

ENGLISH BIMONTHLY ISSUE 105 MARCH-APRIL 2022

# SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living



**Be modest and you will be able to attain every kind of high success in life.**

# A MAGAZINE FOR THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

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

Spirit of Islam bimonthly...

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

United in prayers  
SOI Editorial Committee



# SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living

ISSUE 105 MARCH-APRIL 2022

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

PROF. FARIDA KHANAM

**EDITORIAL DIRECTOR**

DR. NAGHMA SIDDIQI

**ADVISORS**

INAYATHULLAH UMRI  
PROF. ZAHEERUDDIN

**SUB-EDITORS**

DR. MARIA KHAN  
MOHAMMAD USMAN

**PUBLISHER**

FATHIMA SARAH

**OFFICE**

SPIRIT OF ISLAM  
002, HM WIMBERLY, 6  
BERLIE STREET CROSS  
LANGFORD TOWN  
BENGALURU 560025, INDIA

**ACCESS ONLINE AT**

[www.spiritofislam.co.in](http://www.spiritofislam.co.in)

**CPS INTERNATIONAL**

[www.cpsglobal.org](http://www.cpsglobal.org)  
[www.cpsquran.com](http://www.cpsquran.com)



# CONTENTS

■ FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S DESK	5
■ THE GOAL OF CPS	8
■ A READYMADE WORLD	10
■ TOWARDS GLOBAL PEACE	11
■ WHERE DO WE STAND?	14
■ THE MONTH OF <i>RAMADAN</i>	16
■ LIVING IN A WORLD OF PROFESSIONS	18
■ THE JOURNEY OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE	20
■ THE POWER OF SPEECH	23
■ THE ROLE OF WOMEN	26
■ CPS NEWSLETTER	37
■ CHILDREN'S CORNER	39
■ BOOK REVIEW	41
■ INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY	44
■ THE WORD OF GOD	46
■ YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED	48

## FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S DESK



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

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## THE RECIPE OF SUCCESS

**T**WITTER is a microblogging website. In November 2021, Indian American Mr Parag Agrawal (b. 1984) was elected as the new CEO of Twitter. While making this announcement to elect Mr Parag as CEO of Twitter, the reasons for doing so were also disclosed. According to the outgoing Twitter CEO, Jack Dorsey (b. 1975):

"He (Parag) understands the company and its needs. Parag has been behind every critical decision that helped turn this company around. He's curious, probing, rational, creative, demanding, self-aware, and humble. He leads with heart and soul and is someone I learn from daily."

What is the secret of success in any field? This is exactly what Mr Jack has mentioned for Mr Parag. This principle of success holds good not only for the secular field but also for the religious field. The fact is that success and progress are the names of realizing and actualizing the potential that lies dormant in a human being. To realize this potential, a person needs to inculcate and develop these same traits that were mentioned by Mr Jack. This is the secret of achieving a goal. Without this kind of total commitment, no great work can be accomplished, neither in this world nor in the Hereafter.

***Success and progress are the names of realizing and actualizing the potential that lies dormant in a human being.***

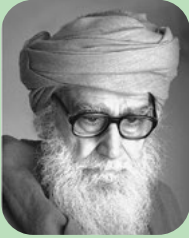
The Prophet Muhammad has enumerated the secret of success in these words: A person gains knowledge through learning, even-mindedness; and serenity comes from exercising patience; one who strives to find good, receives good and who desires to protect oneself from evil is protected from evil. (*Al-Mujam al-Awsat by Tabarani*) In another *Hadith*, the Prophet said, "A deep understanding is developed through sincere striving." (*Al-Mujam al-Kabir by Tabarani*) □

**Prof Farida Khanam**

*spiritofislamperiodical@gmail.com*



## IN FOCUS



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

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

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

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

***-Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021)***



## THE GOAL OF CPS

*Self-reform & Well-wishing*

**A** GENTLEMAN once told me, “You have made statements about some national and community-related issues that have made you isolated from the Muslim community. This approach is not helpful for your mission.” He then went on to advise me to carry on my mission while paying due respect to and taking into consideration the sentiments of the Muslim community. He further stated that by ignoring one’s community, no one can succeed in his cause. I said, “It is probably not clear to you what my goal is. You are aware of the goals of others and you have assumed that I harbour similar ambitions. There is a fundamental difference between the goal I have set for my mission and the goal of other movements. Other movements aim to bring about practical tangible results while my goal is communicating and conveying the message of Truth. The success of others is possible only if they get the support of the community so that they can achieve the result they want. To get the support of the community, they deem it necessary not to say anything that might go against the popular sentiments of the community. They cannot afford to lose this support.

***We aim to convey the message of God to people as it is. It is our responsibility to convey the message of God to people in its pristine form and as their true well-wishers.***

On the contrary, our case is that we have risen purely for the task of calling people to God. For this purpose, our vision is only to convey (36: 17). It means we aim to convey the message of God to the people as it is. It is our responsibility to convey the message of God to people in its pristine form and as their true well-wishers. Then it is the responsibility

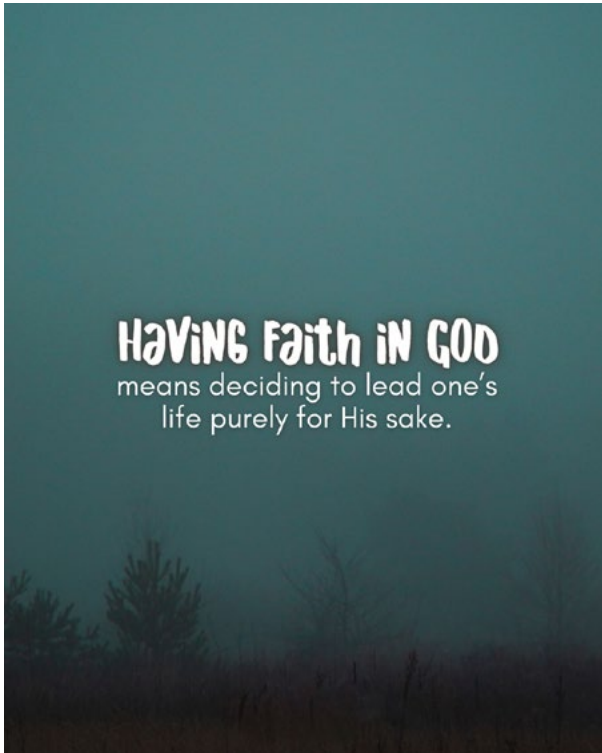
of others how they receive this message and what they do with it. I told him that there are two types of people in the Muslim community. One type runs the politics of rabble-rousing in the name of Muslim interests. Some people in this group are involved at the level of thinking and some people are practically involved. Their view is that the Muslim community is surrounded by enemies and conspirators. Therefore, it

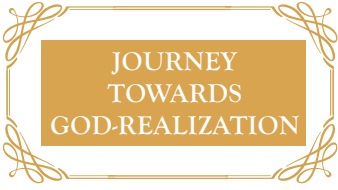


is important to fight these people. I am undoubtedly cut off from this class.

However, at the same time, there is another section in the community which is serious, which gives importance to reforming itself instead of starting negative turmoil against others, which believes in the peaceful task of calling people to God instead of violence in the name of *jihad*. This other section of the Muslim community is with me all over the world, and through the cooperation of this section, our mission is running successfully everywhere. Then I read this couplet of an Arab poet:

Of the rabble-rousers, I have but a few support,  
Of the sincere people, my numbers are many □





## A READYMADE WORLD

*Acknowledge Your Creator*

**I**F a person were to be transported to the moon or if he found himself on some planet other than the earth, it would be a very shocking experience for him. He would see that none of those things exists on the moon or on other planets which are necessary for a human being's survival. We call this life-support system. This system is nowhere to be found in the known universe. Look at the example of the fish out of the water which wriggles about on dry land.

On the contrary, when a man takes stock of his life on earth, he finds that all those things are available here in abundance which are necessary for him to survive. For example, light, water, air, food, etc. Why is it that for human beings all the favourable conditions of life are already present on this earth? And does man understand the price of acknowledgement expected from him, for what has already been provided on the planet earth for him?

***O God! I believe  
in Your existence  
without seeing  
You; O God! I  
surrender myself  
before You without  
any compulsion;  
O God! I admit my  
helplessness in the  
face of Your power.***

There are so many amazing phenomena in the universe. For instance the stars, the planets, the oceans, the mountains, etc. All these things are the creations of God. They all acknowledge God, but this is compulsory acknowledgement; it is not by choice.

Exceptionally, God has created man as a free creature. Man is required to acknowledge God by his own choice. He should stand on the planet earth and say: "O God! I believe in

Your existence without seeing You; O God! I surrender myself before You without any compulsion; O God! I admit my helplessness in the face of Your power." That is the acknowledgement expected from a human being. Those who measure up to this acknowledgement will find that these blessings will continue to increase for them, but those who failed to acknowledge these blessings will be deprived of them forever. □

# TOWARDS GLOBAL PEACE

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



---

## THE KEY TO PEACEFUL LIVING

**E**VERYONE likes a house surrounded by green trees. Verdant foliage beautifies our world. It is this idea that has brought farmhouses—houses in gardens—into being.

However, it is difficult to find anyone who can listen to the silent message of the trees or who tries to adopt the culture of the tree in their own lives. The culture of planting trees is widespread but adopting the culture of the tree is seldom in evidence. Trees beautify our homes but they do not beautify the person living in that house.

A tree lives in the same world as the one in which we live. Nonetheless, there is a difference. People's lives are marred by tension, malice, hate and violence, whereas all these negative features are missing from the tree culture. Man is like a walking tree, but he fails to follow the culture of the tree in his own life. Trees share our world. For man, this world has become a source of complaint, hate and stress; this same world has a different meaning for a tree. The beauty we see in the tree has come from this very world. It has not been imported by it from outer space. How was this possible for the tree? The reason is that the tree, by nature, has adopted the art of conversion: converting things to one's advantage.

What does the tree do? It takes minerals and water from the soil and converts them into food for itself. The tree, through the process of photosynthesis, takes light energy from the sun and converts it into chemical energy, which is then used to fuel its activities.

This is the result of the art of conversion. In doing so, every tree gives a silent message to man: Learn the art of conversion and the whole world will become a means of spiritual food for you. Make the whole world a global source of your personality development. You will be able to live in this world as a complaint-free person.

For example, if a person says something that goes against what you think, then turn it into a point for discussion. If somebody speaks ill of you, then make that a source of self-discovery. If you are discriminated against, then draw the lesson from this instance that you need to develop in yourself that missing quality on the basis of which you have been discriminated against. If someone provokes you, you should defuse the issue through unilateral avoidance. If someone makes you angry, you should calm yourself down by forgiving him. If a person differs from your point of view, then enter into a discussion with him and thus increase your intellectual development.

***Spirituality is not a mysterious term. It is only another name for positive thinking. Positive thinking means living in positivity despite all kinds of negative experiences. This is the key to spirituality.***

There is a story that tells us that once someone hit Rama with a stone. In return, Rama embraced the person and in this way, he made the throwing of a stone a means to inculcate in him a positive quality, that is, love for humanity.

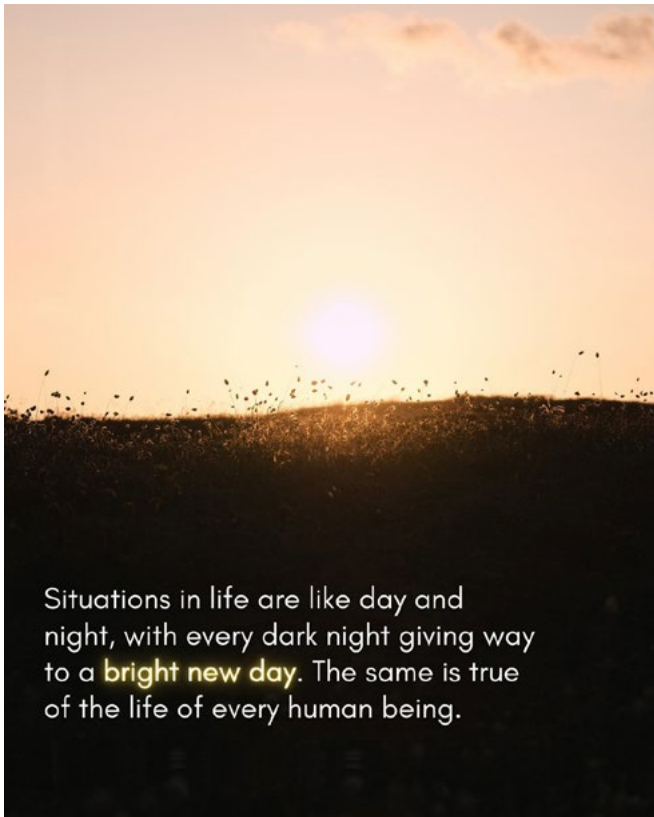
This story teaches us a lesson on how to adopt the culture of the tree in one's own life. If you throw a stone at a tree, it will give you fruit in return. This is the highest kind of positive behaviour. By adopting this positive behaviour, you can make the whole world turn in your favour, just as the tree does.

Everyone is free to act. This culture of freedom has filled the world with differences. It is these differences that lead to negative thoughts about others. Then what is the art of living in such a situation? It is in some way or the other to convert every difference into something positive which will be in your favour.

Spirituality is not a mysterious term. It is only another name for positive thinking. Positive thinking means living in positivity despite all kinds of negative experiences. This is the key to spirituality. Any man or woman who wants to live as a spiritual person must adopt this formula, that is, the art of conversion: converting negativity into positivity. Spirituality is not a natural gift: it is an acquired attribute.

Spirituality makes you tension-free and gives you a peaceful mind. Spirituality in itself is a non-material quality, yet it is the basis of all kinds of success, including material success. If you want to live as a successful person and die as a successful person, then you have to learn the art of spiritual living. Spirituality makes one a super person, i.e. a superior version of themselves. Spirituality enables you to unfold the hidden treasures of your nature. Spirituality is the secret of super-achievement in this world. It is the only key to peaceful living. A peaceful individual will be a peaceful global citizen in every way. Peace at the individual level will result in global peace. ☐

*Learn the art of conversion and the whole world will become a means of spiritual food for you. Make the whole world a global source of your personality development. You will be able to live in this world as a complaint-free person.*



Situations in life are like day and night, with every dark night giving way to a **bright new day**. The same is true of the life of every human being.

# WHERE DO WE STAND?

*Recognize the Greatness of God*

**A** GREAT Islamic figure died on September 22, 1979. Newspapers and magazines were then flooded with adulatory articles about this person. These articles eloquently stated the great respect, love and adulation their writers had for the deceased, and how the death of this person had filled their hearts with sorrow. After reading many of these articles, I asked one of the admirers of the deceased that these newspapers and magazines of theirs had been coming out for more than a quarter-century, could he cite some articles from these that mentioned God with similar zeal and enthusiasm?

A believer is characterized by the fact that he is ever-conscious of the greatness of God. The name of God produces thrill in his very soul. I asked him whether the same newspapers and magazines ever carried articles expressing these extraordinary feelings about God that they had expressed about their leader. He responded in silence.

It is not just a matter of one Islamic movement. The fact is that today all Muslim institutions and movements are overflowing with the adulatory mention of some of their elders. Their assemblies are filled with the mention of their leaders. Everyone has made someone their elder and leader, and when the names of these elders come up, it seems

*A believer is characterized by the fact that he is ever-conscious of the greatness of God. The name of God produces thrill in his very soul.*

that their tongues and pens have gone into a state of ecstasy. On the contrary, in no circle does it appear that people receive contentment by the discussion of God. A mention of God's name does not evoke the sentiments of adulation. God has become just a dry creed. On the other hand, when their beloved personalities are mentioned, their entire beings are shaken with sentiments and respect. The vents of their hearts and minds are torn open. The memory of their leaders enlivens their memories.

God gives light to the whole world through the sun, but observing the sun does not create any extraordinary feelings. However, a person takes great pride in proclaiming to the world that his beloved personality has bestowed rays of hope to the whole world with his speeches. Seeing the system of winds, they are not thrilled by the handiwork of God. However, to convey the achievements of his leaders, he uses glorious

words to the effect that the leader has driven the winds carrying his great deeds all over the world. In the earth and in the heavens, observing the great wisdom of God at play does not uplift his spirits. However, he finds all the words of the dictionary inadequate to convey the greatness of his beloved leader's thoughts and wisdom. God controls the earth and the heavens with His immense power but observing this, he does not tremble with awe. However, his elders seem to him as if they were holding all countries and nations together. The strange management of water that has made the earth an exceptional planet in the whole known universe does not surprise him. In order to describe the achievements of his leaders, he says enthusiastically that the whole world is being saturated by the fountains of their wit. Perhaps man wants to make some visible thing the centre of his love and devotion, and when he does not see the Creator, he makes a creation his centre of love and adulation. □



## USA

Centre for Peace and Spirituality  
2665 Byberry Road, Bensalem, PA 19020  
kkaleemuddin@gmail.com



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# THE MONTH OF RAMADAN

## *For Introspection*

**R**AMADAN—the month of fasting, is a special and blessed month for Muslims. It is a month of restraint and worship; of caring and thanksgiving; of repentance and piety. The multitude of benefits of this month inspired the Prophet to exclaim: “Welcome to the one who purifies!”

It is a month of spiritual activism when believers endeavour to awaken their spirituality. It is a scheme to improve human beings; to weaken man’s dependence on material things and strengthen his spiritual resolve, so that he may enter the higher realms of piety. The month which encourages all to ask for higher things from God; to ask for His forgiveness; for His blessings and for success in the Hereafter. *Ramadan* is also the month of patience.

***Ramadan is the month of patience. One has to have patience to live a life of restraint and be self-controlled. The most important thing required to lead an Islamic life in this world is patience.***

One has to have patience to live a life of restraint and be self-controlled. The most important thing required to lead an Islamic life in this world is patience. Unlike other months this month provides more time and a congenial atmosphere to help the believer to contemplate on the meaning of the Quran. Therefore it is also known as the month of contemplation. Believers turn away from many activities and spend time in peace and tranquillity which creates an environment for moral rectification.

The month of *Ramadan* serves as a training course in humility. Humility refers to fear of God which means realization of a person’s helplessness vis-a-vis God’s greatness. This ensures the spiritual growth of a person thereby cleansing him of feelings of pride and ego which lead to his being distanced from God.

The above aspects of the month of fasting were fully observed by the Prophet and his Companions. Today, if we compare the culture followed in society during the month of *Ramadan* what do we see? One cannot deny that there are individuals who observe this worship in full earnestness in its spirit. However, the general tendency is more towards lavish food at *Iftar* and *Sehri* time. Spending more time in shopping centres, purchasing material gifts for others and for oneself. More people begging on the streets, excessive sleeping during the day and



continuous activity during the night without taking into consideration the needs of the sick, elderly, children and people of other communities.

Then how about the eve of *Eid-ul-Fitr* and the day of *Eid* itself? A portion of a *Hadith* pertaining to the day before *Eid* is as follows: During the last night of *Ramadan*, the sins of all the believers who have been fasting are forgiven. It was asked, 'O Prophet of God, is this night the one known as the 'night of power? The Prophet replied, 'No, but as soon as the deed is done, the reward for the deed is immediately bestowed'.

According to this *Hadith*, on the last night of *Ramadan*, those amongst the followers of the Prophet who have fasted in the true spirit will be rewarded for their deeds, and this will be noted in their records. This night of *Ramadan* is referred to in other *Hadith* literature as the 'night of reward' (*Al Bayhaqi*). God rewards His believers for every good deed. Due to the special significance of worship during *Ramadan*, this reward has been specifically mentioned by the Prophet.

It is so unfortunate that the night before *Eid* is spent by most people in careless indulgence and entertainment. They throng shopping centres and market places. The above *Hadith* is a warning against all such frivolities.

Another *Hadith* regarding the day of *Eid-ul-Fitr* is reported as: When the day of *Eid-ul-Fitr* dawns on them, then God is pleased and proclaims to the angels. 'O my angels, what is the reward for the doer who has completed his deed, The angels reply, 'Our Lord, such a person should be given the complete reward for the deed done.'

The day of *Eid* is a day of glad tidings and its true spirit is to promote spiritual values among people and create a peaceful environment in society. This day should be celebrated with praises of God, thankfulness, while refraining from causing any kind of inconvenience to fellow citizens irrespective of what inconveniences one faces during celebrations by others in society. □



# LIVING IN A WORLD OF PROFESSIONS

## *Set Your Priorities Right*

**W**E are living in a world of professions. In the present world, it is mostly your profession that defines your identity. Everyone is Mr Profession or Ms Profession. The profession-oriented life is the generally accepted lifestyle of every man and woman.

Having a profession means living according to the dictates of the “money market”. Everyone tries to develop a professional skill that enables them to be a sharing partner in the flow of money in the market. This culture has resulted in a new phenomenon that was absent in former times, that is, living in accordance with external requirements and setting aside internal requirements. In other words, you no longer live according to what is required by your inner nature.

***It is the lack of intellectual development which has resulted in all those problems that are common in our present age, for example, tension, unnecessary disease, lack of peace of mind, and lack of happiness.***

The result is that while everyone is a developed personality in terms of their profession, in terms of their own nature, everyone is an underdeveloped personality.

Choose a person at random and ask him about his profession. He will readily give you specific answers. If you speak to him about his professional subject, he will give you a detailed answer to every question. But, if you ask him about those issues which pertain to human life, that is, non-professional issues, then you will find that he is not mentally prepared to discuss this subject.

Once I was in a European city where I happened to meet a learned man. When I asked him about his profession, I found that he was well-disposed to share information with me. I learnt a lot from him regarding his professional field. But, at the same time, he was uncomfortable with his wife and admitted that he had decided to separate from her. I asked him the reason. He replied with some confidence: “She is an adamant person and I don’t like adamant people.” I said that his wife was doing a very tough job and so she had to be adamant to be successful at it. But, I failed to convince him. The reason was that he knew the science of profession, but was quite ignorant of the science of life.

This is true of every man and woman. Every person is living in a culture of duality. When it comes to their profession, everyone is well-equipped. But, as far as the science of life is concerned, everyone is ill-equipped. This is so common that finding an exception is very difficult.

It is not a question of balance; it is a question of priority. I am not saying that everyone should keep a balance between these two requirements. I am saying that everyone has to rightly set, or reset his priorities.

The problem is that when you try to reset your priorities, you fear that you are going to damage your commercial interests. You fear that when your mind is engaged in intellectual issues, it will not be able to engage in money-related issues. You gain one thing, but at the same time, you lose another. But, this is not a genuine excuse. You should not think in terms of money; you should think rather in terms of intellectual development. Intellectual development is so important that no excuse for neglecting it is acceptable. Adopt a simple formula: make intellectual development your priority and then try to manage all other aspects of your life.

A lack of intellectual development is not a very simple matter. It is the lack of intellectual development which has resulted in all those problems that are common in our present age, for example, tension, unnecessary disease, lack of peace of mind, and losing that very thing that man so desperately wants—happiness. □



## **CPS Ladies Group**

New Delhi

Official Number

+91 9910288870

# THE JOURNEY OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

*Bright Future Ahead*

**R**ELIGIOUS differences have always existed between people. That is why interreligious dialogue has been found in one form or the other since ancient times. Fourteen hundred years ago, the Prophet of Islam held in Madinah a three-religion conference—in modern terminology, a trialogue—to exchange views on religious issues.

Such attempts have repeatedly been made in history. The circumstances that unfolded following the Second World War led the Christian Church, in particular, to pay great attention to this matter. Through its continuous efforts, dialogues of this nature are regularly being held in various countries, between Muslims and Christians in particular. I have been fortunate to participate in several of these dialogues.

***Whenever common grounds for agreement between two or more parties cannot be arrived at on an ideological basis, then the way of practical coexistence must be adopted.***

These efforts have borne fruit, at least partially. For instance, it is as a result of these efforts that on the one hand, a Church has appeared once again in Ben Ghazi (Libya) while on the other, a mosque has been built in Rome for the first time in recent history.

If the Quran is consulted to find its guidance on this matter, we find two main principles on which to hold dialogues. One is derived from this verse of the Quran:

Say, 'People of Book, let us come to a word common to us that we shall worship none but God. (3: 64)

The first and foremost principle for any dialogue held to discuss two or more religions is to strive to find a mutual basis for peaceful coexistence.

It is a fact that finding a common ground in secular matters is comparatively easy, for nothing is held as sacred in secularism. On the contrary, everything acquires a sacred character in religion. Therefore, it becomes a difficult task to find a basis for agreement in religious matters. However, despite all difficulties, we must continue our efforts peacefully, irrespective of the results.

The second principle given by the Quran is purely a matter of pragmatism. That is, matters should be settled on practical grounds by avoiding their theoretical aspects. This principle is derived from this verse of the Quran:

You have your religion and I have mine. (109: 6)

In today's context, this principle is generally referred to as religious coexistence. This means that whenever common grounds for agreement between two or more parties cannot be arrived at on an ideological basis, then the way of practical coexistence must be adopted.

The Community of Saint Egidio provides a good example of a continuing dialogue of this nature. This promotes interaction on a mass scale between adherents of different religions. In view of its vastness, it may be rightly termed a super-dialogue. The religious meet held under the auspices of the Community of Saint Egidio on a large scale each year makes a considerable contribution towards the achievement of the goal targeted by interreligious dialogue.

Here I would like to add another point. We should not judge our efforts in this matter only by the results of meetings held in the name of formally arranged interreligious dialogue. The truth is that "interreligious dialogue" is not now limited to specific meetings held in the field of religion. It has rather assumed the form of a vast historical process—spontaneous, ongoing and perhaps never fully recorded. Discussion on controversial matters is in tune with the spirit of the age. Today, it has permeated all walks of national as well as international life.

The modern industrial revolution and modern communication have added such vast dimensions to human relations that now the entire world has been converted into a global village. People of various persuasions are coming closer on a universal scale. This interaction serves as an ongoing dialogue of an informal nature. In this way, with distances narrowed, the confrontational attitude now gives way to adjustment.

Interaction in itself is a form of dialogue. When, as a result of circumstances, interaction between people of different persuasions increases, the purpose of the dialogue is served.

Today, in educational institutions, offices, and factories, in travels, on playgrounds and in national and international activities, adherents of different religious traditions are meeting one another on a scale hitherto unwitnessed.

In the course of this continuous and vast interaction, for the first time in human history, people seem less like strangers to one another. A great gap has been bridged. People are learning one another's languages. They are becoming familiar with one another's culture. Making concessions to one another has become a need of the people themselves.

These factors have brought people closer right across the world. And it is a psychological truth that closeness and interaction in themselves serve the purpose of practical dialogue. In this way, a natural dialogue has come into existence and has become an ongoing process at all times and in all places.

Probably the most signal result of this historical process is that after a long intellectual struggle, religious intolerance has been universally rejected. Religious intolerance has now been replaced with complete religious freedom. Today under the auspices of the United Nations, all the nations of the world have signed the universal declaration of human rights.

In accordance with this declaration, religious freedom has been accepted as the natural birthright of all human beings. As opposed to practices in ancient times, no one now has the right to persecute anyone on the basis of religion. This is the change which has confined the sphere of religious difference to peaceful negotiation.

The effects of this can be seen in all walks of life, whether religious or secular. Every one of us, consciously or unconsciously, plays a part in making religious coexistence a reality.

Interfaith dialogue becoming a part of the historical process holds great promise for us, as in this case its success is assured. This is how every great revolution of history has got underway. Whenever a movement goes beyond the stage of individual or group efforts and joins the historical process itself, then the continuity of that movement is ensured and ultimately nothing can stop it from reaching its destination.

In short, the interreligious dialogue had its beginnings in individual interaction, paving the way for discussions held in religious gatherings. Ultimately, the time came when it became a part of a world movement. Now, if the course of events is any indication, God willing, that day too will dawn when the world is no more ridden with religious disputes, and we are able to live in a peaceful and harmonious world. □

# THE POWER OF SPEECH

## *Islamic Guidance on the Use of Tongue*

**T**HE tongue is a great blessing for humankind. No creature other than man possesses such an asset. Meaningful speech is a very rare phenomenon in the universe. No two astronomical bodies, no two trees, no two animals, and no mountain or river can enter into a meaningful conversation. It is only human beings who have this unique capacity.

Being an important organ of a human being, it is like a double-edged sword. It has plus points as well as minus points. In terms of use, this unique blessing can be described in two different ways—healthy use and unhealthy use. The right use of the tongue can produce a healthy atmosphere in society. Conversely, the wrong use of the tongue is so baneful that it may destroy the whole social fabric. The right use of the tongue can create the spirit of love among people, while the wrong use of the tongue will create hatred and intolerance in society.

One who uses his tongue along healthy lines will receive a double reward. This will help develop his personality and then he will receive more and more blessings from the Creator. Make your speech the result of positive thinking, rather than an abrupt expression of ill-considered ideas.

***Make your speech  
the result of positive  
thinking, rather than  
an abrupt expression  
of ill-considered  
ideas.***

The Quran says: There is no good in most of their secret talk, except in the case of those who enjoin charity and kindness or reconciliation between people. If anyone does that, seeking the pleasure of God, We will give him an immense reward. (4:114)

This Quranic verse sets the standard for secret as well as open talk, namely, soundness and utility. One can only live up to this standard by being sincere in what one says and speaking only after analyzing the matter at hand, and what one says should stem from a positive mind. According to this verse, a person must refrain from futile talk. He should never indulge in talking just for the sake of talking. Now the question is, what is the best manner of speaking? And what content of one's speech may be regarded as worthwhile? The Quranic criterion for proper social interaction is based on three principles. All three principles are described in the above verse of the Quran, which sets them forth as follows:

**Charity:** speaking with the true giving spirit

**Kindness:** speaking with the spirit of well-wishing towards others

**Conciliation:** speaking in such a way as to create an atmosphere of harmony among people

This is what constitutes well thought-out speech and is the only legitimate use of one's tongue. This kind of speech is useful to both the speaker as well as the listener. For the speaker's part, it conveys sincerity and positivity, while for the listener it is also fruitful in all respects.

An article published in the *Time* magazine web portal brings out in vivid detail the importance that is given to measured and guarded speech in Islam:

*The Prophet once remarked that Lord had commanded him nine things. One of them was to speak the truth, in prosperity and adversity.*

The tongue is called "the mirror of the heart." What appears on our tongue is a chief indicator of what is in our hearts. This becomes even truer in those unguarded moments when anger, frustration, or stress gets the best of us and our tongues lose any sense of discipline.

The Prophet Muhammad said that one of the ways of knowing if there is hypocrisy in our hearts is to examine what we say with our tongues when we become angry. If it is foul

and vile words, then that is a measure of how much purification of the heart remains.

The Prophet Muhammad said that "anyone who believes in God and the Last Day should either speak well or remain silent." Silence is golden, so goes the saying. Thinking before you speak is the key. (*Ramadan, Day 25: Restraining the Tongue*, July 24, 2014, [time.com](http://time.com))

The following is a selection of Quranic verses, *Hadith* reports and prayers that highlight how to use the ability of speech to good effect.

- The Merciful who taught the Quran. He created man and He taught him speech. (55: 1)
- (O God!) Loosen the knot in my tongue so that they may understand my speech. (25: 28)



## Teachings of the Prophet

- If the observer of a fast does not give up false utterances and their pursuit, then God does not require him to give up his food and water.
- Fasting is like a shield. When one of you is observing a fast, neither should you indulge in indecent talk nor should you create an uproar. And if someone talks ill of you, or fights with you, you should just say, "I am observing my fast."
- A man may speak of God's pleasure without giving it much importance and yet be raised in status by his Creator. A man may say something which is abhorrent to God, without attaching any importance to it, and it may sweep him straight into Hell.
- A person once said to the Prophet, "O Messenger of God, a certain woman is said to offer prayers, observe fasts and give alms generously, but she hurts her neighbours by the way she speaks." The Prophet replied, "She will go to Hell." Then the man said, "O Messenger of God, a certain other woman says fewer prayers, keeps fewer fasts voluntarily and offers little in the way of alms. She only gives a few pieces of cheese. But she never hurts her neighbours with her tongue." The Prophet replied, "She will enter Paradise."
- According to a Companion of the Prophet, the Prophet forbade not only indulgence in slander and backbiting, but even listening to such talk.
- The man who indulges in backbiting will not enter Paradise.
- God! I seek from You a tongue that speaks the truth and a heart which is pure and clean.
- The Prophet once remarked that Lord had commanded him nine things. One of them was to speak the truth, in prosperity and adversity.
- A supervising angel remains vigilant to preserve on record every speech that is uttered by a person's tongue. □



# THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN COMMUNICATING THE WORD OF GOD

*An Interview with Dr Naghma Siddiqi*



*Dr Naghma Siddiqi is the editorial director of **Spirit of Islam**. She has been associated with the CPS mission for close to two decades. Her role in bringing out the teachings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan to the world through the use of technology has been instrumental. She has designed and produced books and teaching material which highlight the message of peace and spirituality based on the Islamic Scriptures. She has dedicated her life to this mission. Her*

*passion has permeated to her family. Dr Naghma Siddiqi along with her family members has been tirelessly working to spread the message of peace. We interviewed her to know the inspiring story of her journey. She lives in New Delhi. She can be contacted at [naghma@cpsglobal.org](mailto:naghma@cpsglobal.org)*

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## **Will you please enlighten our readers with some details about your formative years?**

I was born in a modern Muslim household. My father Dr M. N. Siddiqi (d. 2013) and my mother Prof. Najma Siddiqi were both educationists. They provided us with good education and gave us the freedom to pursue our interests. We are three siblings. My elder sister Seema Jalal is an interior designer in Dubai. She is involved in the CPS mission. My younger brother, Faisal Siddiqi lives in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. He is an IT professional and helps with our technology needs. When my husband, Navdeep Kapur, and I joined the mission, both my parents also started attending CPS classes.

I received my education primarily in Delhi, first in a convent school and later in a premier English-medium school. In the early '70s, I studied in the USA where my father went for his doctoral studies for five years. I graduated from Delhi University in 1983 in Zoology Honours. I always wanted to study more and even took admission to pursue my master's in MBA and Psychology but was unable to complete these courses. In 2007, I decided to do my master's in Islamic Studies. Though I felt I would not be able to complete even this programme, God sent His angels and enabled me to complete my master's in Islamic Studies from Jamia Millia Islamia in 2008 and my doctorate from Jamia Hamdard in 2017. These courses gave me the background to understand Maulana's writings better in comparison.

Through campus recruitment, I was selected for a management programme at one of the premier corporate organizations of India immediately upon graduating from Delhi University in 1983. I joined the organization and received excellent training in the fields of advertisement and media there. Upon getting married, I ventured into business in the same field. My business flourished. I gained fame and fortune. During the next two decades, my material life was flourishing. But I was living in a sense of dissatisfaction. I wanted more from life. I always felt I had a higher calling and was wasting my life in material pursuits.

### **What did you think of religion before you met Maulana Wahiduddin Khan?**

My parents brought us up to be good Muslims and good human beings. We prayed five times a day, kept all the fasts, paid the *zakat*, all of us performed our *Hajj* early in life and tried to be good Muslims. However, my life and my religion seemed like two separate compartments of my life. Islam was never integrated into my life. Wanting to understand Islam better, I started asking questions from my elders. But neither did I receive any answers nor any encouragement. So I stopped questioning, while continuing ritualistic Islam, though I had always had an inner urge to stand for God and Islam.

In the early 2000s, I was jolted out of my spiritual slumber, through a health setback. It was one shock after another. Both my grandmothers, who had been the source of my religious strength passed away. Later my sister-in-law died within just a few months of an illness at the age of 52. I regularly prayed to God not to let me die till He had shown me my purpose and role in life and helped me to perform it. I even got up for *tahajjud* prayers and started reading material on Islam that I could get my hands on.

As I only knew English, I first went through all the material on Islam in English. I have fond memories of my father visiting the Urdu Bazar, Jamia Masjid to buy books on Islam. I often visited the Goodword Bookstore at Nizamuddin, though I had not yet been introduced to the writings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. Over time, I collected more than 500 books in my home library, all of which I then read. But tragically, I had not found my answers or the purpose of my life.

The 9/11 incident in 2001 made me start questioning Islam itself. I went to one scholar after another asking them about the Islamic position on the issue: Was Islam a religion of violence or peace? Was this *jihad*?

Unfortunately, not even a single scholar gave any clarity on the Islamic position on the issue. I stopped questioning and prayed to God for guidance.

In efforts to stand up for God's mission, whenever I met scholars and people associated with Muslim organizations, I requested them to give me an opportunity, even at an assistant level, to serve Islam. When I found that an organization was publishing an English translation of the Quran, I offered my services as a proofreader. But I did not find any opportunity. In time, I realized that there was no real scope for women in Islamic circles and organizations. I continued to read material on Islam and I would spend hours in prayer. My prayer was only one: God, guide me to the purpose of and role in life!

### **How were you introduced to Maulana? Kindly describe your first meeting?**

I realized there were others like me who wanted to find answers to questions and learn about Islam. Finding no place to go, we decided to set up a library where we could get together and interact to find our answers. With this thought, in May 2004 a friend of mine and I decided to set up a library and interaction platform and named it ClearLight. To ask for support for the same we visited some people, one of whom was Dr Saniyasnain Khan, whose bookstore I often used to visit. Patiently listening to our plans, he recommended Maulana Wahiduddin Khan as the scholar, donated a set of books to set up our library and gave us contacts for our endeavours. He also sent his daughter Sadia Khan to join us. During the summer of 2004, ClearLight received a tremendous response. Thereafter we realized the need for a scholar to guide us further in our search. I decided to visit Maulana to request him to provide guidance.

Through Sadia, we contacted Prof Farida Khanam to arrange a meeting with Maulana. I then found out that he was a world-renowned scholar who had written more than a hundred books. I had read his book *The True Jihad* till then and thought that this book gave a completely different picture of *jihad* from other books. I was very intrigued to meet him and understand his thoughts better. This is how I was introduced to Maulana.

As arranged, a colleague of mine and I from ClearLight went to Maulana's office at C-29. I remember as we sat in the small office on the ground floor when Maulana came down the stairs. My first impression of Maulana was that he was different from all the other scholars I had

seen or met so far. He did not have an all-knowing air about him. He seemed approachable, spiritual and most importantly very humble.

When he sat down with us, the first thing he asked me was, "Do you have any questions?" I was spellbound that an Islamic scholar of such renown, for that matter any Islamic scholar was allowing me to ask him questions. Hesitatingly I asked him the same question I had asked so many scholars: "Was the incident of 9/11 *jihad*?" His prompt reply was: "It is not *jihad*, it is *fasad*—terrorism. Islam does not sanction such acts." He went on to define terrorism from the Islamic perspective: The use of arms by any individual or organization, except for an established state. Then he went on to clarify the position of Islam.

I listened enthralled to finally receive the answers to questions I had been looking for so long. In my mind, I knew Islam was a religion of peace, but the information I had received before this was completely different. I wanted to know more. Maulana asked me to come to his Sunday lectures. I decided to go to Maulana's lecture to seek further guidance. I realized that ClearLight had only been a stepping stone to get me here. I requested my other colleagues to also start coming to Maulana, which many did.

### **How did Maulana influence your thinking?**

I went to Maulana's room for his Sunday Class and I sat by the entrance of the door waiting for the lecture to start. Seeing me from afar he called me towards him where the other CPS members were sitting.

That day Maulana gave a lecture on the Creation Plan of God, that God created eternal Paradise and then created man for Paradise. But as Paradise needed to be earned, God divided man's life into two parts: a small portion to give a test on this earth so he could show that he was deserving of inhabiting Paradise and an eternal part in which he could live eternally in Paradise, if he proved himself deserving of it. This made complete sense to me. It completely addressed my mind.

While listening to this lecture I was reminded of a dream I had had when I was in my early teens. Every night before sleeping I used to read some chapters of the Arabic Quran and prayed to God to guide me towards Him and what He expected from me. One night I had a dream which made me feel close to God. I felt that God was calling me towards some higher mission.

I found the similarity between the dream and Maulana's lecture. After the lecture, I approached Maulana and mentioned the dream.

He explained that at that young age when I had had the dream, I was immature. Now that I had reached the age of maturity, I was in a position to understand the meaning of a calling towards a higher mission. This gave me the conviction that CPS was that mission. This made complete sense to me.

In the thrill, I continued to thank God for guiding me towards Maulana. Then I remembered that I had had that dream at my cousin's house in Nizamuddin East in the mid-seventies and this dream was realized in September 2004 in Nizamuddin West. This was another indicator that my dream was to become a reality at CPS.

Maulana also gave an interpretation of one part of my dream which I had not understood. He said that it means you will receive Islam in the modern idiom which addresses today's man. These words of Maulana made me realize that God had finally guided me to what I had been waiting for all my life. I felt that I had been guided to the place where God would help me to understand Islam. I decided to continue on this journey with renewed confidence.

When my husband Navdeep heard of my experience in Maulana's class, he asked me to explain it to him. Maulana had advised me to write my experience in a diary, which I had done. I read out my notes of Maulana's Creation Plan of God lecture to my husband. He was so enamoured just listening to a summary of Maulana's lecture, and said, "This scholar thinks like me. I want to meet him." From then on we became regular attendees of these classes.

I started to read Maulana's books and we regularly attended his lectures. Slowly, I realized how Islam and life could be integrated, by applying Islamic teachings in life. Maulana's teachings started changing my thinking, speech and actions. Seeing the change coming in my life, my parents also started attending the Sunday Classes. Through them, the mission started spreading in our family. We all realized that Maulana's lectures and books were different. They gave us a general introduction of Islam in the scientific framework. Maulana's books address modern minds and become the voice of their hearts and minds.

I feel that if I had not met Maulana Wahiduddin Khan my life would be completely wasted. Through Maulana, God answered my prayers. He guided me towards the purpose of life, my dream was realized and I was blessed with a meaningful role in God's Mission. I cannot ask for more from God, but that He helps me to perform my role in His Mission with steadfastness and accepts it.

## **What inspired you to devote yourself wholly to the mission?**

When we had attended Maulana's lectures for a few weeks, I approached Maulana and asked him, "Maulana why are you giving lectures to only a few people in this room? The whole world needs to understand Islam in the universal way you explain." He smiled at me and replied: "Who is stopping you? You take it to the world."

I was spellbound again. When I had earlier contacted many religious scholars and senior members of various religious institutions I had come in contact with and asked them if I could help them in any way, I was never encouraged. And here, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan was giving me—a woman—an open invitation to take his message to the world. I felt that through Maulana God had given me an open invitation to join His mission and play a role in it.

My husband and I decided to dedicate ourselves to this mission. After a few months, we realized that Maulana had prepared a corpus of material. What we could do was, organize and make soft copies of the material, and develop a website to take it to the world. Under the guidance of Prof Farida Khanam and Dr Saniyasnain Khan, we initiated efforts to computerize Maulana's English books. Navdeep put his office people on this task. Helped by the CPS team, we started making soft copies of Maulana's books, articles and *Al-Risala* English magazine. I volunteered to proofread the material along with Raazia Siddiqui, Maulana's granddaughter.

When I was going through this material, I immediately realized that this material was different. It was clear; it explained Islam in a simple and rational manner and was easily understandable for modern educated people. While going through the material we realized that not only was the English of the books at par with international publications, so was its publishing. This is Dr Saniyasnain Khan's contribution, who had set up Goodword Books to print and publish books of international standard.

We also decided to start recording Maulana's Sunday lectures, so the message can be shared globally. For this, we brought a small Sony Handycam recorder to the next class. Dr Saniyasnain Khan understood the importance of this task and took the video recordings to a whole new level. He started recording with a better camera, and in time developed the CPS Centre as a studio and started regular classes there. All of us in the CPS Team worked under the guidance of Farida Aapa and Dr Saheb to take Maulana's material to the world.

The next step was to take the message to the world. The CPS Team developed the website, [www.cpsglobal.org](http://www.cpsglobal.org) and started placing all of Maulana's books and material there for the world. An exercise of preserving the material for online consumption has been ongoing for more than a decade: Quran translations, commentary, magazines—*Al-Risala*, *Spirit of Islam*, books, FAQs, audio and video lectures among others. With the help of God today most of the material is available online.

People from all over the world who were already a part of Maulana's mission, and many new people joined the CPS Team thereafter. Not only did the mission give us all a purpose in life, but it also gave us a divine mission whereby we could share our discovery with others. All of us realized that if we wanted eternal Paradise for ourselves, we had to involve ourselves in the mission of proclaiming the divine truth to all humankind.

**Maulana's central teaching was about being connected to God. Kindly share with us the most inspiring teaching of Maulana which helped you in this connection.**

From early in my life, especially after my dream, I always felt close to God. But I did not know how to connect with Him and stand for Him. What Maulana's writings and lectures helped me to do was that I realized my Creator and understood His Creation Plan.

I think my realization of God grew deeper when Maulana's book *Kitabe-Marefat* was published and Aapa started translating it into English. At that time, I was helping Aapa to organize the English translations. I was involved in proofreading. Going through the English translations of *Discovering God* and *The Purpose of Creation*, I realized that perhaps one of the greatest contributions of Maulana is to help people realize God, i.e. *marifah* and connect with Him. I had heard Maulana say we need to live in *Alhamdulillah* (being grateful to God) culture. Now I realized how to do it so as to have a deeper realization of God. God Almighty is the source of all the blessings we receive in the world: our existence, our life-support system, food, water and so much more. Maulana helped us to realize everything we receive as a blessing of God and acknowledge Him as the Giver, while we are all simply receivers.

Maulana used to say that the strongest feeling is the emotion of love. The Quran says that "those who believe love God most" (2:165). I realized that if we realize that God is the Giver of each and everything we receive, we will develop a deep love of God. Then we can make God our



supreme concern. This, in religious terminology, is known as making God one's deity, (*mabud*). By making God our supreme concern, we make God the object of our worship and then we are involved in the continuous remembrance of God. When I drank water, when I ate food, when I breathed in oxygenated air, I thought of how God had not only created me but also gave me all that I needed. And all that He wants in return is acknowledgement and thankfulness (*shukr*) for these blessings and voluntary submission to Him. This is truly a very small price.

Although I personally feel that I have not achieved even an iota of the level of acknowledgement and devotion that God deserves, I constantly seek forgiveness from God for my shortcomings. And I pray to God that He will help me develop the sort of personality out of His mercy that he can find eligible of inhabiting in eternal Paradise.

### **What is your message to the women members of CPS in particular?**

I had mentioned earlier that during my seeking phase, I asked whoever I met, be they Islamic scholars or people associated with Muslim organizations, to give me an opportunity, be it minuscule to come to the service of Islam. Receiving no encouragement, I felt that there was no real scope for women to stand for Islam. Maybe God only wanted men for the Islamic mission. Though it saddened me, I accepted it.

Receiving an open invitation from Maulana to take his mission to the world, I realized that it was not God who had closed the doors for women to get involved in the Islamic mission, it was Muslims who were standing in the way. Later when I read Maulana's book *Islam Rediscovered*, I realized that what Maulana called Islam was what is mentioned in its original sources, Quran and *Sunnah*. He called for a distinction to be made between Islam as presented by the Prophet Muhammad, information about which is available to us in the Quran and the *Sunnah* and Islam as practised by later Muslim generations—both in theory and practice. Maulana gave us the formula: differentiate between Islam and Muslims.

I recalled another guidance that Maulana had given me soon after I came to CPS. Once we were sitting with him. After listening to my life story Maulana told me that I have to change. He told me that this change would alter 99% of the learnings I have had. I was shocked when he said that. But he explained that I had received Islam from Muslim culture. I must unlearn this understanding of Islam and learn what is given in the Quran and the *Sunnah*. From then on I decided I will strive to decondition myself and try to apply the real teachings of Islam in my life. It has been a long and ongoing struggle.

Over time I realized that not only did Maulana encourage me to work for the mission, but he also encouraged all women to get involved in conveying God's message to others. Giving arguments through the examples of Prophet Abraham's wife Hajira, Maulana explained that all women can perform a revolutionary role to come to the service of the Islamic mission. He said we have to follow in the footsteps of Hajira. She sacrificed her entire life as well as that of her son Ishmael for the Islamic mission. Today, God has given us an opportunity to stand for His mission. He advised, "You must follow in the footsteps of Hajira. You must also work for the Islamic mission at the point of sacrifice." This greatly inspired me and other female members of the CPS who dedicated themselves to this mission.

In February 2020 just before the Coronavirus lockdown, Maulana specifically called me up and told me to initiate more efforts to organize women members of the CPS. Subsequently, the CPS Ladies Interaction Forum was initiated. Today women from all over the world are part of the CPS Ladies Group. The platform is helping women to do a regular study of Islamic material in the modern idiom, apply it in their own lives and share their learning with others. All the women are doing this with great passion. As I was motivated to work for the cause of Islam when Maulana gave me an opportunity, others also work with full enthusiasm. I advise more and more ladies to join the CPS Ladies Group if they want to understand Islam that addresses their minds and inspires them to stand for God.

### **What are the tasks you are shouldering post-Maulana Saheb's demise?**

God took Maulana away from us on April 21, 2021. Each member of the CPS Team worldwide felt completely lost. However, I am sure each was and will continue to be guided by God. As for me, it was a great shock, a personal loss. I was in complete silence. Thinking, crying, I was a bundle of emotions. However, Maulana's last advice to all of us helped me to realize that while God had taken Maulana away from us, God Himself was alive and would always be with anyone who calls out to Him and stands for His mission. God has made arrangements for our continued guidance through Maulana's lectures and writings. We just need to rededicate ourselves to the mission. That is what I did.

Then I was reminded of Maulana's telephone call to me before the Coronavirus lockdown in March 2020. He said:

Do whatever needs to be done to call people towards God and a God-oriented life which is a life of peace and spirituality.

I took this as guidance from God through Maulana. Thinking of these words, I have since felt a sense of urgency and as if we were all always standing in front of God. The first thing the CPS Team did was organize the ongoing tasks of the mission meticulously. The CPS Team had been placing material on [www.cpsglobal.org](http://www.cpsglobal.org) to take God's message to the world. We first decided to make more efforts to consolidate and revamp the site for easy accessibility.

We remembered the task Maulana gave us during the Quran Conference in April 2019, **To Take the Quran, a book for all humanity, to the World**, in fulfilment of the following prediction of the Prophet: "There will be no home remaining—big or small—into which God will not have caused His word to enter." (*Musnad Ahmad*)

We realized that this was possible partially through *e-Dawah*. Through Maulana, God had arranged the explanation of God's message in simple language and in rational terms. If we wanted to take this to the world, the Internet was the only place this vast resource of information could be made accessible for seekers of truth. We began developing a Quran website [www.quranforyou.org](http://www.quranforyou.org) as a desktop and mobile website as well as an app, where the translations and commentary of the Quran can be placed in all major languages. Presently we have translations in nearly 40 languages; there is a translation even in braille both English and Hindi, and a commentary of the Quran in five languages. The English translation of the Quran is accepted worldwide as simple, clear and in the contemporary idiom.

The websites will showcase the material in an organized form under major headings. These can be searched for specific Quran verses as well as for a topic. They will enable easy searches for visitors to find specific topics and find answers to questions in their search for truth. Those who want to study the Quran deeper can go through the commentary and supporting material: articles, videos, audios, books, magazines, etc. that are being placed verse-wise and topic-wise.

In the traditional age, we had to go to places where people gathered physically to convey God's message to them. Today, God has created social media as an online platform for people to gather. CPS has been availing of these social media opportunities through Facebook, Instagram and YouTube to preserve and showcase our video library. We are now organizing our social media handles so that seekers after truth can easily access these resources through LIVE lectures, short

videos, posters and by showcasing our complete library of magazines, articles and books.

### **What kind of inspiration do you draw from Prof Farida Khanam?**

When I think of Aapa: Prof Farida Khanam, I first thank God for her role in the mission. The role of women as presented by Islam was revived through her role in this mission. She was the one to bring to the world the English version of the mission. If it was not for her dedication, English-reading people like me and my husband, and many CPS members could have never had access to Maulana's writings. We would have been spiritually deprived and without purpose. Maulana had advised us: "After I am gone if you want to know what I would say in a particular situation, ask Aapa."

This advice of Maulana is really coming to our rescue. We are striving to preserve the ideology of the mission and take it globally. Many times, when we have questions from the ideological perspective, Aapa's guidance comes as a blessing.

What I find most inspiring about her is that she always maintains such an unassuming stance. But, when we ask her anything, she is immediately able to grasp the situation and give us direction. This makes me realize that while she has a storehouse of knowledge of the mission, she considers this as help from God. She does not attribute it to herself.

By maintaining complete modesty, Maulana had made himself deserving of God's continued guidance, by which he was able to perform his role as the guide for a divine mission. If anyone of us wants to perform our role, we also have to discover our modesty, our helplessness in comparison to God's All-Powerfulness. We must realize that it is God who is getting everything done. We are only the stones that God is making speak.

I pray to God to help us maintain our modesty and to help us to discover and perform our role with His help. And through His Special Mercy, He admits us into Gardens of eternity. May God guide all towards the divine mission! □



# CPS NEWSLETTER

Center for Peace and Spirituality USA has launched the first-ever **Maulana Wahiduddin Khan Legacy Competition** and is awarding grants up to \$5000 USD. You can participate by submitting either a research paper, a comprehensive essay or book reviews.

**Maulana Wahiduddin Khan Legacy Competition  
\$5,000 grant for the winning research paper!**

The aim of the Maulana Wahiduddin Khan Legacy Competition is to promote critical thinking, academic research and encourage the habit of reading and reflection. You can participate by either submitting an academic research paper or a comprehensive essay on this year's theme: **Life, Works and Thoughts of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan**. You can also submit book reviews which will be displayed on our website for the world to read.

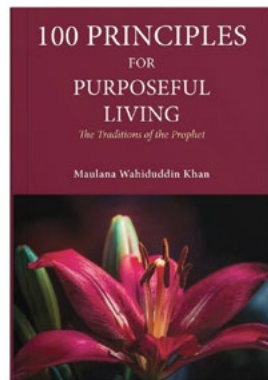
Please click the link for details: <https://www.cpsusa.net/legacy>

**100 Principles for Purposeful Living**, a new book by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan launched. Download the book for free from the link: <https://cpsglobal.org/books/100-principles-purposeful-living>

## 100 PRINCIPLES FOR PURPOSEFUL LIVING

The book explains the importance of acquiring knowledge and wisdom, gives 100 principles of purposeful living based on Quranic wisdom, traditions of the Prophet, his companions and the followers of the companions.

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE COPY AT  
[www.cpsglobal.org/books/mwk/english](http://www.cpsglobal.org/books/mwk/english)



We are gifting 15 copies of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's latest book, **100 Principles for Purposeful Living**. For eligibility, please participate through any of the following social media links:



Dr Maria Khan, writer, speaker and a member of CPS Delhi team hosts an interactive Facebook Live session regularly. She discusses various aspects of Islam with her guests on the show. The list of participants to her show include:

- Hamza Ali Abbasi (Actor, Director)
- Dr Mona Mehta (Editor: Speaking Tree, Times of India)
- Adnan Sami (Playback Singer, Pianist)
- Muniba Mazari (UN Ambassador)

Please visit her Facebook page for timely updates for such programmes: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/drmariakhanofficial/>

An interfaith programme was conducted at Vidyajyoti, New Delhi on February 3, 2022. CPS International was represented by Prof Farida Khanam, Ms Shabina Ali and Ms Fathima Sarah. The interaction was based on these topics:

- Prophet Muhammad: A Guide and a Beautiful Model
- Islam in the Modern World
- The Universal Message of the Quran
- Maulana Wahiddudin Khan: A Modern Muslim Thinker

CPS International member Ms Fathima Sarah was invited to give keynote address in an interfaith programme organized by Chavara Cultural Centre, Delhi on February 4, 2022.

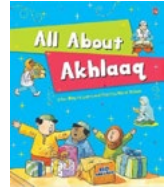
The topic was **The Role of Islam in Promoting Peace and Harmony.**

A Vaccination Camp was held for 15-18 age group students in a school at Kamptee, Nagpur on January 10-11, 2022. On the completion of the camp, CPS team members from Kamptee introduced the Peace Mission of CPS and the Quran to the vaccination team. Marathi translation of the Quran and peace literature in Hindi and Marathi were gifted to them.

# CHILDREN'S CORNER

*Selections from All About Akhlaaq*

Goodword is an award-winning publishing company with a splendid range of Islamic Books in many languages. It offers innovative products for children, including Quran stories, moral stories, craft and activity books, gift packs, Islamic games, Arabic and Islamic readers for home and school.



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**Dear kids,**

It is difficult to find a fun way to teach children *akhlaaq*, that is, moral values and good manners in Islam. **All About Akhlaaq**, being a fun book, will aid them in this. Colourful and story-filled, with an easy-to-use format and short skits, it will give a better understanding of each moral by encouraging children, parents and teachers to engage in role-playing. Each theme, listed alphabetically, is expressed in simple language and has attractive illustrations on every page. Here, we reproduce one moral **Cleanliness** from this book.

The author Sr. Nafees Khan has a special interest in children's education and played a key role in the establishment of two full-time Islamic schools, Islamic Foundation School and Al-Falah School in Toronto.

Name of the Book: All about Akhlaaq

Author: Sr Nafees Khan

First Published: 2012

ISBN: 9788178989969

Pages: 58

Published by: Goodword Books, New Delhi

## CLEANLINESS

Two friends are going for Juma Prayers. Before entering the masjid, Imad twitches his nose.

Imad: Basheer, did you brush your teeth and take a shower before putting on clean clothes?

Basheer: Ummm, I was in a rush.

Imad: It is very important to do so, especially when you come to the masjid. The Prophet told us to be clean. This way people will not be bothered by anyone's bad breath or smelly body.

Basheer: I'm sorry! Now, I feel embarrassed.

Imad: I did not mean to embarrass you. We are responsible for keeping one another on the '*siratul mustaqeem*'. Cleanliness is half of '*Imaan*' which means half of faith and is therefore very important. You should brush your teeth as soon as you get up and before going to bed. Allah loves clean people.

While coming out of the masjid, they see a boy slip on a banana peel. They rush to help him.

Boy: Aow!

Basheer: Are you okay?

Boy: I think so! Thank you.

Imad: This is why it is so important to throw things in the proper place.

Basheer: My mother says that Allah gets happy if I remove a broken piece of glass from a path to protect even a stranger from getting hurt.

Imad: Yes, that is correct. It is also regarded as an act of worship. Islam teaches us to be clean and thoughtful. We have to be clean at all times and in all places. That is why we do *Wudu* at least five times a day. *Wudu* keeps our hearts clean.

Basheer: How?

Imad: When you do *Wudu* you must think of Allah, and the thought of Allah keeps our hearts clean.

Basheer: Thank you, I have learned so much about cleanliness from you today.

### **LET'S SAY**

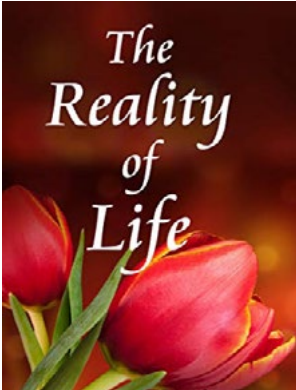
C is for 'cleanliness of body, mind and soul'. Keeping surroundings clean and tidy should also be our goal.

### **LET'S REMEMBER**

The Prophet said, "Cleanliness leads towards faith, and faith leads its possessor to Paradise." (*Tabarani*) □



# BOOK REVIEW



**Name of the Book: The Reality of Life**

**Author: Maulana Wahiduddin Khan**

**Published by: Goodword Books, New Delhi**

**First Published: 2007**

**ISBN: 93-91481-24-8**

**Pages: 50**

**Reviewed by: Faheem-ul-Islam**

This booklet is extraordinary in the way that it transforms thoughts and insists readers to ponder over the universe and on "Self".

The book starts with a question of whether man has been made for the world or vice versa. This makes a reader ponder over a very important question.

Maulana had rightly answered this question in different ways to make our conscience aware of the happenings of life. As we all are known to the fact of being alive, the question is why we have been here and why without our own will we are being taken back to the place of origin? Why we have been sent to face the atrocities and difficulties without any benefit? These questions are addressed when we understand the creation plan of God.

We are living in an era where things are accepted only when they are observed. We find it hard to believe in those things which we cannot observe. The terms like Paradise, post-death life, Hell, angels and other things are not visible or sensed by naked eyes, it becomes impossible to believe in them.

Human life is eternal but God has divided it into two phases, one the life here on earth (pre-death) and the second one the life after death (post-death). God has created this plan to test human beings whether they will fit in the criteria of goodness to enter the second phase of life where there is no death. Human desires are uncountable and unsatisfied in the first phase of life as this world is just the trial room; you have to be obedient to the superpower in this world.

The book starts with the creation plan of God. Without being acquainted with the "Self", no one will be able to get familiar with the creation plan of God. Man is a unique creation in the entire known universe. Therefore, when the Quran calls human beings as created on the best of mould, this life cannot be without a purpose or meaning.

According to the creation plan of God, man must spend a period of trial in this present, imperfect world and after this, according to his deeds, he will receive the right to inhabit the perfect and eternal world, another name for which is Paradise.

Now, let's come to the era of present tremendous development in the human fields, the negative and adverse conditions still prevail there but due to the lack of understanding of the creation plan of God, we easily give up and respond negatively to the situations. We thus prove ourselves wrong in the eyes of God and we prove to be failures in the examination He has set for us.

We should know that this life is a test. We have been blessed with not only two eyes but the third one is also there. The two eyes are to be used to observe the world and the phenomenon occurring around us, but the third one is called "intellect". It is the most important for us as we can understand the unseen world with the help of intellect. This eye helps us to ponder over the invisible world which has been kept hidden.

Now let's move to another important topic "Death". Everyone whether religious or not believes that one day death will occur and we have to be buried or cremated according to the different customs. But at the final stage of this first phase of life, we are still bound to the questions like what will happen to my children after my death? Who will take the charge of my business?

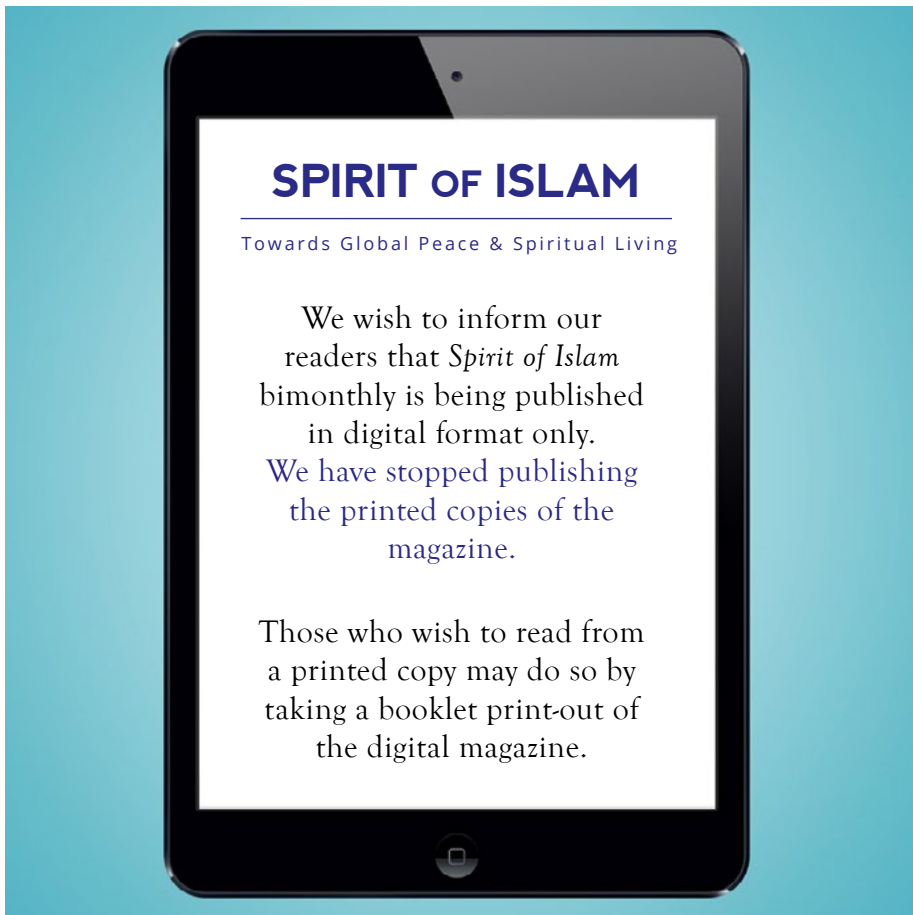
If we only realize that when we are buried we are actually being ushered into another world, we would be more worried about ourselves rather than about the future of our children and business.

There may be two factors that make us less serious and even forgetful towards the Hereafter. Firstly, we doubt when we die we will turn to dust and how can we be revived? Secondly, life after death is not visible to us.

Our physical body is made up of tiny particles called cells and these cells are continuously destroyed in the course of our daily life. By eating food, we compensate for them and put balance in our bodies. In the course of 10 years, our body cells are completely renewed and the old

ones get destroyed. We nonetheless remain the same, this indicates that another portion is there which is immortal and that is soul.

The last portion of this amazing book talks about “God-oriented life”. Just like the rest of the universe follows the command of God, in the same way, we should fashion our lives in accordance with the guidance provided by God. We must ponder over the universe to find the symbols of Almighty God to make our belief stronger. We should work for the second phase of life to fulfill the eternal quality of being obedient to God. Submission to God is the only way of life for both man and the universe. □



# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

## *Discovering the Role of Women in Islam*

**International Women's Day** is celebrated annually on March 8 to commemorate the cultural, political, and socioeconomic achievements of women. The theme for International Women's Day, March 8, 2022, is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow". **Ms Subia Kausar**, from Bengaluru has penned her thoughts on how a Muslim woman can discover her role in the family and society.

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**M**Y first introduction to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan was through Ms Fathima Sarah's classes. We would attend her weekend classes as children and borrow books published by Goodword Books. We had heard distorted Islamic stories and the children's books were the first authentic literature we got.

It was during my first year of Pre-University that I was introduced to Maulana's books. Sarah Aunty, as we would fondly call her, started a six-month course called 'VISION'. Each month, we were assigned to read a book of Maulana. After reading the book, we were encouraged to write an essay outlining our understanding of the book. We would submit the essay at the end of the month.

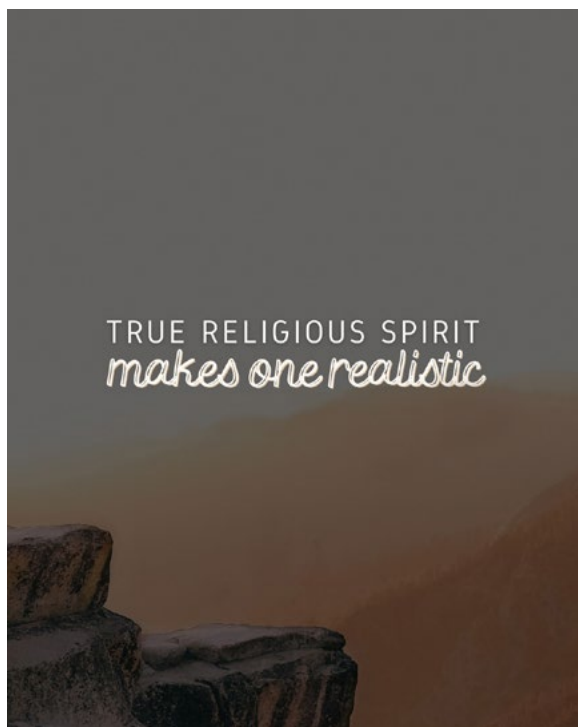
One of the books I read was '*Women between Islam and Western Society*'. I've read this book over and over many times since. It has helped me make important life decisions, helped me in being true to the nature bestowed upon me by God. This book has shown women in Islam in its true light. It has described the qualities of a believing woman, the constructive role that she plays in the spheres endowed to her by God. These lessons will stay with me for life.

Maulana's teachings have helped re-engineer the minds of my family members, particularly me and my mother's. Maulana would urge women to divert their emotions to God and develop themselves intellectually. His advice for parents to not pamper their children helped us immensely. He would urge us not to become bitter when faced with challenges of life and always, always look at the positive aspect of things. By the grace of God, I am sharing these learnings with many others in my circle of family and friends.

I'm a homemaker, a mother to two little girls. Once a person in the family made a very snide comment that God has created women and given them half the intelligence of a man. This was a very upsetting

comment coming from a very educated person. When I told this to Sarah Aunty and expressed my disappointment, she played the audio of that week's Sunday class where a similar question was asked. Maulana replied, *Hajira nahi hoti to Islam hi nahi hota* (There would be no Islam if not for Hagar). Hagar was the wife of the Prophet Abraham who played an instrumental role in bringing about God's scheme. This statement ignited my mind and made me even more firm in my resolve to educate myself, my family and also help other women my age in their intellectual development.

The women members of CPS are an inspiration to all women who want to tread the path of intellectual development and participate in the activity of communicating the Word of God and doing their bit in the way of God. May God reward them immensely! May God reward Maulana saheb for helping women discover their role! He used to say that men and women were different in role but equal in respect. May God guide us all in doing His work and accept our deeds. Aameen! □

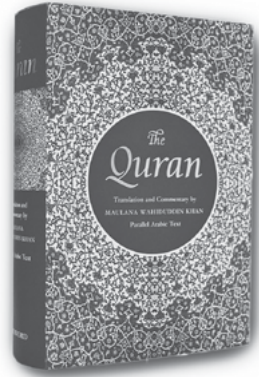


# THE WORD OF GOD

*From The Scriptures*

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

Translated from Arabic and commentary by  
**Maulana Wahiduddin Khan**



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***They say, 'What kind of a messenger is this who eats food and walks about in the market-places? Why has no angel been sent down with him to warn us?' Or a treasure should have been sent down to him, or he should have had a garden from which to eat.' The wrongdoers say, 'You are surely following a man who is bewitched.' Observe what kind of things they attribute to you. They have surely gone astray and cannot find the right way again. (25: 7-9)***

Every preacher giving the call for Truth has had to face the same experience, as that of a prophet. While his contemporaries looked down upon him with contempt, the people of succeeding ages venerated the preacher like a god. This is so because during his lifetime, a prophet lives the life of an ordinary human being and his contemporaries therefore fail to appreciate the wisdom he propagates. They see him cast in an overly idealized form, wearing the halo conferred by legend, and therefore, feel obliged to pay homage to him and glorify him in an exaggerated manner.

The minds of succeeding generations develop such deep-seated notions about the extraordinary greatness of the prophet, that nobody is held superior to or even at par with him. A living prophet, however, is treated scornfully by the majority of his contemporaries. The few who develop a reasoned understanding of his message are also 'advised' to disassociate themselves from one who is "possessed". Having no rational arguments, the unrelenting contemporaries of a prophet, resort to unfair vilification of his image so as to curb the preaching of his message.

***Blessed is He who, if He please, can give you better things than that; gardens watered by flowing streams, and palaces too. They deny the Hour. For those who deny that Hour, We have prepared a blazing fire. When it sees them from afar, they will hear its raging and roaring. When they are thrown into a narrow space, chained together, they will plead for death. But they will be told, 'Do not call today for one death, call for many deaths!' Say, 'Which is better, this or the Paradise of immortality which the righteous have been promised? It is their recompense and their destination.' Abiding there forever, they shall find in it all that they desire. This is a binding promise which your Lord has made.*** (25:10-16)

The opponents of Truth frequently make the character of the preacher of Truth their target. In order to prove him untrustworthy, they indulge in all sorts of slander. Thus they give the impression that they would have accepted what the preacher had to say, had he been up to their standard. But this is not correct. Their real problem is not that they do not find the preacher of truth trustworthy. Their real problem is that they have no fear of the reckoning of Judgement Day. Therefore, they go on casting aspersions in an irresponsible manner.

The matter of Truth and untruth is important because they will be examined on this basis in the life Hereafter. Those who are fearless about being censured in the Hereafter are consequently not serious about Truth or untruth. And when a man is not serious about something, he does not realize its importance, though numerous arguments may be advanced in its support. The meaningless utterances of such people will cease only when the terrible roar of Doomsday snatches away their words. □

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# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

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

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

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## ***How does the Quran describe God?***

The Quran says: "He is God the One, God, the Self-sufficient One. He does not give birth, nor was He born, and there is nothing like Him. (112: 1-4)

This chapter, entitled *Ikhlas* (Oneness), gives us the essence of monotheism. Not only does it tell us of the oneness of God, but it also makes it clear what the oneness of God means. He is one and all depend upon Him. He depends on none. He, in His own being, is all-powerful. He is a unique being who has no equal or compeer. The concept of One God and its discovery is the actual beginning point and the supreme concern of Islam.

## ***What is the goal of Islam?***

The goal of Islam is to induce man to give up his ungodly ways, so that he may lead a totally God-oriented life. A life that is not God-oriented will be concerned with just worldly materialistic issues. Man will become subservient to his desires attaching importance to immediate interests; he will fall prey to negative feelings such as anger, hatred, jealousy, egoism, etc. or he will simply run in any direction he finds open before him, without giving his destination much thought.

On the other hand, a God-oriented path is one on which he earnestly considers God's commands. He sets his course after serious deliberation on the basis of accountability, instead of pursuing immediate gains or temporary satisfactions.



***Describe the relationship between God and man. According to the relationship, how should man behave?***

Man is God's servant. Man has been created by God with a plan, that is, to place him temporarily on earth in order to test him. Those who pass this test will be rewarded, while those who fail will be rejected.

For the purposes of this test, man has been granted freedom in this world. Whatever man receives in this world is not a matter of right but only a matter of trial. Every situation in this world is a test, and in all situations, man must give a proper response, as is required of him by God.

The proper attitude for man is not to take the path of his desires, but to try to understand the divine plan of creation, and then after being convinced of its ineluctability, he should build his life accordingly.

Man may deviate from the divine plan by misusing the freedom given to him by God, but he cannot save himself from the consequences of this deviation.

***How would you describe a good character?***

Good character is the sum of personal virtues. Good character guarantees correct and agreeable behaviour in daily social interaction. A person of good character will invariably conform in his behaviour to a strict code of ethics.

The underlying principle of this strict code of ethics is explained in the following teaching of the Prophet of Islam, 'You should like for others what you like for yourself.' It means you should treat others just as you want to be treated by others.

Everyone likes to be addressed with good manners and pleasing words. Everyone wants others to deal with them in a sympathetic and cooperative manner. So, what everyone ought to do while dealing with others is to give them their sympathy, cooperation and respect.

The above standard of ethics is very simple and natural to follow. According to another teaching of the Prophet, the best of us is one who is best in moral character.

***In the previous answer, you said good character is the sum of personal virtues. Amongst all the virtues which one is the most important one when it comes to our dealings with people?***

In social life, friction between people tends to occur quite often. The reasons for this are the differences arising from culture, religion,

tradition, personal interests and personal tastes, etc. In such a situation, the virtue of tolerance becomes very important.

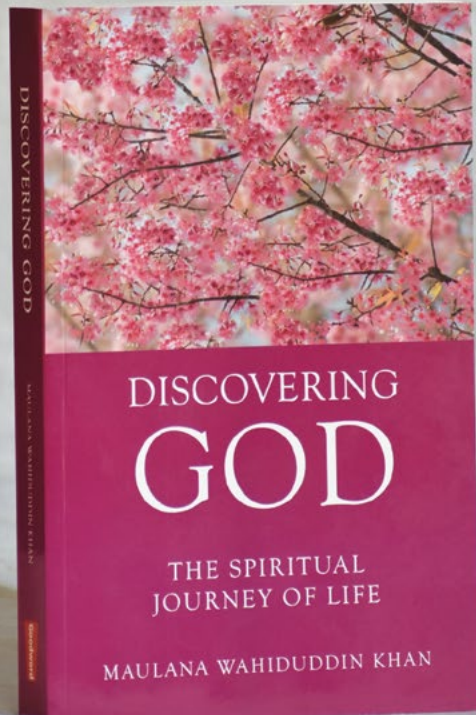
Tolerance refers to giving consideration to others. It implies unswerving respect for others, whether in agreement or disagreement with them. The tolerant person will always consider the case of others sympathetically, be they relatives, friends, or opponents, and irrespective of the treatment he is given by them, be it of a positive or negative nature.

A person of good character should be a person of principle as far as he himself is concerned but should be tolerant towards others. He should judge himself in the light of ideal character but in the matter of his fellow-men, he should show tolerance and broad-mindedness. This is the teaching of Islam. □



# DISCOVERING GOD

The author, through his study of science, religion, psychology and the experiences of his own life, enlightens about the path to discovery of God through one's journey of life. A discovery of this kind involves pondering on the word of God, converting one's material experiences into spiritual insights, constant introspection, and contemplating on the numerous phenomena of the universe. This kind of spiritual and intellectual endeavor of remembering God and recognizing His majesty and glory in everything around provides nourishment to the soul. Such a person develops strong affection for His Creator, Sustainer and Benefactor, a feeling which reflects in his character and behaviour. Discovery of the noble and merciful God makes a person rise above negative thinking; his heart becomes free of hatred, anger, and vengefulness. He develops the ability to engage in positive thinking even in unpleasant situations. The personality that undergoes this spiritual process is deserving of being settled in Paradise in the Hereafter.



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