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Today, after 20 years....

Today was a huge gathering in a mosque near Seyyid's house. It was the 40th day after he passed away due to short illness. Several of his students, friends, relatives and those who used to attend his lectures had gathered from different cities and countries. They were all very sad and talking about him, his good lectures, his polite and compassionate behavior, his good actions and the role he had played in their lives. A local scholar, who was a friend of Seyyid, then gave a speech on Seyyid's life. The speech was a great shock for almost all of Seyyid's students and even close friends. They were weeping and missing him even more…It was a sad scene. Seyyid's story had captured their hearts.

The scholar started his speech with ayah of Qur'an and then said… 'Perhaps most of you know your teacher and mentor who used to live a very simple and seemingly closed life and give lectures at his house and help you all as 'Seyyid Baqir', the person you thought had probably received traditional religious education and that he was as such from the beginning of his professional career. It was not like that....'

'Your Seyyid was my close friend for the past 40 years. He belonged to a rich family. He was the top student in his high school, college and then in university. He then left for USA and studied in one of the best institutions there and got his PhD in applied ethics and psychology with flying colors. He then finished his post-doctoral training making new discoveries in that field and then became an assistant professor in another top university. All of his family members live there. A few of them are here with us after twenty years when they heard of his death. May God bless him.' Everybody recited *salawat* and voices of weeping and sighs could be heard in the hall…

He continued… 'At that stage of his career, he had all the opportunities to make a future for himself and his new family in the West. He was recently married at that time and had a daughter. He then started his research on a totally new topic in ethics and psychology and won a grant of several hundred thousand dollars. He was also a successful psychologist right from his early professional career and worked as a consultant earning a good amount of money. He had published few very good research papers at that time. His life and career were full of potential to grow and make him famous. Even I didn't know it until today when I met his brother after 25 years… He kept all his achievements a secret from me as well.'

Sighs were now heard across the hall.

The scholar then continued… ‘His brother told me yesterday that ‘Seyyid’ then suddenly felt that serving and making career in a Western society was a treachery to his own people. He was sad to see young people living in developing countries having no guidance about their career. He felt that it was necessary to make their lives and counter the wave of Western culture that was destroying their lives and distorting their ideology. He then resigned from the university and left with his family for Qom to study in a seminary for few years. Since he had learned Arabic before and his religious base was very strong from the beginning, he was able to get the permission to teach religious and ethical sciences within a few years. He then left for your city and settled down here without exactly informing about his profession to his own family members back in USA. I too thought that he left Western society only because of his own children. I didn’t know that he had a noble aim in his life which he kept hidden. Please recite a *salawat* for his noble spirit.’ The audience recited *salawat* in the midst of sighs and sobs.

‘And now I have another surprise for you. The brother of ‘Seyyid’ has brought his few old pictures, valuable documents and certificates, shields and awards he received in USA and from his past life before that. Few others of these are taken with the permission of Seyyid’s wife. Seyyid and his wife kept these valuable things here for the last 25 years hidden in their house. All these are now displayed in the yard of Seyyid’s house where many of you used to attend his lectures during the last over twenty years. After my speech is over, we will go there to see the past of this great man – may Allah bless his soul. Please recite *salawat…*’

‘And finally the last secret of this great man… You might be curious sometimes about the source of earning of Seyyid. Was he supported by his family? No. I also didn’t know until yesterday when his wife disclosed that Seyyid used to run online courses on ethics, spirituality, and spiritual psychology and provided counselling to people. He kept the payment option open for his courses and counselling at his website and never forced anyone to pay. A lot of young people, especially university students benefitted from his online courses.

However, he never disclosed his identity or home address and so nobody knew who was taking the courses. He was using a pseudonym of Dr. S.M. Sadiq. Perhaps some of you or your kids may have taken courses from the website psychology teacher online. Several patients suffering from psychological problems including depression, anxiety, stress and other such conditions used to benefit from his advices on daily basis through the website. This is yet another glorious aspect of Seyyid’s life that he was financially independent and every day he spent about 5 to 6 hours online to take courses and provide psychology counselling services and earn a respected living. This also meant that all the lectures he gave and help that he provided to many of you was free and out of his pocket as a duty and obligation that he took upon himself several years ago when he came back to his country. What a great soul he was and what a successful life he had. May God bless him. Please recite *Surah Fatiha* for him.’

After the speech, the guests had food. Most of them were quiet and remembering the memorable life

they had with Seyyid… His face, his polite manners and his words of guidance, moments he provided compassionate advices to his students and attendees of his lectures were now in front of their eyes. Many of them were still in a state of shock after knowing that Seyyid, besides having had an excellent career at a top university in the West as a brilliant psychologist and ethicist, had also successfully studied at a seminary. They all ate food quietly and were now eager to leave for his house…

Sobhan, Qamar, Asad, Bilal, Shahid, Yusuf, Shareef, Ahmad, Mostafa, Ibrahim, Vaheed and Husayn were all together again after several years. Although they all lived in same country and most of them in the same city, and were in touch with Seyyid, it was after several years that they were all there with their family members. They were in their cars. Husayn and Bilal told their family members that they had taken online courses with Dr. S.M. Sadiq a few years ago but didn't know that it was Seyyid who offered them. They all now reached Seyyid's house.

All of them and several others went inside and in the yard saw Seyyid's old pictures, his certificates, shields, awards, his books, his research articles and proof of his past achievements that were hidden from their lives. 'Look papa, Seyyid was also a great debater during his college life,' said Bilal's son. 'And he was a mountain climber too. Look at this photo,' said Bilal. They were explaining to their family members, especially their sons and daughters, about Seyyid's great life and his words of wisdom that had changed their own lives.

The 12 students in particular were very sad, some had tears in their eyes and some were just shocked to see what a great intellectual Seyyid was… They wished their own sons and daughters to follow his example. After a few minutes, they said good bye to Seyyid's brother and his two sons and came out of his house. While standing in the parking lot, they started exchanging last few words with each other before leaving for their homes…

Mostafa said: 'Brothers do you remember several years ago Seyyid gave few lectures on '*birr*' and qualities of '*abrar*?' Others recalled and everyone said that yes they remembered. Ahmad said that he had given a copy of important points to everyone. Then they recalled that a few years ago one of the attendees of Seyyid's lectures came with his friend from USA. His friend wanted to take Seyyid's advice about his personal matters. He asked questions to Seyyid in English. 'Do you recall that Seyyid spoke excellent and fluent English with that person and replied to all of his questions?' said Husayn. 'I was surprised at that time and asked him after the guests had left about where he had learned English.' Mostafa continued. 'Seyyid was so smart. He smiled and replied to me "I learned English when I was in school and I am not an expert in English language".' 'Of course, a true believer is smart,' said Qamar. 'And his wife too! I am his son-in-law for the last 14 years and I never saw them talking in English or giving an impression that they have lived in the West before,' said Shareef. 'Truly amazing,' said Vaheed. 'They are really great people.'

Ibrahim said: 'Alas, we didn't know that our dear Seyyid and his wife are too of the '*abrar*'. His station is much higher than all of his students and others to whom he practically taught how to achieve '*birr*'. He

achieved it. He was truly a great man, close to God.' All were sad and quiet for few moments…

Ibrahim asked: 'So brothers, did anyone of you perform an action of '*birr*' in your lives?' And everyone said a loud 'No'. They all smiled and said goodbye to each other.

Seyyid was alive in their hearts and their lives….
THE END

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