will you deny the orphan?
The Forgotten Ones

The Plight of the Orphans

We all pray for righteousness. We want the sincere (God-fearing), the humble, the patience. We seek to follow the example of our beloved Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) - his honesty, his sincerity, his grace and his generosity.

Yet it seems that instead of growth in grace and generosity, it is the insensitivity of the Ummah (global Muslim community) that is growing. With over a million orphans left unattended in all corners of the globe, we have no excuses. We are each responsible for fulfilling their needs. There is no shadow of pride to hide behind to explain away our neglect, our utter thoughtlessness.

In ayat (Qur’anic verse) after ayat of the Qur’ayn, Allah the Most High tells us not to forget the orphans with harshness. True, most of us do not spend our days beating children, so we’re safe... right? That what it is called when we completely ignore helpless children, denying them of proper medication, food, education, clothing and, most importantly, family? What are we doing when we allow the hajjar (soror-believer) to take away our children and raise them outside the domains of Islam? What could possibly be a harsher sentence to a child? But we are too caught up ensuring our own prosperity to care. We have our own families to worry about, our own bills to pay, our own children to put through the exorbitant university system. We insist on our own needs first, however superficial they may be in respect to the basic needs of a helpless child.

Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) didn’t think that way. He would unselfishly put the security of others above his own needs, especially children. If we truly love the Prophet (pbuh) and if we sincerely strive to follow his footsteps (Prophetic example), how is it that we let the plight of our orphans, our children, go unchecked? Trying to answer this question.

Yes, we can distance ourselves from the orphans, label apathy as one of our many problems of the Ummah and throw up our hands. It may be all we need to convince ourselves in this life - but on the Day of Judgement, as we stand before our Lord (may He be glorified) what explanation will we have to offer? That we didn’t have the time, the resources or the money? And Allah the Most High has blessed so many of us with so much. But rather than using these resources to earn His pleasure, we squander our efforts to obtain the wealth of this dunya (this world).

If we would only realize the magnificence of our own existence, we might not want to spend our days in the world and strive to answer the Day. Imagine what one token of compassion for a lonely child could tip the scale for us. It could be in respect to the other children and raise them in our hands.

"It is not Righteousness that you turn your faces to the East and West; but piety is the one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Books, and the Prophets and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to the poor, and to the wayfarer, and to those who asked and to set slaves free, performs salat, and pays zakat, and fulfill their covenant when they make it, and who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment and at the time of fighting. Such are the people of truth and the God-fearing."

~ the Holy Qur’an (2: 177)

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ISTANBUL, Turkey (Aug. 20) — More than 58,000 bodies have thus far been recovered from the rubble caused by a powerful earthquake that struck northwestern Turkey on August 17. The earthquake was centered in the industrial town of Fethiye, approximately 90 km (56 miles) east of Istanbul, measuring 7.4 on the Richter scale. Over 50,000 people have been reported injured and over 60,000 left homeless.

The streets shook the city before dawn while many were asleep, trapping many inside their homes. Shortly after, a fire caught Turkey's biggest oil refinery and nearby chemical pools, black smoke rising from burning aircraft bought the fire.

Rescuers cautioned that lack of clean water and food coupled with the unseasonal summer heat could spread disease and drive the death toll even higher.

Three trapped victims were rescued from crumbled buildings three days after the quake. The disaster threatened to rival Turkey's most destructive quake - a 7.9 quake in 1999 that killed 33,000 people.

Seyyid Puzia, an official with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs based in Geneva, said Turkish officials estimated that as many as 35,000 people were still unaccounted for.

Medical emergency rescue workers against typhoid and warned of health risks for the multitude of injured victims who are crowded in parks or along roadsides in the search for basic necessities.

The World Health Organization in Geneva, however, called the health risk from unburied cadavers "negligible," saying resources were better spent on providing portable toilets and clean water and monitoring for outbreaks.

-Al-Tih is asking its readers to generously donate funds to the victims of the Turkey earthquake. May Allah reward you for your efforts. Please send money to us, and we will send the money to Al-Tih Neighbors Turkey Earthquake Relief 118 Kirkwood Hall 308 Weierman Plaza Los Angeles, CA 90024

-Clashes and a death at money order to Al-Tih Neighbors Turkey Earthquake Relief 118 Kirkwood Hall 308 Weierman Plaza Los Angeles, CA 90024

Over 13,000 dead, 600,000 homeless in Turkey Quake

Residents walk past rubble from the collapsed Sakarya masjid (place of worship). The famed historic buildings in Istanbul, such as the Blue Mosque, were unharmed by the quake.

Newbriefs...

- Philippine Government to Start Peace Talks with Muslims

MANILLA, (Aug. 2) - The Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a Muslim rebel group, are to hold formal peace talks next month, Philippine Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado said.

Mercado said both sides are finalizing details of the talks such as identifying 46 camps claimed to be under the control of the MILF at the country's southernmost island of Mindanao.

Identifying the camps is a prerequisite for the implementation of a 1997 agreement that calls for a general cessation of hostilities while the formal talks are in progress.

The government, however, is reluctant to concede that a significant number of the camps are under MILF control.

The government asserts that identifying the camps must be done within the limits imposed by the Philippine Constitution and legal system, a demand the MILF refuses to accede to.

- The Kuala Nenas Service

- Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahman - Tortured in Prison Cell

ROCHESTER, Minnesota - CNN Interactive confirmed on August 20, 1999 that Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahman was attacked by a prison official and suffered contusions. The attack occurred while the Shaykh was using the prison toilet. As a result of the attack, he fell down and then seems to have been dragged to his cell.

Shaykh 'Umar is the spiritual guide of the Jamaah al-Islamiyyah in Egypt. The depth and support of this movement is witnessed by the fact that 70,000 associates of the group are now in Egyptian district Mokarraka's prisons.

In 1996, Shaykh 'Umar was falsely accused of being a suspect in the World Trade Center bombing, and was sentenced to life in prison. Before his sentence, Shaykh 'Umar told the judge, "This case is nothing but an extension of the American war against Islam."