

‘Ashara Mubaraka AH 1440
Majlis 3
English Reflections

The third location al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin ^{RA} visited during his 1381 *safr mubarak* of Yemen, which formed the basis of today’s *wa’az mubarak*, was Hisne Af’ida. Across a small valley at approximately a kilometre’s distance from Taiba, Hisne Af’ida is a sheer sided, formidable mountaintop which has been the home to several of Yemen’s Duat Mutlaqeen ^{RA} and their final resting place as well. Af’ida is the plural for ‘heart’ in Arabic and this *hisn* – fort – is thus the Fort of Hearts. Over time, Hisne Af’ida has become inaccessible and there are no visible traces of the previous stately residences of the Du’āt. However, the *quboor mubarak* of the Du’at residing there have forever enshrined Hisne Af’ida’s *barakat* as has their successor, the Dai of each age, who is the true protector of the hearts of Mumineen.

In a verse of his, al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Taher Saifuddin ^{RA} explained that the heart of Rasul Allah ^{SA}, and that of his progeny the Aimmat Tahireen ^{AS}, always remain awake even when they seem asleep. This lofty trait is also apparent in Imam’s du’at as Syedna al-Dai al-Ajal ^{TUS} explained by recounting an incident that took place during one of Syedna Abdulqadir Najmuddin’s ^{RA} *sabaqs*. One hot summer, Syedna Najmuddin ^{RA} was giving a *haqqeeqat sabaq* in Sironj on a rooftop terrace. During the course of the *sabaq*, Maula briefly closed his eyes in repose, yet continued to explain the meaning of the text. When he awoke again he asked where they had stopped, then reiterated the meaning exactly as he

had done whilst asleep before continuing with the rest of the *sabaq*.

In his discussions pertaining to the heart, al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} referenced a phrase in description of Ibrahim Nabi ^{AS} which features in the Quran-e-Majeed (37:84): *qalbin saleem* - 'tranquil of heart'. When Nabi Ibrahim's ^{AS} foes placed him in a catapult and readied to hurl him into fire, his heart was tranquil and at peace with whatever Allah's decree was for him. Ibrahim ^{AS} declined Jibra'eel's ^{AS} offer for assistance, and even his offer to petition a request on his behalf to the Almighty Himself. He did not protest when he was placed in the catapult for to do so would have been to question why this was happening and in turn Allah ta'ālā's Will. The purity of his heart and in his trust in his Creator was such that the fire that he was cast into, by Allah's Will, transformed into verdant foliage.

Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin ^{RA} gathered hundreds of thousands together in his heart, awakening them to the lament and grief upon Imam Husain ^{AS}. Zikr e Husain was at the heart of all that he called towards and that remembrance brought one and all to Maula's ^{RA} *janaza mubarak*a, whether in body or in spirit. During his life and even now after his departure from this world, Syedna al-Muqaddas is awake; no matter where one might be, far away in America or England, one only has to think of him and he is there for us.

The tranquillity of heart apparent in the actions of Ibrahim Nabi ^{AS} was also shown by Maulana Abdul-Muttalib ^{AS} when Abraha arrived in Makkah seeking to destroy the Kaaba. Unlike the rest of Quraysh who had fled in fear, Maulana Abdul-Muttalib ^{AS} remained near the Ka'aba, unintimidated.

When Abraha asked him, upon meeting him, if he had any requests, he replied that he desired the return of his camels which had been seized. Abraha's esteem for Maulana Abdul-Muttalib evaporated and he expressed astonishment that instead of asking for a reprieve for the sacred Ka'aba Abdul-Muttalib ^{AS} seemed more preoccupied with his camels. To this Maulana demonstrated the utter conviction that underpinned his tranquillity of heart; the camels were his property and so he asked for their return; the Kaaba had its own master who would protect it from any harm. And this is what came to pass as the small birds, the *abaabeel*, stoned the elephant divisions and put them to flight.

This tranquillity, purity and peace of heart is witnessed once more in Karbala in the actions of Imam Husain ^{AS}. Husain Imam ^{AS} had ridden into battle and was in full force, Zu al-Faqar was in full force; who could stand against him? How could martyrdom take place? He could not just lay down his sword without cause. The opportunity for *shahādat* had to be found. Whether through Jibra'eel's ^{AS} battalions of angels or Imam Husain's ^{AS} divine might, the foes would have been completely vanquished and the opportunity for *shahādat* and the fulfilment of a vow made to Rasul Allah ^{SAW} for the salvation of mankind lost. Hence, when Jibra'eel ^{AS} proffered the support of the angels it was a moment of supreme examination, Husain ^{AS} is banishing the enemy and yet he asks, "What is Allah's wish?"

Husain Imam's ^{AS} tranquillity and purity went further still. Whereas Nabi Ibrahim ^{AS} and Maulana Abd al-Muttalib ^{SA} remained unharmed at the moment of their test, Husain Imam ^{AS} had already seen indescribable torment in the martyrdoms of his Ahle Bayt ^{AS} and Ashaab Kiraam. He knew

full well that even after his *shahādat* that this was just the beginning of difficulties which the *sayyidāt*, children and Imam Ali Zain al-Abideen ^{AS} were yet to endure. Yet he submitted willingly, with tranquil heart, to Allah's wish and left them to His care.

During the Mumbai disturbances of 1415 AH, Syedna Burhanuddin Aqa ^{RA} was in Dubai. It was the month of Rajab al-Asab and the '*urs mubarak*' of Syedna Taher Saifuddin; a commemoration Maulana had never missed in Mumbai. The situation was tense, curfews were in place, yet Syedna did not flinch and returned to Mumbai. He came to give succour to Mumineen in this trying time and barely did he reach and the violence subsided.

Today, India's Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modiji visited Saifee Masjid to join Mufaddal Maula ^{TUS} and the community in their remembrance of Imam Husain ^{AS}. Following yesterday's *wa'az mubarak* in which Maulana spoke of how Allah's Awliyā' are held in high esteem by all, Mumineen, Muslimeen and mankind generally for their commitment to humanitarianism, Islam and for salvation, it was fascinating to see all these facets being expressed today. Both the PM and the Honourable Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh – Mr Shivraj Singh Chauhan – praised the various humanitarian efforts of Syedna and the community; the Faizul Mawaaid al-Burhaniyyah initiative to ensure no one sleeps hungry, Project Rise to dispel malnutrition in children, the community's attempts to provide a house for all that has so far seen 11,000 apartments handed over, cleanliness initiatives and even the Save Our Sparrow scheme that was launched to celebrate Syedna Burhanuddin's hundredth birthday. Shri Modiji highlighted this last one and expressed

some astonishment that even on his birthday Syedna chose to celebrate with an initiative to preserve this endangered city bird.

“Wherever I go around the world I am likely to have someone somewhere ask me, ‘Kem cho?’ (how are you?),” the PM said indicating the ubiquity of Bohras around the globe and their goodwill towards him. It was no surprise then that he addressed the gathered Bohras as his ‘family’. He further stated that the community was to be lauded for its role in keeping the peace throughout the country. Coming from the senior most Minister of the land, these were not to be taken as mere words but a genuine recognition of how the community’s outlook has been adopted into the nationwide efforts for universal care of the population.

Shri Modiji recalled the support of Syedna Taher Saifuddin ^{RA} for Mahatma Gandhi, the Dandi Salt March and the efforts to achieve independence. He heralded Syedna Burhanuddin’s ^{RA} contributions to his efforts as CM in Gujarat. After just a simple conversation Syedna helped kick-start a water distribution effort that the then CM went on to implement successfully in the state.

The CM was also generous in his praise of the community. Thanking Syedna for accepting the invitation to bless the land of MP with his visit the CM went on to say, “Truly, looking at this scene, if there is a well-disciplined, devoted, with love for all, love for the country, helpful to others community; then it is the Bohra community!”

Syedna al-Dai al-Ajal ^{TUS} in his inspired kalimaat for the occasion, spoke of how all faiths share a universal message of

love. This was Imam's statement to Ziyad: Religion is nothing but love. Mufaddal Maula ^{TUS} also spoke of the PM's love for Syedna Burhanuddin ^{RA} and prayed that by the *wasila* of Imam Husain ^{AS}, the PM sees success in all his initiatives for the betterment of the nation and her citizens. Concluding, Maula ^{TUS} informed the PM, and subsequently reminded Mumineen, of the reason the Bohra community exists so peacefully and prosperously in India after centuries in Yemen: because of sincerity and i and because of their compliance with '*Syedna's' farmaan*' as he demonstrated in the example of Ahmedabaad's *wali* Maulaya Ahmed ^{RA}. Today's events clearly illustrate that due to Wali Allah's ^{AS} sincerity and purity of heart, Allah Ta'ala always comes to his aid and always raises his standards across the world.

How pure and tranquil was the heart of Husain ^{AS}? He said to Jibra'eel ^{AS}, "But Jibra'eel I have one more requirement. That were I to be slain one lakh times for the will of Allah and be reborn and be slain again and this to happen seventy lakh times that this not be the end of it, for me never to say – let that be enough!"

May we as Mumineen, continuously increase our lament upon Imam Husain ^{AS} and never ever feel that our tears and *maatam*, our attendance in these *mawa'iz* and our expression of *nawha* and '*aweel*' are ever even remotely – 'enough'. May Allah grant our beloved Maula a life in good health and happiness, for the peace of heart of all those who encounter him, until Qiyamat.