

SAYYID AMMAR AL-HAKIM: "Al-Zahraa (Ú) symbolizes a lesson, a moral and a vision in how humans can become perfect."



I offer condolences to you all on the painful anniversary of the martyrdom of our Lady and Mistress, Fatima al-Zahraa (Allah's peace with her). We are accustomed on occasions of the birth or death anniversaries of members of Ahl al-Bayt (Ú) to freeze the series of our talks about Islam's theory in administration and leadership to talk about what an occasion inspires.

Al-Zahraa represents a lesson, a moral and a vision in how humans can become perfect

What can we say about the immaculate al-Zahraa, this personality that stands great and giant in the history of Islam? What can we say about the daughter of the Prophet (Ŧ) that came to express the status of a role model, of an example, which the heavens presents not only for women but for mankind, for men and women alike. Immaculate al-Zahraa was not only a distinctive woman but a distinctive human being who reached in her purity and candor the level of divine infallibility, and she reached in her perfection the tumultuous knowledge to the extent that the Messenger of Allah (Ŧ) used to refer people, men and women, to her to ask her and to get sufficient and complete answers for their questions, for ambiguous matters of their creed and world. Thus was the Immaculate Zahraa in all her roles despite her very short holy life. She did not live in this world but 18 years, and she was nine when she got married. There is in every movement, hiatus, position, statement and deed of Lady al-Zahraa a lesson, a moral, a vision about mankind's movement, about human perfection, about reaching Allah Almighty. Lady al-Zahraa was a testimony for a perfect human being in whom all requirements of perfection and loftiness are available. If we discern al-Zahraa's character, we will find in many corners that one of the most important lessons is that the heavens wanted to give us a lesson that woman can reach these levels in her perfection and roles not just on the family level. Lady al-Zahraa shone in her domestic duties. She exerted efforts and spent time looking after the family's affairs, solving the house's problems, raising the children, etc.

Al-Zahraa's Divine Message-related missions, her intellectual, cultural and social pursuits present a mature vision and a precise concept about how Islam understands woman's position in the society. But al-Zahraa's missions and responsibilities extended to what is beyond the family duties so she would have Message-related missions, intellectual, cultural and social pursuits. Thus, she presents a mature vision and a precise concept about how Islam understands woman's position in the society. And who can bargain on Fatima and her holiness? If Fatima daughter of the Messenger of Allah, the infallible lady, withstood, carried the responsibility out and moved in the society, performing her obligations..., who can stand towards woman fortifying himself behind a narrow understanding of Islam to prevent woman from challenging and carrying out the natural, sought and anticipated roles? The presence of Lady al-Zahraa, her missions and challenges is the irrefutable evidence for Islam's vision of the nature of roles expected for the woman in the general social reality in addition to her family reality and

private life. Yes, there are frameworks, scales, constants and restrictions to woman's movements just as there are frameworks and scales in man's movement, for woman can undertake challenge while fully safeguarding her privacy and responsibility.

The Holy Qur'an is full of demonstrating the injustices and predicaments to which the prophets (Ú) were subjected, but what we can find in al-Zahraa's character is the element of injustice, and this drags us to talk about the topic of injustice according to the Islamic viewpoint. Why should there be pain? Why should predicament be presented? Why do we go into details explaining injustices? Why do we shed a tear and beat the chest, so much so that followers of Ahl al-Bayt (Ú) are taunted of being people who are drowned in pain and predicament? Is this not an innovation, an intrusive phenomenon? Thus do some people cast doubt. But when we refer to the Holy Qur'an, which is our constitution and the document to which we refer in order to regulate our conduct on the basis of the Holy Qur'an, we find the Holy Qur'an full in its entire chapters and verses of presenting stories of the prophets. Whenever it stopped at the story of a prophet, it demonstrated the injustices and predicaments that afflicted him. It stops at Noah (Ú) and talks about his predicament, how people ridiculed him, how his supporters were few, how difficult the circumstances through which he went were as he continuously supplicated thus: "Lord! I have called on my people night and day, yet my call did not increase them in aught but flight." For nine hundred and fifty years did the prophet of Allah Noah convey the message, talking, explaining and guiding, but all of this talk found no place in people's hard hearts, so he remained alone, like a stranger, for hundreds of years tolerating and being ridiculed. About Ibrahim (Abraham) (Ú), the Holy Qur'an talks about Ibrahim's dilemma, how he was a nation summed up in one man. He stood in the face of deviation and tyranny, smashing the idols in order to bring the deviation back to the right track. The Holy Qur'an talks about how they wanted to burn him, throwing him into the fire. It talks about Jesus, Moses and our Prophet Muhammed (Ŧ): All have been through predicaments and pains which the Holy Qur'an discusses.

Talking about injustice is not "bid'a", innovation, but a Qur'anic and Islamic education. So, to talk about injustice is not to commit an innovation in the faith; rather, it is a Qur'anic and an Islamic education. Yet this question lingers: Why and what is the benefit of the injustice methodology, the talk about injustices in man's life? Complaining about injustice presents a clear, shining, simple and swift image that finds its way to the heart. It reveals the deviation of falsehood, explains the paths of righteousness and achieves many rankings with what is right. Sometimes a dramatic scene is witnessed by a spectator who knows that it is a film, yet for merely seeing a shot in which a child is beaten, or a woman's sanctity being violated, or a poor man being subjected to a problem..., one starts sympathizing and perhaps crying. The heart aches for even an imagined injustice. Someone walking down the street sheds tears for someone else. It is an image about injustice which soon finds its place in the hearts and in the minds, the conscientious status of sympathy, the interacting with this image, something which we find due to being broadly influenced by the methodology of Ahl al-Bayt (Ú).

Some people ask in a country of a limited population, such as Iraq, of 34 million what it means when 15 million pilgrims go on foot to visit the shrine of Imam al-Hussain (Ú) on the occasion of his Arba'een under harsh security conditions when suicide terrorists target these pilgrims. Moreover, there are no monetary rewards available for these pilgrims. Rather, these pilgrims may be subject to problems, to being absent from their offices. They tolerate the cold or the heat, the conditions of the lengthy route, etc. Had these millions been at the highest levels in their ideology, culture and vision, Iraq would have been a Paradise, but our social reality gives the impression that we are a nation just like other nations, yet this fusion in the injustice to which al-Hussain (Ú) was subjected proves that this injustice had an impact when it is discussed even in a simple way, so it was able to attract all these millions.

Sensing the injustice... a direct, frank, simple and clear message that takes its route to the hearts, moving sentiments and feelings

So, discussing injustice means a direct, frank, simple and clear message that takes its route to the hearts, moving sentiments and feelings, then comes the role of reason to mobilize these feelings in the right direction, towards bias to what is right and to oppose what is false.

Lady al-Zahraa (Ú) distinguished herself in the injustice issue. This injustice issue deepened al-Zahraa's way and personality, and she came to have this big impact among all Muslims. One who tries to forget about al-Zahraa (Ú) does not bring anything directly to cast doubt about her being the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (Ō), but he went to belittle the value of the injustice to which Lady al-Zahraa (Ú) was subjected because he knew fully well that to interfere to weaken this personality is not among her characteristics and attributes: This matter cannot be doubted; rather, one casts doubt about her being subjected to injustice since this injustice is the reason behind all this big and broad impact in people's hearts. So, we find some people casting doubts about al-Zahraa (Ú) being subjected to injustice, about what she had to go through, discarding it with certain alleged "evidences". They say that they are believing people, so how could they harm the daughter of the Prophet of Allah (Ō)? Also, they were close to the time of the Messenger of Allah (Ō), so what are the motives that prompt them to harm or abuse her? Such statements they make as "evidence" for casting doubt about clear and numerous texts. If we want to shun all these texts, what other fact is there to prove since we did not see the historic facts with our own eyes? All the incidents have come down to us through historic texts. If the historic text is not recognized as being relevant to Lady al-Zahraa (Ú), we must generalize it to other facts. Or is the matter one of temper, of accepting what I like and rejecting everything else? This is not possible because in a scientific methodology, restrictions and criteria must be put in place, and they must be upheld when it comes to what we like and what we do not, when it comes to anything which we readily accept or find to be odd.

Methodology says that we must accept these abundant texts with all the proofs and evidences which they have brought to back and support them.

Lady al-Zahraa's methodology is one of peaceful resistance which clearly explains positions without dragging into a military battle that risks the Muslims' unity, wastes this cohesion and affiliation

Another issue, which we always mention and to which the martyred imam al-Sadr (may his soul be sanctified) referred, is that Ahl al-Bayt (Ú) played multiple roles while maintaining one objective. Their goal was one. They were like one reality though their roles were many in reaching that reality and that same goal, each according to his circumstances, political and social conditions that surround him, and he has to undertake a certain position, procedures or conduct to deal with the eventuality in his reality in order to support the one goal. Here, we find how the Commander of the Faithful (Ú) had a certain political program, how Imam al-Hassan (Ú) had another program, how Imam al-Hussain (Ú) had a third program, whereas Lady al-Zahraa (Ú) had a political program of her own. She did not agree in it with Imam al-Hassan's program, the program of a truce, nor with that of Imam al-Hussain, which was that of armed resistance and to raise arms in the face of the oppressor. The methodology of Lady al-Zahraa (Ú) represents what we nowadays label in our political literature as peaceful resistance, political resistance, not resistance with weapons and killing. Lady al-Zahraa (Ú) was a resisting personality who stood and expressed her project fully clearly, defending it to the extent of sacrifice. She offered her unborn child, al-Muhsin (Ú), as a sacrifice on this path, then she sacrificed her own self, falling as a martyr at a later time. So, it is resistance to the extent of sacrifice: sacrifice in which there is martyrdom but without fighting. Such is the methodology which justifies how Lady al-Zahraa (Ú) faced that phase. When someone knocked at the door, and Ali (Ú) was at home and he knew that the enemies stood behind the door, it is not rational that al-Zahraa should come out while Ali (Ú) was sitting at home so she would be squeezed, a nail pierces through her chest, injustice takes place and she loses her fetus. This condition does not take place to the Arabs, nor does it take place to ordinary people; so, how can it happen with Ali (Ú)? Ali (Ú) does not permit al-Zahraa (Ú) to come out as he kept sitting. Rather, he would unsheathe his sword, Thul-Fiqar, in their face. This is what they say. But we say: Who told you that the common interest at that moment permitted fighting so we would say that Ali (Ú) was more fit to come out to face those folks? When we examine the epoch and the circumstances at the time, we will come to know that openness on Islam in a broad way took place during the year when Mecca was conquered, and it was during the last year of the life of the Messenger of Allah (Ŏ) when he went for the pilgrimage, entered Mecca and people starting believing in him in hordes. "In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. When God's help comes, and victory, and when you see the people entering into God's religion in crowds..." (Qur'an, 110:1-2). Few weeks later, the Messenger of Allah (Ŏ) died, and these folks did not know much about Islam, a big human mass was yet to be familiar with Islam. They had respect for all those who accompanied and were close to the Messenger of Allah (Ŏ). Suddenly the Prophet (Ŏ) died, and a problem rose. Two theories were there, and the subject of caliphate was debated by more than one viewpoint. Some say that this caliph must be elected,

and others say that. Before this large majority of people, the issue seems as struggle for power. Ali (ʿ) is the peer and the image of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his son-in-law. The other [candidate] was a companion of the Prophet (ﷺ). To those folks, the issue seemed as a battle of turbans over power and nothing else. Both men were close to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and they both struggle for power. The story was not about Islam, a religion, a set of principles. Rather, the issue was one of interests, gains and privileges. Thus did the people interpret it, and they were new to Islam. Had fighting erupted at that moment, it would have led to large numbers of people abandoning Islam. There would have been a mass reverting from the creed. But Ali avoided clashing, found the majority of Muslims as having only recently entered into the folds of Islam, and they did not know much about Islam. On the other hand, Ali (ʿ) could not remain silent rather than say the truth. He believed that [caliphate] was a right brought by the heavens and was not a personal issue; rather, it was an issue that would positively impact people and their interests as Salman, a follower of Muhammed (ﷺ), says, "By Allah! Had you given its charge to Ali, you would have eaten from what is above your heads and underneath their feet." He (ʿ), therefore, could not relinquish what is right just as he was unable to fight for the sake of this right; so, what could he do while the issue was so tough? Had Ali (ʿ) come out to those folks, had swords been unsheathed, he should have unsheathed his sword, too, because there was a battle there and fighting. But when al-Zahraa (ʿ) comes out, the woman that she is, and women according to the Arab culture do not fight, she was able to prove a position without being dragged into a battle, a war, a fighting. She would thus prove what is right without confusing the unity of the Islamic nation at the time and risk those folks misunderstanding or abandoning Islam. For this reason, due to this precise balancing act between maintaining the unity of the Islamic nation at one hand, which required not fighting, and proving the right of the caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful (ʿ) which required the uttering of the truth, that the statement must be made clearly. This role could not be carried out by anyone other than Lady al-Zahraa (ʿ); therefore, she went out, made her statement and confronted without bearing a weapon. And when she was attacked the magic turned against the magician: Everyone denounced the act of fighting a woman, and this is what history texts transmit when someone said, "Burn the house!" They said, "But Fatima is inside!" He said, "So what?!"

Such is the methodology of Lady Fatima al-Zahraa (ʿ): one of peaceful resistance which clearly shows the positions without dragging into a military battle that would jeopardize the unity of the Muslims, causes them to disunite, or putting this affiliation at risk. So, we can regard Lady al-Zahraa (ʿ) as the first lady to be martyred in supporting and firming the wilaya.