



The Light

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Table of Contents

From The Editorial Desk	5
A humble servant of Ahlul Bayt a.s Fidahusein A. Hameer	6
Memoirs	6
Prophet Muhammad (s) (The paragon of virtue)	7
The Human Ear: Masterpiece of Engineering	10
TO SERVE HIM AND HIS CREATION.	12
How can Kerbala bring a Revoluton in our lives?	13
Is Humility the Essence of Greatness?	15
A Tribute to Human Kindness	18
Waiting for the Mahdi	20
Medical References at the shadows of Surat Al Kahf.....	22
Inner Peace of Mind	24

From The Editorial Desk

The original Light magazine started off as a cyclostyled paper for community students living abroad, especially in the western countries. This then turned into a magazine with a selection of articles of diverse contemporary as well as religious issues.

The readership also spread over the world amongst Muslims and non-Muslims in countries such as West Africa, Latin America and remote parts of the world catering for their scholarly needs. The aim at that time was Tabligh and this continues to be our mission but in different times and circumstances.

We re-launch this magazine in an era of globalization, bearing in mind the revolution in information technology and major events such as the revolution in Iran, formation and consolidation of World Federation and the extensive role of media in covering issues touching upon the Muslim world, which have significantly contributed towards increasing awareness worldwide towards our Islamic faith and its role in shaping events.

The need to adapt in this evolving environment is a necessity to maintain the scholarly standards of this magazine which we shall aspire to do.

Brother Latif Ali of British Guyana once mentioned at the World Ahlul Bayt League Conference, “I lived alone as a Shia Ithnaasheri with literature of Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania and the Light magazine as my sole companions”.

With Light’s sister Swahili magazine, Sauti Ya Bilal, let us hope that these magazines continue their companionship from the remotest village of Tanzania to the busiest metropolis of the world.

The pioneering efforts and support of Maulana Syed Saeed Akhtar Rizvi, Marhum Mulla Asgher Jaffer, Marhum Ahmed Sheriff and Marhum Mohamed Rafik Somji are a continuing beacon of inspiration for us. Let us pray for their souls and request a Sura e Fateha.

A humble servant of Ahlul Bayt a.s Fidahusein A. Hameer

Memoirs

As a young kid, I was always fascinated to watch my late grandfather, Yusufali G.M Dharsi writing articles and helping in the typesetting for The Light magazine.

Like Sayid Akhtar Rizvi and other writers in those days, he was also a regular contributor for the magazine, researching hours on end to get everything meticulously correct.

Everything was first written on draft paper initially in pen, corrected or edited and proofread using pencil and red ink pens, the paper from which the article was usually typed out, looked like off white paper that had confetti scratches all over it. I could have never deciphered it.

The rhythmical clicking of type writer keys and the bell depicting the end of the line were a very regular sounds at home, in those days it was still a manual typewriter, not the fancy electrical ones, and by the time computers came in, my grandfather had stopped writing.

Growing up with the sounds of keys hitting the paper and the times where he would ask me to roll back the red and black ribbon, always made me a part of the process, and the request made me happy that I could help.

By: Sameer Kermalli

The process I remember vividly was the one where, the typesetter, Mr. Mohamed Namwanga used to come home and painstakingly took letters and words that were needed for the next issue, cut and pasted them on a marked paper, cut to the end books size.

This was a tedious job using the old magazines that were then printed by Jamana, located near the corner of Uhuru Street and now Indira Gandhi street then. Lots of man hours went into that. The dedication of Fidahusein Hameer, who till today plays an active role in The Light magazine, can only be deemed as very commendable work, cause I remember him since those days.

There are things that are embedded in our brains, and amongst them for me, is the experience to see, learn and partially understand the process of printing. Today I work for a printing company, DTP and I am grateful to The Light magazine for the printing process knowledge it imparted to me, a past that is fruitful to date.

Prophet Muhammad (s) (The paragon of virtue)

Muslims throughout the world will be celebrating the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (s) during the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal, beginning on 12th and culminating on 17th. In fact, the Maulid ceremonies continue to be observed throughout the month in various mosques, religious institutions, and even in the private homes.

By Dr. Ja'far Tijani

The Prophet (s) was born in 570 A.D. He appeared at a time when the society was prepared for him. Not only the Arabian peninsular but the whole world at large was prepared for his coming.

In fact, the whole ancient world was longing for the appearance of a man to guide them. History bears witness that he established the most creative of all faiths, and the most profound for the cultivation of knowledge and spirituality:

“Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave.”

“Seek knowledge even if it were in China.”

“Seeking knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim man and a Muslim woman.”

The Prophet (s) awakened to new life the dormant minds of human beings and created a suitable environment for their cultivation. He drove away the idol worshippers and instructed them in the mysteries of, profession of the unity of God and how to live and die with dignity. As a result of his teachings the idolaters gave way to monotheism; ignorance yielded to knowledge and sciences; brotherliness, compassion and other human virtues took the place of hostility, hatred and discord.

The messenger of Allah was the paragon of virtue as echoed by the verses of the Qur'an.

“Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent pattern (of conduct).” (33:21)

“And lo! You (Muhammad) are of a tremendous nature.” (68:4)

Allah has presented a beautiful pattern of conduct and character of the Prophet (s).

He has been sent into this world as the greatest exemplar and the perfect model and the best pattern of a flawless righteous life on earth. The sublime moral excellence of the Prophet (s) manifested in every aspect of his life, private as well as public. He himself has said:

“Indeed I have been sent to accomplish noble traits of character. He is also reported to have said:

“Allah has inculcated in me refined manners and He has embellished my moral example.”

No one could read the excellence in the qualities that Prophet Muhammad possessed. His virtue, the magnanimity of his character, and his love for mankind were recognised even during his lifetime. His conduct on the one hand, and the verses of the holy Qur'an on the other, he conveyed the message that he had been ordered to deliver.

He proclaimed clearly and loudly the revelations he had received. He conveyed the message in the midst of the society where people's mind revolved exclusively around eloquent speech and the composition of

beautiful poetry and literacy excellence. Under these conditions Allah equipped Muhammad (s) with a weapon, the holy Qur'an, which possessed unique characteristics that were beyond the capacity of human being to reproduce.

The verses of the Qur'an filled the hearts of the Arabs with new feeling and perception. As they were fully versed in the art of rhetoric they readily realized that the eloquence of the Qur'an was beyond the power of man to produce. In fact, the Prophet (s) challenged them to produce even one surah like that.

“And if you are in doubt concerning that which We revealed to Our servant then produce a chapter like it, and call your witnesses besides Allah if you are truthful.” (2:23)

In a society where poetry could be more powerful than swords, the exquisite style of the Qur'an and its inimitability - could be very convincing indeed. Everyone who heard it had to acknowledge that its language was extraordinarily powerful.

The Arabs of that age who were addressed by the Qur'an could never have doubts about its extraordinary eloquence. It is intended to be an eternal miracle. A permanent message must display to mankind a permanent and everlasting miracle one which advances with time, so that just as it offered convincing proofs to the people of the past, it can also offer these proofs to the people of the future.

A short - lived miracle cannot be a source of reference for the future. For this reason, the Qur'an is presented as permanent and universal message. “It is not poetry, though it is hard to say whether it be or not, it is beyond poetry.

It is not history, not metaphysical dialectics like the Buddhist sutras nor the sublime homiletics like Plato's conference on the wise and foolish teachers. It is a Prophet's cry, Semitic to the core, yet of meaning so universal and so timely that all the voices of the age take it up, willing or unwilling, and it echoes over palaces and deserts, over cities and empires, first kindling its chosen hearts to the world conquest, then gathers itself up into a reconstructive force that penetrates the dark, glooms of Greece and Asia when Christianity was the Queen of Night.”

The verses of the Qur'an give out very important guiding factors for those who sincerely long for the right guidance. Indeed, the Prophet is guidance personified as was rightly versified by the Egyptian poet, Ahmad Shawqi in his famous qasidah.

“Born is the right guidance blazing the whole Universe with glow and brightness.” Ka'b bin Zuhayr, author of the famous panegyric on the Prophet (s), composed almost sixty verses in praise of him in the Jahiliyyah style beginning: “Su'ad has gone away, so my heart today is distracted and enslaved to her, unrequited and in fetters.”

When Ka'b reached the following verses:

The messenger is indeed a light from whom enlightenment is sought; he is an unsheathed Indian sword from amongst the swords of Allah.

“At the head of the company of Quraysh whose spokesman said in the valley of Makkah, when they became Muslims, “Go forth!” “They went

forth, but the weak and the defenders in the fray and those who sat badly in the saddle and those unarmed did not go forth.”

“They walk with the gait of pure white camels - a blow protects them, when dwarfish black ones take flight in fear.”

“Holding their heads high, heroes whose coats of mail in the fray are breast plates of (Nabii) Da’ud’s weave.”

“Shining and foil, whose rings have been knit together as though they were the close-woven rings of al-Qaf a plant.” “They do not exalt if their spears pierce an enemy and they are not, despairing when they are speared.”

“They thrust (lances) only in their throats (i.e. they never show their backs to the enemy) and for them there is no flying away and shrinking from the pools of death, the Prophet (s) threw his own burda - a mantle, a sort of a cloak at him (Ka’b bin Zuhayr).”

The supplication of Nabi Ibrahim (a) while building the Ka’bah was answered: “Our Lord! And raise up in their midst a messenger from among them who shall recite unto them Your revelations, and shall instruct them in the Scripture and in wisdom and shall purify them. Lo! You, only You, are the Mighty, the Wise. (2: 129)”

And the glad tidings of Nabi Isa came true: “And when Isa, son of Maryam said: O Children of Israel, Lo! I am the messenger of Allah unto you, confirming that which was (revealed) before me in the Torah, and bringing glad tidings of a messenger who will come after me whose name is Ahmad. (61:6)”

Indeed it was a man who brought forth the Arabs from Jahiliyyah (ignorance) into the faith and devotion of one God.

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“Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example” 33:21

The Human Ear: Masterpiece of Engineering

The study of the human being has long been a fascinating task for philosophers, physicians and poets. With the recent advances in science and technology our knowledge about ourselves is increasing rapidly.

Now to appreciate wonders of the Creator Allah, let us take one example only:

the human EAR and see its wonders. In this article, we will look at the amazing human ears and see how clearly their construction points to a designer.

The First Sense: The Hearing The first sense to develop in a developing human embryo is HEARING. The foetus can hear sounds after the 24th week.

Subsequently, the sense of SIGHT is developed and by the 28th week, the retina becomes sensitive to light.

Consider the following Qur'anic verses related to the development of the senses in the embryo:

“And He gave you (the faculties of) hearing And sight and feeling (and understanding).” (Qur'an 32: 9) “Verily We created man from a drop of mingled sperm; in order to try him: so Contributed by Mehtaab Ismail We gave him (the gifts), of hearing and sight.” (Qur'an 76: 2)

“It is He who has created for you (the faculties) of hearing, sight, feeling and understanding: little thanks; It is ye give.” (Qur'an 23:78)

In all these verses, the sense of HEARING is mentioned before that of SIGHT. Thus 1400 years ago the Glorious Qur'an has alluded to the order of the senses in the developing foetus. First HEARING develops;

thereafter SIGHT. Modern embryology has only discovered this fact centuries later. Subhaanallah ! GLORY BE TO THE CREATOR.

The Organ Equilibrium Of Balance And Humans are the only creatures that can stand upright naturally and have large complex brains that they can use to synthesize sounds into speech. No other creature has this capability.

The human ear is unique since, besides processing sounds, it is also the organ of balance and equilibrium. Our ability to stand upright and walk on two legs has brought many advantages - specifically the opportunity to develop manual skills such as reading, writing, driving and operating equipment.

Without our eyes and ears and the ability to stand up, even the most modern communication systems will not work, since the eyes and ears have to prepare the input and interpret the output.

Why was the human being endowed with these attributes? Since we are the most intelligent species and dominate this earth, it behooves us to reflect on this. Each part of the human is uniquely and beautifully constructed in the most efficient design.

Human ears are not much to look at, yet behind these flaps of skin and cartilage lie structures of such delicacy that they shame the most skillful craftsman, and of such reliable automatic operation that they inspire awe in the most ingenious engineer.

Working together, the structure of the outer, middle, and inner ear perform acts of amazing range and virtuosity.

The reason we have two ears is because they form a stereo system allowing us to identify the place from which the sound originated and also to identify whether the source is moving.

The processing of sound by the ear and brain is so accurate that clicks presented to one ear and then the other can be distinguished as separate Plain But Perfect!

sounds when the time interval between them is as small as thirty microseconds.

You Could Hear A Pin drop...

If the, sensitivity of the ear was further increased, we would be conscious of the continual bombardment of the eardrum by air molecules. Even at the present limit it is surprising that we do not hear our own blood flowing through the tiny vessels in the eardrum.

This is so because the ear can ignore signals which are constantly present. In fact, a normal ear can discriminate among some 400,000 sounds. We can reject the hubbub of a function while picking out a single familiar voice.

Even during sleep the ear continues to function with incredible efficiency: because the brain can interpret and select signals passed to it by the ear, a person can sleep soundly through noisy traffic and the blaring of a neighbor's television, and yet awaken promptly at the gentle urging of an alarm clock.

A barking dog, a squealing tire, a footstep - can all be identified.

All This And More! Of all the organs of the body, few can accomplish as much in so little a space as the ear.

If an engineer could duplicate its functions, he would have to compress into approximately one cubic inch a sound system that includes an impedance matcher, a wide range mechanical analyser, a mobile relay and amplification unit, a multichannel transducer to convert mechanical energy to electrical energy, a system to maintain a delicate hydraulic balance and an internal two- way communication system.

Even if he could perform this miracle of miniaturization, he would be unable to match the ear's performance. Many birds and animals have learned to signal one another by their voices, both for warning and recognition, but we, the humans, with our ears, our mobile tongues and throats, and our large complex brains have learned to speak.

We have learned to be articulate, to attach arbitrary and abstract meaning to sounds, synthesize words, and create a language which we then use as a tool to communicate our experiences of the past and also our ideas and plans for future action.

We now have innumerable languages across the world. Humans are the only creatures capable of achieving all this. The great strides we are making in every field are evidence of this fact. Why All This?

Is there a lesson to be learned from all this? Is there a purpose? And if so, what is it? What is our responsibility? It seems abundantly clear to me that our main responsibility is to use our ears and eyes and brain to recognize Allah, the Creator of all these wonders; to recognise the role of the Almighty God; and to understand the purpose of our existence:

TO SERVE HIM AND HIS CREATION.

Using our God given senses and our unique ability to explore this vast Universe we have learnt a great deal about the physical laws that govern it.

We know that these laws are fixed and consistent; that they apply equally at all points through out the Universe, without differentiation. This attests to the fact that there is one Creator and His system is unchangeable.

Let us be appreciative of Him by using our senses in the only way they should be used - to recognize Him as the absolute God and pledge our allegiance to Him alone, the Creator of mankind.

“Verily We created man from a drop of mingled sperm; in order TO TRY HIM: so We gave him (the gifts), of hearing and sight.” (Qur’an 76: 2)

“It is He who has created for you (the faculties) of hearing, sight, feeling and understanding: little THANKS; It is ye give.” (Qur’an 23: 78)

“... Surely every act of Hearing, and Seeing and Feeling (of hearts), all of these shall be QUESTIONED.” (Qur’an 17:36).

How can Kerbala bring a Revolution in our lives?

“I am not rising (against Yazid) as an insolent or an arrogant person or a mischief-monger or tyrant. I have risen (against Yazid) as I seek to reform the Ummah of my grandfather. I wish to bid the good and forbid the evil.”(Imam Hussein (a.s)).

Imam Hussein (a.s) left Medina on the 28th Rajab 60 A.H with his family which includes the ladies and children.

When he asked as to why he was taking his family. He replied, “The Lord has willed that they should suffer captivity.”

After the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (a.s), the ladies and children were taken as captives, and it was through them that the sacrifice of Imam Hussein was spread, which brought love of the Ahlulbayt in people’s heart.

Of Islam, so firmly he re-established the truth so that never again should it be shaken by any one until the Day of Judgment. No wonder the Quran refers this sacrifice as Dhibhe-Azeem from all the sacrifices.

Since imam Hussein has made such a big sacrifice for us, we should be thankful to him for saving the true Islam and answering his call which he made on the By Zaynab Thawar battlefield, “is there any supporter to support?

Is there any helper to help me?” On the day of Ashura, the battle was of blood and so the answer ended with shed of blood in the way of Allah (s.w.t). However the battle today is with our Nafs.

So only if we learn how to control our Nafs then we shall answer the call of imam if we love him from the depths of our heart so that the aims and values for which the Imam shed his pure blood and the blood of his sons, brothers and companions do not die.

The fact that “everyday is Ashura and every land is Karbala” means that the life itself is battle against evil forces, that is, the internal forces like jealousy, anger, pride, backbiting e.t.c and external forces like western influence, media, peer pressure e.t.c.

Hence when the Imam called for help, he was asking the Shias of the future generation to help him in his mission which was to preserve the true Islam.

As regards to our crying on Imam Hussein (a.s), when the tragedy of Karbala is related our emotions are aroused and so we cry. This crying helps to link us to the Imam emotionally, spiritually, mentally and physically.

The crying should help us remember the aim of Imam Hussein and awaken our conscience to come on the right path.

The tear has a great value when it makes us live like Hussein, fight like Hussein for the truth and sacrifice and die like Hussein for the removal of falsehood from all the spheres of life.

Imam Hussein (a.s) has said, “I am the one who will be killed in a manner that tears will be shed upon me and my remembrance will not but awaken the conscience and impart lessons.” Hence this Hadith shows that Karbala should bring a revolution and a remembrance within us.

We also learnt the importance of having good friends just the way Imam Hussein had friends like Habib Ibn Mazaher who stood up for him in times

of need and sacrificed his life. Imam Hussein has taught us the importance of praying Namaaz on time.

In spite of being on the battlefield, he stopped fighting and performed his prayers of Zohr and Asr. So we must try our best to say our prayers on Fadhilat time.

taught us to preach the religion of Islam through our actions and this can only be done by gaining Islamic knowledge in various fields.

We have learnt from Imam Hussein how to be a good and just leader and bring about a revolution and rise up against oppressive rulers. Mahatma Gandhi the renowned Indian leader said, "I learnt the lesson of leadership from Hussein, for he was wronged and hence loved."

We have also learnt from this great event to be steadfast in our faith and be proud to call ourselves Muslims. We have learnt that Islam means total submission to the will of Allah (s.w.t) and all our actions and deeds should be for the pleasure of Allah (s.w.t). From the shining personalities of Karbala we have learnt how to be ideal daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers.

The initial step is for an individual to change, for it is said: "be the change you want to see in the world." Bibi Zainab has taught us the importance of piety, self sacrifice, controlling the Nafs from worldly things, modesty and Hijab.

Through the sermons that she delivered in the courts of Ibn Ziyad and Yazid, she has In conclusion, from the tragedy of Karbala, I have learnt many lessons which if implemented can surely change and bring a revolution in our lives as the holy Quran says in Suratul Asr, "Surely man is in a loss except for those who believe and do good and enjoin each other truth and enjoin each other in patience."

Is Humility the Essence of Greatness?

By Ismat Mukhtar

A Muslim Reflects on the Prophet's Conduct... (By Sariya Islam a convert of more than 13 years. She holds a Master's in Business Management and is an experienced Human Resource Professional) Who Is the Perfect Leader?

As I read this description, I realized that effective leaders are those who work for their people, those who are humble, and those who neither flaunt their status nor exploit their power.

It is hard to come by such individuals in real life, and you rarely come across the perfect combination of humility, knowledge, and charisma that is required of the perfect leaders.

I sat back looking out into the garden and tried to identify an individual who fitted this role. I thought for a while and then slowly smiled to myself; I had found the perfect leader!

I thought of a man who rose to be the initiator of a new way of life that today has about 1.8 billion adherents spread across the world, a man who at the height of his success maintained the humility displayed in his youth.

His wisdom, he asserted, was never his own but rather was divine revelation; at the height of his success, he proclaimed, "I am but an ordinary man."

Let me introduce you to Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), the prophet of Islam. Charles de Secondat, a French political philosopher and social critic, said, "To become truly great, one has to stand with people, not above them."

This reminded me of the building of the first mosque in Madinah: The Prophet had recently completed a tiring and stressful journey, but when he saw his people enthusiastically laying bricks for the mosque, he insisted he would join them; thus laying the foundations of a society in which nobody's status was too high and no work was too menial.

Through his actions that day, he taught his people enduring lessons on equality, companionship, and respect: [Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is the one who is the most righteous of you] (Al-Hujurat 49:13).

Sharing Chores and Errands The Prophet ate with his people - he shared the same bread and drank from the same flask - and when his people went hungry, he starved too.

He lived with his Companions as one of them and their problems were his own: He laughed with them when they were happy, and he cried with them when they were sad. On the battlefield, he was always with his soldiers, and at home he helped his wives with their chores.

The Prophet was once traveling with a group of people and it was time to rest and cook food. As work was divided and everybody was assigned a task, the Prophet insisted he would contribute too and began to collect firewood.

brother, a husband, a friend, and also a Prophet of God.

He could have used this passion that his followers had for him in whatever manner he pleased. He could have had luxury and deserved it too.

Yet he slept on a crude straw mat that left his back marked, he prayed on the bare earth which left his forehead stained, and he wore clothes that had torn many times over and that he himself had mended.

Making Compromises Is a Tough Call Another wonderful example of the Prophet's humility occurred at the signing of the treaty of Hudaibiyah between the Muslims and the leaders of Makkah at the time.

The Muslims, led by the Prophet, had journeyed toward Makkah in order to perform the pilgrimage at the Ka'bah, but the leaders of Makkah did not want this to happen.

To prevent the impending conflict, the Prophet agreed to a treaty with the leaders of Makkah that stipulated the Muslims to go back that year without entering Makkah; however, they would be given the right to enter Makkah for three days every year for the next 10 years.

His Companions argued that there was no need for the Prophet to work; after all, he was the Prophet of God, how could they let him collect firewood!

But he remained adamant saying that since he was part of the traveling party, he too would participate in the work to be done, for he hated to be privileged. For most of his followers, the high status of the Prophet is unquestionable.

While he lived, he was considered even by his detractors to be a man of truth and honesty.

The genuineness of the message he brought was authenticated by the millions who accepted the new faith he preached with such great passion, willing to sacrifice all they had for their religion and for the man who led them to it.

He was their leader not just in all spheres of life in this world but in the life of the hereafter too - a man of religion, a general, a father, an elder This treaty, especially some of its other clauses,

were seen as a step backward by many Muslims who felt that there was no need for them to compromise when they had both political strength and military prowess, but the Prophet wanted to avoid unnecessary violence and agreed to the treaty.

One incident that highlights the Prophet's modesty occurred at the actual signing of this treaty: He was mentioned in the document as "Muhammad, the Messenger of God", a fact that the leaders of Makkah took offence to, saying that if they had recognized the Prophet as the Messenger of God, there would have been no need for the treaty at all.

Tempers flared in the Muslim camp, this was too much of an insult. So to me, this man epitomizes within himself unimaginable humility, yet he is one of the greatest leaders in history.

He preached the word of God and continued to conquer the hearts and souls of millions. But even today he is remembered, by the same title he insisted be used when he was alive, simply as 'Abd Allah (Arabic for the Slave of God).

To end, it is apt to quote Mahatma Gandhi, another simple man and the father of the Indian nation. What he said captures the essence of the Prophet's character and his dedication to both his ideals and his people. It

captures the love of not just the 1.8 billion Muslims but also the respect that countless academics, philosophers, and thinkers have for the man called Muhammad. Gandhi had this to say:

I wanted to know the best of the life of one who holds today an undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind...

I became more than ever convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regard for pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers,

his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle.

The Prophet, however, reacted calmly and wisely, and asked for the part "Messenger of God" to be removed and had his father's name written instead (a common way of referring to people at the time). He was simply "Muhammad son of Abdullah"

Gentleness Sets the True Leader Apart On another occasion, a man new to the Muslim gathering came to visit the Prophet. The man was filled with awe that made him nervous and anxious; this was natural for the man as his belief told him he was visiting the Prophet of God and the leader of the powerful Muslim nation.

When the Prophet realized the man's uneasiness, he comforted him saying, "Brother, don't be afraid; relax and be at ease. I am not a great monarch or king. I am only a son of a lady who ate cured meat."

A Tribute to Human Kindness

a Lifeline from Britain to Gaza What happens after the bombs stop falling? Does a country under siege for fourteen month period, go back to the way it was? Do children stop crying for their dead parents,

do mothers stop weeping for their lost children? Where do they live, now that their houses are destroyed, and how do they survive after losing almost everything?

Many have already forgotten about Palestinian cries for help. The Media started looking for a new story, as soon as the country no longer had illegal weapons tearing apart their homes, and killing their children.

What people don't realize is that now, the people of Gaza are pulling out the bodies, from underneath the ruins left by Israeli army. Dead are still being counted, and the homeless shiver in the cold of winter.

In Palestine's darkest hour George Galloway a member of the British House of Commons, took a step forward, and awakened the world, not to forget the people of Gaza.

Leaving on February 14, 2009, with 300 extraordinarily kind people of several ethnicities and faiths, George Galloway, lead his convoy which consists of a fire engine, 12 Contributed by Shahista Dharsi The convoy is already supported by the Stop the War Coalition, which organized the largest demonstrations in British history,

as well as the Anglo- Arab Organization, several British trade unions and a large number of Muslim organizations. Fundraising for the convoy is taking place all over Britain.

Also accompanying the convoy is Yvonne Ridley, who, along with a team from Press TV, has ambulances, a boat and trucks packed with medicines, cash, tools, clothes, blankets and gifts for children living under the Israeli blockade.

Traveling through several countries, France, Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt raising the banner of Palestine, as symbol of solidarity, and trying to arouse consciousness, for the people in Palestine still suffering through immense hardship. The convoy will go through Rafah and into Gaza, some thirty days after it's departure.

The message due to be delivered is an important one, "We truly care and we've driven across continents to prove it". For the rest of us it surely signifies the goodness of human nature and the strength of people power, which if correctly directed, can move mountains.

traveled with the convoy since Day One. As she was driving through the snow-capped mountains of eastern Algeria, she described the experience, thus far, as "absolutely amazing" and said that everywhere they journeyed they were greeted by smiling well wishers carrying goodwill letters addressed to the people of Gaza. They have also been overwhelmed with gifts of money, bottled water and food.

a brand new van to replace one that had broken down and insured it as well. In Morocco, a private individual erected a marquee and prepared on a feast for all consisting of 22 lambs. And after refueling in Algeria, they were astonished to discover that an Algerian businessman had picked up the entire fuel tab; which was no small sum.

Greg Galloway made this statement, "The time for talking is over and the time for action is now. The Viva Palestina convoy has struck a chord with thousands who wish to express their solidarity with the people of Gaza.

But we need more money to purchase the aid so desperately needed by a people living under siege."

Donations are still needed; every penny goes to the convoy already on its way to Palestine. You still have a chance to help those who cannot alone help themselves. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said "God is not merciful to him who is not so to humankind. He who is not kind to God's creation and to his own children, God will not be kind to him."

These self-sacrificing individuals' confidence in the seemingly impossible has already produced a miracle. Their sincerity has melted the hearts of Moroccan and Algerian politicians who agreed to open their common border, which closed since 1994, something the then US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice tried to achieve, but failed.

Their commitment to people who are less fortunate has been commendable. How many of us would dig into our own pockets and convince our families, friends and complete strangers to do the same so that we could take off in the middle of winter on a mission with an unknown time period, and unsure of the welcome we would receive on the way?

These individuals had no idea where they would sleep or shower or how they would get back home once they had donated their vehicles. They have found that acts of kindness are rewarded by other acts of kindness.

Waiting for the Mahdi

When The Almighty blesses a person with a visit to the Holy Land of Samarah, the person turns to The Mahdi (atfs) and laments in these words: “O Master !

be a witness that I pledge myself to you even if your ghaibat is prolonged to such an extent that my life is on the verge of exhaustion!.. ! still, I will keep waiting for you.... my confidence, my love and my trust in you will increase every moment !

He then says...” I will keep waiting for you, and waiting for your call of Jihad. O my Master ! Through this passage from Mafaatihul Jinaan, we see that a true Muntazir / an Awaiter of The Mahdi never tires of waiting for his or her Imam.

By S. Abdulrasul

increases, duas will be recited; the parent will lament and appeal to Allah (SWT) to send her loved one to her soon, to give her some news of his safety...the same applies to a spouse, a parent or a friend - anyone you hold dear to your heart. That is ‘waiting’.

Another example could be waiting for exam results, a job offer or even a guest, you can have the worrying kind of waiting or the anticipated waiting for good news. In both cases a person tends to be anxious and restless.

When we claim that we await The Mahdi (atfs), do we have the restlessness and anxiety of someone who is waiting within us ?

Are our eyes at the door waiting for Him, looking out for him, lamenting for him and praying to The Almighty for his safety ?

Or are we sitting back as silent spectators and going on with our daily lives, reserving His remembrance to the 15th of Sha’baan or a Friday morning or do we include him into our daily lives and give him the respect he deserves?

Why oh why do we not forget to eat, watch TV or even take our So what does a Muntazar do? Wait !! Butwhat is waiting?

Imagine if you will the state of a mother whose child is late coming back home. There will be certain restlessness within her, a discomfort that will not allow her to sit still until she has some news of her child. Questions will arise - why is he late?

Why is she not back yet? As the delay medications, but we forget to remember Our Imam (atfs) even once a day ? If like me, you are thinking ‘No,

I am not fulfilling my role as a Muntazir but I wish I was! ‘and I am willing to change, then the love of The Mahdi (atfs) will help us succeed, Inshallah. But on the condition that we put in some effort ourselves, take a step towards Him and ask Him to guide us.

with others, we must build dimensions, bringing our (physical), mind (intellect), (emotion) and soul (spiritual) harmony with each other.

Though we emphasize spirituality which is central, so long as we reside in a physical body and need to interact The belief in the Mahdi cannot be a mere tradition. We cannot sit on the fence and wait to see what happens.

Each of us must believe and prepare with all our strength, heart, mind and soul or at the very least make sure we do not become the obstacles to

his return. We must have Islamic Values when preparing for the return of the Mahdi (atfs) and that includes being well rounded in every aspect.

A person once built a house and showed it to Imam ‘Ali (as). The Imam asked him why he had built a window in one room and he said it was to brighten the room. The Imam said, if he done it with the intention to know when it is time for salaah, he would have gotten reward in the hereafter as well. This kind of character comes only from being well-rounded in all aspects.

When our Youth choose their professions, let them give it a deeper meaning and do so with the intent and hope that their talent will be of service in the army of The Mahdi (atfs).

We need to awaken and we need to bond with our Imam (atfs) before it is too late.

“The best struggle for the man is to fight against his own self and his ill-desire.” Prophet Muhammad (s)

Medical References at the shadows of Surat Al Kahf

The Quranic chapter 18: “The Cave” (Al Kahf) was revealed to answer few questions which the mushriks (unbelievers) of Makkah, had put to the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in order to test him.

One of the questions was: Who were “the Sleepers of the Cave”? The disbelievers of Makkah were told that the story of the Sleepers of the Cave was a clear proof of the creed of the Hereafter, as it shows that Allah has the power to resurrect anyone He wills even after a long sleep of death as He did with the Sleepers of the Cave (they slept over 300 years).

Allah the Almighty says in this chapter: “Then We smote their ears in the Cave many years.” (18:11)

Contributed by Neelam Ismail equilibrium (position and movement of the head).

In the case of Cave Sleepers the physiological function of both hearing and equilibrium did stop, therefore, the Quranic verse uses the expression “Smote their ears..” rather than their hearing.

The other bodily functions were veiled, and the eye did not see though open: “You would have thought them awake, as they lay sleeping” (18:18) And their muscles did not move, although they were alive: “While We turned them now to the right, now to the left” (18:18)

Their shape did not change although many years elapsed as they did not notice real changes on their faces when they woke up: “They said: “We have tarried a day, or part of a day” (18:19) The sense of hearing is a physiological one that does not stop functioning at the time of sleep (the sleeper can wake up at a nearby sound).

As the 8th cranial nerve (which passes in the inner part of the ear) has two divisions: one for hearing and the other for Their conditions as such are like that of preserving organs through cooling to cause metabolic inhibition, which is used extensively in the medical field to preserve donated organs (heart, kidneys,cornea,etc)before transplantation into another body.

Therefore, the sun inclines towards the right when rising up and towards the left when setting down, so that it will not strike them, while they are in a gap in the cave:

“And you would have seen the sun, when it rose, inclining from their Cave towards the right, and when it set, passing them by on the left, While they are in a gap therein, Such are among the Signs of Allah” (18:17), would have thought them awake, as they lay sleeping”. (18:18)

And did not say; “You would have thought them dead, as they lay sleeping,” as the sign of awakening is ‘eye wink’. Allah preserved their eyes from blindness through blinking, as the eye if kept closed for a long period of time will be blind, because the optic nerve will shrink and die, and if it is kept open, the cornea will be affected with corneo-xerosis, and blindness.

So, coolness in this gap in the Cave away from the heat of the sun that did not touch them, was sufficient to inhibit bodily metabolism for the preservation of their bodies all this long period.

Had they been only asleep, they would have needed water and food to survive, and would have been awoken by the need to urinate after some hours.

But Allah inhibited all their biological functions and preserved their bodies in a living shape. So, He said: “You Therefore, this rare status of theirs would have aroused terror, if seen, as they were not alive or dead. They were asleep, yet their eyes were blinking: “Had you observed them surely you would have turned your back on them in flight, and been filled with terror of them.” (18:18)

As Allah preserved their eyes through blinking, He also preserved their bodies from ulcers through constant turning: “While We turned them now to the right, now to the left” (18:18)w So that they would not be affected with pressure sores.

Inner Peace of Mind

The inner disturbances that afflict the human heart prevent him from enjoying true peace of mind.

These disturbances often stem from a resentment of circumstances and an inability to accept things that cannot be changed. One of the signs of faith is calmness and strength of spirit bestowed by submission to Allah. Outer circumstances cannot disturb this inner serenity.

Submission is to trust that God knows all things and has a master plan for our affairs. The Holy Qur'an says:

Perhaps you dislike something while it is good for you, and perhaps you love something and it is evil for you, and Allah knows while you do not know. (2:216)

His will that Husayn (a) be martyred, then Zaynab (as) would accept and submit. Submission and being pleased with Allah's decree was their armor against the pain of the tragedy.

The women of Karbala have given us many lessons, among them the peace that can be gained from submission to Allah's decree.

When Zaynab binte Ali (a) saw her brother going off to the battle field, she prayed:

O our Lord, accept from us this sacrifice. My God, if this pleases You, then take until You are well pleased. The pleasure of Allah is a paramount consideration in all affairs, and if it was Ridha is the Arabic term used to denote the quality of being pleased with Allah's decree. The following hadith are strong on the importance of ridha:

- The peak of obedience to Allah is ridha, whether the servant likes it [the decree] or dislikes it. Imam as-Sadiq (as).

- The root of ridha is trust in Allah Imam Ali (as)

- How can a believer be a believer when he is angry at his lot and resents his position, while he knows that the Decreeer on him is Allah? Imam al-Hasan (as)

The fruits of complete submission include freedom, peace, happiness and tranquility. Lead a more peaceful and happier life regardless of your circumstances by submitting to what Allah has decreed.

As Imam as-Sadiq (as) says:

Happiness and comfort lie in Ridha and Yaqeen, while worry and grief lie in doubt and anger at Allah's decree. "Anecdote" of Palestine The Hebrews also came as conquerors to Palestine. Long before them were many other semitic and non-semitic tribes settled there -the Amorties, the Edonioles, the Philistines, the Monbities, and the Hittites. These tribes lived there even in the days of the kingdom of Israel and Judah.

They continued living there after the Romans drove their ancestors away. The Arabs who settled in Syria and Palestine after their conquest in the 11th century were only a small minority of the population. The rest of what we describe today as Palestinians or Syrian "Arabs" are in reality only the arabianised, original inhabitants of the country.

Some of them became Muslims in the course of centuries, others remained Christians.

The Muslims naturally Contributed by M.J.Mussa inter-married with their co-religionists from Arabia. But can you deny that the bulk of those people in Palestine, who speak Arabic,

whether Muslim or Christians, are direct-line descendents of the original? Original in the sense of having lived in this country centuries before the Hebrews came to it?

The Jews have been away from Palestine for nearly two thousand years. Before that that had ruled this country and hardly even the whole of it, for less than 500 years; don't you think the Arabs could, with equal justification, demand Spain for themselves- for after all, they ruled in Spain for nearly 700 years and lost it entirely only 500 years ago?

Extracted from 'The Road to Mecca' by a Hungarian Author.

The Messenger of Allah (s) said: "Verily I have been sent to accomplish noble traits of character."

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