

Home > Nafasul Mahmum, Relating to the heart rending tragedy of Karbala¹ > Part 3: Relating to the incidents after the Martyrdom > Entry of the Household (Ahlul Bayt) of Imam Husayn (a.s.) into Kufa > Sayyidah Umm Kulthum bint Ali (a.s.)'s sermon in Kufa

Entry of the Household (Ahlul Bayt) of Imam Husayn (a.s.) into Kufa

(Umar) Ibn Sa'ad proceeded with the captives, and when they neared Kufa the natives therein gathered for a spectacle. A narrator reports, that a Kufan woman peeped down from her balcony and asked, "You are the captives from which place?" They replied, "We are the captives from the family of Muhammad (S)".

Hearing this, the woman stepped down and started collecting the shawls, skirts and veils and handed them over to them and they wore it. (Imam) Ali bin Husayn (Zainul Abedeen) (a.s.) was along with the women, while illness had bent him severely.

There was also Hasan al Musannah, who had accompanied his uncle and Imam, and had endured the wounds of swords and lances and was severely wounded, as also Zayd and 'Amr, two other sons of Imam Hasan (a.s.) were along with them. The people of Kufa started wailing and lamenting upon their state, when Imam Ali bin Husayn (a.s.) said,

"You weep and lament for us, then who killed us (except you)?"

It is related from the 'Intellectual among the Qurayshites' Sayyidah Zainab (a.s.), the daughter Imam Ali (a.s.), that when Ibn Muljim wounded her father and she saw his last moments, she related the tradition of Umm Ayman to her father and said, "Umm Ayman related to me the following and I endear that I hear it from you". Imam said,

"O my dear daughter! The tradition is similar to the one related to you by Umm Ayman. And it is as if I see you and the women of your family captivated in this city in a wretched and dreadful state, and I fear lest people might harm you. Forbear! Forbear! By Him, Who splits open the seeds and creates human! On that day there shall not be another friend of Allah upon this earth except you all, your friends and your Shi'ah".

Sayyidah Zainab bint Ali (a.s.)'s sermon in Kufa

Abu Mansoor Tabarsi in his Ehtijaj relates, that the sermon of Sayyidah Zainab (a.s.), the daughter of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.), in the midst of Kufans on that day was a suppression and reproach of them. Hizam bin Sateer Asadi relates, that when Imam Ali bin Husayn (a.s.) was brought from Karbala to Kufa in an ailing state, the women of Kufa started tearing off their collars and wailing aloud, while the men too accompanied them in lamenting. Imam Zainul Abedeen (a.s.), who was ailing, called out to them in a feeble (yet stern) voice,

“O these who weep! And who else except them have killed us?”

Sayyidah Zainab (a.s.), the daughter of Ali (a.s.) signaled the men to remain silent. Hizam Asadi continues that by Allah! I have never seen a modest woman more eloquent than her and she spoke in the voice of the Commander of the faithful Ali (a.s.). She signaled to the men to pay heed, their breaths stopped in their breasts and their chimes faded. She then glorified Allah and sent salutations upon the Prophet of Allah (S) and said,

“Now then! O Kufans! O men of vaunt! O treacherous men! O retreaters! Beware! May your lament never cease and may your wailing never end. Verily your similitude is that of a woman who untwirls the threads spinned by herself. You have broken your pledges by deceit and there remains nothing in you except pretense, self-conceit, exorbitance and dishonesty. You have adopted the flatter of maids and coquettishness of the enemies as your customs. Your similitude is of that of the expanse vegetation or jewelry in the graveyard.

Beware! What an evil have you brought forth for yourselves that has invited Allah's wrath upon you and you have earned a place of fury in the hereafter. You weep for my brother? Verily yes by Allah! You should weep, for you deserve it. Weep abundantly and laugh less, thus you are tainted with disgrace and trapped in contempt that you shall never be able to wash off. How will you wash off the blood of the son of the 'Seal of Prophethood (S)' and the 'Mine of Apostleship' from yourselves, who was the Master of the youth of Paradise, the General of the battlefield, and an Asylum of your group. He was a residence of repose for you and your well-being. He healed your wounds and safeguarded you against whatever evil came towards you. You approached him when you quarreled among yourselves. He was your best counsel and you relied upon him, and he was a lantern of your path.

Beware! What evil have you brought forth for yourselves and what load have you put upon your neck for the day of Qiyamah. Perdition! Perdition! Destruction! May your search go vain and may your hands paralyze that you have handed over the affairs of your provisions to the wind. You have occupied a place in Allah's wrath, while the stamp of contempt and misfortune is sealed upon your forehead.

Woe be to you! Do you know that you have amputated the dear child of Muhammad (S)? And what pledge have you broken off from him? And what endeared family of his have you brought out onto the

streets? And what veil of sanctity have you snatched away from them? And what blood have you shed from him? What an awry thing have you brought forth that it is likely that the heavens would fall down and the earth would disperse, while the mountains would crumble down as much as the fill of the earth and the heavens.

The bride of your affairs is hairless, unfamiliar, indecent, blind, ugly and sullen. You wonder why the heavens rain blood. The chastisement of the hereafter is more disgraceful and there will be no helper. Let not this respite make you frivolous, for none has the power to anticipate upon Allah, the Mighty, the Sublime, and seeking vengeance does not lapse from him. No, not at all, your Lord is in ambush for you”.

Then she recited the following elegies:

“What will you reply when the Prophet shall ask you, how did you fair, while you were the last nation, with my progeny and my children, the noble ones, that some of them are captivated and some drenched in their blood, this is not the recompense regarding which I advised you with which you treated my ‘Near-ones’, I fear that a wrath similar to the people of Iram¹ might descend upon you”.

Saying then she turned her face away from them.

Hizam says that I saw that all the men wandered away and were deeply remorseful. An old man standing besides me wept bitterly until his beard was soaked with his tears. He held up his hands towards the heavens and said, “May my parents be ransom upon those whose elders, youth and women are the chosen ones among all elders, youth and women. Their family is respectful and their grace eminent”. Then he said, “Theirs are the best of elders and the best progeny. And when tomorrow the progenies are taken into account, theirs will not be from among the ruined and damned ones”.

Imam Ali bin Husayn (a.s.) said,

“O dear aunt! Please remain silent, that what has passed away should serve as an example for the future. You, praise be to Allah, are an intellectual without having being trained, and are knowledgeable who needs none to make her understand. Verily, lamenting and wailing would not return back those who have passed away”.

Hearing this, Sayyidah Zainab (a.s.) became silent and Imam (a.s.) alighted and pitched a tent. Then he dismounted the women and brought them into the tent.

Imam Ali bin Husayn (a.s.)’s remonstrations amidst the people of Kufa and his reproach to them for their breach of trust and

deception

Then Hizam bin Sateer says that Imam Ali Zainul Abedeen (a.s.) came forward facing the men and signaled them to remain silent. Then he sat down and praised and glorified Allah and sent salutations upon His Prophet, then said,

“O people! Those of you, who know me, know me, while those who do not know me I am Ali, the son of Husayn, who was beheaded without any fault or error on the banks of the Euphrates. I am the son of the one whose sanctity was violated and was robbed off the blessing of his life. His wealth was plundered and his women were captivated. I am the son of the one who was killed by a collective group, while this honor (Martyrdom) is sufficient for us.

O people! I tell you in the name of Allah! Do you not know that you had written a letter to my father inviting him? You deceived him while pledging and promising to aid him and took the oath of allegiance to him. And in return you fought against him and abandoned him? May you be ruined by that what you have brought forth and may your ideologies be ugly! How shall you face the Prophet of Allah (S) when he shall say to you: You killed my progeny and violated my sanctity, you are not from among my nation”.

The voice of wailing of men arose and they started telling one another, “You are ruined and you do not know”. Then Imam (a.s.) continued,

“May Allah’s Mercy be upon him who accepts my counsel and safeguards my recommendation in the way of Allah, the Prophet of Allah (S) and his Progeny, that we possess better following while having relation with the Prophet of Allah (S)”.

They told him, “O son of the Prophet of Allah! All of us are heedful ones, obedient and admirers of your sanctity. We shall not desert you nor turn away from you. Then command us, may your Lord have mercy upon you, we are along with you in times of conflict and peace. Then we shall seek revenge from the one who oppressed you or ourselves”. Hearing this Imam (a.s.) said,

“Alas! Alas! O deceivers loaded with fraud! There is a large obstacle between you and your futile caprice. You desire to fair with me similarly as you have faired with my fathers? No, never. By the Lord of the joyous Camels of the pilgrims! The deep wounds of the martyrdom of my father and my family have not yet healed. The wounds inflicted upon the breasts of the Prophet of Allah (S), my father and his sons have not yet been forgotten. The bones of my neck are broken due to the sorrow and its bitterness exists in between my throat and larynx. And the bones of the heart are suffocating me. My desire is that you should not be of those who benefit us nor of those who harm us”.

Then he said,

“No wonder that Husayn (a.s.) is killed, similar to his father, who was better and greater than him. O Kufans! Do not rejoice upon this affliction of ours which is a great affliction, who has been lying martyred on the bank of the Euphrates, may my life be his ransom, while the retribution for his murder shall be the fire of hell”.

Besides, the remonstrance of Fatemah Sughra (a.s.) with the Kufans is also quoted. Zayd bin Moosa bin Ja'far relates from his father, who relates from his fathers the sermon of Fatemah Sughra (a.s.), which she delivered after returning from Karbala:

“Praise be to Allah equivalent to the particles of sand and the weight of the heavens until the earth. We praise Him and believe in Him and rely upon Him alone, and we say that there is no other Deity except Allah. He is Unique and has no associate, while Muhammad (S) is His Slave and Messenger. And the heads of his sons have been severed innocently on the banks of the Euphrates.

O Allah! I seek refuge in You if I attribute falsehood to You, or if I misconstrue against what You ordered regarding the pledge of the Vicegerency of (Imam) Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.), whose right was usurped. He was also innocently killed in one of the houses of Allah as they killed his sons yesterday. There was present a group of men who claimed to be Muslims, may their heads not remain upon their necks, he was thirsty until his soul was taken up to You. He was of a praiseworthy character, pious lineage, and renowned qualities and acclaimed Religion and he did not fear rebuke and reproach in Your Path.

O Allah! You guided him towards Your Islam since his early childhood and You praised his attributes in his adulthood. He constantly remained sincere towards You and Your Prophet and Your salutations descended unto him until You summoned him to Yourself. He was abstinent with regard to this world and was not avaricious, while he was desirous with regard to the hereafter. Then he strove in Your way, while You cherished and preferred him and guided him to the Right Path.

Now then! O people of Kufa! O men of deceit, fraud and conceit! We are a family tried on your account by Allah and He has tried you on our account. He has made these trials as a felicity for us and has informed us regarding it. We are the guardians of His Knowledge and the treasure of His Intelligence. We recognize His Wisdom and are the Proof for His slaves upon His earth. He cherishes us dearly through His Kindness and has exalted us upon His creations through His Prophet.

You have belied us and committed infidelity through (oppressing) us. You considered killing us to be lawful and have plundered our belongings as though we are the infidels of Turkey or Kabul. It was yesterday that you killed our grandfather and your swords spits the blood of us the family (of Prophet). You have cooled your eyes due to an ancient enmity (which you bear towards us) and rejoice upon the insolence towards Allah and deceit that you bring forth. Do not rejoice upon shedding our blood and plundering our belongings, for whatever has reached us through this great affliction and the immense slaughter is in conformity to this verse of the Qur'an:

Vie in hastening to forgiveness from your Lord and to a garden whose extent is like the extent of the

heaven and the earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers; that is the Grace of Allah, He bestows it upon whomsoever He wills; and Allah is the Lord of Mighty Grace. Befalls not any disaster in the earth or in your own selves save it is in a Book, ere We cause it to be verily that is easy for Allah. (Surah al-Hadeed, 57: 21-22).

May you be expelled, look forward towards the wrath which will soon descend upon you. The vengeance of the heavens will descend upon you successively and erode, or He (Allah) should involve you in confusion (in) party (dissentions) and make some of you taste the fighting of the other. (Surah al-An`aam, 6:65).

Then due to the oppression that you have committed upon us, you shall remain everlasting in the fierce wrath in Qiyamah. Beware! Curse of Allah upon the oppressors! Woe be to you! Do you know and do you understand? With what hands did you aim the lances at us? With what souls did you come to fight us? With what feet did you proceed for a combat with us? Your hearts have hardened, your livers have turned into iron, and your hearts have become blind, while your ears and eyes have been sealed. Shaitan has enticed you and has enjoined you while he has blinded your eyes and you shall never find guidance.

May you be ruined O Kufans! How much blood of the Prophet of Allah (S) is upon you? And what measure (of vengeance) is upon your neck? Then you committed treachery with his (the Prophet's) brother Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) as also his sons, the progeny of the Prophet, and who were among the chaste and virtuous. And one of you said arrogantly: It is we who killed Ali and his sons, with Indian swords and lances, and we captivated their women-folk similar to the Turkish captives, and we battled with him and what a battle. Mud in the mouth of the one who said it! You pride upon the murder of the ones whom Allah has praised and purified and has kept away all filth away from them? Hold your breadth! Then sit down as a dog sits down upon the tip of its tail, as your father sat. Every man shall reap what he sends forth. Woe be to you! You envied us due to the grace that Allah bestowed upon us. What is our fault in it if our river is full of abundant water, while the water of your river has dried up, that cannot even hide a worm?

That is the grace of Allah, He bestows it upon whomsoever He wills, and Allah is the Lord of Mighty Grace. (Surah al-Hadeed, 57:21).

Unto whomsoever Allah gives not light, there is not for him anything of light". (Surah an-Noor, 24:40).

It is said that hearing this, the voices of wailing arose and people said, "Enough O daughter of the Chaste Ones! You have blazed our hearts and have flexed our necks and have inflamed our conscience". Then she became silent, salutations upon her and her father and grandfather.

Sayyidah Umm Kulthum bint Ali (a.s.)'s sermon in Kufa

Sayyid Ibn Tawoos in his Malhoof quotes these sermons and then says that, on that day Umm Kulthum (a.s.),² the daughter of Imam Ali (a.s.), bewailed from behind the curtain and said,

“O Kufans! May you face evil! Why did you refrain yourselves from rendering assistance to Husayn (a.s.), why did you kill him? Why did you plunder his belongings and become its possessors? Why did you imprison his women-folk and suppress him? May you be ruined and uprooted! Woe be to you! Do you know what you have brought forth? And do you know what load of sin have you taken upon your backs? And what blood have you shed? And which women-folk have you taken as captives? And what children have to loot? And what belongings have you plundered? You have killed the best of men succeeding the Prophet (S), while mercy has departed away from your hearts.

Beware, verily the Party of Allah alone shall be the successful ones and verily the party of Shaitan are the losers (Surah al-Mujadilah, 58:22 and 19).”

Then she retorted,

“You killed my brother, woe be upon you, you will surely be rewarded by the fire which burns eternally. You have shed the blood whose shedding was proclaimed to be unlawful by Allah, by the Qur’an and Muhammad (S), may you receive tidings of the fire where tomorrow you shall dwell eternally. I shall weep upon my brother all through my life, who was born as the best of creatures after the Prophet (S), the tears shall flow upon my cheeks similar to the flood and rain waters and shall never dry up. ”

It is said that people started weeping and wailing aloud. The women tore their hair and put sand upon their head. They scratched their faces and started beating them and saying, “Alas! Alas!” The men started weeping and pulled their beards. Never was such a wailing of men and women ever been seen before.

Allamah Majlisi relates in Bihar al Anwar from the reliable books, without quoting the chain of narrators, from Muslim, the plasterer, that he said, that (Ubaydullah) Ibn Ziyad had summoned me to Kufa for the repair of the Royal Palace. While I was plastering the doors, suddenly voices of wailing arose from the surroundings of Kufa. A servant who was supervising us came and I asked him, “What is the news that I hear hue and cry in Kufa?”

He answered, “The severed head of a rebel has been brought in, who revolted against Yazid”. I asked him as to who he was and he replied that he was Husayn bin Ali (a.s.). I waited until the servant had left, then I hit upon my face with my wrist (with such force) and feared lest my eyes would have come out. I washed my hands and came out from the back of the palace until I reached the open ground of Kufa. I stood there while men were awaiting the arrival of the captives and the heads. Suddenly nearly forty litters upon forty Camels drew near wherein were women, family and children of Fatemah (a.s.), while

Imam Ali (Zainul Abedeen) was seated upon a Camel without a litter. Blood was dripping from his legs and he was weeping in this state and said,

“O evil nation! May you never be satiated! O the nation who did not respect us in consideration of our grandfather! What will you answer on the day of Qiyamah when we shall be joined along with our grandfather? You made us sit upon bare litters as though it is not us who had strengthened the foundations of Religion. O Bani Umayyah! Until when shall you keep oppressing us or refuse to respond to the call of our proclaimer? O those who clap your hands rejoicing upon our misfortunes and slander us upon the earth, is not my grandfather the Prophet of Allah, Woe be to you, who guides abundantly than the path of the misguide? O event of Taff (Karbala)! You have made me the heir of grief and sorrow. By Allah! The veils will be pulled off the faces of those who have treated us badly. ”

The people of Kufa started distributing dates, bread and walnuts to the captivated children seated upon the litters. Seeing this Umm Kulthum (a.s.) called out, *“O Kufans! Charity is unlawful for us”*. She took it away from the hands and mouths of the children and threw it upon the ground.

It is said that when she uttered these words, people wept on account of this unpleasant event.

Umm Kulthum (a.s.) peeped out from the litter and said, *“Quite O Kufans! Your men kill us while your women weep upon us? Allah is the Judge on the day of Judgment between you and us”*. When she said this, the voice of wailing increased and the heads were brought forth. The head of Imam Husayn (a.s.) was in the forefront, it seemed similar to the Venus and moon and bore resemblance to the Prophet of Allah (S) more than anyone else. His beard bore the mark of dye, while his face was glowing like a disc of the moon, while the wind was whirling it (the beard) to the left and right. Sayyidah Zainab (a.s.) lifted her head and saw the face of her brother and hit her head upon the wooden pillar of the litter. We saw with our own eyes that blood started flowing from under her veil and she started uttering with a broken heart,

“O crescent who did not even rise when it was eclipsed and it set! O piece of my heart! I had not presumed that the pen of destiny would have written this. O brother! Speak to the young Fatemah so that her heart may find solace. O brother! What has happened to the heart that was merciful and kind towards us, that it has hardened? O brother! I wish you would look at Ali (Zainul Abedeen) when he was being captivated while he was also orphaned. He possessed no strength to retaliate; when he was being flogged he was calling out to you helplessly, while his tears were flowing. O brother! Take him into your fold and bring him close to you and offer solace to his frightened heart, what a disgrace for an orphan when he calls out to his father and receives no answer from him”.

1. Iram – A city built by Shaddad, a claimant of Godhead, as a challenge to Paradise, while exhausting all his resources. But he himself could not have a glance at it and death overtook him at the door. The people of that city were called the

people of Ad, who were the people of Arab antiquity; they were powerful and possessed a tall stature. They became proud of their strength and power and thus rebelled against Allah's laws and were persistent in their arrogance and disbelief, thus Allah's wrath descended upon them and they were destroyed. Numerous verses of the Qur'an refer to their state.

2. Sayyidah Zainab as Sughra (the younger Zainab), better known by her agnomen Umm Kulthum, was the younger daughter of the Commander of the faithful Imam Ali (a.s.) and Sayyidah Fatemah az Zahra (a.s.). She was born during the days of her grandfather Prophet Muhammad (S), who cherished her and nurtured her in his blessed lap. Her excellent character, sublime morals, abundant virtue and unparalleled wisdom earned her great fame and she was looked upon as the inheritor of her mother's chastity second only to her elder sister Sayyidah Zainab al Kubra (a.s.).

She was married to her cousin Muhammad bin Ja'far at Tayyar, who died leaving her a widow. She remained attached and dedicated to her brothers Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husayn (a.s.). Umm Kulthum (a.s.) accompanied her brother Imam Husayn (a.s.) at Karbala and witnessed the heart-rending episode of his martyrdom and those of the other men-folk of her family. Her speeches and sermons at Kufa and Damascus, reprimanding and condemning the oppressors for their misdeeds, bear witness to her eloquence and valiant character, the legacy of her father Imam Ali (a.s.).

She remained steadfast and forbore patiently the worst ordeals of life alongside her elder sister Sayyidah Zainab al Kubra (the elder Zainab) thus entering the ranks of the most honorable and pious women of the world. The Shi'ah Scholars unanimously agree to her being free from error and fault (Mahfooz anil Khata). While the episode quoted by Non-Shi'ah sources of her alleged marriage with Caliph Umar bin Khattab is nothing but fictitious, and is fabricated with a sole motive to demean the exalted status of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and applause their enemies. Shi'ah Scholars have authored numerous books in refutation of this alleged claim.

For further study refer to: As Sirrul Makhtoom fi Tahqeeq Aqd Umm Kulthum by Mawlawi Muhammad Inshallah Muhammadi Siddiqi Hanafi Badayuni (a Sunni Author), Afhamul A'ada was Khusoom fi nahi Tazweej Sayyidatena Umm Kulthum by Ayatullah Sayyid Nasir Husayn, Kanze Maktoom fi hall Aqd Umm Kulthum by Fakhrul Hukama Sayyid Ali Azhar, A Treatise by Ayatullah Shaikh Muhammad Jawad Balaghi, etc. Also refer to the renowned Fatwa of Ayatullah al Uzma Sayyid Shihabuddin Mar'ashi Najafi, refuting the claim. Sayyidah Umm Kulthum (a.s.) died in Damascus and lies buried in the renowned graveyard of Babe Sagheer, opposite her niece Sayyidah Sakinah (a.s.), the daughter of Imam Husayn (a.s.). May Allah's abundant Peace and Blessings be showered upon her and her exalted family.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/nafasul-mahmum-relating-heart-rending-tragedy-karbala-shaykh-abbas-qummi/entry-household-ahlul-bayt>