

www.islamkashmir.org

RADIANT REALITY

Regd. No.: JKENG/2000/4174,
Published From Srinagar. Jan. 2015. Vol.16, No: 01.

Editor, Printer & Publisher: Mawlana Hamidullah Lone	Contents	
<p><i>*Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor.</i></p> <p><i>*The Editor reserves the right to abridge letters and any other material received for publication.</i></p> <p><i>*Published articles do not necessarily reflect the views of Radiant Reality.</i></p> <p><i>*Articles may be reproduced free of charge with due acknowledgment.</i></p> <hr/> <p><u>Mailing Address:</u> Editor In-Charge,- Radiant Reality P.O. Box 974 G.P.O. Srinagar, J&K, 190001, India.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Subscription:</u> Yearly: Rs 240/- + Postage: Rs. 30 (Normal Post) Rs. 140 (Regd. Post)</p> <p>Email: siteadmin@islamkashmir.org</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Editorial - Helping Google Find Sensibility 2 2. Question Answer 4 3. Lesson from the Qur'an 10 4. Lesson from Sahih al-Bukhari 13 5. Beyond the Floods 16 6. On the Existence and Unity of Allah 19 7. It is in the Heart Not in the Money 21 8. The Idea of Worship in Islam 23 9. The Norms of Da'wah 27 10. When is Dajjal Coming 31 11. Here Ye, O Woman! 33 12. Look for Your Heart in Three Places 37 13. Mosque Etiquettes 39 14. Reflecting on the Worldly Life 42 15. The Banu Musa Brothers 44 16. Miracles of Allah 46 	

Join us to spread the message of Islam.

Send your donations to: ⇒

"The Truth"
Account No: 0349010100000045,
IFSC Code: JAKA0DOCTOR
Branch Unit: GMC, Srinagar. Bank: J&K Bank.

EDITORIAL

All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted

Helping Google Find Sensibility

Regarding the latest attack on the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, Google has certainly acted as if Muslims do not matter. It has arrogantly refused to remove the offending content from the YouTube site that it owns. The offensive video, the reactions to it and the reactions to reactions have generated lot of heated debates.

Could it have been avoided?

Many have observed that the offensive video remained un-noticed for fifty-five days. Then curiosity traffic increased the hit count from five thousand to five million in a couple of days. Obviously ignoring it would have been a better option. That is true, as far as it goes. In the initial stage the best option was to ignore it. However those who profit from such offensive material also know this. They tried to get negative publicity in Rushdie affair, they tried it now and they will try it again. They will rub it in your face until there is a reaction. And when that happens, just wishing that there had been no reaction is not going to help us solve the problem.

What Makes Google Tick?

The question arises, why Google must rub it in our face? Google would not allow the freedom to insult to its own employees in its offices that it says we must learn to live with. Why? Why can't it see reason? The answer lies in its very nature. It is a corporation--- impersonal and amoral. You cannot plead with it on the basis of morality, decency, or sensibility. It does not understand the language of

right and wrong or good and evil. It could not care less about the Prophets. It only cares about its profits. Right and wrong translate into profit and loss in its world. It would enforce a code of behavior and decorum in its offices because that is needed for ensuring productivity. It upholds the exact opposite on its sites because that is good for business. If it can increase its profits by inflicting pain on us it will gladly do that. If it sees that doing so reduces its profits, it will "find" that inflicting pain is wrong and insulting the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, is immoral.

And it has been very successful.

Last year Google had revenues of nearly \$40 billion. Ninety-six percent of these came from ads. And its claim to fame in the advertising world is that it has revolutionized advertising by providing targeted ads: Ads that are delivered to each viewer based on the personal preferences and interests of that viewer. Both the AdWords and AdSense programs that it uses are based on information about the users that it gathers and stores through their use of its free services.

It has a huge database about everyone who uses it and it uses that database to generate money. Every time you search for something using it, it learns something about your interests. It knows how to translate that information into hard cash because it can find the right buyers for that information. Every time you click on a Google ad, you are simply sending a check to Google as ad revenues are on a per click basis. It may be a fraction of a cent

per click. But trillions of clicks turn into billions of dollars. In other words every time you use it you are financially supporting it and nurturing its arrogance.

It is our clicks that make Google tick.

Therein lies the secret to making it see reason. If most of us stop using Google even for one week, it will see such a huge shrinking of its revenue stream that it would find sensibility and decency faster than its fastest searches. It would immediately stop any and all insulting content if that happened.

Google Ads

A second but related area of our concern should be the otherwise responsible and serious websites that allow Google ads. When a web site agrees to allow Google to display ads on it, it gives them a blank space over which they can write the message they want. Google gets money from the ad sponsors for these directed ads and passes a fraction of that money to the site owner. For that fraction many "Islamic" sites are selling their Iman. One can find a site hosting a lecture on Qur'an and Hadith and on the same page a Google ad displays a semi nude picture. Sometimes this blurring of the boundaries of the sacred and the profane is justified by the owners by issuing a disclaimer that they are not responsible for the ads. In most cases even the disclaimer is not there.

That such scandalous behavior has become acceptable is an indication of the toll that our blind submission to the Internet revolution has taken on us. For thinking people this should be cause for much reflection and soul searching. This calls for a new level of media activism that has been totally missing from the Muslim world. Isn't it time that someone convinced the owners of such sites to stop allowing such ads?

Is It Futile?

There are those for whom all this talk is futile. In Google they see just an innocent search engine not a cold calculating advertizing giant that is also serving a cultural agenda, about which we may have some concerns. In the Internet and the media revolution they see only wonders.

It is part of a larger malaise in our attitudes about technology that we have been seeing for the past couple of centuries. In the 19th century the British introduced science and technology in the subcontinent through exhibitions for the public. The idea was not to educate but to impress. It was presented as magic. At an exhibition in Calcutta in the early 1800s the visitors were reported to make such comments as "Bap rey bap (Oh My!)...How fantastic."

It seems we have not stopped saying "Bap rey bap... How fantastic."

Once we come out of this spell, we may realize that technology both gives and takes away. And the resulting bargain will be in our favor only if we are actively negotiating with it instead of passively submitting to it. A cell phone magically can connect you to another person on the other part of the globe without any visible link. Yet it also disconnects you from your immediate surroundings. We see that in the horrible acts of insolence when people even in the Haram making tawaf are talking over their cell phones.

Once we determine that technology should be our servant and not our master, our attitudes about it will change dramatically. And so will our attitudes about the technology leaders. We may then realize that Google's declared goal is to "change the world." Can anyone in their right mind advocate that we should just be a passive spectator as they go about changing our world?

Cont'd on page 38

Question Answer

Question.

Is it okay to request others to make Dua for oneself?

Answer.

One should make sincere Dua to Allah and have conviction in its acceptance.

One may also ask the pious and elders to make Dua for oneself and family as is mentioned in the Hadith: On one occasion Umar Radhiyallahu Anhu took permission from Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam to perform Umrah. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "Oh My brother, include us in your Duas and do not forget us" (Tirmidhi)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

It is said that Monday is an auspicious day and hence a nikah should take place either Sunday after Maghrib or on the Monday – Is this true?

Answer.

There are no specific Nikah dates or days during the year. A Nikah date or day should be set in accordance to convenience.

However, it is Mustahab to marry on a Friday. (Majmaul Anhur)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question:

I am married and have 2 wonderful children alhumdulillah. A few months into my marriage I found out that my husband was seeing another woman. He told me he was sorry and it just happened, so I forgave him. But ever since then I have found him cheating but this time his cheating was physical. It came to a stage where I realized he wasn't happy with me. Since he never wanted to divorce, I gave him permission to take a second wife, which he did not do.

A few months back I found out he has been chatting to a non Muslim woman who he had fallen in love with. He said that when he met her it was like she was what was missing from his life and he misses her and likes her a lot. She stopped all contact when she found out he was married and he was heartbroken over the fact that she was not talking to him. He kept trying to make contact with her, trying to win her back, until she was about to open a case of harassment against him.

So my thing is, had she accepted him he would have left me, but coz she doesn't want him he is staying with me. It's like he has no choice or I was the last option. With the other times I could forgive coz it never included feelings. My heart is not in this marriage anymore I really want out of it. I want to live

my life for me and my kids. I don't think I can get past this time. I feel like he is just using me for his pleasure coz other than that there is nothing in our marriage

Answer.

Your husband's conduct and illicit relationships is most despicable. May Allah guide him and give him the ability of making sincere taubah.

While his haraam has been stopped by circumstances, look at this as unseen help for him and for your marriage. We strongly urge you that you try to save your marriage. Indeed you have suffered much due to his despicable conduct. Nevertheless you will be greatly rewarded for the patience you made and continue to make.

Although it is indeed painful to go through this situation, in the interim mask your feelings as best as you can and show extra affection to your husband, in your treatment towards him, in your cooking, dressing, giving of simple gifts, etc. Try to win his heart with affection. It will insha-Allah turn his heart away from any incorrect contact.

The root issue is the heart. Merely taking some commitment from him, and he making promises that he will not commit haraam again is not enough. The main issue is that the consciousness of Allah must develop in his heart. Then, even when he is alone, he will be conscious that Allah is watching at all times. For this we suggest that with the greatest of importance you start the following:

1. Daily conduct ta'leem of the Fazaail-e-A'maal and Fazaail-e-Sadaqaat for at least ten minutes. Encourage him to participate but do not insist. If he does not join, you sit and read the kitaab with your children. Insha-Allah if you consistently do this you will see the difference.
2. Make tilaawat of some portion of the

Quraan Majeed daily.

3. Be punctual on zikr.
4. Make sincere du'aa to Allah to change the condition of your husband's heart and to bless you'll with peace and happiness.
5. Encourage your husband to join the company of some experienced 'Aalim and attend his programs.

Uswatul Muslimah Panel of 'Ulama

Question.

I am a new Muslim. I live in America. I have three children from my Muslim husband. He wants to follow strict Islamic lifestyle. I want to know if I can celebrate birthday of my children who are minors and of ages between 2-7. Is it haram to celebrate birthday of my children?

Answer.

We understand that you live in America and that modern societies create various challenges that may require one to do certain things in order to blend with the rest. However, if this may contradict the teachings of Islam, then it will not be permissible to do so.

You should understand that as Muslims our salvation lies in the adherence of each and every aspect of Deen and by gaining the pleasure of Allah Taala. It is praise worthy to note that your husband wants you to completely adhere to the teachings of Deen, protect your Imaan and gain the pleasure of Allah Taala in which you may feel restricted, but in doing so lies the safety and protection of your Imaan.

We advise you to practice upon the laws of Shariah with an open and positive mind. You will understand the beauty of Islam and feel content with all aspects of Islam.

Mufti Ebrahim

Question.

Kindly advise if it is necessary or part of Shariah to give a tip at a restaurant?

(Vol.16, Issue: 01) 5.

Answer.

Tips that are given at a restaurant are not considered to be part of a transaction nor is it considered to be a condition for the validity of a transaction.

Tips are simply a gift (Hibah) to the restaurant or waiters.

It is morally encouraged but it is not necessary to do so. If no tip is given then no sin has been committed.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Does a man have to wear a hat to perform Salaat?

Answer.

It was the constant practice of Rasoolullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam to perform Salaah with a Head gear (Topee).

Hence, it is Sunnah for males to wear a head gear (Topee) whilst performing Salaah.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Should a Walimah be done before or after the consummation of a Nikah?

Answer.

Walimah is a Sunnah of Rasoolullah Sallallahu Alahi Wasallam.

The Walimahs of Rasoolullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam were immediately after the consummation of marriage.

However, if one wishes to have a Walima after the Nikah and before the consummation of marriage that too will be valid.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it preferable to have a Nikah in a Musjid?

Answer.

It is preferable to perform a Nikah at a

Musjid. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi wa Sallam has stated, "Announce your Nikahs and perform them in the Masjid." (Tirmizi)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I am asking one question regarding reciting tasbeeh fatima that can I use both hand or only one hand for counting tasbeeh by finger tips?

Answer.

It is not necessary to use the fingers of one hand or both hands to make Tasbeeh (Zikr etc.).

One may use the fingers of one hand or both hands to make Tasbeeh (Zikr etc.).

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it permissible to find out the gender of a baby before it is born?

Answer.

There is no harm in finding out the gender of a baby before it is born provided no impermissible means are used to ascertain this.

However, one should not have conviction on the results of medical tests. The final outcome should be left in the knowledge of Allah Ta'ala.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it required to take bath after haircut in a barber shop? Usually the hair cutting shops cater to all communities with varying economic and religious back ground as well as hygienic practises. My question is : for prayers is it required for one who got hair cut in such shops to take bath?

Answer.

It is not necessary to take a shower

after cutting ones hair at a barber shop.

However, from a hygenic perspective, after taking a haircut, it would be best to clean oneself before performing Salaah.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

What is the time of performing Tahajjud Salaah? Can I perform Tahajjud Salaah at Fajr time?

Answer.

Tahajjud Salaah may be performed after the Esha Salaah until Subah Saadiq (the starting of Fajr Salaah time). However, the reward for Tahajjud Salaah increases if it is performed after half of the night has elapsed.

Tahajjud Salaah cannot be performed after Subah Saadiq or at Fajr Salaah time.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Kindly explain to me if the purdah is compulsory on a woman, as I get different views from people and how is it different from only wearing the abaya and headscarf?

Answer.

Apart from covering the rest of the body, it is necessary for a woman to conceal her face from strange (non-mahram) men.

The details in this regard are many. However, to understand the matter briefly, consider the following two verses of the Quraan Majeed.

Allah says: "O Nabi, say to your wives, daughters and the women of the Believers that they should lower their "jilbaab" upon themselves" (Al-Ahzaab v59). In order to truly understand the meaning of this injunction, the best people to refer to are the Sahaabah (RA). In a lengthy incident narrated in Saheeh Bukhaari (#4141) it is reported that once during a journey Sayyidah 'Aaisha (RA) had fallen

asleep while alone in a deserted place. A Sahaabi (RA) passing by saw her and immediately recited "inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raaji'oon" aloud. She states: "His recitation of "inna lillah" awakened me and I immediately covered my face with my jilbaab". Thus the purpose of the jilbaab is apparent that it was meant to cover the head and also the face from non-mahram men. Furthermore, the fact that Sayyidah 'Aaisha (radhiyallahu 'anha) first and foremost covered her face in the presence of a stranger clearly displays the understanding that she had of the said verse.

Allah commands the Sahaabah (RA) with regards to the Ummahaatul Mu'mineen (the pure wives of Rasulullah sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) thus: "And when you ask them for any necessity, do so from behind a curtain. That is purer for your hearts and their hearts" (Al-Ahzaab v53). In order to understand this verse clearly, reflect upon the status of the Sahaabah (RA) and the Ummahaatul Mu'mineen. The Sahaabah (RA) are those personalities who received the certificate of the pleasure of Allah in the Quraan Majeed while they walked on the surface of the earth. The Ummahaatul Mu'mineen, the chaste wives of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) and the mothers of all the Believers have a very sublime position. Their purity was of the highest level. Yet, in order to serve as a lesson to mankind till the Day of Qiyaamah, the Quraan Majeed instructs them to maintain the curtain between them if they have to communicate due to a genuine necessity. This screen, the Quraan declares, is purer for their hearts. Can anyone in this belated fifteenth century claim to be even more pure that this Quraanic injunction should not apply to him/her?

Uswatul Muslimah Panel of Ulama

Question.

I would like to ask if women are allowed to wear white gold rings and also I know

(Vol.16, Issue: 01) 7.

men and women are not permitted to wear platinum rings, but what if it is a real silver (sterling silver) ring (for women) with platinum or rhodium finish?

In principle, it is permissible for women to wear rings made of gold and silver.

White gold is similar to yellow gold, except that platinum, nickel or zinc has been added to it instead of silver or copper. It is well known that adding silver or copper to gold does not alter the fact that it is gold, which also applies to adding palladium to it.

Therefore, as a principle, if the ring is made of an alloy of different metals then the ring will take the ruling of whichever metal is predominant in the alloy. For example, if the finger ring is made of an alloy containing 37.5% platinum, 10% silver and 52.5% gold, the ring will be considered to be of gold and therefore it will be permissible for a woman to wear it. (As for other types of jewellery of women — such as necklaces, ear rings etc. — they can be of any material.)

Women can only wear gold and silver rings, or rings which are plated with gold and silver. Therefore, it will not be permissible for a woman to wear a ring which is plated or finished with platinum or rhodium because it does not display gold or silver.

Asim Patel

Question.

Was it the habit of Rasoolullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam and His Sahaabah Radhiallahu Anhum to eat to their fill?

Answer.

It was not the habit of Rasoolullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam nor His Sahaabah Radhiallahu Anhum to eat to their fill.

Rather, Rasulallah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam advised us to keep one third of our stomachs for food, one third for drink and one third empty. (Tirmidhi)

Mufti Ismaeel

8. (Vol.16, Issue: 01)

Question.

The person that did not Memorise or did not even study the holy Quraan and nows the Surah Fatiha and 3 Qools and recites that in his/her Sallah. Is there any punishments for that person in the day of Judgment. For not studying the Quraan?

Answer.

A person should recite whatever amount/portion of the Quraan he/she knows in Salaah. At the same time, an effort must be made in learning and memorizing that amount of the Quraan that is necessary for Salaah.

Every Muslim should endeavour to study the Quran. This is from the rights of the Quran. While there is great virtue in memorising the Quran, there is no punishment for not memorizing a large portion or the entire Quraan.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it permissible to reply to Salams in writing?

If someone sends Salaam as an audio message on WhatsApp can we reply to his Salaam by writing him back on Whatsapp?

What is the ruling of Salaam on Social Media. Generally we type the work "Assalamualaikum" on WhatsApp.... Is it necessary to reply verbally or can we reply by writing back?

Answer.

It is permissible to reply to a Salaam on social media verbally or by text. Either of them will suffice.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Assalamu alaykum, Is using counter or beads to count dhikr of Allah Bidah. Using of digital Tashbeeh or tally counter is allowed?

Answer.

It is permissible (Mubaah) to use a "Tasbīh" or "Subhah" in order to aid oneself in performing Zikr.

In the past, people used stones and beads as an aid in making Zikr. In today's times, digital counters along with other technological methods are used.

Hence, if one uses a Tasbih for this purpose it will not be Bid'ah. The general principle of Mubaah is one may practice on it or use it on condition he does not regard it as compulsory in Deen or a Sunnah.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Please advise is it necessary to eat only 7 kinds of vegetable during the ten days of Muharram and where does this rule come from I would just like to confirm this and know the reason why one should eat only vegetables I know of families that are doing this is this Islamic or not Please advise

Answer.

In Islam, there is no basis for eating only seven kinds of vegetables during the first ten days of Muharram. It is a baseless superstition that has no place in Islam.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

My mother is going to end her iddah period in the next month. I want to know the rules and

Answer.

The term of iddah for a widow is to allow her to mourn the death of her husband and to give her time to overcome the grief and emotions. As such, a widow being a broken-hearted person is very close to Allah. Consider the following Hadeeth:

Musa (AS) said: Oh Allah! Where should I search for you? He (Allah) replied:

look for me by the broken-hearted ones

During the final moments of iddah, a widow reaches the peak of her emotions as she finally exits from the marriage bond, while that period is very challenging; it is a time to engage in dua for the deceased and for oneself. The duas at that time are accepted.

As a principle, the procedure of terminating iddah is that all the restrictions during iddah, for example, beautifying oneself or applying fragrances are lifted. After iddah a widow may beautify herself, apply fragrance etc.

Mufti Ebrahim

Question.

A friend of mine made intention to perform Umrah (his wife, and two daughters), however he wants to take his wife sister with.

PS. the wife and the sister are from two different fathers. Can he (my friend) be a Mahram for the wife's sister.

Answer.

The husband is considered to be a non-Mahram (stranger) to his wife's sister (whether there are maternal or paternal sisters).

Hence, in the inquired situation, the husband cannot be a Mahram for the wife's sister.

Mufti Ismaeel

Cont'd from page 45

al-Ma'mun to measure a degree of latitude and they made their measurements in the desert in northern Mesopotamia. They also made many observations of the sun and the moon from Baghdad. Muhammad and Ahmad measured the length of the year, obtaining the value of 365 days and 6 hours. Observations of the star Regulus were made by the three brothers from their house on a bridge in Baghdad in 840-41, 847-48, and 850-51.

taken from http://www.gap-system.org/~history/Biographies/Banu_Musa.html

(Vol.16, Issue: 01) 9.

Lesson From The Qur'an

Sura Nisa - Verse 13-22

Note: Text in bold letters is the literal translation of the meaning of the Qur'an by M. Taqi Usmani and the normal text is the brief explanation compiled by Institute of Islamic Research, Darul Uloom Ilahiya.

After declaring the commands above, the following verse now lays emphasis on putting them into action.

These - the commands related to orphans and inheritance - **are the limits set by Allah. Whoever truly obeys Allah and His Messenger** and also keeps to these limits, **He will immediately admit him to gardens beneath the palaces of which rivers flow, where he will live forever. That is a great success.** [4:13]

Whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses the limits set by Him by considering them unnecessary - this condition is equivalent to unbelief, **He shall admit him to the Fire, where he will remain forever. For him there is a humiliating punishment.** [4:14]

*Now, the reformation of some more matters related to is being mentioned below.
Punishment for adultery.*

Those of your duly married women who commit the shameful act of adultery, have four witnesses against them from among you who

must be Muslims, freemen, sane, adults and males, so that those in authority can impose punishment based on their witness. **So, if they testify** that they saw with their eyes the actual bodily unification, **then confine those adulterous women to their homes** by way of punishment on the orders of those in authority **until death overcomes them,* or Allah prescribes a way** - another decree, **for them** through His prophet. [4:15] **This was the penalty imposed in the beginning of Islam.*

The punishment for adultery is not specific to married women only, but **those two** men or women, married or unmarried, **of you** Muslims - sane and adult, **who commit it, chastise both of them** as determined by those in authority.* **However, if after their chastisement they repent** over the past **and make amends** for the future against committing such a crime again, **then, overlook them** after they have been punishment, as **surely, Allah is Most-Relenting** so He has now accepted their repentance; and **Very-Merciful** so He has now forgiven them. [4:16] **This was the decree*

until the law - 100 lashes for unmarried, and death by stoning for married - was revealed.

After commenting upon repentance above the following verse now mentions various aspects of its acceptance or non-acceptance.

The relenting taken by Allah upon Himself is promised **for those** alone **who do evil**, whether major or minor, **in ignorance** without clear consciousness of guilt, and **then repent shortly thereafter** as soon as their guilt is made clear to them. **So, Allah relents towards them** in forgiveness. **Allah is All-Knowing** of whose repentance is sincere, **All-Wise** to let not usually disgrace him whose repentance is false. [4:17]

The relenting is not for those who do the evil deeds persistently, **until when the time of death approaches one of them** and the Hereafter has begun to unfold itself before him, at that moment **he says, "Now I repent"**, so, neither for those the repentance is accepted, **nor for those who** spend their lives in disbelief and offer to repent just at the time of death, but **die while they are still disbelievers**. These disbelievers, **for them We have prepared a painful punishment**. [4:18]

In the above verses the issue of repentance is mentioned in connection to a particular situation, and before it the decrees related to women are mentioned. The following verses also present some more commands with regard to women.

In pagan Arabia, widows were divided amongst the heirs of a deceased as goods and property. Immediately after a man died, his son would cast a sheet of cloth on each of the widows (except his own mother), and this signified the he had taken their possession to himself. The heirs, in such cases, either married

the widow to someone else and keep her dowry, or refused to let her marry unless she compensated for her release by paying off handsomely, or else married her himself.

O you who believe, it is not lawful for you that you should forcibly take wealth or person of **women as inheritance** the way you used to do in pre-Islamic days. **Do not hold on to them so that you** yourself or your kinsmen **may take away some of what you have given them** as dower, **unless they commit a clearly shameful act** such as doing harm to the person or property of the husband or his family, or commit adultery. **Live with them in the recognized manner** that of good morality and proper attention towards their maintenance allowance. **If you**, due to human instinct, **dislike them**, but at the same time you find no reason of their disliking you, **then** have recourse to your intellectual faculty and tolerate them as **it is quite likely that you dislike something and Allah has placed a lot of material as well as spiritual good in it**. [4:19]

It is not lawful to take away dower of wives in situations other the one mentioned above. For example, in case of unattractiveness towards the previous wife and desire to marry some other woman, the pagan Arabs would by hook or crook take away wealth or absolve themselves of dower money from their previous wife in order to pay it to a new one, and thus achieve their wish. So, to satisfy this cause and also escape the blame of taking his previous wife's wealth, a pagan would slander her of committing some gross immorality, or traumatize her to such an extent that she yielded to pay or absolve him of her dower money in order to save herself. The following verse prohibits this.

Based on your desire **if you want to take a**

wife in place of the one you have ir-
respective that she is not guilty, **and you**
have given her - either in payment of
dower money, or as free gift - **plenty of**
wealth, or there is a contract of paying
it to her as dower, **then do not take**
any of it - the given wealth or contrac-
tual dower - **back** by traumatizing her
or through absolving yourself. **Would**
you take it back through false imputa-
tion of disobedience or immorality on
her, **and** by committing the **open sin** of
injustice by seizing her wealth? [4:20]

How can you take it – in morality or in
law – **when**, apart from slander and
injustice there are two more preven-
tives, one - **you have had access to**
each other after the consummation or
valid retirement* of marriage, **and two**
- **they have taken a firm covenant**
from you of paying them their dower
money? [4:21] *(i.e., the man has been
alone with his wife for a sufficient
length of time, even though there has
been no intercourse)

The present verses, dealing with mar-
riage, are an extension of the descrip-
tion of evil practices common in pagan
Arabs. These verses also give details of
muharramat, that is, women with
whom marriage is prohibited; and also
about whom Muslims had doubts of
unlawfulness but were lawful.

Do not marry those women whom
your fathers or grandfathers **had mar-**
ried except what has passed in pagan-
ism is forgiven but be on your guard in
the future. **It is indeed shameful** rati-
onally **and detestable** for those mor-
ally upright, **and it is also an evil prac-**
tice as per Shariah. [4:22]

“Khaleelullah”

*It was the habit of Nabi Ebrahim (AS) to al-
ways invite someone over when partaking of
meals. On one occasion he set out looking for
someone to join him for meals. When he could not
find anyone, he returned to his house. As he en-
tered, he saw someone standing in his home. He
exclaimed: “O servant of Allah, with whose per-
mission have you entered my house?” The stranger
replied: “The real owner of this house has granted
me permission.” Ebrahim (AS) then asked him:
“Who are you?” He replied: “I am the angel of
death. Allah has sent me to give glad tidings to a
special servant of His, who He has selected to be
His Khaleel (close and bosom friend).” Ebrahim
(AS) said: “Please, do let me know who this
saint is. I swear by Allah, no matter which ever
part of the world he resides in, I would definitely
go there and meet him. Then, I would spend my
entire life at his feet (serving him).” The angel of
death responded: “You are that fortunate person.”*

*Ebrahim (‘alaihis salaam) asked: “Is it really
me?” The angel of death replied in the affirma-
tive. Thereafter Ebrahim (AS) inquired from
him the reason for Allah Ta‘ala selecting him as*

*His Khaleel? The angel of death replied:
“Because you always keep giving others, but never
ask anything from anyone.”*

(Tafseer Ibni Katheer)

*Lesson: When one gives for the pleasure of Al-
lah, one always receives something in return – in
this world and the Hereafter. In this world, be-
sides blessings in ones sustenance, it brings great
spiritual benefits which are beyond all the material
benefits of this world.*

Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

The Book of Menses

Chapter 7 : A menstruating woman should perform all the rituals of Haj except the circumambulation (Tawaaf) around the Ka'ba.

And Ibrahim (Nakha'ee) said: "There is no problem in reciting a verse of Qur'an by a menstruating woman". And Ibn Abbas viewed nothing bad in the recitation of Qur'an by a ritually impure person". And the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to remember (Zikr) Allah at all times. Ummi Atiya said that they were ordered to let the menstruating women come out (to Eidgah) to say 'Takbeer' and to invoke Allah.

And Ibn Abbas narrated on the authority of Abu Sufiyan: Hiraclulus asked for the letter of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and read it: It began: In the name of Allah, the Glorious, the Merciful. O people of the scripture! Come to a word common to you and us that we worship no one but Allah..." (3:64).

And Ata quoted from Jaabir: "Hadhrat Ayesha (RA) got her menses during Haj days and she performed all the rituals except the circumambulation around the Ka'ba and she did not offer Salaah.

And Haakim said: "I slaughter the animal even if I were in a ritual impure state". And Allah said, "Eat not (O believers) of that meat on

which Allah's name has not been pronounced (at the time of slaughtering of that animal". (6:122)

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Imam Bukhari (RA) says in the title of this chapter that a menstruating woman can perform all rituals of Haj except Tawaaf but the statements he has quoted in this chapter make the scholars feel that actually he wants to prove that recitation of Qur'an is permissible for a menstruating woman and ritually impure person. The majority of Ulema feel that the arguments which Imam Bukhari (RA) puts forward are weak. For example, he quotes Ibrahim Nakha'ee saying that a menstruating woman can recite one verse of the Qur'an. This does not support Imam Bukhari's view, as it shows that even Ibrahim Nakha'ee is in favour of recitation of only a single verse and not more than that. The scholars have also questioned the analogy which Imam Bukhari has deduced from the statement of Ibne Abbas (RA). It is quoted from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he used to recite his daily routine Zikr (Wadheefa) even when in ritual impurity. It is not clear that this Zikr included the verses of Qur'an as well. Even if his Zikr included the

verses of Qur'an, the same cannot be applied to a menstruating woman i.e., a man who is ritually impure cannot be compared with a menstruating woman.

Thirdly, Imam Bukhari (RA) says that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) always used to perform Zikr. It is a general statement i.e., it does not mean the recitation of Qur'an even with ritual impurity.

Fourthly, the statement of Ummi Atiya is about Takbeer and Dua and not the recitation of Qur'an.

Fifthly, Imam Bukhari (RA) argues that the letter of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to Hiraclus contained the verses of the Qur'an, so when a Kaafir can read Qur'an why not a ritually impure Muslim or menstruating woman? The scholars say that this analogy also seems far-fetched.

Sixthly, the statement of Ata from Jaabir that Hadhrat Ayesha performed all the rituals of Haj except Tawaaf does not prove the point of permissibility for a menstruating woman to recite the Qur'an.

Lastly, Haakam says that while being ritually impure, he used to slaughter the animals; there is no mention of the recitation of Qur'an in this case.

Hadith No. 298

Narrated 'Aisha (RA)

We set out with the Prophet for Hajj and when we reached Sarif I got my menses. When the Prophet came to me, I was weeping. He asked, "Why are you weeping?" I said, "I wish if I had not performed Hajj this year." He asked, "May be that you got your menses?" I replied, "Yes." He then said, "This is the thing which Allah has ordained for all the daughters of Adam. So do what all the pilgrims do except that you do not perform the Tawaf round the Ka'ba till you are clean."

Comments

This Hadith has been repeated here.

Chapter 8 : Istihaadha.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

It means the excessive menstrual bleeding which exceeds usual days of menstrual period. For example, if a woman routinely gets menstruation for seven days and in some month she gets it for ten days, the additional three days will be considered as 'Istihadha' and not menses. If a woman gets menstrual bleeding for less than her least period, that will also be considered an Istihadha. This least period as per Hanafite school is three days and as per Shafite school is one day, that means if the last duration of usual menstrual period is three days and in some month she gets the bleeding only for two days, it will be considered as Istihadha as per Hanafite school. The Hanafite school considers ten days as maximum period of menstruation whereas in Shafite school it is fifteen days and more than that is considered as Istihadha.

Definition of Istihadha

"Istihadha is that blood which flows from (the vagina) of a woman during the menstrual period from the 'Aadhil' and that is a vessel from lower part of uterus and not from its depth".

The purpose of Imam Bukhari (RA) is to say that menses and Istihadha are two different issues.

Hadith No. 299

Narrated 'Aisha (RA)

Fatima bint Abi Hubaish said to Allah's Apostle, "O Allah's Apostle! I do not become clean (from bleeding). Shall I give up my prayers?" Allah's Apostle replied: "No, because it is from a blood vessel and not the menses. So when the real menses begins give up your prayers and when it (the period) has finished wash the

blood off your body (take a bath) and offer your prayers."

Comments

Hadhrat Fatima bint Abi Hubaish asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that she was getting prolonged menstrual periods and with such menstrual bleeding which mimics menstruation, was she supposed to offer Salaah or not? Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) told her that it was not menses but it (i.e., Istihaadha) is blood which comes from a vessel and it is due to a disease. The routine menstruation comes in a state of normal health conditions whereas Istihaadha is due to some disease. In one of the Hadith, different causes of Istihaadha have been mentioned.

Masaa'il (Issues) of Istihaadha

As per all the four juristic schools and the majority of jurists, if a woman gets Istihaadha after the cessation of menses, then only one ritual ablution (Gusul) is mandatory for her .

As per Hanafite school, after the Gusul, she has to perform Wudu for every Fardh Salaah and with one Wudu she can offer other Salaah during the stipulated time of a particular Salaah and after the time of that Salaah ends she has to perform Wudu again. For example, if she has performed Wudu for Zuhr Salaah, she can also offer other Salaah with the same Wudu up to the time of Asr Salaah but for Asr, she will have to perform another Wudu.

As per Shafite school, she can offer only a single obligatory Salaah with one Wudu.

Chapter 9 : The washing out of menstrual blood.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Since the menstrual blood is more thicker and with more impurity and bad look, it needs little more exaggeration in washing.

Hadith No. 300

Narrated Asma' bint Abi Bakr (RA)

A woman asked Allah's Apostle, "O Allah's Apostle! What should we do, if the blood of menses falls on our clothes?" Allah's Apostle replied, "If the blood of menses falls on the garment of anyone of you, she must take hold of the blood spot, rub it, and wash it with water and then pray in (with it)."

Hadith No. 301

Narrated 'Aisha (RA)

Whenever anyone of us got her menses, she, on becoming clean, used to take hold of the blood spot and rub the blood off her garment, and pour water over it and wash that portion thoroughly and sprinkle water over the rest of the garment. After that she would pray in (with) it.

Comments

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) instructed the woman who had asked him regarding the blood of menses, to sprinkle a little water on that part of cloth which gets stained with the menstrual blood and then scrub and squeeze it so that the embedded blood comes out of the garment and after that wash it with water.

Cont'd from page 36

the ever irritant sisters in law. They are in another house. This house has only sisters. Does the daughter await her mother's death? You must be a lunatic. And children? Well, they are the father's/paternal grandfather's responsibility until their puberty. Boys live with her until at least the age of eight, and girls until puberty (although all expenses are paid by the father/grandfather).

Now is the time to compare the situation of a divorced woman or a widow in the house of the in-laws with that of hers in her parent's house. No comparison. That's Islam.

(Vol.16, Issue: 01) 15.

Beyond the Flood

Abid Ahmad

The devastating flood that inundated Kashmir recently brought the best out of the Kashmiris. From mutual considerateness and help to introspection and turning back to Lord from breaking the natural course He has prescribed for human beings were some of the profoundest lessons we were imparted through this catastrophe.

As a community, this is how we looked at it. But there were a few who tried to look at this phenomenon purely from a geo-physical point of view. Religious point of view is too naive for them to be digestible. They simply focus on the question of 'how' without going beyond and trying to gauge the question of 'why', though the latter is more excruciating question. As humans, we cannot simply be contented with 'how'. We tend to ask questions on everything from mundane to metaphysical and even beyond. As human beings we are adept at it. In fact being able to ask questions is considered to be the prowess of geniuses among us. Some of the greatest human personalities are still revered for their ability to have asked some profound universal questions. But at the same time, none of these great minds was ever able to answer any of these questions in a satisfactory way. That is why human species is still groping in meaninglessness. Answering the ultimate questions is

exclusively God's prerogative. And that is precisely why God Himself sends His message down to the human sphere (*tanzeel* in Islamic terminology) to provide answers to the existential questions of human beings, and through this message (al-Quran), He advises humans not to ask too many questions as human mind has very limited capacity of understanding things.

The introduction to God given by God Himself in the holy Quran familiarizes us with His working in all realms of creation – comprehensible to us or not. There is not a leaf which falls from a tree but with God's consent and intent, is what God says in the Quran. Nothing is futile, not to speak of a deluge of such a huge magnitude as we witnessed recently. Answering its 'how' is so simplistic to satisfy our curiosity to know its 'why'. That can be understood only through the divine logic which begins where human logic ends. The divine logic says that if the creations endowed with free-will use it in ways other than those prescribed by God Himself, there is corresponding disturbance in the natural phenomena too. From Islamic perspective, this backlash, the reflection of our own doings, could be severe or mild, depending on multiple factors. Its purpose is either to chasten or chastise us as the case may be and which cannot

be determined by us but by God Himself. This is not anthropomorphism but plain divine logic given by Divinity Itself. If anybody is in doubt about it, then the holy Quran throws the challenge to get a verse which could match the holy Quran, in content, in form and above all in the Godly confidence it exudes.

Neutralizing any physical disturbance from its divine intent amounts to reducing God to an entity who is done with winding the watch and is napping now, in total contrast to the constant dynamism and change we see all around us as a universal phenomenon. The holy Quran mentions at more than one place God possessing something which usually humans have like 'wajah' (face), 'saaq' (leg) etc. Similarly God ascribes to Himself the qualities like anger, pleasure etc which are normally associated with human beings. But God possesses these qualities as behave the God Who has no parallel, and not as we imagine them. God, in essence, is even beyond our imagination. However, the Quran itself mentions how God's qualities get manifested in this world as well as in the Hereafter. His ways of chastising (*ta'zeeb*) or chastening (*tahzeeb*) His creations through suffering is one dimension of His divine qualities.

Religion is not a superficial understanding of things. In fact it is the deepest attempt at engaging in a creative encounter with the baffling mysteries within ourselves and outside. From Islamic perspective, religion is not a human attempt, it's a divine initiative where humans are at receiving end and have to comply, anyhow. So, the only option available to us is to look at everything as God desires us to. We are too puny, insignificant and humble in front of the whole cosmos to avail the option of not to, against the voice that says it's God speaking and claims the immeasurable vastness around us and including us as exclusively His.

*The Wisdom behind a Woman Travelling
with a Mabram*

Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (ra) once mentioned that he received a letter from a person enquiring whether it would be permissible for him to travel with one of his elderly female relatives who wished to accompany him for hajj. Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (ra) replied that as long as there is no mahram accompanying her on the journey, it will be impermissible for her to travel.

An 'Aalim present asked that is it not that the reason for the prohibition of a woman travelling alone for hajj is due to being alone (hence if she is in company, it should be permissible). Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (ra) replied in the negative. Thereafter he explained that the reason for the prohibition (as explained by the Fuqahaa) is that generally many difficulties and evils occur during the journey. In the case where a woman travels alone, there is no one to assist her or come to her aid. On the contrary, in the case where she is accompanied by her mahram, then she feels (mentally and physically) secure that in the event of some difficulty, she would be able to easily call out for him and seek his assistance. However Hazrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (ra) then said that these explanations that we present are mere logical explanations which appeal to our comprehension and understanding. The reality of the matter is that this is the law of sharee'ah which we are unable to fully comprehend and encompass its divine wisdom. Hence, we are bound to believe in it being correct and accept it whether we understand its wisdom and logical reasoning or not. (Malfoozaat Hakeemul Ummat 1/87)

On the Existence and Unity of God

Ali Unal

It is very easy to explain existence when one attributes it to one Divine Being. If you try to explain existence by attributing it to various origins, insurmountable barriers are encountered. If you attribute existence to one Divine Being, you can then see that the whole universe is as easy to create as a honeybee, and that a honeybee is as easy to create as fruit. If, by contrast, you ascribe it to multiple origins, creating a honeybee is as difficult as creating the universe, and creating fruit will be as difficult as creating all the trees in the universe. This is because a single being, with a single movement, can produce an effect that deals with a whole. If that effect or treatment is expected of multiple beings, it will only be obtained, if at all, with extreme difficulty and after much controversy. Which is easier or more difficult: managing an army under a single commander, or letting the soldiers make their own decisions; employing a builder to construct a building, or letting the stones arrange themselves; the revolution of many planets around a single sun, or vice versa?

When all things are attributed to one Divine Being, they do not have to be created from absolute non-existence, for creation means giving external, material existence to things that already exist in the Divine Knowledge. It is like putting in words the meaning in one's mind, or applying a sub-

stance to make letters written in invisible ink be visible. However, if things, most of which are lifeless, ignorant, and unconscious—or, if alive, powerless and lacking in sufficient knowledge—are ascribed to themselves or to their causes—which are themselves lifeless, ignorant, and unconscious—then these things have to be created from absolute non-existence. This is impossible. The ease with which one Divine Being does this makes the existence of things as easy as is necessary; the difficulty in the latter is beyond measure. The existence of a living being requires that the atoms forming it, which are spread throughout the soil, water, and air, should come together. Therefore, each atom would have to have universal knowledge and absolute will. Anything with such knowledge and will would be independent of any partner and would not need to acknowledge any such partner. Nowhere in the universe is there any sign of such things or partners to be found. Creating the heavens and the earth requires a perfect, infinite power that has no partner. otherwise, this power would have to be limited by a finite power, which is inconceivable. An infinite power does not need partners and is not obliged to admit of such even if they were to exist (which they do not).

Tawhid, that is the Principle of Divine Unity and oneness, can be clearly observed through-

out the universe. Those who take a look at themselves and their environment can easily discern that everything depends upon this basic principle of God-revealed Religion. Parts of the human body, for example, are in close cooperation with one another, and each cell is also interconnected with the whole body, making it impossible not to conclude that He Who has created the single cell is also He Who created the whole body. Likewise, the elements comprising the universe are interrelated and in harmony with one another and the universe as a whole. One cannot help but believe that the entire universe, from the particles to the galaxies, has been brought into existence by the same Creator, and furthermore that the motion of atoms observed in a molecule is the same as that observed in the solar system. Everything originates from "one" and eventually will return to "one." The tree, for instance, which grows out of a seed or a stone, will result finally in a seed or stone. This visible evidence explains why an orderliness and harmony are observed in the whole universe; it operates in strict obedience to the One Who has established that order. In other words, it is directly operated by the Creator, the One, the All-Powerful, and the All-Knowing. Otherwise, as pointed out in the Qur'an: God has never taken to Himself a child, nor is there any god along with Him; otherwise each god would surely have sought absolute independence with his creatures under his authority, and they would surely have tried to overpower one another (23: 91); and: The fact is that had there been in the heavens and the earth any gods other than God, both (of those realms) would certainly have fallen into ruin (21: 22).

Tawhid is the highest conception of deity, the knowledge of which God has sent to humankind in all ages through His Prophets. It was this same knowledge which all the Prophets, including Moses, Jesus, and the Prophet

Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) brought to humankind. Humans were guilty of polytheism or idol-worship after the demise of their Prophets. They misinterpreted the religion, mixed it with superstition, and let it degenerate into magical practices and meaningless rituals. The concept of God, the very core of religion, was debased by anthropomorphism, the deification of angels, the association of others with God, the attempt to elevate Prophets or godly people as 'incarnations' of God, and the personification of His Attributes through separate deities.

The followers of Tawhid must not be narrow-minded. Their belief in One God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the Master of the east and the west, and the sustainer of the universe, leads them to view everything as belonging to the same Lord, to Whom they belong as well. Thus, they consider nothing as alien. Their sympathy, love, and service are not confined to any particular race, color, or group; they come to understand the Prophetic saying: "O servants of God, be brothers (and sisters)!"

The followers of Tawhid know that only God has true power, that only He can benefit or harm them, fulfill their needs, cause them to die, or wield authority and influence. This conviction makes them indifferent to and independent and fearless of all powers other than those of God. They never bow in homage to any of God's creates.

The followers of Tawhid, although humble and mild, never abase themselves by bowing before anyone or anything except God. They never aim at any advantage by their worship, even if that advantage is Paradise. They seek only to please God and obtain His approval. They know that the only way to success and salvation is to acquire a pure soul and righteous behavior. They have perfect faith in God, Who is above all needs, related to none,

absolutely just, and without partner in His exercise of Divine Power. Given this belief, they understand that they can succeed only through right living and just action, for no influence or underhanded activity can save them from ruin. However, some believe that they have atoned for their sins, while others assert that they are God's favorites and thus immune to punishment. Still others believe that their idols or saints will intercede with God on their behalf, and so make offerings to their deities in the belief that such bribes give them license to do whatever they want. Such false beliefs keep them entangled in sin and evil, and their dependence on such deities causes them to neglect their need for spiritual purification and for living a pure and good life.

The followers of Tawhid do not become hopeless or disappointed. Their firm faith in God, Master of all treasures of the earth and the heavens, and Possessor of limitless grace, bounty, and infinite power, imparts to their hearts extraordinary consolation, grants them contentment, and keeps them filled with hope. In this world, they might meet with rejection at all doors, nothing might serve their ends, and all means might desert them. But faith in and dependence on God, which never leave them, give them the strength to go on struggling. Such a profound confidence can come only from belief in One God. Such a belief produces great determination, patient perseverance, and trust in God. When such believers decide to devote their resources to fulfilling the Divine commands in order to secure God's good pleasure and approval, they are sure that they have the support and backing of the Lord of the universe.

Tawhid inspires bravery, for it defeats the two factors that make people cowardly: fear of death and love of safety along with the belief that someone other than God can somehow be bribed into postponing one's death.

Belief in the Islamic creed that "there is no deity but God" purges the mind of these ideas. The first idea loses its influence when people realize that their lives, property, and everything else really belong to God, for this makes them willing to sacrifice whatever they have for God's approval. The second idea is defeated when people realize that no weapon, person, or power can kill them, for only God has this power. No one can die before his appointed time, even if all of the world's forces combine to do so. Nothing can bring death forward or push it back, even for one instant. This firm belief in One God and dependence upon Him makes followers of Tawhid the bravest of people.

Tawhid creates an attitude of peace and contentment, purges the mind of subtle passions, jealousy, envy and greed, and it prevents one from resorting to base and unfair means for achieving success.

Cont'd from page 22

*He who lives for himself, lives small, and dies small and will be forgotten,
And he who lives for others, lives big, and dies big and will be remembered*

Our function in life is not merely to have and to hold, but to give and to serve, to get and not to forget. "The service we render to others is really the rent we pay for our room on this earth." (Dr Wilfred Grenfell) Prophet Muhammad (S) said: "Allah is at the assistance of a person as long as that person is of help to another."

Remember the promise, people will enter Paradise; by the Mercy of Allah, through the generosity of their spirits and the soundness of their hearts. (Prophet Muhammad (S))

O Allah! I seek refuge in Thee from anxiety, grief, incapacity, laziness, stinginess, cowardice; from the burden of debt and from the domination of people.

(Prayer of Prophet Muhammad (S))

It is in the Heart Not in the Money

Sadullah Khan

The way people relate to wealth influences most aspects of their personal lives. For many people, where there is wealth there is attention.

If you became wealthy overnight...

What will the first thing you would do?

Is charity one of your primary focuses?

How much more charity will you give? ... and what is your proof?

Biblical text encourages each person to give in proportion to the way God has blessed them [Deuteronomy 16:17] Many believe that the more they have, the more generous they'll become; but is that really the case. To become more generous, you have to have a spirit of generosity in the first place.

It's Not really about the Money, It's actually about the Heart

Real generosity is not dependant so much on income as it is on the capacity of the heart. There are many who have the means to give, but not the heart to give. And there are many, who, the more they have the less they give. Henry Ward Beecher warned; "watch, lest prosperity destroy generosity".

Father, Unlike Son

In the 1950s J.P. Getty was the richest man in world. He is known to have disliked the attention his wealth brought, but not because of his humility but because of people's request

for donations, he "despised passive acceptance of money"; had a pay-phone installed in his house for guests; delayed ransom for his grandson's kidnapping for 6 months and only paid a fraction of the ransom after his grandson's ear was cut off and sent to him.

J.P. Getty Jr. inherited relatively a small part of his father's estate yet gave millions in charity saying, "I am privileged to be the heir to huge wealth and I regard myself as custodian of that money for the benefit of people who need it more than I do."

Even when you do give of your material wealth, do not give merely from the top of your wallet, but rather give from the bottom of your heart. Also, it is not material help only. Whatever one can do to enhance the situation of others is considered generosity. Prophet Muhammad (S) said; "There is charity due on every part of the body every day." He went on to say: " to bring justice between people is charity, to help a person with transport and helping with baggage is charity, a good, kind word is charity, every step towards prayer is charity, removing harmful things from the way is charity and giving water to the thirsty is charity. A person's true wealth lies in the good they accrue for the Hereafter through good deeds in this world. When a person dies people say 'what has he left behind?' while angels say 'what has he sent forth?' "

To give of your self is the best kind of giving. Prophet Muhammad (S) said: "When you give of yourself then you truly are a Believer".

The great Lebanese poet and writer Khalil Gibran echoed the same sentiments when he said: "You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give."

So, if you genuinely desire to become a generous person, don't wait for your income to change; change the attitude of your heart.

Stinginess

As for those who are stingy due to fear that generosity will deplete their wealth, Prophet Muhammad (S) said: A person says, "this is my wealth, my things" but all that he really has is three; What he consumes and digests, what he wears and wears out, or what he gives in charity and it continues to benefit; The rest you leave behind when you depart from this world."

Martin Luther King Jr. said: "Every person must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness."

Note that the stingy person is far from people, far from Allah, far from paradise and closer to the fire of Hell. (Prophet Muhammad (S))

Positive Aspects of Giving

The Company of the generous is delightful. The generous focus on other than themselves, and their generosity not only makes them likeable but also makes the world a happier and better place.

Life should not really be about how much money we accrue, but rather how many people we serve; because the greater your giving, the greater your living. Giving does not devalue your worth and the Prophet said that

"charity does not decrease wealth". Remember, we are here to enrich the world, and if we ever forget that we impoverish ourselves.

In helping others we enhance ourselves, for when you light another's path you can't help but cast light on your own path. Realize that no one stands taller in success than the one who bends down to help those in need. We become enriched by enriching the lives of others. The Prophet said that a Believer feels good doing good. So do not do good merely to feel good, but rather feel good doing good.

In a humorous incident, a beggar asked a woman for money and she said; "I'll give you a dollar, not because you deserve it but because it pleases me". So the beggar said; "Thanks Maam, why don't you give me \$100 and you could feel really, really good about it." By living a life that is helpful, one's life becomes significant. "Life's most persistent and urgent question is ... What are we doing for others?" (civil rights leader, Martin Luther King Jr.) How we answer that question is in a way a good measure of our spirit of generosity.

Spirit of Generosity

Characteristic of a true Believer: When asked about the characteristics of a Believer, Imam Zainul 'Abideen said: "Righteousness in privacy, generosity even when needy, patience during misfortunes, sense of control when angry and truthfulness even when fearful."

Kindness: Giving requires compassion, mercy, and love. Each person should give what he has decided in his heart to give; not reluctantly nor under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. [2 Corinthians 9:7]

Selflessness: Eventually, what we do for ourselves alone dies with us, but what we do for others outlives us. Wise are the words that reminds us:

Cont'd on page 20

The Idea of Worship in Islam

Dr. Spahic Omer

Islam teaches that man has been created as Allah's vicegerent on earth. With his honorable vicegerency (khilafah) mission, man signifies both the climax and the epicenter of Allah's act of creation and its divine purpose. As such, when completely submitting to the Will and Word of his Creator and Master – as man's ultimate fate ought to be -- man elevates himself to the highest level in the hierarchy of life's multifaceted constituents and beings, including angels. Man's life, then, in its totality becomes one sweet song of worshipping, glorifying and praising Allah, the Lord of the universe. It becomes a form of worship ('ibadah) where Allah in all the life interests and pursuits of man becomes the ultimate object of all his spiritual cravings and desires.

In Islam, life is a perfectly meaningful, consequential, purposeful, beautiful, pure and wholesome affair. Thus, it is regarded as sacred, and living it in accordance with Allah's guidance, which is meant for that very purpose, is synonymous with worship and submission to Allah. Allah says that He had created both men and Jinns only that they may worship and serve Him (al-Dhariyat, 56). It follows that for a person to thus live his life is to keep things in a natural order, to remain on the right path and to remain faithful and loyal to Allah. It means, furthermore, that he is bound to remain faithful to his inner self and to what he really is and was always meant to be. Con-

versely, for a person to alienate an aspect of his life from the inspiration and guidance of Allah is to start moving towards an aberrant order of things, unfaithfulness and disloyalty to Allah. The more estranged his life aspects from divine guidance and inspiration, the more alienated from Allah a man becomes, and the more deviant and anomalous the life tendencies -- which he evolves and adopts -- become, and the more alienated from, and deceitful towards, his intrinsic self and its disposition, a man becomes. As Muhammad Iqbal remarked:

*“When faith is lost then so is peace,
And there is no life for the one who is not enlivened by religion (Islam),
Whoever is pleased with a life bereft of faith
Has made total ruin to be life's substance.”*

Hence, Islamic pure religious rituals, which have been prescribed to be performed at appointed times, are to be viewed as neither separated from nor burdensomely imposed superfluous actions on the smooth flow of everyday life activities. Rather, such religious rituals are to be viewed as life's integral dimension which inspires, guides, facilitates and gives a perfect sense to the rest of life's dimensions. The two systems of expression, the spiritual and the physical ones, construct a perfect whole which, although operational in terrestrial contexts, transcends them and aims for a higher metaphysical order of ideas and

things where its full potential can only be fully realized. However, if the two systems are separated, always being at odds and on a collision course with each other, the religious rituals will then be reduced to mere mechanical and spiritless movements and acts, spawning in turn a lifestyle deeply rooted in a deadening formalism which is incapable of bringing much good to anyone. As per the same proposition, the physical aspects of human existence, once separated from divinity, will become ephemeral, imprudent, hollow, and, more often than not, perilous. The spiritual and physical aspects of life, it stands to reason, need each other for their individual as well as collective realizations. Man's fulfillment of his vicegerency mission completely depends on such a coalition. Without it, man would not really be a man, his life a life, and his life mission a mission. Islamic worship combines the mundane with the spiritual, the individual with the society, and the internal soul with the external body.

Islam is a religion of actions and deeds. Islam is a religion of life accomplishments. Islam is life, and life, the way Allah created and predetermined it, echoes the quintessence and ethos of Islam. The word "islam" which implies a total submission to Allah through one's acts, words and thoughts, clearly attests to it. Islam is not a religion of mere words, slogans, or symbols. Islam is not a religion of an abstract philosophy, or a set of sheer religious rituals. Islam knows no distinction between the spiritual and material realms of existence along the ideological and ontological lines. To assert something like that is to distort the Islamic message and to live in the wrong. Due to the unity and oneness of Allah, Islam likewise propagates the unity and oneness of the truth and of the meaning, purpose and providence of life and man.

Moreover, Islam is a religion of culture

and civilization. It is as much a matter of a personal spiritual transformation and enrichment, as it is a matter of an all-embracing societal upbringing, reform and advancement. Islam is a religion of wisdom and erudition where revelation and reason are not at loggerheads with each other. Rather, they cooperate with and support each other, each one knowing its respective intent and scope, while honoring the intent and scope of the other pole. Islam is a rational religion.

Practicing Islam inevitably means the creation of a comprehensive culture and civilization that carry the imprints of Islamic values, teachings and principles, in some aspects more and in other aspects less. Islam is so much concerned about quenching man's thirst for socializing and interacting with others that some people could not help observing that Islam, as a matter of fact, have a preference for the sedentary over the nomad, and for the city dweller over the villager. While contending that Islam is a "profoundly urban faith", those people were implicitly suggesting the universalism, comprehensiveness, pragmatism and dynamism of Islam's teachings and value and belief systems, which in no way can be restricted to a geographical region, a point of time, a group of people, or a single aspect -- or a few aspects -- of human existence.

It was because of this underlining character of Islam, surely, that after Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had received in the cave of Khira' his first revelation, and with it his appointment as a messenger of Allah to people, where heretofore he used to spend long periods contemplating and reflecting on the spiritual depression and failure of the world around him, he subsequently never returned to the cave. He did so because Islam is not a religion of isolation to be practiced by certain ascetic individuals away from the masses and the pressing realities of life. It

must be pointed out that the whole process of the Islamic transformation project started right in the cave of Khira', but not with the words of, for example, "pray" or "fast" or "perform pilgrimage", etc., but rather with the words "Read (iqra') in the name of your Lord Who created. He created man from a clot. Read and your Lord is most Honorable, Who taught (to write) with the pen." (al-'Alaq, 1-4)

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was asked – as is anyone who subscribes to Islam and Muhammad's mission – to read, study, try to solve and make known the problems and maladies of his people, as well as of the world and life in general. This is strongly suggested by the notions of Allah the Creator and Guardian, and man the guided and taught mortal completely dependent on Allah, which are enfolded in the above mentioned verses. If Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was asked to read in the narrowest meaning of the word iqra', such would have been a paradox because Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was, and remained, an illiterate man. However, since he was asked to read in the widest and most comprehensive meaning of the word iqra', without which even the purest religious rites and ceremonies cannot be carried out, such not only was not a paradox, but also made the most perfect sense, as Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in terms of wisdom, intelligence, perspicacity, spirituality and morals was the most complete man. His sublime conduct embodied all the qualities which were expected to rise from the Islamic "iqra'" scheme. Though outwardly illiterate, Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was a perfectly "literate" man. He perfectly exemplified the Islamic message. The words "Read (iqra') in the name of your Lord Who created" perfectly exemplifies the Islamic message too. Because of him being an excellent exemplar,

Allah's chosen one, every single Muslim believer extraordinarily admires and endeavors to follow Muhammad's most beautiful pattern of conduct in his daily life. A prominent place in that task occupies the application of the universal model of iqra' with all of its dimensions and implications. Due to this, the relevance of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), iqra' and Islam never fizzles out. "It was Allah Who educated me and Who perfected my good manners", were once the words of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Due to this, furthermore, the relevance of Islamic worship, which spawns all-encompassing Islamic lifestyles, never fizzles out either.

Owing to the similar reasons, indeed, the early Muslims had been forced to migrate from Makkah to Madinah, the former being the Prophet's birthplace and the place which he loved most on earth, because the application of Islam's universal, all-inclusive and dynamic message in Makkah proved unfeasible after 13 years of intense and futile trying. Thus, other alternatives had to be sought and appraised for the purpose. The best alternative was the town, or the area with a number of loosely interconnected settlements, called Yathrib whose name the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) immediately after the migration changed to Madinah (the City). Madinah, the city-state of Islam, entailed in its new name several and thus deliberately publicized meanings and messages concerning Islam and the nascent Muslim community which embodied the former. Some of those meanings and messages were: Madinah is a place where Islam as a complete way of life is practiced; Madinah is a place of civilization; Madinah is a place where the supreme authority of Islam (Allah) is established and adhered to.

Thus, whatever believers do, they do it for the sake of Allah, i.e., for the sake of up-

holding the truth, as well as for the sake of ensuring that the Word of Allah reigns supreme on Allah's earth and in the midst of Allah's animate and inanimate creatures, which is the only natural, logical and needed thing. Indeed, this is exactly what is expected from true believers to do. Consequently, they are abundantly rewarded for their actions in both worlds: in this world by living an honorable, consequential and truly productive life, and in the Hereafter by the eternal bliss of Paradise. In short, for every act of his, no matter how small and insignificant it may be, a believer is rewarded by Allah, even when he or she spends the most intimate moments with his or her spouse, as expounded by Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) on many occasions. A believer is rewarded for spending his earnings on his family members too. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said: "You will be rewarded for whatever you spend for Allah's sake even if it were a morsel which you put in your wife's mouth."

While promising it to believers in the Qur'an, Allah calls this type of life *hayatan tayyibah* and *mata'an hasanan*, which mean a happy life and a good and true enjoyment respectively. Allah says: "Whoever does good whether male or female and he is a believer, We will most certainly make him live a happy life, and We will most certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did." (al-Nahl, 97)

"Seek the forgiveness of your Lord, and turn to Him in repentance; that He may grant you enjoyment, good (and true), for a term appointed, and bestow His abounding grace on all who abound in merit! But if you turn away, then I fear for you the penalty of a great day." (Hud, 3)

Islam strikes a fine balance between the exigencies of the material and spiritual aspects of existence, between the require-

ments of one's well-being in this world and in the Hereafter, and between the needs of personal, family as well as societal development. Islam means having a strong and complete faith in Allah and the other required realities from the spiritual and corporeal worlds plus performing good deeds under all circumstances. Appropriation of simply one aspect of Islam without the other is insufficient for attaining salvation. The two must be integrated in a whole that we call "Islam", which, in turn, must be interwoven with the life-force of the notion of comprehensive excellence or *ihsan*. In Islam, faith and good deeds go hand-in-hand. Neither faith suffices without good deeds, nor good deeds are of value without faith. A strong relationship between faith and good deeds is the way towards comprehensive excellence. That, too, is the way towards an Islamic quality culture.

The Holy Qur'an affirms that in Islam quality, sincerity and perseverance are preferred over sheer quantity, irregularity and pretense. Allah did not say in the Qur'an that man has been created to perform as many deeds as possible, but He did say on more than one occasion that man has been created to perform his required good deeds in the best possible way. For example, Allah says: "Blessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things, Who created death and life that He may try you -- which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving." (al-Mulk, 2)

"Surely We have made whatever is on the earth an embellishment for it, so that We may try them (as to) which of them is best in conduct." (al-Kahf, 7)

"He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days -- and His Throne was over the waters -- that He might try you, which of you is best in conduct." (Hud, 7)

Cont'd on page 41

The Norms of Da'wah

Mawlana Syed Abul Hassan Ali Nadvi (ra)

Invite [mankind] to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching. (al-Na ħl 16: 125)

It is not possible to enumerate upon all the norms of preaching the call to truth. For it depends much on and varies with the level of intellect and predilection of the addressee of Da'wah. The Arabic expression ħikmah (wisdom) is nonetheless pregnant with such a wide range of meanings that one may compile a huge volume containing explanations of this single expression and its connotations. In keeping with the level of understanding, capacity, social customs, regional variations, tastes, interests, contemporary issues and challenges and psychological factors, and more importantly, the beliefs and worldview of the persons at whom Da'wah is directed, one should evolve suitable norms. Every mode of persuasion for winning over the addressee should be included in this.

While speaking at a conference, I was asked to spell out the principles and norms of Da'wah, its scope, sphere and terminology . To this I replied: Let me answer you with the help of a parable . Once someone employed a servant and gave him a list of jobs to be done. One day while he was about to mount a horse, the master's feet became stuck in the saddle and he was about to drop to the ground. As he called out to his servant for help, the latter waved his list of jobs at him, which did not include rescuing his master from a fall. The

same holds true for Da'wah. We cannot enumerate or describe its norms precisely. As servants of the Creator of this universe, we are His slaves who should be ever-ready to perform all that is demanded of us.

Having said that it is nonetheless useful to gain some familiarity with the history of Da'wah, its objectives and goals. Equally important is knowledge of the tactful and wise mode the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth employ in Da'wah. We should bear in mind the revivalist mission of our illustrious ancestors who strove in their varied ways for the cause of Islam. Let me recount an incident reported in the Qur'ān which brings into view many of the norms and principles of Da'wah:

And there entered with him two young men in prison. One of them said: Verily, I saw myself [in a dream] pressing wine. The other said: Verily, I saw myself [in a dream] carrying bread on my head and birds were eating thereof.

They said: Inform us of the interpretation of this. Verily, we think you are one of those who do good. Joseph said: No food will come to you as your provision, but I will inform you of its interpretation before the food comes. This is part of the duty which my Lord has taught me. I have abandoned the way of the people who do not believe in Allah and even deny the Hereafter. I follow the ways of my fathers – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and never could we attribute any partners to Allah. This is from the

grace of Allah to us and to mankind, but most men do not thank. O two companions of the prison! Are many different lords [gods] better or Allah, the One, the Irresistible? You do not worship besides Him but only names which you have forged, you and your fathers, for which Allah has not sent down any authority. The command is for none but Allah. He has commanded that you worship none but Allah. That is the true religion, but most men do not know.
(Y ūsuf 12: 36-40)

In the above passage the Qur'ān states the mode of Da'wah adopted effectively by the Prophet Joseph (peace and blessings be upon him). He carried out this difficult work from inside prison, his efforts marked by caution, intelligence and tact. Let us study this then in some detail. As to the issue of how he carried out Da'wah, the Qur'ān answers this at length in its own inimitable style. It goes without saying that before conducting any business, one first looks for a suitable place, offering peace and security. Moreover, one needs tact to do business. If one arrives at a shop at closing time and is told to visit the next day, one is naturally offended by such discourtesy. Such a customer is not likely to approach that shop in the future. For he was denied a facility at a time when it was needed most. Everyone wants that his needs be met first. Time is also crucial in any business transaction. If one is asked by a shopkeeper to revisit the premises after a few hours, the customer quickly becomes disheartened. Everyone loves to achieve a bargain or discount in a transaction. The person in need expects others' full attention. If a patient suffering from a fever calls on a physician, the latter is obliged to prescribe some medicine both for the fever and any other ailment he diagnoses. He is supposed to carry out a thorough check of his patient.

The above points are not generally made in standard tafsīr works. One may de-

duce them however by dint of one's close study of the Qur'ānic text. If one embraces faith after reciting the above passage about the Prophet Joseph (peace and blessings be upon him), it is further testimony to the miracle that is the Qur'ān. For many points in the passage are worth noting. Two fellow prisoners approached Joseph to inform them of the meaning of their dreams. Before doing so, they had ascertained that he was a man of impeccable integrity, honesty, truthfulness and knowledge. They recognised such special abilities. These prisoners may not have been familiar with the concept of Prophethood yet they could sense Joseph's piety, chastity and holiness. A preacher of truth should be of such appearance and conduct that everyone should be drawn to him. Such a preacher should also pay full attention to seekers after the truth. These prisoners, as we note, were irresistibly drawn towards the Prophet Joseph (peace and blessings be upon him). In his turn, he looked after them very well. One also learns from this Qur'ānic passage that one engaged in Da'wah should have a distinct identity which appeals to those around one.

As soon as the Prophet Joseph (peace and blessings be upon him) entered prison, his fellow inmates realised that he was not some convict. Rather, they were convinced of his innocence. They looked upon him as one persecuted; a virtuous person dragged into prison, by others who had falsely implicated him. For those in prison can readily tell whether someone is a culprit or not. To sum up, everyone there was impressed by Joseph's piety in their heart of hearts. So much so that his two fellow prisoners asked him to interpret their dreams for them, which he did. They had guessed that he possessed some special knowledge. Otherwise, there was nothing on record in the prison to indicate his expertise in this field.

In every age Allah has blessed man, of every class, including those who are illiterate, to discern between good and evil. Based on the same knowledge, they recognised that Joseph was not a culprit. Upon meeting him they exclaimed: "Verily, we think you are one of those who do good." The expressions used by them connote that they took him to be a man of special ability, nobility, generosity and high moral standing. They had collected their necessary background information before approaching him.

Another point worth noting is that one need not act modestly on each and every occasion. If one puts before someone a question and out of modesty the latter makes no contribution, he will be taken as ignorant. The prisoners' request was only that Joseph should interpret their dreams for them. In his reply, however, he asserted that he possessed the requisite knowledge to answer their questions.

The Prophet Joseph (peace and blessings be upon him) could have fixed a later time for their audience. However, he availed himself of the opportunity then and there lest they choose not to return. Here is a lesson for those engaged in Da'wah. They should immediately meet the needs of their addressees. The Prophet Joseph (peace and blessings be upon him) then made mention of food. In prison life food assumes far greater importance than otherwise. So, in keeping with the psychology of prison inmates he referred to food, which would have brought them much joy and strength. Some exegetes interpret this allusion as meaning that he told them that he would inform them in advance of the food that would be served to them. Hence why, at a later stage in his career, he was placed in charge of the treasures of the land. Nonetheless, the allusion is not to the variety of food. Rather, Joseph meant that he would interpret their

dreams. The situation called for some bragging on his part. He could take much pride in asserting that with his enviable faculties of intelligence and sharpness he could provide meaning and that he had proved his mettle on numerous earlier occasions. However, far from this, he used the opportunity to instruct them in the doctrine of pure monotheism. His focus throughout is on Allah's creative power, Oneness and holiness. His sermon is an exhaustive account of divine attributes. He does not condemn false gods. Nor does he resort to any other negative point making. Instead he tells them only what his Lord had taught him. This did not involve any attack on anyone. He does not ascribe his knowledge to family traditions. Nor does he attribute his achievements to his upbringing. Rather, he explains that this knowledge was bestowed upon him by Allah. He makes a point of stating that he was an adherent of the faith of his forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He mentions their names, for they, being distinguished persons, would have been known to his fellow inmates. He does not however, claim any credit for himself, but thanks Allah profusely for His favours. The Qur'an recounts his gratitude thus: This is from the grace of Allah to us and to mankind, but most men do not thank.

Availing himself of this opportunity, the Prophet Joseph (peace and blessings be upon him) addressed his two fellow prisoners thus: "O two companions of the prison! Are many different lords [gods] better or Allah, the One, the Irresistible?" He expressed himself thus because he apprehended that his adherence to this faith would make the king hostile towards him. He therefore took his fellow inmates into his confidence, addressing them as "companions". Such tactics are not an anathema to the office of Prophethood. However, Joseph stopped at this point in his account of faith, lest the two prisoners grew weary. For

they had approached him only to find out the meaning of their dreams. They were not there to listen to a long sermon. They were after all already upset over the disturbing dreams they had experienced. Keeping in mind these psychological factors the Prophet Joseph (peace and blessings be upon him) made only a brief mention of his faith.

As regards Da'wah there are limits which one should adhere to. One should be careful, for example, about the amount of

time devoted to it. Furthermore, it should contain a mix of history and literary embellishment. The description too should be simple and easy to understand. Being a Messenger, who hailed from a family of Messengers, Joseph was fully aware of these norms. In his story is a lesson for all those who make a call to Islam. The passage itself abounds in instructions on the methodology, style, mode, and norms of Da'wah. For the Prophet Joseph's response suited best his addressees.

WHAT IS YOUR POSITIVE IN NEGATIVE?

A man was lying on the couch worried about the taxes to be paid, the unpaid bills, his kid's School fees and to top it all, his relatives and friends were coming over for the felicitation party after a week.

When he got up and looked around, he noticed his son at the study table writing furiously into his notebook.

"My Teacher asked us to write a paragraph on "Negative Thanksgiving" for homework today" Said the son. He continued "Teacher told us to make a list of things that we are grateful for, things that make us feel not so good in the beginning, but eventually turn out to be good."

Out of curiosity, the father took a look into the book.

This is what the boy wrote:

I am thankful for final exams; it means my holidays are going to start

I am thankful for the bad tasting vegetables, they keep me stay healthy

I am thankful for my injections; they keep me away from diseases

I am thankful for waking up early, because it means I am still alive

His father then realized that he had a lot of things to be thankful and grateful for too. He thought once again and realized, "He was thankful for taxes, that meant he was blessed with a good job, he had unpaid bills that means he was living a comfortable life with all the facilities, he had to pay his kids' school fee, that meant his kids were lucky to get good education. He had to make arrangements for his relatives' and friends' stay for the party which meant he had good relatives and friends with whom he could celebrate.

Moral of the story:

We generally complain about the negative things in life, but we fail to look at the positive side of it. Sometimes we complain even without realizing because complaining is the easiest thing to do. When you find yourself thinking or saying a negative thing about something or someone, stop and try to find something positive instead.

When is Dajjal Coming

With the swift pace of time and the rapid change of conditions, many people try to apply and fit the prophecies of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) regarding the major signs of Qiyaamah to present day occurrences.

Weird Views

In many narrations the appearance of the Mahdi has been described in some detail. However, the actual time of his appearance is not mentioned. Likewise, many authentic ahaadeeth describe the appearance of Dajjaal. Some people claimed that Mahdi (RA) was going to appear in 2004 or 2012. Others believe that Dajjaal refers to a system, and that his first day which will be equal to a year (as mentioned in the hadeeth) represents his rule in England starting in 900 of the Christian era. The second day which will be equal to a month (as mentioned in the hadeeth) represents his rule in America starting in 1917, and that the third day which will be equal to a week (as mentioned in the hadeeth) represents his rule in Palestine, starting in 2001. And yet another group promotes that Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj are not physical people. Instead it refers to "The Modern Secular Western Civilization."

Superficial Meaning

All this is done based on their own imagination and unsubstantiated understanding.

They misinterpret the words of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) and choose to promote a superficial, metaphorical meaning. In doing so, the doors of re-interpreting deen will be opened, thus giving the leeway to adopt superficial meanings based on our imagination for whatever we wish.

The question is: "How can we give Dajjaal and Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj some superficial interpretation, whereas it is clearly mentioned in authentic narrations that 'Isaa ('alaihi salaam) will kill Dajjaal and that 'Isaa ('alaihi salaam) will be with the Believers during the emergence and destruction of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj?"

At this rate, soon the physical descension of 'Isaa ('alaihi salaam) will also be given a metaphorical interpretation, Allah forbid.

Don't Delve

The above approach is a direct result of neglecting the golden principle of "Leave ambiguous that which Allah has kept ambiguous". If Allah and His Rasul (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) did not find the need to explain the exact details of these occurrences, why do we need to delve into them? Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has said: "Allah has remained silent regarding certain issues, out of mercy for you and not due to forgetting (to explain them), therefore do not investigate these issues (i.e. do not try to delve into the de-

tails)." (Sunan Daaraqutni #4814)

Correct Understanding

If a person has to read the ahaadeeth describing the emergence of Dajjal and Ya'jooj Ma'jooj with a clear mind, then without any mental effort and analysis he will get a specific clear meaning and understanding of the words of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). This clear meaning is what is intended, and not any other metaphorical one.

Not Unprecedented

Man by nature is very emotional and impulsive. The moment he sees something happening against the norm, he tends to view it as something supernatural and he then tries to reconcile it with the signs of the last hour. However he has forgotten that the history of Islam is replete with more serious happenings and trials, where at times it seemed that the Ummah would have been wiped out from the surface of the earth, but it was the unseen help of Allah that had granted them salvation and safety.

Greatest Disservice

The greatest disservice we can do to the Ummah is to predict as to when the major signs of Qiyaamah will take place. Our Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), despite being a Nabi upon whom revelation would descend, remained silent on this issue. Thus we as the followers should not even attempt to venture into such discussions. The danger of such a venture is that the pure words of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) will eventually take the form of some science experiment in a laboratory. Each time a prediction does not unfold as explained by those giving their own interpretations, the Ummah's confidence in the noble words of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) will drop and they

may even begin to reject the prophecies of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam).

Path of Salvation

May Allah guide us to hold onto our pious and learned 'Ulama and save us from distorting the clear meanings of the ahaadeeth, thereby providing audiences with excitement and entertainment.

Source: ibnemasood

Cont'd from page 43

obeying Allah's certain command and avoiding his great wrath. Allah, Exalted be He, says: "...Then as for those who disbelieve, garments of fire will be cut out for them, boiling water will be poured down over their heads. With it will melt (or vanish away) what is within their bellies, as well as (their) skins. And for them are hooked rods of iron (to punish them). Every time they seek to get away therefrom, from anguish, they will be driven back therein, and (it will be) said to them: "Taste the torment of burning!" (Al-Hajj: 19-22)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says: "...and send (good deeds, or ask Allah to bestow upon you pious offspring) for your own selves beforehand. And fear Allah, and know that you are to meet Him (in the Hereafter), and give good tidings to the believers (O Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him))." (Al-Baqarah: 223)

May Allah bless you and me with the Great Qur'an and make us benefit from its verses and wise words and benefit from the guidance and right sayings of the Imam of all Messengers. I have said what you have heard and I ask forgiveness of Allah for myself, for you, and for all Muslims for any sin we have committed. Ask Allah for forgiveness. He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Here Ye, O Woman?

Syed Iqbal Zaheer

The talk about women's maintenance upon the death of her husband or in case of a divorce is a good case to show how campaigners work against Islam.

There is of course, the everlasting confusion over the status of women in systems other than Islam. Those systems are not working. They have never worked. They will not work. But what happens is that sometimes a woman's status in other religions or social systems is first patched up on Islam, and then problems are cited and demonstrated to the ever-suspicious public that it is Islam which has failed.

What happens when a woman gets married? Well, there are smiles on all faces. But, wait. It is only for a couple of weeks. As months slip by confusion takes charge. No one knows where the newly married woman should live, and how should she relate herself to the husband's family if she is required to live with them. She is perplexed. She doesn't know whom to go for an emphatic reply. The smiling folks have disappeared. Some of them display a frown. The husband has wet eyebrows. As she discusses the issue with a variety of people, she gets a variety of recipes: "Adjust yourself," says one. Or, "Well, this is the challenge of married life" quips another. "Be patient and act with wisdom," another wit sings the line. The professor in social sciences tells her, "Well, I'm only an academician. Talk to a family counselor." The counselor has plenty of patience. Nice chap. He hears everything and understands everything. But he is short of solutions. The rest is OK with him. The woman has a strong feeling he is an idiot. In short, when she goes with questions, she is turned off with a sneeze. To her specific inquiry: What is she supposed to get, and what is she supposed to give, to the husband and his family? – the advisors all but consult stars. The practice in many social systems other than Islam is that with marriage a woman leaves her home – for good. In the Indian scene, the

land of the sages, if we say she is cast out, with the parents secretly saying to themselves "good riddance", it wouldn't be far from the truth. (They had no idea what chagrin they will go through, the day they decided she wouldn't be one of the 7 million fetuses that are aborted every year in India because they are female). The interesting thing is, when these "lucky to survive" women grow up, they ask the non-abortionist Muslims, "Why is the status of women so low in Islam?" Shoo. What a world.

In any case, once she leaves her home, and enters into the husband's family, a woman in systems other than Islam is considered as belonging to the new family there onward. Her life and death are to be within its confines. Therefore, if she is not given shelter after the husband's death in "a Muslim family," then it is a good case of Islam's prejudices against her! It is asked, "Why there aren't any instructions in Islam to help her out?" This is what we meant when we wrote earlier, that first a system foreign to Islam is patched up onto it, a problem created which is not of its making, and then asked, "Why hasn't the Islamic law made any provision for her?"

Religious authorities are quickly consulted. (They are not consulted at the time marriage discussions take place, when they might learn from the irrational mullahs that

any money her parents are forced to hand down, is as lawful to the groom as pork). However, the Fatwa is cast against the divorced/widowed woman: she cannot claim anything from her in-laws by right. Ah, another case of Islamic injustice to the fair sex, the mother of mankind, the weakling, the poor thing!

In the anxiety to blame Islam, stir up sentiments against it, and create hysteria among womenfolk, it never occurs to anyone how unreasonable it is to ask the in-laws to house a daughter-in-law in her own house. Who doesn't know the differences that rule between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law? Has there ever been harmony between the two? Wouldn't it be planting strife to plant an otherwise unwanted person into a family? What kind of a solution is it that solves the problem of one woman at the cost of another woman's peace?

Again, what are the chances that a woman will be happy in a family in which she is after all a stranger? That means, it is a solution in which not one woman is unhappy, but two: the mother in law, and the daughter in law herself. How about the husband between the two warring parties? He manages to remain equidistant from the two, in times of strife. To the disappointment of both, mother and wife, he thinks the fuss is over nothing. When peace doesn't prevail, he acts ignorant of the problems, sits pretty and relaxes. Only, as he sips tea, he wishes he hadn't got married in the first place.

However, in a joint family of the kind we are discussing, the problem is not limited to two individuals. The deceased husband might have a brother. He too gets married. Another woman is added to the family. This new person is a stranger to the mother-in-law, and a stranger to the sister-in-law. Have fun.

The absolute chaos that results when there are unmarried sisters aboard the ship is

not an imaginary one. Look into some homes. Have more fun.

Don't ask how the mother-in-law fares. Has she any rights? What more does she want after she has had a hearty meal over the leftovers? She is otherwise such a nuisance. Even the cartoonists make fun of her to everybody's delight. Nobody ever talks of her rights. The women's lib hasn't done enough homework. The daughters in law team up among themselves and treat the mother-in-law like dirt. She is pariah in her own house. If, by chance her own husband dies, she inherits the house. She also inherits the daughters in law, and tons of trouble without the husband's support. They live in her house, and await her death. How do you like that? Well, the Devil likes it if no one else. And his followers too. Sure they like it.

So, what kind of solution is it to ask a woman to live in the house of her in-laws? Whether in the life of the husband or after his death? Providing her material support, you say? What cliché is that? Come to your senses man.

Come to another scene. Add brothers in law to the cast. They are young. They are mischievous. The widowed sister in law is not related by blood. She is not unlawful to them. What's likely to happen? The insinuations, the accidental touches, and other such things. But that's only one part. Another is that she has to wash their dishes, clean the place after the lords have retired, and peep out into the street if somebody is looking, so she can empty the trash can. Providing her material support? Let's change the topic.

Situations similar to the above ensue when the son-in-law is invited to move into the house of the father-in-law after marriage. (A measure resorted to by some families when the parasite could not be identified before marriage). Similar confusion, loss of privacy,

other bothersome things. Even if it is by choice, both husband and wife suffer in this unnatural setting. They cannot even have a meal of their choice.

So what's the solution when disappointment gives place to sullenness, followed by melancholy and ending with frustration – for those women who live with the husband's family in the same house? Suicide is one solution. Thousands of women in India commit suicide every year in search of a solution. But that's not a good solution, if one might say. So, what's a good one?

Well, why shouldn't someone download solutions from every religious site on the Net, offering solutions to family and social problems – and compare? Ah! You didn't find any? Well, if you didn't find any, it is because there isn't any. All you get is advice, good words, counseling. But laws? Clearly defined rights and duties? Click the mouse for something else.

In the Islamic system of life, a man is required to move out to his own house when he marries. For, the brothers in law are unlawful to a woman. She must not appear before them without hijab. How can she live with them? The Islamic law clearly states that it is a woman's right to have her own private quarters, provided by the husband, of standards she was used to before marriage, where none but people of her choice can come in. What about the parents in law? Are they her parents? No. They are not. Her parents are those who sired her: the biological parents, and not the so-called "parents in law" – an English term, foreign to Islam, with all the connotations it carries foreign to it. Is she supposed to serve her in-laws? No. If she did, it would be out of charity. Is she required to cook for them? No. She isn't. Do they have any rights on her? None. Does she have any duty to them? None. Does she have any rights on

them? None. (Add "except out of charity" after every "none").

Another situation. What happens when she is forced to share a house with one or both the parents in law, because they have nowhere else to go – perhaps because they are too old, and are, by Islamic law, the responsibility of the son? The answer is clear. The son is required to house his parents separately (but not in old people's home) and serve them as best as he can, involving his children also in the service. His wife is not bound to serve them. But, if he cannot afford separate quarters for his parents and another for himself and his wife and children, then, obviously, his wife has to share the house. But, in such an event she has her rights to her private apartments, which includes a kitchen, washroom and other basic amenities. She might live under the same roof, with the parents in law, but, her designated apartment is a "no go" area for others. Any interaction between her and the parents in law or others, is voluntary. She goes as a guest and receives them as guests. She doesn't feel obliged to her parents in law for her housing. It is her husband's duty to provide her an independent house. She is no burden on them, and they no burden on her.

Now, what happens to a woman if the husband dies? Here comes a point when the lawmakers of the secular world lose their heads and run into bushes looking for wonder drugs. The prescriptions betray contradictions. They say that when the husband dies, she should stay in the in law's house? Why? Because, the poor thing needs material support. She is in tears. And the lawmakers are in tears. Fine! But what happens when she is divorced? The answer is, she should leave the house. Go where? Well, go anywhere. The real estate agent is around the corner. Now, only the woman is in tears. The lawmaker is handling

another case.

The contradiction has not gone entirely unrecognized. So the Western lawmakers tried to act smart. They ruled that if the woman is divorced, the husband is to pay up regularly for her living cost. But, what happens after the third installment was duly paid? None arrived. How many times is the woman to knock at the court doors? Further, the hint to the males was, "don't divorce." So, their men don't divorce. They make the life of their spouses miserable. She goes to the court and says, "For God's sake, separate us." The husband says, "I have no problems with her. I love her." She pleads, "Free me, please." They are separated. She gets nothing. She heaves a sigh. The man smiles. The jury lights his cigar. A day well spent.

The woman is glad at least on one account: She won the children's custody. For her, they will be the only source of future smiles. The man is glad, she took them away. He didn't want them anyway. Amicable solutions for all. Indeed.

Thus did West create single parent families. Millions of them. And, a false civilization built on falsehood can never cease to play its tricks. The West calls them single parent families, as if there are fifty percent families headed by men and fifty percent by women. Na. Most are headed by women. But that reality is covered under the cloak "single parent families." Those women live with the children, work for them, cook for them, look after them, and when frustrated, try some marijuana.

Here is a good reason why the media has to portray Islam to women as a horrible religion. Many of them in their forties are just tired of their lives. They are looking for alternatives. They are saying, "Give meaning to our lives." Let them not per chance discover meaning in quarters disapproved by those who think they own the minds and souls of their people.

So, what's the Islamic solution? Where does a woman go when her husband dies. Well, the answer is, if she had been staying with the in-laws, she is not to be pushed out for one whole year. That's the law. This gives her time to bear the shock of the husband's death, evaluate the situation, and plan the future course. During this period she is entitled to full maintenance cost. She is also entitled to receive a share from the husband's wealth. When leaving, she also gets back everything she brought with her: furniture and all. Finally, when leaving – after a year or more – she receives gifts: some clothes, some cash. Reasonable?

But where does she go ultimately? Well, to where she came from. To her parent's home. Aren't they the ones who sired her? But, when they accept her, is it simply a duty they are fulfilling? Yes and no. Yes because that's the Islamic law. A father, a son, a brother, an uncle, a grandfather, one or all of them are bound by Islamic laws to materially support a woman from her birth until marriage, and, if divorced or widowed, then, until a remarriage, or death. They have to provide her the same quality of life that they themselves enjoy.

And, "no" to the above question, because, by nature, the parents are responding to the call of love. Coming back, especially after a divorce, she may not be welcome, kind of open arm reception. But, even if an irritant (worst come worst), she is after all their child. Even anger towards the daughter has a sugar bottom of love. The bitter pills have a sweet seed. Right?

Look at the battle-grounds. There are none. The constant fight between two women. None. Mother and daughter are in perfect harmony. The winks and the insinuations? None. There are only brothers around. How about

Cont'd on page 15

Look for your heart in three places

Heina Dadabhoy

The word "heart" is one of the most commonly used motifs, metaphors, and symbols in human history. It is a term whose definition is broad enough to include the fierceness of strength and courage as well as the tenderness and vulnerability of intense emotion. Traditional science, however, has downplayed the heart as merely a monotonously contracting muscle, while the brain is touted as both the center and originator of intelligence and feeling.

In spite of this, the tendency to ascribe psychological sensitivities to that constantly beating organ continues to haunt contemporary human thought. At the language level, the word "heart" remains a strong conveyer of emotion and meaning. If human beings are discouraged, they are disheartened; if stoic, heartless; if in the best state of energy and enthusiasm, hearty.

In the face of traditional science, why does the collective psyche of humanity continue to fixate upon this same intangible concept of the heart? Perhaps it is because, to this day, the stopping of the heartbeat signifies the coming of death. It might be ascribed to the way that the heart responds so readily to emotional signals, increasing or reducing pace in direct correlation to the human psychological state. Within human consciousness, the

heart's meaning extends beyond that of a muscle; within Islam, the role of the heart cannot be understated.

The heart is mentioned repeatedly in the Qur'an. One of the mentioned *du`a'* (supplications) of Prophet Ibrahim, (AS), beseeches to Allah (the Exalted and Glorified): "Do not forsake me on the Day of Resurrection, a day where neither money nor children will benefit except whoever meets Allah with a sound heart" (26:87-89). Allah revealed this powerful supplication about the Day of Resurrection, for the judgment on the eternal fate of each soul is decided by Allah on that day, rendering a pure heart necessary for entering Paradise.

The Arabic term for the heart, *qalb*, has a very specific meaning. It refers to what defines the existence of the individual: one's personal center of faith. A most illustrious and beautiful chapter of the Qur'an, Surah Yaseen, is referred to as the heart of the Qur'an. According to the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), the virtues of reciting this *qalb*, among others, include receiving benefits of the *dunya* (earthly life) and the removal of the dread of the *akhirah* (life after death).

Furthermore, worship of Allah is divided into four categories, two of which deal with the heart: its sayings and its actions. A true

Mu'min (Believer) is said to possess a pure heart that is well-informed in the total belief of Allah and complete trust in Him—a heart that is true to its Maker in both its impulses and the carrying out of those impulses. The qalb was created to hold its Creator as its highest Authority, Love, and Loyalty. If the heart is dead, then spiritual (and, eventually, physical) problems would manifest themselves in the individual.

In purifying the heart, a Believer can rest assured that the best of examples is being followed: that of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), the most virtuous of the creations of Allah and the most beloved to Allah. Indeed, despite his perfection in the sight of Allah, the Prophet's heart (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was not only cleansed by Angel Jibreel (Gabriel), but was also purified by his own strategies of worship.

One of the greatest interpreters of Shari'ah (Islamic law) of the fourteenth centu-

ry, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, was greatly concerned with matters of the qalb. According to him, `Abdullah ibn Mas`ood (RA), one of the closest companions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), once presented a diagnostic by which a Believer may determine the state of the qalb. He said:

"Look for your heart in three places: when listening to the Qur'an, when seeking knowledge (of Allah) and when in privacy. If you cannot find it in these places, then ask Allah (swt) to bless you with a heart, for indeed you have no heart."

A soul with no heart can not even begin to work on increasing its level of submission to its Lord—the very foundation of its purity. A vital conductor of faith must be found and awakened within every loyal slave of Allah. The following exploration of `Abdullah ibn Mas`ood's (RA) mentioned places transcends the mind and body and deals with a site precious to all human beings.

Cont'd from page 3

Of course in the latest episode Google is betting that our love for the convenience it offers is greater than our love for the Prophet and our sense of honor. And not even convenience but only addiction. For there are a dozen search engines out there that we could use without sacrificing anything.

It is only through our determined individual and collective efforts that we can convince the likes of Google, Facebook, and others to agree to a code of ethics that assures freedom from insults for everyone— which is the only way to ensure peace in the global village.

Bridle the Idle Mind

We need to be creative and constructive. We need to keep ourselves occupied in useful activities and our minds need to be engaged in profitable thoughts. We cannot allow ourselves to simply remain idle, as this becomes the fertile field for many ills to breed in our lives.

The idle mind begins to run into the dusty memories of the past and dig up nasty experiences. People's actions and words are further scanned and scrutinised and are inevitably misread and misinterpreted. These ill-thoughts mature into ill-feelings, which in turn rekindle forgotten hatred. This hatred which is now hidden in the crevices of our hearts, stealthily seeks opportunities to unmask itself in words and actions. It ultimately destroys all peace of mind and tranquillity of heart. Therefore, we cannot afford to sit idle at the risk of losing all the good that we are presently enjoying. Let us strive to occupy ourselves with good, so that goodness occupies our lives.

Mosque Etiquettes

It is important to be respectful when entering one of 'Allah's houses'. When a person visits a masjid/mosque for the first time, it is often very daunting. You know that there must be many rules, customs and etiquettes, and you don't want to offend anyone or break any rules, but it takes time to learn what these are. What we present here is not an exhaustive list of such things, but hopefully we can explain some of the main things to be aware of. If there are any mistakes, or if you have anything to add to this guide, please let us know.

1. It is Sunnah for the Muslim, when he leaves his house and heads towards the mosque, to recite the du'a for walking to the mosque

It was narrated that 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas (RA) said: "... Then the muezzin gave the call to prayer, and he (the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)) came out, saying, *'Allahumma aj'al fi qalbi nooran wa fi lisaani nooran waj'al fi sam'i nooran waj'al fi basari nooran waj'al min khalfi nooran wa min amaami nooran waj'al min fawqi nooran wa min tahti nooran, Allahummah a'tini nooran (O Allah, place with my heart light, and upon my tongue light, and within my ears light and within my eyes light, and place behind me light and in front of me light and above me light and beneath me light, O Allah, bestow upon me light).*" [Shahih Muslim 763]

When he enters the mosque, he

should enter with his right foot first, and say the words that were narrated from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

It was narrated that Abu Humayd or Abu Usayd (RA) said: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "When any one of you enters the mosque, let him say:

"Allahumma iftah li abwaab rahmatika (O Allah, open to me the gates of Your mercy), and when he leaves let him say, Allahumma inni as'aluka min fadlika (O Allah, I ask You of Your bounty)." [Shahih Muslim 713]

According to some reports, the words Bismillaah, Allahumma salli 'ala Muhammad (In the name of Allah, O Allah, send blessings upon Muhammad) are added at the beginning of each [Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi 314 | Ibn Maajah 771]

It was narrated that Haywah ibn Shurayh (RA) said: "I met 'Uqbah ibn Muslim and said to him, 'I heard that you narrated from 'Abd-Allah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas that when the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) entered the mosque, he would say, "A'oodhu Billaah il-'Azeem wa bi wajhihi'l-kareem wa sultaanihi'l-qadeem min al-shaytaan il-rajeem (O Allah, I seek refuge in Your noble countenance and Your eternal authority from the accursed Shaytaan).'" He said, 'Is that all?' I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'And when he said that, the Shaytaan said, "He is protected from me for the whole day.'" [Narrated by Abu Dawood

466]

When the Muslim enters the mosque, he should not sit down until he has prayed two rak'ahs to "greet the mosque".

It was narrated from Abu Qutaadah al-Sulami (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "When any one of you enters the mosque, let him pray two rak'ahs before he sits down." [Shahih Bukhaari 443 | Muslim 714]

The mosque should be cleaned and perfumed by those who are able to do it.

'Aa'ishah (RA) said: "The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) commanded that mosques should be built in every neighbourhood, and that they should be cleaned and perfumed" [Narrated by Abu Dawood 437]

It was narrated from Abu Dharr (RA) that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "The deeds of my ummah, both good and bad, were shown to me, and I found that among the best of its deeds was removing a harmful thing from the road, and I found among the worst of its deeds leaving phlegm in the mosque (note: it was not carpeted then) and not burying it." [Shahih Muslim 555]

Not raising one's voice in the mosque, even in reciting Qur'an, because that may disturb one of the worshippers

It was narrated that Abu Sa'ed (RA) said: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) went into i'tikaaf (seclusion or retreat for worship) in the mosque, and he heard them reciting Qur'aan in loud voices. He pulled back the curtain and said: "Each one of you is conversing with his Lord, so do not disturb one another and do not raise your voices above one another in reciting Qur'aan" – or he said, "in prayer" [Narrated by Abu Dawood 1332]

He should exit the mosque with the left foot first, and saying the du'a narrated from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "When any one of you enters the mosque, let him send blessings upon the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and say, Allahumma iftah li abwaab rahmatika (O Allah, open to me the gates of Your mercy). And when he leaves let him send blessings upon the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and say, Allahumma i'simni min al-Shaytaan il-rajeeem (O Allah, protect me from the accursed Shaytaan) [Narrated by Ibn Maajah 773]

Be considerate about your personal hygiene. One hadith says, "Whoever eats garlic, onion, then keep away from our Masjid because the angels get offended from what offends the children of Adam." It is reported that if the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) found a man to have a strong smell upon him, he (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) ordered him to be taken out. So it is something that should be taken very seriously.

If you enter the masjid and the prayer for which you came has started, do not run to join in. The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said "If the prayer started, then do not join it running, and join it walking and quiet, and pray whatever you caught up with, and make up for what you missed."

Do not walk directly in front of a praying person. This is one of the most common blunders of the newcomer! According to a hadith, "If the passer in front of the praying person knew how much sin he committed, it would have been better for him to wait for forty years than to pass in front of him." On a related note, worshippers often place a scarf or other item a short distance in front of them as a 'marker' – treat this as their inviolable space while they are praying. If it is absolutely necessary for you to pass in front of them, do so in a manner that your back is facing the

praying person.

The Muslim should sit where he finds a place in the masjid. The Muslim should not skip people or squeeze himself between two people who are already sitting. To aid people who come when the masjid is busy, those already sitting should try to make space for them.

When a women is experiencing her monthly cycle, it is forbidden for her to enter the masjid.

Do not engage in trade in the masjid. The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said "If you see some one selling or buying inside the Masjid, say to him: May Allah not make your trading profitable. And if you see someone crying out inside the Masjid something he has lost, say to him: May Allah not restore it to you, for the Masajid were not built for this." More generally, try to avoid devaluing the purpose for which you came by speaking of worldly affairs.

If the adhan is called, do not leave the masjid until you have prayed – even if you have already prayed the prayer that is being called. Pray with the congregation, and count it as a 'nafl' (optional) prayer. Imam Ahmad reported that Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with them) said "the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) ordered us, when we are in the Masjid and the Salah is called for, not to leave the Masjid until we pray."

Greet people when you enter, and when you leave the masjid. The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said "When one of you joins a gathering he should greet those present; and when he leaves them he should greet them because the first salutation is not better than the last one." If there are many people present a single declaration of 'As Salamu alaikum' will suffice, as this means 'Peace be upon you (all)'.
Do not sit with you feet pointing towards the Qibla (direction of prayer) or other people.

Do not sit with you feet pointing towards the Qibla (direction of prayer) or other people.

It is generally agreed that the Qur'an should not be placed on the floor out of respect for the divine word, although there are some groups that do not adhere to this.

If men and women should meet in the masjid, they should not shake hands! Such physical contact is everyday in Western society, but is inappropriate in Islam.

There are, relative to Western norms, strict dress codes in Islam. Make sure you dress modestly. For men, this means, as a legal minimum, being covered from navel to knee, but more dignifiedly the top clothing should cover the elbows. It is also good practice for men to wear a hat. For women, the majority of opinion is that only the face, hands and feet should show. You should also avoid wearing clothes with pictures of faces on them.

Source: islam.ru

Cont'd from page 26

As a result, a person will be judged on account of his overall performances in life: towards his Creator, his very self, the people around him and the natural environment, as well as on account of the quality of such performances. He will not be judged only on account of his sheer religious rituals because the same rituals have their own personal, family and societal development implications which lie at the core of those rituals and must be duly observed. Carrying out those rituals unconsciously and mechanically just for the sake of carrying them out, or because they became no more than an unresponsive habit or a cultural manifestation, without producing any impact whatsoever on one's contributions towards one's personal, family and societal development and contributions, means that they are done incorrectly and that they at the end might not be accepted by Allah.

Reflecting on the Worldly Life

Friday Sermon by Sheikh Ali ibn Abdur-Rahman Al-Hudhaifi

Praise be to Allah, the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving. He causes the night to succeed the day and the day to succeed the night and everything with Him is in due proportions. I praise my Lord and thank Him for His favours and His grace. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, Who has no partners, the One, the All-Dominant, and I bear witness that our prophet and master, Muhammad, is His servant and chosen messenger. O Allah! Bestow Your prayers, peace, and blessings upon Your servant and messenger Muhammad and upon his family and righteous Companions.

Now then, Fear Allah, Exalted be He, and obey Him, for obedience to Allah is the soundest and most upright way. Take provisions for the hereafter and know that the best provision is fear of Allah. Servants of Allah!

If you think deeply about this transient worldly life, its despicable ornaments, and its ever-changing nature, you will realize its real worth and true meaning. He who trusts it will be deceived, and he who is inclined to it will be doomed. This world is as short as one's life in it. One's life starts with a few hours, which are followed by further hours, then days, then months, and then years. Then life comes to an end, and nobody knows about the horrifying matters that await him after his death.

O Man! Are the lives of others after your death an extension of your own life? A man's life is but a single moment compared with the life of successive generations, and even this present life in its entirety is nothing but a brief enjoyment. Allah, Exalted be He, says: "...Truly, this life of the world is nothing but a (quick passing) enjoyment, and verily, the Hereafter that is the home that will remain forever." (Ghafir: 39)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says: "And put forward to them the example of the life of this world; it is like the water (rain) which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, and becomes fresh and green. But (later) it becomes dry and broken pieces, which the winds scatter. And Allah is Able to do everything." (Al-Kahf: 45)

Our Lord informs us about the brevity of people's stay in their graves until the day they are resurrected for judgement. He tells us that this long period will seem to them on the Day of Judgement like an hour. Allah, Exalted be He, says: "And on the Day when He shall gather (resurrect) them together, (it will be) as if they had not stayed (in the life of this world and graves) but an hour of a day. They will recognize each other. ..." (Yunus: 45)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says: "And on the Day that the Hour will be established,

the Mujrimun (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners) will swear that they stayed not but an hour - thus were they ever deluded [away from the truth (i.e. they used to tell lies and take false oaths, and turn away from the truth) in this life of the world]." (Ar-Rum: 55)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says: "Therefore be patient (O Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)) as did the Messengers of strong will and be in no haste about them (disbelievers). On the Day when they will see that (torment) with which they are promised (i.e. threatened, it will be) as if they had not stayed more than an hour in a single day. (O Humankind! This Qur'an is sufficient as) a clear Message (or proclamation to save yourself from destruction). But shall any be destroyed except the people who are Al-Fasiqun (the rebellious against Allah's command, disobedient to Allah)." (Al-Ahqaf: 35)

O Man! How long will you then live when it is all like an hour in a single day? And what is your share in this hour? Blessed, then, are those who do good deeds and shun prohibited acts, for that will win them the good pleasure of Allah and the delights of the gardens of Paradise. And wretched are those who follow their lusts and neglect their prayers and all religious obligations, as they will be doomed to the lowest depths of Hellfire.

O You who have been deluded by your good health, and therefore have disobeyed your Lord! O You who have been corrupted by your free time, and therefore have engaged in distractions! O You who have failed to stand the test of your wealth, and therefore have ruined yourself! O You who have followed your evil whims and desires, and therefore have fallen into sin! O you who have been deceived by your youth, and therefore have forgotten about death! O you who have dared to disobey your Lord because you feel that you still have time to live and hopes to fulfil! When

death snatches you away, you will wish to return to this world to do deeds other than those you used to do, but in vain!

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Remember the destroyer of pleasures [i.e. death], for it is not remembered amidst many pleasures but it makes them seem little [thus saving one from indulging in pleasures and making one closer to Allah], and it is not remembered amidst few pleasures but it makes them seem many." The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) also said, "Death is sufficient as an admonition."

O you who are heedless, neglectful and disobedient! Is it not time for you to turn to your Lord in repentance? Is it not time to wake up from your deep sleep and respond to the call of Allah? Will you not draw lessons from the previous generations and deserted dwellings? Will you not draw lessons from those who left all their grandeur and glory and have now become history?

There are lessons and morals to be drawn from the coming and passing of years. You will continue to leave a day behind and welcome another until your appointed time is over and your hopes come to an end. Allah, Exalted be He, says: "And that man can have nothing but what he does (good or bad). And that his deeds will be seen. Then he will be recompensed with a full and the best recompense. And that to your Lord (Allah) is the End (Return of everything)." (An-Najm: 39-42)

Therefore, strive to enter Paradise, the eternal abode whose bliss will never end, decrease, or perish, and about which Allah says: "Enter you therein in peace and security; this is a Day of eternal life!" There they will have all that they desire, and We have more." (Qaf: 34-35)

And strive to escape Hellfire, whose torment of its dwellers will never abate, by

Cont'd on page 32

The Banu Musa Brothers

Article by: J J O'Connor and E F Robertson

There were three brothers Jafar Muhammad ibn Musa ibn Shakir, Ahmad ibn Musa ibn Shakir and al-Hasan ibn Musa ibn Shakir. They are almost indistinguishable but we do know that although they often worked together, they did have their own areas of expertise.

Jafar Muhammad worked mainly on geometry and astronomy while Ahmad worked mainly on mechanics and al-Hasan worked mainly on geometry. It is quite impossible to write separate biographies of the three brothers, who are usually known as the Banu Musa, and we shall not attempt to do so.

The Banu Musa brothers were among the first group of mathematicians to begin to carry forward the mathematical developments begun by the ancient Greeks. It is therefore worth looking at the background to how Arabic mathematics came to fill this role.

Harun al-Rashid became the fifth Caliph of the Abbasid dynasty on 14 September 786, not long after Musa ibn Shakir, the father of the Banu Musa brothers, was born. Harun ruled from his court in the capital city of Baghdad over the Islam empire which stretched from the Mediterranean to India. He brought culture to his court and tried to establish the intellectual disciplines which at that time were not flourishing in the Arabic world. An exam-

ple of this change is seen in the life of Musa ibn Shakir, the father of the Banu Musa brothers, who was a robber in his youth but turned to science, becoming highly proficient in astronomy. It was during al-Rashid's reign that the first Arabic translation of Euclid's Elements into Arabic was made by al-Hajjaj. The first steps were being taken to allow Greek mathematics to spread through the Islam empire.

Al-Rashid had two sons, the eldest was al-Amin while the younger was al-Ma'mun. Harun al-Rashid died in 809 and there was an armed conflict between his two sons. Al-Ma'mun won the armed struggle and al-Amin was defeated and killed in 813. Following this, al-Ma'mun became Caliph and ruled the empire from Baghdad. Even before this time Musa ibn Shakir had become a close friend of al-Ma'mun and when Musa ibn Shakir died, al-Ma'mun became the guardian of the Banu Musa brothers. The brothers were given the best education in Baghdad, studying geometry, mechanics, music, mathematics and astronomy.

Al-Ma'mun had continued the patronage of learning started by his father and had founded an academy called the House of Wisdom where Greek philosophical and scientific works were translated. He also built up a li-

brary of manuscripts, the first major library to be set up since that at Alexandria, collecting important works from Byzantium. In addition to the House of Wisdom, al-Ma'mun set up observatories in which Muslim astronomers could build on the knowledge acquired by earlier peoples.

Al-Ma'mun recruited the most talented men for the House of Wisdom and appointed the Banu Musa brothers whose talents he had quickly come to appreciate. He also appointed al-Khwarizmi, al-Kindi and al-Hajjaj the first translator of Euclid's Elements into Arabic. Hunayn ibn Ishaq and later Thabit ibn Qurra also worked in the House of Wisdom with the Banu Musa brothers. Muhammad became a close friend of Hunayn.

In 833 al-Ma'mun died and was succeeded by his brother al-Mu'tasim. The house of Wisdom continued to flourish under successive caliphs. Al-Mu'tasim died in 842 and was succeeded by al-Wathiq who, in turn, was succeed as Caliph in 847 by al-Mutawakkil. Under both these Caliphs internal arguments and rivalry arose between the scholars in the House of Wisdom and the Banu Musa brothers were certainly involved in this rivalry.

We now turn to the important mathematical contributions made by the Banu Musa brothers. As al-Dabbagh writes:-

The Banu Musa were among the first Arabic scientists to study the Greek mathematical works and to lay the foundation of the Arabic school of mathematics. They may be called disciples of Greek mathematics, yet they deviated from classical Greek mathematics in ways that were very important to the development of some mathematical concepts.

The most studied treatise written by the Banu Musa is Kitab marifat masakhat al-ashkal (The Book of the Measurement of Plane and Spherical Figures). This work became well known through the translation into Latin by

Gherard of Cremona entitled Liber trium fractum de geometria. The treatise considers problems similar to those considered in the two texts by Archimedes, namely On the measurement of the circle and On the sphere and the cylinder.

There are many similarities in the methods employed by the Banu Musa and those employed by Archimedes. More significant, however, is the fact that there are also many differences which, although at first sight may not seem of major importance, yet were providing the first steps towards a new approach to mathematics. The Banu Musa apply the method of exhaustion invented by Eudoxus and used so effectively by Archimedes. However, they omitted that part of the method which involves considering polygons with $2k$ sides as k tends to infinity. Rather they chose to use a proposition which itself required this passage to infinity in its proof.

In another aspect, however, the Banu Musa made a definite step forward. The Greeks had not thought of areas and volumes as numbers, but had only compared ratios of areas etc. The Banu Musa's concept of number is broader than that of the Greeks. For example they describe π as:-

... the magnitude which, when multiplied by the diameter of a circle, yields the circumference.

In the text areas as described as products of linear magnitudes, so the terminology of arithmetic is perhaps for the first time applied to the operations of geometry. The Banu Musa also introduced geometrical proofs which involve thinking of the geometric objects as moving. In particular they used kinematic methods to solve the classical problem of trisecting an angle.

In astronomy the brothers made many contributions. They were instructed by

Cont'd on page 9

Miracle of Allah

Tolerance of our body's defense system

Harun Yahya

The elements of the defense system fight against the enemies that will harm the body just like ordered and disciplined soldiers. First the soldiers that render the enemies ineffective by swallowing them (known as phagocytes) come to the battlefield. Sometimes however, the battlefield conditions overwhelm the abilities of these soldiers; then other soldiers (known as macrophages) step in. This causes a "situation alert" to occur in the target area and an army of soldiers (called helper T cells) is called to the battlefield.

However, during this struggle, a miracle takes place. Even though the body is always on the alert to fight against the organisms that can cause it harm, it allows millions of other types of bacteria to live in some organs. For example, it is known that 80 species of microorganisms live in the mouth, throat and the tonsils. According to research, there are 200 organism species which keep our bodies constantly healthy. The reason that our defense system does not attack these organisms is that these are vital for tolerance of the defense system.

T cells are the fighter white blood cells of our body. They fight against everything harmful to the body and they eliminate hazardous bacteria and molecules out of our body. However, during the clean up they do

not harm the body's healthy tissues and bacteria beneficial to the body.

Every cell has an identification system to introduce itself that we call receptors. Fighter T cells can make this distinction by recognizing the receptors in all other cells, and they ignore the cells the body needs. This quality of the defense system is called "tolerance."

This situation is actually a great miracle because the defense system is able to distinguish thousands of different proteins from one another.

So how did cells acquire a system that allows them to distinguish such different structures from one another?

It is of course impossible for coincidences to account for the ability to choose, which requires characteristics such as knowledge, consciousness and intelligence. There is no doubt that the defense system acts with the inspiration of Almighty Allah as revealed in the verse "hearkening to its Lord as it is bound to do!" (Surat Al-Inshiqaq, 2)

The defense system that we have been speaking of causes another very miraculous event. The pancreas is sheltered from the rest of the body. Therefore, the white blood cells do not directly work together with pancreatic cells. Instead, some intermediary cells

interface with white blood cells and introduce the pancreas. In order to do this, these cells put on a mask that displays the antigens of their normal neighbors, thus suppress the immune system and keep it in a quiet and calm state. These are called “dendritic cells.”

T cells recognize these antigens and learn not to become alarmed by the pancreatic cells and attack this organ.

As it can be seen from this example, it is clear that qualities like developing new methods to recognize one another, agreeing with one another, making plans and moving with a perfect organization according to these plans cannot be expected from defense cells and a mere organ. There is no doubt that even a community of human beings couldn't move in such a flawless synchronicity and accomplish what needs to be done without failing, forgetting, making a mistake or causing confusion.

There is only one definite truth that must be accepted here and that is all cells, just like everything else in nature, are created specially by Allah, Who is the Owner of an infinite power, knowledge and intelligence: “... He created all things and He has knowledge of all things.” (Surat Al-An'am, 101)

Another organ, which the defense system tolerates is the intestines. Even though our general body is covered with very detailed defensive weapons, millions of bacteria nonetheless continue to survive in our intestines because the food we eat and the fluids we drink are digested by the bacteria in our small intestines. In addition, these bacteria provide a natural method of protection as they prevent the reproduction of other bacteria that could harm the body so defense cells cooperate with these bacteria that prove beneficial for the body. Even though there is the possibility of activating an immune system response and starting a war in the intestines, T cells some-

how ignore the bacteria in the small intestine and prevent this. So, how do defense cells tolerate these bacteria?

Cells' training that is amazing

In a research paper published in Nature Immunology journal, investigators led by Shannon Turley of Harvard Medical School have found that the defense system has a tolerance mechanism that was previously unknown. According to this, the lymph nodes are like strategic encampments that surround the whole body. The white blood cells pull the antigens to the lymph nodes and fight them

However, the lymph nodes found in the intestines are like a training center more than a strategic encampment. The basic cells found there train the T cells, which are the soldiers of our defense system, about behaving in an appropriate and tolerant manner toward these uninvited, yet friendly guests. It cannot be explained away that such a system in this part of the body could have come into existence by coincidences. Shannon Turley states her excitement as such: “It's obvious that T cells must be able to ignore — or become ‘tolerized’ to — normal intestinal tissue. ... But it has been unclear how dendritic cells, which are extremely sensitive to microbial agents such as bacteria, teach T cells to resist attacking healthy intestinal cells.” Unconscious cells do not have the intelligence, consciousness and ability to make it possible to “teach” a biological process to one another. There is no doubt that a system, which even the most intelligent researchers and scientists cannot comprehend, being placed inside a cell with no ability to think and consider things for itself has a very special meaning.

Allah created the defense system with impeccable equipment

With the invention of the microscope

some 250 years ago, scientists revealed that we live side by side with numerous tiny organisms invisible to the naked eye. Moreover, these organisms were everywhere, from the air we breathe to the water we drink, from everything we touch to the surface of our own bodies. In addition, these organisms frequently enter inside the body. The presence of this enemy was detected 250 years ago. However, many of the secrets of the "defense system" that fights that enemy so effectively are still not completely understood today.

The defense system recognizes and distinguishes viruses and bacteria that are harmful to it from friendly organisms. The way that defense cells with no mind or brain can accomplish this is a reflection of the matchless Creation of Allah, the Lord of infinite knowledge, seen in a small cell. It is revealed that Allah's infinite knowledge encompasses all: "... They cannot grasp any of His knowledge save what He wills. His kursi encompasses the heavens and the earth and their preservation does not tire Him. He is the Most High, the Magnificent." (2:255)

Quotable Quotes

The Prophet (s) said:

"It is better for a leader to make a mistake in forgiving than to make a mistake in punishing." Tirmidhi

"There is reward for kindness to every living thing." Bukhari & Muslim

"Richness lies in the richness of the soul." Bukhari

"When Riba (interest) & zina (fornication) become prevalent in a nation, they become eligible for the punishment of Allah".

Ahmad

Silence is the best response to a fool. Imam Ali

"Whenever sorrow comes, be kind to it. For Allah has placed a pearl in sorrow's hand." -Mawlana Rumi

"Seek understanding before you lead. When you lead, then there is no way to seek understanding." Imam al-Shāfi'i

"Desires make slaves out of kings, and patience makes kings out of slaves." Imam al-Ghazali

"He whose heart is in awe of his Lord, everything in creation is in awe of him." Fudhayl ibn Iyadh

"Some people have passed away, but their character kept them alive. Others are alive, but their character killed them." Imam Shafi'e

"So long as you are in this world, be not surprised at the existence of sorrows." Ibn 'Ata Allah

"Whoever disobeys Allah, Allah will let loose upon him two of His soldiers until he repents: misery & sorrow." Ibnul Qayyim

"Just as good deeds yield bliss of the Hereafter

IbnHajar

So too do we need good deeds to attain bliss in this world".

"Concealing the sins of others & overlooking the shortcomings of others are traits of people with lofty moral conduct". Mujaddid Alf Thani