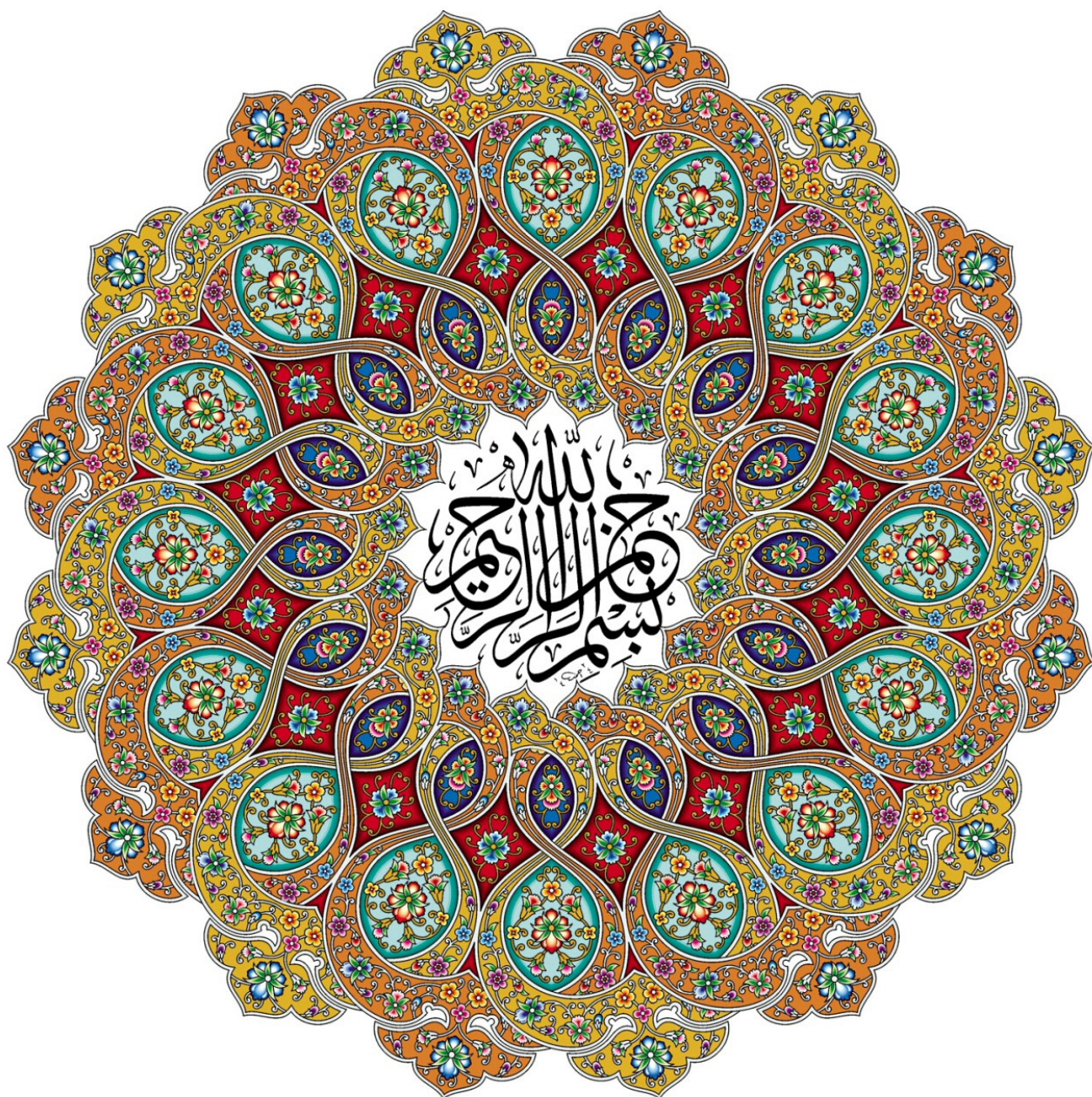


Auzo Billahi Minash Shaitan ir Rajeem

I seek Allah's protection from Satan, the accursed



Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem

In the Name of God, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful



Limited Edition



Eleven Majalis © Maharajkumar Mohammad Amir Haider Khan

First published:	August 2017
Second (revised) edition:	June 2020
Third (revised) edition:	June 2021
Fourth (revised) edition:	February 2024
Fifth (fully revised & expanded) edition:	March 2025



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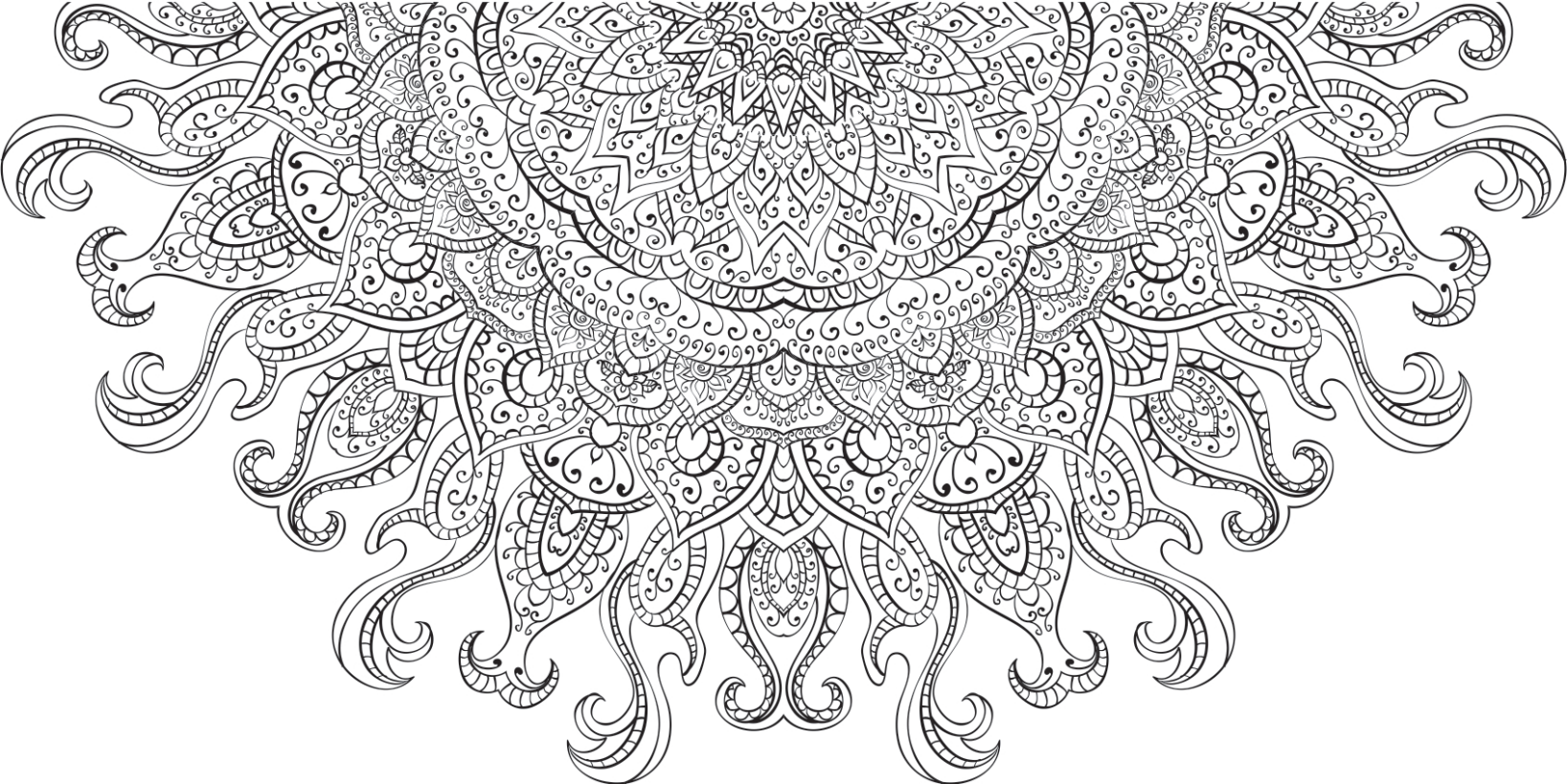
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Published by InHouse Publishing
www.inhousepublishing.com.au



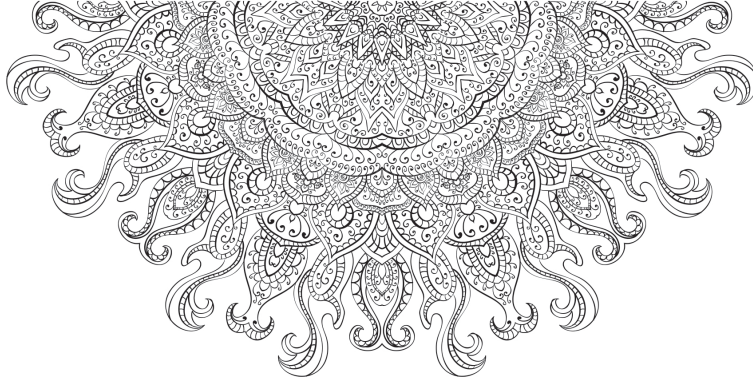


ELEVEN MAJALIS



(Lectures / Sermons - Battle of Karbala)

Maharajkumar Mohammad
Amir Haider Khan
of Mahmudabad, India



وَقُلْ
رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

¹¹⁴ ... *Wa Qul 'Rabbi Zidni Ilma'*

¹¹⁴ ... *and say, 'My Lord! Increase me in Knowledge.'*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 20 (Ta Ha : Ta Ha) Ayah 114*



*'O God! Make me benefit from what you have taught me,
teach me what is of benefit to me
and increase my knowledge.'*

Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Nahj al Fasahah; Tradition No. 1460; Page 207

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem

In the name of God, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

يَا حَفِیْظُ

Ya Hafeezu - 'The Preserver'

يَا حَافِیْظُ

Ya Hafizu - 'The Protector'

يَا نَصِیْرُ

Ya Naseeru - 'The Helper'

يَا نَاصِرُ

Ya Nasiru - 'The Supporter'

يَا قَدِیْرُ

Ya Qadeeru - 'The Ominipotent One'

يَا قَادِرُ

Ya Qadiru - 'The Powerful'

يَا كَرِیْمُ

Ya Karimu - 'The Most Generous'

يَا رَحِیْمُ

Ya Raheemu - 'The Merciful'

REFERENCES:

With one exception, all English translations of the Holy Qur'an have been taken from 'The Qur'an', translated by Ali Quli Qara'i, published by the Islamic College for Advanced Studies Press, London, UK, 6th edition, 2018, ISBN-13: 978-172 157 5213.

The solitary exception is *Surah al-Ikhlās*: Appendix 10, which has been taken from 'The Glorious Qur'an', translated by M.H. Shakir, published by Ansariyan Publications, Qum, Islamic Republic of Iran, 2nd reprint, 2008, ISBN 978 964 438 3250.

Most of the English transliterations of the text are from The Holy Qur'an, www.quran411.com

ROMANISATION (or LATINISATION):

Very many languages, like Arabic, do not use the Latin alphabets. Romanisation (Latinisation), is the conversion of the words of the original writing system (in a different alphabet), using the Latin alphabet to read as per the sound (and accent) of the foreign language word. Depending on the regional variation in accents and pronunciation of words – romanisation of words can vary greatly, the process being very subjective.

As an example, the name Mohammad, when Romanised as pronounced in different accents and languages, differs. In Persian, it would be Mohammad, in Turkish, Muhammet, in Russian, Mukhammed and Egyptian Arabic, Mohamed. In the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the officially accepted spelling is now Mohammad. A fact: Today, 'Mohammad' is the most used name by mankind.

ABBREVIATIONS:

Abbreviations are not universal or standardised and may be misunderstood or confusing.

Some scholars have voiced concerns about the use of abbreviation in written Islamic text, especially considering the use of abbreviation for salutations, as not a proper greeting. These scholars classify abbreviations as inappropriate and rather disrespectful (especially, if the abbreviation is read as an acronym).

When mentioning the name of a Prophet of God, an Angel, an Imam, or members of the Holy (purified¹) Family (the *Ahl al-Bayt*), it is mandatory to send upon them blessings and peace.

¹ The Purified Holy Family: Almighty God, gave the members of the household of the Holy Prophet, the *Ahl al-Bayt*, a very special status and blessed them with a divine spiritual purification. (They are also designated as the *Ahl al-Kisa*, the *Al al-Aba* and the *Ahl e Zikr*.) These 'purified' blessed individuals are five in total.

- (i) Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
- (ii) Syeda Fatima Zahra (s.a) his only daughter
- (iii) Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) his cousin & son-in-law
- (iv) Imam Hasan (a.s) his 1st grandson
- (v) Imam Hussain (a.s) his 2nd grandson

Known as 'the verse of purification' (*Ayat al-Tathir*) – the spiritual purification of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (people of the household) is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

³³ ... *Indeed, God desires to repel all impurity from you,
O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification.*
Holy Qur'an: *Surah 33 (al-Ahzab : The Confederates) Ayah 33*

Sending salutations upon the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) are mandatory; and must be done in full, at all times. In any language, written abbreviations (for example, pbuh: peace be upon him, or any variants) are unacceptable.

Specifically for the last Prophet of Islam, scholars are agreed and highly recommended a specific salutation called ‘*Salawat*’² (also called a *Darood*), to be proclaimed whenever his blessed name is evoked. There are very many, very acceptable variations of ‘*Salawat*’.

⁵⁶ *Indeed, God and His angels bless the Prophet;
O you who have faith!
Invoke blessings on him and invoke peace
upon him in a worthy manner.*

Holy Qur’an: *Surah 33 (al-Ahzab : The Confederates) Ayah 56*

Cognisant of these points, the minimal use of abbreviations was deemed unavoidable in this work. Abbreviations are often used in brackets.

- a.s: Stands for *alay’his salaam*, which translates to ‘Upon him be blessings of peace’. This salutation is a prayer for Prophets, Imams, and the male members of the Prophet’s Family (the *Ahl al-Bayt*).
- atfs: For the Arabic ‘*ajjal’allahu ta’ala farajahu al-sharif*’, which translates to ‘May Almighty Allah hasten the reappearance of the noble Imam’ (the 12th and last Imam; al-Mahdi).
- l.a: For the Arabic *La’anahu Allah*, which translates to ‘May he be far removed from the Mercy of God; cursed, extremely debased and disgraced, in this life and the hereafter’. *La’anahu Allah* is masculine, *La’anaha Allah* is feminine. Practically the opposite of sending a salutatory greeting or a spiritual blessing, in this book this abbreviation is used sparingly so as not to distract from the essential message.
- s.a: For the Arabic ‘*salaamullah alayhaa*’, which translates to ‘Upon her be blessings of peace’. This is a mandatory salutation for the esteemed female members of the Prophet’s family.
- SWT: Abbreviation for ‘*Subhanahu Wa Ta’ala*’ – an Arabic phrase meaning ‘Glory be to Him, the Exalted’. An expression of deep reverence and immense respect used by all Muslims when the name ‘Allah’ (SWT) is written or mentioned (uppercase letters are used).

² *Salawat* (also called a *Darood* / *Darood Sharif*): *Salawat* is the plural form of *salat* – which simply means ‘to call’. A calling from a higher source is called ‘*Rahmat*’ – while from a lower source is called a *Du’a* (pray). The *salawat* of Angels is called a ‘*Tazkeiah*’.

Essentially, a *salawat* is an Islamic (complimentary) Arabic phrase which contains spiritual veneration for the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him). It is obligatory to recite this in Muslim daily prayers, and also whenever the Holy Prophet’s name is mentioned.

‘SALAWAT’ / ‘DAROOD’



*Allahumma sall'ay ala Mohammasin
wa aal e Mohammad*

*O' God, send Your blessings upon Mohammad and
the family of Mohammad*



*'Wherever you may be,
invoke blessings on me
for verily your blessing reaches me.'*

Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Kanz al-'Ummal, Number 2147;
Mizan ul Hikmah Page 486



*'No Supplication reaches the heaven,
unless one recites salutation on
Mohammad (peace be upon him) and his progeny.'*

Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s)
Sawab al-A'amal, Page 203

*‘May God damn the slaves
of Dirhams and Dinars.’*

Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Nahj al Fasahah; Tradition No. 1283; Page 183



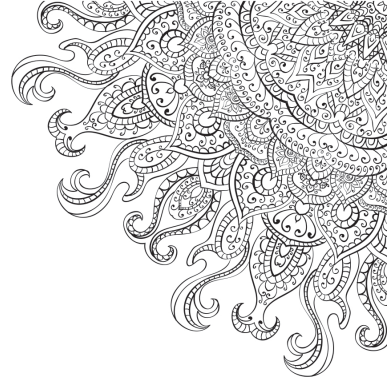
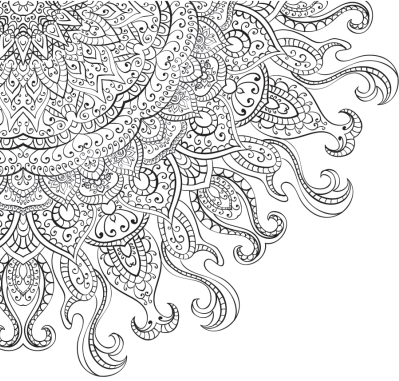
*‘The love for Allah and the love for the
world cannot ever coexist in one heart.’*

Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Tanbih al-Khawatir, Vol 2, Page 122;
Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 579



*‘Who could have determined,
from the dendrites of the brain,
that Denarius,
Dirhams and Dinars,
Dimes and Dollars,
– the worldly dirty lucre – money,
– the ‘root’ of all evil – money,
would derange & destroy its doings.’*

Dr Syed K.H. Shah

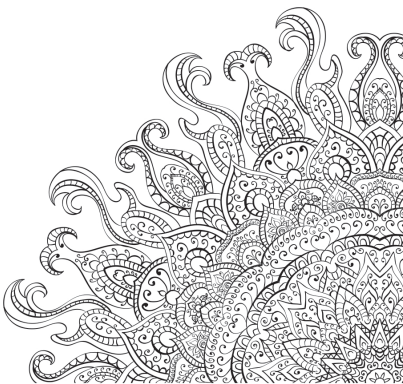
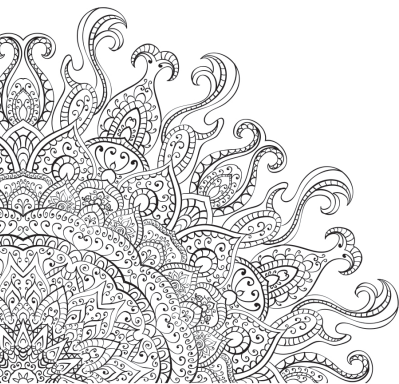


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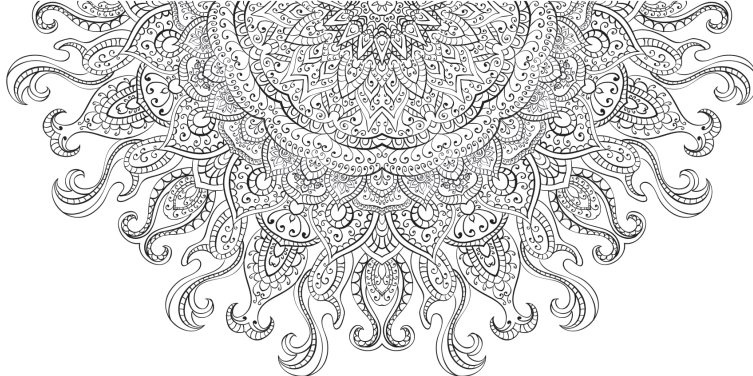
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DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this publication to our current living Imam³, the Imam of our present time: Mohammad ibn al-Hasan⁴ (atfs).

Known by his numerous glorious titles rather than his name, he is generally addressed respectfully as Imam al-Mahdi⁵ (atfs) and Sahib al'-Asr waz Zaman⁶ (atfs).

His other noble titles include:

- i. Hujjatullah Arabic for 'Proof of Allah'
- ii. al-Hujjah Arabic for 'The Proof'
- iii. al-Qa'im Arabic for 'One who Rises'
- iv. al-Muntadhar Arabic for 'The Awaited One'
- v. Khalif al-Salih Arabic for 'Best & Most Righteous Successor'

We all eagerly await his advent (*Zuhoor*⁷), as he is currently in occultation (*Ghaibat*⁸).

May Almighty Allah hasten his reappearance and make us among his followers.

³ *Imam* in Arabic means 'the leader' (plural: *A'immah*).

⁴ His *Kunya* (Agnomen) is Abul Qasim. He is also known as 'Dilawar'.

⁵ Imam al-Mahdi (atfs) – Arabic for 'The Guided One' – the 12th and last Imam. He is presently alive but in (the second, 'greater') occultation.

⁶ Arabic for 'Master of the Time and Era'.

⁷ *Zuhoor* in Arabic means 'appearance'.

⁸ *Ghaibat* in Arabic means occultation. The word is derived from the Latin root word 'occultare', meaning to hide from view, to cover, to disguise, or to conceal identity. In Shi'a Islam, this refers to the awaited messianic figure – Imam al-Mahdi (atfs), the 12th and last Imam, a male descendant of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) – going into temporary disappearance.

THE 12TH AND LAST IMAM THE IMAM OF OUR TIME ABU AL-QASIM MOHAMMAD IBN AL-HASAN AL-ASKARI KNOWN AS *AL-MAHDI* (ATFS)

Imam *al-Mehdi* (atfs) was born on the 15th *Sha'ban* in 255AH / 869AD in Samarra (modern day Iraq).

His spiritually blessed father Imam al-Hasan (a.s) known as al-Askari was the 11th Imam. He was held under close surveillance, persecuted, imprisoned and finally poisoned on the orders of the tyrannical Abbasid Caliph al-Mu'tamid. He was martyred on the 8th Rabi al-Awwal 260AH; aged 28 years.

Narrations state, his noble mother, Lady Narjis Khatoon (s.a) was a Princess. Her father was Yusha, and she was a granddaughter of a Roman (Byzantine) Emperor. She was also related to Simon, a disciple of (Jesus) Prophet Isa (a.s). Different narrations mention her name as Susan, Raihana, Saqeel and Khamt.

Lady Narjis (s.a) was being badgered to marry a Commander in the Roman army. God had bestowed her with other majestic plans.

In a vivid dream, Hazrat Maryam (s.a) – The blessed mother of Prophet Isa (a.s), appeared, and gave her amazing news, (Saint Mary – Mother of Jesus, as in the Bible).

Lady Narjis (s.a) was to marry a noble, and pious man; the Imam. Their union would be blessed with a son. This son would be the great, much awaited, prophesised messiah. She would be protected, guided, and was to follow divine instructions.

By Holy decree, she was sold at a slave market, in Bagdad (Iraq), and became the wife of Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s). She and her husband are both buried in Samarra (Iraq).

Due to the danger of the political era, the pregnancy of Lady Narjis (s.a), and the birth of Imam al-Mahdi (atfs), were divinely and deliberately concealed.

On the Imam's right arm, since birth, is written:

⁸¹*And say, 'The truth has come, and falsehood has vanished.
Falsehood is indeed bound to vanish.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 17 (al-Isra : The Night Journey) Ayah 81*

He lived in hiding under the protection and tutelage of his father. Upon the martyrdom of his father, at the young age of about five years, he became the 12th and final Imam.

Again, due the political climate of the era, he was in mortal danger from the cruel Abbasid rulers. As he has a very important status (being the last of the Imams) and divine role, he went into 'occultation'. He was invisible and hidden from ordinary men but appeared only to his deputies, to provide guidance, to his followers – the Shi'a.

Upon the martyrdom of his father, the young Imam went into a 'minor occultation', (*Ghaibat e Sughra*; lasting 69 years – 872AD to 939AD) communicating with his Shi'a through four deputies.

In the year 329AH / 939AD – he went into the 'greater occultation' (*Ghaibat e Kubra*) and will reappear when God wills (this will be at a time when the world will be filled with great oppression and tyranny). Imam Mehdi (atfs) is reported to have said 'the time of my reappearance and return - is with Allah, whosoever specifies it, is a liar.'

He is the much-awaited messiah, with the same name (Mohammad) and kunya (Abu al-Qasim) of the Holy Prophet himself. Also, his appearance, character, habits and good virtues would most resemble the last Messenger of God. He will return to remove all evil and injustices in the world. Delivering universal welfare, divine economic equality, justice and peace to humanity. He will rule for about 40 years.

One of the signs heralding his return will be the rising of the Sun from the West

According to narrations, his reappearance will be heralded by the Archangel Gabriel – *Malakat Jibra'il* (a.s) – on a 23rd of Ramadan. He will appear in the Holy city of Makkah, on a Saturday in the month of Muharram, on an odd numbered year. It will be the Day of Ashura.

The first mob of his supporters will swear allegiance to their Iman in the Holy Ka'ba (between the *Rukn* and *Maqaam e Ibrahim*).

The first *Ayat* of the Holy Qur'an he will recite will be:

⁸⁶ *'What remains of God's provision is better for you,
should you be faithful,
and I am not a keeper over you.'*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 11 (Hud : Hud) Ayah 86*

The capital of his government will be the city of Kufa (Iraq) and he will have his headquarters in the Grand Mosque (Masjid)⁹ of Kufa. He will bring with him as an inheritance the pulpit of Prophet Sulaiman (a.s).

The first batch of his true supporters will be 313 people (as were the number of Muslim warriors in the 'Battle of Badr').

The name of his house as stated in a hadith¹⁰ will be '*Bayt ul-Hamd*'. The name of his sword will be '*Sayfullah*'.

A supplication, *Du'a Allaahuma kun le-waliyyekal*' (Appendix 7) – also known as *Du'a al-Faraj*¹¹ / *Hujjat* / *Imam e Zaman* (atfs) – is often recited, requesting God to bless the Holy Prophet and the Imam of our time, al-Mahdi (atfs).

⁹ *Masjid*: literally 'a place of prostration'; a Mosque

¹⁰ *Hadith* (plural *Ahadith*) : These are the collected statements and actions of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), his sincere companions and followers; especially the Ahl al-Bayt, and the 12 Shi'a Imams.

Ahadith of the 'purified' family of the Holy Prophet, along with the Holy Qur'an, form the basis of Shi'a Islamic Law.

Ahadith are graded for 'degree of reliability' and rely on the chain of narrations.

Sound *saheeh*

Reliable *hasan*

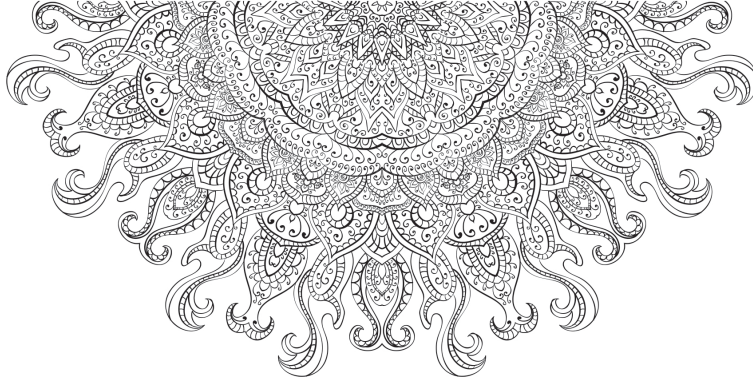
Weak *da'eef*

Odd *ghareeb*

Authentic includes 'sound' & 'reliable' or a grade in between

Acceptable *sakat 'anhu* - nothing unacceptable about it

¹¹ *Faraj*, in Arabic – meaning, being bestowed with all manner of ease. Granted prosperity and all kinds of success into our world. Given a sense of spiritual wellbeing. Removal of all hardships, physical and mental.



INTRODUCTION

*Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem*¹²

*Allahumma sall'ay ala Mohammadin wa aal e Mohammad*¹³

*As-salaamu alaikum wa'rahma-tullahi wa'barakaa'tuh*¹⁴

This is not my original work. This is the 5th fully revised and annotated edition of *Eleven Majlises in English Language*, originally published in India in 1956. These majalis (lectures or sermons) were delivered in London (UK) by Maharajkumar Mohammad Amir Haider Khan of Mahmudabad (Dist. Sitapur, U.P., India) in *Muharram*¹⁵ 1375AH in August 1955.

It was in Perth (Western Australia) that one of my dear friends, Mohamed Raza Bindahneem, introduced me to this book in 2013. I was personally impressed and found this to be a succinct and useful text, for two reasons.

Firstly, in enabling me a better understanding of the events leading to; and secondly providing a succinct history of the battle of Karbala, which historically proved to be a Pyrrhic victory¹⁶ for the Umayyad Caliphate.

¹² In the Name of God, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.

¹³ 'O God, send your blessings upon Mohammad and the progeny of Mohammad.' This supplication (*Salawat*) is one where we ask God to send His blessings upon our beloved Prophet and his family.

¹⁴ A Muslim greeting: Peace be upon you and the mercy and blessings of Allah. This is often shortened to '*As-salaamu alaikum*' (peace be upon you), or just '*Salaam*' (peace). This greeting is part of the spiritual practice, as peace is a core value of Islam (Appendix 1).

¹⁵ *Muharram*, the first of the 12 Islamic (lunar) months is also one of the 4 sacred months, during which fighting is prohibited. This prohibition dates back to the time of Prophet Ibrahim (a.s). The three other sacred months are:

- *Rajab* (7th)
- *Dhu al-Q'adah* (11th)
- *Dhu al-Hijjah* (12th)

¹⁶ A Pyrrhic victory: named after King Pyrrhus (an ancient King of Epirus – Europe). It is a 'win' in a battle that inflicts such a devastating toll on the victor, that it is tantamount to a defeat. A victory that negates any true sense of achievement and damages long term progress or goals. Winning the battle but losing the war!

It then dawned on me that, perhaps, I should get permission from the copyright owners to edit and publish this book for distribution, free of cost (*Fi Sabilillah*¹⁷), to my family, friends, and the local community. It should be more useful to those reading about Karbala for, perhaps, the first time.

May Almighty Allah grant *Jannatul Firdaus*¹⁸ to the author Maharajkumar Mohammad Amir Haider Khan, a remarkable man of his time.

*Al-hamdu'lillah*¹⁹ – Here it is – with the permission, guidance, and blessings of Almighty Allah, and the help, support and contributions from a whole mob of my learned friends.

As they say, ‘Truth is never given to us ... we find it when we fail to deceive ourselves.’

As humans (*Homo sapiens*),²⁰ it is incumbent upon us to continually increase our wisdom by seeking knowledge and searching for the truth.

May we be guided and awakened to the truth, and not be forsaken by our Creator.

And Allah knows best.

*Wa’alaikumu salaam wa’rahma-tullahi wa’barakaa’tuh*²¹



October 2023, Brisbane, Queensland

Hajj Dr Syed Khawar Hussain Shah

BSc (Hons), BMedSc, MBBS (Tas), FACRRM, FRACGP



19th of *Ramadan ul Mubarak*²² – 1446AH (20th March 2025 – Brisbane – Qld)

¹⁷ *Fi Sabilillah*: For the sake of Allah.

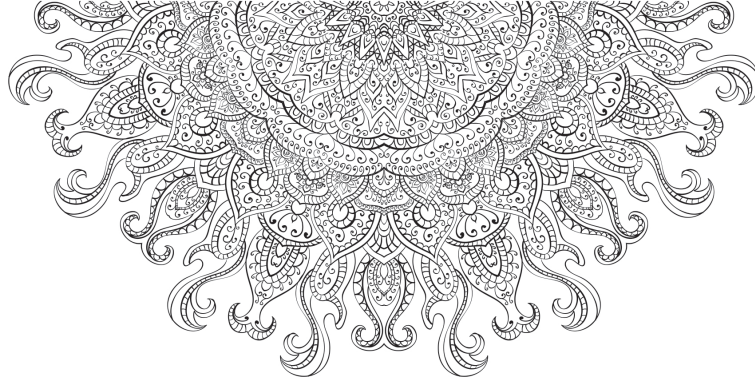
¹⁸ *Jannatul Firdaus*: The highest level of Paradise.

¹⁹ *Al-hamdu'lillah*: All praise is due to Allah alone.

²⁰ *Homo sapiens*, a scientific classification from the Latin *Homo*, referring to humans of either gender; the species name *sapiens* means ‘wise’. and ‘knowledgeable’.

²¹ Means; ‘And upon you be peace and the mercy and blessings of Allah.’ Often shortened to ‘*Wa’alaikumu salaam*.’ A beautiful way to acknowledge and return the wish for peace.

²² *Ramadan*, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, during which the faithful are prescribed to fast (from sunrise to sunset).



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks to all the individuals who helped in any way, contributing to this effort. Your rewards will be by the Almighty.

I would like to acknowledge and humbly thank Mohamed Raza Bindahneem (Perth, Western Australia), who introduced me to *Eleven Majlises in English Language* and supported my desire to reprint and distribute the book free of cost.

Brother Raza has been a great inspiration to me. His dedication to the *Ahl al-Bayt* community of Western Australia is indeed remarkable and truly magnificent. He has carried on the great work of his (*marhum*²³) Father Haj Mirza Hasan and released a DVD for the community on Haj Hasan's efforts, entitled *Dear Dad*. May Almighty Allah bless brother Raza, and grant Haj Hasan a place in *Jannatul Firdaus*.

The help made available to us by my dear friend Syed Baqar Ali in copy-editing the manuscript also deserves a mention. Baqar *bhai*²⁴, who currently calls Sydney home, was in my *ziyarat*²⁵ tour group in 2015. He is an author himself and his book *A Closer Look at Islam*, published in 2016, attempts to dismantle Islamophobia, in addition to explaining Islam through our Holy Imams (a.s).

²³ *Marhum* (masculine), *marhuma* (feminine), *marhumeen* (plural): honorifics for the deceased.

²⁴ *Bhai* is the Urdu word for 'brother'.

²⁵ *Ziyarat*: In Islam, *ziyara(h)* or *ziyarat* is a form of pilgrimage to holy sites associated with the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), his family members, descendants, companions and other venerated figures in Islam, such as the Prophets (and their true companions). Pilgrims are called *zawaar*. About 20 million *zawaar* visit the shrine of Imam Hussain (a.s) on *Arba'een* day (*Arba'een* in Arabic means forty and it's the 20th of *Safar* in the Islamic calendar), forty days after the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (a.s)

Remarkably, Baqar *Bhai* happened to personally know the author as well as Haj Hasan and brother Raza. He suggested minor edits to correspond to changing norms, and obtained permission from the copyright holders in India for republication. The edits have since snowballed to accommodate a broader range of audiences. We have, however, taken pains to ensure that the sequence and substance of the original text has been maintained.

Throughout the book, comprehensive footnotes have been added. Fourteen appendices, including relevant family trees and a map have been added, to help make the subject matter clearer and comprehensible. A quiz is also appended to enable self-evaluation of the core messages in this book.

I have received invaluable help, guidance, and suggestions from a number of friends, and Islamic scholars. I am deeply indebted to respected scholars, namely Sheikh Zaid Alsalami, Maulana Enayatullah Zara, Maulana Hayder Shirazi, Dr Jafar Hasan, Reza Javaheri, and Alaa al-Haider.

The mother of my children, Iram Raza Batool (ex-wife), has been diligent in her religious duties and *azadari*,²⁶ inculcating religious sensibilities in our children.

The eldest of six children, I believe my siblings have always been a divine blessing to me – figuratively and literally. From the core of my being, a sincere note of gratitude to my dear brothers Yawar, Dawar, Bawar, Humawar, and sister Dure Shahwar.

My brother Syed Bawar Hussain Shah, who has established the Global Peace Project and has been involved in publishing a book, *Global Peace: An Islamic Perspective*, also encouraged me to write. His daughter, my beloved niece Sajidah, very diligently read and suggested improvements on an earlier versions of this book.

Mx. Arete Dane (B.A.) did a very thorough and professional job of proof-reading this latest edition. I am truly obliged.

²⁶ *Azadari*: Body of events remembering the sufferings of the Prophet's family, in particular the tragedy of Karbala. The recommended manner of performing *Azadari*: One should express grief and mourn. Lament, remembering the calamities which befell Imam Hussain (a.s), his family, and companions. Tears should not be held back. Offer condolences and consolation to each other and to the Imam of our time.

Last, but by no means least, a very sincere thanks to Paul Woolnough of InHouse Publishing (Brisbane, Qld) for his great saintly patience and professional support. I would unreservedly recommend them to anyone contemplating publishing.



The 4th Imam: Imam Ali ibn Hussain
– Zayn al-Abideen / al-Sajjad (a.s)
said:

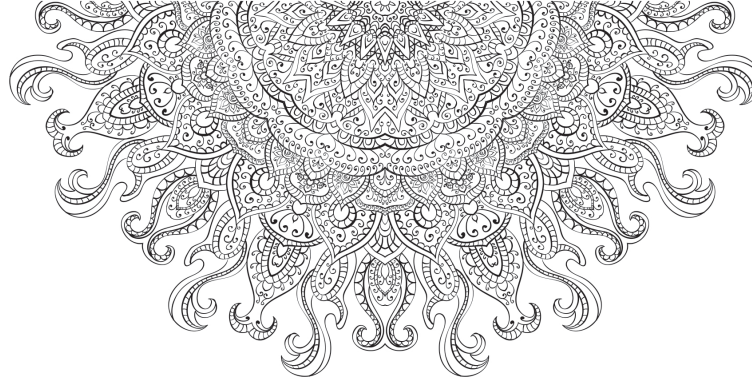
'The right of he who does a kindly act towards you is that you thank him and mention his kindness; that you reward him with beautiful words and supplicate for him sincerely in that which is between you and God.

*If you do that, you have thanked him
both secretly and openly.*

Then if you are able to repay him one day, repay him.'

References:

- (i) *Al-Khisal*, Page 568, No 1
- (ii) *Mizan ul Hikmah*, Page 935
- (iii) *'Bihar al-Anwar'* – al-Wafa Organisation, Beirut, Lebanon, 1983. Vol. 71, Page 7



FOREWORD²⁷

Maharajkumar Mohammad Amir Haider Khan has recently made a very useful contribution to the missionary works of Madrasatul Waizeen in the form of a series of lectures delivered in London in the month of *Muharram* 1375AH. These lectures provide an account, in clear and simple English, of the historical events that culminated in the tragedy of Karbala. This account has been aptly divided into eleven parts, each part giving an overview of either the exploits of a particular hero or the sufferings of a particular day. The glorious part played by the men, women, and children accompanying Imam Hussain²⁸ (a.s), the Prince of Martyrs, has been described with admirable simplicity, clarity, and pathos. The account forms a deep impression on the mind of the reader by drawing for them a touching picture of the tragedy of Karbala and the part played by every member of the party in the great tragedy.

The mourning days of the sacred month of *Muharram* can be duly observed in every part of the world where English is spoken. By reciting these discourses delivered by the author, people will realise the importance of the cause taken up by Imam Hussain (a.s), and the admirable manner in which he restored the honour of the faith which the enemies of Islam sought to bring into disrepute.

²⁷ As appearing in the original book, published in 1956.

²⁸ Imam Hussain (a.s), the 3rd Imam, is the (second) son of Imam Ali (a.s). His glorious name has several cultural and regional spelling variations (e.g. Husain, Husayn, Hossain, Huseyin, etc.).

ELEVEN MAJALIS IN SIMPLE ENGLISH

My colleagues and I are deeply grateful to Maharajkumar *sahib*²⁹ for this highly useful set of lectures and hope that all English speakers will take full advantage of the series by enlightening people about the achievements of our great Imam.

(Sd). Syed Mohammad Zaki
Managing Trustee, Madrasatul Waizeen
Lucknow (India), 1956

²⁹ *Sahib* is an Urdu language honorific given to a distinguished person.

*BON MOTS*³⁰ / *HIKAM*³¹

‘Everyone who stays silent when others are being oppressed are themselves considered to be guilty of oppression.’

- Imam Hussain (a.s), 626AD – 680AD

3rd Imam and 2nd grandson of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)

‘The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.’

- Edmund Burke, 1729 – 1797

Anglo-Irish Statesman, Member of Parliament,
Economist and Philosopher

*‘The world suffers a lot.
Not because of the violence of bad people.
But because of the silence of the good people.’*

- Napoleon Bonaparte, 1769 – 1821

French Military Commander, Political Leader & Emperor of France

³⁰ *Bon Mots*: In French, literally means ‘good words’.

³¹ *Hikam*: In Arabic, means ‘wise sayings’ or ‘words of wisdom’.

GOD IS GREAT – ALLAHU AKBAR

‘Meditate on anything, save God’s nature.’

Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Nahj al Fasahah; Tradition No. 1304, Page 186

Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Reza (a.s) said in his description of Allah, Glory be to Him;

*‘He is too exalted for sight to be able to perceive Him,
for imagination to be able to fathom Him,
and for the intellect to be able to grasp Him.’*

al-Tawhid, Page 252, No. 3; Mizan ul Hikmah, No. 442

*Allah is too great to be described.
Allah is greater than any description.*

*‘He never ceases to exist and will always be,
the First before all things - without a beginning,
and the Last after all things - without an end.’*

Imam Ali ibn Talib (a.s)
Nahj al-Balagha, Letter 31; Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 448

*All praise be to Almighty Allah
– firstly and finally.*

HE IS GOD³²

*²² He is God – there is no god except Him –
Knower of the sensible and the Unseen,
He is the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.*

*²³ He is God – there is no god except Him –
the Sovereign, the All-holy, the All-benign,
the Securer, the All-conserver, the All-mighty,
the All-compeller and the All-magnanimous.
Clear is God of any partners that
they may ascribe to Him!*

*²⁴ He is God, the Creator, the Maker, and the Former.
To Him belong the Best Names.
Whatever there is in the heavens and
the earth glorifies Him,
and He is the All-mighty, the All-wise.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 59 (al-Hashr : The Banishment) Ayaat 22 - 24*

³² There are several narrations that strongly recommend the frequent recitation of especially the last three *Ayaat* (22 – 24) of *Surah 59, al-Hashr : The Banishment*. This is believed to bestow great spiritual blessings of God. Likewise, there are very many *Dhikr* and *Du'a*, believed to bring spiritual closeness to God. Providing divine blessings, protection, calmness and a peace of mind.

Dhikr: In Arabic refers to remembrance, reminder, mention, or invocation of God. These are specific phrase, prayer, or verse recited in prayer and supplication to remember and glorify God (plural: *Azkar*).

Du'a: An Arabic word; essentially a supplication. An expression of one's neediness to God, acknowledging him as the only Sustainer and Provider. Beseeching God, in total submission and faith. *Du'a* is an act of worship, accessible to every Muslim, in any state, at any time (plural: *Du'as*).

FEAR OF GOD

'Blessed is the one whose fear of Allah, preoccupies him from fearing people.'

Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 77, Page 126. No. 32
Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 322

Imam Sadiq (a.s) said:

'Fear (of God) is the legacy of knowledge, and knowledge is the ray of inner understanding, and the heart of faith.'

So, he who is devoid of fear cannot be knowledgeable, even, if he is able to split hairs with obscure sciences.

God, the Most High, has said (in His book), only those of God's servants who have knowledge fear Him.'

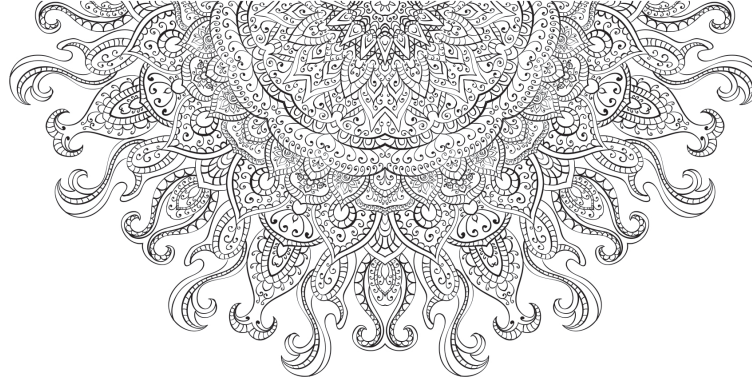
Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 2 Page 52

'Hope in God with such hope that it will not embolden you to disobey Him, and fear God with such fear that it will not cause you to despair of His mercy.'

Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 67, Page 384

*'I only fear God
But life has taught me
to be fearful and on guard
from the evil of those who
do not fear God.'*

Dr Syed K.H. Shah



PROLOGUE

Aged about 48 years, Imam Hasan (a.s) was on his deathbed. At the behest of Mu'awiya (l.a), our 2nd Imam, had been poisoned by his wife Ja'da bint al-Ash'ath. She was coerced into committing this, a truly despicable and inhumane act of betrayal. Duped, with the promise of money and fame. Falsely promised 100,000 Dirhams, and marriage to his own son – Yazid (l.a). For naught, selling her soul to the devil, she took the bait.

Imam Hussain (a.s) much grieved, rushed to be with his elder brother, Imam Hasan (a.s), offering support and prayers.

Imam Hasan (a.s) reiterated, commiserated, and acknowledged that Imam Hussain's (a.s) day of martyrdom, compared to his own, would be far more savage and brutal. An epic atrocity. In the pangs of his own pain and illness, Imam Hasan (a.s) addressed his younger brother – Imam Hussain (a.s) – and said these now famous words:

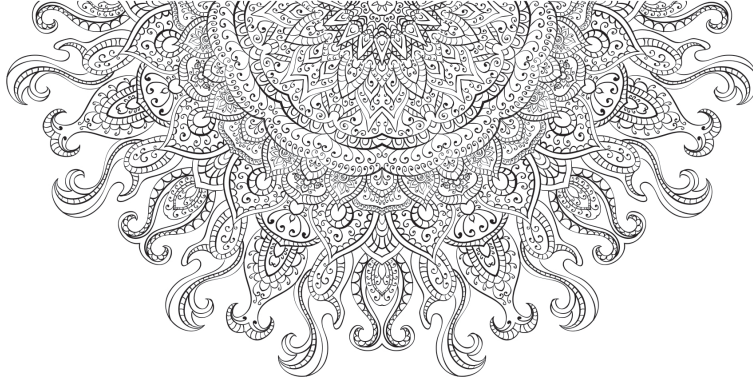
*'la yaum ka yaumika
ya Aba Abdillah'*

**'There is no day like your day
O Aba Abdillah'**

Imam Hasan (a.s)

Reference:

'Bihar al-Anwar' – al-Wafa organisation, Beirut, Lebanon,
Arabic edition, 1983. Vol. 45, Page 218



THE FIRST MAJLIS



JOURNEY OF IMAM HUSSAIN³³ (A.S)
TO KARBALA³⁴ AND MARTYRDOM OF HIS COUSIN,
MUSLIM IBN AQEEL

Tonight, the new moon has been sighted,³⁵ which marks the beginning of the period of mourning for the greatest of all martyrs, Imam Hussain (a.s).

Tomorrow will be the 1st of *Muharram*, 1375AH (19th August 1955).

Many, many years ago, on this same day (also the Islamic New Year), Imam Hussain (a.s) was on the way to Kufa.

He decided to leave his home in Madinah³⁶ for two reasons.

Primarily because, in hundreds of letters, the people of Kufa³⁷ had invited him to come and guide them in moral and spiritual matters, promising their support at all times.

³³ His *Kunya* (Agnomen) is Aba Abdillah.

³⁴ Karbala is a city close to the river Euphrates, in central Iraq, about 100 km southwest of Baghdad.

³⁵ As the Islamic (Hijri) Calendar is lunar based, the thinnest sliver of a crescent (waxing crescent, '*Hilal*' in Arabic) termed a new moon is keenly sought in the sky at dusk (Appendix 2). There are only ever 29 or 30 days in a lunar month. Every month has several religious connotations. For example, fasting in Ramadan and the festivity of Eid al-Fitr in *Shawwal* are observed based on moon sightings. On sighting a new moon, Muslims are recommended to give charity to the needy (*Sadaqa*), perform supplications (*Du'as*), and offer prayer (*Salah*).

³⁶ Madinah: Initially called Yathrib. After the migration of the Prophet from Makkah in 1AH (622-623AD), it was renamed Madinat an-Nabi (City of the Prophet), Madinah for short. The Prophet's camel stopped at a location, which was purchased and a mosque established (*Masjid e Nabawi* – Mosque of the Prophet). He temporarily stayed in the house of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, while the mosque was being built. This is also where the Holy Prophet is buried.

³⁷ Kufa is a city about 170 km south of Baghdad, Iraq (about 74 km from Karbala).

And also, because Yazid's (l.a)³⁸ men were planning to kill him should he refuse to pledge his allegiance (*Bay'at*³⁹) to Yazid.⁴⁰

Mu'awiya was the son of Abu Sufyan ibn Harb (l.a) and Hind bint Utba ibn Rabi'a⁴¹ (l.a). He was a despotic tyrant who ruled over Muslims for about two decades. A family tree of the Umayyad dynasty (relevant & simplified) is depicted in Appendix 3.

By careful manipulation and shrewd planning, Mu'awiya had grasped power. His rule of terror and oppressive authority was engineered to systematically erode and dismantle Islamic jurisprudence.

³⁸ Yazid ibn Mu'awiya ibn Abu Sufyan (the 2nd Caliph of the Umayyad dynasty) was born in Makkah 25AH and died 14th *Rabi al-Awwal* 64AH. He was the ruler of Arabia for 3 years till his death. Yazid is recognised as an illegitimate ruler and a tyrant by Shi'a Muslims, due to his hereditary succession, the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (a.s), mistreatment of the Holy Prophet's noble family (the *Ahl al-Bayt*), and the violent attack on the city of Madinah by his Umayyad army. Known in history as the Incident of *Harra* – 28th *Dhul al-Hijja* 63AH.

³⁹ *Bay'at* in Arabic translates to 'unconditional submission to (someone's) authority'.

⁴⁰ By getting Imam Hussain's (a.s) pledge of allegiance, Yazid wanted to gain a very weighty and greatly beneficial endorsement of his (non-Islamic) inherited rule.

⁴¹ *Hind bint Utba ibn Rabi'a* (584AD – 636AD), is a despised figure in Islam.

She was the wife of *Abu Sufyan ibn Harb* (l.a), the mother of *Mu'awiya I* (l.a), and the grandmother of Yazid I (l.a); the murderer of Imam Hussain (a.s).

Infamously known as the 'Liver Eater', she promised manumission; trained an Abyssinian slave '*Wahshi ibn Harb*', to specifically target and kill *Hazrat Hamza ibn Abdul Muttalib* (a.s), in the 'Battle of *Uhad*' (3AH).

A great supporter and a beloved maternal uncle of the Holy Prophet, *Hazrat Hamza* (a.s) was a gallant and brave warrior. For his valour in battle, he was called the 'Lion of Allah'. A year earlier (2AH), in the Battle of *Badr*, he was instrumental in the great victory of the small Muslim force of 313 men.

Hind's eldest son, a brother and an uncle had been killed in this battle.

Targeted by *Wahshi*, *Hazrat Hamza* was martyred. On the battlefield, *Hind* mutilated his body and chewed his liver. She desecrated the Muslim martyrs of the battle by making a macabre necklace from their ears and noses, proclaiming 'I have slaked my vengeance and fulfilled my vow'.

After the Prophet's conquest of the *Quraysh* (a major tribe of the region) controlled city of Makkah (8AH) as a cunning political ploy, *Hind* allegedly reverted to Islam (circa 8AH - 10AH) – reprimanding and admonishing the Holy Prophet to stop a black ex-slave, *Hazrat Bilal* (a.s), from calling the faithful to prayers – '*Adhaan*'; to abolish the '*Rukoo*' (bowing in prayers) and refrain from making the '*Hijab*' obligatory in Islam.

The name *Hind* is a feminine, ancient Arabic name (pre-Islamic era). Depending on the context, it can be used for (i) 'group of camels'; (ii) 'a hundred camels'; (iii) a female (red) deer; (iv) 'two hundred years'; or (v) a gentle / timid female.

He had officially nominated his son, Yazid, as his successor.⁴² So, at his death (20th *Rajab* 60AH), Yazid took over the mantle of the Caliphate.

Yazid was worse than his father. In addition to all the evil qualities of his father, he openly mocked Islam. He was often found drunk and singing songs which made joke of the Holy Prophet, his progeny, and Islam.

Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said:
'Friendship and enmity are both hereditary.'

Nahj al Fasahah; Tradition No. 657, Page 95

Historically, the difference between father and son was that Mu'awiya pretended to be a Muslim to fully exploit and use Islam for his personal gain. Yazid was simply determined to destroy Islam and revert to the (barbaric) ways of his ancestors.

Their methods (*modus operandi*) changed from being subversive to becoming overt and brazen.

The people Yazid ruled over were not happy, because he was a wicked, cruel and immoral man who had no respect for the commands of God and no regard for the Holy Prophet's family.

The brunt of his subjugation and oppression was especially felt by the weaker, more vulnerable of society – the needy. He diverted public funds meant to feed, shelter and clothe the poor and needy, while he himself spent monies on drinking, gambling and leading a loose life.

It was due to the grave perpetual fear of the sword that the masses remained silenced and effectively subdued.

⁴² A relevant hadith:

'Mu'awiya ibn Abu Sufyan has no right to delegate anybody after him to power. Rather, the matter will be for the Muslims to decide in counsel amongst themselves.'

Imam Hussain ibn Ali (a.s)

Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 44, Page 65, No. 13

Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 222

As the Islamic core principles and the Holy Prophets' values and traditions were being ruthlessly eroded, cleverly altered, destructively diluted, and much abused, Imam Hussain (a.s) knew that it was his sacred obligation, as the incumbent Imam, to guide all those who sought his help and guidance. He was upset, offended and affronted to see Yazid, a despotic and flagrant tyrant, rule over the Muslims. His grandfather, the Holy Prophet, had made the people free of barbaric practices. As such, Imam Hussain (a.s) could not let them become heedless of Islamic principles⁴³ and enslaved to the whims of an unjust authoritarian.⁴⁴

So, when the Kufans invited him to their town, Imam Hussain (a.s), accompanied by some of the women and children of his household, and a few relatives, chosen friends, and companions, set off from Madinah, initially for Makkah, and then on to Kufa.

It was a hard and weary journey in those days. They had to travel in a caravan, and on horses and camels. For miles around them, they could see nothing but the vast and arid desert. There was no shade or trees, and not even grass, except at the oasis. Water was very scarce.

The heat of the Arabian summer scorched their skins, but the brave Imam and his party kept going, urged by his duty to God and mankind.

He asked his cousin Muslim ibn⁴⁵ Aqeel to go ahead to Kufa and tell the people there that the Imam had received their letters and was on his way.

Muslim took a swift horse and, along with two of his four sons,⁴⁶ left for Kufa. When he arrived in Kufa, the people gave him a rousing welcome and swore allegiance to Imam Hussain (a.s) in large numbers.

Each day, Muslim led the prayers in the mosque and gave a sermon on the teachings of the Holy Prophet, Imam Hussain (a.s), and Islam in general.

⁴³ As a Muslim, more so as an Imam (Leader), he had a religious duty, a grave responsibility, and an essential obligation. To uphold the sacred principles of *Amr bil Maroof* (bid what is right) and *Nahi Anil Munkar* (forbid what is wrong).

¹¹² *bid what is right and forbid what is wrong*,

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 9 (al-Tawbah : Repentance) Ayah 112*

⁴⁴ Just because some people call themselves Muslims (or Christians or Jews) does not mean that they follow the principles and ideals of their professed religion.

⁴⁵ ibn (or bin) in Arabic means 'son of'.

⁴⁶ In some narrations, Muslim ibn Aqeel did not take any of his children with him. His four sons, travelled to Karbala in the company of the Imam. Two of his children were killed in Karbala and two were killed in al-Musayyib (33 km from Karbala).

When Yazid came to know of this, he feared he might lose control of Kufa and sent a new governor to the city. This new governor was Ubaidullah ibn Ziad (l.a). He was feared and known to be an immoral, oppressive, and unscrupulous governor, totally obedient to Yazid's whims and dictums.

On arrival in Kufa, Ubaidullah ibn Ziad began to force his influence over most of Muslim's supporters, employing physical threats, financial bribes, and cunning tricks. As a result, most Kufans left Muslim and joined Yazid's party.

Muslim was now almost alone, but there was one man who remained a true supporter of Muslim. His name was Hani ibn Urwa. He kept Muslim as an honoured guest in his house, and continued to support the good cause Muslim was working for.

As Hani was the chief of his clan, Ubaidullah ibn Ziad, at first, felt rather afraid to injure Hani in any way. But one day, Ibn Ziad decided to put an end to the Imam's supporters.

He arrested Hani and demanded that Muslim be brought before him, but Hani said that he would rather die than betray his guest. So, Hani was imprisoned.

Muslim fled, moving from house to house, seeking shelter in the city that, only a few days before, was full of his alleged friends and supporters.

At last, Ibn Ziad's spies found out where Muslim was and a regiment of soldiers was sent to capture him. He was in the house of a God-fearing woman named Tao'ah. Ibn Ziad's soldiers surrounded the house and broke open the door.

Muslim fought bravely against the whole regiment and single-handedly held them at bay until he came out of the house and continued fighting in a lane.

There, the soldiers scored an advantage. They climbed onto the roofs of the adjoining houses, and showered stones and arrows upon the lone hero.

Finally, severely wounded and utterly exhausted, Muslim was captured and taken to the governor's court.

The governor, Ubaidullah ibn Ziad, tried him summarily. But Muslim was convinced that the truth was on his side, and he answered all the governor's charges truthfully and fearlessly.

In the end, Ibn Ziad condemned Muslim to be killed without mercy. By this order, they gave him no food or water before they killed him. Muslim was

taken to the roof of the governor's palace, where he was beheaded and his body thrown down to the street below. His head was displayed on the gate of the palace⁴⁷ as a warning to any remaining supporters of Imam Hussain (a.s).

Muslim ibn Aqeel is the first martyr linked to the tragedy of Karbala.⁴⁸

After Muslim's death, his friend Hani ibn Urwa was also killed by the order of Ibn Ziad. They were both buried near the great mosque of Kufa.⁴⁹

These tragic events took place on the 9th day of the last month of the year (*Dhu al-Hijjah*) 60AH, and the sad news reached Imam Hussain (a.s) on the way to Kufa.

Muslim's wife, Ruqayya, two of her sons, and a daughter were with Imam Hussain (a.s). When they heard the harrowing news of Muslim's martyrdom, they were filled with grief. Their pain and suffering were not without pride and admiration for the loyalty and courage of their great hero who stood against so many enemies, undaunted, until his last breath.

⁴⁷ Who would perform such a vile and barbaric act of terror? This behaviour, universally despicable, evil and abhorrent is surely not befitting of any human being, regardless of race, religion or creed.

⁴⁸ In Islam whenever we are informed of the death of a fellow Muslim, we are recommended to recite a verse of the Holy Qur'an:

¹⁵⁶ *'innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji'oon.'*

¹⁵⁶ 'Indeed, we belong to God, and to him do we indeed return.'

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 2 (al-Baqarah) : The Heifer) Ayah 156*

⁴⁹ The Great Mosque of Kufa (Masjid al-Kufa / Masjid al-Mu'azzam), located in Kufa (Iraq), is one of the oldest and holiest surviving mosques in the world. It was the home and seat of the government of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s).

This mosque is narrated as:

- The dwelling place of Prophet Nuh (a.s) and where he built the 'Ark'
- The location where the subsequent great flood started submerging earth, and where the water was eventually reabsorbed
- The location of the court from where Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) used to preside, and the location Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) was fatally wounded by a poison-coated sword while prostrating in the (early morning) *Fajr* prayer
- Located nearby are the tombs of Muslim ibn Aqeel, his companion Hani ibn Urwa, and the revolutionary, al-Mukhtar
- The future seat of the great government of our awaited messianic 12th Shi'a Imam – Imam al-Mahdi (atfs).
- *'A single prayer in Masjid al-Kufa is equal to one thousand prayers in other mosques.'*

Imam Ja'far ibn Mohammad (a.s)

Sawab al-A'mal, Page 60

In Madinah, when the authorities threatened to kill him if he did not swear the oath of allegiance, Imam Hussain (a.s) said:

‘Governor! We are members of the house of the Prophet,
the substance of the Message,
the ones often visited by the Angels;
with us did Allah initiate, and with us did He seal.

And Yazid is a debauchee, a sinner, a drinker of wine,
a killer of the respectful soul, a man who publicly declares
his debauchery and sinning ...’

**‘Someone like me could never pledge
allegiance to someone like him.’**

Imam Hussain (a.s)

Reference:

‘*al-Awaalim*’ by Sheikh Abdullah al-Bahraani, Vol 17, Page 174, 2000,
Qum, Islamic Republic of Iran

Kunya of Imam Hussain (a.s)

A *Kunya* (pronounced *COON-yah*) is an Arab variant of ‘teknonyms’ – a form of nomenclature, referring to a parent by the name of their child, often the first-born. This tradition is still widely practiced in very diverse cultures – worldwide.

Kunya is used as an honorific title/name, ascribing a person ‘as the father’ (or mother) of someone or something. Often but not necessarily the first-born child (male or female). It may also affectionately refer to an inanimate object or animal. For example, *Abu Turab* ‘father of dirt’ or *Abu Hurairah* ‘father of a cat / kitten’.

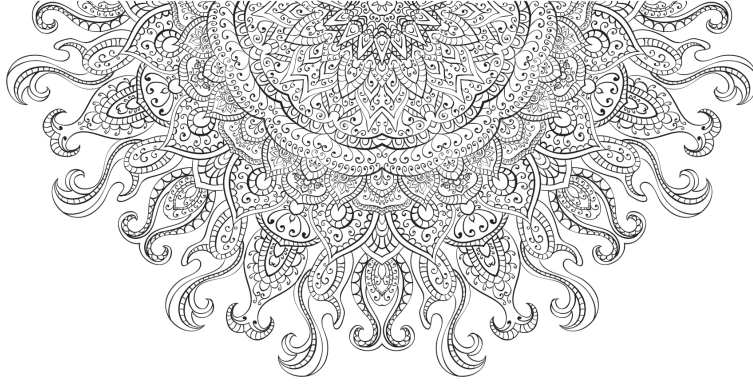
Kunya were often given at a very young age, (even breastfeeding infants and young children) usually by an esteemed member of the family or tribe, as a token of respect, honour and reverence. Also, as a mark of intended optimism.

Aba Abdillah – (translates to ‘father [of] the slave of Allah’). This title is very frequently used in texts and in references to the third grandson of the Holy Prophet, Imam Hussain (a.s).

Some scholars state that the Holy Prophet himself, gave this *Kunya* to his grandson, and they also give a number of reasons for this title to have been chosen.

Firstly, due to his total, unreserved devotion, and dedication to the Supreme, Almighty God, Imam Hussain (a.s) is considered a father to the servants of Allah. A manifestation of how a pure and true servant of Allah should be.

Secondly, one of the names of the awaited saviour of mankind, Imam *al-Mahdi* (atfs) is *Abdillah*. Hence, the title *Aba Abdillah* for Imam Hussain (a.s) points to the fact that the (last) 12th Holy Imam is a direct progeny of Imam Hussain (a.s).



THE SECOND MAJLIS

1ST MUHARRAM, 1375AH (19TH AUGUST 1955)



MARTYRDOM OF THE TWO SONS OF MUSLIM
IBN AQEEL (IBRAHIM AND MOHAMMAD)

As mentioned earlier, Muslim had taken two of his sons (Ibrahim and Mohammad) with him to Kufa. They stayed in Kufa with their father until Ubaidullah ibn Ziad began to persecute supporters of Imam Hussain (a.s).

When Muslim was taken prisoner, the two boys were separated from him. They were only about eight to ten years old, and so they could not fight to save their father.

They roamed the narrow streets of the city and hid themselves for some time. After Muslim's martyrdom, the soldiers began to search for the boys.

With nowhere to go, they were spotted wandering aimlessly and taken into custody. The prison-keeper was ordered to lock them up in a dark, cold and miserable dungeon. They had to sleep on the hard, stone floor and were given bread and water to live on.

Their father had taught them all the virtues of Islam and so the two young boys bore their suffering with courage and patience, praying to God five times a day. They never complained about the mistreatment. They knew that God would help them and punish their enemies on the Day of Judgement.

The boys remained in the dungeon for a while. At last, one day, when one of the prison wardens brought them food and drink, they asked him, 'How long are we meant to stay in this prison? You know we are innocent. We have

done nothing wrong. We have never complained to you, but now, we cannot endure the suffering any longer.'

The warden was a kind-hearted man and was deeply touched by this solemn appeal.

The boys then asked him, 'Do you know Mohammad (peace be upon him)?'

The warden replied, 'Of course, I believe in him as the last and final Messenger of God.'

They then asked, 'Have you heard of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s)?'

He said 'Why, I am a follower of Ali (a.s) because he was the Prophet's cousin and successor. He was the best and bravest of men after the Prophet.'

So, the boys continued to tell the warden that they were the orphans of Muslim ibn Aqeel who had been killed by Ibn Ziad, and that Muslim's father was Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib's (a.s) brother.

The warden took pity on them and allowed them to escape. He tried to give them some money for expenses on their journey, but they thanked him for his kindness and said, 'We do not want any money. You have given us our freedom and we shall always pray for you.'

With this Believer's help, the boys escaped from the city of Kufa and wandered about the neighbouring villages, hoping to find their way home.

Presently, they saw a woman standing at the door of her house. The boys were absolutely exhausted and were badly in need of some sleep. They approached her and besought her generosity, 'We have no place to go and we are almost fainting with exhaustion.'

The house belonged to her son-in-law, who was a vile and vicious man, but the kindly old woman took pity on them and hid them in a little room in the house. There, the boys lay down on the floor and were soon fast asleep.

In the evening, the master of the house came home and began to shout at his mother-in-law. He was in a bad temper that day because he had gone out in search of plunder, but had found nothing.

At last, Harith (l.a) (for that was the man's name) went to bed without his supper. He was thoroughly annoyed with himself, as his efforts had been fruitless. He lay tossing in bed without a wink of sleep. Later in the night, he

heard the voices of the children. *Who can this be?* he thought to himself, and crept slowly towards the room in which the boys were hidden.

There he saw the boys and asked them, 'Who are you?' The boys were terrified, but at last they said, 'Will you promise not to hurt us if we tell you who we are?' When the man promised, they told him that they were the sons of Muslim ibn Aqeel and had only taken shelter in his house for the night.

Ho, ho, thought Harith, *now I can get a rich reward from Ibn Ziad!* And he tied the two innocent children to a pillar and waited for the morning.

Just before sunrise, he took the boys towards the river. As he was taking them out of the house, his mother-in-law tried to stop him, but to no avail.

By the side of the river Euphrates,⁵⁰ the wicked Harith prepared to kill the two innocent boys in the hope that if he took their heads to Ibn Ziad, he would get a big reward.

How the boys begged him to spare their lives! 'If all that you want is money,' they said, 'why not take us to the market and sell us into slavery?' But Harith showed them no pity. And when they said, 'At least, spare us for five minutes that we may say our prayers for the last time,' Harith laughed and said, 'Prayers cannot save your lives.'

And so, that infidel drew out his sword, cold-heartedly beheaded them and threw their bodies in the river, which were collected and buried later by some kind-hearted people.

The tombs of these two brothers (Ibrahim and Mohammad al-Asghar) are situated at al-Musayyib, about 33 kilometres from Karbala, and are visited by pilgrims on their way to Karbala.

Muslim's two other sons (Abdullah and Mohammad) were martyred in Karbala, along with the rest of Imam Hussain's (a.s) men.

This sad and heart-rending story shows how brutal and inhumane the enemies of Imam Hussain (a.s) were. They turned away from God and the Prophet and showed no pity, even to innocent children. But on the Day of Judgement, they will surely know what a grievous doom awaits them.

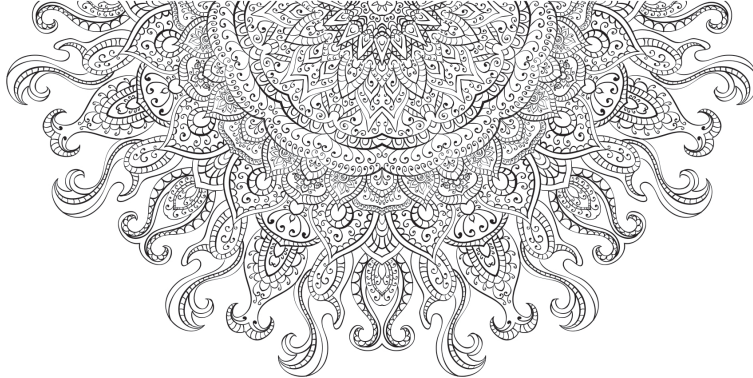
⁵⁰ In Iraq, the river Euphrates is called '*Nahr al-Furat*'. It is the longest (about 2,800 km) and historically the most important river in Western Asia. Originating in Turkey, it joins the river Tigris before emptying into the Persian Gulf.

**The Messenger of Allah,
Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said:**

**‘Hussain is from me,
and I am from Hussain.
God loves those who love Hussain.
Hussain is a chief
from among the chiefs.’**

References:

1. Imam as-Suyuti in ‘Jami al Masaneed wal Maraseel’, hadith 19026
2. Imam Bukhari in ‘Adab ul Mufrad’, Book 19, hadith 364
3. Jami’ al-Trimidhi, Book 49, hadith 4144
4. Kamil al-Ziyarat, hadith 11
5. Musannaf ibn Abi Shaybah, hadith 27931
6. Musnad Ahmed ibn Hanbal, hadith 17231
7. Sahih ibn Hibban, hadith 6857
8. Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Vol 6. No. 3775
9. Sunnan ibn Majah, hadith 147



THE THIRD MAJLIS

2ND MUHARRAM, 1375AH (20TH AUGUST 1955)



THE ESTEEM OF THE *AHL AL-BAYT*⁵¹ BEFORE GOD

The Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) loved his two grandsons Imam Hasan (a.s) and Imam Hussain (a.s) more than anyone else. He loved them not only because they were the sons of his only daughter Lady Fatima (s.a) and his cousin Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s), but also, because he had great hopes from them, knowing the pivotal roles and designated services they were destined to provide.

He knew that they would stand up for the cause of Islam when all others would forsake Islam, and that they would lay down their lives so that Islam should live.

When Imam Hussain (a.s) was born, the Archangel Gabriel – *Malakat Jibra'il* (a.s)⁵² came to the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) and said, 'This boy will become a martyr for the sake of Islam at Karbala.' Therefore, the Holy Prophet loved Hussain (a.s) even more.

Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) often used to say, 'Hussain is from me and I am from Hussain.' He wanted his followers to know that,

⁵¹ In Islamic parlance, *Ahl al-Bayt* refers to the Prophet's family and includes Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), Lady Fatima (s.a) and the 12 Shi'a *A'imma*h. In the Shi'a school of thought, the Holy Prophet's wives and those not related by blood are excluded from this distinguished category.

⁵² In Islam, Allah created angels from *Nur* (which in Arabic means 'light'). Angels are prescribed specific roles and the Archangel Gabriel – *Malakat Jibra'il* (a.s), delivered revelations of God to the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him).

after his death, when the people would be misled into evil ways, they must not do anything to hurt Hussain (a.s).

Pertinent hadith:

The Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said:

‘When I stand at the Glorious Station, I will intercede on behalf of those of my community who have perpetrated grave sins, and Allah will accept my intercession for them. By Allah, I will not intercede for anyone who hurts my progeny.’

Reference:

Amali al-Saduq, Page 242, No. 3; Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 478

He used to say, ‘Whoever hurts Hussain, hurts me, and whoever hurts me, hurts God.’ He also used to say, ‘Hasan and Hussain are the leaders of the Youth of Paradise.’

One day, a man brought a young deer as a present for the Prophet. The Holy Prophet took the deer and gave it to Imam Hasan (a.s) to play with. When Imam Hussain (a.s) saw his older brother playing with the deer, he felt very unhappy and came to his grandfather and said, ‘It seems that you do not love me as much as you love my brother, because, you have given him a deer but you haven’t given me one.’

Imam Hussain (a.s) felt so unhappy that he was about to cry, and so the Holy Prophet prayed to God. At once, God listened to the Holy Prophet’s prayer. There was a deer, sitting with her young one in the desert nearby, and God said to her, ‘Go to the Prophet’s house at once and take your young one with you.’ The deer at once started running and her young one ran along with her, until they reached Madinah and stood before the Prophet.

All this took place in such a short time that Imam Hussain (a.s) had not quite begun to cry. He immediately felt happy again and took the young deer with him. Those who witnessed this wonderful incident marvelled at the miracle the Prophet performed because of his love for Imam Hussain (a.s). God and the Prophet did not want Imam Hussain (a.s) to be unhappy for a single moment.

Just as God loved Imam Hussain (a.s), so also did Imam Hussain (a.s) obey and adore God. One day, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s), Lady Fatima (s.a), Imam Hasan (a.s), and Imam Hussain (a.s) made a *nazr*⁵³ that they would fast for three days.

Accordingly, on the first day, when the sun went down, and they were about to break their fast, a poor man came to the door of their house, begging for bread. The Holy (purified) Family could not let the needy man go away hungry; they took the food that was in the house and gave it to him. They themselves went hungry that day.

The next day, they fasted. In the evening, an orphan came begging at their door. Again, they gave all the food that was in the house and had nothing except water to drink.

On the third day, they fasted once more and, this time, a prisoner came begging at their door. Once again, they gave away all their food and had to go to bed hungry.

By this time, they had become very weak. But they praised and glorified God, thinking nothing of their discomfort since it was for a good cause.

At this, God revealed the *Surah al-Insan* (Holy Qur'an: *Surah* 76) to the Prophet, in which praise for the *Ahl al-Bayt*, has been recorded for all time to come.

⁷ *They fulfill their vows
and fear a day whose ill will be widespread.*
⁸ *For the love of Him they feed
the needy, the orphan and the prisoner,*
⁹ *[saying,] 'We feed you only for the sake of God.
We desire no reward from you, nor thanks.*
¹⁰ *We indeed fear from our Lord
a frowning and fateful day.'*
¹¹ *So God saved them from that day's ills
and graced them with freshness and joy.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah* 76 (*al-Insan* : The Human Being) *Ayaat* 7-11

⁵³ *Nazr*: The vow to do a good deed, once a prayer has been answered. The deed cannot be one that was obligatory.

From these incidents, we get a glimpse into the greatness of Imam Hussain (a.s). We can see how pious and kind-hearted he was, and how well he was brought up to lead the people in the path of God.⁵⁴ But, alas, after the Holy Prophet, the followers of Yazid persecuted our great Imam.

He made the choice to leave his home to wander in the desert, in the scorching heat of an Arabian summer.

When Imam Hussain (a.s) was on the way to Kufa, one day a deer came running towards him. He pulled up to let the deer come near and it placed its forelegs on the side of the Imam's horse and began to speak. 'Please Sir, I am in great distress. A hunter has captured my little fawn. I have no other offspring. What am I to do?' The Imam knew exactly what the deer was saying, because he could understand the language of all animals.⁵⁵

At once, he rode towards the nearby village and went to the house of the hunter and said to him, 'Where is the young deer you have caught?' When the hunter brought the deer, the Imam bought it from him and gave it to its mother. And she went away happily with her young one.

Such was the Imam's kindness. He could not bear to see even animals in distress. But the soldiers of Yazid showed no pity to such a kind Imam. They showed no mercy, even to his children. They killed Ali Akbar⁵⁶ with a spear, and they killed the Imam's infant son Ali Asghar, who was only about six months old, with a three-pronged arrow.

⁵⁴ Imam Hussain (a.s) was brought up by Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) and his parents, Lady Fatima (s.a) and Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s). His wisdom, kindness and great character as a perfect leader for humanity was aptly summed up by Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) in the words, 'Verily Hussain is The Light of guidance and The Ark of Salvation'. The best and kindest of humanity, Imam Hussain (a.s), was treated in the worst possible way by the wicked, immoral, oppressive and despotic ruler Yazid and his evil supporters.

⁵⁵ In Shi'a Islam, Prophets and Imams have the divine ability to communicate with non-human entities. Prophet Suleiman (a.s) was known for communicating with ants and birds (known as Prophet Solomon in the Bible).

⁵⁶ One of the sons of Imam Hussain (a.s) and a grandson of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s).

They imprisoned his beloved daughter Sakina,⁵⁷ scolded and slapped her. They did not give her any food or water, for the soldiers of Yazid (l.a) had no mercy.

Those cruel men forgot how dearly the Prophet loved Imam Hussain (a.s). They had no regard for the laws of Islam, which forbid cruelty to anyone, and which require us to be kind and merciful, even to animals.

⁵⁷ Sakina was a very beloved, young daughter of Imam Hussain (a.s) present in Karbala. The name is derived from the Arabic word *Sakun / Sakoon*, meaning, a calmness, peace of mind, peace of a reassurance and a spirit of tranquillity. Sakina can refer to the sense of serenity, or the reassuring peace, or the God inspired peace of mind that can settle upon an enlightened / spiritual person. Some Scholars have mentioned that ‘Sakina’ is an Angel of God, who brings tranquillity to the reciters of the Holy Qur’an. Regional variations of the name include Sakeenah, Sakinah, Sukaina, and Sukayna.

The Messenger of Allah,
Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said:

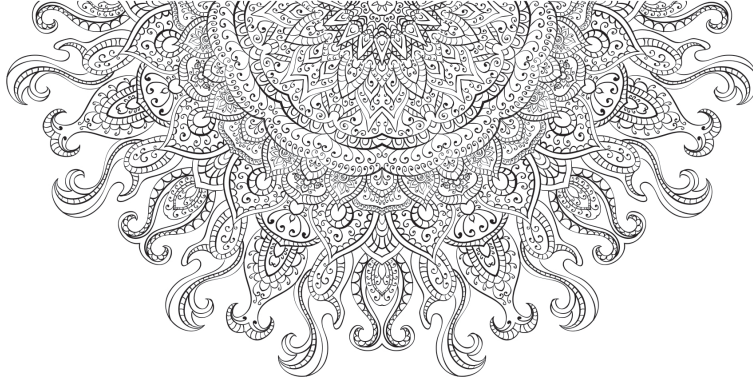
*‘Innal Hussain Misbah al-Huda
wa Safinat an-Najah.’*



‘Verily, Hussain is The Light of Guidance
and The Ark of Salvation.’

Reference:

‘Bihar al-Anwar’ – al-Wafa organisation, Beirut, Lebanon,
Arabic edition, 1983. Vol. 36, Page 204



THE FOURTH MAJLIS

3RD MUHARRAM, 1375AH (21ST AUGUST 1955)



ARRIVAL OF IMAM HUSSAIN'S (A.S) CARAVAN AND YAZID'S ARMY IN KARBALA

Imam Hussain (a.s) and his travel caravan had to bear the searing heat of the Arabian desert, stretching more than one thousand kilometres. Not very far from his destination, he noticed a cavalry unit coming in the opposite direction. It was a very hot day, and when the regiment came closer, he saw that they were all very thirsty. The Commander of the regiment, a man called Hur, came up to the Imam, saluted him and begged for water. Imam Hussain (a.s) at once asked his companions to give them water. Even though he knew these men were in the army of his enemy Yazid, he gave them as much water as they wanted. Then he ordered that their horses and camels should also be given water.

When they had all quenched their thirst, the Imam asked Hur why he had come. Hur told him that he had been sent to stop the Imam from going towards Kufa. The Imam's companions, including Hazrat ⁵⁸ Abbas and Ali Akbar, reacted with indignation and were willing to stand their ground. But Imam Hussain (a.s) remained calm and patient. He did not want to be the first to attack his enemies. He would only fight in self-defence.

⁵⁸ Hazrat is an Arabic honorific for a person of distinction. Literally translating to 'Presence'/'Appearance', this word has been incorporated, albeit with regionally dictated pronunciations, into Urdu, Farsi, Turkish and Bosnian languages.

So, the Imam asked Hur to let him go his own way, but Hur said that his orders were to take Imam Hussain (a.s) towards the river. Imam Hussain (a.s) did not want bloodshed, so he went along with Hur.

At last, on the 2nd of *Muharram*, Imam Hussain (a.s) reached a place where a tributary of the Euphrates ran on one side, and on the other there were sand dunes. There he halted and asked, 'What is the name of this place?' and was told, 'This is Karbala.'

He pitched his tents by the river, but Yazid's soldiers wanted him to move his tents away from the water. This cruel and wicked ploy was meant to prevent life sustaining water reaching the Imam's camp and could hardly be accepted. But once again, the Imam counselled patience. He did not want bloodshed if he could possibly avoid it. So, on the 4th of *Muharram*, he moved his tents to one of the sand dunes, a fair distance from the river, while Yazid's army camped by the river.

Two days later, more and more army units began to arrive in Karbala. Umar ibn Sa'ad (l.a) arrived on the 5th of *Muharram*, and with him came many thousands of troops.⁵⁹

On the 7th of *Muharram*, Umar ibn Sa'ad⁶⁰ received an order from Ubaidullah ibn Ziad⁶¹ that Imam Hussain (a.s) should not be given any water from the river. So, from the 7th of *Muharram* onwards, the Imam and his party were not allowed to take any water.

The riverbanks became heavily guarded. Very soon, the Imam's children began to suffer from thirst. The Imam then went to Ibn Sa'ad's camp and addressed the enemy soldiers.

'I am the grandson of the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him). I am the son of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) and Lady Fatima (s.a). You claim to be Muslims and to follow the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him),

⁵⁹ Estimated at around 30,000 able-bodied and armed soldiers.

⁶⁰ Umar ibn Sa'ad, (son of Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas) was the commander of Yazid's (Umayyad) army in the Battle of Karbala.

⁶¹ Ubaidullah ibn Ziad (l.a), also called 'Ibn Marjana'- sold his soul to the devil. To buy his loyalty, Yazid (l.a) falsely promised him fame and fortune (the Governorship of Ray - which he did not get). Known as an evil, ruthless, and ungodly person, Yazid specifically chose him and sent him as a Governor to Kufa. To ensure he curbed, the potential threat of a rebellion from Imam Hussain (a.s), and his followers in Kufa. A very disliked figure in Shi'a Islamic history, he is named and cursed in '*Ziyarat Ashura*'.

and yet you want to shed my blood. You know that I have done no wrong, and yet you have surrounded me and denied me access to water. How can you justify this?’

But the accursed enemies hardened their hearts and said, ‘We know that you are the Prophet’s grandson, but we are going to kill you if you don’t pledge your allegiance to Yazid.’

This shows that the Imam’s enemies had no religion and no regard for anyone. They did not even have common human decency. In short, they were worse than animals, and Imam Hussain (a.s) wanted to guide them and remind them of the teachings of Islam so that they should become good and kind-hearted men. But they did not listen to Imam Hussain (a.s).

The call of Imam Hussain (a.s) on the Day of *Ashura*:

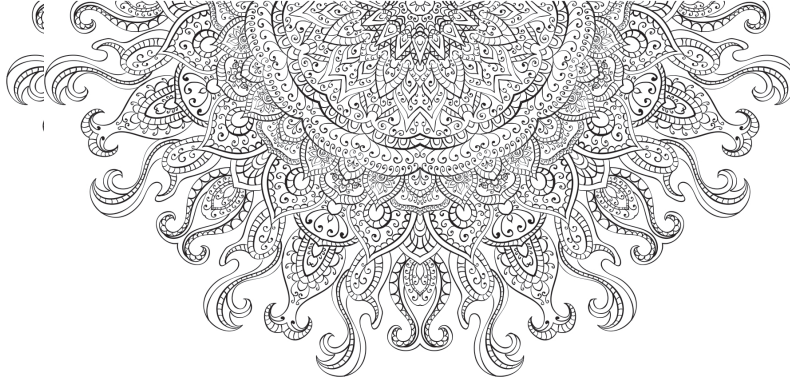
Umm-maeeyn mugheethin yugheethunaa?



Is there anyone who will help
relieve our anguish?

Reference:

'Bihar al-Anwar' – al-Wafa organisation, Beirut, Lebanon,
Arabic edition, 1983. Vol. 45, Page 12



THE FIFTH MAJLIS

4TH MUHARRAM, 1375AH (22ND AUGUST 1955)



REPENTANCE AND MARTYRDOM OF HAZRAT HUR (A.S)⁶²

On the eve of their martyrdom, Imam Hussain (a.s) and his followers prayed and asked God to give them patience and courage. The soldiers of Umar ibn Sa'ad sharpened their swords and spears, and prepared for the fight. Hur sat in his tent, thinking.

He was thinking of all the events that had taken place so far, and was trying to make up his mind what he should do the next day.

Should he fight against Imam Hussain (a.s) and lead his men to attack the Holy Prophet's kinsmen? *No, thought Hur, I will never do that. Only a few days ago, when we were fainting with thirst in the desert, did the Imam not save our lives? And now, for the last two days, the Imam's children are crying for water and no-one takes pity on them.*

I know that the Imam did not come all this way for war. He stands for peace, but these people have forced him to defend himself. When I stopped him from going to Kufa, he told me that he wanted to go back to Madinah or go to India.

He did not want to fight Yazid. I have brought him here because Ibn Ziad ordered me to, and now they have sent thousands of troops to surround and kill him, his family and companions.

⁶² His full name was al-Hur ibn Yazid ibn Najiyah al-Tamimi al-Yarbu 'i al-Riyahi. He was a nobleman, a warrior and a commander of a thousand soldiers, in Ubaidullah ibn Ziad's (Umayyad) army.

I will not stain my hands with the blood of this innocent Imam. I have wronged him by delivering him and his companions into the hands of their enemies. How can I save them now? They are the Prophet's own flesh and blood. How can I take up arms against them?

Hur was troubled by these thoughts throughout the night, and he kept thinking about all these matters until dawn.

At last, the sun rose and Ibn Sa'ad ordered his troops to take their positions. The war drums beat, the trumpets sounded and the black banners of the wicked Yazid were unfurled.

On the other side, Imam Hussain (a.s), after saying the morning prayers, arranged his seventy-two faithful followers and mounted his horse. A great display of courage to face thousands of armed soldiers with a small force of only seventy-two!

But see how they advance to embrace martyrdom! Surely, they must be right. What glory awaits those who are on the Imam's side?

When the Imam and his followers were close to the enemy camp, the Imam pulled up and addressed them as follows:

'You know that I am the Holy Prophet's grandson, the son of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) and Lady Fatima (s.a). There are many among you who have heard the Prophet say that all Muslims should love me and no-one should injure me. O, people of Kufa, you sent letter after letter begging me to help you. Now that I am here, you want to kill me.⁶³ It is one of the rules of chivalry that when two armies fight, they never prevent one another from taking water from the river. But you have posted your guards on the river, and you do not let us draw water. Look, even the birds of the air and the beasts of the desert come and drink water, but my children have not had a drop for three days. Is there no pity in your hearts? I warn you that if you will not listen to me and if you will fight against me, knowing that I am the grandson of the Prophet, you will receive the severest punishment on the

⁶³ The people of Kufa betrayed Imam Hussain (a.s) due to fear, greed, and the sly tactics of Ubaidullah ibn Ziad, an immoral, oppressive, and unscrupulous person. To regain control and crush any possible dissent, Yazid (l.a) specifically chose and sent him to be his appointed governor of Kufa.

Day of Judgement. Tell me, have I done you any harm? Have I killed any one of your kin? Have I dispossessed you of your belongings? If not, then why do you want to kill me?’

Hur stood listening to the Imam’s address. He believed every word the Imam had said, and when the address was over, no-one could say a word in reply.

Hur went to his general, Ibn Sa’ad, and pleaded with him not to fight Imam Hussain (a.s). Umar ibn Sa’ad, however, would not listen to Hur.

Hur finally decided to switch camps. He asked his brother, his son, and a slave who was in his service if they would join him. When they all agreed, they spurred their horses and galloped towards Imam Hussain (a.s) to seek his forgiveness and to offer their services in the battle.

When Hur came to Imam Hussain (a.s), the Imam blessed him and assured him that his past mistakes were now forgiven.⁶⁴

Then Hur, his brother, his son, and his slave all went out to fight Ibn Ziad’s army. They fought bravely until, one by one, they fell in battle, in defence of Imam Hussain (a.s).

When Hur was mortally wounded, the Imam hastened to be by his side. Hur had received a deep wound to his head, and the Imam tied a handkerchief over the wound as Hur’s soul departed from his body.⁶⁵

Then Imam Hussain (a.s) said, ‘Rightly did your mother name you Hur, for *Hur* means “free” and you are free in this world and in the Hereafter.’

⁶⁴ This has earned Hazrat Hur (a.s) a deep, and special reverence in the Shi’a tradition. He is regarded as the symbol of hope in sincere repentance and its acceptance, leading to eternal salvation.

Pertinent hadith:

‘He who is given the opportunity to seek forgiveness is not deprived forgiveness.’

Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s)
Nahj al-Balagha, Saying 135;
Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 829

⁶⁵ Hazrat Hur (a.s) was the first martyr on the battlefield. His shrine is a few kilometres away from that of Imam Hussain’s (a.s).

The call of Imam Hussain (a.s) on the Day of *Ashura*:

Hal min nasirin yansuruna?

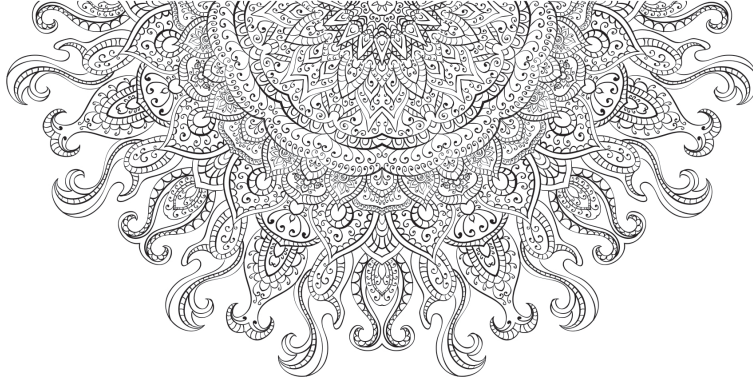
Is there anyone willing to help us?



The call still echoes today!

A lament to stop the decay of moral values.

A cry to awaken the comatose consciousness of humanity.



THE SIXTH MAJLIS

5TH MUHARRAM, 1375AH (23RD AUGUST 1955)



MARTYRDOM OF AUN AND MOHAMMAD,⁶⁶
YOUNG NEPHEWS OF IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

Imam Hussain's (a.s) sister, Lady Zainab (s.a), rightly referred to as the 'Lioness of Karbala', and her husband, Abdullah ibn Ja'far e Tayyar, had two sons, Aun and Mohammad.

Lady Zainab (s.a) was a very brave lady and her sons were brave too. Ja'far e Tayyar⁶⁷ was Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib's (a.s) elder brother and carried the banner of Islam in many a battle in the Prophet's lifetime. He was the standard-bearer of the Muslim army in the battle of *Mu'tah* (Jordan), in which he lost both his arms and was martyred.

⁶⁶ This Mohammad was a nephew of Imam Hussain (a.s) and a son of Lady Zainab (s.a) (Appendix 4).

⁶⁷ Hazrat Ja'far ibn Abu Talib (a.s), was a cousin of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), and also a sincerely devoted, loyal and trusted close companion.

The 3rd son of Abu Talib ibn Abd al-Muttalib (a.s) – a paternal grandfather of the Holy Prophet. His mother was Fatima bint Asad (s.a). Hazrat Ja'far was an older brother to Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s). He was married to Asma bint Umays (s.a).

His grandfather Abd al-Muttalib's real name was Shayba ibn Hashim, a chief of the Quraysh tribe.

As (early) Muslims were severely persecuted in Makkah, under the directions of the Holy Prophet, and along with a small group, Hazrat Ja'far sought asylum, migrating (across the Red Sea) to Abyssinia (*Habasha*, now Ethiopia).

In the Battle of Mu'tah (near the town of Mu'tah, Jordan – 1st *Jumada al-Awwal* 8AH), Hazrat Ja'far was a flagbearer of the Muslim army. In the battlefield, he lost both arms and was martyred. The Holy Prophet, was informed by the Archangel Gabriel – *Malakat Jibra'il* (a.s); Almighty Allah, has replaced his lost arms with two wings to fly with in Paradise. The Holy Prophet, post-humously, gave him the title of Ja'far al-Tayyar, (meaning 'owner of two wings').

As it is well-known, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) was also the standard-bearer of the Muslim army in many battles.

Aun and Mohammad went to their mother and asked her to speak to Imam Hussain (a.s), requesting if they could have the honour of carrying the banner of Islam in the battle of Karbala.

But Lady Zainab (s.a) knew that there was only one man who deserved that honour, and that was Hazrat Abbas,⁶⁸ for he had been faithfully serving his older brother all his life. So, she told her sons that they could not have the banner.

This shows the noble character of Lady Zainab (s.a). When she believed that it would not be right to ask for a certain thing, she would not do so, even to please her own sons.

She explained the matter to them, and they understood and obeyed her, and did not ask for the banner again.

On the morning of the 10th of *Muharram*, 61AH (Day of *Ashura*)⁶⁹ after all the companions of Imam Hussain (a.s) had fallen in battle for the cause of Islam, and when the two sons of Muslim bin Aqeel who were with the Imam had also been killed, Aun and Mohammad decided to ask the Imam to let them onto the battlefield.

Such requests, which came in quick succession throughout the day, had to be approved – by no means an easy task for such a noble, thoughtful and kind-hearted man.

They also still needed their mother's permission. Lady Zainab (s.a) loved her brother deeply. Moreover, she knew that it was the duty of every true believer to take up arms in defence of the Imam in that perilous hour, so she gladly gave them permission to fight and lay down their lives for the cause of Islam.

Aun and Mohammad came out of their tent with great zeal and vigour, and the Imam embraced them. They plunged into enemy lines, brandishing their swords and killing their foes until they were surrounded and outnumbered.

⁶⁸ Hazrat Abbas is also titled in the Urdu language '*Alamdār*', meaning banner/flag/standard bearer. In the Urdu-speaking communities, he is generally addressed as Hazrat *Ghazi Abbas Alamdar*.

⁶⁹ This tragic day came to be known as *Ashura* (literally 'The Tenth') the day of martyrdom, when Imam Hussain (a.s), grandson of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), and members of his family and companions were massacred.

Covered with wounds and weakened by thirst, the two brothers were trapped by the enemy.

They fell from their horses and the enemy doubled the ferocity of their attack. They cried out to their uncle, Imam Hussain (a.s), for help.

The Imam dispersed enemy soldiers, but it was too late. Aun and Mohammad had been mortally wounded. They soon departed from this physical world and the Imam carried their bodies to the place where the bodies of all other martyrs lay and prayed to God, saying, 'O Allah, accept this sacrifice from me.'

Thus did the grandsons of Ja'far e Tayyar uphold the values of Islam, until martyrdom on the fateful *Ashura* day, following in the footsteps of their glorious ancestors.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Their maternal great-grandfather was the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him).

Rayyan ibn Shabeeb, narrated that the 8th Imam; Ali al-Ridha (a.s),
said to him:

‘O’ son of Shabeeb, if you weep for anything, weep for Hussain
ibn Ali (a.s),

for he was slaughtered like a lamb. Eighteen members of his
household were killed with him, none of whom had any equal
on earth. The seven heavens and the earth wept for his killing.

O’ son of Shabeeb, if you weep for Hussain (a.s) until your tears
flow down your cheeks, Almighty Allah will forgive every sin you
have committed, whether small or great, whether few or many.

O’ son of Shabeeb, if it pleases you to meet Almighty Allah, exalted
and glorified, without any sin upon you, then visit Hussain (a.s).

O’ son of Shabeeb, if it pleases you to dwell in the upper chambers
of Paradise with the Prophet and his family, may Almighty Allah
bless them, then curse the killers of Hussain (a.s).

O’ son of Shabeeb, if it pleases you to have a reward like that of
those who were martyred with Hussain, then say whenever you
mention them:

‘O’, I wish I had been with them
so that I would have achieved a great victory.’

Imam Jafar ibn Mohammad (a.s) said:

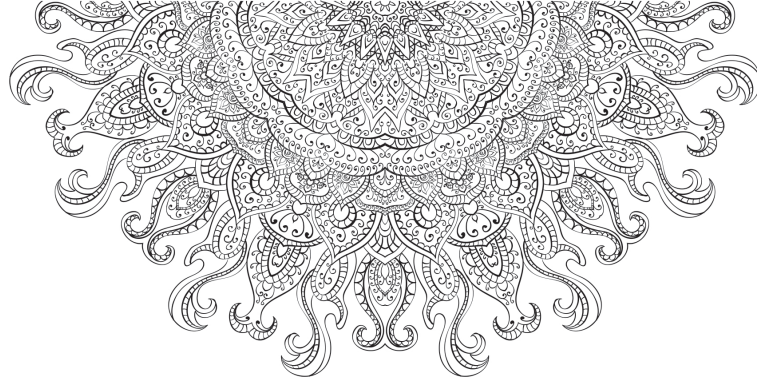
‘Imam Sadiq (a.s) said; four thousand Angels came down to fight for Imam Hussain (a.s), but he did not permit them.

When they came down again to seek permission, Imam Hussain (a.s) had already been martyred.

So, they remain at his grave, dishevelled and covered with dust, crying over him until Judgement Day.

Their leader is an Angel called Mansur.’

Kamil al Ziyarat, hadith No. 15



THE SEVENTH MAJLIS

6TH MUHARRAM, 1375AH (24TH AUGUST 1955)



MARTYRDOM OF QASIM, YOUNG NEPHEW OF IMAM
HUSSAIN (A.S)

Yazid's father, Mu'awiya (l.a), was an ingrained, hardened, and sworn enemy of the Prophet's family. He had set up the vulgar practice of open condemnation and curses being hurled on Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) at every mosque in his domain. This vile practice continued even after his death.

It was at his behest that, in 50AH (670AD), Imam Hasan (a.s) was given the poison that killed him. As Imam Hasan (a.s) lay on his deathbed, he called his sons and charged them to obey and serve Imam Hussain (a.s) at all times and in every possible way. Then he whispered something in Imam Hussain's (a.s) ear, and tied an amulet around Qasim's arm, saying, 'When you are in great distress, open this amulet, read it, and follow the instructions.' After this, Imam Hasan (a.s) breathed his last.

On the eve of *Ashura*, Yazid's troops had surrounded the Imam's camp on all sides. It was certain the enemy would carry out their truly devil-inspired, insanely ignorant, nefarious, very short-sighted, inhumane, vile, and evil plan the next morning. The plan of attacking the family of the Holy Prophet!

All the friends and relatives of the Imam made up their minds to defend him with all their might. But Imam Hussain (a.s) said to each of them, one by one, that they should leave and save themselves because Yazid's men only wanted to shed the Imam's blood. The seventy-two loyal followers, however,

would not think of deserting their leader while he was in such grave danger. One by one, they expressed their unswerving determination to stand by him, come what may.

Among them was the Imam's nephew, Qasim. The Imam could not bear the thought of seeing his beloved nephew killed, and tried to persuade him not to fight.

But Qasim was very unhappy to be deprived of the chance to do his duty to the Imam. In that moment of despair, he remembered the amulet that his father had tied round his arm. *What greater distress can I be in?* Thought Qasim. *This is surely the time for me to open the amulet and see what my father wants me to do.* He opened the amulet and read his father's dying wish, which was as follows:

'O Qasim, when your uncle will be surrounded by enemies, do not hesitate for a moment to lay down your life for him.'

Happily, he took the writing to his uncle and begged to be allowed to fight. The Imam was left with no choice but to let his dear nephew sacrifice himself in the field of battle.

When all the friends and supporters of the Imam had been slain, and when Aun and Mohammad, the sons of Lady Zainab (s.a), had also fallen in battle, only three men were left to take up Imam Hussain's (a.s) defence. They were Hazrat Abbas, Ali Akbar, and Qasim.

With the Imam's permission granted, Qasim now stepped forward and went forth to fight. He was about fourteen years of age at the time.

He fought and killed the renowned ferocious warrior Azraq (l.a) and his four sons.

At last, he was surrounded by thousands of troops, and was severely wounded.

He cried out for help, and the Imam rushed to his rescue, but he had fallen from his horse and, by the time the Imam could reach him, the dispersing horsemen had trampled his body under their horses' hoofs.

So died Qasim, the son of Imam Hasan (a.s), gaining martyrdom gallantly fighting in defence of Imam Hussain (a.s) and thus the Islam of his grandfather, Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), the final Prophet of Islam.

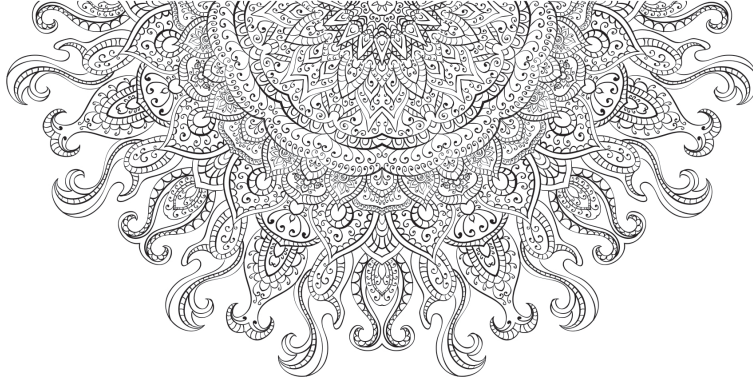
*As-salaamu alaika – ya Aba Abdillah
al-Hussain.*

*Allahumal A'n Qatalatal Hussain
Wa Awlaadihee Wa Ashaabihee.*



Peace be upon you, O Hussain.

May Allah far remove his mercy from the
murderers of Hussain,
his children and his companions.



THE EIGHTH MAJLIS

7TH MUHARRAM, 1375AH (25TH AUGUST 1955)



MARTYRDOM OF ALI AKBAR, YOUNG SON OF IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

Imam Hussain's (a.s) son, Ali Akbar, was so handsome and good-natured that all those who had seen the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said that Ali Akbar physically resembled the Holy Prophet more than anyone else.⁷¹

People used to come from far and wide just to see Ali Akbar's face, because they knew that he had a great likeness to the blessed Messenger of God, and it was an act of piety to gaze upon the glorious and blessed face of the Imam's son.

Ali Akbar had a beautiful voice too, and so at the time of prayer he used to stand up and recite the *Adhan*.⁷²

For all these reasons, the Imam was rightly proud of his son, and as the saying goes, he was the apple of his mother's eye.

Above all, his aunt Lady Zainab (s.a) loved Ali Akbar with all her heart and all her soul. As the Imam's companions ventured, one by one, to face death in defence of the faith, Ali Akbar's impending martyrdom added to the aura of sadness in the Imam's camp. They would have given their own lives to save Ali Akbar, but in Karbala (as is universal), events were divinely ordained. It was a question of putting duty above all other considerations. The Imam was prepared to make every possible sacrifice in order to make sure that belief

⁷¹ In Arabic he was called '*Shabah Rasool Allah*' (peace be upon him), meaning 'resembling the messenger of Allah'.

⁷² The formal call to prayer, in Islam, always in a human voice. The person who recites the *Adhan* is referred to as a '*mu'azzin*' (also Romanised as *mu'adh'dhin*). Hazrat Bilal ibn Rabah al-Habashi, a very early revert to Islam and a very loyal companion of the Holy Prophet, was the first blessed person to call out the formal *Adhan* (he is buried in Damascus, Syria).

in God's unity, the mission of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), and the high and lofty ideals of Islam should be preserved forever.

Therefore, if the Imam had seventy sons, he would gladly sacrifice them all for the cause.

The Imam's sister, Lady Zainab (s.a), though she realised this duty as much as anyone else, was naturally upset at the thought of losing her beloved nephew. She loved him as much as her own sons and she had very strong feelings about the parting of Ali Akbar. From the time of his birth, she had brought him up, and now the thought of losing him was hard to bear.

But when Ali Akbar pleaded with her, begging and imploring her not to deprive him of the honour of martyrdom, she was left with no choice. Ali Akbar's mother (Lady Umme Layla) likewise had to let her dear son go. So, Ali Akbar mounted his horse and left for the battlefield.

At this moment, Imam Hussain (a.s) lifted his hands towards the sky and said, 'O God, be my witness that I am sending my son to fight and to die in Your service. He, of all my sons, resembles Your Prophet more than any man alive and whenever we wanted to see the Holy Prophet's face we only had to look at his face to be reminded of those exquisite features.'

Ali Akbar plunged into the fight, dealing death and destruction on all sides, facing the hordes of Islam's enemies.

After a while, he was overcome by thirst and rode back to his father and said, 'O father, I am dying of thirst; my armour burns in the heat of the sun, and the strain of battle has made me even thirstier.'

At this, Imam Hussain (a.s) could not help weeping because he knew that he was helpless and could not get a drop of water to give to his weakened and exhausted son.

The Imam replied, 'You know I have no water to give you, but go now and fight for another few moments and in the end your grandfather, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s), will quench your thirst from the stream of *al-Kawthar*⁷³ in Paradise.'

⁷³ *al-Kawthar*: (in Arabic: abundance/plentiful/multitude) In Paradise, this is a cool, ultimately refreshing and heavenly pleasant drink to quench thirst (said to be whiter than milk and sweeter than honey, and described as a stream/river/pond/lake/fount/cistern). This was gifted to the Holy Prophet by God.

¹ *We have indeed given you abundance.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah* 108 (*al-Kawthar* : Abundance) *Ayah* 1

Ali Akbar went to fight again and soon disappeared into the throng of his enemies. As he was fighting, a man called Khooli (l.a) struck him in the chest with a spear, and he fell off his horse. At this moment, he cried out to his father for help. When Imam Hussain (a.s) came to his aid, he found his young son mortally wounded, thus becoming a martyr.

The Imam took Ali Akbar in his arms and blessed him and Ali Akbar breathed his last. Alas, a life so dear and full of promise was tragically taken. The Imam wept⁷⁴ and said, 'My son, my child, what use is life to me now that you are gone?'

⁷⁴ In Islam, nothing contradicts nature. Weeping, wailing, and crying are an innate instinct in mankind. Crying is not prohibited in any religion or creed. Tears are shed, automatically, when one is confronted by a significant mishap – physical, mental, or spiritual. Tears are not only a sign of grief, but also a kind of reimbursement for that grief. There are many mentions about crying in the Holy Qur'an. Importantly, these must be read in full to understand the context.

⁸³ *When they hear what has been revealed to the Apostle, you see their eyes fill with tears because of the truth that they recognise.*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 5 (al-Ma'idah : The Table) Ayah 83

⁹² *Nor is there any blame on those to whom, when they came to you to provide them with a mount, you said, 'I do not find any mount for you,' and they turned back, their eyes flowing with tears, grieved because they did not find any means to spend.*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 9 (al-Tawbah : Repentance) Ayah 92

- When Joseph's brothers lied to their father, saying Joseph was dead:

⁸⁴ *He turned away from them and said, 'Alas for Joseph!' His eyes had turned white with grief, and he choked with suppressed agony.*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 12 (Yusuf: Joseph) Ayah 84

⁵⁸ *When the signs of the All-beneficent were recited to them, they would fall down weeping in prostration.*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 19 (Maryam : Mary) Ayah 58

- On the demise of the Pharaoh:

²⁹ *So neither the heaven wept for them, nor the earth, nor were they granted any respite.*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 44 (al-Dukhan : Smoke) Ayah 29

In the Holy Qur'an (and all the authentic ahadith and Sunnah of the Prophet mentioned in Islamic literature), there is nothing against expressing grief, sorrow, or in crying and weeping at the loss of a loved one.

Ziyarat Ashura: #

*Allahumma il'an al'isabata allati jahadat
alhusayna (alay'his salaam)*



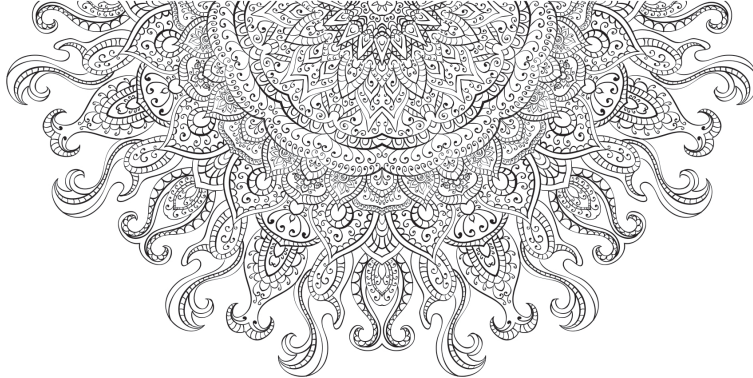
**O Allah, withhold blessings[§] from the group
that fought against Hussain (a.s)**

[#] Ziyarat Ashura is an Islamic salutatory prayer to God. The prayer is part of the liturgy recommended during the pilgrimage to the Holy shrine of Imam Hussain (a.s) in Karbala (Iraq). The 5th Imam, Imam Mohammad al-Baqir (a direct descendant of the Holy Prophet), recommended reciting Ziyarat Ashura while facing Karbala, as a symbolic visit to the Holy shrine.

[§] It is historically appropriate and unambiguously approved to mention after the name of any person (like Yazid), whomsoever that has displeased, angered, or committed an atrocity on the Holy (purified) Family (the *Ahl al-Bayt*) or the Holy Prophet, a wish that they 'be far removed from the Mercy of God' (In Arabic : '*la'nah*'). In essence, the opposite of sending a salutation or a spiritual blessing.

⁵⁷ *Indeed, those who offend God and His Apostle are cursed by God in the world and the Hereafter, ...*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 33 (al-Ahzab : The Confederates) Ayah 57*



THE NINTH MAJLIS

8TH MUHARRAM, 1375AH (26TH AUGUST 1955)



MARTYRDOM OF HAZRAT ABBAS, BROTHER OF
IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

One of the bravest of the Holy Prophet's followers was Ja'far e Tayyar, the older brother of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s).

In the battle of Mu'tah, Ja'far e Tayyar carried the banner of Islam, but he was outnumbered by his enemies and martyred.

When the news reached the Holy Prophet, he cried and prayed for Ja'far's soul, and the Archangel Gabriel – *Malakat Jibra'il* (a.s) – came down and consoled the Prophet, saying, 'Ja'far was a brave and loyal soldier. God has given him everlasting life and in place of the two arms that he lost in battle, the Lord has given him a pair of wings.'

Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s), who was with the Holy Prophet at the time, said, 'Please pray to God that I should also die fighting for the cause of Islam and become a martyr.' But the Holy Prophet said, 'O Ali, your death has already been decreed. You will die in a mosque during your prayers, but the Almighty will give you another son who will be martyred fighting for Hussain (a.s) on *Ashura* day.'

From that time on, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) eagerly awaited the birth of this prophesied son.

After the death of Lady Fatima (s.a), Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) looked for a truly remarkable lady, from a noble lineage, with upright morals, and possessing a strong enduring personality and faith.

He found all these and more amazing qualities in Lady Fatima bint Hazam (s.a), a descendant of a valiant family. She belonged to the Arabian tribe of '*Banu Kilab*'. Her forefathers, renowned, respected, and greatly admired in the region for their legendary bravery, valour and courage.

Hazrat Ali (a.s) married her and God blessed them with a son they named Abbas⁷⁵. She is respectfully better known by her *Kunya* as '*Bibi Umm al-Banin*', meaning 'Lady, Mother of Several Sons.'

Hazrat Abbas grew strong and brave, and learnt all the arts of war. He became an expert in fighting with a sword, spear, and lance.

When Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) was about to die, he entrusted all his sons to the care of Imam Hasan (a.s), but he placed Hazrat Abbas's hand in the hand of Imam Hussain (a.s) and said, 'My son, it is my dying wish that you should protect and defend Hussain with your life.' So Hazrat Abbas continued to serve Imam Hussain (a.s) and never parted from him as long as he lived.

The eve of *Ashura* found Hazrat Abbas preparing for the day to come. The passage of a few short hours would usher in the day that would host one of the greatest tragedies in human history.

On this day, earthly power would try, but fail, to subdue some of the noblest of God's men, who gave their lives and those of their loved ones in order that Islam might live.

The Imam would offer his sons, the handsome Ali Akbar, and the infant Ali Asghar, as his sacrifice. Lady Zainab (s.a) would part with her sons, Aun and Mohammad, whereas young Qasim would die on behalf of his late father, Imam Hasan (a.s).

⁷⁵ Abbas is one of the many names for a lion. (Scientific name: *Panthera leo*). There are very many (perhaps 300 – 500) names for a lion in the ancient and very richly descriptive Arabic language. These names are in reference to the many attributes of a lion recognised in the Arabian tradition and culture. The primary and most common name used is Asad. Other commonly used names are, *Dhir'ghaam*, *Ghazanfar*, *Hamza*, *Haider*, *Shibl*, *Qaswarah*, & *Zaigham*. Each name reflects a poetic, or descriptive feature; a character or is a reference to a symbolic attitude, behaviour, colour, gender, or size. People were also allegorically named after these 'lion' names. Hazrat Abbas was widely and well regarded for his bravery, courage, ferocity and strength as a warrior. Historians have referred to him as 'The Lion That Other Lions Feared.'

The name for a lion – mentioned in the Holy Qur'an is '*Qaswarah*':

⁵⁰ as if they were terrified asses

⁵¹ fleeing from a lion?

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 74 (al-Muddaththir : Shrouded): Ayaat 50-51*

While sharpening his sword, Hazrat Abbas saw his sister Lady Umme Kulsum (s.a) come into his tent. Bemoaning that she did not have any children to fight for the Imam, and, as a woman, was not permitted to fight. What could she do?

Hazrat Abbas consoled her, saying, ‘You need not worry, dear sister. Slaves often perform services that children are supposed to. You have brought me up since I was a child and as your slave, I will willingly fight and sacrifice⁷⁶ myself on your behalf.’

The next morning, Lady Umme Kulsum (s.a) took Hazrat Abbas to Imam Hussain (a.s) and said, ‘Let my brother fight for you on my behalf.’

All day long, Hazrat Abbas was with the Imam, standing staunchly by him, at his command. As long as he lived, he did not allow a single wound to be inflicted on the Imam.

After Imam Hasan’s son Qasim was killed, there was great weeping and wailing in the tents of the ladies, and Hazrat Abbas’s beloved niece Sakina was feeling faint with thirst.

So Hazrat Abbas took a waterskin⁷⁷ and said, ‘I am going to try and get some water for you.’ He tied the waterskin to the banner he carried, for he was Imam Hussain’s (a.s) standard-bearer, and headed for the river.

The soldiers tried to stop him, but his prowess and courage proved too much for them. Hundreds of men scattered, running to save their lives, because no-one could stop Hazrat Abbas, the son of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s).

Alone, he was more powerful than a whole army. At last, Hazrat Abbas reached the river and plunged in with his horse to fill the waterskin. He was indeed, parched with a great thirst, but he could not bring himself to drink any of the cool flowing water.⁷⁸ He thought of his brother, Imam Hussain

⁷⁶ All those present in Karbala were surely well aware of the only possible outcome of this battle: a certain death (martyrdom) at the hands of Yazid’s army. The small group determined to make a stand, along with the Imam, were willing to be sacrificed as loyal defenders of the true Islam, the Islam as practised by the Imam and as taught by his grandfather, The seal of the Prophets, Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him).

⁷⁷ A waterskin is a leather receptacle used to hold water. Usually made of a sheep or goat skin, it retains water naturally. It is still used in some desert and arid regions of the world.

⁷⁸ Pertinent hadith: The Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said:

‘The watercarrier of a tribe should drink last’

(a.s), and said to himself, *'How can I drink water when my master and his family are thirsty?'*

Hazrat Abbas took the water and headed back towards the camp. By this time, the soldiers who had fled came back and resumed their attacks. Again Hazrat Abbas started fighting them, but this time he had to protect the precious waterskin as well as himself, and this was a difficult task. Someone aimed and shot an arrow at the leather water container. The water started flowing out.

This broke Hazrat Abbas's heart. *What is the use*, he thought, *if I cannot take some water for the children?* At this moment, someone struck a blow at his right arm and cut it off. He took the sword in his left hand and started fighting, but very soon his left arm was also severed. Then someone struck a blow with a mace and wounded his forehead. He lurched and fell from his horse.

The Imam was watching this battle. When he saw the banner fall to the ground, he rushed to the scene, but Hazrat Abbas had been fatally wounded.

Hazrat Abbas died and was buried at the spot where he fell, near the river. The river has since changed course, but his tomb was built by the bank of the river to remind us how he was martyred⁷⁹ in his effort to bring a little water for the Imam's children.

⁷⁹ Hazrat Abbas is highly revered in Shi'a Islam. He acquired this great status, and was ennobled due to his devotion to Islam, his lifelong loyalty and total obedience to his Imam (his brother). His heroic self-sacrifice was displayed in the Battle of Karbala. He is often referred to as '*Bab al-Hawaej*' (the gateway to the fulfilment of legitimate needs/desires). Shi'as believe that when we beseech and supplicate to Almighty God, through Hazrat Abbas's intercession (*tawassul*), Insha'Allah, all our sincere legitimate desires will be fulfilled.

Tawassul means 'nearness' or a 'means' through which to attain a certain spiritual goal. To achieve this, one can make or take hold of something or somebody that is in a very high status/rank before God, with the purpose of gaining nearness to God and also for the granting of a supplication (*Du'a*). As narrated in the Holy Qur'an:

³⁵ *O you who have faith! Be wary of God, and seek the means of recourse to Him, ...*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 5 (al-Maidah : The Table) Ayah 35*

His noble titles include:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| (i) <i>Abu al-Fadhl</i> | Father of Heavenly Graces |
| (ii) <i>Qamar Bani Hashim</i> | The Moon of the clan of Bani Hashim |
| (iii) <i>Ghazi</i> | Warrior returning victorious; in reference to the Battle of <i>Saffin</i> |
| (iv) <i>Bab al-Hawaej</i> | The gateway to the fulfilment of legitimate needs/desires |
| (v) <i>Alamdar</i> | Banner/Flag/Standard Bearer (only used in Urdu-speaking communities.) |

The 5th Imam: Imam Mohammad (al-Baqir) (a.s) was asked:

‘To condole others in the month of *Muharram*, especially on the Day of *Ashura*, what do we say?’

The Imam replied:

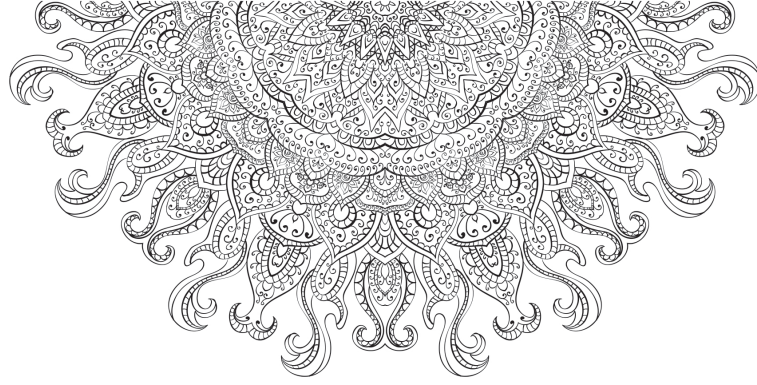
‘Say, May Allah make our reward and your reward great, for our grief for Hussain (a.s).

‘May He place us and you, with those who helped His cause, with His representative, the guided Imam from the family of Mohammad (peace be upon him).’

Reference:

‘*Misbah al-mutahajjid wa silah al-muta’abbid*’

by al-Shaykh al-Tusi



THE TENTH MAJLIS

9TH MUHARRAM, 1375AH (27TH AUGUST 1955)



MARTYRDOM OF ALI ASGHAR, INFANT SON OF IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

Two days had passed since access to the river had been blocked, and the Imam's camp presented a sorrowful sight.

Children cried for water, but there was nothing that could quench their thirst. The parched lips of the faithful uttered no sound except gratitude to the Almighty.

That day, Ibn Sa'ad received further orders from the governor of Kufa, saying that they must start fighting against Imam Hussain (a.s) at once.

So, the army of Yazid took up its position in the battlefield. But Imam Hussain (a.s), anxious to avoid bloodshed and hoping that tempers may cool down, sent his brother Hazrat Abbas to ask for a day's respite.

The Imam wanted Ibn Sa'ad to postpone the battle until the next day, so that he and his followers may spend the last night of their earthly existence in prayers and glorifying God.

Hazrat Abbas went to Ibn Sa'ad and said, 'Imam Hussain (a.s) has asked me to tell you how devoted he is to the duty of glorifying God and would therefore, like to spend the night in prayer along with his followers. Will you then give him leave for a night?'

Ibn Sa'ad was unwilling to delay the fight, but one of his officers stood up and said, 'O General, surely there is no harm in granting this request. It is a convention among soldiers that even if the enemy is a *kafir*⁸⁰ and asks for

⁸⁰ *Kafir*: The Arabic word '*Kafir*' literally means 'to cover' or 'to conceal', implying that a *kafir* realises the truth of God, but covers or hides it. In context, it refers to a 'heathen', 'infidel', 'rejecter', 'pagan', essentially a non-believer in God. The opposite of *kafir* is *mu'min* (believer).

respite, the battle should be postponed for a day. How then can you refuse such a request from the Holy Prophet's grandson?'

The battle was postponed. The Imam and his friends spread their prayer mats on the ground and spent the whole night praying and reciting the Holy Qur'an.

Meanwhile, the ladies also prayed in their tents that the battle may be averted. They were prepared to part with their sons if, by so doing, they could save the Imam's life.

That night Imam Hussain (a.s) was worried that enemy soldiers may attack his camp. A trench was dug around the camp and fire lit in it to protect the tents from enemy horsemen. The heat of the fire made the camp dwellers all the thirstier.

At last, the Day of *Ashura* began to dawn, and the Imam said his morning prayers along with his followers.

Meanwhile, Yazid's men began to beat their drums and prepare for battle. Imam Hussain (a.s) rode forward and tried to make them understand what a great wrong they were about to do, but they turned a deaf ear to his words and the battle began.

By the time of the (late) afternoon prayer (*Salat Al-'Asr*),⁸¹ all the friends and relatives of Imam Hussain (a.s) had been killed. The Imam stood alone, undaunted amidst thousands of his enemies. Hazrat Abbas, Ali Akbar, and Qasim were all martyred. There was nobody left to defend him, but he was prepared to fight until the ultimate end.

At this moment, he heard the sound of someone crying in his tent. He went there and found that his six-month-old baby, Ali Asghar, had fainted from thirst. *The child will die in any case, thought Imam Hussain (a.s), so why not ask Yazid's men to give him a few drops of water? I will see if they will take pity on this child and his life may be saved.*

⁸¹ *Asr*: the third of the five daily (compulsory and obligatory) prayers.

- (1) *Salat Al-Fajr* : offered at dawn – before sunrise
- (2) *Salat Al-Dhuhr* : offered at midday – after the sun passes its highest
- (3) *Salat Al-'Asr* : offered half way between noon and sundown.
- (4) *Salat Al-Maghrib* : offered just after sunset
- (5) *Salat Al-'Isha* : offered after sunset, but before midnight

Imam Hussain (a.s) took Ali Asghar in his arms and stood before his enemies and said, 'If you think that I deserve to die, at least you should take pity on this innocent child and give him a little water.' At this, even some of the cruel soldiers of Yazid broke into tears, but the heartless and brutal Ibn Sa'ad ordered Hurmalah (l.a)⁸² to shoot an arrow at the child. At once, an arrow hissed through the air and struck Ali Asghar, the innocent infant, in the neck, and the child died in his father's arms.⁸³

Imam Hussain (a.s) dug a little grave with his sword and buried him there, saying, 'O God, the murder of this child is no less than the slaughter of the Prophet Saleh's (a.s) she-camel.'

This is a reference to a *Surah (al-Shams)* of the Holy Qur'an:

¹¹ *The people of Thamud denied [God's signs]
out of their rebellion,*

¹² *when the most wretched of them rose up.*

¹³ *The apostle of God had told them,
'This is God's she-camel, let her drink!'*

¹⁴ *But they impugned him and hamstrung her.*

*So their Lord brought down His punishment upon
them because of their sin, and levelled it,*

¹⁵ *and He does not fear its outcome.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 91 (al-Shams : The Sun) Ayaat 11–15*

⁸² Hurmalah ibn Kahil al-Asadi al-Koofi (may he be far removed from the Mercy of God) was the killer of Ali Asghar ibn Hussain (a.s), the great grandchild of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), on the 10th of October 61AH.

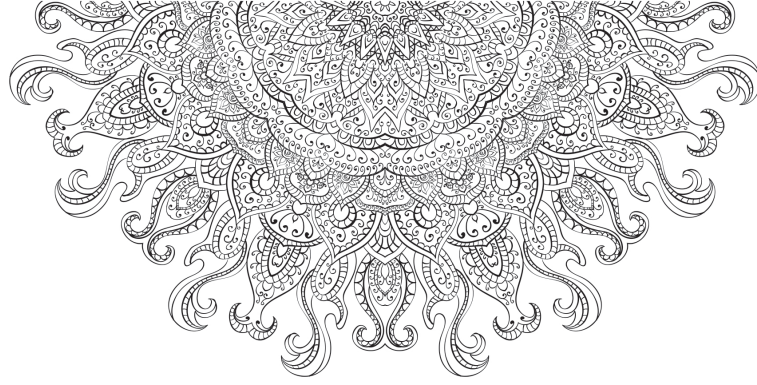
⁸³ Imam Hussain (a.s) in a short space of time witnessed the brutal killing of two of his sons; Ali Akbar (a.s) and Ali Asghar (a.s).

Ziyarat Ashura:

السَّلَامُ عَلَى الْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَى عَلِيِّ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَى أَوْلَادِ الْحُسَيْنِ
وَعَلَى أَصْحَابِ الْحُسَيْنِ

*As-salaamu alal Hussain
wa ala aliyy ibnil Hussain
wa ala awladil Hussain
wa ala ashabil Hussain*

Peace be upon Hussain,
and upon Ali ibn Hussain,
and upon the sons of Hussain,
and upon the companions of Hussain.



THE ELEVENTH MAJLIS

10TH MUHARRAM, 1375AH (28TH AUGUST 1955)



MARTYRDOM OF THE COMPANIONS AND,
FINALLY, IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

This is the day on which Imam Hussain (a.s), with his small group of faithful friends and relatives, took his stand against thousands of Yazid's soldiers on the sandy plains of Karbala.

This is the day on which the Holy Prophet's rightful successor fought against the cruel army that wanted to crush the spirit of Islam.

This is the day when Imam Hussain (a.s), aided by only seventy-two valiant and noble men, shed his precious blood in order to awaken the spark of divine love in the hearts of men, women, and children for all time to come.

Imam Hussain (a.s) fought to uphold right against might. Yazid wanted his unconditional surrender, but Imam Hussain (a.s) knew that if he submitted, the world would be misled to believe that Yazid's character was an example of righteousness, whereas Yazid was really a gambler, drunkard, and among the most cruel and wicked of men. He was a truly immoral, oppressive, unscrupulous man, and definitely not fit to be a ruler of pious people.

Therefore, Imam Hussain (a.s) made up his mind that, whatever happened, he would not give his allegiance to Yazid. It was his duty to tell the world that Yazid was wrong, and he gave this message to us, not only through his words,⁸⁴ but through his deeds, so that whoever hears the story of his heroic

⁸⁴ As the saying goes, 'When we lose our moral voice, we lose our strongest asset.'

stand at Karbala should clearly know what men ought to do when their ideals are in danger.

One by one, the followers of Imam Hussain (a.s) fought against the evil forces and met their death with smiles on their bright faces. They included his friends, companions, brothers, cousins, nephews, and sons.

The enemies proved their own wickedness by showing no pity for anyone – not even for the infant, Ali Asghar, who was only six months old.

After Ali Asghar's martyrdom, there was no further need to prove the wickedness of his enemies. Imam Hussain (a.s) rode out from his tent to confront his destiny.

When Imam Hussain (a.s) was alone and went to the battlefield, after each attack, he would return near to the tents of the womenfolk and to reassure them that he was still alive, he would loudly and repeatedly proclaim:

'La Hawla Wa La Quwwata illa Billahil Ali'yyil Azeem'

'There is no power and no strength except with Allah'

He had the great strength of faith in his 'soul', and he fought vigorously without any fear of death, because he knew that death was more desirable to a righteous man than the bosom of the mother was to a child. Moreover, God was on his side and, if he so wished, God would destroy his enemies and save him from them. Needless to say, Imam Hussain (a.s) loved Islam more than his own life.

Had he saved his own life, he would not have been able to give us his message as forcefully or as clearly as he did by suffering a most cruel death. If he had defeated Yazid in battle, he would have become a good and just ruler, but the difference between right and might would not have been illustrated so clearly. If Imam Hussain (a.s) had lived by escaping from the battlefield, he would have led a great and noble life, but men would soon forget the issues for which he had taken his stand against Yazid. For all these reasons, it was necessary that he should die on that day.

So, having displayed his fierce determination, courage, valour, and prowess, Imam Hussain (a.s) stopped fighting and prepared to offer his sacrifice.

This required much more than robust energy, more than enduring vitality, more than an unyielding will, more than immense patience; it required a

firm belief, belief in 'the' cause. Belief in 'his' cause, and in the Almighty God. A fundamental belief in one of the foundations of the religion of Islam. Standing up for what is 'right' and denouncing any 'wrong'.

It was time for the *Asr* prayer, and so the brave Imam turned his face towards the *Qibla*⁸⁵ and began to remember God, even though he knew his murderers would now have an easy chance to do their worst.

At this time, the fleeing soldiers came back and began to throw spears and shoot arrows at him. Mortally wounded and bleeding, he fell down on the burning sand, but all the while he continued to pray.

His enemies knew well that it was not right for one Muslim to kill another, and it was an even greater wrong to kill the beloved grandson of the Prophet. Above all, it was the height of wickedness to kill such a man when he was saying his prayers, but his enemies had no moral sense at all. They worshipped wealth and they had sold themselves to Yazid for his gold.

The brutal Shimr (l.a)⁸⁶ stepped forward and cut off the Imam's head with his dagger⁸⁷ (*'innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji'oon*). Thus Imam Hussain (a.s) fulfilled the promise that he had made to his grandfather in his early childhood: that he would water the withering garden of Islam with the blood of his heart.

He was slaughtered mercilessly, but his mission was accomplished. Not only did Islam survive, but it is still truly triumphant today. Hope was revived and courage reinstalled in the people.

Imam Hussain (a.s) became and still is very much the source of inspiration for all of humanity at large. One fact remains, there never was a Hussain (a.s) before him, and there has been none ever after. The Battle of Karbala was a Pyrrhic victory that led to the demise of the ungodly Umayyad dynasty. Truly a noble and magnificent victory for humanity at large.

⁸⁵ *Qibla*: The direction of all Muslim prayers; facing the Holy *Ka'bah*, in Makkah. Initially, the *qibla* was the direction of the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, Palestine.

⁸⁶ Shimr ibn Dhi al-Jawshan (may he be far removed from the Mercy of God), the accursed murderer of Imam Hussain (a.s).

⁸⁷ This utterly disgraceful, vile act demonstrated no respect for life or the sanctity of a human being, especially of a member of the Prophet's family. A Muslim is taught to honour every fellow human being and more so those the Prophet loved. As the 1st Imam, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) said very eloquently:

'People are of two kinds, either your brothers in faith or your equals in humanity.'

The 12th Imam: Imam Mohammad (*al-Mahdi*) (atfs) said:

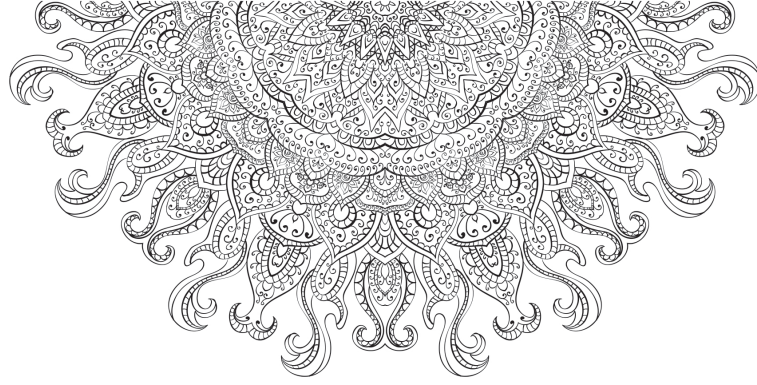
أَلَا يَا أَهْلَ الْعَالَمِ إِنَّ جَدِّي الْحُسَيْنَ
قَتَلُوهُ عَطْشَانًا

*'Alaa yaa ahlal aalam
inna jaddi al-Hussain
qataluhu at-shaanan.'*

*'O people of the world,
my grandfather Hussain
was killed thirsty.'*

Reference:

'al-Irshaad' by al-Sheikh al-Mufeed – Vol. 2, Page 384, (1993)
Dar al-Mufeed publishers, Beirut, Lebanon.



MY PAST & THE FUTURE

This small effort is solely for the *Esaal e Thawaab*⁸⁸ and as *Sadaqa e Jaariyah*⁸⁹ for all my *marhumeen*, especially my beloved parents *Alhaji*⁹⁰ Syed Dilawar Hussain Shah (23rd March 1933 – 22nd February 2002) and Syeda Kishwar Sultana Shah (22nd May 1940 – 11th April 2010). May Almighty Allah have infinite mercy on them, grant them forgiveness, and a place in *Jannatul Firdaus*. Their deep love, devotion, and guidance gave us, all their children, the moral and ethical compass that defines and guides us. As a child, I marvelled at their devotion and love for the *Ahl al-Bayt*.

My dear dad, a mere mortal, ‘punched far above his weight’. He has always been my hero and role model. I am still in awe of his gentle strength of character, great silent resilience, and unwavering total faith in his creator.

He subtly imbibed moral values into me and taught me much. Not only did he contribute to make me a human (providing the ‘y’ chromosome), but forged me (with a velvet covered sledgehammer) into a God conscious ‘human being’.

⁸⁸ Conveying spiritual rewards to the deceased.

⁸⁹ A charity deed, performed for obtaining perpetual spiritual rewards.

⁹⁰ My family lived in Sokoto (Nigeria) for a number of years, where the local people are and the language is Hausa. There, as per the Hausa tradition, my dear father was addressed / titled as *Alhaji*.

In many Islamic cultures, it is the custom to respectfully address one who has performed the sacred rituals of *Hajj* (pilgrimage to the Holy Ka’bah, in Makkah, Arabia, one of the five pillars of Islam) so as to acknowledge this fact. Some regional and cultural variations of the title are (masculine : ‘*al-Hajj*’, ‘*Haj*’, ‘*Hajj*’ or ‘*Hajji*’ etc; feminine : ‘*Hajjah*’ or ‘*Hajjya*’ etc; Plural : ‘*Hujjaj*’).

I think back and proudly send *Salaam*, sincerely acknowledging and paying my humble and deep respects to all my ancestors.

These forefathers saved, the true religion of Islam, despite great suffering, and persecution; for being the ‘Shi’a of Ali’⁹¹ (a.s).

May God also bless our current *Maraji*,⁹² elders and scholars. They serve the (pure) Islam of the last Prophet of Islam.

A gift of reciting a *Surah al-Fatihah*⁹³ (Appendix 10) and three times *Surah al-Ikhlās*⁹⁴ (Appendix 11) for all my *Marhumeen*, for those of the author and everyone else that helped in this work, and indeed (the entire *Ithna-Asheri Shi’a ummah*⁹⁵) all our *mo’mineen*⁹⁶ and *mo’minaat*, will be greatly appreciated – *Jazak’Allah khairal jaza*.⁹⁷

I humbly beg Almighty God to be infinitely forgiving and merciful to my progeny and next generations of our ‘Tribe of Shah’.

My beloved children (Ms. Syeda Sakina Kishwar Shah, Mr. Syed Dilawar Hussain Shah, and Mr. Syed Haider Hussain Shah) are truly my only reasons for existence – as they say in French, ‘*raisons d’être*’.

⁹¹ ‘Shi’a of Ali’ : *Shi’a* (*Shi’i*, *Shi’ah*) is short for the Arabic ‘*Shi’a’atu Ali*’, ‘The Followers of Ali’. The term Shi’a refers to the Muslims that at the time of the Holy Prophet and after him regard Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) as the appointed heir, Imam, and caliph. The Shi’a believe the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) designated Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) as his successor by God’s Command (on the 18th *Dhu al-Hijjah* at a place called *Ghadir Khumm*; this occasion is celebrated by the Shi’a as ‘*Eid al-Ghadir*’).

⁹² *Maraji* : (singular *Marja*) literally ‘source to follow’ or ‘religious reference’. A title given to the highest level of Shi’a (*Ithna Asheri*) religious clerics bestowed by a *hawza* (a seminary where scholars are educated and authorised).

⁹³ *Surah al-Fatihah* (The Opening): Holy Qur’an: *Surah* 1. Some *surah* of the Holy Qur’an are known by other names as well. Another name of this *surah* is *Surah al-Hamd*, the *surah* of the Lord’s praise. Some scholars report that this was the first *surah* to be revealed to the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him).

⁹⁴ *Surah al-Ikhlās* (Pure Monotheism): Holy Qur’an: *Surah* 112.

⁹⁵ *Ummah* is an Arabic word meaning ‘people’, ‘group’ or ‘community’ formed based on some common and coherent features (in this case, religious belief in the 12 *a’immah*).

⁹⁶ *Mo’min* (masculine), *mo’mineen* (masculine plural), *mo’mina* (feminine), and *mo’minaat* (feminine plural) are terms used in the Holy Qur’an for a monotheistic believer who has complete submission to the will of Allah and has faith firmly established in his heart, i.e., a ‘faithful Muslim’.

⁹⁷ May Almighty Allah reward you greatly.

My dearly beloved nieces and nephews: may Almighty Allah always protect them, bless them abundantly, guide them, and keep them (and their progeny) on the straight path (*Siraat al-Mustaqeem*).

As parents and care providers to our beloved children, we have a moral and religious duty; not only to prepare the road for them but to also prepare them for the road that lies ahead in their journey through life.

May they follow the path of their noble (*Syed*) ancestors, and be the true '*Shi'a of Ali*' (a.s).

In all ways, and always; following the message of the Holy Qur'an, the teachings of the (last Prophet of Islam) Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) and his noble (purified) family (the *Ahl al-Bayt*).

I humbly pray that they all serve in the cause of humanity and Islam, and are among the sincere and faithful followers of the Iman of our time, Imam al-Mahdi (atfs).

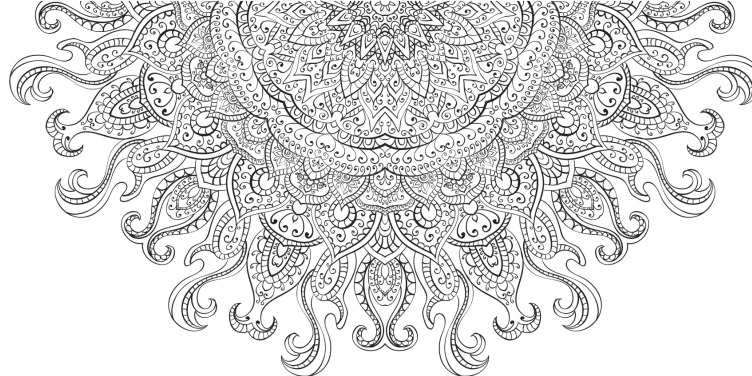
- Ms. Syeda Sakina Kishwar Shah
- Mr. Syed Dilawar Hussain Shah
- Mr. Syed Haider Hussain Shah
- Ms. Aliza Shah
- Ms. Anika Shah
- Dr. Yasmin Shah (BHIthSc, MD)
- Dr. Syed Haider Dilawar Shah (BHIthSc, MD)
- Ms. Syeda Sajidah Sultana Shah
- Mr. Syed Luqman Hussain Shah
- Ms. Syeda Dur E Shahwar Shah
- Mr. Syed Ali Kazmi
- Ms. Syeda Zahra Kazmi

And Allah knows best.



*¹⁶⁹ Do not suppose
those who were slain
in the way of God
to be dead;
no, they are living
and provided for
near their Lord,*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 3 (Al-i Imran : The House of Imran) Ayah 169*



EPILOGUE

THE INCIDENT OF *HARRA*

Soon after the tragedy of Karbala, in the year 63AH, the people of Madinah revolted against the rule of Yazid (l.a). In response, Yazid sent his (Umayyad) army from Syria to attack Madinah. This, a brutal and savage event, (known as the incident of *Harra*), resulted in barbaric atrocities and the loss of many innocent civilian lives. The sanctity of the mosque of the Holy Prophet was violated. Historians document the violent death of about 80 companions of the Holy Prophet, and about 700 (mostly) religious scholars (*Hafiz*⁹⁸ of the Holy Qur'an).

AVENGING THE MASSACRE OF KARBALA

Amir Mukhtar ibn Abi Ubayd al-Thaqafi, was a brave warrior, army general, politician, and a just administrator based in Kufa. He was above all a very loyal and devoted friend of the *Ahl al-Bayt*.

Amir Mukhtar played a pivotal role against the arch enemies of the *Ahl al-Bayt* – the Umayyads, enabling the just and due punishment of the killers of Imam Hussain (a.s), and his supporters, in Karbala.

About five years after the tragedy of Karbala (*Rabi ul-Awwal* 66AH) – Amir Mukhtar led an Islamic revolt (from the city of Kufa) against the Umayyads to avenge the blood of the martyrs of Karbala and within a short period of about eighteen months, he had killed about 18,000 Yazidites, all culprits, who had taken part in the atrocities against the *Ahl al-Bayt*.

⁹⁸ *Hafiz*: (also Romanised as *Hafidh*) an Arabic word literally meaning 'memory' (plural: *Huffaz*; feminine: *Hafiza*) – a respectful term used for someone who has memorized the Holy Qur'an. *Huffaz* are regarded as blessed, given much respect, privileges and prominence in the Muslim world. The Holy Qur'an is divided into 114 *Suwar* (chapters) containing 6,236 *Ayaat* (verses). It has some 80,000 words and 330,000 individual characters.

ISLAMIC GREETING: 'AS-SALAAMU ALAIKUM'

Salaam, an Arabic word literally meaning 'peace' and the embodiment of 'peace'. *As-Salaam* is also one of the ninety-nine glorious attributes and infinite names of God (referred to in Arabic as: *al-Asma ul Hasna*).

¹⁸⁰*To God belong the Best Names, so supplicate Him by them,*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 7 (al-A'raf: The Elevations) Ayah 180*



⁸*God – there is no god except Him –
to Him belongs the Best Names.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 20 (Ta Ha : Ta Ha) Ayah 8*



²⁴*He is God, the Creator, the Maker and the Former. To Him
belong the Best Names.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 59 (al-Hashr : The Banishment) Ayah 24*



When you greet someone with '*As-salaam alaikum*', you are wishing them, 'May the blessings of his name descend upon you'.

The Holy Prophet urged, that to earn a greater reward from God, we should always try to initiate the (prescribed) greeting (*As-salaamu alaikum*).

Pertinent ahadith: The Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) said:

(i) '*The initiator of the greeting is not prone to arrogance*'

Kanz al-'Ummal, No. 25265; Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 813

(ii) *The believer initiates the greeting of peace (Salaam) whereas the hypocrite says, 'Not until it is said to me first!'*

Kanz al-'Ummal, No. 778; Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 297

(iii) *'Verily the nearest people to Allah and His Messenger are those who initiate the greeting of peace'*

Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 76 Page 12 No.50

Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 813

The Holy Qur'an mentions this greeting in several places:

⁸⁶*When you are greeted with a salute, greet with a better one than it, or return it; indeed God takes account of all things.*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 4 (*al-Nisa* : Women) Ayah 86



²³*Those who have faith and do righteous deeds will be admitted into gardens with streams running in them, to remain in them, by the leave of their Lord. Their greeting therein will be 'Peace!'*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 14 (*Abraham* : Ibrahim) Ayah 23



³²*those whom the angels take away while they are pure. They say to them, Peace be to you! Enter paradise because of what you used to do.*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 16 (*al-Nahl* : The Bee) Ayah 32



⁶¹*... So when you enter houses, greet yourselves with a salutation from God, blessed and good ...*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 24 (*al-Nur* : The Light) Ayah 61

⁵⁶ *Indeed, God and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who have faith! Invoke blessings on him and invoke Peace upon him in a worthy manner.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 33 (al-Ahzab : The Confederates) Ayah 56*

The commonly used greeting in Islam is *'As-salaamu alaikum wa'rahmatullahi wa barakatu* (peace be upon you and the mercy and blessings of Allah). This is often shortened to *As-salaamu alaikum* (peace be upon you), or just *'Salaam'* (peace).

'Salaam' is not only the greeting of the people on Earth, but also the greeting of the people of heaven and the greeting of the Angels.

Salaam is also the way Allah greets people as even Allah says *Salaam*.

⁵⁸ *'Peace!' – a salutation from the all-merciful Lord.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 36 (Ya Sin : Ya Sin) Ayah 58*



¹⁸⁰ *Clear is your Lord, the Lord of Might, of whatever they allege concerning Him.*

¹⁸¹ *Peace be to the apostles!*

¹⁸² *All praise belongs to God, Lord of all the worlds.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 37 (al-Saffat : The Ranged Ones) Ayaat 180-182*



⁷³ *Those who are wary of their Lord will be led to paradise in throngs. When they reach it and its gates are opened, its keepers will say to them, 'Peace be to you! You are welcome! Enter it to remain.'*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 39 (al-Zumar : Throngs) Ayah 73*

A few relevant ahadith on 'greetings'

*'The young should greet the old,
a single individual should greet two together,
the fewer number of people should greet the larger number,
the person on horseback should greet the one on foot,
the person walking should greet the one standing,
and the person standing should greet the one sitting.'*

Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Kanz al-Ummal, No. 25321; Mizan ul Hikmah Page 814



'Shake hands (with each other) to make grudges leave your hearts.'

Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Nahj al Fasahah; Tradition No. 1730; Page 244



*'The maladies of your predecessors such as envy and enmity have
penetrated into your (souls), wearing away not your bodies,
but your faith. By the One in whose hands Mohammad's soul
stands, you will not be allowed to Paradise unless you turn
out to be (true) believers, and you will not achieve that save by
loving one another. Shall I make you aware of something that
would help you so doing? Greet each other'*

Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Nahj al Fasahah; Tradition No. 2078: Pages 291 & 292

'The greeting of peace comes before speech.'

Imam Jafar ibn Mohammad (a.s)
Jami'a al-Akhbar, Page 231, No. 596; Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 812

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) used to greet women, and they would return his greeting. The commander of the faithful, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (a.s) also used to greet women, but he used to be cautious greeting young (unmarried) ladies and used to say, I fear lest their voices may be pleasing to me, whence I would end up with more (consequences) than the reward I anticipated (from the greeting).

al-Kafi, Vol. 5, Page 535, No. 3; Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 815

Greeting by saying ‘*Salaam*’ is the *Sunnah*⁹⁹ of the Prophet and is *Mustahabb*,¹⁰⁰ but the response to this greeting is a *Fardh*¹⁰¹ (synonym: *Wajib*).

‘Greeting with peace is a voluntary act whereas returning it is an obligation.’

Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
Kanz al- ‘Ummal, No 25294; Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 814

⁹⁹ *Sunnah*: An Arabic word that means ‘tradition/way/habitual practice’. In this context, it means ‘The Way of the Prophet’ – the particular customs, mannerisms, practices and doings of the Holy Prophet – thus making it a highly recommended activity.

¹⁰⁰ *Mustahabb*: In Arabic, literally means ‘beloved thing’, an Islamic term referring to voluntary, recommended, favoured or virtuous actions. It can be defined as duties recommended, but not essential, fulfilment of which is rewarded, though they may be neglected without punishment. The opposite of *mustahabb* is *Makruh* (discouraged).

¹⁰¹ *Fardh*: (Synonym: ‘*Wajib*’) An Arabic word, for any Islamic religious (essential) activity, a prescribed duty, or an obligatory ritual commanded by God. Essentially, a part of the laws, tenets, and principles of Islam, and must be adhered to. For sincerely obeying *fardh* commands and duties, the obedient servant of Almighty God receives ‘*Hasanat*’, ‘*Ajr*’, and ‘*Thawaab*’ (spiritual blessings and divine rewards) – for each good religious deed performed and accepted by our Creator.

ISLAMIC LUNAR CALENDAR

The lunar-based Islamic *Hijri* calendar is the official calendar in only a few predominantly Muslim countries.

Most Muslims generally refer to the Christian or Western (Gregorian) calendar for most dates (for secular purposes) and consult the *Hijri* calendar for religious reference purposes only.

The *Hijri* calendar is abbreviated to AH, from the Latin '*Anno Hegirae*', which means 'In the year of the *Hijrah*.' In English, the years prior to the *Hijra* are abbreviated as BH ('Before the *Hijra*').

In Arabic, *Hijrah* means to leave one place and to seek sanctuary or freedom in another place. The Holy Prophet and almost every Muslim emigrated from Makkah to Madinah. This very significant event in early Islam was used to mark a new beginning, and thus the beginning of the Islamic calendar.

The 1st day of the first month of the start of the *Hijri* calendar is therefore 1st *Muharram*, 1AH, which corresponds to 16th July 622AD (also 622CE).

Traditionally, the Christian calendar divides dates into BC (Before Christ) and AD ('*Anno Domini*' 'In the year of our Lord' in Latin). The international standard for civil calendars used throughout the world today (the Gregorian calendar) uses CE (Common Era) and BCE (Before Common Era).

Both of these notation systems (referred to as the Gregorian calendar) are numerically equivalent (and started as 1AD / 1CE), thus BCE and CE are alternatives of BC and AD. Therefore, 2021AD corresponds to 2021CE.

As each lunar month is approximately 29.53 solar days, the Islamic calendar is shorter than the Gregorian calendar. There are only ever 29 or 30 days in the lunar calendar.

In Arabia, these months were in use since pre-Islamic times. Muslims now look for the new moon (waxing crescent – *Hilal* in Arabic) at dusk, when determining the beginning and end of the Islamic months.

Muslims fundamentally do not revere as sacred, nor worship the moon (or the sun), very strictly, only the ONE God, the only creator and only master of the whole universe is acknowledged and worshipped.¹⁰²

The Holy Qur'an states:

³⁷ Among His signs are the night and day and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun, nor to the moon, but prostrate to God who created them, if it is Him that you worship.

Holy Qur'an : *Surah 41 (Fussilat : Elaborated) Ayah 37*

The need to determine with some precision the appearance of the *hilar*, the crescent of the new moon, was one of the reasons for the early Muslim scholars to study and excel in astronomy.

In the Holy Qur'an, there are several references to the lunar calendar and months.

Both the sun and moon are described as 'calculation devices' for people. Thus, the position of the sun is used as a clock, for example, to determine times for prayers, while the lunar calendar is used to determine, for example, the times for Ramadan and the Hajj.

Listed below are some relevant Qur'anic references to calendars and months:

¹⁸⁵ The month of Ramadan is one in which the Qur'an was sent down as guidance for mankind, ...

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 2 (al-Baqarah : The Heifer) Ayah 185*

¹⁰²The 'Shahadah', is the 1st of the 5 pillars of Islam, an essential declaration of the belief in the oneness (*tawhid*) of God, and the acceptance of Mohammad (peace be upon him) as God's messenger. It is a verbal proclamation, the words are:

*'Ash-hadu anla elaha illa-Allah
wa ash-hadu an'na Mohammadun rasul-Allah'*

Which translates to:

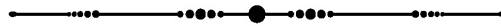
*'I bear witness that there is no deity but God,
and I bear witness that Mohammad is the messenger of God.'*

¹⁸⁹ *They question you concerning the new moons. Say, 'They are timekeeping signs for the people and [for the sake of] hajj.'*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 2 (al-Baqarah : The Heifer) Ayah 189*

⁹⁶ *Splitter of the dawn, He has made the night for rest, and the sun and moon for calculation ...*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 6 (al-An'am : Cattle) Ayah 96*



³⁶ *Indeed, the number of months with God is twelve months in God's Book, the day when He created the heavens and the earth. Of these, four are sacred. That is the upright religion. So do not wrong yourselves during them.*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 9 (al-Tawbah : Repentance) Ayah 36*



⁵ *It is He who made the sun a radiance and the moon a light, and ordained its phases that you might know the number of years and the calculation of time ...*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 10 (Yunus : Jonah) Ayah 5*



¹³ *He makes the night pass into the day and makes the day pass into the night, and He has disposed the sun and the moon, each moving for a specified term ...*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah 35 (al-Fatir : The Originator) Ayah 13*

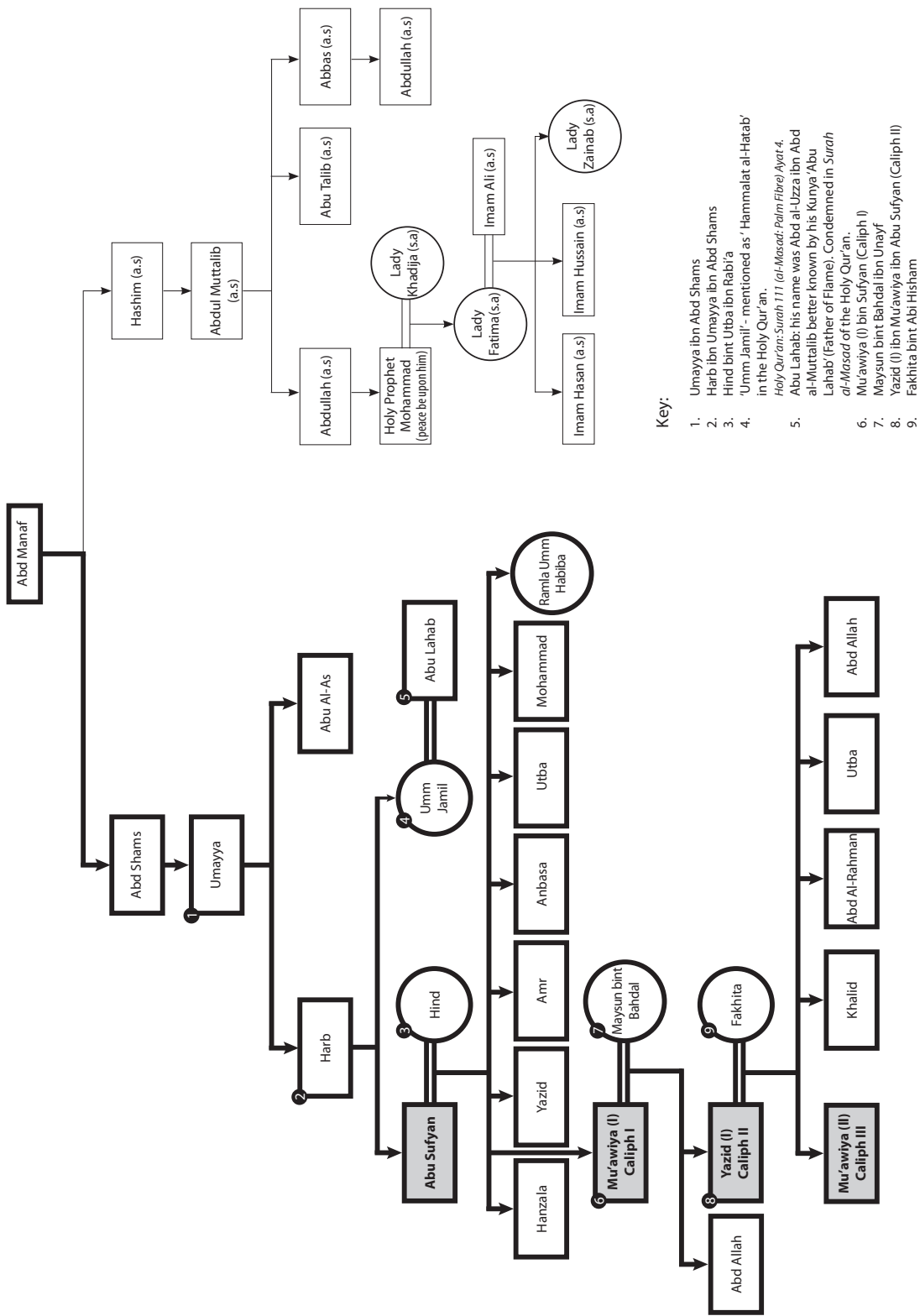
THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR (*HIJRI* CALENDAR)

A Lunar Calander of 12 Months – based on the cycle of the moon

Month No.	Name	Translated Meaning	Special Significance	Note
1 st	<i>Muharram</i>	‘Forbidden’	1 st Sacred Month	Battles are forbidden, except in response to aggression. Muharram 10 th is the day of ‘Ashura’
2 nd	<i>Safar</i>	‘Void’		Named as pre-Islamic Arab houses were empty as they went out to find & gather food.
3 rd	<i>Rabi al-Awwal</i>	‘The First Spring’ or ‘To Graze’		Cattle were grazed during this time.
4 th	<i>Rabi al-Thani</i> or <i>Rabi al-Akhir</i>	‘The Second Spring’ or ‘The Last Spring’		Latter Spring
5 th	<i>Jumada al-Awwal</i>	‘The First of Parched Land’		Marked the beginning of an Arabian Summer
6 th	<i>Jumada al-Thani</i> or <i>Jumada al-Akhirah</i>	‘The Second of Parched Land’ or ‘The Last of Parched Land’		Latter Summer
7 th	<i>Rajab</i>	‘Respect’ / ‘Honor’ / ‘Refrain’ / ‘To Remove’	2 nd Sacred Month, Month of Allah (SWT)	Performing ‘Umra’ in <i>Rajab</i> holds greater virtue. Arabs removed the tips of their spears and refrain from warfare.
8 th	<i>Sha’ban</i>	‘Scattered’	Month of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)	Arab tribes traditionally dispersed to find water.
9 th	<i>Ramadan</i>	‘Burning Heat’	Month of the Muslim Nation (Ummah)	Only Month mentioned in the Holy Qur’an. Month of fasting – the empty stomach ‘burns’ worldly desires.
10 th	<i>Shawwal</i>	‘Raised’		1 st day of this month is Eid al-Fitr. Female camels’ calf and ‘raise’ their young ones.
11 th	<i>Dhu al-Qa’dah</i>	‘The One of Truce / Sitting’	3 rd Sacred Month	Literally means to sit. You sit back and do not engage in fighting
12 th	<i>Dhu al-Hijjah</i>	‘The One of Pilgrimage’	4 th Sacred Month	<i>Hajj</i> is performed on the 8 th , 9 th & 10 th of the month. <i>Eid al-Adha</i> begins on the 10 th day of the month.

Family Tree of the Umayyad Dynasty (Relevant & Simplified)

(May the Mercy of God be far removed from them all)



Notes on some members of the (cursed) Umayyad dynasty:

(1) *Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan* (I) – The Founder of the Umayyad Caliphate.

(2) *Hind bint Utba ibn Rabi'a* – The 'Liver Eater'

Wife of Abu Sufyan and mother of Mu'awiya (I)

(3) Umm Jamil (l.a): The wife of Abu Lahab (l.a)

Her full name was Arwa Umm Jamil bint Harb. A sister of Abu Sufyan (l.a) and therefore, a paternal aunt of Mu'awiya (l.a).

Her husband and she were fierce opponents of the Holy Prophet. They are both cursed in the Holy Qur'an. Umm Jamil is referred to as 'Hammalat al-Hatab' meaning 'the Firewood Carrier' so called because she is said to have carried thorns and cast them in the pathway of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him).

⁴ *and his wife, too, the firewood carrier,*

Holy Qur'an: *Surah* 111 (*al-Masad* : Palm Fibre) Ayah 4.

(4) *Abu Lahab*: A paternal Uncle of the Holy Prophet.

His name was Abd al-Uzza ibn Abd al-Muttalib, (his *Kunya* was *Abu Lahab*: 'Father of Flame' – due to his reddish cheeks). Abd al-Uzza, means a slave of al-Uzza; a pre-Islamic pagan Arabian goddess. Due to his severe animosity towards the Holy Prophet, he is mentioned by his kunya, and along with his wife (Umm Jamil) – both are cursed in the Holy Qur'an. (*Surah* 111 – *al-Masad* : The Palm Fibre).

Pertinent hadith - Imam Jafar ibn Mohammad (a.s) said:

'Whenever you recite (Surah 111, al-Masad : Palm Fibre), curse Abu Lahab without fail because he was such a liar that he had denied the Holy Prophet and whatever was revealed upon him.'

Sawab al- A'amal; Page 173

(5) *Yazid ibn Mu'awiya* (I) – the 2nd Umayyad Caliph.

The name has Arabic origins, derived from the root word '*yazada*', meaning 'to increase' or 'to grow'.

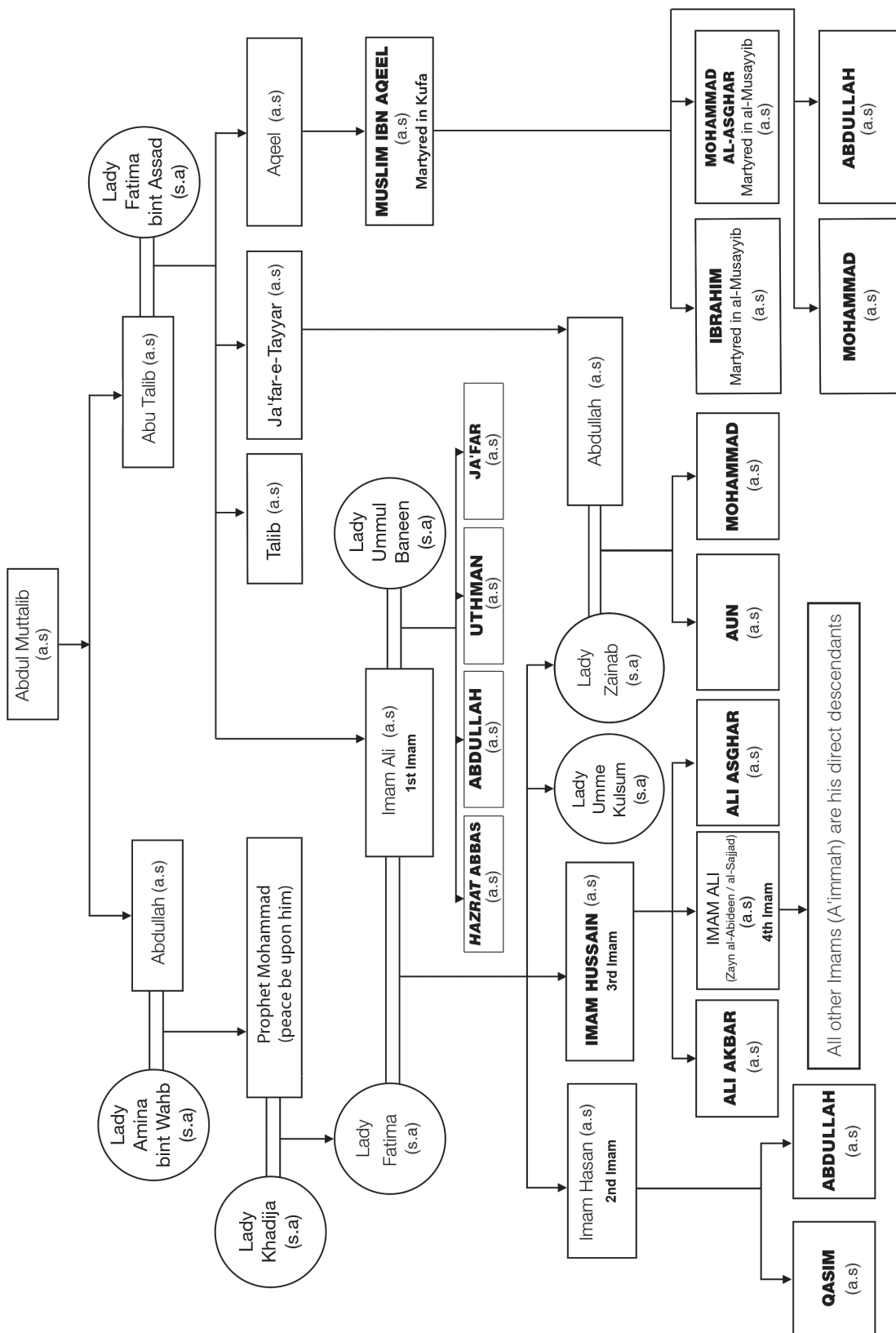
(6) *Mu'awiya* (II) – the 3rd and last Umayyad caliph.

He succeeded his father Yazid (I) and became the 3rd Caliph. He was killed while fleeing the (coalition forces made up of Persians, Iraqis and Shi'ites) under the command of Abu al-Abbas al-Saffah. He was the last caliph of the Sufyanid line in the Umayyad dynasty.

FAMILY TREE 1

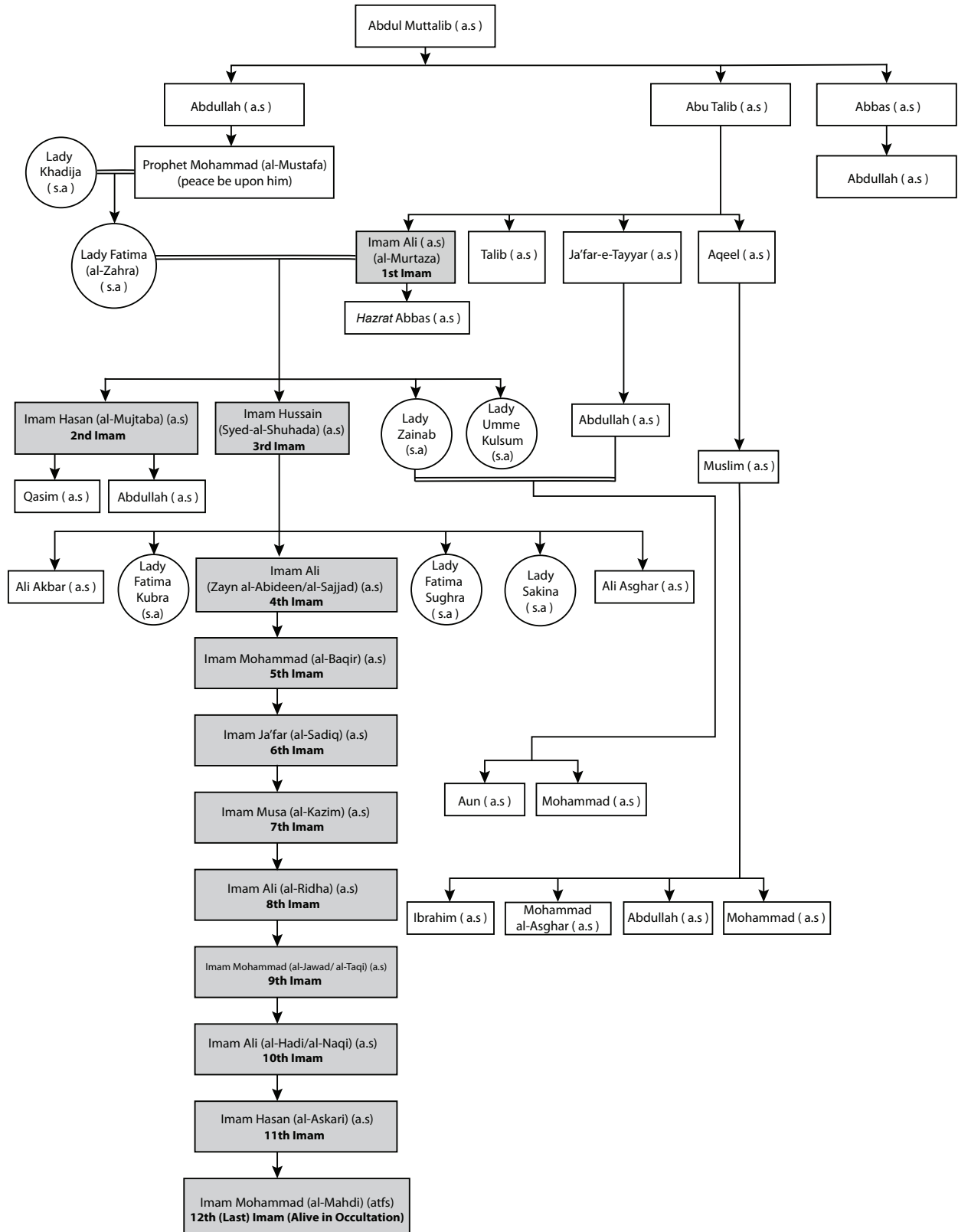
Simplified family tree of Imam Hussain (a.s), relevant to this book.

The names in bold were martyred in the Battle of Karbala. It is documented about seventy-two family members and companions were martyred.



FAMILY TREE 2

Simplified family tree of Imam Hussain (a.s), members of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, and the twelve Shi'a Imams.



MAP: IMAM HUSSAIN'S (A.S) JOURNEY

MADINAH TO KARBALA AND (FOR SURVIVORS OF THE MASSACRE – 'SABAYA'¹⁰³)
ONTO DAMASCUS AND BACK TO MADINAH (VIA KARBALA)



Map not to scale. Many of these places no longer exist by these names.

¹⁰³ *Sabaya* (feminine, plural; singular is *Sabiyya*) an Arabic word literally meaning 'young ladies'. In parlance it has come to mean 'captive women' or 'female prisoners of war'.

In history books, authored by different scholars, inevitably, there are several variations (in the minor details) to this remarkable epic true story. The exodus (a day before *Hajj* – 60AH) from Makkah to the intended destination of Kufa, ended up with the massacre in the barren plains of Karbala.

The arduous travels, culminating in the return (home) of the survivors of Karbala to Madinah, are reported in five stages. For brevity – only some very pertinent and brief mentions are made of the various parts of the Journey. The details of this subject are well documented in very many books.

Stage (1): Madinah – Makkah

- Departed: 28th *Rajab* 60AH
- Arrived: 3rd *Shaban* 60AH

The intention was to perform the annual Holy Pilgrimage (*Hajj*) in Makkah.

Stage (2): Makkah to Karbala (intended destination: Kufa)

- Departed: 8th *Dhu al-Hijjah* 60AH
- Arrived: 2nd *Muharram* 61AH

In history, there are several places mentioned, where the Imam halted and met people or gave sermons after leaving Madinah (on the 28th *Rajab* 60AH). Very brief accounts of the events at major halting stations in the Imam's journey are given below.

1. Makkah: The Imam and his family arrived in Makkah on the 3rd *Shaban* 60AH, intending to perform the Hajj rituals. He became aware that there were plans to assassinate him. Yazid had sent assassins to Makkah, to kill him while he performed the Hajj rituals.

Imam Hussain (a.s) completed the rituals of Umrah, instead of the Hajj. Enabling him and his family to leave Makkah sooner than previously intended. Along with a small entourage (family and close associates) he decided to migrate to Kufa, having received hundreds of letters from the residents of Kufa – imploring him to settle among them.

2. Tanim: As Imam Hussain (a.s) had to leave Makkah in a hurry, they bought supplies from this trading post for their journey ahead (camels, horses, tents, food, clothes and waterskins).

3. Saffah: Here, Imam Hussain (a.s) met a famous poet from Iraq, al-Farazdaq, and inquired about the mood of the people of Kufa. His reply was, *'Their hearts are with you, but their swords are with the Umayyads.'*

4. Zubalah: The Imam learnt from two tribesmen coming from Kufa about the martyrdom of Hazrat Muslim and Hani. The Imam said:

*'Innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji'oon –
Indallaahi nahtasibu anfusana.'*

*'Indeed, we belong to Allah, and to Him do we indeed return –
who surely accounts for our self-sacrifice.'*

These martyrs are both buried near the mosque of Kufa.

5. Batn-al-Aqaba: The Imam met a man from the tribe of Akrama who told him that Kufa was no longer a friendly town and was now surrounded by Yazid's army. No-one could get in or out of the town. Nevertheless, the Imam proceeded onwards.

6. Dhu Husum: Here the Imam met Hur, (the Commander of the Umayyad army), with him were a thousand, fully armed, and trained soldiers. They were thirsty and requested water. The Imam ordered his men to generously give them all the water they wanted. Even all their animals were watered. *Dhuhr*¹⁰⁴ prayers were led by the Imam, with Hur and his soldiers praying behind him. The Imam told Hur about the many letters he had received from Kufa. He said, "The people of Kufa have sent delegations and letters requesting that as they had no Imam (leader/guide), that I should come to

¹⁰⁴ *Dhuhr*: the second of the five daily prayers.

- (1) *Salat Al-Fajr* : offered at dawn – before sunrise
- (2) *Salat Al-Dhuhr* : offered at midday – after the sun passes its highest
- (3) *Salat Al-Asr* : offered half way between noon and sundown.
- (4) *Salat Al-Maghrib* : offered just after sunset
- (5) *Salat Al-Isha* : offered after sunset, but before midnight

lead them in the way of Allah. They wrote that we, the *Ahl al-Bayt*, were more qualified to govern their affairs than those who make a claim to which they had no right and are acting unjustly and wrongly. But if they changed their minds, choosing to ignore our rights and forgetting their promises, I would go back.’ He was, however, denied turning back by Hur’s army, and was instead stopped in Karbala.

7. Al-Baidah: The Imam delivered one of his many famous sermons – ‘O people, the Prophet has said that if one sees a tyrannical ruler transgressing against Allah and His Prophet and oppressing people but does nothing by word or action to change the situation, then it will be incumbent upon Allah to place him where he rightly belongs. Do you not see to what low levels your community affairs have come to? ... Do you not observe that truth has been suppressed and falsehood has no limits? And, as for me, I look upon death as but a means of attaining martyrdom. I consider living my life amongst transgressors as nothing but an agony and an affliction.’

8. Karbala: The Imam asked his companions the name of the place they had reached. A barren desert plain near the village of Nainawa.

Several companions mentioned the different names that the location was known to them: as ‘al-Taff’, ‘al-Nawawees’, ‘Ghazariyah’, ‘Amoorah’ and ‘Shatt al-Furat’.

A companion said ‘Karbala’. The Imam said, ‘Yes, this is the place. Let us stop here for we have arrived at our destination.’ On the orders of the Imam, tents were erected near the Alqama, a tributary of the Euphrates, some kilometres away. The date was *2nd Muharram 61AH*.

The name ‘Karbala’ is a composite of two words – ‘*Kerbin*’ means ‘grief’ or ‘sorrow’, and ‘*Bala*’ means ‘afflictions’. So ‘*Kerbin-wa-bala*’ means land of sorrow and afflictions.

A day after his arrival (thus on the *3rd Muharram 61AH*) – Imam Hussain (a.s) called the people of Karbala and the nearby villages of Nainawa, Ghazariyah and Shaayyde. He paid an extremely generous price of 60,000

*Dirhams*¹⁰⁵ for freehold ownership of a parcel of land in Karbala, belonging to the tribe of Banu Asad.

The condition of sale stipulating three strict conditions:

1. That the people of Banu Asad should bury him and his martyred companions (as Yazid's army will depart, leaving their bodies uninterred).
2. That the land purchased should remain a cemetery and not be used for cultivation.
3. That they should continually host and be hospitable to all pilgrims who would come to pay homage at their grave sites.

The tribe of Banu Asad agreed to these conditions.

The Imam bought the land in the name of his son – Hazrat Ali al-Akbar bin al-Hussain ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s). The Imam paid for the land and then immediately gave it back to the Banu Asad as a gift.

As agreed upon, and up until today, these three conditions of Imam Hussain (a.s) have been honoured by the people of Karbala.

Stage (3): Karbala (via Kufa) – Damascus

- Departed: Karbala – 11th Muharram 61AH
- Arrived: Kufa – 12th Muharram 61AH
- Departed: Kufa – 19th Muharram 61AH
- Arrived: Damascus – 1st Safar 61AH

Captives were taken along a longer route (28 days - Via Kufa, Mosul, Halab, Hums, and Baalbek), and marched to Yazid's palace – in Damascus (capital of Syria).

Some scholars are of the opinion that it was a shameless display of shackled, haggard, dusty, dishevelled captives (mostly women and children) paraded through as many settlements as possible. To display Yazid's prowess and might (political reasons). But other scholars are of the opinion that it was partly to avoid the outrage, anger, and indignation of God conscious villagers and townfolks along the route.

¹⁰⁵ *Dirham*: a specific weight of pure silver equivalent to 3.0 grams. *Dinar*: a specific weight of 22k gold (917.) equivalent to 4.25 grams (10 Dirhams = 1 Dinar).

The severed heads of the Holy Imam, his male relatives, and his companions, (72 heads) were impaled onto spears and lances. Held aloft for public viewing. Displayed as 'trophies', in a macabre and barbaric act, leading the procession of captives, who in the main consisted of the Imam's surviving (mostly female) relatives.

Before reaching Damascus, a young daughter of Imam Hussain (a.s) Syeda Khawla (s.a) died and is buried in Baalbek (Lebanon).

The fourth Imam, Imam Ali (Zayn al-Abideen / al-Sajjad) (a.s), a son of the martyred Imam, and the remaining family members were taken prisoner and marched to Yazid's palace in Damascus, capital of Syria.

Imam Hussain's (a.s) noble sister Lady Zainab (s.a) and his noble son (the fourth Imam) gave very bold, defiant, dignified, and proud speeches along the way and in the court of Yazid, humiliating Yazid. Exposing his army's cowardice and atrocities and honouring the *Ahl al-Bayt* and all those martyred in Karbala. The speeches, well documented by historians, are very worthwhile reading to understand Imam Hussain's (a.s) accomplishment and the great success of his desired mission.

Stage (4): Damascus – Karbala

- Departed: *6th Safar 61AH*
- Arrived: *20th Safar 61AH – The 40th day (Arbaeen) after the Martyrdom of Imam Hussain (a.s)*

Stage (5): Karbala – Madinah

- Departed: *23rd Safar 61AH*
- Arrived: *7th Rabi ul-Awwal 61AH*

Du'a 'Allaahuma kun le-waliyyekal'

Also known as Du'a al-Faraj / Hujjat / Imam e Zaman (atfs)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Rahim

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

Allahuma Salle Ala Mohammadin wa aale Mohammad

اللَّهُمَّ كُنْ لَوْلِيِّكَ الْحُجَّةِ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ صَلَواتُكَ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آبَائِهِ فِي

*Allaahuma kun le-waliyyekal hujjatebnil Hasane Salawaatokā a'layhe wa
a'ala aabaa-ehi fee*

هَذِهِ السَّاعَةِ وَفِي كُلِّ سَاعَةٍ وَلِيًّا وَحَافِظًا وَقَائِدًا وَنَاصِرًا

*haazehis saa-a'te wa fee kulle saa-a'tin walliyyan wa haafezan wa qaaedan
wa naseran*

وَدَلِيلًا وَعَيْنًا حَتَّى تُسْكِنَهُ أَرْضَكَ طَوْعًا وَتُمَتِّعَهُ فِيهَا طَوِيلًا

*wa daleelan wa a'yna hattaa tuskenahu arzaka taw'a wa tomatte-a'hu feeha
taweelaa*

*Oh Allah, send your blessings on Mohammad and the progeny of Mohammad
Oh Allah, be, for Your representative, the Hujjat (proof), son of Al-Hasan,
your blessings be upon him and his forefathers, in this hour and every hour, a
guardian, a protector, a leader, a helper, a guidance, and an eye. Until You make
him live on the earth, in obedience (to You), and cause him to live in it for a long
time.*

SOME INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES OF IMAM HUSSAIN (a.s)

This selection of quotes is very unlikely to be 'verbatim'. Albeit, having had several translations and modifications over the past 1400-year period, the crux of the message remains relevant and unchanged.

- (1) *Those who worship God, with the hope of a gain, they are not real worshipers, they are but merchants. Those who worship, out of fear (of punishment), they are but slaves. Those who worship, to be grateful to their Creator, they are the free people, and their worship sincere and real.*
- (2) *Among the signs of being ignorant; is arguing with irrational people.*
- (3) *Avoid doing what you might later need to apologize for. The believer does not harm and does not seek an apology, while the hypocrite always harms and may apologise.*
- (4) *One who reveals your faults to you, like a mirror, is your true friend, and one who flatters you and covers up your faults is an enemy.*
- (5) *A person who considers you his friend will always stop you from doing a wrong. However, a person who is an enemy, will always persuade you to do badly.*
- (6) *Being thankful for the Grace of God - God rewards you with another Grace.*
- (7) *Beware that the need of people, for your assistance, is among the blessings of God to you. So do not turn away the needy, when they come to you. Alas, God's blessings on you cease.*

APPENDIX 8:

SOME INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES OF IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

- (8) *Be patient, you noble ones. Death is only a bridge that takes you from misery and loss to the vast Paradise and the eternal graces.*
- (9) *God will help the person who cares about other people's needs. Both in this world and the hereafter.*
- (10) *Seeking knowledge will lead you toward wisdom and elevation.*
- (11) *Kindness elevates human beings, and faithfulness is a sign of decency.*
- (12) *Wisdom will not be gained, unless through following the right path.*
- (13) *The best of wealth is that with which one protects his fame and dignity.*
- (14) *The aim of my revolution is to reform society and revive the true teachings of Islam.*
- (15) *When you know that you are right, then do not care about life or wealth!*
- (16) *The most generous person is the one who forgives while in power.*
- (17) *Avoid oppressing the one who does not have any supporter against you, other than the Almighty God.*
- (18) *Crying out of fear from God is salvation, from the hellfire.*
- (19) *The most generous person is the one who offers help to those who do not expect him to help.*
- (20) *Wisdom will not be complete except by following the truth.*

- (21) *Death with dignity is better than life with humility.*
- (22) *Wars can be won by using guns and violence but hearts can only be won through strong character and pure manners.*
- (23) *If there were no poverty and illness in this world, man would never bow down in front of his Lord.*
- (24) *A rude person in all true meanings is the one who avoids greeting others.*
- (25) *Among you, the most merciful person is the one who forgives even when he is fully able to take revenge.*
- (26) *A person never forgets two types of people in his lifetime. Firstly, a person who helped him in his hour of need. Secondly, the person who abandoned him in difficult times.*
- (27) *Oh God, You are my only trust in every calamity. You are my only hope in every hardship. You are my only promise in my anxiety and distress, when the heart becomes feeble, and I am deserted and forsaken by friends.*
- (28) *Your life is passing day by day. Your death is coming nearer. Hence whatever worldly possessions you have, spend helping other people.*
- (29) *Should poverty, illness, and death, not exist, man would not bow to anything.*
- (30) *I did not revolt in vain. Not as a rebel nor a tyrant. Rather, I arose seeking reformation for the nation of Islam.*

UNIVERSAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF IMAM HUSSAIN (a.s)

Imam Hussain's (a.s) exemplary moral stand, the events of Karbala, the great suffering and sacrifices of his family and companions, and finally his martyrdom all serve as vivid and powerful lessons.

Firmly, establishing the importance of standing up against tyrants, injustice, oppression, and corruption, despite overwhelming odds, and personal sacrifices required.

Imam Hussain's (a.s) inspirational legacy will forever continue to globally influence and moderate mankind's morality. Universally, his legend transcends all differences; religious, and cultures boundaries.

Some quotes from literature on the personal opinions, and reflections of some distinguished intellectuals, writers, artists, and world leaders are presented.

These opinions are presented verbatim and may reflect a different usage of the English language (reflecting cultural, era and regional variation). Different spelling variations of Iman Hussain's (a.s) name were used by the various authors.

Antoine Bara

Lebanese/Syrian Christian, Thinker, Researcher and Writer (Author: Husayn in Christian Ideology)

- ✧ *'I am moved by the life of Imam Husayn especially the post-revolutionary dimension of his personality.'*
- ✧ *'The entire world, especially the scholars are enthralled when they get to know about the way of Imam Husayn as they are fascinated by the way of Ali ibn Abi Talib.'*
- ✧ *'Imam Husayn is not exclusive to the Shi'a or Muslims, but belongs to the whole world because he is the "conscience of religions".'*
- ✧ *'Husayn is in my heart; If Husayn was one of us, we would raise a banner for him in every corner of the earth and call the people to Christianity with the name of Husayn. You Shiites and Muslims do not appreciate the value of Imam Husayn.'*

ELEVEN MAJALIS IN SIMPLE ENGLISH

- ✧ *'No battle in the modern and past history of mankind has earned more sympathy and admiration as well as provided more lessons than the martyrdom of Husayn in the battle of Karbala.'*

Chadli Benjedid (1929 – 2012)
President of Algeria (1979 – 1992)

- ✧ *'Hussain was one of the pioneers of the worldwide revolutionary movement as he is one of the founders of this movement that terrified those of weak thrones and tossed them into an abyss, the place they deserve (to be).'*

Louis Malcom Boyd (1927 – 2007)
United States newspaper columnist

- ✧ *'Throughout the centuries, human beings have always loved the courage, braveness, heroism and the greatness of heart and at the same time, freedom and justice never surrendering to the oppressive and arrogant powers. This was the courage and the greatness of Imam Hussain (a.s); I am pleased that I have participated with the one who gave a great sacrifice wholeheartedly, though 1300 years have passed since its history.'*

Edward Granville Browne (1862 – 1926)
British, Professor of Arabic and Oriental Studies, University of Cambridge
(Author: A literary history of Persia, London, 1919, P.227)

- ✧ *'A reminder of that blood stained field of Karbala, where the grandson of the Apostle of God fell at length, tortured by thirst and surrounded by the bodies of his murdered kinsmen, has been at any time since then sufficient to evoke, even in the most lukewarm and heedless, the deepest emotion, the most frantic grief and an exaltation of spirit before which pain, danger, and death shrink to unconsidered trifles. Yearly, on the tenth day of Muharram, the tragedy is rehearsed in Persia, in India, in Turkey, in Egypt, wherever a Shiite community or colony exists; ... As I write raiment red with blood from self-inflicted wounds, the intoxication of grief and sympathy.'*
- ✧ *'The scarifies that Hazrat Imam Hussain (a.s) gave us in the desert of Karbala thirteen hundred years ago is an example to us all, giving us impetus and intuition to do our bit when circumstance, oblige us to face evil against truth. Imam Hussain (a.s) with his 72 followers achieved everlasting victory in his defeat, which it is impossible for any great force to acquire at any cost. Imam Hussain (a.s) proved to the world for all*

times that numbers do not count when the real spirit is in action with a definite purpose and determination.'

- ✻ *'Is there a heart that may not brim with grief and sorrow when it hears about the tragedy of Karbala, even a non-Muslim also cannot deny the cleanness and purity of this Islamic war.'*

Thomas Carlyle (1795 – 1881)
Scottish Philosopher, Essayist, and Historian

- ✻ *'In the history of Islam, especially the life of Imam Husayn (a.s) stands unique, unapproached and unapproachable by anyone. Without his martyrdom, Islam would have extinguished long ago. He was the saviour of Islam and it was due to his martyrdom that Islam took such a deep root, which it is neither possible nor even imaginable to destroy now.'*
- ✻ *'The best lesson which we get from the tragedy of Karbala is that Husayn and his companions were rigid believers in God. They illustrated that numerical superiority does not count when it comes to truth and falsehood. The victory of Husayn despite his minority, marvels me! Imam Husayn explains the mission of his sacrifice in his own words: 'I have taken this stand not out of arrogance or pride, neither out of mischief nor injustice. I would like to bid good, forbid evil, and follow the tradition of my grandfather and my father Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s).'*

Peter J Chelkowski (1933 – present)
Professor of Middle Eastern Studies, New York University
(Author: Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York, 1979, p.2)

- ✻ *'Hussain accepted and set out from Mecca with his family and an entourage of about seventy followers. But on the plain of Karbala they were caught in an ambush set by the caliph, Yazid. Though defeat was certain Hussein refused to pay homage to him. Surrounded by a great enemy force, Hussein and his company existed without water for ten days in the burning desert of Karbala. Finally, Hussain, the adults and some male children of his family and his companions were cut to bits by the arrows and swords of Yazid's army; his women and remaining children were taken as captives to Yazid in Damascus. The renowned historian Abu Reyhan al-Biruni states, '..... then fire was set to their camp and the bodies were trampled by the hoofs {sic, hooves} of the horses; nobody in the history of the human kind has seen such atrocities.'*

ELEVEN MAJALIS IN SIMPLE ENGLISH

Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti (1143 – 1236)

Also known as 'Gharib Nawaz': 'Benefactor of the Poor'. Sufi Saint of the Chishti Order.

- ✧ *'Verify, Hussein is the foundation of 'la ilaha illa Allah'. Hussein is lord and the lord of lords. Hussein himself is Islam and the shield of Islam. Though he gave his head (for Islam) but never pledged Yazid. Truly Hussein is the founder of there is no Deity except Allah Ta'ala.'*

Charles John Huffam Dickens (1812 – 1870)

English Writer and Social Critic, and Novelist

(Author: On the Grandson of the Prophet of Islam)

- ✧ *'If Husayn had fought to quench his worldly desires, (as alleged by certain critics) then I do not understand why his sisters, wives, and children accompanied him. It stands to reason therefore, that he sacrificed purely for Islam.'*

Charles Le Gai Eaton, also known as Hasan Abd al-Hakim, (1921 – 2010)

British diplomat, Muslim intellectual, Writer, Historian, Islamic Scholar, and Broadcaster

'Islam and the Destiny of Man', 1985 pages 145-6

- ✧ *'The Governor of Iraq dispatched a great army against him [Husayn], and the people of Kufa, cowed and frightened, left Husayn to his fate. 'The heart of Kufa is with thee,' reported a messenger, 'but its sword is against thee.' On the plain of Karbala by the Euphrates River he drew up his little band in battle order, facing 4,000 troops. The Governor demanded unconditional surrender. He and his people resolved to die.*
- ✧ *'The martyrdom of the Prophet's beloved grandson at the hands of these Muslims had repercussions which still roll through the world like the waves which follow an earthquake on the seabed, and like Cain's murder of his brother Abel, it has burnt itself into the conscience of a great sector of mankind.'*
- ✧ *'To this day Husayn's death is commemorated annually By an outpouring of grief which leaves the Western observers appalled But this grief has a universal significance. The Shi'a weep and wail not only for the death of this gallant, doomed man, but also for a world in which such things can happen, in which the good are put down, while the wicked prosper. They lament this cruel world's destruction of so much that is beautiful, noble and precious. They grieve over the triumph of naked power over the insult offered to bright hope.'*

al-Fakhri
Arab Historian

- ✧ *‘This is a catastrophe whereof I care not to speak at length, deeming it alike too grievous and too horrible. For verily, it was a catastrophe than that which naught more shameful has happened in Islam. There happened therein such a foul slaughter as to cause man’s flesh to creep with horror. And again I have dispersed with my long description because of its notoriety, for it is the most lamented of catastrophes’*

Kurt Frischler (1917 – 2003)
Austrian Journalist

- ✧ *‘By sacrificing all his children Hussein pushed all the boundaries and limits of self-sacrifice ... the decisive and immovable position of Hussein for absolute sacrifice was neither obstinacy nor caprice, it was a full and encompassing compliance to reason and wisdom that he had been decisive to sacrifice by all means and multilaterally, so that not to be forced against and in contrary to his eminent and exalted goal and belief to carry on with his life through a compromise with Yazid Ibn Moaviye.’*

Mohandas Karamchand (Mahatma) Gandhi (1869 – 1948)
Indian Lawyer, Anti-colonial Nationalist and Political ethicist

- ✧ *‘If I had an army like the 72 soldiers of Hussain, I would have won freedom for India in 24 hours.’*
- ✧ *‘I learnt from Hussain how to achieve victory while being oppressed.’*
- ✧ *‘If India wants to be a successful country, it must follow in the footsteps of Imam Hussain.’*
- ✧ *‘My faith is that the progress of Islam does not depend on the use of sword by its believers, but the result of the supreme sacrifice of Hussain - the great saint.’*
- ✧ *‘Everyone knows dying after death, but you (Hussain) taught us how to live after death.’*
- ✧ *‘My admiration for the noble sacrifice of Imam Hussain as a martyr abounds because he accepted death and the torture of thirst for himself for his sons and for his whole family, but did not submit to unjust authorities.’*

Edward Gibbon (1737 – 1794)
English Member of Parliament, Rationalist Historian, Writer, and Scholar

- ✧ *‘In a distant age and climate, the tragic scene of the death of Husayn will awaken the sympathy of the coldest reader.’ ‘In the history of Islam,*

especially the life of Imam Husayn stands unique, unapproached and unapproachable by anyone. Without his martyrdom, Islam would have extinguished long ago. He was the saviour of Islam, and it was due to his martyrdom that Islam took such a deep root, which it is neither possible nor even imaginable to destroy now.’ (The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, London, 1911, Vol. 5, pp. 391-2)

- ✧ *‘Throughout the next centuries, narration and explaining the sad and melancholy death scene of Imam Hussein will result in awareness and sensitivity of hearts and souls for the entire mankind anywhere they might be.’*
- ✧ *‘Iman Hussein’s sacrifice is for all groups and communities, an example of the path of righteousness.’*

Ignaz Goldziher (1850 – 1921)

Hungarian Orientalist Scholar

Author: Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law, Princeton, 1981, pp 179

- ✧ *‘Ever since the black day of Karbala, the history of this family has been a continuous series of sufferings and persecutions. These are narrated in poetry and prose, in a richly cultivated literature of martyrologies – a Shi’a specialty – and form the Theme of Shi’a gatherings in the first third of the month of Muharram, whose tenth day (Ashura) is kept as the anniversary of the tragedy at Karbala. Scenes of that tragedy are also presented on this day of commemoration in dramatic form (ta’ziya).*

‘Our feast days are our assemblies of mourning. So concludes a poem by a prince of Shi’a disposition recalling the many trials and tribulations of the Prophet’s family. Weeping and lamenting over the evils and persecutions suffered by the Alid family, and mourning for its martyrs: these are things from which loyal supporters of the cause cannot cease. More touching than the tears of the Shi’a has even become an Arabic proverb.’

Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899 – 1961)

American novelist, Short Story Writer, and Journalist

- ✧ *‘The grief caused by the death of Hussain kept flaring in the hearts of the enlightened due to the great tragedy committed by factions thirsty for the blood of the innocent’.*

Victor-Marie Hugo (1802 – 1885)

French Writer and Politician

- ✧ *‘The principles of Hussain’s revolution became a path for every rebel who wants to tear out his right from the hands of his oppressors’.*

APPENDIX 9:

UNIVERSAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

Allama Dr Sir Mohammad Iqbal (1877 – 1938) (Allama: translates as Scholar)

Muslim Poet, Philosopher, Writer, Scholar, Politician.

His poetry in the Farsi language is very highly praised. However, his poetry in the Urdu language has made him legendary and he is acclaimed as the greatest Urdu poet ever. A national iconic treasure of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

- ✧ *‘Ismaeel was the beginning (first step), Hussain (a.s) was the ultimate.’*
- ✧ *‘Imam Hussain (a.s) uprooted despotism forever, till the Day of Resurrection. He (a.s) watered the dry garden of freedom with the surging wave of his blood, and indeed he awakened the sleeping Muslim nation. If Imam Hussain (a.s) had aimed at acquiring the worldly empire, he would not have travelled the way he did (from Madinah to Karbala). Hussain (a.s) weltered in blood and dust for the sake of truth. Verily he, therefore, became the bedrock (foundation) of the Muslim creed; ‘La ilaha illa Allah’, meaning there is no deity but Allah (God).’*
- ✧ *‘Karbala is the cruellest tragedy humanity has ever seen. Yet, the startling (though appalling) events in Karbala proved like a powerful volcano that shook the very foundation of Muslims, it stirred their consciousness, ignorant or learned alike. For sincere Muslims, Karbala turned into a triumph. The tragic event became the very beacon of light to always remind Muslims to practice Islam honestly and sincerely, to do what is right irrespective of consequences, and fear no one except Allah (swt)’*

Washington Irving (1783 – 1859)

American writer, Essayist, Biographer, Historian and Diplomat

- ✧ *‘On a burning sun of a deserted land and on the heated sands of Iraq, Husayn’s soul is immortal. Oh my hero, my paragon of braveness. Oh Husayn!’*
- ✧ *‘Imam Husayn could have saved his life by surrendering to Yazid’s will, but, his responsibility as the leader of the Islamic movement did not permit him to recognise Yazid as the ruler. He made himself well-prepared for any other tribulation to free Islam from the clutches of Bani Omayyeh. I know, Imam Husayn’s soul will remain forever under the scorching sun and on the hot sands of Karbala. I honour you, O, my Lord, the shining lesson of bravery and sacrifice!’*

Sir Byramjee Jeejeebhoy (c.1822 – 1890)

An Indian (Parsi) Businessman and Educational Philanthropist

- ✧ *‘The sacrifices that Hazrat Imam Hussain gave us in the desert of Karbala thirteen hundred years ago is an example to us all, giving us impetus and*

ELEVEN MAJALIS IN SIMPLE ENGLISH

intuition to do our bit when circumstances, oblige us to face evil against truth. Imam Hussain with his 72 followers achieved everlasting victory in his defeat, which it is impossible for any great force to acquire at any cost. Imam Hussain proved to the world for all times that numbers do not count when the real spirit is in action with a definite purpose and determination.'

Dr. Amarnath Jha (1897– 1955)

Was Vice Chancellor of the University of Allahabad and the Banaras Hindu University, India

- ✧ *'The sacrifices of Imam Hussain was for the sake of the good of the whole mankind. There is no martyr in the whole history of the world who can compare with him in point of exalted excellence.'*
- ✧ *'No tragic event of human history can vie with the end of Hazrat Imam Hussain in point of its heart-rending pathos, in the field of Karbala'*

Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876 – 1948) (Quid e Azam: translates as "Great Leader")

Barrister, Politician, the founder of Pakistan, Pakistan's first Governor-General

- ✧ *'The world is unable to present an example finer and brighter than the personality of Iman Hussain (a.s). He was the embodiment of love, valour and personification of sacrifice and devotion. Every Muslim, in particular, must learn a lesson from his life and should seek guidance from him.'*
- ✧ *'My admiration for the noble sacrifice of Imam Hussain as a martyr abounds because he accepted death and the torture of thirst for himself for his sons and for his whole family, but did not submit to unjust authorities.'*

George Jordac (1931 – 2014)

A Lebanese Christian, Arabic poet, and author

- ✧ *'Since in the battlefield he remained alone, and sat on the ground with the wound of a sword and spear and an arrow, and when the ruffians of Kufa and the mercenary soldiers saw the ruler who surrounded the woman and children from all sides of the tent, they came out and said "O cowards! If you do not have religion, don't forget freedom in your lives."*

Liaquat Ali Khan (1895 – 1951)

Pakistani Lawyer, Politician, and Statesman. 1st Prime Minister of Pakistan

- ✧ *'The martyrdom of Imam Hussein (a.s) teaches us a lesson that whatever the problems or dangers we face, we must not be afraid of it, and must not get deviated from the path of truth and justice.'*

APPENDIX 9:

UNIVERSAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

- ✻ *‘We will never allow our freedom to be taken away; we shall fight aggression wherever it may be.’*

Imam Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902 – 1989)

Islamic Revolutionary, Politician, and supreme leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

- ✻ *‘Muharram is the month in which justice rose against injustice and truth stood up against falsehood and proved that, in the course of history; truth has always triumphed over falsehood.’*
- ✻ *‘Imam Hussain taught us all by his sacrifice that this is the true path. In all history: Do not mind the inadequacy of numbers! It is the quality that counts not quantity. . . Let the great powers of the world be our enemies. . . The truth is clear and will be illuminated.’*
- ✻ *‘Imam Hussain (a.s) taught us all how to stand up and resist cruelty and the government of tyranny.’*

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela (1918 – 2013)

First President of South Africa

- ✻ *‘I spent more than 20 years in prison then on one night I decided to surrender by signing all the terms and conditions of government, BUT suddenly I thought about Iman Hussain and Karbala movement and Iman Hussain give me strength to stand for the right of freedom and liberation and I did.’*

Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969)

Vietnamese communist revolutionary, Nationalist, Politician

Prime Minister (1945–1955) and President of Democratic republic of Vietnam (1945–1969)

- ✻ *‘Oh brave soldiers, as you are in your trenches look at that eastern man, the great Hussain, who shook the ground under the feet of the tyrants.’*

Tomas Garrigue Masaryk (1850-1937)

Founding “Father of Czechoslovakia”, Statesman, Political activist, Philosopher

President (1918-1935)

- ✻ *‘Although our clergies also move us while describing the Christ’s sufferings, but the zeal and zest that is found in the followers of Hussain will not be found in the followers of Christ. And it seems that the suffering of Christ against the suffering of Hussein is like a bale of straw in front of a huge mountain.’*

ELEVEN MAJALIS IN SIMPLE ENGLISH

Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) (Circa: AD 570/571- AD 632)

The Final Prophet and Messenger of God, divinely inspired to preach the monotheistic teachings of Islam
He was also a Diplomat, Merchant, Philosopher, Orator, Legislator, Reformer, Solider and an Army General

- ✧ *‘Hasan (Imam Hussain’s elder brother) and Hussain are the leaders of the youth of Paradise.’*
- ✧ *‘As a result of the assassination of Hussain such warmth will be kindled in the hearts of the believers that shall not become cold till the Day of the Resurrection.’*

Prof. Radha Kumud Mukherjee (1884 – 1963)

Chairperson-Dept. of History, Lucknow University, Lucknow, India

- ✧ *‘Hazrat Imam Hussain gave to the world some thirteen hundred years ago, a message and way of life, which was unique and perfect and of which we are celebrating the memory. I do not possess the words nor has any language of the world the eloquence and comprehension, which can serve as the vehicle of expression for the sentiment of reverence, which I entertain in my mind for this magnificent martyr. Hazrat Imam Hussain does not belong only to the Muslims but he is a treasure, common to all the creatures of the Almighty God. I congratulate the Muslims that among them has been such a personality who is acknowledged and revered equally by all communities of the world.’*
- ✧ *‘The sacrifices of Imam Hussain was for the sake of the good of the whole mankind. There is no martyr in the whole history of the world who can compare with him in point of exalted excellence.’*

Sir William Muir (1819 – 1905)

Scottish Orientalist, Scholar, and Statesman

Annals of the Early Caliphate, London, 1883, pp 441

- ✧ *‘The tragedy of Karbala decided not only the fate of the caliphate, but of the Mohammedan kingdoms long after the Caliphate had waned and disappeared.’*

Mrs Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949)

Indian Political Activist, Writer and Poet, first Governor of United Provinces (UP) India

- ✧ *‘I congratulate Muslims that from among them, Hussein a great human being was born who is revered and honoured totally by all communities.’*
- ✧ *‘My admiration for the noble sacrifice of Imam Hussain as a martyr abides, because he accepted death and the torture of thirst for himself, his sons and for his whole family but did not submit to unjust authorities.’*

- ✧ *‘... after thirteen centuries, the inspiration of Imam Hussain’s example still shines, in undimmed splendour, to guide countless seekers after truth and freedom. His stands high above all conflicts and the challenge of time, the immortal symbol of victory over wrong and unrighteousness.’*

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (1889 – 1964) (Pandit: Teacher)

Indian anti-colonial nationalist, social democrat, and author. He was the 1st Prime Minister of India.

- ✧ *‘Imam Hussain’s sacrifice is for all groups and communities, an example of the path of righteousness.’*
- ✧ *‘There is a universal appeal in this martyrdom. Imam Hussain sacrificed his all, but he refused to submit to a tyrannical government. He never gave any weight to the fact that his material force was far less in comparison with that of the enemy. The power of faith to him is the greatest force which regards all material force as nothing. This sacrifice is a beacon of light. For the guidance of every community and every nation.’*

Reynold Alleyne Nicholson (1868 – 1945)

Sir Thomas Adams Professor of Arabic at the University of Cambridge

A Literary History of the Arabs, Cambridge, 1930, pp 197

- ✧ *‘Husayn fell, pierced by an arrow, and his brave followers were cut down beside him to the last man. Mohammadan tradition, which with rare exceptions is uniformly hostile to the Umayyad dynasty, regards Husayn as a martyr and Yazid as his murderer.’*

Simon Ockley (1678 – 1720)

British Orientalist, Professor of Arabic – University of Cambridge,

‘The History of the Saracens’, London 1894, Pages 404-5

- ✧ *‘Then Hosein mounted his horse, and took the Koran and laid it before him, and, coming up to the people, invited them to the performances of their duty, adding:*
- ‘O God, thou art my confidence in every trouble, and my hope in all adversity!’*
- ✧ *‘He next reminded them of his excellency, the nobility of his birth, the greatness of his power, and his high descent, and said:*
- ‘Consider with yourselves whether or not such a man as I am, is not better than you; I who am the son of your prophet’s daughter, besides whom there is no other upon the face of the earth. Ali was my father; Jaafar and*

Hamza, the chief of the martyrs, were both my uncles; and the apostle of God; upon whom be peace, and both of me and my brother, that we were the chief of the youth of Paradise.’’

Robert Durey Osborn (1835 – 1889)

Major of the Bengal Staff Corps

‘Islam under the Arabs’, Delaware, 1976, Pages 126-7

✧ *“Hosain had a child named Abdulla, only a year old. He had accompanied his father in this terrible march. Touched by its cries, he took the infant in his arms and wept.*

At that instant, a shaft from the hostile ranks pierced the child’s ear, and it expired in his father’s arms. Hosain placed the little corpse upon the ground. ‘We come from God, and we return to him!’ he cried; ‘O Lord, give me strength to bear these misfortunes!’ Faint with thirst, and exhausted from wounds, he fought with desperate courage, slaying several of his antagonists.

At last, he was cut down from behind; at the same instance a lance was thrust through his back and bore him to the ground; as the dealer of this last blow withdrew his weapon, the ill-fated son of Ali rolled over a corpse. The head was severed from the trunk; the trunk was trampled under the hoofs of the victors’ horses; and the next morning the women and a surviving infant son were carried away to Koufa.

The bodies of Hosain and his followers were left unburied on the spot where they fell. For 3 days they remained exposed to the sun and the night dews, the vultures and the prowling animals of the waste; but then the inhabitants of a neighbouring village; struck with horror that the body of a grandson of the prophet should be thus shamefully abandoned to the unclean beasts of the field, dared the anger of Obaidallah, and interred the body of the martyr and those of his heroic friends.’

Dr Rajendra Prasad (1884 – 1963)

Indian Politician, Lawyer, Journalist, and Scholar. He was the 1st president of India

✧ *‘The sacrifice of Imam Hussain is not limited to one country, or nation, but it is the hereditary state of the brotherhood of all mankind.’*

✧ *‘The Karbala tragedy is a historical event of human martyrdom of such importance that it can never be forgotten. It shall continue to influence the lives of billions of men and women of the world throughout the ages.’*

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UNIVERSAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888 – 1975)

Indian Politician, Philosopher and Statesman

Vice president (1952 – 1962), President of India (1962 – 1967)

- ✧ *‘Though Imam Hussain gave his life almost 1300-years ago, but his indestructible soul rules the hearts of people even today.’*

Kunwar Mahendra Singh Bedi Sahar (1909 – 1992)

Indian Poet

- ✧ *‘Everyone knows dying after death, but you (Hussain) taught us how to live after death.’*

Frithjof Schuon (1907 – 1998)

Swiss Metaphysician, Philosopher, Author (of numerous books on Religion & Spirituality)

‘Islam and the Perennial Philosophy’ Page 95 (quoted in ‘Islam and the Destiny of Man’ Page 148)

- ✧ *‘The Sunnis resign themselves to this fatality [i.e. the establishment by the Umayyads of a political administration very different from that inaugurated by the Prophet in Medina], whereas the Shi’ites enwrap themselves in the bitter memory of lost purity, which combines with the recollection of the drama of Karbala and, on the level of mystical life, with the noble sadness aroused by the awareness of our earthly exile – an exile which is then seen above all in its aspects of injustice, oppression and frustration as regards primitive virtue and divine rights’ [the ‘divine rights’ of the family of the Prophet, and therefore the descendants of Ali]’*

Swami Shankaracharya (1924– 2022)

Indian religious leader

- ✧ *‘It is Hussain’s sacrifice that has kept Islam alive or else in this world there would be no one left to take Islam’s name.’*

Dr Khalid (Bertram William) Sheldrake (1888 – 1947)

Pickle Manufacturer, Islamic Philanthropist

- ✧ *‘Of that gallant band, male and female knew that the enemy forces around were implacable, and were not only ready to fight, but to kill. Denied even water for the children, they remained parched under the burning sun and scorching sands, yet not one faltered for a moment. Husayn marched with his little company, not to glory, not to power or wealth, but to a supreme sacrifice, and every member bravely faced the greatest odds without flinching.’*

ELEVEN MAJALIS IN SIMPLE ENGLISH

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822)

English Romantic Poet

- ✧ *‘Hussain does not belong to anyone; he belongs to everyone because everyone that wants to be an icon to his people and nation has taken from his unerring thoughts.’*

Ahmad Sukarno (1901-1970)

Indonesian Statesman, Orator, Revolutionary and Nationalist

First President of Indonesia (1945-1967)

- ✧ *‘Hussain was a fluttering flag held by all who want to defy the tyrants of their time whom have enjoyed worldly pleasures, leaving their people suffering of conquer and deprivation.’*

Sir Percy Molesworth Sykes (1867 – 1945)

British Brigadier General, Orientalist, Explorer, Diplomat, Scholar, and a Spy

- ✧ *‘Indeed, the courage and bravery that these less number of people showed was at a level that in all these centuries, everyone who heard it, unconsciously, they admired it and their tongues praised it. These are a handful of brave and zealous people, who made their names inevitable forever.’*

Rabindranath Tagore (1861 – 1941)

Indian (Bengali) Poet, Painter, Writer, Philosopher, and Nobel Prize (Literature) winner 1913

- ✧ *‘In order to keep alive justice and truth, instead of an army or weapons success can be achieved by sacrificing lives, exactly what Imam Hussain did.’*
- ✧ *‘Imam Hussain will warm the coldest heart.’*

Count Lev Nikolayevich (Leo) Tolstoy (1828–1910)

Russian Writer and Philosopher

- ✧ *‘There is no doubt that Hussain was one of the greatest revolutionists for reforming leaders who have deviated from the right way, and from his stance he has gained the martyrdom that the free desire.’*

Surah al-Fatihah / al-Hamd

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

¹ Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

² Alhamdu lillaahi Rabbil 'aalameen

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

³ Ar-Rahmaanir-Raheem

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

⁴ 'Maaliki Yawmid-Deen

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

⁵ Iyyaaka na'budu wa Iyyaaka nasta'een

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

⁶ Ihdinas-Siraatal-Mustaqeem

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

⁷ Siraatal-lazeena an'amta 'alaihim

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

Ghayril-maghdoobi 'alaihim wa lad-daaalleen

¹ In the Name of God, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.

² All praise belongs to God, Lord of all the worlds,

³ the All-beneficent, the All-merciful,

⁴ Master of the Day of Retribution.

⁵ You alone do we worship, and to You alone do we turn for help.

⁶ Guide us on the straight path,

⁷ the path of those whom You have blessed – such as have not incurred Your wrath, nor are astray.

Surah al-Ikhlās

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

¹ *Qul huwal laahu ahad*

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

² *Allah hus-samad*

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

³ *Lam yalid wa lam yoolad*

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

⁴ *Wa lam yakul-lahu kufuwan ahad*

In the Name of God, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.

¹ *Say: He, Allah, is One*

² *Allah is He on Whom all depend*

³ *He begets not, nor is He begotten*

⁴ *And none is like Him.*

A QUIZ: ELEVEN MAJALIS

- ① Why did Imam Hussain (a.s) decide to leave his home in Madinah?
 - a) To escape Yazid's men, who were planning to kill him should he refuse to pledge his allegiance (*Bay'at*) to Yazid
 - b) The people of Kufa had sent hundreds of letters, inviting the Imam to come and guide them, in moral and spiritual matters
 - c) Both options are correct
- ② Why were the people that Yazid ruled over not happy with him?
 - a) Because Yazid was a wicked, cruel and immoral man who had no respect for the commands of God and no regard for the Holy Prophet's family
 - b) Because he was not an Arab
 - c) Because he was very old and frail
- ③ As the representative of Imam Hussain (a.s) who was sent ahead to Kufa to inform the people that their Imam was on the way?
 - a) Zuhair ibn Qain – his neighbour
 - b) Muslim ibn Aqeel – his cousin
 - c) Habib ibn Mazahir – his friend
- ④ In Kufa, who kept Muslim ibn Aqeel as an honoured guest in his house?
 - a) His true supporter – Hani ibn Urwa
 - b) His older brother – Mukhtar al-Thaqafi
 - c) His sworn enemy – Yazid ibn Mu'awiya

- ⑤ When was Muslim ibn Aqeel (a.s) killed (martyred)?
- a) 7th *Shawwal* 60AH
 - b) 8th *Dhu al-Qi'dah* 60AH
 - c) 9th *Dhu al-Hijjah* 60AH
- ⑥ Where are both Muslim ibn Aqeel and Hani buried?
- a) Near the great mosque of Kufa
 - b) In Karbala, near the Euphrates River
 - c) In the '*Wadi al-Salaam*' cemetery, in Najaf
- ⑦ What were the names of the two sons of Muslim that went with him to Kufa?
- a) Mohsin and Jaffar
 - b) Ibrahim and Mohammad
 - c) Abbas and Qasim
- ⑧ How did the orphans of Muslim ibn Aqeel escape from prison?
- a) They broke down the prison door and escaped
 - b) They escaped when the warden fell asleep and left the door open by mistake
 - c) After the warden heard their story, he took pity on them and allowed them to escape

- ⑨ What did the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) often use to say about his grandson, Imam Hussain (a.s)?
- a) 'Hussain is from me and I am from Hussain'
 - b) 'Whoever hurts Hussain, hurts me, and whoever hurts me, hurts God'
 - c) Both of the above

- ⑩ Who is being praised in the following verses?

⁹ [Saying,] *'We feed you only for the sake of God. We desire no reward from you, nor thanks.'*

¹⁰ *'We indeed fear from our Lord a frowning and fateful day.'*

Holy Qur'an: Surah 76 (*al-Insan* : The Human Being) Ayah 9-10

- a) The Holy (purified) Family (The *Ahl al-Bayt*)
 - b) Bilal ibn Rabah al-Habashi (Recited the first 'Adhan')
 - c) Salman al-Farsi (A Persian, devoted companion of the Holy Prophet)
- ⑪ Before Karbala, when Hur and his cavalry unit met the Imam's small group in the desert, Hur came to the Imam. What did he beg for, and what did the Imam do?
- a) Hur begged the Imam not to go to Kufa but to return to Madinah, and the Imam agreed
 - b) Hur begged for water and the Imam asked his companions to give water to Hur, his army, their horses and camels
 - c) Hur begged the Imam to give an oath of allegiance to Yazid

- ⑫ On what day of *Muharram* did the Imam reach Karbala, and on what day were they denied access to water?
- a) 1st and 6th
 - b) 2nd and 7th
 - c) 3rd and 8th
- ⑬ What is the meaning of the Arabic name, 'Hur'?
- a) 'Brave'
 - b) 'Honest'
 - c) 'Free'
- ⑭ In which battle did the elder brother of Imam Ali (a.s) Ja'far e Tayyar lose both his arms and was martyred?
- a) Battle of *Mu'tah*
 - b) Battle of *Khandaq*
 - c) Battle of *Khaybar*
- ⑮ When did Aun and Mohammad decide to ask the Imam for permission to fight?
- a) After the martyrdom of Ali Akbar
 - b) After the martyrdom of the two sons of Muslim ibn Aqeel
 - c) After the martyrdom of Hazrat Abbas
- ⑯ Why was Qasim feeling very unhappy?
- a) The Imam was trying to persuade Qasim not to fight
 - b) It was a hot day; he was feeling tired and sleepy
 - c) He was feeling hungry and thirsty and wanted to rest

- ①7 What had Imam Hasan (a.s) written on Qasim's amulet?
- a) 'O Qasim, do whatever it takes to always be happy in life'
 - b) 'O Qasim, when your uncle will be surrounded by enemies, do not hesitate for a moment to lay down your life for him'
 - c) 'O Qasim, my advice is, only choose and marry a beautiful woman'
- ①8 Who physically resembled the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) more than anyone else?
- a) Qasim
 - b) Hazrat Abbas
 - c) Ali Akbar
- ①9 When Ali Akbar said to his father, 'O father, I am dying of thirst; my armour burns in the heat of the sun, and the strain of battle has made me even thirstier.' What was the Imam's reply?
- a) 'You know I have no water to give you, but go now and fight for another few moments and in the end your grandfather, Imam Ali (a.s), will quench your thirst from the stream of *al-Kawthar* in Paradise'
 - b) 'Go into the tent, take rest and drink some water'
 - c) 'Take off your hot armour and rest in the cool shade'
- ②0 What was Imam Ali's (a.s) dying wish to Hazrat Abbas?
- a) 'My son, you should protect your house and belongings'
 - b) 'My son, it is my dying wish that you should protect and defend Hussain with your life'
 - c) 'My son, you should go and live in India'

- ②1 What happened when Lady Umme Kulsum (s.a) was bemoaning the fact that she did not have any children to fight for the Imam?
- a) Hazrat Abbas said, 'I will willingly fight and sacrifice myself on your behalf'
 - b) She paid a slave to fight on her behalf, for the Imam
 - c) She went to the battlefield, and sacrificed her life, fighting for the Imam
- ②2 When Ibn Sa'ad received orders to start the fight at once, what did the Imam ask for?
- a) To postpone the battle, until the next day, so that he and his followers may spend the last night of their earthly existence in prayers and glorifying God
 - b) To postpone the battle, so that they could drink water from the Euphrates river
 - c) To postpone the battle, so that he and his followers could escape during the night
- ②3 Why did Ibn Sa'ad accept Imam Hussain's (a.s) request to delay the fight for one day?
- a) Ibn Sa'ad was in a good mood and wanted to obey the Imam
 - b) Ibn Sa'ad thought that the Imam might change his mind and pledge allegiance to Yazid
 - c) He accepted when one of his officers stood up and said, 'O General, surely there is no harm in granting this request. It is a convention among soldiers that even if the enemy is a *kafir* and asks for respite, the battle should be postponed for a day.'

- ②4 On whose murder did Imam Hussain (a.s) say, ‘O God, the murder of this child is no less than the slaughter of the Prophet Saleh’s (a.s) she-camel’?
- a) Hazrat Abbas
 - b) Ali Akbar
 - c) Ali Asghar
- ②5 Why did Imam Hussain (a.s) not give his allegiance (*Bay’at*) to Yazid?
- a) Because the world would be misled to believe that Yazid’s character was an example of righteousness
 - b) Because the Imam wanted to fight and become the king
 - c) Because the Imam wanted all of Yazid’s palace, fame and wealth
- ②6 Who cut off the Imam’s head with his dagger?
- a) Hurmalah ibn Kahil al-Asadi al-Koofi (may he be far removed from the Mercy of God)
 - b) Umar ibn Sa’ad (may he be far removed from the Mercy of God)
 - c) Shimr ibn Dhi al-Jawshan (may he be far removed from the Mercy of God)
- ②7 Why did Imam Hussain (a.s) complete the rituals of Umrah instead of the Hajj?
- a) So that he could have more rest
 - b) So that he could finish early, enabling him and his family to leave Makkah sooner as Yazid had sent assassins to kill him while he was performing the Hajj rituals
 - c) So that he could have more time to spend with his family, on holidays

- ②⑧ When the Imam asked about the mood of the people of Kufa, who replied ‘Their hearts are with you, but their swords are with the Umayyads’?
- a) His good friend – Mukhtar
 - b) A famous poet from Iraq – al-Farazdaq
 - c) His dear cousin – Muslim ibn Aqeel
- ②⑨ What was the extremely generous price paid by the Imam for freehold ownership of a parcel of land in Karbala, which he then gifted back to the tribe of Banu Asad?
- a) 60 bags of Gold
 - b) 600 Camels
 - c) 60,000 Dirhams
- ③⑩ From Karbala, the family of the martyred Imam Hussain (a.s) were taken prisoner and marched to Yazid’s palace in ...?
- a) Delhi – capital of India
 - b) Damascus – capital of Syria
 - c) Tehran – capital of Iran

QUIZ ANSWER KEY AND PAGE NUMBER REFERENCES

Question	Answer	Page Number
1	c	2 & 3
2	a	4
3	b	5
4	a	6
5	c	7
6	a	7
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10	a	16
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29	c	74 & 75
30	b	75

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF IMAM HUSSAIN (A.S)

Born: Madinah – 3rd *Sha'ban* 4AH / 11th January 626AD

Martyred: Karbala – 10th *Muharram* 61AH / 10th October 680AD

Day	Month	Year		Event
		AH	AD	
3 rd	<i>Sha'ban</i>	4	626	Birth of Imam Hussain (a.s)
27 th	<i>Safar</i>	11	632	His grandfather, Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him), dies
21 st	<i>Ramadan</i>	40	660	His father, Imam Ali (a.s) is martyred praying in the mosque (in Kufa)
7 th	<i>Safar</i>	50	670	His older brother, Imam Hasan (a.s) poisoned to death
27 th	<i>Rajab</i>	60	680	Yazid (l.a) demands allegiance of Imam Hussain (a.s)
28 th	<i>Rajab</i>	60	680	The Imam leaves Madinah at night
3 rd	<i>Sha'ban</i>	60	680	The Imam arrives at Makkah
10 th	<i>Ramadan</i>	60	680	People of Kufa, Iraq, invite the Imam
15 th	<i>Ramadan</i>	60	680	Hazrat Muslim ibn Aqeel (a cousin) goes to Kufa as Imam's messenger
5 th	<i>Shawwal</i>	60	680	Hazrat Muslim ibn Aqeel arrives in Kufa
8 th	<i>Dhu al-Hijjah</i>	60	680	Hazrat Muslim ibn Aqeel betrayed and killed
8 th	<i>Dhu al-Hijjah</i>	60	680	Imam leaves from Makkah to Kufa
2 nd	<i>Muharram</i>	61	680	Imam arrives in Karbala, Iraq
3 rd	<i>Muharram</i>	61	680	Umar Ibn Sa'd (l.a) arrives with an army of 30,000 soldiers
7 th	<i>Muharram</i>	61	680	Imam's camp blocked from access to water
9 th	<i>Muharram</i>	61	680	The first attack on the Imam's camp
10 th	<i>Muharram</i>	61	680	The Massacre (Martyrdom) of Imam Hussain (a.s), his family and companions
11 th	<i>Muharram</i>	61	680	Captivity of the Imam's Holy (purified) Family

TIMELINE OF THE BATTLE OF KARBALA 60AH / 61AH

Day	Month	Significant event
15 th	<i>Rajab</i> 60AH	Death of Mu'awiya bin Abi Sufyan (l.a)
28 th	<i>Rajab</i>	Departure of Imam Hussain (a.s) from Madinah
3 rd	<i>Shaban</i>	Arrival of Imam Hussain (a.s) to Makkah
10 th	<i>Ramadan</i>	Arrival of several letters, from the citizens, inviting the Imam to Kufa
12 th	<i>Ramadan</i>	Arrival of a further deluge of letters from the residents of Kufa
14 th	<i>Ramadan</i>	Arrival of letters, from the leaders of Kufa – imploring his move to Kufa
15 th	<i>Ramadan</i>	Departure of Muslim ibn Aqeel from Makkah to Kufa
5 th	<i>Shawwal</i>	Arrival of Muslim ibn Aqeel to Kufa
8 th	<i>Dhul al-Hijjah</i>	– Departure of Imam from Makkah – Uprising of Muslim ibn Aqeel in Kufa
9 th	<i>Dhul al-Hijjah</i>	Martyrdom of Muslim ibn Aqeel in Kufa
1 st	<i>Muharram</i> 61AH	Beginning of a New Islamic Year / a 'sacred' Month
2 nd	<i>Muharram</i>	Arrival of Imam Hussain (a.s) to Karbala
3 rd	<i>Muharram</i>	Arrival of Umar ibn Sa'ad (l.a) with troops to Karbala
7 th	<i>Muharram</i>	Depriving access to any water by Umar ibn Sa'ad (l.a)
9 th	<i>Muharram</i>	– Arrival of Shimr ibn Dhi al-Jawshan (l.a) to Karbala – Shimr's safe conduct for the children of Bibi 'Umm al-Banin' – Declaration of battle by Umar ibn Sa'ad and Imam asking for a day's respite
10 th	<i>Muharram</i>	Events of Ashura & the martyrdom of the Imam & his companions
11 th	<i>Muharram</i>	Moving the captives to Kufa & burial of the martyrs by the Banu Asad
19 th	<i>Muharram</i>	Moving the captives from Kufa towards Damascus
1 st	<i>Safar</i>	Arrival of captives & the severed heads (as trophies) to Damascus
3 rd – 13 th (narrations vary)	<i>Safar</i>	Lady Sakina (youngest daughter of Imam Hussain (a.s) aged 4 years dies in the dungeon & is buried there by her brother Imam Zayn al-Abideen (a.s)
6 th	<i>Safar</i>	Freedom & departure from Damascus – towards Karbala
20 th	<i>Safar</i>	Return of the <i>Ahl al-Bayt</i> to Karbala (for Arbacen – 40 th day after Martyrdom)
23 rd	<i>Safar</i>	Departed Karbala for home (Madinah)
7 th	<i>Rabi ul-Awwal</i>	Arrival of the <i>Ahl al-Bayt</i> to Madinah

Among the several narrations and historians, there are differences regarding (some of) the precise dates.

For the sake of brevity – not all events mentioned are covered in this book.

*'Muharram is the month in which
Justice rose up against Injustice
and Truth stood up against Falsehood
and proved that, in the course of history,
Truth has always triumphed over Falsehood.'*

Imam Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902 – 1989)
Islamic Revolutionary, Politician, Founder and
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran



*'Imam Sadiq (a.s) said: Imam Hussain (a.s) was slain in grief and
distress. So, it is only befitting for Almighty Allah to return every
aggrieved person, who performs his ziyarat, pleased.'*

Imam Ja'far ibn Mohammad (a.s)
Kamil al-Ziyarat; Hadith No.3



*'When I stand at the Glorious Station, I will intercede on
behalf of those of my community who have perpetrated grave
sins, and Allah will accept my intercession for them. By
Allah, I will not intercede for anyone who hurts my progeny.'*

Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him)
(Amali al-Saduq, Page 242, No. 3;
Mizan ul Hikmah, Page 478)

THE TRUTH!

Losing one's eyesight is tragic.
Losing one's insight – more so;
for this is to be truly blind.
It is only when the mind opens,
that the flowers bloom.

Dr Syed K.H. Shah



The fortitude of our spirit is measured by how much truth - we can tolerate.

The evidence, the proof, the reality, the fact, the truth - is out there.

Truth is never known through men; truth is never given to us.

We realise the truth, when we fail to deceive ourselves.

Only our intellect is the pathway to the truth.

When we are ready, the truth dawns.

Preciously, precisely - upon us.

The truth, we deeply seek.

If, we sincerely seek.

The truth!

Dr Syed K.H. Shah

A PARTING SHOT:

Perhaps, the one poignant and important message, this book has reiterated and reverberated in my consciousness, and deeply etched onto my mind is how relevant, valid and pertinent the famous statement about the (original) 'Day of Ashura' is:

EVERY DAY IS ASHURA!

EVERY LAND IS KARBALA!



Humanity remains blind, deaf, and dumb.

Unless these two simple statements are fully comprehended.

Once understood, it elevates us as 'human beings',
this being, indeed, a great achievement.

No less than a divine blessing.

A supreme gift of spiritual guidance.



And Allah Knows Best

Dr Syed K.H. Shah