

# A New Challenge?

By Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

## The Religion of Irreligiousness

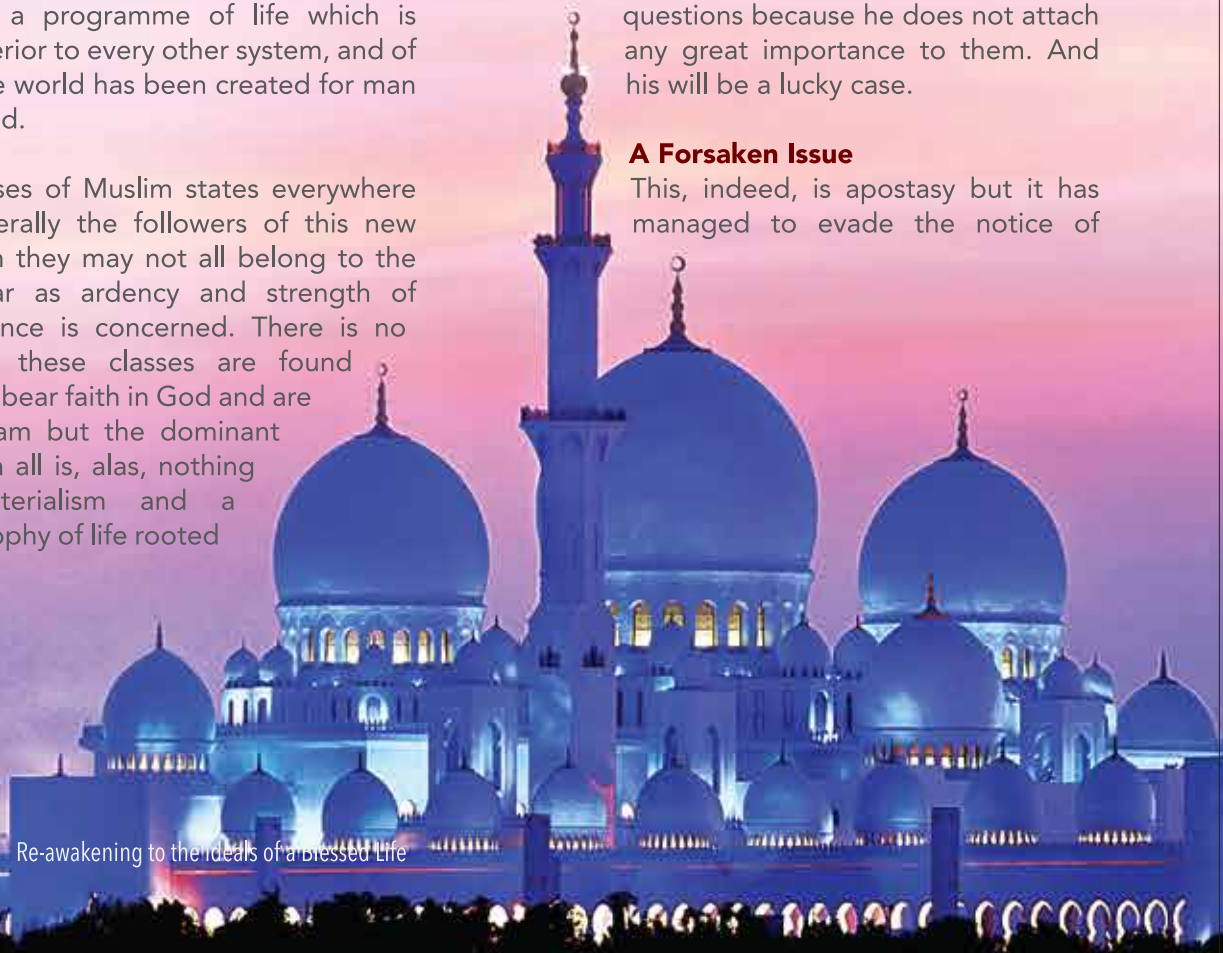
What, then, is this new faith — however shy its protagonists may feel in giving it the name of a faith? It consists of, as we have said earlier, the rejection of that All-Knowing, Well-Informed Being who is the Creator of the Worlds, the Owner of Destiny and the Architect of the life of Futurity, the Last Day, Heaven, Hell, Divine Reward and Punishment, Prophecy, Apostleship and the Holy Law, of the Truth that God has ordained for all mankind, and of obedience to the Holy Prophet. It rejects the idea that all salvation and enlightenment are dependent on that loyalty, rejects the principle that Islam is that final and eternal Message from the Divine which enfolds all that is good in this world and the Next, and embodies a programme of life which is higher and superior to every other system, and of the fact that the world has been created for man and man for God.

The ruling classes of Muslim states everywhere today are generally the followers of this new creed, although they may not all belong to the category so far as ardency and strength of spiritual allegiance is concerned. There is no doubt that in these classes are found individuals who bear faith in God and are believers in Islam but the dominant feature of them all is, alas, nothing else but materialism and a Western philosophy of life rooted in atheism.

I say again that it is this apostasy which is nowadays engulfing the Islamic World from one end to another. It has made its onslaught from house to house, family to family. Schools, colleges, universities have all been overrun by it. There is hardly a family fortunate enough not to include a follower of this creed among its members. Approach any Muslim family, talk to its members in confidence, question, scratch them under the surface and you are sure to find someone who does not believe in God or the Hereafter or in the Apostleship of the Prophet or in the Qur'an as a Divine, eternal Message, and a complete code of life. Or, he will just say that he has given no thought to these questions because he does not attach any great importance to them. And his will be a lucky case.

## A Forsaken Issue

This, indeed, is apostasy but it has managed to evade the notice of



The ruling classes of Muslim states everywhere today are generally the followers of this new creed, although they may not all belong to the category so far as ardency and strength of spiritual allegiance is concerned. There is no doubt that in these classes are found individuals who bear faith in God and are believers in Islam but the dominant feature of them all is, alas, nothing else but materialism and a Western philosophy of life rooted in atheism.

Muslims; the reason being that its victims do not go to the church or the synagogue, nor do they proclaim their conversion. Society, consequently, remains blissfully blind to it. It does not take exception to apostates. It neither criticises them nor punishes them nor does it enforce other social sanctions. Apostates retain their place and rights in society and even get a chance to dominate it.

It is here that the most vital issue confronting the Muslim World lies. It is an issue that affects the entire Islamic nation (*millat*). A fast spreading apostatic wave is sweeping over Muslim society and yet no one cares. Even the *Ulama* and religious leaders feel no anxiety about it. In the past, when a critical question faced theologians they used to cry out in desperation: "An issue and no Abul Hasan! (That is, an issue of vital importance to the *millat* has cropped up and there is no one with the wisdom of Hazrat Ali to solve it)." Now I say: "An issue and no Abu Bakr! (Apostasy is consuming the Muslim *millat* like wild fire and there is no one with the faith and fortitude of Hazrat Abu Bakr to put it down)."

But remember that war is no solution to the problem, nor is it wise to inflame public opinion over it. The problem cannot be solved by anger or by the use of force. Islam is not acquainted with the Holy Inquisition. It also

does not allow for vindictiveness and violence. Instead, the matter calls for patience, perseverance, sagacity and resolution. We will need immense study, thought and wisdom to deal with it successfully.

### Why Irreligiousness Succeeds

But how did this new faith infiltrate the Islamic World? How did it come to acquire the strength to engulf Muslims within their own homes; what can explain the mighty hold it enjoys over the hearts and minds of men? All these questions require careful examination.

In the nineteenth century, Islam had begun to show signs of fatigue and decay. In matters of faith, religious endeavour, knowledge and learning it had indeed reached a nadir... Islam, in fact, knows no old age and no decline. Like the sun, it is ever young, ever new. It was the Muslims, themselves, who had fallen prey to senility and degeneration. They had become narrow in their outlook, their thinking had become stereotyped—it had lost originality—their minds had grown fossilised, they had lost enthusiasm for religion, and, exceptions apart, the ability to present it in an effective manner.

In addition to this, no attempt was made to establish contact with the young educated classes and to influence their minds although the future belonged to them. It occurred to no one to impress upon them the basic truths that Islam was an eternal, evergreen faith, the faith of humanity, that the Qur'an was a miracle of a book, permanent, unchanging, deathless, whose wonders knew no limit and whose treasures were

boundless, that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was the Prophet for all times and the leader of all men, that the Islamic *Shariah* was a marvel of legislation, endowed with the ability to march hand in hand with life and answer all the demands it may make upon jurisprudence. Faith, morality and spiritual values are the only foundations on which a civilised, enlightened society can be built. Modern civilisation, however, has only the means and the channels. The ends and the real springheads are contained in the teachings of the Prophets. And a healthy and balanced system of civilization can come into being only when there is a harmony between ends and means.

This was the situation when the West made its assault on the Islamic World. An assault which contained its whole armoury of thoughts and ideas, designed and hammered into shape in the minds of the foremost thinkers and philosophers of the time and garbed in such philosophical phraseology that they gave the impression of being the very essence of human wisdom and learning, although quite a good deal was purely empirical and had no basis in fact. Western thinkers took a lot for granted and drew conclusions that were in a measure just hypothetical. The systems of thought they had built up were an amalgamation of fact and fiction, of knowledge and ignorance, and of firm reality and poetic imagination — yes, poetry, for you must not imagine that poetry is confined only to verse and rhyme; it is practised also in the realms of philosophy and the social sciences.

These ideologies came under the shadow of political conquest by the West, and the people of the East bowed down to them both emotionally and intellectually. Eastern intellectuals welcomed them with open arms. Some of them, of course, accepted them intelligently and consciously, but their number was few. With the majority, it was a case of unthinking acceptance, dazzled as they were by the material superiority of alien rulers. They saw and they surrendered. Their minds were hypnotised and belief in Western ideas became synonymous with progress and enlightenment and the most important criterion of learning and wisdom.

Thus it was that this new apostasy spread its wings over the Muslim East without any hitch or opposition. Neither the father objected to the

downfall of the son nor the teacher to that of the student. Religious leaders also felt no qualms about it. It was a silent revolution. The apostates did not make their way to any Church or Temple; they did not prostrate themselves before any idol nor made any sacrificial offerings at any polytheistic altar—signs, which, in the past, indicated spiritual metamorphosis.

The apostates of old used to walk openly out of Muslim society and associated themselves freely with the society of those whose Religion they had accepted. They used to declare boldly their change of Faith and submit cheerfully to what they had to bear as a result. They did not insist upon clinging to the benefits accruing from membership of the society they had in fact forsaken. But present-day apostates who turn their backs on Islam do not at the same time also walk out of Islamic society in spite of the fact that of all societies it is only an Islamic society which is based entirely on spiritual beliefs since it cannot come into being without the presence of a particular set of religious doctrines. These modern apostates continue to avail themselves of all the possible advantages of membership of the Islamic society. This is a unique situation for Islam.

As they have turned and twisted moral and spiritual values, these ideologies have also sown the seeds of sentiment and feeling of Paganism in the Muslim World against which Islam has declared an open war. For instance, take pagan factionalism which is founded on race, country and nation. It is currently being venerated with fanatical enthusiasm and reverence.

The human family is cut into pieces in its name. It has been raised to the status of a religion and given complete control over people's thoughts and emotions. It is indeed the most powerful rival to Religion judged by the extensiveness and intensity of its influence. It gains ascendancy over one's entire existence. When it sweeps over a society it pushes the work of the Prophets into oblivion and reduces Religion into a soulless programme of rituals and ceremonies; the organic unity of mankind about which God had declared, '*Lo! This your religion, is one religion, and I am your Lord, so worship Me,*' is destroyed and the human race is divided into a number of warring camps.

*(To be continued, insha'Allah)*





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# The Covenant of Alast

We are in this courtroom world, presided over by the Judge who issues decrees, for the sake of the litigation between Am I not? and Yea.

For we said Yea, and in our trial our actions and words are testimony and evidence.

Why do we keep silence in the court of the Judge? Did we not come in the first place to give witness?

Whether in a hundred years, or in a moment, discharge this Trust and be delivered.

*From the 'Mathnavi' of Maulana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ.*

# Prayer

By Dr Hafsa Siddiqui

Hands spread out  
In front of her visage  
She calls out to the Lord,  
The Most Merciful of all.  
She hears a cry  
Escape her lips  
As the tears stream down  
Bit by bit...  
Shoulders slumped  
Face soaked  
With salty pearls,  
A realization  
Suddenly unearths.  
The lips curve into a smile  
For she remembers  
Surah Najm  
"And it is He who makes you laugh,  
And He who makes you cry.  
And that He will give death, and  
He who gives life."  
Consoled and calm  
She forgets her strife.  
With renewed vigor  
Her eyes sparkle and shine.  
For the believer,  
Everything is a sign.





## Miswak—The Miraculous Twig

By Dr. Hafsa Siddiqui

Waking up to a video on the social media early one morning, I was pleasantly surprised and amused. The reason: the tooth-brush tree twig (*Siwak/Miswak*) has finally been “discovered” by the West! The video advertisement showed different individuals happily using the age-old Sunnah of the Prophets, on the street, commuting to and fro to work and so forth.

This left me wondering if we really need a validation from the west for adopting and adhering to Sunnah. Pertaining to the dentistry domain, my main field, the discovery compelled me to uncover more.

Derived from an Arabic word, ‘miswak’ is basically a chewing stick obtained from the root, stem, twigs or bark of a tree, specifically used to clean the mouth cavity. Ideally, its length is preferred to be of a hand-span and the width approximately equal to that of an index finger for ease of usage. For effective cleaning, the bark is first removed by chewing and the fibres prepared into a frayed-out brush.

Miswak or siwak is obtained from a number of bitter tasting trees like the “mustard tree” or *Peelu* in Urdu (*Salvadorapersica*), the olive tree (*Olea europaea*), and the *Neem* tree (*Azadirachta indica*). The *Peelu* miswak is preferred according to the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, though the olive miswak is a close runner. Now-a-days, flavoured miswak is also available to suit the varying palate.

The olive miswak has finer fibres and is gentler on the gums and has a more bitter taste than its *Peelu* counterpart. *Neem* miswak is the bitterest of the trio and albeit providing a cleaner experience than the toothpaste and tooth brush combination, tends to stain the teeth to a greener tinge. Though, this may be because of the freshness of the *Neem* twig used.

Let us delve deeper into the medical and dental benefits that have so far been attributed to this wondrous twig.

Since there is more scientific literature attributed to the *Peelu* (*Salvadorapersica*) miswak, therefore the article will aim to encompass the benefits related to this species. It must be noted that more scientific

research is needed on this beautiful Sunnah.

Miswak has multiple beneficial influences on oral health ranging from antimicrobial (that is it kills the harmful microbes and bacteria), anticariogenic effects (it prevents the tooth decay), it strengthens the gingiva (the gums) and the periodontal tissues (the tissues surrounding the teeth).

Islamic literature abounds with the advantages of miswak ranging from improving memory, aiding digestion, combating bad breath (halitosis), teeth and gum related problems, to improving eye sight etc.

Dentists supporting miswak as an effective cleaning agent do advise complementing its usage with that of a toothbrush. Miswak users have demonstrated plaque or debris accumulation on their teeth and receded gum lines. This has been countered with the claim that it might be due to faulty technique or individual error in using miswak.

In recent times, research is being conducted on miswak and it has shown efficacy in combating cancerous cells in initial lab studies conducted on mice. Further research is still required till a concrete claim can be laid scientifically that it is effective in human cancer treatment.

Mouthwashes prepared from miswak are in their clinical trials and have yet to hit the market shelves. Such herbal mouthwashes have shown efficacy in reducing plaque occurrence in initial studies.

The ‘miraculous miswak’ with its numerous dental and medical benefits for health, is cost effective and hygienic.

*(Acknowledgment:* The writer wishes to acknowledge Dr. Fayez Hussain Niazi for his mentoring and support. *References:* [http://www.theneempeople.com/2011/01/miswak-sticks/Niazi, F., Naseem, M., Khurshid, Z., Zafar, M. S., & Almas, K. \(2016\). Role of Salvadorapersica chewing stick \(miswak\): A natural toothbrush for holistic oral health. European Journal of Dentistry, 10\(2\), 301–308. http://doi.org/10.4103/1305-7456.178297](http://www.theneempeople.com/2011/01/miswak-sticks/Niazi, F., Naseem, M., Khurshid, Z., Zafar, M. S., & Almas, K. (2016). Role of Salvadorapersica chewing stick (miswak): A natural toothbrush for holistic oral health. European Journal of Dentistry, 10(2), 301–308. http://doi.org/10.4103/1305-7456.178297)

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# The *Storm* and the Man who Worshiped an *Idol*

Contributed by G.M.Surriya

Sheikh Abdul bin Wahid رحمته الله, who was a well-known spiritual leader of the Chishti Order of Sufis, has narrated the following story:

Once we were sailing in a boat when a storm blew our boat to an island where we saw a man engaged in idol-worship. We said to him, 'Whom do you worship?' and he pointed towards an idol. We said, 'You have moulded your god with your own hands! Our Lord, whom we worship, is the Creator of all things. Hand-made idols are not worthy of worship.' The man asked, 'Whom do you worship?' We replied, 'We worship Allah ﷻ, the Sacred Being Whose Throne is above the heavens, Who controls the affairs of the world. Whose Majesty and Glory transcends everything.' The man said, 'How did you come to know Him?'

We said, 'Our Lord sent us His Rasool ﷺ who was noble of birth and most excellent of character. The Rasool ﷺ taught us all these things. He said, 'Where is that Rasool ﷺ now?' We said, 'After conveying the message of His Lord, his obligation was fulfilled and our Lord called him back to Him so that He might grant him good recompense and reward him for conveying His message completely and properly.' The man said, 'Did your Rasool ﷺ leave behind any signs of his apostleship for you?' We said, 'He left for us the Word of Allah, the Quran.' The man asked us to show him the Book and we placed the Quran before him. We recited a Surah from the Quran, to which he listened, with tears falling from his eyes. After we had recited up to the last verse, he



said, "It is due from us to Him who revealed this Book that we should never disobey His Commandments." After this, he accepted Islam and we taught him the fundamentals of Islam and some of the commandments of Allah ﷻ. We also taught him a few Surahs of the Quran. At nightfall, when we were preparing to go to bed, after performing *Isha Salah*, the man said, "Does your Lord also sleep?" We said, "He is the Alive, the Eternal, neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him." He then said, "How imprudent of you to sleep while Your Lord is Awake!" We were amazed at his words.

While we were going to leave the island, the man asked us to take him along, saying that he wished to learn more of the new faith. We took him on board and our boat sailed back to the city of Ibadan. On reaching there, I said to my friends, "Let us make contributions for our newly converted brother for he must be in need of money for his provisions." We collected some silver coins and presented the money to him. He asked, "What is this?" and we told him that it was something to help him in his needs. He recited, *La Ilaaha illAllah* and said,

"You have shown me a path, which you are not following yourselves. I lived in an island and worshipped an idol, instead of worshipping Allah ﷻ and still, He did not destroy me, nor let me die of hunger, though I did not know Him. How can He destroy me now, that I know Him (and worship Him!)?"

Three days later, we were told that he was on his death-bed and his last hour had drawn near. We visited him and asked him if he had any wish. He replied, "He who sent you to the island for my guidance has fulfilled all my wishes."

As we sat there, I dozed off and dreamt that I saw a green and pleasant garden, in which there stood a magnificent building with a dome. I woke up to find that his soul had departed from the body. We washed, shrouded him and laid him to rest in the grave, after offering the funeral *Salah*. That night I saw the same garden and same magnificent building with a dome, while I saw the man reciting the following:

*The angels enter unto them from every gate, saying: Peace be unto you (glad tidings of being protected against all manner of afflictions), because you persevered! Ah! Sweet will be sequel of (Heavenly) Home.*

These are the miraculous manifestations of Allah's ﷻ infinite bounty and His forgiveness! The man spent his life in worshipping an idol, but when his hour of death drew near, Allah ﷻ raised a storm to blow a boat to the island and thus, the man was granted eternal heavenly bliss through the guidance of the people on board.

*O Sovereign Lord of the Universe! No one can withhold what You give, nor can anyone give what You withhold.*

## Laziness

A seeker wrote, laziness and heedlessness persists. I humbly request for prayers (*dua*) for determination (*himmat*).

Hakim al Umma Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (Allah have mercy on him) replied,

'Supplication in this regards is not refused. However, you have to be determined to a degree yourself also. Supplication in these circumstances brings facilitation (*barakah*) only with it. Otherwise it will be similar to supplicating for a child without getting married. "

- *Tarbiyet us Salik, volume 3, page 153*



# Sunnah and Bid'ah

By Khalid Baig

*The Straight Path has been laid out. Our job is only to follow it, not to try to discover new paths.*

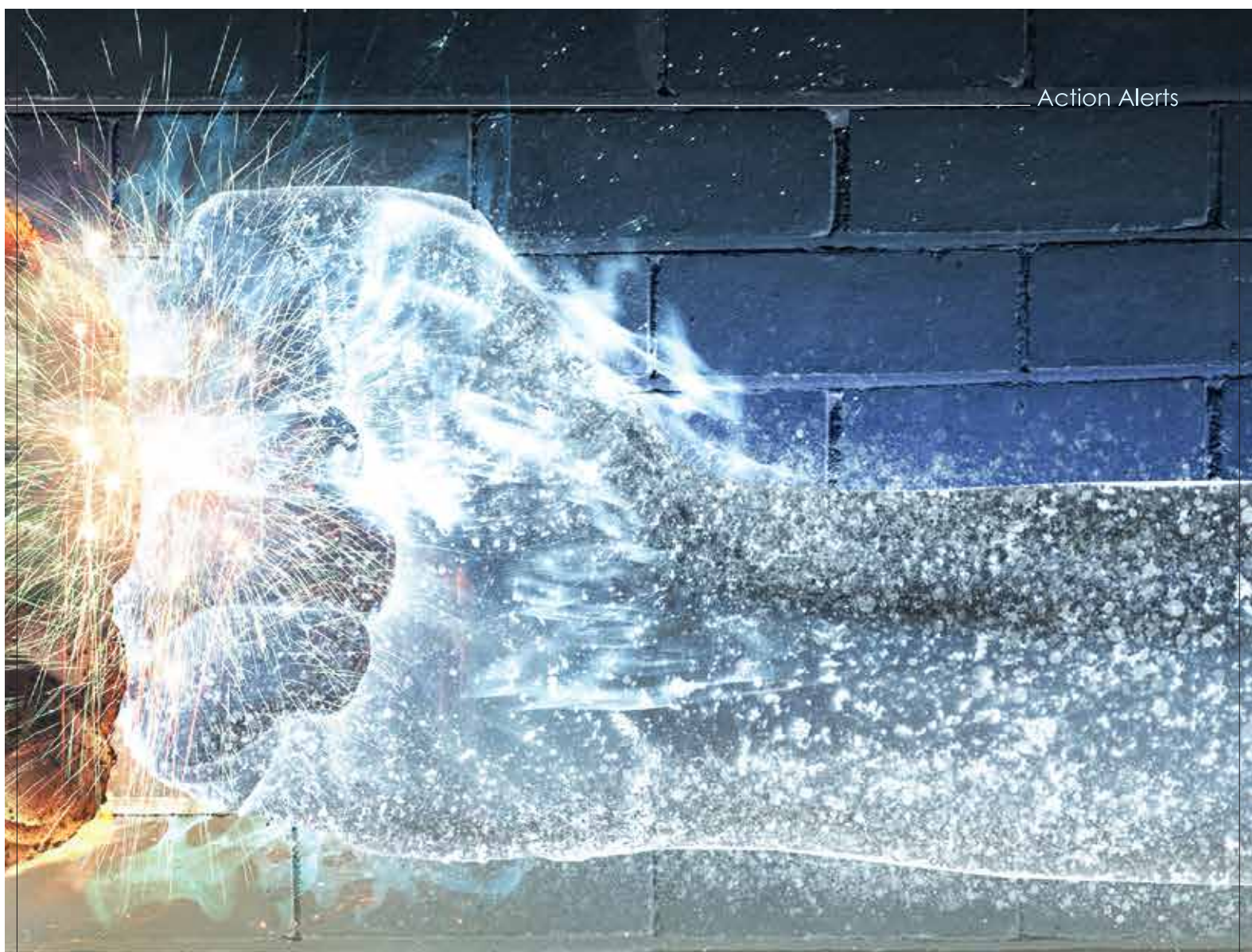
Once some Jewish scholars said to Sayyidna Umar bin Khattab, Radi-Allahu unhu, "The Qur'an contains a verse that if it had been revealed to us, we would have designated a day to celebrate its revelation." Upon enquiry they mentioned the verse: "This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." [Al-Maida 5:3] "Yes, I know, the time and place when it was revealed," he replied.

Indeed it was a historic day. It was the day of Arafat during the farewell Hajj of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. This verse announced the

completion of a historic process that had started with the coming to earth of Sayyidna Adam, alayhi salam. Allah sent His guidance with him and informed him that in the generations to come there would be additional messengers. The process continued through the 124,000 prophets who were sent to different lands at different times. It culminated with the coming of the Last Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ. He received revelations over a twenty-three year period. Then during the Farewell Hajj, on the plain of Arafat, in the presence of nearly 150,000 companions, this verse announced that it was all done!

The full significance of this message must never escape us. Islam is unlike all previous revealed





religions in one crucial respect. All of them came with expiration dates. Islam has none. The Guidance from Allah had been completed. The religion had been perfected. There would be no new message, no new Prophet, no new Shariah, and no new command until the Last Day! The Straight Path has been laid out. Our job is only to follow it, not to try to discover new paths. In Jum'ah khutbahs this Ummah has been repeating the hadith: "I warn you of the newly invented matters (in the religion), and every newly invented matter is bid'ah, and every bid'ah is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hellfire." (*an-Nasaa'ee*)

In Islamic terminology, Sunnah and Bid'ah are antonyms. Sunnah literally means path, and it is

the path shown to us by the Prophet ﷺ. This includes the Shariah teachings derived from Qur'an, Hadith, the consensus of the Companions, and the ijtehad of the qualified imams. Bid'ah means adding or changing articles of faith or religious practices. It can take many forms. One may change the occasion of a prescribed act, thereby extending it to occasions for which it was not meant. One may add restrictions on a desired act that the Shariah had not imposed. One may change the style or form of such an act. One may start doing something collectively that was to be performed individually. Or one may change the Shariah status of an act from permissible to mandatory. Of course, one may also add a ritual where none existed. These



are all forms of bid'ah. They are all forbidden.

Bid'ah is like fake currency that tries to drive out the good currency. By design it has the appearance of a virtuous religious act. But it lies outside the Shariah. So do its sources, which, in a great number of cases can be traced to non-Islamic influence from surrounding communities with which Muslim communities historically came into contact. Hence the telltale signs that set it apart from Sunnah. First, bid'ahs normally vary from region to region - and over time - revealing their local, non-Islamic source. This is unlike the genuine religious practices that maintain the same form everywhere. No matter where he comes from, a follower of, say, Hanafi Fiqh, will be offering salat in exactly the same way, right down to the minutest detail - like when to raise the index finger. In contrast, the bid'ah practices surrounding, marriage or death in the Indo-Pak subcontinent vary from those in Arabia or Africa.

Second, the bid'ah practices are largely transmitted through oral tradition. Many of these have a pseudo-legal, ritualistic framework of their own, but one would be hard pressed to find it in the standard legal texts! Rather it lives in the folklore. Example: consider the practice of shaking hands after finishing the salat. Open the chapter on salat in your fiqh book. It lists all the steps, in great detail, involved in offering salat. Does it mention the handshake as well? No. The handshake comes from folklore, not from an authentic text, a clue that it may be a bid'ah,

which it is. Similarly consider the rituals normally performed upon the death of a person. Again the fiqh books describe in great detail how the funeral and burial should be done. But do they also mention that on the third day (or the tenth or the fortieth), a gathering should be arranged where participants should recite the Qur'an for the benefit of the deceased and after which they should be served with dinner? Again the answer is no. Again the reason is that all of these common practices are not part of the Shariah. They are an addition or bid'ah.

One factor that helps the propagation of bid'ahs is the attitude that treats religion as hobby rather than as the serious business of submitting to the command of Allah ﷻ. Pure submission may be "boring." It demands sacrifice. Bid'ahs are fun. On top of that they "promise" reward in the Hereafter. This makes the bid'ah more deadly than ordinary sins. From an act we know to be a sin, we can repent. But how can one repent from a wrong that he considers to be right?

But in reality bid'ahs are a tremendous burden. Islamic teachings are simple and easy and life would be much simpler if all bid'ahs were removed from it. When a person dies, Islam teaches that others should be providing food to the bereaved family. Bid'ah requires the exact opposite, that the bereaved should feed all the visitors—a widespread practice in the Muslim communities in Asia. Other bid'ahs are also like that. A burden. And the burden in the Hereafter will be much bigger, for "every bid'ah is in the Fire."

## Who are the Dead?

Our master Prophet Essa (Jesus) son of Mariam (peace be upon them) said,

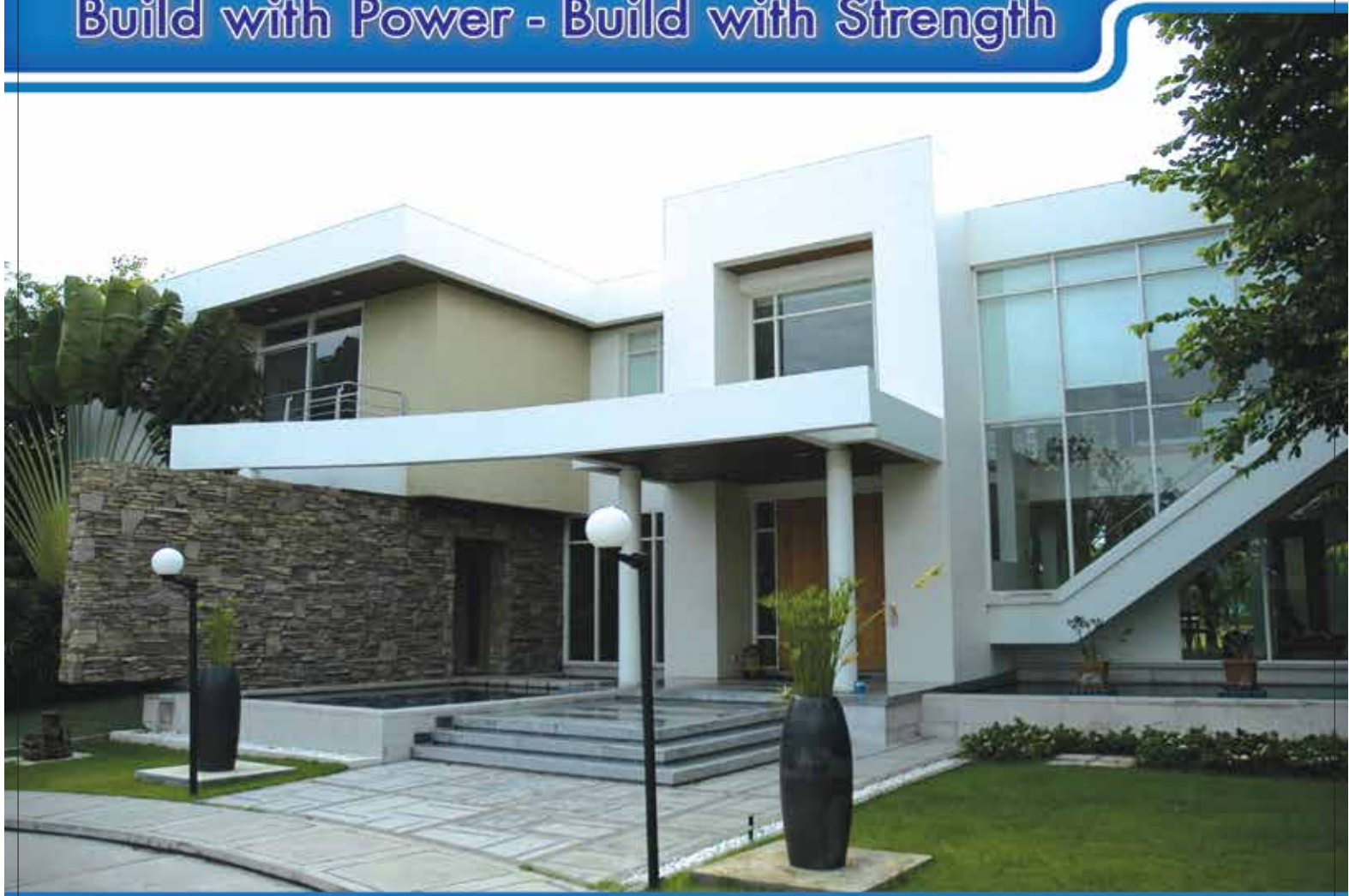
'Do not sit with the dead for your heart will die.'

Who are the dead? He was asked.

He replied, 'The avid lovers of the worldly things.'

*Kifayatuladhkiya 2513*

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# Whose *Land* is it?

*From Muhammad Asad's 'The Road to Mecca', which recounts his short exchange with Chaim Weizmann, who went onto become the first President of Israel.*

'But it is our country,' replied Dr. Weizmann, raising his eyebrows. 'We are doing no more than taking back what we have been wrongly deprived of.'

But you have been away from Palestine for nearly two thousand years! Before that you had ruled this country, and hardly ever the whole of it, for less than five hundred years. Don't you think that the Arabs could, with equal justification, demand Spain for themselves – for, after all, they held sway in Spain for nearly seven hundred years and lost it entirely only five hundred years ago?'

Dr. Weizmann became visibly impatient: 'Nonsense. The Arabs had only conquered Spain; it had never been their original homeland, and so it was only right that in the end they were driven out by the Spaniards.'

'Forgive me,' I retorted, 'but it seems to me that there is some historical oversight here. After all,

the Hebrews also came as conquerors to Palestine. Long before them were other Semitic and non-Semitic tribes settled here – the Amorites, the Edomites, the Philistines, the Moabites, the Hittites. Those tribes continued living here even in the days of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah. They continued living here after the Romans drove our ancestors away. They are living here today. The Arabs who settled in Syria and Palestine after their conquest in the seventh century were always only a small minority of the population; the rest of what we describe today as Palestinian or Syrian "Arabs" are in reality only the Arabianized, original inhabitants of the country. Some of them became Muslims in the course of centuries, others remained Christians; the Muslims naturally inter-married with their co-religionists from Arabia. But can you deny that the bulk of those people in Palestine, who speak Arabic, whether Muslims or Christians, are direct-line descendants of the original inhabitants: original in the sense of having lived in this country centuries before the Hebrews came to it?'

Dr. Weizmann smiled politely at my outburst and turned the conversation to other topics.





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An eye-opening exchange with  
**Syed Moazzam Ali Qasim,**  
an accomplished US-qualified  
**Software Engineer,**  
teaching and residing at  
*Jamia Bait-us-Salam, Karachi.*

Q. Assalam o Alaikum, kindly introduce yourself and tell us how you decided to teach and stay here in the Madrassa after relocating from the US?

A. I belong to the Kaghan Valley. My father, Syed Qasim Shah, has been a Federal Minister for almost twenty years. I had my early education from Army Burn Hall College in Abbottabad and after I did my FSc. (Second Year), in the fall of 1993, I went to the United States where I was in upstate New York in the beginning and transferred later on to Los Angeles, California, staying there for almost six years, studying Computer Sciences (Software Engineering).

That is where Allah ﷻ gave me the opportunity to go, for the first time, in the His path for three days with the *Tableeghi Jamaat* and that changed my life. From then on I started inclining more towards the deen of Allah ﷻ and I came from Los Angeles to Raiwind, Pakistan for four months. My father then persuaded me to go back to the US for another year where I took some classes in the University. This was a turning point for me in terms of education.

The classes that I took in the university were for the purpose of learning more about Islam, because for any regular person, the highest institute of learning is a university – that's where you have all the researches etc. So I took a course called *Comparison between Religions* (in California State University, at North Ridge in Los Angeles). The person teaching us was a Jew. He taught us that the first of the religion that came from the heaven was Judaism on Moses ﷺ, then Christianity on Jesus ﷺ and then Islam on Muhammad ﷺ. He was trying to portray that the best of the deen among all the deens from the heaven is Judaism and then it's Christianity and then it's Islam. So I came to understand that though a university is an institute of higher learning, but the real knowledge of Islam is not to be found here. At the same time I was taking another class, which was called *The Beginning of Islam*, being taught by a Christian. And his way of teaching also wasn't satisfactory. So that was the first time I realized that if I want to learn deen, the best institution to do that is not a university; I have to go to a proper institution with people who really know about our religion. And *Alhamdulillah suma Alhamdulillah* Allah ﷻ has blessed Pakistan with the best of *ulema* and the best of *madaris*. I had seen the *madrassa* in Raiwind, so I came back and joined it.

Actually, there is a story related to my relocation as well.

There was a person who died when I was in Los Angeles and only fifteen to seventeen people attended his funeral and most of them probably didn't know how to offer the prayer of *Jananza*. When I went to the graveyard, a big beautiful portion was reserved for the Christians. There was another portion smaller than it, apportioned for the Jews and then there was a very small section, within a boundary wall, for Muslims. And the authorities didn't even let you touch the body of the deceased. They dug a grave with a machine and the machine picked up the body and placed it in the grave. We were told that these are the regulations of the country (USA). That's when I asked Allah ﷻ to please give me one chance and not let me die here! I wanted to get away from it.

Luckily, in that funeral I spotted two persons who had beards *mashAllah* and seemed like practicing Muslims. I probed them and found out that they belonged to Bannu and Lakki Marwat and had come with a *Jamaat* from Pakistan, and they had been in the US since a year. I went off with them for three days and ended spending two and half months with them! We used to travel by foot and that's how we undertook the journey from Los Angeles to San Francisco, a distance of 600 miles! I was a translator for the *Jamaat*.

So that's how Allah ﷻ gave me a chance.... I didn't go back to Los Angeles from there, my brother brought my stuff, and I flew with that same *Jamaat* from San Francisco to New York and there on to Lahore. And that was it!

That was in 1999. Then I started my early education in *deen* in Raiwind.

*Q. You did your Dars-e-Nizami from Raiwind?*

*A. Yes, most of it from there.*

*Q. Have you totally given up your original field of Software Engineering?*

*A. No, I have not given it up. I am using it now. But during the time I was studying the kutab (books), Ahadith, or Fiqh or Tafseer-ul-Qur'an, at that time I didn't really need it, so I put it on a side and I also put my English on a side; because I had to learn Arabic and start from scratch. Alhamdulillah Allah ﷻ helped me through that and the education that you already have helps*

*you, but I think not much. You have to learn Arabic, that's a totally different language, and whatever you've learnt in English may not help you much in learning Arabic.*

*Q. You have a degree of worldly value, which can give you good financial returns, so what made you take up teaching as a profession, and come out of the main city to live here, in the madrassa? You could've commuted to this place instead of taking up residence here.*

*A. To answer this I have to tell you a little bit more about my background.*

I did most of my *deeni* education from the Raiwind madrassa, but also from Binori Town, Jamia Binoria; I did a year here and a year there and then eventually, after the big earthquake in our area in 2005, I graduated from Mansehra, because we were serving over there as well *Alhamdulillah*. Then I went out in the path of Allah ﷻ for a year and taught in a Madrassa in Mansehra for two years; then I went for a year to Qatar and Mauritania. There I was the Arabic Translator for my *Jamaat*. And then when I came back, I taught in a Madrassa in Abbottabad for two years. After that I went with a *Jamaat* for three months to Jordan, a *mehram masturat jammaat*, so I took my wife along, and there were other men and women as well *MashAllah*; we went from Raiwind.

When I came back from Jordan I was a little worried about my children's education as I wanted them to acquire skills and worldly knowledge as well but I didn't like the prevalent atmosphere. I did not send them to any regular school or college and I never meant to, because I had lived my life through that environment; I had been through it myself and I didn't wish them to go through it. So I was waiting and hoping that Allah ﷻ will show me a way out. And He ﷻ did that in the form of Jamia Bait us Salaam!

I went to the Raiwind madrassa and handed over my case to them by telling that I am worried about my kids and I want them to be subservient to Allah ﷻ and fulfill all the demands and requirements of the *Deen* of Allah ﷻ. I told them that there is a Madrassa in Karachi where there is an environment of *deen* and *tabligh*



*Alhamdulillah* and where English and other languages and skills are taught as well; so I was given permission by my elders of Raiwind and I came here with their suggestion and advice.

When I came here, *Alhamdulillah suma Alhamdulillah* I found it to be the best place on the planet; exactly what I was looking for! I have the perfect environment of deen; one can learn and read and write Urdu, English, whatever you want, but everything is within the limits of the deen and according to the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ.

*Q. We were just having a discussion with Maulana Abdus Sattar Sb and he was eager that more people like you, who are qualified and have a background of good worldly education, should join here so that in the future, we have a well-rounded quality lot coming out of the madrassa, people who can take the responsibility of the Ummah and show us all the right direction.*

*You mentioned that your father was a politician, which implies that you generally come from an influential background. In addition, you have a Software Engineering degree. It is very difficult to come out of such an environment and take up residence here. What was your source of strength in taking this decision?*

A. My source of strength is a light from Allah ﷻ, it is a nur, and I am very thankful to Allah ﷻ for it. It is just like swimming against the tide but it is purely from Allah ﷻ; this is what tawwakul really is. It grows from looking into the 'future' and we can look into the future only if we are 'alive'. In general, we do not consider going into the grave as our 'future'; we don't consider the life after death as our future. In fact, that is the real future for every one of us. So my decisions are based on keeping that reality in mind; because the worldly life is going to end. It's not going to last. It will end for you, it will end for me, it will end for *Ustadh Sahib*, it will end for everybody around us. We need to keep our eyes on the hereafter and prefer it over our worldly lives. For that future, Allah ﷻ, the Prophet ﷺ have given us a path, laid down a way for us, telling us that if you want to prosper in the everlasting life, this is the path you have to choose.

You talked about my influential background; I

have seen all of it, the health, the wealth, the amenities etc. Even yesterday, the Prime Minister of Pakistan was with my father in my village, but what does that really mean? Death will still come to my father, to the Prime Minister, to everybody. So keeping that in view, we need to categorize...

What categories have been made by Allah ﷻ and the Prophet ﷺ for our life here? It is said that the best amongst the Ummah are the ulema. In the Holy Quran, it is said that the people who are really afraid of Allah ﷻ and really know Him, are the ulema. And the Prophet ﷺ has said that the ulema are the heirs of the Prophets ﷺ; so the best of the people liked by Allah ﷻ and the Prophet ﷺ are the ulema; those who have knowledge of deen and who practice it.

Now coming to the second part of your question: why teaching? I don't consider teaching as a profession. I consider it as my duty, as something ongoing. Because, if tomorrow, there is another duty that comes up for me to perform as a Muslim, I'll go there; this is what we refer to as *tashkeel*; what our elders tell us to do at a particular time, we will do that.

I have heard from my elders that it is best to keep going on with your knowledge; keep on reading, studying and teaching other people and your knowledge will increase alongside. We need to look after the Ummah as well. We need such people who have knowledge in *deen* and *duniya* and who can go around the world to preach it.

*Q. The attachment with the jammah was also a source of the strength for you?*

A. True. That is a fundamental. But there are also people who come and spend four months but they are not able to practice. That's why I said it is purely from Allah ﷻ. You keep asking Allah ﷻ for it.

The other day *Ustadh ji* (Maulana Abdus Sattar Sb.) called all the teachers of the Jamia and said if you have a good connection with Allah ﷻ, everything will work out fine and if that connection isn't good enough, then you will start having problems.

*Q. When you initially came towards deen, was there resistance from your near ones?*

A. Yes, there was strong resistance, there still is. But

this is what Allah ﷻ wants us to do, looking up to His Help; if it's for Allah ﷻ, and there is resistance from parents or other family members, still, you have to be very kind to them. That's very important. But you have to have elders to take advice from; mukhlis (sincere) elders. *Alhamdulillah* I got that from Raiwind, and they helped me throughout. I am forty four now. It has been almost twenty years!

*Q. What about your children and spouse? How did they take your decision of living here at the Jamia?*

A. They are very happy. My children are here with me, studying here. I have three sons, one is in *Hifz*, one is in Level 1, one is in *Tajweed*; they are all studying here. That's why I am here; this is what I was worried about, their education. And this is the best place for it.

*Q. So the kids were mentally prepared about the move? They must've been on the same mental plane as yours?*

A. My children are happier here than I am *mashAllah!* I didn't face that challenge of resistance from them because when they were being brought up, they were told about the 'reality' of life. They were not exposed to television dramas telling them fake things. They were not taken into virtual reality.

*Q. Yes, true. But if a person has gone through a transformation, but his immediate family has not...*

A. Yes, that's an important question and our elders have guided us in the matter. If your wife or mother or your sister do not go on the path of Allah ﷻ and even if you go out for a year in countries all around the world, still, when you come back, all the deen, all the *tabligh* that you have done will not enter even the doorstep of your house. Why, because you have not gotten them prepared. We need to have a *halaqa* of *taleem* in our homes. That's important. We want to bring a society like that of the *Sahaba* (Companions) ﷺ to life. We want all the Muslim brothers and elders to act like the *Sahaba-e-Karaam* ﷺ. We want all the Muslim women to be like the *Sahabiyyat* ﷺ. And we want all the Muslim children to be like the children of the *Sahaba* ﷺ. These are the only three categories possible in this Ummah: men, women

and children. Once we go out in the path of Allah ﷻ we have to think that it's not only I who wishes to enter *Jannah* but I have a responsibility and first of all I am responsible for my family. For that we need to have a *halaqa* of *taleem* and for that we need to take our spouse or mother or sister to *jamaats of masturat* in our localities because this interaction will help them. When they hear the stories of the *Sahabiyyat* ﷺ, it will get them going.

*Q. What is your advice for those potential teachers who may have ambitions like you but face difficulties or resistance?*

A. The first thing is that we need to have the love of Allah ﷻ in our hearts. We must ask and beg Him. We must cry in front of Him to accept us for His deen, the acceptance like that of the *Sahaba* ﷺ. What we call *qabulliat*.

Secondly, we should not look for money or worldly wealth, thinking: 'if I have this, if I have that' and so on. No, once we have Allah ﷻ, He has all the wealth. Allah ﷻ has everything. So we want Allah ﷻ. Our hearts should always be asking, begging, talking with Allah ﷻ.

Then we need to figure out what Allah ﷻ wants from us. Instead of what we want from the world or *dunya*, we need to know what Allah ﷻ wants from us. Instead of focusing on what everybody wants from us, we should know what *RasulAlla* ﷺ would want from us. So we should fulfill that. If we start doing that, it will give us contentment of the heart, *Alhamdulillah* and whatever we have, we will be happy with that *inshAllah*.

So, my very humble advice to all my Muslim brothers is that we should all think of the *Aakhirah* more than we think of this *dunya* and we should provide our services, our health, our wealth, whatever Allah ﷻ has given us, for the deen of Allah ﷻ, so that the deen can prevail and Muslims around the world can have a better life and the only way for that is by acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

*MashAllah! JazakAllahu Khair.*



# The Power of a Smile

By Mehwish Abdul Wahid

I go to a nearby park sometimes to enjoy the open air and to be close to nature. As I went there last week, feeling a little down, I happened to look around and found a young girl, sitting alone and sad, deep in her thoughts. The moment I caught her eyes, I could not help giving her a smile, a smile that was the warmest and the most sincere one I could muster. Though she could manage to return only a feeble one, I felt good about it and my mood also lifted. She came to me and sat by my side and we talked for some time. By the time we left, her mood was better and so was mine. This little event helped me in making an interesting discovery—the power of a smile! It was just a moment that lasted for about 5 seconds, but it told us that smiling was a powerful act. In that time, just a simple act of smiling made a dramatic difference in so many ways, and it helped in uncovering and exploring the smile's powers and benefits, which I would like to share with everyone.

Smile is that little curve of the mouth and wrinkling of the eyes that makes not only you but those around you feel good.

“Smile and the world smiles with you” is part of an old saying, and rightly so; give to the world and the world will give back to you; smile at the world and the world will smile back at you. It is a well-known fact that a smile is contagious, so

when you smile you actually generate a ripple effect. Like the ripple effect of a pebble tossed into a pond, a smile spreads far beyond the first person who receives it. We never know how many people will benefit because we smiled first. A simple smile has the power of brightening someone's day in a moment, without costing us anything. It is because of the great benefits that smiling at someone brings that it is considered a gift to the person you give it.

While a smile benefits the receiver, the giver also reaps immense rewards from their act of smiling. It can improve their mood, make them seem more trustworthy and approachable, and helps in creating a positive impression. When you are wearing a smile, others find you more attractive and positive. This is why George Eliot said, “Wear a smile and have friends; wear a scowl and have wrinkles”.

Apart from this, smiling helps in calming any fears, insecurity, or anxiety that you may be experiencing and gives you more confidence. Moreover, it makes you feel good and happy and gives one a sense of wellbeing. Smiling is also regarded as a key ingredient for the establishment of genuine and healthy relationships. It makes others feel welcome, special, and appreciated, which means that your smile can help in developing positive and healthy

relationships with people around you. All these have been proven from research and experience.

#### **What research tells us about a smile's powers and its benefits**

There is a plethora of research that tells us of the amazing benefits that smiling brings to one's health and well-being. Science tells us that when we smile the muscles in our face contract and a positive feedback loop begins, stimulating the reward mechanisms, and reinforcing the feeling of happiness. The habitual act of smiling helps the mind in moving towards a more positive direction and creates happiness loops that encourage patterns of positive-thinking. From research, it has also been found out that smiling lowers the heart rate, reduces blood pressure temporarily, boosts the immune system, and increases productivity. It was also found that smiling reduces stress

felt by mind and body by releasing endorphins that naturally diminish stress hormones, thereby lifting our mood positively. This is also the reason why smiling makes us feel better. This is why we often feel happier around children, since they smile more and we also tend to smile more in their presence.

Smiling is also associated with enhancing creativity since those who are happier have a more comprehensive approach to problems and can think of more solutions than their negative-minded counterparts. Researchers also link smiling with the release of dopamine, which is a neurotransmitter involved in learning and decision-making and having various functions that work in our brain to help us in leading a healthy lifestyle.

#### **What our Religion tells us about smiling**

While research and science tell us about the commendable benefits that smiling brings, our religion Islam is also all in favor of smiling. Islam is a complete code of life and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ



is the best example we have. His Sunnah provides us with the best guidance for leading our lives. When we look at the life of the best man on this planet ﷺ we find out that he was kind and polite with everyone and always greeted people around him with a smile on his face. Abdullah ibn Haarith رضي الله عنه said, "I have never seen anyone who smiled more than Allah's Messenger" (Tirmidhi). Another companion of the Prophet ﷺ Jarir رضي الله عنه relates that: "Since I embraced Islam Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) never refused to see me and he did not see me but with a smile on his face." (Sahih Muslim).

So we know that our Prophet ﷺ had a pleasant smiling face and he left us an example to follow when we greet and meet someone. He also encouraged his followers to smile and said, "Smiling in the face of your brother is charity (Sadaqa)" (Tirmidhi). This means that when we smile at our fellow Muslims, we are actually doing something that is the Sunnah of our Prophet ﷺ, something that Allah ﷻ likes and that pleases Him ﷻ. However, it should be kept in consideration that it should be a genuine smile, which is not hurtful or condescending. Also, Islam is the middle way and a religion that is known for its moderation; thus laughing excessively is not appreciated and cracking jokes that hurt someone's feelings are not allowed.

### A guide to develop the habit of smiling

Given the benefits of smiling and the importance laid in our religion on this act, here are some ways you can develop this beautiful and beneficial habit and train yourself to smile more often.

1. Practice smiling in front of the mirror or give yourself a genuine smile in the mirror early in the morning. This is something that I have been doing since a long time, and trust me, you will see a dramatic difference in your

mood when you do it.

2. Smile in situations that you do not normally smile in, such as smiling at your maid/peon or your co-workers etc. This way you develop the habit of smiling more often.
3. Imagine a situation of happiness or recall an event that brought you deep satisfaction and joy whenever you feel down, reflect on those happy memories, count your blessings, and smile.
4. Be close to nature and observe nature carefully, especially birds. You can keep a bird bath and a bird feeder in your balcony or garden and look at them for a while. My personal experience says that you'll find it naturally bring a smile to your face.
5. Do something nice for someone even if it is as small as holding a door for someone as they go through it or giving a child a candy. This will not just make you feel better about yourself but also help you smile.

### Conclusion

Whether you are angry, upset, or burdened, you now know that you are just a smile away from happiness. Gracing your face with a grin can seriously change your internal and external experience. Smiling is a star that shines to ease the darkening horizons. It is a light that helps in making wilted life feel rejuvenated. It is an all-around mood booster that is available to each one of us at no cost whatsoever. It throws in life, lifts the sagging spirits & when nothing works it acts as a crutch that aids one to pick oneself up after a fall. If you can make smiling a habit, then you can turn happiness into a habit. So keep smiling, don't let the world change your smile, instead let your smile change the world. May you discover your own smile, and then multiply it by sharing it with the world!





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# Changing The World

By Dr. Asad Zaman

For too long, we have been content to accept foreign analyses of our problems, instead of doing our own thinking. The Eurocentric worldview defines deviation from European norms as a problem, and advances towards European ideals as progress. On this view, we must liberalize, modernize, industrialize, and acquire good governance and democracy. To accomplish this, we need to promote the English language as a medium for instruction in Science and Technology, as well as modern culture. We need to educate our superstitious, ignorant and backwards people, make Pakistan safe, attractive and profitable for Western investors, etc. In short, we must do everything that competent administrators working on behalf of the British Raj would do.

Thinking of problems of Pakistan in our own terms, instead of thinking about how to get Pakistan to resemble England or USA, leads to dramatically different views about development. How can we improve the quality of lives of the

people of Pakistan, the majority of whom are poor, illiterate, and live in rural areas or urban slums? This question is not even on the agenda of planners. Widespread globally observed failures of World Bank and IMF prescribed Structural Adjustment Programs has led popular protests as well as changes in theorizing by professional economists. However, close analysis of newly developed and recommended policies reveals that the mention of poverty, jobs, environment etc. only provides a cover for public consumption. Like old wine in new bottles, strategies to be used for these noble goals continue to focus on enabling multinationals to be able to operate securely, enforce contracts, and repatriate profits.

Solutions to our problems lie in re-acquiring self-esteem and dignity shattered by colonization. The vast majority of Pakistanis are warm, hospitable, generous and charitable people of integrity and honor, trusting and trustworthy. This is a treasure beyond price in today's worlds. Our natural resources lie not in the coal mines of Thar, but in our Pakistani youth, which is capable of doing whatever we ask them to do. The challenge facing us as a society is to inspire them with worthwhile and ambitious goals and provide them with the means to facilitate the achievement of these goals.

In meeting this challenge, a formidable enemy is the dominant message being spread by Hollywood, internet and other popular media. This glamorizes individualistic lifestyles, pursuit of pleasure, and teaches contempt for traditions

and community. This is extremely attractive to our young, who are initially exhilarated at being freed from the stifling bonds of commitments and obligations to the entire community. It is only in the long run that they come to realize the treasures that they have thrown away for this short run freedom. Instead of life-time commitments of marriage and family, one has relationships of uncertain duration and reliability even with the nearest and dearest. By the time we realize the value of permanent lifetime commitments which day-to-day events cannot shake, it is often too late to rebuild social relations. Islam places a tremendous emphasis on "Sila-Rahmi," which is to do good to your relatives, even if they behave badly towards you.

All lasting change requires building communities which work together for change. Building

communities requires concern, compassion, cooperation, caring for others, self-sacrifice and service. While not highlighted by popular media, these ideals are very much part of our traditions. The inspirational poetry of Iqbal, Rumi, Saadi and others provide effective tools to combat the pursuit of individual pleasure.

Revolution begins at home. The key is to act as a model for others, and to become agents of change. Instead of waiting for the world to become a better place, act to bring this about. Instead of talking about how bad things are, talk about how you and I can change things for the better. Instead of being spectators, become participants in the process of change. Given the abject poverty that exists in Pakistan, every reader of this write-up can easily change ten lives dramatically. Do it.

## Mawlana Ahmad Ali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Mawlana Sayyid Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali Nadwi (may Allah shower His mercy upon him) wrote:

"It was a greatly blessed day and fortunate hour of my life when I attended in the service of Mawlana Ahmad 'Ali Lahori, the amir of Anjuman Khuddam al-Din [situated at] Shiranwala Gate, Lahore. My life has two major turns from where it chose a new path (a better and blessed path, I believe). The first was when I became acquainted with Mawlana Ahmad 'Ali [Lahori]. The second occurred when Allah took me to Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas (may Allah shower His mercy upon him).

If I had not met Mawlana Ahmad 'Ali, my life – whether good or bad – would have been very different to my current one. It probably would not have a taste for, nor inclination towards anything save literature, history and writing.

Gnosticism, finding the path and traversing it are great things. Being in Mawlana's company created, in the least, a yearning to seek Allah, the sweetness of [uttering] Allah's name, a love for the people of Allah, recognition of my own deficiency and the need for my rectification and perfection. And for us laypeople this is the greatest fortune and bounty."

[Chalis Barey Musalman (Karachi: Idarat al-Qur'an, November 2001 ed.) Vol. 1, p. 630, compiled by Sayyid Hafiz Muhammad Akbar Shah Bukhari.]





# Memoirs of Hazrat Mufti Taqi Usmani ولست برکاتہم

After that, once again I received the following letter from Hazrat Mufti Sahab ولست برکاتہم:

*Bismihī ta'ala*

*(In the name of the Elevated One)*

In the service of Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Taqi Usmani Sahab ولست برکاتہم,

I hope with the grace of Allah ﷻ that Hazratwala is doing well. It was in the month of Sh'aban ul Muazam when, in a letter, this insignificant requested Hazratwala to pen down his autobiography, which also got the privilege of acceptance by Hazratwala. *Fajzakumullahu Ahsanal jazaa.*

In that month, I got the honour of visiting Makkah Muazzama and at that time Hazratwala had said, 'I am in the process of writing the autobiography.'

After reaching my abode in India, Hazratwala's letter reached this insignificant and that too mentioned your serious consideration of this task. It was a source of immense pleasure that you had granted this insignificant's requests some eminence.

Whoever here got to know about this was delighted and prayed that Allah Ta'ala soon fulfils this task. Aameen.

Hazratwala had written this in his letter: "Still, one thought is a great obstacle which is that some other tasks are already in progress, so the question is whether time should be spent upon them or upon this?"

The real answer to this is known to Hazratwala himself; however, the opinion of this insignificant is as follows:

- 1) The writing responsibilities of Hazratwala can be undertaken by others in his supervision, while the autobiography can be jotted down by himself; this is because the prior mentioned tasks and their shortcomings can be carried out by other people of knowledge. However, in the case of the autobiography, this isn't possible. Capturing the true picture of the incidents and putting them into words probably cannot be done by anyone else. Even if someone tries to do it, the margin of some error would still be there, just like some other biographies have gone through this strain.
- 2) Many people acquired the solution to their troubles through Hazratwala's discourses; they acted upon the advises and found the ways out. I quote some words of wisdom from Hazratwala's 'spiritual discourses':

#### **A golden rule for have things done**

"Our respected father, Hazrat Mufti Shafi Sahab رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, used to say that whatever tasks you postponed in lieu of some free time, those tasks will get postponed forever; just because you yourself deferred them. The rule to have things done is to thrust the third task between the two tasks already at hand. Meaning you were doing two things, now a thought arises to have the third thing done as well, so you forcefully plunge this third thing between the others, and this third task will also be completed, *Insha'Allah*. But if you think that we will start this third assignment after getting free from the previous ones, then that thing will hardly ever be done. Planning that we will do another thing after finishing the things already on our plate, is just a way of

delaying and not doing it at all" (Spiritual discourses: 1/53).

I dared to present the above elucidation as Hazratwala had said, "Whenever possible, I will take a verbal suggestion from you on the matter," otherwise, someone inferior telling anything to their elders is like showing a torch to the sun.

Hazratwala has also written the following in his letter: "The reality, though, is still the same, that what benefit can an autobiography of a mere mosquito or fly be to anyone."

This insignificant thinks that the sentence is very deep and meaningful. In its reply, we can only say that if the fly didn't have any value in it then Allah Ta'ala wouldn't have named a Surah 'Nahl' in the Holy Qur'an with its name.

Another point that comes to mind is that both flies and mosquitoes are winged animals. Hazratwala's autobiography would, in fact, be an 'arise-graphy' (jaag beeti). It's highly unlikely that anyone from the people of knowledge has travelled around the world as much as Hazrat has. The travelogues 'Jahan e deeda' and 'Dunya mere aage' are a witness to this fact. When Hazrat's travelogues are a reflection of *lazeez bood hikayat, daraaz tar guftam* (the story is interesting, I prolong the conversation) (a persian phrase), then what would be the eminence of Hazrat's autobiography! I'm at a total loss of putting this into words.

Nonetheless, it's a recurrent request that you kindly complete the task that you have started of writing your autobiography. May Allah Ta'ala extend Hazratwala's prestigious shadow over us and grant *barakah* in his time. Aameen.

*Amlahu Al-abd* Ahmad A'fi A'na Khanpuri

Servant Darul Ifta o Tadrees

Jamia Islamia Taleemuddin

10th Dhil Qaddah 1432



In this letter, all that Hazrat Mufti Sahab رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had said about this insignificant is based on nothing else but his love and good thinking about me, otherwise, I know who I am. However, with this letter, another thought surfaced, which made me act upon Hazrat's request, which is that some of my well-wishers out of their admiration for me had produced my biographies in English and Arabic and in those I noticed that their love had made them act with exaggeration as they didn't know the actual background and details of several incidents, thus it is perhaps difficult that anyone other than myself could narrate those incidents. That's why, to keep the records aright, it would better that I myself penned them down.

On the other hand, something that had been a great obstacle was that various other writing tasks needed to be accomplished first; leaving them and starting to write about myself felt like a burden upon my soul. Keeping these two dimensions in mind I had promised Hazrat Mufti Ahmad Khanpuri Sahab رحمۃ اللہ علیہ that during my trips I would try to inscribe the memories of my life.

Thus, I composed the following reply:

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

Respected Hazrat Maulana Mufti Ahmad Khanpuri Sahab رحمۃ اللہ علیہ,

*Assalamualykum warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu,*

Hazratwala's letter reached me via email and to fulfil what you had asked, in the name of Allah Tabarak o Ta'ala, I have intended to start with the autobiography during my travels. You are about to embark on your journey for Hajj, this insignificant is in need of your earnest duas, and although it is known that Hazrat already prays for this inadequate person, still the heart desires to ask for it. And also please pray that if this work has Allah's pleasure in it then may Allah Ta'ala complete it in a way that other responsibilities also don't get neglected in the process. It is also requested that you please convey this insignificant's *Salaam* at the blessed *Rawdah* (of

the Prophet ﷺ). May Allah Tabarak o Ta'ala bless you with *Hajj e Mabroor*, safely bring you back and extend your shadow over us for a long period of time.

Wassalam,

Mufti Taqi Usmani

28<sup>th</sup> Dhil Qaddah' 1432

Henceforth, working upon this project, I began the task during flights and my short stays at various travelling stations. After some time, I again had the privilege of meeting Hazrat Mufti Sahab رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and by that time quite a considerable portion of this book had been completed. When I told this to Hazrat Mufti Sahab, he suggested that I started publishing this in episodes in our monthly, "Al-Balagh" magazine. Thus, this is going to begin in Albalagh from the next month Insha'Allah. May Allah Taa'ala make it beneficial for the readers. Aameen.

(The English translation of the episodes printed in Al-Balagh are being published in The Intellect)

