

‘Ashara Mubaraka AH 1440
Majlis 4
English Reflections

The fourth sacred location in Yemen is Zamarmar, also pronounced *Zimarmar*; a mountain rising some 2500m above sea level a little distance from the capital San’aa. Several dais stayed here or frequented it over the years. Three dais, the 14th dai al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Abdul Muttalib Najmuddi ^{RA}, the 16th dai al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Abd Allah Fakhruddin ^{RA} and the 17th dai al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna al-Hasan Badruddin ^{RA} as well as Mazoon al-Dawat Syedi Ahmed bin Syedna Ali bin Hanzala ^{QR} rest here. Despite being accessible only by narrow mountainside trails it was once a flourishing enclave. We are given some idea of how many people lived there by the fact that, when it had been besieged centuries ago, over a thousand remained in the care of the dai after a cholera epidemic had decimated the population.

Zā mir in Arabic means ‘person of valour’ and a core theme of today’s wa‘az mubārak was *shajā‘at* – courage. ‘Marmar’ itself means marble – a substance noted for its solidity and purity and these characteristics were given great attention today. Maulana ^{TUS} spoke of the miraculous escape that happened on Zamarmar when Maulana Burhanuddin ^{RA} climbed the mountain in his 1381AH visit. First of all there were those who advised against making the climb given the difficulties involved but Maulana responded by saying, “I am used to difficulty.” As the climb was underway an enormous boulder suddenly began to fall from directly above Maulana and the unthinkable seemed inevitable. Instead the rock stopped as suddenly as it had started, wedged into the mountainside where it still remains today. Burhanuddin

Maula's ^{RA} purity had repelled the evil inherent in the stone, a purity the like of which can not only move mountains but halt them as well.

Solidity and purity go hand in hand and a unique example of their physical manifestation is in Raudat Tahera. Here, unlike anywhere else in the world at the time of its construction, is the only place where the entire Quran is engraved. The engraving is in marble and then overlaid with gold leaf and thus it combines the solidity of the marble with the purity of gold. The reverence held for the Quran-e-Majeed is evident and yet even this, in turn, is a testimony to the way in which the 52nd al-dai al-mutlaq, haafiz al-Quran, has engraved the Quran into the minds and hearts of Mumineen in their thousands with their commitment to memorization of the holy book. Similarly, he overlaid the engraving of knowledge upon their hearts with the gold leaf of the remembrance of Imam Husain ^{AS} to such an extent that a Mumin sees Husain, Husain, Husain in their every outlook.

Today Maulana ^{TUS} continued delving into the inner contests and conflicts that are the essence of mankind. Courage is a pre-requisite in any battle and courage is especially required in order to combat anger. To be slow to anger is in itself a good thing but to swallow one's anger when it rises takes a special strength – it can be alike to swallowing a mountain. A prophet once had a dream in which he was told that in the morning he would come across five things. The first he should swallow, the second - hide, the third - protect, fulfil a need of the fourth and flee from the fifth. What were these things? First a mountain, then a gold plate, a sparrow, a falcon and finally a reeking carcass. The first was anger which, if you control it goes from being the size of a

mountain to the size of a morsel and if you banish it, it tastes as sweet as honey. The others were to hide one's virtues, to protect those who are oppressed, to provide for those in need at any cost and finally to flee from back-biting and slander.

Maulana Ali ^{AS} had overcome an enemy in battle and was on the verge of slaying him when the foe spat at him. Ali let him go and when the man asked why he had done so he replied that he could not allow his anger to be any part of his intent in killing. His acts were for Allah alone. The foe who had done the ill deed was so taken by this act that he entered into the faith as a result. This is in fact the very essence of the actions of Awliya Allah ^{AS} for whom every act, regardless of how disparate they may outwardly appear, is aimed at bringing closeness to the Almighty. Maula gave a simple prescription to alleviate anger when it comes: bow your head and think of Buthanuddin Maula ^{RA} and it will dissipate.

It behoves us as Maulana Ali's dai's adherents to consider this in every act or word we speak. Does what I do, how I do it or who and what I am cause others to think well of me, my faith and my Maula? Conversely, is there any such thing that I do or say that might actually drive people away from Maula? Are my acts and words purely intent on bringing people to Maula, or is there self-interest or self-aggrandisement involved too? In the example of Syedi Najam Khan QR we see the total subversion of the self to the greater pleasure of Maula. He had been divested of the post of mazoon – outwardly this would appear a grave and public humiliation – but far from viewing it as such he instead maintained gratitude for being kept within the faith as an ordinary

Mumin. Such serenity at heart is the like of which we should be trying to emulate in our own lives.

Maulana ^{TUS} told us there were seven virtues to be attained and these could be harnessed by following the tenets of the Shariah. The seven virtues are humility, truthfulness, nearness to Allah, generosity, piety, valour and attraction to the angels. One example of how the Shariah engenders these virtues is through the halal and haraam of what we consume. As others also say, 'We are what we eat,' thus the purity or impurity of what we consume impacts upon our character.

The solidity and purity of Imam Husain ^{AS} was to be seen when he saw Yazid ^{LA} drinking wine in his court at which point he declared that if Yazid assumed the caliphate he would never give him allegiance, but would give him the sword instead. And so it came to be and on the eve of Aashura we saw Husain's supreme purity and firmness of spirit. Despite three days of being without food and water he asked for one more night before battle commenced. Surely that further time could only increase their weakness and prolong their pain? Yet Husain ^{AS} knew that the *shahadat* was for Aashura and, in this night's reprieve, the enemy who came to see what the sound of honeybees was that was emanating through the night; found the as-haab and Ahle Bayt ^{AS} spending it in prayer and seeking of forgiveness. It is related that the woman who tied a cat and prevented it from food and water for three days was punished by hellfire so what of those who denied food and water to Ahle Bayt ^{AS} for three days?!

In Karbala the extremes of humanity and inhumanity were pitted against one another and as much as we witnessed the

very worst evils of man we also saw his greatest virtues in the form of Husain ^{AS} and those who were with him.

On Aashura Husain Imam ^{AS} left the haram and rode into battle. As he waded through the enemy lines he thought of his steed who was also without water for three days and must be tiring. There was still much to be done and Husain Imam ^{AS} made to the river. Yet his noble mount refused to take any water whilst his rider remained parched. Imam Husain ^{AS} took some water in his hand and was just about to take a sip so that the horse would drink when a cry came, "While you drink water your camp is being looted!" Husain threw the water and hurried back to find all was well at the camp and no harm had yet befallen them. Nothing of the like could happen while he was still alive and indeed Husain continuously turned to check that the camp was safe even as he fought with the enemy.

In Karbala is a lesson of valour for everyone, from the horse, from the six month old infant Maulana Ali Asgher ^{AS}, the youth and the elderly, to the two sisters Zainab and Umme Kulsum ^{AS} who between them protected the entire haram after Husain Imam ^{AS} was slain.

May Allah Ta'ālā preserve Imam Husain's ^{AS} dai, Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS}, and the guardian of the valour and virtues of Karbala, until Qiyamat