

Satisfaction and Patience

Series of Prophets (peace be upon them)

In this world of land and water, the creation of Allah, who brought along with them the certificate of nobility from their Creator and inhabited this world, are called humans. For their test, guidance and to establish justice, a series of Prophets (peace be upon them) was sent to complete the argument. They were raised in this world to guide mankind. These luminous personalities came from the loins of Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) and began the process of guidance through their words and deeds.

Propagation

The world is a field for cultivating the Hereafter. Whatever is sowed here will be reaped in the hereafter. To achieve this, as mentioned before, Prophets (peace be upon them) left no stone unturned to convey divine laws to the masses. Irrespective of the conditions they lived in, they made people aware of them through their conduct and admonishments. In the meantime, depending on the severity of the need, a book from Allah was presented to them. Thus, Holy Quran, the Old Testament (the Torah), the Psalms, the New Testament (the Bible) and other books were revealed.

Satanism

In essence, the word "devilry" covers all the elements of evil acts in its ambit, such as being an outcast and deviated, among others. Satan straight away claimed his reward from Allah the Almighty for his acts of worship and defying Allah's command, refused to bow down to Prophet Adam (peace be upon him). He argued that he was superior, thus exhibiting his arrogance. Justice demanded that he be rewarded, while refusing and professing disbelief warranted punishment. Both claims were apportioned by the Almighty Allah. For flouting the divine command, he was banished from the circle of angels and fulfilling the principles of His justice, Allah granted him respite.

While demonstrating His Greatness, Allah said, "You will never be able to deviate My special servants — the ones who obey Me - from the right path." This is because while being expelled from the congregation of the angels, Satan had said, "I will work untiringly to deviate Your servants." The Holy Quran, the mother of all books, says, "Why don't you contemplate on the verses of Quran?" The reason is clear. In the light of Quran and traditions, Satan does not compel people to commit sins. He simply invites them towards evil and they themselves are the ones to commit evil by accepting his invitation with their own freewill which Allah has granted them.

Satisfaction and Patience

When the Creator granted intellect to mankind and fulfilled the need, He established two principles for guiding the children of Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) - His own satisfaction and the patience of His special servants.

Satisfaction

The act of every individual striving to raise his level is aimed at divine satisfaction. If His satisfaction is added then in return for this short lifespan on this earth, hundred thousand difficult years of hereafter will pass in peace, happiness and bliss. We have heard the glad tidings of how comfortable life will be, but none can really narrate in detail what Allah the Almighty has planned for His special servants. When one can't enumerate or imagine the bounties showered in this brief worldly life, there is no way one can measure the bounties of the hereafter.

But the measure of servitude in this worldly life is earning Allah's satisfaction. Based on servitude, the levels will be assigned in the hereafter. In the night of ascension (Me'raaj), Allah the High revealed to His beloved servant, "O My beloved, ask whatever you wish for." So, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny), who had come as an Imam of Mercy for the sinners, requested Allah to address him once as 'His servant.' The Divine Power addressed His beloved in such a way that one cannot decipher its profundity. In the entire universe, wherever prayer is being offered, the status of servitude is recited before the rank of Prophethood. The point is that if satisfaction of Allah is the aim, then one ought to learn the etiquette of servitude. In this life, the moments lived need to be in conformity with the conditions of servitude. Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) had declared from his cradle, "I am a servant of Allah. I have been sent as a messenger and have been given a book." It means that the book, Prophethood and teaching servitude is a connecting chain between Allah's satisfaction and a person's servitude.

The Opponent

To fulfil the essentials of servitude is an extremely difficult affair and these intricacies engulf one ceaselessly. It is divine justice that a person comes across these difficulties every moment. It is with the aim of Allah's satisfaction that Messengers (peace be upon them) arrived and heavenly books descended in every era. If a person charts the course of his life as per the guidance of these pious leaders, then all difficulties will automatically cease to exist and there will be an air of easiness within, while navigating different stages of life. If a person focuses on himself, he finds himself to be weak and because of this feeling, he looks to mould his character on the path of excellent virtues. But he faces grave difficulties which shackle him and arrest his movements. However, for those who tread the path shown by Allah, the links of the chain come undone and free the feet of a steadfast believer. It brings him good news and becomes a cause of Allah's satisfaction and happiness. It results in Satan's failure and thus he declares, "You are the Adornment of Worshippers (Zain alAabideen)." We will try and present a solid proof in the latter part of this article.

Patience

The first thing the Holy Quran has said about patience is: **Verily, Allah is with the patient ones** (Surah Baqarah (2): Verse 153). Then, Allah the High also says, "**Why don't they ponder on the verses of the Quran?**

(Surah Nisaa (4): Verse 82).

The point to be understood here is: When the Creator is with someone, who can then deviate His creation? Who is it or who can dare deprive the creation of striving for the hereafter? Will there remain any difficulty which can't be conquered? The key is exercising patience in every situation. Going forward, the path to guidance gets clearer but only for those who understand the meaning of patience and embellish their mind with the teachings of the Holy Quran. Those hearts that get tranquillity while remembering Allah. The feet which don't slip are the ones which patiently mould their character on the rules laid down by the Holy Quran and the life of Infallibles ones (peace be upon them), who are the symbols of Allah.

Hasn't the Holy Quran declared: "We sent Our Messengers with clear arguments and sent down with them the Book and the Balance (of Right and Wrong), that men may stand forth in justice."

(Surah Hadeed (57): Verse 25)

What is patience? Why does it hold so much importance that it summarizes the teachings and conduct of all Prophets and Messengers (peace be on them all)? It was their way of life or the blood running in their veins. If the existence of humanity is summarized, then there is just one word 'patience' which directly connects to Allah's pleasure and satisfaction. This patience was seen in the Prophets, their successors, the Messengers and the Infallible Imams (peace be on them all), not the one that was exhibited by power-hungry rulers in attaining power through bloodshed and corruption.

Allah the Almighty has even explained the reason for patience, which is a cause of His pleasure. Allah is the Master of the Kingdom. He created life and death in order to test mankind because this world has become the target of the wicked and there is a test waiting at every step. There are signals from all corners which are inviting the people towards deviation. For such people, who have been ambushed by difficulties, the Holy Quran has forewarned and advised in these words:

Seek help from prayers (salaat) and patience (fasting)

(Surah Baqarah (2): Verse 45).

An eloquent and calming sentence indeed, but the ones who have fortified their faith through patience and certitude and the ranks in the hereafter, which have been earmarked for people in heaven, will be given after being tested on these lines.

Allah is Just, Merciful and Benevolent for conferring nobility to His creation and thus completing the argument to the world. Now, if a person still becomes a troublemaker for his own vested interests, then there is only hellfire waiting for him, regardless of who he is, where he comes from, exhibits his leadership through his connections or status. (Allah doesn't count the troublemakers as His friends).

The connection which Allah has established based on patience, as mentioned above, will remain manifest in the remotest part of the universe till the Day of Judgment, and keep the faithful ones safe from deviation and wrath. Here's the greatest manifestation of patience just to sum things up:

MOHARRAM 1440 A.H.

The sun on the day of Aashura was on its way down, when standing alone on the plains of Karbala, Imam Husain (peace be upon him) raised the cry, "Is there anyone to help us?" A six-month old threw himself from the cradle. It was the thirsty infant's, who did not have a drop of water for three days, way of answering the call of Imam (peace be upon him). Imam Husain (peace be upon him) came on a high ground, with Ali Asghar (peace be upon him) under his cloak. The enemies thought Imam was bringing the Holy Quran. Indeed, it was the Holy Quran. Imam uncovered Ali Asghar (peace be upon them), spread his cloak on the ground and placed the infant on it. He went and stood at a distance and said in a loud and clear voice, "You are the son of the Proof of Allah, complete the argument." Did Ali Asghar (peace be upon him) understand the meaning of Proof? Is it possible? Ali Asghar (peace be upon him) rolled his tongue over his delicate lips. This act of his was an interpretation of divine satisfaction and patience. A revolution was sensed in the air. The stone-hearted wilted and lowered the bows and arrows. Spears slipped out of their hands and embarrassed swords lay buried. Tears started to trickle down.

O Son of Allah's Proof! How well did you present the argument that it impacted the entire universe! O Dignified Son of Allah's! How did you, despite your infancy, meet all the demands and statuses of helping (the Imam) and answering the call by accepting the accursed Hurmala's arrow on your throat? The blood of Ali Asghar (peace be upon him) and the countenance of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) in the field of tribulations was a journey of patience towards the pleasure of Allah. The Holy Quran reflects this journey in the following words in Surah Fajr: So enter among My servants. Enter My gardens. The martyrdom of Ali Asghar (peace be upon him) is a rightful interpretation of this verse. But the call of "O Allah) I am satisfied with Your decision and submit to your order," still rings in the atmosphere.

This has been engraved in bold letters in this exegesis. O Allah! Hearts are hurt. Isn't it Your way of doing justice to bring forth the seeker of revenge for the blood of the martyred ones, who will also heal the broken hearts? The answer will be,

"So wait, surely I am from the awaiting ones."

(Surah A'raaf (7): Verse 71)

Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance) will avenge the blood of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and perhaps the sword Zulfiqar will say,

"I still have to seek revenge for a single drop of blood of Ali Asghar (peace be upon him)."

Aim Of Imam Husain (p.b.u.h.) In His Own Words

One of the basic aims of Islam is to take people away from all kinds of evil and adorn them with all types of goodness. These may be related to beliefs, manners, morals or actions. They may be either related to one's individual or social life, worldly affairs or hereafter and spirituality. Since Allah, the Almighty has bestowed them excellence over all other creations, he has conferred upon them the highest status of perfection. This is why Allah the High sent his most beloved creation - Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (peace be upon him and his progeny) in the form of a human and made apparent the ascension of his excellence on The Throne. This is why the Creator of the universe, through Prophets and Messengers (peace be upon them) established His Proof in such a manner that He did not keep the creation devoid of their reminders. Finally, He sealed these reminders by perfecting and completing the religion with the martyrdom of Imam Husain (peace be upon him).

The unmatched and unparalleled martyrdom of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) is that lofty pulpit of guidance which invites people of every era to goodness and righteousness. That is why we read in the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) that "Peace be on you, O the chosen one of Allah and son of His chosen one!" These words unfold many streams of profound realities in front of mankind.

This event of martyrdom is not just to cry and lament but it is a lesson, a moral and a complete message. This battle did not end in 61 A.H. but it is still on-going and the only battle in the world which will not face defeat. The army of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) will forever remain victorious. The reason being, the main element or factor for this battle was sincerity to Allah Who can never be overpowered. The one who fought in the battlefield with only one aim - 'The Divine Word should reign supreme – can never be defeated.

The pivotal aim of the event of Karbala was 'enjoining good and forbidding evil. Ever since enjoining good was confined to books, people narrate this incident just as an anecdote. One of the primary reasons for existence of so many differences and divisions, groups and sects is belittling this great responsibility. Some people, for their own convenience and liberating themselves from this great responsibility, have pushed it only on the scholars.

Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) did not come only for propagation of religion but they are its protectors as well. They have also mentioned the ways of safeguarding the religion. One such way is enjoining good and forbidding evil. There are many traditions in this regard as well. In traditions, 'enjoining good and forbidding from evil' has been mentioned as the most important duty of Muslims. The exegesis of Islam, and the life and survival of all teachings is due to this responsibility. Here, we are thankful to have the good fortune of narrating the admonishment of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) on enjoining good and forbidding evil with regards to the month of Muharram al-Haraam.

We are narrating from the book Tohaf alUqool by Ibn Sho'ba al-Harraani (may Allah be satisfied with him). We should pay attention to the fact that all traditions and narrations of the Infallible Imams (peace be upon him) are a manifestation of divine knowledge. Every word and action emanates from Allah's knowledge and will. Their knowledge is not due to their thoughts but the essence of reality and truth. Moreover, there is no exaggeration in their words.

If something has been given significance and narrated with importance, or if we have been warned of a few things and their implications, then the reality is exactly as it is mentioned.

Incidents of past nations narrated in the Holy Quran are not just for reading and reaping rewards, rather they are to derive lessons and morals as well. Allah, the Almighty has communicated His laws through these incidents. If we follow them, we will meet the same fate. This is from the divine tradition. Pay attention to the words of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) concerning enjoining of good and prohibition from evil:

*"O People, take lessons from the admonishments given by Allah to His friends and vicegerents. They used to wrongly praise their religious scholars. Allah, the Almighty, says concerning this in the Holy Quran: **Why did their followers and scholars not stop the people from eating the unlawful? They used to do such bad actions.***

[Surah Maedah (5): Verse 63]

They did not stop their people from evil actions. They used to perform bad actions.

[Surah Maedah (5): Verse 79]

*In these verses the scholars of Jews are mentioned as to how they remained silent when their religion was being distorted. Their religion perished while they were mere silent spectators. The Holy Quran has reprimanded the silence of such scholars and also criticized those who respected them. Indeed, the Almighty Allah has reprimanded these people because they used to see oppressors committing evil acts in front of them, but they remained silent due to the benefits and grants they used to receive from them and feared them. Whereas, the order of Allah was: **"Do not be afraid of people, just be afraid of Me."***

(Surah Maedah (5): Verse 44]

Allah, the Almighty has also mentioned the following characteristics in the Holy Quran: **"Believing men and believing women are the guardians and friends of each other, they enjoin each other to goodness and prohibit from evil."**

[Surah Taubah (9): Verse 17]

Allah, the Almighty has made the importance of enjoining good and prohibiting evil clear by starting the discussion with it. This is because He knew that if this duty is acted upon then all their obligations, easy or difficult, will also be acted upon. One reason is that enjoining good and prohibiting evil attracts a person towards Islam because

- *It negates the oppression of the oppressors*
- *Distributes public treasury in an equitable manner*
- *Collects taxes from appropriate places and spends it appropriately as well*

O people! You are famous for your knowledge, you are remembered by good actions, your names are among those who distribute bounties and by the Grace of Allah you have a special position and place in the hearts of people. The honourable are afraid of you, the weak respect you and even give you preference over the ones upon whom you do not possess any preference and neither do you have any right upon. You recommend things which others cannot acquire. You walk on the streets like kings and exhibit pride.

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Are all these things not because people hope that you will establish the right of Allah? Whereas in reality you fall short in fulfilling most of the rights of Allah and lessen the right of your Imams and belittle them. You have wasted the rights of the weak and acquired those rights that you thought you deserve. Neither have you spent any money in this way nor have you done anything with regards to the aim for which you had been created. You have not even shown enmity with any group for the sake of Allah whereas you are hopeful of Allah's Paradise, wish for the companionship of His Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) and safety from Allah's punishment. O those who have such wishes from Allah! I fear that His punishment might descend upon you.

You have been given respect and stature by Allah but you do not respect those who possess the recognition of Allah whereas you are respected in the eyes of people due to Allah. You are seeing that laws of Allah are breached and it does not affect you at all but if the laws of your elders are violated then you are deeply disturbed. The laws of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) do not have any significance in front of you. In your cities there is no one to take care of the blind, deaf and the destitute nor do you show any mercy for them. Neither do you work in your house nor do you support others in their work. You lick the shoes of the oppressors and entertain yourself through tricks. Whereas, Allah the Almighty has prohibited you from all such things and asked you to stay away from them but you neglected all these things.

You should realize that you carry more responsibilities and burden as opposed to common people as you possess the status and position of a scholar.

The reason for this is that the responsibility of practically implementing all laws of Islam rests with the scholars who possess the recognition and fear of Allah, who are trustees of the prohibited and permissible of Allah. This position and status has been snatched from you because in spite of being on truth you are not united but divided. In spite of clear Prophetic traditions you still differ.

Had you been patient in the way of Allah and borne difficulties, the affairs of Allah would have turned back to you. They would have been preached through you and returned to you. But you helped the oppressors with your position and gave them to those people who acted on doubtful and used to traverse the path of their desires. You have imposed them since you run away from death and are happy in your worldly life – the life which will leave you one day. You have imposed them on the weak. Some of them have become slaves and others are not capable of fulfilling their daily needs. These people are doing whatever they intend in their country. They are experiencing disgrace by following their desires. They are following the evil and are audacious before Allah. He is like speaker on pulpit who shouts:

The land belongs to them and their hands are open. If you become their slaves, there is none to defend them. Among them are oppressors and tyrants who are strict with the weak. They are like dictators and are aware of neither the beginning nor the end. All these things are very astonishing and why should I not be astonished? The earth is filled with them and with the oppressed. Those who have been made rulers over the believers do not have mercy in their hearts. Allah, the Almighty, is going to decide with regards to the differences prevalent among us.

MOHARRAM 1440 A.H.

O Allah! You know that none of us have any desire for kingdom or anything from the world. But we desire that the minarets of your religion are raised high and reformation takes place in your cities. Your weak and oppressed servants stay in peace and your obligations, traditions and laws are acted upon. If you do not help us in this and do not act justly with us then the oppressors will gain more control and power over you and they will try to extinguish the light of your Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny).

Allah is sufficient for us and upon Him do we rely. We are attentive towards Him, and we have to return to Him." If we carefully read these words of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and pay attention to the conditions prevalent, it will be very clear to us that we are engulfed in trials and tribulations today since we have not paid attention to enjoining good and prohibiting evil.

Conclusion

Let us remember the time when after the death of Muawiyah, Yazid ascended the mantle of power. The condition of the seekers of truth at that time among the Arabs and those nearby can be summarised in the words of (the famous Urdu poet) Mirza Galib as 'We neither have the ability to speak nor the power to retaliate'.

There were great efforts to propagate evil and subdue Islamic teachings on all fronts. But such was the arrangement from the side of Allah which will remain till the Day of Judgment. Imam Husain (peace be upon him) was present in the form of Allah's emissary who possessed the strength to eliminate and negate all their efforts, that too in a manner which nobody could think of at that time. The martyrdom of Imam Husain (peace be upon him), enjoining good and forbidding evil reformed the teachings of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) in a manner that none can eliminate it now and destroy it.

The world is filled with the filthy politics of transgressors. There are many who have left enjoining good and prohibiting evil, but the son of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) is still alive, due to whose presence the world exists today. He is the proof of Allah, infallible and cannot be deviated. Treading his path and as per his teachings, the minarets of guidance are shining for all and sundry. Our responsibility is that we stay alert, do not follow our whimsical desires and are attentive towards him so that our end is on goodness. O Husain (peace be upon him)! O Mahdi (peace be upon him)!

The Rituals Of Imam Husain's (p.b.u.h.) Mourning And The Religious Authority (Marjaiyyat)

A group of Shias enquired from Grand Ayatullah His Holiness Syed Ali al-Husaini alSistani (may Allah grant him a long life) regarding Azaadari (mourning rituals) of Imam Husain (peace be upon him). Their question and the reply of the Grand Marja of our time are mentioned hereunder. We pray to Allah, the Most High, the Most Merciful and Forgiving, through the medium of Prophet Muhammad and his progeny (peace be upon them), to bestow us with such bounties of Azaadari that every aspect of it is accepted in their infallible presence and it becomes a cause of their satisfaction especially that of the Master of the time, inheritor of the martyrs of Karbala, His Eminence Hujjat Ibn al-Hasan al-Askari (peace be upon both of them). May it result in good fortune and blessings in this world and makes us eligible to receive their intercession in the hereafter. Aameen!

Question:

To,

Grand Ayatullah al-Sayed al-Sistani (may Allah grant him long life):

Salaamun Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh

We are a number of pilgrims setting out to Karbala to attend the Arbaeen (20th Safar - 40th day of Martyrdom) and pay tribute to Imam Husain (peace be upon him). In order to benefit from this spiritual journey and earn the reward of visiting the tomb of the Chief of Martyrs as well as to know what we do not know, we are in need of your fatherly advice which we hope to spread across all segments of the community. May Allah grant you long life! We earnestly call on you to furnish us with your advice and pray for us.

A Group of Believers

Reply by Grand Ayatullah al-Sayed alSistani (may Allah grant him long life):

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful Praise belongs to Allah and peace and benedictions of Allah be upon our master, Muhammad and his pure progeny.

It is befitting for believers whom Allah has granted success to perform pilgrimage, to note that Allah, the Exalted, chosen Prophets and their noble successors from amongst His servants to be divine proofs and authority over people and that whose teachings people should follow to be guided aright. Allah the Almighty has encouraged people to visit the sacred sites so that those infallible leaders are continuously remembered and held in reverence. Since those nobles are the best examples of servitude to Allah, the Glorified, striving in His way and sacrificing for the cause of His everlasting religion, visiting their shrines, commemorating them and narrating their stories will remind the believers of Allah, the Exalted, His doctrines and injunctions.

Hence, it is one of the essentials of this pilgrimage that the pilgrim, in addition to remembering Imam Husain's (peace be upon him) sacrifices and devotion in the way of Allah, the Exalted, observes the teachings of Islam including those relating to prayer, hijab, self-reform, selflessness and moral etiquette etc. so that his pilgrimage may be a step towards developing and training the soul for accepting these and consolidating their effects until the next

pilgrimage. It is only by doing so that attending these ceremonies will be practically the same as attending the lessons of the Imam (peace be upon him).

Indeed, we have not been in the time of the Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) to learn from them directly and be educated by them. But Allah, the Exalted, has preserved their conducts for us and has persuaded us to visit them, as they are our role models. As the contemporaries of Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) lived with them and were put to test, Allah also wants to test us as to how far we are sincere in our desire to live with them and follow their teachings. Hence, we must be careful about being truthful in our desire to see them. We must know that if we act as per their advice, it is hoped that we shall be resurrected along with their friends. For, it has been reported that Ameer al- Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon both of them) said in the Battle of Jamal:

"Today we are accompanied by those who are still in the loins of their fathers and wombs of their mothers."

Therefore, it is not difficult for each of us who has a true and pure desire to act according to the teachings of the Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) and tread their footsteps. We should purify ourselves through the medium of their purity and adorn ourselves with their educational methods and manners.

Fear Allah in relation to your prayers! As stated in traditions, it is the pillar of your religion and the ascension of the believer. If it is accepted, all other acts will be accepted and if it is rejected, all other acts of worship will also be rejected.

It is befitting for believers to offer their prayers on time because Allah loves those who rush to prayer as soon as they hear the call for it. It is not appropriate for a believer to engage in any other acts of worship in the prime for prayer because prayer is the best form of obedience to Allah. It has been narrated from the Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) that:

"Our intercession will not be attained by that person who undervalues the prayer".

About Imam Husain's (peace be upon him) special attention to prayer on the Day of Aashurah, it has been reported that he told his companion, Abu Sumamah alSaidaawi, who reminded him of the primetime for the prayer:

"You remembered the prayer, may Allah include you among the praying ones."

Then and there he established prayer under a rain of arrows.

Fear Allah in relation to your sincerity! The value and blessings of one's deeds depends on how far he is sincere in performing them for Allah's sake because Allah will not accept deeds which are not purely for Him. It has been narrated from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) that he announced during the Muslims' emigration from Makkah to Madinah:

"Whoever migrates for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, he has migrated to Him and whoever migrates to make worldly gains, he has migrated to the world. Allah will reward sincere deeds to the extent that it will increase to seven hundred folds and He doubles the rewards for whomsoever He wants."

Hence, it is necessary for the pilgrims to remember Allah and be mindful of every step and every deed to be for Allah's sake. They should know that Allah has not bestowed anyone with a

blessing as precious as sincerity in belief, speech and conduct. An act which is devoid of sincerity ends with the end of life in this world whereas a sincere act will be lasting and blessed in this world and the hereafter.

Fear Allah in relation to Hijaab! Observing modest clothing is amongst the most important thing that Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) heeded to even in the most difficult circumstances and they were the best role models in terms of observing modest clothing. Imam Husain (peace be upon him) was not hurt by anything as much as by the enemy violating his dignity and respect. It is, therefore, necessary for all pilgrims, especially ladies, to observe modesty in their conduct, clothing and appearance and to avoid whatever is deemed a violation of this like wearing tight-fitting clothes, mixing up in an abominable way with members of the opposite gender and wearing glittering jewellery. In fact, it is befitting for believers that in order to keep the sacred ceremony untainted, they have to, as far as possible, adhere to the highest levels of modesty.

We pray to Almighty Allah to elevate the position of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his descendants) and his pure family (peace be upon them), due to the sacrifices they made in the way of Allah and their efforts to guide His creatures. May He increase the salutations and blessings upon them as He has sent greetings to previous Prophets especially Prophet Ibrahim and his family!

We also pray to Allah to bestow blessings upon the pilgrimage of the pilgrims of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and accept it in the best way as He accepts the deeds of His noble servants so that they may, through their lifestyle and deeds in this pilgrimage, be a role model for others for the rest of their lives and be rewarded for their love of and obedience to the household of the Prophet (peace be upon them) and for preaching their mission.

We pray that on the Day of Judgment, when all the people are called with their Imam, they (these pilgrims) are called along with Ahle Bait (peace be upon them). May the ones who are martyred in this way, due to their sacrifices and sufferings which they have gone through, be resurrected with Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and his friends. Verily, He is all Hearing, Ever Responsive!

13 Safar, 1435 A.H.

Question 1

What is the opinion of His Eminence regarding the following tradition from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him):

"Whoever weeps or tries to weep upon Husain (peace be upon him), Paradise is obligatory upon him."

Reply

In His Name, the Most High!

Yes there are many traditions of which some are even to the extent of being considered most reliable that Paradise has been guaranteed for weeping over Imam Husain (peace be upon him). In some traditions, even those who make an attempt to cry and recite elegies which make others weep, have been promised Paradise. This guarantee is of no surprise. Both Shia and Ahle Tasannun traditions speak about certain actions for which heaven has been promised. But this

does not mean that a person can consider himself to be complete secure from divine chastisement especially by forsaking the obligatory and committing the prohibited. How can such a feeling be developed when the Holy Quran has most certainly promised divine chastisement for abandonment of the obligatory and performing the prohibited? In the light of verses and traditions, these traditions imply that if such actions are accepted then they will lead to Paradise and sometimes excessive sins act as obstacles which prevent us from entering heaven and being secure from Hell-fire. In other words, it can be interpreted as such actions definitely make a person eligible for Paradise but their acceptance largely depends on nonperformance of prohibited actions for which a person deserves Hell-fire and especially those actions for which Hell-fire has been promised.

As for the reason why weeping over Imam Husain (peace be upon him) carries such a great reward, then it is because weeping indicates towards the innermost condition of a person's heart and his attachment. A person weeps when he is deeply aggrieved and saddened and it is an expression of extreme grief. Lamenting over Imam Husain (peace be upon him) is a symbol of true love and acceptance of the Mastership of Holy Prophet and his pure Ahle Bait (peace be upon them). It is a reflection of teachings towards which these holy personalities have invited others, for which they sacrificed their lives and were martyred. It is an evident reality that this incident has caused history to tremble, thrones of tyrants and oppressors to quiver, affirmed and strengthened the roots of Islamic teachings in the hearts of believers. But this is possible only if we hold fast unto them and remember them constantly. Therefore such traditions have been narrated from the Ahle Bait (peace be upon him).

Trying to weep does not mean only manifesting our lamentation in front of others. Rather, it means to feel the reality of grief and then make an attempt to weep. When a person feels that his heart has hardened and tears are not flowing, at that time he should try and weep so that his feelings can answer the call of his conscience.

The reward which has been promised for lamenting upon the remembrance of Allah or attempting to weep is an interpretation of this tradition which many scholars have indicated towards especially Allamah Muqarram who has mentioned it in his book 'Maqatal al-Husain (peace be upon him)'.

29 Muharram al-Haraam, 1435 A.H.

Question 2

Is it necessary that we leave the mourning procession (Juloos) at the time of Zuhr prayers and recite prayers on time or should we recite prayers after the procession ends? Which of these two are more virtuous?

Reply

Reciting prayers on time! But more importantly, the mourning procession should be organized at a time such that prayers can be performed on time (i.e. the timings of the two should not clash).

Question 3

Is it appropriate that mourning procession is carried out along with very few mourners (Azaadaar) in the first part of the morning and end it before Fajr prayers or wait for more people to gather (i.e. delay the beginning of the procession) and the time for Fajr prayers arrives during the procession?

Reply

Wait for more people to gather, recite prayers during the procession and then restart the procession.

29 Muharram al-Haraam, 1435 A.H.

Question 4

There are many Imambargahs and Husainiyyahs in our area where mournful gatherings in the remembrance of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and his loyal companions are organised on a large scale. Believers out of their sheer love for Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) offer their valuable services in this regard. Such gatherings involve a lot of material and worldly services. Many large gatherings are organised at the same time at different places. In most of these gatherings, food is served from morning right up to about 8.30 pm as a result of which a lot of food is spilt on the floor and is wasted. What is the opinion of his eminence in this regard?

Reply

Wasting food is abominable and forbidden in Shariah. Arrangements should be necessarily made such that food is not wasted or squandered. Hence, mutual understanding between those who serve food is absolutely essential and an appropriate and required quantity should be prepared in order to avoid wastage.

29 Muharram al-Haraam, 1435 A.H.

Question 5

Can large vessels of brass and copper which have been in use for years and have worn out be sold in exchange of new vessels made up of aluminium, etc. and used for preparing food in a similar manner? Reply

If old vessels can be repaired and reused then selling them is not permitted. Albeit, if the money spent in repairing them amounts to waste of money then the legal owner of such vessels can sell them in exchange of new ones.

8 Rajab, 1430 A.H.

Question 6

If, in an Imambargah, Husainiyyah, Anjuman, Mosque and other such endowed (Waqf) places, some objects like lights, lamps, carpets, tiles on walls and floor become old and worn out and if a wellwisher wants to replace them with better ones, then is it permissible? If not, then what is the limit for its non-permissibility? Although those things have turned old but can still be benefitted from. There are times when common people look down upon such religious centres.

Reply

A well-wisher can replace them with better ones but if those objects were endowed (Waqf) then they cannot be sold off if they can be utilised in a similar way in other religious centres. But if they are owned by those centres then the lawful caretaker should sell them off and use the money in the expenses of that religious centre.

29 Muharram al-Haraam, 1435 A.H.

Question 7

Every year during Arbaeen, two situations are observed while walking to Karbala:

1. For those walking alongside the main road to Karbala, the two-lane road is converted only to one lane because one lane is closed for pilgrims. Is this permissible?
2. Those Anjumans which serve the pilgrims on the way, their members slow down the speed of cars by way of barricades for the safety of pilgrims. Is this permissible?

Reply

1. Arrangements should be made in such a way that both lanes can be used.
2. There is no problem in it if done with the cooperation of the traffic police.

29 Muharram al-Haraam, 1435 A.H.

Question 8

What is the ruling regarding the use of drums and trumpets during mourning processions?

Reply

According to common practice, use of these instruments in mourning processions is permissible even though these are the same instruments but not specific to entertainment.

Question 9

In our area, Azadaari is carried out as per Bahraini rituals i.e. elegies are recited in various tunes and styles. Sometimes these styles seem similar to those in entertainment. Can such tunes and styles be practiced in mourning processions?

Reply

Till the time it is not known that these forms, styles and tunes are specific to those used in entertainment, their use in Azadaari is permissible. Once it is known then it is not permissible,

29 Muharram al-Haraam, 1435 A.H.

Question 10

Some believers perform certain undesirable acts such as marriage, moving into a new house, new purchases for their homes, buying new clothes, adorning themselves, laying foundations of new institutions, centres, etc. during the months of Muharram, Safar and other mournful occasions. What is the permissibility of these acts in the eyes of Shariat?

Reply

Although it is not forbidden (Haraam) to perform such acts during these days but it results into insultor devaluing the importance of such occasions such as adorning oneself or expressing joy on the Day of Aashura.

In fact, it is necessary to refrain from any such act during days when we mourn for Ahle Bait (peace be upon them), which we would not perform during any personal tragedy or sorrow unless absolutely necessary...

We should select an occasion other than the mourning period. Allah shall grant Taufeeq.

29 Muharram al-Haraam, 1435 A.H.

Question 11

His Excellency, the honourable Syed! Some youth wear such outfits while visiting the holy places which bear pictures of sports persons, heroes, singers, etc. Some clothes have immoral statements written in different languages. Some youngsters are clean shaven or have beard and hair styles similar to the western culture.

What is your esteemed view regarding these from the aspect of Shariat?

Reply

Whatever has been mentioned, some part of it is forbidden whereas some is inappropriate. Nevertheless, the need is to explain to these pilgrims with wisdom and good advice. It is necessary for youngsters who love Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) and follow them that they should not wear clothes which are tight or have inappropriate pictures or statements printed on them. Clothes are a part of a person's personality. They are an interpretation of his intellect, culture, civilisation, thoughts and ideology. Some of those clothes are such that wearing them is forbidden like those which encourage a person into committing forbidden acts or those which become a cause of spreading mischief and corruption. It is important to wear appropriate clothes in these holy places, mosques, shrines which are suitable to be worn at these places, uphold their sanctity and respect and are an indication of a person's honour and dignity. Wearing such suitable clothes is also a part of the etiquette of visitation. Allah shall grant Taufeeq.

13 Safar, 1434 A.H.

Question 12

Is it permissible for a girl or a married lady to go to the mosque, etc. for congregational prayers, listening to religious speeches or attending Majlis while her father or husband do not permit her to do so? What is the ruling of Shariat in this regard when the rights of her husband are being violated? Reply

As far as a married woman is concerned, she is not allowed to step out of her house without the permission of her husband. For an unmarried girl, if her stepping out of the house results into distress for her father and if the father, out of his love, prevents her based on certain dangers then in such a situation she is not permitted to step out.

Question 13

Can ladies attend Majaalis during their menstruation cycles?

Reply

It is permitted.

29 Muharram al-Haraam, 1435 A.H.

Question 14

There are some CDs pertaining to mourning wherein youngsters remove their shirts and beat their chests. Is it permissible for women to watch such CDs?

Reply

As per obligatory precaution, it is not permissible for women to look at the bodies of men in a condition other than what is normally seen such as chest, stomach, etc.

29 Muharram al-Haraam, 1435 A.H.

Effects And Blessings Of Ziyaarat Of Imam Husain (p.b.u.h.)

Before I began to write on the effects and blessings of the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him), I pondered if the blood that gushes through my veins will ever, in any era, be able to find its way out through my eyes. Will I ever be blessed to have the power that the blood gushing through my veins will someday spurt out from my eyes, replacing my tears, in the love for the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him)? I wish I would pick up one such drop of my blood and gather the courage to pen something on this topic of extreme emotional depth.

Meaning of effects and blessings

Blessings

During the feast of the clan (Dhu alAsheerah), the Holy Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (peace be upon him and his progeny) designated the arrangement of meals to Ameer al-Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him). The quantity of food was not ample enough to satiate such a huge crowd of the people of Makkah. Yet, everyone ate to their full and even after that some food was surplus. This is called Barakah (blessing). Simply put, if a person earns a meagre amount but has a happy family with all their needs fulfilled, this can be termed as blessing.

Effects

It is narrated in authentic traditions that once Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) while travelling with some of his disciples happened to pass through a noisy house. When inquired, he was informed that a wedding is to take place in the house. Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) told his disciples that next day there would be mourning over there because the bride will die. On the morrow, when the disciples came to that place with Prophet Isa (peace be upon him), they found the house cheerful and as happy as the previous day. He (peace be upon him) went to the bride and inquired if she performed some goodness in the way of Allah. The bride narrated that she gave charity to a poor person who came to her door the last night. Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) went towards the mattress of the bride and pulled it over. There was a dead snake beneath the mattress. He (peace be upon him) explained that it is because of the generous act of giving charity in the way of Allah that the bride is saved, otherwise the house would have been in mourning.

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol.4, p. 94, H. 1]

If one simple act of giving few alms to the poor in the way of Allah can save a life, so can the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) save people from difficulties and grief, diseases and distress, disputes and conflicts.

A respectable and renowned poet who glorified the Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) in his poetries, Abul Hasan Jamaluddin Ali Ibn Abdul Azeez Ibn Abi Muhammad AlKhil'ei Al-Mosuli Al-Hilli, a resident of Hilla and passed away in the year 750 A.H. is still popular amongst people and his grave is well identified and frequented by people. Qazi Nurullah Shustari (may Allah have mercy upon him) (also known as Shaheed-e-Saalis) (martyred in 966 A.H. and buried in Agra, India) in his book Al-Majaalis, p.463 and Muhaddis Noori (may Allah have mercy upon him) (exp. 1320 A.H. and buried in Najaf alAshraf, Iraq) in his Riyaadh al-Jannah have narrated that the parents of Abu al-Hasan Jamaal al-Din were Naasebi. They bore enmity towards the Ahle

Bait (peace be upon them) to an extent that they took an oath that if a male child is born in their family they would, through him, block the routes of the pilgrims of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and would get the pilgrims killed by their son. When their son (Abul Hasan Jamaluddin) attained youth, he reached Musayyab, a place near the city of Karbala, to trouble and kill the pilgrims visiting the shrine of Imam Husain (peace be upon him). As he waited for the caravan of pilgrims near Musayyab, he fell asleep and the caravan moved ahead. He dreamt that it was the Day of Resurrection and he was being dragged to the fire of hell after his final accounting. But to his surprise, the fire of hell could not affect his body because while he slept, the dust from the footsteps of the pilgrims of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) blew and settled on his body.

[Al-Ghadeer, vol. 6, p. 12]

Dear readers, the effects of the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) are immense and this was one of the smallest of effects upon Abu al-Hasan Jamaal al-Din. Rather, the pilgrims had not even visited the shrine of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and yet the dust under their feet was so miraculous that it saved the poet from the fire of hell.

While I still pondered over the fact that the Almighty Allah placed such blessings in the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) I recalled a conversation of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) with Allah the Almighty. Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) asked Allah:

"O my Lord! Show me the status of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) and of his nation." Allah the Almighty replied: **"O Musa, you do not possess the capacity to see their status. Although, I shall show you a glimpse of only one of their elevated and prestigious statuses because of which I gave them all the lofty virtues"**.

Hence, the divine veils were removed from the eyes of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) and when he observed the illuminated effulgence of these virtuous personalities and their closeness to Allah the Almighty he was about to die. Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) asked Allah,

"O Lord! Why have you blessed them with this esteemed status?" Allah the Almighty replied: **"Due to one quality in them which I like the most and that is sacrifice."** **"O Musa! Whoever from amongst My servants comes to Me in a manner that he has spent a fraction of his life in it (sacrifice), I would be ashamed to account him for his deeds and I shall give him the level of Paradise which he wishes."**

[Tanbeeh al-Khawaatir (famous as Majmua) by al-Warraam Ibn Abi Feraas, vol. 1, p. 173]

Now if Allah the Almighty can bless a person who spends a fraction of his life in sacrifice, then for the illuminated ones and the embodiments of infallibility and purity who have spent their complete lives in sacrifice, how can the Almighty not bless them with incredible virtues?

There is no doubt that describing the virtues of visiting the grave of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) is not just difficult but impossible. For the benefit of our readers, we would like to quote a few traditions highlighting the virtues of visiting the grave of Imam Husain (peace be upon him), based on various aspects and taken from various books of traditions, with the hope that it may increase the love of his Ziyaarat in our hearts.

1. Forgiveness of sins

It is well known that except for Prophets and Infallible Imams (peace be upon them), all human beings are prone to committing sins. Sins attract divine punishment and human instinct dislikes being punished. We prefer to be forgiven and let off. One of the best ways to get our sins forgiven is visiting the grave of Imam Husain (peace be upon him), about which Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) says:

"One who comes to the grave of Abu Abdillah (al-Husain) (peace be upon him) while recognising his right, Allah will forgive his past and future sins".

At another place Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) says:

"When a person intends to go for the Ziyarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and bids farewell to his family, as soon as he places his first step for this journey, Allah forgives all his sins. As he moves closer and closer to the shrine of Imam Husain (peace be upon him), he becomes purer.

When he reaches the shrine, Allah the Almighty calls out to him: O My servant! Ask and I will give you, call me and I will respond to you, pray to me and I shall answer you, seek your desires and I shall fulfil them."

The narrator mentions that it is the right of Allah to provide him whatever this servant has spent for this journey.

[Sawaab al-A'maal, H. 32]

2. Superior to Hajj and Umrah

Hajj and Umrah fall under the category of one of the most difficult acts of Allah's worship. This is one of the reasons why Allah has kept these forms of worship as exceptions with trials as a precondition. Traditions have clearly stated that Ziyarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) is superior than Hajj and Umrah. Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) says:

*"Visiting the grave of Husain (peace be upon him) is equal, near Allah, to twenty Hajj, in fact superior to twenty Hajj." **** (This does not refer to the obligatory (Waajib) Hajj rather it is the recommended (Mustahab) Hajj)***

[Sawaab al-A'maal, p. 92]

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) says:

"One who comes to the grave of Husain (peace be upon him) while recognising his right is like the one who has performed a hundred Hajj with Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny)".

[Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat, p. 162, H. 5]

3. Angels pray for him

A common complaint in the society today is non-acceptance of prayers ultimately leading to despair. It should be noted that the angels, who are infallible and Allah accepts their prayers, pray for the one who visits the grave of Imam Husain (peace be upon him). Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) mentions:

"Do not forsake the Ziyaarat of Husain (peace be upon him). Do you not like to be among those for whom the angels pray?"

[Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat, p. 119, H. 3]

"(Imam Husain (peace be upon him) is) the one for whose visitors, the ones who pray are more in the skies than on earth."

[Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat, p. 117, H. 2]

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) also said:

"Surely Allah has appointed four thousand angels over the grave of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) with dishevelled hair and covered in dust. These angels lament over Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and will continue to do so till the Day of Judgment. Their leader is known as Mansoor. Whoever goes for the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him), this leader angel goes to welcome him. All these angels would not detach themselves from this person till the time he is alive. If the person falls sick, they attend to him. If he dies, they perform his funeral prayers and seek forgiveness for him."

[Sawaab al-A'maal, H. 15]

4. Importance of Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him)

Traditions emphasizing the greatness of visiting the grave of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) as taught by the infallible ones (peace be upon them) are so magnificent that the more we ponder, the more we shall experience the mercy of Allah upon us. It is impossible to pen down the true importance of Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him).

5. Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) is like meeting Allah on the Divine Empyrean

The narrator asked Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), "What is the reward of the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him)?" Imam (peace be upon him) replied:

"It is like visiting Allah on His Empyrean."

[Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat, p. 147, H. 2]

Bashir Dahaan says that he got an opportunity to perform Hajj every year but once he could not go for Hajj. When he went for Hajj the next year, he paid a visit to Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him). Imam (peace be upon him) inquired from him,

"O Bashir! Why did you not come for Hajj last year?"

Bashir replied, "May I be your ransom! People had entrusted me with some belongings and I feared that their belongings might go missing if I went for Hajj. So I went for Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) on the day of Arafah'.

Imam (peace be upon him) exclaimed, "You did not lose anything in comparison to those people who were present on the plains of Arafat. O Bashir! One who performs the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) recognizing his rights, it is as if he has visited Allah on the Divine Empyrean."

6. Increase in lifespan and sustenance

Man always wants to avert death but at the same time knows that it is imminent. The desire to lead a long life is a human instinct. Therefore, we find that enormous efforts are put in maintaining one's health, be it in the form of discovery of medicines that will help man live longer or anything else. Similarly, man wishes for the best ways of sustenance, likes more money, wants to amass wealth and looks out for comfortable ways to earn. Allah, the Almighty, has placed such effects and blessings in the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) that whoever performs his Ziyaarat, Allah the Almighty, will grant him a long life and increase his sustenance.

Muhammad Ibn Muslim (may Allah have mercy upon him), narrates from Imam Muhammad Baqir (peace be upon him) that:

"Command our Shias to visit the grave of Husain (peace be upon him) for surely visiting him increases sustenance, increases lifespan and keeps away evils. Visiting him is incumbent upon every person who believes that his Imamate is from Allah."

(Wasaael al-Shia, vol. 14, p. 413, H. 4]

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) admonished:

"Do not forsake the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and command your friends to perform it too, for it grants long lives, increases sustenance, makes life happier, leads to a death of martyrs and Allah enumerates such person among the esteemed ones."

[Kaamil al-Ziyaaraat, p. 152, H. 5]

7. Cause of removal of grief and fulfilment of desires

It is difficult to find someone not distressed, grief-stricken or anxious these days. Even if we find one, it is impossible that such a person would not have any desires to be fulfilled. Allah, the Almighty, has made Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) a cause of removal of grief and fulfilment of desires.

Muhammad Ibn Muslim (may Allah have mercy upon him) narrates from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (peace be upon him):

"Imam Husain (peace be upon him) was killed while he was innocent, grief-stricken, thirsty and aggrieved. So it is his right upon Allah that whoever comes for the Ziyaarat of the grief-stricken, the aggrieved, the innocent and the thirsty and pray near his grave with the intention of seeking proximity towards Allah, Allah will relieve him of his grief, fulfil his desires, forgive all his sins, grant him a long life and increase his sustenance. O people of intellect! Take lessons from this."

(Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 98, p. 46]

8. Pilgrim of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) will intercede

None among us can claim that he will enter paradise solely on the basis of his deeds. We are not aware how polluted our actions are, sometimes with hypocrisy, backbiting, envy and ego. The only thing that can be a source of salvation is the love of Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) and the intercession of their lovers.

MOHARRAM 1440 A.H.

Saif al-Tammaar heard from Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him):

"On the Day of Judgement, each pilgrim of Husain (peace be upon him) will intercede for hundred sinners upon whom hell was ordained, who were among the extravagant ones (i.e. sinners) in the world".

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 98, p. 77, H. 36]

Abdullah ibn Shaiba al-Tamimi narrates from Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him):

"A caller shall call out on the Day of Resurrection 'Where are the Shias of Aal-e-Muhammad (peace be upon them)?' Few necks (people) will rise from among the people whom nobody can enumerate except Allah and they shall stand at a distance from other people. A caller will again call out 'Where are the visitors of the grave of Husain (peace be upon him)?' so an enormous group of people would stand up and they will be commanded Catch hold of whoever you like and take them along to Paradise'. Then every person will take along whoever he likes to the extent that another person would call out, 'Oso and so! Do you not recognize me? I stood up in your honour that day'. So he will take that person too to Paradise and nobody would block or stop him."

[Behaar al-Anwaar, vol. 98, p. 27, H. 34]

O Allah! The Mighty and the Most High! Bless us with a heart that holds the love of the Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him). O our Master! Let us quench our thirst of the love of your Ziyaarat by calling us to your shrine but increase our thirst so that we keep this love of your Ziyaarat alive in our hearts. Maybe, we might be fortunate to meet our master of the time, Imam al-Hujjah (may Allah hasten his reappearance) during your Ziyaarat.

Then What Is This Hue And Cry In The Universe

During my childhood my uncles, aunts, grandparents and other elders at home would take me to Azaakhaana (Places where mourning gatherings during Muharram are held) and thus inculcated this habit within me. In fact, we were taken for Majaalis in infancy itself and the voices of mourning and elegies reached our ears. We grew up in that atmosphere slowly and gradually the affection to these gatherings strengthened by the day. When we started comprehending few things, we noticed that the Azaakhaana was decorated and part of those decorations were strips of black cloth on which certain things were written in red, blue and yellow colours. We however did not pay attention to them. But with the passage of time and changing conditions we received some education and stepped into our youth.

The strips we saw in our childhood were, fully or partially, reserved in some corner of our mind. After learning the Persian language to some extent we now started reading those strips in parts and found out the following to be written on them:

Baaz een che shoorish ast ke dar khalq-e-aalam ast

Then what is this hue and cry in the universe?

I also understood the second sentence and read several of them after certain attempts and started comprehending them.

Who wrote these couplets?

These couplets belong to a very famous Persian poet Shams al-Sho'ara Mohtasham Kaashaani Ali Ibn Ahmad. He was born in 905 A.H. in the Iranian city of Kaashaan and passed away at the age of 91 in 996 A.H. in Kaashaan itself and was buried in the same city. He lived in the initial rule of Safavi dynasty. Mohtasham was a poet from his youth itself but initially he penned songs. However, after inclining towards religion, he changed his topics and wrote elegies on the tragedy of Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) and attained great fame.

The beginning of composing elegies

Mohtasham was fond of writing from his youth and hence was given the title 'Kalk alShi'aar' by his contemporaries i.e. someone who had a carefree attitude. However, an incident in which his brother Abdul passed away in Deccan, India made him compose elegies and he penned a heart rending elegy for him. He also composed an elegy on the death of his nephew and thence began his journey of composing elegies.

Ameerul Momineen (peace be upon him) in a dream

Marhoom Haaj Mulla Ali Khayabani Tabrizi writes about Mohtasham Kaashaani in his book 'Waqaa'ye al-Ayyaam':

"When his nephew passed away, Mohtasham penned an elegy. One night he saw Ameerul Momineen Ali Ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon both of them) in his dream saying: '*You wrote an elegy for your nephew but not for my son Husain!*'"

He woke up and thought about his dream. The succeeding night also he saw Ameerul Momineen (peace be upon him) in his dream saying: '*Compose elegies for my son Husain.*'

MOHARRAM 1440 A.H.

Mohtasham said: May I be your ransom, the tragedy of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) is beyond comprehension and description and I am unable to decide where to start from.

Ameerul Momineen (peace be upon him) then told him to start with the following verse:

'Baaz een che shoorish ast ke dar khalq-e-aalam ast'

Then what is this hue and cry in the universe?

By the grace of Ameerul Momineen (peace be upon him) and Imam Zamana (may Allah hasten his reappearance) he wrote several verses after waking up till he reached the following line:

Hast az malaal gar che baree zaat e Zul Jalaal

No doubt, there is no feeling of grief within Allah, the Mighty.

He was not able to write the next line for the next several days until he saw Imam-eZamana (may Allah hasten his reappearance) in his dream, who completed the couplet for him thus:

Oo dar dil ast wa heech dilee bee malaal neest

He (Allah) is in the heart and no heart is free from grief.

[Waqaa'ye' al-Ayyaam by Khayabani, p. 58]

Note:

in the book Al-Kalaamo Yajurr al-Kalaam, vol. 2, p. 110 this incident is mentioned with a slight difference where Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) has been mentioned in place of Ameerul Momineen (peace be upon him). In short, the first phrase is from an infallible (Then what is this hue and cry in the universe?) and the fifth phrase (He (Allah) is in the heart and no heart is free from grief) is by Imam Zamana (may Allah hasten his reappearance).

How this elegy became famous?

This elegy is known in Persian literature as the 'Elegy of Twelve stanzas' and as mentioned, it has come from Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) or Ameerul Momineen (peace be upon him) and hence it is widely accepted and found in every mosque, lane, Azakhana and wall in Iran. This elegy is also echoed in India, Pakistan and other countries.

Opinion of Shaikh Abbas Qummi (may Allah have mercy upon him)

The great traditionalist and author of Mafaateeh al-Jinaan Shaikh Abbas Qummi (may Allah have mercy upon him) writes:

“Mohtasham, the poet, who composed the famous elegy and whose position is evident in every Majlis of Imam Husain (peace be upon him), affixed on every door and wall, has written this elegy either with great sorrow or mixed it with the soil of Karbala. This does not in any way let the tragedy of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) fade away and brings out the high status of Mohtasham and his level of (Imam) cognition.”

[Deewaan-e-Mohtasham Kaashaani by Saeed Qaane'i, p. 20]

Wailing of Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) on the elegy of Mohtasham

Muqbil Kaashaani was a very famous poet and desirous of visiting the mausoleum of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) but was unable to do so due to financial constraints. When anyone would head for Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him), his eyes would well with tears and his desire for Ziyaarat would intensify. One day, a friend of his arranged the finances for his journey and he set out from Kaashaan for Karbala. However his caravan was robbed by dacoits near Golpaygaan. Some members of the caravan returned to Kaashaan while others went to Golpaygaan to arrange expenses for the remaining journey through their acquaintances. However Muqbil had no acquaintances in Golpaygaan. He neither wanted to borrow money from anyone nor return to Kaashaan. The desire for Ziyaarat of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) was brimming in his heart. He thought he has already covered some distance and will work to gather expenses for the remaining journey to Karbala.

He stayed in Golpaygaan for some days and the month of Muharram arrived. He participated in Majaalis like other Shias and the night of Aashura arrived. He read his elegy and a huge wailing and mourning ensued. The same night after the Majlis concluded, he dreamt that he is in the courtyard of the shrine of Imam Husain (peace be upon him). He attempted to go near the tomb but was not permitted.

Muqbil quotes: I thought that O Allah, none should prevent anyone from entering the shrine. A person told me that you are right Muqbil but presently Janabe Fatima Zahra, Khadijah al-Kubra, Aasiya, Haajra and Saarah (peace be upon them) along with few fairies (al-hoor al-reen) are busy inside the shrine and you being a stranger (na-mahram) are not allowed. I asked 'Who are you?' He said, I am from the group of angel surrounding the shrine of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) ('al-Haaffeen alMalaekah'). Do not be dejected and come with me. I will take you inside from the other side'. In the courtyard towards the west of the mausoleum, a large gathering was being held. I asked the angel about those present there. He replied that all Prophets from Adam (peace be upon him) to Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (peace be upon him and his progeny) have arrived for the Ziyaarat of the sacred grave of Imam Husain (peace be upon him). I saw that Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) instructed: 'GO and call Mohtasham.' I saw the short statured Mohtasham arriving with his radiant face and worn out turban. Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) directed him to ascend a pulpit nearby. Every step of the pulpit where Mohtasham stood at, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) ordered him to ascend further until he reached Arshah, the ninth and the highest step of the pulpit. He stood there and waited for the command from Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) who said, 'O Mohtasham, this is the night of Aashura, recite your heart rending elegy.'

Mohtasham complied with the orders and began reciting.

O the ship wrecked in the storm of Karbala

The plain of Karbala drenched in blood and soil

If the entire universe wails loudly upon them

The vicinity of Karbala will be replete with blood

When Imam Husain (peace be upon him) was martyred in wilderness of Karbala

MOHARRAM 1440 A.H.

There remained no eye that was not filled with tears

The Kufans invited this guest and kept him thirsty

And were happy at shedding his blood

Everyone in Karbala had access to water

But for the king of Karbala was a drought

The thirsty ones were kept at a distance from water

And the voices of thirst, thirst echoed

from the wilderness

The army of the enemy did not respect

him and turned to his tents

He (peace be upon him and his progeny) ordered Mohtasham to recite more and Mohtasham continued:

When the sacred head of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) was raised on a spear

The sun came out dejected from the clouds

There was tumult in the waves and they rose till the mountains

The clouds rained heavily and profusely in tears

The stable land of Karbala went into mayhem

The whole creation went into disorder

The foundation of the universe went into a shiver

It appeared like the Day of Judgement has arrived

The tent, the ropes of which were the forelocks of the fairies

Was uprooted by the wind and filled with smoke

The one whose saddle was held by Jibraeel

Mounted a camel without a saddle

The nation of the Prophet after this heinous act

Has turned disgraceful for the soul of the Prophet

The mourning on this elegy was so severe that it appeared to reach the Divine Empyrean. Mohtasham intended to descend from the pulpit but Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) said: 'Continue reciting as my heart is not satisfied with mourning yet.' Mohtasham complied with the order, removed his turban and in a heart rending voice said: o Messenger of Allah!

The one who was martyred in a wilderness were you O Husain The one who was rubbing his hands and feet in blood like a hunted were you O Husain

Muqbil narrates that when Mohtasham read this line, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his progeny) fell unconscious and all the Prophets (peace be upon him) wailed loudly, beating their heads. Meanwhile, an angel read these lines:

*Be quiet Mohtasham as the hearts of
stones have melted
The foundations of patience and forbearance are now broken
This heart rending elegy has burnt the birds and the fishes
With your elegy the eyes have wept tears
And the earth has been scorched with this grief
Be quiet Mohtasham as the sky is weeping blood
And a thousand rivers are now in tumult
Be quiet Mohtasham for the sun due to your elegy
And the mourning of mourners has frozen down
Be quiet Mohtasham for Jibraeel is hiding from the Prophet
Due to the grief of Husain*

Mohtasham became silent and descended from the pulpit. After some time when the gathering recouped, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) awarded Mohtasham with his cloak.

The request from Janabe Zahra (peace be upon her)

Muqbil says that I was also a poet of Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) and wanted the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) to order me to recite my composition. I waited but left from the sanctuary in a state of dejection. I saw that a fairy came to me and said that Janabe Zahra (peace be upon her) came to her father and requested him to ask Muqbil also to recite his elegy. I went to the first step of the pulpit. However Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) did not ask me to ascend further and I understood that my position is not akin to Mohtasham. I started reciting my elegy:

*Now neither the Zuljanah can remain steadfast
Nor does the chief of martyrs has the
energy to fight
When the black storm of the enemy's army blew
The beloved of Fatima (peace be on her) fell from the horse
A king of high position came down to the earth
Or if I am not wrong, the Divine
Empyrean fell on the earth*

MOHARRAM 1440 A.H.

Muqbil says that a fairy came to me and asked me to stop as Janabe Zahra (peace be upon her) has fallen unconscious. I descended from the pulpit but the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) did not reward me. In a state of dream I saw Imam Husain (peace be upon him) telling me from his severed head:

'O Muqbil! I will myself gift you a cloak.'

I woke up and the next day a caravan intending to visit Imam Husain (peace be upon him) took me along.

[Manaabe' Wasaael al-Shia, vol. 14, p. 597; Waqaaye' al-Ayyaam by Khayabani, p. 59]

This shows the position of Mohtasham near Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) and Ameerul Momneen (peace be upon him) and also that of Muqbil before Janabe Zahra (peace be upon her) and Imam Husain (peace be upon him). Indeed, Imam Husain (peace be upon him) does not deprive his lovers of his Ziyaarat in this world and intercession in the hereafter. May Allah grant us the love which Mohtasham and Muqbil had so that we can receive special favours from Imam Husain (peace be upon him) and the one who will avenge his blood!

In the end, it is necessary to mention that all phrases in the elegy of Mohtasham are supported by traditions; however, we have not mentioned them for the sake of brevity. We would humbly like to say that the revered poets of Ahle Bait (peace be upon them) are aware of verses of Holy Quran and the traditions and their works are replete with their meanings. Our revered scholars also have achieved great feats in this field.

Allamah Sayed Muhammad Mahdi famous as Bahr al-Uloom (may Allah have mercy upon him) has also written a twelve

stanza elegy in Arabic which is famous as 'AlUqood al-Ithna Ashara fi risaa Saadaat alBashar'. Insha Allah, we will present the same before our esteemed readers if we get an opportunity and good fortune in the future.

O Aba Abdillah al-Husain! Please accept this humble work from us and just like Mohtasham and Muqbil, reward us too.