

Time to Wake up to Realities

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The 12th of Muharram, two days after Muslims all over the globe observed Ashura, with a rare unanimity, thanks to the sighting of the crescent on the same day throughout the world this year.

Hopefully, this would be a good omen for the solidarity of the ummah at a time when at the bidding of the enemies of Islam, Muslims are tearing themselves apart.

While Ashura is marked as a day of grief by the majority of Muslims including many of our Sunni brethren, because of the heartrending tragedy that befell the blessed household of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) on the 10th of Muharram, there are elements in our midst who unfortunately feel no inhibitions in shedding the blood of fellow Muslims, even on such a tragic day, as was evident by the terrorist bomb blasts that targeted the peaceful gatherings of mourners in Afghanistan and Iraq – not to speak of the brutal suppression of rallies in remembrance of Imam Husain (AS) in Bahrain, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia.

Why these atrocities and savagery against the followers of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt? Does this Yazid-like behaviour endear the perpetrators to God Almighty?

These questions require soul-searching answers, especially since no true Muslim would ever endorse the cardinal sin of the drunkard and debauched disbeliever called Yazid, in ordering the killing of the paragon of faith, piety, patience, and virtue, that Imam Husain (AS) was.

And this includes even those who tend to ignore the Prophet's expression of grief while foretelling the tragedy to befall his grandson, and who instead rejoice at such a great sacrifice that was offered to save Islam –on the wrong notion that Ashura is an auspicious day.

The unanimous observance of Ashura on Tuesday, December 6 this year ought to jolt the conscience of Muslims, whatever their denominations and in whatever manner they mark the 10th of Muharram, because unless the ummah has the courage to scientifically probe the causes and factors that led to the rise of the Godless Omayyads to power and the tragedies they inflicted on the Ahl al-Bayt, Muslims will remain hopelessly ignorant of realities and Islamic solidarity will be a distant dream.

The 12th of Muharram is one of those days that ought to open our eyes. It was on this day that the survivors of the tragedy of Karbala, that is, the children and womenfolk of the Prophet's Household, led by the Prophet's two granddaughters, Hazrat Zainab (SA) and Hazrat Omm Kolsoum (SA) and including the Prophet's sick and bedridden great grandson, the 23-year old

Imam Zain al-Abedin (AS), were dragged in chains and fetters to the court of the ungodly governor of Kufa, Obaidullah ibn Ziyad.

It is worth noting that Hazrat Zainab (SA) and Imam Zain al-Abedin (AS), as the two main figures who carried the battle to the enemy's camp in a novel way to publicize and universalize Imam Husain's (AS) message to all humanity and in the process revealed the true heathen colours of Yazid through the life-inspiring mourning ceremonies for the Martyrs of Karbala which they initiated, never ever said that their ancestor Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) used to regard Ashura as an auspicious day.

Incidentally, the 12th of Muharram, according to an account, also happens to be the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Zain al-Abedin (AS) in Medina in 95 AH, 34 years after the tragedy of Karbala. He was the victim of the Omayyad caliph, Waleed, who in a state of drunkenness had once ordered his ritually unclean concubine to lead the Fajr Prayer in the mosque, and whose vow to drink wine atop the holy Ka'ba in Mecca never materialized because of his sudden death.

The 4th Infallible Imam of the Prophet's Household, whom Sunni Muslims also venerate as a highly knowledgeable, pious and unrivalled personality of his age –as is evident by his legacy of the Prayer Manual, the Sahifat as-Sajjadiyya, and the Risalat al-Hoqouq (Treatise of Rights) – never preached any spite or vengeance, but always profoundly felt aggrieved about the Tragedy of Karbala and the Day of Ashura.

In other words, he and his line of virtuous descendants who were known to be the practical promoters of the pure and pristine Sunnah and Seerah of their ancestor, never ever said the Prophet attached any degree of auspiciousness to the Day of Ashura.

On the contrary the Ahl al-Bayt made it clear in many a statement that Ashura was dubbed auspicious and a day of rejoicing by the Omayyads, who as part of their heathen joy at the massacre of the Hashemites and their campaign to tarnish the image of Islam, coined many a false hadith.

One of these notoriously false hadith is the claim that it was on Ashura Adam's repentance was accepted, Noah's Ark was salvaged, the fire of Nimrod turned into a garden for Abraham, the waters parted for Moses, etc.

These are nothing but sheer fabrications, especially when a so-called narration belittles the personality of the Greatest Ever Messenger of God by alleging that on his migration to Medina when he saw Jews fasting on the 10th of Muharram, he enquired about its significance and on being informed that it was Yom Kippur, he also decided to fast, saying he is more near to Moses than the Israelites.

The picture that emerges from such a narration is not that of the Best and Wisest of all creation in constant communion with God and possessor of the most rationally dynamic Shari'ah, but that of a weak, ill-informed and indecisive person who is easily swayed by the reports of newly converted Arab pagans and the whims of the ever-rebellious Israelites who had long strayed away from the path of Moses and other Divine Messengers. No doubt, Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) had said in explicit words in the famous Hadith Thaqalayn that Muslims will never go astray after him if they hold fast to God's Revealed Word, the Holy Qur'an, and to his progeny, the Ahl al-Bayt – whose member, Imam Husain (AS) offered the Greatest Ever Sacrifice (Zibhin Azim) to draw the indelible line between Truth and .Falsehood, so vividly kept alive by commemoration of his heartrending tragedy every year