

Chapter – 18

Imam Hussain

(626 - 680 AD)

Imam Hussein was born in Sha'ban, 4AH/626AD. His father is 'Ali Murtaza and mother is the Prophet's daughter Fatima az-Zahra. His name was given by the Noble Prophet. He was about eight years old when the Noble Prophet left this world. So Imam Hussein did not get much opportunity to grow under the guidance of the Noble Prophet. However, he was the beloved grandson of the Prophet. The Noble Prophet used to love him and his elder brother Hassan so much so that he used to visit the house of Fatima daily to see both of them. Usama bin Zaid has narrated that once I visited to the Noble Prophet and on reaching there I felt something is wrapped by the Prophet in his sheet. When I asked about it, he removed his sheet and underneath I found Hassan and Hussein. The Prophet said, *"They are both my boys and the children of my daughter."* Then he said, *"O my God! I love them both, so You also love them and their lovers."* (Sunan Tirmizi).

'Umar was also very kind to him. He loved those two brothers more than his own boys. So, once 'Abdullah, the son of 'Umar, asked him, *"You always preferred them than me, why?"* 'Umar said: *"Tell me, is your grandfather like his grandfather? Is your mother like his mother? Is your grandmother like his grandmother? Is your uncle like their uncle? Is your aunt like their aunt? - Listen, their grandfather is Allah's Prophet. Their mother is the daughter of the Messenger of Allah. Their*

grandmother is the mother of all the believers. Their uncle is Ibrahim, the son of the Prophet. Their aunts are the Prophet's daughters."

After the four Caliphates, the rule of the family of Umayyad (*Banu Umaiya*) was established in 41AH/662AD. This rule of the Umayyad family continued for almost 88 years. During this period, 14 rulers had run the state. Amir Mu'awiya was the first ruler. After his death, his son, Yazid bin Mu'awiya took the throne in 60AH/679AD. This period becomes significant in the history because the tragic event of Karbala happened.

Imam Hussein, 'Abdullah bin Zubair, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and 'Abdul Rahman bin Abi Bakr did not recognize the succession of Yazid. Marwan bin Hakam advised Yazid that if Hussein and 'Abdullah bin Zubair are not satisfied with your allegiance, then kill them as they would be a constant threat to you. As a result, he sent his order from Iraq to Medina's Governor Walid bin 'Utba urging them to take allegiance.

Walid bin 'Utba summoned Imam Hussein and informed him of the death of Amir Mu'awiya and informed him about the orders of Yazid. Imam Hussein first condoled on the passing of Amir Mu'awiya then said that he will not go for any allegiance secretly. When you will gather common people for this work then I will come. Walid agreed and Imam returned. 'Abdullah bin Zubair asked for a day's rest, and then he left overnight for Makkah and went to the Haram and took refuge over there. Marwan yelled at Walid for leaving them both and said that you missed the opportunity, and now you will never be able to control them. On this, Walid replied that I can not involve myself for Hussein's blood.

Hussein not only opposed with the hereditary monarchy of Yazid, but he also gone into a big confusion due to the extraordinary inclination of the Shiites of Iraq towards him.

But at the same time he was realizing that it is no longer possible to live in Madinah without pledging allegiance. Therefore he also left for Makkah.

During the stay in Makkah, Hussein started receiving letters from the people of Kufa, inviting him to reach Kufa because all the Shiites were very much eager to transfer the Caliphate into Ahl-Bait. In its response he sent his cousin Muslim Bin Aqeel with his letter written in the name of the people of Kufa, in which he wrote: *"If you really agree with my Caliphate then Muslim Bin Aqeel will assess the real situation over there and then he will inform me accordingly, subsequently I may depart straight away"*.

Yazid's spies sent information to Damascus that Muslim bin Aqeel has arrived in Kufa and he is provoking people. For this, Yazid sent his order to the Chief of Basra, 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad that he should soon reach to Kufa and expel Muslim Bin Aqeel from there or kill him. Immediately after receiving this order, he reached to Kufa and in his first speech he told that he has been appointed as the ruler of Kufa as well. He then urged the people of Kufa to obey him and threatened them with severe consequences if they disobeyed.

When Muslim Bin Aqeel arrived at Kufa he first resided in Mukhtar's house, but after seeing the arrangements of 'Ubaidullah, he shifted to the house of Hani Bin 'Urwa for safety reasons. By that time, about 18,000 Shi'a people had pledged allegiance to Muslim bin Aqeel, so he wrote to Imam Hussein that the conditions are favorable here and he should come without delay.

Immediately after receiving this information, Hussein started preparing for his departure. Since the people of Makkah and also most of his relatives were fully aware of the treachery made by the people of Kufa in the past with Hazrat 'Ali and Hassan, so when they learned about the preparations of

Hussein, all the well-wishers stopped him. But he did not agree. 'Abdullah bin Abbas had even told him that if you want to go you may go, but do not take your family with you. The Divine Fate was something else, so all the goodwill efforts gone in vain. In the month of Zul Hajj, 60AH/680AD, Hussein finally left for Kufa along with his family.

Meanwhile, in Kufa, 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad summoned Hani and demanded that he should hand over Muslim Bin Aqeel to him. Hani's *ghairah* (*sense of honor*) didn't accept this and as a result 'Ubaidullah imprisoned him. The news spread in Kufa that Hani has been killed, so after listening to this, Muslim bin Aqeel left his place to fight 'Ubaidullah with his thousands of devotees. But in the end only 30 people remained to support him. He felt that now there is no escape from this situation so he made Muhammad bin 'Ash'ath responsible to inform Imam Hussein about his fate and urge them to return to Makkah from wherever the point they have arrived.

On the way, Imam Hussein got the information about the killing of Muslim bin Aqeel along with his message as well. It also created some variations in his intention, but at that time the brothers of Muslim bin Aqeel refused to return and insisted on the revenge, so he had to decide to go with them.

Hussein unloaded his caravan in Karbala on 2nd Muharram of 61AH/680AD. 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad sent 'Umar bin Sa'ad to Karbala with 4000 troops. On 7th Muharram, he guarded them and stopped the water of these people. Since he was a relative of Hussein therefore he tried to reconcile the war but failed. Hussein made arrangements for the protection of the tents of Ahl Bait, and in the morning he set up a short army of 72 devotees, of which 20 were from Banu Hashim. He gave 'Abbas the Flag to lead, and then the regular war started. Obviously there was no ratio between the troops. However, a handful of people fought with great bravery and became

martyrs one after another. In the end Imam Hussein became thirsty, so he proceeded to the water of river Furat, but the enemy kept shooting arrows from different sides on him and he fell down with severe wounds. Sunnan bin Anas separated Imam's head from his body. It was the 10th Muharram of 61AH/680AD. His sacred body was buried there but his head was sent to have a look for 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad.

It is said that this tragic event had occurred without the knowledge of Yazid and also without his orders. He had ordered to take allegiance only but not said to fight. So when he received this news, he cried. The whole family of Yazid was beloved of the Ahl Bait. So, as soon as the women entered to the house of Yazid there was a big hue and cry all over. There was mourning for three days. History of the murderers of Imam Hussein shows that none of them could escape the punishment of Allah. Some suffered so much that death was much easier than that.

It is a fact that even if Imam Hussein did not rise up against Yazid, it was not possible for Muslims to agree with Yazid's Caliphate and obey him sincerely. If Hussain would have the rule, all Muslims would have supported him wholeheartedly, and again there would have been the scene of unity that the world could see once again the period of the four famous Caliphates. Hussein left his place to reinstate the same objective For this principle he gave his life in the field of Karbala. It teaches us that we must sacrifice our lives for the sake of principle and for the unity and brotherhood.

قتل حسین اصل میں مرگ یزید ہے

اسلام زندہ ہوتا ہے ہر کربلا کے بعد

*{The martyr of Hussain is in fact the death of Yazid
Islam revives after every such event of Karbala}*