

# The Husayni (Religious Congregation) programs

## Introduction

The Husayni *majalis* are commemoration programs in honour of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, which normally include lectures, recitation of *ziyarah*, eulogy poetry and *latm*, beating the one's chest as a gesture of grief.

When Imam Zayn al-‘Abideen and Lady Zaynab, peace be upon them, gave their speeches in Damascus introducing themselves and relating what happened on the day of Ashura, the people of Damascus began to realize who those captives were, what happened in Karbala, and they started to sympathize with the family of Imam Husayn, and thus the captives began to gain respect in the eyes of the masses. Yazid feared for his authority and his grip on power, and resorted to a charm offensive and eventually deciding to let those captives go back to Medina. Before going back to Medina they asked to be allowed to mourn and lament for Imam Husayn there and then. They were granted their wish. “Therefore, the houses and apartments in Damascus were vacated for them, and the mourning and lamentation for Imam Husayn went on for **seven days**.”<sup>1</sup>

So the family of Imam Husayn – amongst them his sisters Lady Zaynab and his son Imam Zayn al-‘Abideen – organised a mourning and lamentation program (*majlis*) for Imam Husayn at the first opportunity they could have, and this they did at the enemy's heartland – at the Omayyad's capital city, and less a month after the martyrdom of Imam Husayn peace be upon him. Editors.

- ❖ The name of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, reverberates around the world, and his standard flies high in every location. His teachings are

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<sup>1</sup> Bihar al-Anwar, vol.45, p196

those of Allah's Messenger and of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon them and their families, which spread further and further every day. The Husayni commemoration programs are held in his name around the world; thousands of speakers, poets, and writers recite his name, and millions of people are guided to the truth by his blessing.

- ❖ It is imperative that the Ashura season is utilized – through every Sharia-permissible means – to facilitate guidance for people all over the world, through the Husayni commemoration programs, dedicated Husayni groups, procession, and suchlike. The Husayni commemoration programs held throughout the year should also be utilized for achieving the same objective.
- ❖ According to the Shari'a, grief and anguish is disapproved of in afflictions in general, however, on the occasion of Ashura, this is praiseworthy, rewarded, and indeed it is recommended and commanded to do so for the sake of *Sayyid al-Shohada'* Imam Husayn, peace be upon him.
- ❖ The real loser is the one who violates – in any way that may be – the sanctity of the mourning program of *Sayyid al-Shohada'* and the Ahl al- Bayt, peace be upon them. Such individuals will not prosper in their lives, nor enjoy any aspects of their lives, not even a drink of water.
- ❖ It is indicative of one's great honor if one holds a *majlis* for *Sayyid al- Shohada'*, peace be upon him. Such a *majlis*, even if only a few individuals attend them and minimum refreshment served, such programs are of great value in the sight of Allah on the day of resurrection, not to mention that they repel misfortune of this world and the hereafter.

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- ❖ Those who do not succeed to hold the *majalis* for *Sayyid al-Shohada'*, peace be upon him, from now on, let them make a resolution to hold them in their houses.
- ❖ Pay particular attention to religious programs (*majalis*), promote them, also the programs and lectures about Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, and the Qur'an programs. Furthermore, attention should also be paid to the literature and booklets on religious matters, which explains the roots and branches of the religion, the resurrection and the hereafter, and the attribute of Almighty Allah; so that the correct beliefs are conveyed to our sons and daughters.
- ❖ The Imam Husayn commemoration programs (*majalis*) are the continuation of [presenting] Almighty Allah's rulings [on *halal* and *haram*], and the support and fortification for them, and for the Holy Qur'an, the Prophetic Sunnah, and the teachings of Ahl al-Bayt peace be upon them.
- ❖ The *majlis* or gathering commemorating Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, has led to an abundance of successes and it will continue to do so.
- ❖ Husayni mourning processions have lofty status and high prestige such that great scholars, dignitaries, and personalities would pride themselves in partaking in these processions.
- ❖ Those who organize and run the Husayni *matam* programs in fact offer their condolences and sympathy to Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him and his holy family.

- ❖ It is highly befitting to the faithful everywhere that every one of them – in any way they can – organize and run Husayni *majalis* and Husayni rites, which are the outward continuation of Almighty Allah's rites.<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ Amongst the things that please Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, for him to see the rites and programs that are upheld in his name are, in all aspects, accompanied with Islamic virtue and morals; even in the course of debating and responding to skeptics and those who do not observe virtue.<sup>2</sup>
- ❖ We must make sure that the local youths are not deprived of the Husayni mourning programs, and if we know of youths who do not attend such functions, we should encourage them to attend these *majalis*.
- ❖ We should not give up or lose hope if some of the youths do not respond positively in participating in the Husayni mourning *majalis*; we should persevere until they join the Husayni programs.
- ❖ Participation and serving in the Husayni *majalis* have great rewards, but the issue does not end here.
- ❖ Benefit from the blessings of *Sayyid al-Shohada* ', peace be upon him, as much as possible, and that is achieved through participation in the mourning *majalis* and promoting them.

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<sup>1</sup> [Whoever holds in honour the rites of Allah, it surely is from devotion of the hearts], the Holy Qur'an; (22):32.

<sup>2</sup> Just as there were those who, at the time, fought and killed Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, today there are those are fighting the rites of Imam Husayn trying to dispel them in any way they can.

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- ❖ It is imperative that every one of you should do their utmost to uphold the Husayni mourning *majalis* and to participate in them throughout the year, for this blessed endeavor will never be in vain; not even by one iota; it will be reserved for you, and will be recorded in your good deeds, by Almighty Allah's Will.
- ❖ It is possible for you to light the Husayni lantern of guidance in your homes; through holding public Husayni mourning programs, which would be of great honor. If one cannot do so, then they could hold private Husayni mourning programs. Failing that, one could hold Husayni mourning programs for one's family only, and possibly friends and neighbors.
- ❖ Whoever holds Husayni mourning programs, whether public or private, he would be bestowed great blessings in this world, before the blessings of the hereafter.
- ❖ Attending the Husayniahs and public *majalis* is of great significance, but it is better that one draws these blessings to one's home, and if one cannot bear burden of those *majalis* one should do the minimum. You will see for yourselves how Almighty Allah would shower His blessings through those *majalis*, and you would be able to give food too.
- ❖ I emphasize on one advice; hold weekly *majalis* in your houses in the name of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him.
- ❖ Whoever holds a *majlis* for Imam Husayn, peace be upon him; whether man or woman, in the months of Muharram or Safar, on the day of Ashura or on other occasions, all of that will bring blessings for you.

- ❖ You should endeavor that a week does not pass you by without the mention of tragedy of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, being made in your homes; in this is the blessings of this world and hereafter.
- ❖ If one was poor and did not have much, let them do what they can afford; like light a candle or a lamp in the name of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, for a few minutes a week, amongst the family members at home. And if one can do more than that, one should invite one's neighbors, relatives, and friends for this.
- ❖ After the end of the month of Safar,<sup>1</sup> try to acquire the great honour of holding the Husayni mourning programs (*majalis*), and I hope that you would encourage others to do that too. That is, each one of you, whether the head of a family, or a young person, should allocate one or two hours of your time to disseminate the teachings and values of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him.
- ❖ We should know that when we succeed in holding Husayni mourning *majalis* the credit for all that goes to our fathers and forefathers, and therefore we should always remember them. We should also know that we too could leave the imprint and influence upon our generations through our determination to serve the cause of *Sayyid al-Shohada*' Imam Husayn, peace be upon him.

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<sup>1</sup> The Husayni *majalis* continue to be held non-stop all over the world for almost seventy days beginning from beginning of the holy month of Muharram, through the following month of Safar, up to 8<sup>th</sup> Rabi' I, after which they are normally held on weekly basis.

- ❖ Just as those who serve the Husayni processions will achieve great rewards, in the same way those who hinder and oppose those processions will face misfortune and wretched consequences.
- ❖ Whoever causes obstructions in the path of the Husayni processions, deliberately or unknowingly, he will see his punishment in this world before the hereafter.
- ❖ Throughout history whenever the Husayni *majalis* and processions were subjected to repression and pressure, they radiated evermore and became stronger. And whenever the number of opponents of these *majalis* and processions increase, these programs harden and become more rooted.
- ❖ The remembrance and commemoration of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, brings the blessings, amongst which is the health and safety of the offspring. So, whoever wants his offspring to be good and pious, he should attract the blessings to his house through holding the *majalis* of remembrance of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, according to his ability.
- ❖ If one is able to hold the Ahl al-Bayt's remembrance *majalis* every day, that would be of great benefit, and if one is not able to do that, then one should do so once every week, or once a month, or at least once every year.
- ❖ It is imperative to exercise great effort to revere the Husayni rites, build Husayniahs, and organize mourning programs and processions, set up Husayni groups (*hay'ah*), and to globalize the manifestation of sorrow and grief in all their forms in streets and public areas, towns and cities, etc. This is the ideal means to attract the people to the religion in order to open their minds and free their selves, and, through this, to be inspired to every good, and in this way they would be enabled to attain happiness and prosperity in all their forms in this world and in the hereafter.