

Better light a candle than curse the darkness

شکوہ ظلمت شب سے نو کہیں بہتر تھا اپنے حصے کی کوئی شمع جلاتے جاتے

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باخبر

# BAKHABAR

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BE AWARE, ALWAYS, EVERYWHERE

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IN DEPTH

**Does Islam  
regard  
men and women  
as equal**

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# ISLAM AGAINST RACISM AND PREJUDICE

**H**ajj as a shift against racism: El Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X)'s letter

Many Muslims who have been blessed to make Hajj often speak of how the journey is a life-changing experience. This is more the case for some than others.

MalcolmX is one Muslim who saw the light of true Islam through his Hajj in April 1964. As a former member and speaker for the Nation of Islam, a black spiritual and nationalist movement, he believed that the white man was the devil and the blackman superior.

After leaving the Nation of Islam in March 1964, he made Hajj, which helped change his perspective on whites and racism completely.

Here is an excerpt of a letter El Hajj Malik El Shabazz wrote about his Hajj experience. In it, he explains what it was during this blessed journey that made him so profoundly shift his perspective on race and racism:

"There were tens of thousands of pilgrims, from all over the world. They were of all colors, from blue-eyed blondes to black-skinned Africans. But we were all participating in the same ritual, displaying a spirit of unity and brotherhood that my experiences in America had led me to believe never could exist between the white and the non-white.

You may be shocked by these words coming from me. But on this pilgrimage, what I have seen, and experienced, has forced me to rearrange much of my thought patterns previously held, and to toss aside some of my previous conclusions. This was not too difficult for me. Despite my firm convictions, I have been always a man who tries to face facts, and to accept the reality of life as new experience and new knowledge unfolds it. I have always kept an open mind, which is necessary to the flexibility that must go hand in hand with every form of intelligent search for truth.

During the past eleven days here in the Muslim world, I have eaten from the same plate, drunk from the same glass and slept in the same bed (or on the same rug)-while praying to the same God with fellow Muslims, whose eyes were the bluest of the blue, whose hair was the blondest of blond, and whose skin was the whitest of white. And in the words and in the actions and in the deeds of the 'white' Muslims, I felt the same sincerity that I felt among the black African Muslims of Nigeria, Sudan and Ghana.

We are truly all the same-brothers.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds."

# Enjoin good, forbidding evil... with wisdom

I By Abubakar Kasim I

**A** Masjid should be a place where one attains peace and be in peace with himself and with those around him.

Two teenagers travelled miles to the city of Toronto to attend a Fridaysermon.  
It was their first time to attend a Muslim gathering.

They were hoping for a memorable experience which they would cherish for a long time.  
Things had turned ugly when they entered the mosque.

A man had shouted at them for dressing up like bad girls. He told them that they did not belong to a Masjid but a nightclub.

The two Muslim teenage girls left the mosque crying. They were in a state of shock and disbelief. They made a commitment of never stepping their feet to another mosque again.  
It is sad and unfortunate to find people who take matters into their own hands at the places of worship.

They look around to find shortcomings in others and start speaking to them in a rude manner.

They are arrogant and don't look at their own shortcomings. They start judging others as if they are God's representatives on earth.

Even when they are in the middle of prayers, they look around and take a sneak peak in order to spot anyone not performing the prayer properly.

They don't have proper manners in talking to people.

Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is bad is indeed an important principle in Islam.  
As a matter of fact it is the criteria and the ingredient for being the best ummah.

"You have been the best nation that has been raised up for mankind. You enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong..." (Qur'an 3:110)

Performing this task is not as simple as some people might think. It requires a sound knowledge, a high level of wisdom and superior communication skills.

A person who might be making an error while praying could be a new Muslim struggling to learn the basics or a visitor who is interested in Islam.

Lashing out at these people could turn them away from Islam.

Another Sadness!

A convert has confided to my wife a sad story.

Her son who is not a Muslim used to accompany her to Islamic centers but not anymore.

Every time he comes to a mosque he faces people harassing him of why he is not a Muslim yet and what was he waiting for.

Even when he comes to pick up his mother, he waits outside in order to avoid harassment and humiliation.

It is important to have outstanding qualities when approaching others.

The Prophet of Islam was given a dire warning about the importance of showing mercy toward others.

It was what made people feel comfortable to come closer to him and listening to his message.

Had the Prophet been harsh and rude with them, they would have broken away from him.  
One should not be hasty in correcting others. It is important to focus on oneself first and foremost.

The Glorious Qur'an emphasizes the importance of approaching people nicely.

"Invite people with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious." (Qur'an 16:125)

When one encounters an issue that requires attention, he or she should not take the matter into his own hands and act like a police officer.

### A Mosque is Not a Lawless Jungle

When one finds an issue of concern in a supermarket, for instance, he or she tries to talk to the people of authority about it.

The same approach should be applied to the places of worship. There is an imam and other figures of authority who can be asked to address the matter.

A Masjid should be a place where one attains peace and be in peace with himself and with those around him.

A person who comes to a mosque has made a huge sacrifice or leaving everything behind in order to worship the Almighty in a state of peace. Such a devoted person deserves support and respect instead of harassment and hostility.

Even if he makes a mistake in the process, such mistake should be overlooked in the name of brotherhood.

The atmosphere in the Masjid should always be welcoming and everyone should work hard to maintain that atmosphere, so that even when someone who is overwhelmed with grief and sadness enters the Masjid, he or she should feel a sense of relief that can never be found anywhere else but in the Masjid.

<http://muslimvillage.com/2016/02/22/10201/enjoining-good-forbidding-evil-with-wisdom/>

## ATS chief says SIMI undertrials not armed; Nitish, Mamata doubt 'encounter'

Submitted by IANS on 2 November 2016 - 11:05pm

New Delhi/Bhopal : Madhya Pradesh's anti-terror squad chief Sanjeev Shami on Wednesday stood by his earlier statement that the eight SIMI activists shot dead in Bhopal on Monday were not armed when they were killed.

His comments came as more political leaders voiced doubts over Monday's "encounter".

"It is well settled in law when police can use force and take life. These men were dreaded criminals. If the police sees the possibility that such men can escape, they can use maximum force... Even if the police are not being fired at," Shami told NDTV.

On Tuesday, Shami was quoted by media as saying that the eight Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) men were unarmed when they were killed.

"I stand by my earlier statement," Shami told the TV channel when asked for his comments.

The eight undertrial activists of the banned SIMI were shot dead in an alleged gun battle, hours after they escaped from a high-security jail in Bhopal.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday demanded a high-level impartial probe into the killing of the eight SIMI undertrials.

"A probe is a must into the killing of the SIMI (Students Islamic Movement of India) activists as several questions have been raised," Nitish Kumar told the media in Patna.

He said the Madhya Pradesh government should order the probe by an independent agency.

"There are many unanswered questions regarding the gun battle and some videos have also surfaced that question the encounter. The state government should explain it," Nitish Kumar said.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also rejected the Madhya Pradesh police claim that eight Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) activists were killed in a gun battle with the police later.

"We do not agree with the so-called 'encounter' theory. Many unanswered questions arise in the minds of the people," Banerjee tweeted.

Banerjee saw political vendetta behind the deaths of SIMI undertrials.

Continued on Page No. 18



# “Hit Him Hard Man!”

## The Cult of Violence

I By Nissar Nadiadwala I

With violence running furiously in the blood of teenagers across the globe, people are unable to deal with the menace. Gone are the days when you could whack your kid and put him straight. Teachers are no more objects of threat. Discipline is a fossil.

A concerned Psychiatrist once remarked in her editorial: “The dangerous difference between a violent movie and a violent video game can be easily spotted. In a movie, you are merely watching someone using a trigger or throwing a bomb, but when you play video games, the trigger is in your hands. It is you who is shooting and killing...” and finally she concluded: “The movies exaggerating violence are dangerous but violent video games pose a bigger danger for the subtle minds of children.”

Laura Clark of Sunday Times, London, wrote a surprising article in 2005 informing the readers that there were 500 schools in UK having cops in the premises. Later in 2009 the same author, in the same newspaper, updated the news: “now there are five thousands schools with cops.” Many streets of London and Moscow have night curfews for children under 18, unless accompanied by an adult. A 200 page IPPR declared that 66% of Britons would not dare to stop children from vandalizing a bus shelter. They further told of 1.5 million British now thinking of moving away from their area they live in “because of violent young people hanging around”.

The curved flyover that runs from Bhendi Bazar to CST Mumbai has been banned for motor cycle riders. Young men race their motorbikes on this silky flyover only to be killed or seriously injured.

Motorbikes are not new, but the cult of driving it recklessly is taught by video games of car and motorbike races. It has carved a new mentality of dangerous life style. Those who have been in Arab cities must have also seen the Arab kids driving rough cars and motorbikes and meeting with accidents.

The world is turning into a civilization having hostile mentality, with minds getting more concrete upon not finding news with a few killings worth reading.

The other day, a man hanging out of a running train was murmuring a song from a Bollywood movie 'Satya': “Goli maar bheje mein” which means “Shoot the bullet in head.” It came as a little surprise to me because the words of the song did not match his smiling face.

What do you understand when people take killing ruthlessly as a mere entertainment. The culture of violence decorated and glamorized by the dream merchants is turning into a cult.

No wonder we are foretold in Sahih Hadith that when Qiyamah will be near, there will be a lot of killing. In another hadith it says, “A person will not know why he is being killed!” The most advanced nations have largest killings including suicides. If US lead in violent killings in all forms, i.e. domestic violence, murder, arson, murders by school children, Japan leads in suicide. Hardcore violence and volatile race and killing video games are breeding a new cult of dangers. Being brave is one thing and showing foolish bravery is another thing.

If only our youth realize this...

From “Beyond Education”, by Nissar Nadiadwala

# IMBIBE EMPATHY IN OUR LIVES

In our increasing violent world full of fragile egos and unresolved issues the most powerful tool to heal the feeling of Us vs Them.

"Empathy is being in the heart of another other".

Today everyone is talking about how empathy makes life happier and less complex. Right now, the world needs an empathy revolution. It will free us from hyper-individualism. Do away with the question 'What is in it for me?'

The antidote to it is empathy. Think and feel situations from the other person's point of view. There are ways in which you can be more empathetic. Listen carefully. Show genuine concern. Pay attention to others. Don't judge. Validate their feelings and emotions. If anyone shows you empathy, your heart will warm up to the person. Empathy is the bridge to better understanding and care.

Empathy is an important life skill to cultivate in today's world. If you want to bring the immediate benefits of empathy in your life, start at your home, workplace or in school: show care, con-

cern, listen and talk. Ask someone, anyone, a simple thing like: how are you doing today?  
Nona Walia.

Hadith:

*"The most beloved of people according to Allah is he who brings most benefit to people, and the most beloved of deeds according to Allah the Mighty, the Magnificent, is that you bring happiness to a fellow Muslim, or relieve him of distress, or pay off his debt or stave away hunger from him. It is more beloved to me that I walk with my brother in his time of need than I stay secluded in the mosque for a month."*

*(Tabarani – Hasan, Silsilah Saheeha, Al-AlBani)*

Whosoever removes a worldly grief from a believer, Allah will remove from him one of the grief's of the Day of Judgment. Whosoever alleviates [the lot of] a needy person, Allah will alleviate [his lot] in this world and the next. Whosoever shields a Muslim, Allah will shield him in this world and the next. Allah will aid a slave [of His] so long as the slave aids his brother.....

(this message comes from a collection called An-Nawawi:)



"Islam- A way of life of Empathy"  
An attitude of 'I CARE'

# Does Islam regard men and women as equal?

## *Is there a mention of the equality of women in the qur'an?*

Praise be to Allaah.

Firstly:

This word – equality – which many thinkers in both the east and the west advocate in various fields of life is a word which is based on deviation and a lack of understanding, especially when the speaker attributes this idea of equality to the Qur'aan and to Islam. One of the things that people misunderstand is when they say that "Islam is the religion of equality".

What they should say is that Islam is the religion of justice.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

"Here we should note that there are some people who speak of equality instead of justice, and this is a mistake. We should not say equality, because equality implies no differentiation between the two. Because of this unjust call for equality, they started to ask, what is the difference between male and female?' So they made males and females the same, and then the communists said, 'What difference is there between ruler and subject? No one has any authority over anyone else, not even fathers and sons; the father has no authority over his son,' and so on. But if we say justice, which means giving each one that to which he or she is entitled, this misunderstanding no longer applies, and the word used is correct. Hence it does not say in the Qur'aan that Allaah enjoins equality, rather it says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Verily, Allaah enjoins Al 'Adl (i.e. justice)" [al-Nahl 16:90]

"and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice" [al-Nisa' 4:58]

Those who say that Islam is the religion of equality

are lying against Islam. Rather Islam is the religion of justice which means treating equally those who are equal and differentiating between those who are different.

No one who knows the religion of Islam would say that it is the religion of equality. Rather what shows you that this principle is false is the fact that most of what is mentioned in the Qur'aan denies equality, as in the following verses:

'Say: Are those who know equal to those who know not?' [al-Zumar 39:9]

'Say: Is the blind equal to the one who sees? Or darkness equal to light?' [al-Ra'd 13:16]

'Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the conquering (of Makkah, with those among you who did so later' [al-Hadeed 57:10]

'Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame), and those who strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allaah with their wealth and their live' [al-Nisa' 4:95]

Not one single letter in the Qur'aan enjoins equality, rather it enjoins justice. You will also find that the word justice is acceptable to people, for I feel that if I am better than this man in terms of knowledge, or wealth, or piety, or in doing good, I would not like for him to be equal to me.

Every man knows that he find it unacceptable if we say that the male is equal to the female." Sharh al-'Aqeedah al-Waasitah, 1/180-181

Based on this, Islam does not regard men and women as equal in matters where regarding them as equal would result in injustice to one of them, because equality that is inappropriate is a severe form of injustice.

The Qur'aan commands women to wear clothes that are different from those worn by men, because of the differences in the ways each sex is tempted by the other. The temptation posed by men is less than the

temptation posed by women, so the clothes that women should wear are different than the clothes that men wear. It makes no sense to tell women to expose the parts of the body that men are allowed to expose, because of the differences in the temptation posed by a woman's body and a man's body – as we shall explain.

Secondly:

There are matters in which men and women are treated differently in Islamic sharee'ah, such as:

1 – Qiwaamah (being in charge of the household)  
Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allaah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means” [al-Nisa' 4:34]

Ibn Katheer (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: “Allaah says ‘Men are the protectors and maintainers of women’ meaning that the man is in charge of the woman, i.e., he is the leader and head of the household, the one who disciplines her if she goes astray. ‘because Allaah has made one of them to excel the other’ i.e., because men are superior to women and are better than women. Hence Prophethood was given only to men, as was the position of khaleefah, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, ‘No people shall ever prosper who appoint a woman as their ruler.’ This was narrated by al-Bukhaari from the hadeeth of ‘Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Abi Bakrah from his father. The same applies to the position of qaadi (judge), etc. ‘and because they spend (to support them) from their means’ refers to the mahr and the spending on women's maintenance that Allaah has enjoined upon men in His Book and in the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). So a man is inherently better than a woman, and he is superior to her because he spends on her. So it is appropriate that he should be in charge of her, as Allaah says, ‘but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them’ [al-Baqarah 2:228].

‘Ali ibn Abi Talhah said, narrating from Ibn ‘Abbaas: ‘Men are the protectors and maintainers of women’ means that men are the leaders of women and they should obey them in areas where Allaah has enjoined obedience. Obedience may mean treating his family kindly and protecting his wealth.” (Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 1/490)

2 – Testimony or bearing witness. The Qur'aan states that the testimony of one man is equivalent to the testimony of two women.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women, such as you agree for witnesses, so that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her” [al-Baqarah 2:282]

Ibn Katheer said:

Two women are to take the place of one man because women are lacking in reason, as Muslim narrated in his Saheeh... from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “O women, give in charity and seek forgiveness a great deal, for I have seen that you form the majority of the people of Hell.” A wise woman among them said, “Why is it, O Messenger of Allaah, that we are the majority of the people of Hell?” He said, “Because you curse too much, and you are ungrateful to your spouses. I have seen none lacking in common sense and failing in religion but (at the same time) robbing the wisdom of the wise, besides you.” The woman asked: “O Messenger of Allaah, what is wrong with our common sense and our religion?” He said: “Your lack of common sense (can be well judged from the fact) that the evidence of two women is equal to that of one man, that is a proof of the lack of common sense, and you spend some nights (and days) in which you do not offer prayer and in the month of Ramadan (during the days) you do not observe fast, that is a failing in religion.” (Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 1/336)

There may be some women who are wiser than some men, but this is not the usual rule and such women are not in the majority. Sharee'ah is based on what is general and most common.

The fact that women are lacking in reason does not mean that they are crazy, rather their reason is often overtaken by their emotions, and this happens to women more often than it happens to men. No one would deny this except one who is arrogant.

3 – A woman inherits half of what a man inherits.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allaah commands you as regards your children's (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females” [al-Nisa' 4:11]



Al-Qurtubi said:

Because Allaah knows better than they do what is in their best interests, He made the division of inheritance based on differentiation, because He knows what is in their best interests. Tafseer al-Qurtubi, 5/164

For example, a man is obliged to spend more than a woman, so it is appropriate that he should have a larger share of inheritance than a woman.

#### 4 – Clothing:

A woman's 'awrah includes her entire body. The least that can be said is that she should not uncover anything except her face and hands, and it was said that she should not even uncover that.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allaah is Ever Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful” [al-Ahzaab 33:59]

The 'awrah of a man is the area from the navel to the knees.

It was said to 'Abd-Allaah ibn Ja'far ibn Abi Taalib, “Tell us what you heard from the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and what you saw of him, and do not tell us about anyone else, even if he was trustworthy.” He said, “I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say, ‘The area between the navel and the knee is 'awrah.’”

Narrated by al-Haakim in al-Mustadrak (6418); classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami', 5583.

Other examples include the following, which is not a comprehensive list.

There are other differences between the sexes, including the following:

- A man can marry four women, but a woman can only have one husband.
- A man has the right to issue a divorce and it is valid if he does so, but a woman does not have the right to issue a divorce.
- A man may marry a woman from among the Peo-

ple of the Book (Jews and Christians), but a Muslim woman may not marry anyone but a Muslim.

- A man may travel without his wife or any of his mahrams, but a woman may not travel unless she is accompanied by a mahram.
- Prayer in the mosque is obligatory for men, but not for women; a woman's prayer in her house is more beloved to Allaah.
- A woman may wear silk and gold, but a man must not wear them.

Everything that we have mentioned is based on the difference between men and women, because the male is not like the female. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And the male is not like the female” [Aal 'Imraan 3:36]

The male is different from the female in many ways, in his strength, in his body, in his toughness and roughness, whereas women are soft and gentle. And men are different in intellectual terms, for men are known for their strength of understanding and their memory as compared to women. Women are weaker than men in memory and forget more than men do. This is well known, for most of the reputable scholars in the world are men. There are some women who are more intelligent and have better memories than some men, but this does not cancel out the general rule. Most cases are as we have described above.

With regard to emotions, men speak of them when they get angry or when they are happy, but women are affected by the slightest emotional effects, so their tears flow at the slightest emotional provocation.

Jihad is obligatory for men, but jihad in the sense of fighting is not obligatory for women. This is the mercy of Allaah towards them, and consideration for their nature.

In conclusion we may say that the rulings for men are not like the rulings for women.

Thirdly:

Islam regards men and women as equally obliged with regard to many acts of worship and interactions with others. For example, women do wudoo' just as men do, they do ghusl as men do, they pray as men do, and they fast as men do, except when they are

menstruating or bleeding following childbirth. Women pay zakaah as men pay zakaah, and they do Hajj as men do, except for a few differences in the rulings. It is permissible and acceptable to buy from a woman, and if a woman gives charity, that is permissible. It is permissible for a woman to set free the slaves that she owns, and there are many other similar cases because women are the twin halves of men, as it says in the hadeeth:

It was narrated that ‘Aa’ishah said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was asked about a man who finds some wetness (on his clothes) but did not have an erotic dream, and he said, “He should do ghusl.” He was asked about a man who had an erotic dream but did not find any wetness, and he said, “He does not have to do ghusl.” Umm Salamah said, “O Messenger of Allaah, if a woman sees that, does she have to do ghusl?” He said, “Yes, for women are the twin halves of men.”

(Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 113; Ahmad, 25663. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi, 98)

#### Conclusion:

Women are like men in some aspects and they differ from them in others. Most of the rulings of Islam apply to men and women equally. In cases where a distinction is made between the sexes, the Muslim regards that as a mercy from Allaah and a sign of His knowledge of His creation, but the arrogant kaafir sees it as oppression and injustice, so he stubbornly insists on claiming that men and women are the same. So let him tell us how a man can carry a foetus and breastfeed it? He stubbornly ignores the weakness of women and how they bleed during their monthly period, and he stubbornly beat his head against the rock of reality. But the Muslim is still at peace with his faith, surrendering to the command of Allaah. “Should not He Who has created know? And He is the Most Kind and Courteous (to His slaves), All Aware (of everything)” [al-Mulk 67:14 – interpretation of the meaning] And Allaah knows best.

Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid

## Pardon your brother, hold his hand and go to Jannah

On the Day of Qiyamah, there would be such great abundance of mercies and favors, yet there will be some who will exercise the lack of it. It is recorded in the Hadith Sharif that a person will be ordered to go to Jannah. He will want to go but the one who will demand his right will stop him. This person will say, “Oh Allah! Grant me my rights from this brother of mine.” Allah will order all the good deeds of the person to be given to fulfill the complainant’s rights. Though all the good deeds will be given, but the rights will not be fulfilled.

However, the complainant will again demand his rights. Allah will order all the bad deeds of the complainant to be put on the accused for repayment. This will be done, but the rights will still not be fulfilled. The complainant will again demand his rights from his fellow Muslim brother whereupon Allah will say, “You were given all his good deeds and all your bad deeds were loaded upon him. Now what does he have for you to take?” The complainant will still persist, “Oh Allah! Grant me the balance of my rights.”

Almighty Allah will order the Angels to elaborately decorate a Palace and bring it forward from Jannah. Everyone will be astonished by its splendor and beauty. Allah will then say, “I am selling this Palace. Is there anyone to buy it?” The complainant will say, “Oh My Lord! Who has the wealth to buy this?” Allah will reply, “But you have the value!” He will say in amazement, “And what is that my Lord?” The command will be, “The price is to pardon your brother, hold his hand and go to Jannah.” [At-Targhib wat-Tarhib, Vol. 3, Page 247, Hadith 3768]

# A self-effacing Litterateur: Professor Najmul Hoda

I By Mohammad Sajjad I

In this era when modesty is no longer a virtue, and everybody shares his/her accomplishments via social networking sites, it is indeed almost unbelievable to find someone who is sort of in a mode of denial about his no ordinary literary accomplishments. Becoming reclusive while reaching an age of 80 years, this self-effacing litterateur remains reluctant about writing his memoir despite lot of persuasions. Professor Najmul Hoda of Muzaffarpur (north Bihar) is fond of talking about his teaching career, publications, and other literary activities he had undertaken in the Madras University, during 1977-88, where he served on an Extra Ordinary Leave (EoL) from the Bihar University, Muzaffarpur.

In the prestigious Madras University he not only headed and expanded the Department of Urdu, Persian and Arabic, he also introduced postgraduate teachings and promoted researches in the literatures of the three languages. Besides, he also joined the 'Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu' of Tamil Nadu to popularise and promote Urdu in Tamil Nadu. He made efforts towards establishment of 'Urdu Academy' in Madras, which fructified, and he joined an agitation to secure second official language status for Urdu in Tamil Nadu. This was the time when his friends and colleagues in Muzaffarpur were doing the same. While the latter succeeded in fulfilling the demand in Bihar, the agitation in Tamil Nadu did not succeed. However, such efforts did popularize Urdu on a big scale in Tamil Nadu. His

nostalgia about Madras (now called Chennai) remains undiminished, for which he composed a poem, "Saahil-e-Madras" (The Coast of Madras).

In 1983, he contributed his essay in English language on "Nationalism and Akbar Allahabadi" in the Annals of Oriental Research (of Madras University), wherein he analysed the anti-colonial satires of Akbar's poems. This was long before Shamsur Rahman Faruqi wrote his incisive essay on Akbar Allahabadi (1846-1921). Besides, Najmul Hoda also wrote another essay, "Universal Brotherhood and Islam" for the journal. In both these essays he reflected upon the ideas of nationalism and patriotism.

Aleem Saba Nawedi of Madras and Najmul Hoda remember each other quite fondly. In 1988 when Professor Najmul Hoda was leaving Madras to re-join his services in Muzaffarpur, more than hundred people went to see him off on the railway junction with tearful eyes.



**Prof Najmul Hoda**

Professor Hoda rose to prominence with his book on literary criticism in Urdu, Fann-e-Tanqeed aur Tanqeedi Mazaameen (1966). Though written arguably in a little 'difficult' prose, tinged with Arabic and Persian diction, it ran into several editions. It encompasses and evaluates the journey of Urdu literary criticism from Altaf Husain Hali's Muqaddima to Shamsur Rahman Faruqi's interventions. In the 1990s, he was supposed to expand this work taking into account the subsequent generation of critics, but he met his distraction when his colleagues in Muzaffarpur threw him into the vortex of legal battles. In



the Patna High Court, eventually he won the battle of seniority in the Department of Urdu in the Bihar University in Muzaffarpur, and went on to serve as the Head of the Department as well as the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities of the University. But this battle changed him forever and he gradually tilted towards becoming reclusive. Meanwhile, his book found itself 'translated' into more lucid prose of Urdu by other authors of better provisioned universities. Shedding rancour against being robbed off his intellectual property, he prefers to downplay and euphemise the act of plagiarism as a 'translation'. After all steeped deeply into Sufism, he is a forgiveness personified!

Born on August 2, 1938, in a prominent family of Motihari (Champanan), with a formidable ancestry from Dr. Rajendra Prasad (1884-1963), Hoda inherited the tradition of composing poetry from his father, Nurul Hoda 'Zabt', who was a police inspector and after retirement he practised law. 'Zabt' published his poetry in prestigious Paise Akhbar, Lahore. Likewise, Professor Najmul Hoda published in the leading Urdu periodicals brought out from Delhi, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Karachi, among many others. Najmul Hoda's maternal uncle was quite an accomplished writer and former Union Minister, Professor Shakeelur Rahman (1936-2016).

Professor Najmul Hoda started his teaching career from the Millat College (Darbhanga) in 1961 and also provided editorial assistance to the Urdu fortnightly (now daily), Qaumi Tanzim. In 1962, he left it to join the L. S. College, Muzaffarpur, from where he had graduated, and then moved on to the Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, where he served till his superannuation in 1998, and is now settled there in Muzaffarpur.

His other claims to fame are his books, Masnawi Ka Fun aur Urdu Masnawiyen (1976); and Kirdaar aur Kirdaar Nigari (1980), dealing with disjunctions between fictional and real-life characters. It received reviewer's laurels in the prestigious Urdu monthly, Shaayer (January 1981). However, he identifies himself essentially as a poet and seems to be much in reading about the English poets such as T. S. Eliot, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats. Of the Urdu writers, he is fond more of Raashidul Khairi (1868-1936), Shibli (1857-1914), Maulana Azad (1888-1958). His personal library is quite rich. Lot of scholars derive benefit from him and from the books in his personal collection.

He has written many long essays, including few on Nazeer Akbarabadi (1735-1830), Iqbal, Premchand (aspects of class struggle), and also on his acquaintances like Alqama Shibli, besides on his own teacher in Muzaffarpur, Professor Akhtar Qadri; and the one on a novel by Ghazanfar. Only few of these essays have been collected in his Masaael o Mabaahis (1983).

The inquisitive people, with quest of learning, flock around him where he offers very good hospitality. Long conversations with him pay lot of dividends. Of his teachers in the Patna University he claims to owe a lot to Jameel Mazhari (1904-82), and Akhtar Orainwi, among many others, whereas among his students, he showers more of his laurels upon Professor Jabir Husain. One of his distinguished batchmates, elder to him by almost two decades, was Kaleem Aajiz (1920-2015), the famous poet.

People around him are eager that he should start working on his memoir. Besides vivid details of many aspects, this will be an account of the progress and marginalisation of Urdu in Bihar, at popular as well as academic level. Though, just out of courtesy he does reiterate his commitment to write one, he doesn't seem to be sincere about keeping this promise as revealed in the title of one of his poems, "Aarzu-e-Gumnaami" (Quest of Anonymity), so is a couplet of one of his ghazals:

Dil ki baatein kaun sunaaye, kaun yahaaN sun-ney  
wala hai  
Jo hai apni zaat mein gum hai, har insaan bas bol  
raha hai

[http://twocircles.net/2016oct08/1475918939.html#V\\_sLaPi97IU](http://twocircles.net/2016oct08/1475918939.html#V_sLaPi97IU)

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# Burkini

I By Iftikhar Ahmad I

Sir we have to fight terrorism shall we send air force to bomb isis ? no .shall we send aid to the rebels ? no shall we decrease number of immigrants ? no . what shall we do sir ? BAN BURKINI .It's part of western society who can't seem to stop objectifying women. Look around its everywhere. U get paid more to take ur clothes off, and fined for wearing more clothes.

It's ok for Nuns to chill on the beach full clothed but not Muslim females? Absolutely disgrace! Glad to hear of this being suspended!

Mayors do not have the right to ban Burkinis. France's highest administrative court ruled.

The Council of State's ruling suspends a ban in the town of Villeneuve-Loubet, near Nice, and could affect cities around the country that have prohibited the full-length swimsuit.

I'm fascinated to hear from those decrying this decision exactly what they would do if local authorities decided to ban an item of their clothing and engaged policemen to force them to take it off in public? Hiding behind the nonsense that the Burkini defies France's secular culture is just pathetic. There is nothing outwardly religious about it as the police proved by their own incompetence yesterday in failing to distinguish Burkinis from similar dress worn by women with no allegiance to Islam at all. The court has ruled quite correctly according to law. Let's hope that's an end to it. I am proudly a reactionary person is to defend the common good and the good of society I am in favour of Burkini in Europe

French authorities have been criticised for imposing the ban, after photographs were published this week of police fining Muslim women wearing headscarves on beaches. It has peaked fierce debate on freedom of religion, women's rights and the integration of France's Muslim community. The ban was imposed following a series of terror attacks in France by Islamist terrorists.

Opinion polls suggested most of the French public supported the bans, which Muslims claimed targeted

them unfairly.

John Dalhuisen, Amnesty International's Europe Director welcomed the court's decision.

"By overturning a discriminatory ban that is fuelled by and is fuelling prejudice and intolerance, today's decision has drawn an important line in the sand," he said in a statement.

"French authorities must now drop the pretence that these measures do anything to protect the rights of women. Rather, invasive and discriminatory measures such as these restrict women's choices and are an assault on their freedoms of expression, religion and right to non-discrimination."

"These bans do nothing to increase public safety, but do a lot to promote public humiliation. Not only are they in themselves discriminatory, but as we have seen, the enforcement of these bans leads to abuses and the degrading treatment of Muslim women.

A long time ago, in Europe, a Catholic woman had to cover her hair when entering a church. Also, before nuns were liberated, they had to wear habits! Very restrictive and ridiculous! The French then didn't make a big deal out of it as it was A RELIGIOUS RIGHT!

Long before France attempted to colonise parts of Africa and the Middle East, there was a battle, in 732, at Tours, when an Islamic army, led by Abdul Rahman, tried to colonise all of France, and to force every French person to convert. The French drove them back to Spain, with much bloodshed. So, naturally, they have a reasonable amount of distrust for anything Muslim. After the battle of Tours, France was "ruled" for 1,000 years or so by the Church of Rome, and the "aristocracy", until the revolution of 1793, when the people decided that no religion or royalty would ever hold sway over the elected government. That's it, and the laughable attempts by Islamists to justify dress codes mandated by their "prophets", is just, laughable. Thank you. Banning the Burkini by the French govt. is not the issue but telling me that France is a secular country after the

banning of the Burkini is the big issue. This is hypocrisy and we know it.

European immigrants to Australia, New Zealand, Canada or even the USA did that they took their religion, culture, language and customs with them and then forced the indigenous people to behave like them!! The French government is doing exactly what ISIS and the other terrorist groups want. They want the French government to segregate and discriminate against Muslims, to create a us and them society. Well done France, bowing to terrorism. How many attacks were carried out by French Muslim women in Burkinis?

Women should be allowed to wear WHATEVER THEY WANT on the beach. Whether that be a bikini, a swimming costume, a skirt, leggings, a dress, pyjamas, trousers, a jacket, a coat, a jumper, a hoody, a Burkini! It's their body so should be their choice whether to strip off or cover up. The West is fast becoming very oppressive and hypocritically doing the very thing it's accusing other nations of. Whatever happened to tolerance, acceptance, equality and freedom? Leave innocent people alone. Fed up of this nonsense. I think forcing the woman to take off her clothes was wrong. A bit like forcing a Sikh to remove his turban. They should have explained the new law to her and given her a chance to leave the beach, or just face a fine. I am wondering how this law could be implemented in Australia as stinger suits and wet suits are not dissimilar to Burkinis. Will they be outlawed too?

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau defended the Burkini — an Islamic dress for swimming that covers the whole body except the face, hands, and feet — and stood for individual rights during a meeting with his ministers on Monday (22 August). He said that Canada did not like to seize personal rights and respected cultural diversity.

While speaking to media, the Liberal Party leader addressed the controversy swirling in France over a Burkini ban and said, "We should be past tolerance in Canada". He added that the country could never think of a Burkini ban or any kind of prohibition that would affect any person's individuality.

"In Canada, can we speak of acceptance, openness, friendship, understanding? It is about where we are going and what we are going through every day in our diverse and rich communities," he was quoted as

saying by AFP.

He also added that individual rights should be "at the top of public discourse and debate."

Some policymakers in Quebec province of Canada had requested for the ban after 15 towns in France's southeast banned Burkinis, but Trudeau dismissed the ministers' call.

Societies which force people to dress a certain way cannot call themselves 'democratic.' This Burkini ban claims to protect "secularism" and ban "beach-wear which ostentatiously displays religious affiliation." My question: do you think someone wearing beach clothes decorated in Jewish religious themes would face the same fine and treatment? What a low hypocrite and disgusting country. No wonder why France is becoming almost a poor country and having millions of its own citizens immigrating to England, USA, Dubai, Canada seeking a better life.

Should we start dressing down anyone wearing a nighty and a shower cap because of "national security" This isn't a law that targets criminals, or terrorists. This is a by-law that targets Muslims for not wanting to show skin. Which is ridiculous. If tomorrow in any country someone said "white people can't wear trench coats" because of the amount of American mass shooters who have worn one would be met with complete anarchy.

There is a thousand and one other outfits from different cultures that similarly represent the Burkini. This is state sponsored racism. No one seems to have a problem with Sikhs wearing turbans and rightfully so... You see this is borderline apartheid on the grounds of "national security" and "protecting western values" when in reality it's just a way of segregating and disenfranchising those who are 'different' from us.

They have no problems with Sikhs, Jews, Buda's etc... When it comes to Muslims, yes everybody is against them! Com on guys those are not our values, we were not raised like this, at least not in the US... We should all condemn these stupidities which divide us more than anything else and give terrorists more ground to recruit other ignorant people. This is really what the terrorists want and the French are doing exactly what they want to segregate those Muslims and make them feel the society don't want them although those ladies weren't terrorist. This is

how the terrorist wants and the French are doing exactly. Congrats and now many of those who got fined eventually will feel ashamed that society cant accept them for who they are... thus what do u think these people would do? God knows how they feel.. and just so u people know that many Muslims themselves are targets of terrorist too.

West must learn to respect and tolerate those who are different. Discrimination against Muslim practices, such as France's recent stance against the Burkini, can have the opposite of the intended impact. In making Muslim communities feel threatened and under siege, discriminatory policies can make the narrative of extremists that the West is at war with Islam that much more appealing.

Muslims are not embracing western life'. What do we do? In our free time us English go down the pubs and get smashed, do the same in clubs, sleep with random people and as a result have the highest teenage pregnancy rate in Europe. Can anybody please tell me what integration means? other then speak English!!! The Jews did their best to integrate in Germany. They even took German names! Look how far it got them. If the Muslims try to integrate, the Germans/British will complain about the 'pollution' of their identity once again. I wonder how many English people were saying "Multi-Culturalism does not work" when they were busy invading and taking over other people's countries!? India, the Africa, the Americas, Australia, to name but a few. I wonder how many English people are saying "Multi Culturalism does not work" when they are busy sunning themselves in the south of Spain, speaking only English, eating in English restaurants, drinking in English bars, and complaining that not all Spaniards speak English!? Monkey see? Monkey do? And what is English culture, anyhow!? Our football teams are full of foreign players and some are owned by foreign owners, Christian Church attendance has dwindled, we love our curries (influenced by Indian food), we holiday abroad often...so I really would like somebody to define to me what is English culture, these days. If you mean by integration going down to the pub with the lads, getting drunk, picking up a few girls, and then on Sunday maybe going to church - then I'm sure that Muslims will not integrate.

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**Who is responsible for illiteracy among muslims?? If we can't even teach the basics to make our people literate, why should we brag about muslims to be the BEST OF NATIONS?? If this is not the sign of a murda qaum, what else is?**

**Where will the illiterate muslim neighbours land? If they land in the laps of our enemies, how shall we face our Almighty? Remember Spain? Where are the muslims of Spain? The former PM of Philipines, Arroyo was a descendant of muslims .... what happened to the vast population of mulsims there? With so much being done by our enemies to eliminate us from the map of the world, and with RSS working so hard in India, what are we doing?? Sleeping? Waiting for some one else to make our people literate? Leave our people to the mercy of their teaching who would love to teach them Bhagwad Gita, rather than the Quran!!!**

**10/21/16, 7:08:22 PM: Shakeel Ahmad: Should we leave our kids at the mercy of the govt which forces our kids, by law, to start the day with surya namaskar, transform through Veda recitations and yoga?**

3. As per the Census Report 2001, the percentages of minority population, viz. Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsis) and their literacy rates are, as under:

Communities	Percentage of population	Percentage of literacy
Muslims	12.4	59.1
Christians	2.3	80.3
Sikhs	1.9	69.4
Buddhists	0.8	72.7
Zoroastrians (Parsis)	0.007	97.9

① [mhrd.gov.in/educational-development-minorities](http://mhrd.gov.in/educational-development-minorities)



# Multiplication Table

I By Hajira Khan & Sameen Ahmed Khan I

Arithmetic is the oldest and the most elementary branch of mathematics. Its primary purpose is to study numbers and perform the four basic operations namely: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. These operations are encountered in everyday life. For example, one may collect fruits from a tree and put them together. Addition helps us to keep the count of the fruits in the heap. At the end of the day, one may give away the fruits from this heap, which will require the knowledge of subtraction to keep the account. Suppose we have many trees and many heaps. Then keeping an account of the total fruits would involve big numbers. One can still manage with addition. But the third arithmetic operation namely the multiplication takes care of the large numbers. Multiplication of whole numbers can be

thought of as repeated addition. For illustration, let there be six heaps with eight fruits in each of them. Then there are 48 fruits. This can be seen either as counting ‘six heaps eight times’ or equivalently ‘eight sets six times’. Two approaches are possible because  $6 \times 8 = 8 \times 6$ . Order does not matter in addition and multiplication. These statements may appear to us as obvious but are of great mathematical value. This property of the order not mattering has a special name and we say that ‘addition is commutative’ and ‘multiplication is commutative’, respectively. To visualize the division, let us consider a heap of 20 fruits, which has to be distributed among 4 persons. Symbolically, this task is stated as  $20 \div 4$ . Each person gets 5 fruits. After the distribution, one can get back the size of the original heap as  $4 \times 5 = 20$ . Hence, the division

is sort of opposite of multiplication. We note, that subtraction and division are not commutative. This can be checked by considering the example with the numbers say, 2 and 5; as  $5 - 2 \neq 2 - 5$  and  $5 \div 2 \neq 2 \div 5$ .

Since, ancient times there have been attempts to obtain mastery of the four basic arithmetic operations. Addition and subtraction are relatively easy. The multiplication is facilitated with the help of tables. Division is the most difficult and an expertise in multiplication is a must. The oldest known multiplication tables date back to four thousand years and were used by the Babylonians (modern day include

parts of Iraq, Kuwait, Syria, Turkey and Iran). The Babylonian tables used base 60 (same as our clocks use for time, 1 hour = 60 minutes and each minute = 60 seconds). Such tables of have been also found in other ancient civilizations from later periods.

In this article,

we shall have a closer look at the modern day base 10 ‘multiplication table’ (also called the ‘times table’) and some of its many properties. In our school books, we are introduced to a multiplication table.

The figure has a table. We note some basic properties. Multiplication with 1 does not change the number. Multiplication with 10 only appends a zero in the end. This is the advantage of using the base 10. The diagonal distributes the table into two identical triangles having the same set of numbers, with the diagonal acting as a mirror. The two triangles have the same set of numbers because the multiplication is commutative. The diagonal has the perfect squares: 1, 4, 9, 16 and so on. This reduces the bur-

X	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
3	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36
4	4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40	44	48
5	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
6	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72
7	7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70	77	84
8	8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80	88	96
9	9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90	99	108
10	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120
11	11	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	99	110	121	132
12	12	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144



den of memorizing the multiplication table to a little more than the half. One has to memorize either of the triangles and the diagonal only.

Now, we note some advanced properties of the multiplication table. Numbers within the diagonal do not repeat. But numbers within each of the triangles repeat. For example, within each triangle, the numbers 6, 8, etc. repeat. The numbers in the diagonal and the triangle also have an overlap. For example, 4, 9 etc. occur both in the diagonal and the triangles. Because of these repetitions and overlaps, it becomes difficult to count the numbers in the multiplication table! The repetitions and the overlaps only increase with the size of the multiplication table, that too in an unpredictable manner. Using these properties of the table, we note the sets of numbers in the multiplication tables of different sizes. The sets designated by  $S_n$  contains the numbers occurring in the multiplication table. For completeness, we start with a table of size 1. The first few sets are

$$S_0 = \{1\},$$

$$S_1 = \{1, 4\},$$

$$S_2 = \{1, 4, 9\},$$

$$S_3 = \{1, 4, 9, 16\},$$

$$S_4 = \{1, 4, 9, 16, 25\},$$

$$S_5 = \{1, 4, 9, 16, 25, 36\},$$

$$S_6 = \{1, 4, 9, 16, 25, 36, 49\},$$

$$S_7 = \{1, 4, 9, 16, 25, 36, 49, 64\},$$

Sets of larger size completely contain all the sets of lower size. The size or order of the sets denoted by  $S_n$  grows as 1, 3, 6, 9, 14, 18, 25, 30 and so on. More terms of this infinite sequence can be obtained from The On-Line Encyclopedia of Integer Sequences at <http://oeis.org/A027424>. It may surprise the reader, but there is no simple formula for the size or order of the sets. Even the legendary mathematician Paul Erdős could provide only a rough estimate. Some very complicated formulae have been obtained involving logarithms and other advanced functions. For practical purposes, a good estimate is given by the simple inequality  $|S_n| \leq n^2$ . In mathematics, there are many such surprises. Even easy to understand prob-

lems such as the 'size of the multiplication sets' defy solutions. It is such problems, which keep some of the brightest mathematicians engaged!!!

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# ATS chief says SIMI undertrials...

Continued from Page:

"This is all happening in the name of political vendetta. Issues like these make me deeply concerned about the unity and national integrity," she said.

Madhya Pradesh's former Inspector General (prisons), G.K. Agarwal told reporters in Bhopal that he had written to the state's chief secretary in which the issue of jail security was included.

"The state of Bhopal Central Jail is such that the job of the guards was being performed by the prisoners," he said in the letter.

"It would be wrong to presume that everything is fine if no major incident takes place. God is helping but it would a mistake to presume that he will continue to offer help," he had written.

Agarwal wrote the letter in 2013, after SIMI operatives escaped from Khandwa jail. He blamed this incident on the jail authorities.

Agarwal had also sent copies of the letter to the Intelligence Bureau and the National Security Adviser.

Amidst these revelations, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Wednesday inspected Bhopal Central Jail.

Chouhan directed the jail officials to strengthen the security as well as devise methods to make it foolproof.

According to sources at Bhopal Central Jail, the officials had suspected that the SIMI men might attempt a jailbreak and had given specific directions to beef up security.

According to sources, Additional Inspector General of Prisons Sushovan Banerjee had directed the prison officials last month to keep a special check on the SIMI linked prisoners and change the locks of their barracks.

Banerjee had also alerted the prison superintendent and told him to restrict the meetings of the prisoners and keep them under strict watch.

It was also mentioned in the directives to interchange the prisoners, increase security on the outer wall of the prison as well as cut the bushes to increase visibility.

Sources said that after the alert by department officials, special security forces were requested and the prisoners were restricted from meeting, but the rest of the directives were not followed.

On Tuesday, the bodies of the eight SIMI operators were sent for post-mortem in which bullets were found in four of the eight bodies, while the bullets went through the bodies of the other four.

Late night on Tuesday, five bodies (Mehboob, Zakir, Amjad, Akeel and Salik) were buried in Khandwa while one (Majid) in Mahidpur, Ujjain. The body of Khalid was buried in Halalpur, Bhopal.

The body of Mujib was handed over to his relatives.

# Definition of the Islamic character and its main features, and a warning against spoiling or distorting it

**Question:** We often hear or read

about the human character as discussed by the non-Muslims, to the point that we almost feel that they have a virtual monopoly and are ahead of us in this matter, and we do not know whether what they teach to people is in accordance with, or contrary to, Islam and the Qur'an and Sunnah!

What is the Islamic character? What are its characteristics? How can we teach it to people? Is it the matter of belief ('aqeedah) or purifying the soul (tazkiyat an-nafs) or does it have to do with education? How does this Islamic character motivate one and raise ambitions in a practical way?

What is the relationship between the Islamic personality and the "science" of neuro-linguistic programming? Does this new science have any negative or positive impact on our character?

**Answer:** Praise be to Allah.

**Firstly:**

The Islamic character is one that is sound and upright; in terms of its principles, fundamentals and etiquette it is based on submission and adherence to the teachings of Islam, in obedience to Allah and His Messenger.

It is the character that learns its etiquette and bases its principles on the Qur'an and Sunnah. It is the character that seeks to apply those teachings by following the example of the early generations of the ummah and of the righteous among them who achieve a great deal in that field.

Islam is very keen to describe the true Islamic character and it confirms the importance of its main features that are based on sound Islamic teaching. Islam

discusses a great deal of the features of this character and its fundamentals, and its impact on the well-being of individuals and communities, so that the accurate image of true Islam, and its impact on people's life, may be presented.

The Islamic character is based on belief in Allah and His Messengers, and in His promise and warning, and on adherence to Islamic conduct in a complete way, which includes truthfulness, honesty, chastity, modesty, good attitude, kindness to neighbours, hastening to do good, helping people to do what is right, refraining from harming others, and other aspects of Islamic conduct.

The basis of the Islamic character is belief in Allah and His Messenger, and submission to and compliance with the rulings, principles and etiquette of Islam.

Throughout the centuries, the Islamic character has been subjected to evil campaigns aimed at distorting, deforming and scorning it. By means of what they have introduced of philosophies and cultural practices, the enemies of Islam have sought to crowd Islam out of people's hearts, so that Islam will no longer be the only factor in building human character, and people will no longer see the sublimity, perfection and pure belief of Islamic teachings. Thus there will be distortion, alterations and changes, by means of which the enemies of Allah seek to reach their goals – which Allah will never let them reach – of extinguishing His light and altering His words.

The Islamic character today has no choice but to adhere to that to which their predecessors before them adhered, namely affirmation of the Oneness of Allah (tawheed) and sound commitment and loyalty to the religion of Allah, as well as complete disavowal of the enemies of Allah and their beliefs and principles, whilst adhering to the sublime conduct that Islam promotes. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "I was only sent to perfect good manners and attitude." Narrated by

Ahmad (8729); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami' (2349).

### **Secondly:**

Achieving that may be done by educating people and teaching them sound beliefs and how to purify their souls in word and deed, on the basis of Islamic principles and the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Indeed Allah conferred a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger

(Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)) from among themselves, reciting unto them His Verses (the Quran), and purifying them (from sins by their following him), and instructing them (in) the Book (the Quran) and Al-Hikmah (the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) (i.e. his legal ways, statements, acts of worship, etc.)), while before that they had been in manifest error"

[Aal 'Imraan 3:164].

### **Thirdly:**

This Islamic character will have high aspirations because of its faith and certainty and belief in the promise of Allah, and because it realises the honour attained by being a Muslim and a follower of the Prophets. The Muslim's aspiration will be commensurate with his level of faith and certainty, because actions are connected to that which is settled in the heart of certainty, faith and belief. This is something that is very clear to everyone with regard to any issue.

According to the level of the Muslim's awareness of his strength, honour and pride, his ambitions will soar and he will be of strong resolve, and his religious commitment will be sound.

### **Fourthly:**

Neuro-linguistic programming, according to those who believe in it, is a collection of ways and methods that are based on psychological principles, aimed at solving some psychological problems and helping people to achieve greater success in their lives. According to its promoters, the one who becomes well-versed in the methods of this school of psychology will not need help from anyone else. Hence it may be a means of self-help behavioural therapy, that tries to work out a clear plan for success, then it uses psychological techniques to reinforce the more successful behaviour and try to undo

some old beliefs which are diagnosed as an obstacle to the individual's development. Therefore it is called programming, because it reprograms the mind.

But in fact, after examining this new science and its fundamental principles and what it is based on, and what it results in, we realise that it has roots in philosophy and certain beliefs, and it also brainwashes the Muslim and teaches him corrupt ideas that are contrary to sound beliefs.

Contemporary scholars have issued many fatwas concerning it, and some prominent specialists in the fields of psychology and psychiatry have also warned against this programming, and have highlighted its negative effects and the danger it poses to the religious commitment and character of the Muslim.

Please see the following link:

<http://alda3ayat.com/vb/showthread.php?t=4129>

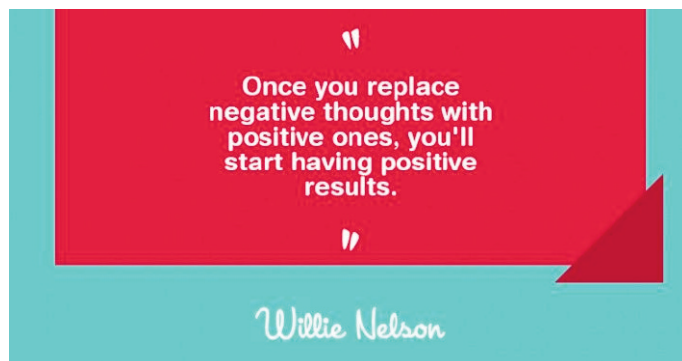
See also the answers to questions no. 121011 and 118292

For more information, please see the book Ma'aalim ash-Shakhsiyyah al-Islamiyyah by Dr. 'Umar Sulaymaan al-Ashqar. Another important book on Islamic education is Manhaj at-Tarbiyyah al-Islamiyyah by Prof. Muhammad Qutub (may Allah preserve him); see also his book Diraasaat fi'n-Nafs al-Insaaniyyah. We also advise you to read the book Zahara Jeel Salaah ad-Deen by Dr. Maajid 'Arsaani al-Keelaani.

For more information, please see also the answers to questions no. 120211 and 138390

And Allah knows best.

Source: Islam Q&A <https://islamqa.info/en/181665>





# Lewd Musicians and Singers: The Pied Pipers of Today

I By Nissar Nadiadwala I

In my school book I had a story: "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" written by Robert Browning. It was a fictitious story that happened in a German village which was afflicted by rats. The mayor announced a huge reward for anyone who could get rid of the rats. A musician arrived from somewhere and played his pipe, the rats from all around the town followed him and he walked into the river, followed by the rats intoxicated by his tune.

Later when he approached the Mayor for the reward he was refused and was mocked at. He took his revenge. Next evening he played his flute again. This time the little children of the town were mesmerized and they followed him. He entered the opening of a cave and the children followed him, and when the last child had entered, the door of the cave closed. The Pied piper took away hundreds of children from their parents leaving them in grief.

Today these Pied pipers are back in new forms. Like Pied Piper of Hamelin these singers and musicians drive away our children from their innocent childhood and duties.

There is an invisible movement to stir up the sexual passions among the kids. These kids are the richest consumers throughout the globe. The most powerful buyers come from this age group with an estimated \$40 Billion. The number one thing bought by kids is "Music Albums". Hanna Montana and Britney Spears are household names in many Muslim families whose culture is colored by

western brushes. What do these children get in return except that their iPods and blackberries are full of raunchy and sexy lyrics?

Like heavy drinkers we have "Heavy listeners", swaying, jumping, and twisting along with hip hops, rap or rock, each beautified with vulgar lyrics. Few decades back there were "Youth Bands", now they have "Teen Bands".

I was shocked to see a Muslim singer (guess his name) performing like a Jazz singer, in an American Auditorium, but presenting a Nasheed, and young girls standing on their seats swaying and enjoying! I was told later that the singer has shades of corrupt Sufism. Songs and Nasheed, as long as they are good and goodness oriented, are not objected by scholars.

A time will come when a man wakes up as a Muslim but in the evening he will die on kufr!

There are many Muslim singers and musicians, including award winners in Oscars and Grammys, who sing and compose tunes for lyrics which have kufr related phrases. Imagine you find one of those songs good and you hum it many times and death meets you all of a sudden, while you are humming it. In what state will you die?

How many of you are aware of the fact that the arrival of Dajjal will be welcomed by many people and the musicians will be leading them. Guess, if the musicians march, would not those who are intoxicated by the music follow like those rats and little children of Hamelin?

"  
Dream small dreams. If you make them too big, you get overwhelmed and you don't do anything. If you make small goals and accomplish them, it gives you the confidence to go on to higher goals.  
"

John H. Johnson

"  
It takes but one positive thought when given a chance to survive and thrive to overpower an entire army of negative thoughts.  
"

Robert H. Schuller

# Peace Foundation organised conference on 'Islam and Peace'

I By MM News, I

**P**atna: A conference on Islam and Peace organized by , took place at Seminar Hall, Bihar Urdu Bhawan on 23rd October 2016.

Speaking at the event senior journalist and Vice President of Peace foundation Anwarul Hoda said, "The Islamic scholars and the intellectuals present at the conference expressed serious concern over the upsurge of terrorist activities in different parts of world and linking these with Islam. Identifying Islam with violence and terrorism is highly unfair.

Dr. M.A. Ibrahim, I.A.S. (Ret'd) addressing Islam's teachings are very explicit and clear. One of the meanings of Islam itself is peace. Islam regards the killing of a single innocent as a killing of the whole humankind, the Holy Quran says. Islam insists on the need to respect treaties and agreements with others. Islam has advised mercy for all. The Prophet (May Peace be Upon Him) said that God is merciful to those who show mercy to others. Islam also regards all creatures as members of God's family. It announces the equality of all human beings. Islam calls for peace and justice and mercy. Under no conditions does it legitimize strife.

The conference strongly condemns terrorism of all kind. Calling these activities as religious is tantamount to sanctifying them and thus leaving no space for the correct teachings of different religions." In his inspiring presidential address Dr. M.A. Ibrahim, I.A.S. (Ret'd), former Chief Secretary, Government of Bihar said that Islam aims at spiritual progress, intellectual development, character building, social reform, educational activities etc. He called upon the people to lead a peaceful and purposeful life. He emphasized on social work for the development of the society and for the nation. 'A good human being will obey law of the land, uphold moral values and follow true teaching of religion', he stressed.

Also present at the event was eminent Islamic scholar Maulana Syed Shah Mashhood Ahmed Qadri

Nadvi. In his speech he said that "Islam does not just promote peace, Islam itself means peace". "Generally on conquering any territory the rulers ransack and loot enemy state. But Prophet Muhammad (may be peace upon him) exercised extreme restraint, ignored the crimes of Quraysh; who had compelled him to migrate to Madina in a hostile situation. He proclaimed a general amnesty to all" he added. Maulana Rizwan Islahi of Jamaat e Islami Hind said that one of Allah's attribute is As-Salam, which means peace. Moreover the holy Qur'an states that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent to the world as a mercy of mankind. We all are equal and descendants of Prophet Adam.

Hafiz Shanuddin emphasized that the correct and patient presentation of truth conquers the hearts of opponents. He stressed that there are various misunderstanding about Islam and Muslims which can be cleared only through good character and a regular interaction with the people.

Naushad Ansari, President, Peace Foundation said that the word 'Islam' has come from the root word 'silm', which itself means peace. So the spirit of Islam is the spirit of peace. Any deviation from this is a deviation from Islam'.

The program was coordinated by Abdullah Kaifi, Joint Secretary of Peace foundation. Dr. Zakir Husain delivered the vote of thanks.

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# Salafis risked their safety to condemn terrorism, British author finds after extensive research

I By [ummid.com News Network I](#)

**L**ondon: Rejecting the myth that Salafis secretly support terrorism while publicly claiming to respect the law of the land, a British author after an extensive research of more than two and half years found that they are actually explicitly against terrorism, non-violent and

searcher, said in an article published on Oxford University Press's blog (OUPblog).

"While aspects of their purist creed are shared by Jihadi groups, mostprobably the vast majority of—Salafis in Europe are explicitly against terrorism. Not only that, but they tend to oppose all formal political forms of organisation, such as



[Image credit: Women wearing niqabs in London. From Paolo Napolitano. [Wikipedia Commons](#)]

their mission is to nurture peacefully distinct Muslim identities.

"Salafism, often referred to as 'Wahhabism', is widely regarded as a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam that fuels Jihadism and subjugates women. Some even lump ISIS and Salafism together—casting suspicion upon the thousands of Muslims who identify as Salafi in the West. After gaining unprecedented access to Salafi women's groups in London, I discovered the realities behind the myths", Anabel Inge, a British re-

political parties and campaign groups. Although they believe that the shari'a is the best system, they do not seek to impose it on non-Muslim countries", Anabel Inge, the author of 'The Making of a Salafi Muslim Woman: Paths to Conversion' - due to release in November this year, added.

"Instead, their (not uncontroversial) mission is peacefully to nurture distinct Muslim identities. This includes a duty to proselytize to both non-Muslims and Muslims who have, in their view,



‘deviated’ from the ‘correct’ path”, she said.

"During nearly two-and-a-half years of fieldwork with Salafi groups, I never witnessed any explicit or implicit support for Jihadism, or calls for shari’a for the United Kingdom. I only ever witnessed condemnation of the former, and express prescriptions to obey the law of the land.

"While it is, of course, possible that Salafis moderate their speech in front of researchers, it would become almost impossible to keep this up after a few months of regular interaction. That’s why long-term participant research is so valuable", she said.

"Once I became a familiar face in Salafi circles, I became less conspicuous and people were less likely to react to my presence. In fact, a few women felt comfortable enough to tell me about their prior sympathy with or involvement in Jihadist groups, such as Al-Muhajiroun, and why they had left these. Other Salafis had actually helped them to understand that terrorism was forbidden by the scriptures", she added.

"In Britain, the ‘Salafi’ label has been associated with non-violent, often quietist groups since at least the end of the 1990s. These Salafis have condemned Al-Qa’ida and ISIS vocally and vociferously on public platforms—occasionally at some risk to their personal safety and reputations", she said.

"One preacher, for instance, encouraged his on-line followers to ‘mass distribute’ an anti-ISIS leaflet he had written, in which he urged anyone with information about terrorist plots to ‘inform the authorities’. That same preacher reported receiving death threats from ISIS sympathizers", she said.

Anabel Inge also rejected the myth that the Salafi Muslims are downtrodden, backwards, 'brain-washed', uneducated, alienated ‘drop-outs’ of society whose lack of education makes them ill-equipped to make sensible, rational decisions about their lives.

"My impression as a researcher was that these women are at least as likely as the general UK

population to pursue higher education. Most of my interviewees had already started or finished university, and just one had no plans for further education. Most were also keen to launch or pursue existing careers", she said.

"Although five decades of research on New Religious Movements have yielded no empirical evidence for the so-called ‘brainwashing thesis’, it is nonetheless often regarded as the primary reason why people become ‘Islamic extremists’", she said.

"I found no evidence of so-called brainwashing. On the contrary, I found that the Salafi conversion process was largely intellectual, rather than based on social or other pressures.

"Each woman’s story was unique, but all spoke of coming to see Salafism as an approach that maderational sense to them. Typically, I was told that Salafism was an evidence-based methodology, with every single prescription tied to ‘authentic’ scriptural ‘proofs’, rather than to culture or human opinion. This gave the women—most of whom had been exposed to a plethora of Islamic interpretations—the reassuring certainty that they were following the ‘pure’ Islam", she said.

**"Quran Is Such An Authority On Problems Of Religion That It Can Be Trusted Upon. It Contains Best Pleasures For A Super Mind. It Is The Greatest Source Of Knowledge To Mankind."**

QUOTEHD.COM

Imam Ali



# The Eternal Delight of Repentance!

I By Sister Jamine Khan I

**W**hen Allah created us, Allah pointed out the path of righteousness, and also the path which will lead to Allah's displeasure. In addition, Allah gave us free will, in other words, we have a choice as to which path to follow. When we choose the path of sin we are turning away from our Creator. We are all born in a state of purity, with a natural predisposition to obey Allah. We enter the world in a state of submission to the divine known as the Fitrah. To return to our natural state we should turn away from doing what is wrong, and repent.

With true repentance we dedicate ourselves to correcting our behaviour, it enables us to turn away from sin and return to the path of Allah. Allah's infinite mercy has given this as a means by which we can strive for purification and thus return to our original sinless state of the Fitrah. True peace, tranquillity and contentment can only be obtained from the remembrance of Allah.

"Without doubt, it is in the remembrance of Allah that the hearts find rest" (Quran: 13:28)

The greatest tragedy occurs when we turn away from the remembrance of Allah. This causes us to degenerate into a slave of our own base desires. Real repentance should begin at the point that one becomes Allah conscious. Among the qualities by which Allah describes those whose repentance is accepted is that of

"Those who having done something shameful or (having) wronged their own souls, remember Allah and immediately ask forgiveness for their sins" (Quran: 3:135).

Repentance is a very intimate and personal act between the sinner and Allah, therefore reflection is vital. Most of us have the tendency to go through life believing that we are aware, yet not fully conscious of how Allah works in our life. When we are aware of the many blessings Allah pours into our lives, even when we occasionally stray, we will be grateful and long to return to Allah's favour. This is the time to reflect upon where we have wronged ourselves as a divine creation of Allah. This is when the longing to make amends take hold.

The temptations of the world are very seductive, and it is easy to succumb. However, Allah's mercy is infinite. Allah is pleased when we turn to Him in repentance because we have been created with a tendency to make mistakes so that we will repent and be forgiven from Allah's mercy.

With repentance we embark on an act of worship so great that we can be totally absolved of our sins. When we are forgiven, Allah's divine attributes of mercy and forgiveness are manifested. The process of doing wrong, being aware of it and then repenting also serves as a channel for our spiritual growth. It develops our love for the Almighty and increases our respect and consciousness of Allah.

Allah forgives anyone who turns to Him, repentant. When we commit a sin by disobeying the commands of Allah, we are responsible before Allah for that sin. We have to take responsibility. When we turn to Allah in repentance we are in fact fulfilling Allah's wish as well as a part of the reason for our creation. Repentance then be-

comes an act of righteousness and worship greatly pleasing to Allah.

“Surely Allah loves those who constantly turn to Him in repentance And those who keep themselves pure”(Quran: 2:222)

However, as with all things, repentance requires certain conditions. The repentance must first be acceptable to Allah. The guidelines represent the necessary conditions which must be met in order for the act of worship through repentance to be valid. Repentance has been commanded by Allah but Allah does not need our repentance, we need Allah’s remission.

Tawbah (repentance) has been legislated primarily for our benefit; for our spiritual growth through rising above sin and the remembrance of Allah. Ideally repentance should take place immediately, although do not despair that Allah will not forgive sincere repentance even if time has elapsed.

“Surely Allah will forgive those who do sins in ignorance and soon turn in repentance. These Allah will forgive, for Allah is all-Knowing, all-Wise” (Quran: 4:17)

Some important points to note when turning to Allah in Repentance:

- An immediate abandonment of the sin for which forgiveness is sought must take place. One should not repent and then commit the same offence again.
- If the sin for which repentance is sought involves the violation of the rights of others, these rights must be restored for absolution to be granted.
- A feeling of sorrow and regret must be present. Remorse is the foundation of the act of Tawbah. Without it repentance becomes a meaningless ritual devoid of any sincerity and substance.
- True Tawbah is not only expressed in feelings from the heart and words on the lips but also in the penitent individual’s actions. He

should be driven by his desire for absolution to correct whatever wrong he has done and make amends.

“If any of you does evil in ignorance, then repents And makes amends, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful” (Quran: 6:54)

True peace, tranquillity and contentment can only be obtained from the remembrance of Allah.

“Without doubt, it is in the remembrance of Allah that the hearts find rest” (Quran: 13:28)

Repentance must be done strictly for the pleasure of Allah alone, for only He can pardon the sins of man. The act of Tawbah must be performed while maintaining full consciousness of Allah throughout. For acts of worship done in a purely ritualistic manner, wherein words are uttered quickly, limbs moved reflexively and mindlessly, are unacceptable to Allah and are of no benefit to man. Abu Hurayrah (RA) reported that the Noble Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) emphatically stated this point as follows:

“Call on Allah in prayer confident that it will be answered. But know that Allah does not answer the prayer of an unmindful, inattentive heart.” (Hadith)

When one is aware of one’s actions, they become deliberate and can be directed correctly, but in an unconscious state they become meaningless.

May Allah grant us all consciousness, for true Allah Consciousness leads to contentment, In-sha’Allah!

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# Why We Need To Revisit Rumi And Gandhiji

Standing at this juncture of sub-continental history, when two neighbouring countries, India and Pakistan, are looking at each other with daggers drawn, it'll be instructive to remember Jalaluddin Rumi and M K Gandhi whose birth-days fall on September 30 and October 2 respectively. Coleman Barks wrote in his book 'Rumi' that humankind is in urgent need of re-reading Gandhi and Rumi's irenic and pacifist philosophies.

Gandhi first read Rumi at the age of 26 and his poetry, translated by the English scholar Swanton, stayed with him till his last breath. Rumi's great thought, 'Choon jang ashad ifnaaz aize khoon-e-ifraad' -- 'A battle is death's dance macabre' -- moved Gandhi intensely. So too when he read Rumi's words in 'Ramz-e-Kaaynaat' -- 'Passivity at any price. Suffer dishonour and disgrace but never resort to arms. Be bullied, be outraged, be killed. But do not kill'. This line is sometimes (erroneously) attributed to the Buddha.

We indeed need to read and understand these two completely non-violent and peace-loving men who changed the way we look at conflict.

Gandhi wrote to Allama Iqbal in 1930, quoting Rumi, 'Why we shed blood of our brethren for a piece of land, religion and money?' Iqbal wrote back, quoting Rumi, 'This existence of mine on earth depends upon the lives of my fellow beings. I exist because of you and vice versa.'

The interdependence of humankind was first proclaimed by Rumi and endorsed by Gandhi. Rumi's 'Go beyond your own needs and merge yourself into the ocean of compassion' brought tears to Gandhi's eyes.

Elsewhere, Rumi writes, 'Put your swords back in the scabbards and embrace even your enemies, for, love conquers all.' Gandhi said the same thing

when he wrote to Nehru that the British must leave the country not as enemies but as friends. Such lofty philosophy is not difficult to follow, provided we elevate ourselves to higher levels.

'Farishat boodam munhir zaat, insaan ferazat aseet' -- 'Strive to become angels and spread love like fragrance' wrote Rumi in Masnavi. We have all become too violent and blood-thirsty. The soothing philosophies of Gandhi and Rumi can uplift our souls and help make this world a place free of bloodshed and violence.

When Maulana Abul Kalam Azad sent a sublime thought from Rumi's book, 'Parvaaz-e-ruhaniyat' (Flight of spirituality), Gandhi immediately jotted it down in his diary and called that his daily prayer. The thought was: 'The moment my sword was about to behead my "enemy", it dawned on me that he was my brother and the sword fell from my hand.'

Gandhi drew daily inspiration from the Bhagwad Gita, the 'Sermon on the Mount' and Rumi's 'Guldasta'. He wondered, if war-mongers like Hitler and Mussolini ever read and understood Rumi, the world would never have witnessed the two horrific World Wars and numerous other conflicts. Gandhi wrote to his Scottish friend and Christian missionary in India 'Deenbandhu' (friend of the poor) Charles Freer Andrews, 'The more I read Rumi, the more I believe in the power and capacity of human co-existence. It's a potential possibility, not a pipe-dream.' Let's rejoice in such sublime ideas of non-violence and believe that the power of love overcome violence.

Finally, it's an irony of fate that Rumi was born in Balkh (Afghanistan), which is today a hotbed of violence, bloodshed and cruelty. Let's all shun war and work for peace through love.

Source: <http://www.speakingtree.in/article/why-we-need-to-revisit-rumi-and-gandhiji>

# The Prophet as the Feminist

*The Prophet championed the rights and dignity of women at a time when they were the most degraded lot in Arabia and around the world*

I By ASMA ANJUM KHAN I

Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, a feminist? I can see a few eyebrows raised, several harsh glances thrown and some hands lifted. Relax. Let me explain.

Here comes his story, though it is possible that you might not have heard it from this angle or were just misinformed, as is often the case.

Being a woman is hard work. Says the Black American writer Maya Angelou. It is indeed hard [and lots of it!] work to be a woman and stay that way! Should I add being a Muslim woman is more difficult, at least in the eyes of the Western world?

The popular image of the suffering Muslim woman is orientalist in nature. The West and its media are obsessed with the false perception of the alleged suffocation of Muslim women. This image suggests that these veiled souls can't speak for themselves and need to be, 'saved'. We do not need, saving, and this liberty is forced upon us.

Also we must do away with despite-being-a-Muslim woman kind of rhetoric. It is too patronizing an attitude and instills dichotomy.

To begin with the story, he began with the banning of female infanticide. It was a hugely revolutionary step. Imagine how difficult it must have been to convince a people, to not be killing their daughters, who had the habit of burying them alive?

Once he wept uncontrollably to hear one such confession. He had not one or two but four daughters and was an exemplary father to them. He had informed his people that they should not prefer their sons over daughters, and they should bring them up with utmost care and never ever subject them to discrimination of any kind. If they succeed in doing so, they were assured, they will be rewarded immensely in the afterlife. We all know how this charity of discrimination with us begins at home; with mothers expecting their daughters to be perfect and contributing in the household work while the sons are spoilt to the hilt.

Discrimination begins with this attitude where sons/boys are preferred for exceptional treatment. He never was one for this. According to his wife Aisha RA, he would be at his happiest best when his youngest daughter Fatima RA came visiting. His face would lit up and he would be at his warmest best towards her and happiest in her company.

When it comes to the issue of women and Islam, everyone is familiar with the commonplace perceptions and stereotypes as to how Islam exploits women, curbs their freedom and condemns them to domestic existence in their homes.

The fact of the matter is that if we look closely, it is actually Muslim men who should be complaining about not being favored as much as women. I am illustrating my case here.

The Prophet said that a woman has the freedom to choose her spouse, to spend her money where she wants to and has the right to own property. That was some 1400 years ago!

Furthermore, without her explicit consent, she can't be married off; she can demand divorce if she is not happy in her marriage. The Prophet was most concerned about widow remarriage and asked for avoiding any delays regarding this. In those times a woman could even send her own marriage proposal to a man!

Can you imagine such a thing today? They could earn their living, why his first wife Khadijah RA was a business woman and had employed him to help her. Financial freedom is the true freedom. In Islam it is binding on the male relations of a woman to take care of her expenses. Irrespective of whether she earns or not, she is not obliged to or does not need to spend on herself, from her own pocket.

If she earns, her money is her property entirely; any male relation, has no right to stake a claim on it, directly or indirectly. The argument that this creates inequality among the genders does not hold water. Does granting of privileges of some special kind, means we are unequal? Why not then ban the special reserved seats for women in buses or even refrain, from offering a woman your seat?

While my case is, if you are given a privilege, a concession, without your asking for it, then just grab it and make hay. Of course the sun shines bright on us the Muslim women. There is no scope for a Muslim man



to take a single penny from a woman relative [especially wife] without her unambiguous and happy consent.

This way, the concept of dowry is also automatically rendered un-Islamic. He knew the importance of educating women and had asked the believers to learn teachings of Islam, also from his wife Aisha, who was groomed by him with special care and attention.

I wish to share a few slices of his wonderful life where he shows how cool he was with the women. He understood them, loved them, respected them, cared for them and most of all he showed that he cared. He said it as it was. He was never shy of expressing his love for his wives. They were bestowed with lovely nicknames; were listened to patiently, never taunted, criticized or made fun of by him.

If reprimanding them was necessary, he did so privately and in a very gentle and considerate way. His wives would even stop talking to him if they were miffed for some reason and could even reply back! He was there for them, when they needed him.

Talking to them, narrating the day's happenings, asking for their opinion, never hurting their sentiments, sharing caring and loving.... You have to be a wife [woman] to know how precious this feels!

He was also not one among those scores of men who order around their women. He would wash his clothes himself, mend his shoes, serve himself and did whatever other ordinary workmen do.

The popular perception calculatingly enforced in the media is that Islam is a bad religion for women. [Oh! You have four wives! They forget to mention 4, 5 or 6, girlfriends for some!]

When it comes to the matter of rights, there is justice and equality among men and women, no prejudice no favoritism to him or her. Yes, due to their characteristic traits, there are bound to be specifications about their dealings with the world and hence a different set of instructions for them to follow.

This is what the critics of Islam must understand, attributing individual and communal follies, [be it against educating women or their driving cars] to Islam and the Prophet's teachings is like blaming Taliban for the fly sitting on your pretty nose. Thank you.

This champion of women's rights practiced what he preached. He never hit any of his wives, and severely reprimanded the men who resort to violence. Once when Aisha RA angrily smashed a bowl filled with

food from another of his wife Safia RA; he dealt with it astutely. He sat down and picked up the shreds of glass with his own hands, uttering the words, Oh, she got angry!

Imagine in his place a typical husband and you know the difference. This slice from his life makes it clear that he was not unaware of the psychology of women, her natural jealousies with a co-wife and, hence his maturity and wisdom of demeanor.

The matter of breaking a bowl was resolved finally when the guilty party was asked to procure a similar bowl with similar filling, and that was that. The matter was over within seconds, no hard feelings and no grudges. He understood a woman's mind perfectly well.

Yes, he was a feminist, a fierce one at that. He was feminist enough to accept his weakness and proclaim that it was his wife Khadija who helped, consoled and supported him when he was emotionally wrought at the time of the first divine revelation. Talking of the Prophet's equation with her, Dr. Gary Miller makes an interesting observation:

As a matter of fact she [Khadija] must have been quite a woman because when the first revelation came to him, he ran home to her, afraid. Certainly, even today one would have a hard time trying to find an Arab who would tell you, "I was so afraid that I ran home to my wife," They just aren't that way. Yet Mohammad, pbuh, felt comfortable enough with his wife to be able to do that.—The Amazing Quran.

How many men can admit to their wives that they were afraid and needed their support? He was courageous and man enough to acknowledge his wife's contribution and gave her the credit where it was due. Stressing the importance of treating a wife in the best way possible, he had said,

The best of the believers are those who are best in their manners and kindest to their wives. Elsewhere, he said,

The best one of you is the best to his family and I am the best one of you to my family.

The Prophet also famously said that Jannah or heaven lay at the feet of a woman—one's mother. 'Treat women kindly, Fear Allah concerning women' were his last words.

With his model life before us and his noble words to guide us, being a woman is not hard work.

Asma Anjum Khan is Assistant Professor of English and a community activist based in Maharashtra, India

# Why a Scientist Believes in God

**T**his article of Mr A. Cressy Morrison, former President of the New York Academy of Sciences, first appeared in the "Reader's Digest" (January 1948); then on recommendation of Professor C. A. Coulson, F. R.S., Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University, was republished in the "Reader's Digest" November 1960 - It shows how science compels the scientists to admit to the essential need of a Supreme Creator.

We are still in the dawn of the scientific age and every increase of light reveals more brightly the handiwork of an intelligent Creator. In the 90 years since Darwin we have made stupendous discoveries; with a spirit of scientific humanity and of faith grounded in knowledge we are approaching even nearer to an awareness of God. For myself I count seven reasons for my faith.

First: By unwavering mathematical law we can prove that our universe was designed and executed by a great engineering Intelligence. Suppose you put ten coins, marked from one to ten, into your pocket and give them a good shuffle. Now try to take them out in sequence from one to ten, pulling back the coin each time and shaking them all again. Mathematically we know that your chance of first drawing number one is one in ten; of drawing one and two in succession, one in 100; of drawing one, two and three in succession, one in a thousand, and so on; your chance of drawing them all, from one to number ten in succession, would reach the unbelievable figure of one chance in ten thousand million. By the same reasoning, so many exacting conditions are necessary for life on earth that they could not possibly exist in proper relationship by chance. The earth rotates on its axis at one thousand miles an hour; if it turned at one hundred miles an hour, our days and nights would be ten times as long as now, and the hot sun would then burn up our vegetation during each long day, while in the long night any surviving sprout would freeze. Again, the sun, source of our life, has a surface temperature of 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit, and our earth is, just far enough away so that this 'eternal fire' warms us just enough and not too much! If the sun gave off only one-half its present radiation, we would freeze, and if it gave half as much more, we would roast. The slant of the earth, tilted at an angle of 23 degrees, gives us our season; if it had not been so tilted, vapors from the ocean would move north and south, piling up for us continents of ice. If our moon was, say, only 50 thousand

miles away instead of its actual distance, our tides would be so enormous that twice a day all continents would be submerged; even the mountains would soon be eroded away. If the crust of the earth had been only ten feet thicker, there would be no oxygen without which animal life must die. Had the ocean been a few feet deeper, carbon dioxide and oxygen would have been absorbed and no vegetable life could exist. Or if our atmosphere had been thinner, some of the meteors, now burned in space by the million every day would be striking all parts of the earth, starting fires everywhere. Because of these, and host of other examples, there is not one chance in millions that life on our planet is an accident.

Second: The resourcefulness of life to accomplish its purpose is a manifestation of all-pervading Intelligence. What life itself is no man has fathomed. It has neither weight nor dimensions, but it does have force; a growing root will crack a rock. Life has conquered water, land and air, mastering the element, compelling them to dissolve and reform their combinations. Life, the sculptor, shapes all living things; an artist, it designs every leaf of every tree, and colours every flower. Life is a musician and has each bird to sing its love songs, the insects to call each other in the music of their multitudinous sounds. Life is a sublime chemist, giving taste to fruits and spices, and perfume to the rose changing water and carbonic acid into sugar and wood and, in so doing, releasing oxygen that animals may have the breath of life. Behold an almost invisible drop of protoplasm, transparent and jelly-like, capable of motion, drawing energy from the sun. This single cell, this transparent mist-like droplet, holds within itself the germ of life, and has the power to distribute this life to every living thing, great and small. The powers of this droplet are greater than our vegetation and animals and people, for all life came from it. Nature did not create life; fire-blistered rocks and a salt less sea could not meet the necessary requirements. Who, then, has put it here?

Third: Animal wisdom speaks irresistibly of a good Creator who infused instinct into otherwise helpless little creatures. The young salmon spends years at sea, then comes back to his own river; and travels up the very side of the river into which flows The tributary where he was born. What brings him back so precisely? If you transfer him to another tributary he will know at once that he is off his course and he

will fight his way down and back to the main stream and then turn up against the current to finish his destiny more accurately. Even more difficult to solve is the mystery of eels. These amazing creatures migrate at maturity from all ponds and rivers everywhere - those from Europe across thousands of miles of oceans - all bound for the same abysmal depths near Bermuda. There they breed and die. The little ones, with no apparent means of knowing anything except that they are in a wilderness of water nevertheless find their way back not only to the very shore from which their parent came but thence to the rivers, lakes or little ponds - so that each body of water is always populated with eels. No American eel has ever been caught in Europe, no European eel in American waters. Nature has even delayed the maturity of the European eel by a year or more to make up for its longer journey. Where does the directing impulse originate? A wasp will overpower a grasshopper, dig a hole in the earth, sting the grasshopper in exactly the right place so that he does not die but becomes unconscious and lives on as a form of preserved meat. Then the wasp will lay her eggs handily so that her children when they hatch can nibble without killing the insect on which they feed, to them dead meat would be fatal. The mother then flies away and dies; she never sees her young. Surely the wasp must have done all this right the first time and every time, or else there would be no wasp. Such mysterious techniques cannot be explained by adaptation; they were bestowed.

Fourth: Man has something more than animal instinct - the power of reason. No other animal has ever left a record of its ability to count ten or even to understand the meaning of ten. Where instinct is like a single note of a flute, beautiful but limited, the human brain contains all the notes of all the instruments in the orchestra. No need to belabour this fourth point; thanks to the human reason we can contemplate the possibility that we are what we are only because we have received a spark of Universal Intelligence.

Fifth: Provision for all living is revealed in phenomena which we know today but which Darwin did not know - such as the wonders of genes. So unspeakably tiny are these genes that, if all of them responsible for all living people in the world could be put in one place, there would be less than a thimbleful. Yet these ultra-microscopic genes and their companions, the chromosomes, inhabit every living cell and are the absolute keys to all human, animal and

vegetable characteristics. A thimble is a small place in which to put all the individual characteristics of two thousand million human beings. However; the facts are beyond question. Well then, how do genes lock up all the normal heredity of a multitude of ancestors and preserve the psychology of each in such an infinitely small space? Here evolution really begins - at the cell, the entity which holds and carries genes. How a few million atoms, locked up as an ultra-microscopic gene, can absolutely rule all on earth is an example of profound cunning and provision that could emanate only from a Creative Intelligence - no other hypothesis will serve.

Sixth: By the economy of nature, we are forced to realize that only infinite wisdom could have foreseen and prepared with such astute husbandry. Many years ago a species of cactus was planted in Australia as a protective fence. Having no insect enemies in Australia the cactus soon began a prodigious growth; the alarming abundance persisted until the plants covered an area as long and wide as England, crowding inhabitants out of the towns and villages, and destroying their farms. Seeking a defence, the entomologists scoured the world; finally they turned up an insect which exclusively feeds on cactus, and would eat nothing else. It would breed freely too; and it had no enemies in Australia. So an animal soon conquered vegetable and today the cactus pest has retreated, and with it all but a small protective residue of the insects, enough to hold the cactus in check for ever. Such checks and balances have been universally provided. Why have not fast-breeding insects dominated the earth? Because they have no lungs such as man possesses; they breathe through tubes. But when insects grow large, their tubes do not grow in ratio to the increasing size of the body. Hence there has never been an insect of great size; this limitation on growth has held them all in check. If this physical check had not been provided, man could not exist. Imagine meeting a hornet as big as a lion!

Seventh: The fact that man can conceive the idea of God is in itself a unique proof. The conception of god rises from a divine faculty of man, unshared with the rest of our world - the faculty we call imagination. By its power, man and man alone can find the evidence of things unseen. The vista that power opens up is unbounded; indeed, as man is perfected, imagination becomes a spiritual reality.

# Ten Easy Phrases to Gain Jannah

I By: Abu Sabaaya I

Ten different phrases that are short, easy, and light, but will give you what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and what no mind has imagined.

1 - "Whoever says: 'Glorified is Allah, the Most Great, and praised is He' [Subhan Allah al-'Adhim wa bi-Hamdih] will have a date palm planted for him in Paradise." ['Sahih al-Jami' #5531]

2 - "Whoever is stricken with sadness, grief, sickness or hardship and says: 'Allah is my Lord, without any partners' [Allahu Rabbi, la sharika lah], then it will be removed from him." ['Sahih al-Jami' #6040]

3 - "Whoever ate something, then said: 'Praise be to Allah who has fed me this food and provided it for me, without any strength or power on my part' [al-Hamdu lillah aladhi at'amani hadha wa Razaqnihi bi ghayr hawlin minni wa la quwwa] is forgiven his past and future sins. And whoever wears a garment and says: 'Praise be to Allah who has clothed me with this garment and provided it for me without any strength or power on my part' [al-Hamdu lillah aladhi kasani hadha at-thawb wa Razaqnihi bi ghayr hawlin minni wa la quwwa] is forgiven his past and future sins." ['Sahih al-Jami' #6086]

4 - "Whoever enters the marketplace and says: 'There is none worthy of worship except Allah who has no partners, for Him is the Dominion, and for Him is all Praise, He brings life and He causes death, and He is Alive and does not die, in His Hand is all good, and He is able to do all things,' [La ilaha illa Allah, Wahdahu la sharika lahu, la hul-Mulk, wa la hul-Hamd, yuhyiyy wa yumit, wa Huwa Hayyun la yamut, bi Yadihil-Khayr wa Huwa 'ala kulli shay'in Qadir] then Allah will write one million good deeds for him, and will wipe away one million of his bad deeds, and will raise him one million levels and will build a home for him in Paradise." ['Sahih al-Jami' #6231]

5 - "Whoever controls his anger when he is able to act upon it, then Allah will call him to come in front of all of the Creation so that he would let him choose from the Hur al-'Ayn and marry from them whomever he pleases." ['Sahih al-Jami' #6518]

6 - "Whoever asks Allah for Paradise three times: [Allahumma inni as'aluk al-Jannah], then Paradise will say: "O Allah! Enter him into Paradise!" And whoever seeks protection with Allah from the Fire three times [Allahumma najjini min an-Nar], the Fire will say: "O Allah! Protect him from the Fire!" [Reported by at-Tirmidhi, and it is authentic]

7 - "Whoever seeks forgiveness for the believing men and the believing women, Allah writes for him - for every believing man and woman - a good deed." [Reported by at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, and Ahmad, and it is authentic]

8 - 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud said: "Whoever reads 'al-Mulk' (chapter 67 of the Qur'an) every night, Allah will protect him from the torment of the grave. At the time of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), we used to call it al-mani'ah (that which protects). In the Book of Allah, it is a chapter which - whoever recites it every night - has done very well." ['Sahih at-Targhib wat-Tarhib' #1475]

9 - "Whoever asks Allah sincerely for martyrdom: [Allahumma inni as'aluk ash-shahadah], Allah will cause him to reach the status of the martyrs even if he dies in his bed." ['Sahih al-Bukhari' #1909]

10 - "No one witnesses that there is none worthy of worship but Allah and that I am Allah's Messenger - truthfully, from his heart - except that Allah makes the Fire of Hell forbidden to touch him." [Reported by Muslim, Ahmad, and al-Bayhaqi]

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