

Home > The Sacred Effusion Volume 1 > Chapter 5: Peace be unto you, O blood of Allah and the son of the blood of Allah > Commentary

Chapter 5: Peace be unto you, O blood of Allah and the son of the blood of Allah

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ثَارَ اللَّهِ وَابْنَ ثَارِهِ

Peace be unto You, O Blood of Allah and the son of the Blood of Allah

Commentary

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ثَارَ اللَّهِ

Peace be unto You, O possessor of the blood venerated by Allah

The word *thar* ثَار in the Arabic language has been employed for different meanings: avenging for blood, rancour, blood, the slain, etc.

Many commentators of *Ziyarat 'Ashura'* have rendered the phrase '*thar Allah*' as 'blood of Allah'. 'Allama al-Tabataba'i likewise is reported to have said the same thing when asked about its meaning.¹

In order for this verse to be comprehensible, a *mudhaf* (first particle of a genitive construction) is taken to be elliptical and hidden before the word *thar*. The sentence would originally read "*ya sahiba tharillah*" (O *possessor* of the blood of Allah'. Therefore when we say "*ya thar Allah*", we actually mean "*ya sahiba tharillah*".

Obviously Allah is free from any kind of anthropomorphic attribute (Qur'an, 42:11), and thus the meaning of 'blood of Allah' should not be taken as 'the blood that is a part of Allah', far is He from any kind of

imperfection whatsoever. The possibility that *thar Allah* means ‘the blood owned by Allah’ is although correct in the real sense, for Almighty Allah has absolute ownership over every entity (Qur`an, 3:189), it is not meant in the present case. This is because the appellation ‘*thar Allah*’ here denotes a distinct characteristic of al-Husayn (AS) whereas ‘*thar Allah*’ in its general sense refers to every human being. Unless, however, we would like to express the nobility (*sharafa*) of the blood of Imam al-Husayn (AS), which was sacrificed in the way of Allah.

We do have similar instances in the Arabic language such as *baytullah* (house of Allah), *ruhullah* (spirit of Allah), *naqatallah* (camel of Allah: 91:13), etc. Annexing the name Allah in such instances is in order to reveal the nobility of the first particle of the genitive construction. In short, when we say ‘*ya thar Allah*’ we mean ‘O one whose blood is the blood that Allah venerated and preferred over the blood of others.’²

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ثَارَ اللَّهِ

Peace be unto you, O the spilled blood, whose avenger is Allah

One of the most clear expositions³ for *thar Allah* is that it refers to that blood that has been spilled in falsehood and injustice, and is attributed to the *wali al-dam* (one who has the right to avenge for the blood). Therefore when we say *thar Allah* we mean ‘the spilled blood that belongs to Allah’, and He alone is the avenger of the same. This meaning can be understood in other salutations as well. For example in one of the *ziyarat* of Imam al-Husayn (AS) we address him as follows:

...وَأَنَّكَ ثَارُ اللَّهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالِدَمُ الَّذِي لَا يُدْرِكُ ثَارَهُ أَحَدٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا
يُدْرِكُهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ

...and that you are the blood of Allah (*thar Allah*) in the earth and **the blood** that none of the inhabitants of the earth can avenge, and none save Allah alone can avenge it.⁴

This, however, does not contradict those salutations and supplications that encourage us to ask Almighty Allah to enable us avenge the blood of Imam al-Husayn (AS) with our present Imam (AS), for he is a vicegerent of Allah on earth and His medium, and can thus serve as Allah’s representative in avenging the blood of Imam al-Husayn (AS).

The Holy Qur`an says:

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيَّهِ

سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يُسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنْصُورًا

Do not kill a soul [whose life] Allah has made inviolable, except with due cause, and whoever is killed wrongfully, We have certainly given his heir an authority. But let him not commit any excess in killing, for he enjoys the support [of law.] (17:33)

Al-Bahrani in his *Tafsir al-Burhan*, while commenting on the above verse narrates the following tradition:

عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ سِنَانَ، عَنْ رَجُلٍ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنِ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيَّهِ سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يُسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنْصُورًا. قَالَ: ذَلِكَ قَائِمُ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، يَخْرُجُ فَيَقْتُلُ بِدَمِ الْحُسَيْنِ...

Muhammad bin Sinan narrates from a person who said: I asked Aba ‘Abdillah [al-Sadiq (AS)] about the verse “and whoever is killed wrongfully, We have certainly given his heir an authority”, and he said: **That is the Qa'im of the progeny of Muhammad (AS). He will come out and rise to avenge the blood of al-Husayn (AS)...**5

We also read in the supplication of *al-Nudba*:

أَيْنَ الطَّالِبُ بِدَمِ الْمَقْتُولِ بِكَرْبَلَاءَ

Where is the one who would avenge the blood of the one who was killed in Karbala’...6

Therefore whether we say that Allah Himself will avenge the blood of Imam al-Husayn (AS) or the present Imam (AS) will do the same, there is no difference. This is because the Imam (AS) is an entirely submissive servant of Almighty Allah and whatever he does is whatever Allah wants.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ثَارَ اللَّهِ

Peace be unto you, O one whose blood is the blood of Allah

One of the possible meanings of the phrase *ya thar Allah* is ‘*ya man tharuhu thar Allah*’ (O one whose blood is the blood of Allah)⁷. Here the *za’ir* declares that Imam al-Husayn (AS) enjoys the lofty spiritual state of *al-baqa’ bi Allah ba’d al-fana’* (survival in Allah after dissolution in Him) which the mystic-

scholars expound in their works. Due to the comprehensive and profound meaning it entails, we would not like to go into the details of this reality here.

Those who have attained heights of human perfection through supererogatory worship and obedience (*nawafil*) come to a station where they vision and comprehend that every act of theirs is done through Almighty Allah. In other words, Almighty Allah becomes their means of action. In a sacred tradition [*hadith al-qudsi*], Almighty Allah is reported to have said:

مَا يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ عَبْدٌ مِنْ عِبَادِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُ عَلَيْهِ. وَإِنَّهُ لِيَتَقَرَّبُ
إِلَيَّ بِالنَّافِلَةِ حَتَّى أُحِبَّهُ، فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ، كُنْتُ إِذَا سَمِعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ وَبَصَرَهُ الَّتِي
يَبْصُرُ بِهَا وَلِسَانَهُ الَّذِي يَنْطِقُ بِهِ وَيَدَهُ الَّتِي يَبْطِشُ بِهَا، إِنْ دَعَانِي أُجِبْتُهُ.

My servant does not draw near to me with anything more lovable to Me than what I have made obligatory on him. And surely he never ceases to draw near to Me through supererogatory acts until I love him. And when I love him, I am his hearing through which he hears, his sight through which he sees, his tongue through which he speaks, his hand through which he grasps. When he calls on Me I respond to him.

This tradition speaks of two fundamental kinds of proximity: (a) proximity attained through obligatory deeds (*qurb al-fara'idh*), and (b) proximity attained through supererogatory deeds (*qurb al-nawafil*). *Thar Allah* refers to the first level. In this level it is the servant who becomes the instrument of Allah. Almighty Allah Sees, Hears, and Speaks through His servant. This should not lead one to conjecture that Allah is in need of His servant, for the latter's very existence as well as subsistence entirely depend on Allah's volition. Being an instrument of Allah rather shows the utter obedience of the servant and his unity with Divine volition.

Perhaps Imam al-Husayn (AS)'s well-known dictum '*Ridha Allah Ridhana Ahl al-Bayt*' (The pleasure of Allah is our pleasure, the Ahl al-Bayt (AS)⁸ refers to this very state. The servant in this state becomes *ayn Allah* (the eyes of Allah), *yad Allah* (the hand of Allah) or *thar Allah* (blood of Allah), which means that He employs these intermediaries of the elevated human being to do what He decides. Hashim bin 'Umara narrates: I heard Amir al-mu'minin 'Ali (AS) say:

أَنَا عَيْنُ اللَّهِ وَأَنَا يَدُ اللَّهِ وَأَنَا جَنْبُ اللَّهِ وَأَنَا بَابُ اللَّهِ

I am the eye of Allah, and I am the hand of Allah; and I am the side of Allah and I am the door of Allah.⁹

And Aswad bin Sa'id reports: I was with Abu Ja'far (AS), and he said:

نَحْنُ حُجَّةُ اللَّهِ وَنَحْنُ بَابُ اللَّهِ وَنَحْنُ لِسَانُ اللَّهِ وَنَحْنُ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ وَنَحْنُ عَيْنُ اللَّهِ
فِي خَلْقِهِ...

We (the Ahl al-Bayt) are the proof of Allah, we are the door of Allah, and we are the tongue of Allah, and we are the face of Allah, and we are the eye of Allah in His creation... 10

Scholars of insight when expounding this exalted state also refer to the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَى وَلِيُبْلِيَ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءً حَسَنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

You did not kill them; rather it was Allah who killed them; and you did not throw when you threw, rather it was Allah who threw, that He might test the faithful with a good test from Himself. Indeed Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (8:17)

This verse speaks of the Battle of Badr. The Holy Prophet (S) asks Imam 'Ali (AS) to give him a handful of pebbles, whereafter he (S) throws them at the faces of the polytheists of Quraysh. 11 Almighty Allah describes this as His own action. In other words, the Holy Prophet (S) was Allah's agent and medium. He is told: *You did not throw when you threw, but Allah threw.* In reality no kind of selfhood remained in the Prophet (S). His entire being manifested the Divine.

Thar Allah, according to some Divine scholars, refers to this very kind of perfection. Imam al-Husayn (AS)'s entire movement and sacrifice manifested the attributes of Allah.

Scholars of insight, considering the reality that Imam al-Husayn (AS) is *thar Allah* say that the compensatory price of the blood of al-Husayn (AS) therefore is Allah Himself. The late scholar Ayatullah Muhammad Ridha Rabbani in his *Jalawat-e-Rabbani* says:

آن حضرت مقام ثاراللهی را واجد است و بهمین جهت است که خونبهای او
خود خداست

That Hadhrat occupies the station of *thar Allah* and for this very reason his compensatory price is God Himself. 12

And in his comments over 'Allama al-Tabataba'i's translation of *thar Allah* as 'blood of Allah' Shaykh

Rukhshad, a former student of 'Allama says:

منظور این است که خداوند متعال خود خونبهای امام حسین – علیه السلام – می باشد؛ زیرا در برابر شهادت و فداکاری آن حضرت هیچ نعمتی از نعمتهای آخرتی جز دیدار پروردگار قرار نمی گرفت.

This implies that Almighty God Himself is the compensatory price of the blood of Imam al-Husayn (AS). This is because in exchange for the Imam's martyrdom and sacrifice, there was no blessing of the Hereafter other than the vision of God. 13

Perhaps the reason why the compensatory price of al-Husayn (AS) is Allah Himself is the Imam's state of utter dissolution in the Beloved and survival by Him (*al-fana' fi Allah wa al-baqa' bihi*) 14. As we said earlier, Imam al-Husayn (AS), due to his very exalted station, was a medium of Allah's works.

Therefore, like the Prophet (S) who is told '**you did not throw when you threw, rather it was Allah who threw**' (8:17), Imam al-Husayn did not fight gallantly when he fought gallantly in the plains of Karbala' but Allah fought gallantly in the plains of Karbala'. This is because every element of Imam al-Husayn (AS) was for Allah. Hence he can rightly be known as '*aynillah* (eye of Allah), '*yadullah* (hand of Allah), '*lisanullah* (tongue of Allah), '*tharullah* (blood of Allah), etc.

Mentioning the lofty station of Imam al-Husayn (AS) and his companions, al-Naraqī in his *Mathnawi-e-Taqdis* says:

این فنای بنده در مولا بُود

این فنا از صد بقا اولی بُود

این عدم باشد ره کوی بقا

فهم آن خواهی برو تا کربلا

*This is the dissolution of the servant in his Master
This dissolution is better than a hundred lives
This dissolution is a path towards the alley of survival
If you would like to know its reality go upto Karbala. 15*

Although the compensatory price for the horrendous massacre cannot be paid, the meaning of ‘avenging the blood of Imam al-Husayn (AS)’, as we shall come to understand later in this *Ziyarat*, would in reality be a struggle to eradicate all those enemies who are openly against a Divine government being established, where the laws of Allah are executed and the religion is practised in the best possible manner, so that an environment for human perfection is facilitated for every human being.

يَا ثَارَ اللَّهِ

O one who has been killed for the sake of Allah

Thar has also been translated as *qatil* (the one who is killed). And when Allah is annexed to the word *thar*, it confers the meaning *qatilullah* (the one killed for Allah or in His way). The expression *qatilu Allah* has come in different *ziyarat* related to Imam al-Husayn (AS). For example in a *Ziyarat* taught by Imam al-Sadiq (AS) we address the Imam (AS) saying:

أَلْسَلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا قَتِيلَ اللَّهِ وَابْنَ قَتِيلِهِ أَلْسَلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا ثَارَ اللَّهِ وَابْنَ ثَارِهِ

Peace be unto you O martyr, the son of a martyr, peace be unto you, O blood of Allah, the son of the blood of Allah... 16

Observe that the phrase ‘*thar Allah wabna tharih*’ has also come in this *Ziyarat*. Does it mean therefore that *thar Allah* has a different meaning from *qatil Allah*? Obviously in this place it is possible. However we can also take *thar Allah* as an emphasis of *qatil Allah*. In our case, i.e. in *Ziyarat ‘Ashura’*, however, it is possible that this phrase would like to confer the meaning of both the phrases depicted in the above quotation. And Allah is All-Knowing.

وَابْنَ ثَارِهِ

And the offspring of the blood of Allah

This phrase talks about Imam ‘Ali (AS) also occupying the exalted station of *thar Allah*. Perhaps it would

like us to know that Imam al-Husayn (AS) being the product (*ibn*) of a *thar Allah* inherited the same appellation from his father.

-
1. Muhammad Husayn Rukhshad, Dar Mahzare 'Allameye Tabataba'i, p. 177
 2. Habibullah Kashani, Sharhu Ziyarat 'Ashura', p. 45
 3. Sayyid Mahdi Mir Baqiri, Sabr-e-Jamil Sayr o Suluk ba 'Ashura', pp. 75-76
 4. Ibn Qulawayh, Kamil al-Ziyarat, v.1, p. 216
 5. Al-Bahrani, Al-Burhan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, v.3, p. 528
 6. Al-Mashhadi, al-Mazar, p. 579
 7. Habibullah Kashani, Sharhu Ziyarat 'Ashura', p. 45
 8. Imam Khumayni, Glosses on the Commentary of Fusus al-Hikam, pp. 281-282
 9. Shaykh al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi, v.1, p. 145
 10. 'Allama Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, v.25, p. 384
 11. Shaykh al-Bahrani, Al-Burhan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, v.2, p. 662
 12. Ayatullah Muhammad Ridha Rabbani, Jalawat-e-Rabbani, v.1, p.305
 13. Muhammad Husayn Rukhshad, Dar Mahzare 'Allameye Tabataba'i, p. 177
 14. One should not misconceive such kind of unity being a kind of compositional unity (ittihad) or incarnation (hulul); far is Allah from every kind of deficiency whatsoever. Those endowed with a sharp vision say that such a state is nothing but 'the unveiling of the reality.' The utterly submissive human being understands that he is nothing but an action of Allah.
 15. Mawla al-Naraq, Mathnawi-e-Taqdis, p. 273
 16. 'Allama Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, v.98, p. 151

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/the-sacred-effusion-reflections-on-ziyarat-ashura-volume-1-shaykh-muhammad-khalfan/chapter-5-peace>