“The Promised Messiah (as) States:

‘You should regularly study [the book], Noah’s Ark and act according to it.

قد أفلح من ركيعا

He indeed, prospers who purifies it (91:10).

‘In Noah’s Ark I have presented my teachings and it is essential for everyone to be aware of them, even if it be that every city’s Jama’at organises a Jalsa and read this out to them… In this way it will not only propagate the message but also establish unity amongst the Jama’at which we seek to instil in them.’

Therefore, while arrangements should be made to read this out in the Jama'ats, there should also be arrangements for it to be read out on MTA. Everyone should make this a part of their lives. One should read this themselves as well and make an effort to adhere to it.”

[Extract taken from the Summary of the Friday Sermon Delivered by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (May Allah be his helper) on Friday 13th April 2018]
Earlier this year our beloved Khalifa, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad May Allah be his Helper delivered a Friday Sermon on the topic of Taqwa and our relationship with Allah. In this Sermon Hazuraba mentioned the importance that the Promised Messiah placed on members of his community to read his book ‘Noah’s Ark’. In this book the teachings of the Promised Messiah have been presented and thus it is vital for all members to read it thoroughly.

We are extremely blessed as members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at to have constant guidance from the divinely appointed Caliph of the time. It is vital for our spiritual progress for us to abide by each and every one of Hazur’s instructions, as each one is a stepping stone guiding us towards Allah the Almighty.

In his Friday Sermon Hazuraba also stated:

“In regard to saving oneself from sins and outlining the qualities of a true Ahmadi, the Promised Messiah states: “Your duty now is to occupy yourself in supplication, Istighfar [seeking forgiveness], worshipping the Almighty and the purification of one’s inner self.”” (Friday Sermon 13th April 2018)

In light of Hazur’s instructions, this issue of Maryam Magazine is focused on the book ‘Noah’s Ark’, with articles including ‘Question and Answers from Noah’s Ark’ and Summary discussion points from Noah’s Ark. We are also honoured to print a historical article ‘Hazuraba, an Exemplary husband’ by Hazrat Sayyida Amtul Subuh begum sahiba, respected wife of Hazrat Khalifatul Massih V, translated by Review of Religions team into English from Urdu. Our readers can also read other interesting articles on topics including ‘Peer Pressure’ and ‘Islam Empowering Women’.

Hina Ahmedi

Do you have any comments, suggestions or want your article featured in our next edition?

Email us at: waqfenaumagazine@gmail.com
The Holy Qur’an

Hadith

Writings of the Promised Messiah

The Life and Character of the Seal of the Prophets

Incident: Accounts of Holy Prophet’s Love for Children

Hazuraba - An Exemplary Husband | Hazrat Syeda Amatul Sabooh Begum Sahiba, Respected Wife of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V

Poem: My Allah | Sajia Rafay Majeed

Aunt of Our Beloved Master Ammatun-Nabi - Hazrat Safiyyah | Sadaf Waheed

Noah’s Ark by the Promised Messiah Summarised in Questions and Answer

Islam Empowers Women | Ayesha Malick

Peer Pressure | Yusra Dahri

Personal Reflections with Khilafat

Kids Spread

Creative Corner: DIY Cake Stand

Depression: A Real Illness | Mustabshra Qayyum

Hazrat Shu’aib Recommended Study Topic from Waqfe Nau Syllabus

Story: The Truth of the Shopkeeper

A Waqfe Nau Girl: A Role Model for Today’s Society | Azka Fateha Chaudhry
Translation:

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah, the Sovereign, the Holy, the Mighty, the Wise. He it is Who has raised among the Unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves who recite unto them His Signs, and purifies them and teaches them the book and wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest misguidance; And among others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise. That is Allah’s grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases; and Allah is the Master of immense grace.

(English translation by Hazrat Maulvi Sher Ali sahib*)
Hadith: A Saying of The Holy Prophet saw

(May Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Him)

The Advent of the Promised Messiah as and Imam Mahdi

Translation:

Hazrat Abu Huraira narrates: “We were sitting with the Holy Prophet saw when the following verse of Surah Al-Jumu’ah was revealed: ‘And among others from among them who have not yet joined them’. One of those present asked: ‘O Prophet of Allah! Who are these people?’. The Holy Prophet saw did not reply. The man repeated the question two or three times. At that time Hazrat Salman Al-Farsi was also sitting amongst us. The Holy Prophet saw placed his hand on his shoulder and said ‘Even if faith ascended to the Pleiades (completely disappearing from the earth), there would be some from his people (In another version ‘one man’ is mentioned instead of ‘some people’) who would restore faith (back) to earth.’ (Bukhari kitabul Tafsir Surah Al-Jumu’ah wa Muslim)
Prophets Demonstrate God’s Existence

It should be remembered that it is the Prophets (peace be on them) who demonstrate the existence of God and teach people His Unity. If those holy ones had not appeared, it would have been impossible to discover the straight path with certainty. Though a person of sincere nature, possessing sane reason can, by reflecting on the universe and observing its perfect and well-established order, conclude that there ought to be a Creator of this well-ordered universe, however, there is a world of difference between ‘Ought to be’ and ‘is’. The Prophets alone (peace be on them) established through thousands of signs and miracles that the Transcendent Being Who comprises all power does in fact exist. Indeed, the degree of comprehension that the need of a Creator may be perceived by the observation of the universe is also a reflection of the rays of Prophethood. Had there been no Prophets, no one would have achieved this degree of reason. This may be understood through the contemplation that, though there is water below the surface of the earth, the maintenance of that water depends upon the water that descends from the sky. When there is a long drought, the underground water dries up and when rain descends the underground water also begins to well up. In the same way, with the advent of a Prophet, reason— which is sub-surface water—is sharpened and improved; and when over a long period no Prophet is raised the sub-surface water of reason begins to decline and becomes muddied and the worship of idols and all manner of paganism and vice abound. The eye possesses the faculty of sight, yet it needs the light of the sun to be able to see. In the same way, human reason, which resembles the eye, needs the light of the sun of Prophethood. And when that sun disappears reason becomes confused and dark; just as you cannot see with the eye alone, you cannot see without the light of Prophethood.

As the recognition of God always depends upon the recognition of a Prophet, it is not possible to recognize the Unity of God without him. A Prophet is a mirror for the observance of the Divine. God can only be seen through this mirror. When God Almighty designs to reveal Himself to the world, He raises a Prophet, who is a manifestation of Divine powers, and sends down His revelation to him and manifests His Divine powers through him. It is then that the world comes to know that God exists.

(Essence of Islam, Volume 3, p. 114-115)
The Life & Character of the Seal of Prophet
(May Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Him)

Ashābul-Fīl

During the era of ‘Abdul-Muttalib, the region of Yemen was ruled by the African sovereignty of Abyssinia, which in those days was the centre of a powerful dominion. Since Abyssinia was a Christian country, the ruler of Yemen was also Christian. During the time of ‘Abdul-Muttalib, the viceroy of Yemen was Abrahah Al-Ashram. This individual harboured severe enmity against the Ka’bah, and in one way or other, he desired to sway the people of Arabia from the Ka’bah. Thus, in opposition of the Ka’bah he built a place of worship and urged people that instead of the Ka’bah, they should come to this place of worship for pilgrimage. How could the Arabian disposition tolerate the existence of any place of worship other than the Ka’bah? Thus, it is written that one Arab, overwhelmed by his emotions, relieved his call of nature in this place of worship. When Abrahah was informed of this, in his rage, he decided to attack Makkah with his forces to annihilate the Ka’bah. Hence, he sought permission from Negus, the king of Abyssinia and proceeded with a very large army. The number of his army is recorded as 60,000 according to various narrations. In any case, his army was composed of thousands. He left Yemen, and defeated various Arabian tribes en-route, until he reached the close proximity of Makkah and set his armies in the outskirts of the city. When the Quraish were informed of this, they became quite distressed, as they knew that they did not possess the power to compete. Therefore, they sent ‘Abdul-Muttalib to Abrahah as a delegate. His respectable appearance and high intellect embossed a great impression upon Abrahah, who treated him with great esteem and instructed his interpreters to ask ‘Abdul-Muttalib what he desired. ‘Abdul-Muttalib, who had perhaps planned this discourse beforehand said, “Your army has seized my camels, I wish for them to be returned to me”. Abrahah returned his camels to him, but his initial impression of ‘Abdul-Muttalib’s dignity and intelligence began to fade, and he mocked him saying, “I have come here to destroy your Ka’bah but you have exhibited no concern. You care only for your camels.” ‘Abdul-Muttalib, in a manner of inattention said, “I am the owner of these camels alone, thus, my concern is with them. However, there is also an owner of this house, Who shall himself protect it.” When Abrahah heard this response he was immensely vexed and responded, “Alright, I shall see how the owner of this house stops me from it.” Therefore, he advanced with his forces, but due to divine intervention, as soon as Abrahah’s elephant was turned in Makkah’s direction to march forward, it refused to move. Even after tremendous struggle it did not advance. After this his forces were struck by such a calamity as the entire army became the victual of birds. Narrations allude to the elaboration of this occurrence in the manner that when this army attempted to advance towards Makkah, in accordance with divine supremacy they were swarmed by a flock of birds, that carried fragments of poisonous dirt in their claws. Whomsoever these fragments fell upon would fall victim to a fatal and contagious disease similar to that of small-pox. When this disease was first contracted, it spread with immense rapidity. This occurrence should not spur shock, as contagious diseases, in many instances, spread through fragments of dirt or other means. Hence, it is quite possible that these birds had flown from a region that was infected by the bacteria of a contagious disease, and on account of this, a fatal disease similar to small-pox spread throughout the army. Therefore, with relevance to Abrahah, it is particularly mentioned that he contracted such a disease by which his flesh fell off in pieces.1 This occurrence is mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān in the following words:
This attack of Abrahah, in history, is renowned as the attack of the Ashābul-Fīl, meaning, the attack of the People of the Elephant. This is because, there was one elephant, or on the basis of various narrations, many elephants in Abrahah’s army. Since the elephant was a strange and new creature to the Quraish of Makkah, and they had never seen it before, not only did they title the invaders as the Ashābul-Fīl, they even named that particular year the ‘Āmul-Fīl. By the destruction of the Ashābul-Fīl, the honour of the Ka’batullāh and awe of the Quraish increased significantly and the other tribes of Arabia began to look upon the Quraish with even greater reverence and respect.

(The Life & Character of the Seal of Prophets(saw), Vol.1, p.122-124)

2. Al-Fīl (105:2-6)
Accounts of Holy Prophet’s saw Love for Children

Abu Qatadah ra narrated: “The Messenger of Allah came towards us while carrying Umamah, the daughter of Abi Al-`As (The Holy Prophet’s saw granddaughter) over his shoulder. He prayed, and when he wanted to bow, he put her down, and when he stood up he lifted her up.” (Al-Bukhari)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah ra narrated: Allah’s Messenger saw kissed Al-Hasan ibn `Ali while Al-Aqra` ibn Habis At-Tamim was sitting with him. Al-Aqra` said, “I have ten children and have never kissed one of them.” The Holy Prophet saw cast a look at him and said, “Whoever is not merciful to others will not be treated mercifully.” (Al-Bukhari)
In accordance with the Divine Scriptures, one hundred years of the flourishing system of Khilafat have come to pass in the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. We are now in the remarkable fifth era of Khilafat in which God Almighty, out of His Divine Decree, appointed my husband – Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad Sahib (Khalifatul Masih V, may Allah be his Helper) – to this station as the fifth manifestation of the institution of Khilafat.

[That is Allah's grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases]

The National President of Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya Pakistan [auxiliary organisation for the youth] wrote to me stating that on the occasion of the 100 year jubilee [of the institution of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya], the ‘Tashhizul Azhaan’ magazine wish to publish a special edition on Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vaba. In this respect, he expressed his desire for me to write an article by the name “Huzur - An exemplary Husband”, and that I relate some accounts regarding his character, and to recount some memories prior to his appointment to the station of Khilafat. Hence, I shall write a few things which come to mind.
FULL COOPERATION IN DOMESTIC MATTERS

Even prior to his life as the Khalifa, Huzur had already dedicated himself for the service of faith, and he would spend his days and nights occupied in these matters. Yet despite his official duties he would also pay great interest to household matters, and show his complete cooperation.

In 1977, under the Nusrat Jahan Scheme, he was appointed as the Principal of an Ahmadiyya Secondary School. When we moved to Ghana, at the time the country was experiencing a serious economic crisis, and due to the lack of rain there was also a severe drought. The state of affairs of the country were extremely deplorable. The foremost notable aspect of Huzur’s character, which I dearly valued was that he never displayed any form of selfishness. Despite his vast responsibilities, he would always take care of me and the children to the best of his ability. Indeed for a Waqf-e-Zindagi [life devotee] to fulfil their objectives their spouse must also make sacrifices and fully support them. In particularly when it comes to the stipend that the Community graciously grants a Waqf-e-Zindagi to run their home; without the cooperation of the husband, the wife would remain in a constant struggle to manage her home with this limited allowance.

There was always a shortage of water in Ghana. We had kept a tank outside which the tanker would come and fill with water. There were large plastic drums in the kitchen and bathroom; Huzur would fill up [these drums] with buckets [of water] after every morning-prayer. No matter how urgent his work, he never said to me that he was busy and I should fill these [drums] myself. Whenever I fell ill he would take on the responsibility of cooking for us. He would actively support me in teaching the Holy Quran to our children.

TRUST IN GOD ALMIGHTY

Shortly after we had moved to Tamale (Northern Region of Ghana), there was a doctor’s strike in the hospital. The doctors would only come to the hospital between 9am to 5pm, and apart from these timings, including the weekend, there would be no medical staff available. Our son Waqas, may Allah protect him, was only two days old at the time when he developed severe diarrhoea. Due to our new surroundings, inadequate medical facilities and the doctor’s strike, it became an extremely worrying situation indeed. It was impossible to see the suffering of such a small infant. Our daughter Farah, may Allah protect her, was also very young at the time. I had brought some medicine for her
from Pakistan, the potency of which was very strong, and which the doctors would never recommend for such a young infant. However, we were greatly worried and concerned at this very moment. Placing his complete trust in God Almighty and suppling to Him, Huzur dipped a finger of his right hand into the medicine and gave it to Waqas twice - who at the time was extremely weak due to diarrhoea and not drinking milk - and said that no one could know what Allah’s decree was, yet this regret will not remain that a cure was untried. Within a few minutes Waqas’ health improved, and God Almighty miraculously cured him. Alhamdulillah [all praise is due to God].

Whenever the children fell ill, Huzur would help me in every possible way. During meetings where men would congregate in our home, he would wash the feeding bottles himself, for in order to reach the kitchen I would have had to pass through this congregation of men.

THE KINDNESS OF HAZRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH IV RH TO HUZUR

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVth had great trust in Huzur, and he treated Huzur with great love and affection. When we were in Ghana, Huzur’s parents (Hazrat Mirza Mansoor Ahmad Sahib and Hazrat Sayyida Apa Nasira Begum Sahiba) went to visit their eldest son Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad Sahib (Huzur’s elder brother) in USA. During the days that they were visiting America, Huzur received a letter from Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVth in which he had written a personal note with his own hand stating, “My dear brother and sister [referring to Huzur’s parents] are currently visiting America. I wonder whether or not they have any news of my life-devotee son who is striving in the service of faith, and does his thought even cross their minds. He is serving his faith in the jungles of Africa. However, this courageous son of mine is very dear to me.” One can observe the boundless love and affection Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVth had for Huzur.

A GREAT LESSON IN TAUHID (ONENESS OF GOD)

When our children enrolled into school in Ghana, it was a Protestant school where Christian doctrines were taught. Huzur advised the children that if there ever was a hymn sung regarding Jesus being the son of God, or in which there was any element of Shirk [associating partners with God] then they must not sing it. During assemblies these hymns were sung.

On their first day of school the children returned home beaten with the cane as a punishment for not singing these hymns. Huzur reassured the children and explained to them that no matter what happens they must not sing such hymns. For a continuous three days they were vetted with this punishment. On the fourth day Huzur went to the school himself and told the Head Teacher, “We are Muslims and worship One God. We believe Jesusas to be a Prophet but not the son of God. For this reason my children will not sing these hymns at school.” The Head teacher said, “Bible studies is a compulsory subject in the course, [if they do not take this] your children will otherwise fail.” Huzur replied, “Whenever this subject arises, my children will write, ‘The Christian point of view is such and such.’” At this the Head Teacher granted the children permission not to recite the hymns. Huzur resolved this issue with great wisdom and understanding. This was the first lesson in Tauhid that Huzur imparted to his children.

ADHERENCE TO THE SHARIA

In Ghana one of our neighbours was a colonel. One day he sent a bottle of alcohol to put in our fridge. Huzur refused to do this. Upon this the colonel became enraged and came knocking forcefully on our door. Huzur opened the door and sat him inside. He enquired as to why he was angry. The colonel replied that what harm
was there in putting an unopened bottle in our fridge. Huzur said, “Our Prophet stated that the one who drinks alcohol, the one who supplies alcohol to drink, the one who prepares alcohol, the one who stores alcohol and the one who sells it are all hell-bound. So decide for yourself, would I like to be among the inmates of the Fire? Of course not.” His anger subsided and he apologised as he left.

It was always Huzur’s habit to silently observe everything and then make a firm decision. A teacher once remarked on this saying, “You appear to remain quiet, yet you observe everything in great detail.” It is not Huzur’s habit to be so apparent in his expression but he quietly takes attentive care of all his relatives and continues to do so.

If ever I became anxious over certain issues he would always tell me to be patient and pray, and that I will witness for myself the great blessings of God Almighty. Whenever I was faced with a difficulty, he would always raise my spirits. He never said to me that I was wrong, nor was he ever upset with anyone. Whenever he was given grief by someone he would tend to read the following part of a couplet:

جاؤں بن کمینہ بھی خود میں دل کر لگا ساتھ تیرے

Shall I associate myself with you and in turn become wretched too?

OBEDIENCE TO KHILAFAT

Huzur’s temperament was imbued with obedience to the Khulafa [Caliphs], and would even consider mere indications as an instruction to obey. His love and attachment to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh was instilled with the utmost devotion. Similarly Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh held special love and affection for Huzur, and cared for him greatly. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh knew that Huzur loved Parathe [flat piece of unleavened fried bread] in his childhood even though it was against Huzur’s nature to express his desire no matter what the circumstances may be. However, everyone came to know of the national and economic situation of Ghana through the news. With reference to this, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh wrote in a very loving manner, “God only knows if oil is available for Masroor to prepare Parathe.” In reply to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh, Huzur wrote, “We have pineapples, bananas and tangerines to eat.” Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh commented on this, “You are very fortunate. The pineapples here are extremely expensive.”

When Hazrat Sayyida Mehr Apa Sahiba enquired, “What do you have in Ghana?” Huzur gave a very comprehensive answer, “God Almighty’s grace”. When my daughter Farah, may Allah protect her, had an operation for her gall bladder, we took care of both of her children. Huzur spent several hours walking with Mansoor [Huzur’s grandson] to keep him engaged.

A TRIP TO QADIAN

We planned to visit Qadian in 1991 and accompanying us were my mother and father, my auntie Amat-ul-Naseer Sahiba (Khala Cheeru) and my grandmother Mrs Farkhanda Shah Sahiba. My brother Qasim was also with us. He took it upon himself to take care of Khala Cheeru and my grandmother. Huzur very resolutely took responsibility and looked after all the travel preparations for the rest of us – to pack all the luggage, to roll up all the beddings and all other necessary arrangements. Furthermore, during our journey and stay he took great care of the elders with me.

HONOUR AND REGARD FOR KHALIFATUL MASIH

Huzur had great devotion to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh and respected him with the depths of his heart. Once when he was speaking to him on the phone he spontaneously bowed down in respect to him. One person asked as to who he was speaking to over the phone. Huzur replied that it was Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVrh.
ABSOLUTE OBEDIENCE TO KHALIFATUL MASIH

In every matter Huzur would act upon and fulfill all the instructions of the Khalifa. He would not allow for even the slightest deviation in doing so. When Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVth fell ill, he had instructed that there was no need for anyone to come and visit him. However, his health deteriorated and it became a worrying situation. The members of the Community were also concerned. When Mian Saifi (Mirza Safeer Ahmad Sahib) saw that the condition of his health was increasingly deteriorating, he phoned Huzur informing him of the situation and said that it would be wise for him to come. Hence, Huzur travelled to London and went to meet Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVth. Upon seeing him, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVth enquired as to why he had come. Huzur replied, "Members of the Community are deeply concerned due to your ill-health, hence I have come to enquire about your health." Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVth then said, "The situation is such that you should return immediately". Huzur said "Very well, I shall book a return seat immediately". Later on, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVth asked Mian Saifi Sahib, "He [i.e. Huzur] is so obedient to me that he could not come here without my permission, so how is it that he came?" Mian Saifi Sahib replied that he had spoken to him over the phone requesting him to come, so that is why he travelled here. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IVth was then reassured that the high levels of obedience of his courageous son were still as he had expected of him.

Huzur possesses a very refined disposition, yet he leads a life of simplicity. The simple lifestyle in the home he had prior to Khilafat is still present now. He did not let his routine be affected in any way. He never criticises the food he eats, and he absolutely dislikes wastage of food.

It was after he was appointed as the Khalifa that once I became extremely ill, and I was suffering from a severe migraine. Huzur first prepared breakfast for me, and then after making his own breakfast he went to the office. Even now, despite his extremely busy schedule he still manages to plant flowers, prune the plants and do other such tasks.

I have briefly mentioned what has come to mind. I conclude with this prayer that may God Almighty enable me and my future progeny to always remain loyal servants to Khilafat, and to remain helpers of the Khalifa of the time in fulfilling the mission of the Promised Messiah as. May Huzur’s life and health be filled with immense blessings, and may the Community continue to reach newer heights of progress under his great leadership. Also, may the revelation of the Promised Messiah continue to be fulfilled in his physical and spiritual progeny until the Day of Judgement.

Ameen
MY ALLAH

He is the most Gracious
He is the most Merciful
He is the one
The only one
Who will listen?
Listen to our prayers
And grant our wishes
If you belong to Allah
He will belong to you
Please always pray
Without any delay

O my Lord
Help me,
Protect me,
Stay with me,
And be my fellow
Make me righteous
Keep me Steadfast
Accept my prayers
Forgive my bad Deeds
And help all the people in Need
You are the Protector
You are our Helper
O my Lord
Help me,
Protect me

Sajia Rafay Majeed, 10 years old
Aunt of Our Beloved Master
Ammatun-Nabi - Hazrat Safiyyah\textsuperscript{a}

By Sadaf Waheed

By looking back on the lives of the female companions of the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saw}, we can gain a great insight into what qualities a true Muslim woman should strive for. Their fearlessness, sacrifice and selflessness are exceptional, and we are fortunate enough to be able to hear their stories in order to educate and better our character.

Family Background

Hazrat Safiyyah\textsuperscript{a} bint’ Abdul Muttalib, a magnificent Sahabiyah (female companion of the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saw}), was born to Hazrat Abdul Muttalib, the chief of the Quraish and Hallah bint Wuhaib. Her father was the grandfather of the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saw} and thus Hazrat Safiyyah\textsuperscript{a} was the paternal aunt of the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saw}, gaining the title of ‘Ammatun-nabi’. Her mother was also the first cousin of the Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saw} mother, Hazrat Aminah\textsuperscript{a} \textsuperscript{[1]}. The Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{saw} and Hazrat Safiyyah\textsuperscript{a} were around the same age and grew up in one house and therefore developed an extraordinary bond between each other. Hazrat Safiyyah\textsuperscript{a} was one of the first people to accept Islam and hence she was amongst those who had been assured by Allah within their lives, that in the afterlife, they would be granted paradise\textsuperscript{[2]}.

Marriage and Upbringing of Children

The first marriage of Hazrat Safiyyah\textsuperscript{a} to Harith bin Harb was prior to the advent of Islam. However, following the death of her husband she married the brother of Hazrat Khadija\textsuperscript{a}, Awwam bin Khuwailid. From her second marriage she had three sons; Hazrat Zubair\textsuperscript{a}, Sa’ib\textsuperscript{a} and ‘Abdul-Ka’bah. After the death of Hazrat Safiyyah’s\textsuperscript{a} second husband, she was left with the sole responsibility of the upbringing of all three children\textsuperscript{[3]}. Nevertheless, Hazrat Safiyyah\textsuperscript{a} was not shy of her responsibility. Instead she was driven to ensure that her children were brought up in the most exemplary manner. She particularly desired that Hazrat Zubair\textsuperscript{a} would become the most fearless soldier and therefore at times, in order to make sure that he would be able to face anything in life, she would discipline him strictly. This included him partaking in challenging tasks, which often Hazrat Zubair\textsuperscript{a} could not do very well, and sometimes Hazrat Safiyyah\textsuperscript{a} would get angry at him\textsuperscript{[3]}.
Some may assume that the stern discipline of Hazrat Zubair\(^a\) was cruel. However Hazrat Safiyyah\(^a\) said herself, when asked by Nawfal bin Khuwailid, the uncle of Hazrat Zubair\(^a\) that, “do not think I punish him because I do not love him, I do so only so that he will become smart.” This in fact was very true. The upbringing Hazrat Safiyyah\(^a\) gave her son mirrored the man he became. He stood by what his mother had taught him and even gained the most respectable name of Hawarie-Rasul (the Messenger’s Disciple). Furthermore he was also amongst those who, like his mother, were promised paradise in the afterlife\(^3\). There are numerous and inspiring accounts, which bring to light how much Hazrat Zubair\(^a\) was devoted to the Holy Prophet\(^aw\) and Islam, and if it had not been for the motivation and sacrifice that Hazrat Safiyyah\(^a\) went through when raising her sons, perhaps that loyalty and love would not be as strong.

**A True Warrior of Islam**

Hazrat Safiyyah’s\(^a\) devotion to Islam was not limited to the verbal wisdom she offered her children, but also through her own sacrifices. Being as courageous as she was, she participated in several battles, she tended to the soldiers, and also fought the enemies herself\(^4\).

During the Battle of Uhud a time came when the Muslims were experiencing heavy losses, and therefore the opponents were beginning to draw nearer to the Holy Prophet\(^aw\). When this news reached Hazrat Safiyyah\(^a\), without thinking twice, she picked up her spear and left her home. She faced many Muslims soldiers who were escaping the battlefield on her route to the battle. Infuriated by their lack of loyalty and protection to the Holy Prophet\(^aw\), Hazrat Safiyyah\(^a\) questioned them on whether they had left the Holy Prophet\(^aw\) behind. Such a question was enough to wake emotions of embarrassment and the sense of responsibility they held to protect the Holy Prophet\(^aw\), and so they returned to the battlefield with Hazrat Safiyyah\(^a\)\(^4\).

A particular incident that displays Hazrat Safiyyah’s\(^a\) strong and heroic character is from the period of the 5th Hijrah. During this era, disbelieving Arabian tribes combined services with the Jewish tribes in order to arrange a vicious attack on the Muslims in Medinah.

A Medinah-located Jewish tribe, known as Banu Quraizah, was also involved in this horrific scheme. Initially, the tribe lived peacefully with the Muslims, but a time came during the Battle of the Ditch where they turned against the Muslims, leaving these innocent Muslims to fear death in a place they called home. In order to keep the women and children protected from the enemies outside of Medinah, the Holy Prophet\(^aw\) instructed that they were sent to the fortress known as ‘Fari’. However, at this time it was not known that the Banu Quraizah had turned against them. The fortress was located very closely to the fortress of the Banu Quraizah and due to unknown knowledge that the tribe was in fact a threat, the children and the women were assumed to be extremely safe\(^5\).
Whilst the Holy Prophet saw and his companions fought at the border of Medinah, Hazrat Hassan bin Thabit ra was given the prime responsibility to protect the people in Fari. As time proceeded, the Muslims gained knowledge of the betrayal of Banu Quraizah and consequently when Hazrat Safiyyah ra noticed a Jewish man had arrived in the district of Fari, she immediately became suspicious. Her instinct was that the man was a spy and if he found out that it was only children and women in the fortress, the tribe would raid Fari. In an attempt to protect the people of the Holy Prophet saw she ran to find Hazrat Hassan bin Thabit ra and told him that he must kill this Jewish man. Hazrat Hassan bin Thabit ra replied by explaining that if he were able to kill the Jewish spy he would have gone with the Holy Prophet saw to fight. In response to this, Hazrat Safiyyah ra grabbed a wooden pole that had been prompting-up the tent and ran after the Jewish spy. With a powerful hit to the head, the Jewish man was instantly killed[5].

Hazrat Safiyyah ra approached Hazrat Hassan bin Thabit ra asking him to remove the clothes and weapons from the body of the man. However, Hazrat Hassan bin Thabit ra again remained unable to do so. Then Hazrat Safiyyah ra asked him to decapitate the head off the body and throw it over the wall of the fortress in an attempt to scare anyone who was thinking that they could come inside the fortress to harm the Muslims. Hazrat Hassan bin Thabit ra again declined leaving Hazrat Safiyyah ra to cut the head off the body and toss it over the wall. The actions of Hazrat Safiyyah ra were greatly understood by the Jewish accomplices who were waiting outside of Fari for the spy. Disturbed by this, they assumed that there must be an entire army inside the fortress. However, little did they know, that this was purely the single-handed work of a brave and bold woman[5].

It is important to note that Hazrat Hassan bin Thabit ra was not a weak man, but due to his own personal circumstances, which the Holy Prophet saw was aware of, he was not able to fight or kill anyone. This did not make him any less of a warrior for Islam; in fact he was a very noble and respected man.

This story is one which shows that we as Muslim women are not limited in what we can do. Instead when needed, we will defend our religion; this incident challenges those who assume that Muslim women are not able to do so.

**Patience and Complete Trust in Allah**

Hazrat Hamzah ra, the brother of Hazrat Safiyyah ra, was well known for his strength and courage in protecting the Holy Prophet saw. When news arrived that Hazrat Hamzah ra had been vulgarly martyred by Wahshi bin Harb, the slave of Jabr bin Mut‘im, the Holy Prophet saw set out to find him. On arrival, the Holy Prophet saw saw how defaced the body of Hazrat Hamzah ra was and consequently instructed Hazrat Zubair ra that he should not let his mother come forward to see the state of her dear brother as it may disturb her[6].
Hazrat Safiyyah[^a] did not protest and simply answered with, “I have learned that my brother’s dead body was mutilated, but it all happened while he fought in the way of Allah. Allah knows that I am not happy about it, but I will be patient while facing this misfortune, and God willing, I will display forbearance, and I hope that Allah will reward me for it.” What a woman she was. Regardless of how much anguish and pain she may have felt inside, she still was able to control it and leave everything in the hands of Allah. This is only possible when you have complete and utter trust in the Alighty, and the Holy Prophet[^aw] saw this quality in her. As a result, the Holy Prophet[^aw] instructed that she was allowed to come forward and view her brother’s body[^b].

Whilst sitting by the remains of her brother, all that left her lips were the words, “To Allah we belong, and to Him we shall return.” Her pain was evident as she sat there uncontrollably weeping whilst praying for his forgiveness. The Holy Prophet[^aw] could feel her agony and in order to lighten her suffering heart, he told her that “Gabriel the trustworthy has given me the good news that Allah has given Hamzah[^c] bin ‘Abdul-Muttalib the titles of Asadullah and AsadurRasul (The Lion of God and The Lion of the Messenger) in His heavenly abode”[^d].

There is so much to learn from this incident that regardless of how much pain you may feel when you are being tested, you should always turn to Allah and show resilience and trust that He will make the pain go away. For surely Allah is the Most Just and He will always give you the reward you deserve for your patience. This is exactly what Hazrat Safiyyah[^a] displayed and Allah granted her such an honour that her beloved brother, who had been so heartlessly killed, was granted such an honourable title.

Hazrat Safiyyah[^a], an inspiring and courageous woman, who fought battles even in her fifties[^e], passed away at the age of seventy-three, in 20th Hijri. She was buried in Jannatul-Baqi, leaving behind a legacy full of loyalty, utter love and reverence for Islam and the Holy Prophet[^aw]. She most surely was a true follower of Islam and her actions are evidence of that. May Allah reward her for her efforts and grant us the opportunity to learn and gain from her life so that we may also become defenders of Islam. Ameen.

References:

[^a]: Sahihul-Bukhari Kitabut-Tafsir, Tafsiru Suratut-Taubah, Babu Qautilhi Thaniyathnain, Hadith No. 4665.
[^d]: At-Tabaqatul-Kubra, Muhammad bin Sa’d, Volume 8, p. 263, Safiyyatu binti ‘Abdul-Muttalib, Published by Daru Ilya’it-Turathil-‘Arabiyyi, Beirut (1996).
[^g]: Usdul-Ghlibati Fi Ma’rifatis-Sahabah, Volume 6, p. 176, Safiyyatu binti ‘Abdul-Muttalib, Published by Darul-Fikr, Beirut (2003).
1. Who is the author of 'Noah’s Ark' and when was it published?

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmadas, of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, was the author of ‘Noah’s Ark’ and it was published on 5th October 1902 in the Urdu language.

2. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmadas gave ‘Noah’s Ark’ two other names, what are they?

The second name of ‘Noah’s Ark’ is ‘An Invitation to Faith’ and the third name is ‘The Revival of Faith’.

3. What did The Promised Messiahs write on the title page of ‘Noah’s Ark’ with regards to this book?

The Promised Messiahs wrote “The treatise ‘Heavenly Inoculation’ which has been prepared about the plague for my community.”

4. The Promised Messiahs received a revelation about the plague prior to writing ‘Noah’s Ark’. When did the Promised Messiahs receive the revelation and what was it?

On 6th February 1898, The Promised Messiahs saw in a vision that “Angels of God are planting black trees in different places of Punjab. These plants are very ugly, black, frightening and stunted. I asked the person planting these trees, what kind of trees are these? He replied that these were plague trees, which would spread in the country very shortly.”

5. What did The Promised Messiahs convey regarding the introduction of a ‘new earth’ and ‘new heaven’?

‘New earth’ refers to pure hearts that God is preparing with His own hands. ‘New heaven’ refers to those signs, which are being shown by God’s commandment through the hand of his servant.

6. Which two signs of God have been manifested in the heavens in support of the truthfulness of the Promised Messiahs?

Lunar and Solar Eclipses. The Promised Messiahs write in ‘Noah’s Ark’ that ‘Ten years ago today, God testified in favour of His servant by causing the sun and the moon to eclipse in Ramadan. He caused the luminary of day and the luminary of night to bear testimony in my favour and thus manifested two signs.”

7. Which two signs of God have been manifested on earth in support of the truthfulness of the Promised Messiahs?

The Promised Messiahs states in ‘Noah’s Ark’ that God Almighty has also shown two earthly signs in his favour. ‘Number one, you read the first of these in the Holy Qur’an as stated:                                 . Then, in the Hadith as you read:                                                    . For the fulfilment of this a railway in the land of Hejaz i.e. between Mecca and Medina is being constructed. The second sign is the plague, as God Almighty says:                                . So, God introduced the railway in the land and also sent the plague so that the heaven and earth may bear witness.”
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8. What did The Promised Messiah say to the British Government in regards to the plague vaccinations?
The Promised Messiah commends the government and writes: “Gratitude is due to the eminent British government who, showing kindness to its subjects, has once again advised inoculation against the plague, and has undertaken the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of rupees for the welfare of the servants of God. In truth, it is the duty of wise subjects to welcome this undertaking with gratefulness.”

9. What did The Promised Messiah say to his followers with regards to the vaccinations advised by the British government?
The Promised Messiah said “had there not been a heavenly prohibition for us, we would have been the first among its subjects to be inoculated. The heavenly prohibition is that God in this age desires to show a heavenly sign of His mercy to mankind. Addressing me, He said: ‘You and those who dwell within the four walls of your house; those who unconditionally follow you and are obedient to you, and who on account of true righteousness have become devoted to you, shall all be safeguarded against the plague. This will be a sign of God in the Latter Days so that He might demonstrate a distinction between people.”

Our Teaching

10. What is meant by the four walls of the house of the Promised Messiah?
The four walls of the house of the Promised Messiah refers to those who have taken Bai’at (pledged their allegiance) of the Promised Messiah and accepted him to be the Mahdi and Messiah of the time and have entered his Jama’at. The Promised Messiah states that ‘this should not be taken to mean only such people who dwell in my house made of brick and mortar; rather, this also refers to all those who follow me completely and dwell in my spiritual home.”

11. What are the conditions of entering the four walls of the house of the Promised Messiah?
The conditions laid by The Promised Messiah for anyone wanting to enter the four walls of his house are, that they should abstain from any evil desire and enter the establishment of Bai’at with full sincerity, obedience and humility, to face every commandment of God with no arrogance and to keep every action in accordance to His teachings.

12. What explanation did The Promised Messiah give regarding the people who had entered his dwelling?
The Promised Messiah says, “Whosoever fully acts upon my teachings enters that house of mine, concerning which God Almighty has promised”
13. How can one experience an extraordinary change in themselves?
The Promised Messiah explains that the root of all extraordinary happenings and miracles is God. So, “Believe in Him and give precedence to Him over your own souls and comforts and over all your relationships; show sincerity and loyalty in His cause by exhibiting courage in your practice. Worldly people do not prefer Him over their means, and their kith and kin, but you ought to, so that you may be counted in heaven as belonging to His community.”

14. What did The Promised Messiah say in regards to satisfying God and forgiving other people?
The Promised Messiah says that “if you desire that God should be pleased with you in heaven, unite with one another as though you were brothers from the same womb. The one who most forgives the transgressions of his brother is the more honourable among you. Unfortunate is the one who is obstinate and does not forgive. Such a person has no part in me.”

15. How has salvation been explained in ‘Noah’s Ark?’
The Promised Messiah explains that “salvation is not something that will be manifested after death. On the contrary, true salvation exhibits its light in this very world.”

16. Who is the one who attains salvation?
The Promised Messiah says that such a person is he who believes that God is true and that Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is the Intercessor between God and all His creation, and that under the heaven there is no Messenger equal in rank to him, nor is there any book equal in status to the Quran.

17. How has the Promised Messiah proved the glory of the Holy Prophet saw?
The Promised Messiah says, “God did not desire that anyone should remain alive eternally, but this Chosen Prophet lives forever. To keep him alive forever, God has ordained that his spiritual and law-giving blessings would last until the day of resurrection. Finally, as a continuation of his spiritual blessings, God has sent unto the world the Promised Messiah—whose advent was essential for the completion of the edifice of Islam. It was necessary that the world should not come to an end until the dispensation of Muhammad had been granted a spiritual Messiah, as had been endowed to the Mosaic dispensation.”

18. What should the day and night of an Ahmadi bear witness to?
The Promised Messiah writes “Let every morning bear witness that you have spent the night in righteousness, and let every evening bear witness that you have spent the day with the fear of God.”

19. What is an essential teaching for us?
The Promised Messiah reminds us that “an essential teaching for you is that you should not abandon the Holy Quran like a thing forsaken, for therein lies your life. Those who honour the Quran will be honoured in heaven. Those who give precedence to the Quran over every Hadith and every other saying will be given precedence in heaven. Today, there is no book on the face of the earth for mankind except for the Quran.”
20. What has the Promised Messiah⁷⁷ said about salaat and prayer?
The Promised Messiah⁷⁷ states that “whosoever does not observe the five daily prayers, is not of my community. Whosoever is not constant in supplication and does not remember God with humility is not of my community.”

21. What are the three things mentioned by the Promised Messiah⁷⁷, which God Almighty has given to us as guidance?
The Promised Messiah⁷⁷ says “…it is my belief that there are three components, which God has bestowed on you for your guidance. First and foremost is the Quran, which elaborates on the Oneness, Glory and Greatness of God and resolves disputes between the Jews and Christians… The second means of guidance is the Sunnah, that is, the impeccable example of the Holy Prophet⁷⁶⁵⁵⁵⁵, which was manifested through his deeds and actions… The third means of guidance are the Hadith, that is, those sayings of the Holy Prophet which were collected after his demise. The status of the Hadith ranks below the Quran and Sunnah, for many Hadith are based on conjecture. But, those Hadith that are supported by the Sunnah ought to be considered authentic.”

22. Which two religious scriptures has the Promised Messiah⁷⁷ compared?
The Promised Messiah⁷⁷ has compared the Gospel with the Holy Qur’an.

23. Which Quranic prayer did the Promised Messiah⁷⁷ use to compare it to the ‘Lord’s prayer’ in the Bible?
Surah Al-Fatihah

24. What are the differences in the Quran and the Gospel with regards to praying?
The Promised Messiah⁷⁷ makes the comparison that “the Gospel teaches its followers to supplicate in seclusion. But the Quran instructs you not to pray in seclusion on all occasions. At times you ought to openly pray before others, in the company of your brethren. For, if any of your entreaties are accepted, they might serve to increase the faith of the gathering at large and cause others to be inclined towards prayer.”

25. How is the kingdom and honour of God affected by the prayer in the Bible, and how is it manifested in the prayer of the Quran?
The Promised Messiah⁷⁷ explains “So much for the prayer taught in the Gospel, which causes human beings to despair of the mercy of God and allows Christians to take exception with His providence, beneficence, reward and punishment to the extent that they consider God incapable of helping them in this world, until His Kingdom should arrive upon the earth. In contrast, the prayer that God has taught the Muslims in the Quran illustrates that God is not powerless on the earth, like vanquished rulers. On the contrary, His system of providence, graciousness, mercy, reward and punishment are in operation on earth and He has the power to help those who worship Him and can destroy sinners with His wrath.”

26. What is mentioned in Surah Al Tahrim regarding the coming of the new Messiah?
The Promised Messiah⁷⁷ explains that “in Surah Tahrim, that some people from among this Ummah would resemble Mary the Truthful, who lived a life of chastity. Then, the soul of Jesus was breathed into her womb and he was born to her. This verse signifies that someone from
among this Ummah would first be conferred the station of Mary and then the soul of Jesus would be breathed into him. Then would Jesus emerge from Mary. That is to say, the attributes of the person who resembles Mary would be transformed into those of Jesus. In other words, the quality of being Mary’s likeness would give birth to one who takes on the form of Jesus. In this way such a person would be referred to as ‘the Son of Mary.’

27. How is the condition of the Muslims related to that of the Mosaic dispensation?
Comparing himself to Hazrat Isa as, The Promised Messiah as explains “…similarly Jewish scholars issued an edict of disbelief against Jesus, which was prepared by a mischievous Jewish scholar and endorsed by other priests. Even the Jewish scholars and priests of Bayt-ul-Maqd as, most of whom were Pharisees and who numbered in the hundreds, put their seals of attestation on this edict of disbelief against Jesus. This is exactly what happened with me. Then, after this edict had been issued against Jesus, he was greatly harassed. Terrible abuse was hurled at him, and offensive and defamatory books were published against him. The same happened to me. After 1800 years, it was as if the very same Jesus and the very same Jews had been born again. Alas, this was the meaning of the prophecy which God had explained beforehand. But, these people were not content until they became like the Jews and incurred the wrath of God.”

28. In terms of the time in which they appeared as Prophets, how do the Promised Messiah as and Jesus resemble?
Allah raised Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as as “the Messiah of Islam precisely at the head of the fourteenth century, just as He had raised the previous Messiah son of Mary at the head of the fourteenth century.”

29. What are the two systems of law made by God mentioned by the Promised Messiah as in ‘Noah’s Ark’?
The two systems of law mentioned by The Promised Messiah as are “one which relates to the angels, in that they have been created for obedience alone, with their obedience being characteristic of their bright nature. They cannot sin, but they cannot progress in virtue either. The second system of law relates to human beings, in that, by their nature, they can be guilty of sin, but they can also make progress in piety. Both these natural laws are unchangeable and as an angel cannot become human, so too a human cannot become an angel. Both these systems of law are unchangeable – they are eternal and immutable. The law that operates in heaven cannot operate on earth, nor can the law that operates on earth be made applicable in respect of angels.”

30. What does prayer cure?
The Promised Messiah as explains, “prayer is the cure for all future tribulations. You know not what divine decree the new day will usher in for you. So before the new day dawns, humble yourselves before your Lord, so that the new day brings for you goodness and blessing.”

31. What did the Promised Messiah as pray in regards to his community towards the end of ‘Noah’s Ark’?
The Promised Messiah as ended this book with “I now conclude and pray that my teachings prove beneficial for you. May such a transformation take place within you that you become the stars of the earth, and that the earth is illumined by the light you have been granted by your Lord. Ameen, and again, Ameen.”
Imagine it is the 7th century. Camels and horseback dot the Arabian sands that continue to sprawl endlessly into the horizon. Desert dwellers use basic oils or the friction from rubbing stones to light wood to warm themselves in the desert chill and also use these fires as stoves. They gather to listen to tales from faraway lands such as China and the treasures, which can be found there such as garments of silk. Meanwhile, deep in the desert shrills of female infants being buried alive cloud the barren landscape. To be woman or cattle are one and the same. The society is not only starkly primitive but also the archetype of patriarchy.

Thus, for the 21st century scholar and thinker, it is an era that both captures the imagination with its mystic sense of Arabian ouds but also leaves one aghast as it goes against the modern day values of equality, human rights and women’s rights. Into this beleaguered state, dawns the advent of a man who brings the revolution of monotheism and women’s rights. Into this primeval and crude infrastructure, he introduces the notions of government, rules of war and principles of equality and non-discrimination. And into the incessant history of the persecution of Arabian women, he brings for women the right to marry freely, the right to seek education and the right to inherit and initiate divorce.

This radical new faith is called Islam. Its rules are universal, thereby bringing within its ambit all those who choose to take the oath of allegiance at the hands of its founder, the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Its rules are also revolutionary as they grant women the right to seek education, the right to initiate divorce and the right to inherit property. It also grants women full control over their own earnings. In other parts of the world, these rights remain largely unheard of, until many hundreds of years later. Paradoxically, when these rights begin to dawn in what is considered the modern world; Islam is castigated as being regressive, illiberal and oppressive to women.

Until 1857 British law dictated that the right to divorce was largely open to men and required an Act of Parliament to be decreed. This being an onerous and expensive process, it also meant divorce was open largely to the wealthy. The 1857 Matrimonial Clauses Act granted ordinary people the right to divorce for the first time. Even then, women seeking divorce on grounds of adultery had to prove their husbands had been unfaithful along with proving additional faults such as rape and incest. In contrast, Muslim women could seek divorce without the burden of fulfilling arduous conditions by placing the merits of their case before a qadi (judge).
Similarly, it was only in 1870 that Britain passed the Married Women’s property Act, which allowed women to have independent legal rights over their income and inheritance. John Stuart Mill in his “The Subjection of Women” describes the predicament of women in the 19th century in these words, he writes:

“[T]he wife is the actual bond servant of her husband... She can acquire no property for herself: the instant something becomes hers, even if by inheritance, it automatically becomes his. In this respect the wife’s position under the common law of England is worse than that of slaves in the laws of many countries.”

On the other hand, under Islamic law, women enjoyed the right to inherit 1200 years before Mill put ink to paper. Even today, a Muslim woman is the sole master of her own earnings and is not obliged to spend any of her personal income towards the upkeep of her household, the entire responsibility whereof rests on the man.

Perhaps the greatest testament to the empowerment of women in Islam is the emphasis it places on their right to seek education. This commandment encouraging the pursuit of knowledge is 1400 years old and entirely gender neutral. It was a Muslim woman, Fatimah al-Fihri, who founded one of the world’s oldest universities in 859 CE. In contrast, British universities opened their doors to women as late as 1876. Women have played key roles in various capacities throughout Islamic history, from the women who partook in battle in the 7th century by tending to wounded soldiers to the Prophet’s saw wife Hazrat Khadija who was a successful tradeswoman.

Today, the question of empowerment of Muslim women is largely seen as an oxymoron owing to the misplaced practices in the Muslim-majority world that have chosen to use the Islamic faith as a political tool and fashioned their own virulent interpretation of the religion that has no bearing to its original form. As a hijab-wearing Muslim woman I find no contradiction between the question of my empowerment and my identity as a Muslim. By recognising and appreciating the differences between men and women as unique, women are not measured against men as standard bearers but rather celebrated for their own inimitable contributions to society. This distinctive point of view provides the single most powerful means of making a woman feel empowered and is exclusive to the Islamic faith.

By Ayesha Malick
By Yusra Dahri

How many times have we all been told through some medium or another that we must stay true to ourselves and not let anyone change who we are?

How many times have we rolled our eyes in response, thinking that it would never be us? We are far too clever for that!

If we fast forward a few years later then we all start looking a little foolish.

A flicker of hesitation. An awkward smile.

If we’re so smart, why can’t we think of the perfect thing to say right now, instead of fidgeting nervously?

How do you hold on to your values without offending those who don’t really mean any harm?

Peer pressure.
Not as black and white as we thought...

It’s easy enough to defend yourself when someone attacks you directly, but it’s much harder to defend yourself when people challenge your way of thinking, especially unintentionally.

The desire to ‘fit in’ is human nature; no one wants to be an outcast.

But remember, who is it that you’re trying to fit in with? Who are you allowing to influence you? A family member who has experience with your problem and is trying to give you advice? Or a classmate, someone who is just as inexperienced with real life as you are but insists they know best, or is treated like they do?

And you have to ascertain whether your friends (who are probably quite naive) have your best interests at heart, or in actuality do they not know what they’re doing either and just don’t want to be alone?
If you are more inclined to the latter option, then the chances are you’re a sensitive and kind person who wants to help others.

But you have to distinguish whether they need help or they just want hedonism. If it is just hedonism, say no. There’s no reason for you to take part in something you don’t believe in. In some cases the help your friends want is help you can’t give. It’s unfair to you and it’s unfair to them because they aren’t getting the proper help they need.

Peer pressure can also be more confrontational. People will want, even demand you to do something that you really don’t want to do. They may even threaten you, but the key here is to say no.

When I was in my first year of secondary school, there were some people who wanted me to do something that I did not want to do. They even threatened to drop my pencil case out of the window (the stakes were high - that pencil case was brand new!). However, I still refused and said I would tell a teacher. They scoffed like they didn’t care, but lo and behold, my pencil case was returned to me. I stayed sitting exactly where I was but they left me alone after that. By saying no, you give yourself respect and people will sense that immediately.

To their credit, after five years they’ve matured and grown up completely since then. That’s another reason why it’s so important to stand up for your values: you have no idea what a profound effect it can have on someone else.

The best way to avoid peer pressure or influence is to find a peer group that respects you and your values. If you’re lucky, you may find this at school, but even if you don’t, remember that school is a setting that’s only temporary.

The people you know now you may not even know in another five years, but you will have to live with yourself and the decisions you make forever. You don’t want to change yourself for people you won’t even remember in ten years time.

So what do you do amidst the hesitation and the awkward smiles? If you’re not quite feeling up to it (which is fine, by the way) stay away and don’t look back. But if you’re feeling brave enough, say what you think clearly and boldly.

There will be pressure. There always will.

But why does that mean you should give in?
Personal Reflections with Khilafat

In this era, we Ahmadi Muslims are extremely fortunate to be led by the blessed institution of Khilafat. In order to guide the members of the Jama’at, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V\(^{\text{May Allah be his Helper}}\) regularly travels to different parts of the world to meet and guide the local Ahmadis. Certainly, the bond of love between the Khalifa and an Ahmadi is truly unique. During his tours, Huzuraba also spreads the message of Islam through various lectures, meetings and interviews. Dear readers, we hereby present some inspiring and emotional personal reflections and experiences with Khilafat pertaining to some of Huzur’saba tours. These incidents and narrations have been taken from the diaries written by respected Abid Khan sahib, who has had the honour of travelling with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vaba on various occasions.

The overcoat of the Promised Messiah\(^{\text{as}}\) and International Bai’at:

“Since the International Bai’at started in 1993 it has been a tradition that Hazrat Khalifatul Masih has worn the overcoat of the Promised Messiah\(^{\text{as}}\). For many years, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV\(^{\text{th}}\) and then Hazrat Khalifatul Masih Vaba wore the same green coat of the Promised Messiah\(^{\text{as}}\). However, in the past few years, Huzuraba has worn a different coat of a beige-brown colour. Several people had asked me about why Huzuraba had started wearing the different coat and if there was any significance attached to it. Regarding this, one day I asked Huzuraba about this, whilst sitting in his office at Masjid Fazl. In reply, Huzuraba said: “Over time the green coat of the Promised Messiah\(^{\text{as}}\) had become very worn and frayed and so I decided that it was better to wear the other coat of the Promised Messiah\(^{\text{as}}\).” Huzuraba continued: “Whilst it is a tradition to wear the coat of the Promised Messiah\(^{\text{as}}\) at the International Bai’at ceremony it is not something that is necessary. If this coat becomes frayed or damaged then the ceremony will go on without it.”

[UK Jalsa 2017 diary part 2, A Personal Account by Abid Khan]

Khilafat is a shield:

“Another person I met was a young student, Shahrukh Khan (23) from New York, who was spending the summer doing an internship at Oxford University. Shahrukh said: “Ever since I was a child, I have listened to Huzur’saba sermons and considered him to be my role model but meeting him in person has taken my love and understanding of Khilafat to a whole new level. I feel a spirituality that I have never felt before. I feel an awakening in my heart because I have met the holiest person in the world today.” As our meeting ended, Shahrukh said: “Growing up in the West is difficult and we face a lot of challenges and obstacles that can take us away from our faith but Khilafat
is a shield that shows us that worldly things are distractions and we should focus on our faith. Huzuraba encourages the youth by showing us that Islam does not restrict us but encourages us to excel, whilst channelling our passions in a positive direction. For example, when I asked Huzur’saba guidance about my future studies, he was not at all rigid and encouraged me to pursue those subjects about which I am passionate.”

[UK Jalsa 2017 diary part 1, A Personal Account by Abid Khan]

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The Secret to Success:

Another person I met in the run-up to Jalsa Salana was Mahmood Ahmad Malhi (27), a young Missionary who had graduated from Jamia Ahmadiyya Germany and was now posted in Cologne. Mahmood sahib narrated an incident that I found to be extremely captivating and faith inspiring. He told me that when he started at Jamia many years ago, one of his classmates, Arsalan, who was also one of his best friends, wrote to Huzuraba asking what the ‘secret to success’ in Jamia was. Rather than responding that he should work hard or by giving educational tips, Huzuraba wrote back simply with the words: “The secret to success is that you are punctual in offering Namaz.” Mahmood sahib told me that after receiving this response, Arsalan took Huzur’saba advice to be punctual in prayers so seriously that on this occasion Allah rewarded him by answering his prayer there and then.”

[UK Jalsa 2017 diary part 2, A Personal Account by Abid Khan]

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A memorable scene of affection of Huzuraba for a small Albanian girl:

“In a mulaqat with an Albanian delegation as the questions continued, a little girl, perhaps four or five years old, wearing a blue frock escaped the clutches of her mother and suddenly ran from the back of the hall towards where Huzuraba was seated. As she approached, one of Huzur’saba security guards tried to gently divert her attention and guide her back to her mother but upon seeing her, Huzuraba gestured affectionately towards her and so she came and sat at the feet of Huzuraba. For the next few minutes, Huzuraba continued to answer the questions of the guests, whilst the young girl seemed extremely proud and overjoyed to be sitting next to Huzuraba. Throughout, the girl’s mother kept trying to beckon her daughter to come back but the girl ignored her mother’s pleas for a few minutes before returning to her. It was a very affectionate and memorable scene.”

[Hazur’s Germany Jalsa Tour 2017 part 2, A Personal Account by Abid Khan]
Fill in the missing words in the following paragraph:

On February 6 ______, the Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{as} had a vision in which he saw angels planting plants which grew rapidly into ugly trees, upon enquiry as to what they were he was told that they were trees of the ______ and that it would break out across the country shortly. In accordance with his prophecy the plague did in fact break out and it reached its peak in ______ 1898, and it was then that the government began a drive to ______ people against this disease. However, God almighty had promised protection against this calamity to those who lived in the ______ of the Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{as}. It is for this reason that the Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{as} described his house to be akin to ______ Ark. In actual fact the house of the Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{as} remained completely ______ from this calamity however the houses next to the house of the Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{as} were ______ protected.

Answers:

1. 1898 3. October 5. House 7. protected
2. plague 4. vaccinate 6. Noah’s 8. not

Match the following statements:

1. The book Noah’s Ark
2. Two other titles of the book
3. The revelation granted to the Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{as} regarding the protection against the calamity of the plague
4. 20 years prior to the outbreak the Promised Messiah mentions the plague in this book
5. The two prophets the Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{as} mentions in reference to being commanded to raise the sword
6. Two traits that cannot be found together
7. Khatam-ul-khalafa in Islam

a. The Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{as}
b. The Holy Prophet\textsuperscript{as} and Prophet Moses\textsuperscript{as}
c. Sinn and belief in God
d. Published and written by the Promised Messiah\textsuperscript{as}
e. ‘An Invitation to Faith’ and ‘The Revival of Faith’
f. I shall protect everyone who is within the four walls of your home
g. Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya

Answers:

1-d 3-f 5-b 7-a
2-e 4-g 6-c
WORD SEARCH

INVITATION  PROPHECY
MOSES       REVIVAL
NOAH        TEACHINGS
PLAGUE      VACCINE
DIY CAKE STAND

Make these decorative stands to hold and display various things like cakes, candles, jewellery etc. These are so pretty and a super easy DIY!

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Decorative plate (any old one will do as long as it has a pretty design)
- Candleholder/narrow vase
- Super glue/hot glue gun
- Decorative pearls

STEP 1

- Glue the candleholder and plate together.
- Make sure to apply some sort of weight on the plate and candleholder in order for it to be secured.
STEP 2

- Add pearls around the candleholder to glam it up!
- Now it’s ready to display whatever you like! I chose mine to present Eid gifts!

STEP 3 OPTIONAL

- Lay and display gifts on the plate.

STEP 4

- Wrap up with cellophane and add ribbons and pearls to finish off.

TRY VARIATIONS!

Use candleholders/vases of different heights and plates of different sizes to create different styles!

Try different beads and ribbons to add more glam!
As the above Surah states “Allah burdens not any soul beyond its capacity”, therefore we should not consider our duties as a burden. Among the most valuable things in life is one’s health. We should have a positive attitude towards our daily tasks and responsibilities in life. If not this could have a negative impact on our health.

According to the World Health Organisation, health comprises of physical, psychological and spiritual factors. Being in the right mental state enables one to think, interact, express, live and enjoy life. Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Hence it is crucial that individuals, families and communities should see the need to promote, protect and restore mental health.

At any one time, social, psychological and biological factors affect the state of one’s mental health. This includes socio-economic pressures, rapidly changing social environments, stressful work conditions, gender and social discrimination and exclusion, unhealthy lifestyle, violence, poor health and violation of human rights. Mental health is as important as physical well-being yet it is greatly ignored. Talking about mental health in general is considered a taboo, and depression is not even considered to be an illness in some parts of the world.
DEPRESSION

There are several types of mental health issues; one common disorder is called depression. It affects nearly 1 in 6 people in the UK. Feeling unhappy or sad is often misrepresented and it is termed as depression. Unhappiness is something we all feel at different times and there is usually a particular cause that makes us feel unhappy. “I feel depressed” has become a common expression to describe low mood. But clinical depression is much more than just feeling down. Depression causes one to experience intense emotions of anxiety, negativity, hopelessness and helplessness, and this feeling stays for a longer period of time. In severe cases, it can lead to self-harm, hallucinations and delusions.

WHY DOES IT HAPPEN?

Depression knows no age or gender. Many successful people who seem to have everything under control, battle with depression. There are a lot of reasons that can lead to depression; some include physical illness, experiences at childhood, unemployment, bereavement, family problems and other life-changing events. Depression can also be caused by some chronic illnesses such as cancer, heart diseases, back pain, and head injury and medication used to treat them can cause side effects which can lead to depression. Some people are more prone to depression than others due to their genetic makeup and it is found that women are more likely to be depressed than men due to their hormonal changes.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

If you have one of these symptoms for more than 2 weeks, then you need to speak to your family or friends and contact your GP who will be able to help you. Some of the most common symptoms include:

- Continuous low mood or sadness, feeling hopeless and helpless, tearful, guilt-ridden, irritable and intolerant, having low self-esteem, lack of motivation and trouble making decisions

- Lack of enjoyment, feeling anxious or worried, having suicidal thoughts or thoughts of self-harm

- Moving or speaking more slowly than usual

- Changes in appetite or weight (usually decreased, but sometimes increased)

- Disturbed sleep - for example, finding it difficult to fall asleep at night or waking up very early in the morning
- Not doing well at work
- Avoiding contact with friends and taking part in fewer social activities
- Neglecting your hobbies and interests
- Having difficulties in your home and family life

**RECITATION OF THE HOLY QUR’AN STRENGTHENS POSITIVE FEELINGS AND IMPROVES ONE’S PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE**

**TYPES OF DEPRESSION:**

There are several types of depression, some are listed below:

**Mild depression:** there are few symptoms which have limited effect on the daily life such as difficulty concentrating at work, or lack of motivation to do things you normally do.

**Major depression:** interferes with everyday activities of life including eating, sleeping etc. some people may experience only one episode while the more common form is to experience several episodes in a lifetime. This may cause risk of self-harm and hospitalisation.

**Bi-polar disorder:** individuals with this disorder have extreme mood swings feeling extremely elated and indestructible, to lows feeling despair, lethargy and suicidal.

**Post-natal depression:** This affects 1 in 10 mothers and begins two to three weeks after birth. Many new mothers have this is intense feeling of anxiety and lack of confidence that lasts longer than few weeks after birth. Making them feel overwhelmed, inadequate and unable to cope. This may cause sleeping problems, panic attacks or intense fear of dying. In some cases, they may also experience negative feelings towards the child.

**Seasonal affective disorder:** this is linked to changes in the season. It usually occurs in winter.²,³
HELP/TREATMENT

Even in the most severe cases, **depression can be treated.** The first step to recovery is speaking to your GP and finding out what the original cause of depression is and identifying the things that trigger depression. The recovery period varies in individuals and it ranges from around 6 months to a year or more. It is most effective if it is treated at an earlier stage. Symptoms of depression are most commonly treated using medication, talk therapy or a combination of both. In other cases, brain stimulating therapies may be used. No two people are affected the same way by depression. There is no one-size-fits-all treatment.⁴

According to Darabinia et al (2017), listening to the Qur’an as Tartil for 3 minutes every day improved mental state. It is therefore highly recommended that recitation of the Holy Qur’an strengthens positive feelings and improves one’s psychological state. Other studies have shown that spirituality is linked with lower amount of diseases, greater longevity and that reading the Holy Qur’an is effective in reducing stress of young people and adolescents.⁵

Since ancient times, prayer has been used in healing process. Prayer is considered as an expression of the behavioural dimension. According to a systematic review conducted in 2015, prayer is a positive factor in 7 studies out of 12 and the outcomes were as follows: reduced anxiety of mothers of children with cancer, reduced level of concern, and enabled improved physical functioning in those who believed in prayer.⁶

There are ways in which one can make lifestyle changes to help cope with depression which can include activities such as regular exercise, including walking outdoors and yoga.

If you think a loved one may have depression, it is important that you help the individual get a diagnosis and treatment. You may need to make an appointment for them to see the GP and/or go with them, and encourage your loved one to stay in treatment until they have fully recovered. It is important that you offer emotional support, talk to the individual, listen carefully, never dismiss feelings but offer hope, invite them to take part in activities with you without being pushy, never ignore comments about suicide and report them to their doctor immediately.

References
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2 https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg90/ifp/chapter/Depression
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HAZRAT SHU’A’IB
(Peace be upon him)

HAZRAT SHU’A’IB AS AND HAZRAT ABRAHAM AS:
In the Holy Quran Hazrat Shu’aib AS has been mentioned as the ‘brother’ of Midian, hence the inference is inevitable that he was a descendent of Hazrat Abraham, Midian being the son of the Patriarch from his third wife, Keturah.²

HAZRAT SHU’A’IB AS AND MOSES AS:
Hazrat Shu’aib AS was a non-Israelite Prophet who lived before Moses AS. Some commentators think that Hazrat Shu’aib AS was the father-in-law of Hazrat Moses AS. According to the Bible the name of the father-in-law of Hazrat Moses AS is Jethro (Exod. 3:1). Jethro and Shu’aib cannot be the same person, nor can Shu’aib be the father-in-law of Moses as the Holy Qur’an mentions both at several places, however nowhere in the Holy Qur’an is there a slightest hint that the two are the same person. To further support this view, nowhere has the father-in-law of Moses been referred to as a Prophet of God. Furthermore, the Qur’an speaks of Moses AS as having been raised after Shu’aib AS, so he could not be his contemporary.
WHERE WAS HAZRAT SHU’AIBAS SENT?
Midian was on the Red Sea, opposite to Sinai on the Arabian shore. The town was called Midian because it was inhabited by the descendants of Midian. Midian had a large population of the descendants of Ishmael.¹

IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT THE PEOPLE OF HAZRAT SHU’AIBAS:
• Like the Holy Prophet saw, Shu’aib met with the opposition primarily at the hands of the people of his town²
• His people not only practiced idolatry, but were also fraudulent in their dealings with one another.
• They were well-to-do and prosperous people.²
• They had adopted the calling of the road and were given to plundering and dacoity. As they lived on the trade-route to Egypt, they used to plunder the caravans that passed by.²
• The most prominent evil of the Midian people was their unfair practice in measuring and weighing.¹

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE TRIBE OF HAZRAT SHU’AIBAS AND THE HOLY PROPHETSAW:
The tribe of Shu’aib appears to resemble the Arabs very much, with regards to their ways and customs, for the Meccans did with the Holy Prophet saw exactly what the people of Shu’aib’s did with him. Both of them hindered the outsiders from approaching the Prophets.
HAZRAT SHU’AIB’S AS WARNING TO THE PEOPLE:

- Hazrat Shu’aib as warns his people to stop idolatry: ‘O my people, worship Allah; you have no other deity but Him. A clear Sign has indeed come to you from your Lord.’¹; ‘O my people, worship Allah. You have no God other than Him’.²
- Further Hazrat Shu’aib warns his people about the importance of fair and just dealings, especially in business matters, reminding them to not commit fraud and to stop causing disorder.⁴
- Hazrat Shu’aib as warns the people to stop ‘threatening and turning people away from the path of Allah those who believe in Him, and seeking to make it crooked’.⁴
- Hazrat Shu’aib as adopts the last course after the failure of all his efforts to make his people reform themselves and accept the truth. He leaves the whole matter in the hand of God and has ‘patience until Allah judges between us.’

REJECTION OF HAZRAT SHU’AIB’S AS WARNING:
The reaction of the opponents was ignorant as they would not give up on the hardly-won wealth and world honour. They were not so foolish as to act upon Hazrat Shu’aib’s as advice.

THREATENING HAZRAT SHU’AIB AS AND HIS BELIEVERS TO EXPEL HIM FROM HIS TOWN:
The disbelievers arrogantly reject all warnings as they reply: ‘Assuredly, we will drive thee out, O Shu’aib, and the believers that are with thee, from our town, or you shall have to return to our religion.’

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PUNISHMENT OF THE DISBELIEVING PEOPLE OF HAZRAT SHU’AIB AS:

- The disbelievers arrogantly reject all warnings as they reply: ‘Assuredly, we will
- Hazrat Shu’aib as answered to the jibes of the opponents: ‘It is not my prayers but my God who bids me preach to you.’ and warns his opponents that ‘I only desire reform only as far as I can. There is no power in me save through Allah.’
• Hazrat Shu’aib⁵ warns his people of the punishment: ‘And O my people, let not your hostility towards me lead you to this that there should befall you the like of that which befell the people of Noah or the people of Hud or the people of Salih; and the people of Lot are not far from you.’

• Final warning of punishment: ‘And O my people, act as best you can, I too am acting. You will soon know on whom lights a punishment that will disgrace him, and who it is that is a liar. And wait; surely, I wait with you.’

THREATENING HAZRAT SHU’AIB⁵ AND HIS BELIEVERS TO EXPEL HIM FROM HIS TOWN:

The disbelievers arrogantly reject all warnings as they reply: ‘Assuredly, we will drive thee out, O Shu’aib, and the believers that are with thee, from our town, or you shall have to return to our religion.’

THREATENING HAZRAT SHU’AIB⁵ AND HIS BELIEVERS TO EXPEL HIM FROM HIS TOWN:

• The Holy Quran clearly states that the disbelieving people of Midian were destroyed by an earthquake possibly taking place in the early morning. All signs of their habitation and dwelling were completely effaced as if they had never dwelt therein.

• One of the accounts of the punishment to the people of Shu’aib is as follows: ‘So the earthquake seized them and in their homes they lay prostrate upon the ground.’¹²

¹Holy Qur’an Chapter 7: Verse 86, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
²Holy Qur’an Chapter 7: Verse 86, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
³www.jesuswalk.com/moses/images/map-egypt-midian-900x709x300.jpg
⁴Holy Qur’an Chapter 7: Verse 87, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
⁵Holy Qur’an Chapter 11: Verse 86, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
⁶Holy Qur’an Chapter 7: Verse 88, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
⁷Holy Qur’an Chapter 7: Verse 89, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
⁸Holy Qur’an Chapter 11: Verse 90, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
⁹Holy Qur’an Chapter 11: Verse 91, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
¹⁰Holy Qur’an Chapter 11: Verse 92, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
¹¹Holy Qur’an Chapter 11: Verse 93, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
¹²Holy Qur’an Chapter 7: Verse 94, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
¹³Holy Qur’an Chapter 11: Verse 95-96, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
¹⁴Holy Qur’an Chapter 29: Verse 38, 5 Vol. Commentary by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih ||May Allah be pleased with him||
Once upon a time, in a small town lived a man who was believed to be very pious. He spent his days deep in supplication to Allah by fasting, praying and devoting his time to meditation and spiritual thought. He was pleased with his spiritual progress as his mind and body remained clear of evil temptations.

One night however, as he fell into a deep sleep; he dreamt a rather peculiar dream. In his dream he saw the local shopkeeper. In the dream the shopkeeper was shown as far more superior to him in spirituality, and so to attain that same level, he must go the shopkeeper to learn the basics of true spiritual life.

Startled, the pious man suddenly awoke, confused by his dream, but determined to attain true spirituality. The pious man got up and immediately began making his way towards the shopkeeper in the market.

He entered the store and saw the shopkeeper, who was busy attending to his customers, selling his goods with a cheerful and polite manner. The pious man sat in the corner of the shop and observed the shopkeeper for some time.

“He does not seem particularly spiritual at all,” thought the pious man arrogantly. In this time the shopkeeper disappeared to pray, and then soon after returned to attend to his customers.

The shopkeeper has noticed the pious man sitting in the corner of his shop for some time, and so he asked: “Assalamo Alaikum, would you like something?”

“Walaikumasalam dear shopkeeper, no, no, I do not need to buy anything, but I would like to ask you a question.” It was here that the pious man began to relate his dream and what brought him to the shopkeeper.

“Is that all?” asked the shopkeeper. “That is very simple to explain, but before I do so could you do something for me?”
“Why yes of course, tell me” replied the pious man.

“Ok then, take this saucer, there is some water in it. Go to the end of the street and back as fast as you can without dropping any of the water. If you are back within half an hour then I will give you the answer you need.”

At first the pious man thought this to be a very strange request, but nonetheless he took the saucer of water and began briskly walking down the road. The water slipped and slid in the saucer and almost fell out several times. Each time the pious man would slow down and steady the saucer, before realising the time and speeding up once again.

After some time, the pious man returned huffing and puffing with the saucer in hand. He saved it just in time.

“Here is your water,” panted the pious man, “now please tell me the true interpretation of my dream.”

The shopkeeper smiled at the pious man and said: “Dear friend, whilst you were walking with the saucer in your hand, how many times did you remember Allah?”

“Remember Allah?” inquired the pious man, “I did not remember him at all, I was too busy making sure the water would stay in the saucer.”

“But I remember Allah all the time,” replied the shopkeeper. “Whenever I am conducting my business, it is like I am carrying that saucer of water, except that I make sure I am kind and honest to my customers. I never forget Allah when I am dealing with others.”

Allah the Almighty stated in the Holy Quran:

“By men, whom neither merchandise nor traffic diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the observance of Prayer, and the giving of the Zakat. They fear a day in which hearts and eyes will be agitated, so that Allah may give them the best reward of their deeds, and give them increase out of His bounty. And Allah does provide for whomsoever He pleases without measure.”

- Surah Al Nur Ch 24 v 38-39

The moral of this story is to be like the shopkeeper and remember Allah in all that you do.
A WAQFE NAU GIRL: A ROLE MODEL FOR TODAY’S SOCIETY

By Azka Fateha Chaudhry, 13 years old

In today’s society mankind strives for freedom, values and respect but unfortunately due to a lack of divine guidance, their efforts at times fall short.

In the UK, we are blessed with the freedom to practice our religion; living our lives as we see best. We are particularly blessed because we receive regular guidance at every stage of our lives through the blessed institution of Khilafat. These blessings put extra responsibilities and expectations on us. Hence, it is our responsibility as Ahmadi Waqfe Nau girls to be the ambassadors of the true teachings of Islam. In a world dominated by wealth and glamour we need to proudly uphold the values of modesty, humbleness, truthfulness, dignity and respect.

There are a few ways in which we can do this. Firstly, we need to pick the right friends and carefully choose the people who we spend the most time with. Unfortunately, the society we are living in has priorities which are absolutely opposite to what is important to us and since we are human we can’t just be isolated all the time. We have to have friends from all religions, races and cultures but we need to be selective and pick those as friends who are moral and good and will not influence us with habits that will prevent us from being exemplary Waqfe Nau.

Secondly, we can look to the Holy Qur’an in which Allah guides us in everything. In Surah-Al-Imran, verse 111, Allah has summed up who we are and what is expected of us. He says:

“**You are the best people raised for the good of mankind; you enjoin what is good and forbid evil and believe in Allah.**”

Thirdly, we need to stay close to our beloved Huzuraba by listening and following his instructions and participating in as many Jama’at activities as possible. By doing so, we will be reminded day in and day out about our own values and principles, and increase our knowledge, which will help us differentiate between right and wrong, good from bad.

Our beloved Huzuraba has addressed us on many occasions and we should always keep his words in mind. Huzuraba has guided us by saying:

‘**Come and join us and by obeying the commands of Allah try to win His pleasure. This is what will make you content and safeguard your future generations. I am hopeful that every decent Ahmadi woman who has even the slightest doubt about any of Allah’s commands will rid herself of it and will become one who is truly “resigned, believing, obedient, always turning to God, devout in worship.”**’ (Ch.66: V.6)

In this society, it is a big challenge but with the help of prayers and the guidance of our parents, we can succeed in becoming a guiding light for those around us, Inshallah.

References