

‘Ashara Mubaraka AH 1440
Majlis 1
English Reflections

As has become tradition over the past few years, al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} announced in today’s *wa‘az mubarak* the central theme of this year’s ‘Ashara Mubaraka, which is to be inspired by and related to the land of Yemen. In particular, each day’s *wa‘az mubarak* will be based on a town visited by al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin ^{RA} during his historic visit to Yemen in AH 1381 after which his father al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Taher Saifuddin ^{RA} conferred upon him the title of Mansoor al-Yemen.

The first city Syedna al-Muqaddas Mansoor al-Yemen ^{RA} visited during his historic visit to Yemen was the city of Zi Jibla, the resting place of Maulatuna Hurra al-Malika ^{RA}. With Syedna al-Muqaddas’ lodging in Ib, a close-by city, he travelled to Zi Jibla every morning returning to Ib in the night. Every day Syedna Burhanuddin ^{RA} sought blessings with Maulatuna Hurra al-Malika’s ^{RA} *ziyarat* and by leading *namaz* in her masjid. While in Jibla, Syedna al-Muqaddas ^{RA} met with the people of the city, distributed sweetmeats amongst the children of a school and attended a gathering held in his honour.

Jibla was once the capital of the Sulayhi kingdom during Maulatuna Hurra al-Malika’s ^{RA} reign. This was brought about by her own request to her husband, al-Malik al-Mukarram, Syedna Ali b. Mohammed al-Sulayhi’s son. She suggested that the capital of the kingdom be shifted from Sana’a to Zi Jibla for its strategic, central location in the Sulayhi territories and its temperate climate. Al-Malik al-Mukarram summoned the people of Sana’a who presented themselves to the Sulayhi court carrying their swords and spears. Once in Zi Jiblah, al-Malik al-Mukarram summoned the people of Zi Jibla who arrived with presents and offerings in their hands. Syeda Hura al-Malika remarked that a life of comfort was only to be had amongst the people of Jibla.

Situated between two major rivers, Zi Jibla is known as Madina zu Nahrayn, ‘the city of two rivers’. At various points throughout the *wa‘az mubarak*, Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} spoke of rivers, their importance in establishing major civilizations throughout history, the heavenly river of Kawthar and various allegorical references to rivers in Dawat theology and literature. Syedna al-Dai al-Ajal ^{TUS} mentioned a few major rivers of the world noted for their length, depth and other unique attributes. Syedna al-Dai al-Ajal ^{TUS} explained the various nuances in the meanings of the word Kawthar and pointed out — most poignantly — the rivers of blood and tears that drenched the sands of Karbala.

When The Tigris flooded at Kufa, the inhabitants turned to Amirul Mumineen Ali ^{AS}. He prayed at the bank, tapped his staff near the waters and they receded. The waters receded so far that the fish were seen, many of which bade ‘salaam’ upon Amirul Mumineen ^{AS} while others, such as the catfish, did not. Asked as to why some did and some did not, Amirul Mumineen ^{AS} told them that the ones that were halal bade the salaam and the ones that were not halal did not.

The Du‘āt Mutlaqeen have shed many tears on Imam Husain ^{AS}. Al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Abdulqadir Najmuddin ^{RA}, whose blessed mausoleum in Ujjain is very near to Indore,

addressed the Mumineen of Hindustan specifically as he related to them the very special and focused gaze Rasul Allah ^{SAW} had upon this land. The narrative in question was that in which Rasul Allah ^{SAW} stood at Hajar-e-Aswad and, facing Hind and with copious tears, prayed for his 'brothers' who would one day be his most ardent followers. Rasul Allah's ^{SAW} tears alluded to the copious tears the Du'āt would cry and have cried upon Imam Husain ^{AS} in that coming time. In relaying this powerful moment in history, Syedna Najmuddin ^{RA} informed the Mumineen of his time, as Mufaddal Maula ^{TUS} did today, that by virtue of Rasul Allah's ^{SAW} gaze towards the land of Hind, they were more obligated to shed tears upon Imam Husain more than any other. In relating this address Syedna al-Dai al-Ajal ^{TUS}, broadened it to include all Mumineen wherever they may happen to be.

The Du'āt have brought forth twin rivers of the exoteric and esoteric knowledge within Dawat, the waters of which are so sweet that once tasted they dispel thirst forever. However, this water is not available nor accessible to everyone. Indeed, at times those closest to it are those bereft of it. This reality was demonstrated in the example of a stone behind the falls of Niagara. Even here, where the force of water is incomparable, the rocks near to where the water falls are seen to be utterly dry – no water touches them. It is a remarkable phenomenon of nature with profound philosophical connotations. Who, after all, was closest to Husain Imam ^{AS} on Aashura? The wretched Shimr, for all his hateful proximity, went away parched, failing to take even a sip of the blessed waters of Kawthar.

In imbibing the holy water one has to have 'zowq-e-saleem' – 'sound' or healthy taste. For a person who is in ill health even fresh water will taste salty – the problem lying not in the liquid itself but in the person taking it in. Rasul Allah ^{SAW} taught his young grandson Imam Husain ^{AS} the correct manner of drinking water: he would drink it in three sips, slowly supping the water while taking a breath between each sip, and ending with "Alhamdulillah". In doing so Rasul Allah ^{SAW} demonstrated the value placed on each sip of water which, in turn, establishes an invaluable lesson in the need for conservation and preservation of our natural resources.

The health benefit of taking water in sips is that it aids in digestion, and the stomach is the 'head of all maladies'. Good digestion is a vital first step in preventing illnesses. The three sips method of drinking water prevents illness and also aids in ridding one of an ailment if inflicted. Stated fourteen centuries ago, this is another example of the divine wisdom of Awliya' Allah ^{AS} and its superiority over human methods of scientific discovery. Science is beholden to hypotheses and yields results after months, years, and even decades of experimentation. Even then, its conclusions remain subject to modification or even being rejected altogether. The wisdom of the prophets, however, is both ahead of its time and also timeless.

The *bayān* of three sips, the 'sound' taste and the final '*hamd*' were to be seen in the *shahaadat* of Ahle Bayt ^{AS} in Karbala. Maulana al-Min'ām ^{TUS} related the meanings of Kawthar first to Maulana Ali Akber ^{AS}, who by virtue of the prophetic ring bestowed upon him by Imam Husain ^{AS} was able to witness and relay his vision of Khamsat At'haar receiving him in his final moments. For Maulana Abbas ^{AS} the 'soundness' of taste related to his desire to bring water to his Imam. The three sips of water were related to both his arms as they were severed and the final piercing of the water-skin he clenched in his mouth – the call to his Maula Imam Husain ^{AS} his culminating *hamd*.

Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} concluded by calling upon Mumineen to express aloud *nawha* and *'aweel*. Acts that are obligated, *faridat*, are to be done openly, for all to see, and the lamentation upon Imam Husain ^{AS} is the *faridat* by which all others are made valid. May Allah Ta'ala bless Syedna al-Dai al-Ajal with a life of health and happiness until the Day of Qiyāma.