

Nouman Ali Khan

REVIVE YOUR HEART

*Putting Life in
Perspective*



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Revive Your Heart: Putting Life in Perspective

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Contents

Transliteration Table	v
Preface	vi

Part I

Connecting to Allah Through *Du‘ā’*

1. A Prayer for Desperate Times	3
2. <i>Du‘ā’</i> and Disappointment	22

Part II

Creating a Cohesive Muslim Community

3. Criticism	45
4. Assumptions	65
5. Leadership	82

Part III

Our Financial Dealings

6. How We Earn	107
7. Money Matters	127

Part IV

Some Contemporary Issues

8. It's a Girl!	149
9. Thoughts on Paris	170
10. <i>Naṣīḥah</i> in Brief: The Dangers of Listening to Music	192

Part V

Focusing on the *Ākhirah*

11. Putting Life in Perspective	199
12. Small Beginnings	216
13. <i>Naṣīḥah</i> in Brief: The Afterlife	240
Glossary	246

Transliteration Table

Arabic Consonants

Initial, unexpressed medial and final: ء ′

ا a	د d	ض ḍ	ك k
ب b	ذ dh	ط ṭ	ل l
ت t	ر r	ظ ḏ	م m
ث th	ز z	ع ′	ن n
ج j	س s	غ gh	ه h
ح ḥ	ش sh	ف f	و w
خ kh	ص ṣ	ق q	ي y

Vowels, diphthongs, etc.

Short: a اَ i اِ u اُ

Long: ā اَآ ī اِيّ ū اُوّ

Diphthongs: aw اَوّ

ay اَيّ

Preface

The world today is abuzz with unrelenting activity. The developments in the worlds of politics, economics, social media, entertainment, technology and beyond, are all constantly vying for our attention. But more importantly, they are vying to distract our hearts. In line with the ideology of unfettered free markets, we are constantly being ‘exhorted’ to consume. There has, perhaps, never been a time when Allah’s words, *alhākum al-takāthur* (*al-Takāthur* 102: 1), were more applicable. We have arrived at a time when being distracted from our duties to Allah has been institutionalized: the entertainment industry is undoubtedly one of the most imposing industries of modernity.

Of course, it does not stop there. In modern society, individuals can be reduced to little more than atomized consumers. Our *dīn* also can become commodified into a form of entertainment in this environment. Our scholars can become celebrities, who we watch for a ‘spiritual high’ before returning to our routinized consumer existence.

The Muslim ummah is experiencing crises of religious identity, with its global image being hijacked by violent groups. These groups attract young Muslims, ignorant of their *dīn*, into their ranks through their domination of the headlines with shocking acts of violence.

With such levels of distraction and crisis, it is difficult to stay spiritually centred. Our communities and mosques are not always the centres of spiritual guidance and counsel we need them to be. The Prophet taught us: *al-dīn al-naṣīḥah*—“The *dīn* is about giving sincere counsel.” And in an age of distraction and pervasive negativity, positive and constructive reminders are essential to our spiritual well-being.

This collection of reminders from *Ustādh* Nouman Ali Khan is an important contribution in our age of distraction. *Ustādh* Nouman’s reminders speak directly to the heart, encouraging us to be mindful of our duties to Allah, exhorting us to put life in perspective. Contemporary culture asks us to think of death as the ultimate conclusion to what should be a hedonistic existence, while our *dīn* teaches us that death is only the beginning of our true lives.

The subtitle of this work, *Putting Life in Perspective*, is about reminding ourselves not to forget the true nature of reality. Our lives here are temporary. They are the small window of opportunity to do some good in the world for which Allah will judge whether we are deserving of *jannah*. The author deals with issues from the highly personal to

the global. The work is divided into five parts with two or three reminders in each. They range from the profoundly personal questions of how we should approach Allah in our prayers, and how we should never think ill of our fellows; to communal ills such as the unacceptable attitude many Muslim communities have towards daughters, despite the explicit teachings of the Prophet that honour daughters, and women generally.

Ustādh Nouman's work is also an excellent example of what Muslim communities and their scholars need to do in reaching out to a global audience through the building of institutions like Bayyinah, and the harnessing of modern social media to reach people from all walks of life. It is immensely important that modern Muslims and, in particular, Muslims in the West, invest in institutions that will promote sound Islamic teachings to counteract the rise in extremism that has engulfed parts of the world where traditional institutions of learning have been reduced to ruin by imperial wars and corrupt scholars.

It is hoped that this work will contribute to inspiring modern Muslims to become sources of light in our world through the revival of their hearts, and the reorientation of their outlooks towards greater social responsibility and greater God-consciousness.

The Editor, Kube Publishing Ltd.

January 2017



PART I

CONNECTING TO ALLAH
THROUGH DU‘Ā’



A Prayer for Desperate Times

In this reminder, *in shā' Allāh ta'ālā*, I would like to share with you some reflections on an *āyah* from *Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ*, the twenty-eighth surah of the Qur'an. The story of *Mūsā* (*'alayhi al-salām*) is mentioned in many places in the Qur'an. In this particular place, Allah is telling us about the part of his life before he speaks with Allah on the mountain of Ṭūr. Glimpses of the life of *Mūsā* (*'alayhi al-salām*) before that event are captured in *Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ*. One of those events is when he escaped Egypt and made it into Madyan. He escaped because he was wanted for murder; even though it was a mistake. He had punched someone, and they had died by accident. He had escaped the city, escaped Egypt because they were looking for him and were going to kill him if they found him. The order was 'shoot to kill'.

Allah guided him through the desert and He got him all the way to the waters of Madyan. Madyan is in the middle of the desert but it has some waters, some lakes and ponds, so he ends up over there; finally

sitting, getting some relief, drinking some water. Allah ('azza wa-jall) tells us that:

... وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ وَوَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمُ
 امْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ... ﴿٢٣﴾

(القصص ٢٨ : ٢٣)

... he found there a crowd of people watering their flocks, and he found apart from them two women holding their flocks back ...

(Al-Qaşāş 28: 23)

He found a group of people that were giving their animals drink and besides them he saw two women who were pulling on their animals. In other words, up on top of the hill there are two young ladies that had some animals but they are not letting their animals drink the water, while all the rest of the village is feeding their animals water: their sheep and their goats and their camels and their cows are all drinking water. But these women with their sheep, they are just tugging away at them. Obviously the sheep see the water so they want to go drink; but they're not going, they are staying in place.

He sees this scene so he goes up to them and says:

... قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا قَالَتَا لَا نَسْقِي حَتَّى يُصَدِرَ الرِّعَاءُ وَأُبُونَا
 شَيْخَ كَبِيرٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

(القصص ٢٨ : ٢٣)