

The Aftermath of Karbala: Mourning and Captivity

1. The Cruel Journey to Kufa (12th Muharram)

After the tragedy of Ashura, the survivors—mostly women and children—were treated as "captives of war".

- **The Physical Toll:** There were nearly **20 widows** and many orphans, including young Sakina. They were forced onto **camels without saddles**, a move intended by the captors to cause physical pain and public humiliation.
- **The Sick Leader:** The only adult male survivor was **Imam Sajjad**, who was so "extremely ill" that he could barely stand. Despite his condition, he had to provide emotional strength to the grieving women and children.

2. The Mystery of the "Noor" (Light)

A famous and moving story from this journey involves the head of Imam Hussain.

- **The Oven of Khuli:** One of the criminals, Khuli, took the head of Imam Hussain to his house to hide it until he could claim a reward the next morning. He hid the head in a clay oven.
- **The Witness:** His wife, a Christian lady, noticed a **strange and beautiful light (Noor)** coming from the kitchen late at night. When she went to investigate, she reported hearing the **voices of ladies wailing and crying** around the oven, a spiritual sign of the holiness of the person whose head was kept there.

3. The Night Outside the City Walls

The captors reached the outskirts of Kufa on the evening of the 12th of Muharram but refused to let the family enter.

- **Psychological Warfare:** They purposely waited until **sunrise** so they could parade the captives through the city when the streets were crowded, maximizing their humiliation.
- **Environmental Hardship:** Since it was October, the desert climate was brutal—**intensely hot during the day and freezing cold at night**. The captives were left out in the open without proper shelter, food, or water.
- **Honor in Hunger:** When some onlookers felt pity and tried to offer the children pieces of bread or dates as **Sadaqah (charity)**, Lady Zainab and Imam Sajjad immediately stopped them. They taught the children that because they were from the family of the Prophet, **charity was forbidden for them**, showing that even in starvation, their principles remained unbroken.

4. The Burial of the Martyrs (13th Muharram)

While the captives were near Kufa, the bodies of the martyrs remained on the burning sands of Karbala.

- **The Tribe of Bani Asad:** On the 13th of Muharram, the women of the local Bani Asad tribe came to the river for water and smelled a **"very sweet fragrance"** coming from the battlefield. They found the bodies and rushed back to tell their men that a great massacre had occurred and they must bury the fallen.
- **The Miraculous Identification:** The bodies were so badly damaged—Imam Hussain's body was "cut into pieces"—that the tribe could not identify who was who. Miraculously, **Imam Sajjad arrived** (through divine means) to guide them.
- **Final Resting Places:** Imam Sajjad asked for a **mat** to gather the pieces of his father's body. He then placed the infant **Ali Asghar** on Imam Hussain's chest and **Ali Akbar** at his feet. Finally, he

went to the bank of the river to bury his uncle, **Hazrat Abbas**, at the exact spot where he had fallen.

Class Discussion Point: Why does this matter today?

The sources mention that even today, figures like the Imam of our time (Imam Mahdi) are said to "**cry blood**" instead of tears when remembering these events. For us, the lesson is about **Resilience (Sabr)**. The family of the Prophet lost everything—their homes, their loved ones, and their freedom—but they never lost their **faith** or their **dignity**.

Reference:

Summarized from the lecture of Sheikh Mansour Leghaei (ehawza.com)