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RADIANT REALITY

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Surely,
this
Qur'an
guides to
something
that is most
upright, and
gives glad
tidings to the
believers
who do good,
that surely for
them there is
great reward.
(15:9)

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RADIANT REALITY

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This magazine is dedicated to the greatest and the last Prophet Sayyidna Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) on whom the succession of Prophethood ended and was sealed forever.

Editor, Printer & Publisher:	Contents	
Maulana Hamidullah Lone	1. Question Answer	2
*Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor.	2. Lesson from the Qur'an: Towards Forgiveness, Towards Paradise	7
*The Editor reserves the right to abridge letters and any other material received for publication.	3. Lesson from Sahih al-Bukhari	9
*Published articles do not necessarily reflect the views of Radiant Reality.	4. Islam? Which Islam	11
*Articles may be reproduced free of charge with due acknowledgement.	5. From Stardom to Islam	15
Printed at: Khidmat Offset Press, The Bund, Srinagar.	6. Why Masjid al-Aqsa is Important to Muslims	17
Mailing Address: Editor In-Charge,- Radiant Reality P.O. Box 974 G.P.O. Srinagar, J&K, 190001, India.	7. Two Words	20
Subscription: Yearly: Rs 300/- Postage: 240/- Regd. 30/- Normal	8. Psychology, Islam & Self-Control	23
Contact: siteadmin@islamkashmir.org	9. Terrorism and Selective Memory	26
  +918491895043	10. Significance of Emotions	28
	11. Tired of Life Difficulties?	30
	12. Seerah: What He said about Corruption	32
	13. Prophet Yusuf-II (AS)	34
	14. The Khawarij	38
	15. A Poor Man Finds a Fortune	40
	16. Relate al-Fatihah to Your Life	43
	17. Introduction to God	45

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Question.

I find it hard to remember Dua e Qunoot for the witr Salaah. I have tried memorizing it many times but I get confused and fear I'm getting a sin by reading it wrong. Kindly advise if there is an alternate Dua that can be read? And is it Makrooh to read a Dua other than Qunoot?

Answer.

One should make an effort to learn the Du'a-e-Qunoot to the best of one's ability. If however, a person does not know the Du'a-e-Qunoot, he/she may recite any other Du'a from the Quran or Hadith.

In such a case, one may recite: "Allahum-maghfirli" [O Allah, forgive me] or "Allahum-mahdini" [O Allah, guide me] thrice (or any such Du'a from Quran or Hadith). (Shaami 1/447).

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Do you have to seek the forgiveness of a person who you backbite or is Taubah enough?

Answer.

In this regard, there are two situations:

a) The person who had been backbitten is unaware of it. In this case, Taubah and Istighfaar will be sufficient.

b) The person who had been backbitten be-

comes aware of it. In this case, Taubah and Istighfaar will not suffice. Rather, it will be necessary for a person to seek the forgiveness of whom he had backbit. (Shaami 6/410)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Can a woman perform Janaazah Salaah in the Harm behind the Imaam? I see many women not performing Janaazah Salaah behind the Imaam in the Harm.

Answer.

There is no obligation on women to perform Salaah in the Harm. However, in an event of women being present in the Harm at the time of Salaah or Janaazah Salaah, they may join and follow the Imaam of the Harm for the Fardh and Janaazah Salaah. (Al-Muheetul-Burhaani 2/197)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Who has the right to stipulate the Mahr? The girl or the boy? If the Mahr was not stipulated, what is the amount of Mahr that should be given to the girl?

Answer.

It is the right of a woman to stipulate the Mahr amount. Usually, the Mahr amount is mutually agreed upon prior to the Nikah. However, a

woman is not forced to accept the Mahr amount offered by the man prior to the Nikah.

If the Mahr amount is not stipulated prior to the Nikah, then the Mahr amount will be equivalent to the average Mahr of the other women in the woman's family. (Al-Muheet-ul-Burhaani 3/84)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

A man married the younger sister of his wife and made her his second wife which violates the Shariah Law. Now what he should do. With which one he should live - first one or second one.

Answer.

It is not permissible for a man to marry his wife's sister whilst he is in the Nikah of his wife. Hence, the Nikah performed to the wife's sister is invalid.

In this case, the husband does not have the choice of choosing between the two, but will have to remain with his first wife. (Badaai'-us-Sanaai 2/263)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

My mother passed away. The only person my brother and I had was my mother. We cannot eat, drink and sleep properly since she passed away. Will we meet our mother after we die?

Answer.

After the demise of a person, the soul of a person meets other souls of people who passed away before him/her. (Fataawa Mahmoodiyyah 1/613)

Therefore, the same would apply to meeting ones family and relatives after one passes away.

We make Dua to Allah to ease your grief and unite you with your family in Jannah. Ameen.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Can a person perform the Tawaaf of Umrah

after Fajr and Asr? If so, can a person perform the two Raka'ats of Tawaaf after Fajr and Asr? If not? Can a person continue with the Sae' after Fajr and Asr without performing the two Raka'ats after Tawaaf?

Answer.

It is permissible to perform the Tawaaf of Umrah after Fajr and Asr. However, it is Makrooh (disliked) to perform the two Rakaats of Tawaaf after Fajr and Asr as Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam prevented Salaah during these times.

Therefore, if a person performs the Tawaaf of Umrah after Fajr and Asr, the two Rakaats of Tawaaf should be postponed until after sunrise (ishraaq time) and after sunset respectively. (Shaami 2/499)

A person may perform multiple Tawaafs in this time and postpone the two Rakaats of Tawaaf for each Tawaaf performed until after sunrise or sunset respectively. Sae' of Tawaaf is permissible after Fajr and Asr. (Fataawa Mahmoodiyyah 10/350)

Note: If the two Rakaats of Tawaaf are performed after Fajr and Asr, it would be valid but should be repeated.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I missed reciting the qiraat after Surah Faatihah in one rakaat of my esha salaah and I performed sajdah-e-sahw. Is sajdah-e-sahw sufficient or do I have to repeat the salaah?

Answer.

If you missed reciting the qiraat forgetfully after Surah Faatihah, then the salaah will be valid through performing sajdah-e-sahw at the end of the salaah. However, if you missed the qiraat intentionally after Surah Faatihah, then the salaah will not be valid even though you performed sajdah-e-sahw at the end of the salaah. The salaah will have to be repeated.

Mufti Zakaria

Question.

Nowadays we find Islamic Souks and Fairs on the increase. People refer to these Souks and Fairs as Islamic Souks and Fairs. Are these Souks and Fairs something which Islam encourages?

Answer.

Islam is the most perfect way of life which was presented to us by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Thus whatever conforms to this perfect way, whether it relates to Ibaadah, business, personal attire and appearance or social life, will be Islamic. Anything that is contrary to the way of life presented by the Qur'an and Sunnah can never be Islamic.

From the above, it is clear that something does not become "Islamic" simply by attaching the label of Islam to it, or due to being organised by Muslims/ Muslim organisations or because some apparently Muslim items such as abayas, scarves and nasheed CD's will be sold there.

Unfortunately many people are in the misconception that many Fairs, Souks, bazaars, etc., held in the name of Islam or organised by Muslim organisations are Islamic, due to the reasons mentioned above. The reality is that there are many un-Islamic aspects at these Fairs and Souks due to which they cannot be referred to as "Islamic". Intermingling of sexes, photography, pop-music styled nasheed concerts, dancing of men and women, immodest dressing, men and women rubbing shoulders with each other are often the "highlights" of such events. Such events also attract youth of both genders and often serve as a meeting point for immodest activities. In essence, today's "Islamic Souks and Fairs" mainly provide entertainment, shopping and various family activities in the name of Islam.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) prophesized the coming of such critical times in the Ummah, when the true spirit of Islam will be totally lost, and only the name and outer appearance of Islam will remain.

Hazrat Ali (Radhiyallahu Anhu) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "A time will soon dawn upon the people when Islam will only remain in name, and the Qur'an will only remain in its words. The Masaajid will be decorated, yet bereft of guidance (i.e. people will not perform Salaah in it)." (Shu'abul Imaan #1908)

From this Hadith we understand that true Islam can only be obtained when the true spirit of Islam and its value system is implemented in the lives of the Muslims, and the Qur'an is not merely recited in melodious tones, but its teachings and injunctions are adhered to. Muslims should refrain from attending these so called "Islamic Souks and Fairs" where the laws of Shari'ah are openly violated.

Mufti Zakaria

Question.

Are women allowed to visit graveyards?

Answer.

It is best for women to refrain from going to the cemetery and public places, especially in such times of corruption and fitnah.

In today's circumstances, it is not at all easy to control and restrict the fitnah. The freedom in people's behaviour and dressing is quite evident. When this is not going to be restricted and controlled, then unimaginable fitnah will begin to escalate.

The Qur'aan and Hadeeth encourages women to remain within the confines of their homes. The obligations of Janaazah, burial, etc, are all quite easily and comfortably carried out by the men folk.

The reason for not allowing females to visit the graveyard nowadays is because of the corrupt environment we live in, where there are overwhelming forces of vice and evil and women do not adhere to the laws of the Shari'ah, and hence strange men are attracted towards them. Furthermore, graveyards are generally found in

desolate areas where even men are not safe from being held up, mugged, etc.

Also, the number of sexual abuse and rape incidents in society at present is not a hidden fact. Additionally, the laws of the Shari'ah governing women, should they need to leave their homes, are so openly flouted that it is almost unimaginable that they can be safe from the evil and vice that has infested society.

The Hadeeth commands women that should they have to leave the home for some need, then they should do so in unattractive clothing, un-perfumed, avoiding the attention of men. Furthermore, they are commanded not to intermingle with men but to rather keep to the sides of the roads/paths.

In the light of the above and many other evils which are beyond our wisdom and comprehension, our Ulama have discouraged women from leaving their homes in order to remove the causes of these problems from the very root.

Therefore, it is important for females not to visit the graveyards, just as they are discouraged nowadays from attending the congregational prayer in the masajid.

Mufti Ebrahim

Question.

If no money or goods are involved, is it haram to have a league, with family, where you predict football match results and then have a league table of who got the most predictions right, based on their odds? There is no money or real stake (in the form of any asset) involved. It's done for fun and of course, a small feeling of achievement when someone wins or leads.

Answer.

This is all a waste of time and energy, and going to an end without any results. This does not at all behove the character and conduct of a Muslim where his time, energy and wealth is used in such vain activities.

Mufti Ebrahim

Question.

I wanted to find out what the significance of the 40 day mourning period is? Firstly is this allowed, and if it is, what are we supposed to do?

Answer.

There is no Islamic significance to the 40 day mourning period.

Among the religions that hold to this practice, perhaps the most prominent is the Eastern Orthodox Church.

“The mourning period for Eastern Orthodox Christians can vary with each family, but generally lasts for forty (40) days. Within the forty day mourning period, the third day, the ninth day, and the forty (40th) day have special significance.”

<http://www.orthodoxcustomstraditionsandpractices.com/mourning-after-burial/>

“The 40th Day concludes the 40-day memorial period and has a major significance in traditions of Eastern Orthodox. It is believed that the soul of the departed remains wandering on Earth during the 40-day period, coming back home, visiting places the departed has lived in as well as their fresh grave.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/40th_Day_after_death

These beliefs and practices are alien to Islam. It is not permissible for Muslims to observe these practices.

Mufti Moosa

Question.

If I make said sahw when not needed what should I do?

Answer.

If a person made Sajdah Sahw and then later realised that Sajdah Sahw was not necessary, the Salaah will be valid. It will not be necessary to repeat the Salaah. (Shaami 1/599)

Mufti Taahir

Question.

What is the Islamic status of visiting the graveyard?

Answer.

It is Mustahab for men to visit graves/the grave yard. It is preferable to visit at least once a week. It is also preferable that this day be on a Friday. It is also permissible to undertake journeys to visit the graves of the pious. This is permissible as long as no belief or action contrary to the Shar'iah takes place. [Bahisti Zeenat Page 268]

Ml. Yusuf

Question.

Is it permissible to recite the Noble Quraan at sunrise, sunset and Zawaal?

Answer.

Yes, it is permissible to recite the Noble Quraan at the times of sunrise, sunset and Zawaal. However, instead of reciting Quraan, it is preferable to make Tasbeeh, recite Du'ood or make Dua at the times of sunrise, sunset and Zawaal.

Ml. Yusuf

Question.

A lady borrowed jewellery from a family member to use for a wedding. The night before the wedding she experienced a burglary and the jewellery got stolen. Is she responsible?

Answer.

The status of a borrowed item in the hands of the borrower is like a trust: if it perishes without transgression then there is no liability on the borrower. In the above case, if the lady had stored the jewellery in a place of safekeeping in her home when the burglary took place - she will not be responsible to pay compensation to the owner. However if there was negligence on her behalf she will be responsible.

Ml. Yusuf

Question.

How does the Salaah of a lady differ from the Salaah of a man?

Answer.

The Salaah of lady differs in the following ways;

- 1) She will raise her hands to the height of her shoulders for Takbir Tahreema.

- 2) She will place her hands on her chest while standing.

- 3) She will lower herself slightly less for Ruku.

- 4) She will keep her fingers close together in Ruku.

- 5) She will keep her elbows close in Ruku.

- 6) She will keep her stomach close to her thighs in Sajdah.

- 7) She will place her arms on the ground during Sajdah

- 8) She will sit in the Twarruk position in every sitting. i.e. She will extend her legs to the right side, with the right calf on the left calf and her buttock on the ground. [at Tashil ad-Daruri Limasail al Quduri Page 56]

Ml. Yusuf

Question.

What are the Sunnah practices after the birth of a child?

Answer.

On the seventh day, it is Mustahab to observe the following practices;

- 1) To give a name to the child.

- 2) To slaughter one sheep or goat for a girl and two for a boy.

- 3) To shave the baby's hair.

- 4) To give charity of gold or silver (or the value of any of the two) equivalent to the weight of the hair.

It is preferable that the above practices be carried out in the sequence mentioned.

Ml. Yusuf

*Lesson from
The*



Towards Forgiveness, Towards Paradise

*And race one
another towards
Forgiveness
from your Lord
and towards
a paradise the
width of which
spans the heavens
and the earth.
It has been
prepared for the
God-fearing.
[3:133]*

Forgiveness here stands for the means of obtaining forgiveness, that is, good deeds which bring forth forgiveness. There are several exegetic views reported from the blessed Companions and their immediate successors. Though expressed differently, they convey the same theme. Out of the noble Companions and their successors, may Allah be pleased with them all, Sayyidna 'Ali explained it as 'the fulfillment of obligations', Ibn 'Abbas as 'Islam', Abu al-'Aliyah as 'Hijrah', Anas ibn Malik as 'al-Takbir al-Uula (the first call of Allahu Akbar in salah)', Sa'id ibn Jubayr as 'perfection of obedience', Dahhak as 'Jihad' and 'Ikrimah as 'Taubah (repentance)'. The outcome of all these sayings is that Forgiveness covers all good deeds which become the means of obtaining Divine forgiveness.

At this point two things need our attention. First comes the resolution of an apparent contradiction which may be felt when one notices that the present verse carries a command to race one another towards Forgiveness and Paradise, while through another verse:

And do not covet something by which Allah has made some of you excel some others. (4:32)

the very seeking of other merits and ranks has been prohibited.

The answer is that fada'il (merits, ranks, virtues) are of two kinds. The first kind relates to that which cannot be achieved by man, being beyond one's power and control. We can call these 'non-electable'. For example, colour or beauty or birth in a morally high family cannot be chosen and acquired. The other kind is something man can achieve by effort. These can be called voluntary or 'electable'. So, the reason why the effort to acquire non-electable merits, even its very desire, has been prohibited for the simple reason that they have been given to His created beings by Allah Almighty Himself in His infinite wisdom. It is something beyond human effort. Why run after them? All such efforts will lead to nothing but envy and malice. Let him who has been given a particular colour of his skin keep desiring to have some other colour. What is he going to get out of his desire? Nothing. However, there is a vast range of meritworthy deeds. One could, and would, make his mark there. That is why we have been asked to accelerate our efforts in that direc-

tion. This is not something restricted to one verse. The exhortation appears in several verses. Somewhere it is said: (Try to get ahead of one another in good deeds - 2:148, 5:48). Elsewhere, it is said: (And in this, then, aspire the aspirers.) (83:26)

Let us consider the advice of the sage who said: 'If one has a natural or physical handicap which is beyond his power to correct, he should remain contented (with his handicap) and unaffected by the achievements of others. He should go on doing what he does. For, if he were to pine over his handicap and envy the achievements of others, he would be unable to perform to his capability, and ultimately, he would end up doing nothing or very little.'

The second point worth considering is that Allah Almighty has mentioned 'Forgiveness' first and the 'Paradise' after it. May be, this is to suggest that entry into Paradise is impossible without Divine Forgiveness. The reason is obvious. Man may spend a life-time doing good and abstaining from the evils. Still the aggregate of his good deeds cannot pay the price of Paradise. What will take him to Paradise is only Forgiveness of His Lord, and His grace. The Holy Prophet has said:

Strive to be straight and true, take the middle course and seek glad tidings (of Allah's grace), for one's deeds shall not take anyone into the Paradise'. People said: 'Not even yours, O Messenger of Allah?' He said: 'Not even mine, unless it is that Allah covers me up with His mercy.' (al-Tarhib wa al-Tarhib, with reference to al-Bukhari and Muslim).

In short, our deeds are not the price of Paradise. But, as is the customary practice of Allah, He does bestow His grace upon a servant who does what is good. In fact, one who is given the very ability to do good deeds is really given the signal that Allah is pleased with him. So, let none of us be tardy in the performance of what is good. Since Divine forgiveness is the primary factor in one's entry into the Paradise, the text takes this importance into consideration and does not present forgiveness in the absolute sense. It has, rather, elected to say: (Forgiveness from your Lord). By doing so, the text highlights

Allah's attribute as the Lord, showing thereby His added grace and mercy for His servants.

The second object towards which man is being asked to hasten is Paradise. It has been said here that the Paradise is as wide as whole of the heavens and the earth. Since human mind cannot conceive any greater vastness than that of the heavens and the earth within the confines of his experience, the Paradise has been likened to them. This is a manner of saying that Paradise is very vast, so vast that it can accommodate the entire heavens and the earth in its vastness.

When the width of the Paradise is so great who can imagine its length which should be even greater?

All the above discussion is based on the assumption that the Arabic word (ard) means 'width'. However, there is another possible interpretation adopted by some commentators. According to them the word "ard" is also used in the meaning of 'price'. If the word is taken here in this sense, the verse would mean that Paradise is not an ordinary commodity; the entire heavens and the earth are its price.

With such an object of unimaginable worth and magnitude, what else should one do but hasten towards it.

Al-Razi in his 'al-Tafsir al-Kabir explains this point as follows:

Abu Muslim says that 'al-'ard' in this verse means that which is offered against the object of sale as its price. In other words, if a price were to be put on Paradise, the heavens and the earth together with whatever is in them will be its price. The purpose is to demonstrate the most exalted status of the Paradise which remains unmatched by anything in its greatness.

Another statement about the Paradise is given in the end by: (It has been prepared for the God-fearing.) This tells us that Paradise has already been created. Clear indicators in the Qur'an and Hadith seem to suggest the existence of Paradise on the seventh heaven which is its surface.

*Adapted from Maariful Qur'an
Mufti Muhammad Shafi (ra)*

Lessons from Sahih

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

Chapter 78 : Bringing a camel into the mosque with a reason.

Ibn Abbas said, "The Prophet (saws) did Tawaaf on a camel."

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Imam Bukhari here mentions the permissibility of bringing a camel into the mosque if there is some unavoidable circumstances. He supports his argument with a hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas who says that Rasulullah (saws) performed Tawwaf on a camel.

Hadith No. 451

Narrated Umm Salmah

I complained to Allah's Apostle that I was sick. He told me to perform the Tawaaf behind the people while riding. So I did so and Allah's Apostle was praying beside the Ka'ba and reciting the Sura starting with Wat-tur-wa-Kitabinmastur.

Comments

During Hajjatul Vida (last or farewell Hajj of the Prophet) Sayyida Umm Salma complained to Rasulullah (saws) about her inability to perform Tawaaf by foot due to illness. Rasulullah (saws) permitted her to perform Tawwaf riding a camel but to do so while remaining behind all others so as to avoid any inconvenience

to them. Imam Bukhari has quoted from Ibn Abbas (RA):

Rasulullah (saws) performed Tawaaf on his camel during his farewell Hajj.

Abu Dawood has narrated that the Prophet was not feeling well when he reached Makkah at the time.

Many learned scholars have expressed their reservations about the opinion of Imam Bukhari that a camel can be taken inside a mosque. They put forward the following points in their claim:

1. It was one of the miracles of Rasulullah (saws) that the camel neither passed urine nor defecated during the Tawaaf, and similar was the case with camel of Umm Salma.
2. The Tawaaf while mounting the camel was undertaken for safety purpose as it was done soon after the Makkan victory.
3. Rasulullah (saws) wanted that the people eager to see or ask questions related to tawaaf may do so with ease.
4. He was not feeling well.

Lesson from this hadith

1. Sick people can make use of a conveyance to perform Tawwaf.
2. Women should perform Tawwaf behind men.
3. Tawwaf is just like a Salaah.

Chapter 79 : Without title.

Purpose of the chapter without Tajmatul Baab

As seen on many occasions, Imam Bukhari sometimes establishes a chapter without giving it a title, and also that the hadith quoted under such a chapter having some relation with the chapter before it. But here, the case is somewhat different. The hadith quoted below in this chapter has apparently no relation with the previous chapter. The learned scholars of hadith have discussed it in detail and given their opinions. Allaama Ayni is of the opinion that this chapter should be titled. "Excellence of walking towards the mosque in the dark", as the two persons mentioned in the hadith stayed with Rasulullah (saws) in the mosque till late night after Isha Salaah for which they were blessed and led by two lights on their way back home. He further says that this hadith shows how excellent it is to wait for Isha Salaah in the mosque till dark hours; that is why Imam Bukhari has got this hadith here.

According to Shah Waliullah Muhad-dith Delhvi these two men talked for long in the Prophet's mosque with him, therefore, it can be deduced that it is permissible to talk in the mosque till late hours.

Hadith No. 452

Narrated Anas bin Maalik

Two of the companions of the Prophet departed from him on a dark night and were led by two lights like lamps (going in front of them from Allah as a miracle) lighting the way in front of them, and when they parted, each of them was accompanied by one of these lights till they reached their families.

Comments

According to Sayyiduna Anas, two men namely Abbad Bin Bishr and Usaid bin Hudhair once came to see Rasulullah (saws) and got engaged in talks with him till late night. When

they started to leave it was already very dark. As a miracle from Allah they were led by two lights like lamps in their way. It so happened that the end of one of the sticks carried by these two started emitting light. When they reached a point of divergence where they had to take separate paths, the end of the stick of other person also started emitting light until they reached home.

Abu Dawood has quoted a hadith on the authority of Buraidah which says:

Give glad tidings of perfect light on the day of Qiyaamah to those who walk towards the mosque in darkness (i.e., Fajr or Isha Salaah).

According to this hadith, people who offer early morning (i.e., Fajr) and late night (i.e., Isha) Salaah in congregation in the mosques walking through darkness will be rewarded in the Hereafter with the perfect light which will make it easy for them to cross what is known as 'Siraat' (a bridge over the hell). This hadith under discussion mentions that the two companions who left the mosque very late in night were rewarded with such a light in this world as well. Allaama Ayni writes:

"Indeed in it there is clear cut proof regarding the miracles of the 'Auliya' - the men of Allah, and there is no doubt in it; and rejects those who refute it; and such incidents have occurred earlier as well as in recent times.

Allaama Ayni has quoted further such incidents as well in Umdatul Qaari.

Cont'd from page 31 prophets, then those next to them (in faith and devotion), and then the next. Everyone will be tried according to his level of faith; one who has strong faith will undergo a harsh trial and one who is of weak faith will receive a weak trial. And the affliction will encompass one until he becomes free of sins altogether.

Islam? *Straight Talk*

Which Islam



Syed Iqbal Zaheer

It is curiously noted at conferences, seminars, or gathering of Muslims that some (sometimes all speakers) make remarks which give their residential address as an island which has no means of communication, into which no current news and information arrives. Aside several other noteworthy remarks during these events, one is the constant refrain, by every intellectual concerning what they say as, “Muslims fighting Muslims.” Some of them add, “everywhere,” i.e., Muslims are fighting Muslims everywhere. To us, these complaints seem to emerge from the island identified. When asked to clarify, they punch out, “Syria, Iraq, Yemen.” So, their globe seems to be a page from a 100-page atlas of the world.

The statement concerning “Muslims pitted against Muslims,” however, needs some deliberation.

Confusion about how Islam is defined leads to confusion about how a Muslim is defined. Are Muslims fighting a people whose definition of Muslims is ‘those who sided with `Ali,’ and of non-Muslims as those ‘who agreed to the succession of Abu Bakr, `Umar and `Uthman as Caliphs preceding `Ali’ – then, are they fighting Muslims? When one group believes that the Companions of the Prophet were the best of Muslims ever, and another claims that the ma-

majority of them were hypocrites, then, which of the two is Muslim?

When one discovers the historical animosity, wars, and more wars, and yet more wars, against Muslims by one group, and the same warring group having never fought against non-Muslims, then, by what definition can the two be defined Muslims at the same time?

The Islam of the Sunnis began, so to say, with the birth of Prophet Muhammad. That was the day, they say, when Allah looked kindly upon mankind.

The Islam of the Shi`ah began, so to say, with the death of Prophet Muhammad. They mourn the day. That was the day, they say in sobbing notes, when `Ali was denied leadership of the Muslims.

Note that in this religion, Allah and His Messenger are already removed from a primary role.

The Shi`ah part ways with the Muslims over issues that they declare as “fundamental” to defining who a Muslim is, and who is not. They state as a matter of fundamental doctrine the following. (The sources are authoritative Shi`ah books):

`Ali ibn abi Talib deserved to be the Caliph immediately with the Prophet’s death. The basis of this claim is the Prophet’s declaration at Ghadeer Khumm to this effect. Accordingly,

their standard and central doctrine is:

“Allah did not create a Prophet or a Messenger except that He took covenant from them concerning Prophethood of Muhammad, (upon whom be peace), and Imamate of `Ali (upon whom be peace).” (Bihar al-Anwar, [a powerful Shi`ah source book] vol. 26, page 297).

Abu Bakr, `Umar and `Uthman were usurpers of `Ali’s divine right to have become Caliphs before him. And, all those Companions who did nothing to right the situation were equal in crime with the usurpers.

The said Companions were in actual fact hypocrites who concealed their hypocrisy from the Prophet until he died. As soon as he died, their hypocrisy came to surface. After all, has not the Prophet said that angels will drive away some of his Companions from his Pond, saying, “You do not know what they did after you?” (Tafsir al-Qummi, 9/13)

To curse them, therefore, (to say, e.g. mal`oon after naming `Umar ibn al-Khattab) is a legitimate expression of anger and a sign of accurate perception. (‘Allamah Majlisi, “Mir`atu al-`Uqul,” 20/42)

If `Ali did not protest, or even speak out, during the Caliphate of the three usurpers, but instead, entered into bay`ah pacts with them, it was because right from the start, he was physically overpowered and threatened with execution. (Al-Mustarshid, Bihar al-Anwar, Majlisi, etc.)

`Ali’s concealment of his differences with other Companions brought into free play a religious rule called “Taqiyyah” (dissimulation of faith), which dictates, theoretically, that if one is fearful of persecution he may resort to Taqiyyah. But that is only theoretically so; practically, it is to conceal faith all the time whether the situation is threatening or not. Says one of their scholars: ‘He is not a Shi`i who does not treat it as a fundamental element of the Shi`ah doctrine.’ (Mishkatul Anwar, p. 29)

What’s Wrong with the Doctrines?

Point 1: At no time did the Prophet nominate anyone (neither `Ali, nor Abu Bakr, nor anyone else), to Khilafah after him. The most that he did was to insist on Abu Bakr to lead in Prayers, while he lay in his deathbed. He did not approve of even `Umar to lead in the Prayers.

The claim that Allah made every Prophet and Messenger enter into a pact that they shall believe in Muhammad’s Prophethood and `Ali’s Imamate is false. It is an untruth of universal ramifications. Within tens of thousands of reports in the collections of Sunnis, not a single report of this nature exists, neither Sahih nor fabricated.

The Qur’an would not have failed to mention a pact running through 1400 Messengers that were raised in human history.

Ghadir Khumm

Khumm is the name of a valley between Makkah and Madinah where the Prophet had camped after his Hajj, on his way back to Madinah after Hajj. Ghadir is ‘a well’ in Arabic.

The Prophet had heard complaints against `Ali’s leadership from those who had accompanied him to Yemen and back. They thought `Ali was very demanding on them in religious matters and pretty frugal in worldly matters. When one of them spoke to the Prophet about `Ali’s harshness, he disapproved of his complaint. The narrator himself reports: “(When I complained), the Prophet asked me,

‘Do I not come first to the believers before their own souls?’ I said, ‘Sure, you do, O Messenger of Allah.’ He said, ‘(Then) whoever has me as a friend has (to have) `Ali as a friend.’”

These words said at Ghadeer Khumm give no indication that he was appointing `Ali as his Khalifah or the immediate Imam after him. If at all he wished to say any such thing, he – who never minced words in his life – would have said it in direct terms, such as, “People! `Ali will be my immediate successor. Listen and obey him.”

Moreover, for any such declaration, the best time and place was the day of 'Arafah, where he delivered his famous sermons before tens of thousands. But he said no such thing there.

2. Allegation of treachery on part of the three Khulafa' is actually attribution of treachery to the Prophet because he said, "Surely whoever of you lives on, will witness many differences. So hold fast unto my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Caliph. Hold on to it, clutching it with your teeth." (Ibn Hibban, Tirmidhi)

The close Companions of the Prophet, especially those who migrated, fought at Badr and took oath on the day of Hudaibiyya, were neither treacherous nor fell into hypocrisy at any time in their lives. How could they, when Allah registered His praise in their favor in a book to be recited till the Day of Judgment? It said,

"Allah was certainly pleased with the believers when they were swearing fealty to you under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, and so sent down tranquility upon them and awarded them an imminent victory."

How could Allah praise a people who, as the Shi'ah claim, were in actual fact, hypocrites?

3. As for those who would be turned away from the Prophet at the Pond, his prediction came true when many of the Arabs of the outlying areas of Arabia, either turned apostates after him, or refused to pay Zakah. It was Abu Bakr who fought them and subdued them. The general body of the Companions cannot be bracketed among those who would be turned away from the Pond because Allah was pleased with them. He said:

"As for the early outrunners of the Immigrants and Helpers and those who followed them in good stead, Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him."

4. It is not legitimate to curse 'Umar ibn al-Khattab as found in Shi'ah books. For example, the author of Mustadrak Safeenatu al-Bihar

mentions 'Umar as the Taghut (vol.1, p. 387). Says 'Allamah Majlisi (an extremely prominent scholar of the Shi'ah):

"Let me say that these two reports (to the effect that 'Ali married his daughter Umm Kulthum) to this accursed, the hypocrite (i.e. 'Umar) following a pressing reason, or pursuing Taqiyyah rules, do not prove that the event took place." (Mir'aatul 'Uqul, vol.20, page 42).

In the above report, Majlisi denies that the marriage took place at all, although great majority of Shi'ah scholars have accepted that the marriage took place and explain in great detail how it happened.

At all events, our answer to this attitude towards 'Umar is that it is not legitimate on many grounds, one of which is that it was largely because of the Prophet's supplication that 'Umar had embraced Islam.

5. The argument that 'Ali did not protest against the three Caliphs because he was afraid of persecution, is not quite strong. 'Ali is well-known for his courage. The Shi'ah themselves say that 'Ali was better than Abu Bakr because – according to them – if Abu Bakr took risk to be with the Prophet in the cave during the migration journey, then, 'Ali bore greater risk by lying down on the Prophet's cot, while the Quraysh had surrounded the house, and could have murdered him that night. So, to say that 'Ali showed weakness, in claiming what the Shi'ah allege was rightfully his, is to insult him.

6. No man with common sense would include Taqiyyah as a religious doctrine. A point of central doctrine has to be derived from the Qur'an.

At best, a man may conceal his faith when faced with an imminent danger. If, under life-threatening situation, he denounces Islam while free of denial in his heart, he can be forgiven. But, to say that one should always show something and hide something else, is a trait fitful to the hypocrites. Apart from the Shi'ah, it is the Jews who conceal their faith and identity. It

is they who got the “religious” column removed from the passports.

But Mishkat al-Anwar records a scholar’s opinion:

“Taqiyyah is my religion and the religion of my forefathers. He who does not practice Taqiyyah has no religion.”

Another scholar states,

“There is nothing more lovable to me on the earth than Taqiyyah.” (p. 29)

When Taqiyyah is considered as the most important element of Shi`ah faith, then, when a Shi`i says to a Sunni that he is no different from a Sunni, or that he never curses Abu Bakr and `Umar, while, at every Muharram he does it, and does it more than he did the last time, and no Shi`i scholar denounces it, year in and year out, then, this is a clear and powerful evidence that this Taqiyyah is a means of deception.

Sunnis believe that there is a huge difference between Shi`as and Sunnis, but the Shi`ah always say, “We are brothers, and there are only minor differences between the two.” Aside the question whether these differences are minor, the question that can be asked is, why should the Shi`ah not become Sunnis? Why did they let loose a massive persecution campaign in Iraq and Syria, resulting in the loss of tens of thousands of lives, which led to the struggle against them in these places?

In addition to Taqiyyah, the Shi`ah concealment of their books casts dark shadows of Batiniiyah on them. In the whole of the Indian sub-continent, for instance (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan), not a single Shi`ah source book is available in any bookstore. Ordinary Sunnis do not even know that such Shi`ah books as al-Kafi, Bihar al-Anwar, Mishkatul

Anwar and others exist. Why not? Why conceal them if all’s clear? After all, Islam is a universal religion. It is for the entire humanity. Islam is not Judaism, which is for a race, who have a special God of their own, called Yahweh. Islam on the other hand is an invitation to the entire humanity to become Muslims. Anyone can obtain and read any book on Islam. It is not only the Qur’an which is available to all, but tens of thousands of Sunni books are available in bookstores in every corner of the world. But Shi`i literature, although in hundreds, is not available anywhere. Even their major works (such as equivalent of what Sunnis have: Bukhari, Muslim, Al-Mughni, Hidayah, Tafsir ibn Kathir, Tarikh ibn Khaldun, etc.), have never been seen by other than the Shi`ah themselves. In fact, even the common Shi`ah are denied their possession. The core books are the prerogative of their scholars alone. The Shi`a books that the Sunnis have come to possess, had to be smuggled out of Iran in great secrecy. Is this the characteristic of a universal religion, or is it that the universal religion – Islam – has nothing to do with Shi`ism?

We may ask our readers: If one group offers its million books to the common public for study, examination and criticism, and another conceals its primary and secondary books, opening only the tertiary books (mostly propaganda work against the Sunnis) then, which of the two groups believes in a universal religion called Islam?

There are several other issues that need to be looked into, to understand what exactly Shi`a-ism is, but which we postpone for a future issue, Allah willing.

Source: YMD July 2105

“I have have handed my affairs to Allah. He has done a brilliant job in the past, and he will do no less in the future” (Sayyidna Ali (ra))

From Stardom to Islam

*Famous French
Rapper Diam's Jour-
ney to Islam*

Amid a nationwide debate in France surrounding attitudes towards the Islamic veil, or hijab, a French rapper has surprised fans by announcing her conversion to Islam and choosing to wear a headscarf.

Mélanie Georgiades, known as Diam's, has gone through what onlookers have described as a "complete transformation" from an image she had prior to 2009.

Since 2009, Diam's had been unusually absent from the mainstream rap scene, prompting more than three years of controversy over her whereabouts, despite making the odd public appearance with her scarf. But recently the French rapper made her first television appearance with her new image.

Diam's talked about a past experience with drugs, including hallucinating narcotics, and being in a mental asylum until she discovered the "serenity of Islam." The rapper said the religion was introduced to her by coincidence, when she saw a Muslim friend praying.

Diam's said she has been married for over a year and is now a new mother, moving far away from her drug-related past.

She said her conversion to Islam was the result of a personal conviction, after understanding the religion and reading the Holy Quran.

When asked about wearing the hijab in

France, a country which has banned the niqab, she said: "I believe that I live in a tolerant society, and I don't feel hurt by criticism, but by insults and stereotyping and ready-made judgments."

Asked by her host about why she is wearing a hijab while many Muslim women don't wear it, and don't find it to be a religious obligation, she answered: "I see it as a divine order or a divine advice, this brings joy to my heart and for me this is enough."

Stardom?

Diam's said that by converting to Islam she gained comfort, adding that stardom doesn't fit in with her life anymore, adding "this has warmed my heart, as I know now the purpose of my existence, and why am I here on Earth."

Discussing how her life was like before her conversion to Islam, Diam's said:

"I was very famous and I had what every famous person looks for, but I was always crying bitterly alone at home, and this is what none of my fans had felt."

She added:

"I was heavily addicted to drugs, including hallucinating narcotics and was admitted in mental asylum to recover, but this was in vain until I heard one of my Muslim friends saying 'I am going to pray for a while and will come back,' so I told her that I want to pray as well."

Recalling that moment, Diam's said:

"It was the first time that I touched the floor with head, and I had a strong feeling that I have never experienced before, and I believe now that kneeling in prayer, shouldn't be done to anyone but Allah."

Islam, a Religion of Tolerance

Diam's said that she moved to Mauritius to read the Quran, and have a better understanding of Islam, discovering during her retreat, the tolerance of Islam.

When asked by her host about her views on Islam, and those who commit all the murders and atrocities pretending to be doing it in the name of religion, she answered: "I think we should differentiate between the ignorant and the knowledgeable, and the ignorant should not speak about what he doesn't know, Islam does not allow murdering innocent victims the way we see it nowadays."

FORM IV (See Rule 8)

Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper **Radiant Reality** to be published in the first issue every year after the last day of February

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I, Maulana Hamidullah Lone, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date 01/03/2018

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Why Masjid al-Aqsa is Important to Muslims

Muslim Rulers recognised the rights of Christians and Jews to their holy city and allowed them to visit Jerusalem

Muzammil H. Siddiqi

The masjid al-aqsa is one of Islam's three most sacred mosques. It is also called *al-Haram al-Shareef* (the Noble Sanctuary), which includes the mosque, the Dome of the Rock and the surrounding compound. All Muslims without exception consider it sacred, just like they do the Ka'bah and the Prophet's Mosque.

Jerusalem, "the land of the Prophets," "the blessed land," "the land of the Ascent" and the first prayer direction, is held in high esteem for

several reasons. First, the Masjid al-Aqsa and its surroundings are associated with the lives of many of God's prophets and messengers, all of whom Islam accepts as legitimate. The Quran, which mentions many of them by name, relates their stories and teachings at varying lengths. Muslims accept Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Zachariah, John and Jesus ('alayhum al-salam) as among God's honored prophets and messengers.

Since Jerusalem is historically associated

with them, Muslims naturally view it as a sacred city. Islam considers itself a continuation of the same spiritual and ethical movement begun by the earlier prophets and therefore, in historical and theological terms, the true inheritor of these earlier traditions. Thus the Quran calls Palestine, the land associated with many of the prophets, *al-ard al-muqaddasah* (the Sacred Land (5:21)) and its surroundings *barakna hawlaha* (God's Blessed Precincts (17:1)).

According to Islam, Jerusalem's sacredness lies in its historical religious reality. For example, this city witnessed the life and works of God's greatest prophets and messengers, who lived and walked in its valleys and streets. Thus its soil has been repeatedly touched by the divine grace. Just as Makkah and Madinah are blessed cities due to Abraham and Ishmael (as) and Muhammad (saws), Jerusalem is blessed and important because of David, Solomon and Jesus. As Jews and Christians do not consider Ishmael and Muhammad to be God's prophets and messengers, to them Makkah and Madinah are just regular cities; however, Muslims believe in Moses, David, Solomon and Jesus and therefore recognize Jerusalem's special status in the eyes of God.

Jerusalem and its sacred places of worship are also associated with Muhammad: "Glory be to Him who took His servant by night from the Masjid al-Haram to the Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him

some of Our signs. He alone is the All Hearing, the All Seeing" (17:1).

This refers to the *isra* (the night journey) and the *mi'raj* (the ascent), the Prophet's miraculous journey from Makkah to Jerusalem in 620, almost 1.5 years before the *hijrah*. One night, Angel Gabriel took him, via *Buraq*, from Makkah to Jerusalem and then ascended to the heavenly abodes, an honor and confirmation of the two cities' spiritual link. It is reported that while the Prophet was in Jerusalem, he stood on

the Sacred Rock and ascended to heaven, where he met with those prophets and messengers who had gathered together to meet him. He led them in prayers in the blessed compound and then returned to Jerusalem.

During the ascension, God revealed to him the five daily obligatory prayers, which he instituted upon his return to Makkah. As he also made Jerusalem the Muslims' prayer direction, that city is also called the "first qiblah" (*ula al-qiblatayn*). The Prophet and his Companions prayed toward it during their stay in Makkah and for almost

seventeen months after they moved to Madinah. They only began praying toward Makkah when God told Muhammad to do so (2:142-150).

Muslim commentators of the Quran and historians have detailed the meaning and purpose of this change. Suffice it to say that this event did not diminish Jerusalem's status. The Ka'bah was always meant to be the prayer direction, because it was the "first house" (*awwal bayt*; 3:96) of worship established for humanity. However,

JERUSALEM CAME UNDER ISLAMIC RULE IN 638 DURING THE REIGN OF CALIPH UMAR (RA). AFTER ITS PEACEFUL CONQUEST, THE CITY'S RULING PATRIARCH SOPHRONIUS (560- 638) OFFERED THE CITY'S KEYS TO HIM.

as it was full of idols when the Prophet began preaching his message of God's oneness and transcendence, the new Muslims needed to be separated from their former pagan practices and the Ka'bah's idolatrous associations. Jerusalem aptly served that purpose by distancing them from their past in this regard. Once monotheism was fully established in the believers' hearts and minds and once the Ka'bah's relationship with Abraham and monotheism was made clear, the way was open to restore it as the original prayer direction.

Islamic legislation contains many instances of such changes (or abrogation [*naskh*]). For example, visiting graves was originally forbidden but permitted later after Muslims understood the difference between that custom and ancestor worship. The Prophet also forbade Muslims to write down his words, fearing that they might mix them with the Word of God. But later on, when they were able to distinguish between the two, he allowed them to write down the Hadith as well.

Restoring Jerusalem

Jerusalem came under Islamic rule in 638 during the reign of Caliph Umar (ra). After its peaceful conquest, the city's ruling patriarch Sophronius (560- 638) offered the city's keys to him. Upon entering the blessed city, Umar asked about the location of the Masjid al-Aqsa and the Blessed Rock from which the Prophet had ascended to heaven. He found them in a desolate place, for after the Romans destroyed the Temple in 70 no Christian ruler or Jewish group had sought to build any place of worship there. In fact, according to historians, the Jerusalemites used it as a garbage dump.

Along with his companions, Umar cleaned and washed the site himself, after which all of the Muslims prayed there. The Masjid al-Aqsa was built there and, in 691, was joined by the Dome of Rock and a more elaborate mosque, the Masjid al-Aqsa perhaps the Muslim com-

munity's first really expensive and large purpose-built sacred monument.

According to the Prophet,

No journey should be taken (with the intention of worship) except to three mosques: the Sacred Mosque in Makkah, the Prophet's Mosque and the Masjid al-Aqsa (al-Bukhari, hadith no. 1115).

Thus Muslims have always considered it a religious deed to visit Jerusalem, its mosque and its sacred and blessed precincts. Pilgrims to Makkah often made it a point to visit that city as well.

Muslim rulers and philanthropists purchased land in and around the city upon which they built many hostels, schools and other religious centers. They dedicated these as *wuqfs* (endowments) set up for religious purposes, meaning that they could not be legally sold, transferred or even given as a bequest to someone else.

Many Muslim scholars also migrated and settled in Jerusalem, thereby making the Masjid al-Aqsa a great seat of learning, thousands of pious people and scholars stated in their wills that they wanted to be buried there. As a result, thousands and perhaps even millions of Muslims are buried within the city and its environs.

Muslim rulers, who recognized the rights of Christians and Jews to their holy city, allowed them to visit Jerusalem; many of them were also permitted to settle there. When Caliph Umar signed the treaty, he had to agree to Patriarch Sophronius' insistence that "No Jews will live with them in Aelia Capitolina," the official name for Jerusalem. Later on, however, Muslim religious tolerance caused this rule to be relaxed and Jews were allowed to visit and settle there. After Salahuddin Ayyubi took it from the Crusaders in 1187, the Christian rulers' ban on both Jews and Muslims was lifted and the Jews' rights were restored.

Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, a former ISNA president, is chairman of The Fiqh Council of North America.

TWO WORDS

Maryam Amir

He had never prayed two **H**rak`ah (units of prayer) in his adult life. Born and raised in Egypt, he had continuously heard the athan (call to prayer) and the iqama (second call to prayer) rolling through the streets, calling the believers to prayer, but he had never voluntarily accepted the call. This included refusing to pray at the masjid (mosque) on the first floor of the apartment building in which he lived; He passed by it day and night, on his way to work, on his way to spend hours at the local Hookah Café with his friends, and on his way home to his wife and children, only to start the routine of neglecting his prayers again the following day.

On one Friday, he was suddenly hit by a novel idea. “Why don’t I just try Friday prayer today? Just to see what it’s like? I’ll just try it,” the man thought. He came in late to the masjid; The Khatib (speaker) was already speaking. As the man was looking for a place to sit, he heard the words of the Khatib, “The Prophet (saws) has told us:

Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense. (Bukhari)



The man, preoccupied with having just entered and finding a place to sit, only heard a few of the Khatib’s words. He sat, perplexed, turning the fragmented words over and over in his mind, “*Kalimatan* (two words)... *habibatan* (both beloved)... *ila-Rahman* (to The Merciful)... *Subhan Allahi wa bihamdi* (Glory be to Allah and by His praise)... *Subhan Allah il-`azeem* (Glory be to Allah, the Immense).” He had lost complete focus on the rest of the khutbah (sermon), overtaken by these words he had heard in passing, working hard to make sense of what the words could possibly mean.

After the prayer, he approached the Khatib directly. "Is all what you've said in the khutbah today true?" he questioned. Surprised, the Khatib responded, "I've said quite a bit in the khutbah today. To what specifically are you referring?" The man replied, "You said some words... *Kalimatatan... habibatan... ila-Rahman... Subhan Allahi wa bi hamdih, subhan Allah il-`azeem.*"

The Khatib smiled in recognition. "Yes, those are in fact from a blessed hadith (narration) from The Truthful himself. He told us so.

The man stood, overwhelmed, awestruck, in a daze. The words had penetrated through his heart and embraced his soul. Captivated, he continued to repeat the hadith of the Prophet (saws) over and over to himself: "Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: 'Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.'"

He walked out of the masjid in a trance and left for his home. Upon entering, he gathered his wife and children. "Have you heard," he began to tell them, "the words of the Prophet (saws)? He has told us: "Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: 'Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.'"

From that moment, the man transformed. From his home, he would leave to work, from his work, he would go straight to the Masjid, and from the Masjid, he would immediately go back home to his wife and children. All the while, two words kept his lips moving and his tongue wet with remembrance, "*Subhan Allahi wa bihamdi, Subhan Allah il-`azeem.*"

Soon, his friends from the Hookah Café noticed his continued absence. They came to his apartment one day. "Where have you been?" they asked. "We haven't seen you smokin' hookah with us for a while."

A beautiful, wistful look came over the man's face. "Haven't you heard?" He replied to his old crew from the café, "The Prophet (saws) has told us: "Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in

the balance, beloved to the Merciful: 'Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.'"

And this is how he spent his days; reminding his family, his friends, those in the masjid and those who passed by in the streets, about the beloved words to Allah, those heavy words on the scale, those words light on the tongue, "*Subhan Allahi wa bihamdi, subhan Allah il-`azeem.*" The man had gone from a person who never prayed, spent little time with family and frequented the house of hookah instead of the House of Allah subhanahu wa ta`ala (exalted is He), to a person who longed for Allah (swt), whose eyes were filled with tears, whose tongue, heart, and soul burned with the inscription: "Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: 'Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.'"

Soon, he fell ill. It had only been a few months since he had gone to the masjid, since he had first heard the beloved words of the Prophet (saws) by the Khatib in a Jumu`ah (Friday) khutbah. He told his son to go and to ask the Masjid administration to call upon that very Khatib to come visit him in his illness.

When he was informed, the Khatib remembered the man immediately and rushed to his apartment. Upon being let in, he saw the man, sleeping in his bed, the doctor sitting at his side. The Khatib sat at the foot of the bed and waited for the man to awaken. Finally, the man stirred and he noticed, at the foot of his bed, the very Khatib who had related the beloved, noble words of the Prophet (saws).

The man looked at the Khatib. He then asked him, "Have you heard? The Prophet (saws) has told us: "Two words are light on the tongue, heavy in the balance, beloved to the Merciful: 'Glory be to Allah and by His praise. Glory be to Allah, the Immense.'"

With that, the man passed away.

The Khatib in this story is the teacher of my Arabic teacher. My Arabic teacher related this

incident to me and continued to stress that it wasn't a story from books of the past, it wasn't a story coined to tug hearts, it was the true story of a man who was completely disconnected from Allah (swt), but to whom Allah (swt) gave a passing thought to enter the masjid, and who Allah (swt) blessed with hearing the words of the Prophet (saws) at a time and in a way which truly impacted his soul and final actions in life.

My teacher then told me, "The Prophet (saws) has said:

"Convey from me, even if it's just one ayah [verse].....(Bukhari).

We never know what word or action, done with a sincere intention, will truly be a means of impacting another person's life to come back to Allah (swt).

Let's stop judging people; let's stop driving people out of mosques because "we" deem their dress, their swagger, their accessories, or language as something "unsuitable" to the House of God. Let's stop assuming they'll never be guided to "our righteous path" (since we're so righteous, we guided our own selves, right?) and thus resolve to harsh words or disapproving stares. Perhaps those who "we" think are far from Allah (swt) will pass in a more honorable, beloved state to the One Who guides.

Let us be the first to cling to the beloved words to Allah (swt), "*Subhan Allahi wa bihamdih, subhan Allah il-`azeem,*" and let us warmly, sincerely and smile-fully be a means of helping ourselves and others come back to Allah (swt)—with His Power and Mercy—through relating the beautiful words of Allah (swt) and His Prophet (saws), through action and speech. We never know what small, miniscule act, may be a means of guidance for ourselves and another, and a means of possibly entering jannatul firdose al `alaa bi ghayri hisaab—The Highest Paradise, without any reckoning.

May Allah (swt) bless this man's soul. Subhan Allah—if he had died like any other person who knows about the obligation of prayer and

lazily defies praying, we would never know his story—he'd just be another person who passed away in another country, a person we may have never even known existed..

But perhaps because of his repentance and his sincere coming back to Allah (swt), Allah has blessed us with coming to know of him—so that his actions will continue to be rewarded even while he's in his grave, every single time any one of us, because of his story, even across the world, remember to say, "Subhan Allahi wa bihamdi, subhan Allah il-`azeem."

What will you do—so sincerely—that Allah (swt) will bless people with being transformed because of you, even after you've passed on?

Mutual Consultation

Often a person has to make a decision pertaining to some aspect or the other. The more serious the matter, the more difficult it becomes to make the decision. According to the advice of the Qur'an and hadith, such important decisions should never be made without prior consultation. Allah declares in the Qur'an regarding the Believers: "And their matters are (decided) with mutual consultation" (Surah Shura v38). Even Rasulullah (saws) was commanded by Allah to consult the Sahaabah (ra) in such matters of importance wherein no divine instruction had been given.

ways found troubling. To be blunt, I have always found people who make their happiness their #1 priority to be quite selfish and short-sighted. The pursuit of self-fulfilment at-all-costs seems contradictory to the Islamic worldview, a frame of reference that has no problem with happiness in and of itself but which emphasizes patience and sacrifice as more noble goals.

Self-control, on the other hand, is perfectly Islamic. Our whole religion is based around it. One of the reasons we pray five times a day is to gain discipline. We fast in the month of Ramadan in order to “learn self-restraint.” (Qur’an 2:183). We partake in Hajj, partly, to practice fortitude. We “lower our gaze” (24:31) to resist temptation. Even the pursuit of wealth is not by any means necessary: we are stringent about examining the how and why of whatever we earn and spend (17:26). We have to regulate what we consume. We have to regulate our speech. We have to constantly exert control over our thoughts and feelings. We have to control our anger, our jealousy; any feelings of pride or arrogance. We constantly have to check our actions against our intentions.

We even have to exercise restraint in the permissible display of our emotions. When at war, Muslims are commanded to fight honourably and ethically. When we fall in love with our spouses, the expectation from our religion is to be temperate and keep the display of our affections limited to the domestic sphere. When someone close to us dies, we are allowed to cry and show sadness, but we cannot wail and excessively lament. Even the duration of our mourning is limited to three days at which point we are expected to collect ourselves and move on.

The ethos of modern societies is to pursue with passion whatever you desire. But Islam emphasizes restraint, discipline and sabr (patience).

The Qur’an even goes as far as to say:

“Who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts?” (28:50).

The implication is that the opposite of that, a person who is in control of his desires, represents the pinnacle of right guidance.

In the past few decades, self-restraint has resumed its once-forgotten place at the centre of psychology. The turning point was triggered in a now-famous study by Walter Mischel of Stanford University, where children aged four and five were asked whether they wanted to eat one marshmallow now or two marshmallows later. The idea was to test the ability of these children to delay gratification. Many children gave in right away and consumed the marshmallow in front of them. But some were able to wait as long as fifteen minutes, successfully repressing their current desire for the promise of a double reward later. Mischel and his team then followed the children into adulthood and found that those who were able to control themselves as children subsequently performed better in school, sports and other extra-curricular activities, attained higher educational and salary levels, engaged in far less drug and alcohol abuse, and reported stronger, more satisfying relationships. In short, those children who were able to practice self-control were more successful in every aspect of their lives decades later.

Moreover, in a review of thousands of studies, founder and president of The Families and Work Institute Dr. Ellen Galinsky concluded that there are seven essential life skills that every child needs in order to reach his or her fullest potential. What is the top entry on her list? You guessed it: self-control. And this is based on decades of frontline observations and volumes upon volumes of research.

More recently, one of the world’s most prolific psychologists, Dr. Roy Baumeister of Florida State University published a book entitled *Willpower* that basically summarized decades of his and his colleagues’ research in the field. What he essentially found is that success, no matter how you define it, often boils down to two things: intelligence and self-control. While you

cannot increase your God-given intelligence, you can definitely improve your self-control. How important is willpower? According to Baumeister “self-regulation failure is the major social pathology of our time.” I’ll let you read that again in order for it to sink in. Baumeister goes on to discuss various proven ways to improve self-control including: eating and sleeping right, keeping a diary, establishing routines, getting organized, implementing personalized distraction techniques and practicing guided meditation. He also demonstrates how the effects of successfully disciplining yourself in one area of life spill over into other areas of your life, creating a domino effect of positive transformation. As a Muslim, that sounds very familiar.

I could go on but you get the point. Science is only now uncovering the reality that our religion has taught all along. The secret to success is discipline and self-control. We have always known that the ability to make choices is what separates us from animals. Now we also know that the ability to self-regulate is what separates average people from the truly remarkable. This is the kind of discipline that Allah subhanahu wa ta’ala (exalted is He) is trying to build in us through the various acts of worship and rituals He commands. Who else Knows better the intricacies of human nature? Allah (swt) wants us to be successful and indicates the way. It is up us to now to act upon this knowledge.

“Oh you who believe, endure and outdo all others in endurance, be ready, and observe your duty to Allah, so that you may succeed.” (3:200)

Done with the right intentions, not only will self-control warrant success in this life, it will also guarantee success in the life to come. May Allah (swt) make us of those who practice discipline and remain firm on the His path. Ameen

Wise Aphorisms

The Prophet (saws) said:

- *There is hesitation in everything except in the actions of the next world. (Abi Dawud)*
- *The best gift parents can give their children is good character. (Tirmidhi)*
- *It is not permissible for a person to sit between two people without their permission. (Tirmidhi)*
- *The likeness of one who takes back his gift is that of a dog that eats until it is full and vomits; then it goes back to its vomit and eats it again. (Ibn Majah)*

*Verily the emptiest of houses are those that are empty of the Book of Allah.
Abdullah ibn Masud (ra)*

*How strange is it for someone to care about beautifying their face.
Imam Ghazali*

*The heart will rest and feel relief if it is settled with Allah. And it will worry and feel anxious if it is settled with the people.
Ibn al-Qayyim*

*Wherever there is mercy and wisdom, there is Islam; and wherever there is harshness and rigidity, it is absent."
bn al-Qayyim*

TERRORISM AND SELECTIVE MEMORY

Terrorism is a term that is used almost exclusively to crimes committed by Muslims. What does the term terrorism mean and who gets to define it? According to the FBI, terrorism is the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims. Even if we accept this definition, we notice several problems. There are many governments that fit this definition. They use acts of violence for political aims. The only difference is that they establish themselves as the victims of terrorism and therefore justify their acts of violence against civilians. Humanities worst terrorists have always been governing states. For instance, Bashar al-Assad of Syria has killed hundreds of thousands of civilians, misplaced and injured millions. He is a secularist.

The US invasion of Iraq has taken the lives of half a million people (let that number sink in for a moment). This invasion was based on the lie that there were weapons of mass destruction and we went to another country to save those poor people from their way of life and convert them to ours. An Iraqi or Syrian child who witnessed her classmates, parents, or sibling murdered or raped will clearly identify the perpetrators as terrorists. According to the FBI, most terrorist attacks in America were not committed

by Muslims. Even in Western Europe, terrorist acts by Muslims are miniscule compared to terrorism by non-Muslims (see here). In Europe, the worst modern terrorist attack was the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 by pro-Russian forces in which 300 passengers and crew members were killed. These numbers can all be verified. Why then do we only think of Islam and Muslims when the term terrorism is used?

We remember 9/11, the Boston Marathon bombing (where 3 people were killed), and Charlie Hebdo. However, when thinking of terrorism rarely does anyone remember Dylan Roof who killed 9 innocent Americans in the Church with the intention of starting a race war, or Stephen Paddock who shot more than 500 civilians and killed 58, Adam Lanza who killed 20 children ages 6-7, George Hennard who drove his pickup truck through a restaurant and killed 23 people because he hated minorities, or Jeremy Christian who stabbed two men who were trying to protect him from hurting two black women, one of whom was Muslim.

When it comes to terrorism, there is clearly selective memory, hypocrisy, and double standards. Even though most mass suicide shootings, which bear close resemblance to mass suicide

bombers, are committed by white men, there are no policies put in place to protect us from “their” rage. We have silently accepted the rage of white men who are mass shooters, contextualize it, try to understand it, and when all fails we blame it on mental illness. This is not to say that mental illness does not exist, but Muslim terrorists are never given the chance to be mentally ill. They are immediately labeled as terrorists. There is no call for a “total and complete shutdown” of white men from entering the country until we “figure out what is going on.”

We have been conditioned to have these double standards. Terrorism only counts when it is committed by a Muslim against non-Muslims. If it is committed by a non-Muslim, or Muslim against other Muslims, it does not matter, we do not condemn it, and we erase it from our memories. When there was a terrorist attack in a mosque in Sinai Egypt, in which 305 innocent civilians were killed, no one cared. Facebook profiles did not change to the Egyptian flag and we did not all “become Sinai” because not all lives are equal.

There is a fear based in fiction, hysteria, and exaggeration that Muslims en masse are concealed terrorists. There is also fear of the individual terrorist, the suicide bomber. The suicide bomber, like the mass shooter, is unintelligible in the sense that no one can understand why someone would commit such a horrendous crime against innocent civilians. For the suicide bomber, the term terrorism is always used. However, the term is never used for mass shooters who are not Muslim. Instead, there is always an attempt to contextualize and understand why they committed their crime. Neutral terms are used to immediately single out the murderer in a manner that ensures there is no larger connection to his race or religion such as “lone wolf” “gunman” “shooter.” If the perpetrator is Muslim, there is always a larger connection made using terms identifying race and religion such as “Islamic” or “Muslim” terrorist. However, statistics show us that “Islamic terrorism” is not the exaggerated threat it is made out to be.

Source: whyislam

Manifestation

Our leaders can be an external manifestation of what *we* are inside. Sometimes a nation has a racist president because there is deep, hidden racism in the hearts of many people.

And sometimes we are ruled by pharonic tyrants because we have yet to tame the Pharaoh with. We may not be Pharaohs to a nation, but we pharaohs in our homes, our workplaces, our mosques?

Remember God says:

“Indeed Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is inside themselves”. (Qur’an)

Yasmin Mogahed

Significance of Emotions

Emotion: an often-neglected, yet significant component of our psychological configuration.

Tariq Younis

Our psychological configuration consists of several components, all of which are interrelated:

- The spiritual component, as we say the fitrah, which naturally predisposes us with an inclination towards God and good.
- The cognitive component, which assumes all types of mental processes we can have.
- The emotional component, which covers the range of emotions we experience, such as anger, sadness, fear, shame, and guilt.

The purpose of this article is to focus exclusively on the emotional component, as it is oft-neglected amongst Muslims; indeed our community habitually focuses on our spiritual and cognitive components instead. This imbalance is significant for two reasons:

First of all, I contend that many – if not most – of the problems we face as individuals can directly be related to our emotional regulation.

Second of all, by neglecting the emotional component, we undervalue the emotional intelligence of the Prophet (saws), who was a mercy to mankind on the basis of all three components combined. We consequently overlook his emo-

tional character, perhaps even reducing him to a man of rules and regulations devoid of any feelings at all. An ayah that specifically highlights this trait was revealed after the battle of Uhud, in which Allah says:

“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].”(3:159)

The ayah (verse) demonstrates how the Prophet (saws) was perfectly attuned to the emotional state of his followers – had it been otherwise, his companions would have disbanded. Indeed, the Prophet (saws) knew very well the importance of recognizing our emotions; his life was the quintessential example of emotional expression – when and how to express them – with the ultimate objective of developing our emotional intelligence.

What is the emotional component?

The experience of emotions is inevitable. Thus we do not exercise our free will in choosing not to have them, rather we practice free will in deciding what to do with them when they arise. There are several key points with regards to emotional intelligence that must be understood.

First of all, it's important to realize that if God has created us with emotions, such as anger, sadness, fear, etc., then they must serve a purpose that is ultimately to our benefit. In fact, research has shown that our well-being – how happy you are, how good you feel, etc. – is entirely a function of our emotional make-up. Keep in mind, much like everything else we were given, emotions were created to enhance healthy living but it also carries the potential of being abused.

Second of all, the emotional component is incapable of reason; instead, it requires our rational brain to reflect on the valuable emotional information it produces. For example, when you're scared, you try to use that information to rationalize what you're afraid of. It is the collaboration of emotion and reason that results in a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Third of all, we use emotions to give meaning to things. People reflect on their emotional feelings to make sense of their experiences. For example, someone may create meaning via the feeling of calmness that they experience when sitting in a religious institution, and they may thus appreciate the experience in a manner that attributes the calmness coming from God. The emotional component indeed plays a major role in our convictions and worldviews, which is quite often neglected in debates and arguments. This is especially important with regards to da'wah (calling people to Islam); the most common da'wah method I see amongst da'iis (those who do da'wah), I would say it's almost exclusively a rational approach. I personally do not advocate an entirely rational approach to da'wah as that would presuppose that humans

are entirely rational creatures. Rather, we must appreciate that our emotions play an equally significant (if not more so) role in the decisions we make. Significantly, if you speak to people who accepted Islam, not everyone will agree that they converted because it was an entirely reasonable choice; many, for example, say it was because of the love they felt for Allah, Islam, or indeed, the Muslim community. Although the general Western population places a superior emphasis on “rationality” than anything else, do not neglect the person's feelings in the process. The meaning they will construct following your da'wah engagement will almost certainly depend on the emotions they were feeling in the process.

Finally, the emotional component consists of two processes: the facility of experiencing emotions and the capacity to regulate it. Indeed, the over and under-regulation of emotions is a significant cause of psychological distress. Let's take the core emotion of fear as an example, and briefly examine how the Prophet (saws) regulated it. Fear is a powerful, adaptive emotion that screams “danger!” It quickly generates a tremendous amount of energy (hence, your heart is racing, adrenaline, etc.) so you can immediately seek protection. In the time of the Prophet (saws), there was one context that we're sure was fear-invoking for his companions: war. How did the Prophet (saws) show us how to regulate our fear in these unquestionably fearful times? Did he under-regulate it by staying at home in hiding, overcome by the need to protect himself? Did he over-regulate it by running towards the enemy on his own, without any consideration for his own being? Of course not, the Prophet (saws) was instead the perfect example of emotional regulation. You see, fear is just a warning sign for danger, and this is an incredibly valuable emotional information; instead of attacking the enemy carelessly (ignoring the fear), or staying at home (overcome by fear), he put on body

Cont'd on page 42

Tired of LIFE DIFFICULTIES? Read This:

Muhammad Fathi



Abu Sa'id and Abu Hurairah (ra) reported that the Prophet (saws) said, **No fatigue, nor disease, nor anxiety, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).**

This world is no more than a test in which all humans are bound to face some hardships and challenges that reveal their patience and steadfastness.

The forms of this test are numerous and diverse: Some people suffer poverty, some suffer physical illnesses, some live in a state of insecurity, some are deprived of their cherished and beloved ones, and still others suffer psychiatric disorders. Referring to this fact, Allah says:

And surely We shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the patient, Who says, when afflicted with calamity: To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return: They are those on whom (descend) Blessings from Allah, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance. (2:155-157)

In another verse, He Almighty says:

He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed: and He is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving. (67:2)

Since trials and hardships are inevitable, Islam does not let them pass by without instructing Muslims on the best course of action or by guiding them to the safest and most appropriate attitude. The Hadith reveals one dimension of Islam's recipe for successfully dealing with life's challenges.

In order to balance the negative effects posed by afflictions, Islam draws our attention to their expected fruit. Problems and troubles serve as means to expiate sins and elevate the believer's rank in the Hereafter.

This optimistic and positive approach safeguards one from falling prey to despair and grief. Here, it is fitting to cite some Prophetic hadiths that emphasize this concept:

Abu Yahya Suhaib bin Sinan (ra) reported:

The Messenger of Allah (saws) said,

How wonderful is the case of a believer; there is good for him in everything and this applies only to a believer. If prosperity attends him, he expresses gratitude to Allah and that is good for him; and if adversity befalls him, he endures it patiently and that is good for him (Muslim).

Abu Hurairah (ra) reported: The Messenger of Allah (saws) said,

He whom Allah intends good, He makes him to suffer from some affliction (Al-Bukhari).

Abu Hurairah (Ra) reported: The Messenger of Allah (saws) said,

A Muslim, male or female, continues to remain under trial in respect of his life, property, and offspring until he faces Allah, the Exalted, with no sin record (At-Tirmidhi).

The above hadiths should not be mistaken for a call to fatalism and defeatism. The message the hadiths convey is that every Muslim should expect hardships and prepare to weather them. This point makes a distinction between one who trusts in Allah and believes in His mercy and one who feels that he is alone in this world, that he faces its formidable challenges isolated from any source of support or assistance.

So, these hadiths are meant to infuse the Muslim with hope and vigor and drive away the destructive thoughts of failure and hopelessness. To get a better understanding of them, they should be considered light of the following hadiths:

Abu Hurairah (Ra) reported: The Messenger of Allah (saws) said,

A strong believer is better and dearer to Allah than a weak one, and both are good.

Adhere to that which is beneficial for you. Keep asking Allah for help and do not refrain from it.

(If you are afflicted in any way), do not say: If I had taken this or that step, it would have re-

sulted into such and such, but say only: Allah so determined and did as He willed. The word 'if' opens the gates of satanic (thoughts) (Muslim).

In line with this hadith comes the Prophet's advice to his cousin Ibn `Abbas (ra) to know that with patience comes victory, with distress comes relief, and with hardship comes ease.

In this respect, one idea may be a source of worry and disturbance. How can we approach afflictions with such optimism when they are clear signs of Allah's wrath and manifestations of His punishment? Has not Allah said,

Whatever misfortune happens to you, is because of the things your hands have wrought, and for many (of them) He grants forgiveness (42:30)?

Actually, these questions haunts many people, especially the practicing ones when they are afflicted with a calamity, deprived of a cherished person, or plagued with an illness. The problem is that in many cases this thought becomes a source of frustration and depression.

Instead of being an incentive to hastening to Allah and drawing closer to him, the idea serves sometimes as a dispiriting factor. So, let's see how the Companions viewed the above verse and how they took it positively and optimistically.

In his comment on this verse, Imam Al-Qurtubi reports that `Ali (ra) said,

"This verse is the most hopeful one in the Quran; if my sins are to be expiated through afflictions and calamities, and in addition to that, Allah forgives many other sins, then what will remain after such expiation and forgiveness?"

True, life's disasters leave hearts broken and loved ones deprived, but the bright believer knows how turn them into a source of determination and a fountain of strength.

I conclude with the beautiful authentic hadith in which the Prophet (saws) tells us that the people who face the harshest trial (bla') are the

Cont'd on page 30

What He said about Corruption



Muhammad Fathi

Corruption is one of the worst predicaments that haunt many countries around the world.

The abuse of power, authority and resources by governments and public servants hinders the progress of countries. It alienates ordinary citizens and blocks them from investing in the development of their nations.

The ailment of corruption is something that, unfortunately, plagues many Muslim countries. This raises questions like:

- Why are these countries associated with corruption?
- Is it because they are “Muslim” countries?
- Is there anything in the Islamic culture that nurtures corruption?

The answer is absolutely not. In fact, corruption exists when nations are NOT adequately faithful to the Islamic teachings.

The following 15 hadiths are just examples of how Islam fought corruption. In Islam, it is individual and a collective responsibility to expose and stop any abuse of power and authority.

Public Service is a Great Responsibility

1. Narrated Abdullah ibn `Umar (ra) I heard Allah’s Messenger (saws) saying:

Every one of you is a guardian, and responsible for what is in his custody:

The ruler is a guardian of his subjects and responsible for them;

a husband is a guardian of his family and is responsible for it;

a lady is a guardian of her husband’s house and is responsible for it;

and a servant is a guardian of his master’s property and is responsible for it.”

I heard that from Allah’s Messenger and I think that the Prophet also said,

“A man is a guardian of his father’s property and is responsible for it.” (The Prophet continued,) “So all of you are guardians and responsible for what is under your care.” (Al- Bukhari)

2. Ma`qil ibn Yasar (ra) reported from the Prophet that Paradise is forbidden for any person in authority who dies while he is dishonest in his dealings with those under his rule. (Authenticated by Al-Albani)

3. Abu Dharr (ra) narrated: I said to the Prophet (saws): O Messenger of Allah, will you not appoint me to a public office?

He stroked my shoulder with his hand and said: “Abu Dharr, you are weak and authority is a trust. And on the Day of Judgment it is a cause of humiliation and regret except for one who fulfills its obligations and (properly) discharges the duties.”(Muslim)

Duty of Fighting Corruption is Collective

4. Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri (ra) narrated that the Prophet (saws) said: “Whosoever amongst you sees an evil, let him change it with his hands; and if he is not able, then with his tongue; and if he is not able, then let him hate it in his heart, and that is the weakest of faith.” (Authenticated by Al-Albani)

5. An-Nu`man ibn Basheer narrated that the Prophet (saws): “The example of the person abiding by Allah’s order and restrictions in comparison to those who violate them is like the example of those persons who drew lots for their seats in a boat. Some of them got seats in the upper part, and the others in the lower.

When the latter needed water, they had to go up to bring water (and that troubled the others), so they said, ‘Let us make a hole in our share of the ship (and get water) saving those who are above us from troubling them.’

So, if the people in the upper part left the others do what they had suggested, all the people of the ship would be destroyed, but if they prevented them, both parties would be safe.” (Al-Bukhari)

6. Anas ibn Malik (ra) narrated that the Prophet (saws) said: “Help your brother whether he is the doer of wrong or wrong is done to him.”

The Companions asked, “O Messenger of Allah! We can help a man to whom wrong is done, but how could we help him when he is the doer of wrong?” The Prophet replied, “Hold him back from doing wrong.” (Al-Bukhari)

No Excuse for Abusing Public Position

7. Abu Humaid ibn Sa`d As-Sa`idi (ra) reported: The Prophet employed a man from the tribe of Al-Azd named Ibn Al-Lutabiyahh to collect the Zakah. When he returned (to the Prophet with the collections), he said: “This is for you while this (other wealth) is a gift presented to me. (So, it is mine).”

So, the Messenger of Allah stood on the pul-

pit, praised Allah, extolled Him and then he said, “Why does an official whom I send (in a mission) say: ‘This is for you and this has been presented to me as gift’?”

Why did he not stay in the house of his father and mother to see whether gifts will be given to him or not?

By (Allah) in Whose Hand is the life of Muhammad, if any one of you takes anything (wrongfully,) he will bring it on the Day of Resurrection, carrying it on his neck...”

Then he raised his hands till we could see the whiteness of his armpits and repeated twice, “O Allah! Have I conveyed (Your Commands)?” (Muslim)

“Every da’wah (call) in the name of Islam and in the name of the legislation of the best of mankind (i.e, the Prophet (saws)), and is not upon the prophetic way, success will never be written for it, no matter how much propaganda is put in place for it or how much it is pushed in the society”.

*Shaykh Zayd ibn Muhammad al-Madhkali
al Ajwibat al Athariyyah*

Prophet Yusuf (AS)

Yusuf's as first ordeal - Taken to Egypt

Meanwhile, the young Yusuf AS remained in the bottom of the well. While terrified and shocked at his horrendous betrayal by his brothers and greatly pained for his father's grief, a divine revelation came to Yusuf AS in the well.

"You will surely inform them [someday] about this affair of theirs while they do not perceive [your identity]." (Qur'an 12:15)

Allah comforted him that he should not be frightened. Because there will soon be a relief and he will be out of that hardship. He will also tell his brothers about this action of theirs and he will at that time a powerful person and they need and fearful from him, would not realise that it is him.

It is reported that Yusuf AS stayed in the well for three days and three nights. Then, at a time decreed by Allah, there came a company of travelers in an Egyptian caravan. They sent their drawer of water to the well and he let down his pail. Catching hold of the rope, Yusuf AS was pulled out. The man called his companions to help him draw the child from the well and all were amazed at the sight of this an extraordinarily handsome boy. (Qur'an 12:19)

The treacherous brothers appeared and demanded payment for Yusuf AS. They sold him for a small price, for a few dirhams and they showed little regard for him. (Qur'an 12:20). It is said that they followed behind him, saying to those who had bought him from them, "Make sure he does not escape" – that is until they had safely reached Egypt with him.

The men of the caravan took Yusuf AS to

Egypt expecting to sell him for a handsome price. The slave markets of Egypt were teeming with people, some buying, and some selling, others just watching the proceedings. The beautiful boy attracted many onlookers, and bidding for him was swift. He was finally bought by one who recognised his value, a man of power and prestige referred to in the Qur'an as Al-Aziz. It is said that he was a high-ranking official in charge of the Egyptian treasury.

Yusuf's AS master brought his newly-acquired slave boy to his home in Memphis, the capital city of Egypt.

"Make his residence comfortable," he said to his wife. "Perhaps he will benefit us, or we will adopt him as a son." (Quran 12:21)

And Allah Most High adds,

"And thus, We established Yusuf in the land that We might teach him the interpretation of events. And Allah is predominant over His affair, but most of the people do not know." (Qur'an 12:21)

Yusuf's as second ordeal - A test and temptation

The brothers of Yusuf AS believed they had matters under control when they put their brother in the well, but in reality, the matter was out of their hands. Allah is the One in control of all affairs. Allah was decisive in His action, and His plan was carried out despite the treachery, jealousy and pride of others. Yusuf AS found himself in the decision making centre of Egypt with a man who seemed kind and somehow aware of

Yusuf's AS special qualities. While longing for his father and younger brother, Yusuf AS was well taken care of, and lived in luxurious surroundings. Yusuf AS grew into adulthood both physically and spiritually, trained and guided by his Lord, who said,

And when Yusuf AS reached maturity, We gave him judgment and knowledge. And thus We reward the doers of good. (Qur'an 12:22)

Ibn Khathir described Yusuf AS as obedient, polite and exceedingly handsome. Prophet Muhammad SAW also described Yusuf AS, and called him "The embodiment of half of all beauty". As Yusuf AS grew, Allah gave him wisdom and good judgement, and Minister Al-Aziz recognised these qualities in his loyal servant and therefore put him in charge of all household affairs.

Yusuf's AS master, it is said, was not only childless but may also have been impotent as well. Consequently, his wife, to whom tradition gives the name Zulaikha, although most beautiful and desirable, remained a virgin.

Disappointed in her husband, perhaps her eyes had been fixed for some time on the incredibly handsome youth who lived in her home. And one day, unable to contain herself any longer, she maneuvered Yusuf AS into an empty room. Quickly she closed doors.

"Come, you." (Qur'an 12:23) she ordered him as one orders a slave.

"[I seek] the refuge of Allah," he exclaimed, horrified. His first thought was of Al-Aziz, who had taken him in and treated him with honour and kindness. "Indeed, he is my master, who has made good my residence. Indeed, wrongdoers will not succeed." (Qur'an 12:23)

Yusuf AS drove any thoughts of sleeping with the wife of his master from his mind, sought refuge with Allah and attempted to remove himself from the complicated situation. Perhaps Yusuf AS had been resisting her advances for many years. A rich beautiful woman from the highest echelons of Egyptian society would not stoop im-

mediately to such behaviour. Her beauty, status and wealth meant that most men or boys would succumb to her desires easily. Yusuf AS however was no ordinary man, and when he immediately turned to Allah for help, Allah rescued him.

Yusuf AS turned to flee from Zulaikha. Yusuf's AS refusal only increased her passion.

They both raced to the door and as Zulaikha reached out for Yusuf AS, she tore his shirt from the back. Then, without warning, they found her husband at the door. (Qur'an 12:25)

Frantically Zulaikha tried to clear herself of blame. "What is the recompense of one who intended evil to your wife except that he be imprisoned or a painful punishment?" (Qur'an 12:25), she demanded of her husband, blatantly lying and suggesting that Yusuf AS be put in prison.

"It was she who sought to seduce me," Yusuf AS boldly claimed his innocence. (Qur'an 12:26)

The betrayed husband did not know whom to believe. Although Zulaikha was his wife, he knew her state of mind. At the same time, Yusuf's AS integrity and noble character were also known to him. Which of the two was telling the truth?

A witness from the household testified, pointing to the evidence of Yusuf's AS truthfulness.

"If his shirt is torn from the front, then she has told the truth, and he is of the liars. But if his shirt is torn from the back, then she has lied, and he is of the truthful." (Qur'an 12:26-27)

Yusuf AS was a prophet, and a descendent of prophets, so his Lord saved him from committing indecency and protected him from the evil plot of a woman. Yusuf AS is one of those who will be shaded by Allah on the Day of Judgement. Prophet Muhammad SAW explained that the heat of the Day of Judgment would be fierce, and people will be mingling with fear as they wait to be judged by Allah. There will be however, certain categories of people shaded from this brutal heat. One of them is a man who resisted the temptations of a beautiful, desirable woman by seeking refuge with Allah. (Bukhari)

The proof was unmistakable. Yusuf's AS

master was a wise, just man. He did not attempt to defend or exonerate Zulaikha simply because she was wife. Rather, his interest was in determining the truth. When he saw the shirt was torn from the back, he said to his wife, "Indeed, it is of the women's plan. Indeed, your plan is great." (Qur'an 12:28)

And he turned to his young slave and asked him to keep the matter quiet and pass over it as if it had not happened. And again addressing Zulaikha, he said,

"And, [my wife], ask forgiveness for your sin. Indeed, you were of the sinful." (Qur'an 12:29)

This episode was just the beginning of bigger issues about to happen in Yusuf's AS life.

The women's meeting with Yusuf (AS)

Word of what had taken place between the beautiful, aristocratic wife of the Minister and Yusuf AS soon leaked out and spread among the noblewomen of the city. The news was spreading and the women asked themselves how she could desire a slave and put her reputation in jeopardy.

This talk soon reached Zulaikha's ears. Because she was an experienced woman, skilled in dealing with the politics of the capital city, she was not one to be put down by the gossip of her peers. However, she was not one to submit to it in silence. Consequently, a subtle plan for teaching the women a lesson sprung in her mind.

She invited them to a banquet of great luxury at her palace. And when the women were in their places, she gave them each a knife. (Qur'an 12:31) for cutting the variety of fruits she had set before them.

She then called Yusuf AS to come before them. As her slave, Yusuf AS had no choice but to obey.

They looked up, saw his beauty and forgot that they had knives in their hands. The women were so entranced by his shape and form that they cut clear through their own flesh. They described Yusuf AS as a noble angel. The wife of Al-Aziz, confident and haughty said to her guests triumphantly,

"That is the one about whom you blamed me. And I certainly sought to seduce him, but he firmly refused," and changing to a menacing tone, she added, "and if he will not do what I order him, he will surely be imprisoned and will be of those debased." (Qur'an 12:32)

Yusuf AS stood before the wealthiest, most elegant ladies of the capital in all the purity of his innocent young manhood, with a face more beautiful than any in this world. And he called upon his Creator,

"My Lord, prison is more to my liking than that to which they invite me. And if You do not avert from me their plan, I might incline toward them and [thus] be of the ignorant." (Qur'an 12:33), stating that that prison was preferable to the environment in the palace, filled with lust and greed, and with unlawful beauty and seduction. Without Allah's help against their scheming he might gradually lose his sense of right and wrong and be seduced.

Therefore, his Lord Allah answered his invocation.

Yusuf's as third ordeal – From palace to prison

Although convinced of Yusuf's AS innocence, Al-Aziz, chief minister of Egypt put Yusuf AS in prison. He could see no other way of safeguarding the reputation of his name and position.

It is evident from Qur'anic accounts that Yusuf AS was by now a prophet, receiving revelations and inspirations from Allah. He now began to carry out his divinely appointed mission inside the prison walls.

Imprisoned with Yusuf AS, were two men who recognised his piety and righteousness. At some point, each of them had a dream which was felt to be of significance. They reported their dreams to Yusuf AS, certain that he would be able to interpret them correctly.

One man, cupbearer to the king, saw a dream in which he was pressing wine, the other, a baker, saw a dream in which birds were eating bread

from his head. Yusuf AS said, “I will inform you of the meaning of these dreams before your next meal is served”. And to assure his listeners that he would not give the interpretation from himself, he added, “That is from what my Lord has taught me.” (Qur’an 12:37)

By his words, Yusuf AS assured his two listeners that he would do what they had requested of him within a given time frame. But before doing so, he put before them the outlines of the pure faith of his fathers in an attempt to make them examine their own beliefs.

He did this by explaining to them what he believed and what he did not, referring to the fact that he and his forefathers had steadfastly rejected the ascribing of any partner to Allah. (Qur’an 12:38)

Yusuf AS carefully and wisely informed his companions that false gods have no substance and explaining the Omnipotence of Allah (Qur’an 12:37-40), trying with evidences and arguments granted him by his Lord, to turn them away from idolatry and shirk. When he had fulfilled his duty of calling them to the way of Allah, he gave them the interpretations of their dreams.

To the cupbearer who dreamt he was pressing wine, Yusuf AS said that he would pour wine for his master. As for the baker who dreamt of birds eating bread from his head, Yusuf AS said that he would be crucified and birds shall eat from his head. And to convince the man that his fate was unchangeable and sealed, and that he must now come to terms with it and prepare for the meeting with his Lord, he added, “The matter has been decreed about which you both inquire.” (Qur’an 12:41)

Yusuf AS approached the companion whom he supposed would be saved and asked him to mention him to his master, who perhaps may already be familiar with Yusuf AS due to the wide publicity of the affair of the women. He hoped the master, the king, would look into his case, see his oppression and free him.

In due course the cupbearer was released

from prison, as Yusuf AS had foretold. But as Allah had willed, Shaytan caused the cupbearer to forget Yusuf’s AS request to mention him to the king, and hence Yusuf AS remained in prison for a few more years. (Qur’an 12:42)

Acknowledgement: Most of the information for this work has been obtained from:

*“A History of the Prophets of Islam”, Volume I, by Suzanne Haneef
“Stories of the Prophets”, by Ibn Kathir (Translation by Rashad Ahmad Azami)*

Believe, don't be a Loser

Are they, then, seeking a religion other than that of Allah, while to Him alone submit all those in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him they shall be returned? Say, “We believe in Allah and in what has been revealed to us and in what was revealed to Nabi Ebrahim (as), Nabi Ismaa’eel (as), Nabi Ishaq (as), Nabi Ya’qoob (as) and the descendants, and in what has been given to Nabi Moosa (as), Nabi ‘Isa (as) and the prophets, from their Rabb: We do not differentiate between any of them; and to Him we submit ourselves.”

Whoever seeks a faith other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers.

(Surah Aal-‘Imraan 83-85)

THE KHAWARIJ

Firas al-Khateeb

Throughout Islamic history, groups have arisen from time to time advocating radically new and divergent ways of thinking about the religion. One of the most radical and violent of these groups emerged during the political mayhem of 'Ali's caliphate, which lasted from 656 to 661. Known as the Kharijis, they emerged from a radical political position and went on to develop particularly extreme beliefs that put them at odds with most Muslims. While they never became a major political or religious force in the Muslim world, they had major impact on their own times and their ideology has been replicated numerous times by other fringe groups throughout the past 1400 years.

Background

In June of 656 CE (35 After Hijra), the caliph of the Muslim Empire, 'Uthman bin 'Affan was assassinated. The killers were a group of discontented Muslim Egyptian soldiers, who took issue with a ruling 'Uthman made in a case between them and the governor of Egypt. Unlike the previous two caliphs, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, who left behind at least some guidance as to how to pick a new caliph (Abu Bakr simply appointed 'Umar while 'Umar appointed a council of six to choose one of their own), 'Uthman had not left behind a framework to choose a new caliph.

The assassins, who now held effective control in the capital, Medina, wanted 'Ali to be the new

caliph. 'Ali naturally resisted such an appointment by murderers. Accepting the nomination could be construed by others as his implicit approval of the rebels' actions, which couldn't be further from the truth considering that he sent his own sons to defend 'Uthman when the rebels barricaded him in his house. But when some of the leading members of Medina's community told 'Ali that he was the Muslim nation's best chance at peace and normalcy, especially considering his status as the Prophet's (saws) cousin and son-in-law, he reluctantly took on the title of fourth caliph of the Muslim Empire.

He did, however, have some immediate opposition. Mu'awiya, the governor of Syria, was a cousin of 'Uthman. He was ready to pledge allegiance to the new caliph so long as 'Ali tried and punished the rebellious Egyptian soldiers who killed 'Uthman. 'Ali, however, did not believe doing so was in the interests of the Muslim nation. He certainly did not approve of the soldier's actions, but punishing them could bring about an even bigger revolt, leading to more bloodshed and trials for the young Muslim Empire, which 'Ali was keen to avoid.

Without Mu'awiya's support, however, 'Ali was left without one of the largest and most prosperous provinces of the empire. Mu'awiya was intensely popular in Syria. He had been the governor there since the caliphate of 'Umar, and did a good job of prudently managing the

relations between the region's native Christian population and the newly introduced Arab Muslims. 'Ali, in turn, had strong support in Iraq, particularly in the city of Kufa, where his supporters were incensed at Mu'awiya's refusal to pledge allegiance.

In order to avoid an eventual civil war between Mu'awiya's Syrian supporters and Ali's Iraqi ones, the two men agreed to an arbitration. They figured allowing a third party to mediate the dispute and find a solution, and potentially a new caliph, would be a peaceful end to a perilous political divide.

But 'Ali encountered an unforeseen problem with his arbitration. Some of his supporters were so convinced that he was right in his choice not to pursue justice for 'Uthman's murderers, that they were enraged at his choice to go to arbitration. To them, 'Ali had committed a major sin by agreeing to deal with Mu'awiya. They seceded from 'Ali's camp and became known as the Kharijis (also known as the Khawarj or Kharijites), meaning "those who left".

Khariji Ideas

The development of Khariji ideas is an interesting lesson in how political ideas can lead to new divergent ideas of Islam. The Khariji political position that 'Ali made a mistake morphed into a belief that any and all people who commit sins are unfit to rule. This alone was a particularly extreme idea, but it didn't end there.

Eventually, the Kharijis argued that sins themselves were a form of kufr (disbelief in God). They argued that if you commit a sin, you are in effect a disbeliever in God and thus could be fought and killed, even if you were a Companion of the Prophet (saws) or a caliph. Furthermore, if you disagreed with their belief that sins are disbelief, you are by default a disbeliever and could be fought and killed.

Khariji beliefs did not have much basis in actual Islamic theology. Takfir (declaring people disbelievers) is in fact a very specific and

rare thing in mainstream Muslim belief, with the majority opinion, as stated in the 'Aqida of Imam al-Tahawi, being that the only thing that invalidates someone's status as a Muslim is openly declaring that they do not believe that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad (saws) is His messenger. Thus most of the Kharijis were not educated people well versed in the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet. The majority were desert Bedouin raiders who made up for their lack of understanding of Islam with a strong zeal for Khariji beliefs, no matter how intellectually shallow they were.

Khariji ideas never took hold with the general population. Besides being a distortion of the Prophet's teachings, Khariji beliefs were simply too extreme for most people to be on board with. But that didn't stop the small group of Kharijis from having a major impact on the Muslim world.

In line with their beliefs, Kharijis attempted to assassinate all the political leaders who took part in the arbitration that led to their establishment. They failed in their attempts to kill Mu'awiya and 'Amr ibn al-'As, who supported Mu'awiya and ruled Egypt in his name. But in 661 they succeeded in killing the caliph, 'Ali, in Kufa. The assassination of the Prophet's cousin and son in law brought about the end of the Rashidun era of the caliphate and the beginning of the Umayyad Caliphate, led by Mu'awiya.

The Kharijis continued to be a nuisance for the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates for centuries. They never came to hold major cities in their numerous rebellions, but would use their familiarity with the deserts to roam throughout the Muslim world, harassing and terrorizing populations that did not accept their beliefs. In North Africa, they managed to get some support for their cause from groups of indigenous Berbers by playing off of the tensions between them and the ruling Arabs.

Eventually, the Khariji movement would die

Cont'd on page 46

A Poor Man Finds a Fortune

Among the signs of true sincerity are fearing Allah and avoiding any unlawful earnings. A sincere person would prefer poverty and hardship to consuming any ill-gotten gain.

Dr. Abu 'Abd Ar-Razzaq
Translated by: Ibrahim Hindy

Imam Ibn Jarir At-Tabari narrates an impressive story in this regard:

I was in Makkah during the season of Hajj and I saw a man from Khurasan calling out to the people,

“Pilgrims, people of Makkah—from those who are present and those far off—, I have lost a pouch that contains a thousand dinars. So whoever returns the pouch will be rewarded by Allah with good and saved from the Hellfire, and His bounty and favors will be acquired on the Day of Accounting (Day of Judgment).”

An old man from the people of Makkah approached him and said, “Khurasani, our city is in very tough condition, and the days of Hajj are few, and its season is appointed, and the doors of profit-making are closed. This money might fall into the hands of a believer who is poor and old in age. Maybe he plans to give it back if you promise that you will give him a little bit of money that is halal (permissible) for him to use.”

The Khurasani asked, “How much does he want?”



“He wants one-tenth of the money,” the man answered.

The Khurasani replied, “No, I will not grant him the money. Instead, I will take my case to Allah and complain to Him on the day we meet Him, and Allah is sufficient for us and the best one to trust in.”

I realized that it was the old man who was poor, and he was the one who had taken the pouch of dinars and wished to have a little portion of it. So I followed him until he returned to his home. My assumptions were confirmed. I heard him calling onto his wife, “Lubabah!”

She said, “I am at your service, Abu Ghayth.”

The old man said,

“I found the owner of the dinars calling for

it, and he does not intend to give any reward to the person who finds it. I said to him, 'Give us a hundred dinars,' and he refused and said he would take his case to Allah.

What should I do, Lubabah? I must return it, for I fear my Lord and I fear that my sin is multiplied."

The wife replied,

"Oh man! We have been struggling and suffering from poverty with you for the last 50 years, and you have four daughters, two sisters, my mother and me, and you are the ninth. Keep all the money and feed us, for we are hungry, and clothe us, for you know better our situation.

Perhaps Allah the Almighty will make you rich afterwards and you might be able to give the money back after you have fed your children, or Allah will pay the amount you owe on the day when the kingdom will belong to the King (Allah)."

The old man exclaimed, "Will I consume haram (unlawful) after 86 years of my life, and burn my organs with fire after I have been patient with my poverty, and become worthy of Allah's anger, even though I am close to my grave? No, by Allah, I will not do so!"

I left amazed at his condition and that of his wife. Later I heard the owner of the pouch calling out, "People of Makkah, pilgrims, whoever of you finds a pouch containing a thousand dinars, let him return it and he will surely find great reward with Allah."

The old man said,

"Khurasani, I addressed you the other day and advised you that our land is low in cultivation, so reward the person who found the pouch so that he is not tempted to break the laws of Allah.

I advised you to pay the person who finds it a hundred dinars, but you refused. If your money falls into the hands of a person who fears Allah the Almighty, will you give him ten dinars at least, instead of a hundred?"

The Khurasani replied, "I will not do so, and

I will complain to Allah on the day I meet Him, and Allah is sufficient for us and the best one to trust in."

The people dispersed and left. Later, once again, the Khurasani made the same call.

The old man came again and said,

"Khurasani, I said to you the day before yesterday to reward the finder a hundred dinars and you refused. Then I advised you to give him ten dinars and you refused. So will you give only one dinar so that he can buy with half of it things he needs and with the other half sheep's milk so that he can give to the people and feed his children?"

So will you give only one dinar so that he can buy with half of it things he needs and with the other half sheep's milk so that he can give to the people and feed his children?"

The Khurasani said, "I will not do so, and I will complain to Allah on the day I meet Him, and Allah is sufficient for us and the best one to trust in."

The old man said angrily, "Come and take your money so that I can sleep at night, for I have not been in a good mood ever since I found this money."

So the old man went with the owner of the money and I followed them until the old man entered his house, dug a hole, and pulled out the money and said, "Take your money and ask Allah to forgive me and bless me from His bounty."

The Khurasani took the money and intended to leave, but when he reached the door he said,

"Old man, my father died—may Allah have mercy on him—and left behind three thousand dinars and said to me, 'Take out a third of this money and give it to a person from the people who is most deserving of it.'

Therefore, I tied it in a pouch so that I may spend it on someone who is worthy of it. By Allah, I have not seen a person since I left Khurasan until now, who is more worthy of it than you. So take it, may Allah's blessing be upon you, and may He reward you for the trust you kept and

your patience during poverty.”

The Khurasani man left without the money.

The old man wept and prayed to Allah, “May Allah bless the owner of the money in his grave, and may Allah bless his son.”

I left after the Khurasani but Abu Ghayth, the old man, followed me and brought me back. He asked me to sit down and said, “I have seen you following me since the first day; you have come to know of our situation yesterday and today.

I have heard that the Prophet said, ‘If you are gifted from the provision of Allah, without begging or asking, then accept it and do not reject it. So this is a gift from Allah to all those attending.’”

The old man called his daughters, his sisters, and his wife and her mother, and sat down and made me sit down. We were 10. He opened the bag and said, “Spread your clothing over your laps.”

So I did, but the girls did not have proper clothing that would enable them to do that, so they extended their hands. The old man gave out the dinars one by one in order until he reached me and said, “Here is a dinar.” The process continued until the bag was empty and I received a hundred dinars.

So joy filled my heart because of the provision they received, more than the joy I had because I received a hundred dinars.

When I was leaving the old man said,

“Young man, you are blessed. Keep this money with you, for it is halal. And know that I used to wake up for Fajr Prayer with this wet shirt. After I was done I would take it off and give it to my daughters so that they could pray, one by one.

Then I would go to work between Zhuhr Prayer and `Asr Prayer and then I would come back at the end of the day with what Allah has given me of dates and dry pieces of bread.

Then I would take off my clothes for my daughters and they would pray Zhuhr and `Asr, and the same would happen for the Maghrib

and `Isha' Prayers.

And we did not ever expect to see this kind of money. So may Allah make us make good use of them, and may Allah bless the person in his grave and multiply the reward for him.”

So I told him goodbye and took the hundred dinars and used them to write knowledge for two years. I used it to buy paper and pay rent, and after 16 years I returned to Makkah and inquired about the old man. I was told that he had died a few months after the incident that occurred between us. His wife had died, along with her mother and his two sisters.

The only ones that remained were the daughters, who, I found upon asking, were married to kings and princes. I dropped by and they honored me as a guest and treated me kindly until they died also. So May Allah bless them in their graves.

{And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him.} (At-Talaq 65:2-3)

Cont'd from page 20

armor and planned his attacks precisely. Hence, fear is a valuable asset from Allah that tells us to be careful. We shouldn't let it overpower us, nor should we ever ignore it.

This is obviously an enormous topic. Indeed, philosophers and scholars have discussed the significance of the emotional component for millennia. As such, there were but a few thoughts on the importance of emotions, and I pray in the future we can discuss specific emotions – anger, sadness, fear, and shame – individually by reflecting on their purpose and, significantly, their abuse.

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Relate *al-Fatihah* to Your Life

Dr. Muhammad Hakeem

Surat Al-Fatihah has a lot of nick names, such as the Mother of the Book, and the seven oft-recited [verses], as Allah mentions in Surah Al-Hijr:

{We have given you the seven oft-recited verses and the whole glorious Qur'an.}(Al-Hijr 15:87)

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said about this noble Surah:

I swear by the One in Whose Hand lies my soul, the like of it has neither been revealed in the Tawrah, nor the Injil nor the Zabur, nor in the Furqan.

It is the chapter with the seven oft-repeated verses, and the Magnificent Qur'an which I was given." (At-Tirmidhi)

Intro and summary for the whole Book

The Qur'an discusses 3 main themes, and this Surah serves as an intro for it and a summary of its main components:

1. How to know Allah

{Praise belongs to God, Lord of the Worlds. The Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy}

A major part of the Qur'an explains about Allah, his beautiful names, and how to reflect on His creation.

2. The best way to worship Allah

{It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help}.

Other sections in the Qur'an teach about worship, (e.g. prayer & fasting) in addition to rulings on different aspects of life (e.g., marriage)

3. Islam as a way of life

{Guide us to the straight path, the path of those You have blessed, those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray}

Almost 1/3 of the Qur'an mentions stories of previous nations; some of them led a righteous life while others deviated and earned Allah's anger.

A Dialogue with Your Creator

When Omar Bin Abdul-Aziz would recite Surat Al-Fatihah, he would pause after reading every single verse. When asked about that he answered: "Because I wanted to enjoy the reply from my Lord". He was referring to this beautiful authentic hadith:

The Prophet said: "Allah said:

"I have divided the Prayer (salah) between Me and My servant, half is for Me and half for him, and My servant shall have what he asks for.

For when the servant says {All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds}, Allah says, 'My servant has praised Me'.

When the servant says, {The Most Beneficent,

the Most Merciful}, Allah says, 'My servant has extolled Me'.

When the servant says {Master of the Day of Judgment}, Allah says 'My servant has glorified Me.'

When he says, {It is You we worship and You we ask for help}, He says, 'This is shared by Me and My servant. He will be given what he will ask.'

When he says, {Guide us to the Straight Path, The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray }, He says 'This is for My servant, and My servant shall have what he has asked for' (Muslim, At-Tirmidhi, Ahmad) .

Relating Al-Fatihah to your daily concerns, needs and issues

We repeat This Surah at least 17 times every single day. Reflecting on its meaning is essential to attain Khushu` (humility) in our prayers.

Some people get bored from repeating it, however repetition is meant to enforce certain meanings and attitudes. Here's a suggested plan to make sure that you read it with a conscious mind and a humble heart.

You can always direct your OWN thoughts and PLAN on how you want to attain humility and contemplation inside the salah, but I hope that this helps as a starting point:

{In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.}

– Always start your affairs with the name of Allah

– His mercy is the first attribute used to introduce Allah to you

{All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds}

– Reflect on His infinite blessings

– A practical tip is to remember one blessing in each rak`ah (unit) of your prayer

{The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.}

– The names of mercy are occurred FOUR times in a relatively short Surah

– His mercy is the first attribute used to introduce Allah to you.

{Master of the Day of Judgment}

– Reflect on the Day of Judgment

– Remember that this prayer may be the last one before you meet Him.

{It is You we worship and You we ask for help.}

– This Ayah is the CORE of the Surah, and the essence of Tawhid (confirming the one-ness of Allah)

– This is a perfect moment to think about what you want from Allah, and prepare for your upcoming supplication (du`aa') and wishes

{Guide us to the Straight Path}

– The number ONE request you definitely need from Allah is guidance, and from Him alone.

Remember that If Allah guides you, then the whole world with its temptation won't matter, so be sincere in your request

{The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray.}

– Remember that you're not the only one on the quest for the straight path. God already blessed many generations before us with guidance. You can read about them in the Quran and in Islamic history. This verse helps you reflect on their lives and ask Allah to follow into their footsteps

– Similarly, many people earned Allah's wrath and went astray; this Ayah helps you define what you really want from Allah and helps you set up a specific action plan to reach your goals. It also encourages you to seek for good company and friends and stay away from bad influences and friends.

Introduction to God

by God Himself

Collection of verses from the Holy Quran

Al Baqara (The Heifer) 2

Compiled by Dr. Abid Ahmad

God is ever round the rejecters of Faith! 19

Know they not that God knoweth what they conceal and what they reveal? 77

O ye people! Adore your Guardian-Lord, who created you and those who came before you, that ye may have the chance to learn righteous; 21

He never breaks His promise? 80

He causes not to stray, except those who forsake (the path). 26

God is not unmindful of what ye do. 85

How can ye reject the faith in God.- seeing that ye were without life, and He gave you life; then will He cause you to die, and will again bring you to life; and again to Him will ye return. 28

God is well-acquainted with the wrong-doers. 95

God sees well all that they do. 96

It is He Who hath created for you all things that are on earth; Moreover His design comprehended the heavens, for He gave order and perfection to the seven firmaments; and of all things He hath perfect knowledge. 29

God will choose for His special Mercy whom He will - for God is Lord of grace abounding. 105

Knowest thou not that God Hath power over all things? 106

He is Oft- Returning, Most Merciful. 54

Knowest thou not that to God belongeth the dominion of the heavens and the earth? And besides Him ye have neither patron nor helper. 107

God bringeth the dead to life and showeth you His Signs: Perchance ye may understand. 73

God sees well all that ye do. 110

God is not unmindful of what ye do. 74

To God belong the east and the West: Whither-

soever ye turn, there is God's countenance. For God is all-Embracing, all-Knowing. 115

Glory be to Him.... to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth: everything renders worship to Him. 116

To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: When He decreeth a matter, He saith to it: "Be," and it is. 117

He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. 137

Say: To God belong both east and West: He guideth whom He will to a Way that is straight. 142

God is to all people Most surely full of kindness, Most Merciful. 143

God hath power over all things. 148

do ye remember Me; I will remember you. 152

God is with those who patiently persevere. 153

I am Oft-returning, Most Merciful. 160

And your God is One God. There is no god but He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. 163

To God belongs all power, and God will strongly enforce the Punishment. 165

God is Oft-forgiving Most Merciful. 173

God hears and knows (All things). 181

God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. 182

God intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties. 185

When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calleth on Me: Let them also, with a will, Listen to My call, and believe in Me: That they may walk in the right way. 186

God loveth not transgressors. 190

God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. 192

Know that God is with those who restrain themselves. 194

God loveth those who do good. 195

And fear God, and know that God is strict in punishment. 196

God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. 199

And God is quick in account. 202

God loveth not mischief. 205

God is full of kindness to (His) devotees. 207

Know that God is Exalted in Power, Wise. 209

To God do all questions go back (for decision). 210

Cont'd from page 39

out slowly, a victim of its own extremism that prevented it from ever being accepted by most Muslims. One strand of them managed to moderate to some extent and developed into the Ibadi sect, which today forms the majority of Oman's population. But while the Khariji movement itself did not last, their concept of takfir of sinners has been resurrected from time to time by numerous extremist groups, even being echoed by some modern political movements.

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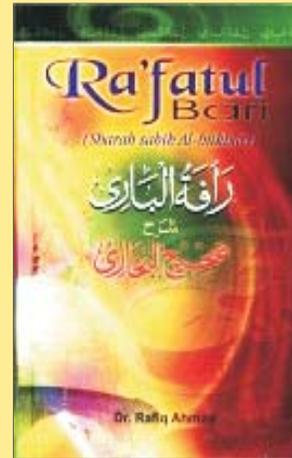
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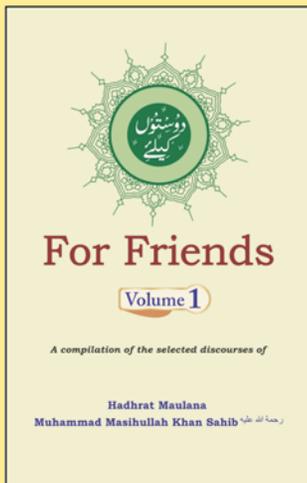
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