

Crying

Crying from the Viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an and Traditions

By studying the Holy Qur'an and traditions [*hadiths*], realities of weeping and shedding tears become known and various secrets about crying are clarified. We now refer to some of the Qu'ranic verses and traditions which discuss this issue:

A. Qur'anic verses

1. Crying as a sign of perceiving realities

Allah, the Exalted, says,

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ أَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿١﴾

“And when they hear what has been revealed to the Apostle, you will see their eyes overflowing with tears on account of the truth that they recognize; they say: Our Lord! We believe, so write us down with the witnesses of the truth.”¹

This Qur'anic verse is an account of the reaction of the Ethiopian King, Najjashi, who had received and welcomed the Muslims that had migrated from Mecca to Ethiopia at the beginning of the Prophet's mission to seek safety.

2. Crying for repentance

Allah, the Exalted, says in the Qur'an,

﴿ فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلاً وَلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيراً جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴾

“Therefore they shall laugh little and weep much as a recompense for what they earned.”²

This verse of the Qur'an is an account of the hypocrites [*munafiqin*] at the time of the Prophet Muhammad (S) who used to avoid fighting in battles against the enemies of Islam and also encouraged others to do so, on the pretext that the weather was too hot or too cold.

3. Shedding tears of belief is a sign of wisdom

Allah, the Exalted, states,

﴿ وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا أَلَمْ نَكُنْ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولاً * وَيَخْرُونَ لِلأَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعاً ﴾

“And they say: Glory be to our Lord! Most surely the promise of our Lord was to be fulfilled. And they fall down on their faces weeping, and it adds to their humility.”³

4. Prophets shed tears for Allah

Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ إِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُ الرَّحْمَنِ خَرُّوا سُجَّداً وَبُكِيّاً ﴾

“When the communications of the Beneficent God were recited to them [the prophets], they fell down making obeisance and weeping.”⁴

5. Tears of regret are a remedy for those who have gone astray

Allah, the Exalted, says,

﴿ أَزِفَتِ الأَزْفَةُ * لَيْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُونِ اللّهِ كَاشِفَةٌ * أَفَمِنَ هَذَا الحَدِيثِ تَعْجَبُونَ * وَتَضْحَكُونَ وَلَا تَبْكُونَ ﴾

“The near event draws nigh. There shall be none besides Allah to remove it. Do you then wonder at this announcement? And will you laugh and not weep?”⁵

B. Islamic traditions [hadiths] regarding crying

Crying and shedding tears have been given special value in Islamic traditions.

1. Tears are a sign of Allah's mercy

Amir al-Mu'minin, Imam 'Ali (as), has said,

«بكاء العيون وخشية القلوب من رحمة الله»

“The tears of the eyes and the fear of the heart (for the sake of Allah) are among the blessings and mercies of Allah.”⁶

2. Tears: Allah's gift to mankind

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said,

«أنا هي رحمة يجعلها في قلوب عباده»

“Verily, tears are a mercy that Allah has placed in the essence of his servants (the human beings).”⁷

3. Tears illuminate the heart

Amir al-Mu'minin, Imam 'Ali (as), has said,

«البكاء من خشية الله ينير القلب ويعصم من معاودة الذنب»

“Crying out of fear of Allah illuminates the heart and prevents a person from returning to past sins.”⁸

4. Tears soften the heart and bring prosperity

In his last will and testament to Imam 'Ali (as), the Prophet of Allah (S) said,

«يا علي! اربع خصال من الشقاء: جمود العين وقساوة القلب وبُعد الامل وحبّ البقاء»

“O 'Ali! There are four notable signs of misfortune and wretchedness: lack of tears, hardness of the heart, unrealistically drawn out hopes, and desire to live forever.”⁹

5. Tears bring deliverance from Allah's punishment

Imam al-Husayn (as) said,

«البكاء من خشية الله نجاة من النار»

“Crying due to fear of Allah brings deliverance from hell.”¹⁰

6. Tears bring about a great reward from Allah

The Prophet of Allah (S) has said,

«ما من عمل إلا وله وزن وثواب إلا الدمعة، فإنها تطفى غضب الرب»

“Every action and every good deed has a fixed heavenly reward, except tears. Verily, tears extinguish the fire of Allah's wrath.”¹¹

7. Tears have the value of the blood of martyrs

The Prophet of Allah (S) said,

«وما من قطرة أحبّ الى الله من قطرتين: قطرة دم في سبيل الله، وقطرة دمع في سواد الليل من خشية الله...»

“... There are no drops more beloved by Allah than two: a drop of blood that has been shed due to sacrifice in the way of Allah, and a tear that flows from the eyes in the dark of the night due to fear of Allah.”¹²

^{1.} Surat al-Ma'idah 5:83.

^{2.} Surat al-Tawbah (or Bara'ah) 9:82.

^{3.} Surat Bani Isra'il (al-Isra') 17:108-109.

^{4.} Surat Maryam 19:58.

^{5.} Surat al-Najm 53:57-60.

^{6.} Tabarsi, Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 317, Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 90, p. 336.

^{7.} Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 79, p. 91, hadith 43.

^{8.} Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. 11, p. 245, hadith 36.

^{9.} Man la Yahduruhu al-Faqih, vol. 4, p. 360; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 70, p. 164, hadith 21.

^{10.} Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. 11, p. 245, hadith 35.

^{11.} Ibid., p. 240.

^{12.} Shaykh Mufid, Amali, p. 11, hadith 8.

The Effects of Crying

Religious scholars and academics have mentioned a number of beneficial effects derived from crying, some of which we will now mention.

1. Inner purification and refinement

People who shed tears as an instrument of devotion to their Lord benefit from numerous spiritual and intellectual rewards because every tear that is shed for Allah while grieving for His *awliya* have extraordinary spiritual effects. That is why the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali (as), in the Prayer *al-Kumayl*, says,

«يا الهي وربّي وسيدي ومولاي، لأني الأمور اليك اشكوا ولما منها اضجّ وأبكي»

“O my Lord, Master and Protector! For which of my affairs should I complain to you! And for which of them should I lament and weep?”

And elsewhere, he says,

«ولأبكينّ عليك بكاء الفاقدين»

“And (due to separation from you) I will weep before You with the weeping of the bereft.”

And in the last part of the prayer, he says,

«إرحم من رأس ماله الرجاء، وسلاحه البكاء»

“Have mercy on one whose only capital is hope and whose weapon is tears.”

2. Tears are a means of self-building

Crying and shedding tears is a strong and cutting weapon that can help us tremendously along the way of self-knowledge and self-building. Again, this is why Imam 'Ali (as) in the Prayer *al-Kumayl* says,

«إرحم من رأس ماله الرجاء وسلاحه البكاء»

“Have mercy on one whose only capital is hope and whose weapon is tears.”

In the inner spiritual struggle against our internal enemy (egotism), that is to say the Greater Holy War [*Jihad Akbar*], crying is the weapon used, not the sword. That is to say, in the battlefield of self-building, shedding tears is the tool, not steel blades.

There are some people who attend gatherings where mourning over Imam al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali (as) takes place, but they do not possess that deep perception and discernment which is needed to bring about the flow of tears.

Assuming that they do possess the needed perception and discernment which is needed to cry, if they cannot cry it suggests that they are not blessed with the necessary compassion or softness of heart. Of course, acquiring softness of heart is not easy and is granted by Allah in accordance with our capacity.

From the viewpoint of scholars of ethics, the root cause of most crimes is hardheartedness. When man is afflicted by hardheartedness and lacks compassion, he loses a lot of his natural blessings and talents. The result is that neither will the sufferings of others affect him, nor will his heart beat in love and affection for others.

A heartless man finds no inclination in himself to pray silently and present his needs to Allah. He does not feel in himself the compassionate disposition to give and receive love and affection. Clearly, one of the best ways to prevent and treat the affliction of hardheartedness is shedding tears and crying.

3. Tears are a means of attaining love

Love literally means fond affection and devotion. The renowned traditionalist Muhaddith Qummi says, “Love is an excess of affection.”^{[1](#)}

After gaining knowledge and enlightenment, it is beyond doubt that crying or shedding tears is one of the best tools or means required for man to bond with true love—which is devotion to the Beloved of the Worlds, Allah the Most High.

It is for this reason that no matter how eager a person might be to reach out and find reality and truth, he will never bring about a successful and effective spiritual transformation within himself unless he seeks help from tears.

The tongue expresses wisdom and intellect while the eyes express the love that is felt in the heart and dwells in the soul. Love is always present where tears, arising from feelings of pain and heartache, are shed whereas the mind is the active agent wherever the tongue searches for orderly and logical sentences to express itself.

Therefore, just as logical and compelling discourses can show the unity that exists between the aims of

the leaders of a particular school of thought and the speaker, a tear too can declare an emotional war against the enemies of a school of thought.

William Shakespeare, the erudite English writer and poet, says that thoughts, dreams, heartache, hopes, and tears are inseparable from love.

In another place, he says, “Love that is cleansed by tears will forever remain pure, clean and beautiful.”²

Victor Hugo, the famous western writer, says, “Happy and prosperous is he whom God has granted a heart that has the capacity for burning love and compassion.”³

4. The effects of crying on man’s health

Researchers of the empirical and medical sciences believe that tears possess special medical properties, some of which we will now mention:

1. As tears flow, an enzyme is released that disinfects the eyes and all the surrounding parts.
2. According to conducted medical tests, those who cry more suffer less from gastritis and ulcers.
3. Scholars are of the belief that crying has very beneficial and surprising effects in reducing inner pain and spiritual, mental or psychological pressures.
4. Some diseases can be identified through examination of tears because tears that flow from the eyes are a substance that has been filtered or sieved from the body’s blood, and therefore making use of this substance can help us identify different types of disorders. ⁴

¹. Safinah al-Bihar, vol. 1, p. 197.

². Chekideh-ye Andisheh-ha (A Summary of Thoughts), p. 250.

³. Ibid.

The Reasoning behind Crying about the Sufferings of the awliya’ of Allah

Crying out of sorrow for the *awliya’* of Allah, especially the Doyen of Martyrs, Aba ‘Abd Allah al-Husayn (as), is compatible with sound logic and reason. Shedding tears for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (as) has many positive effects and benefits, some of which we will now refer to:

1. Crying for the *Ahl al-Bayt*, especially Imam al-Husayn (as), is one of the important ways of

manifesting one's love for them, which (as shown in previous chapters) has been ordered by Allah and is also confirmed by logic and reason.

2. Shedding tears is one of the ways to venerate the signs of Allah, because by crying we show our compassion and acceptance of the purpose and struggle of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (as).

3. Crying for al-Husayn (as) is a means of repentance. Shedding tears for Imam al-Husayn (as) is a means of returning to that which is all-good and pure, because there is no personal interest involved in crying for Imam al-Husayn (as). On the contrary, we shed tears for him because he is the child of Allah's Prophet (S) and because his essence and nature possesses all the beautiful attributes.

We cry for Imam al-Husayn (as) because he was oppressed, wronged and martyred on a mission to revive the religion of Allah. Crying for such people is in reality an act of repentance and gaining proximity with that which is all-good and pure. It has been recounted in Islamic traditions [*hadiths*] that Paradise becomes incumbent upon every person who cries, incites others to cry, or forces oneself to cry for Imam al-Husayn (as) because this type of crying is an act of remorse and returning to Allah, the Exalted.

4. As long as man has not examined his inner conscience and spirit and by means of such introspection gotten in contact with the *awliya'* of Allah, especially Imam al-Husayn (as), his heart cannot break and his tears cannot flow. Crying for Imam al-Husayn (as) is a means for a limited human being to get in contact with an infinite being by way of internal intuition. It is clear that through such connection, a limited being can become unlimited. A good example of this is a limited amount of water that collects in a place. If it is not attached to an unlimited sea, it either becomes polluted or dries up, due to the intensity of heat, in a very short period of time. However, if it is connected to an unlimited sea, it will acquire the properties of the sea water and will become immune and unsusceptible to microbes, contamination and drying up.

5. Crying for the oppressed moves man's emotions and awakens his compassion. It makes him a defender of the downtrodden. Shedding tears is more effective when a person cries for is an infallible person and a 'Trust of Allah' on earth or a successor of the Holy Prophet (S), who is the possessor of divine law [*shari'ah*]. In this case, man becomes a defender of divine law. Such a man is able to defend the oppressed and downtrodden. It is for this reason that the Shi'ahs of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (as), by utilizing and benefiting from this great elixir of life—shedding tears for the oppression and wrong committed against the Doyen of Martyrs, Imam al-Husayn (as)—have historically been the persistent helpers and protectors of the oppressed.

6. Crying for the *awliya'* and trustees of Allah, especially Imam al-Husayn (as), is a tranquilizer for those sick at heart. Crying for the *awliya'* of Allah soothes the soul because the oppression and sufferings that were imposed upon the *awliya'* of Allah are like hot flames of fire and tears shed for them are gifts from a heart which is burning with love and affection. These drops go far in extinguishing those flames.

7. Shedding tears, especially for the *awliya'* of Allah, causes the heart to become tender and keeps man

away from hardheartedness. It lays the foundation for the light of Allah to enter freely and settle in the heart, because tears that are shed for good reason polish the rust out of man's heart.

8. Shedding tears for Imam al-Husayn (as) is a kind of practical struggle against tyrants; that is to say, by crying we express our disgust with the tyrants' ways, just like when Fatimah al-Zahra (as) cried a lot after her beloved father (S) passed away and the event of "Saqifah" came to pass. The purpose of her crying was to make the people contemplate the reason for the sadness and tears of the daughter of the Holy Prophet (S) and ask themselves why Fatimah al-Zahra (as) was crying in spite of the fact that the *Ahl al-Bayt* (as) had been, up to that time, role models of forbearance, firmness and perseverance.

9. Shedding tears for *Ahl al-Bayt* (as), especially the Doyen of Martyrs, Imam al-Husayn (as), is an announcement of support for the continuation and revival of the way of those great people. It is also a clear announcement that throughout history we are and will continue to be opposed to Yazid and all tyrants like Yazid and also that we are aligned with and obey Imam al-Husayn (as) and those like al-Husayn in our own time, as well as their ideals and mottos.

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."¹

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 تَفْتُوْا تَذْكُرُ 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.”²

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.”³

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).”⁴

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.”⁵

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,

«أَنَا اهل بيت اختار الله لنا الآخرة على الدنيا، وأنّ 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*’.”⁶

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.”⁷

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.”⁸

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.”⁹

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.”¹⁰

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.”¹¹

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. [12](#)

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 حتّى انظر اليه»

‘Do not put him in the shroud until I see him’.” [13](#)

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.” [14](#)

On his chain of transmission, al-Hakim al-Neyshaburi narrates that Abu Hurayrah said, “There was a corpse that was being taken to its burial place. ‘Umar ibn 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 دامعة، والنفس مصابة والعهد قريب»

‘O ‘Umar! Leave them alone, because tearful eyes, a troubled soul and the promise are near’.” [15](#)

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 أملتتْ 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?" [16](#)

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..." [17](#)

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." [18](#)

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." [19](#)

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." [20](#)

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

«كيف طابت 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...'²¹

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?'"²²

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.’”²⁷

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,

«اللهم احكم بيننا وبين قوم دعونا لينصرونا فقتلونا. فنودي من الهواء: دعه 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’.”²⁸

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 وآياهم في مستقر رحمتك، انك على كل 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.”²⁹

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’.”³⁰

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’.”³¹

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.”³²

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.”³³

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.”³⁴

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!’”³⁵

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.³⁶

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.

Crying while Mourning for Imam al-Husayn

When we refer to history and *hadith*, we can see that the Holy Prophet (S), his *Ahl al-Bayt* (as), his companions, the generation that came just after the Prophet's (S) death, and great men of the Islamic *ummah* all cried when mourning over Imam al-Husayn (as). We now will narrate some examples from Sunni sources:

1. The Prophet (S) cried mourning for Imam al-Husayn (as)

'A'ishah recounted, "Al-Husayn ibn 'Ali came into the house while revelation was being given to the Noble Prophet (S). He grabbed the Prophet's waist and climbed up on his back and started playing. The Archangel Jibra'il (Gabriel) said to the Holy Prophet, 'O Muhammad! Verily, soon it will be that your *ummah* will create sedition and conspiracy after you and kill this child of yours.' Then, Gabriel stretched his fist out and brought out clay which he gave to the Noble Prophet (S). He said, 'It is in this land where your child will be killed. A land called "Taff".'

When the Archangel Gabriel left, the Prophet of Allah joined his companions. He still had the clay in his hands. Among them were Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Ali, Hadhayfah, 'Ammar and Abu Dharr. The Holy Prophet (S) started crying.

They asked, 'Why are you crying, O Prophet of Allah?' He answered, 'Gabriel has told me that my child al-Husayn will surely be killed in a land called Taff. He brought clay for me from that land. He also informed me that al-Husayn will be buried in that same place'." [1](#)

2. Imam 'Ali (as) cried for Imam al-Husayn (as)

Ibn 'Asakir narrates that Najja said, "Imam 'Ali (as) and I started off on a journey. When we reached the valley of Naynawa, which is on the way to Siffin, Imam 'Ali (as) gave out a loud cry and said, 'O Aba 'Abd Allah! Bear patiently near the River Euphrates, O Aba 'Abd Allah!' Najja says he asked Imam 'Ali (as) why he had said this. Imam 'Ali replied, 'One day, I visited the Noble Prophet and found him shedding tears.

I asked, 'O Prophet of Allah! Has anyone made you angry? Why are you crying?' The Holy Prophet answered, 'A few moments ago, the Archangel Gabriel was here. He informed me that al-Husayn will be killed next to the River Euphrates'."

Najja recounts, "Imam 'Ali (as) said to me, 'Do you want me to give you a part of the soil on which al-Husayn will be killed? Do you want to smell it?' I said, 'Yes.' Then, he stretched his hand out and gave me a handful of the soil. I could not control myself, and hence my tears fell." [2](#)

3. Imam al-Sajjad (as) cried in mourning for Imam al-Husayn (as)

On his own chain of transmission, Ibn 'Asakir narrates that Ja'far ibn Muhammad (as) said, "It was asked of 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) why he used to cry so much for Imam al-Husayn (as).

He answered, 'Do not reproach me, because when Jacob (Ya'qub) lost one of his children, he cried so much that his eyes became white, and yet he knew that his child was alive and had not died, but I saw fourteen of my family members slaughtered in one morning. Do you want the sorrow and pain which I feel for them to leave my heart?'"³

4. Imam al-Sadiq (as) cried for Imam al-Husayn (as)

On his chain of transmission, Abu al-Faraj Isfahani recounts that Isma'il Tamimi said, "I was with Aba 'Abd Allah Ja'far ibn Muhammad when his servant asked for permission to allow the poet Sayyid Humayri to enter.

The Imam (as) gave him permission to enter. The Imam's family went behind a curtain and Sayyid Humayri came in. When he entered, he greeted Imam al-Sadiq (as) and went to sit in a corner. Imam al-Sadiq (as) asked him to recite some poetry. Sayyid Humayri recited the following poem of lamentation for Imam al-Husayn,

أمرُّ على جدِّ الحسينِ فقلُّ لأعظمِهِ الزكِيَّةُ

أأعظماً لازلتِ منْ وطفاءِ ساكبةً رويَّةُ

وإذا مررتِ بقبرِهِ فأطلِّ بهِ وقفَ المطيَّةُ

وابكِ المطهَّرَ للمطهَّرِ والمطهَّرةِ النقيَّةُ

كبكاءِ معولةٍ أتتْ يوماً لواحدِها المنِّيَّةُ

Humayri says, "I saw the tears of Ja'far ibn Muhammad flowing on the sides of his cheeks, and loud voices of wailing were heard in the Imam's house, to such an extent that Imam al-Sadiq (as) asked them

to control themselves. Everyone obeyed and they became quiet...”[4](#)

5. Ibn ‘Abbas cried for Imam al–Husayn (as)

Sibt ibn Jawzi narrates, “After al–Husayn got killed, ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Abbas constantly cried for him until his eyes became blind.”[5](#)

6. Anas ibn Malik cried for Imam al–Husayn (as)

Al–Qunduzi al–Hanafi says, “When the blessed head of Imam al–Husayn ibn ‘Ali was brought to Ibn Ziyad, he put it in a basin and started hitting the Imam’s teeth with a wooden stick in his hand while saying, ‘I have never seen teeth this beautiful.’ Anas was in his company, and he started crying and said, ‘Of all the people, al–Husayn is the one who resembles the Holy Prophet most’.”[6](#)

7. Zayd ibn Arqam cried for Imam al–Husayn (as)

Ibn Abi al–Dunya’ recounts a *hadith* that Zayd ibn Arqam was in the presence of Ibn Ziyad. He said to him, “Take your wooden stick away, I swear upon Allah! I have countless times seen the Prophet of Allah kiss those two lips.” Then, Zayd ibn Arqam started crying.[7](#)

8. Umm Salamah cried for Imam al–Husayn (as)

When Umm Salamah was told that Imam al–Husayn (as) had been killed, she said, “Have they really done this? May Allah fill their graves with fire!” Then, she broke down and cried so much that she passed out.[8](#)

9. Hasan ibn Abi al–Hasan Basri cried for al–Husayn (as)

Zuhri says, “When al–Hasan Basri was informed that Imam al–Husayn (as) had been killed, he cried so much that his cheeks got wet with tears. Then, he said, ‘May the people who have killed the son of their own Prophet’s daughter be abased...’”[9](#)

10. Rabi’ ibn Khuthaym cried for Imam al–Husayn (as)

One of the people among the *tabi’in* who mourned for Imam al–Husayn’s (as) suffering was Rabi’ ibn Khuthaym. Sibt ibn Jawzi narrates, “When Rabi’ was informed that Imam al–Husayn (as) had been killed, he cried and said, ‘They have killed youths whom the Prophet loved to look at, used to feed with his own hands, and sat on his knees’.”[10](#)

11. The people of Kufah cried for Imam al-Husayn (as)

When the caravan of captives reached Kufah, all the people came to see the womenfolk of the Prophet's Household. Sounds of crying and wailing rose high. The women and men of Kufah, while yelling and rending their collars, cried for the captives.¹¹

12. The generation that came after the Prophet's companions cried for Imam al-Husayn (as)

'A'ishah bint al-Shati says, "The year 65 AH had not yet arrived when the loud cries of the *tawwab*in were heard, 'O blood of al-Husayn!' [*ya al-tharat al-Husayn!*] These cries sent a quake under the feet of Bani Umayyah. The people of Kufah picked up their weapons and went towards the grave of al-Husayn (as) while reciting this verse of the Qur'an along the way,

﴿ فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِئِكُمْ ﴾

'... therefore turn to your Creator (penitently) and slay yourselves, that will be better for you with your Creator.'¹²

When they reached the tomb of Imam al-Husayn (as), they all yelled and cried out. The people had never before been seen to cry as much as they did on that day. They stayed there for twenty four hours..."¹³

1. Tarikh Ibn Kathir, vol. 11, pp. 29-30; Tadhkirah al-Huffaz, vol. 2, p. 164; Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh, vol. 5, p. 364; Al-Hakim al-Neyshaburi, Al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn, vol. 3, p. 176; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Al-Musnad, vol. 3, p. 342.
2. Mukhtasar Tarikh Damishq, trans. Imam al-Husayn (as), p 238; Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 300; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Al-Musnad, vol. 1, p. 58; Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir, vol. 2, p. 105.
3. Mukhtasar Tarikh Damishq, trans. Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (as), p. 56; Hiliyah al-Awliya', vol. 3, p. 138.
4. Al-Aghani, vol. 7, p. 240.
5. Tadhkirah al-Khawass, p. 152.
6. Yanabi' al-Mawaddah, p. 389, as narrated by al-Tirmidhi.
7. Usd al-Ghabah, vol. 2, p. 21; Siyr A'lam al-Nubala', vol. 3, p. 315; Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh, vol. 3, p. 434.
8. Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 196.
9. Tadhkirah al-Khawass, p. 265; Ansab al-Ashraf, vol. 3, p. 227; Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir, vol. 3, p. 127.
10. Tadhkirah al-Khawass, p. 268.
11. Dr. 'A'ishah bint al-Shati, Mawsu'ah Al al-Nabi (s), p. 734.
12. Surat al-Baqarah 2:54.
13. Mawsu'ah Al al-Nabi (s), p. 764; Tarikh Tabari, vol. 4, p. 451.

Examining Opposing Claims

Some Muslim sects have denied the permissibility of shedding tears for Imam al-Husayn (as). In their denials, they have cited and held fast to a number of proofs which we will now discuss and examine:

1. Hadiths which prohibit crying for the dead

Muslim and other historians have recounted that ‘Abd Allah said, “Hafsah cried for ‘Umar.” ‘Umar said to her, “Keep quiet, my little daughter. Don’t you know that the Prophet of Allah said,

«إِنَّ الْمَيِّتَ يَعْتَذِبُ بِبِكَاءِ أَهْلِهِ عَلَيْهِ»

‘The crying of the family tortures the dead person’.”¹

It has also been narrated that when ‘Umar was hit by a spear, he fainted. They started yelling and crying for him. When he became conscious again, he said, “Don’t you know that the Prophet of Allah said,

«إِنَّ الْمَيِّتَ لَيُعَذَّبُ بِبِكَاءِ الْحَيِّ»

‘Verily, the dead get tortured by the crying of the living’.”²

Response

Firstly, these traditions contradict all the previously related traditions which prove that crying is not only permissible but also preferred. Secondly, it can be shown by citing other traditions that ‘Umar made a mistake in applying the Prophet’s tradition, because Suhayb says, “After hearing this tradition from ‘Umar, I went to see ‘A’ishah and told her what I had heard from ‘Umar. ‘A’ishah said, ‘No, I swear upon Allah! The Prophet of Allah never said that the crying of a person tortures the dead. On the contrary, he said,

إِنَّ الْكَافِرَ يَزِيدُهُ اللَّهُ بِبِكَاءِ أَهْلِهِ عَذَاباً، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوِ الضَّحْكُ وَأَبْكِي، وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى

‘Verily Allah increases the torture and pain of an unbeliever [*kafir*] when his family cries for him. Verily it is Allah that makes people laugh and cry. No one bears the burden of another.’”³

Hisham ibn ‘Urwah narrates from his father that the saying (words) of Aba ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn ‘Umar were repeated to ‘A’ishah, that the dead get tortured by the crying of his family. ‘A’ishah said, “May Allah

have mercy on Aba ‘Abd al–Rahman. He heard something but did not commit it to his memory. One day the corpse of a Jew was passed near the Prophet of Allah while his family was crying. The Holy Prophet said,

انتم تبكون وانه ليعذب

‘You are crying while he is getting tortured’.”[4](#)

Thirdly, as previously mentioned ‘Umar forbade women from crying in the presence of the Holy Prophet (S). The Noble Prophet (S) said to him,

دعهنّ يا عمر! فانّ العين دامعة والقلب مصاب والعهد قريب

“O ‘Umar! Leave them alone, because tearful eyes, grieving hearts and the promise are near.”

Fourthly, this tradition is not compatible with the apparent meanings of many verses of the Holy Qur’an because Allah says,

﴿ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ﴾

“A burdened soul shall not bear the burden of another.”[5](#)

2. ‘Umar made a prohibition against crying for the dead

Some people say that ‘Umar ibn Khattab forbade crying for the dead. They say that ‘Umar’s verdict is proof that it is not permissible to cry for the dead.

Response

Firstly, ‘Umar’s prohibition is opposed to explicit tenets or statements that prove not only the permissibility, but the preference for crying.

Secondly, ‘Umar’s way of life is not credible when it is opposed to the words and actions [*sunnah*] of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S).

Thirdly, he was opposed by the Holy Prophet (S) when he disallowed crying, as has already been mentioned.

Fourthly, how is it possible that ‘Umar made crying for the dead unlawful when he himself cried for Nu‘man ibn Muqrان,[6](#) Zayd ibn Khattab[7](#) and Khalid ibn Walid[8](#). He even ordered other people to cry for

The Torah forbade crying for the dead

If one ponders the Tawrat (Torah or the Old Testament), he understands that the prohibition for crying for the dead has roots in this book. ‘Umar was known to have good relations with the People of the Book [*ahl al-kitab*], especially the Jews, and he read their books. Therefore, it can be surmised that he may have applied this Jewish law in Islam.

In the Jewish books, we read, “O child! I will get the desire of your two eyes with one stroke. Therefore, do not weep and cry, and do not shed your tears. Keep cool and quiet, and do not weep or wail for the dead.”¹⁰

1. Muslim, Al-Sahih, vol. 2, p. 639; Kitab al-Jana'iz, Bab al-Mayyit Yu'adhdhabu bi-Buka'i Ahlihi 'Alayh.
2. Ibid.
3. Sahih Bukhari, Kitab al-Jana'iz, vol. 1, p. 155; Muslim, Al-Sahih, Kitab al-Jana'iz, section [bab] 9, hadith 22–23.
4. Muslim, Al-Sahih, Kitab al-Jana'iz, section [bab] 9, hadith 25; Sahih Bukhari, vol. 1, p. 156.
5. Surat Fatir 35:18.
6. Al-Musannaf, vol. 3, p. 344.
7. Al-'Aqd al-Farid, vol. 3, p. 191.
8. Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. 15, p. 731.
9. Al-Musannaf, vol. 7, p. 175.
10. Sifar Hazqiyal, ishad 24, faqarah 16–18.

Pretending to Cry while Mourning for the Awliya' of Allah

The verdict regarding making pretence of crying [tabaki]

Because of certain conditions that exercise control over the hearts, some people find it hard to cry and shed tears. When such people present the appearance of crying, they will acquire the same reward as acquired by those who actually cry. It has been recounted that the Noble Prophet (S) recited the last part of the *Surat al-Zumar* for a sizable number of the Helpers [*ansar*],

﴿ وَفَسِيقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا ﴾

“And those who disbelieved shall be driven to hell in companies.”¹

All the people who were present cried except one youth. The youth said, “Tears did not flow from my eyes, but I pretended to cry.” The Holy Prophet (S) said,

«من تباكى فله الجنة»

“Whoever feigns to cry will be rewarded with Paradise.”²

Jarir narrates that the Holy Prophet (S) said,

«إني قاري عليكم ﴿أَلْهَمُ التَّكَاثُرُ﴾ من بكى فله الجنة ومن تباكى فله الجنة»

“Verily, I am reciting *Surat al-Takathur*. Paradise will become incumbent upon whoever cries and whoever feigns to cry.”³

Shaykh Muhammad ‘Abduh says, “*Tabaki* occurs when a person forces himself to cry, but without the intention of acting hypocritically.”⁴

Mir Sayyid Sharif Jurjani says, “The source of feigning to cry is the word of the Prophet (S), who said,

«إن لم تبكوا فتباكوا»

“If you cannot cry, then give the appearance of crying.”

The objective of this sentence is for a person who has a desire to cry but is unable to, not a person who feigns to cry with the intention of sport and hypocrisy.”⁵

It can also be understood from the traditions of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (as) that feigning to cry with correct intention is desirable.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) said,

«من تباكى فله الجنة»

“Any who feigns to cry will be rewarded with Paradise.”⁶

And he also said,

«ومن أنشد في الحسين شعراً فتباكى فله الجنة...»

“... and Paradise becomes incumbent on any person that recites elegies and presents the appearance of crying for al-Husayn (as).”⁷

- ¹. Surat al-Zumar 39:71.
- ². Kanz al-‘Ummal, vol. 1, p. 147.
- ³. Ibid., p. 148.
- ⁴. Tafsir al-Manar, vol. 8, p. 301.
- ⁵. Al-Ta‘rifat, p. 48.
- ⁶. Saduq, Al-Amali, p. 86, majlis 29.
- ⁷. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 44, p. 282.

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