



REVEALING
THE TRUTH

Juloos; Religious mourning procession

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What is happening?

What you are seeing here is a religious mourning procession commemorating martyrdom of Imam Hussain (P), grandson of Prophet Mohammad (P). Hussain was raised in an atmosphere of piety, gentle kindness and tender love. He was also educated to place the needs of others above the needs of his own and to respect and love his mother and father. Above all Hussain was taught that the word of God was the source of salvation and tranquillity. He was killed by Yazeed the Tyrant, some fourteen hundred years ago in Karbala, Iraq.

Why was Imam Hussain (P) killed?

Yazeed sought endorsement of his oppressive regime through the allegiance of Imam Hussain. Imam Hussain, following on from the footsteps of his father Imam Ali (P) and grandfather Prophet Mohammad could never have given his support to such an oppressive ruler. We are sure that there must have been people who despised Yazeed. As is the normal case such individuals are reduced to the ranks of the *'Silent majority'* - they despise their tyrannical leaders but remain silent fearing the consequences of open opposition. You will only get a handful of strong minded courageous individuals who are willing to fight for what they believe in, not fearing the repercussions, however serious they might be. Imam Hussain was willing to sacrifice all this and more to protect the faith and show the world that mankind should never submit to tyranny.

When was Imam Hussain (P) killed?

In 680 A.D. Yazeed's failed assassination attempt on Imam Hussain resulted in his decision to travel to Iraq, so as to avoid bloodshed. Imam Hussain set out on this journey in May 680 A.D. and reached his destination Karbala, Iraq on 2nd of October 680 A.D. He was accompanied by 72 of his companions including women and children from his family. According to Arab culture, anyone accompanying women and children with him is a sign of peace. It was here that Hussain, his family and Shi'a (Partisans) were confronted by the army of Yazeed. Hussain refused to pledge allegiance to the tyrant and Yazeed declared war on him. Hussain was forced to battle the army of Yazeed, but not before the army had cut off their food and water supply for three days. For three whole days and nights, enduring temperatures around 55°C without food or water, the males of the camp, totalling 72 (including the elderly and children) fought valiantly and were all brutally slaughtered.

Hussain was forced to witness the savage mutilation of Abbas - his brother, the callous murder of his nephew Qasim, the torture and execution of his innocent son Ali Akbar and finally the depraved murder of his six month old baby boy - Ali Asghar. Left alone finally Hussain was also attacked, his body was showered with arrows, his head was severed and the hooves of the horses of Yazeed's cavalry trampled on his body.

The aftermath of the battle led to the humiliation of the women of Hussain's camp. Their tents were looted and burnt, leaving the women to the mercy of Yazeed's soldiers. The aggrieved children who had lost their fathers were beaten. Headscarves were snatched off and they were made to trek barefoot, chained and shackled, from Karbala to Damascus, a journey of approximately 750 miles. The heads of all the males including that of Hussain's six -month old son were impaled on spikes (as war trophies) and paraded through the streets. On arriving at Damascus, they were paraded in the town, for all to see and shun. A barrage of stones, rubbish and verbal abuse bombarded them. They were kept in prison for over a year.

Why are we taking it to the roads?

Imam Hussain spent his life following the Divine order of God, and was a brilliant leader, teacher and spiritual guide for humanity. His determination to uphold the truth and denounce the falsehood has given hope to all oppressed peoples and strengthened our faith. We are here, remembering his death, and are sending a message to his killers and all tyrants, that the Truth can never be hidden and no compromise will be made against tyranny.

It is vital that we remember the atrocities committed by Yazeed, in order to keep alive and propagate the message of Imam Hussain to all humanity. Our men mourn the men of Imam Hussain who were martyred, our women mourn the helpless women of Imam Hussain's family, and our children mourn his children. "Azadari" the mourning for Imam Hussain, is an important aspect of Islamic belief and history. All Muslims are indebted to Imam Hussain for keeping the religion alive and free from any distortions.

How often this mourning is observed?

This is observed on the 10th day of Islamic month of Moharam. The mourners of Imam Hussain throughout the world suspend their normal activities on this day, and participate in this noble cause. We march today; to remember, mourn and uphold the teachings and values of Hussain and show our support for all oppressed peoples.