

Khalid Hashmi: Hope and Light

Allah Almighty created human beings as the noblest of creations, blessed them with a beautiful appearance, adorned their bodies with all necessary parts in perfect harmony, and maintained a balance and moderation among them. Because of these God-given qualities, seemingly weak humans possess the courage to reach for the stars and perform such remarkable feats that leave the human intellect astounded. Life is another name for ups and downs, highs and lows, rises and falls. Sometimes, an sudden, extraordinary accident occurs in human life, completely turning the entire scenery of the path of life upside down. In such moments, the footing of even the most courageous individuals falters, and their lives derail to the point where they see no direction left at all. However, there are a few high-spirited and courageous individuals who do not let such sudden life accidents overpower them. Even in the most difficult and unfavorable conditions, they have the grit and courage to carve out their own path. Amjad Siddiqi is one such individual whose smiling, cheerful life completely transformed decades ago due to traffic accidents. A mountain of calamities, difficulties, and sorrows crashed down upon him, and even close friends left him during those testing times. Yet, Amjad Siddiqi had firm and complete faith in Allah, and he never despaired of His mercy. Despite being paralyzed, Amjad Siddiqi did not leave himself at the mercy of others. Instead, he preferred to carry his own weight, which was an extremely difficult task. This was a severe and harsh trial of his self-confidence, courage, patience, and endurance. Because an entire lifetime lay ahead, he could have spent the rest of his life relying on his disability and becoming dependent on others. However, he was the practical embodiment of this couplet by Hafeez Jalandhari: Take me to the middle of the whirlpool, take me! What is this walking along the mere shores? Do not worry about me, or what is mine, For I am well-accustomed to the storms. What difficulties and obstacles he faced during these four decades have been beautifully described in his autobiography, *Unyielding Spirit*. In it, he has brilliantly captured the finest details of life and human psychology. He is a responsible father and a productive citizen of society who manages and resolves all matters of life, big and small, by himself. *Unyielding Spirit* serves as a shining destination and a metaphor of hope for individuals who are despondent, disheartened, and lacking self-confidence. I am certain that after reading this book or meeting Amjad Siddiqi, such people will return to a life adorned with color and light. Undoubtedly, Amjad Siddiqi is a mirror to our society, in which not only disabled individuals but also those who are hopeless, discouraged, and defeated can easily find the path to a meaningful life under the glowing light of hope. In conclusion, I salute Amjad Siddiqi's high spirits, self-confidence, patience, courage, and endurance. I sincerely hope that his autobiography, *Unyielding Spirit*, will open new windows and horizons of life for the readers.

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