

# The Lives of Hasan al Banna & Syed Qutb.

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## Who was Hasan al Banna?

حسن البنا, October 14, 1906 – February 12, 1949

### His Islamic Upbringing



The Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan al Muslimeen) was founded by Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949) in the Egyptian town of al- Isma'iliyyah in 1928. The son of an Azharite scholar, who earned his livelihood by repairing watches, Hasan al-Banna showed from his early school-days an inclination and great zeal for calling people to Islamic values and traditions. His strong sense of religiosity and spiritual awareness drove him to join the Hasafiyyah tariqah, one of many Sufi tariqahs that

were widespread in Egypt at that time. Even though he was not formally associated with this tariqah after he founded the Ikhwan, he, nevertheless, maintained a good relation with it, as indeed with other Islamic organizations and religious personalities, and persisted in reciting the litanies (awrad, pl. of wird) of this tariqah until his last days. Though Hasan al-Banna joined a modern-type school of education, he promised his father that he would continue to memorize the Qur'an, which he did, in fact later, at the age of twelve. While at school, he took part in the activities of some religious associations and clubs which were promoting it and calling for the observance of Islamic teachings. He also formed, while still at school, an association for the enjoining of good and forbidding

of evil. After finishing school, Hasan al-Banna joined Dar alMu'allimin [house of Teachers] in Damanhur, in 1920, and then went to Dar al-'Ulum in 1923 where he graduated in 1927 as a primary school teacher.

### Hasan the Spokesman

He was then assigned to a teaching post in al-Isma'iliyyah. Hasan al-Banna developed the habit of delivering speeches and organizing study circles in the Mosque near his residence. He used to convey to the people his deep sense of disenchantment with the state of the Muslim ummah, and the failure of the religious authorities, in particular al-Azhar University, to redress the status quo. He also expressed doubts about the prevailing political system, and the betrayal by most politicians of the values and principles of the Muslim nation. A group of young workers, who used to attend these speeches and study circles, were so impressed by his comprehensive approach to Islam, his diagnosis of the ills of Muslim society and the cures which he suggested, that they convinced him to form an organization which would take as its mission the revival of Islam. It was a humble beginning, but the speed with which the group grew in the span of just a few years reflected the centuries of Muslims' discontent vis-a-vis what was taking place in their society.

### The Origins of the Ikhwan al Muslimeen

The formation of the Ikhwan al Muslimeen [Muslim brotherhood] took place four years after the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate, the last symbol of Muslim strength and dignity. However, the signs of decay and degeneration of Egyptian society appeared centuries before, with Muhammad 'Ali Pasha's reforms, even though the reign of the latter and the subsequent deviations which came with it, were only logical ends to the deviations which preceded his reign. The formation of the Ikhwan was no ordinary event. Had it been so, it would not have stirred Egyptian society, and indeed those of many other Muslim countries, the way it did. There were, at the beginning of this century, and subsequently, scores of Islamic associations, organizations and

groups. There existed also different political parties. But the emergence of the Ikhwan was an extraordinary event. For out of the ruins of weakness, ideological doubts, still worse perversion to everything Islamic, emerged a group that advocated Islam in its entirety, without apology or complacency.

This group was, as Hasan al-Banna pointed out in his Risalat alMu'tamar al- Khamis (Epistle of the Fifth Congress)':

- (1) **'a salafi message**: for it calls for returning Islam to its pure sources, i.e. The Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger;
- (2) a **Sunni path**: for the Ikhwan oblige themselves to following the purified sunnah in all their deeds, especially in the domain of beliefs and acts of worship . . . ;
- (3) a **Sufi reality**: for the Ikhwan know that the basis of righteousness is the purification of the soul, transparency of the heart, perseverance in work . . . and love for the sake of God . . . ;
- (4) a **political organization**: for the Ikhwan demand the reform of political order from within and the revision of the relationship of the Muslim ummah with other nations ... as well as teaching people and train them to raise their heads in pride and dignity . . . ;
- (5) a **sporting group**: for the Ikhwan look after their bodies and know that a strong Muslim is better than a weak Muslim . . . ;
- (6) a **scientific and cultural league**: for Islam makes the seeking of knowledge a religious duty . . . ;
- (7) an **economic enterprise**: for Islam is interested in the acquiring of money and its use . . . ;
- (8) a **social endeavour**: for the Ikhwan are interested in the ills of society and try to find ways for their cure . . .' This comprehensiveness which Hasan al-Banna had in mind could have passed for a mere theoretical, idealist manifesto similar to countless other manifestos and declarations made by many organizations and religious or political personalities.

But he did, in fact, turn all that he had in mind into a living reality. He surprised Egypt and the Muslim world with his leadership genius, though he was certainly more than a great leader. He left a lasting and positive mark on everyone he met. And this is perhaps why the Ikhwan gathered into its fold people with inclinations, interests and backgrounds which would have otherwise appeared impossible to reconcile. The other interesting characteristic about Hasan al-Banna is that he was wholeheartedly involved in what he was doing and he sacrificed everything for what he believed in.

### Uniting Salafis and Sufis as One Strong Muslim Brotherhood

He built a strong and sound nucleus of believing men and women on whom the whole Islamic project would stand. With Hasan al-Banna and the group he founded the bitter rivalry and conflict between the two main religious currents in Egypt at that time, namely the Salafist movement and the Sufi brotherhoods, was resolved once and for all. Al-Azhar, which had a monopoly over Islamic thought through its institutions and networks, was challenged with a new thought which restored to Islam its holistic stature. In al-Isma'iliyyah, Hasan al-Banna started building the institutions of the Ikhwan which included a mosque, general headquarters, Hira' Islamic institution and Umahat al-Mu'minin school for ladies. From these institutions and places of learning the Ikhwan message spread to neighbouring cities and villages. Hasan al-Banna moved, in 1932, to Cairo, and with him the Ikhwan headquarters moved too. It was from Cairo that the message of the Ikhwan finally spread to the whole of Egypt. In order that the voice of the Ikhwan al-Muslimun should be heard loudly and unequivocally, Hasan al-Banna published two journals, the weekly al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun and al-Nazir (the Warner). In these journals Hasan al-Banna published some of his small treatises and epistles, though his main concern was not writing books but building good Muslim characters. As the Ikhwan organization became stronger, Hasan al-Banna showed his determination to bring about changes in society. He opened a bureau for community aid and a housing

association. He established enterprises of which the most important components were: the Islamic dealings enterprise (Sharikat al-Mu'amalat al-Islamiyyah), the Arabic enterprises for mining (al-Sharika al- Arabiyyah WI-made:dir wernahajir), etc. He established hospitals and dispensaries which were controlled and run by the Ikhwan. He also organized summer camps for the youth and from these youth he formed scouting groups. He organized international and national outings as well as units for the eradication of illiteracy throughout Egypt. He took a special interest in forming drills and preachers who were sent for teaching and instruction throughout the country. Lastly, the Ikhwan were the initiators and promoters of a wave of new books and literature, in terms of their topics and intellectual quality, written by members of the Ikhwan. Parallel to the male organization of the Ikhwan, Hasan al-Banna founded a female section (al- Akhawat alMuslimat), to play its role among the ladies. In order to achieve this task the Akhawat founded the 'Girls' House for Islamic Education' (Dar al-Tarbiyyah al-Islamiyyah It Ifatat) whose role among ladies and girls was similar to that of the male section in terms of comprehensiveness and depth. Hasan al- Banna could not ignore what was happening on the political front. Had he ignored it, he would have failed to rise to the wholeness and compass which he set his group to achieve. Had he left politics aside, his group would have had enhanced the claim, already widespread at that time among the intellectuals of Egyptian society, that Islam is a mere personal relationship between man and God, and hence, had nothing to do with political legitimacy.

### The Ikhwan as a Rising Political Power

Soon the Ikhwan group made its political voice heard by friend and foe alike. It stood firmly, in the early thirties against the missionary activities which exploited the ignorance, misery and vulnerability of ordinary people and the Ikhwan made sure that these activities did not succeed. They also opposed strongly the 1936 AngloEgyptian treaty which the Wafdist government signed on behalf of Egypt, for

they believed it to be a treaty which strengthened Britain's grip on Egypt. Hasan al-Banna mobilized all his group's strength and potential to helping the Palestinian people in their 1936 revolution against the British and the Zionists. The voice of the Ikhwan was a loud cry against the corruption of the establishment which ruled Egypt at that time. Thus, the Ikhwan opposed colonialist and capitalist projects which were implemented in the area through the political system. In this context the Ikhwan mobilized the masses to march against the Sidqi-Bevin treaty, in 1946, leading to its failure. This was but a small reaction which was part of an overall plan to get rid of all aspects of colonialism and dependency. The colonial powers were well aware of the danger posed by the Ikhwan, and Hasan al-Banna in particular, to their interests in the region and the threat which they would face should the Ikhwan ever get into power. Thus, when Hasan al-Banna presented himself for parliamentary election, the Wafdist Prime Minister, Mustafa al-Nahhas asked him to withdraw his candidature because of threats he had received from the British ambassador in Cairo.

### The Ikhwan's Support for the Early Palestinian Cause

Meanwhile the Ikhwan's help for the Palestinian cause did not stop with the end of the 1936 revolution. Hasan al-Banna sent people from his group to train the Palestinians and initiated huge fund-raising schemes for this cause. In the 1948 Arab-Zionist War, the Ikhwan sent to the war-front the best of their youth to fight against the Zionists.

Involved as they were in Egyptian affairs, the Ikhwan were also keen to expand their thought and vision to other parts of the Muslim world. Ikhwan branches, with a close, organizational affiliation with the mother organization in Egypt, were founded in Syria, Jordan, and later on, in almost all Arab countries. The Ikhwan were even involved in the 1948 Yemenite revolution which attempted to enthrone Qadi Abdullah Ibn Ahmad alWazir as Imam of Yemen after the death of Imam Yahya. Some of the leaders of the Algerian association of Muslim scholars, such as al-Fudail al-



Warthilani, had strong links with the Ikhwan who were helping them to rid the country of the French colonialists.

### Hasan al Banna's Plan for Egypt to become an Islamic State

Hasan al-Banna's political plans were not simplistic and aimed only at making partisan noises or party political gains. He did not aim, in the long run, at participating in the political game which the dying monarchy, and the colonialist powers, were playing in Egypt. Clearly, he was planning to change Egypt's political system, and hence, overthrow the monarchy, as a first step towards reviving a great Muslim Caliphate. In order to achieve this aim, he formed an elite core of soldiers, and some civilians, which became known as alJihaz al-Sirri (the secret organ). The activities of this secret



Ikhwan organization among the Egyptian army culminated in the formation of alDubbab al-Ahrar (the Free Army Officers). This organization included some Egyptian army elite among whom was Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir. Nasir and many of his fellow-officers who participated, later on, in the overthrow of King Faruq did, in fact, belong to the Ikhwan and swore allegiance to Hasan al-Banna and the head of the secret organization, Mahmud Labib, whom Hasan al-Banna appointed. Hasan al-Banna did not, however, live to see King Faruq overthrown nor the subsequent turn of events which followed.

After the 1948 Arab -Israeli War, the colonialist powers were convinced that they had to act drastically against the Ikhwan and their leader. Thus, all the Ikhwan members who participated in the war against the Zionists were imprisoned, and most of the Ikhwan members remaining in Egypt were also arrested. But Hasan al-Banna was left free, in order to facilitate his assassination.

### Hasan al Banna is assassinated in the Cause of Allah

The great powers were growing ever more concerned about their interests in the region so, because of the Ikhwan's activities, the liquidation of its leader and severe measures against the group became inevitable. Hasan al-Banna was assassinated on 12th February 1949. On February 12, 1949 in Cairo, Al-Banna was at the Jamiyyah al-Shubban al-Muslimeen headquarters with his brother-in-law Abdul Karim Mansur to negotiate with Minister Zaki Ali Basha who represented the government side. Minister Zaki Ali Basha never arrived. By 5 o'clock in the evening Al-Banna and his brother-in-law decided to leave. The assassination happened when Al-Banna and his brother-in-law called a taxi. As they stood waiting for the taxi, they were shot by two men. Al-Banna was hit by seven shots. Later, he was taken to hospital and they had received orders from the monarchy to not give him any treatment where he died a slow death from the wounds, Hassan Al-Banna realised that they had been ordered not to treat him and he made 3 Dua's against the Monarchy, this monarchy was soon overthrown by Jamal Abdul Nasir

. Sayyid Qutb and Zainab al-Ghazali would soon play key roles in the near future to continue the legacy of Hasan al Banna – through the Ikhwan al Muslimeen [Muslim Brotherhood].

### Who was Syed Qutb?

(سيد قطب; October 9, 1906 – August 29, 1966)

A hero, who has influenced the minds, thoughts and ideologies of the major Muslim fighters - in the path of Allah - around the world against the oppressive regimes. The hero we're going to talk about, if you were to ask them - they would say they have been inspired and influenced directly by this man and his works. For example, if you were to ask Shaheed Abdullah Azzam, he would say that he was firstly inspired by the Shaheed Syed Qutb (may Allah have mercy on him.) And that's why it's important that we understand his life, his works, and the effects he had on society, and how these thoughts and works permeated society.



### His Family

He was born in a town in Egypt called Musha (in the city of Qaha [Co-ordinates:27°07'N 31°14'E]), and there is a difference of opinion on whether he was of Indian origin, or Egyptian origin. But his immediate family was rich due to a large inheritance they had received from their grandfather, but naturally - their inheritance was decreasing as they lived their life.

His father was a highly respected figure in the community, and was a central and political figure to settle their disputes. He was also a practising man, so their family was practising Islam. His father would always take him to the masjid and pray 5 times in the Masjid. His father had also performed hajj, which was really difficult at that time.

Syed Qutb says that his father had implanted '*true fear of the last day*'. This is shown through reading his explanations of these verses [of Judgment Day] in his *tafsir*, *Fi Dhilal al Qur'an* [Under the Shade of the Qur'an.]

His mother was also a highly respected and pious woman, she would generously give to the poor and the workers in their fields. His mother would always listen to the Qur'an on the radio while looking at the workers in the field. His mother was firm in her decision that her son be a man, and not like other children.

His uncles were Azhari scholars, and Syed Qutb's family would sit amongst them to hear them.

He had - excluding himself - 3 sisters and 1 brother. The oldest sister was called Nafeesah. In the future of Syed Qutb, she would be tortured, as well as her 2 sons; Rif'at and 'Azma.

Rif'at was the nephew of Syed Qutb, he was killed in front of Syed Qutb's eyes in the future. 'Azma was tortured and beaten almost to the point of death.

'Aminah the next sister of Syed Qutb was engaged to one of the Ikhwaan [A revolutionary group – started by Hasan al Banna - which Syed Qutb would be involved in, in the future] brothers while he was in prison. The brother said to 'Aminah that he would separate from her because he would spend so long in jail. She said no, and waited for him. They finally got married when she was 50 years old. In the end, her husband was killed by Anwar al Sadat the tyrant.

The 3rd person is his brother Muhammad Qutb, he is still alive today in Saudi Arabia, and he was imprisoned along with Syed Qutb, and almost tortured till death.

Syed's 4th sister Hamidah, her responsibility was to look after the families and women of the Ikhwan, while their brothers were put inside the prison by the Egyptian Government. She was the link between Syed Qutb and the rest of the Ikhwan - while he was in prison. In 1965 she was imprisoned with her brother and given 10 years of hard labour.

So we realise the family of Syed Qutb was Islamic. How many of us would be able to take what the family of Syed Qutb went through?

### Appearance

When you read the books of Syed Qutb, you imagine him to be a revolutionary man who was very large and aggressive.

One man when he visited Syed Qutb, said "I can imagine Syed Qutb to look like a thousand other people, except you."

Syed Qutb was of brown complexion, medium height, of a slim build, due to the illness that overtook him in his young age, and later on in prison. Upon meeting him, he was calm, collected and tranquil.

### His Childhood

As a child, he would pray the *Salah*/prayers 5 times in the Mosque with his father. He would attend the circles of the Azhari scholars. He would help the poor and oppressed and aid them.

Once his Qur'an teacher left the school and made his own *Madrassah* due to an argument with the school. His parents told the teacher they would send Syed to the *madrassah*, and so he went there.

But when he was there, he saw that the teacher wasn't teaching properly, and the children were not learning, and he was not getting any benefit out of this. So he asked his mother for permission to go back to the old school. The people of the

*madrassah* would make fun out of the people who went to the old school.

So Syed Qutb said that he would prove them wrong. At the age of 8, he started to memorize a third of the Qur'an at home per year. So he had memorized all of the Qur'an by the age of 11 (within 3 years.)

Syed Qutb also wanted to show everyone that he was brave. Once his mother took him to his cousins house, all the way to the other side of the village. It was the middle of the night, and his mother needed to get something from home. She said that she had to go, and that she would be back. Syed Qutb said *"No, I will go, don't fear"*. He was only 11 years old, it was the middle of the night, no street lights, and he ran across the village, but half way through - fear overtook him. This was the area where people said there were many Jinn, and it was completely dark. He stood still and in fear.

A man came to rescue him and saw him and asked him what he was doing here. Syed Qutb said that *"I'm here looking for the jinn, I want to scare them so they go away."*

He was very intelligent from a young age.

Once an Azhari scholar was teaching surah al Kahf in the presence of Syed Qutb, and recited;

قَالَ ذٰلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغِ فَارْتَدَّا عَلٰۤى اٰثَارِهِمَا قَصَصًا

(Surah al Kahf 18:46)

*Qala thalika ma kunna nabgh, fartadda 'alaa aatharihim-ma Qasassa.*

Syed Qutb asked why Allah never said *Nabghee* [with a letter 'Yaa' at the end, since this is the normal way it is really said in the Arabic language.]

The Shaykh replied that Allah said it this way to make it easier for pronunciation - for the recitor. And this Shaykh didn't know that it was a child - Syed Qutb - who had asked the question!

This shows his knowledge in the arabic language, and his attentiveness to the Qur'an from such a young age.

Syed Qutb from a young age would save up his money for a man called Amsaalih, who used to sell books around the local villages. He would have a big collection of books, and another small collection specifically for Syed Qutb. If Syed never had the money, he would tell him that I don't have the money now, so let me borrow it and I'll give it you next time you come around. And Amsaalih would let him do that.

At the age of 12, he had his own library collection of 25 books, even though books were really expensive during that time.

He would imitate the scholars by reading the books, and then give lectures to the rest of the village. If any women needed any information, they would wait till Syed Qutb came back from school, and ask him to share the knowledge he had to them. In many occasions he would be shy because he was a young man, but in some occasions he would go and teach the knowledge he had to the people who asked him.

### The Early Secret Meetings

In 1919, Syed Qutb was 13 years old. He would sit with early people who wanted to cause a revolution against the Egyptian Government due to their oppression. He would sit with them and hear what they had to say, and then come back to his village and share what they had discussed in the meetings with his villagers. These would be his first experiences in Revolution.

### His Education

He later moved to Cairo, because his mother was very upset at Syed's father who was very generous on spending with the children. But his generosity made him sell a lot of his land, to the extent that they even had to finally sell their own house. So his mother told Syed to go to Cairo to get a job and buy the land back.

She sent him to train to become a teacher, and in 1924 he got a Diploma in Teaching. But he wasn't happy with this and he wanted to go into a university of *Dar al 'Ulum*, but to get into this, he needed to do a 4 year Preparatory Course – which he did. After succeeding in this, he graduated in 1929, he then went to the *Dar al 'Ulum* and graduated in 1933. He got a First Class Degree in Arabic Language and Literature.

In this *Dar al 'Ulum* university, he also achieved the following units; *Shari'ah [Islamic law]*, Arabic and comparative language, Logic, philosophy, History, and Political economics, as well as other units.

This is a refutation to those who say he did not study the religion officially, since the *Dar al 'Ulum* taught *Shari'ah* properly, and it was a very respected place.

In 1933, after he got his Degree, he was employed by the Ministry of Education. In 1940, he was Editor and Translator for the Ministry.

If we study his early political life, we see that he belonged to the party of Hizb al Wafd, till 1942. This brought him into inevitable conflict with his superiors in the Ministry of Education because of his anti-government views. He then he separated from the Hizb al Wafd due to some disputes. In 1944, he was transferred to the role of School Inspector because they did not like his political views. They felt that he would change his political views after going to America, but this in fact influenced him to become more focused on Islam in the near future.

He became an editor in-chief of two journals; *al 'Alam al 'Arabi* (the Arab World) – through which he lost his position due to editorial



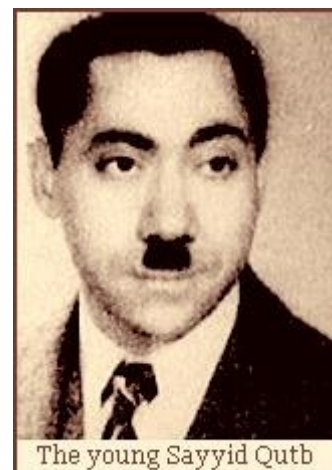
disagreements, and *al Fikr al Jadeed* (the New Thought.) – Which was based on an Islamic society free of corruption, tyranny and foreign domination, and this was banned after only six issues.

So he formed a new party but soon also left that in 1945 because he felt that every party was doing something for their own gain instead of for the people or an Islamic cause.

So he started to write independently and give lectures against the injustice of the government, and continued to do this until 1953.

1948-1950 - he was sent to study the methodology of education and teaching in the USA. As soon as he came back, he resigned from the ministry after all those years of study, as he differed with them in their political activities.

Syed Qutb after having such an Islamic upbringing was affected by his own period of *Jahiliyyah* (times of Ignorance.) This lasted from 1935-1940, when he was in Cairo and university. This is where he began to read on Western Civilization and the principles of Materialism, and these concepts raised severe doubts in his mind about the religion.



He lived in doubt worry, fear, pain, rebelliousness, and he always wanted to know; what was the secret of life? He became so confused. He said about himself that; *He would often cry, scream, and wish death would take him away from all the pain and contradiction. He lost all peace, and tranquillity in his life.*

He recorded all these periods in his poem called "**The Unknown Coast.** [*al Shaati' al Majhool*]" (i.e. *I am standing on a coast, and I don't know what sea I'm standing next to, how big is it? I don't know its name; I don't know what this life is about...*)

*How did Syed Qutb then begin to become an Islamic personality?*

When he discovered the religion, he left the world of ignorance and darkness, and joined the religion of *Da'wah* [calling to Islam], and Revival. He was looking for the secret of life and he found it.

His journey started when he studied the Qur'an in a literal way, and he slowly began to understand the principles lined in the religion. Then something happened to him in America to remove his doubts.

He says; that while he was going to America, he was on the boat/ferry, and he saw the way the boat he was travelling in - was rocking in the huge sea – all under the control of Allah without it sinking or capsizing. At that point he realised the power of Allah. He said Eman [Belief] entered into his heart due to this.

His second scenario was in San Francisco, when he went on top of a mountain, and he could see the whole of creation in front of him, and he realised the beauty and harmony that existed amongst the creation as a whole. He said that, the sweetness of Eman hit him.

He took the Qur'an as guidance to his life, and the harmony between man and the universe. So he involved himself deeply in the Qur'an.

We can look at 3 steps towards his Islam;

His First step was to Literal Study the *Qur'an*. He started a New *Qur'an* Library Project - where he did a literal understanding of the *Qur'an*.

Shaykh Ali Tantawi at that time said about Syed Qutb, that Allah gave him a key to understanding the expressions and meanings of the *Qur'an*, a key which Allah has never given to anyone before him.

He (Syed Qutb) says about his experience with the *Qur'an*;

الحياة في ظلال القرآن نعمة، نعمة لا يعرفها إلا من ذاقها، نعمة ترفع العمر وتباركه وتزكيه، فإذا من الله عليك بالحياة في ظلال القرآن فترة من الزمان ذقت فيها من نعمته ما لم تذق قط في حياتك

*“Life in the Shade of the Qur'an is a wonderful blessing, which no-one knows except the one who has tasted it. It increases the life of a person and gives them blessings in their life and purifies them in their life, and praise is for Allah that Allah has given me a life under the shade of the Qur'an.*

*A small part of the time I have tasted under it a blessing which I have never tasted before. ”*

The *Qur'an* then began to impact his thoughts and ideologies in refuting Communism, and Capitalism which were affecting the Egyptian society at that time.

His second step was his beginning to write different books, like; *Al-'adala al-Ijtima'iyya fi-l-Islam* (Social Justice in Islam) in 1949 in the USA, *The America that I have Seen* (after his return from America to Egypt), *Ma'alim fi-l-Tariq* (Milestones), as well as *Fi Dhilal al Qur'an* [In the Shade of the *Qur'an*] within prison (Some of

these books can be downloaded and will be linked to at the end of the biography *insha Allah.*) *Ma'arakat al-Islam wa'l-Ra's Maliyya* (The Battle Between Islam and Capitalism), in 1951.

His final stage was his complete and comprehensive understanding of the religion and Ikhwani movement, and the movements' role in affecting all aspects of life. In this stage - he most of all understood his duty to Allah, to be a witness for mankind upon the truth of Islam, to spread the religion. He realised the life he needed to lead.

### The Revolution of Abdul Nasir

In Egypt, 1952, a revolution took place. Jamal Abdul Nasir the tyrant became the leader of the country. This would affect the Ikhwani movement in the near future a great deal, so let's look at a brief history of the revolution and how it took place.

Ikhwan al Muslimeen [the Muslim Brotherhood] had a plan in place to cause a revolution against the government which had killed Hasan al Banna. Their plan was to infiltrate the army and to gain officers of the army into the ranks of the Ikhwan. These officers would be a secret party in the Ikhwan who could support the movement secretly, and they would be under the Military command, under the lead of a man called Mahmood al-Labeeb. He was directly in charge of the officers who got involved with the Ikhwan.

Two active men in this organisation were Jamal Abdul Nasir, and a man called Abdul Ra'uf.

In 1944, the first secret Military circle was gathered by the Ikhwan to support their cause.

In 1946 the Officers gave pledge to the special organization – 'the Ikhwan Officers club'. No-one knew about this pledge since it was classified, and solemn secret pledge – a pledge of life and death.

They agreed to avenge the death of Hasan al Banna who had been assassinated by the Egyptian government and to topple their regime. They all promised to keep this plan a secret and not to let it escape to others. Jamal Abdul Nasir was within this circle as one of the officers who had pledged in secrecy.

They also pledged to train the other Ikhwan civilians so that they could fight the English – who had colonised Egypt at that time - after they achieved the assassination of the Egyptian king. For security reasons, they changed their name from ‘the Ikhwan Officers club’ to ‘the Free Officers’.

Then something happened. Jamal Abdul Nasir and Abdul Ra’uf who were the most active officers had a disagreement, so there became a split between the two. Abdul Nasir wanted to involve other non Ikhwanis into this secret organisation, whether they were practising or non practising muslims. Whereas Abdul Rauf said that they will not get anyone involved except a practising Muslim who is part of the ikhwan.

Abdul Rauf was travelling away, and the leader of the Military command Mahmood al Labeeb became ill. He was on his deathbed and he didn’t know who to give the documents (profiles of the Ikhwan etc), the secret plans, and the treasure/wealth of the Ikhwan movement to. The only one there was Jamal Abdul Nasir, so Mahmood al Labeeb handed all this down to Abdul Nasir, and he in effect became the new leader of the ‘the Free officers’.

### Syed Qutb’s Role in Aiding the Revolution

At this time Syed Qutb was not a member of the Ikhwan. He like everybody else thought Abdul Nasir was a good man who was enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, and fighting against the corrupt government of their time. But the reality would be alot different.

The articles of Syed Qutb were against the government which assassinated Hasan al Banna, and his articles were many. It was

due to these articles that many Officers from the army were joining the Ikhwan movement, although Syed Qutb wasn't himself directly involved with the Movement. 'The Free Officers' would distribute his articles to potential members to spread their call. Some of these Officers – including Abdul Nasir – would go to the house of Syed Qutb to ask him for ideas about the Revolution. One could say that he was the main think-tank behind the Revolution. His ideas were permeating to the rest of the people in the revolution.

### Abdul Nasir's Betrayal to the Ikhwan

In 1950, Abdul Nasir left the Officers and made his own organisation with other members of the army. The special branch of the Ikhwan (especially Abdul Ra'uf) didn't want to do this, so he split from them with his own organisation. But he continued to keep contact with the *Da'wah [Religious call]* wing of the Ikhwani movement. Keep in mind that the Da'wah wing were almost a separate entity from the Military wing due to the great danger that was posed if the Officers were exposed, so even from the start there was little communication between the two parties. So Abdul Nasir could easily take advantage of this little communication by keeping his connection with the Da'wah wing, while also having his own Officers' to do with as he wishes, along with the treasures and information of the Ikhwans' passed onto him by Muhammad al Labeeb.

The head of the Da'wah wing was Hassan Hudaibi, and Abdul Nasir kept contact with him saying that we would help you in your cause. We have Generals and Officers, and we will help you when we get in power. Abdul Nasir promised to the brothers of the Da'wah wing, that if they help him in the Revolution – he will implement the *Shari'ah* [Islamic law] completely, and would be in full co-operation with the Ikhwan and aid them.

The Da'wah wing – due to little communication – didn't know that Abdul Nasir had separated from the real Ikhwani 'Free Officers' and they were unaware of his own nationalistic group of officers preparing for the Revolution.

## The Revolution happens

So Abdul Nasir began the Revolution and with the help of the Ikhwan, he took down the monarchy and himself came into power as King of Egypt (Zainab al Ghazali would say he was the new Pharaoh of Egypt).



The Ikhwanis' including Hassan Hudaibi then came to Abdul Nasir, and reminded him of all the conditions they had set before. He was shocked when Abdul Nasir rejected every single condition put forward; he wasn't going to implement *Shari'ah*, nor was he going to help or support the Ikhwan.

< A picture of Jamal Abdul Nasir when King of Egypt.

So Hassan Hudaibi said to Abdul Nasir, *"We still accept you as a Reformist movement"*. Hassan still saw good in Abdul Nasir, and said; *"If you do good – you do so for the people, if not we will advise you and correct you as Allah wills."*

Abdul Nasir still hadn't exposed his full plans, and so Syed Qutb would meet up with Abdul Nasir and the Officers, and they would discuss how to stay firm on this Revolution without harm coming to them. Syed Qutb would sometimes stay for upto 12 hours a day to discuss the plans with them in detail.

Syed Qutb was still not a member of Ikhwan and still thought well of Abdul Nasir.

Abdul Nasir set up an organisation called '*Tahreer*' [*Freedom*], and the reason for this organisation was because the Ikhwan were very active in the field of Da'wah around Egypt. Abdul Nasir knew this, and he wanted to have another organisation which would also be great in number, and oppose the Islamic movement of the Ikhwan. To further strengthen his cause – he would try assassination attempts of major figures in the Ikhwani movement. (An instance occurred where Zainab al Ghazali had a major car accident, and this was done by some of Abdul Nasir's agents to kill her – especially since she was so influential in the da'wah [Islamic call]. (This account can be read further in her own book '*Return of the Pharaoh*' which is linked to at the end of this book.))

Syed Qutb didn't know this was the plan of Abdul Nasir, so he helped him for a whole month in supporting this movement of *Tahreer*. After a month he realised that this was an evil plan of Abdul Nasir, so he quickly separated himself from supporting the '*Tahreer*' organisation.

Abdul Nasir tried to bribe Syed Qutb to come back into this organisation, saying "*We will give you whatever position you want in the government, whether it's the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Arts etc.*" But because Syed Qutb now understood the reality of Abdul Nasir's corruption – he refused every single one of his offers.

### Causes for Syed Qutb Joining the Ikhwan

Syed Qutb didn't personally meet Hasan al Banna, but he had heard about him and his cause. He might have thought that it wasn't such a strong movement, or that it was like other movements which were doing it for their own personal gain, so he



did not join that movement while Hasan al Banna was alive.

Sayyid Qutb did not have any formal or informal connections with the Ikhwan. Although he was aware of their activities and the efforts made by Hasan al-Banna, it seems that he was not convinced, until his time spent in the United States, that the Ikhwan were the effective tool by which Egyptian society could be changed.

While Syed Qutb was in America, the Ikhwanis' best men fought in Palestine in Allah's cause, but when they returned back to Egypt – they were all rounded and taken into prison by the king (this was before Abdul Nasir's rule).

Syed Qutb writ a book called *Al-Adala al-Ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam* (Social Justice in Islam), 1949 during this time. In the beginning he said *'to all the brothers fighting in the way of Allah.'* So the Ikhwani's felt that this book was written specifically for them, and the book was distributed around prison. During this time, Hasan al Banna read the book and said; *"These are our ideas, and it should be that he [Syed Qutb] is one of us (i.e. part of the Ikhwan)."*

When in America, Syed Qutb got to know of Zionism [Jews for the state of 'Israel'], and the hate of the Americans for Islam. Sayyid Qutb was in hospital in the United States when he witnessed the joy of the people there at the assassination of Hasan al-Banna. He was told, when he inquired about the reason for this joy and celebration, that the greatest enemy of the West had been killed.

From that moment Sayyid Qutb decided that he would join the Ikhwan as soon as he returned to Egypt. He realized that the colonial powers would not consider a person, and his organization, to be their archenemy unless that person was a strong and efficient person whose activities genuinely threatened the status quo and the colonialists' interests in the area.

He also realised how much the American's hated Islam after the assassination of Hasan al Banna. He also came in contact with a British spy [John Hersdon] there who was saying that *'the only*

*thing stopping Egypt from becoming like Western Civilization is the Ikhwan movement*'. John Hersdon had gone to the Muslim world, pretending to be a Muslim and even marrying a Muslim woman, and afterwards returning back to America. He said to Syed Qutb (while pretending to be Muslim), I will translate your book *\_Al-Adala al-Ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam* (Social Justice in Islam) for \$10,000.

He also had a massive file filled with information on the activities and speeches of the Ikhwan al Muslimeen movement, from the beginning of Hasan al Banna's activities, uptill his death. He knew all the secrets of the Ikhwan movement. He said to Syed Qutb, *"Forget your plans to fight the British, because if you fight them, America will take their place"*. He said *'forget the corrupt organisation of the Ikhwan'*. Syed Qutb realised that this man was a spy who is trying to fool him.

### A Return to Egypt to Join the Ikhwan

In 1953, he came back to Egypt, and decided to join the Ikhwan. His experiences in America made him realise the strength of such a group, encouraging him to study his religion more and dedicate his life to it by joining the Movement.

When he joined the Ikhwan (1953), it was a time of great fear and trial - when Abdul Nasir was fighting the Ikhwan, a time when the Ikhwan were being gathered from all over Egypt and put in prison. This is like the wealthy Jew [called *Mukhayreeq*] who became Muslim in the Battle of Uhud during the life of the Prophet, when the battle was at its severest – he gave his wealth, and joined the battle and died for Allah's cause.

Syed Qutb became fully involved in the Ikhwan movement and gave a weekly newspaper and lectures in Islamic study circles for the Ikhwan. He even went to Syria and got involved with the

Ikhwani movement there to spread his ideas. He was then soon imprisoned by Abdul Nasir's regime.

### The Ikhwan Movement is Dissolved

In 19<sup>th</sup> January 1954, the Ikhwan movement was dissolved by the government. Many of the Ikhwanis' were imprisoned, as well as their leaders. But due to huge protests by the public – they were freed.

This experience only made Syed Qutb stronger in the Islamic cause, and he continued to make even more articles against Abdul Nasir's government, influencing others to join and support the cause.

### Syed Qutb is Jailed for the First time

Then Abdul Nasir made up a story that the Ikhwan intended to assassinate him, so they gathered up thousands of the Ikhwan in October. This was the real first trial of the Ikhwan. Before the trial of Syed Qutb, they tortured him and beat him severely. They made him sit on a chair for hours upon hours and days, without food and drink. They would then pour water in front of him and ask him '*do you want water*'? They would then make him stand up for hours after this, and whip him and beat him, even though he was just a frail man.

He became ill, his lungs started to bleed. He got arthritis, bronchitis, and many of his illnesses became more intense due to torture.

In the court case, they said to him – *you look tired*? Now if any of the Ikhwanis' were to tell in court the torture they received in prison, they would get even more punishment afterwards.

Syed Qutb replied; “*yes, they made me stand up for hours.*”

To show the torture that the Ikhwanis’ had received, he suddenly lifted his shirt from his back to show everyone the injuries he had received on his body from whipping, and beating.

He was taken back to jail and given a punishment of 15 years hard labour, of which he did 10 years, due to his ill health [his time spent in jail was; 1955-1964], after which he was temporarily freed.

When he was in prison, everyone respected him. Even the worst of criminals had respect for him, even the prison guards did. And he would affect their minds in a positive way. When he received food from his family, he would distribute it to other prisoners.

After he came out of prison, he realised that the Ikhwani movement was dissolved, it had died out.

### Reviving the Ikhwani Movement – from Jail

A man called Abdul Fattah Isma’il tried to restart the Ikhwani jamaa’ah [group]. He spoke to Syed Qutb about this while Syed Qutb was in jail. For 10 years Syed Qutb thought about the organisation, should we re-organise this jamaa’ah? So he thought he has to do something because the society is becoming influenced by Secularism. So Syed Qutb became the leader of the Ikhwani movement while being in jail.

### Plans

But this time he had new ideas and new plans. His idea was that the Islamic groups were focusing on a local political level, whereas the whole of society needed a reform of roots.

The society as a whole could benefit from learning the correct ‘*Aqeedah* [beliefs], and they would naturally take out the un-Islamic government. Meanwhile, a group of Muslim brothers could unite -

who had firm knowledge in *'Aqeedah* and manners, who could protect the jamaa'ah [group] from oppression. This would be necessary since Abdul Nasir was not established firmly in *'Aqeedah* and manners, and this is what led to him breaking his promises of establishing true Islam within his rule.

These Muslim brothers would be a defense force for the Ikhwan al Muslimeen [Muslim brotherhood], so that if anyone from the government intended to harm the Muslims, they would be able to assassinate the prime minister or officers, and retaliate against any aggression. Syed Qutb began to lead the Ikhwan based on this model.

### The Plans are Discovered

This whole model and the plans of Syed Qutb were discovered, due to spies being everywhere.

The ones involved in the Ikhwan – their names were given to Abdul Nasir. So he was now fully aware who was involved in the new Ikhwani movement.

The plan of Syed Qutb - for the Muslim brothers - to retaliate against any aggression - was supposed to be the last stage of the new revolution. However, this now became a priority due to Abdul Nasir being aware of who was involved. So the Ikhwan quickly came together and began to plan which brothers would get involved in defending the cause. There was even a plan that weapons would come from Saudi Arabia to aid them in their cause, but Syed Qutb rejected this because he realised that this was a plan from the secret services to try to expose the movement in their 'betrayal' to the government.

Then in 1965, Abdul Nasir announced in Moscow [due to his links with Communism], that Ikhwan was a secret organization that planned to overthrow him. So many of the Ikhwan were put into trial in 1965 again, and many were imprisoned and tortured.

## The Dream of Syed Qutb

During this time, Syed Qutb was temporarily freed from imprisonment due to health conditions. However, he was still firm in his lead for the Ikhwani cause.

The journalist Mahmud ar-Rakaabi narrated a strange discussion that took place between himself and ash-shaheed Sayyid Qutb at his house before his imprisonment.

Ar-Rakaabi recalls: *I said to him, 'Praise be to Allah upon well-being - whatever Allah wills - your health is good, all you need now is a bride?'*

So Sayyid laughed very much and said, *'Which bride are you referring to [in this world or the next?]' I said, 'We were created for both of them.'*

So we spoke for a while, then he (Syed Qutb) suddenly asks me, *'Can you interpret dreams? For I had a vision last night that a red snake wrapped itself around me and then tightened itself on me. Then I woke up that hour and couldn't go back to sleep.'*

I said, *'My sir! That's a gift, to be presented to you by one of the believers, wrapped with a red ribbon, and if you wish I will present it to you now, so take it and continue with your sleep.'*

He (Qutb) said, *'Why can't the interpretation of the dream be that I am the gift presented to the believers?'*

I said, *'Isn't the existence of the righteous more beneficial for the Islamic Da'wah?'*

He said, *'Not always. In fact, sometimes their departure is more beneficial! Although, I am not intending my own destruction, but we must intend firmness in our stance, knowing that the firmness in stance can bring about destruction.'*

I said, *'O Man! Don't be pessimistic like that, for people should aim to be balanced in everything.'*

He said: *'You will come to know.'*

### Syed Qutb is taken to Court again

Syed Qutb was caught once again by the secret services for his role in the Ikhwani movement.

When Syed Qutb was asked in an investigation of the new plans, in his interview – he confessed to every single thing, including him being the leader of the organisation. He wanted to accept the blame for every single thing instead of putting the blame on the other Ikhwanis.

Even in front of his interrogators, he took the blame for everything.

Syed Qutb was to face a second new trial.

Before being taken to court, he was put in prison. Before being taken to court, his nephew Rif'at was killed in front of his own eyes.

Zainab al Ghazali was also put in jail since she was a leading member of the Ikhwani movement. She reports that she went past the jail cell of Syed Qutb because she needed to go to the toilet, and as she walked past the cell of Syed Qutb, she saw a cloth which covered his cell whilst he was being tortured. Some wind came and raised the cloth, and he saw Zainab al Ghazali. The prison guards then blamed him and said *'you raised the cloth yourself'*. So they started beating him, and beating him. She said that after she returned from the toilet, she walked past his cell and they were still beating him, and he was saying *'I had no plans to talk to her'*.

The doctors said his weak lungs had collapsed, and said *'dont make him run'*, so the interrogators would whip him and force him to run. He then collapsed and got a heart attack.

### His Support for his fellow Prisoners

Sometimes Syed Qutb would see other Ikhwanis who had been tortured and he would smile at them to make them feel better. If he saw them being tortured he would cry and make du'a [pray to God] for them.



His most famous poem is entitled 'From Behind Bars' which begins with the following verses:

أخي أنت حرٌ وراء السدود \* أخي أنت حرٌ بتلك القيود  
إذا كنت بالله مستعصما \* فماذا يضيرك كيد العبيد

*My brother, you are free behind these gates.  
My brother, you are free within these chains.  
For if upon Allah you do rely,  
The intrigues of his slaves can bring no pains*

He also said in some poetry to the Ikhwan;

أخي فامض لا تلتفت للوراء \* طريقك قد خضبته الدماء  
و لا تلتفت هنا أو هناك \* و لا تتطلع لغير السماء

*My brother, do not look back \* Your path has been covered  
in blood. And do not look here or there \* And do not  
look except to the sky.*

[*Diwan Sayyid Qutb*]

He knew that if the Ikhwanis' told any news reporters about the torture they received, they would be punished even more. So he



himself would tell the news reporters about the punishments they received, and for this he would get beaten even more.

### The Judge's fear of Syed Qutb

There was a man called *Fawad Dajawi* - the coward, who claimed to be a judge (even though he was an ignorant commoner), he would make judgments upon the Ikhwanis' in court. To show how much of a coward he was, when he went to fight the Jews in 1956, and the Jews surrounded the Muslims, he joined the side of the Jews against the Muslims. So the Jews let him go due to his betrayal of the Muslims. This man was the judge against Syed Qutb, and he was extremely rude to him.

Syed Qutb would look at Fawad Dajawi, and had no respect for him at all. He would look at him with such a harsh stare, that Dajawi became terrified of Syed Qutb. So in court, Syed Qutb took the blame for everything for the Ikhwani movement.

Syed Qutb was sentenced, and he knew that his execution was going to be near. So he sent letters from prison to his family during this period.

Human Rights Organisations, and many leaders [including Shaykh bin Baz) said that Syed Qutb should be released. When Malik Faisal [the king of Saudi Arabia], said he should be freed, Abdul Nasir became very angry and said that we will do the execution the next day.

His sister Hamidah was told to ask forgiveness from Abdul Nasir, and say that it wasn't you who was responsible for this Ikhwani revolution. And that if you admit to this, then all charges will be lifted from you and you will be safe and free.

So Syed Qutb said;

والله لو كان هذا الكلام صحيحا لقلته ولما استطاعت قوة على  
وجه الأرض أن تمنعني من قوله. ولا أقول كذبة أبدا

*I swear in the Name of Allah, if this "thing or talk" [of another group doing the revolution] was correct, then I would say it and there will be no force on the face of the earth that can prevent me from doing it. And I will not speak a lie, ever.*

They tried to seek pardon from Syed Qutb in any way they could, but he didn't change his word.

Syed Qutb said to his sister.

إن رأيتي الوالد المرشد حسن هديبي فبلغيه عني السلام و  
قولي له لقد تحمل سيد أفسى ما يتحمله بشر حتى لا تمس بأدنى  
سوء

He said, because Hasan Hudaibi was still really in charge of the Ikhwan al Muslimeen.

*"If you see Hasan Hudaibi, the guide of the Ikhwan [brotherhood]. Then give him Salam (the greeting of Peace), and tell him that Syed has faced as much punishment as the human can suffer, so that you and the brotherhood as a whole does not suffer."*

They then came to him again on the last point before he was going to be executed, and said; *Just say sorry you're sorry for what you did and you will be free.*

So Syed Qutb said;

لن أعتذر عن العمل مع الله.

*“I will never seek any excuse for work for the sake of Allah.”*

They told him to say just a line or a few words to Abdul Nasir to say that I’m sorry for what i did, and you won’t be executed, and you will be free.

So Syed Qutb said;

إن إصبع السبابة الذي يشهد لله بالوحدانية في الصلاة ليرفض  
أن يكتب حرفاً يقر به حكم طاغية

*“Indeed this finger which testifies the Oneness of Allah in salah [prayer], it refuses to agree on anything – in support - of this oppressive regime.”*

### The Day of Syed Qutb’s Execution



Generally prisoners would not know when they are due to be executed because of public sensitivities. Consequently, the date of the execution of Syed Qutb was kept hidden even from Syed Qutb himself. On the day of his execution the military officer entered Syed Qutb’s cell under the pretext that he has been ordered to change his cell quarters. However ash-shaheed Syed Qutb knew that this was not just another cell change and said, *‘I know where*

*you are taking me, for the Prophet Muhammed came to me in my dream and told me (about today), so take me. '*

So they took Syed Qutb to the place of his execution. Everybody saw him with a beaming smile on his face, he was extremely happy and waving to the prison guards.

He was saying before his execution;

*I am waiting for this moment.*

And he said;

*I am living a life that I have never lived before. I am feeling the true meaning of Emaan [true Belief]. I fully understand 'Aqeedah (Islamic belief) as its meant to be understood more than ever before.*

*I am waiting for my shahadah (martyrdom), and I have never lived a life better than the life I am living right now.*

This is what he said before he was about to be executed.

"On receiving his death sentence in court, Sayyid Qutb said, '*Alhamdullilah (all praise is for Allah) I performed Jihad (struggle) for fifteen years until I earned this Shahadah (martyrdom).*' "

His face was beaming, as was recorded on the cameras and TV.

This was the reality of life, and he was expecting it, looking pleased to meet Allah. He knew that this was the truth, knowing that if you work sincerely in your life for the sake of Allah – then your end no doubt – will be *shahadah* (martyrdom) in Allah's/God's cause. This is what he had been waiting for, for so long.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> August 1966, with Abdul Fattah Isma'il, and Muhammad Yusuf Hawash (who were also great leaders of the Ikhwan), they were all hanged, may Allah have mercy on them.

And relate to them the story of the two sons of Adam...

On that day, the Imam of the Ikhwan al Muslimeen in the Jumu'ah [Friday congregation] prayer recited from the Qur'an Surah Maa'idah (5:27) on the two sons of Adam;

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقْبِلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا  
وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذْ مِنَ الْآخِرِ قَالَ لَأَفْتُنَّكَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَّخِذُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

And relate to them the story of the two sons of Adam with truth when they both offered an offering, but it was accepted from one of them and was not accepted from the other. He said: I will most certainly kill you. (The other) said: Allah only accepts from those who are Muttaqin [guard (against evil).]

When it was recited, they all burst into tears and began to cry.

Syed Qutb became shaheed for the ideas he carried. And this shahadah brought life to the *Ummah* [muslim nation]. He himself would say;

*'Indeed our words will remain lifeless, barren, devoid of any passion, until we die as a result of these words, whereupon our words will suddenly spring to life and live on amongst the hearts that are dead, bringing them back to life as well...'*

His books spread around Egypt even though the government tried to stop them. His books were handwritten – since the government made it illegal to publish his books - and they spread around the whole Muslim world at speed.

So any Muslim that you see who is affected by Islamic revival today, has read his book *Ma'alim fil Tareeq* [Milestones], and any Muslim who has read his *Fi Dhilal al Qur'an* [Under the Shade of the Qur'an], this is when they started to understand the *Deen* [Religion] from a revival perspective properly and comprehensively.

This person sacrificed his life for the sake of Allah, returning to Him. And Allah brought life to his words throughout the world, as we see today.

#### The Dream of Zainab al Ghazali after Syed Qutb's execution

On the day of ash-Shaheed Sayyid Qutb's execution, Zainab al-Ghazali saw Sayyid Qutb in a dream; he told her, ***'Know that I was not with them, I was in Madina in the company of the Prophet'***.

The following day Zainab had another dream, *'I dozed (fell asleep) after Fajr prayer while reading the supplication of the concluding prayer, and heard a voice saying, 'Sayyid is in the highest (Jannat) Firdous (highest part of Paradise)'*.

*I woke and related the same to Hamidah who cried, saying 'I am sure of Allah's favour on us and that, God willing, Sayyid in the highest Firdous...these visions are consolation, a strengthening from Allah, the Exalted, the High'*

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- \* The Islamic Concept and Its Characteristics
- \* Islam and universal peace

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(<http://kalamullah.com/shade-of-the-quran.html> / <http://www.scribd.com/people/documents/6752159/folder/150139> )

### **The America I have seen – Syed Qutb:**

( <http://www.scribd.com/Syed-QutubThe-America-I-Have-Seen/d/6412907> )

### **Milestones [Special Edition];**

( <http://www.scribd.com/doc/3666492/Milestones-special-edition> / <http://www.kalamullah.com/Books/Milestones%20Special%20Edition.pdf> )

### **Return of the Pharoah – Zainab al Ghazali [a personal account of Zainab in Prison in the Early Ikhwani movement era.] A MUST READ!**

(<http://kalamullah.com/Books/Return%20of%20The%20Pharaoh.pdf> / <http://www.scribd.com/doc/24777817/Return-of-the-Pharaoh-Zainab-Al-Ghazali> )

### **Majmu' al Rasaa'il [6 tracts of Hasan al Banna]**

(<http://www.scribd.com/doc/24583858/24054930-majmu-at-rasa-il-al-imam-al-shahid-hasan-al-banna> )



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(<http://www.scribd.com/doc/24566916/the-west-in-the-eyes-of-the-egyptian-islamic-movement-ibrahim-ghanem> )

**A Video of the Ikhwan al Muslimeen Imprisoned** during the time of Syed Qutb (they are awaiting execution);

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ByfoLqg4jQ>

**DOWNLOAD [Nasheed Hal Turana - MP3](#)** recited by Sa'ad al Ghamdi:

**DOWNLOAD LINK:** [http://www.enshad.net/audio/Al-Damaam\\_D\\_2/Al-Damaam\\_D\\_2\\_-\\_03\\_-\\_Hal\\_Toraanaa\\_Naltaqi.mp3](http://www.enshad.net/audio/Al-Damaam_D_2/Al-Damaam_D_2_-_03_-_Hal_Toraanaa_Naltaqi.mp3)

### Appendix 1:

هل ترنا نلتقي

## Hal Turana Naltaqi

*Do you envision us meeting...*

The following poem is written by Amina Qutb, the sister of Syed Qutb after he was executed, and returned back to Allah's pleasure.

هل ترانا نلتقي أم أنها .... كانت اللقيا على أرض السراب

Do you envision us meeting, or has it already,  
Taken place in the land of the mirage;

ثم ولت وتلاشى ظلها .... واستحالت ذكريات للعذاب

Then it withdrew and its shadow vanished,  
And turned into torturous memories;

هكذا أسأل قلبي كلما .... طالت الأيام من بعد الغياب

Thus asks my heart whenever,  
The days grow long, after your absence;

وإذا طيفك يرنو باسمًا .... وكأنني في استماع للجواب  
When your shadow stares, smiling,  
It is as if I am listening to the response;

أولم نمضي على الحق معًا .... كي يعود الخير للأرض اليباب  
Did we not walk upon Truth together,  
So that Good can return to barren land;

فمضينا في طريق شائك .... ما تخلي فيه عن كل الرغاب  
So we walked along a thorny path,  
Abandoning all our ambitions;

ودفنا الشوق في أعماقنا .... ومضينا في رضاء واحتساب  
We buried our desires deep within ourselves,  
And we strove on in contentment, expecting reward from Allah;

قد تعودنا على السير معًا .... ثم أعجلت مجيئًا للذهاب  
We had made a pact to walk together,  
And then you hurried in responding and departing;

حين نادى لي رب منعم .... لي حياتي في جنان ورحاب  
When a Benevolent Lord called me,  
To a life amidst gardens and vast lands;

ولقاء في نعيم دائم .... لجنود الله مرحا للصحاب  
And towards a sublime meeting amidst divine favours,  
With the Soldiers of Allah, joyful in companionship;

قدموا الأرواح والعمر فدا .... مستجيبين على غير ارتياب  
Presenting their souls and lives, a sacrifice,

Responding without slightest doubts;

فليهب قلبك من غفلاته .... فلقاء الخلد في تلك الرحاب

So to renew your heart from its slumber,  
An ever-lasting meeting in such a land;

أيها الراحل عمراً في شكاتي .... فإلى طيفك أنات عتاب

Oh traveler, Forgiveness from my complaints,  
Unto me is your ghost, to him a patient reproach;

قد تركت القلب يدمي مثقلاً .... تائهاً في الليل في عمق الضباب

I abandoned my heart to bleed heavily,  
Lost in the night, in the depths of fog;

وإذا أطوي وحيداً حائراً .... أقطع الدرب طويلاً في اكتئاب

And if I traverse, confused and alone,  
I'll interrupt the path, long it is in depression;

وإذا الليل خضم موحش .... تتلاقى فيه أمواج العذاب

And if in the night, I find a gloomy sea,  
Encountering in it waves of pain;

لم يعد يبرق في ليلي سنا .... قد توارت كل أنوار الشهاب

Ceasing in my nights, is the radiance of lightening,  
And the brightness of stars have disappeared;

غير أنني سوف أمضي مثلما .... كنت تلقاني في وجه الصعاب

Despite this, I shall continue just as,  
You used to find me, in the face of adversity;

سوف يمضي الرأس مرفوعاً فلا .... يرتضي ضعفاً بقول أو جوابي

I shall continue keeping my head raised, And won't,  
Consent to weakness in speech, nor reply;

سوف تحدوني دماء عابقات .... قد أنارت كل فج للذهاب

I shall be guided by the sweet-scented blood,  
And light has illuminated the horizons of escape;

هل ترانا نلتقي أم أنها .... كانت اللقيا على أرض السراب

Do you envision us meeting, or has it already,  
Taken place in the land of the mirage;

ثم ولت وتلاشى ظلها .... واستحالت ذكريات للعذاب

Then it withdrew and its shadow vanished,  
And turned into torturous memories;

هكذا أسأل قلبي كلما .... طالت الأيام من بعد الغياب

Thus asks my heart whenever,  
The days grow long, after your absence;

وإذا طيفك يرنو باسمًا .... وكأني في استماع للجواب

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LINK: [http://www.enshad.net/audio/Al-Damaam\\_D\\_2/Al-Damaam\\_D\\_2\\_-\\_03\\_-\\_Hal\\_Toraanaa\\_Naltaqi.mp3](http://www.enshad.net/audio/Al-Damaam_D_2/Al-Damaam_D_2_-_03_-_Hal_Toraanaa_Naltaqi.mp3)**

**APPENDIX 2: 'Interview with the wife of Yusuf Hawwash  
(who was executed with Sayyid Qutb)'**

*"We lived together for two years,  
and he spent the rest of his life in  
prisons..."*

**Could you give us a brief introduction to the life of your husband  
Yusuf Hawwaash?**

My husband is Muhammad Yusuf Hawwaash (May Allah have mercy upon him). He was born on the 12th of October 1922. He achieved a diploma from Industrial Schools in 1943. He joined the Ikhwaan (Muslim Brotherhood), during his studies in the Gharbiyyah province. He married me in 1953 and I had from him two children, Ahmad and Sumayyah. They are both now doctors, and each has four children, both male and female.

**How did your marriage start?**

One of the brothers recommended me to him as a wife, to help him carry the burden of the da`wah (calling to Allah). And he remained for a whole year, whenever he met my brother, saying "We are still on our agreement", but he did not propose because of problems his family was going through. At the end of the year, I told my brother to inform him that this matter was over. Indeed we ended the matter, then another brother came to propose to me, but then he [Yusuf] returned, to reiterate his request anew. So I refused, and my brother advised me to pray Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah. When I prayed, I saw myself in the reception of our house in the village, and there was no lighting. Then a bright lamp was hanging

in front of me, in the shape of his face, so I agreed and the contract was made. He later told me that when he made Istikhaarah, he saw me making wudoo' with him pouring the water for me, and even though it was not much water, I did it well.

**Your husband was imprisoned more than once during the beginning of your married life, so how did this situation pass?**

He was imprisoned after the Aqd [contract], then when he was released, we married and stayed together for one year, then he was imprisoned in 1954 and after the sentence was passed, he gave me the choice of staying with him or divorce. So I reprimanded him harshly, and informed him of something he did not know. That once during our engagement, he was giving a talk in one of the open gatherings, and he fell unconscious, and was taken to hospital. Then we found that one of his kidneys was severely damaged, because of an old illness he got when he was imprisoned as a student, in a cell filled with cold water in winter. [At that time] the brothers offered me to cancel [the engagement] if I wanted, but I refused not to be with him on this journey because of this situation that Allah Almighty had placed him in during one of his trials.

And when we married in 1953 I bore Sumayyah after ten months of marriage, and after that by 17 days, the security services came to arrest him, and we used to live in the same block as Anwar As-Sadat, who was the head of the Islamic Conference at the time. And because Muhammad's relationship was good with all those around him, the guards of Sadat warned him as he approached the block, i.e. that the security services were inside, so he stayed on the run for a while.

During this time, he came to visit me once, and the guards of Sadat saw him, but did not tell anyone, so he was able to return from where he had come. After this, one of my sisters came, to take me and host me during my husband's absence, but when we came to leave, we found the security services surrounding us, and they wanted to arrest me. So I decided that I would not go with them silently, until I exposed their evil system in front of the people who they had tricked, so I shouted in my highest voice that I would not go with them, whatever they do, and I criticized their actions. So Anwar Sadat came out and asked what was happening, so I replied: 'Demeaning of women and invasion of privacy is

happening in this black era of yours.’ So he calmed me down, and told the officer to carry my bags and take me where I wanted. So I said to him: ‘I am going to the house of your master and the crown over your head, the respected Murshid (al-Hudaybi) [the head of Ikwaan]’.

Indeed, I remained with the wife of the Murshid and his daughters alone in the house, because all the men in his family were in prison, until my husband appeared, and was tried and sentenced to a total of 55 years.

**It is known that the shaheed Yusuf Hawwaash met his Lord in the same trial as the shaheed Sayyid Qutb, so how was their relationship?**

Their relationship probably started after their sentencing in 1955, for he had been given 55 years, and the shaheed Sayyid Qutb 15; both were released in 1964. They remained throughout this period together, whether in prison or in hospital, so their relationship developed and strengthened for each other. They complemented each other and would find with the other something he needed - they would complete each other. Muhammad would benefit from and learn, the Fikr (thought), culture, Ilm (knowledge) and depth of the shaheed Sayyid, while Sayyid would learn about the history of Ikhwaan, their organization, Manhaj (methodology), and anything related to the Jamaa`ah (group) from the shaheed Muhammad, because he had joined before him. And so, they were very attached to each other. Muhammad would say: ‘Every chapter and every phrase in the books of Ustaadh Sayyid, I know when it was written, what the occasion was, and the discussion about it when it appeared as it did.’

And Muhammad saw Yusuf (as) [in a vision], while in Leemaan Turah, and Ustaadh Sayyid was writing on Surat-Yusuf in his book Adh-Dhilaal [In the Shade of the Qur'aan], and he [Yusuf (as)] said to him: "Inform Sayyid that the surah has what he is looking for: {Indeed judgement is only for Allah}." And thus they remained until after their shahhadah (martyrdom), the brothers would say: "Indeed it from the mercy of Allah over these two men, that He chose them both for martyrdom together, otherwise one would not be able to be patient with splitting from the other."

**And what of his (last) imprisonment in 1965?**

After his release in 1964, I went into hospital for an operation, and after coming out, and being cured by Allah's bounty, he wanted us to spend some time on his father's farm. So I informed him that staying there for a long time was hard on me, especially without a helper to help me with household duties, washing and other things. So he said to me: 'You should make dhikr and seek forgiveness during your work, and you will be rewarded, and have patience and Ihtisaab (looking to your reward in the Hereafter), in being good to your relatives.' So I agreed, and we travelled. And on one of the days straight after our travel, he informed me that he would pray two rak`ahs, (units of prayer) until the food was prepared, and he continuously prayed from nine in the morning to two in the afternoon. Whenever I opened the door, I would find him praying and crying. Until we heard a bang at the door of the house, and found it was the security services. So I opened the door to his room, and informed him that the security services were there and that he should finish his prayer and see them. And he did just that. They tried to take him with them, but he asked them to leave him until he could make ghusl. He then asked me extensively for a Mushaf [copy of the Qur'aan], but I did not have except the one which I had written a small message to Ahmad [the son] and was going to give him as a present. So he promised me that it would return to me even if it had to go to Mars and back, so I gave it to him.

Then the oppression of the regime began to increase in harshness. For after I had been transferred from a headmistress to a teacher, then from one province to another, then from normal teaching to special needs, in his first period of imprisonment, the security services started their campaign to imprison me. Until eventually, they achieved what they wanted and I was imprisoned for six months in Al-Qanaatir prison, which I spent in constant nazeef [bleeding], until I had an operation to remove my womb after that. And so, I did not attend except the sentencing. When he saw me in my weak state, he informed me that he did not know of my imprisonment, until the dogs had ripped his clothes, and he had sent for clothes from the house, and so Ahmad gave the guard old clothes so that they would not steal the new clothes. And when he saw them, he knew that I was not in the house.



In this painful situation was when my sister bore a daughter, and Ahmad asked me to have for him a sister, and he would nag and cry, so I said: 'Your father has to be here.', and when we went to visit his father, he kept crying and pulling him saying: 'Come with me father to the house, and mum can have a sister for me. Who is stopping you? Him?' and he pointed to the guard, 'Don't be scared of him, I will hit him, and you come with me.', until he made me cry and subsequently made the guards cry.

### **Describe to us the final moments of your farewell. How were they?**

The asked us to pay the final visit to him, before the carrying out of the sentence, so I took Ahmad and Sumayyah with me. I prepared for him good food, and we went to see him, but they refused to let me take the food in. They kept taking us into a tent to wait for some time, then taking us to another, until we had been into four tents, and in the end the guards brought him, dragging him in a derogatory manner, and 'threw' him in front of us inside the tent. And Muhammad would say: 'I don't know what to be regretful over? They want me to put forward an apology and regret over what I have done, but what have I done to be regretful over?'

And when I asked the officer to bring in the food, and he refused, Muhammad said to me: "Don't tire yourself, and waste the time that we can spend together. If they bring the food in, then they will insist that I eat now, and I am fasting." Ahmad went and sat on his father's lap and kept crying saying: "The boys keep saying to me, you whose father wanted to kill Abdul-Nasser". So the shaheed replied to him: "The scales today are reversed, and they will not be corrected today, indeed: 'We Shall set up the Scales of Justice for the Day of Judgment.'

He advised me to good with the children, and I advised him to good with himself, and the visit ended. On the morning of 29th of August 1966, at [number missing] in the morning, the radio broadcast the news that the sentence had been carried out on the three Martyrs. And I was preparing breakfast at the time, so I kept saying 'Inna lillaahi wa innaa ilayhi raaji'oon', and seeking forgiveness, with my tears not stopping, while no-one was aware of my situation. The murderers were not content with this, and sent for me, and made me sign acceptance that there would not be a janaazah (funeral prayer) for him, and they gave me his things

but Ahmad's Mushaf (Qur'an) was not amongst them.

**This great faithfulness to the shaheed and his da`wah. How did it grow in you and what were its reasons?**

He (may Allah have mercy on him), was of kind manners. One of his most important attributes was his generosity. The helper who used to work for him, once complained to me after the Aqd (marriage contract), that he did not eat from the food that she would prepare, because his house was always open to the brothers who were students, away from home or in hardship. Whether he was there or not, they would come in and eat, wear whatever of his clothes they wished and sometimes take his money, then he would come back and eat cheese and halaawah from the grocers.

Similarly Ithaar [preference of others]. He would not accept at all that there could be a misunderstanding between him and his brothers. Just as he was clean in body and manners. He would make ghusl more than five times a day apart from wudoo'.

Your relationship with the shaheed husband strengthened despite the short time you spent together, so how did you discover these good characteristics in him?

His letters from prison were Tarbiyah [educative] lessons in Aaqeedah [belief], Imaan [faith], Sabr [patience], and Istiqamaah [steadfastness]. They were a provision for me on this path, and here are some examples:

On Eed-ul-fitr he sent a letter saying: 'Eed would come to the sahaabah, and the honourable of them had been martyred, the loved of them had been lost, and they would have been tested in their spouses, parents and children. But all of this would not dampen the happiness of `eed in their souls. In fact this was the real meaning of `eed, effort, work, and sacrifice. So we, with what we are in, are the most rightful of people to celebrate `eed, and the most real in our happiness for what Allah has given us, and for our knowing Him. And to have thankfulness to Allah for it, on this great day. We now taste this deen, and feel it, and we find it in our khalajaat, fresh and soft just like the day it was revealed, alive and beating in our hearts and our blood mixing with it.'

Just as he was gentle in feelings, he would place his hand on the place of pain, and would nurse it with softness, and gentle medicine. He says in another letter;

"It is hard on me, while I spend these moments with you, to see on you the signs of struggle and the indications of tiredness, and it is as if the journey has been long, and the hardships heavy. And I do not deny the hardships on this path, and I do not claim that I do not feel its difficulty, for indeed I am a weak human. Except that I feel, and I would like you to feel with me, that on either side of this long path, are oases with shade, that passers-by can relax in, if they tire, and in whose shade travellers can rest whenever the toils of travel take their toll. So would you like that we turn to one of these oases, perhaps we may find in it cool and calm? Then we can take from it water and food, which will help us continue our journey, and finish our travel?"

And here is what he wrote in a copy of the Book of Allah Almighty which he gave to me as a present:

"In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful,

To you. To you my wife.

To you O sister in creed.

To you O partner in Jihad.

To you O calmness of the soul and mother of the child.

To you O flower of the heart. To you this great book, upon whose law Allah brought us together as spouses, through which He gathered us as brothers, and in whose path He made us in the ranks of the believers two soldiers.

To you my beloved this grand book, in appreciation, love and faithfulness from your husband. Lest Allah may bring me back to you, and gather us under His aim.

And peace be upon you, and mercy from Allah, and His blessings, and all praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

12th Shawwaal 1383

Aside from these soft letters, did you hear anything about his life in

prison?

Yes, I heard a lot from his brothers speaking about him. One of the brothers had asked him which season was his favourite, and he replied: 'Autumn, as the falling of the leaves reminds me of the end of one's allotted time.'

He also saw the Prophet T more than once, and Yusuf (as) and `Eesaa (as), and he would have true visions. He informed one of his brothers that once in a moment of unconsciousness during his sujood [prostration] during the night, that the cells were opened for them to leave and men from the security services was put in them, and this happened after 1967. And he saw himself with a group of the sahaabah (companions), giving bay`ah (oath of allegiance) to the Prophet T, and when his turn came, to give bay`ah, he said: "Oh Messenger of Allah, have we changed things after you? Have we replaced things after you?" So he replied: "No, but you are trustworthy, trustworthy, trustworthy."

His brothers say that if he would become very tired in the queues he would say: 'Yes my Lord, how gentle you are.' And if they spoke about torture in front of him, he would reply:

(...then leave them in their wasteful discourse and trifling) (Al-An`aam:91)

And if they discussed with him the expectations of sentences, he would say: "Indeed these do not judge, and for Allah is judgment, and Allah does not judge except by the truth and those who they call upon beside him, do not judge by anything. What are we and they while in the qabd [literal: grasp] of Allah like an atom? If Allah sees us as worthy of Martyrdom, He will choose us for it, and if not, then Allah's qadar will pass us and them."

### **We spoke about his visions, so what of your visions of him?**

After his Martyrdom, I saw myself in the village in which his sister lives, standing behind her house and in front of me, the field extending with no end, as if I was lost. Then a great bird came over the fields, and it was huge in size, then I saw it again, standing on a pole that reached into the sky, and between its feet, my son Ahmad, standing, and pointing me to a

path, the end of which I could not see. On it were marching lines of the Ikhwaan, so I went to look at the situation, and I saw the moon, extremely huge, and very bright, at the end of this path.

And after his Martyrdom also, his father went to hajj, and when he returned, I called him to come and lighten the sadness of the children because of the leaving of their father, and I called his other children and grandchildren. But I found him completely ignoring my children and taking interest in the others, and I saw the sadness on the face of my daughter Sumayyah, and I was depressed and unhappy all day. So I slept while I was sad for her, then I saw the shaheed Muhammad bend over next to the bed and say:

"Don't be sad, I accept your right."

### **You said that Ahmad's Mushaf (Qur'an) has a story so what is it?**

When they imprisoned him in 1965, and he took the mushaf [Qur'an] with him, I did not find it in the belongings after his Martyrdom. And after twenty years, while we were in Madeenah, in the house of my daughter and her husband, I saw it on the shelves, so I asked my daughter's husband where he got this mushaf from so he said that during his being in the haram, a woman heard his brothers calling him, so she went to him, and said: 'Are you so and so?', do he replied in the affirmative. She said: 'Then wait for me and do not leave until I give you a trust.' Then she informed him that her husband had given her this mushaf that he had taken from the shaheed and told her to take it to his relatives. And that this mushaf had been to France, London and Saudi Arabia, until it eventually reached us 20 years later. And I do not expect that Allah Almighty had fulfilled the promise of the shaheed.

### **If I asked you to send him a letter today, what would you write?**

I pray to Allah Almighty that I am still upon the covenant, and have not changed after you, and that you are now in the levels of the Shuhadaa [Martyrs] and Sideeqeen [Truthful], and that Allah Almighty gathers me with you: (They and their wives in groves of shade, reclining on thrones) (Surah Yaa-Seen:56).

Taken from Ad-Da'wah Issue 109, Muharram 1422  
([www.cageprisoners.com](http://www.cageprisoners.com))

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*Ash hadu an laa illaaha illa anta astaghfiruka, wa atoobu ilayk. (We bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone, and we seek His forgiveness and all success comes from Him.)*

All the Praise is for Allah, and the salat (prayers) and salam (peace) be upon His final Messenger, Muhammad, and all who follow him until the final Day.