

STORY OF SACRIFICE

By: Naba Organization

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IN THE NAME OF GOD

Perhaps their destination had been tied together every time and at every place they were together. Others too knew them to be together as if the word of ‘duality’ had been composed for those two.

We are talking about Hasnain, Hasan and Hussein. ‘Sebtain’ () means two sons of Prophet; ‘Sheblain’() two (lion) cubs; ‘Sayyedain’ () two masters and two chiefs; ‘Raihanatain’ () two fragrant flowers and ‘Imamatain’() two leaders.

Most of the time Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) would enfold them together in his warm and affectionate arms. He would make both of them sit together on his knees. When the verse of purity (Ayat-e-Tatheer) was revealed, Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) covered them along with their father Ali (A.S.) and mother Fatemah (A.S.) with a Yemeni mantle and said:

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During the event of ‘Mubahala’ too when it was decided to come with his most beloved ones, he came with those two, along with their father and mother.

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...And now, Both had fallen sick together.

When the news of their sickness reached Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A), his heart began to beat and becoming impatient, he rushed to visit them. Two other people accompanied the Holy Prophet.

Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) patted his two sweetheart sons with his kind hands and prayed for their recovery from the depth of his heart.

One of the companions of Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) gave a suggestion to Hazrat Ah (A.S.) that “It is good that you make a vow for their recovery that whenever they regain their health you will fulfill your vow.”

But, what vow () could Ali (A.S.) make? For example, should he give

‘Sadaqa’ (charity)? Free a slave? Feed a hungry person? Clothe a naked person? Or take care of an orphan?

He wished that he could fulfill all of them. But....

In those times the Muslims were living in severe poverty and destitute. Most of the close companions of Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) were not having even the daily food to eat. Holy PROPHET (S.A.W.A.) as well as majority of the people was passing their lives in indigence and hardship. Like the other people, Ali (A.S.) too was having nothing. Nothing at all. For this reason, he decided to spend from his life. He said: - “I make a vow that whenever my children recover from their illness, I shall keep fast for three days.”

His wife Fatemah (A.S.), daughter of Holy Prophet too said: - “I will also do the same.” When the two ill children saw that their father and mother had made such a vow, they too followed them. Fizzah the loyal maidservant of the house too made the same decision.

When the two children recovered from their illness, all of them fasted on the next day. All five of them. However, there was neither any food in the house for breaking the fast nor money with Ali (A.S.) for procuring even one loaf of bread.

Really, what could Ali (A.S.) do? His household members who were the most beloved creation of God (and basically, God has created the whole existence for their sake) were hungry. From where could he make available the nourishment and the provision? From whom could he take a loan? From Holy Prophet? No, because shame and pudency did not allow him to approach the Holy Prophet. From others? No, because they too were like him.

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Sham’oon Yahudi a neighbor of Ali (AS.) was having a workshop for spinning wool. Hazrat Ali (A.S.) went to him and said: “I want you to give me some wool so that Fatemah (A.S.) the daughter of Muhammad (S.A.W.A.) could spin for you in return for three measure of barley.”

Sham’oon accepted and gave Ali (A.S.) some wool and three measure of barley. Hazrat Ali (A.S.) took them to his house and related the story to his wife Fatemah (A.S.). She accepted to do so and obeyed her husband.

Fatemah (A.S.) spun one third of the wool and in return, she took away one measure of barley. Though Sham’oon had given all the barley at one time yet, as per the agreement, the entire barley would become her property after spinning the entire wool.

Anyhow, Fatemah (A.S.) grinded the one measure of barley by her own hands, made dough out of that flour and finally baked five loaves of bread out of the dough. For each of them - i.e. Ali (A.S.), herself, Hassan, Hussein and Fizza, one loaf of bread.

On the other side, Ali (AS.) having recited his night (Maghrib) prayers in the mosque under the leadership of Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) went towards his

house. They spread the tablecloth for breaking the fast. Bread and water was all that was present on the tablecloth. When all sat around the table-cloth, Ali (A.S.) took the first morsel of bread to eat when suddenly the sorrowful cry of one poor beggar who was standing outside the door could be heard:” Peace and saluation be upon you (all) O household of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah!

I am a helpless needy Muslim. Give me also from whatever you eat, so that God may give you in exchange, a table of food from Paradise.”

This helpless needy man was not knowing as to how Ali (A.S.) had procured this meager food? He was only knowing that whomsoever would go to their house, he would not return back empty-handed. It did not matter even if that person was a helpless non-Muslim. He was aware that here was the house of hope for the helpless and how many a time he had heard that Fatemah (A.S.) had once even donated her necklace i.e. all her wealth to one needy person.

By hearing the cry of that disappointed poor man, Ali (A-S.) desisted from eating that morsel of food and addressed his wife Fatemah (A.S.) as such:

Fatemah! I know very well that how kind and affectionate you are.

I know that you have faith in Qiyamat and the life hereafter.

O the daughter of the best of the men, do you see how that helpless and poverty-stricken poor man is crying out with sorrow outside the house and calling out to God in his state of helplessness? Do you see how sadly and sorrowfully he has brought his complaint of hunger to us?

Yes, my kind wife! Anyone who believes in his deeds and anyone who performs any good deed in this world will surely see his reward on the Day of Judgment and his place will be in Paradise with everlasting freshness - the same Paradise which God has forbidden for the mean and the miser. On the Day of Judgment, a miser will stand near Hell with sorrow and shame and he will be made to fall in the vicious flames of the fire. He will remain there for many long years and except for dirty and boiling water, he will not be given anything else.

When Hazrat Zahra (A.S.) heard her own inner feelings from the tongue of her husband, with great enthusiasm she said: I accept your command by heart since meanness, stinginess and abjectness does not exist in me. Is it not that wisdom and generosity is mixed with my life? So what objection is there if I feed the other while I myself am hungry? Yes, with such an act, I hope to be from the pious and besides going to Paradise I will be doing intercession for others by the Grace of God.

Fatemah (A-S.) said this and picked up all that was on the tablecloth and gave it to that poor man.

That night, they broke their fast with water and slept with hunger. The next day, they once again fasted.

This time too Fatemah (A-S.) took the other one-third of the wool to spin but unlike yesterday; her hands were lacking strength and agility. Hunger was tormenting her. Anyhow, with great pain, she finished spinning the wool. She

grinded another measure of barley and made dough out of that flour and this time too she made five loaves of bread.

Ali (A.S.) recited his Namaz with Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in the mosque and then came home. They spread out the tablecloth and all five of them sat besides the tablecloth. When Ali (A.S.) picked up the first morsel-to eat, suddenly the voice of an orphan who was standing besides the door of the house could be heard saying:

“Peace be upon you (all), O household members of Prophet hood. ‘O the household members of Muhammad, I am an orphan from among the Muslim orphans. I swear by Allah that you give me from what you eat, as Allah will give you sustenance in Paradise.”

This time, the test was more difficult as they were hungrier than the previous day. However this man too is an orphan - an orphan without any guardian, without any shelter and without any companion. Perhaps he may be more disabled than the helpless poor man. He has come to the door of this house with a thousand hopes. Is it possible that he returns back hopelessly!?

Does not Quran say:-

(Never drive away an orphan)

Ali (A.S.) immediately desisted from eating and this time too with the same tenderness, sincerity and verity told his wife Fatemah (A.S.) as such:-

‘O dear Fatemah, ‘O the daughter of the honorable and great Master. ‘O the daughter of a Prophet which ignobility cannot find its way in his holy presence. Do you see that God has this time sent an orphan for us. Now is the time of mercy and compassion and if under these circumstances anyone shows mercy to another then he is worthy to be called a compassionate person and surely his place will be in Paradise full of bounties which God has forbidden for the mean and ignoble. Yes, those who are stingy will stand rebuked and condemned besides Hell. Thereafter he will be cast into it and over there he will have nothing but hot and dirty water.

Fatemah (A.S.) had seen how her father used to behave with the orphans. She had heard to what extent her father had recommended the matter of attending to the orphans. For this reason, she too thought that hesitation was not a proper thing and said: “I grant him whatever is there on the table-cloth and I am not sad too from this action. In this way, I prefer the happiness and satisfaction of God to the love of my household members.”

Here, Fatemah (A.S.) cast her glance at her children. She saw Hassan (A.S.) pale and hungry. She saw Hussein (A.S.) paler than Hassan (A.S.). Her eyes remained fixed on Hussein (A.S.) and recollected what her father had told her about him. She then said: “My household members and these two cubs have passed their last night in hunger till morning and especially Hussein who will be

killed in one battle. Yes, they will dastardly kill him in Karbala. Woe be upon his killers who will be severely chastised in Hell. They will roll in the bottom of Hell and will be dragged by chains made of fire.”

Tears gathered in her eyes and picking up all that was on the tablecloth she went and gave it to the helpless orphan.

That night too, they broke their fast with water and all went to sleep more hungry than the previous night. The next day, they again fasted. The third day there was no longer any strength and endurance left for the household members of Holy Prophet. With great pain and difficulty, Fatemah (A.S.) spun the remaining wool too and with the last measure of barley, she made five loaves of bread.

Like always, Ali (A.S.) performed his night (Maghrib) prayers under the leadership of Holy Prophet and then returned home. They spread the tablecloth. It was two days that they had not eaten food. Hunger was severely tormenting them. They sat besides the tablecloth with utmost appetite. Ali (A-S.) picked up the first morsel of food but... .

God wished to make eternal the splendor of sacrifice of this family. This time a captive stood besides the door of the house. A polytheist captive - not a Muslim helpless person and not a Muslim orphan. One captive. One polytheist captive. But he too knew very well the place where he should go. He greeted and said: “Peace be upon you (all) O household members of Muhammad.” Thereafter with grudge and complaint he said: - You (Muslims) take us as captives and drag us. Will you also not give us food to eat?

By hearing the voice of that man, Ali (A.S.) desisted from eating and told Fatemah (A-S.) as such:-

“My dear wife Fatemah, ‘O the daughter of Prophet, O the daughter of Ahmad, O the daughter of Master and Leader of all the great people of the world. Do you see that a captive has taken shelter in us, having no other place to go? See how they have pulled him by the rope. Do you see that only a thin layer of skin has remained over his bones out of intensity of hunger? Do you see how painfully he is complaining of hunger?

Yes my wife, if today someone feeds such a helpless person then tomorrow he shall surely see his reward on the Day of Judgment and the Almighty and Unique God will give his reward. This world is a farm for the Hereafter and anyone who sows goodness over here shall reap his reward in the Hereafter. My wife, fulfill his wish and do not return him back in despair. Do not allow him to plead anymore.

When Fatemah (A.S.) finished hearing her husband’s talk, she said:-

These bread are from the last measure of barley and there is now nothing left for us. My hands too have become injured and sore due to the effect of spinning wool and moreover I cannot spin wool any longer. On the other hand, I swear by Allah that my two children Hassan and Hussein are also suffering from severe hunger.

When the talks of Fatemah (A.S.) reached till this stage, her eyes were filled with tears and raising her hands in ‘dua’ (invocation) she said:-

‘O my Lord! Do not leave alone my children for they will die of hunger. ‘O God Thou are aware that their father is always a pioneer in goodness and generosity and with his two sturdy arms he is very generous, bountiful and open-handed. But, except for these loaves of bread, we are having no other thing left with us. I do not even have a covering on my head except for this very veil which I have woven in return for some measure of barley.’

Yes, this time too, they gave all the bread to that hungry polytheist captive and this time too, they broke their fast with water and slept in the state of hunger.

The next night Ali (A.S.) with his two sons Hassan and Hussein approached the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.). Hassan (A.S.) and Hussein (A.S.) was trembling out of severe starvation. When Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) saw them he asked with surprise: “what is the matter with you? What is this condition which I am observing in you?” Ali (A.S.) did not say anything. Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said: “Come and let us go to Fatemah’s house.” He said this and hastened towards the house of Fatimah (A.S.). When he reached there he saw her standing and praying but in a critical condition.

When Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) saw her daughter too in such a state, he started to cry and embraced her. When he realized that they had not eaten for three days, he said: “I take refuge in Allah. It is three days that you all are in such a state and I am unaware of your condition.”

Yes, Holy Prophet was not aware what his most beloved ones had to suffer in this period of time. However the God of Prophet was knowing what incident had befallen and what splendor and magnificence these chosen ones of creation have initiated by their sacrifice.

For this reason, Gibra’eel the angel of revelation descended down and addressed the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) as such:-

“O Muhammad, take away what God has prepared for your household members.”

The Messenger of God asked: “What should I take?”

Thereafter, Gibraeel recited sura (Sura No.76) for the Prophet which was revealed on the occasion of this incident and as such, the story of sacrifice of this household became eternal.

Surely the righteous shall drink of a cup the admixture of which is comphor.

A fountain from which the servants of Allah shall drink; they make it to flow

a (goodly) following forth.

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They fulfill vows and fear a day the evil of which shall be spreading far and wide.

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And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive.

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We only feed you for Allah's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks.

THE END