

Introduction

The life of man can be divided into four periods: childhood, youth, middle age and old age. From these, youth is the most sensitive and valuable period, since the child does not reach physical and spiritual stage where he/she can be entrusted with responsibilities; and that is why the responsibility of his control and upbringing is entrusted to the parents. The old age is also the age of weakness, helplessness and needfulness. He should either depend on his savings from the period of his youth or in order to assure them he should depend on his children or assistance from charitable organizations.

Although man in his middle age, has the strength to work and make effort and to fulfill the daily needs of his life and has foresight about the needs of his old age, but success in this matter depends on correct use of his youth. Therefore the most sensitive and valuable period of the life of man is his youth.

Physical maturity, bodily strength and mental capacities of the youth reach to such a level that he can with foresight make effort to accept his present and future responsibilities and prepare himself for the future life and his role of a responsible member of society. The special qualities of the youth can be said to be as follows:

Physical fitness, bodily strength, constitution, movement, intelligence and strong memory, relaxation and rest, great courage, high hopes, capability of creation and initiative, truthfulness and well-wishing, inner purity and cleanness. Although all youth are not same in having these values, on the contrary there is difference among them, but all of them have these blessings mostly during their youth. The merciful God has blessed youth with all this so that with great courage, foresight and struggle and effort he may obtain success and fortune for himself; but if he is shortcoming in this important thing and wastes his valuable life in carelessness and valuelessness, he would regret it later, when regret would not be of any use.

Amirul Momineen (a.s.) said:

There are two things whose value is not known to man, except after he loses them; youth and health. [1](#)

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

On Judgment Day, man would not take any step till he is not asked: How did you spend your life and

how did you use up your youth?[2](#)

The Messenger of Allah (S) said to Abu Dharr:

Value five things before five others: youth before old age, health before sickness, wealth before poverty, relaxation before being occupied and life before death.[3](#)

Youths should know the value of youth and they should gain as much as they can from it. And if not they would fall into serious and irredeemable dangers; at that time regret would be of no use. Youths in this particular time have three main responsibilities, which we shall mention in brief below:

First duty: Perfect care about physical fitness and health of the body and physical and spiritual faculties. Health is among the greatest divine bounties and valuable treasure trove of life. Loss of health is the greatest loss; it destroys comfort and pleasure of man and it prevents him from struggle and vigor in achieving great aims.

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) said:

There are five things from which if one loses even one, his whole life would become defective, he would lose his sense and would always be anxious; the first of them is physical health.[4](#)

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

There are two bounties, whose value is not known to man: security and welfare.[5](#)

Amirul Momineen (a.s.) said:

Poverty is a calamity and the worst poverty is physical illness, and the worst physical illness is the disease of conscience.[6](#)

The youth are specially advised: That they should try to observe hygiene and in nutrition they should be more concerned with fulfillment of the needs of the body; they must refrain from eating to satiation. They must also keep away from narcotic substances. They should sleep only as much as is needed. They must never give up exercises and walking. They must also avoid lust and sensual deviations as it leads to damage of your body, nerves and your soul.

Second duty: Determination and planning for the future. Every man should adopt an occupation so that through it he may be able to fulfill the needs of his life and that he may live a respectable and successful life and that he may also serve others. He should prepare the causes and prefaces of his future occupation in his youth. The youth can select one of these two paths to enter the society: Either they can choose an independent occupation, which are of numerous kinds.

Although some of them are more or less need practice and skills, but they do not require university education, which requires spending the best days of the life or incurring high expenses. The second

option is to get admission in the university and study for degrees in the chosen field.

After that one should choose a profession, whether it be management, skill based or scientific; although in case he has chosen an appropriate line of work. How nice it would be if in the beginning of their lives all youths choose one of the above paths after keeping in view their physical capabilities, intelligence and memory, family possibilities and their own future after considering the options and through counseling and foresight.

Third duty: Research and study in religious beliefs. The youth who during his childhood has lived in a religious atmosphere at home would naturally be well versed in religious beliefs and habitual in performing religious rituals. Or if he has learnt those things in the religious school for children, after maturity he will recall his past training, which would make him inclined to religion. Now in his youth, he will either look at them with a fresh perspective or avoid them completely.

At that time he would be faced with questions like the following: Where have I come from and who has created me? What was the aim of my creation? Do I have some duties towards my creator, or I am free to do what I like? And if some duties are imposed on me, what are those? From whom should I learn about my duties?

What are its conditions and qualities? Where am I headed and what would my destiny be after death? Would I be answerable for the way I lived in the world? If there exist success and misfortune and reward and punishment in the world after death, what is the path to gain success and avoid misfortune? Such questions and tens like it come upon the clear and illuminated mind of the youth and emphatically demand replies.

Providing correct and satisfactory replies of these questions to the youth is very important and instrumental in shaping his future, because it is through these very replies that the program of life of the youth and after it can be organized and be followed with certainty and he can tread the path of success in life and hereafter and also continue to have peace of mind. But if he fails to obtain the correct replies to these questions, he would fall into very grave and irredeemable dangers and he would regret in the last moments of his life or after death; when regret would be of no use at all.

Therefore, it is most important for the youth to research and study about religious beliefs and to get correct and satisfactory replies; especially in this age when religious beliefs and even their laws are ridiculed at by the enemies of Islam through modern communication techniques and profusion of doubts and objections from every side.

Youth need serious guidance and reliable sources for this research and study and the most important of them are books. Since a long time, fortunate Muslim intellectuals have written numerous good and detailed books on different topics of Knowing God, general and special prophethood, resurrection, laws of philosophy, laws of Imamate, but most of them are difficult for youth, since most of them are in Arabic and others are laces with philosophical and scholastic terms, and are so lengthy that the youth cannot

muster enough time to peruse them.

Some of them contain such dubious matters that they tend to make them fall into more doubts. To solve this problem, I have written a series of books of medium level on religious beliefs in accordance with the understanding of youth and time available to them. Books on various topics are prepared in this series: The volumes are Knowing God, Resurrection in Quran, Prophethood and the Prophet of Islam (general and special prophethood), Understanding Islam, Understanding the duties and rights of women and Imamate and the Imams.

In compiling the above titles, the following points were kept in view:

Simple language, brevity and clear reasoning – we have refrained from using difficult philosophical and scholastic arguments. We have also refrained from discussing weak and baseless points. Doubtful and debatable matters are avoided. We have depended mostly on verses of Quran and traditions and tried not to mention unimportant matters.

We hope these books would be really beneficial and effective in strengthening religious beliefs of our dear youth.

Ibrahim Amini

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- [1.](#) Ghurarul Hikam, Pg. 414.
- [2.](#) Tarikh Yaqubi, Vol. 2, Pg. 90.
- [3.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 81, Pg. 173.
- [4.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 81, Pg. 171.
- [5.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 81, Pg. 170.
- [6.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 81, Pg. 175.

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