



# **Youth Aspiration Towards Responsibility**

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## Preface

### *In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Merciful*

Have a look throughout this huge universe...

. Sun and moon are responsible for lightening the earth and the heaven at day and night and without them, this whole universe will fall in horrible darkness, in addition, they have other responsibilities, too.

Night and day, also, are responsible for following each other in this timely division of the day. Daytime is for activity and living, while night for sleeping and resting. And without this timely and accurate organization, the life order would have been in a total disorder; being that the day will be long without a night after, it or a long night without day after it.

The air that flows here and there...if not for it transferring breathable to us, we would have been in a state of suppression.

Sweet water that flows from rivers, and other sources of water, that quenches people and animal's thirst, as well as, watering the farms and gardens...and the salty sea that carries ships and allows millions of fishes to live in it, and Turn your face toward this broad world... Do you see anything in it without having a certain responsibility or responsibilities?

The sun and the moon are responsible for lighting the earth and the sky in the daytime and at night...and without these lights and lamps, the whole universe would have been in a complete these birds that fly in the sky and walk on the land, the ants and even the wild animals in the bush...all these have their own work and responsibilities.

If this is the case, then what of the human being who is the best of all these creatures in the sight of Allah?

From the beginning of this world, the Almighty Allah defined, for man, his responsibility: (He said: I will create a vicegerent on earth) (Holy Qur'an: 2:30). From that time man knows the nature of his responsibility: (We did indeed offer the trust to the Heaven and the Earth and the Mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof; but man undertook it...) (Holy Qur'an: 33:72), i.e., he undertook the responsibility of developing the earth, based on the will of Allah.

Thus, the whole universe is responsible...from the smallest to the biggest. You cannot see anything without having a certain responsibility; which may be known or unknown to you. The other creatures are bound to follow the line cleared for it, i.e. they perform their responsibilities based on the system defined by the Almighty Allah. The only creature that has choice and will is man...he- based on the nature of his creation- is obliged to do his own duty and responsibility or be refrained from it. Based on his choice - performing or not performing his duty - the results will be a success or a failure.

Allah's will wants the worldly life to be a workshop of deeds and actions, as well, as a field of competition for goods (He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed) (Holy Qur'an: 67:2). Till when these competitions end, since our father Adam till the last creature on earth, then the Day of Resurrection will approach us; the caller will call in a loud voice: (But stop them, for they must be asked) (Holy Qur'an: 37: 24).

There are many questions to be asked: What have you done with your responsibilities? Have you performed them as expected? Why have you performed some and left some others? Have you done them seeking Allah's pleasure or you have done them just for the sake of personal and worldly benefits? And so on....

In a short note, the Almighty Allah has created every creature for a certain purpose and responsibility, and He guided and gave him the ability to discharge that responsibility. There is no creature, in this world, that doesn't know the responsibility or responsibilities, which he was created for. The broad universe, with all its earth, water and sky, was brought into being for the purpose of serving man and, likewise, man was charged with the development of the world, it is not a joke or a play (*Did ye then think that We had created you in jest*) (Holy Qur'an: 23:110), (*Does man think that he will be left uncontrolled -without purpose-?*) (Holy Qur'an: 75:36)

## **Man without Responsibilities**

Have you ever thought about a man without responsibility? Would you think about seeing yourself free from any responsibility in life? Then how would the shape of life be?

Indeed, a life that is free from responsibility is just like schools without work and assignments, the students are not feeling any sense of responsibility and law, and therefore, how can studies continue in such a school? And how can the end result be achieved? And how will we be able to differentiate between a hard working student and a lazy one, a successful one from an unsuccessful student? By mere thinking about an empty life, in which a man doesn't find his humanity through being a responsible person, it makes us feel the feeling of jest and a joke, because it becomes only the life of instincts.

When you live in a state of feeling responsibility in your house, then you are living in a moral state towards other members of your family. A father has his own responsibility toward his children and wife, the wife has her own responsibility towards her husband and children and, likewise, the children have their own responsibility towards their parents and themselves. If we are free from all these, then, the system and arrangement of the family will be under great danger. The father will not feel the responsibilities of his wife and children towards him.

A world that is free from responsibilities, is a world that is full of corruption, wars and an unlimited misunderstanding, it is a total breakdown. An example of a responsible person is like a captain of a ship, if he leaves the ship unguided in a highly wind situation, it means he has surrendered it, and its passengers, to a great and deadly danger.

Therefore, among the beautifulness and wisdom of this universe is the responsibility that surrounds it and the competition in doing good.

## **The Beginning of Responsibility**

Here you are leaving your childhood playground in order to start a new life...leaving a stage in which you were not responsible...it was your parents who were taking the responsibility for your growth and education...today the situation has changed. You are still closer to them, benefiting from the care, but you are not like that small child...many things have changed in you, physically and spiritually. Now, you are entering the world of big men; you have turned from a child to a man.

These changes, that occur in all young boys and girls, is a natural change for both of them and, likewise, is a new stage in the world of responsibilities...from a playful child to a responsible man or woman. In this stage, called 'the adolescent' stage, a young boy or girl will be responsible in the sight of Allah, the Almighty; he must be obliged to perform some duties prescribed for him to the end of his life.

What does this mean?

It means a youth - no difference between a boy and a girl - from that day on will be the same as the grown up ones in the field of responsibility and account. Me, my father and mother, who came before me, are responsible for their work and, likewise, I am responsible for my work.

The time of dependence, looseness and childhood play has passed; it is the stage of hardwork that is knocking on the door. In this wide and big work, which you are responsible for it; it is closer to a workshop, in that you are working toward a particular purpose, which is seeking Allah's pleasure: (O man! Verily thou art ever toiling on towards thy Lord painful toiling, but thou shalt meet Him) (Holy Qur'an: 84:6).



## Our Responsibility

You, as a mature young woman, may differ from your mature brother who both reached the stage of responsibility; but, both of you have a certain responsibility - according to the nature of creation of each of you - and have a common responsibility. You are responsible for certain deeds, likewise, he is also responsible for the same deeds. It is possible to find slight differences in your responsibility and his own, but in a general terms, you have a common responsibility that doesn't differ from each of you.

Since when our father Adam and mother Eve (Hawwa') lived in Paradise, as mentioned by the Almighty Allah in His book, they were faced with common responsibilities: (Did I not forbid you) and (and tell you) and (That Satan was an avowed enemy unto you) (Holy Qur'an: 7: 22). The message here is clear; Adam had his responsibility and, likewise, Eve.

Based on this, we will understand that we, as young boys and girls, must take our responsibilities individually. If a young fellow discharges his own responsibility, as required, he will be rewarded with addition, but, if he refuses or does it wrong he will pay for his shortcomings (One day every soul will come up struggling for itself) (Holy Qur'an: 16:111).

Some youth might think wrongly that the responsibility of a young boy is less than that of the young girl, as if the reputation of a young girl is not the same as that of a young boy. No, their responsibility is on one line, as the young girl will be held responsible for her wrong doing; likewise, a young boy who does wrong; even if people's opinion towards them differs.

All Qur'anic calls and injunctions, whether they came in the form of second person plural, or with the word 'people' or 'Oh ye who believe' or 'Oh children of Adam', is an address for both sexes; male and female. And there are some verses that combine both of them, in terms of responsibility, like in this blessed verse:

(For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise, for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and reward) (Holy Qur'an: 33:35).

## Qur'anic Examples

It is possible to see many examples on the Qur'anic screen and many youthful samples of those who understood their responsibilities and discharge them nicely, and become a source of imitation for other youth in this life.

In the world of the Prophets (peace be upon them all), we can see the young Ibrahim (Abraham), in his adolescence, being confident, ridiculing the idols worshipped by his fathers, to the extent that he neglected his polytheist people and destroyed them with the axe of the idols. This is when he hung the guilt of the axe in the neck of the big idol in order to make him a source of accusation, but the people realized that the case was not like this when he stood in front of them ridiculing them about worshipping something that could not harm them or be a benefit (They said, "We heard a youth talk of them; he is called Abraham") (Holy Qur'an: 21:60).

The chivalry of Ibrahim (a.s.) is utilized to attract attention of his his people to the necessity of worshipping Allah alone, whether in his discussion concerning stars or dialogue with the tyrant Nimrod or in calling his father toward guidance or his patience and struggle in accepting the result of his responsibility; all these draw the picture of the responsible chivalry of Ibrahim, who became a source of imitation for us: (There is for you an excellent example (to follow) in Abraham and those with him) (Qur'an: 60:4).

Then, there is also the example of Isma'il (a.s.) who drank, from the river of his father Ibrahim (a.s.), the water of chivalry and obeying the Almighty Allah. And how he prepared himself for a great sacrifice with his self, in order to achieve Allah's will, as well as, helping his father in building the Holy Ka'ba.

Based on this chivalry that obeyed the Almighty Allah, which was put in place for piety and devotion that (this was the legacy that Abraham left to his sons, and so did Jacob; Oh my sons! Allah hath chosen the faith for you; then die not except in the faith of Islam) (Holy Qur'an: 2:132.) And, likewise, the Qur'an tells us about the young Dawud (David) who spent his adolescence fighting the oppressors and surprised them with his spirit of sacrifice for the right path.

Regarding the chivalry of a handsome young man, Yusuf (Joseph), he was responsible for becoming a good example for the youth who considers himself too exalted to fall into bad habits; a youth that called others toward monotheism even when in prison.

The chivalry of Musa (Moses) came into light for his righteousness on faith even though he was brought up in a disbelieving environment. In the town of Madyan, he showed his faith and shyness while he was pulling up water for the two young girls, and, likewise, the way he addressed Fir'aun (Pharaoh) with all his arrogant behaviour.

Then, came the face of Isa (Jesus) (a.s.) when he obeyed his mother and was not evil and arrogant. He discharged his duty the moment he came to this world when he preached to his people on worshipping Allah alone.

As for our Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), the Qur'an didn't tell us anything concerning his youthful responsibilities, but we have learned

through his pure biography how he disassociated himself from falsehood, superstition and illusion and retired himself in the mountain of 'Hira'. And, likewise, how he brought his personality, based on honesty and truthfulness, to the extent that he became an exemplary figure among the Quraish tribe.

And apart from the circle of the Prophets (a.s.), the Holy Qur'an also tells us about the responsible youth, i.e., 'The chivalry of the People of the Cave' (Ashab al-Kahf), who terms their responsibility in avoiding dealing with the oppressive ruler and not involving in his corrupt projects. And then came the role of a young woman. The Holy Qur'an tells us about the responsible young girl, Maryam (Mary) daughter of Imran (a.s.), as a model of piety and worshipping, and the sister of Musa, who play a vital role in rescuing her brother from death due to hunger as a result of not getting breastfeeding, as well as, making efforts in order to fulfill Allah's promise to return him safe to his mother.

These are the Qur'anic examples, of responsible youths, that wanted to say:

All Prophets (a.s.) and believers are responsible in their youthfulness. They are examples and patterns of conduct for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day...take, as an example, their youthfulness...from their gifts to your gifts...if you want to know what responsibility is in Islam.

## **Our Present Responsibilities**

Our today's responsibilities, as Muslim youth's is just like that of yesterday. In addition to our religious responsibility, which was made upon us by our closeness to Islam that obliged us to follow it and seek its teachings, likewise, there are other social, scientific and cultural responsibilities that require us to abide by in facing any challenge toward them.

Here are some parts of these responsibilities in brief:

## **1- Responsibility in the Sight of Allah:**

Any responsibility ends in front of Him, because He didn't create us as a joke: (We showed him the way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (rests on his will). (Holy Qur'an: 76:3). There is no way of attaining salvation unless by following the right path: (Guide us to the straight way. The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who do not go astray) (Holy Qur'an: 1:6-7). Thus, answering these three questions can outline our responsibility -as youth - towards our Creator: Of what? In what? To what?

Of what? This is a special question about our knowledge of Allah...for we have known Him in a general knowledge, but we are in need of knowing Him in more details; from His signs in the universe and His signs in the Holy Book. The more our knowledge of Allah increases, the more our faith, love and obedience in Him increase.

In what? This is a question on the purpose of creation; did He create us in order to punish us? Did He bring us into existence in order to play a certain drama, then after the play we all depart? Or is the purpose much higher above these?

This is a great building...every one of us has a role to play in bringing a piece of block or blocks... and there is the role of the engineer.... And also there are those who want to destroy the building or not to leave it to reach its completion stage. Thus, a great work cannot be without problems and difficulties; repairing here, patching there, rebuilding here and completing there.

To what? This question deals with direction and destiny...to where are we being taken? Are we in a ship disturbed by waves without knowing where it is heading? Or is there a lamp that is lighting our way? By answering this question it means we have known our responsibility in the sight of Allah, while starting on the way and while reaching the destination.

Therefore, your responsibility in the sight of Allah is based on the capability given to you from intellect, body, soul, spirit and His guidance to you in the ways of faith, action and favors. The way of knowing this responsibility can be achieved through: Intellect, Allah's book, the traditions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and the high feeling of responsibility.

## 2- Responsibility of Accepting Islam:

Are you a Muslim? Then you have responsibility on you.

Islam is the responsibility of a Muslim, because it is - as we know - not just pronouncing the two testimonies, nor is it worshipping only, rather it is the whole of man's actions. For example, if you enter into the company of faith, you must abide by all its rules and regulations, i.e., you have chosen to be a member of that company freely. Joining any company requires that each and every member must abide by the laws of that particular company known to full members; if not, then, you are as if a blindfolded member.

You must also accept the oneness of Allah; this will make you refrain from any form of associating Allah with anything or anyone. And you must bear witness to the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), this will make you obey, trust and follow all that he brought from His Lord (It is not fitting for a believer, men or women, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Apostle, to have any option about their decision) (Holy Qur'an: 33:36). And you must pray because your prayer restrains you from shameful and evil deeds, and you must fast, because your fasting calls upon refraining from prohibited things both material and spiritual.

Based on this, we can see that there are some acts that remove a Muslim from the Muslim family or from the company of faith because he didn't abide by the laws of the faith. Among those actions are the following:

“Whoever wakes up without giving much care to the Muslim's affairs is not among them, and whoever hears a Muslim seeking help from his fellow Muslims, but didn't answer him, he is not a Muslim.”

“He is not among us who cheats or hurts a Muslim.”

“He is not among us who doesn't respect his elders and be kind to the little ones.”

“He is not among us who calls toward tribalism.”

“He is not among us who doesn't take account himself everyday.”

“He is not among us who sleeps with his stomach full while his neighbour is hungry.”

“He is not among us who does not work for his Hereafter.”

“He is not among us who doesn't control himself when he is angry, nor does good to his companion, nor does good to the one who does good to him, nor escorting the one who escorts him and nor be close to the one who is closer to him.”

From these narrations, we can understand that, as far as Islam is concerned, there is responsibility in everything. And that the words 'he is not among us' excluded anybody who doesn't have the feeling of responsibility in the circle of Muslims.

### **3- Responsibility of Time:**

Our ages are a gift from Allah...a wide or narrow distance of a fertile land that allows us to cultivate in them, but where we will be asked on the day of the great harvesting time (the Hereafter) about what we have done with the land and what we have received from it. The Almighty Allah had given each and everyone of us a container, and said: Take it and fill it with what you want, but you are responsible for what you fill it with. Here we differed: among us there are those who filled their container with sand and there are those who filled their container with a valuable resource, while there are those who filled their container with poison and there are those who filled it with floating dust. Here it is in our hand...it is left to us to think about what we will fill our own container (in our age) with.

As youth we are responsible for benefiting in the time of our youthfulness, because it is the most formost of our life, and it is a field of good, a circle of given, development and services to the religion through giving a helping hand to fellow men.

We are also responsible for not wasting our time joking and playing; too much talking that will neither nourish nor satisfy hunger. And not wander about in the streets, markets and other public places; instead, we should try to follow it with good and beneficial things, which will benefit our society and us.

We are responsible for building our personality in its period of growth and development in order to be different from others in terms of giving; as one of us use to do when he wanted to be different from other students by working hard and concentrating on his lessons. We are also responsible for competing with time, not only imitating. This means making use of every minute and second of ours in developing everything that comes into our hands; be it a part of our personality or our society.

Competing with time means to look into things that are far away from you, not just at things that your eyes set on in the present time...because you are responsible for your today, tomorrow, and future. Time is running out...set your sight on far away tomorrow, then you will see that time - due to its short days and night and its past moving - can offer more than its hours, days, months and years.

Remember...your day is the same with the day of every inventor, initiator or scholar...there is not a day that has 24 hours and the other 30 hours; the only difference is understanding the importance of time and spending it correctly. The responsibility of time is not only when we are alive, rather it continues even after death. Because good remembrance, nice history and what man leaves of scientific experiences will be an everlasting treasure to the people who come.

#### **4- Responsibility of Science and Knowledge:**

Since the beginning of creation, science and knowledge were and will continue to be in man's fight against ignorance, unbelief and retardation. Indeed, the difference is great between the one who knows and the one who doesn't know, the first is in lightness while the second is in total darkness. the first is strong and the second is weak...the first one is rich and the second is destitute. Science and knowledge are not just storing information and data, in Islam knowledge is a responsibility; "Whoever knows his knowledge will guide him toward action." Thus, we must work with our knowledge for the service of our society and the whole human race.

Science and knowledge are not just reading books only, rather they are contemplation, thinking and experiencing. This does not mean that we should forget about reading books and benefiting from its treasures. And, also, the responsibility of knowledge is protecting justice and working for its propagation among people. It is said: "The alms of knowledge is to teach he who doesn't know it." Do not fear its running out and its finishing. Knowledge is among the treasures that doesn't finish, rather it increases with giving; "Knowledge becomes purified with giving".

The responsibility of knowledge doesn't allow you to keep away your knowledge or hide it from those who are in need of it; this is more dangerous than the hoarding of food. This is because a knowledge gained from studies or through life experiences or by one's trial and hard works is a responsibility in front of Allah. Have you given it to one who is in need of it? Have you placed it on the way of destruction? Have you used it for the purpose of growth and development? Or did you place it inside a locked container? Indeed, knowledge is for all. Whoever deprives others from his own knowledge, Allah will take it away from him.

In this era that is called the "Era of Knowledge", we are in need of knowing many things derived from it. "Knowledge in its time cannot be defeated by supposition". We must connect the wheel of institution or university with the movement of the society, because life cannot go without these two good things. And we must learn the basis of scientific studies in different fields, because it is a legislative law that the Muslim community must have essential power and expertise to fulfill all their scientific needs.

It is also the responsibility of knowledge not to give up to the scientific challenges of the time. We should not see it as an end or an ultimate perfection, rather, as youths, we must work hard in order to invent and initiate something new. As other people have the intellect of thinking and inventing, likewise, we have our own intellect that can do the same. Other people's intellects are not made of gold and ours made from steel or their intellect is made from steel and ours from sand, the case is not like this, rather it can only be achieved through programming and thinking, as well as, questioning, seeking advice, competition and dialogue. And, likewise, we must teach ourselves to accept criticism and corrections from every angle.

Our scientific responsibility requires us to seek old and present knowledge (And say O my Lord! Advance me in knowledge) (Holy Qur'an: 20:114). Today the powerful is he who has much knowledge, and a



powerful believer is he who has knowledge and works with it, and no doubt is better than the weak believer. Also, this responsibility requires us to refrain from scientific pride and arrogance, which prevents the increment of knowledge; “Conceit prevents increase” and refraining from intellectual opulence. It is knowledge that neither harm the one who is ignorant of it, nor benefits the one who possesses it. And likewise overcoming intellectual contradiction between what is original and what is invented, between knowledge and action is very important. However, you must play your own role through the capability given to you by the Almighty Allah, even by adding only one block in building the Islamic civilization.

## 5- Responsibility of Words (Speech):

The words we utter are not like the foam of soap, which float over the surface of our tongues and then, burst quickly in the air. In Islam, our words have a responsibility (Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready to note it) (Holy Qur'an: 50:18). They watch our good and bad deeds, because the tongue is as described in this narration: "Is a key of good or evil." The responsibility of speech lies in thinking about it before saying it, choosing the best among them, following the best way in saying it and studying its effect on those directed.

Indeed, it is not an easy work, it is in need of thinking, because many a times, talking without thinking leads to negative and destructive effects, while talking after thinking, many a times, leads to positive effects.

Our good words are like a gift: it is good to present it wrapped with beautiful wrapping paper so as to make the recipient happy. Our words of criticism are like the head of a needle...it is good not face it to the direction of our listener in order not to hurt him. After considering all these, then we will have our own special dictionary of good words, as well as, that of criticism. Here we are in two conditions of wanting to reach the mind of people through their hearts, and this cannot be achieved unless by following the method presented to us by the Holy Qur'an: (Say to my servants that they should (only) say those things that are best) (Holy Qur'an: 17:53).

Therefore, our words are like goods in the market. There are good ones and bad ones...we should choose 'a good word' in its pronunciation and meaning so as to be our messenger to others. It is not an easy job, but it is not difficult for those who know the responsibility of speech. After that, words and speeches have different degrees of goodness and evilness.

There are 'words of kindness' that make people pleased with with: (And speak to them words of kindness and justice) (Holy Qur'an: 4:8). And there are 'words of mildness' that spread their wings over the hearing of the listener and doesn't hurt him (But speak to him mildly; perchance he may take warning or fear (Allah) (Holy Qur'an: 20:44).

And there are 'words of honor' that carry the self-purity of the sayer and attracts the listener because of its sense of preaching, advice, correction, encouragement and guidance: (But address them in terms of honor) (Holy Qur'an: 17: 23).

And there are 'words of eloquence' that enter the hearts of people and became effective as if the speaker is sure that it will hit the target (So keep clear of them, but admonish them, and speak to them a word to reach their very souls) (Holy Qur'an: 4:63).

Selection and choosing of good words and right methods of saying them, is an endeavor and a practice from us, and is a success and guidance from the Almighty Allah (For they have been guided (in this life) to the purest of speeches; they have been guided to the path of Him Who is worthy of (all) praise) (Holy Qur'an: 22:24).

But the bad words that require another test in order to run away from them, are:

(False Words): they are the words and sayings that lack any reliable source or it is giving untrue testimony (And shun the word that is false)

(Holy Qur'an: 22:30), (And in fact they use words (both) iniquitous and false) (Holy Qur'an: 58:2). (The words of slanders and exposing ones in dignity): which destroy people's dignity completely: (Allah loveth not that evil should be noised abroad in public speech, except where injustice hath been done) (Holy Qur'an: 4:148).

(Decorated Words): Which have a beautiful shape, are either internally empty or carries evil contents (inspiring each other with flowering discourse by way of deception) (Holy Qur'an: An'am: 112). An example of it is the sweet and distorted word that is sweet in hearing, but it is full of poison (There is a type of man whose speech about this world's life may dazzle thee, and he calls Allah to witness about what is in his heart; yet is he the most contentious of enemies) (Holy Qur'an: 2: 204).

(Words of Complaint): they are the words released (said) by a disloyal son in front of his parent as if he will slap them (Say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them) (Holy Qur'an: 17: 23).

We are in the market of words as we are in the market of goods; we should select the best of them...therefore, good words like fine goods, require valuable prices and sacrifice in order to achieve them, even though continuity has a great effect and role. An evil word is sweet, being that it can perish quickly and has tax both in this world and in the hereafter. If the word is from the type of good word, then it can serve as a guide, developer of hearth, opener of the mind, encourager of good deeds, teacher, as well as, an opener for loyalty and good.

And if it is from the vulgar bad words, then it is harmful to ones dignity, stimulates to wrong and an opener to the evil doors. Therefore, your words are your responsibility. If they are under your tongue, you can control them, but if they go out and be under other's control, then it would have positive or negative outcomes.

As youth, we are still learning the lessons of the world in the school of responsibility. In this situation we will be faced with some words like: Promise, teaching, preaching, calling people toward Allah, supporting justice, rejecting injustice...they are words that require sincerity and honesty, first. For instance, the word 'promise' is full of responsibility, when you promise me something you must fulfill it, because: "A true believer fulfill when he promises", as it is said in a proverb that 'A true believer is the one who fulfill when he promises.' And "Promise is the freedom of religion'. But we must always remember that the word 'yes' is not easy as we think.

We will be faced with words like: Mockery, humiliation, hurt, stimulating sensitivity, contradiction, slander and degradation. Unfortunately, these are words that are circulating between people without paying attention to the fact that they are dangerous or a mattock that destroys houses or are hammers that break hearts.

Your word is your sound...it is you...therefore, do not give it free of charge... do not set it as a foundation for supporting right here and wrong there. Your words are not an accent of your sound or unnecessary letters...they are full of responsibility.

## 6- The Responsibility of Deeds:

If the responsibility of words and sayings are as mentioned above, then how the responsibility of deeds will be?

We are followers of a religion that requires us to attach our sayings with action...*we should not make our sayings above our capability nor block any way (Do you enjoin right conduct on the people, and forget (to practice it) yourselves, and yet ye study the scripture? Will you not understand) (Holy Qur'an: 2: 44). (O ye who believe! Why say ye that which ye do not? Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that ye say that which ye do not do) (Holy Qur'an: 61: 2-3)*

If you see me talking about the value of honesty and its effect in spreading confidence among people, but when you come closer to me and find that I am a liar here and there, then what will be your opinion toward me? Surely, you will regard me as a hypocrite or a contradictor, who is contradicting his saying with his action, this will make you lose confidence in me.

A Muslim who has an Islamic knowledge without working with it will be like: (An example of those who follow the Mosaic law, but subsequently failed in those (obligations), is that of a donkey which carries huge tomes (but understands them not). Evil is the similitude of people who falsify the signs of Allah...) (Holy Qur'an: 62: 5), because what is the use of a library full of valuable books, and carried by a donkey? It is heavy on its back, but he does not feel the heaviness of its knowledge in his mind, heart and life.

We should put it in our mind that action is the best method that has effect in people. Naturally, actions talk with louder voice than sayings. Based on this, it is narrated in a narration: "Be propagators to people without using your tongues, so when piety and perseverance is seen from you, this is propagation". The words "this is propagation" shows the power of action.

Maybe you might have read in the Holy Qur'an that (And say: work (righteousness): soon Allah will observe your work, and His Apostle and the believers) (Holy Qur'an: 9: 105). Can you close your ears from callings as if the issue doesn't concern you? Are not you a Muslim who tells good and practice it?

Indeed, nonsense fun, play, too much talking and other irresponsible behaviors destroy most of our youth capabilities, likewise, laziness, dullness, negligence and too much relaxation destroy our timely capabilities.

Thus, in the adolescence stage, we are responsible for any act that will benefit people and has Allah's consent. We should talk little and act frequently and we must correspond our sayings with our actions so that people might see honesty in us. There is a lot of hatred and curses between youth and elders toward injustice, but a little number of them tries to light the candle... so be among those who make narrow the black circles and widen the white circles...it is the responsibility in Islamic life.

## **7- Legal Responsibility:**

Seeking religious knowledge is your responsibility, as a youth, since you set your feet on the field of puberty. We are responsible for acquiring the knowledge of knowing the lawful and unlawful things in life.

The culture of knowledge is not only a matter of perfection, rather it is an essential matter being that it will underline your legal opinion toward your moral and social undertakings. This is because Shari'a is the Islamic law and order and ignoring these laws will lead to a lot of destruction. Therefore, permissible (halal) is what was permitted by the Shari'a and is enjoined on us to do it, and unlawful (haram) is what is not permitted; it is the red line. The circle of halal is much wider than that of haram....Allah cannot prohibit something unless there is harm in it, nor permits anything unless there is benefit in it, whether we know it or not.

Islamic laws are similar to the signs on the road of life...there are greens that open ways for you to move, but with conditions, and there is yellow that calls on you to be prepared to stop and there is the red color that prevents you from moving, and there is the one that is open without any condition.

The legal responsibility requires me, as a youth, not to put my feet forward or backward unless in seeking knowledge. Is this acceptable in the sight of Allah or not? Is this permitted conditionally or is it permitted unconditionally? Is it undesirable for me to do this or is it recommendable or permissible?

The way to this responsibility crosses through the knower of Islamic law who has the confidence of people in his knowledge, religion and good behaviors, and who can extract halal and haram from the recognized sources of Shari'a.

Indeed, anything that comes across the path of a youth that he didn't know, whether it falls under the circle of Allah's consent or outside it, reduces the possibility of sliding into the acts that are against the Shari'a or falling into sin.

It is commonly believed that having religious knowledge means knowing the issues related to prayer, fasting, alms, purification, and forgetting other aspects of life run by Shar'ah. It has been narrated in one of the Prophetic hadith: "There is nothing without a law". But having knowledge in religion has taken a broad and wider meaning; it is 'a mean of reforming and correcting ideologies, morals and actions. Indeed, a man through his knowledge of religion, can differentiate between a sound ideology and a false one, between virtues and vices; and good and evil. And, likewise, having Having Islamic knowledge means knowing the way of eternal bliss and happiness, both materially and spiritually. Therefore, having Islamic knowledge is a source of man's perfection and a source of reaching a high standard. It is reported that Imam Musa bin Ja'far (a.s.) said: "Knowledge is the key of insight and the whole of worship, as well as, a source of reaching a higher standard."

## **8- The Responsibility of Good Manners and Morals:**

Being the fact that a youth has a bigger heart, pure nature and higher ability to change from negative to positive, the responsibility of good manners and morals is big and heavy on his shoulders. This is because of Allah's favor towards him.

He is responsible for propagating and spreading virtues. Honesty performed by everyone is good, but it will be more better when it is done by a young man; being patient with others is good, but when it is done by a youth, it is a miracle. Humbleness from a youth is dignity; likewise, kindness is a flower for them. Chastity from them has its decoration; likewise, calmness from a youth that was upset, by some feeling, is good. Brotherhood between youths has its spiritual good and attraction. Their love for good is an indicator of goodness and, likewise, piety is an indicator of firm belief...the more a youth takes hold of morality, the more life will be good and sound.

Indeed, people look at young boys and girls who are well mannered with Islamic morals, with great respect and dignity. Mostly, they used to point at them saying: Look at his/her chastity, faith and righteousness.

And, as a young man, through his pure nature, hates injustice, cheating and many social and political appearances. Therefore, his responsibility comes from his feeling the necessity to establish right and revoke wrong. Therefore, among the moral responsibilities of a youth are: fighting sins and other evils like; lying, backbiting, hypocrisy, disrespecting parents, mockery, humiliating neighbors, pride, arrogance, treason and others. In addition of the fact that it is a religious responsibility, it is a social responsibility, too. A youth is worthier than others in honoring the elders and respecting the pre-generations even though there are differences of time and approaches. Thus, it is his/her responsibility to have a firm relation and discussion with them, as well as, respecting their experiences: "He is not among us who doesn't have mercy on smaller ones and respect the elders."

The responsibility of manners requires the youth not to be a block...

As youth, we can work collectively in order to put forward this responsibility, and also to work together with others in order to fight the dangerous evil manners that are decomposed in the social circle. We should be a model of refraining against the act of evil, talking to those who are practicing it in the best way; maybe they will fear Allah and change. Among the moral responsibilities that are important to the youth are fighting the view that the relationship between people must only be material. They have distorted the feeling of love for Allah's sake. Many a time they have destroyed the relationship that is based on tolerance, guidance and sacrifice; turning all these into a source of business.

Among the descending views are: "If you have money, you are something, if not, you are nothing" or "Be like a wolf, and if not, you will be eaten by wolves" and "Make no drop of water fall if I die thirsty" can never be confronted unless by the determination of a youth who feels his social responsibility; who should work hard to correct and change the distorted image of the youth, step by step.

## **9-Social Responsibility:**

As a youth, you are interrelated with the society around you by different chains of relationship: Relationship with parents, family and neighbors, relationships with brothers, friends and companions, and, likewise, the relationship with general people.

Regarding the relation with parents, family and other relatives...you are responsible for doing good to parents and respecting them (Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents) (Holy Qur'an: 17: 23). This is to say, you must refrain from saying 'a word of contempt' to them, or repelling them and nor hurting them with bad words or actions (accompany them in this world with justice and consideration) (Holy Qur'an: 31:15). And you should, also, work according to your ability to make them understand your great love towards them, and appreciating their favor on you and your needs toward them in difficult situations. This creates a fatherly atmosphere that will make them feel that however you get older and however they get older, having contact with them satisfies a psychological need of you and them, too.

Regarding the relation with the members of the family, you are responsible for respecting the elders and sympathizing with the smaller ones. This will create a psychological rest for all and increases love and affection among them. As you are responsible - in the field of distributing houseworks - for doing your work assigned to you based on your ability and time, and, here, we should not forget that the best deed is the one which is done voluntarily. However, being related to a respected family among people, makes you have the responsibility of safeguarding its good and pure reputation by not doing something which may destroy or hurts their reputation.

But the relation with brothers, friends and companions, you are responsible for building it on the basis of faith:: (The true believers are but a single brotherhood) (Holy Qur'an: 49:10), so that you may benefit from their companionship and, also, they benefit from yours, both in this world and the hereafter. And, also, you are responsible for reforming the gap created between your close brothers (and keep straight the relations between yourself) (Holy Qur'an: 8:1). You should, also, be their mirror in which they see the beauty of their behaviour and its evilness. It is narrated in a hadith that a true brother, on whom you trust, is the one who tells you your faults, and that "A believer is a mirror of his fellow believer." We can widen our understanding of the Prophetic saying "Ask for a companion before (asking for a) way", that it is not only at the time of traveling, rather even in day-to-day activities. This is because a friend is attached to his friend.

As you are responsible for your family and friends, you are, also, responsible for the people surrounding you in your behaviour with them, rendering them a service, reducing their suffering, cooperating with them in doing good that benefits the whole society "The close ones are worthier in goodness." The spirit of a youth may grow further based on his social activities and faith in helping others.

You can feel good and enjoyment while helping your close relatives, but the enjoyment will increase more when you help those who are not close to

you. This is because you will feel that you are out of your limited circle in a more wider one discharging all goods. It is reported in one hadith: “The best of people is the one who benefits others.”

Surely, the way of building a firm social relationship requires us, as a youth, to know the factors that strengthen such relationship, and, also, what are things that harm and weaken it? And what are its positive effects? Knowing others' rights and respecting them - whether he is a father, mother, friend, close relation and or others - make you a source of their respect, thanks and good will prayers...who knows whether your kindness to him will pour Allah's mercy on you “All creatures are Allah's household, and the best among them is the one who is good to his familys.”



## **10- Financial Responsibility:**

By this we mean your responsibility, as a youth, in directing spending and consumption. Indeed, the material outlook has spread and become a wider phenomenon among our youth, boys and girls, to the extent that it makes them spend much on their unnecessary needs and, even sometimes, it may result into extravagancy.

No doubt giving much consideration to physical beauty is good, but having an exaggeration in it such as filling the drawers with so many clothes that one cannot wear, except once or twice and then, leaves it is something of no importance, instead we should spent on necessary things. The youth are responsible for exhorting others towards the 'Culture of Consumption' brought by the mass media based on people's feelings, but, it is necessary to warn people against becoming the victim of a company's advertisement which many time is out of reality.

Economical responsibility, also, requires the youth to take another look into being a tool of hard work till he finishes his studies. Making use of the summer holiday in doing other beneficial things helps a lot, both in experience and getting some money in paying some of their needs. It is a mistake to stay without doing any work till we graduate from the university, because the course we attend will help us in paving the way for us in doing better and getting much experience.

A group of youth with equal or one opinion can come together and require that a certain amount of money, as a loan in order to start a business even a small venture, will help them at the time of marriage or getting a house to start their new life.

And, likewise, they can require to use a certain plot of land in order to build a town or village for the purpose of living there or developing it, but the cost may come from certain people. Maybe it will be difficult due to other social problems, but with all these, there is the possibility that many locked doors might be opened through it, if not, all our request is meant at least some might be accepted. It has been said: "No right will be lost if it is requested," and that "Rights are taken and not given". The economical responsibility requires that a youth who has some wealth to help others, most especially his fellow youth, in solving their problems.

## **11- Political and the Media's Responsibility:**

A Prophetic Hadith says: “Whoever wakes up without giving much consideration to the Muslim's affairs is not a Muslim.”

This is a wider call toward giving much importance to the Muslim's affairs, wherever they might be. This consideration is not only achieved in feeling pain for their sufferings nor becoming happy with their happiness, rather it includes anything that can make their spiritual and material life better: “The example of Muslims in their love and mercy is like that of a body that can be sick sharing the sickness with other parts.” This social Islamic membership in love, affection and mercy will not allow the hand to say: “Well, I am ok so the pain of the other body doesn't concern me.” It will not allow the eyes to say: “There is nothing to bother me since it is the leg that is suffering”, no it is not like this. The relationship is such that it will have effect on every part of the body.

Based on this, the principle of enjoining good and prohibiting evil is not only limited in calling toward moral reform and fighting social evils, rather, it comprises our responsibility, as Muslims, in making a stand in the whole issue of reform and all evils. We must reform all evils using different methods and abilities, as well as, encouraging the reformed one in order for him to be firm on his stand. Here, we can forward this question to ourselves: Tell me what is your least stand...because a youth who doesn't have a stand is just like a feather in the air; it is not stable rather, it is the air that leads it to every evil and misguidance.

If this young fellow, who is sacrificing his life for the purpose of rescuing his people from the injustice of an unjust ruler in a limited and selfless way thinks and says: It has nothing to do with what belongs to people, no people have been liberated nor any force of darkness has been defeated.

If you kept quiet in seeking justice and refrain from defending the rights of the oppressed, you are helping injustice indirectly. It is said: “Whoever keeps quiet against injustice is a worse devil.”

What was called the 'Political Road' contains a large number of youth; a political responsibility requires that the youth must have a say in all affairs. Many a time, the participation of the youth in demonstrations and protests changed the path and the movement here and there. Indeed, your sound is your responsibility...have you not seen how it can help if you give it to a wrong or unjust path? Then, why do not you give it to justice, right and freedom? Are not you a Muslim who is responsible for fighting oppressors and helping the oppressed? “Be harsh to the oppressor and a helper to the oppressed.”

Maybe sanctioning the goods of the occupiers (like the Zionist) cannot be effective on their economy, but it is a great stand...it represents the culture of presence, because sanctions here and there can make the effect wider and harm the enemy more. Therefore, the way of discharging political responsibility follows different channels: One is (consciousness) and a political awareness on what is going on here and there that includes planning, slogans, conferences and other movements both domestic and international.

Then (political presence) in the sense that the youth might have their own opinion in their society's affairs both the present one and the future ones, being a part that can never be separated from the society. A political writer has said: "Retiring from public activities by an Arab is a disaster for the society."

Also, political responsibility calls us toward purifying political activities from lying, controversy, playing with slogans and treason. That is, we must work in order to give politics its moral being. We should not regard depending on forbidden evil as a way to achieve our political goals. No doubt it is a complicated responsibility that can be shouldered by many, but keeping the youth far from it, due to this reason, may make it more complicated, because this can be like releasing the anchor of a ship that can make the ship more closer to sinking.

But on the part of the media, there is no basis for the saying that there is a young media. Even what is said in the mass media concerning youth affairs doesn't fully touch on their affairs. It is either against Muslim youth's morals and his culture, values and behavior, or it will be a guidance to the right path. However, the programs relayed by satellite televisions portray the condition of separation between introductory matters and the gains of the youth where he cannot see himself.

Maybe he may find programs on music, sports and other subjects, but it hardly finds a place in the society or pay attention to his problems or an established program of taking him out of it or a firm culture that gives much consideration to his personality. The media responsibility of a youth is based on criticizing this media. Not only should they forward their complaints to the newspapers and magazines in those western mass media, who are proud of broadcasting youth programs that give much emphasis of sexual stimulants, but they should request that they correct their programs for the benefit of the whole youth population.

The lack of complaints toward those mass media will only encourage them to widen their activities and programs, and, likewise, the broadcasting of pure programs and competing with those evil stations or internet sites might open a way for a youth toward knowledge and understanding. The problem is not from the youth, himself, rather, it is from those who are taking care of his media affairs. Because as we know, if a youth found a nice station that cares about his social affairs and plays a vital role in that field, no doubt he will stick to it and do away with other evil stations.

## **12- National Responsibility:**

“Love for a nation is among faith.” Love is a responsibility...as faith is also a responsibility.

Love and relationship, with one nation and country, grows more and more. It is not just an emotional relation that is related to family, language, culture and ideology, rather, it is a responsible relation in two ways: A nations' responsibility toward its citizens and the citizens' responsibility toward the nation.

It is our big family; can we leave our relationship, help and solving our small family problems? Do not we feel that we are part of it; it hurts us what hurts it and makes us happy what makes it happy? The case is the same with our nation and country...it is our big family that requires a great service in building and developing it, as well as, bringing it out from darkness, dependency, total decay, ignorance and backwardness, as it requires us to protect it from diseases, spiritual and material calamities. This love can also make us take up weapons in order to defend it from its enemy that is against its citizens, security, economy, as well as, sacrifice for its independence and dignity. As it is the responsibility of the occupiers of a small house to defend it, likewise, it is our responsibility to defend our big house (country).

What we see from some of our youth today is lack of national feeling, this is the cultural and educational responsibility. What we mean by national feeling is knowing the state of the nation, its history, the men that sacrificed their lives for its sake, its culture, and politics, as well as, relating to its past, present and future.

Among the requirement of this feeling is to take the responsibility of taking care of its social, economic, political and morals need, and working hard in its development that becomes the target of enemies, weapons and destruction. The national responsibility is of many branches, requiring every ability in developing its components as well as reforming the spoiled part and to be in service of its educational, industrial, intellectual and working fields.

It requires us to work in order to reform its environment, its water, trees, animals and other natural gifts. In addition, we should be its messengers and ambassadors wherever we found ourselves. Imam Ali (a.s.) said: “Your countries have rights upon you, you are responsible even for (its) land and animals.”

### **13- Historical Responsibility:**

The pages of history, both good and evil, are folded...it is the responsibility of the past generations; we will not be questioned on its negativity or otherwise: (That was a people that hath passed away. They shall reap the fruit of what they did, and ye of what ye do! Of their merits there is no question in your case), (Holy Qur'an: 2:134).

Then, what will be our position on history?

Can we lead the best part of our history and legacy even though it has what may benefit our present being? No doubt we can be able to deduct new views and experiences through reading history and its lessons. Experience has shown that those who are versed in history and its lessons are more powerful in their views on the present time and future.

It is a historical responsibility to read our history and the history of the world objectively without limit and it should not be fanatically or extremism between rejecting everything and accepting all that is in it. It is the production of a man like us, it may be correct or otherwise. It may contain things that are not originally there, this may make us not to regard history in the same position with the Holy Qur'an or other pure legacies that don't accept argument or refutation. Anything in history should be subjected to discussion, argument, study, criticism, and contemplation.

Some youth might say: We are people of today, therefore, we are less concerned with what has past. Thus, we are here, we are calling toward looking deep into the past, but can take from our past for our present what benefits us. Indeed, it is a Qur'anic call towards us: (Do they not travel through the earth), (Seest thou not how thy Lord dealt with...), (Say Go ye through the earth and see....). Therefore, we should not consider all the conditions of the past and their experiences as correct or unacceptable. Thus, historical responsibility requires that we should look into events and views more than we are looking at signs and men. Those might have passed the road of history; nothing is left of them except views based on studies, thinking and experiences. No doubt some of their actions are acceptable while others are rejected.

## **On the Path of Responsibility**

The Responsibilities are Knowledge: Know the details of the responsibilities in order to know what your duty is, and, also, know its importance so that you will react with it and strive towards achieving it.

“Be engaged in the thing that you will be responsible for “; so, whoever becomes busy with something of less importance, wastes the most important...there is not enough time in life for marginal matters that are not of great importance. Monotony and dullness kills the spirit of responsibility...try and change the method of your relationship with responsibilities, and not to be a standstill in a certain condition. Because being at a standstill and blind imitation will turn responsibilities into a heavy load that a middle age man cannot carry.

Do not delay your responsibilities because they will accumulate and at last will become difficult to discharge. It is reported in a hadith: “Beware of stalling, because it is a river where people sink”. Deal with responsibility with an open spirit, as if you are the one who drags it to yourself in order to be able to discharge it as expected. Loving responsibility makes your product improve.

Responsibility has an effect on man's personality; the more time that is spent on discharging a particular responsibility, the more mature your intellect will be, and, likewise, so your power of resistance, experience and knowledge.

Laziness and weariness are enemies of discharging responsibility: “Beware of laziness and weariness, because a lazy person cannot fight for right and a bored man cannot seek his rights.” Laziness, inactiveness and lukewarmness in discharging duties is a great block in discharging responsibility.

The collective spirit in discharging responsibility helps in reducing its burden; helps in inventing, as well as feeling the responsibility in achieving common missions which bring far goals closer. Reading the Holy Qur'an and authentic hadith encourages one in discharging his responsibility. But what are they? How can we deal with them? How can we accept them with an open heart? How can we understand the present and future outcomes? Thus, it is necessary for young Muslims boys and girls to depend on these two sources in order to know their responsibilities.

## **Outcomes of being Adhered to Responsibility**

Discharging any responsibility in the best way may result in one or more of the following outcomes:

Holding the principle of responsibility opens the door to freedom without any darkness. Subsequently, it is the necessity of responsibility to close doors of deviation, disorder and anarchy.

One of the natures of Islamic responsibility is that it opens a wider field of goodness; there is no limit to the increment of good in all responsibilities.

Responsibility directs man's activities and makes it valuable, i.e., it will turn a responsible man, who is carrying responsibility, to a man of aim and goals who cannot move without having intended goals.

As responsibility tries to create an understanding between opinions and actions, and the views of a Muslim youth, girls and boys, concerning any responsibility on their shoulder, likewise, it encourages them to discharge their duties. Islamic responsibility is out of any geographical boundary; its distance is the whole world. It is true that close relatives are worthier of goodness, but we are responsible for reforming the whole world. But, if this responsibility stands only on the borderline, we will not have seen the kind of propagation of Islam that occurred in every part of the world.

Responsibility with its spirit of commitment, decreases and limits the circles of deviation, crimes, treason and other forms of downfall and all kinds of failure, laziness and dependence. A responsible man respects the requirements of his role in life.

Responsibility in Islam creates a condition of harmony and conformity between Allah's will and that of His servant (a Muslim). They are not two wills, rather it is a single will...Allah requests and man obeys and discharges, i.e., he practices the will of Allah and commits it into practice on earth "The response of the believers, when they are invited to Allah and His Apostle that he may judge between them, is only to say: We hear and we obey; and these it is that we are the successful." (Holy Qur'an: 24:51).

Positive examples who should undertake their responsibilities in the best way and be provocative tools in order to be followed by those who tarry or disown from its burdens. And as long as the other young man or woman has the capability of performing this or that responsibility, I, also, have the capability of performing this or that mission.

A set of Islamic responsibilities maintain the reformation of life and changing the deviated views and feelings, and they cannot be achieved unless through a responsible person and a responsible society. The degree of enduring the heaviness of responsibility, in the world justifies the degree of reward or punishment in the hereafter. It is similar to the annual hardworking of a student in school, a chance that will give an increment in reward for anyone who wants increment.

## Conclusion

When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: “All of you are shepherds and all of you are responsible for his subjects”, he made every Muslim responsible whatever his position in the society is, so that nobody can say: 'I am not assigned this work...it is the duty of others.'“

From here, the condition of despair, pessimism and frustration that are seen in most Muslim communities requires a youth who is well versed in what is going on, to work hard in order to remove this block from people's way, as well as, working in order to put the spirit of action and hope in them. We should always remember that (So verily, with every difficulty, there is relief. Verily, with every difficulty there is relief). (Holy Qur'an: Inshirah: 5-6).

Opening the door of dialogue based on the basis of respecting others' views, even if they are against ours, is a responsibility of a youth at this time where all doors are opened. This is because the process of knowing each other, as requested by the Almighty Allah, for nations starts with respecting those who have a different view from us.

There is, also, the responsibility of developing feelings of criticism of any opinion and view by tabling it for discussion, even though it is not just a matter of disorder rather it needs planning (I only desire (you) betterment to the best of my ability) (Holy Qur'an: 11: 88). All Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.



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