

will you deny the  
**orphan?**

# The Forgotten Ones

## The Plight of the Orphans



We all pray for righteousness. We want the *taqwa* (God-consciousness), the humility, the patience. We seek to follow the example of our beloved Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah the Most High be upon him) – his honesty, his sincerity, his grace and his generosity.

Yet it seems that instead of growth in

*kuffar* (non-believers) 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

tion 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 magni-

*"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, 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 ask, 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)

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

In *ayah* (Qur'anic verse) after ayah of the Qur'an, Allah the Most High tells us not to treat the orphan with harshness. True, most of us do not spend our days beating children, so we're safe...right? Then what is it 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

putting our own needs first, however superficial they may be in respect to the basic needs of a homeless child.

Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) didn't think that way. He would unwaveringly 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 *Sunnah* (Prophetic example), how is it that we let the plight of our orphans, our children, obtain such an exaggerated level?

Yes, we can distance ourselves from the orphans, label apathy as one of the 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 explana-

tion of the reward for caring for these children, surely we would not hesitate to sacrifice our worldly luxuries. Even sacrificing a little would give us something to answer to our Lord the Most High on the Day. Imagine that one token of compassion to a lonely child could tip our scales into paradise. What a deal for such a small price.

Commit yourself to helping one child, take care of his needs, show him the beauty of this *Din* (Islamic way of life), and insha' Allah He, the Most Magnificent, will bless your sincerity with a place by His Servant (pbuh) on the Day. •

Jazakum Allahu khayran,  
-the *Al-Talib* Staff

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*Al-Talib* welcomes and encourages letters from our readers.

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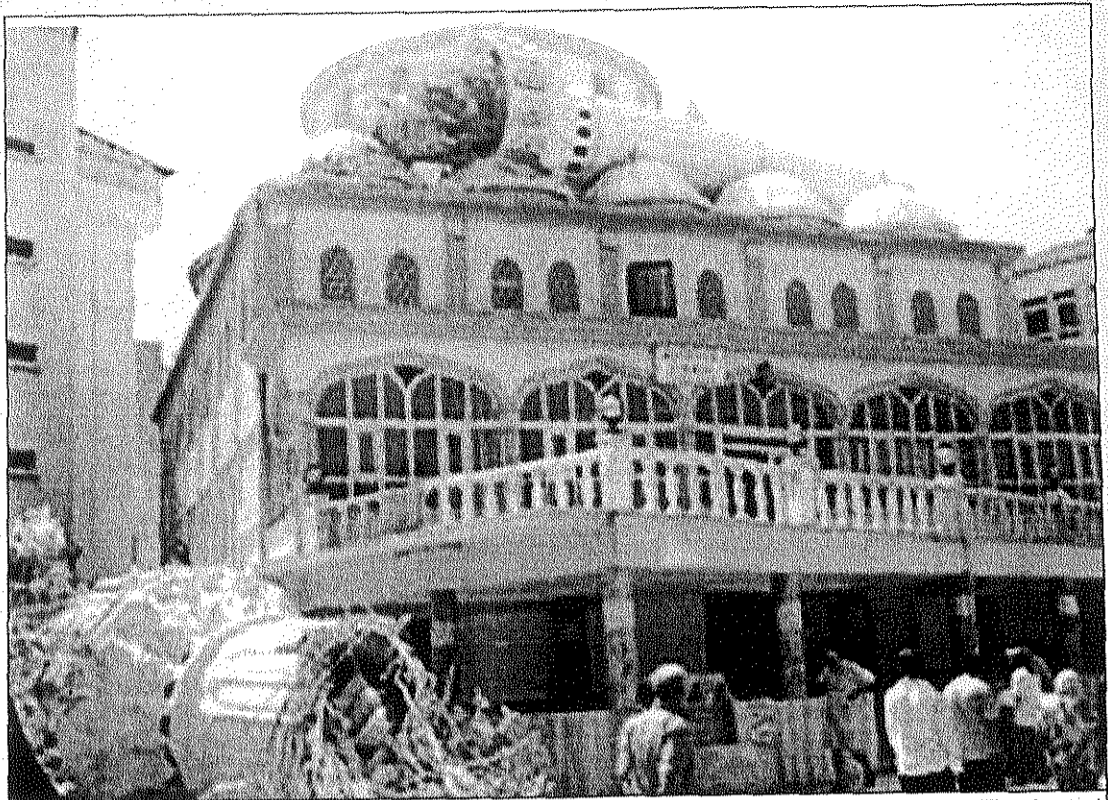
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*Al-Talib* is devoted to expressing the views, concerns and ideas of the American Muslim. It seeks to promote and achieve community empowerment and the worldwide success of Muslims by instilling the *Ummah* with the spirit of Jihad, the love of the Qur'an and the example of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. It also serves to correct the mainstream media's misinformation about Islam and Muslims, and seeks to provide non-Muslims with accurate information about Islam. Furthermore, *Al-Talib* is committed to remaining an independent forum for a diverse spectrum of views and concerns.

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# 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 Masjid, were unharmed by the quake.

ISTANBUL, Turkey (Aug. 20) - More than 13,000 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 Izmit, approximately 90 km (56 miles) east of Istanbul, measuring 7.4 on the Richter scale. Over 30,000 people have been reported injured and over 600,000 left homeless.

The tremor shook the city before dawn while most were asleep, trapping many inside their homes. Shortly after, a fire engulfed Turkey's biggest oil refinery and clouds of thick black smoke tolled skyward as firefighting aircraft fought the blaze.

Rescuers cautioned that lack of clean water and toilets coupled with the

intense 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 threatens to rival Turkey's most destructive quake - a 7.9 quake in 1939 that killed 33,000 people.

Sergio Piazzini, 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.

Medics immunized rescue workers against typhoid and warned of health risks for the multitude of quake victims who are crowded in parks or along roadsides in the sweltering heat under

makeshift tents.

The stench of decay pervaded flattened towns near the quake's epicenter where sewage lines were smashed and electricity and water was cut. Thousands of people, many with open wounds, were forced to live on the streets.

"There are wild problems with organization," said Nurse Egemen Keskin.

The Prime Minister's crisis office said medical teams had begun picking up garbage, spraying disinfectants, and distributing water purification tablets.

"There are many people, animals and food under the debris," said Health Ministry official Rifat Kose. "An epidemic could occur as they decay, but we are taking necessary measures."

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-Talib is asking our 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 *insha'Allah* (God-willing) see that it reaches the victims. Jazakum Allahu khayran.

-Please send a check or money order to:

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Turkey Earthquake Relief  
118 Kerckhoff Hall  
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## Newsbriefs...

### • Rallies to Protest Counter-Terrorism Bill in San Francisco, Los Angeles

Two separate protests were held in San Francisco and Los Angeles to protest the Counter-Terrorism Bill.

The bill has been used by the U.S. Government to detain Muslims and freeze assets of those it deems as "terrorists." Over 20 Muslims are currently imprisoned without charge, on the basis of "secret evidence."

Over 400 people attended the San Francisco protest, held at the San Francisco Civic Center, and about 140 attended the protest held at the Westwood Federal Building in Los Angeles.

Imam Abdul Alim Musa and Abdel Malik Ali of Masjid Al-Islam were speakers at both events. Other speakers at the Los Angeles demonstration included Imam Sa'dullah Khan (Islamic Center, So. Calif.), and Hussam Ayloush (CAIR). A third demonstration will *insha'Allah* (God-willing) be held at Washington D.C.'s Lafayette Park at the end of September. •

### • Philippine Government to Start Peace Talks with Muslims

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

Mercado said both sides are still finalizing details of the talks, such as identifying 46 camps claimed to be under the control of the MILF in 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 Kyodo News 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 officer 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 Jama'ah 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 dictator Mubarak's prisons.

In 1996, Shaykh 'Umar was falsely accused of being a conspirator 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." •