

Q114

094

سورة الانشراح

al-Inshirah

The Expanding



فاطمة
Q Fatima

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SURATUL INSHIRAH (94)

Suratul Inshirah has 8 ayaat.

It was revealed in Makka and is the 94th sura of the Qur'an. This is a sura which with Suratudh Dhuha broke a period of silence after the first revelations. It is clearly connected to Suratudh Dhuha; In Salaa both suwer are recited together.

Although in essence it addresses Rasulullah (S.A.W.) it is for all who follow his footsteps.

Benefits

- One who recites the Sura will be like one who made Rasulullah (S.A.W.) happy.
- It increases certainty in deen.
- If recited on water and drunk; it is a healing for ailments of the kidneys and heart.
- Relieves chest pains.
- Recite 3x on boils, acne, eczema to heal.

SURATUL INSHIRAH (94)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ

Have We not expanded for you your breast,

وَوَضَعْنَا عَنْكَ وِزْرَكَ

And alleviated your burden for you,

الَّذِي أَنْقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ

Which weighed down your back,

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ

And raised up for you your reputation?

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Surely with every difficulty there is ease.

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Surely with every difficulty there is ease.

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ

So when you are free, still strive hard

وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ

And to your Rabb turn all your attention (longing).

AYA 1

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ

Have We not expanded for you your breast,

The root word of 'nashrah' is 'sharaha' which means to disclose, uncover, explain or make clear. It also means to cut. In 'Arabic 'tashreeh' in surgical terms means to dissect. In the context of this aya it is the expansion of the breast is metaphorical meaning the expansion of thought through divine knowledge. It may also refer to the expansion of his patience and perseverance against the obstruction by his opponents.

The 'sadr' or breast, chest.... Is where every imaginable role stirs – king, despot, afflicted, jealous, complainer, doubter.....

When one uses the phrase "get something of one's chest" it refers to the relief of that which constricted one and weighed one down.

The ultimate 'sharh' or expansion is the knowledge of Allah and thus by extension the knowledge of the self. As Imam Ali (A.S.) has said: 'Man 'arafa nafsahu faqad 'arafa rabbahu" One who has recognised him/herself has recognised his/her Rabb." It is this expansion that results in peace and contentment.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE SELF

Knowledge of the self is to recognise the ability one has to reach perfection - to be that which Allah wished us to be (the best of makes).

To recognise this it takes thinking or intelligence – multiple intelligence – most important of it being spiritual intelligence or eiman which is the motivation and persistence – the niyya to attain one’s full potential.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) has also said:

الإِسْلَامُ عَالِيَةٌ وَ الْإِيْمَانُ فِي الْقَلْبِ

Islam is outward whereas eiman is in the heart (inward).

There are three types of intelligence –

- IQ – Rational, logical, rule bound thinking
- EQ- Habit bound, emotional thinking
- SQ – the thinking with which we address meaning, direction and value to our actions.

IQ – It is the rational intelligence which allows us to solve logical or strategic problems – became a big thing in the early part of the 20th century and psychologists devised tests to determine peoples level of intelligence, the theory being that the higher the IQ, the higher their intelligence. However, ust rational, logical intelligence is not enough - in fact on it’s own without EQ and SQ it can lead to one’s downfall through kibr (pride and arrogance) as seen for Shaytan and Abu Jahl (father of ignorance) - the uncle of the Prophet (S.A.W.) who was previously known as Abul Hikma (father of wisdom). Computers have high IQ’s – they know

what the rules are and can follow them without making mistakes.

EQ – name given by Daniel Goleman – better known as personal intelligence. This is the ability to control ones impulses and thus manage emotions and to be able to have empathy – the ability to read emotions in others – in other words self restraint and compassion – animals often have EQ – a sense of the situation they are in and knowing how to respond to it. As Aristotle put it:

‘Anyone can become angry, that is easy. But to be angry with the right person to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose and in the right way – that is not easy.’

SQ – It allows one to discriminate between right and wrong – to question the purpose of existence – to transform one’s situation – in other words to do hijra and jihad.

As Imam Husayn (A.S.) said “ Life is nothing but hijra and jihad.” It is SQ which integrates all our intelligences. It is the intelligence of the nafs which gives a meaning to life. That which feels the ‘emptiness’ in a human being –It is SQ that makes us respond to the Qur’an –that allows us to witness janna and jahannam on earth – that which takes us closer to Allah.

How do we recognise **SQ**

- It is the ability in a person to bring higher vision and value to others and showing them how to use it – in other words a person who motivates others
- One with SQ is incapable of making anyone or anything a victim, one who does not use any force

against another....All our Prophets and Ma'sumeen have a high SQ – they taught us with that which awakens in us the recognition of truth - the most perfect example as we see in the Prophet (S.A.W.) – “Indeed in the messenger of Allah you have the most perfect example (role model)” Qur'an 33:21 We see this in Karbala – Imam ‘transformed’ the aakhira of so many by motivating them towards the right meaning to life

Lack of **SQ** shows up in the form of grief and sorrow A perpetual state of anguish and no possession of peace of mind and body – should an affliction visit them they lose all forbearance and strength and they have no fortitude in the face of events.

So where do we begin?

1st step is to acknowledge that each one of us is accountable for our own lives – most of us live in denial of the real truth about ourselves – ignorance here is not bliss – When you choose the thoughts and the behaviour you choose the consequences – Thoughts also choose the physiological events that are associated with them e.g. think of your favourite food – you will salivate.....there is a powerful connection here – think about how powerfully your thoughts programme you every day

2nd step is to reflect. Reflect on the direction of your life. Who am I? Where am I going? What is my purpose in life? Examine the direction of one's thoughts and actions and measure them in success in gaining pleasure of Allah. In privacy 'Qif 'alal baab' (Stand at the door – His door). One should set aside some time for reflection every twenty-four hours. The best time for reflection is the one in

which are the least pre-occupations, worries, and more potential for the heart to be present, such as the depths of the night. Know that the state of one's religious and worldly affairs depend upon soundness of one's reflection. Anyone who has a share of it has an abundant share of everything good.

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) has said : 'An hour's reflection is better than a year's worship.' Imam Ali (A.S.) has said: 'There is no worship like reflection" It is said that reflection is the lamp of the heart; if it departs the heart will have no light.'

3rd Step – Well done is far better than well said or well written – Nobody cares for thoughts without actions – what is needed first is a firm intention (niyya) to want to be the best.

“And intention is superior to action, or, rather, intention is the complete reality of act itself.” Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

The success or failure of an act depends on the intention with which it is done. Niyya is the base of a deed, according to it one's deed will either be good or bad, sound or unsound. The word niyya means the aim which makes one decide to do or say something. It is in this sense that the above hadith applies.

In Suratul Insaan (Dahr), Allah sent down ayaat of praise for a few loaves of barley bread given by the Ahlulbayt to the poor, orphan & destitute. An ignorant person may be led to think that three days hunger and giving away of one's food to the needy may be important but anyone could have performed that act and is not something of much consequence. The significance however, lay in the purity and sincerity of their (Ahlulbayt's) intention.

In the rational sciences, it is demonstrated that an objects actuality depends on it's form and not on it's matter. Niyya constitutes the form of a deed and the action it's matter. It is the form which distinguishes a cow from a sheep whereas in matter all animals are the same. The apparent semblance of the salaa of Imam Husayn (A.S.) in it's element may not have differed from that of Umar ibn Sa'd, but whereas for Imam it was a means of nearness to Allah and had the highest spiritual form; for Umar ibn Sa'd it was just a physical action. The difference was niyya.

4th Step - Recognise that the difference between those who are successful and those who are losers is that successful people do that which losers don't want to do. Make an action plan – take action – insist on results from yourself.

AYAAT 2 & 3

وَوَضَعْنَا عَنْكَ وِزْرَكَ

And alleviated your burden for you,

الَّذِي أَنْقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ

Which weighed down your back,

The root of 'wizr' is 'wazara' which means to bear or carry a burden. From it comes wazeer meaning minister, vicegerent; someone who helps a leader take the burden of the state.

Prophet Musa (A.S.) in Suratu Taha 20:29-30 asks for a 'wazeer' to assist him in his task against Firawn. He said: "And appoint for me a wazeer from my family, Harun – my brother..."

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) was granted Imam Ali (A.S.) as his wazeer. Addressing Imam Ali (A.S.) he said:

"O Ali! You are to me as Harun was to Musa (in all aspects) except that there is no prophet after me."

Sins are called 'wizr' because they are weights on the back of the sinner.

The term 'anqadha' means to untwist or to untie the knot of a rope. Thus leading to the relief of the burden.

Knowledge of Allah relieves us of any responsibility other than to be attached to Him. In truth, the burdens of the worlds have no permanent reality. It leads us to the conclusion that we can only do our best at any given moment and then hand it over to Him.

The quality that removes all burdens of the human being is taqwa (God consciousness).

TAQWA

The word 'Taqwa' is derived from the root 'waqaya' which means 'to safeguard' or 'to abstain'. In Islamic terminology it is defined as the action of restraining oneself from disobeying the commands of Allah. When Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (A.S.) was asked to elaborate on the meaning of the word 'Taqwa' he replied, "Submit to the command of Allah and do not go near the prohibited."

According to Allama Majlisi there are four types of 'Taqwa'.

1. 'Wara-e-Ta'beeri- which means to abstain from the prohibited things.
2. 'Wara-e-Saliheen'- To abstain from doubtful things so that one may not commit a Haraam act.
3. 'Wara-e-Muttaqeen'- To abstain from permissible things so that one is absolutely protected from 'Haraam'.
4. 'Wara-e-Sadiqeen'- To avoid everything that is not religious so that one may not waste precious time in useless acts, even though there may not be any risk of committing a sin.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A.S.) has said: "To refrain from eating a single morsel of Haraam is, near Allah, more valued than the performance of two thousand rakats of recommended prayer."

"To forgo a single dirham of prohibited money, is equal near Allah, to seventy accepted Hajjs."

"Strive more to perform good deeds. However if you cannot perform a good act (at least) do not disobey (the commands of Allah). Because if one lays the foundation of a building and does not spoil it, then, even if the progress is slow, the building will definitely rise. (Conversely) The person who

lays the foundation and at the same time spoils it, then it is sure that the walls of this building will never be raised."

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said: "On the Day of Qiyama there would be people whose good deeds will be as heavy as the mountains of Tahama. In spite of this it would be ordered that they be thrown into Jahannam." Upon this someone said, "Ya Rasulallah! were these people performing salaa (prayers)?", "Yes, they used to pray, and fast, and also spend a part of the night in worship. But, whenever they chanced upon something which gave them pleasure, they used to rush to it without thinking whether it was right or wrong."

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A.S.) has said: "Allah revealed to Prophet Musa (A.S.), "Indeed, My slave cannot achieve nearness to Me without these three things:

- i) To practice taqwa in this world.
- ii) To abstain from sins and
- iii) To weep due to fear."

Musa (A.S.) asked, "Does one who fulfills the three things get a reward?"

Allah replied, "One who practices taqwa in this world will get Janna. One who weeps due to My fear will be accorded such a high position that no else would be able to reach it. The deeds of all the creatures shall be accounted. But one who abstains from that which I have forbidden, then accounting of his deeds will not be carried out; he would be admitted to Janna directly."

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) is reported to have said, "I swear by Allah, in Whose power is my life, there is not a single person

who prays five times a day, fasts during the month of Ramadhan and abstains from sins that the gates of Janna will not be opened for him."

After this he recited the Qur'anic aya 4:31

إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا نُهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكْفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ
وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا

If you shun the great sins which you are forbidden, We will do away with your small sins and cause you to enter an honorable place of entering.

CONCEPT OF SIN IN ISLAM

A sin (dhanb ذنب) is anything that goes against divine will. We can act following His will, this is the meaning of the word Islam, or we can fail to pay attention to His will or we can deliberately act against His will. Islam is submission to the will of Allah. The purpose of our existence as Human beings is to worship and serve Allah - to do His will.

This is made clear in the aya: "I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me." 51:56

The most important names of Allah are ones expressing His compassion towards creation - Ar-Rahmaan and Ar-Raheem. These mean the most full of compassion and mercy (Ar-Rahmaan) and the most giving in that compassion and mercy (Ar-Raheem). The foundation of worship to Allah is to be grateful for the bounties we already have and as a result to seek our full potential through serving Him. To serve Him our intentions must reflect His intentions; our wills must be consciously submitted to His will. The basic principle for us then is to reflect Allah's 'rahma' by showing compassion and mercy towards Allah's creation in the hope, and with the assurance, that Allah will show compassion and mercy towards us.

One of His greatest gifts is the gift of moral guidance through revelation. If we follow it, it brings the greatest benefits in this life and the next. It is in trying to do this that our intentions are purified and it is by our intentions that we are judged. A fundamental precept of Islam is that human nature is essentially good.

In general a sin is committed when someone causes harm to themselves or to others or to any part of creation. The guilt depends on the intention of the sinner. In its most extreme form someone does deliberately harmful and destructive acts rejecting any appeals to do what is for their own benefit never mind what is beneficial for others. They may claim that it makes no difference anyway since existence is pointless and therefore have no gratitude for the benefits they have in life.

Human beings have the capacity to sin largely as a result of having the capacity to plan. When someone plans their efforts, they need to be able to suppress their natural desires for a time. This is quite different from animals that live from moment to moment obeying their perceptions of the present and their instinctive drives. This is indeed a dramatic difference. Human beings are able to look to the future - conceptualise it and form an intention to act. This conscious intention can override even the most powerful of our instincts. Through it we have capacity to cause ourselves harm in the short term in order to realise the greater good in the long term. As an inevitable part of this we gain the potential to cause ourselves harm, i.e. the potential to sin.

We cannot see clearly into the future. What we do instead is to believe in some future circumstances and direct our actions accordingly. Taking planning to its logical limits we would try to do what is for the good over all time and certainly for our entire life (in this world and the next). This is the core of trying to do what is morally right. It is trying to do what is for the ultimate good. It is trying to do what Allah wills.

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) has said:

“Taqwa (God consciousness) is good character and sin is that which disturbs your heart, about which you do not want people to know.”

Allama Tabatabai states that the fire is nothing but a transformed form of the human’s sin itself.

The Qur'an teaches that the main way back to Allah is through genuine Tawba (repentance) which literally means 'to return'.

TAWBA (REPENTANCE)

"And (remember) Yunus when he went in anger and imagined that We would have no power over him; then he cried out from the darkness-There is no god but You, Glory be to You, indeed I have been one of the unjust. So we answered him and delivered him out of grief and thus do we deliver those who believe"

Suratul Ambiya

21:87,88

The first step on the path of return towards Allah and alleviating burdens is tawba. It is a characteristic of human beings which sets him/her apart from animals. It is not something that is merely verbal. It is a psychological and spiritual state. One that is a revolution of the human being against the self.

Tawba is a reaction. When you throw a ball down it rebounds. Throwing it is the action and the rebounding is the reaction. How high the ball of tawba rebounds depends on two things :

- i) The intensity of the action - the sin
- ii) The nature of the person's conscience and his/her faith

Those who are spiritually strong are constantly in a state of tawba. If you leave a clear mirror in a place where you think the air is pure, you will find a film of dust settling on it in a short while in the place where you had previously thought there was no dust in the air.

However, if a wall is dirty an extra stain will not show up on it easily and if it is blackened then it will not show anything.

A man came to Imam Ali (A.S.) saying:

"Astaghfirullah rabbi wa atubu ilayh"

I seek forgiveness from Allah and I turn repentant towards him.

Imam realised he was not serious and said:

"Do you know what tawba is?"

"Tawba has a high position. It has six conditions for its acceptance out of which the last two are the conditions for completion.

- 1) To show remorse and regret at what has been done.
- 2) A definite resolution not to repeat the sin again.
- 3) To return what belongs to others.
- 4) Wajibats that are qadha must be restored.
- 5) To rid oneself of all the flesh that has grown by haram means.
- 6) To let the body which has tasted the sweetness of sins, also taste the pain of fasting in the day and worshipping in the night.

This means that one must cleanse oneself physically and spiritually for tawba to be accepted.

In the Qur'an Allah says:

"O my servants who have been unjust against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah, Indeed Allah forgives sins altogether."

Suratuz Zumar 39:53

In Hadith e Qudsi Allah says:

The groan (of tawba) of sinners is dearer to me than the glorifications (of me). So you should sigh and groan in these precious nights."

The following dua is quoted from Imam Husayn (A.S.)

My Master, when I look at my sins, I am overcome with fear, but when I look at your Grace, I am filled with hope."

Tawba must be done immediately. The poet Rumi tells of a man who planted a bramble bush on a public foot path. When it started growing he was asked to uproot it and he said there was no hurry for it was yet not much of a hindrance. He kept on offering the excuse year after year. The bramble bush grew thicker, and its roots grew stronger. The thorns grew sharper and more dangerous while the man grew weaker and unable to remove it. Rumi meant that sins take root rapidly. As one gets older one becomes more helpless against them. Today is better for tawba than tomorrow - In fact now is better than later.

Last minute tawba is not acceptable as was the case of Firoun.

"Finally when he began to drown, he said - I believe that there is no god except He in whom the Bani Israil believe and I am of the Muslims."

Suratu Yunus 10:90

As long as he was alive Firoun acted like a tyrant and nothing convinced him. He tortures the Bani Israil, ridicules Prophet Musa (A.S.) and chases them as they leave. When he is at the point of drowning in the sea and there is no escape, he does tawba and expresses his belief in Allah. His tawba is only due to helplessness in a calamity.

So the answer was:

What! Now! When you previously rebelled and were one of the mischief makers?" **Suratu Yunus 10:91**

In other words why did you not do tawba an hour before when you were quite free to do so?

For then, it would have been a true change of heart. What criminal in the world is not repentant at the moment of punishment? It is only when he/she shows repentance before being caught that one can say that there is a spiritual change.

Tawba is not acceptable in the hereafter. This is because the hereafter is the fruit of the deeds of the world. Death is like the fall of the fruit from the tree. As long as the fruit was part of the tree, it is dependant on air, water and nourishment that the tree obtains. Even an hour before falling, there is a chance for the fruit to become more ripe and sweet. As soon as it falls it's chances of development come to an end for it.

We as human beings are the fruit of life with all the potential to be good or bad. If we adopt Islam within us we ripen and progress to be good fruits whilst if we sin we are plagued like a rotten fruit which is of no use to anyone.

“Repentance with Allah is only for those who do evil in ignorance, then turn (to Allah) soon, so these it is to whom Allah turns (mercifully), and Allah is ever Knowing, Wise. And repentance is not for those who go on doing evil deeds, until when death comes to one of them, he says: Surely now I repent; nor (for) those who die while they are unbelievers. These are they for whom We have prepared a painful chastisement” 4:17

Imam Ali (A.S.) is reported to have said in a hadith quoted in Usulul Kaafi - in the chapter of Tawba in the book of Eiman wal Kufr - “If I were to say - I am sorry my Rabb, God will instruct the recording angels to forget that which they have

written of my sins. If I was to say - I am sorry my Rabb, I will not repeat this offence, God will instruct parts of my body to conceal my sins. If I were to rectify the consequence of my actions, God will instruct the earth to conceal the sins that I committed over it. And if I were to spiritually atone in like then when I meet God there would be nothing to give witness against me regarding any sin."

Imam Ali Zaynul Aabedeem (A.S.) in Dua Tawba says: "....Accept my tawba as You have promised and pardon my evil deeds as You have guaranteed and grant me Your love as you have laid down and you have my agreement, my Rabb - that I will never return to what You dislike and my guarantee that I will not go back to what you disapprove and my promise that I will give up all acts of disobedience to You."

A hadith from the ma'sumeen states that when all eyes will be crying on the day of Qiyama there will be two sets of eyes which will not cry. Those that cried in tawba for their sins and those that kept awake at night in ibada.

In Dua Kumayl; Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) mentions three things which stop the acceptance of dua:

1. Not fulfilling the rights of parents
2. Delaying Salaa
3. Hypocrisy towards mu'mineen.

AYA 4

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ

And raised up for you your reputation?

This refers to the outer remembrance of Rasulullah (S.A.W.). Whenever Rasulullah (S.A.W.) is mentioned, that remembrance (zhikr) is further elevated. Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said:

“Jibrail told me that Allah says: Whenever My name is mentioned your name is mentioned following it (which itself is a testimony to show your status).”

Salawat is a testimony to that for Allah in Suratul Ahzaab 33:56 says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who believe! call for (Divine) blessings on him and salute him with a (becoming) salutation

Abu Amamah reports that Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said: “ Invoke more Salawaat upon me on every Friday, the Salawaat from my ummah is presented to me on every Friday. Whoever had invoked more Salawaat upon me will be closest to me”.

Anas reported that Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said: “O people, the most secured among you on the Day of Judgment against its horrors and menacing situations will be those who invoked

Salawaat most upon me in this world. In fact, it was sufficient from Allah and his Angels, as He said: "Allah and his Angels send blessings on the prophet" (33:56), but He also commanded the believers to do so, so that they may be rewarded.

Ibn Asakri has transmitted from al-Hasan bin Ali that Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said: "Invoke more Salawaat upon me, for your invocation is conducive to your sins being forgiven. And pray for me a high status and intercession, for surely my intercession will plead in your favour before Allah".

Abu Saeed says he said to Rasulullah (S.A.W.) : "O Messenger of Allah, this greeting is (to say) peace be upon you, but how do we invoke Salawaat upon you? " He said: "Say O Allah, send your grace to Muhammed, your slave and your messenger the same way as you sent your grace to Ibrahim, and bless Muhammed and Muhammed's progeny as you blessed Ibrahim and Ibrahim's progeny.

Imam Sadiq (A.S.) said that Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said: " Invoking Salawaat upon me and my Ahlul Bayt carries away hypocrisy".

Imam Sadiq A.S. said that Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said: "Do not treat me like a rider's bowl of water; the rider fills it and then drink's from it when he pleases. Keep me at the opening of your dua, and at the end of it, and (also) at the middle".

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) said: “Raise your voices when you invoke Salawaat upon me, for it surely carries away hypocrisy”.

RASULULLAH (S.A.W.)

He was born in Makka on the 29th of August, 570 CE/17 Rabi ul Awwal (Friday), and when he died at the age of 63, (40-13-10) the whole of the Arabian Peninsula had changes from paganism and idol worship to the worship of One God; from tribal quarrels and wars to national solidarity and cohesion; from drunkenness and debauchery to sobriety and piety; from lawlessness and anarchy to disciplined living; from utter moral bankruptcy to the highest standards of moral excellence. Human history has never known such a complete transformation of a people or a place before or since.

He was born an orphan but belonged to the noblest of the Arabian tribes, his genealogy accepted as the most righteous, yet he said “No honour is nobler than humility and kindness” He would say repeatedly – “There are 5 things I will not give up until death – eating with slaves on the ground, riding a donkey without a saddle, milking goats with my hands, wearing coarse clothes and greeting children” When he was asked – Ma AdDeen? Answered – Husnal Khulq Man asked from right, left, back, front – Eventually Prophet (S.A.W.) with a deep look said – Amma tafaqqahu (why don’t you understand?) Huwa anlaa

He abhorred nationalism – “Human beings from Adam to this day are like the teeth of a comb, there is no superiority

for an Arab over a non-Arab, nor for one colour over another except with God awareness” .

His opponents created enmity with him – wronged him, spoke ill of him, harassed him, yet he would say “ Oblige your brother by warning them, correct them by showing favours and giving them favours” e.g. women who through garbage on him every time he passed her house to walk to the mosque, when one day she did not he enquired about her, on learning she was ill he visited her.

He was always first to greet others – He spoke in short, meaningful sentences and was never seen or heard to interrupt anybody's speech. He never spoke with a morose face, nor did he ever apply rough, awkward words. He avoided sitting at prominent places in gatherings – rather sitting in a circle to avoid any distinction, so much so that visitors had difficulty identifying who he was, visited the poor and sick – no housework was too low or undignified for him- ate the simplest of foods yet

When it came to bravery there was no parallel - his most perfect student and successor – Ali (A.S.) would say “ When we used to meet the enemies and battle was at it’s peak, we would stand behind Muhammad when our hearts wavered – He was always closest to the enemy” and battles – he instructed his people never to start war and to fight only when they were attacked first- if the enemy lost his orders were not to chase the fleeing soldiers – he would always try and talk to the enemy hoping that their humanity would shine through and the fighting averted –

He emancipated women – He taught that both genders were created for the same purpose – the recognition of their Creator and therefore the realisation of their full potential as human beings – but have been given different tools with which to fulfill their common goal. Indeed, their physiological, emotional, and psychological differences are a result of their divergent spiritual mandate. Man and woman represent two forms of divine energy, they are the male and female elements of a single soul. In secular societies even today if a woman marries, she changes her name. She has no essential existence - A name is significant - she does not possess sufficient value or credit to have a name. When his daughter used to enter the room he would stand for her in respect.....

They tried to bribe him – intimidate him, threatened him with death and destruction – but he stood firm – not for a moment losing momentum in pursuing his mission to ensure that in recognising the unity of the one God the human being would realise his/her full potential physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually –

A teacher is recognised through his students – Let's see how Ali (p.b.u.h.) describes him – “In the past I had a brother in God – the insignificance of the world in his eyes made him great in my eyes. He was not ruled by his stomach – he used to keep silent most of the time – yet when he spoke he silenced all speakers and quenched the thirst of all questioners. He was more eager to listen than to speak. He was considered weak, yet in an emergency he was a lion of the forest. He would not advance an argument unless it was decisive, and he would not censure anyone for what could

be excused until he had heard the excuse. He would say what he would do and not say what he would not do. When two things came to him, he would see which was more emotionally desirable and then do the contrary.....”

This personality preached a religion – founded a state, built a nation, laid down a moral code, initiated numberless social and political reforms, established a dynamic and powerful society to practise and represent his teachings, revolutionised the worlds of human thought and action for all time.

The commentator of Nahjul Balagha - Ibn Abil Hadeed writes about the Prophet (S.A.W.):

Everyone who heard him (Prophet Muhammad S.A.W.) speak became inclined towards him and developed love for him in their hearts.

Thus the Quraysh called the Muslims in Makka 'Subat' (Infatuated ones) and they said:

"His speech is magic, it intoxicates more than wine."

They forbade their sons to sit with him in case they might be attracted by his speech.

Whenever the Prophet (S.A.W.) sat near the Ka'ba and recited the Qur'an or remembered Allah, the Quraysh would stick their fingers firmly in their ears so as not to hear and fall under 'the spell' of his speech.

They gathered their clothes over their heads and covered their faces so his radiant appearance would not draw them to him.

Nevertheless, most people accepted Islam just by hearing him once or by seeing him.....

IMAM HUSAYN (A.S.)

وَ لَكُمْ فِيَّ أُسْوَةٌ

“And for you I shall be an example”.

The remembrance of Imam Husayn (A.S.) is one that brings one closer to his/her full potential as Rasulullah (S.A.W.) has said: “Husaynu minniy wa anaa minal Husayn”
“Husayn is from me and I am from Husayn”

Over one thousand three hundred and fifty years ago, on the 10th of Muharram, just before ‘asr, a man stood on a sand-dune at Kerbala. He was bleeding from several wounds on his body. He had lost everything. Since early morning he had carried several dead bodies into his camp. He had even buried his infant child.

He looked at the bodies of his loved ones. Tears flowed out of his eyes. He looked at the sky and seemed to draw some strength from an unseen source. Then, like a muezzin from a minaret, he raised a call:

"Is there anyone who will come to assist us ?

Is there anyone who will respond to our call for aid?"

He turned direction and repeated the call. He did this four times.

Whom was he calling out to? Surely he was not expecting anyone to come to his aid. Those who wanted to help him had already crossed the lines and laid down their lives for the cause. He knew there was no one left. He knew that there was no other Hur. And yet, meticulously and

laboriously, he made sure that his call reverberated in all directions.

Of course that call was a call to Muslims of every generation in every land. It was a call to us where ever we may be. It was a call for help. Help against Yazidism which in every age rears its ugly head to oppress justice, truth and morality. Our Imam was calling out to every Muslim of every age and time to combat Yazidism, both within himself and as an external force. This was his battle cry for jihad-ul-akbar (striving against the lower self). He had already demonstrated that his objective had always been to create a spiritual awakening through amr bil ma'ruf and nahyi anal munkar. Now he was calling out for the continuation of this jihad at the individual, social and political levels.

EVOLUTION OF AZA

Muslims, and more particularly the Shiah, have answered this call with the unique institution of aza-e-Husayn. With every tear that we shed for him we pledge to resist the oppression of injustice, immorality, inequity and falsehood. Every time we raise our hand and bring it down on our chest in matam, we are saying: "Labbaik, Labbaik Ya Mawla!" to our Imam, Husayn Ibne Ali, the grandson of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

For long the word aza-e-Husayn has been exclusively used in connection with the remembrance ceremonies for the martyrdom of Imam Husayn. Aza-e-Husayn includes mourning congregations, lamentations, matam and all such actions which express the emotions of grief, anger and, above all, repulsion against what Yazid stood for. These emotions, however, remain futile and hypocritical unless accompanied by a will to reform both at the individual level and the community level.

The term majlis has both a grammatical meaning and a meaning which relates to Aza-e-Husayn. In its technical sense, a majlis is a meeting, a session or a gathering. In reference to aza-e-Husayn, it means a gathering to mourn Imam Husayn. In this sense it was first used by our Imam, Ja'far Sadiq (A.S.)

It is reported that his companion al-Fudhayl Ibne Yasaar came to pay his respects to the Holy Imam. After the exchange of usual courtesies, Imam asked al-Fudhayl: "Do you people ever organise majaalis to recall the martyrdom

of Imam Husayn?" Al-Fudhayl, with tears pouring down his eyes, replied: "Yabna Rasulillah, indeed we do." The Imam said: "May Allah bless you. I highly approve of such majalis."

On another occasion, the poet Ja'far ibne Iffaan recited to our Imam al-Sadiq a poem on the tragedy of Kerbala. The Imam began to weep uncontrollably. He then addressed the poet in the following terms:

"O Iffaan, do not think that it is only those whom you can see here are listening to your poetry. In fact Allah's closest angels are present here at this majlis and they are all listening to your recitation and they too lament and weep. May Allah bless you for what you have recited. He will, inshallah, reward you with jannah for your efforts on our behalf."

The first majlis-e-Husayn was recited in the market-place of Kufa by a lady from whose head the hijab had been ripped off, whose hopes and aspirations had been destroyed on the blood-drenched sands of Kerbala but whose spirit stepped forward to free the Islamic values from the yoke of tyranny and oppression. She was the first one to answer the call of Imam Husayn. Standing on her unsaddled camel, she looked at the multitude rejoicing the victory of Yazid. As soon as people saw her, they were quiet. They knew that a historic moment for Kufa had arrived. Looking straight at them, the daughter of Ali said:

"Woe upon you O people of Kufa. Do you realise which piece of Muhammad's heart you have severed! Which pledge you have broken! Whose blood you have shed! Whose honour you have desecrated!. It is not just Husayn whose headless body lies unburied on the sands of Kerbala.

It is the heart of the Holy Prophet. It is the very soul of Islam !"

When the prisoners were finally freed by Yazid, they asked for an opportunity to have rites of remembrance in Damascus. A house was made available to them and aza-e-Husayn went on for over a week. Just as Prophet Musa (A.S.) had been raised in the palace of the enemy of Allah - Firaun, Sayyida Zaynab laid the foundation of aza-e-Husayn in the very capital of his murderer !

On their return to Madina, she continued the majalis arousing such strong emotions in the people and such revulsion against the oppressor that Amr ibne Said ibne al-Aas wrote to Yazid to have Sayyida Zaynab exiled from Madina. This was done in the beginning of 62 A.H. She died shortly afterwards.

Gradually, the institution of ziyarah came into being. People would visit the graves of the martyrs and there perform aza-e-Husayn. Our Imams wrote for them ziyarahs to be recited. One of these ziyarahs is recited today by us and is known as Ziyarat-e-Waritha. It is not only a testimony of the greatness of Imam Husayn and the moving sentiments describing his sacrifice for the cause of Allah, but also a solemn pledge and a commitment by the reciter:

"And I make Allah, His angels, His prophets, and His messengers, witnesses to the fact that I believe in Imam Husayn and in my return to Allah. I also believe in the laws of Allah and in the consequences of human actions. I have subordinated the desires of my heart to his (Imam Husayn's) heart and I sincerely submit to him and (promise to follow his commands)"

Recitation of Ziyarat-e-Waritha is a commitment to Imam Husayn's cause made in the presence of Allah and the angels and the prophets and the messengers and in full awareness of the final accountability of human action. One must always reflect upon the seriousness and solemnity of this pledge.

Public demonstration of grief first occurred in 351 A.H. On the 10th of Muharram, there was a spontaneous procession in the street of Baghdad and thousands of men, women and children came out chanting "Ya Husayn! Ya Husayn!" beating their breast and reciting elegies. In the same year, a similar procession took place in Egypt. The regime tried its best to stem the tide of aza-e-Husayn but failed. Very soon it became an institution. Majlis evolved into an institution for amr bil ma'ruf and nahya anal munkar as well as reminder of the tragic events.

As Islam spread, different cultures adopted different modes of aza-e-Husayn.

Taimur Lang introduced the institution of tabut and alam in India. As Islam spread southwards on the sub-Continent, the form underwent changes to take into account local cultural influences so as to portray the message of Kerbala in the medium best understood by the local people, both Muslims and non-Muslims.

By the beginning of the 19th Century, there was not a corner of the world, from Spain to Indo-China, which did not have some form of demonstration on the 10th of Muharram.

The form varied from country to country. In Iran, the most popular form has been passion plays as a medium transmit

the message of Kerbala in addition to the majaalis from the mimbir.

In India, the Ashura processions became part of the Indian Muslim culture. Even the Hindus participated in these processions. The Maharajah of Gwalior was always seen walking behind the 'alam of Hadhrat Abbas barefooted and without any insignia of his exalted office. Marthiyas and majaalis were such strong influences on the Muslim population that they helped strengthen not only their Islamic beliefs but also their political resolve.

History reports that even Gandhi on his famous salt march to protest against the oppression of the British Raj took 72 people with him in emulation of Imam Husayn's protest against Yazid's oppression.

REWARDS FOR AZA

Imam al-Sadiq (A.S.) said,

“Rasulullah (S.A.W.) looked at Husayn (A.S.) as he was approaching. He sat him in his lap and said, ‘Indeed, for the martyrdom of Husayn there shall be a heat in the hearts of the believers that shall never subside.’” Then, the Imam (A.S.) continued, “He is the martyr of tears.” I asked, “What is the meaning of the martyr of tears, O son of the Messenger of Allah?” He (A.S.) replied, “No m,u’min remembers him except that he weeps”

Imam Ridha (A.S.) said, “O Son of Shabib! Muharram is a month in which even the people of the former age of ignorance forbade oppression and bloodshed due to its sanctity. However, this nation did not honor the sanctity of this month nor did they honor the sanctity of their Prophet (S.A.W). In this month, they killed the Prophet’s progeny,

enslaved his women, and plundered his belongings. May Allah never forgive them for these crimes.

O Son of Shabib! If you wish to cry for anything or anyone, cry for Husain Ibn Ali (A.S.) for he was slaughtered like a sheep. Eighteen members from his family who were unparalleled on earth were also killed along with him. Certainly, the seven heavens and earths cried because of the murder of Husain (A.S.). Four thousand Angels descended on earth to aid him, but (when they were allowed to reach there) they found him martyred. So they remained at his grave, disheveled and dusty, and will remain there until the rising of al-Qa'im (Imam Mahdi (A.S.)), whereupon they will aid him.

O Son of Shabib! My father related to me from his father, who related from his grandfather that when my grandfather Imam Husain (A.S.) was martyred, the sky rained blood and red sands.

O Son of Shabib! When you weep over the afflictions of Husain (A.S.) so that tears flow from your eyes onto your cheeks, Allah will forgive all your sins, big or small, few or numerous.

O Son of Shabib! If you wish to meet Allah, the mighty and the majestic, free of sin, then perform the Ziyarat of Husain (A.S.).

O Son of Shabib! If it pleases you to abide in the palaces of Paradise in company of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and his family, then invoke Allah's curse upon the murderers of Imam Husain (A.S.).

O Son of Shabib! If you wish to earn the reward of those who were martyred with Husain (A.S.), then whenever you remember him, say, 'If only I had been with them so that I would have attained the great felicity.'

O Son of Shabib! If you desire to be with us in the highest degree of Janna, then grieve in our sorrows and rejoice in our happiness. Remain attached to our love, for even if a person loves a stone, Allah shall resurrect him with it on the Day of Judgment.”

AYAAT 5 & 6

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Surely with every difficulty there is ease.

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Surely with every difficulty there is ease

These two ayaat make specific reference to ‘the difficulty’ indicating that there are two eases or solutions to one difficulty.

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) has said: “Do know that with hardship comes ease and surely with patience comes victory and with distress comes relief”.

The concept to adopt is that of **sabr**.
“Indeed Allah is with those who have sabr.” **Suratul Baqara - 2: 153**

“Indeed sabr is to eiman what the head is to the body. The body perishes without the head; so (in the same way) when sabr goes, eiman also disappears.”

Imam Ja’fer As-Sadiq (A.S.)

The Prophet (S.A.W.) said:

“Sabr is of three kinds:

1. Sabr at the time of hardship.
2. Sabr in regard to obedience.
3. Sabr in regard to disobedience.

Sabr in regard to disobedience is superior to all other levels of sabr.

Sabr in regard to hardship means to stop oneself from complaining about hidden suffering. A man called Sama'ah ibn Mirhan was asked by Imam Ali Ridha (A.S.) what had stopped him from going to Hajj.

Sama'ah replied that he had fallen into debt and had lost his wealth. Imam said:

“If you have sabr, you will be the object of envy and if you do not Allah will enforce His qadr (decree) regardless of your pleasure or displeasure.”

It has been reported by Abu Hamza Thimali from Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.):

“Whoever of the mu'mineen has sabr when a hardship befalls him/her, has the reward of a thousand shuhada (martyrs).”

Sabr in regard to obedience means to perform the wajibaat correctly and to inwardly have khulus (sincerity) and presence of mind. This sabr is helped by remembering Allah's promised reward for obedience, both immediate and to come, the highest reward being closeness to Him.

Sabr in regard to disobedience is realised outwardly by avoiding sins and keeping away from places where they might be committed. Inwardly it is by preventing the nafs from inclining towards them for the very beginning of a sin is a mere thought. Anyone who puts his/her hand in the fire knowingly only does so because he/she wishes to burn him/herself. It does not as a rule happen. Why do we avoid fire? Because our knowledge tells us it is dangerous and we

are sure of this knowledge. In the same way those who strive to perfect their nafs, have yaqeen in the 'burning' power of sins and therefore avoid them. It is said that sabr is the commander of the mu'min's defence against sins.

Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) has said:

“When a mu'min enters his/her grave, salaa is on his/her right side, zakaat on the left. Righteousness faces him/her and sabr is his/her shelter. When the 2 angels charged with questioning him/her enter, sabr says to salaa, zakaat and righteousness - 'Take care of your companion, and if you fail to assist him/her, I will take care of him/her myself.’”

Khwaja Nasiruddin Tusi defines sabr as that which restrains the self from agitation when confronted with something undesirable.

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari defines sabr as restraining the self from complaining to creatures about hidden anguish.”

AYA 7 & 8

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ

So when you are free, still strive hard

وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ

And to your Rabb turn all your attention (longing).

There are numerous narrations commenting on this aya. The outer meaning (Shar'iy) is that once we have discharged our duties we need to turn our attention to seeking closeness to Allah through extra striving (Mustahabaat).

It gives the secret to success in all aspects of life – When we put our desire for knowledge into practise; we become knowledgeable just as if we put into practising anger we will become anger. Once we have laid the groundwork necessary to fulfil our responsibilities and duties; then we can make Allah our sole object of desire – by extension make our goal to be the best.

To evaluate our progress in nearness to Allah thus being those who seek their full potential let us look at the qualities of those Allah calls His 'ibaad' (those who have made Him their longing) from Suratul Furqan 25:63-74

1. LIFE DOMINATED BY HUMILITY

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا
خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا

And the servants of the Beneficent are they who walk on the earth in humbleness, and when the ignorant address them, they say: Peace.

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) has said: "Never can a person who possesses a speck of kibr (pride) inside his heart enter Janna."

Kibr is when a person feels a sense of superiority and behaves high-handedly with others. It shows itself in the person's actions and is easily noticed by others.

There are various aspects and levels of kibr.

1. *Kibr towards Allah & His commands* - This is the worst sort of kibr. It is when one challenges Allah's authority and claims to be God. e.g. Firawn. With regards to kibr towards Allah's commands, it is when one does not practise a wajibaat because one feels it does not comply with his/her status. e.g. When one goes out and there is not enough time to go home to pray salaa in time, then to avoid doing so in public for fear of being ridiculed.
2. *Kibr towards humanity* - It can be divided into the following categories.
 - i) Kibr on possessing true faith.
 - ii) Kibr on having no faith or having false belief.
 - iii) Kibr on having good qualities.
 - iv) Kibr in being immoral.

v) Kibr in one's righteous acts and worship.

vi) Kibr in committing sinful and wicked deeds.

To remove kibr, one of the most effective cures is to remember death as often as possible. Imam Ali (A.S.) used to announce in the masjid: "Equip yourself and be ready, for your departure has already been announced."

2.WHEN INSULTED BY IGNORANCE THEY PUNISH IT WITH KINDNESS (PEACE)

You will never see them argue loudly or say abusive or hurtful words regardless of what is said to them

3.NIGHT TIME ACTIVITY – IBADA OF THEIR RABB

وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا

And they who pass the night prostrating themselves before their Lord and standing.

They inculcate worship into their lives especially at night.

One of the most effective habits is Salat Layl.

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا
مَّحْمُودًا

And during a part of the night, pray Tahajjud beyond what is incumbent on you; maybe your Rabb will raise you to a position of great glory. 17:79

Performance of Salatut Tahajjud leads to gaining the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him); love of the Angels; is the Sunnah of the Prophets; leads to the light of true recognition of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him); is the foundation of belief; tranquility of the soul;

destruction of Shaitan; a weapon against one's enemies; acceptance of one's supplications; acceptance of one's actions; increases the blessings in one's sustenance; intercession when the Angel of Death comes; brightness in the grave; protects the person while in the grave; ease in the answering of the angels Munkir and Nakir and is the companion and friend in the grave.

Rasulullah (S.A.W.) once visited Sayyida Fatima (A.S.) who was preparing for bedtime. He said: "Fatima ! do not sleep without doing 4 things:

- i) Finish the recitation of a whole Qur'an (by reciting Suratul Ikhlas 3x)
- ii) Send salawaat on all the Ambiya
- iii) Seek the pleasure of all mu'mineen (by asking for their forgiveness)
- iv) Complete a hajj and umra (by doing wudhoo before sleeping)

4.THEY HAVE A POWERFUL VISION OF THE AAKHIRA

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا
كَانَ غَرَامًا

And they who say: O our Lord! turn away from us the punishment of hell, surely the punishment thereof is lasting

إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا

Surely it is an evil abode and (evil) place to stay

They are aware of the consequences of their actions. Some of the principles of visualization are:

- i) Your actions come from your images – All of our behavior results from the thoughts that precede it.
- ii) Tell yourself that everything you visualize is already here – Rasulullah (S.A.W.) has said: “When you do dua, know that the answer is at the door.” The principle is that you will only see it when you believe it.

5.THEY LIVE IN MODERATION

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا

And they who when they spend, are neither extravagant nor parsimonious, and (keep) between these the just mean.

6.THEY DO NOT COMMIT SHIRK,

7.THEY RESPECT THE SANCTITY OF LIFE,

8.THEY DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا

And they who do not call upon another god with Allah and do not slay the soul, which Allah has forbidden except in the requirements of justice, and (who) do not commit fornication and he who does this shall find a requital of sin;

يُضَاعَفُ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخَاجُ فِيهِ مُهَانًا

The punishment shall be doubled to him on the day of resurrection, and he shall abide therein in abasement;

9.THEY ARE CONSTANTLY TURNING TOWARDS HIM (TAWBA)

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

Except him who repents and believes and does a good deed; so these are they of whom Allah changes the evil deeds to good ones; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَتَابًا

And whoever repents and does good, he surely turns to Allah a (goodly) turning.

10.THEY DO NOT WITNESS FALSEHOOD

11.WHEN THEY PASS BY WHAT IS VAIN, THEY DO SO WITH DIGNITY – THEY DO NOT RESPOND

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا

And they who do not bear witness to what is false, and when they pass by what is vain, they pass by nobly.

Practical tips –

- Let others have the glory
- Be the first to reach out (Salaam 99thawabs for initiator as opposed to 1 for the one who replies)

- Don't interrupt the sentences of others
- Ask yourself – Will this be important in a years time
- Spend a moment every day to think of someone to thank
- Respect status of all
- Seek first to understand
- Become a better listener
- Remember wherever you go there you are
- Breathe before you speak – count to 10
- If someone throws a ball – you don't have to catch it

12. WHEN EXPOSED TO THE AYAAT OF THEIR RABB – THEY LISTEN AND SUBMIT

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا

And they who, when reminded of the communications of their Lord, do not fall down thereat deaf and blind.

13. THEY ARE FAMILY ORIENTATED

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

And they who say: O our Lord! grant us in our wives and our offspring the joy of our eyes, and make us guides to those who guard (against evil).