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RADIANT REALITY

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Forgiveness

*Forgiving is not forgetting
It's letting go of the hurt*




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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 succession of Prophethood got ended and sealed forever.

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Question Answer

Question.

At a recent funeral approximately thirty people were in attendance. Just before the Jannazah salah was commenced, I asked the brothers to form a minimum of three lines (Suffs) to which an Arab brother said something and the presiding Imam said it was permissible to have just one or two lines. Kindly confirm the correct method which should be followed,

Answer.

It is permissible to perform Janaaza Salaah with one or two Suffs (rows). However, it is preferred to form three Suffs due to the following Hadith:

Marthad bin Abdillah has reported that whenever Sayyiduna Maalik bin Hubairah Radhiyallahu Anhu would perform the Janaaza Salaah and not many people were in attendance, he would divide them in three Suffs. Then he would say, 'Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said, 'When three Suffs perform (Janaaza) Salaah on a person, (forgiveness or Jannah) becomes compulsory for him.'" (Riyaadus Saaliheen)

Mufti Moosa

Question.

With regards to bad deeds being erased by good deeds, does this also apply when people abuse and oppress others like their staff or their spouses, swearing them and even physically assaulting them? It seems like they are under the impression that their Salaat and charity absolves them of their oppression.

Answer.

With regards to good deeds erasing bad deeds as well as when we ask Allah for forgiveness, only those sins are forgiven which have infringed on our duty to Allah. As far as those sins that have infringed on the rights of people, there will be no forgiveness until the oppressed person forgives the oppressor. No amount of Salaah, charity or repentance will secure forgiveness until the oppressed person's rights are redressed and/or the oppressed person forgives the oppressor.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) once asked the Sahaabah Radhiyallahu Anhum: "Do you know who a bankrupt person is?" They replied: "A bankrupt person among us is the one without money or assets."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) then said: "Indeed, the bankrupt one of my Ummah will come on the Day of Resurrection with Salaah, fasting and Zakaah (in his account), but he comes along having abused this one, slandered that one, unlawfully took the wealth of this one and shed the blood of that one, and beaten that one. So this one will be given from his good deeds, and that one will be given from his good deeds. And if his good deeds finish before their rights have been recompensed, some of their sins (i.e. the ones he wronged) will be taken and cast onto him, then he will be thrown into the Fire." (Sahih Muslim, Hadith #: 2581)

May Allah Ta'ala guide us all to become True Muslims in every facet of our lives, Ameen.

Mufti Moosa

Question.

My uncle has given his sons and daughters properties a few years ago as gifts in his lifetime. Now he is asking them not to claim from his inheritance when he passes away because he has already given them their inheritance and the children must leave the entire estate to his wife. Is this correct?

Answer.

As you have stated, the properties that your uncle had given to his children in his lifetime are gifts and belong to them. These properties will not form part of your uncle's estate upon his demise. Whatever your uncle owns at the time of his demise will form part of his estate and has to be distributed according to the Islamic Law of Succession and Inheritance amongst all his rightful heirs.

It is not correct for him to instruct his children to forfeit their inheritance on account of him giving them certain assets in his lifetime. The properties that he has given them in his lifetime are not inheritance. These are gifts. Inheritance only comes into effect after a person passes away. The children of your uncle are legitimate Shar'ee heirs and have the full right to claim their shares of inheritance upon his demise.

Yes, if after the demise of their father, the children wish to cede their shares to their mother without any coercion, they may do so. Alternately, your uncle may gift whatever assets he wishes to his wife in his lifetime as he has gifted his children.

Mufti Suhail

Question.

As a female, I tend to grow to hair along my jawline and my upper lip, I am uncomfortable with this. Can I remove

these hairs?

Answer.

Yes, it is permissible and in fact preferable for you to remove these hairs. (Naf'ul Mufti Was Sa'il, Pg: 419)

Mufti Suhail

Question.

Is it ok for a woman to wait at a Jamaat Khana for females for her lift whilst she is in a state of menses?

Answer.

She can wait in a Jamaat Khana/Musalla in the state of menstruation. A Jamaat Khana is not the same as a Musjid and purity is not a precondition for entering, unlike a Musjid where it is compulsory to be clean.

Mufti Suhail

Question.

I would like to ask a question relating to an application on my phone. I have recently downloaded the full quraan on to my iphone. Is it permissible for me to keep this phone in my pocket if I enter the bathroom even if the application is closed?

Answer.

If the Qur'an application is closed, it will be permissible to enter the toilet/bathroom with the phone.

Mufti Suhail

Question.

I use a western toilet, after urination I always flush before washing myself, then when fresh water collects in the commode I wash myself, yesterday however I flushed after urination fresh water collected but I urinated just a small amount again then I washed my private part and could feel the water splash, I ignored it and went on to pray. The water that splashed was contaminated by only a small amount of urine,

did that still break my ghusl, do I have to repeat my salah?

Answer.

If water from the toilet contaminated with urine splashed on your body, then that area should be washed. This is irrespective of the whether it was a little urine or a lot.

If you did not wash that area and performed your Salaah, then the validity of the Salaah will depend on the amount of contaminated water that splashed on you. If it was a little i.e. less than the size of a Dirham (roughly the size of the present 5 R coin) then the Salaah will be valid. If it was more than this, then the Salaah will not be valid and will have to be repeated.

Mufti Moosa

Question.

Please can you help me to understand better about homosexuality in Islam. I know that it is haraam. My brother (25) has recently come out to inform me that he is attracted only to men and that his feelings and emotions are growing stronger by the day. I am trying to help him to see that this is wrong but he says that he has tried everything to change his feelings but nothing has helped. Not Dua, Qur'an, Salah, Fasting, Zhikr. He is a Hafiz. I am deeply distressed and concerned that he may give in to his desires. He questions, How can Allah being so merciful make him in this way and expect him to stay away from men. How do I respond? Please help!

Answer.

Homosexuality is unnatural. We do not know the background of your brother and why he feels attracted to men. Had we known, we would have more insight for us to advise accordingly.

You may win the confidence of your brother and enquire from him what

has led him to have such feelings. This will give you more insight and be able to diagnose the cause of his inclination.

Many youngsters have this unnatural inclination. This could be Shaytaan's influence. Today's youngsters fall prey to the misgivings of the modern-day atheistic media. An abstinence from these forms of media would serve well in facilitating a return to normality.

Your brother is 25. If he gets married and starts living with a woman, the exposure to the woman will allow him to change.

We pray that Allah grants ease in your matter.

Abu Salman

Question.

A latecomer enters the Musjid when the Imam is in Sajdah. Should he join the congregation (Jama'ah) immediately or should he wait for the Imam to rise from Sajdah and join the congregation thereafter?

Answer.

The latecomer should recite the Takbir of Tahreem (the opening Takbir to commence the Salaah) and immediately join the Imaam in whatever position he is in. He should not wait for the Imaam to wake up from Sajdah or any other posture before commencing Salaah. (Ahsanul Fatawa, Vol: 3, Pg: 275)

The great scholar of Hadith, Imaam Abdullah bin Mubarak (ra) said; "If a person finds the Imaam in Sajdah, he should join immediately. Perhaps, it is destined that in that particular Sajdah, Allah will pardon his sins." (Tirmizi)

Mufti Suhail

Question.

One of my friend said to me that we are not allowed to ask the Prophet

Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to intercede for us whilst standing beside his grave in Medina. He said that no Sahabi (RA) has ever done that. Can you please tell me the name of the Sahabi who asked the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) for intercession whilst standing beside his grave?

Answer.

It is lawful to request for intercession while standing on the holy grave of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). It is proved from the salaf that they requested for intercession while standing beside the holy grave of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). Many Hadiths report the holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), as saying: "Whoever will pay a visit to my grave, my intercession will become due for him".

Based on the above mentioned hadith it is lawful to pay a visit on the holy grave and request for intercession. As the holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is alive in his grave, which is supported from Mutawatir hadiths.

Question.

I would like to know if I have Rs 1 lakh and wanted to give to my friend who is into business and get Rs 5000 every month as profit fixed without any share in losses as long as he has my investment. Is this halal? (2) If he pays me variable like one time Rs. 5000 another month 6,000 is this halal? Please suggest your opinion on this with valid points.

Answer.

It is not lawful to take profit each month without investing one's money as partnership or muzarabah. Likewise if he gives money without fixing it then it shall also not be lawful to take it. If you want to earn profit then it shall be neces-

sary to invest your money as partnership or muzarabah.

DUDeoband

Question

I have a good friend, one day I wrote a message to my friend on WhatsApp messenger, "Apko Meri Qasam Hai Ab Kabhi Bat Mat Kariyega". My friend is not talking with me nor writing any message because of the above mentioned Qasam. I want to know how we should proceed as per the Islamic rules.

Answer.

One should not take oath except in the name of Allah. It is not allowed to take oath in one's own name. You should do taubah. When your friend is a good one then why did you stop talking to him. However, if both of you have some differences you should remove them and start talking to each other.

DUDeoband

Question.

Please clear me about the Baha'i religion; someone told me it is part of the Islamic religion and therefore we should follow it.

Answer.

That Baha'i religion is also Islam is totally wrong. As per some books written on Baha'i religion it is learnt that the beliefs of this religion are kufriya. A person who embraces their concepts cannot remain a Muslim. For example it is their belief that only Bahauallah is kamil (perfect) and akmal mazhar-i-zuhoor (perfect manifestation) of Allah and the matla anwar (rising place of sun) of sacred haqiqat of Allah. Moreover, they do not believe in the holy Qur'an, their holy Book is Kitab Aqdas authored by Bahauallah. They do not believe in Khatm-i-Nubuwwat and Khatm-i-Risalat (finality

of Prophethood) etc.

DUDeoband

Question.

I, in a state of anger, held the Quran in my hands without wudhu. What is kaffarah of this mistake? Please reply.

Answer.

It is not lawful, and therefore a sin, to touch the Holy Quran without wudhu. You should do true taubah from this and should not repeat this again. Taubah will purge the sin away. There is no special kaffarah for this in the Shari'ah except taubah.

Question.

If you have started praying fardh Namaz and some people form Jamah behind you, do you break your namaz to join them or you continue on yourself? And also if you have prayed your fardh namaz and some brothers come and form Jamah for the same fardh namaz, is it better to join them? If yes, what niyyat should I do before joining?

Answer.

If some people come in the mosque after the jamah of the mosque is over and they establish second Jamah then you should not join them by breaking your salah rather complete your salah. Likewise if you have offered fardh salah alone then do not join them in jamah with nafl intention. However if you are offering fardh salah alone and the jamah of the mosque starts then you may join the jamah of the mosque by discontinuing your salah provided you have not completed one rakah of two rakah salah and three rakahs of the four rakah salah.

Likewise if you have completed fardh salah alone then you may join the Imam in Zuhr and Isha salah with nafl

intention.

DUDeoband

Question.

Can a Muslim boy marry to a Christian girl of other countries? A quick reply will be appreciated.

Answer.

The Christians of our times are atheist they are not following their religion; hence they shall not be counted among the people of the Books and the nikah of a Muslim shall not be valid with them.

DUDeoband

Question.

I heard from somebody that not wearing under garments is sunnah. So I would like to know about wearing and not wearing of under garments in case of both Muslim men and women. Please explain in the light of Quran and Hadith if any.

Answer.

It is the common ruling of Shari'ah regarding the dress that they cover those body parts obligatory to be covered. Also they do not resemble the dresses of the non-Muslims. If underwear is worn underneath the garments by which the structure and size of coverable body parts are not exposed then according to the Shari'ah there is no harm in wearing underwear for men and women, rather it will be lawful, it cannot be termed against the Sunnah. Yes, only wearing the underwear which exposes the body structure is not right.

Question.

I am slightly bald in my forehead. I would like to know if I undergo a cosmetic surgery (hair bonding) for the same, will I be still eligible for doing my routine namaz or is my ghusl valid. If I

am not eligible, please let me know the reason also.

Answer.

If the hairs that are transplanted by surgery cannot be separated then they shall carry the same ruling as of the original hair of head in respect of wudhu and ghusl. But if they may be separated then masah will not be enough on those hair; while making wudhu it shall be necessary to do masah of one fourth part of the head excluding the artificial hair; otherwise wudhu shall not be valid and as for the ghusl it is necessary to put off the artificial hair and let water reach the

root of the hair; otherwise ghusl shall not be valid.

It should also be noted that if the hair that are transplanted are the hair of the same person or were taken from other part of the head or from the hair of animals except pig or they are artificial hair prepared from pure things then it is allowable to have hair bonding for hiding baldness. But, if they are the hair of any man or they are impure in itself i.e. they are pig hair or prepared from impure things then it is not lawful to transplant such hair according to the Shariah.

DUDEoband

The Intention of Imam al-Haddad for Sending Blessings Upon the Prophet (SAWS)

O God, I intend by my sending blessings upon the Prophet (SAWS) fulfilling Your command, and professing belief in Your book, and following the way of Your Prophet, our liege lord Muhammad (SAWS) and (declaring) love for him, yearning for him and venerating his right and to ennoble him, and due to the fact that he is deserving of that so accept this from me by virtue of Your grace and excellence.

Remove the veil of heedlessness from my heart, and make me from the righteous. O God, increase him in eminence beyond the eminence with which You have preferred him, and increase him in honour beyond the honour which You have given him and raise his station in the stations of the Emissaries, and raise too his level in the levels of the Prophets.

I ask of You Your Divine pleasure and for Paradise, O Lord of Creations, with well-being in religious and worldly life and in the Hereafter.

I ask of You death upon the Book, the Prophetic Way and Community and upon the testament of faith, without change or alteration.

By Your grace and excellence towards me, forgive me for what I have sinned. Indeed You are the Oft- Returning, the Most Merciful, and may God send blessings upon our liege lord Muhammad (SAWS) and on his folk and his Companions.

Overcome Vile Habits

Ya'aa ayyuhal lazeena aamanoo laa yashkar qawmum min qawmin 'asaaa anyyakoonoo khairam minhum wa laa nisaaa'um min nisaaa'in 'Asaaa ay yakunna khairam minhunna wa laa talmizooo an-fusakum wa laa tanaabazoo bil alqaab; bi'sal ismul fusooqu ba'dal eemaan; wa mal-lam yatub fa-ulaaa'ika humuz zaalimoon.

O those who believe, no men should ever mock at other men, since it is possible that the latter are better than the former, nor (should) women (ever mock) at other women, since it is possible that the latter women are better than the former ones. And do not find fault with one another, nor call one another with bad nicknames. Bad is the name of sinfulness after embracing Faith. And whoever does not repent, such people are the wrongdoers. [49:11]

This verse mentions the rights and etiquettes to be observed between individuals. It prohibits three social evils: [1] ridiculing one another; [2] finding fault with one another; and [3] reviling one another with nicknames.

According to Qurtubi, mocking or scoffing does not only connote mocking with the tongue, but it also implies mimicking someone, making pointed references to him, laughing at his words, his works, his appearance, his dress or calling people's attention to some of his defects, so that they may laugh at him. Mocking includes all of this. By the clear text of the Qur'an, poking fun at someone or ridiculing him is absolutely forbidden.

Stylistically, the Qur'an has, on this occasion, addressed men and women separately. Men are referred to as *qawm*, a word that is specifically reserved for male members of the human society, though by extension the word most often includes the female members of the human society as well. The Qur'an, however, generally employs the word *qawm* for both men and women, but here it is specifically used for men in contradistinction to the word *nisa'* which specifically refers to women. Here both men and

women are reminded that mocking one another is a disdainful and evil act. They must refrain from it, because it is very likely that the man who is mocked at may be better than the mocking person and the woman who is mocked at may be better than the mocker. Here the Qur'an prohibits men from mocking other men, and women from mocking other women. This, however, does not mean that it is permitted for men to mock at women or for women to mock at men. The actual reason for making separate mention of the two sexes is that Islam does not allow free intermingling of the two sexes. Ridiculing each other generally occurs where there is such an intermingling. Therefore, in a Muslim society it is inconceivable that men would mock a woman or women would mock a man in an intermingling situation.

In short: no one dare make mockery of a person whose body, face, shape and stature are defective, imperfect, impaired or deformed, because he does not know that the other person, in the sight of Allah, might be better than him on account of his sincerity and purity of heart. When the righteous predecessors heard this verse, they adopted a conducive attitude: For example, Sayyidna

'Amr Ibn Shurahbil (ra) said that he would not laugh at a person when he sees him drink milk direct from the udders of a goat, lest he should become one like him. Sayyidna 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (ra) said: "I would not like to scoff at a dog, lest I be metamorphosed into a dog (Qurtubi)."

It is recorded in Sahih of Muslim on the authority of Sayyidna Abu Hurairah (ra) that the Holy Prophet (SAWS) said: "Allah does not look at your faces and your wealth; He looks at your hearts and your works." Qurtubi derives a legal maxim from this tradition of the Holy Prophet (SAWS) that in any matter it is not proper to pass a categorical judgment on the basis of overt evidence or circumstances, because it is possible that a person's overt actions might seem to be good but in the sight of Allah, on account of the insincerity and impurity of his heart, they could be bad, as He is fully aware of the inner state of people's hearts. On the contrary, a person's overt actions might seem to us bad, but in the sight of Allah, on account of the sincerity and purity of his heart, they could serve as an expiation of the bad actions, as He is fully aware of the inner state of people's heart.

The next thing that is prohibited in the verse is *lamz* which connotes to find fault with someone or to upbraid him. The verse says *Wa laa talmizoo an-fusakum* literally it means, "Do not find fault with your selves." But the intention is: "Do not find fault with one another" [49:11] as is seen in the translation above. This expression is similar to the expression *laa taqtuloo an-fusakum* '...And do not kill yourselves - [4:29]'. Although the verse commands "do not kill yourselves", it purports to say "do not kill one another". This expression indi-

cates that, from one point of view, killing another person amounts to killing oneself. Often it happens that if one person kills another person, the victim's supporters kill the murderer. Even if this does not happen, a Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. Killing one's brother is like killing oneself and rendering oneself crippled, helpless and powerless. Similarly, the expression '*and not find fault with yourselves*' means when you find fault with others and upbraid them, others will find fault with you and upbraid you, because no man is normally free from any fault. Scholars have formulated the maxim: *feeka guyoob wa lin-naasi a'yun* "You have faults and people have eyes" with which they see them. Thus if someone seeks out the imperfections of some other person and broadcasts them, the latter will do the same in return. If, however, he exercises patience and evades retaliation to his verbal attacks, it comes down to the same thing: If one considers carefully, he will find that defaming and despising one's Muslim brother is actually casting aspersions on oneself.

Scholars have suggested that the satisfaction, well-being and happiness of man lies in examining his own faults and finding ways of mending them. This approach to life will give him no time to find fault with others and broadcast it. How well the last king of India Bahadur Shah Zafar has versified it (translation):

As long as we were unaware of our own faults, we looked into the faults and failings of others; But when we looked at our own faults there remained no one faulty in the world.

The third thing that is prohibited in the verse is reviling one another with nicknames which are offensive to them, e.g. calling a person lame, hands cropped,

Cont'd on page 16

Lessons From Sahih al-Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

The Book of Salaah

Chapter 3 : Tying a loincloth at one's back when offering Salaah.

And Abu Haazim quoted from Sahl bin Sa'd that they offered Salaah with the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) while tying the loincloth at the nape of their necks.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

There are two purposes of this chapter, firstly, that one should tie the loincloth at the nape of his neck in order to avoid its chance of unwrapping during Salaah, and possibility of falling of his gaze on his ones private parts which is disliked by Shariah. Further, in this case other people may also end up looking at his private parts which also is Haraam as per the Shariah.

Secondly, the apprehension of losing loincloth anytime if not tied well. Imam Bukhari has supported his argument with the statement of Sayyiduna Abu Haazim who says that the Sahaaba offered Salaah with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) while wrapping a single cloth tied at the nape of their necks. Had it not been permissible, the Sahaaba would not have done so in the presence of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Hadith No. 344

10. *Radiant Reality*

Narrated Muhammad bin Al-Munkadir

Once Jaabir prayed with his Izar tied to his back while his clothes were lying beside him on a wooden peg. Somebody asked him, "Do you offer your prayer in a single Izar?" He replied, "I did so to show it to a fool like you. Had anyone of us two garments in the lifetime of the Prophet?"

Hadith No. 345

Narrated Muhammad bin Al-Munkadir

I saw Jaabir bin Abdullah praying in a single garment and he said that he had seen the Prophet praying in a single garment.

Comments

Once Sayyiduna Jaabir offered his salaah wrapped in a single cloth which he had tied at the nape of his neck while his clothes were lying on a wood peg besides him. Somebody asked him why he did so irrespective of having enough clothes at his disposal. Jaabir said that he did so purposely because he anticipated someone to ask him such a question, and he wanted to make the permissibility of offering Salaah in a single cloth public. During the time of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam),

some Sahaaba possessing only a single cloth used to tie it to cover their body and offer Salaah.

Chapter 4 : To offer the Salaah with a single garment wrapped round the body.

Az-Zuhri said that al-Multahif is same as al-Mutawishih and that is to cross the ends of the cloth around one's shoulders;

al-Ishtimaal is also the same. Umm Haani said that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wrapped his body with a single garment and crossed its ends over his shoulders.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

In previous chapter it was mentioned that if a person offers Salaah in a single garment he should try to button it around his neck; this is necessary only when the garment is small and tight. In the chapter under discussion, it is said that if the garment is loose enough then it is not necessary to tie it up, one may wrap his body with it in such a way that the right corner of the garment is placed over the left shoulder and the left corner over the right one. This way the garment is ensured to remain intact during Salaah. For wrapping the garment like this, different words have been used in the Hadith viz., al-Multahif, al-Mutawasheh and al-Ishtimaal. Imam Bukhari has quoted Zuhri saying that these words are synonymous.

Hadith No. 346

Narrated Umar bin Abi Salmah

The Prophet prayed in one garment and crossed its ends.

Hadith No. 347

Narrated Umar bin Abi Salmah

I saw the Prophet offering prayers in a

single garment in the house of Um-Salmah and he had crossed its ends around his shoulders.

Hadith No. 348

Narrated Umar bin Abi Salmah

In the house of Um-Salmah I saw Allah's Apostle offering prayers, wrapped in a single garment around his body with its ends crossed round his shoulders.

Hadith No. 349

Narrated Abu Murra

(The freed slave of Umm Hani) Umm Hani, the daughter of Abi Talib said, "I went to Allah's Apostle in the year of the conquest of Makkah and found him taking a bath and his daughter Fatima was screening him. I greeted him. He asked, 'Who is she?' I replied, 'I am Umm Hani bint Abi Talib.' He said, 'Welcome! O Umm Hani.' When he finished his bath he stood up and prayed eight Rak at while wearing a single garment wrapped round his body and when he finished I said, 'O Allah's Apostle ! My brother has told me that he will kill a person whom I gave shelter and that person is so and so the son of Hubaira.' The Prophet said, 'We shelter the person whom you have sheltered.' " Umm Ham added, "And that was before noon (Dhuha)."

Hadith No. 350

Narrated Abu Huraira

A person asked Allah's Apostle about the offering of the prayer in a single garment. Allah's Apostle replied, "Has every one of you got two garments?"

Comments

The purpose of mentioning three narrations of Umar bin Abi Salmah on a single topic

Imam Bukhari has mentioned

three narrations of Umar bin Abi Salmah. Firstly, he mentions a narration with a strong chain which has only two narrators between Imam Bukhari and the first narrator i.e., Umar bin Abi Salmah. This narrations does not indicate that the narrator himself witnessed Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) doing the act, therefore, Imam Bukhari followed it with other narrations from the same narrator which clearly indicate that the narrator personally witnessed Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) doing the act.

Allaama Ayni has quoted a consensus of the jurists regarding the fact that it is permissible to offer Salaah donning a single garment but at the same time it is preferable to have two garments as quoted by him, below, from Tawoos, Ahmad, Ibrahim, Nakha'ee and Tabaari.

“Indeed, Salaah is Makruh (disliked) while donning a single garment if two are available”.

Tahaavi has quoted on the authority of Ibn Umar that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

“When someone among you offers Salaah, he should wear two garments as Allah is most deserving you should adorn for”

Be Fully Human

Why is it that we refuse to accept the full human experience, the full design of the human experiment? We want the happiness without the sadness. The light, without the dark. The ease without the hardship. We want to learn to walk, without struggling through the falls. When a child learns to walk, the falls are part of the process. The fall is just as important as the rise, The slip of Adam was a lesson, not an oversight of God. God gives us the strength and the weakness. Not as an oversight, not as a flaw in the design. He gives us both because each part plays a purpose in our development, and our ultimate success. Don't stunt the process of your growth but trying to limit the spectrum of the human plan. 80 many of us fear failure so much, that we are afraid to try. But reflect on this: was it through your successes or was it through your failures that you learned your deepest lessons? Our successes encourage us. But it is our failures that teach us. In life, we need both. Success gives us the encouragement and motivation to keep going, while failure, teaches us the difficult, often painful, but necessary. lessons we need to grow and fulfill our ultimate purpose.

Yasmeen Mogahed

Do Not Despise the Sinner

Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: “That person who taunts and ridicules his Muslim brother over a sin from which he has repented, will not die until he himself commits that same sin.” For example, you come to know that a certain person committed or was involved in a particular sin and you also know that this person has repented from it. To think low of him or to taunt or ridicule him because of that sin, by saying something like: “You are the one who was involved in certain evil actions”, is in itself a sin.

Through repentance a person has corrected his relationship with Allah Most High. Through repentance not only has the sin been forgiven, it has also been erased from his book of deeds! Allah Most High has erased it from his book of deeds but you, because of that sin, are thinking low of him and treating him with contempt. You are taunting and ridiculing him. This action is extremely despised by Allah Most High.

This is regarding a person whom you know has repented. If you don't know whether he has repented or not, then there is always this possibility that he, being a mu'min (believer), has repented or will repent in the future. Therefore, if someone has committed a sin and you do not know whether he has repented or not,

you still do not have the right to hold him in contempt. It is possible that he has repented. Remember! Abhorrence should be for the sin and not the sinner! Hatred should be for sins. Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not teach us to despise those who sin.

On the other hand, the sinner is worthy of pity and compassion, for this distressed person has been overtaken by a sickness. If a person is overtaken by a physical sickness, do you abhor his sickness or the person who is sick? Does the sick person become the target of your hatred? Obviously, the sick person is not deserving of your hatred. Yes, despise his sickness. Concern yourself with removing his sickness, so make du'a. The sick person should not be the target of hatred. He should be pitied for the reason that this poor person is caught up in a difficulty.

If someone is a kafir (disbeliever) then despise his kufr (disbelief), do not despise him. Make du'a for him that Allah Most High grants him guidance. Amin. How much did the kuffar (disbelievers) not persecute the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)? They shot at him with arrows, they pelted stones at him, and his body bled from various places, but the words that flowed from his mouth were the following: “O Allah! Grant my people guidance, for they do not know

the reality” (of this din).

Take note that that he did not despise them because of their kufr, shirk (associating partners with Allah), oppression and transgressions. Rather, while expressing pity and affection, he made du’a for them that ‘O Allah! These people are ignorant. They are unaware of the reality; therefore they are treating me in this manner. O Allah! Grant them guidance’.

So when seeing someone involved in sin, have pity on him and make du’a for him and try to steer him away from sin. Advise and counsel him but do not think low of him. Perhaps Allah accepts his repentance and he surpasses you in the sight of Allah.

I have heard the following words of advice of Mawlana Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi from my respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi’ and Dr. Abdul Hayy ‘Arifi (raa):

“I consider every current Muslim and every non Muslim, as far as the future is concerned to be superior to me.” “As far as the future is concerned” means that although the person is presently in the condition of kufr, maybe Allah Most High grants him the tawfiq (guidance) of repenting and he is freed from the burden of kufr. Thereafter, Allah Most High raises his status so high that he surpasses me!

“Every current Muslim” means that a person who is a Muslim, a person of iman (true faith), one whom Allah Most High has granted the wealth of iman. What do I know regarding his connection and status with Allah Most High? Every person’s relationship with Allah Most High is unique. How can we judge anyone? Therefore, I consider every Muslim to be superior to me.

In this statement of Mawlana Thanwi, “I consider every Muslim to be superior to me”, there is obviously no possibility of lies and deception, or that he just said it out of moral courtesy. He said

it because he firmly believed it. Anyway, to think low of someone, even though it is due to his committing of sin, is not permissible.

This malady of regarding others with contempt is found mostly in people who have reformed and turned towards din (Islam). They were not concerned with din previously but now have changed and became steadfast on salah and fasting. They have made their dressing and appearance in conformity with the Shari’ah. They have started frequenting the masjid. They have become regular in performing salah with congregation. Satan induces such a person with this thought that you are now on the straight path. These people who are involved in sin are ruined. The result of this thought is that he starts thinking low of them and treats them with contempt. He now starts criticizing them in a hurtful manner. This results in Satan involving such people in vanity, self-regard and pride. When a person suffers from self-regard and pride, all his good actions are destroyed.

When a person’s gaze falls on himself that he is pious and others are bad then he is caught up in vanity. Vanity causes all good actions to become worthless. Only that action is acceptable which is done with sincerity for Allah Most High alone. After performing the action the person makes shukr (gives thanks) unto Allah Most High that He granted me the tawfiq to perform this action (if He did not grant me the tawfiq, I would never have been able to carry out this action).

Therefore, do not treat anyone with contempt. Do not think low of any non-Muslim or any sinner.

It is mentioned in a hadith that when seeing a person afflicted with any sickness, recite the following du’a:

Alhamdu lilla-hil-ladhee aafaanee mim-mab-talaaka bih wa fadh-dha-lanee ala

*katheerim mim-man khalaqa tafdheelaa
All praises are due unto Allah, who has
granted me safety from that which he has
afflicted you with, and granted me well-
being over many of the creation.*

(Al-Hisn al-Hasin, p.349)

It is sunnah to recite this du'a when seeing an afflicted person. The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) taught us this (Note: it should be recited softly lest the afflicted person is offended).

Shaykh Dr. Abdul Hayy 'Arifi (ra) used to say: "Whenever I pass by a hospital, I always recite this du'a." He would also make du'a that Allah grants the sick good health.

One of my teachers used to say that Allah's Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) taught us to recite this du'a when seeing a sick person, but I also recite it when seeing someone involved in sin. Sometimes when walking on the road I see people lined up at the cinema houses purchasing tickets. I recite this du'a on seeing them. Then I make shukr unto Allah Most High that He has saved me from this sin.

The reason for reciting this du'a when seeing a person involved in sin is that just as a physically sick person is worthy of pity, so is the sinner worthy of pity and sympathy, for he is also caught up in a predicament. Also, make du'a for him that: "O Allah! Remove this difficulty from him."

It should be known that those who are presently involved in sin and you consider them low and worthy of contempt may later on receive the tawfiq of repentance and surpass you! So for what reason are you boasting? If you have been granted the tawfiq of abstaining from sin then make shukr unto Allah Most High. If they haven't as yet received the tawfiq, then make du'a for them that Allah Most High

grants them guidance and grants them relief from their afflictions. Amin.

Anyway, despise kufr, despise sin and transgression, but do not despise the person. In fact, you should treat him with love and kindness. When you speak to him, speak with softness and affection. Speak with feeling and love so that it may have a good effect on him. This was always the method of all our pious elders.

I heard this story of Hadrat Junayd al-Baghdadi (ra) from my respected father Mufti Muhammad Shafi' (ra). While passing a certain place, Hadrat Junayd saw a person hanging from the gallows, whose hands and one leg was amputated. He inquired from the people regarding this person. The people informed him that this person was a habitual thief. His hand was cut when he was caught the first time. His leg was cut when caught the second time. Now on the third occasion he has been hanged. Hadrat Junayd went forward and kissed the dead man's foot. People said to him: "This man was such a big and habitual thief, and you kissed his feet?" He replied: "Although he had committed such a big crime and sin for which he has been punished, but he had a wonderful quality in him, and that is steadfastness (istiqamah). Although he used this quality in a wrong way, however, he remained steadfast on the manner of his chosen occupation. His hand was amputated but he never left his choice. His leg was amputated yet he remained steadfast on theft. His other hand was amputated and still he did not give up his occupation. He remained steadfast on theft until finally his life has been taken. It is now apparent that he had the quality of steadfastness in him and I kissed his foot because of this quality." May Allah Most High grant us this quality in our worship and obedience unto Him. Amin.

Anyway, the pious servants of Al-

lah do not despise people but despise the evils perpetrated by them. They (the pious) go to the extent of saying that if an evil person has any good qualities in him then those good qualities should be striven for! Concern yourself with trying to remove the bad qualities in a person by speaking to him with love and affection. Speak only to him and do not speak to others about him.

It is mentioned in a hadith: "A believer (mu'min) is a mirror to another believer" (Abu Dawud). If a person has a spot on his face and stands in front of a mirror, the mirror will reflect that spot on his face. The mirror is showing him his defects. In the same way, a believer is also a mirror to another believer. When a believer sees another with a defect, he should inform him with love and affection that you have this certain weakness in you, remove it.

It is just like when a person has a worm or any insect crawling on him, then out of concern you inform him that there is an insect crawling on him, so remove it. Similarly, if a Muslim brother has a *dini* defect in him, then with love and affection, inform him that he has this defect in him, because a believer is a mirror to another believer.

Mawlana Ashraf 'Ali Thanawi says that this hadith teaches us that when you see a fault in another person, then inform only that person of this fault, do not tell it to others. The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) compared a believer to a mirror. The mirror only exposes the spot on the face to the person standing in front of it and not to others. Thus, the duty of a believer is to inform the person involved that he has a certain weakness in him and not to inform others of his weakness. If a person also tells others then it implies that he has acted upon his own evil desires and this will not be

an act of din anymore. If he only informs and advises the afflicted person with love and concern, then this is what iman (true faith) and brotherhood demands. But to despise or think low of him is not permissible under any circumstance.

May Allah Most High grant us the understanding and the guidance to practice on this. Amin.

Cont'd from page 9

blind or one-eyed; or referring to him by other offensive nicknames. Sayyidna Abu Jabirah Ansari (ra) says, "This verse was revealed in connection with us. When we migrated to Madinah, most of us had two or three names. Some of them were popularised in order to denigrate, defame or belittle the bearer of the name. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) was not aware of this situation; as a result he sometimes called them by one of these offensive names unwittingly. The noble Companions informed the Prophet (SAWS) that the name offends the bearer of that name. This verse was revealed on that occasion." Sayyidna Ibn-'Abbas (ra) says that prohibition of *tanabuzoo bil-alqab* means that if a person committed a sin or performed an evil deed from which he repented and mended his ways, it is unlawful for anyone to call him by denigrating names, such as thief, an adulterer, a drunkard or any such name. The Prophet (SAWS) is reported to have said: "Anyone who denigrates a Muslim who has committed a sin of which he has repented, Allah takes it upon Himself that He will get the person to commit the very same sin and expose him to embarrassment and humiliation in this world and in the Hereafter [Qurtubi]."

Mufti Muhammad Shafi Uthmani (ra)
Adapted from Ma'ariful Qur'an

The Truthful One

A'id al-Qarni

Of all men who have ever walked the earth, none has been — nor will any ever be — as truthful as the Prophet (SAWS). How could anyone come close to him, when he never spoke a single lie in his entire life, not even one that was meant as a joke?

And while he held himself to a high standard of truthfulness, he ordered his followers to do the same. He said: “Verily, truthfulness leads to aI-Birr (righteousness, piety), and aI-Birr leads to Paradise. And a man continues to be truthful and to search out for the truth until, with Allah, he is written as a truthful person...”

The Prophet (SAWS) informed Muslims that, while a believer might be miserly or cowardly on occasion, he will never lie; furthermore, he forbade Muslims from lying even if they do so only as a joke, in order to make others laugh.

Enough of a testament to his truthfulness is the fact that Allah (SAWS) entrusted him with the job of conveying His message to both mankind and jinns. The Prophet (SAWS) then carried out that job with complete truthfulness and trustworthiness, accurately conveying the entire message he was entrusted with, without adding or removing even a single letter of that message.

The Prophet (SAWS) was truthful on all occasions and in all situations — in times of war and times of peace; when he was happy and when he was angry; when he was serious and when he was joking;

when he was engaged in normal conversation and when he issued legal rulings. And he was truthful with all people— with close acquaintances and strangers, with men and women, with friends and enemies. When buying and selling, when signing contracts or treaties, when delivering sermons or writing letters, when issuing legal rulings or telling stories — in these and all other situations, the Prophet (SAWS) was completely truthful. In fact, he couldn't lie, for Allah not only forbade him from lying, but also promoted him from it.

The Prophet (SAWS) was truthful not only in speech, but also with his gestures and signals. For instance, in certain situations, he considered the act of winking to be a lie, because it gave key information to some people, while leaving others in the dark. I am referring here to an incident that actually occurred during the Prophet's lifetime. During the conquest of Makkah, the Prophet (SAWS) issued a universal pardon to his enemies, with the exception of a few men, men who had especially been cruel, evil, and brutal in the enmity they showed towards Muslims. Such men, the Prophet (SAWS) announced, were to be killed, even if they were found clutching the covering of the Ka'bah. One of those men was 'Abdullah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi' as-Sarh.

'Abdullah ibn Sa'd knew he was a wanted man, so he went into hiding; he appealed to 'Uthman ibn 'Affan (RA) for help. Agreeing to help him, 'Uthman took

him to the Prophet (SAWS), made him stand before the Prophet (SAWS) while others were pledging allegiance to him, and said, "O Messenger of Allah, accept the pledge of 'Abdullah.'" 'Abdullah offered his hand three times in order to pledge allegiance, and each time, the Prophet (SAWS) held back his hand and instead simply fixed his gaze on 'Abdullah. On 'Abdullah's fourth try, the Prophet (SAWS) finally extended his hand, thus accepting 'Abdullah's pledge to follow and obey him. The Prophet (SAWS) then went to his Companions and said, "Was there not a sensible man among you who, upon seeing me restrain my hand from accepting his pledge, could have killed him." They replied, "We did not know what you were thinking (when you held your hand back), O Messenger of Allah. Should you not have signaled to us (by winking your eye and by thus informing us that we should kill him)?" The Prophet (SAWS) replied:

"It is not befitting for a Prophet to have a treacherous eye (i.e., it is for this reason that I did not wink to you as a signal)?"

Allah said:

That He may ask the truthful ones [Allah's Messengers and His Prophets] about their truth (i.e., the conveyance of Allah's Message that which they were charged with).

(33: 8)

He also said:

O you who believe! Be afraid of Allah, and be with those who are true [in words and deeds]. (9: 119)

And in another verse, He said:

Then if they had been true to Allah, it would have been better for them. (47: 21)

The Prophet (SAWS) was truthful with Allah, truthful with himself, truthful with his family, truthful with his friends, truthful with people in general, and even truthful with his enemies. Had the truth been, an actual man, that man would

have been Muhammad (SAWS). He was known as, "The Truthful, Trustworthy One" prior to the advent of Islam; imagine, then, how he became once he began to receive revelation from his Lord, once he became a Prophet (SAWS), once he became blessed with guidance and uprightness.

Contentment

Rasulullah (SAWS) stated:

- "Wealth is not having many possessions. Rather, true wealth is the wealth of the soul." (Bukhari)
- "He is successful, who embraces Islam, whose sustenance is sufficient, and who is content with what Allah has given him." (Muslim)
- "That which is little yet sufficient is better than that which is plentiful but distracts (from one's purpose in life)." (Ahmad)
- "Whoever amongst you wakes up, secure in his home, healthy in his body, having the bare amount of food that he requires for the day, then it is as if the entire world has been given to him, with all that it contains!" (Tirmizi)
- Hakeem ibn Hizam (RA) reported: "I asked the Prophet (SAWS) and he gave me, then I asked the Prophet and he gave me, then I asked the Prophet and he gave me. Then the Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said: "O Hakeem, verily, this wealth is green and sweet. Whoever receives it graciously will be blessed in it but whoever receives it with a greedy heart will not be blessed in it. He will be like one who eats yet is never satisfied. The upper hand that gives is better than the lower hand that takes." (Bukhari)

The Society of Perfect Shari'ah

Muhammad Ali

The uniqueness of the Muslim society

The Muslim society as defined by Islam is a unique society that is unlike other societies known to mankind throughout history. This is because it is a society that was formed by the immortal shari'ah of Islam which Allah sent down in full as He says in His Book:

This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.
(5:3)

This shari'ah which Allah has enjoined upon His slaves was complete from the beginning. This is the shari'ah which formed this society on the foundations that Allah wants for His slaves, not on the foundations that some people may want for others. This society was established in the shade of this shari'ah, in contrast to what happened in the case of western societies which developed as a result of class conflict and dealing with ever-changing methods of production and conflicts of interests and ideas.

It is Islamic shari'ah which formed the Muslim society, not Muslim society that formed Islamic shari'ah. It is Islamic shari'ah that laid out its foundations, characteristics, principles, values and traditions. Shari'ah was not simply a response to human needs and requirements as is the case with worldly laws. Rather it is a divine blueprint for all of mankind which encompasses everything in the

lives of individuals and societies. It defined the relationship of the individual member of that society with his Lord, with his own self, and with his family, relatives, neighbours, brothers in Islam, friends and all the members of his society. It defined the relationship of the Islamic state with others both at times of peace and times of war. Hence Islamic fiqh covers acts of worship, interactions with others, family laws, jihad, treaties, halal and haram, Sunnahs, and etiquette. It has not omitted anything in the lives of individuals and societies, rather it has organized everything, starting with the etiquette of relieving oneself and ending with the establishment of the khilafah - the Caliph - and leadership of the ummah.

This is the way in which the Muslim society is unique and distinct from other societies: because the One Who created, established and formed it knows more about what is in the interests of mankind than any philosopher, thinker or social scientist who may be involved in laying the foundations of human societies.

As time goes by and human knowledge advances, people come closer to discovering and appreciating the values, systems and laws which were first established by Muslim societies under the shade of Islamic shari'ah.

The immutability of the rulings of Islamic Shari 'ah

No matter what new needs arise in life, and no matter how much progress and development call for the promulgation of new laws to deal with the new developments, those efforts remain based on a fixed principle which Allah wants to remain in the Muslim society so that it continues to be unique and distinct from other societies.

Thus shari'ah is like a fence that permits the factors of development and progress to have their effect on the Muslim society, but within the limits of that fence which protects the authentic, unique and distinct nature of that society and prevents it from being assimilated or lost.

One may ask, is it a good thing for the development of society to remain attached to a fixed principle when life is constantly developing and its requirements and relationships are constantly changing, when it needs new laws and systems to address the ever changing needs of life?

In order to answer this question we need to have a deep knowledge of that fixed principle and the extent to which it encompasses the basic issues of life. We must also compare the basics of this fixed principle, which produced the Muslim society and the basics of other principles which produced other human societies, in a precise and objective manner. If it is understood that the fixed principles of Islam are established in such a way as to allow stability and ongoing development, and that they are still — after fifteen hundred years — superior to all the systems ever known to mankind, then the fixed nature of these principles will be seen as an advantage that guarantees ongoing progress and development. far removed from the pursuit of whims and desires, and offers protection against being influenced by whims and desires, devia-

tion and misguidance under the guise of progress and renewal.

Open to growth and development

This objective and precise comparison, governed by academic logic, between the social system in the true Muslim society and other social systems, will show us the great truth that this fixed basis on which Islamic shari'ah is founded is flexible and is more able to respond to the needs of new development in human life than all the new systems that mankind has invented and dubbed "progressive" but which, when compared with the holistic principles of Islam, appear to be backward in general, with many contradictions, shortcomings, irrational elements and features that go against human nature.

This Islamic shari'ah that shaped Muslim society has many features that enabled the Muslim society to grow and develop, and made it able to meet the ever-changing needs of mankind.

Some of the most important of these features are:

I. It is in accordance with the basic features of human nature, because it was created by Allah Who knows the nature of His creation and what is best suited to this nature.

2. It came in the form of universal holistic principles which can be implemented in detail with regard to ever-occurring minor issues and changing circumstances. So Zakah — for example — is a fixed and clearly-defined obligation, but the means of collecting it, calculating it and distributing it to those who are entitled to receive it are all things that are open to development in a manner that suits the time when it is collected and that best serves the interests of the poor.

Its pioneering comprehensiveness

The universal and holistic principles of shari'ah encompass all the basic aspects of human life. They encompass the life of the individual, the family and the society, the relationships of individuals with one another, the foundations on which the state rests, and the principles on which international relations are based. It set out the laws that govern civil, political, social and economic life, and it has not omitted any aspect of human life without setting guidelines. These laws are still ahead of the legislative theories that mankind has produced.

In this regard it is sufficient for us to quote one example to prove how Islam is far ahead of other systems: the system of inheritance in Islam, which this shari'ah brought fifteen hundred years ago, complete, fixed and comprehensive. It is just and fair to all the heirs, sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters, wives and husbands, fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, and all the relatives. We will appreciate the fact that Islamic shari'ah was far ahead of others with regard to this system when we realize that under the legislative system in Britain, as late as the end of the nineteenth century the oldest son still inherited everything and the rest of the heirs were at his mercy; if he wanted he would give them something, and if he wanted he would give them nothing.

Further proof of the way in which Islamic shari'ah is ahead of all the legislative systems invented by mankind is to be seen in the rulings that gave women all their rights for the first time in history and allowed them to enjoy full human rights centuries before the world had heard of human rights organizations or charters of human rights. At that early date, Islam proclaimed that women are the twin halves of men, as it says in the

hadith narrated by Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi, ad-Darimi and Ahmad. At that time when Christian societies were uncertain as to whether a woman was even human and were debating, the nature of her soul, the Qur'an proclaimed:

So their Lord accepted of them [their supplication and answered them], 'Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are [members] one of another. (3:195)

The Prophet accepted the bay'ah (oath of allegiance) from women on the basis that they would be Muslims and would hear and obey, just as he used to accept the bay'ah of men. The women's bay'ah was given independently of their menfolk and had nothing to do with them. All of this affirms the personal independence of the Muslim woman, and the fact that she is qualified to bear the responsibility of giving bay'ah, making a pledge and offering her loyalty to Allah and His Messenger. This happened centuries before the modern world gave women the right to express their opinions independently by means of elections. This is in addition to a great number of other rights such as the right to own wealth and possessions independently, the fact that she is not obliged to spend on anyone else even if she is rich and equality with men in terms of human worth, education, discipline and all other duties enjoined by shari'ah.

What Islam achieved with regard to women's position fifteen centuries ago in one fell swoop, no one in history has been able to achieve even in the twentieth century.

It is sufficient for us to note that the French Revolution, at the end of the eighteenth century, produced a document on human rights which was entitled "The Rights of Man". In the first paragraph of this document it says, "Man is born free

and cannot be enslaved.” There were many attempts to add the words “and woman”, but these attempts were rebuffed and the first paragraph of the proclamation of the revolution remained limited to the words, “Man is born free and cannot be enslaved.”

A century later, at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, the great French scholar Gustave le Bon stated in his book *The Spirit of Society* that women have only been equal to men at periods of decline. These words came in his refutation of those who demanded that women be given equal rights to vote along with men.

This is how things continued until the League of Nations was established after the First World War, and the United Nations after the Second World War. The campaigners for women’s rights did not succeed in gaining a statement of women’s equality with men until after a difficult struggle, because they were up against customs that had their roots in religion which stood as obstacles in their way, and they had no local or international texts of law that were fair to women which they could use as a means to overcome those obstacles of tradition that stood in the way of achieving women’s liberation.

In contrast, the texts of Islam in the Qur’an and Sunnah brought a definitive statement fifteen hundred years ago of equality between men and women in terms of reward and punishment, responsibility and reward, worship, human worth and human rights.

The situation of women in ancient laws was very bad, as the Indian leader Jawaharlal Nehru says in his book *The Discovery of India*. He said that woman’s situation in ancient India was better than in ancient Greece, or in ancient Rome, or during the early Christian period. Women had no identity, they had no freedom to dispose of their own affairs, they could not inherit and they enjoyed none of the human rights that men enjoyed.

Perfect and progressive

The basic principles of Islamic shari’ah were perfect and progressive from the outset; they did not start out imperfect and gradually make up for their shortcomings; they were not backward and then tried to address the problem and became progressive. Islamic shari’ah is still able to achieve this perfection and be progressive whenever it has the opportunity to be implemented properly.

“Islamic” Alcohol and Music

Rasulullah (SAWS) said: “There will be people from my Ummah, who will consume alcohol after changing its name, on their heads will be instruments of music and singing girls. Allah Ta’ala will make the ground swallow them and mutate them into apes and swine.” (Saheeh Ibni Hibbaan)

May Allah protect us from being amongst those people who will consume what is unlawful and be so bold to re-label the unlawful as lawful. When pleasure and carnal desire becomes the goal, then everything possible will be done so as to enjoy it, even if be the legalising of alcohol and music by calling it “Islamic”. Such persons no longer qualify to be from amongst the human race, thus they will be changed into apes and swine. They are a burden on earth, thus they will be swallowed by the ground.

A Word On Divorce

Mufti Zubair Bayat

The alarming explosion of Talaqs in our present times is a cause for great concern. The mention of the word Talaq which was at one time taboo in our communities has now become such a common and cheap word that in some marriages every argument features this word; either the husband threatens with it or the wife demands it. Forgotten is the grave warning of our Rasul (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that Talaq causes the grand throne of Allah to shudder. This is an expression to convey the utter abhorrence of Talaq in Islam (unless it is extremely unavoidable).

Casual Attitude

The sanctity of Nikah and marriage has all but left the hearts of these people. Nikah has almost become like another of the hundreds of disposable commodities in the market – disposable plates, cups, towels, lighters, etc. A casual and cavalier attitude has almost developed towards the institution of Nikah, an attitude that says if it doesn't work out, it doesn't matter, we'll live on – maybe try again. Some people have gone through a number of divorces in their lives without a care in the world.

Factors

What has contributed towards this deplorable state of affairs? A number of factors could be responsible for this recent proliferation of talaqs which has resulted in so many broken homes and shattered

families. Lack of proper Islamic education is one big factor. Lack of fear of Allah is another. Selfishness, hard-heartedness, stubbornness, callousness, an uncompromising attitude is another factor. Never overlook the devastating effect of western culture and values in the home – it is poison for the Muslim marriage. Inability to handle the pressures of marriage and an escapist attitude is a major factor.

Anger is another dangerous factor. When a person loses control of his anger and flies into a towering rage, he can do the most drastic and foolish of things in the world. The fruits of anger are very bitter. Sayyidina Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has mentioned: "The beginning of anger is madness and the end result is sorrow and regret." Whatever the cause may be, in order to gain some temporary, imaginary victory, or to score a few points in one's favour, an extremely short-sighted decision is taken and the long term implications are totally ignored.

In almost all instances the short-sightedness adopted in handling the situation by giving or demanding the Talaq results in much regret, misery, sorrow and heartache later on. Often the damage is too extensive to rescue or salvage the situation. At that time, a frantic effort is launched to obtain fatwas or rulings to reverse the devastating damage of Talaq, but to no avail. Even if a fatwa is obtained under false pretenses or grounds, it cannot render lawful that which Allah has rendered unlawful and forbidden.

Parents' Attitude

Nowadays, some parents and family elders too adopt an indifferent, casual attitude and hardly bring any pressure on the warring couple to pull together and resolve their differences. The sad reality is in some instances, they have actively promoted the process of disintegration of the marriage and encouraged the Talaq! At times, they simply shut the door on the any discussion or dialogue to address the problem. Sometimes, the pride of the parents or family comes even before the interest of the couple who inwardly are willing to reconcile but do not have much say because of family pressures.

Wider Community

Then there is the wider Muslim community that sits by as spectators, as if watching some boxing or wrestling match. They are content to pass remarks and indulge in idle gossip on the sad state of affairs. This is a very dangerous attitude. The fire of divorces and marriage breakdown is spreading while people are watching idly. Heaven knows whose house will burn down next if the situation is not arrested in good time. The least that the general public can do when they hear about a marital dispute is to make fervent Dua that Allah must give Hidayat and understanding to the couple and save their marriage. To save marriages, Islam has actually permitted the speaking of "white" lies if that will bring about some degree of reconciliation in the couple. If the situation is left to spiral out of control, the fabric of our society will be rent asunder. Dozens of divorced women (and men) are not healthy for the well being of society. Something has to be done about the present situation.

Solutions

Just as the factors of Talaq are

numerous, the solutions to the problem are also multi-faceted. Mass-scale educational programs on matrimonial matters is an absolute imperative. Through the pulpit and various for a and Islamic media, both print and electronic, a sustained educational campaign is to be launched. Spiritual programs that contribute towards Allah-consciousness and fear of accountability are absolutely imperative and need to be increased many fold. Attitudes and outlooks need to be changed. Rectification of character and conduct – Islahe-Nafs – is a crying need. Marriage counseling with an Islamic orientation must be increased dramatically. Pre-marital educational programs should become compulsory for all prospective couples – boys and girls. A decadent lifestyle and western values have to be shunned and spurned if a marriage is to work and thrive. Islamic values based on simplicity and humility and a sunnah way of life is a guarantee for a happy married life. With these concerted efforts, the tide will slowly turn, Insha-Allah. The rot will be remedied and a solid and firm family structure will result. This in turn will become the bedrock of solid communities, giving rise to a mighty Ummah. For those who are experiencing marital problems, please don't simply throw the towel in and walk out. Please be patient, forgive, forget and overlook, make duas, seek help and guidance, make one more attempt to make it work – this time it might work out with Allah's help!

"Be conscious of Allah wherever you are. Follow the bad deed with a good one to erase it, and engage others with beautiful character." (Tirmizi)

Is There Such Thing As 'Radical Islam'?

CJ Werleman

Why do right wingers, Christian fundamentalists, Zionists, and New Atheists insist on using the term 'radical Islam'?

Anyone watching either American cable news or the US presidential race might conclude that no two words put together are said more often and with more political charge than the words “radical Islam”.

During the most recent GOP debate, US presidential candidates mentioned “radical Islam” more than two-dozen times. “Look, we have a tremendous problem with radical Islam,” said Donald Trump. In an earlier interview, Ted Cruz (R-TX) said Obama’s refusal to mention “radical Islam” is not befitting a commander-in-chief.

So why do right wingers, Christian fundamentalists, Zionists, and New Atheists insist on using the term “radical Islam”? It’s not as if ISIS or al-Qaeda will suddenly surrender the day the rest of us chant “radical Islam” like some kind of weird mantra. It’s not as though not saying “radical Islam” fails to identify the enemy, given I easily identified the enemy in the previous sentence: ISIS and al-Qaeda.

Those who insist on thrusting the words “radical Islam” into the body politic do so for sinister reasons. The application of “radical Islam” not only strips Muslims of normal human emotions (revenge, humiliation, desperation), it also implies that Muslims are ticking time

bombs to be monitored and viewed with a suspicious eye.

John McWhorter, a linguist at Columbia University, told *The New York Times*: “In a sentence such as ‘We must eradicate radical Islam,’ the object of eradicate is technically ‘radical Islam,’ yes, but the core object, the heart of the expression ‘radical Islam’ is ‘Islam’. In another interview, McWhorter said: “That affects how one processes such a sentence – the adjective can come off as kind of decoration.”

We should get one thing straight: there is no such thing as “radical Islam”. There are radical Muslims. Equally there’s no such thing as “radical Christianity,” but there are radical Christians. When the Planned Parenthood gunman, a Christian, made it clear his opposition to abortion motivated his attack, no one used the term “radical Christianity”.

The term “radical Islam” is used most by right wing, neo-con politicians as a fig leaf to divert conversation away from examining the role US foreign policy, and particularly the War on Terror, plays in radicalizing some Muslims.

Instead of “radical Islam,” a more accurate way of defining the US targeted terror threat would be “radical anti-Americanism,” but that then means examining our role in the link between

cause and effect as it pertains to understanding violence and counter-violence, which is not conducive for neither good television ratings nor those who profit from endless war.

American television audiences don't want to be told how their government's actions have led to the death of four million Muslims in US led wars since 1990. When those who target the US with terrorist deeds cite clearly their central grievances, for instance the Boston bombers cited the US killing of civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan, their grievances are ignored or mentioned only as an afterthought.

American television audiences want to be reassured America is that "shining city on a hill," which is why graphics attached to a Fox News backdrop are so star spangled awesome. "Radical" + "Islam" instead of "Iraq" + "invasion" is how right-wingers keep their sense of awesomeness.

The major television network CBS News is also a cog in the wheel of feel-good American exceptionalism. Last week the network aired a focus group discussion that centered on how American Muslims view the rise of ISIS, and how much responsibility they feel, as Muslims, to condemn ISIS attacks.

After the feature aired, however, two of the participants, Muslim Americans, contacted *The Intercept* to complain CBS had "edited out parts of the discussion where they raised their own concerns – including critiques of US militarism, surveillance, and entrapment".

They also said the host of the program, Frank Luntz, a well-known right-wing commentator and pollster, "silenced members of the group when they criticized discriminatory US government policies".

All of which underscores how sinis-

ter the motives are of those who insist on thrusting forth the words "radical Islam" – for the inference from the media and elsewhere is clear: in order for Muslims to retain their "moderate" Muslim-ness, they must keep any criticisms they have of US foreign policy and/or the war on terror to themselves.

"To be classified as moderate Muslims they must forget what they know about Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and instead align themselves with the fantasies of the war on terror; they are expected to constrain their religion to the private sphere but also speak out publicly against extremists' interpretations of Islam; they are supposed to see themselves as liberal individuals but also declare an allegiance to the national collective; they are meant to put their faith capacity for reason above blind faith but not let it lead to criticisms of the West; and they have to publicly condemn using violence to achieve political ends – except when their own governments do so. No wonder moderate Muslims are said to be so hard to find," writes Arun Kundnani in *The Muslims Are Coming: Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror*.

Fear of being wrongly identified as sympathetic to "radical Islam" by work colleagues, friends, and neighbors is forcing many Muslim Americans to self-censor their political views.

"We're Arabs, we talk about politics all the time. Politics is all we do! Every coffee shop, it's either Al-Jazeera or a soccer game on TV. This new idea that we must be suspicious of those who speak about politics – something's wrong," said Linda Sarsour, a prominent Arab American activist.

Indeed, something is wrong by design. The term "radical Islam" is used to silence opposition to those who benefit most from the \$1 trillion counter-

terrorism spend, endless foreign wars and military occupations, which explains why those who are tied intimately to both the military-industrial-complex and the homeland-security-industrial complex are the loudest cheerleaders for the “radical Islam” chant.

“Radical Islam is motivated by a religious doctrine that requires them to purify their religion. They can’t be accommodated or appeased,” said US Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC), who is one of the top recipients of defense contractor campaign donations. While John McCain (R-AZ), who receives more defense contractor money than any elected official in Washington, warned: “The world has turned dramatically towards radical Islam.”

Ultimately, money drives all political narratives, and given the money that’s at stake here, the words “radical Islam” are here to stay, which means more fear and suspicion placed on Muslim Americans; which means an honest conversation regarding the roots of US targeted terror will remain shunned; which ultimately means good television ratings for the corporate owned media. And that’s the way everyone likes it.

CJ Werleman is the author of Crucifying America (2013), God Hates You. Hate Him Back (2009), and Koran Curious (2011).

Perceptions

There are only three perceptions of the world, and there can be no more: the religious one, the materialistic one and the Islamic one. Everything has been created in pairs (Qur’an). Man is a dual being: body and soul. The body is nothing but “the bearer of the spirit.” The bearer has evolved, consequently, it has its history, while the soul has not, it was inspired by God’s touch. The first side of man is subject to science, the second to art and ethics. Therefore, there are two stories and two truths about man. In the Western world they are symbolized by Darwin and Michelangelo. Neither does Darwin speak about Michelangelo’s man nor the other way around. Their truths are different, but not exclusive of each other. Through time they are projected as opposites, civilization and culture, respectively. Science and technology belong to civilization, religion and art to culture. The first is an expression of human needs (how do I live?), the latter of human aspirations (why do I live?). This is the contrast between utopia and drama. Utopia is not about personality, drama a morality. The entirety of the scientific method leads to the denial of God and man, while the entirety of art is essentially religious. If there is no God, there cannot be man...”

Alija Izetbegovic

Authority vs. Friendship

The Prophet (SAWS) said:

“It’s better to leave your children self-sufficient than to leave them on the mercy of others.” (Tirmidhi)

Today’s parents are struggling to balance the fine line of being best friends with their children while at the same time setting limits and enforcing rules. Due to the “therapization” of society, many parents today feel a deep sense of inadequacy in their role as parents and are unsure about the best way to raise their children. They understand the negative consequences of using physical punishment to deal with inappropriate behavior but are unsure about the best way to raise a well disciplined child while at the same time being emotionally close to their children. Some parents do not like how their own parents treated them growing up and want a different experience for their children. These parents recognize the old methods of parenting were too rigid and not in favor of building a close relationship with their children. Other parents have targeted specific issues from the way they were raised, like not feeling validated as children and how their voices were not heard, so they try and spare their children the same experience. They want a more meaningful connection with their children, they want disciplined and happy children who have a good sense of themselves, and want children who are well adjusted. All of this can be very overwhelming, especially for a new parent. Many parents believe the best way to reach this goal is by becoming best friends with their children (i.e. dressing like

them, enjoying the same music, liking the same movies, playing video games, etc). This mindset oftentimes means parents are afraid of making their children angry at them if they set limits or enforce rules, so as a result, they don’t. The line between parent and child becomes blurred and children do not have a guide to steer them in the right direction.

The positive side of this is parents are more interested in having a real relationship with their children rather than demanding complete obedience and having total control of their children. Today’s parents want to talk to their children about their feelings and pursue a deeper connection. Many believe if they have a close relationship with their children at a young age, that connection will carry over to the teenage and adult years. Empowering children and validating them will lead to a more self confident child with great self esteem. Really listening to children and respecting them as individuals will lead to a better sense of self which in turn leads to respect and understanding of parents.

Who’s The Parent?

The negative aspect of being best friends with your children is the lack of clarity regarding parental roles. Parents who are opposed to the authoritarian model of parenting have difficulty determining when to allow children to make independent decisions and when to set limits and enforce their parental control. Discipline begins to take a back seat and parents become unsure of when to enforce

rules and discipline their children for inappropriate behavior. Another negative aspect is the blurred line between parent and child. Sometimes being too close to your children can lead to enmeshment, where the lines between the child's needs and parents needs become blurred. Parents end up not seeing the children as individuals but rather as extensions of themselves and want their children to live their dreams or spare them experiences because they themselves did not like it. Similarly, many parents today get too involved in their children's activities, going as far as spending hours playing video games with their children and neglecting their duties as parents. Recently I heard about a study on the radio where 1 out of 5 women are leaving their men due to excessive video games. I've also heard personal acquaintances complaining about their husbands excessive video game playing to the detriment of their children. Although initially the intended goal was to spend time with the children by joining them to play video games, parents become addicted themselves and as a result, neglect their duties as parents or preferring being their child's best friend and playmate to taking on the parental role. The question then becomes if everyone is a best friend, who is in charge? This blurring of parental/child relationship leads to confusion in the child. Many end up either running the household or becoming the mini-parents to the adults in their lives.

Setting the Boundaries

As Muslims we have general instructions from the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) as to when to discipline children in relation to their spiritual development, "Order your children for salat (prayer) when they are seven, discipline them for it when they are ten and separate their beds." [Abu Daud]. Yet, many parents are still unsure about how to discipline them

in other matters, which is why we need to increase awareness and encourage dialogue about this critical issue in our community.

Although children need to have rational, open minded, and loving parents, they also need parents who can set limits, be willing to be unpopular, and say no. They need to realize that the 4 year old kicking and screaming today because he didn't get his way will not resent them into adulthood. Research has shown children will thrive in environments where clear boundaries exist between children and parents and parental roles are clearly defined. When parents are not willing to assume the parental role, children become anxious and feel lost. When parents do too much for their children and hold their hand for every activity, it teaches kids they are not capable of making good choices. Children become fearful of making decisions on their own and become more dependent.

So how to balance the goal of having well adjusted and disciplined children who also have a deep connection with their parents based on love and respect? It is possible for parents to fulfill their role as the authority figure without taking away from their connection with their children. A relationship built on mutual respect rather than friendship is best for the parent as well as the child. Parents can provide opportunities for their children to express their opinions and really listen to what their children are saying, they can respect their children's feelings and be open to their child's input, yet still be firm and set boundaries. Parents can begin by treating their children the way they want to be treated. Parents can teach their children to be kind, generous, and respectful by being kind, generous, and respectful to their children. Many parents view respect as one sided but kids

need to learn what respect feels like and looks like before they can give it back.

'Playing' by the Rules

Parents can also be playful with their children within limits. Children must be able to be playful one minute and set limits the next if need be. If you are playing with your children and the game gets out of control, you should feel comfortable in stopping the game and setting limits in order to teach appropriate lessons. It's very important as a parent to follow through on threats. Consistency is key to building reliability and respect in a relationship. If you say you will go home if the inappropriate behavior continues, you must be willing to go home despite your child's protests. You can also teach many lessons to your children while playing games. For example, you can teach social skills, turn taking skills, empathy, and friendship building skills all while you and your child are playing with your child's toys. You can set up scenarios where learning a specific skill such as making a friend is taught all while playing with the toys. Since the toys are learning the skill, it's easier for your child to hear the lesson. It's much more effective than lecturing your child or simply telling them.

Overall, it's a great goal to build closer connections with your child. You and your child will benefit from the close relationship. However it's important to recognize the importance of your role as the parental figure as well as the authority figure. School age children need parents to act like parents. When your children are adults, your relationship will then obviously involve less parenting and more friendship.

Source: jamiat.org.za

Quotable Quotes

The Prophet ((Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)) said: If Shayṭān fails to cause man to fall into sin, he causes him to divert away from obedience; and if he fails to divert him away from obedience, he causes his intention to divert to other than Allah. He doesn't get tired until he makes sure you don't receive Allah's mercy.

"Invite people to Islam even without words." They asked: How? He replied "With your Manners." Umar Ibn Al Khattab (ra)

"We were the most disgraced of people, & Allah honored us with Islam. If we look for honor in anything else, Allah will disgrace us" Umar ibn Al Khattab (ra)

"To be able to thank Allah for a blessing, is a blessing within itself." Imam Shafi (ra)

"To approach one's wife with a cheerful disposition is a forgotten Sunnah." Maulana Hakeem Akhtar (ra)

"The Spiritual Path is a battle in which there is no cease fire." Shaykh Junayd al Bagdadi (ra)

If you eat all that you desire, life will bring you much that's undesirable, and you will suffer. Shaykh SaadI (ra)

"Why is it that I see men, but no minds? I hear much commotion, but I do not see anyone to find comfort with?" Hasan al-Basri (ra)

Baltic Muslims and the Enduring Strength of Faith

Tharik Hussain

It may not be the kind of place you would expect to stumble upon a mosque, but Muslims have lived among the forests and lakes of Lithuania for more than 600 years – showing that tolerance reigned here in the Middle Ages, even when religious strife was rampant in other parts of Europe.

At first glance, the square, wooden building looks like thousands seen in villages all over the Baltic. Neat timber slats, wood-framed windows, a tin roof.

But at the apex of the roof, instead of a point there is a small glass turret, topped with an onion dome of the kind you might see on a local church. Then, on top of the onion, stands a small crescent.

This is the most European-looking mosque you will ever come across.

If it looks completely at home in this northern European setting, that's because a mosque has stood here, roughly 20 minutes' drive south-west of the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, since 1558.

There is a clue in the name of the village, Keturiasdesimt Totoriu. It means Forty Tatars, and legend has it that this is the number of Tatar families that settled here more than 600 years ago, at the invitation of the Lithuanian Grand Duke, Vytautas.

The Grand Duchy, with its deep pagan

roots, faced a constant threat from its aggressive Christian neighbours to the west, the Teutonic Knights.

So in 1398, returning from a military campaign near the Black Sea, Vytautas brought with him a large number of Muslim Crimean Tatars and a small group of Karaites Jews to help defend Lithuanian territory.

Sure enough, 12 years later the Teutonic Knights went to war with Poland and Lithuania and the Tatars and Karaites fought alongside Vytautas at the Battle of Grunwald (between Warsaw and Gdansk) in which the crusaders were resoundingly defeated.

As a reward for their support, Vytautas gave the Muslims land and complete religious freedom – and this was at a time when both the Sephardic Jews, and Europe's oldest Muslim community, the Moors, were being driven out of Spain.

Today about 120 people who live in Keturiasdesimt Totoriu are Tatars, with many claiming to be direct descendants of the founding Crimeans.

"It is because of Vytautas we are here, but we know we are Crimean Tatars," says Fatima Stantrukova, a 75-year-old former teacher of Russian literature.

The oldest identifiable grave in the mosque's cemetery belongs to a certain



“Allahberdi” who was buried here in about 1621.

The Tatar population in Lithuania continued to grow and spread to the south and west. Once there were dozens, possibly hundreds of Tatar mosques in villages between Vilnius, the Belarusian capital, Minsk, and the Polish city of Bialystok.

There were still 25 in Lithuania on the eve of World War One. Now there are three – in Keturiasdesimt Totoriu and the nearby villages of Raiziai and Nemezis. Four others are split between the Polish settlements of Kruszyani and Bohoniki and the Belarusian towns of Navahrudak and Iwie.

It was the Tatar language that disappeared first, apparently in the early part of the 18th Century.

“It came to pass that the ‘spiders of forgetfulness’ spread their webs over their customs and their tongues with the passing of the ages,” wrote the Russian Tatar Orientalist Muhammad Murad al-Ramzi, in the 19th Century.

“Yet, despite that, they have never lost their faith in Islam, though they have no scholarly knowledge of the faith.”

What little Islamic knowledge was left, took a further blow in the 20th Century.

“The Soviet period was the worst. All the religious leaders and people of any knowledge were either killed or sent into exile into the farthest reaches of Siberia. Books and archives were burnt. Mosques were closed and destroyed. Communities were closed. Islam was forbidden,” says another descendant of the Crimeans who arrived with Vytautas, the Grand Mufti of Lithuania, Ramadan Yaqoob.

Yaqoob grew up knowing almost nothing about Islam, and was only exposed to it properly after the fall of the Soviet Union, when Muslim students began to arrive in the country. He felt an immediate connection with them, and was able with their

help to study in Lebanon and Libya. The multicultural atmosphere of Lebanon was the perfect place to train to lead a European Muslim community, he says.

Despite a revival of interest in religion among some young Tatars, none of the mosques opens for the five daily prayers. Even in Keturiasdesimt Totoriu, where a third of the population is Muslim, the mosque only opens for special religious occasions.

But in addition to these seven surviving Baltic Tatar mosques, there is another many thousands of miles to the west – at 104 Powers Street in Brooklyn – which bears an uncanny resemblance.

“I used to go to the mosque, mainly with my family, for festivals like Eid,” says Alyssa Ratkewitch, the mosque’s vice-president, a third-generation Lipka Tatar – as Tatars from the Baltic are sometimes called – who traces her roots to the Belarusian town of Iwie.

“One of my earliest memories was the ‘awful’ wood panelling that decorates the interior of the mosque. So when I became vice-president, I planned to get rid of it, until an elder told me that the panels were there to remind them of the mosques they had left behind in the Baltic.”

The Brooklyn mosque – which opened in 1927 and is believed to be the oldest in New York – also no longer opens for daily worship. But it is crucial to the identity of the tiny Tatar community, just like the seven Tatar mosques still standing in Lithuania, Belarus and Poland.

“We did not let our mosques fall! During the [Soviet] time, our mosque was used in secret,” remembers Fatima in Keturiasdesimt Totoriu.

“The imam and the community of the 1940s kept the mosque alive for us children.”

“The mosques are all we have left.”

Source: bbc

Remembering Rumi

İbrahim Kalın

Remembering Rumi today can go a long way in healing many of the spiritual wounds that we have inflicted upon ourselves. His teachings can liberate us from the shackles of an increasingly obfuscating world and he can enlighten our paths in times of darkness

Mawlana Jalaladdin Rumi (d. Dec. 17, 1273), the great Muslim saint, sage and poet, lived at a time of turmoil and chaos. He composed his timeless works on faith, love, devotion and tolerance when the Mongol hordes were wreaking havoc in Muslim lands. Against the barbarism of the invading armies, he preached patience, moderation and an uncompromising commitment to truth and beauty. Given the extremities and ugliness of the present world in which we live, he is as relevant today as he has ever been.

The best answer to the insanities of the modern world is to recover Rumi's message. From school shootings and drugs to wars, DAESH terrorism to racist bigotry, many evils of the present world order can be overcome if we remember who we are and why we are part of this universe. Rumi gave some of the most profound answers to these big questions.

Rumi is known as a mystic, but given the misconceptions about this term, it is somewhat misleading. Rumi was a first-rate scholar of Islamic studies and taught at a madrasa in Konya Turkey where he is buried today. He was a devout man of faith, a profound thinker and an artist. His works combine the best of human intelligence, perennial wisdom and

spiritual beauty. Rumi defined himself as a humble servant of God and a devout follower of the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). His universalist language is underpinned by the core teachings of Islam. He was neither a new age guru nor a wishy washy spiritualist. He was a Muslim with a sharp mind and big heart.

Rumi was a philosopher in the original sense of the term as a lover of wisdom, (philo-sophia) and as such broke the artificial categories of reason versus faith, logic versus transcendence and fact versus value. He was critical of the rationalist philosophers, ridiculing their empty skepticism and asked them to "hit their heads on the wall." This was not because he rejected reason, but because he believed crude rationalism violated the fundamental nature of reason. Unlike Immanuel Kant who tried to limit reason by its own principles, Rumi did so by tying everything to a higher order of things. He based his thinking on "philosophy as spiritual exercise" and called on "limited reason" to attain a state of "universal reason."

Rumi presents a holistic view of existence with everything interconnected. Nothing makes sense when uprooted from its original place in the great chain of being. Just as everything in the universe, including the sun, stars, animals and humans make up one big unit, human faculties function properly when they all respond to the call of the Divine together. Reason and intelligence, heart, the five senses, imagination, consciousness and

emotions altogether enable us to understand the reality of things. Rumi saw no contradiction between reason and love or between logic and virtue because such contradictions are a product of the misuse of human reason and passions. When they function properly and respond to the call of meaning and purpose they reveal the essential connectedness of everything in the universe.

We live in an age of instant gratification. The culture of entertainment pervades everything in our lives. Against fleeting sensations and self-obsession, Rumi invites us to that which is everlasting and fulfilling. His infinite love for everything beautiful and noble comes from his love for the "Supreme Friend," i.e., God. In the words of the great Turkish Sufi poet Yunus Emre, he "loves every creature for the sake of the creator who created it" in the first place. Rumi's philosophy of love is sometimes taken to be a sort of proto-humanism. This is another mislabel and does not explain his true teachings. Rumi was no rootless, secular humanist. His love for humanity and limitless tolerance was based on a deep belief in and love for the Divine. The famous phrase: "Come, come, whoever you are," is a call not to a fun club, but to the path of spiritual perfection and moral integrity.

Finally, Rumi was interested in essential meaning and purpose rather than form and function. As a master storyteller, he explains how one can look for meaning beyond form and unveil the deeper meaning of things without mixing up the metaphysical categories of this world and the hereafter. As an artist, he initiated the Mawlawi Sufi tradition that has preserved some of the finest examples of traditional Islamic art, music and poetry.

Remembering Rumi today can go a long way in healing many of the spiritual wounds that we have inflicted upon ourselves. His teachings can liberate us from the shackles of an increasingly obfuscating world and he can enlighten our paths in times of darkness. He has guided many people to the path of truth, intelligence, peace, compassion and beauty since his departure from this world 742 years ago. All we need to do is to listen to his call.

The Aakhirah is a Reality

Once 'Abdullah bin Rawaahah (RA) was resting with his head on his wife's lap. Suddenly he began crying. Seeing this, his wife also began to cry. When he asked her the reason for crying, she replied, "When I saw the manner in which you were crying, it made me cry as well." 'Abdullah bin Rawaahah (RA) explained the reason for his crying saying, "I remembered the verse: 'There is none among you except that he will come to it (Jahannam)' and I do not know whether I will be granted salvation from the fire or not." (Tafseer Ibni Katheer vol. 3, pg. 136)

Lesson: The Sahaabah (RA) had such conviction in the verses of the Quraan Majeed and the occurrences of the Hereafter, that it made them cry even in their moments of pleasure. On the other hand, we have become so oblivious of the realities after death, that we fantasize the worst of things even when our heads are in prostration before our Beloved Creator. We need to enhance our conviction in the Hereafter to such an extent that it becomes a reality before our eyes.

The Qur'an for All

Abid Ahmad

The holy Quran is not a scripture in an ordinary sense of term. It speaks to humankind from a divine realm. It is God's word revealed by Him through his chosen angel towards His chosen Prophet (SAWS) for the whole humanity. His choice like His Word is always perfect.

God's message is supreme message. That is why its tone and tenor is unsurpassable in terms of its confidence and forcefulness. It throws up the challenge to come up with something similar to it, with the caveat that even if all creatures converge to do this they will never succeed.

One of the peculiarities of the Quran is that it owns all. The Quran says that everything is not Him but everything certainly is His. Everybody and everything is His creation. From smallest specks of dust to incomprehensibly vast expanses of universe, everything is under His direct command and watchful gaze. None can escape his sight. None can deviate from the path assigned to them, howsoever they may choose to willingly or unwillingly.

The sublimity of the Quran is that it owns believers, non-believers, sinners, the righteous, the hypocrites alike. Just

that it treats them differently. All human beings even if they are not Muslims are the addressees of the Qur'an. The maximum portion of the largest chapter of the Quran, The Cow, is addressed to Jews, supposedly avowed enemies of Islam. There are large portions of this holy book asking hypocrites to be sincere believers. There are full-fledged chapters for those who call themselves Christians. And there are many verses admonishing the polytheists.

No religious scripture in the world can claim to be addressing to all or owning even those who do not believe in them.

Thus, the most celebratory aspect of this divine book is that it is most inclusive religious text in the world. More than half of the Quran is addressed to those who do not pay heed to it or who are not loyal to its message. This speaks of the true divinity of the Being behind the message, making it all the more relevant for all.

If this book offers glad tidings to its believers, it warns of severe chastisement to those who do not listen to it. So all the more reason to turn to it for those who do not believe in it.

Wash the Wounds Away

A man complained to 'Abdullah bin Mubaarak (ra) of a boil on his knee since seven years. He said: "I have tried different treatments and consulted many doctors but nothing has helped." 'Abdullah bin Mubaarak (ra) replied: "Dig a well in a place where people are in need of water. I hope that as soon as water gushes out from there, the blood will stop oozing from your wound." The man did so and was cured. (Shu'abul Imaan #3109)

Lesson: While all types of sadaqah are effective in removing calamities and attracting the mercy of Allah, arranging water for those who are in need of it is one of the greatest forms of charity. Rasulullah (SAWS) even advised doing this as a form of thawaab jaariyah for the deceased.

Is the Brain Origin of Our Mind

Ali Unal

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one of the most recently advanced scientific concepts. The associated field of study has been defined as “the study of mental faculties that encompasses computational techniques for performing tasks which apparently require intelligence when performed by humans?”

Modern scientific inquiry; while searching for new techniques to develop machines to do even more of the work now done by people, also is trying to finding analogues for human mental activities. Since many scientists assume that men and women are no more than physical—material entities (a complex of physical, biological, and chemical processes), they are vying to produce a complete copy of human functions. They assert that since no existing physical theory accounts for the human brain’s non-computable processes, all human intellectual activities can be computed.

But Roger Penrose argues against this assertion on the basis of Godel’s theorem, which states that there will always be a true statement for every consistent formal system that has the power to do arithmetic. In other words, a formal system is a set of logical or computational rules. This system is termed consistent if it never produces contradictory statements. Yet, as human beings can see the truth of this statement, this indicates that our minds can go beyond the powers of any formal system. However, since Pen-

rose’s (and others like him) thought is confined by (materialistic) physics and therefore unable to account for now computable processes, he faces a problem: The physical foundation of his theory is contingent upon future elaborations of the theory of quantum mechanics.

While explaining human consciousness, Penrose notes that the biggest mystery of all is how electrical activity in the brain gives rise to consciousness. It is hard to understand why an inner life should arise from the process of computation, regardless of in complexity. His proposed alternative theorizes that human consciousness results from quantum processes in microtubules—collapsing quantum wave functions (the mathematical functions describing a particle’s position and momentum) in the protein structures found in a neuron’s skeletons. But this is no more convincing than what he rejects.

The Source of Our Intellectual Activities

The main problem arises from accepting the physical body as the origin of all human intellectual activity. We face a similar difficulty when listing our expectations of AI. Aksoy has a simple but meaningful objection to our underlying AI-related assumptions:

A man-made system can be very smart and artificially very intelligent, but no such system so far has been awarded a prize for its innovative abilities. It is the

human being who made it who wins the prize. What is prized, what is of higher worth, is not the system but its maker or builder.

Another objection is even simpler. For example, you may notice after running a spell-check program on your document that it missed some mistakes. Any sentence can contain correctly spelled words that are not used correctly. If you type "What is prized is not the system but its maker or builder" as "What is priced is not the system but its make or build," most people familiar with English will tell you at once that it contains mistakes. But the spell-check and grammar-check programs will judge it to be correct. Such examples can be multiplied for all tasks requiring an experience and understanding that cannot be analogue or translated for AI machines, but with which people can cope quite easily.

Another point worth mentioning relates to learning and education. Materialistic approaches attribute all human intellectual activities to a person's brain. If the theory of evolution is taken literally, more "developed" animals would be more developed in using their senses, faculties, or brains. But, as Dr. Yilmaz points out:

[C]ompared with a shark which can smell a drop of blood in the sea from a distance of about 25,000 feet, man is very much less developed. If we judge the degree of development according to the sense of smell, in place of men or monkeys, sharks will be the first. Whereas, with respect to the sense of seeing, eagles are much more developed than sharks, as well as more than men and monkeys. An eagle can spot a rabbit on the ground from a height of about 6,000 feet. Would it not be true for a honey-bee to say of us: "Those clumsy ones can draw with tools and only after calculations the hexagons that I can make so easily and exactly identical to one another. They cannot make so sweet and healing a substance as honey that I produce in great amounts."

Again, taking the theory of evolution literally, must a more developed animal not inherit the abilities of less developed animals? If so, we should have the abilities of all animals, and apes should have the abilities of all animals further down the evolutionary chain. And, if we evolved from apes, should not the first man so evolved have inherited all the abilities and knowledge of all apes?

Here we find an interesting dilemma: All animals are born as if already educated and instructed with all the knowledge they need to survive, whereas people are born knowing almost nothing of the information and skills needed for their survival. All animals come to this world with the information or knowledge possessed by their predecessors, and there is a negligible (if any) difference between the amount of knowledge and abilities possessed by one animal and all others within its species. But people cannot inherit knowledge or pass it on to their progeny. Consequently, the amount and type of knowledge found in each person, as well as his or her level of intellectual and artistic capability, is extremely varied.

Behaviorism and Cognitivism In Learning

Materialist and evolutionist psychologists view learning as a matter of behavioral patterning via reinforcement (behaviorism) or the storage and use of knowledge (cognitivism), but agree that the brain or neural systems do the actual learning. Thus the intellectual dimension of a person's existence consists of his or her brain. In short, they confuse human learning with what is doing the actual learning. They want us to view ourselves as a factory and accept the corollary logic that a factory built itself and works according to laws predetermined by itself or the factories' "collective being."

al-Madrassa al-Yusufiyya

Al-Madrassa al-Yusufiyya in Granada: Knowledge and Power in 14th- & 15th-century al-Andalus

Following the conquest of most of al-Andalus by the Christian kingdoms of Castile, Aragón and Portugal during the thirteenth century, the Nasrid kingdom of Granada (1238–1492) was transformed from one post-Almohad Andalusī emirate among several into *the* last bastion of Islamic governance in Iberia. One of the many ways that the Nasrids sought to legitimize their rule was through a close alliance with the religious and educated classes, the *‘ulama’* and the (Maliki) *fuqaha’*. A significant number of the Andalusī refugees from places such as Cordoba, Sevilla, Murcia, Jaen, Valencia, and Xativa that settled in Granada (primarily in the Albayzin district) following the Christian conquest of those cities belonged to these scholarly classes. Moreover, significant scholarly families (such as the Bunnahi/Nubahi and Banu Juzayy families) formed an important component of the local elites in both Granada and Malaga, the two most important cities in the Nasrid kingdom.

From the outset, the Nasrid rulers worked closely with the Maliki religious establishment and scholarly classes whom it relied upon to govern and rule. The second Nasrid ruler, Muhammad II (r. 1273–1302), was even known as *“al-faqih”* (“the jurist” or “the learned”) for his patronage, promotion and participation in the Islamic legal and theological sciences. However, it was not until the mid-fourteenth century—nearly a century

after the establishment of the emirate—during the reign of the Nasrid emir Yusuf I (r. 1333–1354) that Granada’s most preeminent institution of learning (named *al-Madrassa al-Yusufiyya* or “The College of Yusuf” in honor of its patron) was built. Although there undoubtedly existed other institutions for learning and teaching (Granada’s Grand Mosque being the most important) prior to the mid-fourteenth century, the establishment of the Madrasa al-Yusufiyya by Ridwan al-Nasri (a Castilian convert to Islam and the chief minister of the Nasrid dynasty) around 1349, located directly across from the former Grand Mosque (today the great cathedral) and near the main market, marked a major turning point.

The construction of this institution of learning transformed Granada from an embattled frontier polity into a major center of learning in the Islamic West, competing with other intellectual centers such as Marrakesh, Meknes, Fez, Tlemcen, and Tunis. The subjects taught at the Madrasa al-Yusufiyya encompassed both the “religious sciences” (*al-‘ulum al-naqliyyah*) as well as the “rational sciences” (*al-‘ulum al-‘aqliyyah*) and included Arabic, grammar, rhetoric, logic, theology, Qur’an, *hadith*, jurisprudence, medicine, astronomy, philosophy, mathematics, arithmetic, and geometry. In other words, it followed a similar curriculum to many of the institutions of learning established in the Central Islamic Lands between the

11th and 14th centuries. Its students and teachers included scholars from al-Andalus as well as North Africa, with many scholars traveling from various parts of the western Islamic world to study with many of the pre-eminent scholars based in Granada. Already in 1354, the illustrious Maliki jurist and scholar Ibn Marzuq al-Tilmisani (d. 1379) was established as a professor in the madrasa. Although the Madrasa al-Yusufiyya was one of the best examples of an Andalusī madrasa, it was not the only one in late medieval al-Andalus (a similar madrasa existed in Malaga). Moreover, as Ibn al-Khatib (d. 1374), the chief minister/vizier of Yusuf I, asserts in his historical chronicle of Granada: “The emir constructed this admirable madrasa as the most important of all the madrasas in his capital” [Ibn al-Khatib, *al-Lamḥah al-Badriyya fi al-Dawla al-Nasriyya* (Kuwait, 2013), p. 153], suggesting that there were additional, smaller-scale constructions of learning institutions patronized by Yusuf I (and his successors)

Among other things, the construction of the Madrasa al-Yusufiyya underscores that the Nasrids, despite their primary role as the emirs of a frontier polity, devoted significant attention to cultivating Islamic scholarship in their kingdom. Moreover, the circumstances surrounding the establishment and development of the Madrasa al-Yusufiyya highlights the close bond between the *‘ulama’* (the religious scholars) and the *umara’* (the political rulers/the Nasrid dynasty), in which both groups derived legitimacy from one another. It was in the interests of the Nasrids to promote institutions of learning in order to provide a strong, effective class of administrators, bureaucrats, and judges for the emirate, while it was similarly in the interests of the religious scholars to grant legitimacy to the Nasrids due to their im-

portant role as defenders of Islam in Iberia against the increasing encroachments of the Christian kingdoms. Although the relationship was not always harmonious, until the very end of the Nasrid kingdom there existed a precarious balance between the political authorities on one hand and the religious classes on the other (although, of course, there was not always a clear divide between religious and temporal authority). For a closer examination of the nature of this relationship, I highly recommend M. Isabel Calero Secall’s “Rulers and Qadis: Their Relationship during the Nasrid Kingdom” *Islamic Law and Society* 7 (2000): 235–255.

Significantly, these developments in Nasrid Granada paralleled similar ones occurring in North Africa during the same period. The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, while certainly not unique in this regard, witnessed a conscious attempt by the newly-established dynasties (the Hafsiids, the Zayyanids and the Marinids as well as the Nasrids) to affiliate themselves more closely with the religious establishment, whose members usually belonged to long-standing lineages in the cities and, as such, constituted an important component of the urban elite (*a‘yan*). The Marinids, in particular, were distinguished by their dedication to the construction of madrasas. The major construction of madrasas were undertaken by the highest state functionaries and had clear political implications in the sense that these efforts sought to enhance the prestige of the dynasty, while “co-opting” members of the scholarly establishment by utilizing the latter’s religious authority to solidify the dynasty’s legitimacy. This is not to say that the construction of madrasas was conceived entirely as a political scheme, but only that this was an important dimension of Marinid patronage of these institutions that needs to be tak-

en into account. It is difficult to oversimplify the relationship between the dynasty and the religious scholars largely due to the fact that many of the initiatives to construct these madrasas emanated from Marinid officials who were themselves *'ulama'* (the aforementioned Ibn Marzuq al-Tilmisani, for example, was a high-ranking member of the Marinid administration while also being one of the most eminent jurists of his age).

Many of the scholars (whether those belonging to the strictly juristic/religious class or the scribal/secretarial class) that emerged from these madrasas rose to become prominent judges, ministers, or chancery officials working on behalf of the dynasty. The dissemination of institutions of knowledge and networks of patronage linked to the dynasty ensured the rise of a class of administrators and scholars whose loyalty could be relied upon. The dynasty patronized and linked itself, in various ways, not only with the Maliki jurists but also with various Sufi orders and individual mystics; the construction of *zawiyas* (Sufi lodges), like the building of madrasas, was an important part of the dynastic building program in the late medieval Islamic West. These networks of patronage and the evolving student-teacher relationships fostered in this environment also contributed to the dissemination of a common intellectual culture, strongly influenced by mysticism and philosophy as well as by Maliki legal norms and dialectic (Ash'arite) theology, among the elites of society.

The construction of the Madrasa al-Yusufiyya and the circumstances sur-

rounding it demonstrate that, far from being a period of "intellectual decline," the 14th and 15th centuries in the Islamic West witnessed the emergence of a rigorous scholarly culture that produced brilliant individuals and prolific scholars such as Abu al-Qasim ibn Juzayy (d. 1340), Lisan al-Din ibn al-Khatib (d. 1374), Ibn Marzuq (d. 1379), Ibn Hudhayl (ca. 1380s), Abu al-Qasim ibn Ridwan al-Malaqi (d. 1382), Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi (d. 1388), 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Khaldun (d. 1406), Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn 'Asim (d. 1427), Muhammad al-Jazuli (d. 1465), Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad ibn al-Azraq al-Ashba'i (d. 1491), Ahmad Zarruq (d. 1493), Ahmad al-Wansharisi (d. 1508), most of whom were figures that had acquired their education, served as teachers or were associated (either directly or indirectly) with the Madrasa al-Yusufiyya and other institutions of learning in the Islamic West. The close collaboration and symbiotic relationship between the ruling classes and the religious scholars responsible for producing this scholarly efflorescence was partly embodied by the construction of madrasas. By the fifteenth century, this system in which the military-political rulers and the *'ulama'* worked in close (although sometimes uneasy) cooperation had become the defining marker of the political reality in the Islamic West, as exemplified by the dozens of political treatises composed during this period which attempted to enshrine this arrangement within political theory. But that is another issue and will be the subject of a future post.

Source: ballandalus

The Sign of Imaan

A man asked Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), "O Messenger of Allah! What is imaan?" Nabi (SAWS) replied, "When your good deeds please you and your evil deeds grieve you, then you are a believer." The man asked, "O Messenger of Allah! Then what is sin?" Nabi (SAWS) replied, "When something causes a doubt in your heart, leave it out." (Musnad Ahmad)

Intimacy with Allah

Allama Ibn al-Qayyim (ra)

The Souls of the Senses

Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (ra) rendering apt judgment between opposing views on the issue-said that what the sense of hearing apprehends is more general and comprehensive, while what the sense of sight discerns is sounder and more perfect. Thus, the sense of hearing possesses generality and comprehensiveness, covering what is present and what is absent, and what is perceived and what is conceptualized, whereas the sense of sight [furnishes knowledge that] is perfect and sound.

It follows, then, that each of the five senses has a spirit and a soul, which is essentially its share of the heart. There are those whose hearts have no share of [these senses] any more than the wild beasts do. Hence, in this respect, such people and beasts are comparable. That is why Allah, the All-Powerful, compared these people to cattle-rather them worse. He said: (Or do you really think that most of them even listen or understand? In fact, they are like nothing but cattle. Rather, they are even further astray from Allah's way!) Surat Al-Furqan, 25:44.

For this reason, Allah has attributed to the disbelievers in His Revelation a deficiency in hearing, sight, and intellect, either because they fail to take advantage of these senses-this being as good as lacking in them-or because the divine attribution of these senses pertains to the hear-

ing, sight, and comprehension of the hearts-which will become evident to them when realities are unveiled [in the Hereafter], as [evidenced by] the statement that the dwellers of Hellfire shall make therein, as recorded in the Quran: (Moreover, they shall say: If only we had listened [to the Quran] or had used our reason [to discern its truth], we would not be among the Companions of the Flaming Fire.) Surat Al-Mulk, 67:10.

In addition, one of the interpretations of the statement of the All-High in the Quran: (Thus you [O Prophet] see them looking [blankly] at you, for they do not see.) Surat Al-A raf, 7:198 is as follows: That is, the disbelievers would look at the physical stature of the Prophet through their outwardly senses, but fail to see his prophetic stature and its significance through the inwardly senses, which is to say, through the eye of the heart.

Another interpretation is that the pronoun [‘they] is referring in this verse to idols, which leaves us to understand it in one of two ways: (1) They are looking metaphorically, for they have no eyes to see; or (2) “looking” (yanzuru) means ‘facing/ as the Arabs say; “Your abode looks at mine,” that is, ‘faces’ it [which would render the meaning of the verse: Thus you [O Prophet] see [the idols] ‘facing you/ but they cannot see.]

The same is true of the sense of hearing, which the disbelievers in the

Quran and the Prophet certainly possess- and through which the [divine] proof is established against them. Yet they are said to be lacking it in the sense of the hearing of the heart. For they would hear the Quran with their outwardly hearing, in the sense of cattle that hear nothing of the calling of the shepherd (but mere calls and cries. Deaf, dumb, and blind [in heart]-never shall they understand.) Surat Al-Baqarah, 2:171.

Had they sincerely listened to the Quran with the true soul- that is, the soul of the sense of hearing that resides in the heart-they would surely have had a blessed life that comes from the hearing that is attached to the heart. The deafness and muteness that ails them would have been cured, and they would have saved themselves from the Flaming Fire of Hell, separating from those lacking in hearing and reason.

The Hearing of the Heart

The occurrence of true hearing is the beginning of a blessed life, a life that is the most perfect kind of life in this world. By [this spiritual hearing] the heart obtains its nourishment and its balance, gaining strength and life, and attaining its blessing and its blossom. When it lacks sound nourishment, it turns to fulfilling its need with unwholesome and corrupt nourishment. Thus it fails to attain all its blessings, like the physical body that weakens when fed unwholesome food.

The heart being closer and better linked to physical hearing than to sight, the effect of what is heard transmits quicker to the heart than does what is seen, and the hearing of a beautiful, melodious, and apposite sound may lead one to swoon, which is not likely to occur upon seeing beautiful sights. A sound might have a great effect on the heart even with-

out one's noticing it-on account of heedlessness. But when one is alone or meditating, its effect is felt. The more a soul, or heart is isolated and cut off from the physical body, the more it is affected by what it has previously heard.

If what is heard has a noble meaning and a melodious sound he heart receives a greater share of its meaning, and delights in it to the fullest, and the soul enjoys its share of the beauty and the melody of the voice and delights in it. Thereby, the enjoyment is doubled and the delight perfected, and a state of profound bliss is attained, transcending to the physical body and perhaps even to others nearby. This does not occur in this world save upon attaining perfection; nor does it occur save upon hearing the Divine Word.

Rapture at the Quran

This transport happens only when the soul is isolated from distractions and is prepared, and the heart encounters the soul of the meaning [of the Divine Speech] and embraces with its full being what is heard, exemplifying therein what the Quran says: (Indeed, in this [Quran] there is most surely a reminder for whom-ever has a [living] heart or lends [an attentive] ear, with [full] presence [of mind].) Surat Qaf, 50:37. The beauty of the voice of the reciter helps in this encounter so that it is as if one's heart departs from this world altogether and enters another, and finds delight and a state that is found in nothing else. This state is akin to the state of the people of Paradise. What wonderful nourishment! How wholesome and nurturing!

This [state of bliss] in hearing the Quran is forbidden to hearts nourished on Satanic melody. Indeed, even if such a one finds the Qur'an delightful, it is because its melody may be similar [to the

music that one is used to], not because of its special meanings. There is no blessing for the people of Paradise higher than their seeing of their beloved Lord, Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, with their own eyes and hearing His speech. ‘Abdul-lah the son of Imam Ahmad mentions in the book Al-Sunnah a report-concerning which I do not now recall whether it attributes to the Prophet or not-which has it that “When people will hear the Quran on the Day of Resurrection from the All-Merciful, the Mighty and Glorious, it would be as if they had never heard it before.”

When the heart is filled with something, the distinction between the outward and the inward is mitigated so that the ear transmits to the heart what it finds fitting, even if the conveyed sound or the speaker does not intend such a meaning from it. Al-Qushayri said that he heard Abu ‘Abdullah Al-Sulami say: “I visited Abu Uthman Al-Maghribi. A man nearby was drawing water from a well using a pulley. — He said to me: ‘Do you know O Abu Abd Al-Rahman what this pulley says?’ — I said: ‘No.’ — He said: ‘It says: “Allah. Allah.””

The examples of this are many. Once Abu Sulayman Al-Dimashqi passed by a peddler who was saying ‘Ya za’tar barri’ (wild thyme), but he heard instead ‘isatara birri’ (Be generous. You shall see My bounty). This spiritual hearing follows the reality of the heart, union with which makes one imagine that he perceived [the very] meaning [by which his heart overwhelmed] regardless of the external sound.

The most perfect hearing, then, is that of one who hears from Allah His Speech-and it is the melody of the lovers and the Beloved. As mentioned in the hadith in Sahih Al-Bukhari that the Messenger of Allah & said, reporting from His Lord, the Blessed and the Exalted:

My servant draws near to me by nothing as much as [what] he does by fulfilling what I have required of him. And my servant continues to draw near to me by doing more than what I have required until I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing by which he hears, his sight by which he sees, his hand by which he strikes, and his leg by which he walks. By Me he. By Me he sees. By Me he strikes forth. And by Me he walks. (Bukhari)

“I Rather Stay Blind”

When ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbaas (RA) began turning blind, he was advised to have it treated. However the treatment required him to leave out salaah for a few days. He refused saying that Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said: “Whoever omits his salaah will meet Allah Ta’ala in such a condition that Allah Ta’ala will be angry with him.” (Majma’uz Zawaaid #1632)

Lesson: Salaah was so dear to the Sahaabah (RA) and meant so much to them that they could bear the challenges of remaining blind for the rest of their lives, but could not tolerate the missing of a few salaah.

On the other hand, missing salaah upon salaah for lame excuses is something absolutely normal for us. More tragic than missing the salaah is perhaps the lack of any regret or remorse over missing it, due to having become accustomed to missing salaah often.

If we want to meet Allah in a state that He is pleased with us, let us be punctual on all our salaah.

Evidences and Revelation

Host: How do we know who the author of the Quran is?

Jamal Badawi:

There are a number of sources on this subject in Arabic such as Al Naba' Al Atheem. There are also writings on the subject by Rasheed Rida, Alwahi Muhamaddi by Muhammad Lutfi Juma'a, Thouwrat Al Islam Wa Batal Al Anbia. There is a little booklet that was published by the Islamic Society of North America that is "Muhammad: A Prophethood and Analytical View" which touches on this subject in English. As Dr. Draz suggests we can start with something that everyone agrees is true regardless of whether they are a Muslim, non-Muslim, believer in God or atheist everybody acknowledges

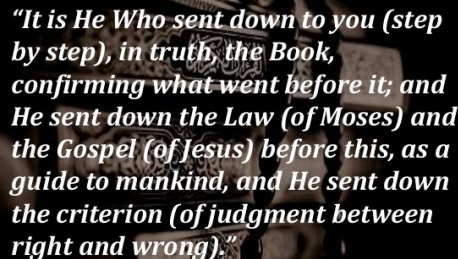
that the Quran was recited for the first time by a man who was born in Arabia in the sixth century by the name of Muhammad (SAWS). This leaves us with the basic question of the source of the Quran. It would appear that there are only three logical possibilities. One that the Quran was authored by Prophet Muhammad himself. Second is that he was not the author of the Quran but he learned it from other human authors. Third, that the Quran didn't have any other author but that it came from God. It is only through a careful examination of each of these possi-

bilities, comparison of the variety of evidence (internal and external evidence) that we may arrive at a reasonable conclusion as to who the author of the Quran is.

Host: What do you mean when you use the term internal evidence?

Jamal Badawi:

Internal evidence is evidence found in the Quran itself about its source aside from what is being said about the Quran. The essence of this internal evidence is that the Quran was not authored by Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) or any other human being but that it was a direct revelation from God. The first time when Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) received revelation when



"It is He Who sent down to you (step by step), in truth, the Book, confirming what went before it; and He sent down the Law (of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus) before this, as a guide to mankind, and He sent down the criterion (of judgment between right and wrong)."

- Qur'an. 3:3

he was meditating in the cave of Hirra'a outside of Mecca, Angel Gabriel came to him held him and said "Iqra'a." He said Iqra'a, recite, then he said recite in the name of your Lord who creates. These were the first verses or passages of the Quran revealed to the Prophet (SAWS). It is obvious from the wording that read is a command given to the Prophet and he can not be an author of this. This appears in Surah 96. It is no wonder that we find that the Surahs of the Quran start with "In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful."

In the Quran we find numerous passages that the Quran did not come from any human and emanated from the Creator. An example is that the Quran in (56:80) "A revelation which came down from the Lord of the worlds." In (57:16) "the Truth which has been revealed." In the Quran in (25:1) "Blessed is He who sent down the criterion to His servant, that it may be an admonition to all creatures." "We have sent down to thee the Book in truth, that thou mightest judge between men, as guided by Allah. so be not (used) as an advocate by those who betray their trust"(4:105).

"It is He Who sent down to thee (step by step), in truth, the Book, confirming what went before it; and He sent down the Law (of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus) before this, as a guide to mankind, and He sent down the criterion (of judgment between right and wrong)"(3:3). "(We sent them) with Clear Signs and Books of dark prophecies; and We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought"(16:44). "We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)"(15:9). In (26:192-194) of the Quran it describes the Quran "Verily this is a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds: With it came down the spirit of Faith and Truth- to they heart and mind, that thou mayest admonish." It is repeated in the Quran that the source of the Quran emanates from the Creator not from any other author.

Host: Is there any indication that it is Allah who is speaking in the Quran rather than any person?

Jamal Badawi:

The examination of the Quran

shows that there isn't a single passage in the Quran which gives any impression that the author is human. I am talking about the style and the way it addresses mankind. The thing which becomes quite evident for anyone who examines the Quran even without any background about Islam is to notice that the address there is from the creator to the creators. It is not like someone who is telling a story or writing a biography, but rather it is a direct address from the Creator to the human being. Many times God speaks in first person and sometimes by using the phrase "say." In (15:26) "We created man from sounding clay, from mud moulded into shape." Notice the term "We" that God uses to refer to Himself doesn't mean that God is plural but in majestic language a King says "We the King" not "I the King." In (15:85) God says "We created not the heavens, the earth, and all between them, but for just ends." The use of an imperative, which is when God speaks and tells the Prophet say such and such, I have counted 340 places in the Quran where God addresses the Prophet by commanding him to "say." How could the Prophet be the author when he is constantly being commanded to tell the people such and such. Examples of that are found in the last three Surahs (112, 113 and 114) which all start with Qul "Say O Muhammad unto mankind." This is not the only imperative used but sometimes the term *baliqh*, proclaim, is used or *utlu*, recite. Some examples of this are found in (15:49), (18:27) are examples of God speaking with imperatives. In other words when we look at the style of the Quran and the way it addresses the human kind it is obvious it is not the words of any human being. The human being in this case, Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), is simply a medium who is told to tell people what God wishes.

Host: Are there any passages that negate any claim to human authorship of the Quran?

Jamal Badawi:

Yes, an example is one of the most famous and widely quoted Ayah, passage, in the Quran in (17:88) "Say: "If the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support." A second example is the Quranic response to those who had doubt if the Prophet himself had anything to do with the Quran or if he was the source of the Quran in (7:203) "If thou bring them not a revelation, they say: "Why hast thou not got it together?" Say "I but follow what is revealed to me from my Lord: this is (nothing but) lights from your lord, and Guidance, and mercy, for any who have faith." In (10:15) it replies not only to those who doubt the authorship and think that the Prophet may be the author but even to those who thought that it was within his authority to change or modify the Quran rather than communicating it exactly as it is. It reads "But when Our Clear Signs are rehearsed unto them, those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, Say: "Bring us a reading other than this, or change this," Say: "It is not for me, of my own accord, to change it: I follow naught but what is revealed unto me: if I were to disobey my Lord, I should myself fear the penalty of a Great Day (to come)." The evidence is quite consistent in the Quran itself not only in terms of affirmation but negation of any human source of the Quran.

Host: Does Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) have sayings about the source of the Quran?

Jamal Badawi:

Lets go back to the beginning of revelation when Angel Gabriel came to Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) in the cave of Hirra'. As narrated in both Bukhari and Muslim it was mentioned that Gabriel simply dictated the Quran to him. This is a manifestation according to the witness of the Prophet that this is what happened to him. In Muslim there is a very interesting Prophetic saying where he says "No Prophet from among the Prophets came in the past without God giving him some sign (miracle) which lead many people to believe in him. What was given to me was a revelation which God has revealed unto me and I pray and hope that on The Day of Judgement I will have the largest of all the followers of the Prophets." This is interesting because the sort of signs that were given to Prophets prior to Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) were reported to largely be metaphysical miracles. The difficulty with this is that as time goes by only those who saw those miracles and only those who believe the witnesses of those miracles can really come to the conclusions that the Prophet was a truthful one. Since Prophet Muhammad was the last of all Prophets and no one came after him it is essential even in the mind of the sceptic to be able to see an existent miracle. A sceptic might say that some may have seen it but that they had not seen it themselves.

The Quran itself is the miracle or the greatest sign of the truthfulness of the Prophet. This will be clarified throughout this series. What we see here is that what the Prophet mentions is consistent with what the Quran mentioned by way of internal evidence. First, the Quran brings to the attention of people that the Prophet had already lived among his people for 40 years before he received the commission from God to act as his last

Prophet. In the Quran (10:16) "Say: "If Allah had so willed, I should not have rehearsed it to you, nor would He have made it known to you. A whole life-time before this have I tarried amongst you: will ye not then understand?" One of the interesting situations in the Quran which teaches the Prophet how to respond to this (29:48) "And thou wast not (able) to recite a Book before this (Book came), nor art thou (able) to transcribe it with thy right hand: In that case, indeed, would the talkers of vanities have doubted." In other words if the Prophet was highly literate and knows how to read or right and if he were a scholar and recited scripture before maybe then those who accuse him of fabricating his claim of the original source of the Quran could have some grounds for doubt. In the absence of this it sounds like a very strange claim. The conclusion here is that the statements by the Prophet himself are in totally consistent with the claims made in the Quran itself that its source is divine and not human.

Host: What is meant by the term revelation?

Jamal Badawi:

First of all, we can not fully understand the phenomena of revelation if we insist that the only world that exists is the word of the physical, tangible world. We see things with our eyes but we can see things with our mind and our soul as well. The fact that there is a difficulty the word that is unseen and unknown to us doesn't mean that it doesn't exist. Second, even in this age of scientific progress, we find that there are so many things that have been proven but can not be explained on a physical or tangible grounds. For example: telepathy, or dreams that come true or predicting that certain

things will happen. This doesn't happen on a full basis but one realizes that there is something beyond the seen world. The Arabic word for revelation is wahi and etymologically speaking it means subtle and quick. It appears in the Quran in a variety of meanings. It is mentioned in (16:68) to refer to the inspiration that God gives to animals. In that case it talks about bees or insects and how it is given to them so they know how to survive. This could refer as we find in (19:11) as a subtle sign without words as is found in the story of Prophet Zakariya. It also means some kind of inspiration that God gives to people who are not Prophets as is find in (28:7) in the story of the mother of Moses. It could also be a command to the Angels as we find in (8:12) to support the believers in the battle field. In some cases it could even mean evil prompting, if one sticks to the purely etymological meaning as is found in (6:12). Of course the most important and highest level of revelation is that which is given to Prophets and Messengers of God.

Host: How do Prophets receive revelation?

Jamal Badawi:

This is summarized in a passage in the Quran in (42:51) "It is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak to him except by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or by the sending of a messenger to reveal, with Allah's permission, what Allah wills: for He is Most High, Most Wise." From this passage we see that there are three basic ways that a Prophet can receive revelation. One is inspiration or insight, God guides him to have the proper judgement on certain matters. Second is from behind a vail which does not have to be physical but could be a vail of light psychological barrier but not through direct communication. Third is by sending a

messenger which is a reference to Angel Gabriel which communicates a specific message to the Prophet.

Host: Which of the types of revelation were given to Prophet Muhammad (SAWS)?

Jamal Badawi:

He was honored by receiving revelation through all of them. First of all, he received inspiration from God to guide him in the conduct of the affairs of the believers. Second, he talked to God from behind a veil, of light, in the Miraj incident (night of ascension) when God talked to him and even Gabriel did not go past a certain point and left the Prophet to talk to God. He also received the revelation of the Quran through the agency of Angel Gabriel who brought the Quran word for word to him. There is also other inspirations in the form of Hadith, which was an inspiration of meaning into his heart and then he used his own words to express it. It is interesting to notice that while one Prophet or another might have been blessed by one or more form of revelation; Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) being the last of God's messengers was blessed by all forms of revelation.

Hard Times

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi wa Sallam has stated,
"Relief accompanies difficulties."

[Al-Arbaoun Lin-Nawawi]

It is the way of Allah - based on His infinite wisdom - to have mankind pass through stages in their lives. In general, people go through good times and they go through hard times. Naturally, it is when they go through hard times that they face the most psychological stress.

We should know that whatever hardship or difficulties we face will come to an end soon. It, therefore, behoves us to be patient and to have good expectations concerning Allah. Allah is the Most Merciful of those who are merciful, even more merciful than a mother towards her small infant. We should realize that the Merciful will not leave us in that situation for long if we are patient for the sake of Allah.

If a person lives a life of ease only, it becomes simple for him to forget about Allah. If a person is rescued by Allah in his darkest hour, that person should never afterwards forget Allah and what Allah has done for him. Indeed, there should be a close bond forged that may not have existed had Allah not tried His servant.