

Good News

...And give good news to those who do good (to others) - HQ22:37

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The Path to Success -

Eid ul Fitr Message Delivered

by

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Almighty God be praised and thanked abundantly for granting us this day of Eid ul Fitr (a day of ever-recurring joy) to celebrate that inner joy that culminates after a month of fasting for the sake of God; a month of intense prayers and supplications, and charity for the poor and indigent out of love for Him.

Despite all the grimness in the world, Ramadan (the month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world) has shown that the Muslim fraternity can rise above their own selfish and self-centred tendencies - on the one hand having been afforded the opportunity of engaging in serious introspection to improve themselves whilst at the same time reaching out for the less fortunate

with love and compassion in a manner that drew the admiration of many outsiders.

The joys and exhilaration that we experience this day are like the joy and gratification that a farmer feels when harvesting a luxuriant crop after long periods of cultivation of the land, followed by planting of the seeds with careful precision, watering it, and guarding it with the utmost vigilance and care against harmful elements until the crops grow to maturity and bear fruit.

This allegory of the farmer and his lush crops illustrates what we undergo during the month of fasting to reap the spiritual fruits that bring joy and contentment of the heart. We are thus reminded that our whole life should be about ensuring the proper growth to perfection of those latent seeds of morality and spirituality that Almighty God had placed inside us so that we may enjoy the bliss and well-being when those seeds reach fruition. This happens when we

reach a state of complete God-Consciousness, that state of being that brings us closer to God and complete surrender to His Will. This state is what the Holy Quran repeatedly refers to as our *falah* or success and therefore the Holy Quran says:

He indeed is **successful** who causes it (the soul) to grow, - 91:9

The word ‘successful’ in the Holy Quran comes from the root word *falah* which also means ‘**self improvement**’, or the ‘**unfoldment**’ of hidden qualities that evolve **into a state of happiness and well-being**. In the rich, comprehensive Arabic language it is interesting to note that ‘a farmer’ is often referred to as *falah* because a farmer is the one who works hard to till the land in order to grow successful crops of delicious fruits, vegetables, herbs, flowers etc. Such crops that give recurring delight to the beholder and the harvester. This is the meaning of Eid- **an ever recurring happiness and joy, accompanied by well-deserved festivities**.

The same principle on which the harvesting of a successful crop by a farmer is based, applies to our relationship with the Holy Quran which often stands for the spiritual rain that enlivens our souls and causes it to grow into super God-Consciousness that knows no end. The

Holy Quran alludes to this, metaphorically, when it says:

And He it is Who sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth with it buds of all (plants), then We bring forth from it green (foliage), from which We produce clustered grain; and of the date-palm, of the sheaths of it, come forth clusters (of dates) within reach; and gardens of grapes and the olive and the pomegranate, alike and unlike. Look at the fruit of it when it bears fruit and the ripening of it - **Surely there are signs in this for a people who believe!- 6:99**

So what are the signs or lessons for us in this beautiful picture of a luxuriant garden, the soil of which was given life to by salubrious rain from the heavens? The month of Ramadan has highlighted this principle in a spiritual sense. We watered the garden of our souls through reading, reciting and studying the Holy Quran more intensely; we engaged in additional prayers sometimes in the middle of the night; we fasted to gain the pleasure of Almighty Allah; we gave charity out of compassion and concern for the poor and less fortunate. In this manner we worked hard to transform the raw seeds of ‘*lust, anger and greed*’ in us into useful moral qualities that are beneficial and not

destructive to ourselves and humankind at large. We were afforded the opportunity to collectively put a check on our lusts and turned it into **'love and compassion'** that extended beyond our own families to the less fortunate in particular. We worked on our **'anger and egotistic natures'** by turning it into **'well-placed bravery and patience'** that developed further into the moral qualities of being **'firm and principled'** in the face of injustice and cruelty. The seeds of greed in us were transformed into moral qualities of being **'up and doing'** against all forms of injustice, **forbidding what is wrong and enjoining what is good** - not being insolent and lethargic, and an idle 'fence-sitter', yet at all times avoiding extremities.

These are but some basic examples of how the Ramadan taught us to cultivate our own souls for it to grow into moral and spiritual fruits. In the Holy month of Ramadan, we did all this like a farmer, so that we could reap the fruits of our ***falah*** i.e. **'the success of both this world and the next.'**

In the next life this crop, built up from our good deeds here, will, **by the Mercy of Almighty God**, manifest itself as the most beautiful Garden of bliss unimaginable to our physical senses here, as promised repeatedly in the Holy Quran to the steadfast.

But like anything else in life, we need expert guidance as to the best methods to adopt to enhance the growth of our souls. We need to know what is useful and what should be avoided. This guidance comes in the form of the Holy Quran:

So He reveals to it its way of evil and its way of good. – 91:8

The Holy Quran tells us what is harmful for us and what is good for us. It is the most up to date and authentic guide for humankind. The Holy Quran is clear on Who its Author is. Thus we are told at the very beginning:

I Allah am the Best Knower.

This Book, there is no doubt in it, **is a guide to those who keep their duty**, -2:1-2

Therefore, in order for the ***falah*** – **'unfoldment'** of our souls to develop from a state of **'low, uncontrolled animal passions'** to a highly civilized, **moral status** - we must turn to the Holy Quran for our guidance. If our approach to the Holy Book is anything other than this, and that is, when it is merely recited at special occasions such as weddings and funerals etc; or treated as an object for debate to sport some academic prowess, then all our efforts will be futile like the **'chaff'** of the failed crop mentioned in the Holy Quran; which says:

Know that this world's life is only sport and play and gaiety and

boasting among yourselves and a vying in the multiplication of wealth and children. It is as rain, whose causing the vegetation to grow pleases the farmer, **then it withers away so that you see it turning yellow, then it becomes chaff** – 57:20

This tells us that success according to Islam is not measured in terms of material possessions which tend to occupy a bigger part of our lives. Nay! Instead it will lead to a failure of the **‘spiritual crop’** even though it might be seemingly pleasing to us.

Our duty is to bring ourselves to the point of true morality that makes us competent of building a civilization based on **‘righteousness, compassion and justice’** for all. A civilization where we find comfort in being principled and stand firm by truth and justice at all costs avoiding hypocrisy and duplicity – typical weaknesses of modern day leadership across the political and religious spectra that are ruining the moral fabric of society in the world. To use the metaphor of the farmer in the Holy Quran above, these are the **‘weeds’** that we do not want in our **‘garden’** for it will retard our growth and turn our crops i.e. the fruits of all our hard labour into useless **‘chaff’**.

Who, these days, can deny the fact that due to the infiltration of such **‘weeds’**

into the **‘Garden of Islam’**, Muslims in general and Muslim nations still find themselves so divided? There appears to be no empathy along the lines of a common brotherhood; Religious scholars cannot agree even on simple mundane issues such as when is the day of Eid or when does the fast begin. When a leading nation in the Muslim world can spend billions of dollars on arms and use it with impunity on a virtually defenceless, ill-equipped Muslim neighbour, mercilessly killing thousands and rendering millions of them, women and children, destitute in the process, then we know there is something very, very seriously wrong somewhere.

Even the holy month of Ramadan was not spared for such barbaric behaviour nor did it bring about a change of heart nor a vestige of the moral transformation highlighted above.

Whilst it is encouraging these days to see many video clips circulating on social media condemning such behaviour as well as clips extolling the beauty of the Holy Quran – these postings are of short-lived admiration and no sooner everyone reverts to the same humdrum state of life. This sorry state prevails despite the fact that nowadays religious clerics are churned out like produce off a conveyor belt in a factory without any quality checks or screening done before they are set loose on an **indifferent, ‘couldn’t – care - less’**

society. These clerics are blindly admired for their packaged education to the extent that their lacking in wisdom and integrity is often over looked! Nowadays, we also find people flocking to Mecca in droves yet with all these well-intentioned efforts there is still no visible transformation of note. Instead of those noble moral qualities of **'love, compassion, empathy, relentless thirst for justice, etc'** referred to above, flourishing and becoming a dominant feature of note in our communities, we still see too much of the low raw qualities of **'lust, anger and greed'** prevail.

There now seems to be a growing general consensus from a 'forward thinking sector' with seemingly genuine concern that at the root of all this chaos lies a serious ideological disease.

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, 19th Century Muslim Reformer, diagnosed and identified this disease accurately 100 years ago and actively set about in treating its root causes - not just the peripheral, superficial symptoms of the disease. Since the disease set in as a result of gross distortions of the teachings of Islam by misguided clerics largely influenced by anti-Islamic propaganda, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad made it very clear that the only solution was to provide quality literature that gives the correct, unadulterated teachings of Islam as a cure

for the disease. The Woking Muslim Mission in England and the establishment of the Berlin Mission in Germany at the turn of the 20th century were the first of its kind.

The Lahore based Ahmadiyya Movement, despite opposition from mainstream Muslims plagued by sectarian strife, has over a century successfully produced widely acclaimed, top quality literature geared at improving the overall moral condition of the Muslims; not such that leaves sincere seekers in a constant state of confusion and misguidance; nor such that breed militant jihadists and suicide bombers; nor such that perpetuate sectarian strife where even something as simple as 'how do you define who is a Muslim' cannot be determined with clarity by 'so called' leading scholars boasting fancy theological degrees

In Pakistan, a country where acts of terror are still much out of control, members of the Ahmadiyya Movement, by law, are not allowed to practice Islam and propagate its peaceful message in that country. This is the cruellest piece of legislation existing anywhere in the world today that should be condemned with the contempt that it deserves by any decent, fair-minded person. This grossly inhumane Pakistani legislation is an abuse of a most basic human right and that is the freedom of worship afforded to humankind by none

other than Almighty God Himself, Who has declared: **‘There is no compulsion in religion.’ – 2:256.**

Nevertheless, under these most oppressive circumstances, the Central Body in Pakistan have not given up serving humanity. These days the work of the organization is focussed on providing free

five hundred with free x-rays.

- Fifty six widows receive financial support and more than seventy students receive free education.

In Europe, our Berlin Mosque has been designated monumental status by the



Explaining the peaceful teachings of Islam to visitors to our Berlin Mosque

humanitarian support to the poor and indigent – which at least they are not prohibited from doing under Pakistani law. Last year they

- Provided more than fifty thousand patients with free medical treatment and medicines from the Maulana Muhammad Ali dispensary
- Seventeen hundred patients were provided with free ultra-sounds, and more than

German Government and is seen as a favourite tourist attraction with a constant flow of visitors from all parts of the world, Muslim and non-Muslim. In this way our renowned peaceful propagation efforts of Islam in a part of the world blinded by prejudice, is most effective and vital in countering anti-Islamic propaganda.

From our US organization we hear good news of the tremendous strides being made in the translation and publication of our literature into Arabic. This is a phenomenal achievement, considering the

smouldering situation in the Middle East where extremism is rife.

In South Africa our national outreach program in the dissemination of free literature is continuing. Hundreds of libraries across the country have benefitted from this initiative thus far.

At an Eid ul Fitr celebration in Johannesburg, guest of honour, the deputy President of South Africa, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, remarked:

‘As you (Muslims) performed service and acts of goodwill and charity for the poor and needy members of our communities, you reminded us that Islam is a faith founded on compassion, justice and universal brotherhood. It is about giving, not taking. It is about generosity, not greed. It is about love, peace, truth, and tolerance. Not hatred, violence, dishonesty and bigotry. And these are universal human values upon which we need to anchor our new society.’

We strongly condemn all forms of human right violations; all forms of injustices, and the wanton abuse of the environment. We especially condemn the ruthless killings of all innocent parties in the name of Religion or State!

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