

‘Ashara Mubāraka AH 1440
Majlis 6
English Reflections

On this seventh of Muharram al-Haraam we were taken to the iconic al-Hutaib al-Mubarak, undoubtedly the locale that is most representative of Yemen for a Mumin. It is from this mountain top that al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Hatim b. Ibrahim ^{RA} solidified the Dawat and spread its knowledge. From this haven that boasts mountain cove of Kahf al-Na‘eem, he delivered discourses and wrote treatises on the life of Maulana Ali ^{AS} and the values and characters of a true Mumin.

Al-Hutaib al-Mubarak is located in the mountainous Haraaz region west of Sana’a. Haraaz comes from the word *ha ra za*, to protect, the root word for *hirz* as well, which means a fortified place or sanctuary. In today’s *wa‘az mubarak*, al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Aali Qadr Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} explained how one can achieve protection, a personal *hirz* so to speak, through *taqwaa*. *Taqwa* is for an individual to do as they should and refrain from what they should not; this process is an armour and shield that protects one from malice and misfortune.

The *wa‘az mubarak* centred around the concepts of *taqwaa* and *karam*, god-fearingness and virtue and their superlatives, *atqaa* and *akram*; the most god-fearing and the most virtuous. The two words trace back to a statement made by Amirul Mumineen ^{SA} close to Maulatona Fatema’s ^{SA} *shahaadat* when she respectfully sought his exoneration for any shortcomings she may have committed during her life. In response, Amirul Mumineen ^{SA} said that she was *atqa* and *akram* – she was far too pious and dignified of committing such things.

Through the auspices of *taqwaa*, Awliya Allah ^{SA} have vouchsafed the protection and peace of their followers. They have done so through

the edifices of prayers, knowledge, philosophy and wisdom. They have done so by the founding of great cities such as Mahdiyya Mardiyya, Mansuriyya Mubarakā and al-Qahiraha al-Mu'izziyya. The Du'at Mutlaqeen ^{AS} have continued the preservation and protection of the dawat and its followers by keeping us true to *taqwaa* and *muhabbat* as a result of which our minds, bodies and spirits are protected.

One is able to achieve *taqwaa*, doing what should be done and refraining from what should not, by acknowledging that Allah Ta'ala sees and knows all. This means one will do the same whether one is in public or private. This notion is also inherently linked to one's self of shame. Amirul Mumineen Maulana Ali b. Abi Talib ^{AS} stated that 'the epitome of good character is for a person to be ashamed of his or her self'. What this means, as Mufaddal Maula ^{TUS} explained, is that it does not take a third party for one to recognize an act that is shameful. The measure of such an understanding is to think of an act that one would be ashamed of if seen by another and question whether if one were alone and without witnesses would he or she be just as embarrassed or ashamed.

Shame, then, is integral to *taqwaa*. To this effect, Maulana al-Min'aam ^{TUS} related the story of a man whose much beloved son had gone astray. He had forsaken faith and indulged himself in worldly vices. The man refused to believe this of those who came to speak of it to him until one day he set out to see for himself. They found him at the forecourt of a woman of ill repute who was combing his hair and when the son saw his father he shielded his face from him with his locks. The man turned back home, saying nothing to those who had accompanied him and when asked why he had not admonished the young man he told them it was because the boy showed shame. This meant he would one day return to the way he once was.

The aforementioned qualities are imbibed by *muhabbat* and *ta'at* – a vital combination that doesn't survive being kept apart. Both love and obedience are needed together. To truly observe these things together we follow the *shar'iah*, Nabi Mohammed's ^{SA} *shari'ah* is the seal of the creeds of the previous prophets and in describing it as a seal it follows that there has to be some secrets that are to be sealed. These secrets are the beauties of the past creeds that the *shari'ah* encompasses. The *shari'ah*, creed, ensures protection and peace for all.

Taqwaa and *karam* and *atqaa* and *akram* were both exemplified by the life of Maulatena Fatema ^{AS}. On the one hand she demonstrated the utmost *taqwaa* in the manner in which she preserved her modesty, retreating from a room where a blind man sat lest he take in her scent. On the other hand, she demonstrated the utmost *taqwaa* in the manner in which she arrived at the gathering after Rasul Allah's ^{SAW} *wafaat* to argue for the divinely ordained rights of Maulana Ali ^{AS} as Nabi Mohammed's ^{SAW} Wasi and successor.

This same modesty and remarkable strength of will were to be later demonstrated by her *shahzadis* after Karbala. Where they stood able to cover their faces only by the hair on their heads. Despite these conditions, when the enemy threatened to execute Imam Ali Zain al-Abideen ^{AS}, Maulatuna Zainab ^{AS} stood afore him and not only defended him but indeed stated that to slay him they would have to slay her first. This Maulatena Fatema ^{AS} and her *shahzadis* taught their female followers the true meaning of modesty and dignity for a woman. This modesty is essential in all aspects of life and is a boon, not a hindrance or encumbrance, to rendering service to one's family and others.

With Rasul Allah's ^{SAW} statement of *baka*, *abkaa* and *tabaakaa*, the process of *taqwaa*, *atqaa*, *karam* and *akram* unfolds before us. To cry

oneself is one stage - *taqwaa*, to make someone else cry is a stage above - *atqaa*. But for those unable to cry, Rasul Allah ^{SAW} has preserved their *karam* and dignity as well. Ultimately, *akram*, is that each one of these individuals is bestowed with Jannat.

Taqwaa means to do what should be done when it should be done. It is taught that the things we keep in trust – *amaanat* – should be returned to their owner even if that owner happens to be *qaatil Husain*^{AS}, one of those who slew Imam Husain^{AS}. Rasul Allah^{SA} gave his family as an *amaanat* to the Ummah. It was the Ummah's duty to ensure that the love that he had asked of for them was offered. Instead it came to the stage that Maulatuna Fatema^{AS} willed that none but the true followers should pray in her *janaaza namaaz*, that she be buried at night and forty additional graves be made so that none of the usurpers should know which was hers.

Maulatuna Zainab^{AS} had a dream in which she saw a woman clearing the ground of Karbala, brushing away the rocks and stones. She would come to know that this was her mother Fatema, clearing away these stones lest they cause any discomfort to her son when he would lie there ravaged by injury upon injury. Maulatuna Fatema^{AS} kissed her *shahzadi* on the hair and stroked her arms. Zainab asked why she had done this where normally she would kiss her cheeks and gently touch her face? Maulatuna Fatema replied, "Tomorrow with this hair you will cover your face and these arms will be lashed together!" When Imam Husain^{AS} heard of this dream he cried copious tears. Why was his mother taking this trouble, when he was gladly and willingly making the sacrifice? And from beyond came his mother's voice, "How can your mother not grieve when even the angels weep upon the enormity of your burden? When even the prophet and the *wasi* are in grief, when even the Lord himself laments your torment."

We are here to weep upon Husain along side the angels. It might be within the majlis among the throngs of Mumineen right in front of Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS}. It might be in the side venues or at the ends of the vast tent. It might be in another masjid or eating hall, in the environs of a *mazaar* next to resting Awliya Allah ^{AS}. It might be in a village, town or city far and wide across the nation and the globe. It might be in a masjid or a *markaz* or a town hall or simply in one's home. Yet the *maatam* and the *buka* can be no less. The lament upon Imam Husain ^{AS} is to be expressed the same as if it was directly in front of Maula ^{TUS}. For the true meaning of *taqwaa* is that he is watching over us, no matter where we are. May Allah Ta'ala grant our beloved Maula good health and long life until Qiyaamat.