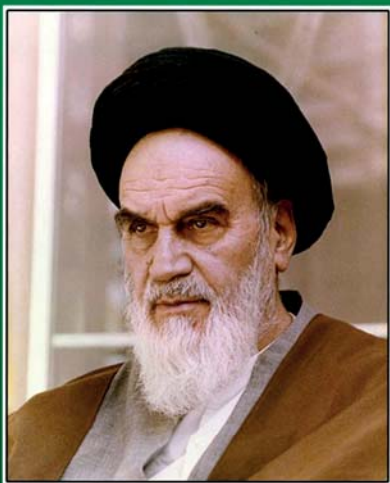




Ashura in the vision of Imam Khomeini



It is the months of Muharram and Safar that have kept Islam alive.

International Affairs Department
The Institute for Compilation and Publication of
Imam Khomeini's Works



Ashura in Imam Khomeini's Vision

“Greetings to Hossein ibn Ali (PBUH) and all praises upon him who, with very few aides rose to uproot and do away with the widespread cruelty of the usurpers of Caliphate. The insignificant number of his companions did not make Imam Hossein (PBUH) think or compromise with the oppressors. He let Karbala become the site of the martyrdom of himself, his children and his few companions. He made his cry of: "Abjection, never!" reach the ears of the seekers of truth.

Greetings unto the standard-bearer of the school of martyrdom. Greetings unto the ever-victorious oppressed of the history. Greetings and salutation upon Imam Hossein (PBUH) and his companions. And Greetings unto the True Children of the Ashura "Imam Khomeini and his disciples ".

In this issue of magazine we have brought some important issues before the followers of the school of martyrdom and the words of a great man who was a perfect example of an imitator-follower of the Master of Martyrs. A man who, in the dark night of oppression, hoisted the shining torch of martyrdom, raised the banners of uprising, eradicated the shame of silence and objection from



the holy skirts of the vanguards of Imam Hossein's blood-smeared Shiism and once more, in the sovereignty of iron and steel, taught the barefooted and oppressed peoples of the world the slogans of "Either Victory or Martyrdom" and the "Triumph of Blood over the sword," and, in the end, overthrew the "Yazidi" rule of the time by the hands of a nation that had cherished their love for Ashura and the memory of the bloody event of Karbala in their heart by tears, blood and truthfulness, from generation to the next.



May his memory live forever, he who consistently used to testify that "Whatever we have, we have it by the blessings of Ashiira and Muharram! " We hope that lovers of the path of Hossein (PBUH) and those who ambulate in the footsteps of Khomeini will, as in the past, guard their honor of being the fore-runners in the uprising of the "Master of the Free" (Imam Hossein -) and of imitating his path and, by their auspicious presence in the impregnable bastion of "walayat" (leadership), remain firm in their

defense of the Islamic Revolution and be true custodians of the priceless, divine trust, the Holy Order of the Islamic Republic until the advent of the universal extender of peace and the avowed avenger.

Ashura Attracted Great Attention of Imam Khomeini

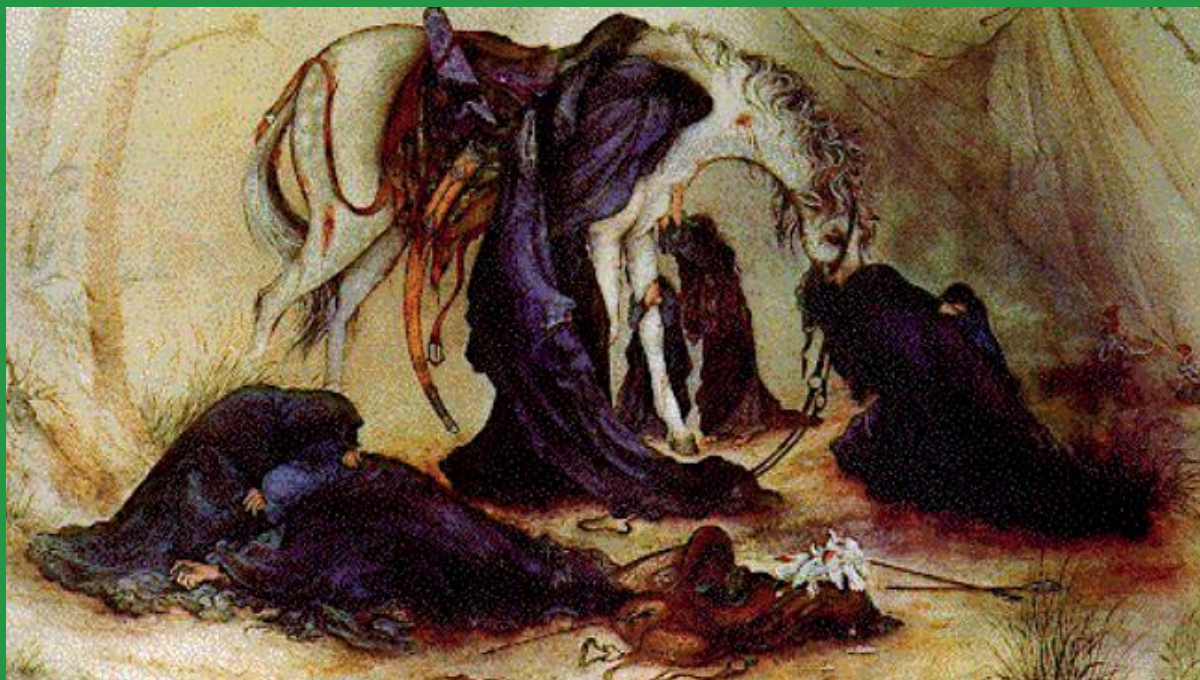
Ashura occupied a large area of Imam Khomeini's words and writings, through analysis and reading the contemporary implications on our cultures, and the lessons learned from this event in order to guide our Islamic nations to the important values and principles of Imam Hussein and his pure Household (PBUH).

Imam Khomeini says in regards to demonstrating some of the dimensions of the revolution of Karbala:

‘Ashura is the Revolution of the advocates for justice, it rose amongst the few in number and great in faith and love, to face the oppressors, people of palaces and arrogant thieves, and its law is that this approach addresses the life of this nation at all times and all the lands.’

‘All the prophets came in order to reform society, all of them were of firm belief in this issue, namely, that the individual must give his all for society, and so Imam Hussein (PBUH) revolted according to this driving factor, and sacrificed himself and his followers. Therefore the individual must reform the community.’

High Spiritual Certainty of the Companions of Imam Hossein (PBUH)



To clarify the place of high spiritual certainty of the companions of Imam Hossein (PBUH), Imam Khomeini says:

‘As the Master of Martyrs on the day of Ashura approached the time of martyrdom his face would shine more, and his companions would compete to win martyrdom, they knew they would soon become martyrs, but they raced towards it because they knew where it would lead them, and they knew why they came (to support the Imam), they were aware: that we have come to perform our divine duty, we have come to save Islam.’

‘The revolution of Ashura exploded at the hands of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH), and by sacrificing his own blood and the blood of his dear ones saved Islam and justice, and condemned the rule of the Umayyads and demolished its rules and its foundations.’

‘Islam is dear to the degree that the children of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and his family) have sacrificed their own lives for this religion.’

‘When the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) saw that they are distorting the religion of Islam, commit evil and oppress on behalf of the Islamic caliphate, and this is being reflected in the world as acts committed by the Khalifah (caliph) of the Messenger of Allah, the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) was aware that his mandate was to rise and also to kill in order to erase the effects of Muawiya and his son.’

‘This phrase – every day is Ashura and every land is Karbala – what a great phrase it is ... Our nation should live by this word everyday, that is that today is Ashura and we need to stand in the face of injustice, and here also is Karbala, and it is not confined to a piece of land, is not limited to a range of individuals, Karbala is not confined to seventy warriors and the land of Karbala , all the land must play this role and fulfill its duty.’

Imam Khomeini confirms that the principle of victory and defeat is not entirely linked to a military triumph, but in fact that the work is in accordance with the divine standards and falls under the legal mandate.

The great Imam Khomeini says:

‘The death of the Master of Martyrs (PBUH) was not a defeat, because it was in the way of God, and revolting and dying in the way of God is never defeat.’

Imam Khomeini views the loss of a loved one from amongst the martyrs not as a calamity, but is the essence of existence and immortality in the world of the Hereafter. He says:

‘Imam Hussein (PBUH) saw his jihad (strive) to be in the way of Allah, and for Allah, and because his jihad was for Allah, he did not see it as a loss of loved ones, since they are ammunition for the world of existence.’



Ashura Significant Since Centuries

Muharram and Ashura have been a significant subject since centuries for Shiite and in fact entire humanity. Many have looked at Muharram with beliefs, respect, fulfillment of desires, personal gains but there are very few who have seen this event full of secrets with a divine vision to get benefit for humanity from this precious gem.

Muharram and Ashura is a deep and vast sea on whose shore we can see a big crowd but there are no deep divers seen who can dive deep into this sea.

There are many who have thought about Muharram and Ashura and some have distanced themselves and distanced others as well. They have drowned themselves and done the same for others as well. Some took full advantage of the generosity of this sea of Karbala lying on its shore whereas some did not even took the pain to go to the shore and created another Karbala out of their imagination and illusions which has no relation at all with the real Karbala.

God Blessed Imam Khomeini with Extraordinary Vision

Allah has granted Imam Khomeini extraordinary vision and foresight. The entire world has seen the miracles of his divine foresight and vision. Whatever Imam acquired was at the mercy of Ashura and his statement in this regard comes as under:

"Whatever I have is from Doyen of Martyrs" has crossed all limits of fame. Volumes of books would be required to present what Imam (got from Ashura and Karbala; and whatever he acquired from Ashura and Karbala he also presented it to others. According to Imam Ashura is not just an event it is a school and Ideology and he has absorbed the path of salvation of Ummah and realities of religion from this school. Imam shed tears on Ashura and mourned on the Martyrs but at the same also acquired the message of Ashura.



This statement of Imam that Muharram is the month of victory of blood over sword should get imprinted on heart of every human.

He said about Muharram: With the advent of the month of Muharram; This is the month in which blood dominated over sword. This is the month in which the power of truth defeated falsehood forever and placed a seal on the forehead of oppressors and devilish governments. A month which has shown the path of victory to every historic generation by raising itself on the spearhead. A month in which history of Superpowers defeat by words of truth was written. A month in which the leader of Muslims, the Doyen of Martyrs has shown us the path of resistance against tyrants. A path where the lovers of freedom, those desiring resolutions and righteous confronters with their firm feet and closed fists should dominate the Satanic tanks, army and weapons thereby destroying falsehood by the words of truth.

Philosophy of Mourning Gatherings from Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini



Don't think that we weep and arrange these mourning meetings to please the Master of Martyrs! No, he has no need for our tears and our tears, per se, cannot do anything! But these lamentation gatherings and meetings unite the people and give them direction. 30 to 35 million people during the month of Muharram, especially the Ashura days, all have a united aspect and move in one direction. Some of the Imams (PBUH) has asked that mourning be arranged for them at Mina. Some of the Infallible Imams (Peace be upon them) have wanted that elegies be recited for them from the pulpits, others have stressed that rewards will accrue to those who cry, make others cry or appear to be sad and crying. The issue is not shedding of tears at all, it is political for our Imams (PBUH) with their divine vision wanted to unite and mobilize the nations, bring them together by various ways so that they won't be vulnerable.

Some of the Infallibles, (e.g. Imam Baqir (PBUH) may have been the one) have wanted a reciter of elegies to be stationed at Mina (a place where Hajj pilgrims converge to perform certain Hajj rites) and recite elegies in their names. That was not because Imam Baqir it has been narrated that Hadrat Imam Muhammad Baqir (PBUH) had willed 800 Dirham's for his mourning and lamentation services. Imam Sadiq (PBUH) is reported to have said: "My father said: 'O Jafar, make an endowment from my property for the mourners to mourn for me at

Mina during Hajj performance for ten consecutive years and thus revive the custom of lamentation and weep over my innocence.”

The depth significance of the lamentation meetings is little known and, to some, it is not evident at all. Our narratives place such great value on even one drop of tear, even for pretension to crying, for the victim of Karbala not because the Master of Martyrs the Ashura Uprising personally needs the tears or lamentations and not even for the reward that those



who shed tear will receive. But, why such extraordinary rewards have been prescribed for the lamentation gatherings? Why has God Almighty granted so much reward for even one drop of tear, for even pretension to crying? The political dimension of the issue is, little by little, becoming known and, God willing, it will become more evident in the future. The assignment of such great rewards for lamentation and mourning gatherings, for recitation of elegies has been in addition to its spiritual and devotional aspects, for political considerations, a major political purpose. The day the related narratives were issued, this savior minority group was afflicted with the Omayyad and Abbasid rulers, a small minority vis-à-vis great powers. At that time, in order to organize the political activities of this minority, they devised a path which itself was an organizing element. That device was to quote divine inspirational sources for the formation of these meetings, their greatness and the highest reward for mourners. The Shiite minority in those days gathered around these lamentation meetings, many of them did not know what it was all about. The issue was imparting organization to a minority group that faced a cruel majority. In the course of history these lamentation gatherings developed into an all-inclusive organization in every Muslim Country. In Iran, which is the cradle of Islam and Shiism that which threw fear in the despotic autocrats, who meant to destroy the clergy and Islam, was these mourning sessions.

Maybe Westernized individuals call us a weeping nation and maybe our own people cannot grasp the meaning of so much reward for one drop of tear or for one lamentation gathering.

Imam Hussein (PBUH) is reported to have said: “Let no servant (of God) shed tears for me unless God for such act descend him in Paradise someday.”

Perhaps they cannot digest or comprehend the promises made for praying. The political aim of these tears and prayers is to draw people together and their collective attention to God that will result in their unity and mobilization for an Islamic aim. A lamentation gathering is for people to cry for the Master of Martyrs and be rewarded for it in the Hereafter. However, the important point is the political aspect that was designed by our Infallible Imams (PBUH) in the early days of Islam, and will last to the end, to get all the people gathered under one single banner, one single ideology and nothing can bring about such unity as readily as the mourning for Imam Hussein (PBUH).

* * *

Others go to the mosques, listen to the sermons and hear what is being preached but when time comes for lamentation, they leave. This is because they do not know the significance of lamentation and elegies for the Infallibles. It is these mourning gatherings that have saved and preserved the altar and the pulpit. If there was no lamentation, this pulpit would not be here today. We must cry for our Martyrs, cry out loudly and awaken the people. We must make the people realize that our lamentation is not to earn rewards. We do lament to advance. The Master of Martyrs did not sacrifice himself to earn rewards; he was not in need of such a reward. He did so to save the ideology, to advance Islam and revive it. You who cry from the pulpit and make others cry, you who recite elegies that make listeners shed tears, your aim and purpose must be to advance Islam by these tumultuous uproars just as you have done so to the present time. People must be made to understand that the aim of our lamentations is not just to make them cry, rather, they must know for sure that Islam has been preserved by these tears, even Sham weeping helps the ideology.



Bani Umayyah’s Vicious Agenda

The Bani Umayyah and specifically Yazid wanted to eradicate Islam and revive the era of ignorance.

He denied the Quranic revelations and religious teachings by his words and also practically trampled them.

The Doyen of Martyrs started an uprising against Yazid when He saw Islam getting wiped off thereby got salvation for Islam from Yazid's impure motives.

Imam Khomeini paid high attention towards this aspect of Ashura uprising and by taking inspirations from it gave salvation to Islam from the Yazid of his era and his evil motives. This is the reason that in the vision of Imam Muharram is not just the month of mourning instead a month of salvation for Islam and revival of religion.

Imam Khomeini says:

Muharram is the month in which Islam revived through the leader of crusader and leader of oppressed. The doyen of martyrs gave salvation to Islam from the transgressing elements of Bani Umayyah. Islam from its advent has been watered with the blood of Martyrs which made it fruitful. Muharram



for Shiite is a month in which success has been achieved in exchange of blood and sacrifice of life.

Imam Khomeini by considering Muharram as the month of calamities also got towards its true secret because there is a great secret hidden behind these calamities. The outcome of the recognition of Ashura which had led it to the conclusion that it was not the calamities which befell upon Imam Hossein instead Imam Hossein (PBUH) turned towards the calamities. There were two major objectives active behind taking upon such big calamities.

One was the nurturing and development of those followers of truth who are willing to sacrifice their lives and second was the defeat of a merciless enemy. Both of these objectives cannot be achieved without stepping inside the valley of calamities. The ignorant human being worships to whatever extent but until unless he bears hardships in the way of Allah and gives sacrifices he can neither purify himself nor can he defeat his enemy. This is the reason for Imam Muharram is the month of construction of human self and defeating enemies.

He says: Muharram to what extent is a month full of calamities and how much constructive it is for man and defeat of enemies. Muharram is the month of great revolution by the Doyen of

Martyrs and Doyen of Saints in which by rising against the devils (Taghut) He taught the lessons of constructing man (self) and defeating enemies of humanity. Imam said that the secret of annihilation of oppressors and defeat of tyrants in this month lies in sacrifices and specifically sacrificing life. This is a green chapter of Islamic teachings for all communities until the Day of Judgment.

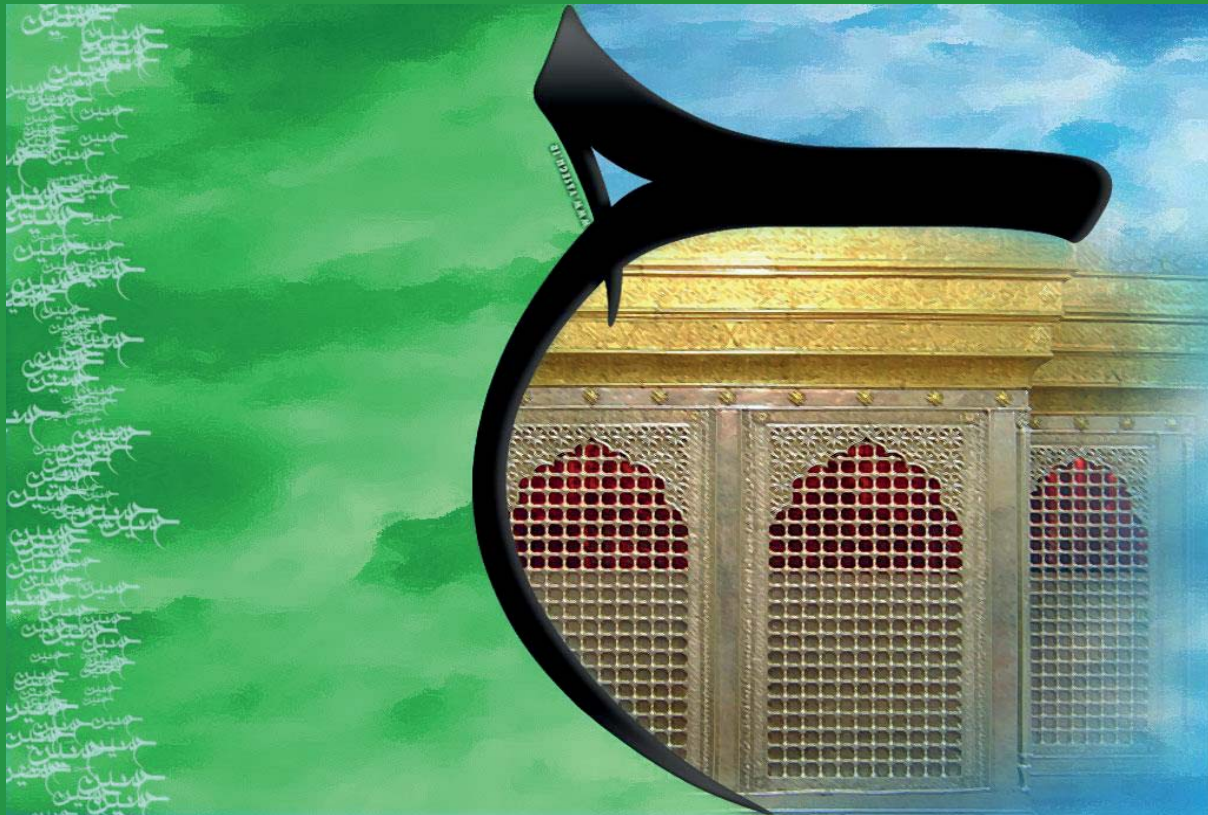


There are many factors involved in survival of Islam amongst which are the hardships of Scholars, the dissemination by preachers, the efforts of writers and Jurist, the efforts of lecturers and teachers but according to Imam the main cause behind survival of Islam is Muharram and Ashura. If the uprising of the Doyen of Martyrs would not have been there than neither lectures nor lecturers would have existed, neither Jurisprudence nor propagation would have taken place, neither pen nor book would be present, neither Quran nor its reciters, neither pulpits nor orators would have existed. All these categories and groups are well appreciated for their efforts in the survival of Islam and have its own position but we should not be negligent about the main cause of survival of Islam till date and that is Muharram and Ashura. Imam had no hesitations to say explicitly in front of scholars, preachers and Jurists that the survival of Islam is only guaranteed by Muharram and Ashura.

Imam says: It is this Muharram and Safar which has kept Islam alive. We should now keep Muharram and Safar alive by expressing the calamities of Ahlulbayt because it is due the calamities of Ahlulbayt (peace be upon them) that this religion is still alive. Muharram is that month in which people are prepared and have the readiness to listen to the truth.

This implies that Muharram is a month in which are inclined towards listening to truth. It is intended that just like the Holy month of Ramazan in which the hearts of believers are ready for understanding Quran similarly in the month of Muharram the hearts are ready for truth and righteousness. They are ready to accept truth, defend and establish righteousness because it is the month of righteousness. Hence in this month nothing else other than promotion of truth and following of truth should happen. As such no day in a year is for following and promoting falsehood but at least in the month of Muharram utmost care should be taken to ensure that falsehood is not promoted.

In this month mischief, distortions and innovations have no place at all. In this month speaking anything other than truth, uttering a single word away from truth and speaking something else other than truth is equivalent to assassinating the Doyen of Martyrs and his loyal companions. This is because the Doyen of Martyrs for the sake of defending truth whereas Yazid for the sake eradicating truth confronted each other in Karbala.



Ashura as the Basis of Revival of Religion

The Bani Umayyah and specifically Yazid wanted to eradicate Islam and revive the era of ignorance. He denied the Quranic revelations and religious teachings by his words and also practically trampled them. When the Dyon of Martyrs saw Islam and its ideals are in danger of getting into oblivion he started an uprising against Yazid and his impure motives.

Imam Khomeini paid high attention towards this aspect of the Ashura uprising which brought salvation to Islam.

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The believers were always recommended by Imam Khomeini to pave the way of Imam Hossein and Ashura throughout their lives.