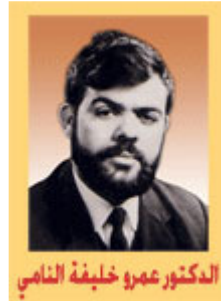


Dr. Amr Annami... A Brilliant Scholar

An Example to Follow



I have chosen to talk about Dr. Amr Annami who is probably known by many. I have read his biography and his doctorate dissertation as well. However, recently I got the chance to read a new detailed and well-organized biography of Dr. Amr Annami written by Soltan Ben Moubarak Achaybany. It contains a description of all of his works as well as his various correspondences. I then got inspired and I decided to demonstrate some lessons to be learned from the life of Dr. Amr from my own perspective as I believe that he is an excellent example for us, the Muslim youth of today.

One of the most important characteristics of Dr. Amr is his intelligence. He was a bright student seeking a high level of education. He first studied in Libya, then went to Egypt and finally spent 5 years at Cambridge University. He loved reading, researching and analyzing. No matter where he was, he was spending hours and hours reading, days and nights, while at home or when traveling, and during study years or in prison. He was well aware of what is happening in the world around him and tried his best to give his views about it. This shows how Dr. Amr valued the importance of education in a Muslim's life. Indeed, reading and seeking knowledge is the essence of Islam. Growing in knowledge means also growing in piety. Knowledge from an Islamic point of view is the means which brings us near to the Almighty Allah. That is, we can't worship God out of ignorance. Moreover, Islam is a religion which combines both faith and science, it urges its followers to think, criticize and study. A strong Muslim does not only have good knowledge about religious matters but also he or she has to be an intellectual being and well aware about various important issues.

Although he was not a native Arabic speaker, Dr. Amr was known for his splendid and pure Arabic skills. This can be observed from his touching poems, articles and books. In addition, he had a good command of the English language. As a result of the combination of these two languages, Dr. Amr produced many

important works; beginning from his English dissertation which was titled "studies in Ibadhism", then with the help of one of his colleagues while he was teaching in the USA, he translated the book of "ossol edin" into English. His third work was a book about learning Arabic as a foreign language, and this work too was written when he was teaching in the USA. This shows that Dr. Amr had considered the importance of mastering some languages. That is to say, for a Muslim, it is important to have a good command of the Arabic language and of a foreign language, more particularly, an international language. Spreading the beautiful message of Islam could not happen if Muslims were not able to communicate with others. In addition, mastering another language has many benefits such as the ability to exchange information.

Dr. Amr was a man of value, of principles. He was a true Muslim and a strong believer. He was a Muslim who practiced what he preached. He was proud of his faith throughout his entire life. He presented a lightening image of Islam wherever he went. Indeed his strong personality was an inspiring example for us; however this level of piety is not easy to reach, it needs persistence. We can certainly learn a very useful lesson from this specific quality and it is the importance of building our beliefs and thoughts out of deep research and not just by blindly following others. By doing so, we will be convinced about what we believe in; so we will be always able to take important or well thought out decisions and this will probably have a good effect on others.

Keeping good company was one of the principles of Dr. Amr. He was in contact with many scholars of his time from different countries and various backgrounds. He kept contacting them even in his tough times. Indeed keeping good company can strengthen our personality; achieve success by helping each other and advising each other and moreover increasing in faith because as human beings we tend to be easily affected by our friends' behaviors and attitudes without paying attention. Having interesting and fruitful discussions with sensible and experienced people and trying to keep in touch with them is one of the joys of life.

Another important characteristic of Dr. Amr was flexibility in life. Surprisingly, at one time in his life, he decided to quit everything related to his educational work and to become a shepherd in desert. That was not an easy decision, however it was made under pressure of being jailed many times and sometimes forced to leave his country because of his opposing political views. He was such a flexible human being facing a challenging and tough life trying many ways to survive. All this torture had happened to him in the course of his life because of the political regime of his country instead of being highly valued as a bright and intellectual university teacher. By far the worst thing that has happened to Dr.

Amr is that he was arrested in 1984 and took to a secret prison where no one knew anything about him till this very day.

What we can learn from this long life of perseverance, bravery and strong faith are the following lessons:

1. Having principles in life is the key to achieving many things. Consequently, one should fight and stand for what he or she believes in.
2. One has to be sincere, humble, a person of value and a strong believer.
3. One should never give up. Keep trying and keep working because we have just one chance to live so we should benefit from our short lives to the maximum.
4. We have to be flexible. Flexibility is a very important aspect to live a happier inner life. You can never have everything available for you, there always exist barriers in your way so be ready to break them out with persistence and flexibility.
5. We have to keep good company. If you are friends with bright, respectable and high minded people then soon many of these good aspects will become a part of your personality and you will improve your character.
6. We have to be strong Muslims and true believers which certainly involves many aspects such as being knowledgeable, seeking a high level of education because Islam is not a blind religion; in fact, it urges its followers to have critical and deep thinking skills and also being aware of what is happening in the world around us. Being a true believer means also having a high standard of morals and values because they are the essence of the message of Islam.
7. Being helpful and caring for your fellow men, regardless their race, faith, color or language, are the last lessons but not the least which I can draw from Dr. Amr's life. This can be achieved by many ways and everyone can do it from his position.

In brief, Dr. Amr is a source of inspiration for all of us, the youth of today, who sincerely wish to be strong Muslims, active members in the world's community and helpful for mankind.

Written by Bía Latreche
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