

Husayn the King of Martyrs

The Importance of the Context

It is a fact acknowledged by one and all in the world of intelligence that things isolated from their natural set up away from the connected events, without the necessary reference to their original context, can neither be properly studied nor correctly understood nor duly judged. The great heart-rending martyrdom of Husayn, the second grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, was not a casual event of an ordinary sacrifice of any ordinary saint.

The divinity endowed in the gruesome tragedy, can be correctly viewed only when it is studied along with the background concerned with its genetic factors. If anyone has failed to understand the real value of the great event of universal import to the human race as a whole, it must be due to the wrong angle from which it would have been viewed.

What a world of difference, the difference in the point of view a reader creates, can very well be seen from the various opinions which the readers of one and the same holy scripture form, for the view of one and the same object, naturally differs a great deal from angle to angle.

Taking for instance the example of the Holy Qur'an which being the unmistakable and the unchallengeable Final Word of God it is understood differently by different people who study it from the different points of view away from the correct one.

Some are rightly guided by the Holy Qur'an but from the very same Holy Book of God, some draw a different meaning altogether misleading, and get themselves beguiled to criticise its teachings and to attack the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

The Holy Qur'an has itself declared this aspect of its study saying:

***"This Book (the Qur'an), no doubt is there (about its being the Word of God), (but) it is a guidance (only) for the pious."*(2:2)**

This (The Holy Qur'an) is only a narrative for (the ordinary) people, and a guidance and an

exhortation to the pious.”(3: 138)

Thus to have a correct view of the great sacrifices offered by the Holy Prophet and the divinely chosen members of his family, more particularly the invaluable sacrifices offered by the Holy Imam Husayn, the second grandson of the Holy Prophet, it is essential to view the events in their proper context connected with their causative factors and the other important environmental background.

It is only to serve this unavoidable demand for the correct understanding of the Great Events that some of the important factors connected with the Great Tragedy, are herewith given with the maximum possible brevity, leaving the other details for a deeper study of the subject by those interested in it.

The Whole Human Race– One Family

Humanity or the human race as a whole, was originally one family, consisting of the children of one and the same parents, which fact had long been forgotten and even today, in many parts of the world, it is totally neglected and has become practically unknown.

Leaving aside the wild tribes of the wilderness of Africa, one cannot help sorrowfully and disgracefully citing the living instance of the treatment which the coloured members of the human family, receive from the white ones of the same lineage, in spite of the latter's lofty claim to the high standard of civilization and culture. The truth about the unity of the human race as a whole was declared to the world, most expressively and repeatedly, for the first time by the Holy Qur'an:

"All human beings are a single nation.. ". (2:213)

"And human beings are naught but a single nation and yet they disagree..."(10: 19)

"And verily this your nation (the human beings) is a single nation..."(21:92)

"And verily this your nation (the human beings) is a single nation. "(23:52)

No other scripture prior to the Qur'an and no leader of any Faith before the Holy Prophet of Islam had so expressly and emphatically preached this Truth.

How the Human Family Got Divided

Groups of the members of the human family moved in various directions, searching for a better living for themselves and their livestock and inhabited the various parts of the globe as they found them helpful to their interest.

According to the kinds of places they occupied, the need of one settlement naturally differed from the other. The various climates of the different places, gradually affected the original features and the complexion of the different groups in the different places of their respective habitations. The ways and

the means of living also, of the group in one place naturally differed from that of the others in the other parts of the earth.

Those who settled in the tropical zones got their skins sunburnt and grew to be black, and those in the cold climates remained white in their complexion. New things and new situations that each group had to adjust itself with, needed new words to be coined to name the new objects.

These new names peculiar to each group, put together brought forth a separate language of each group as its own, according to the needs peculiar to it, quite different from that of the others. The lack of the means of conveyance and communication, with the natural barriers of high mountains, the deep seas, the wide rivers, the vast plains and the dense forests full of wild beasts, was not helpful for easy and frequent visits between the different groups settled afar from each other. Gradually with the passage of time, the groups of the members of one and the same human family, got permanently separated into different units by themselves, separating each other by virtue of the differences in their physical features, complexion, language, dress and the ways of living.

To identify itself, distinguishing and differentiating from the others, each group got itself known by a particular name like the Aryans, the Mongolians, the Semites, the Dravidians, the Saxons, and with the various other names as the different tribes in Africa and elsewhere have chosen for themselves. As time passed on, each group began priding over the other and looking down upon them, with its own fanciful distinctions. Thus gradually the universal family interest got divided into group interest, and this sectional feeling developed into group selfishness which generated group quarrels and tribal wars which separated the various groups from each other further more.

Each group got interested in destroying the other group altogether, to own their properties and to kill or capture the men, women and even the children to serve them, or to make money by selling them to the others as slaves. Thus started the shedding of the blood of the human family by its own members.

With the dissensions getting more and more intensified, the hatred between the groups becoming deeper still, the gulf of the differences separating each other becoming wider and wider, and each group losing its interest in the other, the feeling of mankind belonging to one and the same family was altogether lost, and each group treated the other as the alien one, unknown to it, without any bonds of affinity at all. Thus man became the enemy of man, and lived a beastly life in the jungles he occupied, each group preying upon the other.

The Man-Made gods and Deities

The inherent consciousness of the individual weakness, physical, moral and spiritual, in each human being, forced him to seek a supreme protector with superhuman powers to secure his life and his life-interest, against his antagonists, both human as well as imaginary demons and devils. Owing to his own enmity and hatred against the others, man feared man and at the same time believed in all sorts of evil

spirits, and dreaded their haunts. To protect himself against his enemies, real and imaginary, and for the success in his efforts, in his interest and against the interest of the others, man coined his own fanciful gods and imaginary guardian deities and began worshipping them, offering all sorts of sacrifices to them.

To please his own fancifully coined gods or to appease the wrath of his own fantastically dreaded imaginary demons and devilish beings, man used to offer sacrifices of not only animals but also his fellow human beings. Thus came forth not only tribal gods but also the favourite family gods and the gods of each member of a family, who were fancied to be powerful patrons and protectors. A particular form of each such imaginary deity was fancied and it was idolised, and thus began idolatry in the world.

Besides the innumerable idolised man-made gods, whatever was found to be huge or awesome to him, man began worshipping it, thinking that by paying homage to such things, the harm or the hurt which those objects were fancied to effect, could be averted. Thus fire, the mountains, the seas, the huge rivers, the venomous serpents like the cobra and other similar fantastically dreaded objects, became the objects of worship.

Similarly, whatever was found to be beneficial to him and serving his purpose, man began worshipping the things, thinking that by his worship he was pleasing those objects viz., the sun, the moon, the various planets and the stars, the animals like the cow which gives milk and the bull which ploughs the field etc.

The Guidance from God

Although the All-Merciful Creator, Lord of the Universe has endowed each living creature with the instincts and senses necessary for its proper behaviour to exist, yet man having been stationed amidst the temptations of the various impulses from within his own self and the other objects of attraction from without needed the extra mercy of the All-Merciful to be guided through some divinely inspired agencies. The correct guidance to the creatures, can only come from none but the All-Knowing, All-Merciful Lord Himself. Man, left to himself without any guidance from his Creator, could never have any ray of the light of knowledge of the things and the energies in the midst of which he has been placed. With the advent of human life on earth, started also the divine guidance from God, through God's own inspired and divinely conditioned messengers.

Some of these apostles were adhered to, by man, some suffered the worst of tortures and miseries at the hands of the people, and some were even mercilessly killed. Very rarely was any prophet listened to, and rarer still was any prophet safe among the people, and the rarest is the case of any of the heavenly messengers having been honoured in this world.

When in this modern age of ours, the age of the wonderful advance of human intellect, to the extent of the successful flight of man round the earth several times within a few hours, and when man has hit the moon and there are the efforts with prospects of success, to reach the other planets and the stars, we

have on our earth, in millions, human beings still worshipping stone-gods, animals, serpents, mountains, rivers and even trees and many other similar objects, it can easily be imagined in what an abyss of ignorance, degradation and barbarity, the souls in human frames were lying in, and what a beastly and brutal life it would have been thousands of years ago.

Prophet after prophet, the All-Merciful continued to send to each unit of the human family in the different parts of the earth, and in spite of the brutal treatment man meted out to the apostles of God, no people were deprived of the divine blessing of proper guidance. This fact also was announced for the first time to the world, by the Holy Qur'an:

“And every people had a Prophet.”(10:47)

“And certainly We raised in every people a Prophet.”(16:36)

“And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them.”(35:24)

No scripture prior to Qur'an and no religious leader prior to the Holy Prophet of Islam had ever declared this so impressively and so repeatedly. And every prophet that was sent to a group of people, was sent with the respective language of the people and this fact also was for the first time declared to the world by the Holy Qur'an.

“And We did not send any apostle but with the language of the people, so that lie might explain to them.”(14:4)

Thus, through His infinite Mercy, the All-Merciful Lord did not cease His guidance to man, although man was not tired of his torturing and murdering of messengers from God.

Humanity and its Guidance

As already explained above, every creature could have guidance only from its Creator Lord and man having been created with a decidedly higher object of life on the earth, needed guidance through higher sources than mere instincts which are also gifted in the nature of the lower sphere of creation. Man has been endowed with a unique native endowment called the *Conscience* which is a common award or gift to the human species as a whole.

This great guiding factor is called Rasool Batini or the latent apostle which invariably guides every human being in enabling him to differentiate between the true and the false, the good and the bad and that which is profitable and harmful to his being. Since this unique blessing is liable to be snatched away by the satanic forces which are ever active against wholesome human life on earth, the All-Merciful Lord, to further strengthen the human conscience, instituted the manifest guidance through the external preaching of the truth by His apostles who were duly inspired with the knowledge to serve the purpose of putting humanity, which had gone astray, again on the right track.

With the spread of the human family and its inhabiting the different parts of the earth, apostles of God were also sent to each such habitation to guide the people of the place, in the various languages they had developed for their own respective uses, which fact is borne out by the Holy Qur'an, *vide* 14:4.

And lest his people may fall easy victims to imposters or false prophets, every apostle of God identified his successor, and even prophesied about the advent of the other prophets who were to come in the later generations, if they had to come with any special message of a higher value for the people.

“Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.” (New Testament, Acts 3:24)

God Himself had declared beforehand about the advent of some of His apostles, exhorting mankind to follow them, if they wished salvation for themselves. The Last one of the apostles of God had to come to mankind as a whole with the Final Code of Discipline for a Universal Control, and for the elevation of human life in all parts of the earth, for all times until the end of the world. The prophecies about the Last Apostle of God were incorporated in all the heavenly scriptures and had earned great currency among the peoples in the various parts of the globe. The Holy Qur'an refers to this fact:

“Those who follow the Apostle, the Ummi, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Evangel...” (Holy Qur'an 7:157)

The above verse of the Holy Qur'an informs us that the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, was prophesied by all the preceding apostles of God, and a covenant was also taken from the respective people that they should accept him and hearken to whatever he would tell them. Verses 22 to 25 of chap 3 of the Acts of the New Testament bears testimony to this fact:

“For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, from your own people a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you. And it will be that everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out from the people. And all the prophets, as many as have spoken, from Samuel and those after him, also predicted these days. You are the descendants of the prophets and of the covenant that God gave to your ancestors, saying to Abraham, “And in your descendants all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (New Testament, Acts, 3:22–25).

While all the preceding apostles of God conveyed to their respective people the glad tidings of the advent of the Universal Prophet of God, whom every human soul on the earth had to compulsorily follow, the Universal Prophet, the Holy Prophet Muhammad came to lay down as a cardinal doctrine of his faith that all apostles of God preceding him should be accepted as equally truthful, infallible and holy:

“The Apostle Muhammad believeth in what has come down unto him from his Lord, and so do the believers and His Books (the different Holy Scriptures) and His apostles. They say: We make no difference between any of His Apostles...” (Holy Qur'an 2:285)

The believers in Islam are also described in the Holy Qur'an:

“And those who believe in that which has been revealed to thee (O' Our Apostle Muhammad) and that which was revealed before thee...” (Holy Qur'an 2:4)

Thus the position of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is unique among all the apostles of God, that while the predictions about his advent, made by the preceding apostles, are fulfilled in him, he on the other hand unlike any one of his predecessors, had enforced a compulsory article of Faith, to believe in the truthfulness and infallibility of all the apostles of God gone before him and who had been victims of blasphemies and blackmailing by the people. This same fact has been borne out in another place in the Holy Book of the Christian Church:

“The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren, like unto me: unto him ye shall hearken.” (Deuteronomy 18:15)

“I will raise them a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto them, and will put My words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.”

“And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My Name, I will require it of him.” (Deuteronomy 18:18, 19)

A covenant was made with Abraham which is referred to in the Holy Qur'an:

“And remember that Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain commands, which he fulfilled: He said: “I will make thee an Imam to the Nations.” He pleaded: “And also (Imams) from my offspring!” He answered: “But My Promise is not within the reach of evil-doers.” (Holy Qur'an 2:124)

The Old Testament corroborates this statement in relating the divine promise of God to Abraham about his two sons Isaac and Ishmael:

“And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.” (Genesis 12:2, 3)

“And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; Behold have blessed him and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly: Twelve Princes shall he beget and I will make him a great nation.” (Genesis 18:20)

“And I will establish my covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in generations for an everlasting Covenant to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee.”

“And I will give unto thee and thy seed after thee, the land whereat thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession and I will be their God.” (Genesis 17:7, 8)

And God fixed circumcision as a token of this covenant:

“This is My Covenant which ye shall keep between Me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised” (Genesis 17:10)

“And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin and it shall be a token of the covenant between Me and thee” (Genesis 17:11)

“And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day as God had said unto him.” (Genesis 17:20)

Under the same covenant, Jesus who was an Israelite through his mother Mary (Maryam), did also receive the circumcision after eight days of his birth and only after that was he named Jesus:

“And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcision of the child, his name was called JESUS.” (Luke 2:21)

And every Muslim as a true follower of the tradition of Abraham, whose direct descendant was the Holy Prophet Muhammad, receives circumcision, the token of the Great Covenant, fixed by God.

John the Baptist who appeared just before Jesus, clarified the matter furthermore when he answered the enquirers who asked him, “Who art thou?”

“And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him who art thou?

And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

And they asked him, what then? Art thou Elias? And he said, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered No.” (John 1:19– 21)

The questions of the Jews and the answers given by John the Baptist, make it crystal clear that the expectation of the advent of the Promised Last Prophet, had gained a household currency among the people. The advent of Elias and Christ had been fulfilled. Jesus, before his departure from this world, took special care to announce in his repeated prophecies about the advent of the Last one of the Apostles of God, who had to deliver to mankind the Final Word of the Lord, and who, in the religion which he would preach, would abide with mankind forever, and who had to give out the whole of the truth to mankind which Jesus could not do for his people's inability to bear it:–

“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.” (John 14:16)

By the above statement of Jesus, it is quite clear that his mission was only for a time and not for all times

and that which was to be permanent had yet to come:–

Supplement

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth, that it is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you, and when he is come he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment.” (John 14:7-8)

Jesus made it clear that the Last one of the Apostles of God could not come to deliver the Final Word of God and the whole of the Truth, until the one who had come just to serve the timely need of the age, did not depart, lest the imperfect and the perfect should be confused, and it would create discord, disorder and confusion instead of unity and harmony:–

Jesus had further declared:

“But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatever I have said unto you.” (John 14:26)

By the above declarations, Jesus has made it perfectly clear that he that had to come after him was the Holy Ghost, and the same statement of Jesus also makes it clear that he had not said everything about the Truth, which duty according to him, had been assigned by the Lord to the Comforter who was the Holy Ghost:–

Jesus had done his best when he said:–

“I have yet many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now.”

“But when he, the ‘Spirit of Truth’ is come; he will ‘guide you unto all truth’ for he shall not speak of himself, but ‘whatever he shall hear that shall he speak’ and he will show you things to come.” (John 16:12-13)

The above declaration by Jesus makes it clear:

1. That Jesus had to go away, without disclosing the whole truth due to the inability of the people to bear it then.
2. That the one who had to come after him would guide mankind unto all truth which he (Jesus) could not do.
3. That the one to come after him ‘would speak’ only that which he will hear from the Lord which quality Jesus did not claim for himself

4. That the Spirit of Truth to come after him would show mankind things to come which Jesus did not do, and he will abide forever.

Besides all the above prophecies, there are many similar declarations made by the other Apostles of God in the various parts of the earth, at different times, emanating from the Divine Mercy of the Lord, to keep mankind informed of the Great Guide mankind would be blessed with, who would consolidate all the goodness preached through the different Apostles gone before him in the various parts of the world, at different times, against the clouds of ignorance which were impending to darken the atmosphere of the earth as a whole. The promised Last Deliverer, Muhammad, appeared when in spite of the labours of all the preceding apostles of God, there was darkness everywhere on the earth.

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