

Imam Hussein: THE LIVING QURAN (part 2 of 2)

transcript of the lecture on 8th Muharram (Monday)

Living Islam

Imam Hussein (as) came as a living example of Islam to remind a people who had forgotten it, and revived another facet of the faith with every step towards Kerbala. ***But he (as) went further than being a living representative of Islam and Muhammad (S), and also acted as the embodiment of the teachings of many previous prophets of Allah mentioned in the Quran.***

Imam Hussein (as) manifested the actions of a true believer in Islam through his selflessness, devotion to Allah and respect of His laws, sincerity in belief and standing for truth, and disdain for the life of this world in preference of the next. He was the representative of the Prophet (S) through being the Imam of the Time, reviving the teachings of the Prophet (S) and leading his followers in the same manner as him. Imam Hussein (as) was using his own example to combat the loss of the teachings the Prophet (S) had brought. ***And as Islam was the final conclusion of all revealed faiths brought by all prophets, imam Hussein (as) was in the wider sense representing the teachings of every prophet of Allah at the same time. In fact as part of the comprehensive example of Islam that the Imam (as) provided, he served as a reminder of many stories of the Prophets as told in the Quran.*** The story of Imam Hussein's (as) martyrdom holds many parallels with the lives of previous prophets.

Opposites:

In the Quran, we see that every prophet was sent to oppose a people which were his total opposites. Nabi Ibrahim (as) was sent with the power of logic and reason, to combat people so closed-minded and blind to rational thought that they would worship sticks and stones they found on the ground. Nabi Musa (as) – the most humble nabi, which earned him the status of Kalim Allah (the one who Allah spoke to) – was sent to the ultimate arrogant ruler, Firoun. Firoun was so proud and arrogant that he refused to bow in worship of Allah despite numerous miracles, and tortured and killed anyone who converted, even his own wife. Nabi Nuh (AS) with his faith so strong in the promise of Allah was sent to build the ark amongst a people who were so sceptical that they refused to believe in Allah's punishment, even when the water had reached their necks when they were on top of the highest mountain. Nabi Isa (as) was so compassionate he prayed for his people when they were attempting to kill him, when they were so devoid of compassion that they wanted to free the criminal Barabas and let Isa (as) die instead.

Like all these servants of Allah, imam Hussein (as) was sent to his exact opposites. He was sent to the people who were willing to lose Islam so easily, as a LIVING EMBODIMENT of Islam. Every step of the way imam Hussein (as) manifested another trait of real Islam which was an argument for Allah and a proof against the people of the time.

The Representative of Prophets:

Nabi Adam (as):

Like nabi Adam (as), imam Hussein (as) was the Khalifa of Allah on the earth, and the representation of His Will. He was an example of the perfect man, who Allah

created all humans to be an image of. He was the Imam for the people of the time, and obedience to imam Hussein (AS) would help people become as Allah created them to be, and attain paradise.

Nabi Nuh (as):

Imam Hussein (as) showed unshakeable faith in Allah's plan, just like nabi Nuh (as). Nabi Nuh (as) patiently built the ark despite being ridiculed by his people the whole time, having faith that Allah would fulfil his promise and ruin the disbelievers. **And imam Hussein (as) went towards the death of himself and his followers – who were some of the LAST BELIEVERS on the face of the earth – and trusted that Allah would not fail him and would resurrect islam, and destroy the unbelievers.** Like nabi Nuh (as), imam Hussein too established an ark for his followers – the ark of the ahlul Bayt, as given in the hadeeth:

The Holy Prophet [s] is narrated to have said: "The likeness of my Ahlul-Bayt (progeny) amongst my Ummah (followers) is similar to Noah's Ark. Those who embarked on it were rescued and those who rejected it perished...."

Nabi Ismail & Ibrahim (as):

Imam Hussein (as) made the same great selfless sacrifice of nabi Ismail (as) when agreeing to die if Allah willed it, and at the same time he was in the role of nabi Ibrahim (as) who had to sacrifice his beloved son. Nabi Ibrahim (as) saw that he had to sacrifice Ismail in a dream, as the Quran tells us:

And when he attained to working with him, he said: O my son! surely I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you; consider then what you see. He said: O my father! do what you are commanded; if Allah please, you will find me of the patient ones. (37:102)

In a heartbreaking echo of this situation, imam Hussein (as) awoke from a dream in which he saw their imminent deaths. His son Ali al Akbar (As) saw the imam (as) had become distressed, and is narrated to have said:

Father...May Allah never show you evil, are we not on the right?

Indeed we are, he answered, by Him to whom all his servants must return.

Father, said Ali, then we need have no concern if we are going to die righteously.

May Allah give you a best reward a son can get for his behaviour towards his father, replied the imam.

Although he didn't wield the blade that cut his sons throat himself, in some ways imam Hussein (As) made a greater sacrifice, as he had to watch many of his sons, nephews, brothers & friends all meeting a bitter death through decapitation, mutilation and hails of arrows.

Nabi Ibrahim (as) - Reason:

Imam Hussein (as) also embodied the spirit of logic and reason of nabi Ibrahim (as) in talking to his people – nabi Ibrahim (as) talked to his people in simple logical steps to prove his point, as seen in the ayas:

So when the night over-shadowed him, he saw a star; said he: Is this my Lord? So when it set, he said: I do not love the setting ones.

Then when he saw the moon rising, he said: Is this my Lord? So when it set, he said: If my Lord had not guided me I should certainly be of the erring people.

Then when he saw the sun rising, he said: Is this my Lord? Is this the greatest? So when it set, he said: O my people! surely I am clear of what you set up (with Allah).

Of course here nabi Ibrahim (as) was already a believer in Allah – he was already a nabi – but he used these small steps to illustrate truth to his people. In the same way, imam Hussein (as) tried to reason with those who stood against him, and avoid conflict. He addressed them such, according to the hadeeth:

O people! Let us take the book of Allah and the practice of my grandfather, the apostle of Allah, to arbitrate between us! Don't you see that I carry the sword of the Prophet of Allah, and wear his armour and his turban?

Indeed you do they agreed.

Then why do you fight me? He asked. Their nonsensical reply was that they obey the governor.

Nabi Musa (as):

Imam Hussein (as) embodied the humility of Musa (as), as we see by his deeds on the night before the tragedy. Imam Hussein (as) was coming to give the greatest sacrifice anyone can give for the sake of Allah's will, and yet he STILL spent the entire night before the tragedy supplicating and praying for forgiveness of his own soul, while the people who wanted to kill him and his family were unrepentant!

Imam Hussein (as) asked al Abbas to talk to the enemy, and ask for a final night before the battle. He is narrated to have said:

If you can delay them until morning and persuade them to keep away from us during the evening, then perhaps we may be able to pray to our lord during the night, to supplicate to Him and seek His forgiveness.

Nabi Ayyub (as):

Imam Hussein (as) showed the great patience of nabi ayyub (as) in the face of the most severe trial, in delivering the message of Allah. Nabi ayyub (as) was afflicted with loss of wealth and poor health to the point that he was outcast from his town and lived alone in the desert for many years. Imam Hussein (as) had the devastating trial of watching not his own health and property deteriorate, but watching his beloved children, nephews, brothers and friends brutally butchered before his eyes.

Nabi Isa (as):

And imam Hussein (as) showed compassion like nabi Isa (As), or perhaps even more. For as nabi Isa (as) prayed for forgiveness of the people who were killing him, imam Hussein (as) had the compassion to pray for the people who were about to kill him, even after they did not have the compassion to spare even his 6-month old baby, who was dying of thirst.

In the words of ziarat warith:

Asalamu alaika ya waarith ADAM safwatillah.

Asalamu alaika ya waarith NUHinn nabiyyullah

Asalamu alaika ya waarith IBRAHIMA khaleelAllah

Asalamu alaika ya waarith MUSA kaleemAllah

Asalamu alaika ya waarith ISA ruhullah

The Living Quran:

Imam Hussein (as) was not only the imam of the time and an image of the beloved Last Prophet, who is narrated to have said:

Hussein is from me and I am from Hussein

But also a living, walking, breathing Quran – he was the guidance in it, the stories of the past... he embodied the most noble of the virtues of previous prophets, and bore trials which echoed theirs. He came to remind a people who had willingly allowed a decline of the final, perfect religion that was so great, and so accelerated, that it overshadowed all declines of previous faiths. ***And so, to the worst followers of any faith, imam Hussein (as) manifested the best qualities of any prophet who came.***

By giving his life, and being so cruelly murdered by people who were themselves professing to be Muslim, imam Hussein (as) sent shockwaves over the entire muslim world. It shook people up, and made them think about what they had become – how low they had sunk so that they did not even stand up and defend the grandson of their beloved prophet (S). ***and at the same time as showing them their decay, the behaviour of imam Hussein (As) and his followers had illustrated so gracefully to the ummah everything they should have been, and what they should strive to become.***

The Stance:

Imam Hussein achieved his goal. The people started to disassociate themselves with the government who was willing to butcher the best people, the family of the prophet (S); and turned back to Islam under the gentle guidance of imam Zain al Abideen (As). The stance of imam Hussein (as) sparked a revolution like no other in the hearts of believers; one which renews with each age and spurs all Muslims to combat evil externally and within themselves. A revolution that was

- Against compromising in your faith to gain comfort in this life
- Against allowing what Allah has forbidden
- Against turning a blind eye to oppression
- Against apathy and greed in this world

This is what imam Hussein's (as) stance was all about. ***This is one of the most important points: the tragedy at kerbala was never about fighting armies of the kuffar who were outside islam: it was about REFORMING the people INSIDE ISLAM – reforming the MUSLIMS, combating the enemy WITHIN.*** In the imam's (as) words in the following narration:

I am not taking up arms in order to make merry, or be ecstatic over what I possess. I am not making mischief, nor exercising oppression. But I am ready to fight for the sole goal of seeking REFORM OF THE UMMAH OF MY GRANDFATHER the apostle of Allah. I want to enjoin good and forbid evil and guide the affairs of people as my grandfather and father were doing...

Final Ultimatum

With his last moments on earth, imam Hussein (as) delivered a final, complete, decisive proof of Allah onto the people, and delivered before them the truth: **here is Islam. Will you follow or reject? Will you choose heaven or hell?**

On the burning sand, imam Hussein (as) stood alone. Before him was an army of thousands, thirsty for his blood, and around him lay the bodies of his beloved family and friends. With his last breaths, imam Hussein (as) raised a call, as narrated in the hadeeth:

Is there any defender of the womenfolk of Rasool Allah? Is there a monotheist who fears Allah and so helps us? Is there any supporter seeking Allah's reward and so aids us?

who was he calling to? He knew nobody was going to help him. Those who wanted to help him had already crossed the lines and sacrificed their lives. He knew that there was no one left and yet, he made sure that his call reverberated in all directions. ***It was a call to Muslims of every generation, and in every land.*** It was a call for help against injustice and oppression. It was a call for Jihadu-n-Nafs, which is Jihadul Akber (the greater jihad), and to do Amr bil Ma'roof (ordering the good) and Nahi anil Munkar (forbidding the evil).

Imam Hussein (as) was calling to US.

And as we remember his example, **he** shows us we shouldn't compromise on wrong – that we can't allow what Allah hates without losing our Islam. With his precious blood, imam Hussein (as) still leads the way for us – his followers – to be successful in this life & the next, and defeat external and internal tyranny.

So, if we wish our tears for imam Hussein (As) this year, and every year, to have real meaning; we need to fight in ourselves what the imam (as) opposed in his people, and support our OWN imam (atf). We need to represent islam properly, and not whatever of it suits us at the time. We cannot turn a blind eye to the problems within our society, but need to reform it in the name of Hussein (as) – by following his example & that of his loyal followers, so, finally, we may be able to say:

Ya aba Abdillah, your call has not gone unanswered, your sacrifice for us has not gone in vain!