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Story of Sacrifice

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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 Hussain. '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:

> عَنْ جَابر بن عَبْدِ اللهِ الأنْصَاري عَنْ فَاطِمَةَ الزَّهراءِ عَلَيهَا السَّلامُ بِنتِ رَسُول اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِه وسَلَّم) قَالَ سَمِعْتُ فاطِمَةَ أَنّها قالَت: دَخَلَ عَلَيَّ أبي رَسُولُ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِه وسَلَّم) فِي بَعضِ الأيَّامِ فَقَالَ: السَّلامُ عَلَيك يا فاطِمَةُ، فَقُلتُ عَلَيكَ السَّلامُ، قالَ: إنّي أَجِدُ في بَدَني ضُعفاً، فَقُلتُ لَهُ: أُعِيذُكَ باللهِ يا أَبَتاهُ مِنَ الضُّعف فَقَالَ: يا فاطِمَةُ إيتيني بِالكِساءِ اليَمانِيّ فَغَطّيني بهِ. فَأَتَيتُهُ بِالكِساءِ اليَمانِيّ فَغَطّيتُهُ بِهِ وَصِرتُ أَنظُرُ إِلَيهِ وَإذا وَجهُهُ يَتَلألأ كَأَنَّهُ البَدرُ فِي لَيلَةِ تمامِهِ وَكَمالِهِ،

One day, my father the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his Household, visited me, "Peace be upon you, O Fatemah (A.S.)!" he said.
"Peace be upon you, too." I answered.

"I can feel some fatigue in my body," he said to me, and I answered, "I pray Allah to protect you O father

against fatigue."
"Fatemah (A.S.)," he ordered, "bring me the Yemeni cloak and cover me with it."

I brought him the Yemeni cloak and covered him with it. I then kept on looking at his face, which was glittering like a moon at the night of its fullness and perfection.

فَما كَانَت إلاّ ساعَةً وإذا بوَلَدِيَ الحَسَنِ قَد أَقبَلَ وَقالَ: السَّلامُ عَلَيكِ يا أُمّاهُ، فَقُلتُ: وَعَلَيكَ السَّلامُ يا قُرَّةَ عَينِي وَثَمَرَةَ فُؤادِي، فَقالَ: يا أُمّاهُ إنّي أَشَمُّ عِندَكِ رائِحَةً طَيِّبَةً كَأَنَّها رائِحَةُ جَدِي رَسُولِ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِه وسَلَّم) فَقُلتُ: نَعَم إنَّ جَدَّكَ تَحتَ الكِساء، فَأَقبَلَ الحَسَنُ نَحوَ الكِساء وَقالَ: السَّلامُ عَلَيكَ يا جَدَّاهُ يا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَتَأذَنُ لي أَن أَدخُلَ مَعَكَ تَحتَ الكِساءِ؟ فَقالَ: وَعَلَيكَ السَّلامُ يا وَلَدِي وَيا صاحِبَ حَوضِي قَد أَذِنتُ لَكَ، فَدَخَلَ مَعَهُ تَحتَ الكِساءِ.

No more than a while passed when my son al-Hasan came in, "Peace be upon you, mother!" he greeted.
"Peace be upon you, too, O delight of my eye and fruit of my heart!" I replied.
"O mother," he said, "I can smell a pleasing scent as if it is the scent of my grandfather the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his Household."

"Yes, it is," I answered, "Your grandfather is now under the cloak."
Al-Hasan moved towards the cloak and said, "Peace be upon you, O grandfather, Allah's Messenger. Will you allow me to be with you under this cloak?"
My father replied, "Peace be upon you too, my son and director of my Pond. I allow you."Al-Hasan then went under the cloak with his grandfather.

فَما كانَت إلاّ سَاعَةً وَإذا بِوَلَدِيَ الحُسَينِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلام) قَدْ أَقبَلَ وَقال: السَّلامُ عَلَيكِ يا أُمّاهُ، فَقُلتُ: وَعَلَيكَ السَّلامُ يا قُرَّةَ عَينِي وَثَمَرَةَ فُؤادِي، فَقالَ لِي: يا أُمّاهُ إنّي أَشَمُّ عِندَكِ رائِحَةً طَيِّبَةً كَأَنَّها رائِحَةُ جَدِي رَسُولِ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِه وسَلَّم) فَقُلتُ: نَعَم إنَّ جَدَّكَ وَأَخاكَ تَحتَ الكِساءِ، فَدَنَا الحُسَينُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلام) نحوَ الكِساءِ وَقالَ: السَّلامُ عَلَيكَ يا جَدَّاهُ السَّلامُ عَلَيكَ يا مَنِ اختارَهُ اللهُ أَتَأذَنُ لي أَن أَكونَ مَعَكُما تَحتَ الكِساءِ؟ فَقالَ: وَعَلَيكَ السَّلامُ يا وَلَدِي وَيا شافِعِ أُمَّتِي قَد أَذِنتُ لَكَ، فَدَخَلَ مَعَهُما تَحتَ الكِساء،

No more than a while passed when my son al-Hussain came in, "Peace be upon you, mother!" he greeted.
"Peace be upon you, too, O delight of my eye and fruit of my heart!" I replied.
"O mother," he said, "I can smell a pleasing scent as if it is the scent of my grandfather the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his Household."

"Yes, it is," I answered, "Your grandfather and your brother are now under the cloak."
Al-Hussain moved towards the cloak and said, "Peace be upon you, O grandfather, Allah's Messenger. Will you allow me to be with you under this cloak?"
My father replied, "Peace be upon you too, my son and director of my Pond. I allow you."Al-Hussain

then went under the cloak with his grandfather.

فَأَقبَلَ عِندَ ذلِكَ أَبو الحَسَنِ عَلِيُّ بنُ أَبي طالِبٍ وَقال: السَّلامُ عَلَيكِ يا بِنتَ رَسُولِ اللهِ، فَقُلتُ: وَعَلَيكَ السَّلامُ يا أَبَا الحَسَن وَيا أَمِيرَ المُؤمِنينَ. فَقالَ: يا فاطِمَةُ إِنّي أَشَمُّ عِندَكِ رائِحَةً طَيِّبَةً كَأَنَّها رائِحَةُ أَخي وَابنِ عَمّي رَسُولِ اللهِ، فَقُلتُ: نَعَم ها هُوَ مَعَ وَلَدَيكَ تَحتَ الكِساءِ، فَأقبَلَ عَلِيٌّ نَحوَ الكِساءِ وَقالَ: السَّلامُ عَلَيكَ يا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَتَأذَنُ لي أَن أَكُونَ مَعَكُم تَحتَ الكِساءِ؟ قالَ لَهُ وَعَلَيكَ السَّلامُ يا أَخِي وَيا وَصِيّي وَخَلِيفَتِي وَصاحِبَ لِوائِي قَد أَذِنتُ لَكَ، فَدَخَلَ عَلِيٌّ تَحتَ الكِساءِ.

At the same time, Abu'l-Hasan `Ali ibn Abu Talib came in, "Peace be upon you, daughter of Allah's Messenger," he greeted.
"Peace be upon you too, O Abu'l-Hasan and Commander of the Faithful," I replied.
He then said, "Fatemah (A.S.), I can smell a pleasing scent, as if it is the scent of my brother and cousin the Messenger of Allah."
"Yes," I answered, "He is there with your two sons under the cloak."
`Ali moved towards the cloak and said, "Peace be upon you, O Allah's Messenger! Will you allow me to be with you under the cloak?"
My father replied, "Peace be upon you too, O brother, successor, vicegerent, and bearer of my Pennon. I allow you." `Ali thus went with them under the cloak.

ثُمَّ أَتَيتُ نَحوَ الكِساءِ وَقُلتُ: السَّلامُ عَلَيكَ يا أَبَتاهُ يا رَسُولَ الله أَتأذَنُ لي أَن أَكونَ مَعَكُم تَحتَ الكِساءِ؟ قالَ: وَعَليكِ السَّلامُ يا بِنتِي وَيا بَضعَتِي قَد أَذِنتُ لَكِ، فَدَخَلتُ تَحتَ الكِساءِ، فَلَمَّا اكتَمَلنا جَمِيعاً تَحتَ الكِساءِ أَخَذَ أَبي رَسُولُ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِه وسَلَّم) بِطَرَفَيِ الكِساءِ وَأَومَأَ بِيَدِهِ اليُمنى إِلىَ السَّماءِ وقالَ: اللّهُمَّ إِنَّ هؤُلاءِ أَهلُ بَيتِي وخَاصَّتِي وَحَامَّت، لَحمُهُم لَحمِي وَدَمُهُم دَمِي، يُؤلِمُني ما يُؤلِمُهُم ويَحزُنُني ما يُحزِنُهُم، أَنَا حَربٌ لِمَن حارَبَهُم وَسِلمٌ لِمَن سالَمَهُم وَعَدوٌّ لِمَن عاداهُم وَمُحِبٌّ لِمَن أَحَبَّهُم، إِنَّهُم مِنّي وَأَنا مِنهُم فَاجعَل صَلَواتِكَ وَبَرَكاتِكَ وَرَحمَتَكَ وغُفرانَكَ وَرِضوانَكَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَيهِم وَأَذهِب عَنهُمْ الرِّجسَ وَطَهِّرهُم تَطهِيراً.

I then came towards the cloak and said, "Peace be upon you father, O Allah's Messenger. Will you allow me to be with you under the cloak?"
My father replied, "Peace be upon you too, my daughter and part of my flesh. I allow you." I thus went with them under the cloak.
Getting together underneath the cloak, my father, the Prophet of Allah, held the two ends of the cloak and raised his right hand towards the heavens and prayed:
"O Allah, these are the people of my Household (Ahlul-Bayt). They are my confidants and my supporters.
Their flesh is my flesh and their blood is my blood. Whoever hurts them, hurts me too. Whoever displeases them, displeased me too. I am at war with those at war with them.
I am at peace with those at peace with them. I am the enemies of their enemies and
I am the friend of their friends. They are from me and I am from them.

O Allah! Bestow Your Blessings, Benevolence, Forgiveness and Your pleasure upon me and upon them. And remove impurity from them and keep them thoroughly pure"

فَقالَ اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: يا مَلائِكَتي وَيا سُكَّانَ سَماواتي إنّي ما خَلَقتُ سَماءً مَبنَّيةً وَلا أرضاً مَدحيَّةً وَلا قَمَراً مُنيراًوَلا شَمساً مُضيئةً وَلا فَلَكاً يَدُورُ وَلا بَحراً يَجري وَلا فُلكاً يَسري إلاّ في مَحَبَّةِ هؤُلاءِ الخَمسَةِ الَّذينَ هُم تَحتَ الكِساءِ، فَقالَ الأَمِينُ جِبرائِيلُ: يا رَبِّ وَمَنْ تَحتَ الكِساءِ؟ فَقالَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: هُم أَهلُ بَيتِ النُّبُوَّةِ وَمَعدِنُ الرِّسالَةِ هُم فاطِمَةُ وَأَبُوها، وَبَعلُها وَبَنوها، فَقالَ جِبرائِيلُ: يا رَبِّ أَتَأذَنُ لي أَن أَهبِطَ إلىَ الأَرضِلأِكُونَ مَعَهُم سادِساً؟ فَقالَ اللهُ: نَعَم قَد أَذِنتُ لَكَ.

Then the Lord, Almighty Allah said: "O My angels! O Residents of My Heavens, verily, I have not created the erected Sky, the stretched earth, the illuminated moon, the bright sun, the rotating planets, the flowing seas and the sailing ships, but for the love of these Five lying underneath the cloak"
Gabriel the Honest Archangel asked, "O my Lord! Who are those under the cloak?"
The Almighty and All-majestic Lord answered, "They are the household of Prophethood and the core of the Message. They are namely Fatemah (A.S.), her father, her husband, and her sons."
"O my Lord," Gabriel asked, "Will You allow me to descend to the earth to be the sixth of them?" Allah the Almighty and All-majestic said, "Yes, I allow you."

فَهَبَطَ الأَمِينُ جِبرائِيلُ وَقالَ: السَّلامُ عَلَيكَ يا رَسُولَ اللهِ، العَلِيُّ الأَعلَى يُقرِئُكَ السَّلام، وَيَخُصُّكَ بِالتَّحِيَّةِ وَالإِكرَامِ وَيَقُولُ لَكَ: وَعِزَّتي وَجَلالي إنّي ما خَلَقتُ سَماءً مَبنيَّةً ولا أَرضاً مَدحِيَّةً وَلا قَمَراً مُنِيراً وَلا شَمساً مُضِيئَةً ولا فَلَكاً يَدُورُ ولا بَحراً يَجري وَلا فُلكاً يَسري إلاّ لأجلِكُم وَمَحَبَّتِكُم، و َقَد أَذِنَ لي أَن أَدخُلَ مَعَكُم، فَهَل تَأذَنُ لي يا رَسُول اللهِ؟

Gabriel the Honest Archangel descended, "Peace be upon you, O Allah's Messenger!" he greeted, "The Most High and All-high (Lord) conveys to you His greeting, expresses His special greeting and honoring to you, and says, 'By My Almightiness and My Majesty I take this oath: I have not created any well-established sky, extended land, glowing moon, shining sun, revolving planet, flowing ocean, or moving on ark except for your sake and for your love.' He has then allowed me to join you (under this cloak). Will you, O Allah's Messenger, allow me?"

فَقالَ رَسُولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِه وسَلَّم): وَعَلَيكَ السَّلامُ يا أَمِينَ وَحيِ اللهِ، إنَّهُ نَعَم قَد أَذِنتُ لَكَ، فَدَخَلَ جِبرائِيلُ مَعَنا تَحتَ الكِساءِ، فَقالَ لأِبي: إنَّ اللهَ قَد أَوحى إلَيكُم يَقولُ إنَّما يُرِيدُ اللهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطهِّرَكُمْ تَطهِيرا.

Allah's Messenger said, "Peace be upon you, O trustee of Allah's Revelations. Yes, I allow you."
So, Gabriel joined us under the cloak. He thus said to my father, "Allah has revealed to you saying, 'Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House, and to purify you a thorough purifying.'"

فَقالَ: عَلِيٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلام) لأَبِي: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَخبِرنِي ما لِجُلُوسِنا هَذا تَحتَ الكِساءِ مِنَ الفَضلِ عِندَ اللهِ؟ فَقالَ النَّبيُّ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِه وسَلَّم): وَالَّذي بَعَثَنِي بِالحَقِّ نَبِيّاً وَاصطَفانِي بِالرِّسالَةِ نَجِيّاً، ما ذُكِرَ خَبَرُنا هذا فِي مَحفِلٍ مِن مَحافِلِ أَهلِ الأَرَضِ وَفِيهِ جَمعٌ مِن شِيعَتِنا وَمُحِبِّينا إلاّ وَنَزَلَت عَلَيهِمُ الرَّحمَةُ، وَحَفَّت بِهِمُ المَلائِكَةُ وَاستَغفَرَت لَهُم إِلى أَن يَتَفَرَّقُوا. فَقالَ عَلِيٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلام): إذاً وَاللهِ فُزنا وَفازَ شِيعَتُنا وَرَبِّ الكَعبَةِ.

`Ali then said to my father, "O Allah's Messenger! Please tell me; what is the value of this gathering of us under this cloak in the sight of Allah?"
The Prophet, peace be upon him and his Household, said, "I swear this by Him Who has sent me with the truth as Prophet and chosen me, as holding communion, to convey the Message; whenever the tale of this gathering of us is mentioned in an assembly of the people of the earth in which a group of our adherents and lover are present, the (divine) mercy shall certainly be poured down on them and the angels shall certainly surround them, asking forgiveness for them until they depart."
`Ali, peace be upon him, commented, "Then, by Allah I swear it; we have won. So, have our adherents. I swear it by the Lord of the Ka`bah."

فَقالَ أَبي رَسُولُ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِه وسَلَّم): يا عَلِيُّ وَالَّذي بَعَثَني بِالحَقِّ نَبِيّاً وَاصطَفاني بِالرِّسالَةِ نَجِيّاً ما ذُكِرَ خَبَرُنا هذا في مَحفِلٍ مِن مَحافِلِ أَهلِ الأَرضِ وَفِيهِ جَمعٌ مِن شِيعَتِنا وَمُحِبِّينا وَفِيهِم مَهمُومٌ إلاّ وَفَرَّجَ اللهُ هَمَّهُ وَلا مَغمُومٌ إلاّ وَكَشَفَ اللهُ غَمَّهُ وَلا طالِبُ حاجَةٍ إلاّ وَقَضى اللهُ حاجَتَهُ، فَقالَ عَلِيٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلام): إذاً وَاللهِ فُزنا وَسُعِدنا، وَكَذلِكَ شِيعَتُنا فَازوا وَسُعِدوا في الدُّنيا وَالآخِرَةِ وَرَبِّ الكَعبَةِ.

"O `Ali!" my father Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him and his Household, added, "I swear this by Him Who has sent me with the truth as Prophet and chosen me, as holding communion, to convey the Message; whenever the tale of this gathering of us is mentioned in an assembly of the people of the earth in which a group of our adherents and lover are present and among them there is a distressed one, Almighty Allah shall certainly release him from distress, or there is among them an aggrieved one, Almighty Allah shall certainly relieve him from grief, or there is among them one who needs a request to be granted, Almighty Allah shall certainly grant him his request."

`Ali, peace be upon him, said, "Then, we have won and attained pleasure. I swear it by Allah. So have our adherents; they have won and attained pleasure in this world and in the Hereafter. I swear it by the Lord of the Ka`bah."

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.

* * *

…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.

* * *

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, Hussain 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 were 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 beside 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 beside the tablecloth. When Ali (A.S.) picked up the first morsel-to eat, suddenly the voice of an orphan who was standing beside 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. (***107:2***)

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 beside 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 Hussain (A.S.) paler than Hassan (A.S.). Her eyes remained fixed on Hussain (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 Hussain 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 beside 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 beside 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 fulfills 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: – This 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 Hussain 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 Hussain approached the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.). Hassan (A.S.) and Hussain (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 Fatemah (A.S.) (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 a 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.

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا

Surely the righteous shall drink of a cup the admixture of which is camphor (***76:5***)

عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا

A fountain from which the servants of Allah shall drink; they make it to flow a (***goodly***) ***flowing forth.*** (***76:6***)

يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا

They fulfill vows and fear a day the evil of which shall be spreading far and wide. (***76:7***)

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا

And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive: (***76:8***)

إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا

We only feed you for Allah's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks: (***76:9***)

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