

Mightier Than A Missile

By

Maulana Khalid Dhorat, Masjid Hamzah, Erasmia

When the Americans dropped a small 10-kiloton nuclear bomb in the August of 1945 on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, 66 000 people died instantly. A huge fireball was seen, 1000 times more intense than lightning, and people up to 10 kms away were permanently blinded by just witnessing it. The clothing of some as far as 15 kms away, caught fire; whilst many were burnt beyond recognition within five kms of ground zero. The windows of homes 20kms away were shattered whilst those nearer were completely destroyed by the gale-force nuclear winds traveling up to 600 kms per hour. None could escape.

If all the superpowers of the world were to drop their nuclear bombs now on the world, the living world – the people, animals, plant and marine life – will come to an end within seconds. Mountains will be flattened and due to the intense radiation, life will not revive for a few centuries thereafter. The world will resort back to the ice ages.

Many people mistakenly believe that there is nothing more deadly than a nuclear missile, but there is one thing more deadly - the displeasure and curse of your mother.

Sacrifice of a Mother

Think of your beloved mother sitting on a hard stool, slowly sipping cold tea from a chipped cup in a gloomy old-age home. Her heater is switched on in summer too, but the bars are so worn out that it produces no heat. Her favourite item of comfort is a quilt that she inherited from her own mother 50 years ago; and of course her plastic pill-box, which is always filled by the nurses daily. Sadly, she moved out of her son's house just one year after her husband passed away, not because she was chased out, but because she felt that she wouldn't be a burden to any of

her children who could now go on holiday at any time without worrying about her wheelchair and medication.

Now let us go 40 years back when this same mother was expecting you. Did she think that you would be a burden to her, having to feed you, burp you, and then also change your stinky nappies!! Did she think about dropping you in a trash can because you would vomit at any time on her designer carpet? Did she reason that having a baby would spoil her hourglass figure, and she wouldn't be able to fit in her favourite jeans after that? The fact that our mothers bore all these difficulties with love and patience is enough to make us her captive for life.

Ponder on the fact that upon birth, there was a cozy blanket awaiting your arrival in the cold world; but even before this, your mother carried you within three levels of comfort: in her tummy, in her womb and within her fluids wherein you could move and frolic freely. The umbilical cord connected you to her, nourishing you, like an invisible comforting hand, until you were delivered in a death-like pain in this world.

After delivering you, your mother had to sacrifice the comfort of her home and go to her mother's place to ensure that you were properly cared for. She happily nursed you, sleeping only when you slept and eating only when you ate. She rubbed ointment on your rear due to your nappy rash, but didn't bother about the stretch marks on her own tummy. She sacrificed her favorite *beryani* because the *masoor* – those small brown balls - would've given you wind, and she made sure you had 10 pairs of clothing at any given time whilst her slipper needed upgrading eight years ago. When she felt dizzy or when her blood pressure rose, she couldn't even take medication because the medicine could have affected the milk she fed you.

In fact, no amount of words can do justice to the selfless love and sacrifice of a mother to the degree that even if she were to give birth to a snake, she wouldn't abandon it. A person asked our Holy Prophet Muhammad if he would fulfill the rights of his mother if he carried her from Madinah to Makkah for Hajj and back and the answer he received blew his socks off: "This action wouldn't even suffice for one sip of milk she nursed you with."

Sadly, today we are witnessing the return of the Muslim old-age home, and more sadly, our parents actually see it as a solution to their problems.

A Different Relationship

Due to the supreme sacrifice of a mother, our relationship with her is not like other relationships. If we have a “give and take” policy with our partner, or a tolerant attitude with our neighbour, an attitude of respect with our teacher, or a habit of overlooking the faults of our children, then to our mother, it is about not saying even “oof” or “aagh” to her. It is not about merely obeying her, but about pleasing her and making her as comfortable as possible. Its about making her your priority in life and to carry out whatever she tells you, unless it is wrong or in matters of clear disobedience to the Creator. In short, it’s a relationship of blind love.

Our noble Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) prophesized that a distressing time will come when people will listen to their wives, and disobey their mother. In fact, some of our youngsters start their journey of rudeness to their mother from their teen years already, breaking her heart over and over again, until when they marry, she becomes just a burden in their life. The tragedy of the modern day is that if we demand from our parents, especially our mothers, items that they can not provide, they are no good to us anymore. If they can not fund our weekend outings, upgrade our wardrobe with the latest trends, and send us on holiday, they are useless. She is treated like a piece of furniture, whose purpose in life is just to put a plate of food on the supper table and make sure the laundry is done. She is nothing but a glorified maid.

Conversely, if our mothers were to attach a price for her service to her children, a solid gold bar per day in payment until the end of our lives, would be insufficient.

Consequence of Disobedience

Whatever a parent does for their children is done from the heart. So, if they pray for the happiness and success of their children, it will be from the heart. According to a hadith, it is highly unlikely that a sincere prayer for a parent in favour of their children will go unanswered. So, your success in this world and the next depends on how happy you keep your parents – not only as a carefree child, but as an adult saddled with all the responsibilities of life.

Obedient children will be successful in life, whilst disobedient children will never be successful. Many people in society, when asked about the reason for their success in life, will attribute it to one thing only: the prayers of their parents. Indeed, fortunate children simply die for those

moments wherein they feel the air of paradise on their face – the time when heartfelt prayers emanate from the lips of their parents. This does not mean that we should obey our parents in a way that we trample on the rights of others - like our spouse - but it should be done in a sensible way. Making obedience to parents a pretext to undermine our duty to others is a hallmark of our ignorance and our cunning ability of using “religious blackmail” to shirk our duty. Sometimes parents even make use of this “religious blackmail” to influence their children against their partners.

Sayyadina ‘Alqamah was a Sahabi known for his piety, but he was unable to recite the *shahadah* (testimony of faith) on his death-bed. It was learnt that the reason for this was that his mother was displeased with him on some account. The Prophet ordered that a huge pile of wood be gathered and ‘Alqamah be burnt alive therein before his actual death. When his mother who refused to forgive him at the time, learnt of this, she exclaimed: “How can my son be burnt!!” She was told that if she didn’t forgive him, he would be burnt in any case in the hereafter. The sight of the firewood was enough to stir her sympathy, and she forgave her son. Just then, ‘Alqamah’s tongue was released, he recited the *shahadah* and he passed into the mercy of the Almighty.

The displeasure of ‘Alqamah’s mother was more deadly than a nuclear bomb. A nuclear bomb would’ve wiped you off the face of this earth and that would be the end, but the displeasure of your mother would ensure your eternal damnation. People who didn’t make peace with their parents before they died have a pain in their heart that can never be settled, whilst those who lost their parents whilst on good terms with them will testify that a huge chunk of blessings that they witnessed during their lifetime was also lost for ever.

Conclusion

A mother remains a mother, not until you can walk on your own or feed yourself; but until your death. She worries for you more than herself, and then repeats the cycle all over again with her grandchildren. So, it is natural that if someone sacrifices their entire life for you, you need to sacrifice yours for them. The Almighty demands this level of obedience and respect to our parents, anything less is regarded as selfishness and a deficiency in our duty to them.

Due to old age, many parents start acting childishly and may be stubborn in their ways, but

remember if they could put up with your childish ways and stubbornness when you were in nappies, you need to patiently tolerate them if they are in nappies now. This is the test of your devotion - a test which you can not afford to fail. Never let them feel unwanted in your home. Rather smile at them as they take an awkward step back and forth, for a loving smile at ones parents is equivalent to an accepted hajj and 'umrah according to a hadith.

So go on. Give your parents a huge hug and a smile today and everyday after this. Overlook their mistakes and earn paradise the easy way through them.