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Friendly Letters Part One

Wafa and Raja are two sisters in religion. They exchange letters, which indicates that one of them has been a religious guide to the other.

Letter n. 1

Dear sister Wafa,

Assalamu Alaikum,

I must confess that you have been a real guiding light to me in my life...I am writing to you, while darkness has engulfed the Universe. Night has gently put out its fingers to wipe away the troubles of the day and give rest to the exhausted. Everything around me is silent; a hidden tune is being played, giving the soul the pleasure that it seeks. One wonders how darkness can be changed into brightness, illuminating the features of a new road. Rough words are changed into gentle ones that heal the wounds of the hearts.

Faith can do miracles. Belief in Allah makes one seek His mercy. Such a call to Faith is as pleasant as a spring breeze, as clear as the blue sky, and as beautiful as a flower. It is a clear voice that dominates the soul. One surrenders to it as a prisoner to his watchman and a child to his mother. The soul heeds it to drop anchor at its shore. I hearken to it and hear the story of a new birth. It is the echo of a Qur'anic verse that says,

Our Lord, surely we have heard a preacher calling to the Faith saying: Believe in your Lord, so we did believe, Our Lord forgive us therefore our faults and cover our evil deeds and make us die with the righteous. (Aale-Imran, 3: 193)

Hence I come to understand that I am newly born to lead a new life. After utter darkness, firmly knitted by torturing days, keeping the soul chained to bitter weakness, I started feeling my new life. The mind has been the arena where severe conflict randomly took place. Nothing was clear in the vast desert where everything could be lost. Darkness, throughout those years, colored my life black.

All things seemed to me utter blackness. I looked at life through dark-glasses. I suffered the rough winds and the dangerous sea waves against which my life's boat was about to crush. Allah the Merciful watched that tiny boat struggling against the fearful waves of destiny. Then kind hands stretched to save the drowning soul.

Those were your kind hands dear Wafa. Allah sent you to save this tired heart and disturbed soul. I was kindly led towards the safe harbour of comfort and rest; radiant awareness defeated the disputes of the inner enemy ... I prayed to Allah the Almighty for His bounties. I uttered words which no one but He is worthy of receiving. I promised Him to tread His road to the end.

I am anxious to give you this good news of my new birth...with your help and Allah's, Mercy I came to understand the meaning of happiness or misery in life.

I pray to Allah to keep you safe, dear sister.

Raja

Letter n. 2

Dear sister Raja,

Your letter has been a source of pleasure to me. Its lines and words were in a new bright frame, telling the story of a new birth. I rejoiced, just as a player rejoices over winning the first round of a game. What a game Life is! It shapes the feelings, and colours its own toys through various incidents. Hence you see when I win a round, I make a step forward to save one deviated soul, one victim of a misleading society.

I am sure your wonderful letter was motivated by Faith ... yet I wished you would not have used words such as "prisoner" and "watchman"... A different expression would indicate satisfaction... I hope you go ahead, increasing your faith... you should perform righteous deeds for the sake of Allah, love the good and hate the evil. Be angry for His sake and rejoice at what pleases Him. Depend on Him and you won't face failure.

I pray to Allah to guide you well.

Wafa

Letter n. 3

Dear sister Wafa,

Assalamu Alaikum,

Still, I cannot explain the confusion that overtakes me sometimes. I do not say that happiness and

comfort within my soul has come to an end. This has never been temporary joy of Faith. I still feel the ecstasy of the new birth, but I still feel some pain from an unknown source.

Perhaps I still live the life I led prior to Faith. Please help me pass this crucial phase. Many have tried to help me change my view of life, but I could never respond to them. I have to confess that you are the only person who managed to make me change that black vision I had. Now, I seek your help in overcoming this pain, the source of my discomfort...So please talk, since I find the comfort and security that I seek in your words. Your talks are of Faith and its creative power. Your words fill my soul with bright

righteous guidance.

May Allah keep you safe.

Raja

Letter n. 4

Dear sister Raja,

Assalamu Alaikum,

Pain for no special reason is a mere illusion. Everyone can destroy pain in his life, if he searches for its source in reality. Unreasonable sufferings may bring more sufferings. One should not give way to such pains, which bite the weak with sharp teeth.

You should be ready to resist such feelings. Those things of the world make you forget your religious duties and-take the worship of Allah with a pinch of salt. It is a pity for one to find the source of light and then be pushed away before reaching it. I pray to Allah to give you more strength to fight against your desires. At this stage you need to stand firm, and have a strong will.

Wafa

Letter n. 5

Dear sister Wafa,

I wish I never had the word "pain", in my vocabulary...How wonderful it is for one to have a nice dream that comes true and brings a real not a forced smile to one's lips. You may wonder what kind of dream it is! Well, it is to enjoy happiness in the shadow of Faith and to reject the suffering of an aimless life...1 wish, I could forget this word "pain" with all its reflections.

At the order of Allah, your helpful hand has broken the chains of pain and released my soul. Your kind

heart has destroyed the shadows of torture. You have outlined the righteous road and scattered along it the flowers of hope whose scent touches the soul and removes dark shadows. Such hope in Allah's pleasure is most wonderful. It is a stage of transfer, not only from deviation to righteousness, or from doubt to certainty, but also from misery to happiness and from despair to hope and from darkness to light... to Allah and Religion which I am ready to sacrifice myself for.

I pray to Allah for your strength and fortitude.

Raja

Letter n. 6

Dear sister Raja,

I am sorry to say that I missed optimistic words in your letter; words that foretell a promising new birth. I missed in your letter words that indicate achievement in destroying pains and sufferings. I frankly say that your letter disappointed me. How hard it is to see a long awaited hope vanish in front of one's eyes!

You still talk about pain. What pain is it that can stay, despite a Faith that overwhelms the soul with its light? You should rather talk about happiness, which is at the threshold of your door, though you ignore it. How happy one is to rid oneself of pain and purify one's soul that will soon enjoy the eternal sublime world! How wonderful it is to set up the fortress of Faith on the ruins of pain; such a fortress cannot be destroyed with the passage of time.

Oh sister, how dear you are to me. I feel that your soul, that has suffered this world's pains, has been released, rejecting this world, turning towards a great aim of all souls. It is to gain the pleasure of Allah and to get His Paradise. You should therefore pray to Allah always, for more piety and faith.

Pray to Him for mercy and help, since He is ready to answer those seeking His help; He is most thanked and praised for that. Recite, whenever you can, the Holy Qur'an, which gives comfort to the troubled soul and purifies the self of its sins. Fear the Creator and seek refuge in Him. Pray to Allah, as the Qur'anic verse says:

And glorify the name of your Lord morning and evening. (Al-Insan, 76:25)

Go ahead and rid yourself of all that which causes you pain...Be happy with your belief in Allah...I am waiting for good news from you, to remove my disappointment.

Wafa

Letter n. 7

Dear sister Wafa,

I do apologize for causing you disappointment. What can I write? Well, the one who wished to die, is now interested in life. This is not for the sake of enjoying life, but for the sake of a sublime aim that one strives to attain through the worship of Allah. Hence, you see I am no longer disturbed by life's troubles.

This life with all its hardship and suffering is of no more concern to me. This world is nothing but a tiny portion of the great universe. I feel satisfied wherever I go. Despite the unpleasant reality, the feeling of spiritual security gives me ease.

I came to understand that life will go on whether one is sad or happy. The past days won't come back; time does not bother with one's tears or one's smiles. Why should one, then, demand what time cannot offer?

Now, I don't build castles in the air. I have made a new start on the firm foundation of Faith. Life's troubles won't be allowed to keep me under the domination of pain. I want to achieve a life of Faith and piety. I'll make use of this life for the sake of the other one.

Pray for me dear sister.

Raja

Letter n. 8

Dear sister Raja,

Thanks be to Allah, your letter has been a source of joy to me. How happy I am to know one desires life after being in the pursuit of death. 'This is just what I expected of you. Now you are quite sure that life is precious despite its troubles, which are sometimes too cruel to be tolerated. This is a facet of its nature; hence we should adjust ourselves to its reality with firmness.

Those lines in your letter will be your witness in the Hereafter. The Holy Qur'an says:

Our Lord, surely we have heard a preacher calling to Faith, saying: Believe in your Lord, so we did believe... (Aale-Imran, 3: 193)

How happy I am that you are now on the right-path. You have set out with new determinations and awareness. You have left behind the deceptive materialistic pleasures. With all my heart, I pray for you, that Allah may keep you safe.

Wafa

Letter n. 9

Dear sister Wafa.

You have been a source of light and a means of guidance to me. I shall be strong enough to destroy pain... I'll forget all my sufferings.

With the weapon of faith, I shall break down many pains that spoiled my life. My awareness is back after a long absence. I am fully awake, making my way towards the Divine light and forgiveness.

"Oh my Lord, how great is Your mercy. How easy difficulties are, for Your sake! How wonderful is struggle, for Your pleasure! How sweet bitterness is to get near You. No aim is worthy of struggle, but Yours. Oh God, despite troubles, I find happiness in my striving towards You.

However narrow this room is, I enjoy the horizons of Faith, praying to You. Oh my Lord, how wonderful it is to get free of these earthly chains, setting out towards You...! Oh God! I seek nothing but Your pleasure, I need nothing but Your forgiveness. I tread only towards Your orchard. Oh my Lord, this life is nothing but efforts for your sake.

My soul, Oh God, is full of hope in Your forgiveness. It longs for Your bounties and waits for Your pleasure...Oh God, this hardship is only a means of bringing me nearer to You...Oh God, my tears are for Your sake, Oh God, how great my need of Your pleasure is...!"

Finally, dear sister, I confess my gratitude to you for all your help.

Raja

Letter n. 10

Dear sister Raja,

How wonderful for one to place one's hopes in Allah the Almighty. Such hopes make one smile amid tears and laugh despite suffering. Hope of Allah's pleasure and forgiveness changes darkness within oneself into a bright light reflected on one's face. Such hopes help the believers to tolerate the hardships without despair or retreat.

They make the bitter taste of life, sweet, and heal wounds...Imam Ali (A.S.) refers to this when he describes the believers. He says, "...their bodies are on earth, but their souls are attached to the sublime world..."

How difficult life is, for one who does not seek the source of hope! How hard it is for one to tread difficult roads without the help of Divine Guidance! Faith is, dear sister, a paradise full of shady trees for one seeking refuge from poisonous life. Faith is a spring of water that can never dry up. It is man's provision

in this life and the Hereafter. Keep on seeking Allah's mercy.

May Allah keep you safe.

Wafa

Letter n. 11

Dear sister Wafa,

I have not written to you for some time...not because of feelings of disappointment or negligence...I am, thanks be to Allah, still happy with my faith. Yet I need to be assured of Allah's forgiveness. I am afraid He may chase me out of His presence...How concerned I am for such feelings! Please write to me, give me some comfort.

Raja

Letter n. 12

Dear sister Raja,

Allah, the Almighty never drives away those who seek His door. He never turns away hearts treading towards Him with pure love and absolute worship. He never disappoints those who ask for His mercy and forgiveness. The prophetic narration says: "Whoever takes one step towards Allah, Allah will take ten steps towards him."

The Qur'anic verse says:

Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it... (Al-Anam, 6: 160)

Hence you see, Allah never rejects the sincere words of Faith...1 pray to Him to guide you well in this life.

Wafa

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