

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERATION OF
BELIEVERS THAT MUST REMAIN IN OUR FOCUS**



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First Published: July, 2019

Published by
SADAQATU TAYYIBATUN FOUNDATION
Post Office Box 2630,
Minna, Nigeria.

www.sadtayyfoundation.org

INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. Perfect Peace and Blessings be upon His Messenger, his household, his companions and all believers who strive in the same single, straight, middle and right course.

In this third booklet, the attempt is to outline the central characteristics that define the framework of the generation of the Messenger of Allah, and is the best, for reference.

Individual believers, our groups and especially leaders must avoid not fitting into this. And the best stepping stones are the parents and youths.

The standard for reference or sources remain the same.

I pray that this effort will ignite the taste for reviving the standards of best livelihood that we have either veered away from or are re-defining, to our own detriment.

Believers and the Ummah should be able to revolutionize the culture of mankind for the prosperity of all.

May Allah aid our sincere and consistent efforts.

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THE GENERATION OF BELIEVERS FOR REFERENCE

All praise be to Allah (SWT), Lord of the worlds, who has blessed mankind with a completed guidance, after which the choice is between guidance and straying.

Narrated Tariq: Abdullah said, “The best talk is Allah’s Book (Qur’an) and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad (SAW)”.

This is the Book;
In it is guidance sure, without doubt,
To those who fear Allah.

Qur’an 2: 2.

By the Qur’an,
Full of Wisdom
Thou art indeed
One of the Messengers,
On a Straight Way.
It is a revelation
Sent down by (Him),
The Exalted in Might,
Most Merciful.

Qur’an 36: 2 - 5.

The generation of Muhammad is therefore the best, because of the favour of complete mercy or guidance.

Narrated Abdullah bin Umar: I heard Allah’s Messenger while he was standing on the pulpit, saying, “The remaining period of your stay (on the earth) in comparison to the nations before you, is like the period between the Asr prayer and sunset. The people of the Torah were given the Torah and they acted upon it till midday, and then they were worn out, and were given for their labour, one

Qirat each. Then the people of the Gospel were given the Gospel and they acted upon it till the time of Asr prayer, and then they were worn out and were given (for their labour), one Qirat each. Then you people were given the Qur'an and you acted upon it till sunset and so you were given two Qirat each (double the reward of previous nations)". Then people of the Torah said, 'O our Lord! These people have done a little labour (much less than we) but have taken a greater reward'. Allah said, 'Have I withheld anything from your reward?' They said, 'No'. Then Allah said, 'That is My Favour which I bestow on whom I wish'".

This Favour is uniquely for every member of mankind who submits to Allah and His Messenger since he received the Qur'an to the dead end of world, when it will be folded up before Resurrection and Judgement. What stands the Ummah out is, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil according to the Qur'an and the livelihood of His Messenger, Muhammad (SAW).

And since he lived the Guidance among mankind, his particular generation stands out as the best for FINAL reference. We therefore have the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah and his companions.

Narrated Abdullah: The Prophet (SAW) said, "The best people are those of my generation, and then those who will come after them (the next generation), and then those who will come after them (i.e. the next generation), and then after them, there will come people whose witness will precede their oaths, and whose oaths will precede their witness".

For the benefit of all doubt, the ordinary understanding from this is that Allah (SAW) is the Greatest. He created Adam, the father of mankind in His glorious image and favours him with being His vicegerent on earth. He has accordingly given utmost protection to the integrity of man, by prohibiting his reproduction outside wedlock and the taking of his life, except in accordance with what is consistent with Him. This places adultery, disobedience to parents and murder as

forefront great sins after the greatest sin of apostasy. And the sanction for each of them, when established, is execution. It amounts to cleansing the Ummah of the worst filth and upholding the purity and Unity of Allah (SWT). And the spectacular status of this generation was logically, sensibly and necessarily two-faced. The first is that they sincerely and consistently stuck to the guidance, the rules, in keeping the Ummah clean and pure, by applying the sanctions as enjoined. The other face is that, they struggled or fought with their lives in the ordered holy wars. In consequence, many were martyred and the enemies of Allah were punished. This is the root of the two-way reward for the believers who fought. They either got the booty or were called upon by Allah. This is intelligently why the history of this generation is mostly centred on the ordinary physical man and less on what he has acquired in the world. The topmost emphasis is on his relationship with Allah through prayers and kindness to fellow believers and mankind. Allah was the primary and tertiary focus and commitment. And because of the absolute truth of this and the logical and necessary status, Muhammad (SAW) the Messenger of Allah (SWT) taught that, **IF THE ENTIRE WORLD AND ITS CONTENT WERE AS VALUABLE AS THE WING OF A MOSQUITO, ALLAH WOULD NOT HAVE GRANTED IT FOR THE COMFORT OF UNBELIEVERS.** Whatever is in this world and regardless of how dazzling it may appear, is equally available to unbelievers and believers, no matter how much ignorants may deny. And we are now commonly roped together by both seeming good and evil. Usury is one colourful one. Money is one chameleon by acquisition, multiplication and use. The abolition of capital punishment is on course. Democracy is another formless smoke, under which **ANYTHING** can **eventually** become admitted. And the best model for mankind, Muhammad (SAW) avoided the world while in it, rather than in isolation. At the end of his life, he left behind the Qur'an and his Sunnah.

It is therefore too ambitious to want to recreate this best in most societies. May be in special isolation by volunteers. But no one can claim prophethood or play it under a different name. What will be admissible will be the Mahdi, after the appearance of Dajjal. May Allah guard believers against him.

Thus, it is wrong and wasteful to guard anyone against evaluation, who did not belong to the pillars or flag bearers of these generations. Indeed it will be required to be consistent with the generation of the Messenger of Allah. And the rightly guided successors have an order which is consistent with the personal practice of Muhammad (SAW) RATHER THAN FOR ITSELF OR WITH ITSELF.

Narrated Abu Sa'id: The Prophet (SAW) said, "Do not abuse my companions for if any one of you spent gold equal to Uhud (in Allah's Cause) it would not be equal to a mud or even half mud spent by them".

This settles the difference and superiority of the companions of Muhammad (SAW) against any claim of right knowledge and discipline of the truth. The Ummah of Muhammad (SAW) is one. Special and intelligent care must be taken to ensure consistency – as against what is fanciful, attractive or inviting.

Narrated Hudhaifa bin Al-Yaman: Once I said, 'O Allah's Messenger! We were in ignorance and in evil and Allah has bestowed upon us the present good, will there be any evil after this good?' He said, "Yes, but it would be tainted with *Dakhan* (i.e. a little evil)". I asked, 'What will its *Dakhan* be?' He said, "There will be some people who will lead (people) according to principles other than my tradition. You will see their actions and disapprove of them". I said, 'Will there be any evil after that good?' He said, "Yes, there will be some people who will invite others to the doors of Hell, and whoever accepts their invitation to it will be thrown into it (by them)". I said, 'O Allah's Messenger! Describe those people to us'. He said, "They will belong to us and speak our language". I asked, 'What do you order me to do if such a thing should take place in my life?' He said,

“Adhere to the group of Muslims and their Chief”. I asked, ‘If there is neither a group (of Muslims) nor a Chief (what shall I do)?’ He said, “Keep away from all those different sects, even if you have to bite (i.e. eat) the root of a tree, till you meet Allah while you are still in that state”.

And after this, what is outstanding that is not clear?

EXAMPLES OF MODELS IN THE GENERATION OF MUHAMMAD (SAW)

The only and best source of knowing a good reference other than the Messenger of Allah himself, is from himself. Narrated Abu Sa’id Al-Khudri: The Prophet (SAW) said, “The person who has favoured me most of all, both with his company and wealth is Abu Bakr. If I were to take a Khalil other than my Lord, I would have taken Abu Bakr as such, but (what relates us) is the Islamic brotherhood and friendliness”. This is clearly consistent with his guidance – Narrated Anas: The Prophet (SAW) said, “None of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, his children and all mankind”.

After Abu Bakr, there is Umar. Narrated Abdullah bin Hisham: We were with the Prophet (SAW) and he was holding the hand of Umar bin Al-Khattab. Umar said to him, ‘O Allah’s Messenger! You are dearer to me than everything except my own self’. The Prophet said, “No, by Him in Whose Hand my soul is, (you will not have complete faith) till I am dearer to you than your own self”. Then Umar said to him, ‘However, now, by Allah, you are dearer to me than my own self’. The Prophet (SAW) said, “Now, O Umar, (now you are a believer)”.

Narrated Sa’d bin Waqqas: Umar bin Al-Khattab asked permission of Allah’s Messenger to see him while some Quraishi women were sitting with him, talking to him and asking him for more expenses, raising their voices above the voice of Allah’s Messenger. When Umar asked permission to enter, the women quickly

put on their veil. Allah's Messenger allowed him to enter and Umar came in while Allah's Messenger was smiling. Umar said, 'O Allah's Messenger! May Allah always keep you smiling'. The Prophet said, "These women who have been here, roused my wonder, for as soon as they heard your voice, they quickly put on their veils". Umar said, 'O Allah's Messenger! You have more right to be feared by them than I'. Then Umar addressed the women saying, 'O enemies of yourselves! You fear me more than you do Allah's Messenger?' They said, 'Yes, for you are harsher and sterner than Allah's Messenger'. Then Allah's Messenger said, "O Ibn Al-Khattab! By Him in Whose Hands my life is! Never does Satan find you going on a way, but he takes another way other than yours".

On the contrary, the leaders we have today, have so much little faith that, they are afraid, shy away or resist supporting those who symbolize the right knowledge and discipline of the truth. This is how bankrupt the Ummah is today, as far as the ability to build the truth is concerned. They cannot optimize the sacrifice of what they have and rightly so because, the knowledgeable supporters incline them to either what can attract praises for them or safe-guarded charity.

As for Uthman bin Affan Abi Amr Al-Qurashi, the Prophet (SAW) said, "He who digs the well of Ruma will have Paradise". Uthman dug it. He also said, "He who equips the army of Al-Usra (i.e. *Ghazwa* of Tabuk) will have Paradise". Uthman equipped it. This is very much unlike the lieutenants or supporters of leaders of today, who will not be genuinely available for service but for what they will exploit the position of the leader to get.

Like Uthman displayed, Ali was trustworthy. Narrated Sahl bin Sa'd: That he heard the Prophet on the day (of the battle) of Khaibar saying, "I will give the flag to a person at whose hands Allah will grant victory". So, the companions of the Prophet got up, wishing eagerly to see to whom the flag will be given, and everyone of them wished to be given the flag. But the Prophet (SAW) asked for

Ali. What leader can comfortably and freely place a goodly burden on a member of the Ummah today without the bearer expecting some patronage? Late Abubakar Mahmoud Gumi did it with late Shehu Musa Yar'aduwa in respect of the National mosque Abuja.

Narrated Al-Ma'ruri Ranadha: I met Abu Dhar who was wearing a cloak, and his slave too, was wearing a similar one. I asked about the reason for it. He replied: 'I abused a person by calling his mother with bad names'. The Prophet said to me, "O Abu Dhar! Did you abuse him by calling his mother with bad names? You still have some characteristics of ignorance. Your slaves are your brothers and Allah has put them under your command. So whoever has a brother under his command should feed him of what he eats and dress him of what he wears. Do not ask them to do things beyond their capacity and if you do so, then help them".

While this does not prohibit the provision of defined corporate wears, I have observed a Chief Executive of a Federal organization and a Governor of a state who take serious personal offense with their employees who dress well. They are particular about the kind of cap they wear.

Narrated Anas bin Malik: The Prophet (SAW) missed Thabit bin Qais for a period (so he enquired about him). A man said, 'O Allah's Messenger! I will bring you his news'. So he went to Thabit and found him sitting in his house and bowing his head. The man said to Thabit, 'What is the matter with you?' Thabit replied that it was an evil affair, for he used to raise his voice above the voice of the Prophet and so all his good deeds had been annulled, and he considered himself as one of the people of the Fire. Then the man returned to the Prophet and told him that Thabit had said, so-and-so. (Musa bin Anas) said: The man returned to Thabit with great glad tidings. The Prophet (SAW) said to the man, "Go back to him and say to him: You are not from the people of Hell Fire, but from the people of Paradise". Today, the model leaders do not ask after good companions. They

may even deny them or at least refuse them access when they ask for one. And they are believers.

Narrated Abu Huraira: At the time of the Fajr prayer the Prophet (SAW) asked Bilal, “Tell me of the best deed you did after embracing Islam, for I heard your footsteps in front of me in Paradise”. Bilal replied, ‘I did not do anything worth mentioning except that whenever I performed ablution during the day or night, I prayed after that ablution as much as was written for me’. This is submission without supervision, voluntarily. This is what most lieutenants of leaders are unable or refuse to do, with their primary assignments. In consequence, leadership is made more difficult, complicated and even risky, but fools seek for it at the cost of all resources and their lives.

On contemplation over oneself, narrated Ibrahim: Once a meal was brought to AbdulRahman bin Auf and he was fasting. He said, ‘Mustab bin Umar was martyred and he was better than I and was shrouded in his *Burd* and when his head was covered with it, his legs became bare, and when his legs were covered his head got uncovered. Hamza was martyred and was better than I. Now the worldly wealth have been bestowed upon us. No doubt, I fear that the rewards of my deeds might have been given earlier in this world’. Then he started weeping and left his food. It is not uncommon among believers today, to have criers for the conditions of the Ummah who will return to their comfort den and remain nonchalant, for as long as the tenure lasts. Is it not an embarrassing shame?

Narrated Ishaq Abdullah bin Al-Talha: Abu Talha said to Allah’s Messenger, ‘O Allah’s Messenger! Allah, the Blessed, the Superior says: By no means shall you attain righteousness, unless you spend (in charity) of that which you love. And no doubt, Bairuha garden is the most beloved of all my property to me. So I want to give it in charity in Allah’s Cause. I expect its reward from Allah. O Allah’s Messenger! Spend it where Allah makes you think it feasible’. On that Allah’s

Messenger said, “Bravo! It is useful property. I have heard what you have said (O Abu Talha), and I think it would be proper if you gave it to your kith and kin”. Abu Talha said, ‘I will do so, O Allah’s Messenger’. Then Abu Talha distributed that garden amongst his relatives and his cousins. Still on the contrary, today, the well to do in our generation are very avoiding of what will not bear their name or be seen and pronouncedly associated with their name. This is why building of mosques is so rampant and checking the unity of the Ummah and consistent building of common right knowledge and discipline of the truth.

At community level, narrated Anas: The Prophet (SAW) said (at the time of building the Mosque), “O Bani An-Najjar! Suggest to me a price for your garden”. They replied, ‘We do not ask its price except from Allah’. What a beautiful generation. Today commitments in the service of Allah are both cumbersome and avoided by those who ask and those who can give. But why? Both parties are not in clear sympathy for each other with knowledge. It is like a gamble trade.

Narrated Anas: On the day (of the battle) of the Trench, the Ansar were saying, ‘We are those who have sworn allegiance to Muhammad for Jihad (forever) as long as we live’. The Prophet replied to them, “O Allah! There is no life except the life of the Hereafter. So honour the Ansar and emigrants with Your Generosity”. What can be better than this?

Therefore, it is not uncommon or illegal to hear believers carelessly or loosely praying for Jannatul **firdaus**, as if it can be awarded by the wish of men. The lousy question is: can’t Allah award to all? This is not consistent with the Justness of Allah. Muhammad (SAW) specifically cautioned against praising or certifying any believer. For that reason, pronouncing the best even by a text, is not goodly enough. It will really appear to be diplomatic escapism or share unseriousness. Believers should be more serious. This is because even between us, private

employers will not accept a top heavy management set up and public organizations that have carelessly grown to be so are the most corrupt and least efficient. If everyone that is free to become the president of Nigeria because he is an adult, a Nigerian, is in a registered political party and possess both the resources and educational qualifications to contest, are to show the interest, we will not appear to be sane. Are we not even complaining with the number of political parties? Moderation informed by sincerity is closer to the shyness that is part of our iman.

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR BUILDING THE UMMAH

Narrated Abu Musa: The Prophet said, “A faithful believer to a faithful believer is like the bricks of a wall, enforcing each other”. While (saying that) the Prophet (SAW) clasped his hands by interlacing his fingers.

Narrated Anas: The Prophet said, “None of you will have faith till he wishes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself”.

Narrated Abdullah bin Amr: The Prophet said, “A Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands”.

Narrated Aisha: The Prophet said, “Jibril continued to recommend me about treating the neighbours kindly and politely so much that I thought he would order me to make them as my heirs”.

Narrated Ayyub Al-Ansari: Allah’s Messenger said, “It is not lawful for a man to desert his brother Muslim for more than three nights. (It is unlawful for them that) when they meet one of them turns his face away from the other, and the other turns his face from the former, and the better of the two will be the one who greets the other first”.

None of the above requires money to be committed. However, beyond the scarcity and beyond fellow ordinary believers, it is common place for the leaders to hunt each other or subordinates down. Across both is evil prayer or plotting against each other. But the Ummah cannot prosper in this way and the blessings of Allah cannot be easily attracted in this way. When believers find and rest comfortably in tribalism or nepotism, one wonders, where the faith is hung. Even unbelievers have come up with democracy and patriotism.

When it comes to resources benefits, narrated Abu Huraira: I heard Allah's Messenger saying, "Whoever is pleased that he be granted more wealth and that his lease of life be prolonged, then he should keep good relations with his kith and kin".

This is not a license to restrict your favours to only your family members, with well-earned resources. But because it is common place the extremity of denial to kith and kin that is foolish is presented as holy. In the end, it inevitably breeds thieves and dishonest people all around. And the real pretender gets eventually exposed as fake.

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "The one who looks after a widow or a poor person is like a *Mujahid* (warrior) who fights for Allah's Cause, or like him who performs prayers all the night and fasts all the day". Unfortunately, in our setting, widows trade with themselves, just as it is fashionable to become matrons. And 'orphans' from Zina are giving those from clear Sunnah a wicked competition. Thus the practice of this injunction is not having the same definition with the standard of Islam. So, the status envisaged is very narrowly available. Otherwise, narrated Sahl: Allah's Messenger said, "I and the one who looks after an orphan will be like this in Paradise (showing his middle and index fingers and separating them)".

And Islam is not against non-believers because there is no compulsion in submitting to Allah and His Messenger. Narrated Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari: The Prophet said, "Give food to the hungry, pay visit to the sick and release (set free) the one in captivity (by paying his ransom)". In modern times it can be by paying off the debts of a fellow believer. But many will turn away from a brother, even if he will get jailed for default.

In summary, narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales; and do not look for the other's faults and do not spy, and do not be jealous of one another, and do not desert (cut your relation with) one another, and do not hate one another: and O Allah's worshippers! Be brothers (as Allah has ordered you)!"

Narrated Abdullah: Allah's Messenger said, "Abusing a Muslim is an evil-doing, and killing him is *Kufr* (disbelieve)".

What leader, especially political has thought, is thinking or will admit and commit his take off from **distancing** from great sins? Or does the constitution of this country provide for freedom of religion by ignoring religious provisions? Or are religious provisions harmful and destructive or must they apply to non-faithfuls? Rather believers are fighting each other by name and location while feasting together in the prohibitions by the same God.

MARRIAGE

Allah has provided for the believers, marriage as the standard means for reproduction of its members. Indeed the Messenger of Allah has enjoined believers to reproduce themselves, to boost the size of his community and by implication those who bear the flag of the right knowledge and discipline of the truth, on the Day of Resurrection and Judgement.

Narrated Ali: Allah's Messenger prohibited *Al-Mut'a* marriage and the eating of donkey's meat in the year of Khaibar battle.

Narrated Sa'id bin Jubair: Ibn Abbas asked me, 'Are you married?' I replied, 'No'. He said, 'Marry, for the best person of this (Muslim) nation (i.e. Muhammad) of all other Muslims, had the largest number of wives'.

If ye fear that ye shall not
Be able to deal justly
With the orphans,
Marry women of your choice
Two, or three, or four;
But if ye fear that ye shall not
Be able to deal justly (with them),
Then only one.

Qur'an 4: 3.

This injunction was revealed after the battle of Uhud. Given the consequence of many widows and orphans, arising from the martyrdom of many, believers were guided and permitted with justice. Marrying a widow will ordinarily amount to admitting her children of the marriage severed from, as a result of the war. Today, how many men are inclined to marry matrons, before talking of widows?

The guidance here is that the Ummah members should as much as possible strive for justice. But we are now escapists for real inordinate greed. We have shifted justice to the realm of material things. We have opened the doors of fornication, adultery, prostitution, single parenthood, that are 'cheaper'. The price is already on us and the dividend is mounting. The enemies of Allah and His Messenger are developing their desires and stations from practices to diction. We now have polyamory applied to polygamy that was first bastardized by admitting polyandry. And we are the most pronounceful of *Firdaus*.

How many leaders who are believers and receive loud commendation have more than one wife? How many among them lower their gaze or observe the hijab? Most of them are worse than the description of the Prophet (SAW) that are contrary to the Sunnah. Is it the hands that are of men and voices of women? Is it the nakedness of women in the end times? Is it the clothing that is revealing of the beauty of the woman? Is the camel in the house with its tail outside? If the political leaders are afraid or ashamed of the Sunnah, of what impact are the scholars? In Islam or the Ummah of Muhammad (SAW), is scholarship isolated from practice, knowledge from discipline or the political, social, economic, from the spiritual? And when those to be favoured with exemption from questioning and the shade of Allah on the Day of Judgement are mentioned, we ask to be one of them? What logic and sense is in this ambition when we are strongly and popularly committed to degrading the Sunnah? Can we even observe the limitation of the fornicator and adulterer marrying only their types? Can we count how many marriages are openly built on Zina?

This is the character of our generation as opposed to the model generation. This is the foundation for understanding the challenges of our generation and the Ummah, for any believer, individual, group, leader, that cares.

On the contrary, because of the inordinate greed of our inclination, having children is considered absolutely necessary for fulfilment in life. But that is an extreme choice that is neither convenient nor godly. Aisha (RA), with whom the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said half of the religion can be obtained from, had no child. But ignorance and determination on the path of Satan can divert a believer's commitment of his or her time and resources to other than beneficial things in this world and the hereafter. It can even lead to satanic aids or solutions. Adopting questionable 'orphans' from orphanages is one, against orphans from among relatives or from neighbours.

JUSTICE

Justice is so critical and central, in the life wire of the Ummah, that, the enjoinder is in the form of warnings to the leaders.

Al-Hassan said, “Allah has enjoined an obligation on all the rulers that they should not follow the lust of their hearts and should not be afraid of the people and should not sell Allah’s verse for a low price”. Do not Scholars who are believers pray for non-believers and believers who are hypocrites and oppressors, for good, money, appointments, awards and whatever?

Narrated Ma’qil: I heard Allah’s Messenger saying, “Any man whom Allah has given the authority of ruling some people and he does not look after them in an honest manner, will never feel even the smell of Paradise”. Narrated Ma’qil: Allah’s Messenger said, “If any ruler having the authority to rule Muslim subjects dies while he is deceiving them, Allah will forbid Paradise for him”. In our experience, it is not uncommon for a leader to keep his subject in suspense or in waiting until he loses hope or dies. May be such a leader miscalculates that he will not be accountable for such or knows when he will die, and can strategize to solve the problem before he dies.

This is beyond the standard level of every believer being a shepherd and that every shepherd will account for his trust. And the beginning is in the family. But we are avoiding the trials of justice at the family level and crave for justice at the community or society level. It is as escapist as a woman who cares to have a child or more but not marriage. Only a breeding machine is akin to that, animal farming experiences.

LOVE

Following or really intertwined with marriage is love, the foundation for the care or kindness to fellow believers, fellow humans.

Between husband and wife, Aisha is a model. Narrated Aisha: ‘I applied perfume to the Prophet (SAW) with my own hands when he wanted to assume the state of Ihram and I also perfumed him at Mina before he departed from there (to perform Tawaf-al-Ifada)’. Narrated Urwa: Aisha told me that, she used to comb the hair of Allah’s Messenger.

The most common abominable practice today, is for women believers to perfume themselves for their own outings. Indeed, they do it even in the month of Ramadan along with ignorant men.

Narrated Aisha: The Prophet (SAW) used to offer his night prayer while I was sleeping across in his bed. Whenever he intended to offer the witr prayer, he used to wake me up and I would offer the witr prayer too. This is now growing from rare to difficult, to burdensome to unreasonable. We are getting more and more programmed into the night, with meetings, socializing or entertainment.

Narrated Al-Aswad bin Yazid: I asked Aisha, “What did the Prophet use to do at home?” She said, “He used to work for his family, and when he heard the Adhan (call for the prayer), he would go out”. In our history, it is a big issue to cook or more still, to cook well, for feeding the family. Indeed it is not uncommon to have an ignorant and hypocritical woman believer to ask or try to institute how the husband should feed the family. This can be the case even if that is not the practice in her father’s house.

Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah: My father died and left seven or nine girls and I married a matron. Allah’s Messenger said to me, “O Jabir! Have you married?” I said, ‘Yes’. He said, “A virgin or a matron?” I replied, ‘A matron’. He said, “Why not a virgin, so that you might play with her and she with you, and you might amuse her and she amuse you?” I said, ‘Abdullah (my father) died and left girls, and I dislike to marry a girl like them, so I married a lady (matron) so that she may look after them’. On that he said, “May Allah bless you” or “That is good”.

In our case, it not uncommon for a brother to resist such proposal to shade the children of his brother. But there is no compulsion.

This is love, for self, for a partner, for others and for the Ummah for the sake of Allah (SWT). This is full blown belongingness. Narrated Abu Musa: It was said to the Prophet (SAW), ‘A man may love some people but he cannot catch up with their good deeds’. The Prophet said, “Everyone will be with those whom he loves”. It is encouraging to try to one’s utmost and leave the matter to Allah. For instance, if you love the station of Bilal as inferred from the question the Prophet put to him, then keep doing like he responded. If you love Abubakar for his wholesome submission, then partner with a believer who upholds the right knowledge and discipline of the truth with your company and wealth. And you have all the sides of the Prophet (SAW) to work on.

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, “Were I not afraid that it would be hard on my followers, I would order them to use the Siwak (as obligatory, for cleaning of teeth)”. Do not mistake that the booming businesses of dental care are intended to promote the Sunnah.

Narrated Aisha: The Prophet (SAW) used to like to start from the right side on wearing shoes, combing his hair and cleaning or washing himself and on doing everything else.

Narrated Abu Qatada Al-Aslami: Allah’s Messenger said, “If anyone of you enters a mosque, he should pray two raka’ats before sitting”. Indeed when you return from a travel, the same Sunnah applies.

Narrated Abu Barza: Allah’s Messenger disliked to sleep before Isha prayer and to talk after it. This is very contrary to the tradition of meeting for whatever, in the wee hours of the night by leaders, that is very conventional in our generation.

Narrated Ibn Abbas: The Prophet (SAW) embraced me and said, “O Allah! Teach him (the knowledge of) the Book (Qur’an)”. In our corruption, this generation has in circulation, a questionable, unauthentic record of Tafsir associated with him. And from that, a world of knowledge and society is being built.

GUIDE POSTS FOR LIVELIHOOD OF BELIEVERS

The Ummah is made of families and each family is made up of individuals. These individuals are the parents along with the children that have attained the age of answering for their deeds before Allah then those entrusted to them who are younger. Every believer is therefore for himself before the leaders, who are accountable for themselves and every one of all of those they have been entrusted with authority over.

The first post is that of association. And this must not be muddled up with peer groups association or belongingness. In real life, what should be focused on is association between adults who are believers. If this is missed or obscured by any diversion that pretends to be knowledge, it will be unrealistic, misleading and incline or lead towards the generation of some puristic but false peer group livelihood. The foundation for association must be qualitative, of the attributes of the parties as against chronological age. This is important for emphasis because, that should be the direction.

Narrated Abu Musa: The Prophet (SAW) said, “The example of a good pious companion and an evil one is that of a person carrying musk and another blowing a pair of bellows. The one who is carrying musk will either give you some perfume as a present or you will buy some from him, or you will get a good smell from him, but the one who is blowing a pair of bellows will either burn your clothes or you will get a bad smell from him”.

Consequently, if association is not across ages with positive superior attributes, how do we expect that there will be a smooth and positive transition from one generation to another? Inevitably, the younger or less developed will self-believe that its understanding is right or even the correct one. This is the origin of the gaps in inter-generational differences. Where a family leaves its young ones to what structured school curriculum can provide, you cannot fail to get brilliant examination results but the children can be uncultured. This is common even among the elite, especially those who have command of above average resources. In the end, the children will grow as well fed cattle. And you can only imagine the eventual impact a pool of such creatures will make in the society. When they become leaders, the self-sowed indiscipline will fruit as many misfortunes as the chance of good will permit. In our society today, the curse is that our public schools are deteriorating and the leaders are sending their children to schools with clear or unclear or contradictory orientation with their beliefs, with the assurance of good grades, within or outside the borders of Nigeria. But even if the school plans to give good orientation, it has to scramble from among products of the old ones before the deterioration of the public schools of the confused ones, before the 'new' generation products.

And for believers, what is the guidance on the attributes for association? Narrated Abdullah: Allah's Messenger said, "Do not wish to be like anybody except in two cases: The case of a man whom Allah has given wealth and he spends it in the right way, and that of a man whom Allah has given religious wisdom (i.e. Qur'an and Sunnah) and he gives his verdicts according to it and teaches it".

The best example is with the Messenger of Allah. Narrated Abu Huraira: And no doubt our Muhajir (emigrants) brothers used to be busy in the market with their business (bargains) and our Ansari brothers used to be busy with their property (agriculture). But I (Abu Huraira) used to stick to Allah's Messenger contented

with what will fill my stomach and I used to attend that which they used not to attend and I used to memorize that which they used not to memorize.

Similarly, Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah: We were with Allah's Messenger collecting Al-Kabath at Mar-Az-Zahram. The Prophet said, "Collect the black ones, for they are better". Someone said, '(O Allah's Messenger!) Have you ever shepherd sheep?' He said, "There has been no Prophet but has shepherd them". It is noteworthy in this trade, that, it depends on Allah directly. The rains and land and good weather. The connection is far and opposite to a modern trade like in forex. Indeed, modern banks have avoided the terminology of usury but practically excused themselves from the consequences of investment by a customer given its loan. That is the total business of the customer, and both the principal and anticipated interest is further secured by a collateral. Why will resources not remain in the same hands and circle, except those supported by them?

If families and groups and society will revolve around these two guidelines, it is certain that, whatever problem will befall them, will be kaffara, will cleanse their sins because it will be from Allah. But the wealthy either have questionable means or are closed to admitting association. And for the knowledgeable, the schools certified ones with formal certificates are battling with those who have learned with discipline from scholars. In between are their unripe lieutenants and apostles fanning the bellows of disagreements and hatred for the ignorant.

This goes to define who is rich, the Master of riches and not the servant of riches. Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (SAW) said, "Riches does not mean, having a great amount of property, but riches is self-contentment".

Narrated Sahl bin Sa'd As-Sa'id: A man passed by Allah's Messenger and the Prophet asked a man sitting beside him, "What is your opinion about this (passer-by)?" He replied, 'This (passer-by) is from the noble class of people. By Allah, if

he should ask for a lady's hand in marriage, he ought to be given her in marriage, and if he intercedes for somebody, his intercession will be accepted'. Allah's Messenger kept quiet, and then another man passed by and Allah's Messenger asked the same man (his companion) again, "What is your opinion about this (second) one?" He said, 'O Allah's Messenger! This person is one of the poor Muslims. If he should ask a lady's hand in marriage, no one will accept him, and if he intercedes for somebody, no one will accept his intercession, and if he talks, no one will listen to his talk'. Then Allah's Messenger said, "This (poor man) is better than such a large number of the first type (i.e. rich men) as to fill the earth". Humility is absolutely an attribute of genuine integrity.

The other means of riches or wealth is in the possession of land – the free gift of Allah. Believers must beware. Narrated Salim's father: The Prophet (SAW) said, "Any person who takes a piece of land unjustly will sink down the seven earths on the Day of Resurrection". Allah forbid. What an evil trade.

The reminder and deduction from these, so far, is that every and all acquisitions cannot be possessed permanently. Nobody came with any and we shall return the way we came. If this is not taught, every death should do. So, if a believer is blessed with the trust of resources, he should be a good model for association, by giving in charity.

Narrated Abdullah: The Prophet said, "Who among you considers the wealth of his heirs dearer to him than his own wealth?" They replied, 'O Allah's Messenger! There is none among us but loves his own wealth more'. The Prophet said, "So his wealth is whatever he spends (in Allah's Cause) during his life (on good deeds) while the wealth of his heirs is whatever he leaves after his death".

Narrated Abu Huraira: A man asked the Prophet (SAW), 'O Allah's Messenger! What kind of charity is the best?' He replied, "To give in charity when you are healthy and greedy hoping to be wealthy and afraid of becoming poor. Don't

delay giving in charity till the time when you are on the death bed when you say, ‘Give so much to so-and-so and so much to so-and-so’ and at that time the property is not yours but it belongs to so-and-so (i.e. your inheritors)”.

And the best persons entitled to charity are the poor. Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (SAW) said, “The poor person is not the one who asks a morsel or two (of meals) from the others, but the poor is the one who has nothing and is ashamed to beg from others”. Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah’s Messenger said, “The poor person is not the one who goes round the people and ask them for a mouthful or two (of meals) or a date or two but the poor is that who has not enough (money) to satisfy his needs and whose condition is not known to others, that others may give him something in charity, and who does not beg of people”.

So, to the rich, how many poor people have they served? And to the leaders, how many poor people have they been reproducing? But have we not been sharing? This is our Islam against that of the model generation.

And the Messenger of Allah set an example of choice. Narrated Amr bin Al-Harith: When Allah’s Messenger died, he did not leave any Dirham or Dinar (i.e. money), a slave or a slave woman or anything else except his white mule, his arms and a piece of land which he had given in charity.

Narrated Abdul Aziz bin Rufai: Shaddad bin Ma’qil and I entered upon Ibn Abbas. Shaddad bin Ma’qil asked him, ‘Did the Prophet leave anything (besides the Qur’an)?’ He replied, “He did not leave anything except what is between the two bindings (of the Qur’an)”. Then we visited Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyya and asked him (the same question). He replied, “The Prophet (SAW) did not leave except what is between the bindings (of the Qur’an)”.

In consequence, what should define the strength of a believer, while he is alive, is utmost compliance with patience. This is because disagreement and

disappointments can ignite anger. Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Messenger said, "The strong is not the one who overcomes the people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger".

The rich should strongly and genuinely commit themselves to goodly charity. Narrated Abu Dhar: While I was walking with the Prophet in the Harra of Medina, Uhud came in sight. The Prophet (SAW) said, "O Abu Dhar! I said, '*Labaik, O Allah's Messenger!*' He said, "I would not like to have gold equal to this mountain of Uhud, unless nothing of it, not even a single Dinar of it remains with me for more than three days, except something which I will keep for repaying debts. I would have spent all of it (distributed it) amongst Allah's slaves like this, and like this, and like this". The Prophet pointed out with his hand towards his right, his left and his back (while illustrating it). He proceeded with his walk and said, "The rich are in fact the poor (little rewarded) on the Day of Resurrection except those who spend their wealth like this, and like this, and like this, to their right, left and back, but such people are few in number".

For the poor, an honourable class in Islam, as already defined above, it is more pleasant. Narrated Haritha bin Wahb: I heard Allah's Messenger saying, "Shall I tell you of the people of Paradise? They comprise every poor humble person, and if he swears by Allah to do something, Allah will fulfil it; while the people of the Fire comprise every violent, cruel arrogant person". Narrated Haritha bin Wahb Al-Khuza'i: I heard the Prophet (SAW) saying, "May I tell you of the people of Paradise? Every weak and poor obscure person whom the people look down upon but his oath is fulfilled by Allah when he takes an oath to do something. And may I inform you of the people of the Fire? They are all those violent, arrogant and stubborn people". Are the latter not more arising and fitting from among the rich and leaders?

THE AMBITIONS OF A BELIEVER

Should struggling not have some objectives? Even unbelievers who engage in cut-throat competition to satisfy their insatiable inordinate greed for this fleeting world, are directed by Satan to target objectives. And it is never in oversight of the pursuit of open evil. As for believers, whose aim is meeting Allah with the hope for gaining Paradise by Him, the ambitions are consciously defined by the following:

Remembering the Day of Resurrection and hoping for the best to follow utmost effort in compliance. Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, “The people will be gathered in three ways: (The first way will be of) those who will wish or have a hope (for Paradise) and will have a fear (of punishment); (the second batch will be those who will gather) riding two on a camel or three on a camel or ten on a camel; (the third batch) the rest of the people will be urged to gather by the Fire which will accompany them at the time of their afternoon nap and stay with them where they will spend the night, and will be with them in the morning wherever they may be then, and will be with them in the afternoon wherever they may be then”. The vision and mission of believers are clear for pursuing.

After this, is another level. Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (SAW) said, “Seven people will be shaded by Allah under His shade on the day when there will be no shade except His. They are:

- 1) A just ruler;
- 2) A young man who has been brought up in the worship of Allah (i.e. worship Allah (Alone) sincerely from his childhood);
- 3) A man whose heart is attached to the Mosque (who offers the five compulsory congregational prayers in the Mosque);

4) Two persons who love each other only for Allah's sake and they meet and part in Allah's Cause only);

5) A man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth for an illegal sexual intercourse with her and says: I am afraid of Allah;

6) A person who practices charity so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given (i.e. nobody knows how much he has given in charity);

7) A person who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes get flooded with tears.”

What a wonderful and all-available doors for believers, who care to know and obey?

And the best company. Narrated Abu Huraira: I heard Allah's Messenger saying, “From my followers there will enter Paradise a crowd, seventy thousand in number, whose faces will glitter as the moon does when it is full”.

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Messenger said, “The first batch (of people) who will enter Paradise will be (glittering) like a full moon; and those who will enter next will be (glittering) like the brightest star. Their hearts will be as if the heart of a single man, for they will have no enmity amongst themselves, and every one of them shall have two wives, each of whom will be so beautiful, pure and transparent that the marrow of the bones of their legs will be seen through the flesh. They will be glorifying Allah in the morning and evening, and will never fall ill, and they will neither blow their noses, nor spit. Their utensils will be of gold and silver, and their combs will be of gold, and the fuel used in their centres will be the aloes-wood, and their sweat will smell like musk”.