

Editorial

A PARAGON FOR WOMEN

The enlightened women of Islam have scaled the peaks of honour and heroism by embracing steadfastness and treading on the exemplary path shown by Janabe Zahra (s.a.). These venerable ladies have changed the course of history and with fresh insight have given a new lease of life to Islamic thought and action so as to allow humans to maintain an equitable balance between his material and spiritual life. This has allowed man to register rapid progress and open new vistas towards the highest pinnacles of development.

From the time man realised that women, despite being physically weaker, are forerunners in matters of development and are beacons in the path of perfection, he has persecuted and oppressed them. History testifies that in ancient times, in the so-called Stone Age, women were at the head of families and tribes and all members were answerable to them.

With the passage of time humanity spread far and wide across the face of the earth, dividing into nations with demarcated borders. Not only borders but even resources were demarcated and employed for destructive purposes with the help of technology.

This period marks a decline in the status of women, who were to face the worst and most difficult times thereafter. In Arabia, the condition was most grim. Girls were buried alive and criminals responsible for this heinous act would feel proud about it.

The Apostle of Allah, Prophet Mohammad (s.a.w.a.) rescued women from humiliation and destruction. On divine commandment, he enforced laws for the respect and protection of women, who were the embodiment of sacrifice and mercy. Women too responded with striving in the way of Islam alongside men creating for themselves a special place in history. First and foremost, it was necessary to remove the deep-seated prejudice and bad blood among the Arab tribes and families. These differences that had resulted in many a war were rooted in petty matters like race, language and social status. As an immediate and comprehensive solution to this problem was not feasible, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the succour of mankind, instituted laws incorporating love and goodness into the divinely ordained Shariat. With these laws, the Arabs gradually freed themselves from the shackles of vainglory and this also marked the end of the era of slavery.

During the years from the dawn of Islam till the momentous incident of Karbala, we see ample instances of women showing astonishing courage and resilience combined with extraordinary modesty and purity. We highlight only a few examples to underscore this point:

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1. The Princess of Arabia, Janabe Khadija (s.a.): Islam has spread largely due to three factors - the ethics of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the wealth of Janabe Khadija (s.a.) and the sword of Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.).
2. Janabe Zahra (s.a.): History is witness that angels flocked at the door of her house sometimes in the guise of a tailor and sometimes as a beggar. At other times the broken star has come at this very door and even bread from the heavens has been sent to this house. Enumerating the extraordinary and miraculous events happening at this house will involve a lengthy discussion.
3. Janabe Zainab (s.a.): The legendary bravery of this esteemed lady when she was imprisoned, shook the palace of Yazid. Her eloquence reminded people of Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.). She prevailed over the Kufans and the Syrians along with a handful of prisoners triggering a revolution for which she will be remembered forever.
4. Asma binte Umais (r.a.): She is the one who adorned Islam with the personalities of Mohammad b. Abi Bakr (r.a.) and Abdullah b. Jafar (r.a.). She is the one who warned Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) of Khalid b. Walid's plot to murder him so that he could take requisite precautions even while praying Namaz.
5. The mother of Wahb (r.a.): In Karbala, this brave lady threw the severed head of her young son towards Yazid's forces declaring that she will not take back the gift given in the way of Allah
6. The mother of Junaadah b. Haris (r.a.): After the martyrdom of Junaadah b. Haris she sent their little child to the battlefield.
7. The wife of Muslim b. Ausaja (r.a.): She sent her child to the battlefield after his father was martyred.

There is maternal love on one hand and an undivided focus on the other. This results in a potent combination of bravery and an overwhelming sense of responsibility. In the words of Dr. Ali Qaemi:

A critical duty that we owe towards the infant girls in our society is to inculcate piety and abstinence in them. This should lead to a life of vigorous activity and not a passive existence.

Indeed we should nurture women who will take refuge in piety and chastity and play their dutiful role in ushering a generation of chaste and virtuous children. In many ways these women will play an instrumental role in lifting society from the dregs of corruption and immorality to an altogether different plane.

We must keep in mind the divine promise:

أَتَى لَا أُضَيِّعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ.

"That I will not waste the work of a worker among you, whether male or female."

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(Surah Ale Imran: Verse 195)

لِلرَّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبُوا، وَ لِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبْنَ.

"Men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall benefit of what they earn."

(Surah Nisa: Verse 32)

The Pre-Eminence Of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.)

Birth

The author of 'Zindagani-e-Fatima Zahra' states her year of birth to be 6th A.H. while some other historians consider it to be 5th A.H. The incident of the Cloak (Hadees-e-Kisaa) is witness that the universe, the orbs of light, the stars, the moon, the frothing oceans, and the ships sailing on them, the mountains, the earth with everything in it; all have been created for the sake of the five chaste infallible personas (a.s.). Janab-e-Zainab is the object of attention of these five infallibles (a.s.). She was nurtured in an environment permeated with the heavenly fragrance of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Ali (a.s.) - the conqueror of Khyber, Janab-e-Zahra (s.a.) and Hasnain (a.s.). Her house was the place of frequent visitations by angels and each moment of dawn would be saturated with the remembrance of Allah.

أَسْأَلُكَ بِحَقِّكَ وَفُذْسِكَ..... وَ أَعْظَمِ صِفَاتِكَ وَ أَسْمَائِكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ أَوْقَاتِي مِنَ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ بِذِكْرِكَ مَعْمُورَةً.

Her Famous and Honoured name

According to Arabian customs, the elder of the house would name a child just born. Hence when Janab-e-Fatemah (s.a.) requested Ali (a.s.) to name the child, he (a.s.) replied that,

'This child can be named only by your honourable father when he returns from his journey'.

On returning from his travel, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), as was his practice, descended directly at the house of Janab-e-Fatemah (s.a.). Ali (a.s.) presented the child to the Seal of the Messengers (s.a.w.a.) and entreated him to name the child. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) replied,

'O Ali! All of your children are my children. However, Allah, the Most High and the Almighty, will name this child. This is the object of His will',

As if to answer this request, Jibrail (a.s.) descended and declared,

'Allah, the Almighty, has named this: child Zainab. This very name was written in Lauhe Mahfooz'.

(Namuna-e- Sabr by Akbar Asadi)

Zainab refers to adornment of the father. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) was indeed an adornment for her father and she has safeguarded the virtue of her name. The lionhearted lady through the event of Karbala capitulated the names of Ali (a.s.) and Husain b. Ali (a.s.) to the farthest reaches of the earth and hoisted the flag of courage and eloquence to remain till the end of time. These personalities manifested their power to transform the blazing heat of noon to the gentleness of dawn. These personages give indications of their miraculous moral traits right

from their birth. There is a halo of divine secrets surrounding their existence and they give precedence to divine satisfaction throughout their lives of trials and tribulations. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) is an illuminated light from among such personalities.

The divine responsibility for the continuity of Islam has become embodied in the personality of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.). If the martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.) was preparation from Allah's side and was a reason for its survival, it should be kept in mind that the golden seal of Janab-e-Zainab's (s.a.) imprisonment has ensured the continuity of the Finality of Messengership.

Without Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.), the message of preparation would be devoid of this strong link. For this reason God had treasured Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) for Karbala. Even after historians sold themselves to the wealthy, there would be no spark that would succeed in erasing the incident of Karbala. It is an undeniable fact that Karbala is the name of a divine mission. It was in Karbala that the satanic forces were hurtling towards a common cause i.e. the destruction of Islam. On the other hand, we had the divine leaders - the Ahle Bait. (a.s.) who were taking every step after careful evaluation so as to nullify the satanic forces. They showed no laziness and were vigorous in completing their mission and struggle to safeguard the Shariat of Mohammad (s.a.w.a.). In the past, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had introduced Imam Husain (a.s.) to his nation on numerous occasions and from all aspects, even to the extent of predicting his martyrdom. Thus Abdullah b. Umar warned Imam Husain (a.s.) on the eve of his departure from Medina and predicted his martyrdom,

'I have heard it from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).'

Everyone was aware of the impending martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.). The mention of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) is also made in this context with the description of the pivotal role after the great martyrdom.

The Dream and its Interpretation

Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) was only three years of age when she saw a dream and conveyed this to her maternal grandfather, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.),

"O Messenger of Allah! Last night I dreamt of a severe hurricane blowing over the entire earth. I took shelter from the sandstorm under a gigantic tree but even that got uprooted and collapsed to the ground. I then took refuge under a fallen branch of that tree but that too did not last long. I sought shelter under a third branch of the same tree but it was crushed into pieces due to the severity of the wind. I continued to seek refuge under two entangled branches but the hurricane simply blew them away. And then I awoke with a start."

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) heard the narration and wept uncontrollably. Then, he (s.a.w.a.) informed,

"Zaynab! The tree under which you were sheltered is your grandfather who will leave this world shortly. The other two branches were your parents who will also leave this transient world. And the two entangled branches are your brothers Hasan and Husain, under whose trials and difficulties the world will be enveloped in darkness."

(Reyaahain al-Shar'eeah, vol. 2, pg. 5)

This prophetic interpretation of her vision has guided the life, character and attitude of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) in a manner that the event of Karbala became a defining moment of her life. With the unfolding of Karbala, one can witness her extraordinary level of submission to and satisfaction with the divine decree. With her overwhelming sense of loyalty and with the prayers of the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.), she could withstand the difficulties and tribulations of Karbala.

The Demise of the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.)

Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) was but five years old when the demise of the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.) struck her with grief. On one side was the house of Ali (a.s.) where Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.), Janab-e-Umme Kulsum (s.a.) and Hasanain (a.s.) lived with their virtuous mother Janab-e-Zahra (s.a.) and among their confidants were the members of Bani Hashim. On the other hand, Medina was gripped in the throes of a crisis. The turbulence of Saqifa had blinded the intellects and disguised the truth. The Quraish were hungry for power and in their intoxication, their drive and aggression knew no bounds. When the Quraish were busy selecting a leader for themselves, a handful of the monotheists were with the righteous Imam Ali (a.s.) busy in the shrouding and burial rites of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). The severity of the grief of Janab-e-Zahra (s.a.) was such that the very walls of the house seemed to shed tears. In this distressing condition, the five-year-old Zainab (s.a.) was consoling her honourable mother in the same manner in which she used to comfort her venerable father in Mecca.

The demise of Janab-e-Zahra (s.a.)

After her father's demise, Janab-e-Zahra (s.a.) was constantly wailing and absorbed in grief. She passed away from this world just 75 days after her the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) demise.

It is indeed impossible to gauge the patience, forbearance and satisfaction with which she faced this great ordeal.

But we do find a historical statement, where she cried,

يارسول الله ! الان حَقًّا فَقَدَ نَاكَ.

'O Messenger of Allah! It is today that I have truly lost you'.

(Zainab-e-Kubra, pg.42)

The Arrival of Umm al-Baneen in the House of Ali (a.s.)

The desolation after the martyrdom of Janab-e-Zahra (s.a.) was eating away at the people of the house of Ali (a.s.). Hence, in accordance with the will of Janab-e-Zahra (s.a.), he married the honourable lady, as selected by his brother Aqeel, a renowned genealogist among the Arabs. Her name was also Fatemah but later she came to be known as Umm al-Baneen (the mother of sons). Janab-e-Umm al-Baneen from the time of her arrival in the house of Ali (a.s.), till her last breath performed her duties regarding Hasnain (a.s.), Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) and Janab-e-Umme Kulsum (s.a.) as if she were their maid and not their mother. The character of this lady can hardly be paralleled by anyone in history. Indeed Allah willed to send this pure personality created from heavenly elements to Arabia destining for her the pure environs of the holy house of Ahle Bait (a.s.). Our millions salutations for that honourable lady who has bestowed the valiant Abbas (a.s.) for the protection of Islam. The very same Abbas (a.s.) who never addressed Imam Husain (a.s.) except as 'Master'.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا مُطِيعًا لِلَّهِ وَ لِرَسُولِهِ وَ لِأَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ الْحَسَنِ وَ الْحُسَيْنِ.

"Salutations be on you, o the obedient one of Allah and to His Messenger and to Ameerul Momineen and Hasan and Husain."

Whenever Janab-e-Abbas (a.s.) used to present himself to Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.), he did so like a humble slave addressing his mistress.

Married Life

Soon the time arrived when the immaculate Ahle Bait(a.s.) enjoined the marriage of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) with Abdullah ibn Jafar and thus began the married life of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.). Janab-e-Abdullah held an illustrious position among Arabs due to his courage and generosity and of course also due to the fact that he was the son of Janab-e-Jafar-e-Tayyar (r.a.). We present an incident with regard to his generosity:

The Holy Propeht (s.a.w.a.) has saluted him thus:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَنَ ذِي الْجَنَاحَيْنِ.

"Salutations on you, the son of the one with the two wings"

Once when he was on his steed, a person holding the reins of his horse saluted him in the same manner and requested 'Kill me with your sword'. He replied "You are not sane". That man explained, 'I have an enemy who is hard hearted and stubborn. He has made my life miserable through poverty and indigence'. Janab-e-Abdullah ordered his slave to give him a thousand dinars and turning towards the man said 'o my Arab brother! Take this money and if your enemy ventures near you come to me'. The Arab replied, 'I swear by Allah that you have given me enough money to counter my enemy for the rest of my life and to ward him away from me'.

(Reyaahain al-Shar'eeah, vol 3, pg. 221-222)

The Conditions Laid by Janab-e-Zainab(s.a.)'for Janab-e-Abdullah (r.a.)

There were two conditions associated with Janab-e-Zainab's (a.s.) marriage to Janab-e-Abdullah

(Zainab-e-Kubra, pg.65)

The first condition was that Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) could visit her house whenever she wanted and the second one was that Janab-e-Abdullah would not prohibit Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) from undertaking journeys with Imam Husain (a.s.). Janab-e-Abdullah accepted both conditions and gained the honour of wedding Janab-e-Zainab (a.s.).

After these conditions, does anyone still doubt about the knowledge of Ameerul Mo'mineen - Ali (a.s.) of Janab-e-Zainab's (s.a.) journey with Imam Husain (a.s.) to Karbala? This is indeed a vital link of the divine plan for the promulgation of Islam.

Kufa

When the yoke of Caliphate was lifted from the neck of Islam and Ali (a.s.) took charge of it, Kufa became his capital. During this period, Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) has played a momentous role and gained the famous title of 'The Scholar without A Teacher'. She taught Quran to the women of Kufa and explained its exegesis. This has exposed a facet of the lifestyle and character of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) that directs the Muslim nation towards the education of women. It also outlines the lessons of life for women in Islam, the method of purity and chastity for women and the conditions of the Shariat for the daughters of the Muslim Ummah. This is a very vast topic. In this context it will suffice to know that her eloquence became common knowledge. The famous personality of the time, Bashir b. Khuzain Asadi remarked:

"By Allah! I have not seen a greater orator than her. It is as if she speaks with the tongue of Ameerul Momineen Ali b Abi Talib (a.s.)."

(Zainab-e-Kubra, pg.80, Behaar al-Anwaar, Luhoof by Sayed Ibn Tawoos (r.a.))

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Imam Zainul Aabedeem (a.s.) on witnessing the articulate sermon delivered by Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) in Kufa, admired herthus,

أَنْتِ تَحْمَدِينَ اللَّهَ عَالِمَةً غَيْرَ مُعَلِّمَةٍ فَهَامَةً غَيْرَ مُفَهِّمَةٍ.

"You praise Allah, a scholar without a teacher, a sage without an instructor."

(Zainab-e-Kubra, pg. 80)

After the martyrdom of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) returned to Medina with her brothers Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husain (a.s.). This period too was of trials and calamities. The opponents far outnumbered the friends. Tribulations intensified further with the martyrdom of Imam Hasan (a.s.) after being poisoned by Jodah binte Ashath. His heart was splintered by the poison and fell out onto the salver in pieces. His burial alongside his grandfather (s.a.w.a.) was prohibited and arrows were rained on his bier. He was then buried in the Baqi cemetery. Janab-eZainab (s.a.) was like the heir to Janab-e-Fatema (s.a.) and the ladies of Bani Hashim approached her to offer their condolences on the martyrdom of her brother. She was consoling every member of the household advising patience but surely the memory of her vision would have made her apprehensive when she looked at the second of the entangled branches. And the prophecies flooding her awareness would strengthen her resolve for facing Kerbala. O Allah! What was Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) if not the place of shelter from the stormy winds blowing from the polluted governments.

50 A.H.

The martyrdom of Imam Hasan (a.s.) occurred in 50 A.H. Thereafter, Imam Husain (a.s.) assumed the mantle of Imamah. Muawiyah died in 60 A.H. and Yazid took over the reins of the throne thereafter. In this period, Janab-eZainab (s.a.) divided her time between the house of Imam Husain (a.s.) and that of Janab-e-Abdullah. The period of withdrawal (of Imam Husain (a.s.) has within it thousand facets of guidance. Apparently Medina may have been under the rule of Muawiya, but the school of Ahle Bait (a.s.) and the teaching of Islam and its laws continued to be propagated from the pure household that was frequented by the Angels. The Month of Rajab 60 A.H.

Imam Husain (a.s.) had to leave Medina denying the oath of allegiance to Yazid. He proceeded to Mecca - how well conceived is the divine mission! The time had indeed arrived for the fulfilment of the second condition for the marriage of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) and she accompanied the caravan of Imam Husain (a.s.). She was handling the responsibilities of leading the caravan. like a capable minister of the caliphate. Imam Husain (a.s.) reached Mecca on 8th Zilhijjah but soon changed his Hajj to Umra. He bade farewell to Mecca and headed towards

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Kufa. The journey from Mecca to Karbala (eventually) was of 24 days and Imam Husain (a.s.) has established 16 campsites during this journey.

(Zainab-e-Kubra, p. 151)

Khuzaima, the sixth station of his journey was a daylong. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) approached Imam Husain (a.s.) and said, 'Brother! I have heard these couplets from an unseen voice

الاعين فاحتفلى بجهد

فمن يبكي على الشهداء بعدى؟

على قوم تسوقهم المنايا

بمقدار الى انجاز وعد

"O my eyes cry upon the martyrs

For, who after me will grieve for them?

Cry upon those whom death beckons towards itself

And towards the Promised Land, Which Allah has destined for them."

Upon hearing this Imam Husain (a.s.) remarked, "O my sister that which is destined will surely come to pass."
(Mushirul Ahzan Ibn Numa)

The 14th station was at Ruhaimiyyah where Hur detained their progress and Imam Husain (a.s.) arrived on the land of Karbala on 2nd Muharram. The tents were raised and Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) came towards Imam Husain (a.s.) giving voice to her fears, 'This wilderness is terrible and I am afraid'. Imam Husain (a.s.) informed her, 'Our father Ali (a.s.) had stayed here while returning from Siffin and had slept resting his head in the lap of my brother Hasan. When he woke up a while later, he started to cry. On being asked the reason for his grief, Ali (a.s.) had informed,

"This wilderness is like an ocean of blood and Husain is submerged in it, crying out for help but no one comes forward for his aid."

Then he turned towards me and instructed, "O Abu Abdillah! If such a situation does arise, what will you do? I replied, "I will adopt patience."

Tears of love flowed from his eyes and Imam Husain (a.s.) advised him patience.

(Zainab-e-Kubra, pg. 155)

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The stay of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) in Karbala stretched from the 2nd to the 11th of Muharram. It was akin to a journey of centuries of anxiety and difficulty wherein each moment was filled with grief and wailing and it was as if time itself had ceased to move.

The armies of the Kufans and the Syrians established ranks against them far into the horizon. The Euphrates was vigorously guarded. There was a steady inflow of horsemen and foot soldiers in Karbala, which only increased by the day. The sounds of the clashing of weapons, the springing of the spears, the shine of the armours, the lustre of the javelins, aimed lances, could be seen till the reach of the vision. On the side of Imam Husain (a.s.), a seemingly helpless sister used to ask her lonely brother time and again, "Brother! Have none of your helpers and supporters arrived?" They both looked at each other and then stared towards the heavens.

From the seventh of Muharram, water dried up in the camps of Imam Husain (a.s.) and the 8th Muharram witnessed the echoes of 'Water! Water!' from the parched tongues of the children. Guarding the tents, taking care of women and children and consoling them, all became among the duties of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.). Carrying such heavy responsibilities on her shoulders through the catastrophic days of Muharram, the eve of Aashura arrived. In this one night of respite, there must have been numerous consultations between the brother and the sister. They must have discussed their days of togetherness, from growing in the company of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) till the terrible day that they were facing together. It must have been the night of fulfilment of promises. This was the night of worship for the relatives and friends of Imam Husain (a.s.). The people of Imam's household were engaged in divine obedience and glorification throughout the night. Thus passed the night of Allah's chosen servants on this land, the morn of which would see the realisation of Ameerul Momineen's (a.s.) dream. On the day of Aashura, rivers of blood flowed and the son of Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.a.) saved the ark of Islam by immersing himself in this ocean of blood.

The Morning of Aashura

The morning of Aashura dawned. The series of martyrdom commenced. Corpses of martyrs were brought one after the other. The sun, witnessing this judgement day, kept burning with even more intensity. Gradually, the day began to set after observing the gigantic courage, patience and contentment of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) and Imam Husain (a.s.).

The Evening of Helpless Wayfarers and Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.)

The partner of Imam Husain (a.s.) and the advisor to Imamat, the lion-hearted daughter of Ali (a.s.), Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) was the guiding light and mainstay of this evening. When Imam Husain's (a.s.) camps were burnt down, Janab-e-Zainab(s.a.), under the orders of the Imam of the time, guided the pure and chaste ladies of the household and the children of Imam Husain

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(a.s.) to safety. The attitude of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) had changed. She was handling the duties of guidance, protection and safeguarding that were hitherto handled by Imam Husain (a.s.) and Hazrat Abbas (a.s.). Janab-e-Zainab(s.a.) had two sons who had battled bravely and she had performed the prostration of thanksgiving on their corpses. She also rescued her nephew - Imam Sajjad (a.s.) from the blazing tent with rare courage and doused the flames. A soldier from Yazid's army narrates, 'When the tents were burning, I saw a tall lady near the camp who would go in and then come out, look left and right, then look towards the sky and beat her hand upon her head. I cautioned her,

"The tent is burning, move away from it."

At this the lady replied,

"O Sheikh! One of our dear ones is inside who is incapable of movement due to the severity of illness. How can I leave him amidst the rising flames?"

(Reyaahain al-Shar'eeah, vol. 3 pg. 106)

In that very evening, when Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) began counting the children, she found two of them missing. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) and Umme Kulsum (s.a.) started searching for them in the terrifying wilderness. They found the children at a distant spot embraced to each other having left the world.

Attention of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) towards Imam Sajjad (a.s.) during the Journey

The night of calamity passed away and the ladies of Imam Husain's (a.s.) household were made captives the next day. They were made to mount saddle-less camels like common criminals. Imam Sajjad (a.s.) was sent towards Kufa hands and feet clasped together in iron and wearing a barbed iron collar. The caravan passed through the battlefield where the bodies of the martyrs lay mixed in dust and blood. It was here that Imam Sajjad (a.s.) would have died of grief. He turned a pale yellow. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) consoled her nephew, "Be patient! What am I witnessing? You are the Imam of the time."

She reminded him of the tradition of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to Umme Aiman which had explained the divine covenant. (Zainab-e-Kubra, pg. 207, Kaamil al-Ziaaraat pg. 262)

The caravan reached the court of Ibn Ziyad on the 12th of Muharram 61 A.H. while there was a huge crowd on the streets of Kufa. The people were pelting dried dates on the prisoners.

Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) gathered the dates from the hands of the children and threw them away saying, 'Charity is prohibited on us Ahle:Bait (a.s.)!' There was commotion in the court of Kufa due to the oration of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.). The endeavours of Sulaim al-Kufi had already

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produced a few like-minded people. And the speeches of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) particularly those speeches where she commented on the faithlessness and cowardice of the Kufans made them cover their faces in their clothes in shame and misery. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) and the other prisoners were kept captive in a ruin.

(Zainab-e-Kubra)

There is an incident of Bahr al-Gharaaeb that Harith al-Shaami narrates, "The severed head of Imam Husain (a.s.) was hung from a tree. A child by the name of Ruqaiyyah would frequent the place and speak to the head. I saw the head of Imam Husain (a.s.) descend and hover in the air before the child. The child said,

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَبْتَاهُ! وَآ مُصِيبَتَاهُ بَعْدَ فِرَاقِكَ وَآ عُرْبَتَاهُ بَعْدَ شَهَادَتِكَ.

"My father! Salutations upon you, after you we were made to suffer innumerable calamities and we were afflicted with the wretchedness of alienation. Imam Husain (a.s.) replied,

"O my child! Your difficulties are over. You will meet us in a few days."

The journey from Karbala to Kufa, the court of Ibne Ziad, the interaction of Ibne Ziad, the barbs of shame upon the kufans, the turning of their attention towards the laws of Shariat - these were some of the highlights of her life. It is unlikely that the propagation of Prophethood and Imamat would have been as solid, if Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) had not been a part of this incident.

The caravan of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) left for Syria on the 13th of Muharram. Along the route, there were several altercations between the forces of Yazid and the supporters of Ahle Bait (a.s.). These cities include Mausel, Seeswar, Qansarin, Hamaat and Hamas. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) thanked these people. In Hamaat she questioned the locals, "What is this place?" They replied, "Hamaat." She prayed,

حَمَاهَا اللَّهُ مِنْ كُلِّ ظَلَمٍ

"May Allah protect this place from all oppressions."

(Zainab-e-Kubra, page 241, Muntahal Aamaal by Shaikh Abbas Qummi (a.r.))

Today, Damascus, the city of Syria, resounds with the name of Sayyedah Zainab (s.a.). It is the focus of various visitors. A flag waves over the lofty shrine of the venerable tomb. It is like an announcement that this is the tomb of the granddaughter of the last : Prophet (s.a.w.a.) who has achieved victory over Kufa and Syria. It is not surprising that her bravery and courage still gains sway over the hearts of the visitors. Great emperors bow down before this princess and renowned scholars and traditionalists acknowledge her knowledge and scientific prowess. Damascus was the city housing the court of Yazid. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) was brought here

captive. The caravan was halted at the city gates and had to wait for hours. Hence the gate is known as "Baab al-Sa'ah". It was inquired from Imam Sajjad (a.s.) where did you face the maximum difficulty? He replied,

“الشام” – “الشام” – “الشام”

“This is due to the humiliation that the ladies were subjected to in this place.”

Imam (a.s.) continued,

"The people threw hot water and fire on us due to which my head was burnt. The journey of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) to Syria is that glorious chapter in her chaste life, which has witnessed numerous incidents and occurrences in its path. Such incidents that amazed even the angels. It became clear from the revelry in the marketplace and the decoration of the shops and establishments that the locals knew nothing about the caravan except that a so-called transgressor had rebelled against the Caliph of the time. Janab-e-Zainab(s.a.) tore apart this veil of ignorance in such an effective manner by her oratory skills that even after 14 centuries none possesses the courage to cover the beacon of truth.

She was brought to Yazid's court as a captive prisoner, Yazid sitting on the throne with a stick in his hand and was repeatedly striking the parched lips of Imam Husain's (a.s.) severed head placed in a tray before him. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) put him to shame this heretic with her fiery speeches.

A Syrian pointed towards Janabe-Sakina and sought her for slavery. Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) protected her from his advances. Yazid visualised his defeat in the orations of Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) and could not put her to death due to the reply of Imam Sajjad (a.s.). He imprisoned them in a cell that blackened their skin with the alteration of the searing heat of daytime and the biting cold of night. Janab-e-Hind came to meet Janab-e-Zainab(s.a.) in the prison. (There is a complete elegy of Mir Anees portraying this spectacle)

Demise of Janab-e-Sakina

Janab-e-Sakina (s.a.) finally expired in the dark, lonely dungeon. Her dress was glued to her body with the dried blood caused by merciless and incessant flogging. One day, Imam Sajjad (a.s.) saw her aunt reciting prayers while sitting. When he sought the reason, she explained, "The food and water ration are minimal so I distribute it among the children. Consequently, I have become so weak that I have to offer the prayers while sitting."

Finally, Yazid ordered their freedom. One part of the royal palace was emptied. The first Majlis for Azaa-e-Husain (a.s.) took place in the palace of Yazid itself. The Syrian women came wearing black dresses. The wailing resounded the walls and doors of the palace due to the renditions of

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Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.). The plundered caravan in the words of the writer returned to Karbala in 40 days. The corpses of the martyrs got their burial. When Karbala got decorated, Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) returned to Medina. According to the author of Zainabe Kubra, Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) lived only for a period of a year and a half after the martyrdom of her brother and passed away on the 15th of Rajab 62 A. H. in Syria.

The great traditionalist, Shaikh Abbas Qummi (r.a.) narrates from his teacher Mirza Kusain Noori (r.a.), "Once Syria, Medina and Hijaz came in the grip of a severe famine. Janab-e-Abdullah b. Jafar shifted to Qadiyah Raawiyeh, where he had lands. When he migrated from Medina, Janab-e-Zainab (s.a.) accompanied him and there she fell ill and passed away soon after. She was buried at the place where the mausoleum is presently situated.

(Hadiyyatuz Zaaereen pg. 353; Manaaqib-e-Ahle Bait Dar Sham by Syed Ahmed Fehri pg. 75-76)

Exegesis Of Ziarat-e-Waaresa

Literally, Ziaarat means to pay homage to a revered personality by visiting him/her. Visitation (Ziaarat) even when it involves an intimate friend and close relative assumes a common connotation. While the same act (of visitation) involving a divine emissary like a Prophet (a.s.), successor (a.s.) or Imam (a.s.) takes on a far more significant connotation and bears a profound purpose. To develop a spiritual relation with these personalities is an extraordinary achievement. However, it pales in comparison with the opportunity one gets to convey salutations and greetings to them in their physical presence. Another natural feature of conveying the salutation is that the visitor tries his best to utter the words and sentences of the salutation in the finest manner with precise pronunciation, conveying his heartfelt affection and attachment for the personality. Indeed what can be better for a Shia to greet the infallible (a.s.) with his salutation and confess his precepts of faith to him (a.s.). Most certainly our infallible Imams (a.s.) had scaled the peaks of eloquence and expression and had recognised their Creator with a recognition that was deserving of His Majesty. That is why their words are characterized with eloquence and articulation and remote from errors and shortcomings. Perhaps it is due to this perfection and precision that Safwan Jammaal sought Imam Jafar Sadeq's (a.s.) permission to visit Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine and at the same time he requested Imam (a.s.) to instruct him with the etiquette of visitation and its rules. In response to this request, Imam (a.s.) instructed him to recite Ziaarat-e-Waaresah.

(Misbaah al-Mutahajjid by Shaikh Tusi (r.a.), Mafaatih al-Jinnaan, pg. 1424 – Urdu Edition)

Reason Behind Nomenclature

The reason behind naming the salutation as Ziaarat-e-Waaresah can be attributed to the opening lines wherein Imam Husain (a.s.) is invoked as the inheritor and successor of the past Prophets (a.s.).

Let's proceed and pay homage to the oppressed Imam (a.s.) by reciting this Salutation with a heavy heart and at the same time let us illumine our recognition with its exegesis. (Readers please note that the exegesis deals with the apparent meanings of the words and sentences of the Salutation. The precise and concealed meaning is known only to Imam Sadeq's (a.s.) successor -Hazrat Wali-e-Asr (a.t.f.s.). Imam (a.t.f.si) alone with his storehouse of knowledge and recognition is aware of its profound exegesis and interpretation. Insha Allah, on his reappearance, he (a.t.f.s.) shall elucidate it for us thereby enriching our recognition and insight.)

انشاء الله تعالى اللهمَّ عَجَلْ لوليک الفرج۔

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If the visitor is near Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine, he can commence the Ziaarat without any specific intention. However, if he is not near the shrine, he must accordingly make an intention of a distant recitation.

١. اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَیْكَ يَا وَارِثَ آدَمَ صَفْوَةَ اللّٰهِ.

Salutations be upon you, O inheritor of Hazrat Adam (a.s.) - Allah's Chosen One.

According to this statement, Imam (a.s.) is considered to be Hazrat Adam's (a.s.) heir. What is the meaning of an heir? Who is referred to as an heir? An heir is the one, who after the expiry or martyrdom of a person inherits his property and effects, and this legacy could be of a material or even spiritual nature. The heir enjoys exclusive and undisputed right to expend the legacy as he wishes. In this regard, the Holy Quran mentions the supplication of Hazrat Zakariyya (a.s.):

فَهَبْ لِيْ مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا - يَّرِثُنِيْ وَ يَرِثُ مِنْ آلِ يَعْقُوْبَ.

'Therefore grant me from Thyself an heir, who should inherit me and inherit from the children of Yaqub.'

(Surah Maryam: Verse 586)

Allah, the Almighty, announces in another place in the Holy Quran:

وَ وَّرِثَ سُلَيْمٰنُ دَاوُدَ

'And Sulaiman was Dawood's heir'

(Surah Nami: Verse 16)

Renowned Ahle Sunnah littérateur, Ibne Manzur has explained the meaning of this verse in his celebrated work - Lesaan al-Arab:

وَ وَّرِثَ اِنَّهُ كَانَ لِدَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ تِسْعَةً وَّلَدًا فَوَّرْتَهُ سُلَيْمٰنُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمُ النَّبُوَّةَ وَالْمُلْكُ

'Hazrat Dawood (a.s.) had 19 sons. Of these, Hazrat Sulaiman (a.s.) inherited his legacy, in Prophethood as well in wisdom.

The elucidation of this verse by the esteemed littérateur clearly highlights the fact that the declaration falsely attributed to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), 'We Prophets do not bequeath any material entity' is totally unfounded and bogus. This lame and fabricated tradition was shamelessly invented solely to deprive the rightful heirs of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) of the legacy of Fadak and to usurp it from them.

Nevertheless, according to the opening salutation of the Ziaarat, Imam Husain (a.s.) is the inheritor of Hazrat Adam's (a.s.) legacy. This legacy could be of a material entity or any trait or characteristic that Hazrat Adam (a.s.) possessed. Imam Husain (a.s.) was the inheritor of that entity, trait and characteristic, with special reference to 'صفوه', the Chosen One, that has been mentioned in the salutation.

'صفوه' means the Chosen one or the Purified One. Hazrat Adam (a.s.) is Allah's selected and preferred servant who He sent down to commence the human race as also the first Prophet for man's guidance. Similarly, Imam Husain (a.s.) is also Allah's selected and chosen servant.

٢. أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ نُوحِ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ.

Salutations be upon you, O heir of Hazrat Nuh (a.s.) - Allah's Prophet

An heir is the one who preserves and protects the legacy. Just like Hazrat Nuh (a.s.) protected the believers on his ark from the divine chastisement. Likewise, Imam Husain (a.s.) safeguarded Islam and Muslims from the flood of apostasy and deviation by giving his life. This is the spiritual legacy of Hazrat Nuh (a.s.) that Imam Husain (a.s.) inherited.

٣. أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلِ اللَّهِ:

Salutations be upon you, O the heir of Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) - Allah's intimate friend.

Hazrat Ibrahim's (a.s.) stature grew in five stages. He was first selected as a servant (abd), then as a Prophet (Nabi), then as a Messenger (Rasool), then an intimate friend (Khaleel) and finally an Imam. Allah first took Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) as a servant. When he passed some grades, he was selected as a Prophet. When his rank increased, Allah granted him Messengership (Risaalah). When he succeeded in the divine examination, Allah chose him as an intimate friend. Finally after he negotiated the final trial, he was selected as an Imam.

The Holy Quran refers to the third stage of friendship:

وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا

'...and Allah took Ibrahim as a friend'

(Surah Nisa: Verse 125)

Under the exegesis of this verse, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) explains that

خليل is made from خَلَّتْ or خَلَّتْ, خَلَّتْ means poverty and destitution. Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) depended and relied only on Allah, the Almighty, for his needs and desires. He never approached the

people for his needs, and remained aloof from them. Therefore, when Namrood, the tyrant king, flung him in the fire, Allah instructed Hazrat Jibrael (a.s.),

"Go and help my servant."

Hazrat Jibrael (a.s.) approached Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) while he was in mid-air and asked him, "Allow me to share your burden. Allah has instructed me to help you." Despite his distressful condition, Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) spurned the invitation of the archangel saying,

"Allah is sufficient for me and I rely solely on Him and have confidence only in Him. Certainly I do not approach anyone other than Him (for help) and do not need anyone else."

Hence, Allah named him as a Khaleel, meaning that Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) was poor only for His help, he was destitute only for His support and he had severed his hopes from everyone else.

(Tafseer-e-Noor al-Saqalain by Allamah Huwaizi (r.a.), vol. 1 pg. 554)

In another tradition, Imam. Mohammad Bager (a.s.) reveals that Allah appointed Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) as His Khaleel because he never cast off anyone empty-handed and because he turned only towards Allah for succour.

(Elal al-Sharaa'e, pg. 34)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informs,

'Allah chose Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) as His Khaleel because he fed the people and when the people slept, he was engrossed in the night prayers..

(Elal al-Sharaa'e, pg. 35)

When we deliberate on the characteristics of Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.), we find the choicest and most laudable of traits. Imam Husain (a.s.) being his heir inherited these traits - relying only on Allah, feeding the people, never turning back the needy empty-handed, worship in the death of the night while the people were fast asleep, negligent of their Lord. The best example of this worship can be witnessed on the eve of Aashura in Karbala. While the enemies were engrossed in merriment and festivities and steeped in deviation, Imam (a.s.) and his companions were preoccupied in the glorification of truth and were reciting the Holy Quran with their parched throats and dried lips. The ladies of Imam's (a.s.) household were preparing their sons for the battle on the morrow, urging them to sacrifice their lives for their Imam (a.s.) in order to support and preserve Islam.

٤. اَلْسَّلَامُ عَلَیْكَ يَا وَارِثَ مُوسَىٰ كَلِیْمِ اللّٰهِ:

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Salutations be upon you, O the heir of Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) - the one addressed by Allah.

“..... وَ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا”

'...and to Moosa, Allah addressed His Word, speaking (to him).'

(Surah Nisa: Verse 164)

Ameerul Momineen (a.si) declares:

“الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي كَلَّمَ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا وَ أَرَاهُ مِنْ آيَاتِهِ بِلا جَوَارِحٍ وَلَا أَدْوَاتٍ وَلَا لَهَوَاتٍ.

'All praise is for Allah, the one who addressed His Word to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.), speaking to him. Allah showed him His great signs without the mediation of limbs and members and the organs of speech and without the movement of the jaws.'

(Nahjul Balagah, Sermon No. 182)

Imam Sadeq(a.s.) narrates,

"Allah revealed to Hazrat Moosa (a.s.), 'O Moosa! Do you know why I chose you for conversing with Me?' Hazrat Moosa (a.s.) replied in the negative. Allah revealed, 'I searched the corners of the earth but could not find anyone more humble than you.'

(Amaali-e-Tusi, pg. 165)

Indeed in the history of mankind, our search for a humbler person than Imam Husain (a.s.) will prove futile.

٥- أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ عِيسَى رُوحِ اللَّهِ:

Salutations be upon you, O the heir of Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) - Allah's Spirit

About Hazrat Eesa (a.s.), Allah declares in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى بْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَ كَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ رُوحٌ مِنْهُ.

...the Messiah, Eesa son of Marium is only an apostle of Allah and His Word which He communicated to Marium and a Spirit from Him..'

(Surah Nisa: Verse 171)

What is the 'Spirit' in the above Quranic verse?

The narrator posed this query to Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.). Imam (a.s.) informed him,

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'The Spirit (of Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) is Allah's creation that he created in Hazrat Adam (a.s.) and Hazrat Eesa (a.s.).'
(Tafseer-e-Noor al-Saqalain vol. 1 pg. 577)

It means that there are two distinct spirits that Allah has chosen for His two Prophets (a.s.) and implies that the creation of Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) is similar to that of Hazrat Adam (a.s.). Just like Allah said 'Be and It was' in the case of Hazrat Adam (a.s.), He adopted a similar mode of creation for Hazrat Eesa (a.s.). The only difference was that in case of Hazrat Adam (a.s.), there was neither a father nor a mother, while with Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) he was only fatherless. Allah deposited the Spirit in the womb of Janabe Maryam (s.a.). Just as Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) is included among the Chosen Spirits, Imam Husain (a.s.) and the martyrs of Karbala are reckoned among the esteemed Spirits.

'Salutations be upon you o Aba Abdillah and upon the spirits that were sacrificed at your threshold.'

In addition to this, Imam Husain (a.s.) is the heir of all other traits possessed by Hazrat Eesa (a.s.).

Let us cast a glance at some of these specific traits highlighted in the Holy Quran:

- a. Messiah (Surah Ale Imran: Verse 54),
- b. Allah's Spirit (Surah Nisa: Verse 171)
- c. Imam (Surah Ahzab: Verse 7)
- d. Witness over people's actions (Surah Nisa: Verse 159)
- e. Countenance in the world and hereafter (Surah Ale Imran: Verse 45)
- f. Proximate ones (Surah Ale Imran: Verse 45)
- g. Chosen ones (Surah Ale Imran: Verse 33)
- h. Selected ones (Surah An'aam: Verse 85)
- i. Virtuous ones (Surah An'aam: Verse 87)
- j. Was a source of blessing wherever he went
- k. A sign for the pure ones
- l. Divine mercy
- m. Immaculate conduct with his mother (s.a.)

n. Others submitted to him (Surah Maryam: Verses 19-33)

o. Was taught the Book and Wisdom (Surah Ale Imran: Verse 48)

Imam Husain (a.s.) was the heir of all these traits.

٦. أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ مُحَمَّدٍ حَبِيبِ اللَّهِ:

Salutations be upon you, O inheritor of Hazrat Mohammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.) - Allah's Beloved (Habeeb)

The Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) position as Allah's beloved is superior to Hazrat Ibrahim's (a.s.) rank as Allah's Khaleel. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself highlights this in a tradition.

إِنْ كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلَهُ فَأَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ حَبِيبُهُ

'If Ibrahim (a.s.) was Allah's Khaleel then I Mohammad (s.a.w.a.) am His Habeeb.'

(Al-Ehtejaajaat by Shaikh Tabarsi (r.a.), vol.1, pg. 110)

In other words, Allah has not created anyone more beloved than the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) or else he (s.a.w.a.) would not have been referred to as Allah's Most Beloved. This rank and status also extends to Imam Husain (a.s.) as he is the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) heir. If this was not the case the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) would never have declared - 'Husain (a.s.) is from me and I am from Husain (a.s.)'

(Oyoon-o-Akhbaar al-Reza (a.s.) by Shaikh Saduq (r.a.) vol. 1 pg. 262)

٧. أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَارِثَ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام:

Salutations be upon you, O the heir of the Chief of the Faithful (Hazrat Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.))

The title 'Chief of the Faithful' (Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)) was coined exclusively for Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.). The title should not be used for anybody else, not even for the immaculate Imams (a.s.). The narrator asked Imam Jafar Sadeg (a.s.) if he could address the latter with the title 'Ameerul Momineen'. Imam (a.s.) forbade him explaining, 'This title is exclusively for Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.). No one else has the right to be addressed by it.'

Imam Husain (a.s.) is the heir of all traits possessed by Ali (a.s.) including bravery, generosity, patience, eloquence, forbearance and knowledge. Then why has he not inherited the title of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)? Perhaps Ali (a.s.) shall reply to Imam Husain (a.s.) the one addressed as 'O soul that art at rest! Return to your Lord.' - know that the title of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was bestowed upon me by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself, who is superior to me. He

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(s.a.w.a.) has chosen this title exclusively for me and has not made anyone else a partner with me in it.'

The salutations wherein Imam Husain (a.s.) is declared as the heir of the past Prophets (a.s.) and Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) end over here. Now the mode of addressing changes.

٨. أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَنَ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمُصْطَفَى:

Salutations be upon you, O son of Mohammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.).

The number of traditions establishing the fact that Imam Husain (a.s.) was indeed the son of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) are too many with numerous chains of transmission to merit a debate on the issue. The Verse of Mubaahelah (Surah Ale Imran: Verse 61) and the prophetic tradition 'Hasan (a.s.) and Husain (a.s.) are my sons' should serve as ample and irrevocable evidence in this regard.

٩. أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَنَ عَلِيٍّ الْمُرْتَضَى.

Salutations be upon you, O son of Ali Murtaza (a.s.).

١٠. أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَنَ فَاطِمَةَ الزَّهْرَاءِ

Salutations be upon you, O son of Fatema Zahra (s.a.).

While it is true that Janabe Zahra (s.a.) was attached to all her children, she was exceptionally affectionate towards Imam Husain (a.s.). Perhaps this can be attributed to the fact that she was informed about his impending martyrdom while he would be in a state of helplessness and distress. She was inconsolable on hearing this painful news and wept uncontrollably. It is in a mother's nature to be more affectionate and sympathetic towards the child who is going to be encircled by calamities and tribulations. It is possible that whenever Janabe Zahra (s.a.) cast a glance on her son, the spectacle of Karbala would hover in front of her eyes reminding her of what he would have to undergo after her.

١١. أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَنَ خَدِيجَةَ الْكُبْرَى:

Salutations be upon you, O son of Khadijah al-Kubra (s.a.).

١٢. أَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ يَا ثَارَ اللَّهِ وَابْنَ ثَارِهِ وَالْوَثَرَ الْمَوْتُورَ:

Salutations be upon you, o Pure Blood of Allah and his son. O the one who was deserted.

شار means blood. الله شار الله means Allah's Blood. Does Allah have blood? No, certainly not. The statement over here means that Imam Husain (a.s.) shed his blood in Allah's Way and Allah was so pleased with this sacrifice that He attributed Imam's (a.s.) blood to Himself. Therefore one who shed Imam's (a.s.) blood has in fact spilled Allah's Blood. The one who has waged war with Imam Husain (a.s.) has in fact waged war against Allah. Allah, the Almighty, will most certainly deal with the murderers of Imam (a.s.) in a manner that has no parallel in the history of mankind, rather in the history of creation.

After this statement, we recite “وَابْنُ ثَارِهِ” and his son i.e. Imam Husain (a.s.) is the son of Allah's Pure Blood. This refers to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). It means that even Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) is Allah's Blood by virtue of his sacrifice in Allah's Way. Indeed this is an enviable and lofty trait of this progeny that both father and the son find mention as Allah's Blood! Nowhere in the world can we find an example of this nature and there are no claimants to this position

وَالْوَتْرُ

In the salutation, the word وتر hasfatha on ر. The complete Word is يا وترالله. It is منادى مركب. In منادى مركب, the منصوب is مضاف. Else the منادى مركب, of منصوب would have read with a مرفوع, i.e. الوتر.

الوتر has several connotations. According to one of its meanings, it refers to the one whose life, property, wealth and family have been subjected to looting and plunder and he has been left all alone. One more meaning is that a martyr whose blood is not found after his martyrdom. الموتور is derived from the word وتر and both have almost the same implications.

Imam Husain (a.s.) is the oppressed victim who lost his wealth, family, relatives, etc. He (a.s.) was standing all alone among the tyrants and just as the sun began its downward journey on the 10th of Muharram, the desert in Karbala echoed with the sound,

قُتِلَ الْحُسَيْنُ بِكَرْبَلَاءَ

"Husain is martyred in Karbala".

(To be continued in the next Muharram issue. Insha-Allah

Importance of Imam Husain (a.s.) Ziarat And Levels Of The Hereafter

In the 1422 A.H. Muharram issue of Al Muntazar, in the article titled, 'The visitor of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine From the Intention of Ziyarat till his return to his native', we have already

mentioned the innumerable merits of Imam Husain's (a.s.) Ziarat. Continuing in the same vein, we shall now proceed to appreciate the exalted status of the visitors of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine on the Day of Judgment. Perhaps, some skeptics may doubt that how can a few moments of visitation of Imam's (a.s.) shrine make the visitor deserve such astonishing rewards.

One reason for such misgivings regarding the amazing merits of Imam Husain's (a.s.) merits could stem from the fact that we are materialistic in our approach and look at everything from the narrow, worldly perspective. Indeed in the perspective of Islamic teachings, such doubts and uncertainties will never arise.

Islamic beliefs are tightly entwined with each other with the result that one belief will lead to deliverance provided the believer (momin) also believes in other beliefs related to it. For instance, belief in Tauheed will prove beneficial only if the believer also testifies in the Day of Judgement. Belief in the Day of Judgement will serve its purpose only if one believes in Prophethood. Belief in Prophethood will be advantageous only if the believer acknowledges Imamat, which in turn will reap a reward only if it is supported with belief in Adl (Divine Justice).

Therefore, if a person firmly believes in Tauheed and thinks that it is sufficient for his deliverance and perfection of faith and to this end rejects Prophethood and the Day of Judgement, then he is mistaken. A necessary condition of the belief in Tauheed is that the believer acknowledges all aspects related to Allah and testifies in them. When Allah has repeatedly and vigorously stressed the appointment of the Day of Judgement, then to discard this belief is tantamount to denying Allah's Warning and Promise and one who denies this has in fact, refuted Allah Himself and his belief in Tauheed is of no consequence.

Similarly, we believe that Allah has raised Prophets (a.s.) for man's guidance. As a measure of their truthfulness, Allah aided them with clear arguments and miracles. Divine Prophets (a.s.), in order to support their claim of Prophethood and establish the divine link, advanced irrefutable proofs, overwhelming arguments and evidence that were more manifest than the afternoon sun. Under these circumstances, rejecting them is tantamount to rejecting Allah, the One who raised them.

What we can grasp from the above is that belief in the Day of Judgement is a necessary condition for belief in Tauheed. Likewise, belief in Prophethood is a necessary pre-requisite for belief in Tauheed and the Day of Judgment. Similarly, belief in Imamat and Adl is a must for establishing Tauheed, the Day of Judgment and Prophethood. A firm conviction in all these beliefs collectively is a necessary precondition for the acceptance of each individual belief.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), while enumerating the merits of Zakaat elaborated,

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'If one does not pay Zakaat, he has not observed the divine command of Namaz. His Namaz will be folded like an old piece of cloth is folded and it will be thrown on his face. Then it will be said to him, 'O Allah's servant, without paying Zakaat, what do you expect from your Namaz?'

When the companions heard this, they observed, 'Indeed that servant's condition is so wretched and pathetic!'

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) retorted,

'Should I not inform you about someone who is more wretched than him?'

The companions replied in the affirmative.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed,

'A person participated in Jihad and fought most valiantly and finally died. The fairies of Paradise were informed of his martyrdom, the custodians of Paradise learnt of his soul's departure and ascension. The angels on the earth are informed of the imminent descent of the custodians of Paradise and the fairies. However, no one turns up. The angels of the earth surrounding the corpse are waiting fervently and finally ask each other, 'What happened, where are the fairies? Where are the custodians of Paradise?' A voice addresses them from the seven heavens above, 'O angels raise your eyes towards the heavens!'

The angels will lift their heads towards the heavens.

They will see that the person's belief in Tauheed and Prophethood, his actions like Namaz, Zakaat, charity and other virtuous actions were made to halt below the skies. The skies resembled a huge assembly. In every direction - north, south, east and west, there were only angels. The angels who had recorded that person's deeds and the angels who present the deeds were inquiring as to why the doors of Paradise had not been thrown open to accept the martyr's deeds. Then Allah commands and the doors are opened. Then it is announced, 'O angels, if you can enter, then enter by all means.' However, try as they might, the angels could not lift the actions in order to enter the skies.

The angels confess, 'We do not possess the capacity to lift these deeds.' A voice from Allah's side declares, 'O angels, you cannot lift these actions to enter the skies. In order for these actions to pass through the skies and occupy a place in Paradise, there must be a channel of mediation for them.'

The angels inquire, 'O Allah, what is that channel of mediation?'

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Allah informs, 'The channel for these deeds is the love (Wilayat) and attachment of My Prophet's brother - Ali (a.s.) and the Imams (a.s.). This is the only factor that will enable the deeds to negotiate their path towards Paradise.'

After being enlightened with this information, the angels once again cast a glance at the person's deeds. However, they do not see the love for Ali (a.s.) and his infallible children (a.s.). Likewise, they could not locate the enmity with the enemies of the Imams (a.s.).

Then Allah commands the angels, 'Take these actions away and deposit them in the capitals of My Kingdoms. The ones worthy of them will take them away and will deposit them with the rightful owners.'

The angels carry the actions to the neighbouring region. Then Allah's voice thunders, 'O Flames of Hell, take these deeds and hurl them in Hell. This is because the owner of these deeds has not presented his deeds through the channel of the love of Ali (a.s.) and his infallible children (a.s.). The angels take these deeds away. These very deeds become a source of tribulation and calamity for that person because they were devoid of the all-important element of love of Ali (a.s.) and his pure progeny (a.s.).'

Then these actions shall call out to the hostility towards Ali (a.s) and attachment towards his enemies. Allah shall make a black, horrific form akin to a crow and eagle, dominant over these deeds. This black and ugly form shall spit fire and destroy all his deeds. Only his affection for Ali's (a.s.) enemies and his rejection of Ali's (a.s.) mastership shall remain which shall consign him to the most despicable portion of Hell. All his (good) actions shall be destroyed while his evil actions shall increase manifold.

This is the position of the one who shall suffer more indignities and disgrace than the one who forsakes Zakaat.'

(Tafseer-e-Imam Hasan al-Askari (a.s.), pg. 76-79, Mustadrak al-Wasaael vol. 1, pg. 163, tradition 40)

There are several traditions of this nature explicitly outlining the futility of one's beliefs and actions devoid of love and affection for the infallible Ahle Bait (a.s.) and unaccompanied with the enmity and hostility towards their enemies. Far from granting access to Paradise, such actions and beliefs will drive the person to the depths of Hell.

The visitation of shrines of the infallible Imams (a.s.), particularly Imam Husain (a.s.) is a tremendous demonstration of this love and affection. Since love and attachment are most critical, the importance of visitation increases manifold since it is the best proof and evidence for it. Visitation strikes a chord between the Imam (a.s.) and the visitor that takes root in the

latter's heart. It is not just an emotional bonding like one has with one's father or mother. Rather it is a bonding rooted in recognition that the Imam (a.s.) is Allah's special representative on earth upon His creatures, obedience and submission to whom is mandatory by divine commandment. Apart from man, every atom on this earth is obedient and submissive to the Imams (a.s.) in line with the divine decree. Man in his ignorance and haughtiness dealt with the Imams (a.s.) most ruthlessly and killed them mercilessly with brute force and animal predisposition.

The oppression on the divine representative is in reality atrocity committed against Allah Himself and stark violation of His explicit commands. Visitation of the oppressed Imam's (a.s.) shrine is an expression of one's heartfelt sympathy with him and an explicit action signalling hostility and hatred for his oppressors. Visitation is a gesture that not only shows one's affection for Imam's (a.s.) personality but also highlights one's satisfaction with Imam's (a.s.) religion, his way of life and his excellent morals. Likewise, the visitation serves as a manifest expression of hostility and dissociation from Imam's (a.s.) enemies, their Beliefs, ideologies, actions and disgraceful traits.

Let us see the glorious merits and exalted station of the visitor of Imam's (a.s.) shrine on the Day of Resurrection.

We need to note that all that has been outlined in traditions by the infallible leaders (a.s.) is addressed to us, who possess defective intellects and limited powers of comprehension. These traditions only give us a glimpse of what awaits the visitors of Imam (a.s.) on the Day of Resurrection. Their real station planned by Allah, the Almighty, is beyond our faculties of comprehension and is known only to Allah Himself and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Now that we can appreciate the importance of Imam Husain's (a.s.) visitation, let us try to decipher the splendid station of Imam's (a.s.) visitor on the Day of Judgement. Obviously this can only be illustrated by the one who sees the world and the hereafter alike. In other words, the hereafter is as evident for him as somebody sitting in front of him. We have already highlighted in last year's edition that the visitor's honour and distinction is enhanced the moment he intends going for visitation. Generally, one does not tend to remember a solitary meeting with anyone much intensity and fervour. However, it is the majestic station of the pure and infallible members of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) that a solitary visitation at their shrine not only remains etched in memory for a long time but also serves to solve one's problems of the world.

Pangs of Death

It is narrated that death pangs can be very torturous. The agony at the time of death can be compared to a silk cloth being pulled against a thorny bush thereby shredding each thread of

the cloth. On the one hand, the dying person experiences the pangs of death, and on the other hand there is remorse on separation from relatives and friends. However, for the visitor (of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine), these difficult stages are made easy and comfortable via the intercession of the Imams (a.s.).

One who wants to get respite from the difficulties of death and hopes for ease and tranquillity instead, must visit Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine as much as possible because visiting Imam (a.s.) is like visiting, the Holy Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.).

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat of Ibn Qoolwayh (r.a.), pg. 150, Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101 pg. 77)

Janabe Zahra (s.a.) greets the Visitor

Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) relates,

'Janabe Fatema binte Mohammad (s.a.) calls upon the one who visits Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine. She seeks forgiveness for his sins and his sins are forgiven.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat pg. 118)

When the ones who are served by the angels (i.e. Ahle Bayt (a.s.)) go to the visitors and seek forgiveness for their sins, then it is indeed good fortune for the latter and an honour without any parallel.

Imam Husain (a.s.) visits the Visitor

Alib. Mohammad narrates, 'I used to visit Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine every month. But, as I grew older, my weakness got the better of me and I missed performing the visitation in one month. After some days, I set out on foot for another visitation. I reached the shrine in a few days. I recited the namaz and fell asleep. I saw Imam Husain (a.s.) in a dream. Imam (a.s.) had just left his shrine. He addressed me - You were virtuous and affectionate towards me. Why did you turn oppressive? I replied - I have grown old and weak and yet, have come in your presence. There is a tradition narrated from you, I wish to

"Which tradition?"

I replied, "It is narrated from you that the one who has visited me in his lifetime, then after his death, I will visit his grave." Imam (a.s.) affirmed,

"Yes I will. Even if he is in Hell, I will rescue him from it.'

(Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101, pg. 16)

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Acclaimed Shiite scholars have explained that this visitation could be at the time of (the visitor's) death, while he is being laid to rest in the grave.

In the grave, man will experience unprecedented loneliness. He will be akin to a stranger in an alien land. Various types of dangers, the likes of which he had only heard before, will confront him. Terror and dread will surround him. No one is going to visit the inhabitant of the grave. Even if one does visit, he will come at a distance, recite Surah Fateha and depart. The closest and dearest of relatives will not accompany the deceased inside the grave. But the one who has visited Imam Husain (a.s.) will be fortunate enough to have Imam (a.s.) visit him in his grave. After Imam (a.s.) pays him a visit, he will feel no grief and terror. Indeed after Imam (a.s.) says

“السَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ”

"Peace be on you", no difficulty shall remain and there is no comfort that he shall not experience.

After being informed of the noble and blissful consequence of Imam's (a.s.) visitation, only the unwise will dare to show negligence and forsake urgency and perseverance in this regard. Safety from Squeeze in the Grave

If someone pinches us even playfully or if our finger is caught in the door wedge, our pain and agony can be intense. The signs of the wound can last for a long time highlighting our..discomfort. During the squeeze in the grave, the walls of the grave converge to crush the corpse in the grave. We can well imagine the condition of the corpse. We know that we will die one day. For a moment, let us try to imagine that we are dead and the walls of the grave are crushing us and squeezing our ribs into each other. A simple attempt to imagine this scenario is enough to freeze us, then what about the actual squeezing! The visitation of Imam's (a.s.) shrine comes to our rescue even at this difficult stage and salvages us from its perils.

Imam Mohammad Baqer (a.s.) relates,

'If people knew the significance and merit of visiting the sacred shrine of Imam Husain (a.s.), they would have died with enthusiasm for visiting it and their breaths would have stopped with its craving.'

The narrator inquired, 'What is the reward for visiting the sacred shrine?'

Imam (a.s.) informed,

'One who visits the shrine with zeal, Allah will recompense him with the reward of 1,000 accepted Hajj, 1,000 Umrah, 1,000 martyrs like the martyrs of Badr, 1,000 fasting ones, 1,000 accepted charities, freeing 1,000 slaves to earn divine pleasure. He will be secure from

difficulties and calamities for the entire year, the least of which is Satan. Allah will station an angel on his front, back, left and right who will safeguard him. If he expires in that year, angels of mercy will participate in his shrouding and burial. They will seek divine forgiveness for his sins. They beseech Allah to pardon his transgressions till the time they accompany his bier to the grave. His grave is made wide and expansive for him till the eye can see. Allah grants him security from the squeezing of the grave. The presence of Munkar and Nakeer does not instil fear in him. A door of Paradise opens up for him inside his grave. His list of deeds is presented to him in his right hand. On the Day of Resurrection, he will be blessed with a brilliance with which the East and the West shall be illumined. An announcer will announce, "This is the one who visited Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine with zeal and eagerness. After that on the Day of Resurrection, there shall be none but he would wish - If only I had also visited Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine,"

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 143, Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101 pg. 18)

The above tradition is indeed incredible and an invaluable treasure for the visitors of Imam Husain (a.s.). Along with security from the squeezing of grave, the visitor is also assured of protection from Munkir and Nakeer. Munkir and Nakeer are called thus for the awe and terror they infuse in the corpse.

The place of resurrection shall be illumined with his light

In the tradition mentioned earlier, we find the description of the visitor's brilliance. Indeed with his radiance, the east and west will be lit up. Moreover, a special angel on the land of resurrection will introduce the visitors to the onlookers and this will leave such an impact on them, that all shall wish that they had visited Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine. And why should this be surprising? After all, Janabe Jaun (r.a.) was bestowed a special illumination by Imam (a.s.) in Karbala, which illumined the entire battlefield. For, Imam (a.s.) is the centre of divine illumination and brilliance, the one who is associated with him, is also gifted a portion of this light.

The Shade of the Standard of Hamd

Allah has blessed the immaculate Ahle Bait (a.s.) with innumerable distinctions and merits that have no parallel. One of these merits includes the Standard of Hamd. This Standard unfurls 70 times and each round of the flag is more expansive than the Sun and Moon. Allah conferred this Standard to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), who shall entrust it to his standard-bearer - Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Taalib (a.s.). All the Prophets (a.s.) and successors (a.s.) shall be below the shade of this Standard.

(Haqq al-Yaqeen by Allamah Majlisi (r.a.) pg. 450)

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Imam Jafar Sadeq(a.s.) relates,

'On the Day of Resurrection, the announcer shall cry out, "Where are the visitors of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine?" A multitude of people shall come forth, whose count shall only be possible for Allah. They shall be asked, 'What did you seek by visiting Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine?' They shall reply, 'We have visited it out of love for Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and affection for Imam Ali (a.s.) and Janabe Zahra (s.a.). We sought forgiveness (for our sins) by seeking mediation through the oppression and tribulations that they were made to undergo.' They will be told, 'Mohammad (s.a.w.a.), Ali (a.s.), Fatema (s.a.), Hasan (a.s.) and Husain (a.s.) are over here. Join them as you share their status with them. The multitude of visitors shall gather under the shade of the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) Standard. The Standard shall be upheld by Imam Ali (a.s.). The visitors shall lead the Standard, rather they shall surround the Standard from all sides and march towards Paradise.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat pg. 141, Behaaral-Anwaar by Allamah Majlisi (r.a.), vol. 101 pg. 21)

Indeed the status of Imam Husain's (a.s.) visitors is awesome. They shall gather below the very Standard that is the gathering place of all Prophets (a.s.) and successors (a.s.) and shall share the exalted station of the Ahle Bait (a.s.).

Handshake with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and the Prophets (a.s.)

Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) urged Muwaiyah b. Wahab,

'O Muwaiyah! Never abandon Imam Husain's (a.s.) visitation out of fear. Don't you want to be amongst those with whom the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) will shake hands?'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 118)

In another tradition Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) informs,

'If someone performs one namaz behind Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine, he will meet Allah on the Day of Resurrection while everything around him will be immersed in his brilliance. Allah will honour and revere the visitor of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine. He will not permit the Hell-Fire to touch him, The visitor's station is (not less than) Hauz-e-Kausar. Ameerul Momineen Ali (a.s.), while he is stationed at the Hauz, will shake hands with him and quench his thirst with the water of Kausar.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 123, Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101 pg. 78)

Imam Zainul Abedeen (a.s.) relates, 'One who wishes to shake hands with 1,24,000 Prophets (a.s.) must visit Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine on 15th Shabaan. Angels and the souls of Prophets

(a.s.) seek divine permission to visit Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine and will be granted the same. Indeed, fortunate are those who shake hands with the Prophets (a.s.) and with whom - the Prophets (a.s.) shake hands. Among the Prophets (a.s.) are the five esteemed Apostles (Ulul Azm) - Hazrat · Nuh (a.s.), Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.), Hazrat Moosa (a.s.), Hazrat Eesa (a.s.) and Hazrat Mohammad Mustafa (s.a.w.a.).'

(Kitab-o-Fazl-e-Ziaarat-e-Imam Husain (a.s.))

Shaking hands with Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is a blissful experience for a believer, even if it is in a dream. If it ever happens, the believer will consider himself most fortunate and privileged. Then what about those people who will find themselves being approached by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and the Prophets (a.s.) for shaking hands?

Negotiating the Bridge of Seraat is facilitated

Imam Jafar Sadeq(a.s.) narrates,

'Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) shall despatch an angel towards the visitor. The angel shall command the Bridge, "Be facile for the Visitor." It shall likewise command the Fire (of Hell), "None of your flames should touch him." The visitor shall negotiate the Bridge most comfortably. The angel shall accompany the visitor throughout his journey over the Bridge.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 123, Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101 pg. 78)

Security from the Difficulties of the Day of Resurrection

The Holy Quran has described the difficulties of the Day of Resurrection most eloquently in Sura Hajj: Verses 1 & 2

"O people! Guard against (the punishment from your Lord; surely the violence of the hour is a grievous thing. On the day when you shall see it, every woman giving suck shall quit in confusion what she suckled, and every pregnant woman shall lay down her burden, and you shall see men intoxicated, and they shall not be intoxicated but the chastisement of Allah will be severe.'

This offers us a very brief glimpse into the difficulties of the Day of Resurrection. It will not be easy for anyone to gain respite from these unspeakable difficulties. At the same time, it is imperative for us to secure deliverance from these devastating calamities. While it is true that Allah has apportioned these difficulties for His servants, it is equally true that He has signalled the way to them for securing respite from its hazards. Then it is the duty of the servants to seek the path of deliverance indicated by Allah. The visitation of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine is one such path that guarantees liberation to the servants from the torments of the Hour.

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Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) narrates,

'One day the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) visited our house. We offered him some food... then he (s.a.w.a.) went to the mosque adjacent to the house. He prayed namaz and got engrossed in a lengthy prostration. Then he wept intensely and remained in that condition for some time. When he (s.a.w.a.) rose from his prostration, none of us dared to ask him (s.a.w.a.) the reason for his intense weeping, Husain (a.s.) walked up to the Prophet (S.a.w.a.), seated himself on his (s.a.w.a.) lap and asked, 'O grandfather, why are you weeping?' The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) replied, 'When I came here I was very pleased. I was never so happy before this. Then Jibraeel (a.s.) informed me that you all would be martyred in different places. I : praised Allah and sought goodness from Him.'

Imam Husain (a.s.) queried,

'If our graves are across different places, who will visit us?'

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed,

'A group from my nation shall visit you out of love and affection for me and to maintain relations with me. On the Day of Resurrection I shall meet them, take them by their arms and rescue them from the difficulties and afflictions of that day.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 59)

In another tradition the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) declares,

'I will meet them on the Day of Resurrection and shall free them from the burden of their sins.'
(Al-Kaafi vol. 2, pg. 548; Wasaael al-Shiah, vol. 10, pg. 256)

Yet another version of this tradition states that the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said,

'The visitors have a right upon me and it is that I visit them on the Day of Resurrection. I will liberate them from their sins and lead them to Paradise.'

(Sawaab al-A'maal by Shaikh Saduq (a.r.), pg. 108)

Some facts that are evident from this tradition is that visitors of Ima Husain's (a.s.) shrine:

1. Will have the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) visit them on the Day of Resurrection
2. He (s.a.w.a.) will liberate them from the burden of their sins
3. He (s.a.w.a.) will rescue them from the terrifying tribulations and afflictions of the hereafter.
4. He (s.a.w.a.) will lead them to Paradise.

On slight reflection, we will find on the one hand, sinners like ourselves, steeped in transgressions and disobedience, afflicted with spiritual sicknesses, low and despicable in status, lacking any trace of goodness, devoid of faith and virtuous actions. While on the other hand we find the greatest of creatures, the chief of Apostles and divine emissaries and the reason behind the creation of the world and everything in it. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) shall enjoy the highest and most exalted status on the Day of Resurrection. He shall greet the visitors of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine, escort them by their arms, rescue them from the petrifying calamities of the hereafter and ultimately guide them to Paradise.

Is it possible to imagine a greater status and distinction than this?

Till our last breaths, we must beseech Allah the Almighty to grant us the grace to Imam's (a.s.) grave. If we have already visited Imam's (a.s.) shrine, we must plead with Allah to give us this grace repeatedly. If we are not in a position to visit Imam's (a.s.) shrine in Karbala, we must remember him and send salutations upon him daily from the confines of our home. Unique distinction on the Day of Judgement

On the Day of Judgement, when anxiety and apprehension shall grip all, the visitors of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine shall savour a unique and enviable distinction.

Zareeh Mahaarabi was with Imam Jafar Sadeg (a.s.) when he asked the latter, 'O my Master, when I inform my tribesmen and relatives about the innumerable and amazing merits of visiting Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine, they distrust me and accuse me of misquoting you and fabricating lies.' · Imam Jafar Sadeg (a.s.) consoled him,

'O Zareeh, don't be concerned about what they say. Leave them to their affairs and let them go wherever they want. Allah prides Himself on the visitors of Imam Husain (a.s.). The proximate angels and the carriers of the Throne (Arsh) respect and honour him. Allah asks the angels, 'Didn't you see the visitors of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine, the fervour and enthusiasm with which they visited the shrine? They visited the shrine out of love and attachment for Imam Husain (a.s.) and Fatema Zahra (s.a.). I swear by My Honour, Might and Greatness, I have made My Honour and Respect mandatory upon them. I will most certainly grant them access to the Paradise that I have created for My Friends, My Prophets (a.s.) and My Apostles.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 143, Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101, pg. 75)

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Heavenly Fairies (Hoor) Await his Arrival

Imam Mohammad Bager (a.s.) or Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) informed Zoraarah,

'O Zoraarah! It is necessary for every Shia on this earth to seek the pleasure and good wishes of Janabe Zahra (s.a.) through the Ziaarat of Imam Husain (a.s.).'

Imam (a.s.) continues,

'O Zoraarah, on the Day of Judgement, Imam Husain (a.s.) shall be standing under the shadow of the Arsh.

Allah shall gather Imam's (a.s.) visitors and his Shias, so that they may witness with their eyes honour, prestige, freshness, happiness, gladness and all those things the attributes and traits of which only Allah knows.'

'Then in some time, the representatives of the fairies will descend and will inform the Shias, 'We have been sent by the Hoors who have conveyed that they are anxious for your meeting and have urged you not to delay,'

With this, their honour and happiness will multiply manifold. They will tell the representatives, 'We will soon join the Hoors.'

(Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 101 pg. 75)

Foremost to Enter Paradise

Imam Jafar Sadeq(a.s.) revealed,

'On the Day of Judgement, Imam Husain's (a.s.) visitors shall excel and surpass all others in merit.'

Zoraarah inquired, 'In what shall they surpass everyone?'

'They shall gain access to Paradise 40 years before others, while the latter shall still be gripped in the accounting of their deeds.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 137)

The Table-Cloth of Paradise

Abu Basir (r.a.) relates, "I heard from Imam Mohammad Baqer (a.s.) or Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.),

One who wishes to reside in Paradise, must never forsake the Ziarat of the oppressed one.'

I enquired, 'Who is the oppressed one?'

Imam (a.s.):

'Imam Husain b. Ali (a.s.), the oppressed and martyr of Karbala. One who visits his shrine with eagerness and out of affection for the Holy Prophet (S.a.w.a.), Janabe Zahra (s.a.) and Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), will be seated by Allah on the tablecloth of Paradise. He will dine with these holy personalities (Ahle Bait (a.s.)), while the others will be absorbed in the accounting of deeds.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 137)

Shall Intercede for a Hundred Others

There will be few people, if at all, who will gain entry in Paradise on the strength of their faith (imaan) and actions (a'maal). Everyone will enter Paradise only after intercession. Some will crave for intercession just to enter Paradise. There will be some others who will long for intercession to scale the higher stages of Paradise. The primary right of intercession is vested in Allah... He has delegated this authority to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his immaculate progeny (a.s.) and thereby exalted their position. On the Day of Resurrection, everyone shall crave for the intercession of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) and will be unable to proceed without it. The Ahle Bait (a.s.) will intercede for some individuals. Some of these interceded ones will be so fortunate that they will then be able to intercede for others like them. The visitors of Imam Husain's shrine (a.s.) will be among these fortunate ones who will be showered with so much power that they will in turn be able to intercede for others.

A resident of Toos (in Iran) asked Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.), "O son of Allah's Apostle! What is the station of the person who visits the shrine of Imam Husain (a.s.)?"

Imam (a.s.) informed,

'O resident of Toos! If someone visits the shrine of my grandfather, Imam Husain b. Ali (a.s.) with prior recognition that he is Allah's representative and his obedience is mandatory on all, Allah will forgive all his past and future sins. Moreover, He will accept his intercession for other sinners on the Day of Judgement. Supplications made at his grave will be responded to.

(Amaali-e-Sadooq (r.a.), pg. 526)

In one tradition it is reported that he will intercede for 70 people. According to another report, the number of sinners who will receive intercession at his hands number 100. These are sinners and transgressors who were certain to be consigned to Hell. In other words, in the absence of intercession, Hell was fated to be their final abode.'

Sheef Tammar heard from Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.),

'On the Day of Judgment, the visitors of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine shall intercede for 100 such sinners for whom Hell was a certainty. This is because they were extravagant on the earth,

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 165)

In another tradition, it is mentioned that the visitors will intercede for their family members apart from one thousand brothers-in-faith.

Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) relates,

'If one goes for the visitation of Imam Husain (a.s.) and gets killed there i.e. the ruler oppresses him and finally kills him, then as soon as the first drop of his blood falls on the earth, his sins will be forgiven. His intercession for his family members and one thousand brothers-in-faith will be accepted.

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg. 124)

The difference in the number of people receiving intercession is due to the difference in the level of the visitor's recognition (marefat) and the difficulties he had to undergo in his journey of Ziaarat. Ironically, visitors of this age are averse to undergoing any kind of inconvenience on their Ziaarat tours and their first query to the tour operator is vis-à-vis the benefits and conveniences offered. Such visitors take the Ziaarat as an excursion or a holiday trip. They overlook the fact that the reward is in proportion to the difficulties and inconveniences suffered on the Ziaarat tour. It is regretful that these people pursue comforts and conveniences on the Ziaarat of Imam Husain (a.s.). They forget that Imam Husain (a.s.) abandoned all comforts and luxuries and embraced incomparable difficulties and exertions in his pursuit of Allah's Pleasure.

Enveloped by Divine Mercy

Abdullah b. Mekaan relates from Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.):

'One who performs the visitation of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine for seeking divine pleasure, Allah shall cleanse him of his sins and he is like a new-born. Divine mercy shall envelop him from all corners of the sky. The angels shall welcome him thus, 'Greetings to you! You have become purified and cleansed by performing the Ziaarat.' He shall then be safeguarded amongst his family members.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg 145)

Serenity of the Heart

We are unable to bear the heat in this world. A slight increase in temperature makes us sweat hard and we feel very miserable. Then how can we face the heat of the hereafter? On the Day of Judgement, the scenario will be even more horrifying. There will be the burden of accounting of deeds, the scorching heat of the Fire and the terrifying wrath of Allah. If under these brutal conditions, he desires some coolness from the intolerable heat, he must visit the shrine of Imam Husain (a.s.) on the Day of Arafah.

There is a tradition from Imam Jafar Sadeq(a.s.) and Imam Raza (a.s.),

'One who performs the Ziaarat of Imam Husain (a.s.) on 9th Zilhajj (Day of Arafah), Allah shall keep his heart composed and serene.'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg 170)

Leader of the angels

Imam Jafar Sadeg (a.s.) informs,

'One who visits the Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine on the Day of Arafah, Allah shall reward him as if he has performed a thousand Hajj in the company of Hazrat Hujjat b. Hasan (a.t.f.s.). Allah shall call him - "عبدى الصديق" - 'My true worshipper'. Allah will declare, 'He is my servant who has testified to My Promise and is certain about it. The angels shall proclaim, 'So and so is the testifying servant. Allah has purified and cleansed him over His Arsh. On the earth, he shall be called as كروبي سردار.

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg 172)

In Arabic literature, كروبي سردار implies the leader of the angels.

An association with someone or something important can make even an insignificant entity very significant and exalted. The Holy Quran, the Sacred Kabaa, Masjidul Haraam have acquired the highest status amongst the Muslims as they are associated with Allah, the Almighty. In the above tradition, Allah addresses the visitor of Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine as "عبدالصديق" - My testifying servant. He has associated the visitor towards Himself and proclaims him as 'My servant'. Servitude (or slavery) of Allah is an exalted status. We can gauge the significance of this status from the Tashahud of Namaz, when we testify to the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) servitude before we testify to his Prophethood:

اشهدانَّ محمدًا عبده ورسوله.

Imam Husain's (a.s.) martyrdom is so closely associated with divinity that Allah declares it as "ثار الله". It is maybe due to this that He also proclaims Imam's (a.s.) visitor as 'My servant'.

Inclusion Among the Highest Creation (اعلى عيّن)

Paradise is every Muslim's most ardent desire. However, Paradise is a difficult and elusive station. Security from the torment of hell fire and access to the coolness of Paradise is a formidable achievement and it is not something that anyone can attain. Within Paradise itself, scaling the highest peak is a daunting prospect. However, the love and affection of Ahle Bait (a.s.) make the most formidable of tasks easy and the highest of stations attainable.

In this regard Imam Jafar Sadeq (a.s.) relates,

One who visits Imam Husain's (a.s.) shrine with recognition (of Imam Husain's (a.s.) rights on the people), Allah will include him among the highest and loftiest station. '(اعلى عيّن).'

(Kaamil al-Ziaaraat, pg 147)

We know that اعلى عيّن is the most exalted station in Paradise. May Allah grant us the grace to visit Imam Husain's (a.s.) sacred shrine several times in the company of our Master, Imam-e-Asr, Hazrat Baqiyatullah al-A'zam (a.t.f.s.). Ameen,