

# PORTRAITS OF YOUTHS

*In Quran and the History of Islam*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) says:

Indeed Allah likes that young man or woman spends his/her youth in Allah's obedience.

When Adam and Eve stepped on this earth for the first time, they were in their youths, handsome young people having a good physique and a beautiful body. In the histories of the world most of the greatest feats were performed by those who were in their youth and according to the heavenly books, most of the prophets when they were appointed to convey divine teachings to the people, were either youths or had recently stepped into their adolescence. Accomplishments in scientific and technological fields, illumination of historical realities and other important inventions were the results of the enlightened thinking of only the young generation and results of their hard work. Everywhere the faces of youths are prominent.

The people of the world, in these recent times have begun to pay more attention to the young generation, though there was a time when power in various fields was mostly concentrated in the hands of aged people and they used to impose their will on all. However, slowly the world became

mindful of the fact that more regard should be paid to the new generation and the young people of the community.

In order to encourage and guide the youths and to prevent them from being misguided, there are various establishments, societies, newspapers and magazines etc. We even have special ministries for youth affairs. All this is so because the life of the youth is most precious. Youth is that time of life when responsibilities of a person increase and these important days pass away very soon, but it is the time when the personality of the youth is shaped. The foundations of a brilliant future are made firm in this period. In these days the youth selects and chalks out a program for his life according to his own choice. This time is so crucial that if a proper program is not selected and a proper path not chosen, one would have to suffer its consequences forever, and the realization would come only when there is no recourse except to face shame and humiliation, while regret is not a cure.

Therefore it is necessary that at this critical and important juncture of life parents, and their adolescent children, in the light of reason and contemplation, choose the correct path. On this juncture, one should not merely consider the transient world but also keep the hereafter in view. Where along with the world, the success of the hereafter is also assured. Though in education of youths today only those fields and subjects are selected in which there are more worldly benefits. The aim of education is the material world and its comforts, and this is repeated so many times before the young people that they form a mindset that the aim of life is only to earn money and obtain material comforts. The effect of it is that the youth instead of becoming a perfect

human being becomes a machine for earning money. Then gradually his youth begins to decline and he nears old age. All the parts of that machine of youth deteriorate and become useless. When no scope remains for rejuvenation, these same people become a burden for the future generations who await their death restlessly.

These days slogans of progress are raised with regard to young people. What progress does it imply? Mostly when the parents of young adolescents speak of progress, they speak only in terms of this material and transient world. Only the shine and luster of the world and efforts to excel each other in obtaining material wealth and desires to fulfill lusts, while the holy teachings of Islam have not made them criteria of progress and success. Otherwise, instead of the prophets, Nimrod, Pharaoh, Qarun and Abu Sufyan would have been considered successful people.

In the light of Islamic teachings, the criteria of progress and success are faith, good deeds, ethics and good character. Those who possess them are the most advanced and their lives, most successful.

Parents are advised to, in addition to providing worldly education to their children, also pay attention to their ethical training that would make them perfect human beings. Because the youth of their children is a divine bounty and it is very important to teach them discipline and restraint. For progress and success of young people proper atmosphere is necessary at home and in the locality as well as at school and college.

The youth of today feels insulted and thinks he has some shortcomings while the parents think that since their child



has grown up their respect and control has decreased. The youthful child has become disobedient and rebellious and is a prey to bad habits. He hates good behavior. But the question is that the child who was till yesterday obedient and good, how he became so much disobedient after reaching adolescence? Instead of becoming imbued with good moral behavior why he became a collection of bad habits and vices? This applies to those children who were in their early childhood very much well behaved and obedient. Gradually they became disobedient and did not remain in the control of the parents. Since these changes do not appear all at once but gradually become apparent the youth and their parents do not notice these changes and their demands. The result is seen in the tense atmosphere of the house. Now either the children become absolutely submissive to the parents and themselves form no independent views. They refer to their parents in every matter. They ask their parents regarding the most trivial matter and do not take any decision of their own. But the effect of this is that the personality of the youths is undermined and when their future life of independence begins they find it difficult to take their own decision.

Sometimes it is also that the youth is so sure of the correctness of his views and opinion that he considers every advice and view of his parents wrong and useless. He opposes them at every step. Not only this, he also begins to make fun of them. Though this type of practice makes the youths independent it takes away their ethical capacities, which are the essence of human perfection.

The divine religion is a moderate and disciplined system of life and at every step Islam has paid due regard to justice

and equity. Islam is against extremism in every aspect. Neither it advocates absolute control of the parents nor does it accept disobedience and rebellion of the young generation. Rather it endorses the independence of the youth but in the shade of the correct guidance of the parents.

This is indicated in the tradition of the Prophet who says: More than the elegance of youth, I like the advice of senior people.<sup>1</sup> That is why we have to admit that being a young man or woman is not something great, but it is great to be a perfect human being. For which in addition to education, moral training is very much necessary.

In the heydays of the youth there is desire for independence, the wish to express ones personality, free atmosphere of college, lack of ethical training in educational syllabi etc. In such an atmosphere who can teach humanity to the new generation? Who can save them from the evils of materialism? Who can enrich them with ethics?

Keeping these points in view we present this book that deals with the role of youth and their status and position. Furthermore there are analyses of the influence exercised by the youths, both male and female in a clear manner. Our respected readers may study about the importance of youth in Quran, and the illuminated History of Islam, and then derive lessons therefrom.

*Hujjat-ul-Islam Sayyid Ali Akbar Rizvi Qummi*

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<sup>1</sup> *Wasaelush Shia*, Vol. 4, Pg. 97