

Ibrahim (as) and the Season of Sacrifice

Dhul Hijjah is the month in which the Muslims remember the immense test of Ibrahim (as) and his great willingness to sacrifice. This Dhul Hijjah, the message of sacrifice carries even greater weight, for it is apparent that we are in the season of sacrifice. For this Dhul Hijjah, as the caravan of the Khilafah (Caliphate) is about to launch inshaaAllah, the situation demands greater sacrifices from the advocates of the Khilafah than before.

Yes indeed, this Dhul Hijjah the lesson of sacrifice has great significance. Any believer who is striving to fulfill the obligation of the Khilafah is compelled to think deeply upon the inspiring example of Ibrahim (as). Indeed, the example of the foremost of those who sacrifice for Truth inspire the Muslims of our age to undertake their duty. Ibrahim (as) had attachments and aspirations as we all do. Yet his Imaan propelled him to great heights, making him ready for the greatest sacrifice. He (as) was willing to sacrifice what is dearest to us, our offspring, and that too by his own hands. He (as) who was bestowed a son at an elderly age, after many Dua, was willing to sacrifice him upon the command of Allah (swt). He (as) who had raised his son, protecting him for many years from harm, raised a knife to the throat of his loved one.

It was his Imaan alone that propelled him to such a huge sacrifice, for any loving father would prefer death upon himself rather than upon his child. Indeed, of the greatest tests in this Dunya is that of a parent burying their child!

What made Ibrahim (as) capable of such immense sacrifice was his profound obedience of Allah (swt). The level of obedience of Ibrahim (saw) was such that he was conferred by the Lord of the Worlds Himself (swt) the honored title of “Khalil-ul-Allah” (the intimate friend of Allah). Allah said, ﴿وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا﴾ **“For Allah did take Ibrahim for (an intimate) friend.”** [Surah An-Nisa'a 4:125].

Ibrahim is the one who spoke the Truth, regardless of the rejection of the people. He (as) was strong in denouncing obedience to the Taghoot (Kufr authority) of his time. Allah (swt) described the clear and direct attack on idolatry by Al-Khalil (Ibrahim), ﴿قَالَ اتَّعْبُدُونَ مَا تَحْنُونَ * وَاللَّهُ﴾ **“Do you worship that which you (yourselves) carve While Allah has created you and what you make!”** [Surah As-Saffat 37:95-96].

Ibrahim (as) spoke truthfully even though he was born in the home of Azar, his father, the very idol-maker of the tribe. Ibrahim (as) cared not for the status of his household amongst the people even though, would he have remained silent, he would have enjoyed a privileged position amongst his people. However, Truth burned within his heart and compelled him to speak. Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ عَازِرَ أَنْتَخِذْ أَسْنَمًا ءَالِهَةً إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ مَنَّكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾ **“Lo! Ibrahim said to his father Azar: Do you take idols for God? For I see you and your people in manifest error?”** [Surah Al-Anaam 6:74].

Not only did Ibrahim bear patiently the rejection of the people, he did not fear the harm that would inevitably come his way. For whenever the people of falsehood are defeated on intellectual grounds, they resort to force and oppression. The tyrant of his age, Nimrod, was set upon oppression, yet Ibrahim stood firm. Allah (swt) revealed in Surat Al-Ankabut ﴿فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ﴾ **“So naught was the answer of (Ibrahim's) people except that they said: Slay him or burn him”** [Surah Al-Ankabut 29:24]. Here, Ibrahim (as) could have given up his message and his beliefs to save himself from the fire of Nimrod, however he readied himself for martyrdom. He chose to step into the fire to save humanity from ignorance and tyranny. So he was cast into the fire, only to be saved by His Lord (swt), through a miracle, a sign for his people so that they may be guided. When, despite the clear sign, the idol-worshippers persisted in disbelief, Ibrahim (as) did not become despondent. His steps did not slow down despite of the length and the difficulties of the path.

The Prophet Ibrahim (as) continued to be ready for sacrifice, without tiring from doing so, even after decades of sacrifice. Moreover, he was ready to sacrifice that which he (as) most cherished, a gift from Allah (swt) that came after great longing and in unlikely circumstances.

Ibrahim (as) deeply desired a son, but his wife Hajar was barren. Allah (swt) revealed regarding the Dua of Ibrahim (as) ﴿رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ﴾ **“O my Lord! Grant me a righteous son!”** [Surah As-Saffat 37:100].

Against every expectation, Allah (swt) not only granted him a son, He (swt) ensured that Ibrahim became the seed of a great line of Prophets. Allah (swt) said, ﴿فَبَشِّرْنَاهُ بِعَلِيمٍ حَلِيمٍ﴾ **“So we gave him the good news of a forbearing boy”** [Surah As-Saffaat 37:101]. Thus, Allah (swt) brought mercy to the agedness and anguish of his trustworthy Messenger. For Ibrahim (as), Ismail (as) was not just a son for a sonless father, he was a reward of long years of suffering, the young son of an old father.

Thus, Ibrahim (as) said to Ismail (as), (as) ﴿فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعَىٰ قَالَ يَبْنَؤِي إِنِّي أَرَىٰ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانظُرْ﴾ **“O my Son, I see in a vision that I offer you in sacrifice. Now see what is your view?”** [Surah As-Saffat 37:102]. Realizing his father's distress, Ismail (as) gave him these comforting words, words: ﴿قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾ **“O my father! Do as you are commanded. You will find me, if Allah so wills, patient and constant”** [Surah As-Saffat 37:102]. So Ibrahim proceeded with that which he was commanded. He was suffering while believing and at every moment it was possible for him to retract and turn back.

And, by Allah's grace, the knife did not cut and Ibrahim received a sheep and was called by Allah: ﴿وَوَدِدْنَاهُ أَن يَأْتِرَ آهِمُ • قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّعْيَا إِنَّا كَذَّاكُ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ **“O Ibrahim! You have confirmed the Vision Thus indeed do We reward those who do right!”** [Surah As-Saffat 37:104-105]. Thus, Ibrahim gained the good pleasure of Allah (swt) through his willingness to return back to Allah (swt) the cherished gift he had been given.

In our age, the story of Ibrahim (as) inspires those who witness the systems of Shirk of our age, democracy, dictatorship and monarchy. Whether we speak out or remain silent is the choice of everyone of us. Upon the commands of Allah (swt) as mandated in His Deen, we must be willing to sacrifice our comfort, privileges and all that we cherish most dearly, knowing that it is all gifted by Allah (swt). Nothing less than this will set ourselves firmly on the path to bring down the Tawaagheet (Kufr authorities).

We must be of those who value the Aakhirah more than the fleeting pleasures of this Dunya. Yes, this season, the last season before the sweet victory inshaAllah, is hard and testing. Yet, it is the season to reap a great reward, the reward of the master of martyrs. It is the season of sacrifice, through which inshaaAllah we will see an end to the oppression of the tyrants of our age and the rise of Islam as a state and authority, a Khilafah Rashidah (rightly guided Caliphate), at the helm of which will be those of sacrifice.

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ أَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ * حَتَّىٰ إِذَا اسْتَيْسَسَ الرُّسُلُ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُذِّبُوا جَاءَهُمْ نَصْرُنَا فَنُجِّىَ مِنْ نَشَاءٍ وَلَا يَرِدُ بِأَسْنَا عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ * لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولَى الْأَلْبَابِ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَكِنْ تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

“And We sent not before you (as Messengers) any but men unto whom We revealed, from among the people of townships. Have they not traveled in the land and seen what was the end of those who were before them And verily, the home of the Hereafter is the best for those who have Taqwa. Do you not then understand. They were reprieved) until, when the Messengers gave up hope and thought that they were denied, then came to them Our help, and whomsoever We willed were rescued. And Our punishment cannot be warded off from the people who are criminals. Indeed in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding. It (the Qur'an) is not a forged statement but a confirmation of that which was before it and a detailed explanation of everything and a guide and a mercy for the people who believe.” [Surah Yusuf 12:109 - 111]

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