

# A CURE FOR THE HEART

EPISODE 5: ATTAINING RIGHTEOUSNESS  
THROUGH CHARITY





## VERSE ON CHARITY

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ  
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

*You will never achieve righteousness until you donate some of what you cherish. And whatever you give is certainly well known to Allah. (Surah Ali 'Imran 3:192)*

- There are numerous Ayahs in the Quran advocating for the practice of giving Sadaqah or Infaq, and this verse is among them. However, it's important to recognise the balance in this practice as the constitution itself is balanced.
- We need to look at it from both sides as our focus tends to be on the obligation to give, not realising that **there is a command for the recipient to refrain from asking.**

Qabisah ibn Mukhariq reported:

I was under debt so I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and I asked him about it. The Prophet said, *“Wait until we receive charity, then we will order it to be given to you.”*

Then the Prophet said, *“O Qabisah, **begging is not lawful except for one of three cases: a man who is in heavy debt, so asking others is permissible for him until he pays it, after which he must stop; a man whose property is destroyed by a calamity, so asking is permissible for him until he can support himself; and a man who is afflicted by poverty attested to by three astute members of his people, so asking is permissible for him until he can support himself.**”*

*O Qabisah, **besides these three begging is forbidden and the beggar consumes what is forbidden.**”*

(Sahih Muslim )



Narrated Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri:

Some Ansari persons asked for (something) from Allah's Messenger ﷺ and he gave them. They again asked him for (something) and he again gave them. And then they asked him and he gave them again till all that was with him finished.

And then he said, *"If I had anything, I would not keep it away from you. (Remember) Whoever abstains from asking others, Allah will make him contented, and whoever tries to make himself self-sufficient, Allah will make him self-sufficient. And whoever remains patient, Allah will make him patient. Nobody can be given a blessing better and greater than patience."*

(Sahih Al-Bukhari)





# PERFECTLY BALANCED

- **As much as there's an urge for us to give, there's also an urge for the other party not to ask, except in specific situations outlined in the Hadith above.**
- This reflects the perfection, wisdom, and balanced constitution bestowed upon us by Allah SWT. Similarly, in matters of restorative justice, when we transgress, we're obligated to allow the injured party to seek *Qisas* (retribution) from us, yet this too is balanced, as it encourages forgiveness from the injured party. This is a perfectly balanced constitution.
- As we draw closer to Allah, especially during Ramadan, our eagerness to generously give charity for His Sake is a noble intention, which reflects the excellence of our Ummah. However, if we engage in this practice without a proper understanding of the objectives of Shariah, **we risk weakening rather than strengthening the Ummah.**



# ISSUES WITH CHARITY

- The wisdom behind urging the wealthy to spend on the poor is to uplift people from poverty, thereby strengthening the Ummah. However, when we give indiscriminately, several problems arise:

## 1) Risk in Compromising Niyyah

- When we pay individuals in religious professions, we risk compromising their Niyyah. **Society as a whole creates this expectation on services related to acts of worship (such as inviting a Ustaz to recite Dua) into transactional exchanges.**
- Kak Natasha came to know that within one of the committees she was involved with, requests to engage religious professionals often sparked competition driven by the expectation of financial gain. This realisation led her to question how such expectations could compromise the fundamental aspect of one's Niyyah.

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- Aida shares her experience which was opposite to Kak Natasha's. At AA Plus, whenever she invites teachers and guest speakers, she finds herself having to persuade them to accept payment - every single one of them adamantly refuses! SubhanAllah, this is a testament to their true intentions.
- In current times where expenses are high, and their refusal to accept payment for sharing their knowledge seems unfair, especially when compared to how we would pay professionals like doctors, engineers, and mechanics.
- With such different encounters by Kak Natasha and Aida, it serves as a testament to one's character. While Aida and Kak Natasha have had many positive experiences in this regard, unfortunately, there are instances where people have made the Deen overly transactional. **We need to remain mindful of not corrupting other people's motives.**

We may  
promote  
dependency  
rather than  
independence.





# ADVOCATING UNITY & PEACE



## 2) Balancing Help and Independence

- As outlined in the Hadith, assistance is meant to be short-term, with the ultimate goal of empowering individuals to regain independence. However, **some individuals do not have a strategy to overcome their challenges and instead, continuously rely on others for help.**
- Kak Natasha highlights a critical yet overlooked aspect of strengthening the Ummah. According to her studies and research, **persistent poverty is often rooted in war or conflict.** During this, in times of instability, investors are reluctant to invest, leading to no economic development.
- Hence this is why Islam goes to great extents to avoid disunity, conflict and war, recognising the long-term, debilitating effects that weaken the Ummah.



# POWER OF THE RICH

## 3) The Riches Dictate the Rules

- The wealthy often dictate societal norms and standards. They decide what is valuable and what isn't.
- **They assign worth to certain products (i.e. Louis Vuitton) or services while undervaluing others, such as the labour of factory workers or the materials used in production.**
- There is a worldwide economic order that ascribes value to certain very arbitrary things. For example, much of the wealth of the United States is linked to stock prices. This has led to the creation of a system where certain companies are assigned high value, in which **they create more wealth for themselves and impoverish the rest of the world.**



# DRIVERS OF ONGOING POVERTY

## 4) Challenges of Uneven Development

- In countries such as Britain and Malaysia, imbalanced development persists due to the way leaders have strategised which may have overlooked certain areas, leaving them without adequate infrastructure and education.
- As a result, pockets of the population in these areas suffer from lower standards of living compared to the rest of the country. These are some of the reasons that contribute to the persistence of poverty.

• **If the mission is to be distributive and fairer in the world, what can we do about it? Within the choice that we can make, what can we do differently?**

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# WHAT WE CAN DO

## 1) Make a conscious effort to prioritise conflict-stricken areas.

- It's important to support a variety of causes including funding local projects rather than favouring only one.
- However, Kak Natasha **recommends prioritising conflict zones and specific Islamic relief NGOs** that focus on livelihood projects, such as goat farming, olive farming and Kurma farming. These initiatives aim to provide sustainable livelihoods, even in situations where other sources of investment are limited.



# PROMOTING LOCAL ECONOMIES

## **2) Resist Western Narratives in Our Consumption**

- **Supporting local produce, social enterprises or mom-and-pop shops** is beneficial for the environment as it reduces the logistical footprint involved in feeding our families.
- **We should also make a conscious effort to purchase from businesses with transparent supply chains.** For example, many individuals are now opting to buy local brands instead of supporting those that support Israel.  
**#boycottIsrael!**
- **This approach will contribute to strengthening the economic resilience of the Ummah while addressing poverty in a more dignified way.**

People will  
give and that is  
a noble trait,  
but we hope  
for people to  
give more  
thoughtfully.





# MINDFUL GIVING

- The Muslim community is renowned for its generosity, especially during Ramadan. However, it's essential that we give thoughtfully, consciously and mindfully considering where we allocate our funds.
- Kak Natasha shared a profound insight from the book "*Fiqh of Zakat*" by Yusuf al-Qaradawi RA, where he mentioned that when we have a certain amount of Zakat to give, it's not necessary to distribute it among all 8 categories of Asnaf, as some might assume.
- For instance, when we give to the *Faqir*, it is **more beneficial to offer substantial assistance to one individual in a way that enables them to no longer qualify as Asnaf in the following year.** As opposed to dispersing funds among 100 individuals, only to find that their problems persist.





# DO WE GIVE OUT OF LOVE?

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ  
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*You will never achieve righteousness until you donate some of what you cherish. And whatever you give is certainly well known to Allah. (Surah Ali 'Imran 3:192)*

- In this verse, Allah SWT uses the word تُحِبُّونَ (tuhibboona) "which you love".
- Often, when giving charity items such as clothing, we tend to give away the worn-out or tattered ones. It's more to empty our closet than to give thoughtfully to help someone else's problem. :(
- These people are not our recycling bin, but rather our vehicle to goodness; they are our bridge towards getting closer to Allah SWT.





# WHAT DO YOU LOVE?



- **What we love most might not always be our money; it could be our time.** However, some are reluctant to offer their time and instead opt for the shortcut of giving money.
- It's essential to remember that **Allah SWT emphasises the importance of sacrifice** in this Ayah. So, if our giving does not incur any sense of **sacrifice on our part, then we have not attained righteousness.**
- The concept of Zakat, at just 2.5% of our wealth, may seem minimal. However, it is about the conscious mindset that Zakat is *Tazkiyah*, which is to purify. Sometimes, this purification extends beyond monetary donations but includes giving our time and energy. Similarly, when it comes to knowledge, we should avoid being stingy by hoarding what we learn. We should not gate-keep knowledge!

We have to  
feel a pinch  
when we  
give - it's  
that pinch  
that purifies.



# SACRIFICES FOR ALLAH

- How do we know if we are on the right path and if our Iman is growing stronger?
- One of the indications is our willingness to do something difficult for the Sake of Allah SWT. We can all do easy tasks, but can we do tasks that are truly hard for His Sake?

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ  
رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Say, "Surely my prayer, my sacrifice, my life, and my death are all for Allah—Lord of all worlds.  
(Surah Al-An'am 6:162)



# HEART WORK

## ACTION:

Choose ONE community or charity body that you can continuously give your support to, in hopes of improving their lives.

## REFLECTION:

How are we being stingy to the people around us? How will we change moving forward so that we give sincerely?

## CONTRIBUTION:

In the spirit of Ramadan, give to others with the sole intention to uplift them and to gain Allah's Pleasure, as opposed to just spring cleaning for Eid.