

The Kufians Letters

While still in Mecca, al-Husayn ('a) received the letters sent to him by the people of Kufa. Some letters were written by single individuals, others contained two, three, or four signatures, all requesting him to go there because they did not have an Imam. They wrote saying that they never prayed congregational or Friday prayers with al-Nu'man.

Many letters were delivered to him, so much so that he received a total of as many as twelve thousand letters. He did not answer any of them. The last letter he received was sent by Shabath Ibn Rab'i, Hajar Ibn Abjar, Yazid Ibn al-Harith, 'Izrah Ibn Qays, 'Amr Ibn al-Hajjaj, and Muhammad Ibn 'Omayr Ibn 'Utarid. The latter's letter stated the following:

“The people are waiting for you. They accept no views other than yours; so, hurry, O son of the Messenger of Allah, for the grass is green, the fruits are ripe, and the trees are full of leaves. Come, if you will, for you will be coming to hosts already recruited for you.”¹

As many as the seeds were the letters he did receive:

Saying: Come to Iraq, to those who connive and deceive;

Caliphate has neither guardian nor anyone worthy of it,

While you are the best of those who deserve it.

So he came with hardened men like lions,

Like the leopards in their forests,

Mounted were those whose faces were

Like the moons shining, glorious, virtuous.

He crossed the sierra, reaching al-Taff and

In their courtyards he did settle.

The horse stopped, so he said: Karbala' is this,

Why did not your eyes avoid it at all?

Alight, for its flanks

Are cut only for our graves.

Descending, mending his sword
To cut the helmets on their heads,
As he looked around, he saw the flags
Of betrayal, of treachery.
Never for a moment did I believe it could or it might
A shining moon would in the desert be so bright,
And the sons of the blue woman would in its light
And in its halo receive the night.²

1. Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, p. 11. On p. 193, Vol. 10, chapter 10, al-Khawarizmi indicates the details of the meetings held by the Kufians and their correspondence with al-Husayn ('a).

2. Excerpted from a poem lauding al-Husayn ('a) by Shaikh Muhammad Ibn Isma'il al-Baghdadi al-Hilli, famous as "Ibn al-Khalifa," who died in 1247 A.H./1832 A.D. published on p. 174, Vol. 5, of Shu'ara' al-Hilla.

Source URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/maqtal-al-husayn-abd-al-razzaq-al-muqarram/kufians-letters>