

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2014 • R.AWWAL 1435 • NO: 45 • £3 UK • US\$5 • AUS\$5

WISDOM

A Source of Inspirational and Traditional Islamic Knowledge

ALTIQOLUB

CURE FOR ARROGANCE AND SELF-AMAZEMENT



Osman Nuri Efendi:
The Evilness Arrogance In The
Mathnawi I

Elif Kapici:
Zayd Bin Thabit

Ali Riza Temel:
The Balance of Arrogance and
Honour

*D*ear Kind and Gentle Reader,

When we look at the life of our Prophet (upon him peace) we do not see pride. He acted like other people, lived like them: never putting himself above them. It is narrated that he was very pleased with being called a “slave prophet”. He never became commanding. “The best person is the one who is most useful to people”, he remarked. “I am the son of a woman of Quraish who used to eat dry bread”, he said. “Do not treat me as you treat the kings of others. People are like the teeth of a comb”, he would say.

Abdullah bin Abbas from the great companions would say:

- I didn't put myself above anyone I saw. If I saw someone older than me I said “He has lived for longer than me, he has done more worship and service to others than me”. If I saw someone younger than me I would think “His age is less than mine, I have lived for longer than him. In that case, it is possible I have committed more sins than him.”. If I saw someone of the same age as me, I would remember my mistakes. and think that he has not made these mistakes”.

Arrogance closes all the doors of ‘jannah’. A person who loves himself does not want for others what he wants for himself. He only thinks about himself. These two warnings of the Prophet (upon him peace) are valid in such a situation. “While you do not love one another, you cannot have believed. While you do not believe you cannot enter ‘Jannah’.

This issue is dedicated to the seeking and correcting the state of arrogance which can be found in the hearts of men. With a discussion of arrogance as a state of being, to the discussion how it effects both the mankind individually, as well as the community when it enters the collective hearts of groups of people, this issue focus on the many aspects and forms that arrogance can show itself.

This is a very important topic for it will be shown that, indeed, it is arrogance that could be the root of what is the weakness of Islam today. Far from the days of the humble servants which spread Islam far an wide like a wild fire, today the Muslims seem to be standing immobile and helpless to stop the onslaught of ridicule from all sides. Not seen as the strong wall of unity, Islam today is often seen as the fragmented parts of that unity of ages past.

Perhaps it is time to seek out and reign in the arrogance within our own selves, and to reunite humbly, in order to really display the beauty that is Islam. It is through peace amongst ourselves that the Muslim body can find peace and become a force for peace in the world.

It should never be forgotten that in Islam, superiority is only through ‘taqwa’ (piety). May Allah purify our hearts of arrogance and make us truly righteous.

Elif Kapici

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Wisdom

WISDOM Bimonthly Islamic Journal
Copyright 2014
No: 45 JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2014 - 1435
Price: \$5 (USA), £3 (UK), AUS \$5 (AUS)
WISDOM is published by ALTINOLUK Publishing Co.

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Subscription Rate For One Year

(Including Postage) \$30 (USA) - AUS \$ 30 (AUS) - £18 (UK)

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Printed by

ERKAM Printing • Phone: +90.212.671 07 07

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Harith (I)**

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The Evilness Arrogance In The Mathnawi (I)

Since human beings are created from the earth, they carry the earth's characteristics. From time to time the earth dries up, parched from the heat, longing for water.

The *Mathnawi*: "The earth has surrendered to the skies and it says: I am your slave, bring down what you will!" (vol.3: 452)

"If fire pours onto it from the sun, it turns its face to the fire. Rather than running away from it, it surrenders quietly, spreading its face on the ground against it." (vol. 3: 450)

"O mankind, you are from this earth. You live on it; you should not go against His command, His will or His destiny!"

"You have heard and listened to the verse, 'We created you from earth'. This means Allah wants you to be like the earth; do not defy the Divine order!"

"Allah says, 'O man! Look carefully and see that I have sown a seed from My soul into your body, which is created from earth. I have exalted you. When you were but dust on this earth I made you a distinguished creature. I gave you intelligence I gave you desire'"

"Take another step and make the qualities of earth and humbleness an attribute of yourself so

that I will render you commander over all My creation.” (vol. 3, 453-456)

In the above couplets, Rûmî states that humility is an intrinsic trait for a human being and that it is our natural disposition. Since the human body is formed through nourishment that comes from the earth, the origin of the human body is the earth. The soul (*rûh*) stems from the Divine work of Allah Almighty; Mankind is superior to all of creation since it has been elevated to the position of caliph of Allah Almighty by virtue of the *rûh* which enters by Divine breath. Mankind is tasked with becoming as humble as the earth, the source and essence of our bodies. Because of our innate nature, it is natural that we are endowed with the attributes of the earth. When the two abilities of intelligence and volition are used incorrectly, these innate dispositions weaken and become ruined, and as a consequence the human being strays from humility and takes on arrogance, the attribute of the devil. As a result, human beings deviate from their original nature and act against the Divine honor which they carry.

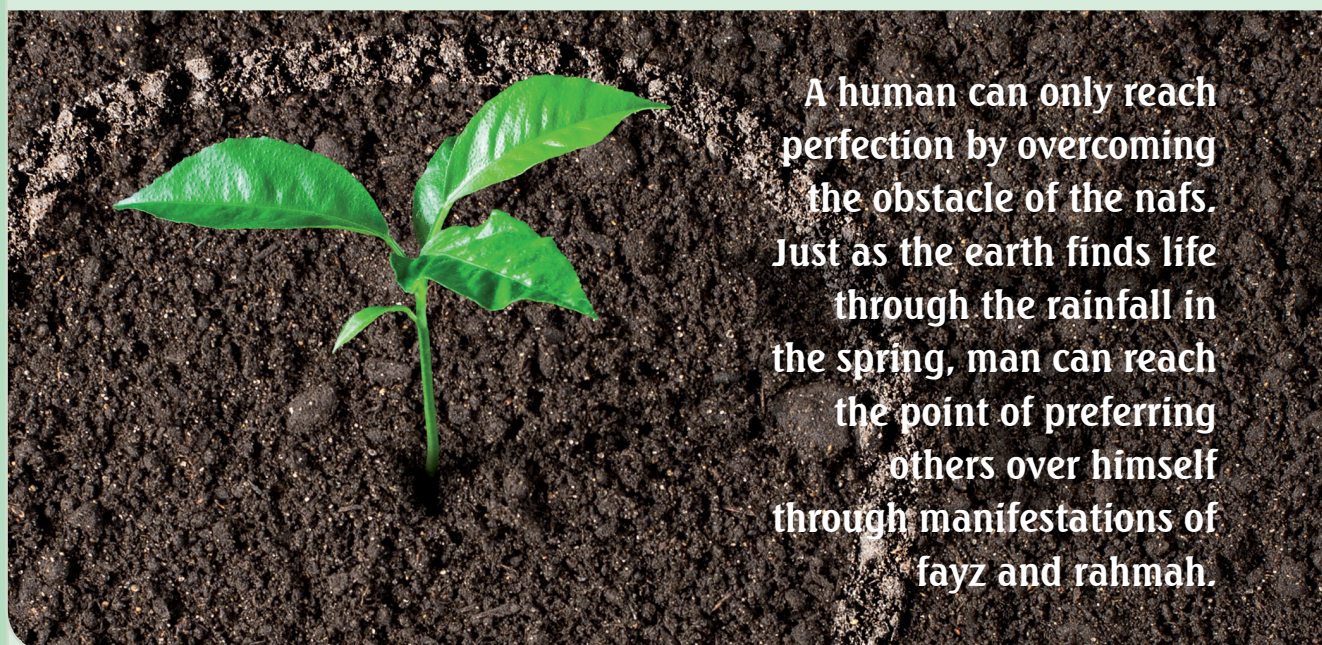
Whatever falls from the heavens, the earth accepts without any objection. Indeed, there is no volition for the earth. In order to reach the zenith of Allah’s plan to create this world, mankind should live in submission that is similar to that of the earth before Divine

judgment; we should submit to destiny (*qadar*) just as the earth submits without question to the heavens and consents to all that comes from Allah. In this way, man can reach perfection (*kâmâl*) and be considered worthy of the title *Khalifat Allâh*, or caliph of Allah, a position which has been ordained for us on this earth.

The Mathnawî: *“At first the seeds of every fruit lay on the earth. They enter it and then reappear, bursting forth.”*

“The origins of all blessings are showered on the earth from the heavens and enter beneath the soil. Then they became life for the pure soul.” (vol. 3, 459-460)

The essence or origin of all forms of creation, both the living and the inanimate, is the earth. The transformations of the earth bring about the many varieties in life’s forms. The Lord Almighty has covered two-thirds of the earth with water and left only one-third as land. Perhaps only one-third of this land has a surface that is suitable for plant growth. This means, considering the surface area of the world, that only one- sixteenth of the earth is an inexhaustible treasure for the birth of plants, animals and humans, those that have come and those that will come in the future. Allah Almighty has made the earth subject to laws of endless metamorphosis and turned it into the sole provision for these countless bodies. If only one kind of plant



A human can only reach perfection by overcoming the obstacle of the nafs. Just as the earth finds life through the rainfall in the spring, man can reach the point of preferring others over himself through manifestations of fayz and rahmah.

or one genus of animal had come to earth since the beginning of time, there would not have been enough space and food for life to continue. As an example, you can think of a pine tree or an elephant. Humans are the same. If all the people were to come into this world at once, they would not be able to find food or a place to step. For this reason, Allah Almighty sends all of His creation to this world in a divine order, through a system of “rotation”, using the earth as the essence of His provisions. In that way there is enough space and food for every living being, in its appointed time and place. After living their lifespan they go back to the earth, from where they had come. Life starts from the earth and ends in it.

Since human beings are created from the earth, they carry the earth’s characteristics. From time to time the earth dries up, parched from the heat, longing for water. It bears the tribulation of winter for a whole season. Then the time comes for its revival by abundant rainfalls in the spring. The flow of Divine might is displayed with a myriad of beauty, color, fragrance and harmony. The human is the same. He wavers like desert storms among the passions of life. He destroys himself under the rule of his *nafs*. A human can only reach perfection by overcoming the obstacle of the *nafs*. Just as the earth finds life through the rainfall in the spring, man

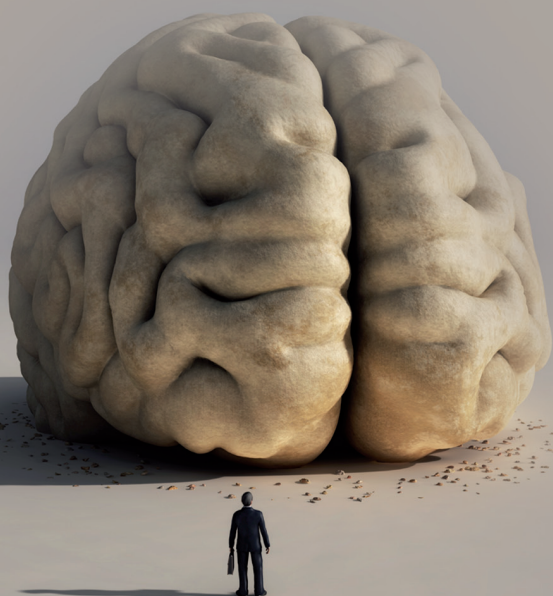
can reach the point of preferring others over himself through manifestations of *fayz* and *rahmah*. Thus, for the sake of Allah, the human being distributes the blessings that come to him in a state that resembles the beauty and abundance of spring, just like the exuberant earth.

As with the illustration given by Rûmî of the seed, the plant which grows from it returns to the earth either directly or eventually after passes through several stages. No creation is exempt from this rule. This state is one of the numerous manifestations of Divine magnificence. It is such a great fortune for those who engage in deep meditation. In a verse of the Qur’ân we read:

“Just let the person look at his food. We poured down the rain — poured it in abundance — then We split the earth — split it asunder — and within it caused the seeds to grow, and grapes and herbs, and olives and date palms, and gardens dense with foliage, and fruit trees and pastures, provision for you and your flocks.” [‘Abasa 80: 24-32]

The Mathnawî: *“Those with good fortune and who are human know that being clever and trying to be wise are the way of Satan, while ‘ashq and servanthood are from the ways of Adam.”*

“Those who claim to be clever are like the Satan, they try to survive in the ocean by swimming. It is rare for a person swimming in a vast ocean



The intellect is the principal asset for reaching Allah and good. But this asset alone will not be enough to carry its owner to Allah or good. The perfection of the intellect is achieved through accepting one’s own inadequacy and adhering to the Revelation.

One should be mindful that, although humility is a virtue, it should not be a reason for disregarding the blessings of Allaḥ. The point here is the discernment of attributing everything to Allaḥ along with the perception of the blessing itself.



to survive. In the end, he will sink and drown. In the end, those who trust their intellect and do board the vessel of Shari'ah will perish."

"Stop swimming and forgo being conceited, let go of hatred! This water you swim in is not a stream or a river, it is the ocean! This ocean is, in fact, the ocean of qaza and qadar." (v.4: 1402-1404)

Even though Rûmî describes the intellect as an attribute that belongs to Shaytân, this is before it receives *tarbiya* (discipline, nurturing and education) through Revelation. Otherwise, the intellect is the principal asset for reaching Allah and good. But this asset alone will not be enough to carry its owner to Allah or good. For this reason, in Islam the intellect is described as *aqal-nâqis*, the deficient intellect. The perfection of the intellect is achieved through accepting one's own inadequacy and adhering to the Revelation, which is a means of compensation. It is only possible through *taslimiyyah*, total reliance on Allah. The intellect is a great blessing from Allah Almighty. But this blessing only gains significance through the Qur'ân and *Sunnah*. Otherwise, the intellect will not prevent its owner from becoming a slave to his *nafs* and drifting towards destruction.

Rûmî compares the universe of events (*âlam al-wuqû'*) to an ocean, and describes mankind as a weak swimmer who is bound to drown. Defying *qadar* by relying on human intellect and volition (*irâda*) is nothing but folly, because unless the intellect and volition submit to *qadar*, that is, fully submit to the will of Allah, no good will come of them.

The precise meaning of *qadar* is unknown. Accordingly, the only way to salvation is to submit to *qadar* after using *irâda*, with recourse to every cause in proportion to one's own capability.

Not only is it useless to wait for the growth of plants before sowing the seed, thinking that merely scattering the seeds is enough for growth is also a vain hope. Scattering seeds is a human task while giving life to the plant is bound to the discretion and might of Allah. For this reason a human "takes recourse to the causes" by sowing the seed and after this "shows reliance and total submission" to the Lord of the Universe, the Controller of *qadar* and all things that occur, and in matters that are beyond us, such as the wind, rain, time and so forth.

The Mathnawî: *"Divine love is like a ship for the distinguished believers. Those who board the ship do not face great calamities or catastrophes, and most often they reach salvation."*

"O You who is travelling to al-Haqq (the Real)! Trade intellect for adoration! Because having intellect is having an idea and being carried away by speculation!, whereas adoration is about seeing the beauty, the power and art of Allah, and in being at the end of one's wits."

"Sacrifice intellect in the presence of the honored Mustafa (pbuh) and say 'Allah is enough for me!'" (v.4: 1406-1408)

"Intellect and intelligence will bring conceit and arrogance to you." (v.4: 1421)

"Sacrifice the intellect for the love of the true

We should state that it is merely a rule of this world that a person with merit has enemies, even if that person is like the Prophets, who only have attributes of perfection.



friend! Because all intellect is with the true friend and because all souls and intellect began from Allah. For this reason sacrifice the intellect for the love of Allah."

"Those with intellect have sent it to the place of the true beloved, to the beyond. The intellect that has stayed in this world is the one ignorant of love; one that does not love and is not loved in return, the foolish one." (v. 4: 1424-1425)

As we have mentioned in the explanation of the verses above, using the intellect correctly is only possible if one can understand its compatibility with Divine wisdom and benefit (*maslaha*); that is, the intellect should work in the boundaries of Qur'ân and Sunnah. Thinking that *intellect* has boundless power in understanding everything is as foolish as comparing the power of an ant to a horse.

By saying "*Sacrifice 'aql in the presence of the honoured Mustafa (pbuh)*" Rûmî states the importance of submission to the Divine orders that came through the Prophet (pbuh). Unless the '*aql*' is curbed – like a fierce horse with the reins of the revelation, it will drag its owner to unlimited and boundless pretences, and as a result of this, to destruction.

If a human uses his intellect seeing the wonders of Allah's creation with the feelings of "adoration", which are the reasons for being aware of Allah Almighty's divine art and power in the universe, they will have perfect faith, "iman al-kamil". Likewise, such a person will be very aware of the inadequacy of their intellect.

However, those who become unequivocally entranced by this adoration become majzoob (one who loses the ability to use their reason because of the love they feel for Allah) due to the fact that they loose their control. Despite wonder and adoration are blessed states, this state is rejected because it constitutes a weakness for the common necessities of human life. For this reason, it is much worthier and desirable to become a jazib who has completed their path rather than becoming a majzoob. Similarly, one who is a jazib is also one of those who have been absorbed in wonder and adoration, who have reached the ruling that says "Allah is sufficient for His servant". In addition to this, a jazib is one who has been able to protect their deliberation. The kind of love and istigraq¹ is seen worthy by Rûmî without doubt is the love without loosing the control of the mind.

The Mathnawi: "*What happiness there is for those who see their nafs as wretched! Woe to those who see themselves as superior as the mountains.*"

"Know this! Arrogance, delusions of sublimeness and seeing oneself superior to others are lethal poison. Fools become intoxicated by drinking this poisonous wine." (v.4: 2746-2747)

A believer needs to don the crown of modesty, and regard his *nafs* as inadequate, even if he possesses many virtues. Those who see themselves as perfect do not try to correct their shortcomings and do not accept their faults. Sufism is the pursuit only

of those who have realized their faults and who protect themselves from boasting. The following *hadith* is pertinent:

"Whoever shows a degree of humility for the sake of Allah, Allah will raise him a degree. Whoever shows arrogance against Allah, Allah will lower him a degree for this, and in the end throw him together with the lowest of the low" (Ibn Mājah, Zuhd, 16)

In the following verse, humble people are praised by Allah and described as follows:

"And the worshippers of the Universally Merciful are they who walk modestly upon the earth, and if the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace!" [Furqān 25: 63]

In other verses, mankind is ordered to forsake arrogance and boasting:

"And do not walk arrogantly upon the earth. Surely you cannot tear the earth [apart] and you will never be taller than the mountains." [Isrā 17: 37]

"And do not scornfully turn your cheek away from people, and do not walk arrogantly upon the earth. Surely God does not love anyone who is a self-deluded boaster." [Luqmān 31: 18]

One should be mindful that, although humility is a virtue, it should not be a reason for disregarding the blessings of Allah. The point here is the discernment of attributing everything to Allah along with the perception of the blessing itself. In religion, this is known as *tabadduth al-ni'mah*, that is to perceive the

existence of the blessings by attributing them to Allah and being thankful for them. This is not arrogance. Arrogance is presuming that a given blessing is from one's *nafs*, to regard it as being from one self. It is this ego that caused Qārūn to be driven to destruction by his whims and buried into the ground. So, everything that is mentioned by Rūmī about the intellect, volition, humility and arrogance should be viewed on the grounds of these rational bases.


The Mathnawī: *"Khidr made a hole in the ship and disabled it in order to protect it against some wicked people."*

"Considering that those who are broken, ruined and poor are saved, you too should be among the broken and ruined. Deliverance and security comes with non-existence. Come on, rescue yourself from the nafs and existence, travel towards non-existence."

"A mountain that has some gold or silver in it will be smashed to bits with the wounds made by a pickaxe."

"The sword will cut the neck of the person with a neck, whereas the shadow is spread out on the ground. There is no wounding it or cutting it because it has neither a neck nor a body." (v.4: 2756-2759)

In the above verses Rūmī explains the same reality from different perspectives. Those who are arrogant stir the appetite of others and incite their enmity because they boast



Arrogance is presuming that a given blessing is from one's *nafs*, to regard it as being from one self. It is this ego that caused Qārūn to be driven to destruction by his whims and buried into the ground.

about their own merits constantly, ascribe things to themselves with exaggeration. In a famous proverb it is said: *"Whatever a nightingale suffers is because of its voice"*. This means that if the nightingale did not have such a beautiful song no one would put it in a cage. A crow is never kept in a cage.

Thus, we should state that it is merely a rule of this world that a person with merit has enemies, even if that person is like the Prophets, who only have attributes of perfection.

The Mathnawi: *"Satan is the guide, the leader on the path of arrogance, because he is the first one to fall into and get caught in the trap of worldly position?"*

"This curse is the curse of Satan, Satan was overtaken by his own ego and said, 'I have more good than him.' In truth, this illness is within every creation, in the nafs of every human being." (v.1: 3216)

"O the person who is hiding the ills of the ego under the curtains of humility and modesty! If someone were to make you angry, stir you and agitate you, just like the water that has filth in it, the color of filth will come out in the open." (v. 1: 3218)

Among creation, only humans and the jinn are equipped with a *nafs*. According to a well-known opinion, Shaytân, before he rebelled against Allah, was the teacher of angels, but because he was from the lineage of the jinn, he possessed a *nafs*. For this reason,

while the angels abided by Allah's command without hesitation when they were ordered to prostrate before Adam, Shaytân claimed that being created from fire meant he was superior to Adam, who had been created from earth. So, he abstained from prostrating and rebelled against Allah. Yet Allah did not ask Shaytân who was superior.

Allah Almighty wanted Shaytân to obey His command to prostrate, but, disregarding this order, Shaytân went on to make a comparison. If we look for a way to avoid the clear decrees of Allah Almighty, if we call upon the feeble resorts of our intellect to set aside these decrees and prohibitions, we will fall into the same calamity and catastrophe that Shaytân did. Those who earn money through interest (*ribâ*) saying, "I want to become rich with this and do many good things with the money" are an example of this.

As mentioned above, because Shaytân is the first example of one caught up by the *nafs*, the first to oppose Allah due to arrogance, when this is the source of action then it is attributed to Shaytân and referred to as an *Action of Shaytân*. Rûmî considers those who turn away from Allah because of their arrogance to be the subjects of Shaytân. Those who are overtaken by the sin which caused the downfall of Shaytân cannot be saved from being rejected and cursed by Allah.

Endnotes: 1) One who is submerged in Allah Almighty's *ashq* to the extent that they forget everything else



Shaytân claimed that being created from fire meant he was superior to Adam, who had been created from earth. So, he abstained from prostrating and rebelled against Allah. Yet Allah did not ask Shaytân who was superior



The Delusion of Belittling *Others*

To exchange greetings of 'salam' will restrain one from speaking against other Muslims, thinking badly of them in one's heart and the feeling of envy. It is highly likely that meeting and speaking during every encounter will ultimately allow mutual understanding and integration.

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet (upon him peace) remarked as follows: "It is enough evil for a person to look down at one's brother"¹

Without doubt, a person not seeing themselves as different and superior to other people; not seeing other people as lower than themselves and unimportant; is the starting point for the growth of human relations which are needed for existence. Islam equates human relations with 'iman' (belief), gives equal rights to those who have the same belief and proclaims the foundational principle that "the believers are brothers" (Hujurat: 10). It has enabled a complete moral and legal framework and equality among those who believe in this underlying principle and proclamation.

As evident from the narration of the hadith we are concerned with, it is the last part of the hadith which enumerates one by one the important and warm relations among those who share the same belief. Moreover, it is the part which warns the truly petty people who begrudge brotherly relations with the

Muslims and belittle them due to their belief.

Actually, for the son of man, who was molded from the clay of the earth, to see another person who is in the same situation as oneself as low and despicable is one's own pettiness and delusion. Yet this human weakness and delusion unfortunately has existed in every age and every society and relies upon different justifications. As much as it is a moral weakness, it is a social impairment which is a hindrance to the formation of a strong social structure.

Leaving the analysis of this point of the topic to experts we will address the subject from two directions:

1. Non-Muslims looking down on Muslims

2. Muslims looking down on Muslims

Disbelief's View of Belief

It is clear that that a disbeliever won't look kindly towards a Muslim (disbelief towards belief), rather he/she will look down on them as much as they are able. History is a witness to this. Our noble book, the Qur'an gives examples of this fact as an illustrative lesson and a consolation for those who believe.

With all the prophets, those who believed in them first were looked down upon by the rulers at the top level of the societies to the extent that it was revealed by this class of people that their level in society was the

reason for their disbelief. These leaders who shared the characteristics of cruelty and misguidance and who are referred to as 'mala' (leaders) in the Quran said that they could not share the same 'iman' (belief) with the believers whom they regarded as inferior and that they may be able to believe on the condition that they are driven away.

The first example is the prophet 'Nuh' and his people. When the prophet Nuh invited his people to believe in Allah and serve Him, the leaders of his people openly belittled those who believed saying "We see (in) thee nothing but a man like ourselves: nor do we see that any follow thee but the meanest among us in judgment immature: nor do we see in you (all) any merit above us: in fact we think ye are liars!" (Hud, 27). Nuh responded to this shabby belittling of theirs in a manner that would make it an example for all times.

"And O my People! who would help me against Allah if I drove them away? Will ye not then take heed? I tell you not that with me are the Treasures of Allah nor do I know what is hidden nor claim I to be an angel. Nor yet do I say of those whom your eyes do despise that Allah will not grant them (all) that is good: Allah knoweth best what is in their souls: I should, if I did, indeed be a wrongdoer." (Hud, 30-31)

With every prophet, those people from the general population who believed in them from the first moment were always belittled and looked down upon, so much so that it

The Prophet remarked in a hadith that "as long as you have not believed, you cannot enter 'jannah' (paradise). As long as you don't love one another you cannot be real believers...".





**The more we witness
all this targeting of
Muslims without making
a distinction, the more
we will appreciate what
exchanging greetings of
'salam' (peace) means
and its purpose.**

was even suggested to the prophets that these kinds of people believing in them was like a great shortcoming. However, in the end, the greatest shame and punishment was always foreordained for those without faith who considered their position and authority to be a thing of value. This is because to look down upon those who believed eventually led them to belittle the divine truths which they believed in, and thus, not attach importance to them. In such a way it became a means by which they fell into an evil delusion and they themselves invited the punishment.

To see other people as low and vile comes from imagining one is affluent and thus becoming arrogant. Was not the mistake of the eternally cursed 'Shaitan' (satan) to become arrogant and say "I am better than he: thou didst create me from fire and him from clay." (A'raf, 12) in response to Allah's command?

The ways that the disbelievers belittle the believers with all the details are laid out in the Quran. Mocking, sneering, joking, insulting with gestures and facial expressions and teasing with words, with foolishness and stupidity, with misunderstanding, with sternness, with bigotry, with ugly nicknames, with defeatism. They accused and disparaged them of abandoning the way of their forefathers, of believing in the unseen, of running behind dreams, and of such other things...

If only those who take devilish joy

from characterizing the believers in the ugliest manner were able to understand the description of the filth of their inner worlds, minds and hearts...

of course this also requires a level of discernment.

Muslims Belittling Muslims

It is possible to understand again to some extent, those outside of the ties of religion and faith belittling the believers. However, what it is truly necessary to consider is a Muslim looking down upon, belittling and abandoning another Muslim: in other words people or groups which share their same faith. The matter which has already been specified in the aforementioned hadith (prophetic narration) as "sufficient evil" is herein laid out in an emphasized form.

Every person being at ease and feeling themselves to be safe among those who have their own cultural values is quite natural. There is no doubt that "wishing for one's brother what one wishes for oneself", a notion which is tied to a Muslim's own value standards, leads to the greatest happiness among Muslims. In fact peace and happiness like this is a natural right of every Muslim. This is because at the same time, this is the standard and indication of the maturity of the Muslims' 'iman' (faith).

Indeed, the Prophet (pbuh) remarked in a hadith that "as long as you have not believed,

The advice to “spread salam among yourselves” is important and guiding as the starting point for coming together as a community of believers.



you cannot enter ‘jannah’ (paradise). As long as you don’t love one another you cannot be real believers...”. He (pbuh) showed us a very practical way, based upon ‘iman’, for an environment of love and the feeling of equality to arise among the members of a society.

“Spread ‘salam’ (the greeting of peace) among yourselves!”

We can understand the importance of this last advice better the more we sorrowfully remember and see that Muslims or Muslims groups live in the same society yet they even begrudge to greet one another with Allah’s ‘salam’ (peace).

Stated differently; the more we contemplate on everyone dispersing and leaving after the prayer like the congregations which fill the mosques as if there was a separation between those in the same lines, the more we witness the accusations directed at the Muslims due to their religious actions and live. The more we witness all this targeting of Muslims without making a distinction, the more we will appreciate what exchanging greetings of ‘salam’ (peace) means and its purpose.

The advice to “spread salam among yourselves” is important and guiding as the starting point for coming together as a community of believers: especially for the aim of a community which has not established the compulsory unity and is devoid of the sense of mutual protection. To exchange greetings

of ‘salam’ will restrain one from speaking against other Muslims, thinking badly of them in one’s heart and the feeling of envy. It is highly likely that meeting and speaking during every encounter will ultimately allow mutual understanding and integration.

The verse which describes the first experienced Muslims establishes that “Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah; and those who are with him are strong against Unbelievers (but) compassionate amongst each other.” (Fath, 29). In order to be forceful against the disbelievers, it is first necessary to be balanced and understanding inside oneself. If this balance and understanding is absent, one cannot be externally tough and formidable. Rather there does not remain anything to do other than to act in a submissive and faint-hearted manner.

While the verse which originally describes the situation of the ‘munafiq’ (hypocrites) as “Strong is their fighting (spirit) amongst themselves: thou wouldst think they were united but their hearts are divided: that is because they are a people devoid of wisdom.” (Hashr, 14) appears to describe, within the limits of the verse’s meaning, the Muslims of today, we must be compelled to research, without losing time, the causes of this situation and the remedies for its removal. We may not be able to find an opportunity like this in the future.

There cannot be any kind of reasonable and understandable reason for Muslims who have

the strongest and most natural foundation which calls for unity and solidarity not to get together even in the face of shared aggression. It must not be forgotten that whatever the reason for looking down upon and despising other Muslims and for avoiding getting together with Muslims, it leads to the distance between those in the same lines, and thus the powerlessness of Muslims, their lack of influence, state of disorder and poverty. The verse “O ye who believe! give your response to Allah and His apostle when He calleth you to that which will give you life; and know that Allah cometh in between a man and his heart and that it is He to whom Ye shall (all) be gathered.” (Anfal, 24) most likely warns against this kind of end.


Individual or party movements which are disconnected from one another will not take anyone anywhere. Even if they enable a few things for some people or institutions, they won't make Muslims win anything; sure enough they won't be the ointment to the shared pains. A little justice and vigilance of 'iman' (faith) are enough to discern this fact. With respect to that narration “It is enough evil to look down upon Muslims”, not looking down upon them will also be enough for many positive steps to be taken.

The crux and the invitation of this narration is most likely this:

It is a painful reality that despite all the opportunities in their hands the Muslim world could not save itself from being the toy of the imperialist powers only because they could not trust one another and draw near to one another in a brotherly way. Whereas Muslims ought to be committed to getting on well not only with living Muslims but also with those Muslims who have passed into the afterlife, and to benefit them as well. A verse which acquaints us with perfect believers explains the situation as follows: “And those who came after them say: “Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who came before us into the Faith and leave not in our hearts rancor (or sense of injury) against those who have believed our Lord! Thou art indeed Full of Kindness Most Merciful.” (Surah Hashr, 10).

To adopt all the pain and trials of the Muslims, to share the sadness and joy in a brotherly way, to see the warmest and sincerest concern as appropriate for them, and to never ever belittle them, is the debt of faith and responsibility of every one of us. Let us not forget that our most blessed duty is to embrace with belief and love in a brotherly way and definitely keep the rows tight, all the while repeating the prayer “leave not hatred of believers in our hearts!”.

Notes: 1. Muslim, birr 32; Abu Dawud, adab 35; Tirmidhi, birr 18; Ibn Majah, Zuhd 23; Ahmad b. Hanbal, III, 491.



For the son of man, who was molded from the clay of the earth, to see another person who is in the same situation as oneself as low and despicable is one's own pettiness and delusion.

Illnesses of the

Heart Series: Arrogance (Kibr)

The scholars are in near agreement that arrogance is considered one of the very roots of sin, for indeed the logic goes, one could not commit sin if one remembered Allah.

“And Allah doth know what ye conceal and what ye reveal. Those whom they invoke besides Allah create nothing and are themselves created. (They are things) dead lifeless: nor do they know when they will be raised up. Unbelievers are arrogant and they will be held responsible for that attitude. Your Allah is One Allah: as to those who believe not in the Hereafter their hearts refuse to know and they are arrogant. Undoubtedly Allah doth know what they conceal and what they reveal: verily He loveth not the arrogant.” (An-Nahl, 16:19-23)

As if there would ever be a warning more stern than this one, the Qur’ân repeatedly explains the signs, symptoms, results and punishments for a person who has given way to their nafs (ego) and allowed the disease of arrogance to fester in their hearts. Arrogance is tied to almost every other disease of the heart, including boastfulness, pride and envy. The scholars are in near agreement that arrogance is considered one of the very roots of sin, for indeed the logic goes, one could not commit sin if one remembered Allah. However, in arrogance one who believes they do not need Allah due to self-sufficiency or

The first class of arrogance is that of those who see themselves as Godly. This is by far the worst. It is not shirk into make someone equal to Allah but even worse; to put oneself above Allah.



that they have obtained a power exempt from Allah, such as knowledge, strength or health, have slipped into the greatest danger of being left unguided; blind and deaf. Thus the worst disease which springs from arrogance is that of heedlessness.

"Then We sent Moses and his brother Aaron with Our Signs and authority manifest To Pharaoh and his Chiefs: but these behaved insolently: they were arrogant people." (Baraqa, 2:45-46)

The understanding of this matter is so necessary that the Qur'an mentions "kibr" in its many forms over 160 times. By definition kibr (arrogance) shares the same root with kibar, to grow older, and kabara, to grow up. It also shares a root with the words that mean to be great, to magnify, to make grand, and to enhance. All of these can be applied as shades of the meaning when in regard to one's ego, and certainly one's ego can make one feel as if they possess all of these traits. An old adage about one acting great than one's age suggests that they are "too big for their breeches (britches)". Often a person of arrogance is said to "have a swelled head" or a "stuffed shirt". Actually, there are most likely as many ways to refer to arrogance in English as there are in Arabic. However, in all of these cases, Allah warns, the only thing great about these people is the amount of trouble they are facing.

"Such as fear not the meeting with Us (for Judgment) say: 'Why are not the angels sent down

to us or (why) do we not see our Lord?' Indeed they have an arrogant conceit of themselves and mighty is the insolence of their impiety!" (Furqan, 25:21)

The ultimate problem with arrogance is that one become inclined to think too much of, and about, themselves and they start to show too little consideration for others. They behave proudly and superior. They lose the virtues of patience, gratitude, and humility. Since Allah closes the spiritual doors of guidance to such people these people turn to their own minds for guidance, thus falling ever deeper into the heedlessness and arrogance and their belief of self-sufficiency. They know in their hearts that they are far from Allah, and since they are still able to take a breath they feel as if this breath is from their own being and is taken by their own power. Allah Himself declares this truth and warns against this lie:

"But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient, And gives the lie to the Best, We will indeed make smooth for him the Path to Misery; Nor will his wealth profit him when he falls headlong (into the Pit)." (Layl, 92:8-11)

Imam Ghazali wrote extensively on the causes, harms and results of arrogance according to the Qur'an and the hadiths. He categorized arrogance into classes and causes which will here in be discussed as they appear in the Qur'an.

1. The first class of arrogance is that of those who see themselves as Godly. This is



It is necessary to think much about one's own intentions, one's own actions, one's own words and quickly squash any feeling which makes the ego grow.

by far the worst. It is not shirk into make someone equal to Allah but even worse; to put oneself above Allah. Pharoah and Nimrud had elements of this class of arrogance. They believed themselves to be self-sufficient from Allah to such an extent that they themselves could question, argue, or dispute with God. Even worse, they believed themselves to have the attributes of God.

Then after them sent We Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our Signs. But they were arrogant: they were a people in sin. (Yunus, 10:75)

"So We sent (plagues) on them wholesale; death, Locusts, Lice, Frogs and Blood: signs openly Self-explained; but they were steeped in arrogance a people given to sin." (Araf, 7:133)

Hast thou not turned thy vision to one who disputed with Abraham about his Lord because Allah had granted him power? Abraham said: "My Lord is He Who Gives life and death." He said: "I give life and death." Said Abraham: "but it is Allah that causes the sun to rise from the East do thou then cause him to rise from the West." Thus was he confounded who (in arrogance) rejected faith. Nor doth Allah give guidance to a people unjust. (Baqarah, 2:258)

"So We exacted retribution from them: We drowned them in the sea because they rejected Our signs and failed to take warning from them." (Araf, 7:136)

2. The second class of arrogance belongs to those who deny, and indeed, act against the

Prophets. These are those who believe they are over the prophets due to wealth, lineage or education: all of which are among the subjects of pride. They refuse to follow the prophets because they, in their having been left by Allah to their own devices and logic, have come to the conclusion that the prophet, or even prophethood in general, is a lowly position in the world.

For they when they were told that there is no god except Allah would puff themselves up with Pride. And say: "What! shall we give up our gods for the sake of a Poet possessed?" (Saffat, 37:35-36)

They swore their strongest oaths by Allah that if a warner came to them they would follow his guidance better than any (other) of the Peoples: but when a warner came to them it has only increased their flight (from righteousness) On account of their arrogance in the land and their plotting of Evil. But the plotting of Evil will hem in only the authors thereof. Now are they but looking for the way the ancients were dealt with? But no change wilt thou find in Allah's way (of dealing): no turning off wilt thou find in Allah's way (of dealing). (Fatir, 35:42-43)

"And when it is said to them "Come the Apostle of Allah will pray for your forgiveness" they turn aside their heads and thou wouldst see them turning away their faces in arrogance. It is equal to them whether thou pray for their forgiveness or not. Allah will not forgive them. Truly Allah guides not rebellious transgressors." (Munafiqun, 63:5-6)

"And every time I have called to them that you



Think of those in our modern times whose names still make the world shutter. They thought themselves great, and were brought down to the lowest of creatures even before they could die.

might forgive them they have (only) thrust their fingers into their ears covered themselves up with their garments grown obstinate and given themselves up to arrogance.” (Nuh, 71:7)

O ye children of Adam! whenever there come to you apostles from amongst you rehearsing my signs unto you those who are righteous and mend (their lives) on them shall be no fear nor shall they grieve. But those who reject our signs and treat them with arrogance they are companions of the fire to dwell therein (for ever). (Al-Araf, 7:35-36)

3. The third class is the arrogance among the general people. These are those who look down on others with contempt; to think oneself great in comparison than those around them. Iblis has long been held as the example of, and indeed the first to commit, this class of arrogance. It is for this reason he takes a share of arrogance from every person after him.

“So the angels prostrated themselves all of them together; Not so Iblis: he was haughty and became one of those who reject Faith.” (Sad, 38:73-74)

“(Allah) said: ‘Get thee down from this: it is not for thee to be arrogant here: get out for thou art of the meanest (of creatures).’” (Araf, 7:13)

There is the type of man whose speech about this world’s life may dazzle thee and he calls Allah to witness about what is in his heart; yet is he the most contentious of enemies. When he turns his back his aim everywhere is to spread mischief through the earth and destroy crops and cattle. But Allah loves not mischief. When it is

said to him “Fear Allah” he is led by arrogance to (more) crime. Enough for him is Hell; an evil bed indeed (to lie on)! (Baqarah, 2:204-206)

But there are among men those who purchase idle tales without knowledge (or meaning) to mislead (men) from the Path of Allah and throw ridicule (on the Path): for such there will be a humiliating Penalty. When Our Signs are rehearsed to such a one he turns away in arrogance as if he heard them not as if there were deafness in both his ears: announce to him a grievous Penalty. (Luqman, 31:6-7)

Those who behave arrogantly on the earth in defiance of right them will I turn away from My signs they will not believe in them; and if they see the way of right conduct they will not adopt it as the way; but if they see the way of error that is the way they will adopt; for they rejected Our signs and failed to take warning from them. (Araf, 7: 146)

Among the third class, those of the general population, there are seven causes of arrogance; seven things which allow the arrogance in the heart to grow. These seven things are: 1. Education; 2. Religion; 3. Pedigree or Ancestry; 4. Beauty; 5. Wealth and Riches; 6. Strength and Vitality; 7. Power and the numbers under ones control. These seven things are indeed dangerous to mankind, and one only needs to look around to find all of these types of arrogance. Any one piece of all of these classes of arrogance is sufficient to end one up with an eternal punishment as promised by Allah.

Man must continually focus on his origins and his ultimate demise in order to remind himself of his lowly position in the world.



It will be said: "Groan not in supplication this day; for ye shall certainly not be helped by Us. My Signs used to be rehearsed to you but ye used to turn back on your heels In arrogance: talking nonsense about the (Qur'an) like one telling fables by night." (Mu'minun, 23:65-67)

(To them) will be said: "Enter ye the gates of Hell to dwell therein: and evil is (this) abode of the arrogant!" (Zumar, 39:72)

To those who reject Our signs and treat them with arrogance no opening will there be of the gates of heaven nor will they enter the garden until the camel can pass through the eye of the needle: such is Our reward for those in sin. (Araf, 7:40)

The men on the heights will call to certain men whom they will know from their marks saying: "Of what profit to you were you hoards and your arrogant ways?" (Araf, 7:48)

Arrogance is a disease of the heart which must be sought out and actively treated every single day, indeed every minute of every day, so that it can be cured. It is necessary to think much about one's own intentions, one's own actions, one's own words and quickly squash any feeling which makes the ego grow. Man must continually focus on his origins and his ultimate demise in order to remind himself of his lowly position in the world.

Cursed be man! how ungrateful is he! Of what thing did He create him? Of a small seed; He created him, then He made him according to a measure, then (as for) the way-- He has

made it easy (for him). Then He causes him to die, then assigns to him a grave. Woe to man! What has made him reject Allah. (Abasa, 80:17-21)

When a person takes into account the causes of arrogance, one should see that each one of them is not from him or herself, rather it is all from Allah. One must properly medicate, inoculate, themselves from the disease of arrogance to avoid certain death on the Last Day. They must be on guard to catch the first germs of arrogance in order to keep it from growing into a cancer in their heart. They should watch for and medicate arrogance at its seven points of entry:

- If one is arrogant about their education they should remember that Allah is knowledge and provides it to whom he so chooses. They should also remind themselves often that the judgment of Allah, on the Last Day, will be most strict.

- If one is arrogant in religion, remember it is Allah that called –and continues to call– him or her to the right path. If Allah turns his back on that arrogant person he or she will be lost to such a degree that *"if they see the way of right conduct they will not adopt it"*. One should adopt the practice of humility in every way that was the modesty of the Prophet (peace upon him).

- If one finds arrogance in their heart due to their pedigree, they must remember that one's pedigree comes not from themselves, thus the respect they receive is

not for his or her own quality as a human, but is that of those who came before him.

- If one finds in his/her heart arrogance based on their beauty, then they must know that external beauty may only be a mask for internal filth. The external beauty is fleeting while the internal filth may be eternal.

- If one is arrogant about their wealth they should remember that what they have will become fodder for arguments when they leave this earth. That arrogant person with regard to wealth should call themselves to account every minute in this life, since for sure they will account in the next. They should avoid the trappings of wealth and disperse of it to the needy so as to remind themselves that had Allah so chosen, they would be the needy and others would have received their provision.

- If one finds in their heart arrogance based on their strength, one should remind themselves that Nimrod was destroyed by a gnat. A fever from a microbe can rob them of their strength for days. They must think that their strength is nothing compared to

the lowly elephant, tiger, or camel; Allah gave animals more than them. They are on the face of the earth weak.

- If one find in their heart arrogance even the weight of mustard seed with regard to their power or position, they must remember the outcomes of those rulers who deems themselves great in the history of man. They should see how their names are still mentioned in infamy and hatred: Nimrod and Pharaoh were already mentioned. Think of those in our modern times whose names still make the world shutter. They thought themselves great, and were brought down to the lowest of creatures even before they could die.

And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge; for every act of hearing or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning). Nor walk on the earth with insolence: for thou canst not rend the earth asunder nor reach the mountains in height. (Israa, 17:36-37)

May Allah protect us from the disease of arrogance by taking to heart the Qur'ân and the example of the Beloved of Allah.



Zayd Bin Thabit

Zayd bin Thabit was among the most distinguished of the companions in the knowledge of recitation. Among the Islamic sciences, the highest was the science of 'Qiraat'. Thanks to this science, the Qur'ân was protected from being corrupted and changed.

Zayd bin Thabit was born in Madinah in the year 612 H.. Our Prophet (upon him peace) had sent the companion Mus'ab bin Umayr, to Madinah to spread Islam. Zayd bin Thabit, who was still 11-years-old at this time also became Muslim through Mus'ab bin Umayr. Once he became a Muslim, he immediately began to memorize the revealed verses. On the one hand he would memorize, on the other he would also teach the children of the Bani Najjar tribe. He had such fondness and love for the Qur'ân that before our prophet (pbuh) had made the 'hijrah' from Makkah to Madinah, he had memorized 17 chapters. After the hijrah, our Prophet (upon him peace) received this news about him with great contentment.

During the battle of Badr, Zayd bin Thabit was 13-years-old. When the Muslim army was about to depart he also wanted to join them. However, the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) did not give him permission because of his young age. Following the order,

he remained in Madinah. It is narrated that it is also for this reason that he could not participate in the battle of Uhud. However, he did participate in the battle of Khandaq. In order to prepare for the battle, he worked at the task of digging the trench and then later participated in the battle and displayed great selflessness. Our Prophet (upon him peace) rewarded him saying "What a great youth this is". Ultimately this battle was a defence of the Muslims. In the battle of Tabuk, when Umarah bin Hazm was carrying Malik bin Najjar's flag, the Messenger (upon him peace) took the flag and gave it to Zayd bin Thabit. Umarah said "Oh Messenger of Allah! Is it that you have heard something against me" to which the Prophet remarked "No! The Qur'an is first. Zayd knows more of the Qur'an than you". Further, he [Zayd] was present during the treaty of Hudaibiyah, the capture of Makkah, the battle of Hunayn and the siege of Taif.

Throughout the life of the Prophet (upon him peace) Zayd bin Thabit also wrote all the correspondences other than the scribing of the revelation. In order for the letters sent from certain rulers to be translated without error, the Prophet (upon him peace) commanded Zayd to learn the Syriac and Hebrew languages. This individual, who was very intelligent was successful in learning both languages in a short amount of time: around 10 days. After this, he would translate the letters from the many leaders sent to Madinah which were written in these languages. Even

in the period of the companions he was the head judge of Madinah. He was also the head imam in the sciences of 'faraiz' (inheritance), 'Qiraat' (recitation) and 'tafsir' (Qur'anic exegesis).

Zayd was among the most distinguished of the companions in the knowledge of recitation. Among the Islamic sciences, the highest was the science of 'Qiraat' (recitation). Thanks to this science, the Qur'an was protected from being corrupted and changed. The specialist scholars of this science recorded the forms of recitation and the differences regarding its status as 'tawatur' (widely reported). In such a way, the uncertainties about the matter of the recitation of the Qur'an were put aside. Zayd bin Thabit's superiority in this science is affirmed by the acknowledgement and admiration of the leading companions and followers. Those ascending to the level of imam among the companions in the science of 'Qiraat' were Sayyidina Abu Bakr, Umar bin al-Khattab, Osman bin Affan, Ali bin Abi Talib, Ubayy bin Ka'b, Zayd bin Thabit, Abdullah bin Masud, Abu Darda and Abu Musa al-Ashari. It was due to these characteristics of his that Abu Bakr gave the task of collecting the Qur'an to Zayd. Sayyidina Umar compared the 'Qiraat' of Zayd with that of Ubayy bin Ka'b and preferred Zayd's recitation since it completely conformed to the recitation of Quraysh. For this reason, it was compulsory to prefer his recitation to other ones. Even though Ubayy bin Ka'b was the authority consulted for recitation

During the plague of Amwas, Abdullah bin Abbas asked Zayd about the measures which could be taken against the plague and the answer he received pleased him.



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by the people while he was alive, after his death all the Muslims gathered around Zayd in 'Madinah Munawwarah' (the enlightened city) and he became the one to turn to for all the people of knowledge. From his time until this time, after 14 centuries the Qur'ân is still recited in the manner narrated by him.

Zayd bin Thabit was also very advanced in the science of 'Tafsir' (Qur'ânic Exegesis). Having the honour of being the scribe of revelation and being exceptionally intelligent, he also knew the reason for the revelation of many verses due to his closeness to the rightly-guided caliphs; he was endowed with their truths and wisdoms. Some knowledge of 'tafsir' has been narrated from him. An example of this is the following: Surah Nisa 88: *"Why should you be divided into two parties about the Hypocrites? Allah has made them return (to unbelief) or what they have earned. Would ye guide those whom Allah hath thrown out of the Way? For those whom Allah has thrown out of the Way, never shall you find the Way."* He explained the reason for the revelation of this verse as follows: "When going to the battle of Uhud, some individuals among the companions turned back. These were 300 'munafiq' (hypocrites) under the influence of Abdullah bin Ubay bin Salul. People divided into two groups regarding them. Some wanted from the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) that they be killed and some wanted that they be spared. Thus, the verse was revealed.

Zayd bin Thabit had vast knowledge in the science of 'Fiqh' (Islamic Jurisprudence) and the law of 'inheritance'. He was authorized to give 'fatwas' (religious rulings) in Madina. Imam Malik recognized Zayd bin Thabit as the imam after Umar. For all the legal problems concerning the law of 'inheritance', Imam Shafii relied upon Zayd bin Thabit.

For many inheritance legal cases, Umar consulted Zayd bin Thabit. Sayyidina Abu Bakr relied upon the religious ruling of Zayd for his opinion to kill of the apostates of Yamamah. During the plague of Amwas, Abdullah bin Abbas asked Zayd about the measures which could be taken against the plague and the answer he received pleased him.

He was among the highest 'mujtahids' (authorities in Islamic law) from the companions for every legal matter in the science of 'fiqh'. In addition, he had received the honour of giving a 'fatwa' (religious ruling) during the time of the Prophet (upon him peace). Later, during the reign of Sayyidina Abu Bakr, Umar, Osman, Ali and Muawiyah he was Madinah's greatest 'mufti' (legal scholar). He was from the top class of the companion 'fakihs' (experts in Islamic Jurisprudence). When his religious rulings were collected, huge volumes emerged. His opinions and sayings concerning Islamic Jurisprudence were distributed to all the Muslims of the east and the west by means of Sa'id bin Musayyab and everyone acted

Among the companions, four of them are reputed in the science of fiqh. These are Zayd bin Thabit, Abdullah bin Masud, Abdullah bin Umar, and Abdullah bin Abbas. The source of the science of fiqh which has spread to the whole world are these four companions.



[in accordance] with these. His religious rulings pertaining to matters of prayer, animal sacrifice, game, hunting animals and agricultural partnerships are included in his 'fiqh' books.

When our Prophet (upon him peace) passed away, there were lots of 'huffaz' (people who had completely memorized the Qur'ân). However during the reign of Sayyidina Abu Bakr, the majority of them became martyrs in the wars which broke out due to the incidents of apostasy. (In the battle of Yamamah, 70 huffaz were martyred.) In such a way the number of 'huffaz' had begun to decrease considerably. As a response to this situation, Umar consulted Abu Bakr and requested that the verses of the Qur'ân written on scattered papers in that time be collected in the form of a book. For this task, Abu Bakr summoned Zayd bin Thabit remarking: 'Oh Zayd, you are a young and intelligent individual. There is nothing about you which will condemn you or leave you in a state of guilt. You were the Prophet's (upon him peace) scribe of revelation during his life. Collect the verses of the Qur'ân together'. Upon this, Zayd bin Thabit founded a committee and with great meticulousness and effort, collected the verses of the Qur'ân together and made them into the form of a 'mushaf' (volume containing the Qur'ân). He presented this 'mushaf' to Abu Bakr.

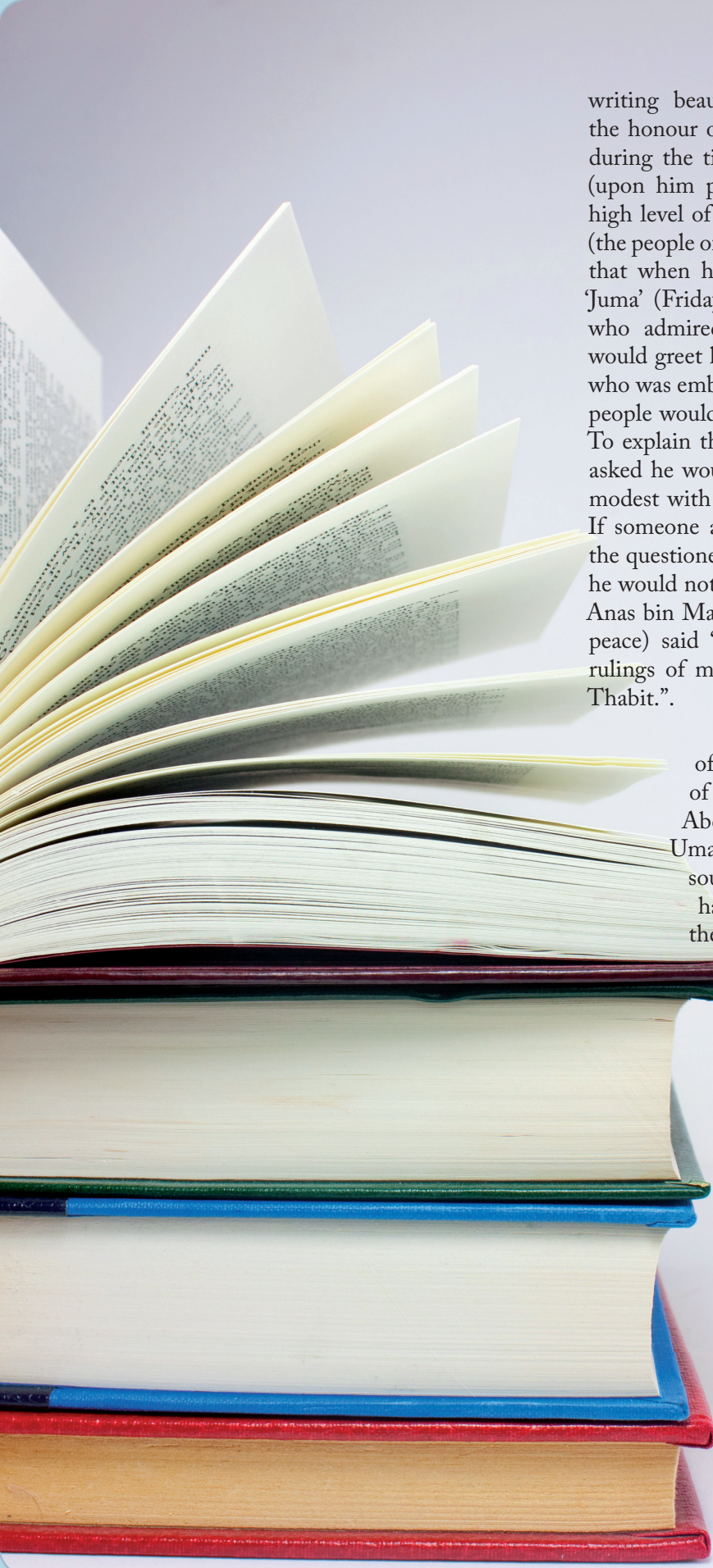
Even during the caliphate of Sayyidina Osman, Zayd bin Thabit became one of his

leading aids. By the command of Osman, the single copy of the Qur'ân which was brought together into the form of a book during the reign of Sayyidina Abu Bakr was reproduced by a committee again under the leadership of Zayd bin Thabit and six more copies of the sacred book were written and sent to prominent centers. Thus he was also privileged with carrying out this honorable role.

Zayd passed away in the year 665 in Madinah during the caliphate of Muawiyah. At this point his age was above 50. Abdullah ibn Abbas, Said bin Musayyab and Abu Hurairah were present at his funeral. Marwan bin Hakim led the prayer.

According to what is narrated in Imam Bukhari's 'Tarikh' (history), Abdullah ibn Abbas expressed his grief saying "Today a treasure of knowledge has been buried" and the famous poet Hassan bin Thabit sorrowfully read an eulogy. Everyone displayed their sadness.

Zayd bin Thabit is a companion who accomplished great tasks and left great services. He performed many services through his efforts for the 'ummah's' (community's) betterment, his endeavours through interventions in his time to sort out its affairs and his struggles to spread knowledge. His services are so many and so great that they cannot be recounted. He possessed many virtues such as his memorizing of the whole Qur'ân, being a trustworthy person and

A stack of several books with different colored spines (red, blue, green, yellow) is shown. The top book is open, and its pages are fanned out, revealing text. The background is a light blue gradient.

writing beautifully. Moreover, he attained the honour of being the scribe of revelation during the time of the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace). He had reached such a high level of regard among all the 'ahle bayt' (the people of the house) and the companions that when he went outside on the days of 'Juma' (Friday), the inhabitants of Madina who admired his knowledge and wisdom would greet him with absolute fervour. Zayd, who was embarrassed by this attention of the people would immediately go into his house. To explain this state of affairs to those who asked he would remark "Those who are not modest with people are not shy with Allah". If someone asked about a legal matter and the questioner did not possess good manners he would not give a reply. It is narrated from Anas bin Malik that the Prophet (upon him peace) said "the one who knows the legal rulings of my community best is Zayd ibn Thabit."

Among the companions, four of them are reputed in the science of fiqh. These are Zayd bin Thabit, Abdullah bin Masud, Abdullah bin Umar, and Abdullah bin Abbas. The source of the science of fiqh which has spread to the whole world are these four companions. May Allah have mercy on all of them.

It is narrated from Anas bin Malik that the Prophet (upon him peace) said "the one who knows the legal rulings of my community best is Zayd ibn Thabit."

Pearls Of Wisdom

We were the most humiliated people on earth and God gave us honour through Islam. If we ever seek honour through anything else, God will humiliate us again

Umar ibn Al-Khattab

Three things cannot be retrieved: The arrow once sped from the bow, the word spoken in haste, the missed opportunity

Sayyidina Ali

Knowledge exists potentially in the human soul like the seed in the soil; by learning the potential becomes actual


Abu Hamid al-Ghazali

The world is 3 days: As for yesterday, it has vanished along with all that was in it. As for tomorrow, you may never see it. As for today, it is yours, so work on it

Hasan Al-Basri

Become a scholar if you are able. If you are not able, then be a student. If you can not, then show love for them. If you are unable to do that, then (at least) do not hate them.

Umar ibn Abdil-'Aziz



If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astonishing results are the three criteria of a human genius, who could dare compare any great man in history with Muhammad?

Alphonse de Lamartine

Verity, knowledge is a lock and its key is the question.

Imam Ja'far Sadiq

The Prophet's character was termed tremendous because his concern was for Allah alone


Imam Junayd al-Baghdadi

Islam teaches that God has given man the faculty of reason and therefore expects man to reason things out objectively and systematically for himself. To reflect and to question and to reflect

Maurice Bucaille

Repentance and yearning, and yearning and repentance: this is the total harvest of life

Khurram Murad



The Balance of ARROGANCE and HONOUR

Islam is a measured and balanced religion. To walk on the middle line away from excess and deficiency assures happiness in this world and the Hereafter.

‘Kibir (Arrogance/pride) means to deem it proper for one to be at the top of a place, to think one has virtues that one does not, to see other people as low and to unjustly give oneself prominence in everything. It can also be described briefly as not knowing the limit. ‘Tawadhu’ (modesty) is humility, knowing the limit, not to give prominence to one’s virtues, to be easily accessible and to surrender to what is right and true. Arrogance and modesty are complete opposites. The modest person is called ‘mutawadhi’ and the arrogant one ‘mutakabbir’. To have ‘Izzet’ (dignity) means to be strong, dignified and honorable. It is from the characteristics of Allah (swa). This characteristic is repeated in the Quran 92 times. In its real meaning ‘Izzet’ is reserved for Allah (swa), the prophet (pbuh) and the believers (Munafiqun, 8).

To have ‘Zillet’ (baseness) means to be undignified, dishonourable, to be in a low place and not to be valued. Izzet (dignity) and zillet (baseness) are also complete opposites of one another. The most important characteristic of a perfect person is ‘izzet’ (dignity) which

does not turn into ‘kibir’ (arrogance) and ‘tawadhu’ (modesty) which does not turn into ‘zillet’ (baseness). The believer is not arrogant but ‘aziz’ (respected). Not base but modest. It is not easy to guard the fine line between these characteristics. The person who guarded the fine line between arrogance, dignity, baseness and modesty in the most careful manner, and who is the best example in this matter just as in every matter, is the Prophet (upon him peace). Even in moments when he was the weakest and alone he did not show any infirmity in continuing his call and did not fall into a low, vile state. Even in his strongest moments, he did not use his strength for injustice, revenge and violence.

Islam is a measured and balanced religion. To walk on the middle line away from excess and deficiency assures happiness in this world and the Hereafter. Iblis (satan) was cursed due to arrogance. Those like ‘Fir’aun’ (pharaoh), Nimrod, Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab were degraded by their intoxication with authority, riches and fame. Man should always be humble like the earth, thinking that he was originally earth. Allah the Master exalts those who are humble. He lowers those who are arrogant. In its absolute sense ‘greatness’ is reserved for Allah. The voice resonating “Allahu Akbar” from the minarets five times a day is the announcement of this truth in the most vibrant manner. To prostrate oneself in the presence of Allah the Master, is the peak of modesty. To bow in front of someone other than Allah however is degradation. How beautifully Iqbal said:

“the real prostration is the one that prevents one from prostrating in front of someone other than Allah”. The Prophet (upon him peace) is great because he was not arrogant. He did not come to be an idol but to demolish idols. The Prophet (upon him peace) became noble since he had the most noble ‘akhlaq’ (morals). Those who feigned supremacy like ‘Fir’aun’ (pharaoh) were reduced forever. How many kings were forgotten and left. However, the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) who preferred to be a servant prophet forever lives in the most vibrant form in hearts, memories and upon tongues; he continues to be a source of mercy.

Let’s narrate some statements and descriptions about the simple and humble life of the Prophet as a lesson and ‘ibret’ (illustrative example) for everyone and especially for leaders: According to a narration from Sayyidina Omar the Prophet (upon him peace) said: ‘Do not go too far in praising me like the Christians praised Jesus the son of Mary excessively. Call me Allah’s servant and Messenger. It is enough.’ According to Anas someone came to the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) and said: ‘Oh the best of us! The son of the best of us! Oh our master. Oh the son of our master!’ Upon this the Messenger of Allah remarked: ‘Oh people! Speak appropriately. Do not let ‘shaitan’ (Satan) confuse you. Consider me upon the ‘maqam’ (rank/station) that Allah considers me upon. I am only Allah’s servant and Messenger.’ Our mother Sayyidah Ayesha narrates that, ‘one day food was brought for the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace). I

The more people become acquainted with their beautiful examples and follow their paths, the happier and more fortunate they become. Because their path is the straight path which takes one to ‘jannah’ (paradise). It is the path of Allah.





When the Prophet (upon him peace) entered Makkah as a conqueror, he bowed from humility so that his head would touch his mount, hoping that people would not exalt him. He did not enter in the manner of a 'muzaffar' (triumphant) commander.

said 'Eat while reclining! Because to eat while reclining is more comfortable.' I saw that the Messenger of Allah bowed his head towards his place, he almost wiped his forehead. Later he remarked: 'However a slave eats, I also eat like that, sitting down not leaning.' Sayyidah Ayesha said that until the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) passed away, she did not see him leaning when eating food. According to Anas b. Malik the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) wore clothes of coarse wool, would ride a donkey, lay his clothes on the floor then sit, accept the invitations of the elderly, take the goat between his knees and milk it and accept the invitation even if he was only invited for trotter soup. When it was said to the Prophet, 'what if we make you a high place so that you can address people from there' he remarked: 'In order that Allah may honour me (or until He brings me to his own presence and takes my life), I will continue to be among you in a humble manner and he added this: 'Do not exalt me too much. Before making me a prophet, Allah made me a slave.'

The Prophet (upon him peace) visited the sick, participated in funerals and accepted everyone's invitations, whether big or small, rich or poor. In the battle of Khaybar he was on a donkey bridled with a rope made of fibre. Underneath was a cloth also made of fibre. The Prophet (upon him peace) said the following: 'Whoever wears woollen clothing, puts slippers on their feet, rides a donkey, milks a sheep, and sits on the dinner table with their family

members, Allah removes arrogance from them. I am slave, the son of a slave. I sit like a slave. I eat like a slave. I was ordered for us to be humble. No-one has superiority over anyone else. Allah's hand of mercy is open for all of His creatures. Whoever sees himself as superior, Allah lowers them. Whoever is humble, Allah raises them. If someone walks a handspan while aspiring to Allah's dominion, He definitely places them on a low place.

When the Prophet (upon him peace) entered Makkah as a conqueror, he bowed from humility so that his head would touch his mount, hoping that people would not exalt him. He did not enter in the manner of a 'muzaffar' (triumphant) commander. Even a black slave would come to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), hold his hand and take him to the place he wanted and explain his need. He did not want there to be a crowd next to him when he walked. He never acquired a doorman and never closed his door to anyone. Anyone who wanted to could meet with him. When that person left he would have another person. When eating, he would lick his fingers. He said the following to someone who was shivering next to him 'Be calm, I am not a king. I am only the son of a Qurayshi woman who ate meat dried in the sun. The Prophet also said the following: 'Allah made every prophet a shepherd. Upon their saying 'you as well oh Allah's Messenger?' he answered 'Yes, I also herded the sheep of Makkah in exchange for a simple wage. The Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) would

supplicate in the following manner: “Oh Lord! I have made a promise to you, do not turn me from my promise. I am only a human. If I have oppressed, reprimanded, punished or cursed any believer turn these into ‘salah ‘ (prayer), ‘Zakah’ (almsgiving), (and the like) for them which will draw them closer to You on the day of reckoning”. Fazl ibni Abbas explained that ‘I arrived next to the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) when he became ill and there was a red or yellow turban on my head. He said to me, ‘Oh son of my uncle! Take this turban and tie it tightly to my head. I tied it and later, leaning upon me he entered the Mosque. He called out the following: ‘Oh people! I am also a human like yourselves. I believe the time has approached [for me] to part from your presence. If I have hurt someone, if I have offended someone, if I have touched someone’s property, here is Muhammad, here is his hair, here is his body. Stand and take retribution. No-one should say that they fear from the hostility or animosity of Muhammad. Because hostility and animosity are not of my nature.” *(For more in depth knowledge about the humility of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) see Ibn Asakir, Mukhtasaru Tarikh Dimashq. 2.240-245, Beirut, 1984)*

It is not easy to be a model person in every matter. All the prophets and especially the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) were exemplary people who were especially prepared and chosen by Allah. Their modelling is not the role modelling presented on the stage, the empty modelling. The people who will be imitated, who will be taken as examples are the prophets and those who follow their tracks. “Ye have indeed in the Apostle of Allah a beautiful pattern of (conduct) for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day and who engages much in the praise of Allah.” (Ahzab, 21). The more people become acquainted with their beautiful examples and follow their paths, the happier and more fortunate they become. Because their path is the straight path which takes one to ‘jannah’ (paradise). It is the path of Allah. “Verily this is My Way leading straight: follow it: follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from His (great) path: thus doth He command you that ye may be righteous.” (An’am, 153). May Allah make us live a life of humility and honour and not of abasement and may we attain His pleasure. Ameen.



SHAUNA CULLEN:

“I have joined the largest family of over 1.5 billion people from all around the world.”

The Prophet was a man greatly respected and admired in his society, particularly for his honesty. It would not make sense for him to falsify the Word of Allah or mislead people with his claims as this would be completely out of his character.

Wisdom: Can you please tell us about yourself?

Shauna Cullen: I was born and brought up in Limerick, Ireland. My parents were Christian. I have lived much of my life as a person without faith, following worldly pursuits, but at the age of 46, Allah opened my heart to Islam.

I converted to Islam in January 2008, in Turkey, where I currently work as an English teacher. Before I moved to Turkey, I saw Islam as a very strict religion, which I felt was at odds with some of my personal values. I thought that Muslim women's place is in the home and they are not allowed outside or without the permission of their husbands.

Wisdom: What made you change your view about Muslims?

Shauna Cullen: Living around Muslims in Turkey, in a Muslim society completely changed my view. They were happy and content people living 'normal' lives and not the repressed, miserable souls as the Western media imposes on us. Not only this, there was something different about them. They

had such a great sense of peace and even confidence about their lives. It struck me that their faith in Allah gave them this sense of peace in their lives, something that we find very rare in our society in the West. Then I started searching about Islam. I was doing my best to learn Islam but at the same time I was hoping a miracle or something amazing to make me decide to convert to Islam.

Wisdom: What amazed you that you decided to convert to Islam?

Shauna Cullen: Two things amazed me in Islam. First is the Qur'ân and the second is the life of the Prophet Muhammad (upon him peace).

When I first read the Qur'ân I expected to find some stories about the life of Prophet Muhammad (upon him peace). However, I did not find anything like that. And what made me even more confused is that I found a chapter in the Qur'ân named "Mary" that contains a lot of respect to Mary (peace be upon her) which is not the case even in the books written by Christians nor in their Bibles so I became more confused. I continued reading the Qur'ân more thoroughly hoping to find a mistake but I was shocked when I read these 2 great verses:

"This is the Scripture whereof there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off (evil)." (Baqarah, 2-2)

"Do they not consider the Qur'ân (with care)? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much

discrepancy". (Nisa,4-82)

No writer in the world has the courage to write a book and say that it has no mistakes, but the Qur'ân, on the contrary, tells you that it has no mistakes and asks you to try to find one and you can not find any.

When I read about the life of the Prophet Muhammad (upon him peace), I read about his kindness, his fairness and his honesty. He was known for his good manners when dealing with Muslims and non-muslims. He was a man greatly respected and admired in his society, particularly for his honesty. With this in mind, it would not make sense for him to falsify the Word of Allah or mislead people with his claims as this would be completely out of his character.

Wisdom: What can you advise for our readers and seekers of the Truth?

Shauna Cullen: In the end of his farewell sermon, the Prophet (upon him peace) stated that he left behind two things, the Qur'ân and the Sunnah, and that if the people followed them, they would never go astray.

We should always remember that the importance of prayer is demonstrated in the many of the Prophet's statement. For example, the Prophet (upon him peace) said, "The first matter that the slave will be brought to account for on the Day of Judgment is the prayer. If it is sound, then the rest of his deeds will be sound. And if it is bad, then the rest of his deeds will be bad."



Living around Muslims in Turkey, in a Muslim society completely changed my view. They were happy and content people living 'normal' lives and not the repressed, miserable souls as the Western media imposes on us

THE ORATOR OF QURAYSH and a *Historical Figure at Hudaybiyyah*

Suhayl ibn Amr was a ‘sahaba’ (companion) who exchanged for the mercy, kindness, tolerance and forgiveness of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) on the day that Makkah was conquered and for this exchange was honoured with Islam and later reached its pinnacle in faith.

He is a historical figure who was from among the great orators of Quraysh, who signed the treaty of Hudaybiyyah as a representative of Quraysh and made speeches against the messenger (pbuh), however at the same time he was a repentant believer who would come to say “the more I remember what I said, the more ashamed I am”.

He became a prisoner in the battle of Badr. Omar wanted to make use of this opportunity and punish Suhail. Approaching the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) he said: “Oh Messenger of Allah! With your permission let me pull out Suhail’s front two teeth as a punishment for the words he has spoken against you, so he may not be able to make speeches against you again”. The Prophet of mercy (pbuh), our beloved master calmed this

firmness of Omar with the following words:

“Oh Omar! Leave Suhail. Maybe he will come one day and give a speech to win your admiration and gratitude”

He found Islam in the following way:

Makkah had been conquered; the polytheists had sought refuge at the Ka’bah. The Honorable Prophet had returned as conqueror to that noble city where he was born and grew up. The polytheists were bewildered, wondering what would happen that day. How would Muhammad (pbuh) behave towards them? What were they going to get in exchange for the persecution and torture they had inflicted upon the Muslims? They were waiting for the outcome overwhelmed by these feelings.

The mercy of the worlds, our Master (pbuh), directed a question to all the people of Quraysh saying “Oh community of Quraysh! What do you anticipate from me? How do you expect me to deal with you?” Allowing them to address him directly provided comfort for them. Suhail ibn Amr came forward and

replied saying: "We wish for good from you, Oh Brother of the kind and the son of the Brother of the kind!" Our Master (pbuh), the pinnacle of mercy, remarked with a smile on his face, "Go...you are free".

These words, which take the life from those whose feelings are alive, which receive the neck that is bent through one's own desire, were the best outcome of that immense forgiveness and tolerance. It was not possible not to melt in the face of this mercy. As if melting the feelings of stubbornness and denial of many polytheists such as Suhail ibn Amr, this attitude full of justice and nobility became a means by which they were honoured with Islam.

With the love of coming across a new world full of peace, Suhail Ibn Amr continuously read the Qur'ân. He would cry continuously from fear of Allah. On the days when he would pass in front of the idols, he would persistently seek forgiveness; he would perform salah (prayer) upon salah and keep fasts upon fasts. Islam had renewed him with his generosity, prayer, fasting and charity. It was as if it had brought new life to his soul.

Suhail, who had embraced Islam earnestly and with sincerity, would say "I still regret my stubbornness against the truth at Badr, Uhud and Khandaq. The more I remember what I said against the Messenger of Allah at the treaty of Hudaibiyah the more I am ashamed".

Iman (faith) had become steadfast in his heart. When the news of our Prophet's (pbuh) passing to the hereafter came to Makkah, what our Master (pbuh) had said to Umar about Suhail came to full light.

As a reflection of the firmness of Islam and the steadfastness of iman at a time when hopes were shattered and enveloped by chaos, Suhail came out in front of the Muslims of Makkah and invited them to calmness with an open and clear statement with the following address: "Oh people of Quraish! Be careful, don't be the last of those who believe and the first of those to leave the religion.

By Allah this religion of Islam will continue illuminating mankind like the course of the moon and sun, rising and setting. The task of believers is to walk on its path." The address which pleased Umar was realized in this manner.

Suhail became the advocate of truth in every place. One day he came together with Abu Sufyan bin Harith bin Hisham, from the Makkan nobility to visit the Khalifah Omar. Suhaib, Ammar and Bilal were also with them. They requested permission to enter from Omar. The Khalifa accepted Shuaib, Ammar and Bilal first. Upon this, Abu Sufyan's old traits came to the surface and he began to bemoan to himself saying "What a time. I have never seen a day like this. Let permission be given to these slaves, so we remain here." Once Suhail heard these words, being a measure of worth from before the establishment of Islam, he explained them away with the following address: "Oh my people! I am reading your faces. If you take offence, take offence from yourselves. They were invited to Islam, you were also invited. They were fast, they acted quickly. You however were left behind. By Allah! The virtues by which they passed you! Your missing out then was more important than your missing out now. You see that they have passed ahead of you. There is no way you can pass them in this matter. However look to Jihad and cling to it tightly. Perhaps, Allah will make you fortunate with martyrdom"

Suhail spent the remaining part of his life participating in jihad. He left for jihad in the region of Syria. Together with all of his relatives he took part in the conquest of Syria. In order to remove his mistakes from the period of polytheism he took advantage of an opportunity for himself at the battle of Yarmuk. Having heard personally from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) of the virtues of a border watchman, Suhail didn't return to Makkah till the end of his life. He waited as a guard at the borders in the region of Syria. He passed away in the plague of Amwas in Hijri 18.



THE BEWILDERMENT OF

Pride

Even though we are nothing more than a tiny grain of sand in an enormous desert, we forget our limitations and are deceived by a little praise and some opportunities, and then perceive ourselves as being above others; this is nothing but conceit.

A tiny mouse caught the bridle of an enormous camel, and taking up the reins of the camel he proudly walked in front of the camel. Due to his mild nature the camel just continued to walk as if nothing had happened, and the mouse, unaware of his own insignificance, said: "What a great, strong creature I am. I am even brave enough to drive camels!"

On their way they came to a river. Seeing the river, the tiny proud mouse froze in terror. Aware of the mouse's pride the camel said: "O you who have kept me company in the meadows and through the mountains! Why have you stopped? Why are you so surprised? Go on, jump into the river; with all your courage, are you not my leader and guide? Is it better to stop like this in the middle of the road?"

The mouse, embarrassed, answered, stuttering: "My friend! This river is so big and deep that I am afraid I will drown." The camel went into the water and said: "O, blind mouse! The water is only knee high; there is nothing to be afraid of." Having no choice, the mouse confessed: "O, camel! The river

may be like an ant to you, but to me it is a great monster. The height of everyone's knees is different; if we were to put one hundred of my legs, one on top of the other, then they would barely reach your knee."

After hearing this, the clever camel gave the mouse some advice: "In that case, do not be misled by your pride and arrogance; do not treat others rudely and know your place! Do not be misled by the gentleness I have shown you, because Allah does not like the proud ones! Go and take on mice of your own size!" The mouse now understood his error and was very ashamed. He said: "I am sorry for what I have done! I will never do it again, but please, take me across this deadly river!" The camel said to him: "Come on! Jump onto my hump! Taking you across this river is my job. My duty is to help thousands of helpless ones like you." The camel took the mouse over the river.

In this story told by Rûmî, the mouse represents those people who try to take on things that are too great for them to handle; the mouse is proud and thinks that he is better than everyone else, while the camel is the symbol of a patient, wise, clever and mature person. The purpose of this story is to convey wisdom, examples of opinions, thoughts and feelings. The following lines show us the great wisdom here:

"At first the devil was seen as a great being among the angels, and he became accustomed to this, thinking that he was better than every

other being. Due to this he became spoiled and was unaware of the magnificence inherent in the commands of Allah Almighty. He saw Prophet Adam (upon him be peace) as being inferior and despicable; so Iblis was afflicted with the worst possible fate."

"Copper does not realize it is copper until it becomes gold. The heart does not realize its mistakes or understand its inferiority until it attains a certain spiritual consistency. O soul! Save your ego from the dungeons of arrogance and pride and serve the potion of life so that you can become gold! Serve it with heartfelt love..."

"These lovers are those that have souls; just as the day and night avoid one another, so too do they avoid the world, and without never inclining to it!"

All this shows that whenever pretension or selfishness enters the heart, an idolatry of degree and rank sets in motion; in such a heart there can never be compassion because pretension and selfishness are the cancer of spiritual life. The cause of pretension and selfishness is a person's conceit before the Divine power. Even though we are nothing more than a tiny grain of sand in an enormous desert, we forget our limitations and are deceived by a little praise and some opportunities, and then perceive ourselves as being above others; this is nothing but conceit.

Without a doubt, pride makes a person perceive of themselves as having more power, talent and ability than they really do. But is not the power of all living creatures the very



Without a doubt, pride makes a person perceive of themselves as having more power, talent and ability than they really do. But is not the power of all living creatures the very power with which Allah Almighty has blessed them?

power with which Allah Almighty has blessed them? Shame on those who are unaware of this reality! The pride of Pharaoh and Nimrod led them to claim divinity; as a result they were punished by Divine retribution. This is why Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), particularly after great victories, would always counsel the Companions with submission and humility and prevent them from boasting. At the Battle of Badr, a triumph in the struggle for Islam, first a thousand, then three thousand and finally five thousand angels, according to the level of faith of the believers, were sent to their aid. Allah declared in the Qur'ân:

“And you did not throw [the dust in the eyes of the attackers] when you threw, but rather it was God Who threw.” [Anfâl 8: 17]

The Prophet and his Companions are eternal examples for all of mankind as a result of such behavior. At the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad actually conquered hearts rather than the city. On entering that holy city there were no indications of a victory; in fact, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) bowed on his camel in prostration, overcome by a feeling of gratitude to Allah. All such situations contain principles. For this reason it is said: *‘Whoever knows his nafs (self) knows his Lord’*

Rûmî warns people: “O heedless man! As you are not a messenger you cannot be aware

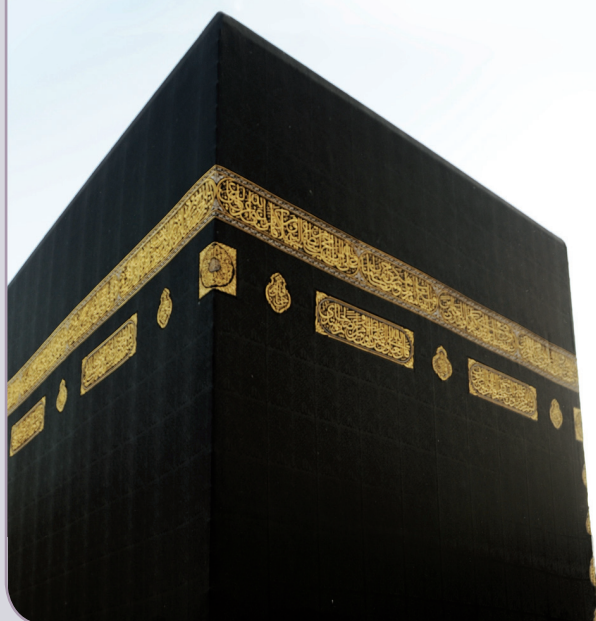
of what is beyond and nobody will follow you: know your place on this path then and follow your own line, do not go any further! Walk behind a great guardian on the path of truth that you are following so that one day you will emerge from the well of egoism and be a sultan of sense, like Prophet Yusuf.”

“Since you have neither the immortality of the Almighty, nor the language of the Almighty, listen! If you will say something then say it as if it is a question so that the words will benefit and you can learn something! Speak to the Sultan of the sultans like a poor and needy man!”

“The beginning of pride and resentment is an extreme love for all egoistical desires, richness and worldly cravings. These extreme desires are embedded in the soul to become habit! When bad habits are strengthened, you abuse those who try to make you abandon the habits and you feel resentment towards them. Even idol worshippers make worshipping the idols a habit; they become enemies of those who try to prevent them from doing so.”

May Allah protect us from conceit and the confusion of pride and arrogance and place us among those who know themselves, who are aware of themselves, the good ones who spend their lives worshipping the Creator!

Âmîn!



On entering that holy city there were no indications of a victory; in fact, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) bowed on his camel in prostration, overcome by a feeling of gratitude to Allah.

Sayyidah JUWAYRIYA BINT HARITH



Sayyidah Juwayriya was influenced by a dream she had had three days before the battle, and she thought of presenting this matter to Prophet Muhammad. In her dream she had embraced a moon that appeared in Medina.

The Beauty from the Bani Mustalik The Bani Mustalik Battle

It was the fifth year of the hijrah. After fighting fiercely for 27 days in the Battle of the Trenches the Muslims received a signal from Archangel Jibreel (as)¹ to immediately set out for campaign against the Bani Qurayza Jews, who had committed treason during the battle. Prophet Muhammad (saw) told the muezzin Bilal to announce: *"Let those who obey the orders of Allah pray the afternoon prayer in the land of the Bani Qurayza!..."*²

Barely even a month had passed after all those exhausting events, the Bani Mustalik, whose leader was Harith bin Abi Dirar, and which was a branch of the Huzaa Tribe, made preparations to attack the Muslims and came as far Medina. Prophet Muhammad (saw) had an envoy investigate the reports, and when the reports were confirmed, Allah's Prophet (saw) decided to march upon the enemy. During this battle he was accompanied by his blessed wives Sayyidah Âishah and Umm Salama. There were many men who participated in this battle with the sole intention of obtaining wealth from their share of the victory spoils.³

The Muslim army consisted of 700 people, and the two armies met at the edge of a body of water that was known as the *Muraysi*. The Mustalik tribe, not expecting to see the Muslims facing them this quickly, were surprised and unprepared. If Prophet Muhammad (saw) had so desired, he could have easily killed all the Mustalik in their moment of panic. However, he was a merciful prophet. For him, guiding people to the Truth was more important, and in any case, the aim of Islam was to conquer hearts rather than lands. For this reason, the merciful Prophet requested that Umar (ra) invite the enemy to Islam. Umar (ra) stood up, and called upon the Mustaliks to accept Islam. However, they responded to this invitation with arrows and thus a fight was inevitable. After a fierce battle, the Bani Mustalik were defeated, and they abandoned the battlefield, leaving behind hundreds of prisoners, and great spoils, consisting of five thousand sheep and two thousand camels.⁴

The chief and commander of the tribe, Harith bin Abi Dirar fled, but his daughter Berre was one of the prisoners. According to their rules of engagement, the spoils of war and prisoners were to be divided up between the soldiers who had participated in the battle. In this division, Berre fell to Sabit bin Qays, one of the Companions of the Prophet (saw).⁵

The Captive Daughter of the Tribal Chief

Berre, the daughter of Harith bin Abi Dirar, the chief of the Bani Mustalik which was a branch of the Huzaa tribe, was born in AD 607.⁶

She had married her cousin⁷, Musavi bin Safwan, who was of the same tribe.⁸ They had no children but they had a happy marriage. However, the Muraysi battle occurred and her life was changed forever: she was a prisoner and her husband was dead, killed during the battle.

Berre, who before the battle had been the daughter of the chief, was now a prisoner as a consequence of the battle and was being taken to Medina. However, before she had even arrived in Medina, she had made a deal with her master, asking him to set a price on her: she would work to earn the money to purchase her freedom. Now she was held as a captive in Medina, far from her homeland, and her master was Sabit bin Qays.⁹

She could purchase her freedom was all well and good; but where was the money to come from? She had to find a solution. She was influenced by a dream she had had three days before the battle, and she thought of presenting this matter to Prophet Muhammad (saw). In her dream she had embraced a moon that appeared in Medina. She had not told anyone in her tribe about her dream because she sensed that in it were indications of

Prophet Muhammad paid the ransom for Berre himself. He set her free and delivered her over to her father. Then he asked for her hand in marriage.



Berre means “blessed woman without fault”. To take such a name was not approved of by the Prophet as it was considered inappropriate to praise one’s self. Thus, Prophet Muhammad gave her the name Juwayriya, meaning “little woman, girl”.



the defeat of her tribe and her being taken to Medina.¹⁰

She went to Prophet Muhammad (saw) and told him that she wanted to attain her freedom, and she mentioned the agreement she had made with her master and the ransom that was to be paid. Prophet Muhammad (saw) listened to her carefully. Then he said: “Shall I suggest a more blessed way for you?”

Berre was surprised; what could be more blessed than her freedom? After hesitating for a moment, she said: “O Prophet of Allah!... What can be more blessed than being emancipated?”

Prophet Muhammad (saw) said: *“I will pay your ransom and take you as my wife.”*¹¹

Berre was shocked by this reply. Never had she met such a great example of morals and kindness: if Prophet Muhammad (saw) had so desired he could have bought her as a concubine,¹² yet, this lofty person was offering her not only her freedom, but the honor of marrying him. With great excitement she replied: “O Prophet! If you present me with such an honor, there can be no doubt that this will be more blessed for me!..”

Berre Becomes Juwayriya

At the time that Allah’s Prophet (saw) was asking Berre to marry him in Medina, Berre’s father Harith bin Abi Dirar had set out for Medina, taking camels with him to exchange for his daughter. When he arrived in Akik, he decided not to present the two best camels and hid them in an obscure place in this valley. He continued on his way. As soon as he arrived in Medina he went to Prophet Muhammad (saw): “O Muhammad!... You have captured my daughter. Look, I have brought you camels. Let them be her ransom. Set her free!..”

Prophet Muhammad (saw) knew just what to say: “Why did you not bring the two camels that you hid in the valley in Akik?”

Harith was shocked. He was sure that no one but himself knew where those camels had

been hidden. How could this be? The only way this man could have such knowledge was if he were receiving information from a Lord who knew both what was hidden and what was apparent. In such a state of confusion, the light of belief shone in his heart and the words of the shahada (*kalima shahadah*) tripped off his tongue. When Harith became Muslim, his two sons and the leading members of the tribe were also honored with Islam.

Prophet Muhammad (saw) paid the ransom for Berre himself. He set her free and delivered her over to her father. Then he asked for her hand in marriage. He gave her 400 *dirhem* for her dowry (*mahr*).¹³ Harith, surprised at all that had happened in such a short time, gladly gave his daughter in marriage.¹⁴ He greatly admired the lofty morals of Allah's Prophet (saw). This is how the marriage between Prophet Muhammad (saw) and Berre (Juwayriya) took place.

Our Mother Berre was given the name Juwayriya by Prophet Muhammad (saw) himself. Berre means "blessed woman without fault". To take such a name was not approved of by the Prophet (saw) as it was considered inappropriate to praise one's self. Thus, Prophet Muhammad (saw) gave her the name Juwayriya, meaning "little woman, girl".¹⁵

Endnotes: 1) Prophet Muhammad had returned from the Battle of the Trench around noon. After praying the noon prayer he went to Zainab's room, removed his weapons and started to wash his face. At once Jibreel (AS) came and said: "O Prophet... the angels have not yet put down their weapons. Allah desires that you march against the Bani Qurayza." (Ibn Hisham, es-Siyreh, III, 138; Ziya Kazıcı, Ibid., page: 267). 2) The Bani Qurayza castle fell after a 25-day long battle. 3) These men were the hypocrites, and because of their large numbers in the battle, serious disputes arose, but Prophet Muhammad was able to solve these peacefully before the problems escalated out of control. However, once again proving contentious during this battle, the hypocrites began slandering Prophet Muhammad's (saw) family, namely Â'ishah, and this had a serious effect on the Muslims for a long time. (See: Osman Nûri Topbaş, Hazret-i Muhammed -Medine Devri-, page: 276-294). 4) Rıza Savaş, DIA, "Juwayriya bint Hâris", VIII, page: 146. 5) Ibn-i Hişam, Sîre, III, 154. 6) DIA, "Juwayriya bint Hâris". 7) DIA, "Juwayriya bint Hâris". 8) Afzalurrahman, Ibid., II, page: 187. 9) However, according to one report Berre actually fell to the share of two Companions, and they decided rather than sharing the prisoner that she, as "the daughter of a chief" should be set free for *fidy-i najat* (a form of ransom). (See: Muhammad Hamidullah, Ibid., II, page: 684). 10) Ziya Kazıcı, Ibid., page: 277 from Ibn-i Kethir, "el-Bidâye ve'n-Nihâye". 11) Ayşe Abdurrahman, Ibid., page: 108-109. 12) Ziya Kazıcı, Ibid., page: 272. 13) Afzalurrahman, Ibid., II, 187-188. 14) Ibn-i Hişam, Sîre, III, 157. 15) DIA, "Juwayriya bint Hâris".



Quiz For Children



1. The word Qur'ān means...
 - a. Recitation
 - b. Revelation
 - c. Holy Book
 - d. Information
2. Who took the responsibility of keeping the Qur'ān safe?
 - a. Allah
 - b. The Sahabah
 - c. The Prophet
 - d. The Jibreel
3. In which city was the last surah revealed?
 - a. Makkah
 - b. Taif
 - c. Damascus
 - d. Madina
4. How many times is the word Allah repeated in the Qur'ān?
 - a. 4698
 - b. 5698
 - c. 2698
 - d. 4000
5. How many times has the Qur'ān stressed the prayer?
 - a. 600
 - b. 700
 - c. 800
 - d. 900
6. How many times has the Qur'ān emphasized on charity?
 - a. 100
 - b. 150
 - c. 200
 - d. 250
7. Name the prophet who is mentioned and discussed most in the Qur'ān?
 - a. Isa
 - b. Yusuf
 - c. Musa
 - d. Ibrahim
8. For how many years did the Prophet receive wahy in Makkah
 - a. 10
 - b. 11
 - c. 12
 - d. 13
9. For how many years did the Prophet receive wahy in Madina?
 - a. 10
 - b. 11
 - c. 12
 - d. 13
10. How many years did it take for the complete revelation of the Qur'ān?
 - a. 22 years
 - b. 23 years
 - c. 22 years 5 months 14 days
 - d. 23 years 5 months

Hey Kids! Maybe you can win a prize!

The first 25 entries that answers the questions correctly will win. Encircle your answers, fill out the form, and mail to: Wisdom - Quiz, 8508 So. 71st East Ave. Tulsa, OK 74133 USA.

Name: Age:

Address:

Parent's Name (for consent purposes only):

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