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The Caravan to Hajj

Taken from: **Anecdotes of Pious Men** by Murtadha Mutahhari,
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A caravan of Muslims was headed towards Mecca. As it arrived in Madina, it rested a few days, and continued on towards Mecca.

On their way from Madina to Mecca, a man joined the group. This man noticed one of them who had the appearance of a guided person. He was eagerly busy in service of the passengers. The man recognized him. With much surprise, he asked the pilgrims if they knew this man who was at their service.

“No, we don't know him. He joined us in Madina. He is a descent and pious man. We haven't asked him for help. But he has been eager in helping us.”

“Obviously you don't know him. For if you did, you would never have allowed a man like him to be at your service.”

“Who is this person?”

“This is ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn, Zain al-‘Abideen.”

The group stood with shame and apologized to the Imam (as). Then complaining to him, they said:

“Why did you treat us as such? We may have gone beyond our bounds in our ignorance, and would have committed a big sin in being disrespectful to you.”

Imam (as):

“I intentionally joined your group, for you didn't know me. When I join a group, where people know me, for the sake of the Prophet (S), they are very kind to me. They don't allow me to be of some service. Thus I was eager to join a group where I will be anonymous, so that I may have the honor of being of some service to my brethren.”¹

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