

The Intellect

Al Quran
Surah Maida – Part 5

Al Hadith
Seeker of the world cannot
keep himself from Sinning

The Awakening
Stay Hopeful! - Part 2

2020
*Looking
Back*

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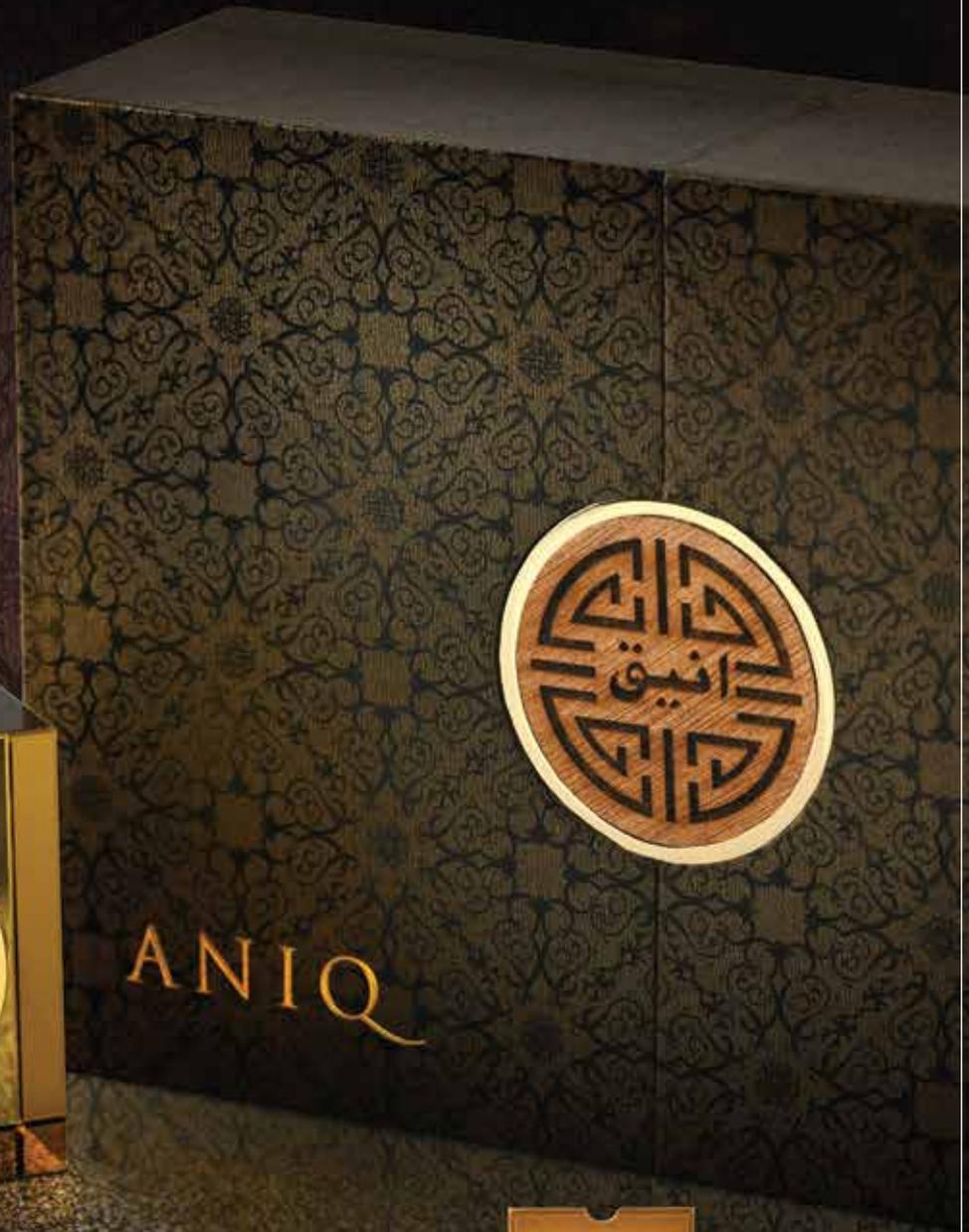


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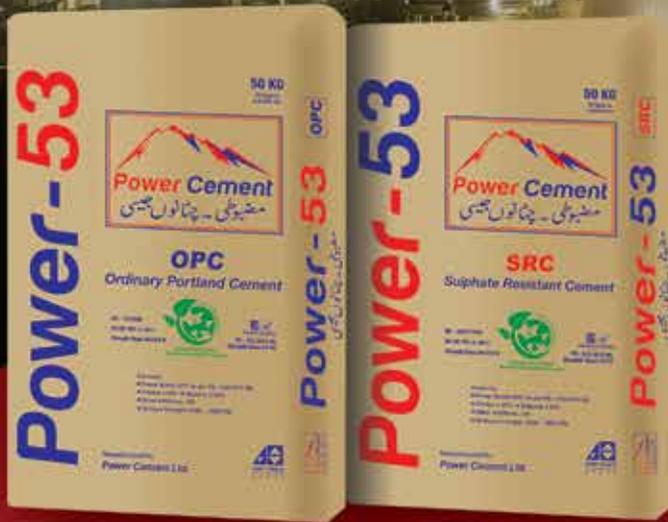
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Editorial



Let's admit it: there seems no end in sight to this virus. With variant upon variant making itself known and warding off every new vaccine, Covid-19 is a nuisance that's here to stay. We have to accept life with it and there seems to be no plan B in the offing.

But is it possible that some good has come out of it? Has it made us more resilient, more aware of our fragility, more conscious of our fallibility? With so much loss, morbidity and despair throughout the world, both physical / emotional and financial, has it opened anyone's eyes to the reality of the *dunya* and all that it entails?

Our *Cover Story* extracts some positive learning points from this bleakness and offers a ray of hope for optimists and pessimists alike. And with the approach of Ramadan, we all can make an extra effort to beseech our loving Lord ﷻ to help us traverse all the tests that come our way, *inshAllah*.

In *Slippery Stone – an inquiry into Islam's stance on music*, the esteemed writer, Mr. Khalid Baig, interestingly points out:

"Many people can see the pollution caused by the exhaust from the car. But few notice the pollution caused by the car speakers. When they talk about noise pollution, critics usually talk about the din of motor vehicles or heavy construction machinery. But what about the sound pollution caused by music machines? There is hardly a place that is beyond the reach of these machines. They surround us like an octopus. The embrace may feel soft but it is deadly..."

...This proliferation of music has produced a desensitization that has made such things normal and acceptable that would have been unthinkable in the not-too-distant past. Today's flourishing Muslim music groups are a loud reminder of this change. Some labor under the notion that they are harnessing the power of music to serve the cause of Islam. For many others the appeal is simple: the issue is too confusing; let us have fun".

It is easy to brush under the carpet any thoughts about issues one is uncomfortable with in accepting as forbidden, but to an open and unbiased mind, there's no confusion at all: there are clear *Ahadith* that prohibit music and the Qur'an keeps reminding us to keep a safe distance from all that is vain and leads to sin. No number of eloquent speeches from pseudo-jurists can change the clear and lucid stance



taken by Islam regarding all such diversions.

The inclusion in *Action Alerts* provides some tips to tackle this issue head-on.

In the Spotlight, this time we feature an inspirational exchange with Dr. Mufti Abdur-Rehman ibn Yusuf Mangera, a British Muslim scholar educated in both the Islamic and Western traditions. He has studied at the Dar ul Uloom seminary Bury in UK, and also at Mazahir ul 'Ulum, Saharanpur, India and has earned his PhD in Islamic studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Mufti Sb. is the founder of Whitethread Institute, a post-graduate institute for Islamic scholars and he delivers lectures at fora the world over.

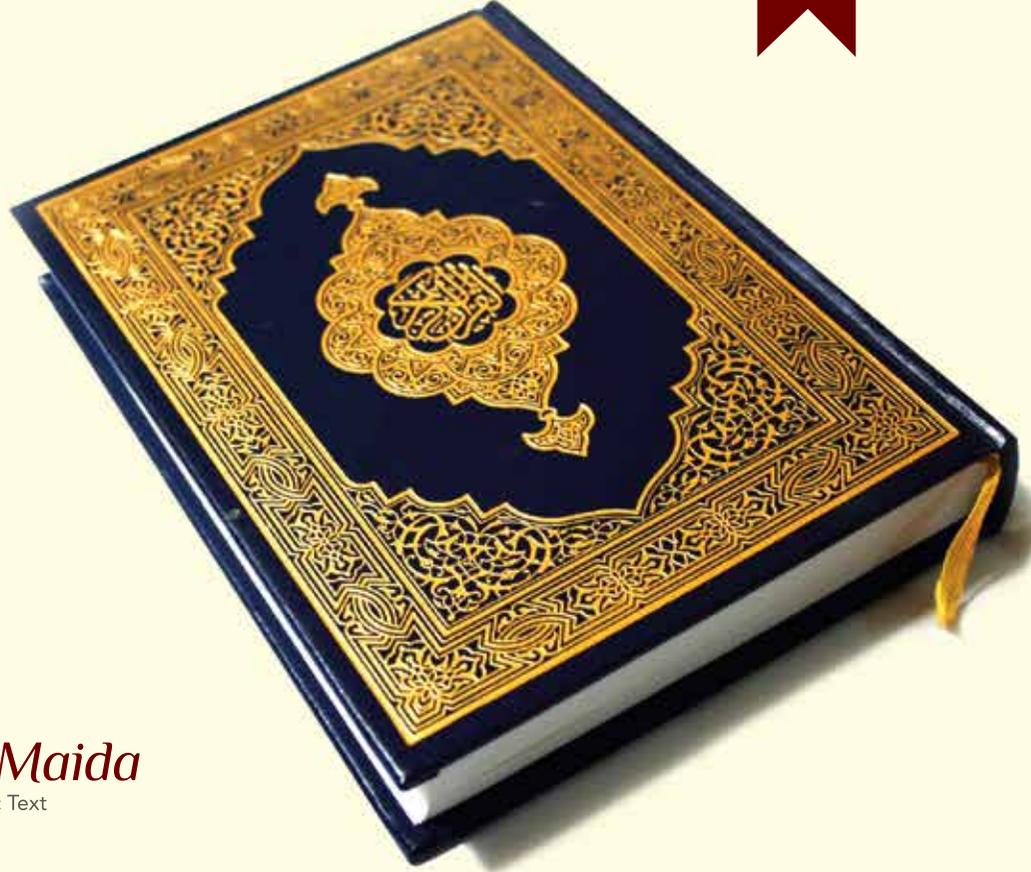
We are sure you would *inshAllah* enjoy reading his interview.

There are times in our lives when we find ourselves standing before a wall, a barrier which seems unsurmountable, a divider between us and some elusive goal or 'happiness'. Had it been some console game, a pot of gold earned at a previous level could unlock a secret latch and rev us up to the next stage, over the intractable wall. But this is real life. So, what do we do now?

A number of us would become despondent, maybe irritable; some would totally give up, yet others would take up the path of the protagonist in a story of hope called *Children around us*; turn to read it in our *Reflections* section...

The Intellect team requests all our readers to remember us and all those suffering from physical, emotional or spiritual ailments in their special Ramadan prayers.

Wassalam,
Zawjah Farid



Surah Al Maida

Translation with Arabic Text

The Meanings of the Quran

By Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani رحمته الله

وَإِذَا جَاءُوكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَقَدْ دَخَلُوا بِالْكَفْرِ وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوا بِهِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

When they come to you, they say, "We believe", while with disbelief they came in, and with the same (disbelief) they went out. Allah knows best what they used to conceal. [61]

وَتَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتِ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

You will see many of them rushing towards sin and aggression, and (towards) devouring what is unlawful. Evil indeed is what they have been doing. [62]

لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّخْتَةَ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

Why do the Men of Allah and the Men of Knowledge not forbid them from saying what is sinful and devouring what is unlawful? Evil indeed is what they have been working. [63]

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلُعِنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ يُنفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا: وَأَلْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ: كُلَّمَا أَوْقَدُوا نَارًا لِلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَأَهَا اللَّهُ: وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا: وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

The Jews said, "Allah's hand is fettered," ³⁷ Fettered are their own hands, and cursed are they for what they said. In fact, His hands are outspread. He spends as He wills. What has been sent down to you from your Lord shall certainly increase many of them in rebellion and disbelief. We have put enmity and hatred amongst them lasting to the Day of Doom. ³⁸ Whenever they lit the flame of war, Allah puts it out. They run about on the earth spreading mischief, ³⁹ and Allah does not like the mischief-makers. [64]

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأَدْخَلْنَاَهُمُ الْجَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾

If the People of the Book had believed and feared Allah, We would have written off their evil deeds and would have surely admitted them to the Gardens of Bliss. [65]

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ: مِّنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

If they had upheld the Torah and the Injil and what had been sent down to them from their Lord, they would surely have had plenty to eat from above them and from beneath them. Among them are moderate people⁴⁰. As for most of them, evil is what they do. [66]

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ رَبِّكَ وَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ: وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

O Messenger, convey all that has been sent down to you from your Lord. If you do not, then you shall not have conveyed His message (at all). Allah shall protect you from the people. Surely, Allah does not lead the disbelieving people to the right path. [67]

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ تُقِيمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ
مِن رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

Say, "O people of the Book, you have nothing to stand on, unless you uphold the Torah and the Injil and what has been sent down to you from your Lord."⁴¹ What has been sent down to you from your Lord will certainly make many of them more persistent in rebellion and disbelief. So, do not grieve over the disbelieving people. [68]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئُونَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

Surely, those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Sabians, and the Christians - whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, and acts righteously, shall have no fear, nor shall such people grieve.⁴² [69]

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ رُسُلًا كَلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا كَذَّبُوا وَفَرِيقًا
يَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

Certainly We took a pledge from the children of Israeli and sent Messengers to them. Whenever a Messenger went to them with what did not meet their desires, they cried lie to some, and killed others. [70]

وَحَسِبُوا أَنَّا لَآ تَكُونُ فِتْنَةً فَعَمُوا وَصَمُّوا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ عَمُوا وَصَمُّوا كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

They thought that no harm would follow. Therefore, they became blind and deaf. Then, Allah accepted their repentance, but again they turned blind and deaf, many of them. Allah is watchful of what they do. [71]





Explanation

37) In accordance with Arabic idiom, this would mean that Allah is niggardly. These blasphemous words were uttered by the Jews of Madinah when they faced decline in their financial resources as a divine punishment for their rebellious attitude towards the truth.

38) This refers to the mutual disputes of the Jews themselves that were based on their personal jealousy and sectarian prejudices.

39) This means that they frequently intend to wage war against Muslims, but whenever they do so, Allah frustrates their plans. Then they adopt other ways to spread mischief, like speaking ill of the Muslims before new converts, conspiring against them, preventing people from accepting Islam and presenting distorted version of Torah.

40) This refers to those of them who accepted Islam, like 'Abdullah Ibn Salam.

41) Upholding Torah and Injil means to act upon them, which includes believing in the prophethood of the Holy Prophet ﷺ because both divine books contain detailed instructions about the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

42) Please see notes on 2:62



Seeker of the World Cannot Keep Himself from Sinning

From *Ma'arif ul Qur'an*
by Maulana Manzoor Naumani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Seeker of the World Cannot Keep Himself from Sinning

171/31: Anas رضی اللہ عنہ relates that the Messenger ﷺ of Allah one day asked: "Is there anyone who walks on water and his feet do not get wet?" "Our Master, it cannot be," he was told. "In the same way," remarked the Prophet, "The worldly-minded cannot remain free from sin."

Commentary: The worldly-minded, in the above saying, signifies one who is intent on worldly gain and pleasure. Such a person cannot remain safe from sin. But if the ultimate aim of the bondsman remains the seeking of the countenance of his Lord, and occupation in worldly interests is only a means to it, then he will not be considered worldly-minded. It will not be difficult for him to keep away from sinful acts in spite of his apparent engagement in worldly pursuits.

Allah protects whom He loves from the World

172/32: It is related by Qatadah ibn Nu'man that

the Messenger ﷺ of Allah said: "When Allah loves anyone, He makes him avoid the world, as you make patient avoid water (when it is harmful for him)" *Tirmidhi* and *Musnad Ahmad*.

Commentary: This 'world', as we have seen, means the world that makes one forgetful of Allah and in getting absorbed in which there is the loss of the Hereafter. Hence, whom Allah loves, He protects them against this wretched world as an ill person is, sometimes, made to abstain from water.

A Wayfarer

173/33: Abdullah ibn Umar رضی اللہ عنہما relates that the Messenger ﷺ of Allah once said to him grasping his shoulders with his hands: "Live in the world as if you were a stranger or a wayfarer."

Commentary: Just as a traveller does not consider an inn or a foreign country his home, a truthful believer should also not imagine the world to be his real abode as if he was going to

live here forever.

The way of life that the Divine Messengers have preferred for mankind rests upon the principle that man should treat his earthly sojourn to be purely temporary and prepare ardently for Hereafter as if he was actually seeing it, rather, living in it. One's life falls in with the wishes and teachings of the Prophets ﷺ to the extent to which one succeeds in producing this state within oneself, and those who fall short of it their life has nothing in common with the precepts taught by them.

This World and the Next

•174/34: 'Amr ibn al-'Aas narrated that one day the Messenger ﷺ of Allah delivered a sermon in which he said: "Listen and remember! The world is a temporary bargain which, for the time being, is ready money (but has no real value, and hence,) everyone, virtuous or wicked, has a share in it and everyone eats from it. But believe it, the Hereafter is an unalterable reality which is bound to come at an appointed time, and in which the All-powerful Sovereign will judge (about reward and punishment according to the deeds of men on Earth). Remember, all that is good and pleasing, and everything connected therewith, is in Heaven, while all that is vicious and painful, and everything connected therewith, is in Hell. So beware! (Whatever you do) do it with the fear of Allah (and earnest anxiety for the Hereafter), and believe that you will be presented before the Lord with your

deeds. Thus, whoever does a good deed, even if it is equivalent to the weight of an atom, he shall see it, and whoever does an evil deed, even if it is equivalent to the weight of an atom, he, too, shall get it back" (*Musnad Imam Shafai'ee*).

Commentary: The greatest misfortune of man and the root of all evil is that he spends his life in disregard of the commands of Allah ﷻ and makes the satisfaction of his inordinate desires the sole aim of living. He does so because whatever is in the world is present before his eyes all the time, while Allah ﷻ and the Hereafter are invisible. The only way to guard men against the danger, therefore, is that the futility and worthlessness of the material world and the importance and superiority of Hereafter is presented before them forcefully and a sustained effort is made to bring certainty to their minds about the Day of Judgment, the Final Requital, and the Heaven and Hell. This is the gist of the Prophet's ﷺ sermon.

Unfortunately, in modern times, the transitoriness of the world and the value and importance of the Hereafter and the reality of Heaven and Hell are not dwelt upon and spoken about in religious preaching and exhortation with the emphasis and force of conviction they deserve. The general tendency is to explain the tenets of Faith in a way that is peculiar to materialistic ideologies and movements. It is a most alarming trend which should be set right soon.

The Pens have been Lifted...

On the authority of Abdullah bin Abbas, who said : One day I was behind the prophet ﷺ and he said to me: "Young man, I shall teach you some words [of advice] : Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask of Allah; if you seek help, seek help of Allah. Know that if the Nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, it would benefit you only with something that Allah had already prescribed for you, and that if they gather together to harm you with anything, they would harm you only with something Allah had already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried."

- Tirmidhi

Finality of Prophethood and the Coming of Jesus

By Mawlana Qari Muhammad Tayyib
Translated by Hamood Aleem

(Translator's note: The *nuzul* (descent) of Sayyiduna 'Isa / Jesus (peace be upon him) in the last of times is an undeniable reality. In his book *Aftab-e-Nubuwwat*, Mawlana Qari Muhammad Tayyib, the late rector of Darul 'Ulum Deoband and the great grandson of its founder, Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi, brings to light a wisdom of this *nuzul*. He explains that the coming of Sayyiduna 'Isa (peace be upon him) as a follower of the Last Prophet ﷺ rather than as an independent prophet is a clear proof and reinforcement of the concept of *khatm al-nubuwwah* (finality of prophethood). The idea that the coming of Sayyiduna 'Isa (peace be upon him) in the time period of the Last Prophet ﷺ somehow contradicts *khatm al-nubuwwah* as some falsely argue is soundly debunked through the brief discussion below.)

The comprehensiveness of perfection in character that exists in the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is clearly understood from the incident wherein Siddiqah 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) was asked about the prophetic character. She responded, "His character was the Qur'an" (Ahmad). In other words, all of that which exists in the Qur'an in the form of knowledge exists in the form of character and aptitude in the Prophet ﷺ ... Since the Qur'an encompasses [the knowledge of] all the previous books and is a collection of the Prophet ﷺ character, this establishes that his character encompasses all the characteristics of the previous prophets. This is a clear proof for the Prophet ﷺ being the finality of the perfection in character and being at the

highest degree of perfection in creation. Hence, it is self-evident from this that the Blessed One ﷺ in whom all the foundations of prophethood are contained and who is superior to all, only he can then be the primary one (*asl*) of these foundations (prophets).

A covenant was taken from the prophets to believe, follow and aid the Prophet [Muhammad] ﷺ on the basis of him being the primary prophet as is clear from the verse of the Qur'an, "When Allah took the covenant of the prophets"(3:81). The Prophet ﷺ elucidated, in light of this verse, that the previous prophets are all under a final prophet by saying, "If Musa (peace be upon him) was alive, he would have had no option except to follow me" (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah). The upshot of this is that Musa (peace be upon him) – the resolute messenger who was given a *shari'ah* – had to be obeyed [by mankind] in the absence of the final prophet but in the presence of the Final Prophet, rather than being the one who is to be obeyed, he becomes the one who obeys [the Final Prophet]. This is only possible when his rank is deemed below the Final Prophet's rank, because in reality all the control and authority of the one who is subordinate (*ma taht*) comes from the one above (*ma fawq*), i.e., it is given to him by the one who is higher in authority.

[The principle is that] in the presence of the primary authority, the authority of the secondary is nonexistent. This is exactly like the prime minister saying to his [subordinate] ministers, "In

my presence, none of you has full authority. Your ability to command comes into effect only in my absence." It can be understood from this that the authority of the one below is nonexistent in the presence of the one above him, even if the rank of the one below customarily remains intact. This principle is not just restricted to this case, but rather this is the case of every primary and secondary entity in any sphere, i.e., in the presence of the primary, the secondary has no control. In the presence of the father, for example, his own son (who has his own children) would feel shy in calling himself "father" in front of him, let alone pointing to or using his right of fatherhood. This is because his fatherhood is secondary to his father's fatherhood, and in the presence of the primary, the status of the secondary does not remain. Furthermore, for example, one would feel shy in referring to a stream as a "river" if the ocean is right in front of him, because [the reality is that] wherever a body of water exists it is directly or indirectly fed by the ocean. This is why once all these mighty rivers reach the ocean, they flow into the ocean's flow. Their own rate of flow does not remain intact. Also, for example, stars would feel shy to refer to themselves as radiant when the sun is shining, because their primary star is in front of them. In the presence of the primary, the secondary feels shy of its own existence, let alone becoming a claimant to its [independent] existence.

In the same manner, upon the rising of the Sun of all Guidance ﷺ, it is natural and innate for all the prophets to conform to this Final Prophet rather than implement their own law, i.e., rather than ruling according to their own prophethood or commanding [others] to rule by them. This is the same reality which has been made clear in the above-mentioned *hadith* that if a

previous prophet finds himself in the period of the Final Prophet, the laws of the finality of prophethood (*khatm al-nubuwwah*) shall apply upon him and his nation rather than his own laws ... which in reality is a clear proof for the Final Prophet ﷺ being primary in perfection, and all non-final prophets being secondary in [this] perfection.

Even though the above-mentioned *hadith* in regards to Musa (peace be upon him) portrays a hypothetical scenario but when in the period [this refers to the period we are in today in which no new prophet is due to arrive] of the Prophet ﷺ, 'Isa (or Jesus) (peace be upon him) will be made to descend from the heavens, he will [in actuality] follow the religion of the Final Prophet. In fact, it is possible that 'Isa (peace be upon him) was raised to the heavens alive, so that he be made to descend from the heavens to the earth in the last period to make this very reality apparent, such that in the age of strife he perform renewal (*tajdid*) of the Shar'iah of the Prophet ﷺ, while obeying it, with all the powers of his prophethood. Therefore, through this, the obedience of a previous prophet to the Shari'ah of the Prophet ﷺ no longer remains a matter of creed (*aqidah*) only, but rather a practical example will [now] be in front of all.

This practical example also establishes that this is not just in reference to a single Israelite messenger, but rather the adherence of all the Israelite prophets is established through this because 'Isa (peace be upon him) is the final prophet of the Banu Isra'il and the last link in the chain of the Israelite prophethood (*nubuwwah*). If the last link of a continuous chain is pulled in one direction, the entire chain will naturally be pulled in the same direction. The ruling of the last link in the chain will be

considered the ruling of the entire chain. Therefore, there is no reason to not accept this as proof for the entire chain of [Israelite] prophets to be followers of the way of the Prophet ﷺ, after the descent of 'Isa (peace be upon him) as a follower of the way of the Prophet ﷺ, as he is the last link in the chain of Banu Isra'il prophets.

Especially when this is [also] in accordance with the Torah's clarification, as has been mentioned in *hadiths*, that Musa (peace be upon him) supplicated, "If the likes of the *ummah* of Muhammad cannot be given to me then include me in it". Therefore, the final prophet of Musa (peace be upon him)'s chain [i.e. 'Isa, peace be upon him] will be sent as a reviver of Islam and as a follower of the Shari'ah of the Prophet ﷺ. 'Isa (peace be upon him) will be included in the *ummah* of the Prophet ﷺ to fulfill the desire of Musa (peace upon him). As 'Isa (peace be upon him) is a prophet who is the end point of the Israelites, when he becomes a member of the *ummah* of the Prophet ﷺ, the entirety of Israelite prophethood from Musa to 'Isa (peace be upon them both) becomes included in the *ummah* of the Prophet ﷺ as followers.

Through the connection between the first and last, i.e., through making apparent the obedience to the way of the Prophet ﷺ by the very first Israelite messenger (Musa) and the very last ('Isa), all of the Israelite messengers – who were the most superior in the world in their respective times – are as a result proven to be followers of the Prophet ﷺ. In addition to this, all the earlier

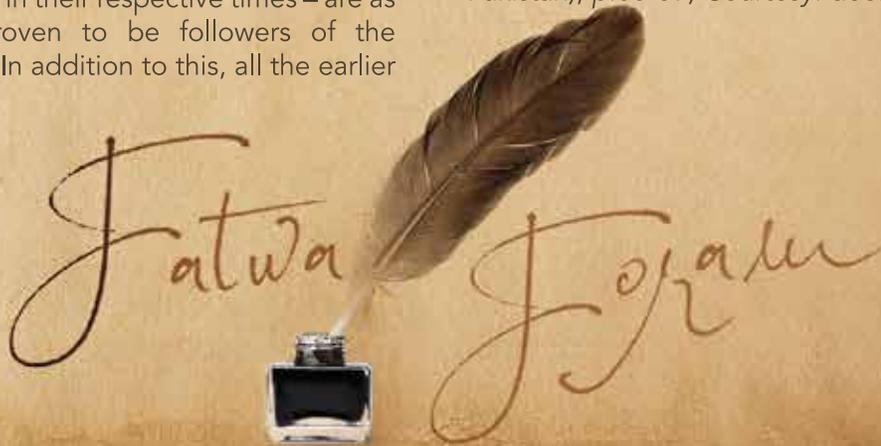
prophethoods which culminated in the station of Isra'iliyyah, due to them being the predecessors to Isra'iliyyah, are included in this following of the Prophet ﷺ [as well]. Consequently, the same ruling is derived for all the prophets (peace be upon them), i.e., their prophethoods are considered secondary to the final prophethood. Through this, it becomes evident that the Prophet ﷺ is the prophet of the prophets (*nabi al-anbiya*).

From this, another issue is clarified in regards to the period of the Prophet ﷺ, which is the last period, if the prophets have no option but to practice obedience to the Prophet ﷺ, then it is an open declaration that their nations also have no option but to be obedient to the Final Prophet. In fact, salvation in the Hereafter is restricted to the religion of the Final Prophet [as the Qur'an declares]:

"If anyone seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him: he will be one of the losers in the Hereafter." (3:85)

Thus, the title of *Khatam al-Nabiyyin* (Finality of the Prophets) has made apparent the primary nature of the prophethood of the Final Prophet ﷺ and that he is the one who is followed in the universal sense.

(*Aftab-e-Nubuwwat (Idarah Islamiyyat, Pakistan)*, p.86-89; Courtesy: deoband.org)



Stay Hopeful!

Translation series of Maulana Abdul Sattar رحمۃ اللہ علیہ spiritual discourses
Translation by Zawja Asim

Abstaining from capturing pictures

Pictures of *na-mehram* and obscene images are becoming part of our lives; have we ever thought that these will be a cause of our doom? These are our destruction! The programs running on the television screens and the obscene pictures we see every day in newspapers, do we think of them as destructive and do we have remorse for them? Do we think of them as an ill? The reality is that we don't think of them as being destructive, and that is why we don't repent and the obligation remains unfulfilled.

Who's eligible for success?

If we don't fulfill this obligation (of repentance), the first step towards *jannah* would also not be taken. Just as prayer, fasting, zakah and Hajj are

obligatory, similarly tawbah is also mandatory for the believers.

"O you who have believed, repent to Allah with sincere repentance" (Surah Tehreem: 8).

"And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed" (Surah Noor: 31).

Allah ﷻ does not talk of attaining success on any one obligation, not after namaz, not after zakah, not after Hajj, but He mentions tawbah as being an obligation in itself - *O believers! Repent (and) you will succeed!*

Today the most ignored obligation is that of *tawbah*, and the example for it is such that there's a bottomless pitcher and we are continuously

pouring milk in it, so in this way there won't be anything left in it. If *tawbah* is not done then how can *iman* reside in heart?

The first step of *islah* is to fulfill the obligation of *tawbah*; that is why when a man wishes to change his life he fulfils this obligation first; when he goes to a pious man of Allah he is first made to do *tawbah*;

"And leave what is apparent of sin and what is concealed thereof" (Surah Al-an'am; 120).

Tawbah is Essential for Every Sin

The sins which are a norm and those which are not, it's necessary to do *tawbah* from all. Lying, for example, cannot be called lawful even if everyone is doing it. Another example is that of illicit talk and pictures of *na-mehram* - very common sins these days -, these do not become lawful even if everyone indulges in them! Interest and bribes arriving in every home do not imply that these things become lawful. Lying has become a skill. Spreading false rumours has become a part of journalism – all these are unlawful (*haram*). Unless *tawbah* has not been sought from all of these sins, *islah* cannot take place. Similarly, backbiting is common but it is also a sin, and seeking *tawbah* is necessary for it as well.

Acts of Piety devoid of Barakah...

Although we perform acts of piety, make sure we remain in good company too, perform prayers, give charity, when it comes to stepping on to one's lower self (*nafs*), we fail. When it comes to keeping away from base desires and interests, we give in to our *nafs*. Such is our condition during weddings and other happy occasions; it seems as if we have no link with the *deen*. Similarly, we remain careless when things start going against the *Shariah* in various walks of life – be it the *tarbiyah* of children or business matters. When it comes to pleasing our *nafs*, there remains no

difference between the one who prays and the one who doesn't, between the one who fasts, and the one who doesn't; the children of a Haji and a non-haji appear to be one and the same; their matters of life proceed likewise – sins are there but no sign of repentance. Their acts of piety did not give them the strength it takes to curb the inner self, and stay consistent in their piety.

The sin of backbiting has also become a norm in our lives - talking about someone day in and day out behind their back. A sin that has absolutely no benefit or gain, but without which no gathering seems entertaining!

The Standard of Virtue

My dear! There are people who do not do good, and then there are those who are tired of doing good yet they remain at a loss:

laboring, exhausted. They will enter into the scorching fire (Al-Ghashiyah, 3-4).

These people tire themselves out in doing good but receive nothing in the end, because they have not fulfilled the obligation of *tawbah* – the sins are also being committed along side. The standard, of one's piety, however, is that a person gets to repent, that is he makes sincere *tawbah*.

To be continued, insha'Allah



A photograph of four hands, two from the left and two from the right, reaching up to form a circle. The hands are positioned against a background of a sunset or sunrise over a hilly, rocky landscape. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow with rays of light. The hands are of various skin tones and are wearing jewelry: a gold ring on the top right hand and a silver watch on the bottom right hand. The overall mood is one of unity and reflection.

2020 Looking Back

By Mariam Maajid Sharif

For the very first time in my life, I look back at the sprawling timeline of twelve months laid out in front of me. I feel as if it challenges me to join all those social media posts, rife with disparaging comments about the year, and cocks an eyebrow which seems to say, joining the naysayers, are we?

So here's my take on the infamous 2020.

It affected most of the world's population to a degree, if not the whole. From the larger macrocosmic structures to our microcosmic spheres, everything was upended. It's

mind-blowing, how a minute microscopic menace had the power to fell the world and bring it to its knees, leaving scientists, doctors and medical experts aghast and helpless at the ensuing devastation. Does it end here? No. Our lives have irrevocably changed. In our own little worlds, we were compelled to adjust to a lifestyle so glaringly different from what we were accustomed to. And like every other person out there, I struggled to adjust too. Sometimes it felt as if the year had brought nothing but trials. But looking back, I can truly say that 2020 had been the making of me in ways I had never imagined. I,

of course, cannot categorically say if it has made me into a better person or not, but I am conscious of a different, broader perspective on life, spiritual development and psychological growth. For weeks, I reflected at length over whether I should pen down and share the significant lessons I had learnt this year or not. What held me back was, why would anyone even want to know? But it occurred to me that when I come across a similar piece of writing, I often find it to be relatable and insightful and that helps me gain perspective. So, here's my summary of eight major lessons that the past year had taught me.

1. There is *Khayr* in everything that happens. It is a statement easy to voice yet it takes considerable effort to start having this belief. Especially when everything around you seems to be falling apart and you feel like nothing is going right, it takes a staggering amount of effort to pull yourself together and convince yourself that there is good in whatever is happening. Today, I look back and I see innumerable lasting good things that resulted from just a handful of trials. And yes, the sneaky thought does sidle up that says, 'But I didn't deserve the pain it gave' or 'Was it worth all that pain?' Don't let it mess with you. And even if you are unable to see the good, never falter in your belief that Allah ﷻ has planned what is best for you. *QadrAllah*, it was at the start of this lockdown when I randomly came across a beautiful *du'a* that became my companion for the year and strengthened my faith.

رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ

"Oh Lord I am in desperate need of the good you send down to me" (Quran 28:24)

2. Gratitude: Something I realized had become an oft repeated statement of this year for me: Man is ungrateful by nature. Being isolated twice allowed me hours of rumination and the long sleepless nights resulted in some deep reflection over just why exactly *Shukr* (gratitude) has such a high status in Islam and is

given so much importance. As humans, we tend to gravitate towards ingratitude because it comes to us so easily. Most of us must have had the '*meray saath hamesha burra hota hai*' and 'Nothing ever goes right in my life' moments several times this year. I did too. Until you realize just how many blessings you're surrounded with. This life is a test and every trial we face in this lifetime is also a test. Being grateful for what you have in life eases the way for you and gives a certain peace to your mind. And let's not forget that Allah ﷻ gives more when you're grateful. So

اللهم لك الحمد ولك الشكر

For all that we have and all that is to come.

3. *Sabr*. Patience. The most difficult lesson till date. Closely linked to *Shukr*. During the years I was a student of hadith, every time I would study one about *Sabr* it would really bother my mind that one has no choice but to be patient in a trial so what is it that we should not be doing? This year gave me the answer. The reason why *Sabr* and *Shukr* are so oft repeated and advised to hold on to, is because they don't come naturally. When faced by a trial, we might be patient because it is not as if we can actually change fate but all the difference is made by the fact that whether we choose to curse fate or we accept what happened and have faith in Allah ﷻ that He will surely ease the pain. And oh my, what a stupendous task that is. But once you start taking this route once, twice, thrice, it will gradually come to you itself.
4. I've always believed that the world isn't black and white, but I've never actually pondered over how that impacts our thought process. People are not black and white; we all are hues and shades of gray, aren't we? Viewing the world and people in black and white considerably limits perspective and mindset and let's not forget it leads to unfounded judgement. The other side always has their own story. Sometimes it is not just about right and wrong but rather about understanding the

other side and respecting their views and actions.

5. **Adaptation:** I might be going against the mainstream belief here, but I learnt that adaptation is not always about losing yourself. Sometimes it is what that ultimately gives you peace because it ends possible dissents that disturb an otherwise cordial environment. But obviously, never at the cost of losing one's self-worth.
6. **Controlling Anger:** The amount of destructive powers this emotion comes with! We all had our tempers hanging by a thread this year and sometimes this leads to disastrous outbreaks of anger which can inadvertently cause hurt and pain both in case of strangers and loved ones alike. It's one arduous task not to let anger get the better of us but trust me, life is infinitely better when you're not worrying about lashing out at people and later regretting it.
7. **Appreciation:** It doesn't take much to say a simple *JazakAllah* or thankyou to someone. Most of us are in the habit of saying it to strangers or when in a formal setting but somehow, we take things for granted when it comes to our family and loved ones. Thanking your mom for the lunch she makes after working for hours in the kitchen and telling her how good it is. Thanking your dad when he leaves his work for you. Sometimes when

you've had a long harrowing day, hearing these little statements rejuvenate you and give a sense of self-fulfillment.

8. **Psychological Well-being:** Peace of mind and psychological well-being should be a priority. Often, we find ourselves inextricably shackled by society and the concept of 'what will people say/think' that we tend to incline towards blocking out problems and burying them deeper in the mind only to find them potentially toxic and taking a huge toll on mental health. If you feel like you need to have closure in order to close a chapter of your life and move on, then seek that closure instead of waiting for it to happen on its own. Sometimes it requires turning a deaf ear towards judgement from people and whether it's a socially *munaasib* (appropriate) thing to do or not but societal requirements should not take precedence over mental health and the need for peace of mind.

I believe that every week of the past year had something to teach me. So, while I have become world-weary and battered with a new-found cynicism and more silver in my head than before, I am more than grateful to Allah ﷻ for blessing me with all that was good, shielding me from all that was toxic for me and for all the *khayr* that I'm unaware of. All I can say is that the Almighty always has the best plan. To better times *Insha'Allah!*

The Last Night...

Rasulullah ﷺ said, 'On the last night of Ramadhaan the fasting Muslims are forgiven.' The Sahaabah ﷺ inquired, 'O Rasulallah ﷺ, is that the night of power?' Rasulallah ﷺ replied, 'No! But it is only right that a servant should be given his reward on having completed his duty.' [Ahmad]

A Journey to San'aa, Yemen

Excerpted from Mufti Taqi Usmani Sb's *دُنْيَا مَرَايَ آغَايَ*
travelogue "Dunya Meray Aagay"
Translation: Zawjah Zia

I was only ten years old when I first heard that the name of the capital city of Yemen was San'aa. I used to learn *Maqamaat e Hariri* in Darul ul Uloom Karachi back then. In this book, each *Maqamah* (Assembly/Discourse) is attributed to some famous city. The first *Maqamah* therein is named "San'aa'iyah" and carries a folk-tale from the city of San'aa. I later learnt the significance of this city through *Ahadith* and books of History too but had not had a chance to visit it yet even though I have been to various countries of the Arabian Peninsula very frequently. Once, on my way to Nairobi, our plane had a brief transit / stopover at the San'aa airport, but we couldn't get off the plane or have a look at the city.

Incidentally this year (1422 H), I received an invitation from Sheikh Abdul Majeed Zandaani *Hafizahullah*, the founder and president of *Jamia tul Iman*, for an international gathering of *Ulema* that he wanted to arrange on 2nd May 2001, in honor of the first batch of students graduating from his *Jamia*. He keenly wished for me to join the gathering. Although there was another probable invitation from the Cairo Ministry of Awqaaf that I had in the same dates for the international conference there, but still I preferred to accept the invitation from Yemen for a number of reasons.

One of the reasons of course was that I was personally keen to visit this special place. It was not only because of the extraordinary

geographical and cultural attractions there, but because of the fact that Allah ﷻ has especially blessed this place like no other after the two Harams. The narrations of Hadith cite amazing virtues of Yemen and the people of Yemen. Moreover, this is a land of Prophets ﷺ, the blessed Companions ﷺ, the blessed generation after them and many elders of our *Deen* (May Allah have mercy upon them all). What could be more attractive for a Muslim!

One could draft a book out of the collection of the Qur'an and Sunnah traditions about the virtues of Yemen. A few examples are:

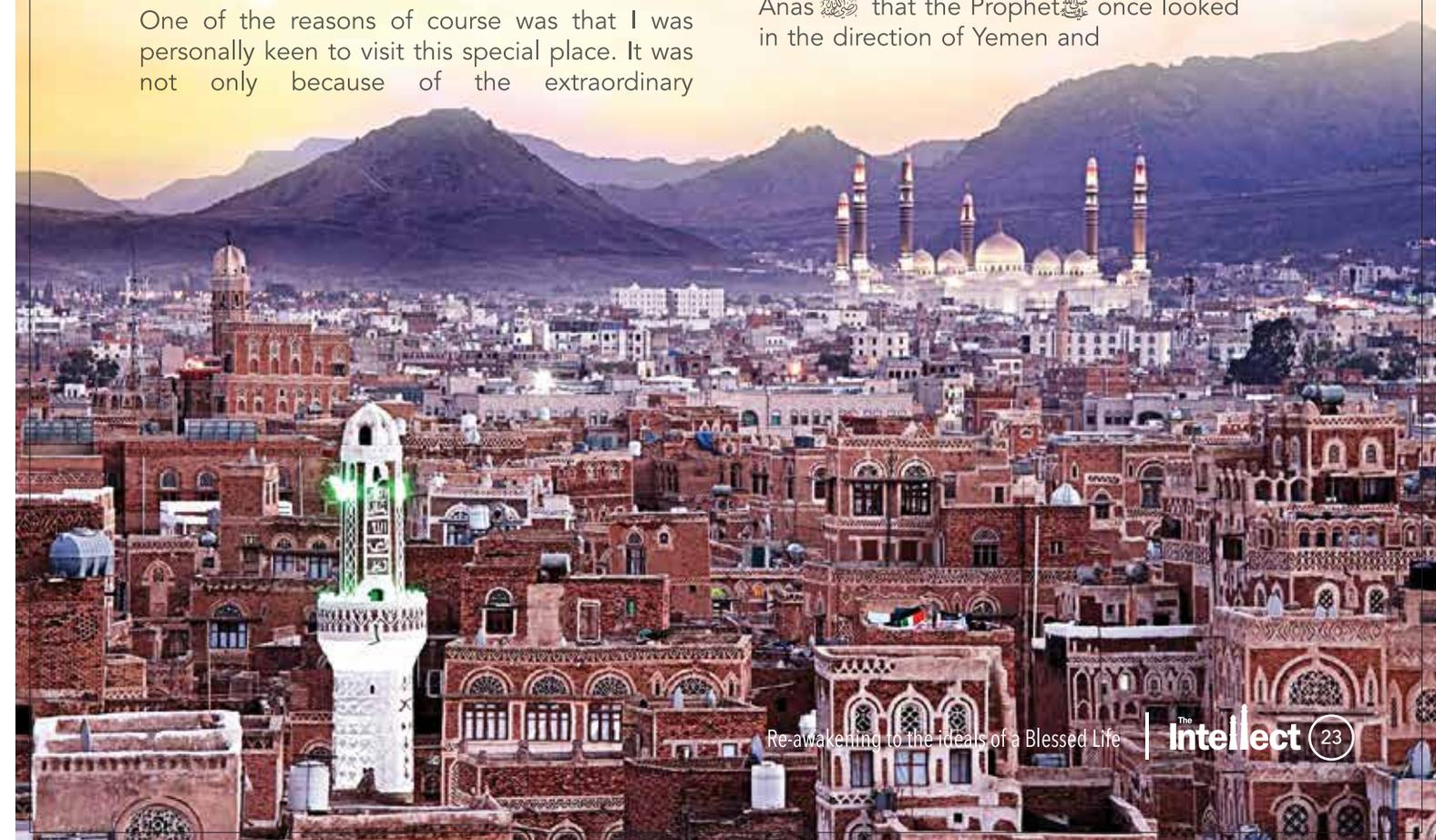
Imam Bukhari رحمته الله has reported:

The Prophet ﷺ said, "The people of Yemen have come to you and they are more gentle and soft-hearted. Belief is Yemenite and Wisdom is Yemenite."

Also in another narration he ﷺ said, "Fiqh is Yemenite and Wisdom is Yemenite"

Imam Bukhari رحمته الله also narrates from Ibn Masood رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ pointed out with his hand towards Yemen and said twice, "Faith is there".

Imam-at-Tirmidhi رحمته الله has narrated from Anas رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ once looked in the direction of Yemen and



made a *du'a*, "O Allah, turn their hearts (towards Iman)"

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal رحمته الله narrates in his *Masnad* from Hazrat Am'r bin Abasah رضي الله عنه that once U'ainah bin Hasan Fazari said that the best of men are from the people of Najd. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied: "You are mistaken. The best of men are the men of Yemen, belief is Yemeni, and I am Yemeni."

In another narration in *Masnad Ahmad*, when the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cited Yemenites as the best of people, a Companion asked if the Yemenites were better than even them, to this he صلى الله عليه وسلم said no; not better than them.

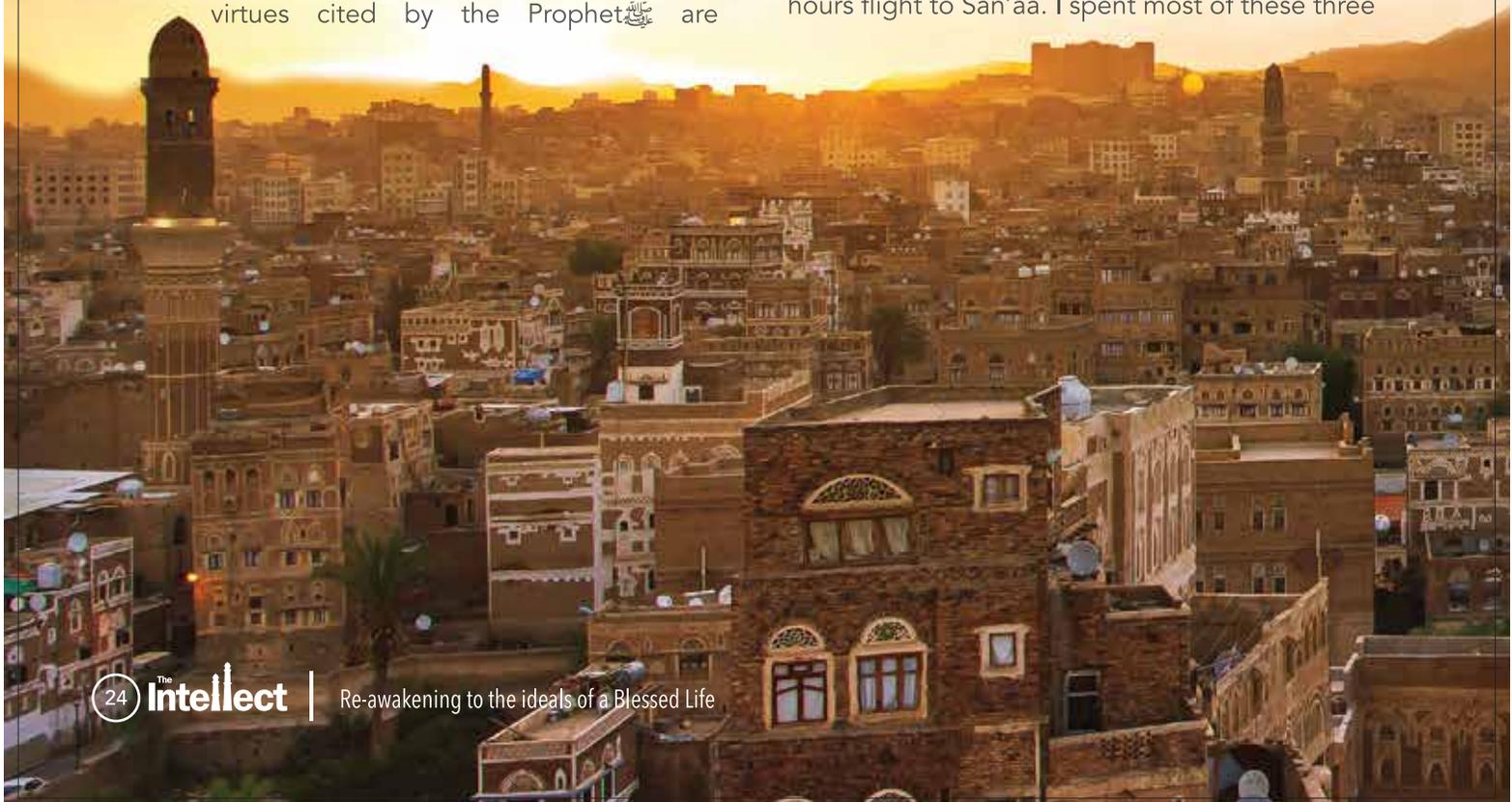
What is interesting though is the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم associating himself with the Yemenites and saying that he was one of them. One of the reasons for this association could be that 'Yemen' was actually the name of the son of Qahtaan who was one of the elders of the Arabs belonging to the Bani Isma'il; hence the Yemenites share the lineage with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Another reason could be the Yemenites holding such virtuous attributes in manners and habits which the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم admired a lot. Whatever the reason is, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم associating himself with a people is such an honor that no Muslim realizing it would not want to meet such people in person.

Though it goes without saying that the virtues cited by the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم are

generally about the Yemenites of his time, still, this is a fact too that Allah ﷻ grants certain special attributes to people belonging to a certain land and these attributes might vary from time to time but are never completely absent. Hence, I always wanted to visit Yemen and meet its people. The invitation from Jamia tul Iman was thus an old wish granted and I was rather quick to accept it.

On 7th Rabi ul Awwal, 1422 H, June 1st 2001 I left for Dubai on a PIA flight. I had to take a four-hour transit before boarding a flight to San'aa. I did the proofreading of the English translation of *Ma'arif ul Quran* mostly during flights; almost five volumes had been completed while aboard. This time, I had with me the draft of Surah Taha in the sixth volume prepared by Br. Ishrat Hussain Siddiqui. I spent my transit at the Dubai airport going through this draft. It was a Friday and I didn't have the visa to go out of the airport for the Jumu'ah prayer. At 1 pm, I entered the *Musallah* at the airport and I noticed that there was enough gathering of people there for the Jumu'ah prayer to be valid. So everyone requested me to lead prayers for them. A gentleman called the *Adhaan*, I delivered the *Khutbah* and led the prayer. It was a unique experience indeed.

The Yemen airline flight took off from Dubai at 2 pm. It had a stop-over at Bahrain and then a three hours flight to San'aa. I spent most of these three



hours looking into the translation of *Ma'arif ul Quran again*. We landed at San'aa at 6 pm in the evening. My hosts, the president of Jamia tul Iman, Sheikh Abdul Majeed Zandaani, Dean Sheikh Abdul Wahhab and many other gentlemen were there to receive me at the plane's staircase. Our passports and luggage tokens were collected in the VIP lounge and we were ushered out without any delay on our way to the hotel. We offered our Maghrib *Salah* upon reaching the hotel. This was a recently built hotel named Fundaq San'aa ad Dooli and it had begun its services by serving the guests of Jamia tul Iman.

If was someone was to fly from Karachi to San'aa directly it would only take them around three hours. It was due to all the transits that it took me around twelve hours to arrive in San'aa.

Sheikh Adil Hasan Ameen was a teacher at Jamia tul Iman. Ever since I had accepted this invitation to San'aa, he'd been frequently in touch with me. He had been a special disciple of *Hadhrat Mawlana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi Sahib* at Nadwa tul Ulama, Lucknow. He knew me through my writings and had been requesting me to bring along a few of my books in Arabic to San'aa. After receiving me at the airport, he was constantly by my side. Sheikh Adil's close friend Dr. Salman Sahib, the grandson of *Hadhrat Mawlana Ali Miyaan* رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, had arrived in San'aa on the same flight as mine. Dr. Salman's son was a student at Jamia tul Iman. After having arrived at the hotel,

these gentlemen graced my room till late night. All of us had dinner together and by 11 pm, everyone was off to bed.

The fifth-floor room I was to stay in was in fact not only a bedroom, but had an attached meeting room and a dining room as well. One could enjoy a breathtakingly beautiful view from the window of the city of San'aa situated in the heart of mountains. It had been considerably hot in Karachi and Dubai but the weather here was quite pleasant. The cool and fresh breeze coming in through the window was quite energizing despite the tiredness of that day. San'aa, being quite high above the sea level, had a maximum temperature of 26-30 degrees centigrade even in the month of June. This was why, with the window ajar, one didn't need any artificial air-conditioning and neither did the hotel offer any.

The first light here was as early as 4 am so it was inevitable to take a bit more rest after Faj'r. However, at 6 am I was up and decided to step out for a morning stroll. The hotel was situated upon the biggest highway of the city called *Shara e Sitteen*. I took a thirty minutes brisk walk upon the sidewalk and then arrived back at the hotel for the breakfast. As soon as I was done with the breakfast, the ride was ready to take me to the Jamia's convention center. It was a ten minutes ride to the Jamia and when we arrived at its gate, the car had to go at the lowest pace due to the huge gathering of enthusiastic folk.

To be continued InshAllah

The New Menace and Its Answer

By Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

The apostates of old used to walk openly out of the Muslim society and associate themselves freely with the society of those whose religion they had accepted. They used to declare boldly their change of faith and submit cheerfully to what they had to bear as a result of it. They did not insist upon clinging to the benefits accruing from membership of the society they had in fact forsaken. But the present-day Apostates who turn their backs on Islam do not at the same time also walk out of the Islamic society in spite of the fact that of all societies it is only Islamic society which is based entirely on spiritual belief since it cannot come into being without the presence of a particular set of religious doctrines. These modern Apostates continue to avail themselves of all the possible advantages of being the members of the Islamic society. This is a unique situation for Islam.

As they had turned and twisted the moral and spiritual values so also have these ideologies sown the seeds of Pagan sentiments and feelings in the Muslim world upon which Islam has declared an open war. For instance, take Pagan factionalism which is founded in race, country and nation. It has been raised to the status of a religion and given a complete control over people's thoughts and emotions. It is indeed the most powerful rival to religion judged by the extensiveness and the intensity of its influence. It gains ascendancy over one's entire existence. When it sweeps over a society it pushes the work of the Prophets into oblivion and reduces religion into a soulless programme of rituals and



ceremonies, the organic unity of mankind about which God had declared, "Lo! This your religion, is one religion, and I am your Lord, so worship Me," is destroyed and the human race is divided into a number of warring camps.

Why is Islam Opposed to Factionalism

Islam had dealt a deadly blow to the spirit and administered a clear warning to its followers against the dangerous possibilities it contained. Factionalism is the very antonym of a universal faith since the basic oneness of humanity cannot endure even for a brief while in its presence. The negation of factionalism is an undisputed feature of the Islamic *Shariat*. There are innumerable provisions to this effect in it. Anyone who has an awareness of the inner nature of Islam - in truth, of religion - will have no hesitation in realising the truth of the assertion that religion can have nothing to do with racial or national prejudices. It is beyond dispute that a majority of the ills that are poisoning the world-atmosphere today and

dragging humanity to the verge of destruction are the direct results of national factionalism. Naturally, therefore, a man who had come to the world only to weld mankind into one whole, to bring it under the banner of a single faith, to call into existence a new society based on the consciousness of God Almighty, the nourisher of the worlds, and to give it peace in place of war, love in place of hatred, unity in place of division, could not but wage a relentless war against it till it became a thing of the past.

Wave of Nationalism in Islamic Countries

But thanks to the political and cultural domination of the West, the Islamic World which owes its very existence to the Prophet has now wholeheartedly adopted the creed of Nationalism as it is a proved scientific truth from which there can be no escape. Almost all the different peoples who go to make the family of Islam are today the ardent admirers of factional prejudices which their religion had unceremoniously buried. They are doing their best to revive them including even those Pagan national practices which are openly amounting to idolatry. Among some of them the pre-Islamic era of their history which Islam emphatically condemns as Pagan and steeped in ignorance is being recalled as a thing of pride - and Pagan is a word nothing more detestable than which exists in the eyes of Islam. The Quran declares the deliverance of Muslims from it as one of the choicest favours of God and calls upon them to be duly grateful to him for that:

And remember Allah's favour unto you. How ye were enemies and He made friendship between your hearts so that ye became as brothers by His grace; and (how) ye were upon the brink of an abyss of fire (2:103)

Nay, but Allah doth confer a favor on you, in as much as He hath led you to the faith, if ye are earnest (49:17)

He it is who sendeth down clear revelations unto His slave, that He may bring you forth from darkness unto light; and lo! for you, Allah is full of pity, merciful (57:9)

Muslim Standpoint

Such being the case, a Muslim should be filled

with repugnance and disgust at the sight of Paganism - whether modern or ancient. Have you ever seen a person released from prison not to look back at the period of his imprisonment with anguish, and displeasure of a man having been cured of a foul disease not to shudder at the thought of his illness? Or has there ever been a man who has not thanked God at the dawn of the day after having experienced a terrible nightmare during the night? Why, then, should it be different with Paganism which is many times worse than a term in prison or an illness or a nightmare? Why should a person having been freed from it by the grace of the Almighty not tremble at the thought of it and earnestly thanksgiving to his Maker for delivering him from a curse which contains innumerable misfortunes of this world and the next? A tradition of the Prophet ﷺ relates: There are three things and if they are present in any one he will taste (the joys of) faith: firstly, that God and the Prophet be dearer to him than anything else, secondly, that his love for anyone (or anything) is only for the sake of God, and, thirdly, that he dreads returning to the state of Paganism like being thrown into the fire" (Bukhari), says God in denunciation of Paganism, its rites, its customs, its practices and its heroes.

And We made them patterns that invite unto the fire and on the Day of Resurrection they will not be helped.

And We made a curse to follow them in this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be among the hateful (27: 41, 42)

Unto Pharaoh and his chiefs, but they did follow the command of Pharaoh, and the command of Pharaoh was no guide. He will go before his people on the Day of Resurrection and will lead them to the fire for watering-place. And hapless is the watering-place (whither they are) led. A curse is made to follow them in the world and on the Day of Resurrection. Hapless is the gift (that will be) given (to them) (11:99)

The Revival of the Pagan Era in Islamic Countries

Due to being over-awed by the Western philosophy and its peculiar mode of approach to life many Muslims in Islamic countries have begun to recall the pre-Islamic period of their national existence with pride and pleasure. They are being

drawn intellectually and emotionally to the customs and practices of that period as a part of their national heritage. They want to resuscitate them and to give a place of honour and privileges to the kings, leaders and other noteworthy personalities of that period in their history as if it was a golden age which Islam snatched away from them. God bless our souls! What a colossal ingratitude and lack of appreciation of the worth and value of Islam and the Prophet ﷺ it is! It would mean that all dislike for Paganism and idolatry and the contempt for their senseless practices has disappeared from the hearts - and these are things which are hard to imagine with

respect to conscientious Muslims. It will be a wonder if because of these follies the Muslims may totally be deprived of faith, the blessing of Islam may be withdrawn from them and some heavenly curse is sent down in place of felicity. The Quran has warned:

And incline not towards those who do wrong lest the fire touch you, and ye have no protecting friends against Allah, and afterward ye would not be helped (11: 113).

Continued, inshaAllah.

The Month of Patience and Sympathy

Salman رضي الله عنه, reports, "On the last day of Sha'aban Rasulullah صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed us and said, 'O people there comes over you now a great month, a most blessed month in which lies a night more greater in virtue than a thousand months. It is a month in which Allah ﷻ has made Fasting compulsory by day. And has made taraweeh the sunnah by night. Whosoever intends drawing near to Allah ﷻ by performing any virtuous deed, for such person shall be the reward like the one who had performed a fardh in any other time. And whoever performs a fardh, shall be blessed with the reward of seventy faraa-idh in any other time.

This is indeed the month of patience, and the reward for true patience is Jannah (paradise). It is the month of sympathy with one's fellowmen. It is the month wherein a true believer's rizq is increased. Whosoever feeds another who fasted, in order to break the fast at sunset, for the feeder there shall be forgiveness of sins and emancipation from the fire of Jahannam (hell), and for such feeder shall be the same reward as the one who Fasted (who he fed) without that person's reward being decreased in the least."

Thereupon we said, "O messenger of Allah ﷺ, not all of us possess the means whereby we can give a fasting person to break his fast." Rasulullah صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Allah ﷻ grants the same reward to

the one who gives a fasting person to break the fast a mere date, or a drink of water, or a sip of milk."

"This is a month, the first of which brings Allah's ﷻ mercy, the middle of which brings His forgiveness and the last of which brings emancipation from the fire of Jahannam."

"Whosoever lessens the burden of his servants (bondsmen) in this month, Allah ﷻ will forgive him and free him from the fire of Jahannam."

"And in this month four things you should continue to perform in great number, two of which shall be to please your Lord, while the other two shall be those without which you cannot do. Those which shall be to please your Lord are that you should in great quantity bear witness that there is no deity to worship except Allah (i.e. recite the Kalimah Tayyibah, Laa Ilaaha illallaah) and make much Istighfaar (beg Allah's ﷻ forgiveness with Astagirfirul-laah)." And as for those without which you cannot do, you should beg of Allah ﷻ, entrance into paradise and ask refuge in Him from Jahannam."

"And whoever gave a person who fasted water to drink, Allah shall grant that giver to drink from My fountain, such a drink where after that person shall never again feel thirsty until he enters Jannah."

- From Fazaail-e Aamaal

A Tree which sheds its Foliage in Spring...

Shaykh Sa'adi narrates the following story in his famous *Gulistan*:

The son of a pious man inherited great wealth left him by some uncles, whereon he plunged into dissipation and profligacy, became a spendthrift and, in short, left no heinous transgression unperpetrated and no intoxicant untasted. I advised him and said: 'My son, income is a flowing water and expense a turning mill; that is to say, only he who has a fixed revenue is entitled to indulge in abundant expenses.

'If you have no income, spend but frugally

Because the sailors chant this song:

"If there be no rain in the mountains

The bed of the Tigris will be dry in one year."

'Follow wisdom and propriety, abandon play and sport because thy wealth will be exhausted, whereon you will fall into trouble and will repent.' The youth was prevented by the delights of the flute and of drink from accepting my admonition but found fault therewith, saying that it is contrary to the opinion of intelligent men to embitter present tranquility by cares concerning the future:

Why should possessors of enjoyment and luck

Bear sorrow for fear of distress?

Go, be merry, my heart-rejoicing friend.

The pain of tomorrow must not be eaten today.

'And how could I restrain myself, who am occupying the highest seat of liberality, have bound the knot of generosity and the fame of whose beneficence has become the topic of general conversation?' He said.

Who has become known for his liberality and generosity

Must not put a lock upon his dirhems.

When the name of a good fellow has spread in a locality

The door cannot be closed against it.

When I perceived that he did not accept my advice and that my warm breath was not taking effect upon his cold iron, I left off admonishing him and turned away my face from his companionship, acting according to the words of the wise people, who said: impart to them what you have and if they receive it not, it is not your fault.

Although you know you will not be heard, say

Whatever you know of good wishes and advice.

It may soon happen that you will behold a silly fellow

With both his feet fallen into captivity,

Striking his hands together, and saying: 'Alas,

I have not listened to the advice of a scholar.'

After some time I saw the consequences of his dissolute behaviour - which I apprehended - realized. When I beheld him sewing patch upon patch and gathering crumb after crumb, my heart was moved with pity for his destitute condition, in which I did not consider it humane to scratch his internal wounds with reproaches or to sprinkle salt upon them. Accordingly, I said to myself:

A foolish fellow in the height of intoxication

Cares not for the coming day of distress.

The tree which sheds its foliage in spring

Will certainly have no leaves remaining in winter.

It's coming...

By Maharun Nesa Maliha

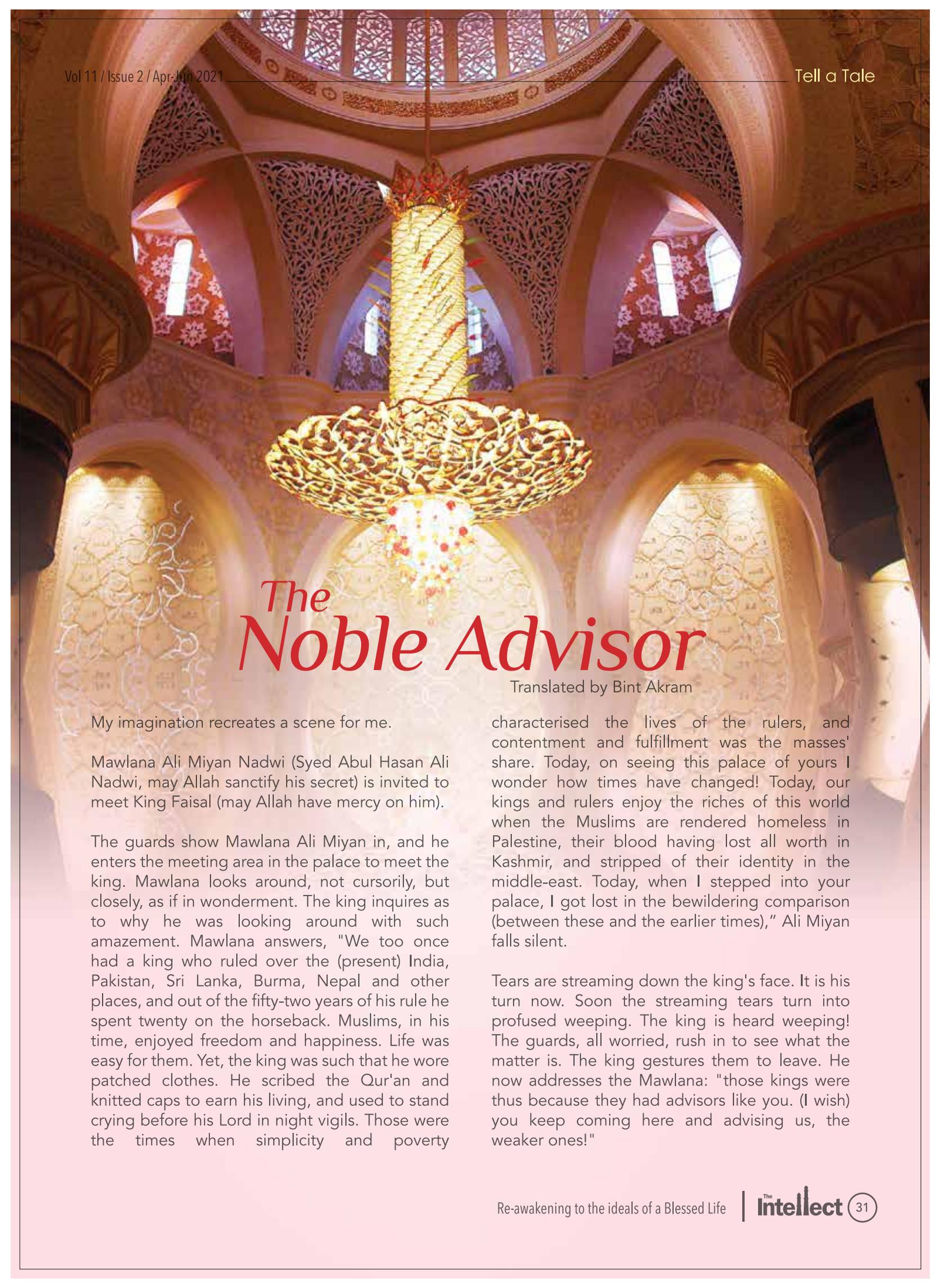
It's coming to heal my heart,
It's coming to take away *fitna*,
It's coming to increase my *Iman*,
It's coming to clean me up from my sins.
It's coming to grant my prayer,
It's coming to give me hope,
It's coming...

It's coming to teach me about the love of Allah,
It's coming to teach me about Ar-Rahim,
It's coming to teach me about Al-Ghaffar,
It's coming to teach me about *sunnah* again,
It's coming...

It's coming to open the door of *Jannah*,
It's coming to shut the door of *Jahannam*,
It's coming to open the door of *Rayyan*,
It's coming to keep shaytan tied up,
It's coming...

The Blessed Ramadan it is,
That's coming...





The Noble Advisor

Translated by Bint Akram

My imagination recreates a scene for me.

Mawlana Ali Miyan Nadwi (Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, may Allah sanctify his secret) is invited to meet King Faisal (may Allah have mercy on him).

The guards show Mawlana Ali Miyan in, and he enters the meeting area in the palace to meet the king. Mawlana looks around, not cursorily, but closely, as if in wonderment. The king inquires as to why he was looking around with such amazement. Mawlana answers, "We too once had a king who ruled over the (present) India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Burma, Nepal and other places, and out of the fifty-two years of his rule he spent twenty on the horseback. Muslims, in his time, enjoyed freedom and happiness. Life was easy for them. Yet, the king was such that he wore patched clothes. He scribed the Qur'an and knitted caps to earn his living, and used to stand crying before his Lord in night vigils. Those were the times when simplicity and poverty

characterised the lives of the rulers, and contentment and fulfillment was the masses' share. Today, on seeing this palace of yours I wonder how times have changed! Today, our kings and rulers enjoy the riches of this world when the Muslims are rendered homeless in Palestine, their blood having lost all worth in Kashmir, and stripped of their identity in the middle-east. Today, when I stepped into your palace, I got lost in the bewildering comparison (between these and the earlier times)," Ali Miyan falls silent.

Tears are streaming down the king's face. It is his turn now. Soon the streaming tears turn into profused weeping. The king is heard weeping! The guards, all worried, rush in to see what the matter is. The king gestures them to leave. He now addresses the Mawlana: "those kings were thus because they had advisors like you. (I wish) you keep coming here and advising us, the weaker ones!"

Setting Boundaries

By Maryam Munir

I'm going to tell you a secret to increase your patience with your sweet kids.

Sometimes when we first become familiar with respectful parenting, it's easy to fall into the trap of thinking that setting boundaries is altogether not part of this kind of parenting.

We tend to start veering into the other directions because we have such a bad history with setting boundaries that we want to now run as far away from setting any limits as possible.

Especially once we start to see how treating our kids like people and seeing the best in them and validating them all result in a much happier home, we hesitate to be "unpleasant" and set boundaries.

What I can tell you is this kind of pattern will at some point lead us to resentment, that's because as much as kids need love and compassion, they do also need healthy boundaries. And no one, not even moms and dads can give and give without limits.

Respectful parenting is the epitome of 'the middle way' or 'etedaal' as we say in Urdu.

Moderation. Since we're human we will never achieve the perfect balance, and it's fine to veer more towards 'less limits' but we do want to have boundaries.

The best way to model them is to have boundaries for ourselves.

It's okay to say all of the following to our kids. Some of these boundaries should be set daily and others used more sparingly (like expressing frustration):

"I can play with you after I finish my work. I'll let you know when I'm done."

"I'm sorry... I don't want to share my phone with you..."

"I love when you help me in the kitchen and today I don't need help, but thank you!"

"No, thank you."

"Please don't hit me, I don't like it."

"Please don't pull my clothes, it's not comfortable..."

"I'm going to the bathroom and would like some privacy. I won't be able to answer you from the inside."

*"I'm feeling frustrated that my *thing* was destroyed. I'm not going to share it for now."*

"I'm really tired and I need to rest. Do you need anything before I go?" (leaving younger kids with a trusted adult, of course)

"I feel like the house is always messy and no one helps me clean. I'm feeling overwhelmed."

"It's very tiring for me when you guys start fighting and then I don't feel like doing anything. Can we please work out a solution before we do xyz?"

It's important to say these things from a place of confidence and self-assurance. If we feel shame and guilt while trying to establish these boundaries, we're going to confuse our kids, and their way of showing confusion is to test our boundaries. "You don't sound so sure... are you sure?"

For example, you tell your child you won't give them your phone but give in when she cries. You say you won't let your son hit his sister, but when he does, you just shout commands from far away without actually getting up and blocking him. You tell your kids not to use your stuff but then don't put it away safely. You tell your teenager he needs to be home by 9pm but don't call to remind him or stay up until he gets home to let him know this was important (no need for punishment or consequences, just letting him know that you care about the boundary).

A fuzzily set boundary causes confusion, distrust and misunderstandings.

Imagine that you're trying to get to your friend's home but when you get there, you can't find her house because the house number she gave you is nowhere to be seen. How are you supposed to know where to go? You call her cell phone and she doesn't respond. And yet she gave you a hard time about reaching on time. She didn't clearly tell you what to do and how to do it, and she wasn't there to help you in case you were 'lost'. Her "boundary" (the gate), is missing vital information and hand-on help.

How do you feel now? Overwhelmed because you know something is expected of you. Anxious

because you don't know how to do it. Frustrated because you don't know what to do. Lost and alone because you have no help. And maybe even shame if your friend later tries to place blame on you in any way for failing to meet her expectations.

That is exactly how kids feel when they're not given clear and concise direction with help.

Unclear boundaries are neither kind nor confident and it's better not to set a boundary if we cannot be these three things.

1- Kind

- Kids might need help respecting your boundaries and that's fine
- They might cry and be upset and we validate
- Our tone is always calm and controlled
- There are no threats involved

2- Confident

- There is no guilt or shame involved
- You know you're an awesome parent and deserve some space
- You won't change your mind because your child's feelings make you uncomfortable

3- Clear

- You say exactly what is and isn't okay
- As often as you can, you add as many physical boundaries as possible that can help the child in upholding the boundary (e.g. lock your door when you go to rest, have a gate on the kitchen entrance, have your phone put away mostly etc.)

Once you get good at this, you will increase your patience levels by multitudes. It's okay to be flexible sometimes in boundary setting, but the whole point of respectful parenting is that we're always filling our kids' cups. We can set boundaries knowing that they're good for them, and good for you.

Maryam Munir is a certified Positive Discipline Educator with a background in psychology and neuroscience. She has founded 'The Parent Empowerment Project' to support parents and caretakers alike. A proponent of respectful parenting, she is also authoring a book on the subject. Originating from Pakistan, Maryam currently resides in the US with her family.

Seeking Halal. Earning

By Khalid Baig

According to Abdullah ibn Masud, Radi-Allahu unhu, The Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, said: 'Seeking halal earning is a duty after the duty.' In other words, working to earn a halal living is itself a religious obligation second in importance after the primary religious obligations like prayers, fasting and hajj.

This brief hadith contains three very important messages.

First, it points to the Islamic way out of the apparent dichotomy between the material and the spiritual worlds.

We often see them working in opposite directions.

Indulgence in the material world does lead one away from the spiritual world. Spiritual uplifting seems to

accompany a tendency to distance oneself from the material pleasures. There is a conflict, but is there a

contradiction also? Is it possible to resolve the conflict in a way that one can take care of both?

Or are they mutually exclusive? This has been a

central question for all religions and many in the past suggested the second answer, making

hermits as the ideal for the humanity.

Unfortunately, not much humanity is left when one moves too far in this direction. One can

read today the horror stories of Christian and Hindu monks, among others, who tried to

seek spiritual purification this way.

As a reaction, others took the other course, making material pleasures the goal of this

life. The western civilization today is the prime example of that. Its toll on human

spirit and morality is well known and is a constant reminder that something is wrong

here as well.

In between the two extremes, Islam points out the *Straight Path*. Man is both a material



and a spiritual being. The solution does not lie in denying the material needs and desires but in denying their claim to primacy. They are part of being but not the reason or goal of being. As long as they are kept in place, they are an important part of our life. The problem is not money but the love of it. Wealth itself is not bad. In fact, Qur'an refers to it as '... your wealth which Allah has made for you a means of support.' [Al-Nisa, 4:5]. And a *hadith* praises the merits of 'the halal wealth of a pious person.' The effort to earn a living is not only not against spirituality, it is a religious obligation!

But this earning must be through halal means. This is the second message of this *hadith*. Our obligation is not just to make money but to make halal money. This is a broad statement that is the basis for Islamization of a society's economic life. Not every business idea or possible business enterprise is good for the society. And the decision regarding right and wrong here cannot be left to the so-called market forces. Right and wrong in the economic life, as in all life, must be determined by a higher source. *Shariah* guides us to the *halal* and *haram* business enterprises and practices, and at both individual and collective levels we must follow that guidance.

At times, that guidance may conflict with the prevailing practices. For example, *Riba* (interest), gambling, pornography, and liquor are haram, and no matter how attractive the financial rewards of engaging in those enterprises may seem to be, a Muslim must refrain from them. This is the economic struggle of a believer, and it is obvious why it should be carried out as a religious obligation. At the individual level the obligation is to engage in halal professions and businesses. At the collective level the obligation is to establish a system that facilitates such individual efforts and discourages their opposite.

Sometimes we lose the balance between obligations at the two levels. Obviously, our ultimate responsibility is at the individual level; in the hereafter we will be asked about what we did in our personal lives. At the same time, in the era of multi-national companies, CNN, IMF, World

bank, and GATT, it is obvious that individual efforts alone cannot steer the economic life of a society in the direction of halal. Why avoiding interest has become so difficult today? Not because of its inherent merits as a healthy financial instrument but because it is entrenched in the system. Can we build an Islamic life style when the CNN is advertising a western life style in the most enticing ways 24 hours a day in our homes? Can we resolve the issues of halal and haram in taxation in Muslim countries when the national budgets and tax decisions are dictated to these countries by the IMF and the World Bank? (Jurists say that taxes may be permissible if they are necessary, reasonable, fair, within the ability of the payers, and if the means of collection are not harsh. Otherwise, they are unjust and haram). Obviously, the struggle to avoid haram individually must, of necessity, include the struggle to change the system that forces haram.

Third, all this effort for halal earning should not eclipse our primary religious obligations. Indulgence even in a purely halal enterprise should not make us miss our *Salat*, or *Hajj*, for example.

This point is more important than we may realize at first. In this century, some Islamic movements made the error of suggesting that the primary acts of worship like *Salat* were not meant for their own sake, but were there to prepare us for the real challenge of establishing an Islamic state. It was stated to persuade the audiences to join such movements but the speakers got carried away and in effect it would result in an inversion of the relationship between the two. The result is that those drawn to collective struggles, in political or economic arenas, sometimes may ignore their primary religious responsibilities, in favor of the 'bigger' struggle.

This *hadith* may help us set our priorities right: The economic endeavor is a duty after the primary duties. And let us remember: in economics, as well as in religion, getting the priorities right is part of being right.

Addicted to Music- How ^{to} get rid of it?

By Umme Ammar

I have seen a lot of people complain about how it is impossible to control themselves when it comes to listening to music. The more you think it is beyond your control, the harder it gets for you to control; each time you say you cannot keep yourself from listening to music you are just making that thought in your mind more entrenched that it's beyond your ability.

•Fix your mind and have pure Intentions

The first thing you have to do is to fix your mindset - have full faith that it's possible to get rid of your music addiction. The next thing is your intention; you're doing it not for anyone else but Allah ﷻ. Sometimes, the Satan tricks people into messing up their intention. It makes people do it for pleasing others and get praises for being so pious, hence the intention is completely at stake in this case. So have a positive attitude towards this and a pure intention about you doing it only for seeking Allah's pleasure.

•Destroy all the easy access to music

Now, this step is very important and probably the

most effective step to undertake. Delete all the songs from whichever device you use to listen music. When I say all, I'm literally referring to those top 10 favourites in your playlist and whole collection of 500 best hits of melody, RDM or whatever songs. Focus on the mercy of your Rabb! Now is the time to fix yourself; who can guarantee if we would live to see tomorrow? And remember there have been people who have died listening to music! [May Allah protect us from such an end!] Don't settle for the thought that *maybe I can gradually reduce it... one song per day won't do me much harm ...* To contaminate something, only one drop of poison is enough. Look at the condition of your heart, there are already enough black spots there for every one of us. What are we waiting for...?

•Stay in a spiritually healthy environment

This is very important too because the friends you have will determine the kind of person you become. Most of us who listen to music belong to the company where every other person is doing the same. Now that we have decided to say goodbye to music, we should also make sure that we let our friends know about our decision. Let us not fret about their reaction. It is Allah who comes first and earning His pleasure is our top most priority. When we set our priorities right! When we do not feel ashamed of doing something unlawful, why do we feel so when we leave something that is clearly *haram*?

Also, in most cases it is our own family who introduced us to music and our folks continue to listen to it; now, we cannot change everyone around us, but why not carry our earphones with us and listen to the Qur'an whenever we are in an environment where music is being played? Do think about it ...

•Memorizing the Qur'an and duas

The goal is to fill the heart with Qur'an and those words that bring us closer to Allah just like the way our heart was earlier filled with words that took us away from Allah. It's basically replacing bad with good. Be consistent, only that shall help. Consistent deeds, even if it is one ayah per day is loved by our Rabb. Let us try and be consistent in whatever efforts we put in.

If you don't know Arabic, refer to some You Tube videos and learn. I took help from Arabic 101 channel to learn Arabic. So, make efforts and search for the resources that are available in abundance for us at a click of a finger.

One more tip is that the more we seek after knowledge the more we will be able to learn about our Deen. Why not listen to talks and speeches that would help us discover the purpose of our lives? Music usually deludes us into believing that life is a fantasy and nothing more ...

•Refrain from anything that contains music

There are some people who don't listen to music yet watch movies. Neither should be encouraged, because they don't really give a person lifetime lessons nor broaden their perspective in any manner. Also, movies are also a source of music, so why watch them when we have decided to quit music.

Discover other lawful ways to entertain yourself. Also, entertainment should be only a small portion of our day because this life is no joke. We barely have something called free time. For Muslims, ideally, the objective should be crystal clear as the time is limited and end is definitely unpredictable. We're here to establish Deen firmly in our lives first and then to spread it and to help humanity. Let us plan as to how to get this deed done! We shouldn't be people who just lived and died but rather those who impacted the world.

•Improving self control

Our Iman is something that fluctuates and there are times when our desires for something we give up for Allah's sake dominates or overpowers our Iman. In those times, we have to be very firm about staying on the straight path. Make Dua in abundance - nothing better than *Salah*, *Dua* and *Sabr* for a believer to seek relief from any kind of hardships. Just be glad that all this is teaching you to improve your self control.

Listen to the Qur'an and let Allah communicate with you. Reciting the Qur'an is a means of help to manage the addiction to music. There is no better shield for the strengthening of heart and mind than the Qur'an. Fasting is also recommended to control desires, so we can also fast if we wish to refrain from what deen calls the fornication of the ears.

Since we have decided to leave something for Allah's sake, Allah ﷻ would not leave us alone or helpless. Let us try and change for good so we can also feel the sweetness of faith in our souls and ear our Lord's pleasure. Let us do our part, and leave the rest up to Allah ﷻ ...

Thumama bin Uthaal

رضي الله عنه

By Dr Abdur Rahman Rafat Pasha

He imposed an economic blockade upon Quraish.

In the sixth year of Hijra, the Blessed Prophet ﷺ, in obedience to Allah's ﷻ command, sent eight letters to Arab and non-Arab kings, inviting them to embrace Islam.

Thumama bin Uthaal Al-Hanafi ﷺ was among the regal recipients of these letters. A man who commanded instant obedience, he towered above contemporary rulers, for he was an aristocrat from the noble tribe of Bani Hanifa and a king from the noble tribe of monarchs of Yamama.

Thumama ﷺ received the Prophet's ﷺ letter with disdain and arrogantly spurned his invitation to Islam. Not content with rejecting Islam, his inner demon urged him to kill the Prophet ﷺ and silence the voice of Islam forever. He began seeking opportunities to fulfill his diabolical intention, hoping to catch him unaware. Fortunately, Thumama's ﷺ paternal uncle dissuaded him from this terrible deed. Thus Allah ﷻ protected His Messenger ﷺ from harm.

However, even though Thumama ﷺ refrained from harming the Prophet ﷺ, he did not show the same restraint regarding his companions and began a campaign of persecution against them, by means of ambush and torture. He killed a number of Companions.

At this, the Prophet ﷺ publicly declared that it was lawful to kill Thumama bin Uthaal ﷺ.

After some time Thumama ﷺ decided to go for Umra. He travelled from Yamama towards Mecca,

where he intended to

circumambulate the Ka'ba and offer sacrifices to the idols.

Enroute to Mecca, while he was near Madina, an unforeseen calamity befell him. A military company of the Prophet ﷺ was patrolling the outskirts of Madina to prevent a sudden enemy attack.

When they came upon Thumama ﷺ, they captured him, although they were unaware of his identity. He was brought to Madina and tied to a pillar of the masjid, while the Companions waited for the Prophet ﷺ to come and decide his fate.

As soon as the Prophet ﷺ set eyes on Thumama ﷺ, he said to his Companions, "Do you know who it is you have captured?"

They replied wonderingly, "No, O Messenger of Allah." He answered, "This is Thumama bin Uthaal Al-Hanafi, treat him well in his captivity."

Then the Prophet ﷺ returned to his family and said, "Gather whatever food you have and send it for Thumama bin Uthaal."

He also commanded that his camel should be milked morning and evening and that the milk should be presented to Thumama ﷺ. All of this was arranged by the Prophet ﷺ before he actually met Thumama ﷺ or spoke to him directly.

Finally Rasul Allah ﷺ came to meet Thumama ﷺ, intending to gradually draw him towards Islam and asked, "What do you intend, Thumama?"

Thumama ﷺ replied boldly, "I desire nothing but good, O Muhammad. If you kill me, you shall

kill one who has shed Muslim blood, but if you treat me with mercy, you will find me grateful. If you wish for wealth, you have but to ask and you shall be given as much as you wish."

The Prophet ﷺ left him for two days in his captivity. During this time, he was treated most honourably, and served with food, drink and camel's milk.

After a while, the Prophet ﷺ came back and repeated, "What do you intend, Thumama?"

He replied, "Nothing but what I told you the other day. If you show me kindness, you will show kindness to one who will repay with gratitude. If you kill me, you will kill a man who shed Muslim blood. And if you desire wealth, ask and you shall be given as much as you wish."

The Prophet ﷺ let him till the following day and then asked, "O Thumama, what do you intend?"

Thumama ﷺ repeated, "I have already told you. If you show mercy to me, you shall find me most grateful. If you shall kill me, you shall kill one who has shed Muslim blood. And if you desire wealth, I shall give you as much as you wish."

Then the Prophet ﷺ turned to his Companions and said, "Free Thumama."

Instantly, they untied his bonds and released him.

Thumama ﷺ left the masjid of the Prophet ﷺ and proceeded to a date palm in the outskirts of Madina, near Al-Baqee'. There he dismounted, and thoroughly purified himself with water. Then he made his way back to the masjid.

There he openly proclaimed his faith among the Muslims and testified, "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and I bear that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger."

Then he turned towards the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and declared, "O Muhammad! By Allah, there was no face more hateful to me on this earth than your face but now your face is the most beloved face to me. I swear there was no religion more hateful to me than yours but now it is the best religion in my eyes. And by Allah, there was no land more loathsome to me than your land but now your land has become the most beloved of

lands for me."

Then he asked, "I have killed many of your Companions. What punishment will you impose upon me?"

The Prophet ﷺ replied, "There is no reproach upon you, Thumama, for Islam wipes out all preceding sins."

Thus the Prophet ﷺ gave him glad tidings of the good that Allah ﷻ had ordained for him by his acceptance of Islam.

Thumama's ﷺ face lit up and he joyfully swore, "By Allah, from now on I shall harass the pagans far more than I used to harass your Companions. And I present myself, my sword and all my supporters at your service; we will willingly aid you and your religion. O Messenger of Allah, when your military company seized me, I was on my way to perform Umra. What should I do now?"

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Go and perform Umra but according to the Shariah of Islam, according to the laws of Allah and His Messenger."

And the Prophet ﷺ instructed him in the sacred rites of Umra.

When Thumama ﷺ entered Mecca, he began proclaiming in reverberating tones, "Labaik Allahuma Labaik. Here I am, Allah, at Your Service. Here I am. You have no partner. Here I am. Surely all praise and blessings and the dominion belongs to You. You have no Partner.

Thumama ﷺ was the first Muslim to enter Mecca while proclaiming the Talbiyah, 'Labaik Alahumma Labaik'. When the Quraish heard him, they stared with astonishment and horror, and furiously drew the swords from their sheaths. Swiftly, they ran towards the source of the voice so that they could destroy the one who dared utter such words.

As they advanced towards Thumama ﷺ, he raised his voice even louder while looking at them haughtily. A youth from Quraish raised his spear but the others grasped hold of his hand and gasped warningly, "Woe betide you, you do realize who this is? This is Thumama bin Uthaa,

King of Yamama. By Allah if you harm him, his people will cut off all aid from us and they will starve us to death.

Slowly, they advanced towards Thumama رضي الله عنه after restoring the swords to their sheaths and unbelievably asked, "Thumama, what has happened to you? Have you abandoned your religion and the religion of your forefathers?"

Thumama رضي الله عنه replied proudly, "I have not abandoned my religion, rather, I have adopted a superior religion. For I have become a follower of Muhammad's صلى الله عليه وسلم religion."

Then he turned away, saying, "I swear by Lord of this House, you will not receive a grain of wheat from my stores in Yamama or any aid until you follow Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, right to the last man of you."

With calm dignity, they proceeded to perform Umra, according to the Prophetic instructions, before the helpless gaze of the Quraish.

Then he performed sacrifice with the intention of drawing nearer to Allah عز وجل, not for the sake of the idols.

When Thumama رضي الله عنه returned to his country, he commanded his people that they should withhold all aid from Quraish. So they suspended the supply of Grain to the Meccans.

Gradually this economic siege grew unendurable until starvation became prevalent and the Meccans feared they would all perish of hunger.

Finally they sent a written appeal to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in which they stated, "We knew you for a man who emphasized the sanctity of family ties and one who always exhorted others to maintain ties of kinship. Yet you violated our family ties, killed our fathers with swords and are now destroying our children by starvation. For Thumama bin Uthaal has cut off all aid from us and has sorely weakened us. If you can, tell him to send us the aid which we desperately need."

So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم wrote to Thumama رضي الله عنه, telling him to renew his aid and he obeyed.

For the rest of his life, Thumama bin Uthaal رضي الله عنه

remained a staunch upholder of Islam and one who faithfully fulfilled the covenant of his prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. After the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed away, the Arab tribes began abandoning Allah's religion en masse. When Musaylama, the imposter established his hold on Bani Hanifa, inviting them to believe in him, Thumama رضي الله عنه was among his most formidable opponents.

Sternly, he warned his people, "O Bani Hanifa, beware of this dark trial in which there is no radiance or light. By Allah, this is a misfortune which Allah عز وجل has ordained for the one who is wretched enough to succumb to it, and surely it is a test for the one who abstains. O Bani Hanifa, two prophets have never conjoined in one era. Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is the Messenger of Allah; there can be no messenger after him, nor is there any who can share his prophethood."

Then he recited the following Quranic verses to convince them,

"Ha Mim, Revelation of the Book from Allah, the All Mighty and All Knowing, Forgiver of Sins, and Acceptor of Repentance, Intense of Retribution, Lord of Bounty, Lord of Power, there is no god but He. To Him in the return" (30:1-3).

He added, "Contrast the Word of Allah to the following words of Musaylama, 'O frog, continue to purify what you can. You cannot stop (people) from drinking nor can you muddy the water.' "

His argument was conclusive for there could be no possible similarity between the incomparable beauty and eloquence of the Divine Word and the ridiculous gibberish spouted by Musaylama.

Then he withdrew with those of his people who remained loyal to Islam and they valiantly fought the apostates in the path of Allah عز وجل.

May Allah عز وجل reward Thumama bin Uthaal رضي الله عنه on behalf of all the Muslims and reward him with the paradise which the god-fearing have been promised.

- Excerpted with permission from 'Stories from the Lives of the Sahaba' (Vol 1); Trans. by Umm Husain



HEALTH BENEFITS

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- AIDS WEIGHT LOSS
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Children Around Us: Offspring and Orphans

By Somaya Ramadan Ahmad

Translation: Zainab Wasay

Our joys are influenced by our thoughts, interests and occupations. And after each desired joy is attained, all efforts made for it come to an end and the seeking of the next joy begins. For example, a young man and woman may desire to marry. Once married, they will desire to have children. Once they begin to have children, they will specifically want a son or a daughter. Then they will strive to bring their children up in the best way. After that they will want their children to get married and have their own children. Hence in the cycle of life, we see that while each joy is enjoyed, it is short-lived and temporary.

The question here is how can we arrange for eternal joys along with temporary ones? We present to you a story on this:

There was a young man who married a wonderful young woman. They both desired to have children but the months continued to pass as the wait got longer and longer. But when they visited doctors to find out what was wrong, they both were left shattered as they were told that it was medically impossible for the man to become a father.

This was absolutely devastating news for the couple which they weren't at all prepared for. They felt completely lost with nowhere to go and

no idea of how should their way forth be. Thus, the husband told his wife to go and stay at her mother's house and decide whatever she willed for herself. And as he saw her leave, he stood still, broken and empty.

The wife loved her husband very much, but she also desired to become a mother. Once at her mother's, she turned to people of knowledge in search of a solution and it was then that the advice of a friend of her mother, a *daa'iyah*, made her see things differently. She said to her, "My dear, go back to your husband and remember that in any case you will only get that which is written for you. But remember that you have a Lord Who can do anything. Our Prophet ﷺ has told us, 'If you ask, ask Allah (alone).'

(Tirmidhi). Allah ﷻ is always ready to listen to you, why don't you share your concerns with Him during your prayers? Call upon Him at the times of the acceptance of *du'as* and give lots of *sadaqah*."

The words of the *daa'iyah* gave the wife new hope and she decided to return to her husband and ask Allah ﷻ for help. The husband was overjoyed when he saw his wife come back. Once they were together again, they thought out how they would like the course of their lives ahead to be and decided that from then onwards, Allah

ﷺ and His pleasure would be their first priority.

Thus, in an effort to get closer to Allah ﷻ, they both decided to sponsor an orphan as the Prophet ﷺ has said: "I and the caretaker of the orphan will be in Paradise like this," and he held his two fingers together. (Bukhari) They also decided that they would take care of not only their *fardh* (obligatory) *ibadaat* but also their *nafl* (voluntary) *ibadaat*. They both also began memorizing the Quran with the intention that after completing its memorization they would help Muslim children memorize it too... then maybe Allah ﷻ would give them the likes of them.

This way, striving for Allah ﷻ pleasure gave them new sources of joy. Then one year, on the occasion of Eid, the young man decided to travel to where the orphan whom they had sponsored lived. He wanted to give him Eid gifts with his own hands and also make sure of his wellbeing.

When he met the child, following the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ he first greeted him with utmost

compassion and then took out the gifts he had brought for him. When the child extended his small hands to take the gifts, the eyes of the young man somehow filled with tears. At that moment, he called upon Allah ﷻ from the depths of his heart and said, "O Allah, this child extended his hands in need, so You granted him his needs through me. O Allah, I too raise my hands in front of You in the hope that You will fulfill my need as well, truly nothing is impossible for You."

It was a truly heart-warming trip, after which the young man returned to his country. But not even a month passed before he received the news that he would soon become a father. Medical specialists were left dumbfounded as they got to know, but truly Allah ﷻ has power over all things. The couple changed their thinking and what they would find joy in, then Allah ﷻ fulfilled their wish for them, and the eternal joys of Paradise are yet to be.

The Last 'Ashrah

The month of Ramadan enjoys an intrinsic superiority over all the other months of the year. Likewise, its last 'Ashra or ten days are superior to the two earlier 'Ashras, and laylatul Qadr or the Night of Power, generally, falls in it. That is why, the sacred Prophet (peace and blessings upon him) devoted himself more intensively to prayer and other forms of worship during it and urged others, also, to do the same.

Ayesha رضي الله عنها related to us that "the Apostle of Allah (peace & blessings upon him) strove harder and took greater pains to observe prayer etc., during the last ten days of Ramadan than during the other days." [Muslim]

It is related by Ayesha رضي الله عنها that "when the last ten days of Ramadan began the Apostle of Allah (peace & blessings upon him) would gird up the loins and keep awake in the nights (i.e., he used to spend the whole of the nights in prayer and worship), and, also, wakened the members of his family (so that they, too, could partake of the blessings of the nights of that month)." [Bukhari]

-From *Meaning and Messages of the traditions* by Maulana Mohammad Manzoor Nomani رحمته الله

Iqbal's Vision: Rise of Islam and Decline of the West

By Dr. Asad Zaman

Iqbal's poetry became the inspiration for the creation of Pakistan, which changed the lives of millions of people, and turned the tides of history. Central to his thought is the vision of the transformation created by the message of Islam in the lives of the plain and simple dwellers of the desert. He foresaw the revival of this message in many of his poems — for example

نخل کے صحرا سے جس نے روما کی سلطنت کو الٹ دیا تھا
سنا ہے یہ قدسیوں سے میں نے، وہ شیر پھر ہوشیار ہوگا

The lion, from the desert, which over-turned the thrones of the Romans

I have heard from the angels that he will re-awaken.

Both *Shikwa/Jawab-e-Shikwa* and *Musaddas-e-Hali* paint the picture of the former glories of the Islamic civilization, and how modern Muslims have completely forgotten their past, and the message which illuminated the world, and created a brilliant

civilization which dazzled the world for a thousand years. However, Iqbal foresaw the end of the era of Western domination –

تمہاری تہذیب اپنے نخب سے آپ ہی خودکشی کرے گی
جو شاخِ نازک پہ آشیانہ بنے گا، ناپائیدار ہوگا

Your civilization will commit suicide with its own dagger

The nest built on the weak branch will not be permanent

Since Ibn-e-Khaldun started the systematic study of history with a deep analysis of the causes of rise and fall of civilizations, this has been a favorite topic among historians. Many historians have stated that all the signs of declining civilizations have now appeared in the Western Civilization, and thus it is time for emergence of a new world leader. Sociologists are predicting an Asian Century, and predicting the emergence of China and East Asia as the new leaders of the

21st Century.

However, at these turning points in history, leadership passes to those who are best prepared for it — the characteristics required of leaders are spelled out in the *Holy Qur'an*, and have been demonstrated for us in the *Sunnah* of the *Khulfa-e-Rashedeen*.

Iqbal has listed the required characteristics in many different verses. For example, he writes that (*Yaqeen Muhkam ...*) strong faith, perseverance in the struggle for the good, and a love which conquers the world — these are the swords used by those who would rule life itself. Another verse along similar lines, which predicts the rise of Islam, is given below:

سبق پڑھ صداقت کا، عدالت کا، شجاعت کا
لیا جائے گا تجھ سے کام دنیا کی امامت کا

Actually, leadership of the world is promised to the Muslims ON THE CONDITION that we are true to our faith — we have the characteristics of love for the welfare of the entire humanity which was in the heart of our Prophet (SAW), who was a *mercy for all nations*, and who suffered grievously because he deeply felt compassion for all others — whether they were Muslims or not. Today, we have come very far from the model of simple living with excellence in conduct that was the hallmark of our Prophet Mohammad, May Allah T'aala shower him with infinite blessings.

In this *write-up*, I just want to list some of the

characteristics which have appeared in the Western Civilization which are signs of the decline of the West. While there are many different types of lists of characteristics of decline which have been made, the following provides a *concise/ convenient* summary:

Some indications that Western society is collapsing:

1. **Nihilism:** The idea that life has meaning and purpose has been lost.
2. **Drugs:** When life seems meaningless, people seek new experiences to fill the void in their lives. This leads to experiments with drugs which create new sensations: *By the year 2000, opium production in Afghanistan had nearly ground to a halt. But after US and NATO forces invaded Afghanistan in 2001 under the pretext of 9/11, production started reaching record highs. In what's surely an 'unrelated' coincidence, the American opioid epidemic has spiraled out of control since 2001.*
3. **Rising Financial Inequality:** Today, the top 60 people own more wealth than the three billion poorest. Increasing inequality is reflected everywhere. *Ex-UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon says that US society is deeply immoral because basic healthcare is denied to vast numbers of the poor, when trillions of excess in wealth is readily available for foreign wars which bomb and destroy millions of other lives. Millions living in misery while a few enjoy billionaire-lifestyles reflects a spiritual deficit, a lack of feeling for fellow human beings, which is*

spreading throughout human societies.

4.Erasure of History: People have lost their connections with the past. History defines who we are, and gives us a sense of mission, continuity, and a vision for the future. Imagine what life would be like if we forgot our past — we would be just like robots without character. Today, this is a common condition.

5.Extreme Injustice: Legal systems in the US routinely ignore police violence — many famous incidents of police killing poor minorities without any excuse have been featured recently. This has led to the creation of the movement “Black Lives Matter” in the USA. On the other hand, minor crimes, like failing to pay a parking ticket due to poverty, can lead to prolonged jail sentences (but only for the poor). This is in stark contrast with the high standards of justice which Islam brought to the world — *do not let enmity sway you from justice, and be just, even if it goes against your self-interest and that of your kinfolk.*

6.Destruction of the Family: Today, the majority of children are born to woman who are not married. Children who never experience a

stable family environment where they receive love, nourishment, stability and support, grow up with many different kinds of psychological deficiencies and disorders.

It does seem that, as Iqbal foresaw, Western society is self-destructing, by following their own desires to the extremes with complete disregard of consequences to others, or to the future generations.

Unfortunately, instead of rejecting these errors which are destroying the West, we Muslims are eagerly embracing the same errors and rushing to adopt them in our lives and societies. The dagger which is likely to be the cause of the suicide of the West is also cutting our own throat as well. Instead of thinking about the decline of the West, the urgent task today is to protect our fast fading Islamic values, to work to re-create an Islamic society on the model of Madina. This can be done by renewing the promises that we made to Allah T’aala to live for Him and to die for Him, and to be first among those who surrender completely to His Will.



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Dr Mufti Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera



Dr. Shaykh Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf Mangera is a British Muslim scholar educated in both the Islamic and Western traditions. He memorised the Qur'an by heart and graduated from the Darul Uloom seminary Bury, UK, and later earned a specialised licence to issue fatwa (legal responses) at Mazahir 'Ulum Saharanpur, India. He earned his BA from the University of Johannesburg and completed his MA and PhD in Islamic Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. He holds an honorary fellowship at The Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, Amman, Jordan. Shaykh Abdur-Rahman has the unique experience of serving as an imam in Muslim communities on both sides of the Atlantic, eight years in Southern California and over five in the great city of London—and his continued work as an international speaker and lecturer enables him to address and offer pertinent advice on current challenges that face Muslims in the West. He is the founder of Whitethread Institute, a post-graduate insitute for Islamic scholars. He is an avid traveller and continues to teach hadith and work on scholarly publications through White Thread Press (www.whitethreadpress.com).

The Intellect (TI): You grew up in the UK, and have been very blessed in the sense that you have been able to acquire education on both sides – in fact, you spent time in four continents acquiring your education! We would like to have a brief intro of your education; most importantly, how you chose this path in life, and ended up being in the shoes you are today?

Shaykh Abdur Rahman (SARM):

BismillahirRahmanirRaheem!

Alhumdulillahiwassalatuwassalamu ala

SayyidilMursaleen, wa ala

aalihiwasahbihiajma'een. Amma ba'd!

Everything is with the grace of Allah Most High. A

lot of the time, we receive things through piety and prayers (*du'as*). So I would say the only reason that I am where I am today is because of the *du'as* of my grandparents and my parents. And the reason why I say that is because I was very fortunate — my father's father was a *hafiz* of the Qur'an and they came from a decently religious family, *mashaAllah*. This grandfather of mine was known as 'HafiziSahib'. My maternal grandfather was a *hafiz* too along with being a *qari* as well. We are originally from Gujrat in India but my maternal grandfather studied in Lucknow. In the early 1940s or so, to have gone to Lucknow, which is very far from Gujarat, and study there, was clearly quite a big undertaking. He

studied *Qira'ah* there. Then, of course, my grandmothers from both sides were very decent and pious women. My paternal grandmother passed away just several years ago and I know that she used to pray *salat al-tasbih, tahajjud*, along with many other rak'ats of nafl prayers and one *manzil* of the Qur'an everyday, at least for the last two decades of her life. I think basically she had nothing else to do so she spent time worshipping. That's all I can remember her doing. Also, my father is a *hafiz* and an '*alim* as well. By the grace of Allah Most High, he is a graduate of Dar al-Ulum Falahe Darain in Tadmekshwar, which is a very famous *madrasah* of Gujarat. He graduated from there in about 1972. And then my mother was also extremely religious. One of the first women's lecture programs in our area of London was organized by my mother and it took place in our house. So when you have so many *huffaz and'ulama* (scholars) in your family, and when they talk about the religion and '*ulama*, they talk about them in a favourable way - in an admirable way - it has a very positive impact on you. When older cousins, or others we knew, had completed the memorisation of the Qur'an, we heard praise for them: "how good he is," "how fortunate he is." I think it is for the first time I am saying this - it has only occurred to me now, that, it is probably this factor that has had such a significant impact on my life. When you keep hearing good things about Islam and hear glorification of the faith, the '*ilm and scholars, and you see Islam being practiced in an enjoyable way in the home, then you say 'okay, that is something I want to do too!*

If someone constantly hears, "Look, he has become a doctor, look, and he has become a doctor, *Wo doctor ban gaya*, then I guess you would also develop an interest in becoming a doctor. However, this can also backfire sometimes if you push it on your child, but I don't think they ever pushed it on to me. I don't remember a single time that they did this. It was always indirect encouragement and they were not even actively trying to convince me. It was just so organic. That is how they felt. Their glorification of the faith was just so powerful.

I forgot to mention that my mom's eldest brother was the local leader of the *Tablighi Jamat* in those days in London, and my mom's youngest brother was a *mufti* as well. Mufti Ismail (may Allah have mercy on him) was a graduate of Jamia Binnori Town, Karachi, and was also a khalifah of Mufti Rashid Ludhyanawi (may Allah have mercy on him). He was one of my first teachers as a child. *Alhumdulillah*, in the maktab classes I tended to be in the higher levels, from what I recall, with the older students, because I had probably performed well given the family environment I had.

It was at the age of eleven that I went to Darul Uloom in Bury, UK, a boarding madrasah in the north of England. I remember the first few months I cried a lot and was very homesick, because our madrasah was four hours away from home, and at that time the condition of the madrasah was not very developed. *Subhanallah!* You had to wash your own clothes. The food was, *alhumdulillah*, okay. Actually, it wasn't too bad, and food wasn't a big issue for me, but missing home was at the beginning, especially when you are only eleven-and-a-half years old. I may have cried but interestingly I never once said that I wanted to go home and leave. As I said, my studying was not out of force; I wanted to pursue '*ilm. So that's how I started there and, *alhumdulillah*, I then first spent about four or five years in hifz class; I didn't really work very hard in the beginning because our teacher was very relaxed. Then eventually after I had only completed about fourteen *juzs* of the Qur'an that one day it hit me, 'let me just finish it!' So I think in one year then I finished the remaining 16 *juzs* and got it done; something which I could have completed a few years ago. *Alhumdulillah*. Then I enrolled into the '*alimiyya course. After competing one year of it, I decided I wanted a change. I had been in the Darul Uloom ...which was founded by Hazrat Maulana Yusuf Motala (may Allah bless him abundantly) — I think everything I have done and will do is a *sadaqa jariya* (perpetual charity) for him. Had he not started a *madrasah*, and had I not enrolled at the madrasah, I don't know what I would be doing**

today, *subhanallah!* There were other *madrasas* but I am glad I went to his *madrasa* because it really gave me everything I needed.

Anyway, I decided that I had been there for about six years by now, so I should go somewhere else. So I went to *Falaha Darain* in Tadkeshwar because my father had graduated from there too, and I had heard a lot of praise about it. I stayed there for one year and, *mashaAllah*, the studies were amazing; they had experts in each subject, so I felt that the one year (I spent there) was hugely productive. It had a very advanced department in *qira'ah* (Qur'an recitation), Arabic language and other subjects, and I could have continued there and benefitted much more in other ways, but I decided that my future work was going to be in English, and if I stayed there my English would deteriorate. So I came back to Darul Uloom Bury, and I completed the last four years of the course there.

When I graduated—as they say, *farigh hogaye, Maulana ban gaye*—I decided to get married; and about a month after marriage, I travelled for post-graduate studies for three more years with my wife and then with my first child. First I went to South Africa to undertake my BA Hons. degree under Professor Abdur Rahman Doi at the Rand Afrikaans University (now the University of Johannesburg). Along with that I did the *ifta'* course under Mufti Rada' al-Haq, who used to be a teacher in Binnori Town, Karachi,—I consider him, after Mufti Taqi Usmani sahib, to be one of the biggest muftis of the world. I stayed for one year with him for the *ifta'* course. Then the year after that, I went to Syria to practice Arabic speaking and to study Islamic Theology (*aqidah*) and I also acquired a *hifz sanad* (chain of authorization) from there. I had completed the *hifz* of the Qur'an before, but here under Shaykh Abd al-Razzaq al-Halabi, I received a transmission chain all the way to the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) with only thirty links in between.

After returning to the UK from Damascus, I decided that I would do another *ifta'* course. I had the opportunity, so I went this time to

Madrasah Mazahir Ulum in Saharanpur, India, which is, as you know, the second oldest *madrasah* after Darul Ulum Deoband, and located very close to it as well. I had my wife and child with me, and it is not like Karachi at all. Karachi is, *mashaAllah*, very advanced as compared to Saharanpur. The electricity would sometimes go off for 24 hours. No generators, nothing, and the mosquitoes would have a field day. After the year in Saharanpur, I moved to undertake an *imat* role in Santa Barbara, California. I remained an *imam* in America for eight years but then as my mother's cancer had gotten worse, and due to some other reasons, I returned to the UK in 2008. I am very glad I returned to spend time with my mother, as she then passed away several months later (may Allah shower her with His mercy). Also, England is just better for the *tarbiyah* of children. I then started my Masters program in 2009 at the University of London and then continued with the PhD. This finished in 2013. I did *imat* during this time in London and just three or four years ago in 2017, we started Whitethread Institute, a post-graduate institute for '*alims* and '*alimas*. White Thread Press, on the other hand, is my publishing company, which started off as Prudence Publications in 1994 or so while I was still a student in Darul Uloom Bury. It was renamed White Thread Press after I moved to America in 2003, and since then, *alhumdulillah*, we have published about nineteen to twenty titles. So, *alhumdulillah*, that is my journey in a nutshell.

TI: From what you have just stated—seeing that in your childhood you had an environment and certain influences around you that led you on to the path that you are on today—arises another question; how can we save our children from becoming materialistic in these times and at the same time deal with the challenges of the modern-day world? One wants to instill the love of Allah ﷻ and the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) in their children but also wants to remain subtle in their imparting of deen. How do you see this from your perspective?

SARM: I can't speak for every family, but in all of these things there are always many factors at play, because we live in a very complex world. For me one of the factors was having the environment where *'ilm* was glorified in the house, and I would say *du'as* are the second factor—something that went alongside! I am sure my grandparents were making *du'as* for me, I am sure that my mother and my father were always making *du'a* too; there is no doubt about that! So I think *du'as* play a very big role. Also, you have to be able to see your parents enjoying their life as a religious people, and, if they are not *hafiz* or *'alim*, you have to get the feeling that they would have loved to be an *'alim* or *hafiz* themselves. I think if children see that, then maybe they would want to do that too. If the parents are just pushing too much then I think it could backfire. You need to do it subtly and naturally. Every child is different, so there are some children who, when you encourage them, are just very amenable and they go along. There are some who are just by nature rebellious.

Somebody mentioned that their child—son or daughter—was always very rebellious. He would always choose to do something different from what his father or mother would say, so they clicked on eventually. What they started doing was very creative; they started to suggest the opposite of what they wanted, and their son or daughter would eventually do what they wanted, but you have to be clever about this. There is not one way to nurture your children. It needs constant vigilance and adjustment.

The way I look at it is like how Mu'awiya (may Allah be pleased with him) used to do his politics; the way he would deal with the masses. He called it a tug of war with a rope. He said when they pull too much I let go a little. They need to feel they are winning as well. But if they try to take advantage and pull too much then I pull back. I think in this age, materialism and consumerism is just, *subhanAllah*, everywhere, including in Pakistan; you have to pick your battles; you need to glorify the *deen* without pushing it too much on to the children. Do not force them. I try not to force my children – for instance, I encourage

them to come to bayans with me but I try not to force them. They come with me to the masjid, they pray with me, and they have also learned how to respect the masjid. I have not let them go alone, as from my experience, we would just mess around at the back of the masjid or sometimes outside with our friends because my father wasn't there. I have learnt a lot of things from my own experiences, *alhamdulillah*, as well as to how to adjust with these kinds of things, but I think at the end of the day, you need to just create a balance for your children. Life with *deen* must be enjoyable.

Let not your children see you as dry people who are just *humesha ye karo, ye na karo, namaz parho, namaz parho, aur us me koi maza nahi hai*, etc., I think that's where we need to create the right balance; *salat* and other worships need to be enjoyable and children need to understand why they do them.

TI: You mentioned *Mazahir Uloom* where you studied and obviously this is one of the most esteemed *madrasas* for our Ulama, so it would be great if you could pin point something that stands out in your mind—an incident or feature that made a deep impact on you from that particular journey, or that particular experience of living in Saharanpur.

SARM: I think that it was probably my most productive study year despite it being the toughest year, because, as I mentioned, I was with my wife and my son who was around a year old at that time and he would get sick because it was a new country and environment. My teachers were very generous with their time, so in the lunch break I would go to Mufti 'Abdullah Maroofi, who is now a big teacher in the *Takhassusfil Hadith* department at Darul Uloom Deoband. He used to be in Saharanpur at the time. I used to go to him to study an extra-curricular book in *fiqh*. This was during my lunch break when I should have been taking the afternoon nap (*qaylula*), but I felt that I just needed to do this.

After 'Asr we would go to Qari Naseem Sahib to

study the ten *qira'ah*(recitation). After 'Asr, as you know in *madrasas*, that's the time *jub tehelne k liye log jatay hain*, they relax, but that's where I used to go. And then after Maghrib, when it was time for preparation for the next day's lessons—I would actually prepare for those in the night or in the afternoon—I would go and study an extra *kitab* with one of the big *shaykhs*, Mufti Zayn al-Abidin A'zami(may Allah have mercy on him). He was from Azamgarh; he was a big *muhaddith* and he was the head of the *Takhassus fil Hadith* department in Saharanpur, which was the first place maybe in India to have such a department. He was very old, over seventy or so, but he was, *mashaAllah*, an amazing teacher. I think his wage was only about 2000 rupees at the time, which was twenty years ago, and I know the Indian rupee is more valuable than the Pakistani rupee right now at least, but it wasn't much money. So at the end of the year in Saharanpur I gave him a thousand or so rupees, at which he started to weep and said "You are giving me my reward in place of my reward in the hereafter!" I was a student and I didn't have much money. I only had enough to last the year. This was just a bit of money that I was able to give him but he found it much! They teach you for the sake of Allah and then this humility on top! *SubhanAllah!*

I can also give you another example; I had my wife and child with me, so I had rented my own place to stay in and I would have to do shopping. So one day I was in a hurry and I was with a classmate. He was actually from Gujarat. Gujarati students tend to be a bit more settled and well-off than UP, Bengal and Bihar students, as Gujarat is supposed to be a wealthier state. He wasn't that wealthy. I took him after 'Asr to do a bit of shopping because we were going to go somewhere else thereafter. In ten minutes, I spent two hundred rupees. Now two hundred rupees is about two pounds or three dollars? I just bought a few groceries and did not think much of it. The next day the same student said to me, "*Aapne kal to itni ziyada fuzool kharchi ki*" (You did so much wasteful spending yesterday). I asked, "What do you mean?" Here in the UK, when you go shopping for a family, there is no way you can

spend any less than twenty pounds, and there I had spent only about two pounds and he was saying, "*aap ne itni zyada fuzool kharchi ki.*" I later learned that the majority of students at that time received only a stipend of forty rupees a month to spend from the *madrasah*. And I had, in just ten minutes, spent five months' of stipend for him, even though for it was not really much...

These were eye opening incidents and profound learning experiences. Saharanpur is an amazing place. Shaykh Yunus Jaunpuri (may Allah have mercy on him) was teaching there at the time, and then Darul Uloom, Deoband, was just 40-50 minutes away. Just when you enter the Deoband –it is a big village town – you can feel the weight of the legacy of the *akabir* just bearing down on you – the vibe there is just amazing. I have never experienced that vibe anywhere else. I used to feel the same vibe when I came earlier to Binnori town. This time I didn't have time to enjoy it there, but that vibe in Deoband... I don't think you can replicate it anywhere. It is just amazing!

TI:You are also a part of the 500 most influential Muslims in the world, *MashaAllah*. However, who do you think is making the most profound influence on the Ummah today? And if you can share your interaction with those people and as to why you think they are the biggest contributors today?

SARM: First, being in the 500 is not significant for me; it should not be such a big deal. I mean if I become even number one on the list but Allah Most High doesn't accept my work, it is really a waste of time, right? So I think it is okay. *Alhumdulillah*, they are doing it for a reason. They have got a good purpose for why they are doing what they are doing.

I have never really thought about who is the single most influential person. Because if I consider what the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) said that at the turn of every century, there will be one person who will come and do the *tajdid* of the *deen*, and revive things that have become corrupted or hidden or obscure. According to the view that I follow

regarding this, I think it is very difficult to single out a single person because the dunya has become very multifaceted; it has become a globalized world. Many scholars have said the revival could be by different scholars in different fields. So to point out a single person is very difficult. *MashaAllah*, I came to Pakistan and saw so much wonderful work taking place. Similarly, I go to other countries, I go to India, I go to Egypt, and there are a lot of good people there, but immediately one person among those people that would come to my mind is probably Mufti Taqi Usmani (may his blessing be permanent), *Shaykh al-Islam*. *Alhumdulillah*, I had the opportunity to stay with him for two weeks in October and that was the main focus of my trip to Karachi. I had taken permission from him to visit and I know he doesn't have much time, but I just said to him that whatever time he can give me, even if there is no time, just being in your *suhba*, just being in your presence will be sufficient.

I got to see him a bit more closely during his interactions in the *madrasah*. He has a lot to contribute in terms of understanding the modern world. The world has changed immensely; it has never changed like this before. In the last forty to fifty years the way the world has changed is immense. It has not changed like that in centuries. A simple example I would give is that just look at the Jamara, the Shaitan in Mina. In the early 1950s, the National Geographic Magazine did a photographic catalogue of Hajj, and the Jamara pillar was only as high as normal ceiling—with a CocaCola sign next to it—if you have seen the famous picture.

Then in 2001 when I went for Hajj for the first time, it had become a pillar of about three floors in height. Now when you go it has become a huge wall—thirty or forty times bigger than the pillar. Why? Because the world has changed tremendously. The way the pillar was in 1952, I would assume that is how it had been for centuries before. There had never been a need to make it bigger. However, the transport, the technology, everything has changed. Now our Islamic education, academics and understanding

needs to stay abreast of this, and Mufti Taqi Sahib, I think is celebrated everywhere for his understanding and analysis of the world today.

I have participated with him in a number of international conferences and I have also been to Uzbekistan with him on a special tour. He understands the changes that have transpired in the world. So he is among the people who understand this, who have managed to incorporate the necessary changes without compromising the principles... I think that's an amazing achievement—to retain a balance in this unbalanced world. That's the difficulty, because you have many forces and pressures from all around you. They are trying to take you in different ways. But, *mashaAllah*, I think he has remained very balanced, and he has not fallen for the extremes, and at the same time he is not saying we are not going to change either. Because I think change needs to happen to a certain degree—positive change.

But there are a lot of other people doing a lot of good work too. I don't want to discount anybody else. The other influential person I shouldn't miss out is our late Shaykh Hazrat Maulana Yusuf Motala Sahib (may Allah have mercy on him) from the UK who started the first *madrasah* outside of the Indian Subcontinent, and I would say many *madrasas* in Europe, Canada and America, and of course in the UK somehow go back to him. He was maybe not as well-known as Mufti Taqi Sahib, but I would say that, *mashaAllah*, it just shows that you don't have to be so well known to achieve a lot...

TI: Now we come to our last question, which is related to what you just said about the change happening in today's world. The question is about Islamophobia because of which Islam has become a challenge even for the youth today who want to practice it. Islamophobic acts are now quite rampant in Europe today, and we see a lot of incidents happening. First, we need your comments on what this really is, and secondly, some advice for young Muslims who are struggling in their *deen* in this difficult time.

SARM: I see a lot of people when they mention Europe, they bring UK into it. I would actually argue that the UK is very different from mainland Europe in many ways; even in terms of being in the European Union; they still have their own currency, they still have their own border checks... I have been to mainland Europe, and the mentality is very different. England, in general, is *alhumdulillah* much better than the rest of Europe. We pray to Allah Most High that the UK continues to remain a good place. Of course, we still have challenges, we need to deal with Islamophobia, and I guess if you are talking about dealing with Islamophobia, I think one of the best ways to deal with it, apart from our *du'as*, is being good representatives of Islam and being decent people, that is, being good citizens while being good Muslims. Another very important thing is to discuss our faith with others, but I think if you want to have a good discussion, you need to improve your own understanding of our religion.

Secondly, statistics are very important, so when people ask you questions about why Muslims do not speak out against terrorism, how do you respond to that? If you have the statistics, if you have the names of the people who have spoken out then you can immediately use that information. For example, if they say Muslims are responsible for the terrorism in the world, then statistically that is an absolutely invalid statement, because really they only constitute a small percentage of those guilty of terrorist activities in the world; they are a minority but they are the ones that are blown out of proportion and magnified the most. If you have these kinds of solid facts, it helps a lot when you speak to

people.

We also run a course called the 'Controversial Questions about Islam' course (<https://crisisinfaith.org>) at Whitethread Institute that teaches you how to deal with a lot of such questions. I think people who are going to have these conversations need to know how to deal with these kinds of questions. They should consider this course.

TI: Obviously it was too short a time to learn from a distinguished person like yourself but I thank you for the time that you have given us, and I pray to Allah that He accepts this and that He protects you from all the evils of the world, and He rewards you in this world and the hereafter. Please remember us in your prayers as well.

SARM: *JazakAllah Khayr* for this opportunity. To be honest, for me it is a waste of time to talk about myself really, so if the benefit from this is that somebody might be inspired then that is a good thing. But *JazakAllah khayr* for this opportunity. Allah grants you for your intentions and your efforts, and may He accept all of our efforts for our *deen*. *Assalamu 'alaykum warahmatAllahi wabarakatuh*.

TI: *Waalykumussalam warahmatullahe wabarakatuh*.

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My Sajida Baji!

By Nadia Godil

My heart even now refuses to accept that the beautiful smile which lit my soul and made the world seem brighter will never shine upon me again. That my name will never be said with the sweet inflection which was completely unique to her. That no one will ever call me 'my angel' ever again.

The heart is broken and the soul is left bereft. Yet, a part of me feels like a phoenix, rising from the ashes, stronger and better than before. That is the power of her inspiration, that even beyond the veil her fire is blazing through my soul. Perhaps through every soul she has ever touched. That is what she was like - a brilliant, blazing, roaring fire, encased in a peaceful body of alabaster with a honey sweet smile, somehow transferring a part of her flame to every student or friend who came her way.

There was so much passion in her! Passion for *Ilm*, passion for attaining one's highest self through spiritualism, and her greatest passion - her intense love for the divine language of Arabic. "Bilarabia, ya Nadia!" was something I heard very often, especially when I got upset about something and started babbling away to her in English. She loved for her students to speak in Arabic even outside class hours. I remember her very first class with us where she spent the entire

session talking about Arabic and why everyone in the world must learn it. While I don't remember every word she spoke that day, I do remember the way she leaned forward, the sparkle in her eyes and the enthusiasm in her voice. I didn't have any feelings, positive or negative, for Arabic prior to that day. In fact I found it more than a bit intimidating. But Baji's passion was such that even the most reluctant of learners would be bowled over by it. Love for the Arabic language is one of the characteristics that marks every graduate of Aisha Siddiqua - a personal gift from Baji to each of us.

My body is convulsing with sobs even now as I remember this woman, this amazing, pious woman who gave me the greatest of gifts; unconditional love and acceptance. My mother often teased her that Nadia seems to love you more than even me. I don't doubt the veracity of that statement. Baji was my spiritual mother. She knew of my sins, my virtues and my failings. My soul had been laid bare to her since the first time I met her and she had picked it up and embraced it, wounded animal that it was and accepted it just for what it was, flaws and all. When I met her I knew that this woman, queen amongst women, loved me. Our souls connected and from that a bond was forged which I hope shall carry on to

the gardens of Paradise.

One of the things that stands out most to me from my time at madrassah was the time spent in Baji's room. I can picture that little haven in my mind's eye as I write this. Her little chair, her throne, now vacant and pitiful, a huge stack of books always beside her. She was constantly in a state of '*Muta'lla*', (perusal of books) something she encouraged in every one of us. Her love for books, reading and knowledge was secondary only to her love of Arabic. Upon graduation she told me that my journey into Ilm was not complete, that it had but started! That I had only spent these last six years learning how to learn on my own. Baji had devoted her entire life to the pursuit of Ilm and she hoped the same from each of her students. However, she was the kindest and most understanding of mothers when we failed to meet her expectations. There was no judgement, no censure. Only support and acceptance. She often reminded us that this journey was about "*Qabooliyat*" (acceptance) not "*qaabiliyat*" (skill).

That little room was my refuge during my madrassah years. I don't know how many times I raced to it, tears streaming down my face because something had upset me which only Baji could fix! I didn't know then but I do know now the intense demands upon her time and the responsibilities upon her shoulders; yet I don't remember a single time that I was turned away or told to wait. I remember one such incident with clarity. We were studying Hadith and we came across one Hadith which spoke about destiny. The translation of a part of that Hadith is, 'By Him, besides whom there is no god, that one amongst you acts like the people deserving Paradise until between him and Paradise there remains but the distance of a cubit, when suddenly the writing of destiny overcomes him and he begins to act like the denizens of Hell (*shakiyy*) and thus enters Hell, and another one acts in the way of the denizens of Hell, until there remains between him and Hell the distance of but a cubit, when suddenly the writing of destiny overcomes him and he begins to act like the people of Paradise

(*saeed*) and enters Paradise.' (Sahih Bukhari)

By the time the teacher finished reciting this Hadith, my whole body was trembling and my ever pessimistic mind was telling me that I was surely amongst the doomed, the '*shakiyy*'. Slowly, hysteria started building up. Tears started coursing down my face. The teacher who was teaching at the time was completely nonplussed by my questions about destiny and free choice. She tried her very best to appease me but nothing worked. Finally, the bell rang and I could do what I had wanted to do from the very first, raced down the corridor to Baji's room! I still remember the soft smile on her beautiful face as she listened to me pouring out my apprehensions. I will never forget how she handled me that day. She listened without interrupting even once, slowly stroking my head or hand. Once she was sure that I was completely done, she smiled at me and said that I know you are not one of the "*shakiyy*" my child. But anytime in your life that when this doubt assails you just read this simple dua, "*Allahumma in katabtanishakiyun famhuhoo waktubni saeedun*" (Oh Allah, if you have written me amongst the *Shakiyy* then erase it and write me amongst the *saeed*). In two simple sentences she had slain the beast of despair that had arisen in my breast, not only for that day but forevermore by arming me with the sword to slay it whenever it reared its ugly head. I remember going to her again and again with my questions. Never was I repulsed. Sometimes she would spend hours arguing logic with me. Never was I made to feel that I was being bay-adab or disrespectful. She understood and accepted that I had some doubts and questions and never told me to just let go of them. She went out of her way to make me feel at home in her madrassah. In fact it would not be an exaggeration to say that she *was* my madrassah. And this wasn't just with me. Baji had a special way of making each and every student feel cherished and special. We each of us felt that she had an unusual amount of love and regard for us.

Baji was not just a scholar, she was also a Sufi. Seeing her immersed in prayer it seemed as if she

was truly talking to Allah in some other dimension. The very first Hadith she taught me was, “*kun fid dunya-kaannaka-gareebun au aabirusabeelin*” (Sahih Bukhari) “Be in this world as if you are a stranger or a traveler”. This seemed to be the ruling principle of her life. Although she was from a wealthy family, she seemed to have forsaken luxuries and was only

interested in her pursuit of Allah and helping Allah’s creation with her ilm, her time and her money. And while the wounds of separation are deep and raw, it is with love and pride that we saw off our traveler onto her final journey, a journey that she spent her whole life preparing for, a journey that ends in true lovers meeting!

Be Careful!

During Ramadan the believers get busy seeking Allah’s mercy, forgiveness, and protection from Hellfire. This is the month for renewing our commitment and re-establishing our relationship with our Creator. It is the spring season for goodness and virtues when righteousness blossoms throughout the Muslim communities. “If we combine all the blessings of the other eleven months, they would not add up to the blessings of Ramadan,” said the great scholar and reformer Shaikh Ahmed Farooqi (Mujaddad Alif Thani). It offers every Muslim an opportunity to strengthen his Iman, purify his heart and soul, and to remove the evil effects of the sins committed by him.

“Anyone who fasts during this month with purity of belief and with expectation of a good reward (from his Creator), will have his previous sins forgiven,” said Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. “Anyone who stands in prayers during its nights with purity of belief and expectation of a reward, will have his previous sins forgiven.” As other ahadith tell us, the rewards for good deeds are multiplied manifold during Ramadan.

Along with the possibility of a great reward, there is the risk of a terrible loss. If we let any other month pass by carelessly, we just lost a month. If we do the same during Ramadan, we have lost everything. The person who misses just one day’s fast without a legitimate reason, cannot really make up for it even if he were to fast everyday for the rest of his life. And of the three persons that Prophet ﷺ cursed, one is the unfortunate Muslim who finds Ramadan in good health but does not use the opportunity to seek Allah’s mercy.

One who does not fast is obviously in this category, but so also is the person who fasts and prays but makes no effort to stay away from sins or attain purity of the heart through the numerous opportunities offered by Ramadan. The Prophet ﷺ, warned us: “There are those who get nothing from their fast but hunger and thirst. There are those who get nothing from their nightly prayers but loss of sleep.”

- From the *Meaning of Ramadan* by Khalid Baig

Memoirs of Hazrat Mufti Taqi Usmani

ولدت بركاتهم

Translation by Umm Abdullah Zubairi

In those days, Bhai Jaan used to stay in a rather dark and cramped flat in Neela Gumbad, adjacent to the old building of Jamia Ashrafiyah. In the upper floor of this same flat, Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Idrees Sahab Kandhlawi, and in the upper most floor, the founder of Jamia Ashrafiyah, Hadhrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Hasan Sahab رحمته used to stay. Hadhrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Hasan Sahab (may his secret be sanctified) was one of the prominent *Khulafah* (deputy in Tasawwuf) of Hadhrat Hakeem ul Ummah رحمته. He had actually founded Jamia Ashrafiyah in Amritsar but when Muslims were massacred in East Punjab at the time of the creation of Pakistan, he moved to Lahore and established the Jamia Ashrafiyah which holds the honour of being the first Madrasah to be established after the founding of Pakistan. Our respected father had emphatically advised us to visit Hadhrat and to be present in his (blessed) company whenever we visited Lahore. Thus, I clearly remember visiting him with (late) Bhai Jaan at the age of seven; he would shower us with his kindnesses and duas. Even though there was no question of me comprehending (since I was so young) Hadhrat's high status in those days, neither do I today, but I still remember this much that in Hadhrat's gatherings a strange kind of *Nur* (Divine radiance) and serenity would be felt even in that dark and cramped flat and it would feel as

if we were under a shelter of kindnesses and mercy. May Allah ﷻ have infinite mercy on him!

During this same time, one day Bhai Jaan returned from the bookstore crying and told us that Shaykhul Islam Hadhrat Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Sahab Usmani رحمته had passed away. He had gone to Bhawalpur University at the university's invitation and passed away there. Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayihi Raji'oon (We certainly belong to Allah, and to Him we are bound to return). How could have I comprehended his high scholarly status at that young an age? However, the thought of getting deprived of his kindnesses made us sad even in that childhood. It was only later that I realised the magnitude of the tragedy of his demise for this country and Islam, as his passing away removed a central figure from scholarly circles who had strung together all schools of thought into the higher objective of national interest. May Allah Ta'ala have infinite mercy on him!

Our second eldest sister, respected 'Ateeqa Khatoon Sahiba Hafidahullah had been left behind in Deoband; her husband, respected Munshi Basheer Ahmad Sahab (who worked in the administration of Darul Uloom Deoband) passed away in Deoband. Our respected father رحمته asked her to come to Pakistan after completing her 'Iddah, so she also came to

Lahore with her three daughters and later reached Karachi together with us. She stayed in one portion of the quarter at Jacob Line. We stayed in Jacob Line for around two years. During this time, my elder sister, respected Haseeba Khatoon رحمۃ اللہ علیہا got married and moved to her in-laws' place.

These quarters at Jacob Line, made for government officers, were of mediocre quality. They had short walls, so much so that thieves would not have to bear much hardship in climbing those walls and entering the quarters at night. Thus, burglars often used to break into this house. However, burglars in those days had not advanced much; after quietly climbing into a house if they found any petty thing they would consider it sufficient, and if ever they suspected someone in the house had woken up they would climb out of the house just as easily as they had climbed in. In a similar fashion, small burglaries happened many times. However, once our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had made intention for Hajj, and having completed all formalities, had put the ticket, passport and perhaps also foreign currency into a big wallet. When all of us were sleeping at night, a thief entered and, God knows how, managed to get his hands on that wallet. When our respected father woke up in the morning he found all those things missing; no money, no ticket, no passport. The departure of the ship was so near that even if he would have somehow arranged the money, there was no time to complete the governmental procedures. As a result, our respected father could not go for Hajj that year despite all preparations. Allah ﷻ had bestowed upon Hadhrat Maulana Ihtisham ul Haq Sahab رحمۃ اللہ علیہ a good sense of humour. When our respected father told him about this theft he said: "Hadhrat! Now only that thief will go for Hajj." In these kinds of situations, the characteristic of being pleased with the decree of Allah ﷻ that we observed in our respected father is rarely witnessed anywhere else.

After the arrival of our sister, who had come to Pakistan with her three daughters after the death of her husband, the house at Jacob Line became

quite small for all of us. Therefore, our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ took a house for rent in a building known as Iqbal Manzil at Campbell Street, near Burns Road. We thus moved into this new house and stayed there for five years (i.e. 1951 to 1956). These five years proved to be very blessed in many ways, and it was during these five years that our stay in Karachi became established.

First Hajj in Childhood

One blessing I received after moving to this place is that our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ made intention to go for Hajj. The previous year as well, during our stay at Jacob Line, our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had completed all preparations for Hajj but, as I have written before, he could not go due to the theft of passport, ticket, etc. Thus he had made that intention again. That year our respected mother رحمۃ اللہ علیہا and Bhai Jaan (late respected Maulana Muhammad Zaki Kaifi Sahab) also accompanied him. I was eight years old then, and it was almost impossible for our respected mother to travel without me, so I received the good fortune of performing Hajj at that small age. Thus, we departed for this blessed journey on 31 July 1951.

A *Khalifa* of Hakeem Ul Ummah Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahab Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, Al-Haaj Zafar Ahmad Sahab Thanwi Rahimahullah was an engineer in Pan Islamic Steamship Company. A ship belonging to this company, called *Safeena-e-Arab*, used to carry pilgrims during the Hajj season. He had booked a big cabin at the upper deck of this ship, in one portion of which he stayed with his respected wife, a son, Musharraf Ali Sahab, and a daughter. We stayed in the other portion with our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. I was beginning to realise the sanctity of this journey of Hajj at that age. Along with it, however, the curiosity of travelling by ship had also crept in. The son and daughter of Al-Haaj Zafar Ahmad were almost the same age as me and soon I developed such frankness with them that the ship became a playground for us. Whatever time I got off from this playing around, I would spend it in learning the duas (prayers) of *Tawaf* from a book about Hajj. Almost one whole

interesting and entertainment-filled week was passed on the ship until I heard our respected father رحمته and others asking the Captain as to when the ship would pass by Yalamlam (In those days the research on this matter suggested that it was necessary to be in the state of Ihram when the ship passed by Yalamlam). A later research concluded otherwise, the details of which can be found in *Jawahir ul Fiqh*). Thus when it was announced that the ship was going to pass by Yalamlam soon, everyone put on their Ihram. I was also made to wear Ihram. The entire ship was echoing with proclamations of "Labbaik" at that time, and we reached Jeddah the very next day.

Jeddah was a small city back then. A 'Hujjaj Building' was built there to house Hajjis for their short stay in Jeddah. Thus, we stayed in a wooden room of this building. When we would take a step out of the room, the land would be so damp that we would sink into it along with our shoes, and it would be difficult to walk. There was only one shop selling food and we could clearly see red insects (weevils) in the *Rotis* it sold. Even if we cleaned the *Rotis*, we would still have to confront the smell of the insects. As a result, we had to satiate our hunger with something other than food. There were very few paved roads in the whole of Jeddah, all other being unpaved. When it was time to go to Makkah Mukarramah we came to know that we had to go quite far away to the bus stand. When we reached the bus stand, the bus came after several hours and then departed for Makkah Mukarramah. Only a part of the road was paved and I seem to remember that it took us four to five hours to reach Makkah Mukarramah. Our destination finally arrived, for which we had been waiting for a week.

It was a spiritually uplifting spectacle when we entered Makkah Mukarramah at 'Isha time. The bus stopped at something like a door where several people carrying Zamzam in *Surahis* were welcoming those entering by giving them Zamzam to drink in white perfumed bowls. The blessings of Makkah Mukarramah had begun. Our belongings were unloaded at the Mu'allim's place. The days of Hajj were very near and all of

us had put on the Ihram for "Qiraan". Hence, our respected father Rahimahullah took all of us to the sacred Haram the same night. The spectacle of seeing the Baitullah, wrapped in a blue *Ghilaaf* (cover), is still in front of my eyes. Despite my small age, I was mesmerized at looking at this embodiment of awe and beauty. However, it felt as if I had seen this spectacle before. My elders were crying, and we began Tawaf in this state. I had read the method of performing Tawaf from the book about Hajj during our journey. The imagination had forged innumerable images of Hajar Al-Aswad and Rukn Al-Yamani and I had also memorized some of the *duas* (prayers) of Tawaf written in the book. However, I forgot everything once we reached here. Thus, I completed the Tawaf by following our respected father رحمته, without comprehending anything.

Next, we had to do Sa'ee between Safa and Marwa. The Mas'aa, i.e. the place of doing Sa'ee, was not separated as it is today; rather there was a common street between Safa and Marwa which also had shops on both sides. Hawker carts were also parked around, and cars used to pass by too. Sa'ee had to be done between those shops and cars. Our respected father Rahimahullah kept us children with him at first, but when he felt that there was a chance of children being trampled or getting lost in the uproar, he hired a car and put us three in that and emphasized the driver to stay with us at all times and also fixed a place where he could meet him after Sa'ee in case of separation. However, only a short while after sitting in the car our respected father, mother and Bhai Jaan (May Allah Ta'ala's mercy be upon them) disappeared from our view in a wave of crowd. When we found ourselves in the hands of a complete stranger who could not understand our language and we could not understand his, we lost hold of our patience, and all three of us were on the verge of weeping. Now I don't remember how the Sa'ee finished and how we met our respected father رحمته.

A friend of our respected father Rahimahullah, late Haji Dawood Maait Sahab was residing in Makkah Mukarramah, and he asked our

respected father Rahimahullah to stay at his place instead of the Mu'allim's.

Perhaps very few people are now alive who had seen the sacred Haram of those days. The sacred Haram only had the (old) Turkish construction and three-storey flats were built adjacent to it in all directions. Where the internal stairs of *Bab ul Fath* are located today, there used to be a small door near it called *Bab Ar-Ribaat*. Stairs from this Bab Ar-Ribaat would lead to the residential flats, and Haji Dawood Maait Sahab's house was located on the third floor. We stayed in a room of this house; a window (in that room) used to open in the direction of the Sacred Haram and the scene of Baitullah Shareef, Meezab-e Rahmat and Hateem would be in front of us all the time.

The population in Mina in those days used to be very small, and Haji Dawood Maait Sahab رحمته الله had rented a house in Mina where all of us stayed. We left for 'Arafah the next day. What understanding of the rites of Hajj could I have had at that small an age? I just remember that the sight of tents spread out as far as the eyes could see and everyone wearing the same kind of clothes was a stunning view for me. Despite the severe heat, people were fervently reciting the *Talbiyah* and briskly walking towards the Jabal ar-Rahmah. The heat was extreme that day. Nevertheless, our respected father Rahimahullah at first left the tent in the direction of Jabal ar-Rahmah. However, people (on his way) told him that even if he reached Jabal ar-Rahmah, it would be impossible to return to his tent due to the tents being dismantled. Therefore, he returned to our tent and became busy in Wuqoof, along with our mother and Bhai Jaan, with great devotion and humility. After sunset we departed 'Arafah, and reached Muzdalifa. Muzdalifa was a sandy desert at that time which had no light except moonlight. After the entire day's heat, the cool sand under us, beneath the open sky, was a great blessing. All of us were tired, but it was necessary to safeguard our belongings first as thefts and robberies were frequent in those days. This was the era of the governance of the founder of the Saudi Government, Sultan 'Abdul 'Azeez

Rahimahullah. Law and order had not come under full control by that time. Therefore, all elders decided to put our belongings in the center and our beddings around them. We thus did that. After putting this security mechanism in place, all of us went into sleep as soon as we lay down. When we woke up in the morning, we found that one box from our belongings, which contained everyone's necessary things, was missing. It also contained the clothes we would wear after coming out of the state of Ihram, as well as some cash, our passports, etc. It seemed that since, for safety, we had put this box in the center and all of us had slept around it, the thief would have understood that it contained the most valuable loot, for which such security measures had been placed. Therefore, the extraordinary precautionary steps proved to be the real reason of the theft. Mutanabbi has said regarding such cases:

الأمر لله رَبِّ مجتهد
ماخاب إلاآته جاهد
ومتقى والسهم مرسله
يهيد من حابض إلى صادر

Meaning: The matter is in the hands of Allah; many a hard worker failed because of their hard work. If an arrow approaches someone from in front, he tries to evade it by getting out of its trajectory. But the arrow misses the target and still hits him.

As a result, all members of our family were left in such a state that we did not have anything except the sheets of Ihram. Therefore, when we returned to Mina that day and the time to come out of Ihram came after performing sacrifice, our respected father, late Bhai Jaan, and I did not have any stitched clothes to wear. Thus Haji Dawood Maait Sahab and his sons gave us their clothes to wear and we wore them for three days. I don't quite recall what arrangements our respected father رحمته الله made after the loss of the passports.

To be Continued, inshaAllah...

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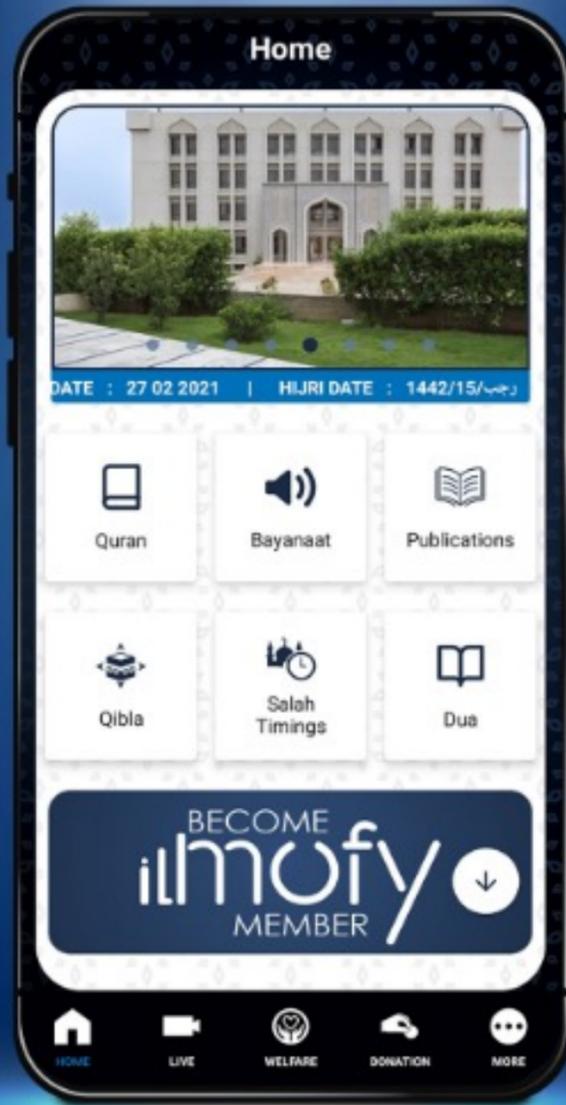
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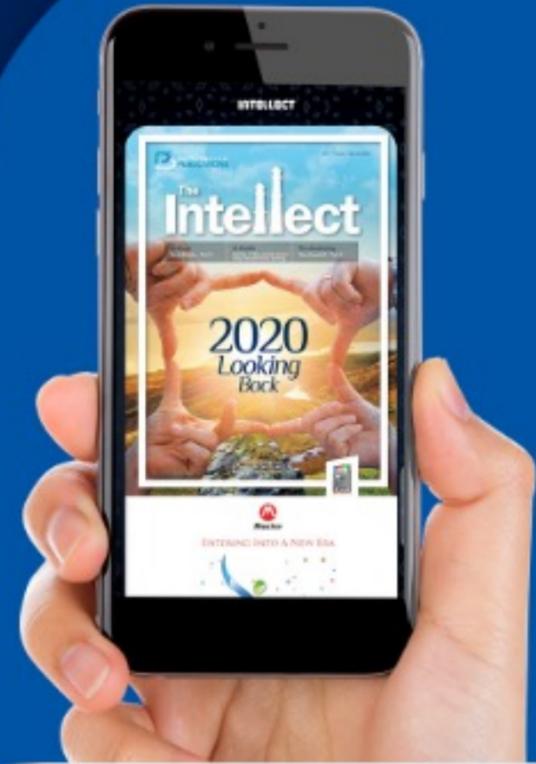
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