

Shaykh Mawlānā  
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*ḥafīẓahullāh*

# *The* Gift *of* YOUTH



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THE GIFT OF YOUTH  
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## FOREWORD

Imagine, if you were to die today, how do you think people would remember you? Would they cry tears of sorrow at the loss of a young person who was an asset to the community? Or would they smile with relief because your death means one less menace to society? Imagine, if today was your last day, would you be happy to meet Allāh? And more than that, would Allāh be happy to meet you?

In this booklet, Shaykh Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat *ḥa fiẓahullāh* discusses how an individual should spend the most valuable portion of life - the period of youth - in good works aimed at acquiring the pleasure of the Giver of Youth. The respected Shaykh highlights the responsibilities that young Muslims have and how the period of youth should be invested not in carelessness and sin but in developing one's self and gaining the proximity of Allāh.

May Allāh help each one of us to pay heed to the respected Shaykh's heartfelt words and may He make us amongst those youth who will be granted shade under His throne on that day when there will be no shade but His shade.

Muḥammad ‘Abdullāh



## The Gift of Youth

### ANAS IBN MĀLIK ؓ

When the Prophet ﷺ migrated from Makkah to Madīnah, Anas ibn Mālik ؓ was 10 years old. He was related to the Prophet ﷺ via the Banū Najjār, who feature in the Prophet's ﷺ lineage on his mother's side. Umm Sulaym ؓ, the mother of Anas ؓ, dedicated her son to the service of the Prophet ﷺ. Relating the episode in his old age, Anas ؓ said:

فَقَالَتْ أُمِّي خُوَيْدِمُكَ أَدْعُ اللَّهَ لَهُ قَالَ فَدَعَا لِي بِكُلِّ خَيْرٍ وَكَانَ  
فِي آخِرِ مَا دَعَا لِي بِهِ أَنْ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ اكْثِرْ مَالَهُ وَوَلَدَهُ وَبَارِكْ لَهُ فِيهِ

**My mother said: “Your little servant; pray to Allāh for him.”**

**So he prayed for every goodness for me, and amongst the last things he asked for me were, “O Allāh, grant him abundance in wealth and offspring and grant him barakah in them.”<sup>1</sup>**

In another narration, he described in detail the du‘ā that the Prophet ﷺ made for him:

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ فِي مَالِهِ وَلَدِهِ وَأَطِلْ عُمرَهُ وَاعْفِرْ ذَنْبَهُ

**O Allāh, bless him in his wealth and his offspring and lengthen his lifespan and forgive his sins.<sup>2</sup>**

Commenting on the outcome of this prayer, Anas رضي الله عنه said that his garden would give fruit twice a year and he was blessed so much in his offspring that by the time Ḥajjāj came to Baṣra, over one hundred and twenty of his offspring had been buried. As for the prayer for longevity, he was given such a long life that he commented how he had become tired of life. It is recorded that Anas رضي الله عنه was amongst those four or five Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم that were the last to leave this world, and he was the last Ṣaḥābī to pass away in the region of Baṣra, aged about a hundred years. And regarding the last du‘ā, the forgiveness of sins, he hoped that it too would be accepted.

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1 Al-Bukhārī  
2 ‘Umdah-al-Qārī

When the Prophet ﷺ passed away, Anas ؓ was only twenty years old. Regarding his ten years of service to the Prophet ﷺ, he comments:

خَدَمْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَشَرَ سِنِينَ فَمَا قَالَ لِي أُفٍّ  
وَلَا لِمَ صَنَعْتَ وَلَا أَلَّا صَنَعْتَ

**I served the Prophet ﷺ for ten years. He never rebuked me or asked why I had done something or why I had not done something.<sup>3</sup>**

Anas ؓ is one of the companions who have been classed as *Mukthirīn fil Ḥadīth* by the eminent imām and muḥaddith, Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal ؓ. His classification commemorates those six companions who transmitted the greatest number of ḥadīth to the ummah. It is evident from the books of ḥadīth that the majority of his 1,286 narrations are attributed directly to the Prophet ﷺ, meaning that he had acquired a substantial corpus of knowledge from the Prophet ﷺ by the time he was twenty. Afterwards, he went to other senior companions ؓ and benefited from their knowledge too.

So Anas ؓ had already achieved a significant amount in his life by the time he was twenty, an age

at which many still consider themselves children in today's day and age. His sense of responsibility and level of maturity were such that from the tender age of ten, he was helping and assisting the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ and fulfilling his service to the required level. The Prophet ﷺ never became annoyed with him and never did the situation arise where he had to be told to leave and return when he was older.

In our environment even a twenty-five or thirty year old lacks the sense of responsibility he should have and goes on thinking that he is still too young to take life seriously.

## **MATURITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

One of the aims of discussing the life of Anas رضي الله عنه is to create love for the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ in our hearts and to acknowledge that they made the Dīn, not the dunyā, their goal. They frequented the company of the Prophet ﷺ, acquired as much knowledge as possible, practiced what they learned and then sacrificed their entire lives in passing this knowledge on to others.

Another aim is to help our youth appreciate and understand the importance of maturity of thought



and actions. From the age of awareness, be it ten, eleven or twelve, they should expect to begin to take responsibilities upon their shoulders and aim to become self-sufficient as soon as possible. Our youngsters should aspire to stand on their own two feet and regulate their lives. By the time they reach puberty, or eighteen or twenty at the most, they should aspire to be independent to the extent that their parents are able to feel their duty to their children has been fulfilled. Rather than being looked after, our youth should become self-sufficient and able to assist in running the family home and should serve their parents.

Even before reaching the age of puberty, a person needs to have understood with his heart and mind what the aim of life is and why he has been sent into this world. Upon reaching the age of puberty, as far as the *Sharī'ah* (Law of Allāh) is concerned, one is now *mukallaf* (accountable for his actions). The injunctions of *ḥalāl* (permissible) and *ḥarām* (impermissible) become applicable and all the obligatory duties apply. After becoming *bāligh* (mature) if one leaves a *fard* or does a *ḥarām* action, one is sinful.

It follows that by the time a person has reached the age of puberty, Allāh ﷻ has given him the adequate amount of understanding needed to comprehend his responsibilities and differentiate between right and wrong. At that age, a person is able to discern which path to take in life and which paths will be harmful to his future. If this was not the case then why would Allāh ﷻ make a person responsible upon reaching puberty?

However, the modern society we live in is one that encourages a life of heedlessness, even after reaching puberty. We do not want to be aware of responsibilities and do not wish to take any burden upon our shoulders. We just want to eat, drink, enjoy life and hang around; we are totally unwilling to take on any form of responsibility.

## THE CONDITION OF OUR PREDECESSORS

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn-al-‘Āṣ ﷺ, was the son of ‘Amr ibn-al-‘Āṣ ﷺ. ‘Allāmah Nawawī ﷺ writes that there was a difference of only eleven or twelve years between their ages. If we take the latter opinion, it means that by the age of eleven ‘Amr ibn-al-‘Āṣ ﷺ was married and by the time he was twelve he already had a son. Hence, in those days,

young men would have such a mature outlook and understanding of their responsibilities by the age of twelve that they could marry, look after their wives, and be capable of supporting children as well.

Today, we are not ready to take up any responsibility. Even though in bygone times the average lifespan used to be longer than today, people still used to be attentive, take on responsibility early, and initiate their works quickly. With our relatively shorter lifespans, we are still unwilling to settle down, even after reaching the age of twenty-five, thirty or forty.

This reluctance is a deception from Shayṭān. People of earlier generations would have completed all of their accomplishments by the time they reached the age of forty. On reaching forty, they would wrap up their bedding and declare that the time for sleep was now over. It meant that they were done with worldly achievements; the time had come for cutting down on eating, drinking and worldly pursuits. Sleep was relegated to brief moments when and where the need arose, before awakening again to prepare for the hereafter.

The universally renowned scholar ‘Allāmah Nawawī رحمہ اللہ achieved an enormous amount in his life. Along with possessing exceptional conduct and piety, he authored the famous commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* that bears his name, as well as *Riyāḍ-aṣ-Ṣāliḥīn*, his famous *Arba‘īn* and many other works. It is interesting to note that he achieved all of this in his youth, as he passed away at the age of forty-five.

Similarly, the Leader of the Faithful, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz رحمہ اللہ lived for only forty years, yet he has gone down in history for his remarkable achievements. Known as the Second ‘Umar, he ruled the Muslim world in an exemplary fashion and his justice and fairness remain unparalleled. There is no doubt that our pious predecessors valued the potential of youth and made the most of their allotted time in this world.

## THE FAMOUS YOUNG ṢAḤĀBAH رحمہم اللہ

Anas رضی اللہ عنہ is only one of the many great companions رضی اللہ عنہم that were young people under forty during the life of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal رضی اللہ عنہ was also a young man, in the prime of his youth. He accepted Islām at the age of eighteen on the occasion of the

Second Pledge of ‘Aqabah. Despite his youthfulness, the Prophet ﷺ used to say about him:

وَأَعْلَمُهُم بِالْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ مُعَاذُ بْنُ جَبَلٍ

**From amongst my companions, the one with the most knowledge of ḥalāl and ḥarām is Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal ﷺ.**<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, the Prophet ﷺ would advise people to learn the Qur’ān from him.

Abū Hurayrah ﷺ too, was a young man. He accepted Islām at the age of 26 and stayed with the Prophet ﷺ for the next three years. In that time he acquired so much knowledge from the Prophet ﷺ that he went on to communicate over five thousand aḥādīth to the ummah.

The young ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ was only thirteen when the Prophet ﷺ passed away. ‘Umar ﷺ used to include him during consultations along with senior Ṣaḥābah who had been at Badr. At the time he was so young that companions such as ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf ﷺ expressed surprise at his inclusion. ‘Umar ﷺ demonstrated the value of his inclusion by letting the senior Ṣaḥābah witness the

young ‘Abdullāh’s exemplary understanding of the Qur’ān.

By the standards of our time, all of these great companions were only children during the life of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. Because they are our elders and because they lived fourteen hundred years before us, we picture elderly figures when we hear their names. We think Abū Hurayrah ؓ must have been an old man of seventy when he was a great muḥaddith or that ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ must have been of a similar age when he did his work of Tafsīr.

## OUR CONDITION TODAY

The young should keep the lives of companions such as Anas ibn Mālīk ؓ before them. They should repent for that part of their youth that they have already wasted and safeguard the remainder of their lives.

Sometimes students, be they at Dārul ‘Ulūm, Madrasah, College or University, just do not seem to be able to accept the fact that they are adults. They may be in their twenties or thirties, studying to become Muftis or pursuing PhDs, but while

they are studying they remain childlike and do not behave with maturity; they often act in a way that is unsuitable for an adult.

We need to change such attitudes. The injunction of our Sharī'ah is that as soon as we reach the age of puberty we are adults and should be responsible members of our community. It immediately becomes necessary for us to follow all of the commands of Allāh ﷻ. It becomes necessary for us, according to our capability and influence, to forbid wrong and invite towards good; to supervise and look after our young ones; to care for and respect our elders; to fulfil our household tasks; to differentiate between right and wrong; to adopt good company and refrain from bad company; and to spend our lives in such a manner that we become good examples and role models for others.

We need to take a leaf out of the book of the young Ṣaḥābah ؓ who spent their lives in acquiring the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ. They were not like us. They did not put off good deeds and responsible behaviour until their hair turned grey, preferring to engross themselves in enjoying the pleasures of youth. They understood that the gift of life melts away by the second.

ہو رہی ہے عمر مثل برف کم  
چپکے چپکے رفتہ رفتہ دم بدم

**Life is melting away, like the melting of ice;  
Silently, slowly, with every breath.**

This life of ours is melting away. It is just like ice. Once it melts away it will be of no use, so before then, we need to make use of it. And the cream of life is youth, during which time we can accomplish those things that we cannot in old age.

## **DO WE KNOW HOW OUR LIVES WILL END?**

Of primary importance is the fact that we have no guarantee whatsoever that we will ever reach middle age, let alone old age. We are dreaming if we wish to spend our time in the pursuit of pleasure and enjoyment and then, when we get older, expect to settle down and do those tasks that are required of us to please Allāh ﷻ. It is a mere dream; nothing but a fantasy. Do we not hear of cases where suddenly and unexpectedly a thirty-five year old, a twenty year old, even a fifteen year old has died? Do we not hear of instances where young friends enjoying a night out committing sins are later involved in fatal



road accidents? Do we not hear of young people dying whilst drunk or high on drugs?

In a ḥadīth we find that the Prophet ﷺ has said:

يُبعثُ كُلُّ عَبْدٍ عَلَى مَا مَاتَ عَلَيْهِ

**Every person will be resurrected (on the day of Qiyāmah) in the state in which he died.** <sup>5</sup>

Commenting on this ḥadīth, the ‘ulamā have mentioned that if a person was to die whilst playing the flute, on the day of Qiyāmah he will be presented in the Court of Allāh ﷻ whilst playing the flute.

If a person dies in an evil gathering, he will be resurrected in an evil gathering. If he dies whilst disobeying Allāh ﷻ, he will be resurrected in the state of disobeying Allāh ﷻ. This is something to fear very greatly. It is for this reason that the Prophet ﷺ would make the du‘ā,

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ خَيْرَ أَيَّامِي يَوْمَ أَلْقَاكَ فِيهِ

**O Allāh make the best day of my life the day on which I meet You.** <sup>6</sup>

In this du‘ā, Rasūlullāh ﷺ has taught us to ask Allāh ﷻ to make the best day of our lives the one

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5 Muslim  
6 At-Tabrānī

on which we die. This is why our pious predecessors would remain fearful regarding what state they would be in at the time of death, fearing lest they die in the state of kufr, shirk or in a state of sin.

## **SHAYṬĀN'S PLOY**

Shayṭān is very cunning and clever: in order to drag us into Jahannam with him, he sets up diverse snares and deploys varied strategies. He beautifies all manner of vile ideas and injects them into our minds. He makes us think that there is still a long time left and death is still a long way away. He reassures us that we are still young and does not let the thought of death occur to us. Subsequently, he does not let the worry of the hereafter develop in our hearts. In the event that someone does remember death and feel concern, Shayṭān occupies him in pleasures and lulls him into forgetting again.

Eventually, Shayṭān leaves young people in such a state that no one can make them see sense: not friends, parents, elders, the ‘ulamā, or well-wishers. The victims are not willing to listen to anybody that tries to persuade them to change their evil ways and remember the grave and what it will be like there.

When they are told that death is close, the reality does not enter their hearts or minds. They look upon those who try to get them to think about death and the Hereafter as enemies, always pestering. In reality those givers of advice are true friends that are worried about their son, nephew, friend or neighbour ruining his hereafter for eternity because of the transient pleasures of this world. But no. Shayṭān makes his victim totally negligent of any advice and keeps him engrossed in his obsessions.

## FATAL OBSESSION

The negligent youth's state has been captured in verse by Khwājā 'Azīz-al-Ḥasan ؒ:

یہی تجھ کو دھن ہے رہل سب سے بالا  
ہو زینت نرالی ہو فیشن نرالا

**Your only obsession is to remain number one,  
In beauty unique, in fashion unique,**

The negligent youth is obsessed with being unique and unrivalled in every way; he wants to be number one amongst his peers. Whether it be in power, strength, appearance, clothes, the car he drives, the model of mobile phone he carries, or whether it be in his show of pride, arrogance or boasting, he is

obsessed with being top. Khwājā ‘Azīz-al-Ḥasan ﷺ confronts him with the cold reality: should he waste time fixated with worldly status when one day, maybe soon, he is going to die?

جیا کرتا ہے کیا یونہی مرنے والا  
تجھے حسن ظاہر نے دھوکہ میں ڈالا

**Is this how one who will die lives?**

**The glitter of the world has deceived you.**

Death is to come. And after death the grave. We will have to go alone to our graves, leaving everything behind. Shayṭān shows us the attractiveness of the world and does not let the thought of death enter our minds. If it does, he pushes it aside, and if it persists for a few days, he takes a new tack: “Yes, you will have to go one day. You only have limited time in the world. But don’t miss the chance to enjoy yourself in your youth. Have fun and then, when you’re older, worship Allāh and make it up to Him!”

“You’re going to go for ḥajj next year anyway, so have fun until then and make tawbah when you get there.”

Shayṭān never puts the thought in our hearts that we do not need to observe our religious duties; he

just tells us to put it off until tomorrow, the day after, next month, next year - until he drags us right up to the brink of the grave. The result is one more slave of Allāh ﷻ leaving this world in a state of disobedience to his Creator.

At the time of death, no worldly power can save us. I have witnessed people in the final stages of life, while their souls are being extracted, experiencing great difficulty. Eyes wide with fear, they writhe in agony and flap their arms as if trying to communicate to the people around them, yet they cannot speak. Their relatives and friends are there; people are entering and leaving the room; mother and father are at the bedside; their darling children are there; the doctor comes and goes but no one is able to do anything except wait for death. Nothing else. When Allāh's ﷻ punishment seizes someone, there is no escape.

### **RESPITE ... THEN SEIZURE**

Sometimes Allāh ﷻ gives respite. One reason is so that we may turn to Allāh ﷻ, make tawbah and prepare for the hereafter. But sometimes a person has corrupted himself so much that Allāh ﷻ lets him continue to sin, so that when eventually he is seized,

his punishment is severe. This can be illustrated by the example of a drug dealer whose activities are known to the police. If he is classified as a dangerous criminal worthy of a hefty jail sentence, they will not take him red-handed immediately. They will keep him under surveillance and accumulate as much evidence against him as possible. When he is eventually arrested, he will not be handed a light sentence but will end up spending a lengthy term behind bars.

When Allāh becomes angry with an individual, He does not punish him straight away, but gives him time. The individual feels no worries, anxiety or discomfort; not so much as a headache. He continues to annoy his parents, oppress the young and the weak, offend his elders, and sin openly and arrogantly wherever he goes. But still the punishment of Allāh ﷻ does not come and he remains totally intoxicated in his ways. But when Allāh ﷻ seizes him, there is no escape.

## **ḤAJJĀJ AT THE END OF HIS LIFE**

Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf killed a hundred thousand people in his lifetime and was branded the Blood-Shedder of this ummah. Included among the many pious

people he unjustly killed is ‘Abdullāh ibn Zubayr رضي الله عنه, a companion of the Prophet ﷺ.

When Allāh ﷻ seized Ḥajjāj, he began to suffer severe stomach pains and his whole body would shiver from continuously feeling cold. He would sit by the fire, feeding it coals to warm his body, but he would not feel the heat. He would move his hands closer and closer to the flames until they actually burned, but would not feel any warmth. Imagine the agony: the pain of the cold, the pain of his burning hands and the severe pain in his stomach. But there was no cure. He was caught in the punishment of Allāh ﷻ.

He was, nonetheless, the governor, so many senior doctors were called to treat him. One very old and experienced doctor attached a piece of meat to a string and passed it down Ḥajjāj’s throat. When the doctor pulled the meat back out, large worms were attached to it. He consulted other experts but no one could work out what the illness was. His verdict to Ḥajjāj was that it was not a curable disease but a punishment from Allāh ﷻ. Ḥajjāj, stretched out on his bed, writhing in agony, uttered the words:

مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّي مَالِيَهٗ هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيَهٗ

**My wealth has been of no use to me. My power  
has gone from me.<sup>7</sup>**

This was that same tyrant ruler who would sit with his legs crossed, an unsheathed sword across his lap, and swear that he would not drink a sip of water nor take a morsel of food until the person he wanted arrested was brought before him. This was a warning to his soldiers telling them to bring their man quickly before hunger and thirst would drive him to take his anger out on them. The only time he would move, would be to offer ṣalāh. He would sit waiting for the wanted man to be captured so that he could personally execute him. He was the most cruel and hard-hearted governor of his time.

But death quashes the hardest of people.

اجل نے نہ کسریٰ ہی چھوڑا نہ دارا  
اسی سے سکندر سا فاتح بھی ہارا

**Death did not overlook Kisrā nor Darius  
It defeated even a conqueror like Alexander**



When Ḥajjāj felt the grip of death, he writhed in agony and became so meek that he admitted his wealth was of no use to him, and that his days of power and sultanate were over. He sent a messenger to the great *tabiʿī* Ḥasan al-Baṣrī ؓ requesting his prayers. Ḥasan ؓ used to always warn Ḥajjāj to mend his ways, but being a strong, healthy man with evil on his mind, Ḥajjāj would never yield to his advice. When someone is healthy and their mind harbours sinful and evil plans, they pay no attention to pious people; instead of listening to them, they treat them with contempt.

But in his pitiful state, Ḥajjāj despatched a messenger to Ḥasan ؓ. The messenger returned to Ḥajjāj with Ḥasan's ؓ reply: "The arrow has left the bow; no one's *duʿā* can help you now." Ḥajjāj sent the messenger back informing Ḥasan ؓ that he was not asking him to make *duʿā* for his recovery, but for his death.

## LIVING RESPONSIBLY

As *mukallaf* (responsible) individuals, every second of our lives is being recorded. On the day of Qiyāmah we will be questioned about our actions and will be expected to answer. The first thing we

need to take responsibility for is ourselves. We need to think about how to spend our lives, how to please Allāh, what actions we should and should not do. In order to make up for having failed to do what we should have, we should prostrate before Allāh ﷻ and make tawbah. If we have wronged our parents, we should ask forgiveness and make them happy. We should ask forgiveness from those whom we may have oppressed and make them happy too. We should spend the vigour and blessings of youth in pleasing the One who has given us this youth.

If we make sincere tawbah, and safeguard our youthful years from sin, from ḥarām, from adultery/fornication, from alcohol, from drugs, from theft, from robbery, from oppressing others, from annoying our parents, from all the sins of youth and if those of us who have so far remained pure, continue to strive to remain clean of sins then we will be granted a place under the throne of Allāh ﷻ.

سَبْعَةٌ يُظِلُّهُمْ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّهِ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ ---  
وَشَابَّ نَشَأَ فِي عِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ

**There are seven people who will be given shade under the throne of Allāh on that day when there**

**will be no shade but His shade... (Amongst them is) that youth who grew up in the worship of Allāh.<sup>8</sup>**

The superior status awarded to the youth who grow up in the worship of Allāh ﷻ is due to the profusion of demands made by the nafs during youth. To suppress those desires and worship Allāh ﷻ is a great accomplishment. Those young people are very lucky who, living at a time when one is invited to sin at all times and from all sides, manage to safeguard their chastity. How fortunate those young men and women are. How blessed and how worthy of praise and envy they are for managing to protect their honour and chastity in such dangerous times when the worship of desires is rife. How impressive are their achievements in staying away from *ḥarām* acts, from sin, alcohol and drugs.

My heart says with full conviction that such youth will be resurrected on the day of Qiyāmah with the Prophet Yūsuf ﷺ. This is because it is more difficult for young people today to protect their chastity and honour than it must have been for Yūsuf ﷺ, a Messenger of Allāh ﷻ, to safeguard himself from the advances of Zulaykha.

## HOW TO BECOME RESPONSIBLE

To be responsible, our youth must establish a relationship with the ‘ulamā and mashā’ikh and seek to cure their spiritual illnesses. The thoughts of committing sin that come into the mind; illegitimate love for a girl; illegitimate love for a boy; lustful, evil thoughts - such diseases must be cured before they cause one’s love for Allāh ﷻ to diminish and prove fatal to one’s faith. A cure must be found. The matter should not be put off for later, otherwise the illness will slowly grow stronger. After finding an experienced and qualified Shaykh, doubts, uncertainties and any disturbing thoughts that enter the mind should be laid bare in front him and his guidance should be followed.

We must also keep within a good environment and adopt good company. We should engage in religious activity like Da‘wah and sit in talks delivered by the ‘ulamā. Any time we spend in a good environment and in good company will be a means of our progressing in our dīn and a means of safeguarding it. These activities will help us to gain concern for the hereafter and will give us the ability to repent.

Along with this, we must avoid doing those things which keep us from spending time in a good

environment, such as unnecessarily loitering around. We should avoid spending time in the company of friends whose aims and aspirations are wrong, even though we may not go to see them with bad intentions ourselves. Our only intention may be to meet a friend, but, before long, the friend is making a plan to go to a nightclub later that evening, and we find ourselves drawn in. This is how dīn is uprooted from our lives. Dīn is not something to be uprooted, it is something that we need to safeguard and nurture.

## **REAL RESPECT**

If we use the strength, energy and keen intelligence of youth in opposing Shayṭān and in pleasing Allāh ﷻ, the Giver of youth, then Allāh ﷻ will give us honour in this world too. A young person who lives a good life is looked on with respect by the whole community and he feels contentment within. One who does not live such a life, regardless of how cheerful he may look from the outside, will be suffering from a guilty conscience. When he sleeps, he sleeps with guilt on his mind; he knows deep down that he has no real status.

A young person may strut around with pride and arrogance, acting big, but in his own eyes he has no respect for himself. In his own eyes he is detestable and useless. What status can a person have when he does not even have self respect? What greater disgrace can there be than when a man no longer has respect for himself?

As for the one who dedicates his youth to Allāh ﷻ, he is gifted with self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self respect and peace. His heart is always happy because he knows he is trying to please his Lord. He cheers himself by thinking how happy Allāh ﷻ must be with him for sacrificing his desires to please Allāh ﷻ. He is happy that Allāh ﷻ loves him, knowing that it is He who has helped him to avoid sins and do good deeds. He is respected within his entire family and the whole community points him out as a role model for others.




And when the time comes for his soul to be taken to the hereafter, an assembly of angels will rush to greet him. They will wrap his soul in a silk cloth, put it on a tray of gold, and take it to Jannah. He will be honoured in this world and honoured in the hereafter. The people of the earth will mourn him and utter words of praise in his remembrance. The

good deeds he did for people in secret will then also be revealed. People will inform each other of how well he treated them, how he helped them in their hour of need and how he guided them to the right path. The angels will rejoice upon his arrival and Allāh ﷻ will order them to take His beloved servant to Jannah-al-Firdaws, the highest ranking Jannah.

## FROM YOUTH TO OLD AGE

Finally, one who safeguards his youth and spends it in the worship of Allāh will have an enormous advantage when he reaches old age. When he is old and frail and unable to carry out acts of worship because of his advanced age, Allāh ﷻ will continue to reward him. He will say to His angels that if His servant still had the strength, he would have continued to perform the same acts of worship that he did in his youth, as only the old age which Allāh ﷻ gave him held him back from such worship. Allāh ﷻ will then order the angels to continue recording for him the rewards for all the actions that he used to do whilst he was a young man, whilst he was a youth.

## SUMMARY

- Many Ṣahābah , like Anas ibn Mālīk  and ‘Ā’ishah , were young like us, even teenagers when they excelled in virtues. They should be our role models because they achieved so much while still young.
- Young people in today’s world should try to be mature and accept responsibilities. By the age of puberty, or 15 at the latest, all the laws of Sharī‘ah start applying. Any sin committed will be recorded and will have to be answered for on the Day of Qiyāmah.
- Just because we’re young doesn’t mean that we have got a long time left to start being good Muslims. Shayṭān just tricks us into thinking that. In reality death may come suddenly, at any time. What if death catches up with us while we’re sinning?
- Worrying about street-cred and being No1 and unrivalled is a Shayṭānic obsession. Only someone who is never going to die can waste time and energy trying to stay on top.
- Just because nothing bad is happening to us now doesn’t mean we should carry on disobeying



Allah ﷻ. If Allah ﷻ is angry with us, we won't sense a thing until His punishment grabs us.

- Remember: Shayṭān will never tell you, “Don’t be a good Muslim.” He’ll tell you, “Not just yet, enjoy yourself for a while...”
- STOP! Turn to Allah ﷻ and make tawbah for all of the wrong things that you have done, then try your hardest to avoid sinning. It may be hard, but if you make the effort, Allah ﷻ will give you a place of honour under His Throne.
- If you have problems overcoming sins or sinful thoughts, consult a qualified shaykh and follow his advice. Spend time in good, religious company and avoid bad company.
- If you turn to Allah ﷻ, you will have self respect and peace of heart. A sinful person dislikes himself and sees himself as useless.
- Do good deeds when you’re young and get free rewards when you get old!
- Remember the Golden Rule: **Spend the vigour and energy of youth in pleasing the One who gave you the blessing of youth in the first place.**

## APPENDIX

**A selection of the Prophet's ﷺ Companions with examples of what they achieved whilst in their youth.**

<b>Name</b>  <b>&amp; Date of Demise</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
Anas ibn Mālik ﷺ (- 91AH aged 100)	Between the ages of 10 and 20 he served the Prophet ﷺ and acquired an enormous amount of knowledge. He narrated 2,286 aḥādīth.
‘Ā’ishah ﷺ (- 58AH aged 65)	One of the Mothers of the Believers, ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ was only 18 when the Prophet ﷺ passed away. She excelled in her knowledge and understanding of Dīn and was widely consulted by eminent Ṣaḥābah ﷺ. She narrated 2,210 aḥādīth, which places her among the 6 most prolific narrators of aḥādīth from the Prophet ﷺ.
‘Alī ﷺ (- 40AH aged 63)	The first child to accept Islām, ‘Alī ﷺ spent his entire youth in the service of Islām. Only 33 when the Prophet ﷺ passed away, he went on to become the fourth Khalīfah of the Muslim Ummah.
Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh ﷺ (- 74AH aged 94)	The last Ṣaḥābī to pass away in Madīnah, Jābir ﷺ was only 30 when the Prophet ﷺ passed away. He narrated 1,540 aḥādīth.

<p>Mu'ādh ibn Jabal ؓ</p> <p>(- 18AH aged 38)</p>	<p>Accepted Islām aged 18 during the second pledge of 'Aqabah. He excelled in fiqh and was sent 10 years later to Yemen by the Prophet ﷺ to guide its inhabitants. He completed his life's achievements by the age of 38 when he died during a plague.</p>
<p>'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar ؓ</p> <p>(- 73AH aged 84)</p>	<p>Accepted Islām at the tender age of 7. When the Prophet ﷺ passed away, 'Abdullāh ؓ was only 21, yet he narrated 2,630 aḥādīth and was known as a great jurist among the Ṣaḥābah ؓ.</p>
<p>Abū Hurayrah ؓ</p> <p>(- 59AH aged 78)</p>	<p>Accepted Islām in the year 7AH at the age of 26. Although he spent only 3 years in the company of the Prophet ﷺ, he narrated the greatest number of aḥādīth from him (5,376).</p>
<p>'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn-al-Āṣ ؓ</p> <p>(- 63AH aged 72)</p>	<p>Not yet 20 when the Prophet ﷺ passed away, he had spent his youth collecting aḥādīth. He secured permission from the Prophet ﷺ to write aḥādīth and his compilation was known as Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah Aṣ-Ṣādiqah.</p>
<p>'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās ؓ</p> <p>(- 68AH aged 71)</p>	<p>Only 13 when the Prophet ﷺ passed away, he spent his early years in the company of the Prophet ﷺ. He acquired a substantial amount of knowledge and came to be known as the leader of the mufasssīrīn.</p>
<p>Usāmah ibn Zayd ؓ</p> <p>(- 54AH aged 62)</p>	<p>Was known as Ḥibb-ur-Rasūl (beloved of the Prophet ﷺ). He served the Prophet ﷺ during his youth, often travelling with him. He was only 18 at the time of the Prophet's ﷺ demise.</p>

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