



## **The Story of Kerbala:**

### **Part 3: Muslim bin Aqeel in Kufa**

The people of Kufa were reaching desperation. They sent sacks full of letters to Imam Hussein (a), begging him to help, begging him to free them from this tyranny. Come to us, they said. We will stand with you, and fight for you, they said. The people were ready to revolt, and they were calling upon Imam Hussein (a) to lead them. Hussein (a) sent his cousin Muslim as an envoy.

Muslim bin Aqeel was welcomed into Kufa. Muslim (a) wrote a letter to the Imam (as) which is narrated to have said:

***Certainly, the man sent by a caravan in a desert to explore the way ahead of it will never lie to those who had sent him. All the people of Kufa are with you. Eighteen thousand of them have given their pledge of allegiance to me. So make haste and come to us as soon as you read this letter of mine. And peace and the blessings of Allah be upon you.***

Imam Hussein (a) is said to have written, to the people of Kufa:

***Hani and Said have brought me your letters; they are the last two of your messengers who have come to me. I have understood everything which you have described and mentioned. The essential statement of the majority of you is: "We have no Imam. Therefore come, through you, may Allah unite us under truth and guidance."***

***By my life, what is the Imam except one who professes the religion of truth, and one who dedicates himself to the essence of Allah.***

So, Imam Hussein (a), his family (a) and followers started their journey towards Kufa.

As Muslim (a) began amassing a huge army in Kufa, Ibn Ziyad, Yazid's governor, started exercising his plot against him. Ibn Ziyad approached Muslim's host Hani, and demanded to have Muslim (a) handed over to him. When Hani refused, he was thrown into prison.

Muslim (a) quickly gathered four thousand people to fight against Ibn Ziyad, but the tribal leaders - bribed by the governor - infiltrated Muslim's troops and discouraged the soldiers. They told them the Syrian forces were near, and that this path was certain death. Many were discouraged, and the numbers in the army began to dwindle. As Muslim (a) went to the mosque to pray, there were only a handful of people left.

When Muslim (a) left the mosque, only ten people were with him.

By the time he reached the gate of the quarter of the tribe of Kindah, Muslim (a) was alone.

Muslim (a) found lodging with a kind old woman, but his whereabouts were betrayed by her son.

The old woman said to Muslim:

***My master, you have not slept the whole night.***

Muslim (a) is said to have replied:

***I slept a while, and in my sleep I saw my uncle, the Commander of the Faithful. He was saying to me, "O Muslim! Hurry and come quickly to us!"***

***I fear the last day of my life has approached.***

Muslim (a) heard the sound of approaching soldiers shortly after finishing prayers.

Muslim (a) is supposed to have said, to himself:

***Go and face death, from which there is no escape.***

The old lady asked:

***O master, have you submitted to death?***

Muslim (a) is said to have told her:

***I have no escape save death. May the Prophet of Allah (a) intercede for you for the favour you have shown.***

Muslim (a) fought bravely against the hundreds of soldiers that attacked, managing to hold them at bay for a time in the narrow streets. History has it that twice reinforcements had to be called for, but in the end one man could not hold off an army. Muslim (a) was exhausted, so tired he could barely lift his sword, so bloodied that he could not drink anything because his own blood would pollute the water.

The guard ordered Muslim:

***Salute your commander in chief!***

Muslim (a) is said to have replied:

***Silence! May sorrow be your lot! He is not my commander.***

Ibn Ziyad declared:

***It is all the same whether you salute me or not. You will be executed.***

Muslim (a) is said to have retorted:

***It will not be the first time that worse than you have killed better than me!***

Muslim (a) is narrated to have said:

***Praise be to Allah! We are pleased with His pleasure. May He decide between you and us.***

He (a) was promised safe conduct by Ibn Ziyad, but on throwing away his weapon, he was swiftly taken to the roof of the building and decapitated... and his body thrown from the rooftop.

Muslim (a) had taken his two young sons, Muhammad and Ibrahim to Kufa with him so people could see he had not come to make war. They were both under the age of ten, but Ibn Ziyad decided that it was too dangerous to leave them alone. He ordered the boys be brought to him. A callous man named Harith finally found the terrified little orphans, and decapitated them by the banks of the Euphrates. He kicked their small bodies into the river and put their heads onto stakes to take to Ibn Ziyad. He had killed his son and his slave, and beaten his wife who had been trying to protect the children.

Ibn Ziyad said:

***"I will use the whip and the sword against those who abandon my commands and oppose my appointment. So, let one guard oneself"***

Ibn Ziyad said:

***The blood and wealth of anyone who opposes us will become lawful for us. I inform the heads of the communities that anyone who knows the whereabouts of the enemies of Yazid and does not inform us will be crucified on their own door and their monthly income discontinued.***

Terror began to spread its wings in the city of Kufa. Yazeed and his followers placed the city and its surroundings under strict observation, and brutally crushed any hint of an uprising. The people were all either with Yazid, or too scared to say otherwise.

Before even reaching Kufa, imam Hussein (a) had already been betrayed.

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**61:2 O you who believe! why do you say that which you do not do?**

**61:3 It is most hateful to Allah that you should say that which you do not do.**

**61:4 Surely Allah loves those who fight in His way in ranks as if they were a firm and compact wall.**

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