

(Along with Imam Husain (AS) from Medina to Karbala (2

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Salaam and welcome to the second part of our special feature titled "Along with Imam Husain (AS) from Medina to Karbala".

As we said yesterday in the first part, Imam Husain (AS) on leaving his hometown for Mecca asked his brother Mohammad Hanafiyah to keep him informed of the events in Medina during his absence. After settling down in Mecca, he sent a letter to Medina that read: In the Name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful. This contains that which has been willed by Husain Ibn Ali to his brother Mohammad Hanafiyah. Verily Husain (AS) bears witness that there is no Lord except Allah and bears witness that Mohammad (SAWA) is the Messenger of Allah, and righteously chosen by Him. And that paradise and hell are truth, and without doubt the Day of Resurrection will come. And Allah will raise all those in the graves." The Imam then expressed the aim of his uprising against the corrupt and illegal rule of Yazid Ibn Mu'awiyya, saying that he had not risen to spread unrest, evil or oppression, but for the betterment of the Ummah of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) in order to restore the originality of the religion of Islam, forbid evil, and enjoin good, as was the manner of the Prophet and Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (AS). The Imam then added that the one accepts the words of truth is surely guided by Allah, while the one who betrays or oppresses him, will be shunned and will be shown forbearance until eventual judgment by Allah the Best Judge. While leaving Medina, Imam Husain (AS) had recited ayah 21 of Surah Qesas pertaining to the fleeing of Prophet Moses from Egypt along with his determination to confront the tyrannical Pharaoh. The ayah says:

"So he left the city, fearful and vigilant. He said, 'My Lord! Deliver me from the wrongdoing lot."

As we said in yesterday's programme, on the 3rd of Sha'ban, that is 5 days later the Imam reached, and recited ayah 22 of Surah Qesas, which also pertains to Prophet Moses: "And when he turned his face toward Midian, he said, '**Maybe my Lord will show me the right way.**'"

By reciting these two ayahs of the same Surah, while leaving Medina, and on reaching Mecca, the Imam intended to say that like Moses, he had become a stranger in his own community because of the oppression of the regime and the indifference of the people of Medina, who despite his constant warnings of the dangers threatening the community had turned a deaf towards the grandson of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Imam Husain (AS), like Prophet Moses

was leaving his homeland and taking refuge in another city in pursuit of highest objectives for the sake of God.

According to the famous Iranian historian, Abu Ja'far at-Tabari, who lived over a millennium ago, after his arrival in Mecca, Imam Husain (AS) wrote a letter to the people of Basra as follows:

"Surely Allah has chosen Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) above all His creatures and granted him (the prestige of) Prophethood and chose him for the Apostleship. Then the Almighty took him towards His mercy (death) after the Prophet having guided all people towards the truth, and after having propagated the message for which he was sent. Thus we are his Ahl al-Bayt (Household), friends, vicegerents and his successors and are more worthy of succeeding him than anyone else. Then the nation has tried to precede us in this matter and we helplessly withdrew to avoid dissensions. We cherish peace although we consider ourselves more worthy and deserving of it (caliphate) than them. I have sent towards you my messenger and I invite you to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah (practice) of the Prophet, for I see that the Sunnah has been destroyed and innovations have crept up. Hence if you pay heed to my words and obey my command, then I shall guide you to the Righteous path. And peace upon you and Allah's blessings and mercy."

The letter was sent by the Imam through Sulayman Abu Razeen, who was detained by the tyrannical governor of Basra, Obaidollah ibn Ziyad and unjustly hanged.

As is clear from the contents of this letter, the Imam while inviting the people of Basra to rise up for the sake of truth informed them of the chaotic situation of the times and the stark deviation that had crept in. At the same time, he made them aware of the position of the Ahl al-Bayt, who along with the holy Qur'an, were specified by the Prophet as Thaqalayn or the Two Preciously Weighty things for guidance from going astray. Imam Husain (AS) explains that if earlier the Ahl al-Bayt had kept silent, it was just for the reason of preventing sedition and worsening the situation. But now the situation was different since Islam was exposed to distortion, and the behaviour and practice of the Prophet was being openly replaced by the pagan customs of the days of Jahiliyya. In such a situation, it is the duty of the faithful to stand up against the oppressors for the sake of Islam and humanitarian values