

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ONE'S SELF

People of the western world often have a gut reaction to any mention of Muslims and their struggles. To believe wholeheartedly what the popular media spits out, you would think that the only struggles Muslims do is to work destruction. Not true.

There are many ways to struggle in the path of Allah. The majority of Islamic scholars agree that by far, the biggest struggle facing the Muslim is against his own evil inclinations. This is not a once and its done struggle. This struggle against one's own evil inclinations has been going on since the Shaitan tempted our common parents Adam and Eve from the Garden of Paradise- and will continue until the last man and woman has expired from this temporary world of trial.

There are many battlefields within yourself that only deep contemplation and constant prayer can make you aware of. Every pleasant thing Allah created in this, the temporary world, has limits imposed upon it. Many kinds of limits. First of all, there is no perfect pleasure here in this life. There's always some flaw or fault with it. Because of this the seeker of earthly pleasures is never happy with his amassed wealth, his collection objects, his acquiring of women, his acquisitions of power and influence. He always will want more until the dust of the grave fills his mouth. The perfect pleasure lies elsewhere in another eternal world- but that is an exclusive realm to enter, very exclusive.

Not to say we cannot enjoy earthly pleasures here, its just that they come with limits that have to be respected in order to avoid the vortex that draws one in uncontrollably into a life hedonistic waste.

The natural inclination of men is to mate lots of women. But Allah orders limits. It must be done inside a marriage, and the marriage itself has limits and regulations.

The natural inclination of men is to hoarde and consume as much wealth as possible. But Allah has prescribed limits. Wealth has its commendable uses. Allah says to spend in charity and in His cause that which is beyond your needs. You have to give account for all that waste and extravagence on the Day The Dead are Raised.

Yet the popular media of the western world- driven by commercials to sell products- extolls as virtues both of these things; to mate lots of women, and to hoarde and accumulate more wealth than you could spend in 10,000 years- so much so that it is now considered normal to pursue these aims full time, AND if you do not think that these two pursuits are what you should focus upon, then you would be considered not normal.

Mating women in marriage comes with limits. Earning wealth is lawful in Allah's sight, but has constraints. Surplus wealth is not to be used to build the pyramids, or fantastic empires. Anyone can see that all these scrapings in the dirt man does cannot permit him to escape death and the limits Allah wrote for him.

Any right minded person can see that to deliberately burn surplus wheat or corn in order to drive up the price while in other parts of the world people die in droves from starvation is a manifest wrong. Closer to home, it is wrong for you to settle in to bed with a full belly without first checking to see if your neighbor is hungry.

Its all about the battle between truth and falsehood that began with Shaitan against Adam and Eve and will continue until the last human dies. Just because these things dazzle one in the earthly life and have a magnetic pull, doesn't mean you should succumb. The truth is something to be fought for, and is totally worthwhile. In fact, there is no higher good than to face certain death in speaking the truth against the forces of falsehood.

The truth should not be watered down. The armies of falsehood, once giving up all hope of making a truthful man lie, will then try to make him mix just a little falsehood with the truth. Afterall, if you can mix falsehood with truth, it will then become palatable and people will readily swallow it. The politicians have all succumbed to this lure. Its all tested by ratings instead of tested by the heart.

If you had a 55 gallon barrel of fresh pure milk and you added to it just one quarter teaspoon of dog poop from the backyard, you would not be inclined to drink it, but someone who did not know of the filthy ingredient would swallow it and not notice.

The believer willingly imposes upon himself the Will of Allah. A little discomfort in the life of this world, which is very short, in exchange for an eternity of perfection, where there is no decay, no death after the first one, no lies, no offensive things, only enjoyment and acceptance by The Creator.

Its not un-doable.

Men like to sleep late in the morning. Allah says get up at dawn and pray.

Men like to eat expensive foods.

Allah says fast at least one month per year (during Ramadan).

Men hide their true intentions, sometimes even from themselves.

Allah says to examine your hearts and purify them. Purify your speech from falsehood, (very hard to do in practice). Allah rewards good intentions. It is not the road to Hell. The road to Hell is not paved with good intentions. That is a saying from the armies of falsehood. It is best if you intend to do a good deed and actually accomplish it, but even if you intended, but were prevented, Allah's reward is still assured.

Look how many people (examine) in public service say they are doing this virtuous deed for the good of everyone, and making sure the television stations cover it, only to find out, years later, that the real intention behind that deed was personal aggrandizement. If it was actually a genuine good deed that he or she wished to do to purify their soul, why not do it in secret, so no one except their Lord knows they did it?

Yet it is the natural inclination of men to want to be praised for what they have done, (and even worse, to be praised for what they have not done). Allah says to not seek this praise, but to do good works seeking no praise.

There is no escape from death all people. Allah granted not one of us people permanent life here, and who would want it here? This world is full of deceit, decay and death.

Similarly there is no escape from struggle. One can only choose whether to struggle in the cause of truth or the cause of falsehood. If you cannot utter truth, then at least keep your tongue from uttering falsehood. Thats a big step.

This is not a formula for Paradise on earth. There will be no such development. No matter how much truth you speak and abstain from falsehood, it will not make the world a perfect place free of evil or even orderly. It will only matter at the Day every sensible person should take heed of: The Day The Dead are Raised. The One who created you the first time will have no difficulties creating you a second time and commanding you to give account of your struggle in this the temporary life.

The biggest of these struggles is the struggle within yourself and your own inclinations to do bad things- even though the popular media may tell you that these are not bad things. The struggle against one's self.

James Riva W38533
OCCC
1 Administration Rd.
Bridgewater, MA 02324

www.jamesriva.info

AND

<http://betweenthebars.org/blogs/339/>