

# The Intellect

Al Quran  
Surah al-An'am - Part 8

Al Hadith  
Zuhd - Islamic Asceticism

The Awakening  
Discovering the Peace of Heart (3)



*Debate  
Dynamics*



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CATEGORY: Fresh Woody

TOP NOTES: Bergamot, White Flower

HEART NOTES: Fruity Pink Apple, Praline, Peach

BASE NOTES: Leather, Cardamom, Oak Wood

**JANAN**

ESSENCE

CATEGORY: Citrus Amber Woody

TOP NOTES: Bergamot, Lemon, Peach, Pink Pepper, Blackcurrant

HEART NOTES: Plum, Mandarin, Warm Tobacco

BASE NOTES: Cedarwood, Cardamom, Vanilla, Musk

**JANAN**

ESSENCE

CATEGORY: Citrus Amber Woody

TOP NOTES: Bergamot, Pink Grape, Ginger

HEART NOTES: Cardamom, Tea, Tiramisu

BASE NOTES: Cedarwood, Ambroxan, Musk

**zarar**

ESSENCE

CATEGORY: Fresh Marine

TOP NOTES: Citrus, Rosemary

HEART NOTES: Marine, Sea Notes

BASE NOTES: Musk, Dry Wood

**zarar**

ESSENCE

CATEGORY: Citrus Woody

TOP NOTES: Lemon, Bergamot, Sea's amber accord, Cardamom Oil, Madagascar

HEART NOTES: Rosewood, Jasmine, Citrus

BASE NOTES: Yellow Musk, Cedarwood, White Amber, Ambroxan, Saffron, Cardamom

J.

**WASH AKKAM 502**

ESSENCE

CATEGORY: Fragrant Fruity

TOP NOTES: Citrus, Cardamom

HEART NOTES: Apple, Lavender

BASE NOTES: patchouli, amber, oak-wood

**DEFENDER**

ESSENCE

CATEGORY: Fragrant

TOP NOTES: Bergamot, Cardamom, Violet Leaves

HEART NOTES: Cardamom, Lily of the Valley

BASE NOTES: Leather, Sandalwood, Tonka Beans, Vanilla

**XPOSE**

ESSENCE

CATEGORY: Citrus, Amaretto, Woody Amber

TOP NOTES: Mandarin, Lemon, Bergamot

HEART NOTES: Red Orange, Saffron, Lavender, Sage

BASE NOTES: Grey Amber, Cardamom, Oakwood

**1947**

ESSENCE

CATEGORY: Fruity Fruity

TOP NOTES: Grapefruit, Mandarin, Greenfruit, Apple, Kiwi, Peachapple, Lime

HEART NOTES: Jasmine

BASE NOTES: Lily of the Valley, Citrus, Sandalwood, Musk, Amber, Sandalwood, Vanilla, Tonka, Plum, Moss

**LEGACY**

ESSENCE

CATEGORY: Floral Fruity Woody

TOP NOTES: Strawberry, Vanilla, Rose, Jasmine

HEART NOTES: Saffron, Cardamom, Patchouli, Musk, Pink Pepper

BASE NOTES: Saffron, Musk, White Musk, Cardamom, Ambroxan

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– Episode 16

Translation by Kaiser Nizamani

# Editorial

Dear Readers,

السلام عليكم و رحمة الله و بركاته

In the midst of a highly charged, often vitriolic political environment, most people tend to relinquish balance in fruitless argumentation with others. Work, social gatherings and even one's home become pitched battlefields, with strongly entrenched opinions flying around in the form of acidic verbal battles – each party irrevocably positioned against the other – barely listening to views expressed by the opposing side and never considering that the other may have a valid point to make and that 'I may be wrong in my opinion'; each party to the argument strongly believes: *my 'leader' can do no wrong; his is very the manifestation of wrong!*

Our Prophet ﷺ instructs us to love in moderation (*perhaps someday you may end up disliking the one you love*) and to be moderate in hate as well (*the one you dislike might become dear to you one day*).

Qazi Bakkar Bin Qutaiba رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, a teacher of Imam Tahawi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was much favoured and liked by the reigning king. The king frequently took his advice, often invited him to court gatherings and made him the chief judge / Qazi of his kingdom.

Once, the king did something which wasn't in conformity with Islam and Qazi Bakkar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ told him off right away; the monarch got really upset – so much so that he sent a messenger to take back all the gifts he had gifted the Qazi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ over a course of many years!

Qazi Bakkar (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) was well aware of the way of kings and the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ were deeply entrenched in his heart...*perhaps someday you develop enmity* So he took the emissary to a locked cupboard in his room, opened its padlock and asked him to take all the sealed pouches in it – unopened gifts that the king had bestowed upon him over all these years!

The Prophet ﷺ also says: "Do not argue with your brother..."; "It is enough sin for you that you never stop disputing" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi) and that one cannot be a *Kaamil Momin* (perfect believer) till he lets go of arguments and disputations even if he is right (Musnad Ahmed).

If dragged into a (political/other) debate, the suggested course of action is to listen to your opponent, air your views and then desist from further argument. (If you accept your rival's point of view, well and good; if not, drop additional discussion on the topic). We can see the essence of this approach in *Surah Al-Kafiroon*.

Our Cover Story talks about the art of debating and its dos and don'ts. The article describes, at length, the correct approach to adopt while attempting to put your views across to others who disagree with you.

Alas! The carnage in Gaza lengthened...



حسبنا الله و نعم الوكيل – اللهم انا نجعلك في نحورهم و نعوذ بك من شرورهم

People around the world are astounded at the steadfastness and deep level of faith of the Palestinians. Losing multiple loved ones, lives upended, displaced, distraught, hungry and thirsty, standing in front of their bombed neighbourhoods and charred vehicles, they still manage to proclaim, with full conviction: *HasbiAllah!* They continue to pray, in congregation, in mosques with fallen minarets and halls reduced to rubble. *Allahu Akbar*. Faith can do wonders.

When Moazzam Baig, ex-(illegally held) detainee / author of *Enemy Combatant*, was being taken to Guantanamo Bay, hands and legs shackled, hooded, with goggles on top of the hood, amidst the noise of the plane and barking dogs, the person next to him in the same terrible state as himself said:

السلام عليكم - يا اخي! هل صليت صلوة المغرب؟

(Have you prayed Maghrib?)

Imagine! At a time when people would find it impossible to focus on anything but their dwindling hope of remaining alive, this Momin was worried about missing his prayers!

A knife was then placed on Moazzam's throat, to stop the two from conversing. But at that very instant, he heard *Allahu Akbar* from the brother next to him and their prayer began. The only movement that the shackles allowed in this entire Salah, was the *Salam!*

This is the power of *Imaan*.

May Allah ﷻ grant the Palestinians peace and complete freedom in this temporal abode and *Jannah* in the eternal.

May Allah ﷻ cool are eyes by making an example of the unrepentant *Zalimeen*. *Ameen*

Wassalam,

Zawjah Farid

# The Meanings of the Quran

By Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

## (The Cattle)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

وَكَذٰلِكَ نُوَصِّرُ الْاٰیٰتِ وَلِيَقُوْلُوْا دَرَسْتَ وَلِنُبَيِّنَهُ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُوْنَ [105]

This is how We bring the verses in diverse ways, so that they say, "you have been tutored",<sup>25</sup> and so that We may explain it to people who have knowledge. [105]

اتَّبِعْ مَا اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۗ اِلَّا هُوَ ۗ وَاَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ [106]

Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord. There is no god but He; and turn away from those who associate partners with Allah. [106]

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللّٰهُ مَا اَشْرَكُوْا ۗ وَمَا جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيْظًا ۗ وَمَا اَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيْلٍ [107]

If Allah willed, they would not have associated. We have not appointed you as a guard over them, nor are you a taskmaster for them. [107]



وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيْنًا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلُهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ  
مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ [108]

Do not revile those whom they invoke other than Allah, lest they should revile Allah in transgression without having knowledge. <sup>26</sup> This is how We have made the deeds of every community attractive in their sight. Then, to their Lord is their return, after which He shall tell them what they have been doing. [108]

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِنْ جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ لَيُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ أَنَّهَا إِذَا جَاءَتْ  
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ [109]

They have sworn forceful oaths by Allah that if a sign comes to them, they will surely believe in it. Say, "Signs are in Allah's power alone." What will make you realize that even when they (the signs) come, they will not believe? [109]

وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ [110]

We will upset their hearts and sights, as they did not believe in them at the first instance, and We will leave them wandering blindly in their rebellion. [110]

وَلَوْ أَنَّنَا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا مَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنَّ  
أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَجْهَلُونَ [111]

If We had sent down to them the angels, and the dead has spoken to them, and (even if) We had gathered everything before them face to face, still, they were not to believe, unless Allah would have so willed. But, most of them adopt the way of ignorance. [111]

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا ۗ وَلَوْ شَاءَ  
رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ فَذَرُهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ [112]

So it is that, for every prophet, We have set up enemies, - the devils of mankind and jinn - who seduce one another with alluring rhetoric in order to deceive - Had Allah willed, they would have not done it. So, leave them alone with what they forge [112]

وَلِتَصْغَىٰ إِلَيْهِ أَفْئِدَةُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوا مَا هُمْ مُّقْتَرِفُونَ [113]

and (they seduce one another) in order that the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter may incline to it, and that they may be well pleased with it, and so that they commit what those (seducers) are used to commit. [113]

أَفَعَبَّرَ اللَّهُ أَلْبَتَغِي حَكَمًا وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكِتَابَ مُفَصَّلًا ۗ وَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ مُنَزَّلٌ  
مِّن رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ [114]

So, should I seek someone other than Allah as judge, while it is He who has sent down to you the Book in details? Those We have given the Book know that it is revealed from your Lord with the truth. So, never be one of those who are in suspicion. [114]

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا ۚ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ [115]

The Word of your Lord is perfect in truth and justice. None is there to change His words, and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. [115]

وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلَوْا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ [116]

If you obey the majority of those on earth, they will make you lose the way of Allah. They follow nothing but whims, and they do nothing but make conjectures. [116]

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ مَنْ يَضِلُّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ [117]

Surely, your Lord is best aware of those who go a stray from His way, and He is best aware of those who are on the right path. [117]

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ [118]

So, eat (the flesh) of that (animal) upon which the name of Allah has been invoked (when slaughtering), if you do believe in His verses. <sup>27</sup> [118]

## EXPLANATION

- 25) When the staunch unbelievers find the arguments of the Qur'an undeniable, their prejudice against the Holy Prophet ﷺ prompts them to claim that he has learned this discourse from someone else, while they know very well that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has never received any education from anyone.
- 26) The pagans used to believe in Allah as their Creator. As such, it was improbable that they should hurl abuses to him knowingly and deliberately. However, it was not improbable for them to use blasphemous words against Allah in the heat of altercation. Hence the phrase: 'without having knowledge'. The verse has laid down a principle that a Muslim should not hurl abuses at those revered by other religions. If a Muslim does so and in retaliation, the unbelievers too hurl abuses at the people revered in Islam, the former will be sinful for being a cause of such abuses by the unbelievers. But one should clearly differentiate between abuses and serious criticism. The latter is allowed; though the former is not.
- 27) The pagans of Makkah raised an objection that the Muslims eat an animal slaughtered by themselves, while they do not eat the one killed by Allah (i.e. the animal that died its natural death). Verses 118 to 121 were revealed in that context. The answer given is twofold. Firstly, the decision whether or not a particular thing is lawful lies only with Allah. Once He declares something lawful, any objection against it is flimsy, because no one can challenge His infinite wisdom. A believer must submit to it, even though he does not understand the underlying wisdom. This is the import of the words: 'if you do believe in His verses.' Secondly, if an animal is slaughtered in the proper way ordained by Allah, all its blood flows out, making the rest of its body pure and clean, and Allah's name invoked on it makes it blessed by Allah. This point is alluded to in the next verse.

(To be continued *In sha' Allah...*)

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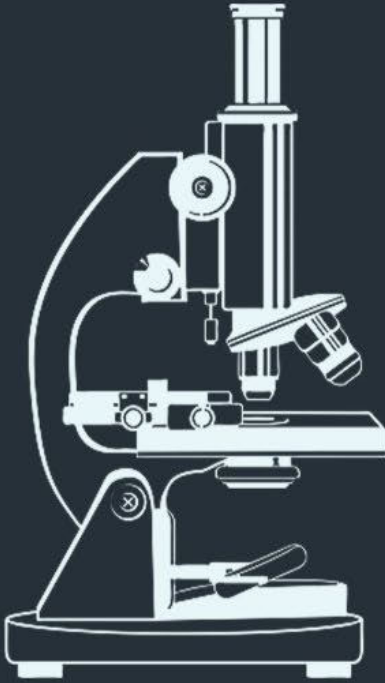


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# Zuhd - Islamic Asceticism

Maulana Manzoor Naumani رحمه الله عليه

(200/60) It is related by Abu Zarr Ghiffari رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Zuhd in relation to the world and detachment from what it has to offer (which is wholly a spiritual state), is not the name of making for yourself unlawful what is allowed and destroying your goods, but in reality it is that you place greater reliance upon what is with God and in His control than upon what is with you and in your control. And when you undergo a disagreeable experience or suffer a calamity, the ardour and yearning for the reward of the Hereafter must be greater than the wish that it may not have happened (to you) at all"

*(Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah).*

**Commentary:** A common misconception about Zuhd is that a man should deem all the good things of life forbidden to himself (i.e., he neither eats delicious food, nor drinks cold water; neither wears expensive clothes, nor sleeps on a soft bed; and if he receives some money from anywhere, he quickly parts with it). The Holy Prophet ﷺ has corrected the mistaken idea in the above tradition by telling that Zuhd does not mean that one makes unlawful for oneself the bodily pleasures Allah ﷻ has declared as legitimate for His bondsmen, or does away with the money that might come to him. It is just that a man should not rely upon what he possesses or controls in this world, believing that it is wholly transitory and perishable, and puts his trust in the Hidden and the Everlasting treasures that lay with the Almighty. Also, when a suffering or distress overtakes man, the longing for the reward on it in the Hereafter must be stronger

than the wish that he it must not have befallen him in the first place. That is, instead of desiring that the misfortune had not reached him, he feels in his heart that the recompense he would receive on it in the Hereafter would be thousand times better than if the affliction had stayed away. Such a state can, evidently, be attained only when the yearning for the joy of the Hereafter is greater than the desire of worldly comfort and this is what Zuhd, basically, signifies.

It must, however, not be imagined that in place of comfort and well-being, people should wish and pray to Allah ﷻ for pain and suffering in their present existence. A clear interdiction against it is contained in a number of traditions. The Prophet ﷺ always exhorted the Companions رضي الله عنهم to beseech Allah ﷻ only for comfort and well-being and the same would be his own practice.

The purport of Abu Zarr's report, thus, is not, at all, that the bondsman should long for grief or misfortune in the present world. What it simply shows is that when a loss or distress might befall him, he should, as a truthful Believer and a genuine ascetic, attach greater importance to the reward he is going to get on it in the future world (instead of feeling that it should not have happened in the first place). The difference between the two states needs to be understood clearly.

*Excerpted from Maulana Manzoor Naumani's "Ma'arif ul Hadith"*

# ‘Aqīdah, Kalām, and Obligation of Ma’rifah (Last Part)

By Mawlana Dr. Mateen A. Khan

## The Need for Kalām

Every generation has a greater need for a particular science. In current times, people have a near non-existent understanding of creed. By this, I do not mean the regurgitation of the six articles of faith, but rather firm conviction in the truth of these articles resulting from a strong logical and textual-based foundation. The current generation has a need for a science called Kalām. Even other religions are turning to the work of

Muslim Kalām scholars to support common core beliefs like the existence of a Creator.

Kalām is the science of Allah’s oneness and attributes through which Islamic beliefs are established by laying out proofs (both logical and text-based) and removing doubts.<sup>4</sup> Imam al-Taftazānī wrote in his *Sharḥ al-‘aqīdah*, “[Kalām] is security from the varying darknesses of doubts.” It was developed to further explain



and defend `aḳīdah, much like Fiqh developed to give insight into new rulings and understanding of old ones. For example, whereas our `aḳīdah is Allah is the Creator of all things, Kalām explains to us why every contingent and possible existent must have a pre-eternal and necessary Existent.

There is a rich tradition of explaining and defending `aḳīdah, which arose soon after the Prophet's ﷺ passing. During the time of the Prophet ﷺ, disagreements in creed did not exist, as the Companions were pure-hearted individuals drinking directly from the fountain of prophethood. If any disagreements arose, they were quickly resolved by simply asking him ﷺ.

After his ﷺ death, different groups like the Mu'taziliyyah (the first group holding beliefs directly against clear scripture), Rawāfiḍ, Khawārij, etc. emerged. These groups held deviant positions incompatible with what was passed from the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions. Whereas disagreements in other fields like Fiqh are more easily tolerated, the Prophet ﷺ warned us about disagreements in `aḳīdah.

وَأَنَّ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ تَفَرَّقَتْ عَلَى ثَلَاثِينَ وَسَبْعِينَ  
مِلَّةً وَتَفَرَّقَ أُمَّتِي عَلَى ثَلَاثٍ وَسَبْعِينَ مِلَّةً  
كُلُّهُمْ فِي النَّارِ إِلَّا مِلَّةً وَاحِدَةً قَالُوا وَمَنْ هِيَ

يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ مَا أَنَا عَلَيْهِ وَأَصْحَابِي  
*Indeed, Banū Isrā'īl split into seventy-two sects. My ummah will split into seventy-three groups. Each of them will enter the Fire (for a time) except for one group. [The Companions] said, "Who are they, O Allah's Messenger?" He ﷺ said, "Those who follow my path and the path of my Companion."*<sup>5</sup>

Deviance in creed can range from bid'ah to kufr, having consequences in both this world and the next. It follows then, we must closely guard our understanding of Allah and Reality. Kalām, like Fiqh, Uṣūl al-Qur'ān, Uṣūl al-aḳīdah, and other

sciences, arose to protect and propagate core Islamic teachings. Nearly every attack against `aḳīdah today is old and recycled from hundreds—if not thousands—of years ago. These attacks, whether stemming from philosophers, atheists, or other religions, are convincingly answered by scholars of Kalām by correctly utilizing the tools of competing ideologies like philosophy, logic, and the Natural Sciences to defend `aḳīdah.

At times, Kalām can be very abstract and difficult for the untrained mind. For specific people and in specific times, it is better left undiscussed since it can result in confusion instead of clarity. The Prophet ﷺ did not ask people to prove their beliefs, but rather just to believe. In a time when misguidance is rare and people naturally follow Islam on a communal scale, Kalām is unnecessary among laypeople. Imam Abū Yūsuf, the absolute mujtahid and student of Imam Abū Ḥanīfah, said to Bishr al-Marīsī, "Whoever seeks knowledge through Kalām, has become a disbeliever." Similar statements have been attributed to other notable scholars, but these statements referred to those who misused the tools of Kalām to arrive at ideas contrary to the *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*. However, when misguidance is rampant like in today's world, people follow their whims and attempt to justify it through misplaced philosophy and feelings, then Kalām is necessary. In needed times, Kalām has been a necessary tool illuminating the truth of Islam against the falsehoods of atheism, agnosticism, and other religions.

"The truth is that the science of Kalām is an obligation upon the Muslims (*wājib 'alā al-kifāyah*). There must exist one who stands to fulfill this responsibility on behalf of the Muslims."<sup>6</sup>

As for Imam Abū Yūsuf's statement above, he referred to the likes of Al-Marīsī, who was a disbeliever of the Jahmī sect utilizing Kalām tools against proper `aḳīdah. Likewise, great scholars like Imam Abū Ḥanīfah, Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī, and Kalām ibn al-Humām from amongst

the Hanafis engaged in Kalām as needed.

### Ma`rifah is an Obligation

The first focus of Kalām addresses the first point of `aqidah, Allah. More specifically, it addresses the recognition of Allah. By consensus, the recognition (*ma`rifah*) of Allah is obligatory on every human possessing a working intellect (*al-`āqil*) and of age (*al-bāligh*). A working intellect is anyone capable of discerning between right and wrong, the beneficial and harmful. A child comes of age and becomes an adult in the eyes of the Sharī`ah by age 15 hijrī years, earlier if they show signs of having reached puberty. In fact, some scholars, most notably the Iraqi Hanafis, made *ma`rifah* binding on the intelligent child even before he or she comes of age. Once one can understand the proofs for the Creator, he and the adult are similar in this respect.<sup>7</sup> It is impermissible that Allah remain unknown to a person gifted with intellect.

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى

*Does man think that he will be left neglected?*  
(2:36)

This is a prompt from Allah that He would not neglect us from achieving *ma`rifah*. The *ma`rifah* of Allah is the first obligation on a person because all other responsibilities in deen are based upon it and stem from it. Praying and fasting necessitate the recognition and acceptance of the Creator first. The Qur'an commands as much.

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

*Know that there is no deity except Allah.* (47:19)

Imam Abū Yusuf narrated from Imam Abū Ḥanīfah, who mastered `aqidah before stepping into fiqh, "Ignorance of recognizing his Creator is not an excuse for anyone when he has seen the creation of the heavens, the earth, himself, and all of the creation of his Lord."<sup>8</sup>

The scholars of `aqidah have a very specific definition of *ma`rifah*. Imam Abū Ḥanīfah defined it in Al-Fiqh al-Akbar, "We recognize Allah as His

right to be recognized just as Allah has described Himself in His book with all His attributes."

Now, one might argue, "How can anyone truly know Allah?" True, no one can fully fathom the *dhāt* (essence) or *ṣifāt* (attributes) of Allah. However, *ma`rifah* means to recognize Him by confirming what He has confirmed for Himself and denying what He has denied for Himself in the Qur'an and Ḥadīth. It means to do this without making any similarities between Him and another nor denying any of His confirmed traits.

Islam begins with a heavy understanding—we owe our intelligence, our blessings, our existence, and indeed, everything to a Creator. Hence, it is incumbent on us to recognize Him as best we can. This is even more so in today's climate of ever-increasing atheism and confusion. We will discuss methods of arriving at *ma`rifah* in a future article, *inshā'Allāh*. Here, we suffice with the point that *ma`rifah* is the first and foremost obligation upon every responsible person in the Sharī`ah. It is best gained today in an intellectual way through the study of Kalām. Every individual must take the necessary steps to increase their own conviction in Islam and those around them, Muslim and non-Muslim. We ask Allah for *tawfiq*.

*For further notes and explanation, the article can be accessed at [ilmgate.org](http://ilmgate.org)*



# Discovering the Peace of Heart

By Maulana Abdul Sattar حفظه الله

## How to Lead a Contented Life?

If you want to lead a contented life, the key is not the accumulation of wealth or the acquisition of worldly things. We need to change the direction of our life and mend our hearts. Circumstances will then become conducive to peace and tranquility within the soul.

Yes, illnesses will come but the mind will not get so stressed up about it; children will fall sick or get hurt, but the heart will not get distressed. Yes, the means of livelihood may be meager, businesses may have ups and downs, but you will not agonize over it. If people criticize you or belittle you, you won't break down. All because you realize that all circumstances that are beyond your control are the will of Allah ﷻ and He is Al-Hakim (The Wise) and Al-Halim (The Forbearing). He knows what is good for us and we know not what benefits us most. If we really

love Allah ﷻ, we will be content with whatever he sends our way. Problems will come and go, but they will not rob you of your peace of mind.

Allah ﷻ mentions in the Holy Qur'an,

*Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest* (Ar-Ra'd 13:28)

Allah's remembrance and leading your life according to the revelation of Allah ﷻ renders one's heart peaceful.

## Main Causes of Distress and Solutions - Ambition and Competition

Some people have this urge to surpass others in life, a blind ambition to move ahead of others, to top others in what they eat, wear, drive, own. Their children must be in the best school, they must get treated by the most expensive

doctor. This sense of competition haunts them till their last day, because the means are not in their control. Whenever they lag behind in the rat race, they move towards pessimism and depression.

A large section of our society shows signs of this illness which invariably leads to hopelessness, because you cannot always have your way. So you will see a person alive in body but dead in spirit; he is flesh and blood in existence yet his soul is lifeless. The solution lies in the Qur'anic verse,

*...despair not of the mercy of Allah... (Az-Zumar 39:53)*

Why should we lose hope? If you take a step towards Allah ﷻ with a sincere heart, join your hands in prayer to Him, bow down in prostration before His Majesty, you will see how he showers His blessings on you.

#### - Jealousy

What exactly is jealousy? Jealousy is the resentment felt at the good fortune of others. It sets forth negative emotions, and there is a burning envy in one's heart. This disease afflicts both men and women. However, women are more prone to it. They are more likely to be resentful of another's wealth, status, attire, personality, house, etc. Jealousy is destructive for the entire family.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ warned us,

*Save yourself from jealousy. Verily, jealousy eats up goodness like fire eats up dry wood.*

*(Abu Dawood; Kitab-ul-Adab, Volume 2, Pg. 329)*

A jealous person is actually burning from inside. He is ill at ease and is not comfortable with the decree of Allah ﷻ. He laments the good fortune of another and cannot understand why

he is deprived of the same blessing.

Maulana Thanvi Rehmatullah suggests a cure for jealousy: If someone wants to cure himself of this disease, he should praise the person in public. Obviously, this is easier said than done. He is always on the lookout for a chance to backbite against the very person. The treatment is painful but effective. Secondly, whenever he meets him, he should initiate saying Salam. Thirdly, he should present him with a gift once in a while and lastly, he should pray for his betterment, guidance and honour in his absence.

What wonderful advice! No wonder Maulana Thanvi is referred to as Hakeem-ul-Ummat. Allah ﷻ opened his heart to creative solutions and ideas that yield beneficial results.

Do you know what happens when you pray for someone in his absence? A Hadith enlightens us that when we do so, the Angels implore Allah ﷻ, *O Allah! Give him what he is wishing for the other person.* This prayer is thus beneficial for you too.

#### - Malice

Malice is ill-intent towards someone. The person who intends evil for others will never be at peace. He would constantly wish for misfortune, degradation and disgrace on his adversary.

There must be a deliberate effort to wish well for everyone with sincerity. This effort will wash away hatred and rancour from the heart. If good-will is not cultivated easily, it must be forced.

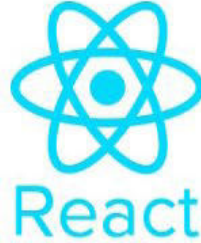
*To be continued, Insha'Allah...*

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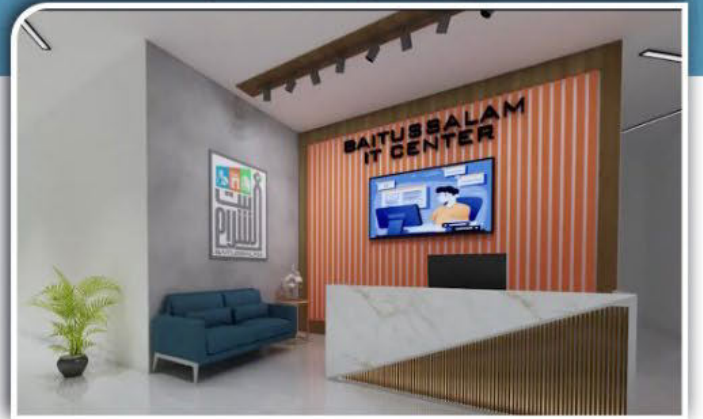
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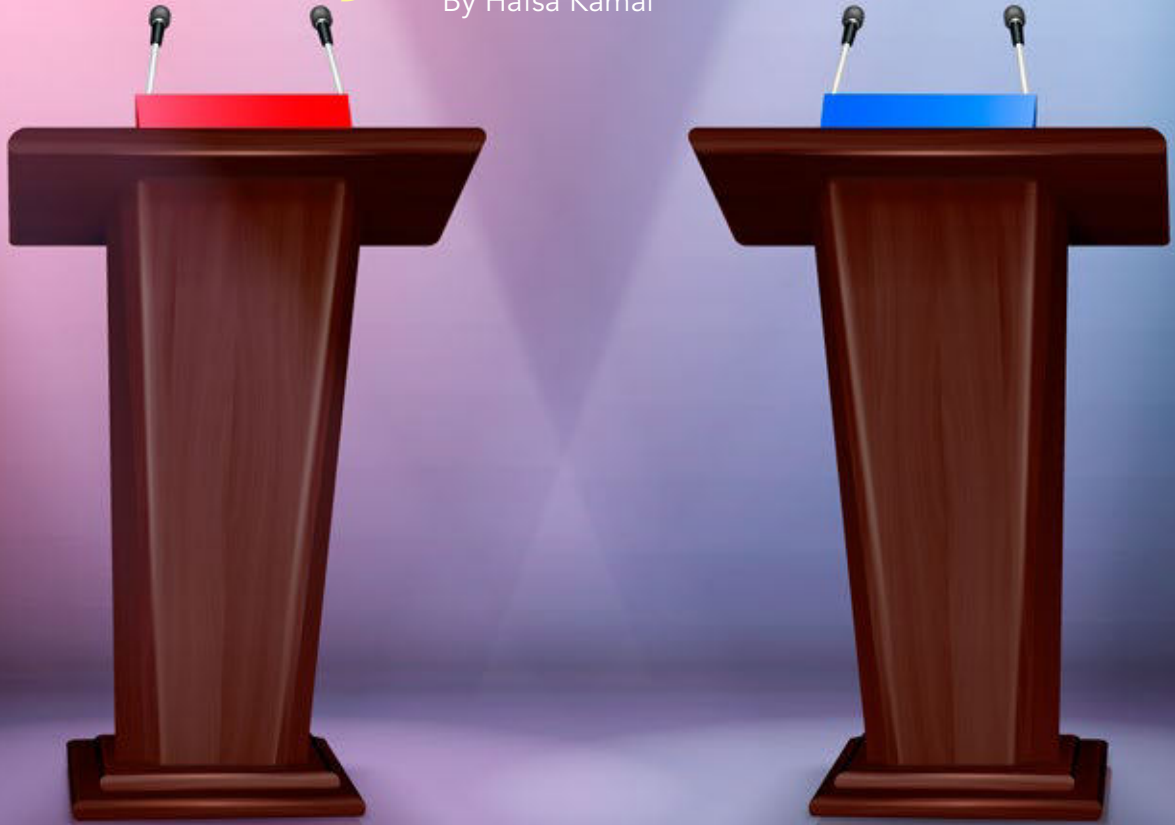
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# Debate Dynamics

By Hafsa Kamal



Four topics of discussion are often subjective and evoke emotions that can cause rifts and complications among people. Talking about financial challenges, delicate personal affairs, politics and religion are an absolute no-no if two cannot agree upon the difference in opinions. Facts, as John Adams puts it, are stubborn things but our mind is even more stubborn.

## Is it honestly worth the headache?

From struggling to sway Flat-Earthers to fatuous X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube threads on how one should or shouldn't act/look like, the scale of debate tips more towards an unhealthy

obsession with being right rather than coming to a solution on how to set things right instead.

Our desire for entertainment has become positively toxic and craving the continuous rollercoaster of emotions which debates often cause can have an adverse effect on relationships.

## To debate or not to debate, that is the question.

*"It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it."*  
– Joseph Joubert

The statistics and the way one words his opinion matters more than anything else when it comes to a verbal clash. Why debate?

The website [washington.edu](http://washington.edu) elucidates: *Debate is the activity that brings the art of reading, thinking and speaking together in one place. When medieval scholars set out to establish the curriculum of the world's first universities, they considered three liberal arts essential for leadership and promotion of the best ideas: grammar, logic, and rhetoric (reading, thinking, speaking). When they sought to test the depth to which these skills had sunk in, medieval faculty demanded students participate not in exams or papers, but in disputations—in other words, debates. Although much has changed in the world since the 19th century, scholars laid out these basic elements of the artium baccalaureus degree. The ability to conceive, articulate, and evaluate arguments remains not only the lifeblood of democracy and society, but essential to the development of an engaged and ethical individual living in contemporary technological democratic society.*

However, going mum in the spousal argument is the wiser course of action, just saying. And it's better not to present an opposing opinion to a rigid boss if you want to keep your paycheck. The point being, there are times one is not in a place to bring up a case which doesn't hold any water.

Islam brings debate to a whole different level. The Quran has commanded believers to demonstrate contention in the most beautiful manner.

#### Define Debate.

Contrary to Google's generic meaning of debate, which in a nutshell is to argue in a formal setting/ manner, the idiomatic definition, Ash-Shinqeeti defines in his book 'Aadaab Al-Bahthwa Al-Munaatharah (The Etiquette of Research and Debate)' is as follows, *"A debate is a discussion between two or more parties with opposing views, each is trying to prove that his view is correct and refute the view of his opponent; while both desire to reveal the truth. In other words, they both look into the matter to reach*

*knowledge or a most likely opinion in order to reveal the truth."*

The objective should remain in one's mind before reaching a deal-clincher. However, it's respectful to agree to disagree if the opponent stands on firm footing against him. The eloquently expressed etiquettes of debate jotted down in the above-mentioned book are as follows;

"Chapter: The etiquette that should be observed by the two debaters:

1. *The debaters should avoid lengthy speech that has no benefit as well as brevity that makes the purpose of their statements incomprehensible.*
2. *The debaters should avoid using terms that are uncommon or too general.*
3. *The discussion should be restricted to the topic of the debate, and they should avoid diverting to irrelevant topics.*
4. *The debaters should not ridicule or mock one another.*
5. *Each of the debaters should hold the intention of finding the truth, even if it is on the tongue of his opponent.*
6. *The debater should not hasten to comment on the argument of his opponent except after understanding it.*
7. *The debater should wait for his opponent to finish presenting his argument and should not interrupt him.*
8. *One should avoid debating with an adversary who is immensely charismatic so that he would not be dazzled by his presence and thus be distracted from presenting his argument as due.*
9. *The debater should not belittle or look down on his adversary because this drives him to be less serious and diligent in presenting his argument, and consequently, enables his weak adversary to overcome him."* [Aadaab Al-Bahthwa Al-Munaatharah]

The debate on whether debating is correct?

Polling sites like debate.org has drawn a 50 slash 50 percent pros and cons of debate weighing each with a logical line of reasoning. While one argument states, *'Yes, it is pointless. The reason I say yes is because debates last a very long time and never get to the point, well, most of the time. What I am saying is that maybe they should make it so they have very limited time to talk. Also, the debates usually make no sense sometimes.'* And, *'Has no necessary connection to what is actually true or right. Debate is argument for argument's sake. It is saying "my points are stronger than yours" when in fact it is equally possible that both parties debating have weak and incorrect points compared to the truth. The only time debate is viable is for resolutions that have no correct answer -- for if they do, no debate is required! Furthermore to argue a resolution with no correct answer is literally argument for argument's sake. No one can be right, only more persuasive. I think we generally value truth over a strong argument.'* Both of which are pitted against by, *"No, it's not pointless. Expressing ideas and challenging personal beliefs is very important. Debates also demand people to interact in a conflict-rich environment while maintaining composure. In and of itself this skill is valuable, but it also allows people to express ideas effectively and analyze decisions deeply. The skills, information, and different perspectives gained from debating absolutely makes debates have a point."*

In my humble opinion, debate, if done right, can be a gateway to new thought. It opens the mind towards reawakening and energizes the mind by allowing it to work. The point isn't simply to 'convince the others' but to allow oneself to be educated as well.

Let's travel back in time to the city of Baghdad where an atheist wished to debate upon the existence of God. Imam Abu Hanifa رحمته الله was well-known for his wisdom and sound knowledge. On crossing the River Tigris, a messenger conveyed the message to him saying, 'Oh Abu Hanifah, an atheist is waiting for you, to debate you, please come!' Abu Hanifah رحمته الله told the messenger that he would be on his way. When it was past

the time agreed upon, the Muslims became apprehensive while the atheist ridiculed them for claiming a coward to be the 'best debater'. Finally Imam Abu Hanifa arrived, hours late, apologizing profusely.

*"Once the messenger delivered the message to me, I began to make my way to the River Tigris, and on reaching the river bank I realized there was no boat, in order to cross the river. It was getting dark, and I looked around, there was no boat anywhere nor was there a navigator or a sailor in order for me to cross the river to get to the Royal Palaces. I continued to look around for a boat, as I did not want the atheist to think I was running away and did not want to debate with him.*

*I was standing on the river bank looking for a navigator or a boat when something caught my attention in the middle of the river. I looked forward, and to my amazement I saw planks of wood rising to the surface from the sea bed. I was shocked, amazed, I couldn't believe what I saw seeing. Ready-made planks of wood were rising up to the surface and joining together. They were all the same width and length, I was astounded at what I saw.*

*I continued to look into the middle of the river, and then I saw nails coming up from the sea floor. They positioned themselves onto the boat and held the planks together, without them being **hammered**. I stood in amazement and thought to myself, 'Oh Allah, how can this happen, planks of wood rising to the surface by itself, and then nails positioning themselves onto the boat without being **hammered**?' I could not understand what was happening before my eyes.'*

The atheist was amused, listening to all this with a mocking smile. Imam Abu Hanifa رحمته الله continued, "I was still standing on the river bank watching these planks of wood join together with nails. I could see water seeping through the gaps in the wood, and suddenly I saw a sealant appear from the river and it began sealing the gaps without someone having poured it, again I thought, 'Ya Allah, how is this possible, how



*can sealant appear and seal the gaps without someone having poured it, and nails appear without someone having hammered them.' I looked closer and I could see a boat forming before my eyes, I stood in amazement and was filled with shock. All of a sudden a sail appeared and I thought to myself, 'How is this happening, a boat has appeared before my eyes by itself, planks of wood, nails, sealant and now a sail, but how can I use this boat in order to cross the river to the Royal Palaces?' I stood staring in wonderment and suddenly the boat began to move. It came towards me against the current. It stood floating beside me while I was on the river bank, as if telling me to embark onto it. I went on the boat and yet again it began to move. There was no navigator or sailor on the boat, and the boat began to travel towards the direction of the royal palaces, without anyone having programmed it as to where to go. I could not understand what was happening, and how this boat had formed and was taking me to my destination against the flow of water. The boat eventually reached the other side of the River Tigris and I disembarked. I turned around and the boat had disappeared, and that is why I am late.'*

At this point, the atheist burst out laughing while pointing out his disbelief at the ridiculously made up story. When Imam Abu Hanifa رحمته الله inquired, 'You don't believe a word of it? You don't believe that nails can appear by themselves? You don't believe sealant can be poured by itself? You don't believe that a boat can move without a navigator, hence you don't believe that a boat can appear without a boat maker?' The atheist replied, 'Yes, I don't believe a word of it!'

Thus, Imam Abu Hanifa رحمته الله contested by asking, 'If you cannot believe that a boat came into being without a boat maker, than this is only a boat, how can you believe that the whole world, the universe, the stars, the oceans, and the planets came into being without a Creator?'

While a spit-speckled row is discouraged, Islam allows freedom of thought to the point of research and debate in order to pursue the truth. Unfortunately, what with Google and random

clicks off to different schools of thought, not finding the right person to seek knowledge from has become a challenging slash tedious task.

Had there not been room for debate, there would not be a concept of Ijma. With evolution emerges enquiries on what is and isn't right. Various schools of thought within Islamic jurisprudence may define this consensus (Ijma) to be that of the first generation of Muslims only; or the consensus of the first three generations of Muslims; or the consensus of the jurists and scholars of the Muslim world, or scholarly consensus; or the consensus of all the Muslim world, both scholars and laymen. The crux of the matter is- a group of scholars sit together, discuss and settle upon religious rulings pertaining current circumstances.

And Allah says,

*"Invite (mankind) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and fair speech, and argue with them in a way that is best" (6:125)*

In a world where freedom of thought is practiced, so is the freedom to ridicule and repress the true representation of the Muslim world. Whatever the media depicts should not create a blind spot towards reality. While we debate about the what ifs and buts, things will happen as Allah ﷻ decrees and wasting time challenging a certain deliberation of scholars can become detrimental to one's spiritual health. Let's focus on the bigger picture - of Allah's Existence and speak about His Creations with His creations.

While we debate, let's choose our words carefully, because once it's out, it is not easy to take it back without causing a ripple effect.



# The Land of the Rising Sun (Episode 3)

Excerpted from the travelogues of Mufti Taqi Usmani Sb دامت برکاتہم  
Translation: Zawjah Zia

Our hosts tried to plan out the next day, Monday the 10th of January, in a way so that we could manage discourses in different cities of Fiji, as well as sightseeing including a visit to the International Date Line. For this reason, we hit the road right after Fajr Salah. Our first stop was Savusavu, another city of the Vanua Island, around ninety kilometers south-east of Labasa.

The landscape around was extremely picturesque; lush green mountains laced with flowers and fruit trees everywhere, most of which were mango trees. Its summer season in this part of the world in the month of January, so these mango trees were literally packed with mangoes. Apart from these, coconut and cedar trees were presenting a natural art upon these mountains as far as the eye could see. The valleys within the mountains were filled with all kinds of fruits and flowers.

The weather that day was very pleasant too with light rain making the environment even more beautiful. This breathtakingly beautiful journey of around one and a half hour took us to Savusavu, the coastal city of this Island.

This coastal city at the edge of Pacific has lush green mountains on two sides and oceanic gulfs on the other two sides. It has a small seaport too. For reasons all too obvious, this is a famous tourist attraction in Fiji. Housing a considerable Muslim population, Savusavu has a mosque too where I needed to address a gathering post Asr that day. We had our flight to another island Taveuni the next morning where the International Date Line was situated. Before the flight, we had some time in which Aziz sahib, the president of the Labasa league kept driving us around through the scenic coastal locations of Savusavu.

We arrived at the airport at a quarter before

nine. It was a very small but neat airport, more like a bus stand where a few benches were serving as the passengers' waiting lounge. We boarded a small plane from here which flew us over the waters and landed us at the Taveuni airport in just about fifteen minutes. From here onwards, we drove upon a coastal highway for quite some time until we reached the International Date Line.

This Date Line is situated exactly upon 180 Longitude. Two sign boards are fixed here with only an inch's gap; through this gap runs the Date Line. It was Sunday on the left side of this Date Line and Saturday on the right side of it. The inscription on the sign board said that if you place your left foot against the left board and right foot against the right, then you would be standing in two consecutive days simultaneously. Your right foot would be in Saturday and the left one in Sunday.

For the people not familiar with this geographical fact: due to the earth being a sphere, every moment in time is simultaneously a moment of sunrise and a moment of sunset at different places on the earth. So technically speaking, the dates and days should be exclusively different at all the different places of this earth according to their exclusive time of sunrise. But in order to maintain uniformity in dates and times around the world, the earth's sphere has been divided into 360 equal portions; each portion called a degree. Furthermore, in order to determine these degrees between the east and the west, a line has been devised to go round the earth's sphere. This line is the line of latitude. This line begins from the Greenwich Observatory in the UK; this observatory being situated upon zero latitude. Moving eastwards from here, at 180 degrees you reach the half way midpoint of the earth's sphere. Towards the west too, 180 degrees takes you to the other half. Again, due to the earth being a sphere, the western and the eastern longitudes merge upon 180 degrees.

Now since the Sun travels from east to west, so

the time around the world is calculated such that at every moment in time in Greenwich is zero degrees longitude; moving eastwards, an hour is subtracted from the time at Greenwich after every 15 degrees longitude. Conversely, an hour keeps adding after every 15 degrees longitude moving westwards. For instance, if it's midnight in Greenwich, then moving 15 degrees eastwards it would be 11 O'clock in the night in that same moment, while at 15 degrees westwards it would be 1 O'clock in the night. Following the same rule, 180 degrees eastwards would take you 12 hours behind as compared to the time in Greenwich while 180 degree westwards would take you 12 hours forward. Hence, the total time difference between the farthest east and the farthest west, which essentially is the same place on the earth, is 24 hours; a day changes into another.

So the point in Fiji where we were standing at this moment was this exact spot upon 180 degrees longitude. Hence the name, "The International Date Line". This line basically separates the east of the earth from its west. This Date Line mostly passes through the ocean, or the largely uninhibited regions of the Antarctica and the Siberia. Fiji is the only country from the inhibited regions of the earth that the International Date Line passes through three of its Islands. Especially this Island of Taveuni is unique in the sense that every day, the new date begins on this earth from the point we were standing at. For every new day and date, this is the first place the sun rises upon. This amazing fact earns this place its exclusive name: *The Land of the Rising Sun*.

I had already travelled once to Greenwich; the point of zero degrees longitude. This day I was present at the point of 180 degrees longitude; as in from one edge of the world to the other. May Allah, Subhanahu wa Ta'ala, cover up the sins of His slave and make these ends of the world witnesses of his *Emaan*, obedience, *Tawbah* and *Istighfaar*. Ameen

(Concluded)

# • *The Fog Clears* •

By Dr Ahras Adeeb Ansari

As I wake up this morning feeling healthy and well slept, I see my family bustling around the house - my mother making breakfast, my father juggling with washed laundry, my brother getting into his ironed suit to look his best at work, my sister matching her accessories with her dress, I suddenly don't feel like getting up at all because.

She is exactly my age, maybe a better person than I am; more pious, so tall and pretty, but as I get on with my perfect life, she sits in that ground waiting for her registration, with countless families surrounding her waiting for theirs for asylum in Germany. Her mother sits next to her. She's crippled. It happened when the bomb exploded in front of their house. She had lost her father in that explosion. Her younger brother passed away on that awful journey from Syria to Germany, and her elder sister was waiting in that queue because she was just too numb and devastated to move. It had been exactly two weeks she had reached here. Initially it was trauma that she had lost the most precious people in her life; then it was the stares and sneers from the locals; now it was this waiting. 'What had gone wrong?' 'What had happened?' These questions she kept repeating to herself.

I get shaken by my mother. 'Breakfast is ready,' she announces. I give her a weak smile, get out of bed and start getting ready for work. I had my full day ahead, I thought. Life with all its treasures was standing with open arms for me to embrace it. I suddenly feel my enthusiastic self again.

My ward is clean and lively. I begin skimming through files and sipping my favourite cup of coffee, my friend stops to have a chat, we share a quick laugh, she walks away to her ownward when my pager beeps. My patient's mother is concerned, 'the eighteen-year-

old is not eating well,' she laments; she tells me in a distressed tone that he's getting weaker with just those fresh juices she makes him drink, and wouldn't have those fresh homemade treats she has been making for him. She ruffles his hair lovingly, and suddenly I don't feel like responding at all because.

She is exactly her age, but looks so old - those dark circles, and that grief-stricken face! She has got her eight-year-old son to the makeshift emergency room. Two of her elder boys and husband had already passed away in the Yemen war. The doctor tries to salvage her only family as he breathes his last. A plane makes some noise above the hospital, she prays for it to drop that wretched bomb on her. There was no point in living any more.

I drag my heavy feet outside the ward. My heart is just not in work anymore, and how useless can I be, I question myself? What use of my working here when there was war in half of the Muslim states that existed and the resulting misery, when there was so much grief, famine, illness... My train of thoughts was interrupted by my phone ringing. It was my father. 'Honey don't take the public transport on your way back home, I'll pick you up after work, it's unsafe to travel alone.'

'Unsafe' a small laughter escapes my lips...

He had turned slightly psychotic, every night he would search the house thoroughly for hidden knives. His sons had to keep reassuring him that they carried none. Two of his neighbors' kids were shot dead while trying to stab the Israeli forces. While he was at his shop today somebody informed him that his younger one was shot at, accused of stabbing the policeman. He ran back home, half crazy! He was so sure he had checked them thoroughly this morning.

Life seemed worthless. What was I up to, I questioned myself. Only a robot would behave the way I did -weep at their misery and then get on with the daily chores. I saw some colleagues walk towards me, they wanted to have lunch somewhere nice, since the weather was so pleasant. I whispered a small no and walked away. Don't get me wrong, I did that all the time, take a break, party, spend lavishly at exotic luncheons when the abandoned Syrians tremble in their refugee camps as winters creep in, as Palestinians run out of food supplies each time there is a curfew which happens just so often.

There had to be a solution. So I made a list of possible solutions: 1. Doctors without borders- better known as MSF -Médecins Sans Frontières- an NGO founded in 1971 with its headquarters in Switzerland, providing medical aid in war torn areas and developing countries. So if this organisation has been functional for the past forty-four years why was there still so much ill-health and continued deterioration of health care in these areas. It must have been working with all the dedication and best intention, but frankly, volunteering is never a solution, at least never a solution in the long run. 2. A fund-raising activity for my Muslim brethren in trouble, really? Fund-raising for four to five Muslim nations suffering from war? Not too feasible. 3. Open my doors for asylum seekers? Like the ansardid for muhajireen? My single house for how many asylum seekers? Plus, my government would turn me into an asylum seeker if I did that!

And then a tiny voice inside of me said something. This tiny voice that lingers around me all the time, this tiny voice that keeps my conscience busy...

It said, taqwa.

Maybe, if I adorned my heart with His remembrance at all times and win His pleasure, He might ease their trials, and maybe, if we all adorned our hearts with His remembrance and win His pleasure these trials might turn into blessings, and finally victory.

When there were only 313 men in the Battle of Badr against an army of greater than a thousand of mushrikeen it was taqwa that made them victorious.

When the fire of Nimrod blazed high it was the taqwa that kept Prophet Ibrahim ؑ unscathed.

When Prophet Yousuf ؑ faced trials after another, it was taqwa that made him the ruler of Egypt from a mere prisoner.

When Prophet Yunus ؑ found himself in the belly of the fish, all helpless, it was taqwa that helped him out of it.

It is taqwa that can save the Muslim nation from trials and tribulations. Piety alone has the power to win the mercy of the Almighty.

Submission to the will of the creator was the answer, I realized'

Iqbal had known it when he wrote these powerful lines:

دشت میں، دامن کسار میں، میدان میں ہے  
بحر میں، موج کی آغوش میں، طوفان میں ہے  
چین کے شہر، مرقش کے بیابان میں ہے  
اور پوشیدہ مسلمان کے ایمان میں ہے  
چشم اقوام یہ نظارہ ابد تک دیکھے  
رفعت شان 'رفعتنا لک ذکرک' دیکھے

[In the wilderness, on the mountain-side, in the plains it is

In the ocean, in the lap of the wave, in the storm it is

In China's city, in Morocco's desert it is

And concealed in the Iman of the Muslim it is

The world's eyes should witness this sight till eternity

The Elegance of the grandeur of *Rafa'naLakaZikrak* should see

(Translation by MAK Khalil)]

# Self-Pity

Shaykh Abu Abd al-Rahman al Sulami رحمته الله

Among the infamies of the soul is its worrying about and pitying itself.

This condition is treated by the individual seeing the grace of Allah Most High that is upon one at all times and circumstance, in order to remove him from pitying his soul. I heard Abu Bakr al-Razi say: I heard al-Wasiti (may Allah

grant his His mercy) say, "The thing closest to the disgust of Allah is having pity for [ru'yah] the soul and its actions."

- Excerpted from Abu Abd al-Rahman al Sulami's 'Uyub al-nafs wa adwiyatuha', translated by Musa Furber as 'Infamies of the Soul & their Treatments'



# Prayer

By Ateefah Sana Ur Rab

And to Allah, goes all my praise  
For it is He who lightens the gloomy days,  
It does not matter how hard I fall,  
He gives me the strength to stand tall.  
Even if I falter—lose direction along the way,  
Even when hope seems like a needle lost in hay,  
Allah is always there; He never leaves me astray,  
His mercy guides me back to the righteous way.  
O Allah, my Lord, fill my heart with peace.  
Remove the troubles from my mind,  
Bestow upon me ease!  
Let my death be like a soothing breeze,  
And place me amongst those who find reward with their release.

# Some Reflections

By Bint Akram

Every morning begins with news from Gaza. Endless videos all across the social media add to the hopelessness of the situation. And we carry on with our mundane lives with Gaza always lurking somewhere at the back of our minds. Gaza, now, forms a major part of the consciousness of anyone who has a thinking mind and a heart that feels. Yes, anyone, whether they are Muslim or not.

There is no point in repeating here all that we see on our mobile screens with respect to Gaza. There is probably no one in the world who does not know what's happening. What is troublesome is how such a great number of Muslims can do nothing but just stare in horror at the horrors of genocide. This probably is the most helpless of eras that we are witnessing as Muslims during our lives.

This is probably the time that we were foretold about – the world and its distractions fill our hearts to the brim. We are too weak to let go of our lifestyles and embrace the difficulties and trials that the Jannah is covered with. Lo and behold! Out of this very dormant state of actionlessness, Allah has brought forth a people before us who we know as 'Gazans'.

Gazans, who pray *taraweeh* on the rubble of their *masajid*. Gazans, who smile while

embracing martyrdom. Gazans, who keep on proclaiming *hasbunAllah* (Allah is Sufficient for us) while witnessing death and destruction all around. Gazans, who are seen making *du'a* at their *iftaar*-spreads, on which we see nothing but cooked grass in bowls, and some small bottles of water, which has become a precious commodity for them. Gazans, who find solace in the Qur'an in these times of hardship. Gazans, whose entire families are being brutally erased from the face of this earth. Gazans, who are successfully passing through the test of life.

The test is not as much for them as it is for us. Let us, at least, reflect.

*March forth (in the way of Allah), no matter whether you are light or heavy, and carry out Jihad (struggle) in the way of Allah with your wealth and lives. That is good for you, if you were to realize (Qur'an, 9:41).*

*Have you taken the serving of water to the pilgrims and the maintenance of Al-Masjid-ul-Haram as equal to (the acts) of one who believes in Allah and in the Last Day, and carries out Jihad in the way of Allah? They are not equal in the sight of Allah. Allah does not lead the wrongdoing people to the right path (Qur'an, 9:19).*





# The Pursuit of Happiness

By Aadil Farook

In 2024, when technology advances at an unprecedented pace and societies strive for progress, the statistics on mental health problems, depression, and suicide tell a tale of a world in search of something elusive.

According to global mental health reports, depression is a leading cause of disability worldwide, affecting around 280 million people. Suicide rates, often linked to untreated mental health conditions, have seen a concerning surge in recent years.

## Modern Fallacy

Secular thought endorses materialism, individualism, and pursuing personal dreams. It says happiness is attainable through fulfilling desires, ambitions, and aspirations. Seeking happiness translates into accumulating status, wealth, and possessions in a world driven by materialism, capitalism, and consumerism. Success, as defined by societal norms, becomes the metric for gauging one's well-being. The prevailing narrative of individual success and personal achievement falters against the backdrop of a global mental health crisis.

Material possessions and financial success, often touted as markers of a happy life, paradoxically contribute to rising dissatisfaction and mental health struggles. The constant pursuit of wealth can lead to a perpetual state of restlessness, where the desire for more never reaches a satisfying culmination. The secular notion that happiness depends on external accomplishments sets individuals on a hedonic treadmill, forever chasing elusive contentment. The flaw in this narrative becomes glaring when confronted with life's inevitable uncertainties and adversities.

## If nothing goes according to our will.

The crux of the matter lies in the inherent limitations of secular thought when confronted with the unpredictable nature of life. This paradigm may offer a fleeting sense of happiness if everything aligns with our wishes, dreams, hopes, and ambitions. However, life's unforeseen challenges, inevitable adversities, and the stark reality that not everything

goes according to plan, expose the fragility of this pursuit. In the face of setbacks, secular thought often falls short, leaving individuals grappling with a sense of emptiness when their aspirations remain unfulfilled. The limitations of materialism become apparent, revealing the hollowness of a life solely built on external achievements.

## A Paradigm Shift

Contrastingly, Islamic thought offers a paradigm shift in pursuing true happiness. Rooted in spirituality, trust in God's wisdom, patience, gratitude, and contentment with fewer possessions, Islamic teachings present a comprehensive framework for a fulfilling life. The focus shifts from the ephemeral nature of worldly success to a higher goal, purpose, ideal, and objective – establishing a strong relationship and connection with God.

## Satisfaction beyond Accomplishments

The crux of Islamic wisdom lies in the understanding that true happiness is not contingent on external achievements or possessions. Instead, religion provides a higher purpose – to follow the path of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, serve humanity, help others, diminish worldly desires, prepare for the hereafter, and find peace without reliance on worldly success. By aligning one's life with these higher ideals, Islamic thought offers a sustainable and enduring source of contentment.

## Healing through Submission

Islamic Sufi wisdom emerges as a healing balm for the soul in adversity and when life unfolds against our will. It teaches the profound art of submitting one's will before the Divine Will. It invites individuals to believe whatever is written in their fate is the best, even if it remains beyond their understanding. This submission to the Divine Will provides solace, healing, and a profound sense of inner peace, transcending the trials of worldly existence.

## Critique of Secular Psychology

The famous psychologist Abraham Maslow proposed a hierarchy of human needs. From the bottom upwards, the needs are physiological,

safety, belonging and love, self-esteem, and self-actualization. This five-stage model can be further divided into three types of needs – basic, psychological, and self-fulfillment. He did not realize that his hierarchy is only correct if we do not consider man's spiritual needs. A person devoid of spirituality will need many things to be happy. The higher the fulfillment of spiritual needs, the lesser the dependence on other needs for happiness. A true follower of Islam can be satisfied with even the basic needs alone. Maslow wrongly kept spirituality entirely out of the equation.

### A Deeper Analysis

Modern psychology says people are strongly impacted by how others view them – successful or not. If we interview people on a deeper level, we will find that their happiness or lack thereof relates to how others see them. Today, since people judge each other on materialistic grounds, we are compelled to follow the path of worldliness. What guidance does Islam have on it? Anything that comes between man and God is an idol. There are idols of stone. There are idols of thought as well. If we genuinely worship God, we only care for His opinion. If we care for people's views so much that it stops us from pursuing the path of righteousness, then it is idol worship. A true Muslim cuts all forms of idols with the sword of his conviction.

### An Open Secret

There is unparalleled far-sightedness in Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is saying that we should always look at people less fortunate than us in worldly matters. Why? Because this approach inculcates gratitude. Even Western psychologists acknowledge that gratitude is the secret to a happy life. It is looking at the glass half-filled and not half-empty. It has nothing to do with one's circumstances. It is a mental state. A poor laborer can have far more gratitude than a millionaire celebrity. However, a secular outlook makes gratitude impossible in a society driven by competition and comparison. Social media instills ingratitude when people compare themselves with more affluent people. Every person's story is unique, so why compare it with anyone else? Your real competition is with the devil within and not the world outside.

### An Unhealthy Obsession

No Quranic verse or saying of the Prophet ﷺ

indicate that an 'ordinary' person cannot enter paradise. Yet, people are obsessed with the idea of becoming extraordinary. Here, one should have a balanced approach. If our hard work, commitment, and dedication to our professions make us extraordinary, we should thank God. However, if, despite our efforts, we remain ordinary, we should not have an iota of frustration because the key performance indicators set by God are not based on brilliance at all. Humility after failure is better than pride after success. The insatiable quest for extraordinariness is an unhealthy obsession. It is a sign of a lack of spiritual maturity. At a microscopic level, it results from the desire for praise and appreciation. No wonder the first verse of the Quran says that all praise belongs to Allah ﷻ because, in actuality, all praiseworthy attributes are granted from Him.

### Embracing Wisdom Free from Illusions

As we navigate the complexities of pursuing happiness, it becomes evident that the secular paradigm, emphasizing materialism and external accomplishments, offers only a transient and precarious sense of well-being. As Islamic thought and Sufi wisdom illuminate, true happiness lies beyond the illusions of worldly success. It is found in spirituality, connection with the Divine, selfless service to humanity, and a life aligned with higher ideals.

In the words of a poet, "Do not ask for love from those who love the world. Ask from those who have no expectations and are in love with the hereafter." This profound insight encapsulates the essence of the pursuit of true happiness – a journey transcending the temporal and material, finding fulfillment in the eternal and spiritual; the most blessed and fortunate person thus, is he who is happy with whatever has been written in his fate, although there is no negation of human efforts to improve one's situation.

Life should be embraced as an opportunity to earn the pleasure of God rather than expecting God to please us. In the spiritual context, hope doesn't mean anticipating Santa Claus to knock on our door and fulfill our wishes. Hope means that soon, there will come a time when we will start enjoying the current blessings of God without any grief of the past or fear of the future, free from the shackles of our own desires!

# *The Other Side of Defeat*

## *– Lessons from the Battle of Uhud*

By Rabia Ilyas

Ever since life began on this earth, success has been the pursuit of individuals and nations. Be it combat, competition, game, career or any other worthwhile goal, no one wants to be defeated in any sphere of life. However, defeat is as much a blessing as success is. If the victory of Badr showed the manners of celebration, the defeat of Uhud guided the ways to cope with failures and challenges. Therefore, turbulent waves train the sailor to deal with them. A competent sailor is never made in calm waters.

Testing times provide the opportunity for self-discovery and self-development.

The Battle of Uhud, is a lot more than a mere struggle between Muslims and Non-Muslims. It serves as a reminder of the transformative power of defeat, failure and daunting challenges in shaping the characters of individuals and nations.

A profound wisdom running through the veins of the Battle of Uhud unfolded how positive attributes such as patience, courage, resilience, consistency and knowledge of one's weak and strong points can turn an adversity into an opportunity. And how the absence of these can make a winning situation into a miserable one.

First and foremost, a lesson that can be extracted from Uhud is that challenges serve as

a mirror of one's character as Allah ﷻ tested His believers in this battle with difficulty, loss and defeat. Similarly, adversities in life reveal the true character of individuals and nations. The testing time of Uhud vividly segregated true believers from hypocrites. When the army of one thousand Muslim soldiers under the leadership of the Holy Prophet ﷺ marched towards the Uhud mountain, the leader of hypocrites and his three hundred companions betrayed the Prophet ﷺ and returned to Madinah leaving the Muslims in the lurch.

This incident disclosed the true intentions and sincerity of people and made it clear who was with the cause of Islam in true letter and spirit. Loyalties and sincerities of our friends and relationships are tested through difficult times. Such times reveal who is one's real friend

indeed. Thus, failures in life not only reflect one's own character, but also disclose the real face of people.

Another important message conveyed through this battle is that united we can cope with difficulties and divided we can fall prey to them. There was a critical point on one side of the battlefield exposing the attack of enemies from behind. The Holy Prophet ﷺ emphasized the vulnerability of that position and deployed fifty arrow snipers to protect it. He strictly advised them to stand there firmly, no matter what happened. However, they got divided due to differences of opinion as the first phase of the war was successful. Some of the archers deserted that place exposing the risk of counter attack. Unfortunately, the enemies attacked resulting in the defeat and huge loss for Muslims. This tells the importance of unity, teamwork and discipline as they are crucial elements in the combat zone and beyond. When individuals join hands and form a cohesive unit, setting aside personal differences and interests and striving towards a common goal, only then they achieve greatness as individuals and nations.

This battle also demonstrates that the first impression is not always the last impression. The Muslims were very confident of winning, considering the victory of the battle of Badr. Their morale was very high and they began fighting with the upper hand. They had almost won the battle, but the tables turned upside down when archers came down from the hill to collect the spoils of war. The sudden change in the result of the war depicts that being confident about winning does not guarantee victory. One has to make a continuous effort to preserve what has been accomplished. Whether it is about getting success in warfare, a profession or relationships or any other facets of life, it takes consistent efforts to sustain that success.

The event of Uhud brings to light another significant fact: defeats and victories unlock the strength and weakness of one's personality. The shortcomings of Muslims were revealed during these tumultuous times and their abilities were put to the test. Had they been victorious in this

war, they would not have been able to gain a deeper understanding of their weaknesses and flaws which might have remained hidden from their sight otherwise.

By the same token, individuals cannot become aware of their true potential and weaknesses in the absence of challenges and adversities. It is the fierce storms of life that forces them to stretch up to their limits and equip themselves with the requisite skills and refine their capabilities to navigate the complexities of life.

One of the most powerful lessons that battle of Uhud offers is to never lose hope. After the defeat, Allah ﷻ comforted the believers in *Surah Al-Imran* verse no 139:

*"Do not then, either lose heart or grieve: for you shall surely gain the upper hand if you are true men of faith"*

This temporary defeat was disheartening at first, but it played a pivotal role in making them examine the situation critically and dig deep within to tap their inner reserves of strengths, and empower themselves accordingly to rise again. Hence, this lesson was the need of the hour assuring them to never be doubtful of sprouting again once cut down. And then these lessons learned by the Muslims resulted in a series of victories including the Battle of Ahzab and the conquest of Makkah leading to the worldwide spread of Islam.

This remarkable battle is more than a set of lessons. It is an institution of self-reflection and self-development. Winning or losing must be accompanied by principles. Winning should not be devoid of humility and losing must be supplemented with dignity. Fortune favors the valiant and the prudent; conquests are achieved on multifarious fields, the battle zone being only one of them.

# The Battle for Hearts and Minds

By Dr Asad Zaman

Capitalism is a system which generates extreme inequalities in wealth, and repeated economic crises which cause misery for millions but leave the top echelon unaffected. One of the arguments of Polanyi (a famous Austro-Hungarian economic anthropologist) suggests that capitalism cannot survive without a massive propaganda effort to make it appear good, and to hide its defects. This propaganda is amazingly powerful and effective. Even the unemployed and the ones hurt by capitalist medical industry have an unthinking allergy to the idea of socialized medicine and government provision of a living wage for everyone. It is a wonder how propaganda trumps even self-interest.

In this context, introducing alternative views with effective arguments is an essential part of the battle to win hearts and minds, in an effort to create a better world for humanity than the one currently created by capitalism — where a handful of rich people own more resources than the bottom billion.

Because the message is aligned with the self-interest of the masses, reaching them with the news of good alternatives to capitalism should be easy. However, the dominant media sources have been purchased by the wealthy, so that dissenting voices cannot easily be heard. The top twenty journals do not publish articles critical of orthodoxy, and similarly a very small cluster of billionaires owns the leading newspapers.

Nonetheless, especially in this electronic age, there is room for manoeuvre. For example, I recently wrote a newspaper article with the title, "The Crisis in Economic Theory." This was published with the title changed to "Waiting for Keynes" in *The News*, one of the leading newspapers in Pakistan. In writing for popular media, one has to assess how much the public can accept — this article of mine is merely meant

to sow seeds of doubt into the minds of an audience which idealizes capitalism as a nearly perfect system. In the comments on the article, one of the readers referred me to "Why Capitalism?" a book defending capitalism by Meltzers. Accordingly, I also wrote a review of this book and posted it on Amazon.

To sympathetic readers, I would suggest a few strategies that are essential in engaging in this battle for hearts and minds. Firstly, we should not be discouraged by the overwhelming odds against us — the billions of dollars being spent on glorifying capitalism. The Truth itself is a powerful weapon, and in any case, fighting an honorable battle for a good cause is worthwhile for itself, whether we win or lose. Secondly, we should start with easy tasks. Use uncontested forums of low visibility — publish in the lower ranked journals instead of aiming for the top twenty. Focus on getting the message across to a sympathetic audience, rather than trying to convert Wall Street. In this connection we should make an effort to use the opportunities available, by publishing comments, as well as creating pointers to useful materials. This involves posting links to interesting articles on social media, up-voting useful articles debunking common myths, posting comments where useful, and otherwise doing our little bit in spreading the light to fight the darkness which surrounds us. The third element in a coherent strategy is to attempt to create unity within diversity. One important weakness of the heterodoxy is that each dissenter has his own different point of view, while the orthodoxy is united. So a rainbow coalition which focuses on commonalities and treats differences as strength rather than a source of division is essential. We should take our inspiration and courage from the many examples where the few have prevailed against overwhelming odds.

## Echoes of Al-Aqsa: Unveiling the Duties of the Muslim Ummah

Excerpts from a Speech by Mufti Taqi Usmani دامت برکاتہم

### at the *Hurmat e Aqsa* Seminar

Translation: Muhammad Ukasha Niazi

*All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the seal of the prophets, the leader of the messengers, and upon his family, companions, and all those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Judgment.*

Esteemed scholars, respected leaders, and honored participants,

*Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

At this moment, we gather to discuss and listen to a topic that, without exaggeration, resonates in the hearts of each of the twenty million people in Pakistan—the issue of Palestine. I will not overstate it when I say that the hearts of Pakistan's entire population beat in unison for the people of Palestine.

Firstly, it is essential to acknowledge the heinous and barbaric acts committed by Israel against the residents of Gaza. This not only violated all principles of humanity but also suggested that even the slightest trace of humanity has been eradicated from the heart of this impure enemy. While condemnation and expressions of concern have been widespread, there are some misconceptions that need clarification.

#### The War is till the end of Israel's Occupation

The entire world, from various international organizations to the OIC, has called for a ceasefire. Ceasefire means stopping Israel from bombing Gaza and stopping Hamas from waging war. Our demand should not be merely to halt the bombing of Gaza but for complete eradication of Israel's occupation Palestine.

Hence, our demand for a ceasefire is not to stop the war but should be understood as a call to end the war only when Israel's occupation is terminated completely. Therefore, instead of advocating for a ceasefire, we should call for an end to the bombing of civilians by Israel. The war will continue until each and every single Israeli tank is destroyed, and all its equipment is rendered useless, *Insha'Allah*.

Our demand should also be to hold Israel accountable for its crimes against innocent civilians, women and children. The call should be for Israel to face the consequences of its losses. The war, *Insha'Allah*, will persist until victory is achieved.

#### Advocating for a Two-State Solution is Incorrect

Secondly, I would like to address another misconception that arises both from the rhetoric of ruling authorities and, at times, from the misguided views of some well-intentioned people. It pertains to the discussion of a two-state solution for Palestine, suggesting the coexistence of an Israeli state and a Palestinian state. This demand is entirely misleading. We openly refute it, and we consider it an attempt by Western powers to legitimize the unlawful occupation by Israel.

Our stance remains firm that Israel has occupied regions through conquest, and our resolution is for the establishment of a Palestinian state within Gaza, Rafah, and the West Bank, where victory over Israel has been achieved. Accepting the occupation by Israel, thus legitimizing its existence on occupied land, in any form, is not acceptable to us. Therefore, the call for a two-state solution should always be approached with caution.

#### In Reality, Israel is the Terrorist

Thirdly, throughout the world, a gross misunderstanding prevails due to Western propaganda, which sometimes influences Muslim governments and, on occasion, sympathetic individuals as well. This misunderstanding, based on Western narratives, tends to label freedom fighters against occupiers as terrorists. This has happened with our Kashmiri freedom fighters, who have been unfairly branded as terrorists, and the same occurred with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Similar misrepresentation is happening in Palestine, where Hamas is wrongly portrayed as a group of militants. It saddens me when, through various sources, their resistance fighters are

labeled as warriors. They are, in fact, *Mujahideen*, engaging in jihad for the sake of Allah ﷻ. Even Brother Haniyah has clarified that the majority of them are *Huffaz* of the Qur'an, and many have a special Islamic upbringing. Before joining Hamas, they undergo a period of education and reform. They are indeed mujahideen, fighting a defensive jihad. Since they are engaged in defensive jihad, they have been unfairly labeled as terrorists. The reality is that Israel is the terrorist, initiating a series of mass killings for the past seventy five years.

So, it is crucial to understand that labelling Hamas as an individual group or a faction, not representative as a government is incorrect. They represent the entire population of Palestine. Therefore, we must safeguard ourselves against such misconceptions.

#### Inefficiency of Muslim Leaders

Fourthly, it is regrettable that though concern is expressed about the severe oppression faced by Muslims, governments seem to respond only with verbal assurances and limited aid efforts. While we acknowledge and appreciate their acknowledgment of the plight of the oppressed, there is still a sense of dissatisfaction that crucial decisions were not made when needed. As Ismail Haniyah has hinted, our governments seem unable to make urgent, necessary decisions.

Hamas has openly stated that there is no need for Muslim governments to launch an attack to support us. However, they request our assistance in reaching to the Muslims of Gaza and supporting the mujahideen in any way possible. It is crucial not to reduce aid to Gaza.

#### Jihad: A *Sharaee* Command

I present the Sharia's ruling before you: "If any Muslim territory is occupied or becomes subject to a ruler, jihad becomes obligatory for the Muslims in that region. It is obligatory first for the Muslims of that region, then for those living nearby, and gradually for all Muslims in that jurisdiction, depending on their capacity. Therefore, I, as a student of Islamic Shariah, announce before you that, to the best of our abilities, jihad has become obligatory for all Muslims, wherever they are. In this regard, it is obligatory to provide support wherever possible."

I quote the meaning of two verses from the Quran to emphasize that this gathering should serve as a message for all Muslims. In Surah An-Nisa, Allah ﷻ addresses all Muslims, reminding them that

if any of their territories are occupied or if their brethren are oppressed, jihad becomes obligatory. And in Surah At-Taubah, Allah ﷻ commands Muslims to spend their wealth and their lives in the way of Allah to support the oppressed, and He reassures them that the awaited help from Allah will come.

These verses are a fresh reminder to us at this critical juncture.

In conclusion, I wish to express with utmost humility that in our gathering, criticism has been directed towards Muslim rulers to a considerable extent, and to some extent rightly so. Criticism is our right, and we are obliged to convey to our rulers what we believe is just. Therefore, instead of fostering hostility in this situation, let us create an atmosphere of reconciliation and advice. As per the Islamic teachings, advising the rulers is the duty of scholars.

I advise with sincerity that, with a clear conscience and seeking Allah's ﷻ guidance through supplication and *Istikhara*, we understand that there are moments in history where making the right decision is crucial. It is said: Moments have made errors, centuries have paid the price. Today, it seems, we are in such a critical moment.

#### Let us Reflect.

Today, the courageous Mujahideen of Hamas have presented us with a significant opportunity – a chance for freedom, to break free from the chains of oppression. This moment, embraced collectively by the entire Muslim world, can create a united front and a shared defense strategy. I firmly believe that even superpowers like America and Britain will struggle against this unified force, as Divine authority does not emanate from America. In the intricate web of power, let us remember: Allah ﷻ holds not only Superpower status but the very essence of supreme power – a force transcending all.

Let us, with unwavering determination, bear the burden upon our shoulders. If the call for justice urges us to action, let it illuminate our path. In the face of gunfire and explosives, let it be known that neither America nor any earthly force can defeat us. May Allah ﷻ grant us the insight to grasp this reality, and may He empower us to dismantle this era of subjugation. As our final prayer: *All praise belongs to Allah, the Sovereign of all existence.*

# *Memoirs of Hazrat Mufti Taqi Usmani* دامت برکاتہم

Translation: Kaiser Nizamani



### Construction of Dār al-'Ulūm in Sharafi Goth

I have mentioned earlier that after relinquishing the site near Allama Usmani's grave, it was by the blessings of our respected father's sincerity and reliance upon Allah that within just a few months, a businessman approached him. He informed our respected father that his friend, Haji Ibrahim Dadabhai, resident of South Africa, possessed some land at a small distance from Karachi, behind Malir in a village named Sharafi Goth. This land contained a bungalow as well as some houses built in the style of servant quarters, and also contained a well. He was prepared to donate the land to Dār al-'Ulūm on the condition that Dār al-'Ulūm construction would be promised to be completed within five years. When our respected father and Hadhrat Mawlana Nūr Ahmad visited the site, they found it to be very far from the city, completely covered with sand dunes and bushes, and the route to it was also extremely difficult. There was no paved road leading to it. At that time, there was no concept of the present Defence Housing Society on the road heading towards Korangi Creek. Hence, after traveling several miles through the desolate Korangi Creek Road, one had to descend onto an unpaved track (around where the Industrial Area's road begins today), and then travel over five miles on such a rough path that a vehicle, shaking on the bumpy road, could not go faster than twenty miles per hour. On the other hand, the route here by bus was also quite challenging, as there was no concept of Korangi Township at that time, and Landhi Colony was newly populated, with its last stop about one and a half miles from the site, which was fully covered with bushes and sand dunes. There wasn't even a proper dirt road for walking.

The truth is that at that time, the idea of constructing Dār al-'Ulūm on this land required immense grit and guts. It was the resolve of those esteemed individuals that they undertook this colossal task in such a wilderness. Thereafter, respected Haji Ibrahim Dadabhai donated twenty-five acres of this land to Dār al-'Ulūm

on 19th July 1955 (approximately 28th Dhu 'al-Qa'dah 1374 AH). Later, six additional acres were added, making it a total of thirty-one acres as a donation from him. (Subsequently, when this area was included in the Town Planning, the government required some of the land from these thirty-one acres for map correction. In exchange, Dār al-'Ulūm received an additional twenty-five acres of uninhabited land from the government, resulting in Dār al-'Ulūm total area increasing to fifty-six acres. However, initially, the work began based on the original twenty-five acres.)

Thus, our respected father, Hadhrat Mawlana Nūr Ahmad and other members of the Managing Committee, relying upon Allah, began construction on this new site on Friday, 30th Rabi' al-Thani 1375 AH, corresponding to 16th December 1955.

Haji Abdul Latif Bawani was a member of the Managing Committee of Dār al-'Ulūm. Besides worldly wealth, Allah Most High had bestowed on him great devotion for Dār. He had pledged 93000 rupees for construction of Dār al-'Ulūm on the land near Hadhrat Allama Shabbir Ahmad Usmani's grave, about which I have mentioned earlier. However, due to the reasons mentioned before, construction could not proceed there. When Dār al-'Ulūm received this new land, he assumed the responsibility of constructing two buildings for Dār al-'Ulūm through his own and his associates' contributions. He fulfilled this undertaking so admirably that we were all astonished. He would frequently endure the toilsome journey to the site himself and personally supervise the construction. Allah Most High had bestowed Hadhrat Mawlana Nūr Ahmad with a special zeal for undertaking challenging tasks. The more difficult a task, the more eagerly he would accomplish it. Thus, he dedicated himself day and night to get the building ready in as short a time as possible. And by Allah's grace and favour, two blocks next to each other, one for student accommodation and the other for classrooms, were completed in just ten months.

At the same time, construction of Dār al-'Ulūm in the remote desert had to be advanced to at least a standard that would allow for the commencement of classes from the next academic year. However, a serious obstacle in starting classes arose; those teachers upon whom the educational activities at Nanak Warah largely depended were leaving from the next year. This was because in that same year, Hadhrat Mawlana Sayyid Muhammad Yusuf Binnori رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was laying foundation to a new madrasa in the Jami mosque of New Town, which today, by the grace of Allah, is counted among the most prestigious madrasas in the country. Hadhrat Mawlana Fazal Muhammad, Hadhrat Mawlana Mufti Wali Hasan and Hadhrat Mawlana Badī al-Zaman (may Allah have mercy on them all) had promised to serve as teachers there. Hadhrat Mawlana Muntakhab al-Haq and Hadhrat Mawlana Mazhar Baqa had joined the Faculty of Islamic Studies at Karachi University. Hadhrat Mawlana Ubayd al-Haq had moved to Dhaka. It was not easy to find replacements for these scholars. Moreover, until now, our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had been personally teaching a major portion of Sahih Bukhari. Due to his various engagements related to city matters, it was not possible for him to continue these lessons after moving to Dār al-'Ulūm new building. Consequently, a significant number of new teachers were required to begin classes in the new building of Dār al-'Ulūm.

At the same time, our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ always adhered to the principle that it was not appropriate to invite any teacher who was engaged in teaching at another madrasa to join his. He used to say that it is wrong to harm one madrasa in order to develop another, unless a teacher himself wished to leave his current madrasa.

But by the grace and mercy of Allah the Glorious and Most High, a solution to this difficulty emerged when our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was informed that some teachers were looking to leave their madrasas of their own accord. Therefore, there was no harm in inviting them. Accordingly, Hadhrat Mawlana Ubaydullah from Bahawalpur, Hadhrat Mawlana Mufti Rashid Ahmad from Therhi, Hadhrat Mawlana Akbar Ali from Mazahir al-'Ulūm Saharanpur, and Hadhrat Mawlana Salīm Ullah (may Allah have mercy on

them all) from Tando Allahyar, promised to join. In addition, Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Idrīs Mirathi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, who until then had been preparing students for the exams of Al-Sunnah Sharqiyyah at Idara Sharqiyyah at Jacob Lines, also promised to teach some classes on a voluntary basis. Moreover, Hadhrat Mawlana Shams al-Haq رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, who was young at the time and had recently graduated from Jamiya Ashrafiya Lahore, also decided to render his services in Dār al-'Ulūm. Similarly, our paternal cousin Hadhrat Mawlana Khurshid Alam had also graduated from Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband around that time. Our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ invited him from Deoband as well. In this manner, the shortage of teachers was largely resolved.


### Relocation to Sharafi Goth

Up until now, we had been receiving our education while living at home, attending the madrasa every morning and returning home in the evening. However, once the madrasa moved to its new building, maintaining this routine was no longer possible, because the new building was very far from our house, requiring several hours to reach it. Consequently, in order to continue our education there, we needed to stay at the students' hostel at the madrasa throughout the week. I had never before had the experience of living away from home, and moreover, our house was newly built, from which we had been able to enjoy the comforts for just a year. I was in the fourteenth year of my life, and being away from my parents was heartbreaking. However, there was no alternative to continue my education. Thus, we moved our residence to the students' hostel in Dār al-'Ulūm. At that time, the hostel comprised two blocks. We were allocated Room Number 16, located at the edge of the Eastern Block (which has now become part of the Madrasa al-Banat). Skipping one room from ours, there was a large room situated under the dome, which was allocated exclusively for unmarried teachers. Hadhrat Mawlana Shams al-Haq رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was residing in that room, who was young at the time, having recently graduated and begun his teaching career. For a few days, our lessons of Husami were assigned to him, so he was one of our teachers. However, he was very good-natured and tasteful, and made us so informal with himself that he had

become more like a friend than a teacher.

It was the first time we had moved out from our home to this new building in Sharafi Goth. At that time, two blocks had been completed, including paint works; one located to the south, consisting of fifteen rooms designated for student accommodation, and the other opposite to it on the northern side (where Bab Fatima of the new mosque is located today). Initially, it comprised of twelve classrooms. Later, after the addition of two round rooms, the total number of classrooms increased to fourteen.

About a hundred yards separated the two blocks, filled entirely with sand dunes and shrubs. These sand dunes and shrubs were home not only to snakes and scorpions but also to chameleons, spiny-tailed lizards, monitor lizards, and porcupines, and God knows how many other kinds of insects and reptiles. They feared us during the day while we feared them during the night, because this was their time to get some fresh air. Scorpions in particular would wander freely after Isha prayer, and perhaps considering this an opportune time to seek revenge for what they went through during the day, they would often sting a student in the foot. Screams of some student would often be heard after Isha, and we would learn that a scorpion had stung him. With no doctor or hospital nearby, various traditional remedies would be tested. Someone suggested that immersing a dead scorpion in oil transformed the oil into an antidote for the sting. Consequently, this was experimented on several students, and also proved to be somewhat effective. Ultimately, the most accepted treatment was to get some child to urinate directly on the sting site. Hence, whenever someone was stung by a scorpion, a child would be quickly found and made to urinate on the sting site.

Across the eastern edge of the South Block, after a small space left for a street, stood a third block which was still under construction and yet to be painted. Located on the western edge of this block was Room Number 16 which was allocated for our accommodation. We two brothers and our nephew Hakim Musharraf Husain  resided in this room, and we installed three small beds in it. Government water lines had not yet reached Dār

al-'Ulūm, and the water from the old well located within Dār al-'Ulūm was too salty for drinking. Hence, our daily water supply would come from a well in Sharafi Goth, which was about a mile away. To fetch the water, a donkey cart had been purchased which carried a large water tank. The task of filling this tank and delivering the water was entrusted to a jovial young man we used to call Musa Bahishti. He would bring water from the well two to three times every day and, standing in the middle of students' hostel, would loudly announce: "Pānī!" ("Water!") However, his pronunciation sounded more like "Pānī̄". Hearing this call, we would bring our earthenware pots and pitchers to the donkey cart, and Musa Bahishti would fill our vessels one by one.

Though even this water was not entirely fresh, it was fit for drinking. Water would be stored in pitchers for drinking and in pots for ablution and other needs, and poured into ewers for ablution. Later, when we sought some luxury, we placed a water tank in the veranda in front of our room, which made performing ablution and washing hands and other things more convenient. However, when the tank ran out of water, there would be no other immediate remedy except to use the salty water from the madrasa's well until Musa Bahishti arrived with the water. Such occasions would make us appreciate the donkey cart's value.

The donkey cart also proved beneficial when VIP guests visited Dār al-'Ulūm via bus. To save them the long trek from Landhi to Dār al-'Ulūm, the cart would be dispatched to the bus stop and they would arrive in Dār al-'Ulūm in this VIP conveyance. The sick would also be granted this royal journey.

A regular electricity connection was out of the question in this far-flung area, but may Allah Most High shower His mercies upon Hadhrat Mawlana Nūr Ahmad, who had somehow procured a small generator and installed it in Dār al-'Ulūm in those early days. This was a peculiar generator which made all the light bulbs flicker while it was running; meaning the brightness of the electric bulbs would constantly change from bright to faint at every moment. However, its din was consistent. We would be grateful for this generator in this wilderness, and recognized its true value when, after just a few weeks, it reached its natural end of life and became

beyond repair, and this wilderness returned to its original state.

We had a lantern in our room for which we would have to queue up to get the kerosene. The responsibility of cleaning its chimney and replacing the wick once it burned out was assigned to me. We would study gathered around this lantern. When my brother's and my Takrar groups became separate, we bought another lantern, and would take our own lanterns to the classroom and conduct Takrar. Meanwhile, in the mosque, a gas cauldron would be lit and students would sit around it, thus collectively satisfying the need for lighting for both study and Takrar.

For breakfast, each student was given a roti from the kitchen, and we had to heat our own tea or milk. We had given up the habit of drinking tea and instead consumed the roti with milk. Buffalo milk was not available. We had to fetch cow's milk from Goth, located a kilometer away. The service of bringing the milk from Goth was carried out either by me or late Hakim Musharraf Husain. It took a long time to get used to its taste. An old kerosene oil stove was available to heat the milk for breakfast, lunch or dinner. The igniter of this stove would fail frequently, so warming the milk would require quite a struggle.

The madrasa was situated such that miles of desert lay to its west, and in that direction, there were neither any settlements nor buildings nor trees up to the sea. While some wild shrubs did dot the desert, they too were covered with sand. Since the winds at the madrasa came from the west, they would typically bring sand particles with them, but during the summer, sandstorms could occur that lasted several days, obscuring anything beyond a yard and depositing a thin layer of sand on everything inside the room, including our beds.


Similarly, towards the south, the desert stretched for about a mile, but rows of wild trees could be spotted at some places. And after crossing a mile of forest, the settlement of Landhi Colony 6, which was newly being populated, began.

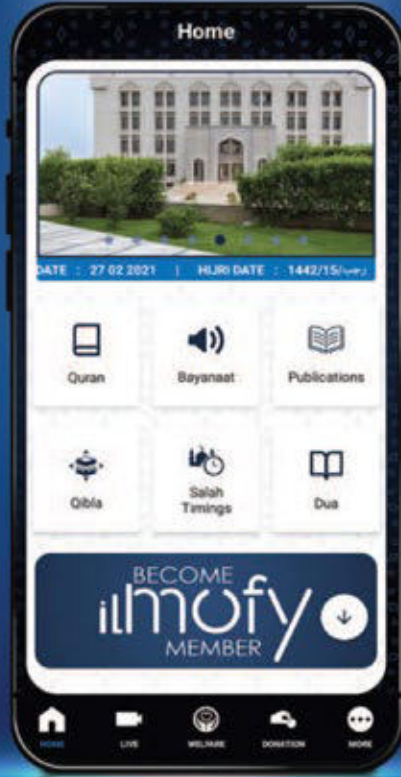
However, at some distance to the east of the madrasa was a date garden, and beyond that, a series of gardens stretched out. To the north as well, after traversing the desert for some distance, fields and gardens began, and to the northeast was the village known as Sharafi Goth. It started with a small shack-like restaurant called "Shidal's restaurant" after the name of its owner. Beyond this restaurant were some houses, and among them was the well

from which we received our water.

The usual way to arrive at Dar al-'Ulum from the city was to take Bus Number 47 from Lea Market, which would travel through Drigh Road and Malir to Landhi, and would traverse the entire Landhi Colony before stopping at Landhi Number 6. This bus passed Lasbela House as well, but after making several stops, it stopped at Malir for a long time. Therefore, travelling on this bus would take two to three hours to reach Landhi Number 6. From there, our journey on foot would begin, which was about one-and-a-half-miles through the southern forest of Dar al-'Ulum. However, this route to the madrasa would easily take three to four hours. And if it rained during our walk through the forest, there was no shelter to be found. Once, as we were crossing the forest, it began to rain, and we became completely soaked from head to toe. Not only did the clothes we were wearing get drenched, but also the clothes in our bags, which were meant for the week ahead. May Allah Most High shower His mercies upon Hadhrat Mawlana Shams al-Haq, who, seeing us arriving soaked through the rear window of his room under the dome, invited us to his room and arranged temporary dry clothes for us.

The second route to Sharafi Goth was to take Bus Number 52, which ran twice a day from Lea Market and traveled to Chakra Goth (where Korangi Number 1 is located today) via Kala Pull and Korangi Road, and then through a dirt track right into Sharafi Goth. If ever we caught this bus, it would be nothing less than a blessing out of the blue, as it saved time and also involved a shorter walk. However, catching it required being at Lea Market at a specific time. Missing this timing meant missing the bus, and the only alternative was Bus Number 47, and the journey would be prolonged.

Upon reaching Dar al-'Ulum, we would be completely cut off from the rest of the city as there was no telephone connection nearby. Only two or three days had passed since our arrival here when Hakim Musharraf Husain contracted Influenza. His fever was so high that he was not in control of his senses. With no reliable treatment available nearby, it was decided to inform his family and send him home. However, there was no means to inform his family. Eventually, Bhai Sahib (Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Rafi ) borrowed a bicycle, seated me behind him, and, after cycling through the forests, called home from a police station near Babar Market. Following this, he called a taxi and sent him home.



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