

Prayer of Prophet Moses, Peace be upon him

Bismillahi Rahmani Raheem.

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي صِدْقًا وَسِيرًا
وَإِحْلَافًا عَقِيدًا تُلَاقِي نَفَقَةً وَأَقْوَمَ

Qur'an 20:25-28

Traumatic Political Context

- Afghanistan - a region ravaged by war because of its strategic location & resources
- 19th century – **The Great Game**
- 1989 - the fall of the Soviet Union to American-backed Taliban fighters
- U.S. led invasion of Afghanistan post-9/11

- **Part of the mechanism of war is to purposefully employ trauma to subjugate & fracture entire communities**

Impact of War

- Destruction of culture, history & social fabric
- Constant dehumanization & demonization
- The impact of being Othered
- Threat to safety -- physically, emotionally, psychologically
- Disruption of kinship & community
- Migration journey

Implications & Message

- **You are not wanted. You don't count. You are a problem.**
- How would that impact one's level of trust & ability to seek help?
- Conversion symptoms make sense:

***When your voice has been silenced,
your body will find other ways to speak.***

Religious & Cultural Considerations

- Yet, people are resilient & survive
- Islamic faith is an important way of coping & **a source of resilience**

“And we will surely test you with something of fear & hunger & a loss of wealth & life & fruits, but give good tidings to the patient. Those who when disaster strikes them, say, “Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.”

-Qur'an, Chapter 2: 155-156

- A compassionate community can be protective & supportive

Spiritual Strength is Powerful

- Everything can be taken from you except your personal connection to Allah
- Islamically, trauma is seen as a test, a purification, a training & a push to a higher spiritual level
- **Inner moral freedom** is the most important of all
- Examples in the Qur'an:
 - Mary abandoned & alone, gripped by labour pangs under date palm
 - Hajra running in the desert with an infant son
 - Jonah in the belly of a whale
 - Joseph at the bottom of the well, sold into slavery & imprisoned
 - Moses wandering in the desert
 - Muhammad persecuted by his own people

Comprehensive & Holistic Treatment

- The previous slide describes a very high spiritual state
- The Qur'an never says that this is a quick or easy path
- It does not prohibit obtaining help or *ever* state that you have to suffer alone
- **Patience does not mean passivity**
- Crying out for help does not equal poor faith/iman
- **It is an act of faith**; even Qur'anic exemplars cried out
- Medications, counselling and psychotherapy can all be incredibly useful in helping someone who is struggling with trauma
- Compassion & patient effort are key

Post-traumatic Growth – A Very Islamic Perspective

- Trauma as transformation
 - Placing gold in a crucible & applying extreme heat to remove impurities
 - Exerting pressure on graphite so it becomes a diamond
 - Rushing water carving pathways through rock
- As Shaykh Rumi said, “In your wound, lies your healing.”
- Many who attain Stage 3 of trauma therapy are able to use their trauma to help others