

حقوق العبد

DEC  
2023

النيدا

AN-NIDA  
MAGAZINE

**SERVICE TO  
MANKIND**

*" None of you Truly Believes Until  
He Wishes for his Brother What he  
Wishes for Himself "*

(Bukhari)

# QURAN

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ  
الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ  
وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنَ  
السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ  
وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ  
وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ  
الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٨﴾

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or the West, but truly righteous is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Book and the Prophets, and spends his money for love of Him, on the kindred and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and those who ask for charity, and for ransoming the captives; and who observes Prayer and pays the Zakat; and those who fulfil their promise when they have made one, and the patient in poverty and afflictions and the steadfast in time of war; it is these who have proved truthful and it is these who are the God-fearing.

The Holy Quran (2:178)





# HADITH

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنْ  
ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، أَنَّ سَالِمًا، أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ عُمَرَ -  
رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا- أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ  
الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ، لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يُسْلِمُهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ  
فِي حَاجَةٍ أَخِيهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ، وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ  
مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبَاتِ يَوْمِ  
الْقِيَامَةِ، وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said "A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. Whoever fulfilled the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs; whoever brought his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, Allah will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection, and whoever screened a Muslim, Allah will screen him on the Day of Resurrection ."



# SYMPATHY & COMPASSION FOR FRIENDS

SO SAID THE PROMISED MESSIAH(AS):

**T**he fact of the matter is that my friends are a part of me, as are my limbs. We observe in our daily lives that even the smallest of parts, such as a finger for example, if subject to pain, agitates and distresses the entire body.

Allah the Exalted is well-aware that in exactly the same way, constantly at every moment, I forever remain anxious and concerned about whether my friends are in a state of ease and comfort. This sympathy and compassion which I feel is not the result of any artificial effort or unnaturally. In fact, just as a mother is incessantly absorbed in ensuring that each and every one of her children are in peace and comfort, no matter their number, I find my heart replete, in the way of Allah, with the same tenderness and compassion for my friends.

This sympathy is so burning that when I receive a letter from any one of my friends alluding to a grief or illness with which they are suffering, my disposition becomes restless and disturbed, and I am taken aback by grief. As our dear ones increase, this grief increases in equal proportion.

There is no hour in which I am free from some form of apprehension and grief, because from among the vast number of my friends, one or the other is afflicted by some form of grief or pain. When they inform me of their worries, my heart becomes perturbed and restless. I cannot describe the amount of time that I suffer from worries. Since there is no being other than Allah Almighty who can deliver one from such worries and concerns, I engage myself constantly in prayers. The foremost prayer that I offer is for my friends to be saved from grief and worry because the thought of them overwhelms me with anguish and agony. Then, I pray in the general sense that if there is anyone who suffers from some form of grief and hardship, may Allah Almighty grant them deliverance. My entire effort and every ounce of my passion moves me to supplicate before Allah the Exalted.

Much hope can be gained from the acceptance of prayer.

(Malfuzat: Volume 1, Page 101)



**AN-NIDA  
MAGAZINE**



**MKAC** MAJLIS  
KHUDDAMUL  
AHMADIYYA  
CANADA

## PUBLICATION TEAM

**SADR MAJLIS**  
TAHIR AHMED

**MUHTAMIM ISHAAT**  
ADNAN MANGLA

**CHIEF EDITOR**  
MURABBI ABDUL NOOR ABID

**ENGLISH EDITOR**  
MURABBI SARMAAD NAVEED

**URDU EDITOR**  
HASOOR AHMAD EQAN

**DESIGN & GRAPHICS**  
ABRAR HAQUE  
KUNWAR KARIM  
KASHIF DAUD

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>6</b>	<b>HUQUQ AL-IBAD: THE RIGHTS OF MANKIND</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>CRITICAL THINKING &amp; MEDIA LITERACY</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>RELATIONSHIPS IN A MEDIA-DRIVEN, PROMISCUOUS SOCIETY</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>OUR JOURNEY WITH KHUDDAM AS THEY TRAVEL THE WORLD</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>GUIDANCE FROM HAZRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V (AA)</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>PRAYERS FOR PALESTINE #VOICESFORPEACE</b>
<b>33</b>	<b>MY STORY WITH KHILAFAT</b>
<b>38</b>	<b>CAREER CORNER</b>



# HUQOOQ-UL-IBAD

## THE RIGHTS OF MANKIND

**I**magine a tree that exists only to eat its own fruit. How might others view that tree? What impact does such a tree have on the world around it? How can we consider its existence to be meaningful?

The last question is essential to ask. How do we gauge the existence of anything to be meaningful? When we look at this question from a secular perspective, some may equate a meaningful life to material success, or power and authority, or even glamour and fame. All these objectives may seem alluring on the surface, but their benefit is limited to - more often than not - a single person.

From a religious perspective, some may think - especially considering the current climate of atheism - that religion means to seclude yourself, to become a hermit, to separate yourself from the joys of life, to adopt a lacklustre, restricting lifestyle, and to worship superficially God. Nothing could be further from the truth, at least in respect to Islam.

Islam reaches the deepest layers of life and teaches us one fundamental principle that can make our lives more meaningful: The purpose of our existence extends beyond our own being; we do not exist only to eat our own fruits, but to ensure that humanity, society, wildlife, the environment and everything else in the world derives benefit from us. Allah the Almighty has made sure to convey this message to us. For instance, He states,

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ  
وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

“And worship Allah and associate naught with Him, and show kindness to parents, and to kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and to the neighbour that is a kinsman and the neighbour that is a stranger, and the companion by your side, and the wayfarer, and those whom your right hands possess.”<sup>(1)</sup>

This verse of the Holy Qur’an outlines the two overarching themes of Islam: The rights owed to God, and the rights owed to mankind. A Muslim is expected by Allah the Almighty to uphold both these rights, and in many cases, Allah the Almighty has stressed the importance of serving humanity over fulfilling the rights owed to Him. This is articulately explained by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aa) in the following words:

“Allah the Almighty states that if a person does not fulfil the rights of fellow mankind, then the worship one performs in the mosque for His sake will be thrown back onto that person....if we do not fulfil the rights of other people and do not help others, if we do not carry out welfare work, if we do not look after those in need, or look after orphans or the needy, then our worship will be futile.”<sup>(2)</sup>

Thus, Islam is not the name of mere worship, meditation and self-reflection. Rather, Islam transforms one into a meaningful human being and a contributing member of our global society.

This teaching of Islam is exemplified by our Community. The Promised Messiah (as), in a Persian couplet, emphatically expresses:

مرامقصد و مطلوب و تمنا خدمتِ خلق است  
همیں کارم ہمیں بارم ہمیں رسم ہمیں راہم

“My purpose, yearning and heartfelt desire is to serve humanity; This is my job, this is my faith, this is my habit and this is my way of life.”<sup>(3)</sup>

These words translated into profound efforts by the Promised Messiah (as), who spent day and night in service to mankind. Whether it was feeding the poor, providing the homeless with shelter, fulfilling the needs of the Community members and others alike, or conveying the true teachings of Islam to those unaware, the Promised Messiah (as) spent his every waking moment in this endeavor.

And what is the purpose of serving mankind? The Promised Messiah (as) states:

“In truth, to show sympathy to God Almighty’s creation is a grand gesture, and He is pleased by it. What could be greater than the fact that, in return for this, God exhibits compassion on His part. In worldly affairs, we also observe this phenomenon; if a servant goes to his master’s friend, and that friend does not ask about the servant’s well-being, will his master be pleased with his own friend? Not in the slightest. Even though he was not offended directly, he would not be pleased. To be kind and considerate towards a servant is akin to being kind and considerate toward his master. God Almighty is also aggrieved when His creation is neglected and treated unkindly because He loves His creation dearly. Thus, he who is compassionate toward God Almighty’s creation attains His pleasure.”<sup>(4)</sup>



Thus, it is to attain God's pleasure, it is for God's sake that we serve humanity. And as members of Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, this responsibility is exponentially heavier. Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra) states:

"Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya means a serving group of Ahmadis. You are the servants of the whole of mankind but from among the Ahmadis. Therefore, it does not mean that you should (only) serve the Ahmadis; rather, you must serve according to the Ahmadi standards." (5)

As Ahmadis, and as members of Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, we must strive to become examples for the rest of humankind. In the precarious conditions that the world is passing through, there is no telling where the world is headed. All that we are accumulating in our lives for our and our family's benefit may be lost within the blink of an eye. And so, in an effort to build a treasury of spiritual wealth, let us strive to serve mankind and become one with God.

To conclude I hope and pray that the following words of our Holy Master, Prophet Muhammad (sa), remain close to our hearts and becomes a means of perpetual inspiration to serve humanity.

"All of creation is the family of Allah. Thus, Allah loves him dearly who treats His family (i.e. creation) with kindness and fulfills their needs."

***Authored by: Farrukh Tahir Sahib, Murabbi Silsila***

(1) The Holy Qur'an (4:37)

(2) Address at Inauguration of Nasir Mosque, Germany - 5 September 2023

(3) Durre Sameen Farsi

(4) Malfuzat Vol. 4, pp. 215-216, New Urdu Edition

(5) Friday Sermon, 1 April 1938

(6) Mishkat, Bab al-Shafqah wa al-Rahmah Ala al-Khalq)

# CRITICAL THINKING

## Author'd by Rumi Sahi Sahib & Media Literacy



In the age of information overload, the ability to critically analyze and interpret the vast volume of data is paramount. The topic of "Critical Thinking and Media Literacy: Navigating Bias and Misinformation in the Digital Age" encapsulates this necessity. This essay will explore the importance of recognizing bias, understanding subtext, drawing evidence-based inferences, applying these concepts to the written and spoken word, and differentiating between critical analysis and conspiracy theorizing

Traditional Canadian English education places great emphasis on teaching students to identify the bias of the writer. This focus is rooted in the belief that critical thinking and analytical skills are essential for students to become well-rounded individuals and active participants in society.

Bias, the inclination to present or hold a partial perspective at the expense of other possible views, is pervasive. It can subtly shape narratives and influence our understanding of issues. Hence, the ability to identify bias allows us to view information objectively, a skill that is increasingly important in our polarized world where opinions are often divided down the middle. The Quran provides guidance on this, cautioning against blindly following the majority. This is stated in Surah Al-An'am (6:116), "And if you obey most of those upon the earth, they will mislead you from the way of Allah." This verse emphasizes the necessity of independent thought and analysis. It reminds us that the majority is not always right, and we should not assume our side is correct simply because it is popular.

Subtext, or the underlying and implicit meaning in a literary work, is another significant aspect of critical analysis. Subtext is text that is not written. Understanding subtext requires us to read between the lines and interpret what the author has not explicitly stated based on internal information and external information of context of the subject but also the author and his background. This skill has been taught to students of the humanities and is not only applicable to literature like Shakespeare's works, but also to our daily consumption of media.

For instance, an article might not explicitly reveal the author's bias, but through careful analysis of the subtext, we can infer it. This is not to be confused with conspiracy theorizing. Inferring bias from subtext requires evidence-based reasoning. We must look for known, measurable facts within the information, similar to how Physicists use supernovae as cosmic distance markers. Supernovae, the explosive deaths of stars, are observable across vast cosmic distances. Certain types of supernovae, known as Type Ia, explode with a consistent peak brightness, making them ideal "standard candles" for measuring cosmic distances correctly. Similarly, when navigating the universe of information, we must look for our "standard candles" of truth to calibrate the truthfulness of the source.

A great example of the overwhelming confusion and paralysis that can be created with information is in the realm of nutrition, where various diets like vegan, carnivore, paleo, and keto vie for supremacy. Each's adherents swear this is the only way, what is one to do? It is here, as believers where we can use our touchstone of truth - God's Word and His Works to judge for ourselves what is true. In this case you might notice that we have teeth for both ripping flesh and for chewing vegetation - this would seem to imply we need both and we could use this common sense approach to come to our own conclusions and find a middle path which incorporates the true things you can discern from each of the perspectives. When doing this exerc-



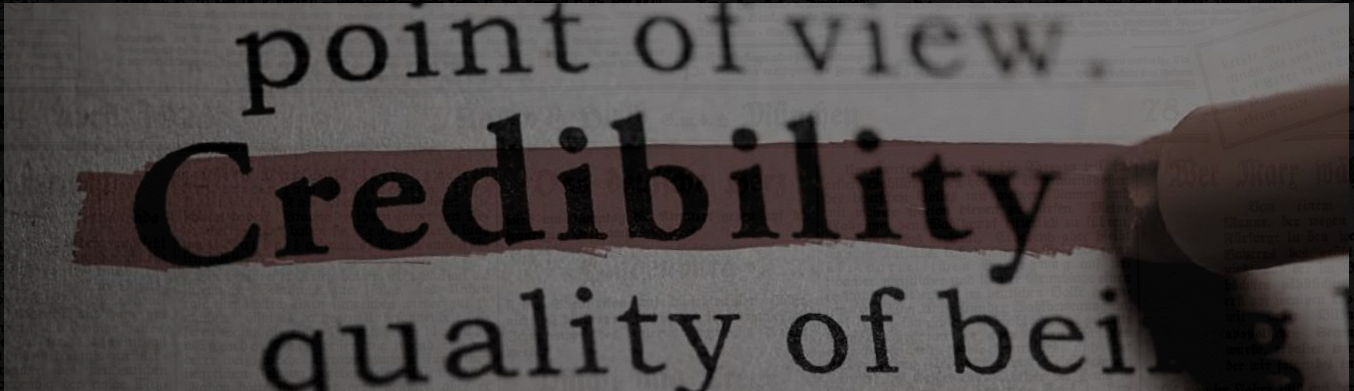
-ise, we should always keep the following Quranic verse in mind which talks about Allah loving those who do justice, in Surah Al-Ma'idah (5:42), Allah says:

*"But if you judge, judge between them with justice. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly."*

Why? Because people might depend on you to draw the right conclusions and hence do justice in the world based on it and therefore we must first do justice in our deliberations. Even if it's just for our own personal conclusions - the importance of being just with your approach doesn't change - for our own mind is but a great gift given to us - it is our duty to seek to purify it with truth. Another situation you might not know but is well known in the scientific community is a crisis in science right now called "The Reproducibility Crisis". It refers to the alarming rate at which many scientific studies cannot be replicated or reproduced, over 60% by some estimates. This casts doubt on the reliability and validity of those scientific papers. This crisis is particularly prevalent in fields such as psychology, medicine, and biology.

The implications of the reproducibility crisis are far-reaching. It can lead to the perpetuation of incorrect information, impacting policy decisions, clinical practices, and public understanding of science. This example from the scientific world should give you a boost of confidence and not to be overwhelmed with appeals to authority - you have the right to carefully consider all information and sources presented to you because it is a fact that misinformation is found in official type sources as well - put there by fellow humans.

Another thing to be aware of is the concept of naivety. As children, we are often unaware of the dangers of the world, and our parents teach us to be wary of strangers with ill motives offering candy but intending to harm innocent children - such evil exists in the world. Similarly, in the realm of information, we cannot be naive. We must be on guard against misinformation and bias. This is not to say that we should suspect everyone and everything, but rather that we should approach information with a healthy degree of skepticism and critical thinking. What candy are we being offered and what am I being asked to think, believe or do?



The **credibility** of a source is another crucial factor in assessing information. What has this source lied about before that I know for a fact is true? What are the similarities in how this new topic is being addressed? A source with a history of dishonesty should be viewed with a high degree of skepticism and should be cross checked with opposing biased sources. This is akin to the investigative work of a detective, such as the famous Sherlock Holmes, who meticulously examines evidence and credibility when solving a crime. A simple denial of guilt from a suspect does not suffice - it requires a careful examination of evidence and motives.

We must also be wary of what is left out. Articles that claim to tell you "what you need to know" may be omitting crucial information. This suggests a desire to shape the readers' opinions. It's important to seek out multiple sources of information to get a more comprehensive view. Also, beware of too many coincidences. If many sources are painting the same narrative simultaneously, it may indicate a coordinated narrative. Be on the lookout for catchy slogans. This is a tactic often used by powerful entities in society to shape public opinion, as discussed by Noam Chomsky in his book "Manufacturing Consent." Chomsky scholarly demonstrates how coordinated narratives are used to gain public consent for the agendas of the powerful in society. This highlights the importance of discerning independent information from orchestrated campaigns. Understanding the difference between critical analysis and conspiracy theorizing is also crucial. While both involve questioning mainstream narratives, critical analysis is based on evidence, logic, and reason. Critical analysis involves asking questions, considering different perspectives, and seeking evidence to support or refute a claim.

In conclusion, the Quran and principles of critical thinking provide valuable guidance on navigating the complex information landscape of the digital age. They encourage us to question, to seek truth, to be wary of falsehood and bias, and to approach information with discernment and skepticism. In our quest for truth, let us strive to be like detectives and righteous judges, using evidence and reason to uncover reality amidst the noise and confusion. As we navigate the vast universe of information, let us do so with our "standard candles" of The Holy Quran, Allah's creation, our own pure Fitra, and our own life experiences and through the testimony of other truth seekers in guiding us towards knowledge and understanding.

# NAVIGATING

## *Relationships in a Media-Driven, Promiscuous Society*

In an era where media profoundly shapes perceptions and behaviors, especially in matters of relationships and dating, young people and their parents face the significant challenge of maneuvering these influences with care and discernment. This need becomes even more critical in a culture that often promotes promiscuity and instant gratification. Understanding the merits of waiting and refraining from dating can be invaluable.

Media often casts dating and romantic relationships in a light that prioritizes excitement and passion, sometimes at the expense of stability and respect. This portrayal, commonly seen in television shows, movies, and advertisements, can pressure the youth into dating, leading to a distorted understanding of what constitutes healthy relationships.



# Relationships in a Media-Driven, Promiscuous Society

Research has revealed concerning trends related to early dating. Teenagers who begin dating early often engage in risky behaviors, suffer from lower academic achievements, and experience emotional distress. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes that adolescents who date before the age of 15 have a higher likelihood of experiencing depression and engaging in unhealthy behaviors, including substance abuse. The risks are not just emotional in a society that frequently endorses casual relationships; they are also physical. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported an increase in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among adolescents who engage in casual or unprotected sexual activities. Moreover, the emotional upheaval from unstable relationships can cause long-term psychological effects, like anxiety and low self-esteem.

Opting to delay entering into romantic relationships allows young people to concentrate on personal growth, education, and laying a solid foundation for future relationships. This approach often leads to more mature and stable relationships later in life. Studies indicate that individuals who postpone dating usually enjoy more successful long-term relationships, as they enter these relationships with a clearer sense of identity and personal values. For parents, guiding their children through these complexities is essential. Engaging in open discussions about the realities of dating, the importance of self-respect, and the value of meaningful relationships is crucial. Encouraging children to focus on their aspirations, hobbies, and friendships can provide a healthy base for making informed decisions about relationships in the future.

In addressing the challenges faced by young parents in the digital age, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih 5th Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) highlights the adverse effects that excessive screen time can have on children's eyesight and thinking. Noting that educational content has largely moved online due to situations like the Covid-19 pandemic, Huzoor Anwar (aba) stresses the importance of differentiating this from the overuse of online games and other screen-based entertainment, which can lead to addiction and exposure to inappropriate content.

To prevent children from falling into the disorder prevalent among youth due to excessive screen time, Huzoor Anwar (aba) underscores the active role parents must play. He advises parents to closely monitor their children's screen interactions, whether they involve games, television programs, or online material. Setting clear boundaries regarding screen time is critical. Moreover, he suggests that parents should engage in meaningful conversations with their children about the risks of excessive screen time and promote healthier alternatives like reading books, which are more beneficial for brain development.

# Relationships in a Media-Driven, Promiscuous Society

Huzoor Anwar's (aba) words offer a roadmap for parents: "Even scientists and doctors are now saying that too much screen-time has a negative effect on a child's eyesight and thinking, which is why children should not use the internet or play games or watch television for more than an hour in a 24 hour period... Further, during these online games immoral and irresponsible adverts are played and these can dangerously influence the minds of the children." Huzoor Anwar (aba) emphasizes the importance of supervision, saying, "Parents must pay particular attention as to what the game that the child is playing is or what the programme that they are watching on television or online is and supervise this... Moreover, make it clear that the child has an allotted amount of screen-time, and they cannot watch outside of this time."

In a world often driven by media that glorifies promiscuity, the harms associated with early and casual dating provide a compelling case for waiting and not engaging in premature romantic relationships. As parents and guardians, guiding young people towards making wise decisions about relationships is a profound responsibility. In the wise words of Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra), "A nation cannot be reformed without the reformation of its youth." By nurturing a generation that values patience, respect, and thoughtful decision-making, there is hope for future generations to build healthier, more fulfilling relationships and contribute positively to society.

Engaging with children in discussions, arranging different activities, and guiding them towards programs that are academically and spiritually enriching foster wisdom in their young minds. As Huzur Anwar (aba) advises, "Talk to your children and explain to them that too much screen-time will be injurious to their eyesight and will impact their thinking... Also arrange different activities for them, speak to them, sit with them, hold discussions with them, and if they still insist, then try to show them such programmes online or on the television which will improve them academically and spiritually and will also enable them to gain wisdom."

Authored by: Adam Alexander



# Travelblog

*Follow Our Journey with  
Khuddam as they travel the World*

Authored by: Bilal Malik Sahib

From a young age, the appeal of travel has fascinated me. My journey began with backpacking through Europe during my high school days, a time that predates the smartphone era. Grateful for the opportunity, now, as a father of two daughters, I am committed to nurturing in them the love for exploration and an open-mindedness that embraces diverse cultures and our rich history as humans.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

See they not how Allah originates creation, then repeats it? That surely is easy for Allah.  
(29,20)



# Travel blog

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ  
يُنشئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Say "Travel in the earth, and see how He originated the creation. Then will Allah provide the latter creation"

Surely, Allah has power over all things. (29:21)

During the summer, I had the opportunity to explore the Greek island of Crete, also known as "Kreta." As widely recognized, Greece is famous for its many islands, totaling around 6000.

What makes Crete stand out? Crete distinguishes itself by being the largest island in the country, offering numerous activities and attractions such as sandy beaches, gorges, caves, and breathtaking picturesque countryside. Additionally, it is renowned for its diverse and delicious cuisine.



After doing much research, we commenced our journey, landing in Heraklion, the largest city on the island. Crete consists of two international airports, three main cities (Heraklion, Rethymno, and Chania), numerous villages and small towns and a diverse landscape. We wanted to immerse ourselves in the local life while also exploring the rural side of Crete. Our next destination was the village of Gerani, on the outskirts of Rethymno, a 2-hour drive which was stunning. The hilly terrain of Crete, coupled with a coastal highway, provided breathtaking views of the sea, mountains, and driving through the occasional valley—a truly enchanting combination. Our Air BnB was located atop a hill, it gave us picturesque panoramic views of the ocean.

As an avid traveler, I always strive to learn about history. Greece is a country with a rich history and its increasingly apparent as you explore the country. From a Muslim past to very Christian present; it is said that 98% of Greeks affiliate themselves with the Greek Orthodox Church. It's impossible to go for even 10 minutes without encountering a church; whether you're at the most secluded tourist spot, you're bound to come across a church.



Gerani became our base; a small peaceful village, boasting only one supermarket and a handful of restaurants. Throughout our 10 day excursion, we visited the city of Chania situated on the western side of the Island. Chania had a distinctive Ottoman influence, a testament to the Ottoman Rule. The City had several Mosques now repurposed as Museums, really showcasing the impact and influence of the Muslim architecture across the Island. It is said that the year 1898 marked the last departure of the Ottoman Forces from the Island. Chania was one of the first cities on the Island that was under the Muslim Rule of the Ottomans.



City of Rethymno boasts a Grand Masjid which is also repurposed as a museum; this masjid was called Veli Pasha Mosque, named after Gazi Huseyn Pasha; an ottoman governor, who conquered the city of Rethymno and later managed to conquer city of Heraklion; both of which had long been under the rule of Europeans.



Throughout our 10 day stay, we had an amazing experience, with temperatures consistently exceeding 40 degrees Celsius. We ventured into cities, towns, and villages, encountering diverse landscapes from olive fields to grape farms. From sandy to rocky shores, for beach enthusiasts Crete offers some of the finest beaches in Europe. We were fortunate to witness various sights during our stay,

- Elafonisi beach which is renowned for its pink and white sand.
- Balos beach is acknowledged as one of Europe's most stunning beaches.
- Lake Kournas is a picturesque freshwater lake, unique as the only one on the island.
- Kourtaliotiko Gorge, a personal favorite, features mountain freshwater cascading down; just be prepared for some challenging climbs.
- Village of Georgioupoli from where we embarked on a boat trip.

For someone who was travelling with kids; there were several water parks on the Island which kids can enjoy. In general, it is an excellent island to explore, a span of 9-10 days is insufficient to fully discover the entirety of the island.

While travelling, it's not merely about the sights that unfold before your eyes; it's the intangible moments and emotions that linger, shaping the essence of your journey. The true value lies in what you take away from each experience, the stories you collect, and the personal growth that accompanies it.





*Where to Next?*

# GUIDANCE

FROM HAZRAT KHALIFATUL MASHIH V (AA)

# REGARDING THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

# *voicesforpeace*



“**THE TRUTH IS THAT  
PEACE AND JUSTICE ARE  
INSEPARABLE - YOU  
CANNOT HAVE ONE  
WITHOUT THE OTHER.**”

HAZRAT MIRZA MASROOR AHMAD (AA)

#VoicesForPeace



## FRIDAY SERMON OCTOBER 13, 2023

At this time, I would like to make an appeal for prayers, relating to the conditions of the world today. Over the past few days, the war between Hamas and Israel has been ongoing, due to which civilians on both sides, including women, children and the elderly, are being killed or have already been killed without distinction. Even in times of war, Islam does not permit the killing of women, children, or anyone that is not engaged in the fighting. This is something which the Holy Prophet (sa) has given very strict guidance on.

The world is saying, and certain evidence also shows, that Hamas initiated this war and is guilty of killing Israeli civilians indiscriminately. Despite the fact that the Israeli army has previously killed many innocent Palestinians in this manner, Muslims however must still act according to the teachings of Islam. The Israeli army is responsible for their own actions, and other methods could have been adopted to resolve the issue. If a war is warranted, then it can be fought between armies, not with women, children & the innocent. Thus, the actions of Hamas were wrong; it has caused far greater harm than any benefit.

Nonetheless, the response to all that has happened and the war should have remained limited to Hamas and that, in reality, is what would constitute true bravery and courage. However, now the actions being taken by the Israeli government are also very dangerous. It seems as if there is no end to this situation. The innumerable amount of innocent lives of women and children that will be lost is unfathomable.

The Israeli government claimed that they would completely raze Gaza to the ground, and for this they have dropped many bombs. They have reduced the city to rubble.

THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SA) IN HIS FAREWELL SERMON SAID:

**“ TO TAKE ANYONE’S LIFE OR HIS PROPERTY OR ATTACK HIS HONOUR IS AS UNJUST AND AS WRONG AS TO VIOLATE THE SACREDNESS OF THIS DAY, THIS MONTH AND THIS TERRITORY. ”**

#VoicesForPeace

The latest circumstances are that they have said more than a million people should leave Gaza, and some have indeed started leaving. Thankfully, as feeble as it may be, the UN has raised its voice to some degree, saying that this would be a violation of human rights and it would be wrong, leading to many difficulties. As such, Israel should reconsider this order. Rather than firmly saying that this is wrong, [the UN] is merely making a request.

In any case, the innocent who are not engaged in the war are not at fault at all. If the world considers Israeli women, children and ordinary citizens to be innocent, then the Palestinians are also just as innocent. The teachings of the People of the Book also state that such killings are impermissible. If the actions of the Muslims were deemed wrong, then these people should reflect on their own conduct as well. In any case, we must pray fervently.

The Palestinian Ambassador [Head of the Palestinian Mission to the UK] gave a television interview here, perhaps to the BBC, and in response to a question, said that Hamas is a militant group, not a government, and it has no connection to the Palestinian government. At the same time, he raised the question, and rightfully so, that if true justice were to be established, then such things would not transpire. If major powers did not have double standards, then such restlessness and warfare in the world could never happen. Hence, if these double standards were eliminated, then it would bring an end to such wars.



These are the very things which I have been stating in light of Islam's teachings for quite some time. In the moment people agree, however, they are not prepared to act accordingly. Now, all the major powers, or Western powers, have put justice aside and are uniting in taking harsh measures against Palestinians and there is talk of armies being sent from all directions. Images of the victims are shown to depict the atrocities being perpetrated and false reports are shown in the media. At times, there will be news about the condition of Israeli women and children and their dire circumstances they are facing, yet, later, it turns out that they were not Israelis but, in fact, Palestinians.

However, the media does not take any accountability for this, and there is no sympathy expressed for them. These people simply follow the rule of "might is right". They will bend before anyone who has worldly wealth. Upon analysis, it would seem that the major powers are bent on fanning the flames of war, rather than putting them out; they do not wish to end warfare.

After the First World War, the major powers created the League of Nations in order to bring an end to wars. However, due to not fulfilling the demands of justice, and failing to establish its own authority, it proved unsuccessful.

Consequently, the Second World War broke out, and it is said that more than 70 million lives were lost. The same is happening now with the UN. It was created to establish justice in the world, support the oppressed and to try and bring an end to wars. However, these are all far from being reality. Everyone is simply concerned with their own interests.

The average person cannot even fathom the harmful consequences of the war that will result from these injustices; however, all the major powers are well aware of the grave consequences.

Yet, despite this, there is no attention given towards establishing justice. No one is even prepared to pay attention to this.





In such circumstances, Muslim nations, at the very least, should come to their senses. They should set aside their differences and establish unity. In order to better their relationships with the People of the Book, if Allah has given the commandment to the Muslims:

تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ

“Come to a word equal between us and you” (The Holy Qur’an, 3:65)

i.e. by uniting over the Unity of God, then Muslims who have the exact same creed should unite between themselves even more so by setting aside their differences. The Muslims must ponder over this, and establish their unity. This is the only way to eradicating disorder from the world. They should unite and raise a resounding voice for the fulfilment of the requirements of justice and fulfilling the rights of the oppressed, wherever they may be. If they unite as one, then there will also be strength in their voice. Otherwise, these Muslim governments will be responsible for the loss of innocent Muslim lives.

These powers should always remember the guidance of the Holy Prophet (sa), that both the oppressors and the oppressed must be helped. This important point must be understood. May Allah the Almighty grant Muslim governments reason and understanding and enable them to unite and establish justice. May He grant reason and understanding to the world’s powers so that rather than leading the world to destruction, they try to save the world from destruction. May their purpose not be to satisfy their egos. They should always remember that when destruction comes, even they won’t be safe from it.

In any case, all we have is the weapon of prayer, which every Ahmadi should use now, more than ever before. Some Ahmadi households in Gaza were destroyed, may Allah the Almighty keep them safe. May He keep all the innocent and oppressed safe, wherever they may be. May Allah the Almighty grant understanding to Hamas, so they do not become responsible for the cruelties inflicted on their own people, nor should they commit injustices against anyone. If they are compelled to fight, then they must do so according to the commandments of Islam.

Enmity for another nation should not lead us away from acting justly; this is the command of Allah the Almighty. May Allah the Almighty enable the major powers to establish justice on both sides and thereby establish peace.

It should not be that they lean towards one side and thus usurp the rights of the other side. May they not commit injustices and cruelties. May Allah the Almighty grant us the opportunity to witness peace and security in the world.



# **PRAYERS FOR PALESTINE**



# APPEAL FOR PRAYERS IN LIGHT OF THE WAR IN PALESTINE & ISRAEL

FRIDAY SERMON OCTOBER 20TH, 2023

His Holiness (aba) said:

‘At this time, I wish to make an appeal for prayers regarding the current situation in the world. Now, some journalists in the west, or even in America have written in their newspapers, that there should be a limit to revenge. Furthermore, America and other western countries should play their parts in [preventing] the Israel/Hamas War, and try to reconcile or reach a ceasefire. But the authors also write that it seems that, instead of stopping this war, they are hellbent on fanning the flames.



**“ ALLAH DIVIDED HUMANITY INTO TRIBES, NATIONS AND RACES TO GIVE THEM BETTER KNOWLEDGE OF EACH OTHER AND TO BENEFIT FROM ONE ANOTHER’S CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALITIES. ”**

#VoicesForPeace

Just the same, it was in the news in America yesterday that one of the top foreign ministers handed in his resignation saying we have crossed the limits, injustice is being done to the innocent people of Palestine, and the world powers should pay heed to this matter. Thus, there are still those who are honourable among these people. Furthermore, Jewish Rabbis also appear in the media from time to time, speaking in favour [of Palestine] and are condemning the oppression. Russia’s Foreign Affairs minister also stated, that if countries keep behaving in this manner, then this war will spread to the entire region; rather, I think that it will spread to the entire world.

Thus, these people need to come to their senses. As I have said before, the Muslim countries must unite as one, with one voice. If they speak as one voice (it is said that there are 53 or 54 countries), they will become a powerful force in the world, and they will have a stronger impact, otherwise individual voices here and there are of no consequence.

This is one of the ways to establish peace in the world and end this war. Thus, to save the world from destruction, Muslims countries must strive to fulfill their role, may Allah enable them to do so.



Nevertheless, we must also fervently pray. May Allah end this war and protect the innocent, oppressed Palestinians so that they are not subjected to further injustices, and may Allah end all injustice in the world, wherever it is. May Allah enable us to pray.’

FRIDAY SERMON OCTOBER 27TH, 2023

# APPEAL FOR PRAYERS

His Holiness (aba) said that in light of the current conditions of the world, he wishes to draw attention towards prayers once again. As a result of the war between Hamas and Israel, the number of innocent Palestinian women and children losing their lives is increasing. The manner in which this war is progressing and the policies which Israel and other big powers are enacting make a world war an imminent reality.

Now, even the leaders of some Muslim nations, Russia, China, and other commentators have started openly saying that this war is only getting worse. If a wise policy is not implemented immediately, then the world will be destroyed. Everything is being relayed on the news and the reality is before everyone. As such, Ahmadis must especially focus on prayers. They should not become relaxed. At least one prostration a day should be dedicated to praying for this situation.



# IF THERE IS NO JUSTICE, PEACE WILL NOT FOLLOW.

**#VOICESFORPEACE**

His Holiness (aba) said that the leaders of the Western nations do not wish to act with justice regarding this situation, nor do they have the courage to speak up. Ahmadis should not get caught up in debates about which countries have good leaders and which do not, what they should say or not say. These are all futile conversations. Until someone does not stand up with courage to try and bring an end to this war then they are responsible for leading the world towards destruction.

His Holiness (aba) said that along with prayers, everyone should try and create an atmosphere of spreading the message that injustices must be brought to an end. Ahmadis should try to relay this message to anyone they have connections with. This is true courage, and this is the standard of acting according to the commands of Allah. His Holiness (aba) said that Israel says that they will retaliate after Hamas attacked their people. However now, this retaliation has crossed all limits. Four to five times more Palestinian lives have been lost as compared to the number of Israeli lives lost. If they wish to end Hamas, as they claim, then they should fight with them. Why are they making women and children their target? They have also hindered these people from obtaining food and water. This is where the claims of governments of fulfilling the rights of people and following the rules of war falter.

His Holiness (aba) said that there are some who draw attention to these things. Recently, former American President Obama said that if there is to be a war, then it should be in accordance with the rules of war, not taking the lives of the innocent. The Secretary General of the UN also spoke up, to the displeasure of the Israeli government. Those who claim themselves in the world to be champions of peace have not supported the statement of the Secretary General, and in fact have spoken against them.



His Holiness (aba) said that these are dangerous times, and they are only becoming more dangerous. The Western media sensationalises the reports of one side and fleetingly mentions the other side. For example, recently there was a female hostage who was freed and said that she was treated very well.

However, another statement saying that imprisonment by Hamas was like hell was made the headline. Justice would dictate that the entire situation be presented and the world be left to decide for itself what is just, what is cruel and whether this war is justified or not. what is cruel and whether this war is justified or not.

His Holiness (aba) said that we must pray a great deal and try to spread the message of justice around us. We should pray for the oppressed Muslims, and that Allah enables the Muslim world to take a united stance. We should have a distinct pain for the difficulties of Muslims to be alleviated.

We have accepted the Promised Messiah (as) and despite difficulties being inflicted upon us by other Muslims, we always express our sentiments in their favour as such. 'O my heart, be mindful of them, for after all, they claim love for my Messenger (sa)' His Holiness (aba) said that love for the Holy Prophet (sa) demands that we pray a great deal for Muslims. His Holiness (aba) prayed that may Allah enable us to do so, and may He grant understanding to the Muslim world, and the world at large.

**ACCORDING TO ISLAM, NO  
RELIGION CAN SANCTION  
VIOLENCE AND BLOODSHED OF  
INNOCENT MEN, WOMEN AND  
CHILDREN IN THE NAME OF GOD,  
SINCE ALL RELIGIONS CAME  
FROM GOD WHO SENT HIS  
PROPHETS TO CREATE PEACE.**

#VoicesForPeace



His Holiness (aba) again reminded to continue praying for the people of Palestine. Now, at least some nonMuslims and certain politicians, though timidly, have started speaking out against this injustice. Even some Jewish people are separating themselves from these cruelties and have called upon the Israeli government saying that they are disgracing them. Hence, some small voices are being raised.



His Holiness (aba) said that now it is being said that there will be a daily 'pause' in the fighting for four hours in order for aid to reach the people of Palestine. Allah the Almighty knows best the degree to which this will be implemented. And Allah knows how much injustice and bombardment will take place against the Palestinians for the remaining 20 hours.

His Holiness (aba) said that governments and politicians are not giving any importance to the lives of Palestinians. They have their own interests. However, these people should remember that Allah the Almighty gives respite only for a certain time.

Furthermore, this is not the only life to be lived, there is also a hereafter. They can be seized in this world, and they will be in the hereafter. His Holiness (aba) said that we must focus on prayers. May Allah the Almighty help the Palestinians and save them from these injustices.





His Holiness (aba) said that as he has been drawing attention towards prayers for Palestine, he wishes to do the same again today. Everyone should continue praying. Now, the cruelties are exceeding all bounds. In the name of fighting against Hamas, innocent children, women and elders are being killed. This so-called civilised world has abandoned any and all rules of war. May Allah the Almighty grant wisdom to the Muslim countries. His Holiness (aba) said that many years ago, Hazrat Musleh Maud (ra), the Second Caliph admonished that Muslims must become united. They should decide whether they wish to die off one by one and individuals, or whether they want to maintain their existence as a single entity. If only these people would understand this today and become united. His Holiness (aba) said that the situation is such that someone told him people going to perform Umrah (the lesser pilgrimage) are being told that once there they cannot mention anything regarding Israel or Palestine.

These are the instructions given by the government when issuing visas. If this is indeed true, then it is an expression of great cowardice on the part of the Muslim government. In any case, the rites of Umrah are important and should be performed. Though nothing can be mentioned whilst there, one should certainly pray. His Holiness (aba) said that even when Muslim nations do raise a voice, it is a very feeble one. Though some have raised their voices, stronger voices have been raised by non-Muslim governments.

May Allah develop courage and wisdom amongst the Muslims. His Holiness (aba) said that the Secretary General of the UN has said some very good things, but it seems as if his voice is given no importance. It seems that if this war continues and spreads into a world war, then even the UN will not remain. May Allah grant wisdom to the world. His Holiness (aba) said that it seems the world is ushering in its destruction. May Allah grant wisdom to those who remain after this destruction and enable them to turn towards God. In any case, we must pray a great deal in this regard. His Holiness (aba) prayed that may Allah have mercy on the world.



**t**he first time I met beloved Huzoor was when he came for a one day visit to Rodrigues, an Island located on the eastern coast of Africa, in 2005. When one lives in such a remote corner of the globe, the possibility of meeting the holiest man on earth is considered a once in a lifetime opportunity. Huzoor's visit to Rodrigues was a historic one, and the blessings of his coming to that tiny island located in the Indian ocean can be felt till today. I knew very well that the chances of beloved Huzoor coming back to visit us were very slim and genuinely thought to myself that it was perhaps once in a lifetime that I would get to meet with a Caliph of the Promised Messiah (AS).

Deep down, however, I wished to see beloved Huzoor again. Several years later, my family immigrated to Canada, a country where I was given the blessed opportunity to meet Huzoor on a number of occasions. I was recently approached by the An Nida team to speak about my most recent encounter with our spiritual leader, which stands as a testament to his incredible memory and the personal relationship he has with even the weakest of his disciples. I was never the kind of person who would write regularly to beloved Huzoor.

Like most people, I would write letters in exceptional circumstances, only. I would do so only when my parents asked me to, and when I needed prayers for my examinations or, should I say, when I performed poorly in midterms and needed prayers for passing my courses. The first time I realized that writing letters to Huzoor is not something that should be done occasionally and under exceptional circumstances only came in 2018, when I was asked by an office bearer to write a letter to Huzoor before penning a refutation to a French critic who made several allegations against Islam. He reminded me that I should imperatively write a letter to the Caliph before undertaking any task whatsoever.

Ever since that time, I made it incumbent upon myself to write a letter to Huzoor on a regular basis. One thing that particularly helped me maintain that habit was the friendship that I had built with fellow Khaddim who frequently wrote letters to Huzoor. I was particularly moved by the story of a university friend of mine, Tahir, by name, who narrated how beloved Huzoor once recognized his name during a family Mulaqat, as he frequently wrote letters to the Caliph (aba).



## MY STORY WITH KHILAFAT

Authored by: Sajid Muslun

Another friend of mine would often relate the miracles derived from the prayers of beloved Huzoor and how the most improbable of occurrences become a reality through the letters that one writes to his Holiness the Caliph. As I started to emulate their example, I discovered that the ‘miracles’ they spoke about were not myths, as I was able to bear testimony to what they said, perhaps not to the same extent as they did, owing to my personal weaknesses. They inspired me to be like them and build a relationship with the Khalifa of the age. In the lead up to ‘that’ historic meeting with beloved Huzoor with waqf e Nau, I was extremely apprehensive. In fact, I hesitated greatly to participate in that virtual Mulaqat, as I felt that I was not living up to the expectations as a waqf e nau and that I was failing in terms of the fulfillment of my pledge.

When I was asked by a Murabbi Saheb why I am hesitating to participate in that blessed gathering, I remember replying, in a playful tone that an ugly duckling does not have his place in a room full of high flying waqf e nau who are Missionaries, Jamia students, doctors, and researchers serving the cause of Ahmadiyyat. This is truly how I felt back then. Anyway, I finally ended up registering for the Mulaqat, my only desire being to see beloved Huzoor and listen to his words, with the firm intention of becoming, through this meeting, a better servant of faith. A few days before the event, I learned that we would have the opportunity to ask questions to Huzoor, and I started to thinking of the most elaborate, intricate, and sophisticated questions that I could conceive of. For example, there is a concept often mentioned in the Qur’an and the books of the Promised Messiah a.s. Which builds a relationship between the concept of Tahrif, more specifically, the displacement of passages in Holy Scriptures to the creation of certain species such as swines and monkeys.



I wanted to ask beloved Huzoor if there is a scientific theory underlying this imagery, according to which the Qur'an alludes to the displacement of segments of DNA, 'passages' of the genome of an archetype organism, from one place to another, as being a mechanism through which certain organisms came into existence. I was rightfully told that such a question would have very little chance of being accepted by the organizers, as it pertains to a very specific scientific issue that is of little interest to the wider audience. Therefore, I thought of an alternative question, pertaining to the subject of dreams. It is something that always fascinated me, but at the same time greatly perplexed me. On one hand, the Promised Messiah (A.S) repeatedly emphasized in his books that the door to Divine converse was still open and that God still communicates with people as He used to do in the past. On the other hand, I always wondered whether these experiences were limited to Holy people, or if ordinary people can see true dreams. I thought to myself: "I certainly do not see dreams that come true. The promised Messiah a.s. says that such things still happen in today's day and age. Is there something wrong with me? Are seeing dreams a necessity for one who is on the right path?". As such, I decided to pen the draft to my question.



#### THE FINAL VERSION READ:

"We have certainly had the pleasure as Ahmadi youth to experience God to a certain degree – that is, for example, through acceptance of prayers. But many of us have not necessarily experienced this direct conversation with Allah the Almighty that the Promised Messiah has repeatedly spoke about in his books. Should we be worried that at this age we are not experiencing this direct communion with God, or is it something that naturally comes with increasing age, provided we do the right things."



At this point, no one knew whether their questions would be accepted by the organizers. The chances, in truth, were quite remote, because so many questions were sent and only a limited number of them would be deemed acceptable and worthy of being presented to his Holiness (aba). I eagerly awaited to receive a message from the organizers regarding my question, but deep down, I knew that the chances of asking a question to the Caliph were very slim. The day before the Mulaqat, I was somewhat saddened to learn that the audio audition for Tilawat and Translations was not received by the organizers.

Later, the same day, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that I would be the second person to ask a question to beloved Huzoor (aba) during this virtual meeting. The next day, I made my way to the International Centre to ask my question to beloved Huzoor on the nature of dreams, and whether ordinary people are also capable of seeing them. This was answered in a most incredible manner, for a reason that I have only shared with my inner circle till now. As I walked up to the mic to ask my question to beloved Huzoor, I had completely forgotten that earlier during the week, I had seen a dream the like of which I had never seen before. In that dream, an AlHakam article published about this Mulaqat was shown whereby something therein was written about me and people seemed very happy for me.



The next day, when I said my name to beloved Huzoor, something quite unexpected happened in that he recalled that I sent him several letters in the past and related some details regarding them. At this point, the dream I saw earlier during the week suddenly came to my mind. It is only after the Mulaqat, when I saw the positive uproar that this conversation generated on social media and receiving messages from all around the world from people telling me how happy they were for me that I realized that not only had beloved Huzoor answered my question, but that Allah, also, created a means to make me experience first hand the answer to my query.

The Magazine AlHakam records the conversation that took place in the following words:

After listening to Sajid Sahib’s question,

Huzoor (aa) very lovingly remarked: “You have been asking questions in your letters as well. You are writing to me very frequently and in each and every of your letter you have a question there, and I have been answering those questions, right? Are you the same person?”

Sajid Sahib, with a smile, confirmed it was him and said, “Yes.”

Huzoor(aa) continued: “I am happy that you are very much interested in spiritual things, and your belief and the religious knowledge.

“The first thing is, yes, of course, we should try to develop our communication with Allah the Almighty, but it is not necessary that you always receive some revelation, or dreams or such type of things. Even after having offered your prayers, seeking Allah’s help, if you are satisfied – your heart is satisfied – that means you are in good communion with Allah the Almighty.

“And try to develop it as much as you can [...] it is a process. You cannot achieve the thing within a short period of time. When you are a primary school student, you cannot compete with a person who has qualified with his postgraduation degree, right? But you have to struggle and strive hard to achieve that goal, so keep on doing it and one day, inshaAllah, you will have better result.”

“But always remember that there is no other way but to pray to Allah the Almighty, and bow before Him and ask His forgiveness and help, in every matter. That should be the main thing of a true believer.

“Gradually, you will improve yourself and develop a good relation with Allah the Almighty. ‘Good relation’ means better communication, communion with Allah the Almighty.”

# CAREER CORNER

JOURNEY WITH US AS WE SPEAK TO ENTREPRENEURS AND KHUDDAM FROM DIFFERENT CAREERS PATHS

## ZEESHAN SHAHID SAHIB

**Can you share the story behind starting your business? What inspired you to become an entrepreneur?**

I always wanted to have my own business, even when working for a corporate company my goal was to start my own business.

**What sets your business apart from others in the same industry? What makes it unique or distinctive?**

In dry cleaning, we have to offer service and quality workmanship and that's exactly what we focus on, ultimately taking care of our customers.

**How did you come up with the idea for your business? Was there a specific problem or need in the market that you wanted to address?**

This business was introduced to me by my father. He thought it would be a good investment for me. There wasn't any particular problem to address, I just wanted a business of my own.

**What challenges did you face when starting your business, and how did you overcome them?**

Many, in the beginning I thought I had made a mistake starting this. We started with the wrong business model, cleaning all the clothes for one flat price. We learned quickly that we started with the wrong business model. I needed to learn the business more, so I paid other dry cleaners in other cities to learn and spend time at their locations to see how they were running their business.

**How do you stay updated on industry trends and changes and ensure your business remains relevant in a dynamic market?**

Our industry changed in COVID, so we adjusted our pick up and delivery and online platform and offered convenience to our customers.

**What advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs based on your own experiences?**

Start a business, don't wait for a right time, it's always the right time. However do your research and start a business of what you know already and use your skillset, this will make the process smoother.

**Is there an opportunity for other members of the Jamaat to get into the Laundromat business? what oppurtunites should they look out for?**

Absolutely, many dry cleaners are retiring and closing down. There is certainly an oppurtunity for members to come in and close that gap.