

The Short Story of Al-Husain bin 'Ali

By: Ibn Katheer



Translation & Researched By:
Darussalam Research Center

The Short Story of Al-Husain bin 'Ali,

(May Allah be Pleased with him)

Taken from

Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah

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Publisher's Preface

Verily, all praise and thanks are due to Allah (SWT). We seek His help and we ask forgiveness from Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the wickedness in ourselves. Whomsoever Allah guides, there is none who can misguide him and whomsoever He sends astray, there is none who can guide him. I bear witness that none is worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger. He sent him with guidance and the true Religion and with the light (of truth), the admonition and wisdom, at a time when no Messengers were sent for a long period, when there was little religious knowledge and the people had gone astray, when the Hour was drawing nearer. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has followed the right course, while whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger erred from it and gone far astray.

The book Al-Bidayah (The Beginning) by the Hafiz, the Imam, the scholarly critic, Ibn Katheer is an incomparable work regarding the study of the events and their chronological order, the knowledge of which he strove hard to acquire. He began by describing the start of creation – from the creation of the Throne and the Kursi and the heavens and the Earth and all that is in them and all that lies between them, such as the angels, the jinn and the devils and he described the manner of Adam's creation. He recounted the stories of the Prophets and the events that took place therein, up to the times of the Children of Isra'eel and the Days of Ignorance, which

ended with the advent of the final Prophet, Muhammad (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him). Then he gave a detailed description of his life and what happened after that, up to the time in which he lived. He then wrote a separate volume called *An-Nihayah Fil- Fitan Wal-Malahim* (The Ending With Trials and Great Battles).

Furthermore, Allah inspired us to undertake the noble task of making this book easily accessible to both the students and the scholars and then to translate it into several languages, by Allah's Permission.

I suggested to my brother, Yoosuf Al-Hajj, the necessity of summarizing this book in a suitable manner, through the omission of unbeneficial repetition, weak ahadeeth, lengthy poems, etc. I am thankful to Brother Yoosuf for assembling a team that consisted of Abdul Malik Wadih, Abu Muslim Al-Jaza'iri, Muwaffeq Khaleel Hammad, and himself. Darussalam funded the entire project, paying each team member for his contribution and work. After they completed their portion of the project, the work then went through numerous people in the Research Division of Darussalam, who meticulously went through the work, adding and subtracting materials. After this, the project went through another round of editing of the Arabic material before it was sent to the translation department. The translation was then checked for accuracy and then sent for editing, resulting in the final project that you see before you.

All praise and thanks be to Allah for allowing us to produce such a classical work for the first time in the English language.

O Allah! We ask that You bless us with sincerity and success and that You spread goodness through our hands.

Abdul Malik Mujahid

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Biography of Husain (May Allah be pleased with him)

Before elaborating on these aspects of his life, it is necessary to provide a brief biography first. His name was al-Husain bin 'Ali bin Abi Talib bin 'Abdul-Muttalib bin Hashim Abu 'Abdullah al-Qurashi al-Hashimi, the son of the Prophet's daughter, Fatimah az-Zahra' (May Allah be pleased with her) who was the Raihan (sweet-smelling basil) of his world.

Al-Qatadah states that al-Husain was born six years and five and half months after the Hijrah (migration). He was killed on a Friday on the day of Ashoorah' (the tenth day of the Islamic month of Muharram) in the sixty-first year, aged fifty-four years and six and a half months (May Allah be pleased with him).

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) invoked for him to be blessed with wisdom and experience and had rubbed his blessed saliva in his mouth while supplicating for him. It was the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) who named him Husain.

Anas is reported to have said: "I was with Ibn Ziyad when the head of al-Husain was brought to him. Ibn Ziyad started poking at the nose and mouth of al-Husain with a stick, upon which he made some reference to his handsome features. So I said to him: "Al-Husain resembled the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) more than the others did. "

Al-Husain was a contemporary of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) and despite being so young, he was a Companion whom the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) was pleased with until his death. After that, as-Siddeeq (i. e. , Abu Bakr) treated him the same way by honouring and respecting him, as did ‘Umar and ‘Uthman. He was a companion of his father, he would narrate Ahadeeth on his authority, and he participated in all the invasions with him, specifically in the battles of al-Jamal and Siffeen. As a result, when his brother gave up the caliphate and sought to reconcile matters with Mu‘awiyah, al-Husain was greatly troubled and urged his brother to go to war with the people of ash-Sham. In spite of his reluctance, however, once Mu‘awiyah assumed the caliphate, al-Husain would frequently visit Mu‘awiyah with his brother and he would show them great hospitality and honour in return.

Following al-Hasan’s death, al-Husain would travel to see Mu‘awiyah every year, who would generously present him with kind gestures and treat him with great esteem. He was in the army that invaded al-Qustanteeniyah (Constantinople) under the commandership of Mu‘awiyah’s son, Yazeed, in the fifty-first year.

When Mu‘awiyah died in the sixtieth year and allegiance was pledged to Yazeed, Ibn ‘Abbas and Ibn ‘Umar offered their pledges and therefore resolved to dispute al-Husain and Ibn az-Zubair, who had left al-Madinah and went to reside in Makkah. There, the

people devoted themselves to al-Husain by visiting him frequently, sitting around him and attentively listening to what he had to say about Mu'awiyah's death and Yazeed's assumption of power. As for Ibn az-Zubair, he would remain at his place of prayer by the Ka'bah, despite the fact that delegations and military detachments had been despatched to Makkah to capture him. Nonetheless, Allah granted him victory over them and defeated whoever else desired his death among the supporters of Yazeed, including his own brother, 'Umar, whom Ibn az-Zubair beat and imprisoned -- an act for which he later became renowned. However, in spite of all this, he was not heralded by the people in the same manner as al-Husain, for the simple reason that al-Husain was regarded as a noble due to his relation as the son of the Prophet's daughter. Even though during that time there was nobody on the face of the earth who was superior to al-Husain, or who could even be considered equal to him, the entire "Yazidite" state opposed him. In contrast, letters and messages came frequently from al-'Iraq inviting al-Husain to go to them.

As the letters began to accumulate and the messengers continued to arrive, the people of al-'Iraq increasingly urged al-Husain to go to them so that they could pledge their allegiance to him in place of Yazeed bin Mu'awiyah, since they had not yet pledged allegiance to anyone. Eventually, al-Husain decided to send his paternal cousin, Muslim bin 'Aqeel bin Abi Talib to al-'Iraq to determine the nature of the matter and its credibility. Upon departing from Makkah,

Muslim passed through al-Madinah in order to obtain two witnesses to take with him on the desolate road. In the middle of their journey, however, one of the witnesses was lost and fled, while the other one died from the harsh conditions of the desert. In due course, Muslim arrived in al-Koofah alone, and upon his arrival he allegedly stayed with a man called Muslim bin ‘Awsajah al-Asadi.

Soon enough, word spread among the people of al-Koofah that Muslim had arrived and so they went to him, pledging their allegiance to al-Husain, as well as vowing to assist him by means of their own selves and their wealth. The number of people who agreed to pledge allegiance to him numbered approximately twelve thousand, which later increased to somewhere around eighteen thousand people. Accordingly, Muslim wrote to al-Husain affirming that he should come, assuring him of the validity of their allegiance and that he would make the necessary arrangements for his arrival in the meantime. Immediately, al-Husain embarked on the journey from Makkah to al-Koofah, which then became widespread knowledge that reached even the governor of al-Koofah, an-Nu‘man bin Basheer, who in turn said: “I do not wage war against whoever does not wage war against me, nor do I ambush whoever does not ambush me. ” On the other hand, ‘Abdullah bin Muslim bin Shu‘bah al-Hadrami went to an-Nu‘man and said to him: “This course of action that you are pursuing, O leader, is the course of the weak and feeble. ” He replied: “That is because I am weak in

obedience to Allah; do you want me to be one of the strong and great in disobedience to Him?”

Upon hearing of an-Nu‘man’s response, Yazeed gave orders for his dismissal from al-Koofah, which he abruptly decided to merge with al-Basrah under the sole governorship of ‘Ubaidullah bin Ziyad. This drastic move by Yazeed was undertaken primarily for his own protection and security, and even though Yazeed hated ‘Ubaidullah bin Ziyad who he originally planned to dismiss from al-Basrah, he ended up entrusting him with authority over both al-Basrah and al-Koofah, as was the Will of Allah.

Soon after, Yazeed wrote to Ibn Ziyad, saying: “When you arrive in al-Koofah, seek out Muslim bin ‘Aqeel and suppress him by either killing or humiliating him. ” Accordingly, Ibn Ziyad travelled from al-Basrah to al-Koofah where he resided at the royal palace. Once he had established his authority there, he then sent a slave called Ma‘qil of the Banu Tameem tribe with three thousand Dirhams, destined for the city of Hims (in central Syria) so that Ma‘qil could take the money to the house in which Muslim bin ‘Aqeel was taking the pledges of allegiance from the people. He was to say that he had come to offer his pledge in order to gain access. On arriving there, Ma‘qil offered his pledge and so was let in to see Muslim bin ‘Aqeel, who subsequently kept him there for a number of days until he demonstrated his sincerity. After that, the slave left from there and

returned to ‘Ubaidullah and informed him of the whereabouts of the house and its occupiers.

Meanwhile, Muslim bin ‘Aqeel moved to the house of Hani’ bin ‘Urwah al-Muradi, and then a second time to the house of Shareek bin al-A‘war, one of the senior chiefs who had been informed that ‘Ubaidullah was pursuing him. Upon hearing this he sent a message to Hani’ saying: “Send Muslim bin ‘Aqeel to me so that he may kill ‘Ubaidullah in my house if he happens to come here looking for him. ” Thus, he was sent to Shareek who said to Muslim: “Go and stay in the tent outside so that when ‘Ubaidullah comes in, I will ask for some water to be fetched, which will be my cue to you to come in and kill him. ” Sure enough, ‘Ubaidullah arrived at the house of Shareek and sat down on his couch, at which point Shareek shouted: “Bring me some water to drink. ” Reluctant to take action, Muslim backed down from killing him and as a slave girl entered the tent with a small jug for the water, she found Muslim in a nervous state and so quickly ran out. Shareek repeated his instruction three times, at which point ‘Ubaidullah quickly realised that he was being set up and signalled to his guard that they should leave immediately, which they did. It follows that Shareek said to Muslim: “What prevented you from coming in and killing him?” He said: “I heard a Hadeeth in which the Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ‘Faith has prevented treacherous assassination. A believer does not commit treacherous assassination. ’ Thus, I detested the idea of conniving to kill him in

your house. ” At this, Shareek said: “Even if you had killed him while sitting in the palace, nobody would have prepared him for that, but you would have settled al-Basrah’s affairs. Had you killed him, you would have killed an insolent oppressor. ”

It had been alleged by some that ‘Ubaidullah went back to the house of Shareek bin al-A‘war while Muslim bin ‘Aqeel was there and attempted to kill him, although Hani’ did not permit them to enter his house. The chiefs subsequently took Hani’ bin ‘Urwah before ‘Ubaidullah bin Ziyad, upon which Ubaidullah turned to the judge, Shuraih, and quoted the saying of a poet (in al-Wafir poetry):

*“I want his life and he wants my death,
Your friend desires that you excuse him. ”*

After Hani’ had greeted ‘Ubaidullah, he said: “O Hani’! Where is Muslim bin ‘Aqeel?” Hani’ replied: “I do not know. ” So ‘Ubaidullah said: “Bring him to me. ” Hani’ replied: “By Allah! If he were under my feet I would not lift them up. ” ‘Ubaidullah then ordered his men to draw Hani’ near to him, which they did and then ‘Ubaidullah struck him in the face with a spear until he gave him a head wound and a broken nose. Hani’ then reached for the sword of ‘Ubaidullah’s guard to stab him with it but he was pushed away, at which point ‘Ubaidullah said: “Allah has made your blood lawful to me because of your provocation. ” Then he ordered his imprisonment.

When news of this reached Muslim bin ‘Aqeel, he mounted his steed while shouting the war cry: “O Mansoor! Die!” In doing so, he rallied together some forty-thousand supporters from al-Koofah, including the likes of al-Mukhtar bin Abu ‘Ubaid and ‘Abdullah bin Nawfal bin al-Harith, who aligned themselves to his right and his left as they advanced against ‘Ubaidullah. When Muslim arrived at the palace gates he stood before it with his army, as the tribal leaders who were with ‘Ubaidullah in the palace looked out from the window urging their people (who had joined Muslim) to desist, and warned and threatened them if they did not.

Following this, ‘Ubaidullah went out in the company of some of the leaders and commanded the people to return to al-Koofah and desert Muslim bin ‘Aqeel, which they did. The people slowly started abandoning him, leaving him one by one until just five-hundred supporters remained, but soon even this number fell to three-hundred and then, in the end, a mere thirty men. As the Maghrib (sunset) prayer was due, Muslim went away to lead his remaining supporters in prayer, after which they were to set out in the direction of the palace gates. However, to Muslim’s dismay, a further ten men withdrew, followed by a second lot of ten and then another, until he stood alone with no one to show him the way to the palace, which he was unable to find on his own.

As he came across a door, he entered and made his way down the path to find a woman, who it is said was called Taw‘ah. He said to

her: "I am Muslim bin 'Aqeel. These people have lied and deceived me." She replied: "Are you Muslim?" He answered: "Yes." She said: "You may enter", as she led him into one of the rooms of her house. Her son, having seen her go in and out of the house numerous times, asked: "What is happening?" As he pleaded with her to tell him, she informed him of Muslim's presence after warning him not to tell anyone, upon which he went to lie down, not speaking to anyone until the next morning.

'Ubaidullah came out from the palace in the company of the leaders and noblemen to address the people to request them to seek out Muslim bin 'Aqeel and hand him over. That morning, when the son of the old lady in whose home Muslim had stayed saw 'Abdur-Rahman bin Muhammad bin al-Ash'ath, he revealed to him that Muslim bin 'Aqeel was staying at their house. Immediately, 'Abdur-Rahman went to his father who was sitting with Ibn Ziyad and said to him: "What is it that brings you here?" He then gave him the news, at which point Ibn Ziyad said, as he prodded him with his rod: "Get up and bring him to me within the next hour."

At the same time, Ibn Ziyad sent out 'Amr bin Huraith al-Makhzoomi at the head of approximately seventy or eighty horsemen. Completely unaware that they were surrounding him, Muslim did not realise he was being attacked until they set the surrounding area of the house on fire. When they entered upon him, Muslim jumped up in bewilderment and as he went to draw his

sword on them, he cut his own lips with it. As they launched rocks at him, he was able to withstand their attack and fought back remarkably, until he killed them all. Soon after that 'Abdur-Rahman arrived and offered him security as he stretched out his hand to him and mounted him on his mule after having disarmed him of his sword. When Muslim realised he was not carrying (his sword), he began to cry as at that point his death had become apparent to him. Giving up all hope, he said: "To Allah do we belong and to Him we shall return. "

Being certain of his impending death, Muslim turned to Muhammad bin al-Ash'ath and said: "If it is possible for you to send word on my behalf to al-Husain instructing him to go back, then do so. " Despite Muhammad bin al-Ash'ath complying with his request, al-Husain failed to believe the messenger even though he testified that everything he said was true.

As Muslim entered upon Ibn Ziyad, he did not offer greetings of peace, because of which al-Harasi said to him: "Do you not send peace on the Ameer (leader)?" He replied: "No. If he insists on killing me then there is no obligation on me to offer him greetings of peace, though if he does not want to kill me then I will send many salutations of peace upon him. " Ibn Ziyad then approached him and said: "Allah will surely kill me if I do not kill a murderer who no one in Islam has yet killed to keep him away from the people. " Muslim replied: "As for you, you have the most right in

Islam to do what has not been done before. As for you, you cannot allow an evil murderer, a malicious example and an evil way that resembles the conduct of your forefathers and the ignorant to prevail. ” At this, Ibn Ziyad began to vilify him, Husain and ‘Ali, while Muslim stood in silence, without responding or recanting.

After completing his tirade against them, Ibn Ziyad said: “I will certainly kill you. ” Muslim replied: “Is that so?” He said: “Yes. ” So Muslim asked: “Then allow me to make some requests to some of my people. ” Ibn Ziyad said: “Go ahead”, at which point Muslim looked around at those who were sitting in his presence, amongst whom was ‘Umar bin Sa’d bin Abi Waqqas. Muslim said to him: “You and I are related therefore I require something from you that is a private matter. I have a debt in al-Koofah amounting to seven-hundred Dirhams that I want you to repay for me. Take my body from Ibn Ziyad and bury me, then seek out al-Husain, as I have written to him informing him that the people here support him and so I am certain that he will be determined to make his way here. ” ‘Umar then stood up and conveyed to Ibn Ziyad what had been said to him, upon which Ibn Ziyad authorised him to fulfill all of Muslim’s requests.

Ibn Ziyad then ordered that Muslim bin ‘Aqeel be taken up to the highest part of the palace, during which he kept extolling the greatness of Allah, saying the words “La ilaha illallah” (there is no one worthy of worship but Allah), glorifying and seeking the

forgiveness of Allah, and sending prayers and peace upon the Angels of Allah. Subsequently, Muslim was executed by beheading, supposedly at the hands of Bukair bin Humran who brutally threw his head followed by his body down to the lowest part of the palace. Hani' bin 'Urwah al-Madhhiji was also charged with the same sentence and was therefore beheaded publicly in the Sooq ul-Ghanam (Market of Sheep). Both their heads were sent to Yazeed bin Mu'awiyah in ash-Sham accompanied with a letter to explain what had happened.

Muslim bin 'Aqeel departed from al-Koofah on a Tuesday, eight days past of Dhul-Hijjah, while others state it happened on a Wednesday, nine days past of Dhul-Hijjah, coinciding with the Day of 'Arafat (9 Dhul Hijjah; the day pilgrims gather in the plains of Arafat during the rites of Hajj) of the sixtieth year. This occurred just one day after al-Husain had left Makkah for al-'Iraq, having left al-Madinah to go to Makkah on Sunday, two nights before the end of the month of Rajab of the sixtieth year. He entered Makkah on a Friday night, three days past Sha'ban, where he spent the rest of the month as well as that of Ramadan, Shawwal and Dhul-Qa'dah. Following this, he left Makkah eight days into the month of Dhul-Hijjah on Tuesday, specifically on the Day of Tarwiyah (lit. 'watering'; 8 Dhul Hijjah, one of the days marking the rites of Hajj).

A Description of al-Husain's Departure and an Account of What Later Happened to Him

When al-Husain received a series of letters from the people of al-'Iraq, he began to correspond with them frequently until he finally resolved to leave Makkah during the days of Tarwiyah (watering) in order to go to them. The people of Makkah, however, were concerned for his safety and cautioned him against going, pleading with him to stay in Makkah. Ibn 'Abbas is reported to have said: "Al-Husain bin 'Ali sought my counsel concerning his departure, so I said to him: 'If it were not for people despising me for it, I would have held you by your head and stopped you from leaving.' His reply to me was: 'To be killed in such and such a place is more beloved to me than being killed in Makkah.' It was his response to what I had said that gave me some solace after that. "

Ibn 'Abbas then left as Ibn Zubair entered and said to him: "I do not know why you want to leave us for that nation when we are the sons of the Muhajireen (Emigrants) and they are without any leading personalities. Tell me, what is it that you want to do exactly?" Al-Husain said: "By Allah! I have been questioning myself over going to al-Koofah since my band of supporters started writing to me, and so I decided to honour them with my visit after performing Istikharah (guidance prayer; seeking the counsel of Allah through prayer and supplication). " Ibn Zubair replied: "If I had a band of supporters like yours, I would not want to give them

such an honour. ” Later that evening, or the following day, Ibn ‘Abbas went to see al-Husain once again and added: “O my paternal cousin! I want to have patience although I cannot endure it, for I certainly fear your death. Verily, the people of al-Iraq are a treacherous nation, therefore do not be deceived by them. Stay in this country until the people of al-‘Iraq have expelled their enemies, then go to them; or if not, go to Yemen, as they too have a citadel and a nation, and they will not refuse to support you. Keep your distance from the people of al-‘Iraq, just write to them and let them know of your requests, as I believe if you do this then you will get what you want. ” Al-Husain answered: “O my cousin! By Allah, I know that you are a compassionate and sympathetic advisor, however, I am determined to go. ” Ibn ‘Abbas said to him: “If it is necessary that you go then do not take your children and wives, as by Allah, I fear that you will be killed like ‘Uthman, while his wives and children were watching him. ” Ibn ‘Abbas then asked: “Have you decided to appoint Ibn az-Zubair as your successor over al-Hijaz? For by Him besides Whom there is no deity worthy of worship, if I knew that you were going to do that I would have taken you by your hair and forelock and made sure we concurred that the people would obey me and that you put me in charge. ” Once Ibn ‘Abbas left al-Husain, he encountered Ibn az-Zubair to whom he said: “Your appointment has been determined, O Ibn az-Zubair”, who said:

“What is a skylark in a flourishing place?”

You are free and safe to lay eggs and tweet;

Peck as you wish and wherever you wish. ”

Ibn ‘Umar stated that he was in Makkah when he heard that al-Husain bin ‘Ali had left for al-‘Iraq and so he went to catch up with him, which he did after having travelled for three whole nights. At that point, he said to him: “Where do you want to go?” Carrying some scrolls and letters, al-Husain said: “Al-‘Iraq. These are their scrolls and letters. ” So Ibn ‘Umar said: “Do not go to them”, but al-Husain refused. Ibn ‘Umar then said: “I will narrate a Hadeeth to you. Once, Jibreel came to the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) and made him choose between the world and the Hereafter, so he chose the Hereafter and to never return to the world. You are a part of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) and, by Allah, no one has ever neglected or resisted you and Allah has never dissuaded anyone from you (the family of the Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him)) except for that which was better for you. ” Despite having said this, al-Husain still refused to go back. Ibn ‘Umar said that after that, he hugged him and started to cry, saying: “I call on Allah to protect you from death. ”

Bishr bin Ghalib is reported to have said that Ibn az-Zubair said to al-Husain: “Where do you want to go, to a nation who murdered your father and defamed your brother?” So he said: “To be killed in

such and such a place is more beloved to me than to be deemed unlawful (i. e. in Makkah). ”

Abu Sa‘eed al-Khudri stated: “I was overwhelmed by al-Husain leaving so I said to him: ‘Fear Allah for yourself, hold fast to your house (i. e. the family of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him)) and do not abandon your leadership. ”

Jabir bin ‘Abdullah said: “When I spoke to al-Husain, I said to him: ‘Fear Allah and do not allow the people to fight one another, for by Allah, you will not be commended for what you seek to do’, so he renounced me. ”

‘Amrah bint ‘Abdur-Rahman wrote to al-Husain out of concern for what he intended to do, enjoining him to be obedient and to stick by his community, informing him that if he were to go ahead with this then he would lead to his own destruction. She said: “I witnessed that ‘A’ishah (May Allah be pleased with her) said that she heard the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) say: ‘Al-Husain will be killed in the land of Babel. ” When he read the letter, he said: “My destruction is therefore inevitable and will happen. ”

Another account states that before al-Husain set off to al-Madinah, those people from the Banu Abdul-Muttalib tribe who were to accompany him on his journey were sent ahead of him. They numbered nineteen men, women and children from his siblings, offspring and wives. Muhammad, the son of al-Hanafiyah,

followed them after meeting al-Husain in Makkah and warned him that he should not travel on that particular day; however, al-Husain refused to take his advice.

The people of al-‘Iraq sent to al-Husain messengers and letters of invitation, upon which he, his family and sixty of his associates from al-Koofah set out to go to them. This took place on a Monday on the tenth day of Dhul-Hijjah. It follows that Marwan wrote to Ibn Ziyad stating: “Al-Husain bin ‘Ali is on his way to you. He is al-Husain, the son of Fatimah, daughter of Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) and, by Allah, He has not given anyone else more beloved to us than al-Husain. Be sure to prepare yourself to say and do the right thing, do not let the public forget him, and do not let him be the last to be mentioned or greeted. ”

‘Abdullah bin Sulaim al-Asadi and al-Madhri bin al-Mushma‘ill al-Asadi are reported to have said: “Al-Husain circumambulated the House (Ka‘bah), performed the seven circuits between as-Safa and al-Marwah (two hills located in the Masjid al-Haram, the Holy Sanctuary in Makkah), cut his hair, completed his ‘Umrah (minor Pilgrimage) and then headed for al-Koofah, while the rest of us headed towards Mina.

Abu Mikhanaf narrates in his first account that al-Farazdaq encountered al-Husain while he was on the road, whereupon he offered him greetings of peace and said: “May Allah fulfil your

wishes and aspirations, just as you want them to be. ” Then al-Husain asked him about the affairs of the people and what was ahead of him, so he said: “The hearts of the people are with you, while their swords are with the Banu Umayyah tribe. The decree will descend from the Heavens and Allah will do what He wills. ” Al-Husain replied: “You have spoken the truth. The matter is with Allah, before and after, He does what He wills and everyday our Lord is engaged in some affair. ”

Twenty-seven days before his execution, Muslim had written to al-Husain stating that a leader should not tell a lie to his people, that the people of al-Koofah were with him and that he should set out upon reading his letter, which he closed by offering him salutations of peace. Qais bin Mus-hir as-Saidawi subsequently came forth with al-Husain’s letter, whereupon he ascended the pulpit and began to praise and glorify Allah. He then said: “O people! Indeed, this is al-Husain bin ‘Ali, the best of all Allah’s creation. He is the son of Fatimah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him), and I am his messenger to you. ” He then went on to say that al-Husain had departed from the centre of Dhur-Rummah in al-Hijaz, and that they should respond and listen to him and obey him. He then cursed ‘Ubaidullah bin Ziyad and his father and sought forgiveness for ‘Ali and al-Hasan. Following his address to the people, Ibn Ziyad ordered him to be taken to the top of the palace tower and beheaded. Other accounts state that he ordered his bones to be broken and to be left for dead.

Afterwards, ‘Abdul-Malik bin ‘Umair al-Lakhmi stood over him and slit his throat, about which he said: “I wanted to relieve him from suffering any pain. ”

‘Abdullah bin Sulaim al-Asadi and al-Madhri bin al-Mushma‘ill al-Asadi are reported to have said: “Once we had completed our Hajj Pilgrimage, we had no other task to complete except to meet al-Husain and so we went to see him. Al-Husain had passed by a man from Banu Asad tribe whom he spoke to and asked questions before his departure. We later saw that man and so we started to ask him about the people, to which he said: ‘By Allah! I did not leave al-Koofah until Muslim bin ‘Aqeel and Hani’ bin ‘Urwah had been executed, prior which I saw them running through the marketplace. ’ When we met with al-Husain, we informed him of what the man had told us and so he remarked: ‘To Allah we belong and to Him we shall return. ” Some of al-Husain’s companions turned to him and said: “By Allah! You are not like Muslim bin ‘Aqeel, for if you had gone to al-Koofah the people would have got to you sooner. ”

Thus, al-Husain continued on his journey until he reached Zarood (a village not far from Samarqand) where received news of the death of the messenger he had sent with his letter to the people of al-Koofah after he had set out from Makkah and arrived in Hajir. Husain proclaimed: “Our followers have disgraced us! Therefore whoever among you wishes to go back then you may do so and there will be no blame on the one who does so, as we cannot offer him

protection. ” At that point, the people began to disperse in all directions until only those companions who had set out with him from Makkah remained. It follows that just before daybreak, he ordered two of his servant boys to fetch him some water to drink and to fill up some to take with him on his journey, after which he embarked on his way until he came to the centre of al-‘Aqabah where he stationed himself.

Yazeed ar-Rishk narrated that someone who reported to have seen al-Husain said: “I saw a tent pitched in the ground within the waterless desert, so I said: ‘To whom does this belong?’ They said: ‘This belongs to al-Husain.’ Then I went to the tent where I found a Shaikh (old man) reciting the Qur’an with tears flowing down his cheeks and beard. I said: ‘By my father and mother! O son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him)! What brings you to stay in this country and within this waterless desert in which no life exists?’ He replied: ‘These are the letters that the people of al-Koofah sent to me and it seems that I will not see them without being killed. However, if they choose to do that then they will not invoke the sanctity of Allah except that it will be violated, as Allah will burden them with a ruler who will degrade and humiliate them until they become the scum of the Ummah (nation).’” It is also narrated that al-Husain said: “By Allah! They do not invite me other than to suck out the blood from inside me, and if they do this, Allah will certainly afflict them with a ruler who will make them the lowest scum of the Ummah. ” He was

killed in Neenawa (Nineveh) on the day of 'AShooora (the tenth day of the first Islamic holy month of Muharram) in the sixty-first year.

Shihab bin Khirash narrated on the authority of a man from his community who said: "I was assigned to the army that had been dispatched by Ibn Ziyad to fight against al-Husain. We were four-thousand strong and it was as we engaged in battle that I first encountered al-Husain for myself. He had black hair and a black beard, and I said to him: 'Peace be upon you, O Abu 'Abdullah! 'He said: 'Peace be upon you too' in a kind of nasal tone, then he said: 'Some mysterious people from amongst you have been with us since last night', i. e. he was referring to thieves. "

Abu Ma'shar reported on the authority of some of his elders that when al-Husain arrived in Karbala', he said: "What is the name of this land?" They replied: "Karbala. " He said: "Karb' (suffering) and 'bala' (affliction). ""Ubaidullah bin Ziyad sent out 'Umar bin Sa'd against al-Husain who said to him: "O 'Umar! Choose one of three options: either that you leave and go back to wherever you came from; or if you refuse to do that then take me to Ibn Ziyad and put my hand in his and let him judge me according to what he sees; or if you refuse to do either of these things, then you leave me no choice but to fight you until my death. " At that point, 'Umar sent Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan to Ibn Ziyad with the message, who then sent him back with his reply, saying: "There is no option other than for you to relinquish your rule. " Al-Husain remarked: "By Allah, I am

not prepared to do that. ” Consequently, ‘Umar steadily proceeded towards him with Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan, to whom Ibn Ziyad had said: “Let ‘Umar proceed to fight al-Husain, but if al-Husain kills him then you take his place and then you will be entrusted with leadership. ” ‘Umar was backed by almost thirty men comprising the prominent people of al-Koofah. At that point, al-Husain’s associates said to them: “The son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) has proposed three options to you, therefore will you not agree to any of them?” For this reason they decided to switch sides to fight alongside al-Husain.

Husain is reported to have said: “I was informed by Sa’d bin ‘Ubaidah about the killing of al-Husain who said to me: ‘I saw al-Husain wearing a loose Jubbah (long outer garment). A man, supposedly ‘Amr bin Khalid at-Tuhawi, shot an arrow at him and as I looked to see where the arrow had struck, I saw that it was caught in al-Husain’s Jubbah. ”

When al-Husain’s head was brought to Ibn Ziyad it was placed between his hands, after which he started to prod at his nose with a stick and say: “Abu ‘Abdullah, certainly you had hair that was a mixture of black and grey. ” It is said that when al-Husain’s wives, children and family were brought to Ibn Ziyad, he said: “The best thing that al-Husain did was to order them to reside in an isolated place to where he would send them their means of livelihood to pay for their expenses and clothing. ”

The servant of Mu'awiyah bin Abu Sufyan is reported to have said: "When Yazeed came with al-Husain's head and placed it in his hands, I saw Yazeed crying and he said: 'If there had been any relationship between Ibn Ziyad and al-Husain then he would not have done this (referring to Ibn Ziyad).'"

Also in this year, 'Amr bin Sa'eed bin al-'As led the people on the Hajj Pilgrimage.

Upon Entering the Sixty-First Year

This year notably commenced with al-Husain bin 'Ali's journey to al-Koofah, where he was later killed on the day of 'AShooa' (the tenth day of the holy month of Muharram) also in this year.

A Description of His Murder

Based on the Accounts of the Communities Involved in this Affair, Not According to the Claims of those Bias Partisans who Lie and Make False Accusations

‘Abdullah bin Sulaim al-Asadi and al-Madhri bin al-Mushma‘ill al-Asadi are reported to have said: “When al-Husain was due to embark on his journey, he told two of his servants just before dawn to fetch him some water to drink and to take with him for the road. They then set off at daybreak.”

Al-Husain took the road left until he decided to halt at his desired location where he gave orders for his tent to be pitched, and it was pitched accordingly. Soon after, a thousand horsemen led by al-Hurr bin Yazeed at-Tameemi, who formed the vanguard of Ibn Ziyad’s army, arrived at al-Husain’s location and stood facing him on the horizon. Al-Husain therefore ordered his companions to quench their thirst and water their horses, including the horses of their enemies.

When the time for the Zuhr (noon) prayer commenced, al-Husain emerged from his tent wearing an Izar (lower body wrap-like garment), Rida’ (upper body wrap-like garment) and sandals to deliver a sermon to the people until the call to prayer was established. Then Husain said to al-Hurr and said: “Do you want to lead your companions in prayer?” He said: “No, I would rather you lead the prayer and we pray behind you.” Thus, al-Husain offered

the prayer with them and then went back into his tent. When the time for 'Asr (afternoon) prayer arrived, al-Husain came out and led the people in prayer again, after which he was brought two saddle bags full of letters, which he spread out in his hands and read a number of them. At that point, Al-Hurr said: "We are not like those people who write to you concerning a matter. In fact, we were commanded to meet you in person and to not part from you until we have taken you to 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad." So al-Husain said: "Death is closer to you than that." Al-Hurr therefore said to him: "I was not ordered to kill you but instead to not separate from you until I take you to Ibn Ziyad in al-Koofah. If you refuse, then you should take a road that neither leads you to al-Koofah nor takes you back to al-Madinah. Then you may write to Yazeed yourself and I will write to Ibn Ziyad, and perhaps Allah will grant me livelihood and good health for undergoing something for your sake."

Hence, al-Husain took the road left leading to al-'Adheeb and al-Qadisiyyah while al-Hurr bin Yazeed travelled alongside him as he said to him: "O Husain! I make you mindful of Allah, as I swear if you go into battle you will either kill or be killed." So al-Husain said: "So it is death that you fear for me? Rather, I say that which the brother of al-Aws said to his paternal cousin when he encountered him wanting to serve the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him). His cousin asked him: "Where are you going, to be killed?" He replied (in at-Taweel poetry):

“I will proceed; death is not shameful for a young man

If his intentions were truly to be a Muslim warrior,

He compared himself with righteous men

And so detached himself from fear as he lived and led the way. ”

When al-Hurr heard that from him, he decided to desist and led his associates in the direction of ‘Udhaibul-Hijanat. There, they encountered four individuals who had arrived from al-Koofah having believed al-Husain based on the conviction of a man known as at-Tirimmah bin ‘Adiyy, who had proclaimed aloud while riding his horse (in ar-Rajaz poetic meter):

“O... my she-camel! Do not be afraid of my suppression

And be prepared before the dawn

To carry the best travellers on the best journey

For you will be oriented towards beneficent descent,

The noble, glorious and tolerant.

God has brought him to execute the optimal deed

May God protect him forever and ever. ”

Upon hearing this, al-Hurr had wanted to come between them and al-Husain but al-Husain prevented him from doing so. The group of four then approached al-Husain who said to them: “Tell me about the people you have come from.” So Mujammi‘ bin ‘Abdullah al-‘A‘idhi, one of the four men, said: “As for the distinguished

amongst them, they are the most mindful of you. With regard to the rest of the people, their hearts go out to you and their swords will tomorrow be a source of fame for you. ”

Following this, at-Tirimmah bin ‘Adiyy said to al-Husain: “Look at what you have. I do not see that you have anyone except this insignificant small band of supporters and I see those people who agree with you being suited to those who are with you. Al-Koofah is replete with horses and armies, therefore how do you think you will fare with them?I implore by Allah that if it is possible for you to not go to them then do not, and if you want to stay in a land which Allah has made impenetrable until you have decided then come with me and I will take you to our impassable mountains. ”

Al-Husain said to him: “May Allah reward you”, however he did not take recourse to his advice and so at-Tirimmah bid him farewell and al-Husain departed. When it was night, he ordered his two servant boys to quench their thirst and then once he had relaxed, he set off while he was still drowsy and so he fell asleep. When he woke up, he said: “To Allah we belong and to Him we shall return. All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. ”

He took the left road in his journey until he came to Neenawa (Nineveh) where a riding man came towards al-Koofah with a bow on his shoulder. The man greeted al-Hurr bin Yazeed, although he did not greet al-Husain, and then presented al-Hurr with a letter from Ibn Ziyad which stated that he should divert al-Husain on his

journey to al-‘Iraq, to a town in which there was no fortress until Ibn Ziyad’s associates and soldiers arrived. This took place on a Thursday on the second day of al-Muharram of the sixty-first year. The following day, ‘Umar bin Sa’d bin Abi Waqqas advanced with an army of four thousand men which Ibn Ziyad had previously assembled in ad-Dailam in the outskirts of al-Koofah. Ibn Ziyad had issued the instructions to them: “Advance towards al-Husain and once you have annihilated him then station yourselves in ad-Dailam. ” At that point, ‘Umar bin Sa’d attempted to submit his resignation to Ibn Ziyad, to which Ibn Ziyad responded: “If you wish, you may be excused and discharged from your post in this land that has raised you. ” He therefore said: “I need to contemplate on the matter some more. ” ‘Umar’s nephew, Hamzah bin al-Mugheerah bin Shu‘bah, later advised him: “Be wary of going to al-Husain as you may disobey your Lord and sever your bonds of kinship. But, by Allah, renouncing the entire authority of the land is better for you than to meet Allah with al-Husain’s blood on your hands. ” So he said: “Indeed, I will do that if Allah wills. ” Subsequent to that, ‘Ubaidullah bin Ziyad warned and threatened him with dismissal and death, and this was the reason he was compelled to advance against al-Husain.

To begin with, ‘Umar bin Sa’d’s associates denied water to al-Husain associates, a strategy that forced al-Husain to propose a meeting with ‘Umar bin Sa’d between the two armies. Thus, they both turned up with approximately twenty horsemen on each side

and spoke for a long time until part of the night had passed, while nobody else knew what had been said. ‘Umar then wrote to ‘Ubaidullah regarding the meeting, about which he said: “Yes, I accept.” At that point, ash-Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan stood up and protested: “No, by Allah! He and his associates seek to seize your office of power.” ‘Ubaidullah therefore delegated ash-Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan to the battlefield while saying to him: “Go and if al-Husain and his associates have come to claim my authority then command ‘Umar bin Sa’d to battle against them and if he hesitates then decapitate him. If you do that then you will be made the commander of the people.”

When ash-Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan presented ‘Umar bin Sa’d with ‘Ubaidullah bin Ziyad’s letter, ‘Umar said: “May Allah do away with your home and defile what you came here for. By Allah! I believe that you dissuaded ‘Ubaidullah bin Ziyad from the three options al-Husain requested you to propose to him.” Following this, ‘Umar bin Sa’d shouted to his army: “O horsemen of Allah, gallop and rejoice! Ride and advance towards them after Salat ul-‘Asr (afternoon prayer) on this day of ours!”

Meanwhile, al-Husain was sitting in front of his tent, reclining with his sword clutched in his hands. He had just started to doze off when his sister, Zainab, heard the shouting and so she hastened to wake him up. Once he became fully alert, he said: “I saw the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) in

my dream and he said to me: 'You are coming to us.' Upon hearing this, Zainab struck her face in lamentation and said: "Woe to us!" He said: "There is no woe to you, O sister! Be at ease, the Most Merciful has compassion on you." His brother, al-'Abbas bin 'Ali, then came to him and said: "O brother! The people have come for you." He said: "Go and find out what you can from them." So he went in the company of approximately twenty horsemen and said: "What do you want?" They said: "We have come by the order of the Ameer. Either you acknowledge his authority or we will wage war against you." So he said: "Retreat so that I may go to Abu 'Abdullah and inform him about this."

When al-'Abbas returned, al-Husain said to him: "Go back and deter them this evening so that we might pray, seek forgiveness and supplicate to our Lord tonight, for Allah knows that I love to pray to Him, recite His Book, seek His forgiveness and supplicate to Him." Hence, al-Husain spent the first part of the night bequeathing his will to his family and delivering a sermon to his companions. He then praised and glorified Allah and sent the most eloquently articulated prayers on the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him), following which he said to his companions: "Whoever would like to return to his family on this night of his then he has my permission, for these people certainly want me." They said in response: "Then the people will say that we abandoned our Shaikh (religious leader; elder), our master and the tribe of our great paternal uncles! We did not shoot arrows with them nor did

we thrust spears with them nor did we strike swords with them seeking the life of this world, so no, by Allah, we will not leave. On the contrary, we will assist you with our own selves, our wealth and our families, and we will fight with you until we return your rightful place to you. May Allah make living shameful and ugly once you are gone. ”

‘Ali bin al-Husain, “Zainul-‘Abideen”, is reported to have said: “I was one of those sitting down on the evening before my father was killed. As my paternal aunt, Zainab, was giving me medical treatment, my father and his companions withdrew into his tent all of a sudden. Huwayy, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari’s servant, was in my father’s presence as he mended and tended to his sword, when my father said:

“As time proceeds you are not befriended.

How many friends, in the morning and afternoon,

Over those who pursue you, do you really have?

Time is not satisfied with alternatives.

Affairs are nothing but complicated.

All beings are to traverse this path. ”

He repeated himself two or three times until I memorised it myself and understood what he wanted. The tears choked me whenever I repeated them and so I remained silent. I knew that some affliction was going to befall us and as for my aunt, she was overcome by

sorrow until she could not bear it anymore, then she said: 'He bereaves me by his death and deprives me of life today. Let my father and mother be sacrificed for you, O Abu Abdullah! Have you put your life at risk?' She then slapped her face in lamentation, tore the front of her garment as a sign of mourning and fell to the floor. Al-Husain therefore went up to her, poured water on her face and said: 'O sister! Fear Allah, be patient and console yourself with the solace of Allah.' He then forbade her from doing anything like that after his death. "

Once 'Umar bin Sa'd had finished praying as-Subh (the morning prayer) with his companions on the Friday -- while others maintain it was on Saturday -- on the day of 'AShooora' (the tenth day of Muharram), he got up and prepared for battle. At the same time, al-Husayn prayed with his companions, all together constituting thirty-two horsemen and forty foot-soldiers, who he subsequently organised into rows after they had set up their military base out of sight, as did 'Umar and his army. In addition, al-Husain ordered that his men dig a trench behind their base, toss firewood, timber and cane into it and then set it on fire to obstruct access to their base from behind; and these were the settings of this battle. Furthermore, al-Husain avoided entering the tent that had been pitched for him, except when he went in to wash from time to time, but he otherwise stayed clear of falling into the trap of being caught in there. He would also enter to scent himself with Misk (musk) quite frequently and others would do so after him.

It follows that al-Husain mounted his horse, took up a Mus-haf (Arabic copy of the Qur'an), in his hands and then approached the people with it raised high, calling: "O Allah! You are my trust during agonising times and my hope during every hardship. " He then said: "O people! Carry me off and return me to my asylum in the ground! "They said: "What prevents you from conceding to the authority of your paternal uncle's tribe?" He replied: "May God grant me refuge from degrading myself to them or endorsing the avowal of a slave. Worshippers of Allah: "Moosa (Moses) said (what means): ['Verily, I seek refuge in my Lord and your Lord from every arrogant person who believes not in the Day of Reckoning! '"] [Ghafir, 40: 27]. His riding camel was then made to kneel down, after which 'Uqbah bin Sim'an ordered it to be strung up by the neck.

At that point, 'Umar bin Sa'd advanced with his bow and as he shot his arrow, he proclaimed: "Bear witness that I was first to shoot at the people. " Yasar, the servant of Ziyad, and Salim, the servant of 'Ubaidullah, then went out and shouted: "Who will meet in combat?" Upon obtaining al-Husain's permission, 'Ubaidullah bin 'Umair-al-Kalbi then stepped forward and first killed Yasar followed by Salim, who managed to strike 'Ubaidullah a blow to the left hand that caused his fingers to fly off. That day, the two sides continued to contest against each other until al-Husain's companions beat the opposition and emerged victorious, primarily due to the strength of

their archers and because they fought heroically with no defence other than their swords.

Next, Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan led the left-wing of his army defended by an immense cavalry force towards al-Husain; the army successfully engaged in battle without Shamir's intervention. Following this, however, Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan (may Allah disgrace him) went to the tent of al-Husain and said: "Bring me a torch so that I may blaze whoever dwells herein." At that instant, the women began to scream and came running out and so al-Husain retorted: "You want to burn my family, so may Allah burn you in the Hellfire!"

The time for az-Zuhr (afternoon) prayer had come in and so al-Husain said: "Order them then refrain from battle until we pray." A man from among the people of al-Koofah said: "It will not be accepted from you anyway." So Habeeb bin Muzahhir shouted back: "Woe unto you! Are your prayers accepted and not those of the family of the Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him)?" Infuriated, he said, "Will your prayers be accepted and will not the prayer be accepted from the family of Yasir?" He then attacked Habeeb so aggressively that he was killed amidst the fighting (May Allah have mercy upon them), after which his head was carried off to Ibn Ziyad.

Al-Husain then led his companions in offering the Salat ul-khawf (optional prayer of fear) before they commenced a brutal battle in

which al-Husain's valiant companions went to magnificent lengths to defend him. As Shamir launched an attack on al-Husain's companions, he shouted:

“Leave God's enemies, leave Shamir

Who strikes them with his sword without fleeing the battlefield. ”

The chief member of the Banu Abi Talib tribe from al-Husain's family was his eldest son, 'Ali bin al-Husain bin 'Ali, whose mother was Laila bint Abu Murrah bin 'Urwah bin Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi. He was fatally stabbed by Murrah bin Munqidh bin an-Nu'man al-'Abdi because he tried to shield his father from being targeted, which caused 'Ali bin al-Husain to say:

“I am Ali bin al-Husain bin 'Ali,

We and Allah's House are the closest to the Prophet.

I swear by Allah that the son of deception will not govern us

You shall see how I will guard my father today. ”

Once he had been stabbed by Murrah, his men surrounded him and began to cut him into pieces with their swords. Al-Husain invoked: “May Allah kill the people who killed you my son! They challenge Allah in their violation of His injunctions! May ruin befall the world after you go! ”Following his murder, 'Abdullah bin Muslim bin 'Aqeel, 'Awn and Muhammad, the sons of 'Abdullah bin Ja'far, were also killed.

Al-Husain remained alone for a whole day with no one approaching him as no one not wanted to be charged with his murder, until a man from the Banu Badda' tribe, who it is said was Malik bin an-Nusair, came to him and struck him on the head with his sword causing it to bleed. He was wearing a cloak, which he tore to bandage his wounded head, although his band quickly filled with blood. So al-Husain said to him: "May you not eat nor drink therein (in Paradise) but may it be that Allah impounds you amidst the Zalimeen (oppressors; wrongdoers). "

As al-Husain's thirst intensified, he desperately tried to obtain some water from the River Euphrates to drink but to no avail. Soon afterwards, a man, supposedly Husain bin Numair, shot an arrow that struck al-Husain in his throat, although it did not kill him. Holding his neck to prevent the blood from gushing out of his it, he then raised his bloody hands to the sky and supplicated: "O Allah! Give them their retribution many times over, kill them wherever they may be and do not leave a single one of them on the earth!" He continued to supplicate in this manner.

Nobody else stepped forward to execute al-Husain's murder and so Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan shouted: "Proceed! What are you waiting for? Do you want them to kill you and bereave your mothers of their sons?" Immediately, his men raced towards al-Husain and began to attack him from all angles. The man who actually stabbed al-Husain with a spear and caused him to fall to the ground was called Sinan

bin Anas bin ‘Amr an-Nakha‘i, who then dismounted his horse, slit al-Husain’s throat and pierced him through the head, which he then severed and handed over to Khawali bin Yazeed. On the other hand, some sources indicate that was Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan himself who murdered al-Husain.

They said that Sinan bin Anas went up to the entrance of ‘Umar bin Sa’d’s tent and shouted at the top of his voice:

“Overload my mount with silver and gold

For it was I who killed the masked king

Who was the best fathered and mothered amongst the people

And who possessed the best ancestry and lineage of all. ”

‘Umar bin Sa’d shouted: “Enter”, and when Sinan bin Anas went in, ‘Umar flogged him with a whip and said: “Woe unto you, you crazy man! By Allah, if Ibn Ziyad were to hear what you are saying he would break your neck! ”

Seventy-two of al-Husain’s companions were killed in the battle and were buried by the people of al-Ghadirah (a neighbouring town of al-Koofah near to Karbala’) belonging to the Banu Asad tribe a day after the onslaught (may Allah bestow His mercy and blessings on them).

Al-Hasan al-Basri is reported to have said: “Sixteen other men were killed with al-Husain, all of whom were from his Ahl ul-Bait (members of his family). It is said that ‘Umar bin Sa’d

commissioned ten horsemen to trample on al-Husain with their horses on the day of the battle until his body was stuck to the ground, while his head was sent with Khawali bin Yazeed al-Asbahi to Ibn Ziyad. It is said that he also took the heads of al-Husain's companions with him, which is in fact a widely recognised opinion. The number of heads therefore amounted to seventy-two and this figure does not include all those who were killed without having their heads' severed. Once the heads were delivered to Ibn Ziyad, he sent them to Yazeed bin Mu'awiyah in ash-Sham (the Levant).

Anas is reported to have said: "Ubaidullah bin Ziyad was brought the head of al-Husain and it was put in a tray. Ibn Ziyad started to play with it with a stick and commented on al-Husain's handsome features. So Anas said: 'Al-Husain resembled the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) more than the others did.' Anas added: 'Al-Husain's hair was dyed with Wasmah (a kind of plant used as dye).'"

Anas is also reported to have said: "When al-Husain's head was brought to 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad, he started to prod and play with al-Husain's nose and mouth with a stick and commented on his good looks. So I said: 'By Allah! Indeed, I saw the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) kiss where you are poking your stick', which made 'Ubaidullah feel uneasy."

In another tradition, at-Tirmidhi reports that 'Umarah bin 'Umair narrated: "When the heads of Ubaidullah bin Ziyad and his

companions were brought, they were stacked in the mosque at ar-Rahbah. So I went to see them and the people were saying: 'It has come, it has come!' And behold there was a snake going between the heads, until it entered the nostrils of 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad, and it remained there momentarily, then left and went until it had disappeared. The people then said again: 'It has come, it has come!' So it did that two or three times" (Dha'eef, i. e. weak narration).

Qasim bin Bukhait is reported to have said: "When al-Husain's head was placed in Yazeed bin Mu'awiyah's hands, he started to play with his mouth with a stick. He then said: "Both this (i. e. the head) and us are like what al-Husain bin al-Humam al-Murri said in his poem (in at-Taweel poetic meter):

*"Women can bring the noses of venerated men down,
They were impious tyrants. "*

Abu Barzah al-Aslami uttered to Yazeed: "By Allah! Perhaps you should take your stick away from him, for I saw the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) kiss him there." He then went on to say: "Will the Day of Resurrection not come when Muhammad (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) will be his (al-Husain's) intercessor and you will come for your intercession, O Ibn Ziyad?" He then stood up and walked away.

Al-Hasan said: "When al-Husain's head was brought, Yazeed started to ridicule it with a stick, singing the following verses:

‘Sumayyah’s descendants are like stones in number

While the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) is barren. ’

As for the rest of al-Husain’s family and wives, ‘Umar bin Sa’d entrusted them to whoever would guard and protect them, after which he mounted them onto a group of riding camels and sent them off on their journey. When they passed by the battlefield on which al-Husain and his companions had fallen, the women began to cry and wail, while Zainab lamented over her brother, al-Husain, and his family. They travelled from Karbala’ until they entered al-Koofah where they were received hospitably and offered provisions and clothing. Following this, they were made to travel once again but this time they were taken back to ash-Sham with Shamir bin Dhul-Jawshan and Muhaffiz bin Tha‘labah al-‘A’idhi from the tribe of Quraish. As the heads and women were presented to Yazeed, he called on the women and children to come and witness the gruesome sight, as he said: “May Allah revile Ibn Marjanah! If there had been any mercy between them and him, this would not have happened to them, nor would you have been summoned for this very reason. ”

Yazeed then ordered an-Nu‘man bin Basheer to send a trustworthy man to accompany the women and al-Husain’s younger son, ‘Ali bin al-Husain, on their journey to al-Madinah and to assign guards and horsemen for their protection. The women were then taken to

Yazeed's Hareem (private quarters for women) situated in the house of the caliph where they were received by the women of Mu'awiyah's family who cried and grieved for al-Husain. They stayed there for a period of three days during which Yazeed would eat neither dinner nor supper except in the company of 'Ali bin al-Husain and his brother, 'Amr bin al-Husain.

Yazeed provided them with provisions by giving them a generous amount of money as well as clothing before sending them away under the protection of his ambassador to whom Yazeed said: "Write to me informing me of every move you make." He then set out with them as he took the desolate road in order to avert any interception and he continued to remain in their service until they arrived in al-Madinah.

Chapter on Murder

Al-Husain's murder took place on a Friday on the day of 'AShooora' (tenth day of Muharram) of the sixty-first year in place known as at-Tuff in Karbala', al-'Iraq. He was aged fifty-eight or so when he died.

'Abdullah bin Nujayy narrated that his father said that he was travelling with 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) on their way to Neenawa (Nineveh) when they saw al-Husain heading in the direction of Siffeen. 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) therefore shouted out to him: "Patience, Abu 'Abdullah! Patience, Abu 'Abdullah! By the banks of the Euphrates!" So I said: "What do you mean?" He said: "I entered upon the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) one day and saw that his eyes were flowing with tears, so I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Has somebody upset you? Are your eyes bothering you?' He said: 'No. Jibreel was just with me and he told me that al-Husain will be killed by the banks of the Euphrates.' Then he asked me: 'Do you want to smell its earth?' I replied in the affirmative and so he stretched out his hand, grabbed a handful of the dust and then gave it to me, while I could not hold back my tears. "

The Shee'ah have exaggerated the events of the day of 'AShooora' and have accordingly fabricated a great deal of narrations based on absurd claims and allegations, none of which can be verified as true.

As for narrations pertaining to the events and conflicts surrounding al-Husain's murder in the Ahadeeth, these are mostly correct. It later emerged that those who survived after killing him were either afflicted with some disease or turmoil in the world, while the majority of them lost their senses.

The Rafidah (Dissenters; Rafidites, a Shee'ah sect) in the state of the Banu Buwaih tribe within Baghdad exceeded all bounds by beating and striking themselves out of remorse on the day of 'AShooora' in addition to scattering ashes and straw in the streets and marketplaces while crying. Many of them even deny themselves water to evoke the state of thirst in which al-Husain died. The women strike their faces with their hands out of lamentation, as they wail and beat their chests while walking barefooted through the marketplaces, along with other horrific innovations and practices.

In fact, the Rafidah and Shee'ah have contradicted and greatly deviated from the practices of their ancestors in ash-Sham on the day of 'AShooora.' It is reported that they used to cook grain, bathe, apply perfume and wear their finest clothes and instead celebrated that day with a feast by making a variety of dishes, thus regarding it as a day to rejoice and be happy as their way of opposing the dissenters.

Such disastrous practices have been best addressed in a narration by 'Ali bin al-Husain, on the authority of his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him)

who said: “Whoever is stricken with a calamity and when he remembers it says: ‘inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji‘oon’ (‘To Allah we belong and to Him we shall return’), even though it happened a long time ago, Allah will record for him a reward like that of the day it befell him.”

As for al-Husain’s grave, many people later believed that he was buried at the place of ‘Ali’s shrine in at-Tuff by the River of Karbala. ‘It is said that the shrine was venerated on top of his grave -- Allah knows best.

With regard to al-Husain’s head, a popular opinion amongst historians and biographers is that Ibn Ziyad sent it to Yazeed bin Mu‘awiyah, while others deny this view. I consider the first opinion to be more credible and Allah knows best.

Furthermore, there is a difference of opinion concerning the place in which his head was buried. Muhammad bin Sa‘d reported that al-Husain’s head was sent to ‘Amr bin Sa‘eed, the deputy of al-Madinah, who buried it with al-Husain’s mother in al-Baqee‘ (a fertile patch of land in al-Madinah where other members of the Prophet’s family were buried).

Ibn Abi Dunya mentions that the head was no longer in Yazeed bin Mu‘awiyah’s coffer when he died. It is believed that it was therefore taken from his coffer and wrapped and buried within the Bab ul-Faradees in the city of Dimashq (Damascus).

A Chapter Mentioning Some of His Virtues

Abu Nu'aim is reported to have said: "I heard 'Abdullah bin 'Umar saying that a man from the people of al-'Iraq asked him about the blood of housefly. Ibn 'Umar said: 'Where are you from?' The man replied: 'From al-'Iraq. 'Ibn 'Umar said: 'Look at that! He is asking me about the blood of a housefly while they (the people of al-'Iraq) have killed the grandson of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him). 'Ibn 'Umar added: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: 'They (Hasan and Husain) are my two sweet-smelling flowers in this world. '"

Muhammad bin Abu Ya'qoob is reported to have said that a man from the people of al-'Iraq asked 'Umar about the blood of a housefly staining the clothes. Ibn 'Umar said: 'Look at that! He is asking me about the blood of a housefly while they (the people of al-'Iraq) have killed the grandson of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him). '

Abu Hurairah is reported to have said that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The one who loves them, loves me, and who hates them, then surely he hates me. " Ya'la bin Murrah reported that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Al-Husain is from me and I am from al-Husain, therefore whoever loves Allah loves al-Husain; he is Sibti among the Asbat (from a great tribe, lineage). "

Abu Sa'eed is reported to have said that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Al-Hasan and al-Husain are masters over the youth in Paradise except over the two sons of al-Khalah (maternal aunt), Yahya and 'Eesa (John and Jesus (Peace be upon him)). "

Hudhaifah reported that he went to the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) to seek forgiveness for himself and his mother, about which he said: "I went to the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) and after performing the Zuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib and 'Isha' prayers with him, I turned and followed him. Upon hearing my voice, the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'Who is this? Hudhaifah?' I said: 'Yes.' He said: 'What is your need, may Allah forgive you and your mother?' He said: 'Indeed, this is an angel that never descended to the earth before tonight. He sought permission from his Lord to greet me and give me glad tidings that Fatimah is the chief of the women of Paradise, and that al-Hasan and al-Husain are the chiefs of the youth of Paradise.' So Hudhaifah said: 'I seek forgiveness for me and my mother.' He (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'Allah has forgiven you, O Hudhaifah, and your mother. "

Abu Hurairah is reported to have said: "We were praying al-'Isha' (the evening prayer) with the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) and whenever he prostrated, al-Hasan and al-Husain pounced on his back, and whenever he raised

his head, they would wrap their arms around him from behind and pull his head back. He would put them down on the ground and when he started again they would repeat the same thing until he had completed the whole prayer. After this, he sat them on his lap and I went to sit next to him and said: 'O Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) ! Whenever you put them down, lightning struck. 'So he said to them: 'Stay by your mother. 'The lightning continued to strike until they went in. "

'Ali is reported to have said: "The Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) came in to see me while I was sleeping. He gave al-Hasan and al-Husain something to drink and then he got up and began to milk one of our uncultivable sheep, which thereafter produced an abundant flow of milk. After he had finished, another one came to him, however the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) pushed it aside. Fatimah then said: 'O Messenger of Allah! It is as if they love you. 'He said: 'No, it is because it quenched its thirst in front of the other. 'Then he said: 'Verily, me, you, these two (al-Hasan and al-Husain) and the one who is asleep will all be in one place on the Day of Resurrection. "

Sulaiman bin al-Haitham is reported to have said: "Al-Husain bin 'Ali was circumambulating the House (Ka'bah) and he wanted to overtake the people but there was no space to do so. As al-Farazdaq bin Ghalib was looking at him, a man said to him: 'O Abu Firas! Who is that?'So al-Farazdaq replied (in al-Baseet poetic meter):

‘The gravity of his tread is realised by the valley

And he is known by the dwelling, domicile and sacred places.

This is the son of the best of all Allah’s worshippers.

This is the pious, pure and chaste soul.

The stone (al-Hateem) would touch his palm

Out of gratitude when he would go to greet it. ”

It is well known that al-Farazdaq would call al-Husain “Ali bin al-Husain (‘Ali, the son of al-Husain’) ” in jest, and not the son of his father due to the fact that he resembled him so much.

Some Poetry Eulogising Al-Husain

According to ‘Abdullah bin Ibraheem, one poet to have eulogised al-Husain bin ‘Ali bin Abu Talib (May Allah be pleased with them) in his poems was Abu Bakr bin Kamil. He wrote:

*“Sing about the Creator’s creation,
So that you may discern the liar and the honest one;
Ask the Most-Gracious for His grace,
None other than the Lord grants sustenance.
Who thinks that people provide livelihood?
Does one not trust the Most-Gracious?
Or does he think that his money is of benefit to him?
If so, you are surely mistaken. ”*

According to al-A‘mash, al-Husain bin ‘Ali once said:

*“The more money its possessors have
The more their worries increase.
We have fathomed you, O embittering life!
O dwelling of all mortals and ephemeral beings!
An ascetic would not be serene
If he were burdened with offspring. ”*

Az-Zubair bin Bakkar recited poetry about al-Husain's wife, ar-Rabab bint Unaif, while others say she was the daughter of Imra'ul-Qais bin 'Adiyy bin Aws al-Kalbi. She was the mother of al-Husain's daughter, Sukainah bint al-Husain. He said:

“By your life! I love the house

Where Sukainah and Rabab dwell.

I love them and on them I am willing to spend my wealth

So that my Admonisher will not have reason to blame me.

And even if they blame me, I will not be compelled

Throughout my entire lifetime until I am entombed. ”

Ar-Rabab's father embraced Islam at the hands of 'Umar bin al-Khattab, after which 'Umar made him chief of his people. Once 'Umar had left, 'Ali bin Abi Talib approached him to offer either al-Hasan or al-Husain's hand in marriage to any of his daughters. Thus, al-Hasan married his daughter Salma and al-Husain married his other daughter, ar-Rabab, while 'Ali himself married his third daughter, al-Muhayyah bint Imra'ul-Qais all within the same hour. Al-Husain deeply loved his wife, ar-Rabab, which is evident from the way he used to recite poetry about her.

After al-Husain's death, many of the Quraish's nobles sought her hand in marriage. Her response was: “I would not have any other (grand) father-in-law after the Messenger of Allah (Peace and

Blessings of Allah be upon him) nor would I ever cohabit with another man after al-Husain. ”

Of the many events that took place following al-Husain’s murder in this year (i. e. , the sixty-first year), was Yazeed bin Mu’awiyah’s appointment of Salm bin Ziyad, who was just twenty-four years of age at the time, over Sijistan and Khurasan. The first task he embarked on was the appointment and selection of prominent personalities and horsemen by promoting Jihad (fighting for Allah’s Cause). He then set out with his legion on an expedition against the Turks, taking his wife, Umm Muhammad bint ‘Abdullah bin ‘Uthman bin Abul-‘As, with him and in that way making her the first ‘Arab woman to have crossed over the river into that land.

Prior to this, the Muslims had never spent the winter in that country and so Salm bin Ziyad was the first to do so. He sent al-Muhallab bin Abu Sufrah to the Turk city of Khuwarizm and laid siege to it until they agreed to reconcile matters at a sum of twenty million or so.

When news of al-Husain’s murder reached az-Zubair, he stood up and began address the people, upon which he denounced the death of al-Husain and his companions and cursed those who killed him. He displayed his contempt at Yazeed bin Mu’awiyah and further incited the people to turn against the Banu Umayyah tribe, urging them to put up opposition and depose Yazeed as caliphate. In consequence to his stance, many people offered their pledge of

allegiance to Ibn az-Zubair, saying: “With regard to the killing of al-Husain, not a single one of us are in disagreement with Ibn az-Zubair.” When Yazeed heard what the people were saying, he was extremely troubled by it and so it was said to him: “If you permit it, ‘Amr bin Sa‘eed can bring you back the head of Ibn az-Zubair or otherwise he can lay siege to him until he leaves the Haram (Holy Sanctuary in Makkah).” ‘Amr was delegated to begin with, but was soon afterwards dismissed and replaced by al-Waleed bin ‘Utbah in this year. Yazeed made him swear that Ibn az-Zubair would be brought to him in silver shackles.

Abu Ma’shar states that no biographer has contested the view that al-Waleed bin ‘Utbah was the Ameer of the Haramain (Custodian of the Two Sanctuaries) and that he performed the Hajj Pilgrimage with the people in this year.