compared to the eagerness of Prophet Yaqub ('a) to see his long lost son, Prophet Yusuf ('a) as His Eminence has himself explained.

3. His Eminence declared that the Almighty has selected for him a great martyrdom and death with honor on the way of defense of religion and support of Islam.

4. His Eminence introduced that purified land where his blood would be shed that it is between Nawawis and Karbala, where he shall be cut up into piece by swords and spears.

5. His Eminence has informed that till the dogs of Bani Umayyah and their followers do not fill their bellies with his flesh and blood they would not rest. This is an allusion to their rule on Muslims after him and how they shall plunder the wealth of the nation etc.

6. The Imam has clarified that whatever calamities were to befall him, have been destined and there was no way to avoid them and when the pen of destiny has moved there was no way one could change it.

7. Imam (‘a) has announced his supplication to Allah that may He join the pleasure of Ahlul Bayt to His pleasure and their obedience to His obedience and it really deserved to be so. Because they were the callers to the religion of God and guides to His satisfaction who bore such terrible difficulties for this that they defy description.

8. His Eminence has described a quality of Ahlul Bayt (‘a) and it was their patience and forbearance and submission to the command of Allah in whatever befalls them and may Allah give them unlimited rewards for their patience.

9. Imam (‘a) has declared that the illuminated reality of Ahlul Bayt was the continuation of the reality of the Prophet (S) because they were his flesh and blood and the stems of the same tree are not different from its root and the eyes of the Prophet (S) shall be illuminated for his progeny in his Holy Grave. They stayed awake on nights and in defense of his religion bore the greatest Jihad.

These brilliant points show that His Eminence had become hopeless of this worldly life and was prepared to die and sacrifice himself. If he had been aiming for kingdom he would not have issued such statements and he would have had to give sweet promises and bright hopes to his supporters.

None from the Meccans or Hajj pilgrims harkened to the Imam’s call, except a few believers. This indicates the paucity of religious inclination in the people and the decadence of that society and its deviation from truth.

Conclusion of Umrah

When the Imam decided to leave Mecca he put on the *Ihram* for *Umrah–e– Mufradah,* performed circumambulation (Tawaf) of Kaaba, shaved the head and performed *Tawafun Nisa*. Then he put on ordinary clothes. Shaykh Mufeed has written that when Imam Husayn (‘a) decided to leave for Iraq; he went around the Kaaba, did *Sayy* (jogging) between Safa and Marwa, then he removed his Ihram and considered it Umrah, because he was not able to conclude his Hajj lest he may be apprehended in Mecca and taken to Yazid.[11] This point is worth consideration. Because one who has come for Hajj cannot, according to verdict of jurisprudents, remove *Ihram* before sacrifice and that it could not be changed into Umrah. What we have explained is supported by two traditions that Shaykh Hurre Amili

has quoted in *Wasailush Shia,* Book of Hajj, chapter on: “Permissibility of Umrah Mufradah in the months of Hajj[12] and going anywhere one likes.”

A. Ibrahim bin Umar Yamani has narrated from Imam Sadiq (‘a) that His Eminence said regarding the person who goes for Umrah in the months of Hajj and after that he returns to his hometown that there is no problem in it. Even if that year he performs *Hajj Afrad* which does not require sacrifice. Indeed Husayn bin Ali (‘a) set out for Iraq on the day of *Tarwiyah* after performing *Umrah Mufradha.*

B. Muawiyah bin Ammar asked Imam Sadiq (‘a): How does *Umrah Tamatto* differs from *Umrah Mufrada*? He said: *Umrah Tamatto* is related to Hajj and it is a part of it but *Umrah Mufrada* when it is done one can go anywhere one likes. Indeed Imam Husayn (‘a) performed *Umrah Mufrada* in Zilhajj. After that on the day of Tarwiyah when the people went towards Mina he set out for Iraq. There is no problem for one who had not intended to perform Hajj to perform *Umrah Mufrada* in Zilhajj.”[13] This tradition also supports what we have stated above.[14]

Departure before Hajj

The question arises why Imam (‘a) left Mecca on 8th Zilhajj while it is the day when pilgrims prepare to leave for Arafat and why he did not complete his Hajj? According to our view there were some factors due to which His Eminence hastily left Mecca and they are as follows:

1. The regime had become so strict on him that His Eminence had become sure that it would open the door of battle with him or it would have him killed during the performance of Hajj rituals. And in this way trample upon the sanctity of Hajj and destroy its Holy aims among whom was freeing the community in a complete way from humiliation and servitude.

2. If the regime had not initiated battle with the Imam during the rituals of Hajj it would have done so immediately after the conclusion of Hajj. At that time he would have been in Mecca either in battle or he would have been killed. In both the cases there would have been bloodshed in the Holy House in the Holy Month. Therefore His Eminence left Mecca in order to defend the Islamic sanctities.

3. The departure of His Eminence at that delicate moment was one of the important ways of propagation against the regime of that time, because the news of the Imam’s sudden departure spread to all the pilgrims of the Holy House in a sensational manner and the people who had arrived from all over the Islamic regions conveyed this information to their native places that Imam Husayn (‘a) has declared an uprising against Yazid. And that the Imam had been compelled to leave Mecca at such a crucial moment as he wanted to protect the sanctity of the Holy land at the hands of the Umayyads’these were some of the factors that led the Imam to depart from Mecca before Hajj.

With Ibn Zubair

When Ibn Zubair learnt of the Imam's departure to Iraq he hurried to him in order to ask him about a matter that he hadn't been be able to solve. He asked the Imam, "O son of Allah's Messenger, we may never meet each other again after today. How does a new born child inherits or is inherited from? And the gifts presented by a king, are they lawful or not?"

Imam ('a) replied to him, "As for the newborn, he is eligible only when it is born into the world and as for the gifts of kings and rulers, they are allowed only if they have not usurped that property."[15]

Ibn Zubair did not possess juristic knowledge that is why he sought the replies of these questions from the Imam. Now is it not surprising that how such a person could aspire to become the caliph of Muslims?

Journey to Iraq

Before leaving Mecca, His Eminence went to the Masjidul Haraam (the Great Mosque) and by performing circumambulation and prayer, he fulfilled its honor and this was the last farewell of His Eminence. Imam ('a) performed the noon prayer in the Masjid and after that he bid farewell to the sanctified Mosque and came out.[16] Imam ('a) bid farewell to the Holy Ka'ba while he was carrying its soul in his body and he was holding aloft its torch with both his hands while angels accompanied him reciting Allaahu Akbar and circumambulating it. As if they were fearful about it because it was a relic of the heavens on the earth.[17]

Imam departed from Mecca while he was fearful of the grandson of Abu Sufyan like his grandfather, His Eminence, the Messenger of Allah (S) had fled Mecca due to the fear of the polytheists under the leadership of Abu Sufyan. Along with the Imam were eighty-two persons from Ahlul Bayt, their friends and their bondsmen.[18]

In the same way the ladies and women of the family also accompanied him. The Imam departed in such a way that he was carrying with himself the complete independence of the Islamic community and he wanted to establish the government of Quran and heavenly justice on the Islamic lands and that he may remove the deceitful and oppressive people from there.

The Imam's departure ñ according to historians - was on the 8th of Zilhajj 60 A.H.,[19] while all the people of Mecca were filled with sorrow and none was free from it'[20]

The caravan left the limits of Mecca. The Imam did not halt at any of the stops but that he spoke to his Ahlul Bayt about the killing of Yahya bin Zakaria.[21] Thus implying that he would also be martyred in the same way.

The regime pursues the Holy Imam

The Imam had not traveled much distance from Mecca when he was pursued by a group of government soldiers under the command of Yahya bin Saeed. They wanted to prevent the Imam from going to Iraq. There was an armed confrontation between the two groups and the soldiers failed to achieve their objective.22 In our view these steps were nothing but a formality because the Imam had left Mecca in clear daylight without voicing any opposition to the regime. Now this battalion was actually sent to chase the Imam's entourage far away from Mecca and then attack them in the desolate desert so that they could be finished off easily.

Dr. Abdul Momim Majid has also stressed this point and said: "It shall become clear to us that Yazid's official in Hijaz did not take any serious steps to prevent the Imam from leaving Mecca for Kufa as many Shias of His Eminence were in his employ. Rather, it may be that he thought that it would be easier for them to eliminate the Imam in the desert, far away from his partisans, as indeed the Bani Hashim, later on blamed Yazid that he had sent his agents to expel the Imam from Mecca."23

Connection of Damascus with Kufa

Damascus had always maintained connection with Kufa in such a way that it was aware of all the movements of the Holy Imam and the failure of the conspiracy to assassinate the Imam in Mecca. The regime became terrified when it learnt that the Imam was now himself heading towards Kufa to take over the charge of the uprising where he had previously dispatched his emissary, Muslim bin Aqil to gauge the level of his support.

Yazid wrote numerous letters to his tyrant governor in Kufa, Ibn Ziyad in which he suggested him of some dangerous plots devised against Shias so that he may confront the Imam. And he commanded him to be careful of the events that he may have to encounter. Of those letters were the following:

1. Yazid wrote this letter after the Imam had departed from Mecca. It contained the following: "So to say: Beware of Husayn bin Ali, he may not escape you. Hasten towards him before he could reach Iraq."

This letter purported to command the regime of Kufa to immediately march into the desert to fight Imam Husayn ('a) before he reaches Iraq and in this matter they must not allow any type of carelessness.

2. It is mentioned in a letter: "So to say: I have received news that Husayn has departed for Kufa. Your day from among all days and your town from all the other towns is in turmoil due to him and you have become involved among your officials because of him. That time either you shall be freed or you shall be enslaved just as a slave is freed."24

This letter is a message of hatred and ferocity because therein Yazid is warning his official that if he commits any sort of shortcoming in his responsibility of fighting His Eminence, Husayn, he shall be

expelled from his relationship of Bani Umayyah and his paternity will be turned back to Ubaid the Roman, his grandfather, so that he becomes a slaves like ordinary slaves who are sold and then emancipated'Immediately after receiving this letter, Ibn Ziyad declared an emergency and martial law. He sealed all the borders of Iraq and put guards on the roads leading to Syria and Basra so that no one could enter or leave the desert of Iraq.25 Also he formed a battalion that would patrol whole of Iraq and search for Imam Husayn ('a). Among them was a regiment of one thousand mounted soldiers under the command of Hurr Ibn Yazid Riyahi that forced the Imam to halt at Karbala and prevented them from going to any other town.

3. Yazid ordered Ibn Ziyad to gift huge sums of money to leaders and elders in order to obtain their loyalties. The text of this letter was as follows: "So to say: To the people of Kufa, supporters and those who obey you, grant more than a hundred units of currency."26

Ibn Ziyad doled out huge amounts to the important personalities and leaders of groups and persuaded them to make war on the son of Allah's Messenger.

Attitude of Umayyads

The Umayyads were terrified when they learnt of Imam's movement and the journey of His Eminence from Hijaz towards Iraq because a group of them was peace-loving and fearful of the consequences of these circumstances. They were worried in case Ibn Ziyad may cause some harm to the Holy Imam and this may become a cause for the downfall of their regime. And a group was afraid of the downfall of Umayyad regime hence they were of the opinion that the Imam ('a) must be dealt with an iron hand or he should be confronted and destroyed to assure security to their regime. The former group was represented by Walid bin Utbah and the latter party was led by Amr bin Saeed Ashdaq. Each of them dispatched a letter to Ibn Ziyad explaining their respective point of view:

1. Letter of Walid bin Utbah

There was none in Bani Umayyah having a realistic and deep view of the circumstances as Walid bin Utbah. When he learnt that the Imam has departed from Hijaz to march towards Kufa, he became perturbed because he was aware of Yazid's arrogance and Ibn Ziyad's oppressive nature. Therefore he penned a letter to Ibn Ziyad and warned him against causing any harm to the Holy Imam because such a thing was going to cause a terrible harm to Bani Umayyah. The text of this letter was as follows:

"From Walid bin Utbah to Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad: Husayn bin Ali has set out for Iraq. He is the son of Fatima and Fatima is the daughter of Allah's Messenger. So, Ibn Ziyad, beware, that you may not send messengers to him and inspite of your not wanting you may be condemned by all the people. Was Salaam."

Ibn Ziyad did not accord any importance to this letter. He continued in his deviation and oppression and

began to fulfill the responsibility the Damascus regime had forced upon him.[27]

Misunderstanding of Ibn Kathir

Ibn Kathir has erred when he claimed that Marwan wrote a letter to Ibn Ziyad urging him to avoid extremism with His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) and that he advised him and warned him of the consequences of his actions. The letter that he sent is similar to the one dispatched by Walid quoted by us above. It additionally has the following sentences:

“So to say: Husayn bin Ali is coming towards you. And Husayn is the son of Fatima and Fatima is the daughter of Allah’s Messenger (S). By Allah! None has Allah kept alive near us more beloved than Husayn. It may not be that you do something that cannot be stopped; the people may also not forget it. Keep this in mind forever. Was Salaam.”[28]

This letter is definitely not from Marwan because he never had any regard for the well being of the community and all his life he never caused any benefit to the Muslims. In addition to it was his enmity towards the Purified Progeny, especially towards Imam Husayn (‘a) because he was the same person who advised the governor of Medina to eliminate the Holy Imam and later when he received the news of Imam’s martyrdom he openly expressed his joy and satisfaction. On the basis of this how could it be possible that he requested Ibn Ziyad to give concession to the Imam and to protect him?

2. Ashdaq’s Letter

Amr bin Saeed Ashdaq wrote a letter to Ibn Ziyad in which he ordered him to resort to the most severe steps against the Imam. The letter states: “So to say: Husayn is coming towards you in such circumstances that either you shall be freed or be enslaved so that you are dealt with like bondsmen.”[29]

Confiscating Yazid’s wealth

Imam (‘a) had not traveled very far from Mecca that in Taneem[30] he came across a caravan carrying huge quantities of red garments and dresses sent by governor of Yemen, Bajeer bin Yasar for the tyrant Yazid. Imam ordered that the goods of the caravan be confiscated. He told the camel owners that whomsoever of them may like may go with His Eminence to Iraq and they would be paid the full fare and whoever wanted to discontinue, may take his charges till that point and go back. Some of them joined the Imam and the rest departed from there.[31]

In this way the Imam saved the goods from being put to unlawful purposes and be used for drinking parties and help in oppressing people. Before this also the Imam had taken the same steps during the time of Muawiyah about which Ayatullah Sayyid Mahdi Aale Bahrul Uloom thinks that it is a weak narrational report, because the position of the Imam was too exalted to resort to such tactics.[32]

However we are of the opinion that there was nothing wrong in this. The Imam considered the regimes

of both Muawiyah and Yazid as unlawful and when he saw that the wealth of Muslims was being used to promote vices and destruction he saved it by confiscating and distributing it all to the poor and needy people. So what is the problem in it?

Meeting with Farazdaq

When the Imam's entourage reached a place called Saffah,33 the famous poet, Farazdaq Haman bin Ghalib met the Imam and saluted him. Farazdaq invoked blessings upon him and asked His Eminence, "May my parents be sacrificed on you, what has compelled you to leave the Hajj?"

"If I do not hasten, I would be apprehended."34

The Holy Imam asked him, "O Aba Firaas, where are you coming from?" "From Kufa."

"Tell me about the people there."

"You have asked a good (question), the hearts of the people are with you but their swords are against you. The decision comes from Heaven and God does what He wishes."35

Imam agreed to what Farazdaq said and he replied: "You have spoken truly of the affair belonging to God. Every day He (is involved) in (every) matter. If fate sends down what we like and are pleased with, we praise God for His blessings. He is the One from Whom help should be sought in order to give thanks to Him. However, although fate may frustrate (our) hopes, yet He does not destroy (the soul of) those whose intention is the truth and whose hearts are pious."36

At that moment the Imam recited the following couplets:

"If the world is considered of any value, the abode of Allah's reward is higher and greater.

If the bodies are created for death it is best that man is killed by the sword in the way of Allah.

If the sustenance has already been appointed, man should spend the least effort in obtaining it.

If wealth is accumulated only to be left behind, why is man miserly in spending something that is going to be left behind?"37

Then Farazdaq asked the Imam about matters concerning vows and pilgrimage rites. The Imam told him about them and then moved his mount off, saying farewell, and so they parted'

This encounter indicates for us a picture of weakness and decadence of the people and their lack of motivation for supporting truth because he was having social and cultural perception, but inspite of knowing that the Imam shall be killed he did not come forward to help him and he did not join the caravan of His Eminence in order to defend him. So, if such was the position of Farazdaq what could be

said of the general populace and laymen?

Anyway, the Imam continued his march with determination and steadfastness and Farazdaq's statements regarding the weakness of the people towards His Eminence and their support to Bani Umayyah was not able to make the Imam change his decision. If the Imam had been aiming for kingdom, Farazdaq's remarks would have dissuaded him from his journey to Iraq.

Letter of the Imam to people of Kufa

When Imam Husayn ('a) reached the spot called Hajir in the Zirrama province, which was a station off from Badia, he wrote a letter to the Shias of Kufa to inform them of his departure towards Iraq. After the name of Allah the Imam wrote:

"From Husayn bin Ali to his believing brothers and Muslims, peace be on you. With you all, I praise that Allah except Whom there is no deity. So to say: The letter of Muslim bin Aqil reached me and informed me about your favorable attitude and the readiness of the majority of you to help me and to restore our rights. Thus I beseech the Almighty to give me success in righteousness and that He makes you eligible for the greatest reward for this. I have set out from Mecca towards you on Tuesday, 8th Zilhajj the day of Tarwiyah. So when my messenger reaches you, you must conceal your affair and continue your efforts as I would, if Allah wills, reach you in a few days. And peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and His bounties."[38]

Imam ('a) entrusted this letter to the great warrior, Qais bin Mus-har Saidawi. He set out with speed without being distracted by anything else till he reached Quddisiya when he came across a police party that was patrolling the lands to check anyone from entering or leaving Iraq. The police arrested him but Qais destroyed the Imam's letter so fast they could not find out about its contents. Then they took him in custody and along with pieces of the letter sent him to Ibn Ziyad, the oppressor. When he came to Ibn Ziyad he asked:

"Who are you?"

"I am a partisan (Shia) of Amirul Momineen, Husayn bin Ali ('a)." "Why did you tear up the letter that you were carrying?"

"For the fear that you would have learnt of its contents?"

"Who was the sender of that letter and who was supposed to be its recipient?"

"It was from Husayn to a group of people of Kufa, whose names I do not know."

The oppressor became infuriated and became absolutely out of control. He screamed at Qais: "By Allah! You will not leave me except that you report to me the names of persons for whom you had brought the

letter or that you go upon the pulpit and curse Husayn, his father and his brother in order to be excused by me or I shall have you cut into pieces."

Qais told him, "I do not know the recipients of the letter but I shall perform the function of cursing."

Ibn Ziyad thought he was another kind of degraded man of Kufa, who the world has deceived and whom death has terrified. He didn't know that Qais was the incomparable reformer of the world who made history of communities and nations and exalted for them the word of truth and justice on the earth'

Ibn Marjana ordered the people to gather at the Great Mosque so that he may display to them through Qais' cursing of Ahlul Bayt, an example of pledge breaking and persuade them to make it a part of their behavior.

That great warrior, while he ridiculed death and made fun of life stood up from his place in order to fulfill the trust and sincerity towards the message of God. Then he mounted the pulpit and praised Allah and glorified Him. He invoked blessings on the Messenger of Allah and prayed for divine mercy for Ali and his sons.39 After that he cursed Ubaidullah, his father and all the oppressors of Bani Umayyah and he raised his call of the rammer which was the call of truth and Islam and said:

"People, this man, Husayn bin Ali, the best of God's creatures, the son of Fatima, the daughter of the Apostle, may God bless him and his family and grant them peace, (is nearby). I am his messenger to you. I left him at Hajir. So you answer him."40

Ibn Ziyad's men rushed to him and informed him what Qais had done. He became infuriated and ordered him to be thrown from the top of the palace alive.

The agents apprehended Qais and threw him to the ground from the palace top. He was smashed to pieces, his bones were pulverized and he passed away with the death of a brave warrior in the path of his faith and belief.

When the news of his killing reached Imam Husayn ('a) he was extremely devastated and he began to weep and said, "O Allah! Appoint for us and our Shias a valuable place in Your realm and surround us all with Your mercy as You are powerful over everything."41

With Abu Harra

When the Imam reached Zaat Irq, Abu Harra came and said to His Eminence: "O Son of Allah's Messenger! What has brought you out from the sanctuary of Allah and the sanctuary of your grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S)?"

The Imam was touched and he said, "It is amazing, O Aba Harra! The Bani Umayyah has plundered my property and I remained patient, they spoke harshly to me and I was patient. They wanted to kill me, so I

fled. I swear by Allah! These unjust people want to slay me and the Almighty will heap them with extensive degradation and put swordsmen over their lives. He would appoint such a person on them as will humiliate them till they become more degraded than the community of Saba just as a woman from them became their queen and ruled their lives and properties, till she humiliated them completely."[42]

The Imam moved out from that place while he was aggrieved of the people who did not believe in helping the truth. He was sad for the people who preferred a life of comfort and did not like to participate in Jihad on the way of Allah.

With an Arab Shaykh

When the Imam's caravan reached Batnul Uqbah, an Arab Shaykh who resided there approached the Holy Imam and said, "I adjure you in the name of God, go back. You won't come to anything there except the points of spears and the edges of swords. If those who sent for you were enough to support you in battle and had prepared the ground for you, and you came to them, that would be a wise decision. However, in the light of the situation as it has been described I don't think that you ought to do it."

Imam ('a) replied, "What you have stated is not concealed from me, but I shall be patient and forbearing till the Almighty Allah completes that which He intends to complete."[43]

Worry of Her Eminence, Zainab ('a)

The Imam's caravan continued its journey till it reached Hazeemiyah, a station on the route of Hajj. The Imam stayed at this place for a day and a night to rest from the fatigue of the journey and the hardships of the way. His sister, the honorable lady of Bani Hashim came to him dragging her garment on the ground and her heart was brimming with sorrow and grief. She said in a forlorn voice accompanied with lamentation that she had heard a caller say:

"O eye! Be diligent, who will weep upon the martyrs after me?

On those whom death follows as they move forward to fulfill the covenant they have made."

The chief of nobles told her, "My sister, whatever is decreed by Allah shall indeed come to pass?"[44]

His Eminence counseled his sister to observe patience and to face the calamities and problems with determination and resolve so that he may be able to fulfill his duty.

With Zuhair bin Qain

Imam's caravan reached Zarood and halted there for sometime. Zuhair bin Qain who held the Uthmani view and that year he had performed the pilgrimage of the House of God, happened to camp near the

Imam's halting place. Though Zuhair and his caravan had been traveling parallel to the Imam's caravan they always avoided camping too near the Imam, lest the Imam may send a messenger to him and summon him, which was something Zuhair was trying to avoid. This day Zuhair and his companions were having dinner when the Imam's messenger arrived and delivered Imam's message. They were so shocked that they threw what food they held in their hands on the table as if birds had alighted on their heads.

Zuhair's wife censured their reaction and remarked, "Glory be to Allah! Did the son of the Messenger of Allah send for you? Then aren't you going to him? If you went to him, you would hear what he had to say."

Zuhair went unwillingly to him. It was not long before he returned in a happy mood and his face was aglow. He ordered his tent (to be struck) and (called for) his luggage, mounts and equipment. His tent was pulled down and taken to Husayn's camp. Then he said to his wife, "You are divorced."

What secret did the beloved grandson of Allah's Messenger convey to him that he was absolutely transformed? Did he promise him wealth and riches? If he had done thus, Zuhair would not have divorced his wife and not bid last farewell to his friends'

Imam promised him martyrdom, salvation and Paradise and told him about a tradition that reminded him of a long day he had passed and which he had long forgotten'Zuhair repeated the incident to his wife as follows:

"I will narrate a tradition for you: we had gone to Balanjar for Jihad. The Almighty Allah granted victory to us and bestowed us war booty and we were elated at this. Salman al-Farsi was accompanying us. He asked us, "Are you happy with the victory which God has granted you and the booty you have won?" We said, "Yes." Then he said, "Therefore when you meet the Lord of the young men of the family of Muhammad be happier to fight with them than you are with the booty which you have obtained today."[45]

Ibrahim bin Saeed who went to the Imam with Zuhair has narrated that His Eminence told him, "He shall be killed at Karbala and Zajar bin Qais will take his blessed severed head to Yazid with the hope of earning reward but he will not give him anything."[46]

Fortune shone on Zuhair that he joined the caravan of the Purified Progeny and he became their strongest defender and their most brilliant companion. He sacrificed his life upon the Holy Imam and was martyred on the way of his equitable aim.

The Tragic News of Muslim's Martyrdom

Abd Allah bin Sulaiman and al-Mundhir bin Mushamill[47] both from Asad brought the tragic news of the martyrdom of Muslim and they have reported thus:

When we had finished the pilgrimage, there was no concern more important to us than to join al-Husayn, peace be on him, on the road, so that we might see what happened in his affair. We went along trotting our two camels speedily until we joined him at Zarood. As we approached, there we (saw) a man from Kufa who had changed his route when he had seen al-Husayn, peace be on him. Al-Husayn, peace be on him, had stopped as if he wanted (to speak to) him, but (the man) ignored him and went on. We went on towards the man. One of us said to the other: "Come with us to ask this man if he has news of Kufa."

We came up to him and greeted him. He returned our greeting.

"From which (tribe) do you come, fellow?" we asked.

"(I am) an Asadi," he answered.

"We also are Asadis," we said, "Who are you?"

"I am Bakr bin so and so," he answered and we told him our lineage.

"Tell us of the people (you have left) behind you?" we asked.

"Yes," he replied, "I only left Kufa after Muslim bin Aqil and Hani bin Urwah had been killed. I saw them being dragged by their legs into the market-place."

We went on to join al-Husayn, peace be on him, and we were traveling close to him until he stopped at al-Thalabiyya in the evening. We caught up with him (at Thalaba)[48] when he stopped and we greeted him. He returned our greeting.

"May God have mercy on you," we said, "we have news. If you wish, we will tell it to you publicly or if you wish, secretly."

He looked at us and at his followers.

"There is no veil for these men," he answered.

"Did you see the rider whom you were near, yesterday evening?" "Yes," he answered, "I had wanted to question him."

"We have got the news from him and spared you (the trouble of) questioning him," we said, "He was a man from our (tribe), of sound judgment, honesty and intelligence. He told us that he had only left Kufa after Muslim and Hani had been killed, and he had seen them being dragged by their legs into the market-place."[49]

"We belong to God and to Him we shall return; may God have mercy on them both," said al-Husayn, and he repeated that several times.[50]

“We adjure you before God,” we exhorted him, “for your own life and for your House that you do not go from this place, for you have no one to support you in Kufa and no Shia. Indeed we fear that such men (will be the very ones who) will be against you.”

“What is your opinion,” he asked, looking towards the sons of Aqil, “now that Muslim has been killed?”

“By God,” they declared, “we will not go back until we have taken our vengeance or have tasted (the death) which he tasted.”

Al-Husayn, peace be on him, came near us and said: “There is nothing good (left) in life for these men.”51

Then the Holy Imam recited these couplets:

“I shall go and death cannot degrade a man if he has true intention and he fights Jihad like a Muslim.

Then if I die I shall not be regretful and if I remain alive I shall not be condemned. For you O man, the only thing to regret is humiliation and degradation.”52

Imam (‘a) moved forward, his face aglow with exaltation while he had now become certain that he was heading towards a victory that nothing shall equal it. He went on till he had fulfilled the divine duty with sincerity and devotion just as before him, his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S) had fulfilled it.”

News of Abdullah’s Martyrdom

When the Imam reached Zubala he received the dreadful news that his messenger, Abdullah bin Yaqtar has been murdered. His Eminence had sent him to meet Muslim bin Aqil. But he was apprehended by the policemen at Quddisiya and sent under custody to Ibn Marjana. When he was taken to that filthy man, Ibn Ziyad screamed at him, “Go atop the pulpit and curse that liar son of liar and then come down so that I may take decision regarding you’”

Ibn Marjana thought that he would do as directed and he was not aware of the fact that he was a nobleman without a peer and that he shall exalt the word of God in the world through this.

That great warrior ascended the pulpit and raised his voice of daring and said: “O people! I am the messenger from Husayn, son of Fatima to you that you help him against Ibn Marjana, the filthy one, son of the filthy one whom Allah has cursed.”53

Then he began to curse and denounce Ibn Ziyad; he related the evil deeds of Bani Umayyah and urged the people to support the beloved grandson of Allah’s Apostle (S). Ibn Ziyad was absolutely infuriated and ordered that Abdullah be thrown from the palace roof just as Qais bin Mus-har Saidawi had been.

Ibn Ziyad’s mercenaries took Abdullah to the roof of the palace and threw him down and his bones were

smashed, but there still remained the last breath of life when the lowly beast, Abdul Malik Lakhmi moved towards him in order to cut off his head so that it may be presented to his master, Ibn Ziyad and earn his proximity. When he was told that that had been a shameful thing to do and he was blamed for it, he said: "I wanted to relieve him (of his suffering)."

When the news of his martyrdom reached Imam ('a) it shocked him a great deal and he became hopeless of this world. At that time he summoned his companions and all those who had joined him for obtaining booties and not for truth. When they were all present he addressed them: "So to say: Our followers have withdrawn support from us. Those of you who prefer to leave, may leave freely (without guilt) and my allegiance shall no more be upon them."

The people began to disperse from him to right and left until there were only left with him those followers who had come with him from Medina, and a small group of those who had joined him. Husayn ('a) had done that because he realized that the Arabs who had followed him had only followed him because they thought that he was going to a land where the inhabitants' obedience to him had already been established. And he did not want them to accompany him without being fully aware of what they were going to.54 If the Imam had been in pursuit of kingdom and power he would not have talked about his position so openly. His Eminence told them that whoever accompanied him will not get any wealth or position but he would be stepping into the fields of Jihad and by gaining martyrdom he shall become eligible for salvation. If His Eminence had been in quest of rulership, in those difficult hours when he was in need of helpers and supporters, he would not have spoken of such matters.

The Imam, time and again advised the people of his Ahlul Bayt to leave him and this was only to make them fully aware of his position and then step into fighting and in action also they be the best of men and most steadfast in the way of defending the truth to follow him, while their souls are full of faith in Allah and sincerity for Jihad in His way.

Dream of Imam Husayn ('a)

During the noon, Imam ('a) became drowsy, according to the narrator:

We set out at once with him and he became drowsy while he was on his horse's back. He woke up, saying: "We belong to God and to Him we will return. Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds."

He did that twice or three times, then his son, Ali bin al-Husayn approached him and asked: "Why are you praising God and repeating the verse of returning to Him?"

"My son," he answered, "I nodded off and a horseman appeared to me, riding a horse and he said: 'Men are traveling and the fates travel towards them.' Then I knew it was our own souls announcing our deaths to us."55

"Father," asked (the youth), "does God regard you as evil? Are we not in the right?"

“Indeed (we are),” he answered, “by Him to Whom all His servants must return.” “Father,” said (the youth), “then we need have no concern, if we are going to die righteously.”

“May God give you the best reward a son can get for (his behavior towards) his father,” answered al-Husayn, peace be on him.[56]

Encounter with Hurr

He, peace be on him, went on from Batn al Aqaba until he stopped at Sharaf (for the night). At dawn he ordered his boys to get water and more (for the journey). Then he continued from there until midday. While he was journeying, one of his followers exclaimed: “God is greater (Allaahu Akbar)!”

“God is greater (Allaahu Akbar)!” responded al-Husayn, peace be on him. Then he asked: “Why did you say Allaahu Akbar?”

“I saw palm-trees,” answered the man.

“This is a place in which we never see a palm-tree,” a group of his followers asserted.

“What do you think it is then?” asked al-Husayn, peace be on him.

“We think it is the ears of horses,” they answered.

“By God, I think so too,” he declared. Then he said: “(So that) we can face them in one direction (i.e. so that we are not surrounded), we should put at our rear whatever place of refuge (we can find).”

“Yes,” he said to him, “there is Dhu Husam[57] over on your left. If you reach it before them, it will be (in) just (the position) you want.” So he veered left towards it and we went in that direction with him. Even before we had had time to change direction the vanguard of the cavalry appeared in front of us and we could see them clearly. We left the road and when they saw that we had moved off the road, they (also) moved off the road towards us. Their spears looked like palm branches stripped of their leaves and their standards were like birds’ wings. Al-Husayn ordered his tents (to be put up) and they were erected. The people came up; (there were) about one thousand horsemen under the command of al-Hurr b. Yazid al-Tamimi. (It was) during the heat of midday (that) he and his cavalry stood (thus) facing al-Husayn, peace be on him. Al-Husayn, peace be on him, and his followers were all wearing their turbans and their swords (ready to fight).

“Provide people with water and let them quench their thirst and give their horses water to drink little by little,” al-Husayn ordered his boys. They did that and they began filling their bowls and cups and took them to the horses. When a horse had drunk three or four or five draughts, the water was taken away and given to another horse-until they had all been watered.[58]

The Imam was fully prepared in his journey because he was able to suffice in giving water to 1,000

riders and their beasts and this was in addition to other rations and provisions they were carrying.

Anyway, the Imam observed generosity with Hurr's battalion that had arrived to fight the Holy Imam and he saved them from death of thirst. Historians say: Ali bin Taan Muharibi was a member of that battalion who has reported about the kindness and lofty morals of the Imam and his action of helping them as follows:

I was with al-Hurr on that day, I was among the last of his followers to arrive. When al-Husayn, peace be on him, saw how thirsty both I and my horse were, he said: "Make your beast (rawiya) kneel." I thought rawiya meant water-skin so he said: "Cousin, make your camel (jamal) kneel." I did so. Then he said: "Drink." I did so, but when I drank, water flowed from my water-skin.

"Bend your water-skin," said al-Husayn. I did not know how to do that. He came up (to me) and bent it (into the proper position for drinking). Then I drank and gave my horse to drink.

This exalted nature and greatness of soul did not move those fighters and they were not a bit impressed by these lofty morals. But Hurr, who was having a sensitive conscience, was highly touched by this behavior which was instrumental in making him join the Imam and being martyred in his service finally.

Imam's sermon

Imam ('a) welcomed the units of that battalion and delivered to them a sermon in which he clarified his position that he had not come to fight. Rather messengers and letters had been sent to him that urged him join their senders and the Imam has responded positively to these requests. After praise and glorification of the Almighty, His Eminence said:

People, I did not come to you until your letters came to me, and they were brought by your messengers (saying), 'Come to us for we have no Imam. Through you may God unite us under guidance and truth.' Since this was your view, I have come to you. Therefore give me what you guaranteed in your covenants and (sworn) testimonies. If you will not and (if you) are (now) averse to my coming, I will leave you (and go back) to the place from which I came.

The audience was unable to reply anything because many of them had written to the Imam inviting him to Kufa, and they had pledged allegiance to the Imam through his emissary, Muslim bin Aqil'the time of prayer arrived. His Eminence directed his Muezzin, Hajjaj bin Masruq to recite Azan and Iqamah for the Zuhr (noon) prayer. After this had been done the Imam asked Hurr, "Do you want to lead your followers in prayer?"

"No," he replied, "but you pray and we will pray (following the lead of) your prayer."

Al-Husayn, peace be on him, prayed before them. Then he returned (to his tent) and his followers gathered around him. Al-Hurr went back to the place where he had positioned (his men) and entered a

tent which had been put up for him. A group of his followers gathered around him while the rest returned to their ranks, which they had been in and which now they went back to. Each of them held the reins of his mount and sat in the shade (of its body).

At the time for the afternoon (Asr) prayer, al-Husayn, peace be on him, ordered his followers to prepare for departure. Then he ordered the call to be made, and the call for the Asr prayer was made, and the Iqamah. Al-Husayn, peace be on him, came forward, stood and prayed.

Imam's Discourse

After the Imam concluded the Asr prayer he stood up with determination among the soldiers of that battalion and a delivered a proper sermon. After praise and glorification of the Almighty, he said:

"People, if you fear God and recognize the rights of those who have rights, God will be more satisfied with you. We are the House of Muhammad and as such are more entitled to the authority (Wilayah) of this affair (i.e. the rule of the community) over you than these pretenders who claim what does not belong to them. They have brought tyranny and aggression among you. If you refuse (us) because you dislike (us) or do not know our rights, and your view has now changed from what came to us in your letters and what your messengers brought, then I will leave you."

By this sermon, the Imam called them towards the obedience of God and following of the callers to truth, the Imams of guidance, Ahlul Bayt ('a), because they were more worthy of it than Bani Umayyah who had spread injustice and oppression among them. In the same way he proposed to them that if they wanted to change their decision and break their allegiance the Imam was prepared to go back.

Hurr, who was completely ignorant of the political situation in Kufa as he was away at that time said:

"By God," declared al-Hurr, "I know nothing of these letters and messengers which you mention."

"Uqbah bin Siman," al-Husayn, peace be on him, called to one of his followers, "bring out the two saddle-bags in which the letters to me are kept."

He brought out two saddle-bags which were full of documents, and they were put before him.

"We are not among those who wrote these letters to you," said al- Hurr.

Argument between His Eminence, Husayn ('a) and Hurr

A heated argument occurred between the Imam and Hurr because Hurr said to the Imam:

"We have been ordered that when we meet you we should not leave you until we have brought you to Kufa to Ubaidullah."

“Death will come to you before that (happens),” al-Husayn, peace be on him, told him.

The chief of the nobles had refused to give allegiance to Yazid, then how could he pay the oath to Ibn Marjana, the dirty son of the dirty father? How could he become his prisoner? In that case it would be better for him to be killed at the hands of Hurr’

He ordered his followers, “Get up and get mounted.”

They got mounted and (then) waited until their women had been mounted.

“Depart,” he ordered his followers.

When they set out to leave, the men (with al-Hurr) got in between them and the direction they were going in.

“May God deprive your mother of you,” said al-Husayn, peace be on him, to al- Hurr, “What do you want?”

“If any of the Arabs other than you were to say that to me,” retorted al-Hurr, “even though he were in the same situation as you, I would not leave him without mentioning his mother being deprived (of him), whoever he might be. But by God there is no way for me to mention your mother except by (saying) the best things possible.”

“What do you want?” al-Husayn, peace be on him, demanded.

“I want to go with you to the governor, Ubaidullah,” he replied.

“Then by God I will not follow you.”

“Then by God I will not let you (go anywhere else).”

These statements were repeated three times, and when their conversation was getting more (heated) al-Hurr said: “I have not been ordered to fight you. I have only been ordered not to leave you until I come with you to Kufa. If you refuse (to do that), then take any road which will not bring you into Kufa nor take you back to Medina, and let that be a compromise between us while I write to the governor, Ubaidullah. Perhaps God will cause something to happen which will relieve me from having to do anything against you. Therefore take this (road) here and bear to the left of the road (to) al Udhayb and al-Quddisiya.”

Al-Husayn, peace be on him, departed and al-Hurr with his followers (also) set out traveling close by him.[59]

A Fabricated report

Among the fabricated reports that lack a proper source is what Bustani has narrated. The text of his report is as follows: “When Husayn approached Kufa he came across Hurr Ibn Yazid Riyahi who had been dispatched by Ibn Ziyad with 1,000 horsemen. He said, “Ubaidullah has sent me to keep watch over your activities. And I have been told that if I find you I must not let you out of my sight or take you to him. I do not like to be involved in such a matter regarding you, so you take up another route and go wherever you like. I will tell Ibn Ziyad that your route was different from mine and I adjure you by the name of Allah for your sake and the sake of those who accompany you.”

Husayn (‘a) altered his route and along with his entourage returned to Hijaz. He set out that night. When it was morning he met Hurr and Husayn asked him, “What has brought you here?” He replied, “Someone complained about me to Ibn Ziyad that after apprehending you I allowed you to go free. He wrote to me that I must find you and not let you go out of sight till you come with the soldiers’”[60]

The above narration is fabricated because the encounter of the Imam with Hurr did not take place near Kufa. It was en route at the place named “Sharaaf.” In addition to this Hurr did not suggest to the Imam that he could go wherever he liked. Rather he had received strict orders from Ibn Ziyad to apprehend the Imam and as we have said, and take him to Kufa. This matter is agreed upon by all historians and writers of accounts of Imam’s martyrdom.

Error of Ibn Anba

Among the concocted things is the account of Ibn Anba Nisaba who has stated as follows: “Hurr wanted to take the Imam to Kufa forcibly but the Imam did not agree. He changed his route to go to Yazid bin Muawiyah in Shaam. And when he reached Karbala they stopped him and three thousand mercenaries under the command of Umar Ibn Saad tried to take the Imam to Kufa, so that he may obey Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad. But the Imam refused to do so. He again set out towards
Yazid and they obstructed his way, and then began to fight with him.”[61]

None of the historians has acknowledged the veracity of this report and they all are unanimous that the Imam stuck to his decision to refuse allegiance of Yazid. And if it had been to the contrary he would not have taken up arms against Yazid.

Discourse of the Holy Imam (‘a)

When the Imam’s caravan reached Baiza, His Eminence delivered a discourse to Hurr and his men describing his views about his uprising against Yazid. He invited those people to help and support him. After praise and glorification of God he said:

“O people! The Prophet has said, that when you see an oppressive ruler legitimizing that which has

been prohibited by Allah and breaking His covenant, and opposing the customs of the Prophet, and he behaves unjustly and oppressively with Allah's servants, then if a person does not oppose him through his word or deed, it is incumbent upon Allah to place that person on the status of that oppressor. Beware that these statesmen (of Bani Umayyah) have adhered to the commands of Satan and disobeyed the orders of Allah, and have made corruption the custom of the day. They have gathered the rights at one place and have reserved the treasury of Muslims (*Baitul Mal*) for themselves, and permitted the prohibitions of Allah and forbade that which is allowed by Him. I am more worthy among all the men to stop and oppose them. You sent your letters to me, and your messengers too, saying that you have taken the oath of fealty to me and promised that you would not hand me over to my enemies nor forsake me. Then if you (still) persist on your allegiance, then you are on the right. I am Husayn, the son of Ali and Fatima the daughter of the Prophet of Allah (S). My life is associated with you and my family with yours, and you should be sympathetic towards me. And if you do not do so and have committed breach of trust, while having taken off the pledge of allegiance from your necks, then I swear by my life, that this is nothing new from you. You have done the same with my father, brother and cousin Muslim (bin Aqil); the one who falls prey to your deception turns helpless. You have let go your share from your hands and have toppled up your fortunes. The one who committed breach of trust shall himself face deceit, and very soon Allah will make me independent of you. Peace be upon you and Allah's Mercy and Abundance."

This brilliant discourse had numerous important points. Some of them are as follows:

First: His Eminence had taken up arms against Yazid in order to fulfill the religious duty he had been entrusted with. Because Islam did not accept a tyrant ruler and it has made it incumbent to confront him and whosoever does not undertake Jihad is a partner in his oppressive and unjust actions.

Second: His Eminence has condemned the Umayyads and severely criticized their policies which were based on obedience of Satan and disobedience of the Beneficent God, committing transgression and non-fulfillment of divine commands, usurping public wealth for themselves, considering lawful as unlawful and unlawful as lawful.

Thirdly: His Eminence, more than others, was more eligible to act in order to change the present situation which was a mortal danger for Islam because His Eminence ('a) was the one having the greatest responsibility in accepting this important duty.

Fourthly: His Eminence ('a) proposed to them that were he to obtain control he would consider himself as one of them and consider their family members as his own family members without there being any difference in their status.

Fifthly: If they broke their allegiance and disregarded the pledges they had given, it was nothing surprising, because previously they had broken the pledges they offered to his father, brother and cousin and by this they lost an important benefit and deprived themselves from success.

By this discourse the Imam clarified the matters and spread rays of light for them. He invited them to reform themselves to stay in its shade so that they may remain in it in peace. When Hurr heard the discourse of His Eminence he glanced at him and said:

“I remind you (before) God to (think of) your life; for I testify that you will be killed if you fight.”

“Do you think that you can frighten me with death?” said al– Husayn, peace be on him, “Could a worse disaster happen to you than killing me? I can only speak (to you) as the brother of al–Aws said to his cousin when he wanted to help the Apostle of God, may God bless him and grant him and his family peace. His cousin feared for him and said: ‘Where are you going, for you will be killed?’ but he replied:

“I will depart for there is no shame in death for a young man, whenever he intends (to do what is) right and he strives like a Muslim,

(Who) has soothed righteous men through (the sacrifice of) his life, who has scattered the cursed and opposed the criminal.

If I live, I will not regret (what I have done) and if I die, I will not suffer. Let it be enough for you to live in humiliation and be reviled.”[62]

When Hurr heard that he drew away from him and he realized that the Imam was determined to lay down his life and sacrifice anything for the sake of his aim of universal reform.

Some people of Kufa join Imam (‘a)

When the Imam arrived at Udhayb Hijanaat, four people joined the Imam’s party. They were astride their camels and had a horse belonging to Nafe bin Hilal. Except for them none from the people of Kufa came forward to welcome His Eminence, Husayn (‘a); they were as follows:

1. Nafe bin Hilal Muradi

2. Amr bin Khalid Saidawi

3. Saad, slave of Amr bin Khalid

4. Majma bin Abdullah Abadi, from Madhij

Hurr tried to stop them from joining His Eminence, Husayn but the Imam scolded him, “In that case I shall defend them just as I would defend myself. They are my helpers and supporters. You promised me that you will not take any action against me before you receive Ibn Ziyad’s letter.”

Hurr left them alone and they joined the Holy Imam. His Eminence accorded them a warm welcome and asked them about the people of Kufa. They said, “As for the nobles, their bribes have become inflated

and their coffers are filled up so that their loyalties may be obtained and their support may be acquired. They have united in their enmity towards you. They have not written to you except that they make profit from you; as for other people, their hearts are with you but their swords shall be drawn against you."[63]

These sentences are having many important points as follows:

1. The regime has purchased the consciences of nobles and upper class people of Kufa through cash bribes and lured them with posts and power. They in turn have become united to confront the Imam. The Umayyads were experts in such type of deception and they lured the noble men of Kufa towards themselves in every way possible. As for the commoners, they beat them with lashes on their backs and burnt them in the fire of their oppression.

2. The nobles of Kufa had written to His Eminence, Husayn (ʻa) urging him to join them in Kufa not because they regarded his aim to be just and they considered the beliefs of Umayyads wrong. They invited Imam Husayn (ʻa) so that they may make profits through him and get into good books of Bani Umayyads and obtain wealth from them. They had threatened the Bani Umayyads that: If you don't share your wealth with us, we shall join the party of Husayn (ʻa). Their letters to Imam (ʻa) were a means to obtain monetary wealth.

3. The commoners were such that they were inwardly in support of His Eminence, Husayn (ʻa) but practically following their leaders without there being any kind of determination or intention of their own to follow the dictates of their conscience. They served as mercenaries of the regime and as their rammers.

These were some important points present in the saying of those people and it shows their deep insight about the problems of their society.

With Tirmah

Tirmah joined the Imam en route and traveled with for a period. Imam (ʻa) glanced at his companions and asked, "Is there anyone among you who is knowledgeable about the route?"

Tirmah bin Adi Tai turned to His Eminence and said, "I know the way." "Lead us."

Tirmah began to move ahead of the caravan of the Purified Progeny while he was in deep grief. In a sorrowful voice he began recite the song of the camel riders (*Haddi*):[64]

"O, my she-camel! Do not be distressed about my browbeating and convey me to my destination before dawn break.

Along with the best youths and passengers from the family of the Prophet, worthy of pride.

Bright faced leaders, faces like flowers hit by darkened spears.

They slash with wielding swords to reach those who are having the best family and roots.

Having honorable ancestors and wide chests as the Almighty has brought them for the best assignment.

May the Almighty keep them safe forever as He is the One Who gives both profit and harm.

Bestow to my master, Husayn, victory over the oppressors of the remaining infidels.

On those two accursed ones from the progeny of Abu Sufyan; Yazid who is always drunk.

And busy in obscene and wanton acts and Ibn Ziyad, that impure son of a dirty father."[65]

The camels began to move faster under the influence of this sorrowful dirge while the eyes of the companions of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) and his Ahlul Bayt were filled with tears. They said Amen to the supplication of Tirmah for help and support of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a).

Dr. Yusuf Khalif has explained the above poetic piece in the following way: "The *Rajaz* is perhaps the first Kufic piece of poetry where it openly speaks about Husayn (‘a). It shows the simplicity of the poet's belief and reliance. And that which is more than that, to speak well of it and the welcome for that dear guest who has arrived at their place and they have come out to welcome them. The reciter of Rajaz urges his camels to move forward fast so that they may reach that dear guest. And that he may complete their duty of sincere hosting and fulfill their praises for them. And that seriousness and merits that people know about him, they may be related to these qualities. Because he, near him has true awe and respect. He is honorable, noble and generous'as these guests are not ordinary men. He is the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S) and the one who is the channel of receiving divine bounties; thus it is the best action. The poem concludes with extolling of their praise and also invocates the Almighty in a natural manner as the poet is having devotion and sincerity towards them. Finally he prays that God Almighty may take care of them forever."[66]

At that time Tirmah remarked to the Holy Imam, "I see that no one is with you. If except for those who are with you no one else fights you there would still be problems for you. Then how was it possible that one day before I left Kufa, I saw that the streets of Kufa were full of people. I asked about them. I was told that they were going to be sent for Husayn. I adjure you by the name of God, do not at all move towards them."[67]

But where could the Imam return? And where could be go? While all the lands were under the control of Umayyads. His Eminence has no choice but to continue his journey to Iraq. Tirmah suggested to His Eminence to go with him to Koh Bani Tai and assured the Holy Imam that 2,0000 persons from the Tai tribe would fight for him. But the Imam refused the offer which could not be guaranteed. Tirmah sought the permission of the Holy to go to his family, get provisions and return to help His Eminence. Imam (‘a) permitted him and he headed to his family, stayed there for some days and was returning when at Adheeb Hajaanat he received the news of the martyrdom of Imam. He began to cry in remorse as he

had lost the opportunity to achieve martyrdom in the company of the beloved grandson of Allah's Messenger (S)[68]

With Ubaidullah bin Hurr

The Imam's caravan now passed by Bani Maqatil.[69] Imam ('a) arrived over there. Near the place they had halted was a tent outside which, in the front, spears had been fixed in the ground indicating the valor and courage of the owner of the tent. Horses could also be seen before it. Imam ('a) inquired who the owner of the tent was. He was told that it belonged to Ubaidullah bin Hurr. His Eminence sent Hajjaj bin Masruq Jofi to meet him. He went out at once and Ubaidullah bin Hurr told him, "What has brought you here?"

"The Almighty Allah has sent you an honor as a gift?" "What is that?"

"This is Husayn Ibn Ali ('a) who has summoned you to help him. Thus if you fight for him you will receive reward and if you die you shall achieve martyrdom."

"I did not leave Kufa but for the fear that Husayn ('a) would arrive while I were staying there and do not help him. Because, there he neither has Shias nor helpers as all of them have fallen to materialism except those whom the Almighty Allah has guarded."

Hajjaj returned and conveyed the message to Imam ('a). It was upon him to complete the argument on Ubaidullah and make him aware of the position he was in. So the Imam, accompanied by some persons from Ahlul Bayt ('a) went over to him personally.

Ubaidullah rose up to welcome Imam Husayn ('a) in the most respectful way while he was absolutely awed by the presence of the Holy Imam. He used to later remark about his encounter in the following way:

"I had not seen anyone more elegant and attractive than Husayn and indeed I have not pitied anyone more than him when I saw him going surrounded by his young children. I looked at his beard and found it as black as the crow's wing, I asked him, 'Is it naturally black or you have dyed it?' He replied, 'O son of Hurr, Old age has come upon me all of a sudden.' Then I understood that he had dyed it."[70]

Imam ('a) discussed with him the present circumstances and political matters. After that he requested him to enlist his support, "O son of Hurr, your townspeople wrote to me that they were ready to help me and they invited me to join them, so I have come. But I find that the view they claimed to hold is not there anymore. Because they have cooperated in the murder of my cousin, Muslim and his followers and they have unified in obedience to Ibn Marjana, Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad' O son of Hurr, know that the Almighty Allah shall punish you for the sinful acts you have committed in the past. I call you towards repentance that would wash your sins'I call you to provide assistance to us, Ahlul Bayt."[71]

Ibn Hurr began to offer excuses and justifications and deprived himself from success, salvation and helping the grandson of the Prophet, saying, “By Allah, I know that whosoever accompanies you shall be fortunate in the Hereafter. But what help can I render you when I see that you don’t have any supporter in Kufa? I adjure in the name of God, please do not force me in this matter because my heart does not allow me to die. However, you may take this horse of mine, named *Mulhaqa.*72 By Allah no one has rode it but achieved whatever he wanted. By Allah I never mounted it for something but that I obtained it. Till now whenever I have remained mounted and if someone wanted to catch me, I always used to outrace him.”73

What was the value of that horse in the Imam’s eyes? Therefore the Imam told him, “I did not come here to ask you for your horse and sword. I came to ask for your help and assistance. Thus if you are miserly over your life for me, I have no need of what you own. I am not the one to take the help of misguided persons.74

And I advise you that if you can avoid hearing my call for help and my tragedy, avoid it, as by Allah, Allah shall cast into Hellfire anyone who hears my call for help and does not respond positively.”75

Ibn Hurr was ashamed and he said in a low voice: “It would never happen if Allah wills.76 Although it never happens that after so many sins a person should get the divine opportunity to become Imam’s helper and get martyred in his company. Thus finally, Ibn Hurr was absolutely sorry and regretful of having suffered such a loss due to his refusal to help the son of the Messenger of Allah (S). He was very much disturbed and he has described his condition in his couplets that we have quoted in our discussion about those who regretted not helping Imam Husayn (‘a).

With Amr bin Qais

Imam (‘a) met Amr bin Qais at Qasr Bani Maqatil who was accompanied by his cousin. They saluted the Imam and asked him, “O Aba Abdillah, have you dyed your hair?” His Eminence replied, “It is dyed, we Bani Hashim encounter graying of hair very soon.”

Then the Imam glanced at them and asked, “Are you willing to help me?”

“No, Sir! We are having large families and we are carrying people’s goods. We don’t know what would happen and we would not like to lose the trusts we hold.”

The Imam advised them and said, “Go away from here so that you don’t hear my call and see our multitude. Because for anyone who hears my cry for help and sees our multitudes but does not responds or helps us, it is the right upon Allah to throw him headlong into the fire (of Hell).”77

The Holy Imam (‘a) set out from the fort of Bani Maqatil and his caravan traveled in the burning sands. And along with it they were traveling in hardships and difficulties and bearing the cutting winds that caused them untold discomfort.

Ibn Ziyad's Letter to Hurr

Imam's caravan continued its journey in the desert, sometimes turning to the right and sometimes to the left in such a way that the mercenaries of Hurr took them away from the wilderness towards Kufa and the caravan resisted them.78 Suddenly a horse rider appeared racing towards them passing upon the sand. They waited for him and noticed that he was the messenger of Ibn Ziyad sent to Hurr.

That filthy man saluted Hurr but did not have the decency to greet His Eminence, Husayn ('a). He gave to Hurr, Ibn Ziyad's letter in which it was mentioned: "So to say: When this letter reaches you and my messenger comes to you, make Husayn come to a halt. But only let him stop in an open place without vegetation. I have ordered my messenger to stay with you and not to leave you until he brings me (news of) your carrying out my instructions. Greetings."79

Ibn Marjana in his order to Hurr cancelled his previous mission of apprehending the Imam and getting him to Kufa under security. Perhaps he feared that the circumstances might change and the events may return to be against him again. Therefore he decided to besiege the Imam in the wilderness away from habitations so that people may not come out for his help and thus he may be eliminated easily.

Hurr read out the letter to Imam Husayn and the Imam wanted to move on to a village or a place where water is available. However Hurr stopped him and said, "I cannot allow you to do that because this man has been sent to keep an eye on me. If I do anything against the order it would be reported to Ibn Ziyad."

"Son of the Apostle of God," said Zuhair bin al-Qain, "I can only think that after what you have seen, the situation will only get worse. Fighting these people now will be easier for us than fighting those who will come against us after them. For by my life, after them will come against us such (a number) as we will not have the power (to fight) against."

"I will not begin to fight against them," answered Husayn.

Zuhair continued, "Let us go up to these villages because it is a secure place and it is situated on the banks of Euphrates. Thus if they prevent us we shall fight with them as our fighting them shall be easier than against those who shall come after them."

Imam asked about the place's name. He was told that it was called Aqar. Imam considered it inauspicious and moved on from there. And he said, "O Allah, please grant me Your refuge from Aqar."80

Hurr insisted upon the Imam to halt at that place and not to move from there. Imam had no choice but to halt there. So he looked at the place, then turned to his companions and asked. "What place is this?" "Karbala"

“The Imam’s eyes were filled with tears and he said, “O Allah, I seek Your refuge from pain and sorrow (*Karb and Bala*).”[81]

At that time he began to address his companions as he was now sure of facing a mortal danger because he said, “This is the place of sorrow and calamities. Here our mounts shall kneel down. This is the place where our litters shall arrive and the place where our blood shall be shed...”

The Imam recalled the past calamities and remembered especially the day when his father, Amirul Momineen, on his way to Siffeen had halted there and remarked, “This is the place where their litters shall arrive and here it is that their blood shall be shed...” When the people asked His Eminence about this he replied, “Some members of the Progeny of Muhammad shall arrive here...”

The world had become worthless in the view of the Holy Imam. He had lost all hopes of worldly life and had become certain that his limbs shall be strewn on the sands of this land. Yet he continued to observe patience and surrendered himself willingly to whatever the Almighty had decreed for him.

With strength and determination, His Eminence, along with his companions and Ahlul Bayt, began to fix the tents for the ladies of the house of prophethood in such a way that the tents of the companions and the tents of Ahlul Bayt were surrounding them from the right and the left.

At that time the youths of Bani Hashim stepped forward to help the ladies alight from their mounts. They escorted them to their tents while those respected ladies were in a state of shock and anxiety as they began to feel that something terrible was to befall them in that place.

Location of Tents

The tents of Ahlul Bayt (‘a) were fixed on the pure land, that is, to this day, its signs are still present there.[82] Sayyid Habtuddin Shahristani says, “Imam camped at a place far away from water where continuous battalions of amateur soldiers had surrounded them from all sides. They began from north-east to Bab-e-Sidra in north. In the same way they stretched from Bab-e-Zainabi towards the west and then to the direction of Qibla from the south. They resembled the shape of a semicircle that had besieged the beloved grandson of the Prophet (S).[83]

My friend, Ustad Sayyid Muhammad Hasan Kaliddar does not accept that the well- known site of Imam’s camp was that same place where Imam had halted. Rather the camp was further away near to the Husayni Hospital. And this matter also supports the military maneuvers and events of that time. Because it is necessary that the two parties should be separated by a distance of at least two miles as it is required for military actions. For example the space required for running of horses and other distances were also required. In spite of there being tents, the camp must be located far away from where arrows are fired. He has in the same way proved his theory with the help of some historical testimonies.[84]

Most probably the Imam’s camp was located at the present site or a little distance from it, because the

large number of Umayyad armies that had come to confront the Imam made it seem a single cantonment that there could not have been much distance between them. There was no obvious demarcation between them, that there could be a distance of two miles between them.

The Umayyad army surrounded the Imam's entourage. So much so that when Ibn Saad shot the first arrow and announced the commencement of battle and following his cue, his archers shot arrows, there was none in the party of the Imam that was not hurt by an arrow. Some arrows also hit the tents of ladies. Hence if there had been a great distance the ladies of Ahlul Bayt would not have become targets of arrows.

That which proves this matter is that when Imam Husayn ('a) delivered a discourse for the army of Umayyads, the ladies present in the Imam's camp were able to hear it and they began to lament because of it. If there had been considerable distance they would not have been able to hear the Imam's discourse. There are other signs also that go on to prove that the Imam's camp was situated at the place where it is generally believed to be.

In Karbala

The caravan of the Purified Progeny halted and camped at Karbala on Thursday, 2nd of Mohurrum 61 A.H.,85 while a condition of distress and anxiety reigned upon them as they were now sure that a terrible disaster was to befall them. Imam knew the hardships of his mission and the terrible disasters that were to befall him had become clear to him.

Historians say: His Eminence gathered his Ahlul Bayt and companions. Then he glanced at them with kindness and compassion knowing that very soon their bodies shall be cut up into pieces. He began to weep profusely and raised up his hands to pray to the Lord. He spoke in a confidential manner and complained about the great calamities that had surrounded him, and he said:

"O my Lord, we are the Progeny of Your Messenger, Muhammad (S) whom the Bani Umayyah forced out of the sanctuary of our grandfather. They banished us, persecuted and oppressed us. O Allah, take up our rights for us and make us victorious over the unjust people."

Then he glanced at those stalwarts and said, "People are the slaves of the world and religion is like leftover food that clings to their tongue that as long as their life passes in comfort they follow it. But when they fall into hard times, very few remain religious."86

What a brilliant statement it is, that describes the reality of the people in all the stages of history. Because they are slaves of material world in all times and in all the places but no kind of religious view was found in the depths of their consciences.

And whenever a storm of calamities falls on them they become disgusted of religion and they desert it...

Yes, religion is present in the very nature only for Imam Husayn, the selected ones of Ahlul Bayt and the companions of His Eminence that their sentiments were fused with it and their emotions were merged with it. Therefore they rushed forward to the fields of death so that their position may be exalted and that they may impart lessons in astonishing loyalty with regard to religion.

After praise and glorification of the Almighty the Imam addressed his companions, “So to say: No doubt you are aware of the gravity of the situation which you are witnessing yourselves here and now. Life has certainly changed disguises and its good has gone forever. This has continued till the remaining good in it amounts to the thin sediment at the bottom of a drinking vessel. Life is a mean food, like a pasture covered with bad grass. Do you not see that the truth is not followed and falsehood not discouraged? The faithful must certainly desire to meet his Lord righteously. I do not deem death other than martyrdom and life among the unjust other than degradation.”87

In these sentences the Imam has again spoken of the hardships and difficulties that fell upon His Eminence and he informed them that as much hardships increase His Eminence shall not hesitate in his determination and resolve for the establishment of truth for which he had stepped forward.

Imam (‘a) did not sermonize his companions to arouse their emotions or to attract their support. Because what could they have done for him while the armies had filled the desert and surrounded His Eminence. He spoke thus in order to make them aware of their responsibilities of establishing truth and to make them determined for an everlasting success and make them willing partners in this mission. While His Eminence had made the desire of death a part of his life, that nothing else could equal it.

When His Eminence concluded his discourse all his companions arose and expressed astonishing examples of loyalty and sacrifice for the sake of justice and truth...

The first one to speak up from his companions was Zuhair Ibn Qain. He was that valiant fighter who had no equal in the world. He said, “O son of Allah’s Messenger, we heard your discourse. If the world had remained for us and we had become immortals in it we would have given preference to fight for you rather than stay in it.”

These statements show the nobility of man in his march on the path of righteousness. Zuhair’s words imparted a great joy and satisfaction to the companions of the Holy Imam and he motivated them to loyalty and sacrifice.

Now another valiant companion of the Imam, Burair stood up, who had dedicated his life to the path of God. He addressed the Imam as follows, “O son of Allah’s Messenger, the Almighty Allah has bestowed a favor upon us through you that we should fight in your service and in your way our body is cut up into pieces. And in that case, on the Day of Judgment your grandfather should intercede for us.”

Burair was certain that his companionship to the Imam was a divine favor for him so that he may obtain the intercession of the Messenger of Allah (S).

After that Nafe also in the same way addressed his fortunate brothers. He said, “You know that your grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S) was not able to imbue their hearts with his love nor were they able to become attached to what he (the Prophet) liked. Some of them were hypocrites who used to promise help to him but secretly they betrayed his trust. In front of the Prophet they were sweeter than honey but on his back they were more bitter than Hanzal.88 Till the time the Almighty Allah took him to Himself.

Your father’s circumstances were also somewhat like this. That some people helped him and on his side fought the Nakiseen, Qasiteen and Mariqeen. Till finally he met his end and joined the mercy of the Lord...

You also are in that condition with us. Anyone who breaks his pledge and leaves off allegiance has caused harm to himself and the Almighty Allah is needles of it. Thus lead us with determination and steadfastness, to the east or to the west. By Allah, we shall not step back from the destiny written by God for us. Nor are we frightened of meeting Allah. And we, on the basis of our aims and perception like what you like and hate what you hate.”89

Most companions of the Imam spoke in this way and the Imam thanked them for their sincerity and loyalty.

A man from Bani Asad waits for Imam (‘a)

As soon as the Imam halted at Karbala, he was joined by a man from Bani Asad. But historians have not recorded the name of this person. His story is narrated by Uryan bin Haitham who says, “My father used to reside near the place where the incident of Taff occurred. Whenever we used to pass by that place we used to see a man of Bani Asad present there. My father asked him, “I see that you are always present here?”

He replied to my father, “I have heard that Imam Husayn (‘a) shall be martyred at this place. I come here so that perhaps I may encounter him and along with him achieve martyrdom.”

When Husayn was martyred, my father said, “Let us go and see if that Asadi man has also been killed.”

We came to the battlefield and searched among the corpses and found that Asadi man among those killed.90

He had achieved the grade of martyrdom in the service of the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). He obtained the loftiest status near the great prophets, martyrs and righteous ones. And what nice companions they are.

The Imam's letter to Ibn Hanafiyah

Imam (ʻa) wrote a letter to his brother, Muhammad bin Hanafiyah and other persons of Bani Hashim from Karbala. Therein he spoke of his death and the end which was very near. The text of that letter was as follows: "So to say: As if the world has not remained and the Hereafter remains as it was."[91]

This is the briefest letter that especially speaks about those hardships that defeat patience.

With Harthima bin Salmi

Harthima bin Salmi joined the forces of Ibn Ziyad. When they reached Karbala he remembered something he had forgotten. He was traveling with Amirul Momineen (ʻa) in a journey of war when His Eminence passed through Karbala and stopped at a tree under the shade of which he stood up to pray. After concluding the prayer he took a handful of sand, smelt it and said, "Alas for you, O dust! A group of people shall be killed upon you and shall enter Paradise without undergoing accounting."

Harthima hurried to His Eminence, Husayn (ʻa) and related to him what he had heard from his father.

Imam asked him, "Are with us or against us?"

"Neither with you nor against you. I have left my family behind."

Imam advised him and ordered him to go away from Karbala so that he may not have to witness the tragedy of Ahlul Bayt and he told him, "Go away from here. By the One in Whose hand is the life of Husayn, anyone who witnesses (without rendering any help) our killing today, shall enter Hell."

Harithma fled from Karbala and heard reports about the martyrdom of Imam (ʻa)[92] while he himself had been deprived of martyrdom in the company of the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S).

Anas bin Harith Joins Imam (ʻa)

A prominent and senior companion of the Prophet, Anas bin Harith joined the Imam and narrated to the Imam what he had heard from the Messenger of Allah (S) regarding him, that His Eminence had said, "This son of mine (that is His Eminence, Husayn) shall be killed on a land called Karbala. Thus whosoever of you sees him should help him."

After that Anas remained in the service of Imam till he achieved martyrdom in his company.[93]

Ibn Ziyad's letter to His Eminence, Husayn (ʻa)

When Ibn Ziyad was informed that Hurr has surrounded His Eminence, Husayn (ʻa) at Karbala, he sent a letter to His Eminence that displayed his oppressive and arrogant nature. The text of that was as follows:

“So to say: O Husayn! I have been informed about your arrival at Karbala. Amirul Momineen, Yazid has written to me that I must not sleep on a bed nor have my drinks till I have not conveyed you to the Kind and Informed Lord, or that you agreed to obey my orders and the command of Yazid!...”

O Ibn Marjana! You and your master, Yazid deserve not to be served with drinks and you must come to your senses as you have committed every type of infamy in Islam.

When the Imam read Ibn Marjana’s letter, considering that transmogrified man to be worthless and weak, he threw down the letter and said, “Those who purchase the pleasure of men through the wrath of God, are never successful.”

Ibn Ziyad’s messenger asked the Imam to give a reply that he may convey to Ibn Ziyad. Imam (‘a) said, “I have no reply with me because, he is in fact, eligible for divine punishment.”

Ibn Ziyad’s messenger returned and told Ibn Marjana what the Imam had said. Ibn Ziyad was terribly infuriated and he prepared all the forces to fight the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S).

Deployment of the Kufan Army

When the news of deployment of army of Ibn Ziyad against Imam Husayn (‘a) spread and it became common knowledge that His Eminence has been surrounded at Karbala, a pall of gloom and dread descended on all gatherings of Kufa. Ibn Ziyad had spread such terror among the multitudes that they were horrified of their future because death was decreed merely on the basis of suspicion or allegation. Hence the people had no will of their own.

When Ibn Marjana apprehended the son of the conqueror of Mecca and the breaker of idols of Quraish, he realized his dreams and aspirations. So that by killing him he could gain proximity to the grandson of Abu Sufyan, that same leader of the group opposed to Islam. And that he may strengthen his relationship to Bani Umayyah that was based on the testimony of Abu Maryam, the wine-seller.[94]

Ibn Marjana spent all his time preparing for war and he resorted to various ways in arranging for dominance in the coming confrontation while the nobility had sold its conscience and they were surrounding Ibn Ziyad ready to offer their help to complete the program of hostilities.

Ibn Saad selected as Commander-in-chief

Ibn Marjana selected Ibn Saad to be the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces that had been prepared to fight against the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). Before we explain the causes of his appointment let us study some important matters:

Prophecy of Allah's Messenger regarding Ibn Saad's end

Ibn Saad happened to pass by the Messenger of Allah (S). When His Eminence saw him, he became disgusted with him and prophesied about his bad end: "He shall be with those who eat up the world with their tongues like the cow licks the ground."95

Amirul Momineen ('a) had also predicted similarly about Ibn Saad. Narrators say that His Eminence glanced at him and spoke to him. He found him to be the arrogant, one who considered truth worthless and who had the daring to resort to illegal acts. He said, "Woe by on you, O, Ibn Saad, how shall you be when you are in a situation when you have to choose between Paradise and Hell and you decide to choose Hell?"96

Saad's hatred for his son Umar

When Saad heard the statement of the Messenger of Allah (S) regarding his son, he scolded him. Narrators say: "He instructed the executors of his will not to give anything to his son, Umar Ibn Saad."97

Harun Rashid Curses Umar Saad

Harun Rashid cursed Umar Saad and decreed that he be considered an apostate and an outcast from religion. It is an interesting anecdote that deserves to be mentioned here:

Narrators say: Ishaq bin Ibrahim was brought as a captive to Harun Rashid. Ishaq was accused to have apostated from religion.

Ishaq told him: "O Amiral Momineen! I believe in Allah and all His messengers and prophets. I am not an apostate. My fault lies elsewhere."

Rashid was surprised and he asked, "What is that?"

"Loyalty and devotion to you, Ahlul Bayt. Can one who believes in love for you and considers it to be obligatory, be considered an apostate?"

Rashid smiled and ordered that the special execution mat and the sword be taken out for him.

Ishaq began to speak and he asked Harun:

"O Amiral Momineen! What is your view about Umar bin Saad, the killer of Husayn? Who said: They say: The Almighty Allah created a Paradise and fire and punishment and arrests."

Rashid bowed his head and thought about it for a long time, then he said, "May Allah curse Umar bin Saad as he had no faith in the Almighty Allah, in resurrection or in prophethood...O Ishaq, do you know

from where this is taken?”

“Yes, O Amiral Momineen! It is taken from the poetry of Yazid bin Muawiyah...

“What did Yazid say?” “He said:

O Alayya give me the goblet and speak up your thoughts as I do not like whispering secretly.

The statement of Abu Sufyan that was used in Uhad till these dirges began to be recited.

And by that word Amr wanted to get Ali but he escaped. But the old man Muawiyah managed to get.

Thus O young mother in red! If I died, you get married and do not wait for reunion after death.

Because whatever is said about resurrection is all useless talk that puts the heart to doubt.

And if people were not useless I would have seen Muhammad, with the pure wine that quenches the bones.

There is no difference in people that Muhammad has chosen a grave in Medina. Often it is that the pasture stinks on the ground while its branches show the existence of the roots.

We shall be destroyed and no sign shall remain on the earth but the malice of the heart shall remain.”

Rashid was terrified and he said, “May Allah curse Yazid, who had no faith in Allah, the Day of Resurrection and prophethood. O Ishaq, do you know from where he has inherited these beliefs?”

“Yes, O Amiral Momineen! He has taken them from the poetry of his father, Muawiyah.”

“What did Muawiyah say?” “He said:

Ask me about the monastery of Busra which is of old. Do not condemn me as there is no use of it.

Get up so that in the darkness we may establish a bright sun. Where there are goblets and cups and the luminosity of the stars.

Perhaps separation may call us and we have to go in such a condition that our souls are quenched with it.

What is present here, get hold of it and let go what is being promised. It is the way intelligent people act and delay will cause problems.

Before the nights return all borrowed things because all the dresses of the world are on hire.”

Rashid cursed Muawiyah and said the same things he had mentioned about Yazid.[98]

Ajali considers Ibn Saad a reliable narrator

Ajali has considered Umar Ibn Saad to be a reliable narrator and he says about him, “He has related traditions from his father and other people have narrated from him. He was a reliable *Tabii* (companion of a companion). He is the same person who killed Husayn.”[99]

I don’t know how Ibn Saad was reliable when he had killed the beloved grandson of the Prophet and one who destroyed the Purified Progeny inspite of the fact that the Almighty Allah has made it incumbent on all Muslims to love them...?

Ajali has deviated from the path of truth due to his considering reliable, narrators who bore enmity to Ahlul Bayt. In the same way he considered those who were loyal to Ahlul Bayt (‘a) to be absolutely unreliable.

Righteous people and those who acted with piety in their religion used to condemn anyone who narrated from Ibn Saad. Once Aaizaar bin Hareeth related a tradition from Umar bin Saad. A person objected to him and said, “Do you not fear Allah? Are you narrating from Umar bin Saad?” Aaizaar wept and said, “I shall never do it.”[100] It is strange that Ibn Hajar has given the biography of Ibn Saad in his Tahdhib at-Tahdhib while he claimed that he was including only those narrators whom he considered reliable!

Habits and Nature of Ibn Saad

Ibn Saad did not have in himself any sort of noble trait or habit because he was by nature hard-hearted. There was not an iota of humanity or goodness in him. Some of his personal qualities were as follows:

A. Surrender to Governor’s Rule

Absolute dedication to the governor’s system was a prominent part of Ibn Saad. According to unanimous verdict of historians, he used to mix up with the ruling class and completely lose his balance for greed of obtaining position and rulership.

He subjected himself to hardships and sorrows in order to earn the confidence of Ibn Marjana. After having killed His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) he had told Ibn Marjana, “By God, the sincerity I performed towards you with regard to the killing of Husayn was such that if I had performed such sincerity for my father, I would have fulfilled his rights.”[101]

Ibn Saad did not have a stable personality or a noble intention. He was always inclined to follow the ruling class and he was always striving to earn their confidence and gain material benefits.

B. Severe Greed for Rulership

Another important trait of his personality was his extreme greed for obtaining power and position of

rulership. Historians say: He used to urge his father to enter politics as it was possible the people may become disinclined to Ali and Muawiyah and select him for caliphate. But his father refused to act in this way and he remained content with whatever he had.[102] When Ibn Ziyad appointed Ibn Saad as the governor of Rayy but upon the condition that he must go out to fight Husayn (‘a) his family members heard him recite:

“Should I abandon the governorship of Rayy while it is my heart-felt desire or should I return with the sin of killing Husayn?”

He believed that if he gets governorship of Rayy he would be able to spend his life in prosperity and comfort. That is why he committed such a terrible oppression in Islamic history.

C. Decadence

Decadence was another trait of Ibn Saad’s personality, because all the signs of nobility and respect had been destroyed. When Muslim bin Aqil stood as a prisoner before Ibn Ziyad, he asked Ibn Saad to hear his bequest but he refused in order to remain in the good books of Ibn Ziyad, till he was instructed by his masters to listen to Muslim’s will. Thus when Muslim made bequest to him in confidence, he at once turned to Ibn Ziyad and told him what Muslim had willed. Ibn Ziyad also objected to him about it and said, “The faithful would not betray you, but the traitor was confided in.”

Of his decadence was the fact that when His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) had been martyred, he rushed forward to plunder his coat of mail, which he put upon himself at once. If he had the least nobility and honor he would not have plundered the corpse of the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). Because, this action of his was a signal to his soldiers that they could freely plunder even the ladies of the household of prophethood and they did not even spare their veils and bed sheets.

D. Cowardice and Fearfulness

Ibn Saad had no sign of courage and bravery. He was cowardly, weak willed and lacked determination. When he was confronted by the problem of the Penitents, he was terrified completely. He never again slept in his house. He used to sleep in the governor’s palace so that he may be guarded by the palace guards. He used to be agitated all the time and spent sleepless nights. And when officers of Mukhtar attacked him he got up from his bed in a disturbed state. Due to the shock, instead of picking up his weapons he fell down and the soldiers killed him in his bed. And in this way was fulfilled the prayer of Husayn (‘a) that: “May Allah have him beheaded in his bed.”

What is surprising is that Khairuddin Zarkali used to consider him a brave commander.[103] If he was really as brave as Zarkali has said he would not have abandoned his family to seek refuge in the governor’s palace to dispel his fear and terror.

E. Doubt in Resurrection

Ibn Saad had no faith in resurrection; he was in doubt about it. As he has mentioned in his couplets he recited when he was selected to fight Imam Husayn (‘a). He said:

“They say: The Almighty Allah has created a Paradise and a Fire, punishments and arrests.”

On the basis of this he neither had faith on accounting, nor on Paradise or Hell as

Harun Rashid has said...

These were some traits of Ibn Saad that show him to be a transmogrified man sunk in evils and crimes.

Reasons for selection of Ibn Saad

Ibn Marjana selected him to lead the army against Imam Husayn (‘a) in order to deceive the common people and gullible populace so that they may also take part in this venture because Ibn Saad was the son of the conqueror of Iraq and one of the six members of the Shura Committee instituted by Umar bin Khattab for the position of Islamic Caliphate. Also Ibn Saad belonged to Quraish and was somewhat related to the Imam. In addition to this, Ibn Ziyad was aware of his deviated views and weaknesses and he knew that except for him none could dare to commit this outrage.

Anxiety of Ibn Saad

Ibn Ziyad had appointed Ibn Saad for the governorship of Rayy[104] and areas of Dastabi and Dailam.[105]

After that he told him to proceed and fight against Imam Husayn (‘a) but he wanted to be excused from it. But Ibn Ziyad threatened him that the governorship of Rayy shall be taken away from him. Ibn Saad asked for a night’s respite to make up his mind, which was granted.

Ibn Saad went home and spent a sleepless night thinking whether he should undertake war against the beloved grandson of the Prophet and earn everlasting degradation or he should excuse himself from this matter. In that case he would have to forgo the governorship of Rayy, while it was an ambition of his life, which would have guaranteed him a life of comfort and prosperity. His family heard him recite the following poem:

“Shall I give up the governorship of Rayy while it is my desire, or shall I soil my hands with the blood of Husayn?

In killing him, nothing could stop me from being sent to Hell, while on the other hand the rulership of Rayy is something I desire most.”[106]

Those who tried to stop Ibn Saad

Historians say: Some well-wishers of Ibn Saad went to him and restrained him from going out to fight Husayn (‘a). One of those who made such a suggestion was his nephew, Hamzah bin Mughairah bin Shoba, who told him, “O Uncle! If you march against Husayn, you shall be a sinner in the view of Allah and you would have cut off relations with him. By Allah, if you give up your world and wealth it would be better for you than that you face the Almighty with responsibility of Husayn’s murder.”107

Some other people also advised him and told him, “Fear Allah, do not do this.”108 He tried to avoid the battle but he did not have the determination to forgo the governorship of Rayy, because he had become greedy for it and there was nothing which could make him forget it. When morning came he decided to lead the forces against the beloved grandson of the Prophet. He went to Ibn Marjana to inform him about his acceptance of the appointment. Ibn Ziyad also became pleased at his assent. This was so because the presence of Ibn Saad would assure that Ibn Ziyad would not be alone condemned for the elimination of Imam Husayn (‘a) and if anyone other than Ibn Saad had assented, Ibn Ziyad would not have been as much elated.

Ibn Saad marched forward at the head of a 4,000 strong army absolutely aware that he was going out to confront the Progeny of Allah’s Messenger (S), who were the best of people.

Ibn Saad reached Karbala and joined the battalion under the command of Hurr Ibn Yazid Riyahi.

March Past

Ibn Marjana stood up to watch the armed units that had been raised to fight against His Eminence, Husayn (‘a), in order to gauge their strength and the level of their preparation in taking part in battle.

Tirmah says: “A day before I departed from Kufa I saw such a large number of people gathered at the outskirts as I have never before seen a greater crowd. I inquired about it and was told that they have been gathered there so that they may be inspected then dispatched to fight Husayn.”109

Ibn Ziyad had employed all the powers of his regime in this matter because he was absolutely terrified of changed circumstances in the future.

Speech of Ibn Marjana

The tyrant, Ibn Ziyad, ordered people to gather in the courtyard of the Great Mosque. Like frightened sheep, the people obeyed these orders and filled up the entire premises. Ibn Ziyad stood up before them and addressed them as follows:

“O people! You have tested the family of Abu Sufyan and found them as you had preferred. This is

Amirul Momineen, Yazid, whom you have found to be of good nature and fine mannered. He is good to the subjects and he rewards according to rightfulness. In his time, the roads are safe as it was during the time of his father, Muawiyah. His son, Yazid has respect for the people and he has made them needless through wealth. He has increased your incomes by a hundred percent. He has ordered me to obtain that income for you. And send you to fight his enemy, Husayn. Thus you must listen to him and obey him."[110]

Ibn Ziyad spoke in such a convincing way that they became submissive to him because he promised them wealth and persuaded them to take part in the most terrible crime of the history of humanity.

He ordered Haseen bin Numair Tamimi, Hijaar bin Abjar and Shimr bin Zil Jaushan that they march forward to fight the Imam. After that he appointed at the command those who had outstanding capabilities. They set out of Karbala to support Ibn Saad.

Samrah encouraged people to fight the Imam

Samrah bin Jundab was that liar companion who played a very important role in motivating people to join in the battle against the son of Allah's Messenger (S), because he was the Police Commissioner of Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad. So he was at the forefront in recruiting people for the battle of Karbala.[111]

Shabth bin Rabi feigned Illness

Shabth bin Rabi, the hypocrite did not like to march out against Imam Husayn ('a) so he feigned illness. But this did not remain concealed from Ibn Ziyad. He sent message to Shabth that: My messenger has informed me about your illness. I fear you might not be of those that when they are with the believers they say: We have accepted faith and when they are alone with their satans they say: we are with you and they make fun of the Muslims. Thus if you obey us you must come immediately. Shabth came to him in the darkness of the night so that he may not discern the absence of illness. Then he responded positively to the proposal of Ibn Ziyad to lead a battalion against Imam Husayn ('a).

Public Mobilization

Ibn Ziyad issued general orders to mobilize people or force them to take part in battle against the Imam. Before they could report in the first cantonment he issued the decree: "No one should remain even from the nobles, elders, traders and residents but that they must all join us in the cantonment. Whoever is found lacking in this would not have any guarantee of security and help."[112]

He ordered that this order be publicized and instructed Kathir Ibn Shahab Harithi, Muhammad bin Ashath, Qaqa bin Suwaid bin Abdur Rahman Munqari and Asmaa bin Kharja Fuzari to go out among the people and urge them to obedience and threaten them with dire consequences. They set out in Kufa and began to fulfill their duty.[113] After that they joined the cantonment. But Kathir bin Shahab remained in

Kufa to restrain the people from helping the Imam and to threaten those who were not willing to go out to fight the Imam. The police arrested a man from Hamadan tribe who had come to Kufa in connection with his inheritance. He was brought to Ibn Ziyad and he condemned him to death. When people saw this, they all rushed out to join the army and not a single grown-up man remained in Kufa.[114]

This was the policy of Ibn Ziyad to persuade the people to join the forces against Imam Husayn ('a). And it was the condition through which he could dominate the circumstances perfectly and did not leave anyone free.

Strict Surveillance on Kufa

Ibn Ziyad applied very strict surveillance on Kufa so that no one is able to go out to help the Imam. He appointed spies and guards and designed very strict surveillance machinery. Whosoever was accused for any act against the administration was immediately apprehended and cast into prison or executed mercilessly. Abdullah bin Yasar used to urge people to support the Imam and he restrained people from helping the members of the Umayyad clan. Ibn Ziyad was informed of this and immediately wanted him to be arrested. But he went into hiding and agents went out to search for him till he was finally apprehended by Ubaidullah bin Hurr. He was taken to Sabakha and executed there.[115] He was other than Ubaidullah bin Hurr Johfi.

Ibn Ziyad appointed guards and installed armories around Kufa and kept them in charge of Zajar bin Qais. Also between them and the army of Ibn Saad were kept ready mounted messengers to convey news of whatever may occur.[116]

Flight of Soldiers

The majority of soldiers of Ibn Ziyad, who were of exceptional capabilities, deserted the army and a large number of them avoided taking part in hostilities against the grandson of the Prophet (S).

Balazari says: "A battalion of 1,000 soldiers used to depart for Karbala but when it reached there, it had only three hundred, four hundred or even less men, because the rest had deserted the army as they did not see the expedition to be having any legality.[117]

They were without any doubt convinced that it was the battle of deviated people. They were fighting their God and His Prophet, fighting someone whose obedience and devotion was incumbent upon them.

The Tyrant Ibn Ziyad in Nukhaila

He went to Nukhaila[118] and encamped over there while a large number of contingents accompanied him. He appointed Amr bin Hareeth as his representative in Kufa. He had been informed that people in singles, in twos and threes were running over by the Euphrates route to join the army of the Imam.

Therefore he issued commands to secure to bridge and keep it under strict surveillance so that none may escape from there.[119]

Plan to kill Ibn Ziyad

The great stalwart, Ammar bin Salama Dalabi tried to kill Ibn Ziyad at Nukhaila but he could not succeed due to the elaborate security arrangements. When he failed in this attempt he decided to join His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) and in the end he was able to achieve martyrdom with His Eminence.[120]

Number of Umayyad Soldiers

Historians have different opinions as regards the number of soldiers that set out to fight Imam (‘a). Here we have stated the opinions of some of them:

1. 80,000 riders[121]

2. 50,000 riders[122]

3. 35,000 riders[123]

4. 30,000 riders[124]

5. 22,000 riders[125]

6. 20,000 riders[126]

7. 16,000 riders[127]

8. 12,000 riders[128]

9. 8,000 riders[129]

10. 6,000 riders[130]

11. 4,000 riders[131]

These are some figures that historians have mentioned. Apart from this whatever reports are recorded, are not free from exaggeration.

Research on this topic

Here it is necessary for research regarding the different theories connected with the number of soldiers that participated in the battle against the Imam so that we may analyze and evaluate the different arguments...

Before everything let us see the number of soldiers that were present in the cantonment in Kufa at that time. The number of soldiers in the middle of the first century were 40,000 from whom 10,000 used to participate in fighting every year.[132]

This number saw increase during the time the Imam had selected Kufa as his capital because migrants converged on Kufa and 1,000 of them accompanied the Imam in the battle of Siffeen along with 8,000 slaves of theirs.[133]

Some expressions of views also exist that some people have given that prove the number of soldiers at that time and prove that at that time the roll of soldiers had reached upto a hundred thousand. Because Sulaiman bin Surd Khuzai objected to the treaty of Imam Hasan (‘a) and said to His Eminence: “I am astonished how you decided to make peace with Muawiyah when you are having a hundred thousand men of Iraq at your command.”

Some letters from the people of Iraq to Imam Husayn (‘a) also mentioned, “We, a hundred thousand men are with you.” And in my view this figure is not without exaggeration and their number was much less...but as for the residents of Kufa, we have not been able to get their list but it is likely that they were so numerous because among them were many workers, traders and artisans and who were not a part of military service...and after this brief research about the number of soldiers and citizens of Kufa we stop here and evaluate the different theories:

First: Acceptance and inspection of everything that is mentioned about the increase of soldiers. Because Ibn Ziyad had declared general mobilization of forces in Kufa and there did not remain any grown up person but that he was sent out to fight His Eminence, Husayn (‘a). And anyone who opposed this order was doomed to execution or thrown into prison. So much so, all modes of transport were used to transfer people from Kufa to the battlefield against the Holy Imam. In this way the figure of 100,000 or more is not an exaggeration.

Secondly: There is doubt regarding that large number because most of the fighters considered fighting against the Imam a serious crime and they deserted the army and fled into wilderness. Apart from this a large number of soldiers were with Ibn Ziyad in Nukhaila cantonment. On the basis of this, the number of men who went to Karbala to fight the Imam was not as high as some historians believe.

The most likely scenario is as mentioned in the tradition of Imam Sadiq (‘a) that 30,000 men came forward to fight Imam Husayn (‘a). This is the nearest saying about the number of soldiers because this figure or a little more took part in battle against the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S).

Military Commanders

Historians have recorded for us the names of some military commanders who participated in the Karbala tragedy. They are as follows:

1. Hurr Ibn Yazid Riyahi ñ He commanded a 1,000 strong force that besieged His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) at Karbala.

2. Umar bin Saad ñ He was appointed commander in chief by Ibn Ziyad. He led a battalion of 4,000.

3. Shabth bin Rabi commanded a 1,000 strong battalion.[134]

4. Madhair bin Raheena Mazini ñ He controlled a 3,000 men group.[135]

5. Nasr bin Harsha commanded a 2,000 men battalion.[136]

6. Kaab bin Talha with 3,000 soldiers.[137]

7. Hijaar bin Abjar with 1,000 men.[138]

8. Haseen bin Numair 4,000 strong force.[139]

9. Shimr bin Zil Jaushan 4,000 strong platoon.[140]

10. Yazid bin Rakaab – At the head of 2000 strong regiment.[141]

11. Yazid bin Harth bin Ruwiyam ñ with 1,000 fighters.[142]

These were some military commanders who jointly controlled a force of around 25000 soldiers.[143]

Ibn Jauzi says: Abdullah bin Zohra bin Sulaym Azadi was the commander of Kufa division. Qais bin Ashath was heading the Rabia and Kinda division. Abdullah bin Sabra Jofi controlled the Madhij and Bani Asad division and Hurr bin Yazid Riyahi was the chief of Rabia and Hamadan division.

Arming the soldiers

The army of Ibn Ziyad was armed with all the weapons in use at that time, such that his preparations for battle against the Imam could be described to be terrible whose importance the historians have mentioned to us and said: Blacksmiths and weapon makers of Kufa worked day and night pointing the arrows and sharpening the swords and this continued for more than 10 days’Ibn Ziyad prepared such a well–armed force to fight against His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) that it had the power to conquer a territory if it wanted.

1. Archers

Archers were those who shot arrows and darts. They had a very important role in the battle and they were the first to initiate battle against the Imam when they shot their arrows to the Imam’s camp. So much so that none from the companions of the Imam remained but that was shot by an arrow. Even some ladies were injured and they were terrified by this. Some children of the family of Prophethood also

were cruelly killed by these arrows like Abdullah bin Muslim, Abdullah bin Hasan, Abdullah (or Ali Asghar), the infant son of His Eminence and others.

2. Foot soldiers

They were battalions of soldiers who threw stones and their weapon was sling.

3. Armored soldiers

They were of those who covered the fighters with materials that would be secure in the battle. In the same way they used to put such things on their horses also so that they may be protected against arrows and darts.

Number of Companions of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a)

The companions of Imam Husayn (‘a) were less in number but historians have differed as regards their exact figure as follows:

1. Masudi believes that they comprised of 500 riders and 100 foot soldiers. Only Masudi has mentioned this figure and no one else has.[144]

2. Ammar Dahni has narrated from Imam Baqir (‘a) that they were 45 horsemen and 100 foot soldiers.[145]

3. Ibn Shahr Aashob has mentioned that they were 82 persons of whom 32 were mounted.[146]

4. Saad bin Abduh says: I have seen that they were around 100 persons. 5 or 7 from the descendants of Ali, 10 from Bani Hashim one from Kinana and another from Sulaym.[147]

5. Ibn Kathir Wafa Khori has written that they were 32 riders and 40 footmen.[148]

According to our belief, including the persons of family of prophethood there were 80 persons. This is proved from the fact that the number of heads that were severed and sent to Ibn Marjana and Yazid numbered 79 and not more.

Anyway, these valiant fighters in spite of being less in number effectively confronted that army and caused them terrible losses and by their courageous attitude, displayed nobility of their beliefs and loftiness of their faith.

Ibn Saad’s Messenger meets Imam (‘a)

Ibn Saad was not in favor of fighting against the Imam and he wanted to shun this in any way possible. Therefore he summoned Azra bin Qais to go and meet the Imam and inquire about the reason for the

arrival of His Eminence, but Azra refused as he was one of those who had written to the Imam inviting him to Kufa.

Ibn Saad appointed Kathir bin Abdullah Shobi to meet the Holy Imam. He was an audacious and reckless man. He said: “I am ready for it and if you want I can attack him suddenly and finish the matter.”

Ibn Saad did not agree to this. He told him to approach the Imam and ask him what has brought him there.

Kathir set out to meet the Imam and when Abu Thamama Saidi saw him, he became suspicious about him and told him to remove his sword before he could meet the Imam. But he did not agree to it and thus he was not able to get the permission to meet the Imam. He returned to Ibn Saad and reported the matter to him.[149] Ibn Saad told Qarra bin Qais Hanzali to go and meet the Imam. He agreed to it. When he came the Imam asked his companions, “Do you know him?”

Habib bin Mazahir replied, “Yes, he is from Bani Tamim. I used to know him as a man of sound judgment. I would not have thought that he would be present at this scene.”

He came and greeted al-Husayn, peace be on him. Then he informed him of Umar bin Saad’s message.

“The people of this town of yours wrote to me that I should come,” answered Husayn, peace be on him. “However, if now you have come to dislike me, I will leave you.”

Habib glanced at him and chided him, “O Qarra, I considered you to be a supporter of Ahlul Bayt. What has changed your attitude? Thus you remain with us and help this gentleman.”

Qarra said: “You are right. But first I shall return to my associates and convey the message to them and after that I shall think upon this matter.”

Qarra returned to Ibn Saad and conveyed to him what the Imam had said.[150]

Ibn Saad was pleased. He thought that there was some peaceful alternative that would free him from this dreadful responsibility.

Ibn Saad Meets the Imam

Ibn Saad wanted to be reassured about this so he expressed the desire to meet the Imam. The Imam agreed to meet him and when he came to His Eminence, he asked, “What has brought you here?”

“People of Kufa.”

“But you don’t know what they have done to you?”

“We the people of God are such that if someone considers it lawful to deceive us, we also for the sake of Allah bear that deception.”

“Now what do you think about escaping from this problem?”

“I shall return and stay in Mecca or Medina or in some other place.

Ibn Saad was pleased at this attitude of the Holy Imam and he saw in it possibility of peace and less chance of hostilities.151

Ibn Saad’s letter to Ibn Ziyad

Ibn Saad immediately penned a letter to his governor, Ibn Marjana which said: “So to say: God has put out the fire of hatred, united the people in one opinion, and set right the affairs of the community. This man, al-Husayn, has given me a promise that he will return to the place which he came from, or he will go to one of the border outposts – he will become like any other of the Muslims, with the same rights and duties as them; or he will go to Yazid, the Commander of the faithful, and offer him his hand and see if the difference between them can be reconciled. In this offer you have the consent to what you have demanded and the community gains benefit.”

Ibn Saad’s Slander

Doubtlessly, in this letter Ibn Saad has attributed things to His Eminence, Imam Husayn (‘a) that he never said: Aqba bin Sulaiman was with the Imam from Medina to Mecca and then to Iraq and at the time of the martyrdom of His Eminence he was in his service, he has said regarding the fabricated points of this letter as follows:

“I accompanied Husayn from Medina to Mecca and then to Iraq and at the time of his martyrdom I did not leave him and I heard whatever he said. And I never heard him say that he was ready to give allegiance to Yazid, as people allege. And neither did he say that he would go to any other place. He did not mention this either in Medina or Mecca or Iraq or in his army, till finally he was martyred. Yes, I heard him say: Leave me, so that I may go to the wide earth till I see what the people do.”152

Shaykh Muhammad Khazari has also stated that this letter mentions false things. He says: “It is not correct that he proposed to them that he would give allegiance to Yazid; rather he suggested them to leave him so that he may return from where he had come.”153

Ibn Saad composed this letter to escape the battle and to keep himself safe from the crime of killing the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). If the Imam had said such a thing, the army of Ibn Ziyad would have dispersed and all the problems would have come to an end’Imam (‘a), since the beginning of his mission, refused to bow down before the unjust group and he was determined before the storms of opposition. And he always displayed loftiness of his aims, steadfastness of his resolve and

respect of his self.

Shimr Defeats Efforts of Peace

When Ibn Saad's letter came to Ibn Ziyad, he liked the view of Ibn Saad and he considered it a solution of the problem and a channel for uniting the Muslims. It restrained him from fighting the battle. Thus with surprise he uttered, "This is the letter about a sincere man who is anxious for his people."

Shimr bin Zil Jaushan was standing besides him and he became annoyed at this, because he was well known for his hatred to people of noble class due to his own lowly birth. Hence he was jealous of Ibn Saad because he was given the command of the army due to his parentage, so he wanted to inflame the fire of battle.

"Are you going to accept this from him," demanded Shimr bin Zil Jaushan, jumping up, "When he has encamped on your land nearby? By God if he was a man from your land and he would not put his hand in yours, whether he was in a position of power and strength (or) whether he was in a position of weakness and impotence you would not give this concession, for it would be (a mark) of weakness."

These words made the circumstances explosive and dashed all hopes regarding peace and agreement, because Ibn Ziyad realized something he had not thought of earlier. That is if the Imam escapes from him and does not give allegiance to Yazid and goes away to another area the reality of the situation will become obvious for all. And the people shall stand up in support of the Imam against that sinful group. Hence the tyrant shall emerge to be weaker while His Eminence, Husayn ('a) shall come out stronger and more influential due to his position as the son of Allah's Messenger (S). These delicate points had never entered the mind of Ibn Marjana; so when Shimr reminded him, he began to think of him as a sincere advisor.

When Shimr understood that he had the situation under his control and that he has succeeded in weakening the position of Ibn Saad near Ibn Ziyad, he tried to have him removed from his post and occupy it himself. So he said, "By God, I have been informed that Husayn and Ibn Saad sat down between the two armies and carried out discussions for the most part of the night."[154]

This meant that Shimr had kept Ibn Saad under secret surveillance so that he may come to know if Ibn Saad committed any shortcoming in discharging his duties. If he did so, the information could be passed on to the government so that he demotes Ibn Saad from his post and Shimr may be able to obtain that place for himself.

Ibn Ziyad Rejected Peaceful Negotiation

Ibn Marjana rejected all the proposals Ibn Saad had written to him with regard to a peaceful solution of this problem. He wrote to Ibn Saad as follows:

“I did not send you to al-Husayn for you to restrain yourself from fighting him, nor to idle the time away with him, nor to promise him peace and preservation of his life, nor to make excuses for him, nor to be an intercessor on his behalf with me. Therefore see that if Husayn and his followers submit to my authority and surrender, you send them to me in peace. If they refuse, then march against them to fight them and to punish them; for they deserve that. If Husayn is killed, make the horses trample on his body, both front and back; for he is a disobedient rebel, and I do not consider that this will be in any way wrong after death. But it is my view that you should do this to him if you kill him. If you carry out your command concerning him, we will give you the reward due to one who is attentive and obedient. If you refuse, we withdraw the command of our province and army from you and leave the army to Shimr bin Zil Jaushan. We have given him our authority. Greetings.”155

This extremely acerbic and cruel letter contains the following points:

1. It limited the discretionary power of Ibn Saad with regard to war and fighting and no sort of choice was given to him for making peace or holding discussions with the Imam.

2. There is indication in this letter that if the Imam accepted peace he must submit to the authority of Ibn Marjana so that he may decide what to do; forgive him or put him to death. He wanted the Imam to come to him as a prisoner or a criminal and plead for mercy.

3. If the Imam refuses to surrender to the command of Ibn Ziyad, Ibn Saad was supposed to immediately put him to death and cut him into pieces.

4. Ibn Ziyad threatened Umar Ibn Saad that he would be stripped of his post if he failed he carry out these commands. After that Shimr bin Zil Jaushan would have the command of all forces and he would carry out the above orders of Ibn Marjana.

Historians say: Ibn Ziyad began his dialogue like this: “Now when our claws cling to him, he hopes for escape but he will be prevented from getting any refuge.”

Shimr set out joyfully and pleased at once. He rode non-stop towards Ibn Saad hoping that he may decline to accept the command of Ibn Ziyad and Shimr would get the chance of being the commander-in-chief. He reached Karbala to find Ibn Saad bathing in the Euphrates. A man went to him and said, “He sent Juwaira bin Badr Tamimi to you and ordered him to murder you if you refrain from fighting the battle.”

Ibn Saad went to get his clothes and put them on.156 He glanced at Shimr bin Zil Jaushan and understood that it was his doing. He told him:

“Shame upon you, what is this to you? May God never show favor to your house. May God make abominable what you have brought to me! By God, I did not think that you would cause him to refuse what I had written to him, and ruin for us a matter which we had hoped to set right. Husayn will not

surrender, for there is a spirit like (his) father's in his body."

"Tell me what you are going to do," demanded Shimr. "Are you going to carry out the governor's command and fight his enemy or are you going to leave the command of the army to me?"

Ibn Saad fell a prey to his desire and greed and he agreed to carry out the commands of the governor. He said, "No, there is going to be no advantage to you. I will carry that out instead of you."157

Shimr kept Ibn Saad under surveillance just in case he may happen to fall short in carrying out the orders of Ibn Marjana and he (Shimr) may get the command of the army. Ibn Saad conveyed the reply of Ibn Ziyad to the Holy Imam and His Eminence said, "By Allah, I shall never surrender to Ibn Marjana."158

The Imam Meets Ibn Saad

Imam ('a) expressed the desire that Ibn Saad comes to meet him. He accepted it unwillingly and met His Eminence at night in a secret meeting attended by none except His Eminence, Abbas and His Eminence, Ali Akbar. Ibn Saad also did not have anyone on his side except Hafs and slave of Ibn Saad. Imam asked him, "O Ibn Saad, would you fight against us? Do you not fear Allah while your return is to Him alone? I am the son of the one you know well. Will you not remain on our side and give up their support, as it would be more liked by Allah?"

Ibn Saad presented a very lame excuse saying, "I am afraid that my house shall be destroyed."

"I shall make it again for you."

"I fear they shall confiscate my orchard." "I shall give you a better one in Hijaz."

"I have a family in Kufa, I am afraid Ibn Ziyad would kill my family."

Imam did not get any positive reply from him. Rather he found him adamant on injustice and oppression. Thus he cursed him and said, "What will happen to you? Almighty Allah will soon have you decapitated in your bed and He shall not forgive you on the Day of Judgment. By Allah, I hope you will not be able to consume but a little from the wheat of Iraq."

Ibn Saad went away from there ridiculing the Imam: "Barley is sufficient for me."159

Shimr offers Security to Brothers of His Eminence, Abbas

The degraded leper, Shimr bin Zil Jaushan thought that he could drive a wedge between His Eminence, Husayn ('a) and his brothers and thus deprive the Imam from their support. Thus he secured a letter of guarantee for them from Ibn Ziyad and came forward quickly. He stood up before them and called out, "Where are the sons of our sister, Abbas and his brothers?"

Those youths rushed out towards him like brave lions and asked him, “What do you want, O son of Zil Jaushan?”

“I am having a guarantee of security for you.”

They shouted angrily at him, “God curse you and curse the security which you offer without offering it to the son of the Apostle of God.”[160]

That criminal returned a failure while he had expected that the Imam’s brothers are his transmogrified friends. He did not know that they were among those incomparable personalities who shaped the nobility of humanity and created the basis for pride for man.

Embargo on Imam’s Entourage

Ibn Saad surrounded Imam Husayn (‘a) from all sides so that he may not receive any outside help and this was carried out with such efficiency that it was impossible for anyone to join the Imam’s camp or convey any sort of help to him.

Access to Euphrates cut off

The most dangerous deed committed by Ibn Saad was cutting off access to tributary of Euphrates because he had received express orders from Ibn Marjana to deprive Imam Husayn (‘a), his Ahlul Bayt and companions from water, like it was done in the case of Uthman bin Affan.

He prepared a force consisting of 500 horsemen and according to another report consisting of 4,000 horsemen under the command of Amr Ibn Hajjaj. They secured all the tributaries, streams and water holes of Euphrates and thus cut off all access of Imam Husayn (‘a) and his companions to get any water. I feel that this cruel step was taken to achieve the following aims:

First: They cause harm to the Imam’s camp so that there remains no strength in them to fight the battle and the forces of Umar Saad do not face any problem.

Second: In this way they also closed the river route for anyone who may try to join the Imam’s group.

Third: It was apparently to avenge the treatment accorded to Uthman. But the fact was that when Uthman was besieged, it was Imam Husayn (‘a) who had brought water and food for him; but what a pity that Bani Umayyah had even disregarded that favor of His Eminence.

Fourth: Ibn Saad through these steps, hoped that the Imam would be compelled to surrender and accept their orders.

These were some of the factors that motivated Ibn Marjana to issue the command to cut off access to Euphrates and prevent His Eminence, Husayn and his companions from getting any water.

Historians have said: “Access to water was cut off for His Eminence, Husayn since three days prior to his martyrdom.[161] The most terrible hardship that the Imam experienced was the thirst of young children and ladies and their clamor of “Water! Water!”

Children were not able to bear thirst. Whenever they looked at the Euphrates that was full of water they used to increase their clamor. The Imam’s heart was shocked at this scene and he felt emotional about their pathetic condition. Lips of the children were shriveled and their bodies had weakened. The breast milk of the mothers had dried up while those oppressors were having unlimited access to water.

Noor Jundi says,

“Evil wolves had full access to water while the family of the Prophet were deprived of it.

What injustice it is in the history of man that the heart of the lion had to bear thirst, while he is capable of doing much.

Husayn’s children lamented in the desert. O my Lord, render help. What has happened to divine justice?”

All the laws and religions of the world are unanimous that water must not be denied to children and ladies especially the Islamic law is particular that everyone has equal right to pasture lands and water resources. Permission is accorded to drink even from streams owned privately even though the owners may not have accorded their permission. Also, it is considered very detestable to slaughter a thirsty animal. However, the Umayyad army did not care about this matter and they considered all the things decreed unlawful by Shariah to be lawful.

Those cruel people did not even consider the favor the Imam had done to the vanguard under Hurr’s command. It was the group that consisted of 1,000 horsemen with Hurr at its leader and it was marching in the desert to find and apprehend the Imam but it ran out of water and was nearly dying of thirst. His Eminence would have let them die of thirst but his magnanimity and nobility could not permit such cruelty. So he ordered his men to provide them all with water, even their beasts; inspite of the fact that His Eminence was in the middle of an arid land and himself in need of water. But those wicked people did not even requite this favor of the Imam. They kept him deprived of water along with the ladies of the house of prophethood and the grandchildren of the Prophet with him.

Decadent Nature

Those transmogrified people who had the control of water under them ridiculed the Imam while they had cut off his access to water. They goaded over this and boasted in a shameless manner; some examples of which are as follows:

1. Muhajir bin Aws

Muhajir bin Aws Tamimi glanced at the Imam and called out loudly, “O Husayn, can you see the water sparkling like a snake’s belly? By God, you shall not be able to drink it till you die.”

Imam responded and said, “I hope that Allah may enable me to reach it and prevent you from it.”[162]

2. Amr bin Hajjaj

Amr bin Hajjaj came forward while he was of those who had written to His Eminence, inviting him to Kufa. He came near the Imam’s camp and called out aloud, “This is Euphrates, that dogs dip their snouts in it and donkeys and pigs drink from it. By Allah you will not get a drop of it till you get boiling water of Hell.”

3. Abdullah bin Haseen

Abdullah bin Haseen Azadi came running like a dog to the Imam and asked, “O Husayn, do you not see the water that is like the center of sky. By God, you wouldn’t be able to get a single drop till you die of thirst.”

The Holy Imam raised both his hands and prayed, “O Allah, let him die in thirst and do not forgive him.”[163]

Those lowly beasts who had power over water supply were goading over their position so that they may get into the good books of their master, Ibn Marjana and please him in order to gain rewards and allowances from him.

Objection to Ibn Saad

Some companions of Imam Husayn (‘a) and other people also condemned Ibn Saad for denying water access to the beloved grandson of Prophet (S) because it was the most degraded type of revenge while the children of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a), before their very eyes were dying of thirst. And it happened when there did not exist any cause of revenge except that the Umayyads were contaminated with malice and degradation. Among those who raised objection against Ibn Saad were the following:

1. Yazid bin Haseen

Yazid bin Haseen came out and told Ibn Saad, “This is Euphrates and dogs are drinking from it while Husayn, the son of Allah’s Messenger (S) and his Ahlul Bayt remain thirsty, while you claim to have recognition of Allah and His Prophet (S)?”

Ibn Saad turned his dirty face down and did not provide any reply.[164]

2. Burair bin Khudhair

Burair bin Khudhair Hamadani went to Ibn Saad and called out aloud, “O Umar, would you leave the family of prophethood to die of thirst, while you have denied them access of Euphrates? While you claim to know Allah and His Messenger!”

Ibn Saad replied, “O Burair, by Allah! Indeed the killer of this group would go to Hell. But if you think that I would leave the governorship of Rayy for someone else, you are wrong, because I can never agree to it.”165

3. Hurr

When Hurr joined the Imam’s camp and repented for his past attitude to His Eminence, he set out towards Ibn Saad’s army and in a loud voice said, “O people of Kufa! May your mothers grieve for you. That you have invited and besieged and surrounded him from all sides that he may not go away anywhere else in the wide earth and obtain security for himself and his Ahlul Bayt. He is like a hostage in your hands having no choice of his own. He, his ladies, his children and his companions are deprived of Euphrates water by you while Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians drink from it and the dogs and pigs of this area swim in it. They are in a serious condition due to thirst. What type of ill behavior have you resorted to with the progeny of Muhammad after his passing away? May Allah not quench you on the day of thirst.”166

This objection had no effect on Ibn Saad and he continued to be adamant on his cruelty and oppression. He continued the embargo on water till the Prophet’s progeny was dying of thirst.

Access to a Spring

Thirst tormented the Ahlul Bayt and children and ladies began to clamor for water. Imam (‘a) arose and picked up the pick axe and dug around the tents of ladies. A spring of fresh water erupted and they drank from it. However only a little water came out of it and it dried after sometime. Spies conveyed this information to Ibn Ziyad and he became infuriated. He wrote to Ibn Saad as follows:

“I have been told that Husayn is digging wells, obtaining water and he and his companions are drinking from it. Thus take care! As soon as my communication reaches you, as far as possible restrain him from digging wells and be strict with him’”

Ibn Saad deployed men to prevent digging of wells and stationed a large number of sentries and mercenaries along the branch of Euphrates so that none may be able to reach it and drink water from it.167

Battle over water supply

When Imam saw his children and Ahlul Bayt tormented and wailing for the killing thirst he was deeply disturbed and aggrieved. So he directed his brother, His Eminence, Abul Fazl al–Abbas to bring water. That great stalwart, set out with 30 horsemen and 20 foot soldiers along with 20 water skins. They all moved to the Euphrates while Nafe bin Hilal Muraid was ahead of them.

Amr bin Hajjaj Zubaidi who was in charge of guarding the Euphrates came forward and asked,

“What do you want?”

“We have come to drink from the water that you had deprived us from.” “Have it.”

“Shall I drink it while Husayn and his companions are thirsty?”

“There is no way they could get water. We have been stationed here to keep them away from water.”

Imam’s men paid no heed. They stepped towards the river to fill up the water skins. But Amr bin Hajjaj rushed to them with his soldiers. His Eminence, Abbad and Nafe bin Hilal confronted with them but none of them were killed. After that the Imam’s group filled up the skins with water and turned back to the camp. It is said that they returned with only a little quantity of water.[168] His Eminence, Abbas quenched the thirst of those who were thirsty among the Ahlul Bayt and saved them from thirst. From that day he became known as “water carrier”, which is the most famous titles of His Eminence and the one liked by him most.

Habib seeks help from his clan

The famous companion of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a), Habib bin Mazahir was his most loyal and sincere ally. When he saw the loneliness of the Imam and the unity of oppressive powers to wage a war against His Eminence he sought the Imam’s permission to seek help from his tribe of Bani Asad so that they may fight Jihad on the side of His Eminence. He said, “A group of Bani Asad people reside in this area as nomads. They are located at Nahreen, a short distance from our camp. Do you permit me to go and call them for help, Perhaps through them the Almighty God would give you some benefit or remove your affliction?”

Imam (‘a) accorded him permission. He went towards them as soon as possible and addressed them, “I invite you towards nobility of the hereafter, its virtues and great reward. I call you towards the help of the son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S) as he is right now in a difficult situation. People of Kufa invited him offering their support. But when he arrived to them they withdrew support and have come to slay him.”

Seventy persons[169] accepted his invitation. Abdullah bin Bushr Asadi was one of them. He said, “I am

the first to accept this call." Then he recited the following war poem:

"When people take a decision they know. And when the riders halt or fall into a hardship.

I am a brave warrior and a valiant one. As if a roaring lion in the den."[170]

They marched forward to join the Imam but a spy of Ibn Saad was present in that meeting who rushed back to inform about these developments. He dispatched a troop under the command of Jabla bin Umar and it prevented the Bani Asad volunteers to join the Imam. Habib returned aggrieved and informed the Imam about what had happened. His Eminence said, "Exceeding thanks to the Almighty Allah."[171]

Imam ('a) along with his companions passed through extremely difficult circumstances due to the forced detention awaiting that terrible event that was to befall them in the desert of Karbala.

With the two Encampments

On the pure desert of the land of Karbala, the powers of betrayal confronted the soldiers of God and the seeds of monotheism. They fought those whose hearts the Almighty Allah had opened up for faith while they were absolutely convinced of their rightfulness...on the other hand their enemies were involved in bewilderment and confusion. They fought with complete awareness of their deviation and misguidance. Here we are compelled to pause for a moment and discuss in some more detail about these two groups.

Husayn's Camp

The Imam's camp displayed humanistic nobility and expressed lofty values and great thinking, such that every righteous person obtains a gem from their high values. And it is sufficient for them that they have become immortal in the pages of history. Because of all the families of martyrs of the world none could equal in nobility, loyalty and sacrifice in the path of justice, the martyrs of Karbala. Here we shall point out some signs of their aims and their personal traits.

Noble Aims

Those noble aims they had taken as their chief slogan and that valor and faith for which they were taking part in this confrontation were as follows:

1. Defense of Islam

The companions of the Imam stood up with sincerity and faith to defend Islam and protect its principles which had been ignored by the Umayyad regime. And in this regard they acted in the best way and with most outstanding sincerity and there are numerous instances deserving of pride. For example, His Eminence, Abbas ('a), who was the nearest relative of the Imam, he did not act on the basis of his brotherly affection and ties of relationship. Whatever sacrifices he offered, they were on the basis of his

firm faith in defense of Islam and the support of an Imam of Muslims whose love and obedience was made incumbent upon all people by Allah. He expressed this in the battlefield when the enemies had cut off his right hand. He said:

“By Allah, even though they have cut off my right hand I would continue to defend my religion.

And go on defending the Imam, whom I really believe to be the rightful Imam and the son of the pure trustworthy Prophet.”

The war poem of Abbas clearly shows that His Eminence had not performed Jihad due to his brotherly relationship with Imam Husayn (‘a). It was due to his concern for the defense of religion and support of the rightful Imam which he truly believed in. People other than His Eminence, Abbas have also announced this reality.

His Eminence, Aba Abdillah (‘a) had nourished them with his spirit and guidance and dressed them up with his morals and manners in such a way that their souls had distanced from the material world and their bodies had separated from worldly matters. Their hearts and emotions had become free of the activities of life...because what teacher is like Husayn? Which school is as inspiring as his school of thought? Can the generations of the world create such faith in Almighty Allah and such sincerity for truth?

2. In defense of Imam Husayn (‘a)

Another special aim of the companions of the Imam was their concern for the defense of His Eminence from those beasts who had come together to slay the Holy Imam. The Imam’s companions sacrificed their lives for their loyalty and sincerity to His Eminence and through this they set outstanding examples of loyalty. For example when Muslim bin Ausaja, the famous companion of the Imam set out to the battlefield, while his body had been wounded by swords and spears and he fell down fighting, the Imam went to him accompanied by Habib bin Mazahir at a time when Muslim was in his last moments in pain of death. Habib told him to make his bequest about that which was important for him. He said in a soft grievous voice, “I will you to defend him”, pointing towards the Imam, “and sacrifice your life upon him.”[172]

What loyalty is so capable to be a cause of pride and esteem? He imparted important lessons in loyalty with regard to truth, to the coming generations, because when he was in the last moments of his life and the hiccups of death were upon his chest, at that time also he displayed no concern save the defense of the Imam and he had abandoned every other thing connected with this life.

This great warrior is Suwaid bin Abi Muta, who is the most outstanding martyr and the most sincere of them in loyalty. When he fell down wounded in the battlefield, the enemies left him thinking that he was dead. They did not attack him anymore. When he heard shouts that the Imam has been killed, he could not keep still and save his life; he stood up immediately and wanted his sword but he found that it had

been plundered. So he tried to get hold of something with which he could fight Jihad with them. He got hold of a knife. He picked it up and used it to stab the enemies. They were terrified of him, thinking that the dead were becoming alive again to restart Jihad. And when they realized that it wasn't so, they turned to him and slew him. This loyalty of the companions of the Imam indeed continued to the final moments of their life.

Such a loyalty was not restricted to men. Ladies who were present in the field of fighting also possessed this condition, for example a woman used to come to her son and implore him to be martyred in the service of Imam. Wives also rushed to their husbands to ask them to defend Imam, while they did not care for their afflictions, like the death of their sons or that they would have wear the dress of mourning.

It is extremely surprising that even the children of the family of prophethood used to come forward and kiss the hands and feet of the Holy Imam seeking his permission to achieve martyrdom. Among them was Abdullah Ibn Hasan, who was only twelve. When he saw that enemies had gathered to slay his uncle, he could not rest still. He came running but his aunt Zainab came forward to stop him. However, he ran away from her till he reached his uncle when Abjar bin Kaab had raised his sword to hit the Imam. The boy screamed at him, "O degraded man, would you slay my uncle?" That dirty beast rushed to the little boy and aimed his sword at his outstretched hands almost severing them from his body.[173] The boy fell into the lap of his uncle. Harmala shot a cruel arrow upon him and killed him in the bosom of his uncle. The lad tasted death in the way of His Eminence...

Examples greater than those of the companions of His Eminence and his Ahlul Bayt are not found in pages of history.

3. Saving the community from oppression

Among the aims of the camp of Imam Husayn ('a) was the emancipation of Muslim community from oppression of Umayyads and their injustice, because they had spread injustice and filled up the world of Islam with mischief. Companions of the Imam arose to destroy that system and to restore the Islamic government. We have already stated this matter in a separate topic during our discussion on the causes of Imam's revolution.

4. Incomparable natures

Companions of His Eminence, Husayn ('a) were imbued with a noble nature and they were more distinguished from other people in the following aspects:

A. Nobility and Self-respect

Among the personal qualities of those noble men was nobility and self-respect, because they had accepted death in the way of their nobility. The chief of the nobles, His Eminence, Imam Husayn ('a) says, "I do not see death except as a success. And I do not consider living with oppressors as nothing

but deception." And his righteous son, His Eminence, Ali Akbar has recited in his war poem of the day of Ashura:

"I am Ali bin Husayn bin Ali. By the Lord of the Kaaba, we are more deserving of the Prophet. By Allah, this son of the evil man cannot rule over us."

Imam Husayn had cast the ray of his soul on his companions and Ahlul Bayt and they welcomed death with honor, respect and nobility.

B. Valor and Steadfastness

Another quality prominent in the Imam's camp was courage, because they were incomparable warriors of the world. Inspite of their few numbers they displayed untold determination against their numerous foes and caused them terrible harms and serious hardships.

The English historian, Percy Skies says: "Imam Husayn and his group of few companions were determined by their firm resolve to face death. And they fought with such valor and courage that to this day no other fighters have earned our astonishment and praise so much."[174]

Imam dressed them with spirituality and revolutionary zeal and it is natural that the personality of the leader is an important effect on imparting spirituality to the soldiers. Because the mechanism of leadership is instrumental in taking forward the warriors in the battlefield.[175] And the companions of the Imam with a firm determination, without any fear of hardships and hurdles fell upon the Umayyad forces till the earth became constricted for that army and a majority of them resorted to flight. A mercenary of Ibn Ziyad condemned the man who had persuaded him to join this campaign and said:

"It was the most difficult thing in the world that if you had seen what we saw, you would also have done what we did. A group pounced upon us while their hands were upon their swords. Like ferocious lions who were killing mounted fighters on their right and left. They were throwing themselves upon death, not prepared to accept security and not having any desire for wealth. There was nothing between them and death, not even the lure of rulership. Thus if they had got hold of us they would have eliminated all the soldiers of our army. Then what we could have done, may your mother die?"[176]

Kaab bin Jabir Azadi was among the soldiers of Ibn Ziyad who killed the great Qari (reciter of Quran) of Kufa, Burair bin Khudhair and who also had a hand in the Imam's killing. In a poetical composition of his, he has glorified the valor of the companions of the Holy Imam ('a) as follows:

"Make inquiries, so that you may be informed about me, and of that time when you were condemned. That day when Husayn was present there and the spears were drawn out.

But I did not do at all what you didn't want and that which I did on that day, it has not affected me in anyway.

With me was a spear that could not break. And the sword drawn out that I had sharpened at both the edges.

Against the group whose religion was not the same as mine, I caught them as I had faith in Muawiyah.

I fought with swords in the battle such that whoever may defend with obligatory actions will be successful.

They would have been steadfast before the swords and spears and continued to fight if that action had been beneficial.

So tell Abdullah that whenever you see him that I am the obedient one of the caliph.

I killed Burair and after that I attacked Abu Munqadh when he came to confront me."

Kaab has revealed his extreme surprise at the bravery of the companions of the Imam; because neither he nor anyone else had ever witnessed such a kind of steadfastness and valor. Those who were patient in front of the strikes of swords, wounds of spears and death. And of their incomparable courage, according to what historians have said was that none of them resorted to flight and all of them were killed while confronting and none in retreat. They displayed the highest limit of possibility in valor, bravery, steadfastness, rightfulness of intention and strength of determination for the support of the Imam and defense of His Eminence; in such a way that Amr bin Hajjaj Zubaidi advised against fighting them and told the people of Kufa:

"Do you know against whom you are fighting? You are fighting against the knights of this land and the owners of perceptions. Against the people who are in pursuit of death and none of you would attack them but that in spite of their meager numbers you shall be killed."[177]

His statement has mentioned qualities that were apparent in them; of them were the following:

- They were knights of the people of Kufa, or rather of the complete Arab region.

- They were having living consciences and wakeful souls that they stepped forward to help the Imam with full awareness, and not in greed of wealth or position.

- They were fighting the battle to achieve martyrdom and had no hope from worldly life. Through this they were most capable to make their enemies retreat; however they (the enemies) had been deceived and defrauded by greed.

Regarding their unsurpassed bravery, Aqqad says: "Accompanying Husayn were the best knights of Arabs and each of them were famous for their valor, daring, sharp shooting and sword fighting. But it was certain that they would not be earning any fame or praise in accompanying the Imam, because at that time conditions were such that they were only expected to face death boldly."[178]

It is clear that none of the companions of the Holy Imam (‘a) had greed for any worldly benefit and none desired anything except the rewards of Allah and success of the Hereafter...

Elements constituting the Imam’s Army

The Imam’s army consisted of two main elements which were as follows:

A. Bondsmen

Bondsmen were having a firm relationship to Imam Husayn (‘a) due to the equitable manner with which His Eminence, Imam Amirul Momineen (‘a) had dealt with them. And if conditions had been favorable a large number of them would have joined the Imam. The Imam’s army had the following persons from the slave class:

1. Sulaiman, slave of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a).

2. Qaarib Daili, slave of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a).

3. Harith bin Nab–haan, slave of Hamzah bin Abdul Muttalib.

4. Sahah, slave of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a).[179]

5. Aamir bin Muslim, slave of Saalim.

6. Jabir bin Hajjaj, slave of Aamir bin Nahshal.

7. Saad, slave of Umar bin Khalid Saidawi.

8. Raafe, slave of Ahle Shanwa.

9. Shauzab, slave of Shakir bin Abdullah Hamadani Shakiri[180]

10. Aslam Turki, slave of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a).[181]

11. Jaun, slave of Abu Zar Ghiffari.[182]

12. Zaahir, slave of Amr bin Khuzai.[183]

These were bondsmen who had precedence over freemen as far as their nobility and their decision to support the truth was concerned, because they succeeded in helping the Chief of the youths of Paradise and earned martyrdom in the service of His Eminence.

B. Arabs

The rest of the companions of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) were of Arab linage and most of them were

residents of Kufa, and from Basra, except for a few, none were martyred with His Eminence. In the same way from Hijaz, the great companion, Anas bin Harith Kahili joined His Eminence.

Here we conclude our discussion about the qualities and composition of the Imam's army.

Umayyad Troops

As for the Umayyad troops, they consisted of trust betrayers and conscience- sellers, such that not a single noble inclination was found among them. In the same way, without any doubt, they were certain that they were in misguidance and deviated from the rightful path'some of their qualities were as follows:

1. Aimlessness

The most prominent sign of these mercenaries was that they were absolutely devoid of any kind of aim and determination. Because most of them ñ according to historians ñ were such that their hearts were with the Imam and their swords were against His Eminence! They had come to fight one in whose rightfulness they believed and they knew that it was only he who could realize their aims and aspirations. If they had an iota of understanding and perception they would have sacrificed their hearts and souls upon him. And that was after they had pledged oath of fealty to the Almighty that they would support and defend him; in spite of this they betrayed the trust.

2. Confusion and Anxiety

Confusion and self betrayal had most of the soldiers of the Umayyad army in its clutches; because they knew that they had fallen into the abyss of falsehood and that His Eminence, Husayn ('a) and his companions were on the path of rightfulness. As described by Shabth bin Rabi, one of their senior officers and leaders, that:

"I fought on the side of Ali bin Abi Talib and his son, Hasan and after that for five years I served in the army of Abu Sufyan's family. Then we wreaked oppression on his (Ali's) son, who is the best of men on the earth. We fought against him on the side of family of Muawiyah and son of Sumaiyyah, the fornicatress. It is deviation and what a deviation? By God! The Almighty Allah will never bestow goodness on the people of this land and He shall never give them success."

These words describe the level of internal anxiety that had taken over Shabth bin Rabi and without any doubt there were hundreds of people like him who inwardly condemned themselves for having fought against the beloved grandson of Allah's Messenger (S). In the same way many of them avoided taking part in martial activities. Just as Amr bin Hajjaj Zubaidi noticed these matters regarding them and addressed them as follows: "Do not fall into doubt in fighting against one, who has left the religion."

Among the signs of their bewilderment was that none of them have been quoted to say anything about their aims and objectives in this war in their war poems[184] because their mouths were shut and their

tongues had become dumb. On the other hand the war poems recited by the companions of Imam Husayn (‘a) and his Ahlul Bayt were such that they state the aims and principles for which they were martyred’Singing war poems was a practice of those days and the warriors used to recite them during the battle boasting about their own valor and strength and threatening to eliminate their enemies or force them to retreat.

Reciting of war poems, in this way, was a weapon of war upon which relied the warriors of that time in the same way as they relied on the tools of warfare like the sword, arrows and spears. During the battle of Jamal, Ayesha’s supporters sang about their aim in taking part in the battle to be in defense of their mother and the companions of the Imam, in their recitations spoke of their defense of His Eminence, Imam Amirul Momineen (‘a) and described it to be a religious duty, like it was in the battle of Siffeen.

However in the battle of Karbala, it is noteworthy that not a single line of a war poem has been quoted from any of the men of the Umayyad army or that they mentioned it by way of testimony or example. This is a proof of their confusion and their self-condemnation because all of them were aware with awareness devoid of any misunderstanding or denial that what an infamy they have committed. How they had sunk in falsehood and were submerged in misguidance.

3. Recklessness

A large group of the army men of the Umayyad forces were famous for sinfulness and crime, because they were those who constantly imbibed wine. Historians say: “All those who carried the severed heads of the martyrs to Damascus, drank wine all the way.” In the previous discussions we have explained about their well-known qualities in lying and impiety in religion.

Here we conclude our discussion about some qualities of that army.

Elements of the Army

The Umayyad troops were composed of the following elements:

1. Opportunists

They were those who for greed or fear of the regime joined the army and who were in constant pursuit of their personal gains. In their behavior and actions they gave no preference to rightfulness and were only after their own benefits. Such persons comprised a large group in Ibn Ziyad’s camp and they were entrusted with important posts in the army. They were of the likes of Ibn Saad, Hijar bin Abjar, Shabth bin Rabi, Shimr bin Zil Jaushan, Qais bin Ashath, Yazid bin Harith and others, who had permanently divorced righteousness and not a single act of goodness was seen throughout their lives. They were only known to afflict harm upon others.

2. Mercenaries

A major part of the Umayyad troops consisted of men who had been lured to join the battle by greed of war booty. As soon as the Imam was martyred they rushed forward to plunder his belongings and such was the level of their decadence that they did not even spare the ornaments of the noble ladies of the family of prophethood. They pillaged all the clothes and weapons of the martyred people. Historians say: "They looted all the garments of His Eminence, Husayn ('a) and left him absolutely unclothed. We shall explain this in more detail in the discussion about the actual martyrdom of the Holy Imam ('a).

3. The Transmogrified

Among the elements that constituted the Umayyad camp were the transmogrified persons. They were such that their breasts were full of malice and enmity towards one and all, and their most important tendency was to shed blood unjustly and rushing towards crimes in response to the call of evil which had been deeply rooted in their souls.

Those oppressors from the transmogrified ones were in constant pursuit of criminal deeds and they competed with each other in putting to death young children and tormenting the ladies of Ahlul Bayt. And they also gloated about their misdeeds and shameful acts. Of such decadent beasts were Shimr bin Zil Jaushan, Harmala bin Kahil, Hakeem bin Tufail Tai, Sinan bin Anas, Amr bin Hajjaj and other rejected dogs like them. Historians have researched the names of some of them who displayed such cruelty in Karbala that even beasts and dogs would wish to be aloof from them.

4. The Compelled Ones

Another group in the army consisted of those who were compelled to join the battle against the Imam. They were forced into this by the regime of the governor, while their loyalties and feelings were in favor of the Holy Imam, except that their fearfulness and weakness has prevented them from joining the Imam's camp. These people did not take part in the actual fighting. They instead prayed to the Almighty that may He send his help to the son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah. One of such characters was even condemned for his attitude and was told, 'Instead of praying, why don't you go ahead and help and defend him?'[185] Without any doubt, they had committed a great sin and are deemed to have a share in the criminal acts of mercenaries, because they did not do anything to save the Imam and defend him against the oppressors.

5. Khawarij

One of the elements of the army that came out to fight against the Holy Imam was the Khawarij. They were the most inimical persons towards the family of the Prophet (S), because Imam Amirul Momineen ('a) had fought against them in the battle of Nahrawan and thus they competed with each other in the battle of Karbala to seek their revenge by eliminating the Purified Progeny.

These were some elements that constituted the troops of Ibn Ziyad. In one of the Ziarats of His Eminence, Imam Husayn (‘a) they are described as follows: “And they united on him ñ on fighting the Imam – those whom the world had deceived and who sold their benefit in the least price and lost their hereafter in exchange of a lowly price and they fell into destruction in their selfish desires.”186

We conclude here our discussion regarding the camps of Imam Husayn (‘a) and Ibn Ziyad so that we may fully understand the main features of that immortal tragedy in the world of sorrows.

Immortal Tragedy

No community from the communities has faced a more painful calamity and more grievous tragedy than the tragedy of Karbala. Because there was no difficulty from the problems of the day or a tragedy from the tragedies of the world that did not pass upon the grandson of the Prophet and his beloved one’the calamities of His Eminence have saddened the emotions and injured the feelings to such an extent that even those who are less emotional or even the hard hearted people among them were moved by the terrible events. So much so that even Umar bin Saad, that decadent oppressor was also affected and he also wept upon the horrifying troubles and terrible circumstances of His Eminence. In the tragedy of Karbala the respect of the Holy Prophet (S) was defiled due to their behavior towards his Purified Progeny.

Imam Reza (‘a) has said, “The day Husayn was martyred our eyes were injured and our relatives were dishonored’”

Here we shall present the portions of that immortal tragedy in the world of sorrows and painful tragedies and the events contemporary to that time.

Beginning of Hostilities

The oppressive powers marched forward to begin the battle, with their hearts filled with mischief, malice and enmity towards the Purified Progeny, who were restorers of the rights of the persecuted and oppressed people and those who always strived to establish truth.

Vanguard of Ibn Saad’s troops marched forward on Thursday at the time of late afternoon on 9th Mohurrum to fight the Holy Imam because strict orders had arrived from Ibn Ziyad for the Commander–in–Chief to make haste in the battle so that the views of soldiers may not change and there may not appear some groups in their ranks.

When that army began to move forward, His Eminence was seated outside his tent with his sword placed on his knees. He had dozed off. His sister heard the clamor from the enemy’s ranks. She came to him and said, “My brother, don’t you hear the sounds which are getting nearer?”

“I have just seen the Apostle of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, in my sleep,” said al–

Husayn, peace be on him, as he raised his head. “He said to me: ‘You are coming to us.’”

His sister struck at her face and cried out in grief.[187]

“You have no (reason) to lament, sister,” al-Husayn, peace be on him, told her. “Be quiet, may God have mercy on you.”

Then he turned to Abbas bin Ali(‘a), “Brother, the enemy have come, so get ready; but first, Abbas, you, yourself, ride out to meet them, to talk to them about what they have in mind and what appears appropriate to them and to ask about what has brought them against us.”

Abbas went towards them with about twenty horsemen, among whom was Zuhair b. al-Qain.[188]

“How do you see (the situation)?” he asked. “What do you want?”

“The command of the governor has arrived that we should offer you the opportunity of submitting to his authority, otherwise we must attack you,” they answered.

“Do not hurry to do anything until I have gone back to Abu Abd Allah and told him what you have said,” Abbas requested.

They stopped where they were and told him: “Go to him and inform him, and tell us what he says to you.”

Abbas went galloping back to al Husayn, peace be on him, to give him the information.[189]

Now Habib bin Mazahir addressed those men reminding them about the Hereafter and dispensed them good advice. He said, “By Allah, the worst people to meet the Almighty Allah and His Prophet tomorrow would be those who have killed the Progeny of the Prophet and his partisans; those who spend their days and nights in Allah’s remembrance.”

Azra bin Qais replied to him saying, “O Ibn Mazahir, do you claim to be purified?”

Zuhair bin Qain glanced at him and said, “O son of Qais, fear Allah, and do not be of those who help misguidance and falsehood and slay the Purified Progeny of the foremost Prophet.”[190]

Azra told him, “You were a follower of Uthman in our opinion, what has happened to you?”

Zuhair said, “By Allah, I did not write to Husayn and I did not send any messenger to him. But I met him on the way. When I saw him I was reminded of Allah’s Messenger and I understood what disloyalty and betrayal of trust you are committing. I saw you inclined towards the material world and I decided to help him, and join his entourage so that I may defend the rights of the Messenger of Allah (S) that you have trespassed.”

Abbas came to the Imam and told him what the enemy had said.[191]

“Go back to them,” he, peace be on him, said, “If you can, delay them until the morning and persuade them to keep from us during the evening. Then, perhaps, we may be able to pray to our Lord during the night to call upon Him and seek His forgiveness. He knows that I have always loved His formal prayer, the recitation of His Book and (making) many invocations to Him, seeking His forgiveness.”

His Eminence, Abbas returned to them and conveyed the message of his brother. Ibn Saad sought the counsel of Shimr in this matter for he feared that if he accepted it of his own accord, Shimr may report the matter to Ibn Ziyad because he was a spy of the governor on Ibn Saad. Or that if Ibn Ziyad were to blame him for giving respite he could claim that even Shimr was an ally in that decision.

Anyway, Shimr did not offer any suggestion and the matter was left to the discretion of Ibn Saad.

Amr bin Hajjaj Zubaidi condemned their refusal to accept Imam’s offer and said, “Glory be to Allah! By God, if the Dailam has put forth such a request you’d have found them worthier to be granted their wish.”[192]

In his statement the son of Hajjaj did not elaborate the subject and state that they were the Progeny of the Prophet lest the matter be reported to Ibn Marjana and he may be considered to be inclined towards Ahlul Bayt. Thus earning disgrace from the governor and be deprived from material gains’

Ibn Ashath supported the view of son of Hajjaj and said to Ibn Saad, “Accept their proposal. By my life, tomorrow they shall be fighting against you.”

Ibn Ashath said this because he was under the impression that the Imam was inclined towards submission to Ibn Ziyad that is why he was asking for respite. However when he realized that the Imam was determined to fight it out, he regretted his words saying, “By Allah, if I knew that they would act in that way, I would never have accorded them any respite.”[193]

Ibn Ashath considered his own ethics and the ethics of Kufians to be a standard against which to judge people. And he was of the view that the Imam will accept humiliation and disgrace and turn away from completing his mission. He did not know that the Imam had inherited his existence and all his attitudes from his Holy grandfather.

Battle delayed till the morning next

After most commanders expressed willingness to postpone hostilities, Ibn Saad issued the permission to give respite till the next day. He told one of his men to announce this to the Imam’s camp. He came to the Imam’s encampments and called out, “O Companions of Husayn bin Ali, we will grant you a day until tomorrow. Then if you surrender, we will send you to our governor, Ubaidullah bin Ziyad but if you refuse we will not leave you (any longer).”[194]

Battle was postponed till 10th of Mohurrum and companions of Ibn Saad waited for the next day to see if the Imam would agree to surrender to their demands or not.

Imam (‘a) permitted his companions to go away

Imam (‘a) gathered his companions and Ahlul Bayt (‘a) on the eve of 10th Mohurrum and asked them to go away anywhere from there and leave him alone to his destiny. His Eminence wanted to make them aware of his real position. So he told them:

“I glorify God with the most perfect glorification and I praise Him in happiness and misfortune. O God, I praise You for blessing us with prophethood, teaching us the Quran and making us understand the religion. You have given us hearing, sight and hearts, and have made us among those who give thanks (to You). I know of no followers more loyal and more virtuous than my followers, nor of any House more pious and more close-knit than my House. May God reward you well on my behalf. Indeed, I do not think that there will be any further days left to us by these men. I permit you to leave me. All of you go away with the absolution of your oath to follow me, for there will be no further obligation on you from me. This is a night whose darkness will give cover to you. Use it as a camel (i.e. ride away in it).

And each of you take the hand of one person from my family ñ so that the Almighty Allah bestows each of you a mighty reward ñ After that you spread out in the land till the time the Almighty makes the conditions favorable because these people do not want anyone except me and if they are able to get me they will not go after anyone else.”[195]

These valuable statements display the greatness of faith. It shows the style of thinking of the Holy Imam who was the guide of human perfections because in this delicate moment he had removed every type of doubt from them and made his helpers and family members fully aware of the circumstances, that showed that the definite result would be getting killed and laying down of lives as there was nothing else besides it’And he would have liked that they left him and went away from him in the darkness of the night as their veil. Perhaps they may be ashamed to go away in daylight or that they may be afraid of him. So he himself released them from the pledges they had given him and he informed them that he was personally the actual target of those wild beasts. Such that if they are able to get him would did not have any other demand.[196]

Reply of Ahlul Bayt of Imam Husayn (‘a)

The Imam had not yet concluded his discourse that his purified and chosen family members stood up and announced that they have selected the very path they were treading on and they would not go any other way. All of them said tearfully, “We will not leave you to make ourselves continue living after your passing away. May God never let us see such a thing.”

Abbas bin Ali, peace be on them, was the first of them to make this declaration. Then the (whole) group

followed him, (all) declaring the same thing.

“Sons of Aqil” said Husayn, “enough of your family has been killed. So go away as I have permitted you.”

“Glory be to God,” they replied, “What would the people say? They would say that we deserted our Shaykh, our lord, the sons of our uncle, who was the best of uncles; that we had not shot arrows alongside them, we had not thrust spears alongside them, we had not struck swords alongside them. (At such an accusation) we do not know what we would do. No, by God, we will not do such a thing. Rather we will ransom you with our lives, property and families. We will fight for you until we reach your destination. May God make life abominable (for us) after your (death).”

Reply of Companions of Imam Husayn (‘a)

The companions of Imam Husayn (‘a) were brimming with faith because Aba Abdillah (‘a), in their view was having the loftiest principles, inclined towards virtue and eager to march towards the truth. And also that His Eminence was not in any pursuit of post, wealth or position. Rather he had left everything for the sole benefit of the community and religion. This matter had affected the depths of their consciences. And he had considered life worthless and was ridiculing death. Therefore they declared their loyalty and devotion to His Eminence. The following are some of their statements:

1. Muslim bin Ausaja

Muslim bin Ausaja, with tears flowing on his cheeks, came forward and told the Imam:

“Could we leave you alone? How should we excuse ourselves before God concerning the performance of our duty to you? By God, I will stab them with my spear until it breaks, I will strike them with my sword as long as the hilt is in my hand. If I have no weapon left to fight them with, I will throw stones at them. Till the time I am killed with you.”

These statements spoke of the depth of his faith. He was convinced that he held responsibility before God for defending the beloved son of the Prophet and he would be questioned about it. And that he shall employ all his capacities to defend His Eminence.

2. Saeed bin Abdullah

Saeed bin Abdullah Hanafi began to speak and announced his sincere loyalty regarding the Imam saying:

“By God we will never leave you until God knows that we have preserved through you the company of his Apostle in his absence. By God, if I knew that I would die and then be revived and then burnt and then revived, and then scattered, and that would be done to me seventy times, I would never leave you

until I met my death fighting on your behalf. So how could I do it when there can only be one death, which is a great blessing which can never be rejected?"

In the dictionary of loyalty there is no greater loyalty and more truthful than this as he aspires to be killed 70 times so that he may be sacrificed on the Imam and he may succeed in saving the honor of Allah's Messenger. Now why should he not consider death in this way good, while it is not more than once and after which is such respectability that has no end.

3. Zuhair bin Qain

Zuhair bin Qain also spoke up on the lines of his brother in faith. He said, "By God, I would prefer to be killed and then recalled to life; and then be killed a thousand times in this manner; and that in this way God, the Mighty and Exalted, should protect your life and the lives of these young men of your House."

These warriors had reached up to the level of such a great daring that no man has ever reached. They have imparted a praiseworthy lesson in loyalty on the path of truth.

Other companions spoke in similar veins, one after the other. Imam Husayn ('a) prayed to Allah to reward them well[197] and then informed them emphatically that all of them shall be martyred. They called out in unison, "Thanks be to Allah, that He favored us with being your helpers and honored us by martyrdom in your company. Should we not be elated that we shall also live in your level in your company, O son of the Messenger of Allah?"

The Imam ('a) tested them and found them to be the most selected ones in rightfulness and loyalty. Their souls were illuminated by the effulgence of faith and free from all worldly attachments and they had become certain that they would be going to the garden of Perpetuity. According to historians they were eager for martyrdom so that they may qualify for the bounties of the Hereafter.

The Imam exposes the Deception of Kufians

Imam ('a) told his companions how the Kufians had deceived His Eminence by writing to him and inviting him to Kufa. He said, "They wrote to me only to deceive me and get into the good books of Muawiyah's son."[198]

Letters sent by most people of Kufa to Imam ('a) were sent on the directions of Yazid so that the Imam may come to them and be eliminated. And they had not written to His Eminence on the basis of faith or with the aim for justice.

With Muhammad bin Bashir

Among the companions of the Holy Imam, the one who had reached the highest ranks of faith was one Muhammad bin Bashir Hadhrami. He received the news that his son has been taken a hostage in Rayy.

He said, “I do not like that he remains a prisoner and I should continue to live after him. Imam (‘a) by his statements thought that he wanted to get his son freed. Therefore he accorded him permission to go and get his son released. Imam said, “You are free, go and try to get your son freed.”

That great warrior announced his true resolve to continue in the service of the Holy Imam and sacrifice himself upon His Eminence, “May the wild beasts devour me alive, if I leave you’”199

Is it not the truest example of deep faith and great loyalty in the path of Imams? That they loved him and had sincerity regarding him and considered death to be nothing for his sake?

Firaas Makhzoomi Flees

Firaas bin Judah Makhzoomi was a close relative of Imam (‘a) because his father Judah’s mother was Umme Hani, daughter of Abu Talib. He was among those who had written to His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) to rise up against the Umayyads during the lifetime of Muawiyah and he had joined the Imam at Mecca. He was with the Imam so far, till they reached Iraq. But when he saw the hardships and conglomeration of troops against the Imam he became afraid and was frightened of fighting. He was completely filled with awe. Imam asked him what was troubling him and gave him permission to go away in the dark of the night and he fled from there200 and he could not achieve martyrdom201 like some other people also who resorted to flight and could not prove themselves to be helpers of the Imam.

The Imam did not allow martyrdom for Sinful persons

Tibrani has reported that the Imam instructed a person to make the following announcement among the people who accompanied him, “Anyone who is having a debt upon him must not be killed with us.” So a man from his companions stood up and said to His Eminence, “A dept is payable upon me and my wife has stood surety for it.”

His Eminence said, “How can a woman stand as a surety?”202

Imam (‘a) wanted the martyrdom achievers with him to be pious people free from liabilities towards others. However here exists doubt because in this case the Imam has not accepted the surety of the wife for debt payable on the husband while there is unanimity in laws of Shariah as to the validity of the surety of the wife regarding monies, etc. and her equality with men in this regard. In our view the last sentence of the above mentioned report must have been a fabrication because Balazari has mentioned this report but not quoted the statement of that man that he was having a debt upon him and that his wife has given surety for it.

The Imam (‘a) speaks about his death

Imam (‘a) came to his tent and began to search for his sword, then began to prepare it for use, while he

was reciting the following couplets:

“Time, shame on you as a friend! At the day’s dawning and the sun’s setting, How many a companion or seeker will be a corpse! Time will not be satisfied with any substitute.

The matter will rest with the Mighty One, and every living creature will have to journey along my path.”

By these couplets the Imam described his death to be the death of a noble man, while Imam Zainul Abideen (‘a) and Her Eminence, Zainab (‘a) were inside the tent. When Imam Zainul Abideen (‘a) heard the words of his father he understood what he wanted, thus he controlled his tears and remained silent and on the basis of what he said ñ he knew that tribulation had come upon them. However when the lady of Bani Hashim heard these lines she became agitated and knew that her beloved brother was determined to confront death and had decided to move towards martyrdom. Therefore she could not control herself; she jumped up, tearing at her clothes and sighing, and went to him. Her eyes were filled with tears. In broken words that came out with pieces torn from her heart she told her brother, “What a grief and what a sorrow! Would that death deprived me of life today. O dear Husayn! As if today have died my grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S), my Sakina said: They were ten and twenty persons who dispersed and except for less than eighty persons none remained with His Eminence.” This is mentioned in the second volume of Baghiyatun Nubla. mother, Fatima Zahra, my father, Ali and my brother, Hasan (‘a). O my surviving one and the guardian of those who survive!”[203]

Imam looked upon her with affection and said, “My sister, don’t let Satan take away your forbearance.”

Her Eminence, Zainab with a face whose color had changed and with a deep sorrow breaking up her kind and aggrieved heart glanced at her brother and with pain and sadness said to him, “Will you take yourself to injustice and oppression so that my grief is prolonged and my heart is further aggrieved?”

At that time when she became sure that her brother will be killed, she could not control her emotions. She tore up her collar, struck her face and threw herself down.[204] Other ladies also shared in her terrible grief. Her Eminence, Umme Kulthum (‘a) lamented, “O Muhammad! O Ali! O my mother! O my Husayn! After you, we shall be destroyed.”

That tragic scene affected the sensibilities of the Holy Imam (‘a) and his heart became filled with grief and remorse. He turned to those daughters of revelation and advised them to observe patience and forbearance in bearing these terrible hardships. He said, “O my sister! O Umme Kulthum! O Fatima! O Rabab! Take care! When I am killed, do not tear your clothes nor scratch your face or utter useless things.”[205]

The great Imam bore the most terrible kinds of tribulations and the worst of hardships and calamities that were proportionate to his faith in God and he had yet not become free of a difficulty that he was confronted with such a flood of calamities that man is unable to bear them.

Precautionary steps

Imam formulated an elaborate and detailed plan to organize his camp in accordance with the prevailing circumstances and he arranged his front in an outstanding and astonishing manner. He made his camp absolutely secure from external attacks. His Eminence came out in the dark of the night accompanied with Nafe bin Hilal and surveyed the adverse conditions of the surroundings and he checked them closely so that it may not be that they serve as ambush for the enemies during fighting. At that time he instructed his companions to take the following steps:

First: He ordered them to bring their tents much closer together so that the tent– pegs came within the area of each other's tents. In our opinion they were not arranged in a single row. Rather they were bunched together in a few lines, so that if they remained among their tents, the enemy could only approach them from one side.[206]

Secondly: He asked them to dig up a ditch behind the tents which were around the tents of his relatives and family of His Eminence. Then the ditch was filled up with dried firewood and cane so that it may be fired up during the battle.[207] This was for the following reasons:

A. It was so that during the battle his women and children remain safe during the fighting because the enemies would not be able to cross the burning ditch.

B. They may be able to face the enemy from a single direction. So that there may not be multiple fronts and paucity of Imam's men may be a serious drawback for them. If this step had not been taken the enemies would have attacked from all sides and finished them off in a short time and the battle wouldn't have stretched to even a full day.

There were some special precautions that the Imam took to make the best of those difficult circumstances and the steps ordered by the Holy Imam clearly tell us about the martial expertise of the Imam and his knowledge about such complex matters.

Night of worship

The Holy Imam, with his Ahlul Bayt and companions began to worship and with all their sincerity became attentive to the Almighty and on the basis of what the historians say. Their humming was like the humming of honeybees. They bowed, prostrated and recited the Quran and none of them slept for a moment. They recited hymns to Allah, humbled themselves before His court and begged for forgiveness and pardon.

Imam's Companions Overjoyed

The Imam's companions were overjoyed on receiving the glad–tidings of martyrdom in the service of the

grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). Historians have recorded the statements of some of them which expressed astonishing happiness. For example, Habib bin Mazahir came out to his colleagues while he had a wide smile on his face. Yazid bin Haseen Tamimi objected to him and said, “This is not the time to laugh!”

Habib with deep faith replied to him, “What situation could be more deserving of joy than this? By Allah, very soon these oppressors would fall upon us with their swords and at that time we shall take the Horul Ein in our bosoms.”208

Burair also jested with Abdur Rahman Ansari but the latter was shocked by this behavior and he said, “What are you doing in such a situation?”

Burair told him, “My people know that neither in my old age nor in my youth have I ever committed a vain action. But I am elated at what we are going to experience. By Allah, there is no distance between us and the Black-eyed Houries of Paradise except that they attack us with their swords and I also like that they attack us.”209

In the families of martyrs of the world faith like this is not found that in spite of being certain of the approaching catastrophe such certainty, recognition, right intention and great sincerity is being displayed’they were elated at being able to achieve Paradise along with the Prophets and the truthful ones and they had become sure that they would die the easiest death, the greatest type of death in the history of humanity in all generations and ages.

Shimr ridicules the Imam (‘a)

The Holy Imam (‘a) recited the ritual prayers, while the decadent impure man, Shimr bin Zil Jaushan210 watched him. He was able to hear the Imam utter the following words of the Almighty:

“And let not those who disbelieve think that Our granting them respite is better for their souls; We grant them respite only that they may add to their sins; and they shall have a disgraceful chastisement. On no account will Allah leave the believers in the condition which you are in until He separates the evil from the good.”211

Shimr made fun of the Imam on hearing this and laughed out aloud.

Imam Husayn’s Vision

After deadly pains had tired Imam Husayn (‘a), His Eminence dozed off for a few moments then awoke and looked at his companions and said to them, “Do you know what I dreamt of?”

“Tell us what you saw?”

“I saw dogs attacking me and tearing me into pieces. And among then is a black and white dog who is attacking me more and I think that the one who is going to kill me is a man with leprosy spots from this community’

Then I saw my grandfather, Allah’s Messenger (S) accompanied by a group of his companions. He said to me, ‘My son, you are the martyr of the Progeny of Muhammad. The folks of the heavens and the higher worlds are talking among themselves about your arrival. Tonight you shall dine with us. Hurry up, do not delay.’ This is what I have seen. The command of the Lord has arrived and the passing away from this world is near.”212

A deep sorrow fell upon his Ahlul Bayt and companions. They became sure of the impending calamity and the end of their journey in the world.

Distress of Ladies of the Prophet’s Family

The ladies of the Prophet’s family were terribly distressed. They could not get any relief on that immortal night in the world of sorrows because their thoughts were full of the impending doom and the imminent arrival of horrifying tribulations that seemed very much real. What would be their fate after they are separated from their guardian ñ the son of the Messenger of Allah (S)? That too when the members of the weaker sex were in a foreign land! And their cruel enemies had surrounded them from all sides? They began to lament and wail and beseech the Almighty Lord to save them from that terrible disaster.

However the enemies of Ahlul Bayt spent the night in joyful anticipation of shedding their purified blood so that they may obtain the acclaim of Ibn Marjana. Riders of a battalion under the command of Urwah bin Qais213 circled the camp of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) lest His Eminence escape their clutches or someone may come and join the entourage.

Imam applied Perfume and Anointed Himself

The Holy Imam and his loyal companions now prepared themselves for their meeting with the Almighty Lord and readied themselves for death. Imam (‘a) ordered the setting up of a tent in which was placed a vessel of musk and fragrance. Camphor was also procured. After that His Eminence entered the tent and applied the fragrant materials to his body. Then Burair entered and anointed himself. All the companions of His Eminence214 followed suit one after another in order to prepare themselves for death and martyrdom in the way of Allah.

Day of Ashura

In the sky of the world no dawn ever broke as the dawn break of the 10th of Mohurrum and the sun of no other day arose like the sorrowful sun of that day’,because no tragedy in history is as painful and as terrible as the Tragedy of the day of Ashura215 on the plains of Karbala, as there did not remain a single

calamity that did not befall the beloved grandson of Allah's Messenger (S).

Imam Zainul Abideen ('a) says, "No day for the Messenger of Allah (S) was as hard as the day of the battle of Uhad on which the uncle of His Eminence, that is Hamzah bin Abdul Muttalib, the lion of God and His Prophet was killed. And after that was the day of the battle of Mutah on which his cousin, Ja'far bin Abu Talib was killed." Then he ('a) said, "There is no day like the day of the martyrdom of His Eminence, Husayn ('a). When 30000 mercenaries attacked him while claiming to be from this community and each of them was trying to obtain divine proximity

Imam ('a) replied, "Son of a goat-herdess you are worthy to be burnt by that."
Muslim bin Ausaja wanted to shoot an arrow at him, but the Imam stopped him from doing that saying, "I am unwilling to begin the fighting against them."216

2. Muhammad bin Ashath

Most degraded of the decadent, Muhammad bin Ashath came towards the Holy

Imam calling out aloud, "Husayn, now you shall go to Hell!"

The Imam ('a) told him, "May the Almighty Allah curse you, your father and your community, O son of the sinful apostate and enemy of Allah, the Prophet and Muslims."217

3. Abdullah bin Hawza

Abdullah bin Hawza, the lowly man, hastened towards the Imam's area and said,

"O Husayn, glad-tidings for Hell for you."

The Imam turned his statement towards him, "I am going to the Merciful Lord and an intercessor who is obeyed (the Prophet)" Then he asked about him, it was told that he was the son of Hawza. The Holy Imam raised his hands in prayer and cursed, "May Allah put him in the Hawza (pool) of fire."

With that his horse upset him in its stride and he fell. His left leg was stuck in the stirrups and his right leg was free. Muslim bin Ausaja attacked him and struck his right leg and cut it off. The horse galloped off (dragging) him (along) and his head struck every stone and clod of earth until he died.218 God hurried his soul to (Hell) fire. (More) fighting then broke out and more men were killed.

When al-Hurr bin Yazid perceived that the people were determined to fight al- Husayn, peace be on him, he said to Umar: "Are you going to fight this man?"

"Yes," he replied, "it will be a terrible battle, the least part of which will be heads falling and severed hands flying (through the air)."

"Haven't you any other way of getting what you want?"

“If the matter rested with me,” answered Umar, “I would do (anything else), but your governor has refused (any alternative).”219

Masruq bin Wael Hadhrami saw this scene while he were himself thinking about killing the Imam and obtaining reward from Ibn Marjana. At that moment he began to regret his decision and realized the true status of Ahlul Bayt (‘a) near the Almighty God. Hence he left the battlefield and ran away due to the fear of divine wrath.220

Both camps became fully prepared

Both the opposite camps became fully alert and ready for the battle. The Imam prepared his army of 72 riders and foot–soldiers. Zuhair bin Qain was given the charge of the right wing and Habib bin Mazahir the command of the left wing. Himself and his Ahlul Bayt he placed in the center of the battalion221 and entrusted his standard to his helper and brother, Abbas.222

Ibn Saad also organized his battalions and placed Abdullah bin Zuhair Azadi at the helm of the Medina division and put Qais bin Ashath at the head of the Rabia and Kinda division. Abdur Rahman bin Abi Sabra Jofi was commanding the Madhij and Asad division. Hurr Ibn Yazid Riyahi was placed at the command of Hamadan division.223 At the right wing of the army he placed Amr bin Hajjaj as the controller and the left wing he placed under Shimr bin Zil Jaushan. Urwah bin Qais Ahami was made the commander of the mounted warriors and Shabth bin Rabi at the charge of footed soldiers. His standard, he gave to his slave, Duraid.224 In this manner both the armies became prepared for battle and fighting.

Severe Objections

The Holy Imam with his great companions made an effort to complete the argument on the people of Kufa and inform them about their true circumstances (the reality of their attitude) and to make them aware of the deadly sin they were about to indulge in, that it was very near that heavens may be rent asunder, the earth may split into pieces and mountains may crash. They tried all means to give them good counsel and restrain those changed people from rushing towards the fire of Hell.

Imam’s Address

The Imam called for his horse, mounted it and galloped to Ibn Saad’s army in such a way that the awe of his grandfather was apparent in him. He stood before them and delivered a historical address which has remained a literary masterpiece of Arabic literature in its eloquence and beauty. His Eminence spoke up in a loud voice audible to most of those present there:

“O people of Iraq,” – and most of them began to listen to him “People, listen to my words and do not hurry to attack me so that I may remind you of the duties you have towards me and so that by telling you the true circumstances I may free myself from any blame in your attacking me. If you give me justice,

you will become happier through that. If you do not give me justice of your own accord as individuals, then agree upon your affairs and your associates; let not your affair be in darkness to you. Then carry it out against me and do not reflect any further. Indeed my guardian is God, Who created the Book, He takes care of the righteous."225

The breeze carried the voice of His Eminence to the great ladies of the family of Prophethood and the women of the house of revelation. They began to lament and their wails arose. His Eminence sent his brother, His Eminence Abbas and his son, Ali towards them and told them to restrain them from weeping as soon they would have to weep much more.

When the ladies were silenced the Imam continued his address. He thanked and praised the Almighty and invoked blessings on His Prophets, Angels and Messengers. In that discourse he spoke in such a way that no speaker has ever been heard before or after him more eloquent in his speech.226 He said:

"O people, the Almighty Allah created the world and made it an abode of death and destruction. And it takes its inmates from one place to another. Then deceived is the one who is deceived by it. That is unfortunate who has been corrupted by it. Hence this world must not deceive you. As it cuts off the hope of all those who rely on it and whosoever is greedy about it, fails. I see you that you gathered upon a matter with which you have made the Almighty wrathful upon you, that He has turned away His merciful face from you and has decreed his revenge on you. The best lord is our Lord and the worst servants are you. You agreed to obey and brought faith in Muhammad, the Prophet and now you are the same people who marched against his progeny and intend to eliminate them. The Satan has you under his control and he has made you forgetful of the remembrance of Almighty God. Thus, woe be upon you and what you have intended. We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return.

They are those who have disbelieved after their acceptance of faith. Keep aloof from these oppressors."227

Imam counseled them through these words, that illuminated the teachings of the Prophet and the efforts of the Prophets regarding their communities and warned them of the deceptions and frauds of the material world. He threatened them about the future loses they would have to suffer and restrained them from stepping forward to slay the Progeny of their Prophet by which they shall go out the pale of faith into infidelity and become eligible for everlasting wrath and punishment of the Almighty God.

His Eminence spoke further and continued in the same vein, "Trace back my lineage and consider who I am. Then look back at yourselves and remonstrate with yourselves. Consider whether it is right for you to kill me and to violate the honor of my womenfolk. Am I not the son of the daughter of your Prophet, of his testamentary trustee (*wasi*) and his cousin, the first of the believers in God and the man who first believed in what his Apostle, may God bless him and his family, brought from his Lord? Was not Hamzah, the lord of the martyrs, my uncle? Was not Ja'far, the one who flies in Heaven, my uncle? Have you not heard the words of the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family, concerning

myself and my brother: 'These are the two lords of the youths of the inhabitants of heaven'? Whether you believe what I am saying and it is the truth, for by God I have never told a lie since I learnt that God hated people who told them – or whether you regard me as a liar, there are among you those who, if you asked them, would tell you: Ask Jabir bin Abd Allah al-Ansari, Abu Said al-Khudri, Sahl bin Sad al-Saidi, Zaid bin Arqam and Anas bin Malik to tell you that they heard these words from the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family, concerning myself and my brother. Is there not sufficient in this to prevent you from shedding my blood?"

I don't know of any discourse more eloquent and affectionate than this with regard to its style in such a delicate moment when even the lion-hearted ones become dumb and the valiant one become tongue-tied, we are compelled to say'this discourse befitted only one who had come with presence of mind and created a revolution of views and actions in their ranks because His Eminence asked them to come to their senses and think logically if they were in control of their reasoning capacity, so that they study the matter carefully and know that he was the grandson of their Prophet, the son of his vicegerent and the nearest in kin to the Messenger. He was also the Chief of the youths of Paradise. There is this justification to observe the sanctity of his life and that his blood must not be shed. But those mercenaries who could not understand this beneficial logic, remained adamant to wreak oppression. The darkness of misguidance had covered their
conscience and reason which had taken away from them, Allah's remembrance.

"If I understand what you are saying," interrupted Shimr bin Zil Jaushan, "then I only worship God (very shakily) on the edge."

Those stony intellects covered with the dust of falsehood could not understand the Imam and perceive what he was saying.

"I think that you worship God (very shakily) on seventy edges," said Habib bin Mazahir "for I testify that you are right. You do not understand what he is saying. For God has impressed ignorance upon your heart."

The Holy Imam continued speaking and said, "If you are in any doubt about this, you are in doubt that I am the son of the daughter of your Prophet. By God there is no son of a prophet other than me among you and among the peoples from East to West. Shame on you, are you seeking retribution from me for one of your dead whom I have killed, or for property of yours which I expropriated, or for a wound which I have inflicted?"

The earth began to tremble under their feet and they became bewildered what to say in reply, because they had not a doubt that he was the son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S) and the beloved grandson of the Prophet and they had no demand from him regarding some blood he had shed or some property he had plundered from them.

After that the Imam called out the commanders of Kufa who had personally written to him, inviting him to

Kufa, “Shabth bin Rabi, Hijar bin Abjar, Qais bin Ashath, Yazid bin Harith, didn’t you write: ‘The fruit has ripened; the dates have grown green; come to an army which has been gathered for you’?”

Those consciences that had broken their pledges and disregarded their vows had no shame at all. Thus they all resorted to lying and said, “We never did so.”

The Imam was astonished at this and he said, “Glory be to God, you have indeed done so.”

Imam (‘a) turned away from them and addressed individual soldiers and said, “O people! If you are not pleased with me, leave me so that I may go to any safe place.”

Qais bin Ashath, well known for his deception and hypocrisy and who was in every way distant from nobility and respect – and it is sufficient for him that he was from a family that did not produce a single noble soul – glanced at the Holy Imam and said, “Do you not accept the command of your cousins? They have never treated you with anything but what you liked and no unfavorable behavior shall be shown to you.”

Imam (‘a) replied to him, “You are the brother of your brother (like them)? Do you want that Bani Hashim demand from you more than the retaliation for the blood of Muslim bin Aqil? No, by Allah! I will never give them my hand like a man who has been humiliated; nor will I flee like a slave.228 O servants of God, I take refuge in my Lord and your Lord from your stoning. I take refuge in my Lord and your Lord from every haughty man who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning.”229

Kingdoms shall be destroyed and regimes shall keep on changing but those immortal words shall remain forever because they expressed the greatness of truth, humanity, nobility and courage.

Pity that there brilliant words did not leave any imprint on those adamant people because ignorance had closed all the doors of their perception. “Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing and there is a covering over their eyes, do you think they hear and understand? They are like cattle, rather more astray than them.”

They had totally rejected the call of the Imam and accorded no importance to it. Almighty Allah has rightly said:

“Surely you do not make the dead to hear, and you do not make the deaf to hear the call when they go back retreating.”230

Zuhair’s Speech

Zuhair bin Qain addressed the soldiers and delivered a speech full of good counsel. He spoke as follows:

“O people of Kufa! Beware of the divine chastisement. It is the duty of every Muslim to dispense good

counsel to his Muslim brother. So far we were brothers in one faith till hostilities had not emerged between us and you are deserving of good counsel from us. When swords are drawn, it is the end of security. We shall become one community and you another. The Almighty Allah has tested us and you through the Progeny of His Messenger so that it be seen how we behave. We invite you to help them and leave off the obedience of the tyrant Yazid and Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad as you shall see nothing during their regimes except evil. You shall be blinded, maimed, cut up into pieces and impaled on date palms like your elders and reciters of Quran like Hujr bin Adi, his companions, Hani bin Urwah and other like them were dealt with."

These statements are full of most expressive and outstanding proof; because it contains the call towards truth with all its dimensions of meanings and warning about divine punishment and anger. It explained to them that the aim of warning them was only to fulfill a religious duty as it is incumbent for one Muslim to advise his Muslim brother – when he sees the latter deviated from the truth ñ he should enjoin him'and it informed them before the Hell fire may be lighted up; because Islamic brotherhood brings them together, thus whenever fighting occurs, the roots of that brotherhood are cut off and each one of the two communities would become a distinct group whom the connections of the Islamic faith have not brought to each other. They were also reminded that the Almighty Allah has tested the Muslims through the Progeny of His Prophet and He has made their love incumbent in His honored book so that people may be shown how to behave with them.

In the same way the speech called their attention to the injustice and oppression of the Umayyads and how they had dealt with such righteous personages as Hujr bin Adi, Mitham Tammar and others who opposed the oppression and stood up against persecution due to which the Umayyad regime wreaked horrible punishments upon them, gouged out their eyes, maimed them and impaled them on date palms.

Zubair had hardly concluded his speech that some soldiers of Ibn Saad began to ridicule him in the most shameless manner. They threatened him and Imam ('a) with death and said, "We are such that we shall kill your friend and his companions or we shall make him and his friends surrender to Ubaidullah bin Ziyad."

Zuhair replied to them with the logic of truth saying, "O servants of Allah! The sons of Fatima are more deserving of friendship and support than the son of Sumaiyyah. I implore you to seek refuge of Allah lest you put them to death'you leave this man for Yazid that by my life, he will accept your obedience without your killing Husayn."

Many of them fell silent and confusion and bewilderment overcame them. When Shimr bin Zil Jaushan saw this condition he feared that the army would be inclined to peace. So he shot an arrow towards Zuhair saying, "Keep quiet, may God kill you, I am fed up with your lecture."

Zuhair regarded him with disdain and looked towards him as if he were the most decadent creature. He told him, "I was not speaking to you; you are not greater than cattle. And by Allah, I don't think you know

even two verses from the Book of Allah. Then be sure of humiliation of the Day of Judgment and painful chastisement."

That degraded man was enraged by the words of Zuhair and he screamed at him,

"Till another time, the Almighty will kill you and your friend."

Zuhair said, "Do you threaten me with death? By Allah, for me death being immortality is more preferable to me than you."

Then Zuhair glanced at the soldiers and said, "O servants of Allah, let not this rude oppressor and his like deviate you from your religion. By Allah, the intercession of Muhammad (S) shall not reach those who shed the blood of his progeny, Ahlul Bayt, companions and defenders."

Imam noticed that Zuhair's speech had no effect on those transmogrified people, so he told one of his companions to restrain him from continuing his dialogue. He went towards him and said, "Aba Abdillah has sent you message that you come back, as by my life, if the believer of the people of Firon had counseled his people and called them to truth, you have also counseled these people and dispensed them good advice if they be of any use."231

Burair's speech

The prominent Shaykh, Burair bin Khudhair began to exhort the army: "O people! The Almighty Allah sent Muhammad as a warner, a giver of glad-tidings, a caller towards Allah and a shinning lamp. This is the water of Euphrates, the pigs and dogs of this area dive into it, but between it and the son of the daughter of the Prophet of God a distance has been created. Is this the way that you recompense Muhammad (S)?"

They abandoned all nobility and shame and said, "O Burair, you have talked a great deal. Do not say anymore. Husayn shall suffer thirst in the same way as before him one had to bear the thirst."

He warned and showed them the way to the right path, "O people, the family of Muhammad (S) is in front of you. They are the progeny, family, daughters and members of his clan so tell us what you want to do with them?"

They replied to him, "We like to impose the authority of governor Ubaidullah upon them so that he may decide to do whatever he wants with them." Burair reminded them of their pledges and letters that they had sent to His Eminence. He said, "Will you not accept from them for which they have come and that they should turn away from it?

Woe be on you, O people of Kufa. Have you forgotten your letters and pledges that you gave him and had them witnessed by Lord Almighty? After having invited the Ahlul Bayt of your Prophet and having

promised that you shall lay down your lives to defend them do you now want to hand them over to Ibn Ziyad and deny them the water of Euphrates? How cruel is your behavior to the progeny to your Prophet after he has passed away. What would happen to you, Allah will not quench you on the day of Qiyamat as you are the worst people?"

Some of those, whose conscience had become deviated, denied having sent any letters or giving pledges to the Imam. They said, "We don't know what you are talking about."

Burair realized their adamancy on sin and their unanimity of intention to commit the infamy. He said, "Thanks be to Allah for having given me more perception regarding you. O Allah, I openly declare my aloofness from the actions of these people. O my Lord, gather them all in such a way that You are infuriated at them. (Be angry!)"

They laughed at him and began to shoot arrows at him.232 He also went away from them.

Speech of Imam Husayn ('a)

Kindness and affection of the Imam with regard to his enemies impelled His Eminence to once more try to persuade them to leave off this path of sin so that none from them would have any excuse remaining that he had not been sufficiently warned. Hence he went towards them carrying open the Book of Allah, wearing the turban of his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S) and armed with the weapons of His Eminence. He exuded such awe that foreheads humbled before him and eyes could not dare to look upon him. Then he told them:

"May destruction and sorrow afflict you, O people! After calling me eagerly when I hastened to respond you, you have drawn out your swords on me? Have you inflamed the fire against us and for the benefit of your enemies that we had ignited for your and our enemies, without there being any justification for you in that? O do you have hope in it, against your friends you have prepared? Or that if you have hope from them that you have gathered against your friend. Should you not be troubled by hardships when the sword is not yet drawn and no sort of harm has been caused to you? And nothing has been given to it, but you hastened to him like the green locusts and you have come to him like the falling of moths into the fire. At that time you broke the pledge. This humiliation afflicted you because of that. O slaves of the community, outcasts of the tribes and those who have distanced from the Book of Allah and the Sunnahs! Woe be upon you! Will you support these people and deny your assistance to us? Indeed, by Allah, it is a betrayal of trust among you that your roots have become firm on it and your branches have matured and become strong on it and you have put forth the worst of the fruits, such that you aggrieve one who looks and you become the diet of every usurper.

Verily, this wicked one son of the wicked one, has put forth two options, be killed by the sword or be humiliated. Never! I shall never opt for degradation. Allah, His Prophet, believers, the pure ones, the purified, the exalted and the noble souls would never accept it from me, that I should prefer the

humiliation of a decadent person instead of martyrdom of great men. Indeed, I shall fight with these (mine) family members in spite of the scarcity of their number and despite the fact that they (Kufians) have withdrawn their support from us."

After that he recited the following couplets of Faruta bin Maseek Muradi:

"If we are able to vanquish them, we have vanquished them before also many times and if we are defeated we shall not be of the vanquished ones.

Fear does not come upon us. It is our death and the wealth of others.

Tell those who ridicule to take lesson from us as they shall see what we have seen.

By Allah! After that you shall not remain but as much as one who mounts the horse and it rotates like a hand mill on you and its pivot shakes you up.

I have heard this from my grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S): Therefore, sit together and think and decide upon this matter so that your actions may not make you full of remorse. And then you do whatever you want with me without giving further respite. Surely I rely on Allah, my Lord and your Lord; there is no living creature but He holds it by its forelock; surely my Lord is on the right path."233

After that he raised up his hands and prayed: "O Allah! Prevent the clouds from raining on them and make them suffer a famine like that of the time of Yusuf. O Lord! Impose the slave of Thaqif (Hajjaj bin Yusuf) on them so that he may make them taste all kinds of kinds of disgrace and indignity and injustice and oppression as they have rejected me and they have left me without friends. Our Lord! On Thee do we rely, and to Thee do we turn, and to Thee is the eventual coming."234

By these statements, His Eminence burst out like a volcano and displayed such determination and will power as was never seen before. The Imam's monologue contained the following points:

First: His Eminence severely condemned them for their misdeeds because when they wrote to him for help and he harkened to their call and hastened to come they did an about turn and drew their swords on His Eminence, that were supposed to be drawn against their enemies who had made all efforts to humiliate them and forced them against their will.

Secondly: His Eminence expressed his deep regret for their assistance to the Umayyad regime, a regime that neither acted with justice among them nor spread truth. Nor did they have any hope or aspiration in that regime.

Thirdly: He severely denounced the qualities present in them that had made them the most degraded people of the world; because they were slaves of the community, outcasts of the tribes, those who had become aloof from Quran and they were from the sinners and other evil traits were also found in them.

Fourth: His Eminence clearly announced his emphatic denial to accept the demands of Ibn Marjana, because he wanted to insult His Eminence and far from it that the Imam should have submitted to him, because he had been created to make humanity and lofty values prominent. Then how could he have surrendered to that wicked one, son of the wicked one?

Fifth: His Eminence announced his determination to wage the battle and said that he would step into the battlefield with members of his clan, who were outstanding warriors, steadfast and who considered death to be of no consequence.

Sixth: His Eminence told them what their future shall be after they have killed him; that the Almighty Allah imposes upon them a tyrant who would force them to drink the bitter cup and wreak upon them a terrible punishment. Not much time passed that Mukhtar rose up against them and filled up their hearts with trepidation and horror and butchered them with fury.

These were some of the sensitive points present in the blessed sermon of His Eminence, a speech that was delivered with the power of eloquence and strength of determination and the army of Ibn Saad was thrown into confusion and bewilderment.

Hurr's Response

Hurr's soul beckoned him towards righteousness and his conscience was awakened by the speech of the Holy Imam. In that moment that shaped his destiny, he fell into contemplation by which there raged a mental tug-of-war in his mind. Should he join His Eminence, Husayn ('a) and sacrifice his life and position in spite of his being a commander having status in the view of the regime that had trusted him and appointed him as the leader of the vanguard of its army? Or that he should remain an opponent of the Imam in battle, in which case there was everlasting chastisement for him?

However Hurr responded to the call of his conscience and overcome the mental tug-of-war. He decided to join His Eminence, Husayn ('a). Before he set out towards His Eminence he came to Ibn Saad and asked him, "Are you going to fight this man?"

Ibn Saad replied at once without any sort of hesitation and to display his sincerity for his master, Ibn Marjana before the outstanding commander, "Yes, it will be a terrible battle, the least part of which will be heads falling and severed hands flying (through the air)."

Hurr again asked him, "Haven't you any other way of getting what you want?"

Ibn Saad said, "If the matter rested with me I would do (anything else), but your governor has refused (any alternative)."

When Hurr became certain that those people were determined to fight the Imam, he broke the ranks while he was trembling, he came forward which surprised Muhajir bin Aws, a man of Ibn Ziyad. In a

voice of doubt and suspicion he said to Hurr, “By God, I have never seen you act like this before. If I was asked who was the bravest of the Kufians, I would not normally neglect to mention you. What is this I see in you, today?”

Hurr revealed his reality, to him and told him about his intention. He said, “By God, I find myself with alternatives of Heaven and Hell and I shall not prefer anything to Paradise even though I am cut to pieces and burnt.”

With that he whipped his horse and galloped over and joined the Imam235 while he was immersed in shame and regret. When he reached the Imam he said in a loud voice, “O my Lord I am turning towards you while I have terrified Your saints and the son of Your Prophet. O Aba Abdillah, I have repented, would I be forgiven?”236

After that he dismounted his horse while his tears were glistening on his face. He stood before the Holy Imam and said, “May I be your ransom, son of the Apostle of God?” he said, “I was your companion who stopped you from returning. I accompanied you along the road and made you stop in this place. But I did not think that the people would refuse to respond to what you have offered them and that they would ever come to this position in which they have now come to with regard to you. By God, if I had I known that they would finish up by doing what I am seeing them do to you, I would not have committed what I have committed against you. I repent to God for what I have done. Will you accept my repentance?”

Imam was glad he was joining him and he forgave him saying, “Yes, Allah has accepted your repentance and forgiven you.”237

At that time Hurr related to the Imam a dream he had seen, “Last night I saw my father in dream that he was asking me: What are you doing these days, and where are you? I replied: I was in pursuit of Husayn. He told me: Woe be on you, what has happened to you. Are you pursuing Husayn, the son of Allah’s Messenger (S)’? I request you to grant the permission to fight so that I may be the first to be killed in your service just as I was the first one to attack you?”238

Hurr’s speech to the soldiers

Hurr asked the Imam’s permission to exhort the people of Kufa and counsel them. Perhaps some of them would turn back from their wrong attitude towards the path of truth. The Imam accorded him the permission and he set out to address them. He called out in a loud voice:

“People of Kufa, your mothers will be deprived of their sons and tears will come to their eyes. Have you summoned this righteous man; but when he has come to you, have you handed him over to his enemies? Did you claim that you would fight with your own lives for him, and then have you begun to attack him in order to kill him? You have laid hold of his life; you have seized his throat; you have

encircled him on every side in order to prevent him returning to God's broad land (i.e. the Hijaz). He has come into your hands like a prisoner who no longer has the power to use his own life and cannot defend it against harm. You have prevented him, his womenfolk, his children and his people from getting the water of the Euphrates which Jews, Christians and Magians may drink, and which the pigs and dogs of Sawad drink. They (al-Husayn's family) are likely to die of thirst. How wickedly you have treated the offspring left by Muhammad. May God not give you water to drink on the Day of Thirst if you do not repent from your current attitude and make amends for it."

The earth began to shake below their feet because there were hundreds of people like Hurr involved in waves of mental tussle and who were certain that what they were doing was wrong, however they had responded positively to their selfish desires due to their love for the world. Some of these transformed people showed impudence to Hurr and shot arrows towards him as their argument.239

Thirty mounted fighters join Imam's Army

Thirty riders from the army of Ibn Saad joined the Imam's camp and before leaving said to the people of Kufa, "The son of Allah's Messenger (S) presented three proposals but you did not accept anyone of them." They fought bravely on the side of the Holy Imam till they were martyred in his service.240

The Battle

All the efforts that Imam made to maintain peace and avoid bloodshed were defeated and Ibn Saad also feared prolonging the matter because he was afraid lest there develop two opposing groups in the army and the deserting of 30 riders to join the Imam's camp had shaken him. On the basis of this, that tyrant approached the encampment of the Imam and fixing an arrow to his bow released it towards them saying, "Testify about me to the governor that I was the first to fire to Husayn."

By shooting the arrow that initiated the battle, Ibn Saad wanted to gain the confidence of his ruler, Ibn Marjana and he wanted the soldiers to witness to him about Ibn Saad's sincerity and loyalty towards him so that he may continue to trust him and dispel any doubts he may be having regarding him that he did not make his best efforts in fighting against Husayn.

Arrows began to rain upon the entourage of Imam Husayn ('a) from the side of Ibn Saad. Such that no one from the Imam's side remained but that he was injured by an arrow, and in this way was destroyed the argument for peace that the Imam had desired. His Eminence waited for the enemy to take the first sinful step and when they initiated the hostilities it became obligatory on His Eminence to fight in self defense. Such an obligation that there was no doubt in it. Therefore the Holy Imam turned to his companions and allowed them to begin fighting, "O noble souls, arise as these arrows shot by those people are targeting you."

Vanguards of truth from the companions of the Imam came forward in the battlefield and in this way

started a furious battle that continued to rage for quite sometime. Absolutely never before and after it had such a battle occurred on the face of the earth, because on one side were 32 horsemen and 40 foot soldiers and on the other were tens of thousands. That small group fought against that huge army which was well-equipped and strong in an outstanding manner.

And they displayed such valor and courage that the intellects were astonished and minds were perplexed.

The Imam's companions dived into the battlefield with absolute faith in purity of intention because they were convinced that they were fighting for the sake of religion they believed in. And they dedicated their lives in its way. Through an outstanding Jihad they established such an honor to this community that no honor could equal it and they made such a great bestowal to humanity that nothing like it has ever been gifted throughout its history.

Martyrdom of the Companions

Mercenaries of falsehood and misguidance, armed to the teeth with rows like a flood fell upon those chosen noble men who had dedicated their lives to Allah and nothing could make them unmindful of supporting the truth and destroying falsehood while those great personalities assumed patience and sincerity and remained steadfast before those wild beasts. And they were not cowed down by their huge numbers, their weapons and their capabilities. They displayed admirable valor and manliness'

We shall discuss about the events of the battle and incidents related to the martyrdom of those righteous souls.

General Attack

Forces of Ibn Saad launched a mammoth attack on the companions of the Holy Imam and a furious battle erupted between the two parties. This was the first attack in which the Imam's men participated. It was an attack in which all the divisions of the army of Kufa took part and the companions derived strength from their faith in the correctness of their belief in the defense of Islam and sacrifice with all sincerity. And their martial spirit was awakened to such an extent that they continued to repulse the huge army and rent asunder their ranks and dispersed the rows of soldiers who had been tough as a stone. As a result of which the small band of Holy warriors was able to put to flight the army of Saad.[241] But in this course half of them were martyred.[242]

Number of Imam's Men who were martyred

The number of martyrs from the Imam's companions in the first attack, on the basis of what Ibn Shahr Aashob has mentioned were as follows: Naeem bin Ajlaan, Imran bin Kaab bin Harith Ashjai, Hanzalah bin Amr Shaibani, Qasit bin Zuhair, Kanana bin Atiq, Amr bin Mashiya, Zarghama bin Malik, Aamir bin

Muslim, Saif bin Malik Numairi, Abdur Rahman Darji, Majma Aaezi, Habbab bin Harith, Amr Jundai, Halaas bin Amr Rasibi, Sawaar bin Abi Umair Fahmi, Ammar bin Abi Salamah Daalaani, Noman bin Amr Raasibi, Zahir bin Amr, slave of Ibn Hamaq, Jabla bin Ali, Masud bin Hajjaj, Abdullah bin Urwah Ghiffari, Zuhair bin Salim, Abdullah and Ubaidullah, two sons of Zaid Basri and ten persons from the slaves of His Eminence, Husayn and slaves of His Eminence, Imam Ali (‘a).243

Single Combat

After the first attack, single combats started between the two armies, because Yasar, the slave of Ziyad and Saalim, the slave of Ubaidullah bin Ziyad came to the battlefield and challenged the Imam’s companions for duels with them. So Habib bin Mazahir and Burair stood up to move towards them, but the Imam did not allow them to proceed. Thus, the great warrior, Abdullah bin Umair Kalbi went towards them.244 He was a daring and courageous man. Imam Husayn (‘a) said, “I consider him a fighter against outstanding warriors.”

When he arrived and faced the two challengers they asked about his name and lineage. He told them about it but they considered it of not much importance and said, “We don’t know who you are. Let Zuhair bin Qain or Habib bin Mazahir or Burair come out against us.” The brave warrior hastened to the two men and screamed at Yasar, “Son of a prostitute, you wanted to do single combat with one of the people. None shall come against you but that he is better than you’”

How meaningful was his statement that: “None shall come but that he shall be better than you.” Each one of the companions of the Imam was better than him and the soldiers of that army because they were fighting with conviction and faith that they were confronting with certainty people of misguidance and deviation in the path of religion.

Kalbi attacked Yasar and felled him to the ground smeared in his own blood. At that moment Saalim attacked him while he was not attentive to him. With his left arm he warded off Saalim’s blow but the fingers of his hand were cut off. Then he turned on Saalim and struck him with the other hand killing him.

The mercenaries of Ibn Saad were terrified of this incomparable warrior. While he was fighting, his respected wife, Umme Wahab245 took up a tent pole and hastened to him and cheered him to fight on, “May my parents be sacrificed on you, fight for the defense of the Purified Progeny of Muhammad (S).”

Companions of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) were concentrating all their efforts in defense of the Holy Imam and in this matter there was no difference between men or women and young or old.

They displayed daring in battle with fiery emotions and they had become impassioned in their love and devotion to the Holy Imam.

When Kalbi saw his wife behind him he ordered her to go back to the ladies’ tents, but she did not agree. The Imam noticed this and he hastened to her and said, “The Almighty Allah shall bestow a good

reward to your family. Go back! May Allah have mercy on you as ladies are not obliged to fight in Jihad'"

Umme Wahab returned to ladies' tent and Kalbi began to recite the following poem of war:

"If you do not know me, I am Ibn al-Kalbi: I am a man of bitterness and anger, I am not a weakling in the face of disaster."

By this poem he introduced himself that he was from Bani Kalb, a tribe of Qaza-a.246

In the same way he spoke about his daring, superiority, outstanding valor, intelligence and eloquence and reiterated that he shall not be found wanting in conditions of hardships. Rather in such circumstances he shall be one with foresight and perception. And in this way he described his noble personality which was a lofty quality of the noble souls.

Inconclusive Attack

Ibn Saad's forces had surrounded the Imam's camp from all the sides, but inspite of their few numbers the Imam's companions had stood up to defend themselves, dug their heels in determination and wielded their spears in such a threatening way that the mounted attackers did not dare to approach them. They were compelled to retreat. The Imam's men showered the foes with arrows, killed some of them and wounded others247 and the forces of Ibn Saad had to suffer huge losses and were not able to get any sort of success.

Burair's Imprecation contest with Yazid

Yazid bin Moqal, an ally of Abdul Qais moved towards the camp of the Holy Imam ('a) and reaching near, he called out in a loud voice to Burair bin Khudhair Hamadani, "O Burair, how do you find what Allah has destined for you?"

Burair replied to him with calmness and perfect faith, "By Allah He sent good with regard to me and evil for you'"

Indeed, the Allah Almighty conveyed goodness to Burair because He guided him with truth and made him among the companions of the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). On the other hand He abandoned his oppressive and degraded opponent in the maze of misguidance and allowed him to be one of the killers of the sons of the Prophet.

That corrupt man retorted to Burair, "You lie! You were not a liar before this day. I testify that you are of the deviated ones."

This wicked man has confessed in the truthfulness of Burair before that day. That is of the time he supported the truth and on that day he alleged that he had become a liar. Burair challenged him to an

imprecation contest with him? ‘So that the Almighty Allah may curse the liar among us and destroy the one who is on falsehood?’

Yazid agreed and the two of them came before the two camps to take part in the imprecation contest and after that both of them came to attack each other. Yazid lashed at Burair but the strike had no effect on him. Burair turned to him and delivered such a terrible blow that his helmet split and the sword reached upto his brain. That filthy corrupt man was smeared in his blood while the sword had sunk into his head. He fell down and died a few moments later.248

Burair was elated that his heartfelt prayers had been fulfilled. He launched an attack on the camp of Ibn Saad, while all the units of that army looked at this incomparable warrior. Burair began to intone the following martial poem:

“I am Burair and my father is Khudhair. I am not scared of the roar of a lion. Righteous people recognize goodness by us.

I shall slay them and won’t have to suffer any loss. And that good deed shall be performed by Burair.”249

He introduced himself to the troops of Ibn Saad and he informed them of his unequalled valor and that he was a lion that was not afraid of roaring. Rather he announced his daring and also that at the time when he would rain severe blows upon them, in this action, he did not see any doubt or sin.

Burair’s Martyrdom

Burair stepped forward to fight like a warrior eager for martyrdom while his being was full of faith, aim and determination to defend the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). He called out aloud to the troops of Ibn Saad, “O killers of believing persons! Come near me! O murderers of the son of the daughter of the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds! Come here!”250

Razi bin Munqidh Abadi, the corrupt one attacked him and the two of them fought for sometime. However Burair subdued him and sat upon his chest about to behead him. While he was engrossed in his, the decadent corrupt man, Kaab bin Jabir Azadi attacked him from behind because he didn’t dare to attack him from the front. Thus he delivered a blow with a spear on the back of Burair and when he felt the blow he threw himself on Abadi and bit a part of his nose. But Kaab rushed upon him and martyred him.251 In this way, the life of this exalted believer, who was a prominent Qari of Kufa, came to an end while his killer was condemned and people regarded him as a degraded person. So much so that even his wife began to hate him and she vowed never to speak to him again. She told him, “You have supported the opposition of the son of Fatima and killed Burair, a reciter of Quran. By Allah, I shall never speak to you again.”252

His cousin, Ubaidullah bin Jabir was also angry with him. He told him, “Woe be on you. Have you killed

Burair? How you'll face the Almighty?" That wicked man was himself deeply ashamed and he composed some couplets that described his grief and regret for having committed such a deadly oppression, that we have quoted in our previous discussions.

Martyrdom of Amr Ansari

Amr bin Qardha Ansari, a famous nobleman from Ansar stepped towards the field of Jihad and honor and with great courage initiated the war of loyalty and faith. He chopped off the heads of wicked people and rained death and destruction on the heads of the enemies, while reciting the following poem of war:

"The Ansars understood that I shall support the center of pledge and honor.

I shall sacrifice my life and house in defense of Husayn with blows of youth that do not accept humiliation."

By this war poem he announced that he was the supporter of pledges and honor. All the companions of the Imam possessed this quality because they were the chosen ones from Muslims for honoring pledges and respecting their promises. In the same way he announced that he would rain terrible blows upon the enemies and fight them with daring and courage in order to defend his chief and master, His Eminence, Husayn ('a) and in this way he was prepared to sacrifice his life and existence.

He fought the battle with a true intention and firm determination till he achieved martyrdom and his soul joined the exalted ranks. He had a brother among the misguided companions of Ibn Saad so when he saw his brother being killed he came towards the Imam's camp and screamed, "O Husayn, O liar, son of liar! You misguided my brother till you got him killed!"

Imam ('a) replied to him, "The Almighty Allah did not deviate your brother. Rather He has guided him and made you deviated."[253]

The Almighty Allah guided Amr and filled his heart with faith. He performed the Jihad till he reached martyrdom in defending the most sanctified matter of Islam. However, his brother was left deviated by the Almighty and his heart was made crooked. Thus he became a partner in the deadliest sin those wicked people had committed.

Umayyad Army refuses one to one fight

The Umayyad troops were tired of one to one fights because the Imam's companions displayed such astonishing examples of valor that the Umayyads had to suffer huge losses. They raised a clamor in such a way that Amr bin Hajjaj Zubaidi, an important official of Ibn Saad's army noticed that if one to one fights continued they shall all be eliminated as a result of the valor of Imam's companions and the power of their certainty and that they had no fear of death at all. So he yelled at his troops and restrained them from person to person duels:

“O you fools! Don’t you know whom you are fighting? You are fighting the most outstanding mounted warriors from the people of this land and a group that is perfect and seeking martyrdom. So none of you can go to confront them without being killed. By God! If you all attack them together you could kill them with stones.”254

These statements point out the prominent qualities of the companions of the Holy Imam and their attitude. Some of them were as follows:

A. They were the knights of that country because they possessed remarkable valor and strength of determination that was not present in the troops of Ibn Saad.

B. They were folks having perception and knowledge who had realized the truth and understood the lofty values that the Imam has chosen as his slogans and was fighting to defend these same. Therefore they were fighting with full knowledge and obvious proof regarding their position. They were not like their enemies who were in misguidance and confusion and immersed in falsehood and deviation.

C. They were seeking martyrdom in defense of the Imam and had no hope in their life. They possessed all human virtues that were considered preferable by intellect so that they may achieve lofty valor, exalted honor and deep faith.

Historians say: Ibn Saad accepted the view of Ibn Hajjaj and ordered all his forces to stop fighting the companions of the Imam in single combat.255

Attack of Amr bin Hajjaj

Amr bin Hajjaj launched a huge attack on Imam’s entourage and indulged in severe fight of death with them. A most terrible and severe type of battle ensued. Both sides had to bear more losses of lives.

Martyrdom of Muslim bin Ausaja

One of the most prominent and incomparable companions of the Imam, Muslim bin Ausaja fell down fighting in the battlefield. Imam (‘a) rushed to him and reached him when he was in the throes of death. Imam moved near him and said, “O Muslim, may the Almighty have mercy on you, so of them is he who accomplished his vow, and of them is he who yet waits, and they have not changed in the least’”256

At that moment his friend and a partner in his Jihad, Habib bin Mazahir approached him and said, “Muslim, your death is hard for me to bear but I bring you good news of Heaven (where you are going).”

“May God bring you good news too,” replied Muslim in a weak voice.

Habib said, “Even though I know that I would follow you soon, I would still like you to appoint me to carry out everything which concerns you.”

Muslim made a bequest to him regarding that which was most precious to him. He pointed towards the Imam and said, “I will you regarding him, that you sacrifice your life to defend him.”

These were his last words.257 Indeed, this is the greatness that indicates the height of nobility that the Imam’s companions possessed, because each of them was the representative of human nobility in all the times and places.

This is that same loyalty that is caused by unlimited faith. In those moments of their life they were neither worried about their families nor about any other worldly matter. Rather their concern was solely about Imam Husayn (‘a) because they were sincere in their love for His Eminence to the last moments of their lives.

Ibn Saad’s troops sighed with relief when this great warrior was finally eliminated. They congratulated each other and exclaimed in delight, “Muslim has been killed!”

This matter was hard upon Shabth bin Rabi because he knew Muslim and acknowledged his merits to be great. Thus being affected by it he addressed those around him, “May your mothers mourn for you! You are killing yourselves and humiliating yourselves before others. Are you elated on killing Muslim? By the one for whom I accepted Islam, I was a witness of his contribution to the Muslims. I saw him, on the day of conquest of Azerbaijan that he slew six infidels before that the horses of Muslims may sleep (they may rest). Are your pleased at the killing of someone like him?”258

Those mutated people who had killed this great warrior; it was as if they had killed themselves, because he was killed in defense of their benefits and rights that the Umayyad regime considered of no importance.

Historians say: Muslim succeeded in putting to death some stalwarts of Ibn Saad’s troops. Of them were Ibn Abdullah Zubabi and Abdur Rahman Ibn Abi Khashkara Bajali.259

Shimr’s Attack

The leprous wicked man, Shimr bin Zil Jaushan attacked with a battalion of his the left wing of the Imam’s army that consisted of only 32 mounted fighters. But they stood firm against him and forced him away (with their spears). Imam Husayn and his followers were attacked on every side but they fought fiercely. Then their cavalry began to attack and even though they were only thirty-two horsemen, they did not attack any side of the Kufan cavalry without putting it to flight.260

Martyrdom of Abdullah Kalbi

Abdullah bin Umar Kalbi fought Jihad like the valiant ones and slashed with his sword on the left and right. According to historians he killed 19 horsemen and 12 foot soldiers,261 while he had received multiple injuries and was severely wounded.

Hani bin Thabeet Hadhrami and Bukair bin Hayy Tamimi pounced upon him and martyred him.262 In this manner ended the life of this warrior who sacrificed himself for the love and devotion towards the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). His wife, the lady Umme Wahab came out looking for him and searched him among the corpses. When she found it she sat down besides him and congratulated him for his martyrdom with faith and sincerity. She said,

"Congratulations for having achieved Paradise. I pray the Almighty to join me with you in Paradise."

She continued to invocate the Almighty in this way when suddenly Shimr bin Zil Jaushan the most wicked person on the earth saw her. He ordered his slave, Rustom to eliminate her. The slave hit her on the head from behind with an iron mace. She was martyred in the battlefield. Historians say: She was the first female companion of Imam Husayn ('a) to be killed.263 This denotes that there were other ladies also who were martyred from the side of the Holy Imam ('a) in the battlefield. And in this way the system of the period of Ignorance returned and the law promulgated by Islam against harming ladies and children was trespassed.

Urwah Asks for Help

Urwah bin Qais was a prominent commander in Ibn Saad's troops and an expert of warfare. On seeing the bravery of Imam's followers and the unprecedented losses that their troops had suffered he became very much worried. So he asked Ibn Saad to send more archers and foot soldiers to support them.

He said, "Don't you see what my cavalry is receiving today from this small number of men? Send the foot soldiers and archers against them."

Ibn Saad ordered Shabth bin Rabi to go for his help but he did not accept it. He said, "Glory be to God, could you not find anyone else for this job?"

Shabth bin Rabi was not fully satisfied in participating in this battle and he has often spoken of this matter. For example he used to say, "The Almighty Allah would never bless the people of this land and may He not guide them. Don't you see that we have killed the best of men? We fought them on the side of the family of Muawiyah and the son of Sumaiyyah, the fornicator. This is evil and a strange evil it is!"

When Ibn Saad heard this he summoned Haseen bin Numair and with him dispatched five hundred well-armed and equipped archers with the order that they must shoot at the companions of the Imam. They showered the followers of Husayn ('a) with arrows. They continued shooting at them until they had lamed most of their horses and wounded some of their men. Then they moved against them and a fierce battle was fought between them for some time. Most of the Imam's followers were now on foot but despite this there was not the slightest decline in their fervor and courage. And they remained steadfast like lofty mountains and did not move a step backwards while Hurr Ibn Yazid also afoot, followed alongside them. Battle raged more furiously and historians have considered it to be the fiercest of all

battles. It continued till midday.264

Opening of Another front

Ibn Saad noticed that since only a single front was open in the battle, it would prolong the hostilities and his troops were bound to suffer huge losses. Therefore it was decided to open upon another front that would expedite the elimination of the remaining men of Imam Husayn (‘a). So he issued orders that the tents and camps of the Imam’s followers that were on the left and right of the tents of the Imam should be attacked and uprooted so that the Imam’s entourage would be busy in defending their tents and hence their front shall be weakened.

Soldiers of Ibn Saad launched the attack and began to uproot the tents. However some companions of the Imam were lying in ambush and they began to kill them and maim their horses. As a result of it their plan was changed into a terrible defeat and they could not gain any sort of advantage. Ibn Saad again commanded them to put the tents afire so that riders may attack them. Imam’s followers tried to prevent them but the Imam restrained them from it and said, “Let them burn the tents. If they do so they would not be able to cross over to reach you.” It happened as His Eminence had foretold. The burning tents became a barrier between the enemy and the Imam’s companions and only one battlefront remained as before.265

Shimr tries to burn to death the Ladies of Revelation

The filthy wicked Shimr bin Zil Jaushan attacked the tents housing the ladies of the house of revelation and the noble maids of Prophet’s family, screaming, “Get me fire so that I may burn down the occupants of these tents.”

This transmogrified monster had gone much ahead in wickedness and decadence and it is certain that there was none among the martial oppressors and deviated ones of the land like this criminal in wickedness and decadence of nature and lowliness of temperament.

Fear loomed over the daughters of the Messenger of Allah (S) and they began to tremble. They came out of the tents in anxiety and their wails arose, while the children and infants were crying behind them. This tragic scene was absolutely shocking and Imam Husayn (‘a) was deeply hurt by it. He screamed at that filthy wicked man, “Would you burn down my house with my family? May the Almighty burn you with (Hell) fire.”266

That wicked one did not change his decision and was ordering his soldiers in the same way to hand over to him a flame so that he may burn down the tents of Ahlul Bayt.

Objection of Hamid bin Muslim

Hamid bin Muslim objected to Shimr and after he witnessed the terror and fear that had surrounded the daughters of Allah's Messenger (S) he hastened to Shimr and said, "You won't gain anything from this. Do you want to earn two sins because of it, that is killing of ladies and killing of children? By Allah, your chief will be satisfied by the killings of men alone."

"Who are you?" asked Shimr in fury.

Hamid bin Muslim feared that if he introduced himself he may complain about him to Ibn Ziyad. So he said, "I shall not tell you who I am."[267]

That decadent wicked oppressor remained adamant in his injustice so that he may increase his sins through them.

Condemnation of Shabth bin Rabi

Shabth bin Rabi hurried to Shimr and condemned him in a furious tone and restrained him from that serious crime. He had to give up against his wish and was about to go away from there when Zuhair bin Qain attacked him with ten soldiers and chased him away. They fought with the mercenaries and Abu Arza Zubabi a relative of Shimr was killed. At this moment the soldiers attacked the Imam's followers. The number of killed and wounded was apparent among the followers of Imam Husayn ('a) because of the fewness of their number while it was not so apparent among the followers of Ibn Saad because of their great number.[268]

Noon prayer time arrives

Midday arrived and it was the time of Zuhr prayers. The believing fighter of Jihad, Abu Thamama Saidi stood up and looked towards the sky as if he was in anticipation of the thing most beloved to him, which was prayer. When he saw that the sun has crossed the zenith he glanced at Imam ('a) and said, "May I be sacrificed on you. I see that they have come close to us. By Allah you shall not be harmed till I lay down my life in your defense and I wish to meet my Lord after having performed the prayer whose time has arrived'"

Death was only a few steps from him but he was neither forgetful of the remembrance of his Lord nor about fulfillment of his religious duty. All the followers of the Imam had such faith in God and in this way they were loyal in fulfillment of their duty.

Imam raised his head towards the sky and calculated the time and saw that the time to perform the religious duty had arrived. So he told Abu Thamama, "You have remembered the Prayer, may Allah include you among the praying ones. Yes, it is the earliest hour for noon prayer'"

Imam asked his companions to request the army of Ibn Ziyad to pause in the battle so that they may perform their devotions to the Almighty Lord. The plea was conveyed to the attacking army but the wicked dirty man, Haseen bin Numair said, “This prayer shall not be valid!”

Habib bin Mazahir asked in a taunting tone, “You claim that the prayer of the family of the Messenger of Allah (S) will not be accepted but that it will be accepted from you, O donkey?”

Haseen attacked him but Zuhair laid a swift blow to his horse’s mouth and it bolted dislodging its rider to the ground. His colleagues rushed forward and saved him.269

The battle continued and before the Imam could complete his prayer some of his companions reached martyrdom while defending him and after that the duty was performed as we shall explain in detail.

Martyrdom of Habib

Habib Ibn Mazahir was the most prominent companion of the Imam and one who made the most efforts in defending His Eminence. He was the right hand of the Imam and one who had purified his soul and nourished it with wisdom and truth. He was a companion of Imam Amirul Momineen and from his special officers,270 having a deep perception and stable faith.

Historians say: He was the one most elated and overjoyed person on the day of Ashura in anticipation of martyrdom in service of the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). He moved towards the battlefield eager for martyrdom reciting the following lines of Rajaz song:

“I am Habib and my father is Mazahir, a knight on the battle day among the flames of war.

By my life, you are more in number but we are more loyal and patient than you. Our argument is more dominant and clear regarding the truth and more lasting and valid than yours.”271

He informed them about his esteemed personality and the lofty qualities that he possessed because he was of the outstanding warriors and famous knights who did not allow fear and trepidation to reach their hearts. And he announced that in spite of the large numbers of Ibn Saad’s troops and the paucity of the supporters of Imam Husayn (‘a), the Imam’s followers were having more loyalty and patience and they exceeded their enemies as far as their convictions and proving their rightfulness was concerned. Thus by having these qualities, they were more deserving of immortality and more suitable for permanence.

Habib fought a furious battle and despite his advanced age succeeded in putting to death 62 fellows from the enemy side. The impure wicked man, Budail bin Sareem attacked him and slashed him with a sword and other degraded fellows of Tamim tribe jabbed him with their spears. He fell down and tried to continue fighting, but Haseen bin Numair rushed to him and delivered a sword strike upon his blessed head. He fell down again and that Tamimi dismounted his horse and decapitated him and that pure spirit, well-satisfied and pleased rose up towards the Lord. Habib’s slaying deeply aggrieved His

Eminence, Husayn (‘a). He stood besides that honorable corpse sighing in sorrow and immersed in grief and remarked, “Allah shall be pleased with me and those friends of mine who render help.”272

Hurr’s Martyrdom

At that moment, the great warrior, Hurr bin Yazid Riyahi, who had responded positively to the call of truth, and preferred the Hereafter over this world, came to the battlefield and went to welcome death smiling in joy of having helped the beloved grandson of Allah’s Messenger (S). He performed a severe fight all the time intoning the following lines:

“I am Hurr and the refuge-giver to the guests who shall attack you with the sword.

In defense of the one who is the best to come to land of Khaif. I shall rain blows on you and not be regretful of it.”273

In this poem he spoke of his nobility and generosity and that his home was a shelter for guests and the center of messengers. He also announced that he shall strike off their necks with his sword in defense of the Holy Imam who the most honorable personality to be present in the land of Khaif. And in this matter he had neither any doubt nor any regret in fighting them.

Hurr fought while Zuhair bin Qain accompanied him. When one of them was caught up in crowd of fighters the other used to rush for his help and had him freed. This continued for quite some time.274

Hurr’s horse got multiple wounds yet he did not dismount it but continued to remain astride it and fight them reciting the lines of Antara:

“In this way I strike below their necks and chests till they are bathed in blood.”

There was a deep rooted and bitter enmity between Hurr and Yazid bin Sufyan. Haseen bin Numair took this into consideration and said to Yazid, “This is Hurr, whom you desire to kill.” Yazid attacked. Hurr swooped upon him and killed him.275

Ayyub bin Mashruh aimed an arrow at Hurr’s horse and maimed it. The horse stampeded but Hurr jumped from it like a lion without incurring any harm. He began to fight on foot with courage till he put to the sword according to historians, 42 men from the enemy side.276 Finally the foot soldiers attacked him with swords and spears and he fell down bathed in his pure blood. Companions of the Holy Imam hastened towards him and carried him to the Imam’s tent in front of which they fought, and placed him on the ground. Imam stood besides him and looked with a sight full of divine effulgence at his manly face. Imam’s followers also stood in a respectful manner. Imam (‘a) stepped forward and cleaned the blood from Hurr’s face and lamented for him with the following lines:

“You are ‘free’ (Hurr) like your mother named you. And you are free in the world and the Hereafter.”

Verily! Hurr was free (noble) and his conscience dominated his selfish desire and he chose martyrdom in defense of the Chief of the youths of Paradise over the life of this world and with his honorable death he trod on the path of Allah. One of the Imam's followers recited the following dirge in his honor:

"The best of free men is Hurr bin Riyahi that even during continuous strikes of spears.

He became the best freeman when he sacrificed himself on Husayn and gave up his life in the morning."277

Fulfilling the Duty of Prayer

Inspite of that which had aggrieved the Imam, that is the calamities by whose fear mountains would have pulverized, His Eminence's prime concern was to fulfill the duty of obligatory prayer, which is the most important worship act in Islam. He requested his enemies to give respite so that they may stand up in the worship of God. They agreed to give respite and His Eminence focused his attention on the Almighty and faced his Lord. Along with the surviving companions he performed the prayer of fear.278 The prayer of His Eminence, in those moments of danger, was the most obvious sign of his devotion and obedience of Allah.

Saeed bin Abdullah Hanafi stood in front of Imam Husayn ('a) so that he may defend His Eminence from the arrows and spears thrown from the enemy camp. Because they broke the pledge to give respite for prayer and taking this as an opportunity they began to shoot arrows towards the Imam and his companions.

Saeed Hanafi, according to historians rushed in the direction of coming arrows and stopped them with his chest and neck. He stood like a mountain and the arrows aimed at him failed to dislodge him from his position. The Imam had hardly concluded his prayer that he was seriously wounded by that time and he fell down bathed in his own blood and in a soft voice he was saying,

"O Allah! Curse them with the curse of Aad and Thamud and convey our salutation to Your Prophet and convey to him the pain I suffered from injuries asby this act I desire Your reward and to render help to the Progeny of Your Prophet."

Then he glanced at the Imam to see if he has fulfilled his right and honored the pledge he had made to His Eminence. He asked, "O son of Allah's Messenger (S), have I fulfilled it?"

Imam ('a) replied to him thankfully, "Yes, you shall be in Paradise with me."

When he heard the Imam's reply, his being became filled with satisfaction and happiness. At that moment his pure soul flew to his Lord while his physical body was shred into pieces by arrows and spears, because in addition to sword and spear blows thirteen arrows had hit him. Indeed this is indescribable and indefinable loyalty.

Zuhair's Martyrdom

Among the companions of Imam Husayn ('a), whose beings were fused with faith in Allah, was Zuhair bin Qain. He was in great haste to go towards Paradise and shake hands with His Eminence, the Holy Prophet (S). Happy and elated by loyalty in the path of the Imam he went to His Eminence and kept his hand on the shoulder of His Eminence, Husayn ('a) and addressed the Imam with the following Rajaz (war poem):

"Come, as you are the guide and the guided one. Today I shall meet your Holy grandfather.

And Hasan and Murtuza Ali and Ja'far with a pair of wings, the daring man. And the Lion of God, that living martyr."279

This recitation indicates his rightful faith devoid of every doubt and with certainty that he shall succeed in meeting the Prophet of Allah (S), his vicegerent, Amirul Momineen, His Eminence Hasan, His Eminence, Ja'far and His Eminence, Hamzah and it was the best thing that he was thinking.

Imam replied to him, "I shall also meet him after you."280

That valiant fighter attacked the troops of Ibn Saad reciting the following lines of

Rajaz poetry:

"I am Zuhair and son of Qain who would chase you away from Husayn with swords."

He informed them about himself and announced to them that he shall battle with them to defend his leader, His Eminence, Husayn ('a). He began to fight a fierce battle and according to historians he killed 120 men281 and performed such a battle that it cannot be described.

Muhajir bin Aws and Kathir bin Abdullah Shobi attacked him and conveyed him to martyrdom. His Eminence, Husayn ('a) went to the place of his martyrdom extremely sorrowful and aggrieved. Then he cast a farewell glace and remarked in a forlorn tone, "O Zuhair, may the Almighty not make you distant, and may He curse your murderers. Such a curse that they be transmogrified into monkeys and pigs'"282

Martyrdom of Nafe bin Hilal

Among those who had dedicated their lives to the Almighty Allah was Nafe bin Hilal Jamli. He hastened towards the battlefield with faith and sincerity and with poisoned arrows began to confront the enemies of God. He had inscribed those arrows with his name. As he fought he went on reciting:

"I am shooting arrows at them while they are bigger and poisoned too and they cut off their flight.

Till by throwing them the field becomes full and greed is not in any way beneficial to the soul."

In this manner he shot them with his arrows till he reached his last one. Then he drew his sword and attacked them reciting the following Rajaz song:

“I am a Tamimi Bajali youth and my religion is same as the religion of Husayn bin Ali.

If I am killed today and my action is this and that belief of mine, I shall face my deeds.”

He has introduced himself and also stated that his religious beliefs were based on the religion of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a), the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S). Also that he shall fight in defense of his faith.

He fought with a firm determination devoid of any shakiness when he saw the loneliness and isolation of his chief, Husayn (‘a).

In such a way 12 persons were killed by him, in addition to those he had seriously wounded.283 At that moment, the enemies of God surrounded him from all sides and began to shoot arrows at him and pelt him with stones. At last both his arms were broken and he could no more be able to wield his sword. They rushed upon him and took him as a prisoner to Ibn Saad.

“What has made you do this to yourself? asked Ibn Saad.

Like one having faith in Almighty he replied, “My Lord knows what I desire.”

A fellow of Ibn Saad glanced at him while his face bled and blood dripped from his beard, and said to him, “Don’t you know what came over you?”

In a taunting manner to infuriate them he replied, “By Allah, I have killed twelve of your men and this is apart from those I wounded. I shall not condemn myself for the deed I have performed and if my arms had remained healthy you wouldn’t have taken me as a hostage.”

The wicked leper, Shimr bin Zil Jaushan arose, took a sword and slew him.

Nafe was shouting at him, “O Shimr, by Allah, if you had been a Muslim it would have been very hard on you to meet the Lord with our blood on your hands. But thanks be to Allah that He appointed our death at the hands of His creatures.

Yes, by Allah, if something had been less important than religion for Shimr he would not have committed that crime, because only one commits it that has no relationship with God.

That degraded one moved to Nafe and striked off his neck284 and in this way came to an end the life of that great warrior having sincerity about his religion, earnest in defending the son of the Messenger of Allah (S) and the greatest man in Islam in steadfastness for truth and true intention for its defense.

Abis and Shauzab

When the divinely inspired warrior, Abis bin Shabeeb Shakiri saw the loneliness of the Imam and the coming together of the people of Kufa for slaying His Eminence to went to his colleague in Jihad, Shauzab, the slave of Shakir285 and asked him, “O Shauzab, have you decided what to do?”

Shauzab stood up to speak about his loyalty and spirit of sacrifice present in his decision. Thus he said, “I shall fight unto death.”

Abis thanked and praised him and said, “Go ahead for the service of Aba Abdillah so that he may take you into account like he has taken into account others than you, because today is the day when we can demand whatever reward we want.”

What faith could be like this faith? He strived with all his capabilities to obtain whatever he could that would make him more proximate to Almighty Allah.

Shauzab went forward and invoked blessings on the Imam. Then he attacked the troops of Ibn Saad and fought like a valiant fighter till he achieved martyrdom in the service of Abu Abdillah.286

Martyrdom of Abis Shakiri

Abis Shakiri belonged to a noble family having great respect and honor. That family was famous for its bravery and sincerity about truth, and His Eminence, Imam Ali (‘a) has said regarding it, “If their number reaches upto a thousand, Almighty Allah shall be worshipped as befits Him.”

They had received the title of “the morning stalwarts.” Abis was the elder of the family and the most famous of them. He was of those who carried His Eminence, Muslim’s letter to His Eminence, Husayn (‘a), in which the Imam was requested to come to Iraq immediately. He remained in the service of the Holy Imam from Mecca to Karbala and he was the foremost of his companion in his love and devotion to His Eminence. He came forward to obtain the permission of His Eminence to fight. He spoke to the Imam and spoke of his deep love that he cultivated for His Eminence and he said,

“There is no one, near or far on the face of the earth as precious for me as your goodself. If I were able to remove your hardship I would have done so even if it necessitated sacrificing something more precious to me than my life. Peace be on you! I testify that I am on the path of your guidance and the guidance of your Holy father.”287

After that he launched an attack on Ibn Saad’s camp and challenged them to confront him. However no one accepted his challenge because all of them were afraid to face him as they knew him to be the most valiant of men. They called to each other while their hearts were full of terror and fear had caused their complexions to pale. They said, “This is the most ferocious lion, this is the son of Abu Shabeeb, none of you must go out to accept his challenge’”

Ibn Saad screamed at his troops, “Stone him!”

They picked up stones and began to pelt him from all sides. When that warrior saw their terror and refusal to accept his challenge, he threw away his coat of mail and helmet and pounced upon them like a lion and drove away more than a hundred mounted soldiers from before himself. They began to attack him from all sides, threw him down and beheaded him. But they began to argue among themselves. Each of them claimed to have killed him so that he may be entitled for the reward. However, Ibn Saad did not accept that one of them be his killer. Rather a group of them shared in his killing[288] and in this manner came to a close the life of that mighty stalwart who strived to his best in defense of Islam and performed a Jihad like the Jihad of the Prophets.

Zahhak flees

Zahhak bin Abdullah Musharrafi was one of the Imam’s followers but when he witnessed so many companions being killed he decided to flee from there. He came to His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) and said, “I have accompanied you so that whenever you face a battle I may die with you. So allow me to go way, because I am incapable of defending you or myself.”

Imam (‘a) permitted him to leave and he fled from there. Some men of Ibn Saad blocked his way but later left him off. He thus escaped from there and could not obtain martyrdom in the service of the beloved grandson of the Messenger of Allah.”[289]

Jaun’s Martyrdom

Jaun is an outstanding personality of Islam.[290] He was the slave of Abu Zar Ghiffari and much advanced in age. But his being was brimming with piety and faith. His black skin and unremarkable lineage did not prevent him from achieving that lofty status and he became a prominent Muslim. And he was able to earn such honor and respectability that no warrior in history has been able to gain.

Historians say: He approached the Holy Imam (‘a) and begged him for permission to sacrifice his life in service of His Eminence.

Imam told him, “O Jaun, you accompanied us in need of life, you are authorized by me (to go away).”

Jaun threw himself at the feet of the Holy Imam and kissed them. Tears were flowing upon his face and he was saying, “In prosperity I lick your vessels but in hardships should I abandon you? My smell is not pleasing, my origin and lineage is unremarkable and my skin is black. Bestow Paradise to me so that my body becomes fragrant, my origin and lineage gain honor and my skin turns fair. No by Allah, I shall not leave you till this black blood fuses with your bloods’”[291]

These brilliant statements, what greatness they speak of? And what an honor that soul had obtained...? His black skin was the most illuminated and elegant from the complexions of those slaves. He was a

freeman with that loftiness of courage and personal nobility that he possessed. His smell was more pleasing than theirs and his origin and lineage was illuminated. The people of Kufa themselves were rendered of unknown identities, because they were not aware of their humanity and they brought disgrace and dishonor for all humanity.

Jaun's statement was full of the logic of a noble man, because it is against humanity that he should remain under the protection of the Imam during times of peace and prosperity but in hard times, desert the Holy Imam. This was so because loyalty was one of the dominating qualities of each of the companions of Imam Abu Abdillah which distinguished them from all the other martyrs of the world.

Imam accorded permission to him and he set out for the battlefield full of self– respect reciting the following:

"O sinner how will you see the black strikes from the wielded and original sword?

We defend the children of Muhammad (S) with the sword. We shall defend them by the tongue and by hand.

Through this I am hopeful of being saved on the day of gathering by the One and Only Lord.

Because there is no intercessor like Ahmad near Him."292

By this Rajaz poetry he has described his daring and courage and that he was defending the children of the Prophet (S) and shall continue to help them by his words and deeds and by doing thus he was hopeful of salvation and intercession of the Prophet (S).

Jaun fought like a courageous fighter and according to historians, he eliminated 25 fellows from the enemies. At last the enemies of God fell upon him and martyred him. Imam ('a) hurried to his side and glanced at his blood smeared body. He prayed for him, "O Allah, make his face fair and his body fragrant and raise him up with Muhammad and bestow him with the recognition of Aale Muhammad."

The Almighty Allah accepted the Imam's supplication because whoever passed through that battlefield perceived from him a fragrance more pleasing than that of musk.293

Martyrdom of Hanzalah Shabami

Hanzalah Shabami was the gentleman who had constructed his life with faith in God and he lived with faith and piety till he obtained the path to the loftiest of human values. He went to the Imam with eagerness and inclination in order to obtain for himself the status of martyrdom with the companions of the Imam. He pleaded for permission from His Eminence and the Imam granted it to him. He set out for the battle front and began to exhort those people towards rightfulness and reminded them of the abode of the Hereafter. He said:

“O people I fear for you a day like the day of confederates, like the community of Nuh, Aad, Thamud and those who succeeded them. The Almighty Allah will not be unjust to the people. O people! I am fearful regarding you for the day of entreaties, the day you shall be turned back and not have any refuge from the Almighty Allah. One who is led astray by Allah is not guided’O people! Do not slay Husayn lest the Almighty involves you in chastisement. Whosoever resorts to slander, fails’”

Those decadent people could not understand his statements. They continued in their disobedience and misguidance as the Lord Almighty had sealed their hearts and ears and they could not see.

Imam (‘a) thanked him for his discourse and said, “May Allah have mercy on you. They have become eligible for divine chastisement. They have requited you with the matters you told them inviting them to truth and they stood to confront you to destroy you and your colleagues. Then how can it be that they have killed your rightful brothers?”

“You are right, son of Allah’s Messenger! Are we not heading for the Hereafter?”294

The Holy Imam gave him permission and he moved to the field of battle with eagerness till he achieved martyrdom. He fought like a courageous soldier till he was martyred fulfilling his pledge to the Almighty that he would support the truth and sacrifice himself on the path of Islam.

Martyrdom of Hajjaj

Among the illuminated pages of loyalty that were embellished with the greatness of humanity was Hajjaj bin Masruq Jofi. He rushed speedily to the battle front and performed a ferocious fight till he was bathed in his chaste blood. He became extremely elated and joyful for having beautifully fulfilled his loyalty to Imam Husayn (‘a). He returned to His Eminence and addressed the Imam with this poem:

“I shall meet your grandfather, the Prophet today and after that your father, Ali, the generous one, whom I recognize to be the vicegerent of the Prophet.”

He came to the blessed grandson of the Messenger of Allah (S) with his head held high due to having displayed remarkable loyalty and sacrifice.

Imam replied to him, “I shall meet them after you.”

Then he returned to the battle ground and resumed fighting with courage and steadfastness till he was martyred in defense of truth.295 May he be rewarded with the best and everlasting divine rewards.

Martyrdom of Amr bin Junada

The fruitful youth, Amr bin Junada Ansari, the most youthful soldier in the army of Husayn (‘a) came to the field. In intellect and religion he was superior to every fellow of Ibn Saad’s camp. Historians say, “He

was eleven years old and his father had been martyred in the battle. When he approached the Imam to permit him to fight, His Eminence refused it saying, “This boy’s father was martyred in the very first attack and perhaps his mother would not like him to go out and fight.”

The youth persisted with the Imam and said, “My mother has ordered me to go.”

The Imam then gave him permission. That young man sped to the ground in eagerness. Not much time passed but that he was martyred and the lowly creatures of Kufa severed his head from his body and tossed it towards the camp of Imam Husayn (‘a). His respected mother came towards it, took it in her arms and kissed it profusely. Then cleaned up the blood and tossed the head to a man nearest to her and threw it down. She ran back to the tents and picking up a tent pole attacked the enemies of God reciting the following lines of poetry:

“I am an old woman from the weak ladies; absolutely hollow and empty from inside...

I shall give terrible blows to you in defense of the son of the honorable Fatima.”

She wounded two persons but the Imam sped to her and made her return to the camps.[296] The isolation of the Holy Imam had deeply affected the emotions of this great lady and after sending her beloved child to the battlefield she herself rushed to the field so that she may lay down her life for her master. These are really the favors of faith and devotion.

Martyrdom of Anas Kahili

Anas bin Harith Kahili was a companion of the Holy Prophet (S) and with His Eminence he participated in the battles of Badr and Hunain. He had heard His Eminence state, “This son of mine (that is His Eminence, Husayn) shall be killed in the land of Karbala. So whosoever of you is present there must support him.”[297]

He was a gentleman much advanced in age but he remained in the service of His Eminence, Husayn (‘a) and accompanied him from Mecca. He sought permission of His Eminence to perform Jihad in his service. His Eminence granted the permission. He tied his waist with turban because his body was stooping. In the same way his drooping eyebrows were tied to his forehead.

When the Holy Imam (‘a) looked at him, he began to weep and said, “The Almighty Allah conveys thanks to you, O Shaykh!” Despite his old age he fought like a brave warrior and reports state that he killed 18 persons and after that he was martyred[298] and his pure soul joined with the prophets, the truthful ones and the martyrs in the high realm. And how pleasing is their company.

Martyrdom of Abul Shasa

Abul Shasa Yazid bin Ziyad Muhajir Kandi was a brave stalwart and an outstanding knight of the Arabs. He was among those who had come out with Ibn Saad to confront the Holy Imam. When the Imam put forth his proposals and Ibn Saad did not accept them, he came over to the Imam's side[299] and shot the soldiers of Ibn Saad with his arrows. Historians say that he shot one hundred arrows upon them of which only one missed its target. Whenever he shot an arrow the Imam said, "O Allah, make his arrow find its target and make Paradise his reward."

When the stock of his arrows was exhausted, he drew out his sword and attacked them intoning the following Rajaz poem:

"I am Yazid and my father is Muhajir, braver than a lion that rests in a grove.[300]

Lord, I am in support of Husayn and am away and aloof from Ibn Saad."

He fought valiantly till he received the position of martyrdom[301] and in this way came to a close the life of this great man in defense of the religion of God and in support of the blessed grandson of Allah's Messenger (S).

Martyrdom of Two Jabiris

Among the most outstanding colleagues of the Holy Imam ('a) were two Jabiris, namely Saif bin Harith bin Saree Jabiri and Malik bin Abd bin Saree Jabiri. They were brothers from their mother's side and cousins of each other. They approached the Imam while tears were flowing from their eyes. The Imam asked them, "What has caused you to weep. I am hopeful that at a later hour your eyes shall be illuminated."

The two of them quickly replied, "May Allah make us your ransom! We are not weeping at ourselves. We are crying for you. We see that you have been surrounded but there is no way we can be of any use to you."

The hearts of the companions of the Imam were rich with remarkable devotion and deep sincerity regarding His Eminence. They were only worried about him and they were only affected with his grief and sorrow.

Those two Jabiris fought with zeal and when the swords and spears had cut up their bodies they reached martyrdom near the Holy Imam ('a).[302]

Martyrdom of Two Ghiffaris

Two brothers, Abdullah and Abdur Rahman, sons of Urwah Ghiffari arrived in the grounds of Jihad and fought with exemplary fervor till they were martyred in the service of Imam Husayn (‘a).

Martyrdom of Two Ansaris

When Imam (‘a) called out for help and sought helpers and supporters to defend the ladies of the family of prophethood and noble women of the abode of revelation this matter deeply affected these two Ansaris. They were Saad bin Harith and his brother Abul Hatoof and they were in the party of Ibn Saad. They attacked the troops of Ibn Saad with wielded swords and fought till they achieved martyrdom.303

Martyrdom of Anees

Anees bin Mauqal Asbahi entered the plains of Jihad for the sake of Aba Abdillah while chanting the following poem of war:

“I am Anees and I am the son of Mauqal. In my right hand is a broad and a polished sword.

I strike with it in the battle so that it becomes clear and with it I hack at the heads of soldiers amidst the dust of the battlefield.

In defense of Husayn with elegance, son of the Messenger of God, the best of the Prophets.”

This Rajaz poem is expressive of religious sentiments dominating him; because he introduced himself and announced that they were fighting in defense of the son of Allah’s Messenger (S) and in this matter he had no desire except to earn the pleasure of Allah’this stalwart fought a furious battle till he reached martyrdom.304

Martyrdom of Qurra Ghiffari

Among the companions of the Imam martyred on the way of truth was Qurra bin Abi Qurra Ghiffari who departed for the battlefield humming the following Rajaz:

“Indeed the Bani Ghiffar knew and Khandaf after the Bani Nizar.

That I am a lion in the dust of the battle to slash at the transgressing people.

With every original cutting sword I hack in defense of the family of the Chosen Prophet.

The family of the Prophet, those chiefs of the righteous ones.”305

This Rajaz is brimming with life and feelings for the defense of the family of the Prophet (S) that

indicates his valor so that the Bani Ghiffar, Khandaf and Bani Nizar, all the tribes can vouch for his bravery. He fought for defending the chief of the righteous, the sons of Allah's Messenger (S) in a remarkable Jihad...the stalwart of Ghiffari clan put up a severe fight till he fell down wounded by the blows of swords and spears and his lofty soul joined the highest realm.

Martyrdom of Yahya Mazini

Yahya bin Muslim Mazini departed for the fighting grounds reciting the following poetic composition:

"I shall attack these people with sword blows that would cut them apart. Terrible blows that would soon rain upon the enemies.

Neither shall I be weak in it nor would I show any sloth. Nor do I fear the approaching death today.

But I am like a lion defending its cubs."

Through these lines he declared his bravery and that he would rain terrible strikes on his enemies and fight them with valor and manly determination. Such that he shall neither display any sort of weakness nor any laziness. He also is not fearful of death. Rather he shall attack them like a lion in order to defend the Progeny of the Messenger of Allah. He attacked them like a fighter and fought a severe battle till he reached martyrdom in the service of His Eminence, Abu Abdillah ('a).306

The Imam ('a) and his companions

Imam ('a) blew into the hearts of his companions the spirit of determination and fortitude and trained them to be patient before hardships. He told them:

"O sons of great men! Be patient, for death is nothing but a bridge that would take you from hardships and difficulties towards vast gardens and everlasting bounties. Which of you would not like to be transferred from a prison to a palace? My father has narrated from Allah's Messenger (S) that he said, 'The world is a prison for a believer and a paradise for an infidel and death is the bridge that conveys the former to gardens and the latter to Hell.' Neither have I lied nor been lied to."307

These words enflamed their passions and they rushed to the whirlpools of death like a raging storm so that they may reach their positions in the garden of perpetuity.

Martyrdom of Abdullah Yazani

Abdullah Yazani hurried to the fields of battle and fought with exemplary courage while he was reciting the following:

"I am the son of Abdullah from the Progeny of Yazan. My religion is same as that of Husayn and Hasan.

I shall rain blows upon you like the blows of the stalwart from Yemen as I am seeking through it salvation near my Lord."

He introduced his lineage and native country and informed them that he was following the faith of his master, Husayn. Also that he shall sacrifice himself in his path. It was so that he may gain salvation near the Almighty...Like his martyr brothers, he put up a furious fight and continued to battle with daring and a firm determination till he reached martyrdom.308

1. Ibne Kathir, Tarikh 8/169, Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/216
2. Bihar 44/375
3. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/216, Ibne Kathir, Tarikh 8/169
4. Dhahabi, Tarikh Islam 5/11, Ibne Kathir, Tarikh 8/169, Tadhib at-Tahdhib 1/56, Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/216, Ad Durrun Nadheem, Pg. 547
5. Kamil az-Ziyaraat, Pg. 157, Dalailul Imamah, Pg. 177-178, H. 107
6. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/211
7. Miraat az-Zamaan, Pg. 167 from facsimile copy at Imam Amirul Momineen (a.s.) Library.
8. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/203
9. Yaqubi, Tarikh 2/249
10. Hadaiq al-Wardiya 1/114, Miftah al-Afkaar, Pg. 148, Kashful Ghumma 2/29
11. Shaykh Mufid, Al-Irshad, 2/67 and Shaykh Tabarsi has mentioned it in A'laamul Wurdi, Pg. 227
12. The months of Shawwal, Zilqad and Zilhajj are called the months of Hajj (Tr.)
13. Wasailush Shia 10/246-247
14. Laws related to Hajj and Umrah are very detailed and it is necessary to refer to the verdicts of great jurists. (Tr.)
15. Miraat az-Zamaan fee Tawarikhul Ayaan, Pg. 167 from facsimile copy at Imam Amirul Momineen (a.s.) Library.
16. Jawahirul Matalib fee Manaqib Imam Ali Ibne Abi Talib (a.s.) from facsimile copy at Imam Amirul Momineen (a.s.) Library.
17. Abdullah Alaili, Imam Husayn (a.s.), Pg. 557
18. Bustani, Dairatul Ma'rif 7/48. It has come in Waseelatul Maal fee idda manaqibul Aal, Pg. 188 that: He departed for Iraq with his Ahlul Bayt and six senior citizens of Kufa. And in Dhahabi, Tarikh Islam 5/9 it says: He departed from Mecca with ninety men from the family of Abdul Muttalib and women and children went with him
19. Maqrizi, Khatat 2/286. Bustani, Dairatul Ma'rif 7/48
20. As Sawaiq al-Mohreqa 196, As-Siraatus Sawi min Manaqib Aalin Nabi Pg. 186
21. Nazm Durarus Simtain, Pg. 215
22. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/39. Al-Bidaya wan Nihaya 8/166. And in Simtun Nujoom 5/57 and Jawahirul Matalib fee Manaqib Imam Ali Ibne Abi Talib 2/264 it is mentioned: When Amr bin Saeed learnt of Husayn's departure from Mecca he told his officers: Mount every camel between the earth and the sky and follow him and people were shocked at his orders. They followed him but could not catch up with him
23. At-Tarikh Siyasi Dawlatul Arab 2/72-73
24. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/214. Dhahabi, Tarikh Islam 5/10. Tibrani, Al-Mojam al-Kabir 3/123. Kifayatut Talib, Pg. 432, Jawahirul Matalib Fee Manaqib Imam Ali Ibne Abi Talib 2/271 it has come in the Arabic text: 'Kama yotaqul Abd' but in the text of Ibne Asakir it says: 'Kama Yotabdul Ubaid' and obviously this is correct, on the basis of this the translation will be: Just as Ubaid became a slave (Tr.)
25. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/371
26. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/371
27. Al Futuh 5/121-122
28. Ibne Kathir, Tarikh 8/165
29. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/212

30. Taneem is a place in Mecca, outside the sanctuary between Mecca and Saraf at a distance of two farsakhs from Mecca and it is said that it is at a distance of four farsakhs that is why it is called Taneem at the right side of which is a mountain called Naeem and on the left is another mountain named Naaim (Mojam al-Buldan 2/49)
31. Tabari, Tarikh 5/385-386. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/166
32. Bahrul Uloom, Rijal 4/48
33. Safah is a place between Hunain and Ansaab al-Haram on the left of anyone who enters Mecca from Mashash'Farazdaq has versified his meeting with the Imam at this place as follows:

I met Husayn at Safah while cloaks and shields were on His Eminence. This matter is mentioned in Mojam al-Buldan 3/412 and in Tadhkiratul Huffaz of Dhahabi it says that the Imam's encounter with Farazdaq was at Zaatul Irq and in Maqtal of Khwarizmi it is mentioned that they met at Ash-Shuqooq and in Al-Lohoof, Pg. 134

Zubala is mentioned but the fact is that they met at Safah as Farazdaq has himself stated.

34. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/167
35. Waseelatul Maal Pg. 188
36. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/166. Tabari, Tarikh 5/386. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/40. As Sawaiq al-Mohreqa 196
37. Al Futuh of Ibne Athim 5/125-126
38. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/168 and in Futuh 5/143-145 the letter of His Eminence is quoted in a different detailed manner. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/378
39. Al Futuh 5/146-147
40. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/41
41. Al Futuh 5/147
42. Ad-Darul Maslook 1/110. Al Futuh 5/123-124
43. Ibne Sabbagh, Al Fusulul Muhimma, Pg. 189
44. Ibne Shahr Aashob, Manaqib 4/195 from the facsimile in Amirul Momineen (a.s.) Library. Al Futuh 5/122
45. Shaykh Mufid, Al-Irshad, 2/72-73, Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/42. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/378-379. Ad Durrun Nadheem, Pg. 547-548
46. Muhammad bin Jurair Tabari, Dalail al-Imamah 182, H. 97
47. It is said that the man who brought the news to the Imam was Ibne Yazid Tamimi, as mentioned in As Sawaiq al-Mohreqa 196. According to Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/379 it was Bakr bin Motaqid
48. Thalabiyya is a station on way from Mecca to Kufa after Shaqooq and before Khazimiya. It is at 2/3 distance. Mojam al-Buldan 2/78)
49. Al-Irshad, Pg. 75
50. Ad-Darul Maslook 1/111
51. Al-Irshad, Pg. 74
52. Ad Durrun Nadheem, Pg. 548-549
53. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/379
54. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/42. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/379. Waseelatul Maal Pg. 189. Abul Fida, Tarikh 1/190. Dhahabi, Tarikh Islam 5/11. And in Rauzatul Ayaan Akhbar Mashaheeruz Zamaan, Pg. 67 it is mentioned that when the Imam permitted the people to leave him they dispersed from him and except for 42 men from his Ahlul Bayt none remained
It is mentioned in Tarikh Tabari 5/399: Those who accompanied the Imam from Medina dispersed from him when he informed them of the killing of Abdullah bin Yaqtar which in our view is a mistake of Tabari; because while coming from Mecca the Imam did not pass by Medina but he implied those who were with him from Medina to Mecca or those who joined him on the way.
55. Dhahabi, Tarikh Islam 5/13
56. 2 Maqatilut Talibeen, Pg. 112. Ad-Darul Maslook 1/109. Al Futuh 5/123
57. Dhu Husam is a mountain in that area
58. Tabari, Tarikh 5/400-401, Maqrizi, Khatat 2/286

59. Ibne Athir, Kamil 4/46-48. Tabari, Tarikh 5/401-403
60. Bustani, Dairatul Ma'rif 7/48
61. Umdatut Talib, Pg. 192
62. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/49, and Tabari 5/403-404
63. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/381-382
64. 'Haddi' is a song that Arab camel drivers sing to spur their mounts. (Tr.)
65. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/382-383. Al Futuh 5/140-141
66. Hayatush Sha'ar fil Kufa, Pg. 373
67. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/373
68. Tabari, Tarikh 5/206-207
69. Khwarizmi in his Maqtal Vol. 1, Pgs. 228-229 says: The encounter of the Imam with Ubaidullah bin Hurr was between Thalaba and Zarood.
70. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/384. Khazaanatul Adab, 2/158
71. Al Futuh 5/129-131
72. And it is mentioned in a report that "This horse of mine A'naan is saddled and ready".
73. Ahkbaar at-Tiwaal, Pg. 251. Ad Durrun Nadheem, Pg. 549
74. Al Futuh 5/132
75. Muqarram, Maqtal al-Husayn, Pg. 189-190
76. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/51
77. Kishi, Rijal Pg. 113, No. 181
78. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/51
79. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/385. Ibne Shahr Aashob, Manaqib 4/96
80. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/52. Mojam al-Buldan 4/445
81. Al Futuh 5/149. In Tadkiratul Khawaas Pg. 250 it is stated: When Husayn (a.s.) was told that the place was Karbala he picked up a handful of sand and smelt it. Then he said: "By Allah it is the same land about which Jibraeel informed the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) that I would be killed upon it."

In Hayatul Haiwan of Damiri 1/87 it is mentioned: His Eminence asked the name of that place; he was told that it was called Karbala. Then he said: "It is having 'Karb' (sorrow) and 'Bala' (calamity). My father passed this place on way to Siffeen and I was with him. He stood at this place and asked about it and its name was told to him. He said: Here they shall put down their loads, here their blood will be shed. They asked him about it. He replied: A group of Aale Muhammad will arrive at this place. Then His Eminence, Husayn ordered that they unload their belongings there.

In Mukhtasar Safwatul Safwa, Pg. 262 it is mentioned in the same way.

82. Baghiyatun Nubla fee Tarikh Karbala 2/6 written by Sayyid Abdul Husayn in the library of the Defense Secretary, Sayyid Adil Kaliddar
83. Nahzatul Husayn (a.s.), Pg. 90
84. Madinatul Husayn 2/24
85. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/385. The new moon of Muharram that year was on Wednesday. This is mentioned in Al Ifada min Tarikhul Aimmatus Saadah
86. Abu Hilal Hasan bin Abdullah Askari in his book, As Sana'teen has quoted the statement of the Imam in this way: "People have become slaves of the world and religion is a meaningless thing on their tongues, till their life passes in comfort they follow it and when hardships befall them, very few remain religious
87. Tibrani, Mojam 3/122, Biography of Imam Husayn, Pg. 214. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/217-218. Dhahabi, Tarikh Islam 5/112. Hilyatul Awliya 2/39
88. A bitter fruit
89. Muqarram, Maqtal, Pg. 193-194
90. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/216-217

91. Kamil az-Ziyaraat, Pg. 157, Chap. 23, H. 21
92. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/222-223. Waseelatul Maal fee idda manaqibul Aal, Pg. 179
93. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/223-224
94. One day Muawiyah'told Abu Maryam Salooli in front of the people: With what do you testify? He replied: I testify that Abu Sufyan came to me and asked me for a prostitute. I told him: I don't have anyone other than Sumaiyyah. He said: Bring her even if she is dirty and filthy. I brought that woman'! At that time Muawiyah made Ziyad as his brother and the son of his father, Abu Sufyan. (An-Nasaaih al-Kafiya leman Yatawalla Muawiyah Pg. 81)
95. Ibne Qutaybah, Mukhtasar al-Buldan, Pg. 271
96. Ayanush Shia 4/437
97. Balawi, Alif Baa
98. Shaykh Mufid, Ath-Thaqib fil Manaqib, from the written manuscripts at the Imam Amirul Momineen (a.s.) Library
99. Tahdhib at-Tahdhib 7/451. Mizanul Etedal 3/198
100. Mizanul Etedal Pg. 198
101. Tabari, Tarikh 5/467
102. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 7/282
103. Zarkali, Al-Alaam 5/205
104. Rayy is a famous and one of the large cities due to its beauty and excessive fruits and it is situated in Iran. Istakhri has said: After Baghdad no city is as populous as Rayy. And Asmai has said: It is the bride of the world and people traveled to it for business. This is mentioned in Mojam al-Buldan 3/117-186.
105. Al-Ahkbaar at-Tiwaal, Pg. 253
106. Miraatul Jinaan 1/132. Yafai says: If it were said:

"Should I let go of the governorship of Rayy though I want it badly even though by killing Husayn I return as a sinner." This lamentation informs about the aim in a better way

107. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/385-386
108. Al Futuh 5/152
109. Tabari, Tarikh 5/406
110. Al Futuh 5/157
111. Sharh Nahjul Balagha 4/88-89
112. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
113. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
114. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
115. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
116. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
117. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
118. Nukhaila was an area close to Zul Kifl which is today known as Abbasiyat. This is mentioned by Muqarram in Maqtal al-Husayn, Pg. 199
119. Miraat az-Zamaan fee Tawarikhul Ayan (Manuscript)
120. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/377
121. Baghiyatun Nubla, Part 2, quoted from Maqtal of Abu Mikhnaf, Pg. 80
122. Ibne Zuraas, Sharh Shaafiya 1/93 from written manuscripts at Imam Hakim Library
123. Manaqib, Ibne Shahr Aashob 4/98
124. Matalib al-So-ool 2/136 (Has quoted 22000). Umdatut Talib, Pg. 192
125. Miraatul Jinaan 1/132. Shazaratus Zahab 1/67. Matalib al-So-ool 2/36
126. As Sawaiq al-Mohreqa Pg. 197. Ibne Sabbagh, Al-Fusul al-Muhimma, Pg. 191. Lohoof, 145
127. Ad Durrun Nadheem Fee Manaqibul Aaimma, Pg. 551
128. Ad Durrun Nadheem Fee Manaqibul Aaimma, Pg. 551
129. Miraat az-Zamaan fee Tawarikhul Ayaan, Pg. 92

130. As-Siraatus Sawi min Manaqib Aalin Nabi Pg. 87
131. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/169
132. Sulh al-Hasan, Pg. 114
133. Al Imamah was Siyasah 1/93 has mentioned the figure of 190,000
134. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
135. Manaqib 4/98
136. Manaqib 4/98
137. Muqarram, Maqtal al-Husayn, Pg. 200
138. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
139. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
140. Manaqib, Ibne Shahr Aashob 4/98
141. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/387
142. Calculating the numbers mentioned 96000 is correct figure (Tr.)
143. Miraat az-Zamaan, Pg. 92
144. Muruj az-Zahab 3/61
145. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/197. Tahdhib al-Kamal 6/427. Hadaiq al-Wardiya 1/119. As-Siraatus Sawi, Pg. 86
146. Manaqib 4/98
147. Tadhib at-Tahdhib 1/156
148. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/187. Fakhura, Tohfatul Anaam fii Mukhtasar Tarikhul Islam, Pg. 77
149. Tabari, Tarikh 5/410
150. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/386, Al Futuh 5/155-156
151. As-Siraatus Sawi min Manaqib Aalin Nabi Pg. 87
152. Miraat az-Zamaan fee Tawarikhul Ayaan, Pg. 20
153. Tarikhul Imamatul Islamiya 1/515
154. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/175
155. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/55, Somewhat similar thing is mentioned in Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/390-391. In Tahdhib al-Kamal 6/428 it is mentioned: Ibne Ziyad wrote to Ibne Saad: "No, and no honor will be there for him till he gives his hand into mine." Then Husayn said: "It shall never be so."
156. Dhahabi, Tarikh Islam 5/14
157. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/391
158. As-Siraatus Sawi min Manaqib Aalin Nabi Pg. 87
159. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/175
160. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/391
161. Miraat az-Zamaan fee Tawarikhul Ayaan, Pg. 89, Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/389
162. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/390
163. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/389. As-Siraatus Sawi min Manaqib Aalin Nabi Pg. 86
164. Qirmani, Akhbarud Daul, Pg. 108. Waseelatul Maal fee idda manaqibul Aal, Pg. 290. Matalib al-So-ool 2/36-37
165. Al Futuh 5/171-172
166. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/65
167. Khwarizmi, Maqtal 1/244. Al Futuh 5/162, Baghiyatun Nubla
168. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/389
169. And in a report, ninety persons
170. Part two of Baghiyatun Nubla
171. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/388
172. Tabari, Tarikh 5/435-436
173. Tabari, Tarikh 5/450-451
174. Percy Skies, History of Iran
175. Nizami, Ilmun Nafs 1/36

176. Sharh Nahjul Balagha 3/263
177. Tabari, Tarikh 5/432-435
178. Abu Shohda, Pg. 215
179. Hisan bin Bakr Hanzali killed him.
180. Hadaiq al-Wardiya 1/121-122
181. Ayanush Shia 1/126
182. Biharul Anwar 45/22
183. Manaqib, Ibne Shahr Aashob, 4/113
184. Ibne Habib says: Arabs recited Rajaz in battles to drive camels, to boast of their valor and achievements and for other things. This matter is mentioned in Aghani 18/164.
185. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 1/1
186. Mafatihul Jinan, Pg. 468 Ziarat Arbaeen
187. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/56
188. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/322. Tabari, Tarikh 5/416
189. Al Futuh 5/177
190. Al Futuh 5/177
191. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/392
192. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/57. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/392
193. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/392
194. Al Futuh 5/179
195. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/57-58. Ibne Jauzi, Muntazim 5/337-338 have mentioned the statement of the Imam in another way; because it has some in Maqtal Husayn by Abdullah, Awalim 17/346-347 that His Eminence said: You are free from my allegiance, so join your family and friends. And he said to his Ahlul Bayt: I permit you to leave me; because due to your small numbers do not have the capacity to face their huge number and except for me they do not want anyone else. So leave me for them as the Allah, the Mighty and the Sublime will help me and not deprive me of His good opinion; in the same way as He has done with the former ones. Thus some people from his camp left him but his Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) said: We shall not leave you, whatever aggrieves you aggrieves us and whatever would befall you shall also befall upon us. We shall always remain with you, we shall be most proximate to the Almighty Allah. His Eminence told them: If you have prepared yourself for that which I have decided, you should know that the Almighty Allah bestows a lofty position to His servants for bearing hardships and if the Almighty Allah has reserved for me the honor that He has reserved for those of my family who have passed away ñ I am the last of their survivors ñ if I be bestowed with special bounties it would be easy to bear unwanted hardships and some of the honors of the Almighty Allah shall be there for you also. And know that the world is a sweet and bitter dream and the waking shall be in the hereafter and he is successful that shall be successful there and unfortunate is one that shall be unfortunate there."
196. Tabari, Tarikh 5/419. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/57-58
197. Al Muntazim 5/338. Tabari, Tarikh 5/419-420
198. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/393
199. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/182. Tahzib al-Kamal, 6/407. Biography of Imam Husayn (a.s.) from Tabaqat Ibne Saad, Pg. 70
200. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/388
201. Her Eminence, Sakina has narrated: "I heard my father say to someone who was with him: You came with me as you knew that I have come to those who have pledged allegiance to me by heart and by tongue and that you now see that Shaitan has overpowered them and they have left the remembrance of Allah and they have no intention except to kill me and anyone who performs Jihad with me and I fear that you had not expected this or known about this and you are not dispersing from me due to shame. And deceit and fraud is unlawful for us, Ahlul Bayt, thus whoever doesn't want to support us, this night is veil for them, so (you may) go away.
202. Al-Mojam al-Kabir 3/132
203. Maqatilut Talibeen, Pg. 111-112
204. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/393. Al Muntazim5/338. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/177. As Sayyida Zainab wa Akhbaar az-

Zainabiyat, Pg. 20-21

205. Tabari, Tarikh 5/420. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/393

206. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/177

207. Waseelatul Maal fee idda manaqibul Aal, Pg. 190. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/187

208. Kishi, Rijal Pg.79, No. 133

209. Tabari, Tarikh 5/423. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/178

210. In Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/178 it is mentioned: One who kept the Imam under surveillance was Abu Harb Sabi-i, Ubaidullah bin Shameer, who was a person always given to nonsensical talk.

211. Surah Aale Imran 3:178

212. Al Futuh 5/181

213. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/178

214. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 30/395-396. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/178

215. Ashura is the tenth day of Mohurrum. It is said that it is a very ancient name and its cause was that on this day ten of the prophets were given ten miracles. This is mentioned on Pg. 22 of Al Anwaarul Husaynia of Balawi.

216. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 30/396

217. Miraat az-Zamaan fee Tawarikhul Ayaan

218. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/399. Tadhib at-Tahdhib 1/155

219. Khwarizmi, Maqtal 1/249

220. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/66

221. Muqarram, Maqtal al-Husayn Pg. 225

222. Tabari, Tarikh 5/422

223. Miraat az-Zamaan Pg. 92

224. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/60

225. Tabari, Tarikh 5/424

226. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/61

227. Biharul Anwar 45/5-6

228. And in a report, “I will not submit like slaves”.

229. Tabari, Tarikh 5/421-424. Ad Durrun Nadheem, Pg. 552-553

230. Surah Naml 27:80

231. Tabari, Tarikh 5/426-427

232. Biharul Anwar 5/182-183

233. Khwarizmi, Maqtal Husayn (a.s.) 2/8. Al Lohoof, Pg. 157

234. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 14/218-219. Khwarizmi, Maqtal Husayn (a.s.) 2/8. Al Lohoof, Pg. 157

235. Tabari, Tarikh 5/427. Kamil 4/64

236. Saduq, Amali, Pg. 23. Ibne Tawus, Lohoof, Pg. 160

237. Kamil 4/64, Ad Durrun Nadheem, Pg. 553-554

238. Khwarizmi, Maqtal Husayn (a.s.) 2/10

239. Kamil 4/64

240. Tadhib at-Tahdhib 1/152

241. Ma’-al Husayn Fee Nahzatih, Pg. 220

242. It is mentioned in Biharul Anwar that the number of Imam’s companions martyred in the first attack was fifty.

243. Ibne Shahr Aashob, Manaqib 4/113

244. It is said that Abdullah bin Umair was martyred in the first attack

245. . The lady Umme Wahab was the daughter of Abdullah from Namr bin Qasit and she was killed after the martyrdom of her husband.

246. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/65, Al-Irshad, 2/101

247. Qaza-a: It is a Yemenite tribe that had migrated to Kufa.

248. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/66

249. Al Futuh 5/186
250. Al Futuh 5/187
251. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/399
252. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/66-67
253. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/399
254. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/400
255. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/400
256. Surah Ahzab 33:23
257. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/182, Tabari, Tarikh 5/435-436
258. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/67-68, Tabari, Tarikh 5/436
259. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/68
260. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/68
261. Ibne Shahr Aashob, Manaqib 4/101
262. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/68
263. Tabari, Tarikh 5/438
264. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/69
265. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/69
266. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/68-69. Tabari, Tarikh 5/436-438
267. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/183
268. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/69-70
269. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/70
270. Imam Khui, Mojamur Rijall Hadith 4/227
271. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/402
272. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/70. Tabari, Tarikh 5/439-440
273. Al Futuh 5/185
274. Al Bidayah wan Nihayah 8/183-184
275. Tabari, Tarikh 5/434
276. Al Manaqib, Ibne Shahr Aashob 4/100
277. Al Futuh 5/186
278. Khwarizmi, Maqtal Husayn (a.s.) 2/17
279. Maqtal Imam Husayn, Khwarizmi 2/20
280. Tabari, Tarikh 5/441
281. Muqarram, Maqtal, Pg. 247
282. Khwarizmi, Maqtal Husayn (a.s.) 2/20
283. Khwarizmi, Maqtal 2/21
284. Ibne Kathir, Tarikh 8/184, Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/404
285. It has come in Ziarat Rajabia: Suwaid, the slave of Shakir, Biharul Anwar 101/341
286. Tabari, Tarikh 5/443-444
287. Tabari, Tarikh 5/444
288. Tabari, Tarikh 5/444
289. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/404-405. Tabari, Tarikh 5/444-445
290. It is said that his name was Huwi. Tabari, Tarikh 5/420
291. Ibne Numa, Matheer al-Ahzaan, Pg. 63
292. Al Futuh 5/198
293. Muqarram, Maqtal, Pg. 252
294. Tabari, Tarikh 5/443
295. Muqarram, Maqtal, Pg. 253-254
296. Khwarizmi, Maqtal 2/21-22

297. Usud al-Ghaba 1/349. Al-Isabah 1/68. Kanzul Ummal 12/126, H. 34314
298. Muqarram, Maqtal, Pg. 252-253
299. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/405. Ibne Athir, Tarikh 4/73 and it is mentioned there that he was the first martyr from the companions of the Imam
300. In Al Futuh 5/199 it has come with some variation
301. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 3/405
302. Tabari, Tarikh 5/442-443, Ibne Athir, Tarikh 3/392
303. Hadaiq al-Wardiya 1/122
304. Al Futuh 5/198-199
305. Al Futuh 5/195
306. Al Futuh 5/194
307. Abdullah bin Nurullah, Maqtal al-Husayn Awalim Imam Husayn 17/351
308. Al Futuh 5/194

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