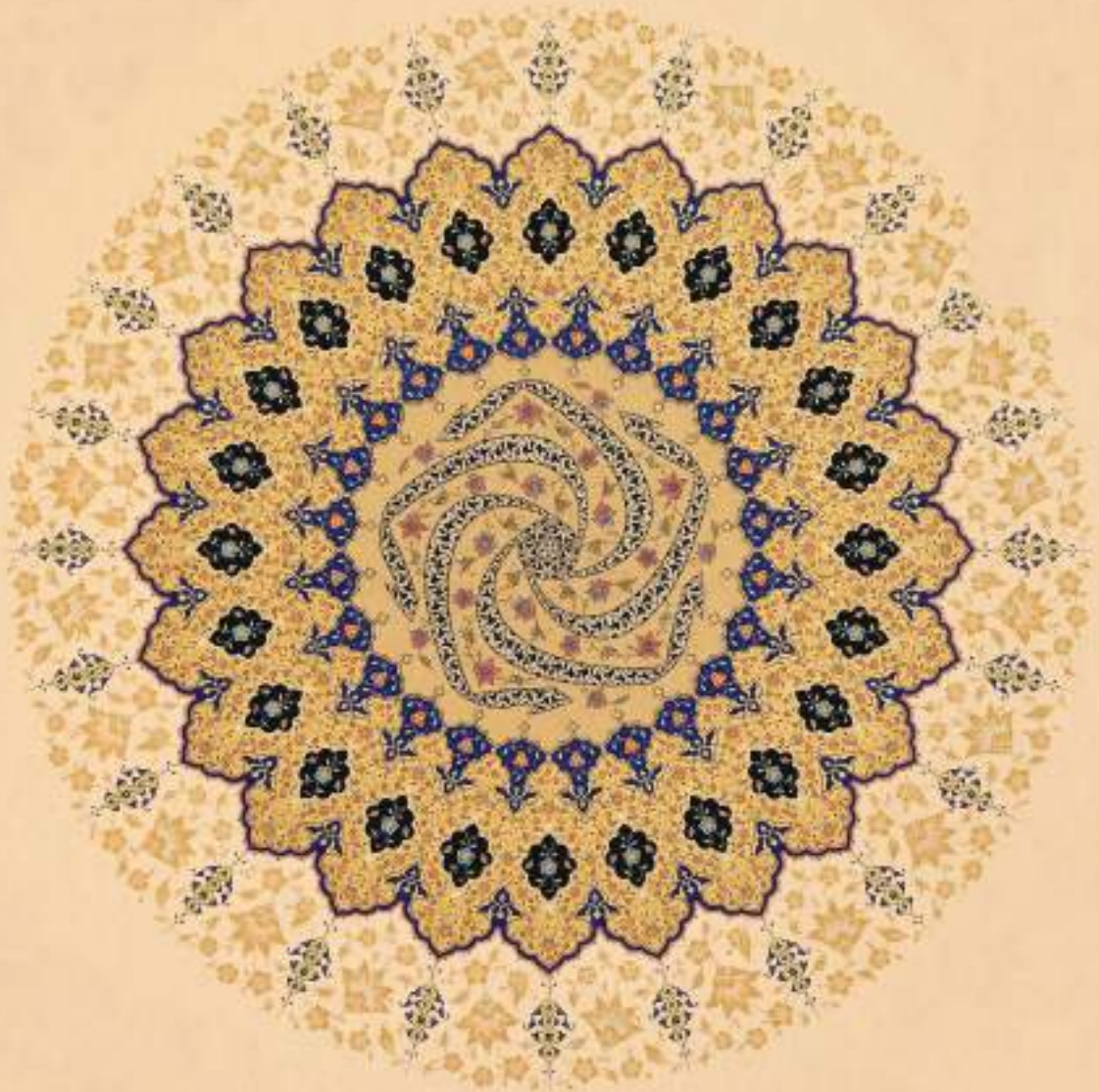


Diyanet Journal

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MUSLIM COURTESY

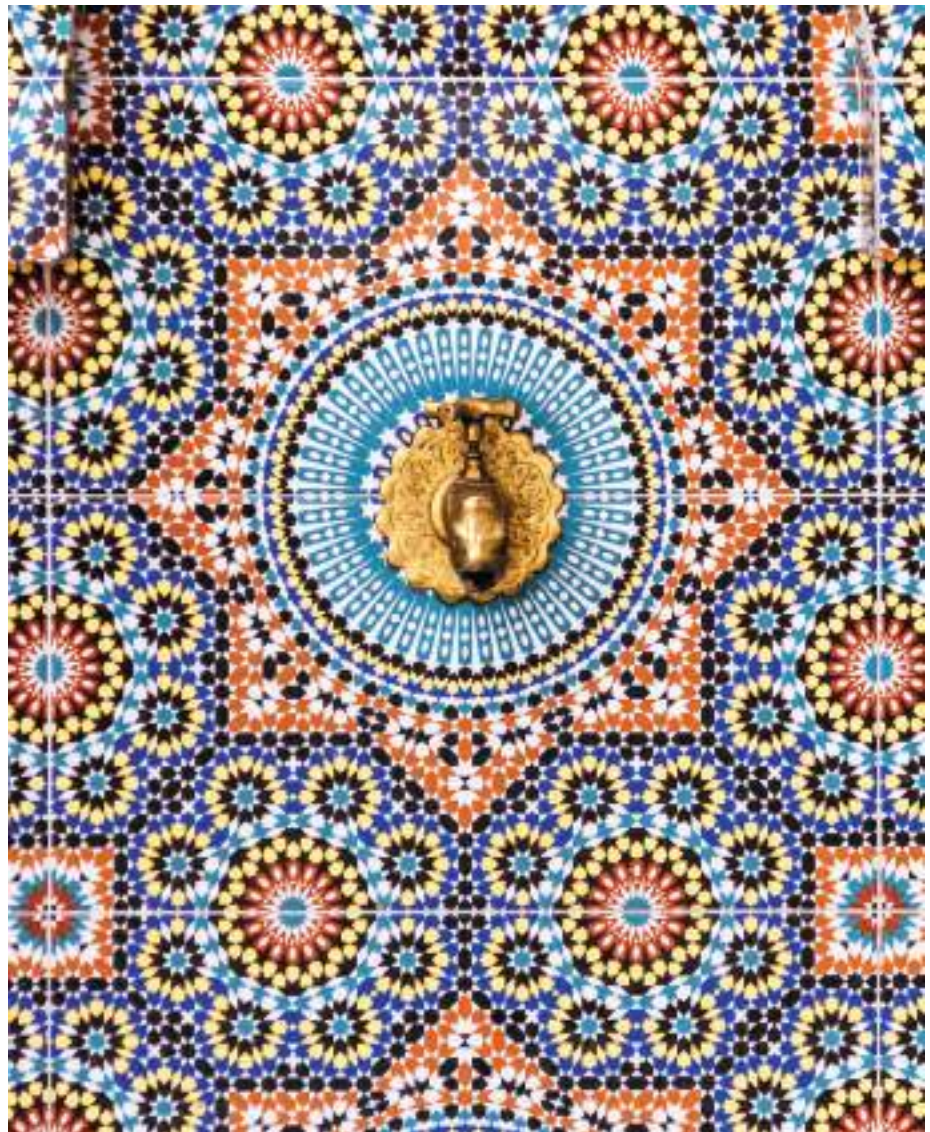
| Ethical Issues of the Digital Age | Children's Rights | The Most Exalted of the Exalted: Al-'Aziz | Islam in Pakistan |



Islamic geometric patterns

Islamic geometry, also known as Islamic geometric design or Islamic pattern, is a distinctive form of geometric art and design characterized by its Islamic cultural and architectural provenance. It is a geometric pattern and motif used to decorate mosques, madrasahs, palaces, and other Islamic structures.

Islamic geometric patterns are characterized by their logical and mathematical nature, as evidenced by their precise alignment on a two-dimensional surface. These patterns are traditionally based on a circle and are created using a compass and a ruler. In the Islamic world, for example, five-pointed, six-pointed, eight-pointed, ten-pointed, and twelve-pointed stars are common. These stars are used either individually or in combination to create more intricate designs.



Editorial

Islam, as a religion of kindness, has bestowed great value upon humanity and has referred to humans as *ashraf al-makhlūqat* (the most honorable of creation). Islamic ethics emphasize that Muslims should always treat one another with care, that courtesy should prevail between spouses within the family, and that the rights of brotherhood should be upheld in social life.

Human beings are social creatures by psychological, biological, and economic necessity. An individual's ability to live a life of security and tranquility largely depends on their relationships with others. This reality necessitates that a person adhere to certain rules in their interactions, regulate their words and actions, and act with consideration for the emotions and thoughts of those they engage with. These fundamental moral principles foster healthy communication, strengthen human relationships, reinforce the culture of coexistence, and support social harmony. All these values manifest as virtues brought forth by courtesy, which stands as one of the most defining qualities of a Muslim.

Every Muslim should exhibit exemplary behavior at home, in the workplace, at school, and in all aspects of social life, never abandoning courtesy, care, and understanding. This is because Muslims must always remember that they represent the religion they believe in. Throughout history, the greatest role model for Muslims has been the Messenger of Allah. The Prophet (saw) is described in the Qur'an as "*uswa hasana*", meaning "the best example" (Ahzab, 33:21). Furthermore, Allah the Almighty highlights the Prophet's noble morality by stating that he is a man of "outstanding character" (Qalam, 68:4). As believers, we must follow his exemplary character in every aspect of our lives and strive to embody his courtesy and kindness.

We are living in an era where communication and human interaction have become more widespread than ever. Our words and actions now reach and influence a greater number of people, engaging with them in various ways. This era increases our responsibilities even further. As Muslims, we must embody both sincerity and refinement simultaneously, avoiding artificial, duplicitous, and insincere behavior. We must tread carefully in every step we take, strive to avoid hurting others and uphold courtesy under all circumstances. It is essential that we commit to practicing Islamic ethics not only in times of peace and ease but also during moments of crisis, ensuring that our conduct remains aligned with these moral principles at all times.

As Diyanet Journal, we are pleased to present this issue on the theme of "Muslim Courtesy". In this month's issue, Prof. Dr. Soner GUNDUZUZ enriches our feature with his article titled "Adding Meaning to Our Lives Through Touches of Courtesy." "In the Light of the Qur'an" section, Dr. Abdulkadir ERKUT pens an insightful article titled "Three Principles of Tabligh". Our interview guest for this issue is Prof. Dr. Mim Kemal OKE, who emphasizes that: "Courtesy is one of the indispensable qualities of a Muslim."

We look forward to seeing you in our next issue.

Wishing you a blessed reading experience.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

A REFLECTION OF ISLAMIC DIGNITY IN SOCIAL LIFE: COURTESY



Prof. Dr. Ali ERBAS

The President
Presidency of Religious Affairs

Living within a society is a psychological, biological, and economic necessity for human beings. The ability to sustain one's existence in an honorable, secure, and peaceful manner largely depends on one's interactions with others. This, in turn, requires adhering to certain principles in communication and engagement with people. These principles, which are essential for coexistence, are referred to as *adab al-mu'asharat*, meaning the rules of courtesy. Also expressed through concepts such as etiquette, decorum, and custom, these rules are fundamental moral principles that ensure healthy communication between individuals, strengthen human relationships and contribute to social harmony.

Courtesy means having good character and being selfless, prioritizing the needs of one's brother over one's own. It is about valuing others without seeking to elevate oneself and approaching everyone with respect, understanding, and tolerance. It involves avoiding offensive, hurtful, or harmful words, attitudes, and behaviors while offering healing words to wounded hearts. Courtesy is doing good without expecting anything in return, reviving hearts without seeking personal gain. It means embodying love, respect, compassion, and mercy in human relationships; choosing the most beautiful words and the most refined actions; and being kind, gentle, and dignified in demeanor. At the same time, courtesy requires an

awareness of boundaries. It is recognizing that every individual's feelings, thoughts, and perspectives hold value in their own right. In this respect, courtesy is the distinguishing mark of a Muslim's character and a reflection of Islamic dignity in social life.

The Holy Qur'an, which defines a person's responsibilities toward Allah, oneself, and society, contains numerous verses across various chapters that set the standards for courtesy and ethical communication. In particular, Surah al-Hujurat is a surah dedicated entirely to courtesy and social etiquette, calling people to morality. In this surah, Allah the Almighty commands believers to show respect to Him and His Messenger, to be cautious regarding unverified information, and to uphold the rights of brotherhood. It warns against attitudes and behaviors that corrupt hearts, disrupt societal harmony, and undermine the possibility of coexistence, such as mocking others, assigning offensive nicknames, harboring suspicion, engaging in backbiting, and prying into people's private matters. Furthermore, the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of kindness, valuing friendships, expressing gratitude for acts of goodness, refraining from reminding others of one's favors, wishing

well for others, and being generous, charitable, and humble. These qualities are regarded as essential for establishing a livable and harmonious society. The standards of courtesy that the Qur'an, as the fundamental source of Islam and our guide to life, teaches, encourages, and promotes are undoubtedly universal principles that facilitate coexistence and lead to happiness in both this world and the hereafter.

We witness the embodiment and pinnacle of these virtues in the life of the Messenger of Allah. His life stands as a timeless symbol of Islamic morality and etiquette, offering the most exemplary model of courtesy and grace. He approached not only humans but all living beings and even the entire creation with a deep sense of trust and responsibility, adopting a constructive and positive manner in all his actions. Never was he harsh, rude, exclusionary, or accusatory toward anyone, nor did he ever treat others unjustly. From his family life to educational settings, from commercial dealings to governance, he remained the greatest example of courtesy, elegance, and noble character in every aspect of life. Allah the Almighty affirms this truth in the Qur'an with His divine proclamation: "And you are truly (a man) of outstanding character." (Qalam, 68:4) This verse not only praises the character

of the Prophet but also presents him as the finest example for all of humanity to follow.

The ultimate source of the Messenger of Allah's morals, the foundation that refined his conduct and shaped his relationships, was undoubtedly the Holy Qur'an. His constant smile, compassion, and humility toward those around him were a reflection of Qur'anic ethics. His refusal to accuse or disparage anyone, his unwillingness to shame or humiliate others, and his avoidance of condemnation or scorn were all outcomes of the divine training he received through revelation. With his noble presence that instilled trust and his delicate soul, his entire life was essentially a living embodiment of the Qur'an. Through his courtesy and grace, he was like a radiant lamp spreading light to those around him, and with his dignity and moral excellence, he served as a guiding compass, directing people toward goodness and beauty.

Despite the harshness, rigidity, and harsh manners of the society of the Age of Ignorance, our beloved Prophet never compromised his courtesy, as it was a divine gift from Allah. Due to this, he left a profound impact on those around him in a short period, winning hearts through his words, demeanor, and actions. With his graceful conduct, he guided people away

from hatred, enmity, and hostility, leading them toward an atmosphere of brotherhood, compassion, and love. Through this, he built a virtuous society where individuals were bound together by mercy, and from this society, he established a civilization that would serve as an example for the entire world. Undoubtedly, the most crucial factor that paved the way for this great transformation was the Prophet's unparalleled courtesy, elegance, compassion, and mercy, which encompassed not only people but all living beings. Indeed, Allah the Almighty highlights this truth in the Qur'an: "It is out of Allah's mercy that you (O Prophet) have been lenient with them. Had you been cruel or hard-hearted, they would have certainly abandoned you..." (Al-i 'Imran, 3:159).

Today, in a world where the pursuit of excess, greed for worldly possessions, arrogance, and envy have turned life into a battleground of competition and oppression, sweeping people into its vortex like a storm, true peace can only be attained by embracing the ethics of courtesy exemplified by the Messenger of Allah. As modern lifestyles drive individuals toward isolation, and as loneliness leads to spiritual distress, hearts can once again find tranquility by following the guidance of the Noble Messenger.

ADDING MEANING TO OUR LIVES THROUGH TOUCHES OF COURTESY

Prof. Dr. Soner GUNDUZ

Courtesy is essential, not only for enhancing the beauty of our character and earning respect in society but also for fostering unity within the community. As believers, we must strive to speak kindly and choose our words with care. In this regard, the Qur'an presents the verse "Speak kindly to people" (Baqarah, 2:83) as a guiding principle for every Muslim. In another verse, it is stated: "Tell My (believing) servants to say only what is best. Satan certainly seeks to sow discord among them. Satan is indeed a sworn enemy to humankind." (Isra, 17:53) At this point, believers do not pay heed even to possible verbal provocations directed at them. Instead, they respond as follows: "When they hear slanderous talk, they turn away from it, saying, 'We are accountable for our deeds and you for yours. Peace (is our only

response) to you! We want nothing to do with those who act ignorantly.'" (Qasas, 28:55)

The elders have emphasized that the most virtuous deeds are "feeding those in need and speaking kindly to people". As a natural consequence of this principle in Islamic civilization, soup kitchens, caravanserais, and charitable institutions were established, fostering a vast culture of endowment based on mutual assistance. This culture extended not only to Muslims but also to those in need from different religions, offering them a helping hand. In doing so, it sought to introduce them to the profound tolerance and generosity of Islam.

The individuals who embodied the spirit of dervishes and represented a refined civilization lived by principles such as eating little,

sleeping little, speaking sparingly, and constantly remembering Allah. They dedicated themselves to contemplating the universe and existence and avoiding base desires. At the same time, they prioritized offering the finest hospitality to others and speaking words that touched the heart—full of wisdom reflecting deep spiritual thought. Undoubtedly, this way of life stems from a person's awareness that Allah is always with them. In this state of realization, they understood that through their senses and actions, they were continually guided by divine inspiration and protection (Bukhari, Riqaq, 38). Through this awareness, a person perceives the universe with a horizon that transcends this world. It is true that, amid the vast industrial crises of the modern world and the fluctuations in the balance of production and consumption,





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COURTESY IS NOT A WEAKNESS THAT UNDERMINES A PERSON'S ENDURANCE OR HUMILIATES THEM IN THE EYES OF OTHERS. ON THE CONTRARY, IT IS A VIRTUE THAT ELEVATES AN INDIVIDUAL IN THE EYES OF PEOPLE, INCREASING THEIR DIGNITY AND RESPECT.

contemporary individuals, who bear the weight of many challenges on their shoulders, may sometimes view this ideal moral level as an unattainable dream. However, reaching such a state of maturity is not difficult for someone who is immersed in the Qur'an and familiar with the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah. On the contrary, it becomes a source of spiritual joy and fulfillment.

On the importance of loyalty to promises and living in harmony

Courtesy, in one sense, is honesty. Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman bore witness to this honesty... It is the necessity of faith being intertwined with loyalty, loyalty with fulfilling promises, and keeping one's word even to an enemy. Hudhayfah begins his account by saying, "Nothing prevented me from being at Badr except this..." and continues: "My father, Husayl, and I set out from Mecca—then under the control of the polytheists—toward Medina. Along the way, the Quraysh polytheists captured us and said, 'You intend to join Muhammad (saw) to fight against us'. We replied, 'Our purpose is only to reach the Prophet; we have no intention of fighting you. Our only goal is to go to Medina.' Upon this, they made us promise that when we reached Medina, we would not



COURTESY SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO HUMAN INTERACTIONS BUT SHOULD ALSO EXTEND TO ANIMALS, NATURE, AND EVEN INANIMATE OBJECTS. IN ESSENCE, EVERY ACT OF KINDNESS IS A MEANS OF SEEKING ALLAH'S PLEASURE.

fight against them on the side of the Messenger of Allah. Although they were oppressing the Muslims in every possible way, we had no choice but to give our word. When we arrived in Medina, we informed the Messenger of Allah about the situation. He said, 'Go on; you will not participate in Badr! We keep our promises to them, and we seek Allah's help against them.'"

(Muslim, Jihād wa'l-Siyar, 93) In an environment where the Quraysh polytheists were actively oppressing Muslims, making such a decision was undoubtedly difficult. However, the prophetic teachings emphasized the utmost importance of loyalty to promises, honesty, and keeping one's word—even when interacting with polytheists. This incident offers many lessons regarding the experience of living alongside non-Muslims. The foremost lesson is that faith and falsehood can never coexist.

The Prophet Muhammad (saw), who gifted humanity the Constitution of Medina as a declaration of human rights, established a profound principle of justice within this document. It states: "And the hands of pious believers shall be raised against every such person as rises in rebellion or attempts to acquire anything by force or is guilty of any sin or

excess or attempts to spread mischief among the believers; their hands shall be raised all together against such a person, even if he be a son to any one of them." Through this, justice was firmly established as the foundation of governance and social order. The Constitution of Medina also included measures for coexisting with different religious communities. This constitutional document emphasized equality among citizens regardless of race, language, or religion, ensuring their rights and protection. It also addressed social welfare, mutual assistance, and a system akin to social security, while upholding freedom of speech and belief with great care. These provisions demonstrate that many principles needed in today's societies were already being implemented in Medina under the direct guidance of the Messenger of Allah.

The account of Sulaym ibn Amir from the Himyar tribe provides a profound understanding of the importance Islam places on honesty and courtesy. There was a peace treaty between Mu'awiya and the Byzantines. However, before the treaty expired, Mu'awiya set out on a campaign toward Byzantine territory. The intention was not to engage in battle during

the peace period but to prepare for war once the treaty had expired. At that moment, a man on horseback arrived, exclaiming: “How astonishing! It is not about breaking agreements; it is about honoring them!” This man was none other than ‘Amr ibn ‘Abasah. When asked what he meant, he explained, “I heard the Messenger of Allah (saw) say: ‘If a people have made a treaty, they must neither break it nor dissolve it until its term ends, or until they have informed the other party of its termination. They must not take unilateral action without mutual agreement.’” Upon hearing this, the entire army turned back from the campaign (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 152). This remarkable sensitivity, strong enough to halt an entire army, was rooted in honesty, courtesy, loyalty to agreements, and above all, the desire to adhere to the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (saw).

Loving the creation for the sake of the Creator: viewing existence through the lens of mercy and courtesy

Courtesy is not a weakness that undermines a person’s endurance or humiliates them in the eyes of others. On the contrary, it is a virtue that elevates an individual in the eyes of people, increasing their dignity



COURTESY IS ESSENTIAL, NOT ONLY FOR ENHANCING THE BEAUTY OF OUR CHARACTER AND EARNING RESPECT IN SOCIETY BUT ALSO FOR FOSTERING UNITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

and respect. In other words, the superficial happiness promised by popular culture can only be transformed from a mundane and profane existence into a deeper, more meaningful dimension when a person expresses the mercy embedded within their own soul.

This broad perspective, one that seeks a delicate soul and profound meaning even in material

things, and highlights the aesthetic dimension in everything, is a powerful step toward cultivating an awareness of eternal happiness. This understanding teaches us that courtesy should not be limited to human interactions but should also extend to animals, nature, and even inanimate objects. In essence, every act of kindness is a means of seeking Allah’s pleasure, an effort to have our names recorded in His exalted presence, and a testament before the Kiraman Katibin angels of our sincerity as righteous servants. Undoubtedly, every good deed serves as a manifestation of Allah’s attribute of beauty on earth, allowing divine mercy and compassion to take shape in this world.

When even Pharaoh was to be warned with gentle words (Ta-Ha, 20:44), how can we possibly justify our rudeness and lack of courtesy toward our spouses, daughters, and sisters in the presence of Allah? Not only is it forbidden to be disobedient to our parents, but we are also commanded to approach them with utmost courtesy and respect, obeying them in all matters as long as they do not lead us toward wrongdoing or disbelief (‘Ankabut, 29:8). Then, what excuse can there be for treating them with harshness or causing them distress? The Blessed

Prophet (saw) placed great emphasis on courtesy and respect. He warned: “Satan has lost hope that he will ever be worshiped again in these lands—the lands of Islam. However, he still takes pleasure in your offensive and discourteous behavior toward one another.” (Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, 2/368). With these words, he made us aware of the delicate path that the Muslim society is treading on. The Prophet (saw) also stated: “Kindness is not to be found in anything but that it adds to its beauty and it is not withdrawn from anything but it makes it defective.” (Muslim, Birr, 78-79) As his ummah, we now face a crucial decision: Will we choose beauty, or will we allow ourselves to fall into defective practices?

The essence of the matter

Courtesy is a moral attitude and a state of virtue that encompasses overcoming anger, restraining oneself against base desires, avoiding offensive jokes and behavior, and exercising wisdom. It is a reflection of Allah’s attribute Latif (The Subtle, The Kind) in His servants, manifesting through gentleness, grace, and tolerance. Courtesy is the very value embodied in the Prophet’s (saw) guidance, where he encouraged us to blend knowledge with tranquility and dignity (Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, Sulwat al-‘Arifin, DKI, Beirut, 2011, 2/91).

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS TOO

As the two boys, one year apart in age, entered the Medina mosque, everyone was listening attentively to the sermon. Dressed in red shirts, the little ones toddled forward with baby steps, yet their determination to reach their grandfather at the pulpit was unwavering. The affection felt by the Prophet (saw) for his grandchildren was so strong that he could not simply ignore Hasan and Husayn (ra) and continue his sermon. To the astonished looks of the congregation, the Messenger of Allah (saw) took the three steps down from the pulpit and picked up the two toddlers, who, in the future, would



be heralded as the young lords of paradise (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 30). When he climbed up the steps with his grandsons in order to finish his sermon, he said, "Allah spoke the Truth: Indeed, your wealth and your children are a trial. (Anfal, 8:28) I looked at these two children walking and falling down, and I could not stand by patiently anymore until I had interrupted my talk and picked them up." (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 30; Nas'ri, Jum'a, 30) The Prophet (saw) was not angry. On the contrary, he

“ PARENTS ARE NOT THE OWNERS BUT THE CUSTODIANS OF THEIR CHILDREN.

was happy and perhaps so excited that he interrupted his flowing sentences to unhesitatingly and openly show his love for his grandchildren. This love was imprinted on our hearts during the creation of mankind. Allah the Almighty granted us the desire to have children and to continue our lineage (A'raf, 7:189), and He (swt) never denied the prayers and requests of those who genuinely wanted to have children (Baqarah, 2:128; Al-i 'Imran, 3:35, 38; Maryam, 19:5-6).

It is extremely meaningful that while our Prophet (saw) expressed his love for his grandchildren, he also warned us that this love could be turned into a weakness. He told us that our interest in our children was one of life's most important tests. By this, it was as if our Lord was warning his servants by reading one of his revelations as an example, saying, "Don't be like those who failed this test because they succumbed to love". Likewise, Allah the Almighty repeatedly





CHILDREN SPROUT WITH LOVE, BLOOM WITH KINDNESS, AND GROW WITH COMPASSION. AT EVERY AGE, THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE UNCONDITIONAL AND INESTIMABLE LOVE FROM THEIR PARENTS.

their parents. Due to this, our beloved Prophet never hesitated to show love towards children. He sometimes held children in a warm embrace and kissed them (Bukhari, *Buyu'*, 49), at other times, he gently patted them

reminded us that a child, who could latch onto people with his cuteness, and was so favored and was one of the blessings of this world (Al-i 'Imran, 3:14; Kahf, 18:46), was, in reality, a major test for us: "Know that your possessions and your children are only a test, but the reward is great in the sight of Allah." (Anfal, 8:28; Mu'minun, 23:55-56)

Parents are not the owners but the custodians of their children (Muslim, *Fadha'il al-Sahaba*, 107). Allah wished to send a new life to the earth and put parents in charge of making, birthing, and raising this being. Therefore, the parents, who take on a serious responsibility on Allah's behalf, are obliged to properly raise the little person that He turned over to them. They must take care of what Allah (swt) has entrusted to them, and not betray Him. This means that they don't have the freedom to do what they want regarding the child. For the day will come when they will be held accountable by Allah as to how they treated this child with whom they'd been entrusted, how they fed him, and how they protected him.

Children sprout with love, bloom with kindness, and grow with compassion. At every age, they have the right to see unconditional and inestimable love from

with his fragrant hands (Muslim, *Fadha'il*, 80). Since he understood that a child needed laughter and play just as much as discipline and guidance, he would playfully fill his mouth with water and gently squirt it at the children since he knew that a child needed jesting and play at least as much as discipline and seriousness, he would fill his mouth with water and squirt it at children (Bukhari, *'Ilm*, 18), and play horsy with his grandchildren on his back (Tirmidhi, *Manaqib*, 30). While he spoke highly of those who showed affection to their children (Muslim, *Fadha'il al-Sahabah*, 201), he reproached with regret those who withheld love from their child (Bukhari, *Adab*, 18; Muslim, *Fadha'il*, 64) saying, "He is not one of us who does not have mercy upon our young, nor knows not to honor our elders." (Tirmidhi, *Birr*, 15)

As a manifestation of love and compassion, a child has a right to receive blessings from their elders. With the example of Prophet Ibrahim, who prayed, "O Lord, make this town safe! Preserve me and my offspring from idolatry" (Ibrahim, 14:35), parents should support their children's well-being with their prayers. Likewise, our Prophet had numerous prayers for the well-being, prosperity, forgiveness, and health of the children he held

in his lap (Muslim, *Fadha'il al-Sahaba*, 143; Muslim, *Fadha'il al-Sahaba*, 172; Bukhari, *Adab*, 22; Bukhari, *Fadha'il al-Sahaba*, 22). Therefore, the sunnah of the Prophet is intended to fulfill children's material needs while also guiding their spiritual development.

As the Messenger of Allah (saw) taught us, our children have the right to engage in life and to learn social life under the supervision of their elders. In that regard, we see that the Prophet (saw) did not keep children away from a life of worship, and he even allocated a place in the mosque at prayer times for children (Abu Dawud, *Salat*, 96). Whenever he returned from a journey or battle, he paid special attention to the children who came to greet him. He took delight in lifting them onto his horse and embracing them as he entered the city (Bukhari, *Libas*, 99; Muslim, *Fadha'il al-Sahaba*, 66). He did not discourage the presence of children at the council; on the contrary, he would first offer the seasonal fresh fruit he had brought for himself to the children beside him (Muslim, *Haji*, 474).

All rights granted to a child apply equally to every child, regardless of religion, language, race, or gender. A needy and disadvantaged child enters the world with the same



rights as a fortunate child raised in the comfort and opportunities of a loving family environment. One should not forget the statement of our Prophet (saw), “You should give the rights of all those who have a right on you” (Bukhari, Sawm, 51; Bukhari, Adab, 86). The first order of the Holy Qur’an, to help needy and orphaned children, should not be forgotten (Nisa, 4:127). We have such a Prophet who, even while performing worship and leading the prayer as the imam to the companions, was mindful of the little children in the congregation: “When I

start the prayer I intend to prolong it, but on hearing the cries of a child, I cut short the prayer because I know that the cries of the child will incite its mother’s passions.” (Bukhari, Adhan, 65; Muslim, Salat, 192)

Every child is innocent enough not to be held accountable for their actions until they enter adolescence; and sinless enough that their mistakes will not be recorded by the recording angels (Abu Dawud, Hudud, 17). One day they will be an adult, and then the effect of their actions from childhood will carry over a lifetime. If parents give children

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GRANTED TO A
CHILD APPLY
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the gift of life and respect their rights, then they will be fully compensated for their efforts. Our Prophet gives the glad tidings to parents that as a result of the beautiful work they left behind as a gift to life, the books of their good deeds will not be closed even after they die (Muslim, Wasiyya, 14; Abu Dawud, Wasaya, 14). When parents ask in Paradise, “O Lord, how did we attain such a high station here?” the answer they will receive is priceless: “With the prayers of your children who asked forgiveness for you!” (Ibn Majah, Adab, 1; Ibn Hanbal, II/509)

THREE PRINCIPLES OF TABLIGH

Dr. Abdulkadir ERKUT

Expert of the High Board of Religious Affairs
of the Presidency of Religious Affairs

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

“Be gracious, enjoin what is right, and turn away from
those who act ignorantly.”

(A'raf, 7:199)

The Qur'an employs various styles to convey the truth, offering evidence to dispel doubts and warnings to soften hearts. Despite this, the deniers persist in refusing to accept the truth, metaphorically covering their ears and eyes, resisting its acceptance. This obstinate attitude can sometimes dishearten believers who are tasked with delivering the message, possibly leading them to withdraw from conveying it or even harbor feelings of resentment and vengeance due to the negative behaviors of the deniers. At this juncture, Allah the Almighty provides clear guidance to believers on how to approach the task of tabligh (conveying the message of Islam): “Be gracious, enjoin what is right, and turn away from those who act ignorantly.” (A'raf, 7:199)

In this verse, Allah the Almighty outlines three principles regarding the task of tabligh. The first of these is to “show forgiveness”. This initial directive instructs believers not to be harsh toward the deniers but to adopt a forgiving attitude toward them (Tabari, Jami' al-Bayan, X, 642). This means that as long as they are not waging war against Muslims, one should not retaliate against their rudeness or misbehavior, nor reproach or scold them for their actions (Baqarah, 2:109). Additionally, this command, by virtue of the definite article “al” in the word for forgiveness, encompasses all forms of forgiveness. Thus, it also applies to forgive some of the mistakes made by fellow believers (Al-i 'Imran, 3:159). However, this principle does not extend to actions that infringe upon fundamental human rights or constitute religiously punishable offenses (Ibn Ashur, al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir, IX, 227).

The principle of “gracious forgiveness” also implies adopting a facilitative and accommodating approach in human interactions. This is because the term “afw” (forgiveness) is the opposite of hardship (Baydawi, Anwar al-Tanzil, III, 46). It entails refraining from imposing undue burdens on others, only requesting actions within their capacity, and not demanding things contrary to their nature or circumstances. By doing so, one overlooks their faults, avoids alienating them, and fosters a positive relationship. This approach strengthens the connection between people and the religion of Allah, showcasing the tolerant and luminous

face of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) articulated this attitude in his statement: "Show leniency (to the people); don't be hard upon them; give them glad tidings (of divine favors in this world and the hereafter); and do not create aversion." (Muslim, *Jihad wa Siyar*, 6) This is because Islam does not aim to burden people with hardship, to punish them, or to seek revenge against them. Instead, it promises benevolence, goodness, and mercy for all humanity, including disbelievers.

In the context of tabligh, the second principle, following the first, is "enjoin what is right". This is because merely forgiving and refraining from conveying the truth would lead to a significant moral responsibility. The term *ma'ruf* refers to actions that reason approves of, the heart finds peace in, and that people accept without objection. It encompasses what is in harmony with religion or what is commanded and recommended by it. The concept of *ma'ruf* highlights Islam's respect for human dignity and its compatibility with human nature. Various examples of *ma'ruf* are mentioned in the tafsirs, but the term is not restricted to a specific meaning. Rather, all actions falling under the scope of *ma'ruf* are expected to be observed by individuals. It is evident

that for one to enjoin *ma'ruf*, they must first embody its qualities and adopt them as part of their character.

In the phrase "enjoin what is right", the Prophet Muhammad (saw) is instructed to remain unaffected by the negative attitudes of the disbelievers and to persist in conveying the truth to them. Therefore, those to whom *ma'ruf* is to be communicated are, primarily, the polytheists and disbelievers, as they are the immediate cause for the general directive in this verse. Nonetheless, the entire human population constitutes the target audience of tabligh because the verse does not specify a direct object (*ma'ful*), thereby implying universality. Additionally, the command to enjoin *ma'ruf* implicitly includes forbidding *munkar* (wrongdoing), as commanding an action inherently involves deterring its opposite. However, the verse explicitly mentions only the command to enjoin *ma'ruf* because, when inviting disbelievers to the truth, the priority is emphasizing what is right. They are individuals whose lives are dominated by *munkar* and who are surrounded by evils. Beginning with prohibitions may drive them further away from the truth and discourage the caller from Islam

(Ibn Ashur, *ibid*, IX, 228). This principle is reflected in the Prophet Muhammad's (saw) guidance when sending Mu'adh ibn Jabal to the people of Yemen, who were followers of earlier scriptures. He instructed him to first convey what they must believe in and practice (Muslim, *Iman*, 29).

The third principle in tabligh is "turn away from the ignorant". After the truth has been conveyed, people adopt various attitudes in response. Some may react to the message with hostility, exhibiting ignorant and reckless behavior. In such cases, the appropriate response is to counter ignorance with wisdom and avoid engaging in futile debates. Engaging in arguments with such individuals does not lead to productive outcomes. Moreover, one should not respond to their unpleasant words or base actions in kind, as doing so would gratify them and give them further opportunities to display their ignorance (Furqan, 25:63, 72). This approach enables the one conveying the message to maintain their dignity in the eyes of society and to focus their attention and energy on more constructive efforts.

Islamic scholars have regarded the aforementioned verse as one that encompasses excellent moral character

and have described it as the most comprehensive verse in the Qur'an concerning good ethics. Moreover, this verse has also been interpreted within the framework of methods to be applied in tabligh. Accordingly, the verse presents three interconnected principles of tabligh, with the first being the preparatory stage and the others the implementation phases. The first principle is creating an environment conducive to delivering the truth. For this, it is necessary to acknowledge the existence of the audience, even if their beliefs are not affirmed, and to avoid behaviors that may distance them from accepting the truth. The second principle is ensuring continuity in conveying the truth, not abandoning the task due to the negative attitudes of the audience. The third principle is severing ties with those who, in addition to rejecting the truth, exhibit extreme attitudes and behaviors. The verse indicates that the duty of conveying the truth is one that must be carried out with careful and precise measures. Indeed, the Qur'an states that the activity of tabligh is a task to be performed with wisdom and insight (Nahl, 16:125; Yusuf, 12:108).

THE UNNOTICED LIE: NARRATING EVERYTHING ONE HEARS

Halil KILIC

Expert of the High Board of Religious Affairs of the Presidency of Religious Affairs

Abdullah ibn Amir narrates: “My mother called me one day when the Messenger of Allah (saw) was sitting in our house. She said: Come here and I shall give you something. The Messenger of Allah (saw) asked her: What do you intend to give him? She replied: I intend to give him some dates. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: If you were not to give him anything, a lie would be recorded against you.”

(Abu Dawud, Adab, 88)

The Prophet Muhammad (saw), who throughout his life never uttered a single lie and was known even by his enemies as “Muhammad al-Amin” (Muhammad the Trustworthy), described what many might consider a trivial and common behavior as a “lie,” as seen in this example. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) was exceedingly sensitive

about the avoidance of lying and consistently warned his ummah on this matter. He rejected the dismissive attitude of “Who has ever died from lying?” and emphasized that lying could lead to hellfire, as he stated: “It is obligatory for you to tell the truth, for the truth leads to virtue and virtue leads to paradise, and the man who continues to speak the truth, and endeavors to tell the truth, is eventually recorded as ‘siddiq’ (truthful) with Allah, and beware of telling of a lie for telling a lie leads to obscenity and obscenity leads to hell-Fire, and the person who keeps telling lies and endeavors to tell a lie is recorded as a liar with Allah.” (Muslim, Birr wa Sila, 105)

Just as knowingly telling a lie is a sin that leads a person step by step toward hellfire, unknowingly transmitting falsehoods and facilitating lies by

repeating everything one hears is equally sinful. To highlight this truth, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said: “It is enough of a lie (sin in a different narration) for a man that he narrates everything he hears.” (Muslim, Muqaddimah, 5; Abu Dawud, Adab, 80)

This hadith clearly demonstrates that it is sinful for a Muslim to convey information to others without verifying its accuracy. Similarly, the hadith commands Muslims to be diligent in investigating the source of a report to avoid falling into the position of a “liar” by transmitting false information. This directive is more explicitly expressed in the following verse: “O believers, if an evildoer brings you any news, verify (it) so you do not harm people unknowingly, becoming

regretful for what you have done.” (Hujurat, 49:6)

The meaning and ruling of the verse, which emphasizes that it is not appropriate to accept information brought by unreliable individuals without verifying its accuracy, are general and apply universally across all times and places. This instruction is crucial for ensuring the orderly functioning of social and legal life and for preventing injustices and disturbances. (Kur’an Yolu Tefsiri, V, 89–90).

Furthermore, the principle of avoiding harm, as expressed in the verse, is a general tenet of Islam. Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) stated: “There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm.” (Muwatta, Aqdiya 31; Ibn Majah, Ahkam 17) Lying is one of the actions that most severely damages

كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ كَذِبًا أَنْ يُحَدِّثَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعَ

“It is enough of a lie for a man to narrate everything he hears”

(Muslim, Muqaddimah, 5)

the honor and dignity of others. If people were to relay everything they hear to others without verifying its accuracy, they would inevitably become tools for falsehood. This falsehood could harm not only others but also themselves.

The principle of “not repeating everything one hears” is particularly violated in the virtual/digital sphere. In this age of rapid advancement, where even keeping up with technological developments is a challenge, our world has virtually become a small village; an event occurring anywhere can reach the rest of the world within seconds. While this has positive aspects, false news, and information—sometimes intentionally and sometimes out of ignorance—are circulated online, leading to widespread

misinformation. For instance, a saying that is not from the Prophet Muhammad (saw) may be falsely attributed to him, posts may insult, mock, or harm the dignity and honor of individuals, or campaigns may be conducted to discredit certain institutions. Furthermore, when information aligns with one’s religious perspective or worldview or critiques opposing views, there is often a lack of due diligence regarding its source. As a result, humanity is subjected to severe information pollution and disinformation. Despite overcoming numerous diseases and epidemics, humanity often finds itself helpless in the face of this epidemic of misinformation. The solution lies in the following command of Allah the Almighty:

“Do not follow what you have no (sure) knowledge of. Indeed, all will be called to account for (their) hearing, sight, and intellect.” (Isra, 17:36)

“As the two recording angels—one sitting to the right, and (the other to) the left—note (everything), not a word does a person utter without having a (vigilant) observer ready (to write it down).” (Qaf, 50:17-18)

Muslims who take these verses as their guide keep in mind that they will be held accountable for every action they take and every word they speak. They do not hide behind fake accounts thinking, “No one sees or knows me anyway”. They understand that anything sinful in real life is equally sinful in the virtual world. Out of concern that it may harm their religion, state, any individuals, or institutions, they refrain from sharing information

whose accuracy they cannot verify. They recognize that excuses such as “This is what I heard” or “Someone else sent it to me” will not absolve them of responsibility. Additionally, they are conscious of the fact that they will be held accountable for any posts that cause tension, panic, or public unrest in society.

In conclusion, Muslims are those whose hands and tongues are pure; they neither knowingly tell lies nor become tools for falsehood. They do not engage in any activities that may harm others and approach all information with caution. They are particularly aware of the need to be more vigilant regarding social media, which is a platform where false news and misinformation are frequently encountered.

Prof. Dr. Mim Kemal OKE: “Courtesy is one of the indispensable qualities of a Muslim.”



Interview by:
Mahir KILINC

He was born in Istanbul in 1955. After graduating from Robert College in 1973, he went to England, where he completed his studies in the Faculties of Economics and History at Cambridge. He specialized in international relations at Sussex, Cambridge, and Istanbul universities. He became an associate professor at Bogazici University in 1984 and a professor in 1990. He has authored twenty books on the history of Turkish foreign policy, including works in English, Arabic, and Urdu. Oke has served as a consultant for the United Nations (1979) and TRT (1983–89). In addition to his academic books and articles published in various languages, he has also written novels.

The Qur'an, in various surahs, contains numerous verses that outline the standards of courtesy and communication ethics, defining a person's responsibilities towards Allah, oneself, and society. Our sublime religion, Islam, encourages the adoption of courtesy as a fundamental principle of life. In this context, could you define courtesy, which is an essential element of the Muslim character?

Courtesy and good manners are of great importance. When we speak of "adab" (proper etiquette), we encounter a remarkably comprehensive concept. One must preserve proper etiquette both towards the Creator and the created beings. This entails giving each their due right. How is this right given? It is given with knowledge and with love. As one gains knowledge, love increases; and as love deepens, knowledge grows in return. Therefore, to comprehend the greatness, majesty, and grandeur of the Creator, one must possess this sense of proper etiquette. The universe presents us with signs of immense beauty, reflections of Allah the Almighty's creation. In the face of such manifestations, it becomes imperative for people to be courteous and respectful. So, what kind of courtesy should be shown to the

Creator? It is the ability to perform acts of worship, and more importantly, to do so with both courtesy and purity. In other words, worship should not be carried out merely as a ritual duty but rather with profound love and devotion. Recognizing one's mortality and helplessness in the presence of Allah is also an essential part of this courtesy. We must also treat the world with courtesy, recognizing it as a trust granted to us by Allah the Almighty. This is because a Muslim is a refined, graceful, and compassionate person. It is not only important to fulfill the five pillars of Islam but also crucial to consider how they are performed. The path to understanding this lies in turning to the Qur'an and viewing those who live the sunnah in its full truth as mirrors to guide us in refining ourselves. Courtesy is one of the essential attributes of a Muslim. I cannot even imagine a Muslim devoid of courtesy.

What does courtesy regulate in human life, and what behaviors does it introduce into our lives within the context of social etiquette?

A person is obligated to be well-mannered. Unfortunately, adab al-mu'asharat (social etiquette) is being lost within the increasingly populist culture of the



THE UNIVERSE PRESENTS US WITH SIGNS OF IMMENSE BEAUTY, REFLECTIONS OF ALLAH THE ALMIGHTY'S CREATION.

21st century, and it is the Muslims who must be conscious of this. A Muslim must serve as an example, highlighting courtesy in their conduct, communication, expressions, and mannerisms. It is crucial for others to notice this courtesy and say, "What a wonderful person," not merely because of their preaching, but because of the way they represent their faith. A Muslim who preserves and upholds proper etiquette in all aspects of life fulfills the responsibilities of their religion. Acting otherwise puts one under serious moral accountability.

A wise saying from an elder emphasizes this point: "You behave admirably in the mosque, but if you cannot maintain the same conduct once you leave, it is not acceptable." Similarly, during Ramadan, while fasting, we treat each other with great kindness and grace. However, once Ramadan ends, we often revert to rough and careless behavior. Every moment of our lives should be lived with this same refinement and elegance.

Could you evaluate the importance of courtesy in ensuring a healthy society and social order?

In the time we live in, unfortunately, we are witnessing a significant rise in hatred. Following the end of the Cold War, the dominant ideology has become one of hatred. People have become isolated, corrupted, and deprived. As a result, many find themselves in a state of rebellion against Allah the Almighty. They may still fulfill their religious duties, but they do so without inner peace and tranquility, often complaining in the process. Refraining from complaining to Allah is a profound act of courtesy. A Muslim is grateful for everything, even for trials and hardships, believing there is wisdom behind them. When faced with affliction, the saying of Ali (ra) comes to mind. When asked whether a

difficulty is a test or simply a misfortune, he replied, "It depends on how you perceive it". In other words, it depends on the lessons one derives from it and how it is understood. Thus, patience alone is not sufficient as an expression of courtesy. Gratitude holds immense importance. By making gratitude a dominant part of our lives, we preserve our courtesy towards both Allah and those around us. For this reason, gratitude is an inseparable element of courtesy in our lives. All of these reflect how etiquette manifests itself in a cyclical and interconnected manner.

When we consider courtesy as a virtue that strengthens the culture of living and social harmony, what can we do to spread the awareness of courtesy from individuals to society?

This is a matter of education and culture. Every human being is born noble, upon the natural disposition of Islam (fitrah), but there is a necessity to develop and refine this nature. Therefore, when we are brought into life, we must understand it as a process of learning and growth. Courtesy itself has the quality of evolving and perfecting over time. One of the most significant aspects of Islam, which also serves as a key concept



MUSLIMS HAVE A CRUCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: TO UPHOLD THE SUNNAH OF COURTESY WITHIN THEIR RELIGION AND REPRESENT IT IN THEIR LIVES.

for all social sciences, is the phenomenon of self-perfection (kamal). Islam is founded on the principle of continuous self-improvement and development. A Muslim must feel the need to embody both ethical and aesthetic values. This process of self-perfection is what courtesy aims to fulfill. It is, therefore, our fundamental duty.

Another important concept is civilization. In the life of the Prophet (saw), two journeys hold great significance. One of these is the Mi'raj, the ascension from the worldly to the spiritual realm, reaching the pinnacle of courtesy and divine connection. The second is the hijrah, during which the Prophet (saw) departed from a corrupt and decaying society in Mecca, embarking on a significant journey to Medina (formerly Yathrib, a place burdened with turmoil and strife). Through his leadership, he transformed it into a thriving civilization. This process signifies the journey of self-perfection, culminating in the Asr al-Sa'adah (Era of Bliss), which represents the ideal state to aspire to. This, in essence, is our fundamental duty. Let us examine the life of the Prophet (saw), where courtesy reigned supreme. How did he exemplify this? Did he ever raise his voice, reprimand others, or complain about the constant stream of questions he received? Did he ever say, "Please leave me alone," or express frustration with those around him?

With the spread of communication driven by globalization and social networks, the erosion of our moral values, including virtues such as courtesy and respect, has become one of today's

challenges. What are your recommendations for addressing these issues?

The diagnosis is spot on. Philosophers and wise individuals around the world are saying the same thing: the world is in a state of incredible moral decay. What is the cause of this? Unfortunately, modern society has become a consumer society shaped by the latest form of capitalism. People consume everything, yet they remain unaware of it. In truth, they are consuming themselves. Humanity is being depleted, and human values are eroding.

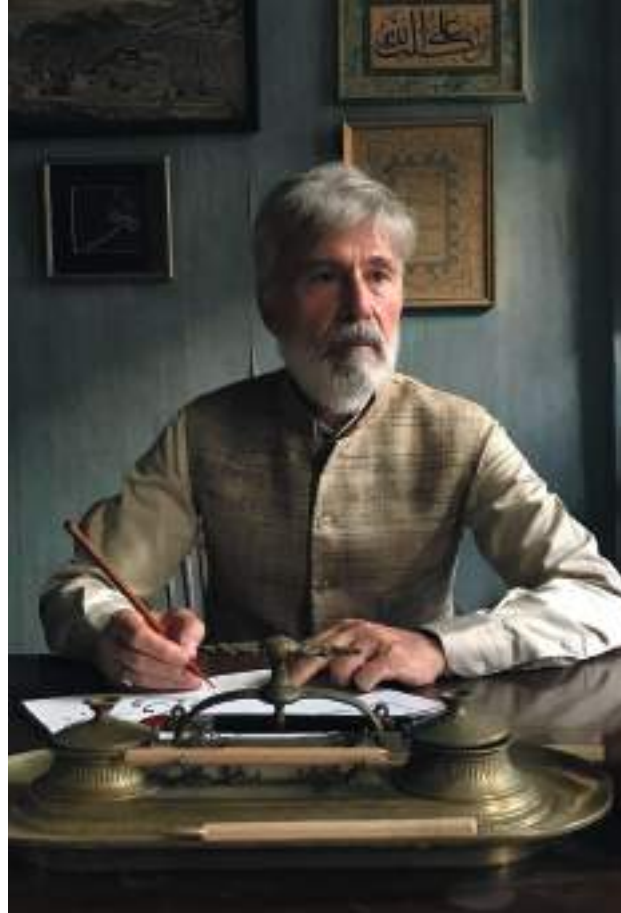
When we look at the 21st century, we observe a culture and art that are increasingly being reduced to a "fast-food" model. In fact, we are beginning to see the gradual disappearance of both culture and art. Humanity is losing its essence, becoming robotic and mechanized. In social sciences, this phenomenon, where humans are increasingly controlled by machines, has been termed "post-human." We are living in an era of transhumanism, a period marked by the departure from true humanity.

The emphasis on courtesy has unfortunately started to be belittled by certain groups today. So, how can we overcome this situation? If things

continue this way, we will lose our civilization. How can this be prevented? Here, Muslims have a crucial responsibility: to uphold the sunnah of courtesy within their religion and represent it in their lives. We need to teach this in schools, within families, and in work environments. In the upbringing of a child, courtesy, proper conduct, the rulings of the Qur'an, Muslim etiquette, and appropriate behavior are taught at every stage. These rituals and practices cannot be dismissed, yet we have been deprived of them. In today's world, everything is rushed, everything and everyone is tied to money, and in the process, people have lost their spiritual essence. For example, in Islam, the concept of "spending" as it exists in modern consumerism does not exist. The word for "consumption" is also absent. Spending in the material sense equates to destruction. In Islamic expressions, one does not ask, "How did you spend your money?" but rather, "How did you perform infaq (charitable giving)?"

Finally, what message would you like to convey to our readers?

Adab al-mu'asharat can be read about, but it must also be lived through practice. When we talk about adab al-mu'asharat and courtesy, there are



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three key periods in our history. The first period is when we matured within the Turkish-Islamic civilization. After the Turks were honored by embracing Islam, this period was characterized by the integration of courtesy as a central value through the teachings of the Qur'an, the sunnah, and the ethics of sufism. The second period began in the 19th century with the Tanzimat reforms, during which the concepts of etiquette and proper conduct began to Westernize. At that time, efforts were made by some to separate Islam from social life by introducing a different system of etiquette. If you examine the adab al-mu'asharat manuals from the 19th century, you will see that

they largely involved the translation and adaptation of Western European etiquette books. This marked the starting point of a transition from our own civilization to Western civilization, incorporating Western courtesy into our society. The third period is the current era of globalization, where fast-food culture and populism have led to a complete disregard for courtesy. This is a period where courtesy is being entirely sidelined. If you ask what we can do to overcome this, the answer is art. Islam is ebru (marbling), qati' (paper cutting), miniature art, and music. The essence of the matter is the refinement of the soul. Young people, life is incomplete without art! Make it a priority to learn one of the Islamic arts. It will teach you patience, show you how your teacher works with courtesy, and guide you through the traditional practice. As you practice and produce beautiful works, you will gradually realize that you, yourself, are one of Allah's finest creations. The greatest work a person can create is the art of self-development and perfection based on the blessings Allah has granted. Islamic art is a key that opens hearts. If you wish to open hearts, engage in art.



Cooperation between Türkiye and Indonesia in the fields of religion and education

Prof. Dr. Ali Erbas, President of Religious Affairs, has confirmed that a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the fields of religious services and religious education has been signed with Indonesia. The signing of these joint agreements took place in the presence of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Indonesian President Prabo Subianto.



The collaboration with Malaysia is focused on religious services

During President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit to Malaysia, the President of Religious Affairs, Prof. Dr. Ali Erbas, met with the Malaysian Minister of Religious Affairs, Dato' Setia Dr. Naim, to discuss cooperation between the two countries on religious education, the fight against anti-Islamism, and support for Palestine and Gaza against the cruel occupiers. At the end of the consultation, Erbas stated that cooperation would be established with Malaysia in the field of religious services.

Türkiye Religious Foundation (TDV) is pleased to announce its collaboration with Afghanistan



Dr. Emrah Kandemir, Counsellor for Religious Services at the Embassy of Türkiye in Kabul, has confirmed that the TDV will be working closely with the Afghanistan Red Crescent to provide humanitarian aid. Mr. Kandemir met with Mr. Shahabuddin Dilaver, President of the Afghanistan Red Crescent, to discuss this collaboration. He stated: “Our nation is committed to providing support to those in need, regardless of their location. In this context, it is also very pleased to be working with our Afghan brothers and sisters.”

Kandemir informed the delegation about the activities of Türkiye Religious Foundation and discussed potential future cooperation with the Religious Services Consultancy, TDV, Turkish, and Afghan Red Crescent.

Shahabuddin Dilaver, President of the Afghanistan Red Crescent, said: “The Turkish people are always in our hearts. They have always been with us in difficult



times, and we do not forget the help and support of our Turkish brothers and sisters, with whom we have many common points. We attach great importance to this and are very grateful.” He emphasized the significant value of the humanitarian aid programs, particularly the ‘goodness trains’ sent by the Republic of Türkiye to Afghanistan. He also highlighted the importance of the in-kind contributions and donations made by the Presidency of Religious Affairs and Türkiye Religious Foundation to Afghanistan, emphasizing their role in supporting those in need.

Demonstration of solidarity with Gaza organized at the iftar march in Kenya

During the iftar march in Kenya's capital Nairobi, participants demonstrated solidarity with Gaza by carrying Palestinian flags and chanting 'Free Palestine' slogans. The iftar march is organized to provide food aid to needy Muslim families living in the slum areas of Nairobi city before the start of Ramadan.



Al-Azhar has issued a call to Islamic countries to 'reject plans to deport Palestinians'

In a written statement, the Al-Azhar institution in Egypt called on Arab and Islamic countries to "reject the relocation plans that aim to liquidate the Palestinian cause". The statement invited support for the stance of Egypt and Arab countries on the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, with the condition that the Palestinian people remain on their land.

The statement also called for the implementation of the ceasefire agreement reached in Gaza and urged world leaders to carefully consider the impact of their statements on the future of nations.



Statement of the High Board of Religious Affairs of Türkiye on the ongoing occupation, genocide, and exile in Gaza

The High Board of Religious Affairs of the Presidency of Religious Affairs convened for the deportation plan for Gazans. Reacting to the deportation plan in the decisions taken at the meeting, the Board emphasized that all Muslims should expand and strengthen the framework of the common attitude of all Muslims against the persecution, occupation, exile, and genocide that has been going on in Palestine for many years. In the statement titled 'On the Ongoing Occupation, Genocide, and Exile in Gaza', the decisions taken after the meeting were recorded as follows:

"Nearly a century ago, an unjust and unlawful occupation began in the Palestinian territories; this situation has continued systematically through oppression, torture, exile, and massacres taking on a drastically different dimension since October 7, 2023. With religious, moral, and humanitarian values, as well as international legal norms disregarded, a brutal massacre and

horrific genocide have been committed in Gaza. The entire population has been brutally targeted, regardless of whether they are children, women, elderly, or sick; tens of thousands have been slaughtered, over a hundred thousand civilians have been injured; and the basic humanitarian rights of people—such as access to food, water, electricity, shelter, and medical care—have been deliberately and ruthlessly denied. The oppression has intensified with each passing day, civilian settlements, places of worship, schools, and hospitals have been heavily bombarded, resulting in horrific destruction.

While this situation, unfolding before the eyes of the world and constituting a crime in every respect, remains undeniable, plans have also emerged to forcibly exile Gazans from their own homeland to other countries—an idea that defies reason, religious and humanitarian values, and universal legal norms. All these actions constitute oppression and crimes against humanity that must

be opposed by all people of conscience, especially Muslims.

Islam fundamentally acknowledges that every individual, by virtue of being a human, possesses inviolable fundamental rights, such as the right to life and property, without any additional condition. Islam regards the unjust killing of a single person as a crime as grave as killing all of humanity. This principle is a shared doctrine of all religions. Furthermore, it is affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all international legal norms have been structured to reflect this.

Considering all this, the following points are of importance from both an Islamic and humanitarian perspective:

1- Preventing massacres and genocide, especially in Gaza but also worldwide, standing in full solidarity with those who suffer oppression, and striving for justice and righteousness are both Islamic and humanitarian obligations.

2- The unjust and unlawful occupation of Palestinian lands, along with ongoing efforts to make the occupation permanent through oppression, intimidation, killings, and exile, has no legitimacy whatsoever.

3- Any direct or indirect support of the oppressors and occupiers constitutes moral and religious accountability. Such actions should be avoided, and this stance must be maintained with utmost sensitivity. Supporting oppression is oppression itself.

4- All Muslims must strengthen their shared stance against this oppression, occupation, exile, and genocide.

5- To stop the atrocity committed against the Palestinian people, all institutions and organizations of the Islamic world must mobilize all their resources.

6- Necessary steps must be taken immediately to rebuild Gaza and return it to its rightful owners, the Palestinian people."

ETHICAL ISSUES OF THE DIGITAL AGE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND MORALITY

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Seyithan CAN

The most significant issue regarding artificial intelligence, which is expected to impact all areas of human life, is whether it will act in accordance with our moral values. Although some scientists accept that

artificial intelligence can behave morally, we can assert that this is not very likely for several reasons. These reasons can be outlined as follows:

The subjectivity of good and evil does not align with an algorithmic structure

Artificial intelligence, by its nature, lacks emotions or a conscious moral understanding. Its systems make decisions through data analysis and learning algorithms. Therefore, it is not possible to characterize

artificial intelligence as moral or immoral. However, when it comes to the implementation of ethical theories regarding artificial intelligence, it requires consideration of digitalization and data/algorithm-oriented

solutions (Kose, 2022, 74–75). For algorithms to be constructed, it appears essential for the subject to possess a numerical nature. If something is inherently variable depending on the situation, it does not seem

feasible to convert this variability into a numerical algorithm that accounts for all possible scenarios. When we consider the qualities of good and evil, which we accept as the foundation of morality, such as their ability to vary

with time, circumstances, purpose, intent, and conditions, it becomes evident that morality cannot be represented algorithmically as numerical data. Let us consider the act of killing a human being.

Classifying this act as “evil” from an ethical standpoint and encoding this moral judgment into an algorithm would imply asserting that killing is wrong under all circumstances. This approach disregards

the fact that killing may be deemed acceptable in situations such as self-defense or warfare. Similarly, defining the concept of “good” algorithmically risks oversimplifying and reducing a complex concept that varies depending on context and intent. Algorithms lack the capacity to comprehend and reflect the nuances and complexities of ethical evaluations. Ethical judgments are not based solely on logical rules; they also rely on emotional assessments, cultural contexts, and individual beliefs. Algorithms cannot fully account for these factors, hence potentially leading to ethically problematic outcomes.

The idea of universal morality is not universally accepted by everyone

One of the most critical considerations related to this topic is the issue of universal moral principles. The existence of a moral understanding that varies according to time, society, and circumstances complicates the idea of designing artificial intelligence based on a framework of universal morality. Different societies and cultures may define the concepts of “good” and “evil” in diverse ways, making it challenging for artificial intelligence to act in alignment with universally

accepted ethical principles. It should also be noted that even ethical principles considered universally accepted today may change over time and be open to different interpretations. For instance, in some societies, individual freedoms may be prioritized, while in others, collective well-being might be regarded as more important. This situation can lead to ethical dilemmas, such as determining when artificial intelligence should be designed to protect individual privacy and when it may be justified to restrict individual freedoms to ensure public safety. To develop and use artificial intelligence in an ethically acceptable manner, a comprehensive ethical framework that considers the values and beliefs of different societies and cultures is required. However, we can assert that this is not entirely feasible in practice. Universal moral principles encompass moral norms and values that are claimed to apply to all humanity. These principles are based on concepts such as respect for human dignity, justice, honesty, and benevolence. While they are widely accepted on paper by many, the extent to which universal moral principles are valid for everyone remains



THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ISSUE REGARDING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO IMPACT ALL AREAS OF HUMAN LIFE, IS WHETHER IT WILL ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR MORAL VALUES.

a subject of debate. Factors such as differing cultures, personal conflicts of interest, changing conditions, and the lack of enforcement prevent the consistent application of these principles. While the 21st century is claimed to represent the pinnacle of civil and advanced human rights,

the genocide taking place in Palestine before the eyes of the world refutes this assertion. This genocide, carried out with the support of the very nations that establish so-called universal moral principles, is ignored in the realm of human rights and law. This reality reveals the impossibility of a truly universal understanding of morality. Moreover, from the point of view of world history and today's order, it does not seem feasible for the intelligent systems that human communities, which differ as a result of various factors, will be dealing with to achieve a synergy within the framework of universal ethical principles. In the current global order, the definitions of “good” and “evil” in artificial intelligence are largely determined by the interests and perspectives of the West, particularly the United States. This creates significant issues in the ethical and political dimensions of artificial intelligence. From a Western perspective, for artificial intelligence to be considered “good”, it must be developed and utilized in a way that helps maintain the status quo and sustain the hegemony of the West in the international system. Conversely, artificial intelligence being labeled as “evil” encompasses any

developments perceived as contrary to Western interests or U.S. foreign policy objectives.

The United States' silence in the face of coups against regimes opposing its interests, despite its consistent advocacy of democratic principles, calls into question the universal validity of moral and ethical concepts. Such actions clearly demonstrate that these concepts are manipulated by countries like the U.S. and other Western powers to serve their own interests. As a result, the understanding of actions that benefit or harm everyone will inevitably vary, making it impossible to fully establish morality as the foundation of artificial intelligence. This is because human-centered artificial intelligence cannot completely detach itself from algorithmic characterizations in areas such as reliability, security, privacy, confidentiality, explainability, interpretability, transparency, accountability, responsibility, social justice and equality, and bias (Henkoglu, 2023, 30–31).

The inability of artificial intelligence to become independent from societal values

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intelligence reaches a level where it can establish its own moral norms over time. This is because, even if machines learn to read or perceive our societal or ethical dilemmas, they will largely live in accordance with our values, beliefs, and mindsets (Leonhard, 2018, 36; Kose, 2022, 105–109). To put it more clearly, as artificial intelligence systems are integrated into and used within human society, they enter a continuous process of learning and development. During this process, they are shaped by the feedback they receive from humans, the data they utilize, and the environments they interact with. This can be described as artificial intelligence being “shaped by society” and “developing alongside society” (Armstrong, 2014, 33–34).

Ultimately, while acknowledging that abstract concepts have not yet been clearly established within algorithms, it will be necessary to build certain bridges between human theories and numerical components (Kose, 2022, 74–75). Even if these steps are achieved, the lack of a general consensus on the concepts of good and evil makes it unlikely to develop algorithms for artificial intelligence based on universal moral principles. Moreover, the convergence of

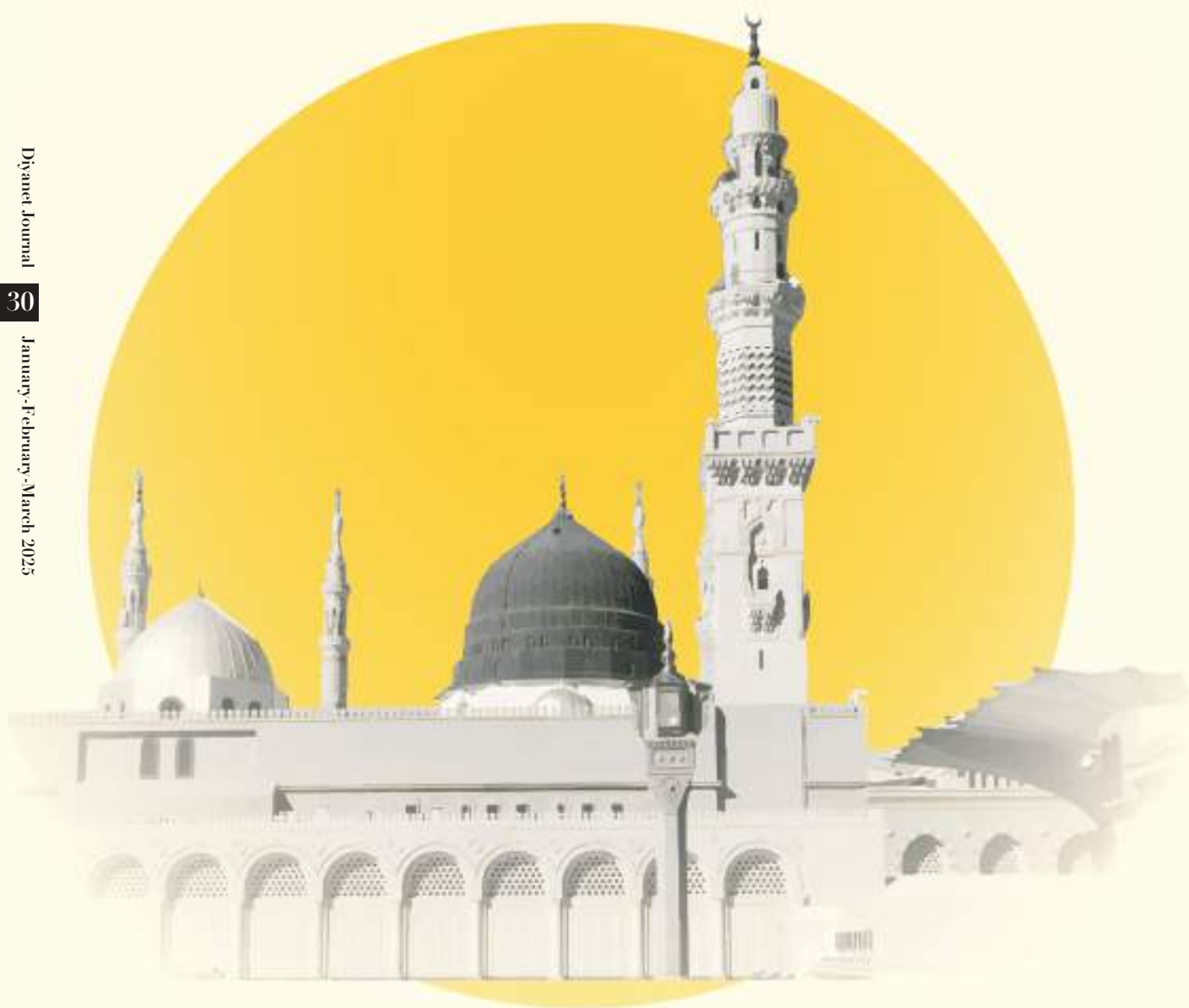
human instincts with modern technology and organizational structures is likely to result in humanity resorting to violence more frequently than ever before (Winston, 2011, 308). Stuart Armstrong argues that if an artificial intelligence were to possess superhuman levels of social skills, technological development, and economic capabilities, it would likely dominate our world in one way or another. He also suggests that once artificial intelligence develops its abilities to a human level, it is highly probable that it will rapidly advance to a superhuman level. In other words, if even one of these capabilities is programmed into a computer, it can be assumed that the future of our world will be governed by artificial intelligence or humans empowered by artificial intelligence (Armstrong, 2014; Leonhard, 2018, 73). Thus, in our view, achieving limitations on artificial intelligence within the framework of all universal principles does not seem feasible. Considering this potential future scenario of artificial intelligence, the risk that AI, devoid of any moral concerns, might bring destruction rather than benefit to humanity remains significantly higher.

A NEW PROBLEM IN MEDINA AFTER THE HIJRAH:

HYPOCRISY AND THE HYPOCRITES

Prof. Dr. Eyup BAS

Religious Services Counselor in Copenhagen



Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw), with every step he took, was shifting the balance in Medina in favor of the Muslims. This situation led to changes in the attitudes and behavior of those who opposed him. Despite neither believing in Islam nor the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad, a hypocritical group emerged that portrayed themselves as believers. This was a new and significant problem the Prophet faced in Medina.

The hypocrites were disturbed by the strengthening and spread of Islam in Medina and lamented their inability to prevent this progress. They observed with dismay how, after Bilal al-Habashi's call to prayer, the believers would line up in rows at the Masjid al-Nabawi, with their unity and solidarity growing stronger. They would sadly remark that there was nothing they could do but watch as the number of believers attending the Prophet's gatherings continued to increase.

The leader of the hypocrisy movement was Abd Allah ibn 'Ubayy ibn Salul, the chief of the Khazraj tribe. This man had been agreed upon to assume leadership of Yathrib after the wars between the Aws and Khazraj tribes.

His supporters had even prepared an ornate crown for him. However, this plan was thwarted by the Prophet's emigration to Medina. As a result, from the very first years of the hijrah, the Prophet (saw) faced the opposition of Abd Allah ibn 'Ubayy and his followers, who harbored enmity towards him until the end of his life. The group of hypocrites led by Abd Allah ibn 'Ubayy constantly warned their fellow townspeople not to support the Muhajirun, aiming to force the Prophet and all the emigrants to leave the city.

Measures against external threats: permission for jihad, the first expeditions, and battles

The negative attitude and behavior displayed by the hypocrites toward the Prophet (saw) and the Muhajirun created an environment that the Jews living in the city and the Qurayshi polytheists in Mecca sought to exploit. The enmity of the Meccan polytheists had not diminished; in fact, it likely intensified due to their concerns about the future. For this reason, they secretly encouraged and incited the Jews and hypocrites in Medina to expel the Muslims from the city. At the same time, they entered into agreements



DURING THE MECCAN PERIOD, THE PROPHET (SAW) DID NOT RETALIATE AGAINST THE QURAYSHI POLYTHEISTS WHO WERE HOSTILE TOWARD HIM AND THE MUSLIMS. HE DID NOT SEEK REVENGE AND ADVISED THE MUSLIMS WHO WERE SUBJECTED TO INSULTS, TORTURE, AND HARDSHIPS TO REMAIN PATIENT.

with the surrounding polytheist Arab tribes and began preparing to launch raids on Medina. During this period, they even sent a letter to Abd Allah ibn 'Ubayy, the leader of the hypocrites, threatening the polytheists and the hypocrites of Medina. To intimidate the people of Medina and discourage them from supporting the Prophet, they once raided the Muslims' grazing fields under the command of Kurz ibn Jabir, driving away their livestock.

As a result of these pursuits and harassments, the Prophet (saw) and the Muslims began to face security issues in Medina shortly after the Hijrah. However, by this point, leaving Medina for another place was no longer an option.

As tensions between the two sides continued to escalate, verses permitting Muslims to engage in armed defense were revealed during the first year of the hijrah.

"Permission 'to fight back' is 'hereby' granted to those being fought, for they have been wronged. And Allah is truly Most Capable of helping them 'prevail'. 'They are' those who have been expelled from their homes for no reason other than proclaiming: 'Our Lord is Allah.'" (Haji, 22:39-40)



During the Meccan period, the Prophet (saw) did not retaliate against the Qurayshi polytheists who were hostile toward him and the Muslims. He did not seek revenge and advised the Muslims who were subjected to insults, torture, and hardships to remain patient. The verses revealed during that time continually emphasized patience. However, with the revelation of the verse permitting jihad, the situation changed. Following this verse, the Prophet took measures for the defense of Medina. Relying on the agreements

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he had made with the Jews of Medina and the surrounding polytheist Arab tribes, he sent out small military units known as “sariyya” in which he himself did not participate. In the first year of the hijrah, there was a need to resort to such precautions on three separate occasions.

The first sariyya aimed at reconnaissance and control of the Quraysh caravans on the trade route to Sham was led by the Prophet’s uncle, Hamza, with a group of 30 men. In this expedition,

the first banner in Islamic history was given. The second sariyya was led by Ubayda, the son of his uncle Harith, while the third was under the command of Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqas. Through these expeditions, the Prophet (saw) monitored the movements of the enemy. Additionally, to guard against the possibility of a night raid, he ordered night patrols to be conducted in the streets of Medina.

After some time, the Prophet (saw) personally led certain military

expeditions, which were called “ghazwah”. In the second year of the hijrah, based on intelligence reports, he organized the ghazwahs of Abwa’, Buwat, Badr al-Ula, and Dhu Al-Ushairah. Although no battles took place during these expeditions, the Prophet secured treaties with some tribes, such as the Banu Damrah, who lived between Medina and Mecca, ensuring their neutrality.

About two months after the last ghazwah he participated in, the Prophet (saw) sent a sariyya under the

command of Abd Allah ibn Jahsh to Batn Nakhlah (Rajab 2 / January 624). This sariyya was dispatched in the final days of the month of Rajab to gather intelligence on the Quraysh’s activities, as they were preparing for a raid on Medina. At Batn Nakhlah, the expedition encountered a Quraysh caravan returning from Ta’if. The expedition killed the leader of the caravan, Amr ibn Hadrami, and returned to Medina with two captives and the seized goods. However, the Prophet (saw) disapproved of the incident because they had not been granted



AFTER SOME TIME, THE PROPHET (SAW) PERSONALLY LED CERTAIN MILITARY EXPEDITIONS, WHICH WERE CALLED “GHAZWAH”.

permission to engage in combat. Moreover, the event occurred during the sacred month of Rajab, in which shedding blood was forbidden according to Arab tradition. The Meccan polytheists used the killing of Amr ibn Hadrami as a pretext to accelerate their war preparations. They spread propaganda throughout the Arab tribes, claiming that the Prophet showed no respect for the sanctity of the sacred months. This situation worsened the relations between the Muslims in Medina and the surrounding tribes.



AHMAD THOMSON:
“ALLAH WAS SAVING THE
BEST UNTIL LAST FOR ME.”



Can you tell us briefly about yourself?

I have enjoyed such a full and wonderful life up to now, al-hamdulillah wa shukrulillah, that it cannot be summarized in a few sentences: “If you tried to count Allah’s blessings, you would never be able to number them.” (Nahl, 16:18)—and—“If you are grateful, I will certainly give you more.” (Ibrahim: 14:7) In a few words, I was born in Fort Jameson, Africa, and embraced Islam over 50 years ago in London, England, where I now live. During my brief time, I have travelled relatively widely, authored some books, and currently work as a lawyer specializing in charities. No one told me when I was young how swiftly life passes, but it does! As the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) counseled: “Be in this world as though you are a stranger or a traveler,” and, “If you survive till the evening, do not expect to be alive in the morning, and if you survive till the morning, do not expect to be alive in the evening.” (Sahih al-Bukhari 6416, Book 81, Hadith 5)

How did your faith develop in your earlier years?

As a young boy growing up in the middle of the African bush, surrounded by Allah’s magnificent

creation and dwelling in places where there was no piped-in running water, no gas, no electricity, no computers, no phones, and no internet, I believed that my parents knew everything, may they rest in peace. When I was sent to boarding school, where church was compulsory, I believed my teachers knew everything, may Allah reward the ones who inspired me. But, then it gradually dawned on me that they didn’t know everything. So, I trusted more and more in what I learned from experience and what my heart told me—which did not always align with what other people were telling me. So, from an early age, although I was aware that there was an unseen dimension to life, and believed in God as the One who controls existence—Whom I could not confine to an idea, concept, or form—I was waiting (although I didn’t realize at the time) to meet a wise teacher. As it turned out, Allah provided this teacher at exactly the right time—when my formal education had been completed, and when I thought I knew everything, yet in reality, I knew very little.

Can you tell us when and why you started to ask yourself questions about your beliefs?

I never had fixed beliefs



IT WAS JUST AN UNAVOIDABLE REALIZATION THAT I HAD REACHED A POINT IN MY LIFE’S JOURNEY WHERE ALLAH HAD CORNERED ME SO THAT I HAD NO CHOICE EXCEPT TO ACCEPT ISLAM.

and I never questioned them—although being initially brought up as an Anglican Christian in central Africa, I did question the beliefs I was being ‘educated’ to have. Especially when the priests and teachers whom I questioned were unable to provide satisfactory answers—for example: “If everyone is equal before God, why did the black Africans have to attend a different church to the white Africans? If Jesus is God, to whom was he praying? If Jesus is God, and if Jesus was crucified, then who supported the heavens and the earth for three days? If the doctrine of Trinity is true, why is it not mentioned in the Old Testament and why did Jesus not teach it? What is the source of the doctrine of original sin? Why should I be held responsible for someone else’s wrong action committed thousands and thousands of years ago near the beginning of time? If I do something wrong today, why should the death of someone over two thousand years ago absolve me from the consequences of my actions? As the Prophet Muhammad said (although I did not know this at the time), “Knowledge is the lost property of the believer,” (Tirmidhi, Ilm, 19)

so without knowing that I was following the sunnah, I picked up my knowledge wherever I found it.

And as it happened, although I explored almost all of the main religions, philosophies, and ideologies at university, I did not look at Islam! Allah was saving the best until last for me.

What were your thoughts on Islam at the time? Did you ever hear about it?

My parents had sent me to the best schools possible, and I went to a good university—and yet none of their syllabuses taught us anything about Islam. From my limited, misinformed viewpoint, Islam was just another religion like Christianity (which I had left as soon as it was not compulsory)—which I knew very little about, and which, because of my ‘educated’ misconceptions and preconceptions, I had no desire to explore. Social conditioning runs deep. This ignorant attitude only changed when I met a wise teacher, who not only talked about Islam, but also existentially embodied its teachings and practices in a profound and meaningful way— and, most importantly, within the setting of a community of Muslims, may Allah fill his grave with nur



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NO ONE TOLD ME WHEN I WAS YOUNG HOW SWIFTLY LIFE PASSES, BUT IT DOES!

and barakah. In this setting, we experienced a taste—however small by comparison—of what it must have been like for the noble companions who entered and learned the life-transaction of Islam—not as an institutionalized religion, but as an unfolding, dynamic way of life—from the Best of Creation (blessings and peace be on him).

What was your breaking point when you decided to become a Muslim?

It wasn't a breaking point—it was just an unavoidable realization that I had reached a point in my life's journey where Allah had cornered me so that I had no choice except to accept Islam. In my small book, *Golden Days on the Open Road*, that point is described as follows:

“Sitting there, in the late morning sun, by the side of the empty open road, perched on my ruck-sack, with my trusty guitar close to hand, completely isolated from all my usual haunts and habits and friends, I considered which way was forwards and which way was backward, which way was straight ahead and which way was running away or turning aside. And I considered which company I wished to keep.”

How did your close circle (your family and your friends) react to this?

None of my friends understood my decision to accept Islam—and when I entered the world of Islam, they remained in the world I had once shared with them. My parents were worried that I had joined some dangerous sect who were brainwashing me, but in time, as I learned how to live as a Muslim and



since I continued to visit my parents regularly, they came to recognize that I had lost a few bad habits and gained a few good habits—so eventually we reached an understanding that they wouldn't try to persuade me to leave Islam and I wouldn't try to persuade them to embrace Islam.

What do you find most admirable about Islam?

I have come across no better way of life than the life transaction of Islam because it is not only a way of action, but also it is a means to knowing what is in the Unseen—and it leads to knowledge of your Creator. As Allah says in the Qur'an, "Whoever seeks a way other than Islam, it will never be accepted from them, and in the Hereafter they will be among the losers." (Al-i 'Imran, 3:85) This confirms the choice that I made when I decided to embrace

Islam, even though I knew so little about Islam at the time: just before I said the shahadah and was given my Muslim name, I said to myself, "If this turns out not to be true, I will leave it." More than 50 years later, I confirm that it is all true! —and I remember the words of T. S. Eliot:

"We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time"

What impressed you the most about the Prophet Muhammad, the Messenger of Mercy (blessings and peace be on him)?

The more I have studied the life of the Prophet Muhammad, the more I have realized how accurately he (blessings

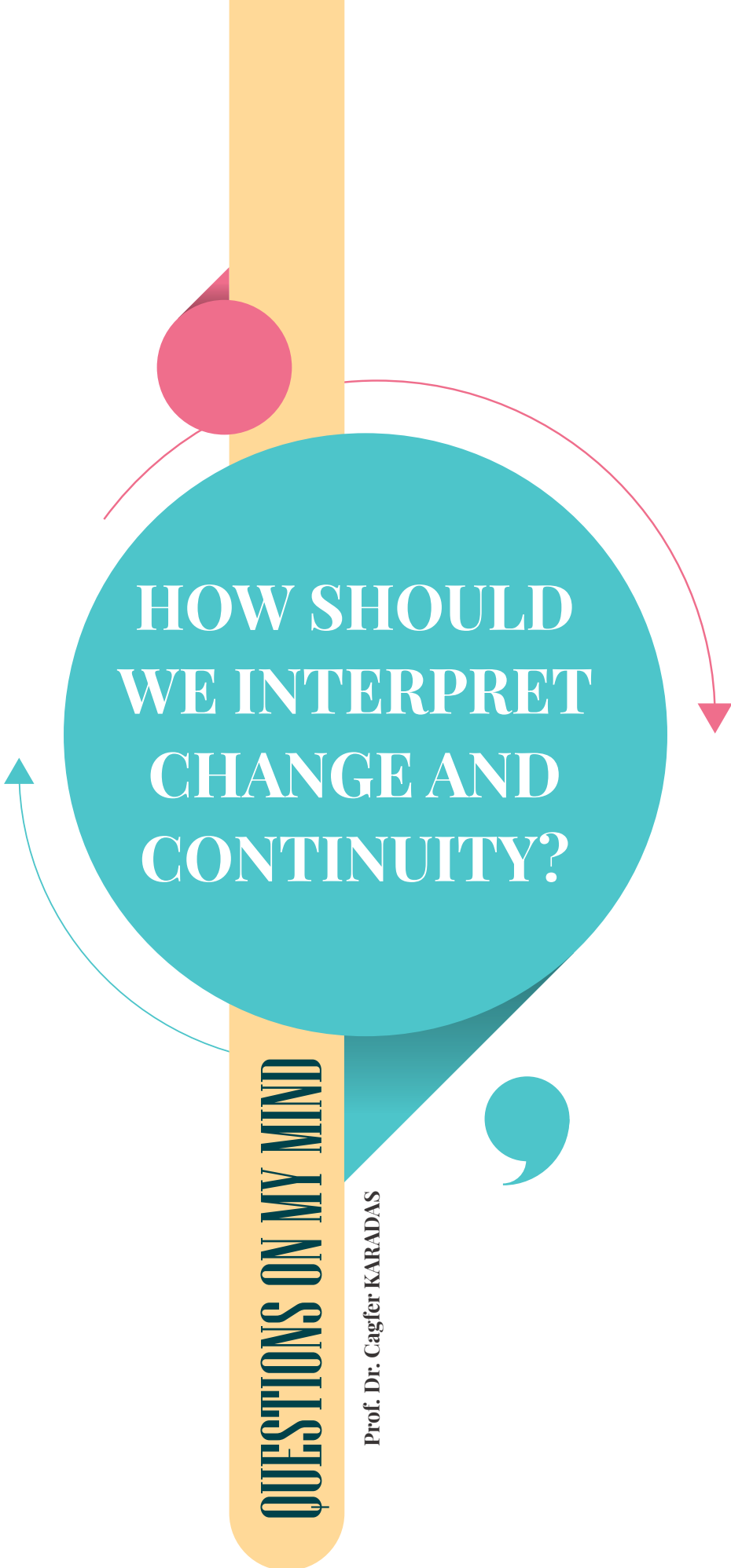
and peace be on him) is described in the Qur'an—and in particular: "He is concerned by your suffering, anxious for your well-being, and gracious and merciful to the believers." (Tawbah, 9:128) —and if we follow him with sincerity, as best we can, Allah has promised us the Garden, insh'Allah, "well-pleasing and well-pleased" (Fajr, 89:29)!

What advice would you give to someone who has embraced Islam?

Things are not what they seem. This world is like a fading mirage. Consult your heart and ask Allah to guide you to a good teacher whom you trust. You only gain success by keeping the company of someone who has been given success. Do not rely solely on books for guidance – and do not expect anything from anyone! The Qur'an is your book, study it, learn Arabic, and recite

it regularly. Study and emulate, as best you can, the life of the Prophet Muhammad, because he is your Prophet, and your means of access to knowledge of your Lord, may Allah bless him, his family, his companions, and all who follow him and them in what they are able, until the Last Day, and grant them peace—and, as well as doing what is obligatory for you, study the meanings of the most beautiful names of Allah and call on Him by them.

Ahmad Thomson was born in 1950 in Fort Jameson, which is now part of Zambia. He received his initial education in Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, before moving to the United Kingdom to study law at the University of Exeter. He was awarded a Bachelor of Laws (honours) degree in 1972 and is currently a practising lawyer. He has written extensively on a range of Islamic issues, notably the history of Muslim Spain.



HOW SHOULD WE INTERPRET CHANGE AND CONTINUITY?

QUESTIONS ON MY MIND

Prof. Dr. Cagfer KARADAS

The change and continuity in the realm of existence have always occupied the minds of humans. How does the continuity occur despite the change or change in continuity?

To understand change and continuity, we must first understand their ground, i.e. the universe. The universe: everything created except Allah? Time, space, facts, and events form the universe. Time and space represent continuity, while facts and events represent change. We perceive time-space and facts-events as if they are two separate elements that are independent and opposed to each other. However, time and space are mental constructs rather than concrete reality. That is why we can possibly divide time and space into various categories in the mind or ignore these categories. Indeed, many thinkers regard time and space as relative. They think they are shaped and evaluated by the subject. From another point of view, it is the sum of time and space, facts and events. We could say that even time and space themselves are subject to change. So, the one that maintains continuity and the one that changes appear to move parallel to each other. This reveals a balanced continuity and change in the universe.

As for people, what changes and remains the same in a person over the years?

Humans change, humanity doesn't change. In Islamic thought, the human is defined as the body, which is pointed as 'I', which can be grasped by the five senses and supported by the soul. However, as the human body constantly changes, it is imperative to find an unchanging aspect for it. Otherwise, the changes in the body over time lead a person to become another being. This unchanging and constant part of the human being is called humanity. It has also been accepted that this humanity will not change, so it will be permanent. So, the person who says 'I' is actually pointing to the humanity that is represented by one's body. This is because the body has a certain shape and volume, and it changes over time as it is renewed by moment. However, humanity never changes according to time and place and maintains the same perception in everyone's mind throughout their lives. That is why a person's unchanging humanity is taken as a basis when making judgments about a person, not their changing bodies. However, treating a person according to

their changing body is inevitable.

How about belief systems, is there continuity and change in it?

Belief is to realize that there is a Creator and Ruler of the universe in the first place. Secondly, it means to know that we are His servants as part of the universe. So, belief is to be aware of one's own existence and, based on this, knowing the Creator. Therefore, there can be no talk of a change and transformation in belief. This is because there can be no change in the positions of God, the universe, and human beings concerning each other. Allah is the Creator, and the universe and the people in it are the created ones. That is why there is no change in human humanity either. However, there may be some differences in wording and expression in understanding and explaining belief, depending on time and place.

Could you elaborate on this a bit?

The divine knowledge is the main source of Islamic belief. This source determines the basic principles that form the main frame of the belief. However, there may be differences

when explaining these principles. This difference is inevitable when both the explaining person and the recipient are humans. "Speak to people only according to their level of knowledge", the hadith says. Therefore, it is necessary to change and adjust the way we address people depending on the recipient. Indeed, when Muslims came to the lands of Iraq, they met people from many nationalities, beliefs, and thoughts. These people were different from the people of the Hijaz region and they had to be addressed accordingly. They were composed of Christian, Jewish, Zoroastrian, and various philosophical groups. So it was necessary to develop a new style of explanation and expression for these people. There was no change in the basic principles of belief, but there was a change in their expression and explanation for the people who were receiving them.

So, how did Islam respond to the change in society?

As needs change, a change is inevitable for both the individual and social life. This change was addressed with a dynamic understanding of fiqh. Religion is a system with a social dimension, not just an individual experience.

In the social dimension, people are faced with two things: conflict and solidarity. This conflict and solidarity result from the change in the flow of time and space. People are always in search of order, as it is a requirement of their nature. The establishment and preservation of this order are only possible when conflict and solidarity are balanced. To achieve this, fixed, sustainable, and agreed rules are needed. Allah the Almighty revealed some rules through prophets to meet this need. The final rules came with the Qur'an and the practice of the Prophet of Mercy was put into action. This is referred to as the evidence of the Book and sunnah in fiqh books. The purpose of these rules is to provide a balance of change and continuity. In fact, if the balance between change and continuity deteriorates, it leads to the emergence of an unfair and unjust environment. The mechanism that will provide this balance in practice is the science of fiqh, which represents the practical dimension of religion or its equivalent in daily life. Therefore, the science of fiqh must be dynamic, as life itself is in constant change.

THE MOST EXALTED OF THE EXALTED: AL-‘AZIZ

Fatma BAYRAM

The name “al-‘Aziz”, one of the most powerful expressions of the greatness and majesty of our Lord, conveys meanings such as honor and dignity, dominance and superiority, intensity and strength, and grandeur and sublimity. Opposing the meaning of “zalil” (weak and powerless), “al-‘Aziz” appears as a proper name in approximately ten verses of the Qur’an, making it one of the most frequently used names in place of the name of Allah after the attributes “Rahman” and “Rab” (An’am, 6:96; Ibrahim, 14:1; Shu’ara, 26:217). Additionally, in more than twenty verses, Allah refers to Himself with the name “al-‘Aziz”. All of this demonstrates that one of the fundamental attributes of divinity is “absolute dignity”.

In Surah As-Saffat, verse 180, Allah the Almighty describes Himself as the “Lord of Honor and Power” (Rabb al-‘Izzah). This means that He is the possessor and source of everything—whether within or beyond human intellect and imagination—that pertains to dignity and honor. No power can disgrace those whom He honors, nor can any power bestow

dignity upon those whom He disgraces. Those who fail to comprehend Allah’s dignity and honor are in a state even lower than that of Satan. This is because even Satan when swearing, swore by Allah’s dignity (Sad, 38:82).

Allah, Who is exalted in His essence, has revealed a Book that is undoubtedly the most honorable of all words. Thus, we know that it too is described as al-‘Aziz (Fussilat, 41:41). It surpasses all other words and elevates those who follow it, granting them honor and dignity. The name “al-‘Aziz” is mentioned 88 times throughout the Qur’an, always in contexts emphasizing Allah’s absolute power and supremacy. Moreover, it is consistently paired with another name, reflecting a relationship of mutual affirmation and balance between the attributes expressed by these names.

Allah the Almighty emphasizes in various verses of the Qur’an (Yunus, 10:65; Fatir, 35:10) that all dignity and honour belong exclusively to Him. However, in another verse, He declares: “But all honour and power belong to Allah, His Messenger, and the

believers...” (Munafiqun, 63:8). By this, He has granted a portion of His dignity to His Messenger and the believers, elevating them in status alongside His own honor. This rank is a magnificent blessing that none but Allah can bestow. It is a promise of the heights to which those who believe in Him can ascend, underscoring the divine grace and favor reserved for the faithful. In Surah An-Nisa, verse 139, it is conveyed that those who seek dignity and honor from sources other than Allah will not attain their goal. True dignity and honor are found only in servitude to Allah. Each time we raise our hands in supplication, it is as though we are standing at the door of His dignity, seeking His grace. Every act of worship, remembrance, and supplication serves as a reminder of His supreme honor. All our dignity and honor are blessings bestowed by Him, and they increase and are preserved solely through His mercy. Those who seek dignity elsewhere will ultimately face humiliation, for no created being can bestow honor greater than their own limited station. Such borrowed

honor is, in reality, a form of degradation. However, the dignity granted by the Lord of all worlds elevates a person above all creation. To be deprived of this divine blessing is the essence of disgrace (Al-i ‘Imran, 3:26).

Those who take refuge not in the dignity of Allah’s name “al-‘Aziz” but instead in the superiority they imagine within themselves (a bloated ego), become arrogant and stray from the path of Allah as a result of this error (Baqarah, 2:206). Those who have been confused about the source of superiority, a misconception humanity has fallen into since its earliest days (the story of Habil and Qabil can also be viewed from this perspective), have even failed to appreciate even the value of Allah’s prophets (Hud, 11:91).

This name is also used in four verses with the phrase “azizun zuntiqam” (Al-i ‘Imran, 3:4; Ma’idah, 5:95; Ibrahim, 14:47; Zumar, 39:37). This expression signifies that Allah is the possessor of absolute power, who exacts justice on wrongdoers and does not let any crime go unpunished. In nearly all these verses, it is emphasized that



those who defy Allah's will, seek to degrade the truth or oppress the innocent will inevitably face Allah's punishment at an unexpected moment.

This noble name appears alongside the name al-Hakim in 46 of the 88 instances that are mentioned in the Qur'an. The term al-Hakim is defined as "one who restrains themselves from false knowledge and selfish desires, possesses upright thinking, and demonstrates sound behavior." When attributed to Allah, it signifies "One whose every word and action aligns with justice, knowledge, and deliberation (hilm)." From

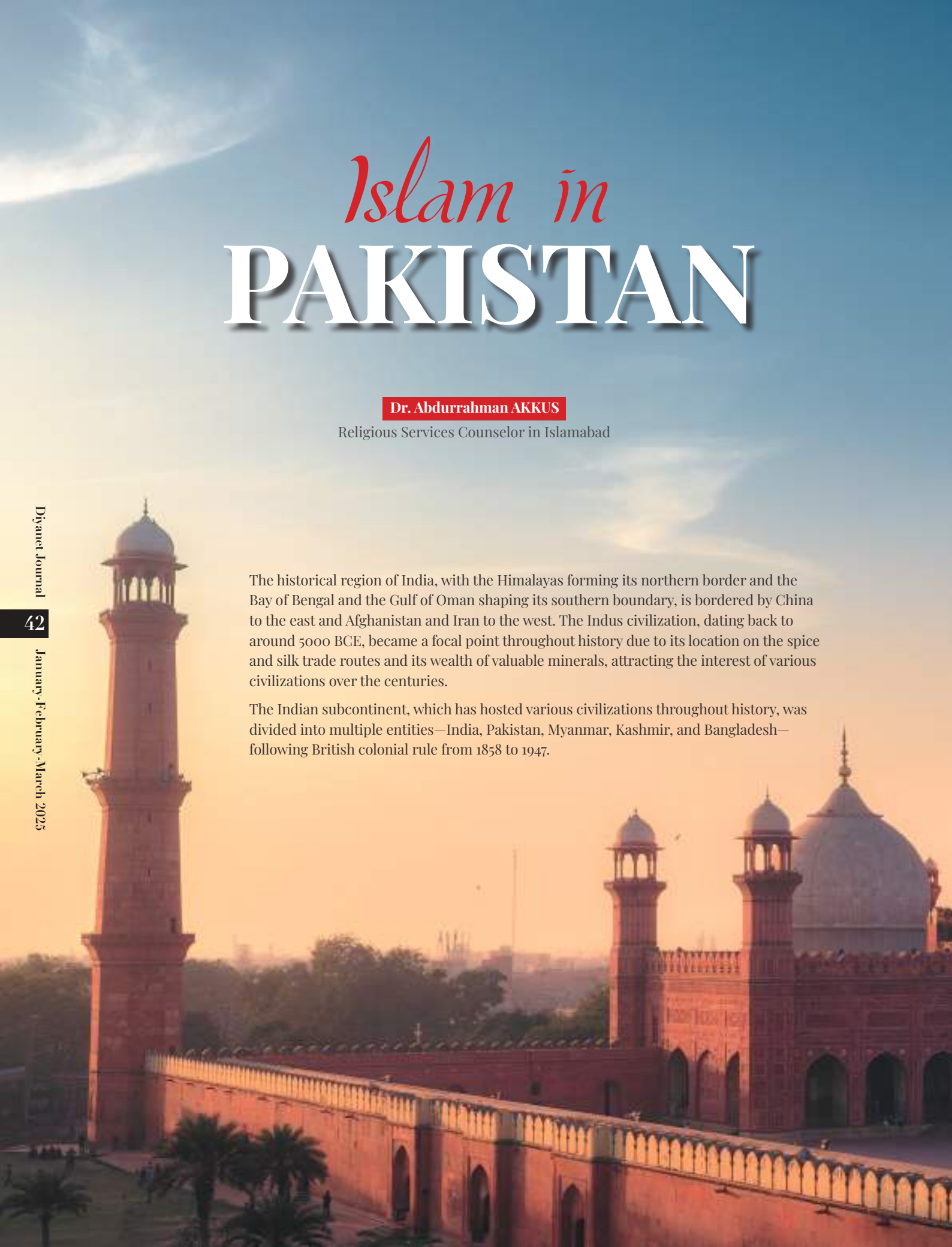
this, we understand that wisdom is one of the most essential complementary elements of a personality centered on dignity, along with knowledge and mercy. A person whose character is grounded in dignity, values knowledge, derives strength from it, and refrains from displaying power with what they do not know. The pairing of al-'Aziz with ar-Rahim reminds us that true strength, rooted in knowledge, must always be accompanied by mercy for one to develop a well-rounded and dignified personality.

Power that lacks knowledge, mercy, and wisdom is a destructive force that brings

no benefit to its possessor or those around them. For this reason, the false dignity of a disbeliever, which is not grounded in knowledge or wisdom, prevents them from responding to the call of those who invite them to Allah's path. In contrast, the dignity of a believer, rooted in knowledge and wisdom, shields them from being influenced by those who follow the path of evil.

A person who is aware of the dignity bestowed upon them through the manifestation of this divine name ensures that everything they do is worthy of that dignity. Whatever they produce is of high quality; they do

not engage in haphazard, careless, or random work. They understand that their actions are a reflection of the dignity inherent in their character. Such a person, conscious of this responsibility, treats their family, children or students, and subordinates with respect and never demean them. They know that the way they make others feel will influence how they behave, work, and produce. Through their own sense of dignity, they recognize and protect the dignity of others. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) also pointed to this when he stated that humility will increase a person's dignity.



Islam in **PAKISTAN**

Dr. Abdurrahman AKKUS

Religious Services Counselor in Islamabad

The historical region of India, with the Himalayas forming its northern border and the Bay of Bengal and the Gulf of Oman shaping its southern boundary, is bordered by China to the east and Afghanistan and Iran to the west. The Indus civilization, dating back to around 5000 BCE, became a focal point throughout history due to its location on the spice and silk trade routes and its wealth of valuable minerals, attracting the interest of various civilizations over the centuries.

The Indian subcontinent, which has hosted various civilizations throughout history, was divided into multiple entities—India, Pakistan, Myanmar, Kashmir, and Bangladesh—following British colonial rule from 1858 to 1947.

The establishment of Pakistan

The colonial activities carried out by the British under the name of the East India Company led to political unrest and violent conflicts in the region in the early 19th century. Initially, Muslims and Hindus fought together against British colonialism. However, in response to the rise of Hindu nationalism, the Muslims of India established the All-India Muslim League. Following World War I, a draft constitution prepared by the British intensified political debates and prompted Muslim representatives to join a separate political organization.

During the annual meeting of the All-India Muslim League in 1930, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal delivered the opening address, in which he, for the first time, openly voiced the idea that “Indian Muslims should have their own separate state”.

In 1940, at the All-India Muslim League meeting held in Lahore, the name “Pakistan”—a special term derived from the phrase “land of the pure” or from the initials of Punjab, Afghan (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or KPK), Kashmir, and Sindh, along with a suffix from Baluchistan—was proposed, marking a significant milestone in the independence movement.

After World War II, when Britain decided to withdraw from India, the country was divided into two parts, East and West. Thus, on August 14, 1947, the state of Pakistan was established under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Pakistan is an Islamic country with an area of approximately 881,000 square kilometers and a population of 250 million. Officially known as the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, its capital is Islamabad. The country has a federal structure, consisting of the provinces of Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, along with the Federal Capital

Territory, Gilgit–Baltistan, Kashmir, and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). While various local languages are spoken in the provinces, the official languages of the country are Urdu and English. The national flag features a white crescent and star on a green background, and the national currency is the Pakistani Rupee (PKR).

The issue that frequently places Pakistan in global headlines is the Kashmir dispute, often referred to as the “Heart of Asia.” Located in the north of Pakistan, Kashmir covers an area of approximately 220,000 square kilometers. The region was introduced to Islam in the 14th century, after which



Muslims rapidly developed its architecture, adorning it with mosques, water channels, and gardens. Kashmir was under Muslim rule for a long period until governance shifted to the Sikhs with British support. In 1947, as princely states and principalities were given the option to join either India or Pakistan based on the religious composition of their populations, the Hindu ruler of Kashmir, despite the Muslim majority in the region, chose to accede to India. This decision sparked problems and injustices that have persisted for nearly a century. Today, Kashmir is divided into three regions: Azad Kashmir under Pakistan's control, Jammu and Kashmir under Indian occupation, and Aksai Chin under Chinese control.

The introduction of the Indian region to Islam

India has been known to traders since ancient times, as it lay on the route used by Arab merchants traveling to China by sea. For this reason, Arab travelers frequently mentioned the land of India in their works. Notably, Al-Biruni (d. 1061) wrote about the region's culture and geography in his renowned work, *Tahqiq ma li'l-Hind*.

The Indian subcontinent's introduction to Islam occurred during the caliphate of Umar (ra). The governor of Bahrain, Uthman ibn Abi al-As



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(d. 671), reached as far as Daybul (Debal) and Barwas (Bahraj) by sea but returned upon the caliph's orders. During the caliphate of Ali (ra), expeditions to India were also organized. However, the actual conquest was carried out between 711 and 714 by an Umayyad army under the command of Muhammad ibn Qasim al-Thaqafi. He brought the region from Kathiawar to Multan under his control and was subsequently given the title “Conqueror of Sindh.”

In the 10th century, Mahmud of Ghazni launched seventeen expeditions into Indian territories, facilitating the region's full Islamization. Following this, the Khwarazmians, the Delhi Sultanate, and in the 16th century, the Mughal Empire were established. The Mughal dynasty, of Chagatai Turkic origin, reached its golden age under Akbar Shah and Jahangir, constructing palaces, mosques, and gardens, many of which have survived to the present day.

Today, the majority of Pakistan's population consists of Muslims, while the remaining comprises followers of minority religions, primarily Christians and Hindus. The majority of Muslims in Pakistan adhere to the Hanafi school of thought, while 10–15% belong to the Shia school of thought.

Religious life in Pakistan

Since its introduction to Islam, Pakistan has been known as a country that diligently adheres to religious principles. To oversee religious matters, there are both official institutions under the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony of the Government of Pakistan and civil organizations established by various religious communities and groups.

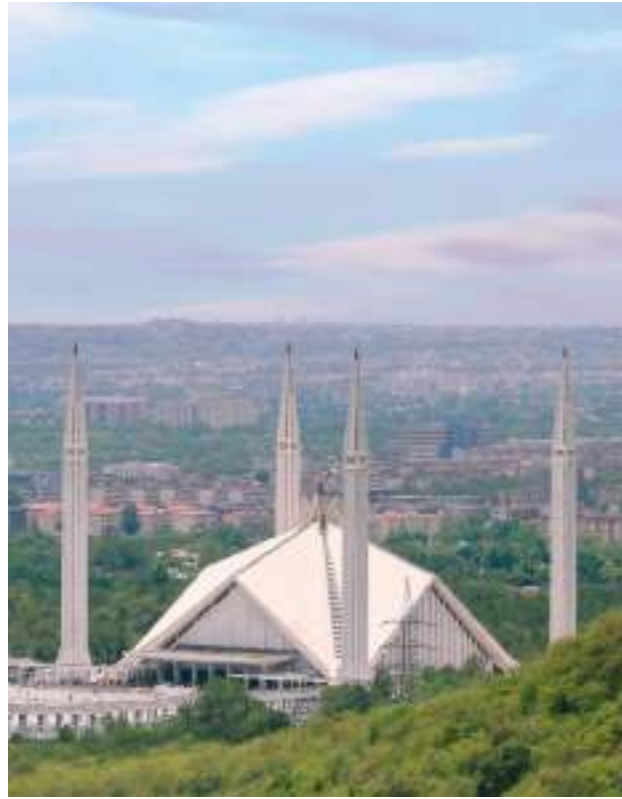
The Ministry oversees various activities, including hajj and umrah services, the training of imams and khatibs, the printing of the Qur'an, organizing conferences on the life of the Prophet (saw), moon sighting and determination of prayer times, religious propagation, and the teaching of Islamic ethics, as well as promoting interfaith harmony and the welfare of minority communities.

One of the important religious institutions in Pakistan is the Council of Islamic Ideology. Established in 1962, the Council's mandate is

defined as “ensuring that laws are brought into conformity with the Islamic injunctions outlined in the Qur’an and Sunnah.” The Council consists of a chairman and twenty members and convenes every three months to fulfill its assigned duties.

Religious life in Pakistan is largely shaped by civil organizations. Leading among these are the Deobandi and Bareilvi communities, both of which have deep historical roots. Other significant religious groups include Jamaat-e-Islami, founded by Abul A’la Maududi; the Ahl-e-Hadith Association representing the Salafi movement; the Tablighi Jamaat, which is engaged in missionary activities worldwide; Dawat-e-Islami, led by Muhammad Ilyas Qadri; and the Pakistan Jafari Movement (TJP), established by followers of the Shia faith. Sufism also holds a wide influence in the country, with various Sufi orders, such as Shadhiliyyah, Chishtiyyah, Naqshbandiyyah, Suhrawardiyyah, and Qadiriyyah, actively operating within these religious structures.

Religious services in Pakistan are predominantly carried out by civil organizations. The country has approximately 300,000 mosques. Among the prominent historical mosques are the Badshahi Mosque and Wazir Khan Mosque in Lahore, the



Shah Jahan Mosque in Thatta, the Mahabat Khan Mosque in Peshawar, and the Faisal Mosque in Islamabad. Mosques typically consist of prayer spaces, madrasas, and various social service units. The appointment of mosque personnel and the management of mosque expenses are handled by the respective religious communities to which the mosque belongs.

In Pakistan, madrasas providing religious education typically begin after the completion of primary or the eighth grade of middle school. Initially, students are taught Qur’anic recitation or undertake memorization (hifz) of the Qur’an. This is followed by an eight-year curriculum known as Dars-i Nizami,

which includes instruction in Arabic, logic, and Islamic sciences such as tafsir (Qur’anic exegesis), hadith (Prophetic traditions), fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and aqidah (Islamic creed).

The education provided in madrasas is supervised by higher councils known as “Wifaq”. Approximately 23,000 legally recognized madrasas in Pakistan operate under five wifaqs, established by Deobandi,

Bareilvi, Ahl-e-Hadith, Jamaat-e-Islami, and Shia Jafari communities. These councils are responsible for setting and implementing the curriculum, textbooks, student enrollment criteria, and examination processes. Students who successfully pass the examinations are awarded certificates equivalent to high school, undergraduate, and postgraduate degrees.

The cooperation and communication between the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Türkiye and the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Pakistan, as well as provincial ministries and civil religious organizations, are carried out through the Religious Services Consultancy, established in 2024. The Türkiye Diyanet Foundation provides various religious and charitable services across many regions of Pakistan, including the slaughtering of qurbani, the distribution of Ramadan food packages, the construction of water wells, and the provision of educational support for underprivileged students.



THE FATHER OF MODERN CHEMISTRY: JABIR IBN HAYYAN

Koray SERBETCI



In the year 721 CE, when a pharmacist named Hayyan, residing in the city of Tus in the region of Khorasan, received the news of the birth of his son, it was not only his household that was enlivened by the arrival of this newborn, but the world also gained a scholar who would pave the way for the advancement of science for the benefit of humanity. The father named the newborn child Jabir. However, due to the political turmoil of the time, Hayyan was executed in 725, leaving Jabir an orphan at a very young age.

Little is known about the life of this great scholar, but historical records indicate that he spent a significant part of his life in Kufah. Jabir ibn Hayyan mentioned the names of his teachers in his works, allowing some of them to be identified. Among these were Harbi al-Himyari, a teacher known only by the epithet Udhun al-Himar al-Mantiqi, and a priest who was a student of Marinus of Neapolis. However, the most influential teacher in Jabir ibn Hayyan's life was the renowned scholar Ja'far al-Sadiq, a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), whom he encountered in Kufah. Jabir ibn Hayyan referred to his teacher as "the source of wisdom" and shaped his intellect



DURING THE MIDDLE AGES, WHEN PEOPLE WERE PRIMARILY ENGAGED IN ALCHEMY, JABIR IBN HAYYAN HAD ALREADY EMPLOYED THE EXPERIMENTAL METHOD CENTURIES BEFORE THESE WESTERN CHEMISTS. FOR THIS REASON, HE IS REFERRED TO AS THE FATHER OF MODERN CHEMISTRY.

largely based on what he learned from him. Under the influence of Ja'far al-Sadiq's knowledge and the conducive environment of the time, Jabir ibn Hayyan turned his focus to the field of chemistry. In pursuit of furthering his chemistry research, he later moved to Baghdad. There, with the support of the famous Barmakid family, who served as viziers to the Abbasids, he conducted extensive scientific studies for an extended period. Historical sources also suggest that he undertook long journeys, traveling to regions such as Syria, Egypt, and India. However, after the Barmakid family was removed from power due to political disputes in Baghdad, Jabir ibn Hayyan returned to Kufah, where he stayed until his death.

So, what kind of legacy did Jabir ibn Hayyan leave in the history of science?

The father of modern chemistry

Jabir ibn Hayyan's name is mentioned alongside figures like Boyle, Priestley, and Lavoisier—the founding fathers of modern chemistry—for a reason. During the Middle Ages, when people were primarily engaged in alchemy, Jabir ibn Hayyan had already employed the experimental method centuries before these

Western chemists. For this reason, he is referred to as the father of modern chemistry.

Jabir ibn Hayyan recognized the importance of the experimental method in his scientific work in the field of chemistry and applied it successfully. In his work *Mukhtar Rasa'il*, he explicitly expressed an idea that would only become prominent in the West in the 18th and 19th centuries: "In this book, we have mentioned not what we heard, what was told to us, or what we read, but only the properties of things we observed after experimentation."

This Muslim scholar, through his work, became the developer of numerous chemical compounds, various instruments used in experiments, and the chemical experimentation process itself. This is precisely one of the reasons why historians of science consider him the founder of modern chemistry.

The theories of Jabir ibn Hayyan

The work of Jabir ibn Hayyan was naturally rooted in the philosophy of nature, which remained influential from antiquity to the modern age. This philosophy was based on the understanding of the microcosm (human) and



JABIR IBN HAYYAN WAS ALSO RECOGNIZED IN THE WESTERN WORLD AS A MASTER IN THE FIELD OF CHEMISTRY AND BECAME RENOWNED UNDER THE NAME “GEBER.”

the macrocosm (universe) as well as the idea of the influence of celestial forces on the earthly realm. Additionally, Jabir ibn Hayyan placed great emphasis on measurement and experimentation, following in the footsteps of Pythagoras. He argued that the material world operated according to a mathematically structured order.

According to Jabir ibn Hayyan, the essence of all metals is a reflection of the signs of celestial bodies on Earth, and in this respect, they are merely unearthly substances of essence. He proposed that all metals are formed as a result of the combination of sulfur and mercury in varying proportions, under the influence of celestial forces. Among these combinations, the most perfect metal was gold. His assertion that metals possess not only physical but also spiritual properties may seem unusual to modern people. However, centuries before contemporary science recognized the concept of vibrations in matter, Jabir ibn Hayyan had expressed this idea in his own terminology.

Another study of Jabir ibn Hayyan was his classification of substances. According to this classification, substances were divided

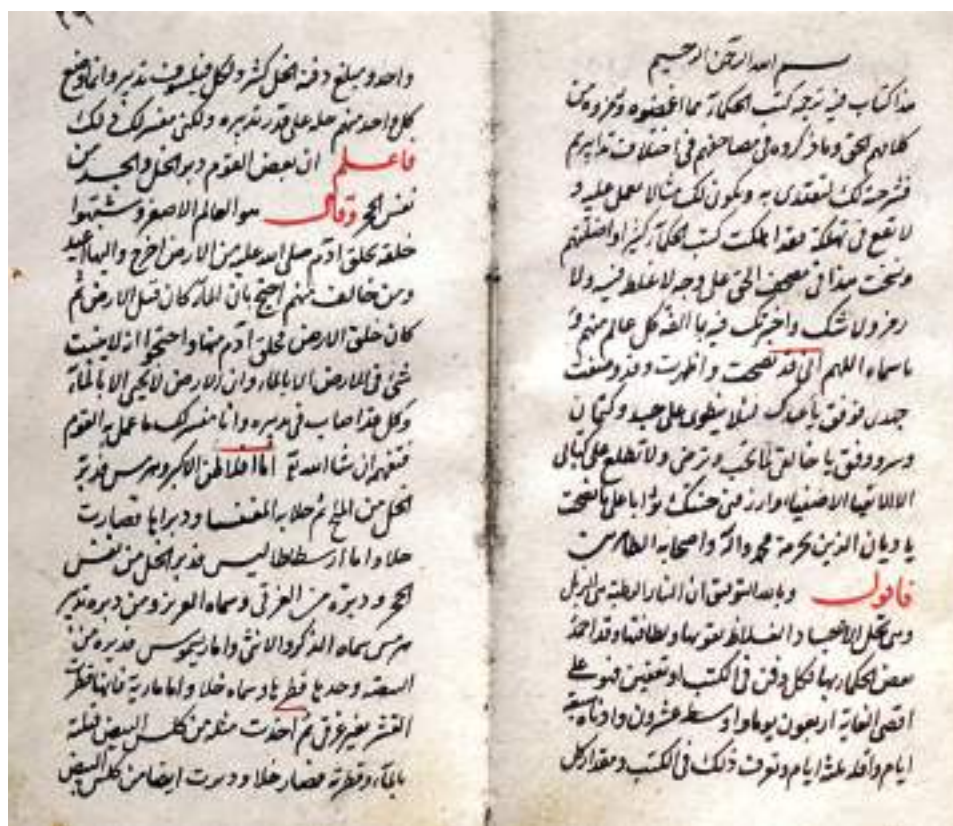
into three groups, these were; spirits (substances that are entirely volatile when exposed to fire), metals (substances that produce sound and possess luster and can be hammered or shaped), and objects (substances that can either melt or remain unmelted).

Jabir ibn Hayyan's contributions to the modern era

Jabir ibn Hayyan made significant contributions to the chemical industry, including advancements in metalworking, fabric and leather dyeing, the production of durable textiles, the use of iron pyrite to write on gold, the distillation of vinegar to

concentrate acetic acid, and the development of techniques for glassmaking. In addition, he studied and explained the use and oxidation of various metals, as well as the structures of toxic substances such as arsenic. He also invented the distillation apparatus, which is considered indispensable in the field of chemistry.

Another significant discovery by Jabir ibn Hayyan was the production of “aqua regia” (royal water). Aqua regia is particularly important because, while many acids exist in chemistry, they cannot dissolve substances like platinum and gold.



Jabir ibn Hayyan's treatise entitled *al-Sirr al-sar wa al-sirr al-asrar*



Jabir ibn
Hayyan's treatise
entitled *al-Sirr
al-sar wa al-sirr
al-asrar*

However, the aqua regia introduced by Jabir ibn Hayyan could interact with and dissolve these highly resilient metals, such as gold and platinum.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Jabir ibn Hayyan's work was his insights about the atom, which would only be fully understood in the 19th and 20th centuries. As early as the 8th century, he possessed the scientific knowledge to state the following about the atom: "In the smallest part of matter (indivisible particle, or atom), there is an intense power. It cannot be definitively said that this small particle cannot be divided further. It, too, can be split, and when it is, such a force is released that it could overturn all of Baghdad. This is a sign of Allah's power."

This deeply knowledgeable and accomplished scientist, Jabir ibn Hayyan, passed on in 815 in the city of Kufah, Iraq. As evidence of a life devoted to science, he left behind over one hundred books, twenty-two of which were specifically related to chemistry. Some of his notable works include: *Kutub al-Sab'in* (The Seventy Books), *Kitab al-Khawass al-Kabir* (On Great Properties), *Kutub al-Ajsad al-Sab'a* (On the Seven Metals), *Kitab al-Nur* (On Light), *Kitab al-Ahjar* (On Stones), *Kitab al-Durrah al-Maknuna* (On Precious Stones), *Kitab al-Usul* (On Methods), *Kitab al-Mizan* (On Balance).

Jabir ibn Hayyan was also recognized in the Western world as a master in the field of chemistry and became renowned under

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THIS MUSLIM SCHOLAR, THROUGH HIS WORK, BECAME THE DEVELOPER OF NUMEROUS CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS, VARIOUS INSTRUMENTS USED IN EXPERIMENTS, AND THE CHEMICAL EXPERIMENTATION PROCESS ITSELF.

the name "Geber." The collection of chemical works derived from translations of Jabir ibn Hayyan's writings, which emerged in the 13th and 14th centuries, played a pivotal role in the development of modern chemistry over the following six centuries. One of the most striking pieces of evidence of his influence is the origin of the English word "alchemy," which is derived from the Arabic term "al-kimiya" as a direct result of Jabir ibn Hayyan's work. The historian and archaeologist Mayerhoff stated unequivocally, "The development of chemistry in Europe is directly based on Jabir". In recognition of his contributions to chemistry, NASA named a crater on the Moon "Geber Crater".

A TEMPLE OF INDEPENDENCE: THE UMAYYAD MOSQUE

Sumeyra CELIK

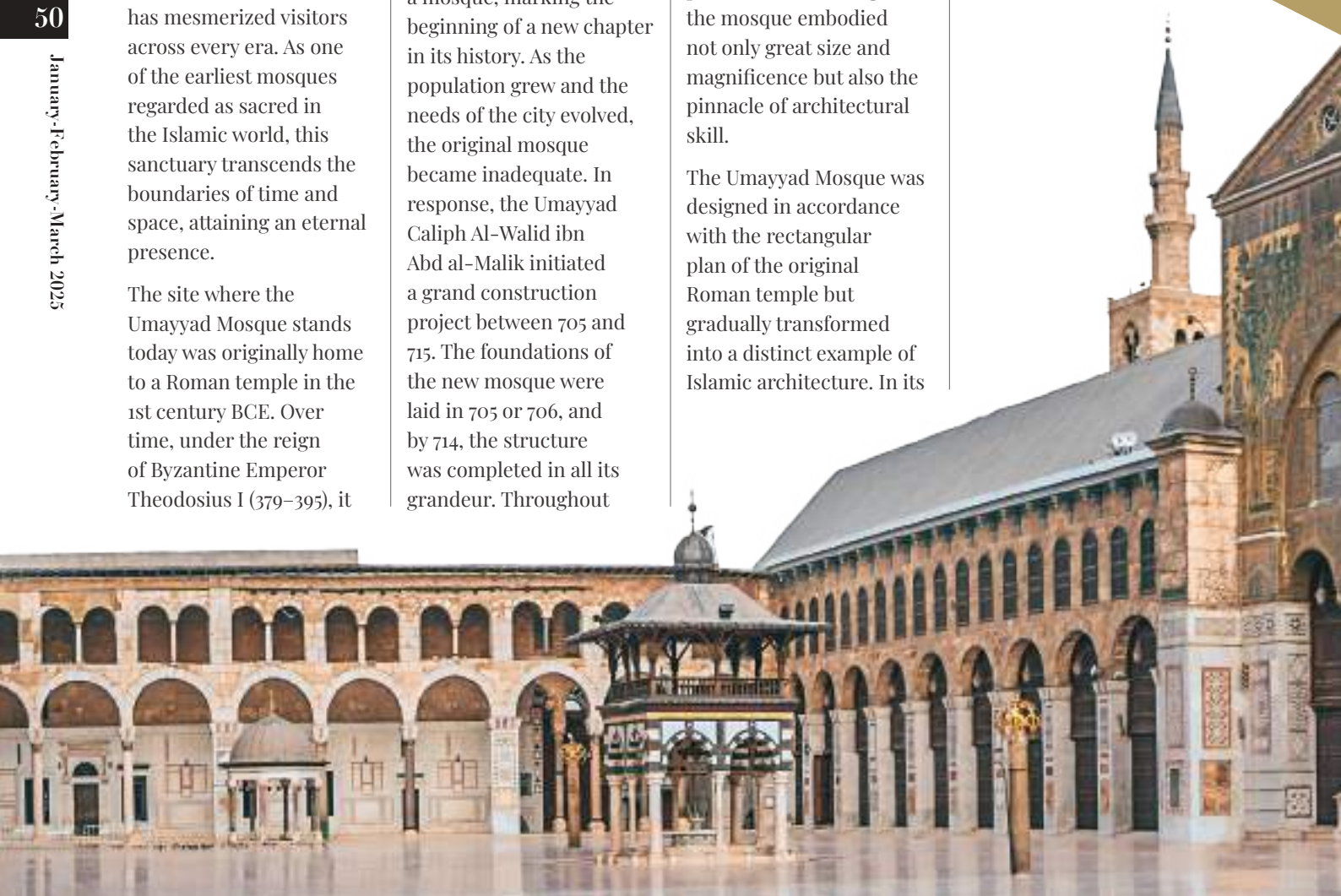
The Umayyad Mosque rises majestically at the heart of Damascus, holding a unique place in the Islamic world with its architectural elegance, exquisite decorations, and profound spirituality. This magnificent structure, a testament to both artistic and religious power, has been praised by numerous scholars and artists throughout history and has mesmerized visitors across every era. As one of the earliest mosques regarded as sacred in the Islamic world, this sanctuary transcends the boundaries of time and space, attaining an eternal presence.

The site where the Umayyad Mosque stands today was originally home to a Roman temple in the 1st century BCE. Over time, under the reign of Byzantine Emperor Theodosius I (379–395), it

was converted into the Church of Saint John (the Prophet Yahya). However, following the Islamic conquests of Damascus in the 7th century under the leadership of Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah, the sacred site was transformed into a mosque, marking the beginning of a new chapter in its history. As the population grew and the needs of the city evolved, the original mosque became inadequate. In response, the Umayyad Caliph Al-Walid ibn Abd al-Malik initiated a grand construction project between 705 and 715. The foundations of the new mosque were laid in 705 or 706, and by 714, the structure was completed in all its grandeur. Throughout

the construction process, master craftsmen sent from Istanbul played a pivotal role, ensuring that the mosque embodied not only great size and magnificence but also the pinnacle of architectural skill.

The Umayyad Mosque was designed in accordance with the rectangular plan of the original Roman temple but gradually transformed into a distinct example of Islamic architecture. In its



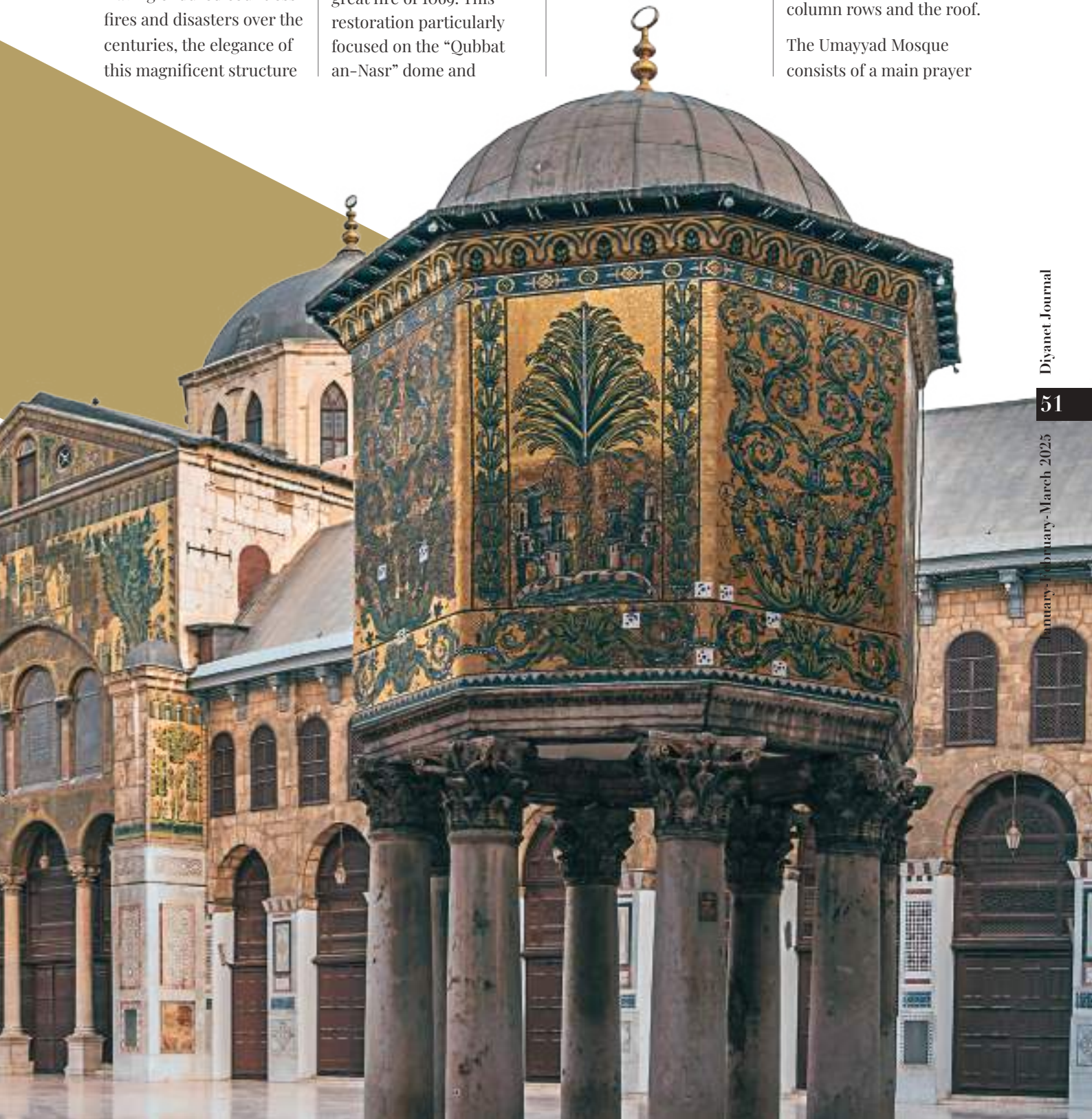
fundamental structure, the south wall, parallel to the qiblah, and the two elegant bastions at its ends were enriched with towers that served as bases for the minarets.

Having endured countless fires and disasters over the centuries, the elegance of this magnificent structure

has been preserved through numerous restorations up to the present day. One of its most significant repairs was carried out by the Seljuk Sultan Malik-Shah in 1082–83, following the great fire of 1069. This restoration particularly focused on the “Qubbat an-Nasr” dome and

the arches. Another major renovation took place during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II after the great fire of 1894 when craftsmen from Istanbul reconstructed the interior column rows and the roof.

The Umayyad Mosque consists of a main prayer





hall measuring 136 by 37 meters and a large courtyard measuring 122.5 by 50 meters. The main prayer area comprises three transverse naves intersected by a wider vertical nave. The two-tiered arches between the naves rest on marble columns, adding an elegant grandeur to the space. At the center of this vast area stands the “Qubbat al-Nasr”, supported by four large piers and covered with a wooden roof. This dome is reinforced by transitional trompes and surrounded by arches, each offering a unique aesthetic beauty. The prayer hall features several mihrabs, reflecting



AS ONE OF THE EARLIEST MOSQUES REGARDED AS SACRED IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD, THIS SANCTUARY TRANSCENDS THE BOUNDARIES OF TIME AND SPACE, ATTAINING AN ETERNAL PRESENCE.

the influences of different Islamic schools of thought. On the right are two mihrabs belonging to the Hanafi and Hanbali schools, while the one on the left is known as either the Sahabah or Maliki mihrab. Between these mihrabs lies the tomb of the Prophet Yahya, making the mosque not only a place of worship but also the resting place of a prophet and a site for sacred relics, imbuing it with profound spiritual significance.

The fountain located in the courtyard symbolizes the integration of water civilization into architecture. Surrounding the fountain are twenty-

four graceful arches, with an additional nine arches on each side forming elegant porticoes. At the rear of the courtyard, smaller yet impressive domed structures, such as the “Qubbat al-Khaznah” (Bayt al-Mal) and the “Qubbat Zayn al-Abidin,” can be found. The Qubbat al-Khaznah served as a storage place for the mosque’s waqf revenues and became a symbol of the mosque’s economic life.

The mosque’s three minarets are elegant representations of Islamic architecture. The western minaret, built atop a Roman bastion, is known as “al-Mi’dhanah

al-Gharbiyyah” and was restored in 1488 by the Mamluk Sultan Qaitbay. The other two minarets are “Mi’dhanah Isa” located on the eastern side and “Mi’dhanah al-Arus” situated above the northern portico. The mosque features four main gates, Bab al-Barid (west), Bab Jairun (east), Bab al-Faradis (north), and Bab al-Ziyadah (qiblah). Additionally, there is an auxiliary gate that opens to the Kallaseh Madrasa on the northern side.

The Umayyad Mosque is one of the earliest examples of the mosque type, featuring long transverse naves and a courtyard, shaping the development of Islamic architecture. This architectural plan has been emulated across Anatolia and other Islamic regions for centuries, serving as a source of inspiration to this day. The mosque’s unique mosaic decorations, adorned with vegetal and geometric motifs, are among the most exquisite examples in art history. These embellishments reflect the artistic vision of the period, the early stages of Islamic art, and the influences of Byzantine, Persian, and Arab cultures. The mosque holds great artistic and historical significance due to its architecture and mosaics. These mosaics, influenced by Byzantine art, give



the mosque a rich and striking appearance. They are adorned with natural landscapes, city and water motifs, trees, animals, and depictions of paradise. The use of gold and blue tones creates a captivating play of light within the interior, offering a visual feast. In addition to Byzantine influences, the mosaics express the aesthetic and symbolic elements of Islamic art. For example, the natural motifs reflect the importance Islam places on nature and evoke imagery of paradise. These mosaics also exemplify how early Islamic art found expression through non-figurative depictions of nature. The interior is further enriched with various geometric patterns and inscriptions on columns, domes, and walls. Calligraphy, particularly in architectural elements, is prominently displayed throughout the mosque.

The courtyard of the mosque is also adorned with rich ornamentation.



**THE FOUNTAIN
LOCATED
IN THE
COURTYARD
SYMBOLIZES
THE
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OF WATER
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INTO
ARCHITECTURE.**

The carefully arranged stones, intricate mosaics, and thoughtfully designed gardens enhance the visual aesthetics of the mosque’s exterior. The courtyard is designed to provide a serene space where visitors can rest comfortably during worship while deepening the mosque’s spiritual atmosphere.

Additionally, adjacent to the mosque stands the mausoleum of Salah al-Din Ayyubi, the conqueror of al-Quds, known as “the most beloved sultan of the East” and the first ruler to use the title “Khadim al-Haramayn” (Servant of the Two Holy Sanctuaries).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ISLAM



What is the ruling on establishing tarawih prayer in the congregation?

Although it is more virtuous to establish nafl prayers alone, tarawih prayer was established in the congregation by the Prophet Muhammad (saw). In this respect, the Prophet (saw) performed tarawih prayer by leading the congregation a few times but afterward, he gave up on this practice thinking that it may become obligatory (Bukhari, Salat al-Tarawih, 1; Muslim, Salat al-Musafirin, 177). When Umar (ra) became the caliph, he saw that people were establishing tarawih prayer separately, and thought that it would be better to establish it in the congregation. After consultation with the companions, he started the establishment of this prayer in the congregation again. Seeing that people were establishing it enthusiastically, he expressed his appreciation by saying: "What a beautiful custom it has become!" (Bukhari, Salat al-Tarawih, 1) Ali (ra) prayed for him due to this practice: "May Allah illuminate the grave of Umar just like Umar illuminated our masjids with the light of tarawih." (Muttaqi, Kanz al-ummal, XII, 576).

What is the time of the tarawih prayer? Will it be valid if it is performed before 'isha prayer?

The time of tarawih and witr prayer is that of 'isha prayer. However, both tarawih and witr prayers are established after the fardh of the 'isha prayer. With respect to this, the tarawih and witr prayers that are established before the fardh of 'isha prayer should be established again. If the time has ended, there is no need to establish qada for tarawih but one should perform qada for witr prayer (Ibn al-Humam, Fath, I, 487; Kasani, Bada'i, I, 290).

May one establish the entire tarawih prayer by one intention?

Hanafi scholars have different opinions on whether it is obligatory to make intentions separately after every tarawih prayer. According to the preferred opinion, it is not obligatory to make an intention after giving salam in every two or four rakats as the tarawih prayer is a whole (Ibn Nujaym, al-Bahr, I, 294; al-Fatawa al-Hindiyyah, I, 130).

What is the ruling on and the nature of tarawih prayer?

Tarawih is the plural form of the word “tarwiha”, which lexically means to relax or rest. As a religious term, it refers to the nafl prayer that is established between ‘isha and witr prayers in the month of Ramadan. The Messenger of Allah (saw) established this prayer with his companions; but stopped establishing it in the congregation when he saw their over-enthusiasm and started establishing it alone at home fearing that it may become obligatory upon the ummah (Bukhari, Salat at-Tarawih, 1; Muslim, Salat al-Musafirin, 177-178). Moreover, he encouraged people to establish tarawih prayer saying, “Whoever prayed at night in it (the month of Ramadan) out of sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven” (Bukhari, Salat at-Tarawih, 1; Muslim, Salat al-Musafirin, 173). In this respect, tarawih prayer is a sunnah mu’akkadah (emphasized sunnah) for both men and women. Although it is permissible to establish tarawih prayer by giving salam in every four rakats, it is more virtuous to establish it by giving salam in every two rakats. It is mustahab to sit and rest for a while at the end of every four rakats. During these rests, it is appropriate to recite tahlil (saying la ilaha illallah) and salawat.

Can women establish tarawih prayer at mosques?

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) expressed on many occasions that women may come to the mosque, but performing prayer at home for them is superior. He said, “Do not prevent your women from visiting the mosque; but their houses are better for them (for praying)” (Abu Dawud, Salat, 53; Hakim, al-Mustadraq, I, 327). It is known that the Prophet Muhammad allowed women to go to the mosque, and even encouraged them to attend Eid prayer on joyous days like Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, which were celebrated altogether so that they could experience the joy of the Eid (Bukhari, ‘Eidayn, 15, 21; Muslim, Salat al-Eidayn, 1-3, 10-12). However, the Messenger of Allah (saw) gave some advice to the women who came to the mosque by warning them from wearing excessively attractive clothes (Muslim, Libas, 125) and fragrance (Muslim, Salat, 141-142). Accordingly, although it is more virtuous for women to establish their prayers at their homes, it is permissible for them to establish fardh and tarawih prayers in congregation at mosques on condition that they show due sensitivity (Zaylai, Tabyin, I, 139, 168; Ibn Nujaym, al-Bahr, I, 380).

SALAH: MI'RAJ OF THE BELIEVER

Meryem KILIC



Salah is a common act of worship transmitted and performed by all prophets. From Prophet Ibrahim to Musa, from Isa to the Prophet Muhammad (saw), all messengers carrying the message of Allah (swt) personally performed the salah. Moreover, emphasizing its importance and value, they placed salah at the center of their servitude. The fact that salah is such a special form of communication distinguishes it from other acts of worship. Therefore, salah is the most important duty of worship for us as a believer.

The work entitled “Salah: Mi’raj of the Believer”, published by the Presidency

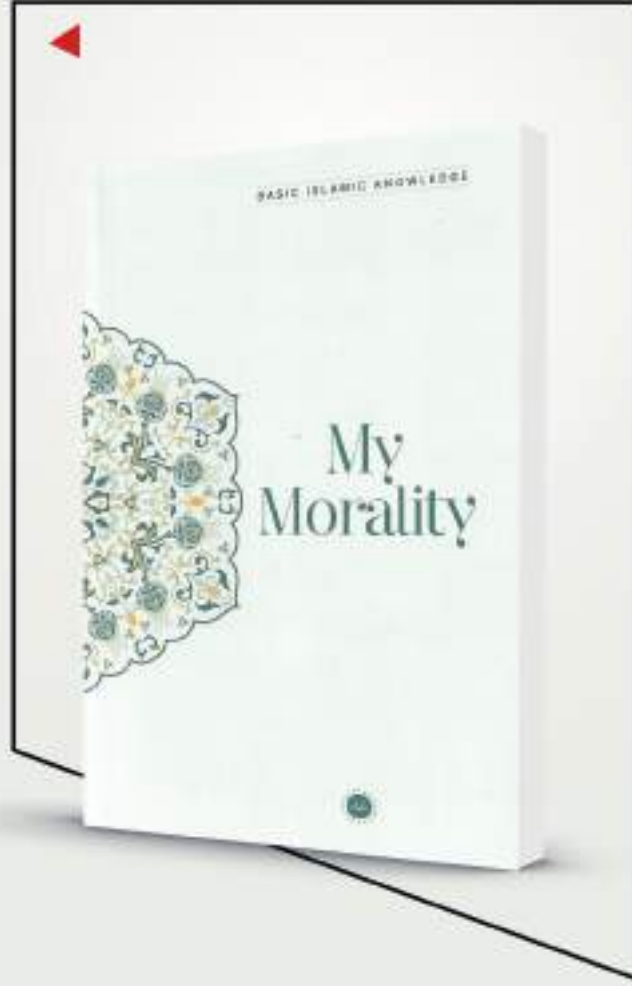
of Religious Affairs, provides general information about Salah and its place and importance among other acts of worship. In this work, written by Dr. Kenan Oral, it is stated that the most important duty of a believer is salah. In fact, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, “The head of the matter is Islam (submitting to Allah by reciting Kalimah al-Shahadah), and its pillar is salah and its peak is to strive on the path of Allah”.

(Jami’ at-Tirmidhi, Iman 8; Ibn Hanbal, V, 231) A Muslim who turns to the Ka’bah five times a day and sincerely and honestly connects with Allah will save himself from the captivity of evil inspired by his own self. By strengthening his faith,

he becomes spiritually stronger and spiritually nourished. The book “Salah: Mi’raj of the Believer” discusses how salah, which is the pillar of religion, prevents people from evil as a material and spiritual purification. In addition, it covers general information about prerequisites of salah, pillars of salah, wajib acts of salah, sunnah acts of salah, mustahabb acts of salah, things that invalidate salah, things that are makruh to do in salah, fard and wajib salah and salah al-naflah. Properly performed, salah matures a Muslim morally and makes him a virtuous individual. A believer who respectfully and consciously fulfills this duty of service has no trace of ingratitude

or miserliness. He becomes a person who is chaste and trustworthy, who has firm faith, and who has imbibed virtues such as modesty and generosity.

Salah is an act of worship that psychologically relaxes people who are in search of meaning where everything quickly loses its value, and who find it difficult to breathe amidst the worries of the world, revealing the qualities that make them human. With this in mind, we present this valuable work, which explains the meaning of salah in a simple and understandable style, for the benefit of our esteemed readers, and hope that it will be of benefit to humanity.



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**“Tell My (believing) servants to
say only what is best.”**

(Isra, 17:53)

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