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WISDOM

A Source of Inspirational and Traditional Islamic Knowledge

ALTINOLUK

IMPORTANCE OF GOOD DEEDS IN ISLAM

Osman Nuri Efendi:
Manners of Giving Charity

Professor M. Yasar Kandemir:
Unity of Heart and Life

Professor Hasan Kamil Yilmaz:
Sharing a Bite

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

"Whosoever relieves from a believer some grief pertaining to this world, Allah will relieve from him some grief pertaining to the Hereafter. Whosoever alleviates the difficulties of a needy person who cannot pay his debt, Allah will alleviate his difficulties in both this world and the Hereafter. Whosoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and the Hereafter. Allah will aid a servant (of His) so long as the servant aids his brother." (Hadith)

Allah says in the Qur'an that our deeds will be weighed, and whosoever has more good deeds will enter the Gardens of Paradise and whose evil deeds weigh more than the good ones will be entered into the Hell fire. An act of doing good deed could be to help an elderly person cross the road or help a blind person. Allah has made it so easy for us in this life to increase our weights in good deeds.

And the best kind of helping is when you do not ask for money or thanks as a return for your help, here we realize the importance of Almighty's saying, "And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, (Saying),"We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks." (Insan: 76/8,9) For this reason, we have dedicated this issue the importance of 'Doing good deeds.'

You can read our beloved teacher Osman Nuri Efendi's article entitled "Manners of Giving Charity." His article teaches us how good manners, which are the essence of faith, encompass all aspects of a believer's life, especially his worship and daily life.

Professor Hasan Kamil Yilmaz's article, "Sharing a Bite", is concerned with the concepts of *futuwwah* and *fatâ* which are almost synonymous with open-handedness, chivalry and generosity, while Professor M. Yasar Kandemir explains us in his article that people should view no act of kindness done to any servant of Allah as worthless; everyone should do good for them with their own hands.

Let us try to be good and do as much good deed as possible, but let us also remember that despite our best of good deeds, we have no hope except with mercy from Allah Almighty!

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and we hope to meet you in the next issue.

Elif Kapici

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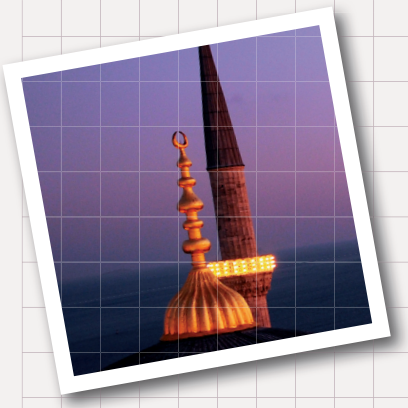
Cafer Durmus

Verses that are Considered to Summarize The Qur'an

Salih Kareem

The Society of the Age of Bliss (I)



Elif Kapici

Examples Of Wafa' (Faithfulness) From Our Prophet

Halime Demiresik

Sayyidina Ummu Habibah Bint Abu Sufyan (II)

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Osman Nuri Efendi

Manners Of Giving Charity

How we perform our responsibilities of servitude is as much important as their performance. Because compliance to good manners in worship and transactions is the only condition to reach Allah's love and pleasure.

When we examine the essence and goal of Sufism, we find out that the principal means used by Sufism for spiritual achievement is "love," and the peak of the spiritual achievement is to comply with the principles of good manners. In this respect, a believer is on the path to Divine unity to the extent that he places Allah and His Messenger in the center of his heart. The greatest sign for this is to be adorned with the ethical principles of the Messenger of Allah.

The feeling of compliance to the principles of good manners constitutes the essence of prophetic ethics. According to the depiction of the companions, Allah's Apostle was more bashful than a covered virgin. Again the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) said about his manners: *"My Lord has taught me good manners and He mannered me (disciplined me) well."* (Suyūtī, *Jami' al-Saghīr*, I, 12)

Good manners, which are the essence of faith, encompass all aspects of a believer's life, especially his worship and daily life.

Allah the Almighty states that He has not created His servants except to worship Him alone. In this respect, all kinds of worship and daily transactions are like the most vital point of our servitude. In other words we cannot think a life of servitude without worship and daily transactions.

On the other hand how we perform our responsibilities of servitude is as much important as their performance. Because compliance to good manners in worship and transactions is the only condition to reach Allah's love and pleasure. This is why worship performed without complying the proper manners and principles loses its entire value and leaves to its performer just physical exhaustion.

As a matter of fact, it is stated in a saying of the Prophet:

"Many people who fast get nothing from their fast except hunger and thirst, and many people who pray at night get nothing from it except wakefulness." (Ibn Mājah, Şiyām, 21)

Just like ritual prayer, which is the pillar of Islam, has conditions and must be performed in reverence, alms and charity should also be meticulously given in compliance with certain principles of manners. Otherwise those who give their charity carelessly will face a fate in the Hereafter similar to the Divine warning of **"So woe to the praying ones…"** (Qur'an:107; 4) for those who are heedless of their prayers.

DO NOT WASTE YOUR CHARITY

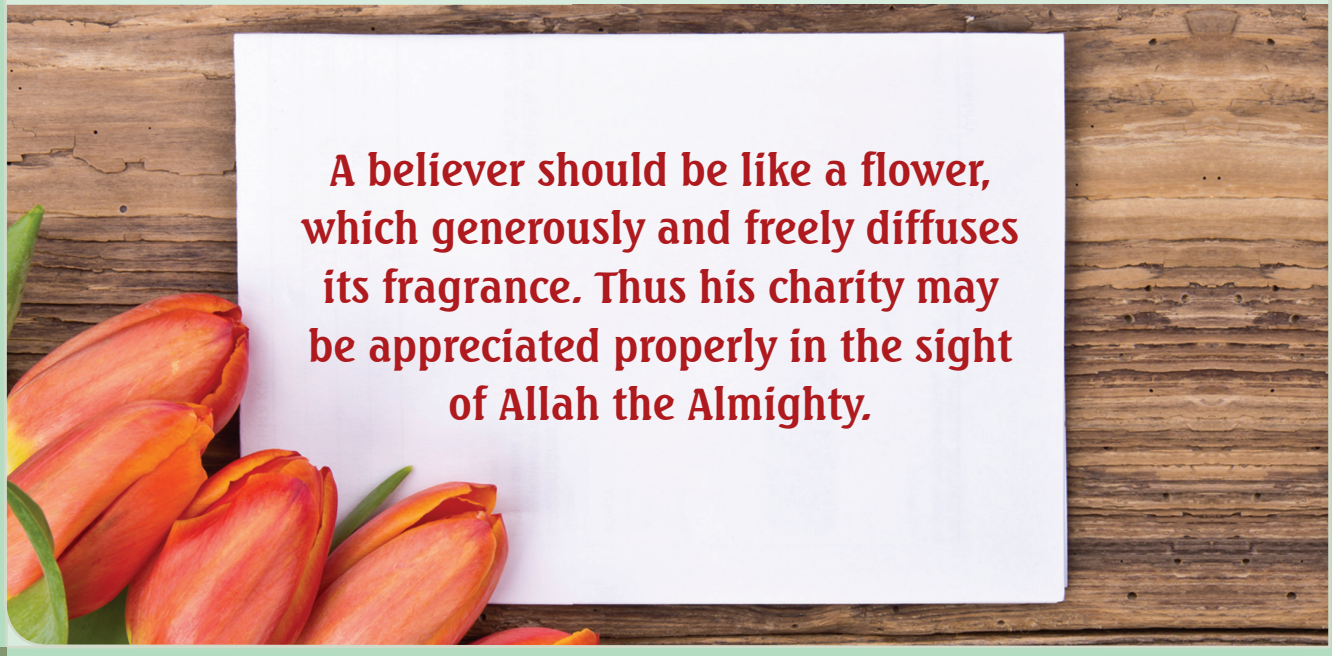
Our Lord informs us about good manners, which we should observe in giving our charity, as follows:

"(As for) those who spend their property in the way of Allah, then do not follow up what they have spent with reproach or injury, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve.

Kind speech and forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury; and Allah is Self-sufficient, Forbearing.

O you who believe! do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury, like him who spends his property to be seen of men and does not believe in Allah and the last day; so his parable is as the parable of a smooth rock with earth upon it, then a heavy rain falls upon it, so it leaves it bare; they shall not be able to gain anything of what they have earned; and Allah does not guide the unbelieving people." (Qur'an:2; 262-264)

In the above mentioned verses, our Lord shows us the proper manners that we need to observe in giving alms and charity. In other words philanthropic actions, which are performed by despising, insulting, and disdaining the poor and breaking their hearts, have no value in the presence of Allah the Almighty. Those who do not follow these principles and give their charity with a



senseless and cold heart dissipate the spiritual rewards of their charity with their own hands.

To rub in the charity and goodness not only cause to lose its rewards but also calls the anger of our Lord. In this regard the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) said that:

"Three are the (persons) with whom Allah would neither speak on the Day of Resurrection, nor would look at them nor would absolve the and there is a painful chastisement for them. The Messenger of Allah repeated it three times.

Abu Dhar remarked:

"They failed and they lost; who are these persons, Messenger of Allah?"

Upon this the Prophet (upon him peace) observed:

"They are: the dragger of lower garment, the seller of goods by false oath and one who reminds his kindness reproachfully." (Muslim, Kitāb al-Imān, 171)

As one can see insincere kindness followed by reproachful reminding and despise is among the great sins which cause its owner to be punished instead of receiving rewards. Since hearts are the place for Divine sight, they should not be broken.

In addition alms and charity, which is ordered by Allah the Almighty, is the natural right of the needy in the possessions of the rich. Therefore taking charity out of the property of the wealthy and giving it to the needy should not be regarded as a favor to the needy but delivering something to its real owner. Forgetting this fact and trying to take credit from delivering the blessings of Allah the Almighty to His servants and maltreating the needy is just heedlessness, immaturity, and ignorance.

Then we should not boast about our charity, despise the needy; on the contrary we should put ourselves to their place and think that someday we may be in their places; Because even though hard work have some role in wealth or poverty, they mostly are matters of fate. Allah may make the wealthy poor and the poor wealthy. They are not measures of superiority in the presence of Allah the Almighty. They are just one of the means of trial in this world. Superiority in the sight of Allah is only with piety and righteousness. Then boasting about helping the needy is just being heedless from the secret of trial in this world.

Sheikh Sādī says in his *Bostān*:

"When you have done a favor to someone, do not boast about it by saying "I am a master, he needs me." Do not say sword of time cut this needy person. Because that sword has not go into its sheath, yet. It is possible that one day it may cut you, too."

Wealthy people should know to put themselves into the place of the needy and

Islamic manners and elegance requires seeing charity as a blessing. Giver should also be in state of thankfulness towards the receiver of charity. Because he saves the giver from responsibility and causes him to earn spiritual rewards.

When Mahmud Sâmi Efendi saw a poor, if he was in a car, he would stop the car, get off the car, smile and give his charity. Altruism, courtesy and mercy should be distinctive characteristics of a Muslim.

they should be able to say that: "Our Lord could create us in their place and them in our place. Since He has given us His blessings, then it means He entrusted them to us. He has also made us responsible for the needy. And He asked us to help them as a sign of our gratitude."

Again Sheikh Sādī's advice in his same work is really remarkable:

"If a needy comes to your door, do not turn him down. God forbid, someday you may become a needy and have to go to other people's doors.

Inquire the state of those whose hearts are broken. One day you may be like them.

Since you do not have to go to anybody's door, as a sign of gratitude you should not refuse the poor who comes to your door and meet with smiling face…"

In fact it is stated in a verse:

"And find you in want and make you to be free from want? Therefore, as for the orphan, do not oppress (him). And as for him who asks, do not chide (him), And as for the favor of your Lord, do announce (it)." (Qur'an: 93; 8-11)

The most important part in doing favors to the needy is not to remind them reproachfully and the best way to realize that is to forget the favors right after doing them. How nicely Lokman Hakim states:

"Do not forget two things: Allah the Almighty and death.

Forget about two things: Your favors to others and other's misdeed towards you."

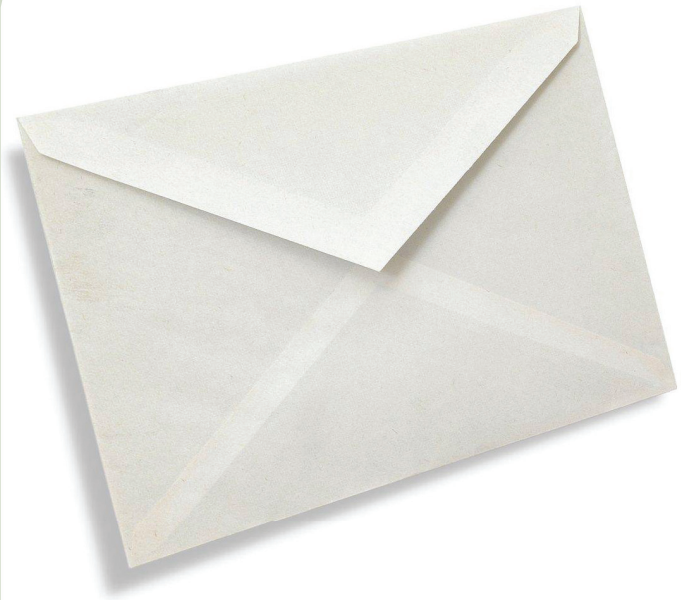
To be a real philanthropic servant is a very valuable blessing both in this world and in the Hereafter. Those who can perform this worship properly, according to the good news of our Lord, will be free from fear and sorrow on Judgment Day. This is why our Lord and our beloved Prophet (upon him peace) encourages us to attain the peace and tranquility of helping others in many verses and *ahadith*.

Allah the Almighty warned us, servants, not to lose such a great blessing like infāq and ordered to observe the manners of it.

A faithful is a generous person. Real generosity means to be able to give without feeling remorse and batting an eyelid. On the contrary it means to be able to give joyfully. A believer should be like a flower, which generously and freely diffuses its fragrance. Thus his charity may be appreciated properly in the sight of Allah the Almighty. In this regard it is stated in a verse: **"…Allah receives their gifts of Charity"** (Qur'an: 9; 107).

How nicely Rumi depicts the blessings of infāq given in an elegant manner:

"Nicely give your property, your wealth, your



When my father was giving money, he was placing it in an envelope, on which he wrote "thank you for accepting this". He would do his best not to hurt his feelings. This was the result of spiritual grace and elegance of helping Creation for the sake of their Creator.

possessions and make the soul happy so that the prayer of that soul be a light in your grave, and light your way in the dark night."

Therefore we should not deny a simple smile from the needy, just as we do not deny our wealth and property.

When Mahmud Sâmi Efendi (may Allah bless his soul) saw a poor, if he was in a car, he would stop the car, get off the car, smile and give his charity. Altruism, courtesy and mercy should be distinctive characteristics of a Muslim.

GIVING CHARITY WITH THE FEELING OF GRATITUDE

Islamic manners and elegance requires seeing charity as a blessing. Giver should also be in state of thankfulness towards the receiver of charity. Because he saves the giver from responsibility and causes him to earn spiritual rewards.

In a verse, it is mentioned that:

"To make them walk in the right way is not incumbent on you, but Allah guides aright whom He pleases; and whatever good thing you spend, it is to your own good; and you do not spend but to seek Allah's pleasure; and whatever good things you spend shall be paid back to you in full, and you shall not be wronged." (Qur'an:2; 272)

This means those who do favors will be the ones who see the real blessings of their kindness. In fact he will receive the reward of his favor completely and even more and more to the extent of his sincerity. In other words, infāq may seem as a favor to the receiver but in fact it is a favor to the giver. This is why the giver should feel indebted to the receiver of charity instead of making him indebted to himself/herself.

My father's love for the poor was like a vast sea. When they accepted his help, he would go in a mood of thankfulness. When he was giving money, he was placing it in an envelope, on which he wrote **"thank you for accepting this"**. He would do his best not to hurt his feelings. This was the result of spiritual grace and elegance of helping Creation for the sake of their Creator.

Rumī states in his sagacious lines that:

"The poor is the mirror of bounty, Beware! Do not breathe over the mirror by saying hurtful things to the face of the mirror.[1]

A loud call was coming (to his ears): "Come, O seeker! Bounty is in need of beggars: (it is needy) like a beggar. Bounty is seeking the beggars and the poor, just as fair ones who seek a clear mirror.[2]

Inasmuch as the beggar is the mirror of Bounty, take care! Breath is hurtful to the face of the mirror. In the one case, his (the giver's)

bounty makes the beggar manifest (causes him to beg), while in the other case he (the giver), (without being asked), bestows on the beggars more (than they need).”[3]

This is why we should accept it as a special blessing from our Lord if someone comes to us and asks our help. And we should also regard such an opportunity as an honor of our servitude.

Sayyidina Ali explains this fact as follows:

“There are two blessings that I don’t know which one of them makes me happier. One of them is that a man comes to me and sincerely asks my help hoping that I will take care of his needs. The second one is that Allah the Almighty helps that man through me. I would rather to ease a Muslim brother’s trouble to have a world full of gold and silver.” (‘Ali al-Muttaqī, *Kanz al-Ummāl*, VI, 598/17049)

If the giver of charity feels proud of his action and expects gratitude and indebtedness, it destroys all the rewards and blessings of his action. Giver of charity should not expect anything but Allah’s contentment. It should not be forgotten that expecting even prayer and thanks from the needy are things shadowing the sincerity of the charity.

The following state of the mothers of Muslim nation about giving the charity just for the sake of Allah the Almighty and not expecting anything from the receiver not to reduce the reward of charity is a very good example:

When Sayidah Aisha and Umm Salamah send something to a needy person, they would ask the delivery person to memorize how the receiver of their charity prayed for them so they could make the same prayers for the needy. They even wanted to compensate the prayers of the needy. They did not even hope to get prayer from the needy, for prayer is like a compensation for their charity.

THE WAY TO ATTAIN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Our Lord shows us a high target for our servitude in the following verse:

“By no means shall you attain to righteousness until you spend (benevolently) out of what you love; and whatever thing you spend, Allah surely knows it.” (Qur’an: 3; 92)

“To be able to spend out of what we love” should be one of the manners which we need to observe in our charity. Because sensitivity in this matter shows the level of the servant’s love for Allah the Almighty.

Therefore we should give out of the things that we love most and that we would be happy if it was given to us. Thus we can advance on the path that makes our charity perfect. We should put ourselves in the place of the needy and when we give something, we should think what we would think about it

if we were the receiver. Again it is stated in a verse:

"O you who believe! spend (benevolently) of the good things that you earn and or what We have brought forth for you out of the earth, and do not aim at what is bad that you may spend (in alms) of it, while you would not take it yourselves unless you have its price lowered, and know that Allah is Self-sufficient, Praiseworthy." (Qur'an: 2; 267)

One should not think that he fulfill his responsibility by giving the needy out of cheap and old things. This kind of charity cannot be considered as a real charity.

A believer is a generous person, and real generosity is not reducing charity to things which are cheap and old, but out of valuable, beneficial and lovable things which could take care a problem of the needy.

AID ONE ANOTHER IN KINDNESS AND PIETY

The aim in giving charity is to relieve completely the problems of the needy. Of course it is impossible to realize this goal alone, since everybody has a limited budget. This is why we should help each other and get united in doing goodness. In a verse, our Lord says that:

"… and help one another in goodness and piety …" (Qur'an: 5; 2)

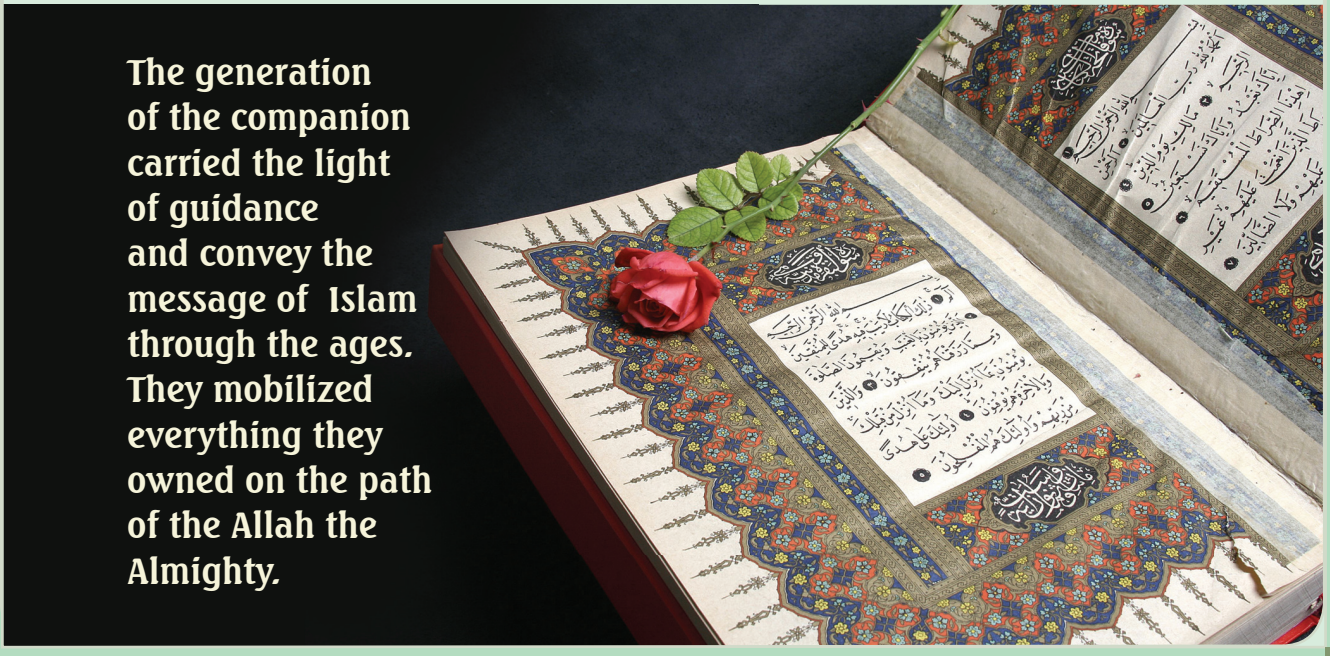
In other words helping each other in goodness is the order of Allah the Almighty. This means that we need to get united and even establish institutions especially in services, which cannot be achieved alone

In this regard, we should try to fulfill our Lords command **"help one another in goodness and piety"** by encouraging the people around us to help each other in cases which we cannot overcome alone.

What is appropriate for a real believer is always to look for ways to do goodness. If a believer who has this level of conscience does not have anything to give, then he would give his time and energy. Thus he can be the means of a greater good.

Today we should not get caught to the disease of comforting our conscience by giving very little amounts, which cannot solve any problems of the needy. We need to think that what percentage of our Lord's blessings do we donate in His path? What is the ratio of our donations to the amount we spend for ourselves? Or do we comfort our conscience with little amounts by comparing our donation to other people's little charity?

However, we, as believers, should compare ourselves to the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) and his distinguished companions; because Allah the Almighty order us to take these pious servants as examples to ourselves in the following verse:



When Sayidah Aisha and Umm Salamah send something to a needy person, they would ask the delivery person to memorize how the receiver of their charity prayed for them so they could make the same prayers for the needy.

"And (as for) the foremost, the first of the Muhajirs and the Ansars, and those who followed them in goodness, Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them forever; that is the mighty achievement." (Qur'an: 9; 100)

The generation of the companion, which our Lord presents to us as the exemplary generation, paid the price for their faith first by the tortures which they had to face in Mecca; second they had to endure the attacks of the unbelievers in Medina. And finally they carried the light of guidance and convey the message of Islam through the ages. They mobilized everything they owned on the path of the Allah the Almighty. Because they always lived in contemplation of the following verse:

"Then on that day you shall most certainly be questioned about the boons." (Qur'an: 102; 8)

We should, too, take the generation of the companions as examples to ourselves and try to live according to the above mentioned three principles.

THE ONE WHO CAUSES GOODNESS IS LIKE THE ONE WHO DOES GOODNESS

We need to ensure that our charity solve a problem of the society. And if we are not enough by ourselves in this regard, we should look for others thinking that *"can I find somebody else who can help this poor man?"* instead of saying *"What else can I do? This is all I am able to do."* Thus we can be a bridge between the needy and the people who have opportunities to help them. Because it is stated in a prophetic saying:

"Those who conduce to something good are like the ones who did it." (Tirmidhī, 'Ilm, 14)

Because of this fact, the friends of Allah encourage people to do goodness so that they could become a part in their goodness. In this regard Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror's teacher, Aksemseddîn's the following state is very remarkable:

The first Friday after the conquest of Istanbul, there was a victory and conquest parade in Ok Meydani square. After Sultan Mehmed, who never forget the help of the people around him, said that:

"Mercy is upon our martyrs, glory and honor to our veterans and praise and gratitude to my people…" he distributed gifts, property, and land to one hundred and seventy thousand soldiers and civilians around him.

Just then sultan Mehmed's spiritual guide Aksemseddîn advised the veterans as follows:

"O Veterans! You should know that the Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) called you as *"what wonderful soldiers…"* I hope all of you are forgiven by Allah the Almighty. Now do not waste your possessions and spend it for doing goodness. Obey your sultan and love him…"

Thus he wanted to reinforce the virtue of the conquering army with another virtue and encouraged them to build the city and help its residents.[4]

We are the descendants of a great nation, which has produced a great civilization of merits. Even today we live in the middle of their meritorious works such as their endowments, fountains, charity rocks etc. We should protect their works and try to produce new charitable works resembling to theirs. First of all we need to adorn our inner world with merits; and then we need to raise new generations that will be faithful and protective of the works of their predecessors. Otherwise Islam loses its strength, generations get lost and our country may even change hands. We should be believers who are philanthropic and aware of their responsibilities.

In short a philanthropic believer is an altruistic person. He is also a person who knows that receiving the eternal salvation tomorrow in the Divine Court depends on helping others; because, our Lord prohibits us to become selfish, rude, and stingy people.

In this respect, we should not forget that our trial will be easy to the extent of our feelings of responsibility towards others.

May our Lord bless us aspiration to strive for our religion. May Allah place in our hearts the love of helping others just for His sake. May Allah also make our philanthropic actions befitting to certain principles of good manners.

Amin…

Endnotes: *1)* Mathnawī, I, 2750. *2)* Mathnawī, I, 2744-2745. *3)* Mathnawī, I, 2748-2749. *4)* See Ayverdi, Sâmiha, Türk Târihinde OSMANLI ASIRLARI, Istanbul 1999, p. 227-228.

We should give out of the things that we love most and that we would be happy if it was given to us. Thus we can advance on the path that makes our charity perfect.

Professor Hasan Kamil Yilmaz

Sharing a Bite

Futuwwah in Arabic is a symbol of valor, heroism, and sacrifice. It is accepted that a sense of sharing and helping others is prominent in youth, while at more advanced ages, love for property and this world surrounds people with a greater force.

This life is full of ups and downs, easy roads and uphill climbs. Just as every difficulty has some ease, every abundance has some poverty. Life is not uniform. Perhaps this is a natural requirement of the manifestation in the world of Allah's attributes of *jamal* (beauty) and *jalal* (majesty). In order to become acquainted with and understand things, which exist with their opposites, Allah, who brings together opposites, makes manifest the *jamal* attributes of good, beauty, day, faith, goodness, and heaven with the *jalal* attributes of bad, ugly, night, unbelief, evil, and hell. However, as night and day follow each other, so also do *jamal* and *jalal* come in succession.

The manifestation of *jamal* and *jalal* apply to every stage and every area of life: individual life, social life, and economic life. Importantly, it may be noticed that there is some *jamal* found in every *jalal*, and some *jalal* in every *jamal*. Indeed, some say "*the real Sufi is he who sees the* jamal *in the* jalal;" They work to see the plan behind every problem and difficulty and learn from events, and they evaluate the problems they experience as components of the training.

Because people have social existence, they

want to share their many thoughts and feelings, loves and concerns. Thus, there is a common expression like this: "Happiness grows as it is shared; hardships shrink as they are shared."

Allah alternates days of prosperity among the people in turns. Years of abundance follow years of famine, and years of famine follow years of abundance. People must be prepared for every period; they must be around, close to, and help those who are falling. In fact, the most beautiful example of this is the brotherhood during the *Hijrah* and solidarity during time of need at the time of the Prophet. *The Qur'an* praises those *Ansar* who opened their arms and their homes to, and shared their houses, facilities, and opportunities with those who, with faithful aims, left their homeland and their families to migrate to another lands; even though they are in need, the *Ansar* prefer generosity and are praised with the wording of "*îthâr*": "*Those who entered the city and the faith before them love those who flee unto them for refuge, and find in their breasts no need for that which hath been given them, but prefer* [yu'thirûna/îthâr] *(the fugitives) above themselves though poverty become their lot. And whoso is saved from his own avarice – such are they who are successful.*" (*Qur'an* 59:9, Surat al-Hashr, Pickthall).

Îthâr (altruism) is a moral concept with the meaning of "preferring others to yourself, despite one's needs." However, for those who believe in Allah and await the Hereafter, it is an especially supreme virtue.

The Qur'an brings to our agenda this understanding of the meaning of being able to show that you prefer others to something that you want, even though you need it, with the following verse: "*And feed with food the needy wretch, the orphan and the prisoner, for love of Him, (Saying): We feed you, for the sake of Allah only. We wish for no reward nor thanks from you; Lo! we fear from our Lord a day of frowning and of fate.*" (*Qur'an* 76:8-10, *Surat ad-Dahr*, Pickthall).

The expression of "for love" in the verse signifies both lovingly feeding the poor, orphan, and prisoner and choosing to feed them in spite of your love for the food. There are people who love just feeding others; and there are people who love both eating and feeding others. While the first is better, the second is also beautiful.

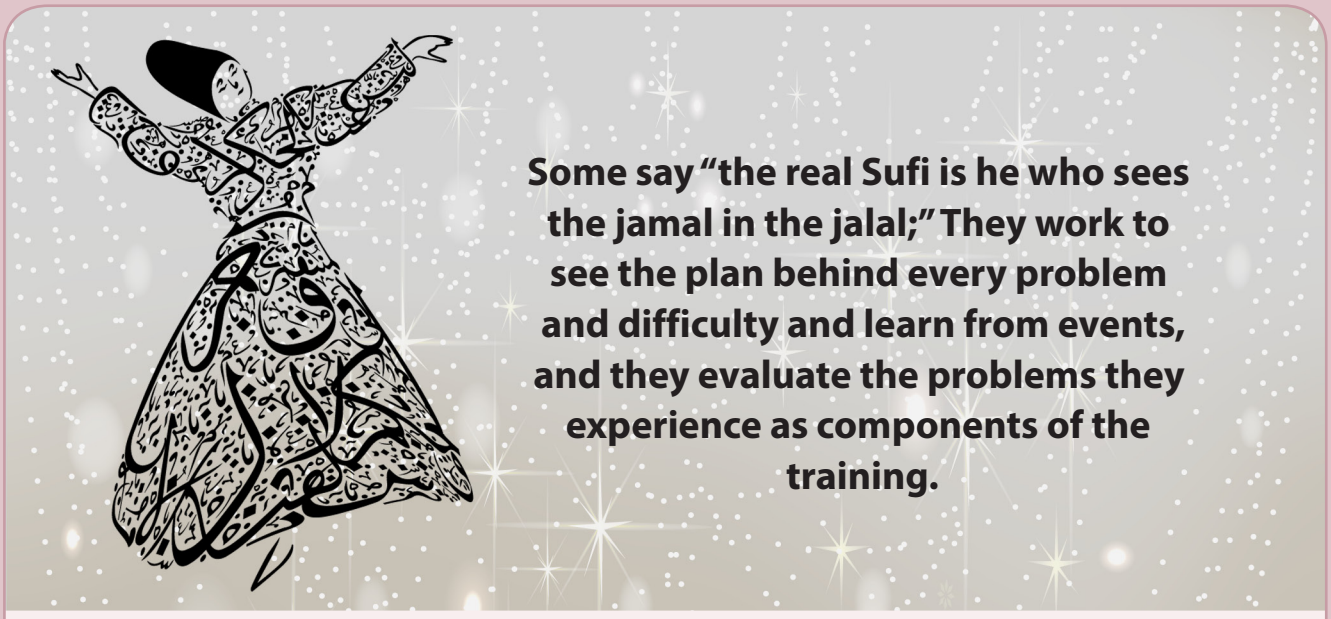
In Islamic society, the words and concepts of *futuwwah* and *fatâ* are almost synonymous with open-handedness, chivalry and generosity.

Fatâ means young and *futuwwah* means youth. Two prominent characteristics are found in young people: altruism and bravery. Therefore, *futuwwah* in Arabic is a symbol of valor, heroism, and sacrifice. It is accepted that a sense of sharing and helping others is prominent in youth, while at more advanced ages, love for property and this world surrounds people with a greater force.

The nature of *fatâ* and *futuwwah* in Islamic culture is also partly due to the self-denial and sacrifice of the young generation of *Sahaba* that were around the Prophet (upon him peace). This came about especially from the characteristics of Sayyidina Ali's bravery and Sayyidina Abu Bakr's generosity. Actually, among pre-Islamic Arabs, *fatâ* meant the noble human that came

ذو الجلال والإكرام جل جلاله

The manifestation of jamal and jalal apply to every stage and every area of life: individual life, social life, and economic life. Importantly, it may be noticed that there is some jamal found in every jalal, and some jalal in every jamal.



Some say "the real Sufi is he who sees the jamal in the jalal;" They work to see the plan behind every problem and difficulty and learn from events, and they evaluate the problems they experience as components of the training.

about as a result of the characteristics of hospitality, generosity, courage, and bravery.

Futuwwah emerged with these characteristics, first as a moral virtue, later as a social welfare organization. The word *fatâ* is also found in *The Qur'an* (see 4:25 Surat an-Nisa, 12:30, 36, 62 Yusuf, 36:62 al-Kahf 17:13, 60, 62, Surat al-Kahf). Thus, this concept was drawn from everyday life, and much has been said on the subject. Works called *futuvvetname*s have been written and descriptions have been made. In fact, Sayyidina Ali said, "*Futuwwah* consists of five things:

1. Showing humility in your status

2. Forgiving when you have the power to punish

3. Giving even if you have only little

4. Giving without expecting anything in return, and

5. Giving advice to everyone."

Ja'far as-Sadiq said, "*Futuwwah* is presenting something that has passed through your hands for the help of another; if something does not comes to one's hands, to be thankful inside anyway."

Fudayl bin 'Iyad said, "*Futuwwah* is to not look at your friends' flaws."

The writer of the first work on *futuwwah*, Sulami, described it thus: "*Futuwwah* is not bad character or immorality; it is the offering of food, the giving of gifts, a smile, and humility. It is refraining from doing evil to others."

Futuwwah is altruism, a kind of love that reaches a point that one will sacrifice himself for his fellow man.

Muhasibi said: "*Futuwwah* is behaving fairly towards others, without expecting them to treat you fairly; contributing to others, but not expecting them to contribute to you; giving, but not expecting of receiving something."

Shibli said, "*Futuwwah* is loyalty in love, softness in hate, sharing what you have in times of shortage and scarcity."

Junayd al-Baghdadi said: "*Futuwwah* is shaking off difficulty, choosing to give, never complaining, giving to everyone, be they rich or poor, and refraining from *haram* (unlawful things)."

Junayd defined *futuwwah* another time as "to remove suffering, to not expect anything from others, and to quit complaining."

Abu Bakr Razî defined *futuwwah* and generosity as "giving to others even in times of trouble."

Futuwwah is generosity, *muruwwah* (courage) is sharing when you only have little; always being ready to help others with your own means.

Owing to solidarity, one of *futuwwah's* basic principles, it became a constructive element in society. Thus, the people of *futuwwah* were successful in staying away from the direct influence of the State. The guiding principles of *futuwwah*, which over time developed into youth organizations and professional and trade movements, were *halal* earnings, having a

profession or art, and preferring everyone else to oneself, helping one's brothers and being in solidarity with them. The people of *futuwwah*, within this context, were also urged towards worldly gain, but these earnings were not for individual interests; they took care that they be utilized for helping people and their brothers.

The *futuwwah* organization, which was organized in the time of Khalifa Nasir and connected to the center of the caliphate (12th-13th centuries), passed into Anatolia with the *Ahîs*; they continued to heal the wounds of society.

The period of the Seljuks of Anatolia and the Beyliks was a time of weakness of political authority; it was a period when economic and social life had fallen into distress. From organizing the youth and the people, it is understood that the *Ahis* of this period undertook a very important task. Indeed, Ibn Batuta, the North African Arab traveler who toured Anatolia duringthese years, reported the following about the *futuwwah* organization referred to as the *Ahis* in Anadolu: "The shaykh who is the leader of this work, makes a house and furnishes it with carpets, rugs, lamps, and similar goods and necessary tools. The *Ahis* work to attain their living during the day, and then in the evening, they gather their earnings for the day together and submit them to the *shaykh*. With this money, the needs of the *tekke* are met, and food necessary for communal living is bought. At that time, if a traveler came to the town, he was hosted at the *tekke*." (*Seyahatname*, p. 313)

Ibn Batuta reported that he came across *Ahi zaviye*s in Central and Eastern Anatolia and in the Black Sea, Aegean Sea, and Sea of Marmara coastal regions, where he stayed as a guest. He said that on these occasions, after becoming closely acquainted with them, he saw among them such generosity that he had never seen in any other country: "The *Ahis* penetrated even to the villages of the Turkmen living in the cities of Anatolia. They have no equals in protecting strangers, being hospitable, addressing people's needs, doing away with evil and sinful people, and getting rid of those who oppress the people." (*Seyahatname*, p. 312)

In our economic and social world, shaken by unemployment, poverty, and economic crisis, it is clear that there are many lessons we can take from our *futuwwah* and the *Ahi* tradition. We must also look at the event in this light: In every home, there is someone who is unemployed or whose business is damaged and famıly budgets are thoroughly shrinking, and people are materially and spiritually overwhelmed, today, we are now more than ever in need of the compassionate, generous, and young attitude of *futuwwah*. With other available possibilities, instead of people being troubled alone and increasing their stress, the work of sharing difficulties is a spiritual dimension to the matter. The crisis hitting everyone in some way, rich and poor alike; slightly alleviates it affects. Today is the day for sharing our daily bread.

Prof. M. Yasar Kandemir

Thanking for the Blessings is Giving

Our Prophet showed us countless ways to make Allah be pleased with us. He taught that it is not necessary to spend large sums of money to do an act of kindness; a person can do good at any time and in every turn.

"Rain People"

Allah gave some of His servants wealth, and some of them poverty. He transferred the duty of looking after the poor to those who are well off. But because His servants are members of His family, he did not leave the matter to chance. To help those in need, He created some servants whom He made to love helping others.

He gave these beautiful servants, who have high honors prepared for them in the Hereafter, not just worldly goods, but also beautiful characteristics. To make it so those in need can approach them without hesitation, He made them angelic in nature, warm, and approachable. Each of these "rain people," becoming divine mercy, has rained down on the dry gardens of those in need. In fact, **they acknowledge the sharing of the blessing of wealth that Allah gave to them with the poor as the most productive business**, and they have taken the Honorable Messenger as an example.

Look to the time when the family of the Prophet slaughtered a sheep and gave it to

People should view no act of kindness done to any servant of Allah as worthless; everyone should do good for them with their own hands.

people in need. When the Prophet came home, he asked:

"What is left of the sheep?"

"Just a shoulder is left," they said. He was pleased with this, and said:

"That is to say, everything but the shoulder remains." (Tirmidhî, *Sifat al-Qiyamah* 55). He tried to explain those giving people who, with the belief that whatever is spent for Allah's sake is never lost, gave, so to speak, what was given to their right hands to their left hands. Those bundles of love, whose hearts are full of compassion, accepted unhesitatingly that what they give for Allah's sake also remains with them and that this is their real wealth.

Allah commanded us to protect the virtue of our Muslim brothers, and to run to help them without asking them to explain their situation. Sayyidina Ali, when an acquaintance came to ask him for a loan, got upset, saying "Why didn't I understand his condition earlier and run to help? Now I've put him in position where he has to ask for a loan."

Allah created some spirits, saying, "Do good!" Rich people with those spirits, as our Prophet explained, have the character of **the man who lends money.** Our Prophet described these compassionate people as follows:

"There was a man who lent money to people. He would say this to his servant: 'When you come to a poor man who has severe financial difficulties, forgive his debt, that Allah might also forgive your sins. In the end, the man died and was returned to Allah. Allah also forgave him." (Bukhârî, *Anbiya'* 54; Muslim, *Musaqat* 31).

Our Lord reminded us that Muslims are our brothers, and he stated that everyone must help their brothers. The Messenger of Allah (upon him peace) expressed this fact thus:

"Whoever addresses the needs of his Muslim brothers, Allah addresses his needs. Whoever resolves a difficulty of a Muslim, Allah will also eliminate a difficulty from him on the Day of Judgment." (Bukhârî, *Mazalim* 3; Muslim, *Birr* 58).

"As long as a servant of Allah helps his brothers, Allah will help him." (Muslim, *Dhikr* 38).

We should never forget the following instructions: Thanking for the blessings is giving. If a man does not give his opportunities, which Allah gave him unrequited, to those in need; that is, if he does not give thanks to Allah, he paves the way of having his blessings given to someone else. If he looks out for the needy, he ensures, not only that he will keep what he has, but also that what he has will increase and multiply.

We should strive to change our brothers' sad looks to happy ones, and the grief on their faces to joy.

The Thousand and One types of Help

Our Prophet (upon him peace) showed us countless ways to make Allah be pleased with us. He taught that it is not necessary to spend large sums of money to do an act of kindness; a person can do good at any time and in every turn:

"Don't view any act of kindness as small; while you talk with your brothers, talk with a smiling face because this also is a kindness." (Abu Dawud, *Libas* 24).

"O Muslim women! Don't refrain from giving something to any neighbor lady, seeing it as too little, even if it is only a trotter of a sheep." (Bukhârî, *Adab* 30; Muslim, *Zakat* 90).

One time, the Prophet (upon him peace) mentioned aman who, **sees a tree branch on the road and picks it up and throws it off to the side so that it doesn't harm anyone.** He gave the news that Allah, being pleased with his actions, placed him in Paradise (Bukhârî, *Azan* 32; Muslim, *Birr* 127).

That is to say, people should view no act of kindness done to any servant of Allah as worthless; everyone should do good for them with their own hands.

The good news has been given that our helping someone and fixing their problems (for example, a person who has a job that must be done at a government office, but can't find the courage to go and thinks that, even if he goes, the work will not be done) will insure that **"our feet will not slip on the bridge of *Sirat*"** (Ibn Abdulbarr, *at-Tamhid*, XIII, 56-57).

All of us are created, and imperfect; we have shame and mistakes. We should know this weakness of ours and, when we catch someone in error, not tell everyone about it; and if possible, we should ignore it, without even thinking of embarrassing them or dragging them down. The Prophet (upon him peace) said:

"If any servant covers up the faults of another servant in this world, Allah will also cover up his faults on the Day of Judgement." (Muslim, *Birr* 72). This is also another kind of help.

It is our duty, not to embarass a believer, but to to cheer him up. There are also a thousand and one ways to do this: to feed a hungry person, to give water to someone who is thirsty, to clothe someone who is naked, to help someone with a loan to pay their debt, to commiserate with someone who is sorrowful...All of these things and similar actions help: all of them are acts of kindness. Even smiling at a Muslim, in our beautiful religion is counted as a kindness, an act of charity.

My dear brothers and sisters! We should never forget who we are. We are servants of Allah, who has adopted the principle of being

Merciful (*An'am* 6: 12, 54), continues to be very Merciful and very Compassionate (Tawbah 9:117), and is the most Merciful of the Merciful (A'raf 7:151, Yusuf 12:64, 92, Anbiya' 21/83). Praise be to Allah that we have this understanding of servitude.

In addition, we are the *ummah* (community) of the Prophet (upon him peace), that Cloud of Mercy who is much loved by Allah, and told us that he loves us much, is fond of us, nurtures us with deep compassion and mercy, and that he would feel very upset when trouble reached us.

We, who are the servants of Allah, whose mercy covers everything (A'raf 7:156), and of the nation of the Prophet (upon him peace), who is at the peak of His mercy, should wrap and surround our troubled brothers as a bundle of mercy. We should strive to change their sad looks to happy ones, and the grief on their faces to joy.

We know that whoever loves and wants a thing for himself, while not wanting it for his brother in religion cannot be considered as truly having faith (Bukhârî, Iman 7; Muslim, Iman 71-72).

Those poor hungry and homeless people are a part of our flesh, our brothers. The Hereafter, with its Paradise and Hell, is just on the other side of the hill we are climbing. Why are we waiting to embrace Paradise and its blessings? We should never forget this: Thanking for the blessings is giving. If a man does not give his opportunities, which Allah gave him unrequited to those in need; that is, if he does not give thanks to Allah, the way is paved to having his blessings given to someone else. If he looks out for the needy, he ensures, not only that he will keep what he has, but also that what he has will increase and multiply.

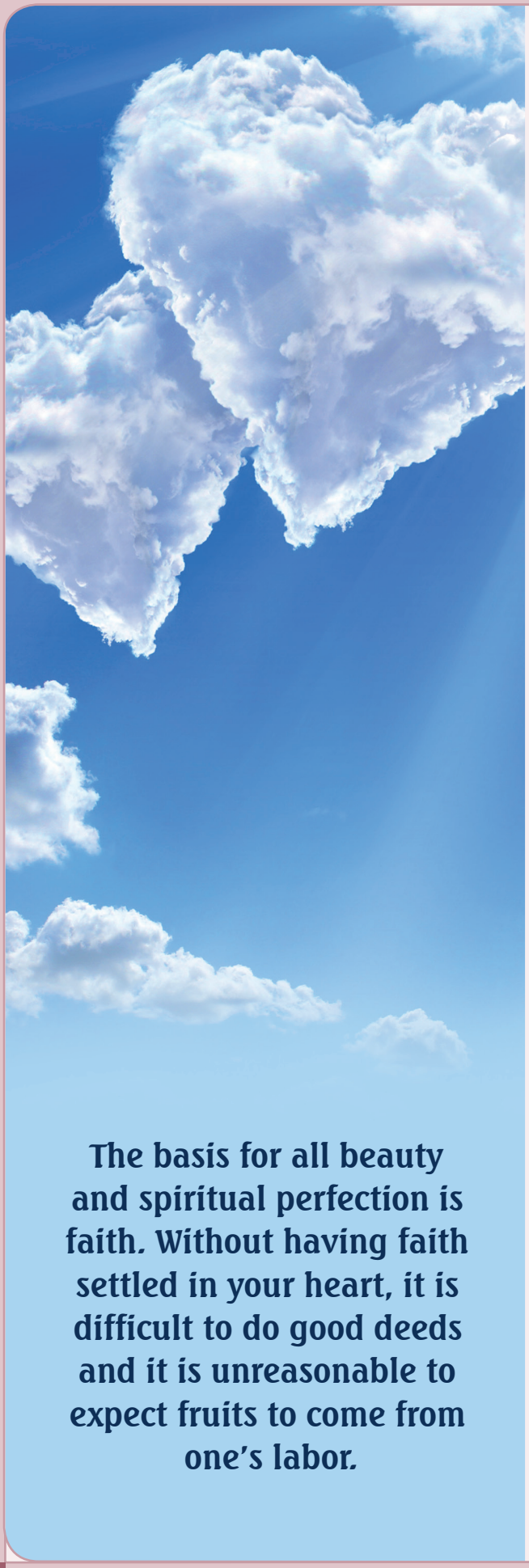
Cafer Durmus

Verses that are considered to Summarize The Qur'an

As for our Prophet, by his saying "Goodness is beautiful character," and thus summing up goodness with two words, he drew attention to the moral dimension of things done in the name of goodness. It also informs us that acts of kindness, when done beautifully, will be accepted.

Our Lord, who encourages goodness for every occasion, in order to teach it, said: "It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces to the East and the West; but righteous is he who believeth in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Scripture and the prophets; and giveth wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free; and observeth proper worship and payeth the poor-due. And those who keep their treaty when they make one, and the patient in tribulation and adversity and time of stress. Such are they who are sincere. Such are the God-fearing." (*Qur'an* 2:177, *Surat al-Baqara*, Pickthall).

The gossiping beyond reasonable bounds of the People of the Book concerning the changing of the *qiblah* became a reason for the revelation of this verse. At that time, the Jews and Christians insisted on claiming that turning to their own *qiblah*s was superior. On this occasion, addressing them and all people, it was said: "O Mankind! The maturity and goodness desired is not that you turn towards the East or the West."



The basis for all beauty and spiritual perfection is faith. Without having faith settled in your heart, it is difficult to do good deeds and it is unreasonable to expect fruits to come from one's labor.

This verse, which is considered to capture the essence of *The Qur'ân*, first reminds us what goodness is not, and then informs us of the main subjects of goodness. In this way we are encouraged to bring together all our words and actions into the framework of goodness. As for our Prophet, by his saying "*Goodness is beautiful character*," and thus summing up goodness with two words, he drew attention to the moral dimension of things done in the name of goodness. It also informs us that acts of kindness, when done beautifully, will be accepted.

In looking at *The Qur'ân* to better understand this verse, we find the warning of "Ye will not attain unto piety until ye spend of that which ye love..." (*Qur'ân* 3:92, *Surat al-Imran*, Pickthall), and the command to "...help ye one another unto righteousness and pious duty. Help not one another unto sin and transgression." (*Qur'ân 5*:2, Surat al-Ma'idah, Pickthall).

As for another Qur'ânic verse, it contains the warning, "And serve Allah. Ascribe no thing as partner unto Him. (Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbour who is of kin (unto you) and unto the neighbour who is not of kin, and the fellow-traveller and the wayfarer and (the slaves) whom your right hands possess. Lo! Allah loveth not such as are proud and boastful." (*Qur'ân* 4:36, Surat an-Nisa', Pickthall)

In *Surat al-Mutaffifin*, there is the good news:"Lo! The righteous verily are in delight, On couches, gazing, Thou wilt know in their faces the radiance of delight." (*Qur'ân 83*:22-24, Surat an-Nisa', Pickthall). In light of this good news, opening our hearts once again to the first Qur'ânic verse, it may be seen there that all types of goodness are summarized. As such, let us summarize the good things listed in the verse. We may sum up the kinds of "goodness" listed in the verse in these four types:

The first is the principleof *iman* (faith). Indeed, the basis for all beauty and spiritual perfection is faith. Without having faith settled in your heart, it is difficult to do good deeds and it is unreasonable to expect fruits to come from one's labor. For this reason, the principles of *iman* are given priority in the verse.

The second is worship, which includes altogether in gladly voluntarily spending on those in need, praying, and giving *zakat*. In the verse, it is important that worship is mentioned after faith. This is because faith is the roots of the tree of Islam; and worship is its trunk and branches.

If the verse is looked at closely, priority is given to gladly spending one's property on those who are in need. This is because religion necessitates sacrifice of life and property. The importance of meeting basic needs is clear for the establishment of Islamic brotherhood and the ensuring of peace and security. Therefore, it is necessary that giving be embraced, both in times of wealth and in times of poverty and difficulty.

The third is actions and human interactions. The foremost of these is to comply with the agreements one makes, to be true to one's word. Let us take note of the Messenger of Allah's saying "One of the three classes of people who will be adversaries on the Day of Judgement are those who swear by Allah and afterwards fail in their promise" (Bukhari, Buyu', 106). For the keeping of agreements is important in the formation of social order and its continuance.

The fourth is moral characteristics, whose basis is patience. Faced with all kinds of challenges, poverty and troubles, especially deaths caused by war or natural disasters, and in states of hunger and misery, to be able to behave patiently."[1]

It may be said that those who strive to fully implement the duties outlined in this verse, with the dimensions of faith, worship, actions, and morality, are sincere in their faith, honest in their actions, and possessors of good character. Now we must find the occasion to hold to this and similar Qur'ânic verses in various circumstances. For the same reasons, the Qur'ânic verses are embraced. Based upon our call to the principle of holding to the "two weighty things," the second will also be embraced.

Note: 1) *Hakk'ın Daveti Kur'ân-ı Kerîm Meâli ve Tefsiri*, Prof. Dr. Omer Celik, Erkam Yayınları, Istanbul, 2013, v. 1, p. 233-234.

The importance of meeting basic needs is clear for the establishment of Islamic brotherhood and the ensuring of peace and security. Therefore, it is necessary that giving be embraced, both in times of wealth and in times of poverty and difficulty.

Pearls Of Wisdom

Truthfulness is composed of justice and courage.

Ibn Hazm

The best awareness is for a man to have self-awareness. And the best knowledge is for a man to stop at the limit of his knowledge.

Shaykh Abdullah Adhami

Whoever loves a thing mentions it frequently.

Rabi'a al-Adawiyya

The essence of knowledge is to know what obedience and worship are.

Imam Ghazali

Meet people in such a manner that if you die, they should weep for you, and if you live, they should long for you.

Sayyidina Ali

O people who take pleasure in a life that will vanish, falling in love with a fading shadow is sheer stupidity.

Ibn al-Qayyim

Intention is the measure for rendering actions true, so that, where intention is sound, action is sound, and where it is corrupt, and then action is corrupt.

Imam Nawawi

When the inward is good the outward is also inevitably so, for the outward always follows the inward, whether good or evil.

Imam Abdullah al Haddad

He who wishes that people always remember him with goodness is neither God-fearing nor sincere.

Sheikh Ibrahim ibn Adham

Whoever is not made glorified by taqwâ can find no glory.

Imam Shafi'

PEOPLE SHOULD GIVE THEIR HEARTS TO ALLAH:

An Interview with Abdullah Sert Efendi, the closest and dearest mureed ofMusa Topbas Efendi.

We could say these lessons are "a personal sohbat ." In this sense, we can evaluate the lesson as a more personal conversation in which all the difficulties of the person being addressed are solved.

WISDOM: ***What did you gain from being close to Musa Efendi?***

Abdullah Sert: It's hard to say what I've gained. This is asking about the condition of one's soul. But if a message must be given, it is beauty in everything. What *ihsan* (righteousness) consists of, the beauties that Adam submitted shortly before. For instance, you can see his restraint; you can see his sensitivity towards responsibility. From time to time, instead of thinking about what I have gained, I think about what I have not gained, what I have missed...

WISDOM: Is there anything else you can say about the subject?

Abdullah Sert: For one thing, we have missed the time. In a word, we have missed Musa Efendi. The poet says, "The caravan has left, and we remain in the middle of nowhere." Of course, while he says that, the road keeps on going. There is something that I often say in my talks. Some of our brothers remained behind with the passing of Sami Efendi in

1984. But the road goes on. We too should not remain with the death of Musa Efendi in 1999. After his death, now also, if we pay attention, what beauty are we living! And in the coming days, future generations will also experience the same longing, that is to say, they will experience longing for these days that we are living. Because the topic is Musa Efendi, there is also a benefit to expressing the opportunities that we missed. There is a famous saying of Farid ud-Din Attar. He said "I was a hunter, and I went down to the material world, saying 'I'll catch my prey, and bring it to eternity,' but I couldn't find it."

Let me say this: Musa Efendi also had a longing. A wish like, "If only those around me would be more attentive and apt, how much more useful would we be!"

WISDOM: Where does this longing stem from?

Abdullah Sert: When it comes to longing, Musa Efendi was particularly that man. He was a man who, when he wanted to give something to someone, he wanted them to accept it. But you can't always find what you're looking for. It also depends on fate. Sometimes we would say, "What can we do? Musa Efendi will be pleased with whatever Allah ordains? He found us as such, and had to be pleased with us." Because there was a big difference between Musa Efendi's own standards and the standards of society. This is a fact. I accept this. I think that because of this, personally, I think Musa Efendi lived with longings. If only there were more people around who understood him. If only we were people who understood what he explained and the subtleties of his life.

WISDOM: How did you feel while in the grip of a lesson given by Musa Efendi? How did he do it? What did he say? What sort of maintenance of the connection with one's brothers did he recommend for those with spiritual duties.

Abdullah Sert: Of course, the happening that we call checking one's lessons, in Musa Efendi's perspective was looking at the *murid-i-murshid* (student-teacher) relationship. More precisely, a relationship at certain times between the *murid* and *murshid* that is more private and confidential. That is to say, it does not consist of only giving a paper and checking where the evening's lesson and it's subtleties have passed to. It means reflecting and painting of one's state, in Sufi terms, with that person; a more private meeting.

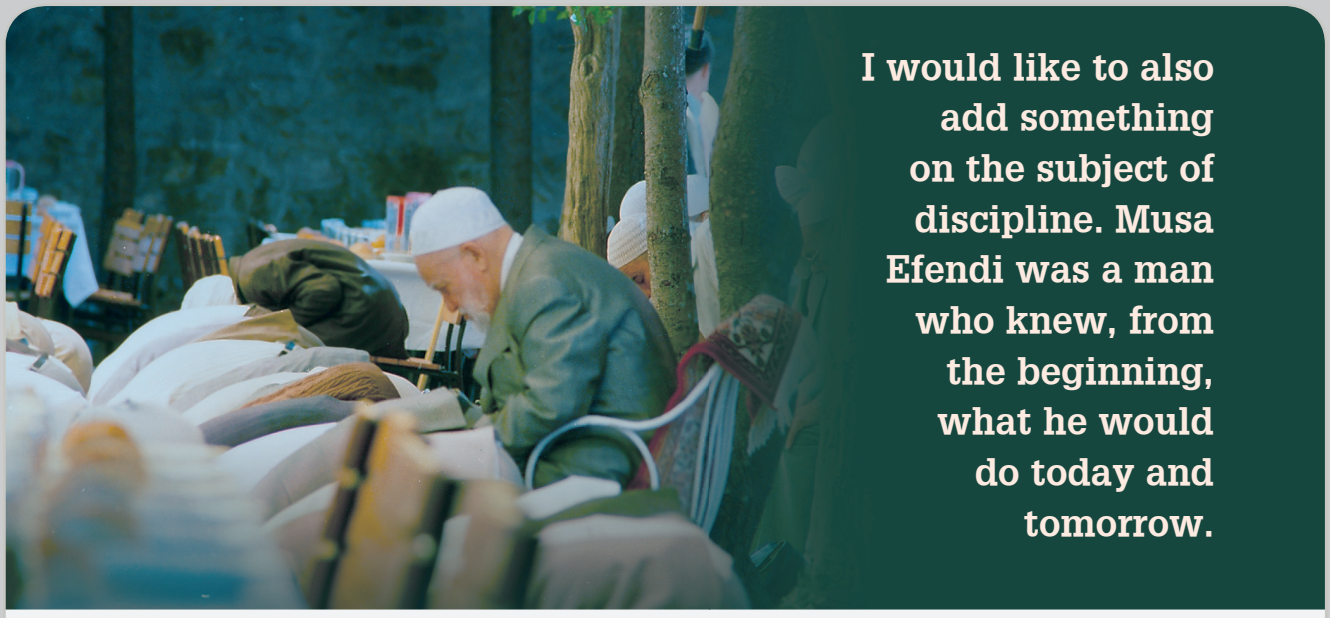
There is a kind of training during that evening lesson. It is a dual education. Underlying this dual education, there is a close vision of the one spoken to, and a taking into observation. From time to time, I had the chance to have my lessons together with the lessons of others. Those were not meetings like those in the form of "From where to where have you passed?"

Therefore, at every meeting with Musa Efendi a vaccination was given for the heart. A vaccination of hope, of love, and of serious responsibility.

They took the form of meeting that person and bonding with them again, refreshing their spiritual point, getting to know their world, and once again establishing a different relationship with them. Musa Efendi would often explain this saying; "**Lessons are not just in the form of a short meeting to determine from where to where you have passed.**" Because of this, the person whom Musa Efendi took before him, he would take almost completely into his heart. That person would feel great happiness in sitting across from where Musa Efendi was. Also, during that happiness, there would come about a flow to the heart. This was also a new path of training. That is, a new thing would be added to the training. Then, Musa Efendi would begin to ask questions: **"How are you doing? Is this work pleasing to you? Is this work coming easy to you? Or is it difficult? Are you able to wake up during the night? How do you feel when you are doing your lessons?"** With these questions, it was almost as if he were taking a picture of the spiritual world of the person to whom he was giving the lesson. He would listen to him. He would listen very well and extensively. At the end of this listening, according to his own determination, he would show him a way. Supposing that person were to say, "I can't wake up at night," he would examine him by asking, "So, why can't you wake up?" Then he'd say, "If you pay attention to these things, you will wake up at night."It was not in the form of questions like, "Why can't you wake up?" Rather, for the people to whom he himself was giving lessons, he would tell of the importance of this spiritual lesson, of it's being a spiritual trust, and of one's being at a loss and harming oneself when doing or not doing, or neglecting it. So, we could say these lessons are "a personal *sohbat* (conversation)." In this sense, we can evaluate the lesson as a more personal conversation in which all the difficulties of the person being addressed are solved. Because not only lessons are under discussion. He would ask about the wife and kids. If there were any difficulties related to them, he would open up the topic a little and offer advice. As it were, he would solve your problem. Basically, the lesson meetings were actually 'trouble' meetings. A physical and spiritual meeting with that person.

WISDOM: There is a saying of Sayyidina Ali: "Love does not manifest itself in hearts that have no peace." So, for a person coming, it's important that his 'baggage' be dumped, right?

Abdullah Sert: Yes. Musa Efendi would first take that baggage from the soul. Here, he would not ask too many questions. There was no calling to account. This was a help in every aspect. In fact, there is something he would say to us often. While meeting with someone, if they needed something, without hurting them, he would say "Solve them." So, the person describing his problems should be integrated with the person conducting lessons. There should be a flow between the



I would like to also add something on the subject of discipline. Musa Efendi was a man who knew, from the beginning, what he would do today and tomorrow.

two people and they should find a solution. A person coming to the class should be able to use *istisharah* (consultation) at a certain level on matters relating to his private life, children, and work and find a solution, or at least receive *dua*s (supplication). If someone has a different kind of trouble, he should be a man to take a prescription for it. So, during the lesson, all problems must be solved. This means a solving of all a person's problems. Musa Efendi set aside a special time for this. In fact, there was something that he insisted on warning about. He said, "When you're given your first lesson, it's not in the form of 'take this paper and do your *awrad* (daily spiritual practices).' Describe at length what the lesson means, what it will bring to you, and what kind of world it enters." There is an important thing that he said: "I used to think along the lines of, 'I will enter Sufism, meet a *murshid* (guide), then I'll receive an *awrad*, and do extra worship. But it wasn't anything like this. A strong vaccination was given to the heart." Therefore, at every meeting with Musa Efendi a vaccination was given for the heart. A vaccination of hope, of love, and of serious responsibility.

WISDOM: According to him, what kind of personality must a person who enters the Sufi path aim for?

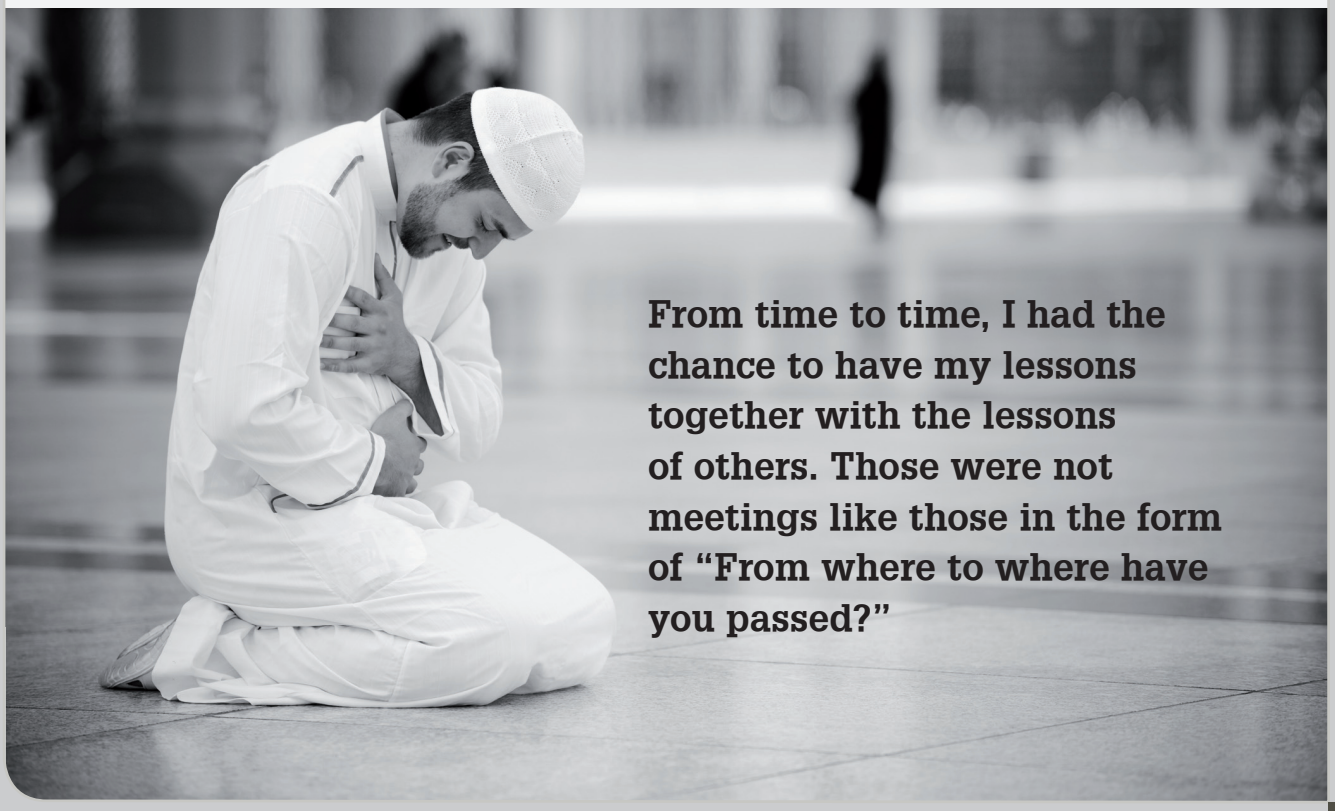
Abdulah Sert: To better understand this subject, we must reflect well the point of what Musa Efendi understood by Sufism, what his understanding of Sufism was. He has a talk called "The Path of the Great Saints." It is the Sufi line of Musa Efendi that must be read again and again. A person has a relationship of servitude with his Lord. It must be very healthy. What is the measure of its well-being? It must be in accordance with *The Qur'an* and Sunnah. So, does this relationship end here? No, there is also the connection with a person's society in which he lives. He also wanted us to live as helpful people and as servants in society. He sets a program in front of us. Of course, it must also be said here that it would not be a service for Musa Efendi to have said this without also implementing it. If Musa Efendi said, "Tell Ahmet to do this," surely he has a share of it. If he said, "Should we start a *wakf* (charitable foundation)?" the first to give was Musa Efendi. "Should we collect aid for a place?" He was the first to take the lead. "Should some work be done?" Surely the person who took the first step was Musa Efendi.

I would like to also add something on the subject of discipline. Musa Efendi was a man who knew, from the beginning, what he would do today and tomorrow. When he woke up in the morning, he knew what he would do for that day, and he would plan what he would do for the next. He was not a man to leave anything to chance. He was like this in his view of Sufi matters, and in his relationships with people. "I should help do

this aid work, and I should visit this person." "I should read this, and I should go there." "I should talk with those people." It was almost like everything related to these things were on an agenda in his own mind.

After presenting this understanding of Sufism, we can now pass to the question of what kind of personality a person who enters the Sufi path should aim for. The ultimate goal of this personality is 'to be like the Companions.' The model that Musa Efendi put us in front of was the Companions. In fact, he was so insistent upon this that he would say, "When one first enters this way, to have a certain amount of excitement, the stories of the saints should be read. However, as one reaches completion, the lives of the Companions should be read." At the end of his publication entitled 'The Path of Saints,' he said: "All in all, the Companions should be at the center of our lives. They went to their deaths like they were going to a wedding. As they saw in the Prophet (upon him peace), they lived their lives with joy, peace, and pleasure. We should also live it." In fact, the *sohbat* comes from the Companions. The main line of our Sami Efendi is the line of Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, 'Ali, Khalid bin Walid, the veterans of Badr and Uhud, and the noble Companions. So, altogether, it is an effort to live completely in the climate of the time of the Prophet. And this was completely present in Musa Efendi.

From where should this begin? To look at some of the details: Once, at dawn, before everything else, a person should be in the presence of Allah. In his words, he should give his heart to Allah. Life should begin with isolating oneself from everything other than Allah, including oneself, abandoning oneself as if there were no other servant in the presence of Allah than oneself, with excitement, and with love. This vibrant life-giving light of dawn should reflect to the day. How will it be reflected to the day? It will reflect in the form of service. It will reflect in the form of affection. It will reflect in the form of giving. It will reflect in the form of altruism. When evening comes, a person should also take the passing day into account. Was I able to succeed in this or that work, or not? He would openly caution a person starting on this way that he should understand this according to the main lines. And he himself was the actual model of this. When you looked at him, you would say it in this way too. You would say, this way of living resembles that of the Companions.



From time to time, I had the chance to have my lessons together with the lessons of others. Those were not meetings like those in the form of "From where to where have you passed?"

Salih Kareem

THE SOCIETY of the Age of Bliss -I-

During the Age of Ignorance, people were undergoing a virtual humanitarian tragedy, demeaning to what essentially defined them as human beings, their reason and conscience.

During the Age of Ignorance, humankind was grounded in bleak darkness. Ignorance was deep-seated; deviancy and transgression were running rife. Chaos was relentlessly showing its ugly face. The Arabian deserts had turned into seas of blood, flowing from the wounds of never-ending blood feuds. Justice and right always belonged to the powerful. Those who acquired power would suddenly turn tyrant, oppressing the weak and the defenceless.

The Degrading Beliefs of the Age of Ignorance

The true faith had become corrupted. Some, supposing the Almighty too distant for them, believed that a divine force was embodied and had become manifest in natural objects like stones, rocks, fire, trees or mountains, which they considered sacred. There were some who worshipped the sun and the moon. By deeming them sacred and revering them, these people thought they could thereby reach Allah, glory unto Him. Others were worshipping nonphysical beings like angels, jinn or the devil. If they

worshipped and respected them well enough, they used to think, these beings could perhaps intercede on their behalf in Divine presence.

There were also idolaters who, on the one hand, claimed to believe in Allah, glory unto Him, while, on the other hand, ascribed partners to Him with various objects or things they wrought with their own hands. Despite their claim to be "the children of Ibrahim and Ismail –upon them peace-", they had long abandoned the belief in tawhîd, the oneness of the Almighty, and were standing at a distant remove the Hanif path that the two prophets had bequeathed them.

The idolaters would ascribe partners to Allah, glory unto Him, almost with anything one could think of. And there was a further group in complete denial of the Almighty and the Hereafter, supposing everything to consist of this visible universe.

Harith, the foster father (Halimah's husband) of the Blessed Prophet (upon him peace) had come to Mecca during the early stages of prophethood to pay a visit to the Prophet. The moment he arrived, he was met by idolaters, who said:"Haven't you heard, Harith, what your son has been saying?"

"What has he been saying?" asked Harith.

"He has been claiming that Allah will resurrect mankind after death. He is also saying that Allah has two abodes called Heaven and Hell, where He will reward the obedient and punish the rebellious. These claims of his have disrupted our order and split out community!"

Harith eventually arrived next to the Blessed Prophet and asked: "What is this dispute between you and your tribesmen all about, dear? You have them complaining about you. They claim that you assure people that they are to be resurrected after death, where they will be bound for either Heaven or Hell."

"Yes, dear father", replied the Blessed Prophet. "That is what I believe and say. If only I could hold you by the hand, right now, and explain how true those words are!"

Harith -Allah be well-pleased with him-

To serve others for Allah's sake, even in unimportant things, may be more valuable than much supererogatory prayer.

Spiritually, society had become a wreck, as individuals were on the brink of total ruin. Islam then arrived to save them from destruction and turned them into members of an exemplary society.

later became Muslim and, as time went by, began reaping his share from the spiritual core of Islam. After his acceptance of Islam, he would say: "How I wish he held me by the hand that day and explained to me the truth of his words and not let go until, with the permission of Allah, he ushered me to Paradise!" (Ibn Ishaq, Sirah, s. 218; Suhayli, Rawd'ul-Unuf, 284-285)

During the Age of Ignorance, people were sunk in many false beliefs. They were undergoing a virtual humanitarian tragedy, demeaning to what essentially defined them as human beings, their reason and conscience. It was almost impossible to find a sound thought, a right idea. False ideas were running riot. And as a result, women were oppressed in society, mothers were banished and daughters were looked upon as bringing shame to the family.

One day, a Companion came to the Blessed Prophet (upon him peace) and said: "We were an ignorant people, Messenger of Allah. We used to worship idols and bury our daughters alive. I had a little daughter who adored me. I remember... I used to call her and she would come running, overjoyed. I again called her one day and she came to me running. She began to walk by my side as I took her by the hand next to a nearby well that belonged to our family. Then grabbing her by the arm, I threw her into the well. The last words I heard from her, as she went crashing down the well, were her screams, 'daddy, daddy!'"Upon hearing these chilling words, tears began flowing from the sparkling eyes of the Blessed Prophet, the ocean of compassion.

Another Companion present then began reproaching the person who had recounted this bitter experience. "You have no right to upset the Messenger of Allah!" he exclaimed. "Leave him", interrupted the Blessed Prophet. "He just wants to clear his chest about something that aggrieves him, something he feels is important." Then turning to that man, he said:"Repeat what you just explained!"

When the Companion retold his story, the Blessed Prophet again broke down in tears, until his beard was left soaked. Turning to the

The Prophet of Allah (upon him peace) stated: "Allah has forgiven the sins committed in the Age of Ignorance of those who have become Muslims."

man, once again, the Prophet of Allah (upon him peace) then stated: "Allah has forgiven the sins committed in the Age of Ignorance of those who have become Muslims. Now, begin your life a new!" (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 1)

Humanity was clearly standing on the edge of a raging pit of fire. Spiritually, society had become a wreck, as individuals were on the brink of total ruin. Islam then arrived to save them from destruction and turned them into members of an exemplary society.

Allah, glory unto Him, states: "And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited, and remember the favor of Allah on you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favor you became brethren; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it, thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way." (Al-i Imran, 103)

Serving the Lord and His Creation were Ignored for Worldly Interests

Most authentic forms of worshipping were long forgotten and what remained was distorted. They had twisted beyond recognition many deeds of worship, like pilgrimage and sacrifice, to the tune of their false beliefs and vested interests. Claiming to give importance to worshipping, they were in fact promoting nothing but evil; though little did they know. They would, for instance, make pilgrims circumambulate naked, after which they would cover their clothing expenses just to flatter their own pride and self-conceit.

The only norm of social relations was power. Right and supremacy belonged to the powerful; the weak exercised no rights, whatsoever. There was not a trace left of peace and stability in society.

What Remained of Moral Qualities were Distorted from their Original Forms:

It had gotten to a stage where the few moral qualities that somehow had managed to survive had become based solely on egoistical interests. They were either practiced in excess or in the bare minimum. Virtue had become a means for a boastful show of strength. They would waste in the name of generosity and commit the worst kind of murder thinkable: they would bury their daughters alive in the name of protecting their pride and honor.

True, a man of the Age of Ignorance was gallant; he always had his weapons close at hand. Courage was his trademark. But his courage was measured by the number of people he killed out of tribal hatred. His courage came from his ego and pride. Underlying his show of courage was an avid desire to prove both his and his tribe's supremacy. The ceaseless wars between tribes were hence eating them away, both physically and spiritually.

Islam taught how to perceive all human beings gathered around the Islamic faith as brothers and to see them like the limbs of one body.

Abolishing the corrupt customs of Ignorance, Islam replaced them with the most beautiful and perfect principles of living. It restrained their unruly tempers with noble dispositions like patience, lenience and justice. Purifying their insensible and sentimental courage from egoism, it spiritualized it, directing it to nobler purposes. Islam taught them to use their courage in the way of superior ideals, like above all restoring justice and the Truth. The man of the Age of Ignorance was generous and hospitable. But these virtues only served to attract praises for himself and his tribe. His grandest ambition was to be venerated, to hold a reputation among men with his nobility, generosity and courage, and awaken feelings of respect and awe in rivals. It was therefore not uncommon for one to slaughter six or seven sheep in one instant and have only their livers roasted for a feast while throwing out the rest of the meat, simply for the purpose of showing off.

While continuing to promote generosity and hospitality, Islam instilled them with a moral content. While acting generously, Muslims would steer clear from showing off and desire only the pleasure of Allah, glory unto Him. Consciousness of the Almighty being the True Owner of all things had, after all, been embedded in their hearts. Accordingly, all riches belong to Allah, glory unto Him, and human beings only act as trustees.

They have only limited authority over wealth and property and they come with certain responsibilities. Given as a trust by the Almighty, it is therefore necessary to put wealth to use in a manner approved and praised by the Almighty. It is vital to use wealth, which ultimately belongs to Allah, glory unto Him, in the service of His servants. One must thereby serve the Almighty by serving His created beings. The Blessed Prophet -upon him blessings and peace- would say: "The hand that gives is superior to the hand that receives."

But whilst giving, one was required to give only for the sake of the Almighty, remaining distant from pride, without any anticipation of worldly ends. The Holy Quran in fact advised and taught all human beings to say: "We only feed you for Allah's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks."

Islam also prohibited wasting. So in stark contrast to the feast of the times of Ignorance, not even a single meat of a sheep slaughtered in the Age of Bliss would go to waste. Again, from feelings of generosity and selflessness, it was not uncommon for meat to pass around seven different families only to return to the same place from where it had been handed out in the first place.

Desert life had led the man of Ignorance to a primitive notion of freedom. They would recognize no authority and rebel against any kind of authority that came. As a consequence, there was no central power. Social solidarity would scarcely go beyond the tribe. There

was neither a system nor an institution of law that exercised a sanctioning power. Disagreements would either be referred to haphazardly chosen arbitrators or, more often than not, to the resolve of brute force.

Islam objected to an unlimited idea of freedom monopolized only by a small minority. The Quran's declaration that a slave with iman was more valuable than a nonbeliever had thus left the idolaters furious. The fiercest protests against Islam therefore came from the ranks of the dominant class, the self-acclaimed free men. They informed the Blessed Prophet –upon him peace- that they would only be willing to negotiate with him on the condition he banished the slaves and the weak from around him; and that offer was unconditionally rejected by the Almighty.

The morals of Islam aligned freedom to spirituality, basing the idea on moral grounds. It brought preventative measures to enable each person to limit his own freedom within his consciousness.

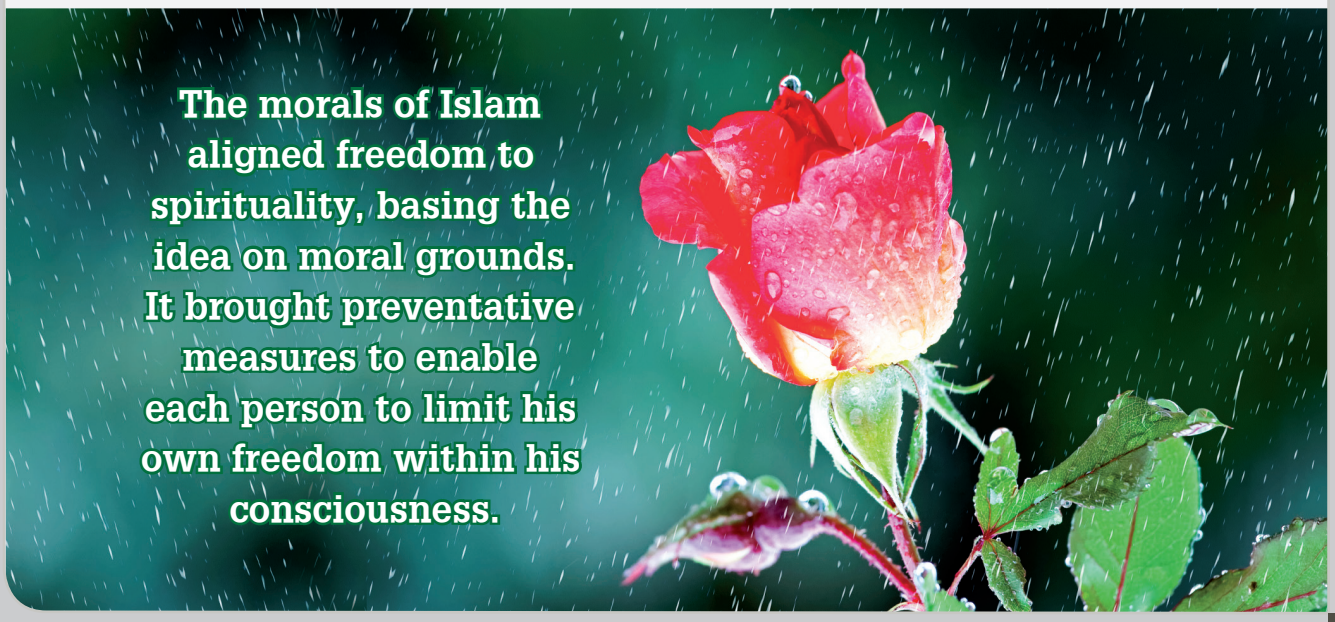
The Holy Quran states: "And certainly We created man, and We know what his mind suggests to him, and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein." (Qaf, 16)

"Do they not know that Allah knows what they keep secret and what they make known?" (al-Baqara, 77; al-Anam, 3)

A Muslim must therefore control not only his actions, but even his hidden tendencies. This essential thought brought about a profound and proportionately swift revolution in the spirit, perception of life and values of the man of Ignorance. He had now become subject to the heavenly authority and, at the same time, an external authority, as well as his own conscience. Given there was a dispute regarding a certain manner, he no longer resorted to brute force, but rather to the mediation of the verdict of Allah, glory unto Him and His Messenger. All Muslims had wholeheartedly embraced the need "to obey Allah, His Messenger and persons in charge from among them."

Solidarity and mutual assistance during the Age of Ignorance would likewise never go beyond feelings of tribalism (asabiyya). The man of Ignorance was hardhearted and ruthless towards those he shared no blood ties with. The value of other beings was measured merely by the benefit they brought. There were simply no recognized limits in preventing others from usurping others' properties. They felt no unease whatsoever in even denying the wages of their workers.

Cleansing feelings of solidarity and mutual assistance from tribal bigotry, Islam reestablished them on the bases of love and compassion that were elevated by moral principles. It taught how to perceive all human beings gathered around the Islamic faith as brothers and to see them like the limbs of one body.



Elif Kapici

EXAMPLES OF WAFA' (FAITHFULNESS) FROM OUR PROPHET

Our Prophet esteemed people who did acts of kindness for a friend and would reciprocate personally and in the most beautiful way, as a requirement of loyalty.

W*afa'* (faithfulness) is a sign of the value given to those who are loved or need to be loved, and given as one's debt of friendship. This is one of the most important marks that make up a Muslim's personality. As character of prophets, saints, and people of virtue, it is a spiritual trait that takes human life to a higher spiritual level.

One day, while the Prophet was together with 'Aisha, an old lady came to them. The Messenger of Allah asked her her name. She answered, "Jassamah al-Mu'zani." Changing her name from something that meant "ugly" to something that meant "beautiful, he said, **"No. You're name is not Jassamah. Your name is Hassanah al-Mu'zani."**

Then, he asked her how she was doing and gave here many compliments. How the Prophet showed respect, interest, and concern towards this old lady had not escaped the attention of 'Aisha. After she left, Aisha wondered about her and asked, "

"Who was that old woman, O Messenger of Allah?"

He replied, **"Being a friend of Khadijah's, she came and went when she was sick. Certainly showing *wafa* (faithfulness/ loyalty) in a beautiful way comes from belief."** (*Hakim, Mustadrak*, I, 20)

The *wafa* (loyalty) that the Prophet (upon him peace) felt for Suwayba, the *jariyah* (servant) of Abu Lahab, was also very splendid. In fact, Suwayba would come to visit the Prophet often, and the Messenger of Allah would show her all the respect and honor due her. After our Prophet married Khadijah, she would also show respect to Suwayba and honor her. Suwayba, who was freed by Abu Lahab after our Prophet's Hijrah to Medina, was looked after by our Prophet, who met all her needs, from the conquest of Khaybar until her death. Also, when the news of Suwayba's death reached him, to honor her, he checked up on her relatives. (*Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istiab*, I, 27-28).

Our Prophet (upon him peace) esteemed people who did acts of kindness for a friend and would reciprocate personally and in the most beautiful way, as a requirement of loyalty. They esteemed him for this.

In fact, one day, a delegation sent by the Negus of Abyssinia came to visit the Prophet. Our Prophet (upon him peace) got up and began to serve them himself. Seeing this, the Companions said:

"O Messenger of Allah, stop. We'll do it for you."

The Messenger of Allah described his feelings about this in this manner:

"They have done good for my Companions; I want to personally do good for them." (*Ibn Kathir, Bidayah*, III, 99).

The honor and attention that was paid to the delegation would then be a compliment to the Negus, the personification of the head of State himself. Likewise, our Prophet, in dealing with them personally, showed how much he valued the kindness shown to him and his Companions in hard times and presented the most beautiful example of loyalty.

May Allah allow us to follow the example of our beloved Prophet (upon him peace). May Allah gather us together with the Messenger of Allah along with all other prophets, the righteous believers, and the foremost in faith. Indeed they are the best of company.

The honor and attention that was paid to the delegation would then be a compliment to the Negus. Likewise, our Prophet, in dealing with them personally, showed how much he valued the kindness shown to his Companions in hard times and presented the most beautiful example of loyalty.

Halime Demiresik

Sayyidah - II -

UMMU HABIBAH BINT ABU SUFYAN

Umm Habibah is a great example for those who, when faced by the smallest trial, cry out: "There is no way out," "I can't practice my religion", "my husband/ wife, my job prevents me from practicing my religion..."

My Beloved…!

Ummu Habibah's affection for Prophet Muhammad was very great; in fact, there is an hadith that suggests that she used the term "beloved" when talking about him.

This situation should be considered to be normal as she was a lady who had undergone great trials for Islam. Her love and affection for the Prophet of Islam was not just for his person, but for any object that belonged to him. An event that occurred in Islamic history presents a good example of this.

The Hudaibiya Treaty was a ten-year treaty that the polytheists of Mecca had contracted with the Muslims. However, this treaty did not put an end to the hatred and resentment of the polytheists towards the Muslims. They were merely looking for an opportunity to cause harm to them. Finally, in contravention of the articles of the treaty, the polytheists incited the Bani Bakir tribe, who were affiliated with them against the Huzaa tribe, and they attacked them. In fact, some of them went so far as to commit (foul) murder.

The Huzaa tribe, with which the Prophet of Allah (upon him peace) was affiliated,

were Muslims. They were praying when they were attacked. In a great massacre they were martyred, some whilst in *sajda*, some in *ruku* and others while in *qiyam*…Amr bin Salim, who managed to escape with his life from this massacre, told the Prophet about this event, and as he was talking Prophet Muhammad's eyes filled with tears. The tear drops, like pearls, wet his rose-like cheeks. The Prophet was very saddened by this event.

He immediately consulted with the leading Companions and the decision made was to attack and conquer Mecca. However, this was not to be made public, so that secret preparations were carried out in Medina and the neighboring tribes. At the same time, news was sent to Mecca that the murderers should pay blood money to the Huzaas or forego the patronage of the Bani Bakir tribe, and if neither of these offers were accepted the Hudaybiya Treaty would be considered null and void. The cruel polytheists, whose eyes were full of vengeance and thirst for blood, accepted the third of these proposals made by Prophet Muhammad (upon him peace): that is they decided to nullify the agreement. This was nothing less than an invitation to the Muslims to attack Mecca.

Even if the polytheists had come to their senses, it was too late: the treaty had been nullified by both sides. In order to rectify the problem, the chief of the Quraysh, Abu Sufyan, set out for Medina, desperate and without hope. He tried to meet with a number of people, including Prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr and Umar. However, none of them agreed to meet with him. He was to return empty-handed to Mecca. As a last attempt, he decided to visit his daughter, Ummu Habibah, who was married to Prophet Muhammad.

As her father was about to sit down, Ummu Habibah withdrew a floor cushion from under him, even though he had come so far to visit her in her house. Abu Sufyan was surprised and asked: "*My dear, is the cushion not worthy of me, or am I not worthy of the cushion*?"

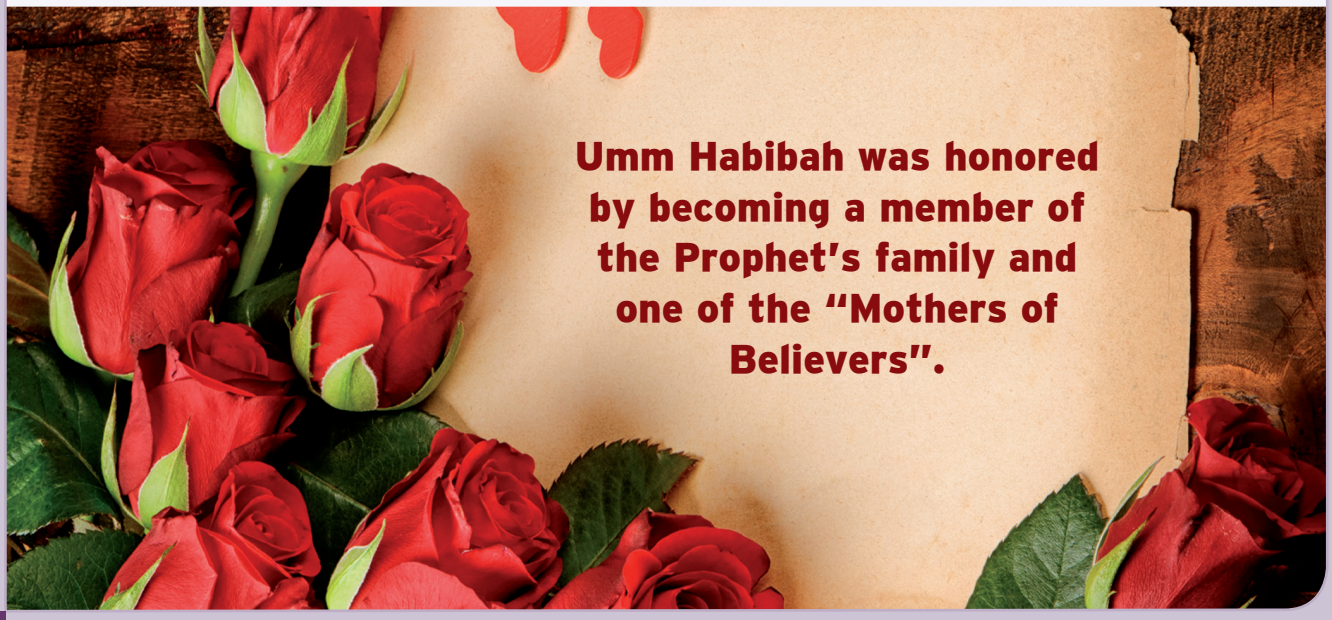
Ummu Habibah, one who was devoted to Prophet Muhammad, answered: "*This cushion belongs to Prophet Muhammad (upon him peace). A filthy infidel like you could never be worthy of sitting on it…!*"

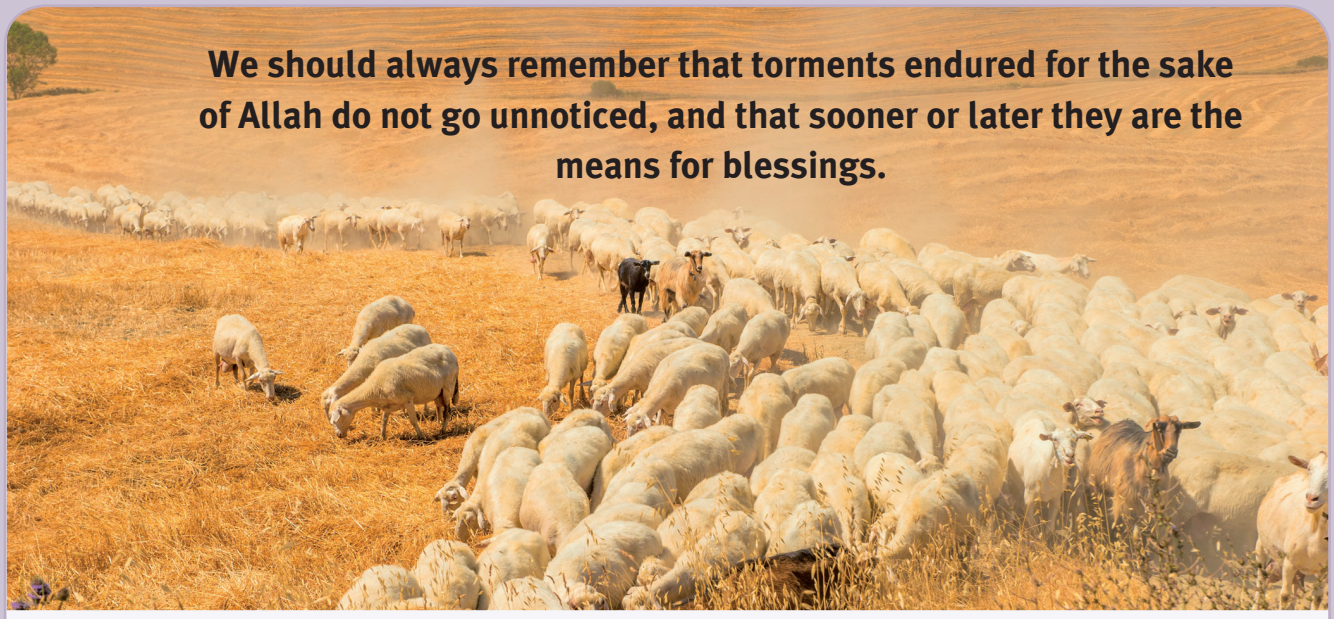
Abu Sufyan was shocked when he heard this reply: "*My dear, you have lost all manners since you have left us…!*" he said

However, Ummu Habibah said: "*No, Allah has honored me with Islam…*" thus reminding her father that belief is more sublime than any other value.

This is a beautiful example of what a Muslim must do when they are fully aware of their religion. No matter what the relationship is, Muslims should not be with relatives who are opposed to Islam just because they are connected by blood.

Faced by such an attitude on the part of all the Companions, led by Prophet Muhammad (upon him peace), Abu Sufyan had no choice





but to return to Makkah. He was unable to hide his shock when telling the residents of Makkah, who had gathered around him, that a peace was not possible: "*I have never met a tribe this devoted, even to their ruler*."

The Character of Ummu Habibah

After becoming Muslim, Ummu Habibah, one of the first people in polytheist Makkah to accept Islam (in other words, a *sabikun*), was subjected to the oppression inflicted by her father Abu Sufyan and the other unbelievers in the name of the religion. At that time, despite being pregnant, she displayed great bravery and resolution by emigrating to Abyssinia.

Her first husband, Ubaydullah bin Jahsh, was an active member of the community in Abyssinia, serving as a leader of the Muslims alongside Jafar bin Abi Talib. However, when her husband apostatised and became Christian, Ummu Habibah, who had a strong belief, was not affected: she remained a devout Muslim. She took on the challenge of remaining in Abyssinia as a single mother and did not think of returning to Mecca, where her father Abu Sufyan was chief.

In general, the **Ummuhatu'l Muminin** (Mothers of Believers), that is the Prophet's wives, were all women who were devout and who possessed *taqwa*: and Ummu Habibah was no exception. An intelligent, clever and articulate woman, Ummu Habibah takes her place among the Companions as one who gave *fatwa* on one or two matters.

Ummu Habibah is known as someone who wished for the good and was charitable toward others. In this aspect, she wished fervently, from her heart, that other women would also be honored by becoming the wife of Prophet Muhammad, even though this would mean that she would have to share her husband.

A hadith reported by Umma Habibah, the daughter of Abu Sufyan, reads as follows: "*Once I said: 'O Prophet! Marry my sister, the daughter of Abu Sufyan…!' The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'How strange, you (are not jealous and) wish for this?' I replied: 'Yes, I desire this, because I cannot share my status with you with another. I would like that my sister to be my partner in this!' In response to this Prophet Muhammad said: 'You must understand that your sister is not halal for me!' I then said: 'Fine, but I have heard that you want to marry the daughter of Abu Salama.' Prophet Muhammad said: 'The daughter of Ummu Salama?' I said yes. Then the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: 'The daughter of Ummu Salama (Zainab) is my step-sister, who grew up as my ward and under my hand. Marrying her is haram for me. Even if this were not the case, she would not be halal for me because she is the daughter of my suckling brother. Suwayba nursed both me and Abu Salama.' He then added: 'Do not offer me any of your daughters or sisters again!'*"

She withstood the troubles of her life without giving way; in short, she is an example of one who chose the Hereafter rather than this world.

When studying the above example, we must remember that Ummu Habibah was a person renowned for her fidelity in religion and for remaining in Abyssinia for a long time. It was not known at the time of the above hadith that two sisters could not marry the same man, and it is perhaps for this reason that she made such an offer.

Ummu Habibah reported 65 hadiths from Prophet Muhammad, though it is possible that this number is higher. When she reported hadiths she would make ablution and would request the person who was listening to also have ablution.

Ummu Habibah was the midwife at the birth of Dawood bin Asim bin Urwa ,who was later to marry her daughter. From this we can deduce the possibility that she acted as midwife for other people as well. Also, according to a hadith reported by Ibn Asakir, Prophet Muhammad reported that Ummu Habibah was blessed with Paradise.

Ummu Habibah remained married to Prophet Muhammad for four years, and she continued to live with asceticism and *taqwa* for thirty-four years after his death. Ummu Habibah, like the other wives of the Prophet, was shown great respect and was greatly valued by the other Muslims, and it was for this reason that during the time when her brother Muawiya was caliph he was referred to as the *'uncle of believers'*.

Ummu Habibah did not participate in the instigation that arose among Muslims after the death of Prophet Muhammad. However, when her cousin Uthman's house was attacked, she went there; and a man in the house pulled back her headscarf and not recognising her, started to list her physical attributes. In response to this disgusting behavior Ummu Habibah said: "*What is going on here! May Allah smite your hand – leave the area of mahram.*" Another person there cut off the right hand of the person who had pulled off her scarf. The man whose arm had been cut off started to flee, holding on to his gown with his left hand (or his mouth); however, his genital area was exposed.

Ummu Habibah died when she was seventy years old, in the 44th year of the *hijrah*, during the reign of her brother Muawiya. May Allah be pleased with her.

Lessons to be Learned from the Life of Sayyidina Ummu Habibah

1 – Ummu Habibah was a member of one of the leading families of Makkah. She could have lived a life of nobility, wealth, luxury and comfort. However, she listened to her heart and the instant she found out about Islam she became a follower. She was a living example of the hadith uttered by Prophet Muhammad: "*A noble life is the life of the Hereafter.*"

2 – She underwent much torment and oppression because of her enthusiasm for her faith, but the troubles she experienced did

not force her back to her former life from the Age of Ignorance. She was able to protect her beliefs and even to abandon the country in which she was born and grew up to go to Abyssinia, where she could practice her faith in safety. The fact that during this emigration she was pregnant and that she was going to a country which was unfamiliar to her shows us how sincere and devoted Ummu Habibah was to the religion. She underwent great difficulties and trouble to protect her faith and to practice her religion. She is a great example for those who, when faced by the smallest trial, cry out: "There is no way out," "I can't practice my religion", "my husband/ wife, my job prevents me from practicing my religion…"

3- Her husband changed his religion and became Christian, but this did not turn her from Islam. Even though she was alone, she did not deviate from the correct path. She took her child under her wing and set up ramparts against her husband's propaganda. All of this behavior demonstrates her courage, intelligence, bravery, obedience, submission and resolution. She withstood the troubles of her life without giving way; in short, she is an example of one who chose the Hereafter rather than this world.

4- The torment that she underwent for the religion left echoes in the hearts of the other Muslims and Prophet Muhammad, and she was honored by becoming a member of the Prophet's family and one of the "Mothers of Believers". This shows that torments endured for the sake of Allah do not go unnoticed, and that sooner or later they are the means for blessings.

5 – After marrying Prophet Muhammad, despite the importance of the ties of family, she did not allow her own father, Abu Sufyan, to sit on the cushion of Prophet Muhammad. This action alone is a perfect example of how deeply rooted belief was in her heart, and demonstrates how one should love for the sake of Allah, and how one should dislike for His sake as well.

6 – Ummu Habibah married Prophet Muhammad and came to Medina, and he allocated her a room there. Ummu Habibah cleaned this room, decorated it and enhanced it with lovely fragrances. Prophet Muhammad praised her for these actions. This event tells us that a Muslim woman should always try to fulfill the order to make every thing as beautiful or good as possible. This means that, our houses, without falling into luxury or waste, should be as beautiful as possible, and we should strive to be as clean as possible, to care for our children as well as possible and to carry out our duties as well as possible.

7 – This blessed mother was very intelligent, very articulate and was one of the Companions who had enough knowledge to give fatwas, showing the way for all women believers in knowledge, *taqwa* and state.

May Allah bless us with being her neighbour in Paradise. Amin!

No matter what the relationship is, Muslims should not be with relatives who are opposed to Islam just because they are connected by blood.

Quiz For Children

1. **On what date is Eid-ul-Fitr celebrated?**
   a. 27th Ramadan
   b. 1st Ramadan
   c. 27th Shawwal
   d. 1st Shawwal

2. **In what Islamic month did the Mir'aaj of the Prophet occur?**
   a. Muharram
   b. Ramadan
   c. Rajab
   d. Shawwal

3. **What is the name of the first month of the Islamic calendar?**
   a. Shaban
   b. Ramadan
   c. Muharram
   d. Rabiul Awwal

4. **What is the second pillar of Islam.**
   a. Salaat
   b. Zakat
   c. Hajj
   d. Sawm

5. **What is the name given to the following position in the prayer: bowing one's body until one's palms are on one's knees?**
   a. Ruku
   b. Sajdah
   c. Tashahhud
   d. Qiyam

6. **In what Islamic month is the Hajj performed?**
   a. Shawwal
   b. Dhul Hijjah
   c. Rabiul Akhir
   d. Muharram

7. **In what city is the Hajj performed?**
   a. Makkah
   b. Medina
   c. Taif
   d. Qudus

8. **Which month is referred to in Surah Baqarah verse 185?**
   a. Rajab
   b. Ramadan
   c. Rabiul Awwal
   d. Dhul Hijjah

9. **Which Battle is referred to in Surah Al-i Imran verse 155?**
   a. Yarmuk
   b. Tabuk
   c. Badr
   d. Uhud

10. **In what year did Muhammad Fatih conquer Istanbul?**
    a. 1423
    b. 1453
    c. 1473
    d. 1493

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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