

Friendly Letters



Amina Bint al-Huda

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These letters deal with common ideological problems of young Muslims. Sisters Wafa and Raja and sisters Zahra and Asma exchange letters on their personal problems and seek each other's advice.

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Wafa and Raja are two sisters in religion. They exchange letters, which indicates that one of them has been a religious guide to the other.

Letter n. 1

Dear sister Wafa,

Assalamu Alaikum,

I must confess that you have been a real guiding light to me in my life...I am writing to you, while darkness has engulfed the Universe. Night has gently put out its fingers to wipe away the troubles of the day and give rest to the exhausted. Everything around me is silent; a hidden tune is being played, giving

the soul the pleasure that it seeks. One wonders how darkness can be changed into brightness, illuminating the features of a new road. Rough words are changed into gentle ones that heal the wounds of the hearts.

Faith can do miracles. Belief in Allah makes one seek His mercy. Such a call to Faith is as pleasant as a spring breeze, as clear as the blue sky, and as beautiful as a flower. It is a clear voice that dominates the soul. One surrenders to it as a prisoner to his watchman and a child to his mother. The soul heeds it to drop anchor at its shore. I hearken to it and hear the story of a new birth. It is the echo of a Qur'anic verse that says,

Our Lord, surely we have heard a preacher calling to the Faith saying: Believe in your Lord, so we did believe, Our Lord forgive us therefore our faults and cover our evil deeds and make us die with the righteous. (Aale-Imran, 3: 193)

Hence I come to understand that I am newly born to lead a new life. After utter darkness, firmly knitted by torturing days, keeping the soul chained to bitter weakness, I started feeling my new life. The mind has been the arena where severe conflict randomly took place. Nothing was clear in the vast desert where everything could be lost. Darkness, throughout those years, colored my life black.

All things seemed to me utter blackness. I looked at life through dark-glasses. I suffered the rough winds and the dangerous sea waves against which my life's boat was about to crush. Allah the Merciful watched that tiny boat struggling against the fearful waves of destiny. Then kind hands stretched to save the drowning soul.

Those were your kind hands dear Wafa. Allah sent you to save this tired heart and disturbed soul. I was kindly led towards the safe harbour of comfort and rest; radiant awareness defeated the disputes of the inner enemy ...I prayed to Allah the Almighty for His bounties. I uttered words which no one but He is worthy of receiving. I promised Him to tread His road to the end.

I am anxious to give you this good news of my new birth...with your help and Allah's, Mercy I came to understand the meaning of happiness or misery in life.

I pray to Allah to keep you safe, dear sister.

Raja

Letter n. 2

Dear sister Raja,

Your letter has been a source of pleasure to me. Its lines and words were in a new bright frame, telling the story of a new birth. I rejoiced, just as a player rejoices over winning the first round of a game. What

a game Life is! It shapes the feelings, and colours its own toys through various incidents. Hence you see when I win a round, I make a step forward to save one deviated soul, one victim of a misleading society.

I am sure your wonderful letter was motivated by Faith ...yet I wished you would not have used words such as "prisoner" and "watchman"...A different expression would indicate satisfaction...I hope you go ahead, increasing your faith...you should perform righteous deeds for the sake of Allah, love the good and hate the evil. Be angry for His sake and rejoice at what pleases Him. Depend on Him and you won't face failure.

I pray to Allah to guide you well.

Wafa

Letter n. 3

Dear sister Wafa,

Assalamu Alaikum,

Still, I cannot explain the confusion that overtakes me sometimes. I do not say that happiness and comfort within my soul has come to an end. This has never been temporary joy of Faith. I still feel the ecstasy of the new birth, but I still feel some pain from an unknown source.

Perhaps I still live the life I led prior to Faith. Please help me pass this crucial phase. Many have tried to help me change my view of life, but I could never respond to them. I have to confess that you are the only person who managed to make me change that black vision I had. Now, I seek your help in overcoming this pain, the source of my discomfort...So please talk, since I find the comfort and security that I seek in your words. Your talks are of Faith and its creative power. Your words fill my soul with bright

righteous guidance.

May Allah keep you safe.

Raja

Letter n. 4

Dear sister Raja,

Assalamu Alaikum,

Pain for no special reason is a mere illusion. Everyone can destroy pain in his life, if he searches for its

source in reality. Unreasonable sufferings may bring more sufferings. One should not give way to such pains, which bite the weak with sharp teeth.

You should be ready to resist such feelings. Those things of the world make you forget your religious duties and—take the worship of Allah with a pinch of salt. It is a pity for one to find the source of light and then be pushed away before reaching it. I pray to Allah to give you more strength to fight against your desires. At this stage you need to stand firm, and have a strong will.

Wafa

Letter n. 5

Dear sister Wafa,

I wish I never had the word "pain ", in my vocabulary...How wonderful it is for one to have a nice dream that comes true and brings a real not a forced smile to one's lips. You may wonder what kind of dream it is! Well, it is to enjoy happiness in the shadow of Faith and to reject the suffering of an aimless life... I wish, I could forget this word "pain" with all its reflections.

At the order of Allah, your helpful hand has broken the chains of pain and released my soul. Your kind heart has destroyed the shadows of torture. You have outlined the righteous road and scattered along it the flowers of hope whose scent touches the soul and removes dark shadows. Such hope in Allah's pleasure is most wonderful. It is a stage of transfer, not only from deviation to righteousness, or from doubt to certainty, but also from misery to happiness and from despair to hope and from darkness to light... to Allah and Religion which I am ready to sacrifice myself for.

I pray to Allah for your strength and fortitude.

Raja

Letter n. 6

Dear sister Raja,

I am sorry to say that I missed optimistic words in your letter; words that foretell a promising new birth. I missed in your letter words that indicate achievement in destroying pains and sufferings. I frankly say that your letter disappointed me. How hard it is to see a long awaited hope vanish in front of one's eyes!

You still talk about pain. What pain is it that can stay, despite a Faith that overwhelms the soul with its light? You should rather talk about happiness, which is at the threshold of your door, though you ignore it. How happy one is to rid oneself of pain and purify one's soul that will soon enjoy the eternal sublime world! How wonderful it is to set up the fortress of Faith on the ruins of pain; such a fortress cannot be

destroyed with the passage of time.

Oh sister, how dear you are to me. I feel that your soul, that has suffered this world's pains, has been released, rejecting this world, turning towards a great aim of all souls. It is to gain the pleasure of Allah and to get His Paradise. You should therefore pray to Allah always, for more piety and faith.

Pray to Him for mercy and help, since He is ready to answer those seeking His help; He is most thanked and praised for that. Recite, whenever you can, the Holy Qur'an, which gives comfort to the troubled soul and purifies the self of its sins. Fear the Creator and seek refuge in Him. Pray to Allah, as the Qur'anic verse says:

And glorify the name of your Lord morning and evening. (Al-Insan, 76:25)

Go ahead and rid yourself of all that which causes you pain...Be happy with your belief in Allah...I am waiting for good news from you, to remove my disappointment.

Wafa

Letter n. 7

Dear sister Wafa,

I do apologize for causing you disappointment. What can I write? Well, the one who wished to die, is now interested in life. This is not for the sake of enjoying life, but for the sake of a sublime aim that one strives to attain through the worship of Allah. Hence, you see I am no longer disturbed by life's troubles.

This life with all its hardship and suffering is of no more concern to me. This world is nothing but a tiny portion of the great universe. I feel satisfied wherever I go. Despite the unpleasant reality, the feeling of spiritual security gives me ease.

I came to understand that life will go on whether one is sad or happy. The past days won't come back; time does not bother with one's tears or one's smiles. Why should one, then, demand what time cannot offer?

Now, I don't build castles in the air. I have made a new start on the firm foundation of Faith. Life's troubles won't be allowed to keep me under the domination of pain. I want to achieve a life of Faith and piety. I'll make use of this life for the sake of the other one.

Pray for me dear sister.

Raja

Letter n. 8

Dear sister Raja,

Thanks be to Allah, your letter has been a source of joy to me. How happy I am to know one desires life after being in the pursuit of death. 'This is just what I expected of you. Now you are quite sure that life is precious despite its troubles, which are sometimes too cruel to be tolerated. This is a facet of its nature; hence we should adjust ourselves to its reality with firmness.

Those lines in your letter will be your witness in the Hereafter. The Holy Qur'an says:

Our Lord, surely we have heard a preacher calling to Faith, saying: Believe in your Lord, so we did believe... (Aale-Imran, 3: 193)

How happy I am that you are now on the right-path. You have set out with new determinations and awareness. You have left behind the deceptive materialistic pleasures. With all my heart, I pray for you, that Allah may keep you safe.

Wafa

Letter n. 9

Dear sister Wafa,

You have been a source of light and a means of guidance to me. I shall be strong enough to destroy pain... I'll forget all my sufferings.

With the weapon of faith, I shall break down many pains that spoiled my life. My awareness is back after a long absence. I am fully awake, making my way towards the Divine light and forgiveness.

"Oh my Lord, how great is Your mercy. How easy difficulties are, for Your sake! How wonderful is struggle, for Your pleasure! How sweet bitterness is to get near You. No aim is worthy of struggle, but Yours. Oh God, despite troubles, I find happiness in my striving towards You.

However narrow this room is, I enjoy the horizons of Faith, praying to You. Oh my Lord, how wonderful it is to get free of these earthly chains, setting out towards You...! Oh God! I seek nothing but Your pleasure, I need nothing but Your forgiveness. I tread only towards Your orchard. Oh my Lord, this life is nothing but efforts for your sake.

My soul, Oh God, is full of hope in Your forgiveness. It longs for Your bounties and waits for Your pleasure...Oh God, this hardship is only a means of bringing me nearer to You...Oh God, my tears are for Your sake, Oh God, how great my need of Your pleasure is...!"

Finally, dear sister, I confess my gratitude to you for all your help.

Raja

Letter n. 10

Dear sister Raja,

How wonderful for one to place one's hopes in Allah the Almighty. Such hopes make one smile amid tears and laugh despite suffering. Hope of Allah's pleasure and forgiveness changes darkness within oneself into a bright light reflected on one's face. Such hopes help the believers to tolerate the hardships without despair or retreat.

They make the bitter taste of life, sweet, and heal wounds...Imam Ali (A.S.) refers to this when he describes the believers. He says, "...their bodies are on earth, but their souls are attached to the sublime world..."

How difficult life is, for one who does not seek the source of hope! How hard it is for one to tread difficult roads without the help of Divine Guidance! Faith is, dear sister, a paradise full of shady trees for one seeking refuge from poisonous life. Faith is a spring of water that can never dry up. It is man's provision in this life and the Hereafter. Keep on seeking Allah's mercy.

May Allah keep you safe.

Wafa

Letter n. 11

Dear sister Wafa,

I have not written to you for some time...not because of feelings of disappointment or negligence...I am, thanks be to Allah, still happy with my faith. Yet I need to be assured of Allah's forgiveness. I am afraid He may chase me out of His presence...How concerned I am for such feelings! Please write to me, give me some comfort.

Raja

Letter n. 12

Dear sister Raja,

Allah, the Almighty never drives away those who seek His door. He never turns away hearts treading towards Him with pure love and absolute worship. He never disappoints those who ask for His mercy

and forgiveness. The prophetic narration says: "Whoever takes one step towards Allah, Allah will take ten steps towards him."

The Qur'anic verse says:

Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it... (Al-Anam, 6: 160)

Hence you see, Allah never rejects the sincere words of Faith... I pray to Him to guide you well in this life.

Wafa

While Zahra (with her husband Barrir) are abroad she exchanges letters with Asma. Through them, Asma becomes a real sister in religion to Zahra. Zahra's husband Barrir is a committed Muslim believer.

Letter n. 1

Dear Asma,

Assalamu Alaikum

I am sure that you spend a good deal of your time engaged in the worship of Allah the Almighty. As for me, I have grown a bit fat, due to the nice weather and good food. Yesterday we (I and Barrir) took a long walk but we, didn't get a bit tired.

We came across an orchard full of scented flowers and I picked a beautiful one. Barrir said to me, "I wonder if you heard the conversation between your flower and its neighbor. "I was surprised at his words and said, "No I have heard nothing."

Barrir said, "When you put out your hand to pick it, it laughed proudly and said to its neighbors, "Oh, stay in this spot forever. As for me, I shall be taken to have a rest in a magnificent vase on a wooden or marble table...perhaps I'll decorate the blouse of a beautiful lady or crown her blond hair!

I'll get rid of these roots that tie me to the earth and get free of these branches, which are supposed to provide me with water and sunlight. I no longer need wait for the gardener to water me, or look for shade to protect me from the sun's heat. Oh poor sister, now I pity you..."

I listened to him while he said, "Of course neither did you hear the answer. The flower's neighbour sadly murmured: "Oh I feel sad for you dear sister you are quite wrong. Those roots that tie you to the earth are a symbol of your life. These branches are to provide you with security and survival. You are quite misled by your supposed freedom. It will cause you to fade and die. Your petals will fall dry and be carried away by the wind. This will be the result of your supposed freedom. As for me I shall stay alive

and fresh since I am still tied by my roots, which give me life."

Barrir then stopped talking, though I was very interested in his dialogue. I was very happy to have comprehended the significance of the two flowers...I feel happy whenever I learn more and increase my knowledge. I am sure you can also comprehend the significance of the two flowers.

My best wishes to you.

Zahra

Letter n. 2

Dear sister Zahra,

Assalamu Alaikum,

How I miss you dear sister. Your letters are a source of pleasure to me. They help me tolerate this boring time. I enjoyed reading your letter and your "flower's dialogue". Of course I understood the significance of the two flowers; they symbolize two girls. The first one is fooled by false propaganda and supposed freedom, and is the victim of ideologies that exploit her identity, the same as the flower carried from here to there as from vase to vase until it dies.

As for me, dear sister, I am often alone...I have recently been hurt by my nearest and dearest. A stone has been thrown at me, which has caused me to seek isolation...I am now busy reading a book about living creatures and their habits.

The book is very interesting and useful, and it stirred, in me a great sense of awe for the greatness of the Creator. It deals with: light-giving creatures and fire worms that live in the sea and fireflies that live in the farms and the bat and its strong sense of hearing.

This creature can hear ultra vocal waves, with a vibration rate of 500,000 per second, and other such scientific facts, which are all created by Allah the Almighty. So you see I do benefit from this isolation and have enough time for reading and writing.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Asma

Letter n. 3

Dear sister Asma,

Assalamu Alaikum,

I got your dear letter yesterday and was eager to read it...I sensed some feelings of distress in your words... what do you mean by this isolation? You should have a social life that will benefit you as well as others. What is this stone thrown by your nearest and dearest? Anyway, haven't you ever seen the fruiting coffee tree, called a "Beauty Tree"? Its roots go deep into the earth; its branches grow high and green to provide a source of hope for the spectator. It bears white flowers in clusters, to decorate its branches. Such a tree is a source of pleasure to others. When someone throws a stone at it, it trembles gently and rains countless white flowers upon him.

A believer can resemble this worthy tree. He devotes his life to Allah. When he suffers injustice, he responds with good advice and gentle words, with prayers for the guidance of others. When a brother believer throws a stone at him, he wishes he could put in that hand a torch of light in place of the stone, and he is kind and loving. He wishes he could replace the stones with olive branches in order to spare the believers the difficulty of carrying stones.

A believer is all good and kind and loving. Hence you should tolerate the wrongs of your nearest and dearest. You should not isolate yourself from society. Isolation is nothing but a kind of cowardice. You must surely remember our talk about the impossibility of finding a perfect person who never gets angry at others who hurt him. Now can you try to be such a person?

With best wishes and heartfelt prayers.

Zahra

Letter n. 4

Dear sister Zahra,

Assalamu Alaikum,

I got your letter for which I was in real need, as it was a source of guiding light for me. Certainly women believers are expected to heal the wounds of each other and help each other. The Holy Qur'an says:

Muhammad. is the Apostle of Allah and those with him are firm of heart against the unbelievers, compassionate among themselves... (Al-Fath, 48:29)

Your letter has caused me to reconsider my decision of isolating myself... I confess that isolation is not a solution...I should keep on guiding others to Islamic instructions. Our religion is in need of illustration and Qur'anic explanations and prophetic Sunnah.

Have you enjoyed reading during your travel? You haven't mentioned anything about such in your letters. Can I ask: why? Nice weather and beautiful quiet surroundings encourage one to read and write a lot. I have recently had such an experience when we went for a picnic on the riverbank. I was

motivated to perform my duty, though it was a mere picnic with some relatives and friends. I sat under the olive and rose trees, and watched the flowing river carrying dead leaves and petals along, with its fish and other water creatures useful for people. It seemed to me that it told the story of life with all its hopes and sufferings and its hardships and pleasures.

I felt in need of my pen and paper...I got them from my handbag and started writing. I was very satisfied with that occasion.

My prayers for you, dear sister.

Zahra

Letter n. 5

Dear sister Asma,

Assalamu Alaikum,

However beautiful nature is, it cannot make one forget one's dear friends...Hence I long to see you and the other sisters...In fact, I am counting the days till my return... You may notice a delay in my reply to your letter. This is because we made a short trip to a nearby place. We hired a small car to go, and the driver drove as if he were sailing! Barrir asked him to slow down a bit, but he didn't. Barrir then said to him, "If you don't care for our lives, at least you should care for your own car!"

The driver answered indifferently, "Why should I? It has been insured since the day I got it." Barrir turned towards me saying, "Did you hear him?"

He is not concerned for his car because the insurance company will pay for any damage or loss. That's why he drives at such a high speed. Otherwise, he would not risk it. Can you take a lesson from this?" I said, "I think it is similar to the life of a human being and the Divine insurance that is expected for any loss as in the Qur'anic verse:

...this is because, there afflicts them not thirst or fatigue or hunger in Allah's way, nor do they tread a path which enrages the unbelievers, nor do they attain from the enemy what they attain, but a good work is written down to them on account of it, surely Allah does not waste the reward of the doers of good (At- Tawba, 9: 120)

Barrir said, "But there is a big difference between the two. The Insurance company won't make up for a loss except through efforts that take a long time and much money, while the Divine insurance is offered several fold and without an appeal. The Qur'anic verse says,

Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it... (Al-Anam, 6: 60)

Hence despite the losses that a believer suffers he is still the winner."

Barrir continued talking about the conditions of the Divine contract, which are genuinely good intention and straight forwardness. Then he explained the two requirements necessary to benefit from Allah's mercy. I was very interested and forgot all about the dangerous roads and the dreadful high speed.

The place was not comfortable so our stay was short. We returned and I was happy to see your letter waiting for me. How nice of you to ask me about my reading. You may rejoice to know that I am reading an interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. I am quite fascinated by the deep meaning of the holy verses. I am taking notes in a special notebook, which you will see when I return home, God willing.

Till then, may Allah keep you safe.

Zahra

Letter n. 6

Dear sister Zahra,

Assalamu Alaikum,

In fact, reading has to some extent spared me from boredom. Yesterday I visited our friend Dunia. There I met a host of guests for the first time. I felt uneasy and regretted being there doing nothing useful for our religion.

Then one of the guests asked about the meaning of the word Dunia (this world). Some showed interest in the name others rejected it. One said, "This word reminds me of a prison." I wondered why when the world is quite wide. She said challengingly, "It is a prison for the believers and a paradise for the disbelievers.

Therefore, if we are believers we are in a prison. If we are infidels, we won't get the eternal paradise." I said to her, "Listen to me sister. This narration refers relatively to prison and paradise. If all pleasure were within the reach of a believer's hand, what he enjoys in the other world is still greater. Hence this world to him is a prison. As for the infidel, whatever disasters he suffers in this world will be nothing compared to the horrible suffering in the other world, hence it is his paradise here, while what is awaiting him is unimaginable."

So you see I could benefit from that visit by explaining the prophetic narration to the guests. As for your letter, I was happy to get it after that delay. I enjoyed your conversation about the Divine insurance and Divine rewards. Such rewards make one smile despite tears. They cause the hopeless to catch sight of a ray of light in the utter darkness.

The Divine promise of rewards helps the believers to tolerate sufferings and hardships with patience.

Hence life's bitterness is changed into sweetness; its hardships into mercy and compassion. Such Divine rewards should be the aim of every believer, otherwise life is quite hard and its passages are quite dark for one to tread. 'Oh God how narrow the roads are for one who does not seek your guidance.'

Our sisters, Zainab, Saliha and Inam, send their best wishes. Inam has rejected an official job. She prefers to take care of her family and perform her religious responsibilities.

Asma

Letter n. 7

Dear sister Asma,

Assalamu Alaikum,

I am always eager to get your letters... I feel quite happy on reading them... Yesterday we went for a walk. Our destination was a spring whose waterfall comes down a high mountain. We walked across the green fields and it was a bright day; the sky was a clear blue. We walked down the valley quite slowly; between the big rocks springs of clear water flowed musically along. We stopped to drink some water and splash it on our faces.

The naked rocks of the high mountains had deep lines cut across their surfaces. I tried to understand something about these high rocks and I said to Barrir, "Do you think these deep lines are quite ancient." He said, "Yes, they are quite old." I said, "How old are they? It must be quite difficult for the wind to cut such deep lines on the solid surfaces."

Barrir said, "It is a long process, otherwise such lines would not have existed. One can easily put one's hand in this stream and find a space for it. But as soon as one draws back one's hand, no trace is left behind. The water will go on flowing filling the empty area on its way. This easy action is nothing significant. But if one tries to cut across a solid stone, certainly one will need great efforts and a substantial length of time.

One may fill the cuts with sweat or stain the stone with bleeding fingers. With firmness and determination, it may take days and nights to achieve one's aim. Then the result will be wonderful. Troubles and hardships are soon forgotten. Such an achievement produces great happiness and survives for a long time. The traces will stay to relate to future generations the story of a hard struggle. Hence, there is a big difference between an easy achievement without the least effort and the difficult one which survives the ages."

Barrir ceased talking and I thought of the effort and hard-work that produce good results, I recalled the Qur'anic verse:

...then as for the scum, it passes away as a worthless thing, and as for that which profits the people it carries in the earth... (Al-Ra'ad, 13:17)

Certainly, we are in need of making efforts to achieve good deeds that can survive for the benefit of people.

My best wishes.

Zahra

Letter n. 8

Dear sister Zahra,

Assalamu Alaikum,

I got your letter just in time. I was in real need of something that could give me rest and ease since I suffered a crucial stage of confused thoughts and sad feelings. I suffered days of pain, despair and bitterness and often wondered: How can one laugh, when others cry nearby! How can one smile in this miserable world! How can one seem happy while one hears the wailing of despair day and night!

Some will surely collapse...yet some may fight back and refuse to surrender. Such people, of course, need a weapon with which to confront the fatal attacks in life. They are ready to fight, but they lack the weapon, hence they may give in. While I was thinking of this matter I listened to a person reciting the Holy Qur'anic verse,

...no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes... (Al-Sajdah, 32:17)

I thought of this verse and found in it a source of light that removed all amazement and loss. I knew it was faith. Faith is the weapon of fortitude and the assurance of Allah's mercy in this world and the Hereafter. Faith can amend personal behavior; can change despair into hope, difficulty into ease and fear into security. All this can happen if one knows it is for the sake of Allah and within His sight.

Then I came to the conclusion that a believer should be optimistic as long as he is sure of Allah's help and content with what he gets or faces. I felt better and hopeful of relief...Your letter had a wonderful effect on me, the first sign of my optimistic theory. I hope you won't be disturbed by this letter. With faith I could overcome this kind of unease.

My prayers to Allah to keep you safe.

Asma

Letter n. 9

Dear sister Asma,

I hope you feel much better now since you have managed to rid yourself of all bitterness and pain and have tasted the sweetness of Faith and Patience. A believer should know that whatever he suffers is for the sake of Allah and within His watch.

Such knowledge will strengthen his firm stance and open new roads of hope for him. However difficult the path is, and he can keep on treading it. Allah the Almighty ordered the prophets: Moses and Haroun, to go to Pharaoh. The Qur'anic verses relate:

Go both to Pharaoh, surely he has become inordinate, then speak to him a gentle word, haply he may mind or fear. Both said: Our Lord, surely we fear that he may hasten to do evil to us as he may become inordinate. He said: Fear not, surely I am with you both. I do hear and see. (Taha, 20: 43-46)

With these Divine words Allah sent two of His worshippers to Pharaoh. These words indicate a serious situation with certain results. Pharaoh might hasten to do evil and increase his oppression, and the two Apostles feared this possibility. They were two of the oppressed masses to face the mightiest tyrant of that time.

A tyrant who claimed without the least right to be himself a god, and dared to ask the people to worship him. The two prophets were to face him and tell him to bear witness that: There is no Lord but

Allah the One, with no other partners. The two prophets were in need of a mighty power though they were strong enough to perform the mission. Hence they said, ***...our Lord, surely we fear that he...***

That mighty power was felt with the awareness that Allah was with them, hearing and seeing. Allah did not promise to fight for them, but just informed them that He was near them, hence they were ready to take all risks and rush into a difficult situation.

When the believer thinks he is striving along the road marked by Allah the Almighty, Who knows everything about that road and observes the performance of His creatures it becomes easy for him to carry on his way, despite the rough terrain. Allah does not provide man with an easy passage along a paved scented road. It is enough for a believer to know that Allah is with him, for him to feel happy and strong.

He then tastes happiness despite hardships. Every believer may face a lot of obstacles throughout his life's course, struggling for the sake of Allah. Sometimes he gives in and wonders: 'Why is all this, Oh my Lord? I am striving for Your sake, treading Your path...but...?'

Such a person should know that, it is not an easy task at all to get to the happy end. One, therefore, needs great spiritual determination and has to pass many stages.

Throughout his drive to achieve his aim, a person needs certainty (in Allah's help), persistence, fortitude and sincerity. He must be aware of such qualifications manifested in his life, and should prove himself worthy, of such qualifications with satisfaction.

One cannot achieve the apex of happiness without going through difficulties. However great the troubles are, one should consider them nothing compared to the sublime aim and worthy reward...those troubles indicate the expected good rewards. Finally, I am happy to tell you that we are coming home within a few days, Allah willing.

Zahra

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