

Majlis 12: Shaam al-Ghariba

Surah al-Fatiha

Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaih Raja'oon!

Karbala'! Karbala'! Karbala'!

In one day 72 men dead! Companions of Husayn lay dead!

‘Aun – Muhammad are dead. Qasim is dead. ‘Abbas is dead.

‘Ali Akbar is dead. ‘Ali Asghar is dead. Husayn is dead.

Lying on the sands of Karbala’ are 72 dead men. Their heads severed from their bodies. No ghusl! No kafan! No burial!

Lying on the sands of Karbala’ are 72 dead men! Their bodies trampled by Yazid's horses.

The sun was setting in the horizon. River Furaat flowed turbulently breaking its bank.

Another night fell on the land of Karbala’. The night of **Shaam Al-Ghariba**. What a lonely night? What a tragic and sad night? No fire! No light! Night of darkness!

The air was filled with sounds of ladies and children crying.

Widows crying for their husbands. Sisters crying for their brothers. Mothers crying for their children. Little orphans crying for their fathers.

Bibi Zainab is not crying. No tears were flowing from her eyes.

Husayn is not there to comfort the mothers and orphans but Bibi Zainab is there. She is comforting the mothers and the little orphans.

‘Abbas or ‘Ali Akbar are not there to guard the tents but Bibi Zainab is there. She is guarding the tents.

Enough! Surely Yazid's beastly men would leave the ladies and children to mourn their dead ones in peace.

But no, they did not.....

They came to the tents. They looted all the belongings of the Holy ladies. They even snatched away the ladies' hijab. Fatimah's daughters were left bare-headed.

Shimr, the most evil of Yazid's men, came too. Sakina was crying for her father. Instead of comforting words, Shimr slapped Sakina's face and pulled off earrings from her ears. Blood poured from little Sakina's ears.

Surely they would stop now. But they did not.

One-by-one they set fire to the tents. The helpless ladies and children ran from one tent to another

Little Sakina ran from one tent to another. Her dress was on fire, Her ears were bleeding. All Sakina wanted was her dear father.

She ran to the battlefield screaming:

“Father, where are you? Father, father....., speak to me father.”

The seventh tent, which was the last was set on fire. Our 4th Imam, Imam Zainul Abideen was lying unconscious in the bed. Zainab got worried. She had to save the Imam of the time, our 4th Imam. So she rushed to the tent and rescued Imam Zainul Abideen to safety.

All the tents were burned down. The Holy ladies and children were left homeless.

Tonight is the night of **Shaam Al-Ghariba**. The night of the homeless.

The children were frightened so they ran away to escape the fire, the restless horses and the beatings.

Bibi Zainab and Umm Kulthoom went in search of the children. They found some dead, trampled by the horses or burnt by the fire.

Zainab and Umm Kulthoom gathered the ladies and children together in a small space, where our 4th Imam was lying.

Sakina could not be found. Umm Kulthoom stood guard, while Zainab rushed to the battlefield screaming:

“Sakina! Darling Sakina! Where are you? Sakina! Sakina!”

Whilst searching, Bibi Zainab reached the area where Husayn's body was lying.

There with her head buried in Husayn's chest, lay Sakina deep in sleep! Bibi Zainab gently picked up Sakina and took her back to her mother.

Bibi Zainab settled all the ladies and children. She then stood on guard with a broken spear in her hand.

Bibi Rubab kept waking up. Zainab said to her:

“Rubab! Do not worry. Rest peacefully as the daughter of ‘Ali is on guard. You have nothing to fear, Rubab!”

“Zainab, I am not worried but I keep hearing my baby crying. I hear my dearest ‘Ali Asghar crying.”

Poor Rubab. Poor mother. She was spending the first night without ‘Ali Asghar, her baby. How can she sleep comfortably when ‘Ali Asghar, her baby was lying alone under the sands of Karbala? Bibi Rubab did not stop crying for her baby.

Late that night, Zainab had a vision. She saw a man on a horse, riding towards her. She cried out:

“O man on the horse! Please do not come any nearer! I have just managed to get the children to sleep. We have nothing left. Please go away!”

The rider continued riding towards her. Zainab got very angry. She lifted the broken spear and warned the rider:

“Stop! Stop, just there! Do not come any nearer! I am the daughter of ‘Ali! I am warning you to stop just there!”

The man on the horse continued to ride towards her. He spoke to Zainab:

“Daughter Zainab! Do you not recognise your father, ‘Ali?”

Zainab rushed to her father. She threw herself to her father's feet and said:

“Baba! I am glad you have come. But you are very late.”

She continued:

“Baba! Where were you when ‘Ali Akbar was being killed?

Baba! Where were you when ‘Abbas was being killed?

Baba! Where were you when Husayn was being killed?

Baba! Where were you when our tents were burned down?

Baba! Baba! Where were you when our hijab was taken?

Baba! Where were you? Where were you? Baba!”

“Zainab, my daughter Zainab, you are very tired! I have come to guard your tents. My daughter, Zainab, you have a lot to do tomorrow. Zainab, you will have many sleepless nights. Tonight, my daughter Zainab you rest. I will guard the tents. Go to sleep my daughter, Zainab.”

Ya Husayn! Ya Husayn! Ya Husayn!

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