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WISDOM

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THE DEED THAT ALLAH LOVES MOST: CALLING TO THE WAY OF ALLAH



Osman Nuri Efendi
Manners and Measure
When Serving Others

Prof. Ibrahim Canan
The Sincerity and Determination of
the Prophet Muhammad's Tabligh

Jasmeen Hamed
My Spiritual Journey To
A Stunning Country

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

”Be a community that calls to what is good, urging what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: those who do this are the successful ones.” (Âl ‘Imrân, 3:104)

“You are the best among all the nations that were raised among mankind - you enjoin what is good and forbid evil and you believe in Allah.” (Âl ‘Imrân, 3:110)

As revealed in these verses of Âl ‘Imrân, We, as an Ummah, should spend our lives enjoining the good and forbidding the evil and spreading the word of Islam on earth. Our goal should be to convey the way we live and the word of Islam to those around us, beginning with our families and then extending it to allö whether they be Muslim or non-Muslim.

It is not possible for a Muslim to attain the pleasure of Allah and true faith without undertaking what was the main duty of all the Prophets, that is, conveying the message of faith to others. Allah imparts this duty on all Muslims in the following way:

“The believers, men and women, are protectors, one to another: They enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil...On them Allah will pour His mercy; for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise” (Tawba, 9: 71)

In this issue, our beloved teacher Osman Nuri Efendi elucidates the manners and measure which should be observed when serving others in conveying the Message of Allah. He explains that Muslims should have knowledge, wisdom and strong character in order to succeed in this service.

Continuing our series of explanations for the meanings of the Names of Allah there is an article by Umm Yusuf illustrating the glory and importance of the beautiful Name, Al-Jabbâr.

Prof. Ibrahim Canan writes about the lessons of sincerity from the life of our beloved Prophet (pbuh) and the methods that he and his Companions used whilst serving Islam.

We hope you enjoy reading all the articles in this edition and find them useful when sharing the message of Islam to others.

May Allah grant us a role to play in furthering Islam and in conveying the light of Islam to the whole of mankind. Âmîn.

Elif Kapici
editor@sufiwisdom.net



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The Universal
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of Believers:
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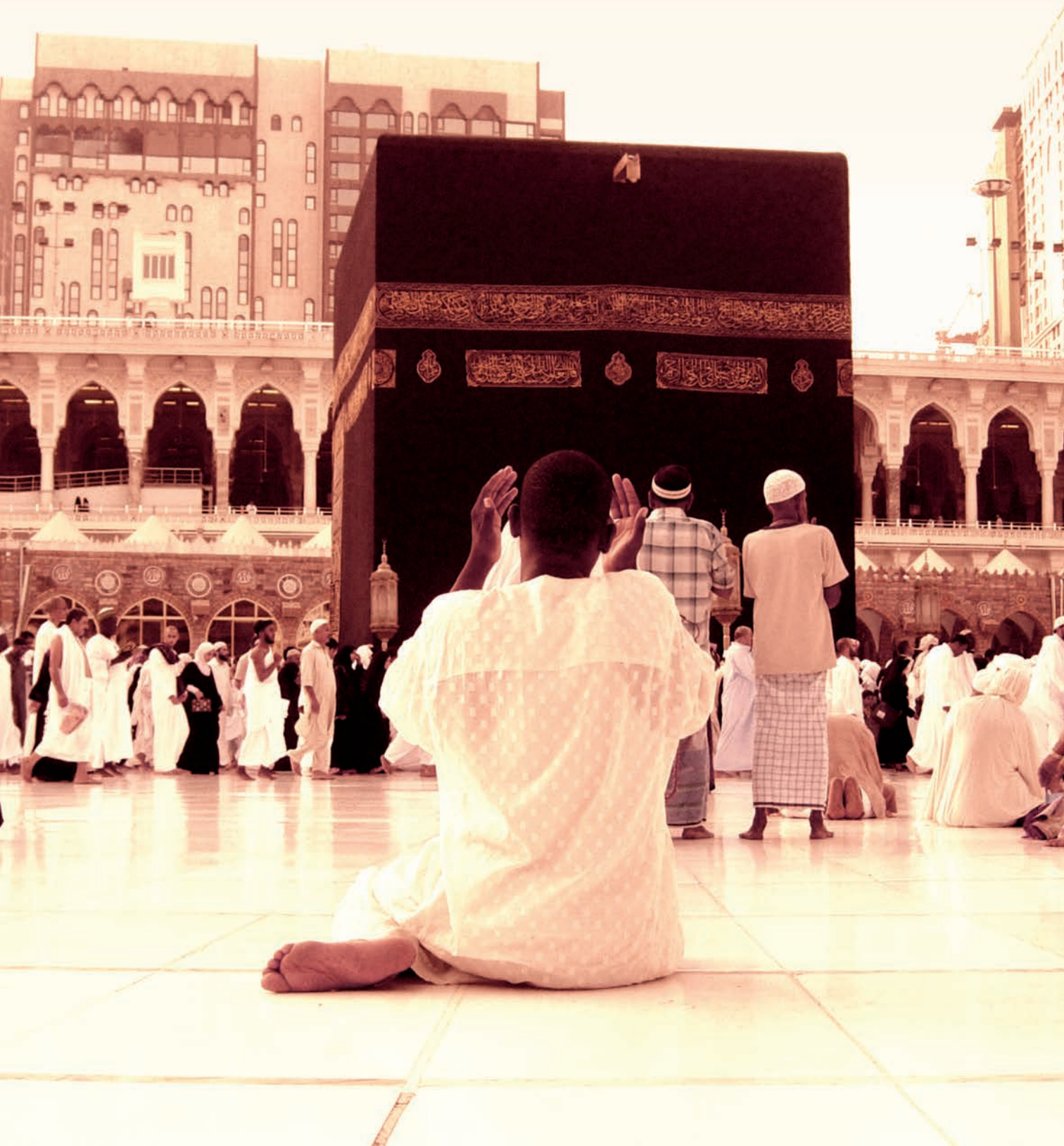
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Manners and Measure When Serving Others

It is absolutely necessary to have knowledge, wisdom, competence, dignity, a strong character and disposition if we are to succeed in serving others.

*O wayfarer! Do not think your knowledge is the reason for the mi'râj
It is none other that service and adab that has taken the prophet to heaven*

Rahmetî

Serving others is one of the social dimensions of servitude which Allah Almighty demands from His servants. The life of a believer bears fruits and gains depth and meaning by serving the creation. Serving others, which is an important element of Islamic morality, is really an act of seeking Allah and His approval through freeing oneself from the selfishness of the nafs and tending to the creation with a giving soul. Every sincere service that is performed for the sake of Allah and which is far from selfish benefit is a search for a union with the Lord Almighty.

Therefore, all kinds of service should be performed in as perfect a form and manner as possible. This is possible through conforming to certain âdâb and measures. As much as it is important to show diligence in performing material and spiritual services, the quality of this

The people of service should be trustworthy in their words and within their essence, conscience that they are of the Ummah of a prophet endowed with attributes such as "the Trustworthy" and "the Truthful".

service is also very important. The blessing and acceptance of any service in the eyes of Cenab-i Haq is dependent on this. For this reason our elders have said "Service is important but adab in service is even more important". They state the importance of serving with a sincere and enlightened heart and performing it with the correct procedure.

It is absolutely necessary to have knowledge, wisdom, competence, dignity, a strong character and disposition if we are to succeed in serving others. On the contrary, it is useless to expect a fruitful result from services that are performed negligently and without sincerity.

It is possible to list the âdâb and measures that a person of service should take:

1. Grasping the Importance of Service

The person of service should think that the service is a great prize and blessing for himself and see this as the first rule of service. He should understand that the continuation of service is possible through giving thanks (shukr) and constantly being in a state of praising (hamd) and thanking his Lord.

The greatest service is to exalt the name of Allah (i'lâ kalimat Allâh) and doing missionary work (tablîgh), that is, communicating and explaining the religion of Islam to others as it is encapsulated in the testimony of faith (kalima al-

tawhîd), lâ ilâha illallâh muhammad rasûlallâh. This is a grand invitation (da'wah) and a sacred responsibility entrusted to the believers. The Qur'ân and the Sunnah are a trust bestowed on us from Allah and His Messenger. We have to deliver this trust to the coming generations in the same way and understanding that the Companions of the Prophet and our blessed forefathers of previous centuries have done. These services will be our wealth in the Hereafter and, Allah willing, will be our passes to Heaven.

Our late Master, Mûsâ Efendi, who was an outstanding person that dedicated his entire life to serving Allah's creation, explained the value and the importance of service as follows:

"A believer should strive to undertake all worship and deeds of excellence with sincerity and as the opportunities arise, without considering their greatness or insignificance. Many people do great services whilst neglecting small ones. In fact, it is not known in which act of service Allah's pleasure lies.

One should realize that the opportunity to serve does not come to all. There are many people who have the ability to serve in every way but because the time and place are not favourable, they are bereft of it. Those who serve should see service as a blessing and increase their modesty and should even be in a state of thankfulness for those who they serve for the reason that they have been a vehicle for this blessing."

Imâm Rabbânî describes the necessity of being in a state of thankfulness towards the one who is being served by the one serving since he also saw it as a blessing:

"Just as the way one person can inspire many people to gain maturity and perfection, many people can also inspire one person to gain maturity and perfection. Because, even though a master can inspire maturity and perfection in his students, it is certain that as a result of mutual reflection they are also a reason for the master's perfection and maturity."

The obligatory percentage of charity (zakât)



one has to give from his wealth is clearly stated in Islam. In this regard, the person who gives zakât as a percentage of his possessions has performed the service required of him in regards to his wealth. However, because it is not possible to quantify the amount one should donate in charity from the abilities and opportunities the Lord Almighty has bestowed upon him, he needs to commit himself to service for the sake of Cenab-i Haq, as his strength allows until his last breath. The result is that the servant constantly sees his acts of service as inadequate and so ever asks himself what more there is to be done; he remains in constant pursuit of service. One of the most vibrant examples of this is ‘Abdullâh ibn Umm Maktûm (May Allah be pleased with him), one of the Companions of the Prophet. This Companion was exempted from participating in jihâd because he was blind. But his participation in the Battle of Qâdisiyya with the intention of at least holding the flag is a clear manifestation of his desire to serve Allah under any condition.

From this point of view, every believer should understand the greatness of the responsibility and the consequences of lagging behind when there is an opportunity to serve. He should realise that such complacency can place at risk the rewards to be had in the Hereafter.

2. Ornamenting the Heart with Spiritual Traits

Acts of service which are not fed by spiritual nourishment are like buckets of water that are poured onto sand in the hope of growing crop. A seed thrown onto dry land is destined only for the stomach of a field mouse, whereas the seeds of service that are scattered with spirituality are the sycamores of the future. For this reason, the person of service needs to be careful about the spiritual nourishment of his personal life. He needs to reach spiritual maturity through giving weight to spirituality, refinement in morality and conduct, as well as to elegance and reciprocity.

The heart of the person who serves should be like a fertile ground. The creatures walking on that ground tread on it, spilling their wastes on it, but the ground merely recycles all of this and grows beautiful varieties of vegetation which then feeds every creature that walks on it. The heart of the person in service should be like this fertile ground; with such beauty in his heart, the scenery and flow of might should impact upon those who are served just like a spontaneous poem.

One needs to pay attention to four principles in order to acquire these characteristics. The heart should be:

- a. With Allah at all times
- b. Full of the love of Allah and His Messenger

Truly, the love felt for a teacher increases the attachment to him and increases interest in what he teaches because his affectionate and compassionate approach enables him to influence via a spiritual channel rather than an intellectual one.



c. Full of love for one's brethren in religion

d. Full of love, compassion and mercy towards the creation for the sake of the Creator.

We should revive ourselves with the love of the Lord Almighty and then plan our lives accordingly.

3. Conserving sincerity (ikhlâs) and steadfastness (istiqâmah)

Sincerity and steadfastness should be the two indispensable characteristics of the person of service. To be a true master of service is an honourable blessing from Allah to His servant. The value of this honourable blessing should be appreciated and one should strive to have sincerity and steadfastness in everything they do. If not, it should be known that this blessing will be removed. Likewise, the person climbing a high mountain needs to be more careful about where he puts his foot and what he holds onto; it is much more dangerous to take a wrong step or to hold a weak branch when one is at the peak. The following hadîth is a beautiful statement of this truth: "...the pious face great danger" (Bayhaqî, Shu'ab al-Imân, V: 345).

Sincerity is the most important requirement for the correctness of service. When there is sincerity, discord, egoism and greed disappear. The path to allocating a share for oneself will be secured and the obstacles on the path of service will be reduced.

The people of service should exhibit a stable character before anything else. People admire those who have strong characters and who are dignified examples to follow and be taken as role models. From this point of view, the people of service should be trustworthy in their words and within their essence (ahl al-sidq), conscience that they are of the Ummah of a prophet endowed with attributes such as "the Trustworthy" (al-Amin) and "the Truthful" (al-Sâdiq). All of these can only be realized with a form of servanthood that remains on the straight path.

4. Being Compassionate, Merciful and Forgiving

A mature and perfect human being is a person of heart. Compassion and altruism should be his most glowing characteristics and innate nature. Mercy in a believer's heart is like a fire that never goes out. The path to the outlet of the heavens of maturity that a human soul can reach traverses the lands of mercy and service. Mercy is a divine essence which is a testimony of our faith in this world and which brings us close to our Lord.

People of service should make it a priority to show compassion and mercy towards the creation they serve by contemplating the Lord Almighty's names, Rahmân and Rahîm; this is because service is a work of mercy. All beautiful things are acquired through mercy, compassion and humbleness. The most

distinguished sign of mercy is charity. From this point of view, the people of service also need to be generous because sublime morality and attributes complement each other. The merciful person will be generous, the generous one will be humble and the humble person will be the ideal one for service. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said:

“Allah Almighty is generous and beneficent; He loves generosity and high morality.” (Suyûtî, al-Jâmi‘al-Sagîr, I: 60)

Also, low morality and unpleasant attributes are inseparable. The person deprived of mercy and compassion is mean, a mean person is arrogant and an arrogant person is far from serving others.

Therefore, no blessing will be expected from a service performed in a rude, hurtful and harsh manner, that has no connection with good morality. This becomes even more important in service such as education, guidance and missionary work, which directly address human beings. In the following verse, the Prophet, and by extension, the whole Ummah is addressed:

“It was by the mercy of Allah that thou wast lenient with them (O Muhammad), for if thou hadst been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from round about thee...” (Âl ‘Imrân, 3:159)

The exoteric aspects of religion are evaluated

and taught by the intellect and the spiritual, esoteric aspects, which are the essence, by the soul. Mercy and affection increases the outcome of nurturing, directing and managing people. Many people, who cannot be ruled by brute force, yield to affection and compassion.

Truly, the love felt for a teacher increases the attachment to him and increases interest in what he teaches because his affectionate and compassionate approach enables him to influence via a spiritual channel rather than an intellectual one. By this, the inspiration gains a suitable content for the spiritual inclinations of the one who is the receiver, enabling the greatest reform within the personality. For this reason, people, especially students, should be approached through affection and compassion since most will surrender to these. The true conquerors of the world are those who can conquer hearts.

The sovereigns who are selfish and deprived of affection and mercy obtain a forced submission from those under their governance because they cannot rule their souls. For this reason, their achievements remain minimal. This is a delicate factor that concerns parents as much as administrators.

Truly, in a person of service, egoism and pretence should make their way for love and affection. Delicate, beautiful flowers can only blossom like this. Those who reach perfection in their behaviour through affection and mercy



always search for the stricken and miserly creatures that need spiritual and material help. They feel the suffering of those who fall into misery.

One of the attributes of Allah Almighty that expresses His forgiveness is His name, al-'Afuw. So too the person of service should be forgiving. Forgiving is a natural result of becoming one with Allah's morality. Looking at the creation with the gaze of the Creator prepares the grounds for forgiveness. Those who want to be filled with divine merriment are those who spread the fragrance of forgiveness. We should prepare the grounds for our own faults to be forgiven by first being forgiving ourselves. In reality, the person who does not forgive has ruined himself.

In addition, the person of service should be one who covers faults and shameful actions, not the one who inquires about these. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

"Whoever covers the faults of his friends, Allah will cover his faults on the Day of Judgement. Whoever reveals the faults of his Muslim brother, Allah will reveal his faults as well. Allah will even shame him with his faults in his own home." (Ibn Mâja, Hudûd, 5)

"Whoever reproaches a believer with a failure, he will not die before he commits that same failure." (Tirmidhî, Qiyâmah, 53)

5. Acting with Consultation

Acting with consultation when serving the other is a Divine order and an important Sunnah. Addressing the Prophet, the Lord Almighty said:

"... Consult with them upon the conduct of affairs. And when thou art resolved, then put thy trust in Allah. Lo! Allah loveth those who put their trust (in Him)." (Âl 'Imrân, 3:159)

He has declared in the following verse that believers should counsel each other in important matters, "...and whose affairs are a matter of counsel..." (Shûrah, 42:38)

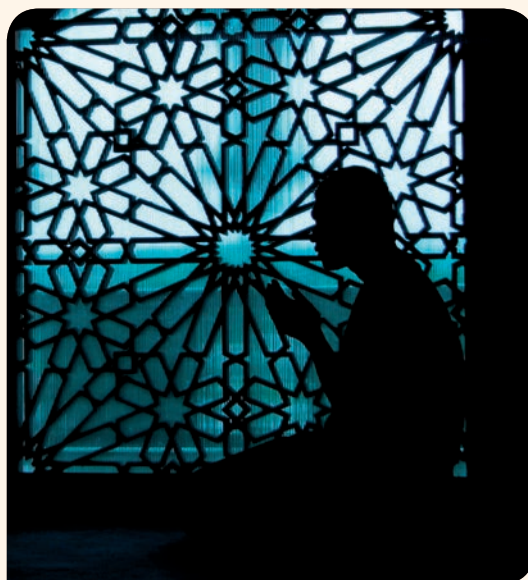
The beloved Prophet sought counsel from

his Companions in almost all matters he saw important. To set an example for his Ummah, in every matter and incident he would prefer consultation, although he was supported by revelation in all matters. At Badr and Khandaq he determined where and how they would encounter the enemy by consultation. At the Battle of 'Uhud, though his own inclination was to adopt a defensive strategy, because of the advice of his Companions recommended he confront the enemy outside Madina, the Prophet left his own preference and acted accordingly.

A human being is always under the influence of his emotions; he thinks and acts upon them. From this point of view, the consultation of the people of service will guarantee actions which are both correct and rewarding.

However, it is important that the people who are sought for counsel be intelligent, knowledgeable and pious, along with being affable and good at teamwork. It is obvious that many minds yield better decisions than just one. The Messenger of Allah stated this truth in the following words:

"Those who make pray for guidance (istikhâra) will not face disappointment, those who consult (istishara) will not regret it and those who are economical will not face poverty." (Haythamî, Majmû' al-Zawâ'id, II, 280)



Forgiving is a natural result of becoming one with Allah's morality. Looking at the creation with the gaze of the Creator prepares the grounds for forgiveness.



Feedback from consultation should definitely be applied. Consultations that are done without sincerity, just to please others, will not bring any benefit. Only those who are competent should be sought for counsel and everyone should state their ideas openly, without hesitation so that truth and mercy will come out of it. If the person who is sought for counsel is not competent in the subject, the result will be ineffective and full of mistakes. From this point of view, bizarre mistakes such as asking a matter of medicine from a lawyer should be strictly avoided.

A person of service should know to prefer the enjoyment of his brothers involved in service over his own. Those who want to perform service entirely alone will tire quickly, become distressed and change their views. They will start belittling everyone. They will become slaves to their love for leadership. The true and mature person of service is a person of purified soul who has shed his mortal being and sees himself right at the back of the caravan of service.

6. Knowing well the Person who is Served

Knowing well the person who is served is also as important as the service itself because appropriate service is possible only through this. A Muslim should seek a share of the attribute of fatâna (intellect, wisdom and foresight related to the heart) from the Prophet and use

the blessing of intellect in the most effective way. He should know what to say, when to say it, how to say it and to whom to say it, along with knowing how to behave. For example, the delicate approach Ja'far at-Tayyâr (May Allah be pleased with him) took as he was informing the Ethiopian King Najâshî about Islam is very important in showing the foresight of a Muslim. Najâshî, who was a Christian, asked Ja'far at-Tayyâr to recite a few verses from the Qur'ân. Rather than reciting the chapter al-Kâfirûn which challenges disbelievers, he chose to recite from al-Maryam which speaks about the Prophet Jesus and his mother with praise. Najâshî, greatly affected by the verses that were recited, drew a line on the floor with his staff and said:

“-Our religion and your religion are as close to each other as this!” He then became a Muslim shortly afterwards.

Whilst performing service, it is a necessity to know the person one is serving well in order to be sure that the trust is going to one deserving. The Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not dispatch companions who were better suited to commanding an army as diplomatic delegates; neither did he nominate the Ashâb as-Suffa—people of knowledge, missionary work and righteous souls—as commanders. When he was allocating these duties, he would consider the persons character, capabilities, competence and even physique.

At this point, recalling some aspects about training and education will be beneficial.

The most difficult service is educating a human being. A nafs that has not been trained will continuously stir one towards wickedness. Allah Almighty has instilled inclinations for both wickedness and piety in human beings. From this point of view, the manifestations of these two inclinations are seen from childhood. Deterring the inclination towards sin and strengthening piety secure happiness for a person. The way to do this is tarbiyyah (training). Training the wildest animal is easier than to train a human being who has given into his nafs.

Tarbiyyah is the occupation of prophets. To become an educator one has to have strong feelings and sentiments because when connecting with a student, one needs to understand their feelings and act accordingly. This is like a doctor who has to understand the reason of the pain before he can produce a diagnosis. It should not be forgotten that only the person whose problem is solved can be gained.

The aptitudes of people are different from each other just as their various weaknesses. For this reason an educator needs to approach human beings with the carefulness



of a psychiatrist. A word or an action that is beneficial for one could be harmful for another. For this reason, we should know the characters of those very well who we are responsible for educating.

An educator should know his student's character and aptitude like the beads on his rosary and work on developing the capabilities they have. For example, the person who has an inclination for poetry should be directed towards the depths of his soul. The one who is apt for administration should be taught about administration, the importance of giving duty to capable people, the necessity of treating people with justice and compassion, and so forth. Other occupational aptitudes are similar too. The approaches in educating all of these aptitudes, which are necessary for any society, are different from each other.

The service of educating a human being should be planned considering the balance of body-soul and mind-heart. If only the intellect of a human being is addressed, then self-interest, status, worldly whims and wishes will become important and the maturation of the soul will be neglected. A human being raised as such will become a slave to wealth, fame and lust. If his heart can be trained along with his intellect, only then will it be possible to direct the inclinations he has in his nature towards the path of Allah. One should be mindful that knowledge that does not reach the heart will not translate into wisdom. Knowledge that is bereft of wisdom can drag one to perversion. The human being who is not equipped with spiritual feelings and virtues will have been left alone to the brute force of his nafs, which continuously commands towards wickedness.

May Lord Almighty make us among those fortunate people who serve all humanity—especially the people of faith—His religion and the entire creation with love and in the best manner.

Âmîn!

﴿ The Mother of Believers: ﴾

Khadijah Bint Huwaylid (II)



Khadijah encouraged the Prophet with full devotion and a foresight traversing ages; demonstrating that she believed in him under all circumstances she said; "I swear by Allah that He will never humiliate you or forsake you. You take care of your relatives and shoulder the burden of powerless people. You give to the needy, show hospitality to your guests and cause people to gain things, like no others can do."

THE FAMILY LIFE OF KHADĪJAH

Khadijah led a peaceful and tranquil life with her esteemed spouse. The Prophet (pbuh) had received almost no inheritance from his parents, and until that day he had lived under the protection of first his grandfather 'Abd al-Muttalib, and then his uncle Abû Tâlib.

The fact that Abû Tâlib had a crowded family meant that the Prophet (pbuh) had try and lessen the burden of this family in which he lived by earning his livelihood though he was still in his youth. It was certainly not an easy period for the young Muhammad, however, with his marriage, he was saved from these straits, and started to live a comfortable life, as described in the Qur'ân:

"Did He not find you an orphan and give you shelter (and care)? And He found you wandering, and He gave you guidance. And He found you in need, and made you independent." (Duhâ, 93: 6-8)

He indeed acquired a good deal of wealth in the first years of his marriage, by managing Khadijah's merchandise.

In their marriage, the Prophet (pbuh) and Khadijah displayed a sincere bond of affection, mutual love and regard for each other. Their married life was filled with peace, happiness, kindness and contentment.



The Prophet (pbuh) was also considerably fortunate regarding children. His house buzzed with the voices of children. From one side he had his own children from Khadijah and on the other side, the sons of Khadijah from her previous marriages; 'Alī, the son of his uncle Abū Tālib and Zayd bin Hārithah, his freed slave originally presented to him by Khadijah were also members of the blessed household.

Khadijah was very particular about her dear children receiving training under the guardianship of the Prophet (pbuh). She served all the needs of the Prophet (pbuh) and the children personally, and disliked employing her servants for this purpose.

Khadijah was exceedingly cautious not to do anything that would upset the Holy Prophet (pbuh), and seized any opportunities to please him.

One day, the Prophet's (pbuh) wet-nurse Halīma came to their house; everyone was suffering due to severe draught at that time and

she had come to explain her plight. Khadijah presented her forty sheep and a camel. Hence, by pleasing his wet-nurse, she was in fact pleasing the heart of the Prophet of Allah (pbuh).

THE SOURCE OF BLISS IN THE FAMILY

In their marriage, the Prophet (pbuh) and Khadijah displayed a sincere bond of affection, mutual love and regard for each other. Their married life was filled with peace, happiness, kindness and contentment.

The Prophet (pbuh) gave glad tidings that Khadijah will have an outstanding and esteemed position among the women of Heaven. By making her as his wife, Allah the Almighty bestowed a generous gift upon His Prophet. Whilst receiving affection and tenderness from Khadijah and others, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) always maintained a state of thankfulness to Allah, to the same degree that he would remain patient and content in the face of hardships which he endured throughout his life and which began at his birth. The Prophet (pbuh) was devoted to Khadijah, though he was much younger. In spite of the fact that the social norms favoured polygamy, and he possessed the means for it, he was content with his wife, and did not seek to marry anyone younger. To the contrary, he had devoted himself to the worship of Allah and to conveying His message, and this whilst he was at the peak of his youth and strength. Along with his wife, they lived as soul mates and confidants on the same path. When it comes to the bond of affection among spouses, the Prophet (pbuh) is an exemplar of love and regard, irrespective of physical and spiritual circumstances. He won the heart of his wife with his high morals and consummate deeds. In this connection he said: "The most righteous among you, are the ones who treat their families in the best way!"

Marriage is essentially a spiritual establishment. By establishing the relationship with a partner through matrimony, love surpasses selfishness and ascends to a spiritual quality. This is due to the fact that men are

When the chapter al-Muddathir were revealed, and the Prophet (pbuh) was fully cognisant of the task that was beginning, he asked Khadijah, "Who will believe in me?" Khadijah shed the first light on this Divine cause by saying "I will!" and acquired the honour of becoming the first to believe in him amongst all the many men and women.

inclined to work and earn their living; they are content with spending generously on others and enjoy being in control. Women, on the other hand, have a delicate and sentimental nature; they aspire to being with a secure person, loving and protecting them. Families preserving this natural formation become centres of peace and tranquillity.

Although modernism constrained the nature of human beings by almost robotising the spirit, deep in the soul these necessities will always make themselves felt.

THE FIRST FEMALE MUSLIM

When the Prophet (pbuh) was close to his forties, leading a happy life with Khadijah and their children, he started to experience some extraordinary events. He witnessed some trees and stones saluting him. It was many years later that the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said to his Companions: "I still know the stone in Makkah, which saluted me before I became a prophet."

Distressed and troubled by the brutality and oppression which characterised Makkah, the Prophet (pbuh) frequented the cave of Hira for prayer and seclusion. During these periods, Khadijah would send him food, sometimes bringing it to him herself.

The Prophet (pbuh) used to withdraw into solitude in the cave of Hira so often, that the women of Quraysh started to come to Khadijah to make mischief: "You have done so much for Muhammad; you spread your wealth before his feet. Now he forsakes you and goes away!"

Khadijah, who knew the Holy Prophet (pbuh) intimately and supported him to the end, laughed at such words and said: "I could not even dream about what you are saying. However, there is something that I expect to happen, and you will see that soon!"

One day, when the Prophet (pbuh) was secluded in Hira, Jibril came in his original form and revealed the first five verses of the chapter al-'Alaq, "The Clot". The Holy Prophet (pbuh), experiencing such an event for the first time, came home in great anxiety and while still shivering said to Khadijah: "Cover me, cover me!"



The Prophet (pbuh) gave glad tidings that Khadijah will have an outstanding and esteemed position among the women of Heaven. By making her as his wife, Allah the Almighty bestowed a generous gift upon His Prophet.



When he recovered from this apprehension and calmed down, he related what had happened to Khadijah: "I was afraid for myself!"

Khadijah encouraged him with full devotion and a foresight traversing ages; demonstrating that she believed in him under all circumstances she said; "Don't talk like that! I swear by Allah that He will never humiliate you or forsake you. You take care of your relatives and shoulder the burden of powerless people. You give to the needy, show hospitality to your guests and cause people to gain things, like no others can do. You help people on the path of righteousness."

Afterwards, Khadijah went to visit her cousin Waraqa bin Nawfal with the Prophet (pbuh). Waraqa was an old and sightless man with a good command of the Hebrew language and knowledge of the Tawrah and the Injil.

Khadijah said to Waraqa, "O my cousin! Listen to what the son of your brother has to say." When Waraqa asked, "O the son of my brother, what happened?" the Prophet (pbuh) narrated all that had happened to him. Then Waraqa said, "What you saw is the Nâmûs al-Akbar -Jibril- who Allah the Almighty sent to Mûsâ. Oh, how I wish I were young during the days of your da'wah! Alas! I wish I could be alive and besides you when your tribe is going

1 Da'wah is the propagation of Islam through word and action, calling the people to follow the commandments of Allah and His Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

to banish you!" Then Prophet (pbuh) asked, "Are they going to banish me from Makkah?" He said, "Certainly, there is no one who has brought what is revealed to you that has not been met with hostility. If I live to see the days of your da'wah, I will help you with all that I can." However, before long, Waraqa passed away.

Both what Khadijah and Waraqa comforted the Holy Prophet (pbuh), and he started to wait for a renewal of revelation from Allah the Almighty. However, the will of God was preparing him for this onerous task; the advent of further revelations would continue, but only after an interlude.

An interesting account is related in the books of sirah² in which Khadijah (RA) had an idea to dispel the doubt in her and in her husband's heart concerning the source of the revelatory experiences.

One day, Khadijah requested the Prophet (pbuh) to let her know when the angel arrives. After a while the Prophet (pbuh) said that the angel had come. Khadijah said, "Come and sit to my left and tell me if you see him." The Prophet (pbuh) changed his place and confirmed that he could still see the angel. Then Khadijah said, "Now sit to the right of me and tell me if you still see him." He sat there and confirmed once again. When Khadijah

2 Sirah is a term used for biographical writings about the conduct and example of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

asked him to sit in front of her there was still no change. Finally, Khadijah hugged him and asked, “Do you still see the angel?” This time she received a different answer: “No, I cannot see him anymore.” Khadijah said, “Glad tidings O husband! It is indeed an angel. If it was a devil, it would not have left us.”

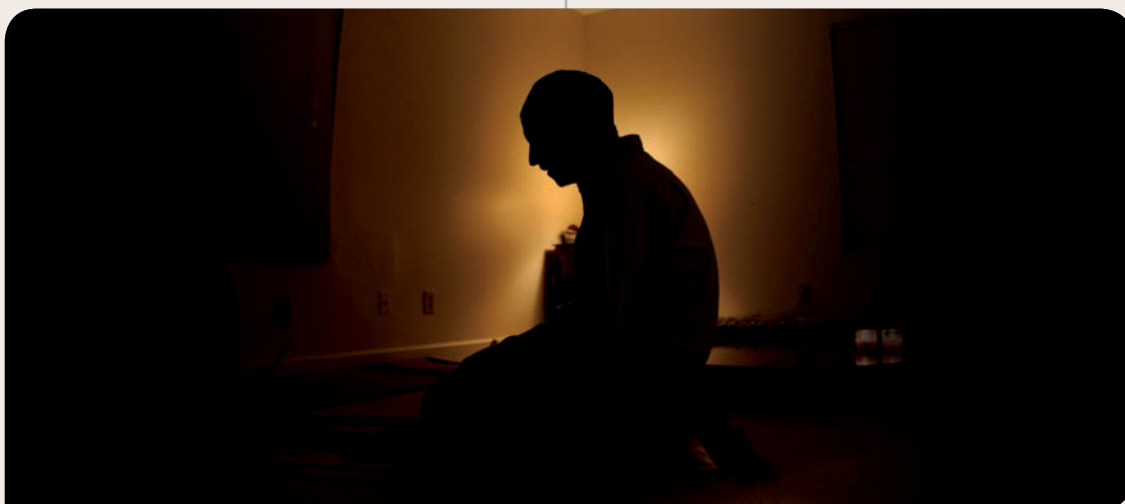
This test is a fine example, manifesting the intellectual capacity and comprehension of Khadijah. After this event, they were both content that what was coming was “an esteemed being with decorum”. The Prophet (pbuh) was the recipient of a Divine commission and not under a satanic spell.

When the first five verses of the chapter al-Muddathir, “The One Wrapped”, were revealed, and the Prophet (pbuh) was fully cognisant of the task that was beginning, he asked his beloved wife, “Who will believe in me?” Khadijah, his supporter throughout his life, shed the first light on this Divine cause by saying “I will!” and acquired the honour of becoming the first to believe in him amongst all the many men and women.

It is narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) performed the first salât, prayer, on Monday, and Khadijah followed suit one day after him. However, at that time early stage of his mission, the prayer was not performed five times a day or of the same form and requirements; it was conceivably similar to an invocation. In fact, the Arabic word salât literally means invocation.

Whilst receiving affection and tenderness from Khadijah and others, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) always maintained a state of thankfulness to Allah, to the same degree that he would remain patient and content in the face of hardships which he endured throughout his life and which began at his birth.

All sources unanimously agree that Khadijah was the first person to believe in the Prophet (pbuh) and attest to the truth of what he was saying. In this connection, Ibn ‘Abbâs said, “Khadijah, the daughter of Khuwaylid, was the first person to affirm Muhammad (pbuh), and the first to believe in Allah and His Prophet. When the pagans tormented the Prophet of Allah and said things which displeased him, Allah would dissipate his distress by Khadijah. All the suffering and troubles caused by his tribe would subside with the help of Khadijah.”





The Universal Characteristics of Tablîgh

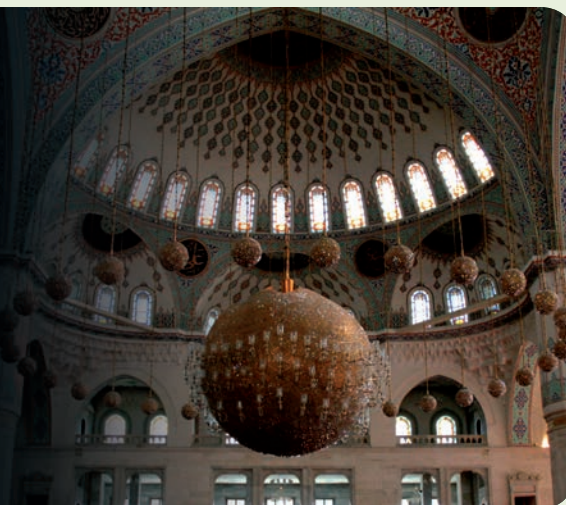
COMPASSION IS OF PRIMACY

When the Prophet Muhammad addressed the Quraysh in Mecca asking them: "O people of Quraysh! If I were to tell you that I see a cavalry on the other side of the mountain, would you believe me?" They replied saying, "Yes we would believe you!" Their response was due to the fact that they had never heard anything but the truth from the Holy Prophet.

Compassion is a very important aspect of tablîgh since it is an emotion which provides the power and ability to unite the whole of mankind under the shade of Islam and true faith. A believer who devotes himself to tablîgh wants the whole of humanity, without discrimination, to embrace the Islam because it is a universe of beauty enabling all to behold the beauty and excellence of the Hereafter. One who conveys the word of faith does not think of Islam solely as a benefit from which he can derive benefit for himself; he also believes in the eternal compassion of the Creator and in the eternal relevance of Islam, and so with this, eternal compassion is his total focus in life. He truly believes that in acceptance of the divine commands lies the rivers of Paradise and the joys of other rewards, all of which he would gladly sacrifice his life.

As for Allah, the Lord of the universe, He is the One in Whom this devoted person believes; he has true faith that Islam was sent as a great blessing to unite the whole of humanity and, therefore, his tablîgh is aimed at the whole of mankind. The conveyer of Islam does not discriminate between humans based on race,

The one who conveys the word of Islam is like a ray of light searching in the darkness to enlighten the souls of humans and with every soul he enlightens he feels a sense of joy, as if he has been newly born into the world.



color or land. Since Allah revealed this religion as a blessing for mankind, a Muslim strives to ensure that the whole of humanity benefits from this blessing of excellence.

There is no sense of egoism in tabligh

There is no egoism in the tabligh of Islam since egoism is the denial of Allah's blessings and the favor of mercy which He bestows upon individuals; egoism is a display of disrespect towards the Creator and His compassion. The one who conveys the word of Islam is like a ray of light searching in the darkness to enlighten the souls of humans and with every soul he enlightens he feels a sense of joy, as if he has been newly born into the world. After all, didn't the Prophet Muhammad say, "If a single person embraces Islam at your hands it would be better for you than a herd of red camels" ?

When the Prophet of Allah began his mission to spread the message of Islam, when he was the only person of faith and there were no other believers, did the Prophet Muhammad discriminate against other humans? His being a "Mercy to the universe" was because his mission of tabligh was one without limits and or discrimination, to such an extent that he never thought for a moment rejecting the Islam of someone like Hind, a person so evil and distant from faith that she had ordered the killing of Hamza, the Prophet's uncle, and then commanded that his liver should be ripped out from his body and brought to her. Despite the

Prophet's personal emotions and the agony he endured by this action, his only aim was to guide others to the path of Truth. This was a privilege that even a Prophet had no right to prevent someone from.

There were many others like Hind; for instance, her husband Abû Sufyân, the oppressor who waged an agonizing war on Islam at the Battle of Badr and inflicted grief on the Muslims during the Battle of 'Uhud was later welcomed by the Prophet's open arms. Upon embracing Islam, without any discrimination whatsoever, he was received with the compassion of Islamic brotherhood rather than treated as a defeated commander of an army of oppression.

There is no conception of 'incurrigibility'

'Incurrigible' is not known in the vocabulary of the one participating in tabligh. There is always the possibility of reform on the path to faith and this should be the understanding of those who convey the message of Islam. There is no possible way of knowing or foreseeing a person's fate; the one who spreads the word of faith constantly sets out on his mission with the aspiration and hope of being the means of another person finding the path towards the Truth. In fact, he prays for the salvation of those to whom he conveys the rays of enlightenment, he prays for this light to reach the souls of even the greatest enemy of Islam, he pleads with the Creator for their salvation and benevolence just like the Prophet Muhammad prayed: "O Allah!

Strengthen this religion with one of the two ‘Umars,” just like he prayed for the oppressors, “O Allah! They know not, guide them to the path of Truth”.

The quest of belief in every human: eliminating the obstacles

One who conveys Islam searches for belief within every human. He has no preconception or opinion of those to whom he preaches the word of Islam. He has total devotion and determination to lead others to the path of faith and as such, his main aim is to eliminate the obstacles which prevent people from reaching the path; essentially, he undertakes every preparation to make the conditions of reaching the path easier. Those who commit themselves to such a task have a duty first to prepare personally for the task.

Do not stand in the way of Islam

When the Prophet Muhammad asked his beloved wife Khadijah, “Who will believe me?”, she replied, “O Muhammad! Allah will never disgrace you thus. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist those afflicted by calamity.” His beloved wife Khadijah was at the earliest stages of prophethood one of the first to convey the word of Islam to others.

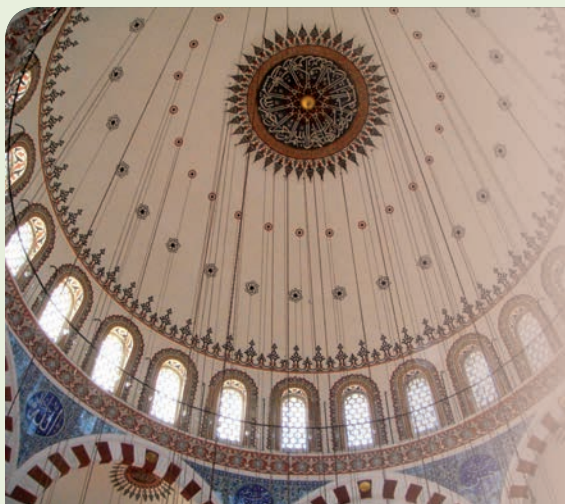
When the Prophet Muhammad addressed the Quraysh in Mecca asking them: “O people of

Quraysh! If I were to tell you that I see a cavalry on the other side of the mountain, would you believe me?” They replied saying, “Yes we would believe you!” Their response was due to the fact that they had never heard anything but the truth from the Holy Prophet.

And when the Najrân Christians asked the Prophet Muhammad for a trustworthy man who could teach them about Islam, he said: “I will send an honest man who is really trustworthy.” Every one of the Companions of Allah’s Messenger hoped at that moment that they would be chosen. The Prophet said, “Get up, O Abu ‘Ubayda ibn al-Jarrâh.” When he got up, Allah’s messenger said, “This is the trustworthy man of our nation.” Thus the characteristics of any conveyer of Islam are absolute trustworthiness, honesty and warmth. He should be in no way obdurate, abrupt, asocial, afraid or a miser; these are the main qualities passed down to the Muslims of today by the excellent examples of forebearers who conveyed the word of Islam, qualities which were first planted by the Prophet Muhammad.

Integration under existing conditions and recognition due to faith

Another important factor in the success of a person involved in tabligh is their ability to integrate within the existing conditions without losing their unique individuality and authenticity. This is why during the period of the Prophet there was a definitive distinction



Every aspect of Islamic excellence they portrayed was a vital form of tabligh and when the believers migrated from Mecca to Medina, a region where there were no Muslims, they conveyed Islam with their actions and individualities of excellence.

between Islam and the period of ignorance. The Companions took every precaution possible to prevent any of the customs from the period of ignorance or any aspect from the past transpiring into their newly found lives as Muslims. Muslims were recognized with their new identity and this newly found identity alone was a form of tabligh to others. Every aspect of Islamic excellence they portrayed was a vital form of tabligh and when the believers migrated from Mecca to Medina, a region where there were no Muslims, they conveyed Islam with their actions and individualities of excellence. When Abû Dharr, the noble Companion about whom the Prophet Muhammad said “The skies have not given shade nor the earth carried any speaker more truthful and honest,” returned to his village Ghifâr from Mecca, he portrayed such a display of excellence in both his character and actions that the people of his village flocked to accept Islam. Therefore, Ghifâr was to be known in history as ‘the first village where tabligh was openly executed’.



The Muslims of today

The Muslims of the present who devote themselves to conveying the word of Islam must pay great attention to the particularities of tabligh, perhaps more so than has been done in the past, translating the excellence and beauty of Islam in their own lives and in their surroundings without becoming involved in the evil around them. It may be that removing the noose of interest and revivifying the system of Islamic loans and credit, by building a structure of brotherhood based on faith instead of being individuals in society, by transforming cruelty and a lack of love into affection and love of faith which is generated from both the love and fear of the Creator results in great progress being made in the world.

A Muslim is obliged to be a human of distinction, a person who portrays the distinctiveness of Islam in every aspect of his life to such an extent that the individuals and communities within the environment feel a sense of peace and confidence emanating from his personality. This is how his humane tranquility and Muslim identity can lead them to the path of faith.

Exterior reservations and tabligh

Although obstacles and complications which prevent a human reaching faith—whether they be the result of ideological, economic, social, judicial, cultural or even military pressures—are inevitable forces which humans face, the Muslim who is involved in conveying the word of faith must persevere and overcome these difficulties with the aim and aspiration of the Qur’anic expression, “Until religion becomes Allah’s in its entirety”; for, if a Muslim has been charged with surviving these difficulties, then without doubt there is a way of eliminating or overcoming the hardship which the mission entails. When this aspect of jihâd is assessed, it becomes evident that such obstacles are overcome only with human affection, devotion and with the intention of integrating humans into the religion of Truth. This is why using force or imposing faith upon humans has been



forbidden. When Usâma bin Zayd attacked a man after he had professed faith, believing that he had done so only to protect his life, it is well known that the Prophet subsequently rebuked him for this. Tablîgh is the way to bring humans into the faith and whilst performing this sacred form of jihâd the conveyer of Islam must in no way confuse his actions with personal egoistic inclinations.

The excellence of tablîgh

The universality of tablîgh in Islam raises meritorious nature of the deed. The call to faith must reach the whole of mankind, but how is that achieved? Like all the messengers, the

Prophet Muhammad abided by the command “Convey unto others what has been revealed to you by Allah”, and began to spread the message of Islam unceasingly until the time of his death. On his farewell pilgrimage, the Prophet asked the thousands of Muslims who had gathered to listen to him, “Have I conveyed the message?” Thrice he commanded that they bear witness that he had conveyed the message of Islam to them.

When the Prophet initially began to spread the Islam he was alone, one man standing against the world; conditions, in the main, were against him yet he achieved what everyone thought impossible. He began by adorning his beloved wife Khadijah with the seed of faith and this continued to flourish one by one into the blooming flowers of religion conveying the truth with total devotion. We all know the anguish which the Prophet felt when the Companions of the Suffa whom he had sent to teach others were barbarically martyred. We know of the grief he felt over the torture endured by ‘Ammâr ibn Yâsir and Summayyah. However, conveying the message of Islam till death, until the day of Unity with the Creator, to every corner of the earth was all that the Companions, with the Prophet at their head, were concerned with.

Delivering the message of Islam is a universal call to faith. Whether we can continue this mission within the conditions of the present is a question facing many Muslims. The time has come for us, the Muslims of the world, to examine ourselves, to ask ourselves whether we have the characteristics and abilities necessary to fulfill this most noble duty.

When the Prophet Muhammad asked his beloved wife Khadijah, “Who will believe me?”, she replied, “O Muhammad! Allah will never disgrace you thus. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist those afflicted by calamity.”

وَمِنْ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَالصَّيِّئَاتِ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْ قِبَلِهِ
أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ كَانَ
مِنْ أَهْلِهَا فَذِيَّةٌ طَعْلًا
أَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ فِيهِ الْفُورَانَ
لَقُرْءَانٌ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
يَضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ
كُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ
وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هُوَ

SELECTIONS FROM IBN 'AJÎBA'S AL-BAHR AL-MADÎD FÎ TAFSÎR AL-QUR'ÂN AL-MAJÎD

In this verse we are strongly encouraged to keep the company of the fuqarâ', those who are spiritual aspirants. In keeping their company there are many secrets to be obtained as well as copious gifts; the spiritual aspirant acquires the manners and etiquettes of the spiritual path by keeping their company.

“And keep thy soul content with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face; and let not thine eyes pass beyond them, seeking the pomp and glitter of this Life; nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds.” (Kahf, 18:28)

Exegesis (tafsîr):

Allah, the Real, says that we must keep ourselves content with those who worship their Lord morning and evening. It is said that the remembrance of the morning and evening is a reference to the five daily prayers, the word al-ghadât referring to the morning prayer and the word al-'ashiyy covering the noon prayer and those after it. Another opinion holds that the two periods (al-ghadât and al-'ashiyy) are a reference to the morning prayer and the mid-afternoon prayer. However, the most likely is that the two periods are a reference to the prayers which the early Muslims would offer before praying was made an obligation: they would pray two cycles in the morning and two cycles in the evening.



Ibn ‘Atiyya says, “Included in this verse is anyone who supplicates at times outside the prayer or gathers for the purposes of learning. It has been reported from ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar that the Prophet (pbuh) said, ‘The remembrance of Allah in the morning and in the evening are better than smashing swords [fighting] in the path of Allah and better than giving money in huge amounts’

It is said that the words “who call on their Lord” is a reference to the poor from among the believers such as ‘Ammār, Suhyab, Khabbāb and Bilāl. It has been reported that the leaders of the disbelieving Quraysh said to the Prophet, “If you distance these [poor companions] from yourself then we will be glad to offer you our company.” They would also complain that the smell of the poorer Companions’ clothes was offensive to their noses. It was for such comments that this verse was revealed.

It is reported that when this verse was revealed the Prophet sat amongst the poorer Companions and said, “Praise be to Allah, the One Who has given me companions with whom I must remain patient.” It has also been said that the verse was revealed concerning the People of the Bench (Ahl al-Suffa), a group who totalled around seven hundred men. If true, this would mean that the verse was revealed in Medina.

Thereafter, Allah describes them as being sincere, saying, ‘seeking His face’, meaning by

this that they seek knowledge of His essence and do not undertake actions for the purposes of acquiring a place in Heaven or to be saved from the Fire. ‘...And let not thine eyes pass beyond them’ is a command that we do not ignore them by being occupied in observing those who have nice attire or forms, as this is nothing but our seeking after’ the pomp and glitter of this Life’.

Finally, we are commanded not to obey those who are heedless of Allah—such as those who ask that the poor be distanced—for such people do not remember their Lord, in contrast to the believers, who spend their moments in remembrance and supplication. And Allah knows best.

Esoteric exegesis (ishārah):

In this verse we are strongly encouraged to keep the company of the fuqarā’, those who are spiritual aspirants. In keeping their company there are many secrets to be obtained as well as copious gifts; the spiritual aspirant acquires the manners and etiquettes of the spiritual path by keeping their company. He is able to attain refinement and education in preparation for the realisation of proximity (hadrat al-taqrīb) with the Divine. Keeping their company is the way to maintain spiritual steadfastness and to speedily traverse the milestones on the way to Realisation. In this regard, Shaykh Abū Madyan has said:

“There’s no joy to life unless in the company of the fakirs

They are the sultans, the masters and the amirs

So keep their company and acquire manners by sitting with them

And leave aside your own whims though they leave you behind them”

Al-Wartijî says: “And keep thy soul content with those spiritual aspirants who yearn for My Beauty and who are keen for my Majesty; they are the ones who at every moment ask when the reunion with Me shall be. They long to fly with wings of love to the world of communion. When they turn to look at you it is that beauty which you behold.”

Allah’s saying ‘seeking His Face’ explains that the supplication and request of the spiritual aspirants is only for the attainment of beholding Him and meeting Him. They yearn for Him and have deep love for Him. They have no connection with anything else or any business with other than Him. Their sole concern is Allah. The following is from the *Ihyâ*²:

“Whoever undertakes acts of piety because he is frightened of the Fire or because he is hopeful of attaining a place in Paradise has indeed acted with a sound intention...However, as Ruwaym has said, ‘a sincere act is one whose performer seeks no recompense in either this world or the next’. This is, in fact, the sincerity of the *siddîqûn*, absolute sincerity. All other types of sincerity are connected with some future benefit.”



1 Translation, Mustapha Sheikh

2 *Ihyâ’ ulûm al-dîn* of Imâm al-Ghazâlî, may Allah shower mercy upon him

We are commanded not to obey those who are heedless of Allah -such as those who ask that the poor be distanced- for such people do not remember their Lord, in contrast to the believers, who spend their moments in remembrance and supplication. And Allah knows best.





AL JABBÂR

THE POWERFUL, THE COMPELLER

As a wise man once said, "When your grievances become many, do not think 'O Rabb how great are my grievances', but rather say, 'O grievances, would that you knew how Great is my Rabb.'"

"Allah is He save whom there is no deity: the Sovereign Supreme, the Holy, the One with whom all salvation rests, the Giver of Faith, the One who determines what is true and false, the Almighty, the One who subdues wrong and restores right, the One to whom all greatness belongs! Utterly remote is Allah, in His limitless glory, from anything to which men may ascribe a share in His divinity" (Hashr, 59:23)

Pondering this glorious Name of Allah is a reminder to the believer of His Might and our absolute submission to His Will, whether we willingly submit to it or not. Only His Will is ever done and only His Power is Complete.

Perhaps the best explanation of Allah's infinite Power is His own explanation where He has said, "Allah, there is no deity but He, the Eternal, The Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His permission? He knows what happens to them (His creatures) in this world, and what will happen to them in the Hereafter. And they will never encompass anything of

His Knowledge except that which He wills. His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great” (Baqarah, 2:255)

His Power and Control over all things is manifest in everything around us; from the small ant struggling with her load, to the wide expanses of the canvas above us. It takes only a moment’s pause and contemplation to see that all that is in creation points to the magnificence and power of Allah, Most High. Allah does say, “Behold, in the heavens as well as on earth there are indeed messages for all who [are willing to] believe. And in your own nature, and in [that of] all the animals which He scatters [over the earth] there are messages for people who are endowed with inner certainty.” (Jâthiya, 45:3-4)

For someone downtrodden, whose tears have kept him up late into the night, let him rise from his tear moistened pillow and beg before the Only One whose Power is absolute, to change his condition. Allah as al-Jabbâr is the Powerful friend to the one who has no other to turn to.

Who is it that can give respite to the ailing heart of the oppressed? O one oppressed by tyrants, is your tyrant greater than your Rabb, Who is al-Jabbâr? Surely not. As a wise man once said, “When your grievances become many, do not think ‘O Rabb how great are my grievances’, but rather say, ‘O grievances, would

that you knew how Great is my Rabb.”

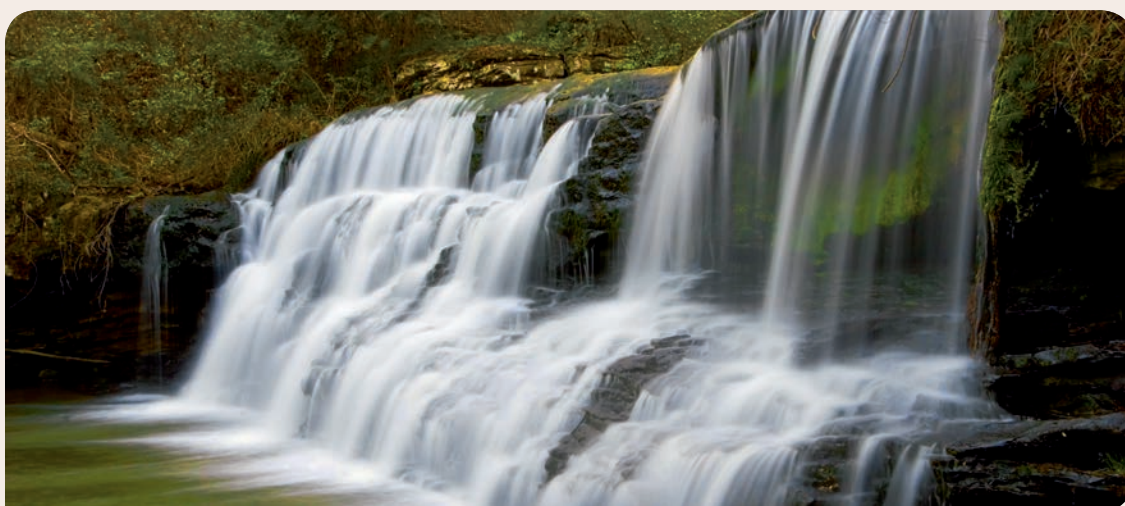
Verily Allah is the Lord of the Oppressed as titled on the tongue of our Beloved (pbuh) who, upon his unkind expulsion from Tâ’if, raised his noble hands bloodied and covered in dust before al-Jabbâr and cried, “Oh, Allah, I appeal to you for the weakness in my strength, and my limited power, and the treatment of contempt and humiliation from people. To you, the most Merciful of all the Merciful ones, you are the Lord of the oppressed, and you are my Lord. Under whose care are you leaving me to? To an enemy oppressing me? Or to a friend you have given control of my affairs? If there is no anger from you on me I will forever be content. However, your blessing is vastly important for me I seek refuge with the glory of your light, which the heavens and earth are lit from, your anger will not fall on me, nor your displeasure descend on me. To you is the supplication until you are pleased, and there is no control or power except by you”

How great the humility of the greatest of mankind (pbuh), that he begins his supplication to Allah, with the acknowledgment of his own weakness before al-Jabbâr, despite his status among men, because now he is in the Court of His Lord. Then he (pbuh) ends his supplication, once more invoking the Power of Allah, because indeed there is no Power besides His.

Thus Allah the Most Powerful did then Will, and cause the hearts of those who had so

It takes only a moment’s pause and contemplation to see that all that is in creation points to the magnificence and power of Allah, Most High.





mercilessly excluded the Prophet (pbuh) from their midst to be turned and they entered into Islam, just as the Prophet (pbuh) had requested in his supplication to the All Powerful.

So too the tyrant should be in fear of the supplication of the oppressed one as he supplicates to al-Jabbâr. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said to Mu'âdh ibn Jabal, 'Beware of the supplication of the unjustly treated, because there is no veil between him and Allah'. Al-Jabbâr, means the Compeller. How arrogantly Nimrod refused Ibrâhîm's (pbuh) call, how impertinently Pharaoh expelled Mûsâ (pbuh). Nimrod and Pharaoh were intoxicated by their belief in their own power, but al-Jabbâr deflates the proud chest of arrogance, for all Power and Might are His alone. Thus Nimrod found himself humbled at death when Allah the Powerful caused a fly to enter into his ear and disrupt the very mind that thought itself almighty, and by it Nimrod met his end. Similarly Pharaoh drove himself and his army into the sea that swallowed him and his great army. Before al-Jabbâr, the One Whose Will is irresistible, the Pharaohs and Nimrods of the world are humbled, while the defeated and subjugated find a Helper, Protector and Friend.

Constant remembrance of Allah's Power and Might soothes the heart from what ails it, and protects the heart from the evils that may stir within it. Narrated Mu'âdh ibn Anas: The

Prophet (pbuh) said: 'If anyone eats food and then says: "Praise be to Allah Who has fed me with this food and provided me with it through no might and power on my part," he will be forgiven his former and later sins. If anyone puts on a garment and says: "Praise be to Allah Who has clothed me with this and provided me with it through no might and power on my part," he will be forgiven his former and later sins.'" Also Anas ibn Mâlik narrated: The Prophet (pbuh) said: 'When a man goes out of his house and says: "In the name of Allah, I trust in Allah; there is no might and no power but in Allah," the following will be said to him at that time: "You are guided, defended and protected." The devils will go far from him and another devil will say: "How can you deal with a man who has been guided, defended and protected?"'

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Stories

Allah The Almighty

Imam Shāfi‘i was standing in front of a mulberry tree when someone asked him about Allah. Imam Shāfi‘i answered, ‘Take a look at this mulberry tree. When goats eat the leaves they make milk, if a bee drinks its nectar, it will produce honey, if a silkworm eats its leaves, the result is silk and if a deer eats its leaves we get musk. All four matters have different compositions and states, but the mulberry tree has only one reality, because one item has only one innate reality. If the innate reality of this tree is milk then how do we also obtain silk, honey and musk?’

Similarly, if the innate reality is silk, how are all the other items formed? Thus we realize that the leaves do not contain the requirement for any one item – Allah is the Creator of all. If He desires He can put leaves in the mouth of a goat and extract milk or allow a bee to drink the nectar and make honey or order a deer to eat the leaves and produce fragrant musk or make them food for silk-worms to convert into silk.’





A True Worshipper

One day people saw Rābī'a running by with a burning branch in one hand and a pail of water in the other. Someone asked, "O lady of the Afterlife, where are you going and what are you doing?"

Rābī'a replied: "I am going to set Heaven on fire, and put out the flames of Hell. In this way, those who are moving towards God can overcome both these illusions and clearly see the real goal. Then, with no ulterior motives, no hopes or fears, all may truly seek God. Today, it is difficult to find anyone who really worships God for His own sake, without hope for Paradise or fear of Hell."

A Wise Dervish

It is related that Mahmūd of Ghazna was once walking in his garden when he stumbled over a blind dervish sleeping beside a bush.

As soon as he awoke, the dervish cried out: 'You clumsy oaf! Do you have no eyes? Why do you trample on the sons of men?' Mahmūd's companion, one of his courtiers, shouted at the dervish: 'Your blindness is equal only to your stupidity! Since you cannot see, you should be doubly careful of whom you are accusing of heedlessness.'

'If by that you mean,' said the dervish, 'that I should not criticize a sultan, it is you who should realize your own shallowness.'

Mahmūd was impressed that the blind man knew that he was in the presence of the sultan, and he said mildly: 'O Dervish, why should the king have to listen to abuse from you?'

The dervish replied: 'The downfall of people is that they are shielded from criticism. It is the burnished metal that shines the most brightly, the knife that has been struck against the whetstone that cuts best, and the exercised arm that can lift the weight.'



MY SPIRITUAL JOURNEY TO A STUNNING COUNTRY

This trip was a life altering experience for our group as a whole. Along with all of the educational and spiritual lessons we learned, there were some physical lessons that made Turkey a place to be remembered. The sisterhood we experienced amongst both the women within our school and those abroad was truly unique, and a gift within itself.

“He who goes out in search of knowledge is in Allah’s path till he returns.”¹

In the latter part of last year I, along with a group of Muslim sisters from Atlanta GA, USA made a commitment that many Muslim Americans, men women and children, make each day; a commitment to study Islam overseas. We were accompanied by other sisters who had traveled for the same purpose from various parts of the world, including The United States of America (with participants from China, French Canada, and Lebanon), England, and Uzbekistan, to name but a few. To partake in study of this sort is a huge feat, that some may even equate to the lifelong struggle involved in the ability to make Hajj. It is a dream that for some is simply unattainable due to a variety of reasons such as; finances, personal obligations, fear, etc. For our group of sisters however, this dream became an amazing reality this past summer of 2008, in the beautiful country of Turkey. Hosted by a group known as “The House of Muslim Women”,² our group totaling nine females (ranging in ages from adolescence to seniority) was graciously received by a school

in Istanbul dedicated to instructing women in the Islamic Sciences..

Although this age range occurred by chance, I believe that it represented a sign from Allah that seeking knowledge is not only incumbent upon every Muslim regardless of age,³ but possible. Each sister had no idea of what to expect on this journey, some having no historic knowledge of Turkey itself. Common questions arose within the group of the possibility of facing typical issues such as; racism and sexism, or being faced with the discomfort associated with the common habit of foreign Muslims who view American Muslims as ignorant, to simply becoming homesick. With these fears in mind, this brave group entered this school in Istanbul to realize the existence of at least one place where these fears became myths. The women and Turkish Muslims in general seemed to have a love for our group that only Allah could have placed in their hearts due to its genuine nature.

It was through this love that our group had an ability to receive this sacred knowledge in its purest form. "By Him in whose hand is my soul, none of you shall enter paradise until you believe, and none of you shall believe until you love one another...."⁴

The above mentioned fear of racism will be expounded on, because it in my opinion became the very foundation that negated all of the above mentioned fears. Our group



was unique in that our participants and our teachers from the States are primarily African American. We share the common thread of being Muslim, but Muslim all carry a different past of either becoming Muslim or remaining Muslim. Some shared an awareness of the predominant existence of Muslims, and the history of Islam in Turkey. This coupled with one's constant battle to heal the damaging effects of racism placed on us as African descendants through slavery, we arrived in Turkey as a group thirsty for knowledge, but guarded of our physical/mental beings. This is not to portray our group as one harboring inner anger, or even regret in a sense of our unique pasts; it is however meant to make clear that no man can control the destiny Allah sets out for all mankind. Because of this, we were fortunate to come as a group that did not place a heavy weight on the details of our pasts, but rather a group of sisters united to increase our own personal relationships with our Lord and His beloved Messenger Muhammad Ibn 'Abdullah (pbuh). By the grace of Allah we were received in this same spirit.

Our daily schedules consisted of invaluable learning experiences occurring both in and out of the classroom. Any historical fact being documented had the opportunity to be visually explained through a visit to an actual site within the country relating to the specific topic. Each class was said to be taught by what we call in the states, "the cream of the crop", which refers to "the best of the best". It's common in Muslim communities within the States to come across individuals (especially foreign individuals) who claim to fit within these criteria, but realistically only possess either a native tongue of Arabic, or be a native/descendent of a country predominated with Muslims. Individuals of this sort are both common and easily recognizable in that they are never humble in their approach. Each interaction seems to be based on a consistent attempt to make others aware of the "automatic hierarchy of holiness" one meeting these aforementioned criteria has above someone who does not.



To claim to be a teacher of something so precious as Qur'an or the life of our beloved Prophet (pbuh) and have a character that does not reflect some form of humbleness will in my opinion corrupt both the student and the knowledge received.

"Truly, Allah does not remove Sacred Knowledge by taking it out of servants, but rather by taking back the souls of Islamic scholars [in death], until, when He has not left a single scholar, the people take the ignorant as leaders, who are asked for and who give Islamic legal opinion without knowledge, misguided and misleading"⁵

Fortunately for our group, we had the opportunity to be blessed with a group of teachers who displayed no form of conceit. In their behavior our group had the opportunity to begin hearing an innate language seemingly

every Muslim speaks from the moment of conception, that being the language of peace.

We covered topics such as Fiqh, Aqidah, Qur'an, Sirah, and Adab, with occasional "sohbets" or "halaqas", which both refer to a learning session. These sessions also extended themselves outside of the classroom, occurring almost daily. Many participants in our group were familiar with these topics, but had rarely been exposed to the teaching style of the women on staff. Each particular teacher seemed to have internalized each subject in such a way that it had truly become a part of their overall character. Their interest and drive in some sense to relay as much on each subject to us was unique as well. Often times a teacher or ustâdha would explain that all Muslims, who make every attempt to base their lives on the life of our beloved Prophet (pbuh) were obligated to not only learn these above mentioned topics, but were to teach them to others. This obligation from their understanding would serve as a criterion which would either permit some into Jannah, or cause others to enter hell. This commitment was coupled with a genuine love for us because of their love for the Prophet (pbuh). This served as another concept that was fairly new to our group. To hear someone make a claim of this sort accompanied by actual behavior introduced our group to what seemed to be a hidden treasure.

"None of you believes until I am more

Often times a teacher or ustâdha would explain that all Muslims, who make every attempt to base their lives on the life of our beloved Prophet (pbuh) were obligated to not only learn these above mentioned topics, but were to teach them to others.



beloved to him than his father, his son, and all people".⁶

Another important aspect of the teaching style of these women was due to the fact that they fall into the categories of Sufi Muslims who ascribe to the Hanafi school of thought.

These two characteristics differ in the common categorization of African American Muslims, who commonly fall into the category of an Orthodox Muslim, ascribing to the Shafi'i school of thought. These differences served as honest differences in our minds when we learned of it. In the States, as I am sure in other parts of the world, many Muslims accept the ideology that following a separate madhab equates to practicing a different form of Islam in a sense. Sufism is commonly defined as, the beliefs and practices of an ascetic, retiring, and mystical sect in Islam⁷. The main focus of this definition commonly focuses on the mystical aspect, which for that reason becomes a topic to be simply avoided. Our teachers introduced us to a new definition of this term, whose meaning relates more closely to that of Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri in his book "The elements of Sufism" as, "those who are interested in inner knowledge, those who are interested in finding a way or practice towards inner awakening and enlightenment."⁸ After receiving the definition of Sufism in this sense, our group came to the realization that we too fit within this latter category in some way or another. The primary interest for our

trip as aforementioned was in fact a search for ways to tap into the knowledge that would create a stronger connection to our Lord, and by His Mercy we seemed to have found it in this previously shunned practice known as Sufism.

An important aspect of Sufism that related to a very important lesson learned on our trip was introduced through the term *tasawwuf* which "basically consists of dedication to worship, total dedication to Allah Most High, disregard for the finery and ornament of the world, abstinence from the pleasure, wealth, and prestige sought by most men, and retiring from others to worship alone."⁹ To achieve this state of mind, it was recommended that we partake in what was described as "*nafs training*", in that we would aspire to gain the ability to both control and direct our inner wants and needs towards a path of seeking the Pleasure of Allah solely. This would occur through various forms of inner sacrifice, which would differ amongst each individual partaking in this struggle. I searched to find ways in which this might occur in my own life, and found an excellent example in a daily sacrifice of both our group and the women of Turkey, that being the struggle and sacrifice attributed to the wearing of hijab.

Struggles associated with covering in the States vary among things such as; discrimination, difference in opinion as to which style of hijab qualifies as correct,

whether covering is a mandate of one's adherence to the laws of Islam, etc. These struggles occur both internally and externally, but rarely results in one's final decision to either cover or not to be possibly breaking the laws of her State. We were made aware that the women we were blessed to be amongst as our teachers and fellow Turkish classmates did not share this same luxury. To cover in Turkey served as both an action that could be defined as a political statement, and an identification of a woman who had given up her opportunity to enter into any professional career later in life, which could eventually lead to what could be defined as a criminal act. I found this news to be both heartbreaking and a great source of inspiration. These were women who were participating in a form of nafs training that would change their lives on earth forever, resulting in an Afterlife of eternal bliss, due to the sole intention to please their Lord through their action. I constantly made it aware to the women of Turkey of my level of admiration for their struggle, only to find out they were in admiration of our group for our own. They viewed our commitment to cover in Western Society, devoid of such laws of their own land, as a true act of worship.

In closing, it goes without saying that this trip was a life altering experience for our group as a whole. Along with all of the educational and spiritual lessons we learned, there were some physical lessons that made Turkey a



place to be remembered. The sisterhood we experienced amongst both the women within our school and those abroad was truly unique, and a gift within itself.

We constantly shared in the indulgence of authentic Turkish meals, the documentation of ancient relics within the histories of both Islam and the Ottoman Empire, and simply a new way to read, interpret, and finally appreciate all things created by Allah. We found that Allah had truly created us different so that we wouldn't simply learn from each other by chance, but we would make attempts to seek out these differences in Muslims throughout the world to develop an even higher form of appreciation for our Lord.

"And from His signs that He created you from earth and then you became humans widespread...And from His signs that He

Our daily schedules consisted of invaluable learning experiences occurring both in and out of the classroom. Any historical fact being documented had the opportunity to be visually explained through a visit to an actual site within the country relating to the specific topic.

Common questions arose within the group of the possibility of facing typical issues such as; racism and sexism. With these fears in mind, we entered this school in Istanbul to realize the existence of at least one place where these fears became myths. The Turkish Muslims in general seemed to have a love for our group that only Allah could have placed in their hearts due to its genuine nature

created the Heavens and the Earth and the difference of your tongues and your colors; Indeed in that signs for the inhabitants of the worlds..”¹⁰

The following reflection provided by one of our group members provides an excellent summary of the trip, which each participant can relate to:

It was an experience of a lifetime for me and my daughters to travel to Turkey and learn about our beautiful religion. The Turkish people are one of the most hospitable people I’ve ever met. They treated us like family. Our teachers were so knowledgeable and willing to share that knowledge with us. 30 days later we are still quoting and practicing things that were learned while we were there. I pray that we can take the good from this trip and share it with sisters here in the U.S. I’ve recommended this trip to everyone I’ve spoken to. Insha-Allah, I plan to return in the future.¹¹

We remain in the United States of America attempting to follow the advice of an honorable man we had the pleasure of both meeting, and receiving Allah’s mercy through his own. When asked how one could purify oneself, he replied,

The only way to prepare is to be a friend of Allah. When you finish one good deed follow it by another good deed. When you finish, the angels will give you peace in the grave... You

will die according to your heart. You should therefore evaluate your life, for you will die in that state.¹²

With this advice in mind, we constantly make dua for the humble servants of Allah we encountered in Turkey, for ourselves, and for all Muslims throughout the world. May Allah protect us all from Shaytân, guide us to knowledge/work that is pleasing to Him, and let us meet again in Jannatul-Firdaus. Âmin.

1 Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) related on the authority of Anas

2 “The House of Muslim Women” is a non-profit organization founded to educate Muslim women aged 13 and up by other Muslim women who have completed courses of study at Islamic institutions.

3 Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) related on the authority of Anas

4 Sahih Muslim, 1.74: Hadith 54

5 Fath al-Bâri, 1.194, Hadith 100

6 Hadith of the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) related in Fath al-Bâri, 1.58, Hadith 15

7 www.dictionary.com

8 An introductory manual of this ancient form of human consciousness found within the Islamic religion. Shaykh Fadhalla Haeri, 1999

9 “The Place of Tassawuf in Traditional Islam”, Nuh Ha Mim Keller, 1995

10 Translation of verses 20-26, Surah al-Rûm

11 Actual comments provided by Tayyeba Steele-Hassan August, 2008

12 Excerpt taken from Sohbet by Osman Nuri Efendi, July 9, 2008 Istanbul Turkey

Istanbul My Beloved.....

Oh! My Beloved Istanbul
Where history has been chiseled on every street
And Ottoman Sultans tasted unforgettable glory

Oh! My Beloved Istanbul
Where all nations are welcome
And their achievements are celebrated

Oh! My beloved Istanbul
Where the earth is stained with the blood of martyrs
And whose sacrifice is zealously celebrated

Oh! My Beloved Istanbul
Where muezzins joyously invite the masses to reflect
And Mosques shine the attributes of God

Oh! My beloved Istanbul
Where Friends of God are many
And share their divine hearts with all regardless of faith

Oh! My Beloved Istanbul
Where travelers are treated better than Sultans
And their well being is prized more than this world

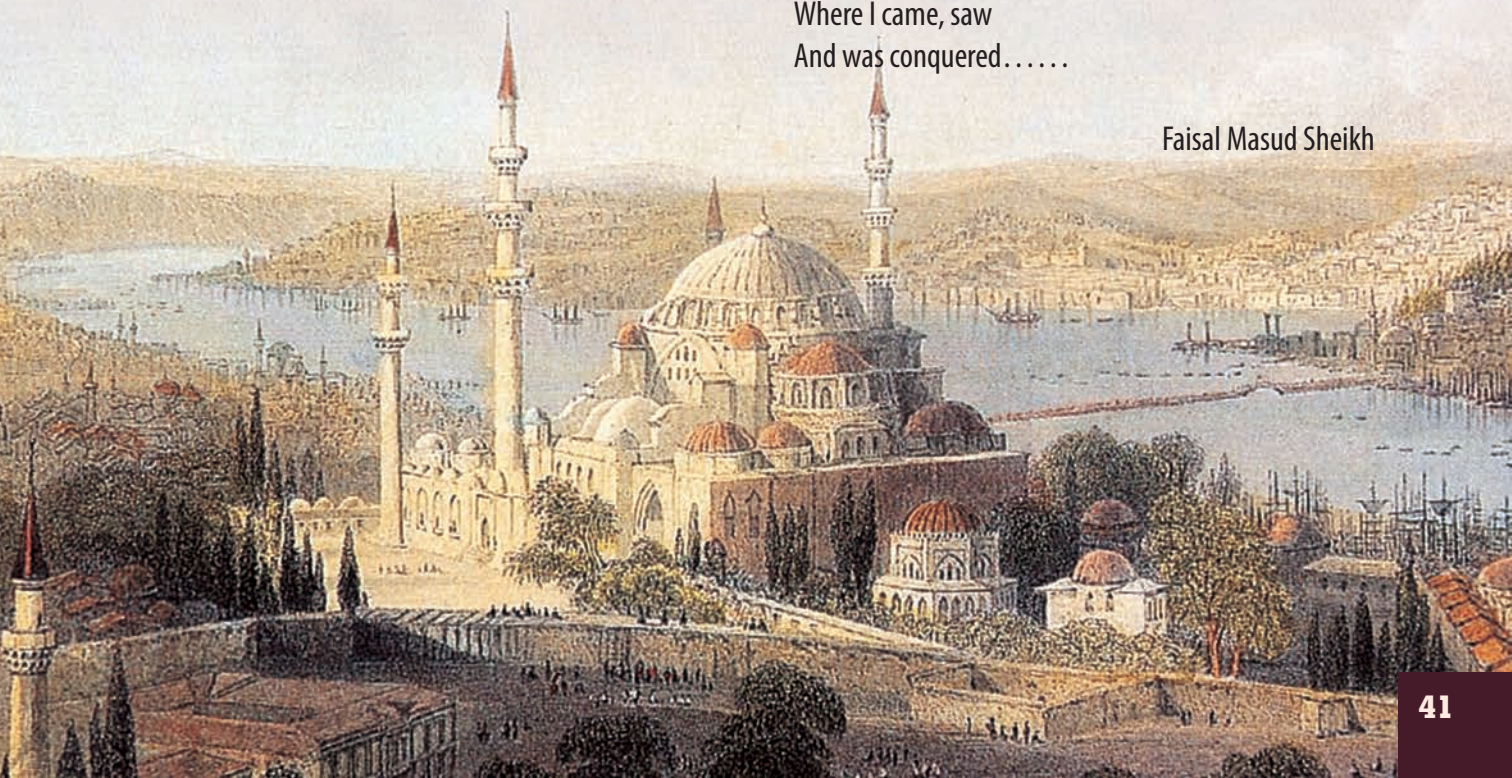
Oh! My Beloved Istanbul
Where the sweat of hearty workers keeps life flowing
And golden fortunes are crafted from dust

Oh! My Beloved Istanbul
Where students dream of global victory
And places of contemplation are everywhere

Oh! My Beloved Istanbul
Where minstrels sing a thousand love songs every day
And lovers cry tears of blood

Oh! My Beloved Istanbul
Where I came, saw
And was conquered.....

Faisal Masud Sheikh





THE NECESSITY OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE



Humans with no spiritual discipline possess souls more disruptive than that of the most ferocious of creatures, they resemble a soiled container polluting everything of excellence and goodness it beholds, therefore spiritual discipline and purification of the soul and ego is necessary for the welfare of both individuals and societies.

EXCELLENT MOTHERS

The education of a child begins in the arms of its mother, her every word adds to the structure of the child's personality and behavior, a mother's heart is the focus of a child's education, the greatest source of human compassion. If mothers ignore their parental duties generations and societies deviate towards detriment. If we, as parents want our children to be impeccable humans then we must make every effort in being perfect mothers and fathers constantly remembering that humans of good character are ultimately the indication of a good mother.





A GUIDE FOR OTHERS

The main keys to success in our duties to others is patience and perseverance, while greater enthusiasm and exertion of a leader bares significant importance in guiding those under his command.



FAILURE IS SELF INFLICTED, SUCCESS IS FROM ALLAH



In any kind of duty humans must avoid blaming others for their own faults or failure, primarily we should seek fault within ourselves with the total acknowledgment that achievement is not personal success, achievement is success from Allah.

SEEKING THE PLEASURE OF ALLAH

The essence of fulfilling our duty of servitude is to exceed egoistic misgivings and to seek the pleasure of Allah, approaching every creature on earth with a soul of compassion.





THE SINCERITY AND DETERMINATION OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD`S TABLÎGH¹

We must consider every move we make, every seed sown in the undertaking of tablîgh for the souls, hearts and social conditions are the places in which these seeds will flourish.

There are many wisdoms we may draw out from the Prophet's life and work which lead to his incomparable success, but perhaps the most significant was his unswerving constancy in maintaining sincerity and devotion when conveying the message of Islam.

Sincerity is an action performed with purity of the heart, for the sake of Allah alone and with no beneficial intention or objective. When we use the word sincerity in daily life, worship comes to mind and we persist in keeping the sincerity of worship distant from any other aspects of worldly life. In fact, this is a mystery that we must seek in every action we perform, for even the most marginal act of piety performed with the intention of sincerity in the heart is much greater than an action of major significance which is carried out insincerely.

True sincerity in Islam is to perform an action without expecting any worldly benefit; an action of sincere intention should also be conducted with no expectation of benevolence in the Hereafter, for the thought of obtaining the eternal joys of Paradise distorts the sincerity of a person's intention because stipulation can

¹ Missionary Work



sometime induce actions which could possibly lead to a person sacrificing Paradise. The most striking examples of sincerity in action is that of 'Alî; throwing an unbeliever to the ground in a struggle, he pulled his sword with the intention of killing the man. Just at that moment, the man spat in Ali's face with fury; 'Alî, with all mercy, lowered his sword and set him free. The man out of astonishment asked: "Why did you set me free?" 'Alî replied: "I was about to kill you for the sake of Allah but when you spat at me I felt a pang of anger in my soul and that tarnished the sincerity of my intention; I would have killed you for revenge, to satisfy my own ego. That is the only thing that deterred me!"

So when the enemy heard 'Alî's assessment of nobility and sincerity he said: "I acted in such a way, I provoked and annoyed you to ensure that you would kill me outright without inflicting any kind of torture. Your forgiving and charitable actions must be due to the mercifulness and verity of Islam; I now accept faith and bear witness to the unification of Allah."

This person, who was a disbeliever, embraced Islam and submitted himself to Allah due to 'Alî's actions of sincerity.

There are various verses of the Qur'ân which stress that the sole duty of the Prophets was to convey the words of truth to others.

"The messenger's duty is but to proclaim (the message)." (Al-Mâ'idah, 5:99)

"What is the mission of the Messengers but to preach the clear message." (Nahl, 16:35)

The messenger fulfills his duty by proclaiming the word of faith; but the people's acceptance of the message, their abandonment of blasphemy and their acceptance of the religion and reaching true faith is in the hands of Allah, for He is the One who sows the seeds of faith in the hearts of humans. Indeed, Allah tells the Prophet in this verse of the Qur'ân:

"Thou wilt not be able to guide everyone whom thou lovest; but Allah guides those whom He wills." (Qasas, 28:56)

I would like to point out that it is natural for those who convey the message of Islam to have a sense of aspiration and a desire for others to accept their call to faith; this is their greatest objective and ideal in life and there is nothing that would please them more than a disbeliever accepting faith; likewise, nothing could cause them more anguish and distress than a person rejecting their call. Yet none of this causes an impediment to their sincerity. Sincerity is eliminated when the one performing tabligh sees no apparent success in his efforts and loses his determination and makes the grave mistake of thinking that he is striving in vain because nobody is accepting his call to faith.

In the life of the Prophet Muhammad, when life in Mecca was full of indulgence, torture and all kinds of social oppression, is a goodly example. Ibn Sa'd reports that the Prophet Muhammad would visit the tents of all the groups who had come from other cities and towns to perform the pilgrimage and speak to them about the Islamic faith: "At the beginning of the prophethood, the Prophet Muhammad lived his faith in secret in Mecca for three years and in the fourth year (when he was given the order of spreading Islam openly) he declared his prophethood and continued to call the people to Islam for a further ten years. Every year, during the Hajj season, the Prophet would go to the places where the pilgrims made camp,

to the bazaars like Ukkâz, Majannah and Zil Majâz where the people gathered and he would convey the message of Islam, calling them to faith and telling them how they would find Paradise. Nobody would offer assistance to the Prophet or accept his call to Islam. He would visit the tribes telling them:

“Acknowledge the Oneness of Allah so that you may attain deliverance. With the strength of faith you can control the entire world, you can make the people obey your orders and you can find a place in Paradise, in the next world”. Abû Lahab would follow the Prophet and tell the people, “O people! Don’t believe in what he says, because he is campaigning against the religion of your ancestors and his words are baseless”. The people rejected the Prophet, saying abruptly: “If your religion was true and profitable, members of your own family would not have opposed you!” Many more remarks similar to this were made to dispute his words and faith. But the Prophet never gave up; he would continue to preach and call them to faith saying: “O Allah! If you so willed they would not have rejected my call.”

Ibn Sa’d reported that before the Prophet reached the group of pilgrims from Medina he was rejected by fifteen tribes but persisted in his mission.

The Prophet had truly believed and devoted himself to his duty and mission of conveying

the word of truth and showed great enthusiasm that was unparalleled; when he reached the tent of the pilgrims from Medina, a group of around six or seven people from the tribes of Aws and Khazraj responded and he finally began to acquire a positive response for his efforts for they accepted the Prophets call to faith.

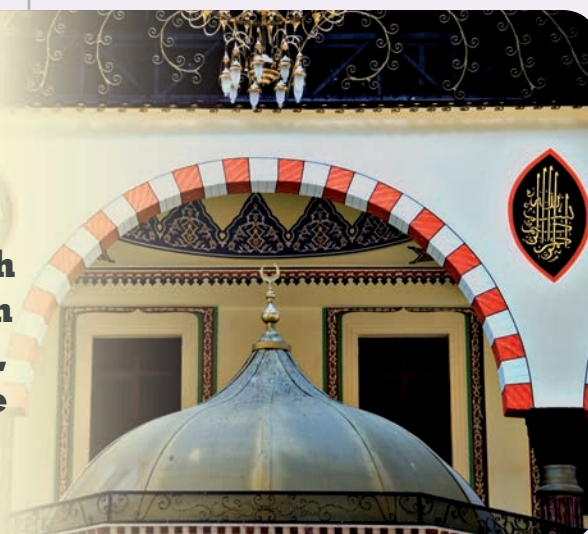
This was an excellent result for the Prophet which, following the completion of the pilgrimage, led to the great event of the first Pledge of ‘Aqabah.

In the Qur’ân there is mention that the duty of the Prophet was solely to convey the message of faith: “O Messenger! Proclaim the (message) which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission” (Mâ’idah, 5:67)

Despite the Prophet’s efforts in conveying the message of Islam, the death of his uncle Abû Tâlib, who died without declaring faith, greatly grieved him for he had not only undertaken the guardianship of the orphaned Muhammad at a young age, he had also protected him during the times of difficulty in the early days when his nephew was first blessed with prophethood.

The command revealed by Allah with regards to the duty of conveying Islam, “If thou didst not thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission”, was then followed by the warning, “Thou wilt not be able to guide everyone whom thou lovest.”

It is important that those who devote themselves to conveying Islam with the values portrayed by the Companions, a matter which has only recently become an issue of greater importance, understand the significance of both their duty and expectations.



Sincerity is eliminated when the one performing tablîgh sees no apparent success in his efforts and loses his determination and makes the grave mistake of thinking that he is striving in vain because nobody is accepting his call to faith.



In a report of Muslim, there were Prophets sent in history who had no followers at all; this suggests that to obtain the attribute of prophet is not dependant on people accepting faith. A prophet is the one sent on the command of Allah to convey His message to humanity. The Prophets were sent to the people as messengers and obtained the blessing of prophethood for their duty of conveying faith, which means each will be blessed in the Hereafter with the title 'prophet'.

The principle of not expecting a result in the mission of tablîgh is an important point, one which every person who conveys the word of faith must understand. This is because it is the main aspect which enables a person to continue and provides him with the power to persist in his plight for the tablîgh.

One with high expectations, however, will only find the energy to continue this holy mission if his efforts are rewarded with acceptance; such a person's mission will inevitably be short lived because when such a person faces rejection he loses determination and enthusiasm and begins to think that his efforts are in vain.

It is important that those who devote themselves to conveying Islam with the values portrayed by the Companions, a matter which has only recently become an issue of greater importance, understand the significance of both their duty and expectations.

We must consider every move we make, every seed sown in the undertaking of tablîgh for the souls, hearts and social conditions are the places in which these seeds will flourish. While some seeds immediately bloom into the buds of spring, others need more time to grow and mature; the soil in one field may be rich while another infertile and whether this is due to the climate, the heat or water, there is something here that needs great consideration, and that is that the conditions must be suitable for a sound result.

So in this case, the result is not actually in our hands; it is greatly dependant on other conditions and the only thing we can do is to perform our duty of sowing the seed of faith and continue to sow these seeds one after another with no expectations of either the effect or the outcome. Although we may not see the results of these seeds blooming into flowers immediately, with time those to come after us might.

It is our duty as believers to abide by the command of Allah and the Prophet's Sunnah: proclaiming the Divine message and leaving the result to the Creator, the Knower of all, for even if nobody accepts our call, we will certainly be rewarded by Allah for our determination and devotion.

"Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar" (Ahzâb, 33:21)

