

**I M A M**  
**AL HUSSAIN**  
**BIN ALI** (AS)  
From **Birth**  
to **Martyrdom**



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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# preface

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1. The book in your hands, dear reader, is an abridgement of the biography of one of the fourteen infallibles in Shia Islam. Its pages constitute about 25% of the original book, which also bears the same title. With Allah's Grace and Will, the original book will be translated at a later date.
2. This book, and the other books in the same series, are aimed at the young generation of Shia Muslims who do not have a good command of the Arabic language, in which the original book was written. It therefore assumes a basic knowledge of the concepts related to the Infallible and their life, and seeks to analyze and expand on them.

We note that there are very few translated books in English

on the lives of the Imams, especially for young English speakers. This is despite the importance of the topic, and it is one of the reasons that prompted this translation project.

3. Since this book and the rest of the series have been translated by multiple individuals and in different ways, it is natural that they will not all be in a consistent style. We would therefore be grateful if the reader would help us by pointing out any errors or observations they may have, so that they can be corrected in future editions.

I ask Allah Almighty to reward the reader, the author of these pages, and the translators with His recompense and blessings, and the intercession of the Infallibles, may peace and blessing be upon them.

**Fawzi Muhammad Taqi Al Saif**

**Tarut - Qatif**

**20/09/1445 H**

# Biographical/Background Information:

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- Name and lineage: Al-Hussein ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib ibn Abd al-Muttalib.
- Nickname: Abu Abdullah.
- Position: The Imam of the Muslims after his brother Imam Al-Hasan.
- Birth: In Medina in the year 4 AH.
- Mother: Fatimah al-Zahraa, daughter of the Messenger of God, peace be upon them.
- Martyrdom: In the year 61 AH, and he was buried in Karbala.

## 1. The birth and nursing of Al-Hussein, peace be upon him:

In this section, we will discuss aspects related to his blessed birth in bullet points to facilitate understanding, and we will try to keep it as concise as possible.

Considering that Imam Ali, peace be upon him, and Fatimah al-Zahraa, peace be upon her, were married in the second year of the Hijra, and the birth of their first child, Imam Al-Hasan Al-Mujtaba, peace be upon him, was on the third year of the Hijra, then the birth of Imam Al-Hussein, peace be upon him, had to have been in the fourth year of the Hijra. It is commonly believed that he was born on the third of the month of Sha'ban.

## 2. Was the gestation period six months?

Some scholars have suggested this based on the comparison with the gestation period of Jesus, son of Mary, peace be upon him, as in a narration attributed to Yahya ibn Zakariyya, peace be upon them. However, this narration contradicts the common belief that the birth of Imam Al-Hasan was in the middle of the month of Ramadan, where the duration with the pregnancy period does not match. Either the birthdate of Imam Al-Hasan was not in Ramadan as stated by Sayedd Ja'far Al-'Amili, or both dates remain as they are, but with the exception that the six-month period is the gestation period for Imam Al-Hussein.

Likewise, there is speculation regarding how long Imam Hussein was in the womb, with some scholars comparing the gestation period to that of Jesus as indicated by the chain of

narration in both of the aforementioned narrations. Some argue that it was a miraculous event that only took hours, which is contrary to the belief that it was a natural pregnancy lasting months.

### 3. Did he nurse from Fatimah?

Narrations indicate that he did not nurse from his mother Fatimah, peace be upon her, but rather from the finger of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his progeny. It has been reported and widely circulated that the late Sayyid Mahdi Bahar al-Ulum stated:

“To Allah belongs a nursed one who was never nursed

From a female breast or from a nurse’s care

Prophet Mohammed gave him his thumb, subtly and gradually

Until his tongue became accustomed to it

It was a secret with Him, a trust when He combined

And entrusted in him His precious possessions

Planted, He nurtured him from His own hand

And flourished thereafter with the purest of origins.”

Proponents of this perspective rely on a narration in Al-Kafi and transmitted by Muhammad ibn Amr al-Zayyat from Imam Al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, stating: “Al-Hussein, peace be upon him, did not nurse from Fatimah, peace be upon her, nor from any other female. The Prophet, peace be upon him

and his progeny, would bring him and place his thumb in his mouth, from which he would suckle enough for two or three days. Thus, the flesh of Al-Hussein, peace be upon him, grew from the flesh of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his progeny, and his blood.”

In another narration attributed to Imam Al-Rida, peace be upon him, it is mentioned that the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, would bring Al-Hussein, peace be upon him, and let him suckle from his tongue. Some reports suggest that this was due to an illness suffered by Lady Fatimah, peace be upon her, which prevented her from nursing Imam Hussein.

Despite the fact that unseen matters and divine miracles concerning the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, are neither strange nor incomprehensible, we might consider this issue surrounding the nursing of Al-Hussein through the Prophet’s finger or tongue as an exception rather than the norm. Denying his complete nursing from Fatimah, peace be upon her, is difficult to accept. However, assuming that it did happen, it might have been for a limited period, supported by the fact that Fatimah, peace be upon her, fell ill and was unable to nurse Al-Hussein, peace be upon him. Some suggest this might have occurred during Ramadan because she was fasting, and because Al-Hasan Al-Mujtaba was still an infant in her care (especially if there was only a six-month gap between their births) and because she was twelve years old at the time, as commonly known.

It is also possible that this occurred before the commencement of nursing and as per the Prophet’s instructions to Fatimah not to nurse him until he arrives.

Indeed, it is reported in some narrations that this happened, where the Prophet placed his tongue in his mouth. However, this possibility contradicts other narrations that suggest he came every day for nursing, while some others deny that Imam Hussein was nursed by any female.

As for the lack of complete acceptance of his not nursing from his mother, peace be upon them, there are two main reasons:

**First**, what is confirmed by the texts is not complete, as it is based on the narrations of Al-Kafi, and they are not fully authenticated in terms of their chains of transmission.

**Second**, during this period, the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, was often absent from Medina due to the demands of warfare and military defence missions, being far away from the city. Therefore, how could it be said that Imam Hussein was never nursed by a female! Nor did he suckle from a nurse"? It is plausible that he was sustained by nursing from the Prophet's finger or tongue for two or three days, but what about the periods when the Prophet was absent for extended periods, which often lasted a month or more?

**For example**, the second Battle of Badr (Badr al-Maw'udah), which took place in Sha'ban of the fourth year after Hijra, was about 120 kilometers away from Medina. The distance from Medina to Mecca took four days each way. We must add to this also the time of resting required as well as periods of waiting for safe passage of the caravan through Quraysh territory.. So, how could the Prophet have nursed him during these critical times? Similarly, during the expedition to Dumat al-Jandal (about 600

kilometers away from Medina) in Rabi' al-Awwal of the fifth year after Hijra, Al-Hussein was about eight months old.

And perhaps the matter is as the commentator on "Kamil al-Ziyarat" said: "The report is a single, obscure report whose apparent meaning is that the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, would bring him and place his hand in his mouth, and when his finger touched him, it became clear to him that he was hungry, so he asked that Imam Hussein be taken to his mother to nurse. Through this method, the flesh of Al-Hussein grew - meaning by the observation of the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny. This is similar to what Al-Ray Shahri mentioned."

#### **4. The Holy Prophet's numerous narrations about Imam Al Hussein:**

The period in which Imam Al-Hussein lived with his grandfather, the Prophet, lasted for six years and some days. During this time, the Prophet, along with his brother, surrounded him with considerable loving care, as mentioned in many narrations about the prophet and his blessed family's love and care for their children. This points out how the Prophet spoke about a "child" at the age of two or three with all those descriptions. Researchers have interpreted that the main purpose of these narrations is to map out the path for the Ummah after the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny. Al-Hussein is described as the "Imam, the brother of the Imam, the father of nine Imams, the last of whom is their Qa'im." If someone seeks the path to paradise, "Al-Hasan and Al-Hussein are the masters of the youth of Paradise."



In another context, we mentioned that the purpose of the virtues narrations is not to confer badges of honor or provide certificates of praise and compliments in this world so those who receive them use them to boast to others about their achievements. Rather, the ultimate purpose is spiritual and religious in nature. On the one hand, they reveal hidden ranks among people and unveil the "Guardians of God (Awliya's Allah)": On the other hand, they implore people to follow these individuals as they are considered guides appointed by God or to commend individuals to follow and obey them. So, if there are different factions, and 'Ammar is killed by the rebellious group, it means that the faction he is in is the righteous one!

## **5. Educational insights into the Prophet's dealings with Al-Hussein, peace be upon them both:**

In addition to what was previously mentioned, the Prophet surrounded his grandson Al-Hussein with special loving care, indicating his deep love for him. The prophet's nurturing style of Imam Hussein serves as a model for Islamic parenting and upbringing. It teaches Muslim parents that their role extends beyond provision of material support to the more critical provision of warmth, love, and support. By doing so, the child is certain to grow and develop into a responsible, independent, God-conscious, and active member of society. Historians have mentioned that the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, taught his grandson Al-Hussein to speak, and eagerly took him and his brother to the mosque at a very young age.

It's even reported in narrations that the Prophet used to perform a single takbir (saying "Allahu Akbar") during the two Eids, until Al-Hussein's tongue faltered. One day, it was Eid, and Lady Fatimah sent him with his grandfather. When the Prophet performed the takbir, Al-Hussein followed suit, repeating it seven times, and this tradition has continued to this day. It's also narrated that Imam Hussein heard his grandfather saying, "God loves matters of dignity and disdains trivialities." Imam Hussein then mentioned that whenever he heard his grandfather say the takbir, he would repeat it after him seven times. The Prophet also taught him Surah Al-Ikhlās (Chapter 112 of the Quran) and the five daily prayers. Imam Hussein heard the Prophet saying, "Whoever obeys God will be elevated, whoever dedicates his intentions to God will be adorned, whoever trusts in God will be enriched, and whoever seeks refuge in God will not be humiliated." This provides an invaluable lesson for anyone who wishes to learn. Imam Hussein's first speech, taught by his grandfather the Prophet, was the takbir after participating in the Eid prayer. Alongside this, he was taught Surah Al-Ikhlās and the five daily prayers, in addition to fundamental teachings in life, emphasizing the importance of focusing on matters of dignity and avoiding trivialities.

## **6. Imam Hussein's stance towards the caliphate:**

The Prophet Muhammad passed away in the eleventh year after the Hijra, when Imam Hussein was merely seven years old. Despite his young age, it's notable that Imam Hussein's stance towards the caliphate was one of resolute rejection.

He understood the magnitude of the injustice inflicted upon his father and his mother Lady Fatimah, peace be upon them. Thus, he followed the Prophet's words regarding the rightful authority of his father over others. However, attempts by some historians from the caliphates' school of thought to construe the stance of Imam Hasan and Imam Hussein, peace be upon them, as one of agreement content with the actions of the caliphs are unfounded in any way. Such portrayals contradict the numerous incontrovertible narrations and run against human nature.

Later hostile events unequivocally demonstrate the utter animosity of the ruling caliphs toward members of the prophet's family. The household of Lady Fatimah, peace be upon her, was violated, and she was physically assaulted which caused her to lose her unborn child. Imam Ali, peace be upon him, was forcefully taken to the central mosque in order to extract from him a public pledge of allegiance to the caliph.. Imam Hussein's reaction to these acts of aggression went beyond mere psychological reflexes to active and loud public protest.. This is documented in some sources of the caliphs' school. Al-Asqalani, citing Ubaid bin Hanin, reported that Imam Hussein bin Ali approached Umar while he was delivering a sermon from the pulpit and said, "Get down from my father's pulpit and go to your father's pulpit." Umar replied, "Your father had no pulpit," then took him down and seated him beside him, where Imam Hussein started playing with pebbles. When Umar descended, he took Imam Hussein to his house and asked him, "Who taught you?" Imam Hussein replied, "By God, no one taught me."

We notice here that if this event even occurred, then Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) would have been ten years old, and it is assumed that the caliphate of the first and second caliphs had already settled. However, Imam Hussein registered this unique and courageous position, and the caliph was surprised by it and wanted to know if Imam Hussein was instigated or coached to say so by someone like his father, for example. So he asked him: Who taught you? - meaning to say this statement. He replied: No one taught me!

While it's true that the general stance taken by Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (peace be upon him) was binding for his followers and certainly for his sons, being among the first people, and that he did not opt for open opposition leading to military or political conflict which would have caused division in the Muslim community, the Muslim community. This, however, did not prevent him from asserting his stance and Islam's stance.

## 7. Did Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) participate in the conquests of the caliphs?

It seems that the first to claim this was al-Tabari in his history, saying: Sa'id ibn al-'As [1] invaded Kufa in the year thirty, aiming for Khurasan, and with him were Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman and some companions of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, and with him were al-Hasan and al-Hussein, Abdullah ibn Abbas, Abdullah ibn Umar, and Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-'As and Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr, and those who

followed him after that among the historians of the caliphate's school.

While we don't take an issue with it, we still wonder if there is credible and reliable historical evidence for it. The objection raised is that if someone like Sa'id ibn al-'As, who was the commander of the army, was in charge, how would Hasan and Hussein be under his command? Moreover, those conquests did not follow the proper methodology in their origin, purpose, or methods, as some researchers have pointed out. The first question can be answered by assuming his appointment, and then Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (peace be upon him), who is the rightful Imam in that matter, would authorize it, and there would be no harm in it. It would be by his permission and prioritizing the more important over the less important. The second question can be answered by assuming his appointment, where the presence of figures like them would aim to correct the direction and engage in invasion as much as possible.

We don't see an issue with it if we assume his appointment. However, the real problem lies in the lack of evidence to support it; rather, the evidence contradicts such a claim. Examples include:

**First**, the discrepancy mentioned by Ibn al-Athir in al-Kamil regarding the conquest of Tabaristan and whether it occurred in the year 18 AH during Umar ibn al-Khattab's time or in the year 30 AH during Uthman ibn Affan's time. If it was the former, there would be no significance to the latter conquest. Additionally, the report confirms that the invasion of Tabaristan was launched from Kufa. It is known that Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) was in Medina in the year 30 AH and did not

come to Kufa until after returning from the Battle of the Camel in the year 36 AH. Before that, there is no mention of Hussein ever coming to Kufa.

**Second,** the relationship between the Hashemite Alawi household and the followers of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and Caliph Uthman ibn Affan in this year was extremely acrimonious, even confrontational. During this time, the people of Kufa testified against al-Walid ibn Uqbah, the step brother of Caliph Uthman from his mother's side, that he drank alcohol, and they brought his case to the Caliph. When the Caliph refused to carry out the sentence against him despite the witnesses testifying, Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (peace be upon him) himself or someone from his household carried out the sentence against him despite Uthman's reluctance to it.

**More over,** In this year, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari was exiled to Rabdha by the Caliph Uthman, and Imam Ali, along with Hasan and Hussein, and some of their followers, attended Abu Dharr's funeral despite the official prohibition. These intense relations between the official caliphate and Imam Ali do not allow for the Imam to send his two sons, Hasan and Hussein, especially given his statement during the Battle of Jamal: "Leave these two boys to me; they will not guide me. I am satisfied with them that the lineage of the Messenger of Allah not be cut off." This was a clear and uncompromising stance under the banner of an infallible Imam. Yet, there is fear that they might be killed and the Prophet's lineage would be cut off. Would he allow them to go under the leadership of Sa'id ibn al-'As, who was described as "when thirty men of the Banu al-'As are gathered, they take Allah's wealth and His servants as booty"?

Thirdly, some of the individuals in the chain of transmission of this narrative had been described as liars, fabricators, or inventors. Furthermore, in any Imami source that traces the lives of Hassan and Hussein, there is no mention of such an event of significance. How could such an important event not even be mentioned in a single line in any book of traditions or biography?

What's even more absurd is what Abdul Rahman Ibn Khaldun mentioned that they also went with Abdullah ibn Abi Sarh to conquer Africa... as if Hassan and Hussein had no other purpose or work except to wait for any leader appointed by Caliph Uthman to conquer the east or west of the earth so they could quickly join his ranks!

## **8. Imam Hussain during the Caliphate of his father Amir Al Mu'minin:**

During the caliphate of Imam Ali, Imam Hussein actively participated in his father's wars, being around 31 years old in the year 35 AH, a period of youthful strength and vigor. One of his earliest military engagements with his father was in the Battle of Jamal, after the betrayal of those who had pledged allegiance to him and rebelled in Basra. Imam Ali and his forces marched from Medina towards Basra to confront the rebels.

One account describes the scene: "Then, a ninth procession passed by us, comprising a great crowd armed with weapons and iron, adorned with various turbans and banners. Leading them was a large, imposing banner, at the forefront of which was a horseman, as if the earth had been shattered under him,

as if birds hovered above his head. To his right was a young man with a handsome face, and to his left, another similar figure, and between them was a young man not far from them, holding the banner. I asked: Who are these? It was said to me: The one in the middle is Amir al-Mu'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib, and the young man on his right is his son Hassan, and the one on his left is his son Hussein, and the one holding the banner is his son Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah. They continued until they reached the corner, where Amir al-Mu'minin prayed four units/ rakaas of prayer, then wiped his cheeks with the soil, mixing it with his tears..."

During the Battle of Jamal, Imam Hassan and Hussein were at the forefront, eager to engage in battle. Seeing their intense zeal, Imam Ali, fearing for their safety, said: "O people, hold back these two young men for me, for I am more concerned about them than myself, lest the lineage of the Messenger of Allah be cut off."

When the oppressive Qasitah from the people of Sham rose against them, Imam Hussein addressed the supporters of his father, saying: "Praise be to Allah and blessings upon Him for what He deserves. O people of Kufa, you are the beloved, the generous, the standard-bearers without banners. Strive to revive what has been buried among you, to rectify what has gone away, and to strengthen the bonds that have loosened among you. Surely, war is its worst when it is unavoidable, its taste is bitter, and it is a cup full of horror. Whoever seizes it is met with its haste, prepares for it with its provisions, and does not hesitate at its calamities when it arrives, he is its master. But whoever rushes to it prematurely, before its time, missing



his opportunity and showing haste in it, he is its fuel, unable to benefit his people, and he will perish. We ask Allah for His assistance to support you with His guidance.”

The narrator “Al-Manqari” describes a scene from the Battle of Siffin, where Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) was closely guarding his father, Ali ibn Abi Talib, defending his side, even though the army was under the protection of Ali ibn Abi Talib. One of the narrators said, “Ali passed by that day with his sons towards the left, accompanied by only Rabi’ah. I could see nobility between his shoulders, and each of his sons was protecting him on their own. Ali was not pleased with this, so he went forward and kept them away from the people of Sham, taking his hand if needed, and throwing him in front of him or behind him. At that moment, someone, perhaps a follower of Abu Sufyan, Uthman, or from the Umayyads, exclaimed: ‘Ali, by the Lord of the Kaaba! May God kill me if I do not kill you or you kill me!’ He approached Ali, and a servant of Ali’s struck him twice. Then, a servant of the Umayyads killed him and approached Ali to strike him with a sword. Ali seized him, and his hand fell into the pocket of his armour. Ali then carried him on his shoulder, and it seemed as if I saw his legs dangling over Ali’s neck. He struck him to the ground, breaking his shoulder and arm. Ali’s sons, Hussein and Muhammad, then struck him with their swords until he perished. It was as if I saw Ali standing, and his youths striking the man.”

Imam Hussein, along with his brother Hassan, like their father Ali, witnessed the battlefields directly, unlike worldly kings and rulers who push people into death to fulfil their dreams while

they and their children are comfortably awaiting the spoils of war from the comfort of their palaces.

## **9. The biography of Imam Hussein from the year 50 to 60 AH:**

Imam Hussein wrote a letter to Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, saying, "I do not know of a greater tribulation for this nation than your leadership over it nor a greater threat to myself, my religion, and the nation of Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family, than to fight against you."

The issue arose after the testimony of Imam Hassan al-Mujtaba, peace be upon him, after the year 50 AH, when matters of leadership and religious leadership transferred to Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, among his followers and even among the people of Medina in general. Even those who were not Shia, although they did not believe in his leadership in the Shia sense, treated him as one of the most prominent religious figures in society, as no one surpassed him in lineage, knowledge, or social status.

Muawiyah, while manoeuvring with Marwan ibn al-Hakam, would sometimes dismiss him and then reinstate him, enticing him with promises of power. Marwan sought to establish his permanent position in Medina, and for this purpose, he needed to show himself as a guardian of Umayyad authority and a vigilant overseer of its enemies. Thus, he wrote to Muawiyah saying, "Amr ibn Uthman mentioned that men from Iraq and prominent figures from the Hijaz are turning towards Hussain ibn Ali. He mentioned that Hussain cannot be trusted. I have

looked into this matter, and I have been informed that he intends to oppose you today, and I am not confident that this will not continue in the future. Therefore, write to me with your opinion on this matter and peace." Muawiyah replied to him, saying, "I have received your letter and understood the issue regarding Hussain. I advise you not to confront Hussein in any way, and leave him alone as long as he leaves you alone. We do not want to confront him in any matter as long as he doesn't challenge us in our authority. Therefore, remain patient until he shows his opposition public, ending his message with the standard Islamic salute Waa salam ( peace be with you)

Mawaiyah wrote to Imam Hussein bin Ali, peace be upon him, saying, "After greetings, matters concerning you have come to my attention. If they are true, I believe you have left them willingly, so leave them. By the oath of God, whoever has been given God's covenant and pledge is worthy of loyalty. If what I have been informed of is false, then you are the fairest among people in this regard. Remind yourself and remember the covenant of God, for if you dismiss me, I will dismiss you, and if you approve of me, I will approve of you. Beware of sowing the seeds of discord and division within this nation, as God may hold you accountable for causing dissension among them. People have been tested and put to trial. Look upon yourself, your religion, and the nation of Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family. Do not let the ignorant and ill-minded mislead you."

"When the letter reached Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), Imam Hussein replied, 'After receiving your letter, I became aware that you have heard matters about me that you wish to

inquire about. However, what you have been informed of is only what has been conveyed to you by those who spread rumors. I do not seek war with you nor do I wish to engage in conflict with you. By Allah, I fear Him in neglecting to address this matter. I do not believe that Allah is pleased with leaving it unattended, nor do I offer excuses without legitimate justification. Have you forgotten that you are the one who killed Hajr ibn Adi, the brother of Kunda, along with the worshippers who stood up against injustice and shunned and heresies in religion? They feared no blame in Allah's cause. Yet, you unjustly and aggressively killed them after you had promised them firm faith and established covenants. Will you hold them accountable for a dispute that arose between you and them, or have you forgotten your killing of Amr ibn al-Hamq, the righteous servant of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family)?" and the "Obedient servant of God who had devoted himself to worship, so much so that his body weakened, and his complexion turned pale? After granting him security and honouring him with Allah's covenants, if you had given him a bird, it would have descended unto you from the mountaintop. Yet, you killed him boldly, showing no regard for your covenant with Allah. Or are you not the one who falsely claimed Ziyad bin Sumayyah, who was born by an enslaved Thaqafi woman, to be the son of your father? Didn't the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) say, 'The father is for the bed and the stone for the adulterer'? Yet, you ignored the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) deliberately, following your desires without guidance from Allah. You unleashed him upon the people of Iraq, cutting off the hands and legs of the Muslims, gouging out their eyes, and crucifying them on palm trees. It's as if you don't belong to this

nation, and they don't belong to you. Or are you not the one who wrote to me about the people of Hadramut, claiming that they followed the religious path of Ali (peace be upon him)? You wrote to me, saying, 'Kill anyone who adheres to the religion of Ali.' He killed them and set them as examples according to your command. By Allah, the same Allah who punished your father and will punish you, and by whom your assembly was held and will be held. Were it not for that, your honour and the honour of your father would have departed twice. You said in your letter, 'Look out for yourself, your religion, and the nation of Muhammad. Beware of causing discord among this nation and leading them into turmoil.' I do not know of any greater turmoil upon this nation than your governance over them. It is not more concerning to anyone than to me, for my own sake and for my religion, and for the nation of Muhammad upon us, to confront you. If I engage in a conflict with you, it is a deed of closeness to Allah, and if I refrain, then I seek forgiveness from Allah for my sins and ask for His guidance in my affairs. You said in your letter, 'If you dismiss me, I will dismiss you, and if you acknowledge me, I will acknowledge you.' Therefore, acknowledge what appears to you as true. I hope that your scheming against me will not harm me."

It appears that the exchange of these two letters took place early after the year 50 AH, as made explicit by their content. The events mentioned in them range from around 46 AH (the claim of Ziyad and his governance of Kufa), to the beginning of 50 AH (the testimony of Amr ibn al-Hakam al-Khuzai), and around 51 AH (the testimony of Hujr ibn Adi al-Kindi). However, they reflect the policies of both parties towards their opponent. Indeed, Muawiyah was not intending to engage in an open and

fierce battle against Imam Hussein, peace be upon him. While he sought to kill prominent Shi'a of (Ali) Amir al-Mu'minin and to contain them, he did not bind himself to any law or covenant. He also acted to consolidate the foundations of Umayyad rule.

In contrast, Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, adhering to the same plan as Imam Hassan al-Mujtaba, peace be upon him, which he followed over ten years (from 40 AH to 50 AH), did not desire a heated confrontation during Muawiyah's time, especially given his deviation from the righteous path. He considered Muawiyah's leadership as the greatest tribulation that befell the Muslim nation. Thus, he believed that seeking forgiveness for his sin would involve refraining from confronting him directly.

Researchers conclude that the approach of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, utilized to manage societal issues and leadership matters during the period between 50 AH and 60 AH was the same approach followed by Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba after the truce with Muawiyah. If the wise leader were to consider and appreciate those circumstances, he would not have crossed the lines set by Imam Hasan, peace be upon him. Therefore, Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, continued with the same policy.

The Imams of guidance, peace be upon them, based on our belief in their divine guidance in their roles and their possession of profound wisdom, if placed in the same circumstances as the others, would have followed the approach used by the other Imams.

This refutes the claim made by some historians that one Imam, for example, had a conciliatory and peaceful temperament, so he took that path, while another Imam had a militant and warlike temperament, so he chose the path of revolution, and a third Imam had a temperament of teaching and education, so he chose the path of teaching. The path and approach used by each Imam did not stem from their temperament or personal tendencies. We believe that they did so for two reasons: the first is its being a divine aspect of guidance, and the second is related to its being a wise decision requiring the most effective methods of managing conflict at that time.

This indicates that generalizing the infallibles' image is not accurate because it assumes a one-sided aspect and frames the entire life of the infallible in that way. The stereotypical portrayal of Imam Hussein is another example people have of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him. In fact, he is portrayed as the sacrificial rebel who knows nothing but the language of martyrdom and bloodshed as instruments of upholding truth and countering falsehood. This aspect is true, but it is not the complete picture. This image reflects only a five-month segment of Imam Hussein's life, and thus, the image was undoubtedly shaped by the circumstances of that critical period. In another context, you find him as a divine scholar speaking about beliefs like his father, Imam Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, and as a jurist in matters of jurisprudence, and so forth. A quick example here is what transpired between Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, and one of the leaders of the Kharijites, Nafi' ibn al-Azraq.

Ibn Asakir, through his chain of transmission from Ibn Abbas, narrated that while Ibn Abbas was addressing the people, Nafi'

ibn al-Azraq approached him and said, "O Ibn Abbas, are you giving religious rulings on ants and lice? Describe to me the deity that you worship!" Ibn Abbas became distressed at his words. Hussein ibn Ali was sitting nearby and said, "Speak, O son of al-Azraq." Ibn Abbas said, "O son of al-Azraq, he belongs to the family of prophecy, and they are the heirs of knowledge." Nafi' then turned to Hussein and said, "O Hussein, if that is the case, then indeed you and your family are the illuminations of Islam and the stars of judgments."

So Hussain said to him: "I have a question for you." Ibn al-Azraq replied, "Ask." Hussain asked him about this verse: "And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city" [Quran 18:82]. "Who guarded the two boys?" Ibn al-Azraq answered, "Their father." Hussain then asked, "Is their father better or the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his family?" Ibn al-Azraq responded, "Allah has informed me that you are contentious people."

The scientific and constructive theological aspects were at the forefront of the concerns of Imam Hussain, peace be upon him. In addition to what has been mentioned, he saw the Umayyad plan systematically aimed at erasing any memory or mention of Imam Ali's virtues, peace be upon him-even from his closest relatives and companions.

Indeed, the Imams, peace be upon them, including Imam Hussein, when they defended Imam Ali and propagated his virtues and merits, they were not doing so out of personal agenda or familial ties. Doing things out of personal agenda or driven by family loyalty was the logic of their enemies. Instead, the Imams operated within an ideological and principled



framework. In fact, we believe that the origin of the idea of narrating the virtues and merits in the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family, emanated from, and can best be understood within, this context. within this context. The Prophet did not come to praise this or that individual or to boast about a particular family; rather, the purpose was guidance for whoever desired to follow the path to their Lord.

The Sheikh Al-Atardi mentioned in his Musnad about Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, 69 hadiths of what was narrated about Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, regarding the virtues and qualities of his father, the necessity of following him, and also about the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them. Among them are 20 hadiths concerning Imam Ali, peace be upon him. We will mention some of them below to illustrate the significant role that Imam Hussein played during this period:

1. What he did in Mina during the days of Tashreeq, when he asked his family to gather and invite people from the immigrants, the Ansar, the people of Mecca and Medina, and others to witness what he would say until their number reached nearly 900 people. He tasked them with conveying what he said to their clans, tribes, and regions. This was during the late days of Muawiyah.

“He did not leave anything of what Allah revealed in them [the family of the Prophet] from the Quran except that he recited it and explained it, and he did not leave anything of what the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said about his father, his brother, his mother, himself, and the people of his household except that he narrated it.”

All of this, the companions of the holy Prophet (as) say: "O Allah, yes, we have heard and witnessed." And the second generation of companions say: "O Allah, someone trustworthy from the companions has informed me about it." So he said: "I adjure you by Allah, except if you have heard it from someone you trust in his narrations and his religion."

His role was not limited to Imam Ali, peace be upon him, but narrations abound about Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, regarding the infallibles after the Prophet. Imam Al-Baqir narrated from his father, peace be upon them, saying: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said to Ali ibn Abi Talib: 'O Ali, I, you, your sons Hasan and Hussein, and nine from the progeny of Hussein are the pillars of religion and the supports of Islam. Whoever follows us will be saved, and whoever deviates from us will be in the hell fire.'"

While some may seek to undermine the position of Imam Hussein and his family by those who conspired against him and plotted and agreed to remove him, Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, affirms this to one of the Asadiyyin, as reported by his daughter Fatima bint Al-Hussein. She said: "A man from the tribe of Asad came to my father, peace be upon him, and said, 'Why do people order you, or it could be 'order upon your father, and they do not order him?' He said: 'The people have conspired and agreed not to pledge allegiance to my father.'" To delve into the details of this role, which clarifies the correct path for the Ummah and indicates the infallible and just leadership, one can refer to the book "Musnad Imam Hussein, peace be upon him," where the seeker will find what they are looking for.

2. Exposing the Umayyad scheme to distort Islam and erode its essence, despite Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, adhering to the covenant signed between Imam Hassan and Muawiyah, without changing anything and remaining inactive, even though many delegations came from Kufa and Basra, urging him to revolt against Umayyad rule, some of whom were sincere Shia. He refused and stated: "There is a covenant and an agreement between me and Muawiyah that cannot be violated until the agreed period elapses. After Muawiyah's death, I will reconsider."

To briefly outline the Umayyad plan hatched by Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, to alter the caliphate line to be Umayyad and hereditary, ensuring his son Yazid's succession as the nation's caliph, he executed several actions:

- **Preparation for Yazid's allegiance: Muawiyah embarked on eliminating potential competitors for Yazid, quietly and systematically.** This included poisoning Imam Hasan ibn Ali through his wife Ja'da bint al-Ash'ath, whom Muawiyah promised to reward by both giving a substantial amount of wealth and arranging for his son Yazid to marry her.

Abdulrahman Ibn Abi Bakr was among the staunchest opponents of Yazid's allegiance. When he read to the people a document demanding their allegiance to Yazid, he condemned their intentions, likening them to those of Heraclius, who reinstated himself each time he died. When Muawiyah heard of Abdulrahman's stance, he sent him a hundred thousand dirhams to win him over. However, Abdulrahman refused, affirming that he would not sell his faith for worldly gains.

The interesting thing is that historians say that after that, Abdul Rahman set out for Mecca, but suddenly died before reaching it, just like Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas suddenly died, and just like Abdul Rahman bin Khalid al-Walid suddenly died. The late scholar al-'Askari pointed out this meaning in his book "The Hadiths of Umm al-Mu'minin Aisha" while analyzing her position regarding the Umayyad state. He says: "In al-Mustadrak, it was mentioned that he lay down in al-Maqil, so they went to wake him up, but found him dead. Aisha accused them of harming him and hurried to bury him while he was still alive. Conflict erupted again between Umm al-Mu'minin and the Umayyads, and trouble started. Umm al-Mu'minin lost her brother Abdul Rahman in this battle, as he died under mysterious circumstances, known when he died on his way to Mecca, just like al-Ash'ath died on his way to Egypt, Abdul Rahman bin Abi Bakr died like Abdul Rahman bin Khalid, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, and Hasan bin Ali. All of them died to make way for giving allegiance to Yazid."

Saad Ibn Abi Waqqas wasn't in a better situation than him; he could have posed a threat to Yazid's allegiance. Al-Isfahani in "Maqatal al-Talibiyyin" mentioned: "Muawiya secretly poisoned both Imam Hasan and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas because he wanted them to pledge allegiance after his death to his son Yazid." The third person was Abdul Rahman ibn Khalid ibn al-Walid. Despite his sincerity, when he became a potential threat to Yazid, Muawiya ordered a Jewish physician, who was skilled but conniving, to visit him and administer a lethal dose of poison, leading to his death.

- **As part of the preparation for Yazid's allegiance, Muawiya arranged influential figures.** Some, considering the degradation of the caliphate, aspired for it. Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, for instance, desired to remain governor of Kufa to prevent his removal by anyone else. Marwan, previously mentioned, was tasked by Muawiya to invite allegiance to Yazid. Compliance ensured Marwan's position, while hesitation justified his removal from Medina's governance, but he was worthless in the eyes of the people. Ziyad ibn Abihi, who became Ziyad ibn Abi Sufyan, remained after Yazid's death but soon passed away in Kufa, closing his chapter!
- **During that period, Muawiya attempted to polish and elevate Yazid's image by instructing him to appear righteous and refrain from indulging in immorality.** However, Yazid's notorious behaviour was widely known. It was even said that when Muawiya ordered Yazid to take allegiance from the people of Basra, Ziyad ibn Abihi responded sarcastically, saying: "What will people say when we invite them to pledge allegiance to Yazid, while he plays with dogs and monkeys, wears colourful garments, indulges in wine, and walks among drummers, with Hussain ibn Ali, Abdullah ibn Abbas, Abdullah ibn Zubair, and Abdullah ibn Umar present? However, he mimics their manners for a while or two, but it's doubtful that he will mature in front of people."

Muawiya even instructed Yazid to perform Hajj one year and accompany the army on a summer expedition. Both actions brought further disgrace to him.

## 10. What did Imam Hussein do to confront this plan?

To foil his scheme, the Imam sent a letter to Muawiyah exposing his crimes against the people and religion, serving as a trial for him and his reign; it was titled "Aren't You? Aren't You?" detailing Muawiyah's actions during his reign.

However, the biggest strike to his plan for pledging allegiance to his son Yazid came when he came to Medina to inform the people about his intention. This happened when Muawiyah himself came to Medina. At that time, the prominent figures of Medina, including Imam Hussein, may peace be upon him, Ibn Abbas, Abdullah ibn Az-Zubair, and Abdullah ibn Umar, were requested to gather. After they gathered, Muawiyah began talking about Yazid and his benefit to the nation. Ibn Abbas intended to stand up, but Imam Hussein gestured for him to sit down. So, Ibn Abbas sat down while Imam Hussein, may peace be upon him, stood up to respond to Muawiyah. He said: "After praising Allah and sending blessings upon the Prophet... I understood what you mentioned about Yazid in terms of his completeness and his policy for the nation of Muhammad. You want to deceive people about Yazid, as if you are describing someone hidden or defaming someone absent, or informing about what you have contained with special knowledge. However, Yazid himself has indicated his position. So, take Yazid in what he has taken from his own conclusions, the barking dogs when they wander, the racing pigeons ahead of their flocks, the singing nightingales, and the various types of amusements. You find him supportive. Leave what you are trying to do. What benefit is it to you to face Allah with the

burden of this creation more than what you are facing now? By Allah, you have not ceased to advance in falsehood, in tyranny, and in injustice until you filled the water containers. There is only a blink between you and death. So, proceed with a preserved deed on a witnessed day, and there is no escape at that moment.”

However, Muawiya, whose heart was filled with love for his son and saw in him the extension of his own existence, was not likely to heed advice from anyone. Instead, he warned Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) and the others present that he would speak in the mosque about this matter and appoint a swordsman at the head of each one of them. If anyone among them spoke a word, his neck would be struck without waiting for further orders, and he who warned is excused.

## **11. With Imam Hussein from Medina to Mecca**

The situation remained unstable and uncertain until Muawiya passed away on the fifteenth of Rajab in the year 60 AH. This marked the beginning of the second phase of the opposition to the Umayyad plan, and with it, the journey of the Hussaini revival against the rule of Yazid began.

Imam Hussein represented the stance of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) (So he left it, fearful and anticipating [what would happen]. He said, “My Lord, save me from the wrongdoing people.”) [1] and summoned the analogy, understanding it as described by the Commander of the Faithful about Prophet Moses’ situation in Sermon 4 of Nahj al-Balagha, where he

said: "Moses did not fear for himself but rather he feared for the prevalence of ignorance and the domination of fools," meaning he feared that control would fall into the hands of the ignorant, the foolish, and the backward. He feared that mischief will spread when the evil doers prevail. Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, had this fear for Islam to perish and vanish. Thus, he said: "And peace be upon Islam if the nation is governed by a shepherd like Yazid."

This sheds light on the reasons behind the Hussaini revival.

Our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) offered a clear and bright image of religion and Islam to the people. However, after the time of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family), this image became blurred and distorted, varying in intensity and weakness over different periods of time. When we reached the era of Muawiyah, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) expressed the state of affairs by saying: "Islam has is worn as a fur coat with its fur inside ." This analogy draws attention to significant aspects. When fur is worn inside out, its appearance becomes ugly because its outer side is now inside and vice versa.

**Moreover**, it loses its effectiveness and functionality since fur is supposed to protect from the cold; when reversed, it fails to provide the intended protection. This means that Islam was threatened to become, during that time, unattractive to the observer and ineffectual for those practicing it.

Imam Hussein's (peace be upon him) first aim was to halt the accelerating collapse within the body of Islam during the time of Muawiyah, which was on the verge of reaching its peak



and being buried during the days of Yazid. If during Muawiyah's era, Islam existed but was dressed in an inverted manner, then during Yazid's era, it would have inevitably reached its end, to the extent that its funeral prayer would be recited over it, as Hussein said: " Farewell to Islam if the nation is cursed with a ruler like Yazid."

**The second aim:** The social responsibility imposed by religion on its followers, which increases with the believer's position in society. Thus, Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) saw himself as more duty bound to confront falsehood and as having a greater duty to bring about change. He cited what he heard from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family): "Whoever among you witnesses an unjust ruler, allowing what is forbidden by Allah, forbidding what is lawful by Allah, and oppressing the servants of Allah, yet does not oppose him by action or word, then it is incumbent upon Allah to admit him to the same abode as the ruler." He said, "Indeed, I am more deserving of changing it." He took the first step within the framework of rejecting the rule of Yazid, which was the most appropriate decision according to the prevailing circumstances at that time. Some scholars pointed out that Medina, despite its religious sanctity, was strategically a graveyard for revolutions. No revolution erupted in Medina without being suppressed on the spot, such as the revolutions of Abdullah bin Hanzala, Ghassil Al-Mala'ika, and the movement of the Ansar of Ibn Al-Zubayr. During the time of the Abbasids, there was the uprising of Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Al-Hasan Al-Muthanna Al-Nafs Al-Zakiyya. However, it did not take long before it was suppressed, followed by the movement of Al-Hussein bin Ali bin Al-Hasan Al-Muthanna bin Al-Hasan Al-Sibt. Scholars

attribute this to the geographical limitations of Medina, as it lacks extensions and does not have significant human depth due to its limited interaction with other communities or adjacent towns, and its population is not large.

Due to all of these circumstances, it did not qualify to become a central state of authority from the strategic point of view, as the city could easily be besieged and invaded by a large military force, as was the fate of earlier acts of revolt. We believe this is one of the reasons that prompted Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) to leave Medina. His presence there without pledging allegiance to Yazid, who specifically instructed his governor to forcefully extract allegiance from him and from several other designated individuals, who were threatened with death if they refuse or dissent.

The opinions of the people of Medina were divided into three categories regarding this decision, as follows:

- **It was natural for the Umayyads and their followers to oppose Hussein's decision, sometimes advising him to pledge allegiance, and at other times threatening him that his life would be in danger if he declared opposition to Umayyad rule.**
- **There was a group that supported Imam Hussein's rejection of allegiance to Yazid and his declaration of resistance against the Umayyad project.** However, they were torn between being concerned for his safety and being willing to defend him and standing by his side. This group formed the core that accompanied Hussein

from Medina to Mecca and continued to support him until the end.

- **A third group did not see the matter as relevant to them.** They were indifferent to their own affairs and did not consider themselves involved in the situation. They neither opposed nor supported Umayyad rule, nor did they align themselves with Imam Hussein or oppose him. This group typically represents the majority in societies--past and present.

One of the clearest examples of individuals in the first group is Marwan ibn al-Hakam, who was ambitious to be the ruler of Medina. Marwan was manipulated by Muawiya for twenty years, sometimes appointed and other times dismissed from power. Historians failed to count the number of times he was let go from power as well as the number of times he was appointed. He came to Imam Hussein and said, "I advise you to pledge allegiance to Yazid, as it is in your best interest both in terms of your religion and worldly affairs."

If the situation was normal in the case of Marwan ibn al-Hakam ibn al-'As, it would be surprising in the case of 'Umar al-Atraf ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, his son from his wife al-Shabaa al-Tughlabiyya, step brother of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, and younger than him by perhaps 15 years or more before his departure. Imam Hussein was advised, as claimed, by 'Umar al-Atraf to pledge allegiance to Yazid! In truth, the positions of and political sides taken by 'Umar al-Atraf, from the beginning to the end, are not only unfavourable but extremely perplexing.

The third category consists of the rest of the people, who were not involved in Imam Hussein's movement. Some ask, 'Where are the companions of the Prophet? Where are the followers? Why don't we find so and so in Imam Hussein's ranks?'

Two reasons can be offered here: First, the understanding of divine leadership and its dimensions at that time were not as clear as it is now. This is a common issue in the study of beliefs, as the understanding of beliefs in earlier times was not as sophisticated and advanced as it is today.

The second reason is that Imam Hussein did not call people to leave with him from Medina. Yes, this happened in Mecca, where there was more than one indication, statement, and public and private speeches in which the Imam encouraged people to join him on his journey, and he invited them to accept his words and to join him against Yazid and his government.

In another context, we pointed out that the failure of the companions to join Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, does not harm his movement or detract from its legitimacy, as some writers affiliated with the Umayyad orientation try to claim. Rather, it is a weakness and a mark of shame on their foreheads, as they received news of Imam Hussein's movement and neither supported him nor joined his ranks.

As mentioned before, the city of Medina, both geographically and strategically, was not the ideal place for Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, to declare his revolution and oppose Umayyad rule. Therefore, the most appropriate decision was to leave Medina. According to geographical calculations, the

closest place where people from all over could gather was Mecca, especially since it was nearing the end of the month of Rajab. Soon, people from various places would be heading to Mecca for pilgrimage. In addition to its status as a sacred city, Mecca was supposed to provide a degree of personal safety, at least in the minds of the people.

Furthermore, the presence of pilgrims and their gathering in Mecca provided ample opportunity for the leader of the uprising to preach his beliefs, communicate with them, and to reach out to their communities for allegiance. Indeed, for several years, the Imam, peace be upon him, had met with pilgrims, acquainting them with the virtues and merits of his father, the Commander of the Faithful, Ali, peace be upon him, and the position of his household in the Imamate.

### **How did the events unfold?**

After reaching the age of 78 and achieving what he desired, Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan passed away on the fifteenth of the month of Rajab in the year 60 AH (After Hijra) in his capital, Damascus, in Syria. He strongly urged governance and allegiance be given to his son Yazid bin Muawiyah, who was around thirty-four years old at that time.

Yazid bin Muawiyah sent messages to the governors appointed by his father, instructing them to take allegiance from the people in their regions. At that time, Medina was under the rule of Walid bin Utbah bin Abi Sufyan. Hence, a message was sent to the governor of Medina, Walid bin Utbah bin Abi Sufyan, to take allegiance from the people in general and from specific individuals due to their social and religious

influence, knowing that those who pledged allegiance would not retract it.

The focus was primarily on three individuals: Imam Hussein, Abdullah bin Az-Zubair, and Abdullah bin Umar. In reality, it is evident that Imam Hussein was the main concern. Abdullah bin Umar was unlikely to delay in pledging allegiance to Yazid, as historical events proved. As for Ibn Az-Zubair, he would not make any moves as long as Imam Hussein was prominent. Therefore, Walid wanted to summon Imam Hussein to the palace in order to get his pledge of allegiance to Yazid.

Yazid's letter perfectly aligned with the mentality and cunning ways of Marwan ibn al-Hakam, the perpetual rival for control of Medina. When Yazid's letter arrived instructing Walid to obtain allegiance from these three individuals, and if they refused, to strike their necks, it resonated with Marwan's way of thinking. This explains the dialogue that took place in Walid ibn Utbah's palace, where he attempted to peacefully resolve the matter and postpone it to another day, hoping that Imam Hussein would leave Medina and the issue would resolve itself. However, Marwan didn't want to miss this opportunity. He knew Walid's nature and understood Yazid's demand, aiming to create a rift between Walid's disposition and Yazid's demand, positioning himself as the victor.

We notice here the ingenuity of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) in several instances. He understood Walid's personality and spoke to him accordingly. Since Walid was not fond of escalation and violent confrontation, Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) hinted to him that it wasn't suitable to pledge allegiance secretly, and that its impact would be greater

if done publicly. He suggested waiting until the invitation was extended to everyone, so that Walid could be among the people present.

This approach aligned with Walid's character, and Imam Hussein intended to conclude the private meeting then and there. At that point, there would be no need for his brothers, sons, and the Hashemites to intervene for protection. However, Marwan, whose eyes were fixed on authority and who was still engaged in a power struggle with Walid, wanted to escalate the conflict between them. Any action taken thereafter would serve his personal interests. If Walid killed Hussein and tensions escalated, it would boost Marwan's chances of assuming control of Medina, as he would be seen as not dealing with Imam Hussein properly. If Walid did nothing to him, it would be seen as negligence and lack of firmness in executing Yazid's order. At this point, Imam Hussein had no choice but to confront Marwan with the firmness and strength we've seen, challenging him to carry out his threat.

As for Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), after deciding to leave, he bid farewell to Umm Salama, as well as to the Hashemites, announcing his departure to Mecca. Everyone knew that his exit from Medina meant rejecting allegiance to Yazid, and even if it led to his death, he would not pledge allegiance.

After bidding farewell to those dear to him in Medina, he turned towards the grave of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family, where Shia sources recount that he fell asleep for a short while by the Prophet's grave and saw him in a dream.

Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) departed with his sons, brothers, nephews, and the noble members of his household. He set out in the evening, taking the main road. Choosing the prominent route adds another indication to the meaning of his being "fearful," as interpreted in the blessed verse: "So he emerged therefrom, fearful, apprehensive. He said, 'My Lord, save me from the wrongdoing people.'" (Surah Al-Qasas: 21). Indeed, someone who fears for his safety would not have chosen the most prominent route, which is easy to track. Moreover, Imam Hussein was not without companions from the close circles of the existing caliphate.

## **12 . Was Imam Hussein peace be upon him preparing to perform Hajj, then was forced to change his plan?**

Some historical poems documenting the movement of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), both in classical and popular poetry, indicate that he was initially prohibited from performing Hajj, then permitted. This notion has become firmly established in the minds of those familiar with these poems to the extent that if told otherwise, they would be surprised and not believe them. Poetry, due to its dual ability to influence and its repetition, solidifies both text and meaning.

The truth is that Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) entered Mecca with a single Umrah from Medina on the 27th of Rajab, 60 AH. This was natural, as he intended to visit Mecca and passed by the appointed station (Miqat) of Dhu al-Hulayfah or the Mosque of the Tree. Islamic jurisprudence dictates that a



pilgrim heading to Mecca must enter the state of ihram for a single Umrah when passing by these points.

Since his entry was not during the months of Hajj, he had no choice but to assume ihram for a single Umrah, and thus, it is incorrect to claim that he added the tawaf al-nisa (circumambulation around the Kaaba by women) to his Umrah before ending it. If he had assumed ihram for Tamattu (Umrah followed by Hajj) and did not complete it, then his ruling would be that of Al-Masdud (restricted), where he would not end it with Tawaf Al-Nisa, but rather with the sacrifice of a sheep. However, none of this is reported to have been done by Imam Hussein (peace be upon him).

What we mentioned is affirmed by what is stated in the book "Mustamsik al-Urwah al-Wuthqa" by Imam al-Hakim, may Allah's mercy be on him. After concurring with what was mentioned in some sources about him changing his Umrah al-Tamattu' into Umrah al-Mufradah is not reliable, reliable reports clearly show that he performed Umrah al-Mufradah from the beginning.

After staying in Mecca for several months, he left it before the ninth of Dhu al-Hijjah towards the road to Iraq. There is no doubt that Imam Hussein's departure from Mecca at that time was the safest and wisest decision to both safeguard the sanctity of the place and the safety of Hajj and the well-being of pilgrims. It was clear that the Umayyad authority would not leave Imam Hussein without compelling him to pledge allegiance to Yazid, which he was adamantly opposed to. Staying in Mecca would have undoubtedly lead to an attempt to assassinate the Imam while performing some rituals. An assassination attempt would

have resulted in the mobilization of Imam Hussein's family who would fight against Yazid's hitmen thereby resulting in inappropriate violation of the sanctity of the sacred month and disrupting the pilgrimage.

The best decision made by Imam Hussein was to leave Mecca to preserve its sanctity and that of the season, and the safety of the pilgrims. He indicated this by saying, "To be killed outside the sanctuary by a span is dearer to me than to be killed inside it by a span."

### **13. Was the Imam aware of his destiny when he left Mecca?**

There is a recurring question in the uprising of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, and it resurfaces every year during the Muharram season. Was Imam Hussein aware of his martyrdom? If so, did he rise up only to be martyred or to achieve a lofty social goal, namely, establishing justice and equity in an Islamic state following the path of the Messenger of Allah and the methodology of Imam Ali, peace be upon them both?

This question is linked to many topics, including those related to the Imamate regarding the extent of knowledge of the infallible Imam, peace be upon him, and whether he knows in advance about his martyrdom in all of its details. This issue also comes up when addressing the motives behind Imam Hussein's jihad movement.

About seven decades ago, this debate was renewed extensively when Sheikh Naematollah Salehi Najafabadi authored his book “The Eternal Martyr” in Persian, which sparked a heated social debate for a considerable period in Iran, and its effects extended to the Shia community beyond its borders.

It is clear that Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, went out knowing that his fate was martyrdom, and others from his family and beyond knew it too. Numerous hadiths narrated from the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, and reports attributed to Imam Ali, peace be upon him, were abundant, and attest to this fact beyond any shadow of doubt. The natural course of events leading to Imam Hussein’s martyrdom, peace be upon him, further attest to the wisdom and knowledge of Imam Hussein’s about the course of events that would later unfold. So, how could he overlook this outcome?! The power imbalance between the two sides—Imam Hussein and his companions, and the Umayyad state, which was at its peak, lead to this tragic eventual outcome. Added to this is Imam Hussein’s unparalleled intelligence and awareness of the circumstances he was dealing with

Scholars have addressed this issue—Imam’s knowledge of his death—first in the context of discussing the testimony of Imam Ali, peace be upon him, and what was mentioned in it. The testimony points out that he knew it was “the night that the Messenger of Allah promised me.” The discussion of pre knowledge Imam Ali as well as his son Imam Hussein Hussein had about the timing of their martyrdom has long been a topic

of discussion and some debate among scholars. And it appears that there are three basic opinions related to it:

1. A view that asserts that: The Imams, peace be upon them, did not know the details of their fate in terms of precise time, place, and moment of its occurrence. They argue that the consensus is based on the Imam's obligation to be knowledgeable about all rulings, not all events and occurrences, according to their expression, 'not all details.' The issue of their knowledge of their fate has not been conclusively proven. This opinion has few proponents due to the convergence of reports indicating their knowledge of their fate, even if in general terms, and denying this within the Shiite circle is considered highly controversial.
2. The second opinion concludes that the Imams had knowledge of their fateful outcomes in the general but not specific sense. For example, the Commander of the Faithful may have known of his assassination in the month of Ramadan or even on the night of the twenty-first, but the exact time of his martyrdom. Similarly, Imam Hussain may have known that he would be martyred in Karbala and during the days of Muharram, for instance, but not the specific hour and day of his martyrdom. This opinion does not differ from the previous one, and it is consistent with the available and more reliable reports and narrations.

What concerns us is that Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, according to what has reached us from reports about his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah, and his father, Imam Ali, was aware of what awaited him in Karbala. Some reports have

mentioned this, and it is assumed that Imam Ali, peace be upon him, knew about it when he spoke near Nineveh.

One of the statements attributed to Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, alluding to his martyrdom, is as we mentioned earlier: "The best form of death for me is the one I will face, that death is as if my limbs are being cut by the scorpion of the wild between Nawawis and Karbala."

### **The Journey towards Kufa**

Staying in Mecca was not safe for Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, considering that the decision of the Umayyad authority was to assassinate him wherever Yazid's authorities find him. Additionally, Yazid's appointment of Amr ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq, compounded the danger for Imam Hussein because Amr Ibn Sa'id had personal animosity towards both him and his father, Imam Ali, peace be upon them. There was political ambition involved, as seen with Ibn Ziyad's consolidation of power in Iraq.

Moreover, Imam Hussein did not want the sanctity of Mecca to be violated, nor to have the pilgrimage and holy month disrupted, and the Kaaba desecrated. This would have set a bad precedent. Therefore, staying in Mecca was not the right place under any circumstances, so it is necessary to head to a different place. Upon reviewing the Islamic regions at that time, there was no better place than Kufa. The remaining places, like Basra, the other major city in Iraq did not have a predominantly Shia population. Also, the presence of Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad, the influential governor, would not have allowed Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) to choose his city as a destination.

Despite widespread Shiism among the people of Yemen, both emotionally and spiritually, it was not chosen due to its geographical distance from the sphere of political influence. It was neither a central region in the Islamic world nor did it possess a distinguished religious status like Medina. It had almost depleted its significant elements, as influential tribes and their leadership left Yemen and went to Kufa early on. Egypt's lack of political influence was similar to that of Yemen, as evidenced by the arrival of Egyptian rebels to Medina during the time of Uthman. If these rebels had remained in Egypt with their protests, they would not have had any impact. So, Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) chose Kufa because it was predominantly Shia in its general sentiment, and because its leaders, figures, and its people had corresponded with him. It's even mentioned that tens of thousands of names from their books were among those who communicated with Imam Hussein!

Despite the fact that Imam Hussein's departure seemed as a withdrawal from confrontation in Mecca, it was not entirely smooth. Amr ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq tried to prevent Imam Hussein and even ordered his men to arrest him. They tried to stop him, but he was firm in his decision to leave. When he left Mecca, a military unit confronted him, and they lashed out with whips.

#### **14. What did Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) do in Mecca?**

Upon arriving in Mecca and performing the individual Umrah pilgrimage, Imam Hussain, peace be upon him, stayed at the house of his uncle, Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib. Imam Hussein

did not have a house in Mecca, nor did his father or grandfather because they settled in Medina after the Prophet's migration. Their properties had been sold out of fear of their seizure by the authorities, as was the case with many Hashemites. The Ummayyad authorities routinely seized the properties of those who converted to Islam and migrated to Medina.

The Imam spent 125 days in Mecca. It was natural for him to be warmly received by those present in Mecca, whether they were pilgrims visiting from various parts of the Islamic world or the locals themselves, regardless of whether they belonged to the Ahl al-Bayt in belief and allegiance, or not. The nature of the reception befits that of a famous and well-recognized and highly respected figure.

During this period, Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) sent messages to Basra and Kufa, urging them to rise against the Ummayyad oppression. He sent five identical messages to the leaders of the tribes (the living in Basra and its tribes), which included the following:

"After this, surely Allah chose Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family, among His creatures, and honoured him with his prophethood and selected him for His message. Then Allah took him unto Himself after he wholeheartedly and fully advised His servants and conveyed what was revealed to him, may Allah's peace be upon him, his family, his close companions, his successors, his heirs, and the most deserving among people for his position among them. Then our people snatched and assumed authority over us, we were pleased with it, disliking separation and desiring well-being. We know that we have more right to this position than those who

have taken authority over us. They have done good, rectified matters, and sought the truth. May Allah have mercy on them and forgive us and them. I have sent my emissary to you with this letter, inviting you to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet, peace be upon him and his family. Verily, the Sunnah has been suppressed, and innovation in religion has been revived. Listening to my words and obeying my command will guide you to the path of righteousness. Peace and Allah's mercy be upon you."

### **The position of the people of Basra regarding the movement of Imam Hussein:**

We find different indications regarding the stance of the people of Basra towards the movement led by Imam Hussein. On the one hand, historians do not report that the people of Basra refused to pledge allegiance to Yazid ibn Muawiya after the death of his father. Neither do they mention that anyone from Basra reached out to Imam Hussein before his messages reached their leaders. Some historians attribute this to the fact that the governor of Basra, Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad, known for his severity and oppression, didn't allow any dissent to flame out. Alternatively, historically, Basra was not Alawi (supportive of Ali) during the days of the Battle of the Camel. By comparison, Kufa seemed to be the ideal city in both regards. Its governor, Nu'man ibn Bashir al-Ansari, was relatively peaceful, and Kufa's popular base had affection for the Alawites and the Banu Hashim, albeit on a psychological level.

Yes, Tabari mentioned, citing from Abu Mukhnaf, that a group of Shia used to gather at the house of a woman among them named Maria, daughter of Sa'd or Manqad from the days



of Abdu'l-Qays, and she was sympathetic to their cause. Her house was a place where they gathered. When news of Imam Hussein's arrival reached them, several of them set out to support him and were martyred in Karbala with him.

"People from the Shia gathered in Basra at the house of a woman from Abdu'l-Qays named Maria, daughter of Sa'd or Manqad for a few days. Her house was familiar to them, and they used to discuss matters there. Ibn Ziyad learned of Hussein's approach and instructed his agent in Basra to intercept and confront Imam Hussein. Yazid bin Thubayt urged for a group to go out to Hussein. He asked his ten sons, 'Who among you will go out with me?' Two of his sons, Abdullah and Ubaydullah, volunteered. He said to his companions in the house of that woman, "I decided to go out, and I am going", They said, 'We fear for you from the followers of Ibn Ziyad!' He replied, 'By Allah, when my camel's feet step on the land, then it is easy for me to join Imam Hussein.' Then he went out and proceeded on his way until he reached Imam Hussein's camp. He immediately entered into a covenant with him. When Imam Hussein learned of his coming, he was waiting eagerly for his arrival. The man arrived at Imam Hussein's camp, and they informed him that Imam Hussein had gone to his house. He followed Imam Hussein's tracks, but did not find Imam Hussein there. He sat on a mount that Imam Hussein used to sit on and waited for Imam Hussein. The man from Basra came and found him seated there, so he said, 'By the grace and mercy of Allah, let them rejoice.' Then he greeted him and sat with him. He informed him of what had transpired, and Imam Hussein prayed for his well-being. Then he accompanied him until he

reached the battlefield and fought along his side. He and his two sons were martyred alongside Imam Hussein."

The response to Imam Hussein's five messages to the leaders of the districts and tribes in Basra was mostly negative, except for the one from Yazid bin Mas'ud al-Nahshali al-Tamimi. He gathered his tribe, Tamim, and ordered them to support Imam Hussein by joining his ranks. Immediately, Al-Tamimi sent an emissary to Imam Hussein informing him of his response and acceptance of his call. This messenger, Al-Hajjaj al-Saadi, along with Qanab bin Amr al-Namari, also attained the honour of martyrdom alongside Imam Hussein. However, Yazid al-Nahshali and his assembled group did not realize this, as news of Imam Hussein's martyrdom reached them before they could reach the battle field.

The remaining four leaders, including Mundhir bin al-Jarud al-Abdi, did not respond to Imam Hussein's letter. Likewise, Al-Hanafi bin Qais' response was not better than that of the others, as he provided a vague answer to Imam Hussein's letter. Malik bin Masma' al-Bukri, Mas'ud bin 'Amr, Qais bin al-Haytham, and Amr bin 'Ubaydullah bin Ma'mar kept Imam Hussein's letter hidden and did not act upon it or respond to it.

It is also noteworthy that other Muslim regions did not react in any way to Imam Hussein's uprising. Important regions at that time, such as Yemen and Bahrain (including the Hajar and the Khatt), did not give any type of response whatsoever to Imam Hussein's letters. Regarding Mecca and Medina, there are some texts indicating that only a few people in these areas pledged allegiance to them - allegiance in a specific

sense meaning full-fledged adherence to their intellectual, jurisprudential, and political line.

## 15. The stance of Kufa towards Imam

### Hussein's movement:

The stance of the people of Kufa is considered one of the clearest positions in support of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), at least in theory. The people of Kufa demonstrated opposition to the Umayyad rule and showed various degrees of civil disobedience. They claimed not to attend congregational prayers led by the Umayyad governor (Nu'man ibn Bashir al-Ansari), nor did they recognize his authority, stating that they had no leader and therefore did not acknowledge allegiance to the Umayyads. This was reflected in numerous letters and messages they sent to Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), although the exact numbers, text content, and senders varied. Their number is believed to be in the hundreds.

According to some historians, the first of these letters arrived in late Sha'ban, which reflects the promptness of their initiative in declaring their stance towards Imam Hussein and following his departure from Medina. The letters multiplied in numbers until they reached their peak in the month of Ramadan. Perhaps the influx of pilgrims coming to Mecca for Umrah before Ramadan facilitated the transmission of these messages, especially from those who came with the intention of delivering the messages, such as Sa'id ibn Abdullah al-Hanafi, who later joined Imam Hussein and defended him even during prayers. He also was one of the martyrs of Karbala,

Certainly, those letters and messages were not the main factor in Imam Hussein's movement. However, they did have an impact in making Kufa the chosen destination for Imam Hussein to send his cousin Muslim ibn Aqil to. On the fifteenth day of Ramadan, Muslim ibn Aqil was sent with Qais ibn Masahar Al-Saydawi as part of a mission expressed in his letter, where Imam Hussain said: "After that, I understood all that you have mentioned. I have sent to you my brother, my cousin, and my trusted one from the people of my household, Muslim ibn Aqil, and I have ordered him to write to me about your situation, your command, and your opinion. If he writes to me that your voice is united and those with authority among you have agreed on what your messengers have conveyed, then I will come to you and fulfil my promise, God willing. By God, the Imam is nothing but one who acts according to the Book, establishes justice, and fulfils the obligations of the true religion. Peace be upon you." Muslim ibn Aqil then headed to Kufa.

Despite the significant turnout of the people of Kufa to pledge allegiance to Muslim ibn Aqil and rally around him, what is astonishing is the rapid change of heart. This occurred with the arrival of Ibn Ziyad in Kufa, his dismissal of Nu'man ibn Bashir, and the restructuring of the Umayyad offensive force. Ibn Ziyad managed to consolidate the Umayyad influence, enforce customary laws, activate the arbitration system, and threaten and intimidate the tribal leaders. Despite various explanations for the turn of events, the speed with which they happened and how remain perplexing.

Muslim ibn Aqil arrived in Kufa on the fifth day of Shawwal, covering the distance from Mecca to Kufa in twenty days. Upon

witnessing the people's readiness to pledge allegiance to him, he wrote a letter with Qais ibn Masahar Al-Saydawi, stating: "Indeed, a leader does not lie to his people. Eighteen thousand people from the people of Kufa have pledged allegiance to me, so hasten your response when my letter reaches you. All the people are with you; they have no allegiance or inclination towards the Umayyads. Peace." In response, Imam Hussein wrote a letter after leaving Mecca with Qais ibn Masahar Al-Saydawi. However, Qais was apprehended before reaching his destination because Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad had arrived in Kufa and seized control of the city. Qais ibn Masahar Al-Saydawi tore the letter when he was arrested, and when Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad asked him why he tore the letter, he replied, "So that you don't know its contents." Ibn Ziyad asked, "Who is this letter from?" Qais replied, "From Imam Hussein." Ibn Ziyad asked, "To whom?" Qais replied, "To his supporters in Kufa." Ibn Ziyad asked, "Who are they?" Qais replied, "I don't know them." Ibn Ziyad then instructed him, "If you don't bring us the letter, go up on the pulpit and curse Hussein and his father until we pardon you." Qais ibn Masahar Al-Saydawi, being clever, agreed, so he went up to the pulpit, and the people of Kufa gathered around him. He said to them, "O people, Hussein ibn Ali is the best creation of God, the son of Fatimah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, and I am his emissary to you. I have left him at Hajar, so respond to him." Then, he cursed Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad and his father and sought forgiveness for Ali ibn Abi Talib. Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad ordered him to be thrown from the top of the palace, and he was thrown, resulting in his death.

## 16. Accompanying Al Hussein from Mecca to Karbala

The journey of Imam Hussain from Mecca to Karbala took 23 days, covering a distance of 1475 kilometres, which was the distance between Mecca and Karbala using the routes available at that time. This means that Imam Hussain and the accompanying caravan travelled an average of 65 kilometres each day, passing through approximately 38 stops, including wells, settlements, and resting places. Some stops were brief, others were longer, and some were overnight stays, while others were not. Imam Hussain arrived in Karbala on the second day of Muharram in the year 61 AH.

The departure began on the eighth day of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah, in the year 60 AH. It is believed that they set out at night, as scholars suggest, as Arabs during that time preferred travelling at night, known as "sariyah," to allow the camels to rest during the cooler temperatures of the night and avoid the scorching sun and hot ground during the day. Travelling at night was therefore preferable.

So they set out at night, based on this, and by morning they reached "Al-Tan'eem," which was an area outside Mecca, but it has now become part of it due to Mecca's urban expansion.

After the Imam, peace be upon him, passed Al-Tan'eem, he reached "Al-Safah," where he met Al-Farazdaq bin Ghalib. According to Al-Farazdaq himself, he said: "I was coming from Basra to perform Hajj with my mother, and we saw the procession of Hussein ibn Ali. So I approached him, and he asked me about the man. I said to him, 'I am an Arab.' He

said, 'No, by Allah, he did not question me further than that.' Meaning he only asked about my identity.

This encounter with Al-Farazdaq raises the question: Was the level of relationship between Al-Farazdaq and the Imam, peace be upon him, such that they exchanged brief words and then each went on their way? Neither did the Imam invite him to join, especially since he was outside Mecca, nor did Al-Farazdaq inquire further from the Imam about what he wanted, like asking about the people behind him.

We have mentioned opinions about the personality of Al-Farazdaq in detail in the comprehensive book. Interested readers can learn more details about Al-Farazdaq in the unabridged version of this book.

### **Station of Zurood and Meeting with Ibn Al-Qain**

As the Imam, peace be upon him, continued his journey past Al-Safah, he reached Zurood. History recounts two important events there: the meeting of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, with Zuhair ibn Al-Qain, and the arrival of the news of the martyrdom of Muslim ibn Aqeel.

Regarding Zuhair ibn Al-Qain, it is clear that his role after joining Imam Hussein was significant, as he was among the foremost loyal companions who were not from the Hashemite lineage. There is speculation about whether he was inclined towards the Umayyads before that or not.

It must be noted that the term "inclined towards the Umayyads," when used, refers to being supportive of them, but with a softened expression, it is called "inclined towards

Uthman.” This does not imply a direct lineage from Uthman but rather aligning with the Umayyad rule, which prevailed until the time of Caliph Uthman. Even Al-Jahid, when he wanted to express pride against the Alawites, mentioned in his praise of Uthmani that encompassed the Umayyads.

In response to that, Al-Allama At-Tabrisi mentioned: “The oldest source in which this description is mentioned is Tarikh Al-Tabari (Al-Tabari History), and it was attributed to one of his enemies in a debate between them on the day of Ashura. Then it was transmitted by Al-Baladhuri and others. Since this description comes from his enemies, it cannot be established as true. Furthermore, there is no evidence or incident (from a statement or action) indicating that he was inclined towards the Umayyads. Even if he was previously inclined in such a way, it wouldn’t harm him, especially considering his later alignment with truth and his support for Imam Hussein. This is akin to the story of Al-Hurr Al-Riyahi, who was at the head of the Umayyad army that came fully ready to fight Imam Hussein and to capture him, yet he achieved happiness and martyrdom, earning the title ‘Al-Hurr’ (emancipated) as his mother named him, as mentioned in the eulogy for Hussein.

Moreover, there is evidence to the contrary, as mentioned by Zuhayr himself when he said: “We raided Blinjar and Allah granted us victory and spoils. Salman al-Bahili said to us: ‘Are you happy with what Allah has granted you in terms of spoils?’ We replied, ‘Yes.’ He said to us: ‘If you encounter the youth of the family of Muhammad, be even happier to fight with them while having the spoils.’ This raid occurred around the year 22 AH. It is natural that Salman al-Bahili would not say such



words except to someone whom he supports and esteems. Undoubtedly, he would not sell his loyalty to someone with any Umayyad affiliations.

Some historians have mentioned that Zuhayr was avoiding meeting Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, along the way. However, in addition to being unlikely, considering that it is known that Zuhayr was performing Hajj that year, as they report. This means that he was behind Imam Hussein's caravan by about five days, the gap between Imam Hussein's movement on the eighth of Dhul-Hijjah and Zuhayr's movement on the afternoon of the twelfth of Dhul-Hijjah, the time of the departure of the pilgrims. Despite this, there is no reason for him to avoid meeting him, as he was following him closely, albeit at a slightly different pace. Even if he had done so, it wouldn't necessarily indicate that the man was inclined towards the Umayyads or had Umayyad sympathies. Otherwise, we would have to say that all the pilgrims who avoided meeting Imam Hussein were Umayyad sympathizers, which is clearly incorrect.

### **The News of the Martyrdom of Muslim Ibn Aqil**

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In this area (Zurud) as well, Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, received the news of the martyrdom of his cousin and envoy to Kufa, Muslim ibn Aqil. Al-Tabari narrates this through two trustworthy individuals who caught up with Imam Hussein after his Hajj and met him in Zurud. They saw a man from Kufa deviating from the road, so one of them asked him about the news from Kufa. The man replied, "Nothing has come out of Kufa until Muslim ibn Aqil and Hani ibn Urwah were killed. I saw them being dragged through the market with their legs." These two men came to Imam Hussein with the news intending to

inform him privately. However, Imam Hussein insisted, "There are no secrets among these companions." When they informed him, he expressed sorrow and compassion. The two men tried to persuade Imam Hussain to return and safeguard himself and his family, emphasizing that he had no supporters in Kufa. But the sons of Aqil vehemently insisted on seeking revenge for their brother or tasting what their brother had tasted. Hearing this, Imam Hussein responded, "There is no good in life after them."

In our commentary on this news, the formulation suggests that Imam Hussein was resolute in his movement, but upon receiving the news of Muslim ibn Aqil's martyrdom, he contemplated changing his plan. However, the sons of Aqil were determined to continue the journey, and Imam Hussein yielded to their wishes.

Our Comment is: it has been mentioned before that Imam Hussein's responses varied according to different situations and individuals, and this is a reflection of his wisdom. The response given by a committed warrior (Mujahid) differs from that of a mere observer (like the two individuals who only inquired about the news from Kufa) and also differs from dialogue with the enemy. Therefore, we do not see the decision to continue the march ahead of the sons of Aqil and their insistence on seeking revenge as valid. The Imam had already defined his objectives and principles from the early days when he left Medina, and he reaffirmed them in Mecca and along the journey. It would not be appropriate for these principles to change suddenly to seek revenge. Furthermore, how could the sons of Aqil influence the

Imam's direction and decisions? They were his followers and supporters, carrying out his orders and directions.

### **Zabala and the news of Abdullah ibn Yaqtar:**

In continuation of Imam Hussein's journey, Abdullah ibn Yaqtar was sent to Kufa with a response letter for Muslim ibn Aqil. The Umayyad military patrols in that area, led by al-Hussein ibn Numayr al-Tamimi, had arrested Abdullah in al-Qadisiyyah. He was then shackled and taken to Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad in Kufa. When they met, Ibn Ziyad said to him, "Ascend the palace and curse (the liar, son of the liar)," referring to Imam Hussein, so that I may judge you accordingly." Abdullah was more intelligent than Ibn Ziyad, so he ascended the palace. When he stood before the people, he said, "O people, I am the envoy of Imam Hussein ibn Fatimah, the grandson of the Messenger of Allah. Support him against the son of Marjana and the son of Sumayyah the liar." Ubaydullah then ordered him to be thrown from the top of the palace to the ground, resulting in his bones being crushed.

In the area of Zabala, Imam Hussein mourned the three martyrs, saying: "We have received terrible news of the killing of Muslim ibn Aqil, Hani ibn Urwah, and Abdullah ibn Yaqtar. Our Shia had abandoned us. Whoever wishes to leave, let them depart without blame." The Imam purified his followers from those who followed him for worldly gains. Ironically, some of them advised Imam Hussein to compromise and delay confrontation until he had enough support. However, Imam Hussein's concern was to stand against injustice and uphold righteousness, even if it led to his death. Therefore, he did not engage in debates with them because he believed their level

of understanding did not allow them to comprehend his goals. He simply told them: "My opinion is not hidden from you, and Allah's will cannot be overcome."

**When he provided water to quench the thirst of his enemies:**

In Zabala, where he received the news of Abdullah bin Yaqar, he manifested the greatest image of religious and human ethics by giving water to his enemies and their horses, reminding humanity of the loftiness of Hussaini virtues. If the conduct of their enemies was to deprive them of water until they died of thirst, the descendants of Muhammad would never engage in such behavior towards their enemies, no matter how evil they were. The enmity towards them is not personal, nor is it a matter of grudges or revenge; rather, what distinguishes them is religion and legal judgments, to which they are committed to in purpose and method. Ibn Ziyad, the new Umayyad governor of Kufa, sent an army of a thousand fighters to besiege and arrest Imam Hussain before his arrival. When Ziyad's army arrived, exhausted and thirsty, some of Imam Hussain's companions suggested confronting them immediately, dispersing their forces, using their thirst and exhaustion from the journey against them. However, Imam Hussain, following the example of his ancestors, only did what was befitting of his leadership. He ordered his companions to give water to the Umayyad soldiers and to sprinkle their horses with water to cool their bodies. It is our right to address Imam Hussain with what the poet said:

"You provided water for your enemies, showing compassion,

In a land of plains where there is no water.

So how if tomorrow your loved ones face,

Thirsty from hardships, they come in amazement.

There is no doubt that such situations, in addition to being immortalized over time and transcending generations, have an impact, one way or another, on those who witness them. Perhaps Al-Hurr ibn Yazid al-Riyahi, the commander of the Umayyad army, who eventually became one of the martyrs of the Hussaini revival, was firstly influenced by this situation and speeches of Imam Hussein”

“He joined the ranks of Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) on the tenth day, marking the beginning of his awakening from this moment and the subsequent events and speeches of the Hussaini tragedy.”

With this gesture of peace, Imam Hussain faced the army of Al-Hurr Al-Riyahi, opening the way for an appropriate response. Al-Hurr listened to Imam Hussain’s speech and allowed his companions to listen as well. Then, Al-Hurr led the prayers behind Imam Hussain, indicating his inclination towards resolving the issue without engaging in confrontation with the Imam. It was reported that he said to Imam Hussain, “Take a path that does not lead you to Kufa or return you to Medina. Let us be intermediaries between you and them until I write to Ibn Ziyad, and you write to Yazid bin Muawiya if you wish, or to Ubaydullah bin Ziyad if you prefer. Perhaps Allah will bring about a resolution that grants me safety rather than being subjected to your fate.”

However, Imam Hussain followed the path of his grandfather, the Prophet Muhammad, who never chose anything over gentleness when given the choice, and he was not one to worship stubbornness or obstinacy.

Nevertheless, this did not mean that Imam Hussain would surrender to the commander of the Umayyad forces hand in hand at that moment, under the pretext of his love for peace and aversion to war. Instead, after leading the prayers with everyone, Imam Hussain addressed them, informing them that he had been contacted by the people of Kufa. Of course, this was more effective as a protest than simply saying that he opposed Yazid bin Muawiya. And it must be mentioned that there is a general popular demand for the arrival of Imam Hussein, and the evidence for that is the numerous books presented on that subject. Hence, Al-Hurr Al-Riyahi said: "We are not among those who wrote to you, and we have been commanded that when we meet you, we should not leave you until we present you to Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad." Then Imam Hussein said to him, "Death is closer to you than that."

When they reached the location of Adhaab Alhajnaat , four individuals approached from Kufa on their mounts, avoiding a horse belonging to Nafi' ibn Hilal, known as Al-Kamil. With them was their guide, At-Tarmah bin Adi, on his horse, reciting:

"O my she-camel, do not fear my reprimand,

Expose yourself before the dawn breaks,

With noble riders and a noble journey,

Until adorned by the gracious host,

The honored, the free, the open-hearted,  
Sent by Allah for a noble cause.”

When Al-Hurr tried to prevent them from joining Imam Hussain, claiming that these individuals from Kufa were not among those who had come with him and that he was detaining or rejecting them, Imam Hussain responded: “I will prevent them from what I prevent myself. These are my supporters and companions. You had promised not to confront me until you receive a letter from Ibn Ziyad.” Al-Hurr replied, “Indeed, but they did not come with you.” Imam Hussain stated, “They are my companions and hold the same status as those who came with me. If you honor our agreement, well and good; otherwise, I will confront you.” Al-Hurr then relented from detaining them.

It was suggested to Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) by Tarmah bin Adi al-Tai to change his plan and go with him to the mountains of Tayy. It was natural for the Imam to refuse this offer. Since he was taking care of the livelihood of his family, he felt obliged to deliver it to those areas. As a result, Tarmah did not partake in Ashura and did not have the honor of martyrdom with Imam Hussein. Despite some reports claiming that he returned immediately, the opportunity had already passed, as many opportunities do for humans.

## 17. Imam Hussein Diaries in Karbala

To understand deeply what happened in Karbala, we point to the personalities responsible for the killing of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him. The first of them was Yazid ibn Muawiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, who was 35 years old when he perpetrated

the crime. He was born in 26 AH and grew up in a Christian environment with his mother Maisun bint Bajdal, despite her family's affiliation with the Syriac Orthodox Church. However, Yazid grew up far from ethical and religious commitment, neither influenced by a committed Christian environment nor by a committed Islamic one, leading to a tendency towards frivolity and sin.

The other one was Ubaidullah ibn Ziyad, who was around 29 years old when the crime was committed. He was born around 32 AH. Besides his young age and lack of wisdom in life, he lived with a sense of inferiority. On the one hand, he saw Imam Hussein's status in the eyes of his mother, father, and grandfather. On the other hand, he saw his mother accused of being a Magian (as some historians mentioned) and his father, who was the son of his grandfather, forced to join Abu Sufyan after nearly five decades of his birth through a humiliating surgical procedure. Despite this, he recognized Imam Hussein's lofty and honorable status before God and among the people. Therefore, it is not surprising that he sent a message to Umar ibn Saad, stating: "If Hussein and his companions surrender, send them to me safely. If they refuse, march against them until you kill them and send their heads to me. They deserve it. If Hussein is killed, trample his chest and back, for he is an obstinate rebel, an arrogant tyrant." Some sources mention that he later said, "I knew that it wouldn't affect him, but it was a matter of pride."

A researcher can trace clear indications in multiple situations of the psychological imbalance in these personalities, as well as



the recklessness in their decisions and actions, not to mention the stage of adolescence they went through.

And Omar Ibn Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas (aged 38), the commander of the army torn between his love for worldly gains, "the root of every sin," and leadership. He opposed the sentiments of kinship and mercy on the one hand and the apprehension of killing Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) on the other. However, the former prevailed, silencing any call to conscience. Despite being presented with opportunities to avoid the crime of killing, he remained indifferent, saying, "For me, the thrill lies in ruling Al-Rai"

The fourth murderer was Shamer ibn Thul-Jawshan al-Dhubabi and the son of the shepherdess of al-Mu'azza. His actions indicate a likeness to those described in the Quran as "apes and pigs and servants of the rebellious." He joined the Kharijites opposing Imam Ali (peace be upon him), then aligned himself with the Umayyads, instigating the killing of Imam Hasan al-Mujtaba. He obstructed people from supporting Muslim ibn Aqil in Kufa after the arrival of Ibn Ziyad. Finally, he led a group of soldiers under the enticement of his master Ibn Ziyad to oust Omar ibn Sa'ad from the army's leadership to assume it himself. Ultimately, the spotted dog ended his dark and disgraceful record by slaughtering Imam Hussein (peace be upon him).

Historians did not mention the birth date nor the age of Omar Ibn Sa'ad when he was killed by the supporters of Mukhtar al-Thaqafi. However, we believe that he was in his late twenties or early thirties when he participated with the Kharijites in their uprising against Imam Ali (peace be upon him). Based on this,

his birth might have been between 10 to 15 AH, and his age during the event of Karbala could have been around 40 to 45 years old.

It's noteworthy that all these individuals, despite their actions, desired the joys of worldly life, as they had no hope for the hereafter. However, just as they wasted their chance in this life, they did not achieve it either. After the incident of Karbala, none of them lived for more than six years. The saying "The killer shall be killed, even after a while" aptly applies to them.

These murderers are the ones who played the main role in the killing of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him). Thus, we wanted to introduce them and their motives. We aim to narrate the daily events of the Hussaini movement since their arrival in Nineveh on the Wednesday of the first of Muharram, 61 AH. Nineveh is located east of Karbala. They camped there on Thursday night and proceeded to Karbala the next day, as stated by the scholar al-Karbasi.

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In Kufa, Omar ibn Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas was equipped with an army of about 4000 men, but he was summoned before he started his mission to fight against Imam Hussein, peace be upon him. The conflict ended for him when he revealed his real wish in this question, "Do you want me to leave Al Rai to someone else?" and he deceived them by saying, "I repent to the Most Merciful from my ways for two years." Now he was heading towards Karbala to reach it on the second or third day of Muharram in the year 61 AH.

After settling with them, Imam Hussein addressed them, saying: "Verily, circumstances have arisen that you are

witnessing. The world has changed and deviated, its goodness has vanished, and what remains of it is like the pouring out of a pitcher and a meagre living like the grazing of a barren land. Do you not see that the truth is not practiced, and falsehood is not avoided? The believer yearns for meeting Allah. For me, death is nothing but happiness, and life with the oppressors is utterly disgraceful.”

Zuhayr ibn Al-Qayn stood up and said, “We heard your words, O son of the Messenger of Allah. Even if the world were to remain for us and we were to live forever in it, we would choose to rise with you over staying here.”

Bureir ibn Khudayr said, “O son of the Messenger of Allah, Allah has blessed us to fight along your side, even if our limbs are severed in your defence, and then your grandfather will intercede for us on the Day of Judgment.”

Nafi’ ibn Hilal said, “You know that your grandfather, the Messenger of Allah, could not make people love him or obey him as he wished. Among them were hypocrites who promised him victory while harboring betrayal. They sweetened their words like honey but acted treacherously, just as he was given sour grapes instead of sweet dates. Yet Allah took him back to Him. Your father, Ali, faced similar circumstances. People united to support him and fought alongside him against the treacherous, the rebellious, and the apostates until his appointed time came, and he departed to the mercy and pleasure of Allah. Today, you are in a similar situation. Whoever breaks his covenant and abandons his allegiance harms only himself, and Allah is sufficient for him. So lead us, whether towards prosperity or adversity, by Allah, we do not fear the decree of Allah, nor do

we dislike meeting our Lord. Our intentions and insights align with those who support you, and we oppose those who oppose you.”

### **Notes on the subject of Stopping in Karbala**

1. I did not find any earlier source that confirms it – yet it doesn't that it didn't exist – that the horse ridden by Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) stopped when he arrived in Karbala. The transmitted information is often from later sources, such as “Al-Muntaqab” by Al-Tarehi and “Yanabee' Al-Mawaddah” by Al-Qunduzi. Perhaps for this reason, the researcher Al-Muqrim said “It is said” and then reported the news as you find it in the margin. It was also mentioned in some sources about the attributed killing to Abu Mukhnaf Al-Azdi, and researchers deny his attribution.
2. If it were proven through authentic transmission -in whatever way authenticity is defined in historical matters- there would be no objection to accepting it if it were accurate or has any parallels. It has been narrated that our Prophet Muhammad was on his way to Al-Hudaybiyyah, and when he reached the vicinity of Marr, where the treaty of Al-Hudaybiyyah was supposed to take place, his she-camel, Al-Qaswaa, stopped. It was a vigorous and strong she-camel, but it stopped without reason. Some of those with him said, “The she-camel has stopped, the she-camel has stopped,” meaning that it had a specific condition and didn't move. He said, “The she-camel didn't stop due to any defect in her character; rather, she was stopped by the one who stopped the elephant.” This matter is unknown,

as Allah, who prevented the elephant from attacking the Kaaba, prevented this she-camel from continuing.

It is also narrated in the case of his migration [peace be upon him] to Medina. When he arrived, every quarter of Medina and every tribe of the Muslims hoped that the Prophet would be with them. So, the Prophet let his she-camel, which he was riding, loose, and said, "Leave her be, for she is commanded," until she stopped on her own accord.

3. Moreover, many sources have mentioned the questioning of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) about the name of that land. The late Al-Muqrim interpreted this question as the knowledgeable person's inquiry to draw attention to those with him and those who would come after him to the characteristics that would be mentioned after that question. Without that question and the subsequent answer, there might not be an occasion to discuss these characteristics. This interpretation is consistent with the Quranic principle that when the Creator of all things, who never forgets anything, says to Moses [peace be upon him], "{What is that in your right hand, O Moses?}" and says to Jesus [peace be upon him], Peace be upon you. The verse "{Did you say to the people, 'Take me and my mother as deities besides Allah?'}" was revealed for the purpose of clarification. Allah, glorified and exalted by He, said to His Khalil [Abraham], "{Or do you not believe?}" even though He knew about his faith. So, the appointed Imam before him is entrusted with his law, and the benefits are not hidden from him. This is a sound and firm statement.

What indicates the validity of the words of Sayyid Al-Muqrim is that Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) was with his father on their march to Siffin and saw that his father stopped near Ninawa and spoke about the martyrdom of the family of Muhammad there

### **Friday , The Third of Muharram 61 A.H**

Omar ibn Saad ibn Abi Waqqas arrived with 4000 fighters to join the army led by Al-Hurr al-Riyahi. This increased the total number of the army to 5000 fighters. A message from Al-Hurr al-Riyahi had reached Ibn Ziyad the previous day, informing him that Imam Hussein had arrived in Karbala. This, in turn, prompted Ibn Ziyad to send a message to Imam Hussain inviting him to pledge allegiance to Yazid ibn Muawiya and to submit to his rule, along with the rule of Yazid. The text of the message read as follows: "After this, O Hussein, I have been informed of your arrival in Karbala. The Commander of the Faithful, Yazid ibn Muawiya, has written to me, commanding me not to delay in attacking you and not to hesitate to take action against you. Either you submit to my authority and that of Yazid's, or you will face the consequences." When Imam Hussein received the letter, he read it, then threw it away, saying: "Those who prioritize their own desires over the pleasure of their Creator will not succeed." The envoy asked him: "Abu Abdullah, don't you have a reply to the letter?" He replied: "I have no response, as the word of punishment has already been decreed upon him."

When the envoy informed Ibn Ziyad of this, he became extremely angry. This action by Imam Hussein towards Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad was more painful for him than a thorn

piercing his heart, as Ibn Ziyad was accustomed to having his slaves obey his orders without question. However, Imam Hussein did not see him worthy of even a two-line response, shattering his ego like a fragile glass that shattered on the ground. Undoubtedly, this incident, along with others like it, motivated Ibn Ziyad more than any other personal or psychological factors during this period and beyond. While Shamar ibn Dhul-Jawshan exploited this aspect to stoke the fire of anger within him, not only towards Imam Hussein, but also towards Omar ibn Saad, who sought to find a middle ground that would absolve him from being directly involved in the killing of Imam Hussien on the one hand, and ensure a swift departure to the land of Al Rai according to his desires and intentions on the other--as we will see in the following days.

As the numbers of fighters continued to gather in Karbala in waves, as mentioned in Al-Ayan: "Shamir came with four thousand, followed by Ibn Ziyad with Yazid bin Rukab Al-Kalbi with two thousand, Al-Husayn bin Tamim Al-Sakuni with four thousand, Fulan Al-Mazini with three thousand, and Nasr ibn Fulan with two thousand. That makes twenty thousand Persian soldiers who joined him by the sixth day of Muharram. Ka'b bin Talha sent three thousand, Shabath bin Rubayi Al-Riyahi sent one thousand, and Hajjar bin Abjar sent one thousand, making twenty-five thousand, and reinforcements continued to flow to him until he had a total of thirty thousand, consisting of both cavalry and foot soldiers. This is what Al-Mufid mentioned in Al-Irshad, which is narrated from As-Sadiq."

On the other hand, there were concerted efforts by Omar bin Sa'ad to avoid engaging in battle and instead enjoy the

governorship of Al-Rai. He claimed that he wished to be spared from this battle by Allah's mercy. Thus, he concocted a deceitful letter in the name of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, and sent it to Ibn Ziyad

The invitations for talk became active. After Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, invited Omar bin Sa'ad to a dialogue between the two armies, despite Omar's reluctance due to knowing that Imam Hussein intended to advise and remind him, he had no choice but to meet with the Imam, peace be upon him. Afterward, he may have portrayed the meeting in a different light to suit the inclinations of different groups. Ibn Athir in Al-Kamil reported under the title "People said that Imam Hussein said to Umar bin Sa'ad... such and such," and more explicitly stated: "People said this, although they did not hear it," especially when these people who did not hear it conveyed that Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, offered them three options: to return to his original position, to join hands with Yazid and follow his opinion, or to march to one of the frontlines. This is despite what was narrated by Uqbah bin Sam'an, who said, "I accompanied Imam Hussein from Medina to Mecca, and from Mecca to Iraq, and I did not leave him until he was killed. I heard all his sermons and speeches to the people until the day of his death. By Allah, he never suggested that he would join hands with Yazid, nor did he indicate marching to any of the Muslim outposts."

I believe - and Allah knows best - that Omar ibn Sa'ad wanted to create what resembles public opinion and popular pressure among the fighters to change the political decision through the inevitability of military confrontation. On one hand, he "leaked"



proposed solutions that could resonate with the desires of many fighters who had no real interest in fighting and losing their lives in battle. On the other hand, he sent a conciliatory message to Ibn Ziyad in Kufa. Its content was: "After this, Allah extinguished the fire, and united the word. Hussein has given me the option to return to where I came from, or to march him to any frontier, or to come to Yazid, the Commander of the Faithful, to reconcile, and in this, you will find satisfaction and the nation's welfare."

Despite Ibn Athir mentioning in his book that when Ibn Ziyad read the letter, he said, "This is a letter of a sincere man to his prince, concerned about his people. Yes, I accept." However, I highly doubt he would say "I accept" and conclude the matter. I suspect this is either an addition by narrators or the author, especially considering that some historians tend to shift the blame for the crime away from the original mastermind to the accessories. They shift responsibility in the case of Yazid to Ibn Ziyad, claiming Yazid was not satisfied, and in the case of Ibn Ziyad, they shift it to Shemr ibn Thil-Jawshan, and so on.

That is why he later said that Shemr ibn Thil-Jawshan approached him immediately and said, "Do you accept this from him when he has come to your land and he is here close to you? By Allah, if he leaves your land without placing his hand in yours, he would be more deserving of strength and honor, while you should be more deserving of weakness and helplessness. Do not grant him this position, as it reflects weakness. Instead, he should submit to your rule along with his companions. If there are consequences, I will bear the punishment, and if

you pardon, it will be for you. By Allah, I have heard that Imam Hussein and Omar converse openly between the troops.”

### **The Fourth, Fifth and Sixth day of Muharram**

The Umayyad fighters continued to arrive in Karbala. We assume that Habib ibn Mazahir al-Asadi, may Allah be pleased with him, arrived during these days, perhaps on the fourth or fifth day. Due to his prestige and historical position and loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt, he assumed his distinguished position until, on the tenth day, he was given a standard among the banners.

It appears that the meetings and messages between Imam Hussein and Omar ibn Sa’ad increased. While Omar was trying to propose a peaceful solution, which seemed impossible, Imam Hussein, in his compassionate nature, attempted to save Umar from plunging into the sinful abyss of the tragedy of Karbala. Various forms of response were given to him. Sometimes he would say: “The people of Kufa are the ones who invited me and wrote to me to come forward.” Other times, he would address his personal motivations, saying: “Woe unto you, O Ibn Sa’ad! Do you not fear Allah, to whom you will return, before fighting me? I am the son of the one whom you know from the Messenger of Allah. Leave these people and join me, for I am closer to bringing you near to Allah, the Almighty.” Then, Omar ibn Sa’ad expressed his fear of losing his home and property. Imam Hussein assured him, offering to rebuild and compensate him more for his losses. However, Umar was not receptive to any of these offers. Imam Hussein turned away from him, saying, “May Allah slaughter you on your bed swiftly and hasten your punishment, and may Allah not forgive you on

the Day of Resurrection. By Allah, I hope that none shall benefit from the fruits of Iraq except in small measure.”

It seems that on the sixth day, the Umayyad army reached its full strength, as it increased from four thousand to thirty thousand fighters, as previously mentioned. This clearly indicates how intensive the efforts were to mobilize the army with these massive numbers. There are two narrations indicating that the number was thirty thousand. One of the narrations is attributed to Imam Hussein himself, who allegedly said to his brother Imam Hasan: “Once, Hussein entered upon Hasan, and when Hasan looked at him, he cried. Hasan asked, ‘What makes you cry, O Abu Abdullah?’ Hussein replied, ‘I cry for what will be done to you.’ Hasan said to him, ‘I will be given poison to drink, and I will be killed by it. But O Abu Abdullah, there will come a day unlike any other for you! Thirty thousand men will gather around you, claiming to be from the Ummah of our grandfather Muhammad, and they will profess the religion of Islam. Yet, they will gather to kill you, shed your blood, violate your sanctity, capture your children and women, and disrespect your honor.”

A similar narration is attributed to Imam Ali Zayn al-Abidin (Imam Sajjad), who reportedly said: “No day was more difficult for the Messenger of Allah than the Day of Uhud, where his uncle Hamza ibn Abdul-Muttalib, the Lion of Allah and the Lion of His Messenger, was killed. Then came the Day of Mu’tah, where his cousin Ja’far ibn Abi Talib was killed. Then he said, ‘And there is no day like the day of Hussein, where thirty thousand men will gather around him, each claiming to draw nearer to Allah

by shedding his blood. Despite Allah's reminders, they will not heed, until they kill him unjustly and oppressively.”

### **The Seventh and the Eighth day of Muharram**

The narrations here speak of how the fighters of the Umayyad clan, after surrounding the Shari'a of the Euphrates and stationing guards to prevent anyone from accessing it for water, found that the water had run out in Imam Hussein's camp. This is when Al-Abbas ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib, along with some members of the Hashemite family and their supporters, went to the river to fill their containers. When they were not allowed to do so, they attacked the group responsible for guarding it, removed them from their position, and filled their containers and vessels.

### **The Ninth of Muharram**

Some new messages arrived from Ubaidullah ibn Ziyad, including two letters carried by Shimr ibn Thil-Jawshan, who arrived in Karbala on this day. One of these letters was a letter of assurance for Abbas ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib and his brothers Abdullah, Uthman, and Ja'far, who are the sons of Umm al-Banin. This assurance came from one of their relatives on their mother's side, aiming to distance them from Imam Hussein. It is clear that Al-Abbas rejected their message.

The second letter was addressed to Omar ibn Saad, stating: "I did not send you to Hussein to ensure his safety, speak with him, and engage in conversation with him, as every night he sits with you without showing any intention of war. If Hussein submits to the authority of Yazid, that is what is intended. Otherwise, engage in combat with him. If you kill him, trample

his chest and back with horses, knowing that it will not harm him but to fulfill what I have said."

When this message arrived, everyone prayed the Asr prayer on the ninth of Muharram, and Imam Hussein took a nap. Here, the drums of war began to beat, and the entire Umayyad army made a slight movement towards Imam Hussein, signalling that the battle would begin shortly. At this moment, Lady Zainab, informed Imam Hussein by saying: "O Aba Abdullah, you are sleeping while the army is moving." Imam Hussein then stood up and said to Abbas, "My brother Abu al-Fadl, ask them what has prompted them and what they want." Abbas went to them, and they replied: "We have received a letter; either you submit to the rule of Yazid, or we fight now." Abbas asked for more time to inform his brother Hussein and return to them. He went to Imam Hussein and informed him of what they said. Imam Hussein responded, "Ask them to grant us respite until the darkness of this night, so that we may pray to our Lord and recite the Quran, for He knows that I love prayer and recitation of the Quran." Abu al-Fadl indeed asked them, and although some insisted on starting the battle without delay, there were those who were embarrassed by the words: "Woe to you! If they were from the infidel Turks or Daylamites and they asked you for respite, would you not grant it to them, knowing that they are your brethren?"

### **The Tenth Day (The Martyrdom of Imam Hussein)**

The account of Imam Hussein's martyrdom and that of his companions and family members has been extensively documented in the original detailed texts. Here, we provide a summary .

Imam Hussein began his day with a sermon to the people, saying:

"Praise be to Allah, who created the world and made it a transient abode, subject to change and demise, with its inhabitants going through different conditions. Indeed, those deluded by it are arrogant, and those tested by it are miserable. So, do not be deceived by this world, as it cuts off the hope of those who rely on it and disappoints the desires of those who crave it. I see that you have gathered upon a matter that has angered Allah against you, causing His noble countenance to turn away from you, subjecting you to His vengeance and depriving you of His mercy. What an excellent Lord is our Lord, and how wretched are you as His servants! You have resolved to obey and believe in the Messenger Muhammad. Yet, now you march towards his progeny and kin, seeking their killing. Indeed, Satan has gained control over you, causing you to forget the remembrance of the Great Allah. Woe unto you and what you intend! Verily, to Allah we belong, and unto Him, we shall return. These people have disbelieved after their belief. Woe unto the unjust people..."

He continued, "As for me, acknowledge who I am, then reflect on yourselves and rebuke them. Consider whether my killing and the violation of my sanctity are justified! Am I not the son of your Prophet's daughter, the son of his successor, the son of his cousin, and the first believer who affirmed the message of Allah brought by him? Is not Hamza, the leader of martyrs, my uncle? Is not Ja'far, the one with wings in paradise, my uncle? Did you not receive what the Messenger of Allah

said about me and my brother: 'These two are the chiefs of the youth of paradise?'

"If you believe what I say, which is the truth, by Allah, I have never intentionally lied since I knew that Allah detests lying for His people. But if you reject my words as lies, then there are those among you who, if asked, will testify to what I say. Ask Jabir ibn Abdullah al-Ansari, Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, Sahl ibn Sa'd al-Sa'idi, Zaid ibn Arqam, and Anas ibn Malik; they will inform you that they heard this statement from the Messenger of Allah, for me and for my brother. Is there not a barrier for you against shedding my blood and violating my sanctity?!"

He then said: "Indeed, the caller, the son of the caller, has firmly distinguished between two things: between dignity and humiliation. Far be it from us to accept humiliation. Allah, His Messenger, the believers, and the chaste have taken refuge. We have gallant origins and souls, unwilling to place the obedience of the lowly over the struggles of the noble. Indeed, I am marching on with this group, despite the small number and the abandonment of supporters."

"If we are defeated, then we are a defeated people,

And if we are conquered, then we are not the conquered.

And if we retreat, it is not out of cowardice,

But it is our aspirations and another's sovereignty."

Others rose and spoke, Zuhair rose and so did Bureir, and others rose and delivered speeches, but:

Hearts hardened and did not incline towards guidance.

Woe to those hardened hearts!

When they finished, Omar ibn Sa'ad stepped forward and hurled an arrow at the urging of his soldiers, towards Imam Hussain's camp. He said, 'Witness for me before the prince that I am the first to launch an arrow.' (His companions all followed suit, and soon every one of Imam Hussain's companions was struck by their arrows.) The arrows and spears continued to rain down upon Imam Hussain's camp, reaching even the tents of the women. They screamed and wailed, calling upon the Messenger of Allah and his family. Imam Hussain then said, 'Rise to the inevitable death.'"

Everyone engaged in a fierce battle, and the small army of Imam Hussein clashed with that large, formidable army. Dust rose, and the clamour intensified. The haze did not clear until about fifty soldiers from Imam Hussein's army fell. Imam Hussein called out, saying: 'There is no power or strength except with Allah, the Most High, The Almighty.'

Many of Imam Hussein's companions were killed by the opposing forces, but due to their large numbers, it was not immediately noticeable. However, the loss of about fifty soldiers from Imam Hussein's ranks was significant, revealing a gap in his camp.

Gradually, one by one, the martyrs emerged, until all the supporters had fulfilled their duty. Then, the Hashemites emerged after the supporters, and Ali al-Akbar, the eldest son of Hussein, stepped forward. He fought fiercely until Munqidh ibn Murrat al-Abdi, cursed by Allah, shot an arrow that struck him and killed him. Some say he was struck by a sword on his



head. His horse carried him to the enemy's camp, where they descended upon him, tearing him limb by limb.

After him, the family of Aqeel emerged, and they too were killed. The sons of Imam Hasan also came forward and were killed. Only Abu al-Fadl al-Abbas remained. He went to fetch water for the children and the families but the enemy denied him access to the water. They resorted to treachery and deceit...

They severed his right and left arms, and their arrows rained down on him, hitting the water-skin, spilling its contents. An arrow struck his noble chest, another pierced his right eye, extinguishing it. Then, a man from the Banu Tamim tribe struck him with an iron rod on his head, causing him to fall as a martyr.

He called out in a loud voice: 'Peace be upon you from me, O Abu Abdillah! Come to my aid, O my brother.'

When Imam Hussain saw the resolve of his young companions and loved ones, he decided to confront the enemy with more determination. He called out, "Is there anyone to show mercy to the family of the Prophet? Is there a supporter to aid the descendants of the pure and chaste? Is there anyone to protect us from harm? Is there any helper to assist us?"

Then he mounted his horse and advanced towards the enemy, brandishing his sword, resigned to death.

"I am the son of Ali the pure,

from the family of Hashim

This lineage is my pride when I boast.

My grandfather is the Messenger of Allah,  
the most honored of all who have passed.

We are the light of Allah among creation, shining brightly.  
And my mother Fatimah is from the lineage of Ahmad,  
and my uncle is known as the one with two wings, Ja'far."

Then he called people to his side, and he continued to kill everyone who approached him from among the men until he killed a great many of them. Then he mounted his horse on the right side and said:

"Death is preferable to disgrace,

And disgrace is preferable to entering the fire.

By Allah, what is this and that is this running!"

Then he mounted on the left side and said:

"I am Hussein, son of Ali,

I will not turn away.

I protect the family of my father,

I follow the religion of the Prophet."

Meanwhile, Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) was bleeding, bleeding from his forehead from an arrow that struck it, bleeding from his noble cheek from another arrow, and bleeding from his entire body, as it was filled with wounds from stabbings and beatings, stabs of spears and their throwing, and sword strikes and stone throwing. The stabbings and strikes

were incessant, until the spears in his body were like thorns in the skin of a hedgehog. It is narrated that they were all in the forefront of his body.

### **The poisoned arrow weakened Imam Hussein ( Peace be upon him)**

He stopped to rest, having grown weak from fighting. While standing, a stone struck his forehead, causing him to reach for his garment to wipe the blood from his face. Then, a targeted poisonous arrow, with three prongs, struck his chest, and in some accounts, his heart. Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, said: "In the name of Allah, and by Allah, and upon the religion of the Messenger of Allah." He raised his head to the sky and said: "My God, You know well that they are killing a man who is not like any other on the face of the earth, the son of a prophet other than him." Hussein tried to remove the arrow from the front but could not. Then, he took the arrow and pulled it out from his back, and blood gushed out like a fountain.

Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, placed his hand on the wound, and when it filled, he threw the blood towards the sky. Not a single drop of that blood came back, and then he placed his hand again. When it filled again, he wiped his head and beard with it, saying: "This is how I will be until I meet my grandfather, the Messenger of Allah, with my blood spilled, and I will say, 'O Messenger of Allah, so-and-so killed me'

When Imam Hussein was overwhelmed by the wounds, suddenly a lance struck his side, causing him to fall from his horse to the ground on his right cheek and lost consciousness.

When Imam Hussein peace be upon him, lost consciousness, the people were unsure of what to do. So, Omar ibn Sa'ad, may Allah curse him, said to them: "The man is protective (ardent). Attack his camp, and if there is still strength within him, he will rise. If not, you will have reached him and relieved him of his suffering."

The army attacked Imam Hussein's camp. Zaynab and the other women came out, calling: "Woe unto him! O Hussein, the son of my mother, the light of my eyes, O Hussein!"

When the Imam heard the voice of Zaynab upon awakening from his fainting, he tried to stand up but fell again. He attempted to rise once more but fell on his face. He called to his brother Zaynab, saying, "Return to the tents, for I am unable to get up."

When Ibn Sa'ad learned that he could not rise, he ordered his army to, "Come down to him and ease his suffering."

Then Zur'ah ibn Sharik, may Allah curse him, and the Imam were face to face. Zur'ah struck our Imam on his head. Then Sanan ibn Anas, may Allah curse him, stabbed him in the back with a spear. Shamr ibn Dhul-Jawshan, may Allah curse him, descended upon him, advanced, kicked our Imam with his foot, and then sat on his chest. This is mentioned in the Ziyarat al-Nahiya: 'And Shamar sat upon your chest, wielding his sword against your neck, gripping your hair with his hand, intending to slaughter you with his sword, your senses dulled, your breaths stifled, and your head raised upon a spear'