

## **The Revolution of Imam Hussein (as) & Our Duties**

*Speaker's notes for 6th Muharram (Saturday)*

### **Introduction:**

1. Revolution of Imam Hussain
2. Our duties

### **Understanding what Islam is:**

1. Philosophy of life
2. Man is vicegerent of Allah on earth – have to fulfil our duties
3. Beliefs and laws are inseparable, actions are expressions of concepts
4. Our aim is to gain Allah's satisfaction, success achieved by obeying Allah's commands and will be rewarded in next life, whilst trying to achieve materialistic success while neglecting duties to creator is in fact failure

### **Understanding the personalities involved:**

#### **Imam Hussain:**

1. Son of Ali and Fatima (alayhimussalam). Their qualities undisputed amongst all Muslims
2. Position of Hussain (Hussain is from me..., and Hasan and Hussain...)
3. Ahadith of Prophet regarding ahlulbayt (qul la as'alakum alyhi ajra..., hadith al-thaqalayn etc.)  
If looked at objectively Prophet did not want us to respect Ahlul-bayt because they're his family, ie personal reason otherwise why did he not accept material reward, rather he commanded us to obey them in order to safeguard message of Islam
4. Imam Hussain grew up in ideal atmosphere, developed all righteous qualities and as mentioned was order by Allah and his prophet to love and obey him, therefore no dispute about his position

#### **Yazid:**

1. Son of Muawiyah son of Abu Sufyan, from family of Ummayah. Family of Abu Sufyan most active in waging war against Islam, grandmother Hind chewed liver of Hamza, Muawiyah also active opponent of Islam
2. After conquest of Mecca, family of Abu Sufyan accepted Islam with their tongues but their materialist way of thinking remained and their subsequent actions showed they had not changed their ways
3. Yazid grew up in house full of hatred towards Islam and this manifested itself in a clear way, known from early age to be a drunkard, committed adultery and in general lead a very corrupt life – quote: The family of Hashim staged a play to get a Kingdom. Actually there was neither news from God nor a revelation

***After clear differences in personalities, how could it possible be that Yazid came to power claiming to be the leader of the Muslims and the successor to the Prophet?***

1. We know that Islam is a perfect way of life, given to us by our creator, so any possible deviations must have come about through people's actions
2. Islam had gone through a rapid growth during the time of the Prophet, spreading to people of

many different cultures and languages. Adopting to the new Islamic faith therefore needed two different objects to achieve the cultural transformation: (a) a significant amount of time for this new culture to be firmly embedded in the people and (b) an ideological leadership where we have a leader who has deep insight and understanding of the message and his ready to sacrifice all he has for that message

3. By deviating from the path of the Prophet the Muslims committed their first major mistake and that inevitably led to a slow deviation from the true teachings of Islam. Under the rule of the first three caliphs after the Prophet the most major deviations include, (a) introduction of social classes with some people being preferred to others, (b) their contempt for people's rights and properties – viewed the whole Muslim kingdom as their own

After the death of Uthman the chaotic events that had happened since the death of the Prophet forced people to open their minds again and rethink their situation. People started to remember the Prophet's last words at Ghadir Khum, and his appointment of Ali as his successor. Thus people went rushing to Ali to pledge their allegiance to him and so Ali took his rightful place. Adopted policies to reverse decisions made previously. These include:

1. Removed all previous governors and put in place of them trustworthy and pious people (many of whom did not include Quraish which was source of shock and anger to Quraish who had previously been favoured)
2. Protection of social and financial rights, no person whether or not he accompanied Prophet is to be treated differently to anyone else, Allah will judge between you in the next world
3. Fiscal and monetary policy - The extravagant monetary policy of Uthman which accumulated the wealth among his relatives and associates, had seriously imbalanced the society. However, Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.) had to take some drastic measures against the existing unnatural imbalance in the society. Thus he warned all people, "I shall follow the Prophet's Tradition and execute whatever he had commanded, hence, every gift which Uthman gave, or God's money which he donated will be returned to the treasury. Nothing will cancel its belonging to the treasury even if it was married with, or distributed in the wide country. Justice must be implemented. If someone feels hard to accept justice then injustice is harder to accept"

However because of the new found justice of this new government many of the quraish were discontented because they lost the privileges that they had before, and so many wars were waged against Ali including Jamal Siffin Nahrawan etc., and eventually murdered

### ***Main features of Muawiya's rule:***

1. Assumed authority by sheer force: O people of Kofah, do you think I fought you to establish prayers or giving alms (Zakat) or perform pilgrimage?" He continued, "I know you pray, pay alms, and perform pilgrimage. Indeed, I fought you in order to command you with contempt, and God has given me that against your wishes. You must be certain that whoever has killed any of us, and then he will be killed. And the contract between us of amnesty is under these feet of mine".
2. Spread terror throughout the Muslim lands, if anyone dared commit anything which displeased the government they were imprisoned and killed
3. Discrimination between Arabs and non-Arabs – non-Arabs were treated like third-class citizens, e.g. ordered to pay jizyah,
4. Campaign against the followers of Imam Ali – anyone who was even suspected of following Ali was killed, cursing of Ali Fatima Hasan and Hussain introduced in Friday prayers! People would have rather been known as atheists or thieves than to be called the shia of Ali
5. Fabricated hadith – knew that he could not even try to compete with Ali on his religious status because of Ali's shining past and his dark and shameful one. Thus he started fabricated hadith in favour of the first three caliphs and in favour of him, and destroying hadith in praise of Ali e.g. Through Abu Hurairah, the Prophet said "God has trusted three for his revelation: myself, Jabriel and Muawiya, and Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet had given Muawiya an

arrow and told him "Take this arrow until we meet in Paradise

Imam Hasan was very politically sound in dealing with the situation. People were tired of the five long years of war and so by negotiating a peace treaty it served many purposes, above all to show the people the glorious nature of alul-bayt and to expose the wicked nature of Muawiya's regime

***It is now in this context that we can begin to analyse the revolution in detail. Some of the motives for the revolution are:***

1. There were many defects and drawbacks but the most urgent one was the attempt to distort Islamic concepts and ideals. This aspect was of extreme importance and preoccupied the minds of responsible Muslims at the time. The fabrication of Hadith was all too common, which had a poisonous effect on the lives of Muslims. This was giving the Umayyads for a while a free hand to carry out their inhuman deeds and policies. The mask of religion, which they used to hide their un-Islamic conduct, was extremely dangerous. In the long run, this could have changed Islamic concepts of ruling and inverted social ideals. Thus, stripping off this mask and exposing the true Umayyad's picture was of utmost necessity.
2. The State's structure was built on an un-Islamic basis. Quraish was born to rule, Arabs were second-class citizens, and non-Arabs constituted the base of the society's pyramid. That was the general social picture of the Muslim world under the Umayyads dynasty. Freedom of thought and expression were denied, when one dared to express an opinion contrary to that of the Umayyad's, prison became his home, his property was robbed, and even his life was at stake.
3. The Umayyads considered the Muslim world to be their own property. The alms (Zakat) and other Islamic dues were collected, but no one knows or can question where that money went. Large gifts and donations were given to few cruel governors and tribal chiefs in order to secure their allegiance. Large sums of money were wastefully spent on racing, gambling, winemaking, and buying slave women to entertain high-class people in power. Hence, the majority of Muslims were left near starvation level while the ruling group all enjoyed the social and material privileges.
4. The Muslims had apparently got used to the un-Islamic rule of the Umayyads as time passed by. Their resistance slackened and some people began adjusting themselves to the new conditions. Hence, the revolutionary spirit of Islam began to disappear gradually from Muslim's lives and thoughts. Therefore, a new stimulant to their souls was necessary to activate their lives and try to restore, Islamic conduct to the society.

## **THE REVOLUTION'S PROCEDURE**

Imam Hussain made no doubt of his intentions to fight the regime of the Umayyads. The speeches he delivered at Mecca were consistent. Besides, the will which he entrusted to his brother Mohammad ibn Al-Hanafia who remained at Madina. That will, in fact, was a formal declaration of the revolution. He (p.b.u.h.). Wrote, "I am not campaigning for unwillingness to accept righteousness, or having intent to do mischief and suppress people. Indeed, I have decided to reform my grandfather's nation. I want to enjoin what is right and forbid dishonour. People who accept my call for being right, and then God is the Master of righteous people. Those who reject my call, and then I shall be steadfast till God passes His Judgment. Indeed, God is the best Judge".

During his travels to Karbala, he never ceased calling people to strive for the Islamic ideals of social justice and government, and to wage war against deviation from Islamic conduct. In his speech (p.b.u.h.) at Karbala, he quoted the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) saying "He who sees a cruel governor violating Gods law, breaking his covenant, acting in contrast to the Tradition of the Prophet, mischievous and suppressing people, then he does not try to change that ruler by action or speech; indeed God has promised with an appropriate place in Hell". "O people those Umayyads have pledged allegiance to the Devil and left God's obedience. They have spread corruption, suspended the application of Islamic laws, and taken to themselves Muslim's wealth. Besides forbidding what is permitted and allowing what is forbidden."

Imam Hussain's speeches were aiming directly at stripping the religious mask of the Umayyad's regime. He was, introducing himself to people and explaining his message to the nation. Indeed, the personality of Imam Hussain and his religious reputation was beyond question or doubt. Therefore, no

wonder of carrying such a great task while many distinguished people were not ready to raise a finger.

Any objective study of this great revolution will show that something unique about its procedure and results. The leader predicts his own death before even setting a foot in the march! But, he goes on carrying out all necessary preparations for his campaign. Imam Hussain's address to the people at Mecca was this: "O people, as if my body be cut to pieces by spears and wolves between Al-Nawawees and Karbala. ... There is no question of the day, which was already written. God's satisfaction is our aim, we the family of the Prophet".

The way Imam Hussain and his Companions fought was a glorious record of bravery and nobility. They were only seventy fighting men against thousands of the Umayyad's Army. Even with this imbalance of fighting power, the Umayyad's Army used the most vicious and ignoble methods in fighting this tiny camp. The Umayyad's Army went to the extent of preventing them drinking water and kept them for three days tortured in the burning heat of the desert. But, the firm faith of Imam Hussain and his followers in their cause was never shaken. Thus they set an ever-shining torch of Jihad against deviation from Islamic conduct and smashed the myth of the Umayyads of keeping allegiance to deviated regimes.

## THE REVOLUTION'S RESULTS

What had Imam Hussain's revolution meant in history? Some people, who are not familiar with its motives, innocently inquire about its results. Others have even questioned its wisdom that striking at a mighty force like the Umayyad's was fatal.

Although the revolution's motives were already discussed, but a brief review of the changes in the Muslim World after Imam Hussain's revolution is appropriate at this stage.

1. Murdering Imam Hussain (p.b.u.h.) the grandson of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was a great shock to the whole Muslim world. This is not to mention the way he was murdered or the treatment given to his family who had the highest esteem and respect of all Muslims. Consequently, all Muslims dissociated themselves from the Umayyad's deeds and policies. Indeed, who want to share in the certain curse upon those who murdered the family of the Prophet? Thus, this revolution had done the task of unveiling the Umayyad's un-Islamic character to the general public and left no doubt in any person's heart about the Umayyad's substance. Therefore, the concepts, which the Umayyad's were propagating in order to distort the ideals of Islam, found no listening ear any longer. Hence, diverting the Umayyad's mischief of changing Islamic concepts and ideals.

2. Imam Hussain's revolution set a lively example as to the duty of Muslims in such conditions. It had deeply penetrated people's hearts, and produced great pains for not doing their Islamic duty. This feeling, which pained people all the time transformed into repentance and then to an open revolt against the Umayyad's regime. Thus, the revolution provided the stimulant to move their spirit and set it in a dynamic movement. Indeed, the Islamic movement was put to a new gear throughout the rest of the Islamic history. A series of revolutions manifesting Imam Hussain's revolutionary spirit and reforms emerged at successive intervals. Tawabeen's revolution took place immediately after Karbala's tragedy. Another revolution at Madina was aiming at doing away with the Umayyads deviated regime Al-Mukhtar Al-Thaqa filed another revolution, which stormed the Umayyad's regime in Iraq. He was able to punish all principal collaborators in the campaign against Imam Hussain in Iraq. Mitraf ibn Al-Mughira's revolution against Hajjaj and Abdul Malik was another result. However, there were a chain of revolutions in all parts of the Muslim world which eventually had done away with the Umayyad's regime. Imam Hussain's revolution was the principal slogan of the revolutionaries against the Umayyad's.

The attempts to restore Islamic conduct were never ceased throughout Islamic history. Bitter experiences and intermittent material failures are natural results of struggle. Most important is the triumph of the Islamic spirit against intimidation and attempts to obscure its shining face and glory. A ceaseless revolution in Muslim lives is a reality, which the enemies of Islam failed to extinguish. The secret key of this blessed revolution lies in the firm faith in God. The unshakable conviction, which puts material supremacy and gain in an inferior position to God's satisfaction. Imam Hussain demonstrated these ideals when the Muslims were in need of such an example most.

The revolution of Imam Hussain was not solely for changing a government. If it was so, then it would be wrong to call it a revolution. Imam Hussain was advocating a drastic change in the social set up, the economic and political structures, and refining Islamic concepts from foreign ideas, which had

crept into Muslim's minds and thoughts. In other words, Imam Hussain wanted to change the life of Muslims to be in conformity with Islamic laws and ideals. Indeed, this explains one main reason for why Imam Hussain was let down by the tribes of Kofa after being promised support, and his call was ignored by the rest of the Muslim world. Hence, a revolution means a drastic change in one's life or the collective life when applied to a large scale.

### ***Our duties as Muslims with regards to the message of Karbala:***

What is the real reason for us coming today? List of reasons:

1. because our parents told us to do so
2. to socialise with friends
3. because its tradition to go to the majalis al-husayni
4. to mourn for imam hussain
5. to gain knowledge about Islam and ashura in particular

All motives by themselves have no problem with them. However there is one problem. For me personally when I leave this building and wake up tomorrow I'll have probably have forgotten about everything I have said or done and act like it's just another day. Is this what the purpose of such gatherings should be? Did Imam Hussain undertake the greatest sacrifice ever undertaken by mankind just so we can have gatherings for the sake of it? Obviously answer is no and we all know it. So what is the reason for the status quo and how can we change it?

1. We don't know what our true duties are? Hopefully I have tried to explain the reasons for Imam Hussain's revolution so we can better understand what aspects of society he tried to change and so we can implement them
2. We don't understand why Ashura is so significant? Again I have tried to explain the significance of the events of Karbala
3. (Most importantly) We are lost in our lives, we don't have any clearly defined goals and even if we do we don't have any plans to achieve these goals.