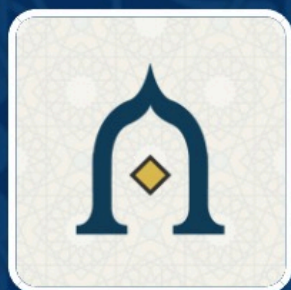


Four Pillars Of Sacrifice

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Syed W. H. Waiz

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Four Pillars of Sacrifice

Syed W. H. Waiz

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On the 10th of Muharram, 61 A. H. in the plain of Karbala, there took place a battle that was to decide the future of human rights for all time to come. In that battle, the supreme sacrifices of Husayn Ibn Ali and his handful of followers ensured the perpetuity and everlasting purity of Muhammad's teachings.

Although these sacrifices were made solely for the cause of Islam, yet the brave deeds of this faithful band of martyrs can serve as highly illuminating examples to all the world. Although these men, who laid down their lives in the services of Islam and for the sake of Truth and Righteousness were few in number, yet as men of character, honesty and undaunting courage they deserve honour and respect from every human being who values these qualities.

To quote Imam Husayn's own words in praise of his followers from the history of At-Tabari, "I have not known the followers of any other man to be more faithful than my own; and I have not known the relatives of any man to be more obedient than mine".

Never did any leader bestow such trust and confidence on his followers and never did the followers discharge their duty so faithfully.

The number of followers of Husayn is generally known to be seventy-two, out of which four persons have been selected whose biographies are recorded in this article. They are the heroes who played a prominent part in the offering of the Zuhr (midday) prayer on the *Ashura* day, at a time when the enemy were shooting thousands of arrows at the small band of peaceful worshippers.

The first of these four is Abu Thamama Amr Ibn Abdullah Sa'idi who proposed that the prayers be offered, at the exact time, the second, Habib Ibn Mazahir who retaliated at the impudence of Hasin Ibn Tamim when the respite for saying prayers was requested; the third, Said Ibn Abdullah Hanafi who laid down his life to protect the Imam during the prayers, and the fourth is Zuhair Ibn Qain who took his stand along with Said Ibn Abdullah, to protect the Imam during the prayers and later sacrificed his life, while fighting for the Truth.

1. Abu Thamama Amr Ibn Abdullah Sa'idi

His name was Amr (عمر), filionymic, Abu Thamama (تمام) and his father's name, Abdullah (عبداله). His home was in Kufa, and he was a respectable member of that branch of the Hamdan clan which was known as the Banu Sa'id (بنو سعد).

Even before the tragedy of Karbala in which his participation earned him immortality and everlasting fame, he was well known as a man of no mean accomplishments. A dauntless warrior, he was regarded among the best horsemen in Arabia. Not having seen the Prophet; he derived his knowledge of Islam directly from some of the companions, and hence he is classed among the Tabe'in, or followers of the companions.

He accompanied the Caliph Ali in all his campaigns and after that he was a disciple of Hasan and Husayn, till at last, he was killed at Karbala. He was a pious and devout Muslim, having imbibed the spirit of the faith from the Imam, and spent his life in striving for the cause of Islam.

At last, when Yazid became the pretender to the Caliphate, and the citizens of Kufa took counsel among themselves to invite Imam Husayn and stand by him, Abu Thamama was a leader of the Kufans, and when Muslim Ibn Aqil arrived in Kufa as the Imam's representative, Abu Thamama was among those who received and welcomed him at the city gates.

When the Kufans, responding to Muslim Ibn Aqil's preaching, began to raise funds to support the Imam, Abu Thamama who was an honest man, was entrusted with the safe custody of the funds and was commissioned by Muslim to purchase arms and weapons therewith.

When Yazid sent Ubaidullah Ibn Ziad as governor of Kufa and the new governor began to prepare for war, and Muslim Ibn Aqil also began to make preparations for defence, Abu Thamama was appointed

commander of the troops of Tamim and Hamdan. [1](#)

As the situation came to a head, the ruthlessness, trickery and unscrupulousness of Ibne Ziad proved too much for Muslim and all his supporters went over to Yazid's side, deserting him. Consequently, Abu Thamama lost all his following, but he remained undaunted. At the time when Muslim Ibn Aqil was cruelly murdered by Ibn Ziad, Abu Thamama managed to escape from Kufa and crossed the desert to join Imam Husayn who was on the march towards Iraq.

The famous historian, Muhammad Ibn Jarir Tabari records the following incident showing Abu Thamama's loyalty and high regard for the Imam:

"Soon after the arrival of Imam Husayn, the army of Yazid led by Umar b. Sa'd also arrived at Karbala, and Umar b. Sa'd wanted to send one of his officers to the Imam's camp for finding out what the Imam desired to do. At first, he selected Azra Ibn Qais Shamsi, but he refused. Then he selected others who were all unwilling to face the Imam as they had signed the letters which had been sent from Kufa inviting him and offering their support.

At last, the man who volunteered to go was Kathir Ibn Abdullah Sha'bi, a warlike man and expert horseman, dreaded for his fiery temper and cruel nature. He stood up and said to Umar Ibn Sa'd, 'Not only this, if you command me, I will go and kill the Prophet's grandson'. Umar b. Sa'd said, 'No, only find out what Husayn wants'."

As Abu Thamama saw the villain coming, he said to the Imam, "Here cometh one who is the cruellest, blood thirstiest and worst of men" and arising from the Imam's presence, went towards Kathir Ibn Abdullah Sha'bi and said, "Stop! Lay down your sword".

Sha'bi refused, and Abu Thamama said, "If you will not lay down your sword, at least let me keep my hand on the hilt". Sha'bi refused this also. Then Abu Thamama said, "Deliver your message to me and I will convey it to the Imam, but I cannot let a foul and unreliable man go armed into the presence of my master". Not agreeing to any of these conditions, Sha'bi went back and Umar Ibn Sa'd sent another man instead of him.

The importance which Islam attaches to the offering of prayer claims the admiration of everyone. Accordingly, the followers of Husayn remained steadfast in prayer even during those last few critical hours of their lives.

The historian Tabari writes: "When the sun crossed the meridian, the battle was raging. At this time, Abu Thamama went near the Imam and said 'The enemies are about to attack you, but as long as we live, no one can do you any harm. However, it is my heart's desire to offer the midday prayers under your leadership, before I go into the presence of my Creator.' "

The Imam, who was meditating, lifted up his head and blessed Abu Thamama, saying "You have

remembered your prayers; may Allah count you among those who are steadfast in prayer. Well, now, request the enemies to give us a few moments, respite to say our prayers." But when this request was made. Umar Ibn Sa'd refused to call off the fight. One of his officers said, "God will not accept Husayn's prayer". At this, the followers of Husayn got so enraged that they charged upon Yazid's army and were eventually surrounded and slain. Abu Thamama was one of the martyrs who sacrificed his life in this skirmish.

2. Habib Ibn Mazahir Asadi

Habib the son of Mazahir, hailed from the famous cantonment of the Muslim army, Kufa. He was an esteemed and honoured member of the Bani Asad clan. He was prominent among the followers of Imam Husayn and had the honour of being among the companions of the Holy Prophet, Muhammed.

After the Holy Prophet, he became a companion of Ali and followed him in all the campaigns. He also received a portion of the secret wisdom from Ali, as a result of which he predicted the time, place and manner of his death, several years before. After Ali, he followed Imam Hasan and then attached himself to Imam Husayn, for whom he gave his life.

He was among the signatories of the letter sent by the citizens of Kufa, inviting Imam Husayn to that city and offering full support. But he was not among those who turned against the Imam in the face of Ibn Ziyd's fierce opposition. When the invitation was drafted and the citizens took counsel, among themselves, two men particularly announced their loyalty to the Imam, and Habib Ibn Mazahir was one of them. The historian, Tabari (vol. 6 p. 189) writes:

"Abis Ibn Shabib Shakiri then addressed the assembly, after glorifying the Almighty and praising the Prophet, 'I do not know what others think and I cannot vouchsafe for their actions, but for my own part, I have decided to respond to Husayn's call and to fight his enemies up to the last moment of my life, and I accept no reward for this from anyone except God'."

When Abis had spoken these words, there stood up Habib Ibn Mazahir and echoed the same sentiments, calling God to bear witness to his vow. It is recorded² that Habib Ibn Mazahir and Muslim Ibn 'Ausaja exerted themselves to the fullest extent in persuading the Kufans to support Imam Husayn's cause and offering allegiance to the Imam's representative, Muslim Ibn Aqil.

But when Yazid's governor, Ibn Ziad roused a powerful opposition in Kufa, compelling Muslim to go into hiding, these two supporters of his also realised the futility of open opposition and consented to seek shelter with their clansmen, only to escape later on for the purpose of joining Imam Husayn in fulfilment of their pledges.

At last, they managed to escape and journeyed secretly by night, hiding in the daytime for fear of Ibn Ziad's spies, till they joined Imam Husayn at Karbala some time before the tenth of Muharram.³

On his arrival at Karbala, Habib Ibn Mazahir, noticing the scarcity of Imam Husayn's supporters went to the nearby clan of the Bani Asad to which he himself belonged, and rallied them round himself for the cause. Though a large number of his clansmen including Abdullah Ibn Bashir were ready to come to Karbala, they were prevented by Ibn Sa'd's armies and were compelled to go back.

In the foregoing account of Abu Thamama, it has already been narrated how Kathir Ibn Abdullah Sha'bi was sent by Ibn Sa'd to find out Imam Husayn's plans and how, not agreeing to put down his sword, was stopped by Abu Thamama and eventually returned to his camp. The sequel to the same incident, as recorded in the *Ibsar-al-ain* throws light on Habib Ibn Mazahir's efforts for the sacred cause.

When Kathir Ibn Abdullah Sha'bi returned without being able to enter Imam Husayn's camp, Qurra Ibn Qais was deputed for the same purpose. Emerging from the camp of Ibn Sa'd, Qurra Ibn Qais came to the camp of Imam Husayn. The Imam first asked in any one knew him and Habib Ibn Mazahir replied that he knew him and was in fact related to him from his mother's side.

When Qurra had delivered his message and received a reply from the Imam, he proceeded on his way back. But Habib Ibn Mazhir went along with him and said, "Why go to the wicked and tyrannous? Come and help the son of the Prophet by whose grace all of you have received the unperishable wealth of Islam." Qurra could not deny the truth of this appeal – he only said that he had to convey the answer to Ibn Sa'd, but he would think about it later.

Tabari records a similar incident, illustrative of Habib Ibn Mazahir's ceaseless endeavours to enlist support for Imam Husayn.

"On the eve of the 9th Muharram Ibn Sa'd moved his troops to make a surprise attack on Imam Husayn's tent, whereupon the Imam sent a small party, headed by his brother, 'Abbas, the son of Ali to enquire into the reason for this move.

Habib Ibn Mazahir and Zuhair Ibn Qain were in this party. Abbas asked the reason and was told that the contemplated attack was in pursuance of the latest order of the Governor of Kufa. So, he went back to report to the Imam, while his men remained on the battlefield holding the enemy at bay.

Present, Habib Ibn Mazahir addressed the Yazidian army in these words:

"Men of Kufa! Consider how mean and despicable will be those people who will be led into the presence of God after having shed the blood of His Prophet's children, and having stained their hands with the blood of those servants of God who keep awake all night and devote all their time to the remembrance of the Lord."

At this, one 'Azra Ibn Qais from the army of Yazid, said, "You are showing off your virtues". And Zuhair Ibn Qain answered saying, "There is no doubt that Habib is a man of impeccable virtue."

On the morning of 10th Muharram, when Imam Husayn rode out into the battlefield and delivered his

famous address to his enemies, Shimr Dhul Jawshan shamefacedly said, "I believe only in the outward forms of Islam; I do not understand what you mean". And Habib replied, "Yes, surely, you obey God only for appearance's sake, and out of hypocrisy, what effect can Imam Husayn's teaching produce on you? God has set a seal upon our heart."

Describing how Imam Husayn arranged his supporters for the battle on the 10th Muharram, the historian, Tabari relates that the right flank was assigned to the leadership of Zuhair Ibn Qain, while Habib Ibn Mazahir was given the command of the left flank, and Abbas was appointed in the middle, with the standard of the Prophet. The followers of Imam numbered seventy-two altogether, out of which 32 rode on horseback and 40 followed on foot.

This shows the high position held by Habib among Imam Husayn's companions. When the time came for the midday prayers in the midst of the battle and the Imam asked for a short respite, as already related, Haseen Ibn Tamim, an officer of Ibn Sa'd's army said, "Husayn's prayer cannot be accepted", Habib Ibn Mazahir, indignantly replied, "You drunkard! do you think your prayer is acceptable to God and the prayer of the Prophet's kinsfolk is unacceptable?"

Infuriated, Haseen Ibn Tamim attacked Habib. but the latter, warding off the blow, struck the enemy's horse on the head, so that it bucked and overthrew the rider. At this moment, Habib would have killed him, but other soldiers of the enemy quickly rescued the insolent officer.

Then Habib began to fight against the enemy, saying, "O people of Kufa! O basest and vilest of men! By God, had we been equal to you or even half of you in numbers, you could not have withstood our attacks."

"Lo! I am Habib son of Mazahir, the famous swordsman, dauntless cavalier, flashing like flame in the battlefield. No doubt, your numbers are excessive and you're armed cap-a-pie with better arms. But we're true to our promise, patient in woe, our cause is righteous, and our faith is firm; Truth is our support, we support the Truth; our innocence and piety are well known."

With these words Habib plunged into the fray and fought a memorable battle. Budail Ibn Harim of the clan of Beni Tamim attacked him. He struck and with a single blow, put an end to him. Just then, another soldier of the same clan wounded Habib with a spear, so that he fell from his horse. As he was about to rise up and resume the fight, Haseen Ibn Tamim who had run away, came back and struck him a staggering blow with his sword. Then the man who had struck him with a spear came forward and beheaded him.

After Habib's head had been cut off, there arose a dispute between his murderers. Haseen Ibn Tamim was eager to prove to Ibn Sa'd his complicity in killing Habib, in order to get a share of the prize. At last, some of the soldiers let him take Habib's head to show to Ibn Ziad. Then the man returned the head to the actual murderer, who tied it to his saddle and took it to Kufa, along with the others, in order to present it before Ibn Ziad and get a reward.

In Kufa, as he went in and out of the markets and streets, waiting to be called into Ibn Ziad's audience chamber, he saw a lad following him wherever he went. Surprised, he asked the lad what he wanted and the lad, whose name was Qasim Ibn Habib said, "The head that hangs from your saddle is my father's. Give it to me that I may bury it."

But the murderer answered, "Young man, it will not please Ibn Ziad if I do so, for I have to get my reward from him". "But God will give you no reward. He will punish you with the severest punishment, for, verily, you have killed one who was better than you in every way." So saying, the young lad broke into tears and vowed vengeance for his father's blood.

When ultimately, in the days of 'Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan, the brave Mas'ab Ibn Zubair led his revolt, Qasim joined Mas'ab's army and killed his Father's murderer in the Battle of Bajmira.⁴ Habib Ibn Mazahir's loss however came as a severe blow to Imam Husayn, who became dejected and despondent to lose such a worthy friend.

3. Sa'id Ibn Abdullah Hanafi

Sa'id, son of Abdullah Hanafi lived in Kufa and enjoyed the reputation of being a brave warrior and pious worshipper. After Yazid's accession, the Kufans sent many letters to Imam Husayn, asking him to come and guide them. One of these letters was despatched to Madina through Hani Ibn Hani Sabi'i and Sa'id Ibn Abdullah Hanafi who were its couriers.

Mulla Mohammad Bakir Majlisi and other notable historians state that the letters sent by the Kufans promising support for Imam Husayn and asking him to send a representative for their guidance numbered about twelve thousand with the result that the Imam sent a reply stating that he would shortly depute his cousin Muslim Ibn Aqil as his representative, to study the condition of Kufa and report to him.

Tabari and Shaikh Mufid record in their histories that the messengers who carried the above-mentioned letter from Imam Husayn were Hani Ibn Hani Sabi'i and Sa'id Ibn Abdullah Hanafi. Muslim Ibn Aqil arrived in Kufa shortly after these two couriers. The warmth and friendship with which Muslim was greeted by the multitudes in Kufa need not be described in detail.

The demonstration of loyalty and fidelity which they made, led Muslim to address a reassuring letter to Imam Husayn, which he entrusted to Sa'id Ibn Abdullah Hanafi,⁵ so that the hero of our present discourse undertook the journey between Kufa and Hejaz for the third time during those few months.

Sa'id Ibn Abdullah met Imam Husayn on the way, conveyed the message to him and joined his camp, till the Imam arrived in Karbala and encamped there. On the eve of the 10th of Muharram, Imam Husayn, addressed his kinsmen and followers in the memorable words which proclaim to the world his innocence and his unparalleled respect for individual liberty.

He absolved all his followers of the obligation to stand by him and entreated them to save their lives and

leave him to fulfil his duty alone. But the faithful followers could not dream of deserting him. Many were the expressions of loyalty and devotion which they offered in that critical hour, and among these expressions, the words of Sa'id Ibn Abdullah Hanafi exemplify the immense love and respect with which our martyred Imam was followed.

Sa'id said, "By Allah, we shall not part with you until we have fully performed our sacred duty of supporting you as the successor of the Prophet. By Allah, even if I were to know that I would be killed in your defence and raised up again and killed again seventy times and my body ground to dust and scattered with the winds, I would not desert you. But I know that I have to die only once, and then I shall merit greatness and eternal life⁶."

The sentiments expressed in these stirring words were heroically translated into action. Husayn's followers had no desire to demonstrate their martial skill – no ambition to conquer or to reap the fruits of victory. Those who came into the battlefield, did so because no other course was open to them. But those who could perform their duty in any other way, did not hesitate to make the required sacrifice. The martyrdom of Sa'id Ibn Abdullah Hanafi is an instance of this general fact.

When the Imam stood up to offer his midday prayers and his followers took their positions behind him, the Yazidian armies discharged spears, arrows and stones at the worshippers. Amid the continuous shower of these deadly missiles, Sa'id Ibn Abdullah along with another comrade, stood in front of the Imam to protect him. Without proper armour, he could do nothing except to offer himself as a target for all the fatal weapons.

So, there he stood, presenting his limbs before every missile that came towards his leader, until exhausted by wounds and loss of blood, he fell down, saying, "O Allah, curse these people like the tribes of 'Ad and Thamud. O Allah convey my greetings to Thy messenger and let him know the sufferings I have undergone in defence of his beloved child; O Allah, I have befriended the child of Thy messenger, wherefore give me the hope of attaining Thy Mercy." When he died, thirty arrows were found piercing his body, apart from several wounds of swords and spears.⁷

Writes Shaikh Tahir Samavi in his Ibsar-ul 'Ain, "Sa'id shielded the Imam, now with his face, now with his chest, and again with his hands, stopping every arrow that came towards the Imam. Thus, the Imam received no wound as long as Sa'id was alive... When at last, he fell down and was about to die, he cried out, "Master, do you certify that I have done my duty? And the Imam said, "Well done, dear friend; verily you will enter Paradise before me." On hearing this the noble soul of Sa'id Ibn Abdullah departed from his wounded body."

4. Zuhair Ibn Qain Bajalli

A citizen of Kufa and a member of the Bujalla clan, Zuhair, the son of Qain, the son of Qais was counted among the prominent personalities of his time. Well versed in the arts of war, he had fought and won

renown in several battles. Prior to his acquaintance with Imam Husayn, he was an adherent of the 'Uthmani creed, but after meeting Imam Husayn, his entire outlook was transformed and he became such a staunch follower of 'Ali that he gave up his life for Husayn's cause.

The details of his sudden change do not tell us exactly what Imam Husayn said to Zuhair Ibn Qain, but it is nevertheless, interesting to study them. When Imam Husayn departed from Medina to Mecca, Zuhair Ibn Qain, accompanied by his wife and some friends took the same route.

But all through the journey Zuhair took care to avoid meeting Imam Husayn. He never moved from any station on the same day as the Imam, and if he happened to be halting at some place ahead of the Imam's caravan, he invariably set off before the Imam's arrival.

One day, in the course of the journey, Zuhair Ibn Qain had to halt at the same place as the Imam. Even so, he took the precaution to put up his tents at a distance from the Imam's camp. "Towards evening, as we were sitting down to dinner", says Zuhair's companion "a messenger came and said to Zuhair that the Imam wanted to see him. We were taken by surprise and did not know what to say.

At last, Zuhair consulted his wife, Dalham bint' Amr and she said, 'Wherefore this silence and astonishment? When the son of the Prophet summons you, it is not meet for you to hesitate. Go see and hear and then come back.'

Zuhair went and returned after a little while, more cheerful than ever, beaming with delight, and immediately asked his friends to move all his belongings into the Imam's camp. This done, he said to his wife, 'Come, let me divorce you, so that you may go and live in your clan, for I do not want you to suffer on my account.'

Then he said to his friends, "Who will come with me, let him come, and who will not, let him know that this is my last farewell. Now I will relate to you an incident. When we won the battle of Balanjar⁸ and a lot of booty fell into our hands, we were beside ourselves with joy. At the time, Sulaiman Bahili, observing my happiness said, 'Do you rejoice in your success and good fortune?' "Pray, why not?" rejoined I.

He said, 'Remember when you will go into the presence of the Prince of the Youth of Paradise, and when you will defend him and support his cause, you will be all the happier with the booty which you will get in that battle.'" With these words Zuhair bade farewell to his friends and from that time he was among the foremost supporters of the Imam, until he sacrificed his life for his leader.⁹

Zuhair was with the Imam when Hur arrived and prevented him from advancing towards Kufa and led him towards Karbala. At this stage, Imam Husayn addressed his companions, appraising them of their situation and dispelling all possible doubts and delusions about their future.

He said, "This is the situation in which we stand. All the world has turned against us; only the last

draught remains in the cup of life; men have given up the path of truth and taken up falsehood. Whoever believes in God and the Day of Judgement should turn away from the world and prepare to meet his Lord, because martyrdom in the cause of Truth is the way to eternal happiness, and life with the tyrants can bear no result for the faithful except toil and dishonour."[10](#)

At this, Zuhair Ibn Qain stood up and said, "Son of the Prophet we have listened to your words. By Allah! Had the world been everlasting and full of happiness, we would rather sacrifice our lives to defend you, than choose the life of this world."

The Imam blessed Zuhair and appreciated his expression of loyalty.[11](#) When Hur arrived with the Imam at Karbala, he received a message from Ibn Ziad (governor of Kufa) commanding him to make Imam Husayn encamp in a place where no food or water should be available. Hur showed the order to the Imam, who readily agreed. But Zuhair said to the Imam. "Master, as yet they are few. Let us fight them now. If we lose time they will get more reinforcements." But Imam Husayn, true to his principles, rejected Zuhair's advice, saying, "We shall not be the aggressors".[12](#)

In the account of Habib Ibn Mazahir, it has been related in this article how the army of Yazid intended to make a surprise attack on Imam Husayn's camp on the eve of the 10th Muharram and how the Imam's companions, coming to know about it, went forward to meet them, led by 'Abbas Ibn 'Ali and how Habib Ibn Mazahir preached to the enemy the righteousness of Husayn's cause. The dialogue that ensued between Zuhair Ibn Qain and 'Azra Ibn Qais on this occasion illustrates the zeal and fervour of the former for the cause of Islam.

The officer of the enemy said to him. "Zuhair, you were not a follower of the Ahl-ul-bait; you were with 'Uthman. How is it that you now advise me to follow Husayn?"

"But now I am on this side, and this is proof enough of my witness, that although I never invited Imam Husayn, nor offered to make him my guest, nor promised to support him, when I chanced to meet him on the way and I looked upon his face, I was at once reminded of the Prophet and threw in my lot with him forsaking everyone, realising the close relationship Husayn has with the Prophet, knowing full well what a dreadful fate awaits him at your hands and what horrors you are going to perpetrate against him. I had to take a decision, and I decided that it was my duty to help him, by joining the ranks of his companions, and sacrificing life for his sake in order to fulfil that sacred obligation, imposed by God and the Prophet which you have abandoned."[13](#)

On the morning of the 10th Muharram Imam Husayn arranged his small band of warriors as follows:

Zuhair Ibn Qain, to command the right flank.

Habith Ibn Mazahir, to command the left flank.

Himself, to command the middle.

And Abbas, to be the standard-bearer.

After arranging his men, he addressed Yazid's army, inviting them to Support the cause of righteousness, and laying before them the full fact about himself and Yazid, so that no one could doubt his innocence and the wickedness of his foes.

The enemies gave no heed to his words and prepared to give a fight. Then Zuhair Ibn Qain came into the battlefield in full armour and said:

"Kufans, fear God. The band of Islamic fraternity requires every Muslim to give good advice to his brethren. While we have not yet drawn our swords upon one another, we are all brothers, following the same religion, and our duty is to advise you. Once the fight begins, our brotherhood shall come to an end. Then we shall be enemies, ranged in warring camps.

This is the day on which God wishes to try our love of His Prophet's children – to see how you and we behave towards them. We invite you to help the son of the Prophet and turn away from the rebellious Ibn Ziad. Beware! you will not receive anything save oppression and woe under his rule. He is one of those who will put out your eyes, sever your limbs, cut you to pieces and hang you on palm trees. They will kill your good men and those who know the Quran by heart, as they have killed Hajr Ibn 'Adi and his comrades and Hani Ibn 'Urwa."

On hearing this, the enemy began to abuse Zuhair and answered, "We will not rest until we have either killed Husayn and all his companions or arrested them and taken them to Ibn Ziad."¹⁴

Then Imam Husayn called back Zuhair and kept him in reserve until Habib Ibn Mazahir was killed and Hur went into the battlefield. At this moment Zuhair was also permitted to fight and the two heroes defended one another and slew many of the enemy's soldiers. At last, Hur was slain and Zuhair Ibn Qain came back to the camp again. At the time of the midday prayers, Zuhair stood along with Sa'id Ibn Abdullah Hanafi to protect the Imam. After the prayers, Zuhair went into the fray once more, reciting the following verse.

"I am Zuhair and my father was Qain. My sword will keep the foes away from Husayn."

He charged several times with tremendous vigour, until, at last, he was killed by Abdullah Sha'bi and Muhajir Ibn Anas.

^{1.} Tamim and Hamdan were the names of two districts of Iraq.

^{2.} 'Allama Tahir Sanavi, Ibsar-ul Ain & Ansar-il-Husain.

^{3.} 'Unsuri-i-Shuja'at, by Khalil Saimari Kamrai, published: Tehran.

^{4.} Tabari, v. 6, p. 251

[5.](#) 'Unsuri-i-Shuja'at.

[6.](#) Tabari, vol. 6; p. 239.

[7.](#) Jila ul-'Uyoon, by Allama Majlisi.

[8.](#) In 36 A.H. in Trans-Caucasia, the Turks and Kazars formed an alliance against the Muslims and declared war. By order of Othman, the reigning Caliph. 'Abdurrahman Ibn Rabi'a marched upon Bulanjar. The enemy was three hundred thousand strong. A sanguinary conflict ensued Abdurrahman Ibn Rabi'a was killed and succeeded by Sulaiman Ibn Rabi'a Bahili under whose command the Muslims were victorious. Salman Farsi is also known to have joined this battle. (Ref. History of Islam by S. Zakir Husain.) "It is more probable" writes the author of Ibsar-ul-'Ain, "that the person who foretold Zuhair about his participation in the battle of Karbala was Salman Farsi, the great companion of the Prophet whose presence in the campaign of Bulanjar is evidenced by Ibn Athir in his 'Complete History'."

[9.](#) Tabari, vol. 6 p. 224.

[10.](#) Jila-ul-Uyon by Majlisi; Tarikh by Tabari.

[11.](#) Tabari, vol. 6, p. 229.

[12.](#) Tabari, vol. 6, p. 231.

[13.](#) Tabari, vol. 6.

[14.](#) Tabari, vol. 6; p. 243.

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