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The Intellect

Re-awakening to the
ideals of a Blessed Life

Al Quran
Surah Nisa – Part 10

Al Hadith
Ma'ariful Hadith

The Awakening
The Reality of Trials

*The
Motivation
as only
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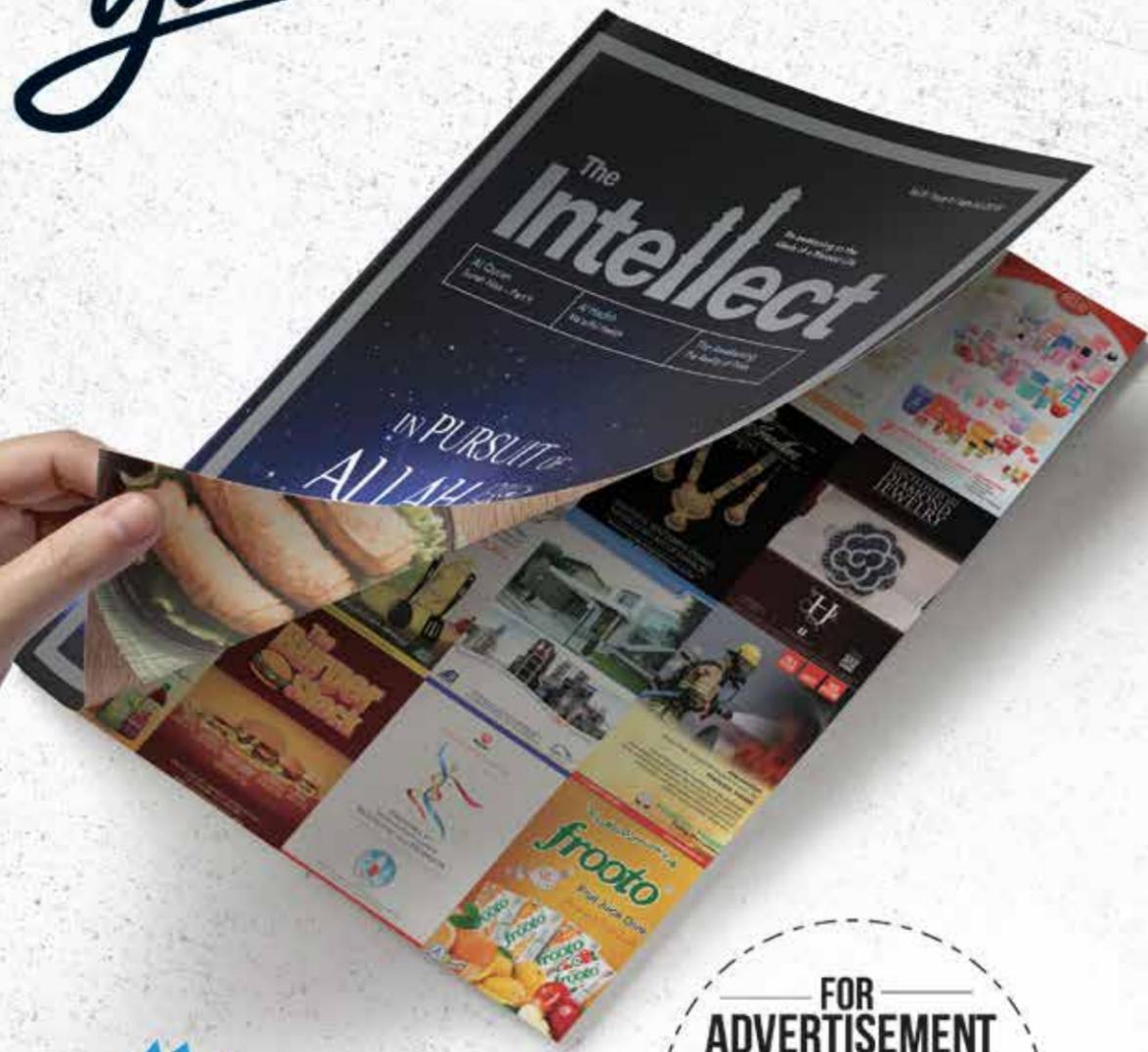
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Re-awakening to the ideals of a Blessed Life

The Intellect

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کنولا۔ آپ کے دل کا قدرتی محافظ

ایوا میں شامل ہیں بہترین صحت بخش آئلز اور امیگا 3 جیسے نیوٹرنس۔
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Editorial

Dear Readers,
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

On 29th May, 2018, just before Maghrib, Ali Banat left this world. It was the blessed month of Ramadan.

In his 30s, Ali was a very wealthy businessman from Australia, who was diagnosed with Cancer and given just seven months to live.

He went on to live for another three years but not before creating a mighty impact through initiating a charity project (working predominantly in Africa) called "Muslims around the World". Not just that, he gave away his expensive watches, clothes, branded accessories (some costing up to 60,000 dollars!) and even sold his luxury cars for the poor. But what really rattled and melted the hearts of countless on social media around the globe was his viral and brave video called, "**Gifted** with Cancer". He considered his fatal, devastating disease a "gift" from Allah ﷻ and where thoughts of impending and certain death can shake even the most pious of people, Ali held on to hope and positivity.

Another video explains how he became really grateful to Allah ﷻ for "the very air that he was able to breathe", for now. In his last days he posted a final message (meant to be viewed after his death) which begins by saying: "*Alhamdulillah, I have passed away....*"

Such positivity in the face of such debilitating circumstances is very rare. He could've easily given up and sat down dejected, agonized and depressed. Instead, he got up on his feet to make a difference in whatever little time he was left with. In doing so he not only recognized the temporality of life and its materials but also created a huge Sadqa-e-Jaria for himself. For after all, he did pass on to the other realm, but not to fade away, rather to begin a new, eternal life that begins at his illuminated grave. (May Allah ﷻ grant him the highest station in *Jannah, Ameen*).

Pointing to the same reality of time running out and our lack of preparedness for the Hereafter, is an anecdote about Bahlool and Haroon ur Rashid in *Action Alerts-Khalid Baig* in *Preparing for Death* reminds us: "*we see it happening all the time. Yet it is amazing how*

we feel that it won't happen to us. At least, not anytime soon. We bury our own friends and relatives but think that we'll live forever. Our attitudes about death defy all logic".

How we behave in the face of serious illness or impending death goes on to show our level of Iman (faith) and servitude to Allah ﷻ. After all, one's real test is during adversities rather than pleasurable times.

An excerpt adapted from "*Ulema-e-Deoband kay Aakhiri Lamhaat*" (The Last Moments of the Scholars of Deoband) in *A Leaf from the Past* is about the different forms of *abdiyat* (servitude) of the friends of Allah ﷻ in the face of physical hardships.

In the pretentious and materialistic times we live in today, most of us spend many hours of our day aimlessly. A clear direction and purpose seems to be lacking in most of our endeavors; one day simply meshes into another, one week into the next. We slavishly pursue rigorous, yet at times, empty routines: wake-up, work, eat, socialize, sleep; repeat! At the end of each day, how much have we really added to our Hereafter kitty? The answer, I am afraid, would not be a very encouraging one.

In contrast to all this, some people are driven by a fiery desire to find and do the right thing in their limited-over innings. They dedicate all their efforts, hours and energy in search of the truth and, once found, stick to it with blazing perseverance.

Our *Cover Story*, *The Motivation as only he had*, describes one such person; *radi Allah Ta'ala anhu!*

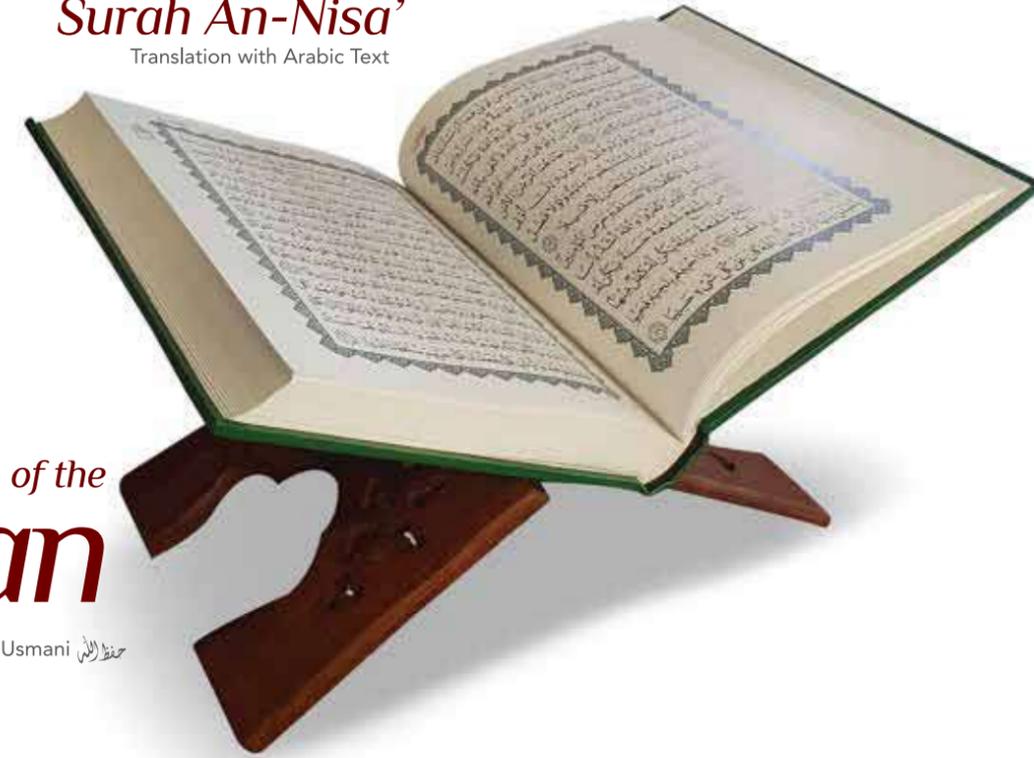
Those of our readers who are planning to go for Hajj this year, kindly remember the entire Bait-us-Salam team in your supplications, *JazakAllahum*.

Wassalam,

Zawjah Farid

Surah An-Nisa'

Translation with Arabic Text

**The Meanings of the Quran**By Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani رحمته الله

وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَأُوا مِنْ عِبَدِكَ نَبَّيْتُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّنُونَ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٨١﴾

They say, "Obedience (we observe)." But when they go away from you, a group of them conspires at night contrary to what they say. Allah records what they conspire. So ignore them and put your trust in Allah. Allah is enough to trust in. [81]

أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

Do they not, then, ponder about the Qur'an? Had it been from someone other than Allah, they would have found in it a great deal of discrepancy. [82]

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

When news concerning peace or fear comes to them, they go about spreading it. Had they referred it to the Messenger and to those having authority among them, the truth of the matter would have come to the knowledge of those of them who are able to investigate. (38) But for Allah's grace upon you, and mercy, you would have followed the Satan, save a few. [83]

فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ وَحَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكْفِكَ بِأَسِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بِأَسَا وَأَشَدُّ تَنكِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

So, fight in the way of Allah. You are not responsible but for yourself, and persuade the believers (to fight in Allah's way). It is likely that Allah will prevent the mischief of those who disbelieve. Allah is the strongest in power and the mightiest in punishing. [84]

مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِنْهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقْتَدِرًا ﴿٨٥﴾

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Whoever makes a good recommendation, there shall be for him a share from it (in the Hereafter), and whoever makes a bad recommendation, there shall be for him a share from it. Allah is powerful over everything. [85]

وَإِذَا خِيبْتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا ﴿٨٦﴾

When you are greeted with a salutation, greet with one better than it, or return the same. Surely, Allah is the One who takes account of everything. [86]

لِلَّهِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لِيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا ﴿٨٧﴾

Allah: There is no god but He. He shall certainly gather you towards the Day of Doom. There is no doubt about it. Who is more truthful in his word than Allah? [87]

فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْأُمْتَانِ فَنَنْتَبِهِنَ وَاللَّهُ أَزْكَسُهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَن تَهْتَدُوا مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾

So, what is the matter with you that you have become two groups about the hypocrites, while Allah has reverted them because of what they did. (39) Do you want to guide the one whom Allah has let go astray? The one whom Allah lets go astray, you shall never find a way for him. [88]

وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّىٰ يَهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَحُذَوْهُمْ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وُليًا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٨٩﴾

They wish that you should disbelieve, as they have disbelieved, and thus you become all alike. So, do not take friends from among them unless they migrate in the way of Allah. Then, if they turn away, seize them, and kill them wherever you find them, and do not take from among them a friend or helper. [89]

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَن يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتِلُوكُمْ فَإِنِ اعْتَرَفْتُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَأَلْقُوا إِلَيْكُم السَّلْمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾

Except those who join a group between whom and you there is a treaty, (40) or who come to you with their hearts feeling discomfort in fighting either against you or against their own people. If Allah had so willed, He would have given them power over you, then they would have fought you (41) so, if they stay away from you, and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah has not given you any authority against them. [90]

Explanation

(38) Verses 81 to 83 refer to the hypocrites, and verse 83 says that they spread rumors among Muslims in both states of war and peace. The verse directs the Muslims that, instead of relying on them and passing them on to others, they should convey these rumors to the administrative authorities who may verify their correctness. If such rumors are spread without verification, it may create confusion in, and at times a big loss to, the community.

(39) Some people from Makkah came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and pretended to have embraced Islam. But after a while, they turned apostates, and left for Makkah on the pretext of taking a business trip. Some Muslims opined that they were still Muslims, while others said that they had turned apostates. This verse disclosed that they had never embraced Islam in reality; they were hypocrites who came to deceive Muslims. After their departure, they abandoned even their claim of being Muslims; therefore the next verse (89) speaks of their real designs and orders the Muslims to kill them wherever they are found.

(40) Verse 89 has ordered to kill the infidels mentioned in verse 88 and 89. This order included all such infidels. Now this verse (90) exempts those who have a peace treaty with the Muslims, or those who join them in the treaty. Similarly those who come to the Muslims and say that they do not like to fight anyone, neither the Muslims, nor their own people, and want to remain in peace; they are also exempted from the order of killing.

(41) It means that the abstinence of these people from fighting is a blessing from Allah, otherwise they might have fought the Muslims like other infidels. Then the Muslims are directed that they should test such people, and if it is proved through their behavior that they really dislike fighting, and want to remain peaceful in real terms, then Allah has not allowed to seize them or to fight them.

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Fear of Allah and Anxiety for The Hereafter

by Maulana Manzoor Ahmed Naumani رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ

After belief, the fear of Allah and anxiety for the Hereafter play the most vital role in the improvement of the moral and spiritual quality of life and its evolution to the stage of salvation. The Prophet ﷺ, therefore, made special effort to produce and develop the two attributes among his followers. Sometimes, he spoke of the advantages flowing out of fear and anxiety, and, sometimes, of the omnipotence of Allah, of His Anger, and of dreadful happenings of the last Day the thought of which tended to promote these sentiments. The Tradition related by the well-known companion Khanzalah Ibn-al-Rabi', shows that it formed, as if one would say, the main subject of conversation in the company of the Prophet ﷺ when the Companions sat with him and listened to his remarks and revelations about the Day of Final Judgement and Heaven and Hell, they felt as if they were actually seeing them.

If the Invisible World Was Made Known to Us

(141/1) It is related by Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "By Him Who has my life in His Hands, if you knew what is known to me [about the Anger of the Lord and the terrible events of the Last Day and the Hereafter] you would laugh less and weep more." (Bukhari)

Commentary: If all that was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ about the Lord's supreme indifference to everything, and His Anger and Almightyness and frightful happenings of the Last Day and Futurity came fully to our knowledge and our

eyes could see what was visible to him and ears could hear what was audible to him, our peace of mind would be destroyed so completely that we would grieve much and rejoice little.

(142/2) It is related by Abu Zarr Ghifari that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "I see the things of the invisible world you do not see and hear the sounds [of the invisible world] you do not hear. The sky is shaking and it is appropriate that it shakes. By the Glorious One is whose power is my life! There is not even a space of four fingers in the heavens where an angle is not prostrating himself before the Almighty, with his forehead touching the ground. If you knew the things that are known to me, you would laugh little and weep much, and could not enjoy the bed with your spouses, and would go out into forests and deserts groaning and crying out to the Lord". [After relating it] Abu Zarr said to us: "I wish I were a tree that was cut down".

(Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi and ibn-i-Majah)

Commentary: As we have seen earlier, in connection with Traditions pertaining to Faith, the chief task and mission of the Prophet ﷺ is to communicate to the bondsmen the truths that the duty of his followers to believe in those truths and observe those commands as the fundamental principles of their lives. The range of the sources of knowledge, like the intellect and senses. What Allah has granted to mankind is limited to the visible world. They do not go far enough to uncover the realities of the other [the invisible] worlds. The only way for us to know and understand the transcendental truths, therefore,

is to relay on and accept as authentic what the Divine Messengers see, hear or tell. This is Faith in a nutshell.

In this Tradition the Prophet ﷺ has made the awe-inspiring revelation about the other world that the sky is shaking with the Power and Splendour of the Lord and with the abundance of the angels. There is hardly any space in it where an angel may not be prostrating himself in reverence and humility. He has further, emphasised that if we became aware of what was

known to him, we would not be able to live happily in this world and enjoy its comforts but abandon our homes and roam about in wilderness, wailing and beseeching the Lord for mercy.

The narrator, Abu Zarr, was so deeply moved by the report that while relating it he would often burst out: "I Wish to Allah that I was a tree which was cut down from the roots so that I was not presented to the Lord for the Great Reckoning".



Since man has been created to function as the Vicegerent of Allah on earth and he can discharge his duty properly only when he enjoys peace of mind in the world, the truth have not been revealed to him which would have ruined his composure and tranquility. For example, if the punishment of the grave and Hell was made known to us and we could see all the events of the Hereafter with our own eyes, we could not attend to the daily needs or even manage to live. But as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was raised up for the fulfillment of a special mission, it was essential that these realities were revealed to him to a certain extent so that he could attain the certitude and assurance that was needed for his

lofty work and position. Thus, certain truth beyond the sphere of human experience were made known to him, and, with it, Divine Providence ordained for his heart an extraordinary strength that enabled him to carry out the tremendous responsibilities of Messenger ship in a fitting manner and lead a balanced life that could serve as a model to mankind at all times.



Blessed Moments

By Bint Akram

Imagine: you listlessly go and sit in the company of a pious friend of Allah ﷺ. You have no idea what awaits you. You simply go and sit with adab waiting for the Shaykh to speak. You yourself do not know what is it that you seek. No specific questions. Just utter confusion caused by the rust that corrodes the heart... The Shaykh begins to speak and the first thing he says strikes a chord. You are jerked out of your listless state because that is exactly what you unconsciously wanted to hear in those moments. Those specific answers to unspecified questions...

Blessed, indeed, are those moments. It is nothing but Allah's Mercy that He clarifies things for us and brings us back to the focus, to Him! Had this not been the case, we would always be continuing with our lives listlessly...

Alhamdulillah!

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Children's Names

By Mufti Taqi Usmani

Q.) Is it mandatory in Islam to name our children with Arabic names? Please answer in the light of Qur'an and Sunnah, thank you.

A.) Psychologists now acknowledge the effect a person's name has on his life. But Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, had revealed this fact to his followers already 1400 years ago. His teaching to his followers was that children should be given good names, and that meaningless names and those having unsavory connotations should be avoided. Subsequently, we find many incidents mentioned in the Hadith where Rasulullah, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, changed the names of people with this object.

Another aspect of a person's name is that it bespeaks a person's religion. Hence, the name of a Muslim is usually of such a nature that by the mere mention of it, the listener understands that the person so addressed, is a Muslim. It is for this reason that our elders laid great emphasis on keeping good and pleasant names.

But since the spread of Western culture throughout the world, it has become customary amongst Muslims not to take into cognizance the meaning of the name when naming a child. Many do not even bother to

ascertain whether it is permissible for one to keep such a name or not. Often, even if the name is correct and suitable, then by way of abbreviating it, its Islamic connotation is distorted. In fact, at times it even become unlawful to address one by such a name. For example, Abdur-Rahmaan is called Rahmaan; Abdur-Razzaq, Razaaq; Abdur-Wahhaab, Wahhaab - whereas Rahmaan, Razzaaq and Wahhaab are the exclusive epithets of Allah Ta'ala. To address any creation by such a name, is therefore unlawful.

While this disease is rampant in the entire Muslims World, it is more in vogue in some countries like South Africa: Sulaymaan is called Solly; Yoosuf is called Joosub, Essop or Joe; Uthman is called Ossy, etc. In this way the blessed names of the Anbiyaa, alayhimus-salaam, and Sahabah, Radi-Allahu anhum, are distorted and needlessly rendered meaningless. Moreover, one may never know whether the one so addressed is a Muslim or not.

Hence, with regards to naming children, there was a need for compiling a book wherein all misconceptions could be eradicated and guidance could be given as to the importance of giving correct and meaningful names. Alhamdulillah, respect

Brother, Moulana Qaree Muhammad Rafeeq, teacher at Madrasah Islamia, Lenasia has fulfilled this need proficiently. The respected compiler has in his introduction explained most ably the Islamic teachings regarding a new-born child. The Masaail pertaining to Tahneek, Adhaan, Du'aas, circumcision, naming a child - and many more - have been explained in detail. Apart from having compiled a book on Muslim names in an alphabetic order, he has also rendered their meanings and their literal and historical aspects as well. During my tour of South Africa, I have had a cursory perusal of the book from

various portions and found it to be most invaluable. In my opinion it should find its place into the home of every Muslim - that no family should remain without it.

May Allah Ta'ala grant the compiler the best of rewards in both the worlds for the services rendered by him, and may He also grant this book acceptance and grant him the guidance to render more and greater service of this nature, Aameen.



The Reality of Trials

The First Degree of Patience

One degree of patience is that a problem or a peril arose, but you didn't complain against it with your tongue or in your heart. Not complaining about it with your tongue, doesn't not imply not mentioning it to your father or sharing it with you wife. It means not to announce it, not to let it circulate. The heart should not complain too. This is one degree of patience.

The Second Degree of Patience

The second degree is that a person is content with the trial through his heart and soul.

The Most Superior Degree of Patience

The most superior degree of patience is that a person becomes happy at a trial; happiness, that this too in an expression of Allah's love for me. This doesn't mean that he shouldn't make Du'a (supplication); Du'a is a requisite in our state of servitude, so he should make Du'a too. And happiness at a trial means a servant admitting that this too is a mode of demonstration of Allah's love.

Similarly when you love someone and that person makes you responsible for a task and asks you to do it you will surely do it even if it involves pain and hardship. Outwardly, there is struggle but inside the heart one is happy: 'so what? At least this task became an excuse for my remembrance; at least he/she thought of me.' Along the same lines, the superior degree of patience is that a person is happy at all arising situations through

heart and soul.

Like a very close friend approaches from the back and gives a tight hug; (a third person might say that this must be painful, i.e., being squeezed). But when he turns around and finds his long lost friend, it makes him extremely happy: 'Oh! So it's you! Give me another hug!' Similarly, when a Momin feels pain, he says if this is an expression of Your love, Allah, then I am satisfied with it.

A Path of Trials Leads to Contentment

This is why one must adopt patience in life. Allah ﷻ has promised: when a person is patient, then many a times the direction through which the trial came, Allah ﷻ blesses it to become a path of contentment, salvation and honour too.

Protection in Sources of Death

The Holy Quran narrates that when Hazrat Musa's ﷺ (Moses) mother was indicated (Ilham) to put him in a trunk and leave it in the river, she unhesitatingly did so. Now, this required nerves of steel; just imagine this lady's heart, that she is placing the apple of her eye in a trunk, which in itself is a source of death. And if in case, he does survive it, then what about the fast flow of the river? These crashing waves are again a clear source of death. And then, she knows well that this river flows towards the enemy's house – again, an invariable source of death. So, these three sources of death are before her, yet she obeys Allah ﷻ, because it is His order, and stays patient. Later, Allah ﷻ showed that this water

which was a source of trial for her, became a source of salvation for her entire people, all Bani-Israel (Children of Israel) escaped through this very water and their enemies were destroyed in it. (Al-Badaayah, Vol. 1, Pg.411-419, Dar-ul-Fqr)

So, many a times, Allah ﷻ shows us that the very path of the problem may bring you contentment and salvation, if you remain patient and steadfast.

Reward of being Blessed with the 'Better' through Patience

Hazrat Umm-e-Salma ﷺ had once heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ say that whoever remains patient and fulfills the requisites of patience, Allah ﷻ will reward him with the best alternative. Hazrat Umm-e-Salama's husband Abu-Saalma ﷺ died. He was very kind to his wife; she was very upset and felt emptiness in her heart that I have lost such a husband. She was very sad, yet she remained patient because she knew the Prophet ﷺ had said that the patient one will be rewarded with a better alternative. Her heart ached, yet she endured it as she truly believed in the Prophet's ﷺ saying.

She ﷺ says that I kept thinking about the alternative Allah ﷻ will give me. Behold! Sometime later, the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent her a proposal of marriage! After this Hazrat Umm-e-Salma ﷺ says that it is a fact: if one is patient, Allah ﷻ surely gives him a thing better than the one desired in this world or the Hereafter.

(Ibn-e-Kaseer, Vol.1, Pg.173,174)

Allah ﷻ says:

"Verily, along with hardship is relief"

(Surah Ash-sharh 94:5)

Every difficulty is followed by relief and this is such a powerful statement. It is reiterated, again: hardship is followed by ease! In fact, the next verse of the Holy Quran implies that Allah ﷻ creates double the relief for every hardship endured.

Impatience during Trials Leads to Deprivation

Impatience does not solve problems during trials, sickness and suffering. Yes, but what it does is to deprive the person of virtues.

Hazrat Ayub's ﷺ Patience

Allah ﷻ has addressed Hazrat Ayub ﷺ in a very loving manner in the Holy Quran. He ﷺ has been given three titles: Sabir (patient), Na'im-ul-Abad (a very good servant), Awaab (one who turns, to Allah i.e.):

"Truly! We found him patient. How excellent a slave! Verily! He was ever oft-returning in repentance (to Us)!" (Surah Swaad: 44)

i.e. he is very patient, a very good person, he turns to Allah a lot. Allah ﷻ has given these three titles to Hazrat Ayub ﷺ.

Hazrat Ayub was an avid worshiper, Allah ﷻ took away his children, young ones; He ﷻ took away his wealth and his health. Not only was his health taken away but he was also inflicted upon by an extremely painful illness. No one stayed close to him – not for a year or two or three, but seventeen years! Lost his children, they died; lost all wealth and remained sick for seventeen years. Satan tried a lot to make Hazrat Ayub ﷺ falter from the right path, but once when this fiend heard him ﷺ pray in the following words, he (Satan) got disheartened and let him be:

Oh Allah, I am content with Your decision; whatever has happened is past. Even if You give me a life of a hundred years, I will still not leave Your door.

Satan said: No trick is working on him, let me go deceive his wife. He came to her in the garb of a doctor and said: I will tell you a cure for your husband, but with a condition. (She was a woman and very concerned about her husband's health), she said: please do tell me. Satan said that you have to fulfill my condition; you have to prostrate before me! When she heard this she said this cannot be. I will ask Hazrat Ayub ﷺ first and then let you know. She went to Hazrat Ayub ﷺ and he got extremely displeased and said why didn't you show the honour of your faith? The one who asked you to prostrate before him was Satan.

(Tafseer Qurtabi, Vol.8, Section 15, Pg.136)

Continued, insha'Allah

The Motivation as only He Had!

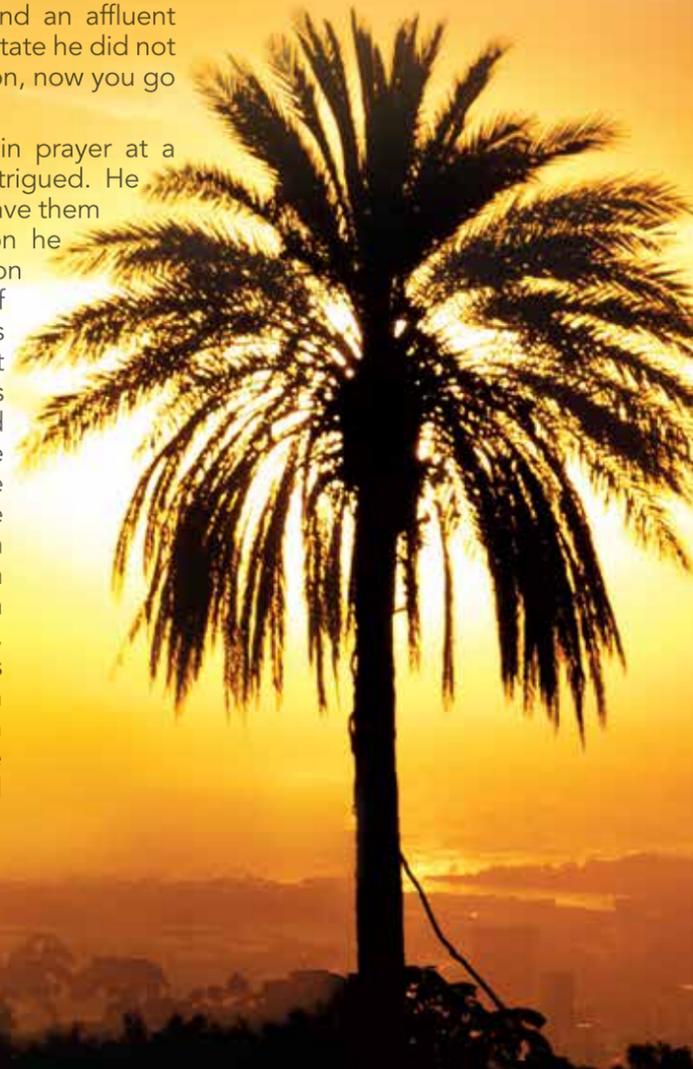
By Eeman Zubair

At first he worshipped fire.

He was so dedicated, so devoted to the religion of his forefathers that he would not let the embers of the sacred fire die away at any hour of the day for even a moment. He would be tending to it always, all the time, ceaselessly.

But then his father, who was chief of the village and an affluent personality, now grown old, who owned a vast crop estate he did not have the strength to look after any longer, said 'My son, now you go to my estate and look after it for me'.

On his way to the estate, he heard voices raised in prayer at a Christian church and was intrigued. He felt drawn and would not leave them until night fell, whereupon he returned home and upon inquiry, told his father of his whereabouts. His father, a devout worshipper of fire, was most displeased and begged his son to see sense, to realize that the real religion was only the religion of their own ancestors. But Sayyidina Salman Farsi ؓ, a Persian born in Kazrun, Iran and bred on his fathers' beliefs had been stirred. He had been stirred by the faith of the true God, and he would not go back.



His father bound him up and shackled him for a while in an attempt to salvage him, but Sayyidina Salman ؓ eventually broke free of his imprisonment and hailed some caravans with Christians who were leaving for Syria. Upon arriving at their destination, he immediately inquired about the whereabouts of the leader of the Christian religion and was directed to the bishop of the church. Sayyidina Salman ؓ told him how his heart had been moved by the Christian practice and how he would like to join their faith now. The bishop readily agreed and Sayyidina Salman ؓ joined his service. Not long thereafter, however, it was discovered that the bishop was corrupt and in fact exploiting his huge band of gullible followers. Nothing could be done about it. After the bishop's demise, Sayyidina Salman Farsi ؓ revealed his dishonest ways to his followers.

Salman ؓ then continued to seek other Christian religious figures and attach himself to their service. After he had remained in the company of a recent one, the Christian figure informed him that the time had arrived for the advent of a Prophet in Allah's ﷻ land, and Sayyidina Salman ؓ should go seek him if he truly wanted to enter the faith of Allah ﷻ. He told him of three distinguishing features of this Prophet ﷺ:

1. He would have a reputation for unbending honesty and integrity
2. He would always accept a gift but never accept charity (sadaqah) for himself
3. He would have the Seal of Prophethood on one of his shoulders

Upon the next opportunity, Sayyidina Salman ؓ set out towards the Arab land with a group of Arab leaders in exchange for whatever money he possessed. However, not long into the journey, the Arabs defaulted in their agreement and declared him a slave, then sold him to a Jew, who shortly afterwards sold him to his nephew. This nephew took Sayyidina Salman ؓ with him to Madinah (called Yathrib at the time).

At that fortuitous time, the Prophet ﷺ was engaged in inviting the people of Madinah towards Islam but Sayyidina Salman ؓ failed to hear about it for a time due to the cruel rigors imposed upon him as a slave. When the Prophet ﷺ reached Madinah after his migration, the news naturally spread like wildfire. Sayyidina Salman ؓ was busy picking off dates from a palm tree for his master. When the news reached him, he requested his master to go but was denied

permission until his work was finished. That evening, after concluding his duties, Sayyidina Salman ؓ set out to meet the Prophet ﷺ.

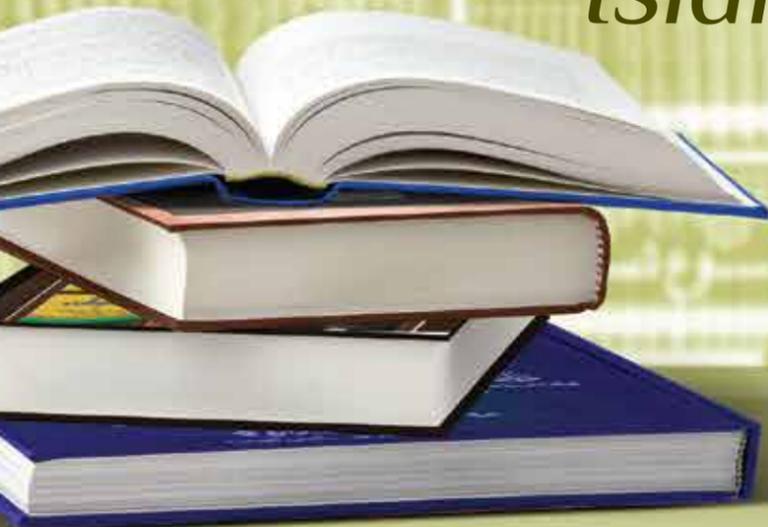
To test the bishop's claims, he took some dates with him and upon reaching the Prophet's location, where he was seated with his Companions ؓ, he said "I bring these dates to you as a sadaqah". He observed that the Prophet ﷺ bade his Companions ؓ to eat them but he himself did not eat of it. The following day, Sayyidina Salman ؓ had gathered more dates and presented himself before the Prophet ﷺ. He now said "I bring these dates as a gift for you". The Prophet ﷺ was pleased and readily consumed the dates. Sayyidina Salman's ؓ heart lifted in joy when he saw the situation before his eyes. He had found the Prophet ﷺ, finally! Of the last sign, Sayyidina Salman ؓ again appeared in the presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at a time when he had draped a cloak/clothing loosely around his shoulders, and tried subtly to make out the Seal of Prophethood. When the Prophet ﷺ noticed and realized what Ha Sayyidina Salman ؓ was trying to do, he himself lifted off the cloak or cloth so that the Seal became visible. Oh, joy! Sayyidina Salman's ؓ tireless journey finally bore its glorious, rich fruit.

There was, alas, one last hurdle on the path. Sayyidina Salman ؓ was still a slave. Upon returning to his place of work, and inquiring from his master the cost of his freedom, the latter put forth very tough conditions: he had to plant 300 date palm trees and after they all bore fruit within a single year, he could be free!. Sayyidina Salman ؓ was dismayed by the cruel reasoning of his master; how could he tame a date palm to flourish so quickly? He shared his dilemma with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who bade him not to worry, and himself helped him in planting 300 plots of date palm trees. Within one year, by the miraculous will of Allah ﷻ and the sanctity of his Prophet ﷺ, each and every tree had borne fruit. Sayyidina Salman ؓ was free at last. And oh, how his heart rejoiced that eventful day and forever thereafter, for he had at long last found the liberty to practice Islam freely, the one true religion in the world. Nothing would sway him from where he stood now.

May Allah ﷻ grant all of us the sheer perseverance and zest that Sayyidina Salman Farsi ؓ had, to pursue the path of Islam and stay devotedly attached to it. Ameen.

Education: Islamic Concepts and Modern Society

By Prof. Syed Ali Ashraf (Late)



Definitions

The title 'Education: Islamic concepts and modern society' implies a question and demands an answer. It raises the question of the relevance of the Islamic concepts of education to modern society, Muslim or non-Muslim. It compels us to ascertain whether educational concepts need to adapt and adjust to social changes brought about by 'modernity' or whether they should be based on absolutes given in the Quran and the Sunnah.

As 'education is a purposeful activity directed to the full development of individuals', the Islamic concept of education cannot be fully appreciated without first of all understanding the Islamic interpretation of 'full development of individuals'. It is only when we compare this concept of man and his development with the concepts that have emerged in modern society, that we can understand the nature of problems confronting us and the method of answering them. Man is regarded in Islam as the vicegerent of God on earth and the entire creation as subservient to

Man. According to the Quran, after creating the first man, Adam (peace be on him), God taught him the names of all things. God willed entire creation into existence out of non-existence, and according to the Quran, God is the beginning and the end, the only Being alone in the beginning, who alone will remain in the end. His will is the source of creation, and each element in creation manifests the power of Allah. Each object in creation therefore manifests some qualities or attributes of God. Teaching Adam (peace be on him), the names of things, means making him aware of the essence creation, in other words of the attributes of God and the relationship between God and His creation. It is not merely an intellectual awareness divorced from spiritual realization. It is spiritual realization controlling, guiding and sharpening the intellect, creating in Adam (peace be on him), a sense of reverence and awe for God and making him able to use this knowledge for the benefit of humanity. In order that Adam's children may try to become the representatives of God on Earth and have mastery over the entire creation under the

authority of God, God granted this knowledge to mankind through his chosen people known as Prophets. This knowledge provides man with universal and objective norms derived from the attributes of God and is applicable to changing situations. God taught the Prophets the principles and methods of applying these norms. These principles and methods were given to Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in their final and completed forms through revealed messages enshrined in the Quran and through the character, sayings and deeds of the Prophet himself. They provide Man with a complete code of life. According to Islam if a man follows this code with sincerity and honesty, he will grow into a balanced person and, God willing, he may be able to reach his goal and become *Khalifatullah*, vicegerent of God on earth.

It is because of this principle of development that Muslim scholars who met at the First World Conference on Muslim Education defined the aims of education as follows:

Education should aim at the balanced growth of the personality of Man through the training of Man's spirit, intellect, his rational self, feelings and bodily senses. Education should cater therefore for the growth of Man in all its aspects: spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical, scientific, linguistic, both individually and collectively and motivate all aspects toward goodness and the attainment of perfection. The ultimate aim of Muslim education lies in the realization of complete submission to Allah on the level of the individual, the community and humanity at large.

How far this definition is acceptable to a modern society depends on our assessment of the society, how it regards Man and his destiny and how therefore it wants his personality to develop. Its acceptability depends also on historical and practical considerations and on

the justifications that Islamic Metaphysics supplies.

Islamic Concept of Man and Educational Metaphysics

From the above brief statement the following basic ideas emerge. Firstly, the Islamic concept of Man and the width and range no other concept of Man has. As Man can become *Khalifatullah* by cultivating or realizing within himself the attributes of God and as these attributes have a limitless dimension, Man's moral, spiritual and intellectual progress is potentially limitless. Secondly, as knowledge is the source of this progress and development, Islam does not put any bar to the acquisition of knowledge. Thirdly, the range of this acquisition must be all by acquiring an intellectual expertise in isolation a person cannot maintain a balanced growth. This implies that education must be planned in such a way that it has a balanced interdisciplinary pattern. An informed man or a trained expert is not necessarily an educated man. Fourthly, the spiritual, moral, intellectual, imaginative, emotional and physical aspects of a man's personality are kept in view in establishing the interrelationship among the disciplines. The growth of a child's mind and abilities must be taken into account in order to plan subjects and courses in graded stages so that this interrelationship is maintained. Fifthly, the development of personality is seen in the context of Man's relationship with God, Man and Nature. Therefore, the organization of disciplines and arrangement of subjects are planned with reference to Man as an individual, Man as a social being and Man as a being who has to live in harmony with Nature. His individuality, his collective existence and his existence as a natural entity are all conditioned by his relationship with God. Thus a hierarchy of knowledge has to be established. All branches of knowledge are not of equal status: spiritual knowledge has the highest priority. Morality is based on that knowledge and

as morality governs man's individual and collective behaviour it is on basic universal values that material progress also depends. Knowledge of moral values is therefore next in importance. Intellectual knowledge or knowledge that leads to the discipline of the intellect follows; then comes knowledge that controls and disciplines human imagination and knowledge that helps the control over bodily senses. Thus faith and ethics have to be instilled into a child from the earliest stages but actual spiritual realization is the final attainment because without an adequate training of the intellect a child will not have sufficient discrimination to appreciate spiritual truth. More stress is laid in childhood therefore on the control of bodily senses and imagination. Intellectual discipline will help a child to proceed from the

concrete to the abstract, from sense-impression to ideation, and from matter-of-fact relationship to symbolisation. It is only when these abilities start growing that a child begins to appreciate the interrelationship of disciplines and realizes what he is emotionally conditioned to believe, that is, the presence of the will of God and Nature and Man and how the entire creation is *ayatullah*, signs of God, manifestation of Divine power, symbols of reality.

To be continued, insha'Allah



The Only Way...

By Bint Akram

The only way to repent for any kind of sin (irrespective of it being big or small) is to do sincere *tawba*. Just ask Allah ﷻ for forgiveness keeping His greatness in view. Ask for it in your heart. Ask for it while sitting, standing or reclining. Ask for it after *salaah*. Beseech Him through the tears that have a language of their own. Implore Him in the solitude of the night when all else are asleep. Speak to Him while being conscious of the fact that He is *Sam'i al Baseer* (the One who listens and the One who sees!). When you do this, just focus on His being Merciful of the merciful, and also that He loves those who repent. Stop thinking about that sin. Just ask consistently. If the thought of that sin bothers you, distract yourself from it, and ask for Allah's forgiveness. The pleasure of being forgiven is always felt in one's heart when the rust gets off it.

'Do not visit the alley of hopelessness, for there are countless hopes (alive)

Do not go into the darkness, for there are countless suns (of Allah's infinite mercy shining)' (Mawlana Rumi)

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A Materialistic World

By Sumayyah Aisha Ghazi

One of our neighbours had a huge garment factory but in order to increase the production, he took a big loan from the bank. In just a matter of three years, they lost everything they had from their factory to even their own house.

The greed for money is the main cause of destruction and demolition of men. Many houses get destroyed because of the greed for money and in the pursuit of a luxurious lifestyle. Many people leave their old parents and the lust of wealth urges them to move to foreign shores.

For instance, a son thinks that it's better to live abroad and to spend a happy and magnificent life there. He'll

try his best to go abroad and settle down, he won't care about his relatives, his father and mother, and leave them all alone. Will this make him an ideal son? Will this lead him to Jannah? No, not at all. There are numerous examples of people who are not with their parents at the time of parents' death. SO what benefit does this 'living abroad' give them? In fact, one should fear being treated the same by their own children in their old age.

Hadhrat Sahal Bin Saad رضي الله عنه narrates, "A man came in Rasoolullah's صلى الله عليه وسلم company and asked Him, 'Please tell me an act which would make Allah تعالى and his people love me. Rasoolullah صلى الله عليه وسلم replied "Don't be gluttonous towards the worldly things (Duniya) and don't show your desire for wealth and earnings which belong to the other people, and the people would love you" [Tirmizi].

What legacy are we going to leave behind? Monuments representative of our attachments to this world, or deeds which have multiplied into blessings for the sake of Allah?

There are many people who try to accumulate wealth illegally (in the haraam way) for their children. Apparently it looks like that by doing this, they are doing a favor to their children, but in reality, this illegitimate wealth does not do any good to them. My great grandfather told me his own story that he was only 18 when his father became very sick and passed away. In the last twenty days of his life, he gave all his wealth to his very close relative and asked him to buy land/property for my great grandfather. This relative, instead of following his instructions, purchased the land/property in the name of his own son. This illegal money did not do any good to those people, they always remained in misery for their whole life and Allah تعالى blessed my great grandfather with immense success in life.

People believe that more money will bring more happiness and contentment. This is just a false perception, and has nothing to do with reality. Money does not bring happiness. Money can

bring Air Conditioners but cannot extinguish the fire that is burning in the heart. People, indeed, are not aware of the reality of this mortal and materialistic world. They think they're going to live here forever, and they are so wrong.

In this world, people strive for name and fame. They can even let go of their own blood relatives for the sake of gaining popularity. They say we need to have money for honour and respect. Comparing ourselves with the ones whose social status does not match ours is plain stupidity. Then people are ready to kidnap somebody or can even kill someone for money. Just in the greed for more and more and more. Human wishes are unlimited! You can't fulfill all of them. We always want more than we have. Instead of thanking Allah for his blessings and bounties we demand for more.

I know a lot of people who got trapped in the vicious cycle of getting things on credit. They start buying things beyond their means. For example if as per their salary they can only afford a motorcycle, they would go ahead and buy a car on monthly installments. Ultimately this leads to a disaster as their monthly expenses go beyond their monthly earnings.

Now let's come towards the solution of this problem. First of all we need to remain steadfast on this belief that we are not in this world for ever and we have to return to Allah تعالى.

Whenever we take some decision and start some work, we should also think if this act will help us in the world hereafter.

May Allah expose the temporality of the worldly possessions to our eyes and minds, and may make us true Muslims. Aameen.

The Nature of the Answer: From the Wisdoms of Ibn 'Ata'illah

By Musa Sugapong

All Muslims acknowledge the integral and prominent nature of *du'a* in Islam. Allah the Exalted explicitly commands all Muslims in His Noble Book to call upon Him, pairing this command, through His sheer mercy, with His promise of granting: "Yet the Lord of all of you has said: Call upon Me in prayer. I shall answer you." (Al-Ghafir 40:60)

Additionally, our beloved Prophet (upon him blessings and peace) referred to *du'a* as being the essence of worship: "*Du'a* is the essence of worship." (Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi)

However, it is essential to couple that *du'a* with an accurate perception of what to expect as a result of it. Allah has already issued a promise for the acceptance of one's *du'a*. However, the manifestation of that promise is subject to the

will of Allah. Regarding this matter, I have selected an excerpt from *Sharh Hikam al-Imam Ibn 'Ata'illah al-Sakandari* (The Explanation of the Wisdoms of Imām Ibn 'Atā'illah Al-Sakandari) by Shaykh 'Abd al-Majīd al-Shurnūbī. This book is a compilation of two hundred and sixty-four wisdoms by Imam Ibn 'Atā'illah, expounded upon by Shaykh Shurnūbī. I have chosen the sixth wisdom and translated it into English.

Wisdom 6:

"Do not allow the delay in the granting of your request, despite your relentless pleas, to be an agency for your despair. For indeed He has guaranteed you that He will answer your prayer in the fashion that He chooses for you, not in the fashion that you choose for yourself, and at the time that He intends, not at the time that you intend."

Explanation:

Do not allow the delay in the granting of your desired request, despite your relentless (i.e. persistent and constant) pleas, to be an agency and cause for your losing hope in the answer to your prayer. For indeed He the Exalted has guaranteed that He will answer your prayer in the Qur'an with His statement: "Call upon me in prayer. I shall answer you." (Ghafir 40:60)

However, this answering will be in the fashion that He chooses for you, not in the fashion that you choose for yourself. Indeed, He is more

aware of what is suitable for you than yourself. Perhaps you may desire something, the absence of which is more appropriate for you. Therefore, His act of denying you is in fact His giving you. This is in accordance with what the author will later state:

"Perhaps He deprived you and therefore gave you. And perhaps He gave you and therefore deprived you." This reality has been witnessed by those who have reached the station of the following verse:

"Yet it may be that you hate a thing, while it is good for you. And it may be that you love a thing, while it is evil for you." (Baqarah 2:216)

In this regard, a pious sage once mentioned: "Your state of being deprived, in actuality, is my endowment."

Similarly, He has guaranteed you that He shall answer your prayer at the time that He intends, not at the time that you intend. Therefore, have the patience of Musa (upon him peace). Indeed, patience and absence of haste is behooving of servants. Is it not known to you that Musa, a prophet, used to make the following *du'a* against the Pharaoh and his army whilst Hārūn, also a prophet, would say *Āmīn*: "Our Lord! Blot out their wealth and harden their hearts" (Yunus 10:88) Not until forty years had passed was their request granted and Allah said: "He said: O Mūsa and Hārūn: Your prayer has been answered. So keep steadfastly straight upon the path of your Lord, and do not follow the way of those who do not know the truth." [Yunus (10):89] It has been mentioned in a *hadīth*: "Indeed, Allah loves those who are persistent in their *du'a*." It has also been mentioned that a righteous slave, when he supplicates to Allah the Exalted, Jibril says: "O my Lord! Your slave, so and so, fulfill his need!" Allah the Exalted then replies: "Leave my slave! Indeed, I love to hear the sound of his voice."

Therefore rise up, O seeker! Fulfill that which Allah has commanded you to perform from the act of *du'a* and leave the results to Him. Perhaps

He shall answer your prayer and reserve for you, in exchange of your desire, that thing through which you shall attain eternal bliss and more!

[Shurnubi, Wisdom no. 6]

Furthermore, the Prophet (upon him blessings and peace) has stated in another *hadīth* related on the authority of Ibn Masūd: "Ask Allah for his bounties. Indeed, Allah loves to be asked." (Tirmidhi)

Our relationship with Allah is nothing like our relationship with the creation because, indeed, Allah is nothing like the creation. The more we call upon Allah and beg of His treasures, the more He becomes pleased. On the other hand, the more we ask from the creation the more they become aggravated.

Du'a is counted as an act filled with virtue and, as previously mentioned, the essence of worship. This is so because one truly calls on Allah upon realization that there is no one else to turn to. This act of turning to and calling on Allah when all hope is lost is in fact the summation of *tawhīd* (the oneness of Allah) and *ikhlas* (sincerity), and there is no form of worship above these two acts.

Further elucidating upon the statement of the Prophet that "*Du'a* is the essence of worship", the great scholar Ibn al-'Arabī has mentioned:

"*Du'a* is the essence of worship: through *du'a*, the acts of worship of those who worship gain strength – it is the soul of worship."

May Allah the Exalted grant us all the facilitation to inculcate the noble act of *du'a* into our life. May He allow us to turn to Him alone for the fulfillment of our needs and guard us from being deprived of this noble act. *Āmīn*.

(Courtesy: Iimgate.org)



Evergreen

By Ateefah Sana Ur Rab

O ye, who dwells in sorrow,
 Encircled with the dread of unknown
 Thy heart weeps and seeks some help
 But all to ever be in sight
 Is the clinging absence of the light!

Ye wander upon thine shrewd beliefs
 And the depth of damage unmeasured
 While a bunch of comrades; with pride
 Adorn the racks with trophies again
 Along with those bearing layers of dust

Dawn to dusk; ye struggle alone
 Awaiting wind to bless thine sails
 Falter not and strike once more
 It may appear in vain; this life,
 But soon thou shalt witness the evergreen sprout!

Feels as if I've Eaten it

Contributed by G. M. Surriya

Khairuddin Afindi lived in a small village called Alfathay in Turkey. He was neither a scholar nor a rich person. In fact, he was a simple labourer, and used to work hard every day to earn bread for his family. However, he had a distinctive quality - he used to love Islam abundantly and would always remain in the forefront in religious activities.

One fine day, Khairuddin suddenly developed an urge to build a Masjid, but he knew well that he would need a very large amount of money to fulfill his wish. He, therefore, thought of ways and means to gather the required money.

His idea was that if he could save little by little every day, it would be a large amount one day and with this, he could achieve his goal. He immediately started working on his idea and began saving regularly. The daily saving seemed very little and with this, he felt he would not be able to materialize his dream. He thus thought of an alternate plan to supplement his original one: of either curtailing or eliminating his needs.....so once, he was in the market and saw fresh fruits were being sold there. He felt a strong desire to buy the fruit but he didn't buy it; instead he estimated verbally how much he would've bought and what would've been its total cost. He came home empty-handed but put the amount he had calculated in the saving box. On his way home from the market he constantly kept explaining to his heart to feel like it had already eaten those fruits and to relish them without having eaten them!

The next day, Khairuddin happened to pass by a butcher's shop and saw the meat hanging down from hooks. Instead of buying the meat, he estimated his requirement in terms of money and deposited that amount in the cash box by saying to himself, "feels like having eaten the meat lavishly."

Through this manner he kept controlling his desires and slowly and gradually, the amount in the money-box kept on increasing. He would only buy the item that was his immediate need and that too, in as much quantity as was direly needed and while sacrificing his needs he would say to himself: "Feels like I have eaten it."

After the passage of a few years, Khairuddin opened his money-box to find that it was full of cash. He started counting the money excitedly and his joy knew no bounds to discover that he had sufficient funds to initiate his project. He thus built a small masjid with his hard-earned savings.

The day Khairuddin departed the world, people of his locality who knew his sacrifices and efforts towards building the masjid, named it "Sanki Yadem" - Turkish for "As If I've eaten it"!

(Ummat, January 8, 2015)

Silent Voice

By Ateefah Sana Ur Rab

The soothing tune of humming; very well-known to mothers, danced alongside one delicious aroma as the oven door slowly revealed what lay inside. Oh, how wonderful the cake appeared to the sight when it was kept on the kitchen counter to cool. This had been another one of the best she had made. The frosting's preparation was resumed with a smile on her lips. Hadn't she been counting down the days for this moment and now, the time had come. It was the day of her little boy's final examination result! Tears of happiness blurred her vision. How fast was he growing up! Just some time ago he used to wobble around; learning how to walk and keep his balance. And now, he was already done with third grade! A hearty chuckle echoed in the white-walled premises as she glanced at the familiar pot resting on the stove that contained Chicken Karahi (a spicy dish of the sub-continent); the most favourite of her little angel.

Soon, the frosting was ready and the cake had cooled down. Her eyes depicted the purest forms of love ever known and her hands worked enthusiastically; to make it exactly how he loved it. Overcome by delight, she wrote her son's name surrounded by one big heart, right in the centre. How happy he would be when he'd get home and see all that she had made for him. He would definitely forget the sour mood of his in the morning when she woke him up for the big day ahead. It was quite unusual for he always looked forward to school. But don't kids do that once in a while? 'It must be natural laziness; yeah, that's what it is!' She had told herself but at that moment, if she would have taken notice, there was an unfathomable dread creeping inside her heart.

The cake was put inside of the refrigerator, the used utensils were washed and the kitchen

counter was wiped clean. The clock struck 10 am, announcing that it was time to get ready for the result ceremony at the school. She had moved over to the bedroom and was taking out her dress from the cupboard when the shrill sound echoed in the house. Something was definitely not right, she felt it quite deeply. Hurrying over to their landline telephone, she picked up the receiver. 'Assalam-o-Alaikum. Who is this?'

'Is this--- speaking--- phone?' There was a lot of background commotion at the other side that caused disruption which made it very hard to understand what had been said.

'Pardon. Can you please repeat? I couldn't hear you properly.'

'Is this--- Mrs Rashida--- speaking on the phone?' The voice was fairly louder this time and she couldn't help but feel more agitated.

'Yes, I am---'

'Mrs Rashida, I am--- speaking--- from Golden Academy--- been an accident---' Once again, there were cut-offs in between.

'What accident? Is my son all right? Is he hurt? Can I talk to him?' Desperation took over her being. She needed to hear her son's voice. She needed him to tell her he was okay!

But whatever that she heard next, very roughly pulled the ground from under her feet. Without a prior warning.

How did it happen? How could it happen? With all the security, how was something like that possible?

With countless questions racing through her head, she grabbed the keys and stormed out of the house. The drive that usually took half an hour at maximum, extended to two excruciating hours due to heavy traffic. There were people out there; mothers crying in the cars and on the motorcycles; fathers with ghostly white faces and expressions that could not be put into words. The car radio continued to announce again and again; the grave news of the inhumane attack to the listeners. Rashida turned it off in rage.

Did it matter how inhumane it was? That wouldn't undo anything! It had happened and now, there was nothing to be done about it. The only thing that truly mattered was to make sure that her son was safe and sound. All of it, for everyone out there, was like believing that snowballs could be cooked on the stove and yet, she wanted to keep clinging onto that hope even if it was wrapped in utter absurdity.

The scene in motion when she arrived at the school couldn't be described in words enough to explain how horrible it was. There were ambulances all around with their sirens ringing alongside painful clamouring and muffled cries of the injured, the devastating silence that hung over the dead, the depressive state of the walls that were decorated with bullet holes and patterns of deep crimson, the broken shards of what had once been the glass windows, and the nauseating stench of blood and gunpowder in the dusty air which was forcefully dominated by the atrocious smell of death.

Rushing past people, neighbours and strangers, she searched for him; desperately calling his name out loud. Like a madwoman, she ran here and there; unaware of everything except that she needed to find her son as soon as possible. The once decorated and beautiful soft boards of the corridors stood silently in dread and watched the unfamiliar woman call for their artistic friend, Ahmad. Had they been blessed a voice, their cries would have joined the wailing adults and grieved with everyone in the vicinity.

It was the fifteenth room or maybe the twentieth where she caught glimpse of hope as her eyes landed on a little figure. She had found him! She

had finally found her son and it would all be okay!

Fate had although, something else planned. Sooner than the blink of an eye, the newly found hope which was very much still-under-construction vanished away. Reality slapped her harshly across the cheek as she registered the full view that lay in front.

The impeccable white fabric showcased gunshot wounds and was soaked and stained with patches of crimson and dirt. There was a pool of blood underneath; on which he lay sprawled. The pink lips of his that she had always remembered stretching into mischievous and naughty grins were a shade of purple and slightly apart as if they were asking for water. His eyes--- oh, those fairly exquisite eyes of his had lost the glow of life. They were rigid and dull; yet, the half-open eyelids seemed to ask countless of the 'wh' questions. The questions that would have several answers, but none rational.

Within seconds, he was scooped in an embrace by her cold and shivery arms--- arms that yearned to feel his warmth once again. Her tearful eyes, with blurry vision--- begged him to turn his head and bless her with one of his breathtakingly adorable smiles. Her ears--- they kept ringing and ringing, and the beating organ inside of her wept with endless prayers that requested for only one thing--- to be able to hear the hearty laugh of her child. Tears rained down, falling upon the little angel's lifeless face; wishing for a sign--- a movement--- anything.

Who knew how many broken hearts continued to rip apart again and again as they remembered finally, the innocent sentence; never given a voice.

'Maa--- I don't feel like going to school today.'

And who knew how relieved they must have felt when the shared memory of one pure question would have resurfaced.

'Maa--- Is there a way I can go straight to Heaven?'

Preparing for Death

By Khalid Baig

"Suppose you learn today that you have only one more day to live; you'll die tomorrow. How will you spend your last day?"

This interview question was posed long before the age of mass media. The interviewer approached prominent scholars and people known for their virtuous lives with the idea that he would compile their answers in a book. Such a book would provide the readers with inspiration for the most important virtues.

But the most inspiring response came from the person who did not provide a wish list of virtuous deeds. He was the great *muhaddith* Abdur Rahman ibn abi Na'um and he replied: "There is nothing that I could change in my daily schedule learning that it is my last day. I already spend every day in my life as if it is going to be my last."

Death is the most certain aspect of life. According to the recent statistics, 6178 people die in the world every hour. These are people of all ages, dying of all causes. Some of these deaths will make headlines. The great majority will die quietly. Yet everyone will enter his grave the same way. Alone. At the time appointed by God. Science and technology can neither prevent nor predict death. It is solely in the hands of the Creator.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِّنْ نُطْقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِّنْ مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَنُقِرُّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِيَبْلُغُوا أَشَدَّكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يَتُوقَىٰ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يَرُدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْدَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مَن بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ وَأَنْبَتَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ رَوْحٍ يَهِيحُ ﴿٥﴾

"O mankind! If you are in doubt concerning the Resurrection, then lo! We have created you from dust, then from a drop of seed, then from a clot, then from a little lump of flesh shapely and shapeless, that We may make it clear for you. And We cause what We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed time, and afterward We bring you forth as infants, then give you growth that you attain full strength. And among you there is he who dies young, and among you there is he who is brought back to the most abject time of life, so that after knowledge he knows naught!" [Al-Haj 22:5]

We see it happening all the time. Yet it is amazing how we feel that it won't happen to us. At least not anytime soon. We bury our own friends and relatives but think that we'll live forever. Our attitudes about death defy all logic. In a way we recognize it and even plan for it. We take out life insurance policies. We may do estate planning. Businesses and governments have contingency plans to carry out their operations in case of sudden loss of their leaders. But this is recognition of death as an end point of this life. Where we fail is in recognizing it as the beginning of another life that will never end and where we'll reap what we sow here.

A central teaching of Islam is that it is our recognition of and preparation for that eternity that must separate those who are smart from those who are not. As the Prophet ﷺ said: "Truly smart is the person who controlled his desires and prepared for life after death."

There is a moving story about Bahlool, who, in his innocence seems to be on the opposite end of the scale of worldly-smartness. Khalifa Haroon ur Rashid had given him access to his court probably because his naiveté was a source of entertainment to him. Once the Khalifa gave him a walking stick saying, "It is meant for the most foolish person in the world. If you find a person more deserving of it than yourself, pass it on." Several years later Haroon ur Rashid fell seriously ill and no medical treatment seemed to work. Bahlool visited him and inquired about his condition. The conversation went something like this:

Haroon: "No treatment is working. I see my final journey ahead of me."

Bahlool: "Where are you going?"

Haroon: "I am going to the Other World."

Bahlool: "How long will you stay there? When will you come back?"

Haroon: "No one ever comes back from that world."

Bahlool: "Then you must have made special preparations for this journey. Did you send an

advance group to take care of you once you arrive?

Haroon: "Bahlool, you have to go there alone. And no I did not make any preparations."

Bahlool: "Ameer-ul-Momineen! You used to send troops to make extensive preparations for you for even short trips of only a few days. Now you are going to a place where you'll live forever but you have made no preparations! I think I have found the person more deserving of the stick that you had given me some years ago."

This story speaks to all of us. We may not be kings but we do plan our trips of even a few days very carefully. How about preparing for the journey into eternity? How about making the concern for the Hereafter the cornerstone of our lives here?

Actually, that concern can change our lives here as well. This world is an abode of deception. Here we are not punished the moment we commit a sin. This fools us into thinking that we can get away with it. Remembering death is the antidote for that deception. A person who remembers that he will have to stand before his Creator and be accountable for his actions simply cannot defy God!

In the story of Pharaoh, we learn that when he saw death approaching he declared belief in the God of Moses. Before that he had been fooled by his apparent power. His repentance came too late but it did show how his arrogance and intransigence evaporated when faced with the certainty of death.

It is amazing how a lot of our own "confusions", frivolous arguments, excuses (for why we cannot do this or avoid that), or plain laziness can melt away when we visualize ourselves in our grave! Death settles a lot of arguments. Its remembrance can do that too. Before it is too late.

He was indeed a very wise person who spent every day of his life as if it was going to be his last day. But that certainly should be the goal for all of us!

Different Colours of Servitude

By Zawjah Farid

Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi's رحمۃ اللہ علیہ son, Maulana Hafiz Muhammad Ahmed رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, was taken ill by a minor ailment. The pain wasn't apparently much but he kept groaning quite loudly. Finally, a hesitant student of his asked him whether his constant groaning could be counted contrary to *raza bil qaza* (acceptance of Allah's decree)? He smiled, asked his student to sit down and replied:

I have experienced the company and benefited from the guardianship of three elders in deen: my respected Sheikh Haji Imdadullah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, my dear father Maulana Nanotvi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and my guardian and benefactor Maulana Gangohi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. And all three would behave very differently whenever they fell ill.

Haji Imdadullah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, when unwell, would groan so much even during minor ailments that people would ask him whether he might be overlooking the lessons in servitude he had taught them himself! He would reply: do you expect me to act brave before Allah ﷻ, to pose that I am strong enough to face every hardship, pass every test that comes my way? Servility in fact demands that at the slightest of afflictions, we show our humility and helplessness before Allah ﷻ; that we implore Him by pointing towards our limitations and utter weakness in controlling our affairs. This is *abadiyat* (servitude).

My father, Maulana Nanotvi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ would behave in a different manner when unwell: the most agonizing of diseases could not force him to utter a word of complaint or a groan of pain. In fact, many a times, not a soul would know about an illness he had been through, and only months later would we find out about it, that too if he

mentioned it himself in some other context. When asked why he did not share about his suffering, so that some treatment plan could've been adopted, he would reply by saying: whatever comes from Allah ﷻ, it should be accepted with patience; the sharing of pain should be with Him alone as He alone can order its cure. This, in fact, is a station of servitude.

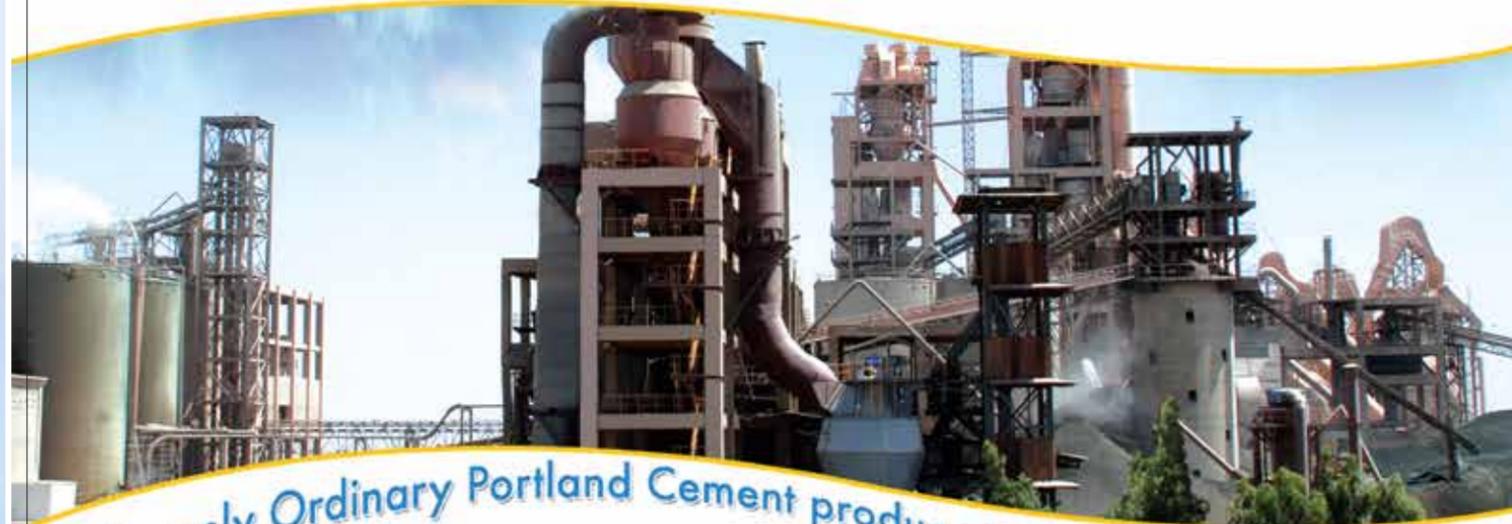
The case of Maulana Gangohi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was yet a different one. He would neither express his pain nor remain silent / complacent, but in fact, he would concentrate on his treatment, medication and diet moderation. He would say that getting treatment is from Sunnah and following Sunnah is in fact servitude.

So my dear friend, whenever I fall ill, at times I follow the ways of Haji Imdadullah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, at others, those of my dear father and at yet others those of Maulana Gangohi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, because servitude has different colours: it can be in showing your utter humility before the Lord ﷻ; it can be in accepting His decree without the slightest expression of unease and it can be in simply employing the means (asbab) provided to us by Allah ﷻ. All paths lead to the pleasure of our Lord ﷻ.

(Translated & adapted from *Ulema-e-Deoband kay Aakhiri Lamhat*, Part 1, by Maulana Sanaullah Saad Shuja'abadi)



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The Incomplete Muslim

By Emaan Zubair

A Muslim's life must ideally be akin to a continuous uphill journey; always struggling to reach the top with regards to improving oneself in each and every aspect of Islamic living, be it as seemingly mundane as choosing what time to wake up each day in line with Islamic teachings, or as significant as trying to amend one's prayers. With this inner aim of improvement in mind only can a Muslim be worthy of being given the beautiful title of a Muslim. Yet the lives of Muslims in today's society tell an entirely and distressingly different story.

Have you ever read the Quran diligently for an hour, then exchanged harsh words with your parents not five minutes later? Do you say all your five prayers regularly and still find more contentment in late-night movie watching or going to the theatre? Do you habitually give *Sadqah* (charity) but are more than a little tight-fisted in spending on your own family? All these conditions, sadly, will have applied in our lives at more than one point. Now, someone reading these very words may well be thinking: so? What does it matter if our lifestyles have become this way? The answer is: does it make sense to read the Quran day after day, which is

brimming with instructions to speak kindly, be gentle and only tell the truth, to carry out the opposite of these teachings later? What use is learning when not applied? Does that behavior of ours not reflect a serious gap between learning and action? It does, and therein lies the problem.

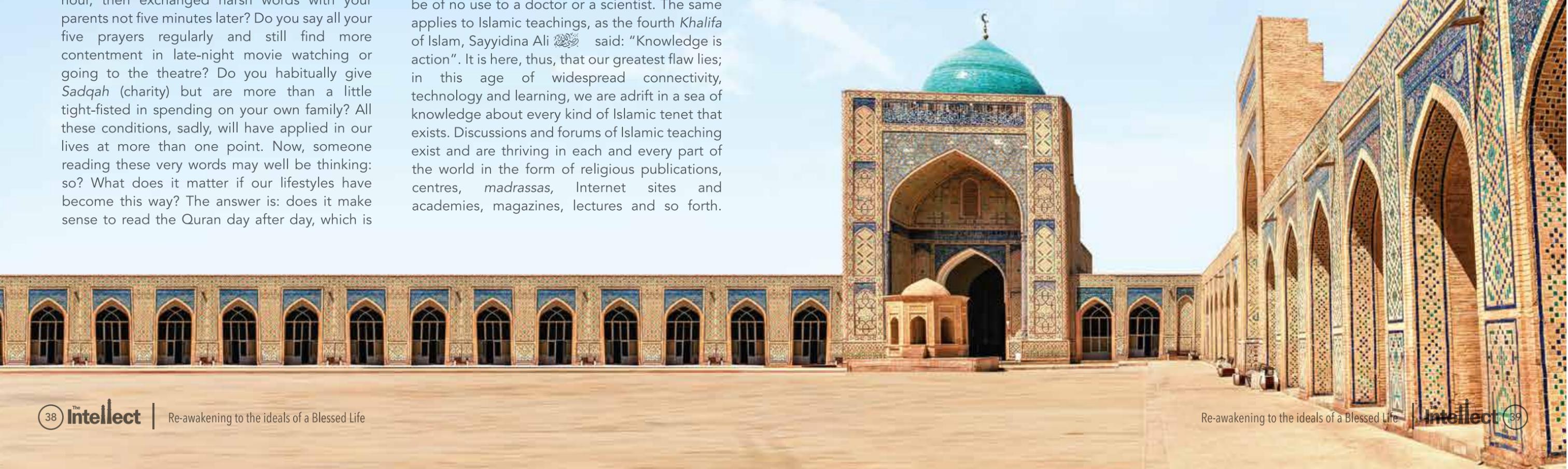
These imperfections in today's Muslim arise from many different factors. Our sorry lack of faith and dedication to Allah ﷻ, and our sheer tardiness in trying to better our own selves are two of the major ones. All the knowledge of the world is useless without practical application; just studying biology and never working in a lab will be of no use to a doctor or a scientist. The same applies to Islamic teachings, as the fourth *Khalifa* of Islam, Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه said: "Knowledge is action". It is here, thus, that our greatest flaw lies; in this age of widespread connectivity, technology and learning, we are adrift in a sea of knowledge about every kind of Islamic tenet that exists. Discussions and forums of Islamic teaching exist and are thriving in each and every part of the world in the form of religious publications, centres, *madrassas*, Internet sites and academies, magazines, lectures and so forth.

Everything from the tiniest of matters to the most pressing is thoroughly covered. And while this continuous propagation of Islam is *Alhamdulillah* a very favorable thing, it is ultimately meaningless for us if we fail to actively implement the Quran and Sunnah in our lives.

Laziness is the demon of this society; with unlimited and instant access to all sorts of attractive entertainment options like social media (Facebook, Twitter, you name it). Movies and TV shows that draw youth like a magnet, the young generation is rapidly losing its stamina for studying religion and interest in the value-based world of Islamic knowledge is dwindling at a fast rate. Oh, they will read the Whatsapp messages telling of *du'as*, religious events and such and they will forward them to everyone they know. But the actual implementation of those well-meaning messages is absent. The number of teenagers who will actually get up and perform *Nafil*, learn a passage of the Quran or give speedy charity is devastatingly few. Once again, this highlights the crippling dilemma of today's Muslim world: how to achieve the mindset, faith

and motivation to carry out Islamic teachings in day-to-day living and ignore the countless distractions devised by Satan for leading us off the right track.

Before I give you the answer, the encouraging truth is that you can do it. Man was born to strive, and in particular, was born to strive for Allah's رضي الله عنه pleasure and for avoiding His anger at all costs. Who expects to get excellent grades at the year's end without dedicated and sustained efforts throughout? Similarly, who can hope to gain the enticing bounties of *Jannah* if he does not even try to improve? This life is but a transitory station to the real and eternal one, and we will be foolish to think to live the eternal life happily and contentedly if we waste all our precious resources in enjoyment at the station.



Steps towards implementing Islam in Real Life

- 1. Sincere supplication:** Possibly, the most important and effective measure. Du'a is the strongest weapon of a believer, as our beloved Prophet ﷺ said: "Dua is the core of all worship". And Allah ﷻ says in the Quran: "(and your Lord says): Call upon Me, I shall answer your prayers". You are not just handed a diamond in your hand, are you? The gift of hidaya, faith, is priceless and something Allah ﷻ wants His slaves to ask from Him. The ability to carry out a purely Islam-based life is something we must persistently ask for and pray to Allah ﷻ to have the strength to exert and maintain it. For Allah ﷻ is free of any need; He does not care for our worship or righteousness and we will benefit only ourselves and others around us if we focus on self-improvement. That, in turn, will be a groundbreaking step towards firmly fixing the roots of Islamic values in modern societies and letting them grow and flourish. Pray. Pray sincerely and intensely for Allah ﷻ to give you the capacity to follow upon the glorious footsteps of our Prophet ﷺ, the footsteps that left such a prominent mark on mankind that they continue to serve as an example for Muslims today and will continue to be our guidance until the Hereafter.
- 2. Conscious Effort:** This goes without saying; unless we are mindfully try to improve, nothing else will help, for God helps those who help themselves. The Prophet ﷺ was once asked by his Companions ﷺ: "O Messenger of Allah! Who is the most excellent of men?" His reply was: "The one who strives hard in the way of Allah ﷻ with his person and his property". This clearly implies that the Prophet ﷺ was referring to not just physical Jihad on the battlefield, but also the mental and spiritual wars we are supposed to wage internally against all evil

inclinations, impious desires and defiance towards religion. This, in fact, is the greatest Jihad or *Jihad-e-Akbar*, also called *Tazkiya-e-Nafs*, i.e. the fight a Muslim puts up against his *nafs* to keep temptations and wrong inclinations at bay. So first the realization of doing wrong, and then the conscious effort towards curbing that wrong, is the key. If this seems overwhelmingly difficult, do not fret: all worthwhile things are at the beginning. You can use Quranic verses and examples from the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions' lives as motivators on your journey of self-improvement. For Allah ﷻ has promised Jannah, its sweet rivers of honey and milk, its lush orchards, its castles of gold and silver and its entire divine beauty to the *Muttaqin*, the people who not only perform good deeds but actively refrain from doing bad deeds as well. He has also expressed His love for the *Tawwabeen* (the people who repent) and the *Mohsineen* (the people who do good favours) so why not try to be one of them? With so much splendor on offer (and such a great risk, i.e. hellfire on the other side), only the unwise and ignorant will not take the opportunity to soak up Allah's ﷻ blessings.

- 3. Change your Environment:** Without question, our surroundings have a major impact on our own conduct in life. Although impiety breeds in even the most religious of places and companies (think of Firaun in Hazrat Moosa's ﷺ time, or Hazrat Ibrahim's idol-worshipping father), the presence of good, God-fearing devout believers can serve as a strong motivator for one to do good himself. Why were the Sahaba, the disciples of the Prophet ﷺ so pious? It was because they lived, felt and breathed the glorious company of the Prophet ﷺ. Some of them would not leave his side for anything, e.g. Sayyidina Abu Hurairah ﷺ and Sayyidina Zaid bin Haris

ﷺ such was their devotion and love for him. Such a strong and noble personality as the Prophet's ﷺ was, left an indelible mark on even his enemies which formed the basis of many important conversions to Islam, e.g. Abu Sufyan ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ himself said: 'The best of people are my generation, then the generation after them, then those after them'. The unfortunate reality of our era is that our youth has taken Western ideals, stars and singers as their 'heroes' and role models rather than take pride in or be inspired by its own invaluable Islamic ancestry. Thankfully, several authoritative Islamic figures still thrive with the Grace of God today (an excellent example being Mufti Taqi Usmani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ)

from whom we can derive inspiration for our personal journeys towards good. But little steps also go a long way: seek out the most religiously inclined member of your family, for example, and confer with them. Consciously avoid the company of frivolous friends or people at your place of work, be it school or a career. Become a regular and eager attendant of any religious events that occur near your residence, such as lectures or gatherings.

Allah ﷻ Who is the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful will *InshaAllah* seize the merest of our efforts and grant us unimaginable rewards in return, both in this life and the life in the Hereafter. *Ameen*.

Time

By Imam al-Ghazzali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

You should not neglect your time or use it haphazardly; on the contrary, you should bring yourself to account, structure your litanies and other practices during each day and night, and assign to each period a fixed and specific function. This is how you bring out the spiritual blessing [*baraka*] in each period. But if you leave yourself adrift, aimlessly wandering as cattle do, not knowing how to occupy yourself at every moment, your time will be lost. It is nothing other than your life, and your life is a capital that you make use of to reach perpetual felicity in the proximity of God the Exalted. Each of your breaths is a priceless jewel, since each of them is irreplaceable and, once gone, can never be retrieved. Do not be like the deceived fools who are joyous because each day their wealth increases while their life shortens. What good is an increase in wealth when life grows ever shorter? Therefore, be joyous only for an increase in knowledge or in good works, for they are your two companions who will accompany you in your grave when your family, wealth, children, and friends stay behind.

Social & Physical Sciences – Myths vs. Reality

By Dr. Asad Zaman

The writer, Vice Chancellor Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad, recently delivered a talk in Urdu at Institute of Business Administration, Karachi, and its summary was posted as “*Insaniyat ka Madar, Tabiati Uloom Ya Islami Uloom*”. An English rendering of it by Dr. Asad Zaman himself, titled “An Islamic Approach to Knowledge” is presented below.

(My paper on Origins of Western Social Sciences explains that the amazing technological progress of the West has dazzled the eyes of the Muslims. Physical Sciences are based on knowledge of the external world, while social sciences are based on knowledge of the internal world of the human beings. Knowing Chemistry, Biology and Physics does not lead to insights into the human heart. Economics is based on a hopelessly bad theory that human beings act like homo economicus. Nonetheless, the prestige of the West has led Muslims into accepting completely absurd theories about human behavior and welfare. Economics teaches us that all of us have maximization of the pleasure obtained from consumption as the sole

purpose of life. Furthermore, it teaches us that this is “rational”; that is, our happiness and welfare depends solely on how much we consume).

It is important to understand that knowledge is basically of two types: about external affairs and internal affairs. External knowledge is of the world around us; the physical sciences. Internal knowledge refers to the world inside us; the knowledge of the psyche, heart and soul, of human beings. Western Economic theory, like all their social sciences, is based on a fundamentally misguided conception about the nature of human beings. Because we are all exceedingly impressed with Western achievements in the physical sciences, we find it difficult to believe that they could make serious and fundamental errors in their formulation of the social sciences. However, this is in fact the case. The West has created many myths that are now widely believed throughout the world:

	Myth	Reality
1	Progress is through external knowledge without taking account of internal affairs.	Physics or Chemistry cannot teach us how to become better human beings.
2	Making profits at the cost of lives is a legitimate business strategy.	Human life is infinitely precious and cost benefit analysis is not viable.
3	Everyone aims to maximize happiness that comes from utility of consumption.	Happiness actually comes with developing social relationships.
4	Social relationships are hurdles to make progress through money.	Social relationships create love, cooperation, sympathy which we all need as human beings.
5	Welfare is gained by material goods.	Material goods and facilities for better living can bring no happiness if you are deprived of family, friends, social relationships.
6	Human resource is an input to the production function. $Y = f(K, L)$.	Human beings are the purpose of creation. Wealth is an input to production of human
7	The purpose of life is to earn money, and everything else is subordinate to this goal.	All humans are born with amazing and unique potential & capabilities. The purpose of life is to develop these capabilities to the fullest.
8	Humans are like robots and behaviors can be predicted by mathematical formulae.	Human beings have free will, choice, ability to change, and hence unpredictable behavior.

The failures of modern European Social Science are demonstrated by the continuous wars, increasing inequality, environmental catastrophes which threaten the planet. For example, killing children for profit; almost no human can favor this but today modern corporations do it routinely. For instance, companies sell baby milk powder for profits, knowing that this can lead to deaths among children; the arms lobby in the USA has blocked all efforts to restrict sales of firearms, even though incidents of people shooting crowds of innocents occur routinely; Madeleine Albright declared on public TV that it was fair to kill half a million children in Iraq for political benefits.

The economic theories currently being taught say that profit is the primary business of business, and they should not be concerned about socially responsible behavior. The misconception that money leads to happiness

has made people obsessed with making money, having successful careers, and increasing standards of life and having high levels of consumption. However, this increasing wealth has come at the cost of neglect of family, friends and social relationships, leading to breakdown of families. In a society where more than 50% of the children are growing up without fathers, how can they learn about love, cooperation and sacrifice, and how can this lead to happiness?

The consequences of western mis-education in social sciences include: 1) Death of spirituality, 2) no knowledge of human development, and eventually, 3) the collapse of the society.

How did the West go astray?

Given that the West has made so much progress in so many areas, it comes as a great surprise to

know that they can make such huge blunders in their development of the social sciences. This requires some explanation, since the dominant versions of history are highly Eurocentric – that is, they portray history in a way which puts Europe at the center of the stage.

The truth is that the dark ages of Europe ended when they conquered Islamic Spain, This happened because an increasing taste for luxuries led to decay and degeneration in the advanced Civilization of Islamic Spain – Al-Andalus. It took two centuries for Europeans to absorb and assimilate the treasure of knowledge found in the millions of books in libraries of Andalus. This is what led to the Enlightenment of Europe. This process led to a crisis of thought when primitive philosophies adopted from Greeks and Romans by the Catholic Church were overturned by the influx of new knowledge. This was called the battle of Science and Religion, in which “science” defeated the Catholic religion in Europe. This victory of science led to the emergence of several mistaken lines of thought in Europe, which lie at the root of their current mistaken ideas about social science. Three of these major mistakes are listed as follows.

1. Europeans came to believe that religion is a superstition which requires belief in the unseen. They invented the philosophy of logical positivism which rejects the possibility of knowledge about the unseen and requires us to confine knowledge only that which we can observe.
2. Europeans decided to apply methods of science to the study of human beings and societies. The types of mistakes that this led to is discussed in greater detail in an earlier post of mine, titled “Method or Madness?”
3. Completely mistaken ideas about the nature

of human beings and societies emerged from their mistaken idea that the mind is the only reliable source of knowledge, and we must reject the heart and soul of human beings. (The post, “The Coca-Cola Theory of Happiness” describes this in more detail).

Because of these major mistakes at the heart of European thought, they were never able to construct good theories in their social sciences. As a result, the modern theories of economics are found on entirely wrong assumptions about human beings and can be rejected completely. Unfortunately, today the Muslims have lost all confidence in their heritage, and accept any kind of false and misleading idea if it comes from the West.

Way Forward.

We Muslims are in ‘compound ignorance’ – that is, we think we know Islam, when we actually don’t. Allah T’aala has gifted us with extremely precious knowledge, which changed the destiny of the ignorant and backward Arabs, and made them leaders of the world 1400 years ago. This knowledge has the same power today, but Muslims are neglecting it. Correcting the foundations for economics as a social science requires a deep understanding of the nature of humans. Islam provides us with the knowledge required to transform human beings from the lowest of the low to the best among the creation. Today, what we need is to utilize this knowledge to create an inner transformation within ourselves, and to show the world the path out of the current darkness which envelops humanity.



Memoirs of Hazrat Mufti Taqi Usmani ولست برکاتهم

My respected mother, Mohtarma Nafessa Khatoon Sahiba, may Allah ﷻ bless her abundantly, was an exemplary mother and an exceptional homemaker. She belonged to an Ansari family hailing from Deoband. One can write volumes on how she stood beside my respected father through thick and thin. I penned this down when she left for her heavenly abode in *Naqoosh e Raftagaan*. She was a very righteous and devout woman whose routines pertaining to *tilawat*, *dhikr* and optional prayers didn’t suffer until she lost consciousness. For us, she was love and gentleness personified; a person whose life was devoted to making ours easy and

comfortable. To meet this end she would often sacrifice her own comfort and ease. Though she loved all her children equally but owing to probably being the youngest, I received the largest share of her love which resulted in the fact that I ate only when she fed me with her own hands; else, I would not eat at all. My attachment with her was such that she could never visit even neighbours, without me following her there.

In those times, in a town like Deoband, there were no means of transport such as automobiles. Those who had never left Deoband had never seen cars. Horse-carts were the only option for



covering long distances within the town, which too were used by men only. It was not deemed appropriate for Muslim women to use them even when burqa-clad. If a long journey had to be undertaken, curtains would be drawn around all four sides of the carts and only then Muslim women would sit inside. In order to move between relatively closer neighbourhoods, *palki* was used. In Deoband, we called it *doli*. The two men who carried it were called *kohaar*. When a woman needed a ride, *Kohaars* would place *palki* inside the house and stand outside, waiting. The lady would get seated, oft times, with a stone along to keep *kohaars* from realizing her actual weight (their piety made them do *purdah* of their weight as well). At times kids fancied a ride with their mothers, in such instances the stone was obviously not needed. Therefore when my mother used to visit her family, she would take me along. Due to the curtains, though I wouldn't know my surroundings but would enjoy the bouncing motion. In our own Deobandi dialect, we would say that we are having great *bariaan* (We are enjoying our ride).

We were nine siblings. The eldest sister, Respected Naeema Sahiba (may her soul rest in peace), who was called *Apa jaan* was married long before my birth. Her two daughters and a son were also older than I was. Even though she had a pleasant disposition and all brothers and sisters were very friendly with her, I had far greater deference towards her; even more than I had for my mother. The reason probably was that she resided in *Tela*, a suburb that was not very far from our place. Though the house was located on a small hill, to me it didn't seem less than a mountain. She used to live in that home with her husband, Hakeem Saeed Shareef Hussain (may his soul rest in peace) who, in his temper and bearing, was like the *nawaab* of *Odh*. An exceptional level of cleanliness was maintained in the home. He couldn't bear even a wrinkle on his sheets.

Whenever I visited them, accompanied by someone older, I would start playing with my nephew and nieces who were my age-mates. Once, while playing, I got on my sister's bed with my dirty feet. She gave me a stare and asked me to stop right there using words that I wasn't wise

enough to understand. Though I didn't even understand the meaning of the difficult expression she used fully but the way she gazed, stuck with me for long. It took some time for me to become friendly with her after this occurrence. At that time, I didn't even know that looking at somebody with anger is called *staring*. It was only when she narrated the event to my brothers and sisters that I heard the word, "stare" for the first time. My eldest sister passed away at the age of thirty-four, I was thirteen years old at that time. May Allah ﷻ grant her *Jannat-ul-Firdous*. In financially trying times, the way she lived her life with dignity and self-respect is a rare example. I would like to share an event in this regard.

She once requested our respected father to make *dua* that she be called for Hajj. Father asked, "Are you fond of performing Hajj?" She nodded, to which my father replied, "No, you are not." Amazed, she insisted saying, "Truly, I really want to perform Hajj." Our esteemed father asked, "Have you saved any money for this purpose?" She denied in response. Then father said, "This means your intent is true only verbally, if it was a real wish, you would have saved something for its realization." She reasoned by saying, "I can only save if any amount is left after covering all expenses," to which he replied, "Can't you save even an *anaa* (a dime)?" She said she could save that much but how can the expenditure of Hajj be covered by that? Our father responded, "When a person takes the first step for a good cause, according to his means, Allah ﷻ helps him and even if the task is not accomplished, one does get its reward from Allah ﷻ but only wishes, in the absence of actions, don't bear any fruit.

When she passed away in 1956, her inheritors found a small pouch amid her belongings. It was tagged as 'Money for Hajj'. There were sixty-five rupees in it. My father wept after seeing it and narrated the whole incident to us. That amount was contributed to the expenses for her *Hajj-e-Badal*. Once my father was in *Araafat* during Hajj; he dreamt of *Apa jaan* as she climbed *Jabl-e-Rahmah*. Thus Allah ﷻ helped her perform Hajj in another realm. May Allah ﷻ bless her with His all-encompassing mercy. *Ameen*.

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