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# RADIANT REALITY

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*Allah's are the excellent names;  
so call on Him thereby.  
(7:180)*

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# RADIANT REALITY

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*This magazine is dedicated to the greatest and the last Prophet Sayyidna Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) on whom the Prophethood got ended and sealed forever.  
Let us all follow him with utmost spirit.*

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## EDITORIAL

*All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted*

# Better, Try to See the Light

Modern day Christianity and Judaism have been through a series of "reformation" processes. Over the centuries tens of thousands of "reformed churches" and "reformed synagogues" have been established throughout Europe and America. Many see this revision and update as a continuous process.

So, why not Islam?

This question is a perplexing one for those looking at Islam from the outside. Unfortunately for many, it brings rage rather than reflection. Some are driven to do whatever it takes to make it happen. It is a measure of the intensity of such desire that, today, any ignoramus with a Muslim sounding name can become instant celebrity by declaring that Qur'an needs to be updated or Shariah needs to be rethought. In fact during the Satanic Verses affairs, when the entire Muslim world had been outraged by the support for pure filth shown by all sorts of pundits, many of these "experts" were secretly thrilled that the moment had arrived. A professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Southern California informed the Los Angeles Times readers at that time that the big question the Muslim world was debating was: "Who had really authored the Qur'an."

Such psychotic scholarship has also been enlisted in all kinds of research projects as well as in secret plans by the U.N. and big powers to find ways of bringing "reform" to Islam. Some come disguised as friends. They appear to ap-

plaud Islam's teachings on tolerance and compassion. Islam does preach tolerance for those outside its boundaries. At the same time it is also very sensitive about its own boundaries and would not allow them to be blurred in a haze of tolerance. Some point to the principles of Ijtihad in Islam. But they fail to realize that Ijtihad does not mean second-guessing the Qur'an, Sunnah or consensus of the companions. Then there are those who resort to ridiculing Muslims for lagging behind the times. When all else fails, they may simply try to order an abrogation of Shariah, as the U.N. is trying to do now under the banner of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Wasted efforts, all!

Their fight is with the Qur'an and they only need to turn to the Qur'an to get a response. Here it is, loud and clear: *"But when Our clear revelations are recited unto them, they who look not for the meeting with Us, say: 'Bring us a Qur'an other than this, or change it.' Say (O Muhammad): It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I can only follow that which is revealed unto me. Lo! If I disobey my Lord I fear the retribution of an awful Day."* [Yunus 10:15]

If Qur'an could have been changed by worldly powers, it would have been changed long time ago. If it could be made controversial by secretly publishing and distributing corrupt versions, that would have been already done. But not an iota has changed in the

Book that was revealed 1400 years ago. It is the only revealed book in the world that exists in the original language of its revelation. And if all the printed copies of it were to be destroyed today, the Book would remain for it is the only Book in the world that is memorized from cover to cover by millions upon millions of people.

And it is the only revealed book that begins with this claim:

*"This is the Scripture whereof there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off evil."*[Albaqarah 2:2]

There is no doubt that it is the Word of Allah. No doubt that it contains the ultimate truth. No doubt that it was sent through the last Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) of Allah who also explained what it means. No doubt that all success and happiness and bliss lies in faithfully following its commands and all failure and sorrow and misery lies in rejecting it.

You either believe in this statement or you do not. There is no third option.

A Muslim, by definition, is the person who attests to the truth of this statement. He has received Allah's Word through Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and he, by force of conviction, submits to this revealed truth. In fact, he stands as a witness to the mankind to the truth of this message.

This witnessing is not meant to convert others, but only to deliver the Message, as a trust from Allah. The Message has been preserved precisely because no one is allowed to change it to make it attractive to the would be believers. Muslims do not do in Rome as the Romans do, because then they will have Islam no more. They rise above their sur-

roundings by submitting to the Word of Allah and invite the whole world to the same. Those who accept it do it for their own good; those who reject it do so at their own peril.

So, why is there no "reform" movement in Islam ala Christianity or Judaism? Because the latter lost their scriptures, Islam did not. Words of man replaced the words of God in their scriptures making the whole thing fallible. One can find hundreds of statements in the Bible that can be tested and found untrue. Or statements that contradict each other. There is not a single such instance in the Qur'an, and there will never be. Islam was never deformed that it should need reform. It is not dated that it should need to be updated. Its message is as true today as it was yesterday. All of its commands are as life giving today as they were yesterday and they will be tomorrow. It remains as the eternal beacon of light as humanity jumps from one extreme to the other in its ignorance.

Right and wrong are eternal. Definitions of good and evil have to be constant. Otherwise, they will lose all meaning. In a world of shifting standards of good, there is no good. It is a great blessing for humanity that Islam provides that constant.

If the entire world agrees that homosexuality is ok, Islam will still call it a great abomination. If the entire world agrees to destroy the institution of family, Islam will still be there to uphold it. If the entire world agrees that sickness is health and health is sickness, Islam will still be there to remove the confusion and safeguard health. You cannot ban light and legislate darkness. Better, try to see the light yourself.

# Question Answer

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## Question

Is it better to read from the Mushaf or from Memory?

## Answer

Just as how the Qur'an is an act of worship, to look at the Mushaf is also an act of worship. Therefore, if one looks in the Mushaf and recites the Qur'an he will get double reward.

If a person is a Hafiz, he should endeavour to preserve his Hifz by reciting by memory. Reciting by memory to preserve is ones Hifz is also an act of worship.

*Ml. Saleem Khan*

## Question

A popular speaker said that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) never said *Ummati...Ummati...Ummati* in the last word before he left this world?

Also, he said it is not recommended to say *Karram Allahu Wajhahu* after the name of Sayyidna Ali (RA).

## Answer

It is proven through authentic narrations that the last statement uttered by Rasulullah (Sallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam) was (translation):

*"O Allah! (With) the highest companion".*

There is a narration that states that the following statement was from among the final words of Rasulullah (Sallahu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam),

*"(Be punctual on) Salat (Be punctual on)*

*Salat and fear Allah regarding those whom your right hands own (slaves)".*

Scholars have reconciled between the two narrations saying that the first narration was the final statement uttered in general and the second narration was the final statement made to the Sahabah. As for the narration you refer to, we have not come across such a narration. However, there are narration that mention that Rasulullah will say *Ummati Ummati* on the day of Qiyamah.

Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi has mentioned that regarding Ali (RA) the Khawarij used to say '*Sawwadallahu Wajhahu*' i.e., 'May Allah blacken his face', so in retaliation the Ahlus Sunnah Wa al-Jama'ah began saying '*Karram Allahu Wajhahu*', 'May Allah honor his face'. Moreover, many scholars of the Ahlus Sunnah Wa al-Jama'ah have used this term for Ali (RA). Therefore, to say that it is not recommended is incorrect.

*Ml. Muntasir Zaman*

## Question

During an argument I said to my husband that I divorce him. He wants to know if we are married or divorced.

## Answer

Sharia has given the right of talaq to a husband, not to a wife. The statement in reference does not constitute talaq.

*Ml. Immad Ibn Arshad*

**Question**

I am 18 years old and I had my last period in March. Since then I have not come on at all but a few days ago I noticed some brown discharge, and, thinking that I had started my haidh, I stopped praying salaah. This discharge was very less and it could only be noticed when going to the bathroom- apart from that the pad is completely clean. The discharge still comes but it is still very less. I would like to ask if this counts as being on haidh or not, and shall I start praying my salaah again?

**Answer**

In principle, if a woman sees a discharge of any color other than clear or pure white, it will be regarded as menstrual blood and accordingly, will take the ruling of normal blood. These colors may include (but are not limited to) the following: red, black, green, yellow, black, beige, tan, and brown. Hence, brown discharge, regardless of the amount is regarded as hayd. Furthermore, only the initial color of the discharge is considered. If the discharge changes color after being exposed for a while, the change in color is not considered. For example, if the discharge comes out clear or white, but upon drying up turns yellow, then the yellow color is not considered. Similarly, if the discharge comes out yellow, but upon drying up turns white, then the white color is not considered; rather, we will go by the initial color, which is clear or white in the first scenario and yellow in the latter scenario.

Since almost two months have passed since your last period, this discharge will be regarded as a part of your hayd. Hence, you should refrain from praying salah until your menstrual cycle

is complete.

*Ml. Bilal Mohammad*

**Question**

Is it permissible for women to recite the Quran or memorise it from the ipad or phone during her Periods?

**Answer**

In principle, a woman in hayd (menstruation) is not permitted to recite the Qur'an whether from memory, using a copy of the Qur'an or an electronic device. This prohibition is clearly stated in a hadith. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated:

*A woman who is her haid (menstruation) and a person who is in the state of janabat (major impurity) should not recite anything from Qur'an.*

However, it is permissible for a woman in menstruation to engage in dhikr and du'a'. As such, she may recite those verses of the Qur'an which are in the context of a du'a', such as Surah Fati-hah, Ayat al-Kursi, etc. However, the intention should be of du'a' and not to recite the Qur'an.

**Question**

Is using tasbeeh is bidah & is this imitation of Christianity?

Is giving tasbeeh as a hadiyah permissible in islam?

**Answer**

It is permissible to use a "tasbih" or "subhah" in order to aid oneself in performing dhikr. A tasbih helps in performing dhikr in two ways:

By holding it in the hand or seeing it, one is encouraged and reminded to perform dhikr. This is why it is also known as a "mudhakkir" (reminder). It also helps one keep count.

Using beads or stones to help one

with dhikr is supported by hadiths. Imams Abu Dawud and al-Tirmidhi narrated in their collections on the authority of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas (RA) that together with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) he came upon a woman with date stones or pebbles before her, with which she was reciting tasbih. The narration continued, but does not state Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) reprimanded her or disapproved of what she was doing. Imam al-Tirmidhi and Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani graded the chain of narration hasan. This offers proof that taking assistance from something to help one to keep count of his dhikr is permissible.

Hence, if one uses tasbih for this purpose it will not be bid'ah. However, there should be no belief attached to the tasbih that it has intrinsic virtue or the one who recites dhikr using it is superior to one who does not.

The great scholars, Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 911 H) and 'Abd al-Hayy al-Laknawi (d. 1304 H), have both authored treatises showing the permissibility of using a tasbih.

It is permissible to give a tasbih as hadiyyah.

*Ml. Zameelur Rahman*

### Question

Is the 40 days after you give birth a tradition or islamic?

### Answer

It is not compulsory upon women to stay in house for forty days specifically after giving birth. The tradition to remain in house after birth is due to health reasons and is not an obligation of Shari'ah.

*Ml. Zakariya*

### Question

My father has sold a land to a person, say for 1 million in 2010. The person has not paid the amount due yet. Does my father have to pay zakaat on that amount owed (Rs 1m) ? How much does he need to pay each year on that amount?

Please treat this as urgent as zakaat has not been paid and this question came to our minds lately.

### Answer

Zakat becomes compulsory (fardh) based on every individual's personal financial condition. In principle, if one does not possess the Nisaab (quantum) of Zakaat or one's liabilities exceed one's assets, then one is not obligated to pay Zakaat.

Debts receivables are treated as one's potential wealth and regarded as a strong debt as one is certain of receiving payment of such a debt.

Zakat on strong debts is governed by the following laws:

- a. At the time of calculating zakat if the debt is not received then zakat is not obligatory on that debt.
- b. Once the payment of the debts is one-fifth or more of the nisab then zakat becomes due on that amount received. The zakat will be calculated for the present year as well as the previous years.
- c. If someone receives the complete debt in a lump sum, then zakat will be paid on the whole amount for that year and the previous years.
- d. It is permissible to discharge zakat on debt receivables before the zakat becomes due on it. In essence, if one pays 2.5% on the debt receivable every year before receiving payments, then one would not have to pay zakat for the past

years upon receiving the final payment.

e. If the credit extended becomes a bad debt (i.e., there is no hope of receiving it) then there is no zakat wajib on such debt. However if the debt has been recovered after losing hope of recovering the debt, then Zakaat will only be applicable on the year one recovered the debt.

*Mufti Ismail*

### Question

I take bus to commute for work. I find prayer time in bus. Can I pray in the moving bus. If I don't do, I am afraid will miss my prayer and the prayer time will be gone. I don't want to miss my prayer so perform with sign while sitting on the seat. Is this permissible. Pls. advise.

### Answer

In principle, it is not permissible to perform Fardh salah while traveling on a conveyance. However, if a person fears that the time of salah will pass out; he should perform it while on the conveyance and thereafter repeat the salah.

*Ml. Asim*

### Question

I would like to ask you a Masala: Are you allowed to pass in front of the children's saffs (row), in the masjid?

### Answer

It is permissible to pass in front of the children's row during congregational salah only if one does so to fill in a space in the front.

*Mufti Ismail*

### Question

If a person keeps a residential plot with no defined intention whether it could be used for living in future by himself/family or whether to be sold at a good price if need arises; will zakaat be

payable on such property?

### Answer

If a person purchased a land with no defined intention, it is not considered as stock in trade. Zakaat is not payable on such property.

*Mufti Ismail*

### Question

I am a student of Engg. I have got some interest money from my saving bank accounts as well as from my father's account. But Due to not practicing Islam my father do not know how to use this interest money as well as I cannot make him understand at this stage. What should I do? How the money can be used?

### Answer

Interest moneys accrued from the bank should be disposed by giving them to the poor and needy without the intention of receiving any reward. The measure of poor and needy will be a legitimate recipient of Zakaat. It is also advisable to use such moneys to uplift needy Muslims.

Interest money can also be given to one's poor relatives who are entitled to receive Zakaat.

Interest money cannot be used for one's personal expenses.

You state that your father's account accrues interest and you find it difficult to make him, understand what to do with the money.

We advise you to procure material on the prohibition of interest and usury and present that to your father or even place them in your home within full view of your father. We advise you to move your interest based savings account to a Shariah Compliant savings account if available and inform your father of your



decision. This may encourage your father to do so likewise. You may also consult with an Alim/senior pious person of your community to discuss the matter with your father after you have exhausted all avenues in personally approaching and convincing your father.

*Mufti Ismail*

### Question

I would like to know is there any share of wife and children in husband's regular monthly or annual income? Do we have the right to ask husband some money for our personal needs so as to facilitate daily living so as to ease our daily life or for saving purpose?

### Answer

It is compulsory upon a man to provide shelter, food and clothing for his children and spouse according to his financial means. It is an honor for a man and in fact an act of virtue to make his dependents comfortable, within the limitations of Shar'iah. This includes offering them money to fulfill their own personal needs. It is also an honor for a woman to consider the financial constraints of her husband and exercise restraint by not making undue financial demands on him. Her restraint will also be an act of virtue and reward.

*Ml. Abdullah*

### Question

Are Muslims allowed to eat turtle meat since they live in sea water and land also?

### Answer

According to Shariah, it is not permissible for one to consume reptiles. A turtle is a reptile from the Order Chelonnii or Testudines.[2] Therefore, it will be impermissible for one to consume tur-

tle meat.

*Mufti Ismail*

### Question

A certain aalim mentioned in a bayaan that after 120 days the rooh is blown in the foetus, after the bayan a brother approached the aalim and told him that he had heard from a sheikh that after 40 days this procedure takes place.

### Answer

The blowing of the rooh (soul) into the foetus has been mentioned in a number of hadiths.

Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "(The matter of the Creation of) a human being is put together in the womb of the mother in forty days, and then he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and then a piece of flesh for a similar period. Then Allah sends an angel who is ordered to write four things. He is ordered to write down his (i.e. the new creature's) deeds, his livelihood, his (date of) death, and whether he will be blessed or wretched (in religion). Then the soul is breathed into him. So, a man amongst you may do (good deeds till there is only a cubit between him and Paradise and then what has been written for him decides his behavior and he starts doing (evil) deeds characteristic of the people of the (Hell) Fire. And similarly a man amongst you may do (evil) deeds till there is only a cubit between him and the (Hell) Fire, and then what has been written for him decides his behavior, and he starts doing deeds characteristic of the people of Paradise." Sahih al-Bukhari

In the above mentioned Hadith, it states that the Rooh is blown into the fetus after 120 days. However there are other hadiths that state the Rooh is en-

tered after 40 days:

Usaid al-Ghifari (RA) said: I listened with these two ears of mine Allahs Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as saying: The semen stays in the womb for forty nights, then the angel, gives it a shape. Zubair said: I think that he said: One who fashions that and decides whether he would be male or female. Then he (the angel) says: Would his limbs be full or imperfect? And then the Lord makes them full and perfect or otherwise as He desires. Then he says: My Lord, what about his livelihood, and his death and what about his disposition? And then the Lord decides about his misfortune and fortune. (Sahih Muslim)

However, the Fuqahaa (jurists) have agreed that the actual time of the Rooh being blown into the foetus is after 120 days.

*Ml. Arshad Ali*

### Question

I would like to ask that when anyone goes to the graveyard what should we do, can we recite Quran and can we speak to the grave and should a person be in wudu. Also is it permissible to take flowers and what else good deed can a person do at the grave?

### Answer

One may visit the graveyard anytime. However, it is preferable for one to visit the graveyard on a Friday and in a state of purity. If one is in the state of janabah (major impurity) when visiting the graveyard, it will not be permissible to recite Quran in that state, even if one is not touching the Quran. However, it will still be permissible to visit the graveyard and make dua, etc.

When one enters the graveyard he should first send peace and salutations to

the dwellers of the graves by saying:

السلام عليكم دار قوم مؤمنين ، وإنا إن شاء الله بكم  
لاحقون

Then one should recite from the Holy Quran, preferably Sura Yasin. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam) has said in a hadith:

*"Whoever enters the graveyard and reads Sura Yasin, Allah will lighten the punishment at that time, and the recital is rewarded according to the amount of people there."*

*(Sharh As-Sudur Fi Ahwal al-Mawta Wal Qubur Li Suyuti)*

However, if this is difficult then one may read another portion which is easier for him, preferably the following:

- Surah Al-Fatihah and the beginning part of Surah Al-Baqarah up to the end of the fifth ayah.
- Ayat-ul-Kursi
- Last ruku' of Surah Al-Baqarah.
- Surah Al-Mulk
- Surah Al-Takathur
- Sura Al-Ikhlash three, seven, eleven, or twelve times.

After recitation of the Holy Quran is complete, one should then ask Allah to send the reward of the recitation upon the people of the graves. One may also make dua to Allah for the deceased while visiting the graveyard.

Placing flowers on graves has no basis in Shari'ah. This is the practice of non-believers to express their gratitude to their deceased. One should do Ibadah on behalf of the deceased and ask Allah to send the reward to them. One may also spend money in charity on behalf of the deceased. These acts will be rewarding and beneficial to the people of the grave.

*Ml. Asif Umar,*

# Lesson From The Qur'an

*“And when He made them appear as few in your eyes when you met them in the battle just as He lessened you in their eyes, so that God might accomplish a thing that He had already decreed.” (Al-Anfāl 8:44)*

The incident mentioned in the verse happened in the Battle of Badr as well. The great majority of those who fought in the lines of Muslims had not participated in a serious battle until that time. Moreover, we should not disregard the fact that when the Muslims left Madīnah, their intention was not fighting but pursuing the caravan which was full of their assets seized by the polytheist Makkans. If the Muslims had seen the other side with all their actual forces, instead of seeing them “as few,” they would have worried and panicked. However, when they came face to face with an unavoidable situation after the battle began, God showed the Muslims the actual conditions of unbelievers so that they might rely on God and take refuge in Him. If they had continued to see them as fewer than their actual numbers, they would have shown neglect and acted carelessly, without even considering that it is always God Who would bestow victory. For human beings tend to act obliviously of God’s grace and help at the time of ease and softness.

There is another point worth mentioning: the angels who were sent to

help the Muslims in the Battle of Badr did not fight like the human fighters, nor did they use swords or kill any unbelievers. They came only to disappoint and frustrate the enemy side and to add to the spiritual power of Muslims. If the angels had fought in the battle, the veil of causality over events would have been rent to a certain extent, the Muslim warriors would not have gained the designation of ghāzī, or warrior in God’s cause, and everybody would have been in expectation of God’s help in any affairs whereas God’s help comes veiled or in an indistinct form in this world of testing and trial.

Indeed, it was the first grace and help of God in the Battle of Badr that He made the unbelievers appear as few in believers’ eyes. By doing so, God preserved some of the inexperienced believers from intimidation before the fighting began and encouraged them to fight. Another help of God to Muslims was that the enemy army saw the Muslims as fewer as well, which caused them to be disdainful of the force of the Muslims and act indifferently. As a result, God bestowed a decisive victory on the Muslims and also caused them to gain great

reward. It was when the fighting began and the Muslims found themselves in the middle of fighting that the two sides saw the actual power of the other side. The Divine Will had put Its decree in force, and whatever God willed did occur. The Muslims were on their way to triumph through God's help and grace

along with their valor and heroic fighting under the eminent command of God's Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings, while the aggressive unbelievers and transgressors were brought to ruin, deprived of every sort of support and succor, falling down to the hollow of their inevitable end.

### *The story of the rose sent to the caliph Harun Rashid*

*There is a story that Charlemagne sent a most perfect rose as a gift to the caliph Harun Rashid.*

*He gave it to his gardener and told him to plant it with great care and as soon as the first rose came from it to bring it to him. The gardener carefully planted the rose in a beautiful part of the garden.*

*The next day a crow came and ate the rose. Trembling, the gardener told the news to Harun Rashid. He told the gardener not to worry for the punishment of the crow will be the same as that of the rose.*

*A few days later a snake came upon the crow and killed him. The gardener told the news to the caliph who again told him that the fate of the snake will be the same as the crow.*

*The next day the gardener was working in the garden when he spotted the snake. He picked up an axe and killed the snake. The caliph told him that his fate would be the same.*

*As it happened the gardener did something wrong and was thrown in jail. The day he was to be hanged he requested to see Harun Rashid.*

*He reminded the caliph of the rose, the crow and the snake and said that if the caliph would show forgiveness toward him, then he would save himself from a like fate.*

# Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

## *The Book of Tayammum*

**Chapter 5 : Tayammum is (only) for face and hands.**

*in a detachment and became Junub and I blew the dust off my hands (performed the rolling over the earth and prayed.)"*

### **Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab**

Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Delhi (RA) says:

*"The author here agrees with Ashaab-u-Zawaahir and some Mujtahideen who believe that the Tayammum is only for face and hands and it is not a must to include the elbows as against the opinion of the majority".*

### **Hadith No. 331**

**Narrated Said bin 'Abdur Rahman bin Abza (RA)**

*"On the authority of his father who said) 'Ammar said so (the above Statement). And Shu'ba stroked lightly the earth with his hands and brought them close to his mouth (blew off the dust) and passed them over his face and then the backs of his hands. 'Ammar said, "Ablution (meaning Tayammum here) is sufficient for a Muslim if water is not available."*

### **Hadith No. 332**

**Narrated 'Abdur Rahman bin Abza (RA)**

*"that while he was in the company of 'Umar, 'Ammar said to 'Umar, "We were*

### **Hadith No. 333**

**Narrated 'Abdur Rahman bin Abza (RA)**

*'Ammar said to 'Umar "I rolled myself in the dust and came to the Prophet who said, 'Passing dusted hands over the face and the backs of the hands is sufficient for you.'*

### **Hadith No. 334**

**Narrated 'Ammar**

*as above.*

### **Hadith No. 335**

**Narrated 'Ammar (RA)**

*The Prophet stroked the earth with his hands and then passed them over his face and the backs of his hands (while demonstrating Tayammum).*

### **Comments**

It is the same narration of Abdur Rahman bin Abza (RA) which Imam Bukhari (RA) has quoted through different chains. Some Ulema say that here Imam Bukhari (RA) agrees with those who believe that to include elbows in Taya-

mmum is not a must as against the majority of Ulema who believe that the elbows are also to be included in it.

Allaama Sindhi says that this Hadith is just to communicate that the Tayammum for Gusul is similar to that of Wudu and one has to look at other Ahaadith to know whether the hands are to be struck only once or twice on earth and whether the elbows are to be included in Tayammum or not.

### **Chapter 6 : The clean dust is sufficient for a Muslim for Wudu and is an equivalent of water.**

And Hasan said that Tayammum remains valid till one gets some Hadath. Hadhrat Ibn Abbas led the congregation Salaah with Tayammum, Yahya bin Saeed says that there is no problem in offering Salaah on marshy or salty land and performing Tayammum with it.

### **Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab**

Allaama Ayni says:

*“The purpose of Imam Bukhari (RA) is to say that Tayammum is like Wudu, the way one can offer different Faraa'id (obligatory Ibaadah) and Nawaafil (optional Ibaadah) with a single Wudu, similarly these can be offered with a single Tayammum unless and until one does not get Hadath (which breaks Wudu) and our Ulema are the same opinion (i.e., the Hanafite school)”.*

Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Delhi (RA) says:

*“The purpose of Imam Bukhari (RA) in establishing this chapter is to prove that the earth or clay is equivalent to water when the later is not available (for Wudu), because one can offer as many Fardh or Nafl prayers as one wishes after performing Tayammum unless and until he*

*does not get any Hadath, as is the case with water and this is the opinion of Abu Haniefah as against the opinion of Imam Shafa'ee and others”.*

Ibn Hajr Asqalaani says:

*“And the author (Imam Bukhari (RA)) wants to make a point here that the Tayammum is equivalent to Wudu. If the ritual purity obtained with it would have been weaker then how could have Ibn Abbas (RA), who was with Tayammum, led those in Salaah who were with Wudu. In this issue Imam Bukhari (RA) is in agreement with the Ulema of Kofa and the majority”.*

### **With what type of clay is Tayammum permissible?**

There is difference of opinion amongst the jurists about this issue.

As per Imam Abu Haniefah (RA), Tayammum is permissible with all those things which are from the like of earth. The jurists say that 'the like of earth' are those things which do not catch fire on burining. As such, Tayammum is also permissible if the hands are rubbed on stones or walls etc.

As per Imam Maalik (RA), the Tayammum is only permissible with dust and nothing else.

As per Imam Shafa'ee (RA), what has been famously quoted from him, Tayammum is permissible from that type of earth which has the capability of growing plantation. (Aelaa-us-Sunan, Inaam-ul-Bari)

### **Hadith No. 336**

#### **Narrated 'Imran (RA)**

*Once we were traveling with the Prophet and we carried on traveling till the last part of the night and then we (halted at a*

place) and slept (deeply). There is nothing sweeter than sleep for a traveler in the last part of the night. So it was only the heat of the sun that made us to wake up and the first to wake up was so and so, then so and so and then so and so (the narrator 'Auf said that Abu Raja' had told him their names but he had forgotten them) and the fourth person to wake up was 'Umar bin Al-Khattab. And whenever the Prophet used to sleep, nobody would wake up him till he himself used to get up as we did not know what was happening (being revealed) to him in his sleep. So, 'Umar got up and saw the condition of the people, and he was a strict man, so he said, "Allahu Akbar" and raised his voice with Takbir, and kept on saying loudly till the Prophet got up because of it. When he got up, the people informed him about what had happened to them. He said, "There is no harm (or it will not be harmful). Depart!" So they departed from that place, and after covering some distance the Prophet stopped and asked for some water to perform the ablution. So he performed the ablution and the call for the prayer was pronounced and he led the people in prayer. After he finished from the prayer, he saw a man sitting aloof who had not prayed with the people. He asked, "O so and so! What has prevented you from praying with us?" He replied, "I am Junub and there is no water." The Prophet said, "Perform Tayammum with (clean) earth and that is sufficient for you."

Then the Prophet proceeded on and the people complained to him of thirst. Thereupon he got down and called a person (the narrator 'Auf added that Abu Raja' had named him but he had forgotten) and 'Ali, and ordered them to go and bring water. So they went in search of water

and met a woman who was sitting on her camel between two bags of water. They asked, "Where can we find water?" She replied, "I was there (at the place of water) this hour yesterday and my people are behind me." They requested her to accompany them. She asked, "Where?" They said, "To Allah's Apostle." She said, "Do you mean the man who is called the Sabi, (with a new religion)?" They replied, "Yes, the same person. So come along." They brought her to the Prophet and narrated the whole story. He said, "Help her to dismount." The Prophet asked for a pot, then he opened the mouths of the bags and poured some water into the pot. Then he closed the big openings of the bags and opened the small ones and the people were called upon to drink and water their animals. So they all watered their animals and they (too) all quenched their thirst and also gave water to others and last of all the Prophet gave a pot full of water to the person who was Junub and told him to pour it over his body. The woman was standing and watching all that what they were doing with her water. By Allah, when her water bags were returned these looked like as if they were more full (of water) than they had been before (Miracle of Allah's Apostle) Then the Prophet ordered us to collect something for her; so dates, flour and Sawiq were collected which amounted to a good meal that was put in a piece of cloth. She was helped to ride on her camel and that cloth full of food-stuff was also placed in front of her and then the Prophet said to her, "We have not taken your water but Allah has given water to us." She returned home late. Her relatives asked her: "O so and so what has delayed you?" She said, "A strange thing! Two men met me and took me to the man who is called the Sabi' and

*he did such and such a thing. By Allah, he is either the greatest magician between this and this (gesturing with her index and middle fingers raising them towards the sky indicating the heaven and the earth) or he is Allah's true Apostle." Afterwards the Muslims used to attack the pagans around her abode but never touched her village. One day she said to her people, "I think that these people leave you purposely. Have you got any inclination to Islam?" They obeyed her and all of them embraced Islam.*

*Abu 'Abdullah said: The word Saba'a means "The one who has deserted his old religion and embraced a new religion." Abul 'Ailya said, "The Sabis are a sect of people of the Scripture who recite the Book of Psalms."*

## Comments

### Lailat-ut-Ta'rees (ليلة التعريس)

Hadhrat Imraan bin Husain says that once they were with Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in a journey. It so happened that they including Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not wake up for Fajr Salaah and thus their Fajr Salah got delayed.

The night in which this incident took place is called "Lailat-ut-Ta'rees". *At-Tarees* means to camp somewhere during the last hours of night while traveling in order to take some rest.

It is reported in Sahih Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah (RA) that this incident took place while Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was returning from Gazwa-Khyber (the battle of Khyber).

Ibn Hajr (RA) seems to be of the opinion that such an incident has taken place more than once, most likely once in the journey of Tabuk and also during the

incident of Hudaibiya.

Allaama Kashmiri (RA) believes that this incident took place only during Gazwa-Khyber. (Faidhul Baari)

There is no accountability for one who misses Salaah due to the reasons beyond ones voluntary control like sleep etc., but if someone sleeps just before the time of Salaah, knowing that he wont be able to wake up quickly afterwards, it will not be considered involuntarily.

**"My eyes sleep and my Qalb does not sleep"** (إن عيني تنام و لا ينام قلبي)

This is a famous Hadith according to which only the blessed eyes of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) sleep and not his blessed Qalb. Here in the Hadith quoted above, a question arises why Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not get up at Fajr time thereby missing his Salah? The learned scholars have given different answers to this question, viz.,

1. Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was sent to educate mankind, so the Ummah had to be taught what they should do in case they miss their Salaah because of sleep. It was for this purpose that sleep was imposed upon Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) at Fajr time.

2. The Hadith says that the eyes sleep and not the Qalb. To feel the emergence of dawn is the work of eyes and not the Qalb.

*"His Qalb does not sleep as regards to the Divine inspiration since he receives inspiration even during the sleep".*

3. Some people say that Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not get up purposefully in order to teach the Ummah what they should do at such a situation.



# Islam, Humanity and Nature

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*Ali Unal*

Everyone talks so much about the danger of war and environment pollution that *peace* and *ecology* have become quite fashionable words. However, those who are expected to diagnose these problems wish to remove them through the further conquest and domination of nature.

This problem has arisen because the humanity-nature equilibrium has been destroyed by the modern materialistic conception of, and corrupt attitude toward, humanity and nature. Most people are reluctant to perceive that social peace and peace with nature is possible only through peace with the spiritual order. To be at peace with the earth one must be at peace with his or her heavenly self, and this is impossible if one is not at peace with Heaven.

The dangers caused by our domination of nature are well known, despite new measures taken to protect it. Nature is no longer considered sacred, as it was in the medieval era, and so has lost its meaning. The resulting void caused by the disappearance of this indispensable aspect of human existence continues to exist within our souls and manifests itself in many ways, sometimes violently and desperately.

This domination of nature is largely responsible for many problems, among them urban sprawl and conges-

tion, the exhaustion of natural resources, the destruction of natural beauty, and the abnormal rise in mental illnesses. This, together with giving our animalistic tendencies complete freedom, has made the problem of war so crucial.

Islam contains an elaborate hierarchy of knowledge integrated by the principle of Divine Unity (*tawhid*). This hierarchy includes juridical, social, and theological sciences, as well as spiritual and metaphysical ones, all of which derive their principles from the Qur'an. Elaborate philosophical, natural, and mathematical sciences, each originating from one of God's Beautiful Names, also developed.

For example, the Name the All-Healing shines on medicine; geometry and engineering depend on the Names the All-Just, All-Shaping, and All-Harmonizing; and philosophy reflects the Name the All-Wise. Each level of knowledge portrays nature in a particular light. Jurists and theologians consider knowledge to be the background for human action, philosophers and scientists see it as a domain to be analyzed and understood, and metaphysicians view it as the object of contemplation and the mirror reflecting supra-sensible realities.

Muslim scholars have no tradi-

tion of separating the study of nature from knowing God. Thus, many Muslim scientists, such as Ibn Sina, Nasiruddin at-Tusi, and Jabir ibn al-Hayyan, were also practicing Muslims with deep spiritual devotion. Muslims always have considered observing and contemplating nature very important aspects of their spiritual life.

Furthermore, Muslims have maintained an intimate connection between science and other fields of Islamic studies. This connection is found in the Qur'an itself, for as the Divine Scripture of Islam it corresponds to the macrocosmic revelation (the universe). Thus Islam is also the name of the Divine system of the universe. The Book of Islam is "the revealed and recorded Qur'an (*al-Qur'an at-tadwini*) and the entire universe is the "Qur'an of creation (*al-Qur'an at-takwini*)"

Humanity is also a Divine Book that corresponds to the Qur'an and the universe. Given this, *ayat* designates a Qur'anic verse, events taking place within our souls, and all phenomena occurring within nature. Human life is so interrelated with natural phenomena that those who can discern them can draw correct conclusions about human social life. In other words, the laws of history can be deduced from the laws of nature. For example:

*Your Lord is God, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days. He was then established on the Supreme Throne, covering day with night, which pursues it urgently—and the sun, moon, and stars subservient, by His command. Verily, His are the creation and the command.*

*Blessed be God, the Lord of all being. Call on your Lord, humbly and secretly. He loves not transgressors. Do not do cor-*

*ruption in the land after it has been set right. Call upon Him in awe and eagerly.*

*Surely the grace of God is nigh to the good-doers. It is He Who looses the winds, bearing good tidings before His grace, till, when they are charged with heavy clouds, We drive them to a dead land and use them to send down water and bring forth all fruits [from the soil]. Even so, We shall bring forth the dead.*

*Hopefully you will remember. And the good land's vegetation comes forth by the leave of its Lord, and the corrupt [land's vegetation] comes forth but scantily. Even so We turn about signs for a people who are thankful. (7:54—58)*

These verses apparently discuss natural phenomena yet mention the Resurrection and prayer's importance. Corruption in the land is forbidden, and we are told that God commands everything and has no partners either in creation or command. Thus, the main principles of faith (belief in God's Oneness and the Resurrection) are emphasized while we are reminded of our function or duty: as God's vicegerent, we are to pray, establish justice, and avoid corrupting and transgressing the Divine law.

Other inner meanings are hinted at. For example, day and night symbolize happy moments and misfortunes respectively, which alternate in both a person's and a nation's life. Rain, the symbol of Divine Grace, is mentioned as the grace of God, which is close to those who do good. The winds bearing the good tidings of rain correspond to the pioneers or leaders of a religious revival, and their message is likened to heavy clouds of rain.

Hearts without faith and minds without good judgment and sound reasoning resemble dead lands that need

rain to be made fruitful. Just as a fertile land's vegetation emerges by its Lord's leave, hearts and minds ready for the Divine Message are the sources from which faith, knowledge, and virtues radiate. However, there always will be some desert-like minds and hearts that do not receive enough rain to produce any vegetation and so do not benefit from this grace.

Finally, these verses console believers living as small oppressed minorities amidst a corrupt, wrong-doing community with the good tidings that victory is near as long as they keep striving for God's cause and seeking help in patience and prayer.

Thus Revelation is inseparable from the cosmic revelation, which is also a book of God. By refusing to separate humanity from nature, Islam preserves an integral view of the universe and sees the flow of Divine grace in the arteries of the cosmic and natural order. As we seek to transcend nature from its very bosom, nature can be an aid in this process, provided that we learn to contemplate it as a mirror reflecting a higher reality:

*In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of night and day there are signs for people with minds, who remember God and mention His Name, standing and sitting and on their sides, and reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth: "Our Lord, You have not created this for vanity. Glory be to You! Guard us against the punishment of the Fire." (3:190-91)*

Humanity is located at the axis and center of the cosmic milieu. By being taught the names of all things, we receive the keys to knowledge of all things and so gain dominion over them. However, we receive this power only in our

capacity of serving as God's vicegerent (*khalifa*) on the earth, not as a rebel against Heaven.

In fact, humanity is the channel of grace for nature, for our active participation in the spiritual world causes light to enter the world of nature. Due to our intimate connection with nature, our inner state is reflected in the external order. Thus, when our inner being turns to darkness and chaos, nature turns from harmony and beauty to disequilibrium and disorder. We see ourselves reflected in nature, and penetrate into nature's inner meaning by delving into our own inner depths. Those who live on the surface of their being can study nature as something to be manipulated and dominated, while those who turn toward the inner dimension of their existence can recognize nature as a symbol and come to understand it in the real sense.

This concept of humanity and nature, as well as the presence of a "metaphysical" doctrine and a hierarchy of knowledge, enabled Islam to develop many sciences that were influential in the West's own development of science and yet did not disturb Islam's intellectual edifice. Someone like Ibn Sina could be a physician and peripatetic philosopher and yet expound his "Oriental philosophy" that sought knowledge through illumination. A Nasiruddin at-Tusi could be the leading mathematician and astronomer of his day as well as the author of an outstanding treatise on Islamic spiritual life. Jabir ibn al-Hayyan's emphasis on Islamic spirituality did not prevent him from founding algebra and chemistry. And Ibn Jarir at-Tabari, one of the most outstanding figures in Islamic jurisprudence, history, and Qur'anic

*Cont'd on page 40*

# Sacrifices of the Sahaaba

*Mr. M. Yousuf Kandhlavi (ra)*

## **Hadhrat Abuzar Ghifari's (RA) Conversion to Islam**

Hadhrat Abuzar Ghifari (RA) is very famous among the Sahaabah for his piety and knowledge. Hadhrat Ali (RA) used to say: "Abuzar (RA) possesses such knowledge that other people are incapable of acquiring."

When he first got news of Nabi's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) mission, he appointed his brother to go to Makkah and make investigations regarding 'the person' who claimed to be the recipient of Divine revelation. His brother returned after the necessary enquiries and informed him that he found Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to be a man of good habits and excellent conduct and that his wonderful revelations were neither poetry nor magic. This report did not satisfy him, he therefore decided to set out for Makkah and find out the facts for himself. On reaching Makkah, he went straight to the Harm. As he did not know Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), he did not consider it advisable at that time, under the circumstances prevailing, to enquire about him from anybody. When it became dark, Hadhrat Ali (RA) noticed him and could not ignore him as he was a stranger. Hospitality and care for the travelers, the poor and the strangers was the Sahaabah's (RA) sec-

ond nature, he therefore took him to his place. Neither did he ask him about the purpose of his visit to Makkah, nor did Abuzar (RA) himself disclose it. Next day, he again went to the Haram and stayed there till nightfall without being able to learn who Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was. In fact everybody knew that Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and his companions were being persecuted in Makkah and Abuzar (RA) might have had doubts about the result of his quest for Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Hadhrat Ali (RA) again took him home for the night and once again did not have any talk with him about the purpose of his visit to the city. However, on the third night, after Hadhrat Ali (RA) had entertained him as on the two previous nights, he asked him: "Brother, what brings you to this town?" Before replying, Hadhrat Abuzar (RA) took an undertaking from Hadhrat Ali (RA) that he would speak the truth. He thereafter enquired from him about Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Hadhrat Ali (RA) replied: "He is verily the Nabi of Allah. You accompany me tomorrow and I shall take you to him, but you have to be very careful, in case the people come to know of your association with me, and you get into trouble. When on our way I sense some trouble, I shall get aside pre-

tending some necessity or adjusting my shoes, and you may proceed ahead without stopping so that the people may not connect us."

The next day, he followed Hadhrat Ali (RA), who took him before Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). In the very first meeting, he embraced Islam. Fearing that the Quraish might harm him, Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) enjoined upon him not to make an open declaration of his Islam and asked him to go back to his clan and return when the Muslims had gained the upper hand. Hadhrat Abuzar (RA) replied: "O, Nabi of Allah! By Him who is the master of my soul, I must go and recite the Kalimah in the midst of these unbelievers."

True to his word, he went straight to the Harm and right in the midst of the crowd, at the pitch of his voice, recited Shahadah viz:

*"I bear witness that there is no god save Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad J is the Nabi of Allah."*

People attacked him from all sides and would have beaten him to death if Abbas (Nabi's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) uncle, who had not till then embraced Islam) had not shielded him and saved him from death.

Abbas said to the mob: "Do you know who he is? He belongs to the Ghifar clan, who live on the way of our caravans to Syria. If he is killed, they will waylay us and we shall not be able to trade with that country."

This appealed to their common sense and they left him alone.

Hadhrat Abuzar (RA) repeated the Shahadaat the next day and would have surely been beaten to death by the crowd had not Abbas once again intervened and saved him for the second time.

The action of Hadhrat Abuzar (RA) was due to his extraordinary enthusiasm for proclaiming Kalimah among the disbelievers, and the prohibition by Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was due to the soft corner in his heart for Hadhrat Abuzar (RA), lest he be put to hardships that might prove too much for him. There is not the least shadow of disobedience in this episode. Since Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) himself was undergoing all sorts of hardships in spreading the message of Islam, Abuzar (RA) also thought it fit to follow his example rather than to avail of his permission to avoid danger. It was this spirit of Sahaabah (RA) that took them to the heights of material and spiritual progress. When a person once recited the Kalimah and entered the fold of Islam, no power on earth could turn him back and no oppression or tyranny could stop him from Tabligh.

### **The Afflictions of Hadhrat Khabbab ibnul Arat (RA)**

Hadhrat Khabbab (RA) is also one of those blessed persons who offered themselves for sacrifice and suffering for the cause of Allah. He was the sixth or seventh person to embrace Islam, and therefore, he suffered long. He was made to put on steel armor and lie in the sun to sweat and swelter. Very often he was made to lie flat on burning sand, which caused the flesh on his back to waste away.

He was the slave of a woman. When she came to know that he was visiting Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) she used to brand his head with a hot iron rod. Hadhrat 'Umar (RA) during his caliphate, once inquired from Hadhrat Khabbab (RA) about the details of his

sufferings after embracing Islam. He showed him his back, on seeing which Hadhrat 'Umar (RA) remarked, "I have never seen such a back before." He said, "My body was dragged over heaps of burning charcoal, and the blood and fat coming out of my back put out the fire." It is said that, when Islam spread and the Muslims conquered all the surrounding territory, he used to weep and say: "Allah seems to be compensating us in this world for all our sufferings and perhaps nothing would be left for us as reward in the Hereafter."

Hadhrat Khabbab (RA) narrates: "Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) once performed an unusually long rak'at while leading Salaah. When the Sahaabah mentioned it to him, he said, ' This was a Salaah of yearning and humility. I asked of three favours from Allah. I begged of Him: O Allah! Let not my Ummat perish by famine; let not my Ummat

be annihilated by an enemy gaining an upper hand on them; and let not my Ummat fight among themselves.' Allah granted the first two prayers, but not the third one."

Hadhrat Khabbab (RA) died in 37 A.H. He was the first of the Sahaabah to be buried at Koofah. Hadhrat Ali (RA) once passing his grave said: "May Allah bless and show mercy on Hadhrat Khabbab (RA). He embraced Islam willingly. He emigrated with great pleasure in Allah's path, and spent his whole life in striving and suffering for Islam. Blessed is the person who is mindful of the Day of Qiyaamah, prepares for his reckoning, remains contented with very little of this world and is able to please his Lord."

To be able to please Allah, was really the Sahaabah's greatest achievement, for this was the sole purpose of their life.

### The Carpenter

*A highly skilled carpenter who had grown old was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house building business and live a more leisurely life with his family. He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire.*

*The employer was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter agreed to this proposal but made sure that this will be his last project. Being in a mood to retire, the carpenter was not paying much attention to building this house. His heart was not in his work. He resorted to poor workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end his career.*

*When the job was done, the carpenter called his employer and showed him the house. The employer handed over some papers and the front door key to the carpenter and said "This is your house, my gift to you."*

*The carpenter was in a shock! What a shame! If he had only known that he was building his own house, he would have made it better than any other house that he ever built!*

*Our situation can be compared to this carpenter. Allah Ta'la has sent us to this world to build our homes in paradise by obeying His commands. Now, we have to decide how well we wish to build the homes where we will live forever.*

# Is Television Haram

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*Lakhdar O'Barret*

Even non-Muslim Americans are often amazed at Islam's ability to inspire reverts to give up harmful habits. Experts on the American prison system admit that conversion to Islam in prison is the single most powerful indicator of likely rehabilitation. Nothing else – no other religion, treatment program, vocational training, psychological counseling technique – comes close.

## **Reaching Deep Down**

As Malcolm X so eloquently put it:

Awareness came surging up in me – how deeply the religion of Islam reached down into the mind to lift me up, to save me from being what I inevitably would have been: a dead criminal in a grave, or, if still alive, a flint-hard, bitter, thirty-seven-year-old convict in some penitentiary, or insane asylum. (Autobiography, 287)

Though I have not done prison time, I can relate to Malcolm's words. I too was mired in destructive habits, living selfishly and on a road to destruction, when the guidance of Islam reached me, al-hamdulillah, and awakened me to the harmful nature of certain behaviors that I had always taken for granted.

## **Step One: Guidance on Khamr**

One of these behaviors, it should surprise no one to learn, was drinking

alcohol. Since I was neither an alcoholic nor an obvious problem drinker, I probably would never have realized the harm alcohol was doing to me had I not encountered the guidance of Islamic tradition, and, specifically, the Qur'anic verses that mention wine and intoxication.

As a non-conformist Irish American intellectual with a weakness for beer and wine, my first response to Islam's prohibition of alcohol was to try to find a way around it. I discovered verse 67 of Surat Al-Nahl, which describes beverages made from dates and grapes as signs of Allah, and verse 43 of Surat Al-Nisa', which seems to advise drinkers to wait until they sober up before they pray. (Obviously if you are praying five times each day, including awakening for Fajr, this does not leave much room for drinking – but misguided by the satan of my alcohol craving, I interpreted this verse to mean that alcohol itself was okay as long as you don't pray when you are drunk!).

But I found it harder to misinterpret Surat Al-Baqarah's ayah 219 which states that wine and gambling have usefulness as well as sin, but that the sin is greater than the usefulness. And then there was verse 90 of Surat Al-Ma'idah, which describes alcohol and gambling as the works of Satan which those who seek

success (presumably in this life as well as the hereafter) should leave behind.

### Coming to My Senses

I am ashamed to say it took me a few years after reversion to put it all together and arrive at the obvious, common-sense conclusion that all sensible Islamic scholars have known for centuries: Alcohol is *haram*. Though made from the glorious fruits of this amazing, Allah-created earth, and though it can provide certain temporary benefits, in the big picture those benefits are outweighed by severe drawbacks. There is no way you can pray properly, or even perceive properly for that matter, if you are polluting your mind with the stuff. We are so much better off without it.

After giving up alcohol and realizing how much that step improved my life, I began to see a deeper logic in the Islamic system of guidance about what is *halal* and what is *haram*. It seems that certain things that we have come to crave are just not good for us. Giving in to destructive cravings degrades us, while licit pleasures, enjoyed within the bounds of moderation prescribed by Allah's guidance, can be among life's greatest blessings.

### Step Two: Applying the Principle of 2:219

Thankfully, the Quran and Islamic tradition are there to help guide us toward the *halal* and away from the *haram*. In some cases, such as alcohol, the guidance is clear and direct. But we can also derive benefit from extending the logic of Qur'anic guidance to areas that are not mentioned directly, as generations of Islamic scholars have recognized.

Verse 2:19 clearly states that the sin in alcohol is greater than the usefulness. Can that principle be applied to other habits? Cigarettes, for example, are very much like alcohol in that they provide a certain amount of pleasure, but that the price of that pleasure – addiction and potentially fatal disease – seems to outweigh the benefits.

The same is true of many other passing pleasures and indulgences. Junk food tastes good, but like tobacco and alcohol it can be addicting, as well as debilitating in larger doses. Anybody who doubts that should see the documentary *Super Size Me*, which shows, in gruesome detail, exactly what living on McDonalds's fare for a month can do to a previously healthy person.

### The Image

And what about addictive technologies like television? Is television *haram* (Islamically illegal)? The question may sound crazy. But is it really so crazy to imagine that someday, somewhere, some overweight couch-potato TV addict might find Islam and give up their unhealthy, destructive lifestyle? Is it crazy to think that television's bombarding us with so much sex, violence, consumerist brainwashing, and celebrity faces and bodies might be incompatible with a way of life based on submission to Allah, and the struggle to be the better person that comes with submission to Allah?

Islam has a long and noble history of producing beautiful art and architecture without the realistic depiction of human faces and bodies. One scriptural source for that tradition is the *hadith* of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

*The makers of pictures (paintings and*



*tamathîl, or statues) will be tormented on the Day of Resurrection. It will be said to them: Give life to what you have created!*  
(Bukhari)

And he said:

*Truly, the angels do not enter a house where there are paintings (of living beings). (Bukhari)*

Another source is the Quran's ban on tamathîl, statues used as pagan idols. Some scholars believe that tamathîl means not just idols, but other realistic depiction of humans in image or sculpture, while others disagree.

Obviously technologies for reproducing images have changed tremendously since the time of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). But are those changes all such a good thing? And are image-reproduction-technologies being put to constructive use?

### The Idol

Television seems to be inseparable from human images in virtually every culture. People seem drawn to the cathode-ray tube like moths to flame. They gaze worshipfully at the images of the faces and bodies of celebrities, who are sometimes called 'idols' because celebrity-worship is so much like idol-worship.

This celebrity-image-worship keeps people in a state of constant envy of the rich, beautiful faces and bodies they see indulging themselves on television. Women wish they could be as beautiful as these TV idols but know they are not. Men imagine that all women should be as beautiful as these perfect blemish-free images, and are led into dissatisfaction and temptation. Both sexes are brain-washed into craving consumer goods that are sold by associating brand-

name products with images of beautiful, hedonistic people.

### Correlation with Decline in Culture

Television also poses another subtler threat: It is slowly but surely destroying the culture of the written word. Neil Postman, discussing the imminent demise of literate American culture, writes:

Television may bring an end to the career of schoolteachers, since school was the invention of the printing press and must stand or fall on the issue of how much importance the printed word has. For four hundred years, schoolteachers have been part of the knowledge-monopoly created by printing, and they are now witnessing the breakup of that monopoly. (Technology, 10)

Americans' lack of understanding of world events is partly the product of their less and less literate, more and more televisual culture.

### Content and Usage

Muslims must revive the great tradition of Islamic learning and scholarship. The tradition is based on words and writing and books, not images. Perhaps the Islamic school of thought that bans human representational images is right, and that there is more harm than good in the use of those images. Or perhaps not; perhaps we simply need to avoid the arrogance of imagining that we can give life to the images we create. Perhaps we should just avoid making images of our idols. Perhaps television technology need not be considered haram or makruh, its content should be.

Perhaps we just need to use it wisely and in moderation. I do keep very careful watch over my children's use of our television set which is set up to get

*Cont'd on page 46*

# Fear

*Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (ra)*

There is no one on the face of the earth whom I fear or pin my hopes on, be it one of the jinn, human beings, animals, insects, or any other creature. I am not afraid of anyone other than Allah (mighty and glorified is He). The more that He allays my fear the more it grows, for He is “One who certainly works His will” (from 11.107) and “He shall not be questioned as to what He does, but they shall be questioned” (21.23).

The believer remains in fear until his innermost being is granted the book of safety. He conceals it from his heart and never reveals it to it. This happens to a few individuals only.

The pious are those who are pious to Allah (mighty and glorified is He) in their public and private lives and watch Him under all circumstances. Their hearts shiver in fear of Him by night and day. They are afraid that tribulations might attack them during the night and cut them off from Him and, with them failing to be patient, they would turn to disbelief. They are afraid that the Angel of Death (prayer and peace be on our Prophet and on him) might come to them while they are doing evil deeds. “They do what they do while their hearts are full of fear” (from 23.60), afraid of being rejected, afraid of the foreknowledge of Allah (mighty and glorified is He) about them. Al-Fudhayl bin ‘Iyādh (may Allah show mercy to him) used to say to Sufyān Ath-Thawrī (may Allah show mercy

to him) whenever he met him: “Let’s weep over the foreknowledge of Allah (mighty and glorified is He) about us.” How excellent these words are! They are the words of someone who is a knower of Allah (mighty and glorified is He) and who is knowledgeable of Him and of His management. As for the “foreknowledge of Allah (mighty and glorified is He)” that bin ‘Iyādh referred to when saying “weep over the foreknowledge of Allah (mighty and glorified is He) about us,” it is His following saying: “These are to go to Paradise and I do not care, and these are to go to the Fire and I do not care.” He mixed them all in one place so one cannot know to which of the two groups he belongs. They did not become conceited because of what became visible of their deeds, because all deeds are assessed according to their final outcome. The pious are those who give up the acts of disobedience and sins, both the apparent and hidden ones, dissimulation, hypocrisy, and working for the sake of the creatures and worldly purposes. Therefore, today they are in the paradise of obedience and tomorrow they will be in the midst of gardens and springs, sitting among trees that never fade, fruits that never run out, and rivers that never run dry. How could the water dry up when it springs from beneath the Throne? For everyone of them there is a river of water, a river of yogurt, a river of honey, and a river of wine. These rivers will be

with them wherever they go, without a cleft in the ground. Everything in this world has an equivalent in the hereafter and more. Everything in Paradise has its prototype in this world. "They receive what their Lord gives them" (from 51.16) (mighty and glorified is He) of bliss that no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and has never occurred to any human being. "Whose fruits are nigh to cull" (69.23). When one of them reclines on his couch, the fruits come to his mouth and he eats them while resting. The roots of the trees are upward whereas their fruits are downward. Their roots are silver and their branches are gold. When it occurs to one of them to eat some of the fruits, they advance to his mouth, so he picks what he likes and then they return to their places. Everything in Paradise sings for the people of Paradise and entertains them. Their speech is lovely and in the finest sound. This is true even of its rivers, trees, and everything there. O seekers of this world, this world is ephemeral and tiring! Seek the everlasting Paradise, which is the place of comfort, the place of bliss, and the place of thankfulness. In Paradise there is no ablution, no prayer, no pilgrimage, no obligatory alms-giving, no tribulations to be endured with patience, no illnesses, no chronic diseases, no poverty, and no fear of departure. O people, soon death will call on you and snatch you away! You will be as if you had not been created or seen! Turn your hearts away from your families, children, and property. Renounce all the creatures of your Lord (mighty and glorified is He) and do not rely on anyone of them in trivial or important matters. O Allah, grant us trust in You under all circumstances and awareness of the powerless-

ness of anyone other than You, and "give us good in this world and good in the hereafter and protect us from the torment of the Fire."

Give up your wish in favor of His, your preference in favor of His, your decision in favor of His, and your will in favor of His. He is "One who certainly works His will" (from 11.107). "He shall not be questioned as to what He does, but they shall be questioned" (21.23). His company is like the company of lions and snakes, which is why the people of Allah are standing in His presence on the feet of fearfulness and caution. Neither their night is an ordinary night nor is their day an ordinary day.

Their eating is like that of the ill, their sleep is like the sleep of those who are drowning, and their speech is out of necessity. The patient feels satisfied with very little of food. He eats while being afraid of his food, unable to tell whether it is good for him or not. The drowning person slumbers only when sleep is irresistible, just to be awakened by the waves of the sea of power, the sea of "One who certainly works His will" not what they will. They are scared of being drowned by the waves and Him sending some animals to eat them. They wish that the waves would throw them ashore and allow them into the palace of His nearness, private conversation, and sightings.

O young man, the people of Allah have given up everything other than working [for Him], saying that everything else is mere nonsense and a shell. They have sought the kernel, clenched to it, and renounced the shell. They have sought the help of Allah (mighty and glorified is He) in their quest for what is indispensable. The True One (mighty

and glorified is He) is indispensable, whereas everything else can be dispensed with. So when He saw and recognized their truthfulness in their quest, He granted them amnesty, well-being, and His nearness: "There, authority is Allah's, the True One" (from 18.44). Every heart that has no fear is like a town without trees or sheep without a shep-

herd. Such a town is nothing but ruins and such sheep are doomed to become food for the wolves. When a person is afraid, he keeps wandering throughout the night. He cannot settle in one place so he is always on the move. The destination of the travel of the people of Allah is the abode of the True One (mighty and glorified is He).

### Eight Things to Learn

*Once a scholar asked one of his students, "You have spent a long time with me, what have you learned?"*

*He said I learned eight things:*

*First, I looked to the creation. Everyone has a loved one. When he goes to the grave, he leaves his loved one. Therefore, I made my loved one my good deeds; that way, they will be with me in the grave.*

*Second, I looked to the verse, "But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust," therefore, I struggled against my desires so I could stay obeying Allah.*

*Third, I saw that if anyone has something with him that is worth something, he will protect it. Then I thought about the verse, "That which you have is wasted away; and that which is with Allah remains," therefore, everything worth something with me I devoted to Him so it would be with Him for me.*

*Fourth, I saw the people seeking wealth, honor and positions and it was not worth anything to me. Then I thought about Allah's words, "Lo, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most aware of Allah, so I did my best to become aware of Allah in order to gain nobility in his sight.*

*Fifth, I saw the people being jealous towards each other and I looked at the verse, "We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of the world", so I left jealousy.*

*Sixth, I saw the people having enmity and I thought about the verse, "Lo, the devil is an enemy for you, so take him as an enemy", so I left enmity and I took the Satan as my only enemy.*

*Seventh, I saw them debasing themselves in search of sustenance and I thought about the verse, "And there is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof depends on Allah", so I kept myself busy with my responsibilities toward Him and I left my property with Him.*

*Eighth, I found them relying on their business, buildings and health and I thought about the verse, "And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him", therefore, I put my trust only on Allah.*

# The Devil's Net

*The social sites that nets billions of youth, are dominated by free-thinkers, atheist and the gay. These sites help the youth cut off their elders from themselves. A sea divides father and son, mother and daughter. They are liberated from such ties by the Satanic culture spreading through the social sites on the Net, and its daughter, the smart phone, writes SYED IQBAL ZAHEER.*

The place is Russia. A boy of 10-12 is at the computer, playing games late at night. His father tells him several times to switch off the computer and go to bed. The lad wouldn't move. Finally, the father comes in, switches off the computer and goes back to his bed.

When the son is sure his father is asleep, he takes a large hammer, and, with a single blow on the head, finishes him off. That was someone, not only his progenitor, but with whom, not too long ago, he had shared the very bed as an infant.

Sometime later his mother enters the house. Finding her husband dead, she is in panic and, concerned about her son's safety, starts looking for him. She finds him at the computer playing games. ("Cool" – today's youth would, perhaps, say).

When this news was narrated in the Gulf, the listeners were not horrified. A similar incident had taken place in their own town.

Where do the games come from? After the simple ones were on disks, most of the engaging ones now come from the Net. And, of course, more, much more of what lures the adults too.

So, what is the Net? It is like a bazaar where you have a billion shops selling a variety of goods: basically, electronic. You think of something, however seri-

ous or absurd, and there are thousands of websites containing one or another electronic detail connected with it: a film, a little script, a talk, pictures, cartoons, statistics, tips, guidelines, business opportunities, stories, poetry, jokes, gossip, proverbs, pornography, atheist's creeds, layman's philosophy, Facebook addresses, in short, information of all sorts.

Ignoring the inactive sites, by 2014, there were close to a billion sites (1,000,000,000). From a single website launched in 1991 to a billion in 2014, this is the fastest growth record ever achieved in the entire human history of any event, of any class. The fastest growth occurred between 2013 and 2014 when close to six hundred million (600,000,000) sites were added.

It's an electronic bazaar, but a bazaar the like of which does not exist.

There are a few useful sites on the Net. They are not in hundreds of millions, but mere thousands. They are needles in the haystack. They are scientific, literary, history, humanistic, culture, etc., visited by a handful. While the great majority goes for the junk, a few – perhaps, one in every hundred thousand – are the true beneficiaries of the Net. They upload well-researched material, and keep updating the stuff for the benefit of researchers or simple information seekers. It is run by a few, profited by a

few.

Some Islamic sites, run by well-known people or organizations, are also an exception. However, despite the respectful names, no more than a few dozen visit authentic Islamic sites daily. Perhaps, there is none which is visited by thousands.

The great majority of Islamic sites are more or less a failure. Problems are several. First, who runs the site? The first ever Islamic site was run by Jews. A Christian-hosted Islamic site of recent visit consists of an Encyclopedia which offers a paragraph on Ibn Taymiyyah, and found from his 36-volume *Fatawa*, one worth quoting as a sample: "If a Muslim does not offer Prayers, he may be killed!"

In this bazaar, good Muslim websites are like peanut-hawkers in the inner lanes, away from the main streets where the fashionable stuff is sold and where stroll the cultured gentry. It is hard, therefore, to reach these peanut hawkers – the true Islamic sites. How does one find them among the billion websites? Google 'Islam' and you get tens of thousands of sites lined up for examination. More than half of them are inactive. But where and which is the site which offers authentic information? Unless you know such sites by name, it is not possible to reach them. The final reliance concerning their address is on word of mouth.

Accordingly, for any webpage to introduce itself as offering authentic Islamic stuff, and get people to visit it, is an almost impossible task. But, sadly, every time you question the Net-lovers about the benefits of the Net, they always answer, "You can reach millions." They do not seem to understand that there is

some difference between "you can" and "you will." It is sites that host sports, pastimes, celebrities, tourist, film actors, musicians, pornography, etc. that are visited by the millions.

Islamic sites face another disadvantage: the visitors are not willing to pay to visit the sites. They want the Islamic material free. But, it is widely known that it is worthless material that is "sold" free. As soon as you say "free," the human mind accords it zero credibility. A thousand years of free distribution of the Bible failed to gain readers, let alone converts. Millions of copies were placed in hotel-rooms all over the world. Perhaps, no copy was opened in decades, until they were withdrawn. The fact that Muslim readers do not wish to pay for Islamic material, tells us plainly that they are in no need of it. Their point is: If it comes free, let it; if not, "no issues, I'm fine as it is."

If it comes free, then too, it is only curiosity that leads them to visit. They have no desire to be guided. In truth, majority of them are looking for untruth. To explain, one of them is in a little discomfort about an Islamic ruling. He has already received the opinion, for example, that it is not allowed in Islam. "Fine" he says to himself, and starts searching through the Net until he falls upon a site, run by one of the Samaritans, which says that it is allowed. They hold on to that and ignore the authentic opinion.

There are other problems that should discourage Muslims from placing Islamic stuff on the Net – unless it is serious, authentic, reference work, etc., as mentioned above. The other classes of stuff placed generously there, do not educate. They only inform, if there is any informational value in the stuff, which is

not always the case.

The best maintained sites are of the deviated sects who conceal their identity so that a clear message does not appear at the first encounter. They poison the minds in small doses. Some are actually hate sites. They create hatred for common Muslims, for those who follow ways of the ancients, and those who are holding on to piety. These contemporary Samaritans belittle them, their learning, and their piety.

The Samaritans are in thousands. They waylay every passerby. Who are they? They are a disgruntled, poorly-educated, angry, proud, young show-off upstarts, who have been influenced by ideas of Western liberalism and wish to popularize them among the Muslims.

They do not know the lingua-franca of Islam, the language of Paradise, the language in which their Lord decided to address them. Actually, many of them hate the Arabs too. They believe it was unfortunate that the Prophet was raised among them. They would be happier if he was one of the "two great towns;" that is, America and Europe (ref. the Qur'an, Zukhruf: 31).

In actual fact, they are the fifth columnists of Islam, trying to remove foundation stones from the edifice of Islam to topple it ultimately. Ever-critical of the Shari'ah, they conceal their dislike by issuing articles criticizing the clergy. But this is a proxy blow. By the clergy, they mean what Islam has stood for through the ages – held on now by the clergy. They are not the ones establishing Madrasas, or orphanages, or medical centers in the slums. They offer no services – for instance, to the black Muslims in America, slum dwellers elsewhere, free coaching to students, and the like works.

In short, they are vociferous spokesmen for a new Islam – devoid of its pillars. Their Sheikh is popularly known as "Sheikh Google."

As for reading from electronic versions, whether directly from the Net, or downloaded into a computer, a book on the screen can never convey what a printed book will. As a reader reads through a printed book, he places pencil marks on areas of special interest, underlines material he could quote, and marks out pages he wishes to return to in order to understand better. The loss is not great if he does not have a pencil around. He remembers roughly where the material is: whether at the start of the book or in the last one-third, whether on the left hand page or right, in the middle of the page or bottom, etc. His refer-back attempt has educational aspect. What happens is that as he searches through a book, he notices other interesting things on his way to the text of his immediate reference.

Another advantage consists in readings through printed books is that a reader can look into a dictionary and pen down the meaning on the borders of the page. Obviously, if he has a book in his possession, he can read or refer to it any number of times. He can carry it to someone who could help him explain unclear portions. He can read it anywhere, and especially while on the move: in a bus, at the airport, waiting in a visitors' hall.

An electronic version on the computer, say laptop, does not offer the same conveniences. The battery is off before you are finished with ten pages. Packing off the computer and re-opening is not as easy as closing and opening a book. Screen reading blurs the vision quite soon. It is hard to remember areas of interest when read on a screen because it is

not something substantial, physical. Notebooks and Pads do offer software for marking texts. But, the gadget, its software and the books are expensive. (The \$1 books are junk). The Net-lover will hasten to tell you that, in the USA, every student has one in his bag. He won't tell you that almost 90% of the earth's population cannot afford these things. He will also not tell you that since a decade or so, there has been a declining trend in IQ, and one suspected reason is www.

The software (a PDF reader costs a hundred dollars in USA), handling the electronic books is not like taking a pencil and underlining text in a printed work. The software do not allow for writing on the borders of an electronic book. For reasons not established yet, paragraphs and lines do not seem to be able to impress themselves on the mind for recall. Memory about them is quite blurred, whereas, in case of printed books, the mind seems to retain areas with clear memory. Indeed, the flow of meaning seems to be disturbed when you slide the page on a screen. Many people complain that they do not seem to remember what they read in the previous screen.

Searching of a book stored in a computer is not as easy as searching for a book in the shelf. You cannot search by a title if you have forgotten it; whereas forgetting the title and the author does not make it very inconvenient to search among printed books in a shelf. You remember that it was a blueish book, paperback, around 300 pages, slightly bigger than the standard size, etc. It is but few moments that your eyes rest on the book (if the sight is not captured by another book on the way, which you had been wanting to consult). No such help

can be had while searching a book in PDF format, on plain, black and white screen which does not accommodate a full page in 1:1 size. And, if you reformat your hard disk, your e-library painstakingly built over years evaporates in a second. This writer greatly benefits from electronic books on the Net with the help of the most modern gadgets, and is sincerely grateful to mankind for providing these services. But neither would he suggest anyone to read on the Net, nor has anyone ever done to any benefit, except, of course, some benefits obtained from a few on-line courses, which are far from being popular.

The Net is a good source of jahalah. People sitting in study circles, those in contact with scholars, those attending lectures, or those reading Islamic magazines, now prefer to educate themselves through the Net. The result is devastating. The Samaritans kidnap them and stuff their heads up with scrap. The company of the good people in the study circles is gone. The company of sluts is obtained. Reading Islamic literature on the Net today is like listening to Qur'anic recitation in the company of half-dressed women. The aura is missing, the effect is undetectable.

Some Islamic magazines, unable to get enough readers, (the majority of whom they have lost to the Net), have either stopped printing, or are on the verge of it. That's a regrettable step. They must hold on to the publication, even if left with a few hundred readers. They may produce fewer pages, fewer issues, but must raise the quality of their writings. Mujaddid Alf-Thani revived Islam through mere hand-written letters that he wrote to Moghul courtiers, governors, officials, the area shuyukh, and, his



own pupils at times when even the printing press wasn't there. Those letters were copied by hand, and reached Kashmir, Lahore, Kabul, Tashkent, Bukhara, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Makkah and Madinah. Altogether some 600 in number, (some written while he had chains in his ankles), most letters were roughly three-fourth of a page long. But, loaded with amazing qualities, they helped – after Allah's help – re-establish unadulterated Tawhid in the heart of millions. They also revived the Sunnah, Hadith studies, and by placing the 'Ulama' Rabbani in the center of Muslim polity, he chased away many pseudo-Sufis and the 'Ulama' al-Soo.'

Today's land bazars are nothing in evil compared to the bazar on the Net. First: the size. Land bazars hardly have a few thousand shops. The Net has a billion. Second: mobility. To visit a few shops at different locations through a land bazar, you need hours. The Net bazar allows visit to any shop in seconds. Third, today's bazars have a few ill-clad women that pass by you as you walk through. The Net has them – worse clad – stuck to you, giving you company, throughout your stay. You do not have to invite any. They come in uninvited, and, it is as difficult to get rid of them as war-mongers in the American Senate. Fourth, bazars normally have only an area where there are a few pimps and prostitutes lurking and strolling around. The Net has them all over, every nook and corner, at every lamppost, and in every dim-lit or well-lit area.

This bazar is one of the hottest in terms of sale of pornography. Total global porn industry is estimated at \$ 96 billion (96,000,000,000) – much of whose trading is done through the Net. And this is the count of raw porn. It does not include the

half-clad women's ubiquitous presence on the Net. There are 420 million (420,000,000) Internet porn pages; and customers searching through the bazar for porn via search engines is 68 million per day (68,000,000). [Chris Hedges, ICH]. This is apart from gay and lesbian stuff, which are promoted by millions of respectable pimps, because it is legal.

The social sites that nets billions of youth, are dominated by free-thinkers, atheist and the gay. These sites help the youth cut off their elders from themselves. A sea divides father and son, mother and daughter. There is good reason why a Net-addicted boy doesn't ever talk to his father, or a daughter to her mother. They are liberated from such ties by the Satanic culture spreading through the social sites on the Net, and its daughter, the smart phone.

Yet, a bazar it is. And so, it is Satan's nest. Said the Prophet: "People! Do not be the first to enter the bazar and not the last one to leave. That is where Shaytan pitches his post and that is where he hosts his battles." Another narration adds: "That is where Shaytan lays his eggs and that is where his chicks hatch."

Knowing its nature explains us why so many people are so crazy of the internet. Shaytan moves along with them as they move through the Net. The Prophet said, "I have learnt that when a man heads to the mosque, an angel accompanies him and remains with him until he returns to his house; and that Shaytan accompanies a man heading to the bazar, and remains with him until he returns to his house."

It will do us good to remember that the Prophet was speaking of the much civilized bazars of his time.

*Courtesy : YMD*

# The Station of the Sought-II

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*Allaama Ibn Al-Qayyim al-Jawziyah (ra)*

## **The First of the Three Levels of the Station of the Sought**

The author of *Manazil Al-Sa'irîn* [Shaykh Abdullah Al-Anjari Al-Harawi, d. 482/1089] said [therein]: "The station of being sought has three levels. At the first level, the servant is protected by way of his own compulsion against disobedience from it. The delight of disobedience is thus spoiled for him, its opportunity diminished, and its doors closed."

This means that when such a servant inclines toward an act that would stand between the servant and his Lord, when the servant is prone to surrender to his base desires, his Master protects him, as if forcibly, by spoiling and dimming the pleasure of the sin. Thus, he does not feel its pleasure save mingled with much discontent, which may even overcome its pleasure altogether and eliminate it, rendering the pleasure of the sin little more than a stealthy shadow.

In this way, Allah narrows the servant's opportunity or means (of sin) as He surrounds him from it until he no longer inclines to it or settles into it. And even when the causes are available, a defender is appointed to him who comes between him and it, one who says to him: "Look! You are being deceived." This is the essence of (divine) care, protection,

and shelter.

Moreover, the paths of sin that incur wrath are closed to him, even if he dislikes this. This is a mark of (divine) compassion for and protection of him.

## **The Second of the Three Levels of the Station of the Sought**

[Al-Harawi] said: "The second level is that [Allah] shelters the servant against any occasions of shortcoming, protecting him from marks of blame, alerting him to the consequences of his lapses. He did this with [prophet] Solomon, when he slaughtered the steeds [that had distracted him from the late-afternoon prayer]. Thereafter, Allah carried him upon the wind of bounty. Allah did this also with Moses, when he cast down [in a rage for the sin of the Children of Israel in fashioning the Golden Calf] the Tablets [just inscribed for him by Allah on Mount >ur], and then seized [by the hair and beard] his brother's head. He did not show displeasure to them [for their shortcomings] as He did show with prophets: Adam, Noah, David, and Jonah."

The difference between this [second] level and the one preceding it is that in the preceding one falling into occasions of disobedience is prevented by force, whereas in this one when a short-

coming deserving of blame occurs, Allah does not blame and chastise the servant. This is a kind of indulgence (dalal), for this occurs only to the elect and beloved of Allah; for a beloved one is forgiven for what others cannot be forgiven, for love is the most persuasive of intercessors.

So when a misstep occurs, Allah gives the reins of the error to him [the elect, the beloved one of Allah], making it an excuse for raising the servant's status; an occasion for sincere repentance, exceptional humility, and meekness before Him; and an increase in righteous deeds that earns him nearness to Allah many times more than what it was prior to his misstep. Thus, his misstep becomes more beneficial to him than many righteous deeds. This is a mark of divine attentiveness toward a servant and a sign of his being among His beloved friends.

The Shaykh has adduced the story of Solomon, of when his steeds distracted him from afternoon prayer. Overcome by rage and protectiveness for [the sake of] Allah, he was led to slice their ribs and necks with the sword, thus destroying the property that distracted him from Allah, for His sake [see Surat Rad, 38:31-40].<sup>[1]</sup> Allah replaced them for him by mounting him upon the wind, thus handing him the reins of this misstep, making it a cause of nearness and elevation to that lofty status.

He also adduced the story of [Prophet] Moses, of when he threw down the Tablets upon which there was inscribed Allah's Word, breaking them, and [violently] seized the beard of his brother, who was a prophet like him [see Surat Al-A'raf, 7:142-157; and Surat Ta Ha, 20:83-98]. Allah did not take Moses to account for this, as He had taken Ad-

am to account for eating from the tree; or Noah for asking for the salvation of his [disbelieving] son [when the latter refused to embark with his father upon the Ark]; or David concerning a woman of Orba (see Surat Rad, 38:21-26); or Jonah, concerning his abandonment [of his mission to his people of Nineveh] (see Surat Al-Saffat, 37:139-148).

I heard Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, say: "Similarly, Moses struck the eye of the Angel of Death and knocked it out, but his Lord did not reproach him for this.<sup>[2]</sup> Also, during the [Prophet's] Night Journey (Isra'), Moses quarreled concerning the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) when Allah raised [Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)] above [Moses], and [the latter] raised his voice [to Allah] about this. Yet Allah did not reproach him for this either." [Ibn Taymiyyah] said: "That is because Moses stood on the lofty stations that earned him this indulgence, for he combated the Pharaoh, the greatest of Allah Almighty's enemies, opposing him and his people. Moreover, he strove most diligently to set aright the Israelites and struggled most assiduously for the sake of Allah, against the enemies of Allah, and was zealous for the sake of his Lord. Thus, he is tolerated [by Allah] in what others are not."

In contrast, [prophet] Thu Al-Nun [the 'Companion of the Whale', Jonah], since he had not reached this status, was imprisoned in the belly of the whale due to Allah's displeasure. Allah has, indeed, made a perfect measure for all things.

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<sup>[1]</sup> *This is one interpretation, that Solomon, slaughtered his prancing steeds because, as a worldly indulgence, they had distracted him*

from the worship of his Lord. Another is that, after offering his belated worship after its office, he summoned for the steeds to be returned to him, whereupon he himself, as king, engaged in the menial grooming of the steeds, in humility.

[2] The reference is to a report in Muslim and Nasa'i: Abu Hurairah reported that Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), said: The Angel of Death came to Moses and said: "Respond to (the call of) Allah (i. e. be prepared for death). Moses delivered a blow to the eye of the Angel of Death and knocked it out. The Angel went back to Allah and said: "You sent me to your servant who does not like to die and he knocked out my eye." Allah restored his eye to its proper place (and revived his eyesight) and said: "Go to My servant and say: 'Do you want life? And in the case that you do want life, place your hand upon the body of the [specified] ox, and you shall live such number of years as the (number of) hairs your hand covers.'" Moses said: "What, then?" He said: "Then you will die." Whereupon he (Moses) said: "Then why not now?" (He then prayed:) "Allah, cause me to die close to the sacred land [meaning Jerusalem]." Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "Were I near this place, I would show [you] his grave by the side of the path at the red mound."

## The Shepherd

Once upon a time, there lived in Basra an old man whose only occupation was caring for and loving his only son who was a handsome young man. The old man invested all his money on his son's education. The young man went away for a few years and acquired an education at a well known university under the great scholars of that age.

The day had arrived for the son to return from his studies and the old man waited at the door for his son. When the son came and met his father, the old man looked into his eyes and felt great disappointment. "What have you learnt my son?" he asked, "I have learnt everything there was to be learnt, father", he said. "But have you learnt what cannot be taught?" asked the father. "Go, my son and learn what cannot be taught", said the old man.

The young man went back to his master and asked him to teach him what cannot be taught.

"Go away to the mountains with these four hundred sheep and come back when they are one thousand", said the master.

The young man went to the mountains and became a shepherd. There for the first time he encountered a silence. He had no one to talk to. The sheep did not understand his language. In his desperation, he would talk to them but they would look back at him as if to say he was stupid. Slowly but surely he began to forget all his worldly knowledge, his ego, his pride and he became quiet like the sheep and great wisdom and humility came to him.

At the end of two years when the number of sheep had grown to one thousand, he returned to his master and fell on his feet. "Now you have learnt what cannot be taught," said the master.

NB. It is interesting to note that the Nabis of Allah (Alayhimus salaam) at some time in their lives, generally before Nubuwat, tended to sheep, and other such animals.

# Qur'an and Hadith

Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah

The *Hadith* inevitably follows the Holy Qur'an. The two together furnish the fundamental law of Islam. It is appropriate, therefore, to begin with the importance of *Hadith* and the nature of its link with the Qur'an. At numerous places the Qur'an commands Muslims to obey the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). It says, for instance: "Whatsoever he forbids you, abstain from it" (59:7). Another verse expresses the same idea more forcefully: "Whoso obeys the Messenger indeed obeys Allah" (4:80).

These as well as other similar verses give us some idea of the Qur'anic concept of *Hadith* which is by no means an unimportant discipline, but is to be treated almost at par with the Holy Qur'an.

Take the example of an ambassador carrying a message of his master to another sovereign. It is obvious that the letter given to him will not carry much detail. In the discussion that follows on the subject every word uttered by an envoy would be taken as the word of his sovereign. The purpose in citing the example is to underline the fact that both the Qur'an and the *Hadith* are essentially the same thing. They carry an equal status. Yet another example will help elucidate this thesis more clearly. Sup-

pose the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is alive today. One of us goes to meet him and announces his conversion to Islam. Addressing the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), he then proceeds to say: "The Qur'an is the word of God and I accept it. But the *Hadith* is your own word and I am not obliged to accept it or act on it". The result of such an assertion would be expulsion from the *ummah*. To say in the presence of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that what he orders is his personal opinion and is not binding on a Muslim is tantamount to repudiating Islam.

The status of an order given by the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the same as that of a command given by God. The difference between the two has arisen only because the process of collection, collation and preservation of the Qur'an has been different from the one followed in respect of the *Hadith*. Thus, the problem that arises is that of authentication and investigation. There was no need of proof during the life of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Whatever he uttered was surely seen to be his command. The problem arose only later. For example, I hear something from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and relate it to you. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi

Wasallam) is absolutely right but, as a human being, I have my human weaknesses. My memory can fail me. My understanding of his word can be faulty. It is possible that I did not hear the statement properly, perhaps owing to lack of requisite attention or owing to noise. In brief, there can be many a reason for inaccurate reporting.

That is why the transmission of the *Hadith* after the death of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) does not possess that status of absolute certainty which the Qur'an does. The Qur'an was compiled personally by him. For its preservation he adopted measures which no other Prophet did. At least no such example is offered by history. This is not the case, however, in regard to *Hadith*. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not pay it the attention that was given to the Qur'an. One of the possible reasons for the apparent neglect was his innate sense of humility. He looked upon himself as a mere human who did not become superior to others only because he was a Prophet.

### Prophet's sayings and revelation

Everything that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says is based on revelation. When he receives a revelation he makes no mistake in communicating it in its entirety. When he does not receive a revelation he simply waits because he has no control over it. God reveals when He desires; and when He does not, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has no choice but to wait for he cannot pass on his own thoughts as the revealed truth.

We come across a number of instances in the *Hadith* from which it is clear that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi

Wasallam) used to consult others in mundane matters. For example, a *hadith* narrates that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) issued certain orders. The Companions enquired whether they were based on revelation. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied: "Had they been based on revelation I would not have consulted you".

There is another very interesting *hadith* about date-trees. When he came to Madinah, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) happened to see that the pollens of a male flower of the tree were being mixed with those of a female flower to fertilize them. Presumably owing to his innate modesty he did not like this and suggested that it was not appropriate to induce male-female connection between the plants. He advised people to refrain from it. When they acted upon his order the produce of dates declined. Some people came to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and told him that owing to lack of pollination the date yield had been substantially reduced. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), according to a *hadith* in Tirmidhi, responded: "You know these worldly matters better than I do".

It is clear from this example that a statement of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) based upon revelation has the status equal to that of the Qur'an, but the expression of his own personal opinion would be merely the utterance of a wise and intelligent person, and by no means Divine revelation. It is related in the *Hadith* that on occasions the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) concluded a prayer after three *rak'ats* instead of four, or he went through three instead of the two that were required. Such lapses are human.

It is possible they occurred due to Divine dispensation. God has acclaimed the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as "a good example" for mankind. "Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example .. (33:21).

A Messenger can be a good example and a perfect model only if he remains within human bounds, i.e. he does what other human beings can do. If, on the contrary, he becomes a superman he will cease to be a good example for us. Therefore we come across instances — even if extremely rare — when he does not wake up early enough for the morning prayers, or makes a mistake in the number of *rak'ats* he offered. God in His wisdom desires mankind to realise that the Prophet is but a human being. We should not think that we cannot emulate his example or perform the task that he did as a human being. We should remember that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) always wanted to ensure that he should do nothing which was beyond the capacity of the *ummah*. Take for example the fast called *wisal*. The duration of this fast, instead of ending at sunset of the same day, is extended and may last for two days or even more. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) emphatically told his followers to desist from it. He advised them against fasting for twenty-four hours, too, and suggested a breakfast before dawn. He laid much emphasis on it. Once a Companion pointed out to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that his own practice on this account was different from the one he preached to others and that he too wished to emulate his example. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) allowed him to try. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi

Wasallam) himself fasted for twenty-four hours, and then extended it to forty-eight hours. The people were worried. By chance the moon of the month of Shawwal was sighted on the 29th of Ramadan and the fast had to be terminated. Had the moon not appeared that day the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) might have extended the fast to seventy-two hours. People would have then realised that their ambition to emulate the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in certain cases was not entirely proper. Maybe a few individuals are able to emulate him, but the common people are incapable of doing it.

### Importance of Hadith

The importance of the *Hadith*, therefore, is by no means less than that of the Qur'an. The only difference is that we do not have the same impeccable proof of accuracy in the case of *Hadith* as indeed we have for the Holy Qur'an, which has been preserved intact exactly in the same form as it existed fourteen hundred years ago in the days of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Not a word, not a letter, not even a dot has changed. This cannot be said about the *Hadith*.

Scriptures similar to the Qur'an are found in other communities. The Jews, for example, have the Torah. Other nations also claim to possess revealed scriptures. But while we have examples of revealed books corresponding to the Qur'an, we do not see an example corresponding to the *Hadith*. Something similar exists in Buddhism but it does not enjoy the importance that we attach to *Hadith*. The basic scripture of Buddhism is somewhat like the sayings of a saint

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# I Am NOT Charlie

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*TheSaker*

All of France is in deep mourning over the incident at Charlie Hebdo. The media worldwide does such a good job presenting it all as a planetary disaster... Crocodile tears, if you ask me, writes THE SAKER.

Okay, let's be clear. I am not Muslim. I oppose terrorism. I don't even support the death penalty. I loathe Takfirism. I oppose violence as a means to make a political or ethical point. I fully support freedom of speech, including critical speech and humor.

But this morning I am most definitely NOT Charlie. In fact, I am disgusted and nauseated by the sick display of collective hypocrisy about the murders in France. Here is why:

## **Charlie Hebdo for the Darwin Awards**

The folks at Charlie Hebdo had it coming. Here is what I wrote about them in September 2012 when they published their famous caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed:

*"Worthy of the Darwin Awards, if you ask me. Excellent, the 'gene pool' of the French 'caviar-Left' badly needs some cleaning."*

Today I fully stand by my words.

Let me ask you this:

What would be the point of, say,

taking a nap on train tracks? You don't have to 'agree' with the train which will run you over, but it still will, won't it? What about taking a nap on train tracks specifically to make a point? To prove that the train is bad? To dare it? To make fun of it? Would that not be the height of stupidity?

And yet, that is exactly what Charlie Hebdo did. I would even argue that, that this is how Charlie Hebdo made his money: daring the 'Muslim train' to run them over.

## **'Spitting in People's Souls'**

There is an expression in Russian: 'spitting in somebody's soul.' It fully applies here. Muslims worldwide have been unambiguously clear about that. They take blasphemy very, very seriously, as they do the name of the Prophet and the Qur'an. If you want to really offend a Muslim, ridicule his Prophet or his Holy Book. That is not a secret at all.

And when Charlie Hebdo published their caricatures of the Prophet and when they ridiculed him in a deliberately rude and provocative manner, they knew what they were doing: they were very deliberately deeply offending 1.6 billion Muslims worldwide.

Oh, and did I mention that in Islam blasphemy is a crime punishable by



death? Well, it turns out that of 1.6 billion Muslims, exactly three decided to take justice in their own hands and kill the very deliberately blaspheming Frenchmen.

You don't have to be Muslim, or to approve of the death penalty for blasphemy, to realize that this was inevitable and that this has nothing to do with Islam as a religion. Offend any group as large as 1.6 billion and sooner, or later, you will find 1-5 folks willing to use violence to make you pay for it. This is a statistical inevitability.

[...] All of France is in deep mourning. The media worldwide does such a good job presenting it all as a planetary disaster... Crocodile tears, if you ask me.

The fact is that the Anglo-Zionists have carefully and lovingly nurtured, organized, armed, financed, trained, equipped and even directed the Takfiri crazies for decades. From the war in Afghanistan to Syria today, these murderous psychopaths have been the foot-soldiers of the Anglo-Zionist Empire for decades.

But, apparently, nobody cares about their victims in Afghanistan, in Bosnia, in Chechnya, in Kosovo, in Libya, in Kurdistan, in Iraq or elsewhere.

### **How Stupid do They Think We Are?**

And then this. Even a drooling idiot knew that Charlie Hebdo was THE prime target for that kind of attack. And I promise you that French cops are not drooling idiots. Yet, for some reason, they were nowhere to be seen that day. Only a van with two (or one?) cop was parked nearby (hardly an anti-terrorist protection detail)...

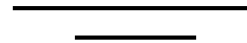
So what is going on here? I will

tell you what – the EU 1% ers are now capitalizing on these murders to crack down on their own population. Sarkozy already met Hollande and they both agreed that new levels of firmness and vigilance need to be implemented.

Does that not reek of a French 9/11?

But most of all, I am disgusted with all those who play along and studiously avoid asking the right questions about all this. I guess they really are 'Charlies' – all of them.

I am not.



*Cont'd from page 18*

interpretation, wrote about the winds' fertilizing clouds so that rain would fall. Ibrahim Haqqi of Erzurum, a well-known seventeenth-century spiritual master, was a brilliant astronomer, mathematician, and physician.

There are many more such examples, but these are enough to show that Islam's hierarchy of knowledge and its possession of a "metaphysical" dimension have satisfied its followers' intellectual needs. And so they never sought to satisfy their thirst for causality outside of religion, as happened in the modern West.

Islam is the universal order, the integral religion of harmony, and the unique system that harmonizes the physical with the metaphysical, the rational with the ideal, and the corporeal with the spiritual. Each dimension of our earthly life has its own place within Islam's matrix and thus can perform its own function, enable us to be at peace with the dimensions of our existence and our community and nature, and to gain happiness in both worlds.

# The Story of the Seven Firm Believers

*Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (ra)*

*They were young men who believed in their Lord. We increased them in guidance. And We made their hearts firm and strong when they stood up and said: Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth . Never shall we call upon any god other than Him . If we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity. (18:13-14)*

This story recounted in the Qur'an may be entitled the account of seven firm believers. The story itself contains a special message and role model for youth of all time and place. It inspires both the heart and mind, motivating us by its simplicity . For it is a story of both tender feelings and firm conviction. The Qur'anic account has rendered these young believers immortal in history. They stand out as an example for the youth of our times. Certain basic truths of immense and abiding value are articulated in relating their account.

The story of the seven believers may be better understood in the light of the following backdrop. The Prophet Isa (AS) launched his mission of truth in the region presently known as Syria and Palestine, which was then part of the Roman Empire. Muslims look upon the Prophet Isa (AS) as a distinguished Messenger who called mankind to the doctrine of monotheism. Polytheism was then the order of the day, enveloping the whole world in its darkness. Jesus' message was the only ray of light in the all-pervading ignorance and error that

bound society. He raised his voice against polytheism, racism, superstition, ritualism and injustice. His message rested on the planks of monotheism and God-consciousness. Some noble souls greeted his message enthusiastically, themselves becoming his faithful disciples. Some moved to various parts of the Roman Empire in order to invite people to truth. It is common knowledge that those senior in age generally refrain from joining any radical movement owing to the fetters of social customs, traditions and worldly considerations. They are too apprehensive of taking any bold step. In contrast, youth, who are not so constrained and who do not have such commitments to which the old ones are bound, enthusiastically accept a new message which strikes a chord in their hearts. The Qur'an does not specify the ages of the youth in its account. This is just one stylistic feature of the Qur'an. It makes generalised statements which hold good for everyone. In other words, Qur'anic stories are marked by universalism. Regarding these seven, the Qur'an says only this much that they

were young people. The expressions used of them carries in the original Arabic connotations of someone young at heart, high-spirited, and radical in thought. Another important implication of the Qur'anic expressions is that they were a handful of young men. Whenever the call to truth is made, only a few persons respond positively in the initial stage. Allah inspires and strengthens these brave souls to take up challenges.

In relating this story the Qur' an brings to the fore a particular attribute of Allah – His Lordship. It is said: "They were young men who believed in their Lord." The emphasis on this attribute is significant. For, at times, states or rulers lay claim to lordship under the false belief that it is they who provide sustenance to their subjects. This gives rise to a superstructure of false beliefs. People are forced into pledging loyalty to them so as to ensure their survival. They have to assure the rulers of their unquestioning loyalty. For, without their patronage they apprehend the loss of sustenance. The Qur'an is very particular in its choice of expressions in a given context. These youths rose to the occasion in the heyday of the Roman Empire. This was the most organised, civilised and powerful empire of the day. It is also known for having passed on to posterity the heritage of Roman law. These youths had the audacity to challenge a superpower of the day under its very nose. They declared their allegiance to sound faith. By then Christianity had not been corrupted. Some early Christians, who were genuine disciples of the Prophet Isa (AS) had reached there. They proclaimed that God, not the state, provided for their sustenance. For they recognised the truth that only the Lord is the Sustainer of the

heavens and the earth. They made this declaration when the Roman Empire and its subservient states used to control all means of livelihood. It reigned supreme in economic matters, disallowing any liberty to citizens. Such absolute power rested with the state that it appeared to be in control of everything. Common sense dictated that in such a setting these youths should have cooperated with the state in matters of faith. They should have been wise enough to conceal their profession of a faith which was at variance with state religion. Boldly, however, they dismissed the Greek and Roman mythology of the day which permeated life at that time. This mythology formed part of Roman culture and civilisation, its belief system and social life. The whole of society was given to superstitions, polytheism and whimsical notions. In Greece, Rome and ancient India, there were incarnations of God in the form of numerous gods and goddesses. Magnificent temples were erected in commemoration of this plethora of idols. There were gods and goddesses of love, wealth, provisions, war, rain and of the whole range of phenomena. Yet these believing youth had the moral courage to dismiss this falsehood, asserting:

*Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Never shall we call upon any god other than Him. If we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity in disbelief. These our people have taken for worship gods other than Allah. Why do they not bring for them a clear authority? And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah? (18:14-15)*

The Qur'an makes it plain that it is man who is to take the initiative in matters of faith. This is followed by help and support extended by Allah.

As these youth proclaimed their faith, Allah helped them attain more guidance. Obviously, Allah is the only source of all guidance. Guidance to truth cannot be obtained by dint of only one's intellectual faculty, written works, self study or library resources. The Qur'an unambiguously ascribes guidance to Allah alone. Thanks to Allah's guidance, and subsequent increase in it, these youth scaled new heights in spiritual development. They submitted themselves wholesale to Allah, turned exclusively to Him, exerted themselves in gaining the gnosis of Allah in terms of His magnificent attributes and excellent names. As they engaged in these spiritually-oriented exercises, Allah enabled them to derive more and more guidance.

It is fallacious to think that man can achieve something of his own, without any effort. Man has to take the initiative and this is followed by the grant of divine help. The same happened with these youths, as the Qur'an tells: "We increased them in guidance. And We made their hearts firm and strong." For they were pitted against the superpower of the day. They had displayed their resolve and commitment to faith in having abandoned the state religion and declared their allegiance to divine faith.

This then is the story of the People of the Cave. In 1973, during my visit to Transjordan I had the privilege of visiting the cave in which these youth lie buried. Wafa' al-Dujjani, a scholar and Director of Archaeology, Jordan, was kind enough to arrange for my visit there. He argued cogently why this spot in Jordan is to be taken as the cave which is referred to in the Qur'an. History bears testimony to the fact that for centuries this event has been recorded

and discussed. It has become part of literature and folklore. I have dealt with this event quite extensively elsewhere, in my book *Ma'raka-i Iman wa Maddiyyat* (Encounter between Faith and Materialism). It emerges that most of these youths were sons of courtiers. Their families would have been loyal to the throne, and their immediate family members would have held important offices of the empire. This, however, complicated the issue. For the young men's stance could not be taken as a prank on the part of some non-serious youth. It was a firm case of opposition to state religion and of affirming a new faith. In sum, it amounted to rebellion. Their links with the leading and noble families of the empire posed a threat. Their actions placed their parents in peril, for the latter could be taken to task for not having prevented their off spring's behaviour. Being parents they could not easily disown their children. Rather, they had great expectations that their children would bring glory to them. The Qur'an has elsewhere portrayed this psychological crisis confronting elders and young members of society. When the Prophet Salih (AS) presented his call to truth before his community, asking them to profess and practise monotheism, the elders told him with much pain that they held great expectations of him. Being a gifted young man he was supposed to bring laurels to his family. He was to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious ancestors. However, his call to the truth had raised all their hopes. For his mission put an end to their vested interests. They looked upon Salih as a promising man destined for worldly glory. His engagement with truth and monotheism, however, disappointed them.

The youths, as referred to in the story of the People of the Cave, constituted just a handful. It appears that they were no more than seven in number. Yet they had links with hundreds of people in terms of their family connections and friendship circles. All of them were at risk and were suspect in the eyes of the state. Being bright young men they were the centre of hope and promised prosperity for their kith and kin. Some might think that their small number would not have posed a problem. For the elimination of such a small number of youths would not have created any ripples. However, this was not an isolated case of just a few individuals. Their family networking was the issue. These seven youths had close family ties with at least seventy other people. The Qur'an therefore cites it as a major event that affected society. Little is on record about the details of the persecution inflicted upon them. They must have been offered lucrative jobs if they recanted their new faith. It is likely that they were both tempted and harassed. Generally speaking, youth are more vulnerable to temptation. A saint who was exposed to both is reported to have said that temptation is very alluring in such circumstances. States often resort to both persecution and enticement. These youths confronted both yet they managed to resist. This was possible because Allah had made their hearts firm and strong. They were blessed with the spirit of sacrifice, self-control and perseverance.

Allah did a great favour to these youths in making their hearts firm and strong. Their commitment to God made them steady and consistent. As a result of divine help, nothing could distract them. For they had sincerely pledged

their loyalty to their Lord Who is the Lord of all that is in the heavens and on earth. They were strengthened in their resolve on account of reposing their trust in Allah. They declared: "*Never shall we call upon any god other than Him. If we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity in disbelief. These our people have taken for worship gods other than Allah.*" They raised the pertinent question, addressed to the leading members of their community: "Why do they not bring for them a clear authority?" For it was beyond them as to why they had taken gods besides Allah, without any grounds. To them it was a case of gross injustice and wrongdoing: "*And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah?*"

Some salient points emerge from this story related in Surah al-Kahf. The first and foremost is that one should be unwavering in one's faith. One should profess faith insightfully, vigorously and confidently. One's faith in Allah and His attributes should be total and firm. This degree of faith should characterise every Muslim, the lay and the scholar alike.

We can gain further guidance if we maintain strong links with Allah. The sources of guidance in our case are the Qur'an, the Sunnah, the Prophet's role model, the Companions and all those who strove for Islam. A study of these may reinvigorate us, just as a battery is recharged. We are constantly exposed to materialism, and come into contact with such people and things as make us oblivious of God. All that is around us drives us away from Him – be it television, radio, newspapers and even literature. It is generally held that literature is innocuous and neutral. However, in our times,

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# Welcome Back to the Quaking

*Amer Haleem*

The greatest crisis facing man—in every age and place, personally and communally—is repentance, tawba.

Our first father, Adam, comes into the world in the midst of this emergency, with our mother Eve, and none of us shall escape it after them, until Allah’s grace purifies us on the Day of Judgment and carries us into the Garden of Delight. If we call this destiny “salvation,” then its road is repentance.

It is a sign of the vast corruption of our times (and let us defend no doubt about how utterly corrupted and corrupting is the life we live in the world today) that repentance for the sins of man has become no issue at all. We are not concerned about it as a creation. We don’t reorder ourselves around it as communities (not even religious communities). And we have little time in our day, our month, our lives to give second thought to the ravages of sin we strew about the world in our wake. We think they are mostly trifling, anyway.

This attitude, in fact, is the foremost block upon the way of salvation. We take our sins lightly, consider them minor, believe their punishments small (if they carry any at all), and dismiss as strange the idea that we have to repent these innocent acts we do, that everyone does. What, are we supposed to repent

for being human?!

But how deluded we are, as we rush on to destroy ourselves by our own hands. Here’s the news. Bad tidings to you: That you think your sins are small is itself a big sign that you are misled, that you are astray. The sins you underestimate are great.

Every day we do acts that we see as finer than frog hair that the Companions beheld as ruinous. Don’t believe me. Believe Anas (RA):

*You indulge in acts of no more significance to you than a hair, while at the time of the Messenger  $\text{œ}$ , we saw them as major, destroying sins (Bukhari).*

The fact that you persist in doing these “slight” sins, moreover, means that you think your sins are so minor as to be of no consequence. How wrong you are. Ibn Abbas (RA) said:

*Any sin one persists in is great. And no sin one repents of is great (Bayhaqi).*

The reason you think the sins you do are petty is because you don’t take time to reflect on how great the One you are sinning against is. No flash of insight into His terrible power strikes awe in your heart. Your understanding of His blessing upon you, His sustaining of you, His providing for you, His protecting of you, His guiding of you, His fashioning of you with His own Hand, His breathing

life into you—your understanding of all of it fails.

You have made yourself heedless that this God punishes. So your fear of Him falters, which drains away your faith, the shield of your heart. It falls sick, and sickness corrupts, until your heart forgets its sins. How, then, will you make tawba from what you don't even remember?

No, my soul. No sin you do is small because the One you have disobeyed is great. Look! That sin you see as a far off spec, it is a mountain. Your own desire uprooted it. Your strong whims raised it overhead. Look up! It is about to crush you. So weep, weep with regret at the destruction your eyes and limbs, your ears and tongue, your heart have carried you to.

How great now is the affair you deemed trivial! Who, tell me, who have you obeyed? That despised one, the one who disrespected your father, and swore to bridle his children like beasts? The one telling you there's no need to rush to tawba? Your sins are small. Your time is long. Your death is far off.

And who have you disobeyed? The Lord of all the Worlds?! The One who upholds the heavens and cast colossal galaxies into them by the billions?! The One who created you and all there is?! The One who swore at the moment of your coming to life, by His word of truth, that He would most surely fill Hell with Satan and all who follow him?! Is that the One you have disobeyed?!

How unlucky you are, then, for your "little" sins. For your Lord is the Lord of even the smallest things, things smaller than you can possibly imagine.

*For there is not even an atom's weight in*

*the earth, nor in the heaven, that eludes your Lord. Nor is there anything smaller than that, nor larger, but that it is registered in a clear Heavenly Book [Surat Yunus, 10:61].*

You are heedless of your "little" sins. You have forgotten them. But He hasn't. He will call you to account for them all. Welcome back, then, to the quaking remembrance of the most frightening ayah of them all:

*So whoever does an atom's weight of good shall see it. And whoever does an atom's weight of evil shall see it. [Surat Al-Zalzalah, 99:7-8]*

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*Cont'd from page 24*

Arabic channels through Dish Network's Arabic package. I hope that the good that comes from their exposure to Arabic, including a Qur'anic recitation channel, will, Insha'Allah, outweigh any potential negative influences of television.

In this as in other decisions, we must pray that we are on the right path, and do our best to seek and follow Allah's guidance.

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collected by his disciples. The sayings of Buddha have been collected by one person. But *Hadith* has been collected and narrated by different persons. This characteristic is conspicuous by its absence in others religions. The *Hadith*, then, is a branch of knowledge whose equivalent is not to be found in other religions. Under the circumstances, therefore, the possibility of a comparative study does not exist. We shall have to content ourselves only with the history of the traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

# Adam and Me

*Khadijah Abdul Haleem*

Finding solace during my own sojourns in life, filled with countless mistakes, I frequently have felt, and feel like, the ramifications of my actions are insurmountable.

My first reaction when the swirl of thoughts clouding my soul begins to clear a little is to grasp for anything that will lift me up so I can gasp for breath in clean air. Drowning—which is what humans tend toward—in the muddied waters of our thoughts and actions is never comfortable.

## **Coping with Consequences**

That pant and puff for fresh breath frequently comes in the form of remembering people before me who have made mistakes and overcome them. Desperation takes me to the highest form of good humanity: our prophets and those of the believers who rank just beneath them.

The first human being, Adam, was very, very human, complete with all the typical human issues. Lack of gratitude for all that is around, disregard of a simple order, inability to resist temptation, and, most importantly, forgetting that Satan is the enemy.

## **Learning from the Story of Adam and Iblîs**

I have found much succor in the story of Adam, peace be upon him. When we feel like, “How can I ever get over this!?” When we have wronged our-

selves, doing something we know we should not have, to remember our Prophet Adam is a balm. It is utterly apropos that his story teaches us the life-altering power of tawba.

The human is, as Allah tells us, very “amenable” to the whisperings of Iblîs (so named because of his despairing of goodness from Allah) and the baseness brought to him through his envy of Adam, and thereby all humans, and his complete ingratitude to Allah. He whispers to us those same feelings in whatever way suits each one of us, tailored for every personality.

His fit of jealousy and discontent with Adam started when he first saw him, and could not help but feel and see the beauty of the human form. Then to have Allah command him to bow to Adam, not in worship but in regard and acknowledgment, was too much for Satan. And he refused to listen to the order of his Lord, and promised to spite the life of all humans, to drag them down with him, again, a testament to his name. Iblîs means one who denies all goodness, whereas the beauty of the human being lies so much in his ability to accept “good” and blessings.

## **Falling Prey**

Adam’s first test from the whispers of the accursed Satan came directly, or so it seems when we read in the Quran, after two things:

(1) Satan’s unabashed refusal to



bow to him, explicitly saying that he, Satan, was better than Adam, cursing him personally, and

(2) Allah's specific forewarning to him against the whispers of Satan and his status as an avowed enemy and competitor to man.

Reading this in earlier years (maybe even not so much earlier), it was hard for me not to feel, "Allah just told you not to touch this tree, and to take Satan as an enemy! How hard can it be to listen to two simple orders?!" It is hard for me to admit thinking that. It is so arrogant of a thought! But later (not so much later either), it became so clear to me how much of an enemy Satan is. Maturity, and life and a bunch of mistakes varying in levels of "wrongness," cleared my vision enough to understand how important it is for humanity to never forget Shayṭān as our primary enemy—and even our Prophet-father Adam, with direct experience, fell prey to the evil whispers of Iblis.

### **Our God-Sent Words for Asking Forgiveness**

Allah knows best the series of events that led to Adam and Eve pleading with Him for forgiveness, whether Allah told them the words to say when asked how to gain forgiveness that we read in Sûrat Al-Baqarah, or if Adam asked Allah: "Does not Your forgiveness outweigh Your anger?" or: "Did You not create me with Your own Hands, and form me. Did You not breathe life into me? Can You not forgive me?" All of it is all beyond our realm of knowledge.

But what we do know without a doubt—for what is the Quran except free of all doubt—that Adam and Eve

acknowledged their actions as wrong, asked for forgiveness with heaven-sent words, and were granted what they so sincerely asked for.

### **From Adam Down to Me**

All this means is that there is a highly consistent pattern of human life: Allah tells us what to do and what not to do...Remember that Satan is all the while fulfilling his cursed promise to lead astray those whom he can...and we will fall at some points.

Yet we can turn to Allah, who always, always keeps His promise to come to us, at a walk, at a run, ever eager to forgive His would-be pleasing servants, when we are always turning, a renewed creation.

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*Cont'd from page 44*

it is no more than an agent of wickedness and promiscuity. It promotes falsehood, sexual anarchy and base desires. We are deluged by materialism. Our educational system, in particular, is responsible for such growing materialism. Amid this all-round degeneration it is quite a task to uphold faith and moral values.

As a precaution against this onslaught we should devote more time and energy to gaining more and more divine guidance, increase our faith, and put up a stiff challenge against base desires. Some token steps or rituals cannot help us withstand encroaching materialism. The challenges are so compelling and ruthless that without firm faith and without emulating role models we stand no chance of winning. It is time to brace ourselves with the help of steady faith.