

JULY/AUGUST 2012 • J.AKHIR 1433 • NO: 36 • £3 UK • US\$5 • AU\$5

# WISDOM

A Source of Inspirational and Traditional Islamic Knowledge

AL-TINOLUH

THE REMEDY FOR THE REMOVAL OF AFFLICTIONS:

# FORGIVING



**Osman Nuri Efendi**  
Forgiving the faults

**Cafer Durmus**  
Take the path of forgiveness

**Norma Nowell**  
Examples of Behaviour from the  
Best Role Model



*D*ear Readers,

“Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; But turn away from the ignorant.” (Araf, 7:199)

“Let them forgive and overlook, do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Nur, 24:22)

Indeed, one the foundational elements of Islam, for believers, is that of forgiving. It is our sincere hope that by exploring the significance of forgiving others, being tolerant will become easier in our daily lives.

In this edition, the article of our teacher, Osman Nuri Efendi, is an article related to the topic of forgiving the faults of others in order to be forgiven by Allah the Almighty. It discusses and points out that repelling evil with goodness becomes a fence between evil and the evil doer. Cafer Durmus explicates that the Qur’ân revealed that forgiveness is not a weakness: on the contrary, it announced in different verses that it is a high virtue. In other articles you will find the discussion of finding peace through forgiveness and finding submission through servanthood. Ibrahim Çelik explains us in his article that the Mi’raj event shows us that the spiritual growth the servant can achieve is only possible by purifying the nafs, reducing its influence to the lowest level, and attaining purity of the heart.

Finally, Jacqueline Oyludag tells us the story of Joseph. In this article, the author points out that learning how to forgive is the most beautiful essence of wisdom.

It is our sincere hope that you enjoy the articles in this edition and that you are able to utilize these words of Wisdom to make the practice of forgiving the faults easier in your everyday life. May Allah bless us all and make our lives full of blessed peace through forgiveness. May we be of those who prefer the hereafter to this

Elif Kapici

[editor@sufiwisdom.net](mailto:editor@sufiwisdom.net)

# Wisdom

WISDOM Bimonthly Islamic Journal

Copyright 2012

No: 36 JULY/AUG 2012 - 1433

Price: \$5 (USA), £3 (UK), AUS \$5 (AUS)

WISDOM is published by ALTINOLUK Publishing Co.

Chairman

Abdullah Sert

Managing Editor

M. Lutfi Arslan

Editorial Board

Elif Kapici

Prof. Henry F. Espiritu

Design

Altinolukgraphic • Saban Muslu

Subscription Rate For One Year

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

## Distribution and Subscription Representatives

Australia - Fatih Ciftci 1/8 Yaralla Crt Meadowheights 3048 Vic  
E-mail: australia@sufiwisdom.net

UK - Selim Bicen 13 - 16 Pier Streetaberystwyth SY23 2LJ Ceredigion  
Phone: +44 1970617417 • E-mail: england@sufiwisdom.net

UK - Elif Kapici - 18 The Nurseries - Cliftonville  
Northampton NN1 5HN

USA - Mahmut Tugrul Tasgetiren 4785 Chestnut Ridge Rd.  
No:2 Amherst, Ny 14228

Phone: 716-208-5893 • E-mail: usa@sufiwisdom.net

USA - Jacqueline V. Frank 8508 So. 71st East Ave. tulsa, OK 74133

## Head Office

İkitelli Organize Sanayi Bölgesi, Turgut Ozal Cad. No:117/2 A-D  
İkitelli - Istanbul / TURKEY

Phone: +90.212.671 07 00 (pbx) - Fax: +90.212.671 07 17

## Printed by

ERKAM Printing • Phone: +90.212.671 07 07

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Jacqueline  
Oyludag

Three Shirts  
And The Path to  
Forgiveness



Cafer Durmus

Take the  
path of  
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Semseddin  
Kiris

Forgiveness  
is a divine  
blessing



Salih Kareem

The  
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Whoever forgives  
he shall have his reward from



Allah

**Forgiving the faults  
and responding  
evil with goodness  
in order to  
establish peace  
and friendship  
was a distinctive  
characteristic of the  
Prophet.**

It is not a merit to respond goodness with goodness and evil with evil. The real virtue is to counter not just goodness with goodness but also evil with goodness. Because of our benefaction, if the person treated with goodness is an enemy, he becomes a friend; if he is neither friend nor an enemy, he comes closer; and if he is a friend, his friendship and love increases. And repelling evil with goodness becomes a fence between evil and the evil doer.

Rumi explains this prophetic manner as follows:

*"His (God's) mercy overcomes His vengeance: hence every prophet prevailed over his adversary; For he (the prophet) is the result of (Divine) mercy and is the opposite of him (the adversary): that ill favored one was the result of (Divine) wrath."*

*"Violence is not the means of averting calamity: the means is beneficence and pardon and kindness. Let the following prophetic warning wake you up: He (the Prophet) said, 'Alms is a means of averting calamity: cure your diseased ones by (giving) alms.' Now comprehend well the method of curing diseases and afflictions."*





**We should remember that forgiving all kinds of faults should not be considered as a merit. Forgiveness is a subject only in faults committed in personal matters.**

In many cases, when the Prophet (pbuh) had the chance to punish sinners, he manifested the merit of forgiveness to rehabilitate them and achieve their eternal salvation. Because the real merit and greatness is to control the self and forgive when there is a chance and power to take revenge. In fact, this is stated in the following prophetic saying:

*"The strong is not the one who overcomes the people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger."* (Bukhārī, *Adab*, 76)

As regards to this virtue, joyful tidings are given in the following verse:

**"And the recompense of evil is punishment like it, but whoever forgives and amends, he shall have his reward from Allah; surely He does not love the unjust."** (Shura, 42:40)

Forgiving the faults and responding evil with goodness in order to establish peace and friendship was a distinctive characteristic of the Prophet. As his followers, we should also adorn ourselves with same qualities. Confining forgiveness just for the holidays and forgetting it on the other days of the year is not an appropriate characteristic for a mature Muslim. To make these manners as our natural qualities is an important sign of the maturity of our faith.

The following sayings of the Prophet should be exemplary measures for every believer:

*"None of you be one of those low people who say 'I am with people, if they do good to me, I will do*

*good to them; and if they treat me badly, I will treat them badly.' On the contrary, you should discipline your inner selves to respond goodness with goodness and not to do wrong to people who treat you badly."* (Tirmidhī, *Kitāb al-Birr*, 63)

*"Do not cut your relationship with those who cut their relationship with you. Give charity to those who do not give to you. Forgive those who do wrong to you."* (Ahmad b. Hanbal, *Musnad*, IV, 148, 158)

*"Fear Allah wherever you are. Respond evil with goodness so that you may eradicate evil. Treat people with good manners."* (Ibrahim Canan, *Kütüb-i Sitte*, V, p. 304)

*"I saw mansions looking over gardens of the Paradise and asked Gabriel:*

*"For whom are these mansions?" He said:*

*"They are for the believers who controls their anger, bury their hatred in their heart and forgive peoples faults."* (‘Alī’ al-Muttaqī, 7016; *Awārif*, p. 253)

### **FORGIVENESS WHEN IT IS APPROPRIATE**

We should remember that forgiving all kinds of faults should not be considered as a merit. Forgiveness is a subject only in faults committed in personal matters. There are some crimes committed against society, religion and sacred things, which cannot be tolerated. In such cases, punishment is required in order to rehabilitate the criminals, establish justice and distinguish what is right and what is wrong. Otherwise forgiving these crimes will be a greater oppression to the society.

Because continuously forgiving the servants of Allah and becoming worthy of Allah's forgiveness is an indispensable characteristic of the friends of Allah. Because continuously forgiving the servants of Allah and becoming worthy of Allah's forgiveness is an indispensable characteristic of the friends of Allah.

Sayyidah Aisha, the wife of Allah's Apostle, told about Prophet's approach towards forgiveness the following:

*"Whenever he had to choose between two things he adopted the easier one, provided it was not sin, but if it was any sin he was the one who was the farthest from it of the people; and Allah's Messenger never took revenge from anyone because of his personal grievance, unless what Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, had made inviolable had been violated."* (Muslim, *Fadāil*, 79; Abū Dawūd, *Kitāb al-Adab*, 4)

Just like inappropriate anger causes mischief and disorder among people, not getting angry when it is necessary is moral weakness which bears similar results. To be able to get angry for the sake of Allah, when it is necessary, is a requirement of faith. For instance anger against the enemy in the battlefield is manifestation of the excitement of faith in the heart and a sign of piety and patriotism. Showing anger against the crimes committed about the matters of the rights of the society, religious and public values is an indicator of the quality of one's faith.

The Messenger of Allah's life is full of manifestations of such merits. He not only forgave the sinners in personal matters but also he treated them with goodness.

#### WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO BE FORGIVEN BY ALLAH?

Abu Bakr, who annihilated himself in the love for the Prophet, is also manifested the unique examples of forgiveness. For instance, there was a poor man named Mistah, to whom Abu Bakr was regularly helping. When Abu Bakr learned that Mistah was among those who slander Sayyidah Aisha, he swore that he would not help Mistah and his family anymore. Without Abu Bakr's financial aid, Mistah and his family became miserable. Upon this the following verses were revealed:

**"And let not those of you who possess grace and abundance swear against giving to the near of kin and the poor and those who have fled in Allah's way, and they**





**should pardon and turn away. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”** (Nur, 24:22)

**“And make not Allah because of your swearing (by Him) an obstacle to your doing good and guarding (against evil) and making peace between men, and Allah is Hearing, Knowing.”** (Baqarah, 2:224)

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq said, “Yes, by Allah, I would like that Allah forgive me.” expiated for his broken oath and went on giving Mistah the money he used to give him before. He also added, “By Allah, I will never deprive him of it at all.” (Bukhari, *Maghazi*, 34; Muslim, *Tawbah*, 56; Tabari, *Tafsir*, II, 546)

Because continuously forgiving the servants of Allah and becoming worthy of Allah’s forgiveness is an indispensable characteristic of the friends of Allah.

#### **HOW MUCH GOODNESS SHOULD BE SHOWN IN RESPONSE TO EVIL?**

Once the Companions of the Prophet asked Allah’s Apostle why he loved ‘Ali so much. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) ordered ‘Ali to be called. One of the

Companions went to bring him. Before his arrival, the Prophet asked his Companions:

*“My dear friends! What would you do, if you treat someone kindly, but he responds with evil?”*

Companions replied that they would respond to him with goodness. Then the Prophet asked: *“What would you do, if he keeps mistreating you?”* Again Companions gave the same response. When the Prophet asked the same question third time, they lowered their heads and did not reply his question.

Later ‘Ali arrived. Even though Allah’s Apostle asked the same question to him seven times, ‘Ali every time said:

“I would treat him nicely.” And then he added:

*“Even if he keeps responding my favors with evil, I would still treat him nicely.”*

In fact ‘Sayyidina Ali said:

*“The worst of mankind is the one who responds goodness with evil and the best of them is the one who does goodness in response to an evil.”*

*“Do people good without thinking that you will see evil in response to your favors.”*



# Three Shirts And The Path to Forgiveness

The story of Joseph seeps in beauty and above all this physical beauty is the overriding notion of forgiveness; indeed the most beautiful of human attributes; and as one can see, learning how to forgive is the most beautiful essence of wisdom.

**“We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’ân in order that ye may learn wisdom. We do relate unto thee the most beautiful of stories in that We reveal to thee this (portion of the) Qur’an: before this thou too was among those who knew it not.” (Yusuf, 12:2-3)**

The story of Joseph in the Qur’ân is indeed, as Allah does declare in this verse, the most beautiful story. It is the story of the unwavering survival of love, hope, and forgiveness in the face the most horrendous acts of cruelty and betrayal; that of brother against brother. The story is in itself a beautiful story in that it details the triumph of good over evil; a theme that is very prominent in today’s global society and is the backbone of the entertainment industry. However, it is not just the story that is beautiful: the characters are known to be the most beautiful in physical appearance, and every physical detail of the story is about owning and possessing the most beautiful materials. The story of Joseph seeps in beauty and above all

this physical beauty is the overriding notion of forgiveness; indeed the most beautiful of human attributes; and as one can see, learning how to forgive is the most beautiful essence of wisdom.

Underlying, however, all of this physical and outwardly beauty lays a story of three shirts, three beautiful shirts. When one follows the tale of these shirts one can see that they guide us through the tale of love, hope, redemption and forgiveness as an insider, as a confidant to the inside of the story. Just as a thread makes a shirt, so here the shirt makes the thread, knitting the story together seamlessly. The shirts, both literally and figuratively, are the fabric of the story.

The first shirt that the reader comes to in the story of Joseph is the shirt that he is wearing as a young lad in the embrace of his family. Joseph's shirt, by most narrations of the story, was made for him by his mother, Rachel, who passed away bearing Joseph's brother, not long after having made the shirt. Thus the shirt reminds us of a mother's love and the beauty of that love and bond. Just as Rachel was the most beloved wife of Jacob, indeed the very reason he worked for her father for seven years, so too was Joseph the most beloved of the sons of Jacob: a fact that wore on the jealousies of the brothers of Joseph. While this story weaves the tales of love and harmony in one family, it also weaves into its tapestry the tale of unrelenting envy.

Before the brothers of Joseph threw him in the well they first took off his shirt. At this Joseph beseeched them: "O my brothers! Give me my shirt. If I die, it will be my shroud. If I stay alive it will be my dress". This statement shows that Joseph understood one very important thing about this shirt: that live or die, it was all he had. The protection of

his mother and father was gone at that point, and the sense of love and harmony was thus gone too. The shirt was now a representative for that protection, and he was even about to lose that! In a very real sense there is another underlying message that was being relayed here, and that has to do with the absolute depth of the betrayal that Joseph is suffering at this very moment in the story.

Since the shirt is a representation of the family bond, both physically and sentimentally, it is easy to understand that its removal by force is literally stripping Joseph of heritage; cutting him from his very roots. It is not just that they threw him into the well, they essentially cut him completely to the last thread from his family in every way.

This is the ultimate betrayal that a brother can have for a brother and links the story in its depth to all the brother-betrayal stories that came before it in the history of the Prophets. It is the link to the story of Cain and Abel and the story of Esau and his own brother Jacob, yes Jacob, Joseph's own father.

Ironically, it was Jacob who had deceived his own brother Esau with a shirt; one made of fur so that in his blindness, the father of

Jacob would give him the blessing that was rightfully due to his brother. This betrayal, as with the betrayal that was occurring in the story of Joseph, caused a split in the family both in space and spirituality, for after his deception, Jacob quickly fled the wrath of his brother to another land. Thread by thread, a new shirt is being unwoven.

In the story of Joseph the brothers return the shirt to Jacob having smeared it with blood, with the tale of Joseph having been eaten by wolves. A tale which immediately began to unravel when Jacob commented in pain and lament: "Until now I haven't ever seen a more gentle wolf than this; he ate my

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son but did not even tear his shirt!”

Jacob placed the shirt on his face and began to cry. His remorse at seeing this shirt was not just the remorse of losing his son, it was at losing everything that this blood soaked shirt represented. This shirt was the thread that tied him to his beloved wife in sentimentality. The destruction of this shirt was his last string to her memory and the love that they shared even for all the years that she never had a child by him. It was the thread that reminded him of the joy of receiving the product of that love, his son Joseph. It was the thread that tied him to the family harmony that they shared as parents raising their son, and then the joy of the news of yet another child coming. And just as Joseph tied the shirt to death by noting that “it could be my shroud”, it was also the reminder for Jacob of the loss of his wife by being the last thing that she made for her child. Seeing this blood soaked shirt in his hands represented for Jacob the cutting of the thread to all that came before it, and all that was possible in the future for the wearer of that shirt, Joseph. No one understood that this shirt lying in his hands meant that Joseph’s training, and all the tribulations and trials that come with it, had begun by the decree of Allah; and he cried until he went blind due to all of this.

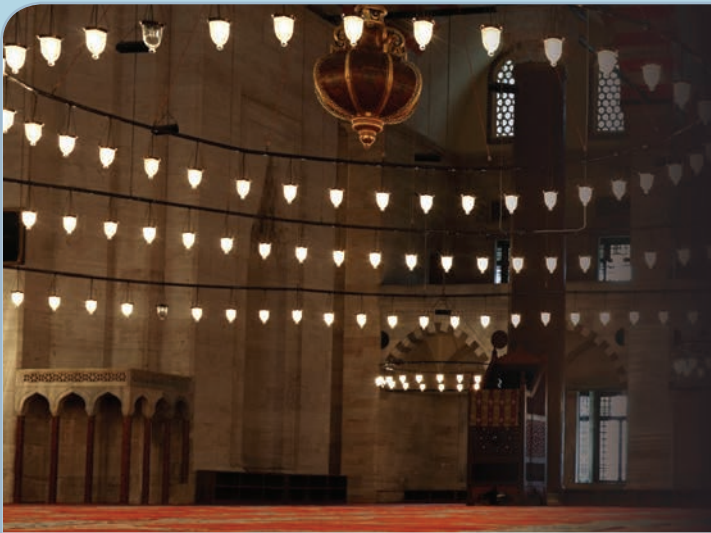
Joseph is thus cut from his family, but not completely. Allah is always merciful,

always full of compassion and sent to Joseph a new shirt: the shirt of Abraham (pbuh). Jibril (pbuh) himself delivered this shirt as a comfort to Joseph as if to say that even though one is far from one’s family, and in a position of great distress, one is never really cut from one’s roots. There is also another small lesson in this that every Muslim should take to heart, which is this: when Allah wishes to give you something better, He must first remove from you completely the thing which He is replacing. This is true in all matters, so we should not look at losses anything other than as an occasion for celebration at the thought that we have been chosen to receive something better and deserved the attention of Allah.

Joseph is quickly sold to the Aziz of Egypt as a slave. But as he grows and matures in the house of the Aziz, he quickly falls under the eye of Zulayha, the beautiful wife of the Aziz. Shortly, her desire for him causes her to attempt to seduce Joseph, which he, out of loyalty to the Aziz, rebuffs. This very loyalty to the feelings of the Aziz comes from having suffered the betrayal of his brothers. This is the heart of the matter. The trials of this life are learning and growing experiences, and Joseph shows well that he learned loyalty from his particular trial. At the point that he rebuffs the advances, she grabs for him and rips his shirt. Indeed, in this is the symbol that the fabric of yet another family is about

Since the shirt is a representation of the family bond, both physically and sentimentally, it is easy to understand that its removal by force is literally stripping Joseph of heritage; cutting him from his very roots.





When Allah wishes to give you something better, He must first remove from you completely the thing which He is replacing.

to be ripped apart, just as his own family had been all those years ago. Zulayha in her frustration cries out, saying that Joseph attacked her, a matter which the shirt, when used as evidence does not bear out.

There is a very important statement that happens at this point. Upon understanding the deception of his wife, the Aziz turns to Zulayha and says: “O Joseph! Turn away from this, and thou, (O woman), ask forgiveness for thy sin. Lo! Thou art of the sinful.” This is most important here because of the lack of its being stated at the time to the brothers of Joseph, even though the evidence of the shirt bears out their own deception. The difference in the two situations has to do with the root of the sin. Zulayha was guilty of having desire for Joseph; the brothers were guilty of envy and jealousy. The sin of desire does not cause the heart to harden the way that jealousy and envy do: they can turn the heart to stone. Thus it is possible for her to sincerely seek forgiveness from Allah, her husband, and Joseph and turn everything right again. But it would have been impossible for the brothers to have sought forgiveness at all. Rather they would have turned, like Cain did, and blamed their brother for their misfortune in having to repent. From this it is easy to understand the reasons why repentance can often be understood as sincere, or not; and furthermore why certain insults and injuries are easier to forgive than others.

So now the story is at the point that with one shirt Joseph becomes a slave, and with another shirt he becomes a prisoner; and

his state is to remain like this for Allah’s appointed time. In the words of Mahmud Sami Ramazanoglu: “Treachery is a reprehensible attribute and trustworthiness is a virtue to be praised.” For this reason, after some time, Joseph is completely exonerated by the warden of the prison and shortly after that is sent to the King for the purpose of interpreting a dream. Having done this, Joseph rises in favor with the King and is appointed as the Minister of Finance, in charge of preparing for the impending famine that is about to hit the lands. Before leaving the prison, Joseph dons a new shirt; one that is a sign of his authority.

The third shirt, the shirt of authority was not granted to Joseph immediately upon entering Egypt. Rather he had to stand his trials; he had to mature into a wise and worthy person in order to gain this position. Thus, unless, one is able to look at the prison that one’s life has become, grow from it, learn from it, and to become wise from it, one will never become worthy of the shirt of authority, of advancement, and will thus remain imprisoned.

After some time, the famine begins and who should appear in front of Joseph other than the very brothers who betrayed him. It is important to note that the wisdom which earned him the high position is applied to this scene. Had Joseph rushed out to greet them upon recognizing them, they certainly in their hard-heartedness would have been even more jealous of his position, and probably would have tried to harm him or his





The tale of the shirts is the tale of life and how the human condition allows for man to lose one shirt, symbolically one aspect of who they are, and gain a better shirt through repentance and forgiveness.

reputation. Instead he set them to task, to test them and really see if they had the ability to repent and be sincere about it. This is a most valuable lesson here; that forgiveness has to be measured, not doled out foolishly. One should seek to learn of the sincerity of the one repenting, for surely if they are not, they would turn to their sin again.

Joseph understood that the brothers to this point had not repented at all for their misdeed as can be proved in their answer to Joseph regarding the number of brothers in their family: "We were twelve brothers. One of us went to the desert and died." Furthermore their lack of repentance is reiterated when Jacob, upon hearing that Benjamin would have to travel to Egypt with them in order to obtain more food: "Can I entrust him to you save as I entrusted his brother to you aforetime?" (Yusuf, 12:80). Thus it is clear that trust and forgiveness, while they often go hand-in-hand, should not go to those who lack sincere regret over their actions.

However, that does not mean it should not go at all. Once the sincerity of the repentance is proven, then forgiveness should be immediate and completely; without hesitation and without residual feelings of the betrayal that brought it. Joseph after hearing his brothers' repentance, thus: "They said: By Allah, verily Allah hath preferred thee above us, and we were indeed sinful" immediately replied to them: "He said: Have no fear this day! May Allah forgive you, and He is the

Most Merciful of those who show mercy" (Yusuf, 12: 91-92).

Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), upon entering Mecca declared the exact same words saying: "I shall speak to you as Joseph spoke unto his brothers: 'There is no reproach against you today; Have no fear this day! May Allah forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy'" upon his conquest of Mecca, erasing the years of torture and torment that the early Muslims had suffered at the hands of the Meccans.

Finally, the thread which connects the shirts also connects the thread of forgiveness. Having been forgiven by Joseph upon hearing their sincere repentance, he gives his shirt to his brothers and tells them to take it to their father. It was shirt that caused his grief, and now it is a shirt that will heal that grief. Judah said: "I had carried the bloody shirt to him and grieved my father; and now, I will carry this to him as a substitute and relieve him" (Ramazanoglu, 140). Upon receiving the shirt, Jacob laid it on his face and his eyesight was, indeed, restored. And immediately the sons cried: "They said: 'O our father! Ask forgiveness of our sins for us, for Lo! We were sinful'. He said: 'I shall ask forgiveness for you of my Lord. Lo! He is the Forgiving, the Merciful'" (Yusuf, 12:97-98).

It is important to note that Jacob said "I shall". This is because there is a condition which Jacob wanted to ascertain; that being the condition of the 'forgiveness of the

wronged'. After seeing for sure that Joseph had forgiven his brothers completely, Jacob made the prayer: "O Allah! Pardon and forgive my cries for Joseph and the lessening of my patience because of the grief of his separation, and the things that my sons did to their brother" to which Joseph responded "Amen". Jacob then turned to his sons and said: "God has forgiven you and all of them."

Thus, by following the thread of the shirts we can see that through forgiveness even the worst wrongs can be, should be, **MUST BE**, forgiven. Allah does not tell a tale, which He Himself calls the 'most beautiful story', without there being a desire that one should learn a lesson from it. The most beautiful attribute of the human being is that of forgiveness: it returns youth to the soul that has grown old in its injury, and restores sight to the eyes that have been blinded by the grief caused by the betrayal of others. The tale of the shirts is the tale of life and how the human condition allows for man to lose one shirt, symbolically one aspect of who they are, and gain a better shirt through repentance and forgiveness. The shirt can represent our connections to the world; those few strands which connect us to our brothers in faith, and our kinship brothers: but none the less, once gone you are bound to gain a new one with patience; for Allah does not produce the replacement for something that has not yet been got rid of.

**"In their history verily there is a lesson for men of understanding. It is no invented story but a confirmation of the existing, (Scripture) and a detailed explanation of everything, and a guidance and a mercy for folk who believe." (Yusuf, 12:111).**


(Note: the Tafsir lines for this were taken from the book "Joseph the Prophet" by Mahmud Sami Ramazanoglu: World Publishers, Istanbul.)

Once the sincerity of the repentance is proven, then forgiveness should be immediate and completely; without hesitation and without residual feelings of the betrayal that brought it.





# Take the path of forgiveness



In the Qur'ân, Allah gives the good news to His servants that all mistakes and sins apart from shirk (idolatry) come within the scope of his forgiveness.

The meaning of some verses of the Qur'ân is so concise, we can call them summaries of summaries: their message is clear enough for everyone to understand. If a person puts them into practise, his life will find its real meaning, and if he takes these morals to the community then people will rediscover Islam with renewed vigour. Surah Al-A'raf, verse 199 is one of these: "Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; But turn away from the ignorant."

The verse contains three key words as sources of peace: take the path of forgiveness, encourage goodness, and turn away from ignorant people. I believe that if someone evaluated in a nutshell how the morals of the Qur'ân and the laws of the honorable Sunnah should be implemented in one's life, it would be to respect these principles.

I believe that these three principles are from the forces which build the Muslim



The Qur'ân revealed  
that forgiveness is  
not a weakness:  
on the contrary, it  
announced in different  
verses that it is a high  
virtue; it decreed that  
forgiveness arose from  
the divine morals and  
to be from the morals  
of the Prophet.

person. Imagine a person who adopts forgiveness in matters pertaining to people, who always encourages goodness, and never lowers himself to the level of ignorant people when he comes across their worthless behaviour. He has made these principles the laws of his life, and he has almost removed his own self from the middle. Only the Creator and the created ones remain. He embodies the religious definition: 'At'ta'zim li amrillah washafakat li halqillah' (to observe the commands of Allah and show mercy and compassion to his creation). He prefers forgiveness in every state. Forgiving in the home, self-sacrificing in the workplace, kind on the street and understanding towards everyone.

When the third of the three principles, 'Turn away from ignorant people', becomes difficult to implement in his life, he immediately turns to Allah, and he doesn't give any opportunity to his nafs (lower self) or the cursed 'Shaitaan' (satan) to instigate something. He always advises goodness, consistently. He always forgives, excuses, and prefers to be the giving hand.

Think about this kind of person... Look how much he resembles the picture our Prophet (pbuh) presented to mankind: and how essential it is to present him to mankind today!

When we look in the books of Hadith (prophetic narrations) we see specific sections about forgiveness. They encourage forgiveness to women, children and orphans. They advise taking the path of forgiveness with rulers. Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) presented the highest examples of forgiveness to mankind. He taught that hearts can only be won with forgiveness. He forgave Wahshi, and he forgave Hind. On the day that Makkah was conquered, with great energy he told the captives: "You are free". He forgave Habbar bin Aswad who caused the death of his daughter Sayyidah Zaynab by wounding her.





The Arabic word 'Aff' has meanings such as to destroy, to wipe away, 'no longer' and excess. However, it is used more generally to mean to forgive the one who does evil, to leave from punishing. However, 'Afuw' is used more often to mean the forgiving person and comes from the characteristics of Allah. Indeed, in the Qur'an, Allah gives the good news to His servants that all mistakes and sins apart from shirk (idolatry) come within the scope of his forgiveness. (see Zumar 39/53, Nisa, 4/48)

However when you decide to take the path of forgiveness don't abandon its commands. When you command, command goodness. Command what is necessary in the eyes of those who are recorded in the Book of Allah, or those who possess sound knowledge. Say that doing it is better than leaving it. Indeed the word "urf" (goodness) in the verse has been explained as: "Fearing Allah, spending time with and attending to the needs of loved ones, protecting oneself from lies and similar evils, keeping one's eyes away from haram (forbidden things) and keeping one's limbs away from sin."

To respond to evil with its like was one of the habits of the jahiliyyah (polytheist arabs), and in that time, not to punish a criminal was considered to be a weakness. The Qur'an revealed that forgiveness is not a weakness: on

the contrary, it announced in different verses that it is a high virtue; it decreed that forgiveness arose from the divine morals and to be from the morals of the Prophet (pbuh).

Allah praises those who forgive in his supreme Book "Those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity, or in adversity; who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men;- for Allah loves those who do good." He announces that he loves those of his servants with this virtue. (Al-i Imran 3/134) Our prophet (pbuh) gave the good news that "Allah makes those who forgive honored and strong" (Musnad, II, 235). Forgiving is indicative of being closer to 'Taqwa' (piety), that forms the foundation of all of the virtues in Islam. In Surah Al-Nur, the believers are invited to forgive and it is asked: "Don't you wish that Allah should forgive you?" (Nur 24/22). It means that to forgive is a means to being pardoned.


To forgive and to command good while wishing for good for everyone, to turn away from ignorant people, not to fall to their level, and to always be forgiving in human relationships, these should be the basic dynamics which make man honoured in the two worlds. Allah does not warn of the need to take the path of forgiveness without a reason. May Allah make all of us from those who take the path of forgiveness. Amen.

Command what is necessary in the eyes of those who are recorded in the Book of Allah, or those who possess sound knowledge.





# *Forgiveness is a divine blessing*



To forgive is such a blessed act that forgiveness breeds forgiveness. Forgiving human beings leads to forgiveness from 'Ar-Rahman' (the Most merciful).

To forgive is a righteous act that eases the soul and gives comfort to the heart. Life is an arduous journey. Sometimes the burden we carry upon our hearts becomes heavier than the burden upon our bodies. To forgive is to throw off unnecessary burdens. The healthiness of our soul is related to forgiveness. The psychological state of ease which forgiveness brings is a gift to us from our Lord.

To be able to complete our life journey without any mistake or accident is very difficult and contrary to the divine will of our Lord. Doing something for the sake of Allah is related to doing something for the sake of people. Just as being with our loved ones during moments of joy and sadness will please them, our forgiveness of their failings, when they happen, also forms the basis of making them happy.

Our honoured book invites us to be of those who 'swallow their anger and forgive people' (1). To forgive is not an easy task. First it is necessary to train ourselves to swallow our anger. To the best of our understanding, forgiveness is also to free our hearts of every material thing they





Our honoured book invites us to be of those who 'swallow their anger and forgive people.' To forgive is not an easy task. First it is necessary to train ourselves to swallow our anger.

contain. In fact, 'Infaq' (charity) is to expend something and that also materializes in the heart first. There is nothing that we haven't taken out of our hearts that we can take out of our hands and our pockets. The unavoidable circumstances of our lives surrounded by material things also give rise to the mistakes and faults of our human relationships. The material constraints which surround us do not allow us to understand those we speak to as we understand ourselves. A human relationship with zero mistakes cannot be sustained.

Our model of forgiveness to imitate is the sultan of hearts, our Prophet (pbuh). His (pbuh) 'seerah' (life) is replete with countless examples of forgiveness. However, there is one that has brought all of us to our knees throughout the ages and teaches us a valuable lesson: it is that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) didn't repay a community which threw rocks at him with rocks but with a good 'dua' (supplication). He remarked: "I wish that Allah brings a people forth from their progeny who only worship Him and they do not ascribe anything as equal to Him." (2)

To forgive is such a blessed act that forgiveness breeds forgiveness. Forgiving human beings leads to forgiveness from 'Ar-Rahman' (the Most merciful). Our lord says "Let not those among you who are endued with grace and amplitude of means resolve by oath against helping their kinsmen, those in want, and those who have left their homes in Allah's cause: let them forgive and overlook, do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (3). As soon as

Abu Bakr heard that verse, he forgave Mistah bin Uthatha who had slandered his daughter Aisha and he began to support him financially once again.

Just as forgiveness breeds forgiveness, 'Kahr' (unkindness/anger/displeasure) also leads to more 'Kahr'. The one who searches for a friend without any faults remains without a friend. To hurt the feelings of one who has been inconsiderate leads to lack of compassion and animosity. Let's think a little...in every situation, humans are being tested not from one but from several directions. It is not possible for our loved ones to understand the specifics of the trials we live through as we understand them. That being the case, it is also not possible for us to fully appreciate the specifics of the tests which our loved ones, and the ones we speak to, are going through. Human relationships move forward upon a wheel of forgiveness. Human relationships which move forward upon a wheel of anger and enmity crash into the wall, because anger breeds anger. When we reveal how others have wronged us to their face, it brings to the fore how we have wronged them. Anger is a type of worldly punishment.

It is as though to forgive is a key which opens endless doors for us in human relationships. There is no such thing as a faultless servant. In us, Allah showed his perfect workmanship, he created us with great care. However, he put such trials in front of us that it is not possible for us to be free of fault. One of the areas of the trial which is difficult is being tested 'within the community'. It is a matter worth pondering over that all of the deeds of the heart which

are forbidden such as envy, enmity and hatred are all related to being tested by one another. One who is blameworthy in his servitude to Allah should be warned. However, warning the one who is blameworthy is displeasing to an individual, so if it is possible to think and forgive, then it is necessary to try to forgive. We should sustain our relationships while holding on to the path of forgiveness. Allah says to the Prophet (pbuh) (4). This verse outlines a framework for our human relations.

To forgive is to ignore the memories that leave an impression in our worldly lives and which displease us. These memories are temporary and there is no need to attach oneself to them. Forgiveness is related to heaven and being angry is related to the 'nafs' (lower desire). Our acts of forgiveness rise to the sky. They are projected into heaven.


The 'nafs' (lower desire) wants to hide and collect negative incidents which occur within it and then finally to punish. Good acts are hidden in heaven, evil acts in our lower desires. On the day of reckoning, the nafs will explain the negative events which occurred inside it one by one. To become angry and displeased is to enter the nafs' (lower desire's) sphere of influence. Even if our bodies are within the sphere of influence of the nafs, our 'ruh' (soul) should not be. The 'ruh' (soul) is not satisfied with the nafs, it desires 'Jannah' (heaven). Soul's which desire Jannah forgive. Forgiveness brings

about dua (prayer) which produces compassion, mercy and love and love brings 'barakah' (blessing). Barakah is a heavenly concept, it can't be explained with worldly measures and words. We feel the 'hand' of barakah caressing our backs in the events we experience, but we can't explain it with words.

Anger or displeasure is a confused emotion which builds up inside of us. Sometimes anger can spill from our mouths as a curse. Our prophet (pbuh) exerted a great amount of effort to avoid cursing in matters relating to humans. To curse someone is to forbid that person from divine blessing. It is to consider excessive the favour of forgiveness given to that person from Allah. Whereas forgiveness is a divine blessing, thanks to this blessing, all the tensions between humans are removed in a moment. Cursing is depriving one from making and receiving duas. The one who deprives someone from duas will also be deprived himself.

To forgive is a divine blessing, a divine door, and we heal our hearts by entering from this door, and we receive the other favours which Allah has ordained for us. Life makes it necessary for even healthy people to go through periods of spiritual healing, and forgiveness is a frequent therapy which we can do by ourselves. Oh Allah! Allow us to understand forgiveness as a blessing and to experience it. Amin.

Notes: 1) Âl-i Imrân, 3:134. 2) Bukhârî, Bed'ü'l-halk 7; Muslim, jihâd 111. 3) Nûr, 24:22. 4) A'râf, 7:99.



It is not possible for us to fully appreciate the specifics of the tests which our loved ones, and the ones we speak to, are going through. Human relationships move forward upon a wheel of forgiveness.



If we also arrange our daily duties and sleeping and eating times in accordance with the five daily prayers and the Tahajjud prayer, our lives will become more harmonious and peaceful.



# The Golden Characteristics Of The Most Merciful's Special Servants

## Part II

Seeking forgiveness is our tool for salvation and forgiveness in our graves and in the hereafter. Especially in 'Sahar' time, turning to Allah in repentance and seeking forgiveness is the greatest means for being pardoned.

The distinctive characteristics of the Most Merciful's special servants and the qualities of upright Muslims are explained in verses 63-76 of Surah Al-Furqan. The second of these qualities is to worship Allah at the time of Tahajjud.

2- Tahajjud:

In the second of the verses of the surah mentioned above we find the following statement "Those who spend the night in adoration of their Lord prostrate and standing; " (Furqan 25:64)

Despite being free from committing sin, the messenger of Allah (pbuh) would pray during the nights until his blessed feet were swollen with the worry that he wouldn't be able to be thankful for Allah's favours. He was also setting an example for his companions in the matter of worship during the night and his companions would imitate him.

Sayyidah Aisha once asked the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):

"Oh Messenger of Allah! Why do you exhaust yourself this much even though Allah has declared in Surah Al-Fatih that you have been completely forgiven?"

The Messenger (pbuh) replied:

Just as daytime is the time with the aim of working to provide sustenance for the body, in their eyes the nights are the time for nourishing the soul and filling the heart with divine truths.



“Should I not be a thankful servant?”

Allah’s most beloved servant, ‘Habibullah’ used to spend his nights in worship in order to thank his lord because he (pbuh) was already going to attain the highest rank in ‘Jannah’ (heaven). For us to spend ‘Sahar’ time (the last portion of the night) in worship however, it must first be with the hope of forgiveness. In this precious time when ‘duas’ (prayers) are accepted and the servant is closest to his Lord, our hearts should only be seeking forgiveness. Seeking forgiveness is our ‘sanad’ (tool) for salvation and forgiveness in our graves and in the hereafter. Especially in ‘Sahar’ time, turning to Allah in repentance and seeking forgiveness is the greatest means for being pardoned.

Imam Ghazali mentions the following:

- Some people saw Shaikh Junayd Baghdadi after his death in a dream: “Oh Abul-Qasim! What news do you have?”, they asked.

Junaid gave this answer:

- “Nothing was beneficial apart from a few rakat (units) of prayer I used to pray in the darkness of the night.”

This incident narrated by Imam Ghazali contains a very important lesson for us and acts as a guide to show us how we should prepare for the life in the grave.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) once remarked:

- “Oh Abu Dharr! When you set off for a journey do you take provisions?”

- “Yes I do oh Messenger of Allah”, replied Abu Dharr.

Upon this the Messenger (pbuh) said:

- “If you don’t leave without provisions for a worldly journey, what do you do for a journey to the afterlife? Shall I inform you of provisions which will benefit you on the day of reckoning?”

- “Tell me oh Messenger of Allah”, replied Abu Dharr

The Messenger (pbuh) said the following:

- “Keep fasts on hot days for the terror of the day of reckoning, perform the ‘Tahajjud’ (night vigil) prayer for the loneliness of the grave, perform Hajj for the big events which are ahead of us, be of help to the poor, and don’t speak bad words.”

This ‘Hadith’ (narration) of the Prophet (pbuh) clarifies that the duas (invocations/supPLICATIONS) and worship performed during ‘Sahar’ time will have a considerable effect upon our lives in the grave.

In another narration, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) remarked that:

“When a person wakes up in a part of the night and also wakes up his family and they each perform two rakat (units) of prayer, they are counted among those men and women who remember Allah a lot.” (Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah)

For those believers who know the importance of ‘Sahar’ time, the nights are an extraordinary treasure. Those who know the true value of this treasure turn to their lord especially after half of the night in order that their ‘duas’ (invocations), worship and



supplications to Allah are accepted. Just as daytime is the time with the aim of working to provide sustenance for the body, in their eyes the nights are the time for nourishing the soul and filling the heart with 'fayz-i ilahi' (divine truths).

The students of a spiritual master once asked about a matter they couldn't understand the wisdom behind:

"Our master, when we look around us we see that dogs, like some other animals, when their time comes they just die without their meat being used. In addition, despite breeding a lot they don't tend to increase.

Whereas, the majority of humans sacrifice sheep with the intention of worship and feed on their meat and in general sheep only give birth to a single lamb. But even then, in one way or another their numbers don't decrease, in fact they increase. What is the wisdom behind this blessing for sheep?"

After listening to the question carefully, that person gave this wise answer:

"What a lesson it is that this state of affairs observed in these animals is from the blessings of 'Sahar' time, because this portion of the night is a blessed time divided into 'rahmah' (mercy) and the downpouring of divine truths. Dogs bark throughout the night and are overcome by sleep during 'Sahar' time. Sheep however are awake at this time. With the blessing of 'Sahar' time they are always multiplying."

Some suggestions to wake up easily at 'Sahar' time.

1) The Awliyaullah advise eating little, sleeping little and speaking little. To eat little and not completely fill the stomach is a way of sleeping little and waking up at the hour of

one's choosing. Perhaps if we eat the evening meal early and don't sleep with a full stomach, it will make it easier for us to get up.

2) The Awliyaullah arrange every moment of their lives in accordance with a specific plan. For example, when they leave for a journey, they plan the journey taking into account the prayer times. Their sleeping times are also in accordance with prayer times. At night they sleep early especially to be able to wake up at the time of 'Tahajjud' prayer. They wake up for the prayer fresh having had sufficient sleep. If we also arrange our daily duties and sleeping and eating times in accordance with the five

daily prayers and the Tahajjud prayer, our lives will become more harmonious and peaceful.

3) Our intention should be to wake up at 'Sahar' time, the time to meet with our Lord and we should read the duas (prayers) for waking up early that we find in prayer books. Also, we should sleep with 'Wudu' (ablution).

If we try these methods, our Lord will also certainly make it easier for us to worship at 'Sahar' time. We must not forget that a few months after starting to wake up at 'Sahar' time, it will become a habit for us and the body will program itself in accordance with it. There are people who have spent 'Sahar' time in worship for many years who after a certain period wake up at Tahajjud time without setting an alarm. Ibn Khaldun said that man is the child of his habits.

May our Lord ordain for all of us to worship and be forgiven at 'Sahar' time, the importance of which is outlined in different verses of the Qur'an. Amen.

**There are people who have spent 'Sahar' time in worship for many years who after a certain period wake up at Tahajjud time without setting an alarm. Ibn Khaldun said that man is the child of his habits.**

# Pearls Of Wisdom

The most excellent Jihad  
is that for the conquest of  
self.

Hadith

A noble person is recognized in  
tribulations and a noble metal  
is recognized in fire.

Proverb

Truthfulness is composed of  
justice and courage.

Ibn Hazm


If a gem falls into mud it is still  
valuable. If dust ascends to  
heaven, it remains valueless.

Sadi Shirazi

Your life in every way  
should become a beacon  
of guidance and it should  
become a means for  
Dawah.

Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi





Those who Know they do not  
Know that to Know is to Know  
what they do not Know!

Ibn Sina

A feeling of discouragement  
when you slip up is a sure  
sign that you put your faith  
in deeds.

Ibn Ajiba

If you do not think well of  
Him because His qualities  
are beautiful, then think well  
of Him because of the way  
He treats you.

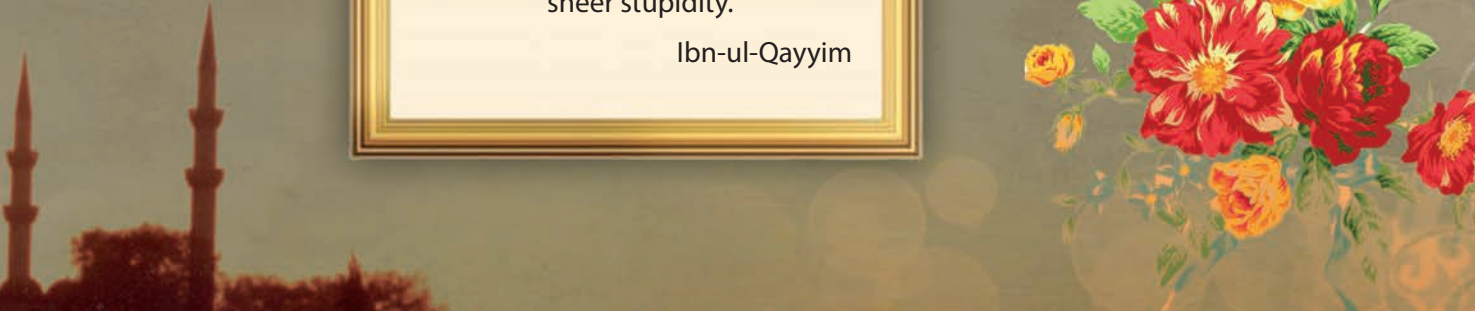
Ibn Ata'llah

It is far better to live like  
a lion for a day than  
to live like a fox for  
hundred years.

Anonymous

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

Ibn-ul-Qayyim



## Examples of Behaviour from the Best Role Model:

*Prophet  
Muhammad*

When Allah brought His creatures into existence, there was only 'adl' (justice) in the world. Everything was created from justice and put in its proper place. Thus, there is a kind of justice in the universe which is without cause.

The Arabic word Adab covers manners, morality, passion, intention, characteristics, and actions. We find that Islam is manners and our beloved Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is the best example for manners in Islam. We should take his example as our guide and learn from his actions in every situation. In the Qur'ân, Surah al-Qalam:4, Allah tells us that the Prophet (pbuh) is an excellent character, and in Surah al-Azhab:21: "The Messenger of God is an excellent model for those of you who put your hope in God and the Last Day."

Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) is the best, most beautiful example for us. He provides examples from his life for every subject for mankind. From him we see the example of politeness and the attitude of always presenting a smiling face, and he didn't shout or act badly, even if he himself was treated badly.

Narrated 'Aisha: (the wife of the Prophet)  
A group of Jews entered upon the Prophet

and said, “As-Samu-Alaikum.” (Meaning death be upon you). I understood it and said, “Wa-Alaikum As-Samu wal-la’n. (Death and the curse of Allah be Upon you).” Allah’s Apostle said “Be calm, O ‘Aisha! Allah loves that one, should be kind and lenient in all matters.” I said, “O Allah’s Apostle! Haven’t you heard what they (the Jews) have said?” Allah’s Apostle said “I have (already) said (to them) “And upon you !

From this narration, we see the calm manners of the Prophet and understand that even when we are being cursed that we should remain calm and thus be able to reply appropriately. We also would expect that the dua of the Prophet (pbuh) would be more likely to be accepted than theirs.

In the Qur’ân, Surah Nisa: 86 states that when a courteous greeting is offered to you return it with a more courteous greeting or one equal to it at least.

The most basic form of the Muslim greeting is to say Assalaamu alaykum and the more courteous is Assalaamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu. At the time of the Prophet (pbuh) a companion came to him with “Assalaamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu” and the Prophet (pbuh) replied “Wa alaykum assalaam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu” The companion asked why the Prophet didn’t reply with better and he (pbuh) said: “You didn’t leave me anything”.

One of the 99 names of Allah is al-Salaam and this means that as you greet your brother or sister with Assalaamu alaykum you are using the name of Allah, and this has the effect of praising Allah and making dua for them. So too does the reply Wa alaykum assalaam. So greet each other and increase the remembrance of Allah and making dua for one another. The Prophet (pbuh) says you cannot enter paradise if you don’t have faith and love one another – so spread salaam. This links us in love and affection and is a process that increases these between. When making the greeting it is best to look the person in the eyes and give the salaam and with this the love

Who are the role models the Muslims take nowadays; we have the very best of creation and every detail of his life as a man, a husband, a father, and Prophet of Allah, are written for us to learn from.





and care between you will increase. With this intention, and taking the time to make this greeting carefully, the blessings of Allah are increased and the ties of friendship and brotherhood are strengthened.

A Hadith states that the Prophet (pbuh) once asked permission to enter the house of Sa'd ibn Ubadah saying: "Assalaamu alaykum." Sa'd replied, "wa alaykum salaam wa rahmatullahi," but did not speak loud enough for the Prophet to hear. He gave the salutation three times and Sa'd responded three times, but did not speak loud enough for him to hear, so the Prophet (pbuh) went away. Sa'd went after him and said, "Messenger of Allah, for whom I would give my father and mother as ransom, you did not give a salutation without my hearing it and responding to you, but I did not speak loud enough for you to hear because I wanted to receive many of your salutations and so receive great blessing."

This hadith also demonstrates the manner to use when visiting someone – to knock or call salaam three times and wait for permission before entering someone's home.

If we look to the example of the Prophet (pbuh) we find very many examples of his forgiveness, and he would say that he wasn't sent other than as a mercy to mankind.

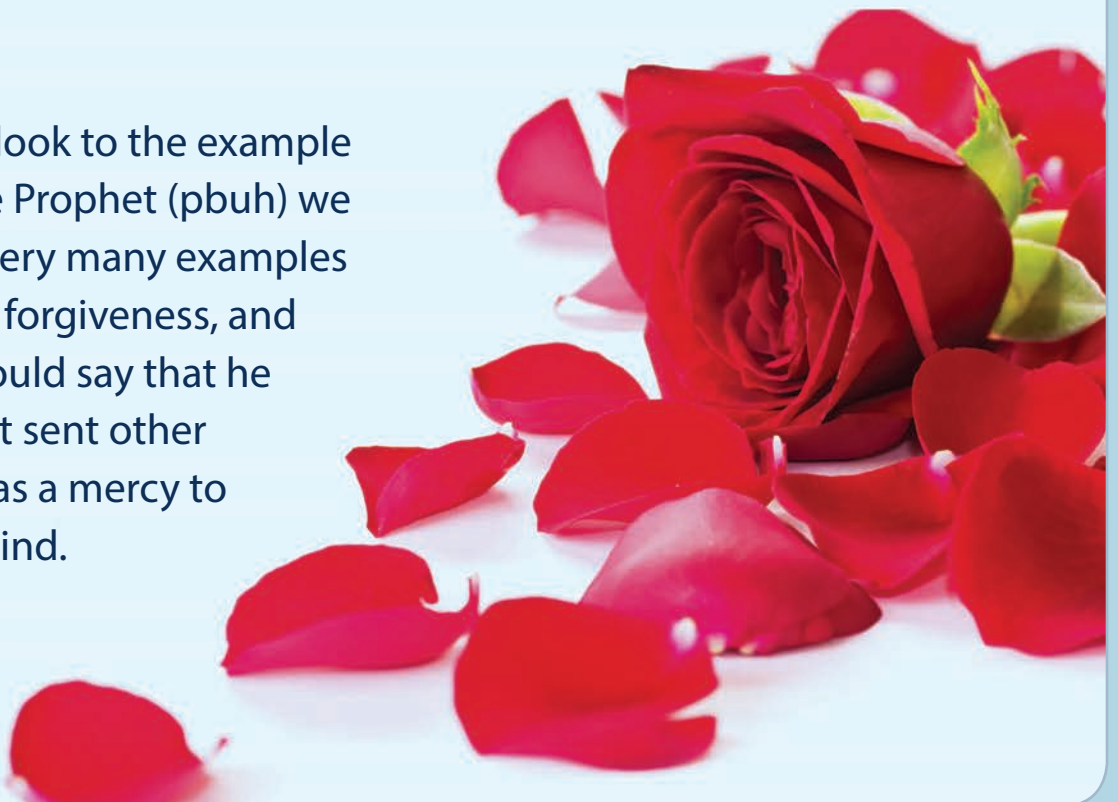
The Qur'an Surah al-Nur: 27 tells us not to enter other people's houses until we have asked permission to do so and greeted those inside, and the narration explains how this is done. The example of the Prophet (pbuh) provides us with explanation of the Qur'an.

Aisha the wife of the Prophet (pbuh) described him as a 'Living Qur'an'. This means that we can understand the instructions of the Qur'an by the example he gave in how he lived the 'Qur'an'.

One day the Prophet (pbuh) came to a place where two people were arguing and swearing. One was so angry that his veins stood out on his neck. The Prophet (pbuh) saw them and said, "I know some words that when a person utters them the state of the person will change: 'Audhu billahi min ash-shaytanirrajeem'.

We find that anger is a door for shaytan to be able to enter our body. In the Qur'an, Surah Ali Imran: 134, it tells us to restrain our anger:

*Those who spend (freely), whether in prosperity, or in adversity; who restrain anger,*







Who are the role models the Muslims take nowadays; we have the very best of creation and every detail of his life as a man, a husband, a father, and Prophet of Allah, are written for us to learn from.

*and pardon (all) men: - for Allah loves those who do good:-*

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) has said, “O ‘Ali! I advise you (in regards to something) with a piece of advice, so then safe-guard this as you shall never be devoid of goodness as long as you have safe-guarded my recommendation. O ‘Ali! Allah will grant the one who swallows his anger - while he is able to act out his rage - protection and faith on the Day of Judgment whose pleasure the person will taste.”

Actually, by stopping and physically ‘swallowing’ our anger we are able to restrain it, and control ourselves. Also, in Ali Imran: 134, we are told to pardon and this is meaning to forgive. If we look to the example of the Prophet (pbuh) we find very many examples of his forgiveness, and he would say that he wasn’t sent other than as a mercy to mankind. This is also said in the Qur’ân: Surah al-Anbiya: 107: “It was only as a mercy that we sent you to all people.”

The conquest of Mecca gave way to the most amazing display of forgiveness, for among the people being pardoned at that time was Hind who had hired the slave Wahshi to kill Hamza, the Prophet’s beloved uncle, and when she had found his dead body she made the horrific display of mutilating

him and most viciously had torn out his liver and chewed at it.

When the believers conquered Mecca after the terrible hurt and evils that the idolators had heaped upon the Muslims people, the Prophet (pbuh) turned to the people and said:

“O Quraish, what do you think of the treatment that I should accord you?”

And they said, “Mercy, O Prophet of Allah. We expect nothing but good from you.”

Thereupon Muhammad declared:

“I speak to you in the same words as Yusuf spoke to his brothers. This day there is no reproof against you; Go your way, for you are free.”

Who are the role models the Muslims take nowadays – we have the very best of creation and every detail of his life as a man, a husband, a father, and Prophet of Allah are written for us to learn from. We see his manners, his politeness, his calmness his mercy and forgiveness. May Allah guide us all to follow the behaviour of the Prophet (pbuh) and to incorporate it into our lives. Amen.







# The Significance Of Hurry Up In Doing Goodness

Just like the most virtuous time for prayer is to perform it as soon as possible, the most meritorious charity is the one given without any postponement. This prophetic deed has been manifested in the lives of scholars and Gnostics.

Time is like a double edged knife. If it is spent according to the spirit of the Qur'ân and Sunnah, it becomes the means of reaching Paradise. However for those who spent their time in this world contrary to the spirit of Islam, it becomes a flood. A believer should not be like a log adrift in this flood.

It is impossible to retrieve the past or to go back in time. Time cannot be saved, borrowed, or sold. Even if we gave our entire wealth as collateral, we cannot postpone or bring forward our time of death even for a second.

Our life in this world, which is the preparation phase of the afterlife, is like a treasure. This is why it should be held dear and spent reasonably, because there is no compensation for losing this blessing. To waste our time for selfish desires like it will never end and to neglect and forget our responsibilities towards Allah the Almighty will be a cause for regret.

Life which is a bumpy road between cradle and grave is the sum of our breaths. This sum



Even righteous people will feel regret for not spending more the blessing they had in this world for the sake of Allah the Almighty. We cannot even find words to express the regret of the heedless people.

is unknown to humans but know to Allah the Almighty. **Last breath** is the most important one of our breaths in this world.

Last breath is the crossing point of our lives in this world to a new and eternal life in the Hereafter. It is a rugged and steep passage between the worlds. Every perceiving believer should contemplate deeply about that difficult passage and try to adjust his life according to the straight path of Islam.

Last breath which is the last episode in the play of life is like a clear mirror which shows everybody's end. Humans will most clearly know who they are in that mirror. While spending such precious breaths of our lives on this temporal world we should not forget that we are continuously being recorded by Divine cameras. One day tape of our lives will be placed in front of us and we will be asked to watch it. Then we will once again recognize ourselves.

Since we don't know the time of our last breath, today is the day to prepare for the eternal salvation. Today is the day to perform good deeds, which will be the provision for our afterlife.

In the sayings of the Prophet, we are reminded that we will be questioned in the Hereafter from every single one of our actions in this world. Allah's Apostle (pbuh) advises us to avoid heedlessness as follows:

*"The feet of a servant will not move on the*

*Day of Judgment until he has been questioned about four things): his life – how he spent it, his knowledge – how he acted upon it, his wealth – where he earned it and how he spent it, and his body – how he used it."* (Tirmidhi, Kitab sifat al-Qiyamah wal Raqa'iq, 1)

*"Take benefit of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before you are preoccupied and your life before your death."* (Bukhari, Riqāq, 3; Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 25)

Allah's Apostle (pbuh) delivered the message about the significance of hurrying up in doing goodness by many examples in his life. One of them is narrated by 'Uqbah b. Ḥārith:

"I offered the 'Asr prayer with the Prophet and after finishing the prayer he got up quickly and went to some of his wives and then came out. He noticed the signs of astonishment on the faces of the people caused by his speed. He then said,

*"I remembered while I was in my prayer that a piece of gold was lying in my house and I disliked that it should remain with us throughout the night, and so I have ordered it to be distributed."* (Bukhari, Adhān, 158, al-'Amal fi al-Salāt, 18; Nasāi, Sahw, 104)

In another hadith, it is stated that:

*"Hurry up in giving your charities; because charity cannot avert the troubles."* (Haythamī, Majma' al-Zawā'id, III, 110)



Just like the most virtuous time for prayer is to perform it as soon as possible, the most meritorious charity is the one given without any postponement. This prophetic deed has been manifested in the lives of scholars and Gnostics, who are the successors of the prophets.

A dervish asked for something from Ḥasan al-Baṣri. He immediately stood up and gave his shirt to the dervish. People told Ḥasan al-Baṣri:

“O Ḥasan! Why didn’t you go home and give the poor dervish something from your home?”

Ḥasan al-Baṣri replied:

“Once a needy man came to the mosque and told me that he had been hungry. We procrastinated and didn’t give him something immediately. We left him in the mosque and went to our homes. When we came to dawn prayer, we saw that the poor man had passed away. Then we shrouded and buried the corpse.

Next day I saw a vision in which I saw the shroud which we buried the poor guy with. The words “*take your shroud back, it is not accepted by Allah the Almighty*” were written on it. On that day I swore that I would never keep anybody in need waiting and would take care of his needs.”<sup>1</sup>

Allah the Almighty manifests some facts to His friends. The object of this is to leave

deep impacts in the souls and direct them to the straight path. As can be understood from the above mentioned story, the value of a good deed is in its punctual performance without any delay.

## AN EXEMPLARY SCENE FROM THE LAST BREATH

Abu Ḥurayrah narrates that:

“A man came to the Prophet (pbuh) and asked, “O Allah’s Apostle! Which charity is the most superior in reward?” He replied,

*“The charity which you practice while you are healthy, niggardly and afraid of poverty and wish to become wealthy. Do not delay it to the time of approaching death and then say, ‘Give so much to such and such, and so much to such and such.’ And it has already belonged to such and such (as it is too late).”* (Bukharī, Zakāt, 11)

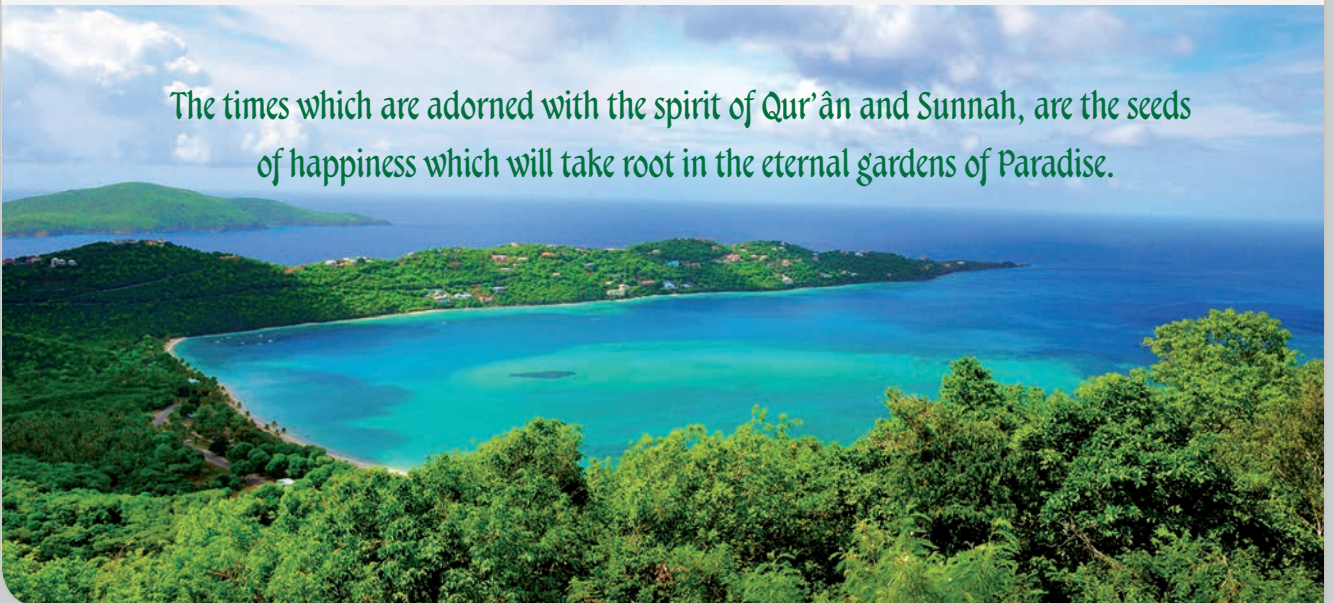
In another hadith, it is ordered that:

*“A man giving a dirham as sadaqah (charity) during his life is better than giving one hundred dirhams as sadaqah (charity) at the moment of his death.”* (Abū Dawūd, Waṣāyā, 3/2866)

Inspired by the above mentioned facts, Sheikh Sadi advises as follows:

*“Supply yourself your provision for the Hereafter in this world. Because after you die, your relatives get greedy and they do nothing for your soul. Give yourself out of your gold and other blessings today! After you die, you will lose all of them.*

The times which are adorned with the spirit of Qur’ân and Sunnah, are the seeds of happiness which will take root in the eternal gardens of Paradise.





**We should run to do the deeds which consists of the pleasure of Allah. We should live every one of our days like it's our last day in this world and spend our time fully.**

*Those who take their own provisions for afterlife are the ones who win the prosperity. Nobody else but only I can itch my back by thinking my own goodness.*

*Put whatever wealth you have in the middle of your palm and give it to the places you need to give. I you cannot give, tomorrow you will bite your hand because of regret."*

It is a fact that not giving the wealth in charity in time and leaving it to the inheritors, who are raised without proper spiritual discipline and are unknown where to spend their wealth, becomes a great responsibility for the afterlife. And this is not something what intelligent believers would do.

The people, who think themselves rich in this world of imagination, will find themselves bankrupt when they die. They will wake up to reality in the morning of their death and realize that they will have nothing in their hands. Real richness is not go bankrupt with death. On the contrary, it means to have the eternal realm and wealth.

That world will be the place everybody will face whatever he deserves. Those who were oppressing sultans in this world will be the slaves of the Hereafter; and those who were pious slaves of this world will be the sultans of afterlife. All ranks and positions of this world will be nothing in the afterlife. There will be beneficial only obedience and sincere hearts.

At the head of the things from which Allah the Most High tests us in this world come life, property, and children. When these are employed for goodness, they become blessings; but when they are employed for evil, they become causes of pain and sorrow. Only the voice of religion can let us know what is good and what is bad and what is blessing and what is derogation for us.

It is stated in a verse that:

**"O you who believe! let not your wealth, or your children, divert you from the remembrance of Allah; and whoever does that, these are the losers. And spend out of what We have given you before death comes to one of you, so that he should say: My Lord! Why did You not respite me to a near term, so that I should have given alms and been of the doers of good deeds?"** (Munafiqun, 63:9-10)

The state of those who heedlessly destroy their lives is depicted in the following verse:

**"And they shall cry therein for succor: O our Lord ! Take us out, we will do good deeds other than those which we used to do. Did We not preserve you alive long enough, so that he who would be mindful in it should mind? And there came to you the warner; therefore taste; because for the unjust, there is no helper."** (Fatur, 35:37)

Imam Ghazali makes the following advices:

*“Dear Son! Think about you died today and sent back to this world. Think about how your excitement would be in such a situation. Therefore stay away from sins and everything other than Allah and do not waste even a moment your today; because, every breath is an invaluable blessing.”*

This means we should consider that every page opened from the calendar of life is a new Divine extension given to us and so we should hurry up doing goodness.

### EVERYBODY REGRETS

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) warns us as follows:

*“There is nobody who dies and does not regret.”* When he was asked what the regret was, he said that:

*“If (dead) was a muhsin person (or someone who did goodness), he will regret for not increasing his goodness; and if he was a bad person, he will regret for not giving up evil and correcting himself/herself.”* (Tirmidhi, Kitān al-Zuhd, 59/2403)

In other words, even righteous people will feel regret for not spending more the blessing they had in this world for the sake of Allah the Almighty. We cannot even find words to express the regret of the heedless people.

Bahlul Dana asks that:

“What is the most that can be found under the earth?” then He himself answers his own question:

“Regrets of the dead are the most things which can be found under the earth.”

Therefore we should run to do the deeds which consists of the pleasure of Allah and stay away from wasting our times with useless actions. We should live every one of our days like it's our last day in this world and spend our time fully.

Allah the Almighty depicts the state of those servants who are in disappointment about properly using their times and shows them the way to save themselves from wasting their times and attain the Divine blessings:

**“Therefore, when you are free (from your immediate task), still labor hard, and make your Lord your exclusive object.”** (Inshirah, 94:7-8)

In other words, when we finish worship or a good deed, we should run to perform another one and do not let even a single moment pass without worship or a good deed.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) says that:

*“Be prompt in doing good deeds (before you are overtaken) by turbulence which would be like a part of the dark night. During (that stormy period) a man would be a Muslim in the morning and an unbeliever in the evening or he would be a believer in the evening and an unbeliever in the morning, and would sell his faith for worldly goods.”* (Muslim, Kitāb al-Imān, 186; Tirmidhi, Kitāb al-Fitan, 30; Kitāb al-Zuhd, 3)

Therefore while we still have the chance, we should hurry up in doing goodness.

Every single moment of this life is seeds of afterlife which will turn into diamonds of eternity. A person should sow these seed into the field of this world and harvest their produce in the Hereafter.





Preparing provision for afterlife must be the goal of every believer. It is necessary for us not to be deceived by the temporal pleasures of this world and not to forget that wealth is similar to a treasure found in a dream.

### **SAVE YOURSELVES FROM THE ILLNESS OF STINGINESS**

Stinginess and staying away from infaq means throwing our life in the Hereafter in danger. In a verse our Lord warns us as follows:

**“And spend in the way of Allah and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands, and do good (to others); surely Allah loves the doers of good.”** (Baqarah, 2:195)

Property and a blessing, which is not spent as charity, is like an unfaithful friend. When time comes and life ends, it will show its disloyalty and will leave its owner alone and helpless. Those who expect loyalty from their wealth and potentials should spend them for the sake of Allah the Almighty and send wealth to Hereafter in order to meet them when they leave this world. In order to realize this, it is necessary to get rid of the stinginess of the self.

In fact in a verse the necessity of prevailing over stinginess for the sake of eternal salvation is stated as follows:

**“... Whoever is preserved from the niggardliness of his soul, these it is that are the successful ones.”** (Hashr, 59:9)

However Devil resorts to different kinds of tricks and sows seeds of delusions into the hearts. He tries to deceive humans even though Allah the Almighty is the only giver of blessings. It is mentioned in a verse:

**“Shaitan threatens you with poverty and enjoins you to be niggardly, and Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and abundance; and Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing.”** (Baqarah, 2:268)

‘Ali, who knew the tricks of Devil very well, used to advice his governors altruism and generosity and warn them saying:

*“Do not let the following people into your consultation assembly: a stingy person who scares you with the possibility of poverty and discourages you from giving in charity, a coward man who loosens your determination to do great things, and an ambitious person who directs you oppression and suggests you that greed is something good.”*

Those who can save themselves from the stinginess of self and delusions of Devil know very well that their charity does not get lost; on the contrary it is waiting for them in the Hereafter. As a matter of fact it is stated in a hadith that:

*“There are there attributes that I can talk about them by swearing, Know them well:*

*By giving charity, someone’s property would not decrease.*

*Allah will increase the honor of those who show patience towards the oppression they faced.*

**What are the Angels of deeds writing in our files for the Hereafter? A believer should carefully think about the answers for these questions and spend his time with the best deeds.**





*Allah opens the door of poverty for those who open the door of begging.*" (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 17)

Rumī expresses the fact that giving in charity does not decrease the amount of wealth as follows:

*"A sowing of pure seeds in God's earth, and then no income! (That is impossible.)"*<sup>2</sup>

*"Since this earth of mortality is not without produce, how should God's earth be (without it)? That (earth of God) is a spacious place."*<sup>3</sup>

*"Verily, the produce of this earth (of God) is infinite: even the least (produce) for a single seed is seven-hundredfold."*<sup>4</sup>

Every single moment of this life, which is a priceless capital for the Hereafter, is seeds of afterlife which will turn into diamonds of eternity. A person should sow these seed into the field of this world and harvest their produce in the Hereafter. However if he wastes these priceless seeds for the sake of their selfish desires, then they will turn into products of Hellfire. What a pity for those unhappy! The times which are adorned with the spirit of Qur'an and Sunnah, are the seeds of happiness which will take root in the eternal gardens of Paradise.

The wealth which is not given as charity is similar to those who are not loyal to their friends. While wealth spent for the sake of Allah is like a nice and loyal friend. This fact is explained in the following saying of the Prophet:

*"What a wonderful friend the property is for a believer. Provided that he has given out of his wealth to the poor, the orphan and the wayfarer."* (Ahmad, III, 21)

*"On Judgment Day everybody will shade*

*under the shadow of his charity."* (Ghazālī, Iḥyā, I, 626)

Ubayd b. Umayr explains this fact as follows:

*"People will be resurrected with an extreme hunger, thirst, and nakedness. However Allah will feed those who fed those who are needy in the world; Allah will remove the thirst of those who got rid of thirst for the sake of Allah."*

Our Lord says in the Qur'an **"By the Break of Day"**<sup>5</sup> and time of dawn acquires a special meaning for our lives. How are we going to fill our lives? How much are we going to work for ourselves and how much are we going to spend time for the needy and destitute? What are the Angels of deeds writing in our files for the Hereafter? A

believer should carefully think about the answers for these questions and spend his time with the best deeds. He should accept the following words of Umar as a principle of his life: *"Question yourselves before being questioned"*<sup>6</sup>

Just like the saying of Umar b. Abd al-Aziz:

*"Wherever you would like to go in the Hereafter, make your preparations according to them."*

Let's end this chapter by saying Amin to the supplication of Abu Bakr:

**"O Allah! The best part of our lives is its end; and the best part of our actions is its consequence; and the best day of my life is the day that I reunite with You!"** <sup>7</sup>

**Amen.**

**Endnotes:** 1. See Darir Mustafa Efendi, *Yüz Hadis Yüz Hikâye*, edited by S. Yıldırım - N. Yılmaz, Istanbul 2001, p. 157. 2. Mathnawī, IV, 1759. 3. Mathnawī, IV, 1761. 4. Mathnawī, IV, 1763. 5. Qur'an 89; 1. 6. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, I, 27. 7. Şuyūṭī, *Tarikh al-Khulafā*, p. 103

**It is necessary for us not  
to be deceived by the  
temporal pleasures of this  
world and not to forget  
that wealth is similar to a  
treasure found in a dream.**



## Stories

# My Master's *Preference*

A man bought a slave. The slave was a religious, praying believer who protected himself from what Allah forbade. When his master took the slave to his home, they had the following conversation: "What would you like to eat in my house?" the master asked.

The slave replied: "Whatever you give me."

The master asked: "How would you like to be dressed?"

The slave replied: "Whatever you give me, I will wear."

The master asked: "In which room of my house would you like to stay?"

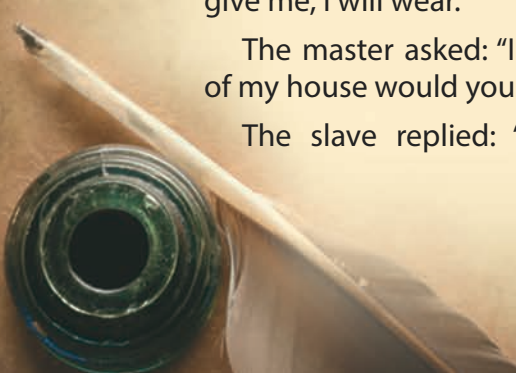
The slave replied: "In whichever

room you want me to stay."

The master asked: "What sort of work do you want to do in my house?"

The slave replied: "Whatever you want me to do, I will do it."

After this last response, the master thought for a while and then spoke while trying to dry his tears: "I wish I was a friend like this to my Lord. That would be the greatest happiness." Upon this, the slave said: «O my master! How could a slave have any other preference or will than his master's?» Then the master said: «I give you your freedom. You are free for Allah's sake. But I would like you to stay with me so I can serve you with my power and my money. »





# I Respect The Friends Of Allah

There was a dervish on a boat; he had no baggage or goods. With good manners, courage and humility he placed his head on a pillow to sleep. While the boat was sailing across the water a pouch of gold went missing. The men on the boat looked everywhere for the gold, but in vain. Then one of the men pointed at the dervish and said: "Search that sleeping crook."

Due to his distress, the owner of the lost money awoke the dervish. He looked at the innocent dervish with accusing eyes and said: "A pouch of gold has gone missing; we've searched everyone but can't find it. Now it's your turn! Take off your cloak and get undressed; prove our doubts to be unfounded." The dervish sought refuge in Allah and said: "O Allah! They accuse your innocent servant. I submit myself to you!"

Those on the boat had acted in a way that hurt the dervish's feelings. Allah Almighty was not pleased that the pure heart of the dervish had been offended. Allah the Merciful at that moment commanded the fish in the sea to emerge

from the water; in the mouth of each fish was a valuable pearl. Each pearl was the equivalent to the wealth of an entire nation. Each was a blessing from Allah and belonged to no one.

The dervish took a few of the pearls and threw them into the centre of the boat; he then jumped into the air and crossed his legs like a king. He sat floating in mid air. The boat continued sailing over the sea and the dervish said to those on the boat: "Continue sailing on your boat, let Allah be mine! He neither accuses me of stealing nor abandons me to those who falsely accuse me."

The people on the boat asked: "O noble servant! Why have you been given this extraordinary power?" The dervish answered: "It has been given to me because I respect the friends of Allah and I never think ill about poor people. Ah, these respected poor ones. Surah 'Abasa was sent to glorify them for their poverty. In their world they have nothing but Allah; this is why they embrace poverty."







# A Mi'raj To The Highest Horizon

## *To Honour The Soul*

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) witnessed several proofs, instructive and extraordinary events from Allah's domain; and the glory of his authority: great signs which could only be appreciated and understood by witnessing them.

Man is a being that goes to and fro between endless positives and negatives. There is no limit to the levels he can ascend to or the lows he can fall to. This is clearly indicated in the following verses:

"We have indeed created man in the best of moulds. Then do We abase him (to be) the lowest of the low." (Tin 95/4-5)

"Whoever works righteousness benefits his own soul; whoever works evil, it is against his own soul: nor is thy Lord ever unjust (in the least) to His Servants." (Fussilat 41/46)

"To all are degrees (or ranks) according to their deeds: for thy Lord is not unmindful of anything that they do." (An'am 6/132)

These divine realities are in operation at every moment without pause as long as human life exists.

There is no doubt about the Prophets (peace be upon them) being elevated individuals in their spiritual development and their continuing advancement. However the

The Prophet (pbuh) brought his Ummah three great gifts from the Mi'raj where he had observed these many great, cautionary and instructive events. The first of these is for the five times daily prayer to be the Mi'raj of the believer.



state of our Prophet (pbuh) when compared to them is completely different. Scholars unanimously agree that the following praise was regarding him (pbuh): "Those messengers We endowed with gifts, some above others: To one of them Allah spoke; others He raised to degrees (of honour); to Jesus the son of Mary We gave clear (Signs), and strengthened him with the holy spirit. If Allah had so willed, succeeding generations would not have fought among each other, after clear (Signs) had come to them, but they (chose) to wrangle, some believing and others rejecting. If Allah had so willed, they would not have fought each other; but Allah Fulfilleth His plan." (Baqarah, 2/253) Furthermore, even in the blessed life of our Prophet (pbuh) there were times recorded of exceptional spiritual ascent. The most important of those times transpired with the event of "Isra and Mi'raj".

"Al-Isra" is when Allah took the Prophet (pbuh) in one night from Masjid al-Haram in Makkah to Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem in order to show him (pbuh) some divine truths, evidences and cautionary and instructive events. Indeed, the first verse of Surah Al-Isra, which takes its name from this event is as follows:

"Glory to (Allah) Who did take His servant for a Journey by night from the

Sacred Mosque to the farthest Mosque, whose precincts We did bless,- in order that We might show him some of Our Signs: for He is the One Who heareth and seeth (all things)." (Isra, 17/1)

Al-Mi'raj however is the event of Allah's Messenger (pbuh) being taken by Jibril from Masjid Al-Aqsa to the heavens on an unworldly steed, reaching 'Sidratul-Muntaha' (the lote tree of the extreme limit) in 'Jannatul Ma'wa' (the Garden of Abode) after crossing seven heavens, arriving in the presence of his Lord and seeing there the great signs of Allah. The first verses of Surah Al-Najm shed light on this matter as follows:

"Endued with Wisdom: for he appeared (in stately form); While he was in the highest part of the horizon: Then he approached and came closer, and was at a distance of but two bow-lengths or (even) nearer; So did (Allah) convey the inspiration to His Servant- (conveyed) what He (meant) to convey. The (Prophet's) (mind and) heart in no way falsified that which he saw. Will ye then dispute with him concerning what he saw?

For indeed he saw him at a second descent, near the Lote-tree beyond which none may pass:

Near it is the Garden of Abode.

Behold, the Lote-tree was shrouded (in mystery unspeakable!)

(His) sight never swerved, nor did it go wrong!

For truly did he see, of the Signs of his Lord, the Greatest!" (Najm 53/ 6-18)

Among these verses, the following stand out especially "(His) sight never swerved, nor did it go wrong! For truly did he see, of the Signs of his Lord, the Greatest!" (Najm, 53/17-18). Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) was inclined that night so much towards his Lord that the countless beauties that he observed in the universe full of mystery that was the heavens did not concern him. He turned his whole attention and the power of his sight to his Lord without being distracted by anything. Though, even Musa (pbuh) fell and fainted when he witnessed an atom of this divine manifestation (see. A'raf 7/143). This shows the Prophet's (pbuh) high Maqam (spiritual position) at the level of Allah) and that particular merit, righteousness and degree of ability which pleases Allah).

It is true that Musa (pbuh) was ordered to take off his shoes in the sacred valley of Tuwa and it was desired that his feet benefit from the blessing of the place and that he attain honour. However, on the night of Mi'raj it was said to Allah's Messenger "Oh Beloved! Walk on the cloth of the throne with your shoes so that the throne may be blessed by the dust of your shoes and the light of the throne may receive the blessing of meeting with you..." (Ruhul Bayan, V, 370).

Isra and Mi'raj is a great gift to the servant and Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (pbuh). There are several apparent conditions which led to its occurrence:

During the Makkan period, our Prophet (pbuh) had lived a life of preaching, full of extreme tribulation and anguish. To be able to influence the hearts of the 'Jahili' (polytheist) arabs which were hardened like rugged rocks in disbelief, stubbornness and persistence,

It was clearly shown through the Mi'raj that human spiritual advancement can be attained and the soul can ascend: in other words, the potential for human spiritual growth was affirmed.





The Prophet (pbuh) brought his Ummah three great gifts from the Mi'raj where he had observed these many great, cautionary and instructive events. The first of these is for the five times daily prayer to be the Mi'raj of the believer.

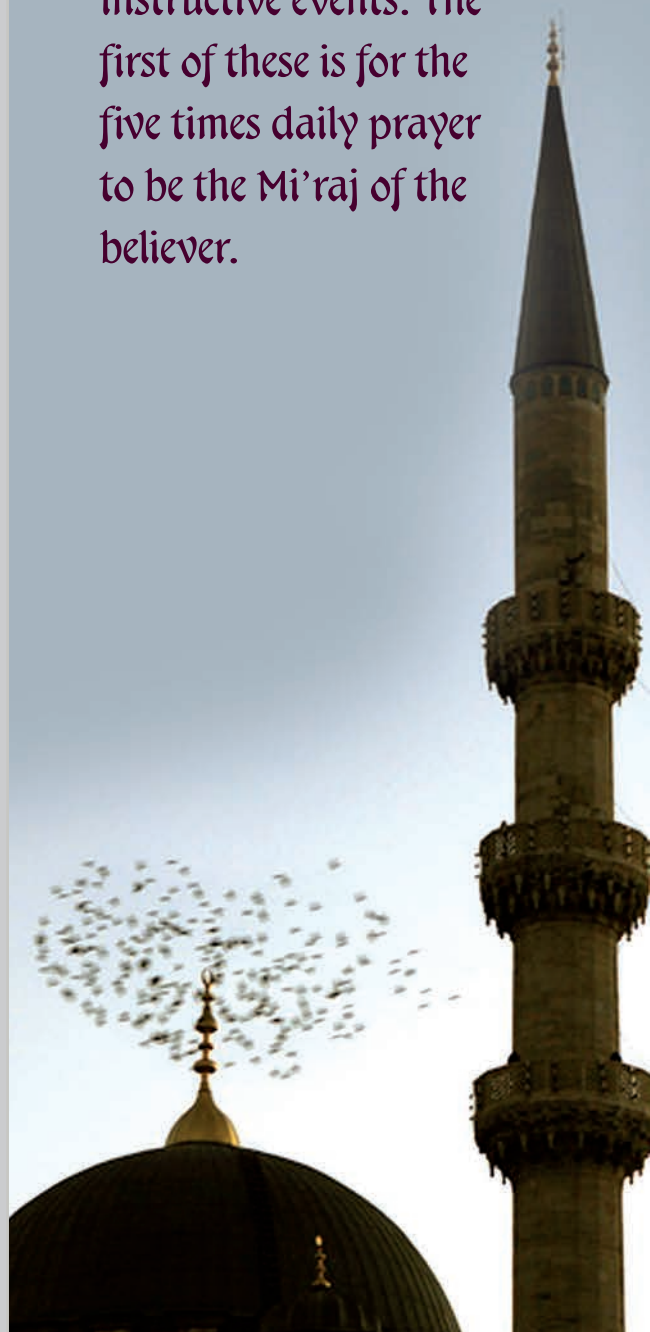
was a situation harder than drilling marble with water. The Prophet (pbuh) was trying to be successful with this difficult task. Despite continuously striving for years without pause the progress he had made wasn't very heartening. Exactly at this time, he lost both Sayyidah Khadijah, who had supported him materially and spiritually, and his Uncle Abu Talib. With the hope that he may find a place of refuge or some assistance he had gone to Taif from where he returned having been chased out, and stoned, his blessed body wounded and his feet still bleeding. Through this the saying "Great victories always come after great tribulations." was proven true.

As indicated in the Qur'anic verses pertaining to this subject, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) witnessed several proofs, instructive and extraordinary events from Allah's domain; and the glory of his authority: great signs which could only be appreciated and understood by witnessing them.

According to the narration from Ibn Abbas the Prophet (pbuh) remarked that: "I saw my Lord supreme!" (Ahmad, I, 285; Haysami, I, 78). Tafsir scholars explain this in the manner: "Our Prophet (pbuh) saw Allah with the eye of his heart. (Tabari, XXVII, 63). In another narration it is transmitted that our Prophet replied to the question: "Did you see your Lord?" by saying: "I saw a light!" (Muslim, Iman, 292).

In one hadith it is remarked that: "(That night) I was raised to the heavens. I unmounted at such a high level that I could hear the scratching of the pens there" (Bukhari, Salah, 1). In other words the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was taken to such a high level that he could hear the sounds of the pens which write the destiny of the Universe: he became knowledgeable about the truths beyond perception.

During the Mi'raj, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) stopped by a group of people and saw



that their lips were like the lips of a camel. Some people in authority were cutting their lips and putting stones in their mouths. The prophet asked: "Oh Jibril, who are these people?" Jibril replied: "These are those who eat up the property of orphans." (Tabari, XV, 18-19)

Later, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) came across another group of people who were scratching their faces and chests with copper nails. He (pbuh) asked: "Oh Jibril, who are these people?" Jibril replied: "These are those who eat the meat of people (by backbiting) and tarnish their honour and dignity." (Abu Dawud, Adab, 35/4878).

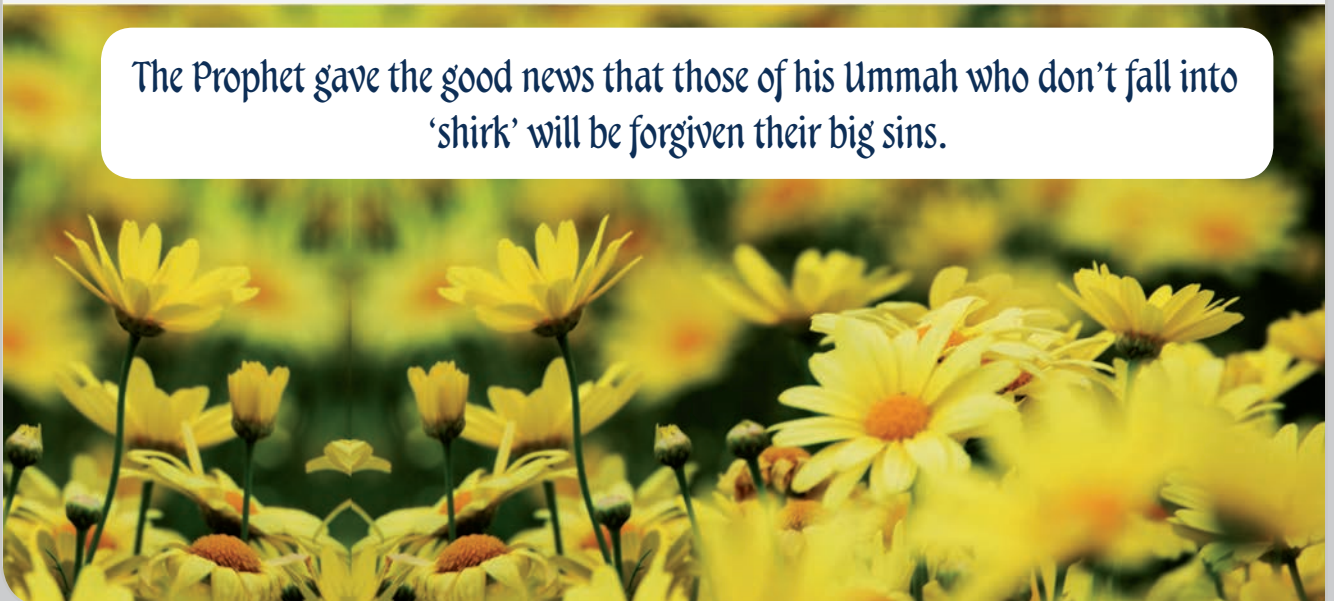
In addition, the Prophet (pbuh) saw those who commit fornication were grief-stricken eating putrefying carcasses; those who consume interest had their stomachs completely swollen in a wretched state as possessed by 'Shaitaan' (satan), and women who commit fornication and then kill their children were looking disappointed, some hanging by their breasts, and some upside-down (Tabari, XV, 18-19).

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) brought his Ummah (community) three great gifts from the Mi'raj where he had observed these many great, cautionary and instructive events. The first of these is for the five

times daily prayer to be the Mi'raj of the believer. The command for 'Salah' (prayer) being made direct to our Prophet (pbuh) without an intermediary is enough to show the exceptional importance it carries among 'ibadat' (acts of worship). The second, are the last two verses of Surah Al-Baqarah that teach us how to beseech/supplicate to our Lord. The third is the good news that those of his (pbuh) Ummah who don't fall into 'shirk' (polytheism) will be forgiven their big sins. (see. Muslim, Iman, 279).

The Mi'raj event shows us that the spiritual growth the servant can achieve is only possible by purifying the nafs (soul), reducing its influence to the lowest level, and attaining purity of the heart. In fact, before leaving for the Mi'raj, the beloved Prophet's heart was cleansed by angels (See Bukhari, Tawhid, 37; Muslim, Iman, 260-264) so there didn't remain space for anything other than 'nur-i ilahi' (divine light). For this reason, there is no doubt that after the heart is freed of cloudiness and filled with divine light, the mysteries of divine manifestation will begin to envelop one's senses. It was clearly shown through the Mi'raj that human spiritual advancement can be attained and the soul can ascend: in other words, the potential for human spiritual growth was affirmed.

**The Prophet gave the good news that those of his Ummah who don't fall into 'shirk' will be forgiven their big sins.**



# Quiz For Children



1. Who was known as Sayfullah?
  - a. Sayyidina Ali
  - b. Khalid bin Walid
  - c. Umar bin Khattab
  - d. Sayyidina Hamza
2. Who was the mother of Prophet Muhammad's son Ibrahim?
  - a. Khadijah
  - b. Mariya
  - c. Aisha
  - d. Sawda
3. How many times is the name of Muhammad mentioned in the Qur'an?
  - a. 19
  - b. 4
  - c. 10
  - d. 50
4. Who was the first son of Muhammad?
  - a. Ali
  - b. Qasim
  - c. Abdullah
  - d. Ibrahim
5. Which is the most Muslim populated country in the world?
  - a. USA
  - b. Turkey
  - c. China
  - d. Indonesia
6. Who is the author of Mukaddima?
  - a. Ibn Khaldun
  - b. Bukhari
  - c. Ibn Sina
  - d. Imam Rabbani
7. Who was the only sahaba who married to two daughters of the Prophet?
  - a. Abu Bakr
  - b. Umar
  - c. Uthman
  - d. Ali
8. How many times in our life do we have to do the hajj?
  - a. 1
  - b. 2
  - c. 3
  - d. 4
9. Among all these names which is not our Prophet's name?
  - a. Muhammad
  - b. Ahmad
  - c. Mahmud
  - d. Hamza
10. What was Avicenna famous for?
  - a. Medicine
  - b. Hadith
  - c. Tafseer
  - d. Biology

Hey Kids! Maybe you can win a prize!

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

Name: ..... Age: .....

Address: .....  
.....

Parent's Name (for consent purposes only): .....

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