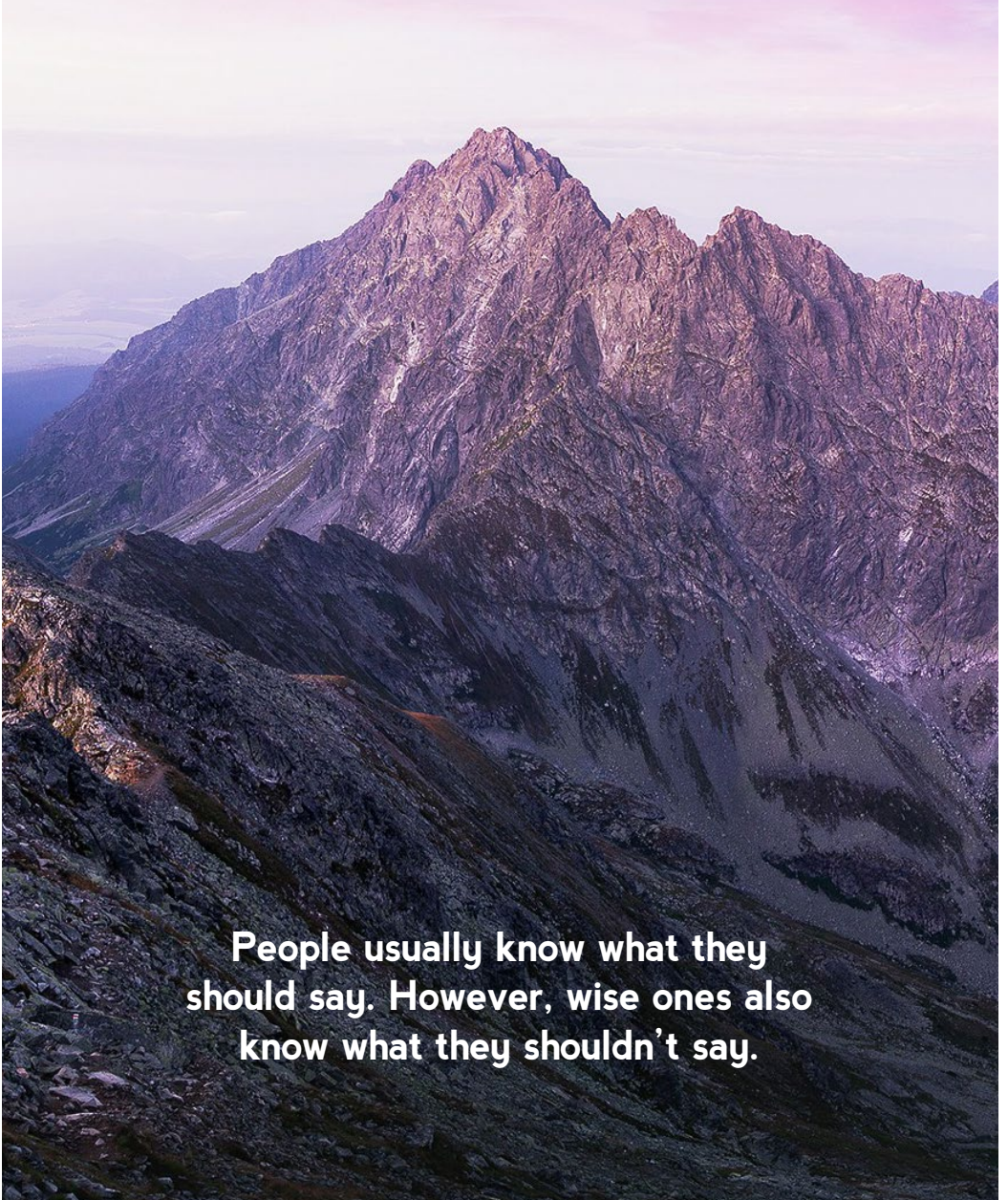


ENGLISH BIMONTHLY ISSUE 121 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2024

SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living



People usually know what they should say. However, wise ones also know what they shouldn't say.

A MAGAZINE FOR THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

Articles in the *Spirit of Islam magazine* are based on sound principles of reason and science with a particular emphasis on the spirit of Islam rather than the form or the ritual. All the articles have been either written by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, translated from his Urdu writings, or based on his writings developed by a team trained and guided by him.

Spirit of Islam bimonthly...

- ▶ Presents Islam, the religion of nature, in the contemporary idiom to help Muslims rediscover Islam from the original sources
- ▶ Explains Creation plan of God for humankind
- ▶ Enlightens people on the subject of global peace
- ▶ Addresses contemporary issues
- ▶ Assists the readers to deal with life's challenges
- ▶ Offers Spirituality to a wider circle of seekers
- ▶ Fosters greater communal harmony through religious understanding

United in prayers
SOI Editorial Committee

SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living

ISSUE 121 NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2024

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FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S DESK



Prof Farida Khanam is an author, editor, translator, public speaker and former professor of Islamic Studies at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Among her books are 'A Simple Guide to Islam' and 'A Study of World's Major Religions'. She has translated into English many books authored by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. Currently the chairperson of CPS International, she is a regular contributor of articles to various publications. Prof Khanam has edited Maulana's English translation of the Quran and has also translated his Urdu commentary on the Quran into English. She can be reached at spiritofislamperiodical@gmail.com

PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT

AMERICAN writer Michael Hart described the Prophet of Islam as the most influential person in history in his book *The 100*. What was the secret behind the Prophet's success? The secret lies in the Prophet consistently favouring peaceful resolutions over warfare. He followed a policy of avoidance and reconciliation regarding confrontation and unnecessary conflict, pivotal in his remarkable success on all fronts.

His approach was not rooted in force or conflict but in diplomacy, patience, tolerance and practical wisdom, which won over hearts and minds. His goal was spiritual and intellectual transformation of individuals, which can only be achieved through peaceful environment, goodwill and wise planning. This is why the Prophet's teachings are entirely based on peace. He was one of the greatest pacifists in human history, using peaceful methods as his most effective tool.

The Prophet's commitment to peace was not just a tactic; he saw peace as a complete ideology. Highlighting this unique approach to conflict resolution, he emphasised, "God grants to peace what He does not grant to violence." (*Sahih Muslim*)

He realized that peace is the most effective solution for any situation. His migration to Madinah and the Treaty of Hudaibiya are two key examples of this. In the former, he quietly left his homeland at

midnight to avoid confrontation with the enemy. In the latter, he unilaterally accepted all the conditions of his dire opponents, showing his unwavering commitment to peace.

The Prophet's teachings emphasize the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means. Arab leaders today should follow this prophetic guidance and prioritize peace over violence.

In contrast, modern Arab leaders call for 'peace with justice', which is unrealistic. Unlike the Prophet, they have sacrificed countless lives in pursuit of this ideal, but to no avail. From the example of the Prophet, we learn that justice does not come from peace itself; peace creates opportunities, and justice is achieved by utilizing them.

This principle, followed by the Prophet throughout his life, which is clearly demonstrated during the Treaty of Hudaibiya, is something Arab leaders today need to embrace fully. From the Quran and the

Prophet's life, we learn that an ideal solution is not always possible. For example, when the Prophet faced a conflict with his opponents, similar to the Arab-Israel issue in the Holy Land, he reached an agreement in AD 628 by unilaterally accepting all the terms set by the opposing side.

This is one of the most notable examples of his peace-oriented strategy. The nonviolent resolution of this conflict showed his foresight and wisdom. He agreed to the Hudaibiya treaty not to impose his conditions but to create opportunities. This agreement ended the ongoing state of war in Arabia, paving the way for future possibilities.

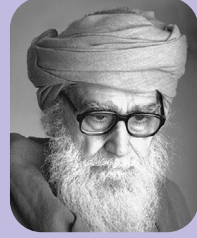
The Prophet's teachings emphasize the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means. Arab leaders today should follow this prophetic guidance and prioritize peace over violence. By focusing on creating peace to open new opportunities, as the Prophet did, modern leaders can usher in an era of peace and progress. The Prophet's success was not built on conquest and coercion but on the strength of his character, the wisdom of his strategies, and the deep appeal of his message of peace. On the occasion of *Eid Milad-un-Nabi* (Birth Anniversary of the Prophet), let us rekindle the spirit of peace, remembering that the Quran describes the Prophet as a mercy to all of humanity (21:107).

(This article appeared in the Speaking Tree column of The Times of India dated September 16, 2024.) □



IN FOCUS

We bring you two articles every issue under the headings of 'Personal Experiences' and 'Journey towards God-realization' of our mentor and founder of CPS International Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021). Though he is no more with us, we feel the presence of his guiding spirit motivating us through his teachings and his advice.



Maulana, through his study of science, religion, psychology and the experiences of his own life, enlightens about the path to discovery of God through one's journey of life. A discovery of this kind involves pondering on the Word of God, converting one's material experiences into spiritual insights, constant introspection, and contemplating on the numerous phenomena of the universe.

The journey of realization begins with a questing spirit. Seeking is an intellectual journey. If a person is sincere and honest in his discovery of God, if there is no negativity in his thinking, if he is free from prejudices, if he has become a completely complex-free soul, attainment of God-realization is as certain as the dawn of light after the rising of the sun.

The greatest success in this world is to live life in such a manner that you should not have an iota of negative thought against any person. You should depart from this world with a totally positive mindset. This is my last discovery in this world.

-Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021)



RECOGNIZING OUR OWN FAULTS

IN my youth, I once read an article in an Urdu monthly magazine titled, *The Fault Lies Within*. This title was inspired by a verse from the famous Urdu poet Momin Khan Momin (1800–1852):

I blamed others, yet the fault was mine

As I recall, the writer emphasized that people, by nature, tend to blame others for their problems. However, if we look deeper, we often find that the discomfort or loss we experience is the result of our own mistakes. People often structure events in a way that shifts the fault onto others, avoiding accountability themselves. In social life, incidents don't occur in isolation; rather, each event is a culmination of various contributing factors. Yet, people selectively highlight aspects that support their own

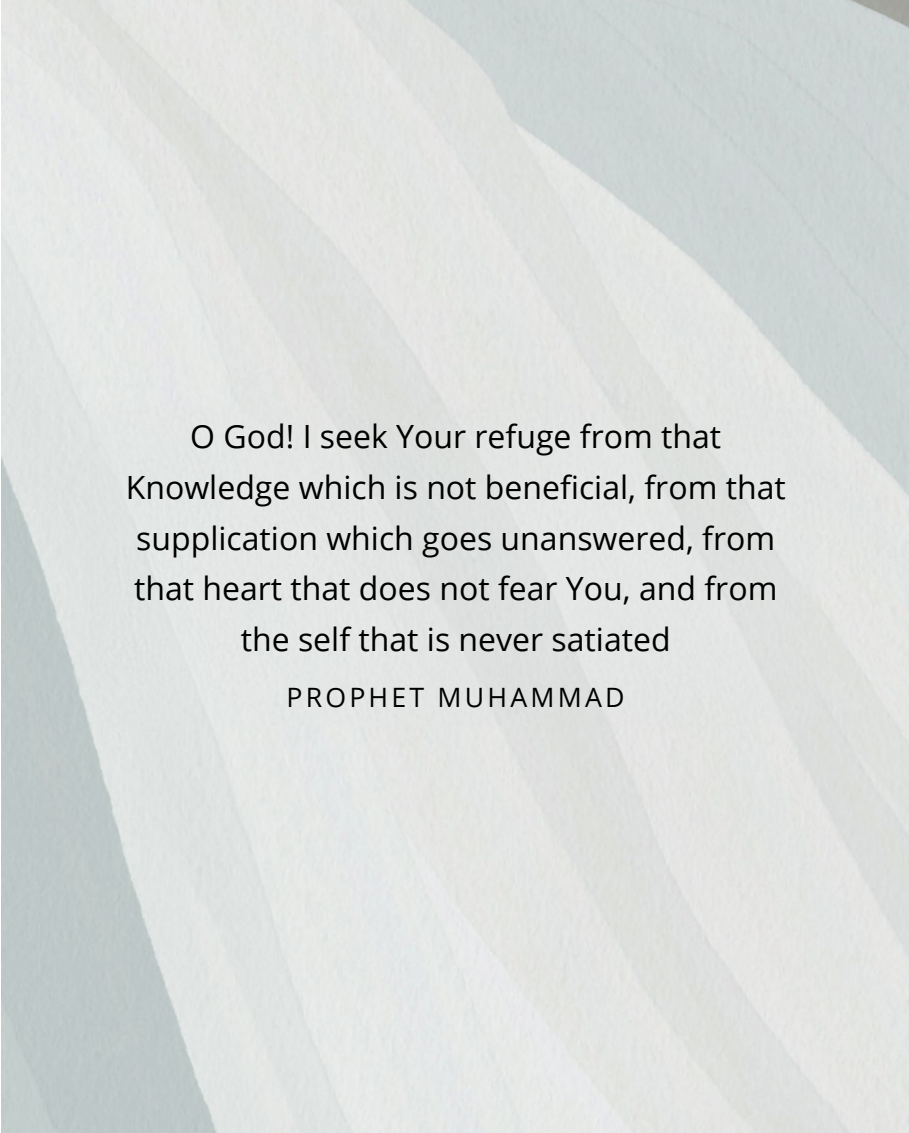
In social life, incidents don't occur in isolation; rather, each event is a culmination of various contributing factors. Yet, people selectively highlight aspects that support their own narrative, disregarding factors that might implicate them.

narrative, disregarding factors that might implicate them. This selective perception not only clouds personal accountability but also perpetuates societal complaints and conflict.

True change begins when we look inward and take ownership. The solution to resolving our mistakes begins with self-correction. Once you take ownership of your role in issues, problems seem to resolve almost effortlessly. We become more thoughtful, gaining insight into our actions, their motivations, and their consequences.

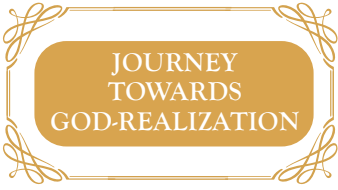
During my travels in youth, I often noticed people blaming others and recounting stories of injustice. I wondered, if everyone claimed to be a victim, who was playing the oppressor? Eventually, I realized that each person was shifting their mistakes onto others, refusing to acknowledge their own shortcomings. This experience transformed my approach; I stopped blaming others, choosing instead to take responsibility—even for errors that didn't seem mine. Blaming others feels unnatural to me now; I view self-accountability as the key to personal and social harmony.

By understanding that personal growth and improved relationships start from within, we cultivate a mindset of self-awareness and maturity. Through introspection and self-responsibility, we foster harmony not just within ourselves, but with those around us. □



O God! I seek Your refuge from that
Knowledge which is not beneficial, from that
supplication which goes unanswered, from
that heart that does not fear You, and from
the self that is never satiated

PROPHET MUHAMMAD



MODERN ATHEISM: AN ANALYSIS

INTELLECTUALLY, human history can be divided into two major periods: the pre-scientific era and the post-scientific era. In the pre-scientific era, religion served as a primary framework through which people interpreted the world. However, the rise of modern science fundamentally altered this dynamic, establishing science as the new trendsetter in human understanding. Importantly, science, as a discipline, does not inherently support or oppose religion; its findings are neutral. Nonetheless, science's insights have contributed to the prevalence of atheism in intellectual circles. This article explores why this shift occurred.

For thousands of years, humans have observed natural phenomena—the rising of the sun, rainfall, and wind—as acts directly governed by divine forces. This worldview became almost an intuitive truth, shared by people of all faiths, who accepted that such phenomena pointed to a divine causation. During this period, the idea of causality, or a link between Creator and creation, did not exist in the structured way we understand it today.

The advent of modern science brought about a profound change in this perspective. Discoveries by scientists like Sir Isaac Newton demonstrated that there is often a material cause preceding every effect. For example, Newton observed an apple falling from a tree and questioned why it fell downward rather than upward. Through this observation, he eventually formulated the concept of gravity, a force that draws objects toward the earth. This insight laid the foundation for the scientific principle of causation, which posits that every observable event has a preceding cause. This principle expanded to encompass all intellectual activities, gradually displacing divine explanations with empirical reasoning.

Initially, this principle of causation was intended to explain only physical events. The shift from divine to natural explanations did not necessitate the denial of God. However, atheistic thinkers—rather than scientists—leveraged this scientific framework to advocate for the rejection of God, thus initiating the doctrine we now call “modern atheism.”

Modern atheists argue that the existence of natural causes negates the need for supernatural explanations, implying that belief in God is unnecessary for understanding the world. However, this argument contains a critical logical flaw: the existence of a natural cause does not preclude the need for an ultimate explanation. Even if science identifies a cause for every event, this does not address why these causes themselves exist. Thus, while causation offers a framework for understanding events, it leaves the question of ultimate origins unanswered.

In short, causes themselves require explanation, and causation alone cannot provide a comprehensive understanding of existence. This insight suggests that modern atheism, in attributing everything solely to material causation, may overlook a fundamental layer of inquiry—the search for an ultimate reason behind causes themselves. □

Even if science identifies a cause for every event, this does not address why these causes themselves exist. Thus, while causation offers a framework for understanding events, it leaves the question of ultimate origins unanswered.

CPS Women's Group

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According to Islam, men and women are different in role, but equal in respect.

THE POWER OF QUALITY IN TODAY'S WORLD

The Key to Success

An old Persian proverb says, “The one who wields the sword holds authority”. This saying hails from a time when power determined authority. However, in today’s scientific age, the emphasis has shifted from power to quality. The world now values quality in everything—be it education, industry, healthcare, management, supply chains, or interpersonal interactions. In every field, success hinges on the delivery of quality. Whatever sector you work in, if you can consistently deliver high quality, success is assured.

Whether you are crafting a nail cutter or a car, quality is the sole ingredient for long-term success. Quality builds trust, customer loyalty, and a competitive edge that no other factor can match.

In this era, there’s no need to campaign for rights, protest against oppression, or pursue activism aggressively. The world today is an open marketplace. If you provide exceptional quality, your work will speak for itself. I know of a man born in a small village in Uttar Pradesh who, due to family circumstances, moved to Mumbai and began as a house painter. Slowly, his commitment to quality painting spread his reputation across the city, leading to his success. His secret was simple yet powerful: consistently delivering top-quality work.

Whether you are crafting something as small as a nail cutter or as complex as a car, quality is the sole ingredient for long-term success. Quality builds trust, customer loyalty, and a competitive edge that no other factor can match. For lasting success, maintain a high-quality approach, offer predictable behaviour, and let every interaction reflect excellence. In a world with abundant choices, it is those who uphold high standards that will always stand out and achieve sustained growth. □



IDENTIFY YOUR UNIQUE ROLE

Be a Positive Force

EVERY human being is part of God's plan, born with unique abilities meant for a special purpose. Every life is built upon a silent covenant between us and our Creator, a commitment that holds the value of our existence. We are each endowed with certain talents, and each of us, in our own way, has pledged to fulfil the purpose for which we were created. Recognizing and using these talents is what helps us find our place in God's design. Failing to do so means not fully realizing the role we are meant to play in the world.

This concept is beautifully illustrated by the example of two Companions of the Prophet Muhammad: Abu Hurairah and Khalid bin Al-Waleed. Though both men were sincere believers, their roles in serving Islam were different. Abu Hurairah is known to have narrated 5,374 *Hadiths*—sayings and teachings of the Prophet—while Khalid bin Al-Waleed narrated fewer than one hundred. This distinction was not about their dedication to Islam but about their natural abilities and the fields in which they excelled.

Abu Hurairah and Khalid recognized their differences and chose paths that suited their strengths. Abu Hurairah had a remarkable memory, allowing him to retain and transmit the Prophet's teachings with accuracy. He was deeply aware of this gift and asked the Prophet to pray that his memory would remain strong and reliable. This prayer, combined with his dedication, helped him become one of the most prolific transmitters of *Hadith*. His extraordinary memory enabled the preservation of the Prophet's words, a legacy that has been invaluable for future generations of Muslims.

Khalid bin Al-Waleed, on the other hand, was known for his courage and strategic prowess in battle. He described how, before embracing Islam, he felt misplaced whenever he fought against the Prophet, as though he was working against his true purpose. Once he accepted Islam, Khalid used his bravery to fight for religious freedom and defend the faith. He joined the Muslim army and spent his life eradicating oppression. He would pray to God for strength and resilience, and even the Prophet himself prayed for Khalid's success. The Prophet honoured Khalid as "one of the swords of God," recognizing that his courage was divinely inspired for a unique role.

These two examples reveal how each individual must find their own path according to their strengths. Abu Hurairah did not have the combat

skills of Khalid, nor did Khalid possess Abu Hurairah's memory. Yet each was devoted to serving Islam in their own way. This acceptance of their unique abilities and roles enabled them to contribute meaningfully. Khalid's legacy is one of defence and courage, while Abu Hurairah's legacy is one of knowledge and preservation. Both men fulfilled the silent covenant with their Creator by embracing and cultivating their gifts.

In a broader sense, this is a reminder to all of us. Our first responsibility is to understand and identify our own unique talents. By recognizing our abilities, we can serve both ourselves and our purpose more effectively. The process of self-discovery is not merely personal but also spiritual, allowing us to see our role in a much larger divine plan. Recognizing and cultivating our God-given talents is essential, not only for personal growth but also for making a meaningful contribution to our personal growth and to the world.

The process of self-discovery is not merely personal but also spiritual. Recognizing and cultivating our God-given talents is essential, not only for personal growth but also for making a meaningful contribution to the world.

The lives of Abu Hurairah and Khalid bin Al-Waleed remind us that true success lies in finding our unique path, understanding the gifts we have been given, and using them to fulfil our purpose. When we listen to our strengths and embrace the role they guide us toward, we find our place in God's blueprint, a place where our work and our faith come together in harmony. □



PEOPLE ENGROSSED IN PETTY
ISSUES ONLY PROVE THEY
CANNOT ACHIEVE ANYTHING
significant IN THEIR LIVES.

IN QUEST OF REALITY

Through Science and Religion

GALILEO (1564-1642) could only peer at the moon's visible face through his humble telescope. In contemporary times, aided by spacecraft cameras, humanity now glimpses the moon's hidden side. This basic example underscores the substantial chasm in scientific understanding spanning the past and the present.

However, the price of accessing modern insights is markedly steep. On October 10, 1980, the world witnessed the installation of the most extensive telescope in New Mexico, incurring a staggering cost of \$78 million. The American spacecraft Voyager, reaching Saturn in December 1980, commanded a hefty price tag of \$340 million. CERN, the European particle physics facility, finalized its construction in 1981, aiming to dissect protons and transmute matter. The financial outlay for this institution amounted to \$120 million. Presently, this establishment plans the inception of a grander research apparatus, estimated at \$550 million. In the United States, a proton research machine came into being, amounting to \$275 million, and so forth.

The mounting fascination of individuals with particle physics manifests in the exponential growth of participation. In the 1927 physics conference, a mere 32 scientists participated, whereas in the 1980 conference, the number soared to 800 participants. The American Physical Society's membership, which was a mere 1300 in 1920, surged to an astonishing 30,000 members by 1980.

Contemporary research endeavours, predominantly in astronomy and particle physics, incubate results over protracted durations, often spanning 50 years or beyond. Comprehending the depreciation of capital allocated to these non-profit ventures, it is evident that a hundred-dollar investment's value would dwindle to a single dollar half a century later.

These contemporary pursuits gravitate toward astronomy and particle physics. Their fruits of inquiry manifest tardily, taking about five decades to crystallize. Accounting for the diminishing monetary worth of investments in these explorations (which accrue no interest), the span of fifty years sees a hundred dollars devalue to a solitary dollar. Many express reservations regarding such projects, citing excessive expenditure on what appears to be futile undertakings. Addressing this sentiment, American scholar Roger Penrose articulates:

“Do economists not share with us the thrill that accompanies each piece of understanding? Do they not care to know where we came from, how we are constituted, or why we are here? Do they not have a drive to understand, quite independent of economic gain? Do they not appreciate the beauty in ideas? A civilization that stopped inquiring about other things as well, a lot else might then die besides particle physics.” (*Sunday Weekly*, Nov. 30, 1980)

This citation unveils the imperative of comprehending the verities of existence. Even those who abstain from dissecting the cosmos through the lens of divinity yearn to unearth bedrocks upon which to ground their understanding and cosmic comprehension. The undeniable fact remains that the presence of beings akin to humans, nestled within both the visible expanse and the uncharted realms of the universe, presents such awe-inspiring marvels that contemplation becomes irresistible.

Possessing a mind capable of glimpsing both past and future, humans are driven to fathom the reason behind these occurrences. These questions loom over contemplative individuals, propelling them towards the truth.

No other pursuits, even substantial material leaps, can supplant this persistent inquiry.

Within the vast expanse of the universe, human beings grapple with their existence within an infinity of galaxies—approximately 200 billion in number. Each galaxy houses an incalculable multitude of colossal stars, and the interstellar distances are so vast that they equate to the expansive seas, with ships isolated from one another. The expanse of stars scattered throughout this immense cosmos is so staggering that uttering their single-word names ceaselessly would demand 300 billion years to exhaust them. (*Plain Truth*, January 1981)

In this unimaginably vast cosmos, humankind emerges as an infinitesimal entity. Even within the cosmic atlas, human presence appears tinier than those minuscule islands omitted from conventional world maps due to their diminutiveness. Despite this insignificance, humanity is traversing the universe’s distances, spanning from subatomic realms to galactic systems. Possessing a mind capable of glimpsing both past and future, humans are driven to fathom the reason behind these occurrences. These questions loom over contemplative individuals, propelling them towards the truth. Yet, humanity’s dilemma lies in the fact that, apart from revelations received by prophets, telescopic observations and laboratory experiments remain the sole avenues for seeking answers to these queries.

In a universe teeming with worlds that the mere act of naming would consume over three billion years, how can humanity unearth the truth it seeks within the span of its fifty or a hundred years of life? The stark verity emerges that only the Creator possesses the power to unveil this enigma, an illumination conveyed through the conduit of prophets.

Albert Einstein (1879-1955) unveiled the theory of space and time, attaining a remarkable fame. Some argue that Einstein's scientific worth transcended the acclaim he garnered. An elucidation is put forth: Einstein's inquiries were tethered to the universe's eternal truths, and one who ventures to peer into these cosmic verities assumes distinct significance in society's eyes. A visionary described:

"Whoever finds that which enables us to obtain a deeper glimpse into the eternal secrets of nature has been given great grace. That was the grace of Albert Einstein's unique greatness—to try to find such thoughts." (*The Hindustan Times*, March 15, 1981)

The yearning to fathom the universe's timeless truths is so deeply ingrained in human nature that it defies detachment. Since antiquity, humanity has yearned for these age-old enigmas, which consistently remains out of reach. If one cannot access these truths through personal endeavour, limitations prove insurmountable barriers. An inquiry arises: Why, despite prophets unveiling these timeless secrets throughout history, do humans remain resistant to embracing the prophets' revelations?

The crux lies in the prophet's response, replete with the concepts of reward and retribution, Heaven and Hell. The prophet calls for relinquishing self-directed lives and embracing a more constrained existence on earth. This conditionality renders humanity averse to adopting the prophet's proclamation. They relentlessly seek solutions to uncover nature's mysteries—responses without constriction. Future contemplation seems undesirable. Nameless spiritual entities' answers find acceptance by countless individuals, yet the prophets' revelations are met with dissatisfaction. This arises from the spiritual entities' responses merely gratifying the spiritual facet, devoid of room for spiritual discipline. Conversely, prophets' revelations engender relinquishing personal freedom, enveloping individuals in perpetual contemplation of the afterlife.

Success lies in alignment with truth, not evasion from it. If the truth indeed resonates with the prophets' guidance, seeking an alternative verity proves a futile endeavour. Who can conjure existence from non-existence? □

LEADERSHIP THROUGH EXPERTISE

Lessons from the Rightly-guided Caliphs

IN the early days of Islam, the leadership of the Muslim community was marked by the exemplary governance of the first four Caliphs, known as the *Khulafa-e-Rashideen* (rightly-guided Caliphs). Their reigns provide a perfect example of how each person, when focused on their unique strengths, can contribute to a successful and harmonious society. This principle of expertise and specialization is crucial, especially when engaging in introducing the peaceful message of the Quran or fulfilling religious duties.

The reigns of the first four Caliphs provide us with timeless lessons on leadership, expertise, and teamwork. In today's context, whether in introducing the peaceful message of the Quran, religious duties, or any other field, it's crucial to recognize and respect the unique strengths of each individual. An intellectual thinker or skilled writer should contribute through their thoughts and writings, while an orator should focus on delivering impactful speeches. Similarly, those proficient in finance should manage financial affairs, and organizers should handle logistics.

When each person excels in their area of expertise and refrains from overstepping into others' roles, the community as a whole benefits. This approach not only ensures efficiency but also fosters a sense of unity and mutual respect. It's important to remember that in the eyes of God, what matters most is our sincerity and dedication to our duties, rather than the recognition we receive from others.

As the *Rashidun Caliphs* have shown, the true reward lies in serving the community with sincerity and striving for excellence in whatever role we are entrusted with. Let us take inspiration from their example and strive to excel in our respective fields, always keeping in mind our ultimate accountability in the Hereafter.

The Role of Expertise in Leadership and the Importance of Sincerity

In any organization, especially those dedicated to religious or communal work, it's essential that individuals contribute in areas where they have the most expertise. When people are placed in roles that align with their skills and knowledge, the organization functions more effectively, and the goals of the group are more likely to be achieved. However, a potential pitfall arises when individuals, based on seniority or tenure, are elevated to positions outside their areas of expertise. This can lead

to inefficiencies, mismanagement, and ultimately, a failure to achieve the organization's mission.

The Dangers of Misplaced Leadership

When a financier or organizer, whose skills lie in managing resources or coordinating logistics, is placed in a leadership position that requires oratory skills, strategic vision, or deep intellectual thought, the results can be detrimental. Their lack of expertise in these areas may hinder the organization's progress, as they might not be equipped to make informed decisions, communicate effectively, or inspire the community.

Moreover, this misalignment can lead to a scenario where the organization's efforts are diluted. Instead of leveraging the unique strengths of each member, the focus shifts to accommodating those in positions they are not suited for, which can create discontent and inefficiency within the team. The Prophet Muhammad warned against assigning responsibilities to those who are not fit for them: "When the trust is betrayed, then wait for the Hour." It was asked, "How will it be betrayed, O Messenger of God?" He said, "When authority is given to those who do not deserve it, then wait for the Hour." (*Sahih al-Bukhari*)

When each person excels in their area of expertise and refrains from overstepping into others' roles, the community as a whole benefits. This approach not only ensures efficiency but also fosters a sense of unity and mutual respect.

This *Hadith* emphasizes the importance of assigning responsibilities based on merit and expertise rather than on other factors such as tenure or personal relationships.

The Unseen Contributions of Financiers and Organizers

In many organizations, the most visible roles are those of the orators and writers—those who speak to the public, craft the message, and shape the vision. These individuals often receive the applause and reverence because their contributions are seen and heard by all. However, the people working behind the scenes, such as financiers and organizers, play a crucial role in the success of any project or initiative. Their work may go unnoticed by the general public, but it is indispensable.

The contributions of those managing finances, coordinating events, and ensuring that resources are available when needed are foundational to

the success of the organization. Without their diligent work, the orators would have no platform to speak from, and the writers would have no means of disseminating their ideas.

While it is natural to seek recognition and appreciation for one's work, it is essential to remember that the ultimate reward lies not in this world but in the Hereafter.

However, history shows that those involved in financing and organizing rarely achieve the same level of recognition as the more visible figures. There is no precedent that a financier has gained the status of "*akabireen*"—the revered elders and scholars within the community. The reason for this is simple: their work, though critical, is not as publicly visible or celebrated.

The Quran reminds us of the importance of sincerity and humility in our work, regardless of whether we receive recognition: Whatever good you may do, God is aware of it. (2: 197)

This verse encourages us to focus on our actions and their alignment with divine guidance, rather than on the recognition or status we might receive.

Keeping the Hereafter in Mind

While it is natural to seek recognition and appreciation for one's work, it is essential to remember that the ultimate reward lies not in this world but in the Hereafter. The true measure of success is not the applause we receive from others but the satisfaction of knowing that we have fulfilled our duties with sincerity and dedication.

The Prophet Muhammad emphasized the importance of intention in our actions: "Actions are (judged) by intentions, so each man will have what he intended." (*Sahih al-Bukhari*)

This *Hadith* highlights that the value of our deeds is determined by our intentions rather than the external recognition we receive. Those working in finance or organizational roles should take solace in the fact that their sincere efforts, though unseen by the public, are known to God and will be rewarded accordingly. □



HUMAN NATURE AND POSITIVE THINKING

Reconciling the Two Extremes

WITHIN the depths of every individual lies a hidden devil, a reservoir of hatred that lurks within us all. This hate bomb remains dormant under ordinary circumstances, but when triggered, it can explode with overwhelming intensity. This aspect of human nature knows no gender boundaries, as all of humanity is susceptible to this powerful force.

In a society comprising 10,000 individuals, each person becomes akin to a moving combustible, susceptible to ignition at the slightest provocation. Nevertheless, personal interests compel people to restrain their violent tendencies and adopt pacifistic approaches, making leadership a formidable challenge.

A true leader must refrain from merely relying on slogans of complaint and protest, as such negative rhetoric can inflame people, fostering a volatile society akin to a gathering of combustible materials awaiting ignition. Instead, a leader must embrace a message of love and compassion, spearheading movements for positive change. Conversely, those who propagate hatred and grievances should refrain from initiating mass movements and reflect on their actions in private.

Collective movements can be categorized as either positive or negative. A positive movement stems from personal responsibility and duty, resulting in righteous endeavours that yield positive outcomes. In contrast, negative movements focus on demanding rights and protesting, often leading to invalid and potentially harmful actions. The choices made by leaders significantly impact the outcome of movements, with righteous endeavours contributing to goodness and unrighteous ones inevitably leading to evil consequences. Understanding the potential explosion of hatred within us and choosing the right approach is paramount in shaping a harmonious and progressive society.

Understanding the interplay between the hate bomb within and the power of positive thinking equips individuals to navigate life's challenges and contribute to a more harmonious and progressive society.

Beyond comprehending the darker facets of human nature, embracing the power of positive thinking plays a pivotal role in shaping a fulfilling and purposeful life. Positive thinking is a mindset free from negative emotions, where opinions are formed based on facts rather than complaints or protests. It embodies a realistic outlook on life, transcending pride and prejudice.

The influence of positive thinking extends to every aspect of a person's life, shaping their personality and defining their future. Embracing positivity fosters a pure and constructive character, resonating with the essence of nature. By adopting a positive mindset, individuals are more likely to tread a path leading to a fulfilling life, while negativity hampers progress and potential.

Cultivating a positive mindset demands conscious effort and mindfulness, holding oneself accountable, and continuously striving for improvement. The essence of positive thinking transcends self-centred goals, empowering individuals to focus on meaningful pursuits and avoid wasting time on fruitless endeavours.

Understanding the interplay between the hate bomb within and the power of positive thinking equips individuals to navigate life's challenges and contribute to a more harmonious and progressive society. By embracing positivity and cultivating self-awareness, we can forge a brighter future, transcending the darker aspects of human nature. □



Paradise

is for those fortunate souls who can
surrender to God, obey God in every situation,
and offer themselves completely to Him.

THE CREATIVE STUDY OF THE QURAN

The following is an English translation of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's Urdu talk delivered on April 21, 2019.

In the Name Of God, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful, And Peace And Blessings Be Upon The Prophet.

We will discuss the following verse of the Quran in today's address: In their stories there is a lesson for men of understanding. This [Quran] is no invented tale, but a confirmation of the previous [scripture] and a detailed explanation of all things as well as guidance and mercy to true believers. (12: 111)

I have been reflecting on the idea that the Quran is both guidance and mercy. But what does that mean? This isn't about forming a mere belief or creating a dogma. The essential point is that we must ponder over the Quran deeply.

This is a blessed Book which We sent down to you [Muhammad], for people to ponder over its messages, and for those with understanding to take heed. (38: 29)

Reflect upon the Quran. What is reflection?

Reflection means rediscovering the Quran daily. Each day, we must draw new sustenance from the Quran to nourish the soul. Only then can we say we have truly embraced the Quran. Otherwise, it becomes just a ritual belief.

When will this happen?

When you continuously engage deeply with the Quran. I first realized this point in Jaunpur when a young man used to visit me frequently. He admired Ghalib and would read Ghalib's verses thoughtfully. Through this constant reflection, new ideas would emerge for him. This, I understood, is exactly how we should approach the Quran—through continuous contemplation. This reflection fosters creative thinking, a development the Quran will inspire within us.

Merely memorizing translations or superficial knowledge is not creative thinking. The Quran is the book of God, the Lord of the universe. It carries the grandeur of this Quranic verse: Every day He manifests Himself in a new state. (55: 29)

This quality should be nurtured within you. This is what I mean when I say that the Quran encourages creative thinking. The test to know if you have embraced the Quran is whether it has sparked creative thinking in you. If it has, be grateful, for you have truly received sustenance from the Quran. The Quran was revealed to foster creative thinking in people.

It is my habit, whenever I meet someone, to ask, "Tell me something of value." Most respond with talks of elections or similar topics, which only indicates that the Quran has not yet become their guidebook. Why not marvel at the sunrise, the vast sky, the ocean filling up with water? There are countless wonders in nature to contemplate, yet discussions always revolve around elections. Politics is a temporary phase; it will come and go without fostering new thinking.

One of the verses I was reflecting on is: On the Day when the earth shall be changed into another earth (...). (14: 48)

In a *Hadith (Sunan Al-Tirmidhi)*, it is said: "The grave can be either a garden from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the pits of Hell." Here, the term "grave" is symbolic, representing a transition from one stage of life to another. We often hear leaders speak about change, like the American President once said, "Change has come to America." But change must also come within us. The Quran should inspire this internal transformation, so that as we read it and move into the life Hereafter, we are filled with new thoughts. This is creative thinking.

Once, while I was in Azamgarh, I slept in a room without electricity. A thought struck me: someone had entrusted me with a 100-rupee note, and if I died, no one would know where I had kept it. I got up, wrote a note detailing the location of the money so it could reach its rightful owner if I were no longer there. This is what creative thinking looks like.

Immersing yourself in politics does not lead to personal development or spark creative thinking. People who read the Quran yet remain absorbed in politics have accepted the Quran as part of their belief, not as a book of guidance.

True believers in the Quran continuously introspect and question their growth. Every day, they reevaluate and replan. For instance, I was unwell recently and wondered if illness is bad. Then I pondered over a verse: Soon you will be gratified with what your Lord will give you. (93: 5) This means something beyond material things; it means new experiences and insights.

Each encounter in life should give you a takeaway, a lesson. Whenever

I attend a gathering or seminar, I ask people what their takeaway was. Unfortunately, few understand this concept. This “takeaway” concept is essential, just like a store labelled “Takeaway” allows you to choose and take what you want. The Quran intends to instil a takeaway mentality in us, so we draw inspiration and creativity from every experience.

I pray that God grants us the wisdom to live in such a way that when we reach the Hereafter, He will be pleased with us and admit us into Paradise. This is my prayer for myself and for all of you. □

The Quran encourages creative thinking. The test to know if you have embraced the Quran is whether it has sparked creative thinking in you. If it has, be grateful, for you have truly received sustenance from the Quran.



Living in a state of
negativity is a kind of
self-killing

Articles Written By CPS Members

Many Islamic scholars from India and abroad have supported the CPS mission. Some of them have in fact become part of the CPS mission. Most notably, few graduates from Jamia Dar-us-Salam, Oomerabad spent a considerable time under the guidance, mentorship and training of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. SOI editorial team has decided to carry articles written by these Islamic scholars within the pages of SOI. The articles written by these scholars display positivity, deep contemplation, a firm grasp on the knowledge of the modern world and the Islamic Scriptures. We hope that this new addition shall prove full of lessons and learnings for our readers.

DISCOVERIES OF THE MODERN AGE

Arguments for Religious Truths

The following article is written by Hafiz Syed Iqbal Umri.

FOR several days, I have been contemplating the modern era, often referred to as the age of scientific discoveries, the age of progress, and the modern age. Is this era inherently opposed to God and religion, or have the discoveries of this age provided additional arguments and insights in favour of religion? Reflecting on a verse from the Quran reveals that this is indeed the promised era. The verse foretells that soon, signs in the external world and within ourselves will be made clear, to the point that the truth becomes undeniable:

We shall show them Our signs in the universe and within themselves, until it becomes clear to them that this is the Truth. (41: 53)

In other words, the explanations of Quranic signs will be through the signs in the external world and within the human self. This suggests that a process will unfold throughout history, enabling believers in God to know and utilize these signs for the elaboration of the truth.

Today, as I was translating a sentence with the help of ChatGPT, a thought struck me. For many days, I had been using Google Translate for translations, and similarly, I had been using Google Lens to select text from PDFs. But lately, I have been using AI-based applications like ChatGPT. It occurred to me that if an application can instantly translate text into languages understandable to different people, then surely, it is possible for God to hear prayers made in various languages and respond immediately. To manifest this possibility, God has revealed such universal signs in the modern era. Today we can translate text using

gadgets, whereas God, without any intermediary, can communicate directly with each individual. There is a *Hadith* that says:

“There is none among you but his Lord will speak to him on the Day of Resurrection, and there will be no interpreter between him and his Lord.” (*Sahih Bukhari*)

Similarly, the information search engines and social media networks created in this modern age are well-known to be highly user-friendly and useful. Furthermore, they read the user’s mind remarkably well. Once you search for something, the system saves it and constantly presents related content. It reads and stores your thoughts, emotions, and gestures, and wherever your ID operates, it provides you with content that interests you.

Reflecting on this reveals how deeply God knows the inner secrets of humans. Numerous Quranic verses affirm God’s boundless knowledge, such as:

Whether you speak in secret or aloud, He knows what is in every heart. How could He who created not know His own creation, when He alone is the Most Subtle in His wisdom and the All Aware? (67: 13-14)

We created man—We know the promptings of his soul, and are closer to him than his jugular vein. (50: 16)

He is aware of the [most] stealthy glance, and of all that the hearts conceal. (40: 19)

These technologies clearly illustrate that if these things are possible at a potential level, why can’t they be accepted at the level of faith?

God has established His existence through the creation of the universe in every conceivable way. To this day, no one is in a position to claim that they have created the universe or that they are running its system. Only in religious scriptures do we find the claim of the Creator. Today, additional arguments have emerged to substantiate this claim. Despite this, people consider the modern age to be an era of denying God. However, the same standards by which they accept a possibility as reality also validate belief in God and the Hereafter. The Quran refers to this attitude:

And they persisted in rejecting them wrongfully and arrogantly, while in their hearts they were convinced of their truth. (27: 14)

In truth, the modern age is a test for everyone. Those who use it correctly can gain profound knowledge and insights, while those who misuse it may choose the path of rebellion. □

TOWARDS GLOBAL PEACE

We often talk of peace in the context of war. But this is a very narrow and restricted notion of peace. Peace is deeply linked with the entirety of human life. Peace is a complete ideology in itself. Peace is the only religion for both—man and the universe. It is the master-key that opens the doors to every success. Peace creates a favourable atmosphere for success in every endeavour. Without peace, no positive action—small or big—is possible.



THE TRUE MEANING OF MARTYRDOM

This article is written by Inayathullah Umri

MARTYRDOM in Islamic teachings is a revered concept, often associated with sacrifice for noble causes. However, limiting its meaning to death in battle does not fully align with the deeper understanding conveyed in the Quran and the practical model of the Prophet Muhammad. By examining key Quranic verses and the Prophet's actions, we find that martyrdom encompasses a broader purpose—one that emphasizes living for the truth and striving for peace.

The Quran states:

“If you have suffered a wound, they too have suffered a similar wound. We bring these days to people by turns, so that God may know those who believe, and choose witnesses from among you; and God does not love the unjust. (3: 140)

This verse highlights two realities: the alternating nature of success and loss in warfare, and the higher purpose of sacrifice. It reminds believers that in conflict, neither side experiences perpetual victory. Just as the Muslims faced a setback at the Battle of Uhud, their enemies suffered defeat earlier at Badr. The Quran clarifies that the trials of war test the faith of believers, but the ultimate aim is not simply to die in battle. Instead, the emphasis is on enduring as witnesses to the truth, reflecting the true essence of martyrdom.

The Quranic principle regarding war is that victory and defeat are temporary, alternating between opposing forces. “We bring these

days to people by turns” speaks to the inevitability of both sides facing triumph and loss.

However, when the Quran addresses peace, it speaks of a far greater victory. When the Prophet Muhammad negotiated the Treaty of Hdaybiyah, it was a moment that, to some of his Companions, appeared to be a concession. Yet, the Quran describes it as a “clear victory”. (48: 1)

This treaty created a peaceful environment, allowing Islam to spread without the hindrance of conflict. The lesson is clear: while war may bring temporary outcomes, peace fosters lasting success and growth.

If sacrifice were simply about dying in battle, then after this verse was revealed, the Prophet would have led his Companions into more wars. Yet, he instead pursued peace. He dug a trench to avoid direct confrontation in the Battle of the Trench, and later, he accepted the terms of the Treaty of Hdaybiyah, favouring negotiation over conflict.

The Prophet’s actions demonstrate that true martyrdom is not about seeking death but about standing firm for the truth. By prioritizing peace, the Prophet gave his Companions the opportunity to live and introduce the message of Islam. This approach enabled Islam to flourish, as peaceful engagement proved far more effective in spreading the message than continued warfare.

The Arabic term for martyrdom, *shahada*, means “witnessing.” A martyr in Islam is one who bears witness to the truth of God’s message through their actions, integrity, and perseverance. The Prophet Muhammad embodied this by guiding his followers to live as witnesses to truth and justice, rather than pursuing martyrdom in the limited sense of dying in battle.

This understanding was reflected after the Treaty of Hdaybiyah, when the Muslim community grew exponentially, a direct result of the peaceful conditions created by the treaty. Had the Prophet continued to pursue conflict, this remarkable growth would likely not have occurred. Instead, by choosing peace, the Prophet and his Companions were able to bear witness to the truth in a far more impactful way.

True success comes not from conflict, but from living as witnesses to truth, justice, and peace. The Prophet Muhammad’s life exemplifies that the ultimate form of martyrdom is living for a cause, not dying for it.

The Quran teaches that war brings temporary victories and defeats, but peace leads to lasting success. The verse “We bring these days to people by turns” reminds us of the fleeting nature of worldly conflicts, while “Indeed, We have given you a clear victory,” reveals the enduring power of peace.

True success comes not from conflict, but from living as witnesses to truth, justice, and peace. The Prophet Muhammad’s life exemplifies that the ultimate form of martyrdom is living for a cause, not dying for it. In today’s world, where conflicts continue, this message of peace and coexistence is more relevant than ever. □



You are not what
others think you are.
You are what you
prove yourself to be.

PILGRIMS OF HOPE

Restoring Faith and Universal Fraternity

The following is the presentation by Shabina Ali (Kolkata Chapter CPS) in an Interfaith programme. This article was later published in The Herald Weekly, Kolkata.



IN a world fraught with challenges, the concept of being “pilgrims of hope” resonates deeply, offering a pathway to restore faith, trust, and a sense of universal fraternity. As we journey through life, pressing forward towards a better future, our commitment at every step is to foster hope not only for ourselves but for all of humanity. This journey is profoundly rooted in Islamic teachings, where hope, trust, and the care for creation are essential elements of a believer’s life. The Quran, *Hadith*, and the insights of Islamic scholars like Maulana Wahiduddin Khan provide valuable guidance on how to live as true pilgrims of hope. The Quran emphasizes the importance of hope in God’s mercy and the promise of a better future. God says, Do not despair of God’s mercy, for God surely forgives all sins. He is truly the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful. (39: 53)

This verse underscores the idea that hope is a vital component of faith. It encourages believers to trust in God’s infinite mercy and to maintain hope even in the darkest of times. This trust is essential for restoring a sense of universal fraternity, as it fosters a spirit of forgiveness, understanding, and compassion among people.

The *Hadith* further illustrates the role of hope in the life of a believer. Prophet Muhammad said, “If the Hour (the Day of Judgement) is about to be established, and one of you is holding a palm shoot, let him take advantage of even one second before the Hour is established to plant it”. (*Musnad Ahmad*) This *Hadith* highlights the importance of proactive hope continuing to do good and contribute positively to the world, regardless of the circumstances. It teaches that hope is not merely a passive expectation but an active engagement with life’s opportunities, which in turn fosters a sense of responsibility towards others and the environment. The Prophet also said that hoping for a better tomorrow is a form of worship, as mentioned in *Jami’ at- Tirmidhi*.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, a prominent Islamic spiritual scholar and founder of CPS International, dedicated his life to demonstrating the relevance of Islam in the modern age. In his writings, he emphasized

that the modern era is one of peace and opportunities, where Islam can be understood as a complete ideology of peace. He argued that Islam, through its creation plan of God, offers a blueprint for living a life of hope and purpose. According to him, being a pilgrim of hope means recognizing the potential for peace and harmony in the world and working tirelessly to achieve it. His vision aligns with the Quranic perspective of hope as a force that drives positive action. He believed that the modern age provides unparalleled opportunities for everyone

By embracing hope, we can play a crucial role in addressing global challenges, promoting universal fraternity, and protecting the environment as part of our spiritual duty.

to engage with the world, spread the message of peace, and care for the common home: our planet. By embracing hope, we can play a crucial role in addressing global challenges, promoting universal fraternity, and protecting the environment as part of our spiritual duty. The concept of being pilgrims of hope is not just a spiritual journey but a practical one, rooted in Islamic teachings. It calls upon believers to restore hope and trust, to recover a sense of universal fraternity, and to care for the common home by contemplating the beauty of creation.

As we move forward in our journey, committed to bringing about a better future, we fulfil the ultimate goal of every vocation: to become ambassadors of hope, contributing to a world where peace, compassion, and justice prevail. As long as the sun continues to rise in this world, God is showing that He has hope in all of us. Let us strive to live up to that hope. □



If you are willing to sacrifice your ego completely and surmount all hurdles and face all sorts of difficulties and losses but still remain firmly established on the truth
- this is the actual jihad.

A PEACEFUL CITIZEN

Be a Giver Member

IN Islam, a true believer is one who brings peace and security to others through their conduct, both in words and deeds. Islam teaches that a true Muslim is a source of reassurance, not fear, for those around them. Such a person refrains from hurting others—whether through speech, behaviour, or even in unspoken attitudes. This is the basic level of humanity that Islam calls for: to ensure that no harm comes to another through our own actions.

Yet Islam’s vision for humanity extends beyond mere non-harm. The highest standard of humanity is achieved when individuals in society become a source of benefit and goodness for others. The Prophet Muhammad once said, “The best among you are those who bring the most benefit to others.” This means that, at the very least, if one cannot offer a direct benefit to others, they should make it their duty to avoid causing harm.

Every individual is accountable for their actions and the impact those actions have on society. Causing harm, whether intentional or unintentional, is a reflection of a lack of sensitivity and awareness. Islam holds individuals to a high moral standard, where they are urged to feel genuine remorse if they inadvertently hurt someone, and then to seek forgiveness and make amends sincerely.

Islam holds individuals to a high moral standard, where they are urged to feel genuine remorse if they inadvertently hurt someone, and then to seek forgiveness and make amends sincerely.

The essence of true humanity lies in empathy, in being mindful of how our actions affect others, and in striving to be a force for peace and goodwill. □



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AN INTERVIEW WITH MAULANA IQBAL UMRI

Maulana Iqbal Umri is a member of CPS Chennai team. He is an Islamic scholar. He is associated with the CPS mission since 2008.

Please tell us about your educational journey.

I completed the memorization of the Quran in 1989 at Jamia Darussalam Oomerabad in Tamil Nadu. In 1996, I completed *Alimiyat* (graduation) and *Fazilat* (post-graduation). I completed BA in Arabic from Madras University, which is referred to as *Afzal-ul-Ulama*. Then, for economic reasons, I travelled to Doha, Qatar, where I served as an Imam in a mosque for three years. In 2000, I returned to India. After that, I went to Bahrain for a period of three months to study *Sahih al-Bukhari*.

What was the subject of your studies?

As part of the syllabus, I studied the Quran, the corpus of Hadith, Fiqh, Aqeedah, Arabic language and history of Islam. My extracurricular reading started with the so-called Islamic novels such as those by Inayatullah Altamash and Nasim Hijazi. After that, I started reading more about Islamic topics. In the last few years, my focus has been on the problems of the Muslim community and their solutions. I felt then that I should serve Islam.

How did you first get involved in introducing the peaceful message of Islam?

After the demolition of the Babri Masjid, discussion on intercommunity relationship became very common among the Muslim community in India. In our institute, Jamia Darussalam, a *dawah*-oriented environment was developed. In the final year of our education, there was a lecture by Abdur Rahim. Then, after that, Janab Riyaz Musa Malbari conducted *dawah* awareness programmes.

What difficulties did you face while introducing the message of the Quran?

In the task of introducing the message of the Quran to the seekers, I have not faced any kind of difficulty till date from people of other faiths. I did face some hardships from the Muslims. They do not understand this noble task, and it is not on their priority list.

How were you first introduced to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan?

During my education, my teacher Maulana Abdul Samad Umri had subscribed to *Al-Risala* monthly. My father Maulana Syed Umair Ahmad Umri Madani himself was its regular reader. This is how I was introduced to *Al-Risala* magazine. My journey towards the CPS mission was greatly aided by my friend and colleague Maulana Fayyazuddin Umri. He impressed upon me the intricacies of the CPS Mission and the God-centric thinking of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, along with his contemporary insights. This was also one of the reasons I was able to understand the Mission, grasp the significance of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's message, and connect with the mission. I met Maulana for the first time probably in 2008 at his house in C29, New Delhi. In my first meeting, Maulana's topic was Paradise and our intense desire for it. Maulana said, "The world in accordance with our needs, and Paradise in accordance with our intense desire." As soon as I heard these words, I quoted two verses of the Quran as support.

Therein you shall have all that your souls desire, and therein you shall have all that you ask for. (41:31) Dishes and goblets of gold will be passed around them with all that their souls desire and their eyes delight in. (43:71) Maulana expressed his pleasure and prayed for me. He told me to work among the intellectual class.

Why did you decide to join the CPS Mission?

Before joining the CPS Mission, I was part of a team engaged in introducing the message of Islam. I spent about ten to twelve years with the team. I visited many cities of India and met many people. However, I understood the concept of this task through Maulana with utmost clarity. Likewise, I got to know the concept of introducing the unadulterated message in contemporary style from Maulana.

What changed in your life after joining this mission?

During my studies, I considered the Muslim community as an oppressed community. But after meeting with Maulana, I found out that the Muslims have become oppressed by turning away from its duty, i.e. introducing the message of the Quran. I was able to form a positive opinion about the seekers of truth and about the modern age. Before this, I harboured hatred for the seekers. Introducing the message of the Quran is an action based on a sense of responsibility. It is not performed on the basis of competence. I was not aware that God-realization should be the motive of this task. Then I realized that such introducing on the basis of God-realization is real introduction.

What difference did you find between other Islamic movements and the CPS Mission?

I understood clearly, through Maulana, that the goal of a believer is God-realization and introducing the message of the Quran to the seekers is the mission of a believer.

How do you think the message of the CPS Mission is unique?

Confirmation of the teachings of Islam and its universal reach both are divine blessings in the modern age. Other movements have awareness neither of the contemporary times nor of the changes that have arisen because of it. Therefore, the correct image of Islam could not be built. Islam was considered a religion of terrorism. The CPS Mission looks at the modern era as an era of confirmation of God's existence and an era of global opportunities for peaceful introduction of God's message.

Describe a memorable example of contemplation.

Once, while travelling on a plane, a question suddenly came to my mind: Which is the most difficult phase for a pilot, the take-off phase or the moment of landing of a flight. While thinking on this question, I was reminded of a *Hadith*: Verily, the results of deeds done depend on the last actions. (*Sahih Bukhari*)

The most important stage for the success of air travel is the last stage, i.e. proper landing. Similarly, human life continues to pass through different highways. This prayer came out of my tongue: "O God! Just as you made my air journey today through a proper landing, so tomorrow the plane of my life is going to land in the Hereafter. O God! Grant me a proper landing in the Hereafter."

Once, my child was not feeling well. He did not sleep all night. The child was in my hands and suddenly I said, "O God, neither sleep nor slumber overtakes You. O God, when a father wraps his children in his arms in a difficult time, so, you are my God, just as you are taking care of me today in my difficult times, take care of me tomorrow on the Day of Resurrection."

How was the experience of working with Maulana Wahiduddin Khan?

After meeting with Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, the intellectual confusion was removed. There was clarity in the purpose. Whenever I got the opportunity to attend his meetings. I learned aspects of God-realization, introducing the peaceful message of the Quran, and wisdom of life.

Maulana's book *Discovery of God* describes very important aspect related to God. I think that this book presents quite convincing and emphatic argument related to God. The book says, 'Direct observation of God is not possible in this world, only indirect observation is possible. God can be believed or known only by inference and effect.'

What are your future plans?

My plans for the future are:

To keep record of and store the entire corpus of Maulana's writings and speeches.

To accomplish thematic division of Maulana's writings and speeches.

To make available Maulana's literature through modern means.

To write supporting articles on any subject that Maulana has described.

To spread awareness on subjects such as science, modern age, the age of peace, the age of God-realization, etc.

What further changes or improvements do you expect in CPS Mission?

Maulana travelled much, and travelled far and wide. Similarly, members of the CPS mission should also plan travels. All members must regularly read the books of Maulana.

What is your message for the younger generation?

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan always advised the young generation to follow the path of knowledge, wisdom and peace. His message is that the youth should inculcate the spirit of inquiry, make study their motto, and bring positive change in the world through their knowledge and actions. He said that the path to success is only through knowledge and wisdom, and for real progress, it is imperative that a person makes proper use of his abilities. According to Maulana, the youth should focus on strengthening their morals and character so that they can become an example in the society and be a guide for others.

What qualities do you think are important to live a successful life?

Hard work is necessary for success in this world and God-realization is necessary for success in the Hereafter. You cannot succeed in the Hereafter without God-realization, nor in this world without hard work.

Many such examples have been given in the Quran. We must develop the characteristic of looking at our life by comparing it with an incident in the Quran. Take the example of Prophet Joseph. It offers great guidance on how to face untoward situations. □

THE CONSIDERATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES

A Fundamental Requirement

THE thoughtful consideration of circumstances holds a pivotal place within Islamic principles. Islam emphasizes the importance of context in the application of divine directives. Both the Quran and Hadith, the primary sources of Islamic guidance, provide general commands that must be understood and applied in accordance with the circumstances in which they are to be implemented. The Quran itself highlights this by stating, “God intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship.” (2: 185). This verse encapsulates the essence of balancing divine directives with the conditions of life, ensuring that Islamic practices are not burdensome but compatible with the realities of human life.

Islam teaches that neglecting the circumstances while implementing divine commands can contradict the purpose of the guidance, as it goes against both the teachings of the religion and the example set by the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet’s life provides a clear example of how to navigate various situations while staying true to Islamic principles. During his 23-year prophetic mission, he consistently adapted his actions to the circumstances, demonstrating a profound understanding of the context in which he operated.

Islam teaches that neglecting the circumstances while implementing divine commands can contradict the purpose of the guidance, as it goes against both the teachings of the religion and the example set by the Prophet Muhammad.

One such example is the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, where the Prophet agreed to a peace treaty with the Quraysh, despite the unfavourable conditions for the believers. His decision to prioritize peace at that moment aligned with the broader goal of ensuring the safety and future strength of the Muslim community. This highlights the principle of understanding of the reality, which emphasizes flexibility in applying Islamic law based on present circumstances.

This approach, which can be seen as aligning with the natural order created by God, underscores the need for a deep understanding of the world in which we live. By considering our context, we align with the divine laws governing creation, ensuring both spiritual and worldly success. □

CPS NEWSLETTER

We are pleased to report that the CPS meet, held in Malegaon (Maharashtra) from October 4 to 6, 2024, was a resounding success. With the participation of 18 dedicated members from Maharashtra, the event facilitated insightful discussions on God-realization and valuable exchanges among attendees. Informal discussions further enriched the gathering, reinforcing our shared mission to disseminate the teachings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan.

The level of engagement and enthusiasm demonstrated by all participants was truly inspiring, underscoring the positive impact of our collective efforts. All members reaffirmed their commitment to collaborate in service of our spiritual objectives.



On October 5, 2024, Dr Rajat Malhotra, representing CPS International, delivered an impactful presentation to the youth in Old Delhi. His talk focused on the theme of **Love and Remembrance of God**, offering meaningful insights and reflections on this core aspect of spiritual growth.

At the marriage ceremony of CPS Raichur member Amjad Ahmed, the Raichur team organized a peace literature distribution initiative. Team members Fayazuddin Umri and Abdussalam Umri actively participated in the distribution efforts, providing copies of the Quran in English, Kannada, Telugu, and Urdu. The initiative received an excellent response from attendees, reflecting strong community interest and engagement.





The Book Fair at Balrampur Garden, Lucknow, commenced on September 27, 2024. At Stall No. 21, Goodword Books and CPS International presented a collection of works by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan in Urdu, English, and Hindi, alongside a diverse selection of children's books. The stall showcased literature aimed at fostering knowledge and spiritual growth for readers of all ages.

On September 14-15, 2024, CPS International (Bengal Chapter) conducted a Peace Conference in Kolkata, designed to introduce the core ideology of the CPS Mission. This event highlighted CPS's ongoing global initiatives to promote humanity's well-being and disseminate the teachings of the Quran, inspired by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's vision.



Approximately 70-90 participants from districts across West Bengal—Nadia, Barasat, Murshidabad, South and North 24 Parganas, Bankura, Birbhum, and Burdwan—attended. The programme began with Quran recitation and a keynote address by Prof. Farida Khanam, chairperson of the conference.

A highlight of the programme was a lecture by a Professor of Mass Communication, discussing "Spreading the Peaceful Message of CPS through Media Activities: Scope and Opportunities." This was followed by an interactive session where attendees shared their work across districts and explored future initiatives.

Video messages from Dr. Saniyasnain Khan and Dr. Rajat Malhotra were shared. Their addresses deeply resonated with the audience, culminating in an emotional talk on God-realization and introducing the peaceful message of Islam, which moved many attendees.

The positive feedback and enthusiasm from attendees reaffirmed the Mission's impact and further motivated participants to strengthen their contributions toward the mission's goals.



A Christian delegation led by Father Victor from Vidyajyoti visited the Centre for Peace and Spirituality (CPS) in Delhi to engage in a dialogue with CPS members on the core aspects of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's religious and spiritual philosophy. Discussions centred on the relevance of Islam in contemporary times through Maulana's teachings. The delegation expressed deep appreciation for CPS's efforts in promoting peace and interfaith understanding.



Ms Shabina Ali, a member of CPS Kolkata team, participated in an interfaith programme. She met the members of the Archdiocese of Calcutta and made a presentation on the peaceful message of Islam. □

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Name of the book:

Goodnight Stories
from the Life of the
Prophet Muhammad

Name of the author:

Dr Saniyasnain Khan

Pages: 132

ISBN:

99788178985336

**Goodnight Stories
from the Life of the
Prophet Muhammad**

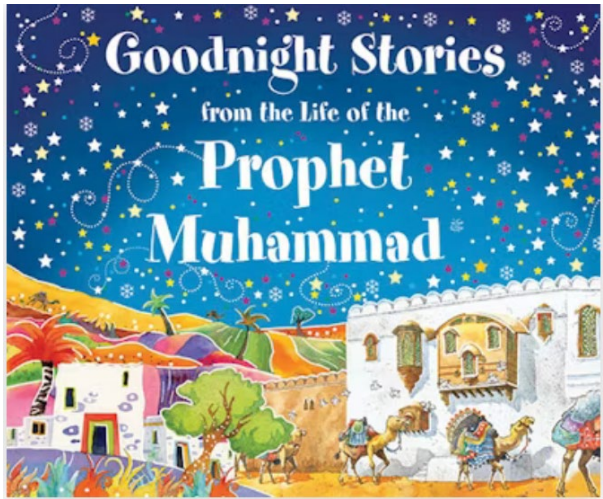
is the answer to every
child's longing to hear

a good bedtime story. It contains a careful selection of twenty-three magnificent tales from the life of the Prophet retold in age-appropriate language. A simple text and fabulous colour illustrations, which bring the narratives vividly to life, make the message of the Prophet more meaningful for children. The book offers a special dimension to these wonderful goodnight stories, and acts as a foundation on which to build a growing knowledge of Islam.

Saniyasnain Khan is a children's author, with over 100 children's books to his credit. His books have been translated into Arabic, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Danish, Polish, Swedish, Bosnian, Russian, Turkish, Malay, Thai, Urdu, Malayalam, and other languages. He hopes that his books will be a true companion on the path of spiritual development and will help children to know the true purpose and meaning of life.

NURSED IN THE DESERT

The Prophet Muhammad was not yet born when his father, Abdullah, died. Amina, the Prophet Muhammad's mother, was left alone. When the little boy was born, she was very happy. She thought of her baby as being very special. There was a custom among the Arabs of that time for little children to be brought up in the desert. They thought that was



best for them. So, they sent them to live with the desert tribal women, who looked after these foster children as their own.

Halima Sadia and her family lived in the desert. They were very poor. Their donkey was very old, and their she-camel gave no milk. Halima had a little son, but he was always hungry. She had no milk to give him.

Halima came to Makkah with some other desert women. The townspeople gave their children to these women to take to the desert. The Prophet Muhammad's grandfather, 'Abdu'l Muttalib, was also looking for a nurse for his grandson. But the desert women did not want to take little Muhammad. They thought: "He is an orphan. His grandfather and his mother have nothing." It was already evening, and Halima had not found any child to take with her. So, she said to her husband: "Let me take that orphan boy with me. Nobody wants to take him." Her husband said: "Do it. Maybe Allah will bless us because of him."

Halima then took charge of little Muhammad, and they left Makkah. They only stopped when they reached the desert. Halima's husband went to milk the she-camel. He cried in surprise: "The she-camel has lots of milk!" All of them drank the milk and then happily went to sleep. In the morning Halima's husband said: "Halima, you have taken a blessed boy." Halima's friends were surprised at how Halima's camel was now giving lots of milk. And Halima's old donkey started being able to walk very fast.

Halima's tribe lived in a barren stretch of desert where nothing grew. All of them often went hungry. But when little Muhammad came to live with them, everything changed. Now Halima's sheep and her camel always had lots of milk. People began to say: "Let's graze our sheep and our camels where Halima takes her flocks. Her animals are well fed. And they always give lots of milk."

Muhammad grew up and returned to his mother. But his mother died soon afterwards. He then went to live with his grandfather, 'Abdu'l Muttalib. When he died, the Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib, became his guardian. □



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

The remedy for ignorance is asking questions. (Prophet Muhammad)

The spirit of enquiry is the hallmark of an open society and the above saying of the Prophet aptly illustrates this principle. A culture of curiosity and open-mindedness will foster development in any society by motivating its members to learn enthusiastically and enrich their knowledge. This is because awareness of one's ignorance is half of knowledge, as it becomes a stepping-stone to seeking and finding answers. A questioning mind is like a flowing river that is replenished with fresh thoughts and ideas and continues on its journey.

Who is Muhammad, the person believed by Muslims as the Prophet of God?

Muhammad, meaning the 'praised one', was born in AD 571 in the North Arabian city of Makkah, which was then inhabited mainly by the tribe of Quraysh. Muhammad's family belonged to one of the noble clans of Quraysh – the clan of Banu Hashim. He grew up as an orphan. His father, Abdullah died before he was born, and his mother passed away when he was just six years old. He was looked after, first by his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, and then his uncle, Abu Talib. From his early youth, he impressed his countrymen as a person of high integrity, and they called him *Al-Ameen* (The Trustworthy). Muhammad was a Truth-seeker. He would often spend days in contemplation in the cave of Hira. He would think about the universe, how it has been made, the people around him, growing injustice in the society, what God expects from us, His Creation. It was on one such night that the Archangel Jibril came down to him with the first few verses of the chapter The Clot from the Quran. He had been chosen to convey God's message to people. Thus began the journey of his prophethood. He conveyed the message of God to people for the next 23 years.

What is the status of Prophet Muhammad in Islam?

Prophet Muhammad was the last Prophet sent to all humankind. The word of God, the Holy Quran, was revealed to him through the Angel Jibril. The Prophet went through sorrows and joys like an ordinary human being. What sets him apart from the rest of humankind is his sublime character. He was the most noble person. His task was to receive God's revelations, and communicate it to people, teach them wisdom and help them in purification of their souls.

How should we show our reverence to the Prophet?

Islam gives man a twofold formula: Worship of One God and obedience to the Prophet. The Prophet was a live example of how a God-oriented person should be. His character was that of the Quran. His life, recorded in the books of *Hadith* and *Seerah*, clearly document the various stages of his life. As believers, we are expected to follow the Prophet in all that he said and did.

Consider the current Muslims and the fervor during processions of Milad-un-Nabi, claiming to be their way of showing love to the Prophet. What does Islam have to say about this?

It is an innovation, not practised either by the Prophet during his lifetime or by his Companions after his death. Showing love to the Prophet should entail following his teachings and conveying the message he brought to all humankind.

What does the Quran say about Shatm-e-Rasul, blaspheming against the Prophet?

The term *Shatm-e-Rasul* is Arabic for blasphemy or using abusive language against the Prophet. It is generally held that Islam prescribes capital punishment against a person who has abused the Prophet. However, this is entirely untrue. The Quran tells us that the Prophet's contemporaries, misusing their freedom, would address him as 'man possessed' (15: 6), a 'liar' (23: 24), and a 'forger' (25: 4). The Quran has referred to these incidents, but it does not give the command to kill those who abuse the Prophet. Rather, in one place, the Quran asks the Prophet to 'bear patiently with what they say and ignore them politely.' (73: 10)

What should be a Muslim's attitude be towards someone who talks about the Prophet in an abusive language?

If someone uses abusive language against the Prophet, Muslims must take it as a case of misunderstanding and then try to remove this misunderstanding in peaceful ways. They must do so by engaging in discussion or by providing the 'blasphemer' with Islamic literature that gives the actual image of the Prophet of Islam. The notion of killing the blasphemer is forbidden. Muslims must understand that, according to the Creation Plan of God, man has been granted freedom and none can take away this freedom. While exercising one's freedom of expression, the only condition should be that one doesn't resort to violence. The Prophet himself, when encountered by such abuses would react calmly. Once, a poet wrote a poem condemning him, one line of which was,

“You are a condemned person, we reject you.” This poet once came to see the Prophet and uttered these words, but the Prophet was not enraged. He did not ask his Companions to beat the poet or kill him. Rather, his reaction was totally different. Ibn Ishaq writes: the Quraysh had named him ‘condemned’ (*muzammam*) and they abused him by this name. The Prophet would counter it by saying: “Aren’t you surprised by how God has saved me from the abuses of the Quraysh? For they abuse a person called ‘*Muzammam*’, while my name is ‘*Muhammad*’ (meaning ‘The praised one’). □



**November-December 2024
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SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living

A revamped Spirit of Islam website has been launched with excellent user-friendly features. Kindly visit:

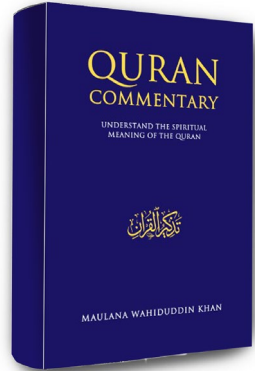
<https://spiritofislam.co.in/spiritnew/>

THE WORD OF GOD

From The Scriptures

The Quran is the book of God. It has been preserved in its entirety since its revelation to the Prophet of Islam between CE 610 and 632. It is a book that brings glad tidings to humankind, along with divine admonition, and stresses the importance of man's discovery of the Truth on a spiritual and intellectual level.

Translated from Arabic and commentary by
Maulana Wahiduddin Khan



In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

The life of the world is like the water which We send down from the sky, and which is absorbed by the plants of the earth, from which men and cattle eat. But when the earth has taken on its finest appearance, and looks beautiful, and its people think they have it under their control, then by day or by night, Our command comes to it and We convert it into a field of stubble, as if nothing had existed there the day before. Thus We make plain Our revelations for those who reflect. (10: 24)

The life of this world is for the purpose of putting man to the test. Therefore, here man has been given complete freedom and all sorts of opportunities. Apparently, a man is free to do whatever he likes and to shape his own future in whatever way he likes. But in the midst of these preoccupations, certain events unfold which teach lessons to thoughtful persons and which indicate the fact that all this is temporary and will very soon be taken away from them. One such example is that of green vegetation on the earth. When there is rain, the earth becomes lush green with different kinds of vegetation. Man is pleased with this; he starts thinking that things are completely under his control and very soon he will be the owner of a rich crop. Exactly at the same time, some calamity suddenly befalls him, for example, a tornado strikes, there is snowfall or there is a plague of locusts and in this way the whole crop is destroyed in a moment. The same is true of man's life. Man is born with a fine body. The worldly factors are in his favour and he shapes for himself a very successful and glorious life. Now he develops confidence in himself; he thinks that his affairs are under his control. But one day, or one night, he suddenly meets with death. A person

who considers himself powerful, suddenly finds himself in a condition of total helplessness and powerlessness. If man keeps this reality in view, he will never be arrogant in this world; he will never be guilty of oppression or injustice.

God calls man to the home of peace and He guides whom He wills to a straight path. Those who do good works shall have a good reward and more besides. No darkness and no ignominy shall cover their faces. They are destined for Paradise wherein they shall dwell forever.

(10: 25-26)

Man is deceived by the apparent conditions of the world. He considers a transient thing as a permanent one. He begins to think that a life of happiness and the comforts which he likes to have are within his reach in this present world itself. In reality, the world of human wishes is going to take shape in the Hereafter, but it will be available only to those who try to attain it in accordance with the method shown by God. Even supposing that a man manages to obtain everything he wants in the world, he still has no power to keep his life free of trouble and sorrow. Here some fear is attached to every happiness: every success here soon falls prey to some trouble; a life free of trouble and sorrow is that unique life which would be available to man only in the atmosphere of Paradise. Those who are able to discover this secret will be the ones who will follow the path to Paradise and ultimately reach the eternal Heaven of God.

But as for those who have done evil deeds, the recompense shall be in proportion. They will have none to defend them against God. Ignominy shall cover them, as though their faces were veiled by the night's own darkness. It is they who are destined for the Fire, where they will live forever. (10: 27)

The life of comfort and happiness which is so favoured by man will be available to God's loyal subjects in a perfect form in Paradise. But there is a still higher grade of comfort and happiness which is much higher than that commonly acknowledged; and that is the glimpse of the Lord of the universe which will specially be available to the people of Paradise. God, Who is the Creator of comforts and pleasure is certainly the greatest treasure of all comforts and pleasure. It has been handed down in a *Hadith* that when the people of Paradise have entered Paradise and when the people of Hell have entered Hell, a call-giver will give the call: 'O people of Paradise! There is one promise of God which remains to be fulfilled, and He wants to fulfil it now.' On hearing this, the people of Paradise will say, 'What is it? Haven't our scales of

virtue been made heavier? Haven't our faces been brightened? Has not God admitted us to Paradise and saved us from the Fire?' Thereafter, the veil will be lifted away from them, and they will be able to see their Lord. So, by God! No bounty that had been granted them will be more pleasant or more favourable to them than the sight of God, and nothing else will cool their eyes more than this. (*Tafsir ibn Kathir*)

There is no worse position that man can find himself in than being in a state of helplessness which is destined to be eternal; it is the equivalent of being plunged into a failure so absolute that it can never be turned back into success. Those who are condemned to be the inhabitants of Hell in the Hereafter, shall have to face this condition. Man will be given punishment commensurate with his evil deeds, and his desperation at his eternal deprivation will be so severe that even his face will be blackened on account of it, as if immersed in layers of darkness. □



Patience

means abstaining from reaction.

A person who is unable to refrain from reaction can never maintain himself on the path of the God-favoured life in this world of trial.

**WE ASKED CHATGPT TO OFFER
SOME INFORMATION ABOUT CPS
INTERNATIONAL, NEW DELHI.
THIS IS THE RESPONSE.**

The Center for Peace and Spirituality (CPS) is a renowned organization dedicated to promoting peace, harmony, and spiritual enlightenment.

Founded by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, CPS aims to foster understanding and cooperation among people of diverse backgrounds and faiths. The center's activities include interfaith dialogues, seminars, and conferences that encourage mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. CPS also emphasizes the importance of personal and spiritual growth, offering guidance and resources for individuals seeking a deeper connection with themselves and the world around them. Through its inclusive and compassionate approach, CPS serves as a beacon of peace, inspiring positive change and unity in society.



**The mark of people with a
purpose is that they begin their
day with planning and end it with
introspection.**

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