



12 QUESTIONS-ANSWERS

With Youth

IN THE CLIMATE OF JALALUDDIN AL-RUMI

Osman Nûri TOPBAŞ

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PREFACE

Endless thanks and praises to Allah (swt) who created us out of nothing, as people among beings, as believers among people, as Muslims among the believers, and honored us to be the addressees of the Holy Qur'an.

Peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh) who is our guide to the straight path in this world and our intercessor in the Hereafter, upon his family and companions.

We had a conversation with our young fellow townsmen on 17 March 2018 in our city Konya which despite being a city of history, culture, and civilization, receives its real value by being the home for one of the prominent friends of Allah and one of sultans of the spiritual world, **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi**.

The main subject of our conversation was about **what the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) taught and how he taught it** to his companions and in their personality to his entire ummah. However, as our addressees were the youth we were asked to make this conversation in the form of question and answer, considering the fact that it would yield more benefits. Consequently,

we took our main subject, the education system of our Prophet Muhammed, as our first question and tried to answer the other questions asked by our young brothers too. Because our time was not enough to answer all fifty questions asked by them, we dealt with the ones that had priority.

It was requested by the Konya Metropolitan Municipality that this fruitful program could be published as a booklet in order to keep it as a pleasant memory in our souls. In this way, we had the opportunity to make some reviews and additions by including some issues that we could not express during the program due to the limited time.

I hope that this humble booklet may become an opportunity for the good and I pray Allah to bestow happiness both in this world and the Hereafter upon Konya Metropolitan Municipality personnel who provided valuable contribution to the performance of this program and upon those who personally attended in our conversation or who attend it by their hearts by means of this booklet.¹

Osman Nûri TOPBAŞ

July 2018

Üsküdar

1 My special thanks to M. Akif Günay who made a substantial contribution to the preparation of this book. I wish Allah to accept his efforts as infinite alms on behalf of him.

KONYA - March 17, 2018

Our esteemed, faithful, brave young men!

Our esteemed, faithful, young ladies!

Our esteemed brothers!

May Allah give us all, our homeland and our nation a long good life in the future and in our destiny. May our day be blessed.

*Let us start our conversation by reciting one **Surah al-Fatiha** and three **Surah al-Ihlas** to ask Allah (swt)*

To bless our conversation and make it fruitful,

To let the blessings of our recitations reach the souls of our Master Prophet Muhammed (pbuh), of our deceased relatives, of the friends of Allah who lived in Konya, of the martyrs of the Battle of Dardanelles, of the martyrs of War of Independence, of the martyrs of July 15th coup attempt, of the martyrs of Afrin operation who are the grandchild of Battle of Dardanelles,

To let our veterans recover as soon as possible,

To protect our homeland and nation from the malice of the evil.



What did our Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, (pbuh) teach? How did he teach it? What did he bring forth from it?

Khalid Baghdadi expressed the fact that **the Prophet Muhammad** (pbuh) was sent as mercy and compassion to the worlds as follows:

“For the sake of his (pbuh) existence, sandy seas give pearl, hard stones turn into rubies and thorns become roses. When his good character is mentioned in a rose garden, you cannot find any rosebuds in the garden that does not turn into a rose out of its love for him.”

Question 1

Our Prophet (pbuh), who was sent as a mercy to the worlds to complete the good character, built the most virtuous civilization of the world ever and brought up the society of golden age out of the semi-savage society of the age of ignorance (the society of jahiliyyah). What did our Master Muhammad (pbuh), the pride of the universe, teach them, how did he teach it, and what results did he get from it so that he managed to build up such a magnificent society of felicity from that kind of society?

And today, what kind of spirit and excitement do we, as the Community of the Prophet Muhammad that came 14 centuries after His time, need in order to live with the same excitement of the believers in the days of the Age of Bliss and to help the world meet again with those exceptional values of that civilization of virtues?

Our estimable brothers!

In order to answer your question fully, we have to summarize the whole prophetic biography here. But, Of course this is not possible due to time constraint. So Let us start by answering the following questions:

– Why did Allah send us to the world?

- What is true knowledge, and what is true learning?
- For which knowledge did we come to this world to learn?
- What is the purpose of knowledge?

The purpose of knowledge is “لِيَعْبُدُونِ” or to be a servant of Allah.²

This world is a school which has been created in order to be a school for man to learn and manifest how to be a good servant to Allah (swt) and it is like a full-length mirror of man... The man has been sent to this world to live a life predestined by Allah (swt) in order to undergo a test and then to continue his journey in the eternal/endless life in the Hereafter.

What is the goal of being a servant of Allah? It is “لِيَعْرِفُونِ”, that is to recognize Allah in the heart so that get a share from the mystery of being spiritually with Him and consequently to become a mature believer.

Allah says;

“We have honored the sons of Adam...” (al-Isra, 17: 70); One will be honorable, remove his selfish desires, and become worthy for the Paradise. Because Allah Almighty invites His servants to the home of peace (Dar al-Salam).

² See Al-Dhariyat, 51: 56

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

Allah Almighty is the “**Rahman (Most Merciful)** and **Rahîm (the most compassionate)**”. Our Prophet (pbuh) is “**Raûf (Kind)** and **Rahîm (Merciful)**”.³ Our Lord wants the believer to be “**man of mercy**” in order to be worthy of the Paradise.

The aim of learning in this school of the universe is to be a “**man of mercy**”, to raise “men of mercy” and in this way to build a peaceful world.

Allah Almighty says in a verse related to the negative characteristics of human beings; “ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا” meaning:

“...He (man), was indeed unjust and foolish.” (al-Ahzab, 33: 72)

In other words, man is “**unjust**”; He commits the greatest injustice to himself and destroys his eternal life.

We have an endless life ahead. Certainly, compared to the eternal life in the Hereafter, our life in this world cannot even be considered in the size of an atom. The greatest injustice of man is the one that he commits against himself by perishing his afterlife.

Secondly, Allah calls man “foolish”. Allah Almighty says that the man is unaware of the felicity in the hereafter and forgets why he was created, in other words;

3 See al-Tawba, 9: 128

“– Why did he come to this world?

– In whose realm does he live in?

–To where is he going? To where is this journey going?” The man is not aware of all these...

This is because Allah Almighty sent His messengers to His servants. According to some narrations, more than one hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets were sent for the guidance of people. A **prophet** was sent to every society except our prophet (pbuh). He has been sent as “*uswa al-hasana*” or “the best exemplar” to all people who will come to this world until the Day of Judgment.

In like manner, Allah Almighty sent **books** and **scriptures** to his servants.

This universe from atom to globe, from particles to the galaxies, is a scene for the manifestation of Divine Might and Power...

The first revealed verse of the Holy Qur’an starts with the divine command “اقْرَأْ” “**Read**”.

So in whose name are you going to read?

“... in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created.”⁴

4 See, al-Alaq, 96: 1

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

It means that Allah Almighty defines a particular characteristic of reading; **“Reading in the name of our Lord”...**

In other words, you will read by your heart what you read with your mind. Your eye will turn into glasses serving both your mind and your heart. Your heart will be matured by reading the mysterious aspects and wisdom of everything and each events.

Everything is a proof for the divine greatness. This is because it is essential to observe everything through the eyes of wisdom and to contemplate upon the divine displays. However, this takes place to the extent of the level of the spiritual improvement of one’s heart.

There are positive sciences. They are the means of leading one to come spiritually closer to Allah. In this way, the servant will be in effort by his heart and mind to pass from the cause to the One who creates the cause, and from the art to the Artist. So he will strive to come closer to Allah.

Therefore,

WHAT IS BENEFICIAL KNOWLEDGE?

The beneficial knowledge is the one that leads a person to **“Taqwa”** which is mentioned 258 times in the Qur’an.

What is **Taqwa**?

Taqwa means to remove the selfish desires, to improve spiritual abilities, and to comprehend that the man is always under divine observation/divine cameras. The most important sign of “**taqwa**” is to embellish one’s heart with these qualities.

Allah Almighty states that He gave “**little knowledge**” to man.⁵ **The Messenger of Allah** (pbuh) was in the apex of that knowledge. Indeed, He (pbuh) says:

“By Allah! If you knew what I know, you would laugh little and you would weep much; ... and you would go out beseeching Allah. ...”. (See. Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 19)

When summarizing his own life, **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi** describes his state at the peak of worldly sciences as “**I was raw**”; when he was bestowed by manifestation of the divine knowledge and understood the mysteries of the universe, he described his state as “**I got matured**”; and finally when he was spiritually annihilated in Allah, he described his state as “**I got burned**”.

HOW DID OUR PROPHET (PBUH) LEARN?

There was neither a scholarly circle, nor a library nor a school in Mecca. It was just a tribe. There was no man of cloth, priest or teacher either. Our Prophet

⁵ See, al-Isra, 17: 85

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

(pbuh) who was born as an orphan and grew up without his mother had no one like parents to rely on.

His educator was Allah Almighty. He says in a hadith:

“My Lord educated me, and what a perfect education He gave me” (al-Suyuti, *Jami-al-Saghir*, I, 12)

Allah Almighty educated our Prophet. Then, our Prophet (pbuh) educated his community by means of the education He received from Allah. In this way, the civilization of Age of Bliss was built out of the semi-wild people of the Age of Ignorance.

HE (PBUH) AS AN EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATOR

Our **Prophet** (pbuh) had not been an educator before his prophethood. For forty years before his prophethood, he neither received education from anybody nor give education to anybody. The society in which he had been raised was an ignorant one. He was an illiterate man, in other words, he did not know how to read and write. The people of his society was illiterate, too. Those who knew writing and reading in his society was scarcely any.

However, Allah Almighty gave him such an excellent education that he became the teacher of the whole universe and guided the world.

Another phase:

HIS (PBUH) MAGNIFICENT COMMANDERSHIP

Before his prophethood, our Prophet (pbuh) had neither commanded an army nor attended to any kind of military service. As a matter of fact, there had not been a regular army at that time either. There used to be frequent tribal feuds. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) brought mercy even to the wars after becoming a prophet. In fact, in the Battle of Badr he gave water to his enemies who asked some water before the fight began.

Let us compare the instructions of our Prophet (pbuh) with the situation we are in today:

Our **Prophet (pbuh)** said:

“(O my people! Even when you are at war);

- *Do not persecute,*
- *Do not torture!*
- *Do not kill children!”* (Muslim, Jihad, 3; Ahmad, V, 352,

358)

“(O my people! Even when you are at war) Do not kill;

- *Children,*
- *Those (Christian, Jew etc.) who secluded in their temples to worship,*
- *Women,*
- *Old people, and*

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

• *Those who were hired to do noncombatant jobs!*
(Also),

• *Do not burn and destroy churches,*

• *Do not cut trees from roots!”* (Ahmad, I, 300; al-Tabarani, *al-Kabir*, XI, 224/11562; al-Bukhari, Jihad, 148; Muslim, Jihad, 24, 25)⁶

We observe the same principles applied by our ancestors Ottomans too. They never oppressed their non-Muslim citizens. Even, their non-Muslim citizens thanked them...

Another characteristic of our Prophet (pbuh);

HIS MAGNIFICENT SOCIAL LEADERSHIP

Our Prophet (pbuh) had not served at public administration before his prophethood. He did not lead any being except herding sheep when he was a child. However, the Islamic State of Medina founded by him turned into the peak of civilization.

He saved all creation from the evil of the wrongdoers.

Thanks to him, the slaves found peace. Animals found tranquility. Plants found tranquility. The deserts which had been turned into the lakes of blood found peace...

⁶ Also see al-Tabarani, *al-Awsat*, I, 48/135; Ibn Majah, Jihad, 30; al-Waqidi, III, 912; Abdurrazzaq, *al-Musannaf*, V, 220.

How eloquently, Turkish poet Mehmed Akif describes this state:

The weakness did not have any right save to be oppressed, but it revived.

The tyranny did not expect to get waned but it died.

On the other hand,

HIS (PBUH) MAGNIFICENCE AS A MAN OF LAW

He was not a legal expert. He had no experience in dispersing rights and justice. But his **farewell sermon** has been the most excellent and exceptional “**Declaration of Human Rights**”. It turned into an unchangeable constitution.

Following the foundation of the first Islamic State in Medina, our Prophet (pbuh) immediately had the first constitution established.

The schools of law which his students formed in a short time went beyond the peaks that human mind could not reach in hundreds of years. **Solon** and **Hammurabi** who are considered as prominent legal experts could not even be accepted as an apprentice in the field of law when they are compared to the legal genius of **Abu Hanifa**.

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

Aristotle, for example, laid the foundations of a number of principles of moral philosophy. However, as he was away from the divine revelation, we cannot see any society that achieved happiness by implementing his philosophy.

Because the ideas and actions of philosophers were not matured under the guidance of revelation. This is because the systems they brought could not go beyond the walls of conference halls or the lines of books.

Whereas, our Prophet (pbuh) was receiving instructions from the divine revelation. For this reason, the system he brought perfectly satisfied the needs of mankind. He reached the peak in every field, for he was taught by Allah Almighty.

HIS (PBUH) STUDENTS

Al-Qarafi (d. 684), one of the famous figures in the methodology of Islamic jurisprudence, says:

“Even if there were no other miracle of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), the education he gave to his companions (developing them from semi-wild people into the those of a magnificent civilization) would be enough to prove his prophethood.”

For example;

Abdullah ibn Masud (r.a.) ... was a shepherd in his past. However, he became the founder of a school

of Law admired by the whole world. **Abu Hanifa** was one of the disciples raised in School of Kufe which was founded by **Abdullah ibn Masud**

What else did our Prophet (pbuh) taught by our Prophet (pbuh)?

HE (PBUH) TAUGHT US THE QUR'AN

In other words, he taught us the instructions of Allah Almighty. He taught the Qur'an, the last call of Allah Almighty to humanity.

HOW DID HE (PBUH) TEACH?

Abu Talha (r.a.) says:

“One day I visited the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). I saw him doubled-up due to hunger and tied a stone over his stomach to keep his back upright. He was teaching (and was practicing) the Qur'an to the Companions of Suffa in that situation”. (Abu Nuaym, *Hilya*, I, 342)

Ibn Mas'ud, who was honored by the manifestations of wisdom in this prophetic education and teaching, was saying:

“We could hear food glorifying Allah while eating with the Messenger of Allah”. (See al-Bukhari, *Manaqib*, 25)

Abu Hurairah (r.a.) says:

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

“No doubt our Muhajir (emigrant) brothers used to be busy in the market with their business (bargains) and our Ansari brothers used to be busy with their property (agriculture). But I (Abu Huraira) used to stick to Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) contented with what will fill my stomach and I used to attend that which they used not to attend and I used to memorize that which they used not to memorize.” (See al-Bukhari, Knowledge, 42)

In short, thanks to such efforts of our Prophet, the whole Medina was filled with the teachers of the Qur’an. Our Prophet (pbuh) tried to send those teachers all over the world.

THE VIRTUE OF THE QUR’AN

The Holy Qur’an spread spirituality over the city-state of Medina. Because Allah Almighty says,

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“We send down (stage by stage) in the Qur’an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe...” (Al-Isra, 17: 82).

Allah Almighty describes the Qur’an as “healing and mercy”. Inshallah we get a share of this healing and mercy...

We can give the following as examples for the mercy of the Qur’an:

Gabriel become the most virtuous of angels after he delivered the divine verses of the Qur'an.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has become the Master of all Prophets "Sayyed Al-Anbiya" after the Qur'an was revealed to him.

The community of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has become the most beneficent community after the Qur'an was sent down to them.

The Qur'an was revealed in the month of Ramadan. By this way, the Ramadan has gained a special value among the months of the year. It has been honored with unique beauties and benefits among the months of the year.

The Qur'an was revealed in the Night of Power (Laylat al-Qadr). Allah Almighty granted such a virtue to this night that it is greater than the virtue of one thousand months.⁷

If we host the Qur'an in our hearts and apply its principles in our lives, we can join the best of people -insha' Allah (If Allah wills)-.

The companions of the Prophet Muhammad were grown up in such an environment. In other words, they became "people of mercy" who spread mercy

⁷ See Al-Qadr

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

through their hands, tongues and hearts. We pray Allah and hope to become like them, Insha' Allah.

This is because our Prophet (pbuh) said:

“The best of you is the one who learns the Qur’an and teaches it.” (Al-Bukhari, Fadail al-Qur’an, 21)

How will the Qur’an be learned and taught? It will be learned and taught by living in accordance with its principles and guidance.

HE (PBUH) TAUGHT THE FAITH

Preserving the faith and protecting the creed is the most difficult part of the religion. Our Prophet (pbuh) taught Islamic creed to His companions during his thirteen year-prophethood in Mecca. The submission to faith removed all kind of injustice. They did not surrender to any kind of oppression. They gave their lives, became martyrs, and lost their properties but never made the slightest concession.

The Prophet’s Companions managed to keep their faith even when they faced the hardest tests. They overcame all obstacles with the faith in their hearts.

When they migrated, they left their homes and all their properties behind. Some of them migrated on foot whereas some other on camelback.

The faith manifested by **Sumayya** and **Yaser** (r. an-huma) at the time of their martyrdom is a great scene of virtue for us.

Allah Almighty says in the Qur'an regarding such believers:

“Allah hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the garden (of Paradise)...” (Al-Tawbah, 9: 111)

That is to say, religion of Islam surpassed all other worldly emotions and desires.

OUR PROPHET (PBUH) TAUGHT THAT TRUE LIFE IS THE LIFE IN THE HEREAFTER

During the difficult times of the Battle of Trench, when it was time of extreme hunger, cold etc., he said:

اللَّهُمَّ لَا عَيْشَ إِلَّا عَيْشُ الْآخِرَةِ

“O Allah! There is no life worth living except the life of the Hereafter.” (al-Bukhari, al-Riqaq, 1)

In like manner at Mecca's Conquest - a very successful victory- to prevent any kind of rampancy, he said:

“O Allah! There is no life worth living except the life of the Hereafter.” (al-Bukhari, al Riqaq, 1)

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

In short, a servant should not forget at any stage of his life that the true life is the life of Hereafter. He should always be in the state of “يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ”⁸ **“takes heed of the Hereafter”**.

HE (PBUH) TAUGHT THE ACTS OF WORSHIP

He (pbuh) Taught Salah (Ritual Prayer)

He taught both the legal and the spiritual side of prayer. He taught such a prayer in harmony of heart and body that it would protect the servant from the sinning and wrongdoing (i.e. immorality and evil).

“How is the prayer that I perform?...”

The Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) simply tried to reflect the spiritual sides of the prayer in their behaviors and checked their state within the context of the following:

- Do their eyes look at the wrong things?
- Do their ears tend to listen to wrong voices?
- Do they say the wrong words by their mouths?
- How is their gaining as well as charity and righteous deeds?..” All these indicated the quality of their prayers.

8 See al-Zumar, 39: 9

Because Allah (swt) states the characteristics of an acceptable prayer as follows:

“...for Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds...” (Al-Ankabut, 29: 45).

However, there are prayers performed in a heedless manner about which Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) warns as follows:

“A servant returns after saying his prayer while a tenth part of his prayer, or a ninth part, or an eight part, or a seventh part, or a sixth part, or a fifth part, or a third part, or half of it, is recorded for him.” (Abu Dawud, al-Salah, 123, 124)

Regarding this fact, our **Prophet** (pbuh) described the acceptable prayer as follows:

“Pray as you have seen me praying.”⁹

“Perform your prayers as if it is your last prayer.”¹⁰

He (pbuh) Taught How to Fast

He taught that in addition to abstaining from eating and drinking we should fast with our eyes, ears, and more importantly with our conscience and feelings. Fasting edifies a servant, makes him merciful,

9 See al-Bukhari, Adhan, 18

10 See al-Daylami, *Musnad*, I, 431

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

compassionate, and contemplating the bounties of Allah.

He (pbuh) Taught Zakat, Benevolence and Charity

He taught that Allah Almighty is the real owner of properties.

He taught to be happy while giving charity.

When you give alms, you give it with happiness. Because the Qur'an says:

وَيَأْخُذُ الصَّدَقَاتِ

“...(Allah) **receives their gifts of charity...**” (al-Tawba, 9: 104)

He (pbuh) taught to be able to give without hypocrisy, without adulation, and only for the sake of Allah.

He (pbuh) Taught Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage is like a rehearsal of the Judgment Day.

It is an act of worship at the peak of grace and contemplation.

Because it includes the stoning of the devil, while some acts and behaviors including plucking grass, hunting, directing the hunters to the preys, commit-

ting sins, quarreling with each other and other negative behaviors are forbidden during the hajj.

This is the type of pilgrimage he taught us.

HE (PBUH) TAUGHT TO LOOK FOR VIRTUES

The Companions of our Prophet (pbuh) were looking for such a virtue that they did not ask our Prophet whether it was obligatory, necessary or supererogatory. Instead, they were repeating exactly what our prophet (pbuh) did.

Anas (r.a.) says:

“One day I saw that the Messenger of Allah was performing Duha (pre-noon) prayer. From that day on, I have never neglected that prayer.”

Hasan al-Basri, who transmitted this narrative, says in the same sensitivity:

“Since I heard this statement of Anas, I have never neglected Duha prayer, either.” (See al-Tabarani, *al-Awsat*, II, 68/1276)

HE (PBUH) TAUGHT WAKING UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT BEFORE DAWN

He (pbuh) taught us to prepare for the day at early dawn. In other words, he taught us to revive our souls with spiritual pleasures at early dawn.

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

He (pbuh) also taught us to get ready for the night during the day time. In order to prepare oneself for the night and to benefit from its blessings, one should protect his eyes, ears and heart from the sins during the day.

Just as the sun setting and moon rising and the moon setting and sun rising, he (pbuh) taught us to live in continuous piety by getting ready for the day at night and for the night during the day.

HE (PBUH) TAUGHT CLEANLINESS

He taught all aspects of cleanliness. He taught people how to clean the filths of polytheism, disbelief and bad character.

It's stated in the Qur'an:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

“Truly he succeeds that purifies it (his soul from the evils).” (Al-Shams, 91: 9)

He (pbuh) taught both ritual cleansing including major and minor ablutions as well as spiritual cleansing or decency and keeping the heart pure.

He (pbuh) taught cleansing from physical impurities and to stay away from being dowdy and untidy.

He (pbuh) taught to live in accordance with the principles of Islam in both actions and speeches.

More importantly;

HE (PBUH) TAUGHT THE RIGHT AND THE JUSTICE

He taught the concept of “right” to the people of Ignorance (Jahiliyyah). He taught that being powerful does not always mean being right, but being right always means being powerful.

On the other hand, he taught us the rights of other people upon us or the responsibilities that we should observe.

He taught the rights of Allah, the rights of the Messenger of Allah, the rights of believers and the rights of creatures... He taught us all these.

He taught how to dispense justice by giving examples from his life: He said:

“I am merely a man like you. I may have violated the rights of someone among you. (He threw his cloak that behind Him) and said “Whoever I hit his back, here is my back, let him come forward and hit my back! Whoever I mistakenly took his goods, here are my goods; let him come forward and take my goods!” (Ahmad, III, 400)

He taught to live by showing respect to other’s rights and to dispense justice. The same understanding of rights and justice continued with those who came after Him.

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

In this respect, there are a lot of good examples in our history. For instance, due to a controversy between Sultan Mehmed II, the Conqueror and a Christian architect, the Sultan was summoned to the court. The Sultan was heard in the court as a defendant. In the summon notice, judge Hızır Bey addressed to the Sultan saying “Mehmed son of Murad! Be at the court hearing at a certain time. So, instead of addressing him as “the Sultan son of Sultan, the ghazi, the Conqueror, Muhammed Khan the Second”, the judge addressed to the Sultan like an ordinary person.”

Sultan Mehmed II went to the court. He could choose not to go. Because he was the conqueror who ruled the world and opened a new era, but rather he sat in the defendant’s chair. The judge said:

“You are at the court hearing, stand up!.

Sultan Mehmed II stood up and testified. The judge found Sultan Mehmed II guilty. Christian architect said,

“– No one in the world could distribute such justice” and thereafter he embraced Islam.

HE (PBUH) TAUGHT THE GOOD MORALITY

According to the Islamic principles, “Removing evil is preferable to bringing benefits.” In other words,

in order to have a good character, one needs first to get rid of bad and wrong behaviors.

What should be removed from the hearts?

“Egocentricity, injustice, vengeance, greed, cupidity, instigation, grudge, pride, arrogance, lie, slander, spying ...”

As they have no place in the faith, these malice feelings should be removed from the hearts.

What should be found in a believer’s heart instead?

A believer’s heart should host the virtues such as divine love, compassion, service to Allah and Muslim society, modesty, generosity, patriotism, equitability, justice, contentment, trustworthiness, goodwill, beneficence, kindness, esteem, fairness, forgiveness, sincerity, self-possession, politeness, patience and modesty.

Our Prophet (pbuh) taught these virtues to his Companions, and his Companions achieved perfection in such virtues.

HE (PBUH) TAUGHT WHICH INSTRUMENTS TO BE USED TO GET RID OF PROBLEMS

He (pbuh) taught how to heal the afflictions and troubles with prayer and patience:

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

Life is in constant ebbs and flows. We continuously face afflictions. With which tools will they be resisted? With prayer and patience... Allah says in the Qur'an:

“O ye who believe! seek help with patient perseverance and prayer...” (Al-Baqara, 2: 153).

He (pbuh) taught to get rid of forgetfulness with the remembrance of Allah:

Our Prophet was in a state of constant remembrance of Allah (swt).

He used to look at to the sky, exclaim “Oh my Lord!” and remember Allah (swt). He (pbuh) would look at the earth and remember Allah (swt). Wherever he looked, he would remember the manifestations, names, and attributes of Allah (swt).

Those who looked at his blessed face would remember Allah (swt). He (pbuh) helped the hearts to reach that state of maturity.

He taught his Companions “to overcome the forgetfulness by means of the remembrance of Allah”. Because one commits a sin when he forgets Allah. Nobody says *bismillah* while backbiting, gossiping and causing someone to fall down.

He (pbuh) taught to get rid of ingratitude by means of giving thanks to Allah:

The biggest calamity for a man is to be an ungrateful person, to lose his humanity and conscience, and to become a tactless and rude person!...

One should contemplate the blessings bestowed upon him by Allah Almighty and enrich his inner world. Thus he will avoid inclining to his selfish desires.

He should observe himself, the universe, the Divine and ecological balance. He should look at the atom, contemplate over the galaxies, observe the cell, observe the heavenly bodies and then will exclaim, "Oh my Lord!"

All this was bestowed on human beings. Allah Almighty says in the Qur'an:

"And He has made subservient to you, [as a gift] from Himself, all that is in the heavens and on earth: in this, behold, there are messages indeed for people who think!" (Al-Jathiya, 45: 13).

He (pbuh) taught to get rid of insurrection through obedience:

Man should not decide what is good or bad based on his selfish desires. Allah (swt) says:

"...but it may well be that you hate a thing the while it is good for you, and it may well be that you

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

love a thing the while it is bad for you...” (Al-Baqarah, 2: 216)

Therefore, Contentment of Allah (swt) should be the criterion. The servant should always trust in Allah and try to be content under any changing circumstances.

Even when **Our Prophet** (pbuh) was stoned in Taif, he supplicated to Allah as follows

“Oh my Lord! If you are not angry at me, I do not mind any trouble that happens to me.” (Ibn-Hisham, II, 29-30; al-Haythami, VI, 35)

On the other hand;

لَا يَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

“No one knows the unperceivable world (*ghayb*) except Allah.”

You do not know the unperceivable. It is possible that what you know as bad can manifest itself as good and what you know as good can manifest itself as bad. Therefore, our prophet (pbuh) taught to become contented with the destiny determined by Allah under every situation.

For example, one who has no children should not be too upset and be contented with the determination of Allah. Because it is unknown whether having a child will bring good or evil to that person. We can-

not know the unperceivable. We should also not forget that our mother Aisha had no child.

He (pbuh) taught to get rid of stinginess by means of generosity:

Stinginess is a kind of cancer of the soul that turns the heart into a ruin. It is a human characteristic which directs the person to worship money and property.

Our mother Aisha (r. anha) says:

“From the time when they migrated to Medina to the time when the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) passed away, the family of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) never filled their stomach with wheat bread for three consecutive days.” (Muslim, Zuhd, 20)

“The family of (the Prophet) Muhammad (pbuh) never ate wheat-bread with meat for three consecutive days to their fill, till he met Allah.” (al-Bukhari, Ayman, 22; Ibn Majah, At’ima, 48)

“We the family of Muhammad (pbuh) used to spend (the whole) month in which we (did not need to) kindle the fire as (we had nothing to cook); we had only dates and water (to fill our bellies).” (al-Bukhari, Hiba 1; al-Riqaq 17; Muslim, Zuhd, 28)

Helping the poor, the weak, the destitute, and the helpless and fulfilling their needs were the biggest pleasure for our **Prophet** (pbuh). The satisfaction of

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

giving was making him forget his own hunger. He (pbuh) also taught this to his followers.

Jabir (r.a.) says:

“I do not know any companion of the Prophet who had the financial means but did not establish a foundation.” (Ibn Qudamah, *al-Mughni*, V, 598)

He (pbuh) taught to get rid of ambition with contentment:

Our Prophet (pbuh) said:

“If the son of Adam were to possess two valleys of riches. He would long for the third one. And the stomach of the son of Adam is not filled but with dust...” (al-Bukhari, *Al-Riqaq*, 10; Muslim, *al-Zakat*, 116-119)

Ahmad bin Hanbal (may Allah show mercy on his soul) also says:

“A little property is enough for the believer, while a lot of property is not enough for the greedy.”

He (pbuh) taught to get rid of mercilessness through forgiveness:

Allah (swt) says,

“Do you not desire that Allah should forgive you your sins, seeing that Allah is much-forgiving, a dispenser of grace?” (Al-Nur, 24: 22).

In like manner, the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) established a brotherhood amongst themselves. They forgave their brother's little mistakes. They were forgiving just as **our Prophet** (pbuh) did.

Conquest of Mecca was a perfect opportunity to take revenge for the 20-year-tyranny. The polytheists came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) trembling in fear:

They said, “–What will happen to us?”

Our Prophet (pbuh) said:

“–You will be forgiven.”

They said “–What a great person you are!” (See Ibn Hisham, IV, 32; al-Waqidi, II, 835; Ibn Saïd, II, 142-143)

He (pbuh) taught to remove suspicion with certain knowledge:

He preached the following:

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَمَا كُنْتُمْ

“... **And He** (Allah) **is with you wherever you may be...**” (Al-Hadid, 57: 4)

Allah (swt) is free from the limitations of time and place. A servant should always contemplate and comprehend that all his acts are being recorded by the di-

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

vine surveillance and the divine cameras. This is the state of “*ihsan*”...

He (pbuh) taught to get rid of hypocrisy through sincerity:

There is no place for association of partnership to Allah in the belief of tawhid (Oneness of Allah).

He (pbuh) taught to save ourselves from arrogance and haughtiness with the help of modesty:

In this way, a servant becomes, “the servant of the Most Merciful (‘*ibadurrahmân*”).” It is stated in the Qur’an:

“And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility...” (al-Furqan, 25: 63)

He (pbuh) taught to get rid of disobedience through repentance:

He (pbuh) opened the doors of forgiveness and preached “Sincere repentance”.

He (pbuh) taught to remove heedlessness through contemplation:

Because contemplation is a key to faith.

He (pbuh) commanded to stay away from the unlawful. In this regard, he healed the hearts:

How can a person stay away from the unlawful?

– He (pbuh) directed the believers to the felicity of marriage and to the peaceful atmosphere of the family instead of committing adultery.

– He (pbuh) directed the believers to goodly loan and legitimately earning instead of earning by usury and excessive duping.

– He (pbuh) directed to the purity of lawful instead of the ugliness of the unlawful. He taught that in place of every haram, there is a halal that help us to achieve the contentedness of Allah.

HOW DID HE (PBUH) TEACH?

He (pbuh) became a loved educator:

Fondness is like a line between two hearts that connects them. He (pbuh) loved and was loved so much that everybody admired his personality, People called him “the honest one (al-Amin), the trustworthy one (al-Sadiq)”. They said to him “*Everything you say is true*”. Even Abu Jahl said:

“– You are the most trustworthy man and a man with the best character among us, but we do not want what you have brought.”

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

He (pbuh) showed sincere and close interest:

He showed closer interest in his students who were talented in delivering the message of Islam. He rode with them on his camel. He sometimes held his addressees' hand...

He (pbuh) did not get tired, and he made self-sacrifice:

In every opportunity he got, he (pbuh) advised to pay the price for the blessing of the faith. He did not take any break, not even a day, during his twenty-three-year long prophethood. He did not say "let me rest under a palm tree for three days and take a vacation". There was no concept of vacation in his life. His vacation was to rest by performing his mission. He was resting with knowledge and spirituality of his mission.

He (pbuh) taught uncompromisingly but gradually:

He taught according to the cognitive level of his audience. He did not begin his speeches with things that should be said at the end. He observed an order. He waited patiently for his audience to get ready.

He (pbuh) taught by establishing principles and maxims:

He established such principles that they will be valid until the Day of Judgment.

He (pbuh) taught in accordance with the capabilities of his audience:

He would first determine the capabilities of his audience and then educate them accordingly.

Some of his Companions became army commanders, some became clerics, and some others became governors... **Aisha** (r. anha) became a jurist. She was one of the 7 great jurists.

He (pbuh) did not allow his Companions who wanted to go extreme:

He always recommended moderation instead of extremism. He said, "Am I not a good example for you?"¹¹

He (pbuh) showed great attention to the youth:

He showed a particular attention to the youth. Governor of Mecca was in his twenties. **Uthama bin Zaid (r.a.)**, the commander of the Muslim army, was, too, in his twenties. **Jafar al-Tayyar (r.a.)** was his mid-twenties when he migrated to Ethiopia. In like man-

¹¹ Ahmad, VI, 226; Ibn Hajar, *al-Isaba*, IV, 291.

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

ner, **Ali (r.a.)** was around the same age when he attended at the expedition to Khaibar ...

Our Prophet (pbuh) paid attention to the education of the youth. Because, in his view, the future belonged to the youth. They were going to serve in building the future of Islam, and become the representatives of Islamic character and morality.

How did he teach?

He (pbuh) taught by practicing:

His 23-year-prophetic life became an example in all aspects of life.

No one can say that “I experienced such an issue which is unprecedented in the life of the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) and in the Age of Bliss.”

WHAT DID HE (PBUH) ACHIEVE?

WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF HIS (PBUH) EDUCATION AND TEACHING?

He (pbuh) built the civilization of the Age of Bliss out of the Age of Ignorance (Jahiliyya).

What was the Jahiliyyah period?

It was a tribal and a semi-wild society.

It had two important characteristics:

The first one was the denial of the Hereafter.

The second one was that there was a caste system. The noble rich people were oppressing the poor slaves. In particular, they were maltreating the helpless orphans.

Moreover, there was nothing to contain the lustful life and selfish desires. Religion, morality, intellect, and conscience were destroyed and disappeared.

Drinking, gambling, interest, adultery, and indecency were at the highest level ...

That's why they opposed to Islam. Polytheists were saying:

“– O Muhammad! If you change what you are offering, we will come to your side and give you whatever you want.”

He (pbuh) answered:

“–I swear to Allah, even if you place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand to convince me to give up conveying the message of Islam, I will never give it up. Either Allah will spread Islam all over the world and I fulfill my mission or I will perish for this purpose!”¹²

12 See Ibn Hisham, I, 278; Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidaya*, III, 96-97; Ibn Athir, *al-Kamil*, II, 64.

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

HOW DID OUR PROPHET (PBUH) ESTABLISH THE SOCIETY OF THE AGE OF BLISS OUT OF THE SOCIETY OF JAHILIYYAH?

Our prophet (pbuh) did not distribute money, fortune or promise positions to his Companions or those who followed him. He just became the best exemplar in character because people are fascinated by the character of their leader.

The most important legacy of our Prophet (pbuh) is his character and personality. He wanted us to live in accordance with this legacy and maintain it.

He said:

“I leave you two trusts: The Qur’an and my Sunnah.”

(See Muwatta’, Qadar, 3)

The personality, honesty, truthfulness and good character of our Prophet (pbuh) were even accepted by those who did not believe in him.

After he (pbuh) started to convey the message of Islam, he asked his nearest relatives;

“– Suppose I told you that there is an (enemy) cavalry in the valley intending to attack you, would you believe me?” All of them answered,

“– Yes, for we have not found you telling anything other than the truth.” (See al-Bukhari, Tafsir, 26)

This example tells us that a Muslim should always constitute a perfect example of personality and character. Everybody should be able to trust him.

This is the main reason that explains why Bosnians and Albanians are Muslims today. The rulers who came after Sultan Murad I moved the virtuous Anatolian people from Konya and Kayseri and located there. The native people who observed the good characters of the Anatolian people embraced Islam.

Converting to Islam and being educated by our Prophet (pbuh), the rude people of the period of Jahliliyyah developed an elegant and tactful personality and became **people of wisdom** through the knowledge they received from the Prophet (pbuh).

What happened? **Contemplation developed:**

They started to contemplate deeply on the following and similar issues:

- That human body was created from a drop of water,
- That the bird was created from a simple egg,
- That the trees and fruits were created from the tiny seeds...
- Their lives were centered on earning Allah's contentedness.
- They excelled in the mercy, compassion and, distribution of the right.

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

– Behaving and acting like our Prophet (pbuh) did became the main goal of His companions.

– They lived in asceticism.

– Over-consumption, gluttony, luxury and, vanity was a lifestyle unknown to the Companions of the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh).

– They always considered that grave was going to become the abode of their soul.

In short, our Master Muhammed (pbuh) became an exemplar for all humanity in all aspects of life by carrying out various tasks like being a commander, an educator, a jurist, and a leader in his 23-year long mission.

Therefore, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) can be the best example for everyone to follow and adhere.

Our Prophet (pbuh) manifested unique examples in every aspect of life for all people who will live until the Day of Judgment.

Indeed, he is as the best exemplar in terms of religious and worldly leadership. He is the best exemplar for those who would like to enter the abode of divine love. He is the best exemplar by his thankfulness and modesty before Allah in times when he was swamped with the blessings of Allah as well as by his patience

and devotion in difficult times. He is also the best exemplar by his generosity regarding the war booty He is the best exemplar by his compassion towards his family, his mercy towards the weak, the orphans and the slaves, his forgiveness and tolerance towards the sinners:

*Thus If you are wealthy, then ponder on the **humble-ness** and **generosity** of that great Prophet who reigned sovereign over entire Arabia and won over the hearts of every Arab notable through love ...*

*If you are among the weak, then take reference from **the Prophet's life** in Mecca under the rule of the horribly oppressive idolaters ...*

*If you are triumphant, reflect on the Prophet of **courage** and **submission** who routed the enemy at the battles of Badr and Hunayn ...*

*But, Allah forbid, should you become defeated, then remember the Prophet walking **patiently** and **courageously** amid his wounded and martyred Companions at the field of Uhud, **having completely yielded to Divine Will** ...*

*And if you are a teacher, just think of the **delicate**, **sensitive** and **affectionate** Prophet conveying the pearls of his heart to the Students of Suffa by the Masjid'un-Nabawi ...*

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

*If you are a student, picture the Prophet sitting before Angel Gabriel at the moment of Revelation, **cautious and motivated, filled with respect.***

*If you are a preacher, a counselor calling to the good, then give ear to the pleasant voice of **the Prophet flashing sparks of wisdom** from his heart to his Companions at the Masjid ...*

*If you are left without an aid in your want to protect and communicate the Truth and elevate it, then take a look at the life of **the Prophet who proclaimed the Truth** to the ignorant and called them onto guidance at a time when he was deprived of all aid in Mecca ...*

*If you have broken the resistance of the enemy, leaving them incapacitated, and devastated evil to proclaim the Truth, then bring before your eyes the sight of the Prophet, on the day of the Conquest, **humbly and thankfully** entering the sacred turf of Mecca, on camelback as if to fall prostrate, despite being a victorious commander ...*

*If you own a farm and want to put things on track, then draw a lesson from the Prophet of **competence** who appointed the **ablest to revive and administer**, in the best possible way, the lands of Banu Nadir, Khaybar and Fadak after seizing possession of them ...*

*If you are lonely, then reflect on the son of Abdullah and Aminah, their **dearly loved orphan of innocence...***

If you are a teenager, closely consider the life of the youth, the future prophet, shepherding the stock of Abu Talib at Mecca ...

If you are a trader set out with caravan loads of goods, ponder the integrity of the grandest man of the convoys destined for Yemen and Damascus ...

*If you are a judge, recall his **just and prudential** move in intervening to replace the Black Stone at the verge of Meccan notables going at each other's throats ...*

*Then turn your glance once more to history and take a look at the Prophet in Medina at the Masjid al-Nabawi **delivering his verdict with the greatest conceivable justice** between the poverty stricken destitute and well to do rich, as just as one can imagine.*

*If you are a spouse consider **the deep emotions and compassion** of the Blessed Husband of Khadijah and Aisha ...*

If you are have children then learn the affectionate conduct of the father of Fatimah, the grandfather of Hasan and Husayn ...

*Whoever you may be and in whichever circumstance you may find yourself in, you will find Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh) as **the most perfect master and the most beautiful guide** at all times and places.*

Master Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, teach? ○

Because his teacher was Allah Almighty and his guide was the Holy Qur'an.

Let us end this conversation with the beautiful lines of Mehmed Akif:

Whatever the World has, it is all but His offering,

To Him is obliged society, and so the individual obliged,

Obliged is all of humankind to that one Innocent, oh Lord

Revive us in the Hereafter with this thought on our mind!





Staying on the Straight Path

Allah Almighty asks:

**“Do men think that they will be left alone on saying,
“We believe”, and that they will not be tested?”**

(Al-Ankabut, 29: 2)

Question 2

When a conscious young man who has been raised in accordance with Islamic manners and has grown up with religious sensitivities begins working after completing his education, he may face degradation in his working life, family life and then he may start compromising from the necessities of a proper Islamic Life.

At this very point, how will it be possible to preserve the integrity, maintain Islamic measures and sensitivities? What do you recommend to our youth to protect themselves against this degradation of life?

Firstly:

The first means of staying on the Straight Path is to be together with the righteous and observant believers.

Allah Almighty says:

“O ye who believe! Fear Allah and be with those who are true (in word and deed).” (al-Tawba, 9: 119)

Being together with those who are true in words and deeds and being able to reflect their way of life in one's own life can enable him/her to resemble them.

As a result of a sort of transfer of behaviors, one can become one of such believers.

Sheikh Sadi says:

“of Ashab al Kahf’s dog Kitmir gained great honor by being with those who are true in word and deeds. Its name is mentioned in the Holy Qur’an. On the other hand, because the wife of the Prophet Noah and the wife of the Prophet Lot were with the disobedient, they were punished to be in hell.”

Therefore, the issue of social environment, neighbors, and friends carry enormous importance.

When we split an atom and its sub-particles, namely protons, neutrons, and electrons transform into energy, it starts to emit some type of rays. Some of those rays are beneficial but some others are harmful. There are many types of rays that we cannot see such as alpha, beta, gamma, ultraviolet, etc... We cannot see them, but all of them have certain effects.

What is much more effective than these rays are the rays coming out of the heart. We call the beneficial ones of such rays *fayd (abundance)* or *ruhaniyya (spirituality)* while we call the harmful ones *gaflah (the heedlessness)* and *qaswah (gloom)*.

This is because Allah (swt) says in the Qur’an;

“...be with those who are true (in words and deeds).” (Al-Tawba, 9: 119)

“...sit not thou in the company of those who do wrong!” (al-An'am, 6: 68)

Moreover, this characteristic of transmission of behaviors and influence on other people is even influential upon the places. In this regard, once the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and his Companions spent the night in a place called al-Hijr, where the people of Thamud had been destroyed. The companions drew water from the wells in that area for their needs and used the water to make the dough. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) ordered them to pour the water they drew, to feed the dough they made to the camels, and allowed them to use only the water drawn from another well where the Prophet Salih's camel had come and drunk water. (See Bukhari, Anbiya, 17; Muslim, Zuhd, 40)

Even though thousands of years passed over the incident of the destruction of the people of Thamud, the visitors do not perform ablution by the waters of the region even today. Because it is a region where the divine wrath manifested itself.

Thus, one should stay away from the disbelievers, the disobedient and the heedless as well as the places where certain sins are committed, which may attract the divine wrath.

Secondly:

We should pay attention to our acts of worship. We should especially pay great attention to perform the “ritual prayer” in humility and with congregation.

Because Allah gives assurance that if we can perform the ritual prayer with our heart as we perform it by our body, it will protect us from immorality and wrongdoings. In other words, Allah Almighty says that our prayer will protect us from sins and falling into wrong situations.¹³

For that reason, one should try to be close to the mosque and become a frequenter of the congregation.

In fact, our Ottoman ancestors were kind and fine people. They built social complexes in central places. They also built small mosques and prayer houses in districts so that the people could easily gather for evening, night and dawn prayers to enjoy the blessing and spirituality of praying in congregation in those days when there was no electricity.

O young men! If you want, you can try this: Imagine that you are going to somewhere and you need to do something. When you are on your way, the adhan is started to be recited... Get off the bus and perform your prayer in congregation. Then you will experience

¹³ See al-Ankabut, 29: 45.

that, your work will go through much more smoothly...

Thirdly:

We should not forget the following command of **the Messenger of Allah** (pbuh): “The real life is the life in the hereafter.”¹⁴

When there is a success, we should remember the above mentioned command and get not spoiled. Moreover, when we face difficulties, we should not lose our hope. For that reason, we should always keep in mind that this world is temporary and the essential and eternal life is the life in the hereafter. We should not forget that both the comfort and difficulty in this world are divine tests.

The Prophet **Suleiman** (pbuh) was made the owner of an enormous wealth and given sultanate. However, he protected his heart from being the captive of the material pleasures. He always was grateful to Allah, the true Lord of the blessings. Because of these beautiful attitudes of him, Allah called Him; “نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ / **how excellent a servant [of Ours].**”¹⁵

On the other hand, the Prophet **Ayyub** (pbuh) who was tested with poverty, illness, and numerous other

14 Al-Bukhari, Riqaq,1.

15 See Sad, 38: 30.

hardships was always contented with his situation and never complained, being aware of the fact that Allah (swt) was testing him. By virtue of this contentedness and submission, the Prophet Ayyub was also honored with Allah's compliment as "نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ / **how excellent a servant [of Ours].**"¹⁶

Therefore, as believers, we must think about how much of the contentedness of Allah we can gain by means of those tests, rather than thinking about under which conditions we are tested.

How nicely Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi says:

"Your inner world is like a guesthouse. Joys are temporary just like sorrows. Neither be cheated with joys nor be distressed by the sorrows! Do not worry if your sorrows become obstacles before your joys! Because the sorrows, if you manage to show patience, prepare for you joys and cheers."

This world is the abode of test. Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an:

"Do the people think that they would be left to themselves without being tested and by only saying to "We believe" (Al-Ankabut, 29: 2)

We should seek the mercy of Allah both in times of wealth and poverty.

¹⁶ See Sad, 38: 44.

We should make the life in the Hereafter, which is the true life, the basis of our lives. Death, mortality, the last breath, grave, the Judgment Day, resurrection, giving account, the balance, *al-sirat*, in short, we should never forget that the life in the hereafter is the greatest future of truth that awaits us.

Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an:

“Did ye then think that We had created you in jest, and that ye would not be brought back to Us (for account)?” (Al-Muminun, 23: 115)

“I do call to witness the Resurrection Day; And I do call to witness the self-reproaching spirit: (Eschew Evil).” (Al-Qiyamah, 75: 1-2)

“Does man think that he will be left uncontrolled, (without purpose)?” (Al-Qiyamah, 75: 36)

“Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it! And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it.” (Al-Zilzal, 99: 7-8)

“Then, shall ye be questioned that Day about the joy (ye indulged in!)” (Al-Takathur, 102: 8)

In modern world, we save some information on a smartphone, a little machine, and then this information reappears just by “clicking”, in like manner, the recording angels, *kiraman kâtibin*, are recording every

moment of us. These records are stored in our ethereal files which will be opened in the Day of Judgment.

That day will be said:

“(It will be said to him:) “Read thine (own) record: Sufficient is thy soul this day to make out an account against thee.”” (Al-Isra, 17: 14).

Eyes will speak! What did these eyes see? Why did Allah give you these eyes and what did you watch?...

Why did **Allah** give you ears and which sounds did you listen to?

The **tongue** will speak! What did you speak? How much good and how much evil did you talk?

In short, that day will be a very difficult day. In other words, we should prepare duly for that day in this world and pay attention to our acts and worship. We should often contemplate the death and the Hereafter. If our mind and heart can become in such depth of contemplation, it will be easier for us to protect ourselves from the evil of time.

Fourthly:

We should be the people of **taqwa (piety)**.

What has Allah (swt) commanded? How did the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) apply those commands in his life? How did the Companions live? Today, 1400

years later, we should try to become a continuation of the legacy of the Companions.

What is **taqwa**?

Taqwa means to avoid carefully the unlawful and reproachable acts, behaviors and things because of love and fear of Allah.

One day **Umar** (r.a.) asked **Ubay Ibn Ka'b** (r.a.) what taqwa is.

Ubay (r.a.) replied:

“– *Did you ever walk on a road full with thorns, O Umar?*”

Umar (r.a.) answered:

“– *Yes, I did.*”

Then Ubay (r.a.) asked again:

“–*So what did you do?*”

Umar (r.a.) answered:

“– *I pulled my dress up and I paid attention to keep myself safe from being hurt by those thorns.*”

Then Ubay ibn Ka'b (r.a.) said:

“– *This is taqwa*”.

In other words, *taqwa* means to avoid meticulously the thorns of sin and the unlawful.

Today, subjected to the invasion of global culture through television, the internet, advertisements and fashion, humanity is drawn into a swirls of the unlawful and sins like the logs washed away by a flood.

The way to protect oneself from the heedlessness of “herd mentality” is to have a heart which is filled with taqwa and which is filled with the fear of losing Allah’s contentedness and love. It is to cover spiritual distances by means of taqwa.

The best manifestation of the taqwa is to stay away from disbelief, hypocrisy, and associating partners to Allah just like staying away from falling into the fire. It is to turn to observance the commands of Allah.

In this world which is a place of divine test, we should pay attention to our steps in every stage of our lives as if walking in a mined land.

We should always accept Islam as a way of life with rules and regulations that addresses every breath of our lives rather than treating it like a ceremony that is performed at certain times so that we can keep ourselves on the straight path.

In addition, we should always pray Allah to keep us on the straight path and our sincerity.





The Mischief of Atheism and Deism

Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi says:

*"If your nose cannot feel the smells, do
not blame the rose for it!.."*

Question 3

The effects of atheism and deism on the beliefs of the young generations have started to increase, especially in recent times. What are the main reasons for this? What do you recommend to stop it and to achieve a true belief?

Today “global culture” has invaded the Islamic geography. This cultural invasion is similar to the invasion of the enemy forces. Advertisements and fashions that encourage lust, luxury and extravagance, the wrong programs of the television and the wrong paths of the internet, their negative inculcations and propagandas bring along a terrible spiritual degradation. People’s mind and spiritual worlds are getting more and more confused every day.

The goal and the means are intermingled. Life is considered only a period of eating and drinking for pleasure. Hearts become prisoners of the world, souls become the slaves of the lustful desires. The dissatisfaction of the souls drags humanity into the individual and social crises.

People are inculcated the perception that there is only life in this world without the one in the hereafter and there is no worry about afterlife. With the indoctrinations of the materialist West which wants to

alienate the Muslim world from its core values, people move away from religion and faith step by step and are dragged into spiritual crises. Moreover, Islam is unfortunately not known properly.

I want to narrate an incident that happened in Istanbul approximately twenty or thirty years ago:

Roger Garaudy, Secretary of the French Communist Party, came to Istanbul. He was giving a lecture at Yıldız Palace. The conference was in the question-answer format just like our program today. He was asked:

“– You were once a Catholic then became a communist. As a communist, you had such strong knowledge about it that you could rewrite all the ideas of Marks and codify Communism. And now you are a Muslim. Why were you first a Catholic, then a communist, and now a Muslim?”

He answered:

“– At first I was a Catholic. I went to the US for education. When I was there, I saw that trusts and cartels were burning tons of wheat and pouring tons of milk just to monopolize the whole market. My soul rebelled against this ruthlessness and mercilessness. This rebellion dragged me to communism.

After a while, I have found out that communism is also soulless and there is no place for conscience in

it. I tried to build a bridge between Communism and Catholicism with the hope to add communism some spirit. However, I failed and could not achieve anything.

Then an order for my execution was issued. (He did not tell the reason of the order). Later, a soldier let me and I ran away.

As a sociologist, I wondered why did this soldier let me free. Later, I searched and found him;

I asked:

“–Why did you let me go even though there was an order for my execution?”

He replied:

“– I am a Muslim. I do not know what crime you committed. I do not know why they want to kill you. I just did not want to be an accessory. That is because I let you go and you ran away.”

Until then, I thought Islam was a tribal religion. I start to become curious about it. Since I am also an economist, I first wanted to start with the economic teachings of Islam.

What is interest? The interest is banned in communism as it is a system of exploitation I wondered how Islam approached interest.

(By referring to Bilal (r.a.) he used the following phrase:)

An incident happened to Bilal has relieved my soul.

Once Bilal took some date fruits to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Our Prophet looked at the dates and said:

“– Bilal, from where did you get this?”

He answered:

“– I had had some ordinary dates. I gave two measures of that ordinary dates and bought in return this one measure of quality dates.”

Thereupon the Prophet (pbuh) said:

“– Alas! This is exactly what interest is. Do not do that!” Then he (pbuh) told Bilal (r.a.) the right way to conclude the exchange:

He said:

“– If you want to buy fine quality of dates, you can sell your lower quality dates in the market and then buy fine quality of dates with your money.”¹⁷

I saw that our Prophet (pbuh) did not show even the slightest concession regarding interest. This incident led me to explore Islam more thoroughly.

¹⁷ See Muslim, *Musaqat*, 96.

Then, I came across Abu Hanifa's magnificent legal expertise. How excellent his legal mentality was! It fascinated and guided me.

But unfortunately today Muslim world does not know this universal legal expert. Even though I am a new Muslim, I am teaching them Abu Hanifa's legal mentality.

You Muslim are healthy, but you think that you are sick. You imitate the sick West. Normally a healthy person is not expected to imitate the sick one."

So we must first recognize our own values. We should know the value of our sanctities. Otherwise, - Allah forbid - we will be like those who have enormous treasures but dying from hunger!

In fact, the Western world is sick today. Because they are self-seeker and pragmatist... As Christianity is itself empty, it does not satisfy the souls. Christianity receives the first blow from Paul. He abolished the sharia;

He said:

"- You should believe in Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, namely the Trinity and do not think further. The provisions of the Torah which regulate the public life have been abolished! Caesar is the only authority to make law."

So live comfortably as you wish. Your worldly laws will be made by your kings, which suited the kings' purposes. Afterwards, the councils gathered consecutively. These councils reestablished the dogmas of Christianity according to their own will. In other words, people determined the Christian creed.

In the **Council of Nicaea** convened in 325, it was decided that the Prophet Jesus (pbuh) was Lord.

In the **Council of Istanbul** held in 381, it was accepted that the holy spirit was Lord.

In the **Council of Ephesus** held in 431, Mary was given the title of "the one who gave birth to the God". The Prophet Jesus was accepted a person who had two natures, which were Divine and human.

In the **Council of Chalcedon** held in 451, it was declared that the Eastern Churches (Egyptian Copts, Armenians, Syriac, Abyssinians) are heretics for they claimed that the Prophet Jesus had only one nature, which was Divine.

In the **Second Council of Nicaea** held in 787, it was decided that iconolatry was not a sin. However, this matter had been discussed for 200 years and even some emperors forbade the icons.

Orthodox Christians accept the first seven councils. Whereas Catholic Christians accept all the 21 councils, the last of which was held in 1965. In this

last council of the Catholic Vatican, there was a call for 'dialogue' between other sects and religions.

In sum, the present form of Christian creed was shaped by the councils. The Shari'a was abolished and the religion was emptied. The church established the system of confession in turn of benefits. A human being has started to absolve the sins of another human being like himself.

Here I would like to convey a memory I heard from **Necip Fâzıl Kısakürek**:

Toynbee went to Egypt. Since he was a sociologist, he approached a strange beggar and asked him:

“- If I give you money, what would you do?”

The beggar answered:

“- I would pray Allah for you.”

Toynbee said:

“- Would Allah accept your prayer?”

The beggar answered:

“- Sir, I pray, I do not interfere the rest. If Allah wishes He accepts or if He does not wish, He does not.”

Toynbee thereupon said:

“- The priests, whom we regard as educated people, say that they have absolve the sins of other people

like themselves. Whereas here, the most destitute man of a religion says, if Allah wishes He accepts or if He does not wish, He does not.”

Today’s altered Christianity has turned into a structure which consists of such irrational practices. However, this state of Christianity seems attractive to many of its members as it allows them to live a selfish life comfortably.

I asked a former missionary who was honored with Islam:

“–Today Christianity is emptied and churches are being sold. There is a certain trend towards Islam, but why does it not happen in large masses?”

He answered:

“– Because Islam is difficult. As Christianity is emptied, everything is free in it.” “In Islam, there are ritual prayers five times in a day; there is fasting; there is zakat; there is aid; there are moral, commercial and legal provisions... None of these exists in Christianity.”

This emptiness causes dissatisfaction in human soul. When people has begun to find some deficiencies in Christianity, they began to turn to atheism. Especially in Europe today, atheism is spreading.

Whereas there is no logical side to atheism. In other words, how can the universe exist on its own? How can this lamp come into existence by itself? There is nothing self-existed...

Atheism, i.e. **irreligiousness/disbelief**, is impossible for a person with a fundamentally benevolent mind and heart. This is - so to speak - the retention of mind and atrophy of the heart. Because the balance in nature and the universe explain to the man clearly that this result cannot take place by blind coincidences. For that reason, the first command of Allah Almighty in the Holy Qur'an is:

“Read in the name of your Lord who created!”

(Al-Alaq, 96: 1)

So, do not look at life with empty eyes! Nothing is created in vain ...

Allah has bestowed everything on earth and in heavens, in man and in the universe as a sign for contemplation for His existence, oneness, unity, and omnipotence.

Hearts that can see, hear and feel do not see anything in this universe other than the manifestations of the divine power and majesty.

Despite all these,

What a pity that there are some hearts that are unaware of the manifestations of the names of Allah, al-

Bari (the Inventor) and **al-Musawwir (the Fashioner)**, who cannot understand anything from the silent language of winds, streams, and mountains!...

The state of those hearts whose eyes are totally blind to the magnificent divine manifestations is like those who have enormous treasures but dying from hunger!...

The reason for such tendencies of denial in our world today and particularly among the youth should be the subject of research. Otherwise, the scholars of **Maturidiyya**, which is our sect in creed, say:

“Even a person to whom no prophet and no divine book has reached should accept the existence of Allah.”

In other words, the universe is a school for contemplation and a lab of faith. In order not to believe, one has to cancel his intellect and be a fool. His heart must be blind.

A friend of Allah (swt) says:

“Allah is so manifest that He is unseen from the severity of his manifestation.”

Look at this flower; how does it come out of black soil? How many colorists and decorators work for it? To whom does Allah bestow it? Why cannot we see these manifestations in other planets and stars where no human being exists?

Every being is proof for the existence Allah. However, only those who are enlightened can understand it. As for the heedless everything is a reason of heedlessness for them.

A wise man says in this context that:

“This world is an occasion for a learned one to watch the manifestations of divine art. But on the other hand, for a foolish one it only consists of dining and satisfying the lust!”

Sheikh Saadi Shirazi says:

“For the men of understanding, even a single leaf in the trees is a means to know Allah. As for the heedless, the all trees do not even have the value of a single leaf”

Allah has created everything in perfect measure. When we look at the universe, we see the perfection in everything from an atom to the universe. In other words, everything has been embedded with divine order and arrangement that attract attention.

Let us give a few examples:

None of the four elements, that we call **al-Anasir al-Arba’a (the four elements)**, namely **fire, air, water** and **earth**, never breaches the borders of the other one.

For example, the **magma layer** at the center of Earth is a great ocean of fire. **The sun** above us is an

enormous ball of flames... Neither of them breaches the other's borders. Our Lord grants the cool and peaceful life to us between these two fires.

Allah says;

“The sun and the moon follow courses (exactly) computed.” (al-Rahman, 55: 5).

For example, if the distance between the Sun and the Earth were a little bit farther, the surface of the Earth would turn into the poles. Or if it were a little closer than its current location, then everything would be burned.

In like manner, if there were no 23,5 degree-slope in the Earth's axis, the seasons would not have taken place. In that case, the places where it is summer would always be summer, the places where it is winter would always be winter.

If the earth's rotation speed around its own axis were a bit slower, the temperature difference between day and night would be very high. If it a bit faster, the winds in the atmosphere would reach such high speeds that hurricanes and floods would make the life on earth impossible.

If the Earth's crust were a little thicker, there would exist no oxygen needed for living beings. The thick layer of soil would suck the existing oxygen and make life impossible.

Seas are also like that. If the seas were a little deeper than their current depth, because the volume of seas would absorb carbon-dioxide and oxygen resources, there would be no life on earth.

If the atmosphere layer around the earth was a little thinner, the meteorites would hit the earth surface every day.

How could the life continue if the proportion of gases in the air (i.e. 77% nitrogen and 21% oxygen) were changed? Do we ever think?

Let me narrate a memory of mine in this respect:

One day I was coming back from Medina. Hostesses in the plane came and said:

“–As we learned, you are a religious scholar.”

I answered

“–Not actually, but people say so.”

They said,

“–Give us advice.”

I said

“– Look, you always fly with the plane. Oxygen level is low at the high altitudes. However, the oxygen level in the airplane is equal to the one on the ground. For that reason, a system in the airplane constantly adjusts the oxygen level.”

You warn people saying,

“Oxygen masks will come when this system mal-functions!”

Does anyone on earth ever say:

“The rations of gases in the air (i.e., 77% nitrogen and 21% oxygen) may change tomorrow, so I'd better to walk around with an oxygen tube! Even an atheist surrenders to the divine will. However, the blindness of the heart prevents him from believing ...”

Indeed, even an atheist – no matter how much he denies it - can live in peace thanks to the divine order in the universe. Everyone continues to live by relying on divine power. But, only the honest souls are able to confess the owner of that power...

Water consists of H_2O , i.e. two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom. One of these gases is flammable, while the other one is explosive. If the oxygen and hydrogen in water molecules were to be set free, everything would go into chaos and life would be impossible. However, what a great art and power that Allah binds a flammable and the explosive atoms and turns them into water, the source of life for all living beings.

When the water gets dirty, it raises up into the sky and gets cleansed in the best way and then comes back down to the earth again as a blessing.

While a fish lives by means of the oxygen existing in the water, it dies when it comes out of the water. Whereas, the oxygen in the air is more than the oxygen in the water ...

Soil is always fruitful. What would happen if it were not?

Every flower blossoms in its proper season. Every vegetable and fruit grows in its proper season. As if there is a computer in every one of them.

They are all in their own border. They all obey the divine order. There is a wonderful ecological balance...

Despite observing such a magnificent order and fine and delicate balance in the universe, thinking that the man is created in vain and living irresponsibly and carelessly like the other creature is nothing but having a dark and wrecked heart.

Consequently, every movement in the universe has been set in a delicate and precise balance. If there is a slight increase or decrease in these measures, the order and harmony will immediately be ruined.

Allah has given this system to the service of the man. Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an:

“And He has made subservient to you, [as a gift] from Himself, all that is in the heavens and on earth:

in this, behold, there are messages indeed for people who think!” (al-Jathiyah, 45: 13. Also See Luqman, 31: 20)

“[Hallowed be] He who has created seven heavens in full harmony with one another: no fault will thou see in the creation of the Most Gracious. And turn thy vision [upon it] once more: canst thou see any flaw? Yea, turn thy vision [upon it] again and yet again: [and every time] thy vision will fall back upon thee, dazzled and truly defeated....” (al-Mulk, 67: 3-4)

“And the skies has He raised high, and has devised [for all things] a measure, so that you [too, O men,] might never transgress the measure [of what is right]!” (Al-Rahman, 55: 7-8)

When we observe the **man**, this divine order will attract our attention:

A person should look at his own creation. Is there any deficiency? Do you have any extra or missing bones in your body?

What do you need? You need two feet. Allah has bestowed you two of them. You need two arms. Allah has bestowed you two of them. Our eyes and ears have been placed in the right place, not in any other part or place of our body, i.e. on our head.

For example, if man were created with one foot, he could not walk or if he were created with one leg longer than the other, he could not walk comfortably. If he

had one arm, he could not perform his tasks properly. Eye, ear and tongue, all of them have unique properties. Lacking one causes disorder and unbalance of the body.

If one is offered “give your eyes, take the whole world in return”, who would accept this deal?

Each cell is located in the limb where it performs its task. When man is in the form of a sperm as if a whistle is blown for it run and every cell runs towards its proper limb. The eye cell does not go to the heart or the heart cell does not settle in the liver. The health and balance of the body depend on this harmony in all limbs.

In conclusion, all the universe is a place of exhibition of Allah’s divine power and majesty. Allah has arranged it in accordance with the cognizance of the man so long as he can look through the love in his heart, look with contemplation, observe with taqwa...

A believer should carry the harmony in this universe. His acts of worship, character and behaviors should be in a fine and delicate manner.

Allah Almighty says:

“Did you, then, think that We created you in mere idle play, and that you would not have to return to Us?” (Al-Muminun, 23: 115)

The creation has been created to be given to the disposal of man and man has been created to worship Allah. Otherwise the creation would have no meaning at all.

Being a disbeliever albeit witnessing so many manifestations of divine glory requires one's heart be totally blind. As everything testifies to the existence of Allah, it is not possible to deny it.

Allah (swt) asks the heedless ones who have an atheist mindset:

“[Or do they deny the existence of God?] Have they themselves been created without anything [that might have caused their creation]? or were they, perchance, their own creators?” (Tur, 52: 35)

Allah asks: Is there anything which is self-created?

One of the most important reasons that draws a person into atheism and disbelief is being together with the disbelievers and the disobedient. Spending time with them leads the person to have a similar mindset with them and a similar emotions of heart in time of union with them. While our Prophet (pbuh) was passing through the wreckage of Thamud people, who had been subject to Divine Wrath centuries ago, he warned his companions:

“Pass through here hurriedly and in a weeping mood, do not collect water from here and spill whatever you collect!”¹⁸

Let us think about the situation of our people who are exposed to the propaganda of people of disbelief and who watch their publication the whole day from screens, phones, televisions, and dirty streets.

If we give up our education and teaching efforts, if we do not carry out our mission to command the right and forbid the wrong properly, our children will become the generations of others.

The Qur’an states that the devil will become a partner of someone’s wealth and children.¹⁹

Being a child’s biological parents does not mean anything. If the devil is breastfeeding him, and the people of disbelief are feeding him, he becomes their son.

We should be very careful about this issue...



Today, as a sad result of the lacking proper Islamic education, the mischief of “Deism” has emerged. Deists accept the existence of Allah, because there is no chance to deny His explicit existence, but they claim

18 See al-Bukhari, Salat 53, al-Anbiya 17, Tafsir, 15/2; Muslim, Zuhd, 38-39.

19 See al-Isra, 17: 64.

that the man has no obligations just like a sheep which has been created by God without any responsibility of servanthood. In other words, man is created idle and with no responsibility.

Allah (swt) warns us in the Holy Qur'an as follows:

“Does man, then, think that he is to be left to himself to go about at will?” (al-Qiyamah, 75: 36)

“For [thus it is:] We have not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in mere idle play.” (See al-Dukhan, 44: 38; al-Anbiya, 21: 16).

Deism is a disease too. As we mentioned above, in order to be someone who denies the Absolute Creator, one must be a fool. The deist seemingly does not deny the Creator, but denies His Lordship, in other words His divine book, His messenger, and the instructions given by Him. Then what difference would a man have from other creatures?

But, unfortunately, the confusing debates about religion, Sunnah, sects, and religious provisions in addition to the ignorance of our society on the religious education, provides a ground to that kind of instigations.

Today, we need a serious education to teach the Islamic values duly. The summer Qur'an courses are not enough for this. Considering its current curriculum

and conditions, Imam Hatip Schools are not sufficient, either.

Our Prophet (pbuh) taught Islam to his companions for 23 years. Islamic culture was completed in only 23 years. Therefore, it means that this education should continue for a lifetime. We need also to take lessons from the people of taqwa and righteous scholars.

The fact that to assume going to summer courses in childhood or taking one hour the lesson of religious culture a week is enough for religious education means to underestimate religious education. As a matter of fact, our people who have such a religious education become hesitant when they face religious discussions on television. Moreover, their lust fuels their hesitation and they totally move the religion away from their lives.

The perception of ignorance coming from the West in modern world has imposed itself in all aspects of life. However, it is not incurable. The cure is to take **our Prophet (pbuh)** and his Companions as our role models and deliver the message of Islam. Everybody should strive. It is not permissible for the people who have proper Islamic education to retreat to a corner and to give up delivering the message of Islam.

Even though so much ignorance exists in our world, if we cannot fill the quota of some Qur'an courses, it means that we are spending enough effort.

So in the school of this world;

- ✓ We should remind our people again that the true life is the life in the Hereafter.
- ✓ We should tell people that everything we do will be subject to account.
- ✓ We should remind them that the goal of creation is to know our Lord and to serve him.
- ✓ By exhibiting the good examples by living them in our lives, we should serve Islam. If we do this, Allah promises to help us and to make our feet steady on the straight path.²⁰





Sunnah is the Application of the Qur'an to the Life

Allah Almighty says:

**“He who obeys the Messenger,
obeys Allah...”** (Al-Nisa, 4: 80)

Question 4

Nowadays some say that merely the Qur'an is enough to understand and live Islam. They say: "The Qur'an is enough for us."

What would you like to say about the importance of hadith and Sunnah?

In the past, the essence of Christianity was emptied by Paul, and then all religious provisions were abolished by Jehovah's witnesses. In like manner, nowadays, the same unknown and unseen force is trying to drag Islam into the same situation... As they have changed Christianity from a religion to only a badge, they also want to do the same to Islam.

Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allah show mercy on his soul) showed explicitly the place of Sunnah in Islam by reminding that the obedience to Allah and his Messenger was repeated in 33 verses of the Qur'an.

23-year long prophetic life of our Prophet (pbuh) is an interpretation of the Qur'an. We learn all acts of worship including ritual prayer, fasting, and daily transactions from his Sunnah. How can this religion be practiced without his guidance?

Allah (swt) says:

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ

“He who obeys the Messenger, obeys Allah...” (al-Nisa, 4: 80).

The following verse of the Qur’an explicitly expresses the value of our Prophet’s sayings:

“and neither does he speak out of his own desire: that [which he conveys to you] is but [a divine] inspiration with which he is being inspired” (al-Najm, 53: 3-4)

Both the words and the meaning of the Qur’an are revealed by Allah. As to the hadith of our Prophet (pbuh), their words are from our Prophet and their meaning are from Allah.

Ali (r.a.) says:

“When we saw our Prophet (pbuh) stood up, we stood up too, and when we saw him sat down, we sat down too.” (Ahmad, I, 83)

The Companions knew very well what the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) did was what Allah (swt) wanted. Allah Almighty was his teacher and instructor. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) did not speak of his will, but he was conveying what came to him from Allah.

The following verse of the Qur’an particularly states that besides Allah, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) also had the authority to make provisions in religion:

“... [the Prophet] who will enjoin upon them the doing of what is right and forbid them the doing of what is wrong, and MAKE LAWFUL TO THEM THE GOOD THINGS OF LIFE AND FORBID THEM THE BAD THINGS ...” (Al-Araf, 7: 157; also see al-Tawba, 9: 29)

In like manner, the following verses also refer to this fact:

“... So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you...” (Al-Hashr, 59: 7)

“Say: “If ye do love Allah, Follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”” (Al Imran, 3: 31)

The Qur'an and Sunnah are the two basis of Islam and they are inseparable from one another. The Qur'an has been interpreted by the statements and actions of our Prophet. Therefore, we should be aware of the real purpose of those who pretend as if they are on the side of the right. In fact, they try to discredit Sunnah by saying “The Qur'an is enough for us” by ignoring the fact that Sunnah is the living interpretation of the Qur'an.

Ayub al-Sakhtiyani (may Allah show mercy on his soul), who was one of Fiqh and Hadith scholars of the generation of the Successors, said:

“When a person is told about the Sunnah, if he says, “We do not need that, tell us about the Qur’an”, know that not only this person has gone astray but also he misleads the people.”²¹

Imam al-Awza’i (may Allah show mercy on his soul) who is one of the scholars of the generation of the successors of the successors says:

“This is because Sunnah came as a ruling source along with the Qur’an.”

The Holy Qur’an was revealed to the heart of our Prophet (pbuh), the honor of the universe. It is stated in the verses of the Qur’an:

“Now, behold, this [divine writ] has indeed been bestowed from on high by the Sustainer of all the worlds: trustworthy divine inspiration has alighted with it from on high upon thy heart, [O Muhammad] so that thou mayest be among those who preach in the clear Arabic tongue.” (Al-Shu’ara, 26: 192-195)

The first and most competent interpreter of the Qur’an is our Prophet (pbuh). The Qur’an says:

“... And upon thee [too] have We bestowed from on high this reminder, so that thou might make clear

21 Al-Hakim, *Ma’rifat Ulum al-Hadith*, s. 65; al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *al-Kifaya fi’l-ilm al-Riwaya*, p. 16.

unto mankind all that has ever been thus bestowed upon them, and that they might take thought.” (Al-Nahl, 16: 44)

The Qur'an was interpreted by our Prophet (pbuh) through his 23-year-long prophetic mission. Therefore, it is not possible to understand the Qur'an without receiving a share of the spiritual legacy of the Messenger of Allah, without taking example of his character, and without following his Sunnah.

As a matter of fact, all the details of the acts of worship, which are the fundamental pillars of Islam, such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and hajj, have been explained in the sayings and the practice of the Messenger of Allah. The Qur'an does not mention prayer times, number of cycles of ritual prayers, the essential parts of prayer and things that nullify the prayer. All these and many other matters have been left to the Sunnah of our Prophet (pbuh).

In like manner, the rules of zakat, such as out of which goods zakat is paid, under which conditions and by which proportions it will be paid, are not explained in the Qur'an. Such provisions were explained by Our Prophet.

Indeed, how the Qur'an will be applied to life cannot be known without considering Sunnah. For example, eating carrion is forbidden in the Qur'an. However, we can eat fish that die after being caught. We learn

from Sunnah that fish is an exception of the general prohibition of the Qur'an.

The Friday prayer is ordered in the Qur'an, but we learn its time and how to perform it from the Sunnah.

Therefore, it is understood that the secret purpose of those who try to discredit the Sunnah is to remove the provisions out of our religion.

Moreover, there is no doubt that the Companions of the Prophet also considered Sunnah as a principal source.

A man came to **Imran bin Husain** (r.a.) who was the judge of Basra during caliphate of Uthman (r.a.) and said,

“– You are telling us some hadiths, but we cannot find their source in the Qur'an?”

Imran (r.a.) answered:

“– Can you find any provision in the Qur'an regarding the proportion of zakat i.e. 1 dirham out of 40 dirhams or one sheep out of certain number of sheep or such and such amount of zakat out of certain number of camels etc.?”

When the man replied as “No” Imran asked:

“From where did you learn all these? You have learned them from us (the scholars). We learned them

from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).” Imran then mentioned other examples similar to this.²²

In fact, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) prophesied the emergence of those who will neglect the hadith and the Sunnah and said in this regard:

“Does any of you, while reclining on his couch, imagine that Allah has prohibited only that which is to be found in this Qur’an? By Allah, I have preached, commanded and prohibited various matters as numerous as that which is found in the Qur’an, or more numerous...”

(Abu Dawud, Haraj, 31-33/3050)

“Beware! I have been given the Qur’an and something like it, yet the time is coming when a man replete on his couch will say: Keep to the Qur’an; what you find in it to be permissible treat as permissible, and what you find in it to be prohibited treat as prohibited. Beware! The domestic ass, beasts of prey with fangs, a find belonging to confederate, unless its owner does not want it, are not permissible to you. If anyone comes to some people, they must entertain him, but if they do not, he has a right to mulct them to an amount equivalent to his entertainment.” (Abu Dawud, Sunnah, 5/4604; Ahmad, IV, 131)

These are truly miraculous hadiths... Because we are now in those days that the Sunnah is tried to be

22 Abu Dawud, Zakat, 2/1561; Ibn Abi Asim, al-Sunnah, II, 386; al-Tabarani, *al-Mujam Al-Kabir*, XVIII, 219.

discredited, about which our Prophet informed us. We must strive to learn our religion correctly in order to protect ourselves and our offspring from the seditions of modern times.

In this regard, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said to Abdullah ibn Umar (r.a.):

*“O Ibn Umar! Hold tight to your religion, hold tight to your religion. Because your religion is both your flesh and blood. Pay utmost attention from whom you learn your religion. Learn religious sciences and the rules of your religion from the scholars who are on the straight path, not from those who are inclined to this world (to the worldly interests)!”*²³

We must not forget that the Sunnah of our Prophet (pbuh) is the only guide to show how to act in accordance with the Qur’an. Therefore, we must never forget that the objections against Sunnah will reach the Qur’an and consequently Islam and Allah.

Abdullah bin al-Daylami (r.a.), one of the greatest scholars of the generation of successors of the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh), said:

“As I have been informed, the disappearance of religion will begin with the abandonment of the Sunnah. Just as the fibers of a rope are unfastened and then bro-

23 Al-Hatib al-Baghdadi, *al-Kifaya fi ‘Ilm al-Riwaya*, al-Madina al-Munawara, al-Maktaba al-‘Ilmiyah, p. 21.

ken in the end, the religion will be lost through the abandonment of the Sunnah one by one.” (al-Darimi, Muqaddima, 16/98)

Therefore, getting the Sunnah one by one out of our lives - Allah Forbid - endangers our eternal salvation.

Our Prophet (pbuh) says;

“I entrust you two things, the Book of Allah and my Sunnah.” (See Hakim, I, 171/318)

This is because, O my brothers!, let us not forget that the hostility against Sunnah is a deliberate act. We should pay more attention to the Sunnah. Because **the aim of the enemies of the Sunnah is to empty the contents of Islam.**

Indeed, the Judaism and Christianity had been distorted by this way throughout the history of religions. First, the traditions of the prophets were abandoned, and then the creedal principles and rules about the acts of worship were altered.

For example, **Abdulahad Dawud Effendi**, who examined the oldest copies of Christianity and the letters of Paul, converted to Islam and adopted the name Abdulahad. He said:

“The distortion in the Christianity began as follows:

- Sunnah was abolished and baptism was established in its place,
- Ritual prayer was abolished and rites was established in its place,
- Fasting was abolished and the lent was established in its place.”

Then, the head cover was abandoned and made compulsory only for nuns. Today, even the nuns started to neglect the head covering.

Thus, Christianity was no longer a divine religion. It was falsified and distorted. It has been altered from being a system of life and turned into a brand and a signboard. Today, Jehovah’s Witnesses almost completely abolish the rules of Christianity.

There are many more examples in this respect. In other words, when religion disturbs raw and ignorant souls, they immediately oppose. For example, in ancient Greece, Socrates said “God is one” and conveyed some ideas related to the belief of the Unity of God, the Council of Athens immediately opposed these ideas and poisoned Socrates. Because the religion disturbed them...

In short, some groups deliberately oppose the Sunnah. The purpose of such groups is to empty the core principles of religion as happened to Christianity...

Today, the same trap is being tried to set for Islam which is the only unaltered divine religion today. Islam is wanted to be distorted by isolating the Sunnah. As believers, we must be highly vigilant against such hidden or open enemies of Islam. We should not forget that the schools of Islamic thought are the guardians of the Sunnah and the Sunnah is the guardian of the Qur'an.

This is because,

✓ It is necessary to establish and maintain the institutions where Islamic knowledge can be learned in sincerity and piety.

✓ It is necessary to train scholars who fear Allah, know the methodology of Hadith and similar sciences, and have the ability to defend Islam.



من بنده قرآنم اگر جان دارم

من خاک در محمد مختارم

کز نقل کند جز این کس از گفتارم

بیزارم از او و ز این سخن بیزارم

What Sufism is and what it is not

Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi says:

*“As long as live, I will remain a humble servant of the Qur’an,
I will be the soil of the path of the chosen Muhammad.*

*Whosoever incorrectly conveys my words,
Know that I am far from him and far from his words!”*

Question 5

Definition of Sufism is made by means of various terms such as maqam (spiritual authority) position (mawki), master guide (ghaws), pole (qutb), wondrous acts (karamah) “If you follow this sheikh, he will save you in the Hereafter!” etc. What should we understand from Sufism? How do you definite true Sufism?

WHAT IS SUFISM?

I would like to start my words by drawing attention to the point that in some circles Sufism is presented as if it is an addition to religion. However, Sufism is not an addition of the religion, on the contrary, it is related to various aspects of the religion including “**taqwa** (piety)”, “**zuhd** (asceticism)” and “**ihsan**”. In other words, it is the art of being able to recognize and know Allah closely by heart.

Sufism is another name of carrying the “**faith**” to a marvelous horizon such as “**ihsan**”. It also means living in accordance with the content of “**Hadith Gabriel**”. In this hadith, “**Gabriel**” asked various questions to the “**Messenger of Allah**.”

In his third question, Gabriel asked “– What is ihsan”?

Our prophet (pbuh) answered:

“–Ihsan means that you worship Allah as if you are seeing Him, for though you do not see Him, He, verily, sees you.” (See Muslim, Iman, 1)

In other words, Sufism is living with the awareness that we are always under the supervision of divine cameras. It means to develop the heart to such consciousness and cognizance. Of course, this state cannot be achieved by reading book or spending mental effort. Instead, this state can only be achieved as a result of the endeavor by the heart.

Sufism is a discipline of purification / cleansing. It is the way of reaching at the state of “**taqwa**” by refraining from everything that keep man away from Allah. It is a spiritual discipline that controls the lust and thus develops the spiritual abilities.

Sufism is a spiritual school where the soul is disciplined and purified under the care of true educators who are the inheritors of our Prophet (pbuh).

Sufism means to abandon the bad habits and to adopt the good morality.

Sufism means fighting against the lust without peace. This battle will continue until the last breath.

Sufism is the skill of remaining always as a friend of Allah by showing contentedness for His fate under any circumstances. It means to protect the balance of the heart in the face of the ebb and flows of life as well

as its bad or good surprises. It means not to be naughty in wealth and not to go into depression in poverty. It is the ability to show maturity in the face of the troubles by regarding them divine tests and a means for purification. It refers to the ability to be a sincere believer who forgets complaining and groaning and becomes a thankful servant under all circumstances.

Sufism is a kind of obligation of the believers who have reached the material and spiritual maturity to satisfy the needs of all creatures voluntarily in a selfless manner. It means to show love, compassion and mercy to all creation and serve them because of their Creator and turn this manner into an essential character.

Sufism means to engage with the Qur'an and Sunnah, to comprehend the divine and prophetic instructions by heart and try to adopt them in all aspects of life.

In short, **Sufism** refers to the effort for trying to know the Messenger of Allah closely with love; to get closer to him, to live Islam sincerely in accordance with its principles by taking lessons from our Prophet's great character, personality and morality.

Anything that contradicts the above-mentioned principles and does not base on the Qur'an and the Sunnah is falsehood and wrong, it does not matter whether it is attributed to Sufism or not.

WHAT IS NOT SUFISM?

Some people say: “*Keep your heart clean, it is okay even if your deed is little (!)*”. That kind of understanding, which opens the doors to the selfish compromises has no relation whatsoever with the real **Sufism** which is a servant of sharia.

For example, today, some people who are distant from the spirit of Mathnawi al-Sharif, ignore the **ecstasy** and **taqwa** aspects of the Mawlawiyyah Order and present it as a kind of folklore show or a dhikr and whirling circle carried out in a music hall.

Whereas, Mawlana complains about the heedless people who listen to him but cannot understand his purpose and intention in the first 18 lines of his *Mathnawi* as follows:

“In every company I uttered my wailful notes, I consorted with the unhappy and with them that rejoice.

Every one became my friend from his own opinion; none sought out my secrets from within me.

My secret is not far from my plaint, but ear and eye lack the light (whereby it should be apprehended).

None that is raw understands the state of the ripe: therefore, my words must be brief. Farewell!” (Mathnawi,

Book 1, verses 5-7, 18)

Similar to all friends of Allah, the main sources of inspiration of Mawlana were the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. He expresses this truth in a quatrain (ruba'i) to the whole world as follow:

“As long as live, I will remain a humble servant of the Qur'an, I will be the soil of the path of the chosen Muhammad. Whosoever incorrectly conveys my words, know that I am far from him and far from his words!””

With this statement, Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi clearly introduces himself as **“The servant and slave of the Qur'an, the soil of the Prophet's bright path”**. In other words, he expressly declares that the fixed leg of his compass is permanently fixed on the Sharia, and that he strives to organize his life according to the instructions of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Therefore, claiming to be a member of the path of Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi, without practicing the provisions of Sharia would first hurt the soul of Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi.

On the other hand, it is observed in some religious groups that by ignoring the sensitivity of halal-haram as well as by saying some pointless expressions like “my heart is clean(!)” the path for man/woman mixed gender circles is paved, the rule of covering the body properly has started to be ignored and concession in many other Islamic provisions are given. This attitude encourages the false view that as if there is no need to

observe the limits of haram and halal when one's heart is clean.

Although our Prophet (pbuh) was the cleanest-hearted human, he showed utmost sensitivity in acts of worship, transactions, character and in especially the greatest problem of our day, “**observance of halal and haram**”. So, no one should ignore this fact.

However, the true Sufism within the framework of the essential principles of the Sunnah is the effort to become integrated both spiritually and materially with the principles of our Prophet (pbuh). Although the Messenger of Allah was at the peak of the spiritual maturity, he performed his acts of worship with great meticulousness. All believers should follow his path and fulfill their religious obligations regardless of their spiritual degree, position and order.

An incident narrated by Abdulqadir Gilani nicely explains this matter:

“One day there was a clear light appeared in front of me and covered the whole horizon. When I was looking at it and wondering “what it was”, a voice came from the light and said:

“–O Abdulqadir! I am your Lord! I am so pleased with your good deeds that from now on I have rendered all prohibited things permissible to you.”

However, as soon as the call ended, I realized that this sound belonged to the devil –may Allah’s curse be upon him - and I said:

“ – Leave me alone O Accursed Satan! The light you showed is eternal gloominess / darkness for me.”

Devil said while walking away:

“ – You managed to escape from my traps again by means of the wisdom and the insight that your Lord has bestowed upon you! Whereas, I misled hundreds of people by this method.”

Knowing that that was a blessing from Allah, I opened my hands to Allah and thanked Him.”

When a man in the congregation asked:

“ –How did you know he was devil?”

Abdulqadir Gilani answered,

“I understood it when he said that I have rendered all prohibited things permissible to you!”

If a servant were to be exempted from the limits of prohibited-permissible based on his good deeds and spiritual state, our Prophet (pbuh), as being at the peak of mankind’s righteousness, would have been given such an exemption. Since he was not given such a privilege, it would not be given to anybody.

If a person does not organize his life in accordance with the principles of the Qur’an and Sunnah and if he

ignores the external obligations of religion, no matter how many mystical expressions he uses in his talks, he cannot be a real Sufi.

Similarly, if a person does not observe Islamic principles in his family life, he cannot be considered a Sufi, either.

The parents who deprive their children from Qur'anic education by merely considering their worldly future and thus endangering their children's eternal life cannot make spiritual progress. Such parent's assumption that they are among the Sufis can only be an indication of their heedlessness.

In like manner, violating other people's rights in commercial life and committing the sins forbidden by Allah in order to make some worldly benefit by hiding behind thoughts such as "there is no harm in doing one time, I will not do it again..." are the most terrible oppression that the person does to himself and that destroys the servant's spirituality.

In this respect, the measure given by Umar (r.a.) should be kept in mind at all times:

"Do not look at the prayers or fasting of a person instead look at the following:

✓ *Does he tell the truth when he speaks?*

✓ *When he is entrusted with something, does he respect the trust?*

✓ *Does he observe the borders between halal and haram while he is taking care of the worldly issues?.”²⁴*

In short, if there is no sensitivity in respect to the Sharia measures in a person’s acts of worship, transactions, morality and lifestyle, it is meaningless to expect a spiritual progress from that person.

Indeed, **Imam Rabbani** said;

“Sufism means to perfect the observance of the Shariah.” In other words, Sufism is the effort to become a good servant and a mature person within the framework of the Qur’an and Sunnah.

THE REAL MIRACLE IS BEING PERSISTENT ON THE STRAIGHT PATH

Sufism is not a journey to develop *kashf* (visions) and *karamah* (wondrous acts).

Wondrous acts (*karamah*) and visions (*kashf*) are Allah-given incidents that can be encountered on the spiritual path. However, there is no guarantee even for the person, who has been bestowed by wondrous acts

24 Al-Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubra*, VI, 288; *Shu’ab*, IV, 230, 326.

(karamah) and visions (kashf) that he will give his last breath in faith.

Allah Almighty mentions the parable of Bal'am bin Baurah in the Qur'an. Bal'am was a man blessed with karamah and kashf, and was honored with the manifestation of the greatest name of Allah. However, he was tempted by worldly pleasures and followed his soul's desires and eventually he was perished. Allah resembled him to a confused dog in the Qur'an.²⁵

Qarun had also been a righteous servant of Allah. He had lived ascetic and pious life. However, he then inclined to his carnal desires. Allah Almighty had given him wealth, in other words, He tested Qarun with wealth but he did not think that it was a divine test and went astray. He rebelled against the Prophet Moses (pbuh). Allah Almighty sank him under the ground along with the wealth he relied on and trusted.

Therefore, karamah and kashf may not indicate how a person's last breath will be. This is because Sufism is a way of observance of the following divine command:

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ

“Pursue, then, the right course, as thou hast been bidden [by Allah]...” (Hud, 11: 112)

²⁵ See al-Araf, 8: 176.

The masters of Sufi path also say,

“The real miracle is being persistent on the straight path.”

The wondrous acts, dreams and several exceptional states may be encountered on the path of Sufism, but they never are the purpose.

After all, Sufism is the effort to organize the life in accordance with the principles of the Qur’an and Sunnah.

Our Prophet (pbuh) said in his farewell sermon:

*“...O believers! I leave you two things, the **book of Allah, the Qur’an, and Sunnah of His Prophet**. If you follow them firmly you will never go astray...”* (See Muslim, Hajj, 147; Abu Dawud, Manasik, 56)

The true Sufism is to be able to respect these two holy trusts. Sufism is an educational path that teaches how to carry out certain acts of heart described in the Qur’an and Sunnah like **sincerity, taqwa, asceticism, submissiveness, repentance** and, **contentedness** and in return Sufism also teaches how to eliminate certain carnal illness including **hypocrisy, hubris, haughtiness, gossip, and envy**.

Therefore, Sufism is not an education of teaching how to reach **karamah** and **kashf**, but rather it is an education of how to be a proper servant to Allah.

In fact, developing the states of kashf and karamah cannot be considered as a benchmark for spiritual progress. For instance, Abu Bakr (r.a.) is reported to be the most beneficent person after prophets in many narrations,²⁶ but there is not much information about his wondrous deeds. His greatest karamah was his exceptional love, loyalty, and obedience to the Messenger of Allah. In the words of the Qur'an, he was **“the second one of the two.”**²⁷

For this reason, the friends of Allah have not attached importance to physical wondrous deeds, which may lead to hubris and fame, and have meticulously avoided revealing them. Because of their fear and concern, they even called the disclosure of kashf and karamah as “the menstruation of men.” They concentrated all their efforts on living **in accordance with the principles of the Qur'an and Sunnah**, which is the real miracle.

Junaid al-Baghdadi says:

“If you see a man flying in the sky (sitting on his prayer rug), but on the other hand, if he is not observing the commands and prohibitions of the Qur'an and Sunnah, do not accredit this man, because what he shows is

26 See Ali al-Muttaqi, *Kanz al-Ummal*, XI, 549/32578; Ibn Majah, *Muqaddima*, 11/106; Ahmad, I, 127, II, 26.

27 Al-Tawba, 9: 40.

not a karamah but rather istidraj (wondrous acts shown by disbelievers)."

It is reported that **Bayazid al-Bistami** said:

"One day I was about to cross to the other side of Tigris River. Both sides of the river merged as a miraculous deed to give me the way. I immediately step back and said to Tigris River:

"– I swear that you cannot cheat me by that! Because the boatmen are crossing people to the other side for half coin. (But you want my righteous deeds that I have been preparing for 30 years for the hereafter). So, I cannot waste my thirty years (for a miraculous deed that drag me to haughtiness). I need Karim (Allah), not karamah!"²⁸

The friends of Allah tried to hide such extraordinary situations when they encountered them. They considered such situations a kind of divine test preventing them to reach the knowledge of Allah and reaching a higher degree in servitude.

On the other hand, some ignorant and heedless people may make various claims such as:

"My sheikh will hold my hand in doomsday! He will not leave me. He will take me to Heaven (!)"

28 See Attar, *Tezkiretü'l Evliya*, p. 217, İlim ve Kültür Publications, Bursa 1984.

Such claims can never be compiled with principles of Shariah. Instead, they are baseless expectations and flurries of excitement and delirium.

As we have mentioned before, no one has the guarantee to give his last breath as a believer except the prophets and certain people who were promised by Heaven like “ten companions of our Prophet whom were promised by Paradise.”

This is because it is stated in the Qur’an:

وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“...O ye who believe! ...and die not except in a state of Islam.” (Al Imran, 3: 102).

While it is unknown who will find salvation with faith in the last breath, the Holy Qur’an reads:

“O ye who believe! If ye will aid (the cause of) Allah, He will aid you, and plant your feet firmly.”

In other words, if you live His religion and have others live it, He will help you. (Muhammad, 47: 7). In this respect, a believer should live in effort to gain the contentedness of Allah in order to give his last breath as a Muslim. He should also invoke Allah with hope to face the mercy and forgiveness of Allah.

Indeed, even the Prophet Ibrahim (called Khalil-ullah, the friend of Allah) (pbuh) worried in this regard and supplicated to his Lord saying:

“And do not put me to shame on the Day when all shall be raised from the dead!” (al-Shuara, 26: 87).

The Prophet Joseph (pbuh) sought refuge to Allah by saying:

“...(O, My Lord!) let me die as one who has surrendered himself unto Thee, and make me one with the righteous!”²⁹

For this reason, every believer, no matter in what spiritual state he/she is, is obliged to be worried about the last breath and be in preparation for Hereafter.

We would like to point out that there is intercession in Islam. If our Lord wills, He may grant this privilege to any one of His servants. However, who will have the right to intercede or whom will be interceded is only known by Allah. No one can intercede without the permission of Allah Almighty. As stated in the Qur'an,

“...Who is there that could intercede with Him, unless it be by His leave?” (al-Baqara, 2: 255)

Even though the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was granted the right of “the greatest intercession”, he said to his nearest relatives including his daughter Fatima and his aunt:

“O Bani Abd Munaf! Rescue yourselves from the Fire; O Bani Abdul-Muttalib! Rescue yourselves from

29 Yusuf, 12: 101

the Fire; O mother of Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam, the aunt of Allah's Messenger (pbuh), and O Fatima bint Muhammad! Rescue yourselves from the Fire, for I cannot defend you before Allah (If you do not do good deeds, do not trust that I am the Messenger of Allah and can save you) for I have nothing which can avail you against Allah." (See Ibn Sa'd, II, 256; al-Bukhari, Manaqib, 13-14; Muslim, Iman, 348-353)

Therefore, no matter if someone is a Sufi master or a sheikh, everyone is weak and in need of mercy. No one has any guarantee in respect to the last breath or to the matters of the Hereafter except those ten Companions whom were heralded by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) with Paradise.

When **Uthman bin Maz'un** (r.a.), one of the well-known ascetic and observant Companions, passed away and was given a bath and was shrouded in his clothes. Umm al-Ala, an Ansari woman, said (addressing to the dead body):

"-O Aba al-Sa'ib! May Allah be Merciful to you! I testify that Allah has honored you."

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) interfered and said:

"- *How do you know that Allah has honored him?*"

Umm al-Ala answered:

“– Let my father be sacrificed for you, O Allah’s Messenger (pbuh)! On whom else shall Allah bestow His honor?” Then the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“– As for him, by Allah, death has come to him. By Allah, I wish him all good (from Allah). By Allah, in spite of the fact that I am Allah’s Messenger, I do not know what Allah will do to me and to you (in the other words, what kind of conditions we will face in the Hereafter) ...” (al-Bukhari, Ta’bir, 27)

Consequently, a servant should always live in accordance with taqwa and sought refuge with Allah Almighty. He will strive to adopt the good character of our Prophet (pbuh). There is no other way of salvation. Just like our prayers, our acts of worship are also needed to be accepted.

Khalid al-Baghdadi who is called as “sun of suns” in terms of knowledge and wisdom, requested his students to pray for his “good end” in letters he wrote to his students. Moreover, in a letter to his brother, he expressed his feelings as follows:

“By Allah Almighty, from the day I was born to this day, I do not believe that I have done even a single good deed which is acceptable in the sight of Allah. I believe that I will be held accountable for all of my deeds.

If you do not consider yourself as bankrupt regarding your deeds, you are at the worst point of ignorance.

Even if you consider yourself as bankrupt, do not lose your hope for Allah's mercy. Because Allah Almighty's mercy for the servant is better than all the righteous deeds of humans and jinn.”³⁰

Therefore, in respect to the eternal salvation, the situation of both the Sufi master and the disciple is uncertain... Living far from taqwa and servanthood and then consoling oneself by the false expectation of salvation saying “my master will save me!” is the heedlessness and ignorance that can never be accepted by the true Sufism. Our lord says;

“...let not then this present life deceive you, nor let the chief Deceiver (Satan) deceive you about Allah.” (Luqman, 31: 33; Fatir, 35: 5).

In other words, while living in heedlessness on the one hand, expecting Allah's forgiveness on the other is described as **“Deception of the Chief Deceiver (Satan)”**. Nevertheless, by neglecting his servanthood duties and expecting his master to save him in the Hereafter has no rightful justification.

Therefore, considering the feelings of love, respect, belonging, affiliation and goodwill, that need to be shown to a righteous master as guarantees for the eternal salvation can bring no spiritual benefit but harm to the person.

³⁰ *Maktubat Mawlana Khalid*, 28. Maktup.

Sufism is not the way to obtain a rank or position, either:

As in every other matter, there have also been exploiters in Sufism from time to time. Today some may refer to themselves as “I am the Qutb (the pole) of contemporary days due to their egos or spiritual disease. These people may be in the search of greatness or fame, which is away from the spirit of Sufism, by means of such groundless allegations. Throughout history, such exploiters have always been criticized especially by the real Sufis.

We should not forget that we did not come to this world to brag about ourselves against each other. Realizing our nothingness, transience, and incompetence, all of us have been sent to this world to present our servitude to our Lord.

Indeed, **Shah Naqshiband** said in this regard:

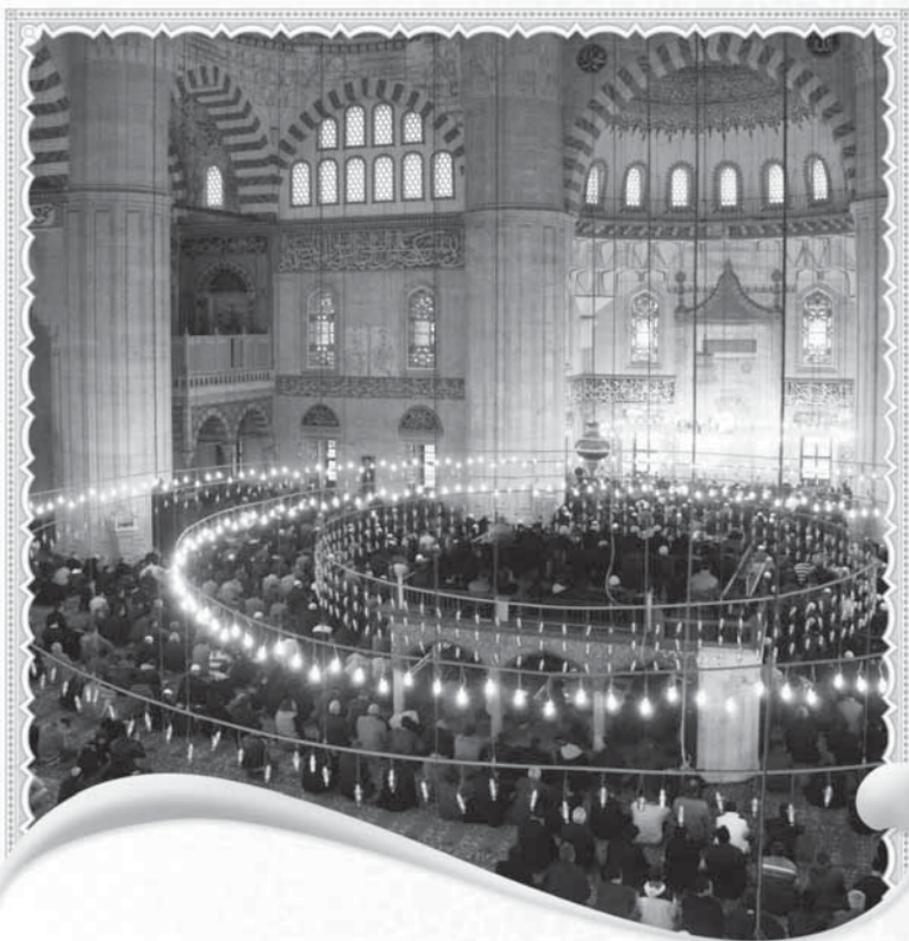
*“Everyone is wheat, I am straw,
Everyone is good, I am bad!”*

In other words, **Sufism** is not a path of “**making an appearance**” but a path of “**presenting the state.**” It is not being in a state of hypocrisy, vanity, and arrogance; but rather it is the path of serving Allah Almighty with the feeling of nothingness, weakness, and humility. Sufism is to be in awareness of the fact that we are “**helpless slaves**” no matter in which position

and rank we are. We should always consider our position “**at the doorstep**”.

In short, **the highest honor** in this transient world is to be **a servant of Allah**. With our faults and good deeds, we all are just weak servants in the end. Regarding our end, we must seek refuge in our Lord’s mercy, forgiveness and grace after we show our best effort.





The Friends of Allah

The Prophet David (pbuh) prayed as follows:

“O Allah, indeed, I ask You for Your love and the love of those who love You, and for the action that will cause me to attain Your love, O Allah, make Your love more beloved to me than myself, my family and cold water.” (al-Tirmidhi, Da’awat, 72)



Sultan Selim I who guided the world expressed what actually the sultanate is as follows:

*Being the sultan of the world was an empty fight;
Being a servant of a friend of Allah is better than everything...*

Question 6

Who is called a friend of Allah? How should one be together with friends of Allah? To what should our young people pay attention in order to benefit from the friends of Allah?

Friends of Allah are the ones who have reached the maturity in external and internal aspects of the religion, who have eliminated their lust and selfish desires, who have reached at the spiritual stations on the way of asceticism and taqwa, who are aware that they are constantly being monitored by divine cameras, who are the representatives of the morality and character of the Messenger of Allah throughout time.

They are the ones who continue to carry out Allah's Messenger's duty of purifying the souls, in other words they are guiding the hearts who show the straight path to those who would like to be guided.

They are the peak personalities to be taken as an example after **our Prophet** (pbuh) and his Companions. Because they are "the heirs of Prophet" with their knowledge, wisdom and exemplary characters.

It is stated in a hadith that:

"The scholars (who reached the maturity in external and internal aspects of the religion) are the heirs of the prophets." (Abu Dawud, 'Ilm, 1)

The friends of Allah are wise and sincere believers who have the following characteristics:

- They have reached the taste of faith, the depth of emotions, and the perfection of behavior;
- Their main purpose is to make humanity reach spiritual maturity and good moral by freeing them from bad habits and selfish desires;
- They are knowledgeable, wise and righteous believers who consider themselves responsible for the goodness of the whole Muslim community.

Allah (swt) has bestowed to the fortunate hearts love for the friends of Allah. It is stated in the Qur'an:

“On those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, will (Allah) Most Gracious bestow love.”

(Maryam, 19: 96)

This is because **Shah Naqshiband, Gilani, Mawlana, Yunus, Hudayi** and other similar friends of Allah, who have reached the source of friendship with Allah, have become forever friends with all humanity. They loved and be loved. Their worldly life ended but they have become eternal by love and left a lovely sound under this transient dome.

After the end of their mortal lives, they have continued to live in the hearts. Their memories, advices, books, poems, and services have not been forgotten.

They have visitors every day even more than many living people.

For example, we have just visited Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi . Let us ask ourselves:

“Who is alive and who is dead?

How many visitors do I have in a day and how many people visit the tomb of Mawlana a day?

How many people pray Allah for me in a day and how many thousands of people recite Fatiha for Mawlana?...

Mawlana died over seven hundred years ago, but his *Mathnawi* and *Diwan al-Kabir* have been read for seven hundred years...”

Therefore, Allah Almighty makes his beloved servants prosperous.

Hereafter is a very terrifying abode. However, Allah Almighty gives a guarantee to those who have reached His friendship as follows:

“Behold! verily on the friends of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve; Those who believe and (constantly) guard against evil; For them are glad tidings, in the life of the present and in the Hereafter; no change can there be in the words of Allah. This is indeed the supreme felicity.” (Yunus, 10: 62-64)

How do we know friends of Allah?

According to a narration, the Companions ask our Prophet (pbuh) the following question:

“– Who are the friends of Allah?” The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) answered:

“– They are the ones who remind Allah Almighty when you look at their faces.” (al-Haythami, *Majma al-Zawa'id*, X, 78; Ibn Majah, *Zuhd*, 4)

What are the distinguishing characteristics of the friends of Allah?

Abu Abdullah Salimi, who was a wise and knowledgeable man, was once asked:

“– How do you distinguish the friends of Allah in public?”

He said that they are known by:

- *By their subtlety of expression,*
- *Their kindness of their souls,*
- *Their grace in their dealings,*
- *With their piousness and their persistence on the righteous path,*
- *Their pleasant dispositions,*
- *Their cheerful countenances,*
- *Their generosity of nature,*

– *Their tolerance and their forgiveness of those who beg their pardon, and*

– *Their kindness, regardless of others' virtue or iniquity-towards all beings."*

Moreover, the friends of Allah have also the following distinguishing characteristics:

- They are always in the state of praising, contentedness, thanking and glorifying Allah (swt).

- They always live in the deepness of contemplation and familiar with wisdom.

- They are far from everything other than Allah (swt) and have spiritual solemnity and dignity.

- They have given up pride, arrogance, and egoism. They are modest people.

- They love the ones who are worth to be loved and hate from the ones who deserve to be hated.

- They are concerned with the problems of the Muslim ummah. Their hearts are a place of mercy.

- They consider themselves responsible for the flow of the events.

- They do not hurt anybody and they do not feel hurt by anybody.

- They do not become a strain on others, instead they become problem-solvers. They are self-sacrificing, altruistic and subservient.

- They are people with wisdom and foresight.

In order to benefit from the friends of Allah; the togetherness of hearts is required.

This means the togetherness of the state and actions.

In accordance with the hadith “*One is together with whom he loves*”³¹, the lover should try to adopt the characteristics of his beloved.

Without the togetherness of the hearts, being together physically means nothing. This is because it is said:

“The person in Yemen is next to me, but the person next to me is in Yemen”.

In Sufism, achieving the togetherness of the hearts and states with the friends of Allah is called “**rabita**”. It simply refers to the flow of love and it is a kind of line of fluxion between two loving hearts.

The most beautiful expression of “rabita”; when we look at the highest level, it is the love between the **Messenger of Allah** (pbuh) and **Abu Bakr** (r.a.). It was such a strong love that Abu Bakr missed the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) even when he was next to him.

After our Prophet’s demise, Abu Bakr (r.a.) longed for him so much. When he was at the deathbed, Aisha

31 Al-Bukhari, Adab, 96

(r. anha) expresses her father Abu Bakr's excitement for meeting with the Prophet (pbuh) as follows:

“When my father Abu Bakr (r.a.) was at the death-bed, he asked:

“ – What day is today?”

We said:

“ – It is Monday.”

“ – If I die tonight, do not keep me waiting until tomorrow! Because the most beautiful days and nights for me are the closest one to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).” (Ahmad, I, 8)

May Allah fill our hearts with the love of those whom He loves.

Let us finish this section with an invocation of the Prophet **David** (pbuh):

“O Allah, indeed, I ask You for Your love and the love of those who love You, and for the action that will cause me to attain Your love, O Allah, make Your love more beloved to me than myself, my family and cold water.” (al-Tirmidhi, Dawat, 72)

May Allah make us all among those servants that Allah loves and is pleased with them.





When Does Sufism Become Necessary?

Islam is not a ceremony to be carried out at certain times, instead it is a lifelong life of "taqwa" that regulates our every breath.

Question 7

When we examine the history of Islam, in which periods was Sufism needed more? Is there a need for Sufism today? Would it not be possible without Sufism?

Sufism is always needed, because it is necessary for man to reach perfection.

Sufism has provided important service for the community throughout history. During the times of both financial and social comfort, Sufism sustained spiritual well-being by obstructing slackness, looseness, and despair. On the other hand, in the difficult times i.e. enemy invasion, tyranny, cruelty, etc., Sufism let the distressed souls take a breath by opening divine windows for them.

This is a completely prophetic manner. In this regard, when **the Messenger of Allah** (pbuh) reached any blessing or victory, He obstructed the ways that inclined the hearts to pride and egoism by saying:

“O Allah! There is no life worth living except the life of the Hereafter.”³²

On the other hand, when he (pbuh) faced any malignity, unkindness or ordeal, he again said, *“O Allah! There is no life worth living except the life of the Hereaf-*

32 Al-Bukhari, Riqaq, 1

ter.” Thus, he aimed to warn the believing souls to lose the state of contentedness due to transient despair and grievance. He gave ummah the spiritual prescription required to remain in peace, calm and balance under any circumstances.

The need for Sufism increased in times when it became hard to live in accordance with the principles of Islam. For example, during the days when the Mongols plundered the Muslim world, the great friends of Allah like **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi** and **Yunus Emre** consoled the people. In fact, that consolation has been going on for 700 years.

Imam al-Ghazali emerged by his endeavors, piety, knowledge, and wisdom at a time when the Esoteric intended to destroy the spirit of Islam. In other words, Ghazali made a great contribution to prevent some false and harmful ideas coming from Indian and Greek philosophies entering Islamic culture. He strived to cleanse the false beliefs and directed the people to a pious life.

Moreover, we see **Imam Rabbani**’s brilliant spiritual guidance in India where **Akbar Shah** attempted to give concessions harmful to Islamic faith. He too strived to protect the Islamic creed against the corruption of time, and thanks to him, many state officials, military men, and general public, who used to be con-

vinced by the false beliefs, repented and turned back to the Straight Path.

So long as the **Edebali** lineage continued in the Ottoman Empire, a spiritual peace prevailed the society. On the blessed day when he conquered Istanbul, Sultan **Mehmet the Conqueror** said:

“The joy and peace that you see on me, are not only because of the conquest of this castle, it is also because a blessed friend of Allah, Akshamsaddin, is here today and by my side (and because I benefit from his spiritual guidance)...”

Likewise, another friend of Allah, **Aziz Mahmud Hudayi**, who lived a life expanding through 8 Ottoman sultans’ reigns, served as a guide both to the sultans who ruled the world as well as to the general public by directing them to knowledge, spirituality, and Straight Path. He even attended the Tabriz expedition with Ferhat Pasha and spiritually commanded the army.

On the other hand, it is a historical fact that believers who are well-acquainted with Sufi training are able to maintain their faith and good deeds more tightly and that they are able to protect their faith more easily when they face to cruelty and oppression.

As a matter of fact, the communities that have been able to maintain their Muslim identity in many

Muslim societies who were subjected to the assimilation of atheist and communist regimes for years, and who were subjected to global cultural erosion and intensive missionary activities especially in the Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia and African countries are seen that they have been mostly educated and trained in a Sufi climate.

Because the aim of Sufism is to strengthen the faith in the hearts even under the attacks of the severest storms of disbelief and blasphemy.

Similarly, during the period of oppression upon Muslims in our country, **Sami Efendi** and other friends of Allah spent great effort to save the community's faith.



Another aspect of the necessity and importance of Sufism today is the method and style that it pursues to educate people.

Especially in our time, a lot of people experience the spiritual depression of being swamped into lust and major sins. It is obvious that it is easier to offer a way for them for salvation by approaching them with **forgiveness, tolerance, mercy, and compassion**, which are indispensable principles of Sufism, rather than getting angry with them.

Because according to Sufi perception, **the hatred felt towards sins should not be carried over to the sinner**. On the contrary, the sinner should be approached by compassion and mercy as if he is a bird with broken wings.

The following examples nicely explain this truth:

Abu al-Darda (r.a.) of the Companions served as a judge in Damascus. One day while wandering around the city, he saw some people heavily insulting a sinner. He asked them,

“– If you see a man fallen into a well, would you not get him out of there?”

They answered,

“– Yes, we would get him out!”

Then Abu al-Darda said,

“–So do not say any harsh words to your brother and praise Allah who has given you health!”

They said:

“–Are you not angry with this sinner?”

Abu al-Darda answered the following,

“–I am not angry with him and his personality. Instead, I am angry at his sin. When he gives up sinning, he will be my brother in religion again.” (Abdurrazzaq,

Musannaf, XI, 180; Abu Nuaym, *Hilya*, I, 225)

Another example is from Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi:

During a conversation in the lodge, a drunk appears. The dervishes attempted to take him out by offending him. Assuming that he might have taken refuge in their lodge to seek the truth, Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi said to the dervishes hurting the man,

“– Leave this poor man alone! As I see, he drank the wine, but you got drunk!”

Another example is as follows:

Two drunks came to an iftar meal offered at Hüdayi Foundation. Some people in the congregation said furiously,

“– Let us throw out these heedless men who drank at such a blessed time!”

On the other hand, some people with Sufi nature in the congregation said:

“– Let us not pay attention to their sin and think that two hungry servants of Allah have come to our door in this blessed time.” Then, people take care of them and offered meal to them. In time, one of them fully repented, corrected his state, and became a righteous dervish.

So, Sufi approach aims to conquer the hearts of those who are deprived of the blessing of faith, or

who have been caught up by selfish weaknesses by approaching them with mercy not with the cold and venomous language of snakes.

For this reason, in the course of history the real Sufis who have made their hearts a place of mercy have always served as guiding torches that illuminate the society. **Abdulqadir Gilani, Bahauddin Naqshiband, Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi, Yunus Emre, Hudayi** and other friends of Allah have always been loved and missed.



Unfortunately, today, some people interpret Islam according to their own desires, ambitions and, interests. But, how should Islam be lived in such a way that our Lord will be pleased? Of course, this requires living in accordance with the examples of **our Prophet (pbuh)** and **his Companions**. In other words, it is necessary to live Islam with its spiritual deepness, moral elegance and the sensibility of taqwa.

Although this is the very Islam itself, it is called “**taqwa**,” “**zuhd**,” “**ihsan**,” or “**tasawwuf**” in order to distinguish it from different understandings. All of them are different names of the same truth...

In this sense, humanity is in great need of Sufism in this era when materialism and lust get out of control... Because religion can only be protected with the

sensitivity of taqwa. Accordingly, **taqwa** can be briefly described as fear and love of Allah ...

Allah (swt) says in describing the believers,

“Believers are only they whose hearts tremble with awe “وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ” whenever Allah is mentioned...” (Al-Anfal, 8: 2).

Therefore, **“taqwa”** means to live Islam with a delicate, sensitive and thrilling heart.





What has the Modern Life Style Brought and Taken Away?

Imam Shafii (May Allah show mercy on his soul) says:

*“If you do not keep yourself busy with the right,
the false will occupy you!”*

Ahmad bin Hanbal

(May Allah show mercy on his soul) says:

*“A little property is enough for the believer,
but much more property is not enough for the greedy.”*

Question 8

What has the modern lifestyle and progress of technology in our century brought about and taken away from us?

A significant segment of our young people are actively using social media. How should we use technology in general and the internet in particular? To what should we pay attention in order to be safe from losing our way – with your frequently used expressions – “in the dead ends of the internet”?

O my esteemed brothers!

Unfortunately, today the progress in iron, mines, and technology are considered civilization. However, civilization takes place by advancement in humanitarian values. However, technical and technological developments have not improved human virtues, instead, they have changed the innate human nature. In other words, the innate nature of humanity has been changed in the negative direction just like the hormone injected in to fruits and vegetables...

What has been the consequences of the development of industry and technology?

- People have become more and more selfish and self-oriented.

- They have forgotten the afterlife
- The traits such as shame, good moral and the right of privacy weakened.

For example, the internet is a result brought about by technology. Some Muslims publish the pictures of their family on the internet while they are dining in a luxurious place!

When you say “– What are you doing?”

He replies, “– I sent it to a friend.”

Maybe that friend is in need and the person sending the picture encourages him to waste and fuels his ambitions.

Moreover, that photo does not go only to one friend. It is distributed to many places. **This violates privacy.**

On the other hand, as a result of this global culture invasion, **the privacy of Muslim women has been violated.** Women have been tricked by expressions like freedom and equality and made vulnerable to harassment. However, a woman is the sultan of her family.

Another important issue is that **our values disappeared in our wedding ceremonies**, and instead the following bad customs have become widespread:

- Vanity, splendor, wasting and, showing off,

What has the Modern Life Style Brought and Taken Away? ○

– Not inviting the poor and the needy (as if there is a “caste system”),

– Not paying attention to privacy...

This is another loss in our spiritual values caused by the invasion of a global culture, which quickly becomes a common practice via technology.

We Have Lost Our Dining Manners:

For example, the believers have started to arrange the places forks and knives on the dining table like arrangement of the foreign dining tables.

The food has begun to be exhibited in showcases. However, many poor hanker after this food. That food causes heedlessness and gloom in those who eat them.

In our childhood and youth years, there were luxury restaurants in Istanbul such as “Konya Lezzet.” However, there was a curtain on its window. The food inside could not be seen from the outside. There were such nice sensitivities coming from our customs.

There were no ovens in the houses in those days. The fire used to be set in the gardens and food used to be cooked there. Pastries, baklavas used to be covered with a table cloth while they were sent to the bakery in the neighborhood to be cooked. Then, the person who took the pastry or baklava to the bakery for cooking would be warned:

“– O my son! The baker may smell and crave, do not forget to leave some of this for the baker.”

There were no string bags in those days, instead, there were shopping bags that did not show what was inside. In market shopping, people used to say,

“– *We do not want such fruits and vegetables that a poor person saw and longed for.*”

Especially, there were no shops openly selling the food outside like today’s doner kebab or roasted meat restaurants. Unfortunately such practices spread in time.

For instance - I mean Istanbul and I hope this is not the case in Konya- there is almost no kitchen left in the houses. Restaurants have turned into the kitchens. Food is delivered to homes by motorcycles.

Whereas, the food has two different tastes, i.e. material and spiritual. If a meal is cooked by contemplating Allah, reciting basmala and kalimat al-tawhid, it will be a cause for abundance and cure to whom eats it. As for the meals delivered from the restaurant, you cannot know who cooked it, how it was cooked and what ingredients it has.

In order to turn a meal into a cause for abundance, spirituality and healing, we should start eating it with basmala and finishing with thanking Allah by not forgetting the real owner of the blessing.

Unfortunately, these have been our values lost over time.

The values related to dressing have been lost:

The clothes which are tight, unhealthy and not proper for Muslim personality have emerged. The personality of male and female have been mixed. Imitating the dressing styles of foreigners have spread. Many unpleasant things have been consented in order to satisfy the children's desires. The sensitivity in covering the body has been subjected to degradation.

The relationships in families have been changed:

In the past – I mean during the years of our youth – ladies used to work in places appropriate to their gender, such gynecology, tailoring, teaching in girls' schools and girls' Qur'an courses etc. where only women were allowed to enter.

Unlike today, the family and home were not neglected. Of course, I do not mean all of them, but most of our children become the children of television, internet, fashion and advertisements. They start to feel the pleasure from those things. As a result of this pleasure, it comes to an end to feel pleasure from the actions and behaviors of the parents and take them as role models. Of course, this causes a terrible spiritual erosion in society.

Neighborhood culture has disappeared:

In the past, everyone in a neighborhood was a kind of guarantee for each other. In particular, the orphans and the widows used to be duly protected. Dowries of the orphan girls used to be prepared in the neighborhood.

Rich and poor used to live in the same neighborhood. There was no “caste system” between the rich and the poor. Everybody lived together happily and peacefully.

There existed the culture of austerity and savings. There was simplicity and dignity.

There was such a high level of courtesy and politeness that even mentally ill people were not called “mad”, but instead they used to be called “venerable disabled ones”.

Such kindness, grace and treating in a sensitive manner have disappeared today. For example, we witness this situation at wedding ceremonies where sparklers and fireworks are fired. Nobody thinks whether there is sick, suffering and mourning people living nearby.

The fashion has become widely accepted:

The fashion has made people like robots. The deficiencies of the characters are tried to be filled with

What has the Modern Life Style Brought and Taken Away? ○

materialism. In other words, the weaknesses of the characters are tried to be completed by fashion and clothes.

Such a life style, that is showing off, consumption frenzy, greedy and wasting is not a lifestyle approved by Islam.

Due to following fashion, the physical and exterior resemblance to those whom Allah condemns increases every day.

This situation means the opposition to the command set out in Surat al-Fatiha:

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

“...not the way of those who have been condemned [by Thee], nor of those who go astray!.” (al-Fatiha, 1: 7)

Because, resembling to those who have been condemned by Allah and who go astray - God forbid - means to be together with them.

Our Master Muhammed (pbuh) stated,

مَنْ تَشَبَهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ

“He who resembles any people is one of them.” (Abu Dawud, Libas, 4/4031)

Therefore, “Everyone in the society doing this, so I will follow them” cannot be our principle. Our mea-

sure is the Messenger of Allah, his Companions, and the leading figures of Muslim society.

Aiming to increase consumption and to sell more goods, the capitalist world invented **certain days**.

In this regard, birthdays, mothers' day, fathers' day etc. are instruments fabricated by the West to encourage the communities to waste.

Of course giving and receiving gifts is a Sunnah of our Prophet (pbuh). There is no harm to give and receive gifts due to occasions belong to our religion such as Fridays, kandils, religious festivals etc. On the contrary, there are compassion, abundance and fondness on giving and accepting gifts on such occasions.

The capitalist West, on the other hand, fabricated a day in a year as "mothers' day or fathers' day" to sell goods. The community members moving away from the spiritual values have started to consider that these days are enough to appreciate the value of the parents by giving gifts for once a year.

Whereas, every day should be the day of mothers and fathers. A Muslim should ask after his parents, kiss their hands, get their blessings and visit them at every opportunity. Even after they pass away, a Muslim should be loyal to his/her parents, do charity works on their behalf, pray Allah for them to be forgiven, and

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thus, in a way, transform into a kind of continuous charity (*sadaqa al-jariyah*) for them.

In like manner, the capitalist West invented the Valentine's Day to exploit societies more. What kind of love is this cannot be understood!

The real love is the one which constitutes a step to reach Divine love. It means the souls' binding to each other. Binding between the physical bodies is not love but lust.

Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi says:

“Do justice, love is good. What damages it is your bad habits. You renamed lust as love. O if only you knew how far is between love and lust!

The divine love keeps Muslim vigilant. Whereas, the worldly and lustful loves make the person foolish and silly.”

The source of true love is Allah Almighty who calls Himself as al-Wadud (The Loving). Because of his love to the Creator, a sincere Muslim looks at all the creation through the eyes of love. He does this not just one day but every day.

Again with the advancement of technique, **pictures and photos** are in vogue. It even penetrated into the spiritual lives under the name of **rabita**. However, rabita cannot be carried out by looking at a picture.

Rabita requires to keep the love and affection fresh. It is a kind of togetherness of souls and cannot be taken beyond this meaning. Rabita should be kept within the boundaries of love and affection. Trespassing these boundaries may open doors - God forbid - to associating partners to Allah. The creed of tawhid (oneness and unity of Allah) has no tolerance against associating partners to Allah.

A mother's love and affection to her children is rabita as well as a dissolute person's affection to drinking and gambling are also types of rabita. A Muslim's rabita refers to the love, loyalty and faithfulness that he feels in his heart to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and to the righteous believers. This is the meaning of rabita.

Rabita cannot be carried out by looking at a photo. Moreover, a photo restricts the meaning and restrains it in a certain mold. Idolatry was stemmed out of this perception. The Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did not have a painter draw each other's portrait and then carry out rabita by looking at those portraits.

In our civilization, the righteous men are remembered not by painting, but by their moral qualities and memories. For example, Umar (r.a.) is remembered by his justice, his bravery, and his ability to distinguish right from wrong, not by his eyebrows, his eyes, his height and his physical shape!..

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Unfortunately, such wrong perceptions and innovations have entered into our lives and deeply spread by means of the internet...

WHAT KIND OF MEASURES WE NEED TO TAKE?

We must evaluate the customs and the traditions of our era within the framework of Islamic principles.

It is important to remember that the means brought by the technology can be used for both the benefits and the harms of our society just like a two-edged knife.

In every stage of life, especially when using the computer, mobile phones, tablets and the social media, we should always be aware that we are obliged to act within the scope of **taqwa**. We should contemplate that just like all the other blessings of Allah, these blessings also have responsibilities in the Hereafter.

We should also adopt the following advice of **Imam Shafi'i** as a principle in all aspects of our lives:

“If you do not keep yourself busy with the right, the false will occupy you!”





Human Systems and Islam, the True Religion

Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi says:

*“Shams taught me something, (but he engraved it not
in my mind but my heart); “If a single Muslim on earth
feels cold, you do not have the right to warm yourself up.”*

*I know that there are Muslims feel cold on earth so
I cannot warm myself up anymore!...”*

Question 9

Certain human systems, such as capitalism, communism, and liberalism, are currently influential around the world. What kind of system does our religion Islam present against these systems? What is Islamic world-view regarding the administration of people and societies?

As I explained in the **Graudy** example before,³³ the human systems have never been able to satisfy the human soul.

Communism and **socialism** emerged and asserted the idea that “Wealth belongs to society.”

But in these systems, a group called “**elite**”, who were claimed to act on behalf of the community, took the place of the rich. However, the wealth was not made the property of the society but the property of “**party members.**” The party members acted pursuant to their own initiatives. While the society had nothing, the members of the party got rich. They exploited the people and as a result the society became poorer. On the other hand, everything such as ferry, train became free for the members of the party.

Communism came to exist with the claim that everybody will be equal and by this way, justice, harmony and peace will be established in the society. Howev-

33 See the pages 70-72

er, the same benefits were provided to both those who worked hard and who did not work at all. One who broke the pot and one who carried it without breaking were treated as equal. This deadened the abilities.

For example, in a race, the fastest runner wins the race. But, if the winner and the loser are offered the same opportunities, those who can run fast will certainly slow down. This stops the development.

Because of this approach, which is contrary to human reality and nature, communism has turned into a system of exploitation that provides benefits only to the party members...

Against the cruelty and injustice of communism, **capitalism** emerged with a gilded expression and said, "the wealth belongs to the individual." However just the opposite happened and the wealth has been gathered in the hands of the trusts and cartels. The rich have become richer. The community has become hostile to the ruling class and the bourgeoisie. Tragic events have taken place.

Liberalism claimed, "The humanity will freely compete. No one should be an obstacle before the capital."

"Laissez faire, laissez passer!"

Which literally means, "Let them be, let them pass!" in other words "Earn, no matter how you earn!"

It was supposed that as a result of competition, better quality goods would be produced, manufacturing would become cheaper, prices would fall and as a result everyone would win. But just the opposite happened. Cartels and trusts agreed amongst themselves and determined the prices. For example, the factories which produce the same products came together and introduced the commodity they produce to the market at the exorbitant prices much higher than it costs. So, a new way of exploitation has started. By means of interest, which fuels the inflation, the poor have been exploited more.

So the slogan “Let them do, let them pass!” resulted in the ruthless manifestation of the expression “*vae victis* or woe to the vanquished.”

Because there is no place for compassion and sharing, the income gaps, crises and social explosions have emerged. The race has evolved into the race of crushing the weak by the strong.

All systems exhibited themselves with deception. The capitalists and the communists, in fact, united at one point which is to remove the rule of Allah, who is the real owner, over the properties. They are actually identical, in other words they both are materialist/worldly and denier...

Communism and capitalism only disagreed about who the owner of the properties is. Communists said

that “it should belong to the society”, while the capitalists said that “it should belong to the individuals.”

Whereas, Islam argued “the property belongs to neither the society nor the individuals, but rather, “**الْمَلِكُ لِلَّهِ**”, “**the property belongs to God.**” Islam declared that the divine rules would prevail in the disposition of the property.

Islam has suggested that all properties - in today’s common expression - is a kind of “time share” property which is entrusted to people’s use for a temporary period. In other words, man is not the real owner of the property, but he is in the position of a civil servant who uses it over a certain period of time.

This is because the acts which trespass the divine borders such as exploiting man and the society and violating other people’s rights are completely rejected in Islam.

Above all the illicit gains which exploit the community, overcharging i.e. making abnormal profits by cheating, taking and paying interest, and profiteering are all prohibited in Islam. Moreover, **wasting** and **stinginess** while disposing the wealth are also forbidden.

Wasting is an act aiming to blanket the inferiority complex through showing off strength.

Stinginess on the other hand refers to saving up just for one's own self and refraining to help others under the fear of poverty inspired by the Satan. This is a weakness brought along by the lack of trust in Allah and the cowardice. In other words, it can be interpreted turning money into a shelter, refuge and a support instead of trusting and taking refuge in Allah.

Both wasting and the stinginess are rebellions against Allah, who is the real owner of the property.

The man is a trustee who is under the obligation to act in accordance with the provisions of Allah in regards to the disposition of the wealth.

The human systems exploit the people, regarding them like the gears turning the wheel of economy. Let us bring an example for this from the past: In the past, there were water wells near the vegetable gardens. To draw water from the well a horse was used. It used to be whipped forced to circle around the well. In this way, water was drawn out of the well. This resembles to the production system of communism.

As for capitalism, it shows a bag of grass to the horse and pulls the bag back whenever the horse approaches to it. So, it draws the water out of the well by cheating the horse. In other words, both systems abuse and exploit the people.

As for Islamic economics, it aims to solve the man's problem. It is a religious obligation to share the means and especially to be beneficial to those who are in need.

It is stated in a verse of Qur'an:

وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ

“And in their wealth and possessions (was remembered) the right of the (needy,) him who asked, and him who (for some reason) was prevented (from asking).” (al-Dhariyat, 51: 19).

You will give the right of those who express their needs. As to those who cannot express their needs (due to their modesty), one should go to them and meet their needs.

Allah Almighty states in a verse of Qur'an that:

“...[but] thou can't recognize them by their special mark...” (al-Baqara, 2: 273).

In other words, Islam imposes an obligation on the owner of wealth. It teaches them how to dispose their money. So, Islam makes wealth a means of binding the hearts.

As in all other areas of life, Islam has laid down regulations in the field of commercial and economic activity. It has determined the borders of the permissible and the prohibited. It has ordered mercy and com-

passion and entrusted the believers to each other. It assembled the earning with **“right”**, **“justice”**, **“mercy”** and **“compassion”**

It prohibits to mix the forbidden things and the rights of others into the earnings. Even an act of worship performed by violating the rights of others are rejected. This is stated in a hadith as follows:

“Whoever visits the Ka’bah with money, which he has earned from illicit ways, is deemed that he disobeyed Allah Almighty. If that person intends to perform pilgrimage, rides his camel towards the Ka’bah and starts saying “Labbayk Allahumma Labbayk” (Here I am, O Allah, here I am) then a caller from the heavens will address him by saying:

“Neither labbayk nor sa’dayk to you! Because your earning is illicit, your food is illicit, and your riding is illicit. Return as a sinner with no reward! Become sad for you will meet what you will not like to meet!”

On the other hand, when a person intends to perform pilgrimage, rides his camel towards the Ka’bah and starts saying “Labbayk Allahumma Labbayk” (Here I am, O Allah, here I am) then a caller from the heavens will address him by saying:

“Labbayk and sa’dayk (may your call be replied and happiness be your reward). Because your earning is halal, your food is halal, and your riding is halal. Return

without committing any sin and with great spiritual rewards! Be happy, because you will meet what will make you happy and pleased!” (See *al-Haythami, III, 209-210*)

Islam brought forward zakat, helping others and charity and prevented the uncontrolled growth of capital.

Zakat, which is a religious obligation, is paid especially out of “accumulated capital”. Zakat is not optional, but obligatory. It is the right of the poor. In a way Islam has declared the poor as a shareholder of the rich. The worst stealing is the one of those who do not give zakat. Because, not giving zakat means stealing of the property of the poor.

Islam provided a real sharing with those who are financially at the lower levels of the society.

Allah tests His servants and societies by determining differing shares of sustenance and opportunities. In accordance with this test,

- The rich are responsible for the poor. In other words, the poor are under the auspices of the rich. In this world, the poor need the assistance of rich. In the hereafter, the rich will need the poor’s invocations and the reward of the alms that they gave to the poor.

- The affluent ones are responsible for the poor and the orphan.

- The strong are responsible for the weak.
- The healthy are responsible for the ill. The ill need the healthy ones in this world. But on the day of judgement, on that difficult day, the healthy need the ill's supplications.
- The ones who have knowledge are responsible for those who are illiterate.

In brief, in Islam those who have opportunities are responsible for those who do not have these opportunities. All the people are responsible for each other.

Every civilization forms its own human type. The distinguishing characteristic of the human type in Islam are the generosity and self-sacrifice. Because;

- **Zakat** (is a minimum obligation. The amount of zakat already belongs to the poor. It is the right of the poor on the wealthy one's property).
- **Sadaqa** (or alms is a voluntary sacrifice that protects people from trouble and calamities).
- **Infaq** (it is open-ended and has no limit).

Allah the Almighty stated in a verse of the Qur'an:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ

[But as for you, O believers,] never shall you attain to true piety unless you spend on others out of what you cherish yourselves;...” (Al-Imran, 3: 92)

This level of generosity and sacrifice gets man closer to Allah Almighty.

The following verse of the Qur'an sets out a criterion when giving alms,

وَيَأْخُذُ الصَّدَقَاتِ

“... Allah ... receives their gifts of charity ...” (al-Tawba, 9: 104) This verse suggests that the alms should be given in politeness and sensitivity as if it is given to the hands of mightiness of Allah Almighty.

In addition, while giving, one is under the obligation to refrain from hypocrisy, show off, arrogance, hubris, and haughtiness. Because the creed of tawhid has no tolerance for associating partners to Allah. So, the alms should be given secretly, if possible.

Consequently, Islam vitalizes society with spiritual values such as mercy, altruism, self-sacrifice and generosity.

There were some 26,600 foundations registered in the **Ottoman Empire**. The number of the unknown foundations is much more. These institutions of mercy and compassion surrounded the community like a network. Therefore, there had never been an economic crisis and rebellion in society.

Moreover, that kind of social turmoil did not take place in the Age of Bliss, either. Because, there were zakat, infaq, charity and fasting in Islam...

Additionally, there was no psychologic illnesses such as depression. Because there was prayer. Allah the Almighty ordered;

“But bow down in adoration, and bring thyself the closer (to Allah).” (Al-Alaq, 96: 19)

“O ye who believe! seek help with patient perseverance and prayer; for Allah is with those who patiently persevere.” (al-Baqara, 2: 153)

“...for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction.” (al-Ra'd, 13: 28).

This is the world view of our civilization.

Communism formed a stern, soulless, vicious human type.

The capitalists also revealed a ruthless, arrogant and spoiled wreck of the human being. They formed a self-seeking human being type who lost compassion, forgot tears, and left the conscience...

When you look at history, you see the countries exploited and especially the current situation of Syria: Wild capitalism comes from thousands of kilometers away, bombs, burns, breaks down! By crushing weak-

er societies, they exploit their underground, above-ground resources.

The capitalist system considers only its material benefits and profits. So it mercilessly exploits the human. It considers all the ways taken to the target permissible.

Islam, on the contrary to capitalism and communism, makes man heart-searching. It asks the following questions:

“Where did you earn, how did you earn, where and how did you spend it?” It reminds that the man will be interrogated in depth at the Divine Court.

However, his conscience asks a pious Muslim the following question as he begins every new day:

“Today Allah Almighty has opened for you a new leaf from the calendar of life. How long will you work for yourself and for the others in your work today? Allah has abundantly bestowed on you His blessings but did not give these blessings (to the others). Thus, He entrusted them to you for a period...”

Because it is stated in the Qur’an that:

“...but do thou good, as Allah has been good to thee...” (al-Qasas, 28: 77).

For this reason, a true Muslim approaches to all living beings selflessly and considers himself respon-

sible to satisfy their needs by addressing them with mercy and compassion.

Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi says:

“Shams (may Allah sanctify his secret) taught me something, (but he engraved it not in my mind but in my heart); “If a single Muslim on earth feels cold, you do not have the right to warm up yourself” I know that there are Muslims who feel cold on earth, so I cannot warm up myself anymore!...”

This is the Sufi morality! ..

During those times when the souls were molded by altruism, such enormous virtues took place in **Muslim** territory - especially during the time of **Umar bin Abdulaziz** - that the rich could not find a poor in the country to give zakat.

To avoid waste and live moderately got the rich closer to the poor. Adopting an abstemious and humble life style got the poor closer to the rich. The civilization of zakat, infaq and endowments did not let dramas take place in Muslim society.

With the consciousness of brotherhood, everyone accepted that his brother in religion was entrusted to him. The believers became like two hands cleaning each other. Not only material problems but also as the spiritual ones were shared. Just like the bricks of the

city wall, a strong social structure which were interlocked by love came into being.

However, the inclination towards luxury and waste began in the Tulip Era in our society. During Tanzimat reform era, an admiration towards the West and the Europe emerged. People turned their attention from spiritual to the material. Our recent history continued with a perception alienated to our essence and imitating the capitalist world.

Today, we should isolate all the negativities and reform ourselves by re-establishing the fundamental standards that Islam demands from us. We should revive our civilization of charity and endowment not only for our own salvation but also for the happiness of our future generations. We should be a generation who worth to be descendants of our blessed ancestors who set up alms stones, who paid the poor's debt to the local tradesmen by buying their debt records, who prepared the dowry for the poor girls, and who set up foundations just to pay the dishes and plates broken by the servants...





Not Islamophobia, But the Virtue of Islam

Islam means greeting, safety of humanity, peace, and tranquility...

It is a religion that is not a scaring but a giving tranquility to the heart as well as spreading grace, delicacy and kindness. Islam is the religion of combatting against all forms of oppression and terrorism.

The 23-year-long prophethood of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was, in a way, consisted of fighting against terrorism. Islam is the religion to show compassion and mercy to all creation.

Question 10

Today, some groups deliberately try to spread the conception called “Islamophobia.” While this conception of phobia/fear is not used in regards to other religion, why is it especially called “Islamophobia”?

The reason why the prefix “**phobia**” is not used with other religions, but only for the only divine religion **Islam** is because;

“The tree that bears fruit will be stoned”

“The burglars prefer to rob a jewelry store, not a junk shop.”

Today, there is nothing left for the false religions and altered religions to give humanity. In Europe, the churches are being sold and being converted to mosques. The representatives of the false religions are trying to make Islam look ugly in order to put an end to this course of events. They struggle to discredit Islam, the only unaltered divine religion in order to prevent their communities accept Islam.

This is the reason why they attack to Islam:

The false one is disturbed by the true divine one!...

Those who sleep in heedlessness will certainly be disturbed by those who warn them.

Today, the compassion, mercy, and generosity commanded by Islam disturb the self-seeking people, pragmatist societies and imperialist powers. Justice and equality imposed by Islam make the tyrants and the imposters uncomfortable.

Indeed, this was planned 20-30 years ago by the Western World. They confessed that the only civilization that could show existence against the Western Civilization was Islam and introduced the **Clash of Civilization** theses.

Although the Muslim World is coming 20-30 years behind the Western World in terms of finance, politics, military, technique and technology, they fear from Islam.

Why?

Because Islam imposes the fact that real life is the one in the hereafter and unites the world and the hereafter. It provides the standards that guarantee the happiness in both worlds.

Whereas, they do not want to feel the responsibility of afterlife and demand a life that is appropriate to their arbitrary, random and self-conscious desires. This is because they are against Islam which offers a life encumbering responsibilities on man, brings certain measures and regulation regarding life in this world, and prevents the irresponsibility and impassivity.

Moreover, they are aware of the fact that the self-seekingness disturbs the human conscience. Humanity looks for compassion and mercy.

The oppression hurts hearts. Humanity turns to a religion that commands and applies justice.

An aimless, bestial and wild life hurts the souls. The man seeks the meaning of his existence.

The answer to this quest will be given by the gracious and tender-hearted believers who live in accordance with the commands and the prohibitions of Islam.

For this reason, in order to prevent the masses embracing Islam in crowds, they want to defame Islam and condemn it in the minds.

Just as some people who were against the prophets and who defamed them existed in the past, today the situation is the same.

Today, those who want to stop the people's inclination to Islam all over the world have created an ugly wave of hatred against Islam called "**Islamophobia**". They try to label Islam with **terror**. They introduce Islam as a belief to be feared.

Whereas, **terror** is based on heartlessness, and for this reason it cannot be united with the distinguishing features of Islam such as decency, good manners, conscience, love of Allah, righteousness and justice.

On the contrary, Islam is built on especially **compassion** and **mercy**. In the Qur'an, among the Divine names and attributes, Allah Almighty mentions most the names "**Rahman**" and "**Rahim**" meaning mercy that surrounds all beings. **Our Prophet** was also sent as "**the mercy to the world.**"



USA dropped an atomic bomb in Japan in World War II. Millions of people who had no connection with the war including women, children, the old, and even the animals and trees were massacred. The perpetrators were Christian. Moreover, Hitler, the killer of hundreds of thousands of people, was also Christian. However, no one calls what they did as **Christian terror**.

Stalin was a communist. He slaughtered hundreds of thousands of people. He built up towers with the heads of his victims. However, what he did is not called **communist terror**.

Israel has been killing our **Palestinian** brothers and sisters for years. Nobody calls what it has been doing as **Jewish terror**.

In **Arakan**, the terrorists tolerated by the Myanmar state are massacring the Muslims. It is not called **Buddhist terror**.

Even though Muslims are the ones who are victims and the oppressed everywhere around the world, the defamation “Islamic terrorism” is being continuously repeated. Islam is tried to be shown as something to be feared.

Whereas, Islam has regulated even the matters of war. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) manifested the acts and behaviors of mercy even during war.

Let us give an example:

In **Battle of Badr**, the polytheists came a day before the clash and requested to take some water from the well of Messenger of Allah. Our Prophet (pbuh) let them take some water.

On the way back from Badr, Medina is 150 kilometers away. Muslims captured 70 prisoners. The number of the mounts was insufficient. The Companions of the Prophet dismounted from their camels occasionally and let the prisoners ride them and they walked. They said, “They are equal to us as human beings.” **The Prophet Muhammad** commanded to his Companions, “you shall feed them with your food, you shall clothe them with your clothes.” Witnessing this goodness and compassion, most of the captives converted to Islam.

What led them make this sacrifice?

- Looking at all living beings through the perspective that they are the creation of the Creator...
- The hope that these prisoners might be honored with Islam like themselves...
- Displaying them the character and personality of Islam ...

Only this example itself is enough to show that Islam teaches the man the real humanity. Therefore, true humanity exists only in Islam. What they call Humanism is just an empty lie.

When we examine history, we see that the person who fought against terror most is our Prophet (pbuh). In a way, his 23-year-prophethood consists of fighting against terrorism. In the time, the weak, the slaves, the animals, the plants were all under oppression and terror. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) fought against all of them. He adopted the principle of respecting all human rights no matter whom it belongs, Muslim or non-Muslim. As a result, he brought about peace to the deserts that had been turned into the lakes of blood. He laid the foundation of a civilization of virtues that has never been seen in the history of humanity.

Today our duty is to represent and transmit the lofty character of our **Master**, who has been sent as mercy and compassion to the worlds, as much as we can. If we can carry out this duty properly, Allah will

fail their traps no matter how much they want to defame Islam.

Because Islam means greeting, salvation of humanity, peace, tranquility...

Islam is a not religion to be feared but rather a religion of grace, delicacy and kindness. It is the religion combatting with all forms of oppression and terrorism. It is the religion of treating all living beings with compassion.

To give a couple of examples:

One day **the Prophet Muhammad** (pbuh) said:

“- By Allah in whose hands my soul is, you cannot enter Paradise unless you have mercy on each other.”

The Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) said:

“- O, messenger of Allah! We are all merciful.”

Upon this answer Our Master (pbuh) said:

“- The mercy (that I mean) is not just showing mercy to each other in the way you understand. Rather, it is compassion encompassing all living beings!” (Hakim, IV, 185/7310)

One day, **our Prophet** (pbuh) passed by a man who was dragging a sheep by its ear to slaughter. He interfered immediately and said:

“- Leave its ear alone and hold it by the sides of its neck!” (Ibn Majah, Dhabaih, 3)

Again, one day **our Master** (pbuh) passed by a group of people. They were riding on their mount and chatting. He told them:

“Ride your animals properly, without tiring them and let them rest nicely. Do not use them as chairs while you chat on the roads and streets. There are such animals ridden on are better than those who ride them. Those animals glorify Allah Almighty more than their rider.” (Ahmad, III, 439)

Sawada bin Rabi (r.a.) said:

“I came into presence of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and asked for something from him. He told someone to give me a couple of camels. Then he advised me:

“When you return to your house, tell your household to look after the animals and feed them properly. Moreover, tell your household to clip their nails so that they do not hurt and injure the animal’s udder while milking them!” (Ahmad, III, 484; al-Haythami, V, 168, 259, VIII, 196)

Again, while our Master (pbuh) and his Companions were going to Mecca, they saw a sleeping gazelle on their way. Our Master, who was sent as mercy to the worlds, ordered one of his Companions to stand guard next to the gazelle until all the people passed by and to ensure the animal not to be disturbed.³⁴

³⁴ Muwatta, Hajj, 79; al-Nasai, Hajj, 78.

While going to conquer Mecca with an army of ten thousand men, they passed on their way by a dog sheltering her pups with her body and nursing them. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) called **Juayl bin Suraka** (r.a.) and commanded him to stand guard by the dog and her puppies. He warned the Muslim army not to scare the animals.³⁵

Once, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) saw an ant nest set afire. What he saw deeply affected his compassionate heart and sadly asked:

*"Who did this? The right of tormenting by fire only belongs to the Lord of fire."*³⁶

One day, our Master (pbuh) came across a bedouin who were hitting the branches of a tree with a stick to drop the leaves to feed his animals with them.

He ordered to the people around him:

"- Bring that Bedouin to me, but treat him kindly, do not scare him!"

When the Bedouin came to him, he said kindly:

*"- O, Bedouin!. To drop the leaves, shake the branches kindly, do not do it by hitting and breaking the branches! (i.e. do not damage the roots of the tree!). (Ibn al-Athir, *Usd al-Ghaba*, Beirut 1417, VI, 378)*

35 Al-Waqidi, II, 804

36 See Abu Dawud, Jihad 112/2675, Adab 163-164/5268.

Our Master (pbuh), who did not even give consent to break a fresh branch, invited his community to be kind, graceful, forgiving and compassionate at every opportunity and towards every being.

During the period of Ottoman State, our ancestor's compassion and mercy even extended to animals and plants. For instance, overloading an animal was forbidden by Law. The municipal police officers were commanded to pursue the violators and when they caught the perpetrators to let the animal rest and force the owner carry the same load as a punishment. During the construction of the "Suleymaniye Mosque", **Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent** enacted certain decrees and ordered to observe carefully the resting and grazing times of the animals used for the transportation of materials.

In short, a religion which ordered compassion not only towards people but also all living beings cannot be referred with the word "**phobia.**" If Islam, the religion of virtues, is known properly, let alone fearing from it, it will be admired. Trying to defame Islam by ignoring its virtues is just an indication of malicious intentions.





The True Conquest, True Jihad

The true jihad in Islam means the conquest of the hearts, not irrigating the soil with blood pursuant to the heroic feelings and mere passion of being the conqueror of the world.

Question 11

As you know, we are currently in a military operation in Afrin Province in Syria. This expedition also coincides with the 103rd anniversary of the magnificent and epic victory in the Battle of Dardanelles. As the grandsons of the heroes who wrote the victory in the Battle of Dardanelles, our soldiers make history in Syria and Northern Iraq nowadays with the spirit of March 18, 1915. We have martyrs and veterans in Afrin. How should we understand the Afrin operation within the framework of “conquest”? What is real “conquest”? What is the true nature of jihad in Islam?

The true jihad in Islam means the conquest of the hearts, not irrigating the soil with blood pursuant to the heroic feelings and mere passion of being the conqueror of the world.

In Islamic understanding, jihad does not mean killing a man, instead, it means removing an oppression, the abolition of injustice, opening ways for the people to find the straight path, and reviving the souls. This is the jihad in our understanding. The other interpretation is atrocity, killing, and murder.

When we examine at the Age of Bliss, the unbelievers attacked at Islam in all the battles including Badr, Uhud and, the Trench, just as happening today.

Some ignorant people may occasionally commit misconducts and attribute it to Islam. However, this is something that Islam cannot accept.

Because Islam is a religion of mercy. Even in war, Islam pays attention to the rights and acts with compassion. Moreover, war is permitted only when it becomes inevitable.

In fact, throughout history Muslims dispensed justice wherever they went. For instance, the following statement became a proverb in **Poland**:

“Unless the Ottoman horses drink water from the Vistula River, this country will never meet freedom and independence.” That region met rights, law, justice and peace when it was under the rule of Muslims.

German reformist **Martin Luther** said:

“O Lord! Let the great Turks take control of us as soon as possible so that we benefit from your divine justice by means of them!”

Martin Luther also warned his own rulers who ruthlessly exploited his people by following words:

“We prefer living under the rule of the Ottomans to living under the rule of greedy princes, land barons and bourgeoisie like you. We prefer the Ottoman governors because they are more compassionate to the poor than you are.”

Philosopher **La Fayette**, one of the those who prepared the intellectual foundations of the 1789 French Revolution, searched all the legal systems and realized the magnificence of Islamic law. Then referring to **our Prophet (pbuh)**, he said the following:

“O glorious and great man! It would not be enough no matter how much you are appreciated! Because you applied the very justice itself. (Up till now, no one has ever reached the level of justice you dispensed!) (Kamil MIRAS, Tecrid-i Sarih Tercemesi, IX, 289)

When **Sultan Fatih’s** army of the believers conquered Istanbul, they gave homes to the poor Christians as charity.

Chief Admiral **Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha** carried the Jews, who had been persecuted in Spain, to Istanbul. The people of Istanbul took care of them with compassion by saying “These are oppressed people.”

This is the horizon of conscience of a Muslim. This is the collective conscience of the Muslim World.

Consequently, this is the Jihad in our understanding. We should not attribute another meaning to Jihad.



On the other hand, it is also jihad to make sacrifices by giving life and property in order to defend the motherland, honor, and religion and to remove

oppression and mischief when it is necessary. Even if there is no active battle, the spirit of jihad continues.

Therefore, to present “**jihad**” only as an “armed battle” narrows the meaning of this concept. This is the desire of those who want to introduce Islam as a “**religion of war**” and who want to keep people away from Islam.

“**Jihad**” means spending all the means granted by Allah for the sake of Allah and thus elevating Islam in the hearts and minds.

Jihad comprises all individual and social services aiming to live and enliven Islam. In this sense;

- Raising up perfect human beings are also jihad.
- Educating the students of the Qur’an is also jihad.
- Working in Islamic services and providing material-spiritual support is also jihad.
- Supporting and carrying out Islamic publication is also jihad.
- Raising up people who will become the witness of Allah on earth, in other words who will represent Islam properly by living it is also jihad.

For example, **delivering the message of Islam (tabligh)** is “a great jihad.” Indeed, Allah Almighty says:

“hence, do not defer to [the likes and dislikes of] those who deny the truth, but strive hard against them, by means of this [Qur’an], with utmost striving.” (al-Furqan, 25: 52)

The order of **“utmost striving or great jihad”** mentioned in this verse was revealed in the period of Mecca when Muslims had not enough material power to fight with the unbelievers. Therefore, this divine order offers one of the most important meanings of jihad which is deliver the message of the Qur’an by living it.

Indeed, in countries such as Abyssinia and Indonesia, Islam spread without a battle.

On the other hand, when it is necessary, Muslim army’s armed struggle for a righteous cause should, of course, be deemed as jihad. The current **Afrin Operation** consists of an example for this situation.

As known, our army which is considered as an organization of our Prophet, and our soldiers whose hearts are full of belief, carried out a defensive fight in our country for months. They fought selflessly at the expense of sacrificing their life. We had martyrs and veterans. May Allah show mercy on our martyrs, and may He let our veterans recover as soon as possible, and may He bestow patience upon their kith and kin.

When we examine our history, we see that if martyrs are given in a battle and if the lives are dedicated to the path of Allah, then the victories follow it. Whereas if lives are given unwillingly without a cause, then destruction and defeat follow that battle. Thereafter, the homeland turns into a total devastation.

Today we hear meaningful testaments from our martyrs who have given their lives for the sake of Allah. A martyr says to his brother in his testament:

“Brother, if Allah permits and I become a martyr, take the compensation which will be paid by the state and use it to cover the expenses to send my parents to pilgrimage, to pay my father’s debts and spend the rest for your marriage preparations.”

In like manner, when it was asked to another soldier who was on his way to the battlefield:

“What would you like to say to your family?”

He said:

“- Tell them not to wait for me!”

These heroes who run to the martyrdom are the forerunners of the great victories.

These statements are the reflections of the spirit of the Sultan Fatih’s glorious soldiers in modern days. While climbing up to the walls of Istanbul, the soldiers of Fatih used to say:

“Today is our turn of martyrdom”.

This is the testimonial of the true martyrs who sacrificed their lives for their religion, land, and the nation....

This is the manifestation of the belief which extends from the Battle of Badr to the Battle of Dardanelles.

The grandsons of those glorious ancestors are writing the same history again today.

Our martyrs and veterans will be the community that **our Master Muhammed (pbuh)** will embrace with love under **his banner Hamd**. As **Mehmet Akif** expressed with admiration:

*Ey şehîd oğlu şehîd, isteme benden makber,
Sana âğûşunu açmış, duruyor Peygamber...*

Meaning: O martyr, the son of a martyr, do not want a grave from me,

The Prophet is waiting for you to embrace...

Thanks to Allah, we have brave soldiers full of faith, ready to give their lives in order to

✓ Keep forever the sounds of adhan to be echoed in our skies,

✓ Keep our banner which carries the crescent of Islam up and not to let it fall to the ground,

✓ Keep the hands of intruders away from our mosques,

✓ Keep the feet of enemy away from our land where we live our religion,

✓ Ensure the continuation of Turkey which is the biggest station of Islam and the only one left.

Just like in the Battle of Badr where Muslims were seemingly weak and outnumbered, but Allah Almighty supported that believing army with his angels and his invisible armies, the same support was repeated in the Battle of Dardanelles too.

Major Lütfi Bey, who was surrounded by the enemies in **the Battle of Dardanelles**, was shouting by saying;

“Arrive, O Muhammad! Your book is being lost.”

Belief, sincerity, and self-sacrifice of our soldiers have changed the course of that great war against the crusader army. The things considered impossible to happen happened in that war.

Thanks to those heroes, this statement **“Dardanelles is impassable”** is written down in the pages of history. Because Allah helped and granted the victory to those heroes, whose chests were full of belief.

Hamilton, the English commander at **the Battle of Dardanelles**, who also was a historian, said:

“We were defeated by the Turk’s spiritual power, not by their material power. Because they did not even have gunpowder. However, we observed the forces descending from the sky!..” So in that war, the metaphysics defeated the physics. Even within impossibilities, it has been proven that “the belief is the biggest strength.”

When **Winston Churchill** was questioned in his country because of his defeat in the Battle of Dardanelles in his country, he had to confess this divine help by saying,

“- Don’t you understand? In the Battle of Dardanelles we fought with God, not with the Turks! Of course, we were to be defeated!”

Just like today, everywhere was surrounded by the enemy in **the War of Independence**. Our nation, which was surrounded by a fire circle, had no power in appearance. However, Divine help again come to the rescue.

Similar scenes were also seen in **The Cyprus Operation**.

On the other hand, the victory of **July 15** was an unbelievable rearing of the public conscience. Allah Almighty helped this nation on that day. Maybe we were not able to see, but as if Allah sent His angels to help us. The country nearly fell apart, but Divine help came to rescue.

Today we fight against the Giants. Alhamdulillah, Allah Almighty grants us victory by means of the powers that we cannot perceive and by means of the belief of our lion-hearted heroes.

A believer can never be a pessimist. He should always be optimist and hopeful. Our fight will end with a victory if Allah wills. No doubt about that!

Our duty as being the ones who are behind the battlefield is to pray for the ones who are at the front.

Let us not forget that a war can only be won by means of sincere struggle of both **armed forces** and of **the army of those who say prayers**. The former is the material battlefield and the latter is the spiritual one.

Because if the heroes in the battlefield are supported by a praying nation, they can never be defeated. Because they are superior to the enemy in terms of moral strength. This is the greatest power that brings the victory in a war. Because the armies which cannot be defeated in terms of morale and spirit cannot be defeated by the best-equipped armies of the world, either.

Keeping this fact in mind, we are going to pray for the glorious sons of this land. We will send our heroes to their duties with our prayers. Especially during the times of dawn, we will pray for the victory of Islam and the Muslims.

Let us say especially the following prayer that was recited in the period of the Prophet David (pbuh) when the believing soldiers of **Talut's** outnumbered army met the **Jalut's** crowded army:

رَبَّنَا أفرغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى
الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

“O our Sustainer! Shower us with patience in adversity, and make firm our steps, and succor us against the people who deny the truth.” (al-Baqara, 2: 250)

In addition, every morning, inshaAllah, we should try to read chapter al-Fath (48):

May Allah Almighty grant numerous material and spiritual victories with the help of; the sincerity of the army of those who say prayers, the touching invocations of oppressed Muslims, and the self-sacrificing struggles of our army.

Amin!..





Stories and Advices from Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi

Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi said:

“The words of the saints resemble a river that is lucid, pure and full of an elixir. While there is still an opportunity, drink from it heartily so that spiritual flowers and roses will blossom in your soul.”

Question 12

Today, we are in Konya, the city of the Sultan of the hearts Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi. We know that you have a special interest in Mawlana. You have written books about Mawlana as well as you referred him many times in your other books.

Could you kindly enlighten us with samples from the stories and wise advice from Mawlana which affected you the most?

First of all, let me express that one can see different manifestation in every friend of Allah. **Mawlana** is like a spokesperson of the friends of Allah. Thanks to the exceptional ability of elocution granted to him, he reflected the secrets and wisdom about knowing Allah and love of Allah, nested in the souls of the friends of Allah, in an exceptionally literary style. *Mathnawi* is the best example of this.

Let all the faculties come together today and write a *Mathnawi* or write a similar book consisting of 26.600 couplets if possible. That is not possible! Because it is a product of the heart.

It is a little difficult for human mind to apprehend the abstract truths. One of the distinguishing features of **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi** is that he interprets and engraves the hard-to-understand abstract truths

to the souls by using tangible examples. For this purpose, his works consists of many similitudes, examples and stories.

There are many stories and erudite advice in his works. Let me give a couple of examples:

Mawlana calls as **fools** those who stay dull, glum and insensitive in the face of numerous manifestations of the divine omnipotence exhibited in the universe and who eat and drink the blessings that Allah bestowed upon them but forget the Judgment Day and the One who endowed those blessings. He describes the foolishness as an illness that has no cure and a kind of Divine punishment. Because the **foolish person** has fallen in love with this transient world. This is like a lamb being in love with a wolf. **The foolish person** has been captivated by his lust dragging him to his eternal calamity.

In one of the stories in his *Mathnawi*, **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi** advises us to stay away from such foolish people in order to protect ourselves from their harm and their misconduct as follows:

I AM ESCAPING FROM A FOOL!..

One day **Prophet Jesus** (pbuh) was running as if a lion was chasing him to shed his blood. Astonishing this situation, a man run behind him and said:

“What is the matter! Why are you running like a bird? Why do you flee? There is no one in pursuit of you!”

Sayyidina Easa (Jesus) was running so fast that he was not able to answer the man’s question. Wondering the reason behind his escape, the man finally caught up with him again and asked:

“O Messenger of Allah! For the sake of pleasing God, stop one moment. I have a difficulty concerning thy flight! From whom are you fleeing? There is no lion pursuing you, no enemy, and there is no fear or danger.

In which Sayyidina Easa (The Prophet Jesus) (pbuh) responded:

“I am fleeing from the fool. Begone! I am saving myself. Do not debar me.”

This time, the man reminded to Prophet Jesus his miracles and asked about the reason behind his escape:

“- Are not you the Messiah by whom the blind and the deaf are restored (to sight and hearing)?

The Prophet Jesus (pbuh) said;

“- Yes. By the Holy Essence of God, the Originator of the body, the Creator of the soul in (its) superiority! (And in) reverence for His Holy Essence and Attributes, (for) whom the collar of the heavens is torn (in ecstasy) (I affirm) that those incantations, as well as the greatest

Name (of God), which I spoke over the deaf and over the blind, were beneficial. I recited (the words) over the rocky mountain (and) it became split, tearing the robe (which was) upon itself (down) to the navel. I spoke (the words) over a dead body (and) it became alive. I said (them) over a point of nothingness (and) it became something. (But) I said those (words) a hundred thousand times with loving-kindness over the heart of a fool and it was not a cure. (Instead), it became a hard rock and didn't change from that habit; it became sand, from which no seed grows.

The man who heard these words became more astonished and asked the Prophet Jesus (pbuh):

“- (Then) what is the wisdom that the Name of God was beneficial in those places, (but) here it had no superiority? That is also (a case) of disease, and this is an affliction. (So) why was it a cure for that (but) not for this?”

The Prophet Jesus (pbuh) answered:

“- The affliction of foolish stupidity is (caused by) the overwhelming anger of God. (Normal) afflictions and blindness are not (from God's) anger-- those are tests and trials. Trials and hardships are an affliction which [eventually] brings (Divine) Mercy. (But) ignorant foolishness brings blows and wounds. That which is his scarring has been produced by His seal, (and) no supporting hand can bring a remedy to it.” (Abridged from *Mathnawi*,

Book 3, verses 2570-2594)

In fact, the **foolishness** means preferring the transient worldly life to the eternal life. In other words, it means to prefer a drop of water to the sea. The reason why the foolishness leads that kind of blind choice is essentially because of the blindness of the heart. In other words, the heart cannot see the divine manifestations no matter how abundant they are. Just as when two fingers are placed in front of the eyes, a person cannot see anything, a foolish man unconsciously looks at the numerous manifestations of the omnipotence of Allah but cannot see anything, either.

The foolish man's situation looks like the following:

If you put the most delicious kebab in front of a cat, but just then if a mouse passes there, that foolish cat leaves the delicious kebab, and chases the mouse. In this sense, being captivated by selfish desires and turning the eternal life into an endless period of torment are similar to the situation of the cat.

For that reason, if you want to prevent yourself being affected from the state of a foolish person, you should run away from him as if you flee from a lion.

Allah Almighty states in the Qur'an:

"... remain not, after recollection, in the company of such evildoing folk!" (al-An'am, 6: 68)



Again, with the following similitude **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi** explains what a great unawareness of a person who stays dull, glum and insensitive in spite of the numerous manifestations of the divine omnipotence exhibited in the universe:

In those days, Baghdad was a center of civilization where great discoveries and developments in science, wisdom and art were made. It was an exceptional exhibition of divine art with the Tigris flowing in the middle. **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi** said:

“(If) a cow come suddenly into Baghdad and pass from this side (of the city) to that (farther) side, Of all (its) pleasures and joys and delights she will see nothing but the rind of a water-melon. (If) straw or hay has fallen on the road, (it is) suitable to his (such a one’s) bovine or asinine disposition.” (Mathnawi, Book 4, verses 2377-2378)

This situation resembles the situation of those who run after their lust. They are deceived by this world and ignores the Hereafter. Spending time for trivial things, they waste their lifetime. They give away divine asset whereas search for the happiness in the market of the vile.

Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi tells the following story to illustrate the difficulties of salvation from this lascivious selfhood, but how important this salvation is as the eternal salvation depends on it:

THE NECESSITY OF THE PURIFYING OF THE SELF

“An amir (ruler) was riding along at the very moment a snake was going into the mouth of a sleeping man. The amir observed this and in spite of hurrying to scare the snake away, he had no chance to do so. Since his Creator had endowed him with an abundant supply of intelligence, he struck the sleeping man several powerful blows with a mace. The strokes of the hard mace drove the man to quickly flee from the amir to a point beneath a tree.

Beneath the tree there were many rotten apples that had fallen from it and the amir said, “Eat of these, O you in the grip of pain!”

He gave the man so many apples to eat that they were falling out of his mouth. He was crying,

“O amir, I beseech you, why have you set upon me? What have I done to deserve this treatment? If you have an inveterate and mortal feud with me, strike me with your sword and shed my blood at once. Ill-omened was the hour I fell into your gaze: Oh, happy would be the one who was never blessed with your visage! ... I entreat Thee O Allah, grant him the retribution which he truly deserves!”

Every instant he continued to utter a new curse, while the amir kept beating him and saying, “Run on this plain.”

The blows of the mace and the rider were as swift as the wind! He therefore went on running between periodic bouts of falling on his face. Full-fed and deeply fatigued: his feet and face became covered with a hundred thousand wounds. Till nightfall the amir drove him to and fro, until vomiting caused by bile finally overtook him.

All the things, both good and bad, came up from within him: the snake shot forth from him along with all that he had eaten.

When he saw the snake outside of him, he fell on his knees before that beneficent man. No sooner had he seen the horror of that big, black, ugly, snake than the grief departed from him.

“Truly,” said he, “you are the Jibril of divine mercy, or you are Allah, for you are the lord of bounty. Oh, blessed is the hour that you first saw me: I was dead and you have given me new life. ... O you whom pure spirit has praised, how many foolish and idle words have I uttered to you! O lord and emperor and amir, I spoke not, my folly spoke: do not punish me for this offense. If I had only known your title, o master, how could I have spoken such foolish words? ... Pardon me, O man of beneficent countenance and benevolent behavior: let pass that which I have exclaimed in a state of frenzy.”

The amir answered,

“If I had uttered a hint of it, your gall would instantly have turned to water. Had I described to you the qualities of the snake, in terror you would have given up the ghost. If I had told you about the snake, neither would you have been able to eat, nor would you have been capable of vomiting or cared to do so.

I heard your abuse and went on with my work; I kept praying beneath my breath, ‘O Lord, make it easy!’ Neither was I able to speak of the cause, nor did I have permission to abandon you. Borne of the grief in my heart I was continually praying, ‘Oh Lord, guide my people; verily they know not.’” (Abridged from *Mathnawi*, Book 2, verses 1878-1914)



Again, **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi** was always in search of the perfect man who disciplines the hearts and who is in divine love. That perfect man tells a story about his search of this perfect and ideal man who will warn and guide the public:

I AM LOOKING FOR A MAN

“It was night time. I went out of my house. I was traveling around the country. I saw a man wandering with a lantern in his hand:

“What are you doing in the dark of the night?” I asked.

Man answered:

“I am looking for a man.”

I told him:

“What a pity! You are getting tired unnecessarily ... I left my homeland but still could not find him. Go back to your home... Go to your bed and relax. You are looking for him in vain, you will not find him anywhere!”

The poor man looked at me and said:

“I too know that I can’t. But I still enjoy looking for him! Even his longing gives me pleasure.”

Thus, there is no place for the hopelessness! There is even a pleasure in searching and longing of it...

Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi, maybe referring to **Shams al-Tabrizi** in the above mentioned story. Because he lost Shams sometime and felt great sorrow. Then, he lost him completely and lived with the longing of him all the time. He constantly looked for a man who understand his troubles and shares the secret and wisdom in his soul.

Nurettin Topçu, who was one of our teachers at the Imam Hatip High School, was a thinker who fell in love with Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi. He taught us sociology group courses. He had valuable ideas about Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi. According to his

view, most of the people were unable to apprehend the depth of Mawlana's ideas and his love. He said:

*“We listened to the lamentations of the love of **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi**. It is not possible for us to see the depths of the sea of tranquility in which he dived. We can only see whatever comes from its depths and reaches the surface. We did not listen to his love, but only the lamentations of his love. That is all what we try to express with our insufficient expression. Only he dived into the sea of tranquility. It has been left to us the voices coming out of his enthusiasm. Alas! We suppose that those voices are Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi...”³⁷*

Hereby, I would like to remember another late teacher of us, **Abdulkadir Keçeoğlu** or better known by the name “Yaman Dede”. Because, he was one of those who instilled the love of Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi in our hearts while we were students.

He was a Christian at first, and then was honored by Islam. In a literature lesson, his teacher wrote a couple of couplets from **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi's Mathnawi**. Upon this, some emotions started to emerge in his inner world and eventually he embraced Islam.

In those days, we had Persian lesson at the Imam Hatip High School and he taught that course. In his

37 Nurettin Topçu, *Mevlana ve Tasavvuf*, p. 139.

class, he used to give some grammatical information, then write one of the Persian couplets of **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi** on the board and start to interpret it in tears.

One day, one of our friends asked him:

“- *My teacher! Why do you talk so much about Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi?*”

He answered:

“- *My son! Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi took my hand. He took me to the door of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and became the reason for conversion to Islam. The amount that I remember a person who saved me from the fire is not even enough!*”

He even wrote a touching eulogy in which he expressed his deep love to our **Messenger of Allah (pbuh)**:

*Gönül hûn oldu şevkinden boyandım yâ Rasûlâllah
Nasıl bilmem bu nîrâna dayandım yâ Rasûlâllah
Ezel bezminde bir dinmez figandım yâ Rasûlâllah
Cemâlinle ferah-nâk et ki yandım yâ Rasûlâllah...*

Meaning:

The heart painted with blood due to the love and affection to you O Messenger of Allah,

I do not know how I could bear this fire O Messenger of Allah,

I was an unrelieved lamentation in the pre-eternity chamber O Messenger of Allah,

Make me relieved with your beauty, because I was burned O Messenger of Allah....



Let us finish our conversation with a couple of wise advices from **Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi**:

- *“O seeker of the Truth! If you want to know the truth, listen to this; Moses, Pharaoh did not die; they live inside of you today, they are hidden in your being and they continue to their war in your heart! For this reason, you have to seek these two adversaries in your inner world!”* (Mathnawi, Book 3, verse 1253)

- *“It is easy to break the idols, very easy (You can do it easily by an ax). But regarding the breaking the idol of the self as easy is folly, folly! (Because it hides itself by fox like tricks and you cannot see idol of self that you want to break!)”* (Mathnawi, Book 1, verse 779)

- *“O, brother! Follow the commands of Allah, and Sunnah of our Prophet so that save yourself from Abu Jahl of the body and the desires of your self.”* (Mathnawi, Book 1, verse 783)

• *“Pray and repent with a heart burning in the flame of remorse and with moist eyes; for flowers bloom in places sunny and moist!”*

• *“Do not over-feed and try to enlarge your body! In the end, it is a sacrifice to be buried to the ground. Focus on feeding up your soul! It is the one which will rise and will be honored.”*

“Give little delicious foods to your body. Because those who overfeed it are following their lust and fall into disgrace in the end.”

“Give spiritual food to your soul. Give it mature thinking, subtle understanding and spiritual food so that it can go to its destination as strong as possible.”

• *“O, brother! Your body consists of only bones and meat. This is same with the animals. You should find life with contemplation. If you contemplate about a rose, you are in a rose garden in other words in the heaven of the world. If you contemplate about a thorn, you are a log of furnace”*

• *“Perform such an ablution that it will never get nullified. Perform such a prayer that it will never end. Five times of prayers are not enough for a lover. He desires five hundred thousand times a day. Would a true lover ever want his meeting with the beloved end?”*

• *“My mind asked to my heart; “What is religion?” My heart whispered to my mind the answer: “Religion is good manners!”*

• *“Be friend with the righteous persons (and in this way help the community of righteous people get increase). Because the larger this community the easily is the more the bandits (rebellious people) are removed.”*

• *“No matter how rich you are, you can only eat as much as you can eat. If you dunk a pot in the sea, it will take water as much as its volume is, the rest will remain.”*

• *“There are such fish in the water that while it is safe in the water, it bites the bait due to its greed.*

• *“Son! Everyone’s death is in his own color. It appears as a terrible enemy to those who hate death without thinking that they are united with Allah through the death, and to those who are enemy of death. Whereas it appears like a friend to those who are friend of it.”*

• *“To be a friend of a friend of Allah is better than to be a crown to the heads of the sultans.”*

May our Lord bestow all of us to hear by the ear of our hearts to the voices of the souls of Mawlana Jalaluddin al-Rumi and other friends of Allah which they left in our spiritual atmosphere. May our Lord grant us to follow their blessed principles reviving the souls.

May our Lord engrave the fondness of those, whom He loves, to our hearts. May our Lord grant us to have the same character that His loved servants have and in the end to be resurrected together with the community of these friends of Allah.

Amin!..



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