

## The House of Grief

When political opposition fails, silent protest starts. This kind of protest can be more effective than the first, because in addition to having the benefits of offending, and disapproving of the opponent's acts, it also gives the person the chance of keeping calm, and tranquil.

Lady Fatima az-Zahra (sa) acted in such a manner when she realized that with the weaknesses, which afflicted her, she could not prevail. So, she took refuge in a house in Baqi' near the tombs of martyrs, to cry for her father, and complain to him about that which grieved her. Fatima az-Zahra (sa) used to visit the great tomb of her father, and take handful of the dirt from his grave, and smell it then begin weeping. Fatima az-Zahra (sa) would then return to her home and cry day and night. The elderly men of Medina came to Imam 'Ali (as) complaining, and said:

'Abu Al-Hasan! Fatima az-Zahra (sa) cries day and night so none of us can sleep comfortably. Hence, we demand you to ask her to either cry during the day, or, the night."

Imam 'Ali (as), replied: "*Most gladly*". He then proceeded towards Fatima az-Zahra (sa) who was crying; when she saw him approaching, she stopped, and Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"Daughter of Allah's Messenger (as) the elderly men of Medina have asked me to ask you to either cry during the day, or, the night."

Fatima az-Zahra (sa) answered:

"Abu Al-Hasan (as) how short will be my stay among them ? And, soon I will depart from them. Therefore, by Allah (SwT), I join my father, Allah 's Messenger (as)."

When Imam 'Ali (as) saw her insistence, he built a house for her behind Baqi' which later became known as "The house of griefs." Thereafter, with every sunrise, Fatima az-Zahra (sa) would take Al-Hasan (as) and Al-Husayn (as) to that house, and cry until sunset, when Imam 'Ali (as) would come, and bring them back home.

Once, Lady Fatima az-Zahra (sa) longed for the sound of Adhan, the call for prayer, which was

performed by Bilal. But, Bilal had taken an oath to never perform it again after the Prophet's death; nevertheless, in respect to Fatima's (sa) request, he decided to do so. Yet, as soon as Bilal said: *'Allahu Akbar,*" Fatima (sa) remembered the era of her great father (sa) and started weeping, so Bilal said:

*"I bear witness that Muhammad is His worshipper and Messenger,"* Fatima took a deep breath and fell unconscious. When Fatima az-Zahra (sa) fell, the people requested Bilal to stop Adhan, because they believed that Fatima az-Zahra (sa) had died.

Now, the voice of rejection seized to reveal that which was in Fatima's (sa) heart, the language of tears spoke out for her; and as it is correctly said: "The "language of tears", is more painful to the heart and bereaving to the eyes"!!

## **Fatima az-Zahra (sa) -The Withering Rose**

It was a short life... As short as the lives of fragrant roses...

A life that Lady Fatima (sa) endured and now it is coming to an end even before it was given the chance to completely blossom!!

Surely the successive calamities and severe hardships which befell Lady Fatima az-Zahra (sa), while she was still young, left her with a broken rib and confined to bed, suffering from her broken rib and remembering what had come to pass, and her devoted husband who was her safe refuge in whom she took refuge whenever abused.

She remembered her usurped rights...

She remembered her oppressed husband and his stolen position...

She remembered him being led by his turban to the Mosque while she followed him...

She remembered all this and a gloomy picture appeared before her tired eyes... then a sigh becomes imprisoned deep in her heart...

That heart which longs for the great Messenger who gave her the good news of her speedy departure after him...

Oh! How forsaken she was?!

But. she was the Prophet's daughter!

She was his favorite child!

She whom the Prophet repeatedly expressed the importance of observing her rights!!

And, as he said: "Man is observed by respecting his children".

Yet, this did not stop the arrogant ones from encroaching on her rights, nor, did it stop the sinful hands from reaching out to strangle the beautiful rose before it completely blossomed!!

Thus, the tree, which the Prophet left among his nation, withered away, its flowers became scattered, its branches wilted.

Fatima az-Zahra (sa) appeared pale, and faint!!

Allah (SwT) is with you Umm al-Hasan (as).

You shall depart towards a generous Lord, and a great Father... then you shall complain to him about what you have encountered...

Yes! Umm Al-Hasan... only ninety (90) days are left...

But, you, Muhammad's Ummah, remember her...

Write this in the pages of history... and tell the generations about Fatima's (sa) sad story!!

## **On the Death Bed**

The moment when eternal separation starts, is anguishing. This is a fact known to everyone who has experienced it, for it is the last opportunity for the beloved to be with his dear ones. Then the inevitable, the predestined, happens. At such a moment, one is in earnest need of calmness and tranquility. Yet, many are the ones who mourn and break apart instead.

Lady Fatima az-Zahra (sa) was calm, and patient when the women of the Muhajireen, and Ansar came to visit her.

Suwaid Ibn Ghafleh said: "When Fatima az-Zahra (sa) was inflicted with her illness, the women of the Muhajireen and Ansar gathered around her and said:

'How are you doing, daughter of Allah's Messenger (as)?'

Fatima az-Zahra (sa) praised Allah (SwT), prayed for her father, and said:

"I have become, by Allah, to have feelings of resentment for your world, detesting your men; I have casted them after testing them, hated them after examining them. Thus, shameful is the defiling of honor, playing after being serious, striking the soft rocks, the slackening of spears; the foolishness of judgments and the misguidance of wants".

"Evil indeed are (the works) which their souls have sent forward before them (with the result) that Allah's

wrath is on them, and in torment will they abide".

Certainly it (Allah's wrath) has control of their affairs, held them responsible (for deserving it), and launched its disagreement on them".

"So, may the unjust ones be done away with, cursed, and damned. Woe unto them!

How they have snatched it away from the foundations of the Message, the fundamentals of prophethood, and guidance, the place of descent for the Devoted Spirit, and he who is clever in the affairs of this world, and the hereafter? (She means that they usurped 'Ali's (as) right)

Surely; (their action) is clear loss. Why were they hostile to Abu Al-Hasan (as)?

They took vengeance, by Allah, from him for his unbiased sword,

his carelessness about his death (i.e., his unprecedented courage),

his deadly assaults

his severe encounters, and

his anger for the sole sake of Allah, Exalted is His Name.

"By Allah (SwT), had they prevented each other from assuming the reigns of power, which Allah's Messenger (as) entrusted to him, he would have held it and led them smoothly,

He would not have harmed them the size of a thread,

Nor, would his followers stammer, (meaning they would have lived in harmony under his rule).

He surely would have delivered them to a spring pure, lush, abundant, and flowing over its banks; yet, its sides are not muddy. He certainly would have brought them back satisfied, and advised them secretly and publicly without providing himself with any availing thing.

Nor, would he favor himself with the worldly things with any gain, save that which would quench the thirst of the thirsty, and feed the hungry.

Surely, the abstinent would have been distinguished from the desirous, and the truthful from the liar.

Had the people of the town believed, and feared Allah (SwT), WE should indeed have opened out to them (all kinds of) blessings from Heaven and Earth; but, they rejected (the truth), and WE brought them to book for their misdeeds.

And, the wrongdoers of this generation; the results of their deeds will soon overtake them (too), and they will never be able to frustrate (Our Plan)!"

"Indeed.

Come to see!

As long as you live, time shall show you amazing events!

I wish I knew what proof they have for that which they have done?

On what foundation have they stood?

On what reliable grip have they held?

Upon whose progeny have they encroached and spoke against?

Evil, indeed, is the patron and evil the companion!

They have exchanged, by Allah, the daring for the tales and the capable for the impotent.

Thus, away with a people who (mistakenly) believe they are doing well (to themselves);

For surely, they are the ones who make mischief, but they realize (it) not.

Woe unto them!

Is he who guides towards truth more worthy to be followed, or the who finds not guidance (himself) unless he is guided?

What then is the matter with you?

How do you judge?

But—upon my life! It has already conceived (meaning that it is too late to do anything).

So, wait until its fruit comes about.

Then shall ye fill your buckets with pure blood and fatal venom?

That day the dealers in falsehood will perish!

And, the ones who come to follow shall know the evil which their successors have established!

Then awaken the aversion in yourselves to your world!

Prepare your hearts for calamities,

Adapt yourselves to a sharp sword;

an assault of a tyrant enemy,

an overwhelming commotion, and

atrociousness from oppressors who shall leave your booty worthless, and your crops unharvested;

Alas!

What a pity! How will ye be treated? But indeed it hath been obscured from your sight. Shall we then compel you to accept it when ye are averse to it?"

Swaid Ibn Ghafalah added:

"The women informed their men what Lady Fatima az-Zahra (sa) had said, then a group of men went to her, and said:

"O you 'the Mistress of all women!' Had Abu Al-Hasan (as) mentioned this to us before we made the oath, and gave the promise (to Abu Bakr), then surely we would not have exchanged him (Imam 'Ali (as)) for anyone else!!!"

Fatima az-Zahra (sa), said:

"Leave me alone! Surely there is not an excuse for you after (I have already) spoken to you; and there shall be no command after (I have seen) your shortcomings. "

When we review Lady Fatima's (sa) speech, it becomes clear to us that she blamed the people for accepting Abu Bakr's and Umar's leadership over Imam 'Ali (as). She also foretold of many calamities, which would take place as a result of this misdeed. Fatima's (sa) predictions were true; Umar seized power after Abu Bakr appointed him as his successor to Caliphate. After Umar, Uthman was appointed leader; this started the era of explicit oppression against the Muslims. Imam 'Ali (as) in his sermon of Shiqshiqiyah pointed out the course of Caliphate, and how it was transferred from one person to another until finally he was appointed leader, virtually by force. He ('Ali (as)) then explained how the same ones who paid allegiance to him turned against his rule, which triggered unrest between the Muslims that had everlasting adverse effects. Imam 'Ali (as) also added his view on Caliphate and this world, in several eloquent words in this sermon. He (as) said:

"By Allah, the son of Abu Quhafa (Abu Bakr) dressed himself with it (the caliphate) and he certainly knew that my position in relation to it was the same as the position of the axis in relation to the hand mill. The floodwater flows down from me, and the bird cannot fly unto me. I put a curtain against the Caliphate, and kept myself detached from it. Then I began to think whether I should assault, or, endure calmly the blinding darkness of tribulations wherein the elders are feeble and the young grow old and the true believer acts under strain till he meets Allah (on his death). I found that endurance thereon was wiser. So, I adopted patience although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation of my inheritance till the

first one went his way but handed over the Caliphate to Ibn Khattab after himself"

Then he quoted Aisha's verse:

"My days now are passed on the camel back (in difficulty), while there were days (of ease) when I enjoyed the company of Jabir's brother Hayyan."

"It is strange that during his lifetime he wished to get rid of the Caliphate but he straightened its way for the other after his death. No doubt these two shared its udders strictly among themselves. This one put the Caliphate in a tough enclosure where the utterance was haughty, and the tough was rough. Mistakes were in plenty and the excuses therefore. One in contact with it, was like the rider of an unruly camel if he pulled up its rein the very nostril would be slit; but, if he let it loose he would be thrown [down]. Consequently, by Allah (SwT), people got involved in recklessness, wickedness, unsteadfastness, and deviation. Nevertheless, I remained patient despite the length of period and stiffness of trial, till when he (Abu Bakr) went his way (by death). He (Abu Bakr) put the matter of Caliphate in the jurisdiction of a committee. And, regarded me to be one of them. But, good Heavens! What had I to do with this 'consultation'? Where was any doubt about me with regard to the first of them that I was not considered akin to these one(s). But, I remained low when they were low and flew high. One of them turned against me because of his hatred, and the other got inclined the other way due to his in-law relationship, and this thing and that thing, till the third man of these people stood up with heaving breasts between his dung, and fodder. With him, his cousins also stood up swallowing up Allah's wealth like a camel devouring the foliage of spring, till his rope broke down, his actions finished him and his gluttony brought him down prostrate. At that moment, the crowd of people frightened me. It advanced towards me from every side like the mane of the hyena so much so that Hasan (as) and Husayn (as) were getting crushed, and both the ends of my shoulder garment were torn. They collected around me like a herd of sheep and goats. When I took up the reins of government, one party broke away, and another turned disobedient while the rest began acting wrongfully as if they had not heard the word of Allah (SwT) saying:

***'That abode in the hereafter, we assign it for those who intend not to exalt themselves in the earth, nor, (to make) mischief (therein); and the end is (best) for the pious ones.'*** (28:83)

Yes, by Allah (SwT), they had heard it and understood it, but the world appeared lustful in their eyes and its embellishments seduced them. Behold, by Him who split the grain (to grow), and created living beings, if people had not come to me, and supporters had not exhausted the argument, and if there had been no pledge of Allah with the learned to the effect that they should not acquiesce the gluttony of the oppressor, and the hunger of the oppressed, I would have cast the rope of Caliphate on its own shoulders and would have given the last one the same treatment as the first. Then you would have seen that in my view this world of yours is no better than the sneezing of a goat."

(It is said that when Amir Al-Mu'mineen reached here in his sermon, a man of Iraq stood up and handed

him writing. Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) began looking at it, when Ibn Abbas (Allah may be pleased with both of them) said,

"O Amir Al-Mu'mineen, I wish you resumed your Sermon from where you broke it."

Thereupon he ('Ali (as)) replied, "O Ibn Abbas, it was like the foam of a camel which gushed out but subsided."

Ibn Abbas says that he never grieved over any utterance as he did over this one; because Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) could not finish it as he wished to. Commenting on this sermon, Allama Razi says:

"The words in this sermon, 'like the rider of a camel' mean to convey that when a camel rider is stiff in drawing up the rein, the nostril gets bruised; but, if he lets it loose in spite of the camel's unruliness, it would throw him somewhere, and would get out of control. Ashnaq-an-Naqah' is used when the rider holds up the rein and raises the camel's head upwards. In the same sense the word 'Shannaq-an-Naqah' is used. Ibn Sekait has mentioned this in 'Islah-il-Mantiq' this is because he has used this word in harmony with 'Aslasa-laha' and harmony could be retained only by using both in the same form. Thus, Amir Al-Mu'mineen (as) has used Ashnaqa laha' as though in place of 'In Rafea laha Raasaha,' (i.e., 'if he stops it by holding up the reins.)"

## **An Apology too Late!**

After Fatima's (sa) visit with women and then the men, which resulted in an emotional revolution in the hearts of the Muslims, Abu Bakr and Umar decided to visit the Mistress of women and try to achieve her contentment with them. The story was reported in '*I'la' Al-Sharaye*' as follows:

When Fatima az-Zahra (sa) was suffering from her fatal illness, Abu Bakr and Umar came to visit her. They asked for permission to enter, but she refused to see them. Upon this, Abu Bakr vowed not to enter any house until he saw Fatima az-Zahra (sa), and asked her to forgive him. Abu Bakr, because of his oath, was forced to spend that night in the cold with no cover. Umar then went to 'Ali (as), and addressed him by saying:

"More than once we have come to see Fatima az-Zahra (sa) so as to ask for requital, but she refuses to grant us permission to enter. If you see to it, you can get us permission from her to talk to her."

He (Imam 'Ali (as)) said: "*I surely will.*"

Imam 'Ali (as) then entered the house and said to Fatima az-Zahra (sa):

"Daughter of Allah's Messenger (as), you have seen what these two men have done. They have repeatedly come to see you, but you have not given them permission to enter. Now, they have asked me to ask you to give them that permission."

She (Fatima az-Zahra (sa)) said: "By Allah, I shall not give them permission, nor, will I speak a word to them until I meet my father, and complain to him about that which they have done and committed against me."

'Ali (as) then said; "But, I have assured them that I will (acquire your permission)."

Now, Fatima az-Zahra (sa) replied: "Now that you have assured them of something, the house is yours, and women follow men (in their commands); I shall not disagree with you in anything; so, allow whoever you wish (to enter the house)."

When 'Ali (as) heard Fatima's (sa) reply, he ('Ali (as)) left the house, and gave permission to enter. The two men entered the house; when they saw Fatima az-Zahra (sa) they submitted their greetings to her; but, she did not reply, only turned her face away from them; in turn, they followed her face, and she constantly turned away from them. The two parties repeated this action several times until Fatima az-Zahra (sa) said:

'Ali (as), cover me with your garment;" she then said to some women who were present: "Turn me towards them!!"

When this was done, Abu Bakr said: "Daughter of Allah's Messenger (as), we have only come to you in an attempt to achieve your satisfaction, and avoid your wrath; we ask you to requite and forgive us for the misdeed which we have committed against you."

Fatima az-Zahra (sa) said: "I shall not speak a word to either of you until I meet my Lord, and complain to Him about you. I shall then complain about your actions, and everything which you have committed against me."

Fatima az-Zahra (sa) then turned towards 'Ali (as), and said: "I shall not speak to them until I ask them about something which they heard from Allah's Messenger (as). If they tell the truth regarding it, then I will decide to speak to them, or, not."

They (Abu Bakr and Umar) said: "By Allah, she has the right to do so. Besides, we only speak that which is right, and testify to that which is true."

She (Fatima az-Zahra (sa)) said: "I ask you by Allah, do you remember when the Messenger of Allah called you out in the middle of the night regarding a matter which came up with 'Ali (as)?"

They answered: "*Yes, By Allah.*"

Fatima az-Zahra (sa) then said: "I ask you by Allah (SwT), did you hear him (Prophet Muhammad (S)) say: 'Fatima is part of me and I am from her; he who offends me offends Allah (SwT) He who offends her after my death is the same as he who offends her during my life; and, he who offends her during my life is the same as he who offends her after my death?'

They both answered: "Yes, by Allah, we remember."

She (sa) said: "Praise be to Allah. O Allah (SwT), I hold you witness, so you who are present testify to this; surely they have offended me when I am living and after my death. By Allah (SwT), I shall not speak a word to you until I meet my Lord, and complain to Him about you and that which you have inflicted me with."

When Abu Bakr heard this, he wailed and burst in loud laments, and said: *"I wish that my mother had not bore me"*.

Umar said: "It is strange how people appointed you as guardian of their affairs while you are not but a foolish old man!! You become anxious at a woman's anger, and you rejoice at her satisfaction. What is wrong with he who angers a woman?"

They then left the house.

Commenting on this story Sayid Qazwini writes:

"There was no need for Abu Bakr to wail and apologize when he had the opportunity to amend his mistakes, nor, was there a reason for him to burst into loud laments when he had the chance to return her estate to her. But, surely the Caliph wished to achieve Lady Fatima's (sa) satisfaction at the same time he was keeping her property and rights usurped."

## **Abu Bakr's Family Versus Fatima's (sa) Progeny**

The early injustices done by Abu Bakr against Lady Fatima az-Zahra (sa), paved the way for his offspring to do the same against the Prophet's progeny. Sayyid Safdar Husayn, in his valuable book *The Early History of Islam* p.242, summarized the wrongdoings committed by the Bakrs (the descendants of Abu Bakr) against Fatima az-Zahra (sa) and her descendants in several points. He wrote:

"History shows that Abu Bakr himself and his whole family (excepting Asma and her son Muhammad) were hostile to the Prophet's (as) family, in utter disregard to what the Qur'an ordained, or, what the Prophet had said relating to the respect and love for his family. The following is the list of those whose hostility was distinctively marked:

1. Abu Bakr, on his accession to the Caliphate, sent Umar to Fatima's (sa) house to compel 'Ali (as), by force, to come in and do fealty to him. Umar threatened to burn the house down upon Fatima az-Zahra (sa), and brought 'Ali (as) under escort to Abu Bakr where he was so humiliated and insulted that he cried bitterly at the tomb of the Prophet (S) complaining against the treatment he had received. Subsequently, Fatima az-Zahra (sa) was so much grieved by Abu Bakr that as long as she survived her father, she never spoke a word to Abu Bakr and on her deathbed she forbade his joining her funeral.

2. Abu Bakr's daughter, Aisha, revolted against 'Ali (as), the Caliph, and at the head of thirty thousand soldiers, she fought the battle of Jamal; but she was discomfited with heavy loss.
3. Abu Bakr's son-in-law, Zubair Ibn Al Awwam, the husband of Asma, the eldest daughter of Abu Bakr, was the Commander of Aisha's armies; during the heat of the battle, he withdrew and took the road towards Mecca, but was slain only at a short distance from the field of battle.
4. Abu Bakr's grandson, Abdullah, the son of Zubair by Asma, was the commander of Aisha's infantry. He was the adopted son of Aisha. After the battle, he was pulled out from under a heap of the slain lying in the battlefield.
5. Abu Bakr's cousin, Talha, and the husband of Abu Bakr's daughter Umm Kulthum, was a Commander of Aisha's Troops. In the heat of the battle, Marwan (the Secretary and the evil genius of Caliph Othman), an officer in the same forces, seeing Talha busily engaged, said to his slave: 'It was but the other day that Talha was busily instigating the murderers of Othman, and now he busily seeks to revenge his blood. What hypocrisy to gain worldly grandeur?' So, saying, he shot an arrow, which pierced through Talha's leg, and struck his horse, which flew wildly off the ranks and Talha fell to the ground. He was instantly taken to Basra where he died after awhile.
6. Abu Bakr's cousin, Abu Al-Rahman, a brother of Talha, also fell fighting in the same battle.
7. Muhammad, the son of Talha, also fell in the same battle.
8. Abu Bakr's sister, Umm Farwa's daughter, Jo'da Bint Ash'ath poisoned Al-Hasan (as), the son of 'Ali (as), to death. She was suborned to commit the wickedness by Yazid, the son of Mu'awiya, or, by Mu'awiya himself.
9. Abu Bakr's sister's (Umm Farwa's) son Ishaq, both brothers, the sons of Ash'sth, appeared among the armies of Yazid, fighting against Husayn (as), the son of 'Ali (as), at the Karbala tragedy. Later on, the former was killed fighting against Mukhtar, who was avenging the murder of Husayn (as); while the latter, who had taken off the dead body of Husayn (as) some of his clothes, was torn to death by dogs.
10. Mos'ab, a son of Zubair, the son-in-law of Abu Bakr, fought against Mukhtar, who was killed avenging the murder of Husayn (as)."

## **Lady Fatima az-Zahra's (sa) Will to Imam 'Ali (as)**

Imam 'Ali (as) was surprised to find that his dear wife (Fatima az-Zahra (sa)) had left her bed, and had started doing the housework; he asked her about it and she replied:

"This is the last day of my life. I want to wash my children's hair, and clothes, because they will soon be orphans, without a mother!!"

Imam 'Ali (as) then asked her about the source of knowledge of this news (the day of her departure). She (sa) told him that she had seen the Messenger of Allah (S) in her dream, and he had told her that she was going to join him that night. She then asked Imam 'Ali (as) to execute her will.

He ('Ali (as)) said:

*"Instruct me to do anything you wish, daughter of Allah's Messenger (as)."* 'Ali (as) then asked everyone to leave the house, and he sat next to her.

Fatima az-Zahra (sa) started:

"Cousin, you are not accustomed to me being a False-teller, undevoted, or, have I disobeyed you since I have become your companion?"

'Ali (as) said:

"Allah forbid!! You are more knowing of Allah (SwT), more devoted, more pious, and more honorable and more fearing of Allah than (to give me a reason) to reprimand you for disobeying me. Surely, it is very painful for me to be separated from you and to lose you; but, it is an inevitable destination. By Allah (SwT), you have renewed the sorrow I have just encountered with the death of Allah's Messenger (as); surely your death and departure will be a great calamity, but `to Allah (SwT) do we belong, and to Him shall we return.'

What a painful, bitter and sad calamity. Surely this is a calamity for which there is not consolation, and a disaster for which there is no compensation."

Then they both cried and Imam 'Ali (as) embraced her head, and said:

"Instruct me to do anything you wish; you certainly will find me devoted, and I will execute everything that you command me to do. I shall also put your matters over mine."

She (sa) said:

"May Allah reward you with the best of goodness. Cousin, firstly I ask you to marry after my death, my niece Umamah; surely she will be to my children as I was. Besides, men cannot do without women."

Fatima az-Zahra (sa) then added:

"I ask you not to let anyone who did injustice to me to witness my funeral, for they certainly are enemies of mine, and the enemy of Allah's Messenger (as). Also, don't give them the chance to pray over me, nor, to any of their followers. Bury me at night when eyes are rested, and sight is put to sleep."

Commenting on Imam 'Ali's (as) speech after Fatima's (sa) burial, the commentator on Nahjul Balagha, English version, published by Ansariyan Publication, p.347 – wrote:

"The treatment meted out to the daughter of the Prophet (S) after his death has been extremely painful, and sad. Although Sayyedah Fatima az-Zahra (sa) did not live in this world more than a few months after the death of the Prophet (S); yet, this short period has a long tale of grief and woe (about her). In this connection, the first scene that strikes the eyes in that the arrangements for the funeral rites of the Prophet (S) had not yet been made when the contest for power started in the Saqifa of Bani Sa'eda. Naturally, their leaving the body of the Prophet (S) (without burial), must have injured Hadhrat Fatima's (sa) grief-stricken heart to see that those who claimed love and attachment (to the Prophet) during his life, became so engrossed in their machinations for power that instead of consoling his only daughter, they did not even know when the Prophet (S) was given funeral bath, and when he was buried; and the way they consoled her, was that crowded at her house with material to set fire to it, and tried to secure allegiance by force with all the display of oppression, compulsion, and violence. All these excesses were with a view to so obliterate the prestigious position of this house that it might not remain its lost prestige on any occasion. With this aim in view, in order to crush her economic position, her claim for (the estate of) Fadak was turned down by dubbing it as false, the effect of which was that Hadhrat Fatima az-Zahra (sa) made the dying will that none of them should attend her funeral."

Fatima (sa), bint Muhammad (S) was ready to meet her Lord. She bathed, than lay down in her garment. She then instructed Asma Bint Umais to wait awhile and then to call her name; if there was no answer, this would mean that she (sa) had departed towards her Lord.

Asma waited awhile, then called Fatima's (sa) name. But, there was no answer;

Asma repeated the call:

"O daughter of the chosen Muhammad!

O daughter of the most honorable of them whom women bore!

O daughter of the best of those who have walked on grave! O daughter of him who was at `A distance of but two bow-lengths, or, (even) nearer" (a Qur'anic verse, (53:9))

...There is no answer... silence overwhelms the house ...Asma then proceeds towards Fatima and finds her dead.

At that point, Hasan (as) and Husayn (as) entered, and asked:

"Where is our mother?"

Yet Asma uttered not a word!

Hasan (as) and Husayn (as) proceeded towards their mother, and found her dead. At this, Husayn (as) turned towards Hasan (as), and said:

"May Allah console you for our Mother!"

Imam 'Ali (as) was at the Mosque. Hasan (as), and Husayn (as) went to the Mosque, and broke the news to their father. As soon as he (as) heard their words, he fell unconscious. When he regained consciousness, he said:

"Who will console me now, daughter of Muhammad? You used to console me, so who will take your place now?"

The Hashimite women were then gathered to receive the news of the great calamity. Yes, the calamity befell them once more, while the blood was still flowing from the wound of losing the Prophet.

Medina shook.

Everyone came to console 'Ali (as), and his two children. *Allah is with you, Zahra's children.*

It was just yesterday that you were inflicted with the death of your great father, the Prophet of Allah, and your new calamity is not any less than that one! But, take patience, for this is the will of the Mighty Lord.

## **A Quiet Funeral**

In the darkness of the jet-black night, when eyes were asleep and voices were silent, a Heavenly procession left 'Ali's (as) house while carrying the Messenger of Allah's daughter to her final abode.

This was on the night of the third (3rd) of Jamadi al-Thani (the second), 11 A.H.

The heartbreaking procession moved towards an unknown location followed by a small number of devoted ones. They were 'Ali (as), Hasan (as), Husayn (as), Zainab and Um Kulthum. Abu Dharr, Ammar, Miqdad, and Salman were following them.

Where are the thousands who inhabited Medina?! One asks, and the answer came: Fatima az-Zahra (sa) requested that they may not be present at her funeral!!

The family and their friends hurry to bury Fatima az-Zahra (sa). Then they rushed back to their own homes so that no one would know where Fatima az-Zahra (sa) was buried!

In such a matter, the first start from Ahlul-Bayt set after the sun (the Prophet (S)), and left everyone with the only light of Imamate!!

Here I was asked:

"What do you think about the end of the life of Fatima az-Zahra (sa)?"

What will be the position of those who oppressed her in the hereafter!?"

I waved my hand to him...

So long... with no word... dead silence...

So long!

But wait... can't you hear the Commander of the faithful... the known hero... 'Ali (as)... Don't you realize that he is crying? Yet, who would not cry for being separated from "the Mistress of women"?

Listen to him ('Ali (as)), he is speaking to the Prophet (S):

"O Prophet of Allah, peace be upon you from me and from your daughter who has come to you and who has hastened to meet you. O Prophet of Allah ! My patience about your chosen (daughter) has been exhausted and my power of endurance has weakened, except that I have ground for consolation in having endured the great hardship and heart-rending event of your separation. I laid you down in your grave while your last breath had passed (when your head) `Verily we are Allah's and verily unto Him shall we return (2:56) between my neck, and the chest.

Now, the trust has been returned and what had been given has been taken back. My grief knows no bounds, and my nights will remain sleepless till Allah chooses for me the house in which you are now residing. Certainly your daughter would apprise you of the joining together of your Ummah (people) for oppressing her. You ask her in detail and get all the news about the position. This happened when a long time had not elapsed and your remembrance had not disappeared. My salam be on you both, the salam of a grief stricken not of a disgusted or a hateful person; for if I go away, it is not because I am weary (of you); and if I stay, it is not due to lack of belief in what Allah has promised the endurers."

## **Failing Attempts**

At sunrise people gathered to participate in Fatima's (sa) funeral, but they were informed that the darling of Allah's Messenger (as) had been secretly buried during the night.

Meanwhile, 'Ali (as) made the shapes of four fresh graves in Baqi' so as to conceal the location where Fatima az-Zahra was buried. When the people entered the graveyard, they were confused as to which spot was actually Lady Fatima az-Zahra's (sa) grave; the people turned towards each other, and with feelings of guilt said:

"Our Prophet (S) has not left behind but one daughter; yet, she died and was buried without our participation in the funeral, or, the prayer rituals. We do not even realize the place where she has been buried"

Noticing that a revolt might be ignited because of the emotional atmosphere this event created, the governing party announced:

"Select a group of Muslim women and ask them to dig these graves so that we may find Fatima az-Zahra (sa), and perform prayers on her."

Yes! They attempted to execute the plan, violating Fatima's (sa) will and causing 'Ali's (as) attempts to hide the grave in vain.

Have they forgotten 'Ali's (as) sharp sword, and his well-known courage!! Did they really think that 'Ali (as) would remain indifferent to their outrageous actions up to the point of letting them dig Fatima's (sa) grave?!

Imam 'Ali (as) did not fight back after the Prophet's (as) death because he considered the Muslim's unity, and over all interests. Yet, this did not mean that he would ignore their villainous crimes against Fatima az-Zahra (sa) even after her death. In other words, 'Ali (as) was asked by the Prophet (S) to have patience, but only to a certain extent; when 'Ali (as) received the news of the about-to-be-executed plot, he put on his fighting gear, and rushed towards Baqi'. A man from among the people called out:

"This is 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib (as) leveling his sword, and saying:

If anyone moves even a mere stone from these graves, I shall strike even the "back of the last follower of the unjust."

People realized 'Ali's (as) seriousness, took his threats with complete belief that he would do just as he said if anyone were to oppose him. Yet, a man from the government addressed 'Ali (as) by saying:

"What is the matter, Abu Al-Hasan?! By Allah, we shall dig her grave out and perform prayers on her."

'Ali (as) then grabbed the man by his clothes, shook him and threw him to the ground, and said:

"Son of the Sawada! I have abandoned my right to prevent people from forsaking their faith, but as regards Fatima's grave, by Him in whose hand is my soul, if you and your followers attempt to do anything to it, I will irrigate the ground with your blood!!"

At this, Abu Bakr said;

"Abu Al-Hasan, I ask you by the right of Allah's Messenger (as), and by Him Who is above the Throne: leave him alone and we will not do anything which you would not approve of..."

Thus, until this day, the location of Fatima's (sa) grave remains a secret.

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