

# The Intellect

Al Quran  
Surah al-An'am - Part 8

Al Hadith  
Zuhd - Islamic Asceticism

The Awakening  
Discovering the Peace of Heart (3)

*Where is  
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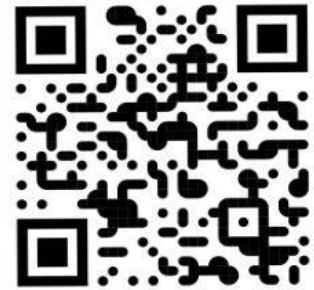
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# Editorial

Dear Readers,

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

She lives within us. In our hearts and our minds. That's where she lives...

But her station in the *Aakhirah* is way beyond ours. While we are lost in the mundanities of this mortal world, she resides amongst the gardens of the immortal heavens.

That's where Hind really lives.

Her story pained us immensely; the 'helpless', mostly unfeeling *Ummah* just watched on during her ordeal – fulfilling our role as silent spectators at a world stage fraught with *Zulm* and injustice and never really allowing any of the tragedies upon tragedies to become our wake-up call. May Allah ﷻ guide us, before our matters are sealed.

Our *Cover Story* brings you Hind's account – one amongst many in this most painful saga of Gaza. Will it serve to awaken us from our hedonistic slumbers? Anyone's call.

It's not as if the *Ummah* has not been through trying times earlier.

The year was 1258.

Abu Ahmad Abdullah ibn al-Mustansir bi'llah, better known as Al-Musta'sim bi'llah, ruling from Baghdad, served as the last Abbasid *Khalifa*. He was captured by the Mongols and forced to watch as his citizens were murdered and his treasury plundered. The majestic Baghdad, the cultural and literary hub of the Muslims, was reduced to ruins. The aggressors didn't stop at this. The caliph was rolled up in a rug and the Mongols trampled upon him with horses!

The *Ummah* was in deep pain, but 'helpless'; just as they were at the fall of the Ottoman caliphate (*Usmania Khilafat*) – its collapse, no feather in the cap of our checkered political history.

But the heart-wrenching Gaza genocide, unfolding in slow motion right before our eyes, seems to be the epitome of cruelty.

Day in and day out – the massacre, the pain and the hunger continues and haunts. Cold-blooded hearts, calculated, soulless, trigger-happy minds plan and orchestrate the bloodshed; hearts blackened with dot after dot of sin and transgression.

Our throats maybe sore with *du'as* but our practical inaction smells of collusion and complicity; our coffers may have been opened up and channeled towards the Palestinians, but our political and military ineffectualness needs no elucidation.



Gaza burns and we carry on with our lives; Gazans yearn, and we sheepishly avert our eyes – saving ourselves the pain of merely witnessing the suffering.

Families lost, limbs severed, homes burnt down into ashes... dreams shattered.

Forgive us, o brethren! We have failed you, once again.

\*\*\*\*\*

Leaving a life of comfort and luxury to try to settle down in a rural environment that lacks basic amenities is a tough ask, especially for someone in his teens.

In *Memoirs*, Mufti Taqi Usmani Sb. دامت برکاتہم takes us through his struggles and labors to adjust at Jamia Dar ul Uloom, Karachi in its nascent days, when the surroundings of the *Madrassa* were totally barren and the place was like a forlorn semi-desert at the outskirts of Karachi. (How it evolved into one of the most exemplary seats of Islamic learning is a story for another time!)

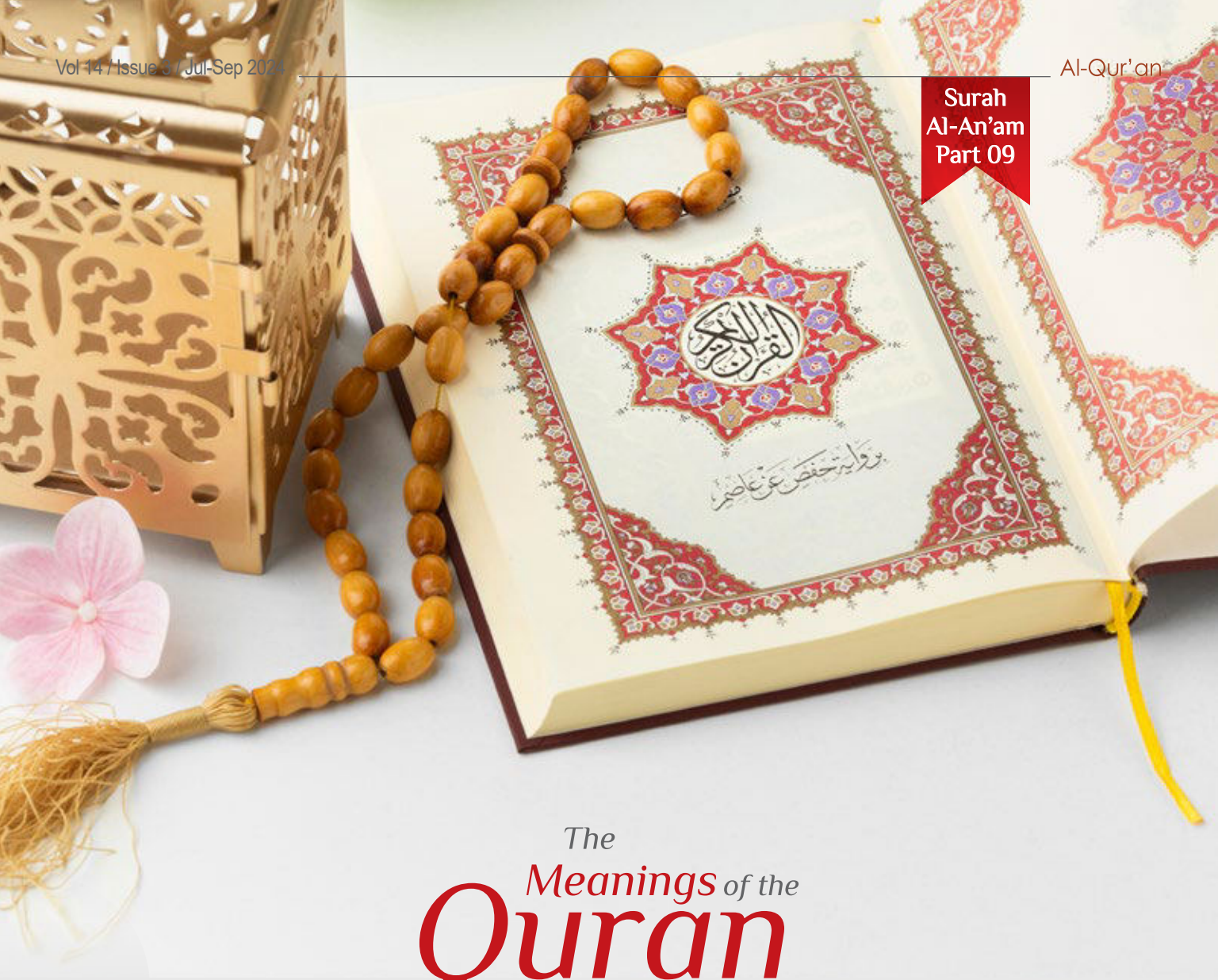
Mufti Sb. outlines his day to day efforts to settle down and the rigorous routine he followed in attaining his education.

It goes without saying that his persistence and hard work in those tough early days contributed immensely to the personification of success that he is today in numerous fields. May Allah ﷻ preserve him, *Ameen*.

In *Action Alerts*, Dr. Asad Zaman elucidates some Islamic ideals of pedagogy and shines a light on the failings of common teaching practices; he also provides fruitful alternatives. And in *Reflections*, we share a writer's personal odyssey of Hajj.

Requesting all our readers to persistently hold on to *Qunoot – e – Nazila* and other du'as for our Palestinian brothers, sisters, children and our beloved Al-Aqsa – that's the very least we can do.

*Wassalam,  
Zawjah Farid*



The  
Meanings of the  
**Quran**

(The Cattle)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا  
لَيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَاءِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

What should cause you to avoid eating of that upon which the name of Allah has been invoked, while He has spelled out to you all that He has made unlawful for you, except that to which you are compelled by extreme necessity? <sup>28</sup> Surely, there are many who misguide people on the basis of their desires without having knowledge. Surely, your Lord is the best knower of those who cross limits. [119]

وَذَرُوا ظَاهِرَ الْإِنِّمْ وَبَاطِنَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ الْإِنِّمْ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرِفُونَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

Leave outward sin and inward sin. <sup>29</sup> Surely, those who commit sin shall be punished for what they used to commit. [120]

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذَكَّرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ وَإِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ لِيُوحُونَ إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَائِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

Do not eat that (meat) over which the name of Allah has not been pronounced. This is surely a sin. The satans inspire their friends to dispute with you. If you were to obey them, you would be *Mushriks*.<sup>30</sup> [121]

أَوْ مَن كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

Is it (conceivable) the one who was dead and to whom We gave life, and set for him a light with which he walks among men, (is held to) be like the one whose condition is such that he is in total darkness, never coming out of it? This is how their deeds appear beautified to the disbelievers. <sup>31</sup> [122]

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكَابِرَ مُجْرِمِينَ لِيَمْكُرُوا فِيهَا وَمَا يَمْكُرُونَ إِلَّا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

In a similar way, in every town We caused its chief sinners to commit mischief in it. And they do not commit mischief but against themselves, while they do not realize it. [123]

وَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ حَتَّىٰ نُؤْتَىٰ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ ۗ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ ۗ سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَعَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

When a sign comes to them, they say, "We shall never come to believe unless we are given the like of what was given to the messengers of Allah" <sup>32</sup> Allah knows best to place His message. Those who committed sin shall soon suffer from disgrace before Allah and face severe punishment for mischief they have been making. [124]

مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ ۗ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعْدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ ۗ كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

So, whomsoever Allah wills to guide, He makes his heart wide open for Islam, and whomsoever He wills to go astray, He makes his heart strait and constricted, (and he feels embracing Islam as difficult) as if he were climbing to the sky. In this way, Allah lays abomination on those who do not believe. [125]

وَهَذَا صِرَاطٌ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيمًا ۗ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

This is the path of your Lord, a straight path. We have made the verses elaborate for people who accept the advice. [126]

لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلَامِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

For them there is the Abode of Peace with their Lord, and He is their Guardian by virtue of what they used to do. [127]

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ قَدِ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ وَقَالَ أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ رَبَّنَا اسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَبَلَّغْنَا أَجَلَنَا الَّذِي أَجَلْتَ لَنَا قَالَ النَّارُ مَثْوَاكُمْ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

The day He will assemble all of them together, (Allah will say to Jinn) "O species of Jinns, you have done too much against mankind." <sup>33</sup> Their friends from among the human beings will say, "Our Lord, some of us have benefitted from others, <sup>34</sup> and we have reached our term that You had appointed for us." He will say, "The Fire is your Abode wherein you will remain forever, unless Allah wills (otherwise). Surely, your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing". [128]

## EXPLANATION

- 28) This exception relates to all prohibited things.
- 29) 'Outward sin' means a sin committed by one's outward organs, like drinking liquor, fornication or telling lies etc. While 'inward sin' means a sin committed by one's heart, like jealousy, arrogance etc.
- 30) Mushrik means a person who believes in more than one God as partners of Allah in His Godhead. The verse warns obedience to any creature in holding something lawful or unlawful in *Shari'ah*, against Allah's clear commands, amounts to shirk.
- 31) This means that although the disbelievers are in total darkness, they do not appreciate this fact and continue to take their deeds as beautiful.
- 32) They meant that Allah should send down His revelation directly to them without meditation of the Prophet. Unless this is done, they would not embrace faith. The answer given is that it is Allah alone who can decide who is a suitable person to receive His message directly. Obviously, it is not possible to appoint everyone as a messenger. It would defeat the very purpose for which the Prophets ﷺ are sent, that is, to test whether or not people believe and obey them by appreciating the proofs brought by them.
- 33) This refers to the devils among the Jinns who misled the human beings.
- 34) This means that they have derived unfair worldly benefits from each other.

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



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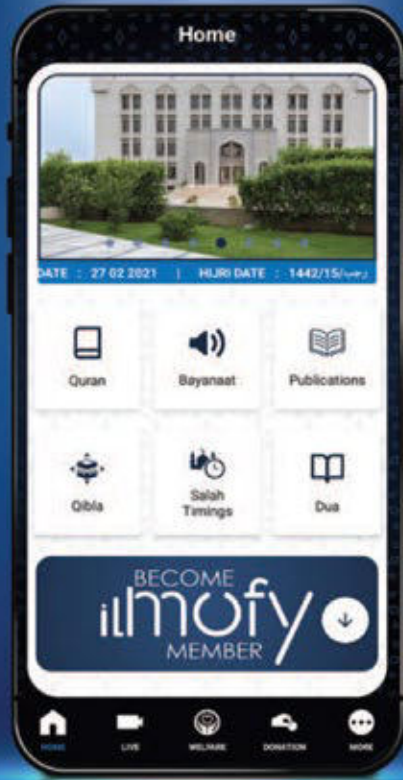


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# Prophet's ﷺ liking for Poverty

Maulana Manzoor Naumani رحمه الله عليه

(201/61) It is related by Anas رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ made this supplication: "O Allah! Keep me alive in the state of indigence, and let me be in the company of those that are indigent" (Tirmidhi and Baihaqi).

Commentary: When Allah asked the Prophet ﷺ if the valley of Makkah be filled with gold for him, the Prophet ﷺ replied, "No, my Lord! What I like is that I may eat my fill on one day and go without a meal on the other."

The Prophet ﷺ had purposely chosen a life of poverty for himself, which was also the inclination of his enlightened inner self. It is indisputable that no other pattern of living could be more suited to the lofty position he occupied and the noble task he had to perform. Should the Lord grant contentment and submission to anyone, it is, generally preferable for him from the viewpoint of Faith and the Hereafter to lead an existence of want and indigence instead of plenty and prosperity.

(202/62) It is related by Anu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ [often] used to pray: "O Allah! Bestow upon the dependants of Muhammad only as much of provision as is necessary to sustain life" (Bukari and Muslim).

Commentary: In the literal sense, the word aal [used in the above tradition] means, household members also dependants, but in the present tradition it, apparently, denotes the household members.

The words, *Quwat and Kafaf*, occurring in the original Arabic text, signify that the provision should only be as much as was necessary to keep the business of living going; neither it is so meager so as to make it difficult for the bondsman to attend to his duties due to hunger or mental distress, or compel him to extend a begging hand before others, nor it be so abundant that he may hoard and preserve it for future needs.

-Excerpted from Maulana Manzoor Naumani's رحمه الله "Ma'arif ul Hadith"

# Muharram

By Mufti Taqi Usmani حفظه الله

Muharram is the month with which the Muslims begin their lunar Hijrah Calendar. It is one of the four sanctified months about which the Holy Qur'an says, "The number of the months according to Allah is twelve (mentioned) in the Book of Allah on the day He created heavens and the earth. Among these (twelve months) there are four sanctified."

These four months, according to the authentic traditions, are Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab. All the commentators of the Holy Quran are unanimous on this point, because the Holy Prophet Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, in his sermon on the occasion of his last Hajj, declared: "One year consists of twelve months, of which four are sanctified months, three of them are in sequence; Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, Muharram, and the fourth is Rajab."

The specific mention of these four months does not mean that any other month has no sanctity, because the month of Ramadan is admittedly the most sanctified month in the year. But these four months were specifically termed as sanctified months for the simple reason that their sanctity was accepted even by the pagans of Makkah.

In fact, every month, out of the twelve, is originally equal to the other, and there is no inherent sanctity that may be attributed to one of them in comparison to the other months.

When Allah Almighty chooses a particular time for His special blessings, the same acquires sanctity out of His grace.

Thus, the sanctity of these four months was recognized right from the days of Sayyidina Ibrahim alayhi salam. Since the Pagans of Makkah attributed themselves to Sayyidina Ibrahim alayhi salam, they observed the sanctity of these four months and despite their frequent tribal battles, they held it unlawful to fight in these months.

In the Shariah of our Noble Prophet Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, the sanctity of these months was upheld and the Holy Quran referred to them as the "sanctified months."

Muharram has certain other characteristics special to it, which are specified below.

## Fasting During the Month

The Noble Prophet ﷺ has said: "The best fasts after the fasts of Ramadan are those of the month of Muharram."

Although the fasts of the month of Muharram are not obligatory, yet one who fasts in these days out of his own will is entitled to a great reward by Allah Almighty. The Hadith cited above signifies that the fasts of the month of Muharram are the most rewardable ones among the *Nafl* or voluntary fasts.

The Hadith does not mean that the award promised for fasts of Muharram can be



achieved only by fasting for the whole month. On the contrary, each fast during this month has merit. Therefore, one should avail of this opportunity as much as he can.

### The Day of 'Ashurah'

Although Muharram is a sanctified month as a whole, yet, the 10th day of Muharram is the most sacred among all its days. The day is named 'aashurah. According to the Holy Companion, Ibn 'Abbas Radi-Allahu anhu, the Holy Prophet ﷺ when migrated to Madinah, found that the Jews of Madinah used to fast on the 10th day of Muharram. They said that it was the day on which the Holy Prophet Musa (Moses) ﷺ and his followers crossed the Red Sea miraculously and the Pharaoh was drowned in its waters. On hearing this from the Jews, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "We are more closely related to Musa ﷺ than you," and directed the Muslims to fast on the day of 'aashura (Abu Dawood).

It is also reported in a number of authentic traditions that in the beginning, fasting on the day of 'aashura was obligatory for the Muslims. It was later that the fasts of Ramadan were made obligatory and the fast on the day of 'aashura was made optional. Sayyidina 'Aisha ﷺ has said:

"When the Holy Prophet ﷺ came to Madinah, he fasted on the day of 'aashura and directed the people to fast. But when the fasts of Ramadan were made obligatory, the obligation of fasting was confined to Ramadan and the obligatory nature of the fast of 'aashura was abandoned. Whoever so desires should fast on it and any other who so likes can avoid fasting on it" (Sunan Abu Dawud).

However, the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to fast on the day of 'aashura even after the fasting in Ramadan was made obligatory. Abdullah ibn Musa ﷺ reports that the Holy Prophet ﷺ preferred the fast of 'aashura to the fasts of other days and preferred the fasts of Ramadan to the fast of 'aashura (Bukhari and Muslim).

In short, it is established through a number of authentic ahadith that fasting on the day of 'aashura is Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and makes one entitled to a great reward.

According to another Hadith, it is more advisable that the fast of 'aashura should either be preceded or followed by another fast. It means that one should fast two days: the 9th and 10th of Muharram or the 10th and 11th. The reason of this additional fast as mentioned by the Holy Prophet ﷺ is that the Jews used to fast on the day of 'aashura alone, and the Holy Prophet ﷺ wanted to distinguish the Muslim way of fasting from that of Jews. Therefore, he advised the Muslims to add another fast to that of 'aashura.

Some traditions signify another feature of the day of 'aashura. According to these traditions, one should be more generous to his family by providing more food to them on this day as compared to other days. These traditions are not very authentic according to the science of Hadith. Yet, some Scholars like Baihaqi and Ibn Hibban have accepted them as reliable.

What is mentioned above is all that is supported through authentic sources about 'aashura.

### Misconceptions and Baseless Traditions

However, there are some legends and misconceptions with regard to 'aashura that have managed to find their way into the minds of the ignorant, but have no support of authentic Islamic sources; some very common of these are as follows: this is the day on which Adam ﷺ was created. This is the day when Ibrahim ﷺ was born. This is the day when Allah accepted the repentance of Sayyidina Adam alayhi salam. This is the day when *Qiyaamah* (doomsday) will take place. Whoever takes bath on the day of 'aashura will never get ill.

All these and other similar whims and fancies are totally baseless and the traditions referred

to in this respect are not worthy of any credit.

Some people take it as Sunnah to prepare a particular type of meal on the day of 'aashura. This practice, too, has no basis in the authentic Islamic sources.

Some other people attribute the sanctity of 'aashura to the martyrdom of Sayyidna Husain ؑ during his battle with the Syrian army. No doubt, the martyrdom of Sayyidna Husain ؑ is one of the most tragic episodes of our history. Yet, the sanctity of 'aashura cannot be ascribed to this event for the simple reason that the sanctity of 'aashura was established during the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ much earlier than the birth of Sayyidna Husain ؑ.

On the contrary, it is one of the merits of Sayyidna Husain ؑ that his martyrdom took place on the day of 'aashura.

Another misconception about the month of Muharram is that it is an evil or unlucky month, for Sayyidna Husain ؑ was killed in it. It is for this misconception that people avoid holding marriage ceremonies in the month of Muharram. This is again a baseless concept, which is contrary to the explicit teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah. If the death of an eminent person on a particular day renders that day unlucky for all times to come, one can hardly find a day of the year free from this bad luck because every day is associated with the demise of some eminent person. The Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ have liberated us from such superstitious beliefs.

### Lamentations and Mourning

Another wrong practice related to this month is to hold the lamentation and mourning ceremonies in the memory of martyrdom of Sayyidna Husain ؑ. As mentioned earlier, the event of Karbala is one of the most tragic events of our history, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden us from holding the mourning

ceremonies on the death of any person. The people of jahiliyyah (ignorance) used to mourn over their deceased through loud lamentations, by tearing their clothes and by beating their cheeks and chests. The Holy Prophet ﷺ stopped the Muslims from doing all this and directed them to observe patience by saying "Innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilayhi raaji'oon". A number of authentic Ahaadith are available on the subject. To quote only one of them:

"He is not from our group who slaps his checks, tears his clothes and cries in the manner of the people of jahiliyyah" (Sahih Bukhari).

All the authentic jurists are unanimous on the point that the mourning of this type is impermissible. Even Sayyidna Husain ؑ shortly before his demise, had advised his beloved sister Sayyidah Zainab ؑ not to mourn over his death in this manner. He said, "My dear sister! I swear upon you that, in case, I die you shall not tear your clothes, nor scratch your face, nor curse anyone for me or pray for your death" (Al-Kamil, ibn al-Athir vol. 4 pg. 24).

It is evident from this advice of Sayyidna Husain ؑ that this type of mourning is condemned even by the blessed person for the memory of whom these mourning ceremonies are held. Every Muslim should avoid this practice and abide by the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his beloved grandchild Sayyidna Husain ؑ.



# Discovering the Peace of Heart

By Maulana Abdul Sattar حفظه الله

## Key to a Peaceful Life

The only way to a peaceful existence is to strengthen your bond with Allah ﷻ and to increase your love for Him. The pleasure and satisfaction that will emerge from this bond will help you sail through adversities.

A Hadith tells us that in the Battle of Uhud, when a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ was wounded, blood gushed out through the wound. In this state of agony, these words inadvertently came out,

“By the Lord of Kaaba, I have succeeded,”

A non-believer present on the battlefield could not grasp this event. He found the comment strange since the Muslim Mujahid was losing his life, his children would be orphaned, his wife would become a widow, he himself was in acute pain, and yet he proclaimed that he had succeeded. He asked another Muslim to explain this bizarre behaviour and wanted to

know what success he was referring to. The other Muslim told him that he would only be able to understand this feeling of ultimate success when he takes the vow of faith and develops love for Allah ﷻ.

Allah’s beloved servants too face the same problems as a non-believer. Their reaction to problems can be understood through an example. Suppose an old friend is here to see me after many years. He creeps up behind me and gives me a tight hug from the back. An onlooker might be observing the brief look of discomfort on my face, but I feel only a gush of pleasure at seeing my long-lost pal.

By Allah! When righteous slaves of Allah ﷻ come across adversities, when things go against their will, they simply accept it as the will of their Rabb. They feel this is another way by which Allah ﷻ is expressing His love; their pleasure multiplies at the thought and their hearts remain contented.

## Allah confirms in the Quran:

No doubt! Verily the friends of Allah, no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve.

(Yunus 10:62)

The triggers are all out there - triggers of fear, agony, trouble, distress and pain, but they don't cause adverse effects. The hearts of the believers are calm and contented because of their love for Allah ﷻ, they feel no agitation or unease.

It won't be right to assume that pious people don't feel transient unease from time to time; it is natural to feel distressed sometimes, but they don't get afflicted by long periods of stress or anxiety. If someone claims to be pious and yet he remains depressed or distressed, then there has to be a problem: if he were a true, righteous slave of Allah ﷻ, this would not be the case. We can be wrong, but the words of Allah ﷻ are always true. Our standards of judging piety are different from His. We judge piety by looking at the number of prayers offered or it revolves around not inflicting harm on others. No doubt these are deeds beloved to Allah ﷻ, but these alone are not a complete measure of piety.

## True Piety

In Islam there is no compulsion in *Nawafil*, *Tasbeehat*, *Zikr* etc. But it is imperative not to disobey Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ identifies His friends in the Quran:

*Those who believe and keep their duty (to Allah) (Yunus 10:63)*

This shows that once they have Imaan, they do not engage in sin.

This is all you need to do. Even if you don't offer *Nawafil* the entire night, fast extensively, recite long *Tasbeehaat*, the main thing is to avoid sin. If your life involves sin, then you have no claim to piety. Allah ﷻ does not let calm and peace enter a sinful and disobedient heart. We must force sins out of our lives.

The benchmark of goodness is not abundance of worship. Rather, it is piety. Whoever keeps adding to his piety increases his overall

goodness. The Lord illuminates the heart of the one who adopts the garment of piety. He blesses him with the *Furqan* or criterion. Just as a mirror clearly reflects the image in front, an illuminated heart can discern right from wrong, truth from falsehood. Allah ﷻ fits a mirror inside that distinguishes all that comes his way. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said,

*Be wary of a Momin's foresight as he sees with Allah's Noor.*

(With reference to: *Ahya Uloom-ud-Deen*, Vol 2, Pg.406, *Dar-ul-Khair*)

## Allah ﷻ explains in the Quran

*O you who believe! If you obey and fear Allah, He will give you 'Furqan' (a criterion to judge between right and wrong).* (Al-Anfal 8:29)

Allah ﷻ assures us that if we remove sin from our lives, He will gift us with *Furqan* i.e. a criterion. The Holy Quran too is a mirror that discriminates between truth and falsehood. Allah ﷻ has also referred to 'The Battle of Badr' as *Yaum-ul-Furqan* (The Day of Discrimination) as it separated truth from falsehood: *the Day of Discrimination, the day when the two armies met.* (Al-Anfal 8:41)

A person who spends a life of piety away from sin receives a *Furqan* from his Rabb – a mirror in his heart that enables him to distinguish between good and bad, truth and falsehood, snake and scorpion, stick and stone. Such a person is saved from sins and is guided towards goodness.

## Where are the Pious?

There is a common complaint that true and pure souls are nowhere to be found. Where should people go? Who should they listen to?

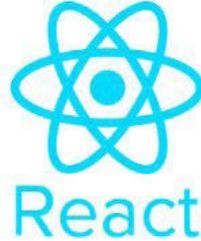
Actually the glow in our heart has diminished, our power of discernment has gone, the illuminating radiance of *Iman* is no more. One lacks the insight to recognize pious people. Hence people listen to all kinds of scholars, and read their literature. We have truly lost insight. The kind of people we are attracted to and impressed by reflects what is truly inside us. Our choices speak volumes about our level of faith.

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# Where is Hind?

By Muqadas Ghumman

*"If I Must Die, Let It Be a Tale" - Reefat Alareer*

*This is in fulfillment to my promise to Reefat Alareer; you and your people died but you are a tale. We will keep you alive...*

I am trapped inside a car. I am surrounded by six dead family members. There are Israeli tanks and snipers everywhere. Everyone is dead except me. I am not even six-years-old yet. It is getting dark and I am terrified. Now I know why my family always prayed for martyrdom. My heart is pacing. I am panicking. I do not have time to think, wonder or keep myself together. I am praying for what my father has always prayed for - *Shahadah*. This test is difficult. I am ready for what most people fear. I am ready to meet my Lord. I wonder if it would make me ungrateful to say the 6 family members I have lost are luckier than me. I hear the snipers shooting, they do not know I am alive. The tanks are getting louder, louder and louder. My heart is pounding. I can't recall the prayers my mom taught me against the enemy. I can't remember words to recite when overwhelmed with fear. The gunshots are piercing my ears.

During the chaos I realize Layan, my 15 year old cousin, is alive. She has it together better than me. She is composed. Is it because she has faced similar situations before? She has witnessed two wars, this is her third. Has she experienced such trauma and fear before this? Is this why she seems to hold herself together? Is she staying strong for me? She doesn't want to spread panic. She is keeping a calm aura. She looks at my terrified face and tries to stay as calm and quiet as possible. I can sense that she wants to embrace me and protect me and make me feel better but she remains still because there are snipers all around us. We suddenly hear the phone ring, she quickly picks up the phone and speaks in low tone, it's the rescue team. I sense hope. I thank my Lord. Someone is going to come and get us. I may be too young to understand the brutality of the Israeli army but I am from a land where we experience far more fear, death and trauma at such a tender age than



most adults do in their entire lifetime, so I know our options are scarce, but I tell myself, it is going to be alright.

Hayan begins to speak, "They are shooting at us. The tank is next to me." The rescue team responds and there is a moment's relief, "are you hiding?" he asks, "yes, in the car, we are next to the tank." Are you inside the car was answered by the sounds of countless gunshots and Hayan's screams. These become the last words of Hayan. She was just fifteen-years-old, she was chosen by Allah. The blood splatters everywhere, there are splashes of blood on my face and clothes, but I try to stay calm and still. At this moment, I have nothing but my morning Quran lessons from my mother. I remember, with difficulty, there is ease. I began to sense the ayah take over me. I suddenly realize I am not alone, I have a Higher Power by my side. I know the One who has put me in this situation will give me courage and ways to deal with it. Now instead of panicking and screaming and crying like any normal six-years-old would do, I stay quiet, I keep hiding, I

sit still, I know I am not spared by the terrorists because I am a kid but out of sheer oversight. I wait for the night to fall.

The night has come, it's quieter, snipers and tanks are withdrawing. I hear the phone vibrate, I pick up the phone, it's the rescue

team. Hearing words from the outside world breaks me down. Words begin to fall out of my mouth, "come take me, will you come and take me?" The woman on the phone is kind, compassionate and concerned, she tries to keep me calm, "Do you want me to come and take you?" I tell her, "I am so scared, please come! Please call someone to come and take me." She reassures me, "Okay dear, I will come and take you." The woman from the rescue team was kind enough to stay on the phone with me for three hours. She keeps up the conversation with me and reassures me someone will come and get me. She tries to keep me as calm as possible, I can hear her voice break down. I raise my eyes and I am surrounded by signs of brutality, machinery of brutality, tanks of tyranny right next to me... but the voice on the phone is full of compassion! I experience two worlds apart at the same moment.

A culture full of compassion, empathy, kindness versus a culture full of hatred, deceit, brutality and tyranny. A community that protects, cares, sacrifices versus a community that is selfish, cold and cruel. I thank Allah that I am from the former. I thank Allah, I am from the land that is full of compassion, love, care, determination and selflessness. I look up and it's getting darker and my voice begins to fall apart. I tell her I am getting afraid of the dark. She knows the source of strength of all



Palestinians - our connection with the Quran. She asks me if we should recite the Quran. She recites Surah Fateha with me. We recite it together, it makes me feel better.

I stay calm until I began to panic again. The operator being from my land knows prayers are our lifeline. She asks me if we should pray to Allah. She helps me ask Allah to protect us. Three hours have passed since I have been on the phone and now she tells me someone is on the way to rescue me. I thank Allah. I wait and I wait and I wait and no one comes. I continue to wait. Two days have passed. I am by myself. There is no phone call. No operator. No family member. No sight of life. No sign of compassion. Just death, cold and brutal tanks and cold faces of Israeli snipers. I have lost track of time and days. I am hungry, cold, afraid and slowly dying.

The world has heard my voice. The world is questioning, where is Hind? The world

doesn't stop. It raises its voice, it screams, where is Hind? Find Hind! But I will not be found now because I have left for Jannah. Only my decaying body will be discovered...

The terror has stopped, the fear is over. I know my mother will cry when they find my body, but I know her misery is going to be over. The other side is beautiful! We are rejoicing in Allah's bounties and are delighted for those yet to join. I wait for my mother. We will soon meet. Her pain will be over. Her pain is a test for the world. It is a test for the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ. It is a test to distinguish between the truthful and the liars. It is to distinguish the compassionate from the tyrant. It is to distinguish those who side with the truth and those who side with the falsehood, between those who speak for justice and those who speak for self-interests.

My story cannot be completed without the sacrifice of two selfless Gazan paramedics, Youssef Zeino and Ahmed Al-Madhoon, who risked their lives to rescue me. They were a symbol of Islamic compassion. We, the people of Gaza, stand apart from the cruel, cold, selfish and materialistic world. We have tales of people sacrificing for each other, people prioritising others over their own lives. Youssef and Ahmed knew what they were getting themselves into. They knew





how cruel the IDF is. They knew despite the approval from the IDF, they could not trust them. They knew they would lose their lives, but their kind hearts did not allow them to stay behind and let a six-year-old die alone, cold and hungry.

They did not reason or use their logic. We are the people of love and hope therefore sacrifice comes to us as second nature.

In Gaza, even a smuggled cucumber becomes a tale because it is shared with

compassion. A hospital bed is a tale because a mother in Gaza embraces as many

children as she can on a hospital bed despite her own children being hungry and in agony. She feeds as many children without parents as she can. She embraces as many orphans as she can [Ghassan Abu Sitta Interview on Center Stage, Al-Jazeera]. In Gaza, when people are starving, they share their food. They don't hoard. Young children, who have finally found some firewood and hope to cook something, give their firewood to an elderly instead because he is in need and can't walk far enough to collect it. They cheer children up. The doctors sacrifice their lives for their patients. The press risks their own and their family's lives to allow the world to witness the truth. We think beyond self-interest. We

wonder if the neighbor has eaten. We give up our warm clothes for the elderly. We distribute the little food we have so more people are fed.

Let our lives be a lesson for you. Let our blood allow you to lead a life of compassion, love and sacrifice. Allow our blood to help you break free from the chains of materialistic lifestyle. I pray you repent for your self-serving lifestyle before the day arrives when my mother will plead to Allah for justice. I wish you can see what Allah has provided me with and let go of *Wahn* (love for dunya and disdain for death).

Don't forget us, we are not numbers. Don't placate yourself and forget a kid pleading for help, dying in a dark cold night. Don't forget the paramedics full of hope decaying in an ambulance. Don't forget the world heard my screams and their hearts ached but were helpless because of the shackles of tyranny and control in the current world. You must break the shackles and let mankind free.



# The Land of the Rising Sun (Last Episode)

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

The farthest coast of the Taveuni Island was just a few kilometers westwards of the International Date Line, where we were at the time. The local Muslims have constructed a mosque at this western coastal area and I was scheduled to deliver a speech there. This is the first mosque towards the west of the International Date Line and the admin of the mosque proudly pointed out that this is the first mosque in the world to call out the Fajr *Adhaan* every day.

A considerable number of people had gathered at the mosque for the speech; women being comparatively greater in numbers and proper arrangement of *pardah* had been in place for them. We left here after Zuhr, caught our flight back to Savusavu at three thirty and landed there at 4 o' clock in the evening. I had to deliver another *bayaan* at another mosque here between Asr and Maghrib. There too, a large audience had gathered.

An amazing feature about this place is the boiling fresh water springs. Hot water springs is a common feature at many places in the world, like the one we have at Manghopir in Karachi. But the water there has a high

Sulphur content. What is special about these in Savusavu is that the water here is boiling literally and crystal clear; the steam rising from it continuously. The locals of the area use this natural resource to boil eggs, fish and meat too. A gentleman accompanying us had a dozen eggs with him in a bag. He simply placed the bag as it was in the boiling water and took it out after five minutes. The eggs had boiled and he offered those to everyone around.

It is actually common to have these springs with such boiling hot water so close to the sea. The scientific reason behind these boiling water springs just upon the coast is the presence of medium category volcanic activity under the mountains here. The lava underneath is not enough to actually erupt but it's enough to make the water of these springs boil.

*wAllahu Subhanahu wa Ta'ala A'lam, wa  
TabarakAllahu Ahsan ul Khaaliqin*

We had to leave Savusavu for Labasa the same night. A prominent social figure of Savusavu had invited us over for dinner and we left for

Labasa right after.

The next day we left Labasa and headed towards Fiji's capital city Suva. Suva and the adjacent Nausori are like beautiful twin cities. The airport is actually situated in Nausori, although the capital city is Suva.

Our host in Suva was Fiji Muslim League, which is the biggest organization of the Muslims in Fiji. We were escorted directly from the airport to visit a grand Muslim school in Nausori; an impressive institution where around fifteen hundred Muslim children are receiving education. Classes up to the intermediate level are taught Qur'an and basic Islamic knowledge alongside the standard curriculum of the country. It was holiday season for the students but the school's principal, administration and teachers were there to welcome us in the school's library. We were provided with a brief overview of the school's performance and were also informed that they had a similar school in Suva. Due to these institutions working tirelessly, Muslim children were being safeguarded to some extent against the ills of attending the regular Non-Muslim schools.

We went for a bit of sightseeing after Asr. Suva is a beautiful city indeed. Apart from the natural beauty, the city's layout and construction is a complimenting feature as well. If the weather was not so hot, this city

could be taken as one out of Switzerland easily.

Driving through different areas of the city, we finally arrived at the seaside. Upon the endless stretch of the Pacific Ocean in front of our eyes, we could see a few scattered islands towards the right side. The Vice President of the Fiji Muslim league, Abdul Qayyum Sahib was with us. He was originally from Pakistan and had been settled in Fiji since many years. Standing at the seaside, he pointed towards an island in sight and told us that the inhabitants of this island had an extraordinary feature about them. Allah ﷻ has blessed them with unusual skins that don't burn in the fire at all. These people could walk barefoot upon burning coals as if walking on plain rocks. Suva's five-star hotels arrange a display of this activity as a tourist attraction and this 'god-gifted' ability of these people has been mentioned in Fiji's introduction book. Although, such stunts are not uncommon around the world in circuses etc., but those are mostly deceptions of the sight in the name of magic, or some chemical substance used as a coating upon the skin which prevents it from burning. The tribesmen of this island claim however, that it's none of these in their case. Rather, they actually are born with non-combustible skins. Allah ﷻ Knows Best.

We had to reach the biggest Jamia Mosque of the city by Maghrib since I was to deliver a



bayaan there right after Maghrib Jamaat. On our way there, I caught sight of a center of Qadiyanis. I was informed that they had been very actively pursuing their activities in Fiji and had established centers in almost every city. Even then, All Praise be to Allah, the majority of Muslims here were well aware of their lies and plots and were not deceived by them.

When we reached the Mosque, the huge parking space was already full. The double-story mosque was filled to capacity with people and then the prayer lines were extending to the roads outside. It was actually a task to reach the *Mehraab*. We were informed that it was the biggest ever gathering of Muslims in this country's history. I spoke for about one and a half hour with the *Tawfeeq* of Allah ﷻ and the crowd listened with attention. I tried conveying to these Muslims everything that I wanted to convey, including practical advice and suggestions for improvements that I had kept noting during my stay there.

Some well-to-do people in Fiji have established a cooperative organization over there to assist the Muslims in their financial needs. I urged them to strive to help the local Muslims to get rid of the evil of usury. They requested for a guidance session regarding the practical steps involved in purifying the financial system from all shades of interest. The meeting was scheduled and held the next day in the morning.

This one week spent in Fiji made me realize that the Muslim population here was

extremely docile and very keen for their *Deen*. Unfortunately in the past, a time came upon them when the religious guidance hit an all-time low. As a result, the biggest drawback of those times was that many Muslim men and women here married into other religions. The effects of that can still be seen and felt.

However, ever since the Tablighi Jamaat had started its activities here, the situation has been improving *Alhamdulillah*. Many *Ulema* men and their *Aalimah* wives have also come from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh and settled here with the mission of Tableegh. A big positive aspect about Fiji's government is that it doesn't hinder religious activities. One would even hear the sound of Adhaan here off and on. But the Muslims here have now started realizing that they are spending their lives in a place very far off from the rest of the Muslim world. This has increased their yearning for deen and the way they welcomed us there and showed gratitude, says many things about their hearts.

The Muslims here are thirsty for religious knowledge and guidance. So the Tableeghi Jamaat and the *Ulema* working upon this mission have still a long way to go.

May Allah ﷻ help, guide and protect them.  
*Aameen*

(Concluded)

# Preoccupation with Adorning the Outward

Shaykh Abu Abd al-Rahman al Sulami رحمته الله

Among the infamies of the soul is being preoccupied with adorning outward things, feigning humility without being humble, and feigning servitude without presence [of heart].

This condition is treated by being occupied by protecting their heart so that the light of one's inward [reality] adorns his visible deeds, and thus be adorned without adornment, dignified without an entourage, and mighty without a tribe. Because of this, the Prophet (may Allah bless him and give him peace) said, "Whoever mends his heart, Allah will mend his public [deeds]."



# *If I Must Die*

By Refaat Alareer (1979 - 2023)

If I must die,  
you must live  
to tell my story  
to sell my things  
to buy a piece of cloth  
and some strings,  
(make it white with a long tail)  
so that a child, somewhere in Gaza  
while looking heaven in the eye  
awaiting his dad who left in a blaze—  
and bid no one farewell  
not even to his flesh  
not even to himself—  
sees the kite, my kite you made, flying up above  
and thinks for a moment an angel is there  
bringing back love  
If I must die  
let it bring hope  
let it be a tale

# Prophet's ﷺ Companionship

Contributed and translated by Bint Akram

Once someone sent some dates for the Prophet ﷺ as a gift. The dates were either eleven or nine in number. The Prophet ﷺ and, the mother of the believers, Hazrat Aisha ؓ, had not had food for many days. Despite being extremely hungry herself, Aisha ؓ reserved those dates for the Messenger ﷺ of Allah. When he ﷺ returned home, Hazrat Aisha ؓ presented those dates before the Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ ate the dates, but later on, it occurred to him ﷺ if Hazrat Aisha herself had had any of those or not. He ﷺ asked: "Aisha, did you eat from these dates?" She replied: "O Messenger of Allah, my Lord's ﷻ pleasure is sufficient for me."

Prophet ﷺ instantly knew that she had not eaten any of the dates. He ﷺ felt sad and said that she should have eaten out of those dates before reserving for him. Hazrat Aisha ؓ smiled and asked if the Prophet ﷺ had eaten fully. At that moment, the Prophet ﷺ prayed to Allah ﷻ: "O Allah, give immense rewards to Aisha for (her) patience."

Hazrat Aisha ؓ further asked the Prophet ﷺ to pray that may Allah ﷻ bless her with the companionship of Prophet ﷺ in Paradise.

Prophet ﷺ explained that if she desired his companionship in Jannah, she must become one of those who are patient (with whatever Allah has decreed for them), those who do not hoard (for the future), and spend whatever excess they have in the way of Allah ﷻ.

Hazrat Aisha ؓ, from then on, wholeheartedly followed and acted upon these commandments of the Messenger ﷺ of Allah.

# Islamic Pedagogy

By Dr Asad Zaman

*I've spent my whole life in academic institutions, first as a student then as a teacher. I taught for 15 years in the USA, 6 in turkey and 25 years in Pakistan. In this essay, I would like to draw some lessons from these life experiences.*

Our religion teaches us that each life is infinitely precious. Each individual life is potentially as valuable as the entire humanity. Our students have enormous potential, and it is our job as teachers to bring out this potential. I found that this effort to bring out the hidden potential in the students to be of immense value, and extremely fruitful. Countless books have been written on the principles of etiquette (Adab) for Islamic education, extracted from the Quran and the Hadith. I will just mention a few.

Our knowledge should not give us Pride. Instead, it should make us humble. We should value our students as having more potential than ourselves and we should take care to value their time and to give them useful knowledge.

The Prophet ﷺ made Dua for useful knowledge and sought protection from useless knowledge. We have a tremendous opportunity because our students, if inspired and motivated, shape the future of the world – just like the students of our Prophet ﷺ did.

Whereas our religion teaches how to become the best human being that we can be, modern education is designed to suppress and destroy this potential, and turn us into

human resources, interchangeable parts in the capitalist machine for the production of wealth.

Since I myself was educated in the West, I experienced and absorbed the dominant Western pedagogical models. It was a long personal journey to recover from the damage done to me by this educational process. It is worth providing a brief summary, so that the reader can understand where I am coming from.

In the 1970s, I studied at MIT and Stanford and then for 15 years I taught at top universities in the USA. I left for two reasons:

1. My children were growing up and I didn't want them in public schools in the USA where they would acquire American culture.
2. I felt that I was being paid for the job of educating the children of foreigners when our own children in our own countries were not educated and this was my responsibility.

When a chance offer materialized, I left and spent six years (from 1993 to 1999) at a leading Turkish University. After that I moved back to Pakistan, and have been teaching here since. I found my experience as a teacher much more satisfying because I felt that these students are my students and their successes were my success, and their failures were also my own failure. So, I tried very hard to make sure that they would succeed. My students responded to my efforts by giving me their best performances, and many graduates are now placed in good institutions in Pakistan, and around the world.

After my return, I noted many differences that forced me to change my approach to teaching from the one I had learnt in the West. While in USA, I saw that at the top universities, the best students were highly competitive and also very confident of their skills. In Pakistan, especially in the Public Sector, I found that the students had



a defeated and colonized mindset. They could not imagine that they could be the world's best. However, in terms of raw talent, our students are just as good as anywhere around the world. Unfortunately, the imitative educational system we have is designed to destroy their capabilities they learn to aim low like the crows, instead of claiming their birthright to fly high.

Students can only achieve according their ambitions, and it is the job of the teacher to believe in the students, and to teach them to reach for the stars.

There is another, much bigger, difference between the role of the teacher in market societies which now dominate the world and in a traditional Islamic society. In a market society a teacher is paid for his work and he educates the students in return for his salary. As opposed to this, in an Islamic society the teacher is a mentor, a life-guide, a counselor, an advisor, and he acts in a parental role. He worries about the personality development of the students. But the most important job of the teacher is to create desire and enthusiasm for the pursuit of knowledge in the students.

In my experience, I have found that the greatest obstacle to high achievement is lack of self-confidence in our students. The students do not even try to learn because the experience that they have had with learning is very bad. They have been trained to not try to think instead just to memorize. Trying to master alien subjects in a foreign language has proven so difficult, that they consider themselves incompetent, and incapable of learning. They cannot identify the real causes for their failure: the educational system, the subject matter, and the teacher.

Building the confidence of our students is essential if we want stellar achievements from them. This requires work on multiple fronts. One of these is the psychological front - we need to work on decolonization of minds. Defeats and failure on every front for the past two centuries has led to a defeated mindset in the *Ummah* as a whole. But, in addition to building psychological confidence, we also need to provide the skills to match. Creating confidence in car-driving skills, without teaching the skills, will lead to crashes.

It is the teacher's job to build this confidence, and this starts by believing in the potential of our students. If we believe that our students have the potential to change the world, they will perform to fulfill our expectations. In addition to self-confidence, we also need to rebuild the shattered confidence in our religion, heritage, and culture.

In order to act as a guide, a mentor, and a life-coach, we need to create a very different relationship from the one that we are accustomed to. In a market society, the teacher's only concern is to teach a subject; he has no other relationship with the student. Instead, we have to become helpers and partners of the students in their quest for knowledge. We have to switch the students from striving for scores to become knowledge seekers. This is a very difficult transition because the students have been burnt in the past. The thirst for knowledge comes naturally; it is part of human nature. But, students have been frustrated by past educational experiences. Both the subject matter and the teaching style has been designed to discourage students to search for knowledge. Students have tried many times and have failed. They have acquired the false belief that we are unable to learn. To switch their mindsets, we must change our own mindset and style of teaching as well as the subject matter.

We vastly underestimate our students. Instead of discussing the big problems facing our society, facing the ummah, facing the world, or facing us in our personal lives, we teach them nitty-gritty details of trivial questions which make no sense and deprive them of the excitement of learning. If we engage with them on problems which actually matter in the real world, and teach the technical stuff as part of what is needed to solve them, they would be very eager and excited and keen to learn. I have found personally that when I started this approach, it was immensely valuable for the students. The students became engaged and interested, and acquired skills.

Instead of the textbook approach which builds micro skills and defers engaging with the real world, we start with a real-world problem and then develop whatever tools, techniques,

theories we need to solve the problem. We can also address life experiences and discuss how we go about solving problems that we face in our lives. Whenever we relate something to the experience of the students either as individuals or social problems that we face as communities, they will be very eager to learn about those.

Lecturing is a very poor way to generate learning. To learn, the students must tackle the subject, must engage with it, and struggle with it. One way to do this is the inverted classroom. We assign students some reading or some materials or some video lecture and then in class we discuss it. One method that I found useful is to put up a list of questions that I plan to discuss. Put up one question on the blackboard, and ask every student to write the answer in front of them on a piece of paper. Now, exchange papers and then ask a student what is the answer that is written in front of you. Then, have a discussion – “is this the correct answer?” “What is the flaw in it?” “How should we grade it?” etc. In the end, all of the students acquire a much deeper knowledge not just by learning the right answer but by also learning the wrong answers and the way in which they are wrong. This is tremendously helpful for learning.

Changing the methodology for assignments and exams is also very valuable in generating learning. We can give them take-home exams. By habit, they will initially copy from each other and cheat. We have to inform them that the take-home will not be graded and *actually I need to know how well you're doing and by looking at your answer I will know what you have learned. If you cheat and deceive me, I will be unable to help you.* Initially, students do not believe this, but eventually they come to realize it. This takes the stress out of exams. They can self-grade the exams in their own classrooms. We can randomly distribute the exams among the students, and grade them together. We ask students to discuss the answers and come to an agreement on what is good and what is bad. This methodology for assignments and exams leads to much more comfort and better learning than the stressful methodology currently in use. It also provides us with a lot more information about what the students are learning, and about

the students who are good, as well as those who are having difficulties. We can create small groups of students and ask the good students to help those who are having trouble.

One question that came up on this material was that we teachers try very hard but when it comes to mid-term we find the students fail miserably. Actually, this should never happen. It should never come as a surprise to us what the students are doing on the midterm. If, at the end of every class we assess what the student has learned, we will know exactly what the students are capable of and what they are not capable of. We should be building skills in every class, and we should be evaluating our students progress in every class. If we do this, we will know exactly what the students are capable of doing, and will not have any surprises regarding their lack of learning on the mid-term. This is our job as teachers and if the students fail that means that we have failed them. Instead of thinking of exams as means of evaluating our students we should think of them as means of helping the students to learn

So to summarize, the job of the teachers is to inspire, to motivate, and to build skills. We have to teach the students that they can do whatever they want to do, and to teach them to reach for the stars. We have to motivate them that acquiring an education, even though it's a struggle, and even though studying and trying to solve challenging problems can be frustrating, it is worthwhile. Knowledge is extremely valuable, and can change our lives, and change the world. But in addition to this inspiration and motivation, you also need to build skills. If we teach students confidence but don't teach them how to perform, then performance failures will crush their confidence. So, confidence and skills should be developed in parallel. That's the job of the teacher and that's both very difficult and very challenging and also extremely rewarding. In fact, it is the most rewarding task in the world: all the Prophets ﷺ were sent as teachers. As teachers, we follow the highest profession.

May Allah T'aala give us the *Taufeeq* to fulfill our responsibilities, to change the lives of our students, and through them the world, for the better.

# Hajj - a Pilgrimage within Myself

By Namra Khurshid

It's been seven years.

To all the uncountable steps I took, my swollen feet, getting lost on the ramps of *jamaraat* because we couldn't find our camps, the perspiration of 45 degree heat and the goose bumps of *talbiah* in the desert air.

The first time I set foot on the Meccan land, I dreamt of treading onto this lifetime of a journey called Hajj.

I was blessed to perform this the same year. *Alhamdulillah*. Or maybe I should say that I was called on this journey by Him?

It was an honor to be invited.

It was an honor from the Inviter.

Indeed I was.

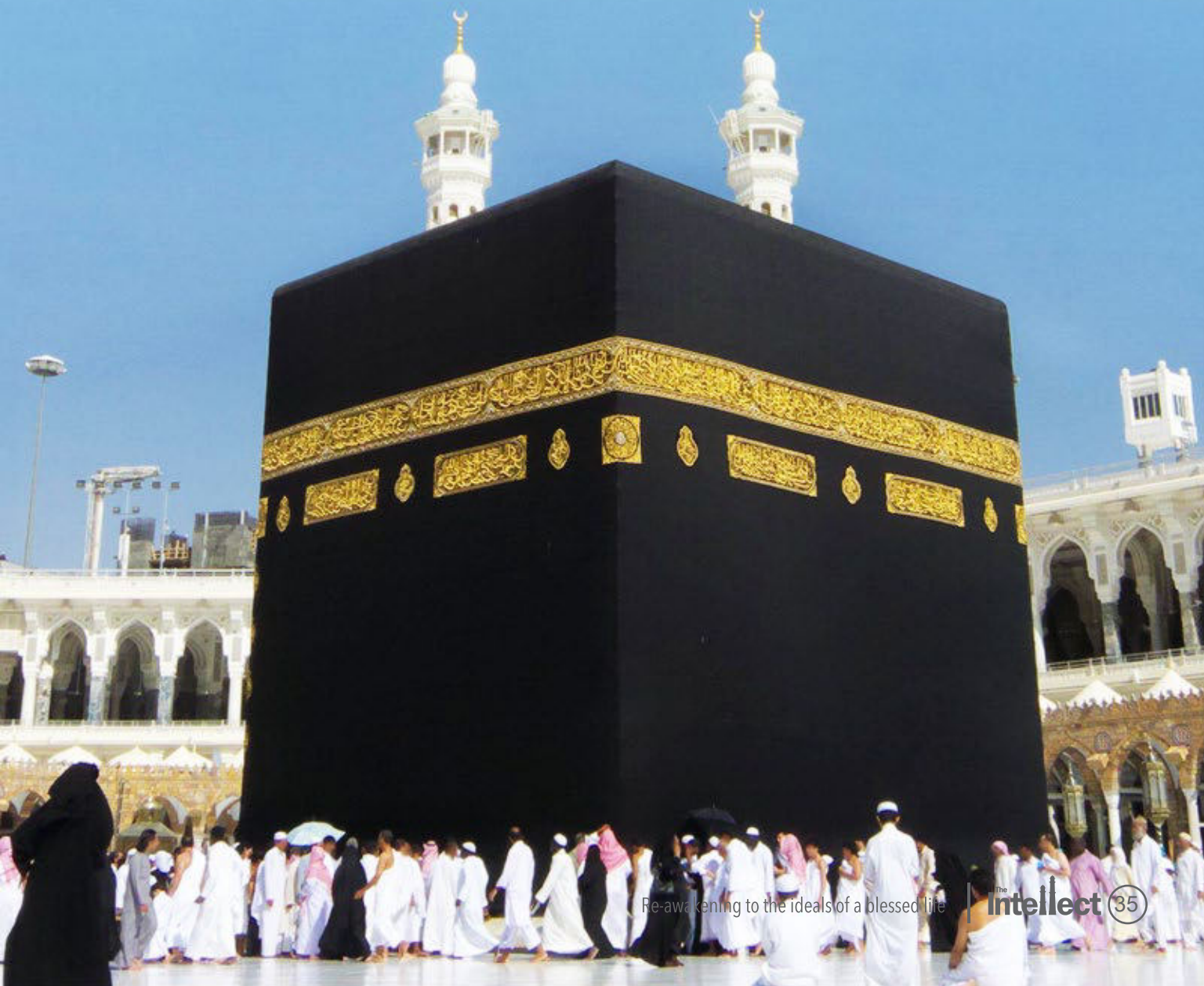
*The journey was written for you,  
For you hold the yearning for it,  
long ago in your heart, for years.*

*The endearing name of His  
and the divine path it is,  
this was written,*

*The enchanting talbiahs*

*The crystal Zamzam*

*This was written for you.*



## Making the intention

I and Muhammad made our niyahs several months ago. For *niyyah* is the name of intent. I began preparing three months afore *Zilhajj* in sheer excitement. I organized my stuff and over-packed till the last moment.

Fragrance free soap, extra clothes, dry fruits to munch on. My preparations mainly included preparing my *du'a* list, a list of *du'as* for others and a list of things we had to pack and need for Hajj

The whole vibe was overwhelming and cumbersome.

## Journeying to encamp in Mina

*Labbaik Allah humma labbaik*

*Labbaik la sharika laka labbaik*

*In-nal hamda*

*Wan-ni'mata*

*Laka walmulk*

*Laa sharika lak.*

O my Lord, here I am at Your service, here I am.

There is no partner with You,  
here I am.

Truly the praise  
and the provisions are Yours,  
and so is the dominion and sovereignty.

There is no partner with You.

There is no partner with You.

On Zilhajj 7, I called my mother and mother in law and bid them farewell. I tried to gulp my tears even though I was journeying from Makkah. The crowd of millions loomed in my mind, the chants of *talbiah* filled my ears and I experienced a sense of belonging like never before.

As our bus hurled towards our campsite, we hopped off and entered the white Mina camp. It was filled with warm fragrance of *bukhoor* that stimulated my olfactory nerves. As I entered in my room, other Hajjis arrived.

Some were reciting the Quran, some were adjusting their beds while others were busy greeting their peers. The air was filled with aromas of Arabic food.

## Gathering in Arafah;

*Labbaik Allah humma labbaik*

*Labbaik la sharika laka labbaik*

*In-nal hamda*

*Wan-ni'mata*

*Laka walmulk*

*Laa sharika lak.*

Today was the day of significance, our big camp had enormous space and there were a lot of women. We had our Arabian breakfast... olives, cheese and other delicacies were there for the special guests of Allah ﷻ .

Then the *khutbah* started and we spent our day praying in the ground of Arafah.

At lunch, a big round silver tray filled with rice, meat topped with brown onions was presented to us. It was delish. The feast of *laham mandi* was shared by a few other hands; it was a moment of true sisterhood. We ate to our fill and the taste of which I remember till date. The appetite did not tire us out till the night in *muzdalifah* - I didn't feel hungry - at all.

The memory of rain drops, the biggest Almarai container filled with Laban and the desert wind swaying across our faces was forever etched in my mind as we paced towards the *mataar* for our night in *Muzdalifah*.

It was a surreal experience on its own.

The container seemingly filled with *Laban* (an Arabic yoghurt and milk drink) was actually filled with intangible generosity that cannot be replaced.

The rain that started out of nowhere with wind was the sign of Allah ﷻ 's *Rahmah*. It truly felt as if the sinners were forgiven. *If this was not His mercy, then what was?*

*Were the cries of my Astaghfar accepted?  
The same voice echoed.*

## Stepping towards Muzdalifah

Now was the night to spend in *Muzdalifah*, I saw long queues proceeding towards the *mataar*, the security helicopters were taking rounds over our heads like eagles.

Hundreds of thousands of people gathering under one night sky chanted His name and whispered prayers to Him.

## Stoning at the Jamaraat

### *Zilhajj 10*

The scorching sun beamed atop our heads.

I saw an overly aged man walking with a crooked stick and arched back. He was managing a lone walk in *ihram* donned over a seemingly meek body.

I saw women having babies on their backs.

Black, white, lots of browns.... All walking towards stoning the *Shaytaan*. In what felt like the thousandth fraction of the second, the world became whole for me. The concept of unity and equality unfolded before my eyes.

We stoned the devil and walked away for our *tawaf-e-ziyarah*. Walking down on the *Jamaraat* ramp was a long stride - one that was heated. Lots of people handed out cold water and dates.

The evaporating water was showering on our heads. Our eyes could not see, for the sunshine was intense

## Circumambulating to the Core: Tawaf-e- Ziyarah

*Labbaik Allah humma labbaik*

*Labbaik la sharika laka labbaik*

*In-nal hamda*

*Wan-ni'mata*

*Laka walmulk*

*Laa sharika lak.*

Lots of black heads appeared in picture as I stepped inside the haram - men and women in white and black garbs. Multi-coloured umbrellas tugging over their heads, a crowd of hundreds of thousands emerged from all over the world only to worship Him. We tried to find space to perform our *Tawaf* and went to the roof top. The heat made it seem impossible for me to continue to walk.

How they used to do it back in the days was beyond my imagination. So we proceeded towards the second floor for our *tawaf*. I was awestruck by the spirit of unity and worship there.

It was submission to the Omnipotent alone.

We offered our *Tawafe ziyarah* and succumbed to the spirituality that was only meant for us.

Alhamdulillah, our Hajj was done.

I came out of my *lhram* but a thought kept lingering in my mind - the pilgrimage within myself has to continue.

The call to Hajj is really a call to our self.



Two essential reads from [albalagh.net](http://albalagh.net)

By Syed Rasheeduddin Ahmed

## Do they always List all the Ingredients? Not Really!

*“Processing aid” ingredients are not required to be listed by the FDA.*

Muslims in USA face the dilemma on how to avoid Haram food products every week when they go to shop for food products in supermarkets. Food products are very complex. Among the complexities is that sometimes there are hidden ingredients, which are not declared on ingredient lists. Many Muslims are not even aware of this practice. One of those hidden ingredients could be from a Haram source.

For example, Sunny Delight fruit drinks has gelatin in their products but it is not mentioned on the list of ingredients. This gelatin is from fish bones and it is the part of a plant pigment called Beta-Carotene. It provides yellow color to the food products.

FDA allows food and ingredient manufacturers to use addition ingredients not exceeding 2% of the finished food product or ingredient. These are called “processing aid” ingredients and they do not require mentioning on the ingredients list. The purpose of a processing aid ingredient is to overcome difficulties in processing a product or using ingredients in a food system.

Beta-Carotene (precursor of vitamin A) is a colorant producing a yellow to orange hue. It is not soluble in water. Since it is obtained from plant source, it is considered Halal,

but not so. The Beta-Carotene is available to food manufacturers in water-dispersible, oil-dispersible, and oil-soluble forms. Oil-dispersible and oil-soluble forms require the use of vegetable oil, thus these two forms of Beta-Carotene are Halal. Water-dispersible form of Beta-Carotene utilizes gelatin from pork or beef or fish or kosher slaughtered beef. Since juices or fruit drinks are water-based food systems and pure Beta-Carotene will not disperse in juices and fruit drinks, so gelatin is added to help Beta-Carotene disperse in fruit juices and fruit drinks. Otherwise pure Beta-Carotene will form lumps in fruit drinks. These three forms of Beta-Carotene are not 100% pure, they are composed of 98% Beta-Carotene and 2% either gelatin or vegetable oil. Gelatin and vegetable oil will not appear on the ingredient list.

Sunny Delight California and Florida style (only) fruit drinks are genuine kosher certified fruit drinks. They are Halal fruit drinks and do not contain alcohol in flavor. Fish gelatin was used in Beta-Carotene as the processing aid ingredient.

Genuine Kosher certified food product containing Beta-Carotene, as an ingredient will indicate that it is not made with pork gelatin. Otherwise, Muslims are also required to call the food manufacturer to confirm that there is no pork gelatin used in Beta-Carotene as a processing aid ingredient.



# Eating Human Hair by another Name?

*L-Cysteine from human hair is haram.*

Your bakery product may contain human hair and you may not even realize it. It comes in the form of L-Cysteine, a non-essential amino acid. Amino acids are the building blocks of proteins. There are 20 amino acids of which 8 are essential for human growth. The amount of these essential amino acids in a protein determines its quality. Casein, a milk protein, has the highest quality of protein whereas wheat proteins are lacking in amino acid Lysine, so they have less quality than milk protein.

L refers to levorotatory, a type of optical rotation of a compound under plane-polarized light.

L-Cysteine is used as a reducing agent in bakery products. It is used to:

1. Reduce the mixing time of the flour dough.
2. Stop shrinking of pizza crust after it is flattened.
3. Help move the dough through various bakery processing equipments or dough conditioners.

L-Cystein is used in Bagels, Croissants, Hard Rolls, Cake Donuts (from human hair in Dunkin Donut's cake donuts only, Yeast raised donuts do not contain L-Cysteine), Pita Bread, some Crackers and Melba Toast. It is also used as a nutrient in baby milk formula and dietary supplements.

The source of L-Cysteine is human hair, chicken

feathers, cow horn, petroleum by-products and synthetic material. It was reported by a food company that a Rabbi refused to Kosher certify L-cysteine from human hair obtained from a temple in India where hairs are cut because of religious rituals.

L-Cysteine is manufactured in Japan, China and Germany only. Human hair is the cheapest source for L-cysteine.

Some reports suggest that European Union countries are thinking to ban the use of L-Cystiene from human hair in food products. There is no pressure from consumers in USA and Canada to ban the L-Cysteine from human hair. It is a haram product for Muslims because it is a part of human body. Islam does not allow to consume any part of human body. Some Rabbis accept it as a Kosher ingredient saying it is dead part of the body but some do not.

Majelis Ulema of Indonesia has halal certified L-Cysteine from synthetic material for Ajinomoto Company and this L-Cysteine is used in USA by Caravan Products of New Jersey in their mixes for bakery industry.

Majority of L-Cysteine used in USA is from human hair, so Muslims in the US, please read the ingredients on the package. If you find L-Cysteine in it, call or write to the manufacturer and find out the source of L-Cysteine and also tell them that you cannot use it from human hair.



# *Memoirs of Hazrat Mufti* *Taqi Usmani* دامت برکاتہم

Translation: Kaiser Nizamani



Mawlana Abdur Rahman Faizabadi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a year ahead of us and was supposed to be in Dawra-e-Hadith class that year. However, Hadhrat Mawlana Nūr Ahmad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had sent him here at a time when no one lived here except a security guard and some goats. Furthermore, he entrusted all kinds of administrative duties to him and also got him married to a Burmese lady. May Allah Most High bestow His special grace upon both husband and wife. During that extremely difficult phase of Dār al-'Ulūm, they took upon themselves responsibilities of the entire Dār al-'Ulūm that only a true homemaker could accomplish. From overseeing construction works to fulfilling all kinds of needs of the students and teachers, they took care of everything. Whenever someone faced any problem, they would turn to none other than Hadhrat Mawlana Abdur Rahman. His sole helper was a security guard whose real name, we learned much later, was Abdul Aziz, but everyone called him "Lala". He was a cheerful young Pathan and was friends with all the students. He spoke very fast but guarded even the smallest belongings of Dār al-'Ulūm as a mother bird protects her nest.

When we first arrived here, Mawlana Abdur Rahman Faizabadi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ felt that since we were accustomed to eating home-cooked food, we might not be able to cope with the madrasa's kitchen food. Thus, with his wife's consent, he proposed to our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ to have our meals prepared at his house. Our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ accepted this proposal on the condition that he would bear the expenses. Consequently, may Allah Most High grant the best rewards to both husband and wife, our meals came from his house for some time. Despite their sincere intentions, taking this favour from them as a regular arrangement weighed heavily upon us. Therefore, after some time, our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ discontinued this arrangement and said to us: "*Alhamdulillah I can afford to hire a chef to cook separately for you, but my heart desires that you eat the same food as the other students, so that you can truly experience the life of a seeker of knowledge and attain its blessings.*" We gladly accepted

this change and began buying food from the madrasa's kitchen.

At that time, the kitchen was located in a garage-like room to the south-east of Dār al-'Ulūm. This room had no door, and a tin sheet served as the roof. Towards its north was a tandār (clay oven), beside which one or two stoves, fuelled by firewood or coal, were used to cook the curry. The daily menu consisted of chana dāl (split chickpeas) in the afternoon and a watery curry in the evening. But Mahmood the cook was such a craftsman that a tantalizing earthy aroma would waft from that very thin curry, which I still miss today. Since the kitchen had no door, particles from the sand outside would often find their way into whatever was being cooked, be it roti, lentils or curry. Respected Mawlana Mujeeb al-Rahman Momin Shahi (may Allah grant him a long life), who currently resides in Dhaka, was the manager of the kitchen. May Allah Most High grant him success in both the worlds; he would manage the kitchen with great frugality, and at that time, when procuring necessities in this remote desert was a very challenging task, he would perform his duties with great diligence. However, obviously he could neither control the sand-bearing winds nor exceed the budget.

Our respected mother رحمۃ اللہ علیہ would send us ghee every week. We would use it to fry our rotis for breakfast, and add it to the Chana Dāl for lunch as long as it lasted. Hadhrat Mawlana Shams al-Haq رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, who was a young man at the time and resided in the room adjacent to ours, taught us to fry small pieces of roti in ghee, put them in the Dāl, and then heat the Dāl. This recipe made the Dāl twice as delicious. Consequently, this would be our special meal whenever we got the opportunity to prepare it. Sometimes we would visit fields of green chilies and pluck some with the owner's permission. These would add further taste to the Dāl.

After having lived a royal life at home, acclimating ourselves to this life of isolation and cutting ourselves off from our luxurious urban life into this tough rural environment was no less than a mujahada (struggle) for us. I was around fourteen years old and had never

had to live away from my bustling household of parents, brothers and sisters. Thus, during the initial days, I would secretly cry to myself. But Allah Most High has created man's nature such that once he firmly resolves to carry out something which is difficult for him, gradually, it becomes a habit, and the difficulty also lessens. It was clear to us that in order to improve our education, we had to do this at all costs. We thus braced our minds for this, and in time we blended ourselves into this environment to such an extent that soon we found new means for our relaxation and enjoyment within this very environment. And I can say this without fear of rebuttal, at least for myself, that though I remain ignorant today, had I not undergone those small inconveniences at the time, I would have turned out even more ignorant.

We spent the first few months in the same Room Number 16 of the student hostel. Later, a patron of Dār al-'Ulūm, Hajji Kabīr al-Dān, who was a businessman from East Pakistan, built a small two-room house near the classrooms and donated it to Dār al-'Ulūm. This was also to serve as his residence whenever he visited Karachi. He proposed to us to move into one of the rooms. We thus moved into that house. This small house was far apart from other buildings. Since we would be near our classrooms during the day, we would not feel its isolation. But dead silence would enshroud us at night. However, a dirt track passed by the northern side of this house, along which some camel cart would trundle along once in a while, and the ringing of bells around their necks would be the only sound heard in the silence. Other than this, especially in the cold winter nights, hyenas would often besiege our house, and we could hear their cries till late into the night. But this house, owing to its relatively bigger size, was more comfortable, and the greatest facility was a bathroom located right outside the rooms. We thus did not need to use the common bathrooms. Later, when our paternal cousin respected Mawlana Khurshid Alam (RH) graduated from Deoband and joined as a teacher here, one room was allotted to him. This room served as his classroom during the day and his residence at other times. And we

two brothers and Mawlana Hakīm Musharraf Husayn ﷺ stayed in the other room. Since this house was close to the classrooms, several other teachers would also sometimes stop by to rest between classes.

Rural life, while comprising some hardships, offers some unique benefits which cannot be acquired in urban life. As I have mentioned before, the location of Dār al-'Ulūm was such that to its west was a bleak and barren desert until one reached the sea, but to its east was a vast lush garden. Beyond that was a beautiful orchard, with trees of various fruits such as sapodilla, guava, lemon, etc. lined in a beautiful orderly pattern. This was called the garden of Pir Bakhsh. Besides this, till about a kilometer to the north of Dār al-'Ulūm were fields of chilies and other vegetables. And beyond them began Sharafi Goth. At the farther end of Sharafi Goth is a government-owned farm for animal breeding, which is known as Cattle Farm to this day. Besides raising and breeding high breed oxen, various scientific experiments were also conducted there. This cattle farm owned vast tracts of land. To the south were thriving lush fields, extending for miles, for the cattle to graze. They extended up to where Shah Faisal Colony is located today. These spectacles of nature were simply not available in city life. Thus, after Asr prayer, having studied for the entire day, we would enjoy those scenes of nature in various ways.

I have made a mention of my nephew Hakīm Musharraf Husayn several times. He was two years older than me, but I was his maternal uncle and a year ahead of him in class. Thus, our age difference and relationship offset each other, as a result of which he was my only friend who was with me in everything, from our childhood games and fun to our life in the madrasa. After Asr, the two of us would leave the madrasa and first go to Goth, where there was a shack-like restaurant known as "Shīdal Hotel", named after its owner. We would have tea there and then head to the fields and gardens. The guavas in those gardens were especially fragrant and delicious, and the landowner would allow us to pluck them by hand for eight Annas (half a rupee) per kilo. Where could one find such

pleasure in the city? After spending our time in those green fields after Asr, we would return to the madrasa, light the lantern, and study our lessons for the next day until Isha without any distractions. After Isha, we would heat our food, bought from the madrasa's kitchen, using a stove. It would often be thin, soupy curry. One benefit of it being as thin as water was that if it spilled on our clothes (which happened to me often), removing the stains was not difficult. We would have it with Tanduri Nan bought before Asr, and with hunger gnawing at us, we had come to find it tasty. Immediately after, it would be our time for Taktar, which would continue under the lantern's light late into the night.

During our initial days in Dar al-'Ulum, our classmates had formed a volleyball team. We would play after Asr, and besides us students, Hadhrat Mawlana Shams al-Haq and Hadhrat Mawlana Khurshid Alam (may Allah have mercy on them both) would also join us. Hadhrat Mufti Rashid Ahmad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ said to us: "If you were to play "Banot" instead of volleyball, I will also join you."

"Banot" was a game played with sticks, which demonstrated the impressive art of wielding and fighting with a stick. An expert in "Banot" can single-handedly deal with an entire crowd. This game was taught in Dar al-'Ulum Deoband, which had a dedicated teacher for it. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib had learnt this art there, and all four of my elder brothers would practice it since their time in Deoband. Our eldest brother, respected Muhammad Zaki Kaifi, was considered a decent master of this art. Thus, as a result of Hadhrat's campaigning, we practiced Banot after Asr for some time.

We had received training for civil defense and first aid during our studies in Nanak Warah. Thereafter, we desired to receive formal military training. When we presented this request to our respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, he sought the services of a retired military inspector, and to the best of my memory, we began receiving training from him after Asr from 10 August 1958. He began by teaching us how to perform a parade, and then conducted practice sessions for techniques in subduing an enemy. He also taught us how to

climb buildings and walls, and then moved on to techniques of climbing while carrying the injured. Finally, he taught us, using artificial guns, how to use firearms. But this training only continued for a short period and was thereafter discontinued.

That year, we were to study Mulla Hasan, رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and Siraji under Hadhrat Mawlana Mufti Rashid Ahmad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ; Hidayat Akhira and Maybadhi under Hadhrat Mawlana Salimullah Khan رحمۃ اللہ علیہ; Tawdih under Hadhrat Mawlana Akbar Ali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ; Sharh 'Aqaid and Husun Hamidiyya under Hadhrat Mawlana Qari Ri'ayatullah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ; and Diwan Hamasa under Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Idris Mirathi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ.

All of these respected teachers, MashaAllah, were unparalleled in their knowledge, scholarship and wonderful style of teaching, and their captivating lectures had imbued beauty into this tough desert lifestyle.

I have already mentioned Hadhrat Mawlana Mufti Rashid Ahmad رحمۃ اللہ علیہ in Nuqush-e-Raftagan. The reality is that we owe a lot to him. Three of our classes were assigned to him that year; Mulla Hasan, Siraji and Tawdih.

I have mentioned before that after Sharh Tahdhib, I did not find much interest in higher books of mantiq (logic). But Hadhrat's fascinating style of teaching made even those books interesting. It was not my habit to prepare for lessons of mantiq beforehand, but I would prepare for Mulla Hasan beforehand, and would also listen to the lecture attentively and do Taktar later. In this way, there was a considerable improvement in the weaknesses I felt in my knowledge of mantiq.

The second book was Siraji, which is a famous book on the Islamic laws of inheritance. Hadhrat had written a book on inheritance named "Tashih al-Mirath" in which he had explained the laws of inheritance in an easy-to-understand manner. Furthermore, he had devised a methodology, based on mathematical techniques, for calculating the shares of inheritance, which was different from the old methodology. Instead of teaching us Siraji, Hadhrat taught us the foundations of the laws of inheritance based on "Tashih al-Mirath" and gave us extensive

practice exercises, to the extent that we were able to solve complex problems of inheritance very easily. Later, studying Siraji became easy for us.

The third important class under Hadhrat was Taṣrīḥ. Besides Fiqh, Hadhrat possessed extraordinary prowess in astronomy and mathematics, and we greatly benefitted from this expertise during our classes of Taṣrīḥ. After Taṣrīḥ, Hadhrat also taught us, as an additional text beyond the syllabus and at his own initiative, a part of "Khulāsa al-ḥisāb", and also trained us in using the astrolabe, the sine quadrant and the astrolabe quadrant. (These were ancient instruments used for measurements in astronomy and geography.) Taṣrīḥ covers Ptolemaic astronomy, which Hadhrat would explain using a ball. At the same time, he would also explain modern Pythagorean theories and concepts.

The teacher of teachers, Hadhrat Mawlana Salīmullah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, was in his youth at the time. He was a student of Shaykh al-Islam Hadhrat Mawlana Husayn Ahmad Madani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, and after having served as a teacher in my second Shaykh (spiritual mentor) Hadhrat Mawlana Masīhullah Khan's رحمۃ اللہ علیہ madrasa Miftahul Uloom in Jalalabad for a long time, had come to Pakistan with the intention of permanently settling here. That year, two of our books, Hidāya Ākhirayn and Maybadhī, were under him. If my memory serves me right, his class of Maybadhī was in the evening on the first day of term. Thus, the very first class we attended under him was of Maybadhī. By nature, I was not much inclined towards philosophy and mantiq (logic) and would suffice with the compulsory books thereof. As for philosophy, this was the first and last book I studied. May Allah Most High bestow His special favours upon him in both the worlds. He delivered the very first lecture with such charm that I became intensely fond of both book and teacher, and, as opposed to my previous habit, I studied Maybadhī the entire year with hard work and great zeal. The second class under him was Hidāya Ākhirayn. That too, MashaAllah, went really well. Hadhrat رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had studied Hidāya Ākhirayn under Shaykh al-Adab wa al-Fiqh Mawlana Aizaz Ali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, due to which

he liked to follow in the footsteps of his teacher. He would therefore always arrive punctually in class, and would deliver the lecture for two continuous hours. He would enchant us with his ever-smiling face and captivating style of speaking, such that we would end the lesson without a trace of fatigue.

Our third teacher that year was Hadhrat Mawlana Akbar Ali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. He was a highly competent and beloved teacher at Mazahir al-Ulum Saharanpur; well-liked by Shaykh al-Hadith Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Zakariyya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, and oft-present in the gatherings of Hakim al-Ummah Hadhrat Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. It was our good fortune that he decided to migrate to Pakistan and accepted to teach at Dār al-'Ulūm. A specialty of his style of teaching was that he would skillfully demystify the most abstruse topics, such that the student's mind would not be burdened much. His lecture would be so well-arranged and gripping that were it to be penned down word-for-word, it could be published as an engrossing read without needing much editing. "Tawdīḥ", the book on principles of jurisprudence, was assigned to him that year, and he taught us in such a simplified manner that we did not even realize that this was supposed to be a complicated book. It was much later, when I had to teach it myself, that I realized that the book is not as easy as we considered it to be while attending his classes. May Allah Most High have infinite mercy on him.

That year, we were fortunate to have another prized addition to the teachers of Dār al-'Ulūm. Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Idrīs Mīrathi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was running an educational institute named "Idāra Sharqiyya" in Jacob Line at the time, where students were prepared for exams of Oriental languages (Arabic for the exam of Fāzil-e-'Arabi, Persian for Fāzil-e-Farsi, Urdu for Fāzil-e-Urdu, etc.). However, he wished to serve as a teacher at a madrasa where the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum was taught. That year, he expressed his desire to teach at Dār al-'Ulūm voluntarily. I have mentioned before that in those days, travelling from the city to the new building of Dār al-'Ulūm was quite strenuous. But Hadhrat made this great sacrifice every day

by travelling from the city until Landhi bus stop and then walking the last mile to Dār al-'Ulūm. He was highly habituated to having tea and pan, but it was difficult to arrange for them in that remote place at the time. He would therefore bring along a supply of both with himself. We studied "Dīwān Ḥamāsa" under him that year. The great diligence with which he taught us that book is among the very pleasant memories of our student life. He would not only explain the poems in Ḥamāsa with excellent elucidation of the meanings of Arabic idioms and proverbs, but would also vividly describe the entire tribal and cultural outlook of life before and at the beginning of Islam.

That year, instead of forming one big group for Takrār, students were paired up. Among our classmates, we had become especially close with two Burmese students because they would cook very tasty fish. They had invited us over once or twice, and we loved it so much that later, if a long time would pass since the last time we had it, we would request them to invite us again. One of them was Mawlana Muhibbullah رحمته الله, and the other was Mawlana Mufti Abdullah (may Allah grant him a long life) (who is now a teacher and a supervisor for Takhaṣṣuṣ Fi al-Iftā (specialization in issuing fatwas) at Dār al-'Ulūm). Mawlana Muhibbullah was assigned to my elder brother Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Rafi' رحمته الله, while Mufti Abdullah had to cope with me. Perhaps out of consideration for me, he asked me to do the Takrār, and I accepted the offer without any hesitation. Consequently, I would take a small flickering lantern after Isha to a corner of an under-construction round room in the middle of the classrooms. Mawlana would arrive there as well, and I would conduct the Takrār for all the books. With regards to Burmese students, I always found that the intelligent and capable among them would be extremely brilliant and competent. Mawlana (may Allah grant him a long life) would quietly listen to my Takrār and never utter a single word during it. May Allah Most High forgive me, but I misconstrued this to mean that perhaps he did not fully grasp the lessons. One day, I could not attend the lesson of Maybadhi due to some reason. The lesson

that day was about "Burhan Sullami", which was considered quite a difficult topic. After the lesson, when I tried to understand it by going through the reading material, I could not grasp it. When it was time for Takrār, I told Mawlana Abdullah: "I couldn't attend the lesson today, and neither could I understand it well enough from the reading material to conduct its Takrār, so you do it today." Owing to his taciturn personality and my above-mentioned misunderstanding, I feared he might make an excuse or shy away. But I was pleasantly surprised when Mawlana immediately agreed. When he conducted the Takrār that day, his true brilliance shone through. He presented that difficult topic in such a fascinating manner that I grasped all the points I previously could not. I still remember the joy I felt at his Takrār that day. May Allah Most High keep him safe with 'afiyah and continuously increase his ranks. My love for him, which began in the days we used to do Takrār together, has only increased since then. Besides his vast knowledge, I always envied him for his love for worship, his Zuhd and Taqwa, and his unflinching determination. His unwavering resolve can be gauged by the fact that he memorized the Noble Qur'an in the very year of Dawra-e-Hadith. Even today, he is not only a teacher of Hadith in Dār al-'Ulūm, but is also among the most respected companions in Darul Ifta. He is the one supervising Takhaṣṣuṣ Fi al-Iftā.

Thus, our academic year came to an end, and my results in the annual exams were as follows:

Book/Subject	Mark
<i>Taṣrīh</i>	50
<i>Ḥamāsa</i>	50
<i>Maybadhī</i>	47
<i>Tawḍīh</i>	50
<i>Mulla Ḥasan</i>	47
<i>Hidāya Ākhirayn</i>	50
<i>Sirāji</i>	49
<i>Ḥusāmi</i>	45