

The month of Hajj is here. Best days of the year. Don't let it be another month/routine, but reflect and learn from it. فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ

“Learn a lesson, then, O you who are endowed with insight! (59:2)

Let's reflect on how Hajj/Qurbani came about? Via a conversation between a Father & Son, a test for both of faith and obedience.

1st LESSON – ACTIVE FATHERING – Interaction & conversation between father & son! Ibrahim, Luqman, Ya'qub, Nuh عليه السلام. Mother's are default active nurturers, Qur'an teaching fathers active positive fathering.

Do not delegate, couch father, arbitrary decisions; be a **PRESENT FATHER**.

2ND LESSON – GOOD UPBRINGING – Ismail عليه السلام response to his father shows his maturity, understanding, obedience & commitment.

فَبَشَّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ - "So We gave him good news of a forbearing boy" (37:101)

Fatherly guidance, Tarbiyyah, in all religious & worldly affairs is essential for success. Good parenting is necessary even if your are a Prophet!

3RD LESSON – EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION - فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَبْنَئِي

“Then when the boy reached the age to work with him, Ibrahim said, “O my dear son!..” (37:102) Speaking with good manners – Adab, love & affection, instead of authority & power.

4TH LESSON – FAITH WITH CONVICTION INSTEAD OF BLIND OBEDIENCE

Our relationship doesn't need to be “**LISTEN & OBEY**” Ibrahim عليه السلام didn't command absolute obedience. Instead, he sought his son's opinion!

فَأَنْظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَى *“What do you think?”* (37:102)

We must instil a critical mind in our children in order to cultivate faith and obedience in them through their own personal convictions. As opposed to drilling in them the dogmatic views of religion.

1. Angels' question Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَعَلَىٰ عَرْشِهِ السَّلَامُ on the reason for creating Adam?
2. Uzair عليه السلام, question how Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَعَلَىٰ عَرْشِهِ السَّلَامُ could resurrect Man after death?
3. Ibrahim عليه السلام on his search for truth?

5TH LESSON – BE CONSULTATIVE IN FAMILY AFFAIRS - Divine injunction, but Ibrahim عليه السلام consulted his son, he maintained both roles, Prophet & Father. Parents should not always impose their Hukm, even in matter such as breastfeeding, mutual consultation must take place!

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ (3:159) وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ ^ط (42:38)

This also underlines a crucial point to parents that being in a position of power should not lead them to be authoritarian towards their children.

6th LESSON – THE USE OF TESTS IN CHILDREN’S UPBRINGING

At the end, it was declared a great test of faith, with praise for passing it.

وَفَدَيْنَاهُ بِذَبْحٍ عَظِيمٍ - *"We ransomed his son with a great sacrifice,"* (37:107)

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْبَلَاءُ الْمُبِينُ. قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّءْيَا إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"You have already fulfilled the vision." Indeed, this is how We reward the good-doers. That was truly a revealing test. (37:105-106)

Tests & Appraisals should not be limited to schools, but also in life with our children and our faith. Tests are not just to punish people, but to build their character & prepare them for challenges ahead.

Fathers, should constantly look for opportunities to uplift and elevate their children’s character and faith. Life is full of tests as is faith, so we must take an active role to prepare our children.

7th LESSON – ACHIEVEMENTS & LEGACIES Allah ﷻ rewarded Ibrahim عليه السلام and Ismail عليه السلام for successfully overcoming the test

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِينَ - كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Allah ﷻ made this a central ritual of Hajj for eternity and & Allah enabled his fatherhood, parenting to be *"praised by succeeding generations"*