(.Lessons from the Lives of Masoomeen (A.S

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HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S)

The Holy Prophet (S) was sitting in the mosque in Madina giving a talk to some of his followers while they were waiting for Salaat time to set in.

A rich man wearing expensive clothes came and sat in front of the Holy Prophet (S) to listen to his talk.

Meanwhile another man who had also came to listen to the Holy Prophet (S) sat down beside the rich man.

The second man was not rich, in fact he was quite poor. The old and torn clothes he was wearing showed just how poor he was. The rich man did not like for the poor man to sit next to him. He pulled his nice, new, expensive clothes closer to himself, so that they would not be touched by the dirty, old, torn clothes of the poor man.

The Holy Prophet (S) noticed what the rich man had done and was upset and disappointed. He asked the rich man why he had done this? Was it because he thought that some of his wealth might go to the poor man, or was it because he thought some of the poverty of the poor man might come to him.

The rich man, who was not a bad person, realised what he had done was wrong and was truly sorry.

To make up for his mistake and to show how sorry he was, the rich man after apologising to the poor man, offered him half of all his wealth.

The poor man told the rich man that he accepted his apology and forgave him, but did not want half of his wealth as he did not want to get something without having worked for it. Moral: In the eyes of Allah how rich or poor a person is makes no difference. The person who is closest .to Allah is the one who obeys Him in every action

BIBI FATIMAH (A)

Once when Imam Hasan (A) and Imam Husain (A) were children they both fell ill. Their parents Imam Ali (A) and Bibi Fatimah (A) were very sad to see them ill.

When the Holy Prophet (S) found out about the illness he suggested that both his daughter Bibi Fatimah (A) and his cousin and son-in-law Imam Ali (A) should keep Nazr.

Nazr is a promise that you make to Allah. Something that you will do extra for the pleasure of

Allah if your wish comes true. Imam Ali (A) and Bibi Fatimah (A) made a nazr that they would fast three days upon the recovery of their children.

Allah accepted their nazr and both Imam Hasan (A) and Imam Husain (A) recovered from their illness.

Their parents decided to fast the next day to fulfil their nazr and when the children came to know of this they also decided to fast. Their maid Bibi Fizza, who loved the children very much also decided to fast.

On the first day of the fasting, Bibi Fatimah prepared 5 loaves of bread to break their fast with. In the evening when the time for Salaat set in they all prayed then sat down to break their fast. Just as they were about to eat their loaves of bread there was a knock on the door. There stood a poor man asking for something to eat.

All of them, one by one gave their loaf of bread to the beggar. And had just water instead.

The next day all of them again fasted. Again they were to break their fast with a loaf of bread each which had been baked that morning.

And again as they were about to eat their loaf there was a knock on the door. This time it was an orphan asking for food. Although they themselves were two days hungry they all happily gave their loaf of bread to the orphan and again slept without any food.

On the third day of their fast as they sat down to break their fast, a prisoner knocked at the door asking for food. Although by now the family were very hungry as they had not eaten for three days, they again gave away their loaves. Sura Ad-Dahr in the Holy Qur'an was revealed in praise of the sacrifice made by this family.

Moral:

Nazr is very powerful.

Always think of others before yourself.

It is not how much you give to others that is important but the intention with which you give, i.e. ."Qurbatan Ilallah" which means to get closer to Allah

IMAM ALI (A)

In the battle of Khandaq, the Muslims dug a ditch around themselves for their defence, so that the enemy could not get across. A man from the enemy side called Amr bin Abdawud who was known for his strength, courage and art of fighting managed to get across the ditch.

All the Muslims were terrified to fight him and only Imam Ali (A) came forward to fight this man.

There was a fierce fight until at last Imam Ali (A) threw Amr down onto the ground and mounted his chest ready to kill him. Just as Imam Ali (A) was about to kill this enemy of Islam,

he spat on the face of our Imam (A).

Everybody was certain that because of this insult, Amr would meet his death even faster still, but to their amazement, Imam Ali (A) moved from Amr's chest and walked away.

Amr attacked Imam (A) again and after a short while, Imam (A) again overpowered Amr and killed him.

After the battle was over people asked Imam Ali (A) the reason why he had spared Amr's life when he had first overpowered him. To which Imam (A) replied that if he had killed him then it would have not been only for the sake of Allah but also for the satisfaction of his anger and so he let him free.

Then Imam (A) controlled his anger and killed Amr purely for the sake of Allah.

Moral: Although your intention may be pure to begin with it can very easily change so always .make sure you do things for the sake of Allah only

IMAM HASAN (A)

Once a follower of Mu'awiyah came to Madina. When he saw our 2nd Imam, Imam Hasan (A) he started to shout names and use foul language at the Imam (A), because Mu'awiyah had told him horrible things about Imam (A).

The followers of Imam Hasan (A) wanted to punish the man for what he had said but Imam (A) told them to leave him alone. Imam Hasan (A) then turned to the man and greeted him with "Salaam" after which Imam asked the man if he would like to come to his house for food and a rest as he had just come from a long trip.

When the man saw the Akhlaq of Imam (A), he realised that what Mu'awiyah had told him about the Imam (A) was untrue and he felt very ashamed of how he had spoken.

The man asked Imam (A) for forgiveness. Thereafter, whenever he heard anyone saying anything against Imam Hasan (A) he would correct them.

Moral:

Never get angry at someone when they are angry - It takes two people to start a fight.

No matter how other people act you should always have perfect akhlaq.

.Never believe bad things about other people that you have heard

IMAM HUSAIN (A)

Our 3rd Imam, Imam Husain (A) fought with Yazid in 61 A.H. to save Islam.

Imam Husain (A) was forced to fight Yazid's army because he would not give Bay'at (oath of allegiance) to Yazid.

When Imam Husain (A) was told that he had to give bay'at to Yazid otherwise he would be

killed, Imam (A) replied that: a man like him could not give bay'at to a man like Yazid. By saying this Imam (A) was trying to tell everyone that what Yazid believed in was totally opposite to what Imam (A) believed in. Yazid was the follower of Shaitan while Imam (A) was the follower of Allah.

Imam Husain (A) knew that himself, his friends and family were to die in Kerbala. He also knew that this was the only way that he could show to the other Muslims that Yazid who claimed to be a Muslim and protect Islam was in-fact destroying it.

In Imam Husain (A) army there were not just strong soldiers, that was not what was needed to get into the army of Imam (A). To get into the army of Imam Husain (A) you needed to believe and act upon Islam.

Imam Husain (A) wanted people, when they heard about the events of Kerbala to know that it was not for power but for Islam and this is why to get into the army of Imam (A) you needed to be a believer and not a soldier.

Imam's (A) army had all kinds of people: He had rich, noble men. He had freed slaves. He had old and young men. He had men who had done wrong and repented (eg. Hur - the commander of Yazid' army). He had pious men.

Whenever other Muslims heard about the events of Kerbala, they would ask themselves, why it was that men from different backgrounds, different circumstances, different ways of life, all came together to fight and die with Imam Husain (A).

Every Muslim regardless of his colour, his race, his background, his financial situation, his age, could identify himself with one martyr in the army of Imam Husain (A) and through him understand why Imam(A) did what he did Moral:

Imam (A) could not give bay'at to Yazid because it was against what he believed in. You should always stand by what you believe in.

Imam (A) gave up his life for Islam. We as guardians of Islam should make sure that we keep .Islam alive the way Imam (A) would have wanted

IMAM ZAINUL ABIDEEN (A)

At the time of our 4th Imam, Imam Zainul Abideen (A) it was very difficult for Imam (A) to teach Islam to the people. This was because Yazid's men used to keep a close watch on Imam's (A) movements.

Imam Zainul Abideen (A) had seen his father, Imam Husain (A), and other loyal friends and family die for the sake of Islam. Imam Zainul Abideen (A) decide that the best way to teach people about Islam, was by prayers (Du'a). As a result, we have today a beautiful collection of his Du'a in a book called: "Al-Sahifat al-kamilat al-Sajjadiyya" - The complete book of Al-

Sajjad, (Imam Zainul Abadeen (A) was also known as al-Sajjad).

An extract from a du'a for Sunday (the 1st verse) from AL- Sahifat al-kamilat al-Sajjadiyya:

In the name of Allah, the most Kind and the most Merciful.

In the name of Allah from whom I hope for nothing but bounty, and from whom I fear nothing but justice!

I rely only upon His word, and I cling only to His cord!

Just in these few lines Imam (A) is teaching us so much:

He is teaching us that only Allah is the provider.

He is teaching us that we should not fear Allah as He is the most forgiving and the most Merciful but at the same time He is also the Most Just and it is this justice that we should fear. There was once a man who was a very religious man and because he was so sure of himself he always used to pray to Allah to judge him on Justice, (we are told always to pray to Allah to judge us with His mercy).

When this man died he saw a scale which was being weighted down with all his good actions. The angels then brought an apple which they put on the other side of the scale and the scale came down on the side of the apple.

The man did not understand how a single apple could outdo all his good actions. He was then told that, that apple was one that he had tasted in the market without the permission of the shop owner. Because the man had insisted that Allah judge him on justice, Allah did not intervene with His mercy.

Imam Zainul Abideen (A) then finished the 1st verse with the lesson that we should only rely on Allah and attach ourselves to Him alone.

Moral:

We should always ask Allah to judge us with His mercy.

We should try to read the du'as from Al-Sahifat al-Kamilat al-Sajjadiyya, as there is so much to learn from them.

IMAM MUHAMMAD AL-BAQIR (A)

In the time of our 5th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) there lived a man called Jabir bin Abdullah.

Jabir was a pious man who was alive at the time of the Holy Prophet (S).

One day the Holy Prophet (S) told Jabir that he would be alive to see the Prophet's great great grandson Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A). The Holy Prophet (S) asked Jabir to give Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) salaams from his great great grandfather, the Holy Prophet(S).

The Holy Prophet (S) passed away and Jabir remained alive for a long time just as the Prophet

(S) had told him.

One day Jabir who was now a very old man, was visiting the house of Imam Ali Zainul Abideen (A) when he came across a small child. Jabir asked Imam Zainul Abideen (A) who the child was. When Imam (A) replied that the child was his son Muhammad al-Baqir who was to be the next Imam, Jabir was so happy that he began to cry.

At last Jabir could give the message that he had been carrying with him for so many years. Jabir turned to face Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (A) and told him that his great great grandfather had asked him to pass his salaams to Imam (A).

Moral: If you are given something to look after or pass to someone else (no matter how small) .then look after it well as you are accountable for it

IMAM JA'FAR AS-SADIQ (A).

In the time of our 6th Imam, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) there was once a wheat shortage in Madina. As a result the people of Madina were buying as much wheat as they could afford. There were some people who were quite poor and could only afford to buy enough wheat for that day.

These people had to pay a little bit more for the wheat each day because there was less and less wheat available.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) asked his servant how much wheat they had in the house. The servant replied that they had enough to last them for several months.

Imam (A) then told the servant to take the wheat to the market and sell it all to the people. The servant argued that if he did this then they probably would not be able to buy all the wheat back and also they would have to pay a lot more for it.

Imam (A) told him that it did not matter. He told him that after he had sold all the wheat he should only buy enough wheat for each day.

Imam (A) also told his servant that from then on the bread in his house should be made from ½ wheat and ½ barley. Moral:

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) did this because he did not want to live in a better manner while so .many people were hungry. Islam does not allow hoarding

IMAM MUSA AL-KADHIM (A)

One day when our 7th Imam, Imam Musa al-Kadhim (A) was only 5 years old, Abu Hanifa asked him who is responsible for our deeds. Does man do them of his own free will or does Allah make him do them.

Imam (A) replied that were are three possibilities:

Allah makes man do them.

Both Allah and man are responsible.

Man does them alone.

If the first is true than Allah should be judged on the day of Qiyamat and sent to heaven or hell.

If the second is true that both Allah and man should be judged on the day of Qiyamat and sent to heaven or hell.

The only one that is true is the third one because only man will be judged on the day of Qiyaaat and sent to heaven or hell, as only man alone is responsible for his actions and deeds.

Moral: Although Allah has power over everything he allows us to do as we please so that we may be held accountable for our deeds on the day of Qiyamat.

IMAM ALI AR-REZA (A)

The king at the time of our 7th Imam, Imam Ali ar-Reza (A) was Ma'mun.

Ma'mun had forced Imam (A) to take the position of his heir apparent (i.e. Imam (A) was supposed to take over as king after Ma'mun); because he wanted to be accepted by the Shias.

Although Imam (A) did not want to take this position, he made full use of it to preach Islam openly.

To show to the people how much he thought of Imam (A), Ma'mun changed the colour of his court from black to green (the colour of the Imams (A).), he also had new coins made with Imam Ali ar-Reza's (A) name on it.

Each Imam (A) is remembered for a specific thing:

eg.4th Imam, Imam Zainul Abideen (A) - In illness.

6th Imam, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) - For sustenance.

And in the same way our 8th Imam, Imam Ali ar-Reza (A) is called upon when someone is about to go on a journey.

When you go on journeys you take with you something called Imam-e-Zaamin (another name for Imam Ali ar-Reza (A)) which is some money tied in a cloth. This tradition probably came from the time of Imam Ali ar-Reza (A) when people used to carry money with them especially because it had Imam's (A) name on it.

As Ma'mun had had coins minted with the name of Imam Ali ar-Reza (A) on them, it was very easy for the Muslims to carry the name of Imam (A) with them, especially when they went on journeys.

There is a hadith of the Prophet that when you travel you should give charity (sadqa). So is it not better to give the money of Imam-e-Zaamin before you go on your journey rather than when you get back, so that it may reach the poor quicker.

It is said that the Sura of Tawheed (Sura Ikhlas) if written and cut into two halves, one given to the traveller and the other left at his home, will always come together again and so ensure the safe journey of the traveller. Moral:

Make best use of your circumstances.

.Give Sadaqa to avoid calamities

IMAM MUHAMMAD AT-TAQI (A)

When our 9th Imam, Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) was a young man, Ma'mun had arranged a question - answer session between Imam (A) and Yahya bin Athkam, who was supposed to be the most learned of men at that time.

The court was full of people from near and far everyone wanted to see what the outcome would be.

Yahya asked the first question which was:

What would be the kaffara of a person in Ihram who hunted and killed his prey?

Imam Muhammad at-Taqi answered that he would have to be given a lot more detail before he could even begin to answer the question. For example:

Was the person in Ihram Baligh or not?

Was the person a free man or a slave?

Did he know the laws of sharia on hunting or not?

Was his Ihram for Hajj or Umra?

Did he hunt intentionally or not?

Was this the first time or one of many?

Did the person in Ihram hunt inside the Haram of the Ka'ba or outside.

Did he hunt in the day or at night?

Was the prey big or small?

Was the prey a bird or an animal?

Was the person sorry or not?

Yahya was shocked and did not know what to say.

Ma'mun asked Imam (A) to answer Yahya's question for all of the above conditions, which Imam (A) did.

It was then Imam Muhammad at-Taqi (A) to ask Yahya a question, which he did and which Yahya could not answer; so Imam (A) again gave the answer.

Moral: To answer a fiqh question is not as easy as you may think; this is why Ulema spend years of their lives learning and researching. And why we have to do Taqlid of a Marja'.(Just like we take the advice of a doctor when we are ill, we should take the advice of a Marja' in

(.religious affairs

IMAM ALI AN-NAQI (A)

Our 10th Imam, Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) became an Imam at the age of only 8 years old. Imam Ali an-Naqi (A) when young, was forced to go to a famous old poet named Junaydi to be tutored.

Junaydi was a very clever man but hated the Ahlul-bayt.

The king at the time forced Imam (A) to go to Junaydi so that anything that the Imam (A) said or did in his life would be according to the teachings that he had received from Junaydi. Even if they were not people would think that they were because he had been taught by him.

After some time had passed the king asked Junaydi how the Imam (A) was doing.

To which Junaydi answered that he was no longer the teacher (Imam (A) was), but a student, and that he now understood what knowledge really was.

Moral:

Imams (A) have a supreme knowledge so that they are able to answer whatever question is put to them. What age you are does not matter but how much you know matters. People will treat you like a child unless you can show them otherwise - through your knowledge and your .Akhlaq

IMAM HASAN AL-ASKARI (A)

The rulers of the time of our 11th Imam, Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) knew that the Imams (A) were going to be 12 in number and that the last of them was going to be the son of Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) and would finally take control of the world.

The rulers wanted to stop the 12th Imam (A) from being born, so they tried to keep Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) imprisoned for most of his life.

They had forgotten how Fir'aun had tried to stop the reign of Prophet Musa (A) by killing all the baby boys born to the Isralites, yet he himself was bringing up the one he wanted to kill.

Motamid, who was the 'Fir'aun' at the time of Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) did everything in his power to stop the birth of the 12th Imam (A).

Motamid had had Imam (A) under his watchful eye from the age of four, and imprisoned following the death of his father, the 10th Imam, Imam Ali an-Naqi (A).

Allah had planned for the 12th Imam (A) to be born so an incident occurred where Motamid had to ask Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) for help to save the faith of the Muslims.

The incident was that at a time of severe draught a Christian priest was able to make it rain, which was making the Muslim people question their faith.

So Motamid had to ask Imam Hasan al-Askari (A) for help, before there were no Muslims to rule over.

Imam (A) showed how the priest was making it rain using the bone of a Prophet (A) and how Imam (A) could make it rain without the help of anything.

The Muslims were overjoyed and Motamid had no choice but to let Imam (A) free. It was during this period that the 12th Imam (A) was born.

Moral: Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, Sura Ali Imran verse 54: "And they planned, and Allah .planned, and Allah is the best of planners." ie. Whatever Allah has decided no-one can change

IMAM MUHAMMAD AL-MAHDI (A)

Many people ask what is the use of an Imam that can not be seen. Just as the sun is still of use to us even when it is hidden behind the clouds, Imam (A) is of benefit even when hidden. Although we can not see our 12th Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (A) can see us. He is aware of our prayers, deeds actions and troubles. Any believer who truly asks him for help receives his assistance.

The ghaybat (concealment) of Imam (A) is in two stages:

Ghaybate sughra - minor concealment.

Ghaybate kubra - major concealment.

Ghaybate sughra started from after Imam (A) led the funeral prayer of his father (Imam Hasan al-Askeri (A)) until the death of his 4th deputy. All in all 68years.

Ghaybate kubra started from the death of his 4th deputy till this day.

During Ghaybate sughra although the Muslims could not see Imam (A) they could communicate with him through his deputies:

Uthman bin Said

Muhammad bin Uthman

Husain bin Rauh

Ali bin Muhammad Samry.

During Ghaybate kubra although there are no special deputies. The Mujtahids are his representatives.

There have been many examples in history of where Imam (A) has guided and helped his followers:

There once lived a great Mujtahid named Allama Mallisi. Once this Mujtahid was asked what to do with the body of a pregnant woman who had died. Should the dead woman be buried as she was or should she be cut open and the child removed, then the woman buried. Allama decided that the woman should be buried as she was, with the child.

When the people were carrying the coffin to the grave, a horseman appeared and said that Allama had decided that the baby should be removed. This was done.

Afew years later Allama Majlisi was visited by a man with a small child. The man told Allama that this was the same child that had been cut from his mother after Allama had sent the horseman telling the people that he had changed his instructions. Allama immediately realised that the horseman must have been Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (A) who had come to his help, preventing him making a grave mistake.

From that day Allama stayed in his house refusing to give anymore advise to the people, in case he made another mistake. In a few days he received a letter from Imam (A) telling him that he should not worry and should continue to guide the people. If by any chance he made a mistake Imam (A) would come to help him rectify it.

The duties of each and every Muslim in the time of Ghatbate kubra is:

To be the caretakers of Islam.

To pray for the safety of Imam (A) and give sadaqa for his safety.

Ask Allah to make Imam (A) appearance soon, so that he may come and fill the world with truth and peace.

Whenever the name of the12th Imam is said, you should stand, placing your right hand on your head and bow your head. You should also recite Salawaat after his name.

Moral: The Holy Prophet (S) has said that if someone dies without knowing the Imam (A) of his time, his death is that of an unbeliever. We must therefore carry out our duties to our 12th .(Imam who is still alive and in Ghaybate(concealment