



Husain's Day

Abd-az-Zahra al-Ka`bi

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Introduction

Ashura has inspired numerous people in numerous ways throughout history. Some were inspired by the braveness of Imam Husain and his companions and others by their commitment to justice and their denial of oppression. Another aspect that has been most prominent in Ashura is love: love for wife and husband, love for family and children, love for Imam and father, love for friends and companions and much more. The purest form of love was manifested when Imam Husain (peace be upon them) said:

“O’ son! [Before riding your horse to the battlefield,] take a few more step before me so that I can watch your tall stature [for the very last time]”.

Above all of these were love for God, which gives Husain’s day a different color. It is now time for a novel reading of Husain’s day.

Biography of the author

The night of 14th of Jumada al-Thani 1394 A.H. was a sorrowful night for the people of Karbala. In that night, a great scholar and speaker and a prominent poet, Shaikh Abd az-Zahra bin Fallah al-Ka`bi, passed away. On the next day, a great crowd gathered all around Karbala from his house in the Hayy al-Husain district to the shrine of Imam Husain and Hadhrat Abbas (peace be upon them) to his tomb in the al-Wadi district.

The maqal (the story of martyrdom) of al-Ka`bi has been recited on the day of Ashura in various Arabic countries. His maqal consisted of two parts: the first part (often recited on the day of `Ashura) on the martyrdom of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and his companions, and the second part (often recited on the day of Arba`in) on the journey of the captivated progeny of Imam Husain (peace be upon them).

Abd az-Zahra was born on the 20th of Jumada al-Thani on the year 1327 A.H. (1909 A.D.), on the birth anniversary of lady Fatimah al-Zahra (peace be upon her), and hence, got his name from her. He was raised in Karbala in a family of scholars and speakers and received his education there and memorized the Holy Quran. Soon he started teaching in various seminaries such as the seminary of Imam al-Qaim and the seminary of al-Shirazi. He was know as a very kind and humble person who spent much time in helping young students and also spent much of his income on the poor.

May Allah bless his soul and unite us with him and his Imam hereafter...

Part I - Martyrdom of Husain (peace be upon him) and his companions

A dark dawn

In the morning of `Ashura, after having said the morning prayers, Husain ibn Ali stood to deliver a sermon and after praising the Lord, he said:

“The Almighty God has decided about your martyrdom and mine; hence, your duty is to be perseverant and to fight.”¹

Companions of light

Then he arranged them for the battle. He had 77 companions, both mounted and afoot. Some said there were a few more. Zuhair bin Qain was installed on the right-hand-side of the army and Habib bin Mudahir was installed on the left-hand-side. He gave the flag to his brother al-Abbas (peace be upon him) and he and his progeny stood at the center of army. ²

They stood to protect the tents of their families. The night before they had dug a moat behind the tents in the shape of a half-circle. They gathered then much wood and canes. Imam commanded to fill the moat with wood and set them on fire, so that the enemy cannot attack the tents from behind. This was an effective way of protecting the families. ³

Army of darkness

Against the army of Husain (peace be upon him), the army of `Umar bin Sa`d was arranged. According to narrations, they were at least 30,000 soldiers. Umar set `Amr bin al-Hajjaj al-Zubaidi on the right-hand-side and Shimr bin Dhi-al-Jaushan al-`Aamiri on the left-hand side. He gave the command of the

¹ Muhammad bin Ja'far Ibn Qulawayh, Kamil al-ziyārāt, p. 152.

² Muhammad bin Jurair al-Tabari, Tarikh al-Umam wa al-Muluk, vol. 5, p 422 and Abu-Hanifah Ahmad bin Dawud al-Dīnawari, Al-Akhabār al-Tiwāl, pp. 256 and 259, al-Muwaffaq bin Ahmad al-Khārazmī, Maqtal al-Husain, vol. 2, p. 7, and Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Nu`mān al-Mufid, al-Irshād, al-Irshād fi Ma`rifat Hujaj Allah ala al-`Ibād, vol. 2, p. 95. (They all count 72 among the companions of Imam Husain, peace be upon him.) See also Ahmad bin Yahyā al-Balādhuri, Ansāb al-Ashrāf, vol. 3, p. 187, where he relates that Imams companions were 73: 33 horseback riders and 40 afoot. However, in al-Balādhuri, vol. 3, p. 206, it is related that after `Ashura, 72 heads were dispatched to Ibn Ziad.

³ al-Tabari, vol. 5, p. 422 (by the authority of Abu-Mikhnaf) and al-Mufid, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 95.

horseback riders to Urwah bin Qais al-Ahmasī and those afoot to Shabath bin Rab`ī. He gave the flag to his slave Duraid.⁴

The army of `Umar bin Sa`d came into action and turned around the tents. There they were confronted with the moat set on fire. Shimr cried:

“O’ Husain, were you in haste and set a fire for yourself before the day of judgment?”

Imam Husain (peace be upon him) asked: “Who is that? Apparently, that is Shimr bin Dhi-al-Jaushan.”

They said: “Indeed, it is Shimr.”

Imam said to Shimr:

“O’ the son of the goat-herder! You deserve more than me to be burnt in the fire.”⁵

Muslim bin `Ausajah set an arrow in the bow to aim at Shimr, but Imam did not allow him and said:

“I do not like that we start the fight.”⁶

Source of all hope

Imam had a glance at the enemy’s army and saw that they have surrounded like a roaring flood, he raised his hands to pray and said:

“O’ Allah, You are my safe refuge in all calamities, my hope is vested in You in all hardships, and You are my strength and my support in any issue that come down to me. Often times there are sorrows, by which the hearts start to beat, one becomes desperate, man gets distressed, and enemies start to blame. [In such situations,] I bring it down to you, complain to you, and turn to you while losing hope in all others. Then You resolve the problems in my affairs and bring about relief. All blessing is Yours and hopes and all hope is vested in You.”⁷

Inviting the enemies

Then Imam asked for his horse, rode it and said aloud:

⁴ al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 95-96 and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 187, where they only relate the name of the prominent people in `Umar ibn Sa`d’s army, but do not relate any number.

⁵ (Maryam (19) / 70)

⁶ al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 96 and al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 423-424 and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, pp. 187-188.

⁷ al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 96 and Ibn-`Asākir, Tārīkh Madīnah Dimashq, vol. 14, p. 217.

“O’ People! Listen to me and do not rush (to kill me) so that I can give you advice, which is my duty towards you, and explain my reason for approaching you. If you find my reasons legitimate, accept my words, and passed an unbiased judgment about me, then it will be the source of your felicity and you will not oppress me any more. However, if you did not accept my reasons and could not pass a fair judgment by yourself, gather together and counsel so that what you chose does not turn out to be a dark path. Then, you can decide, give me no chance, and finish off my case.⁸ My Lord is Allah, who has revealed the Quran and he is in charge of the righteous.⁹”¹⁰

When the ladies in the tents heard these words, they cried and their grief was heard. Imam sent his brother al-`Abbas and his son Ali al-Akbar to them and said: “Please keep them quiet; by my life, they have much grief ahead of them.”¹¹

When the ladies calmed down, he again praised God, sent blessings to Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny), to the angels and the divine prophets, delivered the most eloquent speech,¹² and said:

“Praise is God’s, who has created the world and has set it to be the perishable house, a house which changes form. Whoever is impressed by this house, is deceived by it and whoever is caught in its trap, will never see felicity.

“As it has been noted, this progeny [of the Prophet] (peace be upon them) are treasure troves of eloquence. Many of those who deliver eloquent speeches, have learned it from them and those who did make it clear, have stolen it. They are the companions of the Book of Allah: Quran is the silent book and they are the speaking book.”

He then said:

Beware that this deceitful world does not deceives you, since this world always disappoints those who vested their hopes in it and ruins the palaces of their wishes. I see that you have all gathered to do something and have caused the anger of Allah in it. Beware that God has removed His look of blessing from you and has sent down his curse and doom upon you and has called you off from His grace. Our Lord is a very good god, but you are bad servants to him. You admitted to be his servants, and declared faith in his messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny), but then gather your forces against his progeny and decided to kill them.

⁸ (Yunus (10) / 71)

⁹ (al-A`raf (7) / 196)

¹⁰ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 423-424 by the authority of Abu-Mikhnaf from Abd-Allah bin `Asim from Dhahāk al-Mashriqī and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 97.

¹¹ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 424 and Ali bin Musā al-Hillī Sayyid Ibn-Tāwus, Al-Malhuf `alā Qatlai al-Tofuf, p. 147-148, where the latter relates these words on a different occasion on the day of `Ashura.

¹² See al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 424 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 97 for a similar praise of Imam Husain’s eloquence.

Indeed the devil has prevailed upon you and has caused you to forget about the Exalted remembrance of God.¹³ How evil you are and what an evil intention you have. We are all from God and we will return to Him.¹⁴ We are all in God's possession and we are ready to meet him. This is an army, whose people have first expressed belief and then went back to disbelief.¹⁵ O' you the oppressing people, may God hold (his blessings) back from you.¹⁶ "

The Prophet's Word

Imam went on:

"And then, O' people! First, learn about my ancestry and get to know who I am. Then think back yourself and ponder: are you entitled to kill me and are you allowed to dishonor me?

Am I not the son of your Prophet's daughter? Am I not the son of Your prophet's heir and cousin? Was my father not the first one who believed and supported the Prophet in what he brought from God? Is Hamzah, the chief of the martyr, not my uncle? Is Ja'far, who flies with two wings in the paradise, not my uncle? Did you not hear the word of the Prophet about me and my brother, who said:

"These two sons of mine are the chief of the youth in the paradise."

If you confirm my words, then this is the right thing to do, because I have never intentionally told a lie. since I learned that God abhors those who do so. If you do not believe me, there are still people among you who can bear witness. Ask Jabir bin Abd-Allah al-Ansari and Aba-Sa'id al-Khidri, from Sahl bin Sa'd al-Sa'idi, from Bara` bin Azib, from Zaid bin Arqam, and from Anas bin Malik; ask them all and they will inform you whether they have heard these words from the Prophet about me and my brother. Is this not sufficient to hold you back from spilling my blood?"¹⁷

¹³ Referring to: (al-Mujadilah (58) / 19)

¹⁴ (al-Baqarah (2) / 156)

¹⁵ Referring to: (Al-`Imran (3) / 86)

¹⁶ (al-Mu'minun (23) / 41)

¹⁷ al-Mufid, al-Irshad, vol. 2, pp. 97-98; also see al-Tabari, vol. 5, pp. 424 -425 and al-Khazarimi, vol. 1, pp. 357-358 for abridged accounts of this sermon.

Seal of Misery

Shimr bin Dhi-al-Jaushan cried:

“I have been worshipping God on the very edge,¹⁸ if I knew what you are talking about.”

Habib bin Muzahir replied to Shimr:

“I do not think you have worshipped God at all. I confirm that you do not know what Husain is talking about, since God has put a seal of misery on your heart.¹⁹”²⁰

Then Imam Husain told them:

“If you doubt about what the Prophet has told about us, do you have any doubt that I am the son of your prophet’s daughter? By God, neither anywhere else in this world nor in anyone else can you find a son of a prophet’s daughter but me.

O’ shame on you; have I killed anyone inappropriately so that you want to kill me in return? Have I spoiled anything from your belongings? Have I wounded anyone that you want to take revenge from me?”

A deep silence prevailed over people and no one said a word in response.²¹

Hollow Invitations

Then Imam said:

“O’ Shabath bin Rab`i and O’ Hajjar bin Abjar, O’ Qais bin Ash`ath, O’ Yazid bin Harith! Have you not written letters to me, stating:

Our trees bear fruits and our farms and bushes are in full bloom.

Whenever you approach us, you will find an armed force awaiting your command.”

They said: “We have never written such letters.”

Imam said: “God is exalted; you have indeed written these letters.”

Then he said: “O’ people, if you disapprove of me, then let me return and find a safe land for myself.”²²

¹⁸ Referring to (al-Hajj (22) / 11)

¹⁹ Referring to, e.g., (al-Nahl (16) / 108)

²⁰ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 425.

²¹ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 425 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 29 and 98.

No to Humiliation

Qais bin Ash`ath said to Imam: "Why do not you obey the command of your cousins? Then they will treat you as you wish and will never cause you any harm."

Imam said: "No, by God, I will never obey you as the humiliated and objected people. I will never admit being a servant by pledging obedience like slaves.

O servants of God! I seek refuge by my Lord from your arrows and blades.²³ I seek refuge to God from the disobedient and rebellious who do not believe in the resurrection day.²⁴ "

Then he set his camel and asked `Aqabah bin Sam`an to tie its knees.²⁵

An Arab poet composed the following poems:

"I can never forget Husain,
When he stood among the enemy's army,
and delivered a sermon.
When no one else dared to say a word, he said:

Am I not the son of your Prophet's daughter?
Am I not your safe refuge in the events of the time?
Have I introduced any innovation in the religion of the Prophet?
Or have I doubted any of his commandments?

Or did the prophet not instruct you (regarding our love) and leave
among you two hefty things: the progeny and the book,
If you do not believe in resurrection,
then go back to your ancestors and
return to your Arabic nobility, of you are Arabs.
They were perplexed and astonished by his words, and
could not find any answer to his advice but arrows and blades."²⁶

²² al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 425 and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 188; also see, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 98.

²³ (al-Dukhan (44) / 20)

²⁴ (al-Ghafir (40) / 27)

²⁵ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 425-426 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 98 also see al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 188, where he relates slightly different details in the dialog.

²⁶ al-Sayyid Ridhā al-Musavī al-Hindī, Diwān, pp. 40-43.

Killed by the Hell's Fire

The enemies commenced an attack towards Imam, and among them was Abd-Allah bin Hawzah al-Tamimi who cried: "Is Husain among you"?

The companions of Imam replied: "Husain (peace be upon him) is here, what do you want?"

"O' Husain, I bring you the news of Hell's fire for you.", said Abd-Allah.

Imam replied: "You lied. I am going to the forgiving, the generous, the intercessor, the obeyed and the merciful Lord, but who are you?"

Abd-Allah said: "I am the son of Hawzah."

Imam raised his hands so high that his underarms could be seen and said: "O' Lord, kill him by the Hell's fire."

The son of Hawzah outraged when he heard Imam's words, and rode his horse towards Imam. There was a hole on earth between him and Imam. He fell from horse's back and his foot remained entangled in the saddle. His horse pulled him on earth. One of his feet and his thigh were cut off while he was pulled on earth. The rest of his body, with the foot still entangled in the saddle, was being pulled and he was being hit by rocks and trees, he was finally burnt by the fire that was set in the whole and he died.²⁷

A Repentant

Masruq bin Wa'il al-Hadhrami says: "I was in the army that set out to kill Husain (peace be upon him) and I went to the front dreaming of bringing Husain's head (peace be upon him) in order to receive the reward from Ibn Ziad.

However, when I saw the events surrounding Ibn Hawah, I realized that the households of the Prophet have a distinct position before God. Hence, I moved away from the army and said to myself: "If I fight this family, I will be doomed in the Hell!"²⁸

²⁷ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 430-431 on the authority of Abu-Mikhnaf and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 102. See also al-Khārazmī, vol. 1, p. 352, where a similar story is related about a person by the name of Mālik bin Jurairah.

²⁸ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 431 on the authority of Abu-Mikhnaf.

Zuhair and the Enemies

Zuhair bin Qain, while riding a giant and hairy horse and unsheathing his sword, rode towards the enemies and told them:

“O’ people of Kufah! Beware of God’s punishment! It is mandatory for each Muslim to advise his/her Muslim brother. We and you both follow the same religion and until we put each other to sword, we are brothers. Hence, we have to advise you now, but when the swords are unsheathed, the ties between us will be broken and you and we will be two separate people.

Now beware that God has put us and you into a test about the progeny of His Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny), in order to determine how we and you perform. I invite you to support the progeny of the Prophet and abandon supporting the unjust Yazid and `Ubad-Allah bin Ziad, because you will never see anything but evil during their reign. They will take your eyes out, cut your hands and feet, mutilate your dead bodies, and hang your corpses from date palms, and kill your companions and families. Have you seen what he did to Hujr bin `Adi and his companions and Hani bin `Urwah and his associates?”

The army cursed Zuhair instead, praised Ubaid-Allah and prayed for him and said to Zuhair: “We will never let your chief, Husain, escape until we kill him or take him and his companions as captives to Ubaid-Allah.”

Zuhair again preached them and said:

“O’ servants of God! The son of Zahra (peace be upon her) is more appropriate to be loved and to be supported, than the son of Sumayyah. If you do not support the son of the Prophet, then fear God; beware not to kill Husain and his sons. Leave him alone and Yazid knows himself how to deal with Husain (peace be upon him). I swear by my life that if you do not kill Husain, Yazid will still be satisfied with your obedience.”

Shimr loosed an arrow towards Zuhair and said:

“Shut up, may God mute your voice. You have bored us with your long speech.”

Zuhair said:

“O’ the son of ignorant!²⁹ I am not talking to you; you are a beast. By God, I do not think you know two verses of Qur’an properly. Prepare yourself for humiliation and for the painful punishment.”

Shimr said: “In this very time, God will soon kill you and your chief.”

²⁹ Zuhair used the phrase “al-bawwāl ala aqibaih”, literally meaning “the one who urinates on his feet”; this is a term often used to refer to the ignorant people of jahiliyah.

Zuhair said:

“Do you frighten me from death? By God I love death in Husain’s company (peace be upon him) much more than eternal life with you.”

Then he turned to people and cried:

“O servants of God! Do not let this fool and his likes mislead you from the path of religion. By God those who shed the blood of the sons of the Prophet and his progeny, and disrespect them will be deprived of the intercession by the Prophet Muhammad (peace upon him and his progeny).”

Someone among Husain’s companions called Zuhair and said:

“Aba Abd-Allah (peace be upon him) calls upon you and says: Please return. By my own life, you preached for them just like the believer in the people of Pharaoh preached his people and insisted on inviting them to the right path. In the same way, you did not spare any effort in advising them.”³⁰

Burair and the Enemies

Burair bin Khudhair asked permission from Imam to step forward and to speak to people. Imam gave him permission.³¹

Burair was among tabi`is (those who have met the companions of the Prophet peace be upon him and his progeny); he was a pious man and he recited Quran very well. He was among the most prominent reciters of Quran in the Grand Mosque of Kufah. He was from the Hamdan tribe and had a distinct position among them.

He stepped forward and approached the enemy army and cried:

“O people! Allah sent the Prophet Muhammad as a bearer of glad tidings, a warner, a summoner unto Allah and a shining lamp.³² This is the Euphrates (Furat) in which dogs and swines swim, but you deny its water from the son of the Messenger of Allah. Is this the reward of the Prophet’s mission?”

They replied to Burair:

“O’ Burair! Hold on, you have talked too much! By God, Husain will suffer from thirst as the one before him suffered.”³³

Burair said subsequently:

“O’ people! The hefty (heritage) of Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) is before you; these are the progeny, the offsprings, the daughters and the family of the Prophet of God (peace be

³⁰ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 426-427

³¹ Ibn Tāwus, p. 155

³² Referring to (al-Ahzab (33) / 45-46)

³³ Possibly referring to `Uthmān bin `Affān.

upon him and his progeny). Tell me, what do you want to do with them? Do you have any justification for fighting against them?”

They said:

“We have decided to submit them to the commander Ubaid-Allah bin Ziad and he can deal with them however he desires.”

Burair said:

“Do not you accept from them to return to where they have come from?

Woe unto you, O’ the people of Kufah! Have you forgotten your letters and your treaties that you sent and called Allah to their and to your witness.

Have you invited the progeny of your prophet and promise that you will defend him by your lives and your heads? Now that he has come to you, do you want to surrender him to Ubaid-Allah bin Ziad and stand between him and the Euphrates water.

What a bad treatment you had with the progeny of the Prophet after him. Why did you deny them water? May God leave you thirsty on the day of resurrection.”

Some among the enemy army said:

“O’ Man! We do not understand what you are talking about.”

Burair replied:

“Praise is God’s who gave me more wisdom about you. O’ Lord! Bear witness that I disapprove of the deeds of these people. O’ God! Afflict them with their own fear until they meet you while You are angry at them.”³⁴

The enemies kept on shooting him with their arrows, and hence, he retreated back.

Preaching to the Sealed Heart

Then Husain (peace be upon him) rode his horse, opened a copy of Quran above his head, moved towards the people of Kufah, and addressed them with a loud voice:

“O’ People! Between me and you is the book of God and the tradition of my grandfather the Messenger of God. I take your oaths, do you know me? Do you know the sword, the armor, and the turban of my grandfather, which I am wearing? ”

They all acknowledged.

“Then why have you come forward to kill me?”, Imam asked.

³⁴ al-Khārazmī, vol. 1, pp. 356-357, also see al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 189, where he briefly mentions that Burair preached for the enemies.

“To obey the commander Ubaid-Allah bin Ziad.”, they replied.

He said:

“By God, do you know that Ali bin Abi-Talib is my father?”

They replied:

“By God, this is true.”

He said:

“By God, do you know that Khadijah the daughter of Khuwailid, who was the first among the ladies to express belief, was my grandmother?”

They replied:

“By God, this is true.”

He said:

“By God, do you know that Hamzah, the chief of the martyr, is the uncle of my father?”

They replied:

“By God, this is true.”

He said:

“By God, do you know that Ja’far al-Tayyar, who hovers over the paradise, is my uncle?”

They replied:

“By God, this is true.”

He said:

“By God, do you know that this is the sword of the Messenger of God (peace be upon God) that is in my hands?”

They replied:

“By God, this is true.”

He said:

“By God, do you know that this is the turban of the Messenger of God (peace be upon God) that I wear on my head?”

They replied:

“By God, this is true.”

He said:

“By God, do you know that Ali (peace be upon him) was the first to express belief? And he was superior to all (companions) and the most thoughtful and the most patient? And he was the master of every male and female believer? ”

They replied:

“By God, this is true.”

He said:

“Then what is your justification to shed my blood and how dare you do that, when my father is the guardian and bearer by the pond of Kauthar; he averts people from the pond of Kauthar, like a camel-driver who averts camels from a body of water and when the flag of Hamd (praise) is in my father’s hands on the day of resurrection.”

They said:

“We are aware of all of these, but will not take our hands off you until you are about to die of thirst.”³⁵

In a tradition, it has been said that Imam rode his camel and went towards the people of Kufah; he asked them to be silent, but they did not accept. Imam said to them:

“Woe unto you! I am inviting you to guidance. Whoever follows me will be guided and whoever refuses will be doomed.

You all disobey my command and do not listen to me. Your stomachs are full of haram (impermissible) and your hearts has been sealed with curse. Woe unto you! Why do not you listen to me?”

The companions of Umar bin Sa`d blamed each other and said: “Let’s listen to him.”

Imam then praised God and spoke of Him as it is due; then he asked for blessings for the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny), and for angels and other prophets and messengers and delivered an eloquent speech, in which he said:

“O people, down with you and woe unto you. Were it not you who invited me your begging letters and asked me in despair for help. We have hence raged to your help. However, you are now taking out those swords who swore allegiance to us and you are casting the same fire that you set to burn our common enemy. It is a wonder that you people have risen to support your enemies in defying your friends, while your enemies have never ruled with justice among you and you have no hope in them. It is all for an impermissible fortune that they may give you and for a passing wish that they will give you a certain post to which you may be appointed. You have never seen any evil or sin from us, and we have never given false judgment.

³⁵ Ibn Tāwus, pp. 145-147

Imam Husain (peace be upon him) called for Umar bin Sa`d. First he was reluctant to step forward, but he was asked to move forward and Imam said to him:

“O `Umar! Have you decided to kill me, while you think that the filthy Yazid, the son of the filthy, will give you the governance of Ray and Gorgan. I swear by God, you will never attain your wish and this is a destiny decided in the eternal past. Be certain and do whatever you wish, but beware that you will face happiness neither in this world nor hereafter. I can already see your head raised on a reed and displayed in Kufah, while kids throw stones to it and use your head as their target.”

Umar bin Sa`d infuriated when he heard these words and turned his face angrily and told his companions: “Why do you give Husain more time? Attack all at once, for these are not more than a single bite.”³⁶

Hurr: the Choice between Heaven and Hell

When Hurr learned that the people of Kufah have firmly decided to fight Husain, he asked `Umar bin Sa`d: “Are you certain about fighting with Husain?”

`Umar bin Sa`d replied: “Yes, by God I will fight with him, such a fight that heads will be cut and thrown on earth and hands will be chopped from bodies.”³⁷

Hurr asked: “Do not you agree with the suggestion of Imam [to let him go back to his home]?”

Ibn Sa`d said: “I do not have the authority for this. If it were up to me, I would have done that, but your chief (i.e., `Ubaid-Allah bin Ziad) did not accept this.”

Hurr left `Umar bin Sa`d and moved to a corner away from the rest, while someone called Qurrah bin Qais accompanied him. He turned to Qurrah and said: “Have you given water to your horse at all today?”

Qurrah said: “No.”

Hurr said: “Do not you intend to give water to your horse?”

Qurrah said: “By God, I thought he wants to withdraw from the army and to abandon the fight, and he does not want me to see him in such a situation.”

Thus, I said to him: “No I have not given water to my horse today; I will go and give it water now.” and I moved away from the place where Hurr was standing. By God, if Hurr would inform me about his intention, I would have also accompanied him in joining Husain (peace be upon him).³⁸

Hurr started to move slowly towards Husain’s camp. Muhajir bin Aws, a soldier in the army of Umar bin Sa`d, asked Hurr: “O’ the son of Yazid! What are you up to? Do you intend to attack?”

³⁶ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 10-11

³⁷ Ibn Tāwus, p. 159

³⁸ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 12

Hurr did not answer him, but a strange shiver spread through his body.

Muhajir told Hurr: "I am surprised to see you in this situation. I have never seen you shivering in any battle. If I was asked who is the bravest man of Kufah, I would name no one but you. How come I see you in this manner?"

Hurr answered: "I now see myself on the crossing between the heaven and the hell. By God, if I am chopped into pieces and burnt in fire, I will never choose anything over the heaven."

Then, he urged on his horse, while he was aiming at joining Husain (peace be upon him), breaking his arrows, wearing his shield inside out, lowering his head as a sign of shame from what he has imposed on the progeny of the Prophet and holding back water and food from them. In such a manner, he was saying loudly:

"O' Allah! I repent to you, please accept my penance, since I frightened the hearts of your servants and the children of your Prophet's daughter." ³⁹

Hurr stood in front of Husain (peace be upon him and his progeny) and said:

"O' the son of the Prophet of God! I am the very person who blocked your way, did not let you to return to where you came from, forced you to follow this path and made you settle in this place. I never thought that people will decline your proposal to return and did not think that they will treat you so badly. By God, if I knew that these people will take it so far, I would have never blocked your way and would have never made you be caught in this trap.

Now, I have come to you repenting and sacrificing my your life by your command, and ready to die in your company. I am a repentant, could my repentance be accepted?"

Husain (peace be upon him) said: "Yes, Allah accepts your repentance. Please get off your horse." ⁴⁰

Hurr said: "Mounted I can serve you better; I will ride my horse to the battleground, fight these people for a while and I will eventually fall off my horse."

Husain (peace be upon him) told him: "May Allah bless you, proceed with what you intend to do."

Then he asked Husain (peace be upon him) for permission to speak to the enemies and Husain (peace be upon him) gave him permission.

He moved forward and told the people of Kufah:

³⁹ Ibn Tāwus, p. 159

⁴⁰ Al-Dinawārī, p. 256, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 189, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 99-100, and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 12-13.

“O’ people of Kufah! May your mothers mourn for you and may you end up crying all the time. Do you invite a prominent servant of God to come to you and know that he has arrived you surrender him to the enemy?”

You are the very people who, you thought, are ready to sacrifice your life for supporting Husain (peace be upon him), but in a short while, raised the enmity flag against him, to fight him and to put him and his children under siege so that he cannot reach a wide land of God. They treated him such that he is now like a captive in your hands. He can neither gain profit nor avoid harm. As if this was not sufficient, you stood between him, the ladies and the children and the Euphrates (Furat). This is the same body of water, from which the Jew, the Christian and the Magians drink and in which swines and dogs swim. Come close and see, thirst is about to take all their lives. Evil you treated the children of the Prophet after him. May God not quench your thirst on the day of resurrection.”

Some started shooting Hurr with their arrows. Hurr returned back and stood in front of Imam. Imam had forbidden his companions from commencing any fight. Hence, when they were being shot or someone attacked them, they would return back to obey the command of their Imam and their chief Abi Abd-Allah al-Hussain. He did not want them to be the ones who begin the war.

Hurr stood in front of Imam and said: “Since I was the first to block your way, I ask your permission to be the first martyr among your companions so that due to this deed, on the day of resurrection, I get the opportunity to shake the hands of your grandfather the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny).”⁴¹

Imam gave him permission.⁴²

Hurr then commenced an attack, while reciting the following epics:

“Indeed I am Hurr (the free, the noble) and the hospitable for my guests,
but I cut your throats by the sword,
I defend the territory of the best person who stepped in the land of “Khīf” (a place in Minā),
I do you and I do not regret my deed.”⁴³

Hurr fought a heroic battle; he fought in synchrony with Zuhair bin Qain: whenever one would attack and reach the middle of enemy’s army, the other would commence an attack to save his companion from the siege of the enemies.

⁴¹ Ibn Tāwus, p. 160.

⁴² al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 427-429, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 100-101 and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 13.

⁴³ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 13; also see al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 195, where he relates slightly different verses with similar content.

But then the army of `Umar bin Sa'd suddenly attacked Hurr and surrounded him with many people until they martyred him. The companions of Imam Husain carried his body and brought him, while he was taking the last breaths of his life and blood was flowing from his body. Imam Husain touched his head and face and removed the soil from his face and said: "Wow, blessing upon you Hurr! You are indeed noble both in this world and hereafter, just as your mother named you Hurr (noble)".⁴⁴

Cursed Letter

Shimr shouted: "Where are my nephews? Where are `Abbas and his brothers?"

They disregarded him.

Husain (peace be upon him) said: "Respond to him, even if he is an evildoer.

They hence responded: "What are you up to? What do you want?"

He said: "O' my nephews, you are in safe refuge. Do not kill yourselves together with Husain and instead, pledge your obedience to the commander of the believers, Yazid."

`Abbas told him: "Doom unto you and unto your refuge. Do you give us refuge, while the son of the Prophet has no refuge. Then you order us to pledge obedience to the doomed and the sons of the doomed."

Umar bin Sa'd's Sarcasm

Umar bin Sa'd came a few steps forward, put an arrow in his bow and shot it towards Imam's army and said to his companions:

"Bear witness before the commander Ubaid Allah bin Ziad, that I was the first to shoot an arrow towards Husain's army."⁴⁵

Then the army of Umar bin Sa'd started shooting their arrows and arrows fell, like the drops of rain, on the companions of Husain (peace be upon him).

At this moment, Husain (peace be upon him) turned to his companions and said: "May Allah bless you my companions, rise to receive the death that we are facing, for these arrows have brought you the news of war from these people."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 13-14 and Ibn Tāwus, p. 160. also see al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 428, where he relates these words of Imam upon Hurr's arrival at Imam's army.

⁴⁵ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 429 and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 190 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 101 and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 11.

⁴⁶ Ibn Tāwus, P. 156.

Part II: In the Battlefield

Abd-Allah bin Umair al-Kalbi

From the enemy's army, Yasar, the slave of Ziad, and Salim, the slave of Ubaid-Allah bin Ziad, entered the battlefield and called for confrontation from the army of Imam Husain (peace be upon him). Habib bin Muzahir and Burair bin Khuzair rose to enter the battlefield, but Imam did not permit them.

Abd-Allah bin Umair al-Kalbi rose and asked for permission from Imam to fight with them alone. Abd-Allah was a tall and robust man. Imam looked at him and said: "Yes, this man suffices to fight with them." and gave him his permission.

Abd-Allah bin `Umair al-Kalbi was among those who left Kufah during night; he joined Imam's companions together with his wife Umm-Wahab. When Abd-Allah learned the army of Ibn-Ziad who besieged Imam in a place called Nukhailah and are preparing to fight with him, he said: "By God, I have always had the ambition and the eagerness of fighting with the infidels [at the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny)]. Now, I hope that fighting these people who are in a war against the grandson of their prophet, will not but be considered by God less than fighting with the polytheist." Hence, he informed his wife about this intention. His wife said: "You made the right decision. Move towards Husain and take me with you."

When Abd-Allah bin `Umair came to the battlefield, Yasar asked him: "Who are you?"

Abd-Allah introduced himself.

They said: "We do not know you. Someone like Zuhair bin Qain, Habib bin Muzahir, or Burair bin Khozair should challenge us in the battlefield."

Abd-Allah Ibn `Umair turned to Yasar, who was closer to him, and said: "Are you refraining from facing others in the battlefield? Anyone in this world who challenges you will be superior to you." He attacked Yasar and while he was fighting, Salim the slave of Ubaid-Allah attacked Abd-Allah. The companions of Imam Husain called him to beware of the attack, but Abd-Allah did not pay attention until he killed Yasar. When Salim attacked Abd-Allah he blocked the sword by his left hand and hence his fingers were chopped, but he did give Salim in return a final blow and killed him.

Afterwards, he triumphantly recited the following epics:

"If you know me, it is me the son of Kalb.

Those who know me are aware of my nobility and my prominent lineage.

I am strong and outstanding, and when incurring hardships and calamities, will have no mourning or grief,
O' Umm- Wahab, I promise you I will blast the enemy with sword and spear.”⁴⁷

When Umm-Wahab, the wife of Abd-Allah, saw his cut fingers, he took the pillar of their tent and reached Abd-Allah to fight alongside him and to encourage him to sacrifice and endure. He told his husband: “May my father and parents be sacrificed for you, fight for the sake of supporting the cleansed offspring of Muhammad.”

Abd-Allah insisted on her to return to the tents, but she did not listen to him and kept onto him and said: “I will never leave you alone, until I am killed on your side.”

Imam Husain (peace be upon him) called Umm-Wahab and told her: “May Allah give you excellent reward for the defense you provided for the progeny of your prophet. O' Lady, please return to the tent, since Allah did not mandate taking part in wars for women.”⁴⁸

Umm-Wahab returned to the tent. Abd-Allah kept on fighting steadily until he killed two more. Finally, Hani bin Thabit al-Hadhrami and Bukair bin Haii al-Tamimi martyred him.

A Change in Plans

When the rest of the companions saw that many among them had been martyred, they changed plans and asked for permission from Imam Husain to join the battlefield in groups of 2, 3, or 4 to defend Imam and his household. In such a battle they would protect one another from sudden attacks of the enemy.

Saif bin Harith and Malik bin Abd-Allah's Jihad

Two young men, named Saif bin Harithah and Malik bin Abd-Allah, who were each other's Imam asked them to come forward a few more steps; they came forward while tears were dropping from their eyes. Imam said: “O' my nephews! What makes you cry? By God, I am hopeful that you will be glad to see the paradise in a few moments.”

They replied: “May our lives be sacrificed for you! We are not crying for ourselves; our tears are for you. We see that the enemy has besieged you and we have no power to be of any help for you.”

Imam told them: “O' my nephews! May Allah bestow the best reward of the pious upon you, for your pure emotions and your commitment.”

⁴⁷ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 429-430 on the authority of Abu-Mikhnaf from Abu-Jināb, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, pp. 189-190, and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 101. Also see the more brief account of al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 11.

⁴⁸ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 429-430.

Then they approached Imam and to bid farewell, they said: "Peace be upon you, O' the son of the messenger of Allah."

Imam replied: "And peace be upon the two you and the blessings of God and His bounties." They also fought for a while in front of Imam and eventually they were martyred. ⁴⁹

Abd-Allah and Abd-al-Rahman al-Ghifari's Jihad

Two brothers named Abd-Allah and Abd-al-Rahman bin Urwah al-Ghifari came to Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and said: "Peace be upon you O' Aba `Abd-Allah! We have come to perform jihad in your company and defend your honor." ⁵⁰

`Amr bin Khalid al-Saidawi

Amr bin Khalid prepared to go to the battlefield. Imam Husain (peace be upon him) said to him: "Proceed and we will also soon join you."

Amr bin Khalid, his servant Sa'd, Jabir bin Harith al-Salmāni and Majma' bin Abd-Allah al-A'idhi commenced a joint attack. When they reached the heart of the enemy army, the Kufan besieged them and cut them apart from the army of Imam Husain (peace be upon him).

When Imam saw the situation sent his brother Abbas (peace be upon him) to rescue them. Hadhrat Abbas (peace be upon him) brought himself to the army and rescued them (the companions of Imam) from the siege. While returning, the enemy attacked them again and despite all their wounds, they fought back until they were martyred together. ⁵¹

Husain Calls for Support

When Imam Husain ibn Ali (peace be upon them) saw these martyred companions, he took his beard in his hand and said:

"When the Jew associated a son to God, the anger of God intensified against them and when the Christian called God the third of the three, the anger of God intensified against them and when the Magian stopped worshipping God and worshipped the moon and the son instead, God's anger intensified against them.

⁴⁹ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 442-443, where the name of Malik bin `Abd-Allah is mentioned as Malik bin `Abd bin Sarī`.

⁵⁰ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 442 and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 27.

⁵¹ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 446, where his name is related as "Umar bin Khālid"

Now, God is tremendously angry with these people who have unanimously set out to kill the son of their Prophet's daughter. Beware, that I will never submit to their unjustified requests until I meet my Lord with a body soaked in my blood."⁵²

Then he said loudly: "Is not there any supporter to support us? Is there no defender to defend the household of the Prophet?"
The ladies cried when they heard these words and started mourning.⁵³

Sa'id bin Harth and Abu al-Hotuf Join Imam Husain

Sa'id bin Harth al-Ansari al-'Ijlani were among the army of `Umar bin Sa'd. When they heard Imam Husain's call and the sound of mourning and grief from his household, they joined Imam's army and attacked the army of `Umar bin Sa'd. They killed some and wounded some others and finally, they were martyred together.

At this point, the Husain's army (peace be upon him) decreased in number so much that very few remained and they went to battle one by one.

Kufans Give Up Man-to-Man Battle

Amr bin al-Hajjaj yelled at his men and said: "Do not you know with whom you are fighting? You are fighting persistent cavaliers, brave men, and devoted soldiers. These people, as I see them, will not face any of you, but kill you one after the other. By God, unless you target them collectively by stones and arrows, you cannot kill them."

Umar bin Sa'd said: "You are right, and my opinion is the same. Command those who want to go to the battle not to face them one by one, for if they face them individually, they will defeat all of you."⁵⁴

`Amr bin al-Hajjaj with his men attacked the right wing of Imam Husain's army. `Amr cried to his soldiers: "Kill those who departed from the religion and left the community."

Imam replied: "Wow unto you `Amr! Do you mobilize people against me? Have I departed from the religion and you stayed with it? You will know when our souls leave our bodies who deserves most to be burnt by the fire?"⁵⁵

⁵² al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 12, Ibn Tāwus, p. 158.

⁵³ See Ibn Tāwus, p. 168, where these words are related regarding a later moment.

⁵⁴ al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, pp. 192-193

⁵⁵ (Maryam (19) / 70)

The companions of Husain resisted against them, set their knees on earth and pointed their spears towards them. The horses retreated and as soon as they turned their back to Imam Husain's army, the companions of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) shot them with their arrows. Several of them were killed and wounded. ⁵⁶

Then `Amr bin al-Hajjaj and his men attacked from the side of Euphrates and fought for a while with the army of Imam Husain. In this battle Muslim bin `Ausajah al-Asadi was fighting the enemies and Musim bin `Abd-Allah al-Dhabai and Abd-Allah al-Bijilli were attacking them fiercely. ⁵⁷

Muslim bin `Ausajah on Earth

When the dust settled, they saw that Muslim bin `Ausajah was lying on earth. He still had the last breathes of life when Imam Husain (peace be upon him) reached him together with Habib bin Mudhahir al-Asadi, who was Muslim's life-time friend. Imam Husain told Muslim bin `Ausajah: "O' Muslim! May God bless you. Then Imam recited the following verse:

"... of them some complete their vows and some still wait, but they have never changed in the least." (al-Ahzab (33) / 23)

Habib bin Mudhahir approached Muslim and said: "O' brother! Your martyrdom is tough for me. Muslim I give you the good tidings that the paradise is before you. "

Muslim replied with a very weak voice: "May Allah give you the good tiding of felicity."

Habib then said to Muslim: "Were I not aware of the fact that I will join you soon, I would have loved to hear your will."

Muslim said: "My last will you is to never give up supporting this man and he pointed to Husain (peace be upon him). Fight for his cause until you are killed."

Habib said: "I will obey that by all means."

Then Muslim passed away. May Allah's peace and blessing be upon him." ⁵⁸

An Arab poet composed the following in this regard:

"O' Husain! Your companions never seized supporting you till their last breath,
And in their last moments, each companion's will to his friend was supporting and helping you,

⁵⁶ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 430 and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 190

⁵⁷ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 435, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 193, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 103 and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 18

⁵⁸ Ibn Tāwus, pp. 160-161.

Muslim bin `Ausajah commanded his companion: "Fight for the cause of Husain until the moment of your death arrives."

In the meanwhile, the servant of Muslim, started crying: "O' my sir! Muslim bin `Ausajah". When Umar bin Sa`d's army heard the mourning of Muslim's servant, said: "Good news! We managed to kill Muslim bin `Ausajah."

Shabath bin Rab'i told the companions of `Umar bin Sa`d: "Woe unto you! May your mothers mourn your death! You Kufans kill your own people and put on the cloths of misery to make Yazid happy. Are you glad that you killed Muslim bin `Ausajah? By God, to whom I submit myself, Muslim had a distinct position among Muslims. I saw him when Muslims were fighting in Azerbaijan. Before the Muslim cavaliers could do anything, this very Muslim killed six of the polytheists and the enemies of Islam."⁵⁹

Shimr's Attack and Zuhair's Defense

On the left side, Shimr bin Zi-al-Jaushan and his army attacked the army of Imam Husain (peace be upon him). Zuhair bin Qian, together with 10 companions of Husain, defended against them, chased them away from around the tents, and killed Aba-`Adhrah, among the companions of Shimr. Shimr launched another attack and killed a few of Husain's companions, but the rest returned to their positions.⁶⁰

Shimr told his slave: "Hit her head by your sword." Shimr's slave hit the women and she passed away instantly. This was the first woman among Husain's company to be martyred.⁶¹

Wahab bin Habab al-Kalbi in the Battlefield

Then Wahab bin Habab al-Kalbi went to the battlefield. He used to be a Christian and he has been introduced to Islam. In this trip his mother and his wife accompanied him.⁶²

His mother told him: O' son! Rise and rush to the support of the Prophet's grandson.

Wahab replied: "I will indeed do the same and will not hesitate in doing so."

He joined the battlefield while reciting the following epics:

⁵⁹ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 435-436 and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 18-19; also see al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, pp. 192 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 103-104, where they give a more succinct account of this incident.

⁶⁰ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 438-439; also see al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 104-105 for a brief account.

⁶¹ See al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 15-16 for a slightly abridged narration.

⁶² Ibn Tāwus, p. 161.

“If you do not recognize me, then I and the son of al-Kalb,
you will soon see me and see my blast,
and my attack and my bravery in fight,
I will take revenge for myself, after taking revenge for my companions, and
I will remove sorrow after sorrow, and
my fight in this battlefield is not for amusement.”⁶³

Then he attacked the enemy and kept on fighting until he killed a group of them. Then he came back to his mother and asked her: “Are you not satisfied with me?”

She said: “I will never be satisfied with you, until you are martyred for God’s sake.”

His wife told him: “Wahab, beware and do not make us mourn for you.”

His mother told him: “Never mind your wife; return to the battlefield and fight in the company of your Prophet’s son so that you may have the intercession of his father in the resurrection day.”

Wahab returned to the battlefield and fought until his both hands were cut. His wife took the pillar of their tent and rushed towards him, while he was saying: “May my parents be sacrificed for you; keep on fighting for the sake of defending the honor of the Prophet of God.”⁶⁴

Wahab said: “Was it not you, who was discouraging me from joining the battlefield?”

She said: “Do not blame me Wahab, when I heard Husain’s word, my heart broke.”

He said: “What did you hear?”

She said: “I saw him sitting in front of his tent and crying: O’ how few are the supporters!”

Wahab cried very hard as well and asked her to return, but she would not listen. Wahab then said: “O’ my sir, Aba Abd-Allah! Please return this lady to the tents.” Imam came and brought her back.

The enemies surrounded him and killed him.⁶⁵

Second Person Joining Imam Husain

Yazid bin Yazid bin Muhajir al-Kindi was among the companions of Umar bin Sa’d. When he saw that the army declined the suggestion of Husain ibn Ali (peace be upon them) to return, he joined the companions of Husain (peace be upon him). He fought before Imam with the army of Umar bin Sa’d while reciting the following epics:

“I am Yazid and my father is Muhajir,
braver than the lion of the bush,

⁶³ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 15, where his name is quoted as Wahab bin Abd-Allah bin Jinab al-Kalbī.

⁶⁴ Ibn Tawu, p. 161.

⁶⁵ Ibn Tāwus, p. 161.

O Lord! I am for Husain a supporter,
and from Ibn Sa'd I take distance.”⁶⁶

He sat down in front of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and shot 100 arrows towards the enemies. He was a skilled archer. He killed 5 people from the army of Umar bin Sa'd by his arrows and he was the first to be killed in this attack.

Afterwards the enemy shot many arrows and a fierce war took place. When the dust settled, 50 dead bodies were lying around.

Accepted Prayers

The time had come for dhuhr prayers. Abu-Thumamah al-Saidawi told Imam Husain: “O' Abu Abd-Allah! May my soul be sacrificed for you! The enemy has reached you. By God, I will not let them touch you, before I am killed in your company. However, I very much love to meet Allah while I have said this prayer, of which the time is approaching, with you beforehand.”

Imam Husain turned his face towards the sky and said: “You reminded me of prayers, may Allah count you as those who hold prayers and those who are mindful. Indeed, it is now time for the dhuhr prayers.”

Then he told his companions to ask the enemies to cease the fight to pray. The companions of Imam communicated his request to the enemies.

Hasin bin Numair said: “Your prayer will not be accepted.”

Habib bin Mudhahir said: “O ignorant! Do you presume that the prayers of the son of the Prophet and his companions will not be accepted, while your prayers will be accepted?”

Hasin bin Numair attacked Habib and Habib challenged him; he hit by his sword the forehead of Hasin's horse. The horse panicked and threw Hasin down. The companions of Hasin came, saved him from Habib, and attacked Habib; Habib killed one of them.

Then Imam Husain told Zuahir bin Qain and Sa'id bin Abd-Allah al-Hanafi to stand before him to say the dhuhr prayers with his companions.⁶⁷ These two, together with half of Imam Husain's companions, stood in front of him so that the other half could say their prayers (the fear prayers: the specific manner of saying prayers prescribed for the time of war).⁶⁸

⁶⁶ See al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 445-446, where he mentions a different name, namely Yazid bin Zīād al-Muhāsir.

⁶⁷ Ibn Tāwus, p. 165.

⁶⁸ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 20-21; also see al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 441, where he gives a brief account of Imam's prayer during the battle.

Martyrdom of Sa`id bin Abd-Allah

An arrow was shot at Imam Husain (peace be upon him); Sa`id bin Abd-Allah moved forward and caught the arrow by his body. The enemy was throwing more and more arrows and Sa`id was catching them, until he fell down due to his wounds. He was then whispering: "O' Allah! Curse these people, as you cursed the people of `Ad and Thamud. O' Allah! Please convey my greetings to your messenger and let him know about the pain and the wounds I have incurred, since I took on this battle to support the children of your messenger."

He turned towards Imam Husain and said: "Did I fulfil my promise, O' the son of the Prophet?"

"Indeed, you will be before me in the paradise", Imam replied

He then departed from this world. May Allah bless his pure soul.

When they counted, he had 13 arrows in his body, in addition to the many arrow and spear wounds on his body.⁶⁹

Swaid bin `Amr joins the Battle

Swaid bin `Amr, who was a noble person and prayed very often, came forward and recited the following epics:

"Advance in the company Husain today so that you meet the Prophet Ahmad, and your noble master Ali, whose esteem is high and Hasan, the shining moon, and your uncle, Hamzah, who was the chief of his tribe and was a brave man, the hero of God's army, who was named the lion, and Ja'far, who resides in the paradise with two wing, and there, he hovers and reaches the peaks."

Then he fought like a brave lion and showed an incredible perseverance until he got wounded and fell among the martyrs. He had many wounds and fell motionless, until he heard that the army is shouting: Husain is killed. Once he heard this news, he gathered all his remaining power took a spear from his boot and fought with them until he was also martyred.⁷⁰

Zuhair bin Qain Joining the Battle

Zuhair bin Qain came to the battlefield while reciting the following epics:

I am Zuhair and I am the son of Qain,
for the cause of Husain, I chase you away by my sword,

⁶⁹ Ibn Tāwus, p. 165. See also al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, pp. 196 for a brief account of Sa`id bin Abd-Allah's martyrdom.

⁷⁰ Ibid, pp. 165-166.

because Husain is one of the two grandsons of the messenger of God,
and among the virtuous, pious, and noble progeny,
of that messenger who was certainly sent by God.
I hit you and I do not see any evil in that.
I wish I could have been split in two.⁷¹

Then he fought and according to many traditions, he killed many among the enemies. Finally, Kathir bin Abd-Allah al-Tamimi and Muhajir bin Aws al-Tamimi besieged him and martyred him.⁷²

`Abis bin Shubaib and Shudhab

`Abis bin Shabib al-Shakiri came forward, while Shudhab Mawla Bani-Shakir was accompanying him. `Abis asked Shudhab what he was up to.

He answered: "What am I up to? I would like to fight together with you in the company of the son of the God's messenger until I am killed."

`Abis said: "I expected the same from you, get prepared for the battle and go to the battlefield before Imam Husain so that he joins the rest of the martyrs and is counted among them. Today is the day in which we should spend all our effort to gain rewards and bounties, since hereafter we will have no opportunity to perform any deeds and from today on there will be nothing but judgment.

Shudhab came forward, met Imam and said: "Peace be upon you, O' Aba Abdillah, and his blessings and grace. I bid you farewell." Then he fought until he got killed.

After Shudhab, his companion `Abis came forward and said: "O' Aba Abdillah! By God nowhere on earth, be it far or near, I have anyone who is dearer and more loved to me than you. If I could protect your life with anything dearer than my life and my blood, I would have done that. My master, blessing be upon you. I bear God as the witness that I have chosen you and your fathers as my leaders." Then, he unsheathed his sword and rushed towards the enemies, while he already had a wound on his forehead.⁷³

From the enemy army Rabi' bin Tamim Harithi said: As soon as I saw `Abis approaching us, I recognized him. I had seen his braveries in various wars and he was the bravest of people. Hence, I told my men: "O people! Beware this is the bravest lion, the son of Shabib. No one should challenge him. The best solution is to stone him from distance, and they did so."

⁷¹ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 23-24; also see al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 196 for the first two verses.

⁷² See al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 24 and al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 441, where they give a brief account of Zuhair's martyrdom; Tabarī relates the names of his first murderers as Kathīr bin Abd-Allah al-Sha`bī, Kharazmī adds to that also Muhājir bin Aws al-Tamīmī.

⁷³ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 443-444, also see al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 197 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 105-106 for brief accounts.

`Abis was waiting in the battlefield and calling: "Is there a man to challenge this man?" However, no one dared to face him. `Umar bin Sa`d commanded his people to shoot him with stones and arrows.

`Abis removed his shield and attacked them like a lion. With his attack he chased the enemies away. The narrator says: "By God, I saw `Abis who scared 200 men away and was chasing them." Then they surrounded him and killed him. Chiefs of the army were taking his head in their hand and each of them was claiming it is him who killed `Abis. Umar bin Sa`d met them and told: "This is a pointless argument; one did not kill him single-handedly." and hence, he dismissed them.⁷⁴

Habib bin Mudhahir in the Battlefield

Habib bin Mudhahir al-Asadi came to the battlefield and recited the following epics:

"I am Habib and my father is Mudhahir;
I am a cavalier in the battlefield and a blazing fire.
You are more in number and armor, but
we are superior and more evident concerning reason,
You breached your promises, when you were supposed to keep them, and
we are more loyal and more persistent,
indeed, we are more pious than you and more justified."⁷⁵

Then he commenced a fierce attack and killed a person from Bani Tamim, whose name was Badil bin Suraim. Someone else from Bani Tamim attacked Habib in order to take revenge and wounded him by a spear; when Habib tried to stand again, Hasin bin Tamim stroke him by sword on his head and he fell on earth. A Tamimi man came down from his horse and cut Habib's head.

When Imam Husain (peace be upon him) learned about his martyrdom, he said: I ask Allah for reward for my and my companions' calamities.

Husain bin Tamim approached the Tamimi who killed Habib and told him: "I was also your partner in killing Habib bin Mudhahir with you."

He said: "No, by God, you were not my partner."

⁷⁴ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 444 on the authority of Abu-Mikhnaf from Numair bin Wa`lah and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 26-27.

⁷⁵ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 439, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 195, and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 22.

Hasin bin Tamim said: “Then give me Habib’s head so that I can hang it from my the neck of my horse so that people see that I have also been involved in killing Habib. I will then return the head to you. I do not need the reward that Ibn Ziad will give you.”

The Tamimi man gave the head to Hasin bin Tamim. He also wandered around with the head and returned the head to the Tamimi man. When the man returned to Kufah, he was hanging the head from the neck of his horse.⁷⁶

A Turkish Servant in the Battlefield

Then a Turkish-speaking servant whose name was Aslam decided to go to the battle. He was a servant of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and he was a master in reciting Quran. He joined the battle while he was reciting the following epics:

“Due to my strong blows the sea shakes and
the air fills with my arrows and spears.
When my sword appears in my hands,
the heart of the envious and the malicious tears apart.”

Husain’s servant attacked the heart of the army heroically and after killing a number of enemies, he also departed to the paradise.

Imam Husain (peace be upon them) approached his Turk servant, cried for him and put his face on his. Aslam, who was breathing his last breaths opened his eyes and saw that his head is on Imam’s lap. He smiled out of satisfaction and his soul departed from Imam’s side to the paradise.⁷⁷

Burair bin Khudhair al-Hamdani joins the Battle

Burair bin Khudhair al-Hamdani was a pious and righteous man and was the master of his time in reciting Quran and he was called the “master of Quran reciters”. He joined the battle while reciting the following epics:

“I am Burair and my father is Khudhair,
whoever does not support his master, will not see any good in his life.”

He commenced an attack and challenged the army of `Umar bin Sa’d with the following words: “O’ killers of God’s servants! Come to me, and O’ killers of the sons of the heros in Badr, come to me, and O’ the killers of the sons of the messenger of the Lord and O’ the killers of the offsprings of the Muslim forefathers, come to my battle.”

⁷⁶ See al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 21-22; he quotes the name of the murderer as “Badil bin Sarim”.

⁷⁷ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 28; the narration of Kharazmi is almost identical to above; however, he does mention the name of the servant.

Yazid bin Ma`qil among the enemies responded to Burair's challenge and said: "O' Burair! Have you seen what Allah has inflicted upon you?"

Burair said: "God has not spared me any favor indeed, but has inflicted doom and curse upon you."

Yazid said: "You were not a liar before, but you lied today. Do you remember the day when we were walking in the Bani Lawdhan district and you were saying: Uthman did evil to himself, Mu`awiah was astray and the true leader of guidance was Ali bin Abi-Talib (peace be upon him)?"

Burair said: "I witness before my Lord that I still believe what I said then."

Yazid said: "I also witness that you are among those who went astray."

When Burair saw this said: "Let us perform Mubahilah (i.e., invoke God's doom upon the liar) and ask God to inflict curse upon the one who lies, so that the one who is on the right path kills the one who is led astray."

Then they did Mubahilah and went to fight each other. Yazid stroke Burair first but it did not hit him properly and he was not wounded seriously. But then Burair stroke him with such a blow on his head that his head was cut open and the sword got stuck in his head.⁷⁸ Afterwards Radhi bin Munqidh al-'Abdi attacked Burair and they fought one another for some time. Finally, Burair knocked him and sat on his chest. In the meanwhile, Ka`b bin Jabir al-Azdi attacked burair from the back and hit Burair's back by his spear; Afif bin Zuhari cried: "This person is Burair bin Khudhair, the very Quran reciter who taught us Quran in Kufah Mosque", but Ka'b neglected him and hit Burair by sword and killed him. Allah's blessing be upon him.⁷⁹

When Ka`b bin Jabir returned, his wife told him: "Did you fight against the son of Fatimah? Did you kill Burair the master of reciters? I will never talk to you anymore."

Ka'b recited a poem with the following content:

"O' woman! Ask me so that I can inform you.
Husain came forward, while the spears were soaring,
did I not do the ultimate evil, according to you, and
thoughts could not figure out what I was up to the day after?
I had a sharp spear, whose wounds were severe, and
a sword which had sharp blades on both sides.
I took them out against people whose religion was not like mine, and

⁷⁸ Ibn Tāwus, p. 160.

⁷⁹ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 14-15, where some parts of dialogue between Burair and Yazid are abridged. He also quotes the name of the one who killed Burair differently.

I am content with being involved in such a fight.
I have never seen such people in their time, and
before them among people, as I grown up (among them).
They are the strongest in hitting their swords in battles,
while not any one who is in fight beats.
They endured wounds and punches with great patience, and
if there were any rescue, they would have sought it. ...”⁸⁰

`Amr bin Quradhah al-Ansari joins the Battlefield

Then `Amr bin Quradhah al-Ansari came out, asked Imam Husain (peace be upon him) for permission, joined the battlefield⁸¹ and recited the following epics:

“Soon the companions battalion will know that,
I will indeed protect the territory,
I will fight like a man and will never flee,
before Husain, who is my heart and all that I have.”⁸²

He fought wholeheartedly and killed many of the Ibn Ziad’s army. No arrow was shot towards Imam Husain (peace be upon him), but he would shield him by his hands and no sword was being pointed towards Husain (peace be upon him), but he would protect him by his body. He would not let anyone wound Husain until wounds covered his body. Then he looked back at Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and said: “Did I fulfill my oath?”

Imam said: “Yes, you will enter paradise before me. Convey my greetings to the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny) and tell him: I will also join you following my companions.”⁸³

`Amr had a brother who was in `Umar bin Sa`d’s army. He told Imam Husain (peace be upon him): “You deceived my brother and put him to death.”

Imam said: “I did not deceive your brother, but Allah guided him and let you go astray.”

He said: “May God kill me if I do not kill you before I die”, and he attacked Imam. Nafi` bin Hilal blocked his way and pinned him to earth by his spear. The comrades of the man came and rescued him from among Imam’s companions.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 15; also see al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 432-433, and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 197 for a brief account.

⁸¹ Ibn Tāwus, p. 162.

⁸² See al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 434

⁸³ Ibn Tāwus, pp. 162-163.

An Orphan Young Man the Battlefield

A young man, whose father was killed in the battlefield, came out, while his mother was accompanying him. His mother said: "O' my son, join the battle and fight before the son of the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny)."

The young man came out. Husain (peace be upon him) said: "This young man has lost his father; perhaps his mother does not want him to go to the battle."

He said: "My mother has commanded me to do so."

He went to the field and recited the following epics:

"My commander is Husain and what an excellent commander he is,
the joy in the heart of the bearer of good tidings and the warner (the Prophet),
Ali and Fatimah are his parents,
then, do you know any pair for him?
He has a glow like the son at the middle of the sky,
He has a splendor like the rising full moon."

He fought until he was killed. They cut his head and threw it towards the army of Husain (peace be upon him). His mother took his head and said: "Well done my son! O' the joy of my heart and the light of my eyes!" Then he threw the head back to the army, removed the pillar of the tent and attacked them while reciting the following poems:

"I am a disabled old man from the army of my master Husain,
an old and meager old women,
I hit you with agonizing blows, and
protect the territory of the descendants of Fatimah."⁸⁵

`Amr bin Khalid al-Saidawi joins the Battlefield

`Amr bin Khailid al-Saidawi came out and told Imam Husain (peace be upon him): "O' Aba Abd-Allah! I would like to join my companions. I do not want to remain alive and see you and your family martyred lonely."

Husain (peace be upon him) said: "Then proceed and we will join you in a moment."

`Amr went to the battlefield and fought until he was killed.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ See al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 434

⁸⁵ See al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 25-26.

⁸⁶ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 28 and Ibn Tāwus, pp. 163-164; also see al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 446, where he relates that `Amr was killed together with a few other companions at the beginning of the battle.

Handhalah bin S`ad al-Shabami joins the Battlefield

Handhalah bin S`ad al-Shabami came forward, and stood in front of Husain (peace be upon him). He would shield Imam from arrows and spears by his body.

He started crying: "O people! I fear for you as I feared for you the same fate as that of the people in the war of Ahzab and that of the people of Noah, `Ad, Thamud and those who came after them. God never wants to oppress His servants. O' people! I worry about you in the day of resurrection: the day in which you return backwards and do not find a shelter before God. O' people!⁸⁷ Do not kill Husain as Allah will afflict you with His punishment and whoever falsely accuses others is lost.⁸⁸ " ⁸⁹

Imam Husain (peace be upon him) told him: "O' the son of As'ad! These people are subject to God's punishment, because you have invited them to truth, but they rejected your invitation and instead, cursed you and uttered inappropriate words. How will these people be led to the right path, while they killed your righteous brothers."

He said: "May I be sacrificed for you, you are right. Shall I not depart towards my God and join my brothers?"

Imam said: "Yes, do rush towards what is best for you than the whole world and whatever is in it, towards the eternal world."

He bid Husain (peace be upon him) farewell and said: "Blessing be upon you, O' the son of the Prophet of God! Peace be upon you and your progeny, may Allah gather us and you all in the paradise!"

Imam said: "Amen, amen!"

He joined the battlefield and fought a fierce fight and eventually they attacked him jointly and killed him."⁹⁰

Nafi' bin Hilal al-Jamli joins the Battlefield

Nafi' bin Hilal al-Jamli went to the battlefield and fought fiercely. He was a skilled archer; he had poisoned his arrows and wrote his name on every one of them. While shooting his arrows, he would recite the following epics:

⁸⁷ Referring to (al-Ghafir (40) / 30-33)

⁸⁸ Referring to (Taha (20) / 61)

⁸⁹ Ibn Tāwus, pp. 164-165.

⁹⁰ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 443, al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 28, and Ibn Tāwus, p. 164; also see al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 105, where his sermon is quoted.

“I am shooting with this arch, and with arrows whose blades are marked,
it is of no use to be kind to anyone,
I target them with poisoned arrows, and
I have to target all over this field.”

He shot all his arrows to the last one and then took his sword, while reciting the following epics:

“I am a brave man from Yemen and from Jaml,
whose name religion is that of Husain and Ali (peace be upon them).
If I am killed today, then I have fulfilled my old wish,
this has always been my belief and by sacrificing my life,
I will have realized my belief.”

The enemy encircled him and shot him with stones until they broke his arms and captivated him. Shimr brought him to Ibn Sa’d. Ibn Sa’d told him: “Woe unto you, O’ Nafi’! What made you do this to yourself.”

Nafi’ said, while he was bleeding all over his face: “Allah knows best what I meant with this. Have I had only one arm, you could never have captivated me.”

Shimr raised his sword to kill him.

Nafi’ told him: “By God, if you were a Muslim, you have found it difficult to meet Allah with our bloods on your hands. Praise is God’s, who have put our death on the worst of his creatures.” Then Shimr martyred him.⁹¹

Banu Hashim joining the Battlefield

The companions of Husain (peace be upon him) came forward one by one and said: “Peace be upon you, O’ the son of the Prophet.”

Husain (peace be upon him) would answer their greeting and tell them: “Proceed and we will soon join you, and he would recite the following verse: “of them some have completed their vows and some await...”⁹² “

Soon the last one among the companions was martyred and apart from his household no one remained; these included the sons of Ali (peace be upon him), the sons of Ja`far (peace be upon him), the sons of `Aqil (peace be upon him), the sons of Hasan (peace be upon him) and his own sons. They, who were 17 persons or a few more, gathered, bade farewell to each other and went to the battle.

⁹¹ See al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 435 and 441-442 and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 197 for a brief account.

⁹² Referring to (al-Ahzab (33) / 23)

ʿAli Akbar joining the Battlefield

ʿAli ibn al-Husain, known as ʿAli al-Akbar, whose mother was Laila the daughter of Abi-Mirrah bin ʿUrwah bin Masʿud al-Thaqafi, whose mother was Maimunah bin Ab-Sufian bin Harb, came to the battlefield. He was the most handsome man of his time and had the best manner among them.⁹³ Some have noted age as 18 and others have noted it as 25; some have narrated that he was married by then. He was so unique in his virtues that poets had composed several poems in his honor, such as the following:

“No eye has ever seen his like,
among those who passed away and those who walk,
I mean the son of Laila, who has virtues and ,
I mean the son of the lady who is of a prominent lineage,
He never favors this world over his religion, and
never sells truth for falsehood.”⁹⁴

Ali al-Akbar asked his father for permission to join the battle. Imam gave him permission and stared at him desperately, while tears filled his eyes and he started crying. Then he pointed towards the sky and said:

“O’ Lord! Bear witness against these people! I have sent to them a young man who was the most similar to the Prophet of God, in his manner and his outlook. Whenever we longed for the Prophet of God (peace be upon him and his progeny), we looked at him.⁹⁵ O’ Allah, deprive them of the abundance of the earth, make them divided, tore them apart⁹⁶ and make their chiefs discontent with them forever, because they did not respond to our call for help and instead fought with us.”

Then he cried: “O, the son of Sa’d! May Allah separate you from your relatives and deprive your affairs of His blessings and after me, give authority to one who will kill you in your bed, just as you separated me from my relatives,⁹⁷ and did not respect my relation to the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny).

Then he recited the following verses:

“Allah did choose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of 'Imran above all people. * Offspring, one of the other: And Allah heareth and knoweth all things.^{98, 99}

Ali al-Akbar attacked the enemies fiercely, while reciting the following epics:

⁹³ Ibn Tāwus, p. 166.

⁹⁴ al-Isfahānī, pp. 86–87.

⁹⁵ Ibn Tāwus, p. 166.

⁹⁶ Referring to (Al-Jinn (72) / 11)

⁹⁷ Ibn Tāwus, p. 166.

⁹⁸ (Al-Imran (3) / 33-34)

⁹⁹ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 34-35

“I am Ali the son of Husain the son of Ali,
I and the house of God are closer to the Prophet,
By God, the son of the bastard (Yazid) will never rule over us,
I strike them by sword, protecting my father,
the blow of a young Hashemite Alawite.”¹⁰⁰

Ali al-Akbar fought very hard and then came back to his father and asked him:

“O’ father! Thirst is killing me and the weight of iron has exhausted me, is there a sip of water?”

Imam Husain started crying and said:

“Oh dear! From where could I find water for you!? Please go back to the battle; soon you will meet your grandfather Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) and he will quench your thirst with heavenly water. He will quench your thirst in such a way that you will never become thirsty again.”¹⁰¹

He came back to the battle and attacked the enemies from various directions, and the people of Kufah refrained from killing him. Murrah bin Munqidh looked at Ali al-Akbar and said:

“You attack in such a way that I feel the burden of all Arab’s sins if I do not make your mother mourn for you.”

Murrah stroke him by his sword (or according to some narrations by his spear) and Ali fell on earth. He called his father and said:

“O’ father! My greetings to you! Here is my grandfather, he is bringing me a drink after which I have no thirst, he gives his greetings to you, and asks you to rush in coming towards us!”

People surrounded all around him and cut him by their swords in pieces. Imam Husain rushed to his body, kneeled before Ali, put his face on Ali’s, and said:

“Oh my son! May Allah kill those who killed you! How disgraceful these people have become towards God and disrespected the Prophet of God!? After you, woe unto this world and the life therein.”

Zainab, the daughter of Ali (peace be upon them), rushed out of her tent, crying:

“Oh my dear! Oh the son of my brother!”

¹⁰⁰ al-Mufid, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 106 and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 35 and also see al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 446, where he relates the first three verses.

¹⁰¹ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 35

She came and fell on his body. Husain (peace be upon him) took her hand and brought her back to the tent. He then turned to the youth of Bani Hashim and said: "Come forward and take the body of your brother." They took Ali al-Akbar's body to the tent in front which they were fighting.¹⁰²

Abd-Allah bin Muslim bin `Aqil joining the Battlefield

Then Abd-Allah bin Muslim bin `Aqil bin Abi-Talib, whose mother was Ruqaiyah bint Ali ibn Abi-Talib (peace be upon them) came to the battlefield and recited the following epics:

"Today I will meet Muslim, who is my father, and
also (meet) those heroes who departed on the path of Prophet,
those were people who never knew lies,
righteous people from the prominent lineage
of Hashim, they are noble men, who are of great honor."

He attacked thrice and each time sent a few to the hell. Eventually Yazid bin al-Raqqad al-Juhani shot him by an arrow; Abd-Allah tried to shield himself by his hand, but his hand was pinned to his forehead by the arrow and he could not take it out.

He said: "O' Allah! These people dishonored us. Kill them as they killed us." Then Yazid bin al-Raqqad shot him by another arrow and someone else stroke him by a spear and due to that he was martyred. Allah's peace and blessing be upon him.¹⁰³

Muhammad bin Muslim bin `Aqil joining the Battlefield

Then Muhammad bin Muslim bin `Aqil came to the battlefield, fought and was martyred. Abu-Jurhum al-Azdi and Laqit bin Yasir al-Juhani were those who killed him.

Muhammad bin Abi-Sa`id bin Nufail joining the Battlefield

Then Muhammad bin Abi-Sa`id bin Nufail (peace be upon him) came to the battlefield, and fought until he was martyred. Laqit bin Yasir al-Juhani shot him by an arrow and killed him. After him, three other brothers of his, namely, Ja`far, Abd-al-Rahman, and Abd-Allah al-Akbar joined the field and were martyred.

¹⁰² al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 445-447, al-Isfahānī, pp. 115—116, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 106-107, and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 35-36; also see Ibn Tāwus, p. 167 for an abridged account.

¹⁰³ See al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 447 and also al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 30 for a brief account of his martyrdom.

Muhammad bin Abd-Allah bin Ja'far joining the Battlefield

Then Muhammad bin Abd-Allah bin Ja'far bin Abi-Talib (peace be upon them) rode to the battlefield, whose mother was Khausa from Bani Tamim. Muhammad started reciting the following epics:

“I bring my grievance against these enemies to God,
and I kill those who are blind in their mischief,
they have left behind the teachings of the Quran,
and its fundamental revelations and guidance,
and they were adamant in disbelief and disobedience.”

He then attacked the enemies and killed 10. Finally, `Amir bin Nahshal al-Tamimi attacked and killed him. ¹⁰⁴

`Awn bin Abd-Allah bin Ja'far joining the Battlefield

Then Muhammad's brother `Awn bin Abd-Allah bin Ja'far (peace be upon them), whose mother was Zainab, the daughter of Imam al-Mu'minin (peace be upon them), rushed towards the battlefield. He recited the following epics:

“If you do not know me, then I am the son of Ja'far,
the martyr of truth, who is in the beautiful paradise.
He hovers there with green wings,
This suffices as an honor on the day of resurrection.”

Then he fought the enemies and killed some. Finally Abd-Allah bin Qahutabah al-Ta'i attacked him and martyred him. ¹⁰⁵

Qasim bin al-Hasan joining the Battlefield

Qasim bin al-Hasan bin Ali bin Abi-Talib (peace be upon them), whose mother was Umm-Walad, came to the battlefield. He was a young man, who did not yet reach adolescence. When Imam Husain (peace be upon him) saw that he has prepared himself to fight, he hugged him and they both cried. Then Qasim asked his uncle for permission to go to the battlefield. Imam (peace be upon him) would not give him permission, he kept on kissing Imam's hands and feet, until Imam gave him permission.

¹⁰⁴ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 30-31

¹⁰⁵ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 447 and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 31

Qasim joined the battlefield while his face was still full of tears and while he was reciting the following epics:

“If you do not know me, then I am the son of Hasan,
the grandson of the chosen and the trusted prophet.
This is Husain who is like an imprisoned captive,
among people, may them be denied the rain of clouds (the blessings of God).”

Qasim fought fiercely.

Hamid bin Muslim narrates:

“A teenager came to the battlefield, whose face was shining like the moon. ¹⁰⁶ He had a sword in his hand and covered himself by a shirt and a cloth. He wore a pair of sandals, the lace of one of which was torn. I can still remember that the lace of the left sandal was torn.

‘Amr bin Sa’d bin Nufail al-Azdi said: This teenager is making a big noise. If he comes towards me, I admit the sin of the Arab unless I make his uncle mourn for him.

I told him: God is exalted! What do you gain by killing this teenager? Even if he strikes me, I will never extend my hand towards him. Leave him alone; this crowd is sufficient for killing him. Do you see how they have surrounded him?

He said: By God, I will strike him fiercely. He attacked Qasim fiercely and stroke him by a blow on his head. Qasim fell on his face and cried: “O’ Uncle!”

Imam rushed to him like a hawk; he first swiftly attacked ‘Amr bin Nufail and stroke him with a blow. ‘Amr use his arm to shield himself, but his arm was cut from his shoulder. He screamed so hard that the whole army heard him. Then Imam turned back from him. The enemies rushed to save him but it became such a chaos that he eventually died under the crowd.

When the dust settled the army saw that Husain was sitting beside Qasim and Qasim and Qasim was struggling in his warm blood. Imam Husain said then:

“May those who have killed you be deprived of God’s blessings.”

Then he sighed deeply and said:

“By God, it has been extremely tough for your uncle that you called him for help and he could not help you, or come to your rescue when it was to no avail. By God, his enemies are numerous and his supporters are few.” Then he took the body of Qasim and hugged him. ¹⁰⁷

[The narrators says:] It is as if I see Husain right now, who is bringing the body of this young man, while his feet are being dragged on earth. Husain brought his body and put it next to Ali al-Akbar and the other martyrs. Then he said:

“O’ God! Count them one by one, do not leave a single one of them, and never forgive them! ¹⁰⁸”

¹⁰⁶ Ibn Tāwus, p. 167.

¹⁰⁷ al-Isfahānī, p. 93, al-Mufid, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 107-108., and Ibn Tāwus, p. 168.

I asked who the young man was, they said: “He was Qasim bin al-Hasan bin Ali bin Abi-Talib.” Imam Husain (peace be upon him) then cried among his progeny: “O’ my cousins! Be patient and keep calm. By God, after today, you will never face humiliation.”

Afterwards several sons of Ali ibn Abi-Talib went to the battlefield, fought and were martyred. ¹⁰⁹

Hadhrat Abbas (peace be upon him) joins the Battlefield

After the sons of Imam Ali ibn Abi-Talib, their oldest brother Abbas bin Ali (peace be upon them) rushed to the battlefield. Hadhrat Abbas (peace be upon him) were 34 years old and his designations were the “water carrier” and “the moon of Bani-Hashim”. He was the carrier of the flag in the army of Imam Husain (peace be upon them). He had a handsome face and a strong and tall body. Whenever he rode his horse, his feet would reach the earth. ¹¹⁰

He was the last man remaining with Husain (peace be upon him). When he asked for permission, Imam said: “But you carry my flag.” Hadhrat Abbas said:

“O brother, I am losing my patience and I would like to take my revenge from these hypocrites.”

Imam said:

“Then please go and bring some water for these kids.”

Hadhrat Abbas went towards the enemies and preached them for a while and warned them about God’s anger. However, preaching for those hateful hearts was to no avail.

He cried loudly:

“O’ `Umar bin Sa`d! This is Husain, the son of the Prophet’s daughter; you have killed his companions and progeny, and this is his household and children, who are thirsty. Bring them some water, as thirst has burnt their hearts. He is nevertheless asking: “Leave me to go to Rome or India and I leave Hijaz and Iraq for you.””

Shimr shouted in his loudest voice:

¹⁰⁸ Referring to (al-Jinn (72) / 28) and (al-Kahf (18) / 47)

¹⁰⁹ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 445-447, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 108, and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 31-32. Kharazmi first relates that there is doubt whether Qasim first joined the battlefield or Abd-Allah, but settles for the former in the end.

¹¹⁰ al-Isfahānī, p. 89.

“O’ the son of Abi-Turab! If the whole earth were covered by water, and it was in our hands, we would never give you a drop, unless you pledge your allegiance to Yazid.”

He returned to inform Husain about his preaching and that it did not have any effect on them, but he heard the children in the tents crying and complaining about thirst. He rode his horse again, took a water-skin and proceeded towards the Euphrates bank. 4000 soldiers surrounded him and started shooting at him from all directions, but, he disregarded all of them, without being jeopardized, recited the following epics:

“I am the one who is known by my roar,
the son of `Ali, who is also named Haidar.”

He dispersed the crowd of enemies and entered the river. He caught some water in his hands and brought it up to drink, but remembered the thirst of Husain; he threw it and recited the following poems:

“O’ you! After Husain is humiliation,
and after him you are not to exist.
This is Husain drinking the potion of martyrdom,
and you drink cold and clear water?
No, by God, this is not a deed allowed by my religion,
neither is it a deed allowed by truth and conviction.”

Then he filled the water skin and proceeded towards the tents. They blocked his way and he would attack them and recite:

“I will not be afraid of death, when it creams,
until I am buried in the battlefields,
I am indeed Abbas, moving to carry water,
hence, I am not afraid of the vice of the day we meet,
may my life be sacrificed for the grandson of the cleansed prophet.”

He scattered the enemies, but Zaid bin Warqa’ hid himself behind a tree and stroke Hadhrat Abbas’ right hand and cut it. Hadhrat Abbas held the sword in his right hand and kept on fighting while reciting the following epics:

“By God if you cut my right hand,
I will forever defend my religion,
and my genuine truthful leader,
the offspring of the cleansed and the trustworthy prophet.”

Hakim bin Tufail hid behind another tree and cut Hadhrat Abbas’ left hand. He pressed the flag to his chest and recited:

“O you! Do not be afraid of the unbelievers,
and glory in the blessing of the almighty,
in the company of the prophet, the chosen master,
due to their disobedience, they cut my left hand,
hence, O’ Lord! Enter them in the blazing hell.”

They attacked him from all directions and arrows started falling like rain drops. Finally, an arrow hit the water-skin and the water spilled down, an arrow landed in his chest and another one in his eye. A wretched enemy hit his head by a rod and hence he fell on earth, while crying: “Peace be upon you, O’ Aba-Abd-Allah!”

Another narration has it that he said: “O’ my brother, Husain! Please attend to me!”

Imam Husain rushed to him and attended his body, while his right and left hands were cut and his body was wounded all over. Imam praised him, cried loudly and said: “And now, my backbone is broken and I have no relief.”

Then he commenced a fierce attack on the enemies; he would attack the heart of the enemy’s crowd from right and from left and they would escape altogether. He said: “Were are you escaping, while you are the ones who killed my brother? Where are you escaping while you are the ones who broke my arm?”

He chased the enemies away from around his brother’s body and returned to him. While he was sitting next to his brother, Aba-al-Fadhil al-Abbas’ pure soul left his body and Imam bade farewell from him right there.

Imam rose from the side of brother’s body and returned to the tents, while he was grieved and mournful and was wiping his tears by the side of his sleeve. Sukaynah came forward and asked about his uncle. Imam told him about uncle’s martyrdom. When Zainab (peace be upon her) heard this, started crying and mourning while saying: “O’ my brother! O’ Abbas! What a disaster (is awaiting us) after you!” The ladies started crying and Imam Husain also cried with them and said: “Oh, we are all stricken by a calamity after you.”¹¹¹

After Abbas was martyred, Imam Husain (peace be upon them) looked around and could not find any supporter to help him. He looked around and saw the young martyrs from his progeny and his companions, cut in pieces, like sheep in a slaughterhouse, all lying in their blood and dust. From the other side, he could hear wives and children mourning for their loved ones. He cried: “Is there a defender who can defend the honor of the Prophet of God (peace be upon him and his progeny)? Is there a God-fearing person, who fears God in our cause? Is there a rescuer who has any hope in God’s reward in rescuing us? Is there a supporter wishing God’s blessing in supporting us?”

¹¹¹ Ibn Shahr ‘Ashub, Manaqib, vol. 4, p. 108. See also al-Mufid, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 109 and Ibn Tāwus, p. 170 where it is related that Hadhrat `Abbas accompanied Imam Husain (peace be upon them) and he was martyred while the enemies separated between him and Imam Husain (peace be upon them).

Farewell the Little Son

Then he asked for his little child in order to bid him farewell, and Zainab brought him his little son Abd-Allah (also known as Ali al-Asqar) and his mother was al-Rubab.

He sat him in his lap, kissed him and said: "How far is (the blessing of God) from these people, while your grandfather is their enemy."

He brought him forward to the enemies in order to ask a bit of water for him, but Harmalah bin Kahil al-Asadi shot him by an arrow, while he was still in the lap of his father.¹¹²

Husain would collect the blood in his hand and throw it towards the sky. He said: "It gives me relief, against all that is occurring to me, that it is before the eye of Allah, the exalted.¹¹³ O' God, this is not more benign than the slaughter of Salih's camel. O' God if You have kept back the support, please replace that with what is better for us and take our revenge from the oppressor. Please save what is occurring to us soon, as our resource for hereafter. O' God bear witness against those who killed the one most similar to the Prophet of God."

He laid the body of his child in full blood next to the bodies of the martyrs from Ahl al-Bait and some narrated that he dug a small grave for his son by the tip of his sword and buried his son there.¹¹⁴

Death is Dearer than Humiliation

He had hence no more hope in this short-lived life, he unsheathed his sword, faced the enemies and challenged them for battle. Whoever accepted the challenge, bade farewell to life and would enter the hell by Imam's sword. He constantly fought them and was calling for opponents. When he saw that no one dares to accept his challenge, he commenced an attack to the right wing of the army while reciting the following epics:

"Death is better than suffering humiliation
and humiliation is more worthy than entering the hell,

¹¹² See al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 448, al-Isfahānī, pp. 94–95, Ahmad bin Dawud al-Dinwari, al-Akhabr al-Tiwal, p. 255, and al-Mufid, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 108 (where al-Tabarī, al-Dinawari, and al-Mufid relate that someone from Bani Asad killed `Abd-Allah and al-Isfahani relates by the authority of Hamid b. Muslim that it was Aqabah b. Bushr who killed him.)

¹¹³ Ibn Tāwus, p. 168-169.

¹¹⁴ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 37 and al-Mufid, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 108.

By God neither of the two is in my manners.”

Then he attacked the left wing while reciting:

“I am Husain, the son of Ali,
I swear that I will not return from the right path,
I protect the progeny of my father, and
I pass on the religion of the Prophet.”

In a narration, we read:

“By God, I have never seen a person who has incurred so many losses among his sons, family members and companions, yet is so calm, daring and courageous. By God, neither before him, nor after him, I never saw a person like him. No matter how fiercely the coward enemy attacked him, he would respond to them by his sword and push them back from right and left. They would run away the way a sheep herd is chased by a wolf. Whenever he would attack them, they would flee like insects and Imam would return to his place and recite: “There is no power and no strength but by God.”¹¹⁵

When Shimr saw this situation called for cavaliers and put them behind those afoot. Then he ordered the archers to shoot arrows on Imam; they shot so many arrows that Imam’s cloth was covered by arrows, like a hedgehog. They also turned around Imam and separated him from the tents where his family were residing.

Imam cried:

“O’ the followers of Abi-Sufian’s progeny, if you do not follow any religion, then at least be noble in this world of yours. Return to your forefathers (and their manners), if you are Arabs, as you pretend.”¹¹⁶

Shimr said: “O the son of Fatimah, what are you saying?”

Imam said: “I am saying: I am fighting you and you are fighting me. What is then the fault of the ladies? Prevent your rogue and foolish men from offending my household.”

As the Arabic poem says:

“He said, come to me and leave my household alone,
my time has come and the signs of my death have become evident.”¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 452, according to al-Tabarī, the person relating this is Abd-Allah bin `Ammar. See also al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 111, where similar words are related on the authority of Hamid bin Muslim. See also Ibn Tāwus, pp. 170-171 for an abridged account.

¹¹⁶ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 450, al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 38, and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 202, where the latter relates the first sentence with a slight difference.

¹¹⁷ al-Isfahānī, p. 118 (where he relates a brief account of this dialogue).

Shimr said: “O’ the son of Fatimah, we will do it as you said”, and he cried: “O’ keep away from the household of this man and first kill him. By my life, he is a grand opponent.”

All attended to his fight and attacked Imam Husain (peace be upon him) from all sides. Imam also responded to their attack and chased them away; wherever he would lead his horse, he would hit them with his sword and they would keep back from him and let him pass. He was extremely thirsty, but did not have any water. Hence, he led his horse towards Euphrates and chased `Amr bin Hajjaj who was protecting the shores of Euphrates with 4000 soldiers. He entered water and told his horse: “I am thirsty and you are, too. I will not drink until you drink sufficiently.”¹¹⁸

As if the horse understood what Imam said, it refrained from drinking. Imam bent down to take a handful of water, but as he put his hand in the water, someone cried: “Are you drinking water, while they attacked your household?”¹¹⁹

Last Praises of the Lord

Imam threw the water and rushed towards the tents and started fighting. He kept on fighting until he had 72 wounds on his body.¹²⁰ He stood a bit to rest, since he had been exhausted from the fight. While he was standing, Abu al-Hotuf al-Ju’fi, threw a stone, or shot an arrow according to some narrations, at his forehead. He took the side of his shirt to clean the wound on his forehead, when a three-headed poisoned arrow was shot at his heart. Imam sat and said: “In the name of Allah and by (the permission of) Allah and on the religion of the Prophet of Allah.”

He then faced the sky and said: “O’ Allah you know that these people are now killing the only existent son of the Prophet.” Then he removed the arrow from the back of his chest. Blood started flowing continuously and he bled so much that he did not have any strength to stand. He sat while he could hardly keep his neck straight. Malik bin Nasir al-Kindy approached Imam, cursed him, and hit him by his sword such that the piece of cloth covering Imam’s head became covered by blood. Imam said: “May you not eat and drink with your right hand; may you be resurrected among the oppressor.”¹²¹

¹¹⁸ al-Mufid, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 111 and Ibn Tāwus, pp. 170-171.

¹¹⁹ See Al-Dinawari, 258 and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 201 where he relates that Imam wanted to drink water but they threw an arrow, which stroke his lips (peace be upon him).

¹²⁰ Ibn Tāwus, p. 171.

¹²¹ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 448, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 203, al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 39-40 and Ibn Tāwus, p. 172.

Another Young Martyr

Imam removed the cloth he wore on his head and fixed his turban again. In the meanwhile, Abd-Allah bin al-Hasan (peace be upon them), who was an 11-year-old child rushed out of a tent towards his uncle Husain (peace be upon him). Zainab, the daughter of Ali (peace be upon them), followed him to block his way and Imam indeed cried:

“O’ sister, please do not allow him to leave the tents”, but he struggled to reach his uncle and finally managed, while saying: “I will never leave my uncle alone.”

Bahr bin Ka’b attacked Imam by his sword; Abd-Allah said to him:

“O’ the son of wicked! Do you want to kill my uncle.”

Bahr moved his sword towards Imam, but Abd-Allah shielded Imam by his hand; his hand was cut and was dangling from his body. Abd-Allah cried:

“O’ uncle”, or “O’ mother” according to some narrations.

Imam hugged him and said:

“O’ my nephew! Be patient in this calamity and be sure that you will be rewarded, and Allah will soon reunite you with your righteous forefather, the Prophet of God and his progeny, Ali, Hamzah, Ja`far, and Hasan.”

Then Harmalah bin Kahil al-Asadi shot him by an arrow and killed him while he was embraced by his uncle. ¹²²

Meeting Allah

At this moment, Imam Husain raised his hands towards the sky and said:

“O’ God, deprive them of the drops from the sky, and prevent from them the bounties of the earth.

O’ Allah if you have given them a limited term, then divide them immensely, and

disperse them among different paths, and never let their rulers be content with them,

because they invited us to support us, but they oppressed us and shed our blood.” ¹²³

Husain (peace be upon him) remained exhausted and wounded for a while in his shambles. They could have killed him right away, but each clan wanted to put the responsibility on the other and did not want to do this.

¹²² al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 450-451, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 202, al-Isfahānī, p. 116, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 110, and Ibn Tāwus, p. 173.

¹²³ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 451 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 110-111, where al-Mufīd does not relate the first sentence..

Hilal bin Nafi' says:

"I was with `Umar bin Sa`d's companion when I saw someone crying:

"O happy news to our commander: this is Shimr, who has just killed Husain. I left the crowd and stood close to the body of Imam Husain. He was then departing and by God, I have never seen someone covered in his blood, who is so shining and handsome. His face was so nice and shining that I was only fixed at his face and forgot to realize the ongoing events. He asked for water. Someone replied: "You will never taste water until you enter the hell and drink from its boiling water."

I heard Imam responding:

"Am I supposed to enter the hell and drink from its stale and boiling water? No, by God, I will visit my grandfather the Prophet of God (peace be upon him and his progeny) and will stay with him in his residence. In such a place of the virtuous, before the omnipotent Lord, I will drink a very soft water, which is not stale, and will take my complains regarding your atrocities to him."

They all became furious as if God has not put any mercy and love in their hearts. ¹²⁴

Imam Husain (peace be upon him) looked towards the sky and said:

"O' God, the owner of magnificence and might! O' the one who does not need his servants! O' the one who has glory! O' the one who has power over everything. Your mercy is near, your promise is true, your blessings are abundant, your trial is welcome. Whenever you are called, you are near and you compass your creatures. Whoever repents, you accept his/her repentance. Whatever you desire, you are able to perform. Whatever you will, happens. If they thank you, you accept. If they remember you, you will remember them. I call you in my need, and in my poverty, I approach you. In my fears, I seek refuge by you. Whenever I am sorrowful, I cry before you and whenever I am helpless, I seek your help and in my affairs, I rely on you. O' God! Judge between us and our people. They deceived, suppressed, and killed us, while we are the offspring of your Prophet and the sons of your beloved Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny), the very messenger whom you sent with your mission and trusted with your revelation. O' the most beneficent Prepare for us comfort and relief.

I accept your decree, O' Lord. There is no god save you. O the refuge of all refugees!"

Shimr cried on his soldiers:

"Woe unto you! Why do you give this man more time? May your mothers morn for you, kill him."

They started to attack him from all sides. Zar`ah bin Sharik hit his left shoulder by his sword, Imam responded and hit him by his sword and brought him to the ground. Someone else hit another blow to Imam's shoulder. Imam was exhausted and would stand for a while and fall for some other time. At this moment, Sinan bin `Anas put his spear in the Imam's neck, removed his spear and put it in his chest and shot an arrow in Imam's neck. Imam fell on earth, sat down, and removed the arrow. He would put his hand under the blood, and whenever his hands were

¹²⁴ Ibn Tāwus, p. 177.

full, would color his head and beard with his blood and would say: I will soon meet my Lord covered with this unjustly shed blood and confiscated right.¹²⁵

`Umar bin Sa`d told Sinan bin Anas:

“Woe unto you, come down from your horse and kill Husain.”

Sinan told Khuli:

“You go and behead him.”

Khuli tried to go and behead Imam, but he could not and started shaking.

Sinan, and according to some narrations Shimr, told him:

“May God break your arms, why are you shaking?”¹²⁶

Sinan, and according to some narrations Shimr, came down cut Imam’s holy head while he was saying:

“By God, I cut your head from your body, while I know that you are the chief and the leader and the son of the Prophet of God and the most prominent concerning your parents.”¹²⁷

Then he handed Imam’s head to Khuli and said:

“Take this head and deliver it to the commander, `Umar bin Sa`d.”¹²⁸

People rushed to lute Imam’s cloths. Ishaq bin Haiwah al-Hadhrami took his shirt. Akhnas took his turban,

Bajdal bin Sulaim al-Ka`bi cut Imam’s finger to take his ring.¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Ibn `Asākir, vol. 14, p. 223; also see al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 112 for an abridged account.

¹²⁶ al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 112, where the words are attributed to Shimr indeed.

¹²⁷ See Abi-al-Hasan Ali bin Muhammad Ibn al-‘Athir, Usd al-Ghabah fi Ma`rifah al-Sahābah, p.499, al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 454-455, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 204, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 113 and Ibn Tāwus, pp. 175-176, where they relate that they rode their horses on the bodies of the martyrs. Tabari and Mufid relate that this has been done by the direct order of `Umar bin Sa`d.

¹²⁸ al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 112.

¹²⁹ See Ibn Tāwus, pp. 177-179 for a more detailed account. See al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 204, where he relates the looting, while he mentions different names for those looted different objects. Also see Ibn `Asākir, vol. 14, p. 221 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 112.

Part III - Looted Tents and Captivated Progeny

Spreading the Message of Ashura

History still commemorates every year the heroic martyrdom of Husain ibn Ali ibn Abi-Talib (peace be upon them) and the return of the captivated progeny of the Prophet (peace be upon them) and the family of Husain (peace be upon them) to Karbala in order to mourn on their tombs.

Since 14 centuries ago, forty days after Ashura, on the day of Arba`in (literally meaning 40), the whole of Karbala mourns entirely and the congregations of mourners from all over the world gather in this city. They fill the streets and alleys of Karbala and altogether commemorate Arba`in. Karbala hosts a huge mourning ceremony in which people from all around the world come together and one does not see anything but mourners and their mourning flags and one does not hear anything but the sound of crying, morning and reciting the history of martyrdom of Imam Husain and his family and friends and the captivity of his progeny. They recall the sorts of unbearable calamities that this progeny has encountered in their journey from Karbala to Kufah and from Kufah to Damascus; in such a ceremony, they also cite how, in such dreadful situations, they did not come short of performing their mission and bringing the message of Imam Husain's martyrdom to people. In this section, we cite their sermons in which they promoted the goal of Imam Husain's mission in various places: in Kufah, before `Ubaid-Allah bin Ziad, in Damascus' Bazar, and before Yazid bin Mu`awiah. These sermons were delivered by Zainab, Umm-Kulthum and Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them). In particular, the powerful sermon delivered by Imam al-Sajjad shook the foundations of Yazid's throne and awakened the ignorant people.

In this section, we relate the second part of Maqatal as recited by Abd al-Zahra al-Ka`bi in the Iraqi Radio.

Looted Tents

Sayyid bin Tavus relates: "People were competing in looting the tents of the progeny of the Prophet and the beloved son of Lady Zahra (peace be upon them). The girls in the tent were crying loudly and were mourning for their family."

Hamid bin Muslim says: "I saw a woman from the offspring of Bakr bin Wa'il, who was together with his husband among the army of `Umar bin Sa`d. When she saw that people have entered the tents of Husain's family and disturbed the ladies, took a sword and rushed towards the tents, crying: "O' the family of Bakr bin Wa'il! Is it appropriate that the progeny of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) are being looted? There is no rule by Allah's! O' revenge for the blood of the Prophet of Allah!"

His husband took her and returned her to her tent.¹³⁰

Then they forced the ladies out of their tents and set the tents on fire. Ladies ran out, while they were sorrowful, mournful, and barefoot. The enemies told: "By God, move them along the place where Husain is killed."

They moved them alongside the bodies of the martyrs. As soon as they saw the bodies of the martyrs, they wept and they beat their faces."

An Arab poet composed a poem with the following content:

"They moved them along the bodies of martyrs,
Those bodies chopped into pieces and left on earth,
When Zainab saw Husain's body
covered with blood and wounds on earth,
she cut her dress of patience and fell on earth
like a collapsing mountain on the body of his brother.
My dear Husain, my dear brother,
the apple of my eyes, my hope and my wish,
the most precious one in my life.
What is this calamity that has struck me,
that however I call you, you do not reply?
You have never ignored and I am not used to this."

Another narration goes as follows:

"I never forget Zainab the daughter of Ali (peace be upon them), who was crying for Husain (peace be upon him) and with a sad voice and a broken heart was saying:

"O' dear Muhammad!

The greetings of the angels of the heaven be upon you!

This is Husain, who is covered by blood,

his organs are cut, his turban and cloth are taken, and your daughters are captivated.

Our complaint is put before God and Muhammad al-Mustafa, and Ali al-Murtada, and Fatimah al-Zahra', and Hamzah the chief of martyrs.

O' dear Muhammad! This is Husain on earth, whose head is cut from the back (of his neck)....

¹³¹

May my father be sacrificed for the one whose camp was slaughtered and plundered on the day of Monday,¹³²

¹³⁰ Ibn Tāwus, p. 180.

¹³¹ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 44-45, where he relates also some additional phrases not mentioned above; also see al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 204, where he relates the first few sentences. Also, see al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 456, where he relates slightly different sentences.

¹³² The day of `Ashura has been probably a Wednesday; hence, the statement of Hadrat Zainab (peace be upon her) probably refers to the day of the Prophet's demise and the event of Saqifah.

May my father be sacrificed for the one whose tents were destroyed,
May my father be sacrificed for the one who neither went on a trip such that his return is
expected, neither is he wounded such that his recovery is hoped.”¹³³

Revisiting the Brother

By God, Zainab's grief and mourn made the friend and enemy cry. Sukainah asked her aunt Zainab (peace be upon them): “With whom are you speaking?” “With your father, Husain!”, she answered. Sukainah threw herself from the camel back on the body of her father. She hugged her father's body and made everyone burst into tears.

ʿUmar bin Saʿd said: “Remove him from her father's body.” Some gathered and took her away from her father's body while tears were flowing.”¹³⁴

Dispatching the Heads

It is narrated that there were 78 heads removed from the bodies of the companions of Husain (peace be upon him). The chiefs of different clans divided the heads among themselves so that they can present them to Ibn Ziad and Yazid and thereby receive a distinguished position by them.

Kindah clan, whose chief was Qais bin Ash`ath, got 13 heads,

Hawazin clan, whose chief was Shimr bin Dhi-al-Jaushan, got 20 heads,

Tamim got 17 heads,

Bani-Asad clan got 6 heads,

Midhhaj got 7 heads,

and others brought the rest of martyrs' heads.¹³⁵

¹³³ Ibn Tāwus, p. 180, where he also relates some additional phrases, as well.

¹³⁴ See Ibn Tāwus, p. 180 for an abridged account.

¹³⁵ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 467, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 412, also see al-Dinawari, p. 259, where he relates the same numbers for Kindah and Tamim, and 22 heads for Hawazin, 6 heads for Bani-Asad, 5 heads for ʿAzd, and 12 for Thaḳīf. al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 207 relates by the authority of Abu-Mikhnaḳ that 20 heads

As soon as Ibn Sa`d left Karbala, a group of Bani-Asad gathered, prayed on the holy bodies of the martyrs and buried them as they were.¹³⁶

Entering Kufah: A Revolt is Born

Ibn Sa`d was taking the captives with him. As soon as they approached Kufah, the inhabitants of Kufah came out to see the captives. A Kufan woman came forward and from the roof of her house cries: "Among which captives are you?"

"Among the captives from the progeny of Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny)," responded the daughters of Ali (peace be upon them).

The woman came down and brought some cloths and scarfs for them. The way to Kufah was surrounded by people who had gathered to visit the captives and women and men bursted into tears.

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) turned to the Kufan and said: "If you are crying for our sake, then where are those who killed us?"¹³⁷

Zainab's Sermon in Kufah

Bushr bin Khuzaim al-Asadi relates: I saw that day Zainab, the daughter of Ali (peace be upon them), and I had never seen any speaker in this world more prudent than her. When she spoke, it was as if her father was speaking. She signaled the people to be silent: all kept their breathes and even the cowbells of camels stopped making any noise."

She then said:

"Praise is God's; may His blessing be upon my father Muhammad and his righteous progeny.

Then, O' the people of Kufah! O' the deceitful and the treacherous! Are you crying now? I wish no tear came out of your eyes and no moan and sigh came out of your throats. You are like the foolish old woman, who knitted a thread and then unraveled it.¹³⁸ Do you make a jest of your oath?

were given to Hawazin with Shimr as its chief, and 9 heads were given to Qaid; he agrees with the numbers carried by Kindah, Tamim, Bani-Asad, and Midhhaj.

¹³⁶ al-Dinawari, p. 257, al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 39, Ibn Tāwus, p. 190.

¹³⁷ Ahmad bin Ishāq al-Ya`qubi, Tārikh al-Ya`qubī, vol. 2, p. 245. Ibn A`tham, vol. 5, p. 120. Ibn Tāwus, p. 190.

¹³⁸ Referring to Quran / Nahl (16) / 92

Is there anything in you but betrayal, disgrace and hatred? You are like subservient slaves and the target of reprimand by the enemies. You are like green grass growing on the rubbish, or like silver on a grave. Evil indeed is what you have sent forward that Allah's wrath is on you and you are in doom you will abide.¹³⁹

Do you cry and moan? Yes, by God, you will cry more and smile less from now on, because you now carry an immense shame and disgrace that can never be removed by any means.

How could you possibly remove the shame of killing the son of the seal of the Prophets and the treasure trove of the divine mission? [You killed] the son of the Prophet, who was the chief of the youth of paradise, who was your refuge in in bewilderments and calamities, who enlightened you in discussions and arguments and who explained and related for you the tradition of your Prophet. What a huge burden you have put on your own shoulders? May you be deprived of Lord's blessings and may you be doomed! The efforts were undone, the hands were cut, you became the losers, you acquired the wrath of Allah for yourself and the seal of disgrace and dishonor has been put on your shoulders.

Woe unto you, O' the people of Kufah! Do you know that you have ripped the heart of the Prophet apart, you have shed his blood, you have removed the veils of their ladies, and you have disrespected his honor?

You did something that is more dreadful, horrendous, and evil than what the heavens and the earth can take.

Would you be surprised if the sky weeps blood from this calamity?

The doom hereafter will be more shameful and you will not be helped.¹⁴⁰ Beware this space that you are given does not keep you busy, since Allah does not rush into anything and does not fear missing any revenge and is on the lookout for you."

The narrator says: "By God, I saw people bewildered and flabbergasted. An old man next to me cried so much that his beards became wet of his tears, while he was repeating: "May my parents be sacrificed for you! Your elderly are the best of the elderly, your youth are the best among the youth, your ladies are the best among the ladies and your progeny are the best among the progenies; you will never be shameful, nor defeated."¹⁴¹

Umm-Kulthum's Sermon

Then Umm-Kulthum the daughter of Ali, while she was behind the curtain of her litter, and she were crying loud, delivered the following sermon:

¹³⁹ Referring to Quran / Ma'idah (5) / 80

¹⁴⁰ Referring to (al-Fussilat (41) / 16)

¹⁴¹ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 45-47, Ibn Shahr 'Ashub, vol. 4, p. 115; also see al-Mufid, al-'Amali, p. 321, al-Tusi, al-'Amali, p. 92, and Ibn Tāwus, p. 192 for a similar sermon; see also: Ibn Taifur, Balāghāt al-Nisā', p. 27, where a very similar sermon is attributed to Umm-Kulthum (peace be upon her).

“O’ the people of Kufah! Why did you disrespect Husain, killed him, looted his belongings and took their ownership, and captivated his family and disrespected them?

Doom unto you! What evil has caught you and what sins you have put on your shoulders! What bloods you have shed and which ladies you have captivated!
You have killed the best man after the Prophet.
Mercy has departed from you hearts.
But beware, the ultimate victory is for God’s party and indeed it is the party of the Evil which will perish.

Then she recited the following poems:

“You killed my brother unjustly, woe unto your mothers,
you will soon be punished with a fire with blazing heat.
You indeed shed the blood that is honored and respected by God,
and by Qur’an and by Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny).”

People raised their voices in crying; their women started mourning by disheveling their hairs, casting dirt on their heads, beating their faces and raising their voices in mourning. Men started crying as well. It has unheard of in the history of Kufah that women and men cry so much on any occasion.¹⁴²

Imam Zain al-Abidin’s Sermon

Then Imam Zain al-Abidin (peace be upon him) signaled the people to be silent. People became silent. He rose, praised God and sent the due blessings to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) and then said:

“O’ people! Whoever knows me, then he knows me and whoever does not know me, I introduce myself. I am Ali the son of Husain the son of Ali the son of Abi-Talib (peace be upon them).

I am the son of the one whose head was removed from his body, at the shore of Euphrates, while he did neither have enmity with anyone, nor did he take anyone’s property unjustly.

I am the son of the one who was killed after having been tortured and this suffices for my pride.

O’ people! I invite you to swear by God! Did you not write letters to my father, lied to him, and expressed your allegiance and pledge to him, and extended your hands towards him, but in the

¹⁴² Ibn Tāwus, p. 198; also see Ibn Taifur, p. 27 for a more elaborate sermon.

end, you fought with him and disrespected him? What an evil deed you sent forward and what vicious plans you devised.

If on the day of resurrection, the Prophet of God tells you: "You killed my progeny and disrespected my honor. You do not count any more among my people." How would you then face him and look at him?

People raised their voices in crying and started whispering to each other: "You are doomed while you do not notice."

Imam said:

"May Allah forgive those people, who, for the sake of God, accept my advice and admit my word about God, the Prophet of Allah and his progeny (peace be upon them), because the progeny of the Prophet act precisely according to the tradition of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny)."

They all said: "O' the son of the Prophet! We listen to your words and obey you. We follow you and in this path do not save any effort and will never turn our back to you. May Allah bless you. Command us in whatever you will.

We will be in war with whoever is in war with you, and we will be in peace with whoever is in peace with you. We take your revenge from Yazid and we disapprove of those who have oppressed us and you."

Imam replied: "Oh no! Oh no! O' the deceitful and the treacherous! May you be deprived of your wishes. Do you want to mistreat me the way you mistreated my father?"

By the God of the heavenly masses, our wounds are not yet healed. It was just the other day when my father and his progeny were killed, while the loss of the Prophet of God, my father and the sons of my father are still in mind and I still feel its bitter grief in my mouth and still sense its sorrow in my throat and still keep its mourning in my heart.

My only request to you is to be neither for us, nor against us."

Then he recited the following poems:

"It is no wonder that Husain is killed,
since the one who was better and more prominent than Husain was also killed.
O' people of Kufah, do not be glad of
what has occurred to Husain since it was a grave matter.
May my soul be sacrificed for the martyr on the shore of the river,
the recompense for his killer is the fire of the hell." ¹⁴³

¹⁴³ Ibn Tāwus, p. 199.

The narrator says:

“Ibn Ziad gave an audience in his palace. Husain’s head was brought forward. He put the head in front of himself, and while laughing kept on looking at it. With a stick that he had in his hand, beat Imam’s lips and teeth and said: “What nice teeth you had!”

Then he said: “O’ Aba Abd-Allah! How fast your hairs turned white? Today is the day that counts for the day of Badr.”¹⁴⁴

Companions Arguing with Ibn Ziad

Anas bin Malik was there and burst into tears when he saw these scenes and said: “Husain was the most akin to the Prophet of Allah and used to dye his beards by woad.”¹⁴⁵

Zaid bin Arqam, who was also an old companion of the Prophet was next to him. When he saw Ibn Zaid beating Imam’s lips and teeth by a stick, said: “Remove your stick from these lips. By God, I saw frequently the lips of the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny) kissing these lips.” Then, he started crying.

Ibn Ziad said: “May Allah make your eyes cry. Do you cry for the victory of God? If it were not for that you have become old and dumb, I would have beheaded you.”

Zaid bin Arqam rose while saying: “You will be enslaved by the Umayyad from now on, because you have killed the son of Fatimah (peace be upon them) and let the son of Marjanah rule over you. By God he will kill the virtuous among you, and will appoint the vicious among you. Woe unto those who submitted themselves to humiliation and disgrace.”¹⁴⁶

Then he said: “O’ Ibn Ziad! Let me relate a hadith for you that would be graver to you than what I said before. I saw the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his progeny), while he sat Hasan on his right lap and Husain on his left lap, fondled them and said: “O’ God I commend my sons and virtuous believers to you.” Now tell me the son of Ziad, how did you treat this heritage of the Prophet of God?”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ See al-Bukhārī, vol. 3, p. 1370, Ibn Sa’d, vol. 1, p. 482, and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 50, where this is related by Anas bin Malik (Bukhari relates that Ibn Ziad said something about his beauty); also see al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 49, where Ibn Ziad is related to say: “I have never seen such a nice head.”

¹⁴⁵ al-Bukhārī, vol. 3, p. 1370 and Ibn-`Asākir, vol. 14, pp. 126-127 and 235-236.

¹⁴⁶ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 456, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 207, al-Dinawarī, pp. 259-260 and Ibn ‘Athīr, Usd al-Ghābah, vol. 1, p. 499 and Ibn-`Asākir, vol. 14, pp. 236; see also al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 114 for an abridged account.

¹⁴⁷ al-Qādhī, vol. 3, p. 170 and Ibn al-Hillī, p. 92.

Hadhrat Zainab Arguing with Ibn Ziad

The ladies and the children of Husain were led into the audience of Ibn Ziad. Zainab the daughter of Ali (peace be upon them) entered without being recognized. Ibn Ziad asked about his; they said: “She is Zainab, daughter of Fatimah, the daughter of the Messenger of God (peace be upon them).”

He turned into her and said: “Praise is God’s, who has put you in disgrace, killed you and falsified your myths.”

Zainab answered: “Praise is God’s, who has honored us with his Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) and cleansed us from any abomination. Those who are disgraced are the sinners, and those who lie are the evildoers, who are other people than us.”

Ibn Ziad said: “How did you find God’s treatment of your brother and your family?”

She said: “I have seen nothing but beauty. They were people for whom God chose martyrdom and hence, they proceeded to their martyrdom. Allah will soon gather between you and them. They will ask you for your justification and put you on trial. Think for yourself who will then be saved. O’ the son of Marjanah, may your mother mourn for you.”¹⁴⁸

The narrator says that the son of Ziad became outraged and wanted to attack Zainab and kill her. `Amr bin Huraith told him: “Leave this woman alone; one does not hold a woman accountable for her speech.”

Ibn Ziad then said: “God gave the joy of my heart in killing the rebellious Husain and his insurgent companions.”

Zainab said: “By my life, you killed my sir and cut my branches and my wings and detached my roots. If in this your hearts find any joy, then indeed you have found the joy of your heart.”¹⁴⁹

Ibn Ziad said: “What a composer is this woman? By my God his father was an eloquent composer, too.”

Zainab said: “O’ Ibn Ziad! What does a woman have to do with giving speeches? I do not feel for giving a speech. These short sentences were the signs of my sorrow that found their way from my soul to my tongue.”¹⁵⁰

Ibn Ziad then turned to Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) and said: “Who is this?”

¹⁴⁸ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 47; also see Ibn-Sa’d, vol. 1, p. 481 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 116 for an abridged account.

¹⁴⁹ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 457, al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 47-48 and al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 116, al-Saduq, p. 229, Ibn Tāwus, p. 200.

¹⁵⁰ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 457, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 116, and Ibn Tāwus, p. 200.

“Ali ibn al-Husain is the name of this young man.” They replied.

He said: “Did God not kill Ali ibn al-Husain?”

Imam Zain al-`Abidin (peace be upon him) said: “I had a brother, who was also called Ali ibn al-Husain and who was killed by people.”

Ibn Ziad said: “People did not kill him, God killed him.”

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) said: “Indeed God takes the lives of people when their terms are due.”¹⁵¹

Ibn Ziad said: “How dare you argue with me. Take him and chop his head off.”

When his aunt Zainab heard this embraced him and said: “O’ Ibn Ziad! Enough is so much blood of ours that you have shed. You did not leave any of us alive. If you want to kill him, you should kill me first.”¹⁵²

Ibn Ziad stared at Zainab al-Kubra and Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) for a while and said: “Family bound is a strange wonder; by God. I believe this woman wants me to kill her together with his nephew. Leave him alone and his illness will kill him.”

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon him) told his aunt Zainab al-Kubra (peace be upon her): “O’ Aunt! Please be quiet so that I have a word with him.”

Then he turned to Ibn Ziad and said: “O’ the son of Ziad! Do you threaten me with death? Do not you know that death is an ordinary matter for us and God has honored us with martyrdom?”

Then Ibn Ziad ordered Ali ibn al-Husain and the captives be moved to a house next to the Grand Mosque of Kufah.¹⁵³

Zainab the daughter of Ali (peace be upon them) said: “Do not permit any woman to visit us, but the servants and the slaved nannies, since they share our pain and they have been captivated once.”

Unrest in Ibn Ziad’s Audience

¹⁵¹ Referring to (Al-Zumar (39) / 42).

¹⁵² al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 457, al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, pp. 206-207, Ibn Sa’d, vol. 1, p. 480 al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, pp. 115-116, al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 48, and Ibn-Tawus, p. 200. See also al-Isfahānī, pp. 119-120, where he relates this event regarding Yazid's encounter with Imam Zain al-`Abidin (peace be upon him).

¹⁵³ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 48.

Ibn Ziad ordered the heads to be shown around in the streets and alleys. Then he climbed the pulpit, praised God and in his speech said: "Praise is God's, who made the truth and its followers prevail, gave the commander of the faithful (amir al-mu'minin) Yazid victory, and killed this liar, the son of liar, and his followers."

He could not utter a word further before Abd-Allah bin `Afif al-Azdi, who was a righteous Shi'a and a pious man, who had lost one of his eyes during the battle of Jamal and the other one during the battle of Siffin and who was always present and busy with prayers in the Grand Mosque of Kufah, said: "O' the son of Marjanah! Liars are you and your father and your man and his father. O' the enemy of God! How dare you kill the son of the Prophet and then utter such words on the Muslim's pulpit?"

Ibn Ziad outraged and cried: "Who is the one uttering these words?"

Abd-Allah said: "It is me speaking, O' the enemy of God! Do you kill the pure progeny of the Prophet, from whom God has removed any abomination and yet you believe that you are on the path of Islam? O nee! Help me, O' Muslims! Where are the offspring of Muhajirin and Ansar to take revenge of the martyrs blood from you and from the rebellious and cursed oppressor of yours, who was cursed by the Messenger of God?"

The narrator said that Ibn Ziad became more and more outraged and the anger was evident in his face. He cried: "Bring him to me!" His men went after him, but the chiefs of his tribe (Azd) and his cousins rescued him and brought him to a safe place.

Ibn Ziad ordered his men: "Search for this blind and blind-hearted man and bring him to me." His men went on to his place, but the tribe of Azd gathered around him and called for support from other Yemenite tribes to defend their friend.

When Ibn Ziad learned about the crowd, summoned the Mudar tribe and sent them, with Muhammad bin Ash`ath as their chief, to crack them down. A fierce fight commenced then and many people were killed. Finally, Ibn Ziad's men reached Abd-Allah bin `Afif's place, broke the door and stormed in.

Abd-Allah's daughter cried: "O' Father! Beware that the enemy is about to attack you." He said: "Do not worry my daughter; hand me the sword." She gave him the sword and despite being blind, he started defending himself, while reciting:

I am the son of the prominent person named `Afif (dignified),
He is indeed dignified ad the son of Umm-`Amir.
Many were among you with a helmet and a coat of mail,
warriors and heroes whom I fought.

The father was fighting and the daughter was constantly informing him and sighing: "O' father! I wish I was a man and could fight along with you against these criminals and murderers of the Prophet's progeny."

They surrounded him and would turn around him. He would defend himself fiercely, until they jointly attacked him from all directions. Abd-Allah would turn around and turn his sword constantly:

"I swore if my eyes were opened,
I would have troubled you with my move."

They surrounded him and finally captured him. They took him and brought him to Ubaid-Allah ibn Ziad. When Ubaid-Allah saw him said: "Praise is God's who dishonored you."

Abd-Allah said: "O' the enemy of God! Since when have I been dishonored?"

Ubaid-Allah said: "What do you think about `Uthman?"

Abd-Allah said: "O' the slave of the Bani `Alaj clan! O' the son of Marjanah!" and cursed him more than that and continued: "What do you have to do `Uthman? Whether he did good or evil, whether he reformed or spoiled, God knows how to deal with his servants and He will eventually judge his servants and `Uthman justly. But if you want to know the truth, ask me about your own father and about Yazid and his father."

Ibn Ziad said: "I will not ask you anything until I pour death in your throat."

Abd-Allah replied: "Praise is God's. I had been asking God, before your mother gave birth to you, to honor me with martyrdom and also had been asking him to put my martyrdom in the hands of the most doomed and most wretched creatures of His. When I became blind, I lost my hope for martyrdom, but now, thanks God, I see that after having lost my hope, he is going to bestow the honor of martyrdom upon them. I know hence that my prayers have been responded and the wish that I have had for long is going to be fulfilled."

Ibn Ziad cried: "Behead him."

His men beheaded him and hanged his dead body in a place called "Sabkhah".¹⁵⁴

Moving the Captives to Sham

The narrator writes that Ubaid-Allah ibn Ziad wrote a letter to Yazid and informed him that he has killed Husain (peace be upon him) and captivated his progeny. When the letter was handed

¹⁵⁴ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 58-62 and Ibn-A`tham, vol. 5, p. 123; see also al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 458-459 (on the authority of Hamid bin Muslim), al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 207, and also al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 117, where they relate abridged accounts of this story.

to Yazid and he learned about its content, wrote a letter back to Ubaid-Allah and ordered the head of Husain and the heads of all martyred along with him to be sent to him, together with the family of Husain (peace be upon them).¹⁵⁵

Ibn Jawzi writes: "Ubaid-Allah's men moved the captives and the heads of martyrs and at each stop, they would take the head of Imam Husain out of the case in which they were keeping it. They would raise the head on their spears and would guard it till morning. When they would start their journey they would put the head back in the case and move on."¹⁵⁶

Husain's Head and the Christian Priest

They stopped at a place, where a priest was living. As usual they took out the head of Imam and raised it on a spear and rested the spear upon the walls of the priest's church. Around midnight the Christian priest saw a light rising from the head to the heaven. He asked the crowd around his church who they were.

"We are Ibn Ziad's men", they replied.

He asked: "Whose head is this?"

They answered: "This is the head of Husain, the son of Ali ibn Abi-Talib and Fatimah the daughter of the Prophet of God (peace be upon them)."

He said: "Is this then the head of the son of your prophet's daughter?"

"Indeed", they said.

He said: "What a bad people you are. If Jesus had a son, we would have honored him dearly. Shall we make a deal?"

"What kind of deal?" asked Ibn Ziad's men.

"I have 10 thousand Dirhams. Take them from me and give me the head till tomorrow when you will set out to move. I will then return it to you." the priest said.

They said: "This deal will not cause us any harm."

They handed the head over to the priest. He washed it, applied some perfume to it, placed it on his lap and stayed awake while crying the whole night. When the day broke, he addressed the head saying: "O' head! By God, I have no control on anything but myself, and at this very

¹⁵⁵ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 463, Ibn-Sa`d, vol. 1, p. 485.

¹⁵⁶ Sibṭ ibn Jawzī, Tadhkirah al-Khawāss, p. 263.

moment, I attest to the uniqueness of God, and that your grandfather is the Messenger of God, and you are my Imam and my leader.”

Then he left the church and became a servant of Ahl al-Bait (peace be upon them).¹⁵⁷

Moving the Suns

Ubaid-Allah’s men took the heads of Husain and his progeny as well as the ladies and the captives and proceeded. When they reached Damascus, Umm-Kulthum approached Shimr and said: “O’ Shimr! I have a request from you.”

Shimr said: “O’ the daughter of Ali! What do you want ask?”

She said: “When we enter Sham, take us from a less crowded path so that there are less people watching us and take the heads in front of the caravan. We feel very much distressed with the staring eyes, which look at us as captives.”

However, again Shimr showed his evil and venomous side and ordered the heads to be carried on spears among the captives and led them through the main streets of the city so that more people see them.¹⁵⁸

Ali ibn al-Husain Awakens Sham

When the captive reached the city gates, an old man from Sham came forward, approached the ladies and the family of Husain (peace be upon him) and told them: “Praise is God’s, who killed and crushed you, put the land of Islam in peace from your men and let the commander of the faithful Yazid prevail over you.”

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) said: “O’ old man! Have you ever recited Quran?”

The old man said: “Yes, I do recite it.”

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) said: “Have you recited the following verse:

“No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of those near of kin.” (al-Shura (42) / 23) ”

The old man said: “Yes, I have read this verse.”

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) said: “O’ old man! We are those near of the kin.

O’ old man! Have you recited the following verse in surah Bani-Isra’il:

“And render to the kindred their due rights, ...” (al-Isra’ (17) / 26) ”

¹⁵⁷ Sibṭ ibn Jawzī, p. 263.

¹⁵⁸ Ibn Tāwus, p. 210; also see al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 67, where Sahl bin Sa’d is reported to ask a man to move a head in front of the captives to distract people’s attentions. He is reported to do so by paying the man 400 Dinars (see the forthcoming section on Sahl bin Sa’d al-Sa’idī).

The old man said: “Yes, I have read this verse, as well.”

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) said: “We are also the relative in this verse. O’ man! Have you read the following verse in which Allah says: “Know that whatever thing you may come by, a fifth of it is for Allah and the Apostle, for the relatives ...” (al-`Anfal (8) / 41).”

The old man said: “Yes, I have read this verse, as well.”

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) said: “We are also the relatives in this verse. Have you read the following verse in Quran which reads: “Indeed Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification.” (al-Ahzab (33) / 33)”

The old man said: “Yes, I have read this verse, as well.”

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) said: “We are the People of the Household (Ahl-al-Bait) to whom the “purification verse” is dedicated.”

The old regretted what he had said, faced Imam Zain al-`Abidin and said: “By God, are you really the very Ahl-al-Bait?”.

Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) said: “We are indeed the very Ahl-al-Bait. I swear by our grandfather, the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his progeny), that we are the member of this household.”

The old man burst into tears, threw his turban on the ground, faced the heaven, and said: “O’ Allah! O’ Allah to you, I abhor the enemies of the ”, then he asked Imam Sajjad (peace be upon him): “Will my repentance be accepted?”

Imam replied: “Yes, if you repent, God will accept your repentance and you will be with us.”

The old man said: “I have hence repented.”

Yazid learned about the story of the old man; his men caught the old man and killed him. ¹⁵⁹

The Umayyad Celebrate in Sham

Sahl bin Sa`d al-Sa`idi says: “I was going to Bait al-Maqdis, when on my way, I reached Sham, with its flowing rivers and green trees and joyous and cheerful people and its women playing tambour and drum.”

¹⁵⁹ Ibn Tāwus, p. 210, Ibn A`tham, vol. 5, p. 129, al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p 61, al-Saduq, p. 230.

I wondered: "I do not think there is any festival in Sham that I am not aware of."

When I saw a crowd, talking to each other, approached them and asked them: "Is there any (new) festival in Sham of which we are not aware?"

They said: "O' old man! Perhaps you are a stranger or a Bedouin."

I replied: "I am Sahl bin Sa'd al-Sa`idi, a companion of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his progeny)."

They said: "O' Sahl! It is a wonder that the heaven does not pour blood upon us and the earth does not take in its inhabitants."

I asked why.

They said: "This is the head of Husain, of the Prophet's progeny, which is being taken as a gift from Iraq to Yazid."

I said: "Oh, my Lord! Do they bring Husain's head as a gift and then people burst in joy? From which port are they entering Husain's head?" They pointed to the "Sa`aat" port.

In the meanwhile, I saw several flags appearing one after the other and after a while we saw a horseman with a spear in his hand; however, instead of a spear-head, the spear had a human head on its top, the head was the most similar to the Messenger of God than anyone else. Behind that, there came ladies riding bare camels. I approached the first lady among the captives and asked: "Who are you?"

"I am Sukainah, daughter of Husain", she replied.

I told him: "Can I be of any help? I am Sahl bin Sa`d, who met your grandfather and has related hadith from him."

She said: "O' Sa`d! Please tell the holder of my father's head to move the head forward so that people get busy watching it and stare less at the progeny of the Prophet of God (peace be upon him and his progeny)."

I approached the man holding the spear with Husain's head and asked him: "Are you willing to do me a favor and in return get 400 Dinars from me?"

He said: "What do you want?"

I replied: "Please move this head in front of the caravan." He accepted and did so and I paid him what I promised.¹⁶⁰

Yazid: Proud of Taking Revenge

Zuhari says: "When they brought in the heads, Yazid was sitting in a room which looked at the Jairun hills and was looking out; when they entered the heads entered, Yazid composed the following verses:

When these envoys have arrived and rose
those suns from the peak of Jairun,
a crow started to caw and I told it: no matter whether you caw or not,
I have got back my debt from the one owing me.

Then they entered the convoy of captives and the remaining members of Husain's family, they met Yazid while all of them had ropes attached to them. When they were brought to Yazid's audience in such a way, Imam Zain al-Abidin (peace be upon him) turned to Yazid and said: "O' Yazid! By God, if the Prophet of God sees us in such a situation, how would he think of you?"

Yazid ordered the ropes to be cut and also the chains to be removed from the neck of Imam Zain al-Abidin (peace be upon him). When the chains were removed, Imam's neck started bleeding.¹⁶¹

Result of Umayyad Propaganda

Ibn Athir in his book al-Kamil narrates: "A man from Sham took a look at Fatimah, the daughter of Husain, and told Yazid: "O' Yazid! Give me this servant", and pointed to Fatimah.

Fatimah shivered when she heard this and thought these people may very well do this. She grasped her aunt Zainab and said: "O' my dear aunt! They have killed my father and now want to take me as a servant."

Zainab (peace be upon her said): "Do not worry! This will never happen and this infidel will never gain any respect." She then turned to the Shamite man and said: "By God you lied and showed your indecency. By God, neither you, nor your master Yazid, will never have such a right."

¹⁶⁰ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 67-69

¹⁶¹ Sibṭ ibn Jawzī, p. 261; also see Ibn Sa'd, vol. 1, p. 488 for an abridged account.

Yazid became very angry when she heard these words and said: "O' Zainab! By God you have lied. I do have this right and if I so desire I will exercise it."

Zainab (peace be upon her) replied: "Never! By God, Allah has never given you such a right, unless you leave our path and choose another religion apart from Islam."

Yazid, while becoming infuriated, said: "How dare you address me improperly? Your father and brother forsook their religion, not me."

Zainab (peace be upon her) replied: "Your father and brother were guided to the religion of God, the religion of my father and brother, if they had any."

Yazid said: "O the enemy of God! You lied."

Zainab (peace be upon her) replied: "Now you curse oppressively and abuse us forcefully."

It was as if Yazid became ashamed and hence kept silent.

The Shamite reiterated his request, and Yazid replied: "Shut up! May Allah bring your death forward!"¹⁶²

The Shamite asked: "Why is this not a servant?"

Yazid replied: "This is Fatimah, the daughter of Husain and the other is Zainab, the daughter of Ali ibn Abi-Talib."

The Shamite asked: "Husain, the daughter of Fatimah and Ali, the son of Abi-Talib?"

Yazid said: "Yes."

The Shamite said: "O' Yazid! May Allah curse you! Do you kill the progeny of your prophet and captivate their offsprings? By God, I could not think otherwise than they are Roman captives."

Yazid said: "I will, by God, make you join them." Then he ordered his men to behead the Shamite man.¹⁶³

Yazid Celebrates

¹⁶² al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 121, al-Saduq, p. 231, and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 69-71; also, see al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 461-462 and al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 217, where this story is related regarding Fatimah bint `Ali (peace be upon them) instead.

¹⁶³ Ibn Tāwus, p. 218; also see al-Mizzī, Tahdhib al-Kamāl, vol. 6, p. 429, Ibn Athīr, vol. 8, p. 197, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 121 for an abridged account.

Yazid ordered the head of Husain be brought forward, then he put it in a golden basin, while the family of Imam Husain were behind him. Sukainah and Fatimah were trying to see the head that Yazid was hiding in front of him, when they saw their father's head, they burst into tears.

Then Yazid gave an audience and let people enter; he had a stick by which he was beating the lips and teeth of Husain and was reciting the following verses:

“Our people refused to deal fairly with us, so I dealt fairly.
We have swords from which blood drops down,
and with such (swords), we take the lives of people, who are strong
against us, while they have cut their relations with us and oppressed us.”¹⁶⁴

Zainab: Hammer on Yazid's Head

But when the wise lady of Bani Hashim, Zainab al-Kubra (peace be upon her), saw the head of his brother, tore her cloths (as a sign of mourning) and with an extremely sorrowful voice, that broke the hearts of many, cried:

“O' my Husain! O' the beloved of God's Messenger! O' the son of Mecca and Mina! O' the son of Fatimah al-Zahra, the lady of the world!”

Yazid began composing and reciting his blasphemous poems:¹⁶⁵

“O' may my forefathers in Badr could bear witness,
how Khazraj became desperate of the fall of spears.
Then they would cheer up and brighten and
praise Yazid for his deeds. (literally: say: O' Yazid may you never be paralyzed.)
We have killed from the people their chiefs,
and we made it on a par with Badr, so it became even.
I would not have been from Khandaf, had I not taken revenge
from the sons of Ahmad regarding what they did.
Hashim has played with power, hence no
(divine) message has come and no revelation has descended.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 465 on the authority of Hisham from Abi-Mikhnaf, al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, vol. 2, p. 119, and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 63-64 and al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 65. The former three references relate only the second verse of this poem, while the latter one relates it completely along with an additional verse.

¹⁶⁵ The first few verses are due to Ibn al-Zab`arī who composed them when the infidels defeated Muslims in 'Uhud. It is related that later on Ibn al-Zab`arī converted to Islam and repented from his poem by composing another one.

¹⁶⁶ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 65-66 and Ibn Tāwus, pp. 214-215; see also al-Isfahānī, p. 119 and Sibn ibn Jawzī, p. 261, where they quote the first and the third verse only.

While Yazid was chanting these verses, when Zainab's speech stroke him as a hammer on his head. No one has ever challenged Yazid in such a way and this was very tough on him.

Zainab had risen from her place. She praised God, sent blessings to the Prophet of Allah and his progeny one by one. Then she said:

"God has said the truth when He said:

"Then the fate of those who committed misdeeds was that they denied the signs of Allah and held them up to ridicule." (al-Rum (30) / 10)

O' Yazid! Now that you have closed the width of earth and the height of heaven on us and have put us in chains us like captives, do you think that we are dishonored before God, or have you gained any honor before him? Do you consider the victory you have seemingly gained due to your eminent position before God? Is that why you have become so arrogant and look down upon everyone around you happily and joyfully? Because everything is according to your wishes, matters follow your ambition, and you rule and reign smoothly without any hurdles.

Slow down! Slow down! Have you forgotten the following word of the Almighty God:

"Let not the Unbelievers think that our respite to them is good for themselves:
We grant them respite that they may grow in their iniquity:
But they will have a shameful punishment." (Al-Imran (3) / 178)

O' the son of the freed!¹⁶⁷ Is it fair that your women are behind curtains and the daughters of the Prophet of Allah are captivated in chains, their honor is breached, their faces are revealed and they have been dragged from town to town and the cheap and the indecent stare at them, while none of their men accompany them and they have no support and help?

How can one expect any consideration from the son of Hind, the cannibal who bit the liver of the righteous (referring to Hamzah, peace be upon him)? How can one expect the one who looks down with grudge and hatred upon his to retract from hostility towards Ahlulbait? Then without any sense of guilt and without noticing the graveness of your crime, you cry:

"Then they would cheer up and brighten and praise Yazid for his deeds."

Then you attack the lips and teeth of the chief of the youth of paradise, Husain bin Ali (peace be upon them) by the stick in your hands and chant poems?

¹⁶⁷ This is a reference to the Prophet's word; when he conquered Mecca, addressing Abu Sufiān and other infidels, he said: "Go away; all of you are freed." With this word the Prophet gave them a general pardon.

Why should you not utter such words, while by shedding the blood of Muhammad's offspring and the stars from Abd al-Mutallib's progeny, you have renewed their wounds and cut their roots and now you call your infidel forefathers. Rest assured that you will soon join them and there you will wish that your hands be paralyzed and your tongue be dumb and you could not utter such words and perform such deeds.

O' Allah please redeem our right, take our revenge and cast your doom upon those who have shed our blood and murdered our supporters.

O' Yazid! You have torn your own skin and chopped your own flesh. Soon, with so much blood that you have shed from the progeny of the God's Prophet and so much disrespect that you have shown to his family and the apples of his eye, you will be brought to justice before the Prophet, on the day when God will bring their scattered crowd together and will redeem their rights.

"Think not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead.

Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord." (al-Baqarah (2) / 154)

God is a great judge for you and Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) is a perfect enemy and Gabriel is a perfect supporter for him. Soon the one who has encouraged you to perform this evil and helped you ride over the shoulder of the Muslim will face his punishment and will soon recognize that the vicious will have an evil forfeit and will know which one of you will have the worse destination and will lose is supporters and companions.

If these calamities made me speak to you, beware that I consider you unworthy of that and I will admonish and blame you. What else I can do, when my eyes are full of tears and my heart is full of sorrow.

Beware, I am bewildered by the way the party of the righteous people of God are murdered by the party of the freed people of devil. These murderous hands welter in our blood and these mouths drool over ravaging our bodies and there are the clean and pure bodies that are torn under the teeth of desert's wolves and dragged on earth by hyena. If you have captivated us today, soon you will meet as us as an eager prosecutor, when you will not find but what you have sent forth and Allah will not be unjust to his servants.¹⁶⁸

Hence, our complaint is to God and upon him is our reliance.

You play your tricks, try your best, and do your utmost, but you will never remove our memory (from people's minds), nor can you destroy our revelation, nor can you cut our progeny, nor can you get rid of the shame of this crime.

¹⁶⁸ (Al-'Anfal (8) / 51)

Your view is nothing but wrong, and your due is but a few days, and your crowd is nothing but scattered, when the caller calls: “O’ the doom of Allah is upon the oppressors.”

Praise is Allah’s, the Lord of the worlds, who has concluded the first of ours (our lives) with felicity and forgiveness, and the last of ours with martyrdom and blessing. We call God to complement their reward, mandate for them more, and let us be proper heirs to them. He is the Merciful and the Loving,¹⁶⁹ and Allah is sufficient for us, and He is an excellent trustee.¹⁷⁰ ¹⁷¹

Yazid replied with the following verse:

“O’ the cry which is a praised one among the cries,
how easy it is to mourn for the mournful.”¹⁷²

Converted due to Husain

There was a Christian who was the emissary of the Roman emperor to Yazid; he turned to Yazid and said: “In one of our islands, there is a hoof of Jesus’ donkey. People make pilgrimage from all cities to visit this hoof. We make offerings for it and we respect it, the way you respect Quran. I bear witness that you are in vain.”

Yazid got angry and ordered to kill him. He rose, kissed the head (of Imam Husain, peace be upon him), uttered his words of Islam (Shahadatain) and he was then killed.¹⁷³

Then Yazid removed the head from his audience and put it on the door of his palace for three days.

Hind, the daughter of `Amr and the wife of Yazid, learned about this. She entered Yazid’s audience hasty and bare-head (without wearing any veil). She cried: “O’ Yazid! Is this the head of Husain that you have hanged from the door of our palace?”

Yazid ran towards her, wrapped his cloak around her and said: “O’ Hind, mourn for him; this is the nobleman of Bani Hashim, for whose murder Ibn Ziad hastened.”¹⁷⁴

Blasting Sermon of Imam Sajjad

¹⁶⁹ (Hud (11) / 90)

¹⁷⁰ (Al `Imran (3) / 173)

¹⁷¹ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 71-74 and Ibn Tāwus, pp. 215-218.

¹⁷² al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 74 and Ibn Tāwus, p. 218.

¹⁷³ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 80-81, Sibṭ Ibn-Jawzī, p. 263, and Ibn Tāwus, p. 220.

¹⁷⁴ al-Tabarī, vol. 5, pp. 462 and 465, al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 81-82, Ibn Sa’d, vol. 1, p. 489.

Then Yazid bin Mu`awiah came to the mosque and ordered the preacher to climb the pulpit and in the presence of Zain al-Abidin (peace be upon him) cursed Ali and Husain (peace be upon them). The preacher went to the pulpit and obeyed Yazid's order.

Imam Zain al-`Abidin cried: "O' preacher! Woe unto you, who has exchanged the pleasure of servants with the anger of God and has filled your place with fire."

Then he turned to Yazid and said: "Let me climb this wooden structure and say some words that please God and will bring rewards and benefits for those who listen."

Yazid did not intend to allow this, but people (around him) said: "Let him climb the pulpit so that we may hear something from him."

Yazid replied: "If this man reaches the pulpit, he will not come down until he dishonors me and the whole progeny of Sufian."

They said: "What would such a youngster know to say?"

Yazid said: "These are people who have sucked in knowledge (along with milk)."

People insisted until Yazid gave Imam permission to climb the pulpit.

Imam went to the pulpit, praised God and delivered a sermon which made the eyes cry and the hearts move; he said:

"O' People! I warn you for this world and whatever is in it, because this world is perishable and one has to migrate from it. This world turns its people from a state to another. It has spent centuries and has brought under dirt people who have outlived you and had more heritage than you. The hand of time ruined them all and dominated snakes and ants over them. The world removed them as if they have never lived in this world and never stayed there. The earth swallowed their corps and destroyed the beauties of their bodies, disentangled their bones, scrambled their faces and faded their colors; the hand of time ground them in its mill.

Do you then yearn for eternal life? Not in the least! Not in the least! What a naïve wish! You will also join them. Hence, make the most of the remainder of your life by performing good deeds. I see you being moved from your palaces to your graves while you grieve. Numerous were those who regretted immensely after their deaths. However, the regretful will then find no recourse and the oppressor will receive no help.

They will certainly find what they have done, and recover what they have sent, and "they will find all that they did, placed before them: And not one will thy Lord treat with injustice."¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ (al-Kahf (18) / 49)

They are speechless in the mournful abode of grave and motionless among the army of the dead. They are awaiting the blast of resurrection and the arrival of that overwhelming event¹⁷⁶, so that He rewards those who do evil, according to their deeds, and He rewards those who do good, with what is best.¹⁷⁷

Then he said: O' People, we are given six matters and were made eminent due to seven issues: We are given knowledge, tolerance, benevolence, eloquence, courage, and love in the hearts of the believers.

And we were made eminent, because: the chosen prophet is from us, and the truthful is from us, and the hoverer is from us and the lion of God and the line of his messenger is from us, and the lady of all ladies is from us, and the two grandsons of this people are from us and the Mahdi of this people is from us.

O' people! Whoever knows me, then he does know me and whoever does not know me, then I inform him about my ancestors and my lineage:

O' People! I am the son of Mecca and Mina,
I am the son of Zamzam and Safa,
I am the son of the one, who took the corner (of Ka'bah: the Black Stone) by the sides of the cloak,
I am the son of the best of those who have ever worn izar and rida,¹⁷⁸
I am the son of the best of those who have ever made a tawaf or sa'i,¹⁷⁹
I am the son of the best of those who have ever performed Hajj or said responded to God' call (Labbaik),
I am the son of he, who was taken on Buraq to the heaven,
I am the son of who has been taken during a night from the Masjid al-Haram to the Masjid al-Aqsa,¹⁸⁰
I am the son of the one who was taken by Gabriel to the Lote-tree beyond which none may pass,¹⁸¹
I am the son of the one who approached and came closer, and was at a distance of but two bow-lengths or (even) nearer,¹⁸²
I am the son of the one who prayed together with the angels of the heaven,
I am the son of the one to whom the exalted has revealed whatever He has revealed,
I am the son of Muhammad, the chosen one,
I am the son of Ali, the gratified one,

¹⁷⁶ (al-Nazi`at (79) / 34)

¹⁷⁷ (al-Najm (53) / 31)

¹⁷⁸ cloths to cover the upper and the lower parts of body

¹⁷⁹ Tawāf: turning 7 times around Ka`bah and sa'i: going 7 times between the two hills of Safā and Marwah near Ka`bah

¹⁸⁰ (al-Isra' (17) / 1)

¹⁸¹ (al-Najm (53) / 14)

¹⁸² (al-Najm (53) / 8-9)

I am the son of the one who hit the noses of people until they said: "There is no god but Allah.",
I am the son of the one who fought before the Messenger of God with two swords, threw two spears, immigrated twice, fought in Badr and Hunain, and did not disbelieve in God for a blink of eye,

I am the son of the righteous among the believers,¹⁸³ the heir of prophets, the destroyer of the infidels, the chief of the believers, the light of those who strive, the crown of those who cry, the ornament of the worshippers, the most tolerant of the tolerant, the best among those who rose, among the progeny of Taha and Yasin, the Prophet of the Lord of the universes.

I am the son of the one who was supported by Gabriel and was helped by Michael.

I am the son of the one who protected the honor of the Muslim, and the one who killed those who went astray (Mariqin), and those who breached their treaty (Nakithin), and those who oppressed others (Qasitin), the one who strived against those who unjustly assume (the leadership), and the most prominent among those who have existed in Quraish, and the first who has responded and who has been responded by Allah and His Prophet, the first among the foremost, the one who crushed the unjust, the one who cracked the polytheist, an arrow among the arrows of God towards the hypocrite, the tongue of wisdom for the worshipper, the supporter of God's religion and the guardian of God's issue, the garden of God's wisdom and the trove of God's knowledge,

the tolerant,

the generous,

the well-mannered,

the pure,

the man of Mecca,

the content,

the forerunner,

the prominent,

the persevering,

the one who fasted regularly,

the purified,

the steadfast,

the blaster of lineages,

the one scattered the parties (of infidels).

He had:

the firmest control (over himself), and

the most dauntless hearts,

the strongest will, and

the most lasting resistance.

He was a courageous lion, who would demolish the enemies like a mill when they would gather their pieces and come together; he would dispersed them as the wind carries away the dried herbs; he was the lion of Hijaz, and the chief of Iraq.

¹⁸³ (al-Tahrim (66) / 4)

He was the man of Medinah, Mecca, Khif, Aqabah, Badr, and Uhud. He was an immigrant, the chief of Arab and the lion of the battlefield, the heir of two Mash'ar, the father of Hasan and Husain, the two grandsons of the Prophet. So was he, Ali bin Abitalib, my grandfather.

I am the son of Fatimah al-Zahra,
I am the son of the lady of the ladies,
I am the son of the great Khadijah.

I am the son of the one who was murdered unjustly,
I am the son of he, who was slaughtered from the back (of his neck),
I am the son of he, who was killed, while he was thirsty,
I am the son of he, whose corpse is left in Karbala,
I am the son of he, whose turban and cloak was looted,
I am the son of he, for whom the angels of the heaven cried,
I am the son of he, for whom the Jinn on the earth and the birds in the sky cried,
I am the son of he, whose head delivered on spear as a gift,
I am the son of he, whose family was taken as captives from Iraq to Sham...¹⁸⁴

Call for Prayers

Imam kept on introducing himself, while the cries of mourning and groaning rose from people. Yazid was getting agitated, worrying that an unrest would be looming.

Hence, he ordered someone to call for prayers.

When he cried: "God is great! (Allah u Akbar)"

Imam Ali ibn al-Husain said: "Yes, indeed, there is nothing greater than God; you praised the Great, no one is His like."

When he said: "I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah."

Imam faced Yazid from the pulpit and said: "Is this Muhammad my grandfather or yours, O' Yazid?!"

If you thought he was your grandfather then you have lied and blasphemed, and if you said that he was my grandfather, then why did you kill his progeny?"¹⁸⁵

Then Imam came down from the pulpit and by doing so the crowd in the mosque dispersed and got together around Imam Zain al-Abidin.

Minhal says that I came to him, greeted him and said: "How have you been doing, O' the son of the God's messenger?"

¹⁸⁴ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 76-78 and Ibn A`tham, vol. 5, pp. 132-133.

¹⁸⁵ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 78 and Ibn A`tham, vol. 5, p. 133..

He replied: "We have been doing as Bani Isra'il among the people of Pharaoh: they killed their sons and captivated their women."¹⁸⁶

Arab prides over non Arabs because Muhammad is among them, and Quraish prides over the rest of Arabs, because Muhammad is among them, and we the progeny (of Muhammad, peace be upon him and his progeny) have been murdered and chased away, indeed we belong to Allah and to him do we indeed return."¹⁸⁷

While we were talking, a lady left behind her and he told her: "To where are you going, O' the best of the remainder?" So he left me and rushed towards her.

I asked about her and I was told that she is her aunt Zainab.

Returning to Karbala

Yazid got worried about an uprising and a revolution and hence, he rushed into moving Imam Zain al-`Abidin and the family from Sham to their homes and ordered to give them whatever they ask for. He also ordered Nu`man bin Bashir and a group of people to accompany them at ease towards Medina.¹⁸⁸

When Imam saw that Yazid is granting their requests, he ask from him all the heads so that he can bury them in their places. Yazid did not deny his requested and gave the head of Husain (peace be upon him) as well as the heads of his family and companions so that they bring them back next to their bodies.¹⁸⁹

When they commenced their journey from Sham towards Medina, they chose the path that goes through Iraq and when they approached Karbala, they asked their guide: "Move us to the path towards Karbala."

When they reached the battlefield, they found Jabir bin `Abd-Allah al-Ansari and a group of Bani-Asad who came to pay a visit to the grave of Husain (peace be upon him). They got together and started crying and held a session of mourning. The people in the surroundings joined them in the session and they stayed in Karbala for a few days.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Referring to (al-Baqarah (2) / 49) and (Ibrahim (14) / 6)

¹⁸⁷ (Baqarah (2) / 156); al-Tabarī, vol. 11, p. 630, al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, al-Mizzī, vol. 20, p. 399, p. 79 and Ibn Tāwus, p. 222.

¹⁸⁸ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 74; see also al-Balādhurī, vol. 3, p. 417 and al-Tabarī, vol. 5, p. 462, where they do not mention the name of Nu'mān bin Bashīr.

¹⁸⁹ See al-Saduq, p. 231, where he relates that Imam Husain's head was then returned to Karbala.

¹⁹⁰ Ibn Tāwus, p. 225.

First Pilgrims

`Atiyah al-`Aufi relates that together with Jabir bin `Abd-Allah al-Ansari we left to visit the grave of Husain (peace be upon him). When we entered Karbala, Jabir went to the shore of Euphrates and washed himself. Then he put on a piece of cloth, wore a cloak and applied a herb with a pleasant aroma to his body. Then he proceeded barefoot towards the grave of Husain. He would not take a single step without uttering a word (praising God).

When he approached the grave, he asked me: "Put my hands on the grave."

`Atiyah relates: "I put his hands on the grave. He fainted and collapsed on the grave."

I splashed some water on his body until he recovered. When he recovered he cried three times: "Ya Husain! (O' Husain!)"

Then he faced the grave and said: "What a friend, who does not respond to his friend." and he replied to himself:

"How could you respond, while your veins are cut and they removed your head from your body. I bear witness that you are the son of the best messenger of God, the son of the most prominent among the heirs (to messengers), the son of he who had a pledge of piety and who was an heir to guidance, the fifth among the people of the cloak, the chief among the heirs and the son of the lady of ladies.

How could it be otherwise, while the chief of the prophets has fed you with his hands and have been grown up in the cradle of piety, fed from the breast of faith and you grew out of that by Islam.

You lived an elegant life and died an elegant death; however, the believers do not feel well in your absence and had no objection to your life.

The greetings of God be upon you and his blessing. I bear witness that you departed for the same cause as the cause for which your brother Yahia bin Zakariya (peace be upon them) departed."

Then he faced around the grave and said: "Peace be upon you, O' those souls who dwelled around Husain and kneeled down before him.

I bear witness that you performed the prayer, you delivered the alms, you commanded the right, you prohibited evil, you fought the infidels and you served Allah until there came you that is certain (death).

And by He who sent Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) with the truth, we have indeed taken part in what you did."

`Atiyah said, I told Jabir: "How come (we have taken part), while we have neither travelled any distance, nor hit any sword, while the heads of these people are removed from their bodies and their children incurred their loss, and their wives were widowed."

He told me: "O' `Atiyah! I have heard my beloved Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny) that he said: Whoever likes a people, will be resurrected together with them and whoever approves of the deeds of a people will have a share in their deeds."¹⁹¹

`Atiyah says, while we were discussing these matters a shadow appeared in the direction of Sham. I told Jabir: "I see a huge shadow approaching us from Sham." Jabir faced his servant and said, go and check what this shadow is. If it is of Ubayd-Allah's people, inform us so that we take shelter and hide and if it is from my master Imam Zain al-`Abidin, I will free you for the sake of God.

Jabir's servant went and after a short while returned beating himself and crying. He said rise Jabir and welcome the progeny of Allah's Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny). It is the caravan of my master and my chief Imam Zain al-`Abidin, who is returning with his aunts and sisters.

Jabir rose and ran barehead and barefoot welcoming the caravan. When he approached Imam Zain al-`Abidin, Imam asked: "Are you Jabir?"

Jabir said: "Yes indeed, O' the son of the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny)."

He said: "O' Jabir, by Allah, our men were murdered, our children were beheaded, our women were captivated and our tents were set on fire."

Then Zainab reached to the grave of his brother while crying and mourning.

The progeny of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) remained there for 3 days and afterwards moved towards Medina.

Entering Medina

When they approached Medina, they stopped near by there and Imam Zain al-Abidin (peace be upon him) faced Bushr bin Hadhram and asked him: "O' Bushr! May Allah bless your father! He was a poet, did you inherit any of that?"

Bushr answered: "Indeed, O' the son of the Prophet of Allah! I am indeed a poet, as well." Imam said: "Then enter Medina and recite some poems commemorating Aba Abd-Allah al-Husain (peace be upon him)."

Bushr says: "Then I sat on my horse and rode until I reached Medina. When I reached the Prophet's mosque, I cried loudly and recited:

"O' the people of Medina (Yathrib), there is no point in staying here,

¹⁹¹ al-Tabarī al-Amulī, p. 74; see also al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, p. 167.

Husain was killed, hence cry in torrents,
his body is torn apart in Karbala,
and his head was on the spear moved around.”¹⁹²

Then I told: “O’ the people of Medina! This is Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon them) and his aunts approaching you and soon arriving at your place, and I am his messenger to inform you about his arrival.”

He relates: “There remained no one, not even ladies, at home, while they left their houses crying and beating themselves. I had never seen any day in my life when the people cry so much as on that day. After the demise of the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny) that was the bitterest day for the muslims.

I heard a servant reciting:

“One brought the news about the loss of my master and it was a sorrowful news,
This news made me ill and sad,
O’ my eyes, be generous in shedding your tears and after that shed more tears,
for the son of the Prophet and the son of his heir,
although we have been residing far from him.”¹⁹³

Then she said: “O’ the bearer of the news! You renewed our sorrow by informing us about the martyrdom of Abi-Abd-Allah (peace be upon him) and scratched the unhealed wounds in us. Who are you? May God bless you.”

I said: “I am Bushr bin Hadhlam and my master Ali ibn al-Husain has sent me and he is now staying at such and such place, along with the ladies and the progeny of Abi Abd-Allah al-Husain (peace be upon him).”

People rushed to there and overtook me. I also rode my horse and after reaching there found out that the crowd has blocked my way. I came down from my horse and plowed through the crowd until I reached Imam's tent. Imam was in the tent; he came out while he had a piece of cloth in his hand, and he was wiping his tears with the cloth. Behind Imam came a servant with a stool in his hands. Imam climbed on the stool. He could not stop crying and people's sound of crying rose from every corner. They were all trying to convey their condolences to Imam. The whole land went into complete mourn and sorrow. Imam signaled with his hand for silence. All became silent.¹⁹⁴

Then, Imam said:

¹⁹² Ibn Tāwus, pp. 226-227.

¹⁹³ Ibn Tāwus, pp. 227-228.

¹⁹⁴ Ibn Tāwus, p. 228.

“Praise is God's, the Lord of the worlds, the Master of the Day of Judgment, the Creator of all creatures, who is exalted in the lofty heavens, and is near hence he witnesses the whisper.

We praise him for the grand matters and the calamities of the eras, for the pain of the tragedies and the (bitter) taste of stings, for the hefty affliction, and the great, distressing, intense and severe losses.

O' People! Allah, and the praise is His, has tried us with hefty calamities and a loss, which is for Islam a grand one.

Abu Abd-Allah and his progeny were murdered and his ladies and daughters were captivated and his head, on top of a spear head, was moved around the towns. This is a calamity, for which there is no like.

Whom among you is going to feel happy after his murder,
or which heart of yours is not saddened by his loss,
or which eye of yours can prevent its tears and stop them from pouring?

The seven mighty (heavens)¹⁹⁵ have indeed cried for his martyrdom,
and the seas cried with their waves,
and the skies with their pillars,
and the earth with its sides,
and the trees with the branches,
and the fish in the abyss of the oceans,
and the favored angels,
and the residents of the heavens altogether.

O' People! We got expelled, exiled, repelled, and removed from the towns as if we are the progeny of the Turk or from Kabul (foreign to them).

Without any sin that we have done, or any evil that we have performed, or any damage that we have caused for Islam. We have never seen this among our forefathers;¹⁹⁶ this is surely an invention.¹⁹⁷

By God if the Prophet would have recommended them to kill us, instead of having enjoined about us, they could not have done more harm.

And indeed we belong to Allah and to Him do we indeed return.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Referring to (al-Naba' (78) / 12)

¹⁹⁶ (al-Mu'minun (23) / 24)

¹⁹⁷ (Sad (38) / 7)

¹⁹⁸ (Baqarah (2) / 156)

What a grand, painful, stinging, horrendous, bitter and heft calamity we incurred and our reward, we wish, is by Allah, in what we have incurred and what has reached us, He is indeed the Almighty, the Avenger.¹⁹⁹

Then Imam entered Medina, while it was filled with mourning; the houses were left empty and the people were all crying and mourning.²⁰⁰

The daughters of Husain (peace be upon them) entered the house of Abi-Abd-Allah, while Umm-Kulthum, daughter of Imam `Ali (peace be upon him), was reciting the following poem:

“O the Medina of our grandfather! Do not let us in,
for we have arrived with mourns and sorrows,
we left you with our complete family,
and we return while we have no men and no sons.”²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ Referring to (Ibrahim (14) / 47); Ibn Tāwus, pp. 228-230.

²⁰⁰ al-Khārazmī, vol. 2, pp. 71-74 and Ibn Tāwus, p. 230

²⁰¹ al-Qunduzī, Yanābī` al-Mawaddah, vol. 3, p. 94.

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