

CONSCIOUS — GENERATION

“So Where Are
You Going?”

QUR'AN [SURAH TAKWIR:26]

CONSENT:
WHETHER A SUPREME
ARBITER OF MORALITY?

**THE MORAL
DEGENERATION OF
EDUCATION**

REJECTED AND ABANDONED:
THE TRIAL OF AMBIYA



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“Let there be a group among you who call ‘others’ to goodness, encourage what is good, and forbid what is evil—it is they who will be successful.”

-QUR’AN [SURAH AAL-I-IMRAAN: 104]



ABOUT US

Morality Central is a student run initiative which aims to connect individuals with Islam. Our aim is to build a society which is upright in accordance with tenets of faith. The modern material world's focus on matter has disconnected people from their very spiritual existence and purpose. We intend to emphasise the relationship of man with his creator in order that the society as a collective whole, is able to tackle the ills of the society.

It is a fact that the Muslim community's connection with Islam and its true spirit has weakened over the years. A community, which once was the driver of social change, suffers from intellectual, moral and spiritual stagnation. Our objective is to intellectually revive the Muslim youth and empower them in order that they may embrace their identity.

Our core activities are youth-oriented which include conducting offline and online sessions, debunking myths about Islam, clarifying the Islamic perspective on controversial issues, organizing competitions, raising funds for social issues, connecting people from different parts of the world, one on one counselling and collective development.

Our ultimate vision is to build a community of Islamically oriented individuals who can contribute to the upliftment of the Muslim community in the light of Islamic values. We look forward to collaborating with Muslims from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities and professions. In pursuance of the goal of uniting the Ummah, this initiative is a drop in the ocean.

Building on this commitment, we believe our focus must move beyond mere critique. While identifying what is flawed remains important, we truly believe in moving forward by constructing alternatives rooted in the essence of Islam. Every command revealed by Allah ﷻ is inherently practical. To deny this, in our understanding, is no less than a sin. It is our duty to implement the same unapologetically.

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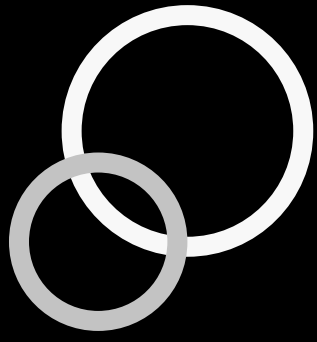
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Consent: Whether A Supreme Arbiter of Morality?

-Azaa Junaid



In law and moral philosophy, consent is not a single idea, it has several layers. Contemporary legal discourse often considers consent as the final moral arbiter. This paradigmatic and normative stance in secular law eliminates culpability from certain immoral acts on the premise of informed consent, particularly adultery, homosexuality, and prostitution, and attests no harm to them. In contrast, Islamic law considers such acts as inherently immoral, hence, they remain penal in nature and employ no weightage to consent, resulting in reproach for the supposed barbarity it sanctions against the principle of respect for an individual's autonomy. Yet the same secular legal philosophy, sociology, and public policy routinely regulate consensual acts, when their repercussions are social harm, structural exploitation, or institutional deterioration. This article argues that consent only removes duress, not necessarily guilt.[1] It highlights the need for sexual ethics that societies apply to regulate sexual anarchic behavior without theological premises.

1. Consent Removes Coercion, Not Necessarily the Guilt

Consent refers to the doing of an act with reason and deliberation. A person possesses and exercises sufficient mental capacity to make an intelligent decision and reflects consent by performing an act recommended by another. It supposes three things, a physical power, a mental power, and a free and serious use of them [3]. Under the dominance of contemporary jurisprudence [4], immoral acts generally escape legal liability [5], if carried out with one's consent. Interestingly, such justifications and exemptions are increasingly being endorsed with honor, particularly in acts paving the way to sexual anarchy. Nevertheless, this anarchy has a moral trump card of consent in modern discourse. This card is, however, not absolute from religious as well as secular paradigms.

Consent only answers one question, "*Did he act under duress?*", but it fails to answer "*Whether the act is harmful?*", "*Is it socially degenerative?*" "*Does it cause social decay?*" or "*Does it exploit the vulnerable?*" Consent determines whether something is rape, but disregards whether something is wise, moral, or socially constructive. It advocates for bodily autonomy but overlooks exploitative relationships, destabilized commitments, harm to family structure, fracturing of social trust, and emotional damage. These harms operate independently of consent.

Based on these foundations, not only the religious dictates but also the secular postulates reject the notion of consent being the supreme principle to gauge morality and legality of an act, for every society tends to fortify its social fabric. What delineates the two is that while the Islamic law functions on coherent principles, the secular law operates on incoherent principles, bringing about jurisprudential dissonance and disparity.

2. The Harm Principle Beyond Individual Autonomy

The harm principle propounds that the only valid ground for coercing an individual is to prevent harm to others. An individual's autonomy cannot be curtailed except to protect public order and individual interests like life, bodily integrity, and property. The secular law refuses to treat consent as a licence for acts that cause *serious* harm or that undermine core social interests; such acts remain punishable. It still regulates consensual acts, which appear to be non-injurious to society. It recognizes collateral or derivative effects *inter alia*, stability of the institution of marriage, public health, preserving lineage, and social trust.

2.1. Jurisprudential Foundations in Secular Law

A significant number of proponents of modern jurisprudence, social scientists did not consider

consent as the supreme moral arbiter, nor did they accord primacy to an individual's autonomy over the social cohesion and public order, including Joel Feinberg, Durkheim, John Stuart Mill, Joseph Raz, and Patrick Devlin. Their works provide an extensive discussion on the limitations of consent and unbridled or unfettered individual autonomy. Though they diverged in where they drew the boundaries, each ultimately rejected the notion that mutual consent is unqualified.

John Stuart Mill, who on one hand advocates, *"The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others...in the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign"* [6] contradicts his own position by conceding *"As soon as any part of a person's conduct affects the interests of others, society has jurisdiction over it, and the question whether the general welfare will or will not be promoted by interfering with it, becomes open to discussion."* [7]

Joseph Raz writes, *"Autonomy requires that many morally acceptable options be available to a person."*[8] To put it differently, an individual's autonomy functions within bounds of morality, it ought not to be exercised for acts detrimental to public morality. The perception of the good must shape the political process, as he further says, *"of what does and what does not contribute to people's well-being, which options and what aspects of the common culture are valuable and to be encouraged, and which are ignoble and to be discouraged."* [9]

Berlin's remark is worth mentioning, *"A variety of opportunities will be respected if we commit to a social system that upholds a measure of negative liberty: there must be some frontiers of freedom which nobody should be permitted to cross."* [10]

Patrick Devlin argues society has a "moral fabric," and even consensual acts can undermine social cohesion. He, while criticizing the jurisprudential error in the Wolfenden Report [11] stated *"...the principle that the criminal law exists for the protection of individuals; on this principle, fornication in private between consenting adults is outside the law, and thus it becomes logically indefensible to bring homosexuality between consenting adults in private within it. But the true principle is that the law exists for the protection of society. It does not discharge its function by protecting the individual from injury,*

annoyance, corruption, and exploitation; the law must protect also the institutions and the community of ideas, political and moral, without which people cannot live together. Society cannot ignore the morality of the individual any more than it can his loyalty; it flourishes on both and without either it dies." [12]

The legal and social philosophy concludes societies' claim in private acts. This is suggestive of the fact that the paramount duty of state is not just protection of "bodily autonomy of individuals", its paramount duty is regulation of public order and prevention of social harm caused due to effects ancillary to consensual acts i.e. stability of institution of marriage, public health, preserving lineage and social trust.

3. Consensual Acts Law Still Regulates

Purportedly, the secular law often assumes no harm in private consensual acts like adultery and Homosexuality, which normalize sexual anarchy. It argues that when two individuals consent to engage in a certain illicit act, society has no determinative role in it. The law nonetheless intervenes in consensual acts that seem, on their face, to be non-injurious to society.

Consensual homicide refers to an act in which a person causes another person's death with that person's explicit or implicit consent. Many countries following the modern jurisprudence have criminalized Consensual homicide or assisted suicide, including the United Kingdom under the Suicide Act 1961; [13] United States under the Modern Penal Code 1962; [14] Germany under the German Criminal Code of 1871; [15] and Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. [16]

Prostitution offers another instance where consent fails to serve as a valid defense. In countries like Japan, China, South Korea, North Korea, Vietnam, Russia, India, the United Kingdom, including many U.S. states, the supremacy of consent is not a valid factor for determining the legality of prostitution. It is regulated by varied models and approaches. Sweden, Norway, France, and Canada follow the Nordic Model [17]. India and the UK follow the Abolitionism approach. [18], and China, most U.S. states, and much of the Middle East, have implemented the Prohibition Model. [19]

Cannibalism, the consumption of another human's body. Most states have enacted laws that make it impossible to legally acquire and consume human

flesh. Any person involved in cannibalism will not escape culpability, regardless of the explicit consent. In the case of Germany, two people formed a disturbing online pact, where one man consented to be killed and eaten by the other. The court convicted him of murder, even though no law existed that *per se* prohibited cannibalism, whether consented to or otherwise. [20]

Consensual Incest, defined as sexual relations between close blood relatives or certain specified affinal relatives, remains illegal in most legal systems worldwide. Its criminalization is nearly universal, although its scope and enforcement vary. Nations like the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Norway, Poland, Germany, France, and so on impose strict bans and heavy criminal and civil liabilities on incestuous acts. [21] The consent of the parties makes no difference, for laws prohibiting incest aim to prevent not just moral issues, but also genetic complications that could arise therefrom.

These instances reflect the underlying rationale for the regulations, detrimental to “individual’s autonomy”, is keeping intact the social fabric, restraining exploitation, human trafficking, public health, and gender asymmetry. These Modern legal systems already in the ordinary course override consent when deeper harms exist. These harms exceed private consent, and society has a legitimate stake in certain private acts, and consent does not legalize intrinsically harmful acts.

4. Islamic Law and Consent

This has been dismantled to the extent that consent does not hold absolute status as a factor in determining the legality of an act, and the idea of individual liberty is not without restrictions in countries following modern jurisprudence. Even with the presumed “progressive reforms” over time, these countries have not fully abandoned the regulation of sexual relations. Yet these half educated, skewed intellectuals dare question Islam.

Zina (Pre marital relations and Adultery) [22] and Sodomy [23] are among the penal offences in Islam, consent has no significance in these matters. They are not merely private wrongs, rather, they are directly violative of the commands of Allah, which cannot be contracted out. Consent does not purify the prohibited, nor does it convert Haram (Prohibited) into Halal (Permitted). Additionally, Zina is an offence against Nasl (lineage) and public

morality. Such consensual acts of personal instinct harm the lineage, disrupt the family structure, and disturb the social fabric. These exceed private contracts, thus, are crimes against society as a whole. Likewise, private transactions between a lender and a lendee involving **Riba** (Usury) remains prohibited. Consent cannot not waive out its intrinsic evil which structurally corrodes the social structure and engenders economic disequilibrium. By reason of these consequences, **Riba** (Usury) is deemed to constitute a declaration of war against Allah and His Apostle. [24]

Consent in Islamic law holds weightage in determining whether the act was rape or not, it changes the category of crime, nor the act’s moral status. All of these grounds of limiting consent have recognition in modern jurisprudence. This further clarifies their critique that Islamic law is subversive of an individual’s liberty, either because they are ignorant of their own laws or plain malevolence on their part.

5. Final Reflections

“If it is not possible for a man to breathe through his eyes instead of his nose, if it is impossible for the heart to perform the functions of the stomach, then it is equally impossible that a nation, by adopting the path which warrants decline according to the Divine Law, can rise to glory. If the reaction of fire upon all people is indiscriminately the same; if it is not hot for one individual and cold for another, then evil deeds, which are evil deeds in the sight of Divine Law, also cannot cause the decline of one and the rise of another. The Divine rules that govern the good or ill-fortune of a man cannot be altered or evaded by human beings. The Divine rules are neither inimical to nor in favour of a particular person.” [25]

The West’s demand for hyper-autonomy is entirely ego-driven, lacking regard for collective social prosperity. They are self-serving to the degree that abortion choice, even when there’s no threat to one’s life is wrongly justified as freedom of choice, in pursuance of their ungoverned instinctive desires. They are putting to ruin the sacred familial institutions, annihilating social cohesion, and humanizing animalism.

The family unit, unlike Western society, holds paramount importance in a Muslim society. Islam does not permit its decay by letting people give way to such desires outside the prescribed limits, and being ruled or enslaved by them.

If everyone becomes enslaved to their instincts, life will run in the wrong direction. Humanity aims at development and advancement, which it can never achieve as long as it is dominated by its unruly passions, which exhaust all the energy and lead it downwards to animalism.

Islam commands the people to control their instincts, without repressing them, willingly and consciously. This call is not an arbitrary ordinance intended to deprive people of the pleasures of life. History has witnessed the fate of the Roman Empire and the Persian Empire, that no nation could uphold its sovereignty without being able to control its passions or abstain willingly from some permitted pleasures. On the other hand, no nation could withstand international conflicts unless its people were trained to endure hardships and were able to suspend the satisfaction of their desires for hours, days, or years, as the need of the hour may be. [26] The West will likewise fail to endure over time.

“Had Allah not repelled a group of people by the might of another, corruption would have dominated the earth, but Allah is Gracious to all” [27]

Endnotes

[1] Peter Schaber and Andreas Müller (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of the Ethics of Consent* (Routledge 2018).

[2] *Uday v State of Karnataka AIR 2003 SC 1639* (Supreme Court of India).

[3] The science or philosophy of law; a system or body of law; the course of court decisions as distinguished from legislation and doctrine.

[4] The quality or state of being liable; accountability and responsibility to another enforceable by civil remedies or criminal sanctions.

[5] PSA Pillai, *Criminal Law* (12th edn, LexisNexis Butterworths Wadhwa 2014) ch 1

[6] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (John W Parker and Son 1859)

[7] Mill (n 6)

[8] Ronald James Hector Culley, *Freedom and the Pursuit of the Good: Exercising an Opportunity Concept* (PhD thesis, University of Glasgow 2004) <<https://theses.gla.ac.uk/71179/>> accessed 29 December 2025.

[9] Culley (n 8)

[10] *ibid*

[11] **Wolfenden Report** was a study that contained recommendations for laws regulating sexual behaviour, published in 1957 by the Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution in Britain, headed by John Wolfenden. The findings of psychoanalysis and social science, were used in the report to urge that public statutes to prevent the law from imposing moral judgments, the committee focused solely on sexual acts that violated public decency or threatened public order. Consequently, it recommended that private sexual relations between consenting adults, including homosexual acts, should no longer be treated as criminal offenses. These recommendations were subsequently incorporated into law through the **Sexual Offences Act 1967**.

[12] Patrick Devlin, *The Enforcement of Morals* (Oxford University Press 1959) 149

[13] S 2

[14] California Penal Code, S 401

[15] S 217

[16] S 101 and S 105

[17] Ane Mathieson, Easton Branam and Anya Noble, ‘Prostitution Policy: Legalization, Decriminalization and the Nordic Model’ (2016) 14(2) *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 367

[18] Laura Barnett, ‘Prostitution: A Review of Legislation in Selected Countries’ (Library of Parliament, 15 February 2022) <https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/202221E> accessed 29 December 2025.

[19] ‘Legalising Prostitution – From India to the World, Both Sides of a Coin, Continuous Debate and No Conclusion’ (*International Journal of Legal Language Research*, 2023) <<https://www.ijlrr.com/post/legalising-prostitution-from-india-to-the-world-both-sides-of-a-coin-continuous-debate-and-no-con>> accessed 29 December 2025.

[20] Bundesgerichtshof (Germany), *Cannibal of Rotenburg (Armin Meiwes Case)* BGHSt 51, 18 (2006).

[21] *Countries Where Incest Is Legal 2025*, *World Population Review* (online), <<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-where-incest-is-legal>> accessed 29 December 2025.

[22] The Qur’an [24:2] <<https://quran.com/an-nur/2>> accessed 8 January 2026

[23] Islam Q&A, The punishment for homosexuality, Question 38622 (IslamQA, 13 Safar 1427 / 13 March 2006) <<https://islamqa.info/en/answers/38622>> accessed 7 January 2026.

[24] The Qur’an [2:278-279] <<https://quran.com/al-baqarah/278-279>> accessed 8 January 2026

[25] Maulana Sayyed Abul A’la Maududi, *Nations Rise and Fall Why?* (10th edn, MMI Publishers 2025).

[26] Muhammad Qutb, *Islam: The Misunderstood Religion* (MMI Publications 2005) 206.

[27] The Qur’an [2:251] (Translation by Sahih International) <<https://quran.com/al-baqarah/251>> accessed 8 January 2026



The Moral Degeneration of Education

-Sameera Irshad



The essence of education is beyond mere knowledge transmission. It is about shaping the person: morally, intellectually and spiritually. It is the moral compass that gives direction to the ethics and values of the individual as well as the society. But today, this seems like a utopian version, like another bookish definition that barely has any connection with reality. Education has now become a hollow pursuit of degrees, jobs and social recognition. It has been reduced to a mere rat race, where measures of success are confined to grades, income levels and titles rather than the cultivation of moral integrity, critical reasoning, spiritual awareness, and the development of the human intellect and character. Today the global literacy rate stands at about 87% [1] and increased access to educational resources, technology, and infrastructure, especially among youth, there is a simultaneous rise in crime, moral decline, and the social normalisation of *batil* (evil). Consequently, contemporary societies are witnessing the emergence of a generation that is increasingly literate, yet morally disoriented and spiritually hollow, accompanied by an increasing indulgence in individualism and materialism.

Historically, formal education was parallel to moral development and spiritual awakening. In ancient civilizations: Ancient Greek, Indian, and Islamic learning aimed at producing virtuous individuals, not merely skilled workers. Plato regarded education as a means of cultivating justice and wisdom (*The Republic*), while the Indian *gurukul* system emphasised discipline, humility, and ethical living alongside intellectual training [2]. Islamic civilization offers one of the most comprehensive models of holistic education, wherein knowledge ('ilm) was regarded as an act of worship, inseparable from *adab* (moral conduct) Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "**The best of you in Islam are those with the best character, if they have understanding.**" [3]

Educational institutions such as **madradas** produced scholars who were simultaneously **jurists**, theologians, scientists, philosophers, and moral guides. Figures such as **Al-Ghazali** exemplified the integration of jurisprudence, spirituality, ethics, and pedagogy; **Ibn Sina** combined philosophy, medicine, and metaphysics; while **Ibn Khaldun** merged historiography, sociology, ethics, and political thought. Learning was never separated from moral formation; rather, intellectual mastery was considered incomplete without ethical refinement. Marshall G. S. Hodgson, in his seminal work, the three volumes of *The Venture of Islam*, argues that Islamic civilization developed as a fundamentally knowledge-centred moral order, [4] in which education and intellectual inquiry were integral to social and ethical life.

1. Causes

With the rise of industrialisation, colonialism, and later neoliberal economic systems, we have witnessed a gradual shift of education from moral formation to economic utility. In nations like India, colonial education placed more emphasis on administrative effectiveness and compliance than on moral or spiritual growth, Macaulay's Minute on Education (1835) [5] explicitly framed education as a tool for producing a class of intermediaries to serve colonial governance. Post-industrial societies accelerated moral disengagement by further transforming and oversimplifying the concept of education into a means of producing labour for the market (Bauman 2000). The causes of this degeneration of education can be simplified into a few statements and misconceptions that are substantiated here.

1.1. 'End justifies the means'

Education is becoming more and more of an economic tool, a means to achieve financial stability and recognition, where individuals are valued more for their material output. Grades, rankings, and

employability statistics are used to gauge success, rather than a holistic approach including character, social responsibility or moral conduct. Schools and colleges have become factories to manufacture “just another cog in the machine”.

This tendency is criticised by the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre in *After Virtue*, where he argues that instead of cultivating virtue, modern institutions train individuals to “fit individuals for specific roles within bureaucratic organizations” [6] thereby aligning education with systems of power rather than moral formation. In a similar vein, Paulo Freire refers to this as the “banking model of education”, [7] in which students are not viewed as morally conscious subjects but rather as passive recipients. In *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Allama Iqbal warns “**The object of education is not to make the individual a mere tool of the existing social order, but to give him a self-consciousness which may enable him to criticise the life which he has inherited.**” [8] Education divorced from moral purpose risks producing intellectual skill without ethical depth what later commentators have summarised as the making of “clever devils” rather than morally responsible humans.

1.2. ‘Worldly success comes first; meaning and spirituality can follow later’

Materialism has become the core of education today. Success is solely associated with wealth, power, and status, marginalising, rather belittling virtues such as humility, service, and integrity. Not only the curriculum, but the so-called motivational quotes like

- “Do whatever it takes to win.
- “Money is the best proof of intelligence.”
- “If you’re not rich yet, you’re not trying hard enough.”
- “Be selfish first; success will follow”, are constantly fed into the minds of students conveying that outcomes justify any means, quietly sidelining ethics. This creates a false sense of security in wealth and worldly gains, from which the Qur’an cautions: “**Know that the life of this world is but amusement and diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children.**” [9]

1.3. ‘Parents provide resources; institutions handle the rest’

The crucial role of parenting has taken a backseat now, while school, tuitions and digital platforms have been handed the responsibility of the students:

8 hours at school, 3 hours in 3 separate coaching classes, then a good dose of devices and parenting is believed to be done. The Prophet stated: “**Every one of you is a shepherd, and every one of you is responsible for his flock.**” [10] But today, the shepherd is barely aware what his flock is leading towards. They are busy providing access to resources but are oblivious of what these resources are doing to their kids.

1.4. ‘Digital exposure is education in itself.’

Digital exposure today functions as a formative factor, shaping attitudes, habits, and moral sensibilities long before formal instruction intervenes. OECD [11] states that globally, over **95% of 15-year-olds** use the internet daily, and around **70% of 10-year-olds** own smartphones. Teenagers spend an average of **30–40 hours per week** online, with **up to 43% exceeding 60 hours**. Social media usage reaches **96% among adolescents**, while children aged 5–8 have an average **3.5 hours of daily screen time**, highlighting pervasive digital engagement. This includes access to all kinds of content which normalises immorality, desensitises them to ethical boundaries, and promotes imitation of harmful behaviour, if not monitored carefully.

The question arises - “Where is the younger generation going?” and the statistics answer - “Towards a catastrophe”

Uncontrolled digital consumption erodes values, and shortens attention spans, making moral education much more challenging, according to academics and psychologists. Access to digital content without moral guidance or framing turns education into a vehicle for spiritual distraction and moral decay.

1.5. ‘Feelings Over Responsibility’

A growing cause of educational degeneration is the imbalance between mental well-being and character formation. While neglecting psychological health reduces students to mere instruments of productivity, ‘another cog in the machine’, the overemphasis on emotions, hormones, and subjective experience weakens moral responsibility by normalising ethical lapses as natural impulses. This outlook has also facilitated the normalisation of practices such as unchecked free mixing, where emotional comfort and personal orientation is prioritised over boundaries, accountability, and ethical

understanding. Islamic education maintained a principled balance: emotional needs were acknowledged, but never allowed to override responsibility and moral discipline.

The Sahaba were trained to regulate emotions through self-control, modesty, courage, and steadfastness upon principle, forming individuals of inner strength rather than emotional volatility. The Qur'an emphasises this inner regulation: "**whereas for the one who feared to stand before his Lord, and restrained his self from the (evil) desire, the Paradise will be the abode.**"[12] An education that fails to balance emotional care with character training produces individuals who are either emotionally neglected or ethically unanchored. The latter, emerging as a dangerous distortion of education and upbringing, marked by an absence of moral restraint and a neglect of character formation.

1.6. 'Morality is personal; education should stay neutral'

The made-up [13] dichotomy of deen and dunya, education and morality, success and spirituality, is what degenerates the entire cycle of learning today. Moral relativism where right and wrong are subjective, replaces absolute ethical principles. This reflects the concept of *Taghoot*, [14] where systems and ideologies other than those ordained by God are obeyed. Education governed by *Taghoot* prioritises hegemonic power, personal profit, and corrupt ideology over power to serve the truth and enjoin virtue. The separation of ethics from the definition of success or making it subjective to the point that it remains only the obedience of *nafs* [15] skewed political ideologies or culture; not only makes it a form of *Taghoot*, but leads to the decay of values.

The fallout of this type of education is that even though the youth may do exceptionally well on tests and browse through a plethora of information, they are becoming void of moral principles, empathy, and a spiritual foundation. Allama Iqbal highlights that education fails the moment it stops forming character and only trains skills when he writes

**"Tarbiyat aam to hai johar-e-qabil hi nahin,
Jis se ta'mir ho Adam ki, yeh woh gil hi
nahin"[16]**

**(Education may be widespread, yet true inner
ability is lacking. It is not the clay from which a
complete human being can be shaped)**

Values like honesty, humility, and responsibility are neglected in favour of a race for wealth, status, and likes and over-normalisation of immorality. They become heedless to the concept of right and wrong due to excessive exposure to digital content, and genuine guidance is replaced by mindless adherence to trends or personal preferences.

The outcome? A generation of resource-rich but morally bankrupt individuals, chasing material success without substance, leaving society full of individuals, least bothered about their values as a human, social responsibility as a part of the *ummah* and ultimately, the purpose of existence.

But the silver lining is that it's not impossible to stop this degeneration. Rather, a conscious generation of the present can create another generation epitomizing strength of character, morals and belief, alongside intellectual development. Some practical steps that can be taken in this direction.

2. Suggestions

2.1. Redefining the approach and purpose of education

Education must recover its original purpose: the formation of character (*tarbiyah*), not merely the training of individuals to function efficiently within the market. Islam does not reject wealth or economic activity; rather, it cautions against the pursuit of material gain when it becomes detached from moral responsibility. Al-Ghazali makes this distinction clear in *The Alchemy of Happiness*, where he explains that wealth is not evil in itself, but becomes harmful when love of it overtakes ethical restraint, intention, and accountability. [17] This moral framework was reflected in practice during the caliphate of Umar ibn al-Khattab[ؓ] who personally supervised marketplaces, prohibited dishonest trade, and restricted commercial activity to those who understood the ethical and legal boundaries governing it, ensuring that economic life remained subject to justice. [18]

Education, therefore, should prepare individuals not merely for market success but for morally governed engagement with worldly life. As Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas explains: "**Education is the recognition and acknowledgement, progressively instilled into man, of the proper places of things in the order of creation, ultimately leading to the recognition of God's rightful place in existence.**" [19] knowledge, thus cannot be separated from faith and

accountability; it guides conduct, regulates desire, and establishes justice across all areas of life: financial dealings, social relations, gender roles, and family. Allah promises elevation to those who combine knowledge with faith:

“Allah will raise those who believe and those who are given knowledge in degrees.” [20] with regard to all spheres of life including financial matters, social affairs, idea of gender, and the concept of family and relationships, affirming that true elevation combines belief, understanding, and righteous action.

2.2. Integrating Spiritual and Ethical Frameworks

Education should prepare individuals to navigate worldly matters (*dunya*) while preparing for the hereafter (*aakhirah*). This includes removing the perceived dichotomy between religion and worldly affairs, teaching children not to ‘balance *deen* and *dunya*’ as separate or competing spheres, but to understand *deen* as a comprehensive “way of life” that guides engagement with the *dunya*.

“But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters.” [21]

2.3. Establishing Purposeful Educational Institutions

It is the collective responsibility of the Muslim *ummah*, rather the need of the hour to create institutions that inculcate value based curriculum, provide a modest environment and address the issues that Muslim students face, including inequality and alienation; which often leads them to sacrifice their beliefs and principles. Though we must create such strong individuals who do not compromise their *deen* at any cost, it is also our responsibility to create safe spaces for the future of the *ummah* to practise and make themselves stand firm. Indian Muslims alone spend billions on weddings every year, while complaining about economic inability to make institutions. This gives us a crucial point to ponder over the condition and priorities of our *ummah* and work on it.

2.4. The crucial role of parenting

Moral and ethical education cannot succeed in isolation within schools alone; **active parental involvement is crucial**. Parents are the first educators, shaping a child’s character, habits, and values from an early age. When schools collaborate

with families and communities, children receive **consistent guidance** that reinforces ethical principles, spiritual awareness, and social responsibility. This partnership ensures that lessons learned in classrooms are mirrored at home, creating a strong moral foundation. Allah says: ***“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them but do what they are commanded.”*** [22]

How can parents improve the system of education?

- **Prepare Before Parenthood:** Parents should learn about child development and Islamic values before having children. Community workshops can offer useful parenting tips and address modern challenges like digital distractions.
- **Lead by Example:** Parents must practice good behavior and Islamic teachings daily. Children learn more from parents’ actions than words, so showing kindness, honesty, and prayer sets a strong example.
- **Teach Values Regularly:** Talk with children often about morals and manners using simple Quranic stories and hadith and inculcate them in daily life. E.g., The Prophet ﷺ said to a young boy: ***“O boy, mention the name of Allah, eat with your right hand, and eat from what is in front of you.”*** [23]
- **Manage Digital Use:** Set limits on screen time and supervise online activities. Encourage children to use technology responsibly and spend time away from devices to focus on family and faith. Monitor what and who influences your children, the prophets and the sahabah or the influencers behind the screen!
- **Encourage Self-Reflection (Muhasabah):** Help children reflect on their actions and intentions regularly, without stressing grades. This builds self-awareness, accountability, and good character.

Parents must create a **holistic environment** where moral, spiritual, and intellectual development are nurtured alongside academic learning.

Conclusion

This moral degeneration of education is not a failure of literacy, infrastructure, or access alone, it is a failure of purpose. When education is detached from ethical and spiritual foundations, it produces individuals who are skilled but unanchored,

informed but morally inert. History, data, and revelation all point to the same conclusion: Education without morality is incomplete and potentially destructive. The couplet by Sarfaraz Bazmi **“Allah se kare dur toh taleem bhi fitnah”** [24] (Education that distances one from Allah becomes a source of misguidance (fitnah), explains how education itself can be a source of fitnah if it distances us from divine consciousness and the true purpose of life.

Therefore, education today requires a conscious return to values, to the glory of bait-al-hikmah [25] combined with the revival of sunnah, where knowledge serves truth, and strength of character. Only then can education fulfil its true role, not merely producing workers for the economy, but cultivating responsible, ethical, and spiritually aware individuals, torchbearers who take the ummah from the darkness of ignorance and decay to the light of ilm (knowledge) and amal (actions). A system of education that forms future leaders with firm moral roots, where the definition of success is embedded in their ability to uphold truth and serve as beacons of haqq, who resonate:

**“Sabaq phir parh sadaaqat ka, adaalat ka,
shuja’at ka;
Liya jaega tujh se kaam duniya ki imamat ka”**
[26]
**(Relearn the lesson of truthfulness, justice, and
courage;
for you will be entrusted with the leadership of
the world)**

Endnotes

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- [4] Hodgson, The Venture of Islam, vol. 1, pp. 71–75.
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- [6] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), p. 30.
- [7] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos, 30th anniversary ed. (New York: Continuum, 2000), 72–74.
- [8] Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934), 167
- [9] The Quran, [Surah Al-Hadid;20] translation by Sahih international, accessed on January 6, 2026 at quran.com

[10] Abi Dawud 2928 accessed on January 6, 2026 at sunnah.com

[11] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

[12] The Quran [Surah An-Nazi’at: 40-41] translation by Taqi Usmani, accessed on January 7, 2026 at quran.com

[13] The phrase “made-up dichotomy” is used because Islam does not posit such a division; instead, it treats the two as complementary parts of the same whole.

[14] To o go beyond the measure, a creature who not only rebels against God but transgresses his will

[15] Self; Ego

[16] Muhammad Iqbal, “Jawab-e-Shikwa,” in Bang-e-Dara (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 2018), 124.

[17] Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Kimiya-yi Sa’adat* (The Alchemy of Happiness), trans. Claud Field (London: John Murray, 1909), 72–79.

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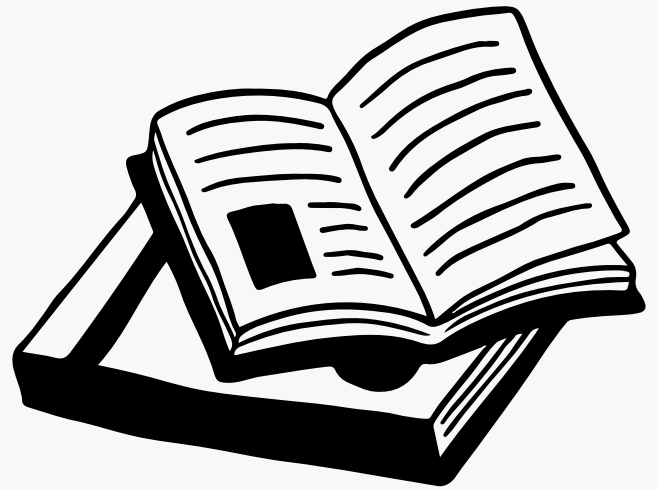
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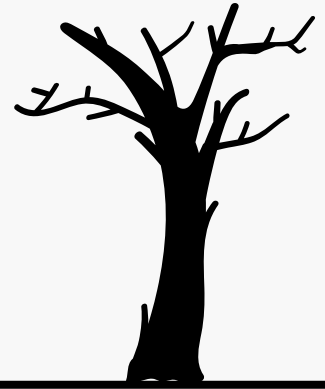
[25] The House of Wisdom, also known as the Grand Library of Baghdad, believed to be a major Abbasid-era public academy and intellectual center

[26] Allama Muhammad Iqbal, *Bang-e-Dara* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 1924)



Desensitisation of Society

-Heba Usmani



“Inculcate empathy” and “Learn to be empathetic” were among the first things we learned in our psychology class. In the first year of university, I heard the word empathy 54 times, after that I stopped counting. Don't mind if I do not disclose how many times I saw it practiced. It's not only a psychological thing; the world is also talking about empathy. Bibliometric research shows that more than 12,600 empathy related works have been published in English alone between 1996 & 2015. [1] It is a widely discussed topic in psychology, philosophy, nursing, and neuroscience. The trend of prioritizing empathy has sparked a backlash, with some pointing out its limitations and potential for over-glamorization. A Canadian-American psychologist, Paul Bloom [2] wrote a book called “Against Empathy.” I am glad he gave a different perspective to think about. However, I am not here to discuss empathy; I want to discuss the theoretical nature of moral consciousness. We're taught moral principles to become more humane but lacking role models at various life stages makes us question their value and necessity. We instead tend to believe those who practice them face an ordeal. India's literacy a hundred years ago was below 10%, and currently it's around 74%. [3] Contrastingly, India's crime rate, rape, burglary, communal tension, and social unrest has shown an upward trend. [4] There are multiple factors contributing to this change. I do not understand how we all are talking about compassion, love, and peace. Mostly, people are dropping hyper-positivity in Instagram Reels. There's a rise in overall awareness and an increase in the flow of information due to social media, but the inconsistency between value and action, the contrast between what we preach and what we practice remains constant which is why there's no significant positive change in our society. Allah warns us in the Qur'an: ***O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do?*** [5]

So, why do we preach or say something that we barely practice and don't intend to fulfill? This is something disliked by Almighty God contradicting our own claim. Not just that; we are also inculcating the same thought process among our children.

What are the factors that could be responsible for collective moral disengagement, moral unconsciousness, and insensitivity in our society, especially among the younger generations?

The following could be some of the aspects driving this desensitization:

1. Education System: I feel the hollowness of the education system between classmates who learn things together for years and feel similar pressure and emotions for or against teachers. Still, they don't manage to know anything about each other beyond their names and fail to acknowledge each other's absence in class for days. Teachers, on the other hand, barely know the names of half a dozen students, just those who are perceived to be smart or those considered weak and liable to trouble making. Our youth is truly going through a spiritual and moral crisis. The true essence of education is slipping from society. Education must be considered and incorporated in alignment to moral upbringing. Imam Malik's mother dressed him in fine clothes and a turban for Imam Rabi'ah's (May Allah be pleased with him) lessons, advising: ***“Go to him and learn his manners before his knowledge.”*** [6] Suggesting manners and morals are to be prioritized over knowledge. As it provides the foundation for applying knowledge in life.

a) The Notion of Mediocrity: The majority of students who are not high achievers in educational institutions are overlooked and underappreciated. Sometimes I start to question if educational institutions work like capitalism—an economic ideology that makes the rich richer—could the

educational institutions make the smart smarter, prioritizing those who are already very much capable. Leaving mediocres behind with a negative self-concept. Isn't it unjust to judge, prioritise or belittle people, assuming that some are better than others based on their worldly abilities and achievements? Such an approach is contradictory to the commandments of Allah. As Allah says in the Qur'an: **“O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be better than them.”** [7]

Belittling does no good to others rather it makes them further insecure about what they already have and they may end up picking jealousy and envy. Studies suggest that individuals who feel insecure or mistreated when they deserve recognition [8] may amplify *moral disengagement* and a cynical outlook.

b) Individual Difference: The ability to understand that not all of us have the same potential, providing positive regard, understanding the uniqueness of each individual, attending to everyone equally based on their needs and not belittling those who lack skills. When teachers and parents lack understanding of individual differences, it creates animosity and aversion among students towards those with authority and their teachings. Through all this, we are endorsing moral vacuity and insensitivity in young minds—there must be conditions for empathy, love, and respect. Conditions like talent, extraordinary abilities, status, power, and reciprocal altruism, i.e., helping when there's anticipation of receiving help. We Muslims must overlook such criteria; the only condition that is enough for you to care is their Muslim identity. Abu Huraira reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: **“A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim. He neither oppresses him nor humiliates him nor looks down upon him. The piety is here, (and while saying so) he pointed towards his chest thrice. It is a serious evil for a Muslim that he should look down upon his brother Muslim. All things of a Muslim are inviolable for his brother in faith: his blood, his wealth and his honour.”** [9]

This Hadith reminds us that we owe certain things to our Muslim brothers. If we witness our classmates, neighbours and cousins getting sidelined because they don't fit in the aforementioned conditions, it automatically becomes our responsibility to defend them and

make them feel better. As Allah says in the Qur'an, **“The believers are but one brotherhood, so make peace between your brothers.”** [10]

Desensitisation through Social Media

Culture shapes the way society thinks, behaves, and internalizes values—it is not innate but acquired through continuous socialization. In today's world, much of this process occurs through digital culture, primarily led by social media, OTT content, music, and television. These mediums profoundly influence our perception of morality, and violence. The kind of content we consume daily has normalized indecency, mockery, and aggression, creating a culture that blurs the line between what is acceptable and what is not. Over time, this constant exposure dulls sensitivity toward suffering and wrongdoings. Social media plays a particularly significant role in this process. It has become a space where outrage and opinion often replace thoughtful dialogue. Instead of fostering understanding, it deepens divisions through narratives that emphasize “us versus them.” Many discussions online serve little constructive purpose and amplify hostility by spreading derogatory terms and non-beneficial trends. Narrated Abu Huraira: That he heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) saying, **“A slave of Allah may utter a word without thinking whether it is right or wrong, he may slip down in the Fire as far away a distance equal to that between the east.”** [11]

This Hadith reminds us of the moral weight of our words, something often forgotten in the fast-paced, reactionary space of social media. Moreover, news presented on these platforms tends to focus on identity: religious, racial, or cultural, rather than on the act of the crime itself. This dysphemistic portrayal fosters prejudice and conditions people to view certain groups as threats, deepening social fragmentation. The relentless repetition of violent news makes viewers less responsive; only the most brutal cases are deemed worthy of attention, as if human tragedy is just another headline. Television shows and music further reinforce this pattern of desensitization. These forms of mass entertainment, consumed from an early age, shape emotional and moral sensibilities. The Quran warns, **“And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.”** [12]

When audiences repeatedly engage with content glorifying crime, immorality, and mockery, it

inevitably impacts their thoughts and feelings. The romanticization of antiheroes, the detailed visual depiction of violence, and the aesthetic portrayal of criminals in popular shows contribute to *euphemistic labeling* and the *copycat effect*—where viewers subconsciously imitate or empathize with harmful behaviors. Many find themselves tolerating or even admiring violence under the guise of artistic brilliance. In my own case, prolonged exposure to psychological thrillers appeared to increase my tolerance for violent content. I found myself ranking *Memories of Murder* above *Zodiac*, despite being aware that both films are grounded in real events. In doing so, I overlooked how the prolonged suffering inflicted by real-life criminals who terrorized the streets of South Korea and San Francisco for years was being transformed into a source of aesthetic judgment and entertainment. This personal reaction is not isolated; it reflects a broader psychological pattern where repeated exposure to violence can shift perceptions, emotional thresholds, and moral sensitivity. When entertainment normalizes real-world suffering, it subtly shapes how societies respond to harm, justice, and empathy. My experience is a small example of a much larger cultural change.

Conclusion

The emotional repertoire of our society is changing the world and is heading towards desensitization and spiritual crisis; the attention to basic moral theories and paucity of practical implications and most importantly uprooted from the followings of Qur'an and Sunnah are causing social incohesion and discord in the Ummah. It is the duty of every human and believer to play their role in the preservation of the teachings of Islam, which incorporates all the elements of moral conscience, norms of love, compassion, respect, and empathy.

Endnotes

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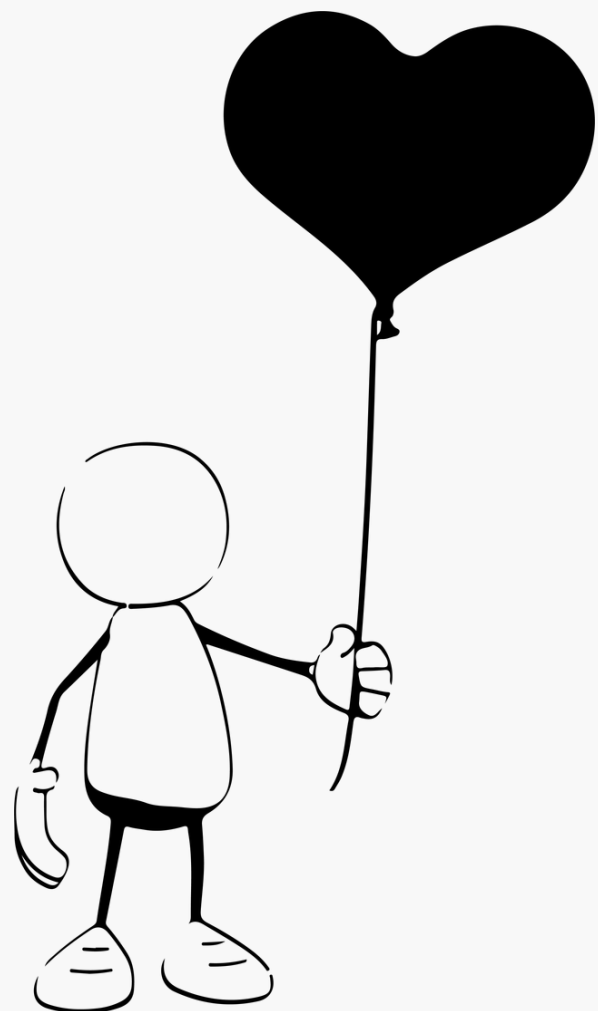
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Challenge to Talaq E Hasan – A Concern for Muslim Women or a Path to Jurisprudential Majoritarianism?

-Abdul Hannan Qazi



On 11th August, 2025, the Supreme Court of India accepted a petition challenging ‘Talaq E Hasan’, a well-established mode of divorce under Muslim law. The case arises from a batch of petitions titled *Benazeer Heena v. Union of India*, wherein the unilateral pronouncement of talaq, even though over a period of three months, has been highlighted as a problematic element divorce under Muslim law. Furthermore, the Supreme Court sought the opinions of the National Commission for Women (NCW), the National Commission for Human Rights (NHRC) and the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

On 19th November 2025, the Supreme Court, in a subsequent hearing, stated that the practice in its present form could not be allowed in a modern and civilised society. [1] The dispute is mainly about the method through which the divorce was pronounced as the notice was sent by the advocate and not the husband directly. The husband resolved to remedy the situation, but the court still made it a constitutional issue by allowing the petitioner to submit an application, upon which the desirability of the petition as to its reference to a constitutional bench would be decided. [2]

The Supreme Court’s acceptance of this petition and allowance of scrutiny into well-established and judicially recognised personal law practices raises questions in respect of the legal identity and autonomy of minorities. This judicial trend opens the floodgates of questioning every practice that is inconceivable in terms of secular or more appropriately, majoritarian beliefs. Has ‘gender justice’ transformed into a license to play with personal laws and erode the spirit of Article 25 of the Indian Constitution?

What is Talaq E Hasan?

As per Islamic law, Talaq E Hasan is a mode (emphasis added) of divorce which only becomes effective after the procedural mandate has been followed. In this mode of talaq, the husband pronounces one talaq in three different states of purity (Tuhr) and it becomes effective if before the pronouncement of the third talaq, there has been no reconciliation between the husband and the wife. Therefore, naturally, the procedure of Talaq E Hasan contemplates a cooling period. Moreover, the attempts of reconciliation may be made in order to reconcile the differences between both parties during the Iddat.

This mode has been derived from Verse 229 of Surah Baqarah of the Qur’an which states, **“Divorce can be pronounced twice: then, either honourable retention or kindly release should follow..”** [3] Maulana Maududi while commenting on this Verse writes that this Verse was revealed to curb the social evil of innumerable divorces and innumerable revocations due to which a woman was unable to happily dwell with her husband and at the same time, was unable to release herself from the marital tie. [4]

Ziya Us Salam in his book ‘Till Talaq Do Us Part’ writes, “The opening words of the verse...have been interpreted to mean that divorce may be pronounced twice, with a suggested gap between each pronouncement.” [5]

Verse 1 of Surah Talaq states, **“O Prophet, when you divorce women, divorce them for their waiting-period, (iddah) and compute the waiting period accurately, and hold Allah, your Lord, in awe. Do not turn them out of their homes (during the waiting period) – nor should they go away (from their homes)...You do not know: maybe Allah will cause something to happen to pave**

the way (for reconciliation). [6] The combined reading of both verses clearly lays down the procedure for Talaq E Hasan which can be summarised in the following points:

1. The first pronouncement of talaq should be in a state of purity and then onwards, the period of Iddat will commence.
2. This will be followed by another pronouncement of divorce after menstruation.
3. If there is no reconciliation until this point, the third talaq will be pronounced in the following state of purity and the divorce will become irrevocable.
4. The wife is entitled to live in the husband's home during the period of Iddat and the husband is bound to provide for her.
5. This cooling period will facilitate mediation between the parties and the husband may decide to revoke his decision. Imam Ibn Kathir writes that the wisdom behind spending the Iddat period together is that the husband might regret his action and might want to continue with the marriage. [7]

From the abovementioned understanding of Talaq E Hasan, it can be said that it is a right that is available to the husband but at the same time, it is subject to procedural limitations and does not have an instantaneous legal effect. Moreover, there is possibility of reconciliation over the period of Iddat.

Judicial Recognition of Talaq E Hasan

Justice Badar Durrez Ahmed in *Masroor Ahmed v. State (NCT of Delhi)* [8] clearly said, **“There is no difficulty with ahsan talaq or hasan talaq. Both have legal recognition under all fiqh schools, sunni or shia.”** [9] Even in *Shayara Bano v. Union of India*, [10] wherein the constitutionality of Talaq E Hasan and Talaq E Ahsan was also challenged, the Court only deemed fit to invalidate Talaq E Biddat.

The Kerala High Court in *Jahfer Sadiq E.A. v. Marwa*, [11] discussed the nature of talaq as per the Hedaya. The court said, **“According to Hedaya, talaq means a repudiation of wife and husband in the exercise of the absolute power which the law has conferred on him.”** By relying on authoritative figures like Faizee and Ameer Ali, the Court classified talaq into: 1) Talaq E Sunnat; and 2) Talaq E Biddat. Further, Talaq E Sunnat can be classified into ‘Ahsan’ and ‘Hasan’. The High Court relied on *Sajani A. v. Kalam Pasha* and held that Talaq E Ahsan and Talaq E Hasan

were valid forms of Talaq recognised under Muslim Law.

In order to establish the properness and legal validity of Talaq E Hasan, *Jahfer Sadiq* has been relied upon in several subsequent decisions such as *Saheer v. State of Kerala* [15] and *Tanveer Ahmed v. State of Maharashtra*. [16]

Therefore, Talaq E Hasan has been widely recognised by the judiciary as a proper mode of divorce under Muslim law and its validity has never been called into question until recent times. It can be said that Shah Bano opened the Pandora's box of judicial intervention in religious practices. Shayara Bano solidified this by reading personal law as law under Article 13 of the Indian Constitution and the following petitions are an extension of this chain which happen to intersect with a conducive political environment.

Is there an Ideal for Divorce?

“As per Hindu concept, marriage is a sacred, eternal and indissoluble union, an ideal Indian wife, even when deserted by her husband, continues to embody strength, dignity and virtue. Her conduct is rooted in dharma, cultural values and sanctity of marital bond,” said the Madhya Pradesh High Court in *XXX v. YYY*. [17] In a simple case of divorce on the ground of cruelty, the High Court deemed fit to dictate the ‘Hindu ideal woman’ in the following words: **“She does not use her sufferings for gain of sympathy, instead she channeled it inward, reflecting the Hindu ideal of the woman as Shakti - not weak, but submissive and powerful in her endurance and grace. Even when she left alone, she does not forsake, the Mangalsutra, the Sindoor or the symbols of her marriage status as her marriage to her is not a contract, but a Sanskara - an indelible sacrament.”** [18]

The remark ‘her marriage to her is not a contract, but a Sanskara’ is reflective of a particular line of thought adopted by the Court. Why is it that marriage as a ‘contract’ is being looked down upon? Why is it that in a simple determination of grounds of cruelty, the Court is laying down the parameters of an ideal Hindu wife? Why is the Court undermining the sanctity of a contractual marriage vis-à-vis a sacrament? If Hindu ideals are being expressed through the language of the judiciary, why is the same institution failing to accommodate the practices of minority communities?

This selective exposition of law hints towards a trend of jurisprudential majoritarianism.

The appropriate question at this juncture should be – How can a Muslim marriage be broken away just by the pronouncement of talaq within a few months when marriage according to the majority’s law is an ‘indelible sacrament’?

Assumption of Legislative Power – The Groundwork for UCC?

When the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) was being debated in the Constituent Assembly, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar gave an assurance to the leaders of minority communities that a UCC will not be imposed on them against their wishes. After nearly 75 years of this assurance, the UCC is being used in the context of gender justice and majoritarian politics, the latter being the dominant narrative.

At this point, it is imperative to ask whether the judiciary is laying the foundations of a Uniform Civil Code by tweaking the personal laws in accordance with the majoritarian legal understanding of personal laws? Is the question really about gender justice? Was denial of access to education due to the Hijab ban not a gender justice issue? The trend suggests that gender justice has become the vehicle that drives the country towards a UCC through judicial reinterpretation of personal laws.

This gradual erosion of personal laws of a community is not only a method of curtailing its legal identity but it can be appropriately termed as the judiciary’s colourable exercise of legislative power.

Endnotes

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[9] Id. para 24.

[10] (2017) SCC OnLine SC 963.

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Generation Online



Nurturing the Soul in Digital World: Tazkiyatun Nafs and Social Media

-Zainab ul Ghazali

Allah ﷻ says in the Holy Qur'an: ***“And as for those who were in awe of standing before their Lord and restrained themselves from ‘evil’ desires, Paradise will certainly be ‘their’ home.”*** [1]

As we know, in today's digital era, the convenience of having everything from essentials to luxuries at our fingertips is undeniable. Everything from baby essentials to deceased *Kafan* is just a click away. We can access a vast array of products and services. However, alongside the many benefits of social media, there are also significant downsides that warrant consideration.

Tristan Harris, a former Google design ethicist and expert in psychology and technology addiction, mentioned in his documentary *“The Social Dilemma”* (2020) that social media platforms are engineered to be addictive. They use algorithms that provide variable rewards (like getting likes, comments, or new followers), triggering dopamine releases in the brain. This creates a cycle similar to other behavioral addictions.

For many, this addiction fills a void: boredom,

loneliness, or a lack of real-world purpose. When the heart is not occupied with the remembrance of Allah and a meaningful life, it becomes susceptible to these distractions. The addiction itself becomes a barrier to Tazkiyah (purity). Likewise, constant immersion in social media can desensitize a person by flooding the brain with dopamine (likes and validations), making normal activities feel less rewarding. Overexposure to intense or tragic content often leads to emotional numbing and reduced empathy. Constant comparison to others' curated highlight reels fosters unhealthy comparison and weakens contentment with one's own life. Additionally, the consumption of short, fast-paced content shortens attention spans, making deeper and more reflective material increasingly difficult to engage with. Repeated exposure to violent or hateful material further dulls moral sensitivity, reducing the sense of shock or concern such content would otherwise provoke. Basically, the brain adapts to the overload, so things feel less impactful. Likewise, Ghayrah/Ghairat (protective jealousy), that a Muslim is encouraged

to uphold for themselves and their family, gradually weakens. What was once considered a clear boundary becomes blurred through constant exposure. Uploading one's family photos randomly or occasionally on Eids has become a trend. Just to get a few likes and comments people have become *Dayyouth* (without protective jealousy) and have risked their Akhirah. [2]

Thus, *when skills are scarce, selfies and home tours often take center stage on social media.* Allahul Musta'n!

1. Blurring the Lines with Non-Mahrams:

This addictive platform becomes the primary arena where interactions with Non-Mahrams occur, often in ways that violate the Hudood of Islam and the principles of Haya. Social media creates a false sense of security and informality. Unlike physical free mixing, which might feel more intentional, online interactions can feel harmless. A comment, a DM, a "like" on a story, each seems insignificant, but they accumulate into a form of sustained communication that Islamic guidelines aim to prevent.

2. Digital Ikhtilat (free mixing) :

The concept of "free mixing" (Ikhtilat) is not just about physical proximity, it's about proximity through unnecessary and unregulated social interaction between non-mahrams as well. **Social media is the largest platform for free mixing:**

2.1. Public Display of Private Life: People share intimate details of their lives, thoughts, and emotions with a wide audience that includes Non-Mahrams. The trend of oversharing on social media has led to a troubling pattern, where many couples who once shared every detail of their lives online, eventually find themselves parting ways. Social media turns personal lives into public content, increasing pressure and scrutiny. Oversharing gives people material to judge, gossip, or act on jealousy. Constant unnecessary comments and reactions blur boundaries, and may increase the chances of infidelity. I have witnessed many influencers face emotional strain, break-ups, divorce and heightened relationship stress under the digital spotlight, which can also be called "modern fitnah."

And this is how today's short term fun becomes tomorrow's long term regret.

3. The Slippery Slope to Greater Transgressions:

This digital environment is a slippery slope, often

leading to more serious issues. Here I would like to discuss 10 major issues associated with this form of addiction:

3.1. Private Messaging (DMs): What starts as a public comment can easily move to private messages. This private, one-on-one communication is particularly dangerous as it can quickly lead to emotional attachments, sharing of personal feelings, and ultimately, sin (Zina of the eyes, ears, and heart, as mentioned in the Hadith, before any physical Zina) [3].

As Allah ﷻ says : **"Do not go near adultery. It is truly a shameful deed and an evil way."** [4]

3.2. Emotional and Frivolous Conversations: The Qur'an commands believers to lower their gaze and guard their modesty, yet social media promotes self-display and unnecessary interaction with non-mahrams. Through messaging, gaming, and online platforms, people waste months and even years in personal conversations (without any legitimate need) and flirtation. This issue is especially prevalent among students living alone in rooms or hostels, where limited supervision and isolation lead to excessive gaming and online interaction, reducing productivity and focus.

Constant exposure to haram content and over dependence on social media can result in forming emotional bonds with non-mahrams, sharing personal struggles, and seeking comfort outside one's spouse or mahram family. This behavior damages real relationships, violates Islamic boundaries, and erodes trust. In Islam, haya (modesty) is inseparable from imaan; when modesty is lost, faith weakens. As the Prophet ﷺ said: **"If you feel no shame, then do as you wish."** [5]

3.3. Normalization of Taboo: Over time, constant and unregulated exposure to the opposite gender normalizes interactions that are meant to be avoided. The heart gradually becomes desensitized, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between right and wrong. When this moral discernment weakens, individuals become vulnerable to deception and exploitation. It is in this way that malicious and evil people manipulate the minds of heedless Muslims.

3.4. Emotional Detachment from Family: One of the gravest harms witnessed today is a person living physically among their family while their heart and emotions remain enslaved by the screen. Children

watch and imitate, and in doing so, grow up starved of true emotional connection. How can one who cannot dedicate quality time to their family, who is blind to their needs and tarbiyah, hope to raise a generation grounded in pure tawhid? How can such a person embody the example of a righteous parent for their children? The Prophet ﷺ said: **“The best of you is he who is best to his family.”** [6]

3.5. Excessive Laughter and the Death of the heart:

In the name of entertainment, our lives have become memes themselves. How can one laugh excessively while remaining oblivious to the suffering of hungry, oppressed, and dying brothers and sisters? How can we neglect our duties toward our families and fellow Muslims? Today, we have forgotten the true meaning of *huqooq ul ibad* (rights and duties of people) today that include:

- Respect for life & property
- Honesty in dealings
- Kindness to family, neighbors, employees
- Fulfilling promises & trusts
- Avoiding oppression, backbiting, cheating

But how can someone actually fulfill the rights of people while he himself is emotionally disengaged.

The Prophet ﷺ said: **“Do not laugh too much, for excessive laughter kills the heart.”** [7] Too much laughing dulls spiritual awareness and can lead to carelessness. Enjoy humor but keep balance — don't let laughter dominate your focus on Allah and serious matters.

3.6. Algorithm-Driven Desires: Many clips and ads are deliberately designed to capture attention and promote patterns of dependence on people. Dual-Coding Theory [8] suggests that visual content, when combined with words, can make messages more memorable and persuasive. As Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an: **“(And Satan said) : I will surely make [evil] attractive to them on earth, and I will mislead them all.”** [9]

3.7. The Cloud of Brain Fog: [10] “The ‘online brain’: Association of digital technology use with brain function and cognition.” In his review paper, Firth discusses the association between digital technology use, attention, and cognitive functioning. Many people notice that when they try to read or think deeply, they often struggle to focus. This is described as brain fog, usually caused by an overflow of information from short clips and repetitive ads. The mind becomes fatigued and is unable to reflect properly. You can't even focus on your salah or any other Ibādah

because your mind will go back to those consumed content again and again. It will be more harmful for your spirit if you start your day with videos on social media. As Allah ﷻ says: **“Do they not then reflect upon the Qur'an?”** [11] Reflection cannot be achieved with a distracted and exhausted mind. Start your day with Qur'an and Adhkār instead and see how your life changes!

3.8. Sleeping Disorders: Instagram Reels, Youtube Shorts, and Tiktok videos are designed to be highly stimulating and engaging. By repeatedly activating the brain's reward system, this type of content for some users can foster a compulsive pattern of use that is difficult to disengage from. Such patterns are associated with sleep disturbances, reduce quality sleep, and in some cases increased risk of depressive symptoms. [12] Allah ﷻ says: **“And We made your sleep [a means for] rest.”** [13]

3.9. The False Escape from Reality: Continuous Scrolling becomes an escape mechanism instead of facing life's real problems. In psychology, this is called emotional avoidance. It is when a person consciously or unconsciously tries to escape, suppress, or ignore uncomfortable feelings instead of facing and processing them. It's a coping mechanism where someone might:

- Distract with work, social media, or substances.
- Avoid situations, people, or thoughts that trigger those emotions.
- Numb feelings through denial or dissociation.

But it is a false cure like taking painkillers without treating the root cause. Instead a momin/mominah should reflect on their behavior and should understand people's behavior and treat them accordingly in a positive way. And on the authority of Wabisah bin Ma'bad (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: I came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “You have come to ask about righteousness.” I said, “Yes.” He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, **“Consult your heart. Righteousness is that about which the soul feels at ease and the heart feels tranquil. And wrongdoing is that which wavers in the soul and causes uneasiness in the breast, even though people have repeatedly given their legal opinion [in its favour].”** [14]

3.10. 10. You Are What You Consume : The content a person engages with can influence thoughts, intentions, and behavior over time. Visual material,

especially when paired with verbal cues, tends to be more memorable and impactful. Repeated exposure to indecent or mocking content about the Sunnah and Islamic principles may subtly distort perceptions if not balanced with reflection. In my upcoming article I will explain In sha Allah, that how, *Social media can warp religious expression into narcissistic displays, causing more harm than good.*

How to deal with it?

Addressing this requires a two-pronged approach: tackling the addiction and reinstating the boundaries.

1. Intentionality and Detox (Muhasabah):

- **Make your Niyyah clear:** Make a sincere intention to use social media for a legitimate, beneficial purpose (e.g., da'wah, learning, halal business) and to avoid sin for the sake of Allah.
- **Digital Detox:** Periodically delete apps from your phone or take extended breaks. Or if it's too necessary then use a laptop instead. This breaks the addictive cycle and allows you to recalibrate. Yet, constant exposure to it opens the door to subtle spiritual diseases: unrestrained desires, envy, Narcissism, objectifying people, short attention spans, and a restless heart. True believers are called to guard their hearts, and one way is through digital detoxification.
- **Curate Your Feed Aggressively:** Unfollow accounts that trigger unnecessary attraction or waste your time. Remove all the Non Mehrams and unfollow them (except for official accounts that serve a necessary and legitimate purpose.) Mute or restrict people if needed. Fill your feed with Islamic content, educational material, and other beneficial things.

2. Reinforcing Islamic Boundaries Online:

- **Apply Ghadd e Basr Digitally (Lower your Gaze online):** This is not just a physical or an offline act. It means consciously scrolling past content that features non-mahrams. Do not linger on profiles or pictures.
- **Strict DM Policies:** Have a zero-tolerance policy for private chats with non-mahram. Keep the conversation brief, formal, and to the point with a third person involved.
- **Practice Privacy:** Be very mindful of what you share. Ask yourself: *"Is this necessary for me to share? Who is the audience? Am I seeking validation from strangers?"* Use privacy settings to limit your audience. Turn off the notifications of your apps if your account isn't for legitimate purposes.

Accountability: Have an accountability partner either a spouse, a sibling, or a pious friend with whom you can discuss your struggles and who can check in on your social media use.

Conclusion

Social media addiction undermines Islamic values and safeguards. To mitigate its harm, Muslims must use it cautiously, with purpose for the sake of Allah, and in adherence to Islamic principles, prioritizing faith and self-control over technological enslavement. The first days will test you. You may feel restless, bored, or lonely. Your *nafs* (self) will crave its usual dopamine feed. But remember: ease comes with/after hardship. As Allah ﷻ says: ***"Indeed, for every hardship there is ease."*** [15]

This detox is not just a mental health exercise, it is Tazkiyatun Nafs (Purification of the Soul). The goal is to strengthen your heart and purify your soul so you can remain firm upon the truth, even if the majority reject it or mock it. As Allah ﷻ says: ***"And if you obey most of those upon the earth, they will mislead you from the way of Allah."*** [16]

Disconnection is not about abandoning the world, rather it's about reclaiming your heart from its grip. Certainly, excessive socializing can lead to being affected by various diseases of heart, which can hinder our inner devotion (*khush'u*) in acts of worship. As Allah ﷻ says: ***"Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder. For indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth, and there are some of them that split open and water comes out, and there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allah . And Allah is not unaware of what you do."*** [17]

It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"When the believer commits sin, a black spot appears on his heart. If he repents and gives up that sin and seeks forgiveness, his heart will be polished. But if (the sin) increases, (the black spot) increases.*** That is the 'Ran' Allah mentions in His Book: ***"Nay! But on their hearts is the Ran (covering of sins and evil deeds) which they used to earn."*** [17]

Tazkiyatun Nafs [Purification of Soul] is the only way because those who worship their desires Allah says about them in the Holy Qur'an that: ***"Have you seen 'O Prophet' the one who has taken their own desires as their god? Will you then be a keeper over them?"*** [18]

Make the Qur'an your Best Friend. Because, after healing from your obsession with social media, you will find that many have surpassed you, some in memorizing the Quran, some in mastering Tajweed, some in memorizing texts, and others in excelling in various arts. Meanwhile, you are stuck in front of your phone as your life passes by without you realizing it. *You are just a step or a few steps away from the grave. So, reconsider your life before you regret it, and regret will be of no use then.*

Allahul Must'a'n!

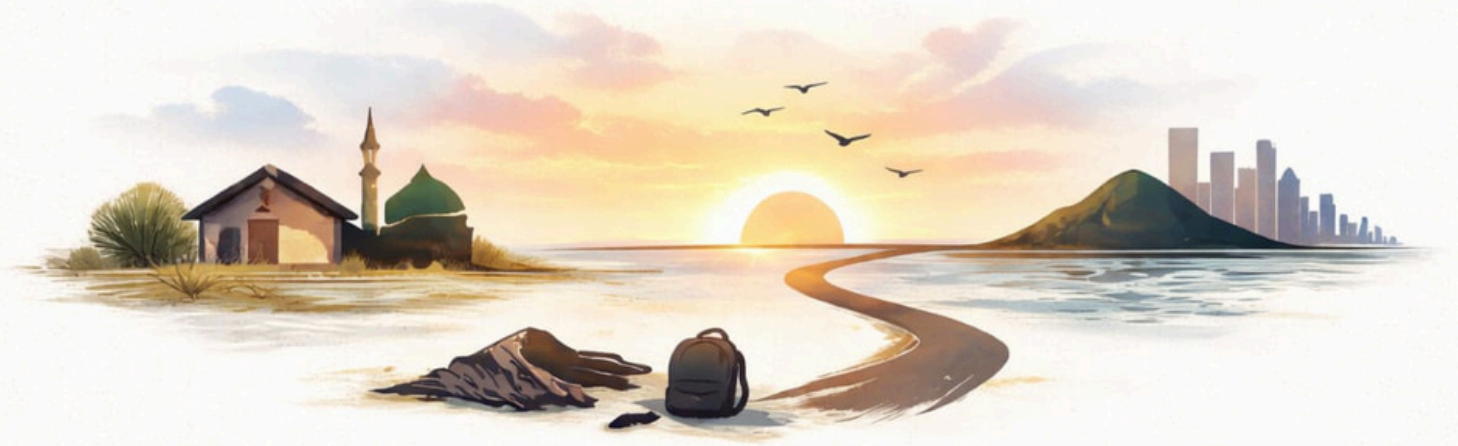
May Allah make it easy for all the believers and make us a responsible Ummati of Rasulullah ﷺ.
Aameen Ya Rabb.

Endnotes:

- [1] The Qur'an [79:40] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026
- [2] Sunan an-Nasai, 2562, Kitab Ishrat an-Nisa (Book 23), Hadith 128, Grade Hasan (Darussalam). Accessed from <https://sunnah.com/nasai:2562> on 28 December 2025.
- [3] Riyad as-Salihin, 1622, Book 17: The Book of Prohibited Actions, Hadith 112, accessed from <https://sunnah.com/riyadussalihin:1622> on 28 December 2025.
- [4] The Qur'an [7:32] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026
- [5] Sahih al-Bukhari, 6120
- [6] Hadith Al Hakm, Mishkat Al Masabih
- [7] Ibn Majah
- [8] Definition of dual-coding theory (verbal and imagery subsystems): Dual-Coding Theory, ScienceDirect Topics (definition under Dual-Coding Theory) <<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/neuroscience/dual-coding-theory>> accessed 12 January 2026.
- [9] The Qur'an [15:39] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026
- [10] Joseph Firth and others, 'The "Online Brain": Association of Digital Technology Use with Brain Function and Cognition' (2019).
- [11] The Qur'an [47:24] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026
- [12] Lydia Y Lin and others, 'Association Between Social Media Use and Depressive Symptoms: A Meta-Analysis' (2022).
- [13] The Qur'an [78:9] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026
- [14] A good hadith is transmitted in the *Musnads* of the two Imams, Ahmad ibn Hanbal and al-Darimi, with a good chain of authorities.
- [15] The Qur'an [94:5-6] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026
- [16] The Qur'an [6:116] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026
- [17] The Qur'an [2:74] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026
- [18] The Qur'an [83:14] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026
- [19] The Qur'an [25:43] accessed from Quran.com on January 12, 2026



PROPHETIC *Precedent*



With Great Powers Comes Great Responsibilities -Rushil Rumaisa Fathima

Stepping into the world of responsibilities, we begin to carry roles and obligations that require our time and effort. With these responsibilities come expectations from people dependent on us. These expectations naturally follow the roles we take on. Whether in the home, the workplace, or the wider community, responsibility takes many forms. At home, it means providing for the family, maintaining harmony, and nurturing relationships. In schools, offices, and public spaces, students and professionals are expected to meet their codes of conduct and performance standards. When leading a team, there is a responsibility to make the right decisions, maintain justice through structured accountability, and offer the right guidance. For those representing Islam in positions of leadership

and authority, it is expected that one acts in accordance with Islamic principles while also ensuring that those under their guidance remain within the fundamentals of Islam and do not transcend its principles.

Over time, this constant pressure can begin to weigh heavily on us, leading to feelings of anxiety, frustration, or even irritation toward those who depend on us. And amidst this, the pressure can unintentionally feel overwhelming, and in that state, we feel the urge to leave everything behind. To walk away. To escape. And the reality is, many times we actually do it. Especially when it comes to the people or duties we are obligated towards, we end up abandoning them either emotionally or physically. However, at that moment we fail to

understand: the people and roles we are entrusted with in our lives are not by mere coincidence. Allah is the One who placed us together in this. We are reminded in the Qur'an: **"Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity."** So, when we hold a responsibility, it becomes crucial to realize that these expectations are not futile. They are not random demands. They are tied to the position Allah has entrusted us with. And thus, the core point remains: with great power comes great responsibility. Because, whenever Allah gives us any responsibility or duty, it becomes vital that, in accordance with that role, we embody the commandments of Allah and his Messenger. Every act within that role can become an act of ibadah (worship) and da'wah (call towards Islam). And when Allah grants us such roles, it means He has also granted us power and the capacity to carry it. That power is an Amanah (trust). As the Prophet (ﷺ) said: **"Indeed each of you is a shepherd and all of you will be questioned regarding your flock. The commander who is in authority over the Muslims is responsible and he will be questioned regarding his responsibility. The man is responsible over the inhabitants of his house and he is the one who will be questioned about them. The wife is responsible in her husband's house and she will be questioned about it. The slave is responsible regarding his master's property, and he will be questioned about it. Indeed each of you is a shepherd and each of you will be questioned about his flock."** [1]

So, when the responsibilities attached to that power start to feel heavy, it becomes essential to understand that great responsibility is not a burden placed on the incapable, rather, it is a sign that we were deemed capable. With that power comes a duty to fulfil it in a way that serves Allah (*Huqooq Allah*) and simultaneously serves people (*Huqooq al-Ibaad*). Thus, these roles have been entrusted to us, and fulfilling them in this manner is in concurrence with the religion. The issue is, we forget the responsibilities tied to our roles and assume that the people expecting things from us are simply pressurizing us. But we need to ask: whether their expectations align with Islamic obligations? If yes, then these are not just their expectations, these are our imperative duties assigned by Allah. Yes, fulfilling them becomes difficult. Yes, there are times we want to run away. But the moment we feel like escaping, that is exactly when we need to revisit the story of Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام. In his story is indeed a great reminder for us.

"And [mention] the man of the fish [i.e., Jonah], when he went off in anger and thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him. And he called out within the darknesses, "There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers." So, We responded to him and saved him from the distress. And thus, do We save the believers." [2]

The stories of the Prophets are not just tales from the past, they're timeless reminders, speaking directly to the struggles we face in our own lives. Among these stories, the story of Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام stands out as a powerful lesson for anyone who has ever felt the urge to walk away from the duty placed upon them. How often do we feel anguish when our efforts to guide our family and loved ones toward the truth go unheeded? When people are unresponsive, unwilling to change or to understand. How often do we forget that we are obligated towards them because of the role Allah has placed us in? In those moments, two dangerous reactions usually take place. Either we begin to bend the religion and start diluting the truth, softening the imperative commandments of Allah, compromising on principles just to avoid conflict or we abandon the duty entirely. We emotionally withdraw, stop fulfilling our role, or physically leave the responsibility altogether. We walk away from the very obligations Allah has tied to us.

Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام left his land in anger and boarded a ship. Through divine decree, he lost in the drawing of lots and was set to cast into the sea and then was swallowed by a great fish. **"And he drew lots and was among the losers. Then the fish swallowed him, while he was blameworthy."** [3] It was in the darkness of the fish's belly and under the darkness of the ocean that Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام made the infamous dua: **"There is no deity except You, exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers."** Narrations tell us that this incident was a form of punishment for Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام. However, as clarified in Sahih Hadith, it is impermissible for anyone to say, **"I am better than Yoonus bin Matta,"** [5] as Prophets are pure from sins. The fish swallowing Prophet Yoonus wasn't an ordinary punishment. And here's something that might slip from our minds: Prophets are free from sins. Their mistakes are not acts of disobedience, but are unintentional subtle lapses, moments of human weakness that we don't even register as faults. Yet Allah holds them to the highest standards.

Why? In my understanding, it is because those with the greatest responsibilities are held to the greatest expectations and it is not of them to commit such mistakes, that can be committed by any ordinary man.

And in this is a deep reflection for us. Just as prophets were held to higher standards because of their role, we too, as Muslims, the ones who have taken the pledge to submit to Allah, are placed in roles that carry responsibilities and expectations. We are reminded, therefore, that holding a position carries not only a title but also the responsibility to uphold Allah's commands within it. However, at times even if we don't leave the position, we still hold the title, sit in the seat, keep the role, but we walk away from the obedience of Allah within that role. We stop implementing His commandments. We neglect the duties He tied to that position. We allow compromise, injustice, or negligence. We stay in the position, but we abandon the responsibility Allah has placed upon us. Whether in the workplace, leadership, family, or any role of influence. Hence, the story of Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام teaches that walking away from our obligatory duties is not the solution; instead, in those moments of darkness, when everything feels lost, we need to turn back to Allah, just as Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام did in the depth of darkness.

“Then has there not been a [single] city that believed so its faith benefited it except the people of Jonah? When they believed, We removed from them the punishment of disgrace in worldly life and gave them enjoyment [i.e., provision] for a time.” [6]

From this Ayah, we uncover one of the most beautiful displays of Allah's mercy. Look at the people of Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام. These were the very people he was frustrated with. The very people he left. Yet Allah mentions them in the Qur'an as the only nation whose faith actually benefitted them and whose punishment was lifted. And here lies the most beautiful part: In the entire Qur'an, no other nation was saved from the punishment after the decree descended, not the people of Nuh عليه السلام, not the people of Salih عليه السلام, not the people of Lut عليه السلام, not the people of Moosa عليه السلام. Only the people of Yoonus عليه السلام were granted this exception. Why? Because when they finally believed after seeing the signs of Allah, Allah's mercy opened in a way that it is impossible one could not help but be

in awe. So, what does this teach us? Allah's mercy is always near. Prophet Yoonus's عليه السلام dua is proof of that. It's a powerful reminder that no matter how far we've gone, no matter how badly we think we've messed up, Allah's door is never closed. The people, from whom, Prophet Yoonus was despaired, are now set as example in the Qur'an, who believed and faith benefited them. Yes, it becomes extremely difficult at times to hold onto the duties entrusted to us. We struggle. We feel exhausted. We feel like we've messed everything up. We feel unworthy. We feel like it's too late. But no matter how far we have gone, how many mistakes we have made, how badly we have collapsed and messed-up, Allah's door never closes. Yes, the responsibility might feel heavy. Yes, fulfilling it feels overwhelming. But if we turn back, when we repent, when we realign ourselves with Allah, the mercy of Allah comes, and our entire story takes a beautiful turn.

We can never compare ourselves to the Prophets in terms of their unwavering faith and spiritual excellence. However, when we are entrusted with responsibilities to achieve a higher purpose, we must sincerely pray that Allah forgives us for any mistakes or forgetfulness. The Quran states about Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام: ***“And had he not been of those who exalt Allah, He would have remained inside its belly until the Day they are resurrected.” [7]***

Prophet Yoonus عليه السلام was a true believer who consistently glorified his Lord, and it was this exaltation that ultimately led to his deliverance. But for us, this becomes a deeply humbling reminder. We are not always in the state of exalting Allah. We neglect remembrance. We forget to glorify Him. So, this verse is teaching us that the door of rescue lies in exalting Allah when we have messed up. Even if we have abandoned our duties, even if we have disobeyed, even if we have walked away from responsibilities Allah entrusted to us, the path back begins with turning to Him in humility and glorification. Because here is the reality: we can never be like Yoonus عليه السلام as He slipped once and immediately turned back to Allah. We slip repeatedly and stay disobedient. So, if he, a prophet, would have remained in the belly had he not glorified Allah, what about us if we abandon our obligations, neglect our duties, and fail to exalt Allah? This verse is a warning and a mercy at the same time, a call to awaken our hearts.

In conclusion, this entire write-up serves as a reminder:

“Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. It will have [the consequence of] what [good] it has gained, and it will bear [the consequence of] what [evil] it has earned.” [8]

If He has placed a responsibility on us, He has also placed within us the potential to fulfil it. All we need is to keep returning to Him. And so, we must cling to the dua'a taught to us in Surah Al-Baqarah:

“Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we have forgotten or erred. Our Lord, and lay not upon us a burden like that which You laid upon those before us. Our Lord, and burden us not with that which we have no ability to bear. And pardon us; and forgive us; and have mercy upon us.” [9]

Note the Exception:

The article applies to persons who are inherently bound by obligatory duties under divine law, explaining that duties arising from family relationships or positions of authority remain binding for as long as those relationships or positions continue. It does not address individuals in non-obligatory roles, since they can leave these positions without committing disobedience, for wrongdoing occurs only if they remain in such roles and fail to follow Allah's commandments. As the Prophet (ﷺ) said: ***“Abdur-Rahman! Do not seek to be a leader/ruler, for if you are given authority on your demand then you will be held responsible for it, but if you are given it without asking (for it), then you will be helped (by Allah) in it. If you ever take an oath to do something and later on you find that something else is better, then you should expiate your oath and do what is better.” [10]***

Endnotes

[1] Jami' at-Tirmidhi, 1705, Book 23, Hadith 36, Sahih (Darussalam) <https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi/23/36>, accessed on 30 November 2025.

[2] The Qur'an [Surah Al-Anbiya: 87–88] Sahih International Translation <https://quran.com/al-anbiya/87-88> last visited on 11 January 2026

[3] The Qur'an [Surah As-Saffat : 141–142] Sahih International Translation <https://quran.com/37?startingVerse=141> last visited on 11 January 2026

[4] Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim, commentary on Surah al-Anbiya (21:87), available at: <https://quran.com/21:87/tafsirs/en-tafsir-ibn-kathir> last visited on 10 October 2025.

[6] The Qur'an [Surah Yunus: 98] Sahih International Translation <https://quran.com/yunus/98> last visited on 11 January 2026

[7] The Qur'an [Surah As-Saffat: 143–end] Sahih International Translation <https://quran.com/37?startingVerse=143> last visited on 11 January 2026

[8] The Qur'an [Surah Al-Baqarah: 286] Sahih International Translation <https://quran.com/al-baqarah/286> last visited on 11 January 2026

[9] *ibid*

[10] Sahih al-Bukhari, 7146, Book 93, Hadith 10, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:7146> last visited on 11 January 2026





Rejected and Abandoned: The Trial of Ambiya

-Madiha Rabbani

Do you ever feel as though the weight of the world is pressing down on you, and, na'audhu billah, think that Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) has somehow forgotten you in your darkest moments? It is a deeply human feeling, one that surfaces when trials and tribulations seem endless. That sense of abandonment or being cast aside is real, but it is precisely this pain that must be met with the comforting embrace of Allah's perfect plan.

At the heart of this struggle lies an unshakable truth: Allah is Al-Aleem (the All-Knowing) and Al-Hakeem (the All-Wise). This isn't just a theological principle to memorize; it is the only true shield against despair. The Prophet (ﷺ) said in a hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him): **"Allah has ninety-nine names. Whoever memorizes them will enter Paradise."** [1] "Memorizing" here means more than rote repetition. It encompasses understanding their

meanings, internalizing them, and acting upon what they imply. [2]

When a believer reflects on Allah as **Al-Aleem** (The All-Knowing), they realize that they are never truly alone. Every struggle, every silent tear, every hidden fear is known to the One whose knowledge encompasses all things. And when one remembers that **Allah is Al-Hakeem** (The All-Wise), they are guided to **sabr** (patience) and **tawakkul** (trust), surrendering to the divine wisdom behind every decree, even when its reason remains veiled. This perspective does not dismiss or diminish personal hardship; rather, it elevates it. It allows the heart to rise above immediate pain and rest in the vast and flawless design of Allah's plan. Such a shift is essential, for a genuine, resilient connection with Allah is impossible without **ma'rifah** (true knowledge of Him), especially through His Names and Attributes. It is through this knowledge that **husn ad-dhann** (a good opinion of Allah) takes root

in the heart. And from this blossoms *sakeenah*, the tranquility, resilience, and contentment that strengthen the soul even in the most testing of times.

Reflect upon Prophet Nuh (Alayhis Salam); for 950 years, he called his people to Allah, yet they denied and turned away. [3] Even his wife and son refused to believe, perishing in the flood. As Allah says, ***“And ‘so’ the Ark sailed with them through waves like mountains. Noah called out to his son, who stood apart, ‘O my dear son! Come aboard with us and do not be with the disbelievers.’ He replied, ‘I will take refuge on a mountain, which will protect me from the water.’ Noah cried, ‘Today no one is protected from Allah’s decree except those to whom He shows mercy!’ And the waves came between them, and his son was among the drowned.”*** [4] Imagine the heartbreak of losing your closest family to disbelief. Still, he endured. His story teaches us that rejection, even from those dearest to us, does not mean our efforts have gone in vain.

Think of Prophet Moosa (Alayhis Salam), one of the greatest messengers. From his birth, he was separated from his mother and raised in the very palace of his enemy. In his youth, he fled into exile after unintentionally causing a man’s death. For 10 years, he lived as an expat, working as a shepherd to survive. How heavy his heart must have been as he had to leave a comfortable life and was stripped of status and forced into hardship. Yet, he never gave up hope in Allah. Allah (subhanahu wa ta’ala) says in the Quran: ***“So Moses left the city in a state of fear and caution, praying, ‘My Lord! Deliver me from the wrongdoing people. And as he made his way towards Midian, he said, ‘I trust my Lord will guide me to the right way.’”*** [5] Ultimately, he was victorious over Pharaoh. His life shows us that exile, loss, and humiliation are not the end of one’s story.

Consider the story of Prophet Ibrahim (Alayhis Salam), Allah’s ***“Khalil”*** (intimate friend). He was commanded to do the unimaginable: to sacrifice his beloved son, Ismail (Alayhis Salam), the child he was granted in his old age. Imagine the inner turmoil of being commanded by your Lord to take the life of your own flesh and blood. Yet, without hesitation, both father and son submitted to Allah’s will. Then Allah replaced the sacrifice with a ram, a testament to their unwavering faith. Allah (subhanahu wa ta’ala) says in the Qur’an: We called out to him, ***“O Abraham! You have already fulfilled the vision.” Indeed, this is how We reward the good-doers.***

That was truly a revealing test. And We ransomed his son with a great sacrifice, and blessed Abraham ‘with honourable mention’ among later generations: “Peace be upon Abraham.” This is how We reward the good-doers. He was truly one of Our faithful servants.” [6] His story teaches us that true submission means placing our trust in Allah above all else, and in doing so, we will be granted ease and a way out of even the most profound tests.

Reflect on the life of Prophet Ayyub (Alayhis Salam), the paragon of patience. He was a wealthy and blessed man, but Allah tested him by stripping him of everything: his family, health, and fortune. He endured a severe illness that caused him to lose the support of his friends and community. Even as his affliction grew, he never lost hope in Allah. He did not turn to his Lord with a complaint, but with a plea for mercy, saying, ***“I have been touched with adversity,¹ and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful.”*** [7] Allah, in His boundless mercy, responded: ***“So We answered his prayer and removed his adversity, and gave him back his family, twice as many, as a mercy from Us and a lesson for the ‘devoted’ worshippers.”*** [8] His story teaches us that true faith is not shaken by misfortune. A heart rooted in sincerity will always turn back to Allah, seeking refuge in His mercy, no matter the trial.

Then there is Prophet Yoosuf (Alayhis Salam), born into the honored lineage of Prophets, who was betrayed by his own brothers, abandoned in a well, and sold as a slave. Imagine such pain, rejection not from strangers, but from those you love. Later, though innocent, he was thrown into prison during the prime years of his life. Yet, in the darkness of the prison cell, he never turned away from Allah. Instead, he spread the message of Tawheed to his fellow inmates, saying: ***“O my fellow-prisoners! Which is far better: many different lords or Allah - the One, the Supreme? Whatever ‘idols’ you worship instead of Him are mere names which you and your forefathers have made up a practice Allah has never authorized. It is only Allah Who decides. He has commanded that you worship none but Him. That is the upright faith, but most people do not know.”*** [9] Years later, Allah raised him from a prisoner to a ruler, and from abandonment to honor.

Then reflect on the life of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), the leader of all Prophets, who bore trials with unparalleled patience and dignity. His hardships were countless, from the painful rejection at Ta’if, where stones were hurled, to the

personal sorrow of burying six of his seven children. Among these trials was his experience with poverty. When we find ourselves feeling deprived, fearing loss, or struggling financially, we must remember the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). There were times when he entered his home and asked his wives if there was anything to eat. Our mother 'A'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated:

“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to me one day: ‘Do we have anything (to eat)?’ I replied, ‘No.’ Thereupon, he said, ‘Then I am fasting.’” [10]

These narrations are timeless relevant in every set-up of any century. We are often met with situations similar to those of the Ambiya (Alayhis Salam), though not parallel in intensity, but certainly in substance. And it is in these very moments, every trial becomes a divine invitation, to rise, to return, and to rediscover Allah’s nearness. Just as every Prophet’s test ended in elevation, every believer’s patience, even the smallest act of steadfastness, finds its reward with the One who never leaves His servants unseen, or unheard. The stories of the Prophets are a profound source of solace and strength for anyone who has ever felt sidelined, cut off, or marginalized. They endured the ultimate boycott from their own families and communities, yet their examples show us that such sadness and rejection do not signify a loss of divine favor. These narratives are, thus, not mere bedtime tales; they are timeless life lessons. They remind us that our suffering is not isolated but shared with the noblest of people. If Allah (subhanahu wa ta’ala) allowed them to face such trials, it was only to elevate their status and to teach a timeless truth: His Will surpasses all human will.

Endnotes

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The Prophetic Model of ‘Conversation’: A Pedagogical Perspective

-Nazrah Adeel

Communication is an integral aspect of human life. It is the process of creating shared understanding, and is an inherent characteristic granted to mankind. Conversation, a dynamic process of listening and speaking using verbal, visual, and vocal language, is the most powerful and fascinating form of communication skills. [1] When Allah (SWT) created Adam, the very first manifestation of his abilities was in the form of dialogue. This incident is narrated to the progeny of Adam in Surah Al-Baqarah, the second chapter of the Glorious Qur’an.

‘Remember’ when your Lord said to the angels, “I am going to place a successive ‘human’ authority on earth.” They asked ‘Allah’, “Will You place in it someone who will spread corruption there and shed blood while we glorify Your praises and proclaim Your holiness?” Allah responded, “I know what you do not know.” He taught Adam the names of all things, then He presented them

“Tell Me the names of these, if what you say is true?” They replied, “Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are truly the All-Knowing, All-Wise.” Allah said, “O Adam! Inform them of their names.” Then when Adam did, Allah said, “Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?” [2]

This establishes that speech is a fundamental and inseparable aspect of human existence, and among the greatest blessings bestowed upon humankind.

Studies say that conversation, if not the only, is one of the most effective tools, which shapes human interactions, forming the dynamics of relationships, daily experiences and work environments. Effective communication plays a significant role in shaping individuals and ultimately in navigating the complexities of daily lives. [3]

The Quranic Paradigms

Conversation serves as a primary method in the Qur'an for conveying the Divine message. Rather than relying solely on narrative style, many Quranic verses employ a conversational approach. This is evident from the recurrence of words derived from the root letters *Qaaf-Waaw-Laam* (meaning "speech" or "talk")—which appear 1,722 times in the Qur'an. Islam, as a divine way of life, places great emphasis on mutual dialogue and meaningful conversation. Let us now explore these Qur'anic paradigms of conversation established by Allah SWT:

١. وَقُلْ لِعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

"Tell My 'believing' servants to say only what is 'best'." [4]

The verse uses the word 'Ahsan,' which Ibn Kathir defines as 'the best' and 'the politest of words. [5] Maulana Maududi writes in the explanation of this verse that the believers should **neither use harsh words, nor make exaggerated statements.** [6]

٢. وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

"And say what is 'right.'" [7]

According to Tafsir Ibn Kathir, it means to talk in a **straightforward manner; with no crookedness or distortion; words of appropriate justice.** [8] Linguistically, the word "Sadeed" comes from the root Seen-Daal-Daal, from which words like As-Saddu or Sud-Dun are derived, meaning a wall or barrier. [9] The connection lies in the idea of protection and firmness. Just as a wall or barrier protects and prevents deviation, a Sadeed word is a word that is firm, correct, and safeguarded against error or harm. In other words, it is precise and appropriate, providing the right guidance and leaving no room for misinterpretation, like a wall that stands firm against chaos. So in the Qur'anic context, the use of Sadeed conveys reliability, firmness, and protective nature of the words, making them truly **"right and appropriate"** in guiding or instructing

٣. فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَيِّنًا

"Speak to him 'gently'" [10]

Layyin is described as a gentle speech, free from harshness. [11] It originates from the root letters ل-ي-ن from which the word لَيِّنٌ is derived, which is mentioned in Surah Aal Imran to describe the

character of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The word carries the deep meaning- that of softness, tenderness, moderateness, and kindness.

4. We also get several insights from Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) Sunnah regarding conversation. His conversational style is characterised by kindness, [12] active listening, [13] respect, [14] clarity, [15] positivity, [16] and humility [17] which also encompasses the above-mentioned principles.

In Islam, every child is born upon fitrah, his natural instincts, which, if not perverted, will lead him to the straight path. [18] When a child's fitrah is nurtured in the right direction, he will grow into a God-conscious and dutiful individual. It is the responsibility of those around children, foremost among them the family, to provide a safe, secure, and healthy environment that supports their holistic development and preserves their fitrah. To achieve this, mutual dialogue, both verbal and non-verbal cues, and the words and tone used while speaking to them hold central importance. Efficiently communicating with children is a vital process that plays a critical role in their cognitive, social, and emotional development. According to Vygotsky, a developmental psychologist, language is the primary cultural tool that enables children to develop higher-level thinking. Vygotsky further emphasises on the effects of sentences spoken to children. According to him, the dialogues of More Knowledgeable Others, who he described as a person or resource that possesses greater expertise, shape the learner's capacity for independent thinking. [19]

The previously mentioned verses establish the general principles of communication. From this, we can understand that this approach needs to be implemented while conversing with children too. In the following, we will draw on two Qur'anic examples to seek insight into how conversation with children should be shaped.

Teaching Emotional Resilience

The first example is that of Prophet Yaqub (Alayhis Salam), who engaged with his young son Yusuf (Alayhis Salam), when he came to him describing a strange dream. The Qur'an narrates this dialogue as follows: **'Remember' when Joseph said to his father, "O my dear father! Indeed I dreamt of eleven stars, and the sun, and the moon—I saw them prostrating to me!" He replied, "O my dear son! Do not relate your vision to**

your brothers, or they will devise a plot against you. Surely Satan is a sworn enemy to humankind. And so will your Lord choose you 'O Joseph', and teach you the interpretation of dreams, and perfect His favour upon you and the descendants of Jacob—'just' as He once perfected it upon your forefathers, Abraham and Isaac. Surely your Lord is All-Knowing, All-Wise.” [20]

These dialogues carry endless wisdom and insights for us. Ya'qub (Alayhis Salam) listens to his son patiently and attentively, validating his emotions and without expressing confusion or disbelief. As noted by *Child and Adolescent*, an organization accredited by the American Psychological Association, emotional resilience, the ability to understand, manage, and cope with one's feelings is essential for children's long-term happiness, well-being, and success. It identifies six key emotional skills: recognizing and accepting feelings, expressing them appropriately, maintaining a positive outlook, developing healthy coping strategies, managing negative emotions, and handling stressful life events. [21]

Yaqub (Alayhis Salam) beautifully models these skills through his words. He acknowledges Yusuf's (Alayhis Salam) feelings, gently preparing him for potential challenges that can be posed by his brothers, and attributes wrongdoing to Satan. In doing so, he guides Yusuf (Alayhis Salam) to recognize the true source of evil, preventing the development of resentment toward his brothers. Moreover, Yaqub (Alayhis Salam) fosters hope and positivity by reminding Yusuf (Alayhis Salam) of Allah's blessings upon their family and the divine wisdom underlying life's trials. This balanced approach nurtures emotional resilience in Yusuf (Alayhis Salam), shielding him from despair while simultaneously preserving faith and reliance (tawakkul) upon Allah.

Through this compassionate interaction, Yaqub (Alayhis Salam) instills the seeds of emotional resilience in Yusuf (Alayhis Salam), a foundation that later enables him to confront betrayal, hardship, and responsibilities of power with remarkable patience, forgiveness, and unwavering faith.

Thus, this dialogue offers several important lessons for parents and caregivers when interacting with children. A child's emotions should not be dismissed; rather, they should be acknowledged and guided with care and wisdom. Parents are

encouraged to prepare children for challenging circumstances by educating them about potential dangers while modeling strong faith and trust in Allah and maintaining firm belief in His support. Furthermore, this guidance should integrate references to Allah's attributes, as this nurtures a firm foundation of Imaan and equipping children to navigate life's trials with faith, resilience, and emotional stability.

Seeking Opinion and Fostering Confidence

The second example we reflect on is the interaction between Ibrahim and Ismael (Alayhima Assalam). The Qur'an narrates the conversation as follows: ***“Then when the boy reached the age to work with him, Abraham said, “O my dear son! I have seen in a dream that I (must) sacrifice you. So tell me what you think.” He replied, “O my dear father! Do as you are commanded. Allah willing, you will find me steadfast.” [22]***

This dialogue is noteworthy. Allah commands a father to sacrifice his son, and he responds with immediate obedience, surrendering entirely to Allah's will without hesitation or reluctance. He surrendered. Yet, one may wonder, why did he engage his son in a discussion that may have led to an otherwise response? By this time Ismael (Alayhis Salam) was approximately 13 years old, mature enough to express his opinions. Ibrahim's (Alayhis Salam) awareness of his son's mental and emotional maturity demonstrates the nature of this interaction.

Ibraheem (Alayhis Salam) addressed his son with the words *“Ya Bunayya”*, signaling attachment and affection. Research shows that attachment security in adolescence exerts precisely the same effect on development as it does in early childhood. [23] We see that Ibraheem (Alayhis Salam) used a dialogical approach. Hence, it offers us insights into seeking children's opinions, which contributes to developing a strong sense of confidence within them. This interaction illustrates the presence of mutual consultation and openness, setting for us an exemplary model of Prophetic parenting. [24] Ibraheem (Alayhis Salam) asked an open-ended question. Studies suggest that open-ended questions foster critical thinking, encourage detailed responses, help scaffold knowledge, reveal thought processes, illuminate ideas and encourage dialogue and discovery. (Komildjanovna, 2024) The question posed by Ibrahim (Alayhis Salam) did not pertain to whether or not to execute the command

was already clear. The Qur'anic narration highlights Ibrahim (Alayhis Salam) establishing the relationship with his son, allowing Ismaeel's (Alayhis Salam) to articulate his perspective and readiness.

In return, Ismaeel's (Alayhis Salam) response is also to be considered. He responded with a properly structured statement: **"O my dear father! Do as you are commanded. Allah willing, you will find me steadfast."** His response demonstrates both confidence and trust in Allah's commands as well as positive self-perception, reflecting strength of the relational bond. Overall, this brief conversation gives deep insights into the communication skills that parents and educators must cultivate to develop strong connections with their children. Their conversation should be aimed at building confidence, fostering critical thinking, and providing children a healthy environment that facilitates the development of a positive self-perception.

Providing Safe Space:

Anas bin Malik (Radhi Allahu Anhu) was ten years old when his mother, Umm Sulaym, brought him to Prophet ﷺ, so that he may serve the Prophet and grow up under his supervision. He says **"I served the Prophet for ten years, and I swear by Allah that he never said uff to me even once. He never said something I did, 'Why did you do that?' and he never said regarding something that I didn't do, 'Why didn't you do such and such?'"** [25]

Studies show that children at ages 9 to 10 begin showing independent decision-making. Thus, a positive and nurturing relationship with a caregiver and setting up an appropriate balance between independence and roles fosters self-confidence and self-assurance. [26] Anas's (Radhi Allahu Anhu) narration beautifully shows the Prophet's ﷺ consideration for the demands of his age.

Conclusion

Thus, our conversations must be integrated with *ihsaan*, *sidaad*, kindness, positivity and clarity. The Prophetic Models of conversation, therefore, provide us, as parents and educators, a framework that must be incorporated into our day to day exchanges. Our mutual conversations must aim to:

- Build harmonious relationships,
- Foster confidence and self-worth,
- Enable children to manage emotions constructively,

- Integrate Qur'anic principles with the highest aim for preparing children to serve as responsible Khalifahs on Earth.

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Living Revelation

فَأَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ

“So Where Are You Going?”

-Sameera Irshad

In a time marked by heedlessness and moral decay, how often do we pause and ask ourselves a fundamental question? A question that is not merely rhetorical but a profound moral interrogation. A question that demands an answer from our conscience. A question directed at a humanity that is always in motion yet oblivious to where it is headed.

A question that lies at the very heart of *Surah At-Takwir*. The surah that confronts the reader with clarity, beginning by dismantling the illusions of permanence and ending by questioning our very sense of direction itself, posing one of the most unsettling inquiries in the Qur'an: "***Fa-ayna Tazhabun***"- ***So, where are you going?*** [1] The question that stands as a challenge to an unreflective life, one that chases speed over direction.

Surah Takwir opens by obliterating the illusion of permanence through a vivid imagery of the Day of Judgment. The cosmic collapse, the sun darkening,

the stars scattering, and the mountains set in motion. The imagery is not mere description but a reminder. The disruptions are meant to awaken heedless humanity from its false sense of security. By dismantling our celestial, social, and psychological anchors, the surah compels us to confront the question of where we are headed. We often define direction through careers, status, entertainment, or validation—things we relentlessly chase. However, when these pursuits dominate our purpose of life, the question of direction indicts misplaced priorities. And before asking the question of direction, the surah reminds us that the foundations of movement are fragile without conscience.



Today, when social and cultural wrongs become normalized and injustice prevails, Allah reminds: **“And when the girl (who was) buried alive is asked for what sin she was killed.”** [2] calling out the actions of the people. The Qur’an questions the victim, not the perpetrator, to reveal societal moral blindness. The Ayah affirms that this ethical degradation would not go unnoticed; accountability and justice await even a single wrongdoing, stern warning against following set norms blindly, without addressing their legitimacy.

The Qur’an then directs the gaze inwards, emphasising personal accountability through the Ayah: **“When the pages are spread (made public)”** [3], **“A soul will then know what it has brought (with it).”** [4] Accountability, that resonates as an inner reckoning, a mirror when every soul is confronted with what it has done, beyond all claims of justification. The unavoidable realization. As stated in the verse, **“Until, when they reach it, their hearing, their eyes, and their skins will testify against them concerning what they used to do,”** [6] leaving no room for denial, excuse, or the shifting of responsibility, as one’s own faculties, even body parts would stand in evidence against one’s actions. A life lived without reflection will ultimately confront itself. Before becoming sheep of a herd, we are reminded that we shall be questioned individually about what we have done. A striking parallel appears in Hannah Arendt’s analysis of “thoughtlessness”. She argues that moral collapse does not arise from ignorance, but the refusal to think ethically, as she mentions **“Absence of thought is not stupidity; it can be found in highly intelligent people, and a wicked heart is not its cause; it is probably the other way around, that wickedness may be caused by absence of thought”**. [7]

Today, we are surrounded by numerous ideologies, ignorant customs, and a whole new arena of *Fitnah*, and the access has made us more vulnerable than ever before. Here, the Surah makes us pause and reflect that the *mahshar* (the day of judgment) won’t be an easy blame game. So who would I hold accountable for my heedlessness and wrongdoings? The ancestors who used to follow a wrong tradition, the society that I am trying to please, the people who I want to get fame from, the trends that I want to fit in or the ideologies that feed my *nafs-e-ammaarah*? [8] The answer is very clear in the numerous verses of Qur’an itself, one of which is: **“And every soul earns not (blame) except against itself,**

and no bearer of burdens will bear one another” [9] and **“when those who have been followed disassociate themselves from those who followed (them) and they (all) see the punishment, and cut off from the ties (of relationship).”** [10] What you do is what you will face: no blames, no excuses, no justifications. Even the closest shall not intercede for you at your wrong, even if it was motivated or normalized by them, just as mentioned in the very next Surah (Abasa) - **“On the Day a man will flee from his brother, And his mother and his father, And his wife and his children, For every man, that Day, will be a matter adequate for him.”** [11] (i.e., to occupy him. He will be concerned only with himself, thus forgetting all others).

Surah Takwir then addresses the source of guidance itself, rejecting claims the revelation is delusion or fantasy, through the verses **“[That] indeed, it [i.e., the Qur’an] is a word [conveyed by] a noble messenger [i.e., Gabriel].”** [12] and **“And your companion [i.e., Prophet Muhammad] is not [at all] mad”**. [13] In the contemporary world marked by misinformation and the attrition of truth; this insistence is crucial. Knowledge without moral anchoring becomes unstable, information might multiply, but wisdom diminishes. It highlights that truth cannot be distorted as per convenience, it is not entertainment, it is orientation. And at this point, the question steps in: “So where are you going”, towards the truth, or away from it? What gives us direction? Towards what end are we moving?

This also challenges modern obsessions with material success, power, influence and fame; none of which can be the ultimate purpose or source of direction. The power of this question lies in the failure to provide an easy answer. By directing us toward introspection, it strips away our distractions, excuses, and borrowed justifications until only conscience remains. In turning our gaze around, it compels us to reassess the choices we make, the companionship we keep, our day-to-day priorities, and ultimately, our true purpose.

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And the Surah concludes with the affirmation that free will is not void of accountability. When we have analysed where we are going, we should be able to answer the “*Why*” questions, and hence, should be aware of the fact that freedom comes with responsibility. Long before modern critiques of moral drift, Shah Waliullah warned that societies decay not from lack of progress, but from the loss of awareness of return and accountability. In his *magnum opus*, ‘**Hujjat Allah Al-Balighah**’, he writes **“The conditions of people are corrupted only when they lose awareness of return (to God) and accountability.”** [14] This insight resonates powerfully as distractions become primary means of avoiding reflection and free will divorces itself from consequence. At this point we need to understand that choice is real, deliberate and consequential, yet it unfolds within a divinely ordered moral framework.

Hence, the Surah does not end in spectacle, nor fear alone; it ends with a call to reflection, an alarm to our deep sleep. After dismantling false securities, moral blindness and the reality of choice and accountability, the fundamental questions should shake our conscience when Allah asks, ‘*So, where are you going?*’ The question is not addressed to a distant future, but to the present moment and the living conscience, to you and to me, to what we are and what we are becoming.

References

- [1] The Quran [Surah At-Takwir: 26] translation by Sahih international, accessed on January 6, 2026 at quran.com
- [2] *Ibid.*, verse 8–9.
- [3] Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Al-Qur’an al Azim 81:8-9
- [4] The Qur’an, *supra note 1*, verse 10.
- [5] The Qur’an, *supra note 1*, verse 14.
- [6] Quran, [Surah Fussilat:20] translation by Sahih international, accessed on January 6, 2026 at quran.com
- [7] Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind* (vol. 1, Thinking), p. 13
- [8] commanding self; ego
- [9] Quran, [Surah Al An’am: 164] translation by Sahih international, accessed on January 6, 2026 at quran.com
- [10] Quran [Surah Al Baqarah: 166] translation by Sahih international, accessed on January 6, 2026 at quran.com
- [11] Quran [Surah Abasa:34-37] translation by Sahih international, accessed on January 6, 2026 at quran.com
- [11] The Qur’an, *supra note 1*, verses 34–37.
- [12] The Qur’an, *supra note 1*, verse 22.
- [13] Shah Waliullah Dehlvi, *Hujjat Allah al-Balighah*, trans. Marcia K. Hermansen (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 117.

FAITH IN VERSES

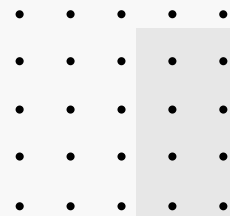
The Abominable Rainbow

-Sameera Irshad

Justifying themselves, shouting out loud.
Is it really an achievement? Why so proud?
And youth today, falling into propaganda,
calling themselves woke, yet following the crowd.

Against the laws of nature, how audaciously they fight.
Don't they fear? How wrath of God they invite,
Brazenly declaring war against their creator,
And then wondering the reason for their plight.

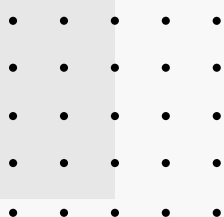
The rainbow is nothing but delusion,
Drawing masses into moral revulsion,
Compelling them to question their identity,
And fall into the trap of an illusion.



You deny what even skeletons from centuries ago
Can clearly evince, but you still forego.
Spreading immorality, insanity in ways.
History edifies its outcome, don't they know?

Oh dear, this rainbow is entirely paradoxical.
All its hues and tints are cynical,
How colours can even blind your ability, this
so-called "pride" is a perfect example.

It's high time now to take a stand,
To step into reality, this illusion must disband.
How minds of masses should be sanctified
From this abominable rainbow, we must understand.



Gaza will Never Fall

-Nimra Ali

Gaza bleeds, but still it stands,
With broken walls and shattered lands,
Smoke may rise and sky may burn,
But hearts of stone will never turn.

The bombs fall loud, the nights are long, Yet
every soul keeps growing strong, They *fast*
they pray, they stand so tall, With nothing
left, they still have all.

Mothers clutch their babies tight,
While fathers walk through endless night,
The world just watches, *turns* away,
But GAZA wakes to fight each day.

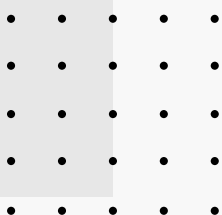
No food to eat, no home to rest,
But faith lives loud in every chest,
“*La ilaha illallah*” they cry,
Even when loved ones say goodbye.



They do not leave, they do not turn, Though
they have lost their daughter, son.
This land is BLOOD, this land is SOUL,
No force on earth can take that role.

A child draws peace on rubble walls,
A call to hope when silence calls,
And still the *Adhaan* climbs the air,
As angels count each whispered prayer.

So write it down, and let it stay,
GAZA will never fade away,
They have lost so much, but still they give,
A lesson in how hearts can live.



Some are Yusufs

-Azaa Junaid

Some are Yusufs of tender age,
Coveted and hated for being loved,
treasured, and cherished;
Betrayed and traduced by those endeared to
their cores.

Some are Yusufs of the well,
thrown abandoned, engrossed in dullness
and gloom,
Not a hand to lift them up, not a rope to
climb up.

Some are Yusufs, bid in trade,
in the markets of slaves, precious and
exquisite,
Yet merchandised for pennies, in the hands
of despicable ignobles.

Others may be Yusufs of the Youth,
trapped in tempting isolation, in chambers
well fortified,
With the seven locks hung, who run for their
Lord in hope and fear.

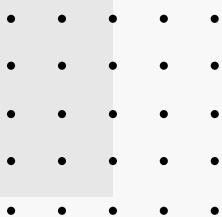


Some are Yusufs unjustly imprisoned,
with no laws to regulate, or a judge to hear.

Others may be Yusufs of forgotten
incarceration,
neglected and forsaken in their prolonged
sufferings,
uncared for and unattended.

And some are Yusufs, raised in authority,
no power deceives them, no revenge enrages
them,
who walk with humility, carried by divine
justice and mercy.

But who are Yusufs, to whom bow the stars,
sun, and moon?
They are the Yusufs, as their Lord calls them
—Al-Muhsinun.



Laut Chalein

-Abdul Hannan Qazi

Phir hukm-e-Iqra ka ehteram kiya jae
(Once again, let the command of Iqra be honored)

Phir apne haasidon ko salam kiya jae
(Once again, let us greet even those who envy us)

In but faroshon ke beech phir ek baar
(Amidst these sellers of idols, once again)

Chalo daawat-e-Tauheed ka kaam kiya jae
(Come, let us resume the mission of calling towards Oneness)

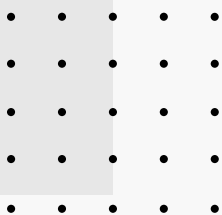


Phir ek baar padha jae Alif Laam o Meem
(Once again, let Alif, Laam, Meem be recited)

Kaalak lage dil ko kiya jae qalb-e-saleem
(Let the stained heart be transformed into a pure one)

Zabaan se nahi ab rooh se karaya jae ada
(Not with the tongue, but now with the soul it should be uttered)

Subhana Rabbi al A'la, Subhana Rabbi al Azeem
(Glory be to my Lord, the Most High; Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great)



Apne ajdaad ki ghaltiyon ko tasleem kar le
(Acknowledge the mistakes of our forefathers)

Zulmat mein bahe ansuon ko tasneem kar le
(Turn the tears shed in darkness into sacred springs)

Seene par rakh phir pathar ae Bilal
(O Bilal, once again place the stone upon your chest)

La Ilaha Illallah ki takreem kar le
(And honor the proclamation of There is no god but Allah)

Zamaane se juda hone ki khata ki jae
(Let the sin of detaching from the age be committed)

Phir sifat-e-tafkeer mujhko ata ki jae
(Grant me once again the gift of deep reflection)

Aakhir kaun hoon? Kyun hoon? Kya hoon?
(Who am I, after all? Why do I exist? What am I?)

Hira mein chal ke ye baat pata ki jae
(Let this be discovered by retreating to Hira)



Quraish ki basti ki taraf phir laut chalein
(Let us return once more towards the land of Quraysh)

Mustafa ki hasti ki taraf phir laut chalein
(Let us turn again towards the being of Mustafa ﷺ)

Phir ek Taweel safar anjaam diya jae
(Let a long journey be undertaken once again)

Makkah chal ke is khabar ko aam kiya jae
(Let us go to Makkah and spread this message far and wide)

