

The Route of Imam Husayn from Makkah to Karbala

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Article

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The map shows the Route that Imam Husayn (A.S) took when he left Makkah for Iraq. The date was 8th Zilhijja 60 Hijri (10.9.680 AD). With him there were about 50 people including women and children of his family and friends.

His uncle Ibn Abbas and his brother Mohammad-e-Hanafiya did not go with him. They came to bid farewell and tried to warn the Imam of the dangers ahead. Mohammad-e-Hanafiya told him that the Makkans and other pilgrims were wondering why he was leaving just one day before the Hajj. Imam left a letter with his brother which explained his position clearly. The letter read as follows:

"I have not come out to stir emotions, to play with oppression. I want to bring the Ummah back to the path of Amr-bil-Marouf & Nahyi Anil Munker. I want to lead them to the path of my Grandfather and my father Ali Ibn Abi Talib."

After leaving Makkah there were 14 places mentioned in history books where Imam either stayed or met people or gave sermons.

1. Saffah: Here Imam met Farazdaq the poet whom Imam asked about conditions in Kufa. He said, 'He said, 'People's hearts were with you but their swords were against you.' Imam replied, 'Allah does what he wishes. I leave it to him who proposes the just cause.'
2. Dhat-el-Irq: Here Imam's cousin Abdullah Ibn Jafar brought his two sons Awn and Mohammed to their mother Hazrat Zainab and to help the imam. He tried to persuade the Imam to return to Madina but Imam replied, 'my destiny is in the hands of Allah.'
3. Batn-er-Rumma: Imam sent a letter to Kufa with Qais bin Mashir, met Abdullah bin Mutee who came from Iraq. When he heard of Imam's intention, he tried to stop him. He said Kufans were not faithful and could not be trusted. But Imam continued his journey.
4. Zurud: Imam met Zohair Ibn Qain. Zohair was not among the followers of Ahlulbait. But when Imam told him of the purpose of his journey Zohair gave all his possessions to his wife, told her to go home and said that he wished to be martyred with the Imam.
5. Zabala: Imam learnt from two tribesmen coming from Kufa of the death of Hazrat Muslim. Imam said, 'Innan Lillahe wa Inna Elaihe Rajعون. Indallah-Nahtasib Anfusana.' 'We are for Allah and we shall return to Him who surely accouts for our sacrifices. Asadi Tribesmen tried to dissuade the Imam from his journey but he persisted. Here Imam told his companions the news of the death of Muslim and Hani and

that people in Kufa were not prepared to be their helpers. Imam said, 'Those who want to depart leave now.' Hoards of various tribesmen who had followed the Imam in the hope of collecting the booty realised their false hopes and scattered to their own homes. Only 50 odd people remained.

6. Batn-e-Aqeeq: Imam met a man from the Tribe of Akrama who told him that Kufa was no more a friendly town and was now surrounded by Yazid's army. No one could get in or out of the town. But the Imam carried on.

7. Sorat: Imam stayed the night here and in the morning ordered his companions to take as much water as they can.

8. Sharaf: While the Imam was passing from this place, one of his companions shouted that he could see the approach of an army. Imam asked for a safe place, preferably a mountain behind them. A guide took them to the nearest mountain.

9. Zuhasm: It was here that Imam met Hurr's army of 1000 men. They were thirsty so Imam ordered his men to give them water. Imam himself helped several thirsty soldiers to drink. Even animals were given water to drink. Zohr prayers were led by the Imam and all followed him including Hurr's soldiers.

Here Imam told Hurr about many letters from Kufa. He said, 'O People of Kufa, you sent me your delegations and wrote me letters that you had no Imam and that I should come to unite you and lead you in the way of Allah. You wrote that we Ahlulbait are more qualified to govern your affairs than those who claim things to which they have no right and act unjustly and wrongly. But if you have changed your mind, have become ignorant of our Rights and have forgotten your promises, I shall turn back. But he was denied to turn back by Hurr's army and was lead to by-pass Kufa.

10. Baiza: Imam reached Baiza the next day and delivered one of his most famous sermons. 'O People, the Prophet has said that if a man sees a tyrannical ruler transgressing against Allah and the Prophet and oppressing people but does nothing by word or action to change the situation then it will be just for Allah to place him where he deservingly belongs. Do you not see to what low level the affairs have come down... Do you not observe that truth has not adhered to and falsehood has no limit. And as for me, I look upon death as but a means of attaining martyrdom and I consider life among transgressors as nothing but an agony and an affliction.'

11. Uzaibul Hajanat: Here Imam stayed away from the army of Hurr and met Trimmah bin Adi. After having learnt about the Kufan abandonment of his envoy it was clear that he had no hope of support or even survival in Kufa. Nevertheless he refused an offer of safety, if not success extended to him. Trimmah pleaded to him to accept the offer of 20,000 trained men of his tribe to help him if he wanted to go to Kufa or he could retire to the mountains and safety.

Imam replied to Ibn Adi, 'May Allah bless you and your people. I cannot go from my word. Things are destined. It is clear from this reply that he was fully aware of the dangers he would face and that he had

a certain strategy and plan in mind to bring about a revolution in the conscience of the Muslim Ummah. He did not try to mobilize military support which he could easily have done in Hejaz nor did he try to exploit whatever physical strength was available to him.

12. Qasr-e-Bani Makatil: It was evident here that Kufa was no more his destination. As Hurr did not want to leave him, he by-passed Kufa and took a new route. Resting in the afternoon he uttered 'Inna Lillah.' His 18 years old son Ali Akber approached him and enquired. Imam said that in his sleep he had heard someone saying that these people were going to their deaths. Ali Akber asked, 'Are we not on the Right path. Death meant nothing to them. Death of this kind transforms into the glory of martyrdom.

13. Nainawa: At this place a messenger of Ibn Zaid brought a message for Hurr not to leave the Imam. The battered caravan passed through Ghaziriya to a place called Karbala. Imam sighed, asked for the name of the place. Someone said Kerbala. Imam said, yes, this is the place of Kerbin-wa-bala. (a place of pain and torture.) Let us stop here for we have arrived at our destination. This is the place of our Martyrdom. This is Karbala.

14. Karbala: On the orders of the Imam, the tents were erected near the river which was a tributary of the River Euphrates some miles away. The date was 2nd Muharram 61 Hijri (3rd October 680 AD).

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