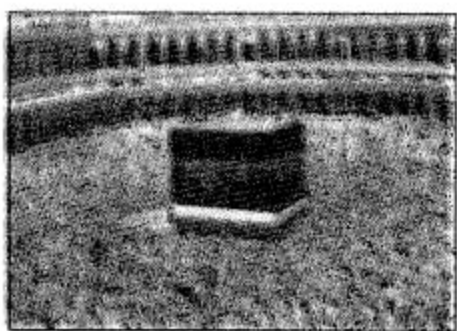


Advice of a wise man

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan



The 31st chapter of the Quran is named after Luqman. Luqman was not a Prophet, but he was a wise man. He lived before the advent of Islam. He gave some advice to his son, a part of which is as follows: "O my son! Though it be but the weight of a grain of mustard seed and though it be hidden in a rock, or in the heavens or on the earth, God will bring it forth... Say your prayers, and enjoin good, and forbid evil, and endure patiently whatever may befall you. Surely, this is something which requires firm resolve. Do not avert your face from people out of haughtiness and do not walk with pride on the earth: for, behold, God does not love arrogant and boastful people. Walk modestly and lower your voice, for the ugliest of all voices is the braying of the ass" (31, 16-19).

This advice can be summarised thus: God knows everything, both hidden and open. This belief inculcates a strong sense of accountability.

Then, prayer is not simply a set of rituals; it is rather a way of acknowledging God's greatness.

This acknowledgement makes one realistic and honest.

It is also everyone's duty to be watchful of others and tell them about the difference between good behaviour and bad behaviour. It is an expression of well-wishing. An honest person cannot afford to live as an indifferent member of society.

Patience is a very important human quality; without keeping one's patience, no one can be good in his behaviour in life. It is also required that everyone be determined, for without determination, no one can unflinchingly follow the path of truth.

The greatest minus point in an individual is arrogance, while the greatest plus point is modesty.

The ass has the bad habit of disturbing others. Man must refrain from this bad habit.