

# MUHAMMAD

## Significance of Ashurah

by Naseem Huq

MUHAMMAD is the first month of the Islamic Calendar. This year it is 1419 Hijri. According to the Quran, Muharram is one of the four sacred months in Islam. The other three being Rajab, Zil Qadh and Zil Hajjah. Muharram has its own unique importance. But unfortunately, as we have distanced ourselves considerably from the religion, we hardly even observe the 1st of Muharram as the Islamic New Year's day. It comes and goes unnoticed. It should be a day of thanks giving to Allah and to seek his forgiveness and mercy to help people live the new year with due decency and prosperity. We however observe the 10th of Muharram as 'Ashurah' to commemorate the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) at Karbala near the river Euphrates in Iraq. He was murdered on the 10th of Muharram by Yazid, twelve years after the Sahadat by poison of his brother Hazrat Imam Hassan RA. They were the sons of Fatima (RA), the Prophet's daughter and Ali (RA) the Prophet's cousin. Therefore Imam Hussain and Imam Hassan were the grandsons of our Prophet Muhammad (SM).

Other than this, Ashurah also has the following commemorative significance:

1. The 10th of Muharram is named 'Ashurah' because on this day 10 prophets received Allah's mercy and forgiveness and were blessed by Allah. The universe was created by Allah on this day. He also created Hazrat Adam and sent him to Heaven on the 10th of Muharram.

2. Baba Adam and Bibi Hawwa were forgiven by Allah, for having disobeyed Him in the Garden of Paradise. Adam and Hawwa got re-united on the 10th of Muharram at Arafat. This is one of the reasons why our prayers are accepted on Arafat Day during Hajj.

3. On the 10th of Muharram,

Hazrat Noah (AS), after the great flood, had his Ark anchored by the Mount Judi and was saved by the Grace of Allah.

4. On the 10th of Muharram, Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) was saved from the fire of Namrood, the infidel king, and became 'the friend of Allah'.

5. On the 10th of Muharram, the Pharaoh of Egypt, who claimed to be god, was drowned in the river and Hazrat Musa (AS) and his followers could cross over the water which was separated by the Grace of Allah to make a road for them and their horses to cross.

6. On the 10th of Muharram, Hazrat Ya'qub (AS) got back his lost son Hazrat Yusuf (AS).

7. On the 10th of Muharram, Hazrat Ayub (AS) recovered from his long illness of 18 years, and thanked Allah for His mercies and blessings.

8. For certain reasons Hazrat Yunus (AS) got into the stomach of a whale and remained there for a very long time. After much repentance he came out of the fish and was saved by the Grace of Allah on the 10th of Muharram. This is one of the reasons why we should read 'Dua Yunus' at the time of great crisis or danger: 'La ilaha illa anta subhanaka inni kuntu min algalamin'.

9. On the 10th of Muharram, Hazrat Idris (AS) was given a high position.

10. On the 10th of Muharram, Hazrat Sulaiman (AS) got back his kingdom which he had lost on the same day.

11. On the 10th of Muharram, Hazrat Isa (AS) was born and was also taken back to the sky.

The above incidents coinciding Ashurah has made the day important for the Muslims in general, regardless of their being Shia or Sunni. It is said that on this day if people do good things, such acts may invoke Allah's mercy as it did in the cases of the Prophets.

MAM Hussain (AS) was born in Medina on the 3rd Shaban in the 4th year of Hijri. The Prophet (SM) gave him the name of Hussain. He resembled the Holy Prophet from breast to foot. His elder brother Hazrat Imam Hassan (AS) was like the Prophet from head to breast. He was born in Medina on the 15th Ramadan 3rd year of Hijri.

Both the brothers were Imams or spiritual leaders of Islam. The Prophet had designated Ali (AS) as his immediate successor or Caliph after him. He had also nominated Hassan and Hussain as his successors after Ali. Ali appointed Hassan his successor at the time of his death on the 21st Ramadan 40 A.H. at Kufa. Hassan also refused to accept Ali as the Caliph and revolted afterwards. The Syrians also did not recognise Ali, for Muawiyah kept them in ignorance of true facts.

Ali asked him to enter the fold in which all the Muhajirs and Ansars had entered and repeatedly told not to create trouble. But he did not care. Ali had not consolidated his position when Bibi Aisha, the daughter of Abu Bakr (RA) and the widow of the Prophet revolted against him on the pretext of revenge for the blood of Uthman (RA). She fought a battle at Basra against her step son-in-law. She was defeated and sent to Medina with full protection and honour by Ali, the commander of the faithful.

The battle is called Jang-e-Jamal (Battle of Camel).

After this battle Ali made Kufa (Iraq) now as his capital and returned there from Basra. Amir Muawiyah did not give breathing time to Ali after the Battle of Camel. He challenged Ali's right to the Caliphate on the bank of river Euphrates. Ali had about 80,000 and Muawiyah over 1,20,000 army men. The battle lasted for about 40 days. When victory for Ali was in sight, the tricky and treacherous Amir-ibn-As turned the tables on Ali. He told Muawiyah to raise copies of the Quran on spear points and appeal to the soldiers of Ali to stop the fight and come to compromise in accordance with the Quran. Ali knew the trick full well and refused to stop the battle. But Muawiyah had already bribed and won over some men of Ali's army. The traitors compelled the Caliph to accept the offer. The battle was stopped. Both sides returned to their respective capitals. Ali to Kufa and Muawiyah to Damascus, Syria.

It must be remembered that Ali had in his army people of diverse views and different denominations. The Shias who believed in Ali's spiritual and temporal leadership as an Imam were a minority. A group from among the army men of Ali objected to him as to why he

ing serious pollution problems affecting soil, water, air, plant and human life as, except two modern tanneries, none of the others has any treatment plant. In the tannery industry at Hazaribagh, nearly 2000-3000 tonnes of sodium sulphide and nearly 3000 tonnes of basic chromium sulphate per year in addition to other chemicals are used for leather processing and tanning.

At present, the country has 214 tanneries, of which 200 are concentrated in the Dhaka city. The government has decided to establish a common effluent treatment plant with the assistance of UNIDO for the 200 tanneries of the Hazaribagh area.

The study said the country has now more than 30,000 industrial units, including about 24,000 small and cottage industries of them, about 1200 units have been identified as polluting agents.

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# Hussain (AS) - the Greatest Martyr of Islam

by MM Faiz Shirazi

*The battle which started from the morning of Ashura (10th Muharram) continued until Asr time. All the men consisting of friends, relatives, nephews, brothers and sons including the six-month old son 'Ali Asghar' embraced Shahadat at the hands of the most brutal army of Yazid.*

temporal administration of the Islamic world to Muawiyah and returned to Medina. But the despot of Damascus violated all the terms of treaty. He put to death many true followers of the Prophet. He sent deadly poison to Joda Bin Ashath, a wife of Imam Hasan and the Grand daughter of Abu Bakr (RA) with one hundred thousand Dirhams and a promise to marry her to his son Yazid if she killed Hasan with that said poison. She administered that poison to Hasan and killed him.

Muawiyah also nominated his unworthy son Yazid as his successor, which was against the terms of the treaty. He took allegiance for him by hook and crook with big promises, temptations, bribes and threats. Imam Hasan had protested against the violation of the terms of the treaty but without any avail. When Imam Hasan was killed in 50 A.H. by a poison sent by Muawiyah, there was a stir amongst the followers of Ali. They had already become tired of the tyranny, the high-handedness and the misdeeds of Muawiyah during his despot reign of 25 years. They wrote to Imam Hussain (A.S) that they wanted to break the oath of allegiance to Muawiyah in his favour.

But Imam Hussain did not agree to their proposal and wrote back that there was a treaty with Muawiyah and that he could not go against it in later life time. He would think over the matter after the death of Muawiyah. The Despot of Damascus died on 15th Rajab 60 A.H. and his son Yazid ascended the throne of his father. The first thing that Yazid did after his becoming so called caliph was to write a letter to the Governor of Medina, Walid ibn Uthman ibn al-Suffian, his cousin, to take him and his family from Imam Hussain at once. If he agrees so much the better otherwise put him (Hussain) to death and send his head to Damascus. On the 27th Rajab 60 A.H. Walid sent for Imam at night. The Imam anticipated the reason and took some of his relatives with him and went to Governor's house, leaving them outside with instructions to enter in case his voice was raised. Imam Hussain went alone to Walid and saw him sitting with Walid. The Imam was turned out of Medina forever by the Prophet (S.M). He was called back from exile by Hazrat Uthman who made him his minister without portfolio in marriage. The same Marwan became caliph after the abdication of Yazid's son.

The eldest grandson of the Prophet became Imam and thousands of Muhajirs and Ansars took oath of Fealty. Muawiyah, the despot of Damascus, who had usurped the caliphate refused to accept Imam Hassan as head of the Islamic state and began preparation for war. Imam Hassan persuaded his companions to come out for Jihad but he found them weak, vacillating and reluctant. In the meantime Muawiyah asked Imam Hassan for a compromise, a sort of truce lasting till the death of Muawiyah. Had Imam Hassan refused the offer and come out to meet the aggression the result would have been the same. The treacherous people of Kufa would have left him alone after thousands of his true followers had lost their lives, and thousands would have been ruined for nothing. Imam Hassan made a treaty, handed over the reign of the

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But Imam Hussain did not agree to their proposal and wrote back that there was a treaty with Muawiyah and that he could not go against it in later life time. He would think over the matter after the death of Muawiyah. The Despot of Damascus died on 15th Rajab 60 A.H. and his son Yazid ascended the throne of his father. The first thing that Yazid did after his becoming so called caliph was to write a letter to the Governor of Medina, Walid ibn Uthman ibn al-Suffian, his cousin, to take him and his family from Imam Hussain at once. If he agrees so much the better otherwise put him (Hussain) to death and send his head to Damascus. On the 27th Rajab 60 A.H. Walid sent for Imam at night. The Imam anticipated the reason and took some of his relatives with him and went to Governor's house, leaving them outside with instructions to enter in case his voice was raised. Imam Hussain went alone to Walid and saw him sitting with Walid. The Imam was turned out of Medina forever by the Prophet (S.M). He was called back from exile by Hazrat Uthman who made him his minister without portfolio in marriage. The same Marwan became caliph after the abdication of Yazid's son.

The eldest grandson of the Prophet became Imam and thousands of Muhajirs and Ansars took oath of Fealty. Muawiyah, the despot of Damascus, who had usurped the caliphate refused to accept Imam Hassan as head of the Islamic state and began preparation for war. Imam Hassan persuaded his companions to come out for Jihad but he found them weak, vacillating and reluctant. In the meantime Muawiyah asked Imam Hassan for a compromise, a sort of truce lasting till the death of Muawiyah. Had Imam Hassan refused the offer and come out to meet the aggression the result would have been the same. The treacherous people of Kufa would have left him alone after thousands of his true followers had lost their lives, and thousands would have been ruined for nothing. Imam Hassan made a treaty, handed over the reign of the

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