

# A Historical View of Crying for the Sufferings of Allah's Awliya'

Crying for the *awliya'* of Allah is included in the previously mentioned precept of permissibility [*ibahah*]. The precept of permissibility is applicable so long as there is no dictate or decree that opposes permissibility; that is to say, all actions are permissible so long as there is no evidence to prove that they are forbidden by the divine law [*shari'ah*] of Islam.

In the following discussions, we will refer to this issue and show that there is no proof for prohibiting crying when mourning for the afflictions that befell the *awliya'* of Allah. On the contrary, we will prove that crying is preferred and encouraged. First, we will refer to some historical examples of crying for the *awliya'* of Allah.

## 1. Prophet Adam (as) cried for Abel

Tabari on his chain of transmission narrates from 'Ali ibn Abi Talib that he said, "When the child of Adam was killed by his brother, Adam cried for him."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Jacob (as) cried due to separation from Joseph

On his own chain of transmission, Tabari recounts the following statement of al-Hasan Basri while interpreting the verse,

﴿ تَاللّٰهِ تَفْتَوُاْ تَذَكَّرُ يُوسُفَ حَتّٰى تَكُوْنَ حَرَضًا اَوْ تَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْهٰلِكِيْنَ ... ﴾

***"They said: By Allah! You will not cease to remember Yusuf until you are a prey to constant disease or until you are of those who perish."***<sup>2</sup>

Al-Hasan Basri said, "Eighty years elapsed from the time that Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) (as) left his father

up to the time that they next saw each other. During this time, sorrow and grief did not leave the heart of Ya‘qub (Jacob).

He cried so much that his eyes became blind.” He also said, “I swear upon Allah! There was no creature on earth at that time that Allah looked upon with generosity more than Jacob.”<sup>3</sup>

### 3. The Holy Prophet (S) cried for Hamzah

Ibn Hisham says, “When the Holy Prophet (S) returned from the Battle of Uhud, he heard voices crying for those who had been martyred. The Prophet’s (S) eyes filled with tears. Then, he said, “But Hamzah has no one to cry for him.” When the women of Bani ‘Abd al-Ashhal heard this, they started weeping for the uncle of the Holy Prophet (S).”<sup>4</sup>

He also narrates from Ibn Mas‘ud saying, “We had never seen the Noble Prophet (S) cry so much save when he cried for Hamzah. He put his corpse in the direction of the *Qiblah*, stood over his dead body and cried. He wept so much that he was close to passing out.”<sup>5</sup>

### 4. The Noble Prophet (S) cried for his progeny

On his own chain of transmission, Ibn Abi Shaybah recounts that Mas‘ud said, “One day, we were in the presence of the Prophet of Allah (S), when suddenly a group of people of Bani Hashim arrived. When the Holy Prophet saw them, his eyes were filled with tears. His color, too, changed. I said to him, ‘We see something in your face showing that you are in pain.’ The Prophet said,

«أنا أهل بيت اختار الله لنا الآخرة على الدنيا، وإنَّ أهل بيتي سيلقون بلاء»

‘Verily, we are the *Ahl al-Bayt*, for whom Allah has preferred the afterlife over this worldly life. And verily, soon it shall be that suffering should afflict my *Ahl al-Bayt*.’<sup>6</sup>

### 5. The Prophet (S) cried for his grandfather, ‘Abd al-Muttalib

Umm Ayman says, “I saw the Prophet of Allah (S) at the foot of ‘Abd al-Muttalib’s coffin crying as he moved.”<sup>7</sup>

### 6. The Prophet (S) cried for martyrs of the War of Mu’tah

Bukhari recounts, “News that Zayd, Ja‘far and Ibn Rawahah had been martyred was brought to the people by the Prophet (S) himself before anyone else. He said, ‘Zayd had the banner, and then he fell to the ground (got martyred). Then, Ja‘far took the standard, and he too fell to the ground. After that Ibn Rawahah got the banner, and he too fell to the ground.’ The Prophet was saying all this while crying.”<sup>8</sup>

## **7. The Holy Prophet (S) cried for Ja'far**

When Ja'far and his companions were martyred, the Prophet of Allah (S) went to his house and requested to see Ja'far's children. He smelt their sweet scent and his eyes became tearful. Ja'far's wife Asma' said to the Prophet (S), "May my parents be your ransom! Why are you crying? Has any news come to you from Ja'far and his companions?"

The Noble Prophet (S) answered, "Yes, they were martyred today." Asma' says, "I got up and started crying. A number of women also surrounded me. Then, Fatimah (as) came in, while she was crying and saying, 'O uncle! O uncle!'"

The Prophet of Allah said,

على مثل جعفر فلتبك البواكي.

"People ought to shed tears for people like Ja'far."<sup>9</sup>

## **8. The Noble Prophet (S) cried for his mother**

Abu Hurayrah says, "The Prophet (S) went to visit his mother's grave. There he cried and made everyone around him cry, too."<sup>10</sup>

## **9. The Holy Prophet (S) cried for Fatimah bint Asad**

It has been recounted that the Noble Prophet (S) recited prayers for Fatimah, the mother of 'Ali (as), and put her in the grave. Then, he broke down and cried. He said, "May Allah rewards you goodly for your motherhood. Verily, you were a good mother."<sup>11</sup>

## **10. The Noble Prophet (S) cried for 'Uthman ibn Maz'un**

On his chain of transmission, Hakim narrates from 'A'ishah that the Holy Prophet (S) kissed the dead body of 'Uthman ibn Maz'un and cried.<sup>12</sup>

## **11. The Holy Prophet (S) cried for his child Ibrahim (as)**

Anas ibn Malik says, "When Ibrahim (Abraham), the son of the Noble Prophet (S), died the Prophet (S) cried and told his companions,

«لا تدرجوه في اكفانه حتى انظر اليه»

‘Do not put him in the shroud until I see him’.”<sup>13</sup>

## 12. The Noble Prophet (S) gave permission to cry

Ibn Mas‘ud, Thabit ibn Ziyad and Qarzah ibn Ka‘b say, “The Holy Prophet (S) gave us permission to cry at the time of affliction and trouble.”<sup>14</sup>

On his chain of transmission, al-Hakim al-Neysaburi narrates that Abu Hurayrah said, “There was a corpse that was being taken to its burial place. ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab was among the people taking it for burial. He heard the voices of women crying, and commanded them to stop. The Holy Prophet (S) said,

«يا عمر! دعهنّ، فإنّ العين دامة، والنفس مصابة والعهد قريب»

‘O ‘Umar! Leave them alone, because tearful eyes, a troubled soul and the promise are near’.”<sup>15</sup>

## 13. Amir al-Mu‘minin ‘Ali (as) cried mourning Fatimah

Ibn Sabbagh Maliki recounts that Ja‘far ibn Muhammad (as) said, “When Fatimah (as) passed away, ‘Ali used to visit her grave every day. One day he went to visit her and threw himself on her grave while crying. He recited this poem,

مالي مررتُ على القبورِ مسلماً قَبْرَ الحبيبِ فلم يردّ جوابي

يا قَبْرُ مالك لا تجيبُ منادياً أمللتَ بعدي خَلَّةَ الأحبابِ

*What has happened to me that I visit the graves and give my greetings and peace [salam] to my friend and beloved but I do not hear a reply!?*

*O grave! What has happened to you that you do not answer the calls of those who cry out!? Is it that you are tired of associating with the weary after associating with me?”*<sup>16</sup>

## 14. Amir al-Mu‘minin (as) cried mourning over ‘Ammar

Ibn Qutaybah says, “When ‘Ammar was killed, Imam ‘Ali (as) said to ‘Uday,

«يا عدي! قتل عمار بن ياسر؟»

‘O ‘Uday! Has ‘Ammar ibn Yasir been killed?’

'Uday replied, 'Yes.' Then, Imam 'Ali (as) said,

«...رحمك الله يا عمار! استوجب الحياة والرزق الكريم»

'May Allah forgive you, O 'Ammar. You were worthy of a bountiful life and sustenance...'”<sup>17</sup>

## **15. Imam 'Ali (as) cried mourning for Hashim ibn 'Utbah**

Sibt ibn Jawzi says, "... on that day, viz. Siffin, Hashim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqas also got killed. Imam 'Ali cried for both of them, and prayed for them. He placed 'Ammar in his direction and Hashim ibn 'Utbah in the direction of the *Ka'bah*. He did not perform the ritual ablution [*ghusl*] for these two.”<sup>18</sup>

## **16. Imam 'Ali (as) cried for Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr**

Sibt ibn Jawzi says, "When the news that Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr was killed reached 'Ali, he cried and showed sorrow, and cursed his killer.”<sup>19</sup>

## **17. Fatimah al-Zahra (as) cried for her father (as)**

Sibt ibn Jawzi says, "Then Fatimah (as) withdrew from the people. She was always crying for the Holy Prophet (S) until she joined him in the afterlife.”<sup>20</sup>

Anas ibn Malik says, "When we were returning from burying the Holy Prophet (S), Fatimah came forward and addressed me,

«كيف طبابت انفسكم ان تحتوا على وجه رسول الله (ص) التراب؟»

'How did you manage to drop dirt on the Prophet's face?'

Then she cried, 'O my beloved father...'”<sup>21</sup>

## **18. Fatimah al-Zahra (as) cried for her mother**

Ya'qubi says, "When Khadijah (as) passed away, Fatimah (as) was crying when she came to the Prophet and asked, 'Where is my mother? Where is my beloved mother?'"<sup>22</sup>

## **19. Fatimah al-Zahra (as) cried for Ruqayyah**

Ibn Shubbah narrates on his chain of transmission that Ibn 'Abbas said, "When Ruqayyah, the Prophet's daughter, passed away, the Prophet said, 'May you be joined to our good predecessor 'Uthman ibn

Maz'un...' It was then that Fatimah cried beside her grave and the Holy Prophet wiped away her tears with the corner of his shirt.”[23](#)

## **20. Fatimah al-Zahra (as) cried for Ja'far**

Ibn Athir narrates, “The Prophet of Allah came to see Asma' and gave her the news that Ja'far had been martyred, and offered her his condolences. Fatimah came in and started to cry.”[24](#)

## **21. Al-Hasan (as) and people of Kufah cried for Imam 'Ali (as)**

Ibn Abi al-Hadid says, “Al-Hasan ibn 'Ali (as) gave a sermon on the night when Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali (as) was martyred. After praising and glorifying Allah, he sent peace and blessings upon the Noble Prophet (S).

Then he said, 'Tonight, a man has passed away who is unsurpassable both by those who came before and will come after him. Those who will come in the future will never understand nor perceive him. He was always fighting in the way of Allah during the holy *Jihad's* alongside the Noble Prophet (S). Amir al-Mu'minin (as) used to protect the Prophet (S) with all his soul.

The Prophet of Allah used to entrust him with his banner while he was accompanied by the Archangel Jibra'il (Gabriel) on his right side and the Angel Mika'il (Michael) on his left side. He never returned from war until Allah gave him victory and made him triumphant over the enemy. He has been martyred on the night when Jesus, son of Mary, was taken to the heavens and Yusha' (Joshua), the son of Nun, passed away.

He did not keep any gold or silver for himself except seven hundred *dirhams* which he intended to use for employing a servant for his family.' Then, an overflow of painful feelings choked his throat and he broke down crying, and the people cried also...”[25](#)

## **22. Imam al-Husayn (as) cried for his brother 'Abbas (as)**

Al-Qunduzi al-Hanafi narrates, “... A man hit the blessed head of 'Abbas with an iron club that caused a deep cut to his skull. He dropped to the ground and then he cried, 'O Aba 'Abd Allah! O al-Husayn! Peace be upon you!' When Imam al-Husayn (as) heard this, he said, 'O my 'Abbas! O blood of my heart!'

Then Imam al-Husayn (as) made a fierce attack on the enemy's army and pushed them aside making way for himself to reach 'Abbas. Then, he got off his horse and put 'Abbas up on his horse and took him to the camp. Imam al-Husayn cried bitterly and said, 'May Allah, for my sake, give you the best of rewards'.”[26](#)

## 23. Imam al-Husayn (as) cried for Muslim ibn 'Aqil

Ahmad ibn A'tham Kufi writes, "A man came from Kufah and brought the news to Imam al-Husayn (as) that Muslim ibn 'Aqil had been killed. Imam al-Husayn (as) asked, 'Where are you from?' He answered, 'I am from Kufah.

I escaped Kufah after seeing that Muslim ibn 'Aqil and Hani ibn 'Urwah Madhhaji had both been killed and hanged. I saw that their bodies were dragged on the ground in streets around the butcher shops. They also sent their heads to Yazid ibn Mu'awiyah. Imam al-Husayn sighed deeply and cried. He then said,

«إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ»

*'We are from Allah and to Him is our return.'"<sup>27</sup>*

## 24. Imam al-Husayn (as) cried for his breastfeeding newborn

Sibt ibn Jawzi narrates from Hisham ibn Muhammad saying, "When Imam al-Husayn (as) realized that the army of 'Umar ibn Sa'd was insistent on killing him, he got the Holy Qur'an, put it on his head and said, 'Let the Book of Allah brought for mankind by my grandfather the Prophet (as) judge between us.

O people! What crime have I committed that you deem shedding my blood a permissible act? Am I not the son of your Prophet's daughter? Have not the Prophet's (S) words reached you about my brother and I when he said, 'Al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the two leaders of the youths of Paradise'? If you do not acknowledge what I say, then ask Jabir, Zayd ibn Arqam and Abu Sa'id Khudri. Is Ja'far Tayyar not my uncle?'

At that moment, Imam al-Husayn's (as) newborn who was fretful due to thirst took his attention. He shouted, 'O People! If you do not have mercy on me, then at least have mercy on this infant.' A man from among the army shot an arrow at the newborn's neck piercing it and killing the infant. Imam al-Husayn (as) started to cry and said,

«اللَّهُمَّ احْكُم بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمٍ دَعَوْنَا لِيُنصِرُونَا فَقَتَلُونَا. فنودي من السماء: دع يا حسين! فان له مرضعاً في الجنة»

'O my Lord! Judge between us and the people who invited us on the pretext that they would help us but have instead betrayed and killed us.' A voice was heard from the heavens, 'O al-Husayn! Deliver the child because he will be given milk in heaven'."<sup>28</sup>

## **25. Imam al-Husayn (as) cried for Qays ibn Musahhar**

When Imam al-Husayn (as) was informed that Qays had been killed, he cried out and shed tears. Then he said,

«اللهم اجعل لنا ولشيعتنا منزلاً كريماً عندك واجمع بيننا وإيّا هم في مستقرّ رحمتك، أنّك على كلّ شيء قدير»

“O my Lord! Give us and our Shi‘ahs a generous abode near Thyself, and gather us and them in Thy abode of mercy, because Thou art powerful over all things.”<sup>29</sup>

## **26. Imam al-Husayn (as) cried for Hurr ibn Yazid Riyahi**

Al-Qunduzi al-Hanafi recounts, “... Hurr carried out an attack on the people from Kufah and killed fifty of them before attaining martyrdom. They cut his head off and threw it in the direction of Imam al-Husayn. Imam al-Husayn put Hurr’s head on his lap and as he cried, he wiped blood from Hurr’s face and said,

«والله ما اخطأت أمك اذ سمّتك حرّاً فانك حرّ في الدنيا وسعيد في الآخرة»

‘I swear upon Allah! Your mother did not make a mistake when she named you Hurr, because you were a free man in this world and one who has gained salvation in the next world’.<sup>30</sup>

## **27. The people of Medina cried mourning the Prophet (S)**

Abu Dhu‘ayb Hudhali says, “I entered Medina and heard wailing and crying, just like when the pilgrims at the *hajj* are leaving the Holy Shrine. I asked, ‘What has happened?’ The people answered, ‘The Prophet of Allah (S) has passed away’.”<sup>31</sup>

## **28. The people of Medina cried for Imam al-Hasan (as)**

On his own chain of transmission, Ibn ‘Asakir narrates that Ibn Abi Najih quoted his father saying, “The people of Mecca and Medina, all of them, including the children, cried for Imam al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali (as) for seven days.”<sup>32</sup>

## **29. Abu Hurayrah cried for Imam al-Hasan (as)**

On his own chain of transmission, Ibn ‘Asakir recounts that Musawir Mawla Bani Sa‘d said, “I saw Abu Hurayrah in the Prophet’s Mosque on the day when al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali (as) was martyred. He was crying out while standing and shedding tears, ‘O People! Today the beloved one of the Prophet has passed away.’ He made every one cry with these words.”<sup>33</sup>

### 30. Sa'id ibn 'As cried while mourning Imam al-Hasan (as)

Hakim narrates on his chain of transmission that Muslimah ibn Muharib said, "Al-Hasan ibn 'Ali passed away when fifty five days from the first of Rabi' al-Awwal had passed and he was forty six years of age. Sa'id ibn 'As was crying while sending greetings to Imam al-Hasan."<sup>34</sup>

### 31. Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah cried for Imam al-Hasan (as)

Ibn 'Abd Rabbah and other historians have narrated, "When al-Hasan ibn 'Ali (as) was buried, his brother Muhammad ibn Hanafiyyah stood at the head of his grave while crying and said, 'May Allah have compassion and mercy on you, O Aba Muhammad!'"<sup>35</sup>

### 32. People of Medina cried remembering the Prophet (S)

Jazri recounts, "Bilal saw the Noble Prophet in a dream telling him,

«ما هذه الجفوة يا بلال؟ اما أن لك أن تزورنا؟»

'What kind of unkindness and disloyalty is this, O Bilal? Has not the time come for you to come and visit us?'

Bilal woke up feeling very sad. He mounted his horse and rode to Medina. He went directly to the Prophet's (S) tomb and started crying. He was pressing himself against the Prophet's (S) grave. Al-Hasan (as) and al-Husayn (as) came by. Bilal started kissing these two and pressing them to himself.

They said to Bilal, 'We want you to recite the call to prayer [*adhan*] at sunrise.' Bilal went on top of the Mosque roof and said, 'Allah is Greater than to be perceived.' [*Allah-u Akbar! Allah-u Akbar!*] Medina vibrated and trembled with yells of crying.

When he said, 'I testify that there is no god but Allah.' [*ashhadu an la ilaha illa Allah!*] The wailing of the people increased. When he said, 'I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah!' [*ashhadu anna Muhammadan rasulullah!*], the women came out of their homes, and there has never been a day since that the men and women cried so much.<sup>36</sup>

1. Tarikh Tabari, vol. 1, p. 37.

2. Surat Yusuf 12:85.

3. Tafsir Tabari, vol. 13, p. 32.

4. Al-Sirah al-Halbiyyah, vol. 3, p. 105.

5. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 323.

6. Al-Musannaf, vol. 8, p. 697.

7. Tadhkirah al-Khawass, p. 7.

8. Sahih Bukhari, vol. 2, p. 240; Kitab Fada'il al-Sahabah, Bab Manaqib Khalid.

- [9.](#) Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh, vol. 2, p. 90.
- [10.](#) Muslim, Al-Sahih, vol. 2, p. 671; Kitab al-Jana'iz, section [bab] 36, hadith 108.
- [11.](#) Dhakha'ir al-'Uqaba, p. 56.
- [12.](#) Al-Hakim al-Neyshaburi, Al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn, vol. 1, p. 361.
- [13.](#) Ibn Majah, Sunan, vol. 1, p. 473; Kitab al-Jana'iz, Bab Ma Ja'a fi al-Nazar ila al-Mayyit.
- [14.](#) Al-Musannaf, vol. 3, p. 268.
- [15.](#) Al-Hakim al-Neyshaburi, Al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn, vol. 1, p. 381; Al-Nassa'i, Sunan, vol. 4, p. 190; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Al-Musnad, vol. 2, p. 333.
- [16.](#) Al-Fusul al-Muhimmah, p. 130.
- [17.](#) Al-Imamah wa al-Siyasah, vol. 1, p. 110.
- [18.](#) Tadhkirah al-Khawass, p. 94.
- [19.](#) Ibid., p. 107.
- [20.](#) Ibid., p. 318.
- [21.](#) Al-'Aqd al-Farid, vol. 3, p. 194; Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. 7, p. 261; Suyuti, Musnad Fatimah, p. 30.
- [22.](#) Tarikh Ya'qubi, vol. 2, p. 35.
- [23.](#) Tarikh al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, vol. 1, p. 103.
- [24.](#) Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh, vol. 2, p. 90.
- [25.](#) Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, vol. 4, p. 11.
- [26.](#) Yanabi' al-Mawaddah, p. 409.
- [27.](#) Al-Futuh, vol. 5, p. 110.
- [28.](#) Tadhkirah al-Khawass, p. 252.
- [29.](#) Al-Futuh, vol. 5, p. 145.
- [30.](#) Yanabi' al-Mawaddah, p. 414.
- [31.](#) Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. 7, p. 265; Hayat al-Sahabah, vol. 2, p. 371.
- [32.](#) Mukhtasar Tarikh Damishq, trans. Imam al-Hasan (as), p. 235.
- [33.](#) Siyr A'lam al-Nubala', vol. 3, p. 277; Mukhtasar Tarikh Damishq, trans. Imam al-Hasan, p. 229.
- [34.](#) Al-Hakim al-Neyshaburi, Al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn, vol. 3, p. 173.
- [35.](#) Al-'Aqd al-Farid, vol. 2, p. 8; Tadhkirah al-Khawass, p. 213.
- [36.](#) Usd al-Ghabah, vol. 1, p. 208.

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