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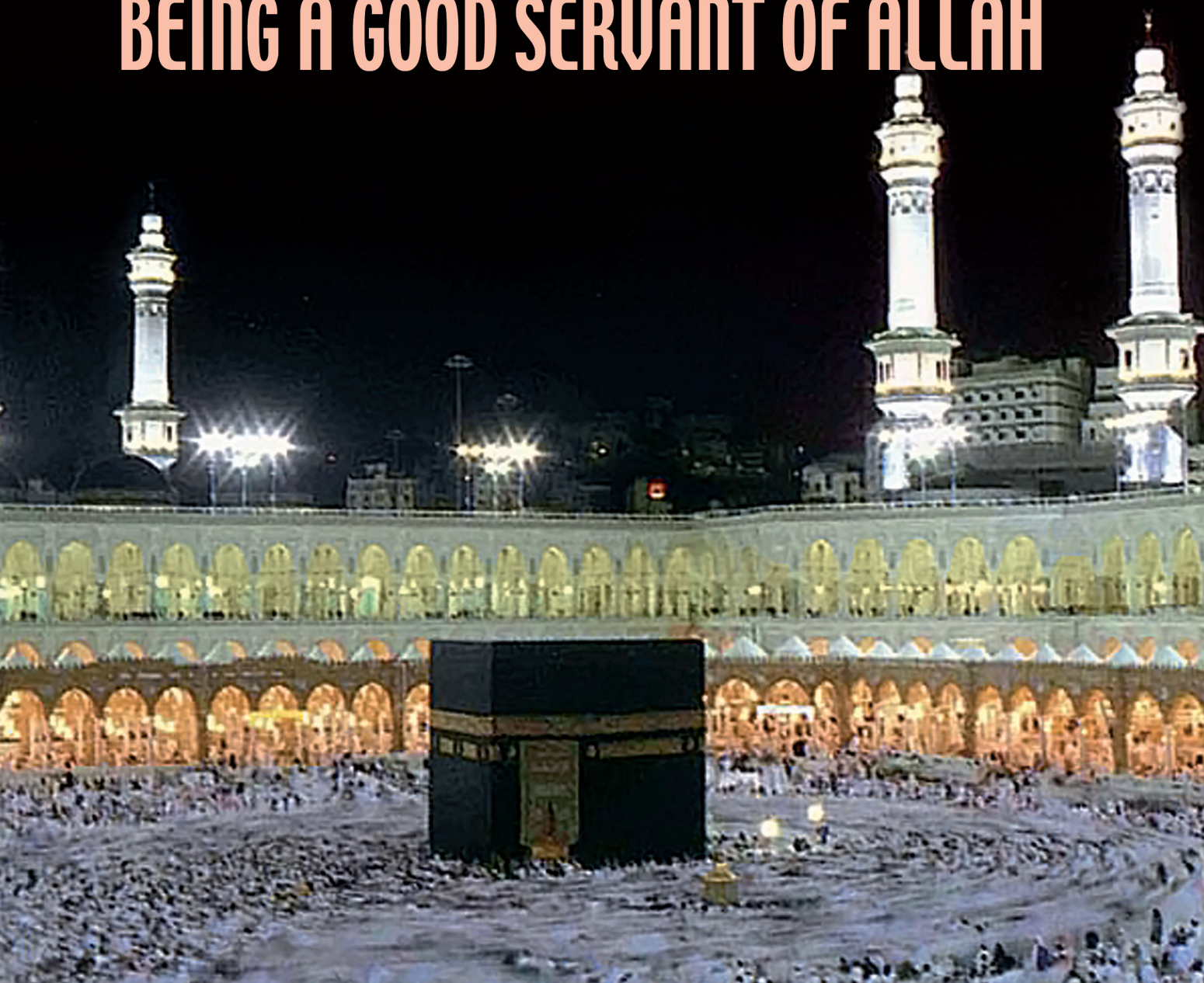


WISDOM

A Source of Inspirational and Traditional Islamic Knowledge

AL-TINOLUK

OUR ULTIMATE AIM: BEING A GOOD SERVANT OF ALLAH



Osman Nuri Efendi

What the Companions Thought About
Prophet Muhammad

I. Lutfi Cakan

The Essence Of Servanthood

Mustapha Sheikh

Selections From Ibn Ajiba

Halime Demiresik / The Mother Of Believers • Melek Zeynep / The Cornerstone Of Peace and Islam • Pearls of Wisdom

EDITORIAL

*D*ear Readers,

When our beloved Prophet was asked by Allah Most High in the secret shrine of his heart whether he would prefer to be a king prophet or a servant prophet, he answered with the fullness of divine wisdom, “A servant prophet.” Therefore we call him Muhammad Abduhu wa Rasuluhu, Muhammad the Servant and Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s peace be upon him forever.

The first generation were the best of servants to Allah. For that reason, we focus on the real meaning of servanthood to Allah in light of one’s struggles and tests, and the very essence of being a servant in light of the Greatness of Allah and the weakness of one’s self.

The first article is from the writings of Osman Nuri Efendi, our teacher on the path of the gifted and righteous companions. His article talks about the feelings and devotion of the companions to our Master, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), including Abu Bakr whose confidence was unflinching that he was well known for the statement “...if the Prophet said it then it must be true.”

Also in this edition is the story of the unwavering devotion of the wife of the Prophet, Sayyidina Khadijah bint Huwaylid. This story of her life with the Prophet is a true love story full of tests, trials, happiness and confidence in the mission of her husband. All of these qualities are forever recorded in time and remembered by every Muslim when they recall that she was the first believer... the first Muslim.

Certainly today, there are many people in this world who are facing struggles and tests of poverty and the harshness of this world who can be an example to the rest of the world of patience in the face of diversity. The article entitled “The African Movement Continuing: The First Condition of the African Task; Living There”. The story of Burkina Faso, where the people were starving not just for the food to fill their stomachs, but also for food to fill their souls, and about a journey to build them their first mosque.

It is our sincere hope that you find inspiration and direction in these articles, but mostly we hope that you find more reason to be a better servant of Allah and confident in your ability to be a traveler on the esteemed path of the companions and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Elif Kapici
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WHAT THE COMPANIONS THOUGHT ABOUT PROPHET MUHAMMAD

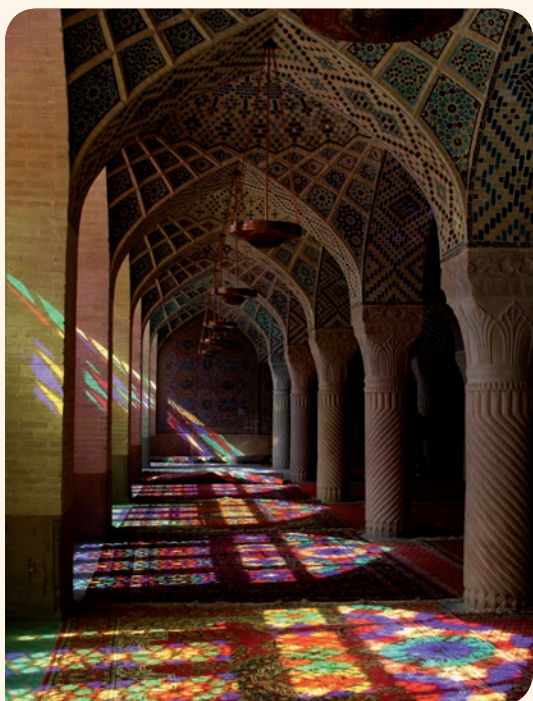
The Companions of Allah attained the lofty character of Prophet Muhammad and are a reflection of his purity and spirituality for everyone; they loved Prophet Muhammad with the best of faith, devotion and affection and they submitted their souls in the most beautiful way.

I WOULD SACRIFICE MY MOTHER AND FATHER!

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the embodiment of love and the peak of affection for all of mankind; from the time of Prophet Adam (pbuh) there has been no one of true faith who has not loved him.

The souls of all the living and non-living are full of affection for him, as stated in the following hadith: “Every being between the heavens and the earth, all but the jinn and the disobedient among mankind, knows that I am Allah’s Messenger.” (Imam Ahmad)

All the Prophets and friends of Prophet Muhammad and Companions of Allah knew him with love and affection; they were more loyal to him than they were to themselves. Those who embraced him with affection were concerned for his every need; they committed their entire lives to Prophet Muhammad and his struggle. Their devotion and affection was frequently displayed and mentioned; in each instance they would say: “You are dearer to us than our mothers and fathers.”



HE MADE THE PEOPLE LOVE HIM...

Prophet Muhammad was so loved by the Companions that it is not possible to understand the true depth of this affection; this love came from divine attachment, and was a manifestation of their affection for Allah, a love for the truth. This abundance love and affection for Prophet Muhammad was from the One Who called him 'The loved one', Allah. The affection for the Prophet displayed by a woman who was from the Dinar tribe and who had lost three martyrs, her husband, her father and her brother, in the battle of Uhud was so great! When the Companions went to visit and comfort her, the first thing she asked was: "Is the Messenger of Allah alive?" Then she said: "Show him to me." When she saw Prophet Muhammad she said: "All praise is to You, Allah...! If I hadn't seen him alive then nothing could have comforted me..."

Prophet Muhammad has been recorded in history with the following words uttered by his Companions:

THERE WAS NOBODY MORE LOVED!

The polytheists of Mecca strung Hubaib from the gallows to hang him. Abu Sufyān asked him "To save your own life would you rather your Prophet took your place?" Hubaib, pitying Abu Sufyān, answered without even pausing for thought; with great courage he shouted: "Never! Not only would I not want him to take my place, I would not even want a thorn to prick his holy foot in the city of Medina where is right now!" Hearing this, Abu Sufyān could not help but say: "I have never seen anyone in the world loved so much by his friends as Muhammad!" (Ibn Sa'd)

The reason why the Companions demonstrated so much affection for the Prophet was that they knew him well and they were able to perceive his great spirituality, thus loving him more than they did anyone else. Abu Bakr al-Siddiq was without doubt one of those who knew and loved Prophet Muhammad the most. Whatever the subject, whether it was confidential or public, secret or open, in every matter Abu Bakr al-Siddiq's answer was:

WHATEVER THE MESSENGER SAYS IS THE TRUTH!

When Prophet Muhammad was about to relate the Mi'rāj (night journey) to the atheists of the Quraysh he said to Gabriel: "O Gabriel! My nation will not believe me!" And Gabriel, trying to comfort him, said: "Abu Bakr will believe you; he is faithful." (Ibn Sa'd)

When the atheists heard about the Mi'rāj, they immediately called Prophet Muhammad a liar; using this as an excuse they tried to get the believers to reject Islam, even going to Abu Bakr; however, he told them, with great faith and devotion: "Whatever he says is the truth! He wouldn't lie! Whatever he says I will believe and support..." And the unbelievers said to him: "You accept what he says, but do you really believe that he went to Masjid al-Aqsa and returned?" Abu Bakr replied: "Yes, why are you so surprised? I swear, day or night,

When Muhammad found his own divine light in this universe of mortality, he glimpsed the world of pure ones, just for a moment, and with this glimpse he split the moon in two.



whenever a revelation comes to him from Allah, the Prophet tells me and I believe him.”

Then he added: “Isn’t it possible that the One Who communicates with him from the skies could send him to the heavens? You speak such foolishness!” Abu Bakr then went to Prophet Muhammad, who was in the Ka’ba and he listened to what had happened as reported by the Messenger himself and said: “You tell the truth, O Messenger of Allah!” Prophet Muhammad was so pleased that Abu Bakr believed him that he smiled; it was as if the entire universe was lit up by that smile. He said to Abu Bakr: “You are a faithful one, O Abu Bakr.” (Ibn Hishām)

Abu Bakr dedicated himself and whatever he owned to Prophet Muhammad; the only thing that we can say about Abu Bakr and everything he did is that:

EVERYTHING WAS FOR PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND ALLAH!

The whole of Abu Bakr’s existence was dedicated to Prophet Muhammad, so much so that even when he was with the Messenger Abu Bakr would yearn for him; every moment he had was spent in the company of the Prophet. In a verse of the Qur’ān he is called the ‘Second of the two’. Prophet Muhammad was on Abu Bakr’s mind and heart at all times.

Everything he owned was at the command of the Messenger to such an extent that one day Prophet Muhammad said: “The most generous of my people with his Companionship and wealth is Abu Bakr.”

Hearing this Abu Bakr burst into tears and said: “Are not I and everything I own for you alone O Messenger of Allah?”

Abu Bakr had learned:

TO CHOOSE ALLAH!

Prophet Muhammad taught his followers to choose Allah; he himself was the greatest example of this and those who knew him followed in the Prophet’s footsteps. During his final illness Prophet Muhammad could not join the community, so he asked Abu Bakr to lead the prayer on his behalf. When he felt a little stronger he went to the mosque and advised the Companions: “O People! Allah gave a choice to one of His worshippers to choose this world or what is with Him in the Hereafter. He chose the latter.” The sensitive and delicate heart of Abu Bakr realized what the Messenger was saying, but he was so saddened by this farewell speech of Prophet Muhammad that he burst into tears, saying: “You are dearer to us than our mothers and fathers, O Messenger! We would sacrifice our mothers, our fathers, our wealth and our children for you!”

Abu Bakr was so faithful and devoted to the

In order to benefit from Prophet Muhammad's spirituality we need to learn about him and his life. Living according to the regulations and purity of Islam is the only way we can embrace the behavior of Prophet Muhammad



Messenger of Allah that he could understand him; the reason for Abu Bakr's affection for and knowledge of the faith was Prophet Muhammad and Abu Bakr clearly implied with every action that:

MIRACLES ARE NOT NECESSARY FOR THOSE WHO KNOW HIM!

The miracles of all the Prophets were confirmed by Prophet Muhammad with the revelations of the holy Qur'an; the example of his character was such a miracle for the community, containing such knowledge and wisdom, that no other miracle was necessary. Prophet Muhammad was the source of faith for many, including Abu Bakr. This is how Mawlana explained this miracle of truth: "When Abu Bakr attained the spiritual presence of the Messenger he said: 'This face is not the face of a liar; it is a holy face that gives revelation from Allah' and his heart was filled with affection and faith. The faithful one of Allah did not require miracles and said: 'This blessed person would not say anything that was not the truth' and he ran towards the path of Allah. But, because Abu Jahl refused to try to find the truth he did not accept the faith, even though he witnessed hundreds of miracles, like the moon splitting into two."

The hearts of those who thought like Abu Jahl were blind due to the weakness of their

egos and they were the slaves of the devil. Even though they said "You are truthful, you are a faithful one" they did not accept the truth or the glory of the straight path. This and their ill treatment of Prophet Muhammad are the reasons why they are among the grief stricken.

All this shows that only those who see Prophet Muhammad as Abu Bakr did know that:

HIS DIVINE LIGHT IS CLEARER THAN THE SUN...

In a report by Suleyman Chalabi it is stated: "Prophet Muhammad was such a divine light of admiration that even the sun used to follow him everywhere..." Prophet Muhammad is the light and the dearest of those from the past and the eternal; he is the divine light that shines on the two universes. Prophet Muhammad was so great that he cannot be compared to the sun or to the moon; his was a light of beauty that surpasses description. It is mentioned in the Qur'an as a 'Lamp that spreads light.'

Mawlana describes the light of Prophet Muhammad in the following way: "That gleaming light is reflected into all of our hearts. It shines on the souls; the knowledge of Adam and the other Prophets were attained with this light. This light was reflected onto Adam, it was held by Seth. Adam saw the light of Seth and made him a Caliph. Nuh (pbuh) received the light and poured the pearls into the ocean

of life. Ibrāhīm (pbuh) threw himself into the flames of the oppressor with the manifestation of this light on his soul. When Ishmael fell into this river of light he was overwhelmed that he willingly laid down his head for his father. The soul of Dāwūd (pbuh) was warmed by the rays of this light and became so hot that iron melted in his hand like a candle. Sulaymān (pbuh) took the generosity of the light like a baby sucking milk, and the giants were at his beck and call. Ya'qūb (pbuh) accepted and bowed his head to the incident of the divine light, but the separation from his beloved Yūsuf (pbuh) grieved him and the scent of Yūsuf's shirt lit up his eyes. The bright-faced Yūsuf saw the light of the sun of Muhammad and his understanding of dreams deepened. He became greatly aware. The staff was held by Mūsā; it was from this that he drank the Divine light; it swallowed up the Pharaoh and his kingdom.

'Isa found the stairs of faith and quickly reached the upper levels above the skies with the divine light. When Muhammad found his own divine light in this universe of mortality, he glimpsed the world of pure ones, just for a moment, and with this glimpse he split the moon in two. When Abu Bakr saw the divine light of the Prophet Muhammad he became the faithful, devoted and inseparable companion of that master of Prophets. When 'Umar fell in love with the source of divine light, the beloved beyond comparison, he chose between the truth and falsehood and became "he

who distinguishes the truth from falsehood. 'Uthmān was one with a heart of purity and clear thoughts and he attained a light of such prosperity that he was granted two very special lights. Prophet Muhammad called him the owner of two lights.

'Alī scattered pearls with the means of this divine light, and became the lion of Allah in the valley of life and the universe of meaning. That great holy man Junayd Baghdādī gained help from the soldiers of that light and their ranks of spirituality increased immensely, they were innumerable. Bayāzīd Bistāmī saw the true path with the gleam of that light clearly, and because of this they called him the 'Happy one of the wise men'. Ma'rūf Karakhī was a guard in the home of that divine light, he was the assistant of the affectionate and lived and breathed with the divine one. When Ibrāhīm bin Adham rode the horse towards the light and turned towards that light for the rest of his life he became the Sultan of all Sultans. With the desire to find the light, Shakīk Balkhī set out on a difficult journey and endured many hardships; due to such difficulties his thoughts were as bright as the sun and his understanding was intense.

There are hundreds of thousands more sultans of mystery, many more who have reached the universe of light and the high ranks of spirituality due to that light of divinity.

If I were to call this great light of eternity the



Whatever the subject, whether it was confidential or public, secret or open, in every matter Abu Bakr al-Siddiq's answer was: "whatever the messenger says is the truth!"

life of the ocean or the ocean of life this would not be worthy of Prophet Muhammad; we will have to search for something else to call him.

Prophet Muhammad is such a great light of authority that all the words we use while trying to describe him are insufficient. All the souls, their spirit, essence and significance are just the surface when compared to him.”

In order to benefit from Prophet Muhammad’s spirituality and divine light we need to learn about him and his life. Living according to the regulations and purity of Islam is the only way we can embrace the behavior of Prophet Muhammad; this condition, which is set out for all believers, is called:

LIVING WITH THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH

Being overwhelmed and losing oneself in an ocean of affection for Prophet Muhammad...

The sign of this is the reflection of the Qur’ān and Sunnah in every aspect of our lives; this is important because one who is unable to achieve living with the Messenger can never attain living with Allah. The essence of this order is to love Prophet Muhammad more than anyone else and to be devoted to him with great affection. Abdullah bin Hishām explained: “We were with the Messenger of Allah; he took hold of ‘Umar’s hand and ‘Umar said to him: “O Messenger of Allah! You are dearer to me than everything but myself.” Prophet Muhammad turned to ‘Umar and said : “No, by He who holds my soul in His hand, (you will never have complete faith) until I am dearer to you than your own self.” ‘Umar immediately answered: “In that case, you are even dearer to me than myself.” Prophet Muhammad replied: “Now, ‘Umar you are a true believer.” (Bukhārī)

In another hadith, Prophet Muhammad said: “By He Who holds my life in His hand, none of you will have faith until you loves me more than your father and your children.” (Bukhārī) This is the reality and condition of true faith. All the fortunate ones of mankind have reached their positions among the

gleaming stars of humanity because they lived according to these conditions. Thus, we must also know, love and follow the path of the Messenger of Allah, the path which the people of greatness chose.

And we must never forget:

LOVE AND RESPECT FOR PROPHET MUHAMMAD IS A MUST

Those exalted by his love and respect are the true ones of compassion; this is the most distinct characteristic of the Companions and the great ones in Islam who followed their path. There are numerous examples, here are just a few of them: Imam Abū Hanīfa, who had been to hajj many times, would go to the grave of Prophet Muhammad with great respect and politeness; entering the garden, he would bow his head to gain the permission of Prophet Muhammad.

Out of respect Imam Mālik would maintain





his ablutions within the boundaries of Medina.

The great scholar Imam Nawawī was so devoted to Prophet Muhammad that, since he never found a hadith about the Prophet eating watermelon, he refused to eat it.

The great wise man Sayyid Ahmad Yasawī, who spread the message and the light of Islam from the Middle East to the Balkans, had a headstone engraved when he was sixty-three years old, saying: “After reaching this age I no longer need to live on this earth!” As a result of being so devoted to Prophet Muhammad and spending his life in worship and guidance Yasawī carried on this devotion to the grave.

The souls of the wise ones that were created with such affection attained the manners of Prophet Muhammad in a magnificent way because they were devout and sincere with a love full of wisdom.

THOSE WHO LOVE HIM ARE A REFLECTION OF MUHAMMAD

When we think of the love and reflection of the Prophet, one of the people who comes to mind from the latest period of the Companions of Allah is Sami Efendi. His adoration and actions were very much like those of Prophet Muhammad. This blessed person lived his life like Prophet Muhammad in every way and acted as a guide and example to the community.

The innumerable examples of his excellent ways and behavior are so much like that of the Prophet of the Universe; his affection for Prophet Muhammad was so deeply embedded and he was so careful to be an example to others in every detail. While he was buying a train ticket he would get the fare ready before he went so he would not waste the time of those who were waiting in the queue; he visited the people who were dear to him even if they never returned his visit; this was a manner of great honor.

Sami Efendi was a great lover of Medina and it was a divine blessing that he passed away in the city of Medina and was buried there. Whoever saw him and Musa Efendi, another Companions of Allah, whom Sami Efendi had taught, would say:

‘Uthmân was one with a heart of purity and clear thoughts and he attained a light of such prosperity that he was granted two very special lights.

THEY HAVE FACES LIKE ANGELS:

We were on our way back to Bursa with Sami Efendi and Musa Efendi, we were about to join the queue to get on the ferry to Yalova when the steward responsible for keeping cars in order came to show us the way. He noticed Sami Efendi and Musa Efendi, who were sitting in the rear of the car. He stopped in astonishment and came nearer the car, looking carefully through the window; he sighed deeply, and said: "Allah, Allah, what a funny world! Some faces are like angels... And some are faces of cruelty!"

Truly the faces of those who are a reflection of the life of Prophet Muhammad are like the faces of angels.

Like Sami Efendi, Musa Efendi was also a great Companion who was overwhelmed by affection for and the light of Prophet Muhammad; his heart would flutter when he heard the name of the city of Medina or that of Prophet Muhammad. The interest he showed



in the people of Medina and his generosity was great. He was an example for those in Ravza when he made the charity of giving food during the month of Ramadan a custom, with a cleanliness, order and harmony as it should be in the presence of Prophet Muhammad.

Musa Efendi was like Abu Bakr when it came to generosity and spending his wealth in the path of Allah. In his sermons he would make a point of purifying the ego, advising everyone to give as little as possible to their own desires while giving plenty to charity. Our duty is to pray for these great people and to gain from their ways of goodness and beauty because they are the affection and love of Muhammad and:

THEY ARE THE GREATEST EXAMPLES...

In every aspect of their lives the Companions of the Messenger of Allah and the great Companions of Allah and those who love Prophet Muhammad in later times are the best examples to us all.


The Companions of Allah attained the lofty character of Prophet Muhammad and are a reflection of his purity and spirituality for everyone; they loved Prophet Muhammad with the best of faith, devotion and affection and they submitted their souls in the most beautiful way.

In brief, all the Companions after Abu Bakr, the great ones of Islam, are reflections of the beautiful manner and personality of Prophet Muhammad.

May Allah Almighty give us all enlightenment and show us the true path with the affection and manner, the eternal light, compassion, and abundance of His Messenger!

O Allah, as you turned those days of darkness and ignorance into the period of happiness, with the prosperity of the Honoured One of the Universe, turn these days of modern ignorance into times of goodness.

BEING A SERVANT OF ALLAH & A FRIEND TO PEOPLE



Our main goal in this world is to be a sultan of the riches of the soul. To be able to attain this stage, one needs to open up their heart and soul to the sultan of sultans, for He is only the Sultan of those whose hearts have opened up to Him

In the Islamic understanding, human beings have been created “in the best form” with the best characteristics and the best nature. Human beings have been given the honor of being the vicegerents of Allah on this earth. They are the best of creation. On the other hand, human beings can be lower than the animals, since they can be extremely hasty, cruel and ungrateful. According to the Qur’ān, human beings, who can be both the best of forms and the lowest of the low, were not created in vain or without any goal, nor have they simply been abandoned to do whatever they will. For all these reasons, the most fundamental problem of mankind since the beginning of creation is the secret of their existence and the questions: “Why do I exist? Why and from where did I come? Where am I going?”

When we consider the human being as a whole, with our bodies, minds and souls and how perfect and precious we are, we can clearly see that it is absolutely impossible that we have been left to do whatever we want. There must be a reason for our existence. As a matter of fact, the Qur’ān bases our existence on “servanthood” and indicates that servanthood is something



that is part of our very nature: “And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me.” (Dhāriyāt, 51/56), “He created death and life that He may try you-- which of you is best in deeds.” (Mulk, 67/2)

Allah has created human beings with a nature that is suited for servanthood to Him and has encouraged them to manifest this nature. He has left those who choose not to serve Him to be servants to their egos, to the world or to other people. This is where human beings lose their grip on the truth, for they are sorely tempted by the pleasures of this world and are swayed by the praise and appreciation of others. Once, a Companion asked the Prophet: “Tell me of a deed that will make me loved both by Allah and the people.” In other words, which deed and behavior of mine will make me a true servant

of Allah and a friend of the people? To this question, the Messenger of Allah replied: “If you renounce the world with your heart, you will be loved by Allah. If you are not greedy for what people have and do not expect anything from them, you will be loved by them.” (Ibn Majah, Kitāb al-zuhd, 1)

The answer that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) gave makes it clear that the path to servanthood starts by renouncing servanthood to the world and to everything other than Allah and by focusing one’s heart on nothing else. In another hadith, the Messenger of Allah says, “Damned be the servants of money” condemning those who are tempted by the world and idolize money. As a matter of fact, the Qur’ān emphasizes that people idolize their selfish desires and are led astray for this reason. “Have you then considered him who takes his low desire for his god?” (Jāthiya, 45/23)

Human beings, who by nature have an inclination to true servanthood, in time can become misled into the servanthood of other people. For this reason, some people think that true freedom is only possible by renouncing servanthood altogether. In other words, being a “member of society” is equated to being a servant. This is where the illusion starts. True freedom lies in serving Allah. What one needs to avoid is servanthood to other people. As a matter of fact the Qur’ān invites the People of the Book to servanthood to Allah and tells them to refrain from being servants to other people: “Say: O followers of the Book! come to an equitable proposition between us and you that we shall not serve any but Allah and (that) we shall not associate aught with Him, and (that) some of us shall not take others for lords besides Allah.” (Al-‘Imrān, 3/64)

In this day and age, while people are trying to emancipate themselves from the servanthood of other people, they are failing at being servants of Allah serving their selfish desires instead.

The honor and excellence of human beings lies in their devotion, servanthood and worship of Allah, not in their self-assumed superiority to others. Rumi says:

To be a servant to Allah and to be loved by the people it is recommended that a human being not desire anything that others have and not ask for anything from other people. Instead, they should be the one to give.



“The sultans of the world, those with the highest ranks, cannot be aware of the scent of the elixir of servanthood for they have been blindfolded by their egos and their greed for power.

If they were aware of this scent, they would immediately understand that being a servant to Allah is superior than being a sultan to the people, and this would leave them astonished and make them renounce their crowns and thrones.

However, Allah Almighty has set a seal on their hearts and mouths to keep the order in this world, making their high ranks pleasant to them.”

Our main goal in this world is not to be a sultan of the riches of this world, but to be a sultan of the riches of the soul. To be able to attain this stage, one needs to open up their heart and soul to the sultan of sultans, for He is only the Sultan of those whose hearts have opened up to Him. Human beings should examine their hearts to see if they are a good servant to the Lord. If they have love and attachment to Allah, if they are able to see and admire His beauty and power of creation in everything that He has created, then they should be aware that they are loved by Allah. Who makes them feel such admiration, love and attachment? It is Allah. For He is not just the Lord of the righteous and the innocent; He is the Lord of everybody and everything. If Allah were only the hope of the righteous and

the innocent, then who would the sinners turn and pray to? In whom will they seek refuge? In truth, Allah is the Most Merciful, wanting His servants to pray and expecting their prayers. For He says, “Say: My Lord would not care for you were it not for your prayer.” (Furqān, 25/77)

Servanthood and worship are not simply occasional performances; they are the task of a lifetime, until death. Therefore, Allah Almighty says, “And serve your Lord until there comes to you that which is certain.” (Hijr, 15/99)

To be a servant to Allah and to be loved by the people it is recommended that a human being not desire anything that others have and not ask for anything from other people. Instead, they should be the one to give. Sharing with others during our limited life span on this earth is the main requirement for socializing. One of the Companions came to the Prophet and said, “O Messenger of Allah, please give me some short and simple advice” to which the beloved Prophet replied: “Perform your prayers as though they were your last. Do not say anything that you will have to apologize for. And do not hope for what people may give you.”

The believer who wants to die a good death at the end of their life needs to improve their servanthood. For being a servant whose hands and tongue benefit people and who has the altruism to want the same thing for others that they want for themselves is the way to be loved by people.



❧ The Mother of Believers: ❧

Khadijah Bint Huwaylid (I)



In purity and nobility, Khadija was the foremost figure amongst her tribe, remaining pure despite the loathsome practices in the Era of Ignorance and the disgraceful treatment displayed towards women at this time.

On the road to Kaaba
Our beloved Kaaba!

The time is one when people are drawn to the Kaaba, wave after wave, and when the advent of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is imminent...

Young Khadija, from the Banu Asad branch of the Quraysh tribe, whose ancestry joins that of Prophet Muhammad, was proceeding towards the Kaaba, accompanied by maidens from her tribe. A Jew came from afar, with long and unkempt hair and beard, and approached them. Out of breath, he said:

“Peace be upon you, O, women of the chosen tribe of Mecca! Soon a prophet will come to you. He will possess unparalleled morality and noble features. He will bring tawhid, to you and will forbid idolatry for you. Strive to be his wife, if you can!”

The women in the caravan ridiculed the Jew. They drove him away; some of them cursing and throwing stones after him, while shouting: “There is no one who can separate us from our idols!”



Yet the words of the Jew left a mark on the heart of Khadija, who was only fifteen at this time. Inwardly, she thought: "If there is a person who has such qualities, I should marry him!"

Khadija's Family

Khadija's father was Huwaylid bin Asad bin Abdul Uzza bin Qusay bin Kilab. He died in the Battle of Fijar.

Her mother was Fatimah bint Zaidat al-Asam, a descendant of Amer bin Luayya. She was born in Mecca, in 556.

Tahirah: A pure woman

In purity and nobility, Khadija was the foremost figure amongst her tribe, remaining pure despite the loathsome practices in the Era of Ignorance and the disgraceful treatment displayed towards women at this time. Due to these qualities, she was also known as tahirah (pure woman), or afifah (chaste woman).

Khadija was an esteemed figure in society.

She never worshipped idols, even before her marriage to the Prophet of Allah. According to the Musnad of Ahmad bin Hanbel, during the Era of Ignorance Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had said to Khadija: "I swear by Allah, that I will never worship al-Lat or al-Uzza!" Khadijah had replied: "Never mind about al-Lat and al-Uzza! Their names are not even worth mentioning!"

The fact that Khadijah was known as tahirah and led a life worthy of such a name acted as a preparatory period for her to become the beloved wife of Prophet Muhammad, the al-Amin (trustworthy) of Mecca. She had a spiritually and physically pure nature that would be a beautiful accompaniment to the beloved servant of Allah Almighty.

Before meeting Prophet Muhammad

Khadijah was married twice before she met Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). She had a son named Hind from her first husband, Abu Halah bin Zurara. For some time, Khadijah was known by the name of this son, that is, as Ummu Hind - the mother of Hind. According to some reports, she also had had a daughter with Abu Halah.

After the death of her husband, she married Ateek bin Aez (or Abid), and she had a daughter named Hind.

Because of her lineage, beauty and wealth, after the death of her second husband some of the dignitaries of the Quraysh wanted to marry her. However, Khadijah refused all these offers.

The Damascus Caravan

Khadijah took care of her children with the money she earned from trade. Although she was a widower, she was unable to travel with the caravans, and she could not make enough money on her investments. Everyone to whom she entrusted her caravan and assets stole goods from her. She was in desperate need of finding someone to manage her caravans.

A caravan of considerable size was preparing



Khadija was an esteemed figure in society. She never worshipped idols, even before her marriage to the Prophet of Allah.

to travel to Damascus. Khadija was looking for someone trustworthy to take her merchandise. All the advice she received from her friends centred on the same person: Muhammad Al-Amin (pbuh)!

Even though Khadija met this young man - renowned as a man of his word and for taking special care of whatever was entrusted to him - for the first time, she handed over her entire caravan to him. She also charged her slave Maysara to travel with him and to observe all his actions.

Among the extraordinary events that Maysara witnessed during his journey with Prophet Muhammad were the words of a Nestorian priest.

While Prophet and Maysara were travelling with the caravan, they stopped for a rest, and Prophet Muhammad rested in the shade of a tree. The priest came to them and asked Maysara who was resting under the tree. And then the priest said that only a prophet would rest there. He asked Maysara whether the person under the tree had a redness in his eyes. When Maysara said "Yes", the priest said: "Then he is the last prophet."

Afterwards someone came to Prophet Muhammad to buy something. When they disagreed about the price, the man said: "Then swear by Lat and Uzza!" Prophet Muhammad replied: "I have never sworn an oath on them."

The priest turned to Maysara and said: "I swear to Allah that he is the prophet whose qualities and features are written in the books of our priests."

While Maysara was closely observing the deeds of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), he realized that a cloud was giving them shade. Wherever they went, the cloud moved with them; when they stopped, the cloud stopped, too.

Finally, the caravan that was led by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) returned to Mecca. For the first time, this expedition brought back a substantial profit for Khadijah.

Maysara accounted all that he had seen to Khadijah. As he talked about the nobility,



The marriage of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and Khadijah has been commemorated as an example for happiness throughout history.



honesty, virtue and other outstanding qualities of Muhammad (pbuh), the heart of the chaste and modest Khadijah started to feel an attraction towards the young man.

The marriage ceremony

After obtaining a good deal of information about him, Khadijah took a rather unusual move - in contrast to the prevailing customs of Mecca, she proposed marriage to Muhammad, who was then 25 years old, through intercessors. Khadijah was 40 years old; a widow with two children.

One day, Nafisa, a friend of Khadijah, had the opportunity to talk to Muhammad. She told him that his time had come; that he belonged to a fine and honorable family and was renowned for his good morals, but despite all these factors he had not yet married. She said that if he were willing, she could easily find a suitable candidate.

Muhammad (pbuh) expressed his thoughts, saying that he did not have the financial means to sustain a family, and that no one would marry him under these conditions.

When she asked: "What if I were to find someone who is rich and beautiful, as well as belonging to a fine and honorable family?" Muhammad curiously inquired: "Who might that be?" Nafisa, as if waiting for the question, replied: "Khadijah!"

Muhammad replied that he could not imagine this happening, because all the dignitaries of the city had requested to marry Khadijah, but she had turned down every offer; she would not accept his offer either.

Nafisa said that if Muhammad were to accept her suggestion, he should allow her to handle the situation; through common friends she would work it out. She must have received approval from Muhammad (pbuh), because she was soon breaking the good news to Khadijah. Upon receiving the news, Khadijah this time personally spoke to this noble youth. "O my cousin! I am inclined to you, due to your trustworthiness, the way you take care of whatever is entrusted to you, your high morals and your noble position in your tribe."

After consulting with his uncles and receiving their consent, Muhammad decided to go ahead with this marriage. The wedding ceremony was held in Khadijah's house. A large wedding was prepared. As Khadijah's father had died in the Battle of Fijar, her uncle Amr bin Asad was expected to perform the marriage ceremony.

Although there are a few differing reports, according to the generally accepted account, the ceremony in the end was performed by Waraqa bin Nawfal, the cousin of Khadijah.

The dignitaries of the Quraysh convened in Khadijah's house. Prophet Muhammad

(pbuh) went there with his uncles Abu Talib and Hamza. Khadijah was represented by her cousin Waraqa bin Nawfal. According to Arab traditions, first Abu Talib, and then Waraka bin Nawfal gave a speech. In his address, Abu Talib said:

“Thanks be to Allah Who has created us from the offspring of Ibrahim, the progeny of Ismail, the essence of Ma’d and the element of Mudar. He ordained us as the guardians of the Kaaba and thus made us rulers and leaders of men.

Coming to the matter in hand; the son of my brother Muhammad bin Abdullah surpasses all the youth of the Quraysh with regard to lineage, wisdom and merits, whomever you compare him to. Although he is not wealthy, this should not be taken into account, because, like a shadow, possession is provisional; it is taken and given.

I swear by Allah that in future his fame will be exalted. Now as you see, he has requested to marry your honorable daughter, Khadijah. And I have set aside such an amount.”

Waraqa bin Nawfal said: “We thank Allah Who created us in the (same) manner as you have described. He made us pre-eminent with more than what you have stated. Hence, we are the nobles and leaders of the Arabs. As are you. The ascendancy of your tribe is

undeniable; no one can refuse to acknowledge your righteousness or honor. We, too, wish to be related to you!

O people! Bear witness that I have married Khadijah, the daughter of Huwaylid, to Muhammad bin Abdullah.”

After the ceremony, Khadijah said to Muhammad: “Tell your uncle to slaughter one of the camels and feed it to the congregation.”

Abu Talib slaughtered a camel for the marriage banquet to feed the dignitaries of the tribe. Since Muhammad was content with this marriage, his guardian and protector Abu Talib was thankful to Allah: “Praise is due to Allah, Who has kept grief away from us!”

Following the wedding ceremony, Muhammad al-Amin (pbuh) - soon to be the Prophet of Islam - moved into Khadijah’s house. This house became the heart of bliss and tranquillity.

So much so, that the marriage of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and Khadijah has been commemorated as an example for happiness throughout history, and people have prayed for newly wed couples to Allah Almighty, asking Him to bestow on them a state that is similar in attachment, affection and warmth to that which these two shared.



The priest turned to Maysara and said: “I swear to Allah that he is the prophet whose qualities and features are written in the books of our priests.”

BEING A GOOD SERVANT OF ALLAH

Servanthood is not slavery nor is it the complete elimination of one's will. In fact, servanthood is about using one's will correctly and appreciating the honor that has been bestowed upon humans among other creatures

In many verses of the Qurʾān it is stated “humankind, the jinn and all other beings are servants of Allah” (Nisā, 4/172, Isrā, 17/1, Aʿrāf, 7/194) and among these, “the jinn and humankind were only created so that they might worship Allah” (Dhāriyāt, 51/56). Today, this truth needs to be strongly emphasized, for human beings have become negligent of the most obvious truths. This negligence in turn prompts a person to rebellion which causes them to become trapped in confusion. They are then unable to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, who is a servant and who is a slave. The human being who was created “in the best stature” loses their faculty of differentiating good from bad and is prevented from pursuing the love of True Beauty. The shade of what is ugly, which they have mistaken for something beautiful, casts a shadow on the human heart. In an environment where the essential principles of religion that train and control people are not seen as necessary, the question of “what does servanthood mean?” will most probably bring one back to questions which juxtapose servanthood with slavery. People might say that servanthood destroys the will of the human being, praising the freedom to do anything

one wants anytime they want. Indeed, there are many ways in which servanthood is despised and equated with slavery.

Putting all this to one side, we believe that human beings are primarily servants of Allah, that it is extremely important to understand the significance of this, that there is a fine line between servanthood and slavery, that the meanings of servanthood and slavery should be spoken of and that we must think, talk and tell the truth.

In Arabic the word for servant is *abd*, which comes from the same root as the words *‘ibādah* and *‘ubūdiyyah*. Thus, the first meaning of servanthood (*‘ibādah*) is to offer one’s reverence and devotion to their real master through worship and submission. The second meaning, *‘ubūdiyyah*, entails an awareness of being a servant of Allah, of recognizing one’s Lord and realizing one’s own weaknesses. It is submitting to the orders of Allah and avoiding what has been forbidden by Him and thus surrendering one’s own limited will to His omnipotent will. This is the true definition of servanthood. This is the point where most people lose sight of the truth because they fail to give it any serious thought. Servanthood is not slavery nor is it the complete elimination of one’s will. In fact, servanthood is about using one’s will correctly and appreciating the honor that has been bestowed upon humans among other creatures. *‘Abd* also has meanings of

raqabah, *raqīq* and *mamlūk*. This incredible richness of the word is noteworthy. Particularly, *raqabah* and *mamlūk* should be highlighted, for they have the meaning of “slave”.

It is in the nature of human beings to put their trust in a power that they think is superior and to see this power as their master. It is in the very essence of humanness to devote oneself to serving the one to whom they have committed themselves, from the bottom of their hearts. We can say that the life of human beings can be summarized as serving and being served. There is something else: Human beings love and commit themselves to what they have put effort into. And over time, this commitment turns into passion.

To conclude this analysis, we can state that “servanthood” is the briefest and clearest definition of the position human beings occupy in this universe. “Servant” is an exclusive qualification that encompasses the true nature of humanity.

The truth of the matter is that if the love, reverence, devotion, submission, worship, service and charity of a human being are for Allah, then they are a “servant”. The story of their life is the recognition that they are a servant to Allah. They bring to life the true essence of the word *‘abd* with their deeds and they know that nothing that has been created can answer or fulfill their prayers. They disclose their needs only to Allah and learn how to be



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content with Allah, thus bringing them to true freedom, bound to nothing or no one. A person cannot be enslaved by anything that has been created.

If a human being's true passion is for something or somebody other than Allah, then they are subjugated to this passion. The outcome of these types of attachments occurs in episodes. First comes the passionate attachment of the one who is in need to the one who is supposed to fulfill that need and this then turns into a hopeless commitment to others who are in fact themselves in need, further exacerbated by the subjugation of the human being.

On the other hand, servanthood, the contours of which have been defined and the essence of which is praised in the Qur'an, is nothing like this. It is a sacred attribute by which Allah refers to Himself through the beautiful word 'ibādī (my servants) for the sake of His believing servants. Furthermore, servanthood is the attribute that Allah bestowed on His most honorable beloved messenger with the kalima tawhīd, even before referring to Prophet Muhammad as His messenger. It is stated that Allah's Messenger attained two stations, one of 'abd (servant) and the other of rasūl (prophet) and they further emphasize that the former is superior to the latter. The station of servanthood is about being content with all that was created and in this respect is above

and beyond all other titles, posts and stations. If committing oneself to what has been created is the lowest level, then servanthood is the highest, it is the pinnacle. The Qur'an sets forth a type of servanthood that is obligatory as a fact and encourages servanthood that is undertaken of one's own free will as an honorable station. The Qur'an emphasizes that being free of everything other than Allah and serving Him alone are the most treasured goals for human beings.

The Qur'an, which conveys wisdom with every single word, teaches its believers "Be ye faithful servants of the Lord" (Al-'Imrān, 3/79) and emphasizes that this can only be possible by happily surrendering oneself to whatever comes from Allah.

We can look at the prophetic model to understand this. Here are some of the verses that tell of the life of Prophet Job:

"And remember Our servant Ayyūb, when he called upon his Lord: The Shaitān has afflicted me with toil and torment. Urge with your foot; here is a cool washing-place and a drink. And We gave him his family and the like of them with them, as a mercy from Us, and as a reminder to those possessed of understanding. And take in your hand a green branch and beat her with It and do not break your oath; surely We found him patient; most excellent the servant! Surely he was frequent in returning (to Allah)." (Sād, 38/41-44)

Upon reading these verses, I think to myself, there can be nothing more peaceful in this world than reading the Qur'an. If we can internalize its meaning and spirit, I believe that the rays of its eternal light will fall on our hearts like sacred love, in the form of a verse, or sometimes even just a single word.

When reading the story of Prophet Job, the expression of "most excellent servant" enlightens my heart like a ray of sun. These verses are yet another testimony to the conciseness of the Qur'an.

Our Lord praised Job and said that "He is a most excellent servant and best of men". Being aware of servanthood is such a great blessing that this divine compliment still warms our hearts after centuries. If we feel drawn towards the good servants of Allah, then our hearts will be alight with joy and happiness.

I imagine a human being whose goodness and grace Allah has witnessed. If this means greater hope than other believers have, then I feel incredible excitement at the thought that there is no blessing that is greater for a human being. Then I feel that I have to hurry. I should go, read and think about the attributes that elevated Prophet Job to being a "most excellent servant".

The story of Prophet Job has it all: imān, worship, patience, thankfulness and submission. He was a servant who adorned his life with virtues. He started his life as a rich person; he later became poor, ill and alone, and then he became rich and healthy again. However, the way his life was torn apart by these hardships never changed his determination or strength on the path of Allah, because he never put his hopes and expectations into anything but Allah.

As it is said in Rūh al-bayān, "Iblis was jealous of the blessings bestowed upon Prophet Job and objected by saying 'It is easy to worship when surrounded by such wealth and abundance' and continued: 'O Lord! Why don't you take away everything that he has and then we'll see how he will do.'" And in the end, Iblis saw that losing



what he had only increased Job's patience and made his submission to Allah even stronger.

It has been narrated by Ibn Abbas that Job was afflicted by an illness which lasted for seven years, seven months, seven days and seven hours. During this time, he could not even blink his eyes. He saw everything that came from Allah as a blessing and remained patient. According to what is narrated by Ibn Mas'ūd, Job will be resurrected as the leader of all those who remain patient.



THE ESSENCE OF SERVANTHOOD

Worship is itself submitting to Allah in complete self-abnegation and accepting one's own actual weakness and His omnipotence. Therefore, prayer is the very essence, the spirit, the nucleus of every form of servanthood

Allah Almighty, Who created us only to serve Him, sent us the knowledge of this essential duty and the ways of putting this knowledge into use through His prophets. Thus, in being good servants prophets are our models and leaders.

The model servant, the last of all prophets, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) explained with his words and personally exemplified with his deeds how to believe and act in a way that Allah will accept. For this reason, following the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad means living the religion in real life. Prayer is the language of practicing the religion.

The Relationship between Invocation and Worship

In the following hadith, as narrated by Nu'mān b. Bashīr, our beloved Prophet says: "Invocation is worship itself. You can read the following verse: And your Lord says: Call upon Me, I will answer you; surely those who are too proud for My service shall soon enter hell abased." (Mu'minūn, 40/60) Prophet Muhammad thus made it clear that prayer is a form of worship. He proved his point by referring to

this verse that does away with any doubt. As a matter of fact, the word “service” in the verse can be also be translated as “call upon”.

At the same time, worship has been commanded by Allah. In the above verse, the word ‘ud‘unī: “call upon me” is an order which shows us that prayer is a sign of worship and servanthood in the true sense of the word. Invocation is recognizing and admitting one’s own weakness and helplessness. This can be through words or other physical actions. In fact, worship is itself submitting to Allah in complete self-abnegation and accepting one’s own actual weakness and His omnipotence. Therefore, prayer is the very essence, the spirit, the nucleus of every form of servanthood. In the above hadith, prayer is defined as being the essence of servanthood without referring to any condition or any particular qualification; this tells us that every kind of prayer has the same essence. Categorizing it under different names, such as the prayer in prayer, the prayer for a particular need or the prayer of rain, does not change the outcome. For these are all the same in terms of the “essence of servanthood”. They can simply be called the “times of prayer”.

Based on the example of the hadith “Hajj is Arafah (the main requisite of Hajj is to perform waqfah - standing upon Mount Arafah on Arafah day)”, we can infer that the true and the greatest part of servanthood is prayer or that prayer is worship, whether it is accepted

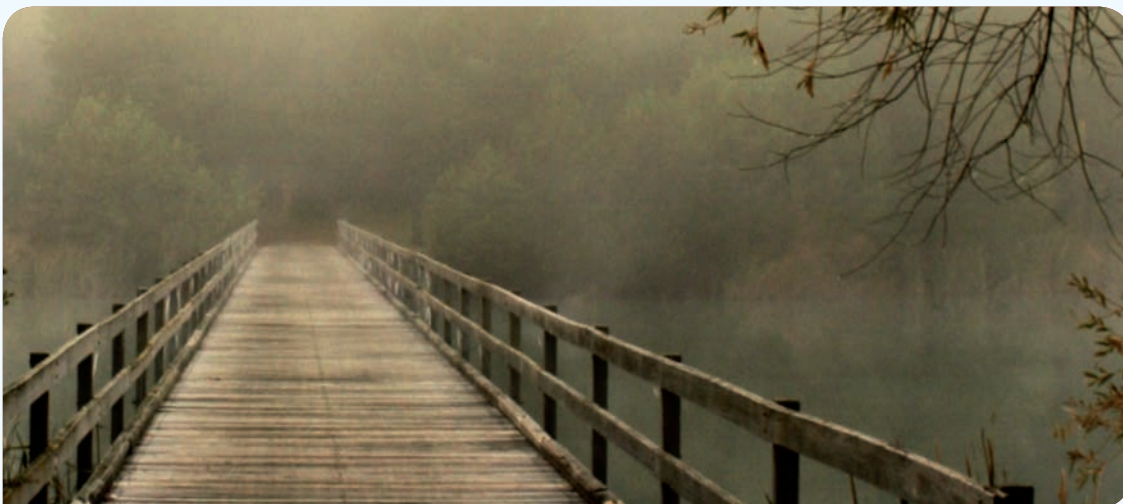
or not, because it is through prayer that the servant admits to their weakness and declares their belief in the power of Allah to fulfill all their needs. For this reason, the prayer cannot be anything else but worship. For it is both the essence and the language, namely, it is the interpretation of servanthood. It is a known fact that Islam encompasses all dimensions of human life because its goal is the guidance of human beings to the right path. It is most probably for this reason that all lawful actions and behavior, along with other deeds that are official forms of “worship”, are seen to be worship and not just simple routines when performed with the intention of worship.

BEYOND TIME

Despite these facts, some people who are lacking a great deal of knowledge or awareness of religion may despise the wishes and thoughts of prayer under various circumstances. But one thing should be understood: neither the times nor the countries in which we live or the technology or opportunities we have can relieve us of our own weakness and helplessness. Some people have the audacity to think that the fact that we now have better opportunities than in the past means that there is no longer any need to pray. They find it particularly difficult to establish a connection between prayer and acts of nature. From our point of view, this approach creates the illusion that on some levels servanthood is unnecessary. However, the fact



One who becomes forgetful of prayer may put themselves at risk of forgetting their Creator, the cost of which is indeed too great.



remains that no development or opportunity has the nature or content to drive us away from servanthood. In fact, changing and improving conditions make it incumbent on us to be better servants of Allah, for we should be thankful for every blessing we have.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INVOCATION AND DIVINE MERCY

There has always been a relationship between prayer and rain in the Qur'an since the time of Prophet Nūh. "Ask forgiveness of your Lord, surely He is the most Forgiving. He will send down upon you the cloud, pouring down abundance of rain. And help you with wealth and sons, and make for you gardens, and make for you rivers." (Nūh, 71/11)

Likewise, Prophet Hūd called upon his people and said "O my people! Ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him; He will send on you clouds pouring down abundance of rain and add strength to your strength, and do not turn back guilty." (Hūd, 11/52)

These verses clearly set forth a cause-and-effect relationship between rain and bounty (servanthood). And again the prayer reported by Prophet Ibrāhīm for Mecca when he had to leave his wife Hajar and his son Ismā'īl makes the relationship between improvement and prayer absolutely clear.

Also, Allah Almighty says, "If the people of the towns had believed and guarded (against evil) We would certainly have opened up for them blessings from the heaven and the earth." (A'raf, 7/96) which explains that belief in and reverence for Allah bring bounty and mercy.

Another verse states that: "He whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allah, He will make for him an outlet, And give him sustenance from whence he thinks not; and whoever trusts in Allah, He is sufficient for him; surely Allah attains His purpose" (Talāq, 65/2-3)

Those without the depth or submission to go beyond seeing livelihood, bounty and mercy within the very limited and material framework of economics and technology are apparently at a loss when the same things are viewed through

**It is a known fact that
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the lens of these verses. Invocation always keeps a servant firm on the ground of servanthood, never letting them cross the line to assume a self-proclaimed deism, like the Pharaoh, nor allowing them to think that they are a poor abandoned soul with no protection or guide in this wild world. It is essential for living as a servant of Allah that one have an awareness of the fact that nothing happens as long as Allah wishes it not to and nothing can stop what happens as long as Allah wishes it to happen; one must remain a hopeful and active servant.

BEING CONSTANT IN PRAYER

For those who recognize the fact that religion is life, reverence for Allah is proven not by neglecting one's own duty but by constantly being occupied with prayer and invocation, for prayer is to put tawhīd into words. Establishing a connection between the Only One and this world of multitudes means taking one's place in the "community of servants" and aspiring to become one the people of Allah.

When this is the case, the best state for a servant is to be constant in prayer. One needs to continue their journey without straying from the path of servanthood or deluding oneself that technology is powerful enough to make everything right. For constant happiness, one needs to be constant in servanthood. Or to put it differently, being constant in servanthood means attaining constant happiness. As one's

It is essential for living as a servant of Allah that one have an awareness of the fact that nothing happens as long as Allah wishes it not to and nothing can stop what happens as long as Allah wishes it to happen; one must remain a hopeful and active servant

sphere of responsibility is extended, one should grow in awareness and practice of their servanthood. Nothing should keep a human being from practicing their servanthood through prayer and good deeds. One who becomes forgetful of prayer may put themselves at risk of forgetting their Creator, the cost of which is indeed too great. "And be not like those who have forsaken Allah, so He made them forsake their own souls: these it is that are the transgressors." (Hashr, 59/19) Living one's life with an awareness of servanthood is only possible by being constant in prayer. This is why we need to remember that prayer is the essence of servanthood. A life of bounty and divine mercy is a source of peace and stability for all societies.



SELECTIONS FROM IBN AJĪBA'S AL-BAHR AL-MADĪD FĪ TAFSĪR AL-QUR'ĀN AL-MAJĪD

"And I did not create jinn and man except that they worship Me. I do not want food from them nor do I want them to provide [for others]. Truly Allah is the Provider and Possessor of Immense Might."

(Dhariyat: 51/56)

Exegesis (*tafsīr*):

When Allah, the Real, says, '*And I did not create jinn and man except that they worship Me*', He means by this is that He created them to manifest His imperative: that they worship Him, show humility to Him and acknowledge Him as their sustainer. He did not create them so they may help Him in one thing or another, as slave masters do when they acquire slaves. Slave masters own slaves because of the help they provide in the acquirement of sustenance and in making a living. This interpretation of mine is supported by the fact that Allah says, 'I do not want food from them...'

Ibn al-Munīr says, '...[I did not create jinn and man] except to command them to worship me, not so that they seek food for themselves or so that they can feed Me; this is the way of the slave masters with their slaves. In the case of Allah, He is the One that feeds and the task of His servants is only that they worship him. They are burdened with this responsibility which is a trial for them and an examination.'

It is also said that God created jinn and

man with a capacity for worship, and did this in the most perfect manner. Some among them will fulfil the purpose of their creation and others will not. As a general rule, it is not necessary that a thing created for a particular purpose will fulfil that purpose.

It may be that the intended meaning of the verse is that they were created in order that they humble themselves to Allah and to His power. This does not have to be in the legal sense. It is a more general idea, since whether they consent or not, every creature is under the sway of His Power and Might and is thus a servant of His in this sense. In the *Sahih* of al-Bukhārī there is the following tradition: ‘I created the ones who will rejoice so that they proclaim my Oneness.’

‘*I do not want food from them*’ means that He did not create them so that they can feed Him or so that they feed other servants of His. ‘...nor do I want them to provide [for others]’ has been explained by Tha’lab to mean that they were not created so they might feed other servants. The main point here is that Allah is exalting Himself above all slave-owners who are in need of their slaves and only own because the need help to make a living and prepare food. In Allah’s case, He is the one to feed them and give them all they need to continue in existence so they should occupy themselves with worshipping Him.

The Prophet said, speaking on behalf of our Lord, ‘O son of Adam, disengage yourself for My worship and I will fill your heart with wealth and relieve you of poverty. If you do not, your work will be the death of you.’

Esoteric exegesis (*ishārah*):

You should know that the Real—Exalted is He—sent the Messengers for no reason other than to show His servants the paths to Him (*sharā’i*) and to invite them to them; also, to command them to devote themselves to Him and to cut off from all else. This they did without concern for who will be ultimately saved and who will be ultimately doomed because this information is a secret of fate; it must not be disclosed when missionary work is being undertaken. It matters not that some of the servants will not accept the invitation.

Al-Wartijī quotes Ja’far al-Sādiq: ‘The meaning of “...so that they worship Me” is “so that they can know Me”.’ This is based on the tradition of our Prophet—may Allah bless him and grant him peace—who said the following on behalf of his Lord: ‘I was a hidden treasure, unknown, and wanted to be known and so I created the world.’ What He means by this is that He created the world so that the humans within it would come to know Him through their worship of Him: He manifests Himself to them in the various forms of worship that they undertake. His Lordship, Might and Wisdom all become manifest through the worship of Him, glory be to Him, the All-Wise the All-Knowing.

Abū l-Sa’ūd says, ‘Perhaps the wisdom in mentioning worship as an expression for gnosis (*ma’rifā*) is to make clear that the only form of gnosis which is recognised in Islam is the sort which stems as a result of the worship of Allah and not from any other means, such as the gnosis of philosophers.’ Furthermore, any form of gnosis or spiritual realisation which is attained outside the Shari’a is afforded no value or significance. In fact, it is nothing more than heresy and a false-claim. Only Allah grants success.

The verse ‘*Truly Allah is the Provider and Possessor of Immense Might*’ and similar such verses serve to cleanse the hearts of the *Siddiqūn*—those who have reached the highest attainable level of spirituality—from all spiritual ailments and doubts, helping

Allah manifests Himself to them in the various forms of worship that they undertake. His Lordship, Might and Wisdom all become manifest through the worship of Him.

them to achieve perfect certainty. Their souls are calm and their hearts at peace. They enjoy rest and satisfaction (*rawh wa rayhān*). The Prophetic Traditions which speak about the guarantee of sustenance for every creature are many; so too are the sayings of the Pious Predecessors. In the Prophetic Tradition narrated by Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, our Prophet has said: 'If any of you were to flee from his sustenance it would pursue him just as death pursues him' (Haythamī, *Majmaʿ al-zawāʿid*, al-Tabarānī, *al-Muʿjam al-awsat*). The Prophet said, speaking on behalf of our Lord, 'O son of Adam, disengage yourself for My worship and I will fill your heart with wealth and relieve you of poverty. If you do not, your work will be the death of you' (Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Ahmed). The Prophet also said, 'Whoever is concerned with the Hereafter, Allah will cause him to feel rich, He will aid him and

will subjugate the world for his use. Whoever is concerned with this life, Allah lead him to believe poverty is inescapable, He will not aid him and He will not give him anything of this world except what he has been apportioned' (Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah).

We end with a quote from al-Muhāsibī:

I asked my master how doubt finds its way into people's hearts when Allah has guaranteed us [our sustenance]. He responded, 'It is for two reasons: from having too little spiritual knowledge and from not having a good opinion of the Lord.' I asked him if there is anything else. He said, 'Yes, Allah has promised people their sustenance and has guaranteed it for them. However, He has not disclosed the times when it comes in order to test the people of intelligence. If this was not so, all the believers would enjoy the spiritual states of contentment, patience and reliance. Allah has informed them that He is their provider and has promised them this, but He has not, at the same time, made known to them when He will give it to them. This is how the worshippers of distinction may be known from the generality, and this is why servants are at different stations of spiritually. Some of them are at peace, some are in constant motion, some are angry and some are anxious. The level of certainty (*yaqīn*) they achieve is congruent with the degree of spiritual knowledge (*maʿrifah*) they attain.'





An old man came
asked for permission
to speak:

“We thank the Turkish
people very much;
this mosque you have
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mission which will
bring us closer to
Allah. This will be the
means for our children
to learn about Islam.
I have grown old and
I am almost blind
but I will now die
with peace of mind.
There are about 2,400
people, all Muslims,
in this village; until
recently we had no
mosque, but thanks
to you we will have a
place to worship soon.”

BURKINA FASO

Population: 14.761.339

Religion: Islam (50%)

Indigenous Beliefs: 40%

Christian: 10%


Languages: French

African Languages



The African Movement is Continuing

The First Condition of the African Task: **LIVING THERE**



The streets are full of emaciated children walking around with empty tins and bowls asking for food. Among them are tens of thousands of orphans with expressions of fear and innocence on their faces

On Saturday, 9 August 2008 we set out for Burkina Faso in a group of four people. Following a plane journey that lasted almost 9 hours we landed in Ouagadougou, the capital, of Burkina Faso, a that means ‘The nation of peace and tranquility’, at around four o’clock in the morning. The president of the Nasrullah Association, Nuh, and his assistants Osman and Ahmad, along with Bilal, a brother who has committed himself to service living under the most difficult conditions, came to welcome us. Bilal is an interesting young man; in the following days when I asked him “Why did you chose to live in a house where there is no water or air conditioning and in an area that is covered in mud when it rains and covered in dust and dirt when it doesn’t?” he gave a very meaningful answer:

“I wouldn’t have understood my brother’s feelings or situation was without living as they actually live, and without understanding them I couldn’t have helped them in any way.”

And he is right: This is the concept of exceeding oneself and sacrificing desires for the sake of Allah; I sincerely hope he will be rewarded with the chance to accomplish his

mission according to his lofty intentions. Bilal's situation reminds us of Prophet Joseph (pbuh) who as treasurer gave provisions 'while he was fasting' to the deprived and poor people who came and asked him for help. He fasted so he would truly understand their feelings of hunger; at present, it is quite rare to find young people who are a light of hope for others.

At the end of our six-day visit I realized that, with the exception of Vaga 2000, an area where the president's palace is situated, and where only ambassadors and wealthy people live, and a few other places, the country is very simple and the living conditions are very bad; in most places of the country, with the exception of the cities, there are no highways and no asphalt roads, electric, water and no sewer system.

The living conditions are very difficult in this country, where the economic opportunities and means are restricted. Poverty, hunger, unemployment, illness, lack of water and education are just a few of the problems the people face. The streets are full of emaciated children walking around with empty tins and bowls asking for food. Among them are tens of thousands of orphans with expressions of fear and innocence on their faces. It is evident that they are trying to find food to get by with great fear for the future. Bare footed with nothing decent to wear, some are lost inside shirts twice their size or wearing shorts that are torn and frayed.

Everything is difficult in this country; 3 to 4 months a year it rains and then there is a drought for 8 months and the rivers and lakes dry up totally. When it rains, everything is damaged by the floodwaters. The people struggle to live among the floodwaters and the mud and when the rain stops they are stricken by drought and the difficulties this brings. Both these situations make their lives untenable, but in spite of all the hardship they have become accustomed to living in this way, as they don't really have any other choice. They are obliged to live their fate and whatever it holds for them. In brief they have a very hard life; they are a people looking to one another for help and daily provisions.

During our visit we had many memorable experiences; once we were on our way to a village called Salla in Titao, 250km from Vaga dugu. For 50 km of our journey there were no paved roads and where there was no asphalt it was extremely muddy due to a recent downpour of rain. It took us 4 hours to reach the village. The foundation of a mosque, measuring a hundred m², had been laid with money that had been given as charity. There were men waiting on one side of the road and 20 meters ahead were women who had been standing in the shade for hours, waiting for us to arrive. There were around two hundred people; some of the villagers had gone to the fields to harvest corn while this group remained in the village waiting for us.

They told us that they wanted to hear a few



words from their Muslim brothers who were visiting from Turkey, so we expressed emotions that came deep from within our souls, telling them that we are all brothers in faith and that Muslims are like bricks, supporting one another to make a sturdy building. We told them how much we loved them and how proud we were to have them as brothers. All of a sudden, in the middle of the conversation an old man came and stood close, waiting for us to finish. When we had finished speaking to the others, the man asked for permission to speak:

“The people of this village are very pleased that you to visit. We thank the Turkish people very much; this mosque you have built is an important mission which will bring us closer to Allah. This will be the means for our children to learn about Islam. I have grown old and I am almost blind but I will now die with peace of mind. There are about 2,400 people, all Muslims, in this village; until recently we had no mosque, but thanks to you we will have a place to worship soon. It is hard for us to believe that you have done such a great thing. So we thank you very much and would like you to accept this small present. If we had anything more valuable to give we would give it to you with pleasure, but this is all we have.”

And when I said “You are the greatest present we could wish for; your souls of purity are the best gift” their eyes filled with joy and excitement. Then when I said “There is no need to thank us, thanks be to Allah” another old man related the following hadith:

“He who does not thank people does not thank Allah.” This was a great demonstration of gratitude and kindness. This group of loyal, appreciative people touched us deeply; one can feel the emotion of Islamic brotherhood better if you are actually among people who have hearts gold.

What Can We Do For Burkina Faso?

This is the time to open our hearts, eyes and ears; it is time to compete with on another in doing good deeds. The friends of ‘Young Hearts’ can help by:



-Helping these African brothers by providing food for them during Ramadan

-Accept the guardianship of an orphan and help them to solve their material and spiritual problems; by doing so one may be granted with the gardens of Paradise

-Pray alongside them in the mosques we have helped to build

-Help them find water for drinking and for cleanliness by having wells dug, help them to live a more civilized life

-Send them packets of provisions during Ramadan or in fact at any time, feeding at least 5 hungry people every month and thus gaining a reward in the Hereafter

-Try to be the means for some of these people to become people of guidance as an Imam or a teacher, that is, someone who leads others to the path of truth.

-Helping them financially will help them to translate and publish books that will help others. ‘I will be the slave of anyone who teaches me one letter for forty years’

-May Allah make us aware of the great blessing He has provided...

And now it is time to practice the Prophet’s words of wisdom: “Protect yourself from the Fire, even if it is only by giving half a date in charity.”

If you would like more information regarding our mission in Africa or to help us in any way financially you can contact us at:

mehmetlutfi@gmail.com



Pearls of Wisdom

The proof of a Muslim's sincerity is, that he pays no heed to that, which is not his business.

Prophet Muhammad

Hide your good deeds from the people just like you hide your evil deeds.

Salamah bin Dinar

When a scholar chases the world his nobility vanishes.


Yahya bin Muaz

Many of the faults you see in others are your own nature reflected in them.

Rumi

Let the beauty of what you love be what you do.

Rumi



Knowledge is better than wealth. Knowledge guards you, while you have to guard the wealth.

Imam Ali

No one should be regarded as trustful before he keeps three things: funds, secrets, and honors.

Jafar As-Sadiq

Breaking relations with a profligate is a source of nearness to God.

Hasan Al-Basri


Intellect takes you to the door, but it doesn't take you into the house.

Shams Tabrizi

One of the signs of dissimulators is that their knowledge resembles mountains, but their actions resemble particles.

Fudayl bin Iyad

LETTERS FROM THE NAQSHI MASTERS:



In today's times, rather than reconciliation, winning quarrels is the rule of the day. Modern life styles are only designed to win, and at any cost. Violence in films and other ego-centric TV programs are diminishing the kindness and tolerance between human beings.

CONTROLLING ANGER

Islam gives great honor to all human beings and forbids rude behavior to others. This is especially emphasized by the Sufis who advise the control of anger in order not to damage others by evil acts. It is due to anger that people insult and degrade others. Sufism removes this trait within a person replacing it with patience and tolerance towards others.

Most crimes, such as murder, happen due to sudden outrages and fits of anger. Sufism treats anger as a kind of vice to be cured.

Imam Rabbani believes that the most important characteristic a Sufi can possess is soft heartedness and mercy towards others. In his 98th letter, he uses many sayings of the Prophet in order to encourage softness and respect towards others:

“The Messenger of Allah says: Allah kind and loves those who are kind. Whatever he bestows upon kindness, He will not bestow upon roughness and unkindness. The Prophet advised Aisha (r.a): be softhearted and kind, beware of roughness and evil words. These two ornament wherever they exist and whenever they lack there is ugliness. The Prophet also

adds: whoever lacks soft heartedness he will lack blessing and goodness. He also said: the best among you in my eyes is the one who has the best moral characteristic. In another hadith the prophet said: whoever has a share from softness of manners was in fact given a share both from the (happiness) of the world and hereafter. (Letter 98)

All the sayings of the Prophet that Imam Rabbani quotes, one after another, show us the significance of controlling anger in Islam. In today's times, rather than reconciliation, winning quarrels is the rule of the day. Modern life styles are only designed to win, and at any cost. Violence in films and other ego-centric TV programs are diminishing the kindness and tolerance between human beings. Especially those without any kind of spiritual training are negatively influenced. Those who cannot control their anger are controlled by their anger. Imam Rabbani advises his followers to control their anger, stating that the unkind and rough people will go to Hell.

"A man came to the Prophet and asked some advice. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: do not get angry! The Messenger of Allah also said: Beware! I will inform you of the people destined for hell: Rude and headlong people, arrogant and those who are conceited. (Bukhari)" (Letter 98)

Insolence is a calamity affecting large groups as well as family units among Muslim societies. Unfortunately, some Muslim groups today defend aggressiveness as a way of life towards all who oppose their ideologies. Similarly, some fathers resort to excessive discipline over gentle persuasion of family members when trying to create morality within the home. Using such methods in Islamic matters is not desirable, on the contrary such attitudes will back fire.

It is also important that Muslims should be tolerant towards each other. Forgiving others in personal matters is an important virtue for individuals. Imam Rabbani quotes the following hadith in this respect:

When Moses asked Allah: "Almighty Lord, who is the most honorable of your servants.

Allah the almighty answered: 'Those who forgive their opponents when they have power to take revenge.' (Bayhaqi)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) also stated: 'Whoever refrains from rage, Allah refrains his punishment from such a person.' (Beyhaki) (Letter 98)

According to Imam Rabbani, controlling one's anger is especially important for those who possess political, economical and physical power. Their anger at times causes the destruction of thousands. In his letter 98, Imam Rabbani addresses a certain Abdulqadir who seems to have a political power over his subjects, in the following way:


"As a matter of fact I know that in the peak of your power and you will not be able to follow my advice (willingly). You are young and strong, living in great wealth. Your words are taken seriously; you have power over your subjects. You are able to do whatever you wish. Nevertheless, I am giving you this advice out of my feeling of mercy for you. At the moment you still have a chance. You can repent from your injustices and take lesson (from the terrible end of conceited rulers).

It is understood from the words of Imam that one needs to remind the unjust rulers as well as insolent and conceited people of their grave mistakes. In one hadith, showing pride towards proud people is considered a kind of charity. Hence the above letter of Imam should not be misunderstood, that a Muslim should always be tolerant of the opponents whatever they do. On the contrary, Islam advises that we oppose the evildoers since their evil damages the public.





THE CORNERSTONE OF PEACE & ISLAM



Times of calamity are the most important times for a human to seek patience and the guidance of Allah. This is the time to believe that Allah will manage the affairs that have been surrendered to Him in the best manner; this is what befits the one who trusts Him.

"And establish regular prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night: for those things that are good remove those that are evil: be that the word of remembrance to those who remember (their Lord): And be steadfast in patience; for verily Allah will not suffer the reward of the righteous to perish." (Hud, 11/114-115)

If one asks a Muslim to name one of the characteristics for which Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was well known throughout his life, the first and foremost answer would be that he was al-Amin, the trustworthy. And, without a doubt, this would be a correct answer. However, this does not mean that this is the only correct answer. The Prophet was also known for his never failing patience; patience with everyone and everything in creation, as well as with every test that he faced in life. This was a patience that was developed and nurtured by Allah from the time of the Prophet's infancy; this was the culmination of all the lessons of patience that are taught in the Qur'ân, the culmination of the lessons from many other Prophets.



It is important to understand that the patience of the Prophet (pbuh) was not limited to Muslims alone; Prophet Muhammad understood that he was an example for every Muslim ... the vicegerent, the representative of Allah on earth. It is for this reason that Prophet Muhammad was known as *uswat al-hasana*, the best example for humanity, a title bestowed upon him by Allah in the Qur'an:

Ye have indeed in the Apostle of Allah a beautiful pattern of (conduct) for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day and who engages much in the praise of Allah. (Ahzâb, 33/21)

That is to say, every human being, and most certainly, every Muslim, should pattern their actions, behavior and deeds on the actions of the Prophet; by so doing they will pattern themselves on a long lineage of Prophets. For his prophethood and inspiration Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the heir of these prophets. After all, he was sent as the ultimate example for mankind.

Patience that Allah Found Worthy of Mention

Allah refers specifically to incidences of patience throughout the Qur'an and praises many Prophets for their endeavors to strive in patience when dealing with both believers and non-believers on their missions to deliver the Revelation.

For instance, the Qur'an tells the story of the patience of Jacob (pbuh) when his older sons presented him with the bloodied shirt of his beloved son Joseph. On their report of the demise of Joseph, Jacob (pbuh) replied to them: "(For me) patience is most fitting: against that which ye assert, it is Allah (alone) whose help can be sought" (Yûsuf, 12/18). From this, one can understand that times of calamity are the most important times for a human to seek patience and the guidance of Allah. This is the time to believe that Allah will manage the affairs that have been surrendered to Him in the best manner; this is what befits the one who trusts Him. This lesson can be seen and understood in the following hadith:

Narrated by Anas bin Mâlik The Prophet passed by a woman who was weeping beside a grave. He told her to fear Allah and be patient. She said to him, "Go away, for you have not been afflicted with a calamity like mine." She did not recognize him. Then she was informed that this man was the Prophet, so she went to the house of the Prophet and she did not find any guard there. She said to him, "I did not recognize you." He said, "Verily, patience is at the first stroke of a calamity."

The Qur'an mentions the patience of other prophets; Nûh (pbuh), Hûd (pbuh) and Sâlih (pbuh), Ismâ'il (pbuh), Idris (pbuh) and Dhul-kifl (pbuh). While in some cases little is known as to the exact reason why they were singled out for this great honor, there is no disputing that all of these prophets faced great tests at the hands of their own people. Slandered and mocked, these prophets continued their missions. Even when faced with being turned out or physically harmed by the very people to whom they had



been sent, they merely responded: “No reason have we why we should not put our trust on Allah. Indeed He has guided us to the Ways we (follow). We shall certainly bear with patience all the hurt you may cause us: for those who put their trust should put their trust on Allah” (Ibrâhîm, 14:12).

Like these Prophets, no one can deny the patience of Prophet Muhammad, despite the injury caused to him, or that of the early Muslims at the hands of the Meccan pagans. There is story after story of hardship and torture, death and dismemberment. There is loss of family, possessions and life in the stories of those early days. Yet, even facing all of these hardships, as well as feeling the anguish of those who followed him due to the gentleness of his heart, Prophet Muhammad replied to the offers of Quraysh: “If they were to place the moon in my left hand and the sun in my right, I would not give up this noble mission of mine.” With these words the Prophet placed both the trust for his future, the future of his followers, and indeed the very protection of his own being, squarely in the hands of Allah. A point made more poignant when shortly after this time the Prophet’s uncle and protector died, leaving the Prophet even more vulnerable to attack.

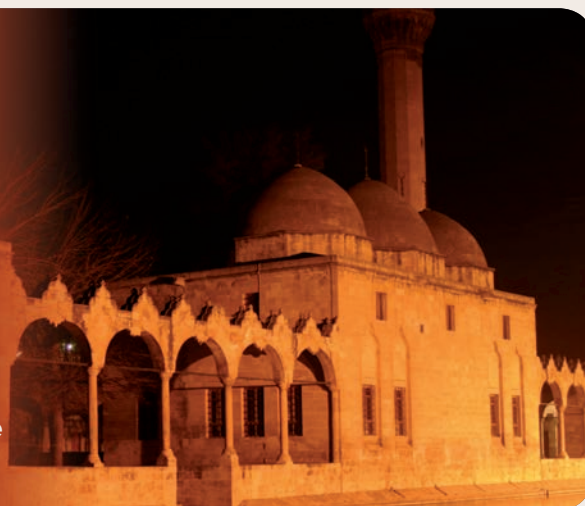
Ibrâhîm (pbuh), too, showed great patience with the will of Allah when, as he was flung into Nimrod’s raging fire, he refused the assistance of even the angels, rather wanting only the

help that Allah had deemed best for him. He, like all of the other Prophets, understood that patience is the cornerstone of peace. By fully trusting that Allah would handle the affairs and outcome of each person, one can abandon all doubt. Faith is one of the greatest fruits of patience. Waiting...watching to see the outcome makes one relish the realization that all things are under the control of Allah. One merely needs to contemplate the subtle calmness of the universe, although the universe controls none of its own affairs, to understand the depth of the peace that comes with patience. Look how every planet continues on its course without fear of bumping into another!

Ismâ’îl (pbuh) accepted his fate in this way because he understood the peace and calmness of patience. This was a peace that could not

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even be disturbed by Satan himself. When told by his father what his fate was to be, he replied, "O my father! do as thou art commanded: thou wilt find me if Allah so wills one practicing patience and constancy!" (Sâffât, 37/102). The entire Muslim world has just celebrated the Hajj, part of which recalls the trial of Ibrâhîm on his way to sacrifice his son. When Satan appeared to him, whispering words of doubt, Ibrâhîm cast stones to chase him away, as doubt could cause him to lose patience with Allah's command. It is obvious that the Satan understands the great value placed on patience by Allah, so why do the Muslims not understand it?

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) demonstrated that he understood these examples of patience all too well. During his visit to the family of his mother in Taif, to seek their aid for his mission, he was stoned so horribly that his very sandals were filled with blood. When the angel came to him with the offer bring a mountain down over the town, he replied with patience and mercy. He wanted no vengeance; he only wanted Allah to bring them to Islam, to Peace. This is the real test of patience; to be forgiving when harmed, to have mercy on those who have caused the harm, even when given the chance to retaliate.

The Best Times for Showing Patience

Certainly one of the best times to act with patience is in dealing with those who do not know the love and mercy of their Rabb; those non-Muslims who think and act according to

the knowledge that they have learned from untrustworthy persons or groups. About these people, Muslims are commanded:

Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best who have strayed from His Path and who receive guidance. And if ye do catch them out catch them out no worse than they catch you out: but if ye show patience that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient. And do thou be patient for thy patience is but from Allah; nor grieve over them: and distress not thyself because of their plots.

For Allah is with those who restrain themselves and those who do good. (Nahl 26/125-128)

Allah declares in the Qur'ân that another time when it is most important to act with patience is when facing and dealing with oppression, even if that oppression forces you from your home or your livelihood. This is truer today than ever before when faced with the millions of Muslims fleeing for their very lives from war, famine and oppression of every kind. When facing such oppression the Muslims must recall the patient tones of Mūsâ (pbuh) as he spoke to Pharaoh, for surely no ruler today is more oppressive than he was.

Such patience during times of oppression must be the practice of every Muslim, of the

oppressed and of those who are aware of the oppression. Those who are able should do whatever is in their power to end the oppression, but at the same time they must realize that ultimately it is only in the hands of Allah to deliver the oppressed. In this way they will not allow anger to get in the way, causing them to lose their manners and make them ultimate loser in the eyes of Allah. Remember the words of Allah:

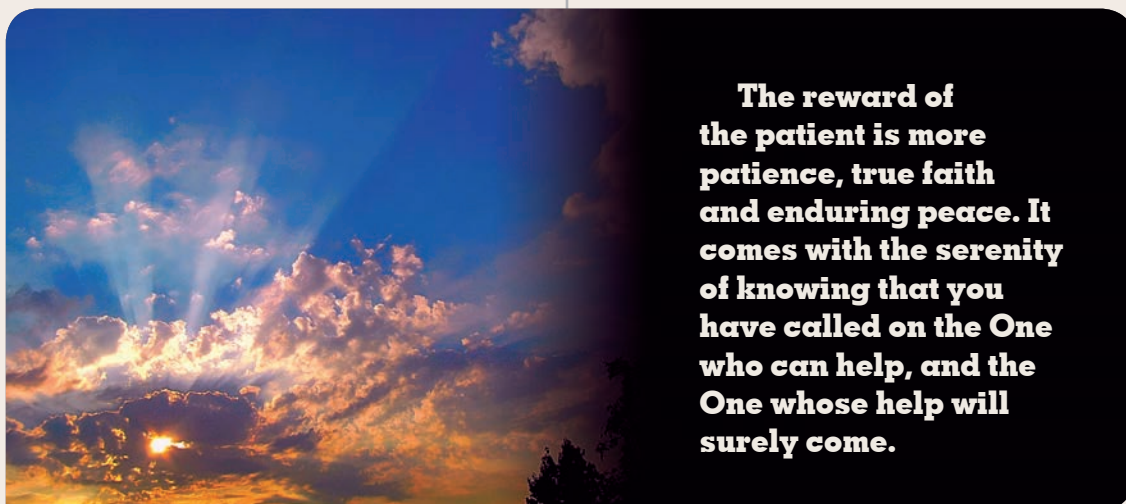
To those who leave their homes in the cause of Allah after suffering oppression We will assuredly give a goodly home in this world: but truly the reward of the Hereafter will be greater if they only realize (this)! (They are) those who persevere in patience and put their trust on their Lord. (Nahl, 16/41-42)

The Prophet and his Companions were driven from their homes. They watched those whom they loved be treated in ways unimaginable to us today. They were left to starve for three years in a valley. They were robbed of all that they owned and their businesses were looted. Yet, in face of all these years of hardship, the fiery anger of the Companions would melt at the calming words of the Prophet and the commands of the Qur'an. It is on these lessons that the Muslims should model their behavior and take heed of the necessity to be patient in today's trying world.

Another time when the Prophet was the model of all patience was when dealing with

the ignorant. Muslims should recall the calm sweetness of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as he spoke and calmed the flames of anger in the hadith:

So the Muslims, the pagans and the Jews started abusing one another until they were on the point of fighting. The Prophet continued quieting them until they were silent, whereupon the Prophet got on his animal (mount) and proceeded until he met with Sad bin Ubada. The Prophet said to Sad, "Did you not hear what 'Abu Hubab said?" He meant 'Abdullah bin Ubayy. "He said so-and-so." On that Sad bin 'Ubâda said, "O Allah's Apostle! Excuse and forgive him, for by He Who revealed the Book to you, Allah brought the Truth which was sent to you at the time when the people of this town (i.e. Medina) had decided unanimously to crown him and tie a turban on his head (electing him as chief). But when Allah opposed that (decision) through the Truth which He gave to you, he (i.e. 'Abdullah bin Ubai) was grieved with jealousy, and that caused him to do what you have seen." So Allah's Apostle excused him, for the Prophet and his Companions used to forgive the pagans and the people of Scripture as Allah had ordered them, and they used to put up with their mischief with patience. Allah said: "And you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you and from the pagans..." (Al-i Imran:3/186) And Allah also said: "Many of the people of the Scripture wish they could



The reward of the patient is more patience, true faith and enduring peace. It comes with the serenity of knowing that you have called on the One who can help, and the One whose help will surely come.

turn you away as disbelievers after you have believed, from selfish envy..." (Baqarah:2/109)

As hard as it is to believe, 1,400 years after the time of the Prophet and his Companions, the Muslims are still the target of the jealousy and mischief of the ignorant. The ignorant ones are still trying to attack the Muslims with words, lies and misinformation, but to no avail, for those who practice patience in the face of mischief have the strength and courage of Allah behind them. Allah gives these patient ones glad tidings in the Qur'an:

"And do thou be patient for thy patience is but from Allah; nor grieve over them: and distress not thyself because of their plots. For Allah is with those who restrain themselves and those who do good." (Nahl, 16/127-128)

The reward of the patient is more patience, true faith and enduring peace. It comes with the serenity of knowing that you have called on the One who can help, and the One whose help will surely come. The Prophet's teachings were most obvious in the narrative of Sayyidina A'isha when, in the face of slander and the evil of the ignorant, she herself became the focus of the slander and mischief of the pagans. She replied to the slanderers in the following way:

Despite the fact that I was a young girl and had a little knowledge of the Qur'an, I said, "By Allah, no doubt I know that you heard this (slandering) speech so that it has been planted in your hearts (i.e. minds) and you have taken it as a truth. Now if I tell you that I am innocent, you will not believe me, and if confess to you about it, and Allah knows that I am innocent, you will surely believe me. By Allah, I find no comparison for me and you except that of Joseph's father when he said, '(For me) patience in the most fitting against that which you assert; it is Allah (Alone) Whose Help can be sought.'" Then I turned to the other side and lay on my bed; and Allah knew then that I was innocent and I hoped that Allah would reveal my innocence.

This is the ultimate reward of patience; hope! While patience brings more patience

and causes one to become firm in their faith and trust of Allah, the greatest reward indeed is the undying hope that Allah will make all work out well. In the face of patience, the ignorant become educated, the oppressors become defeated, the mischief-makers are vanquished, the fire is calmed, anger is soothed and vengeance is forgotten. In the face of patience, peace abounds and submission is the ultimate reality for the practitioner. The reward is not merely a reward of this world, for in the Qur'an Allah promises the practitioners of patience:

"Peace unto you for that ye persevered in patience! Now how excellent is the final Home!" (Ra'd, 13/24)

