



## **The Story of Kerbala:**

### **Part 4: Journey to Kerbala**

One of the most tragic and beautiful things about the story of Hussein (a) is that he knew fully how the conflict would end. He knew, by going to Kufa, he would be taking the last journey of his life. Yet he still did it. Can you believe it? He knew. He knew he was facing death... and not just him, everyone who would fight with him. His sons. His brothers. His wives. His sisters. So why on earth did he do it? Because he knew that if he did not stand for the truth, no one else would. The government was corrupted to its core, and the innocent were suffering, all opposing cries silenced with the sword. He (a) saw the injustice, and knew he had to act. Not only for the sake of the oppressed of today, but to preserve Islam for their children, and their children's children. So, he went for the sake of Allah, and his followers. He knew that some truths are worth dying for.

Imam Hussein (a) caravan set off on the 8th of Dhul Hijjah, before performing Hajj. Imam Hussein (a) is narrated to have said:

***By Allah, should I be killed a spans distance away from Mecca, that would be more desirable for me than being killed in it. And should I be killed two spans' distance away from it, that would be more desirable for me than being killed a spans distance away from it.***

Imam Hussein (a) is narrated to have said:

***Praise be to Allah. What Allah desires is certainly done. There is no power but in Allah. Blessings of Allah be on His messenger. Death has been decreed on man, as the necklace encircles a girl's neck. How great is my desire to see my predecessors. It is as strong as Yaqub's desire to see Yusuf.***

***It is better for me to face my death. It is as if I am seeing now my members being torn to pieces by the wolves of the desert, in a place between Nawawees and Kerbala. They will fill their empty stomachs and their hungry bellies. There is no escape from a day decreed by the divine pen...***

Imam Hussein (a) is narrated to have said:

***By Allah, even if I go into hiding in a hole of an insect, they would flush me out, till they do with me what they wanted. They would abuse me the way the Jews desecrated the Sabbath.***

En route to Kufa, Imam Hussein (a) met the illustrious poet Al-Farazdaq. He asked of the allegiance of the people of Kufa.

Al-Farazdaq said to Imam Hussein (a):

***The hearts of the people are with you, but their swords are against you. The decision comes from heaven and Allah does what He wishes.***

Al Hussein (a) is said to have replied:

***You have spoken truly of the affair belonging to Allah. Every moment He is in a state of Glory. If fate sends down what we like, we praise Allah for His blessings. He is the one from Whom help should be sought. However although fate may frustrate our hopes, yet, it does not destroy the souls of those whose intention is truth, and whose hearts are pious.***

Imam Hussein (as) awoke from a dream in which he saw their imminent deaths. According to the narration, his son Ali al Akbar (as) saw the imam (as) had become distressed, and said:

***Father...May Allah never show you evil, are we not on the right?***

***Indeed we are,*** he answered, ***by Him to whom all his servants must return.***

***Father,*** he said, ***then we need have no concern if we are going to die righteously.***

***May Allah give you a best reward a son can get for his behaviour towards his father,*** came the reply.

Imam Hussein (a) had been warned of what lay ahead. But it did not deter him from what he had to do.

Imam Hussein (a) is reported to have said:

***...I am not taking up arms in order to make merry, or be ecstatic over what I possess. I am not making mischief, nor exercising oppression. But, I am ready to fight for the sole goal of seeking reform of the ummah of my grandfather, the Prophet of Allah (s). I want to enjoin good and forbid evil and guide the affairs of the people as my grandfather, and my father, Ali bin Abi Talib (a) were doing. Whoever justly accepts my call, Allah is the Source and Sustainer of justice, but whoever turns my offer down, I will opt for patience, till Allah judges between me and these people, and He is the best of judges.***

Hussein (a) bore the message to his followers, according to hadeeth:

***Our followers have deserted us. Those of you who prefer to leave us may do so freely, and without guilt.***

Then he (a) turned out the lights, allowing them to leave.

To those who tried to oppose and discourage him, Imam Hussein (a) is reported to have said:

***Do you think you can frighten me with death? Could a worse disaster befall you than killing me? I can only say to you what the brother of al-Aws said to his cousin when he wanted to help the prophet of Allah (s). His cousin feared for him and said: 'where are you going, you will be killed.' But he replied: ' I will depart, for there is no shame for a young man whenever he intends to do what is right and fight like a Muslim. He who soothes righteous men through the sacrifice of his life, has parted with the cursed and opposed the criminal. If I live, I will not regret what I have done, and if I die, I will not be blamed. Let it be enough for you to live in humiliation and be reviled.'***

To his faithful followers, Imam Hussein (a) said, as narrated in hadeeth:

***No doubt you are aware of the gravity of the situation which you are witnessing yourselves here and now. Life has certainly changed disguises, and good has gone forever. This has continued till the remaining good in it amounts to the thin sediment at the bottom of a drinking utensil. Life is a mean food, like a pasture covered with bad grass. Do you not see that the truth is not followed and falsehood not discouraged? The faithful must certainly desire to meet his Lord righteously. I do not deem death other than martyrdom and life among the unjust other than suffering and boredom.***

Now, at the wasteland of Kerbala, with the forces of al Hur preventing retreat and blocking the route to water, and the armies of Yazeed before them, the small party set camp. Imam Hussein (a) requested a final night,

to pray and supplicate in. This once, his request was granted.

Imam Hussein (a) prayed in these words, according to hadeeth:

***O Allah! It is You in Whom I trust, amid all grief. You are my hope amid all violence. You are my refuge and provision in everything that happens to me. How many grievances that weaken the heart, leaving me with no means to handle them, during which friend deserts me, and the enemy rejoices in it. I lay it before You and complain of it to You, because of my desire in You. You alone. You relieve me of it and remove it from me. You are the Master of all grace, the Possessor of all goodness, and the Ultimate Resort of all desire.***

Imam Hussein (a) is reported to have said:

***If the religion of Muhammad (s) will not live except by my death, then, O swords, take me.***

He knew. And he stood, for Allah and Islam.

***3:169 Think not of those who are slain in God's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord;○***

***3:170 They rejoice in the bounty provided by God: And with regard to those left behind, who have not yet joined them (in their bliss), the (Martyrs) glory in the fact that on them is no fear, nor have they (cause to) grieve.○***

***3:171 They glory in the Grace and the bounty from God, and in the fact that God suffereth not the reward of the Faithful to be lost (in the least).○***

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