

A THOUGHT PROVOKING CONTRAST



Jaamia Zainab

H. Motala

Asmaa, a young teenager in Machinga, a small village in Malawi is in the sixth grade, alongside 98 other students in a small, cramped classroom. Her school was built 10 years ago with raw mud. From his little earnings, her dad pays \$0.13 for her school fee.

Last year, Asmaa's brother passed away due to food scarcity. Ever since, Asmaa has had to help her father with work at their small scale farm. This means she has had no time to play with her friends. On lucky days, her father comes home with \$2, but at times if no one buys the crops, they have to survive on fresh air and water.

As she is walking home one Friday, her dad's words ring in her mind, "Asmaa, this is your last month at school, from next month the boys will go. Otherwise, there will be no food to eat."

Asmaa had always dreamt of being a teacher, but now her dreams have been shattered. She is not sure what her future might be...



Hannah is a thirteen year old girl, who lives in California, USA. Her dad works as a designer at Apple and has a high pay. He earns about \$465 a day. He makes sure Hannah gets \$30 pocket money every week. She is free to spend it however she wants. She spent her last vacation in Seychelles, but this summer she insisted on go to Istanbul. She is over the moon and is really looking forward to use the new camera her dad got her last week.

Today is Saturday, Hannah wakes up and checks

her iPhone 11.

“Oh shoot, its 7:30!” she thinks.

She leaps out of bed, takes a relaxing, hot shower and puts on her new D&G shirt and jeans. She walks to her watch closet and picks out one of the Hublot watches that her dad got her. She walks to the breakfast table and lays her eyes upon the large variety of neatly set, scrumptious and appetising food. She gobbles down her food and leaves for the mall with the chauffeur, after picking up her bestie. As she passes by one of the Ferrari showrooms, she recalls her dad saying that he is planning on getting the latest Ferrari.

NAME:	Hannah	Asmaa
Lives in	USA	Malawi
Her dad earns p/day	\$465	\$2
Friends	yes	No
Allowance	\$30/week	\$0
Must-have's	IPhone, Laptop, PlayStation	None
Breakfast	Eggs, baked beans, milk, coffee, pancake	Nshima(thick flour porridge)
Education	John F. Kennedy middle school	School made from mud
Further studies	Harvard University	No hope

I want us to ponder over the economic inequality.

Look, Hannah's weekly pocket money is equal to Asmaa's Dads earning over 15 days. If Hannah's family alongside other high class or middle class families could help Asmaa's family and other low class families, there would be absolutely no poverty.

Have we forgotten our rich heritage? Have we forgotten the famous battle of Tabook? The time when Heraclius the Roman hero, king and so-called "God" turned his attention towards Arabia. He had prepared the great Roman troops to fight. It was a blazing hot, Arabian summer day, when the news reached the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم). He ordered his companions (رضي الله عنهم) to prepare for battle. Where would they get equipment from?

There was drought and everyone was suffering. The prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) urged his companions to help. Every person gave what he could afford. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) said as he looked at the ranks of the army and their needs, "Who will equip them and Allah will forgive him?"

No sooner the wealthiest and most affluent man in Arabia stood up, and hastened towards earning the pleasure of Allah. He supplied the army with 940 of the most expensive camels of the time, from their saddles to the bridles, 60 horses plus another 10,000 dinars to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم). He did not ask for a single penny in return. This amazing personality was none other than 'Uthman (رضي الله عنه).

When the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و سلم) arrived in Madinah there was no water to drink, besides from Roomah, a spring from which the water would be sold to them. Selfless 'Uthman (رضي الله عنه), purchased it at a heavy price of 25,000 dinars and gifted it to the Muslims.

During the caliphate of Amir-al-Mu'mineen Sayyiduna 'Umar-ibn-al Khattab, Abu Talha (رضي الله عنه) saw him entering a house, late at night. The next morning, filled with curiosity he made his way to that house. Upon entering, he saw an old, crippled lady. Confused, he asked her, "What does the man who comes to you every night do?"

She replied, "He is a nice man who has been coming to care of me for quite some time now. He gets me whatever I need and cleans up the filth of the house."

I leave you to ponder...

Have we lost our Islamic heritage? The heritage in which the Amir, the caliph, cleans the old woman's house with his bare hands. The heritage where a man gives 940 camels, 60 horses and 10,000 dinars for those who fight in the path of Allah Ta'ala. I ask you, for the sake of Allah, in the preserving of this noble heritage and in attempt to put an end to extreme poverty what have you and I done? If the entire Muslim Ummah had to unite and preserve this noble heritage, no army, no force would be able to rule the Muslims.

Have we ever thought about the people like those in the first story? How do they live?

Have we not heard the Hadith,

"الخلق عيال الله فاحب الخلق الى الله من احسن الى عياله"؟

All created beings are Allah's dependants, and the most beloved of creation to Allah is the one who is good to His dependants

[Bayhaqi, Shu'ab ul Imaan]

This is why Islam has made it compulsory upon us to give 2.5% of our wealth to the poor. What difference will that make to our wealth? None. But that small amount will definitely change a life. Remember, to change a life, it is not necessary to give a billion dollars, even a single dollar could do the job.

There are so many people, including young children suffering in Yemen, Syria, Palestine, Africa, India and so many other places. So many children are now orphans, women are widows, and parents have lost their children. Can we not give them our assistance? I ask the Muslims, can't we help our brothers and sisters? Alhamdulillah, many people have set charity systems all over the world. We can make a difference by giving a few pennies from our money for donation. If not, we can at least pray for them and include them in our prayers.