

فَاِِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا
فَاِِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Fa inna ma'al usri yusra Inna ma'al usri yusra

*So, surely with hardship comes ease,
surely with hardship comes ease*

-Al Quraan-

ZIL QAD EDITION



PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS. . .

BY S BEMATH



PROBLEMS. . . how we hate them! The time and energy we waste, stewing over problems instead of tackling them cheerfully and constructively, recognising them as the growth points of life and progress. Life can expose us to a series of problems. Problems evoke in us a great deal of emotional pain, such as sorrow, fear, anger, anxiety, sadness etc. These are uncomfortable emotions. Do we want to moan about them or solve them? Discipline is the basic set of tools we require to solve life's problems... it is in this whole process of meeting and solving problems that life has its meaning.

Problems are the cutting edge that distinguishes success and failure. Problems are what cause us to grow mentally and spiritually. Without growth, we're doomed to stay as we have always been. Wise people learn not to dread problems, but to welcome, expect and tackle problems. Fearing the pain involved causes most to go to any lengths to avoid their problems and the suffering, attempting to escape from or even at times ignoring them by building out the most elaborate fantasies in which to live, sometimes to the total exclusion of reality. A little pain, perhaps, in facing a problem... a little patience, courage, thought and effort to try and solve it – they're preferable to burying it and risk becoming a neurotic cripple who may need psychiatric treatment. In ignoring the problem, we stop growth which we learn from the problems that life brings. Therefore, we avoid real life for the replaced fantasy. When we stop the growth, we also stop the healing we could have attained if we faced our problems and pain with proper responses.

As Muslims, we are in direct communication with the Almighty ALLAH. No matter how bad you perceive your situation and your lack of strength is, don't give up! Because, where your strength ends, the grace of ALLAH begins. So, cry your heart to none but ALLAH. Only ALLAH TA'ALA can and will heal you in all possible ways! HE is the only One Who not only Hears and Knows all, but Who can change our situation and give us the patience to deal with our difficulties. Allah, The Most Wise, says:

"Remember Me, and I shall remember you; be grateful to Me, and deny Me not." (Qur'aan 2:152)

Life is difficult, and the world is full of troubles, but the sun still shines, and ALLAH'S blessings are everywhere in our lives. Many have complained that "life isn't fair." Life consists of examination papers given by Almighty ALLAH to see how much we have learnt in HIS subject called "LIFE". Sometimes ALLAH tests us so that we can see the rainbow after a stormy rain. If we can't see the rainbow in this world, then In'Sha'ALLAH we can in the Hereafter. Just be strong in your heart and mind! Furnish it with faith, love, trust, and sincerity for the sake of ALLAH. Make your imagination embroidered with HIS love and light. In'Sha'ALLAH tranquility and contentment will penetrate into our soul. That is when our imagination triumphs over intelligence. Never give up on ALLAH'S MERCY. Doing so is actually tantamount to disbelief.

"Truly no one despairs of ALLAH'S soothing Mercy except those who have no faith." (Qur'aan 12:87)

Be it the silence in your life right now or the rumble of the forthcoming storm... you have ALLAH TA'ALA to guide you through! HE sends you hope in the most desperate moments. Don't forget; the heaviest rain comes out of the darkest clouds. Have faith that it shall pass and a sunshine of Sabr (patience) will shine down on you. So, often we associate problems with "the unwanted, difficulty and stress." We should rather associate them with "lessons, opportunity and growth." Problems are like washing machines, they twist us, spin us and knock us around, but in the end we come out cleaner, brighter and better than before.

Avoiding problems is our attempt to avoid true life's learning opportunities. True emotional and spiritual health comes from acknowledging that life is full of problems. And with this truth, we discover the tools to dealing with these problems. The tools we must discover are found inside discipline. When we develop discipline within every area of our life, we also develop the tools we shall need to successfully confront and overcome problems Insha Allah.

Here are few guidelines for problem solving:

* Develop the habit of viewing problems optimistically and tackling them creatively. With patience, prayer and supplication, most problems can be overcome. Prayer is the key that unlocks all doors.

* Have faith in your ability to solve problems, often while you sleep. Write down what's worrying you before you go to bed, then trust Allah Ta'ala to work on the problem while you sleep. Often an answer comes like a flash in the morning. "Sleep on a problem" is sound common-sense which has worked throughout the ages.

* Recognise which problems need to be lived through and which to be worked through. Recognise also that there are no definite answers to every problem and with the passage of time some will evaporate, while others need to be tackled wisely.

* Don't suppose that, if you change your circumstances, problems will vanish. Many people think that if this and if that, they would be happy – but every situation has its problems. The secret is to change your attitude towards them.

* Place your forehead on the ground and mention ALLAH'S Praises, so that you can obtain true freedom. Let your tears flow in front of HIM and read the supplication of Prophet Yaqoob (Alaihis Salaam), "I only complain of my suffering and grief to ALLAH..." (Qur'aan 12:86)

* Write down several possible solutions. If you can't think of any, remember ALLAH, call out HIS name, and ask HIM for help. HE will make a way out when there seems to be no way!!!

"...And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him. Verily, Allah will accomplish his purpose..." (Quran 65: 2-3)

Accept your problems. View them positively, creatively and courageously. And, yes, be grateful for them – for, in learning to cope, you'll grow in stature and wisdom. Take the time out every day to thank ALLAH for the blessings in your life – not only will you be overwhelmed because you will never be able to enumerate them, but you will truly recognise ALLAH'S presence in your life.

Stay strong and firm because things will get better Insha Allah, it might be stormy now, but it can't rain forever.

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Heroic Resistance Signals Failure of Zionism

BY DR. FIROZ OSMAN

failed to further fracture Syria, Iraq and Lebanon into smaller ethnic enclaves of Alawites, Sunnis, Shias, Kurds, Christian fiefdoms.

Al-Quds (Jerusalem), which houses the Al-Aqsa compound, belonged to the international community under the administration of the UN. It was granted this special status for its importance to the three Abrahamic religions.

The illegal Israeli control of East Jerusalem, including the Old City, which Israel occupied in 1967, violates several principles of international law, which outlines that an occupying power does not have sovereignty in the territory it occupies.

Israel has overturned the demography of Palestine, controlling and Judaising the Old City and East Jerusalem as a whole. Palestinians in Jerusalem hold only permanent residency status, not citizenship, in contrast with Jews who are born in the city. The explosion in Sheikh Jarrah is a consequence of decades of expulsion, oppression and injustice.

This is what apartheid South Africa had done, hence the designation of Israel as an apartheid state. The apartheid wall through which the Zionists have cut off Palestinian families and villages, stealing in the process more Palestinian land, caps it all. In a ruling handed down in July 2004, the International Court of Justice described Israel's apartheid wall as illegal.

From spurious biblical claims that "God promised them this land" described as a "land without a people" (Palestinians are non-people in Zionist mythology), they continue to uproot Palestinian families from their homes and villages, often at gunpoint by Jewish settlers, the vanguard of the Zionist colonial movement.

South Africans should never forget the UN General Assembly Resolution 3379 titled "Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination" which reads "Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination". The measure was adopted 40 years ago, on November 10, 1975, and the majority of the international community backed it.

It is time that the South African government stop issuing inane press statements of supporting the longdead "two-state" fraud and trite "condemnation" for the heinous crimes committed by Israel. There is no alternative but for SA to support the Palestinians to return to the time-honoured and internationally sanctioned armed resistance against the "incremental genocide" by Israel, as the Israeli author, Ilan Pappé, calls it. Until this racist ideology is uprooted and eliminated utterly and irrevocably, there will be no peace in Palestine or anywhere else in the world.

THE heroic resistance by Palestinian youth at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem is a clarion affirmation of the utter failure of the Zionist Project to colonise the land of Palestine and empty it of its indigenous people. The Polish-born first prime minister of the Israeli entity David Ben-Gurion stated in 1948: "We must do everything to insure they (the Palestinians) never do return." He assured his fellow Zionists that Palestinians will never come back to their homes. "The old will die and the young will forget."

Protests by Palestinians against the ethnic cleansing and Judaisation of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) in the suburb of Sheikh Jarrah demonstrates that not even former US president Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the "capital of Israel" will be accepted.

Sheikh Jarrah is named after the personal physician of the iconic liberator of Al-Quds, Salahuddin al-Ayubi (Saladin) in 1187 when it was occupied by the Crusaders. Most of its residents are refugees ethnically cleansed by the Zionists in 1948 from the Talbiya neighbourhood.

Political Zionism is an ethnic cleansing, racist colonial ideology developed in 1896 by an Austrian Jew, Theodor Herzl. Its main goal was the establishment of the Greater Israel Project in the heart of the Arab and Muslim world, extending from the Nile River in Egypt to the Euphrates River in Iraq, as a Jewish-only homeland for what is termed the "Jewish People".

By the turn of the last century, British and French colonialists were busy instigating revolts in the Middle East by buying the loyalty of Arabian tribal chiefs to use them against the Ottoman Sultanate. The toxic brew of Western colonialism, Arabian nationalism, and political Zionism facilitated the imposition of the Zionist entity in Palestine through the infamous Balfour Declaration.

Political Zionism, despite strenuous efforts by its proponents, has little or nothing to do with Judaism, the religion of millions of people. In fact, leading rabbis at The Philadelphia Conference of November 3-6, 1869, adopted a resolution that stressed the radical opposition between the universalist principles of Judaism and those of political Zionism.

The racism of political Zionism is a perfectly coherent system that inspires all the laws and all the practices of Israel. It encompasses all the odious characteristics of colonialism including ethnic cleansing, regular massacres, bombardments of entire civilian populations, wars of aggression, dispossession, exile, systemic racism, apartheid and destabilisation.

With a massive infusion of financial, diplomatic and military help from the British and French colonial powers, the Zionists accomplished this Zionist Project to establish the state of Israel on the occupied Palestinian land after the genocide and ethnic cleansing of a majority of Palestinian Arabs.

Significantly for the Zionist Project, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire fragmented Islam's Arab heartland into some 40 weak and dependent territories and oil-rich protectorates. It has



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Psychological Impact of Ongoing Trauma on Palestinian Children

BY: SHIREEN ISMAIL



Trauma occurs when Human Beings experience or are exposed to unforeseen and unpredictable events and episodes. The resultant shock of traumatic events has a direct impact that triggers multifaceted psychological, physical, emotional, and social problems. Natural phenomena such as earthquakes or man-made phenomena such as wars, domestic violence, and forced migration are considered traumatic events. This article is based on research studies by academic scholars who have explored the long-term effects of war and occupation on the Palestinian children in Gaza.

Palestinian children were required to complete a Checklist of Traumatic Experiences (CTE), a Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Scale (SPTSDS) and a Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ). The research study indicated that every child in Palestine had been exposed to at least minimum three traumatic episodes. The most prevalent types of trauma exposure for Palestinian children were as follows: 99% of children had suffered humiliation (either to themselves or a family member); 97% had been exposed to the sound of explosions and bombs; 85% had witnessed a martyr's funeral and 84% had witnessed shelling by tanks, artillery, or military planes.

The research study results thus highlights that there are 305,195 children in the Gaza Strip suffering from trauma in need of urgent psychological, social, and medical services in the areas of prevention, counselling, rehabilitation, and therapeutic treatment. The common symptoms the Palestinian children undergo from the ongoing post-traumatic stress disorder are: cognitive symptoms, from which 25% of children suffered (eg, a child might take a long time to fall sleep, or cannot stop thinking about the trauma he/she was exposed to, or feels everything around him/her is not safe); emotional symptoms from which 22% suffered (eg, the child feeling alone, suffering from nightmares, easily getting tense and nervous, feeling sad and fearful, bedwetting); social behavioural disorders, from which 22% suffered (eg, aggressive and rude behaviour, rejecting a teacher's or parent's authority, having difficulty enjoying games and hobbies); academic behavioural disorders, from which 17% suffered (eg, difficulty in concentrating on study, increasingly bad academic performance, difficulties in paying attention during school lessons, disruptive behaviour at school); somatic symptoms, from which 14% suffered (eg, headaches, stomach-ache, hypochondriasis, somatization).

Children who belonged to families with low incomes suffered more than others and in Gaza, poverty conditions are high. According to research studies, nearly 87% of the population live below the poverty line. This has increased the risk of psycho-social problems in children. The study noted that the support of family, friends, relatives, teachers, and spiritual leaders can be of great assistance, however, having a normal childhood in Palestine is unlikely in the current circumstances and the psychological well-being of Palestinian children is at risk of being compromised by on-going traumatic experiences. Chronic traumatization may be psychologically damaging, not only due to specific and repeated

traumatic incidents, but also, because of living in a state of constant danger in Gaza.

Studies conducted in the Gaza Strip found that children living in war zones are at high risk of suffering from trauma as well as depressive disorders. For example, after the Gulf War, it was found that the exposure to dead bodies and body parts were the highest predictor of PTSD intrusion symptoms. The exposure to heightened strong sensory impressions such as smelling burning bodies, hearing screams for help may result in more severe re-experiencing symptoms.

The impact of ongoing traumatic episodes researchers suggest will negatively impact on family relationships and that experiences related to political violence and war might constitute a serious risk for the optimal well-functioning family. Parent-child attachment is considered important in providing a protective shield for children's psychological well-being in dangerous conditions. Sadly, parents are often unable to protect their children from seeing destruction, violence, and abuse. As a result, the protective safety-net or shield that is essential for children's mental health is often compromised when families are faced with the shelling and demolition of their homes.

In other words, war and political conflict disrupt the fundamental parental functions, such as protecting children and enhancing trust in security and human virtues. The war and the long-term occupation of Palestinian territory expose children to recurrent traumatic events which violate their human rights: the right to live, to learn, to be healthy, to live with his/her family and community, to develop his/her personality, to be nurtured and protected, and the right to enjoy childhood.

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Gaza: This time it is different

Ebrahim Moosa – Palestine Information Network

After 11 days of sustained assault, the wounds in Gaza, Palestine, run deep.

At least 256 Palestinians including 66 children were killed in the onslaught, the latest manifestation of the Zionist colonial war to purge Palestine of its historical inhabitants.

The skyline of Gaza today is at a stark contrast to what it was barely a month ago. 2000 homes have been destroyed in Israeli terror attacks, and more than 15 000 other housing units have been damaged.

In Gaza, which was already declared unfit for human habitation years ago, the United Nations reports that six hospitals, nine healthcare centres and a water desalination plant were damaged. Roads leading to Al-Shifa Hospital, the largest medical facility in the Gaza Strip, were also targeted, along with the only COVID-19 testing laboratory in the enclave. The already compromised water, sewage-treatment and electricity supply have been dealt further blows.

The statistics no doubt paint a bleak picture of loss, trauma and the steep cost of rebuilding in Gaza. Yet, there is another more optimistic picture that is emerging from this rubble, which to ignore would be myopic.

As many analysts have pointed out, the latest Israeli crimes at Al-Aqsa, Sheikh Jarrah and Gaza, have produced a "tectonic shift in sentiment against the Israeli state".

Of the most notable changes observed this time round:

- The ascendancy of resistance
Palestinians have stood united behind the resistance groups in their defence of Masjid al-Aqsa, Sheikh Jarrah and Gaza. The resistance rockets penetrated the Israeli state on a scale never seen before. The myth of Israeli 'invincibility' was been shattered, and none of the so-called "objectives" of the Israeli war on Gaza were achieved. In the words of Professor Haidar Eid, "the Palestinian people prevailed over an armed-to-the-teeth apartheid regime and its American-made Iron Dome by breaking through their own "Mental Dome".

- The unity of Palestine
Unlike previous assaults, this time round there was a unified

response from residents of Gaza and the West Bank, the Palestinians in the territories Israel occupied in 1948, and refugees in the diaspora. This resistance tore down the artificial barriers Israel has imposed on the various segments of the Palestinian nation, and meant that Israel had to 'fight fires' on several fronts.

- Media inroads

There was a highly noticeable shift in the global discourse surrounding this Israeli assault. Social media enabled ordinary Palestinians to amplify their voices most widely and convey the reality of Israeli crimes. There was greater objectivity from mainstream media too giving rise to Zionist frustration on an inability to continue to dictate the narrative.

At the end of the bombardment, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians rushed to the streets to declare their triumph as a unified, proud people. Says Ramzy Baroud, Palestinians won because, once more, they emerged from the rubble of Israeli bombs as a whole, a nation so determined to win its freedom at any cost.

Still, occupation and dispossession of Palestine persists, and a 'ceasefire' should not lull supporters of the Palestinian cause into a sense of complacency. The momentum of solidarity should be maintained, and Israel must be held accountable for its crimes. "It's not that there is a war at some point, and on the other days we have peace instead," highlights Gaza leader Yahya Sinwar. "We are always under occupation, it is a daily aggression. It is just of varying intensity."

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Mothers of the Believers

The Blessed Wives of
Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ)



The wives of Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) are the Mothers of the Believers or Ummaahatul Mu'mineen. Allah Almighty says in Surah Al-Azhab Verse 6 and Verse 32, "The Messenger (ﷺ) is closer to the believers than their own selves, and his Wives are their Mothers" and "O Wives of the Messenger of Allah, you are not like any other women". The status of the Wives of Nabi (ﷺ) is one of respect and veneration. The Mothers of the Believers are the perfect role models for all of humanity.

Sayidah Khadija Bint Khuwaylid (Radi Allahu Anha)

The Purified

Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) was known in the community of Mecca as At-Tahira, 'the pure one'. A woman of great integrity, intelligence, wisdom, and immense spirituality. The leaders from amongst the best woman of paradise became the wife of Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) before the advent of Prophethood. The prominent lady was a virtuous wife who established a happy home for Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) and provided love, wealth, support, assistance, and comfort during difficult times. Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) was compassionate, affectionate and would ease the causes of worry for her husband at the beginning of the Islamic mission. When Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) received the first revelation of the Quran, overwhelmed by the experience, rushed home to Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) and told his wife to cover him with a blanket. Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) held Nabi (ﷺ) close, reassured and consoled him and expressed kind words, "Expect good news for Allah will decree good for you." Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) went to her cousin Waraqa, a Christian who was well versed in Jewish and Christian prophecy, confirmed that Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) is indeed the Messenger of Allah Almighty. Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) was the first to embrace Islam and stood firmly in her support of her husband's mission. Despite the hardships and being ostracised Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) was Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ)'s constant companion and confidante, faithfully dedicated and devoted to her husband and the prophetic mission. Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) was a pillar of strength to Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) as well as the Muslims. When Sayidah Aisha (Radi Allahu Anha) questioned Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) on the extent to which Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha) was continued to be remembered and missed, the reply was, "She embraced Islam when people disbelieved me, and she helped me in her person and her wealth when there was no one else to lend me a helping hand. I had children only from her".

Sayidah Sawdah Bint Zamah (Radi Allahu Anha)

The Widow of the Emigrant

Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) married Sayidah Sawdah (Radi Allahu Anha) a widow after the passing on of Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha). Sayidah Sawdah (Radi Allahu Anha) had embraced Islam with her husband. She endured tremendous trials and tribulations when she migrated to Abyssinia to preserve her religion. The marriage proposal to Nabi (ﷺ) was accepted with huge honour. Nabi (ﷺ) married Sayidah Sawdah (Radi Allahu Anha) in the tenth year of Prophethood. Sayidah Sawdah (Radi Allahu Anha) was generous and good-hearted and graciously cared for Nabi (ﷺ)'s family and the household. Sayidah A'ishah Siddiqah (Radi Allahu Anha) said about Sayidah Sawdah (Radi

Allahu Anha), "No woman is more beloved to me than Sawdah, in whose shoes I would rather be in than others."

Sayidah A'ishah Bint Abu Bakr (Radi Allahu Anha)

The Truth Testifier

Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha) was the beloved daughter of Nabi (ﷺ)'s closest friend, Hazrat Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه). Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha) was engaged to Nabi (ﷺ) at an early age after the death of the dear Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha). Jabra'eel (جبرائيل) appeared to Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) in a dream, carrying a bundle wrapped in red silk, saying, "This is your wife." Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) later told Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha), "When I uncovered the face, I discovered it was you, so I said, 'If this is from Allah, it will be done'." Meanwhile, Nabi (ﷺ) encouraged by the companions, married Sayidah Sawdah (Radi Allahu Anha) a kind and supportive wife who raised and cared for the family. It was only several years later after the Hijra that the marriage between Nabi (ﷺ) and Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha) occurred. Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha) was beautiful, delicate, noble, and extremely intelligent and grew from a young girl to the most knowledgeable and experienced woman in the presence of Nabi (ﷺ).

The young wife was a source of joy and relaxation for Nabi (ﷺ) from the continuous difficulties. Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha) affirmed that noble qualities of character are: "honesty of speech, reliability, truthfulness and steadfastness in misfortune, the provision of protection for friend and neighbour, and readiness to give aid in the ups and downs of life, to feed the needy, to treat slaves with kindness and to revere one's parents." It was often that when Nabi (ﷺ) was with Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha) that revelation was received. Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha) would question and discuss the meanings of the revelation. From an early age Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha) was present during innumerable conversations between Nabi (ﷺ) and Hazrat Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) regarding the revelation and the needs of the emerging community. Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha)'s mental acumen enabled the honourable lady to easily learn the Quran by heart and to memorise additional verses when revelation occurred. After Sayidah Khadija (Radi Allahu Anha), Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha) was Nabi (ﷺ)'s favourite wife. When Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) was ill, the Blessed Mothers of the Believers would allow Nabi (ﷺ) to remain and rest for many hours with Sayidah A'ishah (Radi Allahu Anha).

HERD MENTALITY

One of the reasons that President Ramaphosa proffered to the Zondo commission as a response to the inactivity to take decisive action against state capture was herd mentality. This concept of herd mentality is normally not explored in the public domain and to make a casual statement using this terminology is naïve. The example of a person walking in a busy street can be used to explain the concept of

BY FAIZEL KHAMKER

herd mentality. Without any warning the person stops and looks intensely at a car and shortly thereafter a number of other pedestrians will stop and do the same for no reason other than having seen the first person doing it. Herd mentality can therefore be described as an act of doing something without reason or consciousness in a manner best understood as blindfolded and what we normally would say "following like sheep". Its application and consequences must be explored particularly in the political and economic sectors.

Many commentators have written on this matter with some defending this idea whilst others have been critical of those actions based on the principle of herd immunity. Add to this the idea, that urban legend not having any valid basis, profoundly affects our approach to this problem. Studies conducted by Prof Jeremy Griffith and Prof Harry Prosen should be welcomed in order to critically reject urban legends which negatively affects the masses. One such legend which was investigated by the above academia was the rejection that the aggressive actions leading to war, destruction and hurt has a biological basis and is a natural reaction rather than a mental or psychiatric disorder.

When we have an admission from the President of the country that parliamentary processes follow the herd mentality we should be extremely worried. The first casualty in this whole process is truth. A person of influence or a badly thought out policy which has the potential to harm many but allow for a handful to handsomely benefit then the application of this principle of herd mentality must be rejected. The pilferage of billions of Rands from our state coffers to benefit a few and at the expense of having key government institutions threatened such as educational and healthcare can never be justified under any circumstances. Its defence that the party or organization or influencer is of higher status and or rank and that the party line must be followed should not be allowed by those that had entrusted these officials to act in the collective best interest of society. This process of creating an "acceptable" code of dishonesty can only survive if the masses themselves have fallen victim of herd mentality.

The second victim is intellectualism. Intellect should not be confused with the amount of text known to a person but should rather be seen as the ability to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong

and the capacity to stand for what is right and oppose what is wrong. This is the qualities that the voters should demand from their representatives. The major problem lies with the masses where they are themselves the victim of herd mentality and as a result have foregone their right to intellectual criticism. This presents the unscrupulous with the opportunity of utilising this tool for the ultimate disadvantage and abuse of the masses. The unanswered questions will remain as to the quantum of the ultimate negative effects on society where intellect and moral conscience has been sacrificed for expediency.

When we extend this principle to the economic front the prime example is the chase for inferior goods and produce at an unreasonable price which potentially can have long term negative effects based on the fact that others lead the way and the rest follow blindly. This can be witnessed on a daily basis and should demand some level of introspection.

The above named members of academia rightfully suggest that we should go back to what we would call the natural "fitra" of humankind. This is necessary to stop the regression of society.








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THE PURSUIT OF Happiness

BY MOULANA NASIK AHMED BUROOD

What is happiness? In Arabic there are different words used for happiness. Happiness as a word, is either external or internal or a combination thereof. It has been said that when a person has both of these then: "You will see a glow on his face and contentment in his heart." People always wonder if there is a formula for happiness. Mo Gawdat, an Egyptian entrepreneur has said that 'Happiness is equal to or greater than the events of your life, minus your expectations of how life should be'.

If we look at happiness, we will see that it is a choice, our choice. It is that choice that we make and create for ourselves and not for something that depends on other people or getting their approval. Happiness is not something that we capture through the affirmation or action of others. We can definitely be inspired by others, but happiness comes from within. Happiness is also an attitude of mind. A good attitude can create happiness. One Buddhist said something to the effect that many candles can be lighted from ONE candle and the life of that one candle will not be shortened. Thus happiness never decreases by being shared and happiness is best found when you do for others. This Buddhist got his inspiration from the Hadith of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi WaSallam): "None of you is a true believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." (Bukhari – 13 & Muslim – 45)

If we have bread every day for breakfast, lunch and supper, it is sufficient to nourish our bodies. Yet we want pizza, prawns, dessert, etc. Why? When people are asked they say: "It should be enjoyable." So we can see that we should make happiness our choice, a choice which we create and make for ourselves. Always remember that happiness is a journey, not a destination.

There was once a king who was walking with his minister. He saw a farmer along with his family (wife and son). They were buzzing, so much of life in them. They were beaming with joy. They had so much of happiness, love and affection for one another. The king said: "What is this? I have a massive palace and everything that a person can dream of. They have nothing and yet they are happier than me. Why?" The minister said: "Oh king! The reason is because they are not part of the 99 club." The king wanted to know what this 99 club is. The minister told the king to give him 99 gold coins and after 6 months he will tell the king what the 99 club is. So the king gave the minister 99 gold coins. The minister took this bag of gold coins and left it right at the door step of the farmer. In the morning when the farmer got up, he saw a bag right at

his door step. He picked up the bag, went back inside, and as excited as he was, he opened the bag. He saw that there were gold coins. He never came across such a stroke of good fortune. He emptied the contents of the bag on the floor and started counting. There were 99. He said: "I must have made a mistake because of my excitement. Let me count again." He counted again, 99. He said: "Who is that idiot that forgot to put one more. He should have made it a round figure. Why 99?" so he called his wife and told her to count. She counted 99. He told his wife that she is not doing it right and so he called his son. The son also counted 99. The farmer said: "We cannot live like this. We have to make it 100." So he started working hard to get that one gold coin. The wife thought to herself: "My husband is such a kebab. We have 99 gold coins and he does not want to spend anything. Are we supposed to make atchaar with this?" So she took 2 coins and went shopping. In the evening when the farmer came back, he counted the gold coins and saw that there were only 97. First there was one less and now 2 have gone. He started shouting as to where the 2 coins went to. The wife said that she had taken it and had gone shopping. The farmer was furious and yelled: "I am working so hard, blood and sweat, to get that one gold coin and you spent 2 coins already." Meanwhile the son spent another 2 coins. After 6 months the king and the minister were walking pass the same farm and he saw that the love, the buzz and the happiness had gone. Everything had gone. The only thing left were arguments, fights, bickering etc. The king said to his minister: "What happened? How did they change so much in just 6 months?" The minister replied: "Now they are officially part of the 99 club." The king wanted to know what this 99 club was all about and the minister told the king that the 99 club is a club of those who have 99 gold coins, but in running after the one, they do not use their 99 gold coins.

People say that money can buy happiness because it increases our standard of living. What people fail to understand is that in the pursuit of acquiring happiness through increasing our standard of living, we forget that the true pursuit of happiness comes from increasing the standard of our lives. Whether we drive a VW or a Mercedes, the road remains the same.

Whether we fly economy or business class, the destination remains the same. Whether we have a Rolex or Fossil watch, the time remains the same. Whether we talk on a Samsung or an iPhone, the concept of calling remains the same. It is quite amazing that we work ourselves so much in increasing the standard of our living that we forget to increase the standard of our lives. There is nothing wrong in driving a Mercedes, or flying business class, or wearing an Omega watch etc. If Allah Almighty has blessed you with the wealth that you can afford it then by all means go for it.

But remember that in trying to enhance and increase the standard of our living, never compromise with the standard of our lives. It is not the standard of living that should make us happy; it should be standard of our lives that should make us happy. There is way more to life than money and there is way more than money can buy. It is a great irony that something that should bring us the greatest joy and fulfilment we very conveniently neglect solely because we running after increasing and enhancing our standard of living and not after our standard of life.



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Stress and your heart

HASINA BEGUM SAYED

The real connection between stress and heart disease, and what to do if you're under too much pressure.

You're stuck in traffic, late to an important appointment. Your breath quickens. Your heart races. Your muscles tense. As your anxiety builds, you might even feel like you're on the verge of having a heart attack.

Chronic stress—whether from a traffic-choked daily commute, unhappy marriage, or overbearing boss—has been linked to a wide range of harmful health effects. It can interfere with your mood, sleep, and appetite.

5 ways to manage stress and help your heart

Want to turn your stress around and help your heart in the process? Try these five simple tips.

1. Stay positive. People with heart disease who maintain an upbeat attitude are less likely to die than those who are more negative, according to research. Just having a good laugh can help your heart. Laughter has been found to lower levels of stress hormones, reduce inflammation in the arteries, and increase "good" HDL cholesterol.
2. Meditate. This practice of inward-focused thought and deep breathing has been shown to reduce heart disease risk factors such as high blood pressure. Anyone can learn to meditate. Just take a few minutes to sit somewhere quiet, close your eyes, and focus on your breathing.
3. Exercise. Every time you are physically active, whether you take a walk or play tennis, your body releases mood-boosting chemicals called endorphins. Exercising not only melts away stress, but it also protects against heart disease by lowering your blood pressure, strengthening your heart muscle, and helping you maintain a healthy weight.
4. Unplug. It's impossible to escape stress when it follows you everywhere. Cut the cord. Avoid emails and TV news. Take time each day—even if it's for just 10 or 15 minutes—to escape from the world.
5. Find your own path to stress relief. Any technique is effective if it works for you.

Foods to avoid:

1. Sausage and other processed meats.
2. Potato chips and other processed, packaged snacks
3. Dessert
4. Too much protein
5. Fast food
6. Energy drinks
7. Added salt
8. Coconut oil

Here are some ways to help manage congestive heart failure with your eating plan:

- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, which are naturally low in sodium.
- Choose fresh foods, including lean meats, fish, poultry, dry and fresh legumes (or rinsed canned beans), eggs, milk, yogurt, plain rice, pasta and oatmeal.
- Choose lower-sodium sensible snacks.
- Avoid using the salt shaker. Or replace it with a sodium-free blend of herbs, such as Mrs. Dash.
- Cut the sodium completely, or at least reduce it by half in recipes. Be a creative cook—use herbs, onion, garlic, citrus and other fruit juices, and vinegars to add flavor.
- Be careful of condiments—ketchup, mayonnaise, mustard, pickles, olives, marinades, tenderizers, soy sauce, lemon pepper and some seasoning blends contain a lot of sodium. Check the ingredient list for salt.
- Avoid convenience foods, and fast foods.



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BY MOULANA MOHAMED ASLAM

Part Nine

In this edition, I would like to draw our readers attention on some Question and relevant Answers on certain matters of Tasawwuf.

QUESTION:-

Can a Seeker, Student or Murid perform Sajda e Taazim (prostration of respect) towards a Mazaar or in front of one's PIR?

ANSWER:-

Sajda is the prostration of eight body parts on the Ground. The forehead, Nose, two palms of the hand, two knees and the two feet. In the Shariah, there are two explanations of Sajda. One is Sajda e Ibaadat, ie to perform prostration of worship which is only to Allah (ﷻ) and no one else. If someone performs the Sajda e Ibaadat to another being besides Allah, this will be termed SHIRK.

The other explanation is to perform Sajda e Taazim ie to prostrate in respect of someone like a Pir Sahb or a Mazaar. In the previous Ummats, Sajda e Taazim was allowed but in the Shariah of Rasul (ﷺ) such a Sajda is deemed HARAAM (Forbidden).

Many Juhala (Ignorant) murids still perform Sajda e Taazim because of some ignorant Peer sahebs they follow that do not correct them.

If Sajda e Taazim was allowed, then why did the Rasul (ﷺ) did not condone it ?. In fact in a Hadith e Mubarak, he said that :- "If I had ordered anyone to make SAJDA besides ALLAH, I would have ordered the wife make SAJDA to her Husband". The SAJDA meant here was Sajda e Taazim. So from this Hadith e Mubarak, we can understand that SAJDA e TAAZIM is not acceptable.

QUESTION:-

Can a woman visit the Mazar of a Wali of Allah?

ANSWER:-

According to many Fuqaha, to go to the Mazaar of a Wali of Allah is Mustahab for women. If a woman goes with good intention, she will earn Sawaab but if she doesn't go, there is no punishment. If a woman goes with the intention of Sawaab, the following conditions will still need to be adhered to:-

- ✍ She must be accompanied by a Mahram (Family member or a Non-Stranger) at all times. If she is married, her husband needs to give her permission. If she is unmarried, she will require the permission of her Parents.
- ✍ Dress up appropriately. Must be covered as per the requirements of Shariah.
- ✍ There shouldn't be danger of her being attacked or robbed.
- ✍ There shouldn't be intermingling of the men and women at the Mazaar she is visiting. Separate entrances and separate seating arrangements for Ladies and Men.
- ✍ There should be no weeping, crying or raising of voices by the Ladies.

A Kausar

- ✍ Fuqaha have made it incorrect for one to touch, kiss the Mazaar or other actions which are contrary to the respect of the Mazaar. Remain at least four steps away when paying your Respects.

QUESTION:

What are the conditions to be a Pir Saheb or spiritual guide? Can someone without a beard be a Pir (Spiritual Guide)?

ANSWER:

"So ask the people of the Book if you do not know."

[Al Quran:- Surah Nahl 16:43]

It is obligatory that one seek the knowledge that makes one's worship, dealings, transactions, and relationships valid according to the Shariah. And it is also obligatory to seek the knowledge that helps one cure and prevent the diseases of the heart. When one does not know a ruling, Allah tells us: "Ask the people of the Book if you know not." The basic manners of asking about matters of religion is that one does so seeking guidance, and the means to the good pleasure of Allah.

It is of tremendous importance to be careful where one takes one's knowledge from. Imam Muslim relates that Ibn Sirin (Allah have mercy on him) said, "Verily, this matter is your religion (din), so be very careful as to whom you take your religion from" [Sahih Muslim]

Thus, one should be careful to seek the guidance of those who are clear in their following of the well-trodden path, the Ahle Sunnat wal Jama'at, which has been the way of the inheritors of the Prophet (ﷺ), and will remain their way until the Last Day.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) himself told us, "There shall always remain a group in my community manifest on the truth, unaffected by those who oppose them, until the last day." [Bukhari and Muslim]

The characteristic of such scholars, guides and Pir Sahb's are:-

- ✍ They follow one of the four schools of Sunni law; They follow traditional scholarship in matters of faith, not reformist or modernist ideologies; Upholds and follows the sunnah. They see the importance and necessity of spirituality, for the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) told us that, "Verily, Allah does not look at your faces or forms. Rather, he looks at your hearts and deeds." [Muslim, and Ahmad]
- ✍ They are people of – good character, noble manners, and wisdom. They promote virtue rather than controversy, and the sunnah rather than reformist innovations. They have an unbroken chain to the Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) They have enough knowledge not to be misguided themselves nor misguide others. The guide must be free from apparent FISQ (open sinning).

As such, if one is unable to access the religious knowledge one requires in one's daily life and worship, it is obligatory to take the means that enable one to do so, even travel if necessary.

Any "guide" who shaves is a FASIQ MU'LIN (open sinner) thus is going against an established tradition which the Ahnaf scholars have categorized as WAAJIB. He cannot be a guide despite if he has the other qualities until he makes sincere TAUBA and keeps away from shaving as the Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) commanded to trim the moustache and grow the beard



Uthman ibn Affan

Possessing Two Lights

Uthman ibn Affan (رضي الله عنه), close companion of the Prophet (ﷺ), Amīr al-Mu'minin, the third Khalifa of Islam and third of the Ten promised Paradise. Called Dhu al-Nūrayn or "Possessing Two Lights," viz marriage to the two daughters of Raulullah (ﷺ). He collected quranic revelations so that they could be compiled as one and read the quraan in its entirety before the Prophet (ﷺ). He related 146 hadiths from the Prophet and there are many companions who related hadith from him.

Uthman had the best of wealth but also the greatest generosity. When he heard the Prophet say: "Whoever equips the army of al-Uṣra, Paradise is for him," he brought the Prophet a thousand gold dinars which he poured into his lap. The Prophet (ﷺ) picked them up with his hand and said repeatedly: "Nothing shall harm Uthman after what he did today." It is also narrated that equipped the army of al-Uṣra with seven hundred ounces of gold, or seven hundred and fifty camels and fifty horses.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The most compassionate of my Community towards my Community is Abu Bakr; the staunchest in Allah's Religion is Umar; and the most truthful in his modesty is Uthman (رضي الله عنه)." The pebbles were heard by Abu Dharr glorifying Allah in the hands of the Prophet (ﷺ), Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman (رضي الله عنه). The Prophet particularly praised Uthman for his modesty and said: "Shall I not feel bashful before a man when even the angels feel bashful before him?" He was humble and was seen at the time of his caliphate sleeping alone in the mosque, wrapped in a blanket with no one around him, and riding on a mule with his son Na'il behind him. It is related through several sound chains that Uthman recited the Qur'an in a single rak'a. Ibn al-Mubarak also narrated that Uthman (رضي الله عنه) used to fast all year round. Ibn Umar said that Uthman (رضي الله عنه) was meant by the verse "Is he who pays adoration in the watches of the night, prostrate and standing, bawarding of the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord..." (39:9).

Anas narrated: When Hudhayfa campaigned with the people of Iraq and al-Sham in Armenia, the Muslims objected with regard to the Qur'an. Hudhayfa came to Uthman (رضي الله عنه) and told him: "O Commander of the Believers, rescue this Community before they differ in the Qur'an the way Christians and Jews differed in the Books." Uthman (رضي الله عنه) was distressed at this and asked Hafsa the Mother of the Believers: "Send me all the volumes in which the Qur'an has been written down." When she did, Uthman (رضي الله عنه) ordered Zayd ibn Thabit, Sa'id ibn al-As, Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr, and Abd Al-Rahman ibn al-

Harith ibn Hisham to copy them into volumes. He said: "If you all differ with Zayd concerning the Arabic, then write it in the dialect of Quraysh, for truly the Qur'an was only revealed in their dialect." There is Consensus around the integral contents of Uthman's volume. This means that one who denies or questions it in whole or in part has left Islam. The plot to kill Uthman (رضي الله عنه) marked the onset of Dissension (fitna) in the Community. Together with deadly division, the great sign of this Dissension was the beginning of falsehood. The timing of the spread of falsehood was foretold by the Prophet (ﷺ) in the hadith: "I entrust to you the well-being of my Companions, and that of those that come after them. Then falsehood will spread. The Prophet (ﷺ) predicted man's forthcoming martyrdom on numerous occasions: "Give him [Uthman] the tidings of Paradise after a trial that shall befall him."

"A dissension shall surge like so many bull's horns. At that time, he [indicating a man wearing a veil] and whoever is with him are on the side of right." Ka'b ibn Murra al-Bahzi then ran to the man, lifted his veil, and turned him towards the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: "Him, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said yes. It was Uthman ibn Affan. Uthman said: "The Prophet (ﷺ) took a covenant from me [not to fight at the time of my martyrdom] and I shall fulfill it." "O Uthman (رضي الله عنه)! It may be that Allah shall vest you with a shirt. If they demand that you remove it, do not remove it." Ibn Umar said: "As Uthman (رضي الله عنه) was delivering a sermon, Jahjah al-Ghafari walked up to him, snatched his stick, and broke it on his knee. A shard of wood entered his thigh and it got gangrened and was amputated. He passed away within a year following the incident. In Umar related from Uthman (رضي الله عنه) that the previous night the latter had seen the Prophet in his dream telling him: "Be strong! Verily you shall break your fast with us tomorrow night." When his assailants came in they found him reading the Qur'an. Uthman (رضي الله عنه) was first stabbed in the head with an arrow-head, then a man placed the point of his sword against his belly, whereupon his wife Na'ila tried to prevent him with her hand, losing several fingers. Then Uthman (رضي الله عنه) and Na'ila's servant were killed as the latter fought back. She ran out of the house screaming for help and the killers dispersed. It is narrated that Uthman (رضي الله عنه) was killed as he was reading the verse "And Allah will suffice you for defense against them. He is the Hearer, the Knower." (2:137) Several reports state that at the time of Uthman's siege and death Zayd ibn Thabit had marshalled three hundred Ansār in his defense together with Abu Hurayra, Ibn Umar, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr (رضي الله عنه), but Uthman (رضي الله عنه) forbade all of them to fight.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOCUS

BY FAKIR HASSEN

New York, USA - The UN Security Council called for immediate humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, especially in the Gaza Strip, following the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel and Palestinian factions. They also called for full adherence to the ceasefire that ended 11 days of fighting during which large parts of Gaza were devastated and scores killed or injured by unrelenting missile attacks from Israel. Members of the Council offered support for the call by Secretary-General António Guterres for the international community to work with the UN "on developing an integrated, robust package of support for a swift, sustainable reconstruction and recovery". UN relief chief Mark Lowcock announced that \$22.5 million was being allocated from emergency funds for the humanitarian response.

Ramallah, PALESTINE - President Mahmoud Abbas met with the Director of the Egyptian General Intelligence, Minister Abbas Kamel, to discuss the latest developments concerning the ceasefire in Gaza. President Abbas expressed his appreciation for the role and efforts of Egypt and its support of the Palestinian people and their just cause. Abbas also met in a separate meeting US Secretary of State Antony Blinken where he thanked the US administration, where he emphasised the need to ensure that the ceasefire included putting an end to the ongoing attacks perpetrated by Israeli forces and settler extremists against Palestinians in Jerusalem, particularly against Al-Aqsa Mosque; preventing the forced expulsion of Palestinians from their homes in Jerusalem's Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan neighbourhoods, and the cessation of the arrest and detention of Palestinians,

the demolition of homes, and the expropriation of Palestinian land for settlement activities. Abbas also emphasized the Palestinian side's commitment to peaceful popular resistance and to repudiate all forms of violence.

Ramallah, PALESTINE - Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh discussed with British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab reconstruction of the Gaza Strip and the significant importance of preventing a recurrence of the Israeli aggression. Shtayyeh stressed that the reconstruction of the devastated enclave must take place in tandem with preventing Israel from carrying out another aggression on Gaza and filling the political vacuum through a serious and real track, under multiple international sponsorships, that ends the occupation and leads to the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state on the pre-1967 borders with Jerusalem as its capital.

Dhaka, BANGLADESH - Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen announced that Bangladeshi citizens are prohibited from visiting Israel as his country did not recognise the Jewish state. Momen warned that any Bangladeshi citizen who went to Israel without the government's permission will be liable to be criminally prosecuted. The minister said that such permission had not been granted by anyone by the Home Affairs Ministry, warning that anyone trying to do so would be detained by immigration officials. The statement by the minister ended confusion round new e-passports issued by Bangladesh. Until last month, Bangladesh used to issue a passport with a declaration that the travel document was "valid for all countries of the world

except Israel" but updated e-passports read: "This passport is valid for all countries of the world."

Abu Dhabi, - UAE - The United Arab Emirates supports all regional and international efforts to accelerate the Middle East peace process based on the two-state solution and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State according to the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, Ahmed Abdulrahman Al Jarman, the UAE Permanent Delegate to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, told a special session held by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on ensuring respect for international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Jarman highlighted the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the necessity of stopping forced evictions of Palestinians from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah.

Riyadh, SAUDI ARABIA - The Hajj Supreme Committee held a virtual meeting on to discuss a number of issues related to managing and organising this year's Hajj season, which is expected to start within a few weeks, as the Kingdom continues its efforts to confront the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting, which was also attended by Makkah Governor Prince Khalid Al-Faisal and Madinah Governor Prince Faisal bin Salman, came up with a number of recommendations to be submitted to the King and Crown Prince, but did not disclose any details. South Africa, like several other countries, is keenly awaiting a decision on whether pilgrims from here will be allowed this year during the Covid-19 pandemic and what the quotas would be.

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