

## **Our Responsibilities Towards The Zainabi Institution of Majlis**

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**This Article is dedicated to Ali Asghar Khambaty, my beloved Brother in law, who was assassinated by a bullet of the Zalim in Karachi, Pakistan on 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2013**

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### **What is a Majlis ?:**

*Majlis is an Arabi term meaning a place of sitting or gathering. Among the Shias the term Majlis is used as a verb referring to a congregation who come to remember in particular Syedush Shuhada, Abi Abdillah al Imam al Husain ibn Ali and Ahl al Bait. All credit goes to Sharikatil Husain, Syedah Zainab who due to her Shujaat[valour] explained the real Islam before the Zalim and established the Institution of Majlis perpetually. She snatched the false covering of Islam from the face of Yazid Maloon and showed his ugly face to the Ummah and discussed the Tafsiir of Shahadat Al Husain ibn Ali in Karbala in a manner which differentiates Haq and Batil till Qiyamat. It is the Ehsan of Syedah Zainab that she spread the message of Husain and eliminated the Manhus ideology which Yazid wanted to establish. Prior to release from the Jail, Yazid Maloon asked Al Imam Ali Zainul Abideen:*

*If he wished for anything?*

*The Imam replied:*

*He would have to consult his aunt Syedah Zainab.*

*Arrangements were made and the daughter of Ali, Syedah Zainab arrived. She replied:*

*O Yazid! Since the day our Moula Husain was brutally butchered by the unsharpened Khanjar of Shimar Maloon in Karbala we have not had any opportunity to mourn for him.*

*A house was therefore provided in Damascus, Syria where Syedah Zainab and Ahl al Bait held their first Majlis al Aza of Al Imam al Husain. Al Imam Ali Zain ul Abideen sat on the Suzani of Al Imam al Husain and then Syedah Zainab narrated to the women of Damascus, Syria what had befallen on them in Karbala and Kufa. They shed tears and mourned. From then Majlis al Aza started to be observed and Buka became its integrate part, on the heartless method in which Moula al Husain ibn Ali and his Ahl al Bait and Ashaab were treated in Karbala. Therefore, Majlis is not only a reverence and love for the Nabavi Family, but also serves to purify our souls.*

### **What is the purpose of the Majlis?**

**1.** *Al Imam al Husain his Ahl al Bait and Ashaab is a part of the Aqidah of Islam and it is not fair to associate it with any particular School of thought. Al Imam al Husain is a metaphor of love, peace, tolerance and human brotherhood, whereas Yazid is a symbol of terrorism,*

*exploitation, oppression, nepotism and Shaitan. One of the purposes of the Majlis is to learn about the qualities of Al Imam al Husain and Ahl al Bait so that our character can be close to them, and learn about the attributes of the enemies of Ahl al Bait so that our character doesn't reflect theirs.*

**2.** *Through Majlis we learn from history to love our Moula Al Imam al Husain and his Ahl al Bait and Ashaab with Marefat and condemn Maloon Yazid and his supporters and his likeminded. We then seek to identify the Right Path by following and supporting Al Imam al Husain Ibn Amir al Mumineen Ali and moreover by identifying the Path of Shaitan in following the Yazids of our current era and condemning them. From the event of Karbala two mindsets and ideologies were born, namely 'Husainiyat and Yazidiyat' and the Advocates of the Yazidi thought would continue to be defeated till the Day of Judgment.*

**3.** *Learn from the Masa'ib that was faced by the Ahl al Bait and share the pain of Syedah Fatimah Az Zahra and her family. The blessings of the Zikar al Husain can help us to get Ajar and also helps in forgiving our sins. The Majlis of Syedush Shuhada, Al Imam al Husain and the tears that roll down our cheeks are for the Mazlum Imam with each droplet being a challenge to the Zalim. We are not the 'Nation of Weepers', but these weeping and wailing have protected the School of Saydush Shuhada, the original Talim of Mohammad(S). The recounting of the tragedy of Karbala has kept his message alive forever.*

**4.** *One of the objectives of Zikril Husain is to create a spiritual awakening through Amr Bil Ma'ruf and Nahyi Anal Munkar. To become closer to Allah and reflect Karbala in the actions and choices we have to follow this institution of Majlis, in all circumstances.*

**5.** *Speaker of the Majlis should generate a feeling which enhances in understanding what is Right and what is Wrong. This is the essence of Majlis which is the message of Maruf and the instruction to refrain from the Munkar should be established. When this concept of the Qur'an is enforced in the society, it would truly help to change the real Islamic atmosphere.*

**6.** *Abi Abdillah al Imam al Husain looked at the bodies of his beloveds. Tears rolled down from his eyes. Then, with full strength, like a Muazzin, he raised a clarion call in thundering voice on the plains of Karbala, on the day of Aashurah:*

**Hal Min Nasirin Yansuruna**

*Is there any helper to help us.*

*Is there anyone who will respond to our call for aid?*

*To whom was Husain ibn Ali calling? Certainly son of Fatemah was not expecting help from the Umayyad forces. Al Imam al Husain knew well that after the Shahadat of his Ahl al Bait and Ashaab there will be no one left. He knew fully that there will be no other Hurr ar Riyahi in the Umayyad forces. The question is then for whom did he raise this call? Naturally that call was for the Generation of the Muslim Ummah, who were to come till the Qiyamat. Syedash Shuhada, Moula Abi Abdillah al Husain wanted to alert each Muslim through this clarion call to fight against Yezidism which oppresses Justice in each era and to raise a voice in favour of Haq.*

**7. The famous poet, Jafar ibn Iffaan recited a Marsiyah in the presence of Abi Abdillah al Imam Jafar Assadiq in remembrance of Al Imam al Husain and the tragedy of Karbala. Tears rolled down from the eyes of the Imam and he wept. The Imam then said to the poet as follow:**

**O Iffaan! Do not think that it is only those whom you can see here are listening your Marsiyah. In fact, Malaek are present here at this Majlis and they are all listening to your Marsiyah and they are also weeping. May Allah bless you for what you have recited! He will, Inshallah, reward you with Jannah for your efforts on our behalf.**

### **What is not the purpose of Majlis ?**

**1. Attend Majlis only as a family tradition or a community custom without understanding its purpose and real spirit.**

**2. Like Bani Israel only love to listen sweet wordings, such as Bisharat (tidings) of Jannah, irrespective of deeds and creeds. How can this Aqidah be correct when one is drinking, enjoying interest and committing adultery and loves to remain busy in corruption, profligacy and licentiousness and then wish for Shafaat, Najaat and Jannah?**

**3. Listen to those who may share facts and analysis with us but we cannot trust what they say (irrespective of their eloquence and intelligence) as they do not have Taqwa and are themselves drawn in Hub ud Duniya, lust and greed of the world.**

**4. Auzubillah is Wajib before reciting Bismillah, likewise Baraat with Shaitan is Wajib before the declaration of Walayat. Tabaara is an announcement of the Baraat. Perform Tabarra against Injustice in a manner different from the practice our Imams performed which is not advisable. Ziyarate Aashurah is the best source to learn how to express Tabarra. Study it carefully and you will learn. We should not exceed from the limit that the Imams have set, Imams of Ahl al Bait have stressed upon this approach to perform it.**

**5. Listen to the event of Karbala but not change at all in our actions and choices e.g. Shed tears and cry about Syedah Zainab's Hijab but be without Hijab, Praise the courage of Syedi Abbas ibn Ali but do not have courage to stand up for the Haq(Right) of the Mazloom(oppressed), Cry on Ali Akbar ibn Husain ibn Ali and Ali Asghar ibn Husain ibn Ali but rather than using them as role models, Suffer from severe inferiority complex and consider everything Western to be better and greater, Talk about Imam Ali Zain ul Abideen but be engaged in materialism and take our definition of success from the Media and the Society.**

**6. We Muslims often talk about the Rise of Muslims and of Renaissance. Could there be a true Islamic Re-birth possible without any revolutionary changes taking place in the approach of the leadership themselves? Islam is not only a 'Code of Life' as we often declare, but it encompasses all aspects of human activities, from the cradle to the grave. The real tragedy of**

*the Muslims is not that we are demoralized and our lands and hearts are occupied, but there are too many Yazids in the world and all are waiting for a person who has Husaini character among us. Year after year the sacrifices of the great Imam is commemorated all over the world; even the rulers of some Muslim countries and communities participate in Marasim ul Aza(ceremonies of Aashurah) to pay tribute to Abi Abdillah al Imam al Husain's principle stand against injustice and oppression. Yet these same rulers and leaders perpetrate corruption, oppression and injustice in their own societies daily. It is this hypocrisy that is at the root of much of the suffering of Muslims today.*

**7.** *Unless we are able to lay a very strong foundation for our children and especially for the children born and bred in the West, we may find ourselves building a very hollow structure as we continue to settle round the ever loosening folds of the Majlis.*

**8.** *The result of Majlis could be effective only when the Speaker himself understands the significance of the message of the Shahadah of Moula Al Husain. From the Minbar [pulpit] Speakers usually are building dream castles in the air. They are not solving the human difficulties; nor do they discuss how we should solve it, but only spend time through their spiritless speeches, which are usually full of myths.*

**9.** *Topics should be selected by the Speaker of the Majlis and to set a time limit to make it respectful with enough contents to pay attention to. What you normally observe in long lasting Bayans is:*

*Sleeping audience*

*Usage of mobile phones*

*Chatting and gossiping etc.*

*It is a natural human behavior. Attention span cannot be so long. It is also a bitter fact that majority of the Speakers of the Majlis spend hours without being able to even understand the problems of the common person. They supposedly come with a sense of mission, to preach, but to whom?*

#### **For Those who Perform Khidmat of Al Imam al Husain Ibn Ali:**

*History repeats itself and unfortunately its important lessons are always forgotten. This is the account of two businessmen, one was Muslim Transporter and the other was Christian, they both came in contact with Al Imam al Husain, heard his sermons all along the way to Karbala and they made a careful decision pertaining to their destiny in this world and the hereafter. Let us begin with the Muslim businessman, this man rented his camels and horses to Al Imam al Husain and travelled along with him from Madinah to Karbala.*

*The tragedy of Karbala has distinctly shown the end result of the Transporter that rented his camels and his horses to al Imam al Husain and travelled along with Al Imam al Husain from Madinah to Karbala. During his travel the Transporter listened to Al Imam al Husain's sermons, he observed Imam's wordings. On the day of Aashurah, the Transporter saw all the Ashaab and male members of Ahl al Bait help Al Imam al Husain Ibn Ali and embraced Shahadat. He saw how Syedush Shuhada was left alone bleeding with numerous wounds on*

*his body. He saw how Moula al Husain was switching position from fighting with the Yazidi forces on the battlefield and returning back to the tent to ensure the safety of the Syedaat and children's in his Khaimeh Ghah.*

*In the midst of this, the Muslim Transporter went to Al Imam al Husain and said:  
O Aba Abdillah! This time, I don't think you will return back from the battlefield, so please settle my account in order that I may leave.*

*Al Imam al Husain dismounted from his horse, Zuljanah, paid him more than what was agreed for the Transporter's service charges. The Imam graciously showed him the safe passage for leaving safely out from Karbala. The point is, that this Transporter stayed with Al Imam al Husain, heard all the sermons of Al Moula al Husain with his ears, heard the Imam's clarion call when he announced and repeated in his thundering voice, the echo of which still sounding:*

*Is there anyone who will come to assist us?*

*Is there anyone who will respond to our call for aid?*

*Alas! The unfortunate Transporter did not response to 'Labbaiyk Ya Husain'. We all know the reason why he did not support Imam's thundering clarion call because his objective from Karbala was only to gain financial benefit; he was with Al Imam al Husain only for the sake of his 'Dinars', in our word 'Dollars' so he did not care about Al Imam al Husain's divine mission and revolutionary objectives, he did not care about Imam's struggle to restore 'Justice' and 'Humanity'.*

*Eventually this transporter came out safely from the boundaries of the Karbala, but on his way he was trapped by a band of dacoits. They killed him and looted all his Dinars, camels and horses. The end result was that the transporter died. Al Imam al Husain along with his Ahl al Bait and his Ashaab were also killed but the difference between the two deaths was infinite. It was like the difference between the Jannah and the Jahnnam. The materialistic transporter died a death of humiliation while Al Imam al Husain, his Ahl al Bait and his Ashaab died the death of dignity and the death of Shaheed. The world remembers the names of the Shuhada of Karbala though nobody remembers the name of this materialistic transporter who neglected Al Imam al Husain.*

*Contrary to this event, history had recorded another episode, which is related to Wahab ibn Abdullah Al Kalbi. He was a Christian, just got married and was returning to his hometown with his mother and his newly married bride. On its way his small group crossed with Al Imam al Husain and thus met the Imam on his way. He carefully heard the Imami sermons at different places. These sermons changed his understanding and created a harmony with the Imam. Wahab al Kalbi understood Al Imam al Husain's mission for 'Justice and Humanity'. He kept on discussing this with his mother and continued with Al Imam al Husain's caravan till they arrived in Karbala. The situation in Karbala was very tense. Husaini Caravan was surrounded on all four sides by the forces of Yazid (LA).*

*Everybody knew that staying with Abi Abdillah al Husain in Karbala meant inviting death. Wahab also discussed this dangerous situation with his mother. He asked her:*

*Mother! What should I do in this tense situation?*

*His mother inquired:*

*How do you feel about this situation O my son?*

*Wahab replied:*

*In my opinion Husain Ibn Ali is on the Right Path and it would be cowardly to leave the side of a 'Just Person', so isolated and surrounded by blood-thirsty forces.*

*His mother argued:*

*But that means definite death*

*Wahab pleaded:*

*Yes I know, but my conscience tells me that this is the Right Action to do, in these circumstances.*

*His mother then said:*

*If that is how you feel then we will stay with Husain.*

*When Imam's Ashaab started leaving for the battlefield, one after the other, Wahab approached the Imam and asked his Izn (permission) to go and fight on behalf of him and sacrifice his life for 'Truth and Justice'. The Imam knew that Wahab had just got married, so Imam insisted that he must leave him and seek safety with his wife and mother, but that brave son of a brave mother did not agree for this. He argued:*

*How is it possible for me to leave you and your dear ones in this condition? If I leave you and go away, my sense of right and wrong would hurt me forever for failing to do my duty. Al Moula al Husain tried to discourage him by reminding him that this was a Muslim issue. It was an issue between an evil wicked man who was claiming to be the leader of the Muslim Ummah and himself, why should he get involved and get killed in the Muslim issue that is unrelated to him. Wahab spontaneously replied:*

*'O grandson of Rasul(S) of Islam! If that is the case then, from this moment, I am a Muslim. He recited Kalimah and gave Bait to the Imam. Now Moula al Husain gave him Izn al Jihad (permission for battlefield). When his newlywed bride saw that Wahab has leaving to the battlefield, she approached Abi Abdillah al Husain and reconfirmed from him:*

*Are you the Imam al Haq?*

*Al Imam al Husain replied:*

*Yes, I am*

*Then she asked:*

*If Wahab dies protecting you, he would go to the Jannah?*

*Imam confirmed:*

*Yes, he should.*

*Then she requested:*

*Can you promise me that you should not let Wahab enter Jannah without me? Son of Fatemah promised generously:*

*Yes, I promise you today, you and Wahab shall enter in to the Jannah together*

*When Wahab was martyred, she walked towards his dead body and sat at his head, wiping the blood from it and said:*

***Congratulations for having earned Jannah! I plead to Allah that blessed you with the Jannah to make me join you.***

***Far away Maloon Shimar saw a woman next to Wahab's dead body. He ordered his slave to kill her. Shimar's slave hit Wahab's bride with a sword and she embraced Shahadat on the spot. This fortunate lady is the first female Shaheed of Karbala.***

***In both these accounts there are Ibrat for those who want to learn and understand. There is a lessons for all of us, the Transporter opted for the monetary gain or worldly benefit from Karbala and he did receive the money though it did not benefit him in this world, while Wahab had a choice between joining Syedush Shuhada's camp or staying away from the Muslim issue. He had a choice between glory in this world and wonder in the hereafter. He had a choice between Jannah and the Jahannam. Wahab opted for Jannah; he selected Hayat Abadiyyah in the hereafter. He is remembered in this world for his courage, for his bravery, for his 'Just Principles', in addition to the everlasting happiness in the Akhirah.***

***In our lifetime, there are many occasions when we have to make a decision between good and evil, between right and wrong, between Halal and Haram, between Jannah and Jahannam, between renting our voice for Zikril Husain or doing it voluntarily, between commercializing Muharram or doing it on a non-commercial basis. Let us become strong supporters like Wahab instead of becoming a 'Traitor' like the Transporter. Let us come to Karbala to give rather than to receive. Let us choose good deeds, let us choose Halal over Haram, let us stand for truth and choose to be in Jannah. Happiness and glory in this world are short lived, while the Sadat Akhirah is everlasting.***

***(Ref: 1). The Story of Karbala, Abdullah bin Wahab al Kalbi, By: Al Mujtaba Islamic Article Series; (Ref: 2). Story of two businessmen in Karbala, By: Siraj Ali, TSC, Canada)***

***The world remembers the names of the Shuhada of Karbala though nobody remembers the name of this materialistic transporter. The point being if the devotees are doing Kihdmat for the sake of worldly affairs and in the lust of money than the end result shall be similar to that of the Transporter and if the devotees are doing Khidmat for the sake of Al Imam al Husain and his Dawah, without any greed and need then the end result will be like Ashaab al Husain Ibn Ali.***

### **Conclusion of The Discussion:**

***When in sorrow at least in Majlis, ladies should not show off or display their wealth by wearing jewelry and expensive fancy covering dress, and wealthy gossip. Avoiding such display also helps fellow sisters to maintain dignity and avoid any inferiority complex or displeasure. Many families cannot afford expensive clothes and other displays amongst women folks. Many of us fail to grasp how extremely amazing and motivating the Zikril Husain is. It is an obligation upon us to inform others of the great sacrifices rendered by Moula al Husain, his Ahl al Bait and Ashaab, both male and female and the lesson to be learnt from it.***

*Let us ask ourselves the same question. If we were alive at that time, would we be among those who fought alongside the Imam or from those who fought against him, or from those who do not pay any attention to the greatest injustice perpetrated in the human history?*

*Let us ask ourselves the question: if the son of Al Imam al Husain comes back tomorrow morning, are we able and qualified enough for him to accept us? Are Muharram and Safar simply months of mourning for us, or do we move beyond the rituals and struggle to follow the Talim and Tarbiyyah of Al Moula al Husain and our beloved Ahl ul Bait?*

*Aza and commemoration of Aba Abdillah al Husain is of utmost important for our Akhirah, but we also have the responsibility to build our nation to live in this Duniya with honor and dignity as well. Imam did not wish for illiterate and blind followers, but wished for a highly educated and cultured class who could argue and teach other nations, as his grandfather Rasulullah(S) had expressed on various occasions. A devotee's life has to be moulded in accordance with the Talim of the Imam. It is the duty of every devotee of the Imam to hold, participate and help others in their efforts in holding such meaningful Majlis. The great Imam taught humanity not to compromise with cruelty and dictatorship. By refusing to take Bait at the hands of Yazid Maloon on principles, Syedush Shuhada Abi Abdillah al Husain taught this essential lesson to the humankind that those who sacrifice their lives for the sake of principles remain alive and the dictators of the time lose despite their seeming victory and become object of universal condemnation and Lanat Abadiyyah ibdaiyyah (eternal curse) till the Day of Judgment.*

*Our Salaam to our Imam and our Ahd does not end at the day of Aashurah – nor even after Arbayeen – rather, our Misaq continues “...as long as the night and the day remain. We keep our Misaq to the Imam until we leave this world – and even beyond! May Allah allow all of us to change and understand our responsibilities towards the Dawah of Al Imam al Husain (AS)! May all our Majalis be true demonstrations of our love for, and a meeting of Walayah and Misaq to, Al Imam al Husain Ibn Ali(AS)! Aameen.*

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