

## (6) The Journey To Mecca

It was 26th of Rajab sixty-first of Hijri  
The heat was unbearable, boiling point the degree  
The caravan was ready with young and old  
This was the day, the Prophet had foretold  
"A day will soon come when my dearest Husayn  
Will leave Medina, in indescribable grief and pain  
To meet his fateful destiny, in a far off land  
With his family and few friends, a tiny band"  
With grief in the air, the atmosphere was surcharged  
With heavy hearts the Medinites silently watched  
Can it be true that their most beloved Husayn,  
With his family and friends, would all be slain?"  
They pleaded with him to drop the risky journey  
He was priceless in all terms, including money  
Or take with him their strong young men with arms  
Who would ensure him against any possible harm  
They also pleaded that Ali Akbar be left behind  
So that, when memory of Prophet came to their mind  
They could look to him, for he was his very image,  
From head to foot, in looks, mannerism and gait.  
Husayn was silent, how could he explain?  
Islam was sinking! There were many to be blamed!  
It was his martyr's cup, how could he reveal  
The plan of God to erase the cancerous evil.  
He apologized; to grant their wish he was not able  
Such love, such feelings were indeed laudable!  
He would, however, remember them in his prayer  
His daughter, Sugar, he was leaving to their care.  
Seriously ill, she cried her heart out

They were leaving her, she had no doubt  
Destiny's hand was beckoning the Imam  
Proceed he must, was God's command!  
Towards holy Mecca the caravan slowly proceeded  
A farewell journey: no explanation was needed  
The guardian of truth was himself out to uproot  
The weeds of untruth, with his devil destroying boots.  
From Kufa they sent an urgent pathetic appeal  
In the name of God, from the helpless people  
"Truth is being trampled, we look to you  
To oust this tyranny, come to our rescue."  
"You, as our Imam, must heed our solemn call  
And save Islam, from its impending downfall  
There is no time to lose, we anxiously await  
Please come at once and do not be late."  
He knew that treachery is a satanic vile  
And the Kufians in this were ahead by miles  
Time and again, Ali they had shamelessly betrayed  
Fickleness and shifting loyalty, was their trait.  
They had addressed him as their Imam  
He was, therefore, in painful duty bound  
To heed their call, despite past experience  
It was a supreme test for Imam's holy license.  
Ordinary spiritual beings can easily foretell  
The coming events, as well as, misfortune dispel  
The fountainhead of spiritualism knew much more  
The things, that were destined for him, in store.  
He was so attuned to the will of Almighty God  
His every act bore the stamp of the Merciful Lord  
Destiny's plan had to be implicitly carried out  
By none other than Husayn there was no doubt.  
As his emissary, he sent his cousin, Muslim Ibn Aqil  
To see things for himself; their pulse to feel;  
He received a hearty welcome he wrote to Husayn  
Little did he realize their vile, treacherous game.