



The Martyrdom of Imam Husayn (pbuh) in Karbala (61 A.H. / 680 A.D.)



On Thursday, the 19th of August 2021 A.D. (the 10th of Muharram 1443 A.H.)

On the tenth of Muharram (61 A.H. / 680 A.D.), a tragedy took place in Iraq at a place known as Karbalā on the bank of Euphrates. A large army who were mobilized by the Umayyad regime besieged a group of people numbering less than a hundred and put them under pressure to pay allegiance to the oppressor Caliph of the time and submit to his authority. The small group resisted and a severe battle took place in which they were all killed. However, the event that occurred on the 10th of Muharram in Karbalā became an inspiration for future generations. It was a great Islamic movement spearheaded by Imam Husayn who was the grandson of the Prophet and the greatest Islamic leader at that time.

وَأَسْأَلُهُ أَنْ يَلْقَى الْقَامَ الْحَمْدَ لَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَنْ يَرْزُقَنِي طَلَبَ ثَارِكٍ مَعَ إِمَامٍ هَدَى ظَاهِرٍ نَاطِقٍ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْكُمْ.¹

"I ask Allah to bring me to a praiseworthy position of yours (the Household of the Prophet) in the presence of Allah and grant me the request of taking revenge for the unjustly shed blood of you while we are the companions of an Imam from you (Imam Mahdi) who is guided, is appeared (people can see him), and speaks about the truth."

1. See Mafāṭih al-Jinān, Āshūrā Ziyārah.



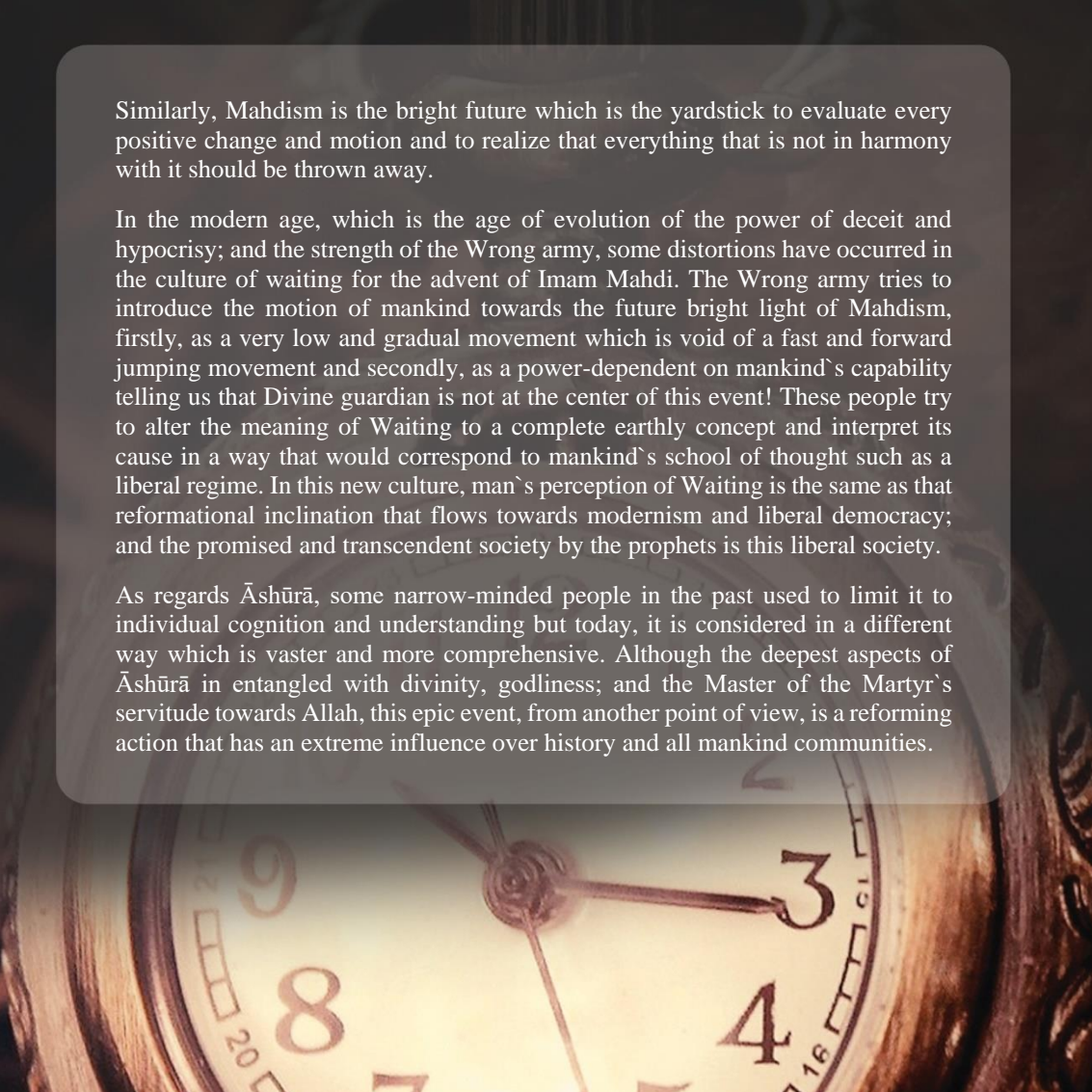


A correlation between Āshūrā and Mahdism

Nowadays, the red way of Āshūrā and the green path of Mahdism [believing in Imam Mahdi] are identified as the most basic “targets” by the infidelity army for cultural attack and opposing the Right army. In the enemies` view, the Shiite society, which is influenced by these two essential points, has more integrity and power of motion. So, for the adversaries to collapse the harmony and unity of a society, it is essential to think about how to remove these huge targets more than anything else!

Āshūrā has a profound effect on the formation and transparency of the historical alignment between the Right and the Wrong. In the event of Āshūrā, there is no good quality, but it is seen in the army of the Master of the Martyrs (Imam Husayn) and there is no moral vice, but it is found in the soldiers of Yazīd and 'Umar bin Sa'd's army.

Āshūrā is a manifestation of belief and godliness that stood in front of animosities and secret wickedness that was hidden in the hearts of some repulsive people that manifested itself in that battle. This is why getting familiar with Āshūrā gives people a real insight and criterion about knowing excellence and badness and removes one`s negligence about what he should know.



Similarly, Mahdism is the bright future which is the yardstick to evaluate every positive change and motion and to realize that everything that is not in harmony with it should be thrown away.

In the modern age, which is the age of evolution of the power of deceit and hypocrisy; and the strength of the Wrong army, some distortions have occurred in the culture of waiting for the advent of Imam Mahdi. The Wrong army tries to introduce the motion of mankind towards the future bright light of Mahdism, firstly, as a very low and gradual movement which is void of a fast and forward jumping movement and secondly, as a power-dependent on mankind's capability telling us that Divine guardian is not at the center of this event! These people try to alter the meaning of Waiting to a complete earthly concept and interpret its cause in a way that would correspond to mankind's school of thought such as a liberal regime. In this new culture, man's perception of Waiting is the same as that reformational inclination that flows towards modernism and liberal democracy; and the promised and transcendent society by the prophets is this liberal society.

As regards Āshūrā, some narrow-minded people in the past used to limit it to individual cognition and understanding but today, it is considered in a different way which is vaster and more comprehensive. Although the deepest aspects of Āshūrā in entangled with divinity, godliness; and the Master of the Martyr's servitude towards Allah, this epic event, from another point of view, is a reforming action that has an extreme influence over history and all mankind communities.

Moreover, Āshūrā aimed to aid all the monotheists all over history to teach people how to act concerning infidelity and atheism. Unfortunately, there is a mutual relation between explicating the event of Āshūrā as a sole divine belief of Imam Hussain and his companions; and vision that tries to lessen Imam Hussain's battle to a combat between Umayyad and Hāshemite. In addition, these two views serve each other fully to ultimately deny every kind of responsibility and sociability from Āshūrā's teachings and define Āshūrā as an abandoned part of history that is void of any social impact and is limited to some people's individual belief and rites.

The fact is that the event of Āshūrā is the central zone of monotheism in the whole world and forms the basic slogan of Imam Mahdi's flag bearers who say (*Yā la Thārāt al Hussain*) meaning, "*O! Those who seek revenge for the blood of Hussain.*" The pervasive event of Āshūrā must not be limited to an event in the Umayyad era and then to one's faith.

In the view of unfair people, since the world community moves towards secularism, the status of hermeneutic interpretation of Āshūrā – in a way that corresponds to the modern universal movement – is very important. It is thought that how Āshūrā can be interpreted so that it would correlate to the world community; moreover, based on the vision of these people Āshūrā should not be in conflict with secularism and modernism and should not disturb liberal democracy and modernism from forming globalization. This is the greatest distortion related to Āshūrā that has a destructive effect on the doctrine of Mahdism.



Common purposes of Imam Husayn and Imam Mahdi

Introduction:

In Shiite culture, two uprisings, in which the leaders of both are infallible Imams and from the prophet's offspring, have an outstanding and prominent status: One of them is "Imam Husayn's uprising" which occurred in 61 A.H, and the other one is "the universal revolution of Imam Mahdi" which will take place in the future.

There is an inseparable link between these two uprisings in a way that each one completes the other and is in line with that. The most important feature of both uprisings is that each one forms a "Right" army against the "Wrong" one. Both uprisings consist of members of the "Right" army, who oppose the "Wrong" one like the agents of corruption, tyrants, atheists, and wealth lovers. Both of them take place to rectify corrupt and destroyed society and their most important aim is to revive transcendent religious and humane teachings of Allah and to eradicate the obstacles that existed against the human's growth. The religious and political message of these two uprisings is to fight against the tyrant and corrupt governments and not to put up with the despots and dictators; moreover, their main goal is delivering human society to transcendence and ultimate perfection which is nothing but to reach servitude and nearness to Allah; and correcting people's immoral, and unpleasant characters and behaviors.

It can be said that both uprisings are in continuation of the prophets and righteous people's revolutions over history; moreover, they themselves were the origin and the source of many other Right-seeking and Wrong-fighting uprisings. In the Shiite's view, the ultimate battle between the Right (light, faith, and goodness) and the Wrong (infidelity, chaos, and evils) will take place in the advent of Imam Mahdi's era by the time he will rise. Many nations and religions wait for this universal and comprehensive uprising. The promise of this ultimate battle between the Wrong and the Right, which would lead to human salvation is mentioned in all of the Divine books and religions. Thus, a brief study of links between the two uprisings – that are listed here - would be useful to the right-seeking people:

1. Fighting against cruelty and tyranny:

Imam Husayn considers Yazid's government a cause of destroying the religion and states,

وَعَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ السَّلَامُ إِذْ قَذَلْتِ الْأُمَّةُ بِرَاعٍ مِثْلَ يَزِيدَ.¹

“When the nation gets caught by a leader like Yazid, one must say goodbye to Islam. [Islam will be destroyed.]”

This is why the Imam strongly says,

مِثْلِي لَا يَتَابِعُ مِثْلَهُ.²

“Someone like me will not pay allegiance to someone like him.”

By his martyrdom, Imam Husayn caused the Umayyad government to be disgraced and consequently overthrown. Likewise, the uprising of Imam Mahdi will cause all the dictator governments to be disgraced and their power to become unstable. As regards this matter, Imam Husayn states,

يُظْهِرُ اللَّهُ قَائِمَنَا فَيَنْتَقِمُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ.³

“Our Upriser will rise and will take revenge from the tyrants.”

It is recited in Nudbah supplication (which is one of the major Shiite prayers about Imam Mahdi and his occultation.),

أَيْنَ قَاصِمِ شَوْكَةِ الْمُتَعَدِّينَ، أَيْنَ هَادِمِ أَيْدِي الشُّرَكَ وَالنَّفَاقِ، أَيْنَ مُبِيدِ أَهْلِ الْفُسُوقِ وَالْبُغْيَانِ وَالطُّغْيَانِ... أَيْنَ مُبِيدِ الْعَتَاةِ وَالْمُرَدَّةِ⁴

“Where is the one who overwhelms the transgressors' glory? Where is the one who destroys the buildings of polytheism and hypocrisy? Where is the terminator of the people of guilt, vice, and rebellion? Where is the terminator of the rebels and disobedient?”

Just as the Prophet, Imam Ali, and Imam Husayn respectively fought with Abū Sufyān, Muāwiya, and Yazid, Imam Mahdi will fight with Sufyānī who is the offspring of Abū Sufyān for the sake of faith in Allah, truth, and justice.

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol.1, p. 184.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 44, p. 325.

3. Ithbāt al-Hudā, vol. 3, p. 569.

4. See Mafāṭīh al-Jinān, Nudba Supplication



2. Seeking reformation

Both Imam Husayn`s uprising and Imam Mahdi`s revolution are aimed to reform society. Related to this issue, Imam Husayn states,

أَنِّي لَمْ أَخْرُجْ أَشْرًا وَلَا بَطْرًا وَلَا مُفْسِدًا وَلَا ظَالِمًا، وَأَنَا خَرَجْتُ لِطَلْبِ الْإِصْلَاحِ فِي أُمَّةٍ جَدِّي مُحَمَّدٌ أَرِيدُ أَنْ أَمُرَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَنْهِيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
أَسِيرُ سِيرَةَ جَدِّي مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَبِي عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ،¹

"I did not move because of joy or arrogance neither for making corruption or cruelty, rather I moved to reform my grandfather`s nation (whose name is) Muhammad. I am going to enjoin the good and prohibit the evil, I want to act in the way of my grandfather, Muhammad, and my father, Ali bin Abī Tālib."

For reforming the role of Imam Mahdi, it is narrated from the prophet who stated,

يُصْلِحُ الْأُمَّةَ بَعْدَ فُسَادِهَا،²

"By recourse to Imam Mahdi, Allah will amend this nation after its corruption."

3. Awakening the nation

The aim of Imam Husayn mentioned in Arba`in supplication is as follows,

وَبَدَّلْ مُجْتَمَعُكَ لَيْسَتْ تَقْدِيرُ عِبَادَكَ مِنَ الْجَهَالَةِ وَخَيْرَةُ الضَّلَالَةِ،³

"He sacrificed his blood for the sake of You, to rescue your worshippers from ignorance and bewilderment of misguidance."

As the same, Imam Mahdi`s goal is to rescue people from mental slavery and to free them from the chains of captivity. It is narrated from the Prophet, regarding Imam Mahdi`s motivation for rising to have said,

....يُصْلِحُ الْأُمَّةَ بَعْدَ فُسَادِهَا،⁴

"...to reform the nation after its corruption."

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 44, p. 329.

2. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 83.

3. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 101, p. 331.

4. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 51, p. 83.

4. Restoring religion`s honor

Honor is the basis of Imam Husayn and Imam Mahdi`s motion and it can be the basis of a strategic policy for making a religious government at an international level. Imam Husayn stated on Āshūrā day:

....هَيْهَاتَ مِنَّا الدُّلَّةُ يَا أَيُّهَا اللَّهُ ذَاكَ لَنَا وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَجُورُ طَائِفَةٍ وَطَهْرُ طَائِفَةٍ وَأَثُوفُ حِمَّةٍ وَنَفُوسُ آيَةٍ مِنْ أَنْ نُؤْتَى طَاعَةُ النَّاسِ عَلَى مَصَارِعِ الْكِرَامِ.¹

“...humiliation is far from us. Allah and His Prophet and the believers and pure intellects and great men of religious zeal deny accepting that for us. They do not let us prefer the obedience of the humble to an honorable death.”

Again, Imam Husayn stated,

مَوْتُ فِي عَزٍّ خَيْرٌ مِنْ حَيَاتٍ فِي ذُلٍّ.²

“Dying in an honorable way is better than living in humiliation.”

Religious government as a government that sets the ground for the dignified Mahdist government, avoids any relation or negotiation with someone or something in which there is a probability of humiliation since the universal government of Imam Mahdi is introduced as the one that only gives honor to the religion. In Eftitāh supplication, it is recited,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَرْغِبُ إِلَيْكَ فِي دَوْلَةٍ كَرِيمَةٍ نُرِي بِهَا الْإِسْلَامَ وَأَهْلَهُ وَتُبْدِلُ بِهَا النِّقَاطَ وَأَهْلَهُ.³

“O Allah! We are eager towards You to find the dignified government by which You will honor Islam and the Muslims and dishonor hypocrisy and its people.”

5. True revival of the prophet`s way:

Imam Husayn`s era was the period that Islam was in isolation. He, in a letter which he sent to Basra and meanwhile invited the heads of their tribes to help him, warned them about adding false innovations into Islam and abandoning the Prophet`s sunnah and stated,

أَنَا أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةِ نَبِيِّهِ فَإِنَّ السُّنَّةَ قَدْ أُمِيتَتْ وَإِنَّ الْبِدْعَةَ قَدْ أُحْيِيَتْ.⁴

“I invite you to Allah`s Book and His Prophet`s way. Indeed, the Prophet`s way is destroyed and (false) innovations are revived.”

1. Khārāzmī Maqtal, vol. 2, p. 7; Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 45, p. 83.

3. See Mafātīh al Jinān.

2. Bihār al Anwār, vol. 44, p. 192.

4. Tabarī History, vol. 4, p. 265.

In Imam of the age's occultation period, the Prophet's religion and his sunnah will be forgotten too and he will bring the Quran and the Prophet's true religion back into use. According to some narrations from Imam Ali the status of the Quran and the Prophet's religion, before and after the advent of Imam Mahdi is introduced. We read in one of those narrations,

يَتَغَيَّرُ الْقَوَى عَلَى الْقَدَى إِذَا عَطَفُوا الْقَدَى عَلَى الْقَوَى وَيَتَغَيَّرُ الرَّأْيُ عَلَى الْقُرْآنِ إِذَا عَطَفُوا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى الرَّأْيِ... فَنَرِيكُمْ كَيْفَ عَدَلَ الشَّرِيعَةِ وَنُجِّيَ مِثَّ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ.¹

“(When Imam Mahdi rises,) he will change worldly desires into heavenly guidance after they had altered salvation into worldly desires; and he will change the ideas based on the Quran after they had made the Quran follow their ideas... then he (Mahdi) will show you how the fair method of governing is, and he will revive what have been abandoned from the Book and the Prophet's sunnah.”

The final word:

The most important aspects of Ashūrā are in its teachings, examples, comprehensive, and perpetual messages. These Islamic teachings have always been life-giving, motivator, effective, and lasting. Although Imam Husayn's uprising took place in a special time and place, its effects are vast, lasting; and beyond time and place. The slogan,

كُلُّ يَوْمٍ عَاشُورَا وَكُلُّ أَرْضٍ كَرْبَلَا

“Every day is Ashūrā and every place is Karbalā” offers a role model and program to all nations and cultures that seek the right and justice. Imam Husayn's epic means denying humiliation and self-respect; battling with cruelty, revealing the real face of the tyrant, seeking the right; inviting people to Imams' leadership; observing justice, and equation; giving value to freedom and nobility; leading to the revival of Islamic religion and traditions, disgracing the wrong, fighting with Satanic innovations; sustaining the right and justice; enjoining to good and prohibiting the evil, reforming the society, fighting against corruption; showing the necessity of sacrificing for the sake of belief and idea, demonstrate the necessity of forming a religious government, clarifying the right of the Household of the Prophet which was taken away of them, overthrowing the dictatorship, making a positive wave in history, trying to reform the corrupt society, and so on.

1. See Nahj al-Balāgha, 138th Sermon.

Imam Husayn and Yazīd in Karbalā land fought with each other and although seemingly Yazīd won the battle, but in fact, ultimately Imam Husayn conquered and his thought and message remained as a heritage for all the nations throughout the human history. He sacrificed his life for the sake of this holy way.

Surprisingly, Imam Husayn's doctrine and idea; and his thought and message will be seen in Imam Mahdī's rising. It means that the role model of the universal rising of Imam Mahdi is the same as the rising of Imam Husayn; and Imam Mahdi's programs and goals will come to reality at the time of his advent. The two risings have many aspects in common and in fact, they share the goals, programs, and demands. Some of these were fulfilled in Āshūrā, but all of them will come true at the time of Imam Mahdi's advent and in the light of his universal rising.

Some of these common aspects are: Seeking the Right and fighting with the Wrong, looking for justice and applying it, destroying tyrant governments; guiding and rescuing people; reforming and making positive changes, reviving transcendent religious teachings and ultimately; forming a government and political leadership for the infallible Imams.

Although Imam Husayn's rising had a special and effective role in delivering these goals and programs as everlasting universal messages and lessons, these goals will be fulfilled completely by Imam Mahdi. At that time, the seeds planted in the event of Karbala will bear fruit and the world will be filled with justice. Moreover, the goals of all Divine prophets will be fulfilled and human beings will experience real peace, security, and salvation.

A considerable point is that the two risings of the two Imams also share the same place in starting and ending their mission, where are Mecca and Kūfa. Imam Husayn started his rising from Mecca; after leaving Medina, he entered Mecca and announced his rising next to Ka'ba and then set out to Kūfa. Likewise, according to narrations, Imam Mahdi, after his advent in Mecca, will invite people to pay allegiance to him and then will start his reforming movements; then, after finishing the rising and establishing justice in the world, he will set the base of his government in Kūfa. As Imam Bāqir stated,

يُخْرِجُ مِنْ مَكَّةَ هُوَ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ الثَّلَاثُ مِائَةً وَبِضْعَةَ عَشَرَ يُبَايِعُونَهُ بَيْنَ الرُّكْنِ وَالْمَقَامِ،¹

“Imam Mahdi and three hundred of his companions will rise from Mecca and tens of people will pay allegiance to him al-Rukn and al-Maqām (which are two places in Masjid al-Harām in Mecca).”

1. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 52, p. 225.