

**qul lā as alukum ‘alayhi ajran illā l-mawaddete fī l-qur`bā. wamey yaqterif ḥaseneten nezid lehu fīhā ḥus`na inna l-laha ghafūrun shakūr- sadaqallah
Surah Ash-Shuraa (42:23)**

Say: No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of those near of kin. For, if anyone gains the merit of a good deed, We shall grant him through it an increase of good:Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (42:23)

In Surah Ash-Shuraa, Allah-u Ta’ala asked Rasulallah (saws) to say to those to whom he delivered the message of Qur’an, that he did not seek any reward from them other than they would love those who were near and dear to him.

Many scholars agreed that the expression of “mewaddata fil qurba,” the near of kin, refers to the kin of Rasullallah (saws) and those who attached themselves to him like kin. So, showing love and respect to Ahl-al Bayt is not less than an obligation for believers. Ahl-al Bayt is the family of Rasulallah (saws), his wives, his children, Hd. Ali, Hd. Fatima al-Zehra, Hd. Hasan and Hd. Husayn (as) The love of Ahl-al bayt is not only because they are the relatives of Rasulallah (saws) but because Ahl-al bayt Mustafa became perfect guides for Muslims, with their knowledge, beautiful morals, and their spirituality. They reflected the beautiful morals of the Prophet Muhammed (saws) to the generations of Muslims who came after them, and nourished the love toward Rasulallah (saws) and his family. Rasulallah (saws) loved his grandsons. In one tradition, it is reported that he prayed for Hd. Hasan and Husayn (ra) and said: “Oh Allah, I love these children. You love them too.” He also said: ‘If any one loves Hasan and Husayn, he loves me too. If anyone turns against them, they turn against me too.”

We are in the month of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar. In Arabic, Muharram literally means “forbidden,” “sacred,” or “prohibited.” In the Islamic tradition, Muharram is the month that should be honored and respected. Historically, even before the advent of Islam, Muharram was designated as one of the four sacred months in the lunar calendar during which fighting, warfare, and tribal feuds were strictly forbidden.

Wars are not always between the armies of two countries. Wars can be waged between two friends, between brothers and sisters, between wives and husbands. In honoring the month of Muharram we should stop wars, find reconciliation and unite around the love of Ahl-i al Bayti Mustafa. Maybe one of the most important battles that we need to stop is our inner battle, the battle between the egotistic self and the soul. This is also a time for us to reflect and learn from the sacrifices made by Ahl-al bayt Mustafa

The 10th day of Muharram, which was yesterday, is particularly significant for Muslims. According to Islamic tradition, many significant historical events happened on this day. Allah-u Ta'ala split the Red Sea, allowing the prophet Musa (as) and his followers to escape the tyranny of the Pharaoh, who drowned in the waters. Historically, this day is also narrated as the day the Ark of Nuh (as) came to rest safely on dry land following the great flood. There are also unverified narrations mentioning that the prophet Yunus (as) was saved from the belly of the whale. The prophet Ibrahim (as) was thrown into the fire, and the fire was turned into a rose garden, on this date. However, one of the most tragic and sad events ever to occur in Islamic history, the martyrdom of Hd. Husayn (ra) and his family, also happened on the 10th of Muharram. He and 72 members of his family were massacred in Karbala.

Inconceivably, this wicked, heinous crime of Islamic history was committed by people who called themselves "Muslims" but who were in fact blinded with the ambition for position, intoxicated with power, wishing to become the leaders of Muslims. Eleven years before the incident of Karbala, Hd. Hasan (ra) was poisoned by the same people, who saw him as a threat to their vicious ambitions. Neither Hd. Hasan (ra) nor Hd. Husayn (ra) sought any position of power. They both resided peacefully in Madina, where they were much loved and respected by the community. Imam Husayn's refusal to pledge allegiance to Yazid's corrupt and tyrannical rule has been immortalized as a timeless symbol of resistance against oppression and as a sacrifice for justice.

How anyone could commit such an atrocity is beyond human understanding, especially given Rasulallah's (saws) profound love for his grandchildren and his reminder: 'Whoever loves Hasan and Husayn loves me, and whoever opposes them opposes me.' Regardless, our duty goes beyond mourning. We must contemplate the divine wisdom behind Karbala and the ongoing trials of our world. The fundamental lessons of Muharram remain timeless: we must refuse to bow to oppression, stand firmly for justice in the face of tyranny, and allow our shared grief to unite and strengthen the Muslim ummah.

The martyrdom of Hadrat Husayn (ra) teaches us the ultimate lesson of loyalty to the truth. When Yazid, whose rule was marked by tyranny and distortion of the Islamic faith, demanded an oath of allegiance, Imam Husayn (ra) refused. For him, giving his approval to a tyrant would be a betrayal of the truth. He famously captured this sentiment, stating: '*A person like me (grandson of the prophet) cannot pledge allegiance to a person like him.*' Ultimately, he chose the extreme hardships of the desert over a comfortable compromise, proving that his allegiance belonged solely to divine justice, not survival.

Hd. Husayn (ra) also taught us the meaning of loyalty to his companions and family. On the night before the battle (the night of *Ashura*), knowing they were heavily

outnumbered by an army of thousands, Husayn (ra) had the torches extinguished. He told his companions that they were free to leave under the cover of darkness without shame, as the enemy wanted only his life.

He taught us the meaning of keeping a promise until death comes. Though denied water for days in the blazing desert, and forced to witness the loss of his brothers, cousins, and children, Imam Husayn (ra) never broke his covenant with God. His resolve never shifted, no matter how brutal the conditions became. Every step he took on the sands of Karbala fulfilled a sacred promise to stand up for the oppressed, a commitment he honored until his final breath.

He taught us unwavering loyalty to the legacy of his grandfather, the Prophet Muhammad (saws). As the grandson of the Prophet (saws), Imam Husayn (ra) felt a heavy, sacred responsibility to protect the core teachings of Islam from being permanently corrupted by political tyranny. His journey to Karbala was not an attempt to seize military power; rather, he traveled with his family, women, and children. He stated that his goal was strictly to reform the community of his grandfather, and to command what was good and forbid what was evil.

For tyrants, victory has always meant the same thing: the slaughter of innocents and the destruction of vital civilian infrastructure. They mistake flattening hospitals and schools through carpet bombing for military triumph. Yet history shows their end is always miserable, with a severe punishment awaiting them in the hereafter.

Hadrat Imam Husayn's (ra) victory is entirely different. His victory is found in his absolute surrender to divine wisdom. Even when a physical victory was out of reach, his heart remained at peace with Allah's plan. To accept martyrdom and submit wholeheartedly to the divine decree is the definition of spiritual victory.

True defeat is giving up hope and falling into despair when all worldly options vanish. Imam Husayn (ra) was as fully prepared to embrace martyrdom, just as the prophet Ibrahim (as) was prepared to enter the fire of Nimrod, or as the prophet Nuh (as) was prepared for the trials of the Great Flood. They were entirely submitted to the outcome ordained by Allah; they were never defeated by it. Submission to divine will is not a loss; it is the highest form of victory.

Yurdaer Al Latif Al Jerrahi