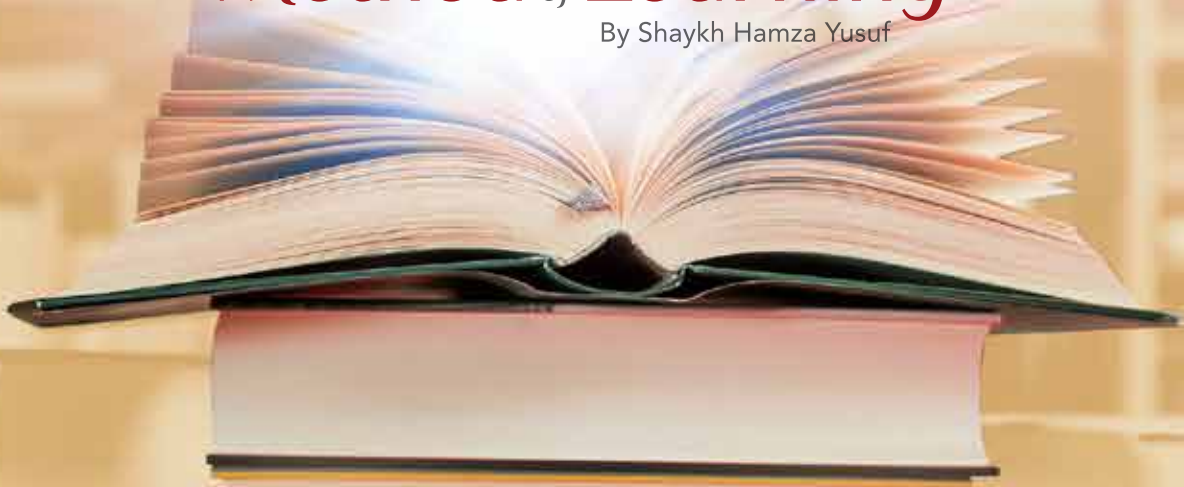


# Foreword to Imam al-Zarnuji's *Instruction of the Student – The Method of Learning*

By Shaykh Hamza Yusuf



The Islamic Community is one rooted in the concept of *adab*, which is usually glossed by translators as "courtesy." But indeed, it is much more profound in its scope, for *adab* also signifies "erudition" and, in certain academic contexts, the "humanities." The idea is that the man of letters is one who puts words in their "proper" place, and this nuance resides in the essence of the word *adab*. In the Arabic language, the imperative or command mood is the same as the mood used for requests without any difference other than the tone of voice of the person giving the command or making the request. Arabic grammarians remark that the difference is whether the one employing the mood is over or under the one being commanded or requested, that is, whether one is in a position of authority or subject to authority. What this implies is that people are aware of their place in a hierarchy. We now live in a time when "hierarchy" is a tabooed word. The idea of one being over another is an anathema to modern man; but to the ancients, this was a sign of good breeding. After all, how could a pious scholar be equated with an ignorant man? The Quran asks, *Are they the same - those who know and those who do not know? (39:9)*. An answer is not given in the verse. According to the rhetoricians, none is needed because the answer is obvious. Our Prophet ﷺ said, "I was commanded to treat people according to their stature." This in no way negates the statement in the light of Sacred Law, all people are equal, but in their accomplishments and divine success (*tawfiq*),

they differ markedly. And should such differences ever cease, then humanity is endangered: "You will continue to be healthy as a society as long as you have degrees of excellence, but should you all become the same, you will be destroyed," said the Prophet ﷺ. This profound hadith implies that the levelling of accomplishments, knowledge, and talents in a society, by its very nature, is a sign that excellence is removed from human works. This is the modern age of nihilistic leveling.

Excellence is removed from our schools by dumbing down the students and leveling them to functional illiterates. It is removed from our politics because those chosen to lead are mainly those who covet it and not those who are morally, intellectually, and spiritually qualified for the office. At the root of Islamic tradition, however, there is *adab*, and at the root of *adab* is knowledge acquired painstakingly at the hands of those who know. Muslims, unlike many modern non-Muslim relativists, believe that knowledge is not only absolute but is a gift from God to man, beginning with the first man and continuing until today in an unbroken chain of prophetic dispensations. What behooves men and women of every generation is to learn this knowledge and exert themselves to the utmost in order to understand it and apply it in the context of their society and its particular needs. To learn this knowledge - which in itself leads to *adab* (or proper comportment) with Allah, His Messenger, and Allah's creation - on requires a modicum of *adab* at the outset. This is the core

subject of this book: what a teacher and a student need to know in order to render fruitful the process of learning and teaching. In reality, it is Allah who is the true Teacher; and both the mortal teacher and student are indeed learners on a shared journey. For the Muslim, knowledge is not ultimately taken from men but from the Maker of men and from His beloved Prophet ﷺ, who is a man but not like other men, in the same way a ruby is a stone but not like other stones.

In the early history of Islam, the men and women of sacred knowledge were able to take directly from the sacred texts of the Quran and Hadith without recourse to others except for the purpose of ascertaining the veracity of the transmission of the Prophet's statements and to learn the primary texts. As time passed, spiritual aspirations waned and people lost the ability to even master the vehicle of the Arabic language to a level that enabled one to fully understand the texts. As such knowledge became codified in secondary and then tertiary texts, and men became keys to understanding those texts. There is something deeply unsatisfying about studying secondary texts, and, even worse, tertiary texts. Children who are at the first stage of learning mathematical symbols cannot read Euclid's *Element*. Similarly, a child learning basic vocabulary cannot jump directly to understanding Shakespeare's sonnets. The Arabs say, "The food of adults is poison when given to children." We are indeed spiritual and intellectual children, and until we mature through learning and mastering our own tradition, we can not safely trust ourselves to delve into primary texts for other than blessings and moral guidance, legal guidance taken directly from texts is only permissible when one has reached the highest level of intellectual mastery in the Islamic scholarly tradition.

The reprinting of this book (*Instruction of the Student - The Method of Learning*) is a start in that direction and should be learned at the outset of one's journey. I personally first read this text as a young student of sacred law in the United Arab Emirates over eighteen years ago and took it with me on my journey to the land of Chinqit and the Maghrib to study with men who embodied its meanings. I still read it from time to time and am reminded of its permanent relevance to the lifelong learner, which is, in fact, one of the defining characteristics of being Muslim: "Learning is from the cradle to the grave," said our beloved Prophet ﷺ. (We are only recently coming to understand the profound implications of that statement in light of recent

neurological breakthroughs concerning how the brain learns from the outset of birth until death when the proper stimuli for learning are given.)

Our Muslim nation is suffering from ignorance and nothing more. Ignorance, moreover, is a permanent status if *adab* is lost. In the West, scholars are still honored with endowments to continue their research unfettered by the concerns of such mundane things as rent and the price of onions. Unfortunately, in the Muslim world, some of our greatest scholars are impoverished and forced to take undignified jobs with tyrannical governments, thus losing their freedom and their respect among the people. Endowments that once acted as social security for students and teachers all over the Muslim world have been usurped by the ministries of endowments. Our madrasas are now museums; our teachers are mere employees; and our students of sacred law no longer come from the intellectually gifted sons and daughters of our community but rather from uneducated families motivated by the possibility of securing the job of imam in a government masjid. This is often coupled with a mentality of extreme poverty and a crude desire for the empty stuff of this world.

Our Prophet ﷺ said, "True wealth is the wealth of the soul." There is no doubt that in order to maintain his dignity with Allah and then with men, a scholar must have a rich soul with no dependencies on man. On the other hand, our Prophet ﷺ said, "Poverty is nearly a type of disbelief." No scholar should live in poverty unless he so chooses, and no student sincere in his studies should suffer the concerns of material well-being. The way out of this is two-fold. First, the teachers and students must purify their intentions and be sincere in making their pursuits purely for the sake of Allah and the honor of His beloved Messenger's community. Allah has promised that those who have piety will be provided for whence they did not expect. They must also heed the advice of Sidi Ahmad Zarruq who says in his book *al-I'āna*, "Never expect anything from the creation of Allah, but rather expect things from the Creator, Allah." Second, businessmen and other people of means must reinvigorate our endowments, particularly in places where the hand of the government cannot reach and does not usurp. This is certainly the case in the West, and this book should be a starting point for the revival of this Islamic intellectual tradition that has always been the preamble to Islamic Renaissance; and we have 1400 years of history to prove this point.

# A New Challenge?

By Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Islam has experienced many an apostatic upsurge during the course of its history. The most powerful of them was the one that manifested itself among the Arab tribes soon after the Prophet's death. By this we mean the mightily rebellious movement that was nipped in the bud by Caliph Abu Bakr through his matchless courage and strength of will. The then, again, the second great onslaught of apostasy within Islam was the widespread swing towards Christianity with the expulsion of the Muslims from Spain. This stole into other countries too that were then under the demotion of the Western Christian powers, and was actively supported and encouraged by Christian missionaries. Apart from these well-known episodes, there are also some stray instances such as that of a few faint-hearted Muslims

going over to some other faith in India. But such cases have been very rare, and the fact is that with the exception of the large-scale conversion of Muslims to Christianity in Spain, if it can be described as an apostatic movement, the general opinion of Islamic historians is that the Muslim millat has never seriously had to encounter a general threat of apostasy.

Whenever an incident of this nature took place in Islam it always produced a two-fold reaction within the Muslim society: intense resentment and anger against the erring party, and the termination of social relations. Anyone who had the misfortune to renounce the Faith was the subject of the unqualified contempt and resentment of the Muslims and he automatically ceased to be a member of the Islamic society in which he had been born and brought up. All contacts and relations between an apostate and his kinsmen became non-existence immediately. The walking over from the fold of Islam into that of another faith meant indeed the walking over from one world into another. The entire family of the apostate would turn its face against him. Now, neither bonds of kinship, marriage, brotherhood nor inheritance remained. A larger wave of apostasy would produce international repercussions and arouse at once the self-protective instincts of Islam and the Muslims. Intellectuals, religious leaders and preachers of the Islamic country where such a thing occurred would array themselves as a united whole against the calamity. They would probe into its causes and draw pointed attention to the virtues and superior merits of

Islam. A current of agony and disgust would run through the entire body of the Muslim society that was immediately concerned with it and shake it up at all levels. The elite as well as commoners would make it their own thought and concern. Such was the way in which incidents of apostasy would react upon the consciousness of Muslims although these were neither widespread nor of much consequence in life.

Now, however, the Islamic World has been confronted for some time with a threat of apostasy which casts its shadow from end to end. In its dimensions and vigour it has by far superseded all previous threats. No country is safe from its sinister influence. But, country is a far cry. There are, in fact, very few families which can claim to have been left unaffected by it. This is an apostasy that has come into the Muslim East in the wake of political domination by the West, and it has posed the most serious challenge to Islam since the days of the Prophet.

What does apostasy mean in Islamic terminology? The exchanging of one faith, of one spiritual creed for another; the refutation of the teachings the Prophet (peace be upon him) brought into the world, the rejection of the ideals and precepts that have been continuously attributed to him and are accepted in Islam positively as truths. And what course does an apostate adopt? He denies the Divine Apostleship of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his Companions) and adopts the creeds of Christianity, Judaism or Hinduism or becomes an atheist and rejects Prophecy, Revelation and the concept of the Hereafter. This was the sense in which the people of former times understood the term apostasy. Anyone who abandoned his Faith took the way of the Church if he adopted Christianity, and of the Temple if he accepted Hinduism, and so on. His apostatic deed would be there for everyone to see; there would be no concealment of it. Fingers would be raised at him and the Muslims would cease to associate with that person. In brief, such apostasy was not hidden from public view.

Europe introduced into the East concepts and

ideologies that were based on the repudiation of the fundamentals of spiritual belief and the rejection of an Omnipotent Power holding sway over the entire universe, of that Supreme Consciousness which brought the world into creation and in Whose hands lay its dispensation. (Beware! It is He Who both create and it is He alone Who rules): concepts which had their origin in the denial of the Unknown, the Supernatural, Divine Revelation, Apostleship and transcendental values— this was the common feature of all the branches of thought brought by the West no matter whether they dealt with biology and evolution or with ethics, psychology, politics or economics. However varied their field of study, they all had as their meeting ground a materialistic approach to man and his world, and an interpretation of phenomena along materialistic lines. These ideals and concepts invaded the East and penetrated deep into the inner recesses of its soul. This Western materialistic philosophy has undoubtedly been the greatest religion preached in the world after Islam. It is the greatest religion from the point of view of the extensiveness of its scope, the profoundest religion from the point of view of the depth to which its roots go and the strongest religion from the point of view of the capacity it possesses for conquering the hearts and minds of men. Educated and intelligent sectors in Muslim countries have simply been bewitched by it: they delightfully drink it in and eagerly assimilate in. They have become a follower of the new faith almost in the same way as a Muslim follows Islam or a Christian follows Christianity, to the extent that they now adore it with all their hearts, revere its ideals and swear by the greatness of its founders and torchbearers.

They propagate its teachings, denounce the creed that may run counter to it and forge links of brotherhood and fraternity with other followers of this new faith. Thus, this new faith has become a sort of international family.

### **The Religion of Irreligiosity:**

What, then, is this new faith — however shy its protagonists may feel in giving it the name of a faith? It consists of, as we have said earlier, the rejection of that All-Knowing, Well-

Informed Being who is the Creator of the Worlds, the Owner of Destiny and the Architect of the life of Futurity, the Last Day, Heaven, Hell, Divine Reward and Punishment, Prophecy,

Apostleship and the Holy Law, of the Truth that God has ordained for all mankind, and of obedience to the Holy Prophet. It rejects the idea that all salvation and enlightenment are dependent on that loyalty, rejects the principle that Islam is that final and eternal Message from the Divine which enfolds all that is good in this world and the Next, and embodies a programme of life which is higher and superior to every other

system, and of the fact that the world has been created for man and man for God.

The ruling classes of Muslim States everywhere today are generally the followers of this new creed, although they may not all belong to the category so far as ardency and strength of spiritual allegiance are concerned. There is no doubt that in these classes are found individuals who bear faith in God and are believers in Islam but the dominant feature of them all is, alas, nothing else but materialism and a Western philosophy of life rooted in atheism.

## *I Only Express my Humility!*

It is said about Haji Imdad Ullah Muhajir Makki رحمته الله that whenever he experienced any minor difficulty, he would moan and groan excessively. Someone once said to him, "Hazrat, outwardly this seems to be against submission to the will of Allah ﷻ and is a sign of expressing intolerance. We ought to be patient with the decree of Allah. Your reaction is completely the opposite."

Hadrat replied, "Do you wish that I be bold in front of my Allah? Should I display such boldness that I can withstand any calamity that He places upon me? Rather, I express my humility and submission that 'O Allah, I am not worthy of being tested. I do not have any strength at all. Forgive me without engaging me in any trial. Therefore, I express my helplessness, inability, and my dependence upon you.'

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# *He Knoweth All*

By Zawjah Asim

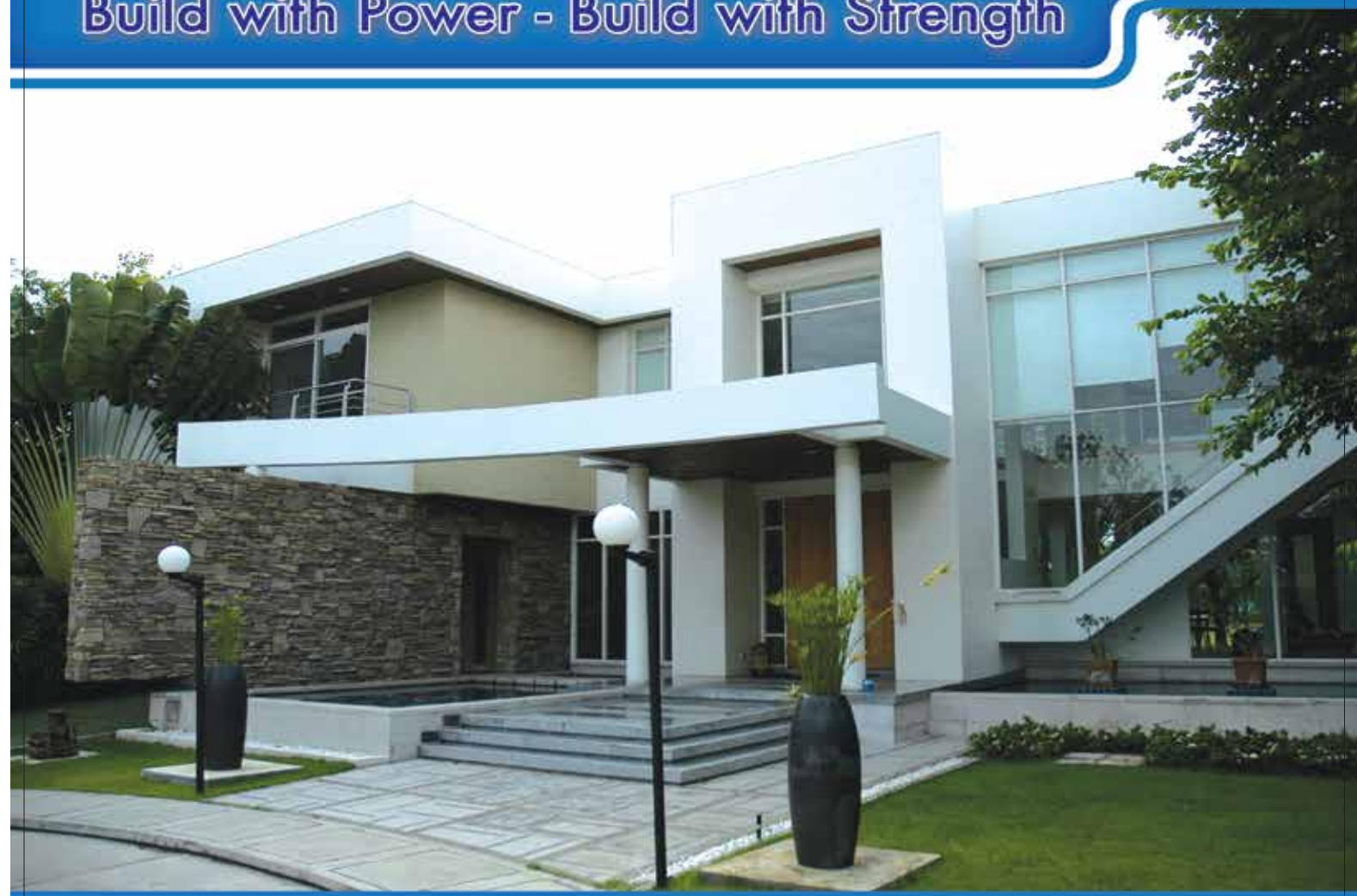
He saved you from fire  
When you were nearing it  
And He knoweth all,  
While you do not.  
The sadness overpowers you,  
The smashing pain hurts,  
'Cause He prepares you for life's calamities  
And He knoweth all,  
While you know not.

And there is a plan that you plan  
And there is a plan that He plans  
And what realises is His,  
For He knoweth all,  
While you know not.

Tis' a strategy He makes,  
For us 'tis unforeseen,  
And the labyrinth will soon be solved  
For He knoweth all,  
While you know not.

The thick and thin demarcates  
The treasures of thy sojourn  
Hold onto those loyals  
He saved you from fire  
When you were nearing it  
He knoweth all,  
And you know not.

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# Health

By Hakeem Shamim Ahmed  
Translation by Syeda Samar Mubashir

*From Letters to a Daughter by her Loving Father...*

My dearest daughter, lots and lots of warm wishes for you!

Dear, you must have heard that, "Health is Wealth". In reality, all the pleasures, happiness and success in life is dependent upon good health as well as positive thinking. It is said that, "A sound mind is in a sound body", which means that intelligence is also a product or gift of good health! The great guide, our Prophet ﷺ regarded health as a huge blessing, and commanded us to protect our health. Protecting health from illness is not just a personal requirement, but rather it is a national necessity, for healthy people will form a healthy nation. Good health does not refer to being fat; instead, it means proper functioning of all the organs in the body.

As you already know that in the past century, medical sciences have made such fast progress that our elders could have never imagined it. There has been a remarkable progress in the field of diagnosis and treatment of diseases. As a result of this, the average age of people today has increased. On the other hand, it has been very difficult to treat diseases like Cancer, Aids, Hepatitis and

cardiac diseases. Scientists are of the view that the rise in these diseases is basically a result of our diet. The diet that is being consumed in the different parts of the world today is not balanced because of the change in our lifestyles and other factors. This has been causing rise in dangerous diseases. Obviously, you cannot use spoiled fuel and expect a machine to function well.

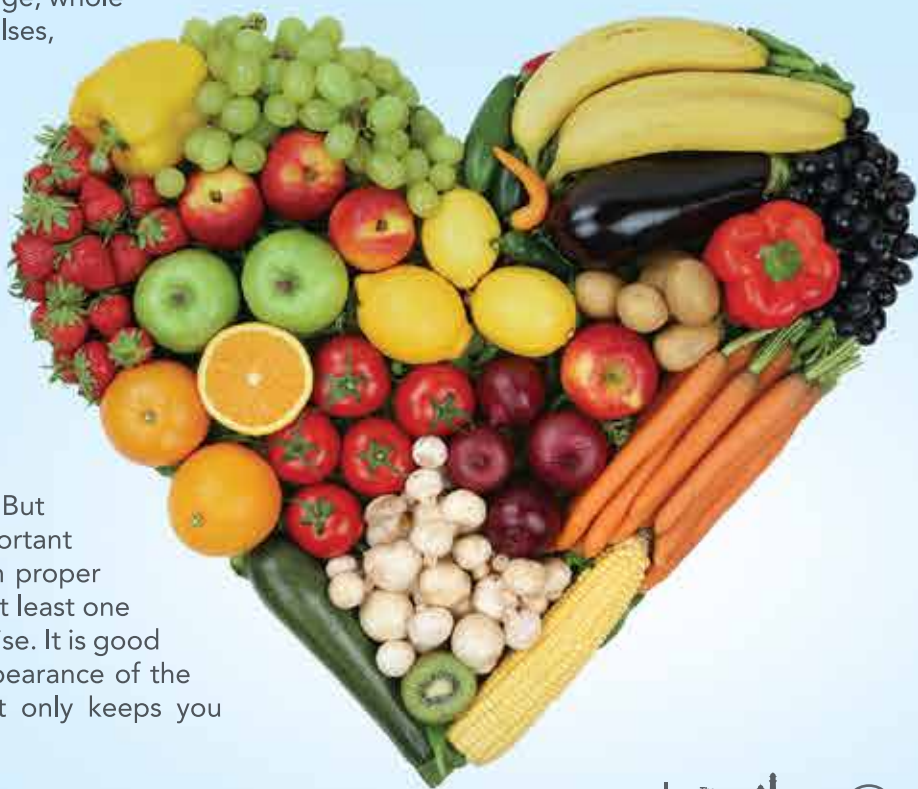
Remember that many harmful foods do not produce instant results; rather, their aftereffects take years in showing up. Now it is up to you as to which foods you prefer. So, it is important to see what we are eating, how much we are eating, how we are eating, and how many times we are eating. All of these factors affect our health, our personalities and feelings throughout our lives. According to modern research, if you take care of the following things, then you will find positive health outcomes:

1. Never skip breakfast. Often young girls are unable to have breakfast because they are in a hurry in the morning. A nourishing breakfast is essential for good health.
2. Keep the intake of red meat, sugar, oily things, things made from white flour (all purpose flour), cold drinks, burger, chips and other such fast foods as minimum as possible. And increase the intake of porridge, whole wheat chapaati, vegetables, pulses, fruits, fish, and skimmed milk.
3. Drink at least 8 to 10 glasses of water per day. It is beneficial for system of the entire body.
4. Take as many calories as needed by your body. If you consume calories in excess, then you are likely to become fat. In this regard, it would be better if you consult a dietary physician.
5. Exercise is good for everyone. But for women, exercise is very important to keep their body smart and in proper shape. Make sure you take out at least one hour for morning walk and exercise. It is good for both internal health and appearance of the body. Plus, walking around not only keeps you

mentally active, but also helps keep your weight under control. Remember, exercise benefits are subject to punctuality. So make sure you don't skip exercise.

So my dear daughter, I have already told you pivotal principles for maintaining good health, but the actual thing is working upon those principles. First thing you should know is that your health is for you. So you are the one who has to take care of your health. These days, parents, siblings, children, spouses are all busy in their own lives. Moreover, no one else can take care of your health always. So in order to keep yourself fit, be the person in charge of your own health.

Taking care of one's own health is one's duty as well as one's right. And if someone remains ill all the time, then they can neither perform their duties, nor can they make their life cheerful, since health is the biggest positive thing in life. He who is deprived of good health is deprived of everything. Hazrat Dawood عليه السلام said, "Health is such a crown that is worn by all healthy people, but only unhealthy ones can see it."





# Sugar Rush

The brain is a greedy organ, needing almost one-third of the blood pumped from the heart to supply it with the oxygen and nutrients it needs to work efficiently. Deprived of these nutrients it won't work as well as it should, so a balanced diet is essential for growing, learning children. Filling up on the wrong foods doesn't just threaten their physical health, it threatens their brain chemistry and thus their capacity to learn.

One of the main dietary culprits is sugar, which children -left to their own devices- often use as a major source of dietary fuel. They start the day with a sugary cereal and continue at regular intervals with cans of fizzy drinks, cakes and biscuits, chocolate bars and sweets. As a body fuel, sugar is worse than useless. It provides an immediate 'sugar high', which in many children

can lead to hyper-activity and impulsiveness, so they're unable to settle down and learn in school. But this high soon wears off, leaving the body craving more sugar. The child then has the option of feeling cranky and miserable or refuelling with sugar for another high. Hence the regular sugary snacks.

There's no doubt that excessive sugar consumption has contributed to the obesity explosion. But even more significantly the calories in refined sugar are 'empty calories'. Sugary drinks and snacks don't provide any of the nutrients and dietary fibre children gain from eating healthy snacks like fruit, vegetables, nuts, dairy produce and grain. This means children with a sugar habit are likely to end up deficient in the minerals and vitamins found in a balanced

diet. For instance, in a review of studies in 2005 the British nutrition foundation found that 50 per cent of children had a marginal intake of vitamin A and 75 per cent had a marginal intake of zinc, both essential nutrients.

A long-term study at the University of Southern California claimed that if children's diets lacked a variety of minerals in the first three years, the children were more likely to be irritable and aggressive at eight years old, more likely to swear and cheat at eleven, and more likely to steal and bully at seventeen.

Over the years studies of children with ADHD and dyslexia have frequently pointed towards various mineral and vitamin deficiencies, usually resulting in a surge in the sales of food supplements. But when human beings eat a balanced diet, supplements aren't generally necessary. Too much sugar is a sure way of putting the diet out of balance. In the words of Oxford scientist Bernard Gesch, 'There is evidence that nutrition can improve [developmental conditions]. More importantly, if careful diet can be used to treat these, it's possible we can also prevent them in the first place'.

### ***The Additive Cocktail***

While children maybe be missing out on essential nutrients, they are usually getting high doses of inessential additives. Controversy has raged for years about the safety of additives, such as tartrazine, caffeine and monosodium glutamate, which are used to colour, flavour or preserve food, and certain additives are banned in some countries but not others. Since additives often have long, complex chemical names (not made any easier in the European Union by the convention of also giving them E-numbers), the whole subject can be bewildering to consumers, adding to parental confusion and concern about diet. A 2004 review of 283 snack foods popular with children in the UK found that the average snack contains more than five additives, 70 per cent contain flavourings or flavour enhancers and one-third contain food colourings.

Recent studies suggest that the 'cocktail' of additives consumed in a diet of processed food and soft drinks could be a contributory factor in

behavioural problems. British toxicologist Vyvyan Howard points out that additives are tested by food companies one at a time, and little is known about how they react in combination: 'A number of these substances are related very closely to transmitter substances in the brain, which is the way nerve cells talk to each other. If you interfere with that, you interfere with brain function. 'But establishing whether this is the case, and then the exact nature of each additive's contribution, will be difficult and could take decades.

Research studies into the effects of dietary factors are few and far between (in a world financed mainly by commerce, it can be difficult for scientists to access funding), and the food industry is quick to find fault with them. There's also the problem of identifying which ingredients specifically affect particular children - indeed it seems possible that different cocktails of sugar, additives and other ingredients have adverse effects on different children, and maybe even the same children at different times.

But we do know what the usual suspects are, and now that the obesity explosion has proved conclusively that an impoverished diet damages the human body, we must also take seriously its potential effects on the brain. On a UK news programme in 2005 about children with behaviour problems, the nutritionist Patrick Holford said, 'We're seeing outrageous imbalances in brain chemistry simply caused by eating the kinds of food that, sadly, millions of kids are eating - and nobody's doing anything about it.

*- Excerpted from Sue Palmer's 'Toxic Childhood - How the Modern World is Damaging Our Children and What We can Do about it'*



# How a Sofa taught her *Patience*

By Zawjah Farid



Its faded golden threads seemed to constantly bemoan the days of its lost glory. The magenta entwined with the blues, the faint intricate patterns, the collage of knots and braids, all spoke loudly about the skill of the workers who had designed it over a decade ago. It must've been bright and colourful then. It must've looked stylish. But now... the many years it had spent sitting in the lounge corner had taken a huge toll on its outlook.

Sania hated it. She hated the rusted nails poking their tails out of its corners; she despised the threads that had come undone, dangling at people's feet; she disliked the faded colours and she totally abhorred the broken springs that could easily schedule a trip to the hospital for her

kids, (had she allowed them to jump on it, that is). In her eyes, it could've easily passed off as a snap out of a horror book! The cherry on top was the fact that it was placed in her portion of the house, upstairs. Whatever did her mother-in-law still want with this complete eyesore; this shabby, disgraceful piece of furniture?

The problem was: how to get rid of it?

Sania's mother-in-law was very fond of it, and after her husband's death, the sofa's sentimental value had grown manifold. She would occasionally come up to dust it herself and had strictly forbidden even her beloved grandchildren to eat ice cream while sitting on it!

For Sania's husband Tahir, the sofa was a very



thorny issue indeed. His wife kept cribbing about it (especially prior to the arrival of guests) and his mother kept indicating her fondness for it in one subtle way or another. He was between a rock and a hard place.

Tahir used to wonder often how something which seemed so trivial to him could become a bone of contention between two mature adults. Because though his mother had become overly sensitive in her old age but Sania, in general, was a pious and conscientious person. She would fulfill all her religious obligations diligently and was conscious of her duties towards her children and husband; she would also take good care of her mother-in-law. How then, could a piece of furniture get to her so badly?

It is amazing, how Satan prompts and whispers, and gets his own way; how he makes a mountain out of a molehill in people's minds and how he befools otherwise sane and mature people; for, what would it cost the mother-in-law to just let it go? And how hard would it be for Sania to just let it rest? Not an insurmountable problem in the least.

The breaking point of the 'sofa-issue' came when Sania's best friend, stationed in another city, called her to intimate that she would be visiting next week. Sania went into panic mode straight away. She called Tahir at his office and asked him to take early leave as they needed to go somewhere important. Her plan was that since it was impossible for her to convince Tahir (and his mother) to get the sofa replaced, she could at least get it repaired and get the cover cloth changed within a week. This too needed convincing her husband but after a twenty minute-long argument, Tahir finally succumbed to her demand. *"After all, we aren't throwing the sofa away, we are just repairing and renovating it"*, he thought to himself. *"If mother finds out about it after its refurbishment, I am sure she would appreciate our gesture and investment"*.

One hour later, measurements in hand, they were at the furniture shop. Tahir outlined their order: the repairman had to come to the upper portion of the house (in relatively discreet hours) and quietly make the repairs and change the cloth.

Mission accomplished, Sania returned home relaxed and contented.

Everything was going great... or so it seemed! Fate though had something else in store for them: the furniture shop's assistant (needlessly) called on their landline to confirm the order and get (already provided) directions to their place! As luck would have it, Sania wasn't home and her mother-in-law, who had come up to dust the now-notorious sofa, conveniently picked up the phone.

*"What repairs, which order?!.....No, there was no sofa that needed to be refurbished..... No, they better not to come to their place for any such chore as they must've gotten the wrong number.....Yes, it was Mr. Tahir's home, but no, no sofa needed a change of cover. Period....and*

yes, any worker from their shop would be turned away if he appeared at their doorstep....case closed.”

At dinner that night, Tahir's mother casually mentioned an obnoxious call from a furniture shop insisting on repairing one of their sofas and how she had rebuked the caller. Sania and Tahir gave each other petrified looks, while his mother kept looking down at her plate, as if nothing had happened. Very tactful indeed; she had obviously found out about the plan but showed as if she knew nothing....

Back to square one. Sania was really very upset.

That night she lay awake the whole time; trying to clear the fog in her mind; trying to think things through. She kept reciting *Ya Haeeyu Ya Qayyum bi Rehmatika Astaghees*, though it wasn't coming naturally; she was forcing herself to stay focused and keep reciting it into the wee hours.

How did she get here in the first place? Was the outlook of her lounge so important that she had to act in secret to uplift it? Was it such a big disaster if one item in her sitting area was a misfit in her otherwise fashionably decorated lounge? If her mother-in-law wasn't relenting, did she too have to be all-stubborn about it? Was it ok to be defensive about a piece of furniture, sheepishly explaining to each and every visitor why they couldn't replace it? If she believed in the transitory nature of this life, why in the world was all this like a mountain in her mind? Why couldn't she be rational and not emotional about a relatively small problem that had come her way? Her husband and kids were healthy *mashAllah*; they were doing well financially. They sat in good *deeni* company and everything was good overall, *Alhamdulillah*, then why was she getting so upset about not getting her own way in ONE, pretty minor thing in life? Was it her *Nafs*? Was it promptings from others? What really was the big deal?

Suddenly, at *Fajr*, her mind cleared up. She rebuked herself for her childish, non-relenting behavior and listed out in her mind the three options that had hitherto been fighting each other for supremacy, but two had now thankfully taken the back-seat:

- a) Option 1 – Put your foot down and get the beastly sofa changed altogether; come what may! (*Crossed out*)
- b) Option 2 – Try to coax and convince your husband and mother-in-law to get it refurbished. (*Crossed out....no choice left after the furniture assistant's tell-all call!*)
- c) Option 3 – Be patient. (*Ticked*)
  - *Sabr* here, in these fleeting moments, meant reward forever, *inshAllah!* (*Had it not been said that the entire worldly life would seem like a day or a part of a day in the Hereafter?*)
  - Be thankful for Allah's ﷻ innumerable blessings and compare this teeny-weeny problem with the enormous issues other people go through in terms of illness of children, financial constraints, marital problems and what not.
  - Stop causing husband further distress.
  - Stop side-stepping mother-in-law, even if she might seem unfair in this case.
  - Don't give in to *Shaitan* and his materialistic whisperings.

*InnAllaha Ma'a Sabireen!*

Tahir noticed how quiet and calm Sania was the next morning. He dared not stir the hornet's nest by discussing last night's episode. In any case, she didn't seem perturbed now and this made him feel relaxed too.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Postscript*

Barely a month later Sania's mother-in-law quietly passed away in her sleep. A few days later her beloved sofa was loaded on to a truck to be sold off for her heirs.





## A Prophecy of RasulAllah (*sallAllahu alayhi wa sallam*)

Contributed by G. M. Surriya

Once RasulAllah (*sallAllahu alayhi wa sallam*) said (meaning), a time would come that a woman would all alone travel from Sanna, Yamen and she would be laden with gold jewelry from head to toe and she would reach Madinah safely and she would have no fears except the fear of Allah ﷻ .

The Companions ﷺ said, what about the tribe of Banu Tae? The people of this tribe are dacoits and they cut human limbs with swords to take off ornaments. He (*sallAllahu alayhi wa sallam*) said (meaning), They will safeguard her (implying that these robbers would be guarding ways for protection of Muslims).

Nearly after a complete century, an assistant of Umer bin Abdul Aziz ﷺ comes to him and says that a lady has come to him from a very distant place. He asks: is there no *mahram* with her? The secretary replies, no; no one had accompanied her. Umer bin Abdul Aziz ﷺ asks him to call another minister as well and directed both of them to occupy their seats. He did not want to meet that lady alone (as it is prohibited in Islam

to meet *non-mahram* women in privacy).

The lady comes and Umer bin Abdul Aziz ﷺ asks her to sit. When she tries to, she finds it difficult to do so because of being over-laden with jewelry. He asks her, why it is so that neither your husband, nor a brother or a nephew or a son is with you? She replies, I have no one and I have come here to seek your help. He asks another question: from where have you come? She replies, from Sanaa, the capital of Yamen. He asks, did you not have any fear while travelling such a long distance and that too, through forests? She replies, no, except the fear of Allah ﷻ .

Upon hearing this, Umer bin Abdul Aziz ﷺ burst into tears. She was greatly surprised and to remove her confusion, he said, it is the result of truthfulness of your and our Rasul (*sallAllahu alayhi wa sallam*) that these dangerous ways have become peaceful and safe and then he repeated the above narration of RasulAllah (*sallAllahu alayhi wa sallam*).



# What is *in a* Number?

By Khalid Baig

A quiet revolution is taking place in the Arabic language; it is fast losing the character set used to represent numbers. Arabs gave the Arabic numerals to the world, thereby making the tremendous advances in mathematics and science possible. But today they are giving them up in favor of the European ones.

The Arab contribution was the symbols for numbers one through nine, the concept of and the symbol for zero, and the idea of the place

value of numbers that made it possible to write all numbers, no matter how big or small, using these ten symbols alone. All of these remain valid today and are the essential elements of the Arabic numbering system. However the symbols themselves changed upon their arrival in Europe. While the European numerals are Arabic in their genesis, their shapes are not the same as those of the Arabic numerals that have been used for centuries in the Arabic world.

First it was the newspapers, magazines, and web sites. Then textbooks. And now even the religious books - the last refuge of the historic numerals - are slowly giving way to the European onslaught. There are notable exceptions but the general trend is very clear.

The same is true of Urdu. Its numerals, which are the same as the Arabic ones (with the exception of 4 and 7), have rapidly joined the endangered species list. Today they are absent from all printed matter in mass circulation. In religious books one finds a hodgepodge of the Urdu and European symbols sitting uneasily next to each other, symbolizing the confusion of the writers or publishers.

While Farsi is holding its ground better than either Arabic or Urdu, signs of change are visible there as well.

The computers and the Internet, with their built in bias in favor of English at the current state of their evolution, have a lot to do with this cultural sea change. But there is also a misconception that the European numerals are actually Arabic or that this is a change for the better or at least that it does not matter.

In 1403 AH, the organization of senior *ulama* in Saudi Arabia, in its 21st congress (Riyadh, 17-28 Rabiul Akhir 1403) reviewed the then emerging trend and passed a resolution addressing these misgivings.

It declared that changing Arabic numerals to the prevalent European ones in Arabic was not right. Among the reasons it cited were the following:

1. The claim that the presently used European numerals are the real Arabic ones is neither well known nor true. Centuries of use give legitimacy and authenticity to the Arabic symbols that are now being replaced.
2. The change will have ill consequences as it is a step in the direction of Westernization of the Islamic society.
3. It is a reflection of the blind following of the West.

4. The Arabic numerals have been used in all written works for centuries. If they are now replaced, it will handicap the new generation in benefiting from this great treasure, and cut it off from its history.

A year later (1404 AH) the Islamic Fiqh Academy in Makkah reviewed the issue and issued a fatwa fully supporting the resolution of the *ulama*. It declared it impermissible to use the European symbols while writing Arabic and warned about very serious consequences of this move.

Today the fears expressed by the Islamic Fiqh Academy can be seen in stark reality. In Pakistan, people are not only using the new symbols for writing, they are increasingly using English when expressing numbers in words in everyday usage. (Example: "Yeh Jora aap ko four seventy five main laga donga."). This Urdu language now evolving is a seriously handicapped language that cannot count, do math, express colors, name an organization, or discuss politics, business or culture without resorting to English. The resulting chaos has not improved their command of English, but it has seriously endangered their language, culture, and civilization.

A similar fate may await Arabic if steps are not taken to reverse the trend. Writers and publishers in Urdu and Arabic need to pause, reflect, and stop this mad rush into numerical disaster. Thirty seven years later the call of the Islamic Fiqh Academy remains as relevant as ever. And even more urgent.



# Labbayk!

By Mehwish Abdul Wahid

A month has passed since I returned from the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah. What an amazing journey it was! Words alone cannot express this uplifting experience that deeply touches and leaves a lasting impression on a person for the rest of their lives. It is as if one leaves their worldly life temporarily and enters into a spiritual haven of serenity - a journey where, at every step, one gets a chance of reviving their faith manifold, of getting closer to Allah ﷻ, and of seeking His mercy and forgiveness! A journey that helps not just in seeking mercy and forgiveness from Allah ﷻ but which is also a means to make peace with yourself and your past, that reunites you with God and with yourself. A journey that provides a believer with a lot to treasure and cherish, reflect on and reminisce about later in his life.

As soon as we arrive in Makkah, the feelings of thankfulness to Allah ﷻ intensify, as it is His sheer blessing that we are given a chance to come and see those places that have seen the best of the best. We begin to think that these places have seen the Prophets and the Sahabah and all the pious personalities in the history or our tradition. How blessed we are, the insignificant ones, to have been treading the same paths! As we make Tawaaf (circumambulations) or go around the Ka'bah, we realize that it is the same path where the Prophet ﷺ and his companions walked. As we walk between *Safa* and *Marwah*, we know these are the same hills where Hajrah ﷺ ran to search for



water for his son Prophet Ismail عليه السلام. As we touch the walls of the Ka'bah, we realize that these walls were touched centuries ago by Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام and later by Prophet Muhammad عليه السلام. When we go for a visit to the cave of Hira, we know that here the greatest man that walked on this earth, Prophet Muhammad عليه السلام, used to come and pray in solace and eventually received the first revelations of the Qur'an from Allah عليه السلام. We go to Mount Arafah and there Prophet Muhammad عليه السلام delivered the farewell sermon to the Muslims. In this manner, at every step, in these places, we are in a grip of history. We can see it, feel it, and touch it.

As we indulge in prayers and supplications there, asking for His forgiveness, we get a chance to reflect on our priorities in life and the orientation we have towards life. Whilst in Makkah and Madinah, we leave behind the material and worldly things and try to focus on the religious and spiritual goals with the thought that we have got limited time in these places and should make the most of it. We prioritize and constantly think about the ways in which we can get closer to Allah عليه السلام and do

something beneficial for the hereafter, and in doing so we are blessed with satisfaction and peace of mind. When reflecting on those days, we get to think why we are so attached to the dunya or the worldly life when our mind, body, and soul are completely at peace in the remembrance of Allah عليه السلام. Why do we allow little affairs of our daily lives to consume our thoughts when it is Allah who provides, suffices, and makes a way out of every hardship? Why are worldly goals our priority when we have got limited time in this world just as we had limited time in Makkah and Madinah? Sitting in Makkah, in front of the Ka'bah reminds us of what the actual focus needs to be in life and how life is supposed to be lived. We understand that life is supposed to revolve around the preparation of the afterlife as opposed to affairs and problems of this world.

While on the pilgrimage, when we look around, people of all races, colour, status, and nationalities can be seen, all dressed exactly the same. Whether it is a millionaire or a poor man, a driver or a state governor, all are equal at this place, devoid of any pretensions or outward signs of social status, wealth, culture etc. This is exactly as Allah عليه السلام sees all of us, as we really are, distinguishable only by the purity of our hearts, soul, and character – it is all that matters to Him.

When on the journey from Makkah to Madinah, the scenery which spans on the way makes us appreciate the Prophet ﷺ and his companions more for the struggles and hardships they had to endure for the spread of Islam. The entire way is a desert with rough paths and rocky mountains that are cut to make a road for travelling from one city to the other. Back in those times, when there were no roads, no air-conditioned cars, and no facilities like we have today, travelling on camels or by foot in that scorching heat must have been really tough. But for the sake of Islam and for the will of Allah, these people did not waver or complain when required to travel for the cause of Islam and when they migrated from Makkah to Yasrib (later named Madinah) on Allah's ﷻ command.

Madinah is a beautiful city with the mosque of the Prophet, Masjid an-Nabawi, with its beautiful green dome and minarets. As we sit in the masjid, we cannot help ourselves from imagining how it must have looked at the time of the Prophet ﷺ when he used to sit with his companions and narrate to them the message of Allah ﷻ. Apart from the Masjid e Nabawi, there are also some significant Islamic historic sites. There is the mountain of Uhud where many companions of the Prophet ﷺ including his beloved uncle Hamza ﷺ sacrificed his life fighting for Islam. There is also the masjid where the revelation came for the Prophet to change the direction of prayer from Jerusalem to Makkah, called *Masjid al-Qiblatain* (Mosque of the two Qiblas). Then there is *Masjid-e-Quba*, the first mosque in the history of Islam, the foundation of which was laid by Prophet

Mohammad ﷺ, where he stayed for fourteen days after Hijra from Makkah to Madinah, and where he used to go every week for praying two raka'at of nafl prayers. There is also a garden of Hazrat Salman Farsi ﷺ and Hazrat Usman Ghani's ﷺ garden and well. Visiting all those places makes us imagine those times and understand and relate to the Islamic history. It makes us feel blessed and joyful that we are in those places where some of the greatest people once walked, sat, and worked for the spread of the best religion in the world. It also reminds us of the sacrifices that Muslims made for the sake of Islam and the great acts they performed only for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ. We get to know their histories and understand the elevated status that Muslims enjoyed in those times. All this makes us so humbled and makes us realize that we have done nothing much as yet as compared to the great things these people did for Islam and for their lives hereafter, thereby motivating us to do more for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

When we return from the most holiest of the places for Muslims, we feel many changes. In fact, Umrah/Hajj is a life changing experience. It actually alters the way we do things in our daily lives. It is not like a


dream where we return home and carry on as usual. It makes us think about our time and reflect. It helps us in emerging as a better person, more aware, more patient, more grateful, more righteous, more spiritually woke, and last but not the least, more closer to Allah ﷻ. In the first few days, the feeling of sadness engulfs us as we feel spiritual deprivation when we return after an intense spiritual experience. It is a difficult moment when it sinks in that the time we spent at those places has ended, and we yearn to go again. On our return, Shaytan tries to make us believe that the spirituality we experienced was exclusive to these holy places and we cannot forget the rest of the world around us. However, we have to understand that the state of the mind and heart which we experienced whilst near the house of Allah ﷻ was because we got a chance of being close to Allah ﷻ. This closeness to Allah ﷻ can be achieved to a great extent if we align our actions to what He has commanded us to do, if we keep Him in our thoughts and intentions, and if we make all efforts and go out of the way to build a connection with Him.

*Labbayk* (I am here) to the call of Allah ﷻ is not just for a pilgrim in Makkah, but it has to be put into practice in everyday

life. We have to be ready to fulfill His commands now and every day and all times as being an 'abd of Allah ﷻ is an everyday thing and an everyday commitment.

# Can Money Buy Happiness?

by Dr. Asad Zaman




Across time and space, in widely different cultures and religions, there is an amazing amount of consensus that the answer to this age-old question is an emphatic "No". The legend of how the golden touch of King Midas turned his daughter to gold teaches this lesson to children. Early in the twentieth century, some influential thinkers argued that even though greed for gold was bad – a "disgusting morbidity" – it could be harnessed for a good end. Unchaining the powerful drives for accumulation of wealth would create wealth for the society as a whole, ultimately freeing man from all worldly worries. Keynes expressed this vision poetically: "... we must pretend that fair is foul and foul is fair. Avarice and usury must be our gods for a while, for only they can lead us out of the tunnel of economic necessity."

This vision of a 'heaven on Earth' created by a fabulous increase in wealth, inspired two generations of followers. The hope was that once free of the necessity to toil for a living, men would become kind, generous and gentle. They would

turn to higher pursuits of philosophy, arts, aesthetics, and sciences, and develop an advanced and sophisticated culture.

Things did not go according to plan. Samuelson was one of the most influential disciples of Keynes, and played a central role in spreading the vision of human progress through economic development. After witnessing decades of unprecedented increases in wealth, he acknowledged that "great affluence has not brought about the slackening of economic ambition," and that we live in a "ruthless economy." The contrast between what was promised and what actually occurred was so great that many different fields of research emerged to analyze the causes of this failure. One of the most important of these is called "Happiness Studies."

A study by Easterlin which initiated this field, led to the surprising conclusion that very large changes in material comforts had virtually no effect on life-satisfaction, or 'happiness,' across time and across cultures. Easterlin showed that



people in the twentieth century in USA enjoyed comforts available only to princes of a century ago. Similarly, the standards of living were dramatically different in USA and India around the middle of the twentieth century. Nonetheless, piecing together evidence from a wide variety of different sources, he found virtually no difference in life satisfaction among these vastly different societies. This became known as the Easterlin Paradox: in the long run, there is no relationship between the wealth of nations and happiness. This discovery has radical implications. If true, then all the collective efforts poured into achieving high growth rates have been wasted. We have been pursuing the mirage of economic heaven at great costs to environment and society. About a quarter century of intensive debate and research has led to some firm conclusions, which we summarize below.

In the first place, money is extremely important for the poor. Satisfying basic needs of food, health, education, housing etc. definitely increases happiness. On this basis alone, it would appear that increased wealth would lead to

reduction in poverty, and hence to increase in happiness. In an earlier column entitled "The Vacuum Cleaner Effect," I explained why this was not the case. The process of economic growth has increased inequalities and poverty. An article by Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz entitled "Of the 1%, by the 1% and for the 1%" shows the dramatic increase in the concentration of wealth in the hands of the wealthy.

Secondly, beyond the level of basic needs, increases in wealth lead only to short term and temporary increases in happiness. Long run durable changes in happiness are strongly tied to friends, family, community, and old fashioned social norms represented by trust, commitments, loyalties, and courtesy. Legitimization of the pursuit of wealth has led to an erosion of these social norms. The unfortunate consequences in the West have been documented in a book entitled "The Loss of Happiness in Market Democracies," by Professor Robert Lane. It is an urgent priority for us in Pakistan to take these findings seriously into consideration in setting priorities for national growth and development.





# Memoirs of Hazrat Mufti Taqi Usmani رحمة وبركاتهم

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

All praise be to Allah, Sustainer of the worlds, and may the blessings and peace be upon the merciful Prophet ﷺ, on his progeny, all his companions, and on all those who follow him with *Ahsaan* till the Day of judgment.

## Introduction

After reading my travelogues, many of my friends and mentors requested me to pen down my autobiography too. But considering it to be only an emblem of love from these sincere individuals, I never gave the idea a second thought, as I was of the opinion that biographies are written of notable personalities in whose lives there are some lessons for others to take heed from; whereas, a person like me, who if looks back at his life, will only have remorse and shame for his deeds. How can his autobiography be of benefit to anyone else?

Three years back, a very respected senior of mine, and the head-Mufti of Darul uloom, Dabhel, Hazrat Maulana Mufti Ahmad Khanpuri رحمة وبركاتهم (whose services are not only widespread in India but also in many diverse spheres of the Islamic world), expressed this wish of his to me in *Baitullah shareef* and I gave him the same excuse. But then after going back to Dabhel, Hazrat Mufti sahib sent a detailed letter in which he reiterated the same desire, not only from his own side, but also from other people of knowledge. The letter is as follows:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

27th June, 2011

Respected Hazrat Aqdas Maulana Muhammad Taqi Usmani Sahab رحمة وبركاتهم !

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

I hope by the grace of Allah Ta'ala Hazrat is safe and sound. Since long this insignificant has remained a devoted follower of the books written by Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahab رحمته الله and Hazratwala. The reason for this is only that these volumes are filled with the aroma of the pious Ulema (*Ulema-e Rabbaniyan*) and are interpreters of our Ulema's untainted beliefs and concerns. Especially what to say about Hazratwala's latest works! People with religious bent fervently read and enjoy them. Many copies are sold in no time at all. When their work is admired to this an extent, then how excessively admired would the writer of these books himself be? That doesn't need to be jotted down here; last year in this same month of July Hazratwala travelled to India in which you experienced great affection of its inhabitants for you.

After this little overview, I wish to express this sincere request to Hazratwala, which is not only mine but is also a heartfelt desire of a large segment of people affiliated with deen. If this entreaty meets fulfilment then a lot of misconceptions will be cleared, and earnest duas will be granted by a great fraction of the people of knowledge (*Ahl-e-Ilm*) as they would obtain a guiding light. With the help of this beacon, these people of knowledge will be able to resolve the important issues of their lives.

The request is that Hazratwala writes down his autobiography. Displaying to you the ways of our elders with regards to writing autobiographies would be like showing a lamp to the sun, which is why I can't even fathom the courage to mention the names of those biographies here. Nonetheless, one thing which this insignificant believes is that biographies of our elders' lives are excessively useful in helping the new generation to walk in the footsteps of their elders, and for making the attainment of the successes of this world and the Hereafter easier and faster for them.

Above, this insignificant has dared to plainly convey his earnest desire and the reason for this is Hazratwala's affection towards me. It is also quite possible that in this letter I might have missed out on some element of respect, or some inappropriate sentence may have been used. If Hazratwala felt so, then I utterly seek your

apology and pray that may Allah Ta'ala keep Hazratwala safe and sound, with His blessings, for the service of the Islamic world. This du'a is from me as well as from the entire universe. Aameen.

(Al abd) Ahmad ('afi anhu) Khanpuri,

Servant, Darul Ifta Jamia Islamia Taleemud deen, Dabhel, Gujrat, Al-Hind.

There was also another document with this one in which there was narrated a dream by one of the learned teachers of Jamia Dabhel himself, and that served as a glad tiding for me. I am copying it here as a mere honour, although the saying of Hazrat Imam Muhammad bin Seereen رحمته الله is fully at the back of my mind which I came across in one of my respected father's رحمته الله book. It is well-known about Hazrat Imam Muhammad bin Seereen رحمته الله that he was the Imam of dream interpretations. He said, "Dreams are sufficient to make one happy but one should not get deceived by them." So it is alright to feel glad upon them provided they serve to increase one in good deeds and in acting upon the Sunnah.

After this clarification, below is presented the text that was attached with that letter.

24th Rajab' 1432

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

Five years ago, a teacher from our Hifz section (someone pious and firm upon his ma'molaat [daily Azkaar]) saw Rasulallah ﷺ in his dream. That dream is copied below verbatim:

"This person, Shabbir Ahmed Naroli, saw a dream during the days of Zil Hajj and its interpretation is sought. The details of the dream are such that at the time of *Tahajjud* I perceived that the *Khanqah* was under progress in Jamia Dahbel and I too became a part of it after teaching at the village. When I entered the Jamia Masjid, I noticed that towards the masjid's *Hayi ala'Salah* corner, towards the first door, near the first window, beneath a fan is sitting none other than Rasulallah ﷺ. During that time some people got the honour of meeting him, and it included me as well. Then for some more time others who came also got to meet Rasulallah ﷺ.

and there grew in me a desire to meet him again. Upon seeing me, Rasulallah ﷺ swiftly got up and gave me the chance to meet him and inquired: "How are you?" I replied with Allah's praise. Then after a while, tea was brought for Rasulallah ﷺ which he drank. I felt a yearning in me that I should also get something for Rasulallah ﷺ from my house. I summoned one of the students with a gesture: 'Quickly go and get food from my home.' He rapidly got some chicken and roti. I presented it before Rasulallah ﷺ and he ate it, and this made me really happy. It reminded me of the scenes of Hijrat where Rasulallah ﷺ drank milk at the house of Hazrat Umm Ma'bad (Radhi Allahu anha). Upon this, Hazrat Abu Bakr (Radhi Allahu anhu) said: "Rasulallah ﷺ drank so much that he got satisfied and it made me extremely glad." I experienced similar feelings. Then Rasulallah ﷺ looked towards the first window on the left. There was placed a book, Anwaar –e-Nabuwat (written by Mufti Shabbir sahib). Rasulallah ﷺ said to me: "Bring that book over."

I presented it to him, opened it and respectfully stated: "Ya Rasulallah ﷺ, all books by Mufti Sahab are very genuine; he writes the reference, volume, page, line number, everything for a particular Hadith."

Upon this Rasulallah ﷺ articulated: "Yes, in India Mufti Shabbir, and in Pakistan Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani are doing great work. After this, Rasulallah ﷺ entered the masjid's Hayya ala'Salah side. Near the first window some people were having food, rice and milk combined. Rasulallah ﷺ kept his staff aside and joined them. In the meanwhile, Maulana Abdullah Kapudarwi Sahab came, met Rasulallah ﷺ and said: "Ya Rasulallah ﷺ! Contrary to your practice, you kept the staff aside." At this, Rasulallah ﷺ said: "Yes brother, one should bear the pain for others." Many Ulema were present there, Hazrat Mufti Ahmad Sahab ولمست ذكاته being one of them too. The call for the *Fajr Salah* was heard and I woke up instantly."

After receiving this letter, I gave the following reply to Hazrat Mufti Sahab ولمست ذكاته:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

Respected Hazrat Maulana Mufti Ahmad Khanpuri Sahab ولمست ذكاته,

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

I received your letter via email at a time when I'm ready for a trip to Europe. Before this whenever anyone requested me to write my autobiography, I strictly spurned away from the thought because I don't deem myself good enough that my life be brought before others; moreover, many other important tasks are always in progress. But the sincerity with which you have drafted this letter, made me, for the very first time, to seriously think over this matter. The reality, though, is still the same, that what benefit can an autobiography of a mere mosquito or fly be to anyone. But some of the facets towards which you have guided me are such that I have intensely started thinking upon them. Still, one thought is a great obstacle which is that some other tasks are already in process, so the question is whether time should be spent upon them or upon this? Whenever possible, I will take a verbal suggestion from you on the matter.

The dream that you have narrated made me go through some strange feelings which are beyond words. May Allah ﷻ make me capable of that. Aameen. I have developed a yearning to meet Mufti Shabbir Sahab ولمست ذكاته and get hold of his books. I wasn't aware of his work. If possible do tell me some more about him.

Wassalam,

Mufti Taqi Usmani

6th August' 1432

