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## Dispatching of the blessed heads of the Pure Household by Ubaydullah bin Ziyad, the accursed, from Kufa to Syria, and the events that occurred thereafter

(Irshad) After they paraded the blessed head in Kufa, they brought it back to the palace. Ibn Ziyad handed over the head to Zahr bin Qays, as also the heads of the companions, and dispatched him to Yazid along with Abu Burdah bin Aun Azdi, Tariq bin Zabiyan and a group of men from Kufa, until they reached Yazid, the accursed.

Here I intend to increase the grief (upon the Imam) and quote the words of the `Commander of the faithful', the 'Master of the Vicegerents' Imam Ali (a.s.) as a comparison,

"Where are the ones who had pledged together to sacrifice their lives, while their heads were taken to the wicked men."

I also quote these elegies as comparison, "Ransom upon the heads which were raised upon the lances, and were taken to Syria as a gift, ransom upon the beloved cheeks, that were smeared harshly in dust and blood, May I be ransom upon the bare bodies laid upon the earth, that were skilled for mourning, weep upon the orphans of the Progeny of Muhammad (S), that the Qur'an was dispersed from them, the Masters of Religion and administrators of guidance, that sacrifice (in Makkah) and the pilgrimage is unsuitable except through their medium".

Abdullah bin Abi Rabi'ah Humayri relates, that I was in Damascus with Yazid, when Zahr bin Qays entered therein. Yazid said, "Woe be to you! What news follows you? And what have you brought along with?"

He replied,

"Have glad tidings of the victory of Allah. Husayn, along with eighteen men of his family and sixty from among his adherents, revolted against us. Thus we confronted them and offered him to submit to the order of commander Ubaydullah bin Ziyad or else fight us, and they preferred battle upon submission. We pounced upon them as soon as the sun arose and surrounded them. And when our swords landed upon their heads, they fled away without having any place of refuge. And they sought refuge upon every low and high places when we attacked them, similar to a pigeon that takes refuge from the falcon. O Commander of the faithful (Allah's refuge)! By Allah! A time needed to slaughter a camel or dozing off during day–time had not yet passed, that we killed the last of them. And we left their bodies naked, clothes smeared in blood, faces upon the ground, while the sun scorched them, and the wind scattered sand upon them, and the wild birds of the severe desert would turn upon them".1

Hearing this, Yazid bowed his head for sometime, then lifting his head said, "I would have been pleased with you even if you had not killed Husayn. Beware! If I had been there with him, I would have let him go. May Allah have mercy upon Husayn". Then he did not bestow any gift upon him.

Sayyid Shiblanji in his Noorul Absar, and Sibt Ibn Jawzee in his Tazkirah say, that Yazid removed him (Zahr bin Qays) from his presence and did not give him anything.

We (the Author) say, that his (Zahr bin Qays) end was already predicted. Zuhayr bin Qayn relates, that when I joined Imam Husayn (a.s.), he said,

"O Zuhayr! Know thou, that here the place of my pilgrimage will be raised. And my head will be taken by Zahr bin Qays to the presence of Yazid in greed of reward, but he will not get anything."

After dispatching the head of Imam Husayn (a.s.), Ubaydullah mobilized the children and ladies and fastened an iron collar in the neck of Imam Ali bin Husayn (a.s.) and dispatched them behind the head along with Makhfar bin Sa'labah A'ezee and Shimr bin Ziljawshan, until they joined the caravan carrying the heads. Imam Zainul Abedeen (a.s.) did not speak to them on the way from Iraq until they reached Syria.

Sayyid Haider Hilli says in his elegies, "Who will inform the Prophet that indeed, Hazrat Sajjad is captivated? Who will inform to Zahra and notify her of the heartburn of Zainab? Their enemies have been parading them from one city to another, while their hearts are pained and aggrieved".

It is stated in the Shi'ah and Sunni books, that when the bearers of the sacred head of Imam Husayn (a.s.) halted at the first place, they started drinking wine and playing and sporting with the blessed head. When suddenly a hand appeared from the wall holding an iron pen, and wrote down in blood the following lines: "The nation which has killed Husayn, still hopes that on the day of Qiyamah his grandfather shall intercede for them?" Seeing this they were terrified and left that place.

It is stated in Tazkirah of Sibt Ibn Jawzee, that Ibn Seereen said, that one hundred and fifty years before the 'Proclamation of Prophethood', a stone was found upon which was written in the Syrian language, and when it was translated into Arabic it meant, "The nation which has killed Husayn, still hopes that on the day of Qiyamah his grandfather will intercede for them?"

Sulayman bin Yasar says that a stone was found, on which was written: "There is no escape from it, that on the day of Qiyamah, Fatemah (a.s.) shall arrive with her shirt smeared in the blood of Husayn, woe be to them who have incurred the wrath of their own intercessors, on the day when Israfeel will blow the trumpet".

It is related from Tareekhul Khamees, that they (the bearers of heads) proceeded until they reached a monastery and entered therein so as to relax until the afternoon. There they saw written on the wall: "The nation which has killed Husayn, still hopes that on the day of Qiyamah his grandfather will intercede for them?" They asked a monk, "Who has written these lines?" He replied, "It was written here one hundred and fifty years before the 'Proclamation of Prophethood'".

Sibt Ibn Jawzee, through his chain of transmitters, relates from Abu Muhammad Abdul Malik bin Hisham Nahvi Misri, in context of a tradition, that whenever they (the bearers of heads) downloaded their equipments, they removed the blessed head from the trunk and raised it upon a lance. They would guard the entire night until the morning, and at the time of proceeding they would put it back into the trunk and proceed further. During one of their halts they came near the monastery of a monk. As usual they raised the head upon the lance and guarded it while leaning the lance against the wall of the monastery. At mid–night, the monk saw a wave of light emanating from the head and reaching the heavens. He looked at them from above the monastery and asked, "Who are you?"

They replied, "We are associates of Ibn Ziyad". He asked, "Whose head is this?" and they replied, "It is of Husayn, the son of Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) and Fatemah (a.s.), the daughter of the Prophet of Allah (S)". He asked, "You mean your Prophet?" and they replied in the affirmative. Hearing this he said, "You are among the worst of men. If Maseeh (Prophet Isa) would have had a son, we would have placed him upon our eyes (we would have honored him greatly)".

He continued, "Do you desire anything, and could you do me a favor?" They asked as to what was it, and he replied, "I have ten thousand Ashrafi with me, you may take it and give me the head. Let it remain with me until the dawn, and when you proceed further, take it back from me". They replied, "We are at no loss due to this", saying this they handed the head over to him and he gave them the Ashrafis in return.

The monk washed the head, perfumed it and kept it upon his thigh and wept profusely until it dawned. And when it dawned he said, "O head! I do not have authority upon anything except myself. I bear witness that there is no Deity except Allah and that your Grandfather is the Prophet of Allah! You bear witness that I am your friend and a slave". Then he renounced the monastery and all that was therein,

and entered the ranks of the slaves of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

Ibn Hisham in his Seerah says that they took the head and proceeded further, and when they reached near Damascus, they started telling one another that, "Come, so that we may divide the Ashrafi among ourselves. Lest Yazid may see them and take it away from us". The purse was brought and opened and they saw that it had turned into clay, and on one of its sides was written:

"And think not Allah to be heedless of what the unjust ones do. He only respites them to a day when the eyes shall be fixed open (staring with terror)". (Surah al-Ibraheem, 14:42)

And on the other (side) it was written:

"And soon shall know those who deal unjustly, what an (evil) turning they shall be turned to!" (Surah ash-Shu`araa, 26: 227)

Seeing this they threw them into the Burda River.

The honorable Shaikh Sa'eed bin Hibatullah (Qutubuddin) Rawandi, in his Kharaej, has related this episode in detail and in this context says that when the monk handed back the head to them, he came down from the monastery and remained engrossed in Prayers in a mountain. Their (the bearers of the head) leader was none other than Umar bin Sa'ad, who had taken the money from the monk. But when he saw that it had turned into clay, he ordered his slaves to throw them into the river.

I (the Author) say, that according to the historical facts, Umar bin Sa'ad did not accompany this group to Syria hence it is unlikely that he was with them. And it seems more unlikely, as quoted by him (Rawandi) in the end of this report, that Umar bin Sa'ad returned back to Rayy, and when he reached the vicinity of his kingdom, Allah shortened his life and he died on the way. For it is verified that Mukhtar killed him in his house at Kufa and thus the Prayer of Imam Husayn (a.s.) regarding him was fulfilled that,

"May Allah prevail upon you a one, who would kill you upon your bed". And Allah is 'the Best Knower'. "

Sayyid Ibn Tawoos says that Ibn Lahee'ah and others relate this report from which we quote a part according to our need. I was circumambulating the Ka'bah and I heard a man say, "O Allah forgive me! But I know that You shall never do so". I said, "O slave of Allah! Fear Allah and do not utter this. Even if your sins are equal to the drops of rain or the leaves of the trees, seek pardon from Allah, and He shall certainly forgive them. While Allah is Forgiving, Merciful".

He said, "Come, so that I may relate to you regarding myself". He continued, "We were fifty men accompanying the head of Husayn to Syria. Every night we would place the head of Husayn into a trunk and drink wine surrounding it. One night my friends drank wine and were intoxicated and inebriated while I did not drink. When a part of the night passed by, I heard a sound of thunder and saw lightening.

Suddenly the doors of the heavens were opened ajar and Prophets Adam (a.s.), Nooh (a.s.), Ibraheem (a.s.), Isma'eel (a.s.), and Ishaq (a.s.), and our Prophet Muhammad (S), accompanied by Jibra'eel and other Angels, descended. Jibra'eel came near the trunk, and lifting the blessed head from it, embraced it while kissing it. Then each of the Prophets followed him likewise until it reached the last Prophet (S). The Prophet started weeping while the other Prophets condoled him. Then Jibra'eel said, 'O Muhammad (S)! I am your obedient one with regards to your nation. And if you command me, I shall capsize the earth upon them as I did with the nation of Prophet Loot (a.s.)'.

The Prophet (S) replied, 'O Jibra'eel! Verily I shall have an accounting against them in the Audience of Allah'. Then the Angels proceeded to kill us and I said: Refuge! Refuge! O Prophet of Allah! And he (S) said, "Get away, may Allah never forgive you".

1. Zahr bin Qays has misinterpreted the entire episode of Karbala simply to gain the pleasure of Yazid; rather the reality was quite opposite. It was the army of Yazid which was routed by the fierce attack of Imam Husayn (a.s.)'s companions and often requested for asylum and took to flight. While most of them killed the companions and family of Imam Husayn (a.s.) treacherously. The narratives, as quoted by the Shi'ah and Non-Shi'ah sources, bear testimony to their invincible valour and memorable struggle.

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