

The Intellect Bulletin



Dr. Ali Muhammad As-Sallabi, in his "Ad-Dawla az Zankiyya," a historical account of the Zangi era wrote about women's education in the rule of Nur ud-Deen Zangi. Noor ul-Deen ruled in Syria from 541 AH to 569 AH (1146 - 1174 CE). He was a just and righteous leader and was well-loved by those under him. He was succeeded by Salahuddin Ayyubi, who followed in his footsteps. Following is a translation of the chapter on women's education:

The devotion of Muslim women to Islamic studies reached high levels. Their purpose was to gain knowledge of the correct teachings of the religion and thereby bring them into practice. The subject that received the most regard was the study of hadith, in which many women attained high qualification. They competed with great Hadith scholars and memorizers of hadith therein and became profound examples of trustworthiness and uprightness.

Many biographical accounts allude to the substantial intellectual activities of women in this era. Sources have mentioned names of numerous female Qaris, hadith scholars, fiqh scholars, writers, grammarians, as well as scholars of other fundamental sciences. Many of these women would travel from region to region with their maharim to seek knowledge from great scholars and Muhaddithin and they received ijazas (certificates) from them. A testimony to the undertakings of women in this field is the fact that the biographers of Ibn Asakir (d. 571

Education of Women in the Zangi Era

By
Dr. Ali Muhammad al-Sallabi



AH / 1176) agree that more than eighty of his teachers were women. This demonstrates the large numbers of women who were busy in this field, such that a single scholar from the scholars of that era studied from more than eighty women. This is in addition to the large number of women whose biographies he has included in his book. (Ibn Asakir collected biographical accounts of 196 women scholars in his tareekh).

It becomes apparent from what Ibn Asakir alludes to in his Tarikh al-Kabir that the home was the first school for these women. The women who received much acclaim for their knowledge were the ones who grew up in the houses of scholars and studied from their fathers or other knowledgeable relatives. These women would also benefit from the various classes that would take place in their homes, as they would listen on to what was being discussed. This is what is listed as "Teaching in the homes of the scholars" in historical accounts. Thus, when Ibn Asakir wrote about his wife, Aisha bint Ali (d. 564

AH / 1168), he mentioned that she studied hadith from Fatima bint Ali Al-Asfraini, known as the Young Scholar, who in turn had studied with her father Abul Farj.

Similarly, the doors of the masjid would be open for women who wanted to study. These women would frequent the study circles that took place in the masjid. These study circles had a specific space appropriated for them, a space which was totally separated from that of the men which eliminated the possibility of mingling of the genders.

Women did not just take part in studying, but rather they played a role in spreading and teaching knowledge as well. Although they did not have teaching positions in specialized schools in the manner we see now, they did have other avenues of teaching. Ibn Asakir indicates this as he writes about his wife's teacher Fatima bint Ali Al-Asfraini that she used to give sermons to women in the masjid.

One of the most notable women in the field of

teaching was the alima Fatima al-Faqiha. She taught in Halab and authored many works of fiqh and hadith. Further, Nur-ud Din, the ruler of the era, would consult with her in his affairs and ask her for fatawa in fiqh issues. He supported her and helped her in her educational pursuits.

An event that transpired between Fatima al-Faqiha and Nur-ud Din highlights the commitment of the Muslim women to the Islamic requirement of hijab and how the female scholars would only communicate with men through a woman assigned to act as a middle-person. The event, as Al-Qurashi writes, is that 'Ala ad-Deen al-Kasani, the husband of the scholar Fatima al-Faqiha, decided to move from Halab to his own country at the request of his wife. Nur ud Deen summoned Imam Ala ad-Deen and requested him to stay in Halab. Imam Ala ud-Deen explained to him the reason for his move and told him that he could not oppose his wife's wish who was also the daughter of his shaikh. Nur ud-Deen then sent a servant to Fatima to speak to her on his behalf. When the servant arrived at her house, she did not allow him to enter. Then she sent someone to her husband (who was with the king at that time) with the message, "With your experience and knowledge of fiqh, don't you know that it's not permissible for this servant to see me? What's the difference between him and other men?" The servant returned and recounted what had taken place to her husband in the presence of the ruler. They then sent a woman to her with the king's request. Fatima then accepted the request and stayed in Halab until she passed away. Her husband al-Kasani passed away after her in 587 AH / 1191 and was buried next to her in Halab.

Education is the most fundamental quality that separates man from other species. Today in the modern world, everyone proposes their idea of how to teach and what the classroom setting should be like. Teachers and principals have their idea of teaching, psychologists recommend their own ways, and scientists deduce their own ideas through their research. Some believe it's important to use high-tech gadgets while others adopt a more traditional approach. Educational meetings and seminars are held to talk about how teachers can improve teaching and how students can learn more. Islam is a religion which values education so much that it is amongst the top most priorities required by its adherents. Islam from its very beginning cherished education and continues to do so. Islam is today the same as it was 1400 years ago; it is the Muslims today who give it a bad name. An Islamic classroom revolves around three basic principles: the rights of the teacher upon the student, the rights of the student upon the teacher, and the etiquette and humility required to learn.

The teacher's role in every society whether it be in Islam or any other ideology has always been to teach. Their goal is to see that the student "reaches the bar" and understands the material well. Sometimes teachers, due to whatever reason, "lower the bar" just so that the student can reach it. This is absolutely looked down upon because it does not allow the student to achieve his potential. According to Islam, this is the main right that is placed upon the teacher. Majority of the teachers all around the world fulfill this responsibility.

There are two main things required from the student. The first one involves his

respect for the teacher and material (like books, pencils, etc.), and the second one involves the subject material. The first one, respecting the teacher and material, is pretty clear and obvious. The basic idea being that there is no harm done to the teacher whether it's physically, verbally,

student comes to class. 2. Hudhoor: The student's actual presence in class as well as his attentiveness and participation (if required) through the lecture.

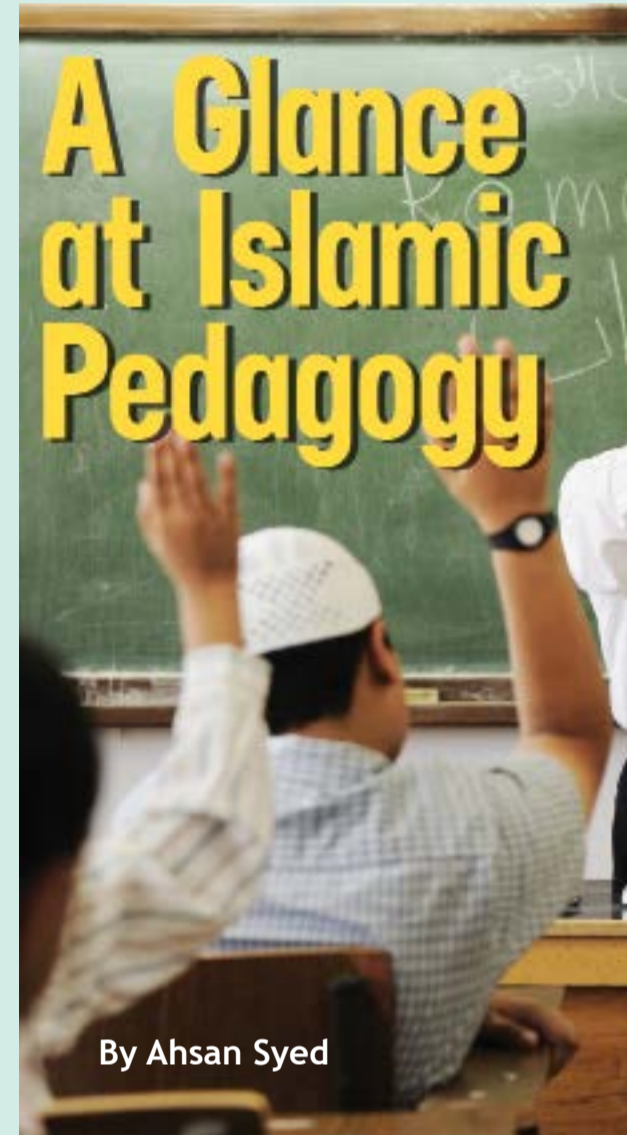
3. Takrar: And finally a thorough revision of the material before the next

completely grasped the material.

The final principle which encompasses the whole process is humility and etiquette which are essential to observe by the student and the teacher. An example of this is that students and teachers sit on the ground with desks built accordingly. This is a very unique feature only found in traditional Islamic seminaries in terms of higher education. Just by this one action one can see respect, humility, and etiquette. When an individual sits on a chair, he or she is likely to stretch their feet out (most likely towards the teacher if they are facing them, and this is considered a sign of disrespect). Almost always, students recline their backs to the chairs which causes them to be sleepy (also considered a sign of disrespect). Majority of the time, the teacher has to stand and give the lecture while the students sit comfortably. Also, this is a physical action representing their humility and submission to Allah because Muslims believe all knowledge comes from Allah, the All-Knowing.

There are many aspects from the Islamic pedagogy that other schools and institutions can benefit from. If the above method of studying were to be followed by any student of any field, then they can be certain that their knowledge is intact. This has been the practice found since early Islam which students learn from their teachers who've learned it from their teachers and the chain continues on. Although worship and submission to Allah are given the first and foremost priority in Islam, they too require some knowledge. Thus knowledge is embedded in the very essence of Islam, and it is a key-fundamental aspect of it.

Courtesy: ilmgate.org



By Ahsan Syed

or even to waste his time, and in regards to his materials, he should keep them organized and use them for their purpose. Respecting the teacher and the material, according to traditional Islamic education, is equally important as the subject material if not more. The second point, the student's involvement with the subject material, has three parts to it, each being equally important:

1. Mutala'ah: The initial preparation of the material before the

class as well as to review previously covered lessons from time to time.

All three are highly emphasized, and majority of the time they are mandatory. Another principle unique to the Islamic pedagogy is that it highly encourages memorization of the material. In fact, many Madaris, traditional Islamic schools, require the student to memorize the material. These components ensure that the student has fully understood and

Fahmedeen Publications

Did you ever wish to seek true knowledge to a peaceful life of Islam?

Now Fahmedeen Publications brings you Enlightening magazines like **Intellect**, **Radiance**, **Fahmedeen**, **Nakhal** and **Mujallat ul Islam** in English, Urdu & Arabic for every person of the household. Discover the exciting treasures of wisdom through Fahmedeen Publications delivered right to your doorsteps. Read uplifting stories and articles, grow in soul and mind, be knowledge's guiding light.

Don't Wait
Subscribe
Now!



Add: 30-C, Basement 2nd Comm. Street, Phase-4, D.H.A., Karachi, Pakistan
for further inquires: +92 322 2120004, +92 332 8278537, +92 21 35313278

WWW.FAHMEDEEN.ORG/PUBLICATIONS

Lift the Curtain

By Bint Yousuf

Everybody's coming and going
And I'm sitting here, not knowing

Life is just a passing fancy
All play and fun, it mustn't be

I think, I say and I do
So many things I needn't have to

The honor, lives and property
Of every Muslim should be dear to me

As another dawn approaches near
Maybe the Sun will rise

from the west, do I fear?

And then no sorry, no apology
The scrolls are tied up, I thought I could be care-free

Drowning self in *Ghafflah*
Shutting eyes to the chance of *Rahmah*

Wake up now, I can't rest yet
There's a purpose, a goal to be met

Then will come the eternal success
Lets strive towards it, oh yes!

Nothing beats
Our Meat



11-11-MEAT-1

www.meatone.net

www.facebook.com/meatone1

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ

Baitussalam Welfare Trust gladly announces

AMBULANCE SERVICES

021-111-298-111



بيت السلام ويليقيترست (رجسٹرڈ)
Baitussalam Welfare Trust (Regd.)

Hush Puppies®
Let's Get Together

hushpuppies.com.pk | HushPuppiesPakistan

SPRING COLLECTION NOW IN STORES 2014

The Burger Shack

Jalapeno Rounds | Shack Chili Con Carne | Shack Chili Fries

Shop no. 3 & 4, 16C Lane 9 5th Commercial Phase 7, Karachi.
Ph: 021-35845981 - 021-35845982, Web: www.theburgershack.org

"Everyone wants to make enough money to live comfortably, but what does this mean? Should one aim to make millions? Or is this a questionable aim for a moral life? Should one aim at a profession in order to achieve high status? ... The big question: What kind of work will contribute to my becoming a whole person and also contribute to my community...?" - Nel Noddings, *Critical Lessons: What Our Schools Might Teach but Do Not* (2006)

Not an unfamiliar scenario: An adult asks a small child, 'What are you going to be when you grow up?' The child looks at his interlocutor confusedly. He is immediately given his options, 'Engineer, doctor, pilot...' and the clichéd list would go on to bog the child down with the weighty responsibility of either 'becoming' any of these or remain a 'good-for-nothing' all his life.

If only we could control our formative influences, life would be so much better! If only...

• Dreams and Desires

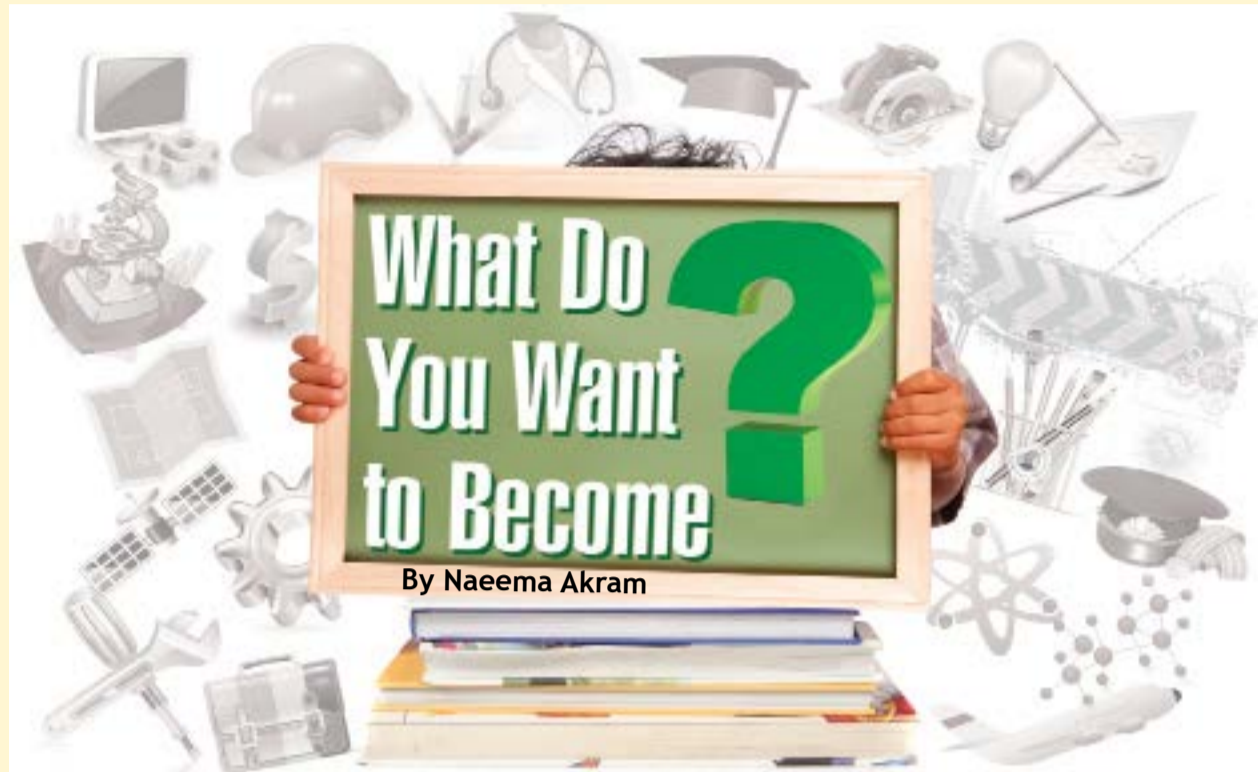
'Dreaming Big' is the slogan of the modern day world. We 'dream big' by wanting our children to grow up into doctors, engineers, corporate professionals, etc. There is nothing inherently wrong with adopting any of these professions, but let's face it squarely: 'dreaming big' is naught but a lust for accumulating money. Money, as they say, makes the world go round! Even if we are reluctant to admit this consciously, there is hardly any doubt that when we 'dream big' for our children, we mostly want them to be monetarily rich - 'stable' as we call it. We end up circumscribing the horizon of the dreams of our children. We drill into their minds the options that they are supposed to consider when opting for courses in their schools, colleges and universities. For most of our children, growing up these days, therefore, is simply a process of inheriting the corporate dreams and aspirations of their elders, and then working day in and day out to turn them into reality.

• Becoming Educated

First parents 'dream big' and then schools catalyse the process of magnifying these dreams for their young ones. The process

of education, most of us believe, is 'formally' set into motion the moment our child first steps into school. From then on there is no turning back. It is the school that now takes care of the aspirations parents so dearly possess for their children.

Let us just consider one major aspect of schooling:



By Naeema Akram

formalising competition. Students are encouraged to 'beat' each other at studies and become high-achievers in school. The underlying assumption for this attitude is that good grades guarantee one's entrance into a good professional college, which is a necessity if you wish to climb the social ladder and secure a monetarily rewarding profession for yourself.

What the school does not teach is the "what-next" part after one has become a 'professional'. In school, students dream to get into institutions of higher learning. Once, however, the dream is realised, these very people simply go on performing the function of cogs in the machinery of a capitalist society, harbouring for their children exactly the same dreams and success criteria, which they inherited from their parents. The vicious circle goes on - our aspirations forever remain chained to owning a big house and numerous cars, sporting a luxurious lifestyle, and minting money.

• The Predicament

The actual problem that besets our present Western mode of educational system is that there is no place for the discussion of topics like death and

afterlife. All we have to live for is this world and keep on striving to better our material conditions - get educated in 'good' schools, obtain good grades, get into some outstanding college or an A-level school, go to a reputed University, get a well-paying job and settle down in life - till we reach

our graves. Our concept of education does not go beyond the idea of making good money.

We are not taught how to approach things in this world with a unified outlook, which is a necessary result of the concept of *tawhid* and prepares Muslims to keep everything subservient to the commands of their religion. For example, there remains no distinction between a man and a woman when it comes to producing able professionals in society. The role of the man as a breadwinner is no more significant than that of a woman these days, because it is perceived that she can also perform a similar role in an equally efficient manner. Hence there is nothing objectionable if a girl chooses to make a career in marketing because gone are the days when girls could either opt for being teachers or doctors. My readers will be able to read more on this specific issue in an upcoming article on the idea of 'women and work', but presently let us get back to the crisis that our educational system is giving rise to in our society.

• The Crisis of Individuality

The journey that began

with a single question, 'what do you want to become when you grow up?' has brought us this far to the discussion of a social crisis. Our current system of education is aimed at promoting the ideal of individualism. Phrases that have become commonplace are 'be yourself', 'have confidence

in yourself', 'do what you think is best for you', 'it's my life!', '...my personal matter', and the list continues. Every man, as they say, to his own island. This is a topic that needs to be written about at length, but here I will limit myself to the fissures this approach has created in our traditional view of knowledge.

When our children start school, they are actually stepping onto the first step of the ladder of individualism. They are stepping onto the path that divorces them from the rich intellectual tradition they belong to. They do not attend schools in order to learn, appreciate, and love their *salaf*, but to 'become something' (we have already discussed what that 'something' refers to!). They are not there to understand the true meaning of knowledge as it was passed down through generations of their Muslim predecessors, but to cram what is written in the O-level Physics and Chemistry textbooks so they can get the maximum number of 'A's - something that would get them a ticket to the most well-known A-Level school! They are there to 'discover themselves' but not under the spiritual tutelage of their religious tradition. They are treated as singular

beings who carve out their paths of life based on their own rational decisions. Following into the footsteps of one's spiritual elders is an idea unheard of. Take the example of how Islamiyat is taught in our schools and colleges - a separate subject for which you have to rote learn and produce answers in an

exam, a subject that does not carry any weight when applying for admissions in some institutions of higher learning. Our education, hence, makes us into individual, isolated beings by imperceptibly implying that Islam in life is confined to the Islamiyat class (which, by the way, hardly anyone is interested in. Teaching methodologies would require me to write another full length article!), and has nothing to do with our personal lives.

• The Alternative

Some years ago, I happened to meet a small child of approximately three to four years of age in a religious gathering - a *majlis* held by a famous Shaykh of *tasawwuf* of our times. When asked the perennial question, 'what do you want to become when you grow up?' the child replied in utmost innocence (which exuded confidence too), 'hazratwala!' - The Shaykh in whose gathering he was present along with his mother...

This incident has stayed with me all these years. It has been helpful in giving me insights about how instrumental our elders (parents, in particular) are in shaping our aspirations. The question, 'what do you want to become?', if

replaced with, 'who do you want to become?' in the formative years of our lives, might give us one of the alternative ways of approaching life. The 'who' question focuses on shaping ideals in terms of personalities in the minds of our children. Idealising the pious, for example, would make them want to achieve and approximate the highest level of piety.

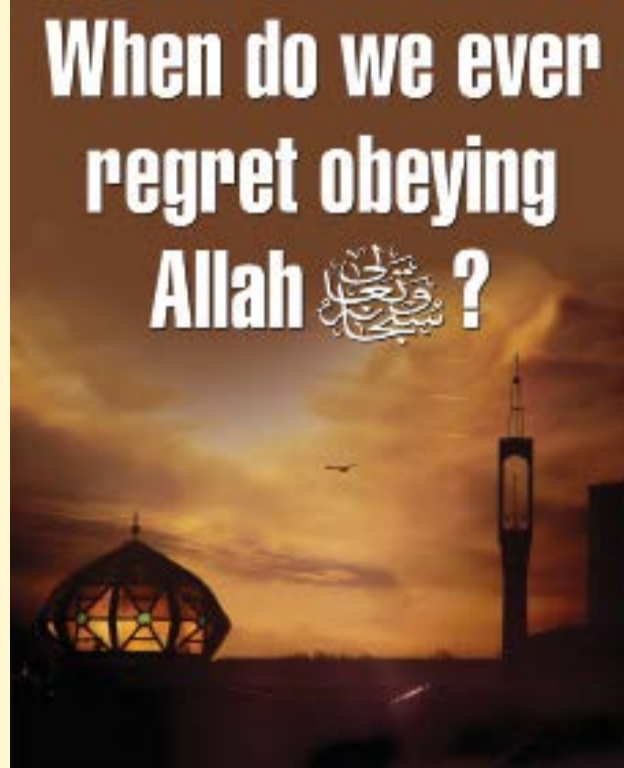
If we wish to hold on to our roots, and make our children idealise the lifestyle of our pious predecessors, then we would have to make an effort to introduce our children to the rich Islamic intellectual tradition at a very early stage, that is, well before their intellects are schooled by the school. We need to let them realise that they cannot 'be themselves' unless they get subsumed into a tradition that the pious and God-conscious Muslims have been following. This requires foregoing one's individuality. Or let us put it this way, it requires one to redefine 'individuality' - not being an isolated soul left to its own whims, but someone who joins in the caravan of those following the Prophet SAW and his spiritual heirs.

I am indeed making a case for the possibility of introducing Rumi and Sa'adi to our younger lot before they begin poring over the pages of Shakespeare; of telling our teenagers who Imam Ghazzali was before they opt for a course in Philosophy in their A-Level school; of encouraging our youth to make an attempt at reading the classical Islamic works on Economics before they enter into a business school; of making them realise that any field of study is useful only when it lets our aspirations remain within the bounds of the *shari'ah* and the lifestyle of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions j. The criterion for the usefulness of our education should be that it does not make us forget the Afterlife, and plunge us into the rat-race of materialism.

Salah is so hard at times. It's like someone wants your time. It's like dedicating your time for something by prioritizing your activities. And then it's also about other things like gratitude and love. *Salah* is hard and no one ever said that it's meant to be easy. It's especially hard

then go to sleep.

First prayer used to be all about fulfilling one of the pillars of Islam, but now it's different. Now I want to talk to Allah ﷻ, I want to thank Him for all the clothes I have, for all the beautiful people He blessed me with, for His love, for making me



when its timing conflicts with what we love doing the most- sometimes out of habit and at times out of being tired from the daily routine or sometimes even for the love of it and that thing I will classify as 'sleep'.

And similarly it does conflict with my sleep as well. For sometimes when I come home from university, I'm so tired. I tell myself that if I never had to pray Isha and Fajr, I'd be the best of Muslims, but it doesn't really work like that. When it's time for Isha, I'm half dead and all I want to do is sleep. I want to pray, but I'm just so lazy sometimes. To counter that I try to create an environment around myself which constantly reminds me of Allah ﷻ. For instance, when I go to my room, I see the prayer mat always laying there, calling me towards it and subhan'Allah that's a good reminder. So I just do *Wudu* and pray Isha and

a Muslim. Sometimes, on the roads I see people begging, and I feel like I've been ungrateful to Allah ﷻ. Some people out there don't even get to eat a meal a day, sometimes they even sleep on the streets and wear their summer clothes in winters. If I don't thank Allah ﷻ for everything that I have then I'm just like a dead girl walking, living my life in oblivion.

Prayer is important, but why I'm praying is more important. Prayer is my connection with my Creator. One day I'll be standing in front of Him, and He will ask me if I chose *salah* over sleep.

One of my dear friends once quoted someone: "I have never regretted leaving my warm bed to make *salah*, but I regret every time I didn't."

And then she added: "Never", I remind myself, "Never"

Bait-us-Salam Updates

Baitusalam Welfare Trust's ambulance works round the clock to transport patients to the nearest hospitals, Medical camps put up in the Chacharro area.

The peaceful residents of Thar are facing a severe crisis in terms of a drought. What are their basic necessities for living now? Every drop of water and every grain of wheat that can be had but the ongoing tug-of-war between the self proclaimed gods of this world have brought many desolate people to their deaths. According to experts, the current drought situation in Thar is a man made disaster. Hence, BSWT, in the face of this inhumane

situation, took it upon itself to provide relief to the starved and suffering people of Thar in whatever way possible. BSWT therefore distributed food packages, set up free medical camps and gave out free medicines.

This task was carried out in two phases. The first phase included a visit to the hospital in the Mathi area along with taking stock of the situation there, patients were also visited and soft diet such as biscuits were distributed among them. Phase two included a thorough survey of the area where the BSWT ambulance was employed to transport many patients to the hospital and first aid was also given. Medical camps were also set up in

the Chacharro area where doctors worked diligently to check-up patients and give them medicines as per their requirement. This simple gesture brought a ray of hope to many dimming souls.

Baitussalaam Welfare Trust distributes food packages to many needy households in Thar.

BSWT also distributed more than 600 food packages to various households in Thar which included approximately 200 in Chacharro, 100 in Dipallo and 300 in Siddiqabad. These packages included 20 kgs of flour, 5 kgs sugar, 5 kgs rice, 1 kg each of daal moong and daal channa, 1/2 kg tea, a packet of salt and chilies each, matchstick and biscuits

and stuff for the children.

Annual Award Ceremony held at Jamia Baitussalaam Karachi, students, parents and guardians attended.

Conflicts in the home or at school can destroy a child's future: Closing remarks by the patron Jamia Baitussalaam.

Last month, the annual award ceremony was held at Jamia Baitussalaam, Karachi to announce the examination results and honor the outstanding achievers. The ceremony was attended by the students, parents and guardians.

The ceremony also honored those students

who had outstanding performance in essay writing, Quranic Tajweed and athletics. At the end of the event, the patron of Jamia Baitussalaam, in his speech, very earnestly emphasized on the importance of matching frequency between the parents and their children to make the children's future bright. As where this was not the case, and a conflict existed in the home and or the educational institute's environment, the child would always remain torn between the two which could destroy his/her future.

Hence, just sending off one's child to a good educational institute is not enough but it is equally important to focus on their upbringing and education at home too.

Fahmedeen Publications

Intellect ■ 1 Yr / Rs.700 ■ 2 Yr / Rs.1400	فہمیدین پبلشرز ■ 1 Yr / Rs.520 ■ 2 Yr / Rs.1040	radiance ■ 1 Yr / Rs.720 ■ 2 Yr / Rs.1350
مجموعۃ الافکار ■ 1 Yr / Rs.220 ■ 2 Yr / Rs.440	نفس ■ 1 Yr / Rs.270 ■ 2 Yr / Rs.540	

Yes! start my subscription for _____ Date: _____
 New Renewal {Reg.# _____} Send a free copy
 Gift {From: _____ Mobile # _____ Email: _____}

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Country: _____
Phone: _____ Mobile: _____
Email: _____

Payment Mode: (Amount in Rs _____ in words: _____)
 Yes! find enclosed Cheque Demand Draft Paid Cash at Shop
 Cash on delivery {only for Pakistan @ Rs.75/- for Karachi}

Remarks: _____ Rep Name: _____

Address: 30-C, Basement, 2nd Commercial Street, Phase-4, D.H.A., Karachi, Pakistan
for further Inquiries: +92-21-35313278, +92-332-8278537, +92-322-2120004

WWW.FAHMEDEEN.ORG/PUBLICATIONS