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BOOK ON LINE

# MADINAH TO KARBALA

The Ahle Sunnah View by Irshad Soofi

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## The Pure companions and Tazkiyah (Purification)

### *ASHAB US-SAFA*

When the Beloved of Allah, Muhammad (Alaihis salatu was salaam), departed from this earthly life, he had a following of over one million Muslims, all over Arabia, following the **Shariah** (the general Islamic code of rules for the masses). Amidst these followers were about four hundred and fifty ascetic, who were known as **Ashab as-Safa** (Companions of the Pure).

These dedicated people, who had sacrificed all for the cause of Islam, were busy in the rigorous discipline of **Safa al-qalb** (purification of the heart), under the guidance of the master. They spent their days teaching or tending to the needs of the sick, widows and orphans and all night they would pray. They lived a humble and simple life, studying, worshipping and serving the creation. They did not engage in worldly business. Their possessions consisted of two pieces of cloth, which served as clothing, bedding and prayer carpets. They collected firewood, which they sold to make a living. They ate fallen dates and a bowl of porridge, which used to come daily from the prophet's house. They took a single sip and passed it around, miraculously the contents never diminished. The prophet urged his followers to feed these devotees. They lived on the veranda of the Prophets mosque. The Qur'aan refers to them in 2:273-

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي  
الْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ لَا  
يَسْتَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِلْحَافًا وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٧٣﴾

(Alms are also) for those who have taken to poverty by dedicating their lives to the cause of Allah- they cannot go about the land (doing business to earn their livelihood). The ignorant man thinks them to be rich because of their abstaining. you can recognize them by their mark (simplicity); They don't beg from men insistently (because they rely upon Allah); and whatever you spend on them Allah knows it.

### *THE FOUR CLOSEST COMPANIONS*

The immediate companions of the Holy Prophet (Alaihis salatu was salaam) are depicted in pious legends as innocent of excesses, despite their position of privilege, they maintained the simplicity and austerity of habit, which they had learned from the Prophet - E.g.

- q Hazrath Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) as the first caliph wore a simple single garment, which he used to pin together, so much so that he became known as the 'man of the two pins'.
- q Hazrath Umar (Radiallahu anhu) as ruler lived on olive oil and bread, wearing a garment of multiple patches.
- q Hazrath Uthman (Radiallahu anhu) appeared like a slave in dress and appearance. It is related that as caliph, he once collected his own firewood, and when questioned replied, 'I wanted to see if my soul would refuse'.
- q Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) wore the simplest clothing, using a cobbler's knife to cut off his shirtsleeve that was too long.

### *COMPANIONSHIP AND PURIFICATION*

After the communication of the message, the link and company (***Ta'alluq***) of the Holy Prophet (Alaihis salatu was salaam) transformed and purified (***tazkiyah***) the entire personality of his followers and only after that did he impart to them the knowledge of the book (***al-Kitaab***) and wisdom (***Al-Hikmah***). This should serve as a lesson to our institutions of theology that have nothing to do with ***tazkiyah***. They teach theology to anybody and only emphasize the external. It is putting the cart before the horse. Sunnah does not start with external adornment; it should start with the heart. Islam came to change the heart. The order of merit has been emphasized in the Qur'aan 62:2

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ  
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾

He it is that sent unto the unlettered people a prophet from amongst themselves, to convey to them His messages and to purify themselves, and to impart to them the Book and the wisdom-whereas before they were indeed in error.

#### *THE INNER DIMENSION OF THE SUNNAH*

The inner dimension of the **Sunnah**, of transforming the heart, on the basis of the human values which reached their perfection in the Holy Prophet (Alaihis salatu was salaam) has to be built up first; then the external manifestation of these great values will automatically come. The inner dimensions of the **Sunnah** are ultimately linked with **tasawwuf** or **Sufism**. Although the word **Sufi** is not found in the **Qur'aan** or **Hadith**, the implication of the word is **Qur'aanic** and belongs to the **Sunnah** of the Holy Prophet (Alaihis salatu was salaam). A **Sufi** is a person whose ideal in life is **Safa al-qalb** or purification of the heart. The word **Safa** means purification, which is the ideal of the **Sufi** and that of Islam. The term **Sufi** came into existence when the **Ulema** became divided into the 'literists' (**fuqaha**) and those **Ulema** who also cared for the spirit along with the letter of the law. So those **Ulema** became known as **Sufis**, the true "inheritors of the Prophet" whilst the others remained **Ulema**. So a **Sufi** is 'a spiritually refined and purified person'.[\[1\]](#)

This **jihad** (struggle) has been termed **jihad al-akbar** (the great struggle), and has to be undertaken by a spiritual pilgrim, whose goal is higher than one who wants to lead a good worldly life only. The dimension of this quest is different. This quest is undertaken on the transcendental dimension. The transcendental reality is beyond the scope of human language. It is always communicated from soul to soul and not mouth to mouth. In Sahih al-

Bukhari Vol. 1, The book of Knowledge, Hadith no. 121, [\[2\]](#) it is reported by Abu Hurraira (Radiallahu anhu) that,

*"The Holy Prophet (salla' llaahu'alaihi wa sallam) taught me two types of knowledge, one type I impart to the people, whilst if I disclose the other my throat will be cut."*

Hence the second type of knowledge was not taught to all and sundry. Consequently it has been communicated through the **silsilah** (spiritual chain) of the Sufis. Thus a Muslim must make jihad over his passions.

To attain this one must be attached to a **Murshid** (guide to righteousness) and attempt to gain contact with the fellowship on the spiritual realm i.e. **Nabiyin**, (prophets), **siddiqin**, (truthful), **shuhada**, (martyrs), and **saliheen** (Awliya). These are the magnets that magnetize those that attain their proximity. The remembrance of Imam Hussain and the martyrs of Karbala are a constant reminder to the Ummah to stand out against corrupt leadership, especially those who assume the political leadership and abuse it.

The Rightly Guided Caliphs

#### **LEADERSHIP OF THE UMMAH**

The Holy Prophet (Alaihis salatu was salaam) merged in him very admirably, numerous functions, amongst these were:

1. Reviving the spiritual aspect of Islam, and:
2. Heading the **Islamic state based on The Law of Allah and His Beloved Messenger's exposition.**

He had trained certain of his intimate companions as leaders in these fields. As far as heading the Islamic State, he had given many signs and according to some reports he announced openly at the foundation laying ceremony of **Masjid an-Nabawi**, that his successors would be as follows: [\[3\]](#)

- q Hazrath Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu). (11 to 13. A.H.) 2 Years. 632 to 634.
- q Hazrath Umar (Radiallahu anhu). (13 to 24. A.H.) 11 Years. 634 to 644.
- q Hazrath Uthman (Radiallahu anhu). (24 to 35. A.H.) 11 Years. 644 to 656.
- q Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu). (35 to 40. A.H.) 5 Years. 656 to 661.

The Holy Prophet (Alaihis salatu was salaam) also stated that the reign of the rightful **Khulafa** would be for 30 years. The Holy Qur'aan also makes reference to the **Khulafa** in Sura 48 Verse 29.

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ  
 تَرَاهُمْ رُكُوعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا

*Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him (refers to Abu Bakr) are hard against the unbelievers (Umar ibn al-Khattaab), merciful one to another (Uthman ibn Affaan), you see them bowing and falling prostrate (Ali ibn Abi Talib)....[4]*

This commentary was given by Hazrath Jafar son of Muhammad son of Ali son of Hussain son of Ali (Radiallahu anhu ajmain).

### ***A UNIQUE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT***

The institution of **Al-Khilafah Ar-Rashidah** is a unique system of government. It introduced principles of government which was not known in the ancient world and only recently been introduced in the modern world.

- q The principle of mutual consultation (**Shura**), to discuss affairs was introduced. **Shura** is made among people concerned with a specific issue,

whether personal or social. Shura also elected the Khulafa. After election people offered ***bai'ah***, or the pledge of allegiance, to the caliph. The ruler in turn had to seek advice in matters of policy. The pledge of allegiance to the Caliph was a conditional pledge; Muslims will obey him if he obeyed Allah and his Messenger.

- q The principle of Human Rights was introduced. This included freedom of religion, privacy, good family life and legal protection.
- q A welfare state was introduced. It fulfilled the basic right to food, shelter education and health. The treasury or ***bait ul-maal*** was a trust of the ***Ummah***.

#### ***PROBLEMS ARISE IN THE UMMAH***

The problems arose in the ***Ummah*** and ***Khilafah*** during the rule of Hazrath Uthman (Radiallahu anhu). The Islamic Empire had experienced tremendous growth and governors grew very powerful in the regions they governed. Among these governors was Muawia ibn Abi Sufyaan (Radiallahu anhu) of Syria He belonged to the ***Ummayad*** Clan of the ***Quraish***. Hazrath Uthman (Radiallahu anhu) once gave audience to a number of people from ***Kufa***, ***Basra*** and ***Egypt***, who had complaints against the governors of their territories. He assured them He would take action against any corrupt official. On their way out of the city, they encountered a person who carried a secret letter from the Caliph to his governors. This letter was actually a forgery, by an enemy of Islam 'Abdullah ibn Saba, who sought to stir up trouble in the Muslim ***Ummah***. This group eventually killed the caliph Uthman. It was the 34<sup>th</sup> year of the ***Hijra***. The community now overwhelmingly proclaimed Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) as the Caliph. Now the clash would occur between Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) of the ***Hashimite*** clan of the ***Quraish*** and Hazrath Muawia (Radiallahu anhu) of the ***Ummayad*** clan of the ***Quraish***.

#### ***THE CLASH BETWEEN HAZRATH ALI (Radiallahu anhu) AND HAZRATH MUAWIAH (Radiallahu anhu)***

The old enmity between the two families was revived. Hazrath Ali wanted to restore the stability and unity of the **Ummah**, whilst Hazrath Muawia insisted that he arrest the murderers of Uthman (Radiallahu anhu) and hand them over to him first. Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) did not want to accuse the wrong people and he needed a peaceful period to trace and arrest the culprits. Hazrath Muawia who had refused to pay homage to Ali (Radiallahu anhu), now openly disobeyed Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and laid claim to leadership of the Muslim World. Hazrath Aisha (Radiallahu anha) and leading **Sahaba** (companions of the Holy Prophet were incited to oppose Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu).

### ***THE BATTLES OF THE CAMEL AND SIFIN***

The followers of Hazrath Aisha (Radiallahu anha) and Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) clashed, at a place near Basra, in 656 AC, in the Battle of the Camel. Hazrath Aisha (Radiallahu anha) was defeated and escorted honorably to Madinah. She deeply regretted opposing Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anha) and praised him. Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) made Kufa the administrative capital of the Muslim World. Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and Muawia (Radiallahu anhu) also fought a battle in 657 AC. This was the Battle of Siffin. Arbitrators were eventually appointed to settle the dispute. Both Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and Hazrath Muawiyah (Radiallahu anhu) were to be removed from the office of Caliph and the Muslims should select another. This plan of peace failed and a group decided to kill both Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and Muawia (Radiallahu anhu). This group professed that they alone were following Qur'aan and Sunnah, and became known as the **Kharijites** (those who broke away). The Holy Prophet (salla' llaahu'alaihi wa sallam) (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) had referred to them in many Ahadith. I quote one example

It is reported in Mishkat from Hazrath Abu Said Khudri (Radiallahu anhu) who narrates that:

"Once we were in the presence and company of the Holy Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) whilst he was distributing the spoils of War. A person named Zul-Khawaisara, who was from the tribe of Bani Tamim addressed the Holy Prophet (salla' llaahu'alaihi wa sallam), "Oh Muhammad Be Just!" ". The Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) replied, "A Great pity that you have doubts, if I am unjust then who will be just, you are a loser and a failure." Zul-Khawaisara's attitude infuriated Hazrath Umar (Radiallahu anhu) and he pleaded with the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) to permit him to slay Zul-Khawaisara. The Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) remarked, "Leave him, as his slaying will serve no good purpose, as he is not the only individual but there are a host of others like him and if you compare their

prayers and fasting to that of yours, you yourself will feel ashamed. These are the people who will recite the Quran but it will not go beyond their throats, with all these apparent virtues they will leave the fold of Deen just like the arrow leaves the bow." [5]

Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) fought and defeated them in the Battle of Nahrawan in 659AC. Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) was assassinated in the Masjid of Kufa, in 659 AC.

### *THE CALIPHS AND HAZRATH ALI (Radiallahu anhu)*

Jabir son of Abdullah (Radiallahu anhu) relates that once he asked the Prophet (Alaihis salatu was salaam) that after his devotion to Allah and his Rasul (saw) who else were to be obeyed next. The Prophet (Alaihis salatu was salaam) said;

' First my Caliphs are to be obeyed, next the saints, of whom Ali is the first and next to him are his sons Hassan and Hussain and their sons.'

After the Holy Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) had performed the pilgrimage and was returning to Madinah, he stopped at Ghadir-e-Khum an oasis between Makkah and Madinah. Here he said that Allah had asked him to announce:

Man Kunto Maulahu Fa Aliun Maulahu Wala Man Walahu Wa Aada Man Aadahu.

"He whose spiritual guide I am, Ali is also his spiritual guide. Oh Allah, You keep him as your friend who keeps Ali as his friend, and You treat him as your enemy who holds enmity against Ali."

Whilst making this statement Rasul (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) pressed Ali to his chest and thereby transferred all the Divine secret knowledge to Ali. Thus Ali was made the spiritual heir and the father of **Tasawwuf**. Therefore even as Heads of State the Caliphs always sought guidance from Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) on spiritual matters. He was also the Chief Justice during all the Khilafath. This does not mean that the others were not spiritually competent. It should be remembered that Hazrath Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu) is the Head of the Naqshbandi School of Sufic teachings, whilst all others are headed by Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu). The methodology of

Loud Zikrullah (remembrance of Allah) was taught to Ali (Radiallahu anhu) whilst the Silent Zikrullah, was taught to Abu Bakr (Radiallahu anhu). The Sahaba, including the first three Caliphs learned much on spirituality from Ali / (Radiallahu anhu). Mystical meaning of the Qur'aan etc. were all given to Ali (Radiallahu anhu). Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) said:

The Prophet of Allah enlightened me on a thousand branches of knowledge, each branch opening a thousand gates.

The Holy Prophet (Alaihis salatu was salaam) said:

Ana Madinatul ilm wa Ali-un-Bab-aha.

I am the city of knowledge and Ali is the door.

He also said:

I am the city of divine wisdom (Hikmah) and Ali is the door.

## AHL AL BAYT and PANJATTAN PAAK

(33:33)

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ  
وَأَتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ  
الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

And stay quietly in your houses and make not a dazzling display, like the times of ignorance, establish regular prayer, give zakaat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. And Allah only wishes to remove all abomination from you and the members of your family and make you pure and spotless.

### *HOUSEHOLD OF THE PROPHET*

This verse of the Holy Qur'aan refers to the **Ahl al-Bait** {household of the Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam)}. This includes the wives of the Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) well as his daughter Fatimah (Radiallahu anha), his-son in-law Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and his grandsons, Hassan (Radiallahu anhu) and Hussain (Radiallahu anhu). [6]

The Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) had called many companions, including the **Ashab as-Safa**, who were not related to him by blood, but had dedicated their lives to achieve purity, piety and humility as his **Ahl al-Bait**. The Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) was asked, "Who are your family (Ahl)?" He replied, "those who are purified (safa), i.e. the pure of heart, who maintain their words, fulfil their promises, dedicate their lives to fulfil my teachings and have greater love for me than any other human being, and after Allah remember me the most". [7]

Therefore all that pursue the science of spirituality (*tasawwuf*) and attain to the status of **Aulia Allah** (friend of Allah) are also referred to as **Ahl al-Bait**.

### *PANJATTAN PAAK OR BLESSED FIVE*

The blood family of the Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) , amongst the **Ahl al-Bait**; Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu) , Hazrath Fatimah (Radiallahu anha) , Hazrath Hassan (Radiallahu anhu) and Hazrath Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) are known as the Blessed Pure Five (**Panjattan Paak**).

The Holy Qur'aan makes reference to this in Sura 55 Verse 19-22

مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ ﴿١٩﴾ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَا يَبْغِيَانِ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢١﴾ يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٢٢﴾

He has let free the two seas meeting together. Between them is a barrier which they do not transgress.. then which of the favors of Allah will you deny. Out of them come pearls and corals.

Hazrath Anas bin Maalik (Radiallahu anhu) in his commentary on these verses say the two seas here referred to allegorically represent Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and Fatimah (Radiallahu anha) and their **Pearls and Corals** are Hassan and Hussain. (Radiallahu anhu ajmain)

In the Hadith, an important event symbolizes the spiritual dimension of their relation to the Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam). This is the tradition of the cloak, which the Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) spread over himself and Fatimah his daughter, Ali and their two sons Hassan

and Hussain. (Radiallahu anhu ajmain) Umm Salama (Radiallahu anha), the wife of the Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) reports, that the Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) said to Fatimah (Radiallahu anha) one day:

"Bring me your husband and two sons" When they had all come together he spread his cloak over them and he said:

"Oh Allah, these are the people of my house! Let therefore your blessings descend upon Muhammad the people of the House of Muhammad (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam)" [\[8\]](#)

It is stated that the verse:

Surely Allah wishes to remove all abomination from you, O People of the House, and purify you with a thorough purification,

was revealed as a response to this Dua.

#### *WASILA(intermediation) OF PANJATAN PAAK*

The Holy Qur'aan tells us that Adam (Alai' his salaam) received certain words from Allah which earned him forgiveness for his transgression. Sura 2 Verse 37

فَتَلَقَّى آدَامُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ  
الرَّحِيمُ

Adam received certain words from his Lord, and He turned towards him; for He is relenting, compassionate.

Imam Suyuti (Rahmatullah-alai) reports that Hazrath ibn Abbas (Radiallahu anhu) , the famous traditionalist and authority on the Qur'aan, asked the Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) about the words which Adam received. The Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) replied:

'He prayed saying, "O Allah, for the sake of Muhammad, Ali, Fatimah, Hassan and Hussain, do turn towards me", and He turned towards him'.[\[9\]](#)

The following Hadith supports this:

"The Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) has stated that when Allah created Adam (Alai' his salaam) ' Adam lifted his eyes and looked towards the right side of the Garden of Eden. He saw five shining faces prostrating themselves before Allah. Adam asked Allah who they were. Allah said that they will be from his descendants, but they will not be created of clay. They will be created out of light (nur). "The whole universe has been created by Me for their sake. Their names have been derived from My names: I am Mahmood (The Praised one) and he is Muhammad (The Praised one); I am Aali (The Supreme) and he is Ali; I am Faatir (creator) and she is Fatimah; I am Ehsaan (Beneficent) and he is Hassan; I am Mohsin (Generous) and he is Hussain. I swear by My Honor that if anybody comes before Me with the least disrespect or hatred for any of them, I shall cast them into hell without any consideration. O Adam! These are my five chosen and blessed and for their sake I will forgive and bless unlimited numbers. If you or your progeny have any difficulties approach Me in the name of the Blessed Five.'

Love for the Prophets family is enjoined by Allah in the Qur'aan in Sura 42 Verse 23.

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

"Say, 'I ask no other reward of you save love of my next of kin'".

Qur'aan commentators are unanimous that '*the next of kin*' here intended are *Ahl al-Bait*.[\[10\]](#)

The spiritual unity of the *Panjattan Paak*, is a symbol of the unity of all Muslims. It is for the sake of this unity in faith and commitment to Allah and truth (which is Islam), that Imam Hussain sacrificed his life. He refused a partisan Islam, and leadership devoid of morality (*Adab*) and love (*Ishq*).

## The Ummayyad dynasty 41-132 A.H

### *IMAM HASSAN (Radiallahu anhu) AND HAZRATH MUAWIA (RADIALLAHU ANHU) 41-60 AH.*

After the **Shahaadat** of Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu), his supporters swore an oath of allegiance to his son Hazrath Imam Hassan (Radiallahu anhu). In a few months however Imam Hassan (Radiallahu anhu) resigned in favor of Hazrath Muawiyah (Radiallahu anhu), to avoid further spilling of blood.

Hazrath Muawia (Radiallahu anhu) became the undisputed Caliph of the Muslim world. He was an able organizer, fighter and administrator. Under him the world of Islam was united again and enjoyed peace and prosperity. Muawia (Radiallahu anhu) ruled as caliph for about nineteen years (41- 60 Ah.). During this period Muawia (Radiallahu anhu) made arrangements for his son Yazid to be Caliph after him. This was the beginning of hereditary rule going against Selection by **Shura** (consultation). The dagger had been thrust into the political stability of Islam. Abdullah ibn Saba, the enemy of **Ahl al-Bait** and Islam induced Yazid to offer marriage to the woman who will poison Imam Hassan (Radiallahu anhu). Imam Hassan's wife, Joda poisoned him. This is how Imam Hassan was martyred, by poison.

### *IMAM HUSSAIN (Radiallahu anhu) AND YAZID THE CURSED- 60 AH. -64AH*

Imam Hassan, the beloved grandson of the Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam), was born in 3 AH, in **Madinah the Illuminated**, was martyred. The Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) had prophesized that he will stop the bloodshed in his **Ummah**. Imam Hassan (Radiallahu anhu) has been a victim of malicious propaganda since his martyrdom. I would like to emphatically state that he was a saintly man who preferred solitude, and the accusation of him marrying and divorcing, had been spread by mischief monger historians. He died at the age of 47, in 50 AH.

**Kufa** and **Basra** in Iraq, had become the main political centers, and the spiritual headquarters was, and will always remain, **Madinah the Illuminated**. The learned and pious all settled in Madinah. All-important matters were referred to them. The Muslims of **Madinah** refused to accept Yazid's nomination. In spite of this Hazrath Muawia (Radiallahu anhu)

persisted. The people of **Hijaaz** (Arabia) favored Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu).

Hazrath Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) was born in **Madinah** in 4 AH. He was now 45 years old. He was a beloved grandson of the Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) who grew up in the blessed lap of the Master. He had tried to talk to Muawia (Radiallahu anhu) to withdraw Yazid's nomination but he refused. Muawia (Radiallahu anhu) died at the age of 75, after ruling for about nineteen years. Muawia died in **Damascus** in 60 AH.

Yazid was a disgrace to the Umayyads in particular, and Islam in general. He indulged in alcohol, merrymaking and immoral activities. He was 35 years of age, on his ascension to the 'Holy Seat of Caliph'. During his four-year reign (60 AH. -64AH.) he abused power, oppressed the pious and spilled the holy blood of the **Ahl al-Bait**. This impious tyrant sent his emissaries to force people throughout the Muslim world to swear allegiance to him. He used all means possible, like bribery, coercion, pressure, threats and force to get people to accept him. He married women that Islam has prohibited and he legalized interest. As soon as he took office as Caliph, Yazid sent the governor of **Madinah**, Walid ibn Uqba to demand allegiance from Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) and prominent **Sahaba** who opposed him. Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) voiced his protest, and he spoke on behalf of all the pious, saying that Yazid was a sinner, impious and worthless, undeserving of any form of allegiance.

Walid warned Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) of the consequences of refusal, but Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) said that he could not give his hand to a tyrant. Yazid knew that his failure to get Imam Hussain's support meant that he would never get the support of the people of **Madinah**. He was blinded with fury and commanded Walid to force Imam Hussain to cooperate and if he still refused he should be beheaded. No amount of threats could make Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) change his attitude. Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) consulted his loyal companions, and they advised him to migrate to **Makkah** with his family. He heeded their advice. Abdullah ibn Zubayr (Radiallahu anhu) and his brother Ja'far also migrated to **Makkah the Ennobled**.

The citizens of the Holy City of **Makkah the Ennobled** welcomed Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) with overflowing love. The grandson of the Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam), the coolness of his blessed eye, the leader of the youths of paradise, had come to live in there midst. He was in every respect pleasing to Allah, courageous and bold, learned and pious, eloquent, fluent and concise, a fine and moving speaker, above all so dearly loved by the Beloved Rasul (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam). He was now 56 years old and it was about him that Rasul (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) said:

"O my Allah, I love this child. May you also love him and those who love him.'

Imam Hussain spent the months of **Shabaan** to **Zil Qadh** in **Makkah**. The people were spiritually uplifted with his blessed presence.

The people of **Kufa**, who were supporters of Hazrath Ali (Radiallahu anhu), got to know of the death of Hazrath Muawiya (Radiallahu anhu). They also heard that that Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) had refused to swear allegiance to Yazid. They decided to call upon Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) to take his rightful place as Caliph. He received an abundance of letters inviting him to **Kufa**. He consulted with his companions. Abdullah ibn Zubayr (Radiallahu anhu) advised that he should go, but ibn Abbas warned him to beware of the **Kufans** who had betrayed both Imam Ali (Radiallahu anhu) and Imam Hassan (Radiallahu anhu).

Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) decided to send his cousin, Muslim bin Akeel (Radiallahu anhu), to assess the situation in **Kufa**. Muslim bin Akeel (Radiallahu anhu) made Dua at the **Roza Mubarak** [at the Blessed Grave of the Holy Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) ] in **Madinah**. Then he took leave from his family and friends. On his arrival in **Kufa**, he was warmly received and more than 30 000 confirmed their support for Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu), with numbers increasing daily. When he was certain that the whole of **Iraq** was behind Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu), he invited him to come. He was certain that the true Caliphate would be reestablished and they would be rid of Yazid.

To Kufa

*INVITATION TO KUFA- MARTYRDOM OF IMAM MUSLIM (Radiallahu anhu)*

**Muslim bin Akeel (Radiallahu anhu)** had assessed the situation in **Iraq** and advised **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** to come to **Kufa**.

**Yazid's** spies had informed him of **Imam Muslim's** welcome in **Kufa**, his support there and the hospitality he received. **Yazid's** supporters advised him to replace **Numan bin Bashir**, the governor of **Kufa** who was sympathetic towards the family of the **Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)**. He acted in accordance with his ministers' advice and dismissed **ibn Bashir**, and placed **Ubaydullah ibn Ziyaad** in his place, as both heads of **Kufa** and **Basra**.

**Yazid** instructed **ibn Ziyaad**, to banish or kill **Imam Muslim (Radiallahu anhu)**. **Ubaidullah ibn Ziyaad** arrived in **Kufa** at a time when the **Kufans** were anxiously awaiting for the arrival of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**. **Ziyaad** took advantage of the situation and pretended to be **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**. **Ziyaad** realized that the people were in favor of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**. He called a meeting at the **Jaame Masjid** (main congregational mosque), disclosed his true identity, and warned the people that any opposition to him would be severely dealt with.

**Ibn Ziyaad** ordered that a list of all foreigners, who were not from **Kufa**, be given to him. Those who submitted the names would be absolved from blame and those who do not comply will be condemned to death. **Imam Muslim (Radiallahu anhu)** was living at a house of one of **Imam Hussain's** followers, whose name was **Mukhtar al- Thaqafi**. **Imam Muslim (Radiallahu anhu)** was accepting **bai'ah** (pledges of allegiance) on behalf of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**.

**Imam Muslim (Radiallahu anhu)** sought refuge in the house of **Hani Bin Uqba**. **Hani** was threatened to hand over **Imam Muslim (Radiallahu anhu)**; he refused and was consequently put to death. **Imam Muslim** and 4000 followers marched to **ibn Ziyaads** house. **Imam Muslim (Radiallahu anhu)** followers were threatened, that if they did not leave him they will be killed together with their families. The **Kufans** eventually abandoned him. He was left alone, captured, beaten to death and flung from the top of **ibn Ziyaads** fort. His body was hung in public to serve as a warning to those

who dare to challenge the regime. After this his body was pierced on to a lance and paraded in the streets. The heartless villains, reciters of the **Kalimah** (testifying faith) then killed **Imam Muslim's** children.

### **BETRAYAL**

Unsuspecting, **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** was on his way to **Kufa**. He made a stop and dispatched a messenger with a letter to the **Kufans** stating that he was on his way. The messenger was captured and put to death by **ibn Ziyaad**. **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** met many travelers on the way coming from **Kufa**, and they informed him about the turn of events in **Kufa**. **Imam Muslim's** brothers wanted to avenge their brother's death. Those who had joined on the way thinking of glory in **Iraq** became afraid. The sincere waited for the Imams decision. He explained the situation and said those who wish to leave may do so. Many left and only a few sincere, who had traveled with him from **Makkah**, remained. **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** arrived in **Kufa**.

**Ibne Ziyaad** received the news of **Imam Hussain's** arrival. He assigned **Hur bin Yazid** and 500 soldiers to keep a watch on **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**. **Imam Hussain** confronted **Hur** and enquired who he was. He replied that he was ordered to keep an eye on him and deliver him to **Ibne Ziyaad**. **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** replied that they, the **Kufans**, had invited him. **Hur** denied having any knowledge of such an invitation, so **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** showed him the letters. It was time for **Zuhr Salaat** (mid afternoon prayer) and **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** ordered the **Muezzin** (caller to prayer) to call the **Azaan** and **Iqamah** (call and summon to prayer). **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** asked **Hur** if they would pray separately or together. **Hur** replied that they will all read salaah behind **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**. The **Asr** Salaah (late afternoon prayer) was offered in the same manner.

After the **salaah** **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** addressed the congregation, saying that he had come on their invitation and if they wished to go back on their word, and not support the path of righteousness, he was willing to go back. **Hur** replied that he would request **Ibne Ziyaad** to permit them to move to another place outside **Madinah** and **Kufa**. **Ibne Ziyaads**

reply was that **Imam Hussain** should not be allowed to take refuge at any fort or fertile ground. **Hur** conveyed the news to **Imam Hussain** saying that he could only allow them to camp in an open place in the desert.

#### *AT KARBALA*

It was Thursday, **2 Muharram 60 AH**; **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** and his followers pitched camp at a place called **Karbala**. They were between the **Euphrates River** and a hill. **Ibne Ziyaad** was informed of **Imam Hussain's** whereabouts and on the **3 Muharram** he reinforced **Hurs** troops with, 4000 soldiers under **Amr bin Saad**. They were ordered to confront **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**. **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** warned **Hur** about the spiritual consequences of taking up arms against the family of the **Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)**. The material promises and greed for wealth and power blinded **Hur** and he paid no heed to the advice given.

Acting on the orders of **Ibne Ziyaad, Amr bin Saad** placed 500 horsemen on the banks of the river stopping the supply of water to **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** and his group. The basic need for survival was now being denied to the grandson of the owner of the fount of **Kauthar (Maalike Kauthar)** in paradise and the son of the waterbearer at **Kauthar (Saqie-Kauthar)**. The situation deteriorated and **Imam Abbas (Radiallahu anhu)**, the brother of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** was ordered was ordered to fetch water from the river under the escort of a few soldiers. He succeeded in getting 20 leather bags of water after a struggle.

#### Karbala

##### *thirst and determination*

The venerable **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**, 55 years of age, and seventy two of his followers, including, twenty three members, who came from the pure lineage and were close relatives, of **our Master, the Noble Messenger and revered Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)**, were camped at **Karbala**, thirsty and exhausted. **Imam Abbas (Radiallahu anhu)**, the brother of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** had managed to

get some water after a battle against the enemy troops who were guarding the river.

#### *negotiations*

Negotiations were continuing between the leadership of the two parties. It was the **9 Th Muharram** and no agreement could be reached. **Imam Hussain** put forward three conditions in a bid to finalize an agreement:

- q He should be left alone to return to where he had come from.
- q He should be allowed an audience with **Yazid** alone to settle the matter.
- q He should be allowed to go to the border and be left alone.

**Amr bin Saad** wrote to **Ibne Ziyaad** explaining the proposals. **Ibne Ziyaad** looked upon the proposals favorably, but **Shimr bin Zil Joushan** stopped **Ziyaad**, by poisoning his mind. He told him that if he let **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** out of his grip without getting the oath of allegiance to **Yazid**, **Yazid** would be upset with him.

**Ibne Ziyaad** ordered **Shimr** to go personally to **Amr** and instruct him to get a complete surrender from **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**. If he does not agree to surrender then they must go to war. He told **Shimr** that if **Amr** does not cooperate he should take over the leadership from **Amr**, kill **Imam Hussain** and bring his blessed head to him.

#### *prayers in the face of adversity*

When **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** saw the enemy forces coming towards them he asked **Hazrath Abbas (Radiallahu anhu)** to request a days grace so that he could supplicate and read salaah. The request was granted and **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** addressed his supporters. He told them that those that wanted to leave might do so, because his fate has been divinely decreed. All his supporters assured him of their wholehearted support. He said he would put out the campfire at night, so that those that change their mind may leave in the dark of night, and he

would not hold any enmity towards them. The entire night was spent offering prayers, invoking forgiveness from Allah, weeping and crying.

*Friday 10 Muharram 61 AH*

It was the day of **Ashura, Friday 10 Muharram 61 AH. Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** and his supporters had gone without food or water for three days. Not a drop of water or a morsel of food was available. The infant son of **Imam Hussain**, 6 month old **Ali Asgar** is thirsty. The mother has been dehydrated, and has not a single drop of milk to nurse her child. The **Fajr Azaan** (call to prayer) goes and this was to be their last congregational **salaat** together. The heads prostrate on the ground for the Creator were prepared to be sacrificed for Him. After the **salaat Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** made an additional supplication of patience for them. The battle strategy was being discussed and the flag was given to **Hazrath Abbas (Radiallahu anhu)**.

**Hazrath Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**, mounted a camel, went to the enemy camp and tried to speak sense into them. They replied that only if he gave his blessed hand into the wretched hand of **Yazid** they would leave him alone. The force of 22 000 was ready to stain the ground of **Karbala** with the blood of their Prophets Family.

**Hur bin Yazid** asked **ibn Saad** if he genuinely wanted to kill the Holy Prophets family. **Hur** knew how was standing between paradise and hell. He rode off towards **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** fell at his feet and asked for forgiveness. He joined the forces of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** and crowned himself with martyrdom. He gave his life with honor and dignity.

**Amr bin Saad** fired the first arrow, and the battle began. **Imam Hussain's (Radiallahu anhu)** followers fought with valor, determination and commitment. They were outnumbered, fatally wounded, but their bravery is indescribable. One by one they got martyred for truth and justice in the path of righteousness.

### *ahle baith on the battlefield*

When all the companions had adorned themselves with the crown of Martyrdom it was the turn of the **Ahl al-Bait** to take to the battlefield. The previous night **Imam Hussain** had a dream in which the **Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)** informed him that he and the male members of his family would be martyred the next day. The people who will kill him would be condemned to hell and therefore, they should bear it with patience.[\[11\]](#) He immediately woke every one up and told them about the glad tidings he received. **Syed Shah Muhammad Kabir of Danapur** writes [\[12\]](#) that upon hearing this dream everyone in **Imam Hussains** camp sat up and prayed with him. In the morning they put on **itr** (sweet fragrance of flowers), their best clothing, went to their womenfolk and took their leave and blessings. They told them they should be patient and not mourn. They then recited the verses of the **Holy Qur'aan** in which it is stated that martyrs are not dead.[\[13\]](#) They then went out bravely to earn eternal life.

I quote a few incidents after about 60 people had been martyred already:

- q **Hazrath Jafar** and **Abd ar-Rahman (Radiallahu anhu)**, the cousins of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** were martyred, then the two teenage sons of **Bibi Zainub (Radiallahu anhu)**, the sister of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**, sought their mothers permission to go to the battlefield. **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** refused saying they were not mature enough. **Bibi Zainub (Radiallahu anhu)** intervened and told **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** not to deprive her sons of the crown of martyrdom.
  
- q **Hazrath Abdullah (Radiallahu anhu)**, the eldest son of **Imam Hassan (Radiallahu anhu)** pleaded with his uncle to go out. He killed 82 before being blessed with martyrdom. The second son of **Imam Hassan (Radiallahu anhu)**, **Imam Hassan al-Musanna (Radiallahu anhu)** was severely wounded and he fell to the ground. He was mistaken for dead and subsequently saved.

- q The youngest son of **Imam Hassan (Radiallahu anhu)** was deeply saddened when his uncle flatly refused to grant him permission to go out. Whilst he was crying he remembered that his father had written something and tied on his hand, with the instruction that he must open it when he is in the most difficult position. When he opened it his tears turned into tears of joy, because it was an order to go out and be martyred in **Karbala. Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** allowed him to go out.
  
- q **Umar bin Hassan (Radiallahu anhu)** and **Abu Bakr bin Hassan (Radiallahu anhu)** sought their uncle's permission and went out. One by one the flowers of the garden of **Bibi Fatimah (Radiallahu anha)** wore the crown of martyrdom.
  
- q Eighteen year old, **Ali Akbar (Radiallahu anhu)**, the second son of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** received his fathers permission to go out. His elder brother **Imam Zain al-Aberdeen**, who was absolutely bedridden with fever, unable to stand, pleaded that he should precede his brother. **Imam Hussain** refused to allow him to go out.
  
- q **Imam Hussain's (Radiallahu anhu)** third son, **Ali Asgar (Radiallahu anhu)**, a six month old baby, was dying of thirst. **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** took his baby in his hands, and pleaded to the enemy to give him some water, but an arrow was fired into the baby's throat.

*imam hussain's shahadat*

**Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)** was the only male left to go out. He fought bravely and killed hundreds, before thousands of arrows rained on him. Covered with wounds from head to toe he fell off his horse. His attackers surrounded him. 'He addressed them saying,

"You made me and my children wander thirsty in these desert wastes. You gave me no water and I know better than to expect any from you. But at

least give my children a drop to drink, so that I may forgive you for the great wrong you have done."

They replied that they would not give a single drop. He then kicked the ground, from which a crystal spring burst forth. Their eyes opened wide in amazement. He said: "Now you see the quality of our patience. We have only suffered like this in order to teach the community and make them understand that they must be prepared to sacrifice everything they have, when they engage in necessary struggle against the tyrannical and the corrupt. Otherwise water was at our command. If we had wished, we would have drawn it up and drunk it before now. We refrained from doing so however, in order to set the community of Muhammad (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) an example of sacrifice."[\[14\]](#)

The time was a little before sunset on the **10 Th. of Muharram 61 AH**. He told his attackers that he had not missed a single prayer in his life, so they should allow him to read his **Asr Salaat**. As he bent down in prostration, **Shimr** beheaded him. The nectar of martyrdom quenched his thirst. Our mother **Umm Salama (Radiallahu anha)** , said:

"I heard the jinn weeping and mourning the venerable Hussain".

**Sheik Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (Radiallahu anhu)**[\[15\]](#) says that **Jafar ibn Muhammad (Radiallahu anhu)** said:

"Seventy thousand angels alighted on the grave of al-Hussain ibn Ali (Radiallahu anhu), on the day when he was mortally wounded, and will continue to weep over him until Yawm al-Qiyaamah (the Day of Resurrection.)."

We should not be surprised to hear that the very **jinn** wept at the martyrdom of **Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)**. All the angels in heaven and earth wept.

q **Sayyid Jalil Shihab** al-Din Ahmad ibn Rifai (Rahmatullah-alai) said:

"Heaven and earth wept for the martyr cruelly wronged, as he lay with his radiant countenance all stained with blood. The blessed hands of Imam Hussain, so thirsty when he fell a martyr by the sword, were powerful enough to make the oceans flow." [\[16\]](#)

q **Khwaja Muin al-Din Hassan Chisti** (Radiallahu anhu) said:

*"Shah ast Hussain, Badshah ast Hussain,*

*Din ast Hussain, Din panah ast Hussain,*

*Sar daad, Na daad dast dar daste Yazid,*

*Haqqua kae binayae La illaha hast Hussain"*

The king of martyrs is Hussain, The king of kings is Hussain,  
Hussains is the way of life (Islam), The savior of Islam is Hussain,  
He gave his head but not his hand (allegiance) into the hand of Yazid,  
In truth the foundation of the adoration of one Allah is Hussain."

As the horses trampled the blessed body of our Master, on the ground, the tears flowed from the eyes of the ladies. Their cries reached the Throne on High (**Arsh**), and made the soul of **Fatimah the Radiant (Radiallahu anha)** weep. They distressed the **blessed soul of The Beloved Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)**

The Imam was martyred at the age of 56 years, 5 months and five days.

## THE AFTERMATH

*Treatment of the martyrs and survivors*

*Imam Hussain's (Radiallahu anhu)* blessed body lay in a pool of blood in the desert. The tyrants forced the women and children of *Ahl al-Bait* out of the tents and set the tents on fire. The weather changed. A red dust storm, blew in the desert, the sky became dark. Some reports say that blood rained from the skies, and the sun did not shine for three days. The bodies of the martyrs lay on the desert sand of *Karbala* for three days. The heads of the martyrs were pierced onto spears and taken to *Kufa*.

Ibne Ziyaad, the accursed sent the blessed head of Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) to Yazid the damned, in Damascus. Imam Hussain's beloved son Zain al-Aberdeen (Radiallahu anhu), and his sister, Bibi Zaynab (Radiallahu anhu), the survivors of Karbala were also sent. The tyrant Yazid mocked them and ordered that their blessed head should be exhibited throughout the Muslim world, but his advisors warned him that as the news of the tragedy was reaching different areas and Muslim anger and anger was being expressed, he withdrew his orders. Few heads were severed in Karbala but a multitude of heads now took notice of the injustice being perpetuated. He now ordered that the noble relatives of the Imam be escorted to Madinah the Illuminated.

*bibi zaynub (Radiallahu anha) in madinah*

When the caravan reached *Madinah the Illuminated*, weeping and sighs could be heard from everywhere. The people became delirious with grief. *Bibi Zainub (Radiallahu anhu)*, went to the *Roza Mubarak* (The Blessed Grave of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)). She said, 'Salutations upon you, My beloved grand father. Your family has been massacred. The readers of your Kalimah (testification of faith) have made us widows. Your children were tortured and killed without any water to drink. Your grandson Hussain gave his life for justice.'

*the blessed head*

The blessed head of the venerable *Hussain (Radiallahu anhu)* was sent to *Ascolan* in *Syria* where the local governor had it buried. When the Crusaders captured *Ascolan* much later, a *Fatimid* named *Salih* paid a lot of money to buy the blessed head from them. He received it with parade and honor. He carried it upon his own head, placed it upon an ebony throne and wrapped it in green silk. He had a casket made of solid gold and lined with musk. The blessed head was placed in this casket. It was laid to rest, in a special *Mazaar* (Blessed grave) in the mosque of *Hussain*, which *Salih* had built in *Cairo*. Despite the inevitable differences of opinion about what did actually become of the blessed head, the great saints and most *Sufis* maintain that it is at *Masjid al-Hussain* in *Cairo*, where it is visited everyday by the *Qutb* (Cardinal Saint) of our age.[\[17\]](#)

### *yazid attacks Makkah and Madinah*

In the year 62 AH. The army of **Yazid** invaded *Madinah the Illuminated*, for three days, murdering over 10 000 companions of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) and their children. They used **Masjid al-Nabawi**, in which the blessed body of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) rests, as a stable for their horses. It was covered with urine and filth from their horses.[\[18\]](#)

*Makkah the Ennobled* was thereafter attacked and the covering of the blessed *Kaaba* was set on fire. The attack on *Makkah the Ennobled* lasted for over two months. Soon thereafter **Yazid** died.

### *symbolic red and green garments*

**Yunus Emre**, the popular Turkish **Sufi** Poet, composed some **Sufi** songs, in the late 13<sup>th</sup> Or 14<sup>th</sup> Century, wherein the Prophets grandsons played a central role. He also makes reference to a well known legend, according to which the Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) saw **Jibraeel (Alai' his salaam)** bring a red and green garment for his grandsons, and was informed that these garments pointed to their future deaths through the sword and poison respectively[\[19\]](#)

### *Tazia (model of the tomb of Imam Hussain)*

The practice of **Tazia** (model of the tomb of Imam Hussain) was started by **Amir Timur**, who invaded *India* in 1398 AD. He built the first **Tazia** after he returned to **Samarkand** from a pilgrimage to **Karbala**. The word **Tazia** is a Persian word, which means, “*expressing sorrow with passion*”. Especially the **Shia** community adopted this practice, hence the Sunni **Ulema**, who mean well and have a lot of love in their hearts, had passed **fatwa** (religious decree) against this practice. In the South African context however Hazrath Soofie Saheb (Rahmatullah-alai) introduced it as a **Tariqah** (methodology) in the **Chisti Nizami Habibi Sufi** order to mobilize the hearts in the love of the Martyrs of **Karbala** and the Blessed Five (**Panjattan Paak**). I must however stress here that this practice is not for all and sundry to copy. It is for those duly authorized by Khulafa (deputies) of the spiritual order. The adoption of this practice by laymen has opened the door to criticism. Many **Ulema** having their roots and training in the **Indo-Pak** subcontinent however, have difficulty in accepting this act of love, in the **Sunni** context.

### *majalis*

The **Majalis** (gathering in which the events of **Karbala**) are related is said to be a practice of **Bibi Zaynab** (Radiallahu anha) who gathered around the inquirer's on her return to **Madinah the Illuminated**, and related the events to them. There is a well-known **Hadith** in which it is stated that:

“The compassion of Allah descends when the deeds of the righteous are mentioned.”

*kitchra niaz*

To prepare **kitchra** on Ashura day is a **Sunnah** of **Hazrath Nuh** (Alai' his salaam) It is stated that when the great flood stopped and the ark stopped at **Mount Judi**, it was the **Day of Ashura. Hazrath Nuh (Alai' his salaam)** ) prepared a meal consisting of seven varieties of grains and fed the people. [\[20\]](#)

Hazrath Soofie Saheb (Rahmatullah-alai) initiated this practice in South Africa as a means of honoring the Day of Ashura and Esaale sawaab (recurring benefit) in the name of the martyrs of Karbala. The author on a visit to Egypt in 1998 also witnessed this being practiced there on the 10<sup>th</sup> Muharram.

The startling event of **Karbala** shook the very foundation of Muslims. The consciousness of Muslims was stirred, to always practice Islam honestly and sincerely, and stand for what is right irrespective of the consequences.

### Status of a Martyr and the “Spiritual Fellowship”

4:69

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ  
وَالصَّٰدِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّٰلِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا

Those who submit to Allah and His Beloved Prophet (establishing harmony with them), are blessed with the companionship (spiritual fellowship) of the Prophets, the Intensely Truthful and Sincere (Servants of Allah), The Martyrs (who are Witnesses to Allah), and the possessors of sound Godliness in general. Ah! What a beautiful companionship! This is a bounty from Allah, and He suffices as Knower. (And because Allah affirms it, don't question it.)

### *beautiful companionship*

Islam did not come to have followers who are Muslim only in name, or ritualistically, or from the point of view of certain **aqaid** (principles of belief) which they may hold but don't practice. Islam came to transform human beings in order that they may become worthy of companionship of any of these four categories.

I have to emphasize here that faith in God and the Messenger of God is to be lived and not merely held. This **Iman** (faith) should be a living, dynamic and consequential faith. The Holy Prophet has been appointed by Allah as the Divine Instrument of **tazkiyah** (purification of the personality) for all time. (62: 2-4 etc.).

Those that have been blessed, to be in this Blessed Fellowship, among them the central luminary being Muhammad, the most excellent, Beloved of God, (in whom God's Choicest blessings abide in abounding measure), they also become God's Beloved, and acquire new properties (qualities). Their attitude in the transcendental realm of existence is one of compassion, sympathy and kindness towards those that remember them. To receive them however, it is necessary to rise up to the spiritual level, where contact becomes possible. Associations with spiritualized personalities who are physically present in this world, and with those on the transcendental dimension assist man in attaining heights of spirituality.

The companionship means: if a piece of iron stays in the company of a magnet, it becomes magnetized. It acquires new properties (qualities). Similarly if a gardener stays in the company of fragrant flowers, he himself attains fragrance by being in touch with the flowers. We pray to Allah daily for this spiritual companionship in **Sura Fateha**.

### *establishing spiritual contact*

Keeping this perspective in mind the question often emerges: God is Ever-Living, Eternal and Omnipresent; hence communion with Him is possible. But the Messenger of God and those categories mentioned were human beings who died a long time ago. How can communication and establishment of intimate spiritual relation with them be possible?

The Holy Qur'aan answers this misgiving very clearly:

- Firstly, the human personality is not annihilated at death; it is transferred from one level of existence to another with its Identity intact, - the life after death being a new life.
- Secondly, the levels of existence after death are of a different quality, in the case of each category of human beings, including Muslims. Thus about the martyrs it has been said: Sura 2 Verse 154

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

• And call not those who have been slain in the way of Allah dead. They are alive only you cannot perceive them.

3:169 again speaks of the Martyrs:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾ فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلِهِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾

Think not of those who are slain in the way of Allah, as dead. They are living. Allah provides for them. They are jubilant because of what Allah has given them of His bounty, rejoicing for the sake of those who have not joined them but are left behind: no fear have they neither do they grieve. They rejoice because of favor from Allah and kindness, and that Allah does not waste the wages of the Believers.

Hence the difference in quality of the life of the ordinary Muslim and the life of the Martyr, after death is very clear. The Martyrs life after death is full of enjoyment and activity and of attachment to those Muslims whom are left behind in their earthly existence.

- The word for martyr in Arabic is **Shaheed**, which is from the root **sh-h-d**. Many shades of meaning can be inferred from this root: Mushahada: which means to witness or to receive something. The martyr, according to

traditional report (Hadith), at the time of martyrdom, before the blood can drop on the ground, receives many bounties from Allah:

1. His sins are forgiven.
2. Allah is pleased with him and gives him the blessings of the hereafter.
3. He witnesses the beauty of Allah unveiled.
4. His **Ruh** (essential being) is taken to the presence of Allah.
5. Angels witness his martyrdom (**mashud bin malaik.**). It is recorded in the authentic books of Hadith that, Hazrath Abdullah ibn Abbas had seen the Holy Prophet (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) in a dream during the period when Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) was martyred. Rasulullah (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) told him that he had witnessed the **Shahaadat** of Imam Hussain (Radiallahu anhu) and his followers. Thus the Martyrdom of Imam Hussain is above all martyrdom since our Beloved Rasul (Salla'llahu'alaihi wa sallam) has witnessed it. (**Mashud bir Rasul**).

Ashura

Sura 9 Verse 36

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ

The number of months in the sight of Allah is twelve months. {Inscribed} in the book of Allah, on the day when He created the heavens and the earth; four of them are sacred.

### *sacred month*

Muharram is one of the four sacred months. (*al-ashur al-muharrama*). It includes the Day of Ashura, and Allah enormously enhances the recompense of those who worship him on that day.

Fasting, caring for the orphans and needy and providing a meal to a fasting person on that day carries great spiritual rewards. Fast should be kept on the ninth and tenth of Muharram.

### *significant events*

The Holy Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) has enumerated the significance of this day in *ahadith*. He has stated that

- Allah created the heavens, mountains, oceans, pen (*qalam*) and tablet (*lawh*) on this day.
- Hazrath Ibrahim (Alai' his salaam) was born, and Allah saved him from the furnace on this day.
- Pharaoh was drowned,
- Allah relented towards Adam (Alai' his salaam) ,
- Isa (Alai' his salaam) was born and
- *qiyama* will occur on this day. [\[21\]](#)

In another tradition it is stated that

- , heaven, earth, stars, *arsh*, (heavenly throne), *kursi* (pedestal), tablet and pen were created on this day.
- Gabriel (Alai' his salaam) all angels and, Adam (Alai' his salaam) were created on Ashura.
- The first rains and the first gift of mercy (*rahma*) descended on this day.

### *cosmic birth*

There is a lack of unanimity amongst the scholars as to why the day of Ashura came to be so called. Without going into the various opinions I mention just one. Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (Rahmatullah-alai) says that it was also on this day that our Beloved Rasul (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) was born. But it is unanimously accepted that the physical birth of Rasul (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) took place on the twelfth of the blessed Rabi ul-Awwal. Therefore many Urafa (people of insight) has stated *that* this could be a reference to the cosmic birth of the *Nur e Muhammadi (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)*. He is the essence of all creation. [\[22\]](#)

### *MARTYRS OF KARBALA*

It is therefore evident that the tenth day of Muharram is a special chosen day of Allah, therefore He effected many events on this particular day. The martyrdom of al-Hussain ibn Ali (Radiallahu anha) and the members of the *Ahle Bait* (members of the Prophet's house) on the Day of Ashura in 61 AH has a great significance.

## Glossary

### A

Aalim / pl. Ulema

Accomplished Scholar of Islam.

Ahl al-Bait

Household members of the prophet (peace is on him)'s house.

Aqaaid

Principles of belief.

Ashab as-Safa

Companions of Holy Prophet (Peace is on him) engaged in internal purification.

Aulia Allah

sing. Wali Allah

Friend of Allah. Term used for Sufis who attain proximity to Allah..

Azaan

The call to prayer.

### B

Bai'ah

a covenant, pledging obedience, allegiance and protection.

Bait ul-maal

the treasury of the Islamic state.

H

Al-Hikmah

Wisdom

the first stage in the Sufi Path.

Hadith

pl. Ahadith

the verbalised form of a tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace is on him) constitutive of his Sunnah.

Hazrath

His / Her eminence.

Hijaaz

Proper Islamic name for Holy Area called Saudi Arabia.

Hijra

The departure of the Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Madinah

designation for the Islamic Lunar Calendar.

J

Jaame Masjid

main congregational mosque.

Jihad

self-exertion in the path of Allah including peaceful as well as violent means.

K

Al-Khilafah Ar-Rashidah

Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali are called the Rightly Guided.

al-Kitaab

The Holy Qur'aan.

Kalimah

Testifying faith.

Karbala

A desert town in Iraq.

Kauthar

Fount in Paradise. The abundance of virtue given to the Holy Prophet (peace is on him)

Kharijites

Those who broke away from the main-stream of the Muslim community.

Khulafa

The Caliphs- vicegerent of Holy Prophet (peace is on him).

M

Maalik

Master.

Mashud bir Rasul

Witnessed by the Holy Prophet.

Masjid an-Nabawi

The mosque of the Holy Prophet (peace is on him) in Madinah, Arabia.

Mazaar

Blessed grave.

Murshid

Spiritual guide.

N

Nabiyin

sing. Nabi

Prophet of Allah. The one who acquaints his followers with unseen realities. He exemplifies the message of God in his own lifestyle.

P

Panjattan

The Blessed Five. The Holy Prophet (Peace is on him), his daughter Fatimah, son in law Ali, and grandsons, Hassan and Hussain (Allah be pleased with them all).

Q

Qur'aan

The final word of God as revealed through His last messenger Muhammad (peace is on him).

Quraish

The tribe of Prophet Muhammad (Peace is on him).

Qutb

An axis or pivot. A perfect being in Islam through whom the blessings of Allah flow into this universe.

R

Radiallahu anhu/anha/anhum

May Allah be well pleased with him/her/them.

Roza Mubarak

The Blessed Grave of the Holy Prophet.

S

Safa al-qalb

Purification of the Heart.

Sahaba pl. Ashaab

Companions of Holy Prophet Muhammad .

Salaat

Prayers offered by Muslims.

Salla' Ilaahu'alaihi wa sallam

Allah has bestowed upon him His blessings and peace.

Saqi

The cup bearer. It stands for the spiritual guide who provides spiritual sustenance to the disciple.

Shahaadat

Martyrdom.

Shariah

Islamic code of law.

Shuhada

sing. Shaheed

The martyr who falls in the cause of Allah.

Shura

Consultation.

Siddiqin

Those who testify to the truth, verbally and actively.

Silsilah

Spiritual order.

Sunnah

The practice and life example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace is on him).

T

Ta'alluq

To be spiritually linked to or physically in the Company of.

Tasawwuf

The science of Spiritual Culture.

Tazia

Model of the tomb of Imam Hussain.

Tazkiyah

lit.- pruning. The process of spiritual transformation and purification.

U

Ummah

Community.

The community as identified by its ideology, law, religion and group consciousness, ethics and morals, culture and art.

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