

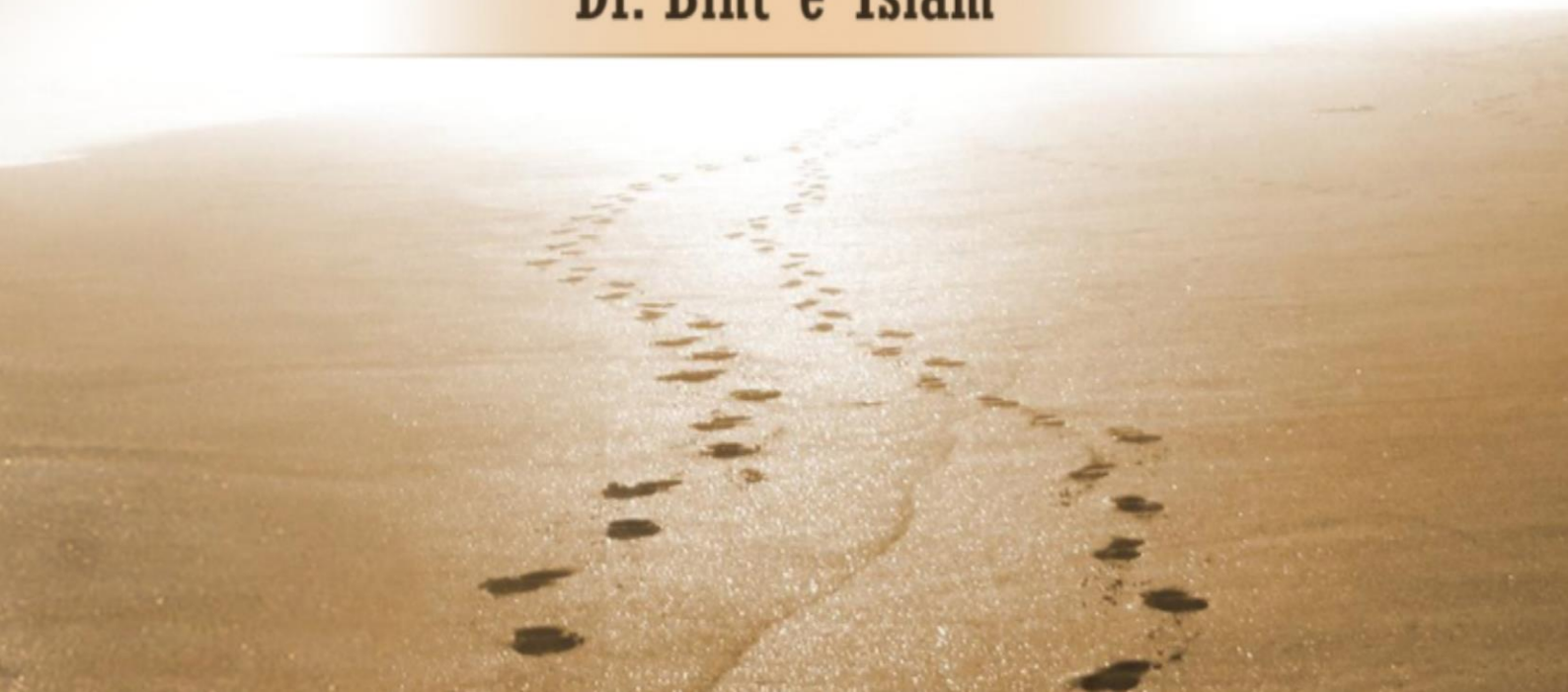
“ISLAM INITIATED AS SOMETHING STRANGE, AND IT WOULD REVERT TO ITS (OLD POSITION) OF BEING STRANGE. SO GOOD TIDINGS FOR THE STRANGERS.”

(SAHIH MUSLIM, THE BOOK OF FAITH.)

GHURABA

(The Strangers)

Dr. Bint e Islam



The Novel "Ghuraba" is a life-changing story that revolves around two main characters; a girl who is deviated & far from religion and a young man who is committed to Deen & is seen fully involved in work for the Ummah. This novel has been written by summing up true life stories of some people (with some additions and subtractions). In Sha Allaah, this novel will act as medicine for the wounded & hurt hearts who have been yearning for their Lord since long..

Author

Dr Binte Islam

Translation

Yahya abd
Dr Syeda Qurat
Dr Maaz
Tahir
Bisma
Saalyha

Editing

Umair
Faiza
Unknown Ukhti
Muslimah Al Haq
Amina
Maryam
Ibrahim Mansur
Aman
Mariyam

Poetry (Translation of urdu poetry into English poetry)

Dr Syeda Qurat
Umair
Muadh
Ibrahim Farzan

Picture editing

Yousuf

PDF:

Ibrahim Mansur

Android application

Salafi

Team Ghuraba

Muhammad Mus'ab, Aiman Al Ansari, Saad, Umme Anum, Taif, Dr Hira Khan, Xahid, Aish binte Muhammad, Sara, Binte Hussain, Binte Parwaiz, Mehr, Sahil, Khadijah, Tayyab, Talha, Brown Pride

About the Author.. !!!

Dr Binte Islam is a medical doctor. She had never thought of writing any book, but the love for the oppressed and hurt Ummah compelled her to hold a pen. No doubt her every word was from Allaah's help and assistance only.

This book is dedicated to those blessed souls who have set on the journey to Paradise, seeking only the pleasure of their Lord. And thus on walking this walk, along with their feet their hearts got injured too. Still they carried on with their bleeding souls, fleeing to their Rabb, with an intention to be of those **Strangers** for whom our beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "فتوبى للغرباء" (So good tidings for the strangers).

Special thanks to those who remained there as strong support. Especially my beloved brother, who proved a shield all along...

Chapter One:

"Katy !!!"

"Katyyyyy!!!"

Bella entered the room nearly shouting. Katy, who was standing before the dressing table applying eyeliner with precocity, became alarmed.

"What's the matter?" She looked at her, asking repulsively. Her deep black eyes grew even more beautiful with anger.

"Why can't you ever make a sane entry? Why do you always barge in shrieking like an ambulance siren?"

Seriously, you almost gave me a heart attack". Katy refocused to the mirror with a frown on her face.

Bella, who had forgotten the urgent matter she had come for, kept staring at her with an impish, static gaze.

"Madam! How many people do you intend to fall for you today?" She teased her with mischievous eyes.

"Only Jamal" Katy timidly smiled and replied boldly. Her lips always used to wear a shy smile with the mention of Jamal's name. Jamal was her boyfriend.

Katy could vividly remember that beautiful evening when she first met Jamal on a trip with her friends during the last semester in Harvard University.

"So you belong to Pakistan too?", Jamal had asked her smiling, Katy reminisced.

"Too? What do you mean by that?" Katy interrupted him, cutting him short. At that time, she was seriously annoyed with Bella, thinking she must have leaked her details to him. Bella would pay for this 'breach of trust', Katy thought to herself.

"I am a Pakistani too".

"Oh really? Is that so?" Katy inquired.

"Yes, absolutely! My father is a Pakistani. When he came to the USA for his studies, he married my mother who is an American citizen. So this makes me a citizen of both countries." Jamal replied beamingly.

Katy could not keep herself from smiling now. Jamal was so damn handsome and his smile made him so attractive that anybody could have an instant crush on him. Katy was also badly infatuated with him in the very first meeting. But she did not reveal her feelings to him. After all she was Katy, the burning light for moths to gather, the princess whose hand many Royals desired, the enchantress

whose spell bounded people. She had been modestly rejecting everyone. How could she herself succumb to Jamal's spell so easily now?

Even Jamal was captivated and charmed by Katy's beauty. He had seen many girls in his life, but no one had been able to mesmerize him like her. She was delicate like a crystal doll, shining from inside out and enamoring him at first sight.

Unlike Katy, he was unable to hide his emotions. Or perhaps he didn't want to.

"So Jamal Jason, it seems you have finally found, the true love of your life", thought Jamal, with his steady gaze full of admiration fixated on Katy.

Katy was wearing a dark red T-shirt and a pair of blue jeans. Her thick black hair, which she had left open, reached all the way down her back and accentuated her snow-like, fair complexion. She had put on slight makeup, which further highlighted her beauty.

It was becoming hard for Jamal to decide what was more attractive: her big beautiful eyes or her black silky hair swaying in the breeze. No doubt, she was strikingly beautiful like a queen. It was absolutely certain that Jamal would try to win her heart at any cost.

Shortly after their initial introduction, they opened up to each other and their frequent discussions became quite frank. Maybe the reason was that the feelings of attraction were mutual. Love seemed to be in the air!

* * *

Even after returning to the hostel that night, Katy was still immersed in the beautiful moments of the day. She had noticed that Jamal could not take his eyes away from her the whole time.

"How could he take his eyes off me? Has anyone been able to avoid my spell of beauty before?" She told herself proudly and pleasingly.

After that eventful day, they started meeting each other on a daily basis. They had already exchanged their phone numbers on the very first meeting and now they were getting closer with each passing day. During the day, they used to hang out together or text each other, and during the night they called each other and chatted until dawn.

This went on for six months. By then, their relationship had come into the lime light. Everyone felt envious of this handsome couple, who were literally inseparable. In fact, so inseparable that they forgot the difference between vice and virtue, having crossed the limits of sin and not regretting it even once.

"What's the harm in this?" she once asked herself, suppressing the questions of morality which her conscience had brought up. "After all, we are going to legalize our relationship by marrying soon, so how could it be wrong?"

This went on for a while, until one day, Katy met Maryam. She was her roommate Farhat's friend and had come to meet her, but unfortunately Farhat had gone out of the hostel that day due to some work. Therefore, Katy had to welcome Maryam which she regretted later.

"Pardon me, I do not have anything to give for charity," Katy opened the door and replied to the woman standing in front of her who was wearing a black Abaya which covered her from head to toe. And then she slammed the door on her face without giving her the opportunity to say anything.

"Ugh! These beggars! They're everywhere." She turned back, murmuring to herself when she again heard the knock on the door.

"Ugh! What's wrong? Didn't you understand the first time?" Katy almost shouted irritably when she opened the door.

At first, that veiled girl was surprised at Katy's rude behavior, but then she replied with great patience, "Is Farhat there, in the room?"

"What?" Katy was shocked.

"I asked if Farhat is in the room?" She replied again in the same calm manner.

"Who are you?" Katy had recovered slightly. She was now ashamed over her behavior. She must be a friend of Farhat, Katy thought.

"My name is Maryam, and I am Farhat's friend."

"Oh! Okay. I thought you were here on behalf of some organization asking for donations. Please come inside. Farhat has gone to the market. She should be back soon. You can wait for her in the room." Katy said to Maryam while fully opening the door.

The room was quite a mess. Things were kept in a very disorganized manner. Books and clothes were cluttered everywhere. There were two single beds on one side of the room. The beds were so messy that they portrayed the picture of an open air, clothes market. A fallen lamp on the side table, heaps of clothes in front of the open closet, and the disorganized books presented evidence of a recent calamity. As if someone took out their anger over the things in the room.

Maryam was a bit shocked when she entered the room. It was only her eyes that Katy could see through the black veil, and the look of surprise in her eyes made Katy feel embarrassed and she clarified rather sheepishly, "Our room is not usually like this. I was actually looking for my favorite dress for my evening outing, which I was unable to find."

Maryam, uncovered her face and smiled at Katy slightly. "I can understand." Katy really admired Maryam's affectionate smile. There was an unusual attraction in her style that left her awestruck.

She always felt irked by the 'religious lot'. If these extremists had a chance, they would label everyone else as infidel and would throw people at the doorsteps of hell even before the Day of Judgment had arrived, Katy always used to think.

But Maryam had such a demeanor that Katy found her aggression being turned into meekness and friendliness.

“When will Farhat arrive?”

“She should be back soon.”

Katy realized that she was getting late for the parlor. She quickly looked at the wall clock.

“Oh shit! I am very late. You please sit down; I have to leave.” She quickly grabbed her purse and her car keys and rushed towards the door.

“Khawlah, will you go outside like this?”

“What?” Katy replied while turning back. She was left in shock.

“I asked will you go outside like this. You are a Muslim girl and a Muslim girl never goes out while dressing like this.” She said this in a very polite manner but it had hit Katy like a bullet. She was wearing a sleeveless shirt with tights.

“Miss Maryam! Everyone calls me Katy here, and you’d better call me with this name.” She spoke quite furiously for being called by her real name.

“Do you know who Hazrat Khawlah was?”

“No! And I do not wish to hear a lecture on this either. It would be better if you mind your own business.” She was enraged, and the soft corner she had for Maryam a little while back was gone.

“One thing more, you don’t need to preach to me. I cannot wear this tent shaped dress like you and pretend to be righteous in front of other people. There should be modesty in a person’s heart. Wearing sacks and roaming in the streets of America won’t increase your faith. If you are so righteous and chaste, why do you even leave your home to go outside? In fact, why did you come to USA in the first place? It is just hypocrisy on your part,” Khawlah kept on speaking in the same breath without giving Maryam the chance to speak. The hatred for the religious people which had been growing in her heart for years was finally poured out on Maryam like lava from an erupting volcano.

Maryam was looking back at Khawlah with shock during the whole time while Khawlah was raging against her. She probably hadn’t even imagined that she would react like that. Khawlah had truly misbehaved with her.

Maryam put on her veil silently, and walked away without saying anything.

* * * * *

When Khawlah came back from the parlor after getting her facial done, Farhat called her.

“I’ll be late today. A friend of mine is here. In fact, I am at her place.” Farhat was in a rush.

“Oh nice! Which friend?” asked Khawlah apprehensively. She was definitely talking about Maryam.

She was now feeling regretful for her behavior. What if she had shown a little self-restraint? Now this will lead to uneasiness in her friendship with Farhat.

“Ugh, Katyyyy! When will you stop overreacting over petty issues?” She quietly cursed herself.

“Her name is Maryam.”

There was no sign of anger in Farhat’s voice.

Why is she not upset with me? After all, I had rudely scolded her friend. Khawlah kept thinking.

“You don’t know her. She arrived in USA a few days ago. I told her about the hostel and told her to meet you, but maybe she wasn’t able to meet you because of the name. I told her your real name by mistake.”

“Oh, Okay. That’s fine,” Khawlah was confused with what to reply.

After hanging up the phone, she sat there for a long time wondering why Maryam hadn't told Farhat that she had already met her? If she had been in her place, she would not have left the hostel silently but would have definitely retorted word for word, and then would have called Farhat to berate her for sending her to such a person.

“Anyway, it’s good. The trouble is over now.” She mumbled to herself.

Khawlah checked the wall clock. It was 6 in the evening. She had to quickly get ready for the night’s outing. Tonight, she was treating all her friends for topping the final semester exams. And for that, she had booked tables in a nearby club on everyone’s insistence.

She went towards the dressing table in order to get ready.

“Bella will be here soon,” she had just thought to herself as she applied eyeliner, when Bella suddenly entered the room reiterating Katy’s name loudly.

* * * *

“If your drama is over, shall we leave?” Khawlah inquired, quite amused with Bella’s mischievous glances.

She knew that today, she was looking more beautiful than other days. Khawlah was wearing a red maxi and had thrown her silky straight hair onto one side. Her hair was adorned with a string of diamond beads which were gifted to her by Jamal. In short, she was looking like a queen of a royal palace.

“Yes, your Highness, as you command. After all, this is your big day,” Bella was leading her outside like a royal slave girl, leaning down to gesture for her to walk ahead.

Khawlah could no longer control her laughter and after locking her hand into Bella's hand, she stepped outside.

* * * *

As soon as both of them sat inside the car, Khawlah received Jamal's call.

"Hello?"

"Katy! I'm really sorry, I won't be able to make it today. You guys enjoy the party."

"What happened Jamal? Are you not feeling alright?" Khawlah became worried.

"Yeah, I'm just feeling a bit off today." His tone carried a strange restlessness.

"Please tell me what happened to you."

"Nothing much Katy, it's just that I feel like I have a slight fever. You don't worry, I will take medicine and get some rest. I'll feel better soon."

"No, I am coming to your place right now."

Bella, who was sitting on the front passenger seat, had also become upset. She asked what happened with a hand gesture. But Khawlah signaled for her to remain quiet.

"No, no. Please don't come to my place. I told you that I will take medicine and will be fine soon. Do not ruin your big day because of me. You must host that party."

"But without you, how can I...", he had hung up before Khawlah could finish her sentence.

She could not believe that Jamal hung up on her. For a few seconds, she just stared at the cell phone in her hand. Khawlah was sure that he was hiding something from her. He must be seriously ill.

Khawlah had tears floating in her eyes. She threw the cell phone on the dashboard and turned the car in the direction of Jamal's apartment.

"Please, can you tell me what happened?" Bella asked with a concerned look on her face.

"Jamal is not well," she replied, whilst speeding towards his apartment.

"What happened to him?" Bella became even more worried.

"I don't know...but he is not fine," Khawlah mumbled the last words as if speaking to herself. She could never see Jamal in distress. She loved him intensely. Crazy intense! She could not even bear the thought of a thorn prick to him. She felt extremely panicky. On top of that, his apartment was quite far away and with each passing moment her anxiety increased.

“Well, don’t you worry, everything will be fine. I am sure he's only slightly unwell. Let’s stop at a pharmacy to buy some medicine for him.” Bella was now trying to pacify her. She knew quite well that Jamal was Katy’s weakness and that she would do anything for him. Katy would continue to worry unless she could see Jamal fine and healthy. But still, she unsuccessfully tried to calm her best friend down.

“Oh yes, the pharmacy! Why did that not cross my mind earlier?” Khawlah cursed herself and turned the car towards the market.

Bella became more worried for Khawlah. Jamal was her childhood friend and Khawlah was her closest friend. She knew both of them quite well. Bella knew that Jamal would probably be fine, but her friend would definitely pass out before reaching Jamal’s apartment.

“Here’s the store,” Bella gestured towards a signboard.

With a sudden jerk, Khawlah stopped the car immediately.

“Oh Katie, please calm down, you were about to get us crashed,” Bella looked at Khawlah feeling miffed. But Khawlah seemed completely shocked, looking towards a nearby restaurant in disbelief.

At first, Bella could not understand what was going on, but when she followed Khawlah's gaze and looked into the restaurant, she could not believe what she saw.

Near the front window, she could see Jamal smiling, seated across a gorgeous girl with brown hair whose hands were in his hands. He was slipping a glamorous diamond ring on her finger.

Katy rushed out of the car at lightning speed. Before Bella could understand the situation and react accordingly, she had reached the table where Jamal was sitting with the pretty girl.

“So this girl is the fever you were talking about?” She slapped him hard across the face as she shouted with a maddening rage.

He was startled by the unexpected arrival of Khawlah. He never imagined that she would show up like this.

Tears rolled down Khawlah's cheeks as she tried to pull off the diamond beads which he had given to her before, literally throwing them back at him in disgust.

"Jamal Jason! You treacherous man! Beauty worshipper! Didn’t your lust get satisfied by ruining one woman’s life? Did you have no heart to go hunting after another one like a street dog? Now stay happy in your dream world of false hopes and love,” Khawlah yelled bitterly as she tossed everything on the table in aggression, preparing to leave.

But as soon as she turned to walk away, her footsteps froze as she felt the firm grip of a hand on her shoulders and her name echoed in her ears.

By then, the scene had caught the attention of nearly everyone sitting in the restaurant that evening.

"Wait, girl," Jamal replied in a sarcastically aggressive tone, as he recovered from the shock of being caught red handed.

"There's no need to vex so much. It takes two to tango. Neither did I force you to be with me nor did I ever drag you into my apartment. You came by your own accord towards me. It was all mutual. I never raped you to give you a reason to blabber so much here today."

Khawlah felt the ground beneath her feet slipping away. She was astonished by what he was saying. She had repeatedly ignored her condemning conscience ever since the beginning and had crossed every limit for Jamal's happiness. She disregarded the whole concept of virtue and sin only for him and today he was absolving himself from blame?

Khawlah, from the corner of her eyes, saw the overly mocking crowd eyeing them as if they had found a good chance of entertainment that evening. She could see the mob laughing at her stupidity.

"I was fed up of this relationship such a long time ago. I had tried a million times to get rid of you but it was you who kept clinging on to me," uttered Jamal, who was now barraging her with deeply venomous words, each word wounding her already weak soul like a poisoned spear.

"I admit that you are a beautiful and intelligent woman, but I do NOT love you. What should I do about it?" Khawlah was left weeping and she couldn't believe what she had heard. She questioned herself, "he doesn't love me?" She wondered if he was the same guy who used to confess that he could never sleep without talking to her, who would remain restless till he saw her face, and that her voice brought life to him. She felt that the world was collapsing around her as the grief in her chest made it harder for her to breathe under the burden of sorrow and self-pity.

She was now lost in her embarrassment and shame. Oblivious to the surroundings, she could now only hear a loud incomprehensible sound in the background. The scene became blurred to her, as if she was fainting with her grief. There was too much noise but her ability to discern had diminished, or may be, her brain had become numb to the situation.

Not knowing where to go, she headed straight out of the restaurant and started walking towards the main road. She was now limping across the road like a zombie with no soul, just a body moving aimlessly, misbalanced by the burden of life and mockery of fellow mates.

"Katy Solomon! Would you marry Jamal Jason?" He was kneeling before her with a diamond ring, Khawlah flash backed. She was now limping along the edge of the road.

"I'll think about it," Khawlah giggled while rolling her eyes with mischief.

The cold night had grown darker in its depth and the cars on the road were flash blinding Khawlah's static gaze.

"You will have to marry me at any cost, whether happily or not!" Jamal was laughing as he slipped the ring on her finger. Echoes of their laughter had filled the whole garden.

She was having flashbacks, one after the other until she was jolted back to reality by a loud shout coming from a car that was speeding towards her, "Hey, do you want to die?" She was saved by a moment's delay of being run over by a car.

"Die?" she questioned her perplexed self. "Yes, I wish to die." she replied loudly as she turned desperately in the opposite direction. Khawlah was hit by a car.

The rushing car noises stopped as a screeching sound filled the air and her body flew onto the middle of the road.

* * *

"Miss Katy!"

"Miss Katy Solomon!"

Khawlah could hear a distant anonymous voice. Maybe someone was referring to her. She tried to open her eyes but found it unbearable due to the intense brightness of the light pouring into the room.

"Oh Allah! Thank You. Thanks a million!" She could hear two indistinct familiar voices reiterating the statement.

"Very good! Try again," she could hear the same anonymous voice encouraging her again.

Khawlah had succeeded in opening her eyes fully this time. It had taken her 5 minutes to do so. Although her eyes were wide open, the intense light was still painful for her to look at. She was definitely in a hospital room.

Standing right in front of her, was a middle-aged man who was wearing a white over-all with a stethoscope hung around his neck. He was a doctor. There was a girl standing next to him, a few steps away. Who was she? Khawlah tried hard to recall the familiar face from her weak memory. Farhat! Yeah, she was Farhat. But she had heard the voices of two women. As she tried hard to think, her head started aching.

"I want to sleep," murmured Khawlah, looking at the doctor.

The doctor, who was still staring at her cautiously, relaxed upon hearing Khawlah speak.

"Thankfully you have gained back your consciousness. You can sleep as long as you wish, that's fine by me. But maybe you should first ask for the permission of your friends who have spent all day and night standing next to you in concern." He replied with smile on his face looking at Farhat.

Farhat who, up to this point, had been thanking Allah constantly, headed towards Khawlah with an affectionate smile on her face.

"Katy! Thanks to Allah that you have gained consciousness. We were so scared. Do you know that you've been in a coma for a week? Your skull and right leg got fractured. We were so busy praying

all the time for you." She was blabbering and crying whilst holding the hands of Khawlah. Khawlah felt the tears fall on her hands.

"Doctor Peter has really helped us a lot. He is one of the best doctors in this hospital." She looked at Doctor Peter with appreciation.

"Let's leave her to rest now. We have got our entire lives to talk," Doctor Peter gently nodded at Farhat.

Khawlah gradually opened her aching eyes, carefully trying to figure out where she was and how she got there. How was she still alive? And what was Farhat saying about her skull and the fracture? Her head started aching even more severely now.

"I want to sleep," stammering, she repeated her words.

"Yeah! Yeah! You take rest." Farhat softly loosened her hand from Khawlah's grip and left the room with Doctor Peter.

"You must help your friend come out of this situation. The sooner that happens, the sooner she will get well. Will-power plays a huge role in the healing process of any patient. If she doesn't have the will to get better, she might never regain health," exclaimed Doctor Peter with concern, while they stood in the busy main hall.

"Yes, I'll keep your advice in mind."

"Good!" he left with a content smile.

Farhat came back to the room and stared at Khawlah with concern. She was sleeping calmly so Farhat left the room to call someone from her cell phone.

* * *

When Khawlah woke up, she found herself in the room alone with a lovely basket of fresh fruits by her side on the table. Farhat must have left them, thought Khawlah to herself as the dusk surrounded her in the cheerless room through the window.

The window of the room was open, showing the lawn beautifully decorated with flowers. The flowers were also in blues to match the dull evening or perhaps it was from within Khawlah that everything seemed so gloomy. The arrival of dusk made it even more dismal. She tried to sit up but felt that she couldn't move her right leg much, due to the heavy plaster. Grieving over her miserable situation, she leaned back on the pillow to sit.

"Oh Allah! Why did I survive? Why didn't You let me die?" She couldn't hold herself anymore and started crying anxiously, hiding her face with her hands.

Khawlah kept weeping like that for a long time. She had never cried so desperately before. She had actually never loved someone so deeply.

"Why did he do this to me? I forgot myself for him. He was my sun and moon. It was for him that I was alive," mumbled Khawlah, as she started sobbing again.

When she got tired after all the crying, she laid down with her head rested on the pillow and started staring at the ceiling with an empty gaze, lost in her own complexities of thoughts.

"Everything changed in just a few moments. It really took just a few moments. Can life be harsher? I, Katty Solomon, the yearning of every gaze, conqueror of all hearts, desire of every eye, winner of every race of her life, lost the race of love. Maybe there is no such thing as love. No one loves anybody. Maybe every man is like that. He is seeking brilliant among brilliants. He neither loves anyone, nor does he try. He buys every new face."

"Yes, this is the reality. Men are insincere," she answered herself, when Farhat entered the room.

"Hey, when did you wake up?"

"Just now," she quickly replied.

"It's good you slept. How do you feel now?" She empathetically asked Khawlah, as she sat down on a chair beside her.

Khawlah was trying to control her anguish, but this question made her lose it again and she replied with poetic rhetoric.

"Tell him not to blanket his lashes with dreamy veils Nothing can be achieved, by making houses along the river bays Often, I hear, this very talk from the stars Being sleepless, is useless for someone who departed far. The chest will get empty and pure blood, the eyes will weep Waseeh! Nothing is achieved by loving the world, insincere and cheap."

Tears floated in Khawlah's eyes thick and fast as she stared at the ceiling fade away....

Farhat was not expecting such an answer from Khawlah. She saw that Katy's eyes were wet with tears. Katy had surely been crying for long. Farhat started blaming herself now for leaving Katy alone like this. Her downhearted attitude began to worry her. She had never seen her even distressed and now she had begun to cry too.

"Katy! Please try to forget everything. That man doesn't deserve your tears," Farhat reassured her whilst gently holding her hand. But Katy continued to weep deeply.

"Farhat!" she exclaimed without looking into her eyes. "Can you call Maryam?"

"Maryam???? Uh... Ok... Why not" She was confused but didn't find it appropriate to question her further.

"Now?" Khawlah spoke with such a pitiable tone that led Farhat to immediately dial in Maryam without thinking for another moment.

A little while later, there was a knock on the door. The handle moved down, unlocking the hinge. As the door slowly creaked open, a girl wearing a black Abaya gown and veil appeared from behind it and she gracefully walked into the room.

Khawlah, who was still grieving in her situation at this point, welcomed Maryam with a slightly mortified smile. She had feared that Maryam won't come since she had a genuine reason not to.

"You two can talk while I go and fetch something from the cafe to eat," Farhat said as she rose from the chair and left the room with a million questions dancing in her mind. She had figured out that Katy wished to be with Maryam alone.

Maryam was interrupted by a nurse in the doorway who had come in to give the night medicine. "Oh, Miss Maryam is here! How are you?" the nurse greeted her with eagerness and shook her hand.

Khawlah was struck with surprise. Had Maryam visited her when she was in the coma? Who was that girl?

An angel from heaven? Khawlah's insides were churning with embarrassment. She remembered well how she had mistreated Maryam and her eyes swelled with tears once again. But she hid them, trying to control her emotions.

Maryam had read the expressions on Khawlah's face after seeing the nurse's enthusiasm upon meeting her. "Yeah, I couldn't show up due to some particular reasons," Maryam smiled back at the nurse. She had interpreted, through Khawlah's facial expressions, that she was astonished by this news.

After a brief conversation, the nurse gave Khawlah her night medicines and then left the room. Maryam and Khawlah were now alone. Maryam closed the door, unveiled her face and sat down next to Khawlah.

"How are you now, Katy?" Maryam broke the uncomfortable silence between them.

"Call me Khawlah, not Katy!" she looked at Maryam remorsefully, as if to compensate for her misbehavior shown at their last meeting.

Maryam smiled in reciprocation to her gesture. Her smile was very captivating, full of affection, making everyone her admirer.

"Maryam! Please forgive me. I was..." Khawlah couldn't complete her sentence as her voice got heavy with deep emotions of grief and embarrassment.

"Khawlah, I have forgotten everything. Please! You should also try to forget it," replied Maryam, firmly tightening her grip on Khawlah's hand, which she was holding gently.

Khawlah had expected the exact same behavior from her.

"Please don't refer to me so formally, it makes me feel estranged." She was timidly smiling.

"Fine, if you don't like that, In sha Allah I'll refer you less formally," she had liked what Khawlah requested.

Khawlah smiled back at her. This was the first time she had smiled after a very long time.

"Alhamdulillah!! Our princess has smiled," Maryam remarked at Khawlah with glittery eyes.

Khawlah felt as if a lot of weight was removed from her weak, injured shoulders. She felt very unburdened.

"Maryam! Why did this happen to me?" she inquired with a sea of tears in her eyes. She couldn't stop that storm of grief from raging up again and again.

"I have many questions in my mind to ask you and they are driving me insane!"

"Khawlah! We do not understand Allah's wisdom in many matters. Hence, when we fail to get our desired goal, we often lose heart. And at times we start complaining about Allah. But with the passage of time, we realize the hidden wisdom in it. And then we also realize that we were such fools to panic"

"But I never understood the wisdom behind any trouble", Khawlah replied softly.

"You must not have paid heed to it then. As long as our heart is blind, we won't visualize anything. When we do not get anything, our Lord has seen harm for us in it, so He moves us away from it." Khawlah was listening to Maryam speak without blinking her eyes.

"And there are times when we lose things due to our own mistakes. We get so blindly indulged in attaining that thing, that we adopt every dark path for it. Do you know what dark paths are?"

Khawlah shook her head in a robotic manner to reply 'no'.

"Dark paths are the trails of disobedience to Allah", echoed Maryam.

Khawlah was shocked to hear all this. She could recall all of Jamal's requests, fair and unfair, that she had fulfilled because she feared that she might lose him otherwise.

"Such paths are so profoundly dark, that the human eyes are unable to see if the steps are actually going towards an abyss or towards a peaceful place. Do you know why that is?"

What could Khawlah have replied? She was shocked by her truthful words. She stared at Maryam in awe.

"Because they are not the right paths, Khawlah! There is no guiding light there. Isn't the Light meant for guidance? Then why would Allah's light lead you to the wrong destination?" Maryam had replied to her own asked question, upon Khawlah's silence.

This was the first time in her life that Khawlah had experienced such a deep conversation. She was dumbfounded.

After a few moments of thinking, Khawlah questioned in a soft, shaky voice, "whenever I loved anything, it never stayed with me. Does that mean I always chose the wrong path?"

“Maybe or it could be that you might have loved that thing to an extent that you neglected the love of the One who made that very thing.”

“What does that mean?” Khawlah looked at her inquisitively.

“This might mean that you had forgotten your Lord who bestowed you with that blessing. You might have crossed the limits of love to an extent that you might have given your Creator’s right of love to your desired thing.”

*And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allah as equals [to Him]. They love them as they [should] love Allah. But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah. *

Do you know whose words these are? These are the verses of your and my Lord, in the Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayat 165.”

Khawlah was so astounded that she didn't even dare to blink. Had Allah said this all? She would have known if only she had ever tried to understand the Quran.

“But, it's not like I don't love Allah," she spoke in her defense.

Maryam smiled and replied, “Khawlah! Did you safeguard the love of Allah or your lover? The one you safeguarded more, you loved him more. The one for whom you made the other angry, that love actually won over the other. You paralleled your Lord with someone in your due love, Khawlah, when you were supposed to love Allah the most!”

Tears started flooding in her eyes. Truly, she had never loved Allah. In fact, what she had been denoting as Allah’s love was merely a joke. Maryam remained silent for a while. And Khawlah kept thinking with her gaze lowered. Then Maryam picked off from where she had left the conversation.

“Khawlah! Do you know when we do this, we don't only lose Allah but we also take ourselves a step closer to the hell fire. But see, despite our stubbornness, Allah still tries to protect us from hell fire. He does this by taking away the thing that was about to make us jump into that devastating pit.”

Khawlah looked at her all muddled up.

“Maryam! This is so hard for me to understand. Please can you simplify it?” she replied with a confused look on her face.

“Okay! Let me explain to you with an example”, Maryam began...

A heart that has faced rejections and betrayals is bound to feel tired at some point in life. Tired , hurt, torn, wounded...

How to walk forward when you feel the blood dribbling from the wounds.. Wounds that are awarded by your own loved ones.

Oh Lord, i had set out on this journey for You. Set out in a way that i left my every desire behind.. Everything that holds one back, I left it for You. And stood up to be a means of strength for the ones Who have chosen You. But got rejections there too my Lord. I do not know where people like Your Prophet's Sahabah R.A have gone.

"Breaking hearts" has become a norm here.

Tired and hurt I call upon You. Take me to the road that leads me to You. Now that the destity is very near, I've started to lose strength. I feel sleepy and weak. My painful eyes do not want to open up anymore. Please be my strength and let me see victory when I've reached this far. Give me strength O Lord, so that I too am able to see my Fateh Makkah after my period of At-Taef.

Oh Lord, only in You I have hope and only in You I have faith.

~ Diary of a prisoner (A Bleeding soul)



Chapter Two:

"Imagine that you have a younger brother. You buy him his favorite video game. But he doesn't use it sensibly. Instead, he plays on it the all day long. He gets so engrossed in it that he forgets to eat his meals and stops studying. So, what would you do? You would make him understand by warning him at first. But if he doesn't listen, you would, of course, take the game back from him. Am I right?"

Khawlah nodded a 'yes'. She would have done the exact same. Ugh! She had never understood what Allah said. She was now inwardly cursing herself for her oblivion.

"Have you ever realized that Allah never stops the very first time a person makes a mistake, but He sends us endless warnings as reminders and indications to understand?", asked Maryam

"Does He indicate it in dreams?" Khawlah replied with confusion.

Maryam smiled and replied, "Khawlah! Haven't you ever heard a voice from within which admonishes you? Haven't you been claimed guilty by your own conscience?" Khawlah felt her heart sinking rapidly now.

"Were these the reminders from Allah?" Khawlah asked herself.

"Have you never been indirectly advised by anyone about the sins you've committed? Have you never been stopped by anyone?" asked Maryam.

"Oh Allah! Were those also the reminders from Allah?" She was getting embarrassed by recalling all such incidences. She used to become extremely irritated when someone dared to point out her mistake and advise her.

"Allah gives us an ample amount of time to correct ourselves. But when we become too stubborn to change and rigidly consider it our victory, by then we would have walked right into the pit of fire as a result of that very thing so Allah takes that blessing away from us."

"Maryam, you are so pleasant to talk to. Who taught you all this?" She couldn't hide her admiration any longer.

With a glowing smile on her face, Maryam answered, "The Book of Allah!"

What? The book of Allah? What was she saying? This was more shocking than what Khawlah could have ever imagined!

A strange awkward silence prevailed for some time among the girls in the room.

Then Khawlah spoke, "Won't you ask me why I called you here?"

"I was just wondering about that! After such an incredible meeting at hostel, why am I being privileged with this honor today?"

Maryam impishly replied, to which Khawlah broke into laughter. Her beautiful, pearly smile prompted Maryam to smile in return. Without a doubt, Khawlah was strikingly beautiful. Allah had really blessed her with exquisiteness. Her every movement was magically eye-catching.

"Seriously, I'm very embarrassed." Khawlah remorsefully replied as her cheeks started to blush with discomfort.

She was now in a good mood due to Maryam's light hearted attitude.

"Maryam! Maybe you disliked what I said, but in reality I have never been fond of religious people. They irritate me with their suffocating conversations. They keep repeating the fact of being condemned to hell, for all kinds of deeds, all the time." She stopped to judge Maryam's reaction, but she was sitting as calm as always, as if talking about religious people in this manner was not belittling. Maryam was not giving any signs of disgust or resentment. She was a girl having a personality of some deep sea, full of secrets... When she talked, it was as if a riddle had been given to you to solve. Thus in herself, she was a complete deep secret. The more you trend to explore, the more you found yourself drowned in curiosity.

Khawlah started her conversation from where she had left. "And when I treated you badly in our first meeting, but you still did not even respond rudely at my insane behavior, I was totally surprised. But honestly speaking I was impressed too. But i did not let my emotions overcome my ego, because I never wanted to show good manners for you, as in that case I would have gone against my own self, which I didn't want. Later I found out that you did not tell any detail of that incident to Farhat. i was shocked literally, and this was the very time when I felt a little bit of soft corner develop for you in my heart. Well, it's another thing that I hid this softness in another corner of my heart... My ego came before me again."

Maryam was listening to Khawlah with full attention. She still remembered that painful day. How could she ever forget it? How brutally she was thrown into the pits of hurt. Life already was not easy and people hurt you without any sense and reason; having no idea of how a person might be passing his life's journey while trying to keep together the pieces of his wounded soul every passersby shattered them again... Maryam remembered, she had got out from there with a really broken heart. She could not hold back her flowing tears. Unintentionally, she had looked up to the sky to whisper :
Oh my Lord, in the Name of Your love i accept all pains..

That whole day played before Maryam's eyes like a scenery. But she did not let Khawlah feel anything.

Hiding her feelings Maryam continued listening to Khawlah.

"And now when i have nothing..", Khawlah's broke off in mid-sentence and lowered her gaze, struggling to hold back her tears. Some moments passed in silence. She then renewed her courage and spoke out... "I missed you so much... I felt that you were the only person with whom i could share my grief... the one who wouldn't laugh at me like other people... rather, would understand me... And after meeting you again now, i admit, that you have gotten even more value in my heart than before..."

On these words, Maryam recalled to herself an ayah of her Lord...

And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend

She had read this verse some days ago in Surat Fussilat (verse 34). How surprisingly her Lord was showing her the practical observation of His verses.

"Khawlah, Only Allah knows when and how to enter someone in someone's life... if it were not me, then surely there would have been someone else. Your real Caretaker is your Lord Who placed everything in front of you with complete planning..."

How deeply Maryam talked... in such a young age. From where had she got this kind of depth...? The more Khawlah was getting to know her, the more she was becoming amazed. Khawlah was lost in thoughts when someone knocked at the door. Maryam covered her face carefully and got up to open the door.

How she easily moved here and there in that large tent, Khawlah was unable to understand.

"If your round-table conference is over, may i come inside...?", Farhat announced smilingly, standing in the doorway. "I was feeling really uncomfortable in the cafe with the white aunties... ahhh this English language is such a punishment... if you speak too much, it seems your mouth has got curved into some really improper shape...", Farhat tried to make the environment a little bit pleasant.

Both girls laughed at this. Farhat's trick had really worked. She entered while holding a shopping bag.

"I should go now... I'm with a patient who is admitted here", Maryam stood up, taking permission to leave.

Oh who's that...? Now Khawlah understood why she had come so much early at Farhat's call...

"My grandmother..."

For just a while, Maryam had an eye contact with Khawlah, and at the same moment she turned her gaze away, as if hiding her emotions.

Khawlah had seen tears in her eyes, but she could'nt do anything for Maryam, though she wanted to. But she didn't know how to share other's grief. Khawlah had always lead her life in carelessness. She was not competent in the use of words. Having different thoughts, Khawlah was trying to muster courage to speak, when Maryam went out saying Salam to both of them.

"What has happened to Maryam's grandmother?", Khawlah asked Farhat.

"She is suffering from cancer and it's in last stages...", Farhat said with a heavy heart, while taking a seat near Khawlah.

"What?. Cancer...??"

"Yes...!!!

You know what, her parents are not alive... Her grandmother is both her mother as well as her father."

Khawlah did not believe that the girl who was right there some time ago, helping her, talking in a peaceful manner, was herself in such great pain... How on earth was she able to be like a peaceful beach before a storm of troubles...? From where did she learn such bravery...? How was it possible that she did not commit suicide... seeing the load of her problems?? There were many questions that Khawlah wanted to ask Maryam, but knew she would never be able to speak out all this to her.

"Look... what I've brought for you", Farhat took out fresh juice and a cake from her shopping bag. Perhaps she wanted to keep Khawlah from useless thoughts, thus tried to divert her attention.

"You love apple juice right?", Farhat handed out the juice to Khawlah

Now I don't like anything..., Thought Khawlah but took the tin silently.

"Who brought me here? And Bella? Where is she? Why did she not come yet?", Khawlah had asked many questions in a row.

Farhat gazed at her with concen. Khawlah was looking much better after meeting Maryam... Farhat thought of telling her everything now. May be she could handle the situation now. After all, how much longer could the truth be kept out of her sight. The girl sitting in front of her was not an ordinary girl like others. She was Katy... Who when once decided to do anything, then nobody could move her an inch from her stance.

"I and Maryam brought you here Khawlah"

"What?? But how..?? I was in the restaurant...", Khawlah stopped before uttering another word... Perhaps some bitter senses had appeared in her mind.

"I and Maryam were at the medical store to buy some medicines... we saw you walking strangely alongside the road... lost in thoughts. First I thought my eyes were cheating me.. maybe it was someone else, but when we got a little bit nearer, I became sure that it was you Katy"

Khawlah was constantly gazing at the wall in front... She did not want to disclose her sadness to Farhat.

"And suddenly, a car hit you... The driver escaped there and then... We immediately rushed to your help".

Khawlah closed her eyes at this... She was feeling pained to recall that incident.

"There came upon many people. There was too much noise around... It was so scary Khawlah.. to see you lying there unconscious, soaked in blood.. I was unable to move even an inch... It was Maryam who showed some strength and called for an ambulance... Someone from amongst the crowd brought from the medical store a first aid box. Maryam is trained in this. She immediately applied bandage

over your wounds. Blood was everywhere... A very difficult moment that was...", Farhat was about to weep recalling all of this.

Tears rolled down Khawlah's cheeks. She turned her face in the opposite direction as she didn't want to cry in front of anyone... She had never known what tears meant as she always used to smile like buds smile in a garden.

"We brought you to the hospital in ambulance. When we called Bella, she arrived there in a while. She was panicked to see you. She had also not thought that you would commit suicide. She told us that you saw Jamal in a restaurant, so you stopped the car in the middle of the road and headed straight there without thinking. And as soon you left, the traffic police officer had arrested her for parking in the wrong place. After paying a hefty fine, she was released."

Khawlah felt embarrassed and guilty after hearing this. She had really left Bella in much trouble.

"When Bella got released, we had called her. She came straight here. We thought that informing your family was necessary, so we tried to get help from your phone log. You had left your phone in the car, which Bella brought here when she came. We searched your whole contact list but couldn't find any family in your contacts. It was very surprising that you had not saved any number at all" she looked at Khawlah, questioning.

"Yeah, actually... I remembered them all by heart so never saved them". Khawlah replied very fast with a lowered gaze so that her eyes did not convey her lie.

" Whatever Katy, at least someone's number...."

" Farhat! Please call me 'Khawlah.", Khawlah interrupted Farhat.

Farhat was shocked. Certainly, the head injury had a great impact on her. Otherwise, she wouldn't like her real name to be said, even in a joke. She got more concerned as she thought.

"Where is Bella? She should have been here with me." Khawlah had clearly seen Farhat's expressions of surprise changing into concern. She was not in the mood to answer any of Farhat's questions. Her head started aching. Khawlah wanted a quick solution to Bella's mystery. The absence of her best friend, in such a serious situation was making her feel worried.

"Actually! Katy- I mean Khawlah- you should sleep now; we can talk about this tomorrow. Dr. Peter had advised that you get proper sleep for your complete recovery." Farhat tried to sneak away from the situation.

"Farhat! Please, I am going crazy about it. Please, don't add to my misery!" she replied as if pleading.

"And if I tell you that your misery will be doubled upon hearing the answer, will you still wish to know about Bella?", asked Farhat

Khawlah was shocked. What was she implying to now? Ah! What big bad news was still awaiting her? Was there still any other issue left to break her further?

"Yes, I would still like to know it," she replied with a sinking heart. If it was a mountain, let it crumble. If it was a storm, let it blow everything away. She had lost the most precious thing of hers. She had lost her life. What could any trouble snatch from her now? What could more grief do to harm her? Her boat of love had sunken so long ago.

Farhat lowered her gaze. She kept thinking quietly, for some time, trying to bring out the words that were stuck in her throat. She feared Khawlah's reaction. God knows how she would react! It was only today that she had recovered from the coma. This news could worsen her condition.

What should she do? Should she tell? or not...?

Farhat was reeling in the swirl of her deep thoughts, when Khawlah's restless voice brought her back to the real world.

"Farhat! Please, tell me. Don't make me panic like this." She was nearly crying for an answer now.

"One second. Is she fine? Has anything happened to her?" Her heart was sinking. She was sure of something big had happened to Bella. Urgh! Urgh! Why couldn't she recognize earlier. What else could be the reason behind the absence of her best friend? Khawlah's heart was sinking with anxiety.

Farhat neither raised her head nor moved her eyes, facing Khawlah as she revealed the truth. Khawlah felt as if the ground beneath her feet had cracked and the world was sinking in.

"Bella and Jamal got married!"

* * *

"Zaini, no!" Khawlah tried to run across the lawn in an attempt to save herself.

In a blink of an eye, water was poured on her, leaving her completely wet.

Far away, a boisterous laugh could be heard.

"Wait, let me get back at you!" Khawlah smiled and rushed towards her attacker.

With a water hose in her hand, six-year-old Zainab, still unaware of her surroundings, was laughing hysterically over the success of her mission. While she was celebrating, Khawlah made a surprise attack on her tiny competitor with the same pipe. Zainab was left stunned for a moment, and then a full scale water fight ensued between both of them.

At that moment, Maryam walked across the lawn, carrying the afternoon tea. She couldn't help but smile at their antics. Zainab had bonded with Khawlah very quickly. And Khawlah had gotten much better now. She remembered how Khawlah had almost lost the will to live 6 months ago when she heard news of Bella and Jamal's wedding. The way she had cried in front of her, Maryam could never forget it. And this thought made her sad once again.

* * *

Khawlah had totally lost it and cried uncontrollably.

The first thing she did was to call Bella. But even after repeated calls, no one picked up from the other side. Khawlah didn't expect that someone would pick the call.

"Such a big fraud! She was her best friend, wasn't she? How could she do such a thing to her?"

Streams of tears flowed from Khawlah's eyes. She couldn't stop them. She felt as if her eyes were bleeding instead of shedding tears. "O Allah! This grief will definitely take away my life". Khawlah felt exhausted with the deep sorrow.

With shaky hands, she quickly messaged Bella, "You are an embarrassingly cheap girl. You both are the same. If you liked that cheater so much, why didn't you marry him earlier? Or were you waiting to celebrate your win over my dead body? I had trusted you Bella..."

Now, Khawlah was shaking terribly with anger and anguish. She couldn't write any further, thus sent the text just like that. And then she again started wailing uncontrollably.

"Khawlah! Please try to gather yourself," Farhat knew her pacifying words were all in vain in such grief. But what else could she have done to help?

After a while, Bella replied via text, "I can understand your pain. If I had been in your place, I would have thought the same... But Katy, I was helpless. I always had a crush on Jamal. I didn't have the courage to tell him...Then you came. When I saw that you two had developed a liking for each other, I moved out of your way because I don't believe in forced love. But the day you broke up with him, that other girl also left him. It was shocking news for her as well, that he was involved with you already.

Anyway, Jamal told me all this after few days, when he proposed to me. Maybe he was feeling in need of someone's love.

I replied saying yes, after thinking for a long time.

What could I do Katy? He was my first love. And you had already removed him from your life.

I hope you will be able to understand my situation."

Khawlah threw her cell phone at the wall, and started weeping while covering her face with her hands. At that very moment Maryam entered the room.

"What happened Khawlah?" She was out of breath. Maryam must have walked in quite quickly. She had run quickly towards Khawlah's apartment upon Farhat's call.

Upon hearing Maryam's voice, Khawlah looked up and blinked away the tears. Maryam held her hands and leaned down to sit at her right side.

"She knows about Bella..." Farhat replied to the exclamatory gaze with which Maryam had eyed her.

"Maryam... I don't wish to live.... I wish to die..."

Khawlah was crying so gravely that she began to hiccup now. Upon observing this, Maryam herself started crying. She couldn't say anything so she hugged her.

"Khawlah my love, we are right here with you..." Maryam's voice grew heavy with emotions. She knew explaining anything right now would be futile.

It was true, that people in the world had much worse stories to share. Maryam herself was living a hard life. She was a witness to daily deaths and wretched houses in her country Jammu & Kashmir. She was a witness to sexual violations of her Muslim sisters. She had seen her father drenched in blood and being tortured by the Indian army. And much more...

But, while one is grieving, their grief should not be compared with someone else's sorrows. It is unwise to debate over whose grief is greater at that moment. Grief can be big or small, but it still remains as grief. It affects all equally. It pains. The heart hurts.

In such a situation, one needs to embrace the other, show the love, and make that person realize that he/she is not alone. And that their wellbeing matters the most to you.

And then if it is a girl in front of you, the way of handling it is way too different. You don't explain to her. You just hold her hand first. If you listen to her sorrow with affection and show her love, consider that you have lessened her pain. But if you start advising her on the very spot, then you will have increased her grief instead. She needs explanatory solutions later, not at that very moment.

"Maryam! I don't have the stamina to carry on. It's as if blood is dripping from the wounds of my heart. Like someone has trodden my heart with his feet on his way to attain happiness." she was narrating her helpless condition whilst crying.

"Khawlah you are not alone! Together, we will come out of this, In Sha Allah," Maryam embraced grief stricken Khawlah in order to lessen the burden of sorrows.

* * *

"Do you know how self-sufficiency is achieved? Such that you do not feel the need of anybody?" Khawlah was inquiring Maryam with wet eyes, sitting in the lawn on a wheelchair, staring at the sun set.

3 months had passed since Bella's event, but even up to today she simply could not forget those painful moments.

Maryam was not surprised by her question. Since many months now, she was observing her struggling through similar pain and restlessness.

"For that, you have to befriend Allah", Maryam replied. "It's a walk over thorns. You have to kill your heart's desires. You have to submit your very self to Him. After all this, you achieve that level which you are inquiring about." Khawlah kept looking at her with awe.

"How do you befriend Allah?" she couldn't hide her restlessness. Her eyes depicted the pain of her burning heart wounds.

Maryam now replied with a smile. "By loving your Lord. But beware, you should not swim over the sea of love in order to reach Him. If you want to get to Him, you have to drown yourself in that sea. Only then will you be bestowed such self-sufficiency that will bring the world to your feet."

Khawlah was absorbing what Maryam was saying, very quietly.

Maryam again initiated the conversation, "Are you aware that in Quran, Allah proclaims that He is sufficient for us? Have you ever focused on this? It is such a big thing... If we had ever read it with open hearts, we would never have relied on the assistance of other people. When our Lord has clearly stated that He alone is sufficient for every problem of ours, why do we rely on people so much? We pave the way for them to hurt us. Cry before Allah. Cry as much as you wish and you will see wonders happening soon. He will wipe away your valuable tears, He will ease your pain, and will give you such strength and steadfastness that you will no longer require any support. But for that you need to Trust Him. Are you aware of 'Blind Trust'? You will have to jump into the fire like Prophet Ibrahim, without questioning. Then you will witness that independence which is bestowed to only a few dear ones."

Maryam saw Khawlah's cheeks constantly being drenched with tears. A steady stream of tears was flowing from her eyes. She was silently weeping with her head lowered down.

Maryam started from where she had left, "In a Hadith, Allah says, you just get yourself busy in the preparation for the Judgement Day, and I will bring the world to your feet. The world will humble itself in your service. You just keep working for the doomsday. This is the summary of that Hadith. Khawlah! You just be closer to your Lord; you won't require anyone else. Rather, the world will run after you. And by the 'world', I mean the blessings of this world, which include happiness, love, dignity, pious spouse. Every nice thing you can think of comes in this criterion."

A new world seemed to have opened for Khawlah. There was a short cut to happiness? But this short cut had hurdles on its way. And she was too weak. Khawlah felt depressed upon thinking that.

"You must be thinking, that this all sounds too difficult, right?" Maryam had read her thoughts. Khawlah couldn't say anything and just nodded slightly.

"Yes! It is difficult, but not impossible. The more valuable a thing is, the more difficult it is to achieve it.

But remember one thing: "Nothing can defeat man, until he himself decides to get defeated."

Khawlah was staring at her with stupor. Tears started rolling from her eyes. Then she slowly lowered her gaze.

"Maryam, I have accepted my defeat. To do all this, one must have the will to live. Whereas I don't wish to live anymore. This life seems like a burden to me. Like a corpse, with a dead heart. Or like a robot, which is moving around like other humans but has no life. What will you explain to such a person, who has no wish to live or fear to lose anything? I no longer have anything to do with happiness... I don't want to live, Maryam." Khawlah was now silently weeping with her head down.

"Who has bestowed you with this life? Maryam asked. Has Jamal made you? Or Has Bella brought you to this world? Are these the ones who bestowed you with this beauty?"

"What...what do you mean," She had understood Maryam's hint in that question, but wished to hear it in detail from her. Maryam's words were always inspirational.

"Khawlah! Who gave you this life? Who had thought to bring you to this world? He created the whole of mankind and animals etc. But when it came to you, He didn't make you an animal... instead He made you a sensible human being. He especially chose you! Do you know why?"

"Why?" Asked Khawlah with teary eyes.

"Because, He wished you to recognize His affection. The Lord of the world and heavens, and of everything with it, wanted to introduce you to Himself, and wished to keep you in His heaven under the shade of His affection. Hence, He made you for Himself Khawlah! The purpose of your life was for Him. Neither for Jamal nor anyone else, but Him only. But you had the wrong idea of the 'purpose' of your life. That is why, when you felt that the reason or 'purpose' is gone, there is no point in living anymore.

Correct your purpose of life Khawlah!" Maryam's tone was sending strong signals to Khawlah's mind.

Khawlah kept weeping silently. What had she done? Where had she wasted her life? She was repenting in her heart.

"And you keep saying that your heart is dead, and that you don't feel anything. There is a remedy to that as well." Maryam held her hand and assured.

"Really?" Khawlah asked, with hope in her teary eyes, as she looked up to Maryam and waited for her to respond.

* * * *

Abdullah was numbly staring at the letter in his hands. This three years old letter was very precious for him. It dated back to the time when the most beautiful period of his life started.

* When before Him, one day I shall stand, Inquired by my Lord, Mighty & Grand,

What's with your condition, so miserable & grim? What sufferings were faced by your limbs?

Where are your sparkling and deep eyes?" To Him I'll bow, with humble replies

"I have sacrificed them for your sake! Since you were the Guardian and the world was fake" *

The scene before him blurred with the tears in his eyes, as he whispered the poetry to himself. Forced back to the memories from the past, the scene blurred and he was now drawn into a flashback...

"BABA (Father)!! BABA!! LEAVE ME, HE IS MY FATHER!" Twelve years old Abdullah was crying at his father's dead body. Grieving at the brutality of the Indian army on his innocent father where he was tortured to death for no crime. He only wished to help the Kashmiris who got injured

by merciless shelling and pellet guns of Indian forces at a procession, as he was a doctor, a savior of humanity. He himself was not among the stone throwing groups.

"Why?"

Abdullah was crying and he thought to himself for what he was left with now?

Two years ago his mother and sister were raped brutally before his eyes. And now, his father too was inhumanely taken away from him. Agonized by the cruelty and inhumanity, he lunged at the Indian Army soldiers and desperately started throwing whatever he could at them. But the little child was no match before them, hence he got beaten and was arrested, and later was presented to the court after being locked up for a few days in solitary confinement. As Abdullah walked numbly to the court room, his eyes met an unpleasant sight, to which his little heart started trembling. It was the blood stained body of a man known to him. His father!

"Baba! babaaaaa!" he started screaming helplessly. Abdullah tried to reach out for his father but two policemen had gripped him strongly and dragged him back, and started heading towards the jeep. He was screaming and crying intensely. It was nothing less than a doomsday for what his eyes had to bear. Abdullah felt his heart thumping out of his chest as his eyes blurred and he felt dizzy. He could feel the pain of his thumping as his heart was pounding his ribs. He saw a journalist standing at some distance, as they were trying to still push him in the jeep. Abdullah screamed helplessly. "These butchers murdered my father! These brutal soldiers raped my mother and sister!" were the only last words that echoed the air as he passed out and were recorded by that journalist, who had come there to collect some news.

As Abdullah gained his consciousness, he found himself in jail. He was mad with pain and anguish as he could not save his mother and sister. Now his father too had gone.

He was kept in custody that day until evening and then sent home. One by one the tragedies were being faced by the remaining members of the family. For two entire days he was not in his senses but as soon he regained his senses, he had still not recovered from the loss. Abdullah now faced depression, loss, helplessness, brutality and inhumanity. Every other day he would be a numb observant of heated clashes between Indian forces and Kashmiri boys; stoning, shelling of tear gas and loud chants of processions, he would see it all from the window of his house... until one day when it was another gloomy morning, Abdullah rambled through the closet and pulled out a piece of cloth. He covered his face with it. It was his mother's scarf (he realized that he did not even know how to cover his face) and without informing anyone at home he left for the main 'Chowk' (crossing). Abdullah now wanted to play his active role in war of independence. He was frustrated with the daily torture of innocent unarmed Kashmiris by Indian forces, rape of their women, accusations of having relations with Pakistan, curfews and crackdowns. As soon he reached the Chowk, he saw a group of people who were together throwing stones at the criminal Indian forces. He walked closer to the group and aspired to join them. Almost everyone there had covered their faces. There were many children and teenagers as well. Nobody recognized anyone, but they were together for a common cause. They all wanted freedom from the brutal Indian occupation. Abdullah picked up some stones and aimed one at the Indian forces standing nearby.

At that very moment Abdullah was reminded of an incident that had happened two years ago when an Indian soldier had beaten him just because he looked at him curiously. He could still recall the

voice echoing in his ears, the soldier had screamed at him, "Who are you threatening with those looks?"

After being reminded of those painful moments, Abdullah threw the stone in his hand with full strength at his target. Although his aim was not good enough, but it was his first step in this struggle for independence.

Abdullah along with his oppressed companions wanted to show the enemy that they were not weak and feeble and that they would not just keep bearing the oppression without any resistance. They wanted to let everyone know that even their kids will know how to defend their rights.

Gradually it became his routine to throw stones at Hindu (Indian) soldiers along with his friends, and this defiance was the defense of their freedom.

Indian propaganda about these stone throwing lads that *they were uneducated, jobless and sold to Pakistani secret services*, was a baseless lie. Yes, The Kashmiri Muslims loved Pakistan and they faced brutality at the hands of Indian soldiers by even mentioning its name but they certainly were not paid for their freedom movement from Pakistan. No wise man could imagine such absurd claims. Kashmiris were in no sense like a common citizen of a common state. They had spent their entire childhood and youth under shadows of guns. Thus, now they feared nothing. Worst death meant no fear to them. They aimed for Shahadah (martyrdom), as if they were born to die for freedom!

None of them were uneducated or jobless; their numbers were mostly swelled with university graduates and school students. In addition, many were financially stable and rich. Their real stories were never told to the world by the Indian government. It was a crime to raise voice against those brutalities, and freedom of expression was a sin in Kashmir! Many journalists were tortured on false charges.

Kashmir was now a prison, a cage where Indian forces roamed about, terrorizing everyone while the world as well as the Muslim from the Ummah were silent spectators. Just a few shallow statements here and there, and that was it! May be the injustice is only seen and felt when one is a victim oneself.

Abdullah grew up in such circumstances. He continued his studies despite all challenges, but he had been a regular visitor of torture cells due to his activities. Sometimes, he was detained for a couple of days, but then there were times when he had been detained for months. Despite all physical and psychological torture, he remained firm and strong. He was still a part of the resisting 'stone-throwing' group and thus protested for his rights like all of them.

Abdullah's hopes were not glued to the leader of any political movement. He knew that was not the Caravan of Fulfillment. How many of his partners had lost their lives in the movements; some fell victim to pellet guns and then went blind but their plea for help was left unheard by every leader. As a result, they were left alone.

Abdullah and the youth like him had to fight their battle on their own. He either had hope in the youth like him or in the Kashmiri Mujahideen.

Once while he was in prison he had met a Mujahid, and his life literally changed in an instant. Abdullah had found the strongest platform for the greatest struggle of his life.

Abdullah could very well remember that day.

It was the day when the Indian forces had arrested him again on charges of throwing stones at them. Some young men with him were also caught along with him. When Abdullah arrived at the prison cell, he saw that some Mujahideen were also imprisoned there.

In the prison, Abdullah was tortured for a month. Twice a day he was placed on heaters running on electricity. The current would flow through his veins and would put him out of his senses. The days of his detention were unbelievably terrible.

In those days, near his prison cell, there was a Mujahid's cell. At night, when the watch was not much strict, he whispered to Abdullah, "Your struggle will not bear fruit until you take part in the fight against Indian oppression for raising the flag of Islam."

"What? I thought this is what I'm doing!", Abdullah remarked surprisingly

"You're making a big effort, but it is not enough to weaken the enemy."

"So what shall I do, that our country becomes free from this imprisonment," he unwillingly remembered the corpse of his father drenched in blood, his mother's and sister's cry, his friends and neighbor's tortured bodies, the missing Kashmiris and those unknown mass graves. He remembered it all at once and his cheeks were soaked with tears.

"You become a Mujahid for the cause of Allah and put your force in fighting for the cause. Help the Mujahideen fight the Indian Army.

But before this, you will have to understand the real meaning of jihad. This is a really risky path and on it there is a very fine line between Heaven and Hell. The slightest slip and everything is over...You have to devise your every move very precisely."

His words had a profound influence on Abdullah, and he felt as if he got a direction for his efforts.

After leaving the prison, Abdullah began to reflect on God's orders. After arming himself with the weapon of knowledge, he was now fully prepared to be a part of the efforts of the Mujahideen, of which he was told by his cell-mate.

A few days before going there, a man delivered to Abdullah a letter by his prison mate which gave the news of his martyrdom.

With tears in his eyes and with quivering fingers he opened the letter.

It contained a single verse which fueled Abdullah's unalterable and resolute determination:

* Dear companion of dungeons and lost victory, Don't you forget the days spent in miserable custody
*

Abdullah enclosed the letter and put it back in his wallet. He had a lot to do today. He performed ablution and went out of his home. After some time Abdullah reached a house near a playground.

He was about to enter when a group of children rushed to him: "Brother Abdullah! Brother Abdullah! We missed you a lot". Their voices chanted loud in the ground. The little kids clung to him affectionately.

Laughing heartily, Abdullah hugged them one by one: "I missed you all too". He could see the happiness in their eyes. These orphaned children were the most important part of his life. Many of the families of his friends and Kashmiris were so very torn. The idea of "half widow" was prevalent in Kashmir. These kids reminded him of his friends who left only helpless children behind them. Some got martyred, some became missing persons and some were brutally murdered. Afterwards Indian forces would claim them dead in false "encounters" or a number would be added in missing people's list.

Abdullah himself was poor but he tried to save some money for these orphans. He used to eat once in a day and would spend his saved earnings to give to these orphans and their widowed mothers at least a week's ration. He had to beg them to accept his help, as after all, they belonged to self-conscious parents, and thus could not bear a strain on their self-respect.

* * * *

My Lord - my Saviour !! You took me out of that hell - a hurricane of problems, a tsunami of hardships it was. I remember how long I ran and ran through that path that in itself was a desert of sorrows and pain.

Now that I stand in prayer, with my tears rolling down my cheeks, I remember it was the very place I was once humiliated to the limit. How I had cried and screamed for help. How I was about to lose myself and my hope when You turned the tables over. You brought me out of all that with miracles, happening one after the other. Oh my Rabb! How can I ever thank You enough.

Your Love has only increased in this heart of mine. Your Dhikr is what my lifeline is now. I came to know of Real love at last - pure love - the Love for You. How can any beauty delude me now that i have felt the Beauty of Your Love??

Do not ever leave me now that I have found You at last. Let my soul be taken away in Your Cause. Let my blood be spilled in Your path & let my eyes see You when they open up after shutting once. Let me be a Martyr like Your beloved servant Hamza (R.A).

O Allaah!! Let me be Yours forever..

~ Diary of a Prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)

Chapter Three:

"Yes, Really!" Maryam looked into the eyes of Khawlah, which had grown large with astonishment.

*So observe the effects of the mercy of Allah - how He gives life to the earth after its lifelessness. Indeed, that [same one] will give life to the dead, and He is over all things competent. *

As said in Surah Ar-Rum verse 50 (Al-Qu'ran); Indeed, Allah will give life to your dead heart too, IN SHA ALLAH. You just have to take a step towards Him, Khawlah. Then He will make the impossible very much possible for you."

Khawlah sat looking at her feet, all stunned. Could she really feel life again? Would the darkness of her life really end? Would Allah bring happiness to her life? She was thinking to herself when Maryam brought her back from her trance "what are you thinking?" she tried to read Khawlah's expressions.

"Maryam, tell me what should I do. How can I present myself to Allah? I have nothing left to offer Him." Her voice choked.

What sins had she not done? She could not explain that she had been so ignorant that neither she ever knew about these paths nor she ever gave a thought or made any effort to know about them. Her only concern was her happiness, her image, her desires and her selfish heart. She was never concerned about pleasing Allah or fearing His wrath. Islam was just a label she had been carrying on her, and that label had not been of much importance to her at all. She never actually let her soul indulge in such things.

"If you obey the orders of Allah, consider that as your first step towards Him. It is not a difficult task Khawlah. Just a few tears of guilt and an affectionate prostration, and you have won His forgiveness. Then, open up the Qur'an and see what He has said to you. He has explained His path in it, rest is on you to follow, but for that you have to raise the first step. You have to express that you really need your Lord."

* * * * *

Maryam was standing still, holding a tray in her hands, lost in her deep thoughts, when suddenly Khawlah and Zainab attacked her with water.

"Surprise!!!"

They all shrieked excitedly. "Aarrgghh!! My clothes are all ruined. Wait, you two, I'll show you people the meaning of surprise. "Maryam mischievously replied with a radiant smile on her face. She then ran after them while holding the tray thinking how the stains of tea will teach them a good lesson.

She chased them till the very end of the lawn. At last, out of breath , she found it easier to put the tray on a table in the lawn .Faking resentment Maryam sat on a nearby chair.

"Oh, so now the Queen is angry Eh !!" Khawlah nodded teasing Maryam.

Maryam simply gave a resentful look to Zainab and Khawlah and then turned her face away. Her eyes did not show any signs of anger. They only reflected love. Maryam's eyes gave away her drama.

"Oh, Drama Queen !!!", Khawlah mocked her while suppressing a smile and sitting on the chair besides Maryam.

"What did you just say? drama queen?? I will not talk...? "

Her sentence was left incomplete as Zainab sneaked behind her and started tickling her.

Maryam was trying to free herself while laughing.

"Zainabbbb....!!

Look , leave it or I will hit you... I am telling you... Khawlah tell her to stoppp!!!"

"Ha ha!! No Maryam Api (elder sister), first you have to say that you are not angry with us now ", Zainab was not looking likely to let her go without her agreeing to the condition. Meanwhile Khawlah, taking sides with Zainab, only gave a mischievous smile and shrugged on Maryam's request, trying to say that she could do nothing.

"Ok fine...!!! Now leave me!!!" Maryam's stomach was aching with all the laughter. At last, on her surrender, she was left free.

"See I know how to coax Maryum Api. Whenever she is angry with me, I defeat her like this ", Zainab said like she was revealing her secret to victory. Both the girls were laughing at her innocence.

* * * *

"You did not respond to my question Khawlah", Maryam was asking in a soft tone.

They both just had breakfast. Having dealt with the morning chores, they were now sitting in the living room. This house was the property of one of Maryam's cousin.

Maryam was staying there since the time she had brought her grandmother to America for treatment.

It was her cousin Abbas and his wife Maimoona who had insisted on bringing Maryam and her grandmother there. The parents of Abbas had been separated in his childhood. And since, in those weak moments, mostly the children are the main victims who suffer, so when his mother and father married some other, Maryam's grandmother who was in fact his Aunt, adopted him. Abbas was only three then. When he reached eleven, his father pleaded to get him back and brought him to America. Since a child loves the one with whom he has spent the most time childhood,

therefore no matter how many miles separated them and how much time passed by, his inner child still loved the familiar face of his childhood days.

After his father's death, Abbas visited Kashmir many times so that he could persuade his grandmother to come with him to America but she resisted the idea. And how could she have agreed to it for she was responsible for Maryam and her brother. Secondly, she could not leave Kashmir because she did not want to forsake the people dying there.

"Khawlah...?"

"Um ... I uh... Don't know.. I think it would take me some more time to set my routine ", embarrassed, Khawlah avoided eye contact. Maryam, who since long had been advising her to develop a habit of reading the Holy Qur'an with understanding, lowered her head on her answer, took a deep breath, and then in a tired voice said:

Do they [then] wait for anything except that the angels should come to them or your Lord should come or that there come some of the signs of your Lord? The Day that some of the signs of your Lord will come no soul will benefit from its faith as long as it had not believed before or had earned through its faith some good...

Allah has said this to you in Surat Al-An'am verse number 158"

Khawlah felt like her soul was sucked out from her body. She felt like the earth beneath her feet had given away or freezing cold water was poured on her head or as if someone had slapped her face with sheer force. She remembered how many times she had made lame excuses for not venturing on the path prescribed by Allah. How many times had she consoled her heart for disobeying. But today these words seemed to have shaken her awake from a deep slumber. Her heart wished she could run away from that place but her legs were failing her. She did not even have the strength to move her hands. Maryam was constantly staring at her. It was obvious that her talk had an unfathomable effect on Khawlah.

Maryam again addressed her, "Do you know Khawlah what Allah says? He says that "Only those who hear will respond. But the dead - Allah will resurrect them; then to Him they will be returned." - (Surah Al-An'am, verse 36)

On her last sentence, Khawlah jerked and stood up. Scuffling, she quickly stepped out of the room. Her eyes were filled with tears. But she was not making any effort to wipe them away. She did not want to wipe them. She wanted to let this flood of tears flow, to let this storm rage on. Her tears were cleansing the dust of her heart with them. She felt the weight of her heart decrease. And in that instant, Khawlah made a promise to her heart. That she would read the words of her Lord (Holy Qur'an) every day from now onwards.

* * * *

"Maryam"

Standing beside the half opened window of the drawing room, Maryam was lost in the view of sunset when she was brought to her senses by Khawlah's call.

Khawlah entered the room without making any noise so that Maryam could not sense her presence. Khawlah was apologetic at entering like this.

"Will you read Qur'an with me?" she said while having Maryam's copy of Quran in her hands.

Maryam saw how Khawlah had Qur'an gripped strongly in her hands. "Why not, the Quran is understood better when we read it together", Maryam smiled affectionately. The shine in her eyes was translating her heart's feelings. She had no idea that Khawlah would take such impression of her words.

"Come, sit." She gestured towards the couch. Khawlah sat silently with her. The Quran was still held in a strong grip in her hands as if, if she loosened it a bit it would disappear from her life like before.

"Maryam! it's not like I never wanted to read it. I have tried every day to read the words of My Rabb Who loves even a sinner like me." She paused to hold her tears.

Maryam sat silently, watching her bowed head. She wanted Khawlah to complete what she had in heart to say.

"But I am a very bad person. Am not able to show my face to Allah..." she broke in mid-sentence and started crying with her face in her palms.

"Dear, dear. Don't think like this my love." Maryam held her with her arm around her shoulders.

"Look at me. No one is bad. It's that sometimes some bad things get happened by us. Shaitan makes us think such depressive thoughts so that we never go back to Allah. Allah knows every thought in your mind. That's why He says to you in His book:

*Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful. *

Khawlah was surprised, watching her with tearful eyes.

"Did Allah really say this?" She could not believe that her Lord loved so much. "Read Surah Az-Zumar, ayat 53, if you do not believe me." Maryam said it again with an affectionate smile on her face.

Khawlah bent her head down. "No, no. I did not mean that. I am astonished that no one introduced me to my Lord this way." Her voice betrayed the sadness she kept for years. "Otherwise I would not turn away from Him." She completed her sentence without raising her head.

"No matter if no one did, but when you turned to Him truly then He made such ways for you to turn to Him. It all depends upon our own want and desire Khawlah. Allah is never unjust with His creation."

"Your words are so great Maryam. I could not understand if it wasn't not for you," said Khawlah gratefully.

Maryam jolted at this. "Never ever say this again. It's not me who deserves your praise. It's your Lord who is praiseworthy. I am just a means. The Source is Allah. If it was not me, it would have been someone else. Today it's me, tomorrow it will be someone else. He will show you the ways although the means might change."

Khawlah sat listening to her, lost in wonder. What kind of person was she? She was completely out of this world. Her words had so much depth. How did she gain such wisdom in such a tender age? Maryam felt as if she was in the era of the Companions when she was talking to her. Maryam belonged to some other world, completely alien in this world. Khawlah continued talking to herself for some time.

They sat silently. It was dark outside now. A bright moon had replaced the sun and was being covered by some stray clouds every now and then.

Khawlah was enjoying the sight of the moon, which was playing hide and seek with the clouds on the dark sky. As Khawlah was staring at the celestial play, she was hit by a thought about Maryam, on which she asked, "Is it wrong to give thanks? I mean you have told me the things which even my parents did not tell me. I have great respect and affection for you in my heart. Is it wrong to be thankful for that?"

"No, one must be grateful but it's not good to praise one in his presence, otherwise that may unwillingly result in riyaa. And an act of riyaa destroys the good deed. All acts that come under riyaa are rendered zero, not to mention the wrath of Allah. " Maryam told her soothingly.

"Right!" These things seemed to be so complex that Khawlah did not bother to ask more about "riyaa" and how it was related to praising someone. She thought to let it go for some other time. May be her little steps were not yet ready to take much of the complexities of this path at the moment.

"So should we start with Quran?" Maryam notioned towards the Quran in her hand.

"Oh yes." As if she had forgotten her intention for being there. Respectfully, she handed the holy book to Maryam.

Maryam had just prayed Maghrib Salah (prayer), she still had her dupatta (piece of cloth that is used to cover head and upper part of body) around her head, however Khawlah readjusted her dupatta and sat respectfully.

Meanwhile Maryam chose a surah to start with.

"Khawlah, may we do a little activity before starting?"

She nodded in confusion. She knew Maryam read Quran differently but did not know what might this have a surprise for her.

"What is your aim in life?", asked Maryam. Khawlah didn't expect this question. She was surprised and then said after a pause, "Err... to make a name in the world." Curiously she looked at Maryam, why did she ask this?

"Right! Usually we give same kinds of answers to this question. I want to be a doctor or engineer or i want such and such position in life. So let's see what aim of life was decided for us by the One Who created us."

Now Maryam was reading the first two verses of surah Al-Mulk.

*Blessed is He in whose hand is dominion, and He is over all things competent - [He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving - *

Khawlah listened silently. She wanted to absorb every word of Allah into her heart.

Maryam explained to her. "See Khawlah, you and I were created with the point that who is more obedient to Allah. And you know that we are obedient to those whom we love."

Khawlah sat with her head bowed. Had she been driving in the wrong direction?

After a momentary pause, Maryam was speaking again. "Khawlah do you use a ballpoint pen to write?"

"Yes.", Khawla answered with confusion. How was this question related to their discussion?

"So Khawlah! if a simple thing created by a human has an aim, do you think that your Creator did not have any aim for your creation? Would He have no reason to create this complex detailed Earth and Heavens? is all this created just for entertainment?"

It was really a very deep truth which Maryam explained by a simple example. Khawlah hadn't understood this fact before despite having such high I.Q. What use of such intelligence is when you do not use it to understand the real deal? She remembered once Maryam had told her that the inability to recognize truth despite having great wisdom, made Abu-Jahl, the father of ignorance. Because he did not use his wisdom to understand the truth - the true religion, so all was lost by him.

"And what do you do when the pen's ink gets finished?"

"I throw it away." Khawlah could not hide her confusion. What was Maryam trying to tell her.

"Yes, you throw it away. No matter how pretty it is, you throw it in the dustbin and why is that? because it now does not fulfill the reason it was created for. It does not fulfill its purpose now. You know what is Allah's dustbin?"

"Hell!" Khawlah answered trembling with fear.

Maryam nodded in agreement.

"Alas! This is such an important information and nobody told me in this manner." Khawlah said sadly. "I read Qur'an in Arabic by a Qaari in my childhood and that was it. Nobody told that this book is about much more than that. Were we supposed to understand each verse like this? I thought it was the job of only the scholars and the religious preachers. Even *they* did not guide us like this."

"Yes. They do not guide like this. Rather they do not tell a lot of other things as well. Or we can say that they are not allowed to. There is a big scam behind all of this. I will tell you about that some other time, In Sha Allah. You won't understand this stuff right now", Maryam said while being in some deep thought.

Khawlah wanted to insist upon asking about the scam Maryam was talking about, as she could not bear curiosity since her childhood. It was her weakness but she respected Maryam by heart. So she could not question her. But Khawlah knew it would irritate her until she gets to know about it.

The weather was much pleasant now. It was drizzling and every now and then a cool breeze would refresh their room through the open window. Both the girls remained silent for a few moments. Only the rustling of leaves of the thick trees outside would break the silence.

At this very moment Zainab entered the room shrieking. "MARYAM AAPI (elder sister)! KHAWLAH AAPI!" She was breathless. Rain drops were dropping like pearls from her golden hair. She had probably been enjoying the rain.

Seeing this, Khawlah was reminded of Bella. Once she had also come with such a rattle and Khawlah had rebutted her. Khawlah was getting sad now. What was she thinking, she scolded herself? Allah! When will my dark past leave me! why does it not get erased from my memories?

"Zainab you are not supposed to do this. You scared us, literally"

"Oh! Maryam api! One is not supposed to do this. One is not supposed to do that. What is one supposed to do?" With a shine in her eyes she was in a mood to tease Maryam fulltime. Both the girls smiled on hearing this. How can one be sad with little kids around? Maryam placed the Qur'an on a shelf and took the little hands of Zainab in hers. "Ok. Tell me why you made such a heart trembling entrance?"

Zainab smiled mischievously. Her long wet eyelashes were making her look cute like a doll.

"I have come to take you both with me" she said smiling. The rain drops were prominent on her face.

"But where are we going?" Khawlah laughed. But Zainab was not in a mood for any interview. She grabbed their hands to take them out. "OH! You girls ask too many questions", Zainab wrinkled her forehead in dismay.

Maryam and Khawlah followed her laughing. Passing the corridor outside the room, they stepped down the stairs into the main hall and out in the garden. "Hurry up!! I want to show you something", Zainab ran towards an old tree in the lawn.

It was still drizzling and the clouds were thick black. Rain could get heavy any moment. If Khawlah were like her past self, she would have been rash driving her car on a long drive with some boyfriend. But now she had changed a lot. Even her thoughts had changed altogether. The change from Katy to Khawlah came from just one accident. But sometimes some accidents are necessary in life and their results might be really good.

"Look! how cute it is! " some white colored thing was moving in Zainab's hands. Although the main light of the lawn was lit but it was not strong enough to guess the thing she held from distance.

Maryam and Khawlah walked through the rain to get close and saw that she had a cute rabbit in her hands.

"Wow. A rabbit!" "so cute where did you find it?", Khawlah was now holding the rabbit. She always liked animals.

"I did not find it. The gardener brought it for me. And he hid it here to give me a surprise. Wait, there is another one." Zainab took out a small black rabbit from behind the tree. Both were cute and may be were born a few days back only. Khawlah and Zainab were so busy playing with them that they did not notice that Maryam had not come to that part of the lawn with them.

"Hey Maryam! what are you doing there? come, see these are so cute"

Khawlah waved her to come. But Maryam said, "No thank you very much. I am fine here." Khawlah did not understand the reason behind her strange reaction.

"Wait Khawlah api. She won't come like this. Watch what I do now" Zainab looked at Khawlah meaningfully and threw the rabbit towards Maryam with a mischievous laugh. Next moment Maryam was running with a scream mixed with laughter of Zainab.

"Hahaha! Khawlah api did you see how Maryam api was running? Hehehe! she keeps a huge distance from animals." Zainab was laughing immensely. "Very... bad... thing to... do Zaini". Khawlah could not hold back her laugh and was pretending to scold Zainab while laughing.

"Now go inside Zaini. Won't you listen to the story by Grandmother tonight?" Khawlah took both rabbits from her smiling.

"Oh yes! i forgot. I must go now lest grandmother falls asleep."

After handing over the rabbits to the gardener, Khawlah headed straight back to the lawn, mesmerized by the smell of the rain. She loved walking in the rain.

After few moments, she took off her sandals, and started walking bare footed to enjoy the soft wet grass beneath her feet. As she pressed down her very first step on the grass a wave of surreal gratification surged through her entire body. Indeed after a scorching hot day, this rain seemed a blessing. She looked at the sky, covered with dark clouds with slight gaps, with a peeping moon.

How beautiful the sight it was! The moon was round, shiny and mysterious like a dream. Why didn't she ever notice this breathtaking beauty before? Where had she been all her life?

How very beautiful was Allah's world was. But she never found time to see this immense beauty Allah had created. She was too self-absorbed to see anything beyond herself. Khawlah felt she had wasted her whole life. Where had she spent all those moments? For the people? none of whom were with her now? What happened? Everyone was satisfied with their life. Some in jobs and some committed in marriages. All of her friends were 'moving on' in life. Nobody had enough time for others like before. Everyone needed to prove their luck. The very people who could not live without

her, those, who perceived her as a necessity of their gatherings, today, she did not matter to them at all, even for a moment. Today she was so alone. Khawlah never had dreamed that she will be left alone like this. Her tears came rolling down her cheeks as she pondered over her past. She wished there could be someone who loved her truly. Whom she could trust and he would never break that trust. Someone who could read the pain in her eyes without the need of verbal justifications. He would be besides her whenever all leave her. Does anybody really have such a friend or love? Or did no one ever have such an ideal friend? Khawlah kept talking to herself for some time.

Rain had grown heavier now but she continued to walk unaffected. Her tears kept falling, merged with the rain drops now.

"Allah! please give me Your companionship. I only want You to be pleased with me. This unfaithful world has broken me." She was crying with hiccups now.

"My heart cries a lot O Allah. I am shattered. My heart is empty. Totally void. You know my soul is damaged.

Please bless me with Your love. Make me content and self-sufficient. This world is evil Allah, really evil. I just want to live for You only. Please accept my words. Please forgive me. Make me Yours, just like Maryam.", Khawlah was pleading now.

She was praying with tears in her eyes, her words of praise now started echoing. Khawlah was asking Dua to Allah like this for the first time in her life.

She had been strolling like this for a long time now, so decided to wear her sandals. Khawlah glanced at the sky for the very last time before returning inside the house. She had reached the edge of the lawn when she felt a wave of pain at the heel of her left foot. She bent down to examine, but could not see clearly in the dim light of the lawn's bulb. Khawlah went to the main hall, clenching her teeth to ignore the pain in her foot. She switched on the light and sat on the sofas in the center. She took off her left sandal to examine her foot. There was a black insect glued to her heel and it was probably dead by now.

"Oh God!! " she shacked her foot with a force and the insect whirled away. Khawlah felt bad for it but had more sympathy for herself. She was extra sensitive for cleanliness and was allergic to germs.

Disgusted, she took some tissues from a tissue box and cleaned her foot. Then reluctantly picked up that insect with the tissue and threw it into the bin. Khawlah went to the washroom to clean her foot with water. Her foot was throbbing with pain by now, so she intended to take some pills at home and get herself checked up by the doctor next day. Maryam and Khawlah used to share a room upstairs. Khawlah carefully climbed up the stairs. She was passing through the corridor when someone called her from inside the room. It was Maryam's Grandmother's room, at some distance from her own room. Although the pain was intense, still she went to her.

"Hello Granny" she tried to smile. Khawlah didn't want to disturb her at this moment.

An aged woman wearing a graceful light blue shalwar qameez with a smile on her angelic face, sat on bed. On her right, little Zainab was sleeping, unaware of the world, relaxed, smiling in her own valley of dreams.

"Dear, don't say hello. I get intrigued", She said jokingly.

Khawlah used to get surprised by her the same way as by her granddaughter, Maryam. They both advised her in similarly surprising ways. Caring, loving, free from disgrace. Their nature didn't involve scolding. They advised in such a manner that the other person understood and embraced the truth being told to him/her. They knew how to reach into the hearts.

"Okay, Assalam-o-alaekum dear Granny. Better now?" Khawlah said smiling.

"Yes that's perfect", grandmother said affectionately. Her wrinkled face had a prominent motherly glow, which enchanted the other people. Khawlah was also moved by her loving looks.

Despite being a cancer patient, Granny always met her with a smiling face. Now she was much better but even in her previous stage of disease, she never cried like common Pakistani women. Khawlah had never seen such a demonstration of patience before meeting Maryam's family. What kind of people were they? what sort of humans? can anyone smile in such hardships? Khawlah could not understand all this.

"Come and sit. I need to talk to you", Grandmother gestured her to sit beside her. "What happens to bother you?" Probably she had read Khawlah's expressions. Her pain was unbearable now.

"Err... granny, my foot." Khawlah showed her foot. Grandmother examined her foot, worried.

"What caused this swelling? Were you bitten by something?" Her pupils were constricted with worry.

"Yes, while I was coming from the lawn."

"Sit here, I may be able to manage it." Grandmother stood up and took out a shawl from her wardrobe. Khawlah was staring at her with a surprised look. May be she was about to carry out some household remedy. Grandmother ironed the shawl hot and placed it on her swollen foot.

"You may feel the heat but bear it. It is really effective, even better than medicine."

Khawlah didn't know what to say. She had seen such a treatment of insect bite for her first time. She just nodded.

Grandmother pressed the hot shawl over her foot repeatedly for some time. Khawlah felt much relieved. Grandmother's household trick proved to be really effective.

"Here dear, keep this cloth wrapped around your heel for few minutes. In Sha Allah you will feel better. And remember to take care while you walk in the lawn." Grandmother pressed Khawlah's hand gently.

"Jazak Allaah khyr, grandma." Khawlah smiled

"Wa anti fa jazakmullahu khaerun my love. Be happy" Grandmother looked at her affectionately and kissed her forehead.

Her affection reminded Khawlah of her own grandfather. She never observed him closely as she did not like old people. Thus she had never accompanied him much even when he used to call for her. After meeting Maryam's grandmother Khawlah now understood that elders were really a great blessing for home. One learns much in their company.

"Granny, can you tell me something?" She wanted to ask her about her problems. May be as an elder she could answer better.

"Yes, speak up daughter."

"Just moments ago I asked Allah to forgive my sins, I repented, I asked for His path. But as I came out, I got bitten by an insect. Does this mean that my supplication is not accepted? May be I am worst among Allah's servants." Khawlah held back her tears with difficulty. She felt heaviness in her chest. Probably she did not know how to pray. She kept thinking about it as she had climbed up the stairs.

Grandmother laughed at this. "Oh my innocent child, how do you think like this. Come here." She held her close. "Why will Allah not accept your prayer? Allah loves his people more than a mother could. Let me tell you a hadith of Beloved Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

Abu Sa'id and Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Never a believer is stricken with a discomfort, an illness, an anxiety, a grief or mental worry or even the pricking of a thorn but Allah will expiate his sins on account of his patience". [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

So your sins are being washed Khawlah. And He expiates those whom He loves. You walked towards Him and He accepted. He shall never waste your tears away. He is not like us humans. He just needs excuses to forgive his people. He is just waiting for us to repent sincerely. Why else did He create such a huge paradise? For you and me, right? He wants to be pleased with you but one has to try first."

Khawlah listened to her silently. Her heart was much lighter. Tears were sparkling in her eyes. If felt like someone had applied bandage over her injured heart. So it really was not a sign of Allah's anger? Her soul was being cleansed? Her Lord had accepted her, held her hands firmly? Even after all she did? Was Allah this loving? Without any question or disregard He accepted her? He did not taunt that she came back only when everyone else had left her? when all paths were closed, only then did she remember Him? When she was kicked out by everyone, for whom she neglected her Creator?

No! Allah never asked her anything. How do we humans forget such a loving Lord? We should have drowned in His love. Two tears dropped from Khawlah's eyes.

* * * *

"Abdullah! bend down! immediately!", Someone screamed behind him.

As advised he bent himself down. With a blast the incoming bullet made a hole in the window.

The filthy Indian army had surrounded their house from all sides. Bullets were being showered at them. Abdullah had come there to get some information from a companion. But may be some one

among themselves had betrayed them. The enemy's army was waiting for them at the meeting point. Abdullah had just entered when they started firing upon them. He had a pistol which he used to carry as a caution. He had brought it that day as well. Abdullah made some defensive shots. His companion also fired in response to the attack. They dreamed of Shahadah (martyrdom) and when one has an intention to sacrifice oneself in the way of Allah, then the enemy's power does not matter to one. Who can beat the one who has come to embrace death, who takes death as a beautiful means to meet Allah, not as an end to life.

Abdullah and his friend fought bravely. For two hours these mujahideen taught the enemy a great lesson. It was a scene of astounding bravery.

The past experience of multiple encounters with the mujahideen had taught Indian forces the lesson that they were not facing some untrained enemy. They learned that when Muslims come into the battle field with love of jihad and thorough understanding of deen, one can't compete them easily. They had seen love for death in the eyes of the mujahideen. These fighters of Allaah used to come face to face smiling in the arena of death. Such devotion for Lord is not seen in any other nation. So much so that it is said that the Russian army upon being defeated by the mujahideen, said, *How can you expect to win against these people when they look at the barrels of our guns and all they see is Heaven?'

Bullets were being fired from both sides. "ALLAHU AKBAR" someone chanted nearby. A smile ran across Abdullah's face. He and his companion raised the slogan of Greatness of Allah and darted into the quagmire, answering the enemy's attack with renewed enthusiasm. Some mujahid friends had reached there for help. Indian army had started shelling now. There were clouds of smoke everywhere. Nothing could be seen. Thus they aimed blindly. Suddenly there was a noise. Some local citizens had come to the aid of the mujahideen, mostly young kashmiri boys.

Abdullah ran out of bullets for his pistol. He was trying to save himself as well as trying to find some ammunition in the room. Meanwhile he got injured by a bullet in his right arm. Momentarily Abdullah became dizzy. A shower of blood ejected in air, a wave of unbearable pain passed through his whole body. He tried to stop the blood by pressing his left hand over the wound, but to no avail. Tiredness was failing him. His senses were blackening out. Abdullah remembered Allah in his heart. He was making out words but his vision got blurry. He was extremely dizzy by now. Finally, he closed his eyes upon losing all strength.

* * * *

"Oh, so you are still alive! I thought I was saved from your poetry atlast." Umar teased Abdullah who was lying on bed.

Abdullah's arm was bandaged. He had lost consciousness due to the excessive blood loss. The encounter had finished till then. The arrival of mujahideen and Kashmiri citizens had proved beneficial for them. His Mujahid friends took him to a secret place where he was treated by a doctor.

"I am also surprised to be stuck with you again. I had prayed a lot for Martyrdom, but bad luck strikes early", Winking, Abdullah cleared his position.

They were talking pleasantly. Abdullah had befriended Umar as he had first joined the group of Mujahideen. Umar was a young man, in his thirties. Abdullah learned a lot from him. Umar was married and had two little kids. But he always was seen on the front lines in path of Allah. It was him from whom Abdullah learned to look into the eyes of death.

"Now that you are alive, you must get married mate. I am so done of serving you. Please have mercy on your brother." Umar was in full mood to tease him.

"What kind of friend are you? Just sitting on the bedside and talking? what else do you do?" Abdullah replied in the same tone, enjoying the whole conversation.

"You are so very ungrateful! Here, take this breakfast, you unthankful person." Umar passed on to him a cup of tea and biscuits. Now they were having breakfast, laughing.

* * * *

"Is Zaini asleep?" A woman in her 20's asked, peeping through the doorway. She was Zainab's mother, Memoona.

"Yes Memoona. Your doll is asleep. Today it was Zainab who told me the stories, not me. " Grandmother looked at Zainab affectionately, smiling with amusement.

Memoona laughed. "Yes I have heard of her mischievousness from Maryam. I shall teach her a lesson in morning. " she cradled her daughter.

"Hey Khawlah! I forgot to tell you. Maryam was asking about you. She wanted to show you something", Memoona told Khawlah.

"I'll be there in a moment", Khawlah replied to her, thinking what could be the new surprise now.

Memoona smiled and went out. She had noticed that Khawlah's clothes were wet. She had probably got wet in the rain, thought Memoona.

"Wonder why remains sad all the time. May Allah take away her all miseries", Memoona prayed in her heart.

"You said you need to tell me something granny?" Khawlah looked at grandmother.

"Oh I forgot. See, I am getting really older now", Grandmother smiled affectionately.

Cool air was refreshing the room from an open window. Rain had stopped by now. The sweet smell of sand was everywhere. Everything was now refreshed with new zeal.

"Did you call your parents? ", Grandmother was much serious now.

"Umm... yes, grani... I did." Khawlah was trying to avoid this question for many days.

"When?"

"Last month", She replied after a pause, without making an eye contact.



My heart feels like a desert today. Deprived of rains - a thirsty land - deserted - moaning in pain. Oh Allaah, I do not know where You are taking me to. These sad days and nights have left my heart wounded. I do not know where this deserted land will lead me to. My soul has got tired of walking now ; didn't know I was this weak. With the weight of pain of betrayals and losses, I feel my "feet" staggering..

Oh Lord - my Loving Friend - will I reach any place that'll lead me to You?? Or will I get crushed on the way?? I fear losing my strength now..

How can I walk with a tired heart, tired soul, tired feet, tired eyes?? Will I ever reach You??

Please save me before I lose myself..

I have cried for You for years - have faced hell; have felt the heat of fire - just to see Your Pleased Face.

So do not leave me when I'll come to You on the day of Judgement. That day will be my day of Eid - as that is the time I've been longing for, for ages. Your Pleasure was the only reason I was put into this prison. Do not look away when the time to look at me will come; as Your Beauty is only what I have seeked & Your pleasure is only what I desired !!

~ Diary of a Prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)

Chapter Four:

"Dear, they're your family. You can't just remain cut off from them."

"Even if they themselves don't value this relation?" grandmother could feel the pain in Khawlah's voice.

"Then you must make them realize that you are their own part... an important part..."

"But why me? Why do I have all the obligations? I have my rights too. Either way, they don't care about me much. They're so busy that they don't even realize that I need some of their time too." Khawlah was venting off her feelings. Years of burnt embers smoked inside her.

"Yes Khawlah dear, you do have your rights, but you have your obligations too. Take care about your obligations, and ask for your rights from your Lord."

"But Granny...." Khawlah protested.

"But?

..but you are the follower of the Prophet S.A.W who taught you to be the first to love. And it's never easy to be the first. You have to sacrifice your ego to mend your relations. Mend them even if you are broken to pieces. When you do this to please Allah, then even the fire will feel pleasant. That's how you gain the reward of Paradise. Just decide whether you want to please Allah or yourself", grandmother completed what she had to say. Khawlah sat with her head down. Both of them were silent for a moment. Khawlah felt that grani was right but this task was really hard, like climbing some mountain.

"Ok dadi (Granny). I shall call Mama in the morning." Khawlah said dejectedly.

"Good, I expected the same from you. Now go have some rest. I kept you long enough."

"No, I love talking to you", Khawlah hugged her with love. She had become used to hugging daadi (Grandma) before sleeping. She got this habit from Maryam as she also used to never sleep without hugging Granny. The love and sincerity Khawlah got from this house was an asset to her. She learned to respect and value relations. Khawlah sometimes thought that what use was her degrees and qualifications if her hi fi education did not instill into her the respect of elders, manners and loving people. Otherwise these degrees were just pieces of paper that deserved to be thrown away in waste baskets, if they made a person only an arrogant, proud man, left to damage the society.

Grandmother smiled and kissed Khawlah's forehead.

"Be happy. You look beautiful that way."

Khawlah smiled at her compliment. Indeed, love is nothing less than magic.

* * * *

Khawlah went to her room to sleep. Maryam had already fallen asleep. There was lying a book of supplications for morning, evening and night, named *Fortress of the Muslim*. Maryam had probably slept while waiting for Khawlah. Their room, though small, appeared wide due to the wise furniture-arrangement. Two single beds were set on one side. A window opened onto the lawn. Khawlah's bed was near it. Through it, she used to watch the moon for hours, she was used to it since long ago. As usual, today too Khawlah spent some time near the window, lost in thoughts. She knew she was going to have some difficulty in sleeping today. After a while she came to bed, slept for some time but got woken up because of someone's crying near her. Khawlah opened her eyes, slightly and saw Maryam sitting on the prayer mat. Maryam was crying in a low voice as usual. Khawlah had seen her in such state from the time she had come to live with her. Khawlah did not want to trouble her by exposing her virtues of solitude, so kept her eyes closed and tried to listen to what Maryam was asking in her Dua (supplication).

"Oh Allah. I am very weak, and sinful too. But I want to stay on Your path. Please keep me steadfast upon the Haqq (Truth). My Lord, there is distress everywhere, where should your servants go, how can they save their emaan? Allah! Now, people take pride in dishonorable acts. Your Muslims are used to shameful things now. O Allah! Today's Muslim girls do not want to cover themselves and Muslim men do not desire to lower their eyes. Ya (O) Allah! the enemies of Your religion are oppressing Your Prophet's Ummah and along with that they call *us* the terrorists, while Muslims themselves are fully asleep. On one side, the throats of Muslims are being cut, they are being brutally murdered and slaughtered, while on the other side the rest of the Muslims are busy celebrating the birthday of Muhammad S.A.W. O Allah! There are too many Muslims here, but no Ummati... The daughters of this Ummah are being raped, and the youth among the Muslims is busy enjoying football and cricket matches. They have sold their swords for prayer mats and their faith has been restricted only to the Masjid. Ya Allah! Your victimized slaves trust You, they expect help from You alone. Please be their helper. The Muslims in Syria, Kashmir, Palestine, Burma, Africa, China, Afghanistan, Iraq are being crushed. Our Muslim brethren have left us alone. Rather they are bombing us alongside with the disbelievers, by being their frontline allies. Allah! what has happened to Your Prophet's Ummah? they have joined the armies of the Supporters of Evil Dajjal against the army of the supporters of Imam Mehdi. Give them shame, they have lost it completely", Maryam was hiccupping by now. Her Dua had a serious effect on Khawlah. Khawlah was feeling embarrassed. A victimized Muslim girl of Kashmir was praying here, shedding tears like blood, while majority of the Muslims around the globe were sleeping like sheep. Will not her tears become a curse for the ignorant, careless Muslims? They, who neither spent any money saved in their heavy bank-accounts, to give in charity for the oppressed Muslims, nor did they help them through their armed forces. Rather, they were too busy in love stories to worry about their brethren in Islam.

A poet had rightly said:

* Enchanted is the Muslim with the Beauty of his Beloved Iqbal ought to be apprised that his Ego has departed *

Two tears slowly streamed down from Khawlah's eyes. She turned with heaviness in her chest and rubbed her eyes to sleep.

* * * *

"Hello." A voice responded from the other side of the phone.

"Assalam-o-alaekum mama, it's Khawlah."

"Khawlah? Who? Khawlah?" the listener was confused.

"I am Katy here." Khawlah forgot that her family was unaware of the change in her name.

"Oh Katy! How are you dear? Where had you disappeared? Why didn't you contact us? Your dad was concerned too."

"Err... mama. I was... a bit busy." Khawlah could not think of any other answer.

"Ok honey, when will you come back? Your got course completed long ago, right? "

"Yes, but it will take me sometime here. I am with friends, and have decided to visit some places. After that I shall be back." Khawlah had kept her family unaware of her accident and other activities of last few months.

"Fine. But you better not delay after that. Do remember Mrs Tanveer? Whose son went to the UK for engineering studies? Her son is back now. I want you to meet her Khawlah. She is looking for girls for her son these days."

"Oh mama, I don't want to meet any one and I don't like that auntie either. I have called after so long. We can talk about these things later", Khawlah expressed her annoyance.

"Katy what has happened to you? Are you alright? You used to be crazy for Mrs. Tanveer's family. What's wrong?", her mother was surprised.

"I ... I don't like them now. It's not necessary that one likes always remain the same", Khawlah tried her best to avoid questions.

"So how is every one at home?", Khawlah quickly changed the topic.

"Everyone is fine. Your daddy is on a business trip to Australia. And Saad and Huma are busy in their professional lives", Mrs Suleman (Khawlah's mother) told her the details of their activities.

Khawlah was relieved that her focus shifted at last. "And Ibrahim? and grandpa??" she asked.

Ibrahim was four year old son of Saad (Khawlah's elder brother). Her grandfather, though part of family, was confined to a corner in the house, left to his own.

"What?", Mrs Suleman was taken aback.

"Mama I have asked about Ibrahim and Grandpa." Khawlah replied in a calm tone. She knew why her mother was so shocked. Khawlah had never talked about her grandfather before. She never visited his room, even when being in the house. Her busy life had no room for him. Rather she did not even remember his face now. Her grandfather's room was in a corner, located so that no one visited it unless really needed. Nobody gave him any importance. Nobody wasted their precious time for elders in this materialistic world.

There was a dead silence on both ends of phone. After a few moments, Mrs. Suleman started, "Katy, what has happened to you my dear? Have you been on some drugs or something? You never even mentioned his name and now you are all concerned about him?"

"Oh, come on mother. Let go. I just asked. Can't I just ask about him?"

"Katy..."

"Please let it go mama."

"Okay. I need to go now for my lecture." (Mrs Suleman was a professor at a university)

"Alright."

After saying good bye, her mother hung up. Khawlah put down the receiver and came into the kitchen. She had not slept well that night and had woken up early too. Her eyes were now red due to lack of sleep but she had no desire to go to bed. Her nights had been like that for months, and now she was getting used to this. Khawlah took a water bottle from the fridge and poured some in a glass. She was about to drink when someone screamed her name. "No Khawlah api (sister) !!!!!!!!!!"

Khawlah turned around and saw Zainab who had put her hand over her mouth in disbelief.

"What happened Zaini? Is everything alright?" Khawlah was astonished at her reaction.

Zainab looked like she was about to faint. "Api you are drinking water with your left hand. It's the way of the disbelievers and the devil. Maryam api says that a believer follows the Prophet s.a.w, not the Kuffar."

Zainab came forward. Khawlah noticed that she was unintentionally holding the glass in her left hand. She realized that she had to change a lot in herself. Khawlah had spent her whole life on stray roads. A little girl had proved to be better than her. Khawlah took the glass in her right hand with guilt and drank water while sitting.

"Am I doing better now, my granny?" she teased the little doll and put the glass in the sink.

"Huh... one should not even tell about a good deed to anyone", Zainab crossed her arms, trying to fake anger. Her golden curly hair was set in a ponytail. With shiny brown, naughty eyes, she appeared to be a mischievous kitten. Zainab looked even prettier when she was angry. Khawlah knew that she got irritated by being called "granny" so she occasionally teased her this way, intentionally

"Ok. Sorry. See I hold ears." Khawlah mischievously held Zainab's ears.

"Hey hold your own ears, not mine", Zainab took Khawlah's hands and put them on her ears.

"Alright my little doll, what else did your Maryam api tell you?" Khawlah held Zainab's hand and walked towards the main hall. It was nine in the morning and everybody was outside after breakfast.

"She says that those who take extra care about small acts regarding religion, are the ones who are conscious of greater subjects of this Deen, and only the one who regards Allah's Greatness can obey His orders." Khawlah was held back by her words.

"The small acts...." she repeated the words in her heart.

"Alas! we never considered any ruling of religion this seriously. How naively we follow our desired part of religion only, and never ponder over orders of Allah,

"Who have made the Qur'an into portions. So by your Lord, We will surely question them all. About what they used to do." Surah Al-Hijr [91-93].

Khawlah recalled another verse, that she had recited with Maryam in the morning." So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part? Then what is the recompense for those who do that among you except disgrace in worldly life; and on the Day of Resurrection they will be sent back to the severest of punishment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do." Surah Al-Baqarah [85].

She was surprised at how Allah was training her. Whenever she studied or heard a new thing, she faced such an issue that she understood its practical implication. As if Allah Himself was solidifying her knowledge by giving her practical work after theory.

"Oh so my Lord chose a sinner like me for training? Such mercifulness!" Khawlah was tearful.

"Khawlah api let's move, why have you stopped?" Zainab brought her to her senses.

"Nothing dear. I was just thinking." Khawlah smiled.

"You are such an over thinker." Zainab screwed her nose.

"Hahaha. And you rattle a lot like a parrot." Khawlah pinched her screwed nose.

"Ahh..." Zainab moaned mischievously and ran away laughing, after pinching back Khawlah's nose as a mischievous revenge.

"Ouch. Stop there. I will teach you a lesson", smiling, Khawlah tried to threaten her

* * * * *

Everyone was seated in the lawn. Khawlah was preparing tea along with Maryam in the kitchen.

"Come see Maryam, is the tea ready?" Khawlah asked while stirring with a spoon.

"Umm... give it another minute."

Maryam was busy grounding herbs for her grandmother. She peeked over to the tea and got busy in her work again.

"Ok", Khawlah came near her.

"Maryam what is this powder which you give to grandma after meals twice a day (by putting the powder into empty capsules. Two capsules in morning and two in evening)?", Khawlah showed her curiosity.

"Praise be to Allah, this herb was given to her punctually. That's why she recovered from her last stage of cancer while the doctors had given up on her." She showed Khawlah a tiny branch from the stack.

"We prepare this powder by grinding the herb as a whole; with its stem, thorns, leaves and flowers" Maryam explained to her the method of preparation.

"What is it called? I never heard of such remedy prescribed for cancer before", Khawlah inquired.

"It is known by different names in different languages. In Urdu and Hindi, it is called "dhamasa", in English "fagonia", in Punjabi "dhamaa" or "dhamia". Allah has put such remedy in it that it shows miraculous results by the Will of Allaah. Serious diseases like hepatitis, cancer and cardiac illness can be remedied. Also diseases like hypertension, asthma, thalassemia, obesity even sexual disorders of male and female can get treated. The list goes on and on. If you have any doubt you can search by the English name of this herb for all of the information.

You can also search on this website. <http://healthymanners.com/fagonia-dhamasa-benefits/> ."

"Wow Maryam. This is amazing." Khawlah could not hide her wonder.

"Where is it found?"

"Well, it is found in barren lands but one can get it from a whole sale trader's shop."

"Praise be to Allah, who has put such great cures in a cheap thing like this. Doctors advise such expensive treatments, that have great side effects along with them, and many are such treatments that do not have much chances of complete cure even..."

Maryam's sentence was left incomplete as Memoona entered the kitchen.

"Hey girls, shall we have a cup of tea today?" Memoona smiled.

Khawlah hurried towards the stove, "Oh, I got distracted and forgot about the tea."

"Alhamdulillah, you came at the right time. Otherwise Miss Khawlah had full plans of ruining our tea", Maryam looked at Khawlah with mischievous smile.

"Maryam! that's not fair!" Khawlah faked her anger.

"You guys fight, while I have tea with Grandma", Memoona winked at them, smiling, and poured the hot tea into a thermos and walked out to the lawn, followed by Khawlah and Maryam.

There were chairs around a table placed in the lawn, where grandmother was lost in deep thoughts, with a book opened on her lap. Zainab was playing with her rabbits nearby. It was evening time after Asr prayer and they were used to discussing things after tea in this time. Khawlah liked this habit of theirs. She had never experienced such gatherings before. Grandmother had told them that when people gather for remembering Allah, Angels gather around them and their hearts feel peace. Now she didn't want to go back to Pakistan as she wondered where she would get such companions.

After the tea, they started with their usual task. "So what shall we discuss today? I think we should talk about Salah, as many scholars say that when a Muslim misses his Salah intentionally or due to laziness, he becomes a kaaafir (disbeliever)"

Khawlah's heart sank. "Oh Allah I never gave due importance to my Salah (Namaz)", she thought to herself. Her time table had no place for it. So was she a disbeliever in the Eyes of Allah? Her heart hammered in anxiety.

"Zaini! come here." Grandmother called out.

"We must let the kids be a part of such gatherings. They get groomed this way, because they copy their elders and thus this way they develop such acts as habits", Grandmother was compassionate as ever.

Zainab came running and sat in grandmother's lap. "Yes, let's talk about it grandma", Zainab seemed very excited. They all laughed at her innocence.

"Okay let Zainab read today." Grandmother brushed away the golden curls of her hair from her eyes and motioned Maryam to bring a copy of Quran from her room.

"Yahooooo!..." Zainab was very glad at this blessing.

Kids are very innocent, just like a clay to be molded in any form you like. It's a duty for parents, especially mothers to groom them into a Muslim who lives for Allah, and not for the world. But alas, modern mothers have no time for the Tarbiyah of their children. Rather they aim to rectify the "society" instead of their homes. These mothers desire to walk in the steps of a male, rather *becoming* the *male*. So the poor children are left at the mercy of maids and the TV sets to be groomed. And both husband and wife are busy being becoming money making machines.

So why then people complain about disobedient youngsters or about their being involved in girlfriend/boyfriend issues, why? No wonder that this is what the final result must be, after having all those years learning from the television sets and the computer screens. A weak mind accepts everything in childhood, and that becomes part of its life. Innocence and nobleness does not settle with lessons from fictional stories like Cinderella, Snow White and the half-naked Little Mermaid.

Khawlah was so lost in thoughts that she didn't notice Maryam bringing the Quran and asking Zainab to read. She was brought into the present by the beautiful recitation of Zainab who was reciting as grandmother had advised.

Zainab was reading verse 238 of Surat Al-Baqarah, and then it's translation; " Maintain with care the [obligatory] prayers and [in particular] the middle prayer and stand before Allah, devoutly obedient. "

Words of Allah were flooding her heart. Devoutly obedient? How does a devoutly obedient servant stand? she asked herself. An image flashed through her head. A master! just as a slave stands before his master; obedient, gaze down, ready to comply any order. So that's how one is supposed to stand for prayer? But we stand as being forced to do so, like we just want to do some other very important work. We have given the heads of universities and leaders of countries more respect than Allaah. Before them our breaths get lost, we do not get tired of repeating "yes sir, yes sir". And how much have we down esteemed the Grace of Allah, The King of Kings. My Lord was right. "They have not appraised Allah with true appraisal. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might." (Surat Al-Hajj, verse 74)

Khawlah's eyes became tearful.

Zainab was now translating verse 45 of Surat Al-Ankaboot after having recited it.

"Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do."

"So can anybody tell me why don't a lot of people who pray regularly five times a day but don't avoid sins?" Grandma asked.

There was silence.

"Since Allah does not lie so there must be something wrong. Khawlah dear can you think of anything?"

"Grandma, me?" She was startled. Khawlah was embarrassed as to how could she, out of all present, judge about those who pray, when she herself had never cared about the obligatory Salah?

"Tell anything you can think of. After all one solves every problem by thinking over it." Grandmother encouraged Khawlah. Maybe grandma wanted to teach her how to understand the Quran by involving her in the discussion.

"I don't know, maybe they don't offer Salah as they are supposed to do", Khawlah guessed.

"Yes! there is a difference in just offering your Salah, and *establishing* it. Allah has ordered to establish Salah. The prayers said with lack of heart are not established." Only the thing which has been done with full heart is what's established."

Khawlah had never understood such things. Maybe she had never wanted to understand. Maybe she was among those whose hearts had become deaf, dumb and blind due to their abstinence.

* * * *

Khawlah was standing on a prayer mat for Maghrib salah. She was all lost, as to how to start with. For years she had shunned a Friend and now she was about to meet Him, but how? Khawlah was hopeful of getting a positive response, but she was ever so guilty too.

"Allahu Akbar", With trembling hands Khawlah started her salah, her tears slipping on her cheeks. She was on Surat Al-Fatihah now. The tears of her eyes now grew into a river. She could not understand why she was crying so much. Just a river wanted to breakthrough every dam. Now she was in prostration and was crying with hiccups. Her centuries old sick soul was getting its ointment. Like a lost child becomes satisfied when he gets the shadow of his mother after years, similarly she was getting relaxed now. The satisfaction she had tried to find in music, clubs, boyfriends, movies and life of her choice was found here, with Allah.

Khawlah just kept crying in prostration.

* My dark misdeeds found no refuge, In this wide world, seemingly huge

The only refuge they found in this mess, Was in attaining Your Gracious Forgiveness *

* * * * *

"Hurry up, we're getting late!", Abbas told everyone to move forward while pushing the luggage trolley.

Khawlah was standing at the airport with Maryam and grandmother. Abbas was there to see them off. Such long a journey can't be made without a Mahram. But they had none. An elder brother of Maryam was off to some piece of work. Abbas had brought them here from Kashmir. Now he was coming along to India with them.

Khawlah had planned to reach Pakistan via India. Her uncle was there and she had not met him for a long time. When you don't meet for long, then distances are created between relations too. Khawlah had now realized the importance of keeping relations. Now she wanted to revive and give new life to her every forgotten relation. Allah has ordered to give due rights to relations and has forbid to cut ties with them.

But people have long forgotten their obligations regarding such important issues.

It was very hard saying goodbye to Memoona and Zainab. Their hearts were heavy with emotions. It got much difficult when Zainab hugged them and started crying to make them stay. But the travelers can't be stopped. We meet a lot of people in this temporary world and establish strong cordial relations with many of them. Especially the relationships held upon the base of love for the sake of Allah, these

have the most unique taste, but we can't live together forever. Forever companionship will be in Paradise only, where there will be no sorrow of parting.

Grandma and Maryam started to read the Supplications (duas) that should be read while traveling. Maryam told Khawlah some Duas too. She had no idea of the importance of these acts. She would have had if her elders had told anything about them.

Khawlah was watching people around them. Everyone was busy chatting, reading magazines, had stuffed earphones in their ears, totally unaware of the world around them. But the women on her right were busy remembering Allah. They were not attracted to this deceiving world. They didn't listen to songs, didn't watch movies, gossip wasn't any part of their discussions and they didn't celebrate birthdays. How on earth were they alive? How did they even breathe like that? Khawlah just could not understand.

"What are you thinking about?" Maryam asked.

"Oh nothing specific", Khawlah jerked her head.

"Maryam."

"Yes dear", Maryam closed her book of prayers and gave Khawlah her full attention.

"People enjoy their journeys, is that wrong?", Khawlah gazed at the people around her.

"Yes, they do enjoy..." Maryam followed her gaze. "But by listening to songs?" Maryam asked.

"Khawlah, we will be raised on our last act on the day of resurrection, and if we die in our journey in such state, then what? You know our Prophet S.A.W told us that a time will come when such bad people will be born in the Ummah who will declare adultery, silk clothing, wine and singing as something halal. This is mentioned in Sahih Al-Bukhari. I've told you summary of that hadith.

Today Muslims declare music as food for souls. Even some so called "Scholars" say that it is not prohibited in Islam. See the extent they have reached? Yes, music is food for souls, but for evil souls. But what my religion teaches me is that remembering Allah is the best food for our souls."

Why did nobody ever tell her this. Listening to music had become so common that life felt congested without it. What shall she do without it as she was habitual to sleep with her headphones on. Khawlah thought in sadness.

* * * * *

They had landed at the airport. The time that she was fearing had come at last. To part with Maryam and grandmother was not easy at all. After having spent days and nights with them, Khawlah had to live without them. She remembered Maryam used to say that Allah guides whom He wills on the path to righteousness and that He sets up people to meet us on this path. Today it was she Maryam, tomorrow it would be someone else. Faces will change, but reminders will keep on reaching the hearts that have the thirst for righteousness.

Parting is painful. And it hurts even more when you try to hide your pain. Khawlah was lost in her thoughts when someone came and hugged her.

"My dear I will miss you a lot, I got so used to you", It was grandmother who had pulled her towards her.

Khawlah could not hold back her tears now, and thus the tears came down as a flood. She tried to open her mouth but could just move her lips. Maryam was crying silently beside her, dressed in her old black Abaya and veil. Her eyes were red, probably due crying during the journey.

Khawlah tried to speak, "Maryam please be in contact".

"In Sha Allah, we'll talk on Skype."

Abbas was dealing at the reception. Khawlah had to undergo a long process of checking because of being a Pakistani, she only got some relaxation when she rang up her uncle, now Abbas was doing the rest of the job and the rest of them were now waiting for him.

A sad silence remained between them for a few moments.

Maryam's brother had still not come to receive Maryam and others. Grandmother had told him to bring pills for her as she used to get headaches during long travels. Maybe he had gone to get the medicines, that's why had become late. As Abbas got free they exchanged emotional greetings. Khawlah moved towards the nearby market, after greeting them for the last time.

She had to buy gifts for her uncle's family. Her uncle could not reach the airport as he was on a business trip and had taken his driver too with him. He was to return one day after Khawlah's arrival.

Khawlah had come out of the airport with a heavy heart. While moving through the market, she had her mind still on Maryam and her Grandmother.

Khawlah was wearing a short shirt, dark red colour. She had no shalwar/qameez with her, as she had never bought such clothes in life. Khawlah had spent time with Maryam in Memoona's clothes, as she had no sensible ones with her. They had insisted her to keep them as a gift, but she didn't want to take from them favours that may burden them. Khawlah had thought of buying new clothes from Pakistan.

She had not let her hair open today. Maryam's companionship had affected her to tie her hair but still was not used to wearing a duppatta/shawl yet. Khawlah had tied her hair into a pony tail. Her red dress was giving a glow to her attractiveness - shining eyes on a beautiful face. Everyone was being drawn towards her. They were looking at her strangely, with looks of lust. Her beauty had mystified everyone and no one was able to look away. If she had been Katty of the past, she would have enjoyed all this. She used to enjoy being the center of attention. But now, she had changed a lot. But even with all the efforts from Maryam, Khawlah was still not used to wearing a veil and Abaya. Anyways, Khawlah as feeling uncomfortable with the looks the people were giving her. She was getting anxious, so she walked faster and tried to find her desired shop as soon as possible. At that very moment, she saw a gift shop. Khawlah thanked Allaah and was about to start walking towards the shop when a man caught her attention.

Tall, broad shouldered, handsome, having black thick hair and a beautiful beard. He appeared to be some Pathan or a Kashmiri. He seemed to be a good Muslim by his appearance, but his actions were totally opposite to his image. The man's eyes were fixed at Khawla. Whether they showed anger or lust, she couldn't decide from distance, but what was sure was that she was not liking his stare at all. There was something peculiar about the way he was looking at her. That person should be ashamed of himself, thought Khawlah angrily. She tried to ignore him but kept watch on his moves by side glances. She was a stranger there, was becoming a bit worried by now. Khawlah noticed that the man kept looking at her for a few moments, and then went into some shop. She let out a sigh of relief and entered a gift shop. She bought many things for her uncle's family, then came out with many bags in her hands. Just then somebody threw a shawl at her face.

"You're dragging not only yourself into hell, but all of us with you too!!" The same man who was gazing at her a while ago was screaming at her with fire of anger in his eyes.

"What is this rudeness?" Khawlah was shocked at this sudden attack. She was not ready for this. Her heart was hammering inside her.

"Girls like you come out in such shameful getups, and then complain why men stare at them, and in the end blame the men if this gets you people raped!", Crazy with anger, that man was fuming.

"What absurdity is this? Mister! mind your language", Khawlah got heated up. This was no way to talk. Men just make excuses to speak to beautiful girls, and now such dramas, thought Khawlah. She was quite familiar to such cases. But this time this wasn't some common man. She did not suppose that a person with such religious attire could behave like that.

"You don't lower your gaze yourself, and blame the girls?", She replied stiffly by looking straight into his eyes. The sleeping Katty had woken up today.

"Not lowering my gaze? Excuse me madam!! There are those trying desperately to walk on the path of Allah, trying hard to keep their eyes clean, while girls like you come as devils and make it even more difficult for them to turn their eyes away. What is the fault of the person who wants to protect his chastity but wherever he comes out, there's a girl wearing a vulgar dress, or is dressed like some prostitute? Many people may have entered Paradise easily, if girls like you had not dragged them to Hell", He said his last words and sped up his steps.

Khawlah was lost at words. His poisoned remarks had affected her soul. Was she really dragging people to Hell? Had she made the path to Paradise difficult for good people? Was she a wandering prostitute?

Khawlah knew answers to many of her questions but had no courage to say them out by her tongue. Khawlah's eyes were teary now. A wave of pain spread through her body. She looked at the shawl sadly and gazed around her. Everyone was watching.

"Ughhhh !! what's the matter with these people? Why can't they keep to their business?", Khawlah kicked out in anger and stopped a taxi to take road to her destination.

* * * *

There was dim light in the room. A man sat on a chair, bent over a diary at his table. His black hair was well settled. Eyes were focused at the sentences scribbled on the diary. Waving a pen between his fingers, that handsome man was lost in thoughts.

"Ahhh!" The man threw his pen over the table and closed his eyes while leaning back. The dim light of the lamp was prominent on his face now. His well-maintained beard looked really graceful.

"Why doesn't that image leave my memory?", Abdullah pressed on his temple with his fingers.

Even after a week he couldn't get the face of the girl dressed in red, out of his mind. He had been disturbed for days since then. Abdullah knew that his reaction was not appropriate, but could he have done, he was really helpless. His patience of years was tested by her glamour.

"Oh Allah! what has happened to the daughter of Eve (Hawwa). She has no shame or virtue left in her. I am trying to avoid sin for You. Make this easy for me. I am weak. The traps of the devil are strong. I cannot avoid his attack without Your help. Please ease my path. Give me a virtuous spouse so that I can turn my gaze away from haram. Protect my faith in these distractions, lest I be distracted. My Lord, I do 'not' want to be distracted. O Rabb, keep my chastity safe in this world of sins. Keep my eyes virtuous.. keep my faith strong.. Make it easy for me to walk on the path of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W."

Abdullah was begging with his hands raised. That incident had left a deep effect on his heart. He could not forget that girl's face. He had no liking for her at all, but still he wasn't able to get her off his mind. Abdullah's likes and dislikes had changed since the day he had changed his life for religion. Before this, he used to get attracted to girls who looked like models - with uncovered hair and no veil, but now he disliked them to the extreme. Abdullah felt no beauty in them. Rather he got irritated now. Truly, when faith enters the heart, beauty is felt in chastity alone. Even if the eyes of a woman wearing a veil aren't visible, she is deemed most gorgeous by a pious man. Same goes for the pious woman; after experiencing the taste of faith she deems the same beard as an attraction which she discarded once as just hair on a man's face. You get attracted by people who have the same thinking as you.

Abdullah kept thinking hard about, then moved his diary closer to him, got his pen and started writing something on it.

* * * *

There was no sound in this part of the jungle, except some rustling of leaves of trees. However, Abdullah treaded with caution, trying hard to avoid making any noise. He looked up at the sky. There was still time until Fajr prayer, he could certainly reach his desired place timely.

Abdullah had walked to the jungle immediately after Tahajjud. He had to pass on some important information to the mujahideen about Indian forces. He had been working on this for the last two months. And during that time, he was in constant danger throughout the days and nights. Death followed him every day, but it was much harder today. This time he had to change his identity too, but got the news he was waiting for. Abdullah's main task was to be a spy for the mujahideen to hide your identity among people is a great risk. It's not easy to live two lives at one time. But he got brave the day he had thrown his first stone, and then became wise by being a mujahid. Now he was turned into such a soldier of Allah who couldn't be distracted from his duty by anything, for he was selling

his life for Allah in return for Paradise. And those who see the path of Paradise are not lured by the worldly attractions. He never regretted over his decision of choosing this blessed path. But he was hurt along this long journey - long and tough. Enemies aside, his own people - the Muslims - had back stabbed the Ummah of Muhammad S.A.W by calling faithful people like him as "Khawarij". Those who didn't even know the exact details about the meaning of this word were allying with the disbelievers against them (the mujahideen). Thus, trusting blindly, the fake news and propaganda. Yes, it's true that there has almost always been a group of money-mongering scholars in every era, but now even simple practicing Muslims were taking the wrong sides. This all was really painful. Simplicity aside, one should at least have basic knowledge of the religion, so that one is able to distinguish between truth and falsehood. If common Muslims had paid some heed in this area, they would not have grotto trapped into tricks of Dajjal's allies and thus would not have ended up setting launching points against the allies of Al-Mehdi. A common Muslim couldn't comprehend the move of the mainstream media which works according to the evil plans of the West. How on earth could they comprehend? A person who takes offering of 5 prayers regularly as the pinnacle of this religion, and not as the first step towards the pinnacle, can never differentiate between Haq and Baatil. Thus such a person will see his protectors as enemies, and enemies as friends.

When Muslims have fallen to such levels that they now need to be told that Christmas isn't their festival that they celebrate with so much zeal along with the disbelievers today, then how is it possible that they will be able to differentiate truth from falsehood? Today's Muslims are under the melody of, "Islam is a peaceful religion" but they have forgotten that, "peace is established through justice only", Not by presenting your other cheek after having gotten slapped on one.

Can an Ummah be this pitiful that it gets oppressed by its oppressor time and again, and the oppressor makes the oppressed believe that the fault is with the oppressed, and not the oppressor! And here we are, taking our oppressor as our teacher, benefactor, well-wisher and helper instead of a cruel wolf trying to remove this Ummah from the face of the earth! Alas! we've reached such levels of helplessness and weakness, and to put an increase into the pain, the ummah in return is attacking those very who are striving hard to protect its honour - i.e. the Soldiers of Allaah - the Mujahideen. What a shame !! Some pointed out guns to stand shoulder to shoulder with the disbelievers, some chanted slogans against them on media and those who had nothing to think of, took out pens and started hurting with words.

How can such an Ummah be helped that has lost the ability to differentiate between its friend and foe?

Muslims are being brutally murdered openly and the Muslims have taken wrongly, the meaning of "Jihad" as "fighting against one's own inner self only!"

The poet, Allama Muhammad Iqbal had rightly said:

* This is an age, the canonist decrees, of the pen: In our world now the sword is worthless

Has it not reached our pious oracle's ear, That such a sermon in the Mosque is now futile and reasonless?

Where, in a Muslim's hand, will he find the sword and gun? Even if there were, the heart is devoid of the pleasure of death and utterly clueless

To one whose nerves falter even at an infidel's death, 'Die like a Muslim!', who would profess?

He needs to be taught relinquishment of Jihad The one who makes world tremble when his bloody fist made an ingress!

For the protection of the glittering reign of falsehood He armed himself, cap-a-pie, in European mail with great finesse

We enquire of our pious canonist, the admirer of Christendom: If for the East war is evil, Is not for the West, the war a malevolent abscess?

And if your goal be truth, Is this the right road— Europe's faults be all glossed, and Islam be held in unkindness? *

Despite this sad situation, there still are groups who fight the disbelievers, not caring a bit about the blame of the blamers. But such are very few who fight to establish the rule of Allah on earth. There are very few who really stand under the flag of Allah. Many groups call themselves mujahideen but raise the flags of their countries or - thus in actual supporting nationalism and not Islam itself. Those people seem to have forgotten that martyr is one who dies fighting for Allah, and not for the sake of nationalism. Our religion has deemed such people in Hell. Now if people want to be wasted away for eternity then it's their own choice. Paradise is not allotted according to the certificates of martyrdom given out by the people here on earth. No matter how much the media shouts to declare you a martyr, no matter how much honour people give your corpse by throwing flowers over it, Allah doesn't care, He deems such as deserving for Hell. Yes, this world is an illusion. Better realise this before it's too late.

Abdullah felt pity for such people because some meet such groups with good intentions but then get misguided by their leaders and plots of the deceivers. He felt bad for them but knew that a believer is not gullible to follow anyone like a herd of sheep; neither is he part of any silent crowd, nor does he trust fake leaders and media, instead he researches for himself the Haqq - truth.

Abdullah too had people around him voting for nationalism, but he refused to be part of such groups. He and his friends believed in the establishment of Caliphate, as ordered by Allaah. They rejected the man-made laws & rules. Their companionship was for the true soldiers of Allah only. They hadn't considered their religion impractical in the so called "modernism" as did doubtful Muslims who were impressed by the disbelievers. Rather they had convicted to establish Allah's word like Abu Bakar, Umar, Usman and Ali (R.A). But, the Ummah had turned their backs on those who raised the flag of Prophet, and labelled them as the "Khawarij" and to spice it up, the enemy was using "money-mongering scholars" for satisfaction, so the strayed ummah had divided.

* * * *

Abdullah reached the edge of the jungle in darkness. Though this had been a very risky path but was the only way to the mujahideen where there were less chances of facing the Indian army. That's why Abdullah had to take this route every time.

It was still dark at the moment. The moon also was covered by dark clouds. His torch was the only light available to guide his way through those woods. Somewhere far off wolves were snarling to

dare any stranger who had any intention to come to their area. But Abdullah had come well prepared. He had brought his pistol along with him. His childhood days flashed through his mind. He used to be afraid of the dark but now his very weakness had turned into his strength. He lived in the dark mostly, as his tasks needed so. Abdullah sacrificed all of his fears for Allah. Now he was trained enough to play with danger.

Finally, Abdullah had reached the cave of the Mujahideen. It was Fajr time. After exchange of Salam, he gave off the information he had and then offered his Fajr Salah. After that they gathered to discuss all things in detail. By this time, it was daylight. It was dangerous to go out in the open now, so on his companions' advice Abdullah delayed his journey for home till night.

After Asr time they all sat together to have some tea. Everyone then insisted on Abdullah to recite some nasheed on their request. His voice was very beautiful and had such pain in it that it softened the heart of the listener so much so that the eyes were bound to get soaked with tears. Abdullah smiled at their insistence and started with a beautiful nasheed with his head bent down.

* Dear patient warrior of Islam (Mujahid)! Where are you? Ambiance of the holy war (Jihad) misses your presence, it's true.

Streets of Kashmir are stained with the blood of loved ones, Burning Palestine, weeping Chechnya, blazing guns, Wake up O Muslim, the Holy mosque calls you, The ambiance of holy war misses your presence, it's true.

Sanctities of our sisters are trampled and slaughtered, Veils are brutally snatched from the faces of our daughters, Still lost in your deep sleep of oblivion, are you? Ambiance of the holy war misses your presence, it's true.

This nation of Mustafa S.A.W is sighing with grief since long, Your honour seems to have gone, you are not now strong, Called out by the blood of Muslims scattered around you, Ambiance of the holy war misses your presence, it's true.

How will you answer your Mighty Lord on doomsday? How will you repay your brothers' lost blood, what will you then say? The book of Allah's Prophet is crying for you, Ambiance of the holy war misses your presence, it's true.

Oh dear patient warrior of Islam! Where are you? *

Abdullah's nasheed had ended, and all eyes were wet with tears. He kept his head down. There were tears in his eyes too. A tear drop slipped on his cheek. Maybe it could no longer bear the pain of a mujahid and thus broke away all barriers.

* * * * *

Staggering, limping, I walk towards You O my Lord.
This pain that i feel is killing me now. Though I'm
dying and all doors seem to be closed, I still have hope
in You. Hope to see Your Beautiful Face one day.

O Rabb, Your people have humiliated me for adhering
to Your path. Though they are my own blood and
flesh, but they went too far in enmity against me. So
much so that my soul feels to be on death bed now.
I complain to You about them not because I want to
see them punished. No. I do not want that. Rather I
forgive them for every pain they give me. I am
complaining to You like Your Prophet Yaqoob A.S who
said , "... I only complain of my suffering and my grief
to Allah.." (12:86)

O my Rabb, I am losing strength now. Please do not
test me with a test I can't pass. I do not want to come
to You like a failure. I have walked Years in pain just
for You. Do not leave me unguided. And do not leave
my affairs in the hands of those who crush my heart
every minute. Do not abandon me when I came to
submit to You O my Rabb. Please hold my hand and
let me die as a martyr in Your Blessed Path. Let me
come to You soaked in blood in a way beloved to You.

Let me be Yours in a way that You become mine too.

~ Diary of a prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)

Chapter Five:

"So, is your degree completed now?", Khawlah's uncle, Asghar, inquired. They were sitting in the TV lounge after dinner, trying to bridge the years of distances between them. Though everyone seemed happy, especially Asghar uncle's son Imran, yet a sense of estrangement hung in the air - a natural consequence of spending decades away from each other.

Khawlah pondered over this with much grief. Relationships are your strength. This fact was understood by the disbelievers of Makkah too, yet the Muslims forgot it.

Asghar uncle was a big businessman. He had two garment factories worth trillions, and a beautiful villa in the center of the city - with servants and maids - he had every luxury one could dream of. His two daughters, Javeria and Sadia were university students. Javeria was two years older than Sadia and was doing her masters in English, while Sadia was doing B.S in computer science. Imran was the only son of Uncle Asghar and Aunt Saima. He was elder than both the sisters. Imran had graduated in software engineering and had joined Uncle Asghar's factory afterwards. He was a good-looking gentleman.

As soon as Imran's eyes had landed on Khawlah for the first time, he was instantly attracted to her. Khawlah had sensed his attraction and it hadn't come as much of a surprise; she was used to people behaving like that around her. However, Aunt Saima was not pleased with her son's increasing admiration for Khawlah.

"Yes uncle," Khawlah answered, sipping tea from her cup. She was wearing a black frock; it complimented her fair complexion really well. Imran could not just steer his gaze away from her, but she ignored him totally.

"I really appreciate you coming to meet us. It's been such a long time since we last met. We got so busy with our lives that we couldn't even speak over the phone", A sad smile crossed Asghar Uncle's face. "You were only two years old when last time I saw you. After mother died, we never visited Pakistan again", He was lost in old memories.

"Relationships are strengthened by meeting each other, Uncle. That's why our Prophet s.a.w prohibited us from cutting ties with relatives, but we've made a big mistake in this regard by not paying heed to his advice", Khawlah said with a hint of sadness tainting her voice.

"Oh, you seem to be quite religious. I thought you would be a very a modern girl", Imran said with an amused expression. He was quite impressed.

"It's not necessary that a person is same on the inside as he looks from the outside. Your inner self needs to change first before your outer appearance. Those who tend to do the opposite, can't stay steady and it's all about being steady and not diverting."

"But one's appearance should change side by side, according to their inner state. The change that is needed must never be this slow. Because those who don't keep their exterior and interior the same, lose track of their destination soon. Actions speak louder than words, you know", Imran stated with confidence. He was happy to finally get a chance of speaking to Khawlah directly. She had been

reserved ever since she came, and initially he couldn't understand why a modern, beautiful girl like her was behaving this way. But now he was getting a clue to the puzzle.

"You're right. I didn't think of it like that. This point never crossed my mind before. Thank you for pointing out", Khawlah acknowledged. This new realization made her sad. Why hadn't she thought of that before? Khawlah scolded herself.

"Ah, what discussion is this? And Imran, since when did you become a scholar? Look at her, you have made the girl upset", Saima Auntie threw a forced smile towards Khawlah and cautioned her son. She did not like her son's tries of impressing Khawlah.

"I was just telling her my point of view", Imran clarified, giving an innocent look.

Javeria and Sadia who were busy with their cell phones before, had left their phones, and had been listening attentively to their brother for long. Asghar was also taken by surprise at his son's statements.

"Imran, we did not know you were a modern 'mawlaana'. Now, don't you start shouting at us to wear burqah, lest we get shouted by you otherwise. Dhuzz dhuzz.." Laughter erupted at Javeria's sarcastic remark. Even Asghar and Saima couldn't hold themselves back from laughing. Only Khawlah remained quiet. She was in actual hurt at their joke.

"Huhhh... what's up with you guys? Is having a little knowledge some crime? ..and this is not even my own research. I quoted what I accidentally happened to hear from that new employee, Amir, who keeps on preaching all the time, and I just repeated that." Imran shrugged, trying to clarify as if he had committed some crime and now had to prove his innocence in front of a panel of judges in court.

Khawlah was hurt at this. Her heart got sick. Her views had changed a bit about Imran a while ago, but at hearing this, all such thoughts disappeared as had come.

Maryam was right, our religion indeed had become strange now, strange amongst the very people who claimed to follow Islam. Khawlah could still remember what Maryam had said to her long ago:

"It is narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira that the Messenger of Allah, (ﷺ) said: Islam initiated as something strange, and it would revert to its (old position) of being strange. so good tidings for the stranger."

(Sahih Muslim)

* * * * *

"Hey Khawlah," Imran's voice pulled her back from her wandering thoughts. "Meet my best friend Maria." He smiled at the girl in red saarhee, standing next to him.

A week had passed since Khawlah had been living at her uncle's place. Now only two days remained before she would be leaving for Pakistan. Imran had arranged a get-together with his old friends in a hotel. He wanted to introduce Khawlah to his friends, but she didn't want to attend the party. After his continuous insistence and uncle Asghar's request, she finally agreed to go. Though it was a very common thing in society and she herself used to attend plenty of them before, but now the thought of

it unsettled her. She found herself in a dilemma; her heart and mind were now at odds with each other. The days spent with Maryam were blissful but now her surroundings had changed, her company had changed. There was no Maryam to guide her anymore Khawlah felt anxious and uncomfortable in this environment. What could she do? Did she have the courage to oppose the norms of the society of today, and rebel against them? Khawlah knew that people wouldn't understand, rather they would ridicule her the way she herself used to do in her days of Jahiliyyah.

"Oh Allah! Please show me a way", Khawlah had silently kept praying on the entire way.

"Hey!" Maria extended her hand towards Khawlah.

"Assalam o Alaikum", Khawlah smiled at her and shook her hand.

"Oh yeah... Salam likum" Maria replied in confusion.

What was happening to the Muslims? They even forgot to perform a simple act like answering greetings properly. Khawlah terribly missed Maryam at this moment.

To top it off, the venue chosen by Imran was a hi fi restaurant. And so, naturally, the majority coming there were had materialistic thinking, not having any care for the afterlife. Khawlah felt herself to be a stranger there. She wanted to flee from there, but had to control her emotions. She was not brave like Maryam to challenge the world. She was already feeling weak without her. The sweetness of faith she felt before was long lost somewhere. Khawlah had never imagined that her state would change so much within just a few days. Maryam was right, she must find righteous companions before it was too late, because no matter how pious we are, our faith is put to test when we lose companionship of pious people. As the Holy Prophet S.A.W had advised:

"The similitude of good company and that of bad company is that of the owner of musk and of the one (iron-smith) blowing bellows, and the owner of musk would either offer you free of charge or you would buy it from him or you would. smell its pleasant odour, and so far as one who blows the bellows is concerned, he would either burn your clothes or you shall have to smell its repugnant smell"

(Sahih Muslim)

The party had started now. All of Imran's friends were present including his university fellows and some college buddies. It was a mixed gathering, consisting of both men and women, and the attire of the women were just mind-boggling. It was as if they had no atom of shame left in them. They were dressed as though they were hunting for men. And surely, the men had ought to be facing a hard test because of their such getup.

"Prostitute!..." a voice from the past rang in her ears. The voice that had robbed her of her peace. The conversation with that man in the market had kept her disturbed since then. She had not seen this side of the picture before, but now she was making sense of his words. The get up of these girls really was like prostitutes. Attractive make-ups, straightened hair pulled on one side baring their backs, low-cut necks of shirts. Some of them were wearing shirts made of cloth so thin that it exposed all what was supposed to be hidden, like an exhibition of bodies! Why would men keep their eyes down when

women be go them are flaunting their bodies for them to see, barely covering it with any clothes? What use are of clothes if they are skin-tight or are see-through?

Someone had said it right:

* Neither Love is revered, nor is beauty modest & pure anymore

Splurging in every nook and corner, lust prevails every door *

Nowadays TV and internet has made porn so easily accessible for men, that everything is before you on just one click. Even if you don't intend to watch such rubbish, nude women are thrown onto your screens while surfing on internet. With all this filth around, contaminating peoples' minds, the rate of rape is bound to increase when women too come up dressed like inviting men to get attracted towards them. Why on earth then the so-called women-rights-organizations come forth chanting slogans of "violation of women rights" when they, with others have brought the society to such levels? If you have any regard for your dignity, then you should safeguard it, and not expose it on billboards. You should keep your beauty to yourself and your husband, not advertise it on the streets. But if you ignore the laws of Allah, then you deserve the bad outcomes. Don't put the blame on others when you didn't come out covered and protected.

A male at the end of the day will always be attracted to a female.

And thus the Holy Prophet S.A.W said, "After me I have not left any trial more severe to men than women." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

This was the very test to attain paradise, but alas! We failed it because of chasing our desires, and and as a result Muslim men and women both adopted the appearances of prostitutes and rebels. Disbelievers are *disbelievers*, They "will" do as they please, but for a Muslim to imitate them without a second thought? That is absurd. And then, when such a Muslim says,

"The lightning of punishment always burnt the muslims."

Such is not called innocence, rather ignorance and absurdity.

Khawlah observed that Imran was way too friendly with Maria. He had told her before that he was very close to Maria and shared everything with her. At this, Khawlah had thought that they were probably interested in each other but was surprised when Imran laughed at this. "Oh no. Friendship is not about love. We are just friends. In fact, she's like a sister to me. I've never thought of her this way and neither has she."

"Your wife will never accept such friendships", Khawlah stated plainly.

He threw her a cocky smile. "She must."

"What if your wife asked you to choose between her and Maria?" Khawlah challenged him.

"Then she must be stupid", Imran retorted, but uncertainty laced his voice. He gave Khawlah a serious look. It was obvious that he had never really thought about it before and now he was confused.

"May be for you; but a wife will either reject this idea or remove her husband from her heart. or make other "friends. I am sorry if you are hurt , but that's the bitter truth. One day you will have to face it. So it's better to think about it now and prepare yourself for what's sure to come. Either marry Maria or leave this relationship. A woman may bear anything but she can never accept that another non-mahram woman is a friend of her husband. Because, a man and woman can never be just friends. There is no brother-sister relationship except through blood. All else are non mahrams. There is no other word, whether we accept this reality or not", Khawlah said confidently while looking out of the window of the car.

Imran did not agree with her. Sometimes, we know what's right and our hearts comply with it too, but then our ego takes over and makes us forcefully subdue the voice of our hearts and then our hearts get sealed. We do not obey even if what's right is screaming at our face. Rather we are devoid of obedience due to our rebellion.

Imran and Maria were busy joking with each other. Watching them took Khawlah back to the dark days of her past, which disturbed her even more. The anxiety was getting the best of her. She had bid farewell to the world of sin with a lot of effort and now she was falling back into that pit-hole once more. Her conscience pricked her. Without another thought, she stood up from her seat.

"I want to go home. I am not feeling well", Khawlah gave an apologetic smile, in response to the questioning eyes of Imran and Maria.

"Stay a while longer Khawlah. We just arrived here", Imran tried to stop her.

"Imran, please try to understand. I don't feel comfortable here....", Khawlah absent-mindedly let out the words that were weighing down her heart for all this while out of irritation, but she couldn't make herself further complete the sentence.

"Why did you come here if you are so conservative? What is a religious person doing here huh?" Maria spat the words at her. She did not approve of Imran's attraction for Khawlah, and Khawlah's previous words really stung her. Maria tried to let out her agitation through her remark.

Khawlah stood there dumbfounded, watching Maria in stunned surprise.

"Maria, that's not what I meant..." Khawlah tried to clarify, in a bid to amend her mistake, but in vain. Maria didn't seem to be in the mood to accept her apology. She turned her face away, her features laced with annoyance. If it was about Khawlah's behaviour, she would have accepted her apology but there was something else. The heat of jealousy cannot be subsided by mere apologies. It darkens the soul like poison. For a woman, It burns the soul to ashes if another woman is the cause behind it.

"Oh...no, there's nothing to apologize for. Let me drop you home." Imran tried to reassure Khawlah as he watched Maria with utter astonishment. He had no idea why she was behaving like this. He tried to cover for her. "She's probably not feeling well. Khawlah please don't mind"

Maria was outraged at Imran's feeble attempt to cover up for her in order to console Khawlah. Maria stood up and gave him a furious look before stuttering off to the wash room with hurried steps.

Yet again, Imran stared at her in surprise. He felt as though this was some other Maria, another girl, not the one he knew for years. Maybe you can never really know someone well enough, no matter how much time you have spent with them.

"I told you, a man and a woman can never be *just* friends, no matter how much you deny it. It's a fact that opposite genders are like magnets; they will inevitably be attracted to each other. You cannot negate the human nature created by God, which He instilled in us. Biology is bound to His rules. You cannot prove it wrong with absurd philosophies." Khawlah gently reminded Imran of her thoughts. May be he would take her seriously now.

Imran remained silent. Khawlah was confident that her words had reached his heart even though he was not willing to accept this yet by his tongue.

"Okay, I should leave now." Khawlah broke the awkward silence brewing between them. "I'm really sorry to disturb your party." She grabbed her purse and said goodbye to her cousin.

"No no, I'm the one who needs to apologize. You didn't want to come but I still dragged you here. I'm sorry", Imram mumbled.

* * * *

Khawlah went home alone by a taxi despite much insistence from Imran, as was her habit of being independent.

Maria was right, what was a person who was trying to follow her religion doing there? She had changed her destination; then why did she find herself treading the same old tracks? One has to change the track along with the destination. Now she had to follow the rules. She had to obey every order without hesitation. She was not seeking to please someone ordinary, she was seeking to please Allah Almighty, Lord of all worlds. She had to sacrifice for His sake, but she still hadn't taken even a small step. A true follower does not follow the winds. He is not like a weightless paper being tossed and turned by the winds neither is he like the insects being washed away with the sewerage.

Allah says " Then is one who was a believer like one who was defiantly disobedient? They are not equal. " (Surat As-Sajdah, verse 18)

The true lovers of Lord are recognized even from distance. Everything related to them is always unique - way different from the lovers of this temporary life. They, though living "in" the same world, are strangers to the inhabitants of this Dunya. Strangers - Al Ghuraba.. They are not of those who go with the trends or the majorities. Al-Ghuraba are those who reject the glitters of this life for the path of truth, which in fact is the path of pains and hardships, but they embrace it for the Aakhirah because they are those who have sold their worldly lives in exchange for their afterlife. Therefore, this glittery world does not blind them like others, it does not attract them like Dunya lovers. Thus, such Ghuraba prefer their Lord over everything and everyone!!

"O my Lord, my loving Rabb!! I am not strong in emaan like Your pious servants, rather I'm really a loser in this regard. My eyes start shedding tears even on a mere bitter word, how on earth will I be able to go against this world of sins and thus invite a war against it? Today even Muslims have become such that they openly take pride over sinful acts, and feel ashamed of following your religion. How

will I ever be able to go against the flow my Lord? How will I be able to become Your Mus'ab bin Umair, Your Bilal, Your Khabbab, Your Salman al-Faarsi, Your Ibn Taymiyyah..??"

Khawlah kept on crying silently while sitting on the back seat of the taxi. She had her face so wet now, that it seemed as if a tsunami had just broke through her eyes. She did not notice when the taxi reached her home, when she came out and entered her room. Nobody was home, except for the house servants. The family had gone out to enjoy dinner in some restaurant. Khawlah let out a sigh of relief. At least she did not have to give explanations for her disturbed condition to anybody. She could not even imagine of meeting anyone with such swollen eyes.

Khawlah performed ablution, offered Isha prayer and opened the Qur'an. It had been quite a few days since she last read the Qur'an. Maryam once said that there is no point of life without the Qur'an. How did she forget all the advices of Maryam in just a few days? When did she become so lazy? Wallowing in guilt and remorse, she turned the pages and read the page in front of her: "O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment. But the clothing of righteousness - that is best. That is from the signs of Allah that perhaps they will remember. " (Surat Al-A'raf, verse 26)

'What is the clothing of righteousness??' She thought to herself as she read the next verse.

"O children of Adam, let not Satan tempt you as he removed your parents from Paradise, stripping them of their clothing to show them their private parts. Indeed, he sees you, he and his tribe, from where you do not see them. Indeed, We have made the devils allies to those who do not believe. " (Surat Al-A'raf, verse 27)

She was swiftly turning over the pages now, engrossed in them.

"And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women. And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment. And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed. " (Surat An-Noor, verse 31)

Trembling, Khawlah again turned the pages. She read the translation of the verses that lay in front of her eyes.

"O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves [part] of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful. " (Surat Al-Ahzab, verse 59)

All these verses were related to the 'veil' (Niqaab). It was no coincidence. Khawlah was deep in thought. Then she remembered something. She closed the Qur'an and searched for something in her luggage. Finally, she found the item she was looking for between some clothes - a packet wrapped in beautiful gift paper. It reminded her of the time when Maryam gave her this gift.

* * * *

"Look! your real gem." Maryam had handed her that packet, her lips curling into an affectionate smile.

"Oh, a gift for me? What's in it?" Khawlah got excited.

"Abbaya (gown) and a scarf for you."

"What? Abbaya? But Maryam, I never wore it before." Khawlah was embarrassed to say that, but it was too late now to take back her words. That's why it's stupid to speak without thinking.

"You never wore it before but you were never a student of the Qur'an before either. A girl who becomes a student of the Qur'an needs it, and you will need it too. Now shut up and keep it." Maryam let out a laugh. "You are so rude to show such manner with a gift." Her laughter lit up her eyes, lightening the mood.

Khawlah felt a pang of guilt but she couldn't hold back her laughter either. "Sorry Maryam, I'm so outspoken."

"Yes I have tested this ability of yours." She mischievously threw a pillow at Khawlah.

* * * *

Khawlah smiled at the flashback.

"Maryam, my best friend, my benefactor." She whispered to herself. Her eyes were now glistening with tears.

She removed the gift paper carefully and a soft abbaya slipped onto her hand. It was a simple black abbaya made of pure silk with no gems or attractive designing. Though it lacked the ability to attract the opposite gender yet it was the most beautiful dress for a pious eye.

Khawlah put the abbaya on her side. There was something else in the packet. A black scarf, a book related to niqaab (veil) and a pocket-sized book of supplications. She had seen a similar book with Maryam when she read the morning and evening supplications. Khawlah pondered on the title words: Hisnul Muslim (Fortress of the Muslim, supplications of day and night from Quran and Sunnah). A smile formed on her lips.

Khawlah opened the book regarding veil and turned the pages.

"Hijaab in Arabic means covering or concealing. Hijaab is the name of something that is used to cover. Everything that comes between two things is hijaab.

Hijaab means everything that is used to cover something and prevent anyone from reaching it, such as curtains, door keepers and garments, etc.

Khimaar comes from the word khamr, the root meaning of which is to cover. For example, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Khammiru aaniyatakum (cover your vessels).” Everything that covers something else is called its khimaar. But in common usage khimaar has come to be used as a name for the garment with which a woman covers her head; in some cases this does not go against the linguistic meaning of khimaar. Some of the fuqahaa’ have defined it as that which covers the head, the temples and the neck.

The difference between the hijaab and the khimaar is that the hijaab is something which covers all of a woman’s body, whilst the khimaar in general is something with which a woman covers her head.

Niqaab is that with which a woman veils her face (tantaqib)...

The difference between hijaab and niqaab is that the hijaab is that which covers all the body, whilst niqaab is that which covers a woman’s face only.

The woman’s dress as prescribed in sharee’ah (“Islamic dress”) is that which covers her head, face and all of her body. But the niqaab or burqa’ – which shows the eyes of the woman – has become widespread among women, and some of them do not wear it properly. Some scholars have forbidden wearing it on the grounds that it is not Islamic in origin, and because it is used improperly and people treat it as something insignificant, demonstrating negligent attitudes towards it and using new forms of niqaab which are not prescribed in Islam, widening the opening for the eyes so that the cheeks, nose and part of the forehead are also visible.

Therefore, if the woman’s niqaab or burqa’ does not show anything but the eyes, and the opening is only as big as the left eye, as was narrated from some of the salaf, then that is permissible, otherwise she should wear something which covers her face entirely.

Shaykh Muhammad al-Saalih al-‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: The Hijaab prescribed in sharee’ah means that a woman should cover everything that it is haraam for her to show, i.e., she should cover that which it is obligatory for her to cover, first and foremost of which is the face, because it is the focus of temptation and desire.

A woman is obliged to cover her face in front of anyone who is not her mahram (blood relative to whom marriage is forbidden). From this we learn that the face is the most essential thing to be covered. There is evidence from the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and the views of the Sahaabah and the imams and scholars of Islam, which indicates that women are obliged to cover all of their bodies in front of those who are not their mahrams.

Fataawa al-Mar’ah al-Muslimah, 1/ 391, 392)

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan (may Allaah preserve him) said: The correct view as indicated by the evidence is that the woman’s face is ‘awrah which must be covered. It is the most tempting part of her body, because what people look at most is the face, so the face is the greatest ‘awrah of a woman. This is in addition to the shar’i evidence which states that it is obligatory to cover the face.

For example, Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like both eyes for necessity

to see the way, or outer palms of hands or one eye or dress like veil, gloves, head cover, apron), and to draw their veils all over Juyoobihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms)...” [al-Noor 24:31]

Drawing the veil all over the juyoob implies covering the face.

When Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) was asked about the aayah (interpretation of the meaning): “O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies” [al-Ahzaab 33:59] –

he covered his face, leaving only one eye showing. This indicates that what was meant by the aayah was covering the face. This was the interpretation of Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) of this aayah, as narrated from him by ‘Ubaydah al-Salmaani when he asked him about it.

In the Sunnah there are many ahaadeeth, such as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The woman in ihraam is forbidden to veil her face (wear niqaab) or to wear the burqa’.” This indicates that when women were not in ihraam, women had to cover their faces.

This does not mean that if a woman takes off her niqaab or burqa’ in the state of ihraam that she should leave her face uncovered in the presence of non-mahram men. Rather she is obliged to cover it with something other than the niqaab or burqa’, on the evidence of the hadeeth of ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) who said: “We were with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in ihraam, and when men passed by us, we would lower the khimaar on our heads over our faces, and when they moved on we would lift it again.”

Women in ihraam and otherwise are obliged to cover their faces in front of non-mahram men, because the face is the center of beauty and it is the place that men look at... and Allaah knows best.

Fataawa al-Mar’ah al-Muslimah, 1/396, 397

He also said: It is OK to cover the face with the Niqaab or burqa’ which has two openings for the eyes only, because this was known at the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and because of necessity. If nothing but the eyes show, this is fine, especially if this is customarily worn by women in her society.

Fataawa al-Mar’ah al-Muslimah, 1/399

And Allaah knows best."

Khawlah closed the book. 'Oh Allah! I have been lost in some other world. I had no idea of basic issues of Islam. I read books in English which was not even my mother language and learned nothing about basic concepts of the Qur'an and hadith, which was my Deen - my key to Jannah. I thought that one should just guard his eyes and heart and that would be sufficient, but i did not know that it was mandatory like Salah (prayer) for which I will be held accountable.' Alas!.. Khawlah took a sad breath.

She put aside the book and took the Abbaya. It reached her feet as she wore it, it was not a slim fit. She had seen girls with Niqabs who wore attractive colors, attractively designed and fitted Abbaya

which made the curves of their body prominent. They wore colored scarves with no concern of their adjustment and if some did adjust them on their chests, they scored the flaw by beautifying their eyes. Some did Niqab but mingled with non-mehram men. Khawlah was not interested in such a veil, as such fake religious people made her question faith itself.

But now she understood that it was foolish to judge Islam based on present day Muslims. Islam had to be learnt through the Qur'an, Hadith, Prophet's Sunnah and Companions of Prophet S.A.W. Today's Muslims adopted the get-up of disbelievers. They considered the Qur'an as mere verses to be read during funerals. These ignorant people gave this Miracle the status of an ordinary book and considered it sacred just enough to kiss it. The message in it, the Divine knowledge, was only for "Moulvis" as only they were to be judged for heaven and hell perhaps. For a common Muslim "religion" was not a code of conduct for life rather it was just orders for prayers and supplications limited to masjids, and the rest of the matters of life i.e. business, government, judiciary, army was free from religion. A round of applause for such useless followers of a splendid religion!

Khawlah took the scarf and tried to do Niqab the way Maryam used to do. For half an hour she tried to adjust it and finally she succeeded. She considered the image on the mirror for a while. She could not recognize the girl standing in the reflection in front of her, was she Khawlah Suleman? Her beautiful hair were no longer a subject of admiration and a sight of enjoyment for all eyes, her enthralling beauty would no longer lead any man to hell. She would not be acting like a prostitute anymore.

Khawlah's mind travelled back to the Muslim man in the market, she owed him big time. His words had shaken her to the core, provoked her conscience. Maryam had advised her multiple times but she could not muster up the courage for this step, but his cracking voice had shaken her from within. Khawlah had understood the pleading of soul in that man's voice. That's why she had been restless whenever his voice echoed in her ears.

But now she felt satisfaction. She will start life with a new outlook, an outlook pleasing to her Lord - identifying herself as a faithful woman; her veil, her asset, her gem.

Ah Khawlah, you were too late to be a good servant for Allah. Her eyes brimmed with tears, threatening to spill any time, as she chastised herself.

"My Allah, accept my veil, I shall become the person You want me to be, and not who I want to be. Please, grant my gaze bashfulness so that it won't linger on any strange man except my husband." Her scarf was now drenched in tears, as the pent-up agony of her soul dripped from her eyes.

* * * * *

"Uncle my flight for Pakistan is due this afternoon." Khawlah kept her eyes fixed on the vegetables which she was peeling carefully.

"What?! This afternoon?" Khawlah's words took Asghar uncle by surprise. Her aunt was surprised as well, her eyes darting up from the bread she was applying butter on, towards Khawlah.

"But weren't you supposed to stay for a day longer?" Aunt Saima asked.

"Yes Aunt, but I think I have been away from home for a long time and burdened you all as well. I don't want to cause all of you anymore hassle." Khawlah's lips twitched into a faint smile at her last sentence. Her eyes were swollen since last night's crying for hours, so she avoided eye contact.

"No dear, we are not burdened at all. Consider it your home and come anytime you want." Saima was giving her a formal, stiff smile. Khawlah knew how honest she was in this offer. Aunt was worried that her son might choose Khawlah instead of her sister's daughter. She must be pleased at the news of her departure, and her eyes expressed her hidden joy quite clearly.

Why were some people so double-faced? Their tongues poured honey but their hearts were full of poison. The condition of the Ummah greatly pained Khawlah. How could they live with such hardened hearts, how could they be so satisfied? But wasn't she herself like this before or perhaps even worse? At this moment Khawlah remembered Maryam's advice to hate the bad deeds, and not the doer. Could she ever become like Maryam? Uhh, how could she start thinking low of others though she herself had stepped on the right path only few days ago. Khawlah felt ashamed at herself.

"Dear! Javeria and Sadia have gone to university and Imran has gone out of city for some business. He went early today. They would have met you if they knew." Asghar Uncle said with much remorse.

"Uncle, I met them last night. Don't be sad. I am going to Pakistan, not to the moon." Khawlah smiled at him, trying to lighten up the mood. "We shall meet again later in sha Allah."

Asghar uncle and aunt laughed at this. Khawlah's excuse was working. She did not want anyone to stop her. She wanted to go home. Enough with these aimless journeys. She had to make things right, it had been late already.

* * * * *

Sitting by the window in the plane, Khawlah was lost in thoughts about the humans down below on earth. We are so insignificant in this vast universe, just like a particle of sand, yet we want to maneuver the sun. Looking past the window she thought to herself.

"And do not walk upon the earth exultantly. Indeed, you will never tear the earth [apart], and you will never reach the mountains in height." (Surah 17, verse 37)

Khawlah was reminded of a verse she had read with Maryam. She sighed. Pity on humans, they want to challenge God?

Her Aunt and Uncle were at the airport to see her off. Thankfully she did not have to face Imran. Otherwise he would have been shocked to see her in a black Abbaya, like his parents would have when she would have asked to cover her face from their beloved son. Well, her own family was also going to be shocked anyways. But Khawlah had not taken them into consideration while deciding for her change. She wanted to get over it as soon as possible now. Their jury would have armed themselves up after giving a verdict against her unanimously, if they knew the change in her. But she decided not to invite this storm before time. This was the path of thorns. She knew she had her head in a beehive, had jumped into fire, was facing the desert. She had submitted herself to Allah to pursue the way of strangers for His religion that had become strange today, she had to prove herself now as she knew her conviction will be tested. Such is the Sunnah of Allah. She won't get into heaven for

nothing, it will be through these tough exams and she was ready. She was not afraid of anyone now, except Allah.

* Monotheism is that God Himself proclaims on the Judgement Day, Only to please Me, my servant has been upset from the World, to this day

What is there to grief about, if the whole world turns against me It is enough! If the One True Lord is there just for me *

Khawlah read the poem in a low voice. She felt at ease. The poetry had come to her mind just on time. This is one of the ways Allah supports us, emotionally. Not everyone is a Prophet to get revelations! Allah sends emotional support in other ways as well. People say they don't see Allah, yes He cannot be seen but He reminds us of His presence in different ways, one must see through the eyes of one's heart. Otherwise if the heart is blind, one cannot see or hear any such reminder, even if that is right before one.

* * * * *

After landing in Pakistan, Khawlah was looking for a taxi. She had not informed her family about her time of arrival. She didn't want to face the negative reaction of her family publicly right at the airport; let the havoc be confined within the walls of home.

Khawlah walked towards a taxi. She was at the Islamabad airport, which she had visited many times over the years. Before, when she would come with her luggage, she was the point of attraction. Her beauty was glamoured by her up to date style and get up. She was the focus of attention, wherever she went. Even girls looked at her with awe, so how could men ignore her? We say that man does not guard his chastity, his eyes lack the piety. Like you tease a wild bear and then step back, the bear will surely attack!

When you ignite the lust of man, he will surely heat up. Then people chant about women rights, what happened to their senses? Alas! when the majority follow unlawful ways, it not only damages the sinners but also the onlookers who do not want to be a part of the campaign. When eyes lack chastity they will judge every woman the same, no matter the few who cover themselves, as when one lacks chastity, it does not matter much if a woman is covered or not.

Khawlah was not only surprised but also happy at the change in attitude of the people towards her in this get up. People took no notice of her presence and it felt like she was not even there. Who will cast a second look on a woman covered in black, with not even the eyes visible properly, lacking attractiveness and beauty?

"Oh Allah! It is so satisfying. I am safe from the lustful eyes of people. This veil is my guard. I just added a piece of cloth in my dress and I feel so much lighter. Now I do not have to get ready taking hours to adorn myself, adjust my look so that people won't make fun of me. I get ready in two minutes now, with Abbaya and Niqab and attend to my work. No tension of dressing up. I wish I had made this decision earlier." With mixed feelings of happiness at the present and remorse at the past, she directed the taxi to her home.

* * * * *

"Just stop here." Khawlah told the taxi driver to stop at a splendid villa. The driver looked at the gate of this wide villa in surprise. Can a girl of such luxurious family go out with her body wrapped in so much covers?

He was trying to solve this mystery when Khawlah paid the fare and moved towards the gate with her luggage. She was about to enter when an elderly man blocked her way. Khawlah was startled, why did Jafar uncle (gate keeper) stop her?

"Stop there! Who are you? Who do you want to meet?" The gate keeper addressed Khawlah harshly. Surely he did not recognize her. How could he? He never saw her in such a get up.

Oh, so that was the matter. Khawlah scolded herself as to why on earth was she so dumb to enter without any introduction? Obviously nobody would let her enter this way.

"Jafar uncle! it's me, Khawlah! I mean Katty." She was being so dumb that he was sure to consider her a thief. Khawlah felt stupid at her answers but her expression was saved by the veil on her face.

"Oh, do such stunts with someone else, like I have not seen Katty!" Jafar uncle let out a sarcastic laugh.

Stunt? what was Jafar uncle saying? If he continued like this, then the show expected inside the house might start here. What should she do? It was a mistake to not inform her family about her decision of taking up the veil. At least they would have recognized her. But now it seemed as if a huge drama was brewing on the way, and on top of that today was a Sunday; the whole family was bound to be home. "Allah save me." She prayed in her heart.

"Jafar uncle, I am Katty. I have started using the veil. Don't you recognize my voice? Please let me in. If you need more evidence then let me remind you that in my childhood, you saved me from a rabid dog at this very place and you got injured while saving me, the scar is still on your elbow. Please move from my way." Khawlah tried to remind the gatekeeper of an old incident, although she didn't know whether Jafar uncle remembered it or not. But the old gate keeper remembered that incident. His eyes widened with sheer astonishment. He could only stammer "Miss Katty! You? How? Why?.... I apologize." He opened the gate with one hand but his feet were glued to where he stood. His face was still facing her in surprise. He could not digest Khawlah's new get up. If he was reacting this way, how would the rest of the family react? She stepped inside, mentally preparing herself for the onslaught of whatever awaited her in her own home.

Entering the house, she removed the Niqab from her face but kept the scarf on her head. A corridor started from the gate, which ran along the wide lawn and car porch towards the entrance door of the house. The lawn had tables and chairs. There were a small pond housing two ducks. There were also swings located at some distance from the pond for her four-year-old nephew Ibrahim. Khawlah smiled at the affectionate memory of her nephew. She never gave him much attention. He was thirsty for the company of his parents. They had no time for their son. They thought that giving him wealth was the most important thing for his future. This void of attention and affection was filled by his grandfather and grandfather's vacuum was filled by Ibrahim. But both of them were not in the lawn at this time, which was not normal. They would always be here usually. Khawlah got suspicious. Allah keep them safe and sound. She entered through the main door, worried.

"Assalam o alaikum." Khawlah greeted her family in a loud voice. They all were having tea in their small dining hall. Mr. Suleman and his wife, Khawlah's brother Saad and his wife Huma with Ibrahim. Grandfather was not there as usual. He always drank tea and had his meals in his room.

Ibrahim ran to Khawlah and within seconds his small hands encircled her. He was jumping with joy. "Sister Katty is here, sister Katty is here!"

Khawlah smiled at the sweet glow in his innocent eyes, putting down the luggage from her hands, she lifted him up. "Call me Khawlah! not Katty." She kissed his forehead.

Ibrahim's eyes rounded with surprise. "You did not like this name."

"Yeah..but i like it now dear." Smiling at the wonder in those innocent eyes, she put him down and walked towards the dining table grasping his finger. But the family was silent, they were like statues; shocked at her getup.

"Ahmm ahmm..." Khawlah cleared her throat. "It seems you guys are not happy to see me." She faked a sad face though she knew why her family was so shocked.

"What are you wearing?" Khawlah's mother screamed at her. Khawlah's heart sunk into a bottomless pit. A heavy load crushed her. Her mother never addressed her like this.

"Mama I have come home after a long time. Let's discuss it after we meet properly." She replied in a soft tone.

"What is the meaning of this rudeness Katty?" Now Mr. Suleman spoke.

Saad was silently watching his sister. He was used to drinking hot tea, but now the steam from his tea had long cooled down and he did not even notice. He could not decide whether it was a prank or she came back with her head full of 'extremist' ideas.

However, Huma had got a spicy, fresh news to update her mother with. She was startled as well that the very person who was an ideal for the whole family, was now in the attire of an illiterate, backward woman.

Everyone was dealing with this in his/her own perspective. Only Ibrahim had given her the usual warm welcome. Kids are innocent, away from evil, close to nature. May be that's why their eyes have a glow and faces are bright as flowers.

"That's why you did not tell us the right time of your flight isn't it? I kept asking when you are coming but you had to create a scene, did you not?" Khawlah's mother was fuming.

Her behaviour and words! A bolt of pain arose from Khawlah's heart and pierced through her whole body. How could an educated woman like her talk like this?

"Katty have you been taking classes from some terrorist group? You look like a maid!" Huma satired sarcastically. As if the behaviour of her parents was not enough, Huma was also contributing in

tearing her soul with poisonous words. As if people hoped to get some great bounty of God by giving pain to others? Like this was some act resulting in their getting a lot of reward!

Saad watched his wife and signaled her to be silent. Huma just shrugged and said "Saad you object on everything thing I say!!" And continued to sip her tea.

"Katty I sent you for studies, not to become a religious fanatic." Mr. Suleman was on the same topic.

"Papa, it is ordered in Islam, I" Her tongue was tied due to the pain of the wounds freshly formed from arrows of her people.

"Enough! No need to tell me about religion. I know better than you. You, a child, will teach religion to your old father? Go and get yourself in some better dress, don't let me see you in this tent again! " He yelled in blind fury. Khawlah felt as if she was facing an enemy and not her parents.

O Allah! What should I do? Please give me the strength. Her heart was hammering fast; her body was trembling.

Did she think that she will fight all this? she was never addressed like this. They took pride in her, she was an example for all, she was a star. But a few meters of added cloth and covering changed all that? Her own people changed? Why? Because she wanted to guard her chastity? Because this was not a world of chastity rather a world of shamelessness? Khawlah felt a load of anguish on her shoulders. Did she have to bear all of this in the way of Allah? Did everyone face hurdles like this? She couldn't stop the relentless tears pouring down her cheeks. Her soul was wounded; her body was trembling.

She tried to speak but words were stuck deep down in her dry throat.

Here I am, a bleeding soul, locked in a world not mine. What WAS my crime?? Everything was taken away from me - my life, my ambition; my reason to live. What will you get by locking me in here? How could my own people be this cruel?? I die here day and night. My eyes shedding blood instead of tears, my soul shattered into a million pieces. Sabr and steadfastness is not any game or play - This is what i've realized after being here. I don't know how my Prophet s.a.w & his companions r.a went through all that with patience. No doubt, they deserve a salute.

Here I am, weak and shaky - not able to even imagine the years I have to pass through this imprisonment. Now I understand (somewhat) the pain of those in real prisons. How much they need me & others - but we kept ourselves deaf & dumb from that side. With each passing day, this desire of mine (of striving for their freedom) is turning into a real dream. I've got one more ambition for my life now - to strive hard for their release !!

~ Diary of a Prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)

Chapter Six:

"Leave it Dad, we can discuss this later. She is tired, let her rest a little." Saad spoke for the first time and motioned for Khawlah to go to her room immediately.

Saad had not approved of her change directly but he did score a place in her heart. Allah sent help at such a crucial time in the form of her clean-shaven brother. Surely He can send help through anyone, anytime. Nothing is difficult for Him. These are only the means. Allah sends aid with or without the means, it's His choice.

Khawlah was grateful to Allah and after that really thankful to her brother. She glanced thankfully at him with tears glistening in her eyes, and went to the upper storey of the house. Weak with grief, staggering, she climbed the stairs and got to her room. Khawlah closed the door but didn't have enough energy to reach the bed, so she just dropped onto the carpet near the door and cried, her face buried in her palms.

"Oh Allah! What are my loved ones doing to me? They never behaved this way before, what more will I have to face? Will they ask me to leave the veil? They should be happy that I covered myself instead of being uncovered. It's not easy that one dresses in simple modest black and be called a maid while the rest dress up glamorously and be called 'Queens'? O Allah, it is very difficult that I stand on the opposite direction of the whole world! Why are Muslims showing disgusting behaviour to a girl for wearing a veil as if she did an illicit act?! Why have Muslims changed like this?!" She sobbed continuously...

There was a light knock on the door as a small voice called out "Sister Khawlah!" "Ibrahim.." Khawlah replied without thinking. She wiped her tears and said "The door is unlocked; you can come inside."

Khawlah's heart was torn. She felt weak to open the door or to fix herself. When your soul is wounded by your loved ones, instead of your body, it leaves your heart scarred. The dribbling blood of such wounds is not seen but it kills the injured from within.

Ibrahim opened the door at her permission and entered inside. Next moment he had her within his arms. "Please don't cry sister Khawlah." He wiped her tears with his small innocent hands.

"Ibrahim, dear...." She hugged him and a serene numbness touched her soul. The love of Allah is so beautiful; when there is pain, there is also someone to share it with.

"My grand dad is ill. Please see him, take him to the doctor. He won't go with me." Four years old Ibrahim cried, concern clearly visible in his wide, round eyes. Black hair combed neatly around his innocent face, and a shade of bright crimson tinting his cheeks, his worried expression made him look even more cute.

Khawlah was filled with love for him but was also worried for her grandfather. She got up hastily and went with him to grandfather's room. His room was in a corner across the corridor to her room. The distances in relations had only increased the steps to his room. She knocked at the door.

"May I come in grand dad?" She asked politely. What will he say? Her parents had pierced her heart, but she had to test him. She knocked again when he did not reply.

"Grand dad, it's me Khawlah, Katty, can I come in?"

May be he did not want to meet her. Why would he reply to her? She never really took care of him. Khawlah was about to return when a weak old voice called out, "Come in dear." She instantly felt relieved at his response. "Oh Allah, I am grateful." She praised God and walked inside with slow, steady steps; hesitating.

Ibrahim ran to his great grandfather, leaving her by the door. A graceful old man lay on the bed. A beautiful mane of white beard adorned his pious face, his eyes holding a mesmerizing hint of glimmer in them. He had such an intimidating yet gentle face, it made any eyes that glanced at him cast down out of respect. And he radiated such an aura of humbleness that truly inspired all. Khawlah felt as if she was looking at him for the first time. Why hadn't she properly seen him before? She never felt such magnetic attraction, where had she been lost?

The old man on the bed noticed her Abbaya and signaled her to come inside. Guilt and hesitation weighing heavy on her heart, she sat on an old rickety chair to the right of the bed. A white cap and some Islamic books were lying on the table.

Ibrahim was winding his fingers through the silvery white hair of grandfather.

"Khawlah dear, when did you come back?" Khawlah raised her anxious gaze at his question. His expression held nothing except love and affection for her. He called her lovingly with his favorite name "Khawlah" despite all her rudeness and carelessness. He did not care that she never met him on her visits and if she had happened to meet him by coincidence, she never regarded his age or their relation.

Yet, his face lit up into a smile for her, such greatness!

Khawlah could no longer hold herself. "Forgive me grandfather, I am such a rude person." She was kissing his hand and crying her heart out.

"Oh no no dear, you are my lovely little girl." He tried to console her so that she stops crying.

"No, tell me that you have forgiven me." Khawlah insisted as relentless tears kept trickling down her cheeks. Her emotions poured out like rain.

"Alright, I forgive you. Now get up and wipe your tears my love. It is the most beautiful day of my life as you are wearing the dress of piety. Why should we waste the day in crying?"

"But the rest of the family have seemed to declare a war on me. They did not even bother to offer me a glass of water....." her voice broke, as if something got stuck in her throat.

Grandfather took a deep breath, patted her head lightly and said, "See, my child! Do you think you have chosen a path laid out with flowers? This path leads to paradise and it is a path of thorns. Your heart will bleed if not your feet. You will see conditions like the valley of Taif, cavern of Shaib abi Talib and hijrah (migration in Allaah's cause). Then you will face occasions like battle of Badr and

wars like Khandaq. But dear, you will see the Conquest of Makkah at the end as well. And you have to show resilience and patience - you cannot win any war without it"

Khawlah wiped away her tears. She felt as if a huge weight had been lifted from her heart.

"Do you know how an axe is made?" Grandfather asked after a pause.

Khawlah shook her head, indicating she didn't know.

"By repeated strikes, much pressure is applied to hot iron. In the same way, a goldsmith molds gold and a leather-maker molds skin. You are in the same condition. You are being passed through inflictions. Now it's upto you, whether you want to turn into gold or coal."

"But grand-dad, not everyone faces it though, why?" Khawlah looked at her grandfather with questioning eyes. He was an ocean of knowledge and she thought she wouldn't find a guide after Maryam.

"This world is a school Khawlah and evrything is a test. We are all pupils and the only teacher is Allah. He tests only His special people. Mercy and hardships are from Him. You are being tested and one has to bear hardships during tests so that you could be among the blessed ones."

"This patience and waiting is also a test? " she asked sadly with her head bowed down.

"Allah loves those who have tawakkul (trust Him fully), not the ones who lack patience. If a man falls in a ditch, then finding a way out with patience is tawakkul."

Khawlah was lost in deep thought.

"Do not lose your strength, be steadfast. Your limit of patience will be tested more."

"But grand-dad...." she looked at her grandfather, her eyes glistening with grief. How could she tell him that her hopes got down at first hit, how can she bear anything further?

Grandfather probably understood what was going on in her mind, so he sat up with support and began speaking in a grave voice.

"Khawlah, listen to me carefully, you have just taken the first step and the journey ahead is long. You are going to be the preacher of truth and you are being trained for that. Whenever the stage is set for battle between good and evil, the basic characters remain the same. World changes, geographical settings change, names change, but the role of the characters never changes.

One of these characters is that of the preacher of truth.

Second is of those righteous people who listen to the declaration of the truth and recognize it by their natural wisdom, and thus present themselves at the front row.

Third are those who oppose with honesty. They listen and ponder over it but due to lack of understanding and psychological block they are late to comprehend reality.

Fourth character is that of the enemies of the truth, who are very aggressive and they raise opposition from day one for their benefits, social status and worldly life. And their hatred just increases with every passing day.

Fifth are the weak commoners who cannot take any active part or play a brave role due to being oppressed by the upper classes of society. They cannot mentally reach the depth of this calling. So for many years they watch the fight between the truth and falsehood with indecision. And when the balance tilts to one side, then this flood of power comes to that side and flows in that direction. Thus the battle of good and evil is heated up by only two characters: the preacher of truth and his followers, and the active opposers who act against them. It is impossible that the act to call for truth is played and these two characters don't come face to face! It is impossible that the voice of good is raised and all the powers of evil don't gather against it! It is impossible that you start to work for the welfare of humanity and the service starts, and world does not accumulate against you with propaganda and torture and weapons of evil! "

Grandfather ended his speech to Khawlah, trying to make her understand the reality of the situation. Khawlah kept her eyes down.

"Allah !! is this going to be much harder than this?" A hadith crossed her mind: " Anas b. Malik reported: The Paradise is surrounded by hardships and the Hell-Fire is surrounded by temptations. (Sahih Muslim)"

Grandfather had been observing her reaction. His words touched her heart. He hoped she would act upon his advice. He prayed in his heart and addressed Khawlah. "Come and get up, the brave hearts are tested hard and it does not suit them to lose heart."

Khawlah raised her head. She had to be like Maryam on this way. If she staggered on this path due to hardships, then how will she complete the mission of holy Prophet S.A.W? She had to invite others to the path of paradise. The Companions of Prophet S.A.W had given their lives and were glorified, now it was her turn.

* Lovers are those, who even sacrifice their lives, While away from the doors, the abnegators drive *

Khawlah quoted a poetry.

A compliant smile tugged at the lips of grandfather. "That's the way my brave girl. Just like your grandmother."

He hugged Khawlah with affection. Moisture welled in Khawla's eyes, spilling over as she lowered her head.

"And am I not brave grandfather?" Ibrahim crossed his hands in agitation. Surely he was irritated to be ignored for so long.

Grandfather and Khawlah chuckled at his innocence.

"On no my sweet child, you are our Khalid bin Waleed." An innocent laughter chimed from him. Ibrahim was elated.

With her head on grandfather's chest Khawlah sensed that his body was hot. Oh she was so stupid. Khawlah sat up straight.

"Grand-dad you have high fever." Her eyes widened in worry as she thought what to do next.

* * * * *

"Ahhhhhh....." An eighteen-year-old young boy screamed from behind the bars of prison.

His arms and legs were tied to a chair. A group of special services officers was standing around him, grinding their teeth in anger. A soldier was giving him electric shocks via a wire to his naked body part. The current used by this bloodthirsty group had left scars on his face, chest, abdomen, arms, legs and rest of the body. His skin had blotched red. Some of his wounds were bleeding.

"You wanted to establish Caliphate? Now you will not even be able to breathe!" one army officer screamed at him.

"Usman why are you punishing yourself? Just tell us who else is with you, otherwise even death will not be able to make you forget what we are going to do next." Major Arthur laughed mercilessly.

Hungry and thirsty since last night, bleeding from wounds, Usman kept looking at the officer with fire in his eyes. His tongue remained locked, not uttering a word from his mouth.

"It seems you won't listen to us this way, you arrogant boy." The army officer scoffed at him.

"Tell him what happens to those who chant slogans of establishing any caliphate." The leader spat on his face, gave orders to his companions and walked out of jail.

"Allah keep me steadfast. I sacrificed my life for you, and I would sacrifice a thousand lives more if I had them. Whether alive or martyred, my victory is you O Allah! Just don't let me be weak." That great soldier of Allah with a weak physique, called out to Allah, silently making dua to Him from the depths of his heart. He remembered his old ailing mother who passed a great ordeal and his old father. With a broken heart, a wounded body and a soul burdened heavily by this world, where did he find such passion and courage?

Such are the brave soldiers of Islam. They don't trade their horses and swords with prayer mats to say "we prayed while our daughters got raped!" Their swords don't rust beneath the covers. Neither are their tanks and weapons sold to the disbelievers to be used against friends of Allaah instead of enemies. They are neither afraid of death nor of powerful foe. Rather they have the flag of Islam in one hand, and Quran in the other, and they send their message to the enemies of Allah by chanting "Allahu Akbar (Allah is Great)" - that we worship Allah Who reins over the entire universe so prove yourself if you have any bigger force.

"Allaah...." Usman moaned helplessly in pain. His toe nails were being pulled out by a soldier now. Oh what agony! Why did not anyone show the real faces of these wolves who gave lessons on 'human rights'? The world had listened and seen for a long time about the awful torture by Americans (and similarly other disbelievers) in secret jails like Guantanamo Bay, Bagram Airbase and Abu Ghuraib. But neither European Union, United Nations nor any NGO of human rights declared these brutes as

'terrorists' and accounted them. Rather their lips were silent. Yes, their carelessness can be understood in this case as they are disbelievers, why would they raise voice for us Muslims? But what happened to the followers of Islam who had no one left in them who had even an ounce of courage or even time to speak about Dr. Aafia Siddique and other oppressed Muslim brothers and sisters, except hollow slogans and empty facebook posts. If you take away their own bread, clothes and houses from them, then see how they will teach you a lesson for your generations to learn. Otherwise, if they themselves are safe, they will just say a few harsh words in a useless attempt to support the oppressed and then go to their offices and win wars by declaring cricket as "Jihaad". Let destruction befall others. Let the Russian aircrafts murder Syrians, rape the daughters of Muslims and destroy their homes. Or let the Zionists take over Masjid Al-Aqsa, let them show their manhood by putting little kids in jail, sing happily while burning Muslims. Or let America with its allies, or more befittingly goons, attack Iraq, why is it of any importance to the sleeping Ummah and money-mongering scholars? Their religious verdicts were to be sold at whatever price the disbelievers and the corrupt buy. Simple Muslims swore not to comprehend Islam. They were so entangled in their love for shrines and "peers" in their custom-made Islam that their bleeding Muslim brethren were crying for help but they kept themselves away from it all, harmless like goats and burned candles for "birthday celebration of Prophet S.A.W". When the crying daughter of the Ummah called for help from behind the bars of jail, when the honour of Prophet S.A.W was abused, when burning Aleppo screamed in agony then the so called lovers of Prophet ran away with their faces covered. Woe to your attire that even it does not give evidence for your love of Prophet S.A.W!

*The Braveheart who sacrificed his neck on this Path that leads to Jannah,

Undoubtedly, he is the one who loves Mustafa (S.A.W) adhering to his Sunnah. *

After pulling out Usman's toe nails one by one, it was now the turn for his finger nails. For an immeasurable time, they tortured him like vultures but that faithful teenager did not reveal his secrets. To intensify his pain, they sprinkled salt over his wounds. But he only screamed, nothing but the name of Allah escaping from his lips. To mute his screams, they put a plaster on his mouth. He helplessly looked at the ceiling above, eyes red due to being awake for two nights, murmuring "O Allah! I strive by putting my trust in You only."

He remembered the saying of Imam Ibn Taymiyyah (R.H):

'What can you do with me? My paradise is in my heart. If you imprison me, it will be seclusion for me with Allah, if you exile me, it will be my time to ponder upon the creation of Allah, and if you kill me, I shall be a martyr. So what can you do to me? I am not limited to this mortal world (Dunya)'

The cycle of torture continued for hours and then Usman was thrown in a dark cell in a half-dead state.

He had no idea of his surroundings. He lay there on the floor, near the chair for a long while. Finally, he felt his consciousness coming around. His body was heaving with pain. He had no strength left in him to move his hand and his breathing was labored. Usman was almost certain that the angel of death would now visit him any time. He had no feeling of life. He cried the whole night, talking to Allah, for Whose sake he was thrown in this grave.

What was his crime other than giving a lecture on Jihad in the mosque? He talked about holding back the hand of the oppressors of this failing Ummah. He tried to stimulate the feeling of shame among

the people for forgetting the commands of Allah. But his simple words agitated those who thrive upon atrocities like thorn. Never has evil tolerated the truth. The fight between them was going on for centuries and will continue till the end of time. There are only two parties; the party of Allah and the party of Devil. If you are not in the party of Allah, then you are among soldiers of Evil. You cannot stand on the side lines as a spectator, only there to see the match.

With much difficulty, Usman performed tayammum and stood for prayer. He had just raised his hands and said "Allahu Akbar (Allah is great)" that his beard got wet with his tears. He recited from the Qur'an whatever he had remembered, let the tears stream down his face and read the verses which gave strength to his heart. Especially the verse 214 of Surat Al-Baqarah healed his wounded soul.

" Or do you think that you will enter Paradise while such [trial] has not yet come to you as came to those who passed on before you? They were touched by poverty and hardship and were shaken until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, 'When is the help of Allah?' Unquestionably, the help of Allah is near." (Verse 214 of Surat Al-Baqarah)

With moisture in his eyes and breath coming in heavy, he continued his prayer crying. He felt relieved and satisfied as never before. His heart was fresh as he bowed his head in sujood. His tears and pleas may have caused heaven to cry and angels to weep. He became unconscious while crying in sujood and woke up in the morning by a strong splash of water on his face. The same cycle of torture resumed, the repeated electric shocks. Every moment he felt as if his nerves were set on fire. The jail echoed with his screams and his cry of "Allah! Allah!" But he did not tell them the whereabouts of his Muslim brother. He was being inflicted with pain upon pain but his determination was as unshakeable as the mountains. Even his enemy was astonished at his unflinching courage.

His wounds started to bleed and once again he lost his senses. In this trance, Allah showed His friend such a dream that could make one forget any pain of this world.

He saw Paradise, the beautiful paradise. Attractive gardens, flowers, beautiful trees, such beauty that human eyes have never seen. And there she was. His Hoor! Usman only saw her shawl. It was gleaming with light. The very light which can blind your eyes.

The process of brutality continued for hours. And then they got tired of him, and left him in a semi-conscious state in the empty cell. This process had continued from eight in the morning till five in the evening. He had no idea of what they had been doing to him. He was kept hungry and thirsty for two days. The scanty water given in between was dirty mud water. He had no idea how his family was dealing with his absence, they did not know where their beloved was taken. Had his mother eaten anything for two days as her son was missing? Is this possible that the son is in such pain and the mother's heart is unaware of that?

That night was also spent in crying to Allah. How did Prophet Yusuf A.S. spend his imprisonment? A respectable woman like Aafia Siddique was in a distorted state. What was being done to prisoners of the horrid Guantanamo Bay, Bagram Airbase and Abu Ghutaib. The prisoners are kept there for years without any crime. The enemy was too selective about the strong men amongst the Muslims. The torture they give can shake the foundations of your very soul and break it.

The torture on Usman was resumed in the morning.

"Tell me who else is your friend?" The main officer, with his medals bouncing on his uniform, barked at him. A face swam across his mind. A smiling man, his Muslim brother.

"I won't tell you even if you behead me." Usman snarled in reply. He was bleeding, body weakened by continuous torture, marks of violence scattered all over his body, half dead but his determination seemed to be made of iron. Strong & unwavering. Many men of knowledge and so called 'scholars' changed tracks miles before reaching this stage due to fear of such future and due to Wahn (love of this Dunya and fear of death) in their hearts. They made deals with the opponents of Islam, sold their religious verdicts, bought the life of this world in exchange of the heavens, became puppets of the enemies of Islam thus they sold the religion of Allah for a cheap price.

But this living corpse (Usman); that eighteen-year-old boy remained loyal to his Prophet S.A.W. He taught the meaning of love to these so-called lovers of Prophet S.A.W., he taught the hollow flag bearers of masjids and governments that the real carriers of the banner of Allah and His Messenger will be hanged but will never surrender to tyrannical governments after they are blessed with knowledge, even if they have to give their lives to preserve it.

Usman's reckless answer infuriated the officer. "Oh just wait, I shall teach you a lesson like I taught many tough ones better than you." He gave an evil smile to his minions and motioned them to move ahead. Usman cast a pained glance towards the ceiling. If Allah has decided such fate, then he shall obey.

A few moments later this lion of Allah was being thrown into hot boiling water. May be all the heavens had trembled with his screams. The walls of the prison were also in a state of sorrow. If the earth had any say, it would have burst apart at this height of barbarism. His superficial skin was melting and his muscles became clearly visible. However, it didn't move the hearts or souls of the human rights champions and advocates of freedom. Iblees was damned as he refused to prostrate but even Iblees would have been confused to charge these tyrants for the awful history of atrocities made by them. So why should not these ruthless oppressors be burnt in hell? Indeed, Allah is Just.

Usman had no idea of what happened next. When he opened his eyes he was in a hospital. His family was told that his survival with these wounds was a miracle of Allah. A month had passed since he was admitted there. His mother's condition was indescribable due to the severity of her crying. She nearly died of a heart attack when he told her the story of the tortures in prison. Only a mother knows how the heart was shredded to pieces.

Usman finally was freed from the prison but many innocent faithful Muslim men and women were still being tortured for years in the dungeons of the disbelievers and tyrants. While the rest of the Ummah was busy convincing the disbelievers that 'Islam is a religion of peace', they forgot that peace never comes without justice. Islam is religion of peace as it establishes justice, but the tyrants consider it a movement against their tyranny. The power of evil and tyranny have always stood against Islam and it will remain like that forever. But how can this ignorant Muslim, devoid of knowledge of Islam, understand these complexities? If he was any wise, he would not let the disbelievers be the think-tank of his educational institutes. That cunning nation knew that if you take hold of weapons of court and education of a nation you can not only win them over but also make them your soldiers.

Usman had decided that now he will put all his efforts to free muslim prisoners. His imprisonment had strengthened his faith rather than weakening it. That jail proved to be the school of Yusuf A.S as

now he understood the Surah Yusuf in a way that he never understood by merely reading out it's Tafseer. At the point where hypocrites turn their backs, the faithful ones start their journey.

* * * * *

Usman took out his phone and started listening to his favourite nasheed:

*O my companion of prison, Never let those days fade away, The days we were oppressed and tortured, The battles lost in assemblies, were of Field, Allies of ours, stood in the rows of foes, Abandon them not, O my imprisoned mates , Shall you be freed once again, To world of beauty, Lose not sight of our pain Keep alive our pain Never throw it in vain

Our wait for destiny, the realm of our patience
Shall you announce,
To everyone who cares,
Shout this loud,
“Some prisoners tied in cages’
‘With mountain like courage,
They want back, battles for truth,”

O my companion of prison,
“Must not you forget,
The slaves of Most Beneficent,
Those, apples of eyes of the world
Those, fellow believers
Those, stars of the deserts
Those , who were cheaply “sold”
Have now become “Gold”

Those ,whose heart sang the pain
Those, whose eyes glittered with fain
Your mates, who fasted in day
In nights, Who threw the pain away,
The only crime what they used to say
Our Lord is Allah only ,
They used to say”

O my fellow of hard days,
The friend of the cave

“Show them the pieces of our soul
Tell them, only they we own

Prayers be for them, that we pray”
Summon to them,

“The path we walked,
The pain we called upon us

Were not our own
Did we ever moan?
We carried the sorrows
Of Ummah
Still we moved on”

Sisters of whose wait for them
sick Mothers still look for their sons
Old fathers of whom needs help,
For Allah, Who put Lives on the line?
Who else could ‘ve stood for you?
To offer our soul’s oblation ,
here we are ”
O my imprisoned mate
If you could remember
“Tell those in joy,
Say those who play”

Let’s dream the world all a new
“where
Islam is supreme with Khilafah renewed
Where Fitnah ends.
And Deen belongs only to the Lord,
A world with fear for hereafter ,
Where
troops will Leave for Al Aqsa and Andalus,
Where
Swords will enjoin faith and reliance upon Our Lord”

we dream
A world of dream,
Where
the army of Islam
Raises their Flag so high,
That devil would wish to die
A realm
Where
we dispose all the shirk
Like our ancestors
Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman & Ali
Strived for.
A universe with Islam
Like a flower blooming
Where light falls
Upon light.

Where they ask
How is your eman?

How about Deen?
Relation with Qur'an
Is asked!

Where exists
peace, love and justice.

Where They find
Always a place for the migrants
In the village of Ansaar

Then will come true our dream
On the day shall we
Hold on to the Rope of Allah”

The cries of captives
O my beloved
“Abu Ghareeb & Guantanamo Bay detention camp’s
Poor prisoners sing in silence
Their songs of pain,
to the World’s bane,

If you turn back to the world of flowers
Ask ‘em, who will set ‘em free??
Afia is seeking for another Qasim, Mehmood Ghaznavi,
When will appear one more Ayyubi??
Shall he break shackles of crusades,
Shall barricades of centuries be lifted
The idols of devil Be rifted”

O my beloved companion
Let them know
“Some eyes wait for you
Some hearts long for you”
Let them hear the tidings of Heavens
Shall they promise to their Lord
to find a way for Us,
In the night prayers made for us
Lest you forget us
O My heart-mate
O My companion
Lest you abandon Us*

* * * * *

With tears in his eyes and a heavy heart, he remembered the direct command of his beloved Prophet
S.A.W in the form of a hadith:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Give food to the hungry, pay a visit to the sick and release (set free) the one in captivity (by paying his ransom)."

(Sahih al Bukhari)

* * * * *

"Why are you being so stubborn Khawlah! What has gotten into you? You are not moved by the tears of your parents neither do you care for their old age! Do you know how Allah has warned against the disobedience of parents? And here you are preaching us!

You cannot even say so much as "uff" to them!" Mrs. Anum said grinding her teeth in anger, as though she was holding herself back from slapping a disobedient child.

Indeed, Khawlah was hurt deep inside by their changing behaviour but she did not back out from her decision to veil. In the last 6 months she had faced a lot of storms and a lot of grievances that stabbed her heart like sharp knives. She spent her nights crying herself to sleep. It astonished her how this country bore the label of Islam but it had everything except Islam. Those who were supposed to be the followers of the Prophet S.A.W were fed up of Islam as if they were given some bitter medicine. They were completely devoted to disbelievers; how could they engage the interest of others in Islam? The Ummah was led by dull minded people, and so breaking apart was only inevitable.

"Mama I can give my life for you." Khawlah pleaded. "Yes, Allah has commanded us to obey our parents but He also forbade us from obeying them if they go against Islam:

And We have enjoined upon man [care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is the [final] destination. But if they endeavor to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them but accompany them in [this] world with appropriate kindness and follow the way of those who turn back to Me [in repentance]. Then to Me will be your return, and I will inform you about what you used to do. (Surat Luqman, verse 14-15)"

Khawlah recited the verses with eyes cast down in respect. Mrs. Anum was left speechless. She tried to refute her daughter and hold her ground. "Oh you have become obsessed with this thing, nothing else," She fired back and walked away with angry steps.

With an aching heart, Khawlah saw her mother leave the lawn. She could not make her understand anything in this long time. Her family was edging towards fire of Hell and she could do nothing. However, her steadfastness did bring about some changes; her family now called her "Khawlah". This showed her that her Islam was winning. Any step which brings you closer to your destination is a victory.

"Oh what is going to happen today?" Khawlah sighed and opened the Qur'an held in her hand.

Her maternal aunt and cousins had to come to her home today. Mrs. Anum came to talk about it. She feared that Khawlah might start some drama in front of her sister's family so she wanted to convince

her to meet her male cousins. But Khawlah was adamant that she would meet them in veil. Her mother rebuked her and told her to avoid the guests if she was so headstrong about wearing the veil.

Such taunts are always faced by those who choose to veil and Khawlah was ready for it. She had clarified that she will look after Kitchen work but someone else has to serve the guests.

At this response she was again reminded that she was being rude. They did not let her wounds dry, every day a new pain was inflicted on her. How long would this last?

Sometimes she wished there was a book which could tell her the feelings of Prophet S.A.W , Ibrahim A.S and the companion Mus'ab bin Umair R.A. Did they too cry when alone with Allah, at the wounds inflicted by their own people? Did their hearts bleed and ache as much? They would only complain to Allah of their pain. In what words did they tell Allah how their loved ones threw daggers at their hearts only for their religion. How did they bear such burden?

" Perhaps, [O Muhammad], you would kill yourself with grief that they will not be believers. If We willed, We could send down to them from the sky a sign for which their necks would remain humbled. And no revelation comes to them anew from the Most Merciful except that they turn away from it. " (Surat # 26, verse 3-5)

Ah, O Rahman! My heart is not hidden from You. You see my soul melt and drip through my eyes, and the sorrow within me eating me alive. Sobbing, Khawlah was talking to her Companion of her grief, her Allah, unaware that her tears had moistened the pages of the Qur'an.

* * * * *

"You should wear that red frock of yours, it suits you well and let your hair loose. Please don't look like a maid for God's sake. Be quick, they will be here any time now." Khawlah's mother came to give her a final lecture after Maghrib prayer.

"Mom you are aware that I shall meet only aunt and sister Sumayyah. I shall greet males in veil, otherwise I shall not see them." Khawlah was worried to see that her mother had totally ignored her conditions which she had set in the evening. And why was mother so anxious? Aunt's family used to visit before. So what was new this time which made mother so tense? She must be hiding something from me, thought Khawlah.

"Girl you have been very rough. It's enough now. We have given you free hand and you took our advantage. Don't argue, get dressed. They want to ask for your hand for aunt's son Salman. For God's sake don't put a show in front of them. Take some pity on your elderly parents. Don't make us a joke." With teary eyes, Mrs. Anum left the room.

Khawlah was numb. So that's why they were trying to mould her. Such a big thing and they did not tell her. And they said "for God's sake" for such things like disobeying Allah. Were they not afraid of His punishment?

Trying to retain her sanity, she sat down on the edge of the bed. How many trials were left? She tried to hold herself for some moments then she got up, went to the wash room, washed up her face and took out her clothes.

Salman....

He was a religious person. Also a doctor, who had just cleared FCPS part 1 exam and now worked in Medicine Department of a hospital. He was training for specialization. She was going to be engaged to him? It was a good news then why did they hide it from her? She wanted a faithful husband. Aunt's family was very religious. Sister Sumayyah used to veil as well. They will approve of her thoughts, Khawlah reassured herself.

Khawlah thought that she should perform istikharah prayer for this matter, but before doing that she must also consult her grandfather who was an experienced man, having good knowledge of deen and was her well-wisher as well. A person who takes advice from such worthy people and then performs istikharah , and thus then does a deed about which he thinks is better to do, he is not let down. He gets no harm, everything that happens, is good for him.

"..And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah . Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]. (Surat # 3 ,verse 159)"

Khawlah was just going to her grandfather's room when her steps were held back by the Adhan (prayer call) of Isha prayer, echoing loud and clear from the Masjid's speaker.

What a beautiful voice, so heart touching. Whoever this young man is, he must be Allah's special one. Since she came to Pakistan she had heard this voice alot. She was curious as to who possessed such a beautiful voice, rejuvenating faith in the listener's heart, which reminded one of Hazrat Bilal's R.A. (one of the companions of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w)

Adhan should be like this which reverts a disbeliever to Islam. But now people were in such a hurry that they did not bother least about how the adhan sounded. They just put their mouths at the speaker and hurriedly completed the sentences of the adhan as if they were going to miss their trains. A sacred obligation was being mocked but no one had any sense of shame. Who can we trust to rectify it when everyone is a mess?

Lost in thoughts, Khawlah knocked at her grandfather's door.

"Grand dad?"

"Come in Khawlah dear."

She entered the room with a smile lighting her face. Her grandfather had some magic in his voice, the listener felt as if all the love in the world had been accumulated in his voice.

"So, what's the matter? After all you **did** miss your grandfather?" He threw a mischievous smile at her.

"Oh it's not like that." Khawlah tried to defend herself. "Whenever I came you were busy offering prayers or resting. Ibrahim has gone to his maternal grandparents with Huma, so he wasn't here as well. I got bored all day. " Making a sad face she sat on the nearby old chair.

Though this room lacked any decorative furniture, having an old bed, a rickety chair, a table with a

lot of memories attached and an antique cupboard with many books. Surely there was no decoration but everything was arranged nicely.

Neatness was most cared for. But this little room had a strange sense of tranquility, as if it was blessed, such blessing as you have enjoyed heavens before reaching paradise.

"Where are you lost dear?"

"Granddad I needed an advice." Feeling shy, she told him about the matter and waited for his response.

"See dear, Salman is a good guy. I have not much understanding of his household but I have talked to him here many times. He has inclination towards religion. I hope he will prove good for you."

A wave of relief washed over her. Her decision was right. She used to worry that where will she find a person who shares the same mentality as her, but now she hoped that Allah would make this smooth for her.

"But...." Grandfather wasn't finished. Khawlah's heart sank at the word. She was convinced now, she didn't want her dream to get shattered.

Impatient, she wanted to know what he was implying. "But what grand dad?" Her voice was filled with worry.

"Dear, we are just humans. We can only see what is apparent. We cannot see how a person is from the inside. Neither do we have any knowledge of the future. So we consult Allah as He knows the inner state of people and the ease or trials which we may face in the future due to our decisions. Now perform istikharah prayer, then whatever you feel you need to do, act upon that and then leave these matters in the Hands of Allah. All that happens next has good in it for you. Do you understand my wise daughter?" He patted her head.

"Yes grand dad." She replied glancing downwards.

"Great. I should go, Salah is about to begin in the Masjid."

"Yes grand dad." She handed him his walking stick and gave him way respectfully. Grandfather went to the masjid, giving her duas.

* * * * *

With a hint of joy now colouring Khawlah's emotions, she took out the red dress that her mother told her to before, and offered ablution to pray two rakah Istikharah prayer.

She had read that Hazrat Jabir bin Abdullah R.A. narrated that The Prophet (S.A.W.) used to teach us the way of doing Istikhara (Istikhara means to ask Allah to guide one to the right sort of action concerning any job or a deed), in all matters as he taught us the Suras of the Qur'an. He said, "If anyone of you thinks of doing any job he should offer a two rak`at prayer other than the compulsory

ones and say (after the prayer):

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أُمْرِي - أَوْ قَالَ عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ - فَاقْضِ لَهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أُمْرِي - أَوْ قَالَ فِي عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ - فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ، وَاقْضِ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ ارْضِنِي بِهِ -

After saying out the dua, Khawlah was reading its translation as her friend Maryam had advised her that if you do not understand the meanings of your duas then it's only hollow words.

"O Allah! I ask guidance from Your knowledge, And Power from Your Might and I ask for Your great blessings. You are capable and I am not. You know and I do not and You know the unseen. O Allah! If You know that this job, marrying Salman, is good for my religion and my subsistence and in my Hereafter--(or said: If it is better for my present and later needs) --Then You ordain it for me and make it easy for me to get, and then bless me in it, and if You know that this job - marrying Salman - is harmful to me In my religion and subsistence and in the Hereafter--(or said: If it is worse for my present and later needs) --Then keep it away from me and let me be away from it. And ordain for me whatever is good for me, And make me satisfied with it).

(The Prophet (ﷺ) added that then the person should name (mention) his need.)

(See Sahih Al - Bukhari).

* * * *

"Take this tea and serve the guests." Khawlah's mother ordered her and gave her the tea tray.

Khawlah just looked at her aghast.

"Mom I told you that I won't go in front of them like this. It is not only aunt but also her sons and sister Sumayya's husband. How can I face them all like this when I have started the veil?" She was almost crying. But her helpless look did her no good. Her mother slapped her in response.

"You rude girl! You have had your will. Do you wish to marry or be alone whole your life? Come with me quietly or else." She jerked her arm.

انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

Khawlah was reciting fast with tearful eyes. Her heart was hammering, hands trembling. It was going to be very bad for her.

"What's going to happen? O Allah save me from the evil of these people." She was praying in whispers with a trembling voice.

"Mom I cannot do this. Please don't disgrace me like this. I beg you." Putting the tray down she was crying to plead her mother.

This instance her mother's sister entered room.

"Where are you people...." She could not complete her sentence. Her eyes fixed on Khawlah's wet eye makeup and detangled attire. Aunt's eyes widened with shock.

"Anum, is everything fine?" Her question held less sympathy and more suspicion. Surely she thought Khawlah was not pleased with this proposal.

Usually in such circumstances people suspect that girl must be involved with someone. Her aunt was thinking on the same lines.

"Assalam o alaikum Aunt" Khawlah uttered with difficulty and went to her room with hurried steps. She washed her face in washroom. Her heart was beating so fast she felt it would break her rib cage. She sat on her bed. Everything had gone wrong. Uff... what Aunt must be thinking? And Mom... she slapped me? how? she slapped her own daughter? Why? Just because I wanted to obey Allah? Khawlah couldn't stop sobbing heavily. Ever since she came back to Pakistan, a war was being waged against her. Her own family had not kept pace with her.

"Khawlah, my dear." Her aunt entered the room after knocking the door. Her mother accompanied her.

"Oh you are in a fit state. I was afraid that what was the matter. Then your mother told me the real thing. They are your family, your brothers, not some strangers. You used to sit among them, you grew up together. Come on, fix yourself up and go down." Aunt was patting her shoulders.

Khawlah felt a heavy weight crushing her chest. Her heart paused. What was aunt saying? She was a religious person. They used to veil. How could she say such a thing? Didn't she know that cousins are not brothers?! What a tough trial!

"Aunt, you know cousins are not real brothers, one has to veil from them too." Eyes down, she voiced her thoughts with respect.

"Dear, we do veil as well but we have to walk in steps with the world too. We cannot be like the Companions. One cannot follow Islam hundred percent nowadays. If you want to live in this society then you will have difficulty breathing if you live by such rigid rules. You wish to veil, good, this has pleased me a lot. But even Salman won't like such things. It will disturb the whole family." She had not liked Khawlah's ideas a single bit but she kept her patience. She suppressed her anger for this weak moment.

Khawlah was shocked. What lesson was her religious Aunt teaching her?

And Salman was a preaching, bearded Muslim, this was his mindset?

What was going on?

If the religious people think that religion cannot be fully followed, then what will rest of the people do to Islam? She had seen religious people like Maryam but what type was this? Such religious Muslims who tried to appease both Rahman and Shaitaan at the same time. Or hypocrites with label of Muslims? What world was this and where was she trapped?

"Aunt this is a command of Allah and I shall not go against it." She kept her head down. It was going to be bad. But she was ready, let it be a nuclear blast. She had been slapped, she could bear everything after this disgrace. What else could they do? Kill her? Let them do it. She was not in heaven anyway.

Her aunt got up in aggression.

"You have no respect for elders. After wandering about in America, you became a scholar? You will teach Islam to us? You don't even know how to address others! My daughter does not talk to others like you." Showering her poison on her she went out.

"Sister listen to me". Looking at her daughter with anger, Mrs. Anum followed her sister.

حسبنا الله و نعم الوكيل

Khawlah recited in her heart.

* * * *

It was one o' clock at night. But even after crying for hours, the sad eyes of Khawlah were not tired.

"Oh Allah tell me why these people are doing such things to me? Why don't they leave me be?" Tears became her companion on this lonely night.

"Tell me Allah...." Khawlah hiccupped once again. she was bent on her prayer mat. Either the Hour will come or she would die tonight.

After crying for some time, she calmed down, wiped her tear-stained face, folded the prayer mat and took out her cell phone. Thinking for a while, Khawlah made an audio call to Maryam on skype.

They all had thrown out their anger at Khawlah as the guests left. Her aunt had rejected the proposal, saying that she could not tolerate such extremism which would destroy her home. She did not want such a daughter in law.

With such confidence she talks against religion? Is following religion extremism? Then by her point, Companions of Prophet S.A.W and even Prophet S.A.W himself were, God forbid, extremists? Rather even Allaah Himself, God forbid, an extremist? Though these people don't say it directly.

After many bells, someone picked up the call. Khawlah knew it was inappropriate to call someone at this hour but right now she needed to talk to Maryam. It was a necessity otherwise she would lose her patience.

"Assalam o alaikum Khawlah, what's up? Is everything alright?" Maryam's soft, affectionate voice made Khawlah's heart melt and this instantly brought moisture to her eyes.

"Maryam..." she could not say anything else and just cried.

O soul who is tired and weak !!

I know your pains are heavy upon your chest. I know u feel like u are about to break. Ahh those who did not understand u were not any stranger but your own family and friends..

They did what your enemies couldn't do ; they broke you..

I know your heart is in great pain, and you feel this dunya to be a place of hurt, sorrow, grief and heartbreaks.

But do you know by facing all this betrayal for your Lord, you have walked the path of Prophet

Muhammad s.a.w & Prophet Ibrahim A.S..

The path of the blessed companions - Mus'ab bin Umair, Salman Al- Faarsi and Bilal (R.A) !!

Ahh how blessed this path is !!

Were they not humans? Did they not have hearts?

What do you think how would *they* have felt in their times of pain and betrayal? Weren't their own people who hurt them & humiliated them?

Weren't their hearts hurt & wounded??

What do you think why the Qur'an is full of verses giving lessons of hope & solace to the believers?

This path is not just a lonely path, but a *heavy* one too - very heavy on the heart !!

So endure patiently with a beautiful patience like your Salaf, and thus gain pleasure of your Lord for Whom u came out on this journey. He will guide u to His Mercy & Pleasure & to His Jannah where you'll forget allll your worries & will enjoy the company of Allaah and His other Beloved & Obedient Servants - The Ghuraba - The Strangers !!

So smile O Stranger, who has become stranger among the people of dunya for His Rabb.

~ Diary of a prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)

Chapter Seven

"Khawlah I may have a heart attack! Please tell me, what has happened to you?", Maryam said in an anxious voice from the other side.

"Maryam I am left all alone..." Khawlah was hiccupping.

"Why Khawlah? Where are you right now?" Maybe she thought that her family had thrown her out of the house. Khawlah was in contact with Maryam since she came back, and kept her updated with her problems. So Maryam was worried if their conflicts had reached that level.

"I am at my house." Maryam was relieved to hear that. "But there is a difference between house and home." Khawlah spoke as if these two words were two different worlds.

"Khawlah what happened? Please tell me clearly, I'm getting tensed." Maryam was getting more suspicious.

In the next few minutes Khawlah narrated the whole story. Her tears and hiccups too conveyed all the pain she was feeling at that moment.

"Maryam I feel as if I'm dying, what's happening? I'm telling you, I am going to die." Khawlah started crying again as if all the oceans in the world were contained in her two eyes.

"Khawlah don't speak like this." Maryam tried to console her with a broken heart. What else could she do from this far. She wasn't near her even to give her a hug.

"Maryam !! my family is not like your's. They will probably kill me." The pain in her voice pierced Maryam's heart.

"Khawlah, my dear, don't lose heart like this. We all have different trials. But we all are tested. If my family is a source of content for me then I have other problems. You know about the condition of Kashmir. Those who live in conflict zone have to die every day, just to be alive. Everyone is passing through turmoils Khawlah. Don't think, "why don't I have relaxation from my family". You are one of the 'strangers' now. Don't consider your luck to be bad. Trust me, Allah has *chosen* you for this blessed path of *al ghuraba*. The world would only have been easy for you if you lived an ignorant life. But you embraced all these hardships, only for the love of Allah. What else can good luck be? These turmoils are medals in the way of Allah; these aren't for everyone. Not everyone is Ibrahim (A.S) or Bilal, Sulman the Persian, Mus'ab bin Umair or Khubab (R.A). It is for those who become 'strangers' for Islam. I envy you really! Why do you cry to Allah in sorrows when He watches over you with such affection that we cannot even imagine. He will surely strengthen you and make your prize better in the Hereafter. Don't waste yourself, you know the verse..."

"O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient." (Surat Al Baqarah, Ayah 153)

And what else could a person need if he has Allah on his side. How sad a person would be if he loses Allah when he lost his patience."

"Maryam you are right but my courage is wavering." Khawlah felt herself weak even with Maryam's counselling, she felt she could not fight much longer.

"Khawlah!! My lovely sister! on every single page of the Qur'an we are backed up. It's not for us to say that I accept failure. We are advised not to give into failure."

"Then why am I losing my courage Maryam?" Khawlah asked with a broken heart.

"You haven't gone weak. These are whispers from shaytan which drag you to disappointment. Let's consider for a moment that you have lost your strength. What will you do? will you commit suicide? or leave the right path to surrender to your parents?"

"No, I won't. I can never ever think about suicide. When all left me, Allah wiped my tears. How can I make Him angry by committing suicide?" She replied sadly.

"That's what I am telling you dear. This is not losing courage. If you had lost courage, you probably would have done so already. See, this counter face of hatred and opposition from falsehood is proof of you being right. Whenever falsehood isn't a problem for you, then you should think that you're on the wrong path. Khawlah, those who stand against the truth have no issue with compromised Islam, or moderate, open-minded and liberal Islam. They are bothered with the true Islam. When they have no issue about it with you, you will realize that you are not following the Islam of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., rather the Islam of your own choice.

So be strong and prove yourself as Allaah's faithful servant. When you have bared so much, then bear a little more. Don't let the evil win." Maryam's voice had more of an element of plead than advice. She could see Khawlah retreating so close to the destination.

Khawlah remembered some stanzas which she once read and now were relatable to her.

*What happened to your flavor in love that made you rest on the way?

Your ambitions changed only after a few hurdles right away? *

Khawlah's eyes had gone wet again. She felt relaxed. She remembered the verse of Surah al-Asr: *Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience* and saw its wonderful results. We know everything but yet the few words of one who supports us, make a wavering heart strong as a rock. Even if the listener is a scholar, you need words to live again, to start your journey with new zeal and stamina. Khawlah was grateful to Allah who caught her before falling.

* * * * *

Abdullah was reading a letter by a Muslim sister named Fatima, that was written in the last decade in the Jail, Abu-Ghareb of Iraq. He had saved the details in his cell phone.

"Assalaamu alaykum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh

December 18, 2004

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Mercy-giving.

"Say, He is Allah, [who is] One, Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, Nor is there to Him any equivalent." [Qur'an, Surat 112 "Al-Ikhlās"]

I chose this noble Surah from the Book of Allah because it has the greatest impact on me and on all of you and it strikes a particular kind of awe in the hearts of the Believers.

My brothers! Mujahideen! The ones on the path of Allah! What can I say to you? I say to you: our wombs have been filled with the children of fornication by those sons of apes and pigs who raped us. Or I could tell you that they have defaced our bodies, spit in our faces.. Allah is Great! Allah is Great! Allah is Great!

Can you not comprehend our situation? Is it true that you do not know what is happening to us? We are your sisters. Allah will be calling you to account [about this] tomorrow.

By Allah, we have not passed one night since we have been in prison without one of the apes and pigs jumping down upon us to rip our bodies apart with their overweening lust. And we are the ones who had guarded our virginity out of fear of Allah. Fear Allah! Kill us along with them! Destroy us along with them! Don't leave us here to let them get pleasure from raping us! It will be an act to ennoble the Throne of Allah the Almighty, Fear Allah regarding us! Leave their tanks and aircraft outside. Come to us here in the prison of Abu Ghurayb.

I am your sister in Islam (Fatimah). They raped me in one day more than nine times. Can you comprehend? Imagine one of your sisters being raped. Why can't you all imagine it, as I am your sister. With me are 13 girls, all unmarried. All have been raped before the eyes and ears of everyone.

They won't let us pray. They took our clothes and won't let us get dressed. As I write this letter one of the girls has committed suicide. She was savagely raped. A soldier hit her on her chest and thigh after raping her. He subjected her to unbelievable torture. She beat her head against the wall of the cell until she died, for she couldn't take any more, even though suicide is forbidden in Islam. But I excuse that girl. I have hope that Allah will forgive her, because He is the Most Merciful of all.

Brothers, I tell you again, fear Allah! Kill us with them so that we might be at peace. Help! Help! Help. "

The letter ended but Abdullah was still lost in it. His eyes wet and his heart pierced. He just grieved over his helplessness. This all was happening around the world but he couldn't stop it. Why had this Ummah become a spectator? Though today, the Mujahideen were fighting almost everywhere and were trying their best to take the revenge of this brutality as much as they could. But were only a few of them sufficient?

Where was the rest of the Ummah? Could the Muslims not see this or did they just not have enough time? This indifferent Ummah just kept silent.

When the mujahideen avenged those disbelievers then the so called Muslims used to cry that it was torment and that 'Islam means peace' and all that nonsense... such cold hearts! As if they wanted to yell: it is a religion of flowers, how dare you raise swords? For them the Mujahideen should have preached, prayed for betterment of the disbelievers, they should have taught them Qur'an but they are torturing them. Khawarij! Khawarij! thats what they knew to yell and parrot... such ignominious they were...

*Even if they massacre us in millions, they aren't questioned by any,

While even our single sigh is considered as a crime by many*

A wonderful mockery of the religion of Prophet (ﷺ). You shall be seen on Doomsday, when the oppressed Muslims shall take you by the collar and hold you accountable in front of Allah and His Messenger. You backstabbed the Ummah today, but tomorrow you shall have to face us.

* * * * *

"So friends! I was saying that here we watch one Muslim country after another going down. Our Ummah did nothing when Palestine was taken away from us. One by one the Muslim countries are getting into afflictions. You see the Muslims of Kashmir, Chechnya, Xinjiang province in China, Philippines etc. And we see the Ummah is doing nothing as Iraq and Syria are surrounded. All are just spectators. This torture will not keep to this rather it will cloud other Muslim countries as well. Allah knows who will be next. We must realize that these countries were not snatched away overnight. Rather they were snatched when we let them over a Muslim country and did not retaliate. Realize that we allowed the enemies to take over all of us just then." The leader of the unit of Mujahideen was exposing his heart's pain in front of his companions with wet eyes. Abdullah listened to every word carefully with his head bent down in silence.

The grooming and education of this small unit went side by side in secret in a wood in Kashmir. Their faithful gatherings enriched their passions.

"My brothers! Holy Prophet S.A.W said:

" مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادِّهِمْ وَتَرَاحُمِهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ مَثَلُ الْجَسَدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهَرِ وَالْحُمَّى "

"The similitude of believers in regard to mutual love, affection, fellow-feeling is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever." (Sahih Muslim)

A body! we are like one single body. As this hadith explains, the whole body will feel two types of aches. "Sleeplessness" (سهر) and "fever" (حمى).

You cannot rest while you have sleeplessness. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) is giving example. Now imagine, if your finger is aching, or your foot or any other part of your body that's aching then you'll feel the pain and can't sleep with this pain. Your body gets pyrexia (fever) in an attempt to fight the germs. It's fighting with a foe and the whole body is involved in this fight.

This picture of the Ummah is presented by Muhammad (ﷺ)

So if a Muslim is in pain in East or West, North or South, whether the central part of the body or the peripheral, finger of the hand or toe of the foot, you have to feel the same pain as if it's happening to your own family. If you're concerned only about you and your family's safety and protection, then it means there's a problem. Then in reality you aren't a part of this body of the Ummah of Muhammed (ﷺ)

Now let me show you a picture of grief and sorrow of this Ummah," The commander of the mujahideen who was giving a lecture, played the video of an old Syrian Muslim on his cell phone. Abdullah was sitting in the last row so he could only listen. He leaned forward to listen even better.

The video was playing. A man in agony of pain and sorrow was screaming.

"We are being slaughtered in Aleppo.
We are hungry.
Our children are slaughtered.
We have nothing left.
Where are you? Be afraid of Allah about us.
Who are listening to us, I warn you.
Be afraid of Allah! O Muslims! O Arabs!
Where are you! We are being slaughtered.
We are murdered! we are dying of hunger. Nothing is left. We have nothing left! Where are you.
Save us! O ALLAH!!! who are listening and can respond to our call!
O creation of Allah! O troops!

Assalam o Alaikum!"

"So you, young blood of the ummah!!!",
The leader of the unit spoke again. The pain in his eyes reflected the hidden agony in his heart. He let out a cold sigh and started his speech again.

"We should not be the *silent majority*.
You must be aware of the incident of Prophet Saleh (A.S) and his camel.
How many people planned to murder? Only Nine!
And among them who made the first strike? Only One!

"Nine" people arrange to murder the camel. And the same nine plan to murder Saleh (A.S) Then why instead of punishing only nine people, all of the people of Thamud were doomed?

Allah says:

"Then look how was the outcome of their plan - that We destroyed them and their people, all."
(Surah An-Naml, verse 51)

"The reason is that they *knew* about their evil plan but they did not resist it. Because they became the silent majority. They thought they will have meals in their homes, have luxury with their wives and be safe in their houses.

My brothers in faith! there is no escape with excuses, no way in between. Either you are with the Troops of Allah or with the allies of Evil. There is nothing in between.

Today you see the public in the same state. Look for yourself, any nation. Any nation !!

Take the example of America. Who are their decision makers?"

The president, national security council, some influential persons of congress, some CEOs of big corporations, some heads of important banks, some zionist advisors and few professors and think tanks of prominent universities.

Only two hundred, three hundred or four hundred persons!

Where are the rest of them? Busy!! They are shopping, relaxing on the park benches, watching games on their sofas at homes; eating, drinking, sleeping.

"...but those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as grazing livestock eat, and the Fire will be a residence for them. " (Surah Al-Muhammad, verse 12)

This is what majority of people do!

" الْمَلَأَ " (the leaders/the decision makers)

Are only few people as mentioned in Qur'an by Allah.

" الْمَلَأَ "

Rejected the message of Prophet Noah (A.S)

" الْمَلَأَ "

Disobeyed Prophet Hood (A.S). and opposed Prophet Saleh (A.S)

" الْمَلَأَ "

Includes leaders, rulers, guides, heads, elected people of society.

What about the rest of the people?

They are busy in this world, crazy to gain worldly aims, lost in its system.

But they cannot evade Allah's punishment by staying on the sidelines. If you do not take a side, then you cannot remain in between either. You have to choose either the party of Allah or the party of the Devil. There is no midway, you must choose one.

The people of Prophet Saleh A.S remained as a silent majority so they were arrested in a collective punishment.

We have a lot of lessons we can learn from of the stories mentioned in the Qur'an.

Even today the Truth and the falsehood stand out against one another. There is an open war between Islam and Kufr (Disbelief). And those who represent Islam are in minority.

The majority of the Muslims are replaying the role of the nation of Thamud, they are not taking part in this war.

Now is the time that we decide either we shall be those who step forward with the flag of the religion of Prophet (S.A.W), or side with disbelief. No place to hang in between!"

Abdullah sat silently, listening to each word attentively without moving. How relatable was this all to modern Muslims who were like the people of Thamud, minding their own world. Matches, cricket, parties, invitations, going on trips to countries! they were not melted by the screams of dying Muslims. But only a prick to a disbeliever, and the common Muslims and the dollar-scholars would take out swords of tongues!

The disbelievers had turned the courageous lions (Muslims) to a docile, grazing, circus animal, which had forgotten its real self. And themselves, they had become the wolves and were rampaging around. Striking drones on one Muslim country, dropped bombs on another, pet the rulers of third one and puppet them around. And the world was just enjoying the whole show.

Those who attacked the Muslim countries, labelled those helpless people as 'terrorists' and the world seconded them. Nobody asked about the disbelievers who were bombing with planes over the countries of the Muslims. Rather, the Muslims who themselves were the oppressed party, were being tormented and were labelled terrorists as well, what justice was that.

The enemy wanted the oppressed to bear the torture and not even complain. A person whose sister is raped, loved ones are burnt alive, whose son is beaten till he's nearly dead, do we really expect him to sit peacefully?

One can only understand if it's one's own family. But Abdullah won't allow this. He had decided that he'll not leave his brothers and sisters alone like the sleeping Ummah.

"Brave lions of Allah! If you have chosen this path, then be ready for death also. Only those who burn their ships at the shore, journey to their destination with full conviction. While the rest retreat....

You'll have to remove the love of this world and embrace your life of the hereafter like the Muhajireen (Emigrants) and the Ansaar (Helpers) of Madina.

You may have heard about the incident when after the Conquest of Makkah, Holy Prophet (ﷺ) distributed the booties of battles of Hunain and Taif, he (ﷺ) bestowed the new Muslim reverts of Makkah a gracious amount under the Qur'anic order of "مولفته القلوب". So that their hearts get softened and they are more loyal to Islamic rules due to gratefulness. Some people among the Ansaar ran strange emotions. They said that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) benefited the Quraish a lot and kept us empty. Even though our swords are yet soaked in blood.

*We're called for in troubles and booties are enjoyed by others. *

Such words reached the ears of the Prophet (ﷺ) He (ﷺ) called for a gathering of the Ansaar. Prophet Muhammed S.A.W. asked if they had said such things. They replied that he (ﷺ) heard right but those words were not said by their responsible people, rather some youngsters.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) gave a sermon:

* Isn't it true that you were lost and Allah showed you the path through me? You were divided and Allah united you through me? You were poor and Allah prospered you through me? *
In reply to each question the Ansaar said Yes, Indeed we are grateful to Allah and His Prophet S.A.W.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said: * No! You should reply that 'O Muhammad! when people rejected you, we approved you. When people left you, we took you. When you came to us in need, we helped you in every possible way.' You keep saying this and I shall say that yes you are speaking the truth. But O group of Anaaar ! Does it not appease you that people take away camels and goats and you take Muhammad (ﷺ) to your houses? *

At this the Ansaar cried out * We want only the Apostle of Allah! *

So brothers have this passion. Do not nurture love of bootie or dream of fame. Rather you too should say: We desire only for Allah and His Apostle S.A.W. Either we live as Ghaazi, or die as a martyr, victory is for Allaah only."

This debate with pure tears and sentiments had stimulated the faith of all Mujahideen sitting there.

Someone shouted the call for Takbeer and they all cried together. "ALLAAHU AKBAR!!!!!!!!!!" (Allah is Great!!!)

"O my Allah do not let my head down for anyone except You. Make my roar be like Ali's roar (R.A). Make my pistol be like the sword of Khalid bin Waleed (R.A). Give me wisdom like that of Umar (R.A). Give me a heart, soft like Usman (R.A), and loyalty for the Muslim brethren like that of Abu Bakr (R.A). Let no mountain stop my way. Make my speed as fast as the winds and let me be the angel of death for the enemies of Your religion."

Eyes clouded with tears, Abdullah gazed at the sky and asked for his purpose of life from Allah...

* * * * *

"Khawlahhhh! Either drive slowly or drop me here. Do you want to kill me?", Fatimah, dressed in Abbaya and veil was screaming in the front seat.

Khawlah, without any warning, pressed on the brakes hard. The car screeched on the road. Fatimah's heart sunk. With a pale face, and a mouth open, she looked at Khawlah in utter disbelief. Around them, speedy cars, unaware of their surroundings, were trying to move ahead of each other as usual.

"As you wish dear, please step out." Holding her laugh with difficulty, Khawlah pointed her friend to step out with mischief shining in her eyes.

"Very bad Khawlah, when will you learn manners?", Fatimah screwed her face in more anger.

"Such dramas! I am just giving you a practice to ride with your husband. Do you know that men drive very fast? Think about it and refuse Ali." (Ali was Fatimah's fiancée). Laughing Khawlah sped up the car again.

"Oh pity! Never do you accept your fault. Don't know which innocent man's life you are going to ruin in future", Fatimah wanted to make full use of this opportunity to tease her friend. Hiding her smile, she continued acting to look serious.

The car was moving on road speedily once again. Khawlah was not impressed at this ridicule. She drove even faster, in an attempt to tease her friend even more.

It had been a month since that last proposal. Though her heart had gotten relaxed after talking to Maryam, but she was still a bit tired at heart. That war had gone on for days and her heart went apiece with this daily battle. Silence of night after day's taunts and torment, talking to Allah and page after page of Qur'an, wet with tears, these were her companions in those hardships. Tiredness of day just vanished after talking to Allah in the darkness of the night. Her nature was so sensitive that if she had not developed such relation with Allah, she would surly have been visiting some psychiatrist by now.

Now Khawlah had to find friends of true faith. She was at loss of how to find them as she had never befriended such girls and she was not pupil of religious schools to have religious people around her.

In the same days, she got a chance to chat with some religious girls through her distantly related cousin who used to veil (but not as approved in Shariah)

In the very first meeting with those girls, Khawlah felt so happy as if she had met her lost blood relatives. Religion teaches such brotherhood. She expressed to them her joy at meeting niqabi friends. She tried to ask them how they came along this path. Did they have to make sacrifices like her?

To Khawlah's surprise, not all of them felt joy as equal to her own. They acted unimpressed, for them truly believing friends and materialistic ones were equal. There was no special attraction or affection for Khawlah in their eyes. They even had no special affection for those who love Islam, leave friendship aside. Khawlah surely would have seemed foolish in front of them as some crazy person who seemed to have never seen humans.

Khawlah cried a lot back at home.

"Allah what has happened to the Muslims? Where are the people like the Sahabah (Companions of Rasul Allaah s.a.w)? Where have the friends of faith gone?"

After this incident, on Maryam's advice, Khawlah had started making Dua to get a friend of faith. And within a week she met Fatimah. Khawlah was in a nearby park with her grandfather and Ibrahim in the evening. It was a family park but little kids gathered here to play in the evening with seldom elders.

Fatimah and her mother had come there with Fatimah's little brother. Coincidentally, Fatimah was also not a regular visitor. She was a doctor and was doing a house job. They started chatting as kids played.

Fatimah had started the chat as Khawlah was too embarrassed by the past experience to relive it again. Fatimah too was in Abaya and veil. Khawlah had no idea that a few moments chat would turn into close friendship.

Fatimah told Khawlah about a Qur'an class which she attended off and on. Khawlah also joined that class on her advice and then her life changed from then on.

You find modern, open minded, self-molded Islam and the variety of Islam approved by America and the tyrants in every corner. But here were the real Muslims who taught the lesson of Qur'an with clarification, taught the real Islam, responded to challenge of America in same tone, considered not only the Kashmir issue (adopted as their issue in opposition to India) as their issues, but also the issues of Palestine, Burma, Syria, Iraq, Africa, Afghanistan, Egypt, Rohingya, China, Waziristan, Yemen and elsewhere Muslims were oppressed and weak as their own issues.

They were not everywhere in the country, rather they were the real 'strangers' who became aliens to their people for raising the flag islam - the flag of Allah.

The joy Khawlah felt in first class could not be expressed in words. She prayed for a faithful friend and found so many.

We have not truly understood the value of dua to Al-Rahman so the amount of prayers and the need in them is not as it should have been.

But along with the feelings of joy, Khawlah had some anger and complaint too against Fatimah. She had told her about this class after whole two weeks of friendship. Why had she taken so many days to invite her to this class? Even though she knew how desperate she was for such a class.

But her displeasure at Fatimah had disappeared the very next moment when she thought about the day of Judgement. People then too may get angry at those who did not guide them to the right path in dunya, though walking it themselves.

Like Khawlah's family and her relatives.

She herself chose the right path but did not sit with them to preach and teach them about religion in a relaxed state for the fear that they may taunt her and abuse or reject her message. She had just took stance for her point of view. But not tried to change their mind so that they may come towards religion by their own choice, so that they may recognize what she recognized.

How could she see them falling in the pits of Hell? Her heart was worried; they were part of her soul. How can she go into paradise without them? Not without them! She must try till her last breath, as one who struggles, never loses.

Allah says:

O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them but do what they are commanded

[Surat At-Tahrim, Ayah 6]

It had been two weeks since Khawlah joined the Qur'an class and these very two weeks became a means to give her life a new turn. Maryam was right that when you step onto the path of Allah, then don't expect that it will be lightened up till the final destination. Allah does not reveal His plans before the right time, he only shows the next step. Each right step, lightens up the next. But the entire path is never enlightened. This is the test of those who trust him. Each step is clear till you trust Him and

you reach the destination by these stepping stones. Just keep in mind that let everything be a loss but not your trust in Allah.

Khawlah's family was unaware of her attending this class. She now used to go to the park with her grandfather and Ibrahim after Asr Salah. Leaving them in the park she would then pick Fatimah from her home and then head to their class. Grandfather and Ibrahim would accompany her again on the return trip. Nobody had any idea about the real story. Neither did they ask, nor did she try to inform them.

Khawlah parked the car outside a house and went in with Fatimah. The entrance door opened into a hall type room, on sides of which were smaller rooms. The room was carpeted but had no furniture. Probably it was dedicated for the purpose of teaching and preaching only.

When Khawlah and Fatimah entered, only a few girls sat there. Some with Abaya, some with just shawls (probably new on this path).

After greeting everyone, they sat in a corner. This habit of the girls attracted Khawlah that everyone who came greeted the rest. There was no point of known or stranger in it, this was how they established the Sunnah.

No male of the house entered this part of the building during class time. So they all comfortably removed their Abbayas and listened to the lecture freely

"Hmm ... so Brother Ali has not yet refused to marry such a boring girl", Khawlah asked mischievously.

"Khawlah! I am telling you, I'm gonna kick you, seriously", Red with shame, Fatimah threw a hot look at her friend. She could not teach her a good lesson among those all, so Khawlah took advantage of this.

A girl who sat nearby with her back to the wall smiled at them, seeing their friendly fight.

"Seems like you two are very close friends", The addressed them.

"Yes, very close", Fatimah responded even before Khawlah, looking at her friend appreciatively.

The room was slowly filling up now. Girls greeted each other as they took their places.

"May Allah put barakah in this friendship, may He make it the reason for you two to have a place under the shadow of His Throne on the day of Judgement". Indeed, a great Dua had been made by that girl.

Khawlah remembered a Hadith on mention of the shadow of the Throne of Allah.

*Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Seven (people) will be shaded by Allah by His Shade on the Day of Resurrection when there will be no shade except His Shade. (They will be), a just ruler, a young man

who has been brought up in the worship of Allah, a man who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes are then flooded with tears, a man whose heart is attached to mosques (offers his compulsory congregational prayers in the mosque), two men who love each other for Allah's Sake, a man who is called by a charming lady of noble birth to commit illegal sexual intercourse with her, and he says, 'I am afraid of Allah,' and (finally), a man who gives in charity so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given."*

[Sahih Al-Bukhari]

Both the parties introduced each other and it came out that, that stranger girl was no simple girl rather a medical doctor who had graduated from one of best medical colleges of Pakistan.

"Army medical college...???" Fatimah's mouth was left open in surprise.

However, Sarah (the new girl) showed no pride, rather was a bit uneasy at Fatimah's behavior.

"You must have joined army then. They take their own graduates enthusiastically. You must be a captain doctor with a sari. Oh I like their sari so very much", Fatimah was speaking non-stop.

Sarah just watched her silently.

"Have you ever reflected upon that sari?", Sarah inquired.

"Yes, it is really attractive." Fatimah's eyes shone with desire.

"No. You haven't dear... Otherwise a girl with modest veil would never have said such a thing.", Sarah's speech lacked any insult but she looked serious.

"What.... I just...", Fatimah did not understand what she has said wrong.

"I had only one dream since childhood. A doctor in the army...", Sarah began her story. May be her story was a big one so she started with a prelude so that the listeners could comprehend.

Sarah continued to narrate. "I liked sari as well. I was crazy about it. Mother and father also desired for me to be in army but I was ambitious for it. I studied too much, I became a bookworm. And then I got admission. For the first time in my life I cried with joy. My happiness was limitless and I was on the seventh sky. My relatives too boosted me up. As if the world was heaven now, but then..."

"Then what...", Khawlah could not hold her curiosity. Sarah looked at her and said, "Then Khawlah I thought about a lot of things. A lot. I thought about sari. I realized that this dress tears apart our modesty. Rather it is not even a dress. A dress covers. But this prominent each part that was supposed to be covered. I thought about the girls who wear sari, their breast was exposed despite being covered. Every part was prominent. When they walked, every organ was apparent to the extent that one could see clearly which part is moving up and which is going down."

Sarah remained silent for a few moments.

Khawlah had never considered in this way. How blind were we Muslims? No worry about importance of anything, apart from eating, drinking, sleeping, shopping and having fun in lives.

"I apologize for speaking like this but it is necessary to know. Anyhow, as my graduation was about to complete, I decided not to join army for many reasons. One of them is that army does not allow women to veil. This is against their rules."

"What?? Niqab is not allowed?? What are you saying? It's impossible", Fatimah and Khawlah were both shocked at this, but Fatimah was a bit over herself. She could not believe her ears. She did not even consider about her reaction that she was talking not talking to a commoner, but to someone who had lived in army.

The girls around them also got attentive towards them in surprise at Fatimah's reaction. Apologizing to all in embarrassment, Fatimah said to Sarah, "Sorry, I was a bit loud."

"It's okay, but please consider that you should accept when someone talks with reason. Illogical emotionalism takes you away from haq (truth)", Sarah said softly.

"So when I did not join the army then people told me that I was very dumb and foolish and what not. My father requested me to at least become a captain and then resign the next day if i wanted to. He just wished to see me with stars of army", Her voice got heavy. After a few moments break, Sarah started again," I cried to my father that what if I die before resigning? I will be raised as one who did not veil. How will I answer my Lord? I told him this is Dunya, that is the Hereafter. Which one should I destroy?.. He stayed silent and accepted with the passing time.. But the world did not accept this at all. People do not realize that a girl whose aim of life was to be in army, who had got all luxury waiting for her, everything. She must have a very valid reason behind her this great a decision!! You know how much privilege an army person has? The world is at your feet. Every luxury, every desire, everything. as if in Heaven !! Is it easy to reject all this and accept to live a life of commoner? But if someone does so, then it really is a big deal. He/she is not stupid who got selected for that college. But no, people are ready to sell their emaan for glamour of this temporary world, need only a suitable buyer. Well there is a lot to say...", Sarah paused as if words choked her throat. She jerked her head and said to both girls, "I told you this so you may understand what's happening in the world around you. A true Believer, who had to rescue the Ummah, if he does not know what is happening around him for years, then how on earth will he counter the evil planning's of Baatil (Falsehood)?"

In a stance, Khawlah and Fatima just looked at her.

The teacher of the class had started her lecture. Those three were so absorbed into their conversation that they did not notice when the room got filled or when the speaker started her talk.

All students took out their notepads to take notes. Khawlah too opened her diary, marked the end of last noted lecture and turned the page to write down the new one.

After making supplications, the teacher started her speech:

"Today we shall talk about the lessons for the youth in Surat Al-Kahf. I hope all sisters here will walk out as a new person.

First thing that we need to realize is that anything a person can do; he can do so in his youth mostly. See the Companions of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W, who were among them? Ali, Zaid, Zubair, Saad bin abi Waqas, Muadh, Ma'uz (R.A) ...

The companions of Devil are also mostly the young. You can observe even in your own houses.

So if you want to achieve anything then you should start in youth. How can you fulfill your goals in old age when you won't be able to even straighten your back?

Keep this in mind that sacrifices are almost always made by young people. Elders are mostly obsessed with fear of risks and aftermaths.

So take the struggle for this religion on to yourself and stand up for Allah, whenever a sacrifice is required. Allah will strengthen your heart. Never consider yourself weak. You have strength of Imaan!!!!

**Fate changes by the look of a Mo'min* (iqbal)*

For this you have to do three things:

First strengthen your faith.

Then stand up for truth, and stand firm.

Raise the word of Truth for Allah as the Companions did.

Remember that Allah shall be sufficient for you when you'll give proof of your obedience. You shall have the better tidings, the more you become a stranger for the sake of this religion.

The heart (Qalb e Saleem) which is needed to get Jannah (Paradise) is not easy to achieve. You have to accept Allah as your **ilaah** - "الله"

Do you know the meaning of ilaah?

One who is die-hardly loved, whose authority is imprinted on heart, whose majesty and greatness is engraved deep inside heart.

The nexus of our hopes and wishes,

For whom we die and live,

Who is asked for sustenance...

Now answer yourselves, how many ilaah have we got?

We repeatedly agree that our ilaah is only Allaah, but whom do we acknowledge as ilaah in real?

Look inside your hearts. Whom do you give this meaning to? How many ilaah have you got?

Now let's talk about the state of today's Muslims in general !!

They are really bold, they have no concern about anything. "Whatever, we'll see about it" has become our habit.

But what will you see about?

Have you any idea about what you will see?

Will you see what happens in the grave?

Will you see what happens on the day of Judgment!
Will you see when you are taken for your funeral when you will not be able to even move a hair?
Will you see when the world is taken away from you?
Will you see when your body gets paralyzed?

"Whatever, we'll see about it"!!!

When the grave burns inside, will you see?
When the snakes bite in grave, will you see?
The beautiful face you show boldly to everyone with no veil, will you be able to see when it is bitten by snakes?
The youth you take pride in, what if it gets ruined by a terminal illness, will you see?
Such majesties now rot in soil!
Such skies have fallen on earth!
Your prime youth will decline, take no pride!

You delay your obligatory prayers and say we'll see about it! Whatever!
Will you see when angels punish you?
Will you see when you walk over the Bridge of Siraat?
You will stand on edge watching people fall one by one into pits of hell!
Think for a moment ! People falling turn by turn!
Ever imagined!??

Now close your eyes and imagine, telling yourself..
*it's my turn. I see people falling, screaming, the hell filling.....
Now I remember all my bad deeds one by one, But it's not my turn yet!
I remember whatever I had done!
How will I pass through!?
What if I fall?
Sharper than a sword, thinner than hair, the Bridge over Hell! the Bridge hidden in darkness!

Will you see when Balance of your Acts is set?

People are running aimless here and there. No virtue is loaned. Mother won't give her virtues to son, son won't give his virtues to his mother.
People say "Whatever, we'll see later"

When four men take your body to put in grave, you will be alone...

You cannot even dare against a company of ten people then what will you do in grave?

Man, we'll see about it!

Have you ever thought about what will you see later?
Nothing ! We are mocking ourselves.

Live to die. You are living to live forever.
Live for dying.

Never forget your death.
I swear by Allah that you will die.
I swear by the Honour of Allah that we all will die. And we will die anytime.
Everything will be left behind and we say ever so ignorantly "Whatever, we'll see".

You cannot tolerate a mouse in your room, how will you tolerate the punishment of grave?

Do not speak like this.
Why do you act so bold?
You are warned not to wander about without modest clothing and veil, but you say "We'll see about it."

Do not live the life in disobedience of Allah and His Apostle S.A.W.

May Allah enable us to repent and to make sincere "Tawbah" and correct our actions.
Ameen."

The talk ended.

Everyone's cheeks were wet with tears.
Khawlah remembered her past.

"O Allah! All those sins..
What have I done with my life..
I spent my life in such pits of sin. Please forgive me", Crying and hiccupping with her head resting on her knees, she prayed.

Meanwhile, a girl started a Nasheed:

*By Walking on the path of Companions (Sahabah) with sheer determination (رضي الله عنهم)
We have attained the Bliss of the heart through its manifestation,

Ever since we had a taste of the Heavens above,
Our hearts have become numb for this world in love.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who cried for you in pain,
Even when he صلى الله عليه وسلم was stoned again and again!

You belittled his ways under your feet!
Isn't your loyalty to your habeeb a deceit?

My dears, such is the death on this path that you tread,
That the Apostle صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed for it even when he bled,

The One who is beheaded for it shall strive,
By Allah! He is forever alive!

Roaring across Uhud the voice of Anas bin Nazr with bravery ,
His words are nothing but mere courage and gallantry

The One who dies for Allah, Ta'aala
He is the true lover of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم - Mustafa

To stand in the field of atrocities
To be fervent for martyrdom
To cut off from falsehood for Allah
This is the way to the Heavens above

My heart is getting anxious
By the fragrance of paradise from the battle grounds

The cool breeze of heavens
Is calling you!
O Muslim youth Wake Up and make your way through!

By Walking on the path of Companions with sheer determination (رضي الله عنهم)
We have attained the Bliss of the heart through its manifestation,

Ever since we had a taste of the Heavens above,
Our hearts have become numb for this world in love.*

* * * * *

Walking along the side of the road, Khawlah and Ibrahim were about to reach their home when a car coming at normal speed from in front of them, on coming near, sped up and passed so that dust had clouded over them.

Ibrahim was at some distance, resulting in Khawlah becoming the main target.
Khawlah's steps went cold, she wanted to turn around but mastered herself.

"I have been answered bitterly, was ridiculing me necessary?" She whispered to herself.
Khawlah swallowed back her urge to cry, her throat choked. She and Ibrahim had come from the park in a happy mood and now... The grief won't let her rest till morning.

Was it a crime to desire for a pious man?

The man in the car was the Muadhin whose Adhan had created a soft corner for him in Khawlah's heart.

After some period from rejection of her first proposal, grandfather had asked the Imam of the masjid for that Muadhin with her approval.

Khawlah just knew that only a virtuous man of Allah gives a beautiful Adhan but had no information about him. Rich or poor, graduated or not, handsome or not.... nothing.
She only knew that his Adhan was beautiful and she approved of him only for this .

It was just by chance that he was the son of one of the richest person in the city. They probably assumed that she had aimed for the status and riches.

So even the religious people were status conscious, they were concerned about their image in society.

Where were the people like The Companions? They were only impressed by the religious status of a person.

With a heavy heart Khawlah entered her house. Ibrahim went to his room for homework. She also went to hers. Khawlah was too grieved to do anything. She didn't go down for dinner. When her mother came to ask she said she had no desire to eat.

Sitting on her bed in darkness, she was lost in thoughts with her back to her pillow.

The window was open and the glimmering light of the natural lamp (the moon) in the sky entered the room.

Was she being punished for her past sins?

Had Allah left her alone?

Khawlah Suleman, a degree holder of one of the top universities, whose intelligence was famous, who was the apple of every person's eye, people praised her wherever she went.

The same Khawlah Suleman was not only a disgrace for her family now, but less than a beggar among her relatives too.

People called her mad, some said she was under the influence of black magic, some accused that she had invented a new religion, some questioned her character as she got no proposals even with her education otherwise she was a gem. She was a stranger to all.

Were there stones instead of hearts in the chests of people?

What kind of humans were they?

Did they get contentment after saying all this about someone? Didn't they feel any guilt?

There was a time when she had people in lines for her. Every luxury was at her feet. She got proposals from doctors, engineers, and officers... but they were all materialistic, drowned for the love of this world.

Khawlah had no desire for them now. She desired for those who loved true religion, not those who acted for compromised religion or self-made materialistic religion.

Those who will not obscure the path of faith rather aid her on this way.

She was told multiple times that she should marry some non-practicing person, later she can preach him and change him once she is with him.

How very wrong they were. Change comes when there is some fundamental base.

They should observe five time prayers; they should accept her veil.

Otherwise they would act worse than her own parents who had not approved her obedience of religious rulings, what can she expect of others?

They would divorce her soon or ask her to follow their ways or else.

It was stupid to expect anything when there is much difference in thoughts.

Such marriages result in unbearable disputes and Khawlah did not want to live such a way. Even parents do not support you later with the argument that you should compromise for your home.

People do such emotional blackmail with their children. When such people who are ignorant regarding the knowledge of the Deen, happen to get any position of authority, either in houses or countries, then the result is a disaster.

For many hours Khawlah cried with her head in between her knees. Feeling tired, then sat up, leaning on her pillow with eyes closed.

Finally when she felt her heart feeling better, she switched on the light, wiped her tears and searched for her cell phone.

Khawlah looked everywhere but could not find it. She opened the drawer of her side table, looked among her stuff but the whole drawer came out on a little extra pull.

"Ohh... it's all a mess now!" Angry at herself she bent to collect all her things. While searching, she found a note pad near the foot of her bed.

"This..? How did this get here?"

She picked up the pad, dusted it, placed it on her bed and put back the rest of her scattered stuff.

Once free, Khawlah took the note pad and turned the pages. Fatimah had given this to her and told her that she found it in a library. Librarian had told Fatimah that some unknown girl left it there with a note that it had the golden words (which she selected from many books) and advice of people which had helped her pass through her difficult times. Now she wanted to leave it there so that Allah may benefit someone with shadows of relief in his/her hardships.

As Fatimah was busy in her tough routine and hardly found time for this so she gave it to Khawlah as a gift.

Khawlah was just turning pages when her eyes got fixed on some lines on a page:

"Mother, am I a lustrous person or detracted or disobedient.... that people have to think hard before accepting me?"

Khawlah just jumped at this sentence. What is this? It was just like her state. She read the next sentences in a hurry.

"Mother people hesitate about accepting such women but they also hesitate about accepting people like me. So there is no difference right?" Mother wanted to stop her but remained silent with a thought.

Static pupils and worn out tone, she was not normal.

"Mother which standard do the girls like us have to fulfil so that we may not be rejected? Mother is it wrong to desire for a Mo'min (a true Muslim)? But a Mo'min or a *True* Mo'min? Do you know that there is a disease in the heart of today's so called Mo'min? A disease of fear for society, respect, beauty, anger of people, family, caste... these all are diseases! Otherwise why must one think before accepting the path of virtue?"

The So called Mo'min of today, tells me that his family will not accept me.... what do I lack? I am created by Allah. His creations have no impairment. The *Mo'min* gave me hopes and then said that I shall get somebody better than him. Are my feelings so worthless?

Mother have I some bad desires? Is it sin to rebel against self-made rules of society?

I am fed up of a life of luxuries, am I wrong for this?

I want to live in faith, is this wrong?

I do not want to be a party warmer, am I sinful for wanting this?"

Ayaad was about to burst today.

"Allah keeps silent with me. Ask Him, is there no way for me in His vast universe? Is there no true Muslim for me in this universe? Will Allah reject me as well? I have never desired against Him. Are my thoughts and desires mightier than my worth? Tell me, Ask Him! The sons like Umar bin Khattab and Ibn Taimiyyah can be born only from a true Muslim mother!"

Mother got startled at her last words. Ayaad was crying bitterly with her head between her knees. Indeed she had made a great wish.

But she was not wrong, the most important phase of her life had passed. She had seen many forms of hypocrisy in her journey to reach Allah. She had not seen the quality of

سمعنا و اطعنا

in anyone.

She was searching for purity in a world of deceit. Her life had become a struggle. Mother had sympathy for Ayaad but she understood why Allah was silent.

"Ayaad do you know that Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. was given ascend to heavens after the moments of Grief?

There are many secrets for a Muslim in the life of the Prophet S.A.W."

Ayaad looked at mother with wet swollen eyes.

"When the grief and sorrow are at their peak then the blessings and mercy of Allah are achieved, His closeness... the blessed ascend is more than near then.

When the people of Taif threw stones at The Apostle S.A.W., didn't Allah show him the path?

You are not even stoned yet!

The matter of the Treaty of Hudaibiah tested his patience and Allah bestowed the Conquest of Makkah in its price.

When no one was with him, then the great woman Khadijah R.A became his companion who was the closest, encouraging, and strengthening wife. Indeed Allah makes ways for those who have faith and are steadfast and patient.

Allah values faith, He does not reject any one. Why do you think He will leave you alone? He will value your innocent faithful Duas. He values the good.

A faithful does not lose hope in Allaah's Mercy. He does not keep in his heart the grief for those who left and fear of those who will come, he does not get disappointed... No!

Allaah blesses His faithful servants with ease when they trust Him. He promises:

"...And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out." (Surah At-Talaq, verse 2)

He will surely value, no doubt, He will value your honest prayers. He will give you the best way....

*By the morning brightness
And [by] the night when it covers with darkness,
Your Lord has not taken leave of you, [O Muhammad], nor has He detested [you].
And the Hereafter is better for you than the first [life].
And your Lord is going to give you, and you will be satisfied.*
(Surah Ad-Dhuhaa, verses 1-5)

* * * * *

Khawlah called Maryam on Skype at night. She could not use direct cell number for calling or messaging. Maryam had told her that that she could be arrested otherwise, as Indian authorities considered the incoming calls from Pakistan as strict crime on part of Kashmiris.

Khawlah told Maryam the whole story.

"Khawlah there are few like the Companions. Though there are many who are apparently religious, so much so that their speech mirrors the principles of Islam, but you will not find faith in their hearts (and thus actions too). True Islam, the Islam of Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), the Islam of Abu Bakr, Umar, Salman The Persian, Mus'ab bin Umair, Abdul Rahman bin Auf, Muadh, Khabbab R.A. is found only among very few today. These people who are called "strangers" are truly strangers in this materialistic society. One among millions. Each is alone in his people. Alien, like Ibrahim. A.S. in his own people. Victim of criticism and abuse of people like Lut A.S in this culture of evil, so that people consider such a person mad. As the Companions who were considered lunatics by the disbelievers of Makkah." Maryam ended her speech.

"Maryam where are such people?" Khawlah asked with a tired , worn out soul. Would she then be waiting forever like this for her life? Almost all cousins and friends of her age had got married, some had two or three children by now. Only Allah knew how her soul was ever so heavy by watching their many pictures with husbands posted on Facebook. Why do people broadcast their romantic lives on social media? You not only hurt the ones who are still deprived, but also insult the principles of Haya and modesty. Muslims are not to copy Romeo & Juliet, Heer Ranjha, Sassi Pannu. The Muslim's love life is confined to the walls of the house. He does not share everything out shamelessly. A Muslim copies Muhammad S.A.W. and Khadija R.A. He is not shameless and bold like the disbelievers.

The ignorant Muslims on one of the sad thing is the following of this attitude by religious people. Those who were supposed to teach modesty had forgotten their lesson. What would Prophet S.A.W. feel if he were here today.

"You will find them in woods, caves, mountains or locked up in jails now a day. Or maybe in some cities where they are waiting to meet up their friends." Maryam spoke as if lost far away in thoughts. "What do you mean Maryam? Woods... Caves... Jails... I fail to understand anything." Khawlah thought she must be ill, was she telling her about some criminals? She must be feeling upset.

"Khawlah I am talking about Mujahideen. You are looking at the wrong place in search of the ideal man you have in your mind. Only Mujahideen have such qualities, who have kicked every glamorous thing of the world by shoe and chose the dangers for love of Allah. Only such virtuous people of

Allah will want to be your partner. They will advise you to stand for truth like the Companions and will move on the way of righteousness shoulder to shoulder with you to heavens".

"But Maryam... where can I find them?" Khawlah was about to cry. It was impossible she could find such people. Did they really live on earth today? Also, Allah blesses only pious persons with them. She was a sinner, not even close to the worth of their feet. Khawlah's eyelids got wet with tears.

"Khawlah your only tool is Dua. It's nothing for Allah. The word "impossible" does not exist in His dictionary. This is His universe. Keys of all treasures are in His hands. Every matter seeks His permission and no leaf falls without His order. He can reveal the secrets in oceans and the closest thing becomes obscure if he says "No! Pray Tahajjud. Cry in front of Him. Show Him that you desire it hard. He will bless you one of His friends. You just ask for this path. If your desire is true and you continuously make Dua with faith in His blessings and powers then even the mountains will give you way.

But first you have to prove that you really want it. You may need to pass through toughest of tests to prove your claim.

"Or do you think that you will enter Paradise while Allah has not yet made evident those of you who fight in His cause and made evident those who are steadfast?" (Surah Aal-E-Imran, verse 142)

Khawlah, my dear sister, such is this path. Many faithful step back from it. Only those of pure faith step forward. So Allah tests His friends as gold in furnace, trains them properly. Then they become true soldiers who can bear the hash troubles of the field. Now it's up to you whether you lose strength midway or keep steadfast till you reach the destination."

Khawlah was listening everything with full attention. She was being shown a whole new world tonight.

"Khawlah! sometimes Allah tests whether you want the world and a compromised half religion or a path through thorns to the Hereafter. And those who love Allah reach their destination with injured feet while others are still thinking about which way to choose. Try to be like those true claimers of Allah's love in this test. But keep in mind that it is one of the most hard paths. The wife of a Mujahid does not live like normal women. She is not able to see her husband every evening like rest of the women of this world. Maybe you do not see his face for days, months or even years. Or you may be grieved with the news of his arrest. Or you may need to act both a mother and a father to your children because of being a widow of a Shaheed. Or you may need to stay on empty stomach for days in a row. Anything can happen Khawlah, anything. This is the path for strong hearted people. Not for losers with weak faith. Not for those who tie their husbands with their duppattas/Scarfs. So decide with all this in mind."

Khawlah's hands were glued to the phone. Indeed, this path required great sacrifices. Could a girl like her, grown up in luxuries bear this all?

Yes, she will bear it all! thought Khawlah.

She had no lust for this world as she had long lost love of her own people. She only desired Heaven now..

and Martyrdom.. And thus, the wonderful companionship of Allah.....

Khawlah had decided to be among the true "strangers".

"But Khawlah if you think that this is hard for you and you cannot walk this path then choose a religious person at least. If not then choose some who at least fulfills the fundamentals of this Deen. Who believes in the Oneness of Allah, offers his Salah five times a day, accepts your veil, has good etiquette, not dreaming about any past love, and earns halal money. If he has these attributes then you can incline him to rest of the acts demanded by the religion... slowly, and wisely."

"No. I have made my decision. I desire for a Mujahid who fights to save this Ummah. One who does not sit in his home like cowards when Jihad is mandatory today. One who has love for religion, heart on Allah's path and strives to raise the flag of Islam."

"Then pray and start working to improve yourself Khawlah, because:

"Evil women are for evil men, and evil men are [subjected] to evil women. And good women are for good men, and good men are [an object] of good women. Those [good people] are declared innocent of what the slanderers say. For them is forgiveness and noble provision"(Surah An-Nur, verse 26).

Make yourself worthy of Mujahid of Allah. Because your Lord is not unjust Khawlah. The Mujahid will desire a wife who observes rulings of religion, not one who compromises. Make yourself a person of religion, and Allah will bless you with His true servant soon. When, where and how.... it is not for you to think. Allah makes His own plans. He can give you through means or without any mean... These are His decisions... We cannot dictate Him the plan. Leave these matters to Him. Do what you are meant to do. Busy yourself on the way of righteousness. And wait with steadiness and patience ,trusting His Might and Power.... Remember that whatever happens, lose everything, do not lose your trust in Allah, do not fail your trust in Him... No matter what. Then no power can stop you from what you desire." Maryam was saying out nonstop today.

"But keep in mind that marriage is the "journey's resting stop" and *not* the destination. If you cannot achieve it then do not waver or lose heart. It is just a means to reach Allah, and not your final Destination. Destination is Allah. Remember this!!!" Maryam had completed her speech. Khawlah was motionless like a statue.

*Indeed this path was not amongst the easy ones,
She will face thorns and come across stones..
But the moon shone in the darkness, however much the darkness maybe
Never lose heart
As the light comes easy
If hope remains..

The moon in the darkness shone
Gives you the message that
Whoever is held by Allah

Is never left alone..
As Allah blesses it with a bright say,
He turns over the nights of its life
To a promising day..

You have to hold on
And act as He wills
That morning shall come
Which you are waiting for
You too shall achieve the light on the hills
This light of closeness with Allah forever lives...*

* * * * *

"Get up Khawlah! Hurry! Mama is calling downstairs. Uncle's family is coming to our home from India by today's flight." Saad informed Khawlah and turned to go.

"What? why all of a sudden?" Khawlah's concern was apparent in her voice.

"Well to ask for my beautiful sister's hand in marriage for their engineer son". With mischievous looks Saad went out of the room.

"What?" Khawlah got up so hard that the tea cup in her hand was barely saved from breaking.

Oh Rabb, I've been running to you since long. My path (of this life) crossed many dark forests and deserts (hardships upon hardships). The sharp thorns (pains of life given by people and my loved ones) left my feet (of soul) hurt & wounded. Many a times I fell, left with no effort to walk further. But You, O my Loving Lord, You made me stand up every time I fell down. Your help used to come at the exact time I needed it. Though many times I lost sight of You, so much so that I started to wonder whether You still were there for me or had abandoned me. But in my every time of need, You came in front in the form of Your devine help. My crying eyes have always found solace in Your remembrance. Though the hurt of body remained, but of soul went away. Your Qur'an and encouraging words of Your prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) proved to be my staff with which I walked this path of blood (a path on which people tore away my soul and left it bleeding - so as to die).

My Lord, You have been my strength all along. But now that I'm crossing this final desert, I feel myself on my weakest point. The water I see a few yards apart - is that a mere mirage or really an oasis of Your Rehman??

My Allaah, why is it that on having reached near my times of salvation I've started losing myself - so much so that I have even forgotten why I was running all these years. My tired eyes are now closing down; they do not have the energy left to stay open anymore. Will I lose myself before I reach my goal, O Rabb??? Please do not leave me now that You have brought me this far. Please let me reach that oasis of Yours for which I have strived for years. Let me enjoy my days of happiness after having gone through days of heart wrenching pains. Let me enjoy peace after having gone through turmoil and war. Let my eyes regain their joy and spark after having lost their shine & twinkle. Let my face regain its long lost mischievous smile. Let me enjoy all this, with You on my side, such that I cry tears of joy in prostration, after having cried blood in sujood for years.

Let me O my Loving Rabb, let me..

~ Diary of a Prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)

Chapter Eight:

Saad certainly did not wait to see Khawlah's reaction.

"This means my test has already started."

With tons of weight on Khawlah's heart, she stood up, composed herself and went downstairs.

Almost all the members in the house sat in the living room except grandfather; he was ignored intentionally, as usual.

How can a child learn about respect when they see such behaviour with their elders? How would such a house be blessed?

There was so much excitement in the house. Everyone was very happy at this news, but her heart got even more worried to see them happy.

"Ya Allah! how will I survive this mess? These people are interested in their high profile status and top rated job in this worldly life. Why do they not consider that Imran does not bother about his obligatory Salah... He does not even appreciate the beard or the veil! The only attribute for this proposal is this material world. My family has no concern Islamically; isn't this total hypocrisy O Allah" she pleaded.

Well, why would a modern - 'moderate' Muslim care about all this anyways?

They do everything with the concept of Allah as Ar -Rahman [The Most Merciful], and thus ignore the rulings even about the basic Islamic faith.

As if they are the favorites of Allah and can mock the religion in any way they want to, but Allah is Ar - Raheem [The Merciful] and Al - Ghafoor [The Forgiving]

They dare to make fun of the orders of the Almighty Allah!, without realizing that Allah is not only Ar-Rahman but "Allah is severe in punishment." too, as said in Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 165).

"Then do they feel secure that there will not come upon them suddenly while they do not perceive?" (Surat Yusuf, Verse 107)

"[O Muhammad], inform My servants that is I who am the forgiving, The Merciful. And that it is My punishment which is the painful punishment." (Surah 15, Verses 49-50)

Only if people had read Qur'an with translation and had comprehended it!!!

Khawlah's father was sitting on the sofa and was talking to someone on the phone.

Saad and Huma were happy as if the proposal was already accepted and were making plans of the wedding preparations.

Her mother was looking over some new clothes for Khawlah, someone else accompanied her as well; Khawlah's paternal aunt... she was the one standing beside her, appreciating the clothes.

Khawlah's heart heaved again...for how long will she have to bear it all?

Questioning herself, she moved towards her mother.

"Come my sweet daughter! Which one do you like?" Anum gave Khawlah the collections. Her aunt started on the colour choices with admiration for the clothes in front.

* * * * *

"Mama, may I come in?" Khawlah knocked on her mother's door.

"Yes honey, come in." Mrs. Anum was on the bed, making a list with a pen and paper in hand. She was so busy as if everything was decided and the wedding was just days away.

Khawlah could not decide what to do, nobody was asking her anything.

Gazing down, Khawlah requested her mother, "Mama, I want to talk to you about Imran."

Her mother gave her a stern look and continued with her work, "I am listening."

Khawlah felt pain jolting inside herself at the harshness of her mother's voice.

With much courage, she spoke again.

"Mama I cannot marry Imran. You know my views about religion. Please do not force..."

Interrupting her, Khawlah's Mother gave her decision like a judge, "I shall not hear even one more word on this topic."

"Mama please don't torture me like this. Imran does not even offer his 5 daily prayers. Please do not push me into this fire." Khawlah started weeping.

"What do you want?!" Mrs. Anum shouted at her daughter, "You have shamed your old parents in front of the whole family. Damn the day you were born! I should have killed you when you came into this world! He does not offer his prayers?! Even your own parents and siblings do not pray regularly, they are not sin-free! So are they all disbelievers and you are some saint?! Leave us then! You do not accept the proposal of religious men neither do you agree for a doctor or an engineer. Then what do you want? You won't find whatever you're looking for here, you understand?!" Anum was saying whatever she had in her heart without giving her daughter a chance to speak.

Khawlah was just looking down and crying...

"Mama, there are such people in this world. I do not want this wealth and fame... Please..." Hiccupping, Khawlah uttered with difficulty.

"Even a prince charming is resentful when you are hungry. We have seen this world. What do you mean? Whom are you talking about?" Her mother inquired suspiciously.

Afraid, Khawlah replied, "the Mujahideen."

The very next moment, her right cheek got stung by a forceful slap from her mother leaving her red in face.

"Are you in your senses?! What are you saying? You're interested in those wild, ignorant terrorists?! If you are not yet satisfied with the torment you are giving us, then kill us all with a dagger once and for all!!! At least then you will be satisfied." Her mother shook her in a fit of anger.

"Mama, please don't say this..." Astonished at the hatred of her mother, Khawlah pleaded, crying and hiccupping.

"Go away from my sight! Get lost!

I shall see if you get your Heaven by tormenting your parents!" Anum also crying, pushed away her daughter.

Khawlah fell from the bed at this sudden attack.

Maybe the insult and disgrace was going to be her fate now.

* * * * *

Khawlah was getting impressed by Allah's miraculous divinity with the wonderful roses in the garden.

No doubt, the beautified petals of rose were evident of the creative wisdom of the Almighty.

And there are some who say that there is no God.

Not even a dumb person could say something this stupid.

It's a surprise that this foolish thought had become a religion in itself..

Atheism/secularism..

What's even more surprising is that they refused God on the basis of Science, where every observation was in fact an open evidence of the presence of God, the One.

Thus there seems to be no limit of such people being deaf, dumb and blind.

These people won't accept that a glass, pencil or their houses could come up on their own, without there being any manufacturer, but they openly claim like idiots that this universe came into being itself with all its complexities.

Just a loud bang and everything got in its place, and there was no role of any god.

These beautiful trees, plants, animals with differently surprising abilities and humans all came in this world without any Maker?

There's no limit to their nonsense.

Rather some even tried to be related to animals thus made a theory that they were evolved from monkeys!

Probably their forefathers were from the nation who were punished and disfigured as monkeys by Allaah.

Well, we are all children of the beloved Prophet of Allah, Adam A.S.

Khawlah remembered an interesting dialogue about atheists that she had read days Khawlah ago.

In a mother's womb were two babies.
One asked the other, "Do you believe in life after delivery?"

The other replied, "Why of course. There has to be something after delivery. Maybe we are here to prepare ourselves for what we will be later."

"Nonsense." Said the first. "There is no life after delivery. What kind of life would that be?"

The second said, "I don't know, but there will be more light than here. Maybe we will walk with our legs and eat from our mouths. Maybe we will have other senses that we can't understand now."

The first replied, "That is absurd. Walking is impossible, and eating with our mouths? Ridiculous! The umbilical cord supplies nutrition and everything we need. But the umbilical cord is so short, life after delivery is to be logically excluded."

The second insisted, "Well I think there is something and maybe it's different than it is here. Maybe we won't need this physical cord anymore."

The first replied, "Nonsense... and moreover if there is life, then why has no one ever come back from there? Delivery is the end of life, and in the after-delivery there is nothing but darkness, silence and oblivion. It takes us nowhere."

"Well I don't know," said the second, "But certainly we will meet our mother and she will take care of us."

The first replied, "Mother? You actually believe in mother? That's laughable. If a mother exists, then where is she now?"

The second said, "She is all around us. We are surrounded by her. We are of Her. It is in Her that we live. Without Her this world would not and could not exist."

"Well I don't see her, so it is only logical that she doesn't exist." Said the first.

To which the second replied, "Sometimes when you're in silence and you focus and you really listen, you can perceive Her presence, and you can hear Her loving voice, calling down from above."

*

Khawlah was at Maryam's house.
Her family had gone to a marriage ceremony. Since it was a mixed gathering with music, songs and dancing, Khawlah had refused to attend.
Although they were all offended, Khawlah was determined about her decision despite their ill-behavior.
She narrated to them many Ahadith, but nobody took her seriously.
She was a 21st century weirdo amongst them.
Khawlah was told all the time that:

- * One has to step in with society and integrate with the system
- * There is much that Islam commands, not only the things you have stuck onto
- * That other person is also a devout follower but nobody acts like you and shows off
- * You are following the life of the woods and mountains. Religion and world [Dunya] should be in harmony.

Such words came out from her own people, who claimed to be 'Muslim'. There was no limit to the pain she felt.

But still , the pain felt by today's strangers (al-Ghuraba) is less compared to the agonized hearts of the Prophets and their Companions.

They had suffered much greater afflictions than this.

Whenever her heart got pierced, Khawlah recalled some words of empathy which strengthened her failing courage.

*I have seen those faces
which get exhausted on the path of loyalty
They hide their wounds away from the eyes of humanity..

Some pearls form in those lake-like eye,
I say to those...
By Allah, you are blessed,
This you cannot deny!

The pain and sorrows of this journey,
Are availed by the lucky ones only.
These tearful eyes, these dirty feet
Are availed by the wealthy creed...
The moment of pain and grief,
Is only for the chosen ones indeed..

The label of disgrace,
Is only for the esteemed..
Whenever I see them,
A scene revolves within me..
Of the Promised day,
Written in the Book of Eternity.
When the rich will be poor
And only the name of Allah will remain for sure.....

On that day, Your faces will glow like the moon..
The paths will be decorated like the scenic noon..
the Angels will welcome you elated..
That day is to come soon..
The air will be full of perfume..

You are blessed,
I swear by Allah, you are blessed!*

It had been months since Imran's proposal came.
His family had refused from this engagement due to Khawlah's religious veil.
Her family was at a state of loss, but she was very happy about it.
How Allah had saved her from drowning in a quicksand of sins.
Allah had saved her in the last moments, when nothing was in her favor. After every wedding plan was made, Allah saved her because He is the Best of Planners.

Khawlah spent that whole night in prostration. It was her first Tahajjud in thanks to her Lord.
She cried with happiness the whole night and her connection with Allah became even more strong.
When none of her loved ones had listened to her cries, the All-Hearing and All-Seeing Allah answered her call.
When they all turned her away, Allah opened His doors of Mercy to her.
When there was nobody to wipe her tears, Allah did.

After her prayers, Khawlah rested her head on the bed and told Allah all her sorrows like one tells a Friend.
She felt as if Allah was in front of her, as if she could see her Benefactor.

Khawlah felt like a child who becomes quiet in its mother's lovely lap, she felt herself just like that.

* * * * *

"Allahhh!!!" Fatimah came tip toeing and took Khawlah by surprise. She had just emptied a whole jug of water over Khawlah.

With a hand full of mud from the lawn, Khawlah ran behind Fatimah, "Oh! I shall teach you a lesson, just wait!"

"Nooooo! Khawlah please, this is my favorite dress.", she ran fast, trying to avoid her by running here and there in the lawn.

Fatimah screamed.

Joyfully, Khawlah took aim of her target with mud, "You should have thought about it before attacking me. No use now Miss Queen!"

"Motherrrrrr...." Fatimah shrieked helplessly, laughing.

"What will mother do now? Take your gift."
Khawlah smeared mud over Fatimah's cheeks. She had Fatimah's both hands locked so that she may not runaway.

"Uff! You're such a cruel girl. You destroyed my beautiful face." With a mocking face Fatimah moved to the water tap in the lawn.

As Khawlah was laughing at her victory, Fatimah showered her with a splash of water.

Fatimah's mother was watching their playful acts from over the balcony, smiling and making Dua for them, then she went to the kitchen to make some tea.

* * * * *

In the darkness of the night, Abdullah sat in the balcony, lost in his thoughts.

There was a time when devoted lovers like Hanzalah R.A. would sacrifice their first nights of marriage when the life of the Prophet S.A.W was in danger.

And here is a wasted Ummah like us that when the religion of the same Prophet S.A.W is in danger and the ignorant, experts of hollow words, so-called lovers of the Prophet S.A.W are not bothered about it

Let these false claimers light the candles, decorate the streets, claiming to celebrate the Prophet's birthday in his love, but when the honour of the same Prophet S.A.W is at stake, then they just do shallow protests and write to the UN. That's the limit of their extravagant love.

In any country, it is a serious crime to abuse the rulers, but no matter what insult is thrown at their Prophet SAW, they just raise a banner in protest, make a few speeches, write to the UN and that's all... their Jihad is done.... or so they think!

Whatever image of Islam is created by the enemy, they have only one solution, their so-called 'protest', and then back to the world of luxuries.

A great joke indeed! An embarrassment!

With the passion to sacrifice like Hanzalah R.A. in his heart, Abdullah sang a Nasheed (Islamic poetry):

* A thousand marriages cannot parallel his one wedding
He sacrificed all he owed for his beloved Prophet S.A.W.
He had not yet spent enough time in bride's company
And many desires were blooming in young heart
When he heard the voice of Bilal
Thundering, echoing that majestic voice sounded
The life of Prophet is in danger, what is keeping you?
God knows, what is happening in the battlefield
He said, O my bride, here I take leave of you
For its time for me to die for my beloved Prophet S.A.W
With immense patience, that shy soul responded
Be the true Lord your helper, Be the true Prophet S.A.W. your Companion
But tell me how to find you in numerous Martyrs.
Among hundreds, thousands and many blessed...
Tearing his shirt he said, Recognize my shirt
For your groom will be the one with torn shirt
Many martyrs we have seen, but none like him
No one brave and courageous like Hanzalah R.A. *

Abdullah wiped his wet eyes and casted a final look at the letter displayed on his cellphone's screen. He had read the letter a while ago, it was from Aleppo, Syria.

He made a vow in his heart to avenge this Muslim sister and other prisoners, to spend his life till his last breath in Jihad.

Abdullah left the cellphone on the chair, the screen of the cellphone was gleaming in the moonlight. While himself, he stood up to offer Tahajjud Salah.

The moon, stars and the night sky could not bear the pain in the words of that letter ...and so they all wept.

Some tears from the clouds dropped on the screen of Abdullah's phone, and in no time that drizzling changed into heavy rainfall.

"I am one of the women in Aleppo who will soon be raped, in just moments.

There are no more weapons or men that can stand between us and the animals (army) who are about to come and finish us off...

I don't want anything from you... I don't even want your supplication... As I am still able to speak I think my supplication is going to be more truthful than what you say!

I am committing suicide... and I don't care if you say I'm in Hellfire!

I am committing suicide because I did not remain firm in my deceased father's home for all these years so that his chest may burn when he sees all those who left Aleppo.

I am committing suicide not due to any reason but because I do not want members of the Assad Regime to savor raping me, while just yesterday they were afraid to say the word 'Aleppo'.

I am committing suicide because the Day of Resurrection has taken place in Aleppo and I don't think Hellfire will be worse than this...

I am committing suicide and I know all of you will unite on my entering of Hellfire... and that will be the only thing you will unite upon: the suicide of a woman.

Not your mother or sister or wife... but a woman you are not concerned about.

I will conclude by saying that your fatawas [verdicts] have become meaningless to me so save it for yourself and your family.

I am committing suicide...

And when you read this know that I have died pure, despite everyone's abandonment."

The heavy rainfall now induced thunder and lighting and the night was blacker than it had ever been before...

* * * * *

On the balcony of her room, sitting in a chair with an Islamic book in her hand, Khawlah was reading while feeling the pleasant breeze.

She had read Qur'an and it was time to study Islamic literature.

Khawlah used to lack the habit of reading religious books. Reading literature was too tiresome for her. She listened to lectures but reading a book was like being at war with herself.

But now she had changed herself a lot. It was emphasized in her Qur'an class that reading a thing by yourself is much different than just listening to something.

Yes, lectures are effective, and you get motivated a lot, one cannot negate their importance but they cannot at all replace a book.

A thing which is heard is not retained much while it gets registered on the mind by reading.

Khawlah was not turned to this by any advice, rather this miracle happened after Imran's proposal.

Though it had been a year now, Khawlah still remembered that day as if it were yesterday.

How her Lord had saved her from a whole world of sin. Tables got turned in the very last moments when her uncle withdrew the proposal by realizing Khawlah's aim to strictly follow the Islamic rules of veil and other aspects of the religion of Prophet S.A.W. and Companions in this modern world.

Khawlah did not spend even a single night without tahajjud since then. One reason was to show her gratitude towards Allah, and second was to ask for a pious spouse.

She knew that only tahajjud and remembrance of Allah were her weapons in this war with the Devil. She could not win without these. She knew evil would use all tactics to weaken her.

It is not possible for the Caller of Haq to reach each and every person who has misunderstandings regarding him and clarify them one by one. It is also not right that he leaves the task of Calling to Allah and busy himself totally with answering the allegations and misinformation of provokers. It is also below his level to reach the low pits as of his enemies.

That's why Allah directed the preachers to seek refuge in Allah from such evil mongers and do their work without any worry. Allah would take care of them, The Lord of mankind, The Owner of mankind.

One of the biggest weapons of Shaitan is to whisper among men or instigate. This is the start point of his evil work. When it affects an ignorant or an empty minded person then it edges him to perform evil.

More whispering of evil changes this desire towards evil intention and wrong thinking. Further effective prompting of evil makes this intention a passion and the last step is to act upon that evil. So to seek refuge of Allah from the prompts of evil whisperer means that Allah may end the evil from the very start.

From another perspective it's how the evil of prompters is trained. They prompt for an open enmity against religion, hatred for religious people, open rebel against Allah and His Apostle S.A.W., openly being an atheist or Mushrik.

If they fail on this and a person turns to religion of Allah then they encourage him for an innovation in religion, If they fail in that too, then they hope to trap him in sins and if they still fail then they whisper in his heart that it's no big deal to carry out minor sins, so that when he does this repeatedly he then will have a load of many little sins and thus resulting in having great burdens on his soul.

If the man escapes this trap as well, then they try that he limits the true religion to himself and does

not intend to spread it.

But if a person blocks all these attacks then the whole party of evil (Satan with its followers) attack him, provoke people against him, shower him with abuse and allegations and attempt to disgrace and humiliate him.

Then Shaitan tempts that faithful person that it is cowardly to bear this all, thus stand up and fight these attackers. It is that trick of the devil with which he sidetracks a religious preacher and tries to trap him in his way to Allah. If the Caller to truth escapes this great trap too, then the devil becomes helpless. As it is said in Qur'an.

"And if an evil suggestion comes to you from Satan, then seek refuge in Allah. Indeed, He is Hearing and Knowing.

Indeed, those who fear Allah - when an impulse touches them from Satan, they remember [Him] and at once they have insight.

(Surat Al-A'raf, Verses 200-201)

One should keep in mind that not only the devil and its followers from among humans, but also one's own Nafs provokes him, desiring for evil. A person's wisdom is tarnished by his own wrong ideologies. His own unjust selfish wishes and intentions distract his self-determination and decision power. Not only the evils from outside but also his Nafs from inside derails him.

Qur'an says in one place:

And We have already created man and know what his soul whispers to him, and We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein

(Surat Qaf, Ayah 16)

Getting out of the valley of thoughts, Khawlah started reading the page from the book sheshein had in her hand.

● Ten Nullifiers of Islam, that put a person beyond the pale of Islam ●

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn 'Abd-Allaah ibn Baaz (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

Note that Allaah has commanded all people to enter Islam and to adhere to it and to beware of whatever is contrary to it. He sent His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) to call mankind to that. He tells us that those who follow him will be guided and that those who turn away from him have gone astray. In many verses He warns against the means that lead to apostasy and all forms of shirk and kufr. The scholars (may Allaah have mercy on them) have said, when discussing apostasy, that a Muslim may apostatize from his religion by doing many acts that nullify Islam, which makes it permissible to shed his blood and seize his wealth, and which will put him beyond the pale of Islam. Among the most serious and most common of these things are ten which were mentioned by Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhaab and other scholars (may Allaah have mercy on them all). We will mention them in brief here, so that you and others can beware of them, in the hope that you will be safe and sound. We will also explain a little about them after mentioning each one.

① 1 – Shirk or associating others in worship with Allaah. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, Allaah forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners (in worship) with Him, but He forgives whom He wills, sins other than that, and whoever sets up partners in worship with Allaah, has indeed strayed far away”

[al-Nisa’ 4:116]

“Verily, whosoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allaah, then Allaah has forbidden Paradise to him, and the Fire will be his abode”

[al-Maa’idah 5:72]

That includes praying to the dead, seeking their help, making vows and offering sacrifices to them or to the jinn or to the grave.

⊗ 2 – Whoever sets up intermediaries between himself and Allaah, asks them to intercede, and puts his trust in them, is a kaafir according to scholarly consensus.

⊗ 3 – Whoever does not regard the mushrikeen as kaafirs, or doubts that they are kaafirs, or regards their way as correct, is a kaafir.

⊗ 4 – Whoever believes that anything other than the teaching of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is more complete than his teachings, or that the rulings of anyone else are better than his rulings – such as those who prefer the rule of false laws to his rulings – is a kaafir.

⊗ 5 – Whoever hates any part of that which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) brought, even if he acts in accordance with it, is a kaafir, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“That is because they hate that which Allaah has sent down (this Qur’aan and Islamic laws); so He has made their deeds fruitless”

[Muhammad 47:9]

⊗ 6 – Whoever makes fun of anything in the religion of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), or makes fun of any texts that refer to rewards or punishments, is a kaafir. The evidence for that is the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: Was it at Allaah, and His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and His Messenger that you were mocking?

Make no excuse; you disbelieved after you had believed”

[al-Tawbah 9:65-66]

⊙ 7 – Sihr (witchcraft) – including spells to turn one person against another or to make someone love another. Whoever does this or approves of it is a kaafir. The evidence for that is the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

“but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, ‘We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)’”

[al-Baqarah 2:102]

⊙ 8 – Supporting the mushrikeen and helping them against the Muslims. The evidence for that is the verse in which Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as Awliyaa’ (friends, protectors, helpers), they are but Awliyaa’ of each other. And if any amongst you takes them (as Awliyaa’), then surely, he is one of them. Verily, Allaah guides not those people who are the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers and unjust)”

[al-Maa'idah 5:51]

⊙ 9 – Whoever believes that some people are allowed to operate outside the law of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) just as al-Khidr operated outside the law of Moosa (peace be upon him) is a kaafir, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers”

[Aal 'Imraan 3:85]

⊙ 10 – Turning away from the religion of Allaah, not learning it and not acting in accordance with it. The evidence for that is the verse (interpretation of the meaning):

“And who does more wrong than he who is reminded of the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of his Lord, then turns aside therefrom? Verily, We shall exact retribution from the Mujrimoon (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners)”

[al-Sajdah 32:22]

With regard to all of these acts that nullify Islam, it makes no difference whether a person is joking, serious or afraid, unless he is forced to do it. All of them are very serious, and they all happen a great deal. The Muslim should beware of them and fear falling into them. We seek refuge with Allaah from the things that may incur His wrath and painful punishment. May Allaah send blessings and peace upon the best of His creation, Muhammad, and upon his family and companions.

The fourth category includes those who believe that the systems and laws devised by men are better than the sharee'ah of Islam, or equal to it; or that it is permissible to refer to them for judgements and rulings, even if he believes that referring to sharee'ah is better; or that the Islamic system is not

fit to be applied in the twentieth century; or that it was the cause of the Muslims' backwardness; or that it should be limited to a person's relationship with his Lord and not have anything to do with the other affairs of life

The fourth category also includes those who think that carrying out the ruling of Allaah by cutting off the hand of the thief or stoning the married adulterer is not appropriate in the modern age.

That also includes: everyone who believes that it is permissible to rule according to something other than the laws of Allaah with regard to interactions, hudood punishments or other matters, even if he does not believe that that is better than the ruling of sharee'ah, because by doing so he is regarding as permissible something that Allaah has forbidden according to consensus, and everyone who regards as permissible something that Allaah has forbidden and is well known to be forbidden in Islam, such that no Muslim has any excuse for not knowing that it is forbidden, such as adultery, alcohol and riba, and ruling by something other than the sharee'ah of Allaah, is a kaafir according to the consensus of the Muslims.

We ask Allaah to help us all to do that which pleases Him, and to guide us and all the Muslims to His Straight Path, for He is All Hearing, Ever-Responsive. May Allaah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions.

Ah! such things of importance and never told by anyone. Such lack of interest on our part. Isn't it the limit?

Khawlah trembled. How many people were not even "Muslims" in the Eyes of Allah, despite their claiming to be the believers? We had simplified the religion to the extent of nonsense! We mocked the religion of Allah and yet claim for His mercy!

Khawlah's very soul shivered.

"YAHOOOOOOO!!" Coming running with joy, little Ibrahim jumped into her lap.

"Sister Khawlah now you must fulfill your promise. I have completed the task you gave". Ibrahim pulled on her arm. He waited for her answer with his head up and his big, hopeful, innocent eyes fixed on her.

Khawlah smiled and attacked at him tickling.

"Oh so my little prince knows how to bargain now?" Both were laughing now. Ibrahim was helpless and Khawlah successfully kept him under her attack.

She had promised Ibrahim that if he learns by heart Surah Al-Alaq in one day, then he can listen to all of his favorite Nasheeds from Khawlah's phone. Ibrahim had completed the challenge before time. How wonderfully brilliant is a child's memory. We can make them memorize a lot of good stuff by tempting them. And what "were" our "very wise" mothers teaching them? Songs? Dances?

What a generation in process, of circus dancers!
Such kids will end up in porn and shameful acts in future. They will not be the Khadijah and Muhammad!

Khawlah turned on a Nasheed for Ibrahim who was now in a bliss. She herself got up to get some water to drink. The beautiful sound of Nasheed followed her outside of room. Khawlah too repeated it in her heart, enjoying the meanings behind the words.

* Islam will dominate
Our lands will be blessed with the Almighty's mercy
There will be no room to hate.
Our lands will be cleansed and pure
The reign of kufr and secularism will be shut within its gate

Whoever faces the lions of Allah, will be defeated
The flag of Islam will be raised high
Islam will not be dominated
The tyranny of evil will wail and cry.

This is the land of Islam, this is the land of faith
An eternal law of the Qur'an
Islam will dominate
We will fight as in Badr and Uhud, and Khaibar too
We have the divine help of Allah
to help us win through ..

We also have with us the Siddiq, Farooq, Usman and Haider (May Allah be pleased with them all) of today
We are ready to die on this path
Every one of us will battle the falsehood till it reaches bay..
Islam will dominate..
The victorious is the brave-heart

Why are we engulfed in a secularism attitude?
Why are our thoughts poisoned with the venom of nationalism?
Remember the story of the fire, Ibrahim and Namrood
Again Allah is testing the believers' gratitude
Whoever will jump into fire, will succeed in multitude..
Islam will dominate..

Once again the warriors of Islam will perform ablution with blood
Once again the disbelievers will be humiliated and trod..
I see that the truth and falsehood are coming face to face
And Islam will resurrect again
The army of Islam will thunder over Kufr with ace..
Islam will dominate...

The corporate of evil is planning our worldly end
But the faithful one is swift as his slender sword
they forget that our every hand is a weapon sent to mend
Every Muslim is ready to die for Allah's word
The earth will tremble when they are called upon to bend..
Islam will dominate...

O the Creator of Earth and Heavens, it is Your pleasure we seek
Every slogan of Takbeer is a fiery message of power
In our hands we have the flag of Islam thus we are not weak
In our heart we have the love of Muhammad S.A.W.
Every one of us will come forth to die for our honour
Islam will dominate..

The men of today are lost in sins
Our faith is the solution to all afflictions
The Qur'an of Allah and the life of Prophet (ﷺ) wins
Our life has the same motto etched
Our heart will reach its destiny by this motto full-fledged..

Just know that soon with the help of Allah the Great,
Islam will dominate!*

* * * * *

After Asr Salah, Khawlah wished to call Maryam via video chat. She had been missing her badly for some days. Khawlah could not forget the time she had spent with her. She was just close to tears today.

Khawlah grabbed her phone and called Maryam on Skype.

"Assalam o alaikum. Wow, so you jumped straight through Skype without telling me. Are you alright? How come the princess of fairyland remembered us?" Smiling, Maryam was talking to her. The very familiar smile.

"Wa alaikum assalam. Now don't tease me like this." Khawlah said laughing.

"Come on grandma. Stop it. I can't eat all this!" A familiar voice crossed her ears. Someone on other end was having fun with grandmother.
A handsome young man, with an attractive beard.
On seeing him and Khawlah was shaken. A flashback left her speechless.

"You are going to hell and dragging us with you!"

Khawlah remembered the man from the market near the Indian airport.

What? How is this man here...?

Aghast, Khawlah spoke to Maryam.” Probably you have guests in your house. I have called at the wrong time”. She was confused how to ask her friend about this man.

"Oh he is no guest. He is my brother, Abdullah. Though he comes like guests." Maryam had no idea what shocks she was giving to her friend.

"Oh... why so? What does he do?" Khawlah asked with a thumping heart.

"Err.... He is a Mujahid". Maryam whispered.

Her heart raced like crazy as if it were going to break Khawlah's ribs. She held control with difficulty, talked to Maryam a little and ended the call.

After hanging up, Khawlah walked to bed with trembling feet and started crying with no control over herself.

"Oh Allah! Now there is a mujahid. You make ways for me. I was unable to find any and you made ways from where I could not even imagine." Crying, Khawlah remembered a verse.

"..And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out. And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent."
(Surat At-Talaq, verse 2-3)

Khawlah wiped her tears and decided that she would not lose this precious chance. Though that man was very pious and she was not worthy of him, still she thought of not losing the only opportunity. Khawlah knew that Abdullah had some idea of her past. No matter what, she would talk to Maryam after making istikharah. She thought that instead of regretting for her whole life, she must step forward for once. May be Allah would fulfill her dream by His mercy. After all He is the Lord who does miracles, One who makes ways through rivers, turns the fire cold, One Who can keep one alive in the stomach of a whale, One Who can bring one alive out from a well, One who sent angels in Badr, The One Almighty Allah! Everything waits for his "كن". Everything is by His will...

* * * * *

Khawlah was once again in the Qur'an class. She turned the pages of her notebook to open up a new page. Many girls were there for the lecture as usual. Fatimah had not come today due to her duty in emergency department. Sad, Khawlah missed her friend, but her off mood was governed by the issue of that mujahid.

She had conveyed her message to Maryam and was waiting for Abdullah's answer. Khawlah feared what if he refused? What would he say? How would he react?

"That shameless,veilless girl??..." May be he'll say this", Khawlah whispered in her heart.

She was very anxious. In her anxiety she had put the wrong date on the diary. On realising this, she tried to correct it but instead made the whole thing dirty.

"Oh such a mess. All my neatness is ruined. What has happen to me". Khawlah was busy in self bashing when the speaker started her lecture.

Allah is the ally of those who believe. He brings them out from darknesses into the light. And those who disbelieve - their allies are Taghut. They take them out of the light into darknesses. Those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.
(Surat Al-Baqarah, Verse 257)

Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of Taghut. So fight against the allies of Satan. Indeed, the plot of Satan has ever been weak.
(Surat An-Nisa', Verse 76)

So let's see who among us knows about the word "Taghut". Those who know may raise their hands."

Taghut? Now what was this? Khawlah had heard this word for the first time. Some people among audience raised their hands.

"So most of us don't even know this word. Even those who are familiar, generally have no detailed insight about it. Anyhow those who don't know are in for some big revelations."
Khawlah got more attentive. The speaker started her lecture from where she had stopped.

"Taghut literally means a person who crosses his limits. In terms of Qur'an, Taghut is a person who crosses limits of obedience and deems himself as Lord or God.

There are three levels of rebellion by man against Allah.
First, a man acknowledges the right of obedience of Allah but practically goes against His Orders. This is "fisq"

Second level is the absolute turning away from His obedience. This is "kufr,".

Third level is rebellion against the Lord and ruling in His land and on His people by one's own will. This last level is called the "Taghut".

A person cannot be believer in true sense unless he disbelieves in this Taghut.

...So whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing. Allah is the ally of those who believe. He brings them out from darknesses into the light. And those who disbelieve - their allies are Taghut. They take them out of the light into darknesses. Those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.
(surat Al-Baqarah, verse : 256-257)

Here darkness means the darkness of ignorance, where a person strays away from his betterment and goodluck and wastes his energy and works in going against the reality.
And light stands for the knowledge of Haq (truth). In it's light, a man can walk on right path by realizing his and universe's truth, and his life's aim.

Here Taghut is used in terms of "tawagheet". By deviating from God, a man falls into the trap of not only One Taghut rather multiple Tawagheet which dominate him. One among them is devil himself, who presents to him many false attractions of everlasting bounties. Second is the man's own self

desires which drag him on difficult paths of life as a slave of his own emotions. There are also many other Taghuts in the world. Wife, children, relatives, close ones, family and tribes, friends, society, nation, leaders and statesmen, government and rulers all may act as Taghut who ask him to obey them for their wishes, And this slave of multiple lords is just entrapped in the cycle to please one and avoid disapproval of another.

In this verse , it is claimed that Allah is the Helper of true believer and brings him out of darkness into light. While in case of disbelievers whose allies are Taghut which drag him into darkness from light.

You may understand better with three examples.

In first example, a man is shown truth with clear argument and he could see no objection against it but since he had given himself to taghut so he did not attain light even after clear truth and remained lost in darkness.

Later two examples are related to such people who hold on to Allah thus Allah brought them out of darkness into light so they observed even the hidden realities of nature.

Have you not seen those who claim to have believed in what was revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you? They wish to refer legislation to Taghut, while they were commanded to reject it; and Satan wishes to lead them far astray.
(Surat An-Nisa', Verse 60)

Here clearly, Taghut means a ruler who makes his decisions not by Allah's law but some one else's. And the judicial system which is not under supremacy of Allah, neither takes the book of Allah as final verdict. This verse clearly shows that it is against faith to take one's issues to a court of Taghut and it is necessary that man rejects such courts for his faith and belief in book of Allah. According to Qur'an it's necessary to believe in Allah and disbelieve in Taghut and it is hypocrisy to bow to them simultaneously.

Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of Taghut. So fight against the allies of Satan. Indeed, the plot of Satan has ever been weak.
(Surat An-Nisa', Verse 76)

This is the absolute decision of Allah. It is the duty of true believers to fight for the establishment of the rule of the religion of Allah and a true believer will never stay away from it. And to fight for the establishment of a rule of rebellions on Allah's land is what the disbelievers will do, and no true believer can do this.

Apparently devil and his allies arise with much preparations and make cunning moves. But the believers should not be afraid of their preparation or moves. That party is sure to fail in the end.

Now see which Taghuts are dominating over you or you have let them dominate you.

If we name the great Taghuts of today then the likes of pharaoh include America, anti-islamic rulers of Muslim countries and allies and their anti-islamic judiciary.

And you are lectured about obedience of "Ruler" and "leader" taking out examples from Islam, while the naive public has missed the point that their rulers had reached the level of Taghut long before.

Common Muslims never open the Qur'an or read Ahadith. Rather their state is such that they don't

even know that a hadith has to be true to be accepted. A "so called very wise" muslim of today forwards a message without any authentication or research, received as hadith however fake it may be even with wrongly named reference of Bukhari etc. Is forwarded by him without any second thought.

Even though the Prophet S.A.W had told that:

‘It is enough of a lie for a man that he narrates everything he hears’.
(Sahih Muslim)

Is there any limit of the pits this ummah has fallen into?

Such a joke made out of the religion of Apostle of Allah. Forward the message lest you be doomed or a miracle may happen etc etc. Use your senses. The world has reached the moon and you are going back into darkness.

So we were talking about "Taghut". My dearest sisters and daughters! Before accepting faith, Allah makes us deny Taghut.

كفر بالطاغوت

I have mentioned some great Taghut but there are also some small ones. Like your own self, your society if it makes you act against Islam, your parents can be Taghut as well if they force you to break rules of Islam.

Now you yourself have to see whose life style you need to follow, whose "do's and don'ts" should you abide by. Now say good bye to Authority and Supremacy of heart.

Dont say that "my heart does not desire". Your heart is not yours anymore. You have given it to Allah on accepting Islam. You are now a slave to Allah. His robot. You do not have your own will anymore. The companions set ideal examples of being robots of Allah. We have to become copy cats of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W and his companions. We can not do whatever we wish.

But alas! today, a muslim idealizes the actors of Bollywood and Hollywood or this cricketer or that sportsman. Then they grieve that there is no Salahuddin or Muhammad bin Qasim today. This all is being nonsense. When the women will come out as honey sweets and act as bollywood actresses, then their children will not be Umar or Ali rather goons and hooligans.

It's a pity that everyone seems to have become a scholar of Islam, a mawlana, throwing out verdicts and fatawas here and there, without any knowledge. Today the state of the common Muslim is such that the more one is ignorant about Islam, the more one claims to be the know-it-all!! So much so that everyone acts like he is *the mawlana, the scholar* here.

* * * * *

Khawlah was thinking about a girl in the class while driving home.

While there, Khawlah was just turning pages of a book she had just bought during the break of the lecture on the class's bookstall, when she heard a girl sobbing. Khawlah's hands had stopped just there. She immediately looked for the source of the voice.

Without abbaya, covered in a thin duppatta, a girl sat in a corner, crying with her head on her knees. May be she was a new on this path so she had not reached the level of veil yet.

Khawlah could not help herself seeing her crying like that and thus asked her politely, "What happened dear sister? why are you crying" , Khawlah tried her best to sound caring like Maryam.

The girl raised her head in surprise. Probably she had no idea that her sobbing and hiccups had been a bit loud now.

She tried to say something but then jerked her head, deciding not to voice her heart's pain. She reminded Khawlah of her own painful past. She could understand that this girl with wet eyes must have had many sleepless nights and wounded soul.

"Tell me one thing" she addressed Khawlah. "A man whom you love beyond limits, and he loves you, so much so that you two cannot sleep without saying good night to each other. He wakes you up for fajr salah, calls you to advise about salah, veil and Qur'an. But then one day, that man changes... without any reason. He says that he has no interest in you, and that his future is uncertain and he has to go abroad, and thus he cannot ask you to wait for him because he has no future. So tell me what to do when he is my everything.?"

Khawlah just looked at her stunned. She could not imagine that she would be asked such questions some day.

"I do not know why am I telling you all this. Can any one share his secrets with some stranger? May be you think I am crazy, but you were so caring that I could not help sharing with you". She started crying once again.

"Oh no, no. It's good that you shared your problem with me and why should I think that you are crazy?" Khawlah pressed her hand softly.

"Please tell me a way out, so that I can forget everything, tell me how to change like he did. What should I do to be normal? I am in torment. My world has got turned upside down. My friends tell me to forget him, keeping this in mind that he shall come back if he is destined to. It's been a week and I feel as if years have passed." That stranger was almost begging.

"My dearest!" Khawlah tried to console her. "The pain in your words have touched my heart. Indeed the real feeling is not known by any but your Lord alone, but I shall try to help you feel calm through little knowledge that I have. Dear sister, no doubt you had love, respect and grace in heart for him but remember that however pious a man may be, if the path chosen to get him is the one that is not halal, then we are bound to lose what we desire for. Allah says that deeds of man cause him trouble. Our Lord gives us time to mend our ways, He gives us some relaxation so that we may turn to Him, repent and come to the halal by good way. But when we don't do such, then he takes away that person or thing that we had desired for. All this is for our own betterment. We lose little in place of greater damage that was about to occur otherwise. But we let ourselves suffer for that little loss, without realizing the wisdom behind that loss. Remember that halal is halal, it has Allah's blessings. And Haram is Haram, even if you intend good, result can never be good. For end to be blessed, the means acquired should go past the halal paths, otherwise all ends in Allah's wrath. A woman should keep herself a secret, not an open book. A man remains attracted towards a woman till he feels suspense to discover her more. The day there is no suspense left, he gets disinterested. So one should never have interaction before marriage. Anyone can change, no matter how good he may be. Religion has not prohibited us for no reason. There is a wisdom in every "No". Remember those who leave, do not come back and those who have to come back, never leave. But Allah is Merciful. Do not be disappointed. We all make mistakes. Even the Companions (May Allah be pleased with them) were not any angel, so what to say of us. We all sin but best sinners are those who repent and turn back to Allah again and again; every time they falter.

Let me advise you through the story of Prophet Yunus (A.S) - The Companion of the Fish !! Sayyidinah Yunus A.S was sent to a town in Iraq. He made Da'wah to his people- calling them to Allah, as usual, they did not respond. And they were harsh on him. Sayyidinah Yunus A.S was irritated by their response and agitated. His people provoked him. Because of their persistence in animosity towards the Religion of Allah, Sayyidinah Yunus A.S said: If this is the situation with these people, they don't deserve this, I will leave and I will go somewhere else. I will go and make Dawah in another part of the World. I will leave these people alone, they don't deserve this, look at their response.

He left his people in a state of anger that they did not respond, they don't want to listen, I'm going to leave and go somewhere else. So he left them, and he wants to get as far as possible so he went in the Sea. And he took a boat to go in the Sea, so it will take him as far as possible from these people who he dispersed. Wind picked up, waves were getting higher and higher, it was storm. The people who were in that boat, decided that in order for us to survive we have to get rid of our luggage, they threw all of their luggage to make the boat lighter. That wasn't enough, so now they have to throw in one of the passengers, they have to sacrifice one of the men on board. So they cast lots, like what people say today: "Throw a dice" So they cast the lot, it came on who? Yunus A.S. They said: No, no no, we are not gonna get rid of Yunus, this is our blessing on the boat. He is the best man we have on board; we are not gonna get rid of him. Let's try again, they threw another time, it came on who? Yunus another time, they did a third time, it came on Yunus, and these people, they don't wanna get rid of Yunus. Sayyidinah Yunus A.S knew that this is not random. This casting of the lots is not random, this is by the will of Allah and Allah is telling him something. So he jumped in the sea. Allah commanded one of his creation, the whale or the big fish to swallow him. So it swallowed Sayyidinah Yunus A.S.

Yunus A.S was unconscious and then he woke up in the stomach of the whale and he looked around him, and he thought that he was where? In the grave! He thought he is dead for a while. But that impletion did not last long because he started touching around him and he found out that this is not a grave, this is a stomach of a whale. Now obviously, a stomach of a whale is not a five-star hotel, it's not a comfortable place to be in. The stomach of the whale is intended to do what? To digest food. And some of the most powerful enzymes and digestive fluids, are in stomachs of fish. Because if you notice, fish do not chew their food, they swallow it whole. If you dissect a stomach of a fish, you would find a whole fish in there and they have disintegrated and melted because of the power of the enzymes. It just breaks apart the fresh. So Sayyidinah Yunus A.S, his flesh, his skin was peeling off. His flesh, his skin was falling out. The stomach did not know this is the Nabi of Allah, Sayyidinah Yunus, it was digesting him just like any other meal. So his skin was peeling out! Yunus A.S , in this moment of difficulty, what did he do? Did he get disappointed? Did he commit suicide? Did he scream?

No

!!

He ran to Allah and he made Sujood. And he told Allah, O Allah, I'm making sujood to You in a place where no one made Sujood to you before. In the stomach of a whale. And then he made his famous Dua which was recorded in Qur'an.

لا اله الا انت سبحانك انى كنت من الظالمين

He called in the darkness, he said, none has the right to be worshiped but You, Glorified and Exalted be You, truly I have been of the wrongdoers. An admission of guilt and a witness of the Oneness of Allah. Allah says He cried in the darkness! This was the darkness of the stomach of the whale, in the darkness of the sea, in the darkness of the night. Three darknesses.

Rasulullah (ﷺ) says that the Angels see the meeting of the remembrance of Allah like stars which you see in the sky. We use the stars to navigate, the Angels use these stars on Earth to know where Allah is being remembered. Whenever a group of Muslims come together, this appearance to the creation of the Heaven is like a star, and they see it and they come to it so that they can witness the circles of remembering Allah and make Dua for the ones who are in it. So even though this was in the depth of the ocean, in the middle of the stomach of the whale, In the darkness of the night, the weak voice of Sayyidina Yunus A.S was heard by the Angels in the utmost Heavens.

These Angels went to Allah and said, O Allah, isn't this the sound of Your righteous servant whom used to do good night and day?

So they would see his good deeds going up in the sky in the night and in the day. So this sound was familiar to them, they knew who he was, why? Because they would see pillars of light going up in the sky because of his good deeds that he used to do every day and every night. They knew who he was, this sound was familiar to them! They knew him. Because good deeds are like pillars of light that travel in the sky and reach to Allah and pass by the Angels. They said O Allah, aren't You gonna have mercy on him? Allah said: Yes. And then Allah tells us in Qur'an the reason why. Allah says If it was not for the fact that he used to remember Us before, he would have remained in the stomach of the whale until the day of Judgement.

Because he remembered Allah in moments of ease, Allah took care of him in moments of difficulty.

We need to remember Allah in our young age so that Allah will remember us in our old age. Remember Allah when you are healthy, so Allah will remember you when you are ill. Remember Allah when you have free time, Allah will remember you when you become busy. Remember Allah when you are alive, so Allah will remember you when you are dead.

Thus Allah took care of Sayyidina Yunus A.S in the depth of the darkness of the sea because of this Dua, so Allah freed him.

This is the Dua of the distress. If you ask Allah using this Dua, Allah will deliver you from your distress.

Yunus A.S was delivered out of the stomach of the whale and he was delivered to safety on the shore but he did not have skin to protect him from the sun rays, he did not have skin to protect him from wind. So Allah delivered him to the shore and then Allah commanded a tree to grow over Sayyidina Yunus, so that it would provide cover and shade for him, and also it would provide him with food. Allah says that Allah planted over him a tree of (Yaqtin)

But now Yunus A.S has to finish his job so Allah sent him back to his town; go back. So he went back to his people. What happened? They believed in him. All of them accepted Islam. The people of Yunus A.S are an exception. Because before, the other Nations of the Anbiya were being destroyed but with the people of Yunus A.S, the case was different. Was there any town that believed after seeing the punishment and its faith saved it from the punishment? The answer is none except the people of Yunus A.S.

It is said that when Yunus A.S left, the punishment was hovering over them. That's it, I mean the punishment was about to strike but because Yunus A.S left immaturely, Allah held away that punishment and then when Yunus A.S came, they responded and Allah saved them from a punishment that was already hovering over their heads.

Allah in Surat Al-Qalam tells Rasulullah (ﷺ) about this story and this was revealed in a period in Makkah when Rasulullah (ﷺ) was receiving the same response as that of the people of Yunus A.S i.e rejection. So to keep Rasulullah (ﷺ) from doing the same thing that Yunus A.S did, Allah told Muhammad (ﷺ) about the story of Yunus A.S and the first word that was used before the narration of this story is? Fasbir! (Have patience). Allah says:

*Then be patient for the decision of your Lord, [O Muhammad], and be not like the companion of the fish when he called out while he was distressed.

If not that a favor from his Lord overtook him, he would have been thrown onto the naked shore while he was censured.

And his Lord chose him and made him of the righteous.*

(Surat Al-Qalam, Ayah 48-50)

So let's talk about the lessons in this story.

Prophet Yunus A.S was a prophet, not any ordinary person. We are not even close to the dirt of his shoes.

If he happened to act in that way once , then how much errors can a common man make? Imagine!!

And See Prophet Yunus A.S didn't say why me... I did so and so for Allah and Allah punished me instead of those who do wrong..

He didn't say any such thing.

Rather he made Dua and repented, and then Allah not only brought him out of that difficult situation, but also gave back him his people in a good state.

So this Dua is not only gonna work for Yunus A.S, it's going work for us too.

Say the dua excessively and comprehend its meaning. O Allah there is no God but You. In other words, no one can help me but You. Glory be to you, I have wronged myself.

So you need to admit your guilt. And Allah loves it when you humble yourself.

So make the dua that he made, send salutations on prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) regularly, and make a lot of istighfaar.

Allah advises us in Qur'an to get help through patience and prayer.

So you should observe patience and offer your five daily prayers. If you can manage then offer voluntary prayers too.

Read the Qur'an with translation. Read at least one verse daily and while reciting, try to imagine as if Allah is speaking to you. You will see how your matters improve In sha Allaah.

May be Allah gives you what you lost or someone even better!

But remember that Allah will help you if you step towards Him and correct your actions. If you just cry with no forward steps, then Allah will not aid you.

Cry in front of Allah, talk to Him like you talk to a friend. He will listen to your pains with attention and will strengthen your heart.

Keep hoping good from Him, as Allah says that He is for His servant as his servant expects Him to be.

If you expect good from Him, then you will get good but if you expect bad then bad will happen.

Remember miracles happen only for those who believe in Allah blindly. So much so that even if the sea is in front, you should have such tawakkul that you say Allah will *make* a way." Khawlah ended with eyes wet.

"Thank you so much. I feel much lighter now", the girl's eyes were glistening with tears, but they did not drop down, and this clearly meant that Khawlah had succeeded.

"Whenever you want to ask something, feel free to call me. Even if I'm not able to do anything, at least I can advise you, pray for you and listen to you to lighten your heart." Khawlah hurriedly took out a page from her notepad, wrote down her number and gave it to girl.

The girl smiled. "Sure" she replied with shining eyes.

* * * * *

Khawlah was just stopping her car near her house when her mobile vibrated on the side seat. She parked the car and picked up her cell phone at once.

So finally her wait was over, Maryam had replied at last. She opened the text with trembling fingers.

Her eyebrows knitted at the message consisting of three sentences...

Khawlah's heart skipped a beat while she read on.

Sitting on the prayer mat, with my head bent over the edge of my bed, I try to feel if I am still alive after this pain of years...

The psychological torture they subject me to everyday is taking away the life in my heart. My joyful eyes have become barren now, with no light of life in them.

Oh Lord, these two years have been really heavy on me. I feel my shoulders tired of pulling along this sack of pains bestowed upon me by my own people. My Lord, I feel more dead than alive today.

How can I bear the pain of my loved ones throwing humiliating labels at me every other day? Why do they hate me to this limit, when I loved them all along? This path of Yours that I chose really is the path of trials and tests. I feel like a psychological patient, begging for life, begging for peace, begging for freedom from this imprisonment.. Begging to You for a life free from this suffocating environment. O Allaah, if this is my condition after a few years of trial, I wonder how Your Prophets carried the burden of pains and hurt over their shoulders? Surly You saluted them rightly in Your Qur'an.

My Lord I'm not like them in emaan. Please take me out of this jail before I lose my mind. O Lord, You are The Merciful King of both worlds, I've come to You like an oppressed and weak servant of Yours. Please do not abandon me when I need You my Rabb. Who is apart from You upon whom I can call? Who is apart from You my Lord? Who is apart from You who will listen to my cries?

O Lord, I cry blood everyday. My soul is dying day by day. My eyes are losing strength now.

Do not look away when i have only You to look to. Do not leave me when today Your people have abandoned me. Please hold my hand and keep me near Yourself even if I am a sinner. O Lord, by losing a sinful slave like me will not result in any decrease in number of Your pious servants. But for me, O my Rabb, on losing You, I'll lose my everything. You are my whole world. What will I do without You?? No pleasure is pleasure if I do not have You as my close friend. No joy is joy if I do not have You to look up to. Please listen to my painful cries, O Lord respond to me as I have only You as my Saviour.

~ Diary of a prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)

Chapter Nine:

* * * * *

Usman entered the masjid in a hurry. Today they were going to discuss an important topic and he did not want to miss it. Despite having fever, he had come after taking medicine. He had not told anyone at home about his fever. Obviously he could not let a fever delay the fruit of his wait. With much difficulty he dragged himself towards the masjid. The lecture had just started. Usman noted that today there was an unusual crowd in the masjid.

The upper portion was reserved for the females. It was expected to be full as usual. Well, the pamphlets distributed by Usman and his companions proved to be fruitful. People really had been attracted by the topic.

" *Why will Imam Mehdi be labelled as a terrorist? *,

"Imam Mehdi, who may appear in our times, will form an army..". , The Islamic scholar had started the lecture. Usman hurriedly found a place to sit and listened attentively.

"He will establish an army that will march towards Syria. Now we see Syria in the time being. May Allah give victory to the Muslims against Bashar ul Asad. But ponder over the hadith. There will be five thousand who will be with him. Only five thousand. I often ask people, if Imam Mehdi was here today, Would you follow him? Would you be fighting in his army? Everybody says "yes". Yet the Prophet (peace be upon him) told us that there would be five thousand people with him. But contrary to this, all Muslims claim that they will feel blessed to be part of his army. Then why will his companions be so few?"

Surprised, Usman just kept watching the speaker speak. What mystery was this?

"What lesson do we learn from this? First: people will be unable to recognize Imam Mehdi. Like he may be among us and we do not know that he is Imam Mehdi. Is there any doubt that his party is Allah's party? Prophet Isa A.S. will himself join them. Is there any doubt that they will be "taifatul mansura" "firqah najia"? Then why only five thousand will join them? You can see today that mujahideen who fight tyrants for the sake of Allah are so few. So no doubt that Imam Mehdi will be labelled a "terrorist" , "extremist", he is at war with the supremacy of man-made laws which are spreading hate, corruption, injustice etc. That is the reason very few will accompany Imam Mehdi. And that is the reason the mujahideen are so few.

Because we Muslims have fallen bait to the tricks and lies of the disbelievers and the hypocrites to the point that we accuse the mujahideen fighting in the path of Allaah as being terrorists

One brother was telling me about a sister in Yemen; the wife of a shaheed (martyr), who had to go around the houses of the neighborhood, knocking on their doors, asking for second hand clothes so that she could put on her children for the day of Eid.

Imagine sisters, if you were in that situation, and you had to go around begging, not for new clothes, but for second hand clothes to put on your little one for Eid. And why are you doing that? You are doing that because your husband didn't die for himself, he died for the Ummah

Wallahi brothers and sisters, that's the ultimate level of betrayal, that we allow this to happen today !!

We have forsaken our brothers.. the Ummah has forsaken them.

They stood up for the sake of the Ummah, not for personal goals. This person could otherwise be a successful doctor, or engineer or a business man. He could be making a living for himself and his family. But he went out for the sake of *you* , and then this is how he is treated. He is betrayed, his wife is betrayed, their children are betrayed, and not only that, people are going to go on the media talking against him - Muslims are going to go on the media, talking against him. When he has given his life *for the SAKE of the Ummah*

Nothing goes for free. We will be held accountable on the day of judgement. You will be held accountable for what is happening today, if you don't do anything about it. And when you see your brothers, wherever they are, being harassed, being arrested, being abused, and you do nothing about it, beware and realize that you will be next, and in addition to paying for that sin in dunya, Allaah will make you pay a hefty price on the day of judgement. If you allow this to happen to your brothers, be assured that punishment is on its way. It will happen in your health, or in your family, or in your wealth, Allaah is going to make you pay for that. Why so? Because we are an Ummah and its membership is not free to be awarded without any responsibility. Being in the Ummah of Prophet S.A.W is a great pride and honour as well as a heavy responsibility. Being a member of the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) carries with it responsibility because it is an honour. It is such a great honour that the prophets would wish to be the members of ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ)

Prophet Musa A.S, he would wish to be a member of the ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ). And Allah gave you that virtue. Allah gave you that honour. To make you part of the greatest ummah that ever existed. But that honour is not free. There are some duties and responsibilities that are tied with it. And those duties are, that you're responsible towards the welfare of every member of this ummah. And if there's something that you could do to help a brother or a sister who is in need, and then you do nothing about it! Be assured that Allah will hold you accountable for that. Because Rasulullah (s.a.w) said this ummah is like a body. If one part of it feels the pain the whole body joins in the pain and the fever and the suffering. You cannot separate your finger from the rest of the body. Even if that small finger is injured , the whole body will feel the pain. A very important lesson for us to learn. Now there's a conflict between truth and evil. The conflict is happening. there's a conflict Between islam and kufr. And the ones who are leading and representing islam are very small minority. And then the ones who are leading kufr are very small minority. And then the masses of the people are like the people of Thamud. Doing nothing! So we need to choose and make a decision. Are we going to be with the ones who are representing islam or are we going to be with the ones who are representing evil! Because there's nothing in between.

Imam Mehdi, he's going to be joined by a small band of the believers. And this is something that we say. That the true believers are going to be criticised. The tyrants of the world are going to mock them. The disbelievers are going to call them terrorists. And in the end, maybe they might have a few mistakes. Salahuddeen al ayyubi! I mean who as a Muslim does not want salahuddeen. And If i were to tell that salahuddeen was an alcoholic, would you believe me? Yes. Before he became a General,

salahuddeen was an alcoholic. He drank alcohol up until the time he was fighting in the crusade. You see that many of the historians said that salahuddeen made some major mistakes. Maybe at times he even might have done things which may compromise the life of Muslims. So you see that, you know he caused (it might be said that) innocent people to die. He made some mistakes. He was an alcoholic. He wasn't the best of people. Yet look at what he brought to the Ummah. And that's why we love him. So why is in our time that we look at a single mistake that a Muslim makes and we criticise them? That we forget who they are. Who they're fighting for. The good that they are bringing to the Ummah. And this is a sickness that we have. We want to attack the leaders who are fighting for Islam. We have to wake up dear brothers and sisters. Imam Mehdi is not an angel. So why do you think the mujahideen of our time are going to be angels? Yes, they make mistakes. And we excuse their mistakes and look at the good they do. We forget their mistakes and advise them. We support them in the good they do. And we realise that they're the ones who are fighting for this ummah while we sit back and live comfortable lives with our tea in our hand, sitting in front of our t.v. sets, while they're out there in the mountains, they're out there without blankets, under the stars of the night sky, living their life for the sake of Allah. Why are we criticizing them? Why are we not making Dua for them? Why is it that we can speak so easily about them yet we don't say a single word about the tyrants? We don't say a single word about the armies destroying our lands and raping our sisters. Yet we speak against the ones who are here to defend the Ummah. We speak against the imams of our community. We speak against the shuyookh. Is it why that it's so easy to criticize a Muslim yet we are not strong, we're not tough against the same kuffar who destroy us. Allah The Almighty describes the believers; listen to this, You want to see if you're a true believer in your heart! Test this by the word of Allah. Allah describes the believers as saying they're soft with one another. Meaning when they have a believer they're soft and easy with them. And they're harsh upon the kuffar. What does this mean? When a believer who is here fighting for Islam, working for Islam, giving his life for the Ummah. You're going to be easy with him. If you're going to advise him, take him by the hand and speak softly to him. As for the disbelievers who bombed our land and raped our sisters and bring turmoil and tyranny. Why is it that we are so afraid to speak a single word against them? What is that you're protecting? Is that your house? Is that your money? Is that your wealth? Is that your wife?

" Say, [O Muhammad], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and jihad in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people." (Surat At Tawbah, verse 24)

Why is it that we are so afraid to speak a word of truth as the Prophet (ﷺ) said the greatest of jihad is to speak a word of truth against the tyrant.

*Indeed, among the greatest types of Jihad is a just statement before a tyrannical ruler. * (Tirmidhi)

Yet here we're kissing their hands and kissing their feet. Whatever else they ask us to kiss. Bowing down to them. Looking up to them. Granting them a position of honour whilst they humiliate our lands. Oh dear Muslims! What is that understanding? Are we on the side of tyrants? Or are we on the side of Imam Mehdi? Are we on the side of disbelievers or are we in on the side of prophet Isa A.S?

When that army marches forth, don't think for a moment that munafiqeen are not going to attack them. Do you see they attack them day and night today? They attack them day and night today! The

words that they use are used for no one else. They use special vocabulary which they use to attack the believers. Are we going to fulfil this or are we going to know our history? Are we going to realise that in the end the you have the "Taifatul mansurah" the group of the believers, whom prophet s.a.w said will fight in jihad until the day of judgement?

So are we going to be on the side of the disbelievers and the munafiqeen and the ones who attack and are the awliya of shaitan? We have to ask ourselves really where are we? The prophet s.a.w said there will be this awakening. And it's happening before our eyes. Where are you? Consider! Am I on the side of believers making dua for them. Supporting them. Hoping to be among them. Or am I with the rest!? Am I the one who sit back and follow my desires. I attack the Muslims. I go online and Criticise the Muslims. Whilst I praise the others. I don't pray in the masjid. I don't educate others about Islam. I don't go to the Islamic centers. Where do we want to be? The choice is ours. If we're sincere and we want to work for Islam, then we're going to begin where we are. Begin with educating our Ummah. An educated Ummah who knows Islam is going to be a honourable and strong Ummah. We have to return back to Islamic education. And this is the beginning. Learning about our religion. You don't know about the tawheed of Allah? Know about the tawheed of Allah. You don't know how to make wudu? Learn how to make wudu. Return to the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Return to the way of Islam. Throw away all cultural things that go against Islam. And come back to the true way of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah. After this, be aware of your history. Be aware of the history of this Ummah. We have the most beautiful histories and as Allah says You'll not find Sunnah of Allah changing. Meaning what gave us victory yesterday is going to give you victory today.

Respected audience! The Qur'an wants to free people from man-made constitutions, parliaments, assemblies and give into slavery of Allah! No other constitution or law is acceptable. " ان الحكم الا لله " The Law is only for Allah. If the whole world says one thing, the whole Ummah says one thing and it does not correlate with the word of Allah and the Prophet S.A.W, then it is worthless in Islam!

For a man who is fond of the paradise of Allah, i.e. the mujahdeen, these worthless attractions of this world are very insignificant in his eyes. If they wanted to have them then it was no big deal. Rather many of them already had whatever this world could offer. Their education was complete. Someone is a doctor, someone an engineer or a business man. But when the love of Allah blossomed in their hearts then they said, 'no more'!

My brothers! How come we wag our tongues so easily against such friends of Allah?? We are not willing to give up our luxurious lives and comfort zones but we use our hands and tongues against those who presented themselves for sake of Allah when jihad became mandatory. They had no vision except the order of Allah and they responded as if in the battle of Badr; the same way Ibrahim (A.S) was thrown in the fire. They made Islam the aim of their lives. They did not become a victim of the enemies by compromising their faith.

Feel it. Come near the stove, burn the fire and put your hand close to the fire. You will feel the courage and steadiness of Prophet Ibrahim A.S! His love for Allah made him jump ignoring the fire of Namrood

Yet we still talk about Hikmah (wisdom) ?? Believe me.. this wisdom of ours is unwise for Islam; rather it is our desires most of the time that control us and try to justify our wrongs. Tell me... on the measures of this world, think with the parameters that is it wise that while on one hand Islam is

ordering to help the oppressed Ummah , the ruler of the Muslims is ruling by other than what Allah revealed?

Think of the young man who has decided to kick off the charms of this world to go out and join those who are fighting for the religion of Allaah; his father now comes in the light and is directing against what the religion says, family is pressurizing to go against the orders of Islam, people are advising and telling big stories and that single young man who is considered stupid for being young and sentimental; just to talk about jihad ..yet he shows them verses of Surah At Tawbah and Surah Al Anfal..?

What does this devoted man gets in reply? *Yes we have read them, we have spent time on them until our hair turned gray, we know what religion says. We know the meanings better than you, how come you immature guy come up to your elders, teaching them what's right and what's wrong...*

See, this is what their Hikmah (wisdom) is!! *

Thus they sideline him as a sentimental person. They think that he is emotional, but he says no! He is ready to jump into this fire but won't stand back. Yet all the Prophets and the Sahabah R.A were emotional in this regard and they never compromised one single bit.

Qur'an says! And let them not disquiet you who are not certain [in faith]. (Surat Ar-Rum, Ayah 60)

But we are very wise. We have so many wisdoms, compromises, that (God forbid) we could try tell the companions and the Prophets that what is hikmah (wisdom).

Think about the loyalty and love of Prophet Ibrahim A.S. On the coming Eid, try to lay down your child and place a knife over his/her neck before using it on the sacrificial animal and then ask yourself what a great personality Ibrahim A.S. was. The sacrifice he gave, that we regard as great, but our hearts do not tremble.

Qur'an says :
Has the time not come for those who have believed that their hearts should become humbly submissive at the remembrance of Allah and what has come down of the truth? And let them not be like those who were given the Scripture before, and a long period passed over them, so their hearts hardened; and many of them are defiantly disobedient. (Surat Al-Hadid, Ayah 16)

Yet we are so ignorant....

A desert, a barren land, no chance of a drop of water let alone food or drinks. Those who are married and have children know very well about this in terms of experience. A man leaves alone his young and loving wife and their lovely child in a desert. Dear all! these are your role models and their lives tell that, to be faithful means you shall be tested !!

So I congratulate a thousand times those young men and old men who leave their houses, wealth and everything else to save their faith and earn their places in Heaven. In a time when the devil's new world order has involved every Muslim into banking & interest, if not directly then indirectly, in a time when the most respected amongst the Ummah and protector of Shareah; the scholars are forced to give verdicts that go against the religion of Allaah, the forces of Dajjal are declaring their supremacy and Muslims who promised to surrender only to Allah's Will are accepting the order of others to commit shirk with Allah. The majority is silent. Except a few by the will of Allah. Most of

the scholars have sold the purity of the pen (haqq) because of the threats of falsehood and thus have frozen their ink forever. The verses of the Qur'an which teach us to stand up against evil have been kept silent from the Muslims. Wherever you see, there are Muslims who have compromised to such an extent that even if Dajjal comes in their time and declares himself as God. Similarly, the agents of dajjal are saying right now; either be with us or be with our enemies. While the ahadith of Prophet S.A.W. demand us to be in the party of Allah thus there is no way in between.

When Imam Mehdi will come then only a small portion of truthful people will accompany him. The tyrants will oppose Muslims and make fun of them. Disbelievers will label them as 'terrorists', 'fundamentalists', 'extremists' etc.

But remember this too that not every gun carrier is a mujahid. Those who fight to ensure supremacy and protection of the system of Taghut on the land of Allah are not mujahideen. Neither those who fight the war of America and disbelievers are. Nationalists and those fighting for some specific tribe are also in illusion of being mujahideen. The forces of Taghut are never going to be part of Imam Mehdi's army. Even if they consider themselves as custodian of Mecca and Madinah or the fortress of Islam.

Remember the mujahideen fee sabeelillah will not have a flag of a nation or a country or a sect. Their flag will be the flag of religion of Allah, flag of Allah and Prophet S.A.W., devoid of nationalism, patriotism; the 'flag of Islam', the banner of Tawheed'.

* * * * *

*A break came in the lecture. Usman was reminded of his time in prison. In his heart he revised a nasheed:

We face the cannon fire every day
We know we are the main target
the tradition of loyalty,
living in pain is part of our noble history,
the fools still continue their threat,
while they forget
that we love playing within the jaws of death...

We know we are the main target
Tyranny has become supreme,
the tyrants flaunt in self-esteem
lost in power,
we are busy in our own little bubbly dream..

We know we are the main target
they murder our innocent
yet, we rise up again with a powerful scent
like musk;
We will sacrifice anything for our faith
from dawn to dusk..

We know we are the main target
the fear of evil is like the clarion
the cowards learn this hard lesson.
let us preserve our dignity and religion
We will never fall into hopeless oblivion..

We know we are the main target
this worldly life engulfs you
Do not let secularism come through
the reign of tyranny is beneath our shoe..

We know we are the main target
We are zealous eagles, warriors of death
we are bold, brave, and we do not fret
We care little for this earth
because the eternity in heaven we shall bequeath

We know we are the main target
We follow the Qur'an with all our heart
the enemy in this does not take part
as his rituals are amongst the darkest path
with no humanity and faith in his shadowy art

We know we are the main target
The super-powers & tyrants will surrender aghast
Their temples, wealth and forts will be set to blast
The vanquishers will vanquish themselves to the past
The tales of our victory will spread long and fast..

We know we are the main target,
We face the cannon fire every day
We know we are the main target...
The ultimate victory is Ours to stay...*

* * * * *

Khawlah reread Maryam's message and a smile spread across her face. A verse from a poetry echoed in her mind.

*To be beheaded is what Our Hearts Desire,

So let's check the strength of the assassinator*

"So the devil is making such moves now? He thinks I will get weaker at this level? I will step back? Never! This head get get beheaded but not surrender to falsehood."

Khawlah read the message again:

"Khawlah I gave your message to brother Abdullah. I told him about you as you had said and mentioned your encounter with him in the market. After istikharah prayer he said he has no

objection on this proposal. He also says that you have to realize some facts and then make any commitment.

First thing, he is a mujahid. His life is not an ordinary one. He cannot give you all that you wish for as a wife of twenty first century. His life fluctuates between difficulties and death. He does not come home every day. Many times he does not come home for months. Many times he has nothing to eat and it is scarce to eat even once a day.

So think again over what you want, so that you may not regret later."

Khawlah replied hurriedly with heart beating fast "I accept everything. I just want to be named with a mujahid. This itself is a great honour for me. I want nothing else, nothing".

A few tears fogged the mobile screen. With trembling fingers she sent the message. Her emotions were uncontrollable. Did miracles happen like this? Khawlah gazed at the sky above and tried to say something but her tongue could not help the words come out.

Eyes got welled up with tears. Was there any doubt in the mercy of That Very Loving Lord...

Subhan Allaah!!

* * * * *

After Maryam's message Khawlah decided to involve her grandfather. After all, he was the only one who could understand her and either way she had no other option. After Khawlah told him, he was glad as there was no better proposal. He was proud as well as surprised at his granddaughter. How different was today's Khawlah from the past 'Katty'. His eyes gleamed with tears in happiness.

Grandfather talked to Abdullah and assured Khawlah that even if no one stood with her, he would !! The only issue was Khawlah's family. How to make them accept this? There was no positive expectation from them. Khawlah remained worried for months. She could see no solution. Though her family had softened a bit but the tag of being s 'mujahid' could worsen matters. After years of efforts, love, gentleness, extreme patience, steadfastness and crying alone for the sorrows given by her loved ones and then advising them with love in return, had been fruitful and now they were slowly inclining towards the religion. Copying Maryam, Khawlah had used her words and method of invitation to religion to soften hearts of her family; told them the purpose of life by Qur'an and Hadith, modified the grounds of religion and then gradually helped them understand religion in detail. By Allah's mercy she had gotten a positive response. (Though her sister in law still did not show any sign of change).

The last two years were passed in real grief & pain. Khawlah endured mental torture at the hands of her loved ones. She had spent these years crying before Allaah. Once matters had worsened to a great level. An old family friend of her father had come to her house, she was forced to meet him! Khawlah told her family that she won't go in front of him, but if she will be forced to do so then she goes in veil and thus then they must not say that she had 'dishonoured' the family. Khawlah's family didn't take her threats seriously, so Khawlah took out a large shawl, covered herself and veiled with its one end.

That uncle remained shocked for a few moments & gathering himself returned back her Salam. Khawlah had no idea whatever he said afterwards. She was too worried for what was going to happen next. She kept on praying to Allah to be her Guard. Later hell broke out at her house. She was scolded

hard by her family. Her father stopped talking to her for making him feel ashamed in front of his friend. He kept on this social boycott with her for three whole months. Taunts and ridiculing of the family went on nonstop. 'This girl is ridiculous', 'she must be under the effects of some black magic', 'she is giving us punishment for bringing her up', 'we fed her and she is giving us this return that we are not able to face our family and acquaintances'. etc. were the typical accusations. Thus Khawlah spent those three months in real pain. Her heart felt at ease only through the remembrance of Allah, patience and tahajjud Salah. As Allah had advised, "And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allah]" (Surat Al-Baqarah, Ayah 45)

Eventually things got better slowly, very slowly, as the family got assured that she was not going to leave her stance no matter what. So, unwillingly they were forced to accept her change.

But they were sure to get angry at topic of 'mujahid'. What could she do now. How to handle this huge task...Khawlah kept on thinking? Getting tired after having struggled for hours and hours for thinking out the solution, she took out her pen and started to write some verses she had read long ago.

*Keep the dreams alive in your eyes..
Keep afresh the relations where loyalty lies..

Be the lamp in dark night
Keep the life alight
Pass the test of love
Give your life for the One
above..

If you desire to reach the moon,
Then let not your target swoon..
Let the world taunt, let it hurt..
Forget all the torment, let the thrones be the roses, not the dirt..

Hidden from the world, in the silence of the night,
Let your palms be a candle of prayer
and let your eye witness the wonderful sight..

Let your enmities be for Allaah's sake alone,
let your love too be for
His sake..
Let the enmities be few and the love unlimited and hard to break..*

* * * * *

"Get yourself in shape. What have you made out of yourself with that overgrown beard! We are going to my mother's place this Sunday. Please make yourself look sensible", with an approving glance at her afternoon's shopping, Huma addressed her husband, Saad.

"Oh, why so? I am much handsome than ever... !!", Saad tried to avoid answering, with a laugh. His eyes fixed on his laptop.

"Saad!! I am serious. You have never been like this before. Please shave your beard. You never let it remain unshaven for more than one day, and now it's been a week you did not even bring any blade near you. If you let it remain so, in a few days' time you'll have a full grown beard like some mawlana", Huma looked at Saad with disapproval.

Saad who was busy searching for advertisements for jobs on internet, got serious at her remark.

"What if I decide to keep it as a beard for real?" He watched for his wife's expressions.

Huma let out a laugh, "A very stupid joke indeed".

"I am not joking; I am really serious". At last with tiredness in his words, Saad shared with her his heart's desire. He had been trying to muster courage to go to her for days, but could not do so until, now when he could not stand it anymore, he let out his feelings at last. Now that he had said it, he was waiting for the lightning to strike as he knew that he had just broke a news worth nuclear blast to his wife.

"Whaaattttt???" Huma screamed at him.

"So you are not getting a job because of this beard?" , Astonished ,Huma gazed at Saad, without blinking, but got only silence in reply.

"That means it really is true that you are jobless because of this beard of yours!! And you lost the previous job due to it for sure." Mad with anger, Huma started shouting at him.

Saad just started at her silently. What kind of woman was she and what kind of women were the true believing women? A hell of a difference indeed. His wife did not even know how to talk to the husband properly. What was she doing? Instead of being his shield, she was being the attacking sword.

He must be crazy to marry this woman... She acted like a boss there. She had no time to spare from shopping and fashion. And that too for whom? For her husband or for every other man on the street? Whenever he had tried to advise her, he was showered with taunts of being a backward, narrow-minded husband. What was that?

He had destroyed his generations to come by marrying her. What was she going to teach her daughters?

To walk in a short shirt, without shawl? To be rude to the husband? To enjoy wasting money? Thinking herself as the know-it-all and the rest as fools? Thinking Islam as fourteen century old religion not applicable in the twenty first century?

What had he done. And realized all this too late! Saad was talking to himself, with tears gleaming in his eyes.

"This is enough. First your sister, and now you.

Everyone is becoming a mawlana here. I am telling you Saad... Either you shave this today, or I am leaving this house. I am fed up of this mental house", letting out anger, Huma left the room.

Lost in thoughts, Saad just kept gazing at the door ; helpless and hurt.

* * * *

"Advise me please, I am too worried". The once steaming hot food in front of Saad had gotten cold by now. He was just twisting his spoon between fingers. He had not taken a single bite yet. Saad was sitting in a restaurant in Islamabad with his best friend. It was evening time and the restaurant was full; as if people had nothing to do but eat. They did not bother about anything else. Not the dying Ummah, not disbelievers playing with the lives of the Muslims, not the calling oppressed - nothing, nothing at all!!

There was no Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman or Ali today. Common Muslims acted like Abu Jahl and Abu Lahb. Their only concern was food, clothes and sleep. Nothing beyond themselves, like animals.

"Hey, I vote for Huma. You really have gone mad. What's happening to you mate? You've been activity weird lately", Saad's friend looked at him with concern as if he was some alien.

"Stop it now. Get some life. And give Huma some space too. And broaden your mind a bit, be open-minded. Seems like you are haunted by a ghost of backwardness"

Saad was too astonished at his friend's reply that he had no words to answer back..

He lived among Muslims! But did they all really accept this faith willingly, or were they forced to be Muslims? How stupid was he to consult the wrong person? He was asking for advice about religion from materialist people like his wife. They were sure to discourage him.

This religious change in him was making his dear ones strangers to him, as if a distance of miles had come between him and them. As if a wall was erected between them, separating them forever. The distances among their hearts were sure to remain till their way of thinking remained so. Saad did not feel himself to be one of them now. He felt practical Muslims who had same views as his, much closer to him than his own blood relations. Such is the relation of Islam and the Ghuraba (the strangers). Examples of Hazrat Mus'ab bin umair and other companions are best for understanding about such strangers.

Saad stood up fast, without any warning. Why had not he thought of this before?

Khawlah!! She was the one who could help.

He paid the bill and rushed out of the restaurant. Saad walked out so fast, that he did not give time to his friend to show any reaction.

* * * * *

"See... Khawlah sister, I have watered all the flowers. Now they will have their breakfast. Hehehe..." Ibrahim innocently came near Khawlah, who was walking on the grass with bare feet. The cold dew drops were feeling pleasant on her feet. It had become her routine to pass sometime in the garden in the morning and evening every day. Khawlah liked to be close to nature, she felt alive near nature, sometimes she thought how ungrateful humans are. What a wonderful world Allah had created. And people had no time to see and thus ponder over the Signs of Allaah's Might and Rahmah hidden behind everything He had created for them. If they really had paid some attention here, they would never have come up with absurd ideas of atheism.

Why the sun rises every day? Illuminating the earth, throwing its golden shower at the green trees and plants.

Moon, whose beauty is used in poetry, gives off an eye-catching sight as it spreads its light - the milky light, the silvery light, everywhere on this earth.

As if a bride glowing in the night, whose beauty is awed when seen.

Then the little glowing stars, as if pearls in the black cover of night.
These green valleys, springs, rivers, stream were all for humans to be content and grateful for
But what did humans do. They openly disobeyed the Lord of the universe. Instead of implementing God's rule on the earth, they set their own man-made laws as they desired. Thus they rebelled against the Lord of the creation. How ungrateful behaviour. Their acts were such that even the devil might seem aghast at the level they had fallen to.
The stupidity of those who still question Hell is amazing.

"Owww..." A sudden attack of shower made Khawlah jump out of her thoughts.

"You were not listening to me..." , giggling, Ibrahim ran inside to escape from the aftermath of his mischief.

Khawlah kept watching him til he was out of sight.

"Ahh... Subhan Allaah!! Such a gift from Allah, how else could i face the tough times. His little mischiefs lighten my weight.

Khawlah picked up her mobile and started listening to an Islamic lecture :

"Why are Muslims disgraceful and humiliated today? Why Muslims are defeated by disbelievers today? Some news come in nights, the hues and cries, the winds give us messages of sorrow, tears flow from the eyes, mothers crying, kids tortured, elders plead, girls raped..

why is Al Aqsa masjid in the hands of the jews? Why are Muslims burnt alive in Burma? Muslims are tortured in Afghanistan, the Muslims of Palestinians are crying, the Muslims of Iraq, Syria, Burma, Philippines, Yemen, Somalia, Muslims all over the world are in torment. Evil rulers rein over us! Worst people control us!

There is Shirk everywhere. Muslims will never be at rest till Shirk is ended, Tawheed is propagated. Evil is not defeated until Uzza and Habal, Laat and Manat of today are not broken. Only then there will be peace; there will be light. People think that we need technology alone to be victorious and Muslims do not have it. Russia had technology yet it lost, why is US running away from Afghanistan, pleading! They cannot compete with these devout ones. Yes, the journey is long but the disbelievers are afraid. I swear that Tawheed gives a Muslim respect, fame, regard, grace. Majority of those who say the Shahadah today have no idea of Tawheed or faith. They just say out the words and then remain busy in football, cricket, they drink and rape and say we have tawheed, we are Muslims.! No! Majority of them follow America, worship Washington and take orders from the white house, you don't see these idols? We think that shirk is prostration in front of graves or idols only. Is it not shirk to worship US, their Dollar, their leaders, their celebrities, their way of life? Today people of Tawheed do not understand it. There are false gods. They have opened shops to sell tawheed such as in the Parliaments and even on the streets. So my dear brothers and sisters. understand Tawheed first. We are far away from tawheed. Tell me what is the two nation theory. Tawheed told me this theory that Hindu and Muslim are not one, temple and masjid are not one, Torah, bible & Qur'an are not one, Christian and Muslim are not one, Obama and Abdullah are not one."

Khawlah picked up her notepad to note down some important points. Skimming through the pages, she came across some old notes.

She had saved a piece of writing from a forum many months ago. Khawlah gave them a read:

"FEAR OF JIHAD"!!

Surah At-Tawbah, verse 24, Al Qur'an:

*Say, [O Muhammad], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and jihad in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people. *

This verse of Qur'an exposes the reality of all our excuses, slaps our reasons on our faces, it tells us that we are not helpless, rather are materialistic. All these excuses which we use to not fight in the cause of Allah are mentioned in this verse.

Today we are counted amongst the strongest countries of the world. Still we are unable to shield our Muslim brethren or to fight shoulder to shoulder with him. Though we have atomic bombs, but we are not allowed to use them because we have sold out our honour and our identity, and thus are forced to agree to everything our enemies say.

As a nation we have no identity, nobody is afraid of us and why would they be? We are the nation which is such that when an American helicopter keeps targeting a check post here in our country, thus openly killing the soldiers there, for hours and the army officers of our country deployed there kept on asking their elders whether were allowed to fire in reply or not? Would America ask back the Rizq it had been feeding us, if their soldiers get hit by any bullet? One who has turned into our sustainer has every right to take our lives, right?

We do not need to wage jihad to be a martyr these days. Haqq is good but if someone else dies for it, that's even better. Why get yourself in trouble? Stay silent !!

This is what the mentality has become.

We know all types of jihad except one. We carry out jihad through the pen, through money, we even cone up to waging jihad by going on da'wah trips, we recognize jihad of removing stones from pathways, but we are afraid to fight, we are afraid to die. We want to be a martyr but by dying through stomach diseases, plaque or by drowning in the water. Allah knows how much water is needed for a person to be martyred otherwise we could drown into a cup of water and be a martyr.

Prophet S.A.W said that The Muslim Ummah is like a body, the whole body feels pain if one part is injured...

But our source of education is different. We are taught that "country comes first".

We had asked for this piece of land for Islam. Now we realize that when one is guilty of oneself, then even the whole earth is not sufficient to cover him up, to hide his face. Thus we asked for a whole country just to hide our shameful faces."

Khawlah was lost in thoughts when Huma came out of the main entrance. Glancing at Khawlah, she immediately looked away and took on speed towards the car porch. Ibrahim followed his mother innocently.

Khawlah sensed that Huma was unusually rude today. She got worried as to what may be the issue. Leaving her notepad , she went over to Huma.

"Going somewhere?" Khawlah smiled politely.
But she got a reply which stressed her even more.

"Yes, to Hell! You want to come??" Huma casted a harsh look at her, sat in the car and raced it towards the gate.

Astonished, Khawlah was left in a choking cloud of car's smoke.
What was this? Huma used to hurt her through her taunts often, but never out of control like this.
Khawlah was standing there, confused, when Saad came there with a sad face.

"Brother Saad, is everything fine between you and Huma?" Khawlah asked with concern.

With hands in his pocket, Saad just looked at the sky with empty eyes and said just one word in reply, "Beard..."

"Beard?" What does this mean?", asked Khawlah, now confused to the limit.

All of a sudden, a thought crossed Khawlah's mind. She looked at her brother closely.
Hair on the face meant beard.. Oh Beard!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
So not shaving for so many days was not due to sadness for loss of job, rather he was keeping a beard?
Allah!! How very dumb of her to not understand this simple fact before. Khawlah's eyes welled up with tears without warning. She thanked Allaah in her heart. It really was a beautiful day today.
Khawlah's love for her brother increased even more now.

"It's great news brother..." Khawlah could not find words to express her joy.
She could not believe that the fruit of her patience could be this sweet.

Saad stared at his sister sadly.
Had he really done the right thing? Why were his wife and close ones shunning him then?
Maybe sometimes you are so alone in the mess of evil that you are not able to decide whether it's you has gone mad or the others?
Here is when we forget that Allah's scales do not go with the *majority is authority* Fatwa, rather, there is an altogether different view for majority in the Eyes of Allah.

"...but most of them do not know." (6:37)

"...most of them do not reason" (5:103)

"...but most of them are defiantly disobedient." (3:110)

"And if you obey most of those upon the earth, they will mislead you from the way of Allah. They follow not except assumption, and they are not but falsifying." (6:116)

"...So be not in doubt about it. Indeed, it is the truth from your Lord, but most of the people do not believe." (11:17)

"Already the word has come into effect upon most of them, so they do not believe." (36:7)

Khawlah was sensing the pain in her brother's eyes, the grief was apparent, she was very aware of this pain, as she herself had got her heart pierced with this long ago. She had been the traveler of the same path - the path Al Ghuraba, the Strangers'

"Come brother, I need to show you something.", Khawlah took her brother to the lawn, sat him up in a chair and herself sat in the other.

She picked up her notepad and turned the pages over to find the desired page. She had copied some quotes from a telegram channel some time ago, to use them to muster courage when needed. Now it was her brother's turn to refill his energy. Saad just kept looking at her silently.

"Alhamdulillah, I found it. Read this brother!!", Khawlah motioned her sibling to read. Saad looked at her with questioning eyes, and read the first few lines on the page.

"If you start acting upon the Qur'an, then you will become a stranger for those around you, even your own family. You will seem boring to your friends. And their parties, those of which you used to be the star of - the center of attention, will now lose interest in you. People will see you as a goof. So find strangers like you and be in their company. Otherwise you will be lost in the world like the majority. Remember you are not new on this path. All Prophets and their followers were "Ghuraba", strangers for the majority."

This path is a lonely path.

So don't be surprised when a time comes when you become a stranger among people you thought were strangers like yourself.

The longer you remain on this blessed path, the more the people will see you as someone who baffles them because a person who chases this Dunya will always find ambitions for the Akhirah strange.

This path is a lonely path.

You will never be understood. Not by your family, nor by your friends. But you must remain firm, because this is the era of those who remain firm.

This path is a lonely path.

Because the lovers of the Dunya have nothing to do with it. It is shunned by most, out of fear of losing the temporary while they don't realise how they're ruining their eternal life. It is not sought after except by those rare, few, blessed ones who seek the Face of Allah ﷻ more than anything this worthless world has to offer.

You will be mocked, misunderstood, considered a foreigner in your own homeland, considered a stranger amongst your own friends and family.

But, Know, O beloved, that you aren't the only one who feels this staggering bite of loneliness, and you certainly aren't the first.

This is the path, where Rasulullah ﷺ was rejected by his own family and tribe, the path where Yusuf عليه السلام was thrown into prison for a crime he never committed. And the examples are many.

Know, O beloved, that you have chosen this path knowing all the hardships, and so you must bear them with patience and walk upon this path with a smile on your faces. Because this is the path for which the Sahabah (R.A) gave their lives. This is the path of the few, blessed, chosen servants of Allah. So strive to be from amongst them.

“The path of truth is solitary. Those who traverse it are lonely; they are not wanted, nor their aspiration. Leisurely do they travel, with resolution. Of what they seek, people are heedless, for, about the truth, most are careless.”

“This path is paved with torn-off limbs, irrigated with blood, surrounded by trials. Its tribulations and fitnah waylay you on this path. But as long as you know your goal, and the way is clear to your sight, pursue your journey whatever the case is.”

Even the Prophets were not safe, so who are you to complain?

They said, "Our Lord knows that we are messengers to you, and we are not responsible except for clear notification." They said, "Indeed, we consider you a bad omen. If you do not desist, we will surely stone you, and there will surely touch you, from us, a painful punishment." (36:16-18)

"We consider you a bad omen.”

Whom is it said to? Prophet of Allah!!

Ponder over these words. See their status and attitude of ignorant ones.

So how come you think that you will walk without any pain.

Know that you will bleed!

O devoted one of this true path!

So keep your eyes focused on the target, leave this world for the journey of Akhirah, be amongst those for whom the beloved prophet (S.A.W) said: "طوبى للغرباء"

* * * * *

The noted ended. Saad felt as if a new soul had entered his body. Such beautiful words, medicine to his wounds. He looked at his sister with tears in his eyes, tears of gratitude.

"Khawlah, may bless you",

Saad was unable to say anything else. but he knew that his sister had heard his unspoken words as well.

"May my Lord bless you too my brother." There appeared shiny pearls in Khawlah's eyes, ready to drop.

* * * * *

"What is this?", Huma was standing in Khawlah's room. She had Khawlah's mobile with a chat open.

"What?" Khawlah asked, pale in the face with fear. What had she done? She forgot to add lock on phone's screw. What was going to happen now?!

"That's what I am asking you!" Harshness in her words made Khawlah tremble with fear. She could expect no good. What had Huma read? Khawlah had never deleted the chat in which Maryam had told her about Abdullah's approval. She used to read it daily. Today, a disaster was sure to come.

"Please Huma..." Khawlah was trembling.

"What are you up to? You are not as innocent as you portray yourself to be. You lecture us about chastity while having marriage settlements and love affairs yourself", Huma probably was not in her senses, the way she was screaming now.

"Please do not speak so loud" Khawlah almost begged, there was no life left in her. Khawlah started dhikr of Allaah in her heart. Only a miracle could save her now.

"Just let me tell your mother what her pious daughter is doing, you give us lectures while searching for lads yourself! And what missions you have started on social media? You want trouble for us? You can be jailed for this, and thus all us may also be dragged along too. I shall disclose all your activities!", Huma was shouting at Khawlah and while Khawlah just sat on the floor with her face in her hands, crying.
A disaster she could not hold.

"What happened? What is all this noise Huma? And Khawlah, what's wrong with you?" Mrs. Anum followed had come all worried.
Khawlah looked at her mother with fear, she was sure she would kill her.

"O Allah, please help me", Khawlah was about to faint.

"Oh, why are you asking her... She won't have the courage to speak up. I will tell you about her affairs. She has made promises of wedding to some mujahid and she is running campaigns for Kashmir, Palestine, Syria and the rest of the world as a brave one so that we may suffer as Doctor Afia is suffering, and we may get killed in the end".
Huma had probably read all her messages.

Anum was so hurt and shocked that she was unable to say anything for a few moments. Then she started screaming at the top of her voice, as if had lost her senses. Huma too got afraid totwhat see her like that. She must have not imagined the outcome to be this grave.

At this point, Khawlah's felt as if the sky had come crashing over her. She felt her mother may die with shock. pale with fear, staggering, Khawlah reached her mother. She had never seen her mother act like this before.

"Mama...." crying, she moved her hand towards her mother but she jerked her away. Mrs Anum was just crying and screaming at the top of her voice.

Khawlah glanced at Huma who seemed to be enjoying all this. She wanted to curse her so badly but then remembered her Prophet S.A.W. No use of being his Ummati if she had not such a heart as him.

She forgave her with a heavy heart.

Khawlah tried to talk to her mother again.

"Mama it is not like what you are thinking", Khawlah herself was crying as she saw her mother hiccupping as if about to die.

The room's window was open and voices must be being heard next door too. Khawlah was heartbroken with grief. Already people were making stories about her and they must think of her as of loose character now.

Her tears dropped like rain..

* * * * *

Numb, Khawlah stood in the kitchen cooking food with wandering thoughts.

A year had passed since that *phone chat incident*. What had not happened to her in this whole year?

Her family became indifferent to her. She had seen how the blood becomes cold. She no longer laughed, a silence entailed her. Maybe she was not as brave as she had thought herself to be.

Khawlah's family was at social boycott with her. Her unwavering stance that she would marry only a Mujahid, had only intensified her family's opposition, so much so that they had announced to her that if she remained stubborn like this, then they won't marry her whole her thing life. That would be more acceptable to them than marrying her to any mujahid.

Khawlah used to cry to Allah in Duas, "Oh Allah I have no guardian, no caretaker except You. I am a girl, who is weak. Nobody in this world can help me in these painful moments. My own family has left me alone. Please You be my caretaker, my guardian, my Wali for marriage. I nominate you as my Wali as none is willing to play this role for me. Make the halal easy for me, I do not wish for haraam. If you leave me at their mercy, then they will never wed me. Make some way for me, I trust You blindly. When the sense cautions that ocean is ahead, there is only dead end awaiting, I stand firm saying my Lord can make ways within oceans too, can pacify the fire, sustain in well, keep alive in the stomach of a fish. Everything need only His "كن", All matters relate to Him.

O my Allah you have said that You own everything in the Heavens and the Earth and all matters present to You.

So Please show mercy regarding my matter", Khawlah's eyes hurt with pain almost all the time as she now cried too much. Sleepless nights were norm for her now. There was a time when she used to fall asleep as soon as she hit the bed, and now she could not sleep even by waiting the whole night.

Khawlah's father had completely stopped talking to her since then, he acted as if she did not exist. Once he used to be proud of her, but now declared her a curse, "I wish she had died the very day she was born. Those who get sad at the birth of girl are justified, these bring embarrassment to the parents"

Khawlah did not have to face only her father's hatred. Anger of her mother and her poisoned words killed Khawlah inside, little by little every day. Her taunts burnt her soul to ashes.

Along with all this to face, Huma's consistent attack of foul words were nonstop, she had set up all weapons to hurt to the limit.

However, Khawlah's brother stood by her side. Sometimes he comforted her by listening to her pains, sometimes by advising his family to come to senses.

Khawlah was deeply thankful to him and thus used to pray for him, what else could she do? She had no words to thank him in a way that he deserved. Only her Lord could reward her brother with what he was deserving of.

Ibrahim and grandfather were great support too; she could not thank Allah much for these blessings. Her Allah gave her sympathizers with her pain. Their presence strengthened her heart, otherwise she could never have become this strong.

Khawlah now did all the household chores as if she was a servant. Serving them day and night and silent to their taunts. Still this did not soften their hearts for her. They behaved as if she had done some grave sin that needed severest punishment. Multiple times her mobile was snatched away from her so as to prevent her from carrying out her projects that she had started for the Ummah on social media. It was a miracle from Allah that her family did not ask her to unlock her cellphone for them, otherwise all details of her internet activities would have been known to all. Till now they had just a vague idea about her activities. They did not at all know the details as to what she was really upto. If the details regarding her project for the dying Ummah, uncovering faces of enemies of Islam would have been exposed, she would have been dragged out of the house which she was already threatened about daily.

But Khawlah was miraculously saved every time, just because of remembrance of Allah, Istighfaar and the Dua of Prophet Yunus A.S.

Sometimes she thought it would be better if she is kicked out, at least she would be relieved of this daily torment. Now she had understood that nobody could be loyal except for Allah. Anyone can leave you except Allah.

People won't forgive a single mistake but Allah embraces you knowing all your hidden sins as if you never sinned.

Sometimes Khawlah thought whether the Mujahid with whom she dreamt to spend her life, knew the sorrows she was bearing, will he value her as she expected, will he realize that she had given so much comforts for living with him, will it matter to him or will he take it all casually as just one of the other painful stories of the world?

How will he know that she spent time praying for his happiness every moment, how every attack on Kashmir made her worry for his wellbeing, she remained anxious until Maryam told her about his safety, so much that she used to get signs in dreams about his news.

Khawlah thought that she would tell Abdullah about all these little things after marriage, she would tell him how much she loved him just because he was a Mujahid of Allaah. She did not need anything else. Just him to accept her by Nikkah, this itself would be a great prize for her.

Khawlah had thought that she would mend the broken heart of the Mujahid, as she knew that one who lives his life in jihad has to go through hardships that a common man cannot even dream of. He sees the pain that a common person has never ever dreamt of. Thus Khawlah had changed herself altogether. She had suppressed her ego, restricted her desires, practiced to walk great distances on foot, eat less, face difficulties, the qualities she thought the wife of a Mujahid must have. She hoped Abdullah would have no complaints about her after marriage.

However, Khawlah was hurt inside a lot because of her parent's rude behaviour. Strike of one's enemy is one thing but a single harsh word of a beloved pierces one's soul to depths that nobody can understand of except for the one who himself has experienced such pain.

Did they forget how much she loved them?, thought Khawlah. She started crying while cooking. It was a routine now to cry for hours. Tears used to stream down on their own, the moment she stepped on her prayer mat. This was her medicine now - crying in Salah.

"Baba (father)! what have you done!" She cried uncontrollably.

*Keep my standard lofty in Yours Oh The Majestic One!

For I care less if I'm seen as high or inferior in the eyes of the world*

Khawlah repeated the poetry in her mind. At this moment she remembered a paragraph that she had read in Fatimah's gifted diary. Maybe it was an excerpt from some book.

*Sometimes in life we reach a state, where all relations leave us. It is only Allah and us. No mother or father, no brother or sister, no friend. Then we realize there is no Earth beneath and no sky above, only Allah is holding us in a vacuum. Then we understand that we are not of value greater than a sand particle in soil or a leaf on the tree. Then we understand that our presence or absence matters only to us. Only our character ends. There is no change in the universe, no effect on anything else. *

There was smell of smoke coming from somewhere, but where? Khawlah turned around. Fire!! There was fire in the kitchen. She had put the hot pan on the rubber gas pipe which resulted in melting it and thus setting it on fire. There was fire everywhere. Everyone came running on smelling the smoke .

Detached, Khawlah saw the flames of fire. They were very high, reaching the cupboards above. A wave of fear engulfed her insides. She had no idea what was going on, she could not comprehend what was happening around her, as to who was screaming, who was throwing water over the flames, who was shouting at her - accusing her, she just said out her Shahadah and got ready to die. Nothing seemed to remain today.

Fire was getting aggressive with water, flames now reaching the roof. Scared, Khawlah stood amongst the hue and cry in trance, ready to die.

A thought about hell fire crossed her mind.

*No! He will surely be thrown into the Crusher.

And what can make you know what is the Crusher?

It is the fire of Allah, [eternally] fueled, which mounts directed at the hearts.
Indeed, Hellfire will be closed down upon them.
In extended columns* (Surah # 104)

Somebody switched off the main switch of gas. Fire was taken control of in the next few moments.
Afterwards Khawlah was in a disaster. Everybody attacked her with accusations of being careless and dumb.

Why did nobody understand that she had been given mental torture for one year, slapped multiple times, screamed at, what was that had not happened to her?
What did they expect now?
Could she be normal now? Could she think like a normal person?
Why did they expect her to be in a perfect state of mind? Why did they not think of her as a human?

Khawlah felt as if in jail, rather than home. when would this imprisonment end?

Khawlah remembered a hadith that often helped her feel at ease:

"The world is a prison-house for a believer and Paradise for a non-believer."
(Shaih Muslim)

To feel relieved Khawlah recalled the words of her grandfather, * if your ship is deliberately being damaged despite your innocence, then do not grieve, as your God will not leave you. Maybe He is protecting your ship from some greater pain to come like that in the story of Prophet Musa A.S and Khizr. Your matters are being resolved. If you have not understood your Lord yet, then when will you understand??*

Khawlah wiped away her tears, opened Qur'an and turned the pages. A verse, satisfying her heart caught her eyes:

And be patient, [O Muhammad], and your patience is not but through Allah. And do not grieve over them and do not be in distress over what they conspire. Indeed, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who are doers of good.
(Surat An-Nahl, verse 127-128)

Her heart welled up with emotions. O Lord! You surly did not leave me.

Khawlah addressed herself in a poetic manner:

*Oh heart! Are you settled with your wailing so we can move further?

For the journey is Long and the time is becoming shorter*

* * * * *

O tired soul...

Is this imprisonment this painful that you've started crying rivers of tears? Is this that hard to bear the psychological torture by your loved ones? Is it too difficult to even breath in this cell huh??

Okay, let's accept it really is.

And yes, i know it really is !!

I know u are tired now..

Having walked so long on this thorny path.. Painful path.. Lonely path..

& that too with you bleeding even more at every step..

All this would tire anyone.. rather the mountains would have fallen down to dust if they had to carry the weight of your pains.

But O Beloved Preacher Of Haq!! Do you not see the aseers of past and today?? Have you forgotten what hell *they* are going through?? You cry over this psychological imprisonment, and there they are facing an imprisonment that has far more a meaning of prison than what the dictionaries of this world could ever describe?

But look at their level of Emaan..

Smiling faces.. Smiling eyes.. Content hearts.. Qur'an on their tongues.. Patience and Prayer being their armour..

Now look at yourself..

Is this how the Soldier of Haq is??

Do not forget; the Prisons come Perfumed..

~ Dairy of a Prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)

Chapter Ten:

Lecture had started again. Usman was fully attentive. It was a really interesting lecture and he was pleased to have gotten the opportunity to be there.

"So dear brothers and sisters, study the Islamic history. What gave us victory yesterday is going to give us victory today. We as Muslims sometimes become upset and we say Gaza has been bombed by the zionists and we say what can we do? We throw up our arms in turmoil, oh what can we do? Lebanon has been bombed, what can we do? Don't we know that sunnah of Allah doesn't change? The situation now we're facing today dear brothers and sisters, many of us don't realise it. In our past we had a situation that made us what happened today. Palestine, the holy land was occupied. It was occupied by an army know as crusaders. Central Asia, meaning Iraq and Afghanistan was being destroyed by an army. Which was the Mongols. What is the difference today? Now find the Muslims fighting Muslims among one another. It is the same today except the armies has been replaced. instead of crusaders in Palestine we have the zionists. Instead of the Mongols in Chingez Khan in central Asia Afghanistan and Iraq we have the Americans the crusaders of today. It is the same situation. The Muslims are fighting one another. There's turmoil in Syria. We found the same thing happening in the past. We find that the Muslim Ummah is waking up. And the key to it all was Egypt. What happened? It was Nuruddin zengi (Rahimahullah) who sent one of his general Salahdin al ayyubi (Rahimahullah) to go to Egypt and to clean this land up. Let us learn from our history. Let us look what happens. What was the solution yesterday and what is the solution today? Egypt was the turning point. How It was cleaned up. The fatimids were pushed out. These people who betrayed the ummah. And then power was taken. And then what happened. Did Salahuddin, this wise general, sit down and say now that I have Egypt, i will fight the crusaders? No. He united the Muslims. He united our lands. He attacked Jordan. He attacked Syria. He attacked Turkey. He united the Muslims by force. He didn't sit down and say elect me! Have an election and vote Salahuddeen number one. No! He got his sword and united the Muslims by force. This is the way of Salahuddeen. Muslims will be united by force. You want to unite us by elections or ballets or by holding hands and singing songs? It's not going to happen. Salahuddeen took the Ummah by force. And then he fought the crusaders. In our day today we have to be sincere to ourselves. Are we going to defeat our enemies by democracy, by socialism or communism? These things have failed us. And it's not the way of the Ummah. If you want to follow the Prophet s.a.w, Salahuddeen al ayyubi, Saifuddeen al kutuz, Muhammad al fatih (Rahimahullah), you have to be realistic. That Islam is going to be established by not the consent of the majority of the people. But by the leaders of this Ummah. By men! In we as Muslims must unite. We find today that the Muslims awakening is taking place. We find the Muslims calling for establishment of shariah The flag of Islam is being raised. Are we going to turn a blind eye to what's happening? Do we deny that the awakening of the Ummah is happening now before us? Dear brothers and sisters! Do we want to be saying in history like the ones who lived during the crusades? You know when the crusaders first attacked? Now we look at the crusades as being the great jihad of the Ummah. Yet when the crusaders first attacked the holy land, Al Quds, the majority of the Muslims sat back and did nothing. We find we have scholars, shaikhs** (Rahimahullah) wrote a book called kitab al jihad. And said it is fard al ayn, it's compulsory upon the Muslims to fight the crusaders. But the majority of the Muslims called him an extremist. They said you are making trouble. Just let the crusaders take this lands. Yet history vindicated the mujahideen. And now we look at them like he was, even the kuffar call Salahuddeen a hero for defending the Muslim Ummah. Do we want to be the munafiqeen who are like the ones

when started the crusades, who said let us not fight? Do we want to be like the munafiqeen of bani israel who said to prophet Musa A.S, go you and your Lord fight and we will sit here? Do we want to be those who are going to be remembered for this?

I am not going to be willing to be the one who sits here and says nonsense and defends the rulers of the taghut, who defends the rulers of the tyrants, and is afraid to talk about the Islamic awakening that is happening before our eyes. I am going to say to you my dear brothers and sisters, it is happening now. The awakening that the prophet s.a.w mentioned is happening in your lifetime. You have been blessed to be one of the people in this time who defends Islam. You have been blessed to be one of the ones who works for Islam. Be it in your city, whether you'll be teaching Qur'an, whether you'll be teaching people about Islam, whether you'll be printing Islamic booklets and pamphlets and CDs and DVDs to gift to the people. No matter what your position maybe you have a chance to be a part of the global blessed awakening that is happening before us. The choice is ours. Do we want history to remember us to be the traitors who bowed down to the disbelievers and defended them whilst they attack Muslims? Do we want to be the ones who mocked the mujahideen and spoke against them? And little do we know that they were the ones who would be holding the advent of Imam Mehdi (Rahimahullah).

Do we not want to be the ones who are the soldiers of Allah fighting for the truth!? If we want that to be the case, then we need to rectify our intentions today. Let's ourselves say, I want to be the one who fights with the army of Imam Mehdi. However small that might be, i want to be among those, and then it's going to happen by disowning ourselves from the taghut, disowning ourselves from these armies which invade our lands. Having Walaa (alliance) for the Muslims. Learning our religion and realising that to say La ilaha illallah does not simply mean I only make sajda to Allah. It means I refuse to follow any system, any law, any religion other than the religion of Allah. Be accurate when you say as a Muslim that my deen is Shariah. When Prophet Jesus A.S returns, Prophet Muhammad s.a.w said he will rule by the law of Allah. By the shariah! When Jesus A.S comes, do we want to be one of those who say oh Jesus peace be upon You! Let us rule by democracy. Oh Jesus let us rule by communism. Oh Jesus why do we have to rule by shariah? Oh Jesus why do you have to be an extremist? As the kuffar tell, they say that if you want to have your shariah, you're an extremist. Then PBUH is an extremist, Muhammad PBUH is an extremist (God forbid)?? Do you doubt for a moment today that's what they would be calling him? And if he PBUH was alive today do you not doubt that they wouldn't call him a terrorist? Just as Quraish called him a mad man! As they called him A liar! Do you doubt for a single moment that he would be public enemy number One If he was preaching Islam as he was? Do you doubt for a single moment that they would be out to fight him, just as they will be out to fight Imam Mehdi, just as they would be there to follow the dajjaal, just as they would be there to fight against Prophet Jesus (Alayhi Salam). Do we doubt for a single moment?!

This ibadah which the disbelievers are trying to cover, they're calling it terrorism and criminal acts and they're branding the followers of this path as being terrorist, extremists, revolutionary and you see this point is important because these names being heard. Whenever you see the word terrorism replace it with jihad and whenever you see the word terrorist replace it with mujahideen. The reason why they are not using "jihad" and "mujahideen" is because these are the words of Qur'an. They can't erase those. They choose another word and whatever the names they try to give us and give it their own definition. And their choice was terrorist and terrorism and Other names. But in reality what it really means is fighting jihad fee sabilillah. That's what they mean by it. And the hypocrites are helping them. How are they helping them Trying to change the meaning jihad!

1. They say that the jihad is defensive and not offensive.
 2. The jihad is only allowed to free Muslim lands.
 3. The jihad must be performed by the permission and the instructions of the leader. The imam, Who is a tool and agent of the jews and the crusaders.
- And they say that jihad has ended by the time of Rasulullah s.a.w. And some of them say that jihad is not a prominent in our present day today in global means.

Now listen to what our Deen says regarding this:

It was narrated that Salamah bin Nufail Al-Kindi said: "I was sitting with the Messenger of Allah when a man said: 'O Messenger of Allah! The people have lost interest in horses and put down their weapons, and they say there is no Jihad, and that war has ended.' The Messenger of Allah turned to face him and said: 'They are lying, now the fighting is to come. There will always be a group among my Ummah who will fight for the truth, for whom Allah will cause some people to deviate, and grant them provision from them, until the Hour begins and until the promise of Allah comes. Goodness is tied to the forelocks of horses until the Day of Resurrection. It has been revealed to me that I am going to die and will not stay long, and you will follow me group after group, striking one another's necks. And the place of safety for the believers is Ash-Sham. (Sunan an-Nasa'i)

It is reported on the authority of Abu Huraira that he heard the Messenger of Allah say: I have been commanded to fight against people, till they testify to the fact that there is no god but Allah, and believe in me (that) I am the messenger (from the Lord) and in all that I have brought. And when they do it, their blood and riches are guaranteed protection on my behalf except where it is justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allah. [Sahih Muslim : Book 1, Hadith 34]

If you do not go forth, He will punish you with a painful punishment and will replace you with another people, and you will not harm Him at all. And Allah is over all things competent. [Surat At-Tawbah, Ayah 39]

Thus they are presenting the wrong definitions regarding jihad, because these people are munafiq. When unfortunately, we find our scholars are spreading some of them. This information. Some false information of jihad fee sabilillah. Whatever the justifications are! For deceiving the people. When it comes to jihad fee sabilillah and changing the definition of jihad. The Ummah since the time of Rasulullah s.a.w has known as learned what jihad means, what the wajib of jihad and what the Sunnah of jihad or what the rule of jihad. And we have that in Qur'an and Sunnah and in the action of the Sahabah (R.A) and the righteous generation. So we do not need anybody to come today and re define for us what jihad means. By borrowing meanings from the East or the West. Because in our heretic is sufficient for us to teach us what's jihad. We don't have to look to anybody for definition. Because we sought it there in Qur'an and Sunnah and the action of the Sahabah (R.A). Allah says, so oh Muhammad, obey not the deniers of the oneness of Allah

[Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has gone astray from His way, and He is most knowing of the [rightly] guided. Then do not obey the deniers. -Surat Al-Qalam, Ayah 7-8]

Obey them not. Don't follow their way! And Allah says,

They wish that you would soften [in your position], so they would soften [toward you] (Surat Al-Qalam, Ayah 9)

They wish that you could compromise so that they can compromise with you. Now the religion of Islam is completely different than any other religions for many reasons. One of them is that with other religions the people responsible for the religion, the religious leadership, have the authority to play around with their religion. But when it comes to Islam we're followers and we're not innovators. We follow what we're told to do so. Therefore, we don't have any rule to play around with the rules of Islam because they're from Allah. Now the kuffar are willing to sit down with Rasulullah s.a.w and compromise. But the problem is he cannot compromise. This is not his religion. But when it comes to them, they gave themselves right to compromise their religion. So therefore they came to prophet Muhammad s.a.w and they said, how about we worship Allah for a day, and you worship our gods for a day? Rasulullah s.a.w said , no. So they said, fine how about we worship Allah for a week, and you worship our gods for a day!. Obviously he refused. They came back and said, how about if we worship Allah for a month, and you worship our God for a day? They're playing around with their religion. They can come up with all of these offers. Rasulullah s.a.w consistently said "No". I do not have that right. This is the religion of Allah and I'm here to convey it. Not to change it. And Allah is warning us through prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) not to compromise. But the problem is that there are some Muslims who gave themselves the right to play around with the religion of Allah. And by doing that they have lost. In investigative report in US news talks about the effort of the US government to win over the hearts and mind minds of the Muslim Ummah, and how this is an individual part of their war on terrorism, and how there's an unseen part of the war that is equally important or more important than what is happening in the field. And they mention that the US government is willing to sit down and work together with Muslim fundamentalist if they're willing to accept to play the game of democracy. If you accept western democracy we're willing to forgive you for your past. We're willing to sit down with you knowing that you're a Muslim fundamentalist. So they have this ability to compromise their law. Muslims don't. Nevertheless, there are some Muslims, Islamic movements, who accepted this offer. And sat down with the US government and negotiate with it ways to work together. Now I said that there was one condition that the US government exceptional. That was one condition I mentioned which was, play the game according to rule of democracy but there's another one. That is that they accept to get involved in the war against terrorists. This is also one of the conditions by the US government. Now the justification of these Islamic movements is that "yes okay we'll go ahead with you, but we are going to do it for the sake of our benefit of Da'wah. We are going to do it for the benefit of Islam." You know these generalizations or the general statement could be used for any occasion. You're fighting طائفة المنصورة. And you're negotiating on playing around with the religion of Allah. To this there's no Maslahah whatsoever. And no matter what you gain, it's in vain.

Allah does not need people to compromise in his religion with the kuffar to gain anything to gain power.

Allah, The One Who created the universe and He wouldn't make his religion so weak that cannot reach the power except the kuffar give it. The religion of Allah will only reach to power except the kuffar humiliate it by giving. Does that make sense? Because the religion of Allah will only reach to power after humiliate the kuffar. Because that is how Allah wants his religion to be.

Al Qurtubi says the kuffar of Quraish came to prophet Muhammad s.a.w and said, leave us alone and we will leave you alone. How about we're making a deal?

Leave us alone! And we will leave you alone. This is a democratic society. Kuffar of Quraish came to prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) and said practice your religion freely but leave us alone. And we will leave you alone.

What does Allah say?

And if We had not strengthened you, you would have almost inclined to them a little.
[Surat Al-Isra', Ayah 74]

Even this little inclination of leaving them alone Is not approved. Allah says, by the favour of Allah that he made you firm. Stand firm. Otherwise you will have inclined to them.

Now let's talk about what people say about jihad today. People now say that jihad is over. They tell the lions of Ummah to distribute sweet potion of *peace, peace, peace*, they advise them to shower petals in the path of everybody - like their tongues should say out only honey-coated words for everybody all the time. Like the enemies of Islam slap you on one cheek, present to them the other too - this is the kind of peace and love they are calling for. Yeah, the enemy takes you at gunpoint and instead of raising your sword in retaliation, you bow down on the prayer mat as if this life was not your test , but Allah's !!

But now this new crime is being committed too. The enemies want to take from us our 'deen' and make us content with 'religion' only. So they have come up with this plan that it is necessary to make the fiqh of Muslim heritage (which is their historical reference to understand Islam and explain it) seem suspicious in the eyes of Muslims. It is only possible when a new fiqh and new explanation of Islam is provided to the Muslims. Now Muslims have taken Islam as a "Deen" (way of life) and not just rituals confined to the masjid, so the enemies consider that all their knowledge, their scholars and fiqh, and their educational intellects have been distracted to think Islam as a Deen which is to rule every aspect of their lives. So they think that the Muslims will remain ignorant and will remain restricted to their Deen, until they are made suspicious of their Fiqh education, scholars and knowledgeable intellect which declared Islam as Deen for centuries and have no other definition for Islam. So unless this continuation of Fiqh and history is subtracted from the lives of the Muslims, and then questioned by every Muslim youth, till then they will not unite on any new image of Islam. They will continue to mix these old ideas with concepts of 21st century. So work must be done on two grounds for the promotion of this new Deen - "secularism.

First, to introduce Islam only as a religion and not Deen. And then popularize it as the most acceptable view, using the power of media. Make the religious aspect of Islam so prominent that Islam gets limited to religion by default. This is the first ground that they are working on.

Secondly, destroy this view of Islam which defines it as "Deen", as understood by the Muslims for centuries. It is necessary to drop out Fiqh and scholars of Fiqh from the way.

We know that Muslims of later times need a strong connection with the knowledge of Fiqh and the scholars of Fiqh from the era of Salaf (the righteous predecessors) to keep them connected to the original source of knowledge I.e. Qur'an and the Sunnah which in fact are the sources of knowledge of Shariah. So to trap the educationally deprived Muslims into this new "Deen-e-Akbari", it is necessary to break this strong link of common Muslim with the knowledge of fiqh and the scholars of fiqh. Once it is done, distract these unaware of Shariah into baseless arguments. In such an environment, when knowledge and those who have knowledge are rare, spread such pupils who mock the collective consensus of Ummah in this dumb society, in order to substandard the scholars of Islam, to renew the explanation of the basic matters of Islam, even rewrite the history of Qur'an and Sunnah. So as a new image of Islam is drawn, the old one is also brushed away side by side.

It is not acceptable to interfere in religion of any nation, even by secular rules, but due to this fear of threat, for the enemies it is necessary to save the future to secularism to take all these resources of knowledge away from Muslims in advance. All those proven laws and rulings which have been taken authentic in knowledgeable groups of this Ummah for understanding and application of revelation for thousands of years must be abstained. The words of "continuity" (متواتر) and "collective acceptance" (اجماع) should be made alien to them.

Then there is Sunnah. Since no one now will recognize the collective consensus, so the very definition of Sunnah will now be a subject of discussion for everyone. They will question about the Sunnah which was left as tradition of Apostle s.a.w, about which he advised to hold strong with teeth. Has anyone ever understood about Sunnah and to solve such big misunderstandings about it the standard definition will be set by some intellectuals of twenty first century with amendments as required with time.

So that's how Sunnah is rejected.

Only obstacle for them now is Qur'an. We know if one tries to understand Qur'an without explanation from Sunnah and understanding of the companions, he will fall trap to Khawarij or Moa'tazila, qadria or jabria, liberal or secular.

Does anyone realize that if we set the trend of understanding the Qur'an out of the way of Hadith and the understanding of the companions, then a new research will follow in every personal library and there will be schools of thought in streets. Everyone will have his own school of thought.

Now the Islam which has been amongst us for fourteen hundred years in its authentic Fiqh books, has never been considered anything except a Deen for a Muslim. It is beyond any doubt that even if a majority of Muslims may not have practiced this Deen fully at times, may have been distracted away from it for worldly desires and many anti Shariah concepts may have been spread amongst them, yet the treasured knowledge of Fiqh displays the same old picture of Islam which surrounds all the aspects of life I.e., government, society and statesmanship. This whole definition is historical and by Fiqh unanimous image is etched among Muslims. So the practice to spread deviation among Muslim youth may have been fruitful but that theoretical, ideological image of Islam still remains which calls the youth to itself.

Praise be to Allah that the ideological image of Islam is still here and this sacred picture calls Muslims to itself. At least it helps Muslims to limit their distractions even today. And if a forgetful one wants to come back on track, then it shows the open door. And when this youth come back to Islam, and it is happening around us, when this youth comes back to Islam with determination, then it is a nightmare for the enemy.

Thus the television, radio, newspapers and other sources which were under control of Enemies of Islam, focused on deviation and lack of practice. But now it is not the lasting solution in their eyes. Now their main intention is to change this ideological image of Islam. No matter how many children of Islam run away from this sacred house, it is not enough for them. It is still their home, if not all, then some may find the way back. It is possible that such few children will destroy the empires of pharaohs!

So how to ensure that when these children find the way back, they do not find this home. Their real success will be this that when the children go back, they find an altogether different Islam.

Then even if they become liberals or Islamic, their ways will be deviated - all will lead to Rome. So their top priority is to take away our true ideological picture of Islam. This is the last thing for which they have come to our lands, and they aren't going to go back without it.

* * * * *

Standing near the window, Khawlah was sadly watching the birds fly back to their homes - their nests. She had her headphone on. A nasheed, was playing on her cell phone, but her mind was in some other world - the world of the sentences she was listening to:

*What level of gratitude have I shown
towards my dear Prophet Muhammad's (s.a.w) troubles which he undertook alone..

I forgot the one who cried for my pain
To make me upon the haqq
And guided me to the ultimate gain

The caravan missed the footsteps of such a leader..
Such unworthy is my love towards him and my devotion is nowhere nearer..

Neither to him nor to my Rabb;
My claim of loving them was hardly enough..

My life showed no mark to this courtesy..
But I take pride in decorating the walls and the doors of the city
A sense of ignorance I feel now mixed with pity..

I was ignorantly indulged in praising the frames of the 'shrines'
Whilst his enemies were destroying his religion with missiles and mines..

Your foot steps were the true guide,
and for the dust of your feet the Sahabahs cried..

The whole world discarded you and we too forfeited you

O leader of truth, how grateful I am now
I'm enlightened by you with guidance from above ..

My dark past washed away in the drops of tears..
O souls, open you ears..
Have your hearts ever throbbed for your ignorance and sins through the years..?*

Khawlah wiped her tears and took out the diary gifted by Fatimah. The messages written on it, always consoled her sad heart.
Turning many pages, she stopped to read one.

"This life that you have chosen for yourself, it will make you lose your loved ones in one way or the other." - Five years ago you had said this, and five years later I find this to be true time and time again. Oh the irony, how choosing this path has made me lose you too.

I have lost people who meant the whole world to me, yet by the grace of Allah I'm doing just fine. It no longer bothers me who stays and who leaves. It's as if I have become desensitized to goodbyes, as if my heart has become numb to farewells - if there is even one to begin with. It's as if my mind already expects them to leave the moment they arrive.

Yes, I have lost people who meant the world to me, but I have also met people who are like missing parts of my soul I never thought I would find. These gems, whenever I come across one, I take them as an added bonus, never for granted. Like a shooting star crossing the sky, I know they're here for a while to illuminate my life, and in a while they'll be gone too.

When loss becomes a constant in your life, you begin to master the art of letting go. And perhaps I'm beginning to master this art, or perhaps I have already mastered it. This path made me lose everything that I ever held dear to me, but if I were given the choice of getting it all back at the expense of changing my route, then I'll gladly refuse it.

Because nothing and no one is more beloved to me than this journey I'm on, because this is the path that will lead me to the Gardens where I shall find my Lord well pleased with me, and I, well pleased with Him. And who gives up the pleasure of his Lord except a blind fool?

So by all means, leave if you wish, for I am used to people leaving. Leave if you wish, for I will never tread another path with you. I have lost people who meant the world to me and I'm still doing just fine. I will be myself, and I will unapologetically be myself. So leave if you wish to, for whoever will accept me for who I am will stay, and I will accept nothing short of that, because I will never change myself for anyone. So leave if you wish, for with me is my Lord, and He shall guide me on."

Khawlah could not hold back her tears. Such beautiful words. May be the writer had used ink of heart to write.

Khawlah picked up her cellphone to share this paragraph with her friends. While tagging everybody she noticed that Fatimah was not on the list.

May be she had unfriended her mistakenly

Thus Khawlah messaged her, "So, after your wedding you have forgotten me to the extent that I am no more in your friends list even? (Sad smiley)"

seen

So Fatimah had read the message but did not reply.

But why ??

Fatimah used to reply in an instant.

What had happened now? Had she deleted her on purpose?

Khawlah felt her heart miss a beat. No, no it's not possible.

She messaged again. This time a question mark.

Again "seen".

Khawlah sensed that something was wrong.

Fatimah replied after a while. Khawlah read the message hurriedly.

"My husband scolded me much. He happened to open my ID and saw your profile. You have started an open campaign. He is right Khawlah, why are you doing this? This is dangerous"

Khawlah felt as if an iceberg had crushed her. The paragraph she had read a while ago... was that a consolation by Allah for this loss to come?

So Fatimah too had left her! Khawlah rubbed her eyes to wipe her tears. It was just a few days after her wedding, and she had forgotten her?

Khawlah felt that her eyes were not in her control today.

*Every moment of love will be a heartbreak..

It was destined that our hearts will ache

It was decided...

So what if we are separated, this is but the rule..

We will not cry for what was created,
however hot or cool..

It was decided...

So it happened, you forgot us in the changing weather...

Though we promised our love will not die for any matter..

We are now not together...

Why are you tired, it's just the start of the journey..

We were not born to just give up, it was decided for you and for me ..

Let us burn the ships at unknown shores..

We shall not retreat until we end our foes..

It was all decided ...*

* * * * *

"Go away!" Khawlah screamed in pain , locked the door and just sat on the floor.

She started crying heartily with her head on her knees.

Her patience gave away , her tolerance lost, after all, she too was a human. Did they think of her a rock or some corpse without heart? why didn't they consider that she had a heart too?

"You have to change your views as well! Do you understand??"

You really are a hopeless case now; screaming like a jinn. Huh!!", Huma satirized across the door and left.

Khawlah's crying turned to wailing.

An evil thought crossed her mind. She stood up with a jerk, picked up the pack of sleeping pills she had hidden in the drawer of her table, and emptied the whole packet in her hand. She had heard enough, she will not live anymore, she thought. It was a living hell here, dying every moment. But now she will not suffer anymore.

"Please forgive me O Allah", Khawlah cried.

"Suicide is Haram Khawlah!", Her heart whispered.

"No! I am exhausted now. I have had enough of your advices. Not anymore..", she forcefully suppressed the weak voice of her pleading heart.

Khawlah was fully prepared to commit suicide when a thought flashed in her mind.

For whom had she come to this point? Whose love did she claim?

Such was her faith? If anyone had the right to commit , suicide then it should have been doctor Aafia Siddiqui who was gang raped by Americans and tortured extremely. It would be the right of the Muslim sisters who were being raped by Rawafid Shia forces in Iraq and Syria, of Muslim brethren, children and elderly who were being burnt alive through cluster bombs fired at them by the disbelievers attacking Syria and Iraq , of those whose bodies were going the through agonising pain because of becoming a victim of the chemical attacks, it would have been the right of the patient Muslims in physical and mental torture in Guantanamo Prison, but yet they did not commit suicide and she thought she would be a warrior of this path? Her mind was entangling her now into all these thoughts...

Was this your journey? How soon you got exhausted! Didn't you feel any shame in displeasing The Lord Who gave you so much love, wiped your tears, consoled you as if hugging you, comforted you again and again through the Qur'an??

You are a follower of a brave (Prophet Muhammad s.a.w)' Will you embarrass him on the day of Judgement? He desired his ummah to be most steadfast in the path of haqq. Will you face him as a suicide?

"O Allah, please protect me against their evil", Khawlah shuddered at her heart's scolding. Her wounded soul bled with pain. She could tell now how it feels to go mad with agony.

"O Allah, I am going mad... or maybe I already am..

They torture me through their words. O Lord, please cover me with Your mercy. My heart is sinking. I feel like I am dying. Please pacify me, make my heart at peace. End my imprisonment, O dear Allah. I am not pious like others. I may retreat from here and fail this test if You won't come to my help. I will lose the whole test if You judge my patience a bit more. Please save me from losing...", She sat there for a long time. What had her own family done to her, do parents become foes? Yes! it happened to prophet Ibrahim A.S too, even worse. He had to endure much to prove his love for Allaah, his steadfastness.

And now, see the love Allaah had for him, He Himself saluted him in Quran with the words

سلام على ابراهيم

"Peace upon Abraham."

[Surat As-Saaffat, Ayah 109]

Whenever Khawlah listened to any lecture or read any book, Allah displayed the life of Prophet Ibrahim A.S again and again in front of her. May be her life was like his in some aspects. Maybe every person who becomes a stranger for the Deen has to face situations like Prophet Ibrahim A.S. Khawlah recalled some of the points from Sheikh Anwar Al-Awlaki's lecture on qualities and lessons from the life of Prophet Ibrahim A.S.

She could still remember the sheikh's words in her mind:

* Prophet Ibrahim (A.S) is from Ulul Azmi Minal Rusul.

Ulul Azmi Minal Rusul - I can't find an exact direct translation of it but there are five Ulul Azmi Minal Rusul.

And these are the greatest of the Anbiya of Allah. They are five. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), Ibrahim, Musa, Isa and Nuh (A.S).

And Ibn Kathir says that the second greatest among them after Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is Prophet Ibrahim (A.S)'

* Prophet Ibrahim (A.S) was mentioned in Qur'an about 74 times, in 25 places. Prophet Ibrahim (A.S) is the one whom Allah has called Khalilullah - The friend of Subhanahu Wa Ta'aala. Allah has chosen Ibrahim (A.S) to be His friend.

* Ibrahim (A.S) lived a lonely life. He would travel from one place to another around the World making Hijrah. He lived in Iraq for a while, in Haran, in Bayt Al-Maqdis, in Egypt, he visited Makkah a few times, all this while travelling in difficult conditions, and Ibrahim (A.S) was driven out of his homeland, no believers with him except his nephew (Prophet) Lut A.S, and then he went to these other countries and he didn't have many followers with him.

Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala told Ibrahim A.S that, I am your friend. Also, Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala has given Ibrahim (A.S) a name that wasn't given to anybody else in the Qur'an. You know when we are talking about Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), O Muhammad (ﷺ), have patience and stay with the ones who remember Allah in the night and in the day. Allah is commanding prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), to stay with the Believers.

Prophet Nuh A.S, when his people came and told him: Leave these weak people alone, he said: No, these are the believers with me, I will be with them, I will remain with them. These Anbiya, they had believers around them, Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala told them to remain with these believers. Why? Because we need to have an environment of Iman. We need to live in an environment of Iman, we need to have this support around us. It's difficult for a human being to live alone. We need to have this support and Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala is commanding prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), to stay with the believers, Allah is commanding prophet Nuh A.S to stay with the Believers, we know that prophet Hud A.S was with the believers, prophet Salih A.S stayed with the believers, prophet Musa A.S stayed with the believers and so on and so forth.

But prophet Ibrahim (A.S) is different.

First of all Ibrahim (A.S) was making Hijrah for all of his life. And then in many places he would go, he would be the 'only' believer. He went to Egypt, he told his wife: Me and you are the only believers here. When he was making Da'wah to his people in Iraq, only him and Lut were the believers. So Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala gave a name that wasn't given to anyone else and that is: Ummah. He was a Nation by himself! Ibrahim (A.S) was a Nation, he was an Ummah. He didn't have anybody with him, he was alone, but Ibrahim (A.S) counts as a Nation, as a whole Ummah. Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala said Ibrahim was an Ummah.

* And then Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala said: He had a lot of Khushu. He had Khushu of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala in the night and day, 24 hours he was in a state of Khushu. And also Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says: Haneef (he stayed away from all shirk). Everyone was trying to pull him to shirk, he stayed away from it and that is 'Haneef'.

Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one inclining toward truth, a Muslim [submitting to Allah]. And he was not of the polytheists.
[Surat Aal-E-Imran, Ayah 67]

* He had sincerity and understanding. And Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says that Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala has tested Ibrahim with some commands. Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says, He completed them all. He completed them all! And that's why Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says about Ibrahim A.S that Ibrahim has fulfilled. He fulfilled. He fulfilled what Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala wanted from him, he fulfilled it all. And Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says about Ibrahim, I will make you an Imam, a leader for mankind. Someone who will be a role model for everyone to follow. And Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says about him, We made all the Prophets after him from his descendants. All of the Anbiya of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala and the Rusul (Messengers) that came after Ibrahim A.S, were from the descendants of Ibrahim A.S.

"And [mention, O Muhammad], when Abraham was tried by his Lord with commands and he fulfilled them. [Allah] said, "Indeed, I will make you a leader for the people.."
[Surat Al-Baqarah, Ayah 124]

Khawlah wiped her tears, asked forgiveness from Allah for her sudden outburst of emotional flaw and got herself in a better shape.

She forgave the one who started it all but she felt hurt at Fatimah.

"Oh Fatimah! Why did you call at home to complain about me", Khawlah let out a sigh.

Fatimah had called to complain that Khawlah was involved in concerned activities. Fatimah knew how difficult the matters were at her home, why then she did all this?
Now everybody taunted at Khawlah that none of her Islamic friends started such missions to save the Ummah. So who on earth was she dragging all of them into trouble.

After pondering over the matter for some time, Khawlah packed her required belongings I.e Her sim card, a cellphone, some money, her degrees and other important documents. Khawlah knew that her days were ending in this house now. She had to be ready for crucial time. She planned that in any such time she would ask for help from her friend from Qur'an class (safiyyah). Khawlah had talked to her already. She just had to secretly shift her stuff there, otherwise when kicked out , she won't be allowed to take along anything.

Thinking about all this, Khawlah's eyes got wet again. Tears now used to roll down without warning.

"Mama, what have you done to me!" Khawlah started to cry again.

"Daughters spend very little time with family, and then live among strangers. No matter how good a person is, none can give love like parents.
Rather in the world of sins today, most people do not truly love at all.

Who is going to hug me in hardships while in in-laws. No one might give me unconditional love. Mama, baba, why did you do this to me??", Khawlah's eyes ached because of crying so hard.

* * * * *

"Why is it necessary for a mujahid to acquire knowledge?", Sheikh was teaching the Kashmiri mujahideen.

Abdullah had got the chance to sit in the first row today. Fixing his eyes at the ground he was fully attentive.

"It is knowledge that differentiates between a mujahid and a robber. Both have weapons but one follows shariah, whilst the other does not. Knowledge is a must for Shariah.

Man is truly on the righteous path only when he has both, sincerity and knowledge of Shariah. Even If he is ultra-sincere, but lacks true knowledge then he shall fall into some pit hole.

Let's understand this through an example. You sincerely wish to drive a car to Jammu, but you neither know how to drive, nor the way to Jammu. What'll happen??
You will get hit within minutes even if you start the car.
So a car cannot be driven with sincerity alone.

Similarly, Deen does not only need sincerity, it also need knowledge. Knowledge of how to please Allah, what are the orders of Allah, how to practice them.
Some rules of Allah need to be learned necessarily, as abandoning them may result in sin of not learning about this obligation.

Regarding worldly matters too, everybody knows that *Ignorance of law is no excuse*.
You break a traffic signal, the policeman arrests you, you excuse that you did not know the traffic rules, he's going to punish you even harder for not knowing.
In court if you excuse that you did not know, court will charge you for not knowing.

Similarly, Allah has set some rules regarding His deen, that you cannot escape by the excuse of not knowing.
So only sincerity is not enough, knowledge is also a must.

Similarly, sincerity is necessary too.
Mere knowledge will not take you to paradise. Many people know the deen but Allah does not accept them because of their lack of sincerity.

A man knows how to drive to reach Jammu. He knows the way too. But his intention is bad, he does not want to go there.
He knows Allah is pleased by this route but his desires takeover him, never letting him go.
Tiredness, difficulties of the way and other excuses. His heart is ill so he does not go that way despite knowledge.

Those who are waging jihad need not invent new ways. Many experiments have been done in the past. Only the movements of this age like after 1960s, show that jihad had been a worldwide

phenomenon for forty or fifty years.

Many experiments were done in this time. There were weaknesses in different movements. We should learn from them. We do not need to start everything from zero.

Sheikh ** starts his books by saying that we wasted our blood, we campaigned a whole movement, we did commit mistakes, I am writing this book so that you may get a head start from where we left! you may not commit mistakes for ten years to learn! You may already know the mistakes in previous movements and you build over them.

Kashmir movement is an example.

Afghanistan movement is an example.

Also we can see in some other jihads. There is a term, collateral damage. Like covering a large target can cause damage in surroundings. But to waste thirty-five people in a market to kill one MPA, to kill forty people to kill a minister, to blast twenty-five persons in a stadium in a failed attempt to kill government personal, kill twenty people in a polling booth, kill five hundred in a jirga around volley ball match.? How to deal with it? why does it happen?

This is due to lack of knowledge.

It is because one who is sacrificing himself is sacrificing with pure intention of sincerity.

But this does not help because he did not fulfill obligation of knowledge which could direct him in the right way.

So my brothers, all these experiments have been done already.

So try to educate your brothers as much as you can.

The more knowledge you have, more is the chance that the movement will head in the right direction , otherwise it takes just a minute to get off track.

Thus there are severe results of lacking knowledge.

And it's not enough for only one or two to have knowledge.

The whole movement should have an environment of knowledge. People should know basics so that there is set a collective break, such that if one errs, companions hold him.

Now the question arises, why in some movements, such people don't come forward who object on error by condemning it firmly?

The higher we rise in the level of knowledge, the more conscious we become. The more we know about halal and haram, the more is chance of the movement of being on the right track.

As Umar R.A was held by a common elderly woman, Abu Bakr R.A was questioned by a commoner. This was because they had knowledge. They knew what's halal, what's haram. So they were straightforward to object, *Who is Umar to fix the amount of Mahr!..*

So brothers! we all need to seek for knowledge and acquire it.

Twenty years before now, the movement lacked scholars, things were getting awful, very horrible experiments were done.

Some movements sent their valuable fighters to get knowledge and then guide the rest of the mujahideen.

Do start it now. Calling for scholars, getting them among you for jihad is important , but what's even more important is to turn mujahideens into scholars.

Jihad has its own grooming and it changes humans.

Sheikh Abdullah Azam says that jihad has its own school. It has its own training.

Such training is not found anywhere else in the world. It trains you into real humans. It gives rise to such men who know how to lead, how to lead the ummah, such personalities are made in the land of jihad only.

The other day I was talking to a scholar. He recalled that Molana ** says that a madrasah produces common soldiers , while a masjid produces leaders, qaid.

The difference is , in a masjid, Imam deals with common people - dozens of people come.

He sits among them, talks to them. They come with their problems, they request for conciliations.

Multiple types of people come. Those who are addicted and the rapists too, those who are virtuous and pious. Thus he deals with them all. Leadership quality is groomed by this dealing.

Such is not the case in a madrasah. There is only class, but no grooming. Grooming comes by living together, grooming comes by living in company. "Sahabah R.A" are termed so because they lived in "sohbat" / company of Prophet S.A.W. Thus they are not termed pupils. They spent time with prophet Muhammad s.a.w, not just visiting him once in a while. The definition of "Sahabi" is a person who has seen Muhammad S.A.W once in life as a muslim. Just seeing once in life makes one his sahabi. The more time one spends, the higher status one gets. The status of those who became sahabi post-conquest of Makkah is not as those who became one before it.

So a man is made by company, a leadership is born by intermingling in masjid.

Thus, while a leader is made in masjid , then in jihad ; where we deal with many nations at a time, whole tribes, we get men like mighty mountains.

But the problem is, a person who comes after completing his education, with knowledge of twenty years, he is welcome. But this is not the solution. We need mujahids as scholars, who are mujahid first , have been trained in jihad. Rare people are like Sheikh ** who spend life there and then spend three years in jihad. For two years many were not aware of his existence here. He spent two years in Afghanistan on letters and in centers of jihad.

He was changed altogether, but this is rare . We hardly find such scholars who alter themselves. If there is any then that's blessing of Allah.

* * * * *

"You have a good voice", Usama praised his friend Hamza. Hamza was singing a nasheed on "hoor ul ain" to his co mujahids, Usama and Abu Bakr.

"Yes, i know but never took pride of it", Hamza faked pride by correcting his shirt's collar.

The trio was at their selected location to keep watch in an area in Syria.

It was a small hill and Rawafid Shia were at some distance.

These three were there for protection of Muslim area and were having fun in free time. While the world imagined them as butchers, little did they know that real Muslims were harsh on disbelievers and courteous with Muslims.

As Allama Iqbal said:

*Soft as silk among friends, a Transcending

Swift as sword in war against Kufr, an obligation*

They were soft for believers. But did not show leniency to hypocrites, disloyal and murtads.

Suddenly a bullet missed Usama just by his ear. "Congratulations, you are engaged to a hoor".
Abu Bakr winked at him mischievously.

Usama raised his head to look at the source of the attack and another bullet got past him.

"Seems your hoor can't wait to get wed", Hamza also teased Usama and picked up his gun.
"Come comrades, let them not escape alive this time. All ready?" Rest two nodded, smiling.

It was their favourite hobby to target enemies of Allah.

The other moment, the area echoed with slogans of takbeer by these tigers. In a short while, the enemy was under attack.... the mujahideen had risen to the task ... Allahu Akbar!!

* * * * *

"So brothers, sincerity alone is not enough. Knowledge is necessary as well. As exemplified in the Quran:

" And recite to them, [O Muhammad], the news of him to whom we gave [knowledge of] Our signs, but he detached himself from them; so Satan pursued him, and he became of the deviators. " (7:175)

There is a whole story behind this verse. A man from Bani Israel who was a scholar and who knew everything but when one's heart becomes ill, one gets deviated from the right path. Thus he was distracted despite having knowledge. So sincerity with knowledge and knowledge with sincerity is the key to keep man on the right path.

For the mujahideen, knowledge is necessary because if there is sincerity, if heart is pure, if there is desire of jihad but lacking knowledge to please Allah, then he won't be able to avoid haram. He will kill a Muslim considering him a disbeliever while having sincerity in his heart, he will use the principle of collateral damage with such extent that he will be considered a murderer in Allaah's Eyes. He will cooperate with agencies having in himself sincerity, and thus he may do other deeds thinking as an excuse from religion with sincerity in heart.

So, these two things go hand in hand for the right track, Knowledge and sincerity. Dear brothers, knowledge is necessary so that you may use your gun and power rightfully.
Knowledge tells us the objectives of jihad, the manners of jihad, the importance of jihad, the boundaries within which we must remain for jihad. Without knowledge we cannot know all this.

The jihad of Kashmir from Pakistan lacked no sincerity. About 90,000 in total got martyred, amongst them 20,000-25,000 may be from religious organizations. All of them gave their life for the sake of Allah, with honesty and sincerity in heart, believing Hindus of India to be the kuffars -

the disbelievers , and thus they fought for the Muslims.

But..

They did not know their aims and objectives. They did not realize that jihad is for establishing "Khilafah". They were told that jihad is only to fight for the freedom of Kashmiri sister.

So even a secularist can carry out such jihad, as it is only fighting, just a reaction to fight...

Thus it was not explained to them as to what is the system of khilafah. The desired system of Allah was not acknowledged. The real meaning of democracy was not explained to them. If they were told all this, then they would surely have strived to take into account Pakistan even before Kashmir.

Agencies controlled them, they did not let them know all this. The visits of scholars over there did not cover most places, but the areas where they did go to, they did not let the discussion move towards Pakistan. They kept them obsessed about India.

Thus those fighters lacked knowledge and despite having sincerity, they made mistakes. With sincerity they have been running a movement for twenty-five years, but that has not come to any conclusion even yet.

Now, that what is happening between the different mujahideen groups worldwide, they may not lack sincerity. They may have amongst them some, who have malign intentions, but the people in line of action are sincere, are working to please Allah, they are giving lives. Even, نعوذ بالله , the person who blew himself upon Sheikh **, may have done so with the intention to please Allah, but will Allah be pleased over this?

Such act is an act leading to hell, and he cannot excuse himself by saying * i did not know that haram order of leader is not to be followed, I did not know the ruling on such and such murder of a Muslim. This is no excuse. Here now, if someone is ordered to blow himself up in a market, and he does follow such an order of the ameer (the leader) thinking that it's an order from the leader. Will this save him from hell? No, it won't!!

So, knowledge is necessary, as it makes a human 'human', a mujahid 'mujahid'. Without it, man gets off the track, makes big blunders, falls into pits, the whole movement loses the right track.

Knowledge tells you what is halal, what is haram. It tells you the manners to hold a gun. Thus, it directs you.

So my dear friends who have come here with full conviction to sacrifice themselves for Allah and His Prophet S.A.W. , who have come here by sacrificing this worldly life which they have seen, for the akhirah which they have not seen, still they have stood up with determination to sacrifice their everything for this Ummah. No doubt the path you have chosen is a great path, it is the shortest path to heaven. Not only Muslims but disbelievers too can come to the right path as jihad is da'wah in itself. Evil and fitnah is erased through this path. But dear brothers, Allah does not like a jihad waged in His name by violating His limits, by shedding unlawful blood. Remember that our betterment is in things prohibited by Allah and His Prophet S.A.W., even if our wisdom does not realize it at the moment. It is for the betterment of the Deen, for the betterment of jihad. For example Apostle of Allah S.A.W. prohibited to kill those women and children of enemy who are not participating in war. Now if someone goes against the order of Prophet S.A.W. and says that the enemy will get scared by this , that it will hurt the enemy even more, its spirit to fight will get

weak so let's kill the women and children.

This will be stupidity and inexperience. A shallow person can think so who does not understand the human psychology. If we consider the psychological effects of murder of women and children on a society, then we can solidify our faith in the order of our Prophet S.A.W. as this rule is as applicable on modern warfare as wars of fourteen hundred years ago. What will cause more aggression? Dead bodies of men in battle or of slaughtered children and women?

Remember slaughtering children and women ignites hatred in the heart. Even a coward will fight for his killed child and woman.

A fragile woman gives her life for children! Thus murder of women and children not only ignites hatred but also increases the number of enemies.

Allah ordered his Prophet S.A.W to fight so as to weaken the fighting spirit of enemies, defeat their ambition to fight, so it was ordered to behead the masterminds and leadership of the enemy.

” ...then fight the leaders of disbelief.” (9:12)

And then discussed the reasoning:

” ...they might cease.”

This verse suggests that killing of leaders of disbelievers is not like in times when ignorance was prevalent, when the people killed each other for the sake of prejudice of jahiliyyah (ignorance) and no other reason at all.

But you, being a Muslim, your fight is reasoned as according to the way the of the Sahabah R.A (the Companions of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w), that behead the disbelievers to smoothen the way, to remove the hurdles of the way so that common men may get light and embrace Islam willingly.

Thus attack viciously to break the stamina of the enemy, strike them back, behead their master minds well, target their officers, so as to weaken their strength and lower their morale.

Stay focused on this objective. Instead of targeting the women and children who haven't participated in war against you, focus on their army, leadership, planners, master minds. But do not extend the principle of collateral damage to the extent of killing fifty common people to target only one army official of the disbelievers, or their allies from the apostate armies or from their leadership. Understand the concept of jihad through these golden advices.

* * * * *

"Khawlah please eat something, or you may get sick", Safiyyah looked at her friend sadly. How much she was suffering for the sake of the path of Haq (Truth). What is there to complain about other people, when your own family discards and disregards you.

A week had passed, still nobody had inquired about her while she was still using her old sim card. Her brother and grandfather were out of city for three weeks and had no idea what had gone on in the house behind their backs.

Upon the insistence of Safiyyah, Khawlah agreed to have her meal but after she has spent some time alone.

Safiyyah obliged with a heavy heart.

After she left, Khawlah re-read the message sent by Maryam on behalf of Abdullah.

He had said that the situation in Kashmir had gone worst and there was no hope of them getting married at all, despite two years of waiting. Thus she better not holds her life for him as he may not be able to marry her ever. Situation was getting unfavorable day by day, so she must accept the reality and go on with her life.

This was a big shock for Khawlah. Was it real? Did she lose something when she was so near to the destination?

Did Abdullah have any idea about how much she had suffered just for this aim of her's?

How could he have any idea when she had never told him?

Was this pain or was she stabbed with some knife?

What she used to be once, and how unworthy she had become now, still she couldn't even become the dust of the feet of a mujahid! Could she live now?

how many nights she had spent in tahajjud asking for that man , did anyone know?

She could wait till Qiyamah, then why her right to even wait was taken away?

Khawlah started cried like a child.

"May be Allah has not accepted me. I must not be fit for any mujahid of Allaah", sobbed Khawlah.

It had all come to an end. The world had turned upside down for her.

"Abdullah is not responsible for this, as he had told me multiple times not to hold on for him but still i did.

But why? Because i believed in the miracles of Allah.

He make ways in sea, pacify the fire, change the laws of physics, chemistry, biology when He wills, so why should I have thought it all to be impossible?", Khawlah cried again at recalling her past efforts.

"O Allah, I believed in You but You did not accept me. When everyone said it is impossible, i said it is possible, because I trusted You , but You did not select me for this path, because I am too bad right? I am not fit for Your blessed path.", Khawlah's eyes ached from crying for hours. She felt her mind numb now.

At that very moment a horrifying thought crossed her mind.

What was she doing.

She was behaving as if her desire was not Allah, rather Abdullah. Will she retreat from Jihad if she does not get Abdullah? Will she turn back on her heels? Will she now leave the path of Allah and His Prophet S.A.W??

Had she not chosen this path for Allah's sake? Did she then need a companion for this?

Her Allah had not left her , even if Abdullah wasn't there. Al Rahman was with still there for her , with her and will always be there even if the whole universe left her.

Why should she cry then and prefer her own wish over Allah's will?

If Allah wanted from her sacrifice of her emotions, then she was ready now. She would enter the battle of Badr with the zeal as that of the Sahabah, but in her case the battle ground was of Badr was her heart.

Khawlah decided to accept the decision of Allah even if it was to jump into the sea. She knew how to surrender now, thus she wiped her tears and opened the Qur'an. On seeing the first verse that came before her eyes, a river of tears started flowing from her already swollen eyes. So it was indeed really a test of her emotions.

*And when they had both submitted and he put him down upon his forehead,

We called to him, "O Abraham,
You have fulfilled the vision."

Indeed, We thus reward the doers of good.
Indeed, this was the clear trial.
And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice,
And We left for him [favorable mention] among later generations:
"Peace upon Abraham."

Indeed, We thus reward the doers of good.
Indeed, he was of Our believing servants.
And We gave him good tidings of Isaac, a prophet from among the righteous.*

[Surat As-Saaffat, verses 103 - 112]

Khawlah's tears rained upon the pages, how Merciful her Lord was !!
Turning a few pages, she read a verse and her heart got further comforted.

Those [believers] who responded to Allah and the Messenger after injury had struck them. For those who did good among them and feared Allah is a great reward -

[Surat Aal-E-Imran, Ayah 172]

Khawlah bent down in prostration with no self-control. Her heart crying in *Labbaek* that from today onwards, she will live her life for Allah only, with no self-desires at all. Her every feeling of hatred and love will now be for the sake of Allah alone. She will bend down where and when Allah will want her to. Now *no* to thoughts of her own self!!

"O Allah, just bless me with Shahadah (martyrdom).
I do not want to die a commoner's death. This is my life's aim. I don't ask You for any mujahid anymore. I have no self-desire now. Just accept me. I want only You and Your Deen. Nothing else, nothing!!", Khawlah hiccupped while crying.

*Shall you see the kings of hearts in action..?
And their ultimate satisfaction!

Such are the victorious!
Some are locked in chains,
Some coloured with wounds, and longing pains..

Fragrant as musk
Some are wrapped in gun powder, as if a firing volcano
Bursting up at dusk..

Shall you see the kings of hearts in action..?
And their ultimate satisfaction!

Some with heads in hand..
Some with wounded bodies
They fly now in paradise amongst angels they land..

These were the guardians..
They proved to Allah with their lives as champions..
These joyous transactions..
And thus they conquer the hearts of millions..

You shall see the kings of hearts in action..
Look to the martyrs and it's seekers
And their promised Eternal satisfaction !! *

* * * * *

The area of Khurasan and a broken house..
A few friends sat in a gathering. They had mountain like responsibilities on their shoulders but their smiling faces were content as if all satisfaction of the world had gathered in their heart.
The fighters of Allah !!

Their eyes waited upon one friend whose smiling eyes told that he was lost far in his beautiful memories. He was about to start on some inspiring stories and they were waiting for him to narrate.

After some moments that pious soul addressed the listeners with pleasure in his eyes.

"Friends, I'll narrate to you the miracles and extraordinary events I witnessed on the path of jihad.

Dua and Istikharah!

The biggest miracle I saw were Dua and Istikharah.
We were just understanding jihad, we had not made Hijrah yet and it was just a small time since we got involved in it. We were indulged in work to call people, doing translations and things of the sort, when Brother Ehsan took me to meet the Sheikh for a two-day tour, a "Sharai" tour. At that time, nobody could explain the Jihad.
There were only two or three people whom you could ask about this call, this message, the jihadi group and its objectives. So such chances were much valuable.", Lost in memories, that young mujahid shared his past. Though he was young but his knowledge showed that his age was much

more than what his physique reflected. The listeners were young as well, rather so young that some did not even have a beard yet.

"We stayed at a brother's house, that is another story..." He smiled on saying that. His eyes sometimes down and sometimes addressed the audience, an attractive smile bewitched his words.

"Me and that brother went out together, got cornered then released. It was night and when we reached near our accommodation. Whole area was full of dogs. Well, I do not have much fondness for dogs", the young mujahid laughed while narrating, with mischief in his eyes. His companions laughed at this too, enjoying this thrilling adventure.

"Anyhow, Allah got us through that. We crossed the rest of the path in panic. A small room was in front. We knew only the name of the Ansaar (helper), the brother whom we wanted to meet. We had hard disks, laptops so we decided to ask him where was that person. We went in and talked to them only to find that it was police's room !!"

Upon this nobody could hold the laugh. The narrator laughed as well.

"So, others told us the place and we went there. Two brothers were there in a garden with two other jihadi companions.

We spent the night there. Next morning the tour began, we had to go on mountains.

It was our beginning of jihad.

It was raining heavily when we started on. The Ansaar told us that if it continued like this, then we would have to go back. The Brother said "Pray to Allah that let it rain around us, and not upon us." Thus it was so. It was raining all around and we passed amongst it all dry". He casted a grateful glance towards the sky. The listeners praised Allah.

"Our tour concluded smoothly and the clouds rained where they were.

Since then, till now I have seen and heard from companions a miraculous effect of making Dua with faith, especially when there is no resource.

We had a scholar friend who got arrested. He recalled many such instances.

They were thrown upon each other in a vehicle , they were in much anguish. Leg of one is hitting chest of other, elbow of one is pressing the face of other. Whole body was in discomfort due to this and there was suffocation too.

Restless, he asked the police or agency men to change their position but they abused him and did not help. He said, he pleaded in misery again and again, then he got ashamed at last and decided to ask from none but Allah. He narrated that then the situation was such that when made Dua that Allah ease the discomfort in my arm", it was eased. "Allah ease the discomfort in my leg" and it was eased. "Allah ease the discomfort in my knee" and it was eased. Such that the whole journey (which he later came to know that it was of hours), got spent in a few moments.

So one thing is Dua and the other is Istikharah.

It is such a miracle that I have experienced, no other thing with such repetitive instances that it never failed us. Allah's Apostle S.A.W. promised that one who does istikharah never gets failed, never gets disappointed and one who seeks advice is never ashamed. So such is the case with istikharah. Even if you aren't able to do anything, just say out the Dua of Istikharah. You will see, Allah makes such ways and arranges your work in such a manner, that you will be surprised. Little things of routine, such as the decision to go to the market, start a new work; your mind gets at ease about your decisions by Allah's mercy. We have seen it multiple times and all sheikhs agree that it seems that Allah hasn't provided any blessing greater than it in jihad.

There used to be three or four drones at a time and we could not move about. But we needed to move out for some necessary appointment. We made their Dua of istikharah and within minutes Allah not only made way for us but also eased our problems. Within moments clouds covered the area and drones disappeared. It has happened ever so often that I now have firm believe in it. So hold on to it, use it for your little tasks too. It is not only that the heart gets contented. That is only a little part. Allah promised that Istikharah won't fail man. He intends and Allah blesses his aim and his work goes smooth. This Dua is not for nothing, ponder over it please. This is a Dua not only for good tidings rather also that if it is good for me then let it be my destiny, bless it, ease it, hence it encompasses all. Thus Allah blesses the tasks that are khair (good), eases the way.

There is another miracle that I want to tell you about. That is, fragrance from the body of martyrs. Their blood always runs free as if alive. We saw some, also heard about others that their bodies bled for hours and remained fragrant.

I had seen body of brother Qitaal first, there were many of us around him. He went into coma. He was taking his last breaths when a brother switched on the camera. He took his last breath in a way that showed the picture of a very peaceful departure. Then there was fragrance in the whole room, in the court outside the room, in the next room. We all were staring at each other in surprise at such strong fragrance.

His little brother got martyred when he fell in a well, he too had the same fragrance.

We witnessed this miracle of Allah a lot, fragrance and fresh body.

I have never seen a mortified body of any martyr. Bodies are so fresh that their fingers can be moved easily. Their bodies retain the warmth for hours and sometimes for days.

I recall a hadith regarding the truth about Dua. A companion said that I have not come for booty of war. I have come so that I get struck here (pointing at his neck) and enter heaven... And he got hit by an arrow where he had pointed. Prophet S.A.W said that "He was sincere toward Allah and Allah fulfilled his wish" (See: Sunan an-Nasa'i, The Book of Funerals, Chapter: Offering The Funeral Prayer For Martyrs.)

We saw such passion in doctor Muadh. We never saw such desire for martyrdom in anybody else. We were not even close. He cried for it, prayed for it, kept awake for it, he prayed in gatherings and among his companions. Thus Allah gave him martyrdom as he prayed.

I think nobody has seen his body except me and another brother. Dead bodies were unrecognizable due to bombardment and some were taken by the Ansaar to be buried.

Before burial when we went to a place, we recognized his body. A brother accompanied me (he is martyred as well now). His body had a bowl shaped hollow in his chest, full of blood. He was true with Allah, in sha Allaah.

I cannot forget when Saeed Ullah was on bed. Many of his bones broken and a thick bandage on head.

There was dust in his eyes, face burnt, leg fractured, just about to die. We wondered how was he alive. We gave him injections of painkillers but he was whimpering with pain.

In such agony, he said such amazing thing that our eyes got tearful.

He inquired about his brother and we hurriedly let it pass over as his brother was martyred in bombardment. He asked about some friends, we told him that they got martyred. He got quiet for some time then he spoke, probably the first proper statement he made to us.

"ان الله طيبا, لا يقبل الا طيبا"

(Allah is pure and accepts nothing but pure). It is strange to have such relation with Allah in this agony.

He got martyred in few days. In sha Allaah, he was amongst the pure.

I came across some such wonderful people of Allah in my journey. There were some children whose level of faith, actions, ikhlaq, relation with Allah was such that We could not reach their dirt, and we are not still close to their level of purity of heart. I have seen many but there are some I cannot forget.

Brother Hashaam, Mus'ab, Jawad, Usman....

Hamza, though was my brother but he belonged to some other world. They all were of pure spirit, as in reality they may not have bothered anyone with their tongue, hands or wealth, even not a thorn prick.

Apple of eyes of their parents and companions, they preached love wherever they went... they loved everyone. Everyone thought that he loves me the most.

They were wonderful, their prayers, their regularity in tahajjud in such small age, their unparalleled services, their relation to Allah that cannot be expressed in words.... I often talk about Usman. No Salah did he offer without crying, without hiccups. It was not possible that anyone else will wash clothes or cook meal in a center where he was.

I have seen Ehtisham. In his last days he had severe backache, for which he even wore a belt and took his pills as well. But it was time of tour and he was helper of brother Zakir. First drone happened that day and another at other center. Our event was not postponed but we dispersed in night. When he came in first night, he was turning sides in bed. I inquired the matter, he said he had severe backache. I advised him to take leave he said I feel guilty as my mentor expects me to be in

first line to set example for others by completing the tasks before anyone else so I won't take leave. I insisted that if you can't then I can, if you allow. But he still did not agree.

One can accept this even, but they came so late in this painful condition - at around eleven at night. I got up at half past two and saw that he was offering tahajjud; knowing that the next day also requires full on hard work. I thought how can I ever compete such a guy. Backache, poor health, still he prays tahajjud in the middle of the night, while there is a whole day of hardship ahead. The next tour was to be full of hard work, no one could rest.

His mother says that when he came home for vacations, she tried to compete in waking before him for tahajjud, but he always woke up before me. She thought she could not compete him.

Such wonderful people taken up by Allah one by one, Subhan Allaah. Our hopes are built by such examples, the hope to destroy system of evil.

If Allah wills then hope of logical conclusion of jihad is also due to this as Allah won't waste the deeds of such pious people and such blood.

Indeed as an Ummah we have sinned a lot and were dishonest in religion. May be only one drop of blood of only one of such people would suffice for repayment of sins of us all. So hopefully blood of each one of them would suffice for not only all of us but also for this land. So we hope that Allah will not disregard these.

There are many blessings but the biggest one is these people, these characters, such tahajjud, such crying in front of Allah, such worships, services, affections are just blessings. I feel this a lot. It is a little part that Allah gives you what you ask. You experiment in these little things and you will find blessing in every center, every house. Problem is that we don't pay much attention to this. These are just few ones...

Brother Sohail was a blessing, Brother Saad was a blessing.

Sohail was a civil engineer, he could earn up to one and a half lac monthly. He was the gem of his family but left everything for this. He served with all his intelligence in this path. Allah gave him many qualities. He was a unique personality, with a lot of aspects. Ideological ability, warfare ability, trainer ability, planning ability, discussion ability, self-purity, thus he was given a lot. But what I felt most unique was his consistency upon ibadaat, as such rarely seen among companions. He had a routine, a difficult one, which we have seen him following. He will pray tahajjud no matter what and won't miss for years. Similarly, he will follow his Salah in congregation in any condition.

His study time was fix. If he had decided to study for two and half hours then he would, whatever happens to world. Such consistency is difficult; he would not worry about displeasure of anyone in this regard. Many of our habits got better in his company. We were free style while he was disciplined.

Same consistency he had for his desire of martyrdom. If I talk about us, then we had ups and downs in our passion. Sometimes we prayed restlessly for martyrdom, sometimes we did not pray for it for months. While he remained adamant for it for years without break. He would request everyone to pray for his martyrdom whether children, adults, old. This consistency was special to his person. I felt another thing, though small, every one may have his own view regarding it, that every companion here has one or two little flaws which he cannot help, a weakness. Means that may be he

is doing some sin or a virtue he is supposed to do but he's not doing it. Generally, there is a sin which he is unable to avoid. For example, some are harsh in words, some have poor manners, some are lazy in Salah and some lack routine of recitation of Qur'an. Everyone does some sins which are clung to his soul so as it is painful to refrain from it, these become habits.

I have felt that the friends I knew closely, they got martyrdom within days of refraining from the bad habits. Sometime it was as if he repented a day and got martyred the next. So he had many virtues but something lacked inside. There are things that I would take as an example, such as a brother had an issue and he rectified it, and thus he reached Allah. As a responsible one, you can keep an eye on flaws of companions but get ignorant about your own. I know a brother who was advised for years to be humble. The day, he adopted it, he reached Allah in four or five days. Another brother lacked patience, then he adopted patience upon incitement of others, he remained patient upon mistakes of others, he was martyred in days of becoming patient. There are many examples, some brothers have problems in ibadaat which he was requested to ponder upon and the day he solved it, he reached martyrdom. So look into yourself the issues which you need to rectify. These are hurdles between you and martyrdom. If one ponders then one will find what's lacking. Some virtues are easy for us, we are doing since childhood and these become habits so they are not difficult. But some virtues are difficult to manage. These are different for different people. For some it is easy to pray but difficult to control the tongue. For some it is easy to control tongue but difficult to repress anger. Similarly, something is difficult for someone else. For some, staying away from home is difficult. Everyone has his own trials. The day you get rid of it, Allah accepts this pious soul within days. Every companion should ponder over it. The journey is straight forward. But even though we know our problems, we do not solve them and journey lengthens. Because solution demands hard work and hard work is to control your inner self.

Then there are some souls that are like *made for Jannah*, you can tell from day one that there is no hurdle for them. Just sometime within months and years they get their destination. Some come in high speed, like Qari Bilal. He was not given any special responsibility neither any letter. He was waiting for his call but was not given any responsibility. He remained patient, never made any complaint. No mujahid will accept to be called just to wait, not to be sent on any mission or anything rather sit around doing chores. But there was something for which he had to wait. He had to be kept free for almost a year. But he was never found complaining. That seemed to be enough for Allah.

Mansoor was like a little Mus'ab. He had a little beard near his martyrdom, he age was this less. Allah arranged many things by him here. In a mission when a vehicle was stuck on road, right at time of mission. There was no way, all roads jammed. If he vehicle was not moved, then our mission would have gotten delayed. That devout man of Allah took the luggage, sat in the vehicle and drove through uneven roads. He was just nineteen or twenty years old by then. There was curfew but he took car through sideways to that far way city in a totally mindlessly devoted way. The vehicle was full of gunpowder and his actions had no logic. He left the vehicle till that city. He was a very mannerly, lovely, loveable child.

Our companions, not only did one, but dozens of missions. By telling this story, I want you, every young and old to be ready for such craziness. Unnecessary logic and estimates, stop men from sacrifice.

If Allah wants, each one of you is equal to a thousand men, if he believes that Allah is with him, his good deeds will open ways for him. The evil system has always been turned down by kids.

Let's take a break. My speech has gone long." With a smiling face, the young mujahid ended the gathering of stories of eye witnessed miracles of jihad.

But the listeners were numb, they could not move themselves. These lucky souls belonged to this very so called modern world but they designated the ends of time as their goal and proved that if man does not want to change then there are thousands of excuses. Otherwise it is not impossible to become follower of Sahabah R.A of Rasul Allaah s.a.w in the path of Allah.

*O the worshipper in Haramain (Mecca/Madina), look at us!
You will realize that your worshipping is just a game..

Wet cheeks with tears are praised,
But the river of blood is a degree above raised..
You race your horses in vain..
While we wage war with ours to gain,
For this Deen to remain..

If such are the differences between both,
Equalizing the two is not worth!*

* * * * *

*Do prisons *really* come perfumed??*

*Sitting alone in this room (my cell) I look back to when
I used to be free. Free from all restrictions..*

*That free bird has been caged now. In past I used to
wonder what this phrase really meant,
"prisons come perfumed"??*

*Now that I too am in one, I feel what that fragrance is.
Allaah brought me out of that fake world of fake
people. Brought me out of all those chains of fake
friendships & emotions, and brought me close to
Himself, where what I see now is Him, what I seek is
Him, what I hear is Him, what I feel is Him..*

Everything is "Him" now !!!

*As I have nothing to look forward to now , I have only
Him to look up to.*

*And thus when I looked at Him - at last - after years
and years of distraction by fake people - I realized I
was looking at the Beauty I had never set my eyes
upon. Though my Lord is not visible to the apparent
eye, but is visible to the Heart.*

*I felt His presence in a way I had never felt in my
whole life..*

*My Love - my Lord - brought me close to His Eyes
through this imprisonment..*

*So why should i hate being here, when I feel the
Fragrance of His Presence here?*

*If "this" is where He wants me , then here I am , His
slave, fully submitted with my head bent in sujud. My
tears tell the story of my heart to Him all the time. And
He Listens.. You know.. Listens to all my pains, with
Love and Care..*

*So why to cry over lost freedom when I have my
Loving Lord by my side??*

I found the peace I was searching for.

*So yes, they have very rightly said; the prisons come
perfumed.*

~ Diary Of a Prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)

Chapter Eleven:

"Khawlah Api, can I talk to you for a moment if you are free?" A sixteen years old boy entered the room.

Teenage....what a charming age, fearless, no fear of anyone if they were determined over something. Khawlah raised her head from Fatimah's diary which she was reading. She saw the unique innocence of Usman's eyes, it always impressed her. Such young age and he did much bigger deeds. His future-planning was also big. How she had been in this age and how this innocent boy was being so totally different. Allah had shown him this correct way which she had acquired of late, for some reason. Usman was Khawlah's brother by milk kinship, as her grandfather told her. She had contacted her grandfather after sometime when she was at Safiyyah's place. He had judged the condition at home, they had closed their doors for her so he directed her a way. Allah is truly praiseworthy. He never leaves alone a person who walks on His path. If a human fights the world for someone, love emerges between the two. So He is the Lord, how is it possible that He does not value His lover?? He is worth more than anyone else and man had not realized that. Allah does not explain His plans, He tests your faith. How else can you tell apart those who love Allah so much that they will jump in the sea for Him?

Grandfather had given Khawlah some details of Usman - which country he is in, where he resides, how to reach there and assured that soon he himself will be there too. He then will become his guardian and arrange for her Nikkah (marriage).

Khawlah told him about Abdullah. He kept silent for a while then advised that it may be a blessing from Allah. For Whom else she had taken all these big steps. If she did it for Allah, then she should not hold herself in this way or wail. It's Allah's will to fulfill His commands by any means He deems worthy. You cannot make your own questionnaire of your choice. We have to be submissive whether He throws us in a well or in a fire. You cannot complain why others have different question papers, as everyone has his own test. As each one has his own level. Maybe for others their test seems very hard to them, but you would take it easy if you were in their place. So, a test is to test one's patience, gratitude, steadfastness, love for Allaah etc. So it's according to everybody's level faith. The goal is to kill your ego, sacrifice your happiness for His commands. This is the real deal and the real test.

*In Dying for Allah lies the secrets of Immortality unknown.

He who doesn't know to die does not know to live in the way that was shown*

Khawlah was much strengthened by her grandfather's consolation. She was just confused about one thing that was troubling her since days. So she shared her thoughts with him to get her answers. How can the Dua made in Tahajjud go unanswered ?? Grandfather's answer relieved her burden. He told her that answering does not necessarily mean to be same in all limits as you asked for. Had she forgotten the rest of the results of the Dua? It may be that what she asked was good in itself, but her future with that couldn't go good, as that would have resulted in hurting her more than making her content or happy, and thus it may be that Allah will give her a better one as replacement. Why this disappointment then? Allah gives according to what you expect of Him. If you expect good, He will give you good, but if you think you will suffer then you will.

Khawlah thus asked for forgiveness from Allah and left her matters to Him.

"Come brother, sit" Smiling, she closed the diary. "What do you want to talk about?"

"In a minute.. First tell me what were you reading with such interest?" Khawlah laughed at his question and handed over the diary.

"Here, read it yourself." Usman smiled, took a chair near her, and started reading the diary with curiosity:

*She sat quiet with her head in her knees. Hadia kept looking at Kashaf for a while and then said softly, "When you devout yourself, you do not see backwards reluctantly or regretfully. Trust is the spirit of devotion. So how can you live with disbelief or fear? If you have any fear, then resubmit yourself. If you cannot do it then ask Allah to enable you. If you lack faith, then ask for faith. But do ponder if you trust Allah. It is easy just to say but the real test of submission comes when you cannot control consequences. A child thrown in space laughs because he believes to be caught. If he does not believe, he will cry."

Kashaf felt as if Hadia knows her condition without saying anything. She slightly nodded her head, felt a little better and said: "Shouldn't we believe that everything shall fall into place when we have submitted?"*

"Khawlah Api, it is beautiful. Which novel's extract are these?" Usman too was captured by it like Khawlah when she had first read it.

"I do not know. It is some stranger's diary in which the owner of this diary has collected these pearls for strangers of Deen from different books. Allah conveyed it to me somehow and it is giving strength to my heart since then." Tears sprinkled in her eyes as her heart got grateful of Allah for His blessings.

"Wow!! It is a worthy gift for anyone." Usman read through a few more pages.

"Okay, now what did you want to ask?" Khawlah asked smiling.

"Oh I nearly forgot. I wanted to talk about a serious matter. Would you migrate with me towards the land of Shaam?" He uttered every word slowly and gravely.

Khawlah, who was sitting with her back to pillow, jerked forward. "Can it really be ever possible?" Almost crying she looked in Usman's eyes. Was he serious or kidding?

Many ahadeeth were present about the blessings of this blessed land of Shaam. Could she be among those lucky people who were busy sacrificing their lives in Jihad over there?

"it is not only possible rather I consider it done." Usman replied with wet eyes.

* * * * *

"Since the European areas were taken from us into the hands of the disbelievers then according to the conditions set by scholars, jihad became an obligation upon us." Recording of interview of a senior mujahid was playing:

"As per scholars, even if a small land of Muslims is occupied by the disbelievers, Jihad becomes an inexcusable obligation on every Muslim - Fard ain!! Similarly, if a man or woman is in custody of disbelievers, jihad becomes obligatory to free that Muslim man/woman. Likewise, if rulers of the Muslims become apostates, it is necessary to fight against them. Scholars have mentioned many such conditions.

Today many of these conditions are omnipresent and obligation is much more imposing upon us then previously.

Why did we follow the path of Jihad? because it is an obligation upon us, rather upon the whole Muslim Ummah. So we have come out to perform our obligation as ordered by Allah. I may point out here that never in history have there been such circumstances as inflicted upon Muslims now. Even our own lands are occupied. There was a time when Muslims ruled over three continents and now there is not a single free area where the word of Allah is implied. Not only one, thousands of Mujahideen, callers of truth, scholars, even women like Aafia Siddiqui, may Allah give them freedom, are in jails suffering unspeakable height of torture and it is our duty to free them. Following the sequence, there have been incidents like we never saw before neither tolerated like this. For example, disrespect of the Book of Allah, not once rather repeatedly, blasphemy of our Prophet Muhammad. S.A.W., who is the most beloved to us. If we had not risen up now, then we may have been marked with wrath of Allah, this is the basic reason of us joining this path. Often it is said that Mujahideen do not give importance to preaching and invitation to Deen. It is not the case. On the contrary, we abide by orders of Allah. Allah says

O you who have believed, enter into Islam completely [and perfectly]... [Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 208]

So all components of Islam, may it be Jihad, Salah, Hajj, invitation to Allah, advice of right and forbidding of wrong, these are all obligations for us. Our faith is no different from the rest of the Muslims. But we keep the order of Jihad superior in light of conditions set by scholars and regulations of Shariah. There is no doubt that preaching of Islam is our responsibility but we consider that in certain conditions, Jihad becomes a compulsory obligation while preaching is an obligation where a few can relieve others. When jihad becomes an obligation, the scholars write that it is such an emergency condition that a child need not to seek his father's permission, indebted need not seek permission of whom he took debt from, slave need not ask his master, wife need not ask husband, everyone has to answer his obligation. In such unusual circumstances, Jihad is to prioritize over the rest of obligations. So we believe that we shall continue preaching, like I am talking to you and doing this work as a Mujahid to call for others. There is no clash between these two but if a clash occurs then Jihad should be our priority. We do not consider it right to preach in such a way that Jihad is hindered. Every Mujahid in his place preaches as well as does his duty.

So this is one aspect. Secondly, as an Imam says that Jihad is not only about killing others neither is it intended solely for this. Rather it intends to spread the word of Islam so it is itself a source of preaching. He says that invitation can be of two types. Verbal i.e. invitation by preaching and Sword i.e. invitation by Jihad. Preaching is much simple as compared to second as for Jihad you have to face risks. So the type of invitation we have followed, i.e Jihad is more dangerous and demands more sacrifice. It is not only a matter of worship rather we have witnessed that Allah has put great affect in

Jihad to spread the word of Islam. We have seen and proven with statistics that how many people in Europe and America have turned to Islam after 9/11. It includes both white and black, in numbers which did not turn to Islam by preaching for decades, they turned after this one strike and blood of martyrs.

Sheikh Usama gives an example that in Makkah the best caller of heavens and earth was preaching i.e. Prophet S.A.W and his companions like Abu Bakar and Umar R.A. Only a hundred or so accepted Islam in thirteen years where only preaching is done. All those who were in front line for enmity of Islam, the day comes that Prophet S.A.W after passing through all those steps, Jihad became compulsory. The Prophet S.A.W. conquers Makkah and these big leaders are presented in front of him who abused, tortured, fought in wars. Apostle of Allah S.A.W. asks what is your opinion about me. They reply unanimously that you are noble son of a noble father, respectable son of a respected father. Sheikh Usama asks why is that they did not accept Islam in thirteen years preaching but here they respond immediately. He says a historical statement that "sword helps in understanding right thing." Arguments does not always help in understanding. Indeed, a righteous soul realizes the facts but for many such who are under influence of evil of their own self and do not accept truth even after facts. So when the sword is taken out and the authority of Islam is exposed (to display power of Islam , not to force people to embrace it) then Islam is considered with regard. We are not doing anything against preaching rather we are removing the hinders in the path.

Now we come to the point of against who do we do jihad? The recognition of friend and foe is matter of basic importance in human life. One who mistakes in this regard, gets hit in life. Allah has granted us recognition of our enemy and saved us from getting hit. Keeping the importance of knowing the enemy, Allah introduced us to our enemy when Adam A.S had not yet come to Earth. Allah warned that the devil is your enemy, he will distract you, beware of him. Allah gave a practical lesson to Adam A.S that The Real friend and Well-wisher of man is Allah Himself. As in Qur'an , Allah says that He is a Friend , Helper of the righteous.. So indeed we trust only One Friend i.e. Allah. And take the devil as our enemy. Moreover, Allah introduces us to the allies of devil as well. Allah told us that He knows our enemy better than us and is enough for us. We, or our intellect do not decide who our enemy is. Whoever believes in Allah, he will ask Allah, the Book of Allah and Prophet of Allah s.a.w. We see that Allah even ranked our enemies. Allah points that you will find jews and polytheists most hard in enmity against the believers. Allah ranked them more hateful than christians. So we wage jihad against the jews, polytheists and as the verses declare us against christians, we wage Jihad against them as well. So these are external enemies and we are fighting against them in the whole World. It started with all its might in 1996 and remains continued like attacking American navy seal, American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, attack on 11 September and London attacks. So this is a whole sequence where these enemies were attacked in different ways and different places. A fourth enemy described by Qur'an and ahadith, as well as our previous scholars, are the apostates. Some scholars have said that the apostates are much worse an enemy than the jews and the polytheists. They say; apostates are worst form of disbelievers. Because they embraced Islam when it was clear to them then they refuted it. Today we are fighting against these three external enemies and this one internal enemy. We are defending the Ummah against them according to the severity of their severity of enmity, and which of them needs to be given priority (regarding fight) in different situations

Now we talk about the biggest question asked. The most important point is that when the jihad was waged against Russia, America aided it. America provided ammunition etc. but now what is the source of Jihad funding, what are the financial resources, from where are we getting weapons , gunpowder etc.

Know that these suspicions are created by disbelievers. The suspicion of Russian defeat by help of

America did not arise from one place alone. Whenever the Mujahideen did some great attack like 9/11 or anything else, the Ummah was told that you cannot do such a thing, the Mujahideen have no courage for this. So as a result the expected awakening of Ummah, the awaited stamina, pulse, excitement and the determination to break the chains of slavery can be suppressed. This concept has been impregnated into the brains of Muslims by much hard work of years. While this is not the reality. In reality, the Jihad against Russia started in late 70's and till '84,'85 neither America nor any other outside force participated or was interested to participate in this. They were all spectators. They had no idea that these separate groups of Mujahideen with lesser weapons can defeat the superpower of Russia which intimidated America and Europe. This era of seven or eight years, in which work was started at zero level was made possible only by Allah's help. All those senior Mujahideen who by the grace of Allah are alive today, agree that there was no role of America or any other Taghut in that Jihad. The sacrifices of Mujahideen, blood of martyrs and blessing of Allah proliferated the Jihad. After '86 when the Mujahideen became stable, even if America did not come to aid, Jihad would have moved forward. America came when the Mujahideen were stable, and it came forward not with the real intention to help, rather it came to prevent the success of mujahideen to reach levels that may harm the international interests of America. Secondly, it came forward to get rid of Russia - its enemy.

Sheikh Abdullah Azzam who was amongst the most prominent persons of Jihad writes in one of his writings, in nearly '87,'88. "Where is the help of America? Those who say that we are aided by America, show us. They say we take stinger missiles from America. We do not take it as a gift rather it is trade which can be done with any one." in that time these missiles come for 70.000 Pakistani rupee.

Many local and Arab Mujahideen of Afghan Jihad never took any direct aid from US. This is a lie that we were funded by America. It is a baseless accusation. However if some groups took aid without regarding the Shariah rulings for taking aid from disbelievers then they did wrong. The adverse effects and diminishing of blessings as a result were apparent. Sheikh Azzam says that before 86 when US did not take part in war, there was many miracles in Jihad. A book has been written about all those miracles in that time. As the people got aid from US, not directly but through local Pakistanis and Saudi government, the blessing in their jihad went away. It does not mean that Mujahideen accepted American aid. At that time there were many scholars and Mujahideen who never got guilty of such sin. And it is a proof of their honesty that they themselves or their children are still propagating Jihad against America. This is the description of the role of America in the Afghan jihad. Now comes a question as who is helping us today?

So a simple straight answer is that we are fighting with aid of the same Allah who sided with us before. We trust in Allah and we will continue fighting believing Him. Allah has told his Apostle S.A.W that ; I'm telling you the summary of Allah's Words, Allah is One who helped you with His aid and the aid of the believers. So after the aid of Allah, our support is the believers. The Ummah of the Apostle of Allah, which loves us and we love it. They back us and this Jihad is going on by their help, prayers and support.

Another big objection, what is the benefit of the Russian defeat? There is no betterment in our condition.

The Mujahideen reply that we do not see our benefit or disadvantage in Jihad. We do jihad as it is an order from Allah and we obey it. Allah forbid, we are not like disbelieving states like America, Britain, France, Germany, that war is part of our foreign ideology or a decision by ourselves that we do it when we see our benefit. Jihad is an order of Allah. As we do not raise such questions in prayers,

fasting, pilgrimage and zakat so why do we question in Jihad? It is an obligation like the rest. Shariah laid down some rules for Jihad, that it is compulsory in some conditions and Fard kifayah in others.

This jihad is a compulsory obligation which we have to fulfill as Muslims.

Practically, if we see the benefits of Jihad on the other side, then it is enough that an Ummah, which got unpulsed about jihad even before the fall of the Khilafah and withdrew from this great obligation, while the Apostle of Allah said that you will be humiliated if you leave it (jihad). Thus now they come back to it. The Ummah got a ground where thousands were trained and hundreds gave their lives in the way of Allah.

A generation of Mujahideen was thus born and is growing day by day...."

* * * * *

"How will we go?" Today Khawlah's much awaited dream was finally coming true?? Martyrdom!! She was brought to this reality by a Mujahid's story who had migrated to Syria. He had told that for migration, most of the brothers used to physically strengthening themselves, but his practice was different. He started strengthening himself spiritually instead. He gathered money for travelling, but in addition also started improving his prayers, meditated about the reasons of existence of universe, applied Quran's teachings in his life practically, practiced Sunnah, in fact he worked on improving his conscience. And that's how new paths kept on surfacing for him and his cause found the right directions.

Khawlah had also started practicing the same and hence could see the fruits of her efforts today.

"Can't answer How, but grandpa is also coming tomorrow to escort us," his eyes beaming with joy now. No doubt he had a strong bond with grandpa. He had not abandoned contact with him so far.

Khawlah's joy was infinite now. Her life's biggest motive was getting accomplished. And her beloved mentor, her grandpa, was also accompanying her in this. This was the greatest joy of her life.

After mumbling for a while Usman left. Khawlah started rummaging through her books while she recalled the Hadith about attributes of Martyrs, she had planned to read today.

It was narrated from Miqdam bin Ma'dikarib that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "The martyr has six things (in store) with Allah: He is forgiven from the first drop of his blood that is shed; he is shown his place in Paradise; he is spared the torment of the grave; he is kept safe from the Great Fright; he is adorned with a garment of faith; he is married to (wives) from among the wide-eyed houris; and he is permitted to intercede for seventy of his relatives." [Sunan Ibn Majah]

The book was old, yet very valuable. Khawlah started reading It was stated on the first page of the book:

Before you start residing in a kaafir country, you should have a read of the following Hadith:

Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) sent an expedition to Khath'am. Some people sought protection by having recourse to prostration, and were hastily killed. When the Prophet (ﷺ) heard that, he ordered half the blood-wit to be paid for them, saying: I am not responsible for any Muslim who stays among polytheists. They asked: Why, Messenger of Allah? He said: Their fires should not be visible to one another.

Abu Dawud said: Hushaim, Ma'mar, Khalid b. al-Wasiti and a group of narrators have also narrated it, but did not mention Jarir.

[Sunan Abi Dawud]

Khawlah read a few more hadiths and then rummaged through more pages, when her eyes got stuck on one of the hadiths grabbing all her attention.

* * * * *

It was her second week in the land of Shaam. Despite being a beautiful land, it was covered with clouds of gloom. Every morning, the sun greeting everyone with a shower of bomb shells from the sky. How impervious had the rest of this Ummah grown, that not even electric shocks could make them feel for the pain of their brethren. It is very different to debate while sitting miles away in your comfort zones. Real thing is to stand firm and tall before the fighter jets in the war zone. Khawlah realized this after being there and experiencing the tragedies of Muslim Ummah. How death hovered the very area while the dear Mujahids fighting for the holy cause were ready for death in their fight with all their determination and everything they had in their hands.

While sitting far away on the comfortable sofas, the mummy daddy type youth is busy enjoying their adult hood, lost and devastated in the practice of watching English channels, to speak, eat, drink, thus love like them. They have even embraced dogs as pets in imitation of the disbelievers about which our Prophet S.A.W had strictly prohibited, that the houses in which dogs live, angels do not enter their doors.

And where the angels don't come, who else would reside! No doubt Satan !! Similarly, the houses bearing pictures of living are also not visited by angels. But here there are manifold albums in the storage of the houses now. Then they say our hearts are not at peace. We possess every amenity, all the worldly stuff but still the houses are not homes. Love has vanished.

But there are still some lamps of belief fighting the gloom. There were still few men and women eager to put their share for the religion. Like men could save the religion in this hour of doom, women could also play their role to save it. A determined woman once rightly said:

*I am telling a truth to all the Muslim sisters of the world, that the role of women had been very important in Islamic history. Mo'minaat are sisters to Mo'mineen, hence women should work with men for the sake of this Ummah and religion. A woman guard the religion with her soul, if not then her money and if still not, then through inviting other sisters to masjids, schools, institutes and houses for religious talk and even if not possible then through inviting sisters to religion through publishing on internet and can help the Mujahids through inviting people to religion. And this way religion will reach every nook and corner, by the grace of Allah. And it will be acquired by the people who possess the ability to hear and absorb knowledge. So, I hope my sisters! You will utilize every possible source you have access to, for the spread of knowledge and religion. *

Muslim woman could do a lot. Sheikh Anwar al Awlaki said such a truthful thing, that example of women is like the archers of Battle of Uhud. No doubt he described the truth. Exactly that is the very position of a woman in our society. Extremely important and fragile. That even a bit of oblivion from them, can devastate the nation. Exactly what is happening today. West has taught women such a false anecdote of freedom and feminism, that in insanity woman left their real freedom bestowed by Islam to them, in which she was the queen of the house. And got committed in lewdness, in search of people's praise, where she became a source to regale the eyes like prostitutes on the brothels. And started considering this indecency as her real freedom. West had rumbled over the sanctity of their own women long ago, now they are after ours. So they started inculcating the notions of individuality, and got them posted on the bill boards, becoming a source of temptation for stranger men. The beauty of the world is by women, this stanza has been so badly misinterpreted and fulfilled in the form of showcasing their women in streets, nooks and corners, offices and airplanes. Just like they have destroyed their family lives, they are after ours now. In fact, almost have corrupted ours. Men who stay among glamorized women all day long, can't be judged for being tempted then. At last they are humans as well. They will fall prey to profanity. And those who testify that they are uninfluenced by the opposite gender no matter how long they talk, for them an intelligent man said something very beautifully:

If an adult man and adult woman sit together, meet often and say that our hearts are clear of bad thoughts, they should be tested if not both, then at least one of them is deprived of their sensual desires. Since the Lord Who has created the intellect, per His teachings such feelings or desires are inevitable in man.

Individuality and the concept of freedom arose in 18th and 19th century with the advent of research and education. A bit of extra pondering leads us to the conclusion, that the freedom they are talking about for the individuals is not applicable in congregational life. One aspiring for such freedom should go live with animals in the wild. Those aspiring to leave Allah's religion and adopt such foolish principles of West, should be questioned, that are they also ready to accept those results West is facing already, because of these thoughts? which are the inevitable and undoubted results of such principles. Are you happy seeing the similar indecent environment in your own society? That your society be also full of similar indecency and vulgarity? Innumerable diseases be common? Divorce and separation be a Child's play? Adult men and women be subjected to indecency? contraception, abortions and killing of children be common, ending the generations? Adult men and women waste their best abilities and health in indecent acts? To an extent where even young children's thoughts be maligned by the indecency in the society leading them to falter at their younger ages hampering their mental and physical growth. If for the sake of materialism and lust you are ready to bear with such things then, without any issue you may walk on the path set by the west for you, and forget about Islam. You must abandon Islam then, before adopting this path, so that you may not use this name later for deceiving people. And your wretchedness not be an issue for Islam and Muslims. But if you are not ready to accept the results, and if you desire of such environment where there is purity and piety, where etiquettes are fostered, where there is peaceful environment for the nurturing of thoughts, soul and physical aspects, such environment where men and women are not influenced by their lustful emotions and can fulfill their duties without hindrance, where the family unit is strong and standing on firm basis, where generations are protected and where the family units are a source of eternal peace and contentment, and where their children are nurtured with the best thoughts and are brought up well, which is matter of unity for the family. So, for such purposes you should not follow the path set by the West, since it is going to a totally opposite direction. it is impossible to reach East while heading towards the West. If, in actual you dream for this, you should adopt Islamic

teachings.

But before you step on this path, you need to cut away materialism from within you, inhumanity and lust from your heart, which have emerged owing to visualization of Western glamour and pomposity. You need to cut out any such thoughts and notions that have been adopted from west. You must also separate yourself from such causes and principles which have been derived from the western world. Islam owns different purposes and beliefs which are reflections of consistent principles which clearly describe a system of socialism which encompasses its own values and roots. This system of socialism is then disciplined through a specific set of rules in which there is sufficient intellect and contentment for the soul of humans. Without which this system cannot be kept from wretch and wreck. It is not a virtual concept like the system of Plato (Utopia), instead it has been steadfast in the face of trials of last 1350 hundred years. It takes no longer than hundred years to get fully engraved in any country or nation. Thus, if you wish to attain benefits from this strong and beneficial system, you should abide by its rules and disciplines. And you will have no right to enforce anything from your own mind or adopt anything that is against the system of society and doesn't go well with the nature of people.

Third group is the group of oblivious and ignorant, who do not possess the ability to take decisions, hence they don't deserve to be paid heed. It is better to ignore them.

* * * * *

"No, dear! Not like this... Bring the pencil to me!!", Khawlah borrowed the pencil from the 4 years old and rectified the alphabet "ح" (Urdu script) which he had written wrong.

"Here, now, you write it like this, okay?"

The child smiled back at Khawlah mischievously.

"Hey! What makes you giggle that much?", Khawlah referred to 4 years old Hassan, with a timid smile.

"This looks like a boat, he", Hassan started a mischievous laughter.

Khawlah smiled back. He had smiled after days today. He was a very cute boy. Innocent little child. An orphan from the land of Shaam. His mother, father and siblings all died from the bombing by enemies of Islam. One should ask this kid, what grief is? Losing one's own family, means exactly what? How does it feel to cry over the blood drenched corpse of one's mother, begging her to wake up and crying how to live without her? With whom will he live? who will feed him? Embracing one's father's half corpse, and crying, what it feels like to not get a reply from the prompt replier dad.

Syrian and Iraqi children have bared such sorrow that their souls have turned grey with grief. The tears of such oppressed will become such a curse for the sleeping nation, which will be horrifying. Those so called Muslim countries, who despite having armies of fighters, do not help their oppressed brethren. Maybe, this pain wouldn't have been much, if they hadn't become friends of the oppressors. They have given away their ports to America so they can easily send their jets from there and kill their brothers and sisters in Islam, in return to safety of their own countries and nations. They pledge to be their fastest friends, and say, just fill our greedy souls with dollars and we shall obey you like

obedient dogs, forever. Every other day we see disbelievers fighting the so-called war of terrorism. Which was in fact a propaganda initially, introduced to destroy Muslims. They have now named it a war, which they are fighting, since they are endangered instead. Wow what a justice played here. Those who call others khawarij, how much khawarij themselves are they, since, they have soft corner for disbelievers and are harsh on Muslims. So many of the so called Muslim states have practiced loyalty to America by capturing the Islamic heroes, putting them behind the bars, assassinating them in police encounters and hung them in gallows. And the blind nation kept considering their same cruel armies as the Islamic warriors. Commendable!! (sarcasm). One shouldn't be that insane after all.

Well, the scholars haven't been of much help either. They acted in way that they exclaimed Dajjal as Imam Mehdi in their proclamations, following the great diplomacies of the western world.

For this very reason, Islamic teachings were an obligation. But it got replaced with unnecessary worldly knowledge leaving Islamic teachings, somewhere far away in a deep dark well. After all this now it was a must that the people of Iraq, Syria, Palestine, China, Africa, Afghanistan and where ever the Ummah was being cruelly dealt with, would say that one day, may these atom bombs, that you own, burst on your own homes since they were futile for us. In fact, you chose to be a disbeliever and Khawarij by obeying the enemies of Allaah against us. When you will party with them and direct your forces against us, then now no one can save you from our guns till you stop helping disbelievers and return to Islam.

*Nemesis of truth, from religious path you are astray,
You are a slave to the dollars, only the disbelievers you obey.

Friends of strangers, protectors of the cross,
How much wretched you are, having sceptics as your boss.

Killers of Mo'mins, Enemies of the mosques,
You attack the madrassas and eye the veiled, in flocks.

Avoiding the disbelievers, you now chose to be foe your Lord,
You are against the Lord, staunch supporter of cruelty and fraud.
How very wretched are you!!

You traded your sisters with hefty money , big houses,
And lengthy cars, filling your lockers, disrespecting, your spouses.
But in actual are you aware what you really, got,
You are in dungeons of darkness and fire, searing hot
How very wretched are you!!!

On every step, you betrayed your nation and home land (Islam),
The night has finally left and now, wide awake the kingdom stand,
Look and see whose flags wave around in the streets
Moses or Pharaoh, Saleh or Thamud, do you see.
Mustafa (s.a.w) or Abu lahab, think with a clear mind,
Whose friend are you, standing straight in which line.
How very wretched are you!!

To Whom all men belong, be His flag high and tall,
This is our moto, for which you fight with us all

How very wretched
How very wretched!!! *

Khawlah used to think a lot about how woman can participate in wars? How to help the nation? She literally went mad thinking. She inquired everyone. At last she understood the whole thing. But she realized quite late that women's fighting front is a different one. Where only women could fight. Its strength, power, ability and experience has been bestowed to only women.

Men fight in the war zones, but women fight psychologically. To prepare more minds for the holy fights - Jihad. To win the war by preaching. By destroying the concept of contraception invented by hypocrites and give birth to more children and make them warriors of religion - Mujahideen.

Don't we have to set free Masjid Al Aqsa?

If yes , then the number of men needed is so much more, has anyone thought about it??

It is all in the hands of women. If she wishes she can rage quarrels in the family or if she wishes she can use her mind and tactics and help win the wars, through good up-bringing good men.

She should raise such men who turn out to be Khalid bin Waleed, Abu Bakr, Umar and Ali, Salahuddin Al Ayyubi and Sultan Al Fateh.

They should change the thinking of their brothers, husbands and fathers, and make them Mujahid. Help them get motivated for religious activities.

There have been many other ways through which men and women can equally take part in all battles.

44 ways of supporting Jihad (available in Urdu translation as well) by Sheikh Anwar Al Awlaki highlights how men and women both can take part in Jihad.

Khawlah recalled the text she had read from the pdf:

Jihad is the greatest deed in Islam and the salvation of the ummah is in practicing it. In times like these, when Muslim lands are occupied by the kuffar, when the jails of tyrants are full of Muslim POWs, when the rule of the law of Allah is absent from this world and when Islam is being attacked in order to uproot it, Jihad becomes obligatory on every Muslim. Jihad must be practiced by the child even if the parents refuse, by the wife even if the husband objects and by the one indebt even if the lender disagrees.

Dear brothers and sisters the issue is urgent since today our enemy is neither a nation nor a race. It is a system of kufr with global reach. The kuffar today are conspiring against us like never before. So could we be heading towards the great battle between the Romans and the Muslims - Al Malhamah - which the Prophet (saaws) spoke about?

Again, the point needs to be stressed: Jihad today is obligatory on every capable Muslim. So as a Muslim who wants to please Allah it is your duty to find ways to practice it and support it. Following are 43 ways for the brothers and sisters to support Jihad f sabeelillah:

1. Having the right intention

You must make the intentions of joining the ranks of the mujahideen. The Messenger of Allah says: “Whoever dies and has not fought or intended to fight has died on a branch of hypocrisy” (Related by Muslim) A sign that an intention of a person is true is whether they are preparing for Jihad or not. Allah says: “And if they had intended to go forth, they would have prepared for it” (9:46). The conditions for Jihad al Daf’ (the defensive Jihad) are five as stated by scholars such as Abu Qudamah: Islam, puberty, sanity, financial ability, and to be free of physical disabilities. If a person lacks the financial ability and doesn’t find anyone to finance him or suffers from an illness or a disability that excuses him from Jihad then a sign of the true intention of such a person is that he is sad that he is exempted from Jihad. Allah says about the ones who could not afford the expenses of joining in the battle of Tabuk: “Nor [is there blame] upon the those who, when they came to you that you might give them mounts, you said, ‘I can find nothing for you to ride upon.’ They turned back while their eyes overflowed with tears out of grief that they could not find something to spend [for the cause of Allah]” (9-92)

2. Praying to Allah to award you with martyrdom

The Messenger (saaws) says: “Whoever sincerely asks Allah to award him with martyrdom would be given the rewards of martyrs even if he dies on his bed” (Related by Muslim) Asking Allah to die as a shaheed pleases Allah because it shows him that you are willing to give your life for him. But you need to be careful not to be merely paying lip service. A person who truly asks for shahadah would respond to the call of Jihad whenever he hears it and would eagerly search for death in the path of Allah. The reason why the enemies of Allah succeeded in defeating some Muslims and taking over their land is because they have lost their love for martyrdom. The Messenger of Allah (saaws) says: Nations will attack you like a group of people eating from a plate. The sahabah said: “Is that because we will be few in numbers?” He said: “No, you will be numerous but you will be like the foam of the sea, and Allah will take away from the hearts of your enemies the fear from you and Allah will cast in your hearts “wahan”” They said: “What is “wahan” O Messenger of Allah?” He said: “The love of this world and the hatred of death” (Related by Abu Dawud). Our culture of martyrdom needs to be revived because the enemy of Allah fears nothing more than our love of death.

3. Jihad with your wealth

The financial Jihad has preceded the physical Jihad in every verse except one. This is to point out to us the importance of the Jihad of wealth because Jihad depends on it. In other words, no money no Jihad, and Jihad needs lots of it. That is why according to Al Qurtubi in his tafseer he states that the reward for money given as Sadaqah is multiplied by ten, but the reward for money spent in Jihad is multiplied by 700! Allah says: “The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills” (2:261) Probably the most important contribution the Muslims of

the West could do for Jihad is making Jihad with their wealth since in many cases the mujahideen are in need of money more than they are in need of men. As Sheikh Abdullah Azzam puts it: “Men are in need of Jihad and Jihad is in need of money”

4. Fundraising for the mujahideen

In addition to paying from your own money you should also encourage others to do the same. Rasulullah says: “The one who guides others towards a good deed would receive rewards equal to those who practice it.” By fundraising for the mujahideen you are also fulfilling a sunnah of Rasulullah (saaws) which he would often practice before going out for a battle.

5. Financing a Mujahid

Rasulullah (saaws) says: “Whoever sponsors a fighter in the cause of Allah has fought” (Majma’ al Zawa’id) This includes all the expenses of the mujahid including his travel expenses. This gives a chance for the rich and the poor to receive the rewards of Jihad, the poor by fighting and the rich by sponsoring them.

6. Taking care of the family of a Mujahid

Taking care of the family of the mujahid could be by protecting them, tending to their needs, providing them with financial assistance and protecting their honor. The Messenger of Allah (saaws) says:

- Anyone of you who takes care of the family and wealth of a mujahid will receive half the reward of the mujahid (Muslim)
- The duty towards protecting the honor of the wives of the mujahideen on the ones who stay behind is like their duty towards protecting the honor of their mothers. If a person who stays behind promises to take care of the wife of a mujahid but then betrays him, on the Day of Judgment the mujahid will be told that this man betrayed you so take whatever you want from his good deeds. So he will take whatever he likes. (Muslim)
- Whoever does not fight, sponsor a fighter, or take care of the family of a fighter, will be afflicted with a disaster before he dies. (Abu Dawud)

If a person fears for the safety of his family, Shaytan can take advantage of that and prevent that person from going to Jihad. Even if such a person disobeys Shaytan and does go to Jihad, Shaytan can come to him and weaken his heart by whispering to him about the loved ones he left behind. Therefore, taking care of the families of the mujahideen would help their morale and that is why Islam devoted this attention to taking care of the family and wealth of the mujahideen.

7. Sponsoring the family of a Shaheed

The shaheed has fought for Islam and Muslims. He gave up his life for me and you. Therefore the families of the shaheeds need to be honored and served. When Ja’far bin Abi Talib was killed in the battle of Mu’tah, the Messenger of Allah (saaws) told his wives: “Prepare food for the family of Ja’far

because they are preoccupied with their affair” and he visited Ja’far’s house. (Related by Abu Dawud and al-Tirmithi). Imam Ahmad narrates that when the Messenger of Allah received the news of the martyrdom of Ja’far he visited his house and asked Ja’far’s wife to bring the children. When they came to him he hugged them and kissed them while his eyes were shedding tears. Asma – the wife of Ja’far – said: “I asked the Messenger of Allah (saaws) if something has happened” He said: “Yes, Ja’far was killed today” Asma said: “When I heard that I started crying and screaming. Then the Messenger of Allah (saaws) left and told his wives: “Don’t forget to prepare food for the family of Ja’far because their affair has overwhelmed them”” The children of the shaheed need to find in the men of the ummah the care of their father. The wife of the shaheed should be given the opportunity of remarrying if she has the desire to. This requires two cultural changes. First: The Muslim society needs to change its negative view regarding the divorced and widowed woman. Unfortunately, today men avoid women who are divorcees or widows. This stigma attached to our divorced and widowed sisters needs to be overcome. Second: The Muslim society today is very intolerant towards polygamy - which becomes a social necessity especially in times of war. So isn’t it unfair to deprive millions of Muslim sisters from the blessings of marriage? No woman in the time of the sahabah was left without a husband - a partner who would take care of her psychological, physical and financial needs. When Ja’far died Abu Bakr married his wife and took care of her children.

8. Sponsoring the families of the prisoners of war

Taking care of the family of a prisoner is equal in reward to taking care of the family of a mujahid. It is extremely important for such a practice to become the norm so that in the future when our brothers go out in the path of Allah they would know that if they die or if they are captured their families would be taken care of.

9. Paying your zakah to the mujahideen

The distribution of zakah is restricted to eight categories: “Zakah expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [Zakah] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam] and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveler” (9:60) In the cause of Allah “f sabeelillah” refers to the mujahideen. The Maliki jurist Abu Bakr bin al Arabi states: “Malik says: “The causes of Allah are many, but there is no difference of opinion that “in the cause of Allah” here (in the verse) refers to fighting” Imam al Nawawi states in al Minhaaj when talking about the spending of zakah: “The fighter in the path of Allah is given what he needs to cover his expenses and the expenses of his family from the time he leaves until the time he comes back, even if he is absent for a long time” Today not a lot of people pay their zakah to the mujahideen. But if Muslims would rid themselves from the whispering of Shaytan they would come to realize that the best way to spend their zakah nowadays is by giving it to the mujahideen because the Messenger of Allah (saaws) says: “Charity cannot be given to a wealthy person except in five situations” The Messenger of Allah (saaws) listed one of them as: “The fighter in the cause of Allah” (Related by Abu Dawud). Now if zakah can be paid to the mujahideen even if they are rich what about when the mujahideen of today fulfill four

out of the eight categories of zakah: They are poor, they are in need, they are wayfarers and they are the ones in the cause of Allah! So pay your zakah to the mujahideen and encourage others also.

10. Contributing to the medical needs of the mujahideen

The mujahideen are in great need of any medical assistance they can get. They need physicians, they need hospitals and clinics that would open their doors to them and they need medicine. There are hundreds of thousands of Muslim physicians and nevertheless we hear many stories of injured mujahideen who suffered from simple wounds but because of the absence of medical help they had to suffer in agony until they died. Those Muslims who studied medicine and claim that they are doing it for the sake of Allah and to benefit the Muslims, we say to them: Where are you? It is said that Khattaab - the great Muslim commander in Chechnya - was injured in a battle and his brothers found no Muslim doctor to take care of him so they had to take him to the Red Cross and have them treat him under gun point! Muslim health care workers have a great responsibility and their contribution to Jihad is indispensable. In fact, their rewards could be even greater than those of the fighters.

11. Providing Moral support and encouragement for the mujahideen

When the mujahideen hear Imams making dua for them, scholars giving fatwas supporting them and the Muslim masses praising them, this boosts their moral and gives them the strength to carry on. However, we find that many Muslims betray their brothers by speaking against them. We see scholars issuing fatwas in support of the apostate governments in their fight against the mujahideen. One should not underestimate the detrimental effect such betrayal has on the mujahideen.

12. Defending the mujahideen and standing up for them

The Messenger of Allah (saaws) says: “Whoever protects the reputation of his brother, Allah will protect his face from Hell Fire on the Day of Judgment” (Related by al Tirmithi) He also says: “Any person who betrays a Muslim whose sanctity is being violated and reputation is being dishonored, Allah will betray him when he is in need of help and any person who protects a Muslim whose sanctity is being violated and reputation is being dishonored, Allah will assist him when he is in need of help” (Related by Abu Dawud) It is therefore our Islamic duty to stand up for the ones who are defending us and our religion. As a rule of thumb, we should never side by word or deed against our brothers in Islam especially the ones who have given up their lives for Islam and we should never side by word or deed with the disbelievers who are the enemies of our most beloved, Allah subhanahu wa ta’aala. And if one cannot speak the truth then at least they should remain silent.

13. Fighting the lies of the Western Media

The perceptions of many Muslims are formed by the Western media. Allah says: “O you who have

believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one (fasiq) with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful” (49:6) So what about when the news is coming from a kafr rather than a fasiq?! The danger of the Western media stems from the fact that it puts on the cloak of truth and objectivity when in reality it is no more than the mouthpiece of the devil. Can’t you see that the Western media is constantly trying to underplay the atrocities committed by the West while exaggerating the violations – which are few and far in between - committed by Muslims? Can’t you see how the Western media succeeded in presenting the awlyaa’ (friends) of Allah, the ones who are fighting in His cause, as the followers of evil, while it presents the Pharaoh of this day and his armies as the army of good? The Western media is so good in its deception that its lies pass on a wide section of the Muslim ummah. The fact is that this media demonizes the mujahideen, spreads lies about them, blows out of proportion their mistakes, tries to sow the seeds of disunity amongst them, attempts to ruin the reputations of their leaders, and ignores or demonizes the scholars of truth when on the other hand, it glorifies and promotes the scholars of falsehood. So my dear brothers and sisters part of your duty is to campaign amongst Muslims to raise their awareness regarding this issue. You should encourage them to be careful and critical of the Western media. A Muslim should not believe Western sources unless they are confirmed by a trustworthy Muslim one. I say a “trustworthy” Muslim source because the verse was warning us from accepting the news of a disobeying Muslim. Now that is not to say that we should not believe the media in anything it says even in its weather forecasts! No, what we are saying is that you should not believe what they say about Islam and Muslims. A media source that could otherwise be very objective and truthful could become a fabricator when it comes to covering news on Muslims. That is how the disbelievers dealt with Muslims since the dawn of history...and there is no reason for us to believe why that would change.

14. Exposing the hypocrites

The hypocrites represented a great danger to the Muslim community during the time of the Prophet, and they still do. The Messenger of Allah would fight them by exposing their lies. If the battle with the kuffar was primarily a battle of swords, the battle against the hypocrites was primarily a battle of words. Since the hypocrites hide behind the cloak of religion to spread their poisonous ideas, the way to fight them is by revealing the truth and exposing their lies. Your weapon against them is Quran and Sunnah. Some of these hypocrites could be very charismatic. They could appear to be very impressive, but they are fake. Allah says: “And when you see them, their forms please you, and if they speak, you listen to their speech. They are as if they were pieces of wood propped up – they think that every shout is against them. They are the enemy, so beware of them. May Allah destroy them; how are they deluded?” (63:4) The fake scholars and deviant ideologies need to be exposed for what they are.

15. Encouraging others to fight Jihad

Inviting others to do good is an encouraged act of worship since it falls under enjoining good and forbidding evil. In addition to that, encouraging others to participate in Jihad was an act of worship we were specifically asked to do.

Allah says: “O Prophet, urge the believers to battle.” (8:65) and He says: “So fight, [O Muhammad], in the cause of Allah; you are not held responsible except for yourself. And encourage the believers [to join you] that perhaps Allah will restrain the might of those who disbelieve. And Allah is greater in might and stronger in [exemplary] punishment.” (4:84)

16. Protecting the mujahideen and preserving their secrets

We need to guard our tongues. Sometimes you could end up endangering your brothers unwillingly by your words. A Muslim should develop the habit of being able to keep secrets. We have an incident from seerah where a sahabi refused to tell his own wife about a secret mentioned to him by the Messenger of Allah. Sometimes you want to protect the secrets from the closest people to you: your wife, parents, children and brothers, because they might be the most vulnerable. A Muslim should learn to not say more than what needs to be said, to work on a “need to know basis”. A lot of Jihad work is secret and clandestine by nature. Therefore, brothers and sisters should be very careful with their words. A lot of harm was inflicted on Jihad work because of otherwise good and sincere brothers who had loose tongues. The enemies of Allah will try to recruit Muslims to infiltrate Islamic work. They will tell them that we are doing this to protect the Muslims. They may carry along with them scholars who would approve that. Part of your role in protecting the mujahideen is by warning the Muslim community that spying on a Muslim for a non-Muslim is nothing less than kufr.

Allah says: “And whoever is an ally of them among you – then indeed, he is one of them.” (5:51)

17. Praying for the mujahideen

Never underestimate the power of a sincere dua’. The Messenger of Allah (saaws) says: “This ummah is given victory through the weak among them, through their dua’, prayers and sincerity”. Make dua for them in your sujood since that is when you are closest to Allah. An important form of dua that needs to be performed is dua al Qunoot in salah. Encourage Imams to perform it when things get tough on the mujahideen. This is the Sunnah of Rasulullah. Prior to one of the battles, the leader of the Muslim army asked his soldiers to see what Muhammad bin Wasi’ (one of the great worshipers of the early Muslims) was doing. They came back saying that we saw him raising his finger and making dua. The leader of the army said: “That finger making dua to Allah is more beloved to me than a thousand men!”

18. Following the news of Jihad and spreading it

Following the news of Jihad and the mujahideen is important because

- It keeps your attachment to Jihad alive.
- It strengthens your belongingness to the ummah.
- It encourages you to join Jihad when you see the heroic acts of the mujahideen. It kindles your desire for martyrdom when you see the courage of martyrs.

- Those who follow the news of the mujahideen will see how Allah is protecting his servants and guiding them towards victory. They will see how the ummah is heading towards the era of Islam under the leadership of: “al Ta’ifah al Mansoorah” mentioned in the hadiths of Rasulullah (saaws).
- Reading history or Fiqh books on Jihad provides you with the theory. Following the news of the mujahideen provides you with practical examples of how our brothers are applying the theory in today’s world. It provides you with something tangible, something real.
- The news of Jihad is the news of the conflict between good and evil which has existed since the time of Adam and will continue until the end of time. Following the developments of this conflict brings Quran into light. When you read Quran with this awareness you would have a more engaged relationship with the book of Allah than a person who is living in the seclusion of his ivory tower. This engagement with the book of Allah reaches its height when you yourself are engaged in this conflict by joining the ranks of the mujahideen. I need to repeat what I mentioned in point 13 that you should only spread authentic information from authentic sources. Because spreading rumors is an attribute of the hypocrites: Allah says: “And when there comes to them something [information] about public security or fear, they spread it around. But if they had referred it back to the Messenger or to those of authority among them, then the ones who [can] draw correct conclusions from it would have known about it.” (4:83)

19. Spreading the writings of the mujahideen and their scholars

Unfortunately we hear some Muslims claiming that the mujahideen lack scholars who support them and they lack a clear strategy and that what the mujahideen are doing is spontaneous and reactionary. Such claims are the furthest from the truth. There are plenty of scholars and strategic thinkers who are supporters of Jihad today. The problem is that because they are on the true path most of them are killed, jailed or forced to go underground. Nevertheless there is still an abundance of material supporting Jihad work and offering strategies for it. In fact the writings of the scholars of Jihad tend to be the most deeply rooted in sharia because they speak it out as it is, which means they do not need to get involved in ignoring any sharia evidence, twisting sharia texts, and searching for odd opinions as some others may do. The scholars of the mujahideen made it clear that they fear no one but Allah and are willing to displease anyone if that pleases him. They refer to Quran and hadith and quote the scholars of the ummah such as Ibn Hajar, al Nawawi, al Qurtubi, ibn Kathir, ibn Taymiyyah, and the four Imams. They have nothing to hide or conceal. This makes their works the most clear and the most convincing. To counter the fact that no publishers or media outlets are willing to risk sponsoring their works, it falls upon the mujahideen and their sympathizers to do that work. It is therefore our responsibility to spread their knowledge. Some ways in which you could contribute:

- Handing out books and pamphlets to your friends and family.
- Posting material online
- Setting up websites that publish such works
- Guiding others towards such websites.
- Email lists
- Placing such information in masjids

- Distributing such material in gatherings
- Holding private circles in which these writings are studied

20. The issuance of fatwas supporting the mujahideen

There are scholars who are willing to speak out the truth. Such scholars should be encouraged to do so and brothers should support these scholars and let them know that they would stand by them. The fatwas of these scholars should be widely distributed to the masses. There are many young brothers and sisters who agree with the methodology of the mujahideen but they are not willing to fully embrace it until they see scholars approving this methodology. At the end of the day the masses are followers and they would like to see scholars guiding them.

21. Providing the scholars and Imams with information and news about the mujahideen

Just because a person is a scholar doesn't mean he knows everything. In fact there is a tendency for people who are specialists in a particular field to ignore, and thus become ignorant, of other fields. Scholars and Imams need to be provided with good material. In my conversations with many scholars – some of whom are on a world class level – I was amazed at their lack of knowledge regarding the mujahideen. They lack information on where the mujahideen stand on issues, their publications and their news. The enemies of Islam know the influence that Muslim scholars have on the ummah. Therefore, they give scholars special attention. The enemies of Islam would love to see our scholars debating and fighting over trivial issues in order to divert their attention from the real issues that are facing the ummah.

What the brothers and sisters alike can do is to influence the scholars, because by influencing the views of one scholar you could change the views of thousands of Muslims. Provide the scholar with carefully chosen material to read. In the beginning you should give them concise material.

Remember scholars tend to be very busy and have a lot of material on their table to read so you need to follow up with them on whether they read what you gave them or not. Discuss with them issues covered in what they read, and discuss it with them as a student and not as an opponent.

Avoid confronting them with controversial questions because their fear or cautiousness could cause them to give you a watered down opinion which they might not sincerely believe in and then try to stand by it and defend it just because they said it. Suggest to Imams issues to discuss in Friday khutbahs and provide them with information that could be used in the khutbahs.

22. Physical fitness

The Messenger of Allah (saaws) says: “The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer and there is good in both” (Related by Muslim)

Physical fitness is part of the preparation for Jihad. What Jihad needs is not body builders. What Jihad needs is mujahideen who have the ability to walk for long hours, to run for long distances (important for guerrilla warfare), to sprint (important for urban warfare), and to climb mountains. The mujahid needs to be able to perform all of the afore-mentioned while carrying a weight. In

Jihad lands such as Bosnia and Chechnya unfit brothers represented a burden on the mujahideen because they would slow down the whole group. Also the unfit can more easily fall in the hands of the enemy. So endurance exercises should take precedence over exercise for strength and flexibility. Even if a Muslim is not going to fight, physical fitness is still important. For example, a fit person can withstand prison and torture more than a person who is not.

The early Muslims were fit since they led a military lifestyle. The companion Amr bin al Aas who opened Egypt in the time of Umar and was appointed as its governor used to say in Jumu'ah khutbah: "I don't want to see any one of you gaining weight while your horse is losing weight. If I see that I will reduce your salaries accordingly"

So dear brothers, exercising with the right intention is an act of worship. Our sisters are not exempt from this. They also need to be fit and the Muslim community needs to work out halal alternatives for the sisters to exercise.

23. Arms training

Preparing for Jihad is obligatory since Jihad today is obligatory and the sharia rule states that: "Whatever is needed for an obligatory act becomes obligatory"

Arms training is an essential part of preparation for Jihad. Allah says: "And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them whom you don't know but Allah knows" (8:60) The Messenger of Allah (saaws) said regarding this verse: "Power is marksmanship, power is marksmanship" (Related by Muslim)

The issue is so critical that if arms training is not possible in your country then it is worth the time and money to travel to another country to train if you can.

24. First aid training

In many situations the mujahideen have no access to hospitals. In such situations first aid becomes the only available option. In addition to first aid brothers and sisters need to get any medical training that would be relevant to the tough conditions of Jihad. This needs to be determined by brothers and sisters who are in the medical field in coordination with brothers who have an experience in Jihad.

25. Learning the fqh of Jihad

Learning the fqh of Jihad includes the fatwas of scholars regarding the issues that face the mujahideen today such as the ruling of Jihad today, rulings of dar-ul-Harb, the issue of civilians and collateral damage, the issue of the covenant of security with non-Muslim governments, fighting in the absence of an Imam, and the ruling on present governments in the Muslim world. It is equally important to study the virtues of Jihad.

One also needs to study the writings of scholars and thinkers who are charting out the course for today's Jihad.

26. Protecting the mujahideen and supporting them

Allah says:” Indeed, those who have believed and emigrated and fought with their wealth and lives in the cause of Allah, and those who gave shelter and aided – they are allies of one another.” (8:72) And He says: “But those who have believed and emigrated and fought in the cause of Allah and those who gave shelter and aided – It is they who are the believers, truly. For them is forgiveness and noble provision.” (8:74)

When the mujahideen are in danger we need to offer them with protection. It is true that such a protection could be very costly but this is a sacrifice that we are offering for the sake of Allah. The Taliban paid the price for offering a safe haven for the foreign mujahideen: They lost their government. But that is not a defeat but a victory because in the eyes of Allah you have won, no matter what the worldly costs are, if you have held on firmly to your religion, and you have lost, no matter what the worldly gains are, if you have wavered in your religion. We should open our houses for the mujahideen among us and we should offer them with the support they need. Isn't that precisely what awarded the Ansar the high status they have achieved?

27. Developing the Aqeedah of Walaa' and Baraa'

The issue of loyalty towards Allah, His Messenger and the believers and the declaration of our animosity towards the disbelievers and their gods has not had its fair share of attention in Islamic circles. Allah says: “There has already been for you an excellent example in Ibrahim and those with him, when they said to their people, “Indeed, we are disassociated from you and from whatever you worship other than Allah. We have denied you, and there has appeared between us and you animosity and hatred forever until you believe in Allah alone”” (60:5)

Allah described the ones who fight in his path as being “Humble towards the believers, powerful against the disbelievers” (5:54) The mujahid should have a clear understanding of what it means to be loyal to Allah, His Messenger and the believers and declaring animosity towards the disbelievers. Ibn Taymiyyah states that: “You need to love the believer even if he wrongs you or oppresses you, and you need to dislike the disbeliever even if he is kind to you”.

The hatred of kuffar is a central element of our military creed. We need to realize that Allah will not grant us victory as long as we still have some love towards his enemies in our hearts. The spiritual condition of total loyalty towards Allah and total animosity towards his enemies was a necessary precursor to the judgment of Allah between His prophets and their disbelieving nations. Never was victory attained by the Prophets of Allah and their people until their loyalty towards Allah was complete and their disassociation with the kuffar was complete.

28. Fulfilling our responsibilities towards the Muslim POW

Rasulullah (saaws) says” “And free the prisoner” (al Bukhari). Our scholars say that it is a duty on Muslims to free the POWs even if they have to expend all their money. Many mujahideen are forgotten, lingering in prison cells in every continent around the world. Not even the islands of the

sea are spared. We need to raise the awareness of the ummah regarding their issue, keep them in our dua and fight for their release.

29. WWW Jihad

The internet has become a great medium for spreading the call of Jihad and following the news of the mujahideen. Some ways in which the brothers and sisters could be “internet mujahideen” is by contributing in one or more of the following ways:

- Establishing discussion forums that offer a free, uncensored medium for posting information relating to Jihad.
- Establishing email lists to share information with interested brothers and sisters.
- Posting or emailing Jihad literature and news.
- Setting up websites to cover specific areas of Jihad, such as: mujahideen news, Muslim POWs, and Jihad literature.

30. Raising our children on the love of Jihad and the mujahideen

Our children need to be raised up with the love of Jihad and the mujahideen. The stories we narrate to them need to stem from our rich Jihad history. We should have them grow up with Ali bin Abi Talib, Khalid bin al Waleed, Abu Ubaidah, Sad bin Abi Waqqas, Muhammad al Fatih, Muhammad bin al Qasim and Salahudin. Their role models should be the heroes of today’s Jihad. On the other hand, they should learn to despise Pharaoh, Qaroon, and Abu Jahl as well as today’s Pharaohs, Qaroons and Abu Jahls. Our children should not be taught to “stay away from trouble and be a good boy” but to “do the right thing even if it’s going to get you in trouble”. They need to be taught to be proactive rather than passive. Al Zubair bin al Awam – one of the ten given the glad tidings of Paradise – used to take with him to the battlefield his son Abdullah when he was still a child. But since Abdullah was still a child and therefore couldn’t fight, his father would have him carry a small knife and go around the battlefield searching for injured disbelievers in order to finish them off. Abdullah then grew up to become one of the great fighters of this ummah.

Even though the physical Jihad is primarily within the men’s domain, our sister still needs to live the “life of a mujahid” which her husband lives. She needs to be supportive of him if he goes for Jihad, content if he is a shaheed and patient if he is taken as a POW. A mujahid sister would be like the women of al Ansar. They saw that Islam was taking away their fathers, brothers, husbands and sons and they were still welcoming the muhajireen and opening their homes for them, spending their money on them when they knew very well the consequences of these actions.

31. Avoiding the life of luxury

Sheikh Abdullah Azzam used to say: “Luxury is the enemy of Jihad”. Jihad is difficult and demands sacrifice. Therefore, avoiding the life of luxury removes some of the obstacles that may stand between a person and Jihad. You need to be able to sleep on the floor, eat food different than what your mother or wife cooks for you, use cold water for wudu or ghusl, and not mind being unable to

take a shower everyday. A brother who aspires to be a mujahid should be able to control his desires and to disobey his nafs. One should train himself to get used to breaking some habits such as his sleeping and eating habits by praying qiyam ul layl and fasting on Mondays and Thursdays. A true mujahid should be able to give up all attachments to this world for the sake of Allah.

32. Learning skills that would benefit the mujahideen

The field of Jihad is wide and it demands many skills. The brothers and sisters need to learn these skills and then use them to serve Islam. I emphasize on using them to serve “Islam” because we hear a lot about Muslims claiming that the reason why they are studying and pursuing degrees is to serve Allah but in the end they end up serving their pockets and selfish desires.

33. Joining groups that work for Jihad

Collective work is an obligation on Muslims today because the application of the law of Allah – which is an obligation - cannot return without a jama’ah (a group). But there are plenty of groups working for Islam so which one should you join?

Since Jihad is the greatest deed after believing in Allah and is the most needed - yet most neglected - act of worship today, it is necessary for you to join a group that has Jihad as its main objective. Every Islamic group that does not work for Jihad is deficient to say the least. That is because from the time Jihad was prescribed after the hijrah of the Messenger of Allah (saaws), the jama’ah that the sahabah were members of always had Jihad as its primary focus. That was true in the time of Rasulullah (saaws), Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali and Mu’awiyah. Seerah documents nineteen battles in which the Messenger himself joined and 55 which he sent out. All within a span of ten years! The same can be said about the righteous Khulafa’ after him.

34. Spiritual preparation

The defeat of Muslims is not due to the strength of the enemy but is due to the weakness of the Muslims. Allah says: “And whatever strikes you of disaster – it is for what your hands have earned; but He pardons much” (42:30)

Therefore, spiritual preparation is needed for any difficult religious duty. Because the Messenger of Allah (saaws) was going to carry a heavy burden, Allah told him to prepare himself spiritually: “O you who wraps himself [in clothing]. Arise [to pray] the night, except for a little – Half of it – or subtract from it a little. Or add to it, and recite Quran with measured recitation. Indeed, We will cast upon you a heavy word.” (73:1-5)

Since Jihad is one of the heaviest commands of Allah, it needs lots of preparation.

35. Guiding others to the scholars of truth

We need to be aware that we are living in a time when scholars can be “made”. The enemies of

Islam through their control of the media and Muslim governments can promote certain figures who they deem as representing a benign form of Islam and consequently, turn them into celebrities. An appointment of a scholar to the post of grand mufti in a particular Muslim country could turn that person into a world class scholar instantly. Arranging for a scholar to have a program on TV or radio makes that scholar famous. On the other hand the scholars of truth are threatened, jailed, and killed. The media ignores them so not many people know them. So does this make them less knowledgeable than the government scholars? The truth is that the scholars who speak out are the most knowledgeable scholars simply because they recognized the truth and proclaimed it. It is therefore the responsibility of our brothers and sisters to guide others towards them.

36. Preparing for Hijrah

Muslims living amongst non-Muslims have put themselves at the mercy of the kuffar. When the Islamic state was established in Madinah the Messenger of Allah (saaws) declared it illegal to live amongst the disbelievers. Muslims should therefore prepare themselves to leave when the opportunity arises. Preparation for hijrah is not restricted to Muslims living in non-Muslim countries but applies to every Muslim because more often than not Jihad in its self-demands hijrah. That is why the Messenger of Allah (saaws) said: “Hijrah does not stop as long as there is an enemy to fight” (Narrated by Ahmad)

37. Giving naseelah to the mujahideen

The mujahideen make mistakes and have shortcomings and need to be given naseelah. You can deliver the naseelah directly to them, you can send it, and you can post it on the internet; whatever way you choose, make sure that you are doing it for the sake of Allah and not to be critical of your brothers. The naseelah not only includes pointing their shortcomings but also suggesting to them new ideas and warning them of danger.

38. Studying the hadiths of fitan

The hadiths of fitan (plural of ftinah) are the hadiths in which the Messenger of Allah (saaws) spoke about events that would happen to his ummah after him. The word ftinah means “trials”. Studying the hadiths of fitan is important for the following reasons:

- There is an abundance of hadiths in this category which indicates its importance.
- The speeches of the Messenger of Allah (saaws) were concise and short. However it is narrated that once the Messenger of Allah (saaws) spoke to some companions continuously from fajr until Isha with no breaks except for salah. What was the topic? The trials that would befall this ummah from the time of his death until the end of time. If this topic wasn’t important why would Rasulullah (saaws) speak about it for an entire day?
- The sahabah were interested in knowing about fitan and would ask the Messenger of Allah (saaws) about how to protect themselves from them.

There are great benefits for the mujahideen in learning and teaching the hadiths of fitan:

- The most important benefit is to learn how to protect one's self from failing in the trials.
- The Muslim gets a general understanding of where the ummah is heading and how it would achieve victory.
- Jihad plays a major role in the history of this ummah. Learning about the hadiths of ftan puts Jihad in its proper perspective. The greatest two leaders of this ummah in the end of time will be men of Jihad: al Mahdi and Isa the son of Mariam.
- The hadiths of ftan clearly reveal that the ascension of this ummah to victory will not be through elections or peaceful dawah, but through fighting in the path of Allah.
- Studying the hadiths of ftan and seeing the role Jihad plays clears the vision of a Muslim and encourages him to join the ranks of the mujahideen.

39. Exposing Pharaoh and his magicians.

The current governments of the Muslim world are playing the role of Pharaoh with Musa and the court scholars are playing the role of the magicians of Pharaoh in deceiving the masses. The governments and their court scholars are the third side of the triangle of enemies of the ummah alongside the Crusaders and the Zionists.

40. Nasheeds:

Muslims need to be inspired to practice Jihad. In the time of Rasulullah (saaws) he had poets who would use their poetry to inspire the Muslims and demoralize the disbelievers. Today nasheed can play that role. A good nasheed can spread so widely it can reach to an audience that you could not reach through a lecture or a book. Nasheeds are especially inspiring to the youth, who are the foundation of Jihad in every age and time. Nasheeds are an important element in creating a "Jihad culture". Nasheeds are abundant in Arabic but scarce in English. Hence it is important for talented poets and talented singers to take up this responsibility. The nasheeds can cover topics such as: Martyrdom, Jihad is our only solution, support of the mujahideen, support of the present day leaders of Jihad (to connect the youth to them), the situation of the Ummah, the responsibility of the youth, the victory of Islam and defending the religion. The nasheeds should focus on Justice rather than peace and strength rather than weakness. The nasheeds should be strong and uplifting and not apologetic and feminine.

41. Boycotting the economy of the enemy.

When Thumama bin Athaal became Muslim he boycotted Quraish by preventing the caravans carrying wheat to Makkah from passing through his land. Today Muslims should boycott the economies of the enemy by boycotting their products.

42. Learning Arabic

Arabic is the international language of Jihad. Most of the Jihad literature is available only in Arabic and publishers are not willing to take the risk of translating it. The only ones who are spending the money and time translating Jihad literature are the Western intelligence services...and too bad, they would not be willing to share it with you. Arabic also happens to be the predominant language of the foreign mujahideen in every land of Jihad so without it you might end up talking to yourself. It is important for the mujahideen to be able to communicate through a common language and Arabic is the proper candidate.

43. Translating Jihad literature into other languages

As I stated in the previous point most of the Jihad literature is in Arabic. Brothers and sisters who speak a foreign language in addition to Arabic should translate the most important works into their languages.

Every movement of change is preceded first by an intellectual change. It is said that the time of Salahudeen was preceded by an upsurge in writings about Jihad. We are seeing this happen today. This revival of Jihad needs to take place among Muslims of every tongue.

44. Teaching others about the characteristics of al Ta'ifah al Mansoorah.

The Messenger of Allah (saaws) says: A group of my ummah would continue fighting, obeying the command of Allah, defeating their enemies and they would not be harmed by those who are against them until the hour starts (the Day of Judgment)" (Related by al Hakim and he stated that the hadith is authentic)

This is the victorious group which each one of us should strive to join. You can recognize this group by their attributes which are as follows:

- They are a "group": They work collectively and cooperate for the cause of good.
- "Fighting": This is a key feature of this group. This characteristic alone would eliminate many of the groups working for Islam today.
- "They are not harmed by those who disagree with them": This is because they have Allah on their side. I heard an English nasheed and even though the singer was a male but the voice and content was so feminine it gives you nausea. All what he was singing In another narration it says: "they are not harmed by those who betray them" which means that they would be betrayed by a lot of Muslims, yet, that won't harm them.
- "They are victorious": Victory here doesn't necessarily mean against their enemies in this world. It means that they would succeed in preserving the religion and fighting for it until they die and meet Allah. It means they will never give up, compromise, or falter in carrying on the banner of Islam.

Teaching others about al Taifah al Mansoorah would help them find the truth.

Any Muslim who has basic knowledge of Islam, common sense, is willing to give up taqlid (blind following) of groups or Shuyukh, and think objectively would easily recognize which groups represent these attributes today. These characteristics fit them like a glove.

So brothers and sisters, these were some suggestions on how you can support Jihad in this day.

These words don't really mean much unless they are applied. So please apply as much as you can yourself and advise others to do the same.

In the end, we ask Allah to guide us to the straight path and to make us of those who listen to the words and follow the best of them. We ask you O Allah to make us among the mujahideen and to grant us victory over your enemies. Ameen!

(SUMMARIZING):

1. Having the right intention
2. Praying to Allah to award you with martyrdom
3. Jihad with your wealth
4. Fundraising for the mujahideen.
5. Financing a Mujahid.
6. Taking care of the family of a Mujahid.
7. Sponsoring the family of a shaheed.
8. Sponsoring the families of the prisoners of war
9. Paying your zakah to the mujahideen
10. Contributing to the medical needs of the mujahideen
11. Providing Moral support and encouragement for the mujahideen
12. Defending the mujahideen and standing up for them
13. Fighting the lies of the Western Media
14. Exposing the hypocrites
15. Encouraging others to fight Jihad
16. Protecting the mujahideen and preserving their secrets
17. Praying for the mujahideen
18. Following the news of Jihad and spreading it
19. Spreading the writings of the mujahideen and their scholars
20. The issuance of fatwas supporting the mujahideen.
21. Providing the scholars and Imams with information and news about the mujahideen
22. Physical fitness
23. Arms training
24. First aid training.
25. Learning the fiqh of Jihad
26. Protecting the mujahideen and supporting them
27. Developing the Aqeedah of Walaa' and Baraa'
28. Fulfilling our responsibilities towards the Muslim POW
29. WWW Jihad:
The internet has become a great medium for spreading the call of Jihad and following the news of the mujahideen. Some ways in which the brothers and sisters could be "internet mujahideen".
30. Raising our children on the love of Jihad and the mujahideen
31. Avoiding the life of luxury
32. Learning skills that would benefit the mujahideen
33. Joining groups that work for Jihad
34. Spiritual preparation.
35. Guiding others to the scholars of truth
36. Preparing for Hijrah

37. Giving naseehah to the mujahideen.
38. Studying the hadiths of Fitan
39. Exposing Pharaoh and his magicians.
(The current governments of the Muslim world are playing the role of Pharaoh with Musa and the court scholars are playing the role of the magicians of Pharaoh in deceiving the masses)
40. Nasheeds:
41. Boycotting the economy of the enemy.
42. Learning Arabic
43. Translating Jihad literature into other languages
44. Teaching others about the characteristics of al Ta'ifah al Mansoorah.

*

Khawlah there is a good news for you". Khadijah came running to her. This was the first friend Khawlah had in Shaam, her husband was a Mujahid. Khawlah had learnt the basic lifesaving and first aid skills from her and was now working in a hospital, which was less of a hospital and more of ruins now, after bombing. she was doing emergency management there. Fighter planes hovered over their heads all the time, they were now accustomed to the idea of dying any moment.

"What's the news?", Khawlah sent off the kids whom she was teaching. Those were the kids of Martyrs and prisoners, whom she was helping with an NGO, working to raise these kids.

"You have been sent a marriage proposal from a Mujahid", With a gleaming smile Umm Khadijah was referring to her friend.

Khawlah's body shivered.

"Oh Allah!" Khawlah uttered impromptu. She couldn't muster courage to inquire who was he. But her friend had already read her question from her face.

"He's a friend of my husband, his name is Hamza! He's very nice, you will live happily with him. In sha Allah. Trust me!!!!!! Umm Khadijah was ready to even get her friend's nikkah done, there and then, in excitement.

Khawlah had no energy to answer. Her grandpa and Usman had also joined the Mujahideen now. But she hadn't wished to aspire for such a dream again when it was so easy for her now, since her relatives were now in direct link with the Mujahideen. But after this one time set back, she had no energy to again build up hopes and dreams.

Khawlah kept staring at the floor with tears in her eyes. it was difficult to make out whether they were tears of happiness or gratitude.

"What happened? Won't you say anything?", Umme Khadijah sat next to Khawlah, while gripping her hand with cordial assurance.

Khawlah mustered up courage to raise her head, with eyes heavily flooded with tears. "But the same had happened earlier as well. If it happens again what will I do." Her voice shrouded by her pain, while she lowered her gaze again.

"Oh dear sister! It won't. We should always expect the best from Allah. And it's just not the matter with you only. There are so many sisters here, whose husbands got martyred. They got married 4 times a year. Death rate is so high here. Recall the Sahabiyat, who got widowed more than one time, and remarried too.

Look at the women, men and children of this land. They have suffered so much, yet they are so strong. These are your first steps; you have lost faith so early?

See you don't have to only let go for the sake of Allah, you must agree to take for the sake of Allah as well. Have you started considering only leaving, as the love of Lord? If He takes away something, He is the only One who bestows back as well.

He doesn't just take away things from you!" Umme Khadijah was politely patting her shoulder.

Khawlah quietly kept looking at the ground. She was speaking the truth. This time she should rest everything with Allah's will, instead of taking charge of herself. She should just offer istikharah prayer and leave it on Allah. Wherever He wills, she should bow before Him. She possessed no desire or dreams of her own now, there was only love of Allah and His Prophet s.a.w in her heart. And the heart in real is also, originally for this very purpose. The world should be in your hand, and not in your heart. Hence, if you will lose the world, you won't be much pained and your aim of life won't end with it. But if you let the world rule your heart, then you will drift away, in the steps of the world.

* * * * *

It was Dusty everywhere, but Hamza, despite the dust, kept running towards his target, without hesitation. No matter what, he was not going to let the mission fall in peril today. Fellow Mujahideen were also dispersed. They were all lions of Allah, tough for the enemy, four times stronger than them, fearless to an extent, if allowed could leap into the valleys of death, without hesitating for once.

They had to set free the seized land of Muslims from the enemies today. The eminent results of this fight were expected today. The supporters of Mujahideen were updating on the progress of the mission on internet, every single moment. Whereas CNN and BBC were busy, demotivating the nation, through their false reporting.

Whereas so-called Muslim countries were broadcasting cricket matches, new Bollywood movies, out looks of celebrities, new music albums of singers and debates on useless strategies of different democracies in the world. The aspirers of food, clothing and residence, were only aspiring this much. They cared the least about the rest of the Muslim nation.

Hamza was leading, with his 3, 4 companions. He was ready to face every challenge in the desire of martyrdom.

The slogan of "Allahu Akbar", filled the air, and the next moment heavy firing was launched on the enemy's troops.

The fight went on for another 3 hours, till the enemies dropped their arms and retreated. The area had been freed back, which was now echoing with "Allahu Akbar" slogans. Mujahideen were

happily prostrating before Allah, to thank Him.
Who were they! At least they didn't seem to belong to this materialistic world.

Hamza was now checking the martyrs, with his few companions. They were picking up all the corpses.

Though in defeating the enemies, several disbelievers died, but some Mujahid brothers also embraced Martyrdom. Though they were less.

They were picking up the corpses, and crying while recalling good memories with the martyred fellows. They were successful, they had attained Jannah, but had left everyone with plenty of beautiful memories. Recalling which would keep the eyes wet forever.

There was a fragrance that had spread around the corpses of the martyrs, which was astounding every human's senses in the vicinity, further deepening the desire of martyrdom.

Hamza recalled the hadith he had read long before:

Narrated Masruq:

from 'Abdullah that he was asked about Allah's saying: Think not of those as dead who are killed in the way of Allah. Nay they are alive, with their Lord (3:169). So he said: "As for us, we asked about that, and we were informed that their souls are in green birds wandering in Paradise wherever they wish, returning to lamps hanging from the Throne. Your Lord looks at them and says: 'Do you want anything more that We may grant you more?' They say: 'Our Lord! What more could we have when we are in Paradise wandering wherever we want' Then He looks at them a second time and says: 'Do you want anything more that We may grant you more?' When they realize that they will not be left alone with that, they say: 'Return our souls to our bodies, so that we may return to the world to be killed in Your cause another time.

[Jami` at-Tirmidhi]

* * * * *

Khawlah was trying to post some content from a book on Facebook. Today, the internet signals were weak. After much toil and prayers, she could completely post her content. She had been praying on the connectivity issue, because a lot of times, the signals got interrupted, leading all publishing efforts to vain.

"Oh! Alhamdulillah," Khawlah sighed in relief.
Now she reviewed her post.

● Submerge their self-consciousness in this caustic education:

Not much attention has been paid to, the ever-increasing O-levels and A-levels education systems. This educational system is silently, plaguing our young generation's minds. This youth, who must lead the nation at every level or may ne now as the situation is, may reach the government, following the footsteps of ex-presidents and government officials and thus reaching high authority posts through the help of western countries.

The havoc Cambridge and British education is creating is shocking. They are inculcating their ideology through different means into the younger minds.

English medium schools teach oxford books in the beginning and create ripples in the traditions, norms and standards of the Muslim Ummah. Later, to top it all, they scrunch their history, and identity and with best intellect nurture robots for the west, who are oblivious of their identity, rebel of their traditions and the most obedient of the western world and thoughts. Allama Iqbal rightly dreaded this situation which we are facing today.

*It is only, the Light of Europe that you have eventually reflected,

For constructing their edifices, you were long ago selected*

*Soiled is the soul and so is the body covered in filth

Sigh! That there exists neither the dweller, nor the filth *

The pain and agony with which this lamentation in the form of poems and stanzas, got scribbled through his pen, can be felt today by every living soul of the Ummah, only if the case isn't otherwise...

*Not even divulged truths, are often visible,

For those whose eyes see this psychological slavery, suitable*

Grief-stricken by the psychological slavery and set back of youngsters in the hands of Western education, Allama Iqbal rightly said:

*Current Muslim youngster, with regards to national values is totally in favor of new ideology. Where his imagined lifestyles aren't as per the Islamic injunctions. In my opinion, he is half Muslim, rather worse than that even. His mind is housed with western ideology. I can say with surety, that he has been made to drift far away from the Islamic institution, owing to disconnection and exasperation from Islamic traditions and continual endorsement into and enjoyment with the western literature. Psychologically he is a slave to the western world. Hence his soul can't appreciate the happiness and joy, one finds in his own history and literature. *

(Maqalaat e Iqbal)

In detail, it is that today, there has grown a network of English medium schools, which provide basis for O and A levels. And parents feel content and happy paying hefty amounts to them, to ensure that their children can fluently speak and understand English. In fact, we have started considering education and spoken English as synonyms. In fact, (sarcastically speaking), half of the growth of the country results by only speaking English. But what is being taught behind this all,

1. Either parents have no ability to know it. It is just like the belief of the unseen, that you hand over your child to the school. They can plan his upbringing as per their wishes. Parents humbly bow before their kids, owing to their educational superiority.

2. Or they don't have time and desire to weigh the merits and demerits. To help the father, mothers of children are also working to pay the fee. So how shall she scrutinize the syllabus being taught, alongside the responsibilities of Job, kids and home. Children have been handed over to schools and academies, and they can mold the kids the way they wish. These kids should get higher education and well paid jobs, that's only what is desired for them. And as for, the unique identity as a Muslim and personal grooming, these are the luxuries, for which parents don't have much time. The "rooh" has died, now there is no soul, but only empty cadavers, ogling at the Rupees, Dollars and Riyaals of the world.

Present days' issues

This has happened to the last generation also. Parents had grown following the education system of Lord Macaulay themselves. Hence, they weren't much aware of their own identity either. To exemplify what is being taught in schools, I have 2 cases to narrate:

History is being taught in an "O" levels class. A question is put up, who was Mahmood Ghaznavid? Was he a conqueror or a burglar? out of 25 students of the class, 2 kids are sure he was our hero and victor. While rest, with consensus are speaking aloud, that he was a burglar. What is the basis of this knowledge they have? The book being taught? Which selectively and timorously, sows the seed of this ideology! Or is It is brought up through internet and other references! Children go home and ask their parents, who if had learnt, only one stanza of Iqbal's poems, could have sown the real seed of knowledge.

Why the idols are broken instead of being sold?

But parents tell them to go ask someone else. They themselves haven't read history. The elder brothers and sisters never read it either. In addition, it is said, whatever your teacher says that's correct.

What does the teacher must say? Hear that too.

One of the teachers says, you see he was a victor, but don't write it in exam, or your numbers will be deducted. Hence, it is better to keep this in one corner of your mind that he was a victor and an iconoclast. But don't write it in exam, or numbers will be deducted. You'll have bad grades, (if the whole school gets bad grades, it will defame the school and the business of the school will be troubled) hence, destroy your thoughts. Be a hypocrite. Destroy the attitude of factual learning. (Does writing against the truth, signify education?)

From this you can comprehend the western education, which is so overrated these days, is in actual so empty, hypocritical and ruthless. In addition, the teacher highlights, that British education system, is more interested always from the time of fall of Mughal Empire, hence if you will learn and write the exact causes of the fall, you will get good grades. This is the policy of that teacher, who agrees that Ghaznavid was iconoclast and not burglar. But for God sake, iconoclast being mentioned in this era.?

Rest are the teachers, who believe in shutdown of schools, and hence their history is the name of that gloominess and black ink that they are rubbing over our faces.

After Mahmood Ghaznavid, Akbar Aurangzeb is also being taught. Akbar was a superb King. (This is what is being taught). He was the torch bearer of the teachings if religion, was open minded and believed in equality etc etc. Hence, hos to Akbar, he made us proud. As for Aurangzeb, he was rightist (if this rightist belonged to neocons in America, it had been awesome, but sighs, sarcasm). He was a radical terrorist Ruler, after slowly putting flaws in his character, they are describing him as an orthodox ruler. He used to earn his living, by selling caps and sewing Qur'an covers.

In contrary, it is being instilled that, if people didn't like buying this work, they were forced to buy

it. Hence, qualifying to be called a brutal king.
This was the history. Just a little thing to reflect upon.

Urdu paragraphs are being given to be translated into English. This paragraph is also a bowl of poison in its true sense. It is so selectively done, refraining any individual grooming of the slaved nation. While daily the role models, broadcasted on the Televisions, in newspapers are in preference to the same. Hence, a whole program presenting tribute to a lady singer who is working for freedom, is being telecasted. One episode is as following:

"In addition she amuses people through her talents, on radios, in cities and in congregations. People love her voice. When she holds the mike, and sings on the stage, her fans, dance with her in joy. And young lads impromptu manage dancing". In actual, this is English, which is being taught, but of course, it will be taught in English way with all the essence of foreigner culture, and we are helpless before this.

Another example:

For 2 hours, focus on the given topic, without influencing your thoughts with religious opinions. Did you see, how poison is being gulped sip by sip by our generation.

They are giving us the taste of a life without Lord, religion and Islam. This Non-religious heroine, slowly shows its effects. To an extent where, we have a teacher, intellectual of local style yet western mind.

How can one bear the fruits of dignity, by sowing the seeds of mistrust? Thus, if you ask any one of this generation, what was the ideology of Pakistan, He would be blank to it. Owing to friendships with Hindus, we have made many changes in our syllabus already. Now the soldier, honored with Nishan e Haider has become some gallows for us. Had they been alive like Dr. Abdul Qadeer, long they would have been confided to their last destination.

Hence, now the situation is that, they are mentioned in the books but the name of the enemies, because of whom there were troubles are not mentioned. This is in fact not only just the deletion of ideology of Pakistan from the chapters of history, oblivion of our identity but also a way of expelling religion.

Fitnah of Dajjal is very near, and the only resort to it was, Allah, His book and firm belief, but instead of combating those forces of Dajjal, are in process of making instead. Who are slaves of the big democracies. Who are broad minded, impartial and to whom if you personify as a loyal dog in the posts, they would happily wage their tails to it. If you tide away their Qur'an in streams, they wouldn't be affected. They had long disconnected both physically and mentally, from the Holy book. they have been emotionally blinded by their syllabus. If they will become insensitive to any insult of Quran, only then can they attack on Mecca and Medina (Jews, Dajjal plan).

Along with all this, different incidents, statements and advises have been long testing the determination of Muslims around the world. They are counting waves after creating ripples from the stones thrown in the pond. The impure Dajjal's plans of marring Masjid Al Aqsa, are being executed every now and then.

Qur'an had said," ...do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him]."

(Surat Aal-E-Imran, Ayah 102)

This Ayat has been included in the Sermon of Nikkah, the best asset is your belief which should be guarded. But we have forgotten that advise. And have indulged our youth in a parallel concept of taking care of worldly things. Like taking care of pencil & rubber in the school, they ought not be lost, guarding money, preventing them not to be looted, taking care of clothes for they shouldn't be stained, taking care of the valuable mobiles, hence we inculcated everything but guarding one's belief. We left them to be robbed off their belief on Allah.

But we are oblivious of this worry. Man has completely disconnected from the good deeds; Fitnah is being showered like rain from the skies. May be we are not endangered by the sun rays passing through the ozone, but by the evil endangering our beliefs. and we are not aware of it either.

*When the days were changed by the Guardian of the skies,
Education is Honor, echoed like cries

But the beliefs got shattered and traumatized instead
Attained the world, but the religious bird was found dead.*

Imagine, how this honored education is not limited to any one division of the society, but has rooted deeper. America is aiding it fully, which is more like AIDS for the nation. In this disease, the immunity is nulled to an extent that patient suffers from every disease. Similar is the effect of the provided aid. Hence all the lethal diseases of soul and belief, over power the body, extracting every bit of the belief in Allah we have, leading us not even capable of blowing away the flies of sins. Thus, America has labelled our national identity, as of a dog.

*we have been worse than a dog in our very condition

as no one ever saw a dog bowing before another for redemption*

* * * * *

● free mixing of men and women ●

The free intermingling of men and women have led women to display their beauty, leading to sexual attraction. Which has emerged to be stronger now, which already had existed naturally. It increases manifold owing to this intermingling. Since it is a human nature that we glamourize ourselves for the opposite gender, to be more appealing to the eye and gradually the glamorization ends up breaking every possible limit of purity leading to vulgarity. The same has now developed in the west. Women wish to attract the opposite gender, wearing tight clothes, using lipsticks and every kind of make-up. She unclothes herself. While men are all the time more fascinated, demanding more beauty and glamour to satisfy their inner lust. It has taken them to a degree where they seem to be sun stroked where every sip of water intensifies the thirst. They keep searching ways to satisfy their sensual lust. They read sensual literature, watch romantic dramas, Arabic Dances, and romantic movies. What are these? merely not the matters of cooling the fire, but all being the fuels of agonizing it further. Every society is so attached to it, naming it "Art" which in actual is just a way to satisfy their lust. The western world is so quickly being plagued by this outbreak.

No nation has survived this plague ever. They literally eat away the physical and mental capabilities. Obviously, people are entrapped in vice and sin, whose feelings are enticed by the

indecent pictures, vulgar literature, instigating songs, seductive Dances, romantic movies and countless opportunities of mingle with the opposite gender. Then where are those from whom they can bring that peace, prosperity and calmness, which are necessary for the growth of a nation. In such conditions the young minds can't have the nurturing they might had in more close to nature system. As soon they become adults, they are surrounded by the powers of the lust devil.

*

"ALHUMDULILAH, this got posted correctly, let me talk to mama now," Khawlah called her mom from the internet cafe. She had only half an hour left, then the male time in the Cafe would begin. Right now, it was ladies time.

Looking past these bars, I see meadows of love and
happiness , the horizon of hope for future.
Being caged here; hurt and injured, I look at those stray
clouds with hope to be free under them some day.
This prison - my house - has been my dwelling since
long; but for how long will it remain as such? Few more
months or years, or forever???

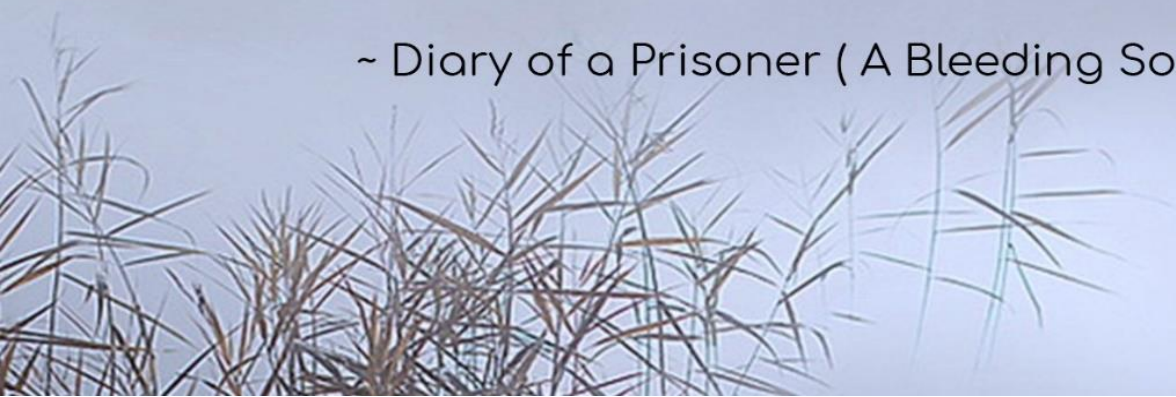
This is the question I ask myself every minute.

What had I done to be here? What was my crime that
caused my lovely ones to cage me here??
Had I killed them or had I placed some dagger over
their necks?? What had I done so wrong that compelled
them to imprison me here - behind these walls ; they
call it a house, but is it really a house?
- a cage it is for me; where I can't even breathe without
their permission..

Was standing up for Tawhid 'this' great a crime??

A caged bird I have become - injured, hurt, tired & torn.
With bleeding eyes & bleeding soul, lonely steps & tired
eyes, I wait for the rays of Rahmah of my Rabb - the rays
of Hope, the rays of Life. Patiently I wait for freedom -
for victory is near & clear. That is what my heart always
whispers; that my sea will also get parted like that of
Prophet Musa (A.S). Till then I too will say (to myself):
"..No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me."
(26:62)

~ Diary of a Prisoner (A Bleeding Soul)



So, what is democracy?

The democrats define it as, a system of government run by the people and for the people. Candidates as nation's representatives, are elected through fair elections over a period and keep rotating. And democracy is a system established based on the majority's opinions and views.

Yes, a system where the power lies with the people of the region instead of Allah (God forbid). And government is chosen by the people, with no discrimination among anyone (be it a literate or illiterate, Faasiq or a devotee of Shareah). With no interference of revelations. Everything shall be dealt in accordance with the human mind. Then, whether, it is positive in the mind while negative as per religion, or negative in the mind and positive as per religion. It doesn't matter, since we ought to follow what the kind says. So, we are making Qur'an and Sunnah a part of this system not because, they are the sayings of Allah and His Prophet (S. A. W) but because if human mind accepts it, it shall be included otherwise not.

So, **Chapter Twelve:**

Khawlah was contacted by her parents, after she had arrived in the land of Shaam. They had now gone very lenient for her. They had started understanding what Khawlah had meant all these years. Sometimes after losing your well-wishers, you realize that they were not fretting over nothing. The same was true for Khawlah's parents. So now when they chatted on phone, they cried. They vented out their emotions fully. Ibrahim also talked. He first complained about not have been chosen to be taken along. He wished becoming a Mujahid too. But then Saad helped him calm down, by assuring him that soon they will be in the battlefield together.

It is worth pondering, had they have consented earlier like they have now, Khawlah wouldn't have been here. Neither could she have become a stronger person. There is always betterment in what Allah plans. But we are often blind to it. Sometimes, the "vice" we envision is "virtue" and sometimes the "virtue" we envisage is a "vice". But you achieve that Virtue only when, you are patient and calm, and remain steadfast on the right path with piety. And instead of raising hell, you stay calm and seek help through patience and Prayer, as guided in Qur'an. But it's (Qur'an's) translation should be read with an intention to seek guidance, and not merely for increasing your knowledge. And, thus implementing it practically too.

But don't consider patience as only waiting. Don't make this mistake. Patience is to wait, but what sort of waiting??

Waiting in obedience to Allah.

Not that you become a rebel while waiting.

Otherwise, if you are just waiting (without acting in obedience) for your prayers to be heard, then you might just keep waiting for your life time.

Someone wisely said:

Patience is not about how long you can wait, but how well you behave while you are waiting

Hence, patience isn't the name of the time you might keep waiting for. But, Patience is that, how well your actions, reactions and behavior have been all that time.

In fact, this sort of patience is very difficult, hence that is why the fruit is sweeter than the delay.

But it's not that Allah is oblivious of your pain and suffering. He is the one who is Best appreciative.

"..Indeed, He is Forgiving and Appreciative."
(Surat Fatir, verse 30)

* * * * *

Though Khawlah's family had melted for her, but her sister in law was still angry. May be with some people you can never be at terms, no matter what you do. It is better to keep your limits set for such people. If you proceed ahead, you might just land up into a conflict only, which won't be beneficial for your hereafter.

Another news that struck Khawlah was that, the Moadhin she was once aspiring to be married to (because of his Adhan), sent a proposal at her place. But due to her absence they turned him down with some excuses.

For a long time, Khawlah kept thinking, that once for whom she really was aspiring, seemed out of reach and had hurdles. And now when it's impossible to happen, the long awaited and farfetched thing just occurred to her.

what did that mean?

After days of thinking and pondering, she could make out now. Allah has better plans which are beautiful and we are so foolish always, we don't understand on time.

The message was clear!!

Allah had shown her, that it was very easy for Him. Not that He was ignorant what her heart bore. He knew everything. But still He kept her from it. Why?

Since, it wasn't good for her.

He knew her heart's distress, and could have brought her desires in her feet, but they were no good for her!!!

How beautiful is that Lord. Who keeps sending love notes, like a revelation, like He directly communicates. Silent talk though, but full of conversation.
Requiring a heart which could appreciate and hear it.

*

Khawlah's family had started loving her again, but this time she wouldn't be in the air because of it. She knew the same very relations once took her to glory and themselves brought her to shackles. And are very much capable, still to do the same.

So, now she didn't get flattered. She would stay on the real ground. She just wished to be raised in Allah's View. Whatever people think, good or bad, mattered no more to her. Only you yourself know how much of a pious you are, so what does it matter whether others take you as a saint or a sinner.

* * * * *

"Long live Democracy", was being enchanted, on the news Channel by a procession. Khawlah's father was sitting in the sofa, reviewing the headlines, when suddenly he recalled an old chat with Khawlah. She had narrated something from the page of a book on democracy. He had scolded her so much then. But today he could see truth in what she had said. But how very strange, he could recall that page of the book so clearly even today. When Allah wills to enlighten hearts, even such things get engraved.

*Democracy being Islamic or non-Islamic is a very old concept. One group calls democracy, kufr (disbelief) based on the Islamic Laws, while the other group makes certain amendments in it to make it closer or somewhat Islamic. While, still, to others, Islam has given the world democracy and the West has learnt it from Muslims. Literate people are present on both sides.

And it is a fact, that humans prefer to follow the footsteps of elders in the country rather believing merely on facts. Whenever one is invited for some decision, he always looks up to his elders, to accept or negate it first, for him. The objection usually made before the plaintiff is, that if your facts are that strong, why didn't our elders accept it?

But shall we discard the truth and facts, since they were not supported by the renowned people of the society? And is it a standard set in Islamic jurisprudence, that if there comes a point where elders and younger generation tend to differ on any matter, the opinions of elders should be considered reliable owing to their experience in society?

Our Prophet (S. A. W) was subjected to the same objections as quoted from Qur'an:

And they said, "Why was this Qur'an not sent down upon a great man from [one of] the two cities (Makkah and Ta'ef)?"

(Surat Az-Zukhruf, Ayah 31)

And Allah retorted with a very good reply to them:

"Do they distribute the mercy of your Lord?.."

(Surat Az-Zukhruf, Ayah 32)

Are these people now going to decide that, who shall or not be bestowed with Allah's blessings? Will they be now deciding to make someone Supreme or is it Allah's power to make one? To them superiority comes from the glamour and riches of this world, which is so different for Allah. See the history of Prophet's preaching era. The nation that caused maximum impedance to their work was the older generation. This older lot used to often call the ones believing in the Prophets, as timid and insignificant lot, while at other times they would call them irrational and unwise. If we see the Sunnah of Prophet (S. A. W) we discover that he emphasized upon the Shariah e Muhammad, as the standard of distinction in vice and virtue, and not merely, being older, age wise or being superior wealth wise.

Hence, for us, Sahabah are the real standards of Haq (Truth). Allah had bestowed many younger Shahabah with knowledge, as compared to the older lot, who would consult them in their matters. So, in case of democracy we ought to see the same, that whose opinions and views are more consistent with the Islamic Shariah. But we need to keep respect as primary objective, since there are sincere literate people on both ends who can err. Making any mistake a basis for abusing them is unfair. It should be humbly and respectfully highlighted, that they made this made here. Since, no

literate and sincere person would ever wish to stay on the wrong path. So, in this regard we should keep fearing Allah, and keep praying that he heads us on the right path.

it seems, in this system human mind has superiority over Qur'an and Sunnah. (God forbid)

Since few people tend to say that like in Shariah you get to choose a Caliph for yourself, it is likewise in democracy too. Few say that we will implement Islam with the aid of this democracy, since we have no other option at hand at present. And provide excuses for it. This absurd idea exists in books only, and has never been implemented in the world so far.

Living democracy with Islamic rules is like, converting pubs and idolatries, as per Islamic ways - as if trying to say Islamic pubs, Islamic bars. In Islam, Shariah is like Constitution in Democracy. Like it is said this act is as per Shariah or not. Likewise, it is said in democracy that this act is as per constitution or not. Similarly, if a rebel is punished in a non-Muslim country based on the constitutional rules, he is punished in Muslim country too, where there is democracy.

Henceforth, these systems are entirely different from one another. And have differences at every step from one another. So, if any Islamic law is given place in democracy, it doesn't mean it is in accordance with the orders of Allah and His Prophet (S. A. W). In fact, it was given place by the permission and interference of human mind. (God forbid).

And the value of vote also differs. In Islam, opinions are sought, which can be rejected or accepted, but in democracy, majority's opinions can't be negated. In Islam, you are encouraged to seek advice from people who have been blessed with knowledge. While in democracy everyone has the right to vote. Like there is no difference between a literate, wise, pious, truthful and virtuous person and, illiterate, immodest, faasiq, dishonest, rapist, disbeliever, apostate. Both are equal and their opinions are equally valued.

Those who got Muslims trapped in this satanic democratic system were not usual people, but they had Satanism rushing through their veins like blood. So, they studied Islamic beliefs, and nature of Muslims completely. And then they devised a system which was in coherence with Islamic values apparently not truly, and they succeeded in doing it. So, no one could be kept off the vices of this system, be it the nation or be it the worthy scholars. So where ever there was coherence between the 2 systems, they were accepted and implemented, and where Islamic laws differed from democracy, the strategy was completely changed and such terms were implemented which apparently don't object Islamic injunctions but in real they were incoherent. For the same very reasons, people from institutions of Islamic world, consent to such notions, protecting them by saying that if we do not do the contrary it will be against the constitution. Like we have no other option so we are going by the Laws incoherent to Islam. Which is certainly intolerable. And for this, they can go to any extent. Hence, think and rethink. How the followers of Satan have taken charge of our minds? and we are unaware. And that to whom do we support? Allah and His followers, or Satan and his. Think!!

And the cherry on the topping, media, is spell bound, like the magicians of Pharaoh. It had the biggest role in promoting democracy in Muslim countries. As media was capable of presenting virtue as vice and vice versa. *

Mr. Salman, Khawlah's father, grabbed hold of the remote and switched the channel. His eyes had tears. He must have missed his daughter badly.

The same moment Mrs Anum entered the room. She had two hot cups of tea in her hands.

In a while the phone on the table beeped. There was some message on the WhatsApp. Mr. Salman picked up the phone, and smiled as he read the message.

"Oh Khawlah!", He exclaimed, while grabbing the cup of tea, Anum had placed on the table a while ago. She also sat next to him.

"What happened... Did you hear anything from Khawlah?" with glittery eyes Khawlah's mom inquired him.

"Your daughter isn't resting even over there... such different ways of preaching she is choosing!!" Salman smiled while handing over the cell phone to Anum.

Khawlah's mom smiled when she read the message.

There was a cartoon, in which a snake was clinging to a branch of tree, leaning into the river, smiling with fish in his mouth.

Captioned with a small message to unveil the uncanny motives of media:

●Todays Media ●

Listen!!!! listen!!!

Breaking news!!!!

An innocent fish (Muslims) saved from drowning, by a brave soldier snake (America). Even our camera men cried visualizing such an act of bravery and valor. It is requested from the viewers to applaud such a hero.

On-the-spot reporter, "your brain washer".

* * * * *

Khawlah felt peace at heart after istikharah prayer. Still she was hesitant to agree to the proposal. Finally, she picked up Qur'an one day in distress, and found some admonishing from Allah, in ayah to the ones being ungrateful to blessings. After which she asked for forgiveness from Allah, took consent of grandfather and brother, and told Umm e Khadijah her desire.

She had always prayed to Allah for a decent, modest Nikkah, and finally it was coming true. It was her Nikkah the next day, and she was sitting with Umm e Khadijah now, who was guiding and advising her, with examples from her life.

"See Khawlah!! You are going to become wife of a Mujahid now, I will explain you from the examples of things associated with a Mujahid's life.

Khawlah, man is like a wild horse. if he is angered he would raise hell in the house.

If you wish peace at home, never try to rule him. Since he was not made to be ruled over.

Yes, you can do this, that you stay with him all the time like a shadow. Look after his needs. Never be oblivious of serving him. Don't separate him from his parents. Instead try keeping them together. They are his Jannah. Don't ever separate him from that Jannah leading him to hell. And Above all respect him.

Then see how he would walk like a straight horse on your instructions.

If you won't follow this path, you wouldn't develop place in his heart for yourself. "

" Yes, I have tethered your advice with my veil, clearly understood, " Khawlah acting naive to the advice of her friend.

They burst into unanimous laughter the next moment.

The roaring planes, had again started echoing in the skies outside. God knows, when they would leave them. But Khawlah, started reciting prayers, ignoring them, truly awaiting martyrdom fearlessly. She was planning the next day in her mind. She was truly becoming the wife of a Mujahid. What a blessing she had that day. She had been praising Allaah for so many days, for such a triumphant victory, just like the Prophet (S. A.W) was instructed by Allah to praise Him after the conquest of Mecca:

"When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest, And you see the people entering into the religion of Allah in multitudes, Then exalt [Him] with praise of your Lord and ask forgiveness of Him. Indeed, He is ever Accepting of repentance." - (Surat An-Nasr)

That means, whenever we are victorious we should praise the Lord similarly, that we were nothing, yet Allah bestowed us.

"Then, to Allah belongs [all] praise - Lord of the heavens and Lord of the earth, Lord of the worlds." - (Surat Al-Jathiya, Ayah 36)

So, one should praise in gratitude, instead of becoming arrogant like Qaroon, who kept praising himself. That it all happened because of his intellect etc. etc.

* * * * *

Khawlah was waiting for her husband in her room. After all she was honored being a wife of a Mujahid now. She was aware, of the mountains of problems escorting this honor. But she was a brave girl of the nation of her brave Prophet (S. A. W), why would she hesitate. She had chosen this path after much consideration. In fact, here it was like as if,

*Getting ...wounded for Your sake, is an honor for me

My lord, this life you gave, is a blessing, I now see*

Nikkah had been very simple. No unwise functions were approved like back in Pakistan. No barat

scene. No dowry. No mehndi's or dholki's like Hindus. No combined gatherings.

Nothing to displease Allah. (Why is it that, people forget their Lord in moments of happiness? May be Allah forgets them too later, hence, there happens to be no Barakah in marriages anymore. They would end up into a divorce or separation, where one or both members tend to be vexed by the other. To an extent now, they seem to be more as siblings merely living together and not as spouses living with intimacy in one home.)

The motive of marriage has been disregarded. The relation of love and admiration has turned into hatred and disgust. Thus, Girlfriend, boyfriend and romantic stories seemed to attract more. And the real romance, Nikkah, as per religion, started to seem as a noose of the snare, like a prison, or a heavy burden.

What did we do to the religion of Allah? We had already ruined it. And now we made a halal relationship, as marriage so difficult, unachievable and expensive. Like if you won't complete studies, we won't get you married. If you attain PHD and so and so degree, only then we will marry you. In fact, not even then. Instead, we will get you married, when you will achieve that big post in that big company.

In addition, they are pushed into combined system. Co-education!! With the decency and modesty thrown in the bins at homes and in families. Well-decorated mixed gatherings. Alongside, vulgar and inappropriate TV shows have given rise to more lustful thoughts. Thus, girls and boys fall prey to fornication and adultery. To an extent, where even the pious persons, have started falling prey to it. What might be the reason??

Nikkah, which is a halal way, has been made as difficult as climbing mount K2, or Himalaya. Or else if you die a hundred times, and still survive, you will then be honored with this sometime later in life.

(Till then watch films on TV, and make friends on mobiles.)

Thus, the haram path seems very easy and close. Satan has always been all ready to coax you to the wrong path. Hence, fornication became common. All homes started facing it. But parents are oblivious.

Yeah, our son went to university, he is very naive.

Daughter? Oh, we are educating her, she is university topper.

Have you been to their University? Have you tried to dig in what happens in free time. How many couples are casually roaming? Oh, right, so you sent them to this sort of University??

Very nice.

Now their naivety would flourish. Since, your girl or boy are angels. They were never bestowed with any humanly quality. They are weak sensually, why would they care of the opposite gender sitting next to them. Or else, a donkey, a wall, bricks or plants, why would they bother about anything at all. they will come as a robot, stir and drink all knowledge from books and head home. (Irony)

Then one day this calamity will strike you, and you will remember, you had to get them married. So, you will ask that to whom they wish to marry. Any uncle's kids they would prefer. And they would reply none. (Instead, do it to anyone, what would matter), and you be happy that how very obedient your children are. Wow! How very wise you are! (sarcasm)

What will you acquire, if you let your children marry their like if there's no valid reason to your objection?

Is it them who will spend life, or you? All your life you kept consenting to all small or big desires. And now when it's the biggest desire of their lives, you tried to wilt the budding flowers of their desires, by your commands on them??

What sort of parental love is that??

It is merely cruelty and brutality!!

And if some poor guy expresses his heart's desire, then you tag him *disobedient, rebel, unruly*!!!

They call themselves wise?? They call themselves elders?? God knows, if Prophet (S. A. W) and his companions had been among them, what issues they might have faced.

*

Before Khawlah's Nikkah, her friends organized a small gathering at home, and made things cheerful by singing songs (not lewd). So, they made the most of their time, which was permitted by religion as well.

Today Khawlah was immensely happy. But still then, there was no greater love for anything in her heart, other than the love of Allah and His Prophet (S. A. W). She had realized that, the void in the human heart can never be filled with worldly pleasures. It can only be filled with the love of the Lord. If you try fill that space with some other love, the void will keep expanding.

Yes, do love the halal way. But don't make that love your weakness, or the motive of your life, neither breath nor oxygen.

Because, that should be the love of Allah and His Prophet (S. A. W) only.

After realizing this, Khawlah had attained that Paradise that ibn Taymiyyah had referred to. The actual heaven for the heart. Whether you have someone on your side or not, if Allah is with you, you have it all.

After she had collected this, her heart was at peace like never.

That moment Khawlah missed Maryam a lot. Since, it was her very efforts that today Khawlah was on this path. She had not heard from Maryam ever since she moved to Usman from Pakistan. And that too for a short while. Maryam had told that, situations in Kashmir had been growing bad. The internet connection had also been non-functional there. She was at her friend's home then, where landline was available.

Khawlah didn't tell Maryam about her condition, since she was already in her troubles. She didn't wish to bother her. It would have been mean.

She came to know about Abdullah, who was still living with Mujahedeen. He seldom visited home, since, he could have brought trouble to his family by visiting them. Indian forces were madly searching the Mujahedeen.

Khawlah prayed that where ever he lives, Allah blesses him in both the worlds.

So, what, if her heart's desire wasn't fulfilled. This was her Lord's will. His plan. And Khawlah had learnt to bow before Him like the Companions of the prophet (S.A.W). Allah wished her to sacrifice her heart's desire. So how could she have refused her beloved Lord. She beheaded her worldly love, for Allah's will. She showed that she had chosen that path for Allah only. Not for Maryam or Abdullah, that when they were not along, she would abandon her journey.

Well, Allah's love demands sacrifices.

A bit tougher though, at times.

Heartrending too.

But the compensation is always grand. That Lord, Who glorifies you from the land to the skies. One is the glorification by the world, and one is by the Lord. So, see, when the Lord glorifies someone,

he is in the air, like none other.

Now it's up to you, which side you wish to be on, dear. The world's or that of the Lord of the worlds!!!

Khawlah had now surpassed all worldly admirations and attractions. After sacrificing all worldly love, she had attained, complete contentment and superiority.

She was resolute, she will never love for her own sake now. She would love only for the sake of Allah. She would love her husband for the sake of Allah too.

Why...? Since he would be a choice made by Allah for her. He, got her married and nikkahfied. So, now she will shower all her love to her spouse for the sake of the Lord. Since, only then she would attain His love, for which she had kicked all the comforts of her glamorous life.

* My entire life is certainly for Your obedience dear Lord
To attain your love, I can get decapitated by any snare or sword.

I beg and bow, only before you,
Only for you dear Lord, only for you

Neither money, nor a residence do I aspire, but only Your love
Tired of this worldly admiration, I desire the heavens above.

Became a stranger, a mismatch on this earth, for You
Only for you dear Lord, only for you.
My heart cries with the desire of martyrdom,
To be in heaven I impatiently await the doom,
Carrying my coffin, I tread Your path like very few.
Only for you dear Lord, only for you.

The prisoners from Guantanamo bay call out for me,
And so, do the Martyrs of Al-Fallujah plea
Called out Labaik, and started my journey to You
Only for You dear Lord, only for You.

When the heart fears You, why fear others then,
I can't even fight myself, and require Your help again.
Believed You and started fighting with no rue.
Only for You dear Lord, only for You.

Being wounded for Your sake is an honor for me,
This life belongs to You, dear Lord, You bestowed me,
To sacrifice my assets In Your name, I marched and flew,
Only for You dear Lord, only for You.

Now nothing can stop my stamping feet,
For I am ready to fight, die or make them defeat.
I have happily sacrificed every desire for You,
Only for You dear Lord, only for You.*

* * * * *

"Dear brothers and sisters

Assalamualaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.

All praise is to Allah the Lord of the Worlds, we ask Allah Almighty to accept all our efforts. We ask Allah Almighty that He provides us with beneficial knowledge.

"اللهم انا نسئلك علما نافعا ونعوذبك من علم لا ينفع -

Sheikh Anwar al Awlaki had started his lecture. Saad was listening to, "Battle of hearts and minds", a lecture of Sheikh suggested by Khawlah. He started listening to it from where he had left it.

Sheikh was elaborating, how Taghut are very concerned about Muslim's thoughts and minds. According to the Defense department, the US Defense Department in its quadrennial defense review report:

"The United states is involved in a war that is both a battle of arms and a battle of ideas. A war in which, ultimate victory, will be achieved only when extremist ideologies are discredited in the eyes of their host populations and passive supporters".

So according to Rand and according to the Pentagon and truth fully so, there is a struggle of ideas going on in the Muslim world, but what is their position regarding this internal affair, this affair that concerns Muslims, this battle of ideas between those who want to follow Islam as it was revealed to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah on him), they want to follow Islam in its entirety and those who want to pick and choose from Islam, they want to follow Islam selectively. Now, this issue is not new with Muslims, In every age, there are Ahl-Haq , and there are those who want to deviate from the true path, throughout our history this was a struggle that Allah destined to remain and it even existed among the believing nations before us.

For example, with Banu Israel (children of Israel), there were those who held on to the truth and then there were those whom Allah Almighty said about in Quran

“They change the meanings of the words” (Surah Maida, ayah 13)

So, they would take the words of the Bible and they would change it. And some of that was done to please the authorities of the time, because we know that Bani Israel lived under various nations. For example, they lived under the Roman rule, and that time the Romans were pagan. And they lived under the rules of the kings of Babel, and they were pagans too. And according to a story mentioned in Tafseer , that at a particular time

some of the Rabbis of Bani Israel gave a Fatwa to the King of Babylon allowing him to have a forbidden relationship, but they gave him such a fatwa to please that king. So they changed the rule of Allah the Almighty, in order to please a human being!

So this conflict of ideas, that is going on in the Muslim world, what are these non-Muslims doing about it! According to the US news and World report,

“Today Washington is fighting back after repeated missteps since the 911 attacks, the US government has embarked on a campaign of political warfare unmatched, since the height of the cold war. From military psychological operations teams and CIA covert operatives to openly funded media and think tanks, Washington is plowing tens of millions of dollars into a campaign to influence not only Muslim societies but Islam itself.”

Now hear this again “The US is trying to change Islam itself!!!”. Without any shame, they are openly stating that we have a desire not only to influence the Muslim societies but we want to change the religion itself! Probably at the time of Bani Israel those Rabbis who were changing the book of Allah never dared to say so openly! These, without even hiding it, are saying that we want to change Islam, yes we do!

And then the article carries on to say that,

“In at least two dozen countries, Washington has quietly funded Islamic radio and TV shows, course work in Muslim schools, Muslim think tanks, political workshops or other programs that promote moderate Islam. Federal aid is going to restore Mosques, 5:46 Qur'an even build Islamic schools”.

Well as we see here, they are trying to promote this modern Islam, modern according to their definition, and they are spending millions of dollars to do so.

Brothers and sisters, when a Muslim, a true Muslim, hears this, he hears that non-Muslims who have no knowledge about the religion, who do not believe in Allah Almighty who don't believe in Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and don't take

Quran as the book of Allah, when a Muslim hears that such a people, are openly claiming that we want to change your religion, this should make any Muslim who has any love of Allah Almighty angry!

How dare you?! And who are you?! To tell us what Islam is and isn't. In fact, we even find that President Bush is standing in front of the microphone, teaching us about Islam, giving us Khutbah about Islam. In an address he gave in 2002, he asserted, “Islam is a faith that brings comfort to a billion people round the world and has made brothers and sisters of every race it is a faith based upon love not hate”.

Now his statement is true, I mean that Islam is a faith that brings comfort to people around the world and it has made brothers and sisters of every race and is a religion that is based upon love not hate. I mean that the statement to some extent is right. But who is Bush to tell us what Islam is and

isn't? Who gave him the authority, to speak for Islam?

And, praise is to Allah we found that some Muslims at the time were happy and proud that Bush has spoken in this way about Islam. But the issue shows the arrogance and the condescending view that these Kuffar have, they think that we are in need of somebody to tell us what Islam is and what it isn't. In fact, this condescending view didn't go unnoticed even from some non-Muslim commentators.

One of them said, sarcastically that the "Political leadership collectively appears to have acquired an instant post graduate degree in Islamic studies enabling them to lecture the population concerning the true nature of Islam".

In another report by Rand, and by the way, Rand is a sixteen hundred employee non-profit organization that provides analysis to the US Department of Defense. So it is connected to the Pentagon and somehow Rand Cooperation has taken in liking, lately, on this issue of "Battle of minds and hearts" and they have written more than one publication on this topic. And I will, during this talk, quote from some of their publications.

In this report titled "Civil democratic Islam" by Sheryl Bernard, she is a Jew married to an apostate, it can't get any worse! Her husband is Zalmay Khaleel Zad, the apostate if he ever was a Muslim, who held some very high posts as you know in the US administration. He was an ambassador to the UN at one point, ambassador to Afghanistan, ambassador to Iraq, so they are putting him in some pretty sensitive posts!

So this Sheryl Bernard is his wife, she published her report, for Rand titled "Civil Democratic Islam" so from the title you can see what kind of Islam they want! What kind of Islam they want to force upon us! And by the way, they are willing to go to the extent of sending their armies to enforce on us their particular version of Islam that we are supposed to follow. Brothers, praise is to Allah, Muslims should stand up and unite against such arrogance!

Some of her recommendations, she said that, she is talking about these moderate Muslims "Publish and Distribute their works at subsidized costs",

Before I go any further, who is the moderate Muslim, according to them? Well, they have even provided a list to define, who is a moderate Muslim and who is not; you know they have pretty detailed work! Let's see here who is the moderate Muslim according to them.

"Characteristics of moderate Muslims " this is from Rand publication:

● 1) Democracy:

So a moderate Muslim is who believes in democracy and believes in the democratic system.

Now, there are some Muslims who adopt democracy and they say that Shura (The Shura Council is the council of elite Muslim scholars that are consulted by the Amir in the matters of the State) the Islamic system of Shura, is similar to democracy, so we could use the term democracy as Muslims, in reality we believe in Shura, but they say it is more appealing for the West, when we talk about democracy, because they don't understand the Islamic concept of Shura. I am quoting to you what some Muslims believe and what some Muslims say. And they believe that they could get the aid and the assistance of the West to change the dictatorship that exists in the Muslim world if they mark themselves as people who want to bring in democracy and there is a serious problem with that, because

1) Democracy isn't Islamic, democracy is a system and Islam has brought us a completely

different system. And a few in reality, believe in the system of the Islamic state and Shura, then say Shura call it what it is and don't call it democracy. That's number one.

2) This trick is not going to pass on these people at Rand because they have given a detailed definition of what democracy do they expect from a moderate Muslim!

3) So they say and I am quoting here "A commitment to democracy as understood in the liberal western tradition"

So don't tell me democracy, as I understand it from Islamic point of view. No!

That is not satisfactory! What we want is a commitment to democracy as understood in the western liberal tradition!

And they went further to say "Support for democracy implies opposition to the concept of the Islamic state"

So a moderate Muslim, is a Muslim who believes in a democratic system that is opposed to the Islamic state!

And then they say

"It follows from the above that for a group to declare itself democratic, in the sense of favoring elections as the vehicle for establishing government as in the case of the present Egyptian Muslim brotherhood is not enough."

● 2) The second characteristic of this moderate Muslim is "acceptance of non-sectarian sources of law"

Meaning you follow man made law willingly and openly and they say here in the report

"the dividing line between moderate Muslims and radical Islamist is whether Sharia should apply "

So to them any Muslim who wants Sharia to apply, is an extremist and a moderate Muslim is a Muslim willing to accept French law or the British law or International law or call it whatever, as long as it is manmade.

● 3) The third characteristic of a moderate Muslim is "respect for the rights of women and religious minorities"

Now we believe in rights of women and we believe in rights of religious minorities, but not according to their definition. According to their definition, if there is an Islamic state that enforces hijab, that is extremism. If it charges the Christians and Jews jizyah (tax) they are extremists!

● 4) And then the fourth characteristic of a moderate Muslim is "opposition to terrorism and illegitimate violence"

So a Muslim who defends his lands, a Muslim who refuses occupation, a Muslim who wants to live according to Islamic rule, is an extremist. And the moderate Muslim is a Muslim, who invites the US army to come and invade his land, and is happy to follow manmade laws and is a person who has no honor and dignity to defend himself against aggression. This is a moderate Muslim!

So from what you see, a moderate Muslim to them, is in reality a non-Muslim! Because according to these four definitions, the definitions that they gave, this is Kufr this is not Islam! So from now on, I am not going to call it a moderate Muslim but I think a more appropriate term would be a "Rand Muslim".

Then they have a questionnaire, to hand over to a Muslim for him to answer, and then they would categorize him as being a moderate or being an extremist, and praise be to Allah, you would not fail to see the arrogance in all of this and the condescending view they have of Muslims, here they are testing our Aqeedah, they are testing our faith and they are giving us the scores!

The questionnaire is:

◆ “Does the group or individual support or condone violence, if it does not support or condone violence now, has it supported it or condoned it in the past”

So they are not going to even leave you alone if you speak against violence now. If you have a history of violence in the past, then you are going to be held responsible about that.

Next question,

◆ “Does it support democracy, and if so does it define democracy broadly in terms of individual rights?”

Following question,

◆ “Does it support internationally recognized human rights? ”

Next question,

◆ “Does it make any exceptions? For example, regarding freedom of religion”

So if you want to enforce the law of Riddah (apostasy) then that’s extremism!

◆ “Does it believe that changing religions is an individual right?”

So if a Muslim wants to become a Jew, if a Muslim wants to become a Christian, if a Muslim wants to worship a cow, or a monkey or a snake, they should have the right to do so! If a Muslim who was guided to the straight path and honored by becoming Muslim and he knew Allah the Almighty and he followed Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), if such a person whom Allah Almighty has blessed, wants to worship a cow after that, he should have the right to do so!

◆ “Does it believe that the state should enforce the criminal law component of Sharia?”

So there should be no Hudood (Plural of Hadd, legal limits that have punishments in the Islamic law)

◆ “Does it believe that the state should believe the civil law component of Sharia?”

Regarding for example, marriage issues, polygamy.

◆ “Or does it believe there should be non-Sharia options?”

Praise is to Allah! What are we talking about here? In a vegetable market buying potatoes and onions?! What are you talking about non-Sharia options? No country in the world, gives you

options regarding law. There is one law, regarding every issue. Here they want us to have options, so you walk in to court and you are handed out a multiple-choice question ‘Which law do you want to follow’!!!

Allah Almighty says,

“But no, by thy Lord, they can have no real faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them and find in their souls no resistance against your decisions but accept them with the fullest conviction” (Surah Nisa’a , ayah 65)

No Muslim is a Muslim, if he does not accept the law of Allah Almighty. No Muslim, is a Muslim if he refuses to accept the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

And then the questionnaire carries on

◆ “Does it believe that numbers of religious minorities should be entitled to the same rights as Muslims? Does it believe that a member of religious minority could hold high political office in a Muslim majority country?”

And we answer no to that question; they cannot hold high office because Allah Almighty says,

“O you who believe, take not into your intimacy, those outside your ranks, they will not fail to corrupt you, they only desire your ruin. Rank hatred has already appeared from their mouths and what their hearts conceal is far worse. We have made plain to you the signs if you have wisdom” (Surah Al-Imran, ayah 118)

So this ayah does not allow us to take the Jews and the Christians as bitanah, as advisors, or to put them in high office.

The questionnaire carries on to state

◆ “Does it believe that members of religious minorities are entitled to build and run institutions of their faith in Muslim majority countries?”

Now the Islamic law regarding that is they are allowed to have their original Synagogues and Churches but they are not allowed to build any new ones as according to the codes regarding Ahl Az Zimmah (Zimmis, People of the Book living in the Lands of)

And then,

◆ “Does it accept any legal system based on non-sectarian legal principles?”

So the whole thing is Kufr! That is what makes for them a moderate Muslim!

We go back to the recommendations of this Sheryl Bernard her first recommendation is,

► Muslims under the Shariah “We should publish and distribute the works of Rand Muslims at

subsidized costs”

This is to promote the falsehood!

Her next recommendation,

- ▶ “Encourage them to write for mass audiences and for the youth”

Because they recognize that the mass, the masses in the Muslim world can discern the truth and they know who speaks for them and who doesn't.

And they understand that the danger comes from the youth because the youth are the ones who stand for al-Haq. Ibrahim (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was a youth, when he destroyed the idols. And we know from the story of the cave in Surah Kahf, that those men who went in to the cave were youth. And we know from the Seerah that the early followers of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were youth. So now she is encouraging the deviance of the youth!

Her next recommendation,

- ▶ “Introduce their views into the curriculum of the Islamic education”

And they have already taken some concrete steps in that direction, they have ruined the curriculum in many Muslim countries, entire sections were wiped out and changed, anything that talks about Jihad, talks about Hudood, talks about the rules of Allah have been taken out of the curriculum!

Next recommendation:

- ▶ “Facilitate and encourage an awareness of their pre and non-Islamic culture, in the media and the curricula of relevant countries”

So for example let's revive the Pharaonic civilization. Let us talk about the Pharaohs and let's present them in a positive light. And let's talk about their civilization and their achievements and the development that they achieved in those early days, let that take place, instead of talking about the Islamic civilization! And let's revive the local culture of the societies before Islam! So let's talk about pre-Islamic Arabia and Arabic nationalism!

Let's talk about the history of the Berber people in the North Africa. And let us talk about the Roman and Greek history of al-Sham (Syria). That's why we see there is great attention given by archeologists to the pre-Islamic history of the Middle East. They talk a lot about Mesopotamia and about Egypt in the time of the Pharaohs.

We should beware of this, and we should not have any pride in our pre-Islamic history!

It is all Jahiliyyah (Ignorance) and it shouldn't even be called a civilization because it is not! It is the path to Jahannam (Hell fire) it is Zulumaat, darkness upon darkness! And pharaoh is a symbol of evil; he should not be presented in any positive light.

When Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) passed with his army next to Diyar Thamuud (A tribe from those that passed who were destroyed by a punishment from Allah), the dwellings of Thamuud, and some of the Sahabas (Companions) wanted to go in, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not allow them to. Why? So that they should not be impressed with what they see and he told them

“Do not enter into their dwellings except if you going to weep and cry (to the faith that befell them)”.

It should be taken as a lesson. And when they drew water out of the well in Thamuud, and they used it for the dough for the bread, Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told them to feed this dough to their animals and not to eat from it themselves, and not to drink from the well of the people of Thamuud. This is to establish a barrier between us and these Kuffar.

Her next recommendation,

- “Encourage the popularity and acceptance of Sufism”

So she wants to promote Tassawuf (Sufism) not because of her love of Tassawuf itself, but because of its position on Jihad in the path of Allah, because of its non-violence, but would they promote for example the Tassawuf of Umar al Mukhtar, or some of the other movements that existed in North Africa or in the sub-continent?

And then under the title of Confront and oppose the Fundamentalists she has a few recommendations,

The first,

- “Reveal their linkages to illegal groups and activities ”

Next,

- “Publicize the consequences of their violent acts ”

Now, in war there are people who are going to be killed and some of them are innocent, that is the nature of war, but Muslims, try their best, to avoid killing innocents and there are strict rules that were laid out by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) regarding Jihad in the path of Allah. For example, non-fighting women and elderly and the monks should not be killed... etc.

What she is talking about here, is that we should take the unintentional accidents that happen with the Mujahideen in the path of Allah, for example some innocent people will be killed, and let us blow it out of proportion and make a big deal out of it. And when the US army kills and bombs entire residences and kills everybody inside it women, children and elderly, keep that aside and not talk about it, and forget about it, and if it becomes revealed to the world then we will find an excuse! However, if the Muslims in their fight in the path of Allah commit a mistake or an unintentional accident happened let's make a big deal out of it and blow it out of proportion. And we see this happening all the time, to the extent that now it is imprinted in the minds of people, that Muslims are violent people who have no regards what so ever, for the rights of innocent human beings. Why? Because this is a fallacy that has been spread by the Western media, this is the agenda of the West; it is to put the Muslim in such a light. But any decent human being, with the least amount of intelligence, would be able to see, that it is the US now who is killing innocents in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Somalia, and elsewhere throwing bombs indiscriminately in areas of Muslim population.

In the embargo that was placed on Iraq prior to the war, more than one million have died, and now we have an entire generation, of Iraqis who is living the poverty caused by such an embargo, and the spread of diseases that was brought by that embargo.

Her next recommendation,

▫“Avoid showing respect, or admiration, for the violent feats of the fundamentalists, extremists and terrorists.”

And then look at what she says,

▫“Caste them as disturbed, and cowardly not as evil heroes ”

Sometimes you would show respect for your enemy because of a certain quality that he holds, for example, the west could not hide their admiration for Salahuddin, his chivalry his courage! Throughout history we find that war has erupted between different nations and peoples, nevertheless, the enemy would show the other side some respect and some admiration. In particular eras they would say, for example “Yes it is true that these are our enemies but we need to speak the word of truth, they are courageous”. “Yes it is true that these are our enemies but nevertheless, they have a point” things like that.

According to Bernard, we are not supposed to show such an admiration, we should never even caste them as “evil heroes”! And then she specifically wanted them to be presented or caste as disturbed, and cowardly. And this “cowardly” thing, we have been hearing it again and again. And I am amazed to see that some Muslims, like parrots, are repeating this accusation, and praise is to Allah, I fail to understand how, the Israeli soldier wearing his bullet proof vest, and his steel helmet, cowering behind the pile of sand bags and still runs away from the stones thrown by Palestinian children is courageous! While the Palestinian children charging at the soldiers full speed, armed with nothing but rocks and wearing nothing but trousers and t-shirts are cowards! I fail to understand that!

And the American “heroic” soldiers, fighting from the comfort of their armored Bradlees and Strikers but nevertheless boiling inside layers of bullet proof gear in the boiling heat of the Iraqi summer, are “courageous” while the Mujahideen armed with nothing but the light weapons of Guerilla war-fare are “cowards”!

And what I really fail to understand, is how can the martyr, the Shaheed, who willingly and happily, hands over his soul to Allah, who walks towards his faith, with pleasure, and faces death with a smile, what I fail to understand is how can you call such a person a “coward”!

But that is what they have been called. And that is what the parrots in the Muslim world have been repeating, that these peoples are cowards.

And then she goes on to say,

▫“Encourage journalists to investigate, issues of corruption, hypocrisy, and immorality, in fundamentalist and terrorist circles”

Well she could have also said, lets fake up such things against them, and take them to court and sentence them to ridiculous sentences in jail for such fake accusations!

Imam Jameel in America was sentenced to life, because he was accused of killing a police officer! Humeidan, the head of ** publications in was sentenced to life, because he was accused of raping his servant!

And we could go on and on with a list of people whom the US government has faked against them false accusations just to liquidate them, and to get them out of the scene!

Take for example, the story of Captain **, the Imam at Guantanamo. Allah knows what the reason was, even though he was a marine soldier, and is an employee and is with the US government, somehow they didn't take a liking to him for one reason or another. So they accused him in the beginning, of espionage, of passing over classified information to Syria! When that didn't hold up, praise is to Allah, what they accused him with? Of pornographic material on his laptop! And the crime is, that this laptop is government owned property so how could he have pornography on it! And they accused him of adultery, and they tried to ruin his family, and then in the end nothing held up so all of the charges against them were dropped!

In this article by US news and world report, says "but individual CIA stations overseas are making some gutsy and innovative moves, among them pouring money in to neutralizing militant anti US preachers and recruiters" And then they say, "If you found out, that **Omar, is on one street corner doing this, you set up Mullah Bradley on the other street corner to counter it".

Well, I wonder how many Mullah Bradlees they have in the Muslim world now!

And then she says

▫ "Encourage divisions amongst fundamentalists"

Dear brothers and sisters we are not only victims, of US military and political aggression, but we are also victims of US lies!

They have been lying about our brothers, charging them with false accusations, until they put hatred of them in our hearts, and they have planted the seeds of disunity amongst us!

And now she is stating openly that we want to encourage divisions among fundamentalists!

Take for example, whenever an Islamic group tries to enforce the law of Allah Almighty, how they try to ruin their reputation! And unfortunately, this lie is believed by many Muslims! Because they are victims of this western media and US lies. We need to be aware! We need to be careful. And we shouldn't rely on their sources, when it comes to information about our Muslim brethren! Take the information from valid sources. Allah Almighty says ,

If a Fasiq -a corrupt Muslim! - Brings you information fatabayyanu (Surah Hujuraat, verse 26- "O ye who believe! If a sinner comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth...") - you need to check- if this information is correct, what if the source is not a Fasiq but a Kafir? So we need to be very careful on what we hear! "

Saad stopped the lecture and looked at the time.

It was quite late and he had to yet buy groceries from market as well.

He disconnected the USB which had the lecture saved. And once again checked if internet connection was still off. Since it was dangerous to listen to Scholars of Haq in today's world. You can't carry such things in laptops and mobiles openly. Disbelievers and the Taghut governments keep a watch over your internet activities. So, you must be very careful. If you are up for something big, you should be vigilant than passionate only. So, that you are not prominent before your task gets completed, so even if you die, you teach such an unforgettable lesson to the enemies that even their to come remember it.

Like sheikh Usama, Sheikh Anwar. And many others.

And people used to say where can we find such scholars to learn all of that is truth today and not the hypocrites one who tell only part of Islam and hide the other part such that they make you Muslim (

who was to come in the scene like a real lion), a lion of circus. Literate and devote scholars are not readily available on TV channels giggling around, so that Taghut is also happy and so is a frustrated Muslim. Instead they are tigers. They are seen unveiling the ugly faces of Taghut, or are found in jails or under the soil, since they are today's Ibn Taymiyyahs, Ibn e Hanbal. Who considered getting beheaded alone with dignity in front of the forces of Baatil (falsehood), rather than complying to them like other scholars of the world. So, they are and will be known then, till the end of times and would be renowned in the hereafter.

Today, the open disrespect of Prophet's (S. A. W) dignity, with Muslim dominance across the world and so called scholars is displeasing. Scholars, like timid cats, protest peacefully for few days and then change their Facebook DP's for few days and consider their duty done. Since they are unaware of the punishment for defaming the Prophet (S. A. W)!!

Death penalty!! Yes!!

And who ever does the task of hanging the filthy disrespectful person to death, gets Jannah. No one ever told that??? Right??

How would a common Muslim know it when scholars and knowledgeable people will mostly rely on silence on such matters.

Anyways, a lot of scholars, who are in jails or are martyrs, their lectures are available on net. Specifically, Sheikh Anwar Al Awlaki's detailed lecture with explanations like the, "dust will never settle down", are available on YouTube. Then why people didn't bother listening to him.

Maybe they never had enough time. Only if they get free from earning, eating and sleeping, would they recall those questions they would be asked in the grave like, who is your Lord, what is your religion, who is your Prophet.

Maybe people had considered it a joke that such easy questions would be asked.

When Munkir Nakir will come as examiners in the grave, people will be all messed up. So, none will respond correctly but only the Muslim, who had been steadfast with religion and Qur'an and Sunnah in the world, lived his life trying his best to act upon them.

A simple bad dream turns them sweaty yet, they tend to ignore the adversities of the grave.

But the loyal souls who were in religious practice would get freedom that day. No worries, just love of the Lord and His Prophet (S.A.W) and the beauty of Jannah.

And give good tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds that they will have gardens [in Paradise] beneath which rivers flow... (Surat Al-Baqarah, Ayah 25)

But you shouldn't also go on calling everyone apostate who is not up to the standards you think for a practicing Muslim.

The prominent kufr is kufr, no doubt!! but in daily matters, little ambiguities and issues do not give u the right to call a common Muslim, a disbeliever or Kafir. Only Scholars should decide such matters. We should not delve into this fire, since:

It is reported on the authority of Ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessings be upon him) said:

Any person who called his brother: "O unbeliever" (has in fact done an act by which this unbelief) would return to one of them. If it were so, as he asserted (then the unbelief of man was confirmed

but if it was not true), then it returned to him (to the man who labeled it on his brother Muslim).
[Sahih Muslim, 60]

so, we should increase our knowledge. Make its basis strong so we can differentiate between Scholars of Haq (Truth) and scholars serving Baatil (Falsehood). And the most important being the Islamic History. Detailed Study of Prophet's life and that of Sahabah and Khulafa Ar Rashideen. Their lifestyles in battles. Study of their utmost efforts against disbelievers, apostates and against those who deceived our religion. Similarly, Salahuddin Ayyubi, Victories of Sultan AL Fateh, Imam Ibn e Taymiyyah, Imam Ibn e Hunbal's lives.

So, Study the lives of Salaf (the righteous predecessors), who are the guiding light for us all.... Search authentic Ahaadith, study them and act upon them. And leave the weak and fabricated Ahaadith. Since, no matter how much you study, or convert people to Islam, if you are teaching incorrect/fabricated Islam, it's of no good to anyone. So, like this you are not promoting Allah's religion but, spreading a religion you yourself devised, and are motivating others on the same. If you have studied from correct references you will be able to understand and appreciate the truth and will be able to guide others too. You will then be able to compare the acts of Prophet (S.A.W), Sahabah, Taba'een and Taba Taba'een and then the truth will be in the lime light before you. In sha Allah. Since, Prophet S.A.W had envisioned 3 golden eras for us, which were to be accepted as ideal. And slight deviation might lead us astray. The era of Sahabah, Taba'een (who learnt religion from them) and Taba Taba'een (who learnt from Taba'een).

So, if you tread on the path other than the one set by these, you will go astray. Be it a scholar even, it won't be acceptable.

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: He who did any act for which there is no sanction from our behalf, that is to be rejected.
[Sahih Muslim, 1718]

* * * *

"Brother Hamza belongs to someone else now!!!!!! Somebody shouted as Hamza walked out towards his room. And then a loud laughter filled the air. When he turned to see, it was a Mujahid friend, who was busy teasing him, now mischievously headed towards him with a will to stop his way. Hamza tried to sneak in his room, but failed.

"He is so impatient, isn't he? God!!", someone patted his shoulder laughing. And all burst into laughter.

" Brother, sit down, we are planning the next strategy. You were talking about A-K 47...." and as he said, everyone started laughing again.

" You guys are truly bad", now even Hamza had started laughing. Handsome man, jet black hair, Hazel eyes, Red and fair complexion, attractive face, beautiful

beard in remembrance of the Prophet's Sunnah (S. A. W), smiling face and attractive eyes. A lively human, well-mannered, with a magnificent personality, and spreading love everywhere. With extremely soft heart, who would cry his eyes out with the pathos of this Ummah. The same grief had made him travel so far. For Allah's sake, he had made Hijrah (migration) to this land.

"Let your brother go now, lest God forbid the same A-K 47 might get fired on you"...

A loud laughter filled the air.

He was Abu Bakr, who had mischievously said this last sentence. He was husband of Umm Khadijah.

Abu Bakr took his friend to a side, giggling and laughing.

"Listen friend..."

Since you are beginning a new life, I'd like to advise you a few things. They will help you a lot, In sha Allah".

Hamza nodded his head with consent and started listening with seriousness.

"Women are to be treated differently from men. They are like a fragile bud. With love they will blossom, but with two harsh words they might wilt. So, if you ever find anything bothersome about, treat her technically with love and patience. I am sure, love would work. If it doesn't work, then try to be a bit strict where required. But that too not exceeding what the Prophet S.A.W told us.

And yes. Women have a unique and different way of expressing and showing love. They enjoy words. So, try make her realize countless times during the day, that you love her to what an extent. With some gifts maybe some times.

I know, we men are a bit stingy when it comes to praises, or maybe we are oblivious, that love is in the heart usually so we seldom express in words.

But for women, only this matters the most. So, consider, that your praise or words of affection are a source of food for her heart. So, as many nice words you will say to her, she will grow more love for you. Consider her trapped in your love then , she will become a slave to your love.

Secondly, take care of her likes and dislikes. Respect her. Make her realize that her thoughts and opinions matter.

These are few tips for a smooth drive on the journey of marital life.

Rest you will learn with time, In sha Allah. "

Abu Bakr patted Hamza's shoulder gently.

Hamza smiled in return, and prayed for him as he walked towards his room.

He was near his room, when Khawlah's Razai brother (breast-fed by the same woman) came in his way. Hamza smiled at him.

Usman held Hamza's hand, "I am not handing you just my sister, but grandpa and my heart to you. Please take good care of my sister. You should have a powerful hand for the disbelievers, but polite, gentle words for my sister, please. Allah keep you two happy always." His eyes were shining with tears.

Hamza smiled at Usman's request. Other than Usman, Khawlah's grandpa and her family from Pakistan had requested the same earlier. It was no doubt the apple of every eye that they were giving away to him.

Salutations to the bride's family, and also to the girl who leaves her everything and starts living with a complete stranger. She has such a big heart to sacrifice, only if someone understands.

Hence, Allah promises to bestow such faithful women the beauty, more than Hoors in Jannah.

"Why not, the Lord has bestowed me with a religious wife, I am grateful every moment to Him. why would I hurt her?

Never, would I do that.

Allah has blessed me with such a unique blessing, even if I bow before him my whole life with gratitude, it wouldn't be sufficient."

Usman upon hearing such nice thoughts, embraced Hamza.

* * * * *

You speak very less. Are you like this since ever? Or is this meanness for me only??" Hamza mischievously asked Khawlah while combing his hair before the mirror. It had been a week since they got married. Khawlah was exactly what Hamza wished for. He considered himself the luckiest. After much waiting, he got this reward. Was Khawlah considering the same for him? He had millions of questions in his heart, which he never uttered.

Khawlah, got startled, upon the question, while she was making the bed.

what...? speaks less? She used to talk so much that even books would fall short jotting stuff down.

But it was right, before Hamza Khawlah used to have loss of words.

She used to have a lot in her mind to share, but upon meeting Hamza, words would get stuck in her throat.

"I do talk." Khawlah smiled back.

"yes you do.

Have tea....

Supper is ready...

Your clothes are washed...

etc. etc. etc.", Hamza faked a naive face.

Khawlah laughed involuntarily.

"I won't let you complain from now on", She replied with a lowered gaze.

"Ah! What an obedient wife I have", Hamza was in a mood to tease her more. He loved her laughing so he tried to make her laugh again. She had bared so much pain. Hamza wished to wipe off every pain and fear from her life.

Though, he could not spend time daily with her, as his job was such, But, he wished loving her, whatever time he had.

"Here, take your gun, don't forget", Khawlah handed Hamza his gun before he had left.

"May Allah, keep you happy in both the worlds", Khawlah smiled at him with a dua. He was so nice. More than she had thought. He loved her so much. He would effort so much for her one smile. Even though, he was himself a soldier of tough times. Watching your friends dying before you aren't an easy task. Despite this, whenever he had time with Khawlah he tried to make that memorable.

"Ameen," Hamza Smiled. "With you, here and hereafter too", with love in her eyes.

"Ameen..

And may Allah bestow us both Martyrdom," Khawlah added to the prayer.

"Martyrdom, together, so both go together and none is left behind," Hamza was adding more love to his talk.

Khawlah smiled, "Ameen." Her eyes had tears; Allah had blessed her so much. Her heart was at peace. And her eyes were cool.

The dua she used to make every time had been heard finally.

Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous.

[Surah Al-Furqan, Ayah 74]

Hamza for sure wished looking at her while she talked.

Khawlah smiled. She had understood what was going in his mind.

"Allah keep you safe...

In the scorching heat, in every storm, no mountain stops your path.

Go like the winds and return with all the victories," kept talking while staring in his eyes. She didn't know from where words kept coming on her tongue.

"But promise, you will take care of yourself."

"When I am encircled by your prayers, why would I worry," Hamza was mesmerized by his wife's sweet words.

* * * * *

"Oh F-16", Hamza was startled by the bombing of the fighter jets.

Hamza and Some Mujahideen were sitting in a trench and were planning with the commander, when they faced a missile shower.

It was a gloomy night.

The Commander quickly warned senior commanders on Wireless.

The rest of the Mujahideen started arguing whether the jet was F-16 or B-52.

B-52 is an extremely dangerous jet, which flies in the air for a while, senses its target and attacks its target. It has very devastating results. It senses metal weapons.

Rawafid Shia forces were few miles from Hamza's groups.

Hamza's Mujahideen friends were busy fighting enemies as per the command. Hamza was there a while ago as well. He had come to the trench on commander's call and wished knowing the further plans and wished updating the rest.

"I'll be back in a while," Hamza stood up.

All of them were attentive to him, wondering what had happened to him.

"Where are you going?" one of them asked.

"To visualize the fighter jet", He replied with a smile.

"Be serious for once at least," his friend smiled.

"Hey! I am serious", Hamza replied with gravity in his tone.

"Okay then, align others too, separately," Commander was referring to Hamza. No doubt, every soldier was a gem among them. We should have least loss of lives. For that strategic planning was necessary, since battles are never won by power alone. Perfect planning even makes you win the most endangered situations. Those who have read Prophet's life as a commander are much aware of this.

Hamza moved towards the trench to his companions. He divided all in groups of twos and threes and himself hid in an old building to understand the situation. The trench was also nearby.

"Subhan Allah!!!! Allahu Akbar!!!!, Hamza exclaimed involuntarily. The Jet was blindly bombing in the nearby deserted ground. Allah helps the people on His path so differently. Someone wise had said so truly,

*Build up the environment of Badr, so the angels may come forth in groups and clusters, in lines. *

Hamza's companions in the trench came worriedly after him, considering him martyred. And to their amazement, he still stood their laughing with the same laughter.

"Wow!! see such beautiful lightening," Hamza pointed at the jet in the sky and all started laughing. No doubt, Allah had made the enemies blind.

* * * * *

After bombing for a while, it grew very quiet. It was the last phase of night. A while before Fajr. The most noble time.

It was the sleep time for the enemies and best time to defeat them.

Whereas the soldiers of Allah had this very time to start up. They used to be in full energy now as compared to other parts of the day. Tahajjud had become a vital part of their lives. And for the same reason they used to give enemies an equal defeat.

Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His cause in a row as though they are a [single] structure joined firmly.

[Surah As-Saf, Ayah 4]

Rest of the Mujahideen had also returned as Ghaazis (returning alive from a fight in Allah's cause)' Commander divided them in three jeeps to head to the centre.

On their way they met a startling incident. The jet had again come back. Surprisingly none of the targets hit the jeeps. The jet used to miss the target, bombing on the sides of the jeeps, while they reached the centre all safe and sound.

*Deserts be deserts, even the seas weren't negated
We drove our furious horses, everywhere unabated*

When they were so strong in their faith, even Allah helped them.

They were performing their duties, but no one knew when the sleeping Ummah might wake up.

*Slaves of the dungeons of the world...
 Glory invites you aloud
 Heaven awaits you...
 Your presence is demanded in the warfronts and crowds
 Shrieks from the oppressed valley
 Reach our ears daily
 This is the song of Hoors in heaven
 This song is inviting you every now and then
 Don't sleep after morning prayers
 For Palestinian lands, will go to slayers
 You are awesome human
 Blessings are calling out aloud
 What proofs you ask me for?
 Look at the nation of Prophet (s.a.w) that implores
 For stepping out of the houses under bomb clouds
 You have reasons that call you aloud

Slaves of the dungeons of the world
 glory calls aloud*

It had taken consecutive 5 days and nights. Thus, It had been immensely tiring, like falling asleep on hitting the bed. But Hamza searched for his phone and switched it on, after reaching the centre. Khawlah would have awaited a response from him. Hamza knew she acted brave but from inside she worried a lot.
 He picked up the phone, and made a call.

*

Khawlah had gotten free a while ago from Tahajjud. She was praying for her husband; to defeat the enemy, of safe arrival of the Mujahideen, of attaining martyrdom together with her husband.

She was crying in prostration, that she had started this journey for Allah, that she was living in this cruel world with a desire of Shahadah (Martyrdom). Please Allah bestow martyrdom and not natural death. Dear Lord, whenever I think about natural death my breathing stops. Heart too. Dear Lord,

I have to die one day ultimately, please make it pleasant by martyrdom.

She had hiccups as she was crying. Khawlah stood up after praying and again looked at the phone. She had seen her phone a million times in these 5 days. She was aware where he was for the five days and it was supposed to be only 5 days, but she didn't know why her steps headed to the phone despite knowing it all.

Khawlah used to think about the wife's of Mujahideen. Shaheeds go to a wonderful world, start living a beautiful life. Actual suffering is for the women left behind. They effort to bring up their kids alone, fulfilling the responsibilities of both mother and father, and filling the void of fathers too. it must be such a valuable task. Involving so much patience!!!

And the world said women are weak. How very wrong this world had been.

Khawlah was lost in her thoughts, when the phone rang. Her heart stopped. Allah please everything be fine. Please he be fine. May we get martyrdom together.

Khawlah attended the call.

She heard same familiar and lively voice of Hamzah, "Assalaam-o-Alaikum",

Khawlah's soul felt peace, with much effort she uttered a reply, "wa alaikum Assalam... how are you?"

She left things half way. Khawlah couldn't muster courage to ask if he was hit by any bullet or so... Allah had blessed them so much love, that if Hamza got wounded, Khawlah experienced the pain too. It was the same on the opposite side also.

Hamza replied with poetic retort.

*Some call him mad, some say he is crazy..

But the impatience of the land for the rain, is understood by the clouds only

How am I far from you, how are you far from me

Only your heart knows, or my heart knows really

Here people say my eyes bear millions of tears

If you try see, they're pearls, Otherwise water my dear *

Khawlah smiled timidly. She couldn't speak. She lost all words. He always made her speechless.

"So, madam, won't you say anything???"

Ahhh!!! This one-sided love!!!"

*Should I prove through books, or should I come before him

He has asked me what is called love*,

Khawlah retorted poetically as well.

"Wow! You have amazingly hidden talents", Hamza had enjoyed the reply.

* * * * *

There was hustle bustle everywhere. The enemies had started a more impactful attack on As-Shaam now. America, Russia and many other countries were busy supporting the bombing.

Common Citizen was being targeted, specially the hospitals and doctors. Houses were marred.

The Muslim men and women were being tortured in jails miserably.

No supporters. Self-help.

The Ummah was sitting mum.

Someone should have questioned this sleeping Ummah:

"Don't talk here and there,

Explain why the caravan got mugged

I have no concern with the trespassers

My grief is about your leaders who snubbed*

Allah's Prophet's (s.a.w) Hadith was coming so true.:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: The people will soon summon one another to attack you as people when eating invite others to share their dish. Someone asked: Will that be because of our small numbers at that time? He replied: No, you will be numerous at that time: but you will be scum and rubbish like that carried down by a torrent, and Allah will take fear of you from the breasts of your enemy and last enervation into your hearts. Someone asked: What is wahn (enervation). Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): He replied: Love of the world and dislike of death.

[Sunan Abi Dawud]

Khawlah was giving first aid to the Mujahideen and other Muslims. she was reading out supplications.

There was a strange hustle bustle. Like doomsday.

One force of Mujahideen was present there to counter the attack of enemies. This was the area of Mujahideen majority.

Hamza, Usman and Khawlah's grandpa were also in the group of Mujahideen fighting nearby.

But she didn't know where they were.

She was running on the road and helping the wounded and then sending them to the hospital. She saw a wounded person at some distance, who was crying out loud Allah u Akbar.

His shirt was all drenched in blood.

May be just a few moments fighter now.

Khawlah tried to focus a bit and was shocked, "Hamza"!!!! Her heart cried with grief at once. She ran stumbling to her husband. She stumbled countless times before reaching him.

"Hamza", Khawlah was crying with her trembling body. She took her husband's face in her hands. She was just calling his name repeatedly but had no hue or cry on her lips. Just his name with trembling voice. Slowly Khawlah's clothes got colored with Hamza's blood. But she didn't care.

Hamza looked at his loving wife, with his sinking eyes. Looked at her , who was the coolness of his eyes, and smiled weakly,

"Khawlah", and held her hands, who were already holding Hamza's face with love.

"You had said we will go together", Khawlah wept like never now. Her voice was not coming out. Like her soul had been withdrawn.

"In sha Allah, Khawlah we will go together, always have good hopes from Allah", Hamza replied with a weak voice.

How very content he was with his Lord. Even in that weak moment, he was strong in his faith on his Lord.

Khawlah tearfully nodded with consent, and leaned over to rest her head on his chest.

Now her face was also covered with blood. She wished to get martyred with him. Allah would surely bless her martyrdom too. He never disappointed her. Please listen, like always.

Hamza was now saying out Shahadah. Khawlah also started reiterating with him. She had to keep trusting her Lord till the last moment.

In just a while a bomb hit the ground, and all got under attack. Hamza, Khawlah, Usman, Khawlah's grandpa, all got martyred.

The air got fragrant as if someone had opened a bottle of musk from Jannah. Angels from Jannah

had arrived for Khawlah, Hamza and rest of the Martyrs. With beautiful dresses from Jannah. They were being shown their houses in Paradise, the beautiful ones. There was joy everywhere. Where was she? What was happening? Was it just a dream, or was it a reality? Oh! she was free from the world. Free from all pains and griefs.

And that too forever???

Subhan Allah, Khawlah and rest were being taken to Allah for a special meeting with Him. In return angels were looking at them with respect, as if knew them.

After all, these divine souls had fulfilled their promise with Him. Now their residence was Jannah permanently, in which they would start living happily even before the coming of Qiyamah (the day of Judgement). Jannah, where their Lord would be happy with them and they would love their Lord.

*Hiding our souls from the world, attaching our hearts to the divine,
Treading miles away from relatives, burnt our souls' fuel in the battle line
We proclaim in the world Tawheed
we are the steadfast travelers of the Akhirat (Hereafter)

In the great leader's supervision, we forget all defeats
We burnt all ships and landed on the beaches with bare feet
We enlightened the dark valleys in the gloomy days
We are the steadfast travelers of the Akhirat,

We promised our Lord, and ordained for heaven
We wished dying than living, or for any Devon
The enemy lines were destroyed by us too fast,
We are the steadfast travelers of the Akhirat,

Democracy which was supposed to help in human success
Leads to bodily decline, the souls to despair and stress,
We could easily have followed it like others, but
We are the steadfast travelers of the Akhirat,

In a non-peaceful city we resided like ushers
Without families and relatives, or well-wishers
We were quiet and peaceful with no complain to blurt
We are the steadfast travelers of the Akhirat,

There had been storms earlier too , in European rivers and countries
The war of crusade is still alive since many centuries
Neither with Afghans they played any good part
We are the steadfast travelers of the Akhirat,

How to spend in luxury when religion is at stake.
Why wouldn't I allow my knife, to kill and break
Fact is that all know who had been loyal from the start
We are the steadfast travelers of the Akhirat,

We are polite followers of the Prophet (s.a.w)
In the masses of rage, searching love, peace and profit

Allah blessed us making us the nation of the last Prophet (s.a.w)
We are the strong travelers of Akhirat,

We get happily decapitated where Shareah says
If truth and righteousness says we stop, there and never move away
We won't tolerate trouble with Islam or Shareah
We are the steadfast travelers of the Akhirat *

● The End

NOTE:

Some of the text of this novel is in actual excerpt from different sources, of which most prominent ones includes poetry of Shaheed Ehsan Aziz and lectures of Sheikh Anwer Al Awlaki. As the author had no worldly motive behind penning down this novel (also we assume the same for these respected personalities whose words have been added without mentioning their names), so even if the reference has not been quoted in some areas, the allegations of violation of copyrights should be avoided and one must fear Allaah regarding this aspect. Also, this should be kept in mind that the author is unaware of the matters that the common writers are acquainted with. Dr Binte Islam is just a sincere Daaee of Islam and has no intentions of seeking any kind of popularity.

REVIEWS
OF SOME
TEAM MEMBERS...

Sometimes when I would read the episodes, I would think that "is it talking about me? ", " how come it's so relating to me? " But then I realized why it is so.

All of us, all those following the religion or I should say " ALL THE GHURABA " are following the same path. They are going through same situations; they are feeling the same pain. One way or another, they are all same in major aspects. We all are on the same boat, so we must help each other O Ghuraba. As Allah said " And Help each other in righteousness ".

Many of you might not have realized so I would mention it for sure that author has not written any fictional story. I know it contains her personal experiences as well, her pain, her emotions. May Allah bless her with what she wants, with what she feels satisfied and ultimately, SHAHADAH.

Throw a stone in a jug full of water, it does go down and down and eventually it reaches the bottom. Then what?? It cannot go down any further, then where it can go? It can only rise! Remember brothers and sisters, we are on the bottom, from here we can only rise.

In order to rise, we have to do our bests, we have to put in our efforts. These are the times of Islamic revolution, we cannot reach the level of Sahabah R.A, we cannot attain such virtues, what we can do is to follow their path, endure the difficulties we face, follow Allah and His Messenger (S.A.W) and as Allah said in the last ayah of Surah Aal-E-Imraan that we must out do the enemies in patience.

Patience is everything O Ghuraba! These are times of Fitan as well. Look around you, stop blindly following any scholar or any jama'ah. Don't treat your Muslim brother like kuffar, Wallahi I had tears in my eyes while writing this. Stop being so intolerant, Islam demands tolerance from you.

We are not supposed to bring the revolution; we are supposed to do our part. There's never an individual or a party that brings revolution alone, it's always combined efforts.

Allahu Allahu Rabbi ... La ghaliba illa hu ...

~ Yahya Abd

* * *

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم.

میں اس بات پر اللہ کا جتنا بھی شکر ادا کروں وہ کم ہے کہ اس نے مجھے غرباء ٹیم کی صورت میں ایک بہت بڑی نعمت عطا کی۔ آج کے دور میں ایک مسلمان جب دین پر عمل کرنا چاہتا ہے تو اس کے دین کے مطابق اسے مختلف قسم کے حالات کا سامنا کرنا پڑتا ہے۔ اگر وہ دین کے صرف اس حصے کو اپنائے جو معاشرے کو قبول ہے تو اس کے لیے مشکلات بہت کم، اگر مکمل دین کو اپنانے کی کوشش کرے تو مشکلات اس کے خلوص کے مطابق بڑھتی چلی جاتی ہیں یہاں تک کہ یہ معاشرہ اس پر زمین تنگ کر دیتا ہے اور اس کی زندگی اجیرن کر دی جاتی ہے۔ لیکن اس صورتحال میں اللہ رب العزت اپنے اس بندے کے دل میں ایسا سکون اور اطمینان ڈال دیتے ہیں جس کو بیان کرنا ممکن نہیں۔ اس وقت بندہ اپنے رب کے بہت قریب ہوتا ہے۔ اپنے بندے کے حالات پر کامل نظر پہونے کے باوجود رب اس کی التجائیں بہت محبت سے سنتا ہے، بار بار اپنی مبارک کتاب اور اپنے پیارے نبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کے ذریعے تسلیاں اور بشارتیں دلواتا ہے۔ کبھی ابراہیم و یوسف علیہم السلام کے قصے سنا کر ہمت بڑھاتا ہے، اور کبھی اپنے آخری نبی ﷺ کا وہ واقعہ سناتا جب انہوں نے اپنے محبوب ساتھی سے لا تحزن ان اللہ معنا

فرمایا تھا - اور پھر اپنے اسی محبوب کی مبارک زبان سے یہ خوشخبری دلواتا ہے کہ
فطوبی للغرباء

ایسے میں انسان اگر اکیلا بھی ہو تو اس کے سامنے ابراہیم و موسیٰ علیہم السلام کی زندگیاں ہوتی ہیں - وہ اپنی ساری باتیں اپنی اللہ سے کرتا ہے - لیکن اگر اللہ اسی بندے کو اگر اس جیسے اور بندوں سے بھی ملوا دے تو اس کے اس عظیم احسان کا جس قدر شکر ادا کیا جائے وہ کم ہے - میں ایک انتہائی گناہگار بندہ ہوں، لیکن میں جن حالات میں تھا، ان میں ایسے لوگ میسر آ جانا ایک بہت بڑی نعمت ہے - الحمد للہ ان کے ساتھ کام کرنا میرے لیے ایک سعادت ہے -

ناول غرباء ہر اس شخص کے دل میں، جس نے دین اسلام کی حقانیت کو جان لیا اور پھر اللہ کے لیے اس پر ڈٹ گیا، یہ احساس پیدا کرتا ہے کہ تم اس راہ میں اکیلے نہیں ہو! تمہارے بہت سے بھائی اور بہنیں تمہارے جیسے بلکہ کئی اس سے بھی کہیں سخت حالات کا ڈٹ کر مقابلہ کر رہے ہیں - پس تم ڈگمگانا مت! اس راہ پر چلتے جانا - چاہے اس دنیا کے زہریلے تیر تمہارے دل کو چھلنی کر دیں، تم اپنی نظر اللہ اور اس کے نبی ﷺ کی دی ہوئی بشارتوں پر رکھنا - اس راہ میں آنے والے ہر زخم کو اپنے لیے باعث سعادت سمجھنا - اللہ پر توکل رکھنا، ایک ایک قدم نبی ﷺ کی سنت کی روشنی میں اٹھانا۔ اپنے بھائیوں کو دعاؤں میں ہمیشہ یاد رکھنا - جب جنت میں محمد عربی ﷺ کی قدم بوسی نصیب ہو گی تو یہ سب رنج و الم تم بھول جاؤ گے - ان شاء اللہ -

آخر میں قارئین سے کہنا چاہوں گا کہ ناول کے بارے میں کچھ بھی کہتے ہوئے انصاف کا دامن مت چھوڑئیے۔ اگر کوئی صرف تقریب اور مزے کے لیے یہ ناول پڑھنا چاہے تو شاید اس کے لیے یہ کوئی اچھا انتخاب نہ ہو۔ اس مقصد کے لیے اور بہت سے ناول میسر ہیں جو فضول خیالات جنم دینے اور وقت کے ضیاع کا بہت اچھا ذریعہ ہیں - اس ناول کو اپنی تربیت کا ذریعہ بنائیے اور اس سے اس دنیا کے حقیقی غرباء پر آنے والے حالات اور ان کے اللہ اور اس کے بندوں سے معاملات کا اندازہ لگائیے - مصنفہ نے کس طرح سے آج کے دور میں اللہ کے دین سے سچی محبت رکھنے والوں کی زندگیوں کو الفاظ سے سانچے میں ڈھالا، اور یہ الفاظ کس طرح زخموں پر مرہم کا کام کرتے ہیں، یہ وہی سمجھ سکتا ہے جس کو ایسے حالات کا سامنا ہو۔ اس جذبے کو سمجھنے جو اس ناول کے لکھے جانے کا باعث بنا - اور پھر آپ بھی اس رستے کے راہی بن جائیے، پھر آپ بھی جان جائیں گے کہ یہ کانٹوں بھرا رستہ کس قدر پر لطف اور اس کی منزل کس قدر حسین ہے -

یوسف ~

السلام علیکم ورحمة وبرکاتہ

بسم اللہ رب الشہداء والمجاہدین

بے شک یہ اللہ رب العزت کا خاص فضل و کرم ہے کہ اللہ نے ہمیں مسلمان پیدا کیا اور امت کا درد ہمارے سینے میں بیٹھا دیا۔

اور اللہ کا شکر ہے کہ ہماری ایک بہن نے ایسا ناول تشکیل دیا جس سے کئی لوگوں نے استفادہ حاصل کیا اور زندگیوں کو بدلنے کا سبب بنا۔ اور یہ خاص اللہ کا ہی کرم ہے بے شک تعریف کے لائق تو بس اللہ کی ہی ذات ہے -

اور خوش قسمت ہیں وہ ٹیم ممبرز جو اپنی بہن کو تنہا چھوڑنے کے بجائے ان کے ساتھی بنے اور کار خیر میں ایک عظیم کردار ادا کیا اللہ ہی بہترین اجر عظیم دینے والا ہے -

ایمن الانصاری ~

السلام علیکم ورحمة وبرکاتہ

As a Chief Editor of the Ghuraba-English Novel, I would like to thank Allah first for such an opportunity and then the writer and the whole Ghuraba team; all of whom were staunch pillars of this massive eye-opening project. My words which are inked in this note is done with the intention of giving a brief explanation and understanding to the reader about this inspiring & life-changing book. I hope the few words of mine will do justice to this Islamic Novel which has already turned heads and hearts of many a reader worldwide as we had already shared episode by episode via our social media platforms (FB, Telegram, WhatsApp etc) with very positive feedback and responses,

All praise is to Allah. The initial writing was done by the writer in the Urdu language with her blessed pen and a lot of effort was taken by our editing team to translate it into English and to also maintain the same meaning & effect amidst language, grammar, syntax and cultural backgrounds in order to ensure a wider audience reach worldwide.

One of the main reasons why this Novel is heart-touching is because the many themes which run through this Novel can be related to every single reader in some way or other by either flashing back to events and times in their past lives or to even stand up and look at their present lives and relate to it.

As a massive achievement to this book, the writer has discussed many vital issues like Hijab, Niqab, Night Prayer, Jihad, Love, Friendship, Sabr etc (just to name a few) in the essence of the Qur'an and

Sunnah in a very sincere, simple and appealing manner which goes beyond any groupism & prejudices and thus appeals to men and women of all ages and background who are in pursuance of the Truth.

One of the main themes of the Novel is offering the Islamic solutions to the present problems of today which have been inflicted on the Muslim Ummah at large and which is dragging the Ummah into an abyss if they do not wake up. Fighting against oppression and injustice and supporting the oppressed by all means able is a duty amongst all Muslims and this point is reiterated throughout the Novel. Identifying the righteous who are amongst the Haqq(truth) and supporting them by word and deed is also a crucial aspect of the Novel. By offering an Islamic system as an alternate by exposing the present western culture, secularism, democracy, taghoot (false gods), nationalistic states, freedom, so called human rights, capitalist system, tyranny, man-made systems, false propaganda, patriotism etc thus demolishing all present false thoughts and secular ideologies by challenging them, the tyrant rulers & the deviant scholars who misguide the masses.

When it comes to standing for the Haqq (truth) the writer reminds us that we need to make sacrifices, even if it means breaking away from the people you love. This is the way of the Ghuraba (strangers), this is the path which leads to the ultimate salvation and this is what all of you will feel once you finish reading this Novel ان شاء الله

Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) said,

“Go on the path of truth and do not feel lonely because there are few who take that path, and beware of the path of falsehood and do not be deceived by the greatness of the perishers.”

So the main aim of this Novel is to check yourself as a Muslim and whether or not you feel the strangeness of being a Muslim at this time of our life where holding on to Islam will be like holding on to a piece of hot coal. And to check whether you feel that you are with Muslim Ummah upon the Haqq or with the misguided 'majority' who follow a watered down moderate version of Islam mixed

with secularism and goes along with the tide which makes the kuffar pleased with it and which makes you a tool in the plans of the enemy to destroy this Deen.

I hope and pray ان شاء الله that this Novel will shake the world by its roots and bring together the real strangers (Ghuraba) from all around this world to raise the word of Allah the highest and to put down the word of kufr to its lowest. May this Novel not just become a fantasy story, a passing of time read or a thing of the past. Rather, becomes a means of guidance for millions of people out there; by taking them out of the darkness of kufr, ignorance and error and guiding them to the light of Haqq (truth) and keeping them firm upon it.

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قُلُوبَنَا عَلَى دِينِكَ

(Oh Turner of the hearts <Allah, the Most High> keep our hearts firm on Your religion.

Here, I would like to remind you of this important hadith which plays a pivotal role in the underlying current of this great Novel:

Our Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم said,

بدأ الإسلام غريباً، وسيعود غريباً كما بدأ، فَطُوبَى لِلْغُرَبَاءِ

"Islam began as something strange, and it shall return to being something strange, so give *glad tidings to the strangers*.

O seeker of Truth wherever you are; Be proud to be strange, for verily Islam has reverted to becoming strange in this era as prophesied by our Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم

Once again I sincerely ask Allah to reward every single soul who exerted their best endeavors to present & publish the book in high esteem to the global readers thus we pray and thank Allah that He made us united from all corners of the world to work on this successful Islamic project i.e 'Ghuraba- English Novel'

May Allah Almighty accept this deed from all of them involved in giving wings to this inspiring & life-changer of a Novel to reach both ends of the horizon ان شاء الله

May Allah make us amongst the Ghuraba (strangers)!

فَطُوبَى لِلْغُرَبَاءِ

Penned by your Brother in Islam:

~ Umair

* * *

Awesome piece of writing i ever read... Wallah words aren't just enough to express my feelings, my gratitude to the author for such a motivating and an inspiring piece.

Kaheen zakhmo pr marham rakhta hua kaheen smjhata hua.
For me it's just not a novel. Sometimes it heals, sometimes it gives smiles - himmat dilata hua...

Working as a team member was a great pleasure for me...
And working for Allah for this purpose, Wallah boosted my iman whenever a task was given to me.
I remember when i was transcribing a video of Dr Arshad, tears were falling from my eyes, Wallah
it's soo iman boosting...

~ Umme Anum

* * *

In the name of ALLAH most Gracious and Most Merciful.

All praise and appreciations in the Majesty of That Almighty Lord Who Blessed us with Unity
Under the umbrella of Ghuraba Novel Team to work for a noble purpose of Enlightening the Hearts of
Believers with True knowledge of Deen in nooks and corners of Whole world only For The Sake of
ALLAH S.W.T.

Firstly, I would like to thank my Dear Sister Dr Binte Islam who gave me a chance of being part of
her team & to serve her in any task.

Alhamdulillah its matter of great pleasure for me that we have this novel in the form of book now in
our hands, Suma alhamdulillah.

I would like to congratulate Dr Binte Islam and all other Believers on completion of this Novel
which is actually more than a Novel.

Alhamdulillah we have a Worth addition of Stuff on The lives of strangers.

Ghuraba Novel was an iman boosting dose for me in this whole journey, its every new episode was
with a lesson of Patience, Tawakkal & full submission to Almighty Allah S.W.T despite whatever
the circumstances you are facing in your life either by your family or surroundings. It gave me
strength, hope, acted as a healing ointment for bleeding soul in my Journey of Life after Choosing
the path of Haq.

It always reminded me that whatever circumstances you'r facing either its the betrayal of loved ones
or ignorance of others or the loneliness in this crowded world, bear with patience because in the end
there are "Glad Tidings For The Strangers".

Every word of this novel is penned with Gold.

Very important topics are Enlightened in this novel, they are arranged in such a beautiful way that
attract the readers.

I hope this Novel will act as medicine for Wounded hearts & Bleeding souls of the walkers of Path
of Strangeness & will also prove a good source of Guidance for many souls in their journey towards
Light/Haq from darkness In sha Allah.

May Allah keep Us firm on the path of Haq and Accept all's efforts & reward with best in Dunya
and in Akhirah. Ameen.

~ Dr Hira Khan

* * *

کہنے کو تو یہ محض ایک ناول ہے لیکن اپنی تاثیر میں یہ ایک زندگی بدل دینے والی راہنما کتاب ہے۔ اس میں احوال ہیں مختلف کرداروں کے، ایسے کردار جو ہمیں اپنے ارد گرد نظر آتے ہیں، ایسے کردار جو زندگی کی تلخیوں، معاشرے کو ظلم و ستم اور گھر والوں کی تنقید و تذلیل کا شکار ہوئے اور آزمائش کی ان بھٹیوں سے کندن بن کر نکلے۔ یہ وہ لوگ ہیں جنہوں نے اپنے نظریے، اپنے عقیدے اور اپنے دین کی قدر جانی، اپنے رب کی پکار پر لبیک کہا اور آج اسلام کے اس اجنبیت کے اس دور میں دین کو ہر شے سے عزیز تر رکھ کر "غرباء" ہونے کا حق ادا کیا۔ انہی میں سے چند غرباء کی زندگی کا احوال ایک ناول کی صورت میں پیش خدمت ہے جس کا مقصد اس سے بڑھ کر کچھ نہیں کہ اپنے ان بھائیوں اور بہنوں کے احوال جان کر مجھے، آپ کو اور ہم جیسے ہزاروں دیگر کو حالات کا مقابلہ کرنے..... اپنے دین کی، اپنے اسلام کی اور اپنے رب کی توحید کی قدر جاننے کی ہمت ملے، تحریک ملے، جوش ملے، ولولہ ملے! اللہ مصنفہ کی اس عظیم کاوش کو قبول فرمائے اور اسے ان کے لیے نجات کا ذریعہ بنائے۔ آمین

~ سعد ~

* * *

All Praise Is to Allah and Allah Alone. Alhamdulillah the writer has been a great companion to work with on this inspiring yet emotional novel, Ghuraba. In this lovely novel you will learn how to fight your daily Muslim struggles, it'll inspire you to become like the Prophets and their wives, show you the sweetness of sisterhood and brotherhood in Islam, you'll feel a connection with the characters and their battles as if you are present there. I recommend this novel to each and everyone, it'll surely move your heart closer to Allah. In Shaa Allah.

As a team member it's been an honour to be part of Alhamdulillah, there's respect given to each member and everyone's treated as a family member. I liked the fact that if you had some work due in 5 days but didn't get to finish it in that period of time you'd always be excused Alhamdulillah, the writer has never put me in trouble for being a bit late.

~ Faiza

* * *

Assalamu alaekum

Ghurabah-This name has baffled me since I was a kid and I started to associate myself immediately with the novel as soon as I read the Title. The novel written by our sister somewhat reminds me of my life and my struggles (Alhamdulillah for everything). She has written it in a very beautiful way and Alhamdulillah I could play a small role in it as well. I am sure when you read it you would feel that the writer is talking about you. The way she connects the theme with Islam is amazing. May Allah bless her and make every test easy on her and may he accept all of our efforts in sha Allah.

~ Xahid

* * *

Assalam o alaekum wr wb.

For the people who are on a journey of pure thoughts and belief, this book is an exact answer for their missings in this journey.

It's my belief that this is just a beginning and pearls of Ummah will now keep on creating such pieces of art bi idhnillah.

Our society, our generation and most importantly our Soul is in utmost need of such work. May Allah give us strength to strive in this most needed cause. We have to utilize our skills for this, even if it's just a single SHARE or a single word.
May Allah reward the author of this book with His blessings.

May Allah bless what He Azza Wa Jal thinks best for whole team of this Book!

~ Taif

* * *

السلام علیکم ورحمۃ اللہ وبرکاتہ

میں اپنے خیالات لکھنے میں اتنی اچھی تو نہیں لیکن میں ضرور شیئر کرنا چاہونگی جو میں نے یہ ناول پڑھنے کے بعد محسوس کیا ہے

۔ غرباء " !! یہ ناول میرے لیے زندگی بدل دینے والی کتاب ثابت ہوئی ہے الحمد للہ "

، میری زندگی میں بھی کچھ ایسے حالات آئے ہیں ، اور کچھ ایسی چیزیں ہوئی ہیں جو اس ناول میں خولہ کے ساتھ ہوئی ہے اور اس وقت ان حالات میں کیا کرنا چاہیے انکا سامنا کس طرح کرنا چاہیے یہ مجھے اس ناول کے ذریعہ پتا چلا ہے ۔ اور صرف یہی نہیں بلکہ دین سے جڑی بہت سی چیزیں ، بہت سی باتیں ہیں جسکا مجھے علم تک نہیں تھا وہ مجھے اس ناول کو پڑھنے کے بعد علم ہوا ہے ۔ بہت سی چیزوں کی اہمیت معلوم ہوئی ہے ۔ اس ناول کو آج کے دور کے حالات کو نظر رکھتے ہوئے لکھا گیا ہے اور بہت ہی بہترین انداز میں ہر چیز کو پیش کیا ہے ۔ میں یہ ضرور کہوں گی کہ ناول پڑھنے کے بعد ایمان اور بھی مضبوط ہو گیا ہے الحمد للہ ۔ اور میں چاہوں گی کہ لوگ اسے پڑھیں ، یہ کتاب انکی زندگی میں بہت گہرا اثر ڈالنے والی ثابت ہوگی ان شاء اللہ ۔ میں بہت خوش نصیب ہوں کہ مجھے غرباء ٹیم کی ممیر بننے کا موقع ملا اور ڈاکٹر بنتِ اسلام کی شکر گزار ہوں کہ انہوں نے مجھے اس قابل سمجھا ۔ مجھے بہت خوشی ہوتی تھی جب وہ ناول سے ریلیٹڈ کوئی کام کرنے کو کہتی تھیں ۔ انہوں نے کن مشکل حالات سے گزر کر اس ناول کو مکمل کیا ہے اللہ انکی یہ کوشش اور محنت کو قبول فرمائے ۔ اور اپنے محبوب ترین لوگوں میں شمار کر لے ۔ اور انہیں اور ہم سب کو اسکے راستے میں نکل کر اس رب کی خاطر اپنی جان قربان کرنے والے بنائے ۔ آمین یا ربی

بنتِ حسین ~

* * *

Assalamu alaikum waramatullahi wabarakatuh

I'm not good at expressing my thoughts but I'm trying to convey my thoughts and experience i got after reading this novel. I'm glad that i had come across this novel because it was really a life changing novel for me. The moment i found this book, I was not at the best level of iman, but this novel revived and strengthened my iman. Alhamdulillah not only a single time but it's the same case everytime i read it. I don't know if its just me or others as well that i can relate myself to Khawlah & that I had gone through some of the circumstances that Khawlah had to go through in this novel.

Other best thing about this novel is that it highlights issues about what's going on in our society about which I had always wondered why no one spoke about it or let alone do something about it and that's the beauty of this novel, it addresses every aspect of those issues beautifully which

everyone escaped to address. Through this novel i got to learn so much & i really recommend everyone to read this beautiful novel.

Finally, becoming a team member of this novel was like answer of my prayers Alhamdulillah. I really want to thank Dr. Binte Islam for adding me as her team for this beautiful cause.

I always wanted to do something and to raise voice for our brothers & sisters who are being oppressed and brutally killed all over the world. I really appreciate her efforts for how she wrote the novel by adding even tiny little details to it & for how wonderfully she leads the team and really appreciate all other members' efforts who worked effortlessly for Allah's sake alone & in the end of those efforts a fruit in the form of this beautiful novel was achieved Alhamdulillah.

I pray that May Allah accept everyone's efforts and give them reward in both the worlds immensely. May Allah make this novel a source of hidayah for everyone and make this novel a source of maghfirah for the author & all the team members. Ameen

~ Binte Parwaiz

* * *

السلام علیکم ورحمة الله وبرکاته

میں امید کرتی ہوں کہ ناول پڑھ کر ضرور آپکی سوچ اور زندگی میں بہت تبدیلی آئی ہوگی۔ "غرباء" ناول کی ٹیم ممبر کی حیثیت سے کہیں زیادہ ایک قاری کی حیثیت سے لکھنا چاہوں گی کہ اس ناول نے میری زندگی پر کتنا گہرا اثر ڈالا، میری سوچ کو ایسے یو ٹرن دے دیا، کہ میرے پاس الفاظ نہیں ہیں۔ اس ناول کو پڑھنے سے پہلے مجھے لگتا تھا کہ جہاد صرف صحابہ رضی اللہ عنہ کے دور تک محدود تھا لیکن ناول پڑھنے کے بعد احساس ہوا کہ یہ تو ایسا فریضہ ہے جو قیامت تک جاری رہے گا۔ جیسے جیسے علم میں پختگی آئی ویسے ویسے عقل حیران ہوتی گئی کہ میں کس دنیا میں رہ رہی ہوں؟ بالکل ہی مختلف دنیا۔ یہاں ہر ایک سٹیٹس، پیسہ، بہترین مستقبل کی ریس میں لگا ہوا ہے اور وہاں۔۔ جہاد کی دنیا ہی اور ہے۔ جہاں ہر کام اللہ کی رضا کے لیے کیا جاتا ہے، جہاں ریس ہے تو شہادت کی موت کی۔۔ جہاں موت کا انتظار کیا جاتا ہے۔۔ پھر مجھے احساس ہوا کہ اصل زندگی تو وہی ہے، جو صحابہ کرام رضی اللہ عنہ نے گزاری، پھر مجھے احساس ہوا کہ دنیا مومن کے لیے قید خانہ کیسے ہے، پھر مجھے سمجھ آئی کہ زندگی کا مقصد کیا ہے۔

پھر میری سوچ نے ایک نیا رخ لیا۔ پھر پتہ چلا کہ جنت پانا کوئی آسان کام نہیں ہے، اسکے لیے صحابہ رضی اللہ عنہ اور ہمارے اسلاف نے ہر طرح کی قربانیاں دی تھیں، آج ہم کیسے قربانیاں دیے بغیر اس راستے پر چل سکتے ہیں۔ پھر ہمت بڑھی کہ آگے بڑھنا ہے کسی طرح، آزمائشیں تو ہیں ہی لیکن جب مقصد واضح ہو جائے تو رکاوٹیں پار کرنا زیادہ مشکل نہیں رہتا لیکن ہاں، صبر اور استقامت۔۔۔ اس راہ پر آپ اکیلے ہو جائیں گے بالکل اجنبی کہ پھر آپ قبروں کو دیکھ کر خواہش کریں گے کاش اس جگہ آپ ہوتے واللہ یہ وہی فتنوں کا دور آ پہنچا ہے جہاں اپنے ایمان کی حفاظت خود کرنی ہے۔ ہر طرف سے دنیا میگزین کی طرح کھینچے گی مگر ہمیں اپنا ایمان مضبوط کرنا ہو گا۔ اللہ سے تعلق، اس سے محبت، حق کی راہ پر استقامت چاہیے ہو گی۔۔ اللہ اس فتنوں کے دور میں ہم سب کے ایمان کی حفاظت فرمائیں اور اس ناول کی رائیٹر سے راضی ہوں جنکے ذریعے کتنے ہی بھٹکے ہوئے کو راہ ملی، اللہ ہم سب کی یہ ادنیٰ سی کوشش قبول فرمائیں۔

آخر میں میں آپ سب سے گزارش کروں گی کہ اس ناول کو زیادہ سے زیادہ آگے پھیلانیں۔۔ جہاد کا علم پھیلانا بھی جہاد کی ہی ایک قسم ہے۔۔

اللہ آپ سب سے راضی ہوں۔

سارہ ~

* * *

ناول 'غرباء' کے لیے ٹیم کی ممبر ہونا اللہ تعالیٰ کی طرف سے ایک سعادت تھی۔ آنکھوں سے دیکھ رہے ہیں کہ اسے پڑھ کر لوگوں کی زندگیاں بدل رہی ہیں۔
اللہ سے دعا ہے اس کتاب کے ذریعے کیا گیا دین کا کام قبول کر لیں۔

عائش بنت محمد ~

* * *

All praise be to Allah, we praise Him and seek His help, guidance and forgiveness, and we seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our own selves and from our bad deeds. Whomever Allah guides no one can misguide, and whomever He sends astray no one can guide.

“Islam began as something strange and it will return to being strange, so glad tidings to the strangers.”

- Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)
(Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 145)

A precious illuminating book titled 'The Ghurabah Novel' touched our Hearts, healed our Distress, Bestowed Upon us Glistening Hopes and Awoke us from the very Deep Slumber that we were in.

A priceless novel that seeps deep into our souls and minds and Purifies us from within bringing a drastic revamp to our Hearts that have been wilted and faded.

A life Changing Novel that encompasses and narrates stories of Individuals who are esteemed as the Ghurabah. The novel includes Amazing stories which very much Relate to Our own lives making it easier for us to take heed and learn lessons from. It is a brilliant novel penned down incredibly well and a Medicine for those hearts that yearn to achieve and seek the Love and Pleasure of Allah Azza Wa Jal.

A must read novel that will bring about a serious change in you In sha Allaah Ta'ala.

I Ask Allah Azza Wa Jal to Spread the Light of this Illuminating Life changing Novel to the corners of the world and Make it as a means for people to wake up from their deep Slumber and Answer the call of their Ummah.

I ask Allah Azza Wa Jal to Bless and reward the Author with goodness and prosperity for Taking such an Untiring effort to Pen down such an Amazing novel.

I ask Him Azza Wa Jal to Bless and immensely reward the entire team for their Immeasurable Hardwork in Helping This Novel become a success.

May Allah Azza Wa Jal unite us all in the Gardens of Paradise and may He accept us.

~ Muadh

* * *

Assalam o alaekum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu, assalatu wassalam ala Rasoolillah.

All praise belongs to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'aala and we are all just His sinful slaves, may He s.w.t forgive us all Ameen.

Ghuraba novel is a kind of novel that totally changes your focus of life, the perspective, your priorities and most important of all... your relation with Allah s.w.t and His Deen. Ghuraba novel is not an ordinary novel that would tell you some lovey-dovey story or some useless philosophy which makes no change in a person or if it does it's usually negative.

It's highly unique from all other novels ,It completely changes a person , it invites you to think about your purpose of life, and lot more topics that you have been ignoring all your life.

This novel is not couple of ordinary paragraphs, it's a need of every Muslim today. And highly recommended for youth. In this era of extreme fitna Allah s.w.t chose my beloved sister in Deen Dr.Binte Islam (may Allah s.w.t bless her immensely) for this amazing work. Indeed, it's by mercy of Allah and her tireless effort that today we have such a precious piece of writing in the form of 'Ghuraba' novel. I don't have enough words to describe its importance but it's worth the read.

As a team member of ghuraba I always kept this work at my first priority list because it deserved it. I did what little that Allah allowed me to do, Alhamdulillah Allah s.w.t gave me this opportunity to be part of this beautiful team, each and every one of them is a Gem, Wallahi each and every one of them is a Gem. I never met such amazing people before, the love for the sake of Allah, the sincere duas, that unconditional love for Deen and every one running to catch every little opportunity to help spreading deen of Allah. SubhanAllah . May Allah s.w.t bless them all, and grant them the best in dunya and aakhirah.

To the readers I would say that Set your priorities O my brothers and sisters. Remember Allah comes first no matter what. Dunya is not any place of enjoyment, rather it's a test. Allah will test you on every step. And always keep praying for hidayah because this dunya and everything that it contains is zillah it's not nai'mah. A thing or a person is only nai'mah if hidayah is attached to it...

Seek knowledge and humble yourself and surrender to what's Haq. May Allah s.w.t make it easy for all of us and forgive us.

Ameen.

And all praise belongs to Allah s.w.t.

~ Saalyha

* * *

It's more than difficult to live in the roam and to fight with the pop. The novel "Ghuraba" is just like this fight and the marvelous achievement is its fighters will be the winners against pop if the guild gets the actual worthy theme.

It's not the romantic story but it's the story of entire love. The love which is your strength, not your weakness. The effective words will force you to explore the enigma of triumph.

It's about the life of strugglers, life of strikers, life of strivers, life of survivors.

May you get the actual sense and move toward a positive change.

~ Mehr

* * *

Assalamu alaikum,

A tremendous work and ultimate way to show the people truth/haqq. Some episodes are like i was literally feeling that I am there and living that moment. In fact, now when I come to know that somebody likes reading I suggest them this novel, it has two benefits; they are enjoying their hobby and side by side getting benefited by this da'wah. Moreover, consistency of writer needs to be appreciated, after living in this duniya full of fitnah she didn't lose her goal and continued writing and we hope it will be a sadqa e jariya for her. May Allah except this effort from her and bless her in this life and hereafter.

~ Tayyab

* * *

Message from the writer

Alhamdulillah at last this long journey of novel "Ghuraba" got completed. I would like to thank my team members and my brothers & sisters (readers) who stayed connected all this time. It is because of your constant encouragement that I was able to complete this book, otherwise there were times when it had become really impossible for me to carry on. I'm really grateful to my team members especially. They really proved to be a gift from Allah to me. I never met people like them before. They were always there to help with utmost zeal and passion for the sake of Allah. Allah sent them as my helpers and surely they were chosen by my Lord. They were always there to help, no matter what I asked and when. They did their best to complete the required task. Whether it was regarding collection of material, translation from Urdu to English or English to Urdu, writing down words of Islamic speakers (from their lectures), writing down words of nasheeds from audios/videos, editing pictures for the page, searching out authentic ahadith, looking for volunteers. Thus they did whatever & whenever I asked them to do. Despite their really busy schedules, they kept this novel on their priority list, and that too for the sake of Allah only. I neither have enough words for gratitude, nor can I give them any reward in return. Only Allah can reward them the way they deserve.

Special thanks to the translators & the editors of this book, who worked day and night, tirelessly to bring forth the English version of my Urdu book. No doubt they gave a professional touch despite being no professionals. May Allah reward them immensely for helping when nobody was willing to come forward. No doubt their efforts will prove to be a blessing for our English speaking brothers & sisters, in sha Allaah.

I would like to share my experience regarding this book. I did not have any intention to write it down. I am not any writer even. But the boat of my life got stuck in such fierce storms that Wallah I was compelled to hold the pen. As if Allaah Himself guided me at every step, every sentence, every episode.. I do not have words to explain the miracles that happened along the way. Allaah made me come across people whose lives needed to be added in the story.. things happened to me as if for the novel only..

Do not think high of me, I'm not any super pious person. Rather I am a really sinful slave of my Lord. Still Allaah made me a means for this da'wah through pen, jihah through pen.. I'm really grateful for that.

Novel "Ghuraba" is specifically dedicated to those brothers and sisters who stepped out to walk the path of Haq, but got their feet, hearts and even souls wounded coz of the hardships they had to face (or are facing). I tried to give meaning to their pain through my words, tried my utmost to make these words act as medicine to their bleeding souls, so that when they don't find any friend or well-wisher in this harsh world of cruelties, they find this book as their caring friend. Such that their hearts might feel some comfort and solace in its sentences...

May Allaah keep you all happy in both this world & the hereafter, and may He make you all of those who carry out great tasks for this religion and Muslim Ummah.

Just remember, never ever think of yourself weak or unworthy of helping this deen. This thinking that *etc etc can do this but I can't, I'm not good at anything, I'm not worthy of anything etc etc*.. these kinds of thoughts are from the devil. Today, when the disbelievers & the enemies of this religion are doing their best to harm the religion of Allaah, even your very small efforts can do wonders in sha Allaah. You only need to step out, Allaah makes out ways from the impossible... But He makes out ways only for those who try and have faith.

Keep this in mind that along with the swords, pens are a need too. Those striving for falsehood are working tirelessly on both the fronts. Why have we then forgotten one front altogether?

Do not underestimate the power of social media. Become the reporters of Haq. Raise voice for Haq here (but with Hikmah and Daleel). Show the people the truth. Be the voice of the oppressed Ummah so that you do not have to face shameful end on the day of resurrection. In sha Allaah we'll carry on with our page. Keep us in your sincere duas. Promote our novel and share it with your family and friends. Help us reach maximum hearts. In sha Allaah we'll upload the pdf soon.

Jazak Allaah khair.