

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



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Parents' Influence on Children

It can be easily observed in our society that whenever a person does something wrong, his parents are blamed for it, his family background is held responsible and the nourishment and teachings of the parents are questioned. All these lead to the misconception that parents are responsible for all the evils that erupt in the society. One of the main causes of such a conception is the tribal thinking. In a tribal setup, family plays an important role and is considered as the center of all the activities. All the attributes that are developed within a personality are thought to have roots in the family. People are recognized as per the name and status of their families. Therefore, their actions are judged in the similar fashion. The evil-doers are thought to have learnt the evils from their families and their parents. This sort of thinking is really narrow-minded and fails to understand the whole truth. It only sees one of the aspects of the fact while getting blind towards most of the others. The formation of a personality is highly dependent on various institutions; from family to political system, there is a long list. Though the family is the basic one, the institutions like schools, social, cultural and religious institutions and ceremonies, offices, sports and others have their undying influences. All these institutions have different practices and there are different personalities in them that imprint their marks on a person's psychology. It is difficult to say that a particular behavior within a person is the outcome of the family or the parents alone as there are different factors involved at the same time.

Parents' nourishment - their care and their neglect have influence on the children, this cannot be rejected. It is believed and believed rightly that a mother's lap is the first academy for a child. But there is a long journey between how a person is treated by his parents and his choice to commit an evil. Moreover, the imprints of parent's behavior on the minds of the children are not like reflection in a mirror - it does not come back in the same form; or it is not like the input and output in the computer, where the output is as per the demands of the users. If it was so, parenting would not be difficult at all, but it is not so and the parents living in our society are the witness to it. The love from the parents will not necessarily result in a good conduct of the children - observations show that children with great love and attention from their parents have committed crimes and evils that have made history; similarly, their neglect does not necessarily result in the children becoming evil-doers. There are many children in our society, who are the victims of their parents' negligence, yet they show great values and behavior and even hate evils. Simply, human behavior and psychology is not like mathematics where two plus two is equal to four. To understand it, more efforts are required than just to cram the tables; unfortunately, cramming is alone what many so-called analysts know; therefore, they are not able to understand the complex nature of human existence.

The evils that we see in our society are, in fact, the responsibility of the society as a whole. As Henry Thomas Buckle had said, "The society prepares a crime, the criminal commits it". This suggests that there are many socio-economic conditions that are involved in the preparation of the crimes which are the biggest evil in our society. The social injustice, the economic disadvantage, the political corruption, the religious intolerance, all these factors and many others play their roles in motivating the criminals and the evil-doers to commit them. Suppose a person steals money and becomes a thief. There are certain possibilities, all of which towards the role of the society in it - the person stole money because he was compelled by his economic conditions. He might have had financial problems and have been incapable of providing basic requirements of life to his family members.

He might have a patient at home, waiting to be cured, which is only possible in today's society through money as health services have become a great business. Thus, there are so many social factors that have nothing to do with the parents alone and which even compel the parents to nourish and guide their children in a certain way. In fact, if we see from a wider perspective we will soon realize that parents themselves are among the effected, how can they be the cause?

The vicious circles of the unjust economic and political systems have bound the people in such a way that they have no way out and no clear idea what to do except blaming each other. That's why we find parents blaming the children and children blaming the parents, and many others blaming both of them, when in fact both are innocent.

However, as mentioned earlier, to understand this concept a wider approach is required while many people are just peeping through the lock hole to see the whole room, which does not assist them in any way to see the whole truth.

Now, if the door is opened for them, they would be able to see the whole truth and realize how big this world is! Much bigger than their tribal perspective!

Regional Cooperation for Peace and Stability

By Abdul Ahad Bahrami

The 'Heart of Asia' conference held in Islamabad on Wednesday with focus on improving cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan and helping the Afghan peace process. At the sidelines of the conference, officials from Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the United States agreed on resuming the stalled peace process between the Afghan government and the Taliban. Afghan and Pakistani officials reiterated their determination for improving ties between the two countries and cooperating over the peace process in Afghanistan. Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif once again expressed his country's support to the peace process in Afghanistan and reassured that "enemies of Afghanistan were enemies of Pakistan". Representatives of many regional countries including China, India and the United States participated in the conference, providing a major opportunity for Afghanistan and Pakistan to discuss economic cooperation, peace and stability at regional level.

The first day impressions from the sidelines of the conferences were remarkable. The governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan seem prepared to have frank talks over the peace process in Afghanistan and other thorny issues related to security in both countries. Pakistan offered an extraordinary welcome to the Afghan delegation. Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the country's powerful military chief of Army staff welcomed President Ghani at Islamabad airport. The participating officials from Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the United States had also a four-nation session behind closed doors. As an important gesture of support to the Afghan peace initiative, Nawaz Sharif reiterated his previously-stated stance that the enemies of Afghanistan were enemies of Pakistan, suggesting his intent for convincing Afghan officials that he has sincerity over promises of his country.

President Ashraf Ghani also reiterated that he does not believe in blame games, trying to assure the Pakistani Prime Minister that he is once again counting on his promises over the peace efforts in Afghanistan. Ghani mentioned that there were too much skepticism in Afghanistan over Pakistan's sincerity and role in the Afghan conflict and peace process. Participating in the conference in Islamabad, President Ghani is tested for a second time his too-much publicized overture to Pakistan for the country's help in the peace process in Afghanistan. President Ashraf Ghani's Pakistan policy has been facing excruciating difficulties as it did not yield any tangible results in getting the peace process started or the violence being decreased. Well aware of the internal backlash and wary of past failures, the Afghan President seemed more cautious this time over his expectations from the government of Pakistan.

As reflected on the first day of the talks at the sidelines of the conference in Islamabad, there are immense potential for promoting a regional cooperation over resuming the peace process in Afghanistan. Notably, China's particular influence on Pakistan and the country's

interest in helping Afghanistan and Pakistan to cooperate over security issues and peace in Afghanistan is seen as a valuable opportunity for the ongoing efforts. China seem interested in playing an active role in helping the Afghan peace process and getting the two countries resolve their differences and cooperate for their security and stability. Both Pakistan and Afghanistan knows well this opportunity and the need to work closely with the United States and China to reach common grounds over security issues and peace in Afghanistan. Both the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan need to integrate their approaches regarding the war and peace efforts in Afghanistan with an international and regional cooperation for bringing peace and stability in the region.

However, there are also conflicting policies regarding the conflict in Afghanistan among the regional players participating in the conference in Islamabad. Iran's foreign minister Jawad Zarif expressed concerns of an emerging Islamic State in Afghanistan as the warring factions of the Taliban are fighting each other. Iran seems to be more concerned with the emergence of the so-called Islamic State while all militant groups are existential threats to the government of Afghanistan. On the other hand, India perceives all militant groups a long-term threat for its interests and the stability of the region. While the United States is gradually pulling back from the Afghanistan conflict and becoming more receptive to participation of the Taliban in a political process in the future. In the meantime, the emergence of the Islamic State group has also become a concern for the United States.

However, there is a common understanding among a majority of the regional players and world powers about the need for improving stability and security in the region and particularly in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Whether the regional conference in Islamabad will result to a concrete action for promoting stability in the region and supporting the peace process in Afghanistan or not depends on Pakistan and Afghanistan's determination to seek a regional cooperation over peace and stability in the region. Afghanistan and Pakistan have now a remarkable shared understanding of what is needed for improving security in both countries and ending the conflict in Afghanistan. What the two countries also need is to seek a common ground on the future of the Taliban and other militant groups and their integration with the political process in the country. The two countries should recognize areas where cooperation between the two countries fail and progresses stall. They need to work on these areas to prevent any possible deterioration of relations and possible collapse of cooperation in the future.

The 'Heart of Asia' conference in Islamabad is a unique forum for promoting a regional consensus on promoting peace and stability in the region focused on helping the peace process in Afghanistan. There are potential capacity with the regional politics to help peace and stability in the region and Afghanistan.

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The Holy Month is Approaching!

By Muhammad Rasool

As the month of the birth of our Holy Prophet (PBUH) is approaching, it seems like a perfect occasion to revisit some of the good qualities of our Holy Prophet (PBUH) as some so-called extremists are defaming the name of this religion that was meant to bring ease into the lives of people and was called 'the religion of peace'. The life of our Holy Prophet (PBUH) is full of such stories and events when he left behind lessons of forgiveness, kindness and good deeds by his strong character. Some of them are:

In the beginning years of Islam, when tribes from different corners of Arab gathered in Makkah, he used to visit the camps of tribes incessantly and invited them towards good deeds and to quit the way of disbelief and cruelty. They did not listen to him, and made fun of his words but he never got angry or disappointed or said anything to them, he just continued his work of preaching.

Once a companion caught the baby birds from a nest and their mother started crying and flying around the man with her babies. When Holy Prophet (PBUH) came to know about it, he got really disturbed and ordered the baby birds to be replaced immediately in their nests and advised the people to be sympathetic towards all the creatures including the animals. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) loved his grandsons a lot and used to play with them. They loved most to sit on his back and play horse-riding. A Bedouin came and exclaimed with surprise that how he was able to love the children so much as he was never able to love them like this. To this our Holy Prophet (PBUH) said, "What can I do if you have got a heart void of any love?"

Every year, when the fresh fruit of new season arrived, first of all our Holy Prophet (PBUH) used to share it with the children. When he used to come while riding his animal, he used to make sit a child with him and would give him a ride. Life of our most kind Prophet (PBUH) is full of such examples. When the Holy Prophet (PBUH) was ordered to invite the kingdoms of the world towards a religion of peace and success, he sent them letters. This shows how much he used to give importance for education. Similarly, when the prisoners of war (Ghazwa-e-Badr) were brought, he put a simple condition for their release. He ordered that every prisoner should teach a Muslim to read and write and then he would be free. In time when prisoners were immediately killed or sold as slaves in the market, this kind treatment was really inspiring and astonishing to all.

It was also his saying that acquisition of knowledge has been made compulsory to all the Muslims; men and women.

Whenever his daughter visited him, he would stand up for her, make her sit in his place and showed extreme regard and importance to her. Our Holy Prophet (PBUH) always treated every woman in the gentlest way and prohibited the men from depriving them of their rights and ordered them to be polite with their wives and family members. Patience and tolerance of Holy Prophet (PBUH) won the hearts of thousands of disbelievers and they entered the safe and peaceful circle of Islam. When our Holy Prophet (PBUH) visited Ta'if where he was showered in his blood and he was sitting under a tree, injured and tired that angel Gabriel came to him and asked his permission to crush the town between the two mountains and punish all the inhabitants

but the kind Holy Prophet (PBUH) did not permit this and prayed for them. Similarly, when he entered Makkah after the victory and when he was in position to punish everyone who had made him leave his town and who had not let go any chance to harm him and his companions, he declared a general pardon for all. He also pardoned those who had involved in conspiracies in killing many of his followers and close relatives or friends. If we make a thorough research, we come to find that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) never supported or initiated any war. Muslims always defended themselves against the vicious intentions and attacks of disbelievers but never started any war. For instance, in the war of Badr, Quraish of Makkah came out of their city to destroy the Muslims and they were left with no other option except to come out of Madina to defend themselves. Similarly, the Pact of Hudaibia is an example when our Holy Prophet (PBUH) accepted all the unfair conditions of disbelievers just to avoid any kind of conflict and sustain the peace. There was an agreement between Muslims and the Jews of Madina not to do anything against each other but the Jews were always stealthily busy in conspiring against Muslims and make associations with their enemies. Such circumstances were tolerated for a long time and when left with no other option, they were ordered to leave their places. They had full authority to take with them whatever they wished. Even in today's enlightened and democratic era, we do not have any such example of treatment of enemy.

Similarly, when a Muslim soldier killed a Non-Muslim soldier when he had accepted Islam seeing the death close to him, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) admonished him for this act. Today, we see that hundreds of innocents are killed without any regard or concern and there is no accountability. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) never liked that he should be given any superior treatment and when he was passing by some people who stood up in his honor, he prohibited them from doing so. He took part in all the works of society like a common man. When the mosque of Quba was being constructed, he worked with common men and did every work like others did.

It was him who taught us how to best serve the guests. He would feed the guest with the best food available at home and would fan him at night so that the guest should not be disturbed by the heat.

Similarly, he had ordered the government officials to give extra importance and respect to the chiefs of tribes. He was well-aware of the human psychology even 15 centuries ago.

But he always liked to sit in the company of poor and less-privileged. He used to treat them with utmost care and honor to sustain their self-respect. The life of Holy Prophet (PBUH) is full of such stories and events that make our hearts full of respect and love towards him. But I would like to remind one small point to our youth; you cannot love the Holy Prophet (PBUH) with writing and sharing his sayings on social websites. If you do love him, you should better read in depth to know about his other unique and kind qualities and then try to adopt them in your lives. Then you would be able to establish your love to the best of prophets on the basis of knowledge and understanding and not on mere sentimentalism.

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