

The Radiance of Imam Husayn

Author(s):

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The following is a translation of the text *Lamaat Al Husayn*, the Radiance of Husayn, quotes and sayings of the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, Husayn ibn 'Ali, peace be upon them.

Category:

Imam al-Husayn and Karbala [4]

Topic Tags:

Muharram [5]

Karbala [6]

Ashura [7]

Person Tags:

Imam Husayn (a) [8]

Preface

In the Name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful

And all praise belongs to the Lord of the worlds; and there is no Power and no Strength except in Allah, the Exalted and Mighty

Endless greetings upon the immaculate soul of the seal of the prophets, Muhammad Mustafa, and his noble deputy and spiritual heir and successor ‘Ali Murtadha and the eleven progeny of his most glorious descendants, especially the *wali* of the contingent realm, the Eminent Imam Zaman, the divinely appointed leader of the era, Muhammad ibn Hasan, the Upholder of the House of Muhammad, who leads the caravan of existence with love and attraction in its movement toward the realm of the absolute and the Oneness of the Eminent Truth—be He magnified and Exalted.

And We made them leaders, guiding (others) by Our command, and We inspired them to do good deeds, to establish regular prayers and to pay the poor rate and they constantly served Us (and Us only). (Sura al-Anbiah 21: 83)

The era of the Imam of the Eminent¹ Imam Hasan Mujtaba and the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs (Imam Husayn) peace be upon them was among the darkest and most difficult eras due to the pressure and domination from the oppressive Umayyad regime. Stifling of the truth, guile, duplicity, ignorance, pretense, lies and deception were at their peak.

In a speech near the end of his life, the Eminent Leader of the Faithful, Amir ul-Mumineen, ‘Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be upon him bore witness to this very situation when he said:

‘Know this—may Allah be merciful upon you—you are living in a time in which those who speak the truth are few. When it comes to saying the truth, the tongue is tired, inarticulate, and unable to explain itself.

The person who follows what is right is abased. The people of this era have turned to the mundane life. They have settled into sinfulness, and have adapted to and become familiar with lassitude and half-heartedness. Their youth are ill-mannered; their elders are sinners. Their learned men are hypocrites; those among them who recite the Quran are polluted and impure. The youth do not treat the elders with dignity and respect; and the rich do not take care of the poor.’²

In addition to the entire length of their lives, the length of the Imam of these two gallant and high-minded Imams amounted to ten years each. Thus, naturally there should be thousands of narrations and traditions, speeches and sermons, Quran exegeses and the like from them. Yet, not more than one or two narrations on jurisprudence and a few hadith giving Quranic commentary have been passed down. Their speeches, sermons, and sayings, are also extremely brief, concise and few in number.

At the same time, books, records, and history have been filled with thousands of forged and false hadith—with content corresponding to the politics of the time—from the hadith merchants such as Abu Hurairah and others like him.

It is obvious that in view of that darkness, gloom, and pressure, either fewer people turned to those great individuals to take advantage of their burgeoning oceans of knowledge; or, the sayings which were repeated from them, due to the anxiety, terror and fear of the narrators of those hadith, were wiped out and destroyed and thus were not conveyed to the later generations.

A few of the speeches and preachings of the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs have reached us, which are lessons in freedom and wisdom, in faith and conviction. Obviously these flow from the font of Wilayat. On such is:

‘We are the sovereigns of speech (regarding the Truth). Our speech has firm roots and bases, and these roots and bases have grown, and its branches spread through our lineage.

Surely we are the creators and sovereigns of (true) discourse. It takes root in us, is established in us, and grows in us so that the fruitful branches of true speech hang from our household.’³

Accordingly, they are the sources and tributaries of speech, representing the bases and the applications of spirituality and Truth.

And how good it would be if the words of that Eminent one, words which contain a world of glory and honor, of independence, faith and conviction, of patience and fortitude, manliness and chivalry, would be written on posters and banners, translated in a flowing and engaging way. Then these posters and banners, like the poems of *Muhtasham*,⁴ would be hung in the mourning ceremonies and centers.

Then, those who enter and participate in these meetings could benefit not only from listening to the truthful speakers and narrators, but also from seeing such words. They could memorize these words exactly and make these be the guiding principles for their life and behavior.

This brief manuscript currently before the esteemed reader includes some of the exact words of the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, (peace be upon him) which this humble writer has recounted, noting their sources. I have merely translated them, refraining from explaining or expounding upon them. Thus, they are concise and brief enough to be written upon posters and banners, placed in view of those present in meetings and gatherings. At the same time, because of their simplicity, they are useful for all of our religious brethren.

It is anticipated that seminarians and other religiously committed students memorize these exact words and speeches, and then in their own speeches and discussions, enlighten the mind of the general public with the radiant brilliance of the light of Husayn peace be upon him. Thus this valuable legacy which has come to us from the pens of the scholars and the blood of the martyrs who came before us, can be passed along to the next generation.

May Allah reward them for their splendid efforts and increase their faith, piety, knowledge, and righteous actions.

Allah's greetings, mercy and blessings, be upon us and upon them and upon the Righteous servants of Allah.

Sayyid Muhammad–Husain Husaini–Tehrani

Noon prayer time,

Ashura, 10th Muharram, 1402 H.Q.

The Sacred City of Mashhad, the region of Imam Ridha', peace be upon him
And He is the Omnipotent

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1. Eminent stands for the word "Hazrat" which is an honorific title, used to show respect, in the Persian language before the names of the Fourteen Infallible. Some translators have omitted this altogether because there is no English equivalent. The word Eminent, capitalized, has been used here in an attempt to keep the flavor of the original manuscript, showing the deference and respect allotted by devout Shia to the Fourteen infallible.
 2. "Nahjul Balaghah", Speech 231; Sharh 'Abdeh. Egypt: Vol. 1, p. 462
 3. "Nahjul Balaghah" (The Peaks of Eloquence), Speech 231, Shahr 'Abdeh, Egypt: Volume 1, p.461.
 4. Muhtasham is an Iranian poet. Verses of his poems elegizing the events at Karbala are traditionally written on black banners hung in mourning ceremonies and halls in meetings commemorating these events.

The Brilliance of Husayn

A selection of the works, sermons and speeches of the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, Abi Abullah Al Husayn, peace be upon him.

Compiled by:

The hopeful servant (of Allah)

Sayyid Muhammad-Husain Husaini-Tehrani

May Allah forgive him¹

I take refuge in Allah from Satan, the outcast

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Allah's blessings and salutations be upon our lord and master Muhammad and his pure and immaculate family, and the curse of Allah be upon all their enemies from now until the judgment day.

And there is no Power or Strength except in Allah, the Exalted, the Mighty

Among the edicts of the Lord of the Martyrs, Aba Abillah, Al Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, peace be upon them, which he delivered one day, was this speech before his companions.

Oh, people. Truly, Allah did not create his creatures other than that they might come to know Him.

And, when they know Him, they will become his servants and worship him; and through being His servants and worshipping Him, they will become free of the need to worship any other.

At this point a man said: Oh, son of the Messenger of Allah! What does it mean to know Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He?

That Eminent one replied: This knowledge, for the people of any era, is embodied in the Imam of their time, whom they are obliged to follow and obey. 2

In one speech which he delivered about the abandonment of the practice of ordering others to the good and forbidding them from doing wrong, and about the uprising of the oppressors and oppressive rulers, he spoke at length about the deprivations of the oppressed, and about the departure from the Truth. In the process, near the end of that speech, he issued this reminder:

The flow of matters and rules are in the hands of those who know Allah, those who uphold and observe the difference between what is haram and is halal.

Oh, Lord. You know that what has taken place (in terms of an upsurge and movement to commanding the right, forbidding the wrong, aiding the oppressed and opposing the oppressor) has not been done out of greed and craving for power or position on our part; nor was it undertaken for self-aggrandizement or to achieve wealth and riches.

Rather, we have done this so that we might see the signs of your religion, and make manifest a restoration in your towns and so that your oppressed worshipers might live in safety security and so that your rules, laws, and the way of life that you commanded should be enacted

He addressed those listening

Surely, Oh people! If you do not assist us in this, and act duly toward us, then the oppressive rulers will overcome you and use their power against you. They will seek to distinguish the light of your Messenger (Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him).

And Allah suffices for us. We rely upon Him alone, and we will return eventually to Him, as will all things

And at the time that that Eminent one wanted to set out from Medina the Radiant, to Mecca the Esteemed, he wrote a last will and testament and sealed it with his signet ring. He then rolled it up and handed it over to his brother, Muhammad ibn Hannafiya. Finally, he bid him farewell and in the darkness of the night of the 3rd of Shaaban, 60 H.Q., and set off for Mecca with all of his family.

And such is the final will and testament of Husayn ibn 'Ali, peace be upon him, to his brother Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah.

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

This is the testament that Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib makes to his brother Muhammad, who is known as ibn Hanafiyyah

'Surely, Husayn ibn 'Ali testifies that:

There is nothing to be worshipped, no god, except Allah. He is One; He has no associate.

And, that truly Muhammad, Allah's greetings and blessings be upon him and his family, is his servant and messenger, who truly came from the Truth

And that heaven and hell are real and true.

The hour of judgment will arrive; there is no doubt in that.

And Allah will raise all who lie in the graves

I did not step forward for idle play or diversion, nor out of recklessness and arrogance. Nor to cause corruption, destruction, oppression, tyranny or injustice!

Rather, I come forth to rectify and restore the religious community, the ommat, of my grandfather Muhammad, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him and his family. I want to enjoin the right and prohibit wrongdoing, and act according to the tradition and customs of my grandfather and the way of life of my father, 'Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be upon him.

Whoever, in truth accepts me; know that Allah is the one who deserves to be accepted more than I do. As for those who reject me, then I will be patient and steadfast, until Allah rules on the rights between me and this group. And He is the best Ruler.'

This is my testament to you, oh my brother. Surely affirmation and success is only from Allah. I rely upon Him and to Him is our return.

Peace be upon you and upon all who follow guidance.

And among his speeches is this one, reported by 'Ali ibn Eisa Erbily

Imam Husayn peace be upon him, composed and delivered this speech:

Oh people, vie amongst yourselves to achieve the most commendable traits and noble character.

Move quickly to achieve those results which have spiritual value. Don't count on any good works which you do not hasten to complete. Earn praise and commendation through the successful completion of your deeds. Don't earn criticism and censure by being lazy and lethargic.

Know this: In some situations one person may do good toward another, and that person shows him no gratitude so he thinks he has no thanks. But Allah Himself is the reward. Allah's generosity is greater and more abundant and his payment is the greatest. 3

And Know this: The requests that people ask of you are actually blessings for you from Allah. Thus, don't face these blessings with lassitude and apathy, lest these blessings be transformed into reprisals and negative consequences.4

Be aware that all good works bear praise and commendation and bring with them a good reward.

If you could see good deeds take human form before your eyes, you would find goodness to be like a

lovely person with a beautiful face, pleasing to look at. Whoever looks upon that beautiful person would find joy and bliss.

If you could see bad and unscrupulous actions embodied in human form, you would see an ugly, revolting person who is repulsive to the heart. All eyes would turn away from it.

Oh people:

The person who is generous becomes a grand, lofty person; the person who is stingy debases himself.

The most generous person is the one who gives to someone from whom he has no hope of repayment or reward.

The most forgiving person is the one who forgives when in a position of power and strength.

The most affable person is the one who makes up with those who have broken off relations with him.

A tree depends on its roots, and grows through sending out branches and fruit. Anyone who hastens to extend benefit toward his brother, has built branches in a spiritual tree. Later, when he comes upon this tree, he will reap the good fruit of it.

If a person does good toward his brother for the sake of Allah, to please Allah, Allah will send this goodness to him in his hour of need; moreover, He will keep an even larger store of adversities from him in this life

If a person alleviates the sadness and troubles of a believer, Allah will turn away the sadness and troubles of this life and the next from him. Whoever does good, Allah will do good unto him. And surely Allah loves those who do good

Once a person approached the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, peace be upon him, and asked him for help. He said: I am a disobedient man. I cannot hold out against sinning.

Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, said:

Do these five things, then commit whatever sin you want.

1. Eat from other than the sustenance that Allah has provided you;

Then commit whatever sin you want.

2. Be independent of the support and protection of Allah;

Then commit whatever sin you want.

3. Choose a place where Allah cannot see you;

Then commit whatever sin you want.

4. When the Angel of Death comes to take your soul, turn him away;

Then commit whatever sin you want.

5. When the angels who guard hell fire want to throw you in, don't go;

Then commit whatever sin you want

Imam Sadiq, peace be upon him said: My father told me, as his father had told him—peace be upon them:

A man from Kufa wrote the Eminent Husayn ibn 'Ali a letter, with this content:

Oh my master and my lord! Tell us what does “goodness in this life and the next” entail?

That eminent one wrote thus to him: In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful:

The person who seeks to please Allah, even though it may incur the anger and wrath of the people, Allah will suffice him against the people and their affairs.

And the person who seeks to please people and gain their approval, even though it may incur the anger and wrath of Allah, Allah will turn his affairs over to the people.

(Signed) In peace

Also, it is reported from the book “A'lam ul deen” that:

Teaching and learning breed direct, esoteric knowledge. Long term experience increases wisdom [‘aql]. Nobility lies in piety. Practicing restraint and moderation leads to physical ease. The person who likes you diverts you from wrongdoing, while your enemy will entice you to disgusting actions.

Another piece of advice from that Eminent one:

Abstain from doing something that you will have to apologize for; a believer does not do wrong actions that must be apologized for. A hypocrite transgresses daily, and then apologizes.

To his son, the Eminent Imam Sajjad, 'Ali ibn Al Husayn, he said:

Oh light of my eyes! Beware of doing wrong to a person who has no aid or support other than Allah, the Majestic and the Mighty.

The Eminent Imam Hasan Mujtaba, peace be upon him achieved martyrdom in the 49 H.Q., when poisoned by Muawiyeh at the hands of Jo'deh, the daughter of Ash'ath ibn Qays, who was that Eminent

one's wife. Then, intrigue, discord, and calamity increased continuously and the Shi'a were more and more under pressure. Soon, there was not one corner in the Islamic regions where a person close to Allah, did not fear for his own life and blood, where such a person was not rejected, hated, and troubled.

On the other hand, the enemies of God were out in the open and unconcealed. They even took pride in their deviance and heretical practices.

One year before Muawiyeh died, the Eminent Husayn ibn 'Ali, the Lord of the Martyrs, peace be upon him, set out on the pilgrimage to the Sacred house of Allah; along with that Eminent one were Abdullah ibn Ja'far, and Abdullah ibn Abbas.

Husayn, peace be upon him, gathered all of the Bani Hashem, male and female, and all of their dependents, (including their servants, their adopted children, those who had treaties with them, and the like), those of the Ansar whom that Eminent one knew, and also his own family. Then he sent messengers instructing them not to leave behind even one of the companions of the prophet who is known for piety, righteousness worship. Bring them all together before him at Mina.

At Mina, in the large and lofty tent of that Eminent one, more than 700 men who had known the companions of the Prophet of Islam. And nearly 200 of them were themselves companions of the Messenger of Allah, Allah's greetings and salutations be upon him and his family.

Husayn, peace be upon him, rose among those present to deliver a sermon. He praised Allah, and then said.

You have all seen and witnessed how this arrogant, conceited transgressor (referring to Muawiyeh ibn Abu Sufyan), has treated us and our Shi'a. I ask you for your testimony. If I speak the truth, then affirm what I say; if I lie, then say I am lying.

And I swear you by the right that Allah has over you, and by the right that the Messenger of Allah has over you, and by the family relationship that I have with your Messenger, to go back to your towns and cities and report this meeting and the stand that I am taking here, exactly as it occurred, to your families and clans, to those in whom you place your trust and confidence and you have no worries about them in that regard! Explain my words to them! And all of you invite them, and call them to this matter of wilayat.

And according to another hadith, after he said: And if I am lying, then call me a liar; he said: Listen to what I said, and write it down. Then return to your cities and your tribes, and summon those men in whom you can place your trust and confidence; invite them to whatever you think are my rights. Otherwise, I am worried that this matter will be obliterated, that the truth will be lost and overtaken by dishonesty and deceit. Allah will complete his Light, although the disbelievers despise that.

Husayn, peace be upon him, did not leave out a single point that Allah revealed about them (his father, his brother, and his mother and about himself and his family) in the Quran; he explained and expounded

upon each point. He did not leave out a single thing that the Messenger of Allah, Allah's greetings and peace be upon him and his family, said about his father, his brother, and his mother and about himself and his family; he narrated each of the traditions. Husayn, peace be upon him, did not leave out a single point that Allah revealed about them (his father, his brother, and his mother and about himself and his family) in the Quran; he explained and expounded upon each point. He did not leave out a single thing that the Messenger of Allah, Allah's greetings and peace be upon him and his family, said about his father, his brother, and his mother and about himself and his family; he narrated each of the traditions.

And for every point that he mentioned, those present who were Companions of the Prophet said, "By Allah, yes! O, Lord, (we swear) it is just as Husayn says it is. We heard these things from the Messenger of Allah; we were present and witnessed these things." And each of those who knew the companions said, "O, Lord, (we swear that) Companions of the Prophet, ones in whom we had confidence and trust had said the same thing to us."

And Husayn ibn 'Ali said: I swear you by Allah to report this matter to those individuals in whose persons and religion you trust.

Sulaym said: One of the issues that Husayn, peace be upon him, called to their minds, presented evidence, and took testimony about was:

By Allah, I ask you: Do you know that 'Ali ibn Abi Talib peace be upon him, was the brother of the Messenger of Allah, Allah's greetings and salutations be upon him and his family? Do you know that when the Messenger of Allah formed the Brotherhood Pact, he made 'Ali ibn Abu Talib his brother, and said to him: 'You are my brother and I am your brother in this life and the next'? They said, "By Allah, yes!"

By Allah, I ask you: Do you know that the Messenger of Allah, Allah's greetings and salutations be upon him and his family, on the day of Ghadir Khum, installed him (the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, my father) as successor, and bestowed upon him the title of wilayat. And he said, 'All those present are required to report this to those who are absent?' They said, "By Allah, yes!"

By Allah I ask you: Do you know that the Messenger of Allah, Allah's greetings and salutations be upon him and his family, in the final speech that he gave said, 'I am leaving two precious and valuable things amongst you. One is the book of Allah and the other is my family. Hold on to both of these and you will not go astray?!' They answered, 'By Allah, this is true!'

That Eminent one adjured them and took their oaths on other points, and then concluded:

By Allah, I ask you: Is there anyone here who has heard the Prophet of Allah say: 'Who ever thinks that he likes me, and feels hatred toward 'Ali, is lying! It is impossible to like me and to feel hatred toward 'Ali.' Then one of those present said to the Messenger of Allah: 'Oh, Messenger of Allah, how are these two inextricably related?'

The Messenger of Allah answered: 'Because 'Ali is from me, and I am from 'Ali. Whoever loves 'Ali loves me, and whoever loves me, loves Allah. And whoever hates 'Ali, hates me, and whosoever hates me, hates Allah.'

They all said, 'By Allah, yes, we heard that!' And then, as Husayn had taken an oath from them to go to their cities and tell what they had heard to all trustworthy persons, they dispersed.

The speech of that Eminent one in Mecca Mukarramah when he was setting off to Karbala. It was reported that when the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, peace be upon him, decided to set out for Iraq, he delivered a speech in Mecca Mukarramah, saying thus:

All Praise belongs to Allah. Whatever Allah wants will occur. There is no strength and no power except in Allah. Greetings upon his Messenger.

For the children of Adam (the human race), death is like a necklace that has been hung and secured around the neck of a young girl.

How I long to meet with those of my family who have died and gone before me, just as Jacob longed to see Joseph!

A place has been specified and chosen for me, upon which my body must fall; I must reach that place. It is as though I can see the wolves of the deserts between Nawawees and Karbala tearing me apart piece by piece, filling their empty stomachs and their hungry pouches to the brim with me.

There is nowhere to escape from the day that the pen of Destiny has inscribed; what satisfies Allah is what satisfies us, the Ahl Bait. We are patient, persevering in the face of His trials and tribulations; and He will fully and completely bestow the blessings and reward of the patient upon us.

The family of the Messenger of Allah cannot be separated from him, just as the main string of a fabric is interwoven with the fabric itself.

And they will join round him in the high heaven; seeing them will bring a sparkle to his eyes. The promise that Allah made to the Messenger of Allah regarding his family will be fulfilled .

Thus, whoever is amongst us, and is ready to sacrifice his life, and give up his lifeblood, and has prepared his soul to meet Allah; travel, migrate with us as I am planning to move on in the morning, may Allah, the Exalted, so will.

And when that Eminent one began to move his encampment toward Kufa, Farazdaq ibn Ghalib, who was one of the well known poets of that time encountered that Eminent one along the way. And when he met him, he said:

O son of the Messenger of Allah! How can you trust the Kufans when they are the ones that have killed

your cousin Muslim ibn Aqil and his followers!

That Eminent one sought Allah's forgiveness for Muslim and said,

Muslim set off to achieve Allah's contentment and satisfaction. He did his duty; our duty is yet upon us.

And that Eminent one recited this poem:

And if it is so that the mundane world is considered valuable;

Then the next life, the home of blessings and divine rewards, is nobler and more exalted.

And if it is such that the human body was created and willed to (eventually) die

Then being killed by the sword in the way of Allah is the best (way to die).

And if it is such that the sustenance of creature is apportioned in specific amounts;

Then the greater goodness and beauty lies in being less greedy in pursuing one's livelihood.

And if it is such that the outcome of gathering possessions is to finally leave them behind

Then what is the value or benefit of clinging to something that must be left behind.

And many of those who wrote about Karbala, such as Muhaddeth Qomi in *Nafs Al Mamhoom*: and Shaykh Sulaiman Qandoozi in *Yanabee' Muwaddeh* said that when that Eminent one recited his battle songs on the day of Ashura, and was striking blows with his sword, he also recited this poem.

Farazdaq said: I had decided against staying in Kufa and was heading back when Husayn, peace be upon him, met up with me. He said, "Oh, Abu Faros! What news do you have of the situation you have just left?"

I said: " Shall I tell you the truth?!" He said, "Yes, I want the truth!"

I said: "The hearts of all the Kufans are with you, but their swords are all in the service of the Ummayeds! Support and help is from Allah!"

He replied:

Yes, this is something you said out of honesty and truthfulness. People are all the slaves and servants of worldly wealth. Their claims of religiosity are nothing more than baseless, empty words flowing from their tongues. They care for their religion only inasmuch as it will provide them with an abundant livelihood. When they are faced with trials and tests, it becomes obvious that only a few are really religious.

When Hurr ibn Yazid ar-Ri'ahi steadfastly prevented that Eminent one from either traveling toward Kufa

or returning to Medina, that Eminent one alighted at Dhi Hasam, and according to the tradition from Tabari in Tarikh, Agabat ibn Al 'Eezar related that the following took place:

Imam Husayn peace be upon him praised and glorified Allah and then said:

With your own eyes and ears you are witnessing this duress and calamity which has befallen me. The world and its events have been turned upside down, showing its despicable, ugly face. The world is rushing along a path which leaves all goodness behind. The little goodness that remains in this world is like the moisture that clings to the bottom of any emptied container. This is a worthless life, like a pasture which has been plowed, turned upside down and ruined.

Don't you see that no one is doing what is right; and no one is preventing false deeds? In such a situation the believer who seeks the Truth, must certainly long to see Allah, and to meet the Truth.

I see death as nothing but bliss and good fortune; and life with tyrants nothing but gloom and weariness.

In the book, Tuhaf Al 'Uqul, these lines followed the above speech:

People are the servants of this mundane world. Their religion is like nothing more than saliva which runs off their tongues. As long as their livelihood is abundant, they are committed and protect their religion; but when they are tested by difficulties and problems the truly religious are reduced to only a small number.

At this point Zuhair ibn Alqain and Nafe' ibn Hilal and Burair ibn Khusair , stood up one by one and announced their acceptance of and commitment to that Eminent one.

Hurr ibn Yazid ar-Ri'ahi accompanied that Eminent one and did not separate his route from him, saying: Oh Husayn: By God, I swear that if you fight, you will be killed!

That Eminent one, in answer to Hurr, said: "Are you trying to frighten me with death? Do you think that if you kill me, all your problems will be solved?"

I answer you in the words of our (religious) brother from Ows who wanted to go to aid the Prophet of Allah, Allah's greetings and salutations be upon him and his family.

His cousin wanted to warn him, asking: 'Where are you going?' You will be surely be killed!'

The Ows man answered:

'I surely will go; death holds no shame for a chivalrous person;

When his actions are for the sake of what is right, and he fights in submission to God and for His pleasure.

By laying down my life and soul I will be joined with the righteous;

I will stand apart from the accursed and despicable.

I will take the path of enmity and opposition to sinners and the guilty.

If I remain alive, I will have no regrets, if I die, no one will reproach me.

What a disgrace it is for you to be alive and be oppressed and encroached upon and not be able to defend your own rights!

And maybe these pearls of wisdom that the contemporary scholar Tufiq Abu 'Elm noted in his book "Ahl Bait", were the answer the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs gave at that point to Hurr ibn Yazid ar-Ri'ahi; where he said:

Being afraid of death is below me. How easy and simple is death on the way of honor and of resurrecting the Truth!

Death in the way of honor is nothing but eternal life.

Living a life of lowliness is nothing more than a death without life.

Are you trying to frighten me by death? Never! You are off the mark!

You are deluded by useless ideas!

I am not one to be afraid of death. My spirit and soul is greater than that; and my sense of purpose and fortitude is loftier than to allow me to tolerate tyranny and oppression out of a fear of death. The most you can do is kill me!

Good for those who are killed in Allah's way! But you have no power to destroy my glory, or to dissolve my honor, dignity and nobleness. Thus, I have nothing to fear from being killed.

The Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, Husayn ibn 'Ali, peace be upon him, is famous for this statement:

Death with honor is better than life with lowliness.

And, in fact, this couplet was one of his battle cries when attacking the enemy:

Death is better than being afflicted with shame and dishonor. And dishonor is better than entering hellfire.⁵

Tabari is reported to say that Abu Mekhnaf reported from 'Abat ibn Abi Al 'Eezar that Husayn peace be upon him addressed his companions and those of Hurr at "Baida" with this speech:

He praised Allah and Glorified him and then said:

O people, The Messenger of Allah, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him and his family said: Whoever sees a tyrannical leader, one who makes what Allah has forbidden permissible; and who breaks the commitment with Allah, acting contrary to the precedent and norms of the Messenger of Allah, Allah's greetings and salutations be upon him and his family; (a tyrant) who in the midst of servants of Allah sins and oppresses. Whoever sees all this and chooses to remain silent, and does not criticize him through word or deed, and does not refute or censure, then Allah has made it mandatory upon Himself to take that person to the same place that He takes the oppressive leader (hell).

Be aware that the tyrannical and oppressive rulers, the Umayyad clan, are in constant obedience to the Devil; they consider it their duty to obey him. They have abandoned obedience to the Merciful Lord; they openly exhibit heinous and corrupt actions. They have violated and vacated all the limits that Allah set up. They consider all the spoils of war, and all the wealth of the Muslim treasury, to belong to them personally. They take what Allah has forbidden to be permissible; and they consider what Allah has permitted to be forbidden.

I am more worthy than anyone else (in preventing this matter and in forbidding it, and in taking the helm of the matters of the Muslims, so that the rules of the Quran and the Messenger of Allah will be acted upon)

Your letters have reached me! And your messengers have come to me saying that you have paid allegiance to me and that you would not turn me over to the enemy, abandoning me without support, throwing me into difficulties and misfortune.

If you stand firm in your allegiance now, this is the way of growth and blessings.

I am Husayn the son of 'Ali, I am the son of Fatima, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, Allah's greetings and salutations be upon him.

My self, my life, is one with yours; my family and people are as one with yours. (In terms of the way we live, I took no advantage over you; and I have not set aside any wealth or worldly status exclusively for myself! My family and I are no different from you and your families in this respect.)

However, I am your model and exemplar (whom you must follow; and who you must consider as your leader and Imam! And you have to imitate and follow me in foregoing a luxurious life, and abandoning all wastefulness, and never touching the spoils of war and public wealth.)

And if you do not and instead if you break your promise and remove the yoke of allegiance from your shoulders, I swear by my own soul that such an action is nothing new or unusual for you!

You have treated my father, to my brother, and my cousin Muslim ibn Aqil the same way

Deceived and duped is the person who would fall for your enticement and advances.

You have turned away from what would benefit you, and overturned your own good fortune! You've destroyed and thrown away that (guidance and goodness) which was allotted to you.

And know this: Whoever breaks his oath, will bring the serious consequences of breaking an oath upon himself.

Of course Allah will soon make us free of all need of you, Greetings, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you!

When the Eminent Lord of the martyrs, peace be upon him, entered Karbala, he asked for pen and ink and inscribed something similar to the speech he delivered above for the nobles and distinguished persons of Kufa, the ones who seemed to be on the same path as that Eminent one.

He put his noble seal on the end of the letter, rolled it up into a scroll, and gave it to Qays ibn Mus'har Saydavi to take to Kufa.

Near sunset on Tasua, the ninth of Muharram, the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, peace be upon him, gathered his companions. The Eminent 'Ali ibn Husayn, Zain ul Abideen, peace be upon him, said, "At that time I was ill, but I got near enough to hear what he was saying to them. I heard my father speak thus to his companions.

I praise Allah, with the best of all praises; and I praise him in times of happiness as well as in times of trial.

O Allah! I truly praise and thank you for ennobling us with the Prophecy! And for teaching us the Quran! And for making us experts, knowledgeable in religion!

Now, truly I know of companions better or more loyal than mine, and no family that is more beneficent or closer to each other than mine; therefore, Allah, on my behalf, give them the best possible rewards.

Be informed that I have given you all my permission to leave. So leave, all of you! I have released you from your oath of allegiance to me and I have no claim or right upon you.

The night has come now and will give you cover; ride it like a fast camel; and disperse!

His brothers and children, and the sons of his brother and the sons of Abdullah ibn Jafar and Muslim bin Ausjeh, and Zuhair ibn Al Qayn and a group of others arose. All of them pleaded with him: 'May we never remain alive after you! May Allah not keep us alive after you! Never, never, will we do such a thing; rather we wish we had several lives and we could sacrifice them all for you!'

From the Eminent Sayyid Sajeden and Zayn ul Abedeen, peace be upon him, it is reported that:

When morning came and the soldiers approached Husayn, peace be upon him, he raised his hands and said:

O, Allah, I entreat thee! You are my support, and the one upon whom I rely In every sorrow and sadness; you are my hope through all my troubles and difficulties; you are my power and certainty in everything that happens to me and whatever befalls me.

In so many difficulties and sorrows--matters which the heart cannot deal with, in which and plans and strategies fall short in solving, in which friends desert the person and enemies unleash their cruel tongues—I have unburdened myself upon you, and brought my greivances before you. This is because I lean on and am inclined toward you; I tend toward no other! Then, Allah, you did away with all of these and took care of my affairs completely!

Thus, oh my Lord! You are the Waliy of all good things! And the holder of all Goodness; and the destination of all longing!

Then that Eminent once called for his horse and mounted it. In a voice so loud that all could hear, he delivered this address:

O, people! Hear what I have to say. Don't rush into things before I have given you that counsel that is your right to hear from me, and before I explain the reason I set out from Mecca toward you!

Then, if you act in fairness and accept my explanation, it will be to your benefit; the door to killing me and to fighting against me will be shut.

And, if you don't accept my explanation and you don't consider my evidence sufficient, then take a vote amongst yourselves and your associates and do not allow your actions and affairs to remain from you. Advance against me without delay; finish what you have set out to do once and for all!

Know that it is Allah, the one who sent the Noble Quran, Who has power over me and Who is my wali. He holds the reins of the affairs of the righteous

Then, Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, praised Allah and glorified him, and sent greetings upon the Messenger. No speaker before him or since him ever expressed any matter with such eloquence.

Following this, he said, "First, consider my lineage and see who I am! Then, review and criticize your own thoughts ideas!

Consider whether killing me the right thing for you to do? Are you permitted to violate my sanctity?

Am I not the son of the daughter of your Prophet? Am I not the son of the executor of your messenger's affairs, who was also his cousin, the first believer, the first to acknowledge the Messenger of Allah and testify to what was sent down to him from Allah?

Wasn't Hamza, the lord of the martyrs, my father's uncle?

Wasn't Ja'far, who soars through the heavens on his own two wings, my uncle?

Haven't you heard what the Messenger of Allah said about my brother and me, when he said: "These two are the lords and chiefs of the youths of paradise"?

Thus, if you confirm what I'm saying, and know that I'm speaking the truth--and I swear to Allah that from the time I heard that Allah considered a liar to be his hated enemy, I have never told a lie--(then change your mind about killing me)!

And, if you don't believe me! And you deny these words, right now there are those among you who can inform you! Ask Jaber ibn Abdullah Ansari and Abu Said Khudri and Sahl ibn Sa'd Sa'idi and Zaid ibn Arqam and Anis ibn Malik! They will inform you that the Messenger of Allah did speak thus about me and my brother.

Doesn't this mean enough to you to prevent you from spilling my blood?"

Shimr said: The person who gets your meaning, worships Allah one-sidedly.

Habib ibn Mathaher responded to Shimr: I swear to God that I see that you worship Allah from 70 angles (of doubt and skepticism). Allah has put a seal upon your heart (and it can no longer understand or comprehend anything).

The Eminent Lord of the Martyrs said: "Do you even doubt this? Do you even doubt that I am the son of the daughter of the Messenger?!"

I swear to Allah, from the East and West of the world, there is no son of the daughter of the Prophet except for me, not amongst you, and not amongst any others!

Woe be upon you! Have I killed one of you that you are now seeking retribution? Or have I usurped your property? Or have I wounded you that you are now coming to get your vengeance?!

Not a single person answered. That Eminent one cried out:

O Shabath ibn Rib'ey, and O, Hajjar ibn Abjor and O Qais ibn Ash'ath and O Yazid ibn Hareth--didn't you write letters to me saying: 'The fruit is ripe on the trees! And the ground has grown green! If you come to us, you will be coming to soldiers ready and prepared, under your command.?'

Qais ibn Ashath said: I don't know what you are saying. Yield the rule of your cousin (Yazid), they want nothing for you other than what you want for yourself!

At that point, the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, peace be upon him said: No! I swear to God! I will not disgrace myself, like a shameful person, and turn myself over to you! And like a slave, take the yoke of oppression and tyranny on my shoulders!

Then he said! O servants of Allah, I take refuge in my Lord and in yours that you should stone me! I take refuge in my Lord and in yours from every arrogant person who does not believe in the Day of

Accounting and the Day of Retribution.”

Ibn Tawus has reported this eloquent speech from the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, peace be upon him on the Day of Ashura in this way:

When the soldiers of ‘Umar ibn S’ad got onto their mounts and readied themselves for battle with the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs peace be upon him, the Eminent one sent Burair ibn Khudhair to preach to the soldiers.

No matter how much Burair advised them, they didn’t listen, as much as he reprimanded and reproached them, they gained nothing from it.

At that point the Eminent Imam Husayn himself, peace be upon him, mounted his camel—and some say that he mounted his horse. He asked them to be silent, and when they were quiet (he began his speech).

He praised and glorified Allah; glorifying all the things that showed sources of the greatness of Majesty of the Eminent Truth (Allah). He sent his salutations to Muhammad and the angels and prophets and messengers of Allah, going to great length to express these matters fully and completely in his speech.

Then he said: Oh, you who are gathered here! Loss and annihilation be upon you! May poverty, misery, and sorrow be your lot as well! You invited me to come to your rescue with such excitement and frenzy and when we rushed to your rescue all the swords which belonged to us and which we placed in your hands have been unsheathed and drawn against us.

And that same fire and fury which had been kindled against my enemy and yours, has now been flamed against me. You have joined sides with your enemies, in order to beat down and your friends. Even though those enemies have not established justice amongst you, and you have no hope to see any good come from them. Thus: May calamities and ignominy besiege you!

Why didn’t you let me be, while the swords were still in their sheaths, and the hearts were calm, and the decision to kill me had not yet been firmly made?! Rather like a swarm of locusts you are flying toward sedition and insurrection! And you have come together like a swarm of moths around the fire of discord.

So, may devastation and annihilation come upon you, oh servants of the masses, you who have been rejected and distanced from groups and communities, you who have rejected the book of Allah, you who have distorted the words of Allah, you the clan that commits and creates sin, you who are the breath and spittle of the Devil, you, who extinguish the customs and norms of the Lord!

Do you help and aid this group? And you leave me abandoned and alone and afflicted with this disaster?

Yes, I swear to Allah, that this deception, this ruse is not without precedent for you! Your bases and roots are bound and interwoven in such a deception! And your offshoots and branches have taken

strength and nourishment from it!

Consequently, you are the most putrid fruit of this tree, which will choke the throat of its owners and overseers like thorns and bones stuck in the throat. But in the mouth of the usurpers and interlopers, it will be a luscious morsel!

Know that this illegitimately conceived man: Born from adultery, and son of one born of adultery, ('Obaidullah ibn Ziyad) has affixed us between two very firm alternatives: Fighting by the sword and drinking the nectar of martyrdom, or submitting ourselves to lowliness and dishonor.

Far be it from me to be dishonored!

Neither Allah, not the Prophet and the believers, nor the pure laps in which we were raised, nor the brave and chivalrous ones would ever find it acceptable for us to submit to oppression and tyranny. None of these would approve should we choose obedience to the wicked and low over the battleground of the noble.

Be aware that I am prepared to fight alongside of this small group who are with me, even though they be only a handful and there are no others to help or support.

At this point that Eminent one added quoted several verses from the poem of Farwat ibn Musaik Moradi to his speech, applying them to this situation.

1. If we overcome and victoriously rout the enemy, this is nothing new for us; From the earliest times this was our way. And if we are overcome then we are never defeated (because our will and intention were good and pious, and such values can never be defeated).
2. It is not in our nature to be frightened by death; (accordingly, we did not come to fight because we love our own lives; rather because we do not want the foul enemy to encompass us, this is why we came to the battle; because it is out of the question that he could overcome us while we are still alive) but his rule depends on our death.
3. If death should turn from one group of people; without a doubt it will alight on another group; the human being can never escape death.
4. This same death did away with the great and noble ones of our clan; just as it did away with former tribes and clans.
5. If the kings and rulers of this world had lived forever, then we too could have lived here eternally; if the great ones had lived on, we too could have remained; but nothing remains alive in this world forever.
6. Thus tell those who are jeering at us; "Hey, wake up!" (They should) be aware that they too will soon meet death!

After this recitation, that Eminent one continued his speech in this way:

And I swear to Allah that after my martyrdom occurs, you will never reach what you have set your hearts on! And you will not be in this world longer than it takes to mount a horse, when suddenly the wheel of fate will pull you under its grindstone; will catch you in its turning, and throw you into anxiety and distress!

This is a promise that my father made to me, on behalf of my grandfather.

Now, vote amongst yourselves and your companions! And, think and decide as a group so that you see clearly what you are about to do, lest you regret your actions and be afflicted with sadness, sorrow, and regret!

Then, after you've deliberated on this without hurry and haste, then attack me and finish me off without any delay!

I rely upon Allah, who is my Lord and your Lord. No living thing moves on the earth, whose destiny is not under his Power; and surely, my Lord is on the Straight and blessed Path.

Oh, Lord. Withhold the drops of rain in the heavens from this people! Afflict them with starvation and famine like the people in the time of Joseph were afflicted. Make give a youth from the Thagaf tribe power over them so they drink a bitter poisoned draft. Because they have denied us and belied us; and they have abandoned us and rejected us.

You are our Lord! We rely upon you, we turn to you, and all things will return to you.

In the book "Kashf Alghommah", it is reported from the book Al Futuh, that when the soldiers of ibn Ziyad encircled that Eminent one and prevented him from reaching water and killed all his companions, they shot an arrow at his infant son and killed him.

That Eminent one smeared himself with his son's blood, used a sword to dig a hole, and buried him. Then he faced the soldiers and attacked them, with this as his battle cry:

1. This group have committed treason and have become infidels; and for a long while they have turned away from the blessings of Allah, the Lord of the jinn and of the human being.
2. This is the group that killed 'Ali ibn Abu Talib, and they also killed his son Hasan, who on both his mother and his father's side was noble and great.
3. In spitefulness and malice of heart they said: Let us all join together so that we may now strike against Husayn
4. O my people, come to my aid! I cry out for justice against these despicable and low people who have instigated the crowds to make war upon the people of the haramain (Mecca and Medina).

5. And then they all set off, and for the sake of pleasing those two heretic apostates (Yazid and Ubaidullah ibn Ziyad) appealing to each other to annihilate and do away with me.
6. They did not fear God in spilling my blood to appease Ubaidullah ibn Ziad, the son of two infidels.
7. Ibn Sa'd, has forcibly turned upon me, attacking me with troops as plentiful as the drops of rain, making me the target of his arrows.
8. Their grudge against me, and desire to hold power over me, is not on account of any crime or offense that I committed, but only because I am ennobled by those two brilliant, shining stars:
9. One of those is 'Ali ibn Abu Talib who is the best person on the earth after the Prophet; and the other is the Messenger of Allah, whose paternal and maternal ancestors were both Quraishi.
10. My father is the one who was chosen and approved by Allah, above all others, and after that, my mother; thus I am the offspring of the two most preferred and accepted people of all!
11. I am silver who was derived from gold; silver, the son of two golden ones.
12. Who, among all creatures, has a grandfather like I have? Who has a mentor and teacher such as my father 'Ali? Thus, I am the offspring of two shining moons.
13. Fatimah Zahra is my mother; and my father is the one who crushed and trounced the forces of disbelief on the day of the battle of Badr and in the skirmish at Hunain.
14. As for my father, there is the episode at Uhud, in which he routed the evil, infidel troops, curing the sadness and sorrow in the believers' hearts.
15. Another tale about him relates to the battle of Ahzab and the conquest of Mecca. In that difficult time when death rained down upon the Muslims and the people of two qiblas (the early Muslims), through his righteous footsteps in battle, death and loss were averted for the Muslim, and they were victorious.
16. My father did these things on Allah's way, and now look what this ill-natured and ill-behaved community is doing with the descendent of those two pure ones?
17. Descended on one side from the good and virtuous Messenger Muhammad Mustafa and descended on the other side from 'Ali ibn Abu Taleb who, in the midst of two yellow faced armies his face always shined as red as a rose.

Abdullah ibn Ammar ibn Yaghuth said: I never saw anyone who was overtaken and attacked by such a large group, whose children, family, and companions were all killed, and yet whose heart was firmer, who was more confident, and whose step was determined than Husayn ibn 'Ali; Whenever he attacked the enemy troops all the men and soldiers fled from in front of him and not a single one remained.

'Umar ibn Sa'd shouted out to his soldiers: This is the son of Anzai Batin ('Ali ibn Abu Talib)! This is the son of the killer of Arabs. Surround him and attack him from all sides! Four thousand archers surrounded him, coming between him and the tents of his women's quarters.

The Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, peace be upon him, shouted:

Oh, you who belong to the party of Abu Sufian, and are his followers! If you have no religion, and your way is such that you don't even believe in the return (in returning to God after death)! Then be a free person in this life! And if you consider yourselves to be Arabs, then return to your own standards and avoid such cowardly actions, lacking in chivalry.

Shimr called him and said, "What are you saying, o son of Fatima?!"

That Eminent one replied: I am the one you are at war with! You have nothing against the women. As long as I live, prevent these despicable, oppressive soldiers from invading and violating the women's quarters. He said: Leave the women's quarters alone and come after me myself! The time of my martyrdom is approaching and its signs are appearing."

Shimr said: "I accept this request!" Then all the troops turned upon that Eminent one. The fighting became intense and thirst bore down upon that Eminent one.

He returned to his camp, to bid farewell once again; and said goodbye to those in the women's quarters; and then he returned to the midst of the confrontation, saying repeatedly:

There is no movement and no change, and no power and no strength except in Allah, glorified be His name

And Abu Al Hutoof Ju'fi shot an arrow into the blessed forehead of that Eminent one. He pulled out the arrow and blood flowed down his face. He said:

Oh Lord, you are witness to my state, brought on by these disobedient servants of yours! Oh Lord, take each into account, one by one! And destroy each and every one of them. Let not one of them remain on the earth! And never, ever, forgive them!

Then, with a loud voice he shouted:

O, you vile people! You have offended and disobeyed Muhammad through your treatment of his descendant!

Be aware that after me, you will not kill anyone about whose killing you need to be so worried and concerned! After this, any killing will be easy and simple.

And I swear to God that I have hope in my Lord that He will give me the honor of martyrdom! And that He will take my revenge upon you, from a direction you don't even know of

Haseen said: On, Son of Fatima! In what form will Allah get your vengeance from us?

The Eminent one said: 'Difficulties, calamities, and adversities will afflict you, until you shed each other's blood; and then surges of torment and punishment will overtake you like the waves of the ocean

At that time, such weakness caused from the large amount of wounds and bloodshed overtook that Eminent one that he stood still, resting a moment. Just then someone threw a stone at his forehead and blood poured down his face. As he was trying to wipe the blood from his eyes with his clothes, another person took aim at his blessed heart with a three pronged arrow;

The son of the Messenger of Allah said to Allah:

In the Name of Allah, I swear by Allah Himself, and by the community and the religion of the Messenger of Allah (this martyrdom is my destined sustenance). He lifted his head toward the sky and said: O my Lord! You know that this people are killing a man like no other, the only son of the Messenger on earth.

He took his hand and pulled out the arrow from his back, blood gushing from the wound as if from a spout.

The Eminent one put his hand under this blood. When it was full, he threw the blood toward the sky, saying:

What is happening to me, because it happens before the eyes of Allah, is easy, is nothing.

And not one drop of that blood spilled on the earth.

Once again, he put his hand under the flow of blood. When it was full he smeared and bloodied his noble face, head, and beard saying,

I will remain like this until I meet Allah and my grandfather, the Messenger of Allah

So much blood had left his blessed body that there was no strength left in it. He sat on the ground, holding up his head with difficulty. As he was in that condition, Malik bin Busr came and insulted him, striking that Eminent one on the head with his sword.

His burnus, (the tall hat which was on that Eminent one's head) filled with blood. The Eminent one threw his burnus aside and wrapped a turban (or some say a handkerchief) around his qalansuwa which was a regular cap.

Zor'eh ibn Shareek struck a blow to that Eminent one's left shoulder. Haseen shot an arrow to that Eminent one's throat; while another person struck that Eminent one's blessed neck. Senan ibn Unas struck a lance into his collar bone, then struck that Eminent one in the chest and pierced that Eminent one's throat with an arrow. Salih ibn Wahab shot an arrow into his side.

Hilal ibn Nafe' said: I was standing near Husayn when he died; I swear to God, that never in my life did I see a person killed whose entire body was covered in blood, and yet had such a radiant and glorious countenance as Husayn did. I swear to God that the radiance of Husayn's face stopped me from even thinking of killing him!

And in that very difficult and intense situation, he lifted his eyes to the heavens; and, praying to the Eminent Lord of Majesty said:

I patiently endure what you have decreed and destined, your commands that are being carried out upon me, O my Lord! There is nothing to be worshipped other than you, O Haven of those who see refuge!

According to the report attributed to Imam Baqer peace be upon him, that Eminent one's horse let out a loud whinny, bloodied his head in that Eminent one's blood, and smelled it, and said:

'Help and rescue from a community that killed the son of the daughter of its Messenger!' and turned toward the camp where the women were quartered.

Umm Kulthum cried out:

Alas! Oh Muhammad! Oh father! Oh 'Ali! Oh Ja'far! Oh Hamza!

This is Husayn who has fallen on the parched plains of Karbala!

Zaynab cried out:

Alas, Oh brother! Oh lord and chief! Oh people of the house (of Muhammad)!

Oh, that the sky had collapsed and stuck to the earth; Oh, that the mountains had crumbled and filled the deserts.

She approached her brother, and she saw that 'Umar bin Sa'd with a group of his followers were nearing that Eminent one, and that her brother Husayn was dying.

She shouted: O 'Umar ibn Sa'd! Do they kill Aba Abdillah while you look on?

'Umar turned around and tears were streaming onto his beard.

Zaynab shouted: 'Woe be upon you! Is there not a Muslim among you?'

No one answered her; 'Umar ibn Sa'd shouted: "Dismount and relive Husayn at ease (finish him off)."

Shimr rushed forward, struck that Eminent one with his foot, and sat on his chest. He and struck 12 blows of his sword to that Eminent one. And then he took hold of his beard, and cut that Eminent one's head off.

Many beautiful and moving poems and narrations have been written about this event. One is poem by Hujjatul Islam Nayyer Tabrizi describing the reaction of each living thing, in its own way, to the martyrdom of Husayn. Another is a poem by Ayatullah Sha'rani describe the Martyrdom of the great leader in Dam' Sujoom . 6

(The following are the concluding lines, composed by Allameh Sayyid Muhammad–Husain Husaini–Tehrani, expressing his gratitude to Allah for being able to complete this work, and expressing his deep love and humility toward Imam Husain, the Lord of the Martyrs, peace be upon him.)

All praise and gratitude are due to Allah for the writing of this manuscript, which took one week, inscribed during the mourning period of that Eminent one, in the ten days of Ashura, 1402 H.Q., and was finished two hours and fifteen minutes passed into the evening of the ninth of Muharram, known as Tasua Husayn.

Through His grace and munificence, for surely He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Oh Lord, gather us with Husain on the Judgment Day and those who seek martyrdom along with him,
Oh Lord, accept our prayer.

The congregation of familiarity is the two worlds

But the burning candle that lights the hearts is Husain, and nothing else.

The one who composed this pure pearls of verse

Is dirt under the path of Husain, and nothing more.

Written through the negligent, mortal, fallible hand of the lowly humble lover, Sayyid Muhammad Husain Al Husaini Al Tehrani in the pure city, the holy Mashhad Razavi⁷

With honor and praise to the one who purified this city (Imam Ridha', peace be upon him), by the position and high degree of Muhammad and his family, the good, the munificent ones.

1. This comment was written by the late Allameh Husaini–Tehrani himself, and is his expression of piety and humility toward Allah.

2. This speech of that Eminent one, has been presented in “Mulhagati Ehqaaq AlHaq”, Vol. 112, p.594; and by Allameh Shahirbeh ibn Hasniwieh in “Dorri Bahri Al Munaqib”, p. 128, in a writing by the Eminent Sadiq (peace be upon him), it was reported that: “Husain ibn ‘Ali (peace be upon him) came out to give a speech to his companions, and spoke thusly.

3. The content of this paragraph was taken from Haji Noori in “Mustandark Al Wasael” , Vol. 2, p, 396, as reported in the book “Enjoining the good and forbidding evil”, Hadith 6, in “Kashf Al Ghammeh”.

4. This paragraph can be found in “Kashf Al Ghammeh” and with slight variations in “Bahar Al Anwar” and in “Mustadrak”

5. Note: In other words, what you are ordering me to do, submit to the rule of Yazid and ‘Obaidullah ibn Ziyad, would be a dishonor for me. And for me, death is better than dishonor. Now, you are not quitting this battle, and you consider that to be a dishonor. But you are making a mistake. It would be better to quit, and to take on such a dishonor as quitting a battle,

than to be entered into the hellfire.

The second line of this couplet refers to an incident which involved ‘Umar. ‘Umar the accursed, the usurper of the rights of Imam ‘Ali, peace be upon him, was the same person who ordered the door of the home of Lady Fatima to be pushed open, thus crushing her between the door and the wall as she tried to protect herself from the gaze of her intruders, a blow which led to her death just months later. ‘Umar the accursed was dying, and the Eminent Amir ul Momineen, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib came to him, offering him a chance to repent for his deeds and thus save himself from the hellfire.

The Eminent Imam ‘Ali, peace be upon him, said to him, “Confess that you usurped the khilafat from me (stealing the right of the leadership of the Muslim nation).”

In response, ‘Umar the accursed said, “Such a confession would bring me low, and hellfire is better than being abased.” (I am satisfied to enter the hellfire rather than to make such a confession, which would make me abased.)

6. The reader is referred to the Persian language poems in the original text, which are beyond the capacity of this translator to render into English.

7. This also is a profound expression of humility written by Allameh Husaini–Tehrani himself.

Translator’s note

The following is a translation of the complete text of *Lamaat Al Husayn*, the Radiance of Husayn, quotes and sayings of the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, Husayn ibn ‘Ali, peace be upon them.

Please note that this is not referred to as a complete translation, for no translation may ever be able to completely convey an original text, with its nuances, metaphors, and special concepts and meanings. This is especially the case when the words are the words of an immaculate being, created by Allah the Almighty, to guide and conduct the human being along the path of righteousness, growth, and perfection. So that when the human being returns to the Creator, as we all will, that return has taken a Straight Path, not a deviant one, allowing the greatest opportunity for returning in a state that is pleasing to the Lord.

This translation would never have been assumed or undertaken were it not for the direct instructions of that blessed soul, the one who is dissolved in the Essence of Truth, Allameh Hajj Sayyid Muhammad–Husain Husain–Tehrani. Never would such a lowly person have attempted to scale such heights or to be so presumptuous as to present such words to others without such a directive.

That warrant guaranties not the flawlessness of the translation, but, if Allah so wills, the power of the blessed words contained in the original, and the strength of the pure intention of those who have followed and lived by these words, to transcend the language of the mind and tongue and to penetrate the heart of each and every human being.

Certain terms used in this text, such as *waliy* and *Imam*, have not been translated, as no one word can

do them justice. The reader is referred to the series *Imam Shinasi*, also written by Allameh Husaini-Tehrani to ponder the meanings of those terms. We pray that Allah will grant the acceptance for those volumes to undergo translation and be put in the hands and hearts of English speaking readers.

The term Eminent has been used for the honorific *Hazrat* used as a term of respect by Farsi speakers. Further, the Farsi poems in the original text, most notably the glorious verses composed by Allah Husaini-Tehrani himself which appear at the end of the text, were far beyond the ability of this translator to approach.

There is no Power and no Strength except in Allah, the Exalted the Mighty. We rely upon Him, and to Him is the return. We beg his forgiveness for the faults and shortcoming in this, and all our endeavors and ask that he deal with us through his Mercy and Beneficence.

Z.D.

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