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you feel a
peaceful joy,
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TRUTH.

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-RUMI

URS MUBARAK!

A holistic picture of Masjid al-Aqsa in the Seerah

by: Ebrahim Moosa – Palestine Information Network



In Rajab, Muslims around the world will remember the Isra and Mi'raj, the miraculous journey made by Sayyiduna Muhammad ﷺ to Masjid al-Aqsa and the Heavens, and with it, reaffirm the centrality and special place that Bayt al-Maqdis occupies in our hearts.

While cherishing the magnitude of this majestic event, it is worthwhile to appreciate that the link to Masjid al-Aqsa in the life of Sayyiduna Muhammad ﷺ is not limited to a single event, but rather encompasses a number of milestones throughout his blessed life.

In fact, a bond was forged with Shaam, the land of Masjid al-Aqsa, right from the moment of birth of the Beloved of Allah ﷺ, when his mother dreamt that a light was emerging from her by which the palaces of Shaam were being illuminated. This vision was physically manifested at the time of his blessed birth when a light indeed did illuminate the palaces of Shaam.

Scholars opine that the particular mention, at this juncture, of the palaces of Shaam signified glad tidings that the message of Nabi Muhammad ﷺ would reach this region, and that in time, it would become an important domain of Islam.

Sayyiduna Muhammad's ﷺ mission to the world was the culmination of the undertakings of hundreds of Prophets sent by Allah ﷻ to mankind over thousands of years. Among these were numerous Ambiyaa who resided in Bayt al-Maqdis, and revered it as their qiblah. As the Seal of the Prophets, Sayyiduna Muhammad ﷺ reaffirmed this sacred link to Masjid al-Aqsa, and, in fact, took the connection to the pinnacle of glory.

A trade link was already in place between Makkah and Shaam when the Nabi of Allah ﷺ was born. He himself travelled to Shaam on two trading missions in his youth. It was also in Gaza, in the land of Bayt al-Maqdis, that his great-grandfather Hashim ibn Abd Manaf passed away whilst out for trade.

As Wahi began to descend, Sayyiduna Muhammad ﷺ carved out for the fledgling Muslim community a keen awareness of the sacred position held by Masjid al-Aqsa in the faith.

Even before the Isra and Mi'raj, the Qur'anic revelation during the Makkan period introduced the land of Masjid al-Aqsa as a land of Barakah, and recounted the accounts of several Ambiyaa who resided in Shaam, and even referenced specific sites in the region.

Whilst this was occurring, in Makkah, with the Ka'bah before him, the Nabi of Allah ﷺ would in fact be facing Masjid al-Aqsa whilst performing Salaah, as was the command from Allah ﷻ. This he did by offering his Salah standing before the Ka'bah between the Rukn Yamani and Hajr Aswad, thereby facing both the Ka'bah and Masjid al-Aqsa at the same time, although Masjid al-Aqsa officially remained the Qiblah.

What this emphasizes is that Nabi Muhammad ﷺ and the Sahaba (RA) in fact prayed towards Masjid al-Aqsa for more than 14 years in total, of which only about 16 months were in Madinah Munawwarah, while the rest of the time was in Makkah. Thus, Sayyiduna Muhammad ﷺ actually prayed towards al-Aqsa for a much longer period of his life than he faced the Ka'bah.

The mentioned Prophetic tarbiyah kindled in the early Muslims a keen interest and appreciation of the place of Masjid al-Aqsa in their faith. Such was the early Muslims' connection to Bayt al-Maqdis that some had made it the subject of their vows and an expressed a keenness to visit it. Sahabah (RA) also paid attention to the political power dynamics in the region as can be referenced in the incident of Surah Room.

It is thus seen how, even before the Isra and Mir'aj, an Islamic framework was in place to emphasize the connection to Masjid al-Aqsa and link the Ummah spiritually and physically to its blessed environs.



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SA Foreign Policy on Israel Must Resist being Dictated by the Apartheid Regime

by: Iqbal Jassat

In her recent media briefing, South African Minister of International Relations Naledi Pandor, reiterated solidarity with Palestine while pledging to continue efforts to overturn Israel's observer status at the African Union.

Many who are familiar with the ruling African National Congress (ANC) position on Palestine, will be pleased with Pandor's stance. However, many who applaud the ANC, will nevertheless raise questions about why its progressive policies have seemingly reached a cul-de-sac.

The repeated mantra of "two-states living side-by-side", pointedly reflects such a dead-end. More importantly, placing faith in the unlikely reincarnation of a stillborn to miraculously emerge as a healthy independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, is both foolish and futile.

Recent Palestinian polls reveal that nearly three-quarters believe the chances of establishing a Palestinian state are slim to none. And in a separate question, 59 percent say the "two-state solution" is no longer feasible due to settlement spread. Forty-two percent, a plurality, believe the most effective means of ending the Israeli occupation is armed struggle.

If an overwhelming majority of Palestinians categorically dismiss the notion of a "two-state solution" and point to large-scale land grabs or settlements across the Occupied Palestinian Territories as evidence for its non-feasibility, why has Minister Pandor not reassessed nor repositioned foreign policy to reflect this reality?

To foolishly pursue a mirage suits the Israeli regime and its backers perfectly. In fact right-wing war criminals heading the Zionist project to liquidate Palestine, actually relish such naivety.

In addition the polls confirm that the Bennet/Gantz regime is bargaining on two trends for two peoples: first, that the voting public – Israelis – accept or even support continuity, and second, that Palestinians – the non-voting public – will allow their quest for self-determination to be permanently thwarted, without major upheaval.

Dahlia Scheindlin, a political scientist and Palestinian researcher Khalil Shikaki, jointly conducted the survey which confirms that support for the two state solution has been waning for years.

Though these findings are far from earth shattering revelations, they serve as a timely reminder that for the South African government to cling onto the myth of two-states is misplaced, unsound and in conflict with its solidarity with victims of the settler colonial regime.

Zionist lobbies use the false narrative of two-states as a fig leaf to shield their complicity in Israel's horrendous war crimes. Whether it is related to ethnic-cleansing being perpetuated around the clock in Occupied East Jerusalem or the Palestinian neighborhoods of Sheikh Jarrar and Silwan, or the state-sponsored settler terrorism, the lobbies keep resorting to fake support for two-states as a means to deflect from their apartheid ideology.

It explains why in South Africa you will not hear any of Israel's apartheid ideologues ever calling on the Jewish state to lift its illegal occupation; end home-demolitions; halt settlements; release political prisoners and all other crimes against the Palestinians.

Their silence on all of Israel's violations of international laws including being in contempt of the United Nations Charter and a host UN Security Council Resolutions, is conveniently concealed by false attachment to SA government's "faith" in the illusion of two-states.

The paradox thus is that while Minister Naledi Pandor reflects the ANC-led government's backing for Palestine's freedom from Israel's reprehensible politics of oppression and occupation, by linking it to the unattainable mirage of two-states, she is parroting a Zionist myth.

Zionist lobbies are obviously fully aware of the contradictions and thus take delight in perpetuating the myth.

Unless there's a paradigm shift, the vacuous fixation on a non-existent solution will allow the Israeli regime to continue to hoodwink public opinion. Indeed, promoting the falsehood of a two-state solution has been exploited by the settler regime to the extent of gatecrashing the African Union.

Similar proganda has been used to co-opt a handful of Arab and African countries to "normalize" relations.

Against this background one must give due to the Islamic Republic of Iran for not having fallen victim to Zionist Hasbara. Consistent with its abhorrence of Zionism, racism and apartheid, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian described Israel as the root cause of all the problems plaguing the Middle East.

Amir-Abdollahian made the remarks in a telephone conversation with the head of the political bureau of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh.

Iran's top diplomat congratulated Haniyeh on the 34th anniversary of Hamas' establishment, saying, "Hamas is among the pioneers of the Islamic resistance front for the liberation of Holy al-Quds, and plays a pivotal role in restoring the historical rights of Palestinians."

Amir-Abdollahian also denounced the British Parliament's "terror" designation for Hamas as a politically-motivated measure against the entire Palestinian nation.

The contrast between South Africa and Iran on their respective foreign policy positions vis-a-vis Israel reveals huge chasms. Any fair reading of the reasons why such wide array of differences exist would conclude that unlike Iran, South Africa has unfortunately allowed itself to be played by Israel.

The football in this game is the two-states. Regrettably, South Africa by playing according to Israel's rules has in the process allowed the colonial entity to drag the game indefinitely without any just outcome.

A harsh reminder about the unequal and utterly disproportionate advantage Israel has in dictating terms is provided by the polls referred to above.

Most Israeli Jews defiantly justify their cause when asked if respondents feel guilt or shame about Israel's ongoing "control over Palestinians in Judea & Samaria," nearly three-quarters of Jews said they did not feel either sentiment.

Mumbai, INDIA – The Cyber Cell of the Mumbai Police have questioned an engineering student from Bengaluru who was allegedly responsible for the notorious 'Bulli Bai' app, which posted scores of photos of prominent Muslim women in India, offering them for auction. Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner of Police in Delhi, Rashmi Karandikar, told media that it had laid charges against the founder of internet hosting platform GitHub and several Twitter handles that used photos of the women. Photos of over 100 Muslim women appeared on the site, including those of actress and social activist Shabana Azmi as well as other leading Muslim women in various fields. "Bulli Bai takes hate crimes in India to another dangerous level where Muslim women are being virtually violated and made a free-for-all for a bigoted mob. These 'auctions' of women from the minority communities display the moral degradation of India and its constitutional values," Rana Ayyub, a Mumbai-based columnist with The Washington Post, told the TV news channel Al Jazeera.

Istanbul, TURKEY - President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said that the only way to achieve stability and peace in Palestine is to create an independent and sovereign Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital. He was speaking at the opening session of the 16th Conference of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Parliamentary Union. "Jerusalem is a blessed city and the trust of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) for his nation, and defending it means defending the whole of humanity, human rights and laws, peace, justice, and civilisation," Erdogan said.

Washington, USA - Board members of the World Bank have discussed a proposal to deliver up to \$500 million from a frozen Afghanistan aid fund to humanitarian agencies. The proposal has been developed by officials from the United States and United Nations to redirect the funds from the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), which has a total of \$1.5 billion. They said that the money will go mainly to addressing urgent health care needs in Afghanistan, where less than seven percent of the population has been vaccinated against the coronavirus. Issues that are hampering the transfer of funds include US sanctions.

Abu Dhabi, UAE - The United Arab Emirates has provided urgent humanitarian aid to those affected by the floods that swept different states of Malaysia. The aid includes medical and food supplies, as well as shelter-building materials. The recent heavy rains in Malaysia caused floods that displaced nearly 63,000 people and damaged infrastructure and public utilities, with 33 districts in eight states affected by these floods.

Rabat, MOROCCO - Leading women from the Muslim world participated in an international conference on "Women and Arabic Language: Realities and Future Prospects" hosted via videoconference by the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation in celebration of World Arabic Language Day on Tuesday, December 21, 2021. Recommendations included organising workshops to build the capacities of women Arabic teachers, especially non-native speakers; launching new literary contests to highlight women's

contributions; and supporting academic research works and studies on women's contributions to Arabic.

Mogadishu, SOMALIA - The Red Crescent has delivered over 4,000 food packages donated by the Turkish government to drought-stricken families in southern Somalia. The aid was distributed to families in need in the drought-stricken Jubaland region. Facing one of its worst droughts in decades, Somalia has already declared that the country is in a state of humanitarian emergency.

Rabat, MOROCCO - Artificial intelligence and digital transformation have a huge technical potential to raise the status of Arabic and developing programs aimed at teaching and learning the language for Arabic and non-Arabic speakers, according to Director-General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Dr. Salim M. Al Malik. He was presenting a paper at the first international conference organised by the Quran Language Endowment at King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia. Al Malik said that Arabic is one of the most used languages on the internet.

Riyadh, SAUDI ARABIA - After a successful collaboration led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 'Arabic Calligraphy: Knowledge, skills and practices' has been officially inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. With its importance derived from religious texts, Arabic calligraphy has for centuries been extremely popular and is used by artists and designers across a broad range of media, including in paintings, sculptures and even graffiti.

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METAVERS

by: Faizul Khamker

Zuckerberg, of Facebook fame announced the restructuring of Facebook and the holding company was named as Meta. This restructuring was premised on the launching of a new digital platform called meta verse. Meta verse is crypto technology described as "a combination of multiple elements of technology, including virtual reality, augmented reality and video where users 'live' within a digital universe." The term itself is not new and was first coined in 1992 from the novel "Snow Crash" where humans and avatars interact with each other. In the metaverse one is required to assume an avatar for yourself. Avatar finds its origin in Sanskrit meaning "descent" and refers to a Hindu deity. The primary purpose would be to increase the financial position of the Facebook conglomerate.

The accepted position of any new technology is that it comes with its upside as well as its downside. This would then require that an objective assessment be made whether to accept its use, reject its use or apply a combination of the two.

This new technology is intended to entrench virtual reality in a more marketable manner and is not something new as many sites on the internet already does so. Investing one hundred and sixty million dollars to initiate this economic project indicates the profits anticipated as well as the estimated number of users.

The biggest area of concern is that it will further break down inter personal contact. Constructive interaction on a family level as well as on a social level is important for the welfare of society. Currently, with the various social media platforms already contributing to this problem in a large way and family life is strained because of this fact to support this initiative which would contribute further to this problem is senseless.

Secondly the content as well as having acceptable shared values will be in the hands of the multinational corporations. Experience has shown that these corporations cannot be trusted as captains of moral integrity. Taking into account the problem of racism and more specifically Islamophobia it would not be surprising that the contents on some of these platforms will be entertained and defended in the name of freedom of expression. Governments would require certain control similar to Facebook and other social medium platforms. Imagine when this is available to Macron, Modi or other bigoted regimes.

Another problem is that this becomes the ideal platform for indoctrination. The effect of virtual platforms has greater impact on the subconscious than other means. The religious moral standpoint which does not wash well with the neo liberal policies will be subject to a one-sided onslaught (taking into account that the content is controlled by the neo liberals in totality.) A typical example is the promotion of the new Saudi way of looking at religious matters which is in contrast to what is and still should be taboo being a form of indoctrination to oppose accepted religious behaviour. Another example is the philosophy towards marriage where the religious viewpoint and the liberal viewpoint are at total odds against one another on critical aspects.

The effect on the mental wellbeing of the individual would also have to be explored. Critics fear the result of this escapism will turn us all into isolated hermits that live devoid of any human interaction, and that we'll all be soulless, mindless, beings with no compassion or empathy for our fellow man. The covid pandemic has already laid down the acceptability of isolationism and its further imposing would not be difficult. When problems are not dealt with and an escape avenue is created to face the problems the situation becomes more dire and does not solve anything. We are witnessing an increase in suicides as well as aggressive behaviour globally largely as a result of this ostrich in the sand "approach. To facilitate this further cannot be described as a common sense approach. Furthermore, let us ask: "How many telephone numbers were we able to record as opposed to the present time with the easier access to these numbers because of modern technology. The slide backwards in invigorating the mind is not beneficial, neither for the individual nor society.



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HAZRAT KHWAJA MAKHDUM AHMED ABDUL HAQ رضي الله عنه

By: Naeem Khan Sabri

Hazrat Khwaja Makhdum Ahmed Abdul Haq Radaulvi RA was born in 717 AH and is a direct descendant of Sayiduna Umar ibn Khattab RA the second Righteous Khalif of Islam. His father's name was Umar and his paternal grandfathers name was Dawood who was a disciple and spiritual representative of Hazrat Khwaja Nasiruddin Chiragh Dehlawi RA. Shaykh Dawood resided in the city of Balkh in Afghanistan but due to the mongol invasion he left Balkh and settled in Awdh in India where he was received and respected by Sultan Alauddeen Khilji. Later land was given to him as a gift in Radauli where he then settled and lived. Here Shaykh Umar was born and he grew up to be a very pious personality. Shaykh Umar had two sons, the eldest was Shaykh Taqiudeen who became an accomplished scholar of Islam and the other was Shaykh Ahmed who was inclined towards spirituality. Shaykh Ahmed at a young age of 7 would engage in punctually performing Salatut tahajud with his mother. One morning his mother said to him out of love and care " O my dear son Ahmed, your elders were pious personalities but not like how you are exerting yourself that you are not even of the age where the compulsory Salaah is compulsory upon you that you have began engaging in non obligatory prayer and made it compulsory upon you." Hearing this Shaykh Ahmed said " Are you a mother or are you one who wishes to lead me away from my Creator?". His mother then sent him to Delhi by his elder brother Shaykh Taqiudeen to seek and gain religious knowledge. Shaykh Ahmed commenced his studies under the tutorship of his brother but continuously said to him " What you are teaching me is of no benefit to me, teach me that knowledge that will gain me closeness to Allah. " Failing in every attempt to teach Shaykh Ahmed, Shaykh Taqiudeen took him to the great scholars of Delhi where they began to teach him arabic linguistics, to this Shaykh Ahmed said to the scholars " On the path of seeking the ultimate Truth which is Allah how is linguistics going to benefit me? Teach me that which will enable me to love and obtain the closeness to Allah. " Hearing this the scholars of Delhi said to Shaykh Taqiudeen " This that your brother seeks is beyond us, leave him in his state as the one whom he seeks which is Allah will guide him through. " Due to his state of spiritual absorption in the love of Allah he became unconscious of his surroundings and would continuously shout out aloud " HAQ HAQ HAQ ". Leaving Delhi Shaykh Ahmed went seeking company that could guide and lead him to the love of Allah. Not being satisfied he said " Since I can't find what I seek amongst the living let me make an attempt to seek it amongst the dead. " Shaykh Ahmed dug a grave with his own hands. He entered it and remained engaged in the remembrance of Allah. After 6 months a divine voice ordered him to travel to Panipat and become the disciple of Hazrat Khwaja Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya. Hazrat Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA was the spiritual successor of Hazrat Khwaja Shamsudeen Turk Pani Pati RA who is the only disciple and successor of Hazrat Khwaja Makhdum Alauddeen Ali Ahmed Saabir Kalyari RA.

Hazrat Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya being aware of the visit of Shaykh Ahmed requested the attendants of the Khanqa to have fine meals prepared and laid out on the tablespread and also to have some fine horses placed outside the khanqa. When Shaykh Ahmed arrived at the Khanqa and saw the fine meals and beautiful horses he immediately left without meeting Hazrat Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA saying " If a spiritual guide lives in such luxury its not possible for him to guide me to Allah. " He walked the entire night only to find himself back in Panipat the next morning. He made three such attempts and every time he found himself back in Panipat. On the third time he came across an elderly man sitting under a tree and asked him for directions. The elderly man replied saying " What

direction can a person find who leaves the door of Khwaja Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA". Hearing this Shaykh Ahmed understood this to be a divine sign and set off to the khanqa of Khwaja Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA. On the way to the khanqa Shaykh Ahmed thought is his heart that Khwaja Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA must be at the mazaar of Khwaja Shamsudeen Turk Pani Pati and when he initiates me he must take his hat off, rub it against the grave of Khwaja Shamsudeen Turk Pani Pati RA and place it on my head and thereafter give me sweetmeats to eat. When shaykh Ahmed arrived at the Khanqa the attendant informed him that Khwaja Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA is gone to the mazaar of Khwaja Shamsudeen Turk Pani Pati RA. Shaykh Ahmed made his way to the mazaar and upon entering he found Hazrat Khwaja Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA seated there. Khwaja Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA removed his hat, rubbed it upon the grave of Khwaja Shamsudeen Turk Pani Pati, placed it on the head of Shaykh Ahmed and initiated him in the Chishty Sabiree Sufi Order. Thereafter a person entered the mazaar with some sweetmeats and presented it to Khwaja Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA which he took and placed it in the mouth of Shaykh Ahmed saying " This was indeed your wish". Noticing the state of spiritual absorption in the love of Allah where Shaykh Ahmed used to call out aloud " HAQ HAQ HAQ " Khwaja Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA bestowed upon him the title of " ABDUL HAQ (SERVANT OF THE TRUTH)".

Hazrat Shaykh Ahmed Abdul Haq RA stayed at the Khanqa undergoing spiritual training under the guidance of his spiritual guide and upon attaining spiritual excellence he was granted the cloak of succession by Hazrat Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA. One day Hazrat Jalaluddeen Kabirul Awliya RA summoned Hazrat Shaykh Ahmed Abdul Haq RA to the mazaar of Hazrat Khwaja Shamsudeen Turk Pani Pati RA and handed over to him the sacred relics and ordered him to place his chest against his saying that he is transferring to his heart the sacred knowledge that he received from his masters as he is a true inheritor of it. Thereafter he raised his hands for a long time in supplication and said " O Ahmed I have supplicated to Allah that our spiritual order (Chishty Sabiree) may rise from you and through you remain spreading the light of the recognition of Allah until the Day of Judgement and its glory may never be dimmed. I see your friendship with Allah having no boundaries be it while you are alive or after your demise therefore you are enough to guide my generations after me. " Due to this Hazrat Shaykh Ahmed Abdul Haq Radaulvi RA is regarded as the Mujjadid of the Chishty Sabiree Sufi Order.

Hazrat Shaykh Ahmed Abdul Haq Radaulvi RA establish his Khanqa in Radauli that became a guiding light from where the Chishty Sabiree Sufi Order spread throughout India. The soul of Hazrat Makhdum Ahmed Abdul Haq RA guided Hazrat Shah Abdul Quddus Gangohi RA the 6th Shaykh in the spiritual order after Hazrat Saabir Paak RA for 40 years. It is reported that once while Hazrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi RA was seated at the graveside of Hazrat Shaykh Ahmed Abdul Haq the grave split open and he came out of his grave and held the hand of Khwaja Abdul Quddus Gangohi RA saying " Abdul Quddus I have handed you over to Allah, go now and do your work spreading the message of the Sufi Masters." Many miracles are attributed to him.

He passed away on the 15 Jamadil Akhir 837 AH and lies buried in a simple mazaar in Radauli in India.

Reference : Anwaar ul Uyoon by Hazrat Shah Abdul Quddus Gangohi RA & Mirat ul Asraar by Shaykh Addur Rahman Chishty Sabiree

Mothers of the Believers

The Blessed Wives of Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ)

BY: SHIREEN ISMAIL

PART 5

Sayyidah Maymunah Bint Harith (Radi Allahu Anha) - The Blessed

Sayyidah Rehana Bint Zayd (Radi Allahu Anha) - The Humble and Shy

Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiya (Radi Allahu Anha) - The Copt

Sayyidah Maymunah Bint Harith (Radi Allahu Anha) The Blessed

Prior to marrying Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ), Sayyidah Maymunah (Radi Allahu Anha) the daughter of Harith bin Huzn and Hind bint Awf was a widow named Barrah. Sayyidah Maymunah (Radi Allahu Anha)'s heart was filled with longing for Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ). The Mother of the Believers confided to her sister Umm Al-Fadl about these feelings and requested marriage to Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ). According to another source, Sayyidah Maymunah (Radi Allahu Anha) herself at the age of fifty-one proposed to the Messenger (ﷺ). On this occasion Allah (ﷻ) revealed the following verse, "...And any believing woman who dedicates herself to the Prophet (ﷺ), if the Prophet (ﷺ) wishes to wed her, she will be reserved exclusively for you (O Muhammad (ﷺ)) and none other of the believers.." (Quran Kareem 33:50). The wedding ceremony occurred at Saraf, a place on route to Makkah.

Sayyidah Maymunah (Radi Allahu Anha)'s marriage to Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) led to the establishment of close relations amongst the various groups of people and many supporters drew closer to Islam. Sayyidah Maymunah (Radi Allahu Anha) was a pious and affectionate woman. Sayyidah Ayesha (Radi Allahu Anha) said, "Sayyidah Maymunah (Radi Allahu Anha) was the most pious and mindful of her kith and kin among the Messenger (ﷺ)'s wives". Sayyidah Maymunah (Radi Allahu Anha) feared Allah (ﷻ). The Mother of Believer was a learned woman who narrated seventy-six hadiths. Sayyidah Maymunah (Radi Allahu Anha) was humble and fond of advising Muslim women. Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) said Sayyidah Maymunah (Radi Allahu Anha)'s was a 'symbol of goodness'.

Sayyidah Rehana Bint Zayd (Radi Allahu Anha) The Humble and Shy

Sayyidah Rehana (Radi Allahu Anha) the daughter of Shamoan son of Zayd belonged to a famous Jewish tribe known as Banu Nadir. There are two traditions about Sayyidah Rehana (Radi Allahu Anha)'s acceptance of Islam. The Messenger (ﷺ) gave Sayyidah Rehana (Radi Allahu Anha) an option to either accept Islam or to continue practising Judaism and the latter was chosen. With time Sayyidah Rehana (Radi Allahu Anha) accepted Islam and this made Nabi (ﷺ) very happy. The second tradition reports that Sayyidah Rehana (Radi Allahu Anha) was taken as a captive and the Messenger (ﷺ) said to the Mother of the Believers, "If you choose Allah (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ), Allah (ﷻ) and His Messenger (ﷺ) will choose you". Sayyidah Rehana (Radi Allahu Anha) accepted the proposal and was

freed from captivity. The Mother of the Faithful thus became one of the Blessed Wives of Nabi (SAW) and was known to be a beautiful and refined woman.

Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiya (Radi Allahu Anha) The Copt

Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiya (Radi Allahu Anha) bint Shamoan, the Copt was an Egyptian Christian and a gift from the Coptic Patriarch Alexandria to Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ). Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiya (Radi Allahu Anha) accepted Islam and was a beautiful pious woman.

Islamic traditions are unanimous in reporting that Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiya (Radi Allahu Anha) was rendered the same honour and respect given to Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ)'s wives. Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiya (Radi Allahu Anha) was conferred the same title as "Ummul Mu'mineen," that is, Mother of the Believers. Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiya (Radi Allahu Anha) was the only wife after Sayyidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) who bore the Noble Messenger (ﷺ) a child. Sayyiduna Ibrahim (Radi Allahu Anhu) was the last-born son to Nabi (SAW) who sadly became ill and passed on at the tender age two years old and was laid to rest in Jannat al-Baqi.

The marriage between Nabi (ﷺ) and Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiya (Radi Allahu Anha) improved the relationship between the Muslims and the Egyptians. The Messenger (ﷺ) advised the Muslims to protect and take care of the Copts as they have kinship. This kinship was from the mother of the Prophet Ismail (Alayhis Salaam), the son of Prophet Ibrahim (Alayhis Salaam) and the mother of Sayyiduna Ibrahim (Radi Allahu Anha). Sayyidah Mariya Qibtiya (Radi Allahu Anha) passed away during the Caliphate of Sayyiduna Umar (Radi Allahu Anhu) and was buried with great respect in Jannatul Baqi in Madinah.

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Benefits of Lemon

Submitted by: Hasina Begum Sayed

1. Lemon being a citrus fruit, fights against infection. It helps in Production of White Blood Cells and antibodies in blood which attacks the invading microorganism and prevents infection.
2. Lemon is an antioxidant which deactivates the free radicals preventing many dangerous diseases like stroke, cardiovascular diseases and cancers.
3. Lemon lowers blood pressure and increases the levels of HDL (Good Cholesterol).
4. Lemon is found to be anti-carcinogenic which lowers the rates of colon, Prostate and breast cancer. They prevent faulty metabolism in the cell which can predispose a cell to becoming carcinogenic (a cancer causing substance)
5. Lemon juice is said to give a glow to the skin.
6. A few drops of lemon juice in hot water are believed to clear the Digestive system and purify liver as well.
7. The skin of lemon dried under the sun and then ground to make powder can be applied to the hair for a few minutes before bath which relieves Head ache and cools the body.
8. Applying lemon juice to acne dries the existing ones and prevents from getting more.
9. Lemon juice acts as a natural hair lighter and skin bleach which reduces the pigment melanin and prevents the risk of chemical allergic reactions which is common with hair dyes and bleaches.
10. Lemon juice is given to relieve gingivitis, stomatitis, and inflammation of the tongue.
11. Lemon juice is used to prevent common cold.
12. Lemon juice is given to prevent/treat urinary tract infection and Gonorrhea.
13. Lemon juice is applied to the sites of bites and stings of certain Insects to relieve its poison and pain.
14. Lemon juice relieves colic pain and gastric problems.
15. Lemon juice soothes the dry skin when applied with little glycerin.
16. Lemon juice used for marinating seafood or meat kills bacteria and other organisms present in them, thereby prevents many gastric-intestinal tract infections.
17. Lemon juice with a pinch of salt (warm) every morning lowers cholesterol levels and brings down your weight.
18. Lemon juice is the best drink to prevent dehydration and shock in case Of diarrhea.
19. Lemon juice can also be used as a mouthwash. It removes plaque, whitens the teeth and strengthens the enamel.
20. A table spoon on thick lemon syrup everyday relieves asthma.
21. Lemon juice relieves chilblains and itchy skin.(Chilblains is an inflammation of the skin, accompanied by burning and itching. Chilblains usually occur on the smaller toes. However, it can occur on the fingers, face and the nose. A chilblain may also occur on a pressure bearing area such as a bunion)
22. Gargling lemon juice relieves throat infection and also used as a treatment for diphtheria.(Diphtheria is an upper respiratory tract illness)
23. Lemon juice is an excellent treatment for dandruff and greasy hair.
24. Lemon juice, applied over the face, removes wrinkles and keeps you young.
25. Lemon juice helps to prevent and cure osteoarthritis.

Benefits of Lemon Tea

- * **Mental freshness:** This is achieved by clearing out the toxins in the blood. Thus, a person will feel less lethargic and more active after drinking lemon tea.
- * **Blood Cleanser:** The lemon tea also helps clean up the various body systems and clears up the skin due to the flushing out of the toxins.
- * **Cancer:** Lemon is very rich in Vitamin C and is a strong natural antioxidant which is a help in neutralizing free radicals. This same reason implies that the the risk of cancer is lesser in an individual who regularly consumes lemon tea.
- * **Digestive System:** Lemon tea also plays a stabilizing role in the digestive system of a person, and helps clear it out.
- * **Antiseptic:** Lemon tea also acts as an antiseptic and helps prevent various infections and illnesses.

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"O Mankind ! Eat of the lawful and good things from what is in the earth, and follow not the evil. Surely he is an open enemy to you (S2: V168)



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Improvement Begins with Me

by: Moulana Naasik Ahmad Mohamed

Every system has based on a series of values and all acts in that system form are based on considered values. Islam advises evaluation as a daily program for each Muslim. In a way that a person once said: "Any time that a day passed and a Muslim does not evaluate precisely his/her acts and behaviors, that person has gone far from the straightway of perfection". What is self-evaluation? Simply put, self-evaluation is the ability to examine yourself to find out how much progress you have made. It requires a person to monitor their abilities and evaluate strengths and weaknesses. It puts one largely in charge of their development. In social psychology, self-assessment is the process of looking at oneself to assess aspects that are important to one's identity. It is one of the motives that drive self-evaluation, along with self-verification and self-enhancement.

The term self-evaluation/self-accountability in the Arabic language is called 'Muhaasabah'. This means that one takes responsibility for their actions and their life, learn from mistakes, and quickly recover from any impulse to blame others, ignore problems, and hide from one's shortcomings. Muhaasabah originates from the word Haasaba that means calculate. In the book Ihya-ul-Uloom-ud-Deen, Imam Ghazali describes Muhaasabah as calculating or counting. Calculating in the context of Muhaasabah has been illustrated as calculating the immoral and discreditable as well as appalling and commendable behaviours. If the calculated actions are admirable, they must be done continuously. On the other hand, if the actions are bad, they must be put an end to through good deeds. Apart from that, Muhaasabah is also referred to as reasoning over desire, the overpowering of weaknesses by strengths in one's self. People ask as to what self-accountability looks like. The answer is simple: When you're personally accountable, you take ownership of situations that you're involved in. You see them through, and you take responsibility for what happens – good or bad. You don't blame others if things go wrong. Instead, you do your best to make things right. Self-reflection and self-evaluation are very much emphasized in Islam. Allah Almighty mentions in the Holy Quran: "O you who believe! Fear Allah Almighty, and let every soul look forward as to what it has sent on for tomorrow. And fear Allah Almighty. Verily Allah Almighty is aware of what you do" (S 59: V18). Mufti Ahmed Yaar Khan Naemi mentions Tafseer Noor-ul-Irfaan that 'Hazrat Ali (Radiyallahu Anhu) says that those who take account of themselves in this world will find accountability of the Hereafter easy'.

Some scholars have classified self-reflection into two categories: pre-action evaluation and post-action evaluation. Pre-action evaluation refers to thinking before action is committed to deterring

one from rushing into making decisions. The decision made is not only based on wants and needs but also based on the individual's capability in executing an action. The Decision-making process refers to two situations: a) if the individual is not capable, the execution of actions about the wants or needs should not proceed and, b) if the individual feels that he/she can take the needed action, the individual will first think of two situations; a) the benefit of abandoning the action if the action's effect is worse; b) the benefit of proceeding with the action if the action's effect is better. These considerations are particularly emphasized in Islam to gain the mercy and blessings of Allah Almighty.

In the context of post-action evaluation there are three approaches which are: a) evaluation on obedience, whether it is in accordance to what is required by Allah Almighty or not. For instance, the evaluation on sincere deeds done for the pleasure of Allah Almighty and following the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam); b) after an action is taken, considerations on whether it is better to abandon or to continue with the action, solely for the inclination of the mercy of Allah Almighty and; c) evaluation of permissible actions or behaviour, whether they are for obtaining the blessings of Allah Almighty or merely to fulfil worldly desires.

Islam advises evaluation as a daily plan for each Muslim. One scholar said that a person cannot be considered as a true lover of Islam if he does not evaluate his works every day and if he does a good act, asks Allah Almighty for more of it and shows gratitude to Allah Almighty for the achieved success and if he does bad act, ask forgiveness from Allah Almighty and repent. As Muslims, self-evaluation, and assessment should be a major part of our lives. Samuel Langhorne Clemens, an American lecturer, said 'Continuous improvement is better than delayed perfection'. Always remember that the best way for us to find ourselves is through self-evaluation

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Why we need GOOD FRIENDS

A well known Arabic saying advises, "Don't talk about a person. Ask about his companions."

This simply means that if you want to enquire about a person — about his character, what are his habits, is he responsible, etc., then do not enquire specifically about him. Instead enquire about the company he keeps. If he keeps good company, insha-Allah he will be likewise a good and upright person. On the contrary if he remains in the company of people accustomed to sin and vice or people of low character and morals, he will generally be judged accordingly.

Musk Seller

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has emphasized upon us to always maintain good company. He is reported to have said: "A person follows the way of his friend, therefore beware of who you befriend!" (Sunan Abi Dawood #4833) In another hadeeth a good friend has been likened to one who sells musk. One will either receive some musk from him as a gift, or buy it from him or at least one will enjoy the fragrance of musk by merely being in his company. In other words one can only benefit from him. The bad friend has been compared to a blacksmith. He will either burn your clothes due to the sparks and embers flying out of his furnace, or at the least one will breathe the toxic fumes. (Saheeh Bukhaari #2101) Thus one will not be able to escape the harm of being in his company. Merely being in the company of the bad friend will leave its negative effects on one.

Friend in Need

Another common saying is, "A friend in need is a friend indeed." Supposing you are stranded on a journey and want to reach home. A friend comes and offers you a lift. He then leaves you at the door of your house. Indeed he will be regarded as a true friend. However, if he gave you a lift and dropped you off at the door of your enemy, you will be extremely disappointed and regard his claims of friendship as false. We are all presently on a journey in this world. Our greatest need is to safely reach our home which is Jannah. The person who assists us to travel on the Straight Path and guides us to our home is our true friend. The one who gives us a lift to the vice dens, encourages us to commit sins and 'helps' us to engage in vice is dropping us off at the door of our worst enemy. Such a 'friend' is either totally ignorant — that he is destroying his friend and thinking that he is doing him a favour — or he is a wolf in sheep's clothing! He merely pretends to be a friend but is a hidden enemy.

Friendship is also a two-way street. While you should choose the right friends, also be a true friend. In the guise of friendship do not push people towards the destruction of this world and the Hereafter by encouraging towards evil or passing on bad habits. Nevertheless choose your friends carefully. A friend will either make you... or break you!

Friends Are Good for Your Physical Health

It turns out that healthy relationships actually contribute to good physical health. Having a close circle of friends can decrease your risk of health problems like diabetes, heart attack, and stroke.

Having strong social ties can also decrease feelings of loneliness, which evidence shows can take a toll on your longevity. According to a 2010 review, people with strong relationships have half the risk of premature death from all causes.

Social isolation and loneliness are linked to a variety of health issues such as high blood pressure, substance abuse, heart disease, and even cancer.

Friends Give You Emotional Support

If you find yourself going through a hard time, having a friend to help you through can make the transition easier.

Research also shows that happiness is contagious among friends. One study of high school students found that those who were depressed were twice as likely to recover if they had happy friends. Likewise, kids were half as likely to develop depression if their friends had a "healthy mood."

Friends Help Build Your Confidence

Everyone has self-doubts and insecurities every now and then. But having friends who support you plays a big role in building your self-esteem, or how much you appreciate and love yourself.

Supportive friends can help you feel more confident by offering praise and reassurance when you're feeling unsure. They'll shine a light on just how amazing you are and how much you have to offer others.

Friends Help You Beat Stress

Everyone goes through stressful events. If you know you have people you can count on, you may be less likely to even perceive a tough time as stressful.

Spending time with friends can also help reduce stress. According to Harvard Medical School, "social connections help relieve levels of stress, which can harm the heart's arteries, gut function, insulin regulation, and the immune system."

Friends can also help you cope with stressful situations. According to one small study, when children hang out with their friends during a stressful situation, they produce less cortisol, a hormone released when the body is under stress.

A lack of friends can leave you feeling lonely and without support, which makes you vulnerable to other problems such as depression and substance abuse.

Friends Push You To Be Your Best

Friends can also provide a positive influence. If you make friends with people who are generous with their time, help others, or are ambitious or family-oriented, you are more likely to develop those values yourself.

Great friends have the power to mold you into the best version of yourself. They see you and love you for who you truly are. They encourage you and push you to do better and be the person you want to be—your "ideal self."



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SAYYIDINA ABUBAKR AS-SIDDIQ ﷺ



Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ was always a very close Companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he knew him better than any other man. He knew how honest and upright the Prophet ﷺ was. Such knowledge of the Prophet made Abu Bakr ﷺ be the first man to follow the Message of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He was indeed the first adult male to accept Islam.

The Holy Prophet told Abu Bakr ﷺ what had happened at Mount Hira', he told him that Allah I had revealed to him and made him His Messenger. When Abu Bakr ﷺ heard this from the Prophet ﷺ, he did not stop to think, he at once became a Muslim. He submitted to Islam with such determination that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself remarked, "I called people to Islam, everybody thought over it, at least for a while, but this was not the case with Abu Bakr ﷺ, the moment I put Islam before him, he accepted it without any hesitation." He was titled as-Siddiq by the Prophet ﷺ because his faith was too strong to be shaken by anything.

In fact, Abu Bakr was more than a great believer, as soon as he became a Muslim, he immediately began to preach Islam to others. Among those who accepted Abu Bakr's invitation to Islam were 'Uthman, Az-Zubayr, Talhah, 'Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf, Sa'ad ibn Waqqas and others who later became the pillars of Islam.

Abu Bakr's love of the Prophet ﷺ was so great that he was willing to sacrifice his life for the sake of protecting and comforting the Prophet saw. Such love and sacrifice were demonstrated when one day the Holy Prophet ﷺ was saying his prayers in the Ka'bah, while some of the chiefs of Makkah were sitting in the court yard of the Ka'bah. Seeing the Prophet ﷺ praying, 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'it took a long piece of cloth and put it around the Prophet's neck and twisted it hard in an attempt to strangle the Prophet ﷺ to death. At that moment Abu Bakr ﷺ happened to pass by from a distance, he saw 'Uqbah trying to strangle the Prophet ﷺ to death. Immediately Abu Bakr ﷺ ran to the help of the Prophet ﷺ, he pushed 'Uqbah aside and took the cloth from around the Prophet's neck. Thereupon the enemies of Islam came down upon Abu Bakr ﷺ and beat him unmercifully, although Abu Bakr ﷺ with faith like a rock did not care for his own suffering, he was glad that he was able to save the Prophet of Allah, even at the risk of his own life.

Abu Bakr ﷺ with the wealth he had, also had a major role in freeing some of the Muslim slaves, who were barbarically tortured by their heartless Mushrik masters to give up the faith and return to their masters' beliefs. The heartless monsters tried all kinds of torture: they made them lie all naked on the burning desert sand, putting big stones on their chest, as well as other kinds of torture. Here Abu Bakr's wealth came to the rescue, as he bought the poor helpless slaves from their inhuman masters and set them free, Bilal al-Habashi, the slave of 'Umayyah ibn Khalaf, was among those who were set free by Abu Bakr ﷺ. Bilal became afterwards the mu'adhin at the Prophet's mosque.

Migration to Madinah

Islam was growing rapidly in Makkah, the enemies of Islam were getting frustrated by this rapid growth. The chiefs of Makkah found

that it is necessary for them to get rid of the Prophet ﷺ before Islam can cause a real threat to them, so they planned to kill the Prophet ﷺ. Allah I revealed to his Prophet the intentions of the non-believers and ordered him to migrate to Madinah. So the Prophet ﷺ quickly went to Abu Bakr's house who was among the few that were left in Makkah with the majority of Muslims having already migrated to Madinah.

The Prophet ﷺ informed Abu Bakr ﷺ that he was commanded to migrate to Madinah that night and that he has chosen him to have the honor of joining him on his migration. Abu Bakr's heart was full of joy, "I have been looking forward to this day for months," he exclaimed.

The Makkans were so eager to find the Prophet ﷺ they were searching for him like mad hounds. Once they came to the mouth of the cave, Abu Bakr ﷺ grew pale with fright, he feared not for himself, but for the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However, the Prophet ﷺ remained calm and said to Abu Bakr ﷺ, "do not fear, certainly Allah is with us". Such words quickly calmed down Abu Bakr ﷺ and brought back tranquility to his heart.

Participation in Battles

Abu Bakr ﷺ, being the closest of Companions to the Prophet ﷺ, took part in all the battles that Prophet Muhammad had fought.

At 'Uhud and Hunayn, some members of the Muslim army showed signs of weakness, however, Abu Bakr's faith never wavered, he always stood like a rock by the side of the Prophet ﷺ.

Abu Bakr's faith and determination to raise the banner of Islam were so great that at Badr, one of his sons, who had not yet embraced Islam was fighting among the enemies, Abu Bakr ﷺ was so eager to find his son in the battle that he was searching for him amongst the enemies in order to slay him.

Abu Bakr's great love of the Prophet ﷺ was demonstrated when peace talks at Hudaibiya were held. During the negotiations, the spokesman of Quraysh was touching the beard of the Prophet ﷺ every now and then. Abu Bakr's love for the Prophet was so great that he could bear no more, he took out his sword and looked angrily at the man saying, " ... if that hand touches the beard of the Prophet ﷺ again, it will not be allowed to go back."


Tabuk was the last expedition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was keen to make it a great success, he therefore asked people to help the expedition with whatever they could. This brought the best out of Abu Bakr ﷺ who beat all records as he took all his money and household articles and heaped them at the Prophet's feet.

"Have you left anything for your children?" asked the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Bakr ﷺ then responded with great faith "Allah and his Messenger are enough for them." Companions standing around were stunned they realized that whatever they do they could not outdo Abu Bakr ﷺ in the field of service to Islam.

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WHEN THE SUN RISES...

'Shamsul Ard' (Sun of the Earth) is how Khwaja Shamsuddin was described by Hazrat Sabir Paak.

He received this title during a difficult spiritual exercise ordered by his mentor spanning a period of six years. He had to dig out a grave, making it his home, and he even slept in it.

In such a moment, Hazrat Sabir Paak observing his disciple, one day exclaimed, "The sun of the Creator is in the sky, the sun of His slave is in the earth!"

On another occasion, Hazrat Shamsuddin lamented his unique but lonely position, "Alas, the followers of Khwaja Nizamuddin take great pride in the number of khalifas their master has. They say his deputies are as many as the stars!"

Replied Hazrat Sabir Paak, half amused, "But when the sun rises, who will see the stars?"

Al Kausar wishes Urs Mubarak to the Sabri Silsila and salutes the great Sabri leader, Hazrat Khadim Ghulam Jilani Baba, for increasing the awareness of this epic spiritual personality and sufi chapter enshrined in Panipat.

Hazrat Jilani Baba undertook a long drawn-out legal and financial battle to reclaim the mazaar for the Muslim world.

In 1993, he also instructed his khalifa, Irshad Siddiqi, to host the Urs of Khwaja Shamsuddin Turk, which was the first official celebration of its kind in South Africa.

May Allah bless the Urs of Khwaja Shamsuddin wherever celebrated in the world, and may He bless Hazrat Jilani Baba with a high place in Jannah!

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