

The Important Lessons of Ashura

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When certain seasons of worship come around like the months of Ramadan and Muharram, it is very important that we re-evaluate ourselves to see what blessings we have gotten from them. Were they in proportion with the power of the season? Have we preserved these blessings? How can we best invest these blessings after the season is over? Many people are pleased with the condition they have at the time, without worrying about what will come after the season. The Devil is eager to take away whatever the believer has earned at the first possible opportunity. Are we cautious about that?

The movement of Imam Hussein (A) was a method for dealing with one's own soul and with others, for he wanted to teach us a lesson about servitude at every stage of his blessed movement. We see him depart from the safety of the Divine Kaaba when he saw that it would please his Lord. We see him exposing his family to capture when he saw that his Lord willed for them to be captured. He exposed himself to the greatest forms of insult and torture when he saw that his Lord willed for him to be killed. His sister Zainab summarized all of these lessons when she confronted the oppressor of her era saying: I didn't see anything but it was beautiful. God willed for this group of people to be killed, so they came out to be killed, and God will gather you and them together to be judged. So wait and see who will be victorious on that day!

The principle of dialogue through speaking is the well-known method of explaining the messages of the Prophets (A), and this is what was referred to when Almighty God said, {And each nation had its own warner.} But the corruption of the leadership sometimes reaches the point where warning and explanation are not sufficient to put an end to the greatest falsehood: the corruption of one who corrupts the entire nation by his actions – because the people follow the religion of their leaders. So it would be necessary to establish a movement beyond explanation and dialogue, an unusual movement in which blood is sacrificed. This movement would awaken the nation from its depths, to see the corruption of the leader's soul after it had neglected the corruption of the leader's deeds! And thus the rule of the Umayyads collapsed shortly after the killing of Hussein (A). His revolution was considered the source of all revolutions which arose throughout the nation which hadn't been seen before the killing of Chief of Martyrs (A).

We notice this year and every year the spread of the majlis of Imam Hussein (A) all over the world. This revives our sense of hope that there is still a heart beating in the body of this

nation, a heart which draws its blood from the pure blood that was spilt at Kerbala. All of that is by the blessing of the commemoration of one of the Imams from the chain of the Holy Family of the Prophet (A), so how many more blessings would there be if the last in this chain were present? We can imagine how much the hearts which thirst for justice would welcome this

Imam after they lost hope in all the theories which promised to bring human happiness. One of the lessons of Kerbala is connecting between the highest degree of chastity and the defense of the religion by whatever power the individual is given. Thus we see Zainab (A) who observed hijab and shyness like no one else. Ali (A) would even try to keep her shadow from the view of outsiders by extinguishing or turning down the lights when she was visiting the grave of her grandfather the Holy Prophet (S). However when it came time, she was the tongue speaking in the name of the sacred law even in the presence of the Imam of her time, Ali ibn al-Hussein al-Sajjad (A). There is a saying that Islam owes its existence to Muhammed but its preservation to Hussein. While this is correct, we could also say that the origin of the reform movement was Hussein, while its preservation belongs to Zainab.

There is a great likeness between Ibrahim (A) the beloved friend of God and Hussein (A) the sacrifice of God. God made the hearts of the people incline towards both of them. What we notice amongst those who gather for the remembrance of Hussein (A) and establish his mourning is something truly amazing! Just as we see people who don't follow the sacred law throughout the year attracted to perform the Hajj, we see the same group showing a loyalty towards Hussein (A) which is not in proportion to their nature. This shows us that there is divine control over the hearts, and it appears that the movement during these two seasons of Hajj and Muharram are an answer to the prayer of Ibrahim (A). The reason for loving the family of the Prophet (A) in their valley of martyrdom is no less than the reason for loving the family of Ibrahim (A) in their valley of barrenness!

Whatever we have done during the days of Muharram is a divine lesson in which God tests us for the heat of love for Hussein (A). The Holy Prophet (S) made it one of the tests of true faith. At the same time it is a claim against us, because after we get these divine blessings the judgement against us is swifter than if we hadn't participated in them. The one who receives these blessings is not like the one who does not, and the one who has knowledge is not like the one who is ignorant. Is it enough to emerge from this season with tears and crying without seeing an important change in our life?!

One of the important lessons of Ashura is to beware of coming to a bad ending in our lives. Some of the companions of Ali (A) participated in killing Imam Hussein. There are many people like this in history who have been cursed by the Imams and who were once their

companions! All of us have to beware of the hidden seeds of major corruption, especially in the area of our beliefs, as one of the signs of the end of time is mental corruption. Some of the causes of this are committing major sins, companionship with corrupt people, profiting from what is forbidden, taking the material world over religion, finding pleasure in the fancy words which the Devil distributes to his friends, as the Holy Qur'an says, {The devils inspire their
{.followers to argue with you