



# A LETTER FROM THE SUFI MASTER

*Khawaja Muhammad Masum (Died 1660 CE) writes to his disciple Shaykh Abdul Lateef*

The athlete who spends several hours a day on the track or in the gymnasium exercising his body and building stamina looks hopefully to the day when he will compete and win. He knows his hours of toiling and sweating in the smelly gym will bear fruit. His success will breed more success. Then on the other hand we have the successful politician at his desk; the prime minister who can, with a stroke of a pen, change the destiny of many people. Then there is the banker who sits in the Bank of England determining the interest rate, making the lives of millions of people miserable. Then there is the editor of the popular tabloid, he has the power of moulding opinions and everyone dreads him.

The list of powerful and mighty people goes on and on; Muscle and power, political power and financial power and the pen power. They are naked powers and frightfully dangerous. Yet there is another human strength which is increasingly being ignored in our materialistic age, a strength that is a far more superior than the aforementioned powers.

That is the moral-spiritual strength in every individual which determines the usefulness or otherwise of muscle, political and financial power! After the death of Moses ﷺ, the Jew's had a chequered history and they deserted the true religion, fell into idol worship, were disunited and suffered at the hands of Amalakites and the people of Palestine. Around the 11th century BC, they begged one of their prophets Samuel to appoint a king, who would unite them, defend them and make them strong once more. The Quran tells us "Their prophet said to them, Allah has appointed Saul as your king." They said "How can he exercise authorities over us when we are better than him to exercise authority, and he is not even wealthy?" He said "Allah has chosen him, has given knowledge in abundance and bodily prowess. Allah gives authority to whom he pleases and he knows all things. (Surah Al Baqarah, Ayah 247)

The objection of the worldly minded was not surprising, they objected that how can one from the working classes be their leader! He was poor too so that barred him the high office. Samuel told them two qualities of Saul which made him the best candidate, his deep knowledge and wisdom coupled with bodily prowess. His knowledge about God, about the purpose of human life, the traversing of joining of moral and spiritual strength which distinguished him from other physically strong men, he had a live conscience, able to clearly separate the truth from falsehood, able to see vividly what was good and evil. He was morally upright.

What a far cry from today's morally bankrupt leaders. This is a symptom of our time, we are concentrating only on physical growth, material abundance, technical skills and the ability to earn a salary, the real strength is sacrificed for the immediate material benefits, The price that humanity is having to pay for ignoring moral strength is the untold misery of single parent, broken homes, and consumerism. Even the office of the most powerful man the president of America is now corrupt and scandalous because it has lost moral strength.

*Moral and Spiritual strength is the real strength*

The mirage of the universe, the supreme teacher and our master Muhammad ﷺ said "A strong believer is more preferred by God than a weak believer and in each of them there is goodness, be desirous of things that will benefit you, seek God's help and don't overdo that." Since God prefers the strong we should try to be strong. But who is the strong one? He is the one who turns to the originator of all causes, he is the one who is genuinely interested in affairs of the hereafter and is committed to worship of his Lord. Some commentators say "the strong believer" is the one who is patient, has forbearance and teaches and guides the people despite them being negligent. He is the one who is physically healthy and strong and can perform his religious duties easily.

It is this moral and spiritual strength that most world leaders lack and in particular the leaders of the Muslim countries. Imagine how different the 46 Muslim countries would be if they had leadership with these qualities. We can pray for them but ourselves we can begin to get strong this very moment if we implement the teachings of Islam.