

Some Titles from Our Education

Upon the spread of the idiom 'education and educating', we go back to our particularities and their data that give this idiom a distinguished connotation. Each nation has its own peculiarity in understanding its own idioms.

This is a prelude to the detailed subject I am going to present on the occasion of the approach of the summer vacation. In this period, the preachers and instructors prepare themselves for preaching and educating. In this period too, there is an opportunity for directing the grown-ups and the youth to make up for the deficiency in their deeds, as they have ample time for some activity to practice because of the leisure time they have, so that they exploit their time in education.

Herein, I go back to the sources in our language that give us the cultural data of the meaning of educating. 'Educating' as was used by our Arabic ancestors, and as is usually used in our language, means 'setting right'. In the past, 'educating the sword' meant 'making it straight'. If we want to use this idiom taking into consideration its linguistic dimension, we find that it fits our cultural identity. How much we need 'educating' with its meaning: 'setting right'!

This definition may also suit best the original description of man when he was created by the Exalted Allah.

"We have indeed created man in the best of mould" (At Tin, v. 4).

Consequently, when we seek educating the generations, the youth, or the grown-ups, we try to spread education, i.e., we try to spread 'the most straight'.

Learning is different from educating. Learning results in producing a material and civilized mind, whereas educating results in setting people right, because development with crookedness does not lead to the sought purpose.

If we want to practice educating, i.e., the process of 'setting right', as is explained in our language, we should spread what helps man to stand aright, be steadfast and develop himself depending upon the best method. In my point of view, only the Holy Qur'an can help man to attain this stage. The Exalted Allah is the One who said:

"Verily this Quran doth guide to that which is most right" (Isra', v. 9).

Thus, if we have a cultural identity through which we aim at educating (i.e., setting right), we must, by necessity, have our Qur'an the starting point, because it helps us to attain 'the most straight'. The Holy Qur'an is the educator because it is the means of setting right.

It is necessary to present a practical example derived from this Qur'an (the educator and the one that sets right), to be a beneficial sample for the educating of our children in summer, and for the spreading of our education as a plan used by our youth.

I have chosen well known verses that I have meditated upon to present some of their connotations and great titles as educating samples. These verses are:

"We bestowed (in the past) Wisdom on Luqman: Show (thy) gratitude to Allah. Any who is (so) grateful does so to profit of his own soul: but if any is ungrateful, verily Allah is free of all wants, worthy of all praise. Behold, Luqman said to his son by way of instruction: O my son join not in worship (others) with Allah: for false worship is indeed the highest wrong doing. And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear The command), Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents: to Me is (thy final) Goal. But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to Me (in love): In the End the return of you all is to Me, and I will tell you the truth (and meaning) of all that ye did. O my son (said Luqman), if there be (but) the weight of a mustard seed and it were (hidden) in a rock, or (anywhere) in the heavens or on earth, Allah will bring it forth: for Allah understands the finest mysteries, (And) is well acquainted (with them). O my son establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong: and bear with patient constancy whate'er betide thee; for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs. And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men nor walk in insolence through the earth; for Allah loveth not any arrogant boaster. And be moderate in thy pace, and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass" (Luqman, vs 13-19).

Thus we can avail ourselves from eleven titles through which we find educational depth that fits our civilization and identity, in addition to their being suitable for the task of 'setting right'.

I frequently assert the difference between learning and educating, because learning is a path that makes man be acquainted with what he should do in order to share in developing and widening his intellectual perception and his knowledge.

On the other hand, educating means setting right. It is a path through which man can make his life connected with justifications. He can understand the wisdom of his existence, and be able to read introductions and results. It is something quite different from learning.

The titles we infer from this text are:

1-Monothelism

This can be derived from the Exalted Allah's speech:

"Behold, Luqman said to his son by way of instruction: O my son join not in worship (others) with Allah: for false worship is indeed the highest wrong doing"

Monothelism trains man to liberate himself from the tension of the fear and hope of objects. The one who lives a captive to the fear and hope of objects is crooked. He can never be free. The free one is that who directs his heart only to Allah, the One.

Notice that the beloved, Al Mustafa (PBUH) was the first who directed a young boy while educating him saying:

"Oh child. I'll teach you some useful words: preserve Allah, and He will preserve you", then he said to him: "If you ask for something, appeal only to Allah; and if you seek help, seek only that of Allah."

This advice is a kind of release that liberates man from the relationships and complexities of objects, and from the domination of temptations that make him deviate from the right path.

Doesn't man get astray and fall in crookedness but because of the temptations of his relationships?

Educating that means setting right cannot be attained unless man liberates himself from these ties and temptations that make him perverted in his behavior.

2-Filial piety

This is derived from the verse:

"We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear The command), Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents, to Me is (thy final) Goal. But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration)."

The Exalted Allah trains man to be grateful to the one who does him favors when He said: "Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents", and before this, He said: "in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning".

This is the nearest example to you, the nearest people who do you favor. If you are unable to be grateful to your closest kinship, then how can you be trained to be grateful when people, or your society do you a favor, or when you receive different kinds of favors from many other sources?

How would you be able to show gratitude and remember the favor of whoever presents it to you?

When one is unable to be grateful towards his parents, he will not be able to do so to anybody else. It is a kind of educational and cultural school that sets right man's behavior, because the one who does not thank people cannot be able to thank Allah, the Exalted.

3-Following the Good Example

It is taken from the Exalted Allah's speech: "and follow the way of those who turn to Me (in love)".

This is to draw man's attention to the good examples to follow. These good examples turn to Allah in repentance and know the source of knowledge, so they appeal to it: "Nor shall they compass aught of his knowledge except as he willeth (Al Baqarah, v. 255). They have known the source of power, so they appeal to it: "Why didst thou not, as thou goeth into thy garden, say: 'Allah's Will (be done)! There is no power but with Allah! (Al Kahef, v. 39). It is turning to Allah in repentance, and whoever turns to Allah, appeals to the source of every perfection.

Therefore, we should follow the many good examples who turn to Allah that we find in the Holy Qur'an. While educating our generation, we should also remind them of the above mentioned examples and put an educational method for that purpose.

For example, the Exalted Allah said:

"For Abraham was, without doubt, forbearing (of faults), compassionate, and given to look to Allah" (Hud, v. 75).

He also said:

"And David gathered that we had tried him: he asked forgiveness of his Lord, fell down, bowing (in prostration), and turned (to Allah in repentance)" (Sad, v.24).

He also said:

"And We did try Solomon: We placed on his throne a body (without life) but he did turn (to Us in true devotion), (Sad, v. 34).

Telling about the story of Shi'awb (PBUH), the Exalted Allah said:

"and my success (in my task) can only come from Allah. In him I trust, and unto him I look" (Hud, v. 88).

As is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, our master Muhammad (PBUH) said as the Exalted Allah ordered him to say:

"Whatever it be wherein ye differ, the decision thereof is with Allah: Such is Allah my Lord: in Him I trust, and to Him I turn" (Ash Shura.v. 10).

These are some samples of our culture which we should satiate our young men, maidens, and children with, otherwise, educating without evidences and examples to follow will be only theoretical ideas, so we have to present the sample in the process of educating.

Oh youth, who is your example, and who is the one that you look up to with veneration and great respect?

The game that is practiced today by the others is to make our generations turn away from the good example who would be the educator and reformer of their behavior, so that our

maidens and young men take filthy people as their examples, such as a whore, or a person who has no good manners whatsoever, just because he or she has a nice voice, or because she exposes the charm of her body, or because the one whom the light is focused on is a skilful footballer. This type of person cannot be an ideal example, for the ideal example is the one who does not care about his body. This does not mean neglecting the body altogether, for one should give his mind, his soul, his self, and his heart, each its right to be the type who is worthy of being a good example. The skilful footballer who has a strong body, but lacks strength in mind, heart and soul is not the good example you are looking for, and he is not worthy of being followed.

Sorrowfully, light is focused only on filthy types that dwarf our civilization and culture.

4-God-Fearing

This is confirmed in the Exalted Allah' speech: " In the End the return of you all is to Me".

The All-Prevailing, the Sublime and the Sovereign Lord says:

"In the End the return of you all is to Me, and I will tell you the truth (and meaning) of all that ye did. O my son (said Luqman), if there be (but) the weight of a mustard seed and it were (hidden) in a rock, or (anywhere) in the heavens or on earth, Allah will bring it forth",

This verse is to remind us of the necessity of making us feel fear in our hearts because He only is the Pervading over all the world and He is its Sovereign Lord.

If this feeling of God-fearing exists in the process of educating man that glorifies his Lord whose destiny is in His Hands, man's behavior will be righteous, and not perverted.

God-fearing always reminds man of his 'Ubudiyya ('Ubudiyya is the highest state in servitude). As the other examples support man to be steadfast, so is the case with the concept of God-fearing. When man realizes the Pervading Greatness of Allah over the universe, he remembers his servitude to Him and adheres to it. In my point of view by which I judge the indications of education, i.e., setting right, the one who turns away from the fact of his being a servant to Allah cannot be considered educated.

5- Prayer

This is taken from the Exalted Allah's speech: "O my son establish regular prayer", for prayer represents man's communication with the source of his support and help. Where can one derive support and help from if he does not pray?

You should differentiate between enticement and support:

"Of the bounties of thy Lord we bestow freely on all these as well as those: the bounties of thy Lord are not closed (to anyone (Isra', v.20), i.e., whoever seeks worldly pleasures, "If any do wish for the transitory things (of this life), (Isra', v.18), "Those who do wish for the (things of) the Hereafter" (Isra', v. 19).

The aid of Allah, the Truth, to the oppressor is called 'enticement', whereas His aid to the believer is called support and help.

Do you believe that the following verses of the Exalted Allah's speech are meant to support oppressors?

Let not the strutting about of the Unbelievers through the land deceive thee" (Al 'Imran, v. 196), and: "Leave them alone, to enjoy (the good things of this life) and to please themselves: let (false) hope amuse them" (Al Hijr, v. 3).

No, by Allah. It refers rather to the hasty ending of their perishing and their passing away, as well as to their unfortunate destiny that no believer envies.

When our master Sa'ed Ibn Waqqas entered the Persian country after the Exalted Allah put an end to their reign, he read the verses in which the Exalted Allah referred to the removal of Pharaoh's kingdom:

"How many were the gardens and springs they left behind. And corn fields and noble buildings. And wealth (and conveniences of life), wherein they had taken such delight! Thus (was their end)! And We made other people inherit (those things!)" (Ad Dukhan, vs 25-28).

6- The mission

The title of the mission is derived from the Exalted Allah's speech:

"Enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong".

By mission, welfare spreads and evil vanishes. The believer should allot part of his time for the mission, though, originally, all his life should be dedicated to the mission, but if your life cannot be dedicated in this way, where is your part activity in this mission?

7- Patience

It is taken from the Exalted Allah's speech:

"and bear with patient constancy whate'er betide thee; for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs".

By patience the truthful realize their purpose, but the impatient produce nothing, and they can never attain their aim. Patience and waiting are a must. The Exalted Allah said:

"But if ye are constant and do right, not the least harm will their cunning do to you" (Al 'Imran, v. 120).

Impatience is a plight that has stricken us.

Who is able to put a plan for the ten or twenty years to come among us?

What have the Zionists done, and how long have they been planning?

They put plans, then they wait for a long time patiently to attain their purpose.

On the other hand, we are fond of plans that do not exceed days or months. We do not even know how to put a long-termed plan, because we have the natural disposition of being impatient. We are unable to put a method to follow.

As we are unable to put this method, the coming generations may be able and achieve the required aim. By doing that, they will begin the first step that lead to welfare, renaissance, and they will be able to wipe out the traces of our defeat.

We are accustomed to haste, because we have lost the quality of patience in our characters and in our behaviors.

8- Humbleness

This quality is derived from the Exalted Allah's speech:

"And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men nor walk in insolence through the earth".

'Swelling' means 'bending'. When one is arrogant he swells his cheek at people, i.e., he looks at them from the side of his eye bending his head to one side.

On the other hand, when humbleness gets away from the cultural method, man can never attain complete harmony with his environment, and have reciprocal intimacy with the other people.

Pride and self-conceit make man disregarded by the people around him, even if they hypocritically praise him for his money or for his high position and authority.

9- Seriousness

This is derived from the Exalted Allah's speech:

"nor walk in insolence through the earth; for Allah loveth not any arrogant boaster."

The disposition of cynicism, laughing and making the other laugh have become a common aspect among the youth, accompanied by the lack of the sense of responsibility and seriousness. Consequently, man has become engrossed in his personal qualities, and has become the captive of his own individualism.

Nowadays, this bad quality has complete control over the youth. So whenever they meet, they say:

"Make us laugh and we'll make you laugh."

Hasn't this quality been common among our university students, our youth and our Ummah?

A great deal of money is spent for the purpose of making people laugh so that this quality has become a knack, such as the hidden camera, and comedies the purpose of which is only to make people laugh.

Generally speaking, the lack of seriousness has become a common quality among the young people. If we make statistics and induction, we find that this fact is true. The serious young man has become rare nowadays. We do not mean that the youth should never smile or tell jokes, for our master Muhammad (PBUH) used to smile and laugh, and he used to tell jokes but he never told a lie.

You should distinguish between the one who frowns with the illusion that his attitude represents obligation, and the one who is far away from this quality.

The Exalted Allah's speech "nor walk in insolence through the earth" refers to the one who has no definite aim in life, nor does he have purpose or seriousness, "for Allah loveth not any arrogant boaster", i.e., the arrogant is the one who swells his cheek at people with pride, and 'the boaster' is the natural result of every one who walks on earth in insolence.

10- Intermediateness and Moderation

This title is derived from the Exalted Allah's speech "And be moderate in the pace". The Exalted Allah said:

"It is He Who has made the earth manageable for you, so traverse ye through its tracts and enjoy of the Sustenance which He furnishes" (Al Mulk, v.15).

Each understands 'walking on the earth' in his own way. But the Exalted Allah said "And be moderate in thy pace", so we should have good understanding of His statement: "traverse ye through its tracts".

Seeking livelihood as well as activity is incumbent for man while he is living on this earth, but "be moderate in thy pace", i.e., be away from immoderation and excess, and adhere to intermediateness and the straight way of moderation. By intermediateness we get away from immoderation and excess.

"And be moderate in thy pace", i.e., make your behavior on earth in the mid-way between immoderation and excess.

How much we do need intermediateness!

11- the method of asking for more deeds not mere speech

This is derived from the Exalted Allah's speech:

"and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass".

We should not be satisfied with the apparent meaning only of this verse, and say this means: "Do not raise your voice". The Holy Qur'an addresses man and gives him an example which he should avail himself of.

The Exalted Allah does not want us to adopt the method of shouting, for the excited people do nothing but shout. The method of shouting has become an expression of a praiseworthy behavior.

Let us turn to the verses where the Exalted Allah mentioned this kind of man:

"The similitude of those who were charged with the (obligations of the) Mosaic Law, but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is that of a donkey which carries huge tones (but understands them not)" (Al Jum'a, v. 5).

Such a person has the elements of knowledge, but he does not make use of them.

We are an Ummah that has its cultural and educational reservoir, but we do not make use of it. We only excel in ' s h o u t i n g ' .

An Algerian scientist drew my attention when he did a surveillance on a certain phenomenon throughout twenty years during the French occupation. Two physicians graduated from university, one was a Muslim and the other was a Jew. The Muslim was more excellent than the Jew. The Muslim drew the attention of people wherever he went. He had a brilliant character. He used to make people fascinated by his speech. The scientist was watching the Muslim physician during twenty years. He found that this physician was able to attract people in his frequent speeches and had a high position among the majority of the other physicians.

On the other hand, the Jewish physician was mostly reticent. He lived at the period when France was watching the practices of the Jews and restricted and chained them. The French authorities prevented the Jews from making any activity. The Jewish physician asked the aid of the Jews who had high university degrees. So they established what was similar to the university, in the houses. Thus throughout twenty years, generations of the Jewish students reticently graduated from

this house university on all high levels, educational and scientific, but nobody heard about them.

When the French wanted to have a debate with the Algerians, the educated Jews were the ones who held the debate on behalf of Algeria because they were well educated. On the other hand, the Muslim physician was doing nothing during these twenty years but shouting.

This is the passivity we have trained to experience since our childhood.

The Algerian scientist made an analysis of this phenomenon in an excellent educational way saying that the Muslim child used to have the breast of his mother whenever he shouted with no disciplined or educational method, whereas, the non-Muslim child was treated in a different way. He was given disciplined suckling at specific organized times. The shouting of this child was in vain for he was given only the amount of milk that was allotted for him according to a set suckling program whether he shouted or not. Thus, method and monotony that depended on a plan was applied since childbirth in this case.

Can we understand the significance of the Exalted Allah's speech:"

"and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass".

Can't we understand after all the above mentioned that we are in need for a convincing method, not a speech that excites the emotions!

Can't we understand from the Exalted Allah's speech: "and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass" that what may save us from the defeat

we live in is not demonstrations during which shouting is presented? It is rather the scientific, educational and cultural method that we need to apply.

Shall we understand that?

Shall we change this plan into a practical method we experience in our houses, in our universities, in our schools, and in our kindergartens?

Thus, the concepts of educating are plenty in the Holy Qur'an, and what I have presented is only one sample.

Allāhum...Guide us to You favorably, and make us from those who listen to wisdom and follow the best of it.

I say my speech and ask God's forgiveness.

Dr Mahmud Abulhuda Al Husaini