

IN SEARCH OF INFINITY

مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

BY SHEIKH ALI HEMANI

In search of Infinity...

مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

Compiled by

Sheikh Ali Hemani

And

Sister Sajeda Ali

The greatest achievement for any *finite*
being is to attain **I***nfinity*...

This book is free for circulation.
Please feel free to circulate among your
friends and family.
However, please do not use it for
commercial purposes.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Thanks to Allah(s) that I was born a Muslim.

Thanks to Him for giving me unlimited opportunities to turn back.

Thanks to Him for guiding me to the right path.

Thanks to Ahlulbayt(a) for being there for me in the hard times.

Thanks to them that they never let go of me, even though I did.

Thanks to them(a) that they care for me beyond words.

Note for readers

This is a personal account of the lives of a couple about the choices they made, the decisions they took, and the path they tread that took them close to Allah(s) and Ahlulbayt(a). Though they confessed that these were not best they could do, they could have definitely done much better than this and would have been much much closer to Allah(s), However, based on their knowledge then, this was what seemed right to them.

He said 'I wish I would have found a book that would tell me the truth bluntly on my face. I wish I would have found a book that would not beat around the bush and put forward the point directly in my face. I wish there would have been a book that showed me a mirror and told me, 'Hey! You are doing it all wrong.' I wish there would have been a book that could have introduced an ideal person to me in this world of technological advancement and told me that 'Hey! Islam still holds true, even in this era of Nuclear science.'

He continued 'However, one had to struggle through most challenging times and when the moment was over, we realized, what an opportunity we have lost. If only someone would have told us earlier we would have used this opportunity to our benefit and attained greater proximity to Allah(s) and Ahlulbayt(a).'

People regularly approach us seeking a list of books that they can read to gain a better understanding of Islam. After we recommended the books we followed up with them to see if they were able to finish the book and how much have they benefitted from the book. So that we can decide if we should be referring the book to the next person or not. To our surprise, most of the people were not able to finish the books. Even if it was a simple 100-150pages book.

Then we conducted a survey to find out, 'How thick an Islamic book should be for people to read it?' And the answer was 'Not more than 75 pages'. Most of the people responded that if the book is between 50-75 pages we would read it, else we would just tuck it away. We got back to them and asked 'Then how do you manage to read a 700 page Harry Potter?' They said 'Because it's simple and easy.' Not complicated and tiring like an Islamic book. Hence we decided that every book we would put together we will try our best to keep it simple and easy to understand. We will try and make complex topics easy to understand and easy to digest.

This book is one such effort to make things simple and easy to understand, through an account of narration of personal experiences of the couple that took them from darkness to the light.

It's an account of their transition from a dunya(of darkness) to a dunya(of light); a dunya(of regrets) to a dunya(of opportunity).

We hope you benefit from these notes and if you do, then remember us in your prayers, wherever you can, and whenever you can.

We deliberately kept the language simple and down to earth, and presented it as a first-person account, So that you can spend more time digesting the content than comprehending it.

We thank Allah(s) that He(s) considered us worthy of such a task and gave us this opportunity to compile these notes.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Note from the Authors

The sole purpose of compiling these notes together is to bring to the attention of the Muslim ummah that there are families who are patient during difficulties and have absolute faith in Allah(s). They remain steadfast even in the most challenging times. They are willing to sacrifice their comfort for the comfort of others.

That their faith in Allah(s) is so strong that they are willing to give away all their savings and all their back-up to help a mo'min brother, because, they know that the true *Raziq* is Allah(s) and He(s) is the one who gives sustenance and increase or reduce it.

There are such Muslims and Muslimahs who are willing to spare extra time from their busy schedule to do charity for mankind, irrespective of their religion or caste.

There are those believers who when faced with a choice of dunya or Islam, they chose Islam over dunya and attain success in dunya and akhirah. Of-late the Muslims are losing faith in Islam and they are losing faith in Ahlulbayt(a) and Allah(s). We are hoping and sincerely praying that these notes revive their faith in Allah(s) and Islam.

Ameen Ya Rabbal A'alameen.

Chapter 1

The grounds were ready

I guess I was five or six years old when my mother first told us about the creation of H.Adam(a). How Allah(s) created him(a), then after, she used to read out the stories of prophets to us regularly. Nothing challenged that view for another six years. The view of creation was challenged by the theory of evolution for the first time when I was twelve. Since then my subconscious mind was being bombarded with ideas and thoughts that creation is a hoax, it's a lie, designed to keep you in check and to keep you under control.

I was time and again told by the system, that science is precise, mathematics is precise. You cannot question science. You can question God, but you cannot question science. With that being fed into my mind, I grew into a person who would easily dismiss Islamic

claims but was a staunch defender of scientific claims. Like one day when I was 14, my friend told me, do you know Holy Kabah is right at the center of the earth, at the exact precise point and I went, 'What nonsense, Has the science proven it? If not then it's just a claim.' I believed that Islam is good to have, but not practical.

I remember all the lovely moral stories my mother narrated to us (me and my little sister) when I was still very young, maybe eight years old. She spoke about barakah, that if we give to the poor and needy, Allah(s) would give barakah in what we have. One day a beggar knocked on our door he was chanting the slogan, 'If you give us one, Allah(s) will give you ten.' That sounded an extremely good deal to me and I gave my pocket-money to him. The next morning, when I woke up the first thing I did was I checked under my pillow for the ten bucks. Nothing, zilch, zero... there was nothing there. I felt I was lied to. I was cheated into losing my money, and I concluded that Allah(s) does not keep his promises.

Things kept building on and my belief that Islam is good to have, but cannot be practiced in this shrewd cunning world grew stronger by the day. Islam kept failing me every day. As a kid, I remember I did not prepare well for a particular exam and I was told not to worry and pray to Allah(s) and things will be alright. I prayed to Allah(s)

desperately, like never before, and if the help is bound to come, then why settle for 80%, I asked for a full 100%. When the corrected sheets were handed to me, it knocked me off my feet, not 100%, neither 80% nor 70% but I got exactly what I deserved. What happened to all my prayers, where did they go? Did I pray at the wrong time? Was God busy with something else at that time? Or did I not pray hard enough?

Someone should have told me 'That's not how things work,' I cannot attempt 50% of the questions and hope to get a 100% score, just because I prayed desperately to Allah(s). Everything was told in vague terms and our little innocent, dreaming mind would build castles out of nowhere. Do as little as you can, pray to Allah(s) and he will fix everything for you. Why not? Cause my mother does it for me all the time and she said Allah(s) loves you 70 times more than your mother. If my mother fixes up seventy percent of my work, then Allah(s) = 70 mothers, He(s) should be literally doing all my work. But my little brain understands the basics too, If I want to call something as my work then I need to at least put in some effort, say 15-20%.

Years passed building up on encounters after encounters. I saw that those who did not believe in God and did not count upon Him(s) to succeed, they did really well in everything they did. While I would

always be an average performer. The more I counted upon Allah(s) the poorer I performed. The education system left no stone unturned to add to this dilemma and to weaken my faith towards Islam and Allah(s).

By the time I was in graduation, I was walking on the edge of Islam. I would spend the least time offering prayers and dua; and most of the time in studying and watching NatGeo and other information channels, at least six hours a day of NatGeo was regular for me. I was a walking Wikipedia, you bring up any topic under the sky and I could speak at least a minimum of 30 mins to an hour about it, Including Islam. I was also a regular to azadari and majlis all through the 70 days, However, again just for shedding tears for Imam Hussain(a). I would come back from a majlis, just the way I went, without any change of mind, heart, or belief, sometimes worse than what I was before the majlis, because of certain things that were recited in the majlis.

Since I believed in a logical approach, I wanted my belief system to be logical, so that if I have to defend it, I can defend it logically. I would straightaway reject any claim made on an emotional level. If you cannot prove it with logic, then it cannot be proven.

I would constantly see people following traditions, rasm o rusumaat which were against aql. I had so many questions that I maintained a separate book with questions in it. I would regularly approach the reciter and pose these questions since I was still 13-14 years, I was dismissed saying you are too young for these questions, or these are all very petty questions, or what kind of a nonsense question is that? Or simply shunned away if not by the reciter then by the elites around him saying 'Maulana doesn't have time for this.' Or 'Maulana don't bother about these questions, come food is being served.'

Surprisingly I can't recall any reciter, coming back to these people saying, let him ask what he wants and let me try and answer it, for Imam Ali(a) in Nahjul Balagha says 'Questions are the key to the treasures of knowledge.'

I was starving for the true knowledge of Islam and there was truly none available. So the grounds were ready, just needed one last push. To add to this predicament, some of the reciters would recite such content, that if I evaluate it now, it's way off the mark with Islam. It has nothing to do with Islam. If Islam is light then that content is darkness. However, Alhamdullilah! I cannot thank Allah(s) enough that even though my faith had weakened in Islam as a practical religion, neither Allah(s) nor Ahlulbayt(a) left me by myself. They

were always there for me, to help me and guide me through a challenging and tough time. Not just then, but they have been for us all through the time.

Additional Points

It is not just evolution theory that doesn't coincide with the Islamic ideology, but a lot of theories of economic, political, human rights, psychological, philosophical and social sciences that do not coincide with the Islamic ideology. Like monopolizing, manipulating public opinion, conducting psychological experiments like the Milgrams experiment or the Stanford Prison experiment, etc...

Hence, the things that influence a person's faith is not just the scientific theories like Bigbang, evolution, and string theory, etc... but every other theory which is against the innate nature (fitrat) of man.

Chapter 2

Flashes of guidance

I was sitting in my room and thanking Allah(s) for making my dreams come true. Of course, this is just the beginning, I thought to myself.

I had joined one of the best colleges in the sub-continent, this was the only thing I had been dreaming of for the last two years. Finally, I was here, I was extremely happy!!!

The college was amazing, I loved every bit of my time there. We were kept well busy, lots of classes, lots of reference material, lots of assignments to do. However, I was enjoying all this learning. A week passed, and I was called to the dean's office. He said, 'You can't go to the Laboratory(Lab) for your practicals with this attire, you have to wear the Lab dress(a short half sleeved shirt and pants). You cannot wear your headscarf either, because in the lab while working with

the equipment, your dress may entangle or catch fire and your dress code is not congenial to the lab environment.'

I was shocked. The first thought that came to my mind was *I can't give up my hijab* and next came the question Can I give up my dream? Are my dreams over?

I am not the girl who gives up easily, I decided to stand up to it. I went to the principal's office and explained my situation to him. I told him I cannot take off my hijab and I can't wear the Lab dress either. However, what I can do is I can wear a Lab coat over my regular dress along with my headscarf. He said 'NO! we can't change our rules for one student. This has been the rule for years now and if you want to study here, you will have to follow the rule, just like everybody else.'

This is not happening, this is not real. I have sacrificed a lot to get here. I have struggled a lot and have been through a lot to be here. I cannot let this get in my way. The principal was adamant. I was stuck between the rock and a hard place. Either I pick my dreams or I pick my Hijab. If I pick my hijab, I would lose my seat in this prestigious college and would have to settle for an average college. However, If I pick my dreams, I would have to leave my hijab. Which one do I pick? Which one is the right one?

I did not give up, I kept insisting that I cannot give up my hijab, there has to be a solution, an alternative for it. Finally, he said, 'Go and speak to your HOD(Head of the Department), if he permits you, I have no problem.'

Alhamdulillah, I was glad that I had some success. If the principal has no problem, then the HOD would easily agree to it.

All my friends and seniors knew about the situation and they were waiting to know what did the principal say? I came back to my hostel and spoke to my seniors, told them what the principal said. They said, 'WHAT! your HOD Mr.Joshi! Impossible! He is the Hitler of the college and no student has ever dared to go and speak to him. He will reject your request straight away, it is not even worth trying.' The principal did not want to deal with you anymore, Hence he sent you to Mr.Joshi, cause he knows Mr.Joshi will never allow you and no one can argue with him. So Forget about it.'

My heart sunk. I was very sad, but I did not lose hope. I prayed to Allah(s) for help, told him I want to uphold your laws, please help me protect my Hijab.

The next morning, I went to my HOD Mr.Joshi's room. I still remember it, it was the scariest moment for me. Not that I was scared of Mr.Joshi, but I was scared 'what if he rejects my request?'

I knocked on the door, with his strict and stern voice, he said 'Come in.'

I entered the room, he did not even look at me. He was reading something, while his head still in the papers he said 'What do you want?' It was a very intense moment, I started stuttering and my voice shaking, I said 'I am a Muslim and my religion does not allow me to wear a lab dress and I cannot give up my Hijab. I need your permission to wear my hijab in the lab.'

As I said this, he looked at me and asked me 'Are you a Shia?' I was surprised since no one knew I was a Shia. I said 'Yes!'

'Permission granted' and he signed the request that I had brought with me. It said I have permission to wear my hijab in the lab and I don't have to wear a lab dress, instead, I can just wear a Lab coat.

I was in tears, I was happy, surprised, and shocked.

He then looked up at me and asked me to sit. He continued, 'don't be surprised, I know everything about Shias and I respect them for their values. Do you want to know how I know about them?'

'When I was a young boy, around 12 years, Hindu-Muslim riots broke-off in the sub-continent, Hindus were killing Muslims, and

Muslims were killing Hindus. We used to live in a Muslim area and our parents were scared that Muslims would come and kill us. The situation was extremely volatile. My parents decided to evacuate the place, however, they had a challenge, they cannot escape with both the children. It would slow them down and risk everyone's life. Our neighbors promised my parents that they'll keep me safe with them till the situation becomes better and my parents had no other option but to leave me with them, and go to another town.

They were Shias.

I stayed with them for more than a month and they took care of me like their own child. I saw them praying, reciting Qur'an, and abide by the laws of Islam. Also just because, I was a vegetarian, they did not cook non-vegetarian food till I was there keeping in mind that I would feel uncomfortable. I still consider that lady as my Mother. I know Shias very well. From now on, anyone says anything to you about your Hijab, just tell them I permitted you and you will have no problem.

Indeed, after that day in my 4 years of college life, no one ever said a word about my Hijab. I not only had permission to wear my Hijab comfortably but now I had someone to protect it.

Alhamdullilahi Rabbil A'alameen.

This was just one instance where I steadfast on the path of Allah(s) and He(s) helped me as promised.

As for those who strive in Us, We shall surely guide them in Our ways, and Allah is indeed with the virtuous. (29:69) ¹

Is it not the grand plan of Allah(s), that a shia family helped a 12-year-old kid, who grew up to become the HOD of a department, who in turn protects the Hijab of a Muslim girl? Truly as informed by the Ahlulbayt(as) 'Have faith in Allah(s), HE(s) is the best planner.' One just has to remain steadfast on the path of Allah(s) and the help comes from the *ghaib*.

(Names have been changed to protect the identity of the person.)

I must share this as well, that my Hijab was my armor, my shield, rather it was an army in itself. There were unlimited instances where girls from my hostel would wait outside the hostel for me so that they can go with me to the canteen for lunch. The canteen was a little away from our hostel and on our way to the canteen, there would be a group of guys sitting and waiting to harass the girls, they would pass inappropriate comments on the girls. However, every time I passed from there, the guys would put down their heads and not even look

¹ وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

at me. So the girls would wait outside the hostel for me so that they can come along with me and save the harassment. Truly some people under-estimate the power of Hijab. Hijab is not just protection or a shield. It is an army by itself, cherish its value.

Chapter 3

Backpacking rice

I was a very active person, you would find me involved in various activities, sports, martial arts, organizing programs and functions, etc. I think its part of the daydreaming package.

During the breaks, we used to hang out in our snacky canteen. We would talk about different things that we wanted to do like start a company when we graduated, or innovative research work, etc. One afternoon we sat there talking and out of nowhere we started discussing 'how poor people suffer in The sub-continent!' We came up with an idea to start a charity organization in our college. However, we had lots of questions on our minds. Who would be the members? Where will we get the funds from? What are the things that we wanted to do?

We said, to start with lets us all be the members and let us all contribute from our pocket money every month to the corpus fund and start the charity work. It was basic stuff, so nothing was written down. We all shelled out part of our pocket money about fifteen rupees each(the equivalent of 50 cents then). We were hoping to collect enough funds to do our first project by the end of 3-4 months. However, we came to know that if we wish to conduct any such activity under the banner of the college, there should be a supervising professor to guide us in our activities.

We found out that it was Mrs. Sheela who needs to be informed and involved. We approached her and explained our charity program. She was not only NOT convinced with it, but she also reprimanded us saying that these are the new tricks that students are coming up with to escape studies and to waste their time and to go out of the college campus. She went on for at least 30 minutes, telling us how flawed our plan was, and how utterly it would fail and how we are good for nothing students. We were disheartened, demotivated, and devastated.

For the next few days no one spoke about it, we were all feeling very low. We sincerely wanted to help the poor, but I guess we couldn't prove our sincerity to her.

Almost a month passed, and one of my classmates informed me that Mrs. Sheela wants to meet you guys again. After what happened last time, none of my friends wanted to come along. I gathered all the courage, prepared to be lectured for another 30 minutes, I went to meet her.

To my surprise, she was extremely polite and welcoming. She sat me down, encouraged our idea, and then pulled our 2000 rupees from her purse and gave it to me. She said 'One of the alumni visited me last week and wanted to do some charity work, He gave me this money. The first person that came to my mind was you, so here you go, you can start your charity project, that you guys had planned.'

Again, Alhamdulillah. Never thought that the person who crushed us would be the first person to contribute to this project.

So we all got together and thought about what can we do with this money, a lot of ideas flew across the table. However, there was one

idea that struck the most and touched our hearts. We all settled for that idea. However, how do we achieve it? We had a small team and no skilled personnel for that task.

One of them suggested, why don't we talk to the cook of snacky (our canteen). We approached the cook and spoke to him and he agreed to help us out, without any service charges. He went ahead and made all the purchases and a couple of days later we all gathered in the canteen with our backpacks.

The idea was to cook some simple food like rice and dal or simple gravy, make packets of it, fill our backpacks and set out on the streets, one on each direction and where ever we find a beggar on the streetside we give him a pack of food.

We stuffed our backpacks with food packets and we each set out on the street. Every now and then I would find an old man or a lady sitting on the streetside in torn clothes, waiting for a passer-by to toss a coin or two. I would stop by them and hand them over a pack of food. Some were in a really dire state, women abandoned by her husband with her kids in torn and tattered clothes, the hot asphalt is their playground, playing with bottles and wrappers that people

throw away, happy with it and smiling with the joy of those little toys, that they thought are priceless.

We all returned after a couple of hours, each of us had walked for a couple of hours, until we ran out of our stock. We all gathered to report our progress, tired, sunburnt, dripping with sweat but with a victorious smile. I cannot explain the satisfaction and the joy we experienced, it can only be felt and not explained. I think each of us carried the smiles, tears, and prayers of every person we helped. We just sat there for a while, no one spoke a word. I guess we were all crying inside, it takes a brave heart to bear what we have witnessed in those two hours on the street.

(Names have been changed to protect the identity of the person.)

Chapter 4

All my riches are yours

The other projects we planned were to visit old-age homes and orphanages. Hence we planned the dates every month for each location. First, we visited the orphanage, the person who was running the orphanage was a very interesting and a kind-hearted person. It had more than 100 kids in it.

Next, we visited the old-age home. It was a disheartening sight. Old parents, unable to walk or help themselves, were abandoned by their children. They couldn't eat by themselves, they couldn't go to the washroom, some of them were sitting in their beds and staring into blankness, I guess they were waiting for their children or were shocked that the child for whom I shed my sweat and blood has left me in such a state at the hands of a stranger.

We went to these parents and sat next to them and spoke to them, some of them started crying, just by the fact that someone visited them and addressed them as *Amma*(mother) or *Baba*(father). Their children had not called them for months. They were in a horrible state, old clothes, beds were in the poorest condition. We were all moved at the sight of the place. We wanted to help them, so we asked them what is that they need? Clothes, a mattress, a new blanket, or a better pillow, or good food. Without an exception, all of them replied we do not want any of this, we just want someone to talk to. We want someone to listen to us, talk to us, call us *Amma* and *Baba* and give us a hug.

Each of us were crying on our way back to college, that was a life-changing moment for us. That day we realized what parents are, how much they love us. What do they mean when they say 'our children mean the world to us.' I do not think anyone of us could ever forget that moment. We decided that we would plan frequent visits to the old-age home.

Until that moment every time we spoke about helping others and doing charity, always spoke about money and thought, a charity can be done only through money. But that day we realized that charity

of time has far far more value than the charity of money. Anybody will donate money, but there are just a handful who can donate their time.

These were my learning years. I studied engineering at the college, but I learned life at the old-age home and orphanage.

We had planned that we would at least visit the orphanage once a month, there were more than 100 kids there and we needed a large team to organize games. We were just seven or eight people then. So we requested our friends to come along and help us out. Most of our friends came along just for the sake of it, just because we requested them a lot.

We spent the whole day with the kids, organized many games, bought some very simple toys and snacks for them, whatever our budget permitted us. The kids played with us the whole day and conducted various games for them, from lemon race to sack race, etc. All the kids had a great fun time and the whole place was echoing with the giggles and laughter of the kids. A little girl came to me, she was quite shy, it looked like she wanted to tell me something, but was shying away. I took her close to me and asked her if there is something she wants to tell me. She smiled and nodded her head. I

had her sit in my laps and asked her to tell me all that she wants. She said 'We have never seen our parents, they abandoned us. You are a complete stranger, but still, you come and spend time with us, you care for us more than they do. I wanted to thank you with a little token of gift.' She pulled out a little bangle from behind her back and said 'This is the only prized possession that I have and I want you to have it.'

I gave my little time to them and she gave me all her riches, that's how pure the little children are, that's how innocent and pure their heart is.

Chapter 5

Heavenly Cook

It's no mystery to anyone that college food is not the best you can get. Our college was no exception either. Half the college had the same challenge. It was a war between tastebuds and the hungry stomach. We had to fight against our tastebuds to feed our hungry stomachs. Plus it was not permissible to cook in the hostel facility. If the warden finds out that someone has been cooking in the hostel, strict disciplinary action was taken against them.

However, the greater challenge was the time at which the food was served. Especially during the month of Ramadhan. There was a two-hour gap between the *iftar* and dinner time. Those two hours used to be really taxing for us. Our only backup was a pack of biscuits from the canteen. I must tell you, an empty stomach is the most creative

one, we have tried the most out of the world experiments with food to satiate our hunger in those two hours, right from water-dipped biscuits to biscuit-achar sandwiches.

Most of my fastings used to be without sehri because there was no arrangement of food at those hours. It used to be a really tough time.

I can't remember why, but my hostel warden sent me to the kitchen of our canteen for some work in the evening. When I entered the kitchen, the cook was busy with his chores. He saw me in Hijab and asked 'Are you a Muslim and do you fast?' I said 'Yes I do.' He asked 'What do you do for your sehri?', I replied 'Nothing, a pack of biscuit maybe or at the most Maggi noodles.' He said 'I will cook fresh Sehri for you and leave in the kitchen by midnight, come and collect it at sehri hours.'

He then continued 'I was a non-Muslim and I married a Muslim girl, then I reverted to Islam. If my wife comes to know that there is a Muslim girl in the Hostel who fasts without Sehri, she will feel really upset. By the time I finish my work here, clean up the place, and go its almost midnight. So just before leaving let me prepare some food for you and keep it aside. You can come at the sehri time and take it from here.

Alhamdulillah, truly Allah(s) is the best planner. He had such special mercy for me, every time I was stuck in a challenging situation, He would make such special arrangements for me. I guess it was the prayers of the little kids from the orphanage that Allah(s) has special mercy for me.

Let me tell you the food he used to prepare for me, was nothing like the canteen food. It tasted like professional five-star restaurant food. It must have been the sincerity (*ikhlas*) of that cook that made the food so tasty.

Alhamdulillah all through the month of Ramadhan, he would leave sehri for me and that made my fasting easier. May Allah(s) feed all the poor and help them. Especially the children of Iraq, Yemen, and other war afflicted areas.

Chapter 6

Hijab for a job

I must tell you this, I was quite an outspoken person, not that I was rude or ill-mannered, but I lacked the skill of playing around with the words. I think am still not good at it.

It was placement time at the university and the MNCs (Multinational corporations) were lining up in our college for hiring people. Each company had a cut off mark, students scoring a certain percentage were interviewed by a certain reputed company, I was among the top 10 students of my department (Non-tech).

It was the week for the software companies, all the software students had lined up, most of them getting the job, some of them

with outstanding pay packages. Our department had just one introductory subject of software programming and I was not an expert at coding. I walked into the interview room and immediately the expressions of the interviewers changed, I guess they noticed my hijab. The interview began, they asked some basic questions, then they asked aptitude questions and it was a pretty easy interview for me.

We came towards the end of the interview. The department head (Head of the IT department of that company) was also present there. He said 'We like you as a candidate, we are willing to give you the job, however, there is one problem. It's your headscarf, it does not fit in our corporate culture. If you agree to get rid of it, I will give you a higher pay package.' I was not shocked, I was not surprised but I was angry. Since Mr.Joshi supported my hijab, no one ever bothered me regarding my Hijab and I had grown stronger and more passionate about my Hijab. But when I heard that statement, my body was flooded with adrenalin, my tone changed, if it was not the interview panel I would have got into some serious fight with them. However, I controlled my temper and got up from my place to leave the interview table and said 'There are certain things in my life that are more important to me than your job or your money.'

He said 'No No, I was just kidding', then he not only gave me a better salary, but till the end of my tenure in the organization, He remembered my name, and every time he was on the work floor, He would visit my desk and talk to me for few minutes. He was head of the department, he would barely give time to floor managers (who were at least 3-4 levels above me), However, he would always stop by my desk to ask me if I was ok with the quality of work and If I was happy with the organization.

After a couple of months, I enquired if they had any charity programs, they had a charity cell, however it was dormant. We decided to revive it. The goal was that we should give back something to society. The Idea was well appreciated and we started planning for this social service unit. The company took care of registering it, we got busy in finalizing the name and logo for it. Finally, in a month's time, everything was ready to roll. We had the goodies ready, the printed Mugs, T-shirts with a logo on it, people were very enthusiastic about it. We had gathered a large number of volunteers and some people even wrote poems and slogans for it. We had one of the poems printed on the official T-shirts.

Since I had some experience with charity work from my college days, I suggested we start with similar projects here, old-age homes, and

orphanages. Later on, we moved into supporting education for the deprived children and promoted the adopt a child scheme in our company. After all, we needed funds to run the program.

We rolled out a charity drive in our company. We printed a booklet of tickets, ten rupees each(30 cents then). Employees can buy as many tickets as they want and the money would go towards the charity program. What surprised me the most is the employees at the entry-level(with minimum salary) bought more tickets than those at higher levels, with many times the salary of entry-level employees. I remember we went to a delivery manager(a position higher than the manager) in our company, and he refused to buy a single ticket. He said 'This is my money, I worked hard for it, why should I give it to those who are lazy and not willing to work and suck our money like parasites.' How stone-hearted can someone be, not willing to spare just Rs 10 (30 cents) for charity? However, Allah(s) gives you from the ways unknown and the work goes on.

We found an orphanage which had some 50 kids in it. It was run by a person who was a working professional and was investing most of his salary in running the orphanage. It wasn't a great salary, but he said, I have absolute faith in God (he was a Christian), since the day I took up this responsibility, even if I run out of money, God would

somehow make the arrangements for these kids, they never went hungry in last 4 years.

He was an amazing person, he had such a strong faith in God that he was never worried about where the food would come from for the kids. He just knew that the food would come, not a speck of doubt in it.

He told us how he started the orphanage, he found an abandoned child on the streets. He informed the police and they took custody of the child, he was relieved that the child is in safe hands. However, he was curious to know what transpired with the child? Who were the parents? Why was he left abandoned?

He returned to the police station, only to find out that there have been no reports of the missing child and no one has come forward to claim the child. He spoke to the police and said, is it possible that till the parents are found, he takes care of the child? Whenever the police find the parents, he will hand over the child. He said, It has been seven years now and the police have not come asking for him. The parents were never found. Since that incident, more children joined the team, When we visited him, he had close to 35 children living there.

One particular month turned out to be a tough one for them, one of the kids fell sick and they had to spend money on his treatment, an unexpected expenditure. They ran out of money earlier than he had planned. There were still a few days to go before he would receive his salary. They were barely managing it through the day, kids were being served a little lesser food so that they get some for tomorrow as well. However, the day came when they had no more money left and no food for the children. The children went hungry for lunch, it was dinner time and no food for the kids. He tried all his sources, called his friends and foes to borrow money for the kids. However, since it was month-end, everybody was running slim on the money. Kids had gathered around him, everybody had a dull face, some were at the verge of crying. He said, deep in my heart, I knew the food will come, I had absolute faith in God, absolute faith. And he started telling the story of H.Maryam(sa) to the kids, that how God used to send food to her from heaven. At around ten in the night, there was a knock on the door, someone had brought food for them, Bag of rice, lentils, sugar, and other necessities. Faith can do wonders in one's life.

There is a hadith from Masoomeen(a), Allah(s) treats you the way you presume Him(s). If you presume Him(s) to be merciful and

benevolent, you will witness his mercy. However, if you perceive him to be vengeful and taskmaster, He treats you the same way.

As part of our companies charity program, we had planned to visit this orphanage. The plan was that we would visit the orphanage at least once a month and every month we would take a huge cake to that place to celebrate the birthday of all the kids whose birthday falls within that month. This was the first time were executing this plan.

Our team of volunteers went there and we conducted games for them, brought toys for them, took memorable pictures there and everybody had a great time. At the end of the day, we celebrated the group birthday. Everybody gathered together sang the birthday song, cut the cake, and gave everyone a little share of it. I think this was the first time they were tasting a pastry. One little kid around three or four years, came to me and said didi, is this the same food that saint Mary(s) used to get from heaven? I have never tasted anything so magical in my life. I had no words, I just did not know what to say. I just hugged this little kid and thanked Allah(s) for all the blessings he had bestowed upon us, from such loving parents to family, to home, to all the comforts of the home. Truly we can never

thank Allah(s) for all the unlimited blessings he has bestowed upon us, but unfortunately, we take all of it for granted.

I was then temporarily moved to another city for a few months. It was some client emergency, the project was falling behind the target dates. I was married just three months ago, I refused to move, however, the company said, 'You do not have the option.' I guess Allah(s) had a plan for me.

I moved to the new location, while I worked on the project, I started looking for opportunities to do charity work in that branch as well and I came across a hostel of blind girls. Most of the girls were fully blind and a few of them were partially blind. However, their blindness did not break their soul. They were all hardworking and preparing for their board exams (A levels). We visited them, spoke to them, encouraged them, motivated them to reach higher levels of studies.

The challenge the girls faced was writing braille, it's the language used by blind people, they mark deep holes in a paper and each sequence of holes represent a letter or a word. Poor girls had to write most of their syllabus in braille and while doing that they would wound their fingers. Their fingers would bleed and their papers were

tainted with blood. My heart went out to them. Truly vision is a blessing from Allah(s) and we take it for granted, and instead of thanking Allah(s) and utilizing our sight to the best of its ability, we spend time watching movies and T.V.

We asked them, how can we help them? They said if we can record their lessons and give them recorded tapes, it would save them the effort of writing their notes in braille. Those days Walkman (small pocket tape recorders) were very common. We pooled in money and raised some money from our office and bought 8-10 walkmans and a team of my colleagues agreed to record the lessons for them. It was a task by itself since it was time-consuming. It would take at least an hour or two every day to record their lessons. However, Alhamdulillah, with our team, passing on recorders among each other, we were filling in tapes upon tapes of lessons. Since there were many girls, we needed more than one tape of each lesson. Eventually, we were able to record all their lessons of different subjects and hand over the tapes to them. They would religiously listen to the tapes, sometimes they had to listen to it a couple of times to understand the lesson clearly.

I was told that they asked the Hostel warden, how do I look, when she described me, she said that I wear a headscarf, they were curious

and asked why? She told them that I was a Muslim. The next time I went to their hostel, they asked me, what is a Muslim and why do I need to wear a headscarf when I explained to them, they all wanted to wear a headscarf, they all wanted to become Muslim, someone who is willing to help others and sacrifice their personal time for others and the needy ones.

After a few months, my project at the office was completed and I relocated back to my home town. Later on, I came to know that every single of those girls cleared their exams with good scores. Alhamdulillah Rabbil A'alameen.

Sometimes it just takes a little extra effort and it can go miles in contributing towards someone's life. I can imagine, how happy they must have felt. I wonder where they are today, how much they have progressed, and what career position they must be holding now. I pray to Allah(s), where ever they are, guide them to your pure light and fill their hearts with your love and show them the noor of Islam. Ilahi Ameen.

Chapter 7

A Spark caused the fire

After working for a couple of years, I got an international opportunity and I moved abroad. My husband was still working in the sub-continent. A couple of months later he too joined me abroad. Now the great task for him was to hunt for jobs. I was a techy, a software professional, there were lots of openings for techies. However, my Husband was in management. He had to struggle a lot to find a good job. I think I should let him narrate his story. He will tell you what happened next.

Well, she is right, there were very few openings for my career roles. I was job hunting for almost three months and still couldn't get a solid break. I had lots of free time on hand, so I started listening to Islamic lectures online, a series of 30+ lectures about the Holy Qur'an

on the internet changed my perspective about the Holy Qur'an and brought me much much closer to Qur'an. I would spend a major part of my day reading and trying to understand the Holy Qur'an. There was another series of 35+ lectures about Imam Ali(as), it changed my perspective towards Ameerul Mo'mineen Ali ibne Abi Talib(as) and opened my eyes towards his(a) predicaments after the Holy Prophet (s).

On the other hand, I was job hunting desperately, I used to get called for the interview but after that, they would never come back to me. It was a very difficult time. I started speaking to the existing expats there. They said since you do not have any international experience and you do not have a residency permit here. Just take up any job here, anything that is even as little as a \$1000 per month, while my previous job in The sub-continent paid much more than that. I continued listening to Islamic lectures and continued looking for jobs.

I gave an interview at an international consulting firm and did not hear from them for a long time. It was only after the new year holidays they called me up for the final interview. They asked me, how much are you expecting. I gave them an exorbitant figure, they agreed to it and called me to collect the appointment letter. I went

to collect the appointment letter and told them before I take the appointment letter, I have three conditions, If you agree to them, then you can give me the appointment letter, else am ok not taking the job. One, I will not shave my beard, two, I will not shake hands with women employees either at the office or at the clients' place and three, when its time for salat, I will go and offer salat. They said, 'Welcome aboard.'

When I spoke to some of the guys there, who have been working for 5+ years and have been citizens there, they couldn't believe the salary I was drawing.

I remember, since we got married, my wife had a special corner for charity programs, with whatever little salary we earned we started sponsoring children's education. We started with two kids and in less than two years we were sponsoring almost 15 kids for their education. The number slowly grew from 15 to 50. Then we moved abroad and started raising funds and soon were sponsoring more to 215 kids ranging from kindergarten to engineering.

Right from the early years of our job we did two things differently than others. Most people I knew, would first pay their bills, expenses, groceries, etc, and then with whatever money left they plan their

savings and investment. However, my wife and I would first set a fixed amount as an investment every month, and then with whatever money we had left, we managed our expenses. We were saving and investing more than 60% of our salaries right from the early years. This was also another reason why we could support so many kids for their education.

The Islamic lectures we were listening to had a great impact on our approach to life. Soon I was spending a few hours a day with Qur'an. I wanted to know more, so I asked someone to introduce a book that can give me a better insight into the Holy Qur'an and He introduced, *Tafseer Al-Mizan* of Allamah Tabtab'ee to me and what a book it is. It changed our life completely.

The other thing that impacted our life dramatically was the local community there, they truly practiced the Islam of the Holy Prophet(s) and not the Islam of Rasm O Rusumat that we saw back home. They would go out of their way to help us in all possible ways.

These classes, the online lectures, and the *Al-Mizan* had set our hearts on fire, we were extremely restless, we felt something is missing from our lives. We felt there is so much to religion which we do not know, which a lot of people back home do not know. We

should be telling them about it. We realized that we got it all wrong. The Allah(s) we knew was not the Allah(s) of Islam. The Allah(s) we worship is not the Allah(s) our Holy Prophet(s) used to worship. The Allah(s) we knew was the strict, punishing, vengeful one. While the Allah(s) of Islam is a benevolent, merciful, and Just Allah(s). He was always showering the believers with mercy unless they go astray and commit greater sins.

Chapter 8

Mad about you

How we madly fell in love with religion and Allah(s) and questioned everything about life.

The more we read about religion, the more we saw beauty in it and the more we discussed about it, the more we fell in love with it.

It is very unfortunate that most of the programs we attended at our community centers in The sub-continent, never discussed the most important topics of Islam. If at all they were addressed they were addressed superficially. This was the case then and this is the case now.

Earlier, Like everybody else, we felt that Islamic laws are limited to the spiritual aspect of man and had nothing to do with the day to day life. Hence we never bothered to explore what Islam has to say about the way of life, or even if we came across any recommendations from Islam regarding day to day life, we would dismiss them saying they were not practical.

Let me take a minute and share with you what being practical meant for us then, or meant for most of the people. Because this criterion rules our life and **ruins** our life. Being practical means taking a decision that is beneficial for this worldly life. However, if you took a decision that apparently seems like a loss in this world, then you are a simpleton.

Since we were conditioned to the worldview of materialism, we would evaluate all Islamic values, recommendations, rulings on the basis of materialism. If the Islamic values held true according to materialism we would accept them, and if they failed we rejected them. What a grave mistake it was, what a heinous blunder it was. How many great opportunities we lost.

So what is the difference between Islamic worldview and materialistic worldview? Let's just look at one theory here, *'Unlimited*

wants and limited means.' Adam Smith is an economist, he claimed in his theory that man has unlimited wants, and the material available in this world to satisfy his needs is limited. Hence every man for himself. Whoever can gather as much as they can, they should do so. Because this is the only way they can satisfy their unlimited wants. The one who gathers the most is the most successful person.

So if I have to put it in simple, 'If you want to be successful gather as much wealth as you can.' This is the criterion that decides who are the most successful people on this planet? It is those who have amassed the most wealth. This gave birth to capitalism.

However, now let's look at the Islamic worldview. We will just touch upon one of the criteria. The Holy Qur'an says:

This is the Book, there is no doubt in it, a guidance to the Godwary, who believe in the Unseen, maintain the prayer, and **spend out of what We have provided for them**; and who believe in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you, and are certain of the Hereafter. Those follow their Lord's guidance and **it is they who are the felicitous.** (2:02-05)¹

¹ ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ ۚ فِيهِ ۚ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ
وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُفْلِحُونَ.

So according to Islam the felicitous, the victorious, and the successful ones are those who spend out (*infaaq*) of what was provided to them. There are two very important aspects of this part of the verse. **First** and the most important one is the ownership of the wealth. Who owns all the wealth? The Verse clearly says "*What we have provided for them*". This means the true ownership of all the wealth of the Universe lies with just one entity and that is Allah(s). From all of which that belongs to Allah(s), He(s) provides each of us with a minuscule share, and we are the temporary bearers of that wealth. **Second** The ones who give out charity, are the successful ones. Unfortunately, we lack the comprehension of this success after charity.

The definition of success according to Islam is in stark contradiction to capitalism. Capitalism says, gather all you can and do not give, cause you are the owner of the wealth and you can choose what to do with it. While Islam says gather as much as you can and give as much as you can in charity. Allah(s) is the true owner of the wealth, and you are the temporary bearer of it in this world. Tomorrow all of it would go to somebody else, whether we like it or not. One day we would die and all of it will belong to somebody else. However, Allah(s) recommends charity, but, you can choose to do charity or not. If you follow the advice of the Most knowledgable and the Most

wise then you are the follower of His(s) guidance and you are the most successful one¹.

Because of this difference in the approach of Islam and materialism, it is incorrect to evaluate and reject Islamic rulings and recommendations based on the criteria of materialism. The greatest challenge with capitalism is that its perspective is limited to this physical world ONLY. While the purview of Islam extends to the hereafter as well. Hence when the Holy Qur'an says '*Those who do charity are the victorious ones*' it means in this world and more so in the hereafter.

So like everybody else since we were conditioned to materialism, we would comfortably reject the Islamic ideology and recommendations. However, when we started attending Tafseer classes, it started changing our worldview, and the more we read about Islam the more it made sense, and the more we fell in love with it. When the perspective changes the behavior changes.

When the understanding of Islam changes, there is a change in the person's behavior, personal choices, decisions, and actions. The way

¹ As expressed in chapter 2 verse 5 of the Holy Qur'an.

they deal with the money, the way they deal with what they have. The way they deal with people and more than anything the way they deal with themselves.

Chapter 9

From darkness towards light

What the caterpillar calls an end, the butterfly calls it a beginning

One of the important sources that we started referring to was *Tafseer Al-Mizan*, I remember that we spent more than a month on just the *Tafseer of Surah e Hamd*. We would come back from office and spend at least two to three hours every day, discussing and trying to understand what Allamah Tabataba'ee was trying to present through this *Tafseer*.

At the end of the month, we realized that there is so much about Islam that we have misunderstood and need to correct our belief system dramatically. We decided to take a break from our work life for a few years and move to Iran to study about Islam.

I think coming to Iran was the best decision of our life. However, we had our challenges while coming to Iran. We faced a lot of heat from friends and extended family. Some of our friends commented '*You have ruined your life with your own hands.*' Our relatives thought we were stupid that after having such high education degrees, 10 years of MNC experience, instead of growing in our career and taking giant steps, we were regressing and downgrading ourselves.

However, we took the giant leap of faith and moved to Iran. There was so much to learn that, we fell short on 24hrs a day. We had the opportunity to meet the great scholars, and see them live Islam in their day to day life. We had the opportunity to study their point of view about other *isms* of the world.

We saw how some of the seminary students here, were living their life according to the Islamic worldview and were content with their life, rather not just content but were happy with their life.

Let me narrate the story of a seminary student here. The weather here in hawza is extreme, in summers it goes up to 47 degrees and in winter it goes down to minus 10 degrees. He owned a regular motorbike. If they had to go to haram or to the doctor or any other

place he would take his family (wife and three kids) on the bike, irrespective of the extreme weather. The extreme weather would constantly cause their children to fall sick, the dry summer would cause them chest congestions, due to all the dust in the air, they would have to administer salbutamol inhaler pumps to them for as long as a month to keep things under control. This was no exception during the winter as well. They used to manage with whatever warm clothes they had. They were direly in need of a car.

He happens to go to a particular place for tableegh and was anticipating a certain amount as hadiya. The hadiya was to be received at the end of the tableegh of ten days. At that time Yemen was under attack and the children were starving to death in Yemen. He got a call from his wife and they discussed about Yemen. She suggested, why don't we donate some amount to Yemen. He agreed and said let's donate 10% of this hadiya to Yemen. That 10% hadiya was equal to their one month's expenses.

This is a live example of how Allah(s) blesses in this dunya and akhirah when someone does an act for the pleasure of Allah(s). The same evening one of the localite visited him and handed him a gift pack, it had a bottle of perfume and this exact 10% that they had decided to give to Yemen. He says he was overwhelmed by the

mercy of Allah(s) since he had only made the intention and had not yet donated it, but Allah(s) already delivered an equivalent amount to him. He was so overwhelmed that then and there he decided to donate even that gift as well to Yemen.

He says next he got invited from a place that he had least expected and got a hadiya that was many times more than the previous place. That Hadiya was enough for him to buy a car. He was extremely happy that he can give that comfort to his family and his children don't have to suffer the weather anymore. However, when he arrived home, the situation in Yemen worsened and the pictures of children dying were heart wrecking. The couple sat down and discussed, how can they help Yemen. They concluded, if I cannot bear to see my children fall sick during peak summer and winter times, Imagine the plight of a mother who watches their children die in their arms out of hunger. The next day He goes to Marja's office and donates all the money to Yemen. With this money, he could have bought a car and if he did not buy a car, this money would have sufficed him for three years of expenses in Qom (considering the simple life they lived).

They continued using their motorbike for another year, his wife suffered from acute backaches. But she says, when I think of the plight of the mother watching her children die bit by bit every day,

this backache did not bother me anymore. Kids continued to fall sick nothing changed. Next year he got invited for tableegh again and he got a similar amount this time. On returning home they had finalized that they would buy the car. However, a picture made rounds on the internet, four kids sitting next to their mother, who passed away and the kids have either not realized that their mother is dead or that they have no idea what to do about their mother. Both of them saw the picture, both of them silently cried. Two days later the wife tells the husband, that picture is bothering me, I have not been able to sleep for the last two nights, is it possible that we donate this hadiya to Yemen? The Husband replied, I so much wanted to donate the money to Yemen, but I thought you may not agree since your backache has intensified and the kids have been falling sick too. She said, don't worry about the backache, it is nothing compared to the plight of those children. The next day he went to Marja's office and donated all the money to Yemen again. That money, if not more, it was at least equal to the previous amount.

I cannot explain what I felt like when I heard this story. There are still such people who prioritize others' comfort upon theirs, there are such people who live their life for the pleasure of Allah(s). There are still such people who live their life as per the guidance of Ahlulbayt(as) and Islam. The Holy Qur'an says '*Those follow their Lord's guidance and it is they who are the felicitous.*' (2:05)

There is no doubt that moving to hawza would prepare us for this ideology, that everything we do, would be for the pleasure of Allah(s) and this is truly a migration from darkness towards light.

مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

Chapter 10

Light upon light

Before we moved to Iran, materialism and feminism had a deep impact on me, particularly regarding the status of women in Islam. Had too many questions related to feminism and women's status in Islam. I had read some novels which dramatically emphasized how women were tortured in Islam and had the status worse than animals. I was very intrigued and I tried all possible ways to find the truth. However, there was very little information available about it.

Somewhere at the back of my mind, these questions continued to bother me. Even though I had a stronger feeling that there must be a perfect answer available to all these accusations and doubts. Moving to Iran gave me the opportunity to explore the answers from different sources. I read many books on this topic, If I found a convincing answer about Hijab, immediately a question about inheritance would pop-up, if that is answered, then the question about women being witness in the court would pop-up if that is answered it spirals back to hijab again.

I spent hours talking to teachers, having various discourses with them, acting as a common man, I cross-questioned the point of view of Islam and argued strongly against it. After hours of discussion, I was still not convinced by the answers. I felt there is something essential missing. Then I let the go of the questions and allowed them to be dormant for a while.

As part of the curriculum, we started studying theology (*Aqaid*). The first section of the course deals with proof of the existence of Allah(s), then Tauheed and then the sifaat of Allah(s). It is only when I studied tauheed and the sifaat of Allah(s) deeper that I realized what was that core essential thing missing in my understanding of the answers. It was the poor understanding of Allah(s) and His(s) characteristics that lead to all the questions and doubts. The deeper I studied tauheed the better I understood all the answers that I rejected earlier. When I revisited all the answers provided by Islam regarding the status of women, Hijab, inheritance, witness, etc... it all made sense to me now, cause now I was seeing it from the purview of tauheed as against my earlier purview of materialism. Tauheed solves some of the foundational issues. When the foundation becomes stronger, all other issues related to feminism, etc seem superficial. It was only when tauheed was resolved for me that I felt convinced and confident regarding all the rulings of Islam, not just

related to women's issues, but regarding everything else, about salat, sawm, haj, zakat, etc...

Having spent more than ten years in Hawza, we have counseled many individuals and families and spent hundreds of hours answering questions. Some of the families that approached us were pious families, however, we noticed that most of the families couldn't follow our advice, they felt it was impractical. Some of the pious families said that though they want to follow Islam, they are not able to practice it well.

We were quite surprised and intrigued. We started looking for the root cause, after hundreds of hours of questioning and analyses, we concluded that the fundamental problem lies with the fact that there is a lack of clear understanding of Allah(s) and Tauheed. The lesser the families knew about it, the stranger they felt regarding the ruling of Islam. The families who had a better understanding of Allah(s) and tauheed easily accepted the rulings of Islam and were able to practice better. Hence we focused all our energies on trying to understand Tauheed better and trying to propagate tauheed better.

There is so much to learn, coming here itself was a migration from darkness to light, and gaining all this knowledge is light upon light.

There is so much depth to the Islamic knowledge that there is no end to learning, once can never claim that they have studied complete Islam and there is nothing left to study anymore. One might claim that they might have completed their course in Fiqh or Usool ul Fiqh, or History, but one can never claim that they have completed their studies in *Aqaid* because it deals with Allah(s) and Allah(s) is infinite and

The infinite is never-ending.