

IMAM HUSAIN (A.S.)
As His Words Portray

1400th ANNIVERSARY
BIRTHDAY OF IMAM HUSAIN (A.S.)
1404 — 1984.

IMAM HUSAIN (A.S.) AS HIS WORDS PORTRAY

IN COMMEMORATION OF 1400th YEAR
OF THE BIRTHDAY OF IMAM HUSAIN (A.S.)

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PART I

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PREFACE

1400 years have elapsed since the birth of Imam Husain (a.s.) the grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), yet his name as an exalted personage and Leader of the Martyrs still survives in the annals of history. Muslims and non-Muslims alike still recall his supreme ideals and sacrifices which act as torch-light of guidance to all those who feel the need of reforming and revolutionizing their society. The Islamic Revolution of Iran is a vivid example of our times in this respect.

On this auspicious occasion of celebrating the 1400th year of the birth of Imam Husain (a.s.), what better tribute could we pay in his memory other than that of to rededicate our lives to the upholding and promoting the cause of truth and Islamic values by drawing inspiration from the sublime words uttered by him. With that aim in view, I have endeavoured to translate selected words spoken by the Imam on different occasions adding my explanatory notes. It is obvious that Arabic being a very vast and rich language, no words in this language can ever be perfectly translated into English.

Besides bearing in mind profound eloquence in the sayings of the Prophet and his progeny, the translation work becomes even more difficult.

Nevertheless, to the best of my ability, I have endeavoured to convey the underlying meaning of every word spoken. That readers will draw inspiration from the sublime words of the Imam and try to emulate the teachings contained therein in their lives in my fervent hope and expectation.

For reviewing the language of this booklet and making suggestions, I am grateful to Mr. Kassimali N. Panju of Mombasa as well as Mr. Fidahusein A. Hameer of Dar es Salaam.

Ahmed H. Sheriff
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IMAM HUSAIN (A.S.) AS HIS WORDS PORTRAY

Renowned and great men of the world, be they national leaders, reformers, poets, thinkers or saints, are often remembered and their status evaluated in the light of their spoken words besides their actions. The words they had uttered on important and decisive occasions go to help in measuring their high ideals and sublime thoughts. Their sayings are quoted again and again consequently providing inspiration to mankind.

For the one who sacrificed his life and those of his kith and kin whole-heartedly just for the cause of saving Islam from extinction, his every spoken word should be and is indeed full of inspiration and does provide guidance to mankind. Though rather fewer sayings of Imam Husain (a.s.) have been recorded perhaps due to the intense persecution by the Omayyads during his time. Nevertheless, let us take this opportunity of studying what is available and endeavour to emulate them.

WHAT IS GOOD OF THIS AND THE NEXT WORLD?

From the people of Kufa in Iraq, someone sent a letter to Imam Husain (a.s.) asking for information on the good of this world and the next. In reply, the Imam wrote this:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ طَلَبَ رِضَا اللَّهِ
بَسَخَطَ النَّاسَ كَفَاهُ اللَّهُ أُمُورَ النَّاسِ، وَمَنْ طَلَبَ رِضَا النَّاسِ
بَسَخَطَ اللَّهُ وَكَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى النَّاسِ، وَالسَّلَامُ

Bismillahi Rahmani Rahim.

If one seeks the pleasure of Allah despite the wrath and displeasure of people, Allah is sufficient for him in his affairs with them. And if one seeks the pleasure of people despite the wrath and displeasure of Allah, he will be forsaken by Him leaving him to (the mercy of) people.

Wassalam.

In dealing with people, concerning business, domestic or social matters, man is often faced with a choice whether or not to uphold the pleasure of Allah against the wishes and pleasure of people around him. The Imam in

his abovementioned words has assured such a person of Allah's protection and help, if he gave preference to His pleasure and not that of people.

But should he restrict himself to the pleasure of people for sporadic gains irrespective of God's pleasure, then Allah would not be on his side. He would be left to the mercy of people, surely not a reliable and lasting source of support and protection.

HOW TO REFRAIN FROM SINS

A man came to the Imam to seek his advice what to do, as he was unable to restrain himself from committing sins. In reply, the Imam advised him to do five things and then he could sin as he wished.

فأول ذلك لا تأكل رزق الله وأذنب ما شئت
والثاني اخرج من ولاية الله وأذنب ما شئت
والثالث اطلب موضعا لا يراك الله وأذنب ما شئت
والرابع إذا جاء ملك الموت ليقبض روحك فادفعه عن
نفسك وأذنب ما شئت

و الخامس إذا أدخلك مالك في النار فلا تدخل في النار و
أذنبا ما شئت

1. *Do not eat of the sustenance of Allah and then sin as you like.*
2. *Go out of the kingdom of Allah and then sin as you like.*
3. *Find a place where Allah sees you not and then sin as you like.*
4. *When approached by the angel of death to remove your soul, stop him from doing so.*
5. *When you are dragged into the hell-fire by Allah, refuse to enter.*

What a splendid way of arousing man's consciousness of the basic facts of his life. However independent, strong, healthy and fully satisfied we may feel in our life, there are certain things from which we can never escape under any circumstance. If we convince ourselves and remain ever conscious of the fact that we live in the kingdom of Allah, enjoying his sustenance, unable to make ourselves unseen by Him, unable to delay or let aside stopping the angel of death and there is hell-fire awaiting to punish us for our misdeeds, we would be apt to refrain from committing sins.

WHO IS A TRUE SHIA?

A man once came to the Imam claiming himself to be one of his Shias. The Imam instantly reacted to this saying:

اتَّقِ اللَّهَ ، وَلَا تَدَّعِينَ شَيْئًا يَقُولُ اللَّهُ لَكَ كَذَبْتَ وَفَجَرْتَ فِي
دَعْوَاكَ، إِنَّ شِيعَتَنَا مِنْ سَلَمَتِ قُلُوبِهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ غَشٍّ وَغَلٍّ وَ
دَغَلٍ، وَلَكِنْ قُلْ أَنَا مِنْ مَوَالِيكُمْ وَمُحِبِّكُمْ

Fear God and do not Claim anything for which Allah may tell you that you have lied and made a false claim. Verily our Shias are those who keep their hearts clean of fraud, malice, and treachery. But you may claim that you are from our friends and lovers.

Having been borne in a Shia family and following in Shi'ite traditions and gatherings, one may be outwardly recognized as a Shia. But from the foregoing real definition of a Shia by the Imam, one who cherishes fraud, malice, and treachery in his heart against others, so commonly witnessed in our surroundings today, he is not to be considered as a true Shia.

WHAT IS THE BEST OF IBADAT - WORSHIP

The Imam defined the true worship of Allah in these words:

إِنَّ قوما عبدوا الله رغبة فتلك عبادة التجار، وإن قوما
عبدوا الله رهبة فتلك عبادة العبيد، وإن قوما عبدوا الله
شكرا فتلك عبادة الأحرار وهي أفضل العبادة

There are people who worship Allah for the sake of (fulfilling their) desires and that is the worship of business people. And verily there are those who worship Allah out of fear of Him, this is the worship of slaves. But there are those who worship out of thanks giving to Him, this being the worship of free-minded people and is the best of worship.

Many of us who say their daily prayers are perhaps prompted to do so by the desires for worldly gains, be they of wealth, health or prestige. Some may be praying for attaining higher places in heaven or of enjoyment of sweet fruits or beautiful hoories in mind. It is the business people who base their actions on such thinking, which does not carry much value.

However there are those truly and religiously enlightened people whose sole aim of prayers is thanks giving to Allah for His countless bounties showered upon them or out of awe and fear of Him that they are so insignificant and so nothing before Him. This is a true worship of elevated level and is of the people who are truly free-minded.

THAT WHICH RELAXES THE HUMAN BODY

In one of his sayings, the Imam had said:

القنوع راحة الأبدان

Contentment gives rest to the body

It is a natural phenomenon that when one lives a contented way of life and refrains from greed and craving for more and more wealth besides avoiding excessive enjoyment of food and drinks, there is less strain over his mind and body. Consequently his body is able to enjoy a good rest and his mind relaxes in peace which he needs.

THE PEAK OF INTELLIGENCE

With Moavia bin Abi Sufyan once, a discussion had arisen on the subject of intelligence. On hearing this, the Imam giving his opinion said this:

لا يكمل العقل إلا باتباع الحق

No man can reach the peak of intelligence except by following Haq i.e. righteousness

Hearing this, Moavia reacted by saying ‘there is no other thing in your hearts except one thing’.

In other words, the Imam hinted that true and perfect intelligence did not lie in conspiring and usurping other people’s rights as believed and practised by the Omayyads. The true path of perfecting one’s intelligence lies in living and acting with righteousness.

Moavia had already experienced well how Imam Ali ibne Abi Taleb (a.s.) as well as his first son Imam Hasan (a.s.) had, despite all sorts of persecution and opposition from him, confined themselves to the path of righteousness. Now the same was followed by Imam Husain

(a.s.) a member of the same household of the Prophet, who also proclaimed that it was living with righteousness that enables one to perfect his intelligence. Thus he was obliged to confirm the noble ideology of Ale Muhammad (a.s.) the holy progeny and rightful vicegerents of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

GENEROSITY WITH HUMILITY

One of the outstanding qualities which elevates one to become a famous leader of his people and followers is a generous nature and outlook. Imam Ali (a.s.) has said ‘The tool of leadership is a generous heart’. From the life history of Imam Husain (a.s.), one comes across instances of profound generosity rarely to be witnessed in lives of other great men of the world. But for his extreme generous heart dedicated to save Islam from extinction, his supreme sacrifices on the plains of Kerbala would not have taken place.

A beggar once comes to Madina and approaching the Imam, begs for some financial help. The Imam instructed his treasurer to pay him One thousand Ashrafi (gold coins of

the time). The beggar received the money but instead of going away with it, he sat down to check and count each and every coin. The treasurer of the Imam asked him whether he had sold any goods that he was doing so in return. The beggar replied “Why not? I have sold my dignity by begging”. On hearing this, the Imam interrupted by saying that it was true what he had said and instructed a further one thousand coins of Ashrafi be paid to him. When he had counted and taken possession of two thousand coins, the Imam lifting his prayer-mat took further one thousand Ashrafi from underneath and passing same to the beggar, he uttered these words:

The first One thousand Ashrafi is in response to your begging

The second One thousand Ashrafi is in return for your dignity

And the third One thousand Ashrafi is for your visit and coming to me instead of going elsewhere to ask for help.

On another occasion, a bedouin Arab came to Madina and inquired who in the city was most generous. He was given the name of Imam Husain (a.s). Searching for him, he reached the

mosque of the Prophet where he found the Imam in the course of prayers. He sat besides him and recited the following couplets:

لم يخب الآن من رجاك ومَن *** حرك من دون بابك الحلقة
أنت جواد وأنت معتمد *** أبوك قد كان قاتل الفسقه
لولا الذي كان من أوائلكم *** كانت علينا الجحيم منطبقه

*Never was he disappointed
whosoever placed his hope upon you
and moved the chain of (knocked upon) your door
You are generous and you are the trusted one
And it was your father who had killed the very
wicked transgressor
Had it not been for your ancestors (guidance)
for us would have been a confinement in hell-fire*

On hearing these words, the Imam terminated his prayers and returning home, he asked Qamber whether there was anything remaining from the wealth received from Hejaz. The reply was that there was a balance of four thousand Ashrafi. The Imam told him to bring them as the Arab was more deserving than they themselves. Wrapping the Ashrafis in a piece of cloth and stretching forth his hand with it from behind the door, the Imam offered them to the Arab rather

shyly and recited the following couplets:

خذها فإني إليك معتر *** واعلم بأني عليك ذو شفقه
لو كان في سيرنا الغداة عصا *** أمست سمانا عليك مندفته
لكن ريب الزمان ذو غير *** والكف مني قليلة النفقه

*Please accept this with my apology
And let it be known to you that I bear compassion
and kindness towards you
Had the rod (of khilafat) today been in our hands
(You would have seen how) our generosity would
have rained upon you
But Alas! the times have changed
And my hand is shortened of charity.*

The Arab with tears in his eyes accepted the Ashrafis. Rather moved to see him in that condition, the Imam said to him:

Perhaps you find our gift to be small

“Not so” replied the Arab, adding: “The reason behind the tears over my face is that I wonder how a person like you shall depart from this world and for the earth (of the grave) to consume your hand.”

The foregoing are instances of profound humility with which the poor and the beggars

were treated by the Imam in whose philosophy, those seeking help were not to be looked down upon by those expected to help. On the contrary they deserve to be respected because, were they not to come forward to seek help, there would be no opportunity for prospective helpers to earn divine reward and grace. That it is a divine blessing upon one to be expected to meet the needs of people can be gleaned from the following words of Imam Husain (a.s.):

إِنَّ حَوَائِجَ النَّاسِ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ نِعَمِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ، فَلَا تَمَلُّوا النِّعَمَ

Verily the needs of people coming before you are blessings of Allah upon you, therefore do not be bored of blessings.

How shortsighted are those who are hasty in exposing their acts of charities and help to others. How lacking in sense of value are those who crave for appreciation and praise for what they have done for others. Publicity of help extended and display of obligation not only injures the feelings of those helped but also obliterates the reward due from Allah.

WATER SUPPLY TO THE ENEMY

An outstanding instance of generosity by the Imam was the help of water extended to the army men of Hur, who on instructions of Yazid were coming from Kufa to intercept the Imam and his followers. It was midday at a place of burning sand of Arabian desert under extreme summer heat. The army men of Hur were almost dying of thirst due to lack of water. The Imam immediately commanded his men to offer all their water reserves and quench the thirst of the enemy to their full satisfaction, with himself holding a water-bag to help those badly affected and out of their senses suffering from extreme thirst.

The tactics of modern warfare is to cut off the supply lines of food and water from enemy, whether by bombardment, sabotage or boycott. But here we see how the Imam acted to the contrary, knowing fully well that the army men under the command of Hur were his archenemies, having come to intercept his way. He was also aware that they were the very people from Yazid who were ultimately to surround him and his kith and kin on the plains of

Kerbala and to deny water to them from the river of Euphrates even to his six-month old babe.

Historians have further elaborated the unparalleled incidence of Imam's generosity by stating that the help of water was not restricted to the army men under Hur but also extended to their horses who were suffering from thirst. Whilst commanding his men to quench their thirst, the words uttered by the Imam are indeed worth pondering upon. The Imam said this:

ورشفوا الخيل ترشيفا

*And allow the horses to sip water
to their full satisfaction*

Wherefrom can we find such examples of unprecedented generosity and humanism??

SALUTATION BEFORE TALKING

A man came to the Imam and commenced talking before showing the courtesy of salutation and said, "How are you, may Allah protect you?" In reply the Imam said:

السلام قبل الكلام عافاك الله

Salam (salutation) first before any talk, may Allah protect you.

Thence the Imam added by saying:

لا تأذنوا لأحد حتى يسلم

Do not allow anyone to talk before he salutes

From the foregoing, we can notice how the Imam was putting into practice the Islamic teaching of showing courtesy to one another by reciting 'Salamon Alaikom' which is meant to convey a message of peace. This courtesy has its psychological effect , of inspiring a desire of peaceful coexistence with another whatever difference of opinion that may exist between them.

AVOID HAVING TO APOLOGIZE

In one of his advices to people, the Imam said:

إياك وما تعتذر منه، فإنّ المؤمن لا يسيء ولا يعتذر، والمنافق كل يوم يسيء ويعتذر

Beware of those acts for which you may have to beg for excuse. For verily the faithful does not commit

an evil act and does not need to seek an excuse for it, whereas a hypocrite does so every day and has to find an, excuse for it.

Prevention is better than cure and the Imam has taught us to beware of every act lest we have to repent and beg for apology should we do wrong to others.

The Imam has also shown us the difference between a faithful and hypocrite. Whilst a faithful is careful of his every action, a hypocrite is careless and goes on committing wrong and thence does not feel ashamed of having to ask for apology.

AIM OF DEPARTURE FROM MADINA

History bears witness to the fact that by the year 60 A.H., Islam - the divinely creed revealed upon Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) - had been overshadowed by dark clouds of hypocrisy and treachery. The sublime tenets of the faith were openly flouted by Yazid bin Moavia who had usurped the caliphate. Not only his blasphemous words on the throne of Damascus expose his

complete lack of faith but his indecent behaviour and debased actions displayed open rebellion against Islam. People were coerced to pay allegiance to him so as to put a seal of approval to whatever he did, however un-Islamic it was.

In the circumstances, Husain the grandson of Prophet and rightful guardian of Islam could neither succumb to the pressure by the tyrant of paying allegiance nor remain indifferent. Had he done so, it would have meant a fatal blow to Islam. But he was absolutely certain that his life was no longer safe hence he decided to migrate with his kith and kin from Madina - his dear birthplace and home-land - so as to preserve the sanctity of the holy place.

His march from Madina was Jihad against Yazid in protest against evil doings and tyranny. At the time of departure, he abundantly clarified his aim for doing so in his will addressed to his brother Mohammad el Hanafiyya:

إني لم أخرج أشراً، ولا بطراً ولا مفسداً، ولا ظالماً، وإنما
خرجت لطلب الاصلاح في أمة جدي، أريد أن آمر بالمعروف
وأنهى عن المنكر

I did not leave (Madina) for evil, discontentment, corruption or injustice but I only left with an aim of reforming the nation of my grandfather. I intend to command what is recognized as good and prohibit what is restricted

WHAT IS PRECIOUS OF THIS WORLD

On arrival at Mecca, Imam Husain (a.s.) could have easily recruited a sizeable army from the thousands of pilgrims gathered there. Yet he did not do so thus proving his stand as non-aggressive. Neither did he accumulate arms in Mecca nor did he raise an army but all his movements and sayings remained concentrated in expounding the truth and upholding the lofty tenets of Islam. To pilgrims gathered there from distant lands, he advised them to spread the message of true Islam. When leaving the holy Ka'aba in Mecca, he preached the following words of advice:

فإن تكن الدنيا تعد نفيسة * فإن ثواب الله أعلى وأنبى
وإن تكن الابدان للموت أنشئت * فقتل امرئ بالسيف في
الله افضل

وإن تكن الأرزاق قسما مقدرًا * فقلة حرص المرء في الرزق
أجمل

وإن تكن الاموال للترك جمعها * فما بال متروك به المرء
يبخل

*If this world be considered precious
The pleasure of Allah is more elevated and
knowable*

*If bodies have been created to die
Then the death of man by the sword
(in way of Allah) is the best*

*And if sustenance is given according to divine
decree
Why then should man miserly cling to wealth*

*And if treasures gathered is in the end left behind
Why then should man grasp that which he must
abandon*

These words provide a valuable insight into the lofty ideology of the Imam and his attitude towards this worldly life. They depict the true sense of value which is to seek the pleasure

of Allah in every sphere of one's life and the readiness to die in His way when need arises.

To those whose only aim in life is to maximise the earning and hoarding of wealth, the Imam enlightens them that the daily sustenance by divine decree is already granted to all creatures, as such there was no need nor wisdom in doing so.

Defining the true meaning of life according to Islamic ideology, the Imam uttered these words:

إن الحياة عقيدة وجهاد

Verily life is nothing but faith and struggle

What is meant to convey is that the true and successful life of salvation is for the one who cherishes pure and staunch faith in Allah coupled with constant struggle in upholding the true principles and tenets of Islam. Wise and intelligent is the one who bases his life programme upon these two things.

THE SACRIFICE OF LIFE PREDICTED

When departing from Mecca, the Imam proclaimed to his followers of what was at stake and for what aim they should accompany him:

ألا ومن كان باذلاً فينا مهجته، موظناً على لقاء الله نفسه
فليرحل معنا، فإني راحل مصباحاً إن شاء الله

Beware whoever is prepared to sacrifice his life with us and is fully resigned in going to meet his Lord (ready to die in way of Allah) should travel with us. Inshallah I am going to depart from here tomorrow

How abundantly clear these words make of the fact that in following and accompanying the Imam in his march, no one was to be tempted with worldly gains of any sort. Only those willing to sacrifice their lives for the noble cause of safeguarding Islam were wanted.

STAND AGAINST YAZID JUSTIFIED

On reaching the resting-place named Baizah, the Imam justified his stand against Yazid by

quoting the following saying of the Holy Prophet of Islam:

أيها الناس إن رسول الله (ص) قال من رأى سلطانا جائرا، مستحلا لحرام الله، ناكثا عهده، مخالفا لسنة رسول الله، يعمل في عباد الله بالإثم والعدوان، فلم يغير عليه بفعل ولا قول كان حقا على الله أن يدخل مدخله

O people! the Messenger of Allah had said:

'Whoever is faced with a ruler who is oppressive, who permits what is prohibited by Allah, who breaks the covenants of Allah, who contradicts the sunnah of the Prophet of Allah, and who acts with wickedness and gross injustice towards people, if he then does not oppose either by actions or by words, it would be right for Allah to put him into such an abode that befits him (i.e. hell).'

By quoting the above saying of the Prophet, the Imam was justifying his defiance against Yazid in order to expose the tyranny and intransigence against Islam. As a rightful vicegerent and grandson of the Prophet, the Imam thus proclaimed his paramount duty of coming out in the open to challenge Yazid so as to draw a line between truth and falsehood and save Islam from permanent extinction.

It is by drawing lesson and guidance from this ideology of the Imam that the Shi'ite ulema in every era of history raised their voices of protest and took steps against unjust and oppressive rulers. Had it not been for the profound inspiration from the martyrs of Kerbala, the people of Iran led by their ulema would not have dared to throw out their oppressive ruler - Mohammad Reza Pahlavi - and boldly challenge the right of the superpowers of the world to intervene in their internal affairs.

ALLEGIANCE TO VILLAIN UNACCEPTABLE

On the eve of the martyrdom, the Imam delivered a sermon in which he told his followers:
Allegiance to the villain (Yazid) is impossible. Whoever wants to go away can do so and whoever wants to die with me can stay behind.

إِنِّي لَا أَرَى الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا سَعَادَةً، وَالْحَيَاةَ مَعَ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا بَرْمًا

Beause I do not see in death but salvation and living together with oppressors is nothing but humiliation

That life of true dignity lies in absolute steadfastness on the noble principles of Islam and not in compromise nor bowing down before a villain and oppressive ruler, however fatal the course for that may be.

FOR SURVIVAL OF ISLAM

In the course of his defensive Jihad against the enemies who had surrounded him on the plains of Kerbala on the 10th of Muharram 61 A.H., the Imam had uttered these words:

إن كان دين محمد لم يستقم إلاّ بقتلي يا سيوف خذيني

If the creed of Muhammad (i.e. Islam) cannot survive except by my being killed, then Oh! swords come and get me

What a profound sense of devotion and sacrifice and determination to lay down his life for the noble cause of saving Islam. Only one absolutely certain of divine approval of his stand and ultimate, justice in afterlife would utter such words and welcome martyrdom.

CHALLENGE TO THE ENEMY

In the course of the battle at Kerbala on Ashura Day, the Imam was often putting forth this question before the army men of Yazid:

Why do you kill me? Have I made any alteration in the Sharia (of Islam)? Have I shed anybody's blood?

The question was a challenge to the enemy to prove the charge which justified their coming to kill the Imam. It was a proclamation of his innocence to all people of then present and future generations to come. The fact is that the enemy had no answer to justify their stand except their inner prejudices against the household members of the Prophet.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Standing before the army of Yazid on the day of Ashura, the Imam admonished them in these words:

إن لم يكن لكم دين وكنتم لا تخافون يوم المعاد فكونوا
أحراراً في دنياكم

If you have no religion and are not afraid of the day of resurrection, then atleast be freeminded in your worldly matters

In other words, the Imam was telling them that if they followed no religious principles nor any scruples nor were they afraid of the Day of Judgement when they would be brought back to life to account for their misdeeds in their coming out to kill him, then atleast they ought not to behave like slaves in bowing down and succumbing to the pressure of a tyrant ruler.

WHAT FOR DID IMAM HUSAIN SEEK HELP?

On the plains of Kerbala on the Day of Ashura, the Imam was also repeatedly heard calling for help in these words:

هل من ناصر ينصرنا، هل من مغيث يغيثنا

Is there any helper to come and help us?

Is there any one to come to our aid?

What did these words imply and what sort of help did the Imam seek?

From the statement made before leaving Mecca, the Imam had clearly proclaimed his intention and final destination. That he was going to sacrifice his life for the cause of truth and to save Islam and only those ready to die were welcome to accompany him. Moreover, he neither induced anyone nor made any effort to recruit any helpers or army men in the course of his march from Madina. He is mentioned to have extinguished lights on Ashura night to allow those people who might have come with a motive of worldly gains to return home without feeling any embarrassment of having to desert the Imam.

Why then was the Imam raising an alarm and asking for help? The philosophers on the martyrdom of Kerbala tell us that It was meant to sound a final warning to the followers of Yazid to reappraise their position and consider abandoning the path of falsehood of Yazid and switch over to the path of righteousness, so as to redeem themselves from the hell-fire on the Day of Judgement.

Besides the seeking of aid by the Imam was a worldwide message and call for help to all

present and future people to preserve the sanctity of Islam and its tenets against whatever odd that may be. The call for help by the Imam was for the preservation of Islam in its pristine purity, free of any adulteration and alteration.

PHILOSOPHY OF DEATH EXPLAINED

In order to boost further the moral of his companions on the Day of Ashura and acquaint them of the philosophy of death, the Imam had spoken the following words to them:

صبرا بني الكرام فما الموت إلا قنطرة تعبر بكم عن البؤس
والضراء إلى الجنان الواسعة والنعيم الدائمة، فأيكم يكره
أن ينتقل من سجن إلى قصر، وما هو لأعدائكم إلا كمن
ينتقل من قصر إلى سجن وعذاب

Excercise forbearance Oh the sons of the noble people. Verily death is nothing but a bridge over which you are now passing from this world of distress and afflictions towards a vast heaven and eternal bliss. Who among you resent to migrate from this (worldly) prison to (heavenly) palace; and as for your foes, it is like migrating from palace towards prison (of hell)

The foregoing words of the Imam throw good light on the essential Islamic belief in life after life? and reward or punishment on Day of Judgement. But for staunch and firm faith in this belief, one may not be expected to face afflictions and meet death for good cause.

SUPPLICATION TO ALLAH

It was afternoon of Ashura - the 10th Muharram of 61 A.H., when all his companions lay dead with their blood-stained bodies on the burning sands of Kerbala. Imam Husain (a.s.) was left all alone and his heart was drawn and intensely attached to Allah. Towards the sky he suddenly raised his head and in supplication to the Lord, he uttered the following memorable words:

إلهي تركت الخلق طرأً في هواك وأيتمت العيال لكي أراك
فلو قطعتني في الحب إرباً لما مال الفؤاد الى سواك

Oh my Lord! I have given up all without exception out of my love for Thee. And I have abandoned all my family and accepting the orphaning of my children in order to meet Thee. If, out of love for Thee, my body were chopped into pieces, even then my heart will not bend before anyone but Thee.

It was under extreme afflictions that the Imam had shown his undaunted faith and love for Allah, which is unparalleled in the history of mankind. It is indeed a source of inspiration to us all of how one reaches the peak of awareness of divine existence and willing submission to His will.

FINAL SUBMISSION TO ALLAH

And it was towards the evening of Ashura when the blazing sun had already cast the hottest of its rays over the sands of Kerbala. The Imam was profusely bleeding from the countless wounds inflicted upon him by the surrounding enemies. He could no more hold himself on the horseback hence slowly he began to lean towards the ground reciting these words:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَبِاللَّهِ وَعَلِيٍّ مَلَّتْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

In the name of Allah and with (the help of) Allah and by the creed of the messenger of Allah

As the forehead of the Imam touched the burning sands on the ground, he uttered the following historical and inspiring words

addressed to the Almighty Allah:

رضا بقضائك وتسليماً لأمرك و صبراً على بلائك لا معبود
سواك يا غياث المستغيثين

*Willingly do I submit to Thy Will And bow down
do to Thy command*

*Accepting from Thee the trials and afflictions with
forebearance*

Oh the Helper of those who seek His help

These last words of the Imam during the most critical moments of his life denote the remarkably high degree of tranquility and undaunted faith in Allah. The severest of the calamities including the three day thirst amidst blazing sun, the separation from his dear kith and kin and the forthcoming tortures to his household members did not shake him from his firm stand against the tyrant Yazid and his determination ,to save the Islam from extinction.

The sublime words of the Imam will ever remain a source of noble inspiration in all ages to all members of mankind irrespective of creed, race or colour.

The blood-stained body of the Imam inflicted with thousands of wounds by the enemy lay on the ground. And Shimr - the cruel assassin - was close by preparing to cut off his head. Suddenly he heard murmurs from the Imam's lips. He thought he would hear words of curse against him and his friends. He bent over the Imam's prostrated body to hear what he was saying and the following are the last words he could catch from his lips:

Oh my Lord! I have fulfilled my pledge, so let your pledge be also fulfilled

In response to this, a call was heard from an unseen source saying:

Oh Husain! Feel happy that I shall for your sake forgive so many of the sinful of your lovers till you are satisfied

On hearing this call, the lips of the Imam moved again and he was heard saying:

Now the death has become pleasant for me

How compassionate was the Imam that even

during the last moments of his life, he should voice his concern for the ultimate destiny and salvation of his lovers. But how unfortunate would be if those claiming to be his lovers did not care to understand and act upon his teachings.

A question may herewith arise whether the promised forgiveness is a free licence for the friends of the Imam to commit sins what they like. If so, then the threatened punishment for misdeeds in so many ayats of the Holy Qur'an would become null and void.

The fact is that a true lover is the one who does nothing that displeases his beloved. If all the great sacrifices made by the Imam were for the purpose of saving Islam and to uphold its rules of sharia, then to flout and disrespect them would be tantamount to displease our beloved Imam.

Whilst there can be no doubt whatsoever in the pledge of Allah for forgiving the sins of the lovers of the Imam, they have to provide for protection in this worldly life and in the grave against afflictions and punishment resulting from sins committed.

SUMMARY

By a serious study of the sublime words spoken by Imam Husain (a.s.) on different occasions as presented in this booklet, one is apt to arrive at the following conclusions:

1. That Allah is with the one who seeks His pleasure in all actions in his every day life.
2. That when one becomes fully conscious and convinced of the fact that he lives in the kingdom of Allah, enjoys divine bounties, cannot ever hide himself from His sight, and cannot expect or contrive to delay his last breath at the time of death, and knowing very well the hell-fire awaiting as punishment for his misdeeds in this world, one would tend to refrain from committing sins.
3. That a true Shi'ite Muslim is the one who keeps his heart free of malice and fraud against others.
4. That the best of Ibadat (worship) of Allah is of those who perform it out of

profound thanks giving to Him for his countless blessings and not for the sake of winning His favour for worldly desires.

5. That life of contentment instead of craving for more and more provides relaxation and rest to one's body and mind.
6. That the peak of intelligence can only be reached by adhering to truth and righteousness.
7. That true generosity lies in help extended with deep humility and in appreciating opportunity of being able to be of service to others and not in anticipation of publicity and self-glorification. And that generosity even to one's enemy at the time of need is most laudable.
8. That the object of Imam's march from Madina was for no worldly purpose but purely in protest against the tyranny of Yazid and for reforming the Muslim Ummah.
9. That it was incumbent upon each to raise his voice of opposition to the oppressive

and unjust ruler who openly violated the commands of Allah and contradicted the Sunnah of the Prophet.

10. That in the philosophy of the Imam, seeking the pleasure of Allah and sacrifice of life in the way of Allah is more elevated and praiseworthy than clinging to worldly gains and attachments.
11. That true freedom even if one were not following any religion lies in not bowing down before any wicked and oppressive leader.
12. That if one has to submit then let his submission be only before Allah, willingly accepting His Will and every calamity and affliction with forbearance.

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*Dedicated for the sawab of Marhoom Haji
Kassamali Fazal Dharamsi and other
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