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EDITORIAL

All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted

The Divine Manifestation

Throughout the universe, the divine care for all things and all-pervading wisdom in the elements of creation may be perceived, attesting to the All-Wise Creator. The Glorious Qur'an has made it clear that each thing and every creature in the universe, whether known to man or not, performs two major functions: A religious function insofar as it evidences the Maker's presence and infinite wisdom, power, and grace; and a social function in the service of man and other created beings.

God's wisdom has ordained that His creatures shall be of service to one another.

The divinely appointed measurement and distribution of all elements and creatures, each performing its ordained role and all of them valuable, makes up the dynamic balance by which the creation is maintained.

Over exploitation, abuse, misuse, destruction, and pollution of natural resources are all transgressions against the divine scheme. Because narrow-sighted self-interest is always likely to tempt men to disrupt the dynamic equilibrium set by God, the protection of all natural resources from abuse is a mandatory duty.

In the divine scheme by which all creatures are made to be of service to one another, God's wisdom has made all things of service to mankind. But nowhere has God indicated that they are created only to serve human beings.

On the contrary, Muslim legal scholars have maintained that the service of man is not the only purpose for which they have been

created.

With regard to God's saying: "And He has made the ships to be of service unto you, that they may sail the sea by His command, and the rivers He has made of service unto you. And He has made the sun and the moon, constant in their courses, to be of service unto you, and He has made of service unto you the night and day. And He gives you all you seek of Him: If you would count the bounty of God, you could never reckon it." (14:32-34)

...and similar verses in which God declares that He created His creations for the children of Adam; it is well known that God in His great wisdom has exalted purposes in them other than the service of man, and greater than the service of man. However, He makes clear to the children of Adam what benefits there are in these creatures and what bounty He has bestowed upon mankind." (*Taqi ud-Din Ahmad ibn Taymiyah in Majmu Al-Fatawa*)

Even though the societal functions of all things are vitally important, the primary function of all created beings as signs of their Creator constitutes the soundest legal basis for conservation of the environment.

It is not possible to base the protection of our environment on our need for its services alone, since these services are only of supporting value and reason.

Because we cannot be aware of all the beneficial functions of all things, to base our efforts at conservation solely on the environmental benefits to man would lead inevitably to the distortion of the dynamic equilibrium

set by God and the misuse of His creation, thereby impairing these same environmental benefits.

However, when we base the conservation and protection of the environment on its value as the sign of its Creator, we cannot omit any thing from it.

Every element and species has its individual and unique role to play in glorifying God, and in bringing man to know and understand his Creator by showing him, through their being and uses, God's infinite power, wisdom, and mercy.

It is impossible to countenance the willful ruin and loss of any of the basic elements and species of the creation, or to think that the continued existence of the remainder is sufficient to lead us to contemplate the glory, wisdom, and might of God in all the aspects that are intended.

Indeed, because species differ in their special qualities, and each evidences God's glory in ways unique to it alone.

Furthermore, all human beings and, indeed, livestock and wildlife as well, enjoy the right to share in the resources of the earth. Man's abuse of any resource, such as water, air, land, and soil as well as other living creatures such as plants and animals is forbidden, and the best use of all resources, both living and lifeless, is prescribed.

No to Courts!

Salm bin Qutaybah al-Baabili (rahimahullah) had an argument with his cousin. He pursued the case until it reached the court. While sitting there waiting for his case to be presided over, Basbeer bin 'Ubaidillah (rahimahullah) met him and enquired: "Why are you sitting here?" He replied: "Because of an argument between my cousin and me. He has made some claims against me in my property." Basbeer said to him: "Your father has been very kind to me and I would like to return this favour to you. (Listen to my advice): I have not seen anything more destructive to one's religion, more humiliating, more distasteful and more stressful on the heart than arguments."

On hearing this, Salm stood up to go away from there. His opponent said to him: "What has happened to you?" He replied: "I do not want to argue with you anymore." He said: "Have you now realized that the truth is in my favour?" Salm replied: "No. Rather, I am protecting my honour from this." Upon hearing this, his opponent said: "I am dropping all my claims. The property belongs to you." (Kitaabus Samt wa Aadaabil Lisaan)

Lesson: *The end result of the one who forgoes his rights in order to avoid a confrontation is the far better person than the one who takes revenge for himself and returns evil with evil. Forbearing and relenting creates a unique tranquillity in the heart and peace in the mind which is much more enjoyable than the "thrill" of winning an argument or a court case. Apart from this, often Allah Ta'ala blesses this person with something far better in this world together with the unimaginable rewards that one in store for him in the Hereafter.*

Question Answer

Question

Is it permissible to wear a jacket with the inscription: "I love my Prophet"?

Answer

Wearing a jacket with the inscription: "I love my Prophet", is not permissible because such inscriptions are in imitation of the kuffar. Love for the Prophet (S) is portrayed in the Muslim's meticulous adoption of the Sunnah and the Shariah. Imitating the kuffar is not a valid way of displaying love for the Prophet (S). Furthermore, the chap may go into the toilet with the jacket. The jacket may be thrown any where. What type of love is it which requires vying with the ways of kuffar. Stating the method of love for Allah and His Messenger (S) the Qur'an states: Say: If you love Me (Allah) then follow me (the Prophet)". Love for the Messenger (S) is reliant on obedience to Allah and the Prophet (S). It is not true love which flaunts kuffar nonsensical styles.

Question

If somebody begins his e-mail or his SMS (text message to a phone) with "Assalamu alaikum", will it be wajib for the recipient to reply with "wa alaikum salam"?

And what about the sender just writes "Salam" rather than "Assalamu alaikum", will it be wajib to reply in this case?

Answer

It is necessary to reply to a Salaam sent in writing by SMS etc, either by sending a response in writing or by verbalising the response when one receives the message.

Question

Is it allowed to wear abayas with stones and embroidery fixed onto it? If it is allowed, up to what extent can it be adorned?

Answer

Beauty is supposed to be displayed in the home in the presence of the husband, children, and mahram relatives. It is not meant to be displayed in public. The beauty of a woman is a private treasure and not a public property to be enjoyed by one and all.

Thus, the purpose of the Abaya is to conceal the body and make one unattractive when emerging from the home. Needless to say, beautifying the abaya defeats the very purpose of the abaya.

The Qur'an commands that women should not even stamp their feet in a way that part of her beauty may be revealed. How can then it permit them to publicly adorn themselves with outer garments that are attractive or revealing? A hadith actually curses the woman who uses any type of perfume at a place where its fragrance would reach non-

mahram men. Further, it categorically states that women should stay out of public view. When she leaves her home the shaitan looks for ways to tempt people through her.

Hence, abayas that have revealing features or any type of attraction are not only impermissible but they are shameful and a cause of fitnah and evil. May Allah protect us all.

However, if the Abaya is worn at home and only in the presence of other females or one's husband, then it could be beautified.

Question

Is it necessary to apologize after breaking somebody's heart?

Answer

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) emphasized the importance of asking for pardon by saying,

"Whoever has wronged his brother should ask for his pardon (before his death), as (in the Hereafter) there will be neither a dinar nor a dirham. (He should secure pardon in this life) before some of his good deeds are taken and paid to his brother, or, if he has done no good deeds, some of the bad deeds of his brother are taken to be loaded on him (in the Hereafter)."

We learn from a hadith reported by Bukhari that the rights will be settled in the hereafter if it is not done in the world:

"After being saved from Hell, the believers will be stopped at a bridge between Paradise and Hell and mutual retaliation will be established among them regarding wrongs they have committed in the world against one another. After they are cleansed and purified (through the retaliation), they will be admitted into Paradise."

"On the Day of Judgment, all of the rights will be given to their owners. The hornless sheep would get its claim from the horned

sheep." (Tirmidhi, Sifatu'l Qiyama, I)

The hadith above shows the importance of the rights of individuals and the importance of asking for pardon.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) informs us about the importance of the rights of individuals and asking for pardon and settling claims as follows:

"All of the sins of martyrs are forgiven except the rights of individuals." The Messenger of Allah defined those who need to ask for pardon from others as "bankrupt" and described their situation as follows:

"The bankrupt is a person from my nation who comes on the Day of Judgment with prayer, fasting, and charity, but also with insulting, slandering, consuming wealth, shedding blood, and beating others. They will each be given from his good deeds; if his good deeds run out before the score is settled, their bad deeds will be cast upon him, then he will be thrown into Hell." (Muslim, Birr, 59)

Asking for pardon and settling claims with people is the only way of getting rid of debts in order to be saved from bankruptcy in the hereafter.

Question

1. Can we eat Muslim meals on international flights. Like LUFTANSA, UNITED, EMIRATES, ETHIHAD ETC.

2. Do we have to pray Khaza for missed prayers during Menstrual periods.

3. We went to Mecca, I enquired most of the resturants around Haraam. They siad chicken came from Brazil. Is this chicken ok to eat?. Zabihah HALAL

Answer

1. Shari'ah emphasises on exercising precaution in consuming food and to ensure the food is halal and beyond doubt.

The Muslim meals offered by the various international flights generally refer to the

meat in Muslim meals being halal.

According to Shari'ah, halal meat refers to the meat of animals that can be consumed in Shari'ah, for example, chickens, goat, cattle, sheep, etc., if the animal is slaughtered according to the Shari'ah laws of zabiha.

It cannot be said with certainty that the halal meals offered on international flights is indeed halal. Some people have an incorrect understanding of halal, for example, the animal slaughtered by machine is regarded as halal. Furthermore, we do not know of the halal standards in different parts of the world. It is possible that some halal certifying organizations have corrupt beliefs (aqidah) that render the slaughtered chicken haram. Some organizations may be lax in their supervision of halal etc. etc.

When one is uncertain of the halal position of the meat on international flights, one should abstain from consuming such meals.

Alternatively, sea foods or vegetarian meals may be requested.

2. There is no qada (making up) for the prayers that are missed during menses. However, there is qada for the missed obligatory fasts.

3. There are conflicting opinions of Ulama regarding the Halaal status of chickens in Saudi Arabia imported from Brazil. Therefore, it is best is to exercise precaution and abstain from consuming such chickens.

Question

I've been feeling a bit lifeless recently, a little sort of sad. I'm not really caring about anything to much. My response now is "I don't mind, you can do that, I'm fine". I have no intention of committing suicide or anything like that and I have no worries or stresses in my life. How can I feel more happy? Why I am feeling like this? It's random, usually I'm quite

a happy person but for a few days I've lost enthusiasm and interest.

Answer

On the outset, it is important for us to first understand our true purpose in life and why we have been sent to this world. A feeling of emptiness and indifference towards life is a result of not preoccupying oneself with certain morals and ideals that shape and form the way we live out our lives. Once you are able to do so, you will be able to take the next step by molding your life in accordance to these pre-defined goals and let them become the means of achieving true happiness.

As Muslims, our aim in life is to seek the pleasure of Allah by worshipping him and obeying His commands and the commands of His messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam). He the Almighty says in the Holy Quran:

And I did not create the Jinns and the human beings except that they should worship Me. I do not want any sustenance from them, nor do I want them to feed Me. In fact, Allah is the All-Sustainer, Possessor of power, the Strong.

[51:56-58]

As such, you should make an effort to bring Islam in every part of your life and let your mind remain busy in furthering this goal. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

Whoever, male or female, has done righteous deed while a believer, We shall certainly make him live a good life and shall give such people their reward for the good they used to do.

[16:97]

In order to help you relieve yourself of these feelings of emptiness, we advise you to do the following:

(1) Make a schedule for the day and single out certain times for nawafil salah (extra prayer), dhikr (remembrance of Allah), recitation of the Quran, and du'a.

(2) Read books about the life of the Holy Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) and

his companions (radiyallahu 'anhu)

(3) Download and listen to lectures about Islam.

(4) Find Islamic activities offered by your local masjid so you may join them and further your Islamic agenda.

(5) Seek the company of the pious Ulama and make an effort to learn more from them about Islam.

Once you are able to bring Islam into every part of your life, your carelessness will automatically dissipate and you will be able to taste the true sweetness of Iman.

You may also recite the following du'a: *O Allah, help me in remembering You, in giving You thanks, and worshipping You well.*

Transliteration: Allahumma A'innee 'alaa dhikrika wa shukrika wa husni 'ibaadatik

Question

Please help me understand the step by step performance of Ghusl for after menstruation so that I can keep it in my memory with ease In shaa Allah, as I find many different sites stating different steps.

Answer

Procedure for Performing Ghusal

1. Wash both hands including the wrists.
2. Wash the private parts. The hands and private parts should be washed even if one is not in the state of Janaabat or Najasat. (Impurity)
3. If there is Najasat elsewhere on the body, it should be washed off.
4. Perform Wudhu. If one is making Ghusl on a stool or platform where water will rapidly flow away, then perform the complete Wudhu. If there is a fear of the feet being dipped in waste water during the Ghusl then postpone the washing of the feet to the end of the Ghusl. If there is no fear of the feet being dipped in waste water, then by merely washing the feet while doing Ghusl is sufficient for the feet to be washed. Ensure that the mouth

and nostrils are thoroughly rinsed when performing Ghusl.

5. After performing Wudhu pour water over the head thrice.

6. Thereafter pour water thrice over the right shoulder and thrice over the left shoulder[6].

7. Then pour water over the entire body and rub.

8. If the hair of the head is not plaited, it is compulsory to wet all the hair up to the very base. If a single hair is left dry, Ghusl will not be valid.

If the hair of a woman is plaited, she is excused from loosening her plaited hair but it is compulsory for her to wet the base of each and every hair. If she fails to do so then the Ghusl will not be valid.

As for men who grow long hair and plait them, they are not excused from leaving their hair dry.

If a woman experiences difficulty or is unable to wet the very bottom of her plaited hair, then it is necessary for her to unplait her hair and wash her entire hair.

9. It is Mustahab (preferable) to clean the body by rubbing it. All parts of the body should be rubbed with the hands to ensure that water has reached all parts of the body and no portion is left dry.

10. Rings, earrings, etc., should be removed to ensure that no portion covered by them is left dry. Ensure that the navel and ears are all wet. If they are not wet Ghusl will be incomplete.

Question

My father has decided to give our inheritance to us in his lifetime so that there is no dispute after his demise. He has given my brothers double the amount that he has given me due me being his daughter. Is this fair in the shari'ah

Answer

The assets that your father is dis-

tributing in his lifetime cannot be regarded as inheritance. Inheritance only comes into effect after a person passes away. The distribution of assets in his lifetime will be regarded as gifts.

With regards to giving gifts in one's lifetime, it is emphasized in the Hadith that the parent exercises equality between all children, be they male or female. The laws of gifting are different from the laws of inheritance. In inheritance, the Qur'an has stipulated the shares of the male and female in a certain proportion based on divine wisdom. With regards to gifting in one's lifetime, the Shari'ah emphasizes equality regardless of gender. Once, Sayyiduna Nu'man bin Bashir was gifted an asset by his father (Bashir - RA) and they went to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to be the witness to the gift. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) asked Sayyiduna Bashir (RA): "Do you have any other children?" He replied: "Yes". Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) then asked him: "Have you also given them the same?" When he replied in the negative, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) became upset and said: "Do not make me a witness to this! I will not be a witness to oppression!" (Muslim).

From the above, it is noted that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) termed inequality in gifting assets to children as oppression. Based on this, the Fuqahaa (Jurists) and Muhaddithoon (scholars of Hadith) have ruled that it is important for parents to be equal when gifting gifts to their children. It is therefore strongly advisable for your father to be equal in distributing the assets amongst

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his children including you. Giving you a smaller portion merely on account of you being his daughter is not correct and he should rectify this.

I suggest that you bring this to the notice of your father in a kind and polite manner. Perhaps he is under the impression that when distributing wealth in one's lifetime amongst children, it should be according to the laws of inheritance where the son gets double the share of the daughter whereas this is not the case in distributing assets in one's lifetime.

Yes, there are certain situations where a father can give preference to one child over the other. In such situations, it is advisable to consult the Ulama for guidance.

Question

We live in Russia and I have accepted Islam but my husband has not yet said he is a Muslim. Is my marriage valid and can I marry another man?

Answer

If you reside in Russia or in any other non-Muslim country, the ruling with regards to you is that since the time you had accepted Islam, you will remain in the Nikah of your husband for three menstrual cycles (or three months if you are not menstruating). If he accepts Islam before the termination of three menstrual cycles, your marriage will remain intact. If he does not accept Islam within this period, your marriage terminates and thereafter, you will wait for another three menstrual cycles as Iddah. After this, it will be permissible for you to marry a Muslim man.

*And Allah Ta'āla Knows Best
Checked and Approved by,
Mufti Ebrahim Sahib.*

Lesson From The Qur'an

Surah Al-Imran - Verse 108-117

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

The previous verses mention recompense and punishment for good and evil deeds respectively. What follows is the explanation regarding the importance of promise and threat with regard to recompense and punishment, and which depend on the following four: i, the correctness of the news related to recompense and punishment, ii, the appropriateness of recompense and punishment, iii, the whole creation belonging to Allah, iv, no authority of anyone other than Allah.

These – what has been said - **are the verses of Allah We recite to you** O Prophet **with all veracity** i.e., their subject is only truth devoid of any doubt, so the one who rejects these proofs and refuses to accept your prophethood betrays intellectual deficiency. And **Allah does not intend to do injustice to anyone in the worlds** i.e., the punishment that We have prepared for the unbelievers and those who reject the truth is no way injustice to them but retribution to their own corrupt deeds. We only wish to shower Our mercy on them but it is they who show their unwilling-

ness to receive it. (3:108)

To meddle with somebody's belongings is surely an injustice, but **to Allah belongs what is in the heavens and what is in the earth**, how is it possible then that He does any kind of injustice? This - that everything belonging to Him, then demands that He interferes in anything and in whichever way He wishes, which is, therefore, nothing but absolute justice. He owns the whole creation that He brought into existence, thus, **to Allah all matters are returned** and He will, owing to His Wisdom and Mercy, deal with every matter accordingly. (3:109)

In continuation to verse not 103 and 104, the believers are again emphasized to keep to their job of bidding good and forbidding evil in the following verses .

O Muslims! **You are the best 'Ummah ever raised** from nothingness into existence **for** the benefit of **mankind**, and the reason behind your selection is that **you bid the Fair** - which the Shariah holds as fair, **and forbid the Unfair**

- which the Shariah declares prohibited and disliked, **and you believe in Allah** as He is, along with His attributes. **If the people of the Book**- Jews and Christians - **had believed** and accepted the prophethood of Muhammad, **it would have been better for them** as this would have made them a part of this best Ummah. But their condition is that **among them, there are believers, while most of them are sinners** and enemies of Muslims always looking for the ways to create problems for them. (3:110)

Previously, the plot devising of the People of the Book to inflict religious harm to Muslims, and afterwards, their opposition to the Islamic ideology is mentioned. Now, in the following verse, their desire to cause worldly damage to Muslims and their failure to do so is commented upon.

O Muslims! **They** - the people of the Book - **shall never** be able to **cause you any harm except a little** verbal **hurt**. And **if they**, somehow overcome their verbal assaults on you, and try to **fight you, they will turn their backs on you, then** - on top of that - **they shall not be helped** to gain victory over you. (3:111)

The reason behind this is that **disgrace has been stamped over them wherever they are found, unless** saved from this disgrace **through a source from Allah** i.e., the exceptions prescribed by the Islamic Law, such as religious hermits, women and children, **and through a source from men** i.e., those obtaining security by entering into treaties, **and** there is no profitability for them near Allah through these sources because **they have returned with wrath from Allah, and misery has been stamped over them. All this** - wrath, misery and disgrace over them - **is because they used to deny the signs of Allah, and to**

slay the prophets knowingly and **unjustly. All this** - denial of the signs of Allah and slaying the prophets - **is because they disobeyed and transgressed the limits** which resulted in the hardening of their hearts and disappearance of the light of Iman. (3:112)

While commenting upon the wrongs of the People of the Book in verse 110, it is pointed that some of them are believers. The forthcoming verses give the detailed account of this point which were revealed regarding Sayyiduna Abdullah bin Salaam (RA) and his companions.

Disobedience and transgression drives a man towards infidelity, and of this ilk there is a good number of individuals among the people of the Book, but, **not all of them are alike: Among the people of the Book there are those who are steadfast** on the true belief; **they recite the verses of Allah** i.e., Qur'an **in the night hours, and they prostrate themselves** in Salaah to seek Allah's nearness, which is a proof of the fact that they are not unmindful of His existence. (3:113)

The basic reason behind this is that **they** fully **believe in** the oneness of **Allah and the Hereafter** the awareness of which does not fade away from their minds, **and** the blessings of these beliefs does not remain restricted to their own selves only but spreads to others also for they **bid the Fair and forbid the Unfair, and** in order to surpass others they **hasten towards good deeds. They are** viewed by Allah **among the righteous** and are exempted from His wrath, misery and disgrace. (3:114)

Whatever good they do whether hastily or slowly, **they shall never go unappreciated for it** but rewarded twofold.* **Allah is All-Aware of the God-fearing,** and since they are God-fearing they deserve due recompense as per

promise. (3:115) *As per the authentic hadiths the people of the Book who testify to the prophethood of Muhammad (S) will be rewarded twofold.

The following verse censures the People of the Book who didn't submit to Islam.

Surely, those who disbelieve need not consider themselves as Allah's loved ones on the basis that they have been blessed with wealth and children, for, on the day of Judgement, **neither their wealth nor their children shall help them against** the punishment of **Allah** as it is only Iman and Taqwa (God-fearing) that will save one from Allah's wrath; **and** because of their disbelief **they are the people of the Fire. They shall be there forever** and never rescued. (3:116)

The following verse makes it null and void the disbelievers' spending of wealth in charity works etc., on the basis of their incorrect belief, since it is the correct belief only which is the basic condition for the acceptance of any good deeds.

The example of what they - the disbelievers - **spend in this worldly life is, regarding its wastage, just like a wind that, having chill within, struck the tillage of those who wronged themselves and destroyed it** i.e., their crop of charity and other good deeds are totally destroyed by the chill of their unbelief. And in wasting it **Allah has not wronged them** in anyway; **rather, they did wrong to themselves** by resorting to unbelief which in itself is the impediment to acceptance. (3:117)

Poverty of Faatimah (radhiyallahu 'anha)

Once, Faatimah (radhiyallahu 'anha) had taken ill and Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) went to visit her together with 'Imraan bin Husain (radhiyallahu 'anhuma). Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) made salaam, asked permission to enter and informed her that 'Imraan bin Husain (radhiyallahu 'anhuma) was accompanying him. Faatimah (radhiyallahu 'anha) said that she does not have an extra piece of cloth to veil and cover herself. So Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) passed her his shawl and asked her to use it to cover herself. Then Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) entered and enquired about her condition. Faatimah (radhiyallahu 'anha) replied that her pain has been aggravated by the hunger that she was experiencing due to the lack of food. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said to her: "O my daughter! Does it not please you that Allah Ta'ala has made you the leader of all the women of the world." (Ithaaful Khairatil Maharab)
Lesson: True wealth is the wealth of contentment. Having all the luxuries and amenities of the world does not guarantee peace of mind and comfort. Hence one of the most important qualities that we need to instil in our lives and the lives of our families, especially in this materialistic era, is that of contentment. This will guarantee us peace of mind and comfort, even without possessing the luxuries of this world.

Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

The Book of Ablution

Chapter 76 : Washing of blood by a woman from his father's face.

And Abul Aaliya said, "Rub my foot as it is aching".

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Shah Wali Ullah Delhvi (RA) says that by getting this chapter Imam Bukhari wants to say that it is permissible to get help from others to perform Wudu.

Hadith No. 239

Narrated Abu Hazim (RA)

"Sahl bin Sa'd As-Sa'idi, was asked by the people, "With what was the wound of the Prophet treated? Sahl replied, "None remains among the people living who knows that better than I. 'Ali used to bring water in his shield and Fatima used to wash the blood off his face. Then straw mat was burnt and the wound was filled with it."

Comments

During the battle of Uhud, the blessed face of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) got injured and it was bleeding. In order to stop the bleeding, Hadhrat Ali (RA) got some water and Hadhrat Fatima (RA) washed the blood from the blessed face of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) but the bleeding didn't stop. Then a mat was burnt and its ash

was placed on the wound and the bleeding stopped.

Some people are of the opinion that here Imam Bukhari (RA) wants to show his difference with Imam Shafa'ee (RA) who believes that if a woman touches a man, her Wudu breaks. Here Hadhrat Fatima (RA) was washing the face of her father. (And Allah knows the best).

Chapter 77 : Regarding Siwak (tooth cleaning stick).

And Ibn Abbas said, "Once I passed the night with Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and saw him cleaning his teeth (with Siwak)".

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Learned scholars of Hadith say that there is difference of opinion amongst the scholars whether using a Siwak is the Sunnah related to Salaah or to Wudu. By quoting this Hadith here in Kitab-ul-Wudu, Imam Bukhari believes that Siwak is a Sunnah related to Wudu.

Hadith No. 240

Narrated Abu Burda (RA)

My father said, "I came to the Prophet and saw him carrying a Siwak in his hand and cleansing his teeth, saying, 'U' U', " as if he was

retching while the Siwak was in his mouth."

Comments

There is consensus in the Ummah about the great significance of Siwak in the Shariah. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to use it with great regularity till he breathed his last. Imam Bukhari (RA) has quoted Hadhrat Ayesha (RA) in Kitab-ul-Magazi saying that her brother, Abdul Rehman bin Abi Bakr came to see Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) when he was in his terminal illness and had placed his blessed head in her lap. There was a fresh nice looking Siwak in Abdul Rehman's hand and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was looking at it constantly. Hadhrat Ayesh (RA) says that she took that Siwak from her brother and made it soft by her own teeth and then gave to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) who cleaned his teeth very nicely. After Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) finished using Siwak, only few minutes must have been passed that he uttered the following words and breathed his last.

"Towards the highest friend".

Another Hadith says,

"If it would not have been difficult for my Ummah or people, I would have been ordered them to use Siwak before every Salaah".

Benefits of Siwak

Learned scholars have described seventy benefits of Siwak and the best of them is that its user is given Tawfiq of reciting "Kalima Shahadah" at the time of his death i.e., he leaves the world with faith.

Allaama Shaami has written

"The author of an-Nahr-u-Faa'iq has said that the benefits of Siwak are more than thirty. The lowest of it is to remove dirt and the highest is the remembrance of article of faith at the time of death".

Chapter 78 : To give Siwak to the elder per-

son.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Delhvi (RA) says that here Imam Bukhari (RA) wants to prove the excellence or Fadeelat of Siwak.

Hadith No. 241

Narrated Ibn Umar (RA)

That Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "I saw myself cleaning my teeth with Siwak in a dream and two men came to me and out of them one was older than the other thus I gave the Siwak to the younger one. I was told (by some angel) to give it to the elder one instead of the younger, then I gave it to the elder one".

Comments

This Hadith shows that we should respect our elders. Whenever Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had to distribute anything among the people, he always started from the one who used to be the elder among all present.

A Hadith says:

"He is not of us, one who does not show kindness to our young ones and does not respects our elders". (Abu Dawood) (Tirmidhi)

Another Hadith says:

Narrated Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: Glorifying Allah involves showing honour to a grey-haired Muslim and to one who can expound the Qur'an, but not to one who acts extravagantly regarding it, or turns away from it, and showing honour to a just ruler. (Abu Dawood)

Chapter 79 : Fadeelat or excellence of that person who sleeps with Wudu.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Bukhari (RA) wants to show the significance and excellence of performing Wudu before going to bed.

Hadith No. 242

Narrated Al-Bara 'bin 'Azib (RA)

The Prophet said to me, "Whenever you go to bed perform ablution like that for the prayer, lie on your right side and say, "Allahumma aslamtu wajhi ilaika, wa fauwadtu amri ilaika, wa alja'tu Zahri ilaika raghbatan wa rahbatan ilaika. La Malja' wa la manja minka illa ilaika. Allahumma amantu bikitabika-l-ladhi anzalta wa bina-biyika-l-ladhi arsalta" (O Allah! I surrender to You and entrust all my affairs to You and depend upon You for Your Blessings both with hope and fear of You. There is no fleeing from You, and there is no place of protection and safety except with You O Allah! I believe in Your Book (the Qur'an) which You have revealed and in Your Prophet (Muhammad) whom You have sent). Then if you die on that very night, you will die with faith (i.e. or the religion of Islam). Let the aforesaid words be your last utterance (before sleep)." I repeated it before the Prophet and when I reached "Allahumma amantu bikitabika-l-ladhi anzalta (O Allah I believe in Your Book which You have revealed)." I said, "Wa-rasulika (and your Apostle)." The Prophet said, "No, (but say): 'Wanabiyika-l-ladhi arsalta (Your Prophet whom You have sent), instead."

Comments

There are two kinds of ablutions (Wudu) viz.,

1. Wudu for Salaah.
2. Wudu for Islam.

Wudu for Islam means that a believer should not perform Wudu only when he has to offer Salaah or execute any deed for which Wudu is obligatory, but should always try to keep Wudu. This is a greatly liked act in Islamic Shariah and it was the usual practice of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). The angels of mercy like cleanliness very much, so they remain with a person who is with Wudu. These things are easily felt by a believer. When he performs Wudu he feels solace and freshness in his heart and mind.

Way of sleeping as per Sunnah

1. To sleep with Wudu.
2. To Clean the bedding.
3. To use Siwak.
4. To recite the last three verses of the Qur'an.
5. To sleep on the right lateral position, preferably facing Qibla.
6. To recite the Dua of sleep as mentioned in Hadith.

The wording of Dua-Maathoora should not be changed

The Dua-Maathoora means that Dua or invocation which has been mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith.

In this Hadith, it is mentioned that when Bura bin Aazib repeated the Dua of sleep before Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), he changed the word 'Nabbiyyika' with 'Rasulika'; though it meant the same, still, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) corrected him and told him to repeat the same words which he taught him. From this, the learned scholars of Islam have derived the conclusion that it is not permissible to change the wordings of any Dua-Maathoora. In these Duas or invocations, not only the meaning is important, but the wording is also of very much importance. Each word which has been uttered by the blessed tongue of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has great significances. No one can replace them with better words than those which Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has himself used. Some people have altered many Duas or invocations and made many additions in these, this is a Bidah and one should refrain from such kind of things. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the last and the final messenger of Allah, whatever he said is the ultimate and the most perfect.

Alhamdulillah, This ends 'The Book of Ablution'.

Take Time for Internal Reflection

I. Abdullah al-Amin

It is not the quantity, but the quality of time spent attempting to follow the guidance of Allah that ensures success. Allah says in Qur'an that "everything is a sign for those who reflect." Each day, if we just take 10 minutes of quiet, quality time in carefully selected thought procedures, we can improve our life by achieving a greater measure of happiness, increased efficiency, and a feeling of spiritual, mental, and physical well-being.

So many things whiz by us each day that it is virtually impossible to reflect while we are on the go. You will possibly see these "signs of Allah", but not will reflect on them to get the full benefit. So many miraculous things occur during the course of our going about our daily activities. They are happening whether you realize it or not. The key is to first know that Allah is in the blessing business and then key in on your blessings by being one of those who "reflect" on the signs of Allah.

This 10 minute formula I am sharing with you has been proven scientifically over time and it is right in sync with Allah's word to "reflect." The plan is to spend 10 minutes every day in quiet submission. It must be regular. To do it for a day or two and then skip a day or two will lessen the impact on the results.

Allah is real, and He will guide you as you submit your mind to Him. Don't go into

this process with the idea "I want to do this-or do that. Instead, wait on an answer to enter your mind. You have now made your mind susceptible to Divine wisdom.

This is in the same vein as the Istikara prayer Muslims say in the early reaches of the night. The difference is, in the istakara prayer, we ask Allah to examine our particular situation. It may be a particular relationship or maybe a career move or something similar. We make two rakah and ask Allah to make it easy and possible to attain- if it is right for us. If it is not right for us, we ask Him to remove it from us. Istakara is a powerful tool of connection and help from Allah.

This time of reflection is also special because we stop what we are doing, go to a quiet place with no distractions and wait for thoughts to enter our minds. They might not be what you expect or even what you want. They may be far from what we are accustomed to thinking. But if you are a believer and have submitted yourself to be an instrument of Allah, you will be on a higher wavelength of righteousness in which there is no error. The time can vary. It may be before salat or after salat-or an hour or so after salat. It doesn't matter. The main thing is quietness, relaxation, and submission of your mind to Allah.

There are many tools and avenues to connect spiritually to our Creator. This is only one. Sometimes while offering salat, solutions and answers come to our minds. I take it as Allah choosing a time to communicate with me. Some people think they are sinning if your mind wanders during salat. But it is not neces-

sarily so. It depends on what your mind is wandering to.

This human mind we have is special and it has a special way of communicating with its Maker. Reflect on the "Signs" of Allah. You will be richer for it.

R.I.P.

Understanding the reality of things grants us a better understanding of its application. The acronym R.I.P. is derived from the burial service of the Catholic Church. Wikipedia provides its definition as, "Rest in peace" (Latin: Requiescat in pace) is a short epitaph or idiomatic expression wishing eternal rest and peace to someone who has died."

In short, it is a prayer for the deceased. In Islam, praying for the deceased is exclusively for Muslims. This is established from the Quran and demonstrated practically by Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam in his relationship with his dear uncle Abu Talib. From the age of 8, Abu Talib fathered the orphaned Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam. In fact he loved him more than his own children. It was Abu Talib who stood in his father's place at his first Nikah to Khadijah. It was Abu Talib who ceaselessly sheltered Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam from the attacks of the disbelievers. Yet at the time of his death, he refused Islam.

Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam was naturally grieved by this and declared that he would continue seeking forgiveness for his uncle until Divine Prohibition forbade him the same. Shortly after Allah revealed the verse,

It is not right for the Prophet and those who have Imaan to ask forgiveness for the disbelievers - even if they are close relatives - after it has become clear to them they are the dwellers of the Fire (because of dying upon disbelief). (Al-Quran: Surah 9, Verse 113)

From the revelation of the verse neither did Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam nor did any Sabaabi Radhiyallahu Anhum pray for a non-Muslim after their demise.

There is a place and at times a necessity for condolences and sympathy for the bereaved, but there is no place in Islam for praying for deceased non-Muslims. Let us not confuse these issues.

A Miracle Please!

R. Ramadan

She stood alone on the rooftop looking up at the night sky with tears that refused to fall; they had already been falling for too long. She asked Him, 'God, do you still love me?'-She listened for an answer and didn't hear anything. There was no sign sent from above, there was no message in the clouds. She wanted a miracle. She wanted to see the answer to her question laid out before her. What she didn't realize though, was that His answers were all around her, she just had to open her eyes to see them. Often times we call out to God, praying for a miracle, praying for something to change drastically and instantly-but we look around and see nothing. We go on living in a world without miracles, constantly passing through days without miracles. The truth is, it's not that there are no more miracles; it's that we refuse to see them for what they are.

Our Beloved Prophet stood in front of the people one morning, telling them of a journey he made the night before. He told them of al-israa wal-miraaj in which he traveled across countries and rose to the heavens for a sacred meeting with his Lord. Those listening to the account split into two groups: those who accepted the miracle and welcomed it open heartedly and those who de-

nied the possibility of any such journey taking place and denied the miracle all together. Those who accepted the miracle were instantly blessed with the magnificent feeling of awe and love for the One who made that miracle possible. Those who denied the miracle didn't get any such feeling of awe and love, nor did they find themselves in a miraculous situation, one we all wish to find ourselves in one day. Every day, this same scenario occurs, on a smaller, but still miraculous, scale. And every day, we get to choose what group we will be a part of: those who accept the miracle and are instantly rewarded; or those who deny the miracle and reap nothing. What we don't realize however, is that when we deny the miracles that occur before our very eyes every day, we deny their effect in our lives and are left scrambling for hope.

Whenever we find ourselves in a difficult situation, the first and most important thing we need to remember is that no matter what happens, nothing we do on our own will cause any beneficial change to occur. The only One in our lives that can make a change is God Himself-when He wills it and with His might, not ours. With this in mind we begin our struggle with spiritual action rather than physical action. Before even moving a muscle we turn

our hearts and minds to Him and ask Him for a miracle. This, of course, doesn't mean we should not put our own effort into fixing our situation; rather, it means that we recognize that our actions are simply a means. The means is not what changes the situation, the change lies in the miracle. With that in mind, no situation is beyond repair, no problem is too big, and no hope is too ambitious. On that same note, God has told us that He is as we think of Him. If we do not fully believe that God will change our situation, then He won't. If we do not think that we will see miracles in our day-to-day lives, then we won't. If we do not think that He can miraculously change our lives from pits of misery to a life of love and worshipping Him, then he won't. When we full-heartedly believe in the miracles of our Lord, we will begin to see them each and every day.

Miracles don't necessarily have to be a message in the clouds or a crystal clear dream.

Rather, miracles can be seen in the smallest of things. It can be that moment when we feel like we are too weak to carry the burden that has been placed on our shoulders, and then He shows us an ant carrying a load many times its size to remind us that if He brought us to it, He'll bring us through it. It can be seen in that excruciating fear we go through when we realize we forgot to turn off the electric stove and our house will surely burn down, and we return home to find the rain caused the electricity to go out, saving our house and our cooking reputation! It can be seen in that moment when we feel like our faith has hit an all-time low, and He blesses us with people to give us exactly the reminders we need, in the manner that we need it in. These are not all 'coincidences'; rather they are miracles from the One above, bringing us closer to Him. But of course, it just depends on how we look at it.

It's not a Place to Hang Around

On the way to Tabuk, when Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) passed by Hijr, the ruins of Thamood, he instructed the Sabaabah (radiyallahu 'anhum) to move on quickly and said to them: "Do not enter the dwellings of those who have oppressed themselves except in the condition that you cry, out of the fear that the same punishment may afflict you."

He (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) also prohibited them from drinking or drawing water from its well. The Sabaabah (radiyallahu 'anhum) said: "We have already pulled out water and made our dough (using this water)." Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) commanded them to dispose of the dough and throw away the water.

Thereafter Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) covered himself with his shawl and rode his horse swiftly until he passed through and left the area. (Saheeh Bukhari, Majma'uz Zawaa'id)

Lesson: Although thousands of years had passed since punishment had come on this area, Rasulallah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) personally exercised such a high level of precaution and instructed His Sabaabah (radiyallahu 'anhum) to do the same. How much more precaution we need to exercise – especially in this holiday and so-called "festive season" – in visiting the beaches and other places wherein there is nothing but vice and immorality, which are definite reasons for the wrath of Allah Ta'ala to descend.

The Virtue of Unity *and* the Danger of Disunity

Sheikh Ali ibn Abdur-Rahman Al-Hudhaifi

O Muslims! Fear Allah as He should be feared, for your Lord is the One Who deserves to be feared and the One Who forgives sins.

O Muslims! Allah has placed the well-being of the Muslim nation (Ummah) in its earliest generations, whose hearts were unified upon the truth and who adhered to it, supported it, avoided all types of falsehood and innovations in religion, and combated everything that Allah, Exalted be He, dislikes and abhors. They only sought the eternal abode and its everlasting bliss and renounced this transient life, which allures none but the deluded and is trusted by none except the doomed and the damned.

You should have drawn lessons and morals from the previous generations. They lived long lives, enjoyed worldly delights, and indulged in prohibited acts, but then a barrier was placed between them and the worldly splendour and enjoyment which they desired. They are bound to feel deep regret, when they find themselves confronted with the evil deeds which they committed in the worldly life and when they are brought to an abode which they did not fill with good deeds. Allah will then punish them for their evil deeds: "...and your Lord treats no one with injustice." (Al-Kahf: 49)

Very few in those generations did

righteous deeds for their hereafter and thus they will enjoy eternal bliss when they stand in the presence of Allah, the King, the Holy, the One Free from all defects.

The last generations of this Muslim nation will be afflicted with calamities as a result of turning away from the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), as well as indulging in diverse whims and preferring this worldly life to the afterlife. Abdullah ibn Amr (RA) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), "The well-being of this ummah was placed in its earliest generations, but its last generations will be afflicted with calamities. Whenever a trial comes upon a believer, he will say, 'This is going to bring about my destruction.' Then relief comes, but another trial follows, and then the believer will say, 'It is this one (that will bring about my destruction).' Therefore, whoever wishes to be delivered from Hellfire and admitted into Paradise should die with faith in Allah and the Last Day and should treat people as he wishes to be treated by them" (Reported by Muslim).

Whims and desires are all evil. Disagreement and disunity cause a great deal of harm to the Muslim nation in their religion and interests. They weaken its power and sow the seeds of discord among its members. Differ-

ences obscure the truth such that it is not revealed to everyone; the truth may be perceived as falsehood and falsehood may be perceived as truth.

There is no way to protect ourselves from trials and tribulations that can lead to misguidance except by adhering to the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), and referring to religious scholars concerning controversial and unclear issues. Allah, Exalted be He, warns us against disunity and the pursuit of whims. He says: "Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects (all kinds of religious sects), you (O Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)) have no concern in them in the least. . ." (Al-An'am: 159)

Allah, Exalted be He, also says: "And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment." (Al-'Imran: 105)

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), informed us that members of his nation would disagree among themselves, so that we may avoid the same mistakes made by the nations before us. Abu Hurairah (RA) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "The Jews were split up into seventy-one (or seventy-two sects), and the same is true of the Christians. As for my nation, it will be split up into seventy-three sects" (Reported by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah).

Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan (RA) narrated that the Messenger of Allah, (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "There will appear among my nation people who will be overwhelmed by desires just like people suffering from rabies, which leaves no vein or joint in them but it penetrates it" (Reported by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Al-Hakim). Rabies is a

disease which can be transmitted to humans by a bite from an infected dog. If it infects man and dominates him, it leads to death. The desires and whims to which man can fall victim are countless.

Different opinions can only be unified by accepting the truth. Nothing can lead Muslims in the right direction or guide them to the straight path except the Book of Allah and the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Exalted be He, says: "Verily, this Qur'an guides to that which is most just and right and gives glad tidings to the believers (in the Oneness of Allah and His Messenger, Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)), etc. who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a great reward (Paradise)." (Al-Isra': 9)

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "The best speech is the Book of Allah, the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, and the worst matters are innovations [in religion], and every innovation [in religion] is misguidance" (Reported by Muslim, as part of the hadith narrated by Jabir ibn Abdullah (RA)). Therefore, nothing can unite hearts upon the truth, guidance, sincerity and correctness but the Qur'an and the Prophet's sunnah, and nothing can make hearts abhor evil and falsehood except love for the truth and its followers.

Imam Malik (ra) said, "Nothing will ameliorate the condition of the later generations of this ummah except that which ameliorated its earlier generations, and whatever was not part of the religion at the time of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), cannot be accepted as part of the religion today."

The Muslim nation will never agree on error and misguidance. Today personal opinions and whims have increased and discord

has become widespread. This has had its detrimental effects on Muslims, who have become weak and disunited. Discord among Muslims has severed bonds of brotherhood or at least weakened them. Sincere advisers advise that the Muslim nation should cure its ills by adhering to the guidance of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), and steering clear of the causes of harmful differences.

The only way to achieve this lofty goal and sublime objective and adopt this ideal method is to believe in the revealed Book (i.e. the Holy Qur'an) and the Sunnah of the Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) agree on the explanation and interpretation of the revealed texts, and act by their dictates by doing righteous deeds, for most differences have arisen in the area of explaining and interpreting the revealed texts.

When the early generations of the Muslim nation agreed on the interpretation of the Qur'an and the Prophet's hadiths, they avoided differences that lead to hostility and only allowed permissible differences that bring hearts together and prompt productive work. The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) explained the Qur'an himself as part of conveying its revelation and interpretation. Allah, Exalted be He, says: "And We have also sent down unto you (O Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) the reminder and the advice (the Qur'an), that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought." (An-Nahl: 44)

The Prophet's Companions also explained it to their contemporaries after the Prophet's death, and these in turn explained it to those who followed them.

Language is the bearer of meanings and thus provides the explanation of the

Qur'an by way of complete correspondence (i.e. by indicating the meaning by the word assigned to it), partial correspondence (i.e. by indicating the meaning by part of an expression referring to it), and necessary correspondence (i.e. by indicating the meaning indirectly, through an expression from which such meaning is necessarily inferred).

A Muslim should adhere to following the interpretations of reliable scholars of the Qur'an, and must stay away from innovations in religion. The Prophet's traditions (hadiths) have also been explained by the leading scholars of hadith. Allah, Exalted be He, says: "O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always), and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allah. And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah (i.e. this Qur'an), and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allah's Favour on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together, so that, by His Grace, you became brethren (in Islamic Faith), and you were on the brink of a pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes His Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.,) clear to you, that you may be guided." (Al-Imran, 102-103)

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

Muslim Woman

Not Just a Wife or Mother

A. Umm Abdullah

Before I was a wife and mother, I was Muslim. I had value even then.

When I became a wife and mother, my worth didn't suddenly shift and depend on that.

And if I am no longer a wife or mother, I will still have purpose.

Allah, the One who created me, said:

"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." 51: 56

This is my purpose. This is what I am supposed to do with my life. However, when we talk about Muslim women, it is usually in the context of her fulfilling her "purpose" of being a wife and mother. But what does this mean for the women who do not fit into either category?

Does it mean she is not fulfilling her purpose in life? Does it mean that she has no value? That she is worthless?

Aisha (RA) was not a birth mother.

Maryam (AS) was not a wife.

And Aasiyah (RA) was not a birth mother and her husband was Fir'aun.

Yet, these women are praised. Why?

Allah says:

"And Allah presents an example of those who believed: the wife of Pharaoh, when she said, 'My Lord, build for me near You a house in Paradise and save me from Pharaoh and his

deeds and save me from the wrongdoing people."

And Mary, the daughter of 'Imran, who guarded her chastity, so We blew into (her garment) through Our angel, and she believed in the words of her Lord and His scriptures and was of the devoutly obedient." 66:11

We need look no further than the incident of slander against Aisha to see an example of her unshakeable faith. When her parents told her the rumours and they had no other words for her, she said, "I cannot but repeat the words which the father of Prophet Yousuf had spoken: *'fa-sabrun jamil'*: I will bear this patiently with good grace."

And when the verses were revealed that declared her innocence, the first thing she said was, "Alhamdulillah." She didn't thank Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). She didn't tell her parents: "I told you so!"

While it is indeed honourable to be a wife and a mother, it is problematic to single out these roles as the honour of a woman. Once we do that, we've taken away her fundamental value that comes from her having faith (imân). This value that she has is independent from any role she may carry out.

"Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you." 49:13

Allah says:

“Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so – for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.”

What’s beautiful is that these are all characteristics, not roles!

And Allah says:

‘And whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while being a believer- those will enter Paradise and will not be wronged, (even as much as) the speck on a date seed.’

4:124

And “Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer – We will surely cause him to have a good life, and We will surely give them their reward (in the Hereafter) according to the best of what they used to do.” 16:97

So a Muslim woman is striving to please her Lord, even when fulfilling her roles as wife and mother. Her value is not placed in her servitude to her husband or her children, but to her Lord.

When we talk about men, we don’t say that they were created to take care of women and that’s it. So why do we tend to focus on the same for women?

We take a few hadith and the rest become irrelevant. We know the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) encouraged men to marry virgins, but looking at his (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) example, we see that he married women who were not virgins. He (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) didn’t see them as worthless.

When Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) explained why he married a previously married woman, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, “You have done well.” (Bukhari)

And he (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said,

“The one who looks after and works for a widow and for a poor person, is like a warrior fighting for Allah’s Cause or like a person who fasts during the day and prays all the night.” (Bukhari)

What if we took some hadith about men and made them the criteria to judge a man’s worth?

“The best of you are those who are best to their wives, and I am the best of you to my wives.” (Tirmidhi)

So what if a man doesn’t have a wife? Does that make him worthless? Does that make him the worst of men? Of course not.

On what basis do you then judge him? The same way we should value the women – *“Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you (who has the most taqwa).” 49:13*

Precious Pearls

Do not consider insignificant any good deed, even if it be meeting your fellow Muslim with a smiling face. (Muslim)

If the final hour approaches and in the hand of any of you there is a seed, if he is capable of planting it he should plant it. (Musnad Ahmad)

By Him in Whose Hand my life is, it is better to take a rope, cut wood, carry it and sell it rather than to ask others.” (Bukhari)

Debate

Preserve History *or* Support Expansion

In order to build the upper part of the walls of the Holy Ka'bah, Prophet Ibrahim stood on a large stone block, which he moved along each side until the Ka'bah was built. His son, Prophet Ismail, would hand stones up to him. When they had finished, the large stone remained close to the eastern side of the Ka'bah. Today, Maqam Ibrahim, also known as the Station of Abraham, stands in front of the door of the Ka'bah, which is where Prophet Ibrahim prayed after the construction was completed. Muslims pray behind Maqam Ibrahim after they circumambulate around the Ka'bah during Umrah or Haj. Tradition has it that when Prophet Ibrahim stood on the rock, it became as soft as clay and his feet sunk into the rock; leaving an impression of his feet on the rock which is still present to this day.

Eagerness and longing to see the Holy Ka'bah in all of its sublimity and to perform the pilgrimage draws millions of Muslims from around the world; with increasing numbers each year. During Haj season, the number of pilgrims in the Grand Mosque can reach over 4 million, necessitating the expansion projects that are currently underway. The expansion will facilitate movement and protect the lives of pilgrims, but some measures of this project are a cause for concern and are being heatedly

debated by many scholars and intellectuals; for example, re-positioning of Maqam Ibrahim. Al-Madinah newspaper went to the experts and professionals in architecture, Islamic history, and other fields, to investigate the validity and the proposed necessity of moving Maqam Ibrahim to another location as a means of reducing congestion. Dr. Sami Angawi, PhD holder in Islamic architecture and founder of the Haj Research Center and the Amar Center for Architectural Heritage, is passionately involved in preserving the Islamic architectural history of the two holy cities, Makkah and Madinah. Angawi said in the report, "Several studies prove that Maqam Ibrahim is not an obstacle in the motion of pilgrims, nor is it the cause of overcrowding that occurs in the tawaf (circumambulation) around the Holy Ka'bah. There is no imperative need to reposition Maqam Ibrahim."

According to Angawi, Maqam Ibrahim actually serves a beneficial function; it slows down and reduces the impact of the waves created by the influx of people circulating the Ka'bah. He likened the Maqam to a large boulder in the face of a torrential stream; the boulder slightly decreases the flow and the force of the current of the stream. He strongly urges keeping the Maqam in its place because of its

immense historical and spiritual significance and he views that moving it is an unnecessary human interference in the sanctity of this sacred place. "This is not an either or dilemma, between either preserving the Maqam or making it easier for pilgrims. It is not a choice between flesh or stone. There are solutions that can help in achieving both ends. It is not the Maqam that is causing crowding; it is the practice of pilgrims insisting on praying directly behind the stone that causes the problem," said Angawi. Directing people to pray at a safer and farther distance behind the Maqam can significantly ease the congestion.

Professor of Arab history at Umm Al-Qura University, Dr. Fawz Al-Dahhas, affirms the importance of preserving Maqam Ibrahim in its place; protecting an essential part of Islamic history. "The place where Maqam Ibrahim lies today is the same spot where it was situated at the time of Prophet Ibrahim, Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), the Rightly Guided Caliphs after him, and it has been there for over 14 centuries," said Al-Dahhas to Al-Madinah newspaper. From another standpoint, researcher Dr. Ahmed bin Qasim Al-Ghamdi sees no drawback in moving the Maqam and changing its place if this move will bring advantages for worshipers, in terms of facilitating the tawaf. "If there are benefits to be gained for the safety, comfort, and convenience of pilgrims as they perform the tawaf, and there are no clear and explicit instructions from Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon) or in the Holy Quran against moving Maqam Ibrahim, then I see no fault in repositioning the Maqam," said Al-Ghamdi to Al-Madinah newspaper.

Al-Ghamdi further states that during the life of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), Maqam Ibrahim had been in closer proximity to the Ka'bah and it was repositioned later by Caliph Omar ibn Al-Khattab to alleviate congestion around the Ka'bah and improve conditions for pilgrims. Some scholars believe that there is no Islamic legal prohibition in moving the stone of Ibrahim, if it accomplishes the purpose of protecting the lives of people. Sheikh Salih Al-Sadlan, professor in Islamic Law at Imam Muhammad ibn Saud University, was of the opinion that the position of Maqam Ibrahim in some instances has hindered the smooth movement of worshipers circling around the Ka'bah. Whether the Maqam will be moved or not is under speculation as more in-depth research and investigation is being conducted. Although Sadlan confirmed that Maqam Ibrahim is in its original place from the time of the noble Prophet Ibrahim, the safety of worshipers is of higher priority than the physical place of the Maqam.

Source: Saudi Gazette

Quotable Quotes

Within time: good/ bad matters occur, health/ illness, richness/ poverty. Time's value and preciousness cannot be measured.

(Fakhr al-Din Razi)

Abdullah Ibn Mubarak was asked, 'What would you do if you were inspired + knew you would die tonight? He said: Study knowledge'

Exercise a humble approach towards the teachers and students of religious knowledge.
(Hasan al-Basri)

"Whoever claims to love this world and its Creator at the same time has lied"

(Imam al-Shafi'i)

*Old Arabic Proverb:
"Live like brothers, deal like strangers"
Al Thammī says in this day it is, "Live with brothers and deal with strangers."*

Corruption

An Islamic Perspective

N. Badrudeen

In this materialistic world, we have become so busy and greedy about this world and we have become so ignorant of Allah's commands and the way of life.

As Muslims we strongly believe in the uncertainty of the time of our death, the Day of Judgment and life after death. Every soul is accountable to Allah for every action that they have done on this world.

The prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

The son of Adam will not pass away from Allah until he is asked about five things: how he lived his life, and how he utilized his youth, How did he earn his wealth, how did he spend his wealth, and what did he do with his knowledge." {Tirmidhi}

As a responsible parent, brother/sister we want the best for our families. We want to live a good life, have good education, earn the respect from family members and the others. Therefore, we do work or get involved in business. With that money we provide for our families and try to give them the very best. Since we live in a materialistic world, we constantly think of ways to make more money, without considering whether the money we earn is halal (allowed) or haraam (not allowed).

Nowadays bribery and corruption has become such a norm in our lives in many part of the world and we take part in it without

even thinking! This is WRONG and it's a big sin in Islam.

Corruption is the misuse of entrusted power for personal or private gain. Generally speaking, corruption exists when a person in power has the right to make decisions that concern others whose interests are at stake. The interested parties will try to find ways and means of getting what they want. One of the common ways is to offer the person in power certain favours so that the decision is made to his/her advantage. This could happen only if the decision maker is willing to accept the favour offered to him.

The problem becomes gigantic when corruption is practised openly. Those in power start demanding what they want and those who give are very open about it as well. Both parties have regarded it as a norm; they don't feel bad about it because everybody else is doing it anyway. Those who choose not do it are considered stupid.

Corruption is also said to be highly related to materialistic tendencies, which can be due to genuine needs caused by income or greed and the desire to live well beyond one's means. When this happens, it can easily lead to gross inefficiencies both financially and in productivity. Those involved will find ways and means of applying pressure on others whom they can prey upon, instead of providing genu-

ine service to such victims.

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) appointed a number of his companions as the collectors of zakat, during the Medina period. They were to make proper assessments on the items where zakat become payable, collect the proper amounts and distribute to the recipients in the same locality. One of these collectors of zakat came back and told the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), "This amount is what I have collected less what I have distributed to the rightful recipients, but this is mine". Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was very upset and rebuked him saying, "What right do you have to put aside something that does not belong to you. If you were to remain in your father's house, would you get what you are taking?"

Gifts to officials are a form of bribery. Justification for bribery is only one part of the problem. We have also desensitized ourselves to the concept of bribery. We have mixed it so well in our practices and given many names other than bribery. For example, doctors get bribed by pharmaceutical companies not in cash, but in form of other rewards (eg. gifts, meals, entertainment, research grants etc). The problem is that we've weaved bribery into the fabric of our society so intricately that we don't consider it abnormal. It is quite common for those intending to receive bribes to delay approval or payment process so that they can expedite the service in return for some bribes.

The people who take and give bribery have the following excuses:

1. If I don't pay bribe, my work will not get done on time.
2. I have to take bribe as my salary is not enough.
3. I have to bribe the decision maker in order to get the contract.
4. I didn't ask for money, but they offered it in a return of favour.

5. If I don't pay bribe, I will have to go to courts and waste lot of time and money.

6. I received only gifts not money

7. The list could go on and on...

Islam prohibits taking, giving bribery and warns all of those involved of hell fire. However, the Muslim scholars affirm that bribery is prohibited when it is aimed at consuming other's property or rights unfairly. Thus, if someone finds himself in a situation in which all avenues of redressing a wrong done him, or recovering a right which has been forfeited, are blocked except through the payment of a bribe, the sin of it will not be on him but on the recipient of the bribe.

"The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) cursed the one who offers the bribe and the one who receives it." (Tirmidhi)

We only think about our immediate benefits and fail to look at the bigger picture. As long as the bribery and corruption exists, the poor will remain poor; the problem of corruption is so serious, affecting all societies rich and poor. Corruption will increase poverty; and governments fail to improve the education system, fail to spend more on scientific research, fail to protect human rights, fail to eradicate poverty.

Allah says:

"And do not eat up your property among yourselves for vanities, nor use it as a bait for the judges, with intent that ye may eat up wrongfully and knowingly a little of (other) people's property". (2:188)

Abu Umamah Al-Bahli (RA) said that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"Whoever intercedes on behalf of his brother and therefore he offers him a gift, it would be nothing other than a grievous usury." (Abu Dawud)

Abdul Rahman ibn Auf (RA), the richest companions among the famous ten whom

the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had predicted will enter paradise, will have to account for all his wealth, the way he got and spent them, before being allowed to approach the gate of paradise. The other nine would have little wealth to account for and hence will speedily reach paradise. God knows best.

If someone consumes even a single morsel of Haraam food, his worship will not be accepted for a period of 40 days. The flesh that grows out of unlawful income has no place in the hereafter but hell How to stop this? 1. Be honest in your duties and do justice to all deserved. 2. When someone ask for or give you a bribe, think about your life after death. 3. Ask your husband/wife/daughter/son/brother/sister how they got any money that is unaccounted for and if it's from haraam, warn them and don't get involved

with it. 4. If every individual stop paying bribe, the receiving party gets affected. 5. If you love your country and your religion, then stop this shameful act. 6. Every change needs to start within; sooner or later millions will follow.

Are you an individual that stands for Integrity and Honour? Are you an individual that is committed to your values and beliefs? What if you die tomorrow? I want every individual to think. You may escape the legal system of your country. But you cannot escape from Allah on the Day of Judgment? If you want true success in this world and hereafter stop this shameful act and become a true Muslim. Allah will definitely bless you.

"Truly, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." (13:11)

*Letter of
Prophet Muhammad
(Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)
to Negus (Najashi) Calling him to Islam*

*"In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.
From Muhammad the Messenger of Allah*

to

Negus, king of Abyssinia (Ethiopia).

Peace be upon him who follows true guidance. Salutations:

I entertain Allah's praise, there is no god but He, the Sovereign, the Holy, the Source of peace, the Giver of peace, the Guardian of faith, the Preserver of safety. I bear witness that Jesus, the son of Mary, is the spirit of Allah and His Word which He cast into Mary, the virgin, the good, the pure, so that she conceived Jesus. Allah created him from His spirit and His breathing as He created Adam by His Hand. I call you to Allah Alone with no associate and to His obedience and to follow me and to believe in that which came to me, for I am the Messenger of Allah. I invite you and your men to Allah, the Glorious, the All-Mighty. I hereby bear witness that I have communicated my message and advice.

I invite you to listen and accept my advice.

Peace be upon him who follows true guidance."

The Prophetic Advice

Reliance On Allah

Mawlana Manzoor Noumani (ra)

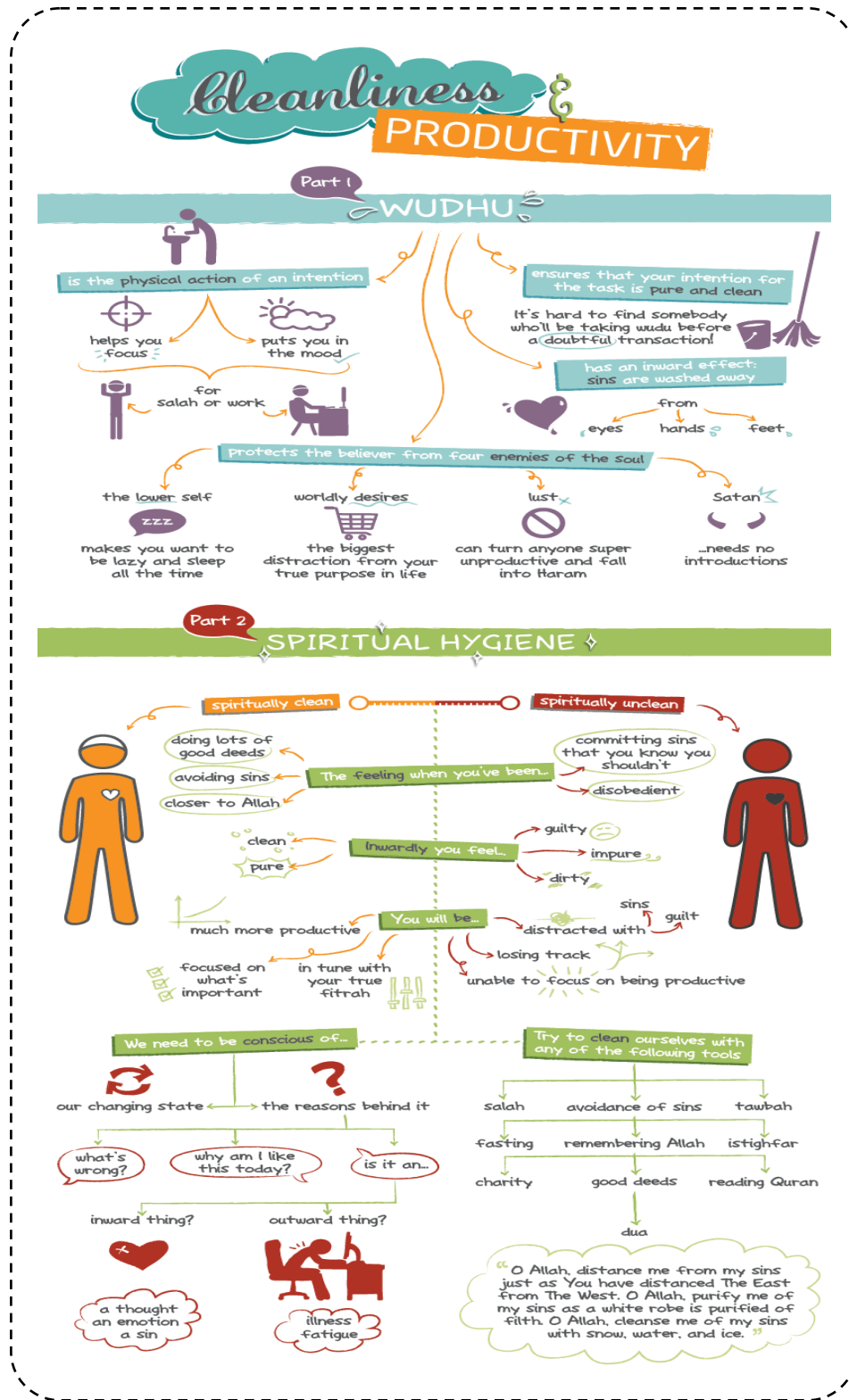
It is related by Abdullah ibn Mas'ud that the Messenger of Allah said, "There is nothing that takes you close to Heaven and away from Hell and I have not told you to observe it, and, in the same way, there is nothing that takes you close to Hell and away from Heaven that I have not told you to avoid it. (I have imparted to you the knowledge of all good and evil deeds, and taught you, in detail what is legitimate and what is forbidden, and conveyed to you all the positive and negative commandments of Allah that were revealed to me). And Rooh-ul-Amin, (the Trustworthy Spirit, and according to another report, Rooh-ul-Quddus the Holy Spirit, both of which denote Angel Jibril (AS)), has just brought to me the revelation that no loving creature dies until he has eaten up the sustenance decreed from him. (The appointed provision reaches everyone, without fail, before he dies, and death, in any case, cannot come until it is consumed). Thus, O People! Fear Allah and be honest and God-fearing in seeking your livelihood, and let not a little delay in sustenance induce you to try to obtain it through unlawful means and by transgression of the Law of Allah for what lies in the power of Allah can be obtained only through submission and obedience to Him." (Baghawi and Baihaqi)

Commentary:

The opening part is introductory. The holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), wanted to convey to his listeners what Jibril had instilled into his heart at that time, but in order to give a special force to what he was going to tell, he first, said that he had taught them all that there was to be taught concerning what was allowed and what was forbidden by Shari'ah, and now he wanted to inform them of a thing just revealed to him by Jibril which, in a nutshell, was that the sustenance of everyone had been determined beforehand and it was sure to reach him before he died, and thus a faithful bondsman should abstain from doing anything with regard to his livelihood that was displeasing to Allah, and if there was a delay or hardship in it, even then he should not act in violation of law decreed by Allah, but believing in the Almighty as the Great Provider of daily bread, try to earn it only through fair and legitimate means as the favour of Allah and His blessings could be gained only through submission.

Suppose a man is hungry and he has no money to buy food. At that moment he sees someone who is fast asleep, and the devil tempts him to steal his goods and go and sell them and purchase for himself something to eat. It is for such an occasion that the sacred

Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has taught that the bondsman should take it for granted that the provision that is to reach him shall reach him in any event. So, why should he incur the displeasure of the Lord, defile his soul and ruin his prospects in the world to come by committing theft? His aim and endeavour ought to be to earn his livelihood through honest means instead of despicable act like stealing. The scope for earning an honest living is not limited by any means.



Faceboasting

Is Social Media Making Muslims Self-Centered?

Faraz Omar

Several psychologists, psychotherapists and academics are voicing concerns over the disproportionate rise in narcissistic behavior among people. They say social media is, at the very least, worsening the trend, if not—like dope—drugging us with self-centeredness and self-love.

This shouldn't be surprising because the most dominant aspect of social networking appears to be the "selfie," which the Oxford English Dictionary recently declared "Word of the Year" for 2013.

Modern values of self-promotion, personal branding and self-absorption, or in other words "Me, Myself and I", that the 21st century has built itself upon is making us, say researchers quoting studies, increasingly self-obsessed, uncaring and lacking empathy for others.

While it has been claimed that this issue is turning into an epidemic in secular societies, I wonder how Muslims, with our pristine Islamic values, are coping with the social media dope.

But before we get there, let's read some comments I found that were uncannily precise in defining our behavior online:

"As one paper concluded, narcissists use Twitter "as a kind of technologically augmented megaphone: A means of amplifying one's

own perceived superiority to others." They use Facebook as "a technologically enhanced mirror, reflecting a preoccupation with one's own image, others' reactions to this image, and a desire to update the image as frequently as possible."

— Jean Twenge is a psychology professor at San Diego State University, co-author of "The Narcissism Epidemic" and author of "Generation Me."

"There are numerous articles that detail the negative effects of the constant perusal of Facebook, and I realize I'm subjecting myself to the derisive cries of the positive people who are simply sharing their amazing experiences in the hopes of improving everyone's existence, but enough is enough."

This self-indulgent phenomenon is becoming rampant in my profession, acting. The daily roll call of "Booked it!" and the seemingly pointless pictures of us while we're "On set!" can be excused by the need to self-promote, or the desire to celebrate one's self (an increasingly misinterpreted piece of today's self-esteem movement). But I like to use the term "faceboasting" for these thinly-veiled attempts to show the world that you're winning."

— Joe Holt is an actor who has appeared in "Grey's Anatomy," "N.C.I.S.," "Scandal," "Franklin & Bash" and many national television

commercial.

"Since narcissistic disturbance involves an intense need to gain recognition and admiration through some form of exhibiting one's self, social media allows for an endless opportunity to gain both the superficial attention that a narcissistic person may crave, as well as an easy avenue for manipulating one's image.

In the end, it is the healthy individual's responsibility to learn the warning signs and not be taken in by the grandiose pretensions and image manipulations of narcissistic individuals."

— Eleanor Payson is a psychotherapist and author of *"The Wizard of Oz and Other Narcissists: Coping with the One-Way Relationship in Work, Love and Family."*

"In many cases, the suggested cure for narcissistic behavior is "feeling good about yourself." (...) This is like suggesting that an obese person would feel much better if she just ate more doughnuts".

— Excerpted from *"The Narcissism Epidemic"* by Jean M. Twenge and W. Keith Campbell.

I find their observations succinct and accurate. If only they were presented with Islam! May Allah guide them. Ameen.

Allah, the Almighty God, has made the Quran and the example of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as the final and eternal source of guidance for mankind.

We will never go astray as long as we hold on to the Quran and Sunnah. In them is the light to every darkness, the solution to every problem and the answer to every question.

Not finding any Islamic focus on this topic, I could not help but turn to the life of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to understand how our behavior is meant to be.

I opened no book. Just thinking about the Prophet's life from the little knowledge I

have was enough to gather enough pearls of guidance:

- He lived with his people like their companion in spite of being their leader.
- Delegates would not be able to identify Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) from his companions in a gathering – no special seating, dress or behavior.
- He was smiling, cheerful and positive, yet he was humble, grounded and selfless. He cared for others more than himself.
- He did not brag about himself, his achievements and his qualities, despite being the best human the world has ever seen.
- He deflected attention from himself. He instructed Muslims to not praise him the way Christians do to Jesus, and to only call him a slave and messenger of Allah.
- He discouraged people from praising one another. He said praising a person was like cutting off his neck, and that it may be better to throw sand in the mouth of the person offering the praise.
- He conquered Makkah, the revered capital of Arabia. Yet he entered it lowering his head in so much humility that his chest almost touched the back of the camel he was riding.
- He did not cultivate self-promotion or celebrity-worship. Rather, his focus was only on calling people to Allah.

The Sahabah who were nurtured by the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) were no different. Abu Bakr (RA), the first caliph, would cook and clean for a blind, old woman. Umar (RA), the Amir of a large empire, would do manual labor to humble himself because he feared conceitedness.

They were special because they never thought they were anything special. They, of all people, feared if Allah would accept their good deeds.

Needless to say, I cannot recall any

examples of narcissistic or self-centered behavior in our role models. Even today I find the most sincerely caring individuals the least narcissistic. They do a lot yet consider themselves insignificant.

It is saddening therefore to see how we are losing some awesome people to the lure of 'faceboasting' and self-obsession.

This newfound realization was more than anything a much-needed reminder to check myself first:

☐ How justified am I that because I claim I am busy and special I have the excuse to not care, or have time, for those around me?

☐ When was it last that I spoke to relatives and found out about their lives?

☐ When was it last that I asked about the welfare of the brother who always asked after mine?

☐ How much interest have I taken in the lives of people close to me?

'Enough is enough!' is all I could tell myself.

Alhamdulillah for the blessing of having a perfect role model we can always look up to for guidance and rectifying ourselves.

While closing, I also hope this topic gets more attention from Muslim celebrities preachers who seem to be busy these days with, ah well, posting selfies;

But I do love them for the sake of Allah.

**Speech on Prophet Muhammad
(Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)
by Jabir bin Abi Talib's (RA) before
Ashamah Negus (also known as al-
Najashi), a Christian king.**

“O king! we were plunged in the depth of ignorance and barbarism; we adored idols, we lived in unchastity, we ate the dead bodies, and we spoke abominations, we disregarded every feeling of humanity, and the duties of hospitality and neighborhood were neglected; we knew no law but that of the strong, when Allah raised among us a man, of whose birth, truthfulness, honesty, and purity we were aware; and he called to the Oneness of Allah, and taught us not to associate anything with Him. He forbade us the worship of idols; and he enjoined us to speak the truth, to be faithful to our trusts, to be merciful and to regard the rights of the neighbors and kith and kin; he forbade us to speak evil of women, or to eat the substance of orphans; he ordered us to fly from the vices, and to abstain from evil; to offer prayers, to render alms, and to observe fast. We have believed in him, we have accepted his teachings and his injunctions to worship Allah, and not to associate anything with Him, and we have allowed what He has allowed, and prohibited what He has prohibited. For this reason, our people have risen against us, have persecuted us in order to make us forsake the worship of Allah and return to the worship of idols and other abominations. They have tortured and injured us, until finding no safety among them; we have come to your country, and hope you will protect us from oppression.”

(source: iqrasense)

Maximise Your Time

Taha Gayyur

Time is limited. Death is certain. However, our intention to live a productive life and to serve Allah (glorified and exalted be He) and His creation will itself be enough to count as a positive action.

If you study the seerah (life of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) with specific focus on his daily and regular routines, it is an eye-opener. How meticulous he was in planning every aspect of his day; how he prioritized tasks; how serious he was about keeping his word and how he kept his speech precise and not indulging in idle talk. He was the best of creation, Khayru-l-Khalq, and it is natural we should learn from his example. Below are five lessons on time-management that we can draw from the Prophet's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) enormously productive and purpose-driven life.

1. Be an Early Riser

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "O Allah, bless my nation in their early mornings (i.e., what they do early in the morning)." (Ibn Majah)

Schedule your important tasks earlier in the day, especially those which require mental exercise, and watch the barakah (blessings) from Allah (glorified and exalted be

He) do the magic. If you have problems staying up after Fajr, here's an article that discusses tips on how you can do just that. In a nutshell, they are:

- Go to bed early and rest
- Untie your three knots
- Perform the prescribed dhikr (remembrance of Allah (glorified and exalted be He)) after Fajr
- Aim to pray Duha
- Recite/reflect on/memorize Qur'an
- Exercise
- Have a list of tasks ready

2. Schedule Your Day Around the Five Daily Prayers

It was narrated that 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (RA) said: "I asked the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) which action is most beloved to Allah? He said: 'Establishing prayer on time, honoring one's parents and jihad in the cause of Allah.'" (Sunan an-Nasa'i)

Narrated Al-Aswad bin Yazid: I asked 'Aisha (RA) "What did the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) do at home?" She said, "He used to work for his family, and when he heard the adhan (call for the prayer), he would go out." (Bukhari)

No compromises. The discipline to

give up all your work and life's distractions to perform salah strengthens your willpower to live a purposeful life. Just as you endeavor to be punctual for meetings with your colleagues or project team mates, you should perform your salah on time.

While some of us who are students or working professionals may find it difficult to pray on time, we can overcome this by discussing the issue with your colleagues or friends. If you find yourself constantly finding pockets of time to perform your salah, your khusyu' will be affected. Performing your salah on time will energize you — once you have fulfilled your most important obligation, the rest will become easy for you.

3. Prioritize and Be Consistent

If we look into the seerah, we can deduce that the Prophet's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) day was divided into three main parts.

Spiritual development: This was the time he dedicated solely to Allah (glorified and exalted be He). It was typically the late part of the night when the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would recharge himself spiritually for the next day and boost his resolve to face the challenges in his mission. It was during the night that he engaged in intimate communication with his Lord, the Source of all strength and empowerment, through qiyam (night prayer), dua (supplication) and dhikr.

Family affairs: The prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was consistent in making time for family matters.

Anas ibn Malik (RA) said: "The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was the most merciful of people towards members of his family. He had his son (Ibrahim) suckled in part of Madina and the husband of his wet-nurse was a blacksmith. We used to go to him and the house would be

full of smoke from the bellows. He would kiss the child and take him in his lap." (Al-Adab Al-Mufrad)

Narrated 'Aisha (RA): that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "The best of you is the best to his wives, and I am the best of you to my wives, and when your companion dies, leave him alone." (Jami' at-Tirmidhi)

Personal/Social affairs: He consistently made time for his followers so no one felt neglected or had their affairs swept under the carpet. This was the time when men and women would come with their personal, marital, financial, spiritual and even health problems. This is when he would receive delegations from other nations and faith group or attend to nerve-racking issues of politics, conflicts and leadership.

Figure out the real priorities in your life. What is worth spending an hour on? What comes first? What is a must-do and what is good-to-do? Allocate time consistently to activities that matter. Unless you plan for and schedule time for community work, studies or attending to parents, your spouse or children on a daily basis, they are not considered important enough to you. Chances are, you will eventually start neglecting these high priority actions.

4. Hasten in Doing Good

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had a sense of urgency in doing good and warned others against procrastination.

Narrated 'Uqba bin Al-Harith (RA): Once the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) offered the Asr prayer and then hurriedly went to his house and returned immediately. I (or somebody else) asked him (as to what was the matter) and he said, "I left at home a piece of gold which was from the charity and I disliked to let it remain a night in my house, so I got it

distributed.” (Bukhari)

Abu Huraira (RA) reported Allah’s Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) having said: Hasten to do good deeds before six things happen: the rising of the sun from the west, the smoke, the Dajjal, the beast and (the death) of one of you or the general turmoil. (Muslim)

Procrastinators do not appreciate time nor the means and the opportunities that Allah (glorified and exalted be He) gives them to be productive. Each day has its own share of work and each time has its own share of obligations. Therefore, in the Prophet’s (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) life, there was no such thing as idle time. Use every single opportunity to do good. Don’t wait to ‘get old’ to fix your life. If you are not willing to live a purpose-driven, productive life now, then how do you expect to live such a life when you are old?

5. Honoring the Time of Others

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was sensitive to his companions’ (RA) time and needs. His khutbahs (sermons) were brief, concise and powerful.

Abu Wa’il reported: ‘Ammar (RA) delivered to us the sermon. It was short and eloquent. When he descended (from the pulpit) we said to him: You have delivered a short and eloquent sermon. Would that you had lengthened (the sermon). He said: I have heard the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as saying: The lengthening of prayer by a man and the shortness of the sermon is the sign of his understanding (of faith). So lengthen the prayer and shorten the sermon, for there is charm (in precise) expression. (Muslim)

Similarly, he emphasised the importance of fulfilling one’s promises.

Narrated Abu Sa’id Al-Khudri (RA): Some women requested the Prophet

(Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to fix a day for them as the men were taking all his time. On that he promised them one day for religious lessons and commandments. (Bukhari)

It is reported on the authority of Abu Huraira (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: Three are the signs of a hypocrite: when he spoke he told a lie, when he made a promise he acted treacherously against it, when he was trusted he betrayed. (Muslim)

Aim to arrive for meetings, classes and events 10 minutes before they are scheduled to start. If you are running late, inform the other parties. Honoring others’ time is part of fulfilling your promise. Breaking a promise not only causes inconvenience to others, but also causes you to lose their respect. The Qur’an says:

“... and fulfill (every) engagement, for (every) engagement will be inquired into (on the Day of Reckoning). (17:34)

Transforming your life into one that is much more productive, meaningful and enjoyable depends on one instantaneous decision: Managing your time the way our beloved Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) taught us. Start NOW!

The life of our Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was an example to us in every way. This article has looked at just a few of those. What time-management tips have you extracted from Prophet Muhammad’s (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) life? Please

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near Haram, told Arab News that he has been collecting such cut pieces and presenting them to visiting dignitaries from India. Mohammed Abdullah Bajada also welcomed visitors, who can visit the plant from 9:00 a.m. till noon to see the work. He said 130 specially trained employees are working on the Kiswa.

Saudi Gazette

Love

The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) ran home to Khadija (RA) and said, "Cover me, cover me!" Khadija (RA) held her frightened husband close in her comforting arms. With her warmth and soothing words, she reassured him that she did not have a doubt he was the blessed by Allah, (exalted is He). She said to him words that would be recorded in the books of Islamic narrations forever: "By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you. You uphold the ties of kinship, speak truthfully, help the poor and destitute, serve your guests generously and assist those who are stricken by calamity." (Bukhari, Muslim)

Years after Khadija (RA) passed away, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) still remembered her love for him, proclaiming that he would always be indebted to her: "She believed in me when people denied me, she trusted me when people belied me; she supported me with her wealth when people refused to support me and I was blessed with children by her when I was denied children by other women." (Ahmad)

Allah decreed that Khadija (RA) would be from those who supported the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and the establishment of His religion. They say that behind every successful man there is a supporting woman. Khadija's (RA) love and faith in the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is what gave him

strength at the beginning of his message. With her reassurance, the Prophet went on to fulfill his prophecy. And thus - Islam emerged upon the most beautiful love story of all time. This shows us the place of love in Islam, and the permissibility of its manifestation within marriage.

We all want love. We want the kind of love that, when our world falls apart, we can turn to that 'Khadija-esque' person who will hold us close to ease our mind and heart while we are going through times of despair. We want someone who will never give up on us; who will strive to see us succeed; and who will be willing to make sacrifices to see us happy. However, is what we want what we actually need?

The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) greatly benefited from the love of Khadija (RA). She gave him provisional and emotional support. This is the love that human beings crave for by nature. At times, it is vital to have someone love you; to have someone believe in you with full faith when the whole world turns its back on you. However, many of us cannot find that love in one specific person.

You may find yourself all alone with no one to love you and with no one to turn to. You may find your world crashing down, with no person to hold you up, wipe your tears, and hear you out. Don't fret. You may long for that person at the time, but you don't necessarily

need them just yet. You have Allah and in Him you can find everything you wish for and need. Allah is the one who gave the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) what he needed when it was best for him. He didn't always have Khadija (RA), but he always had and still has Allah.

We tend to rely upon the means, and forget who facilitates the means for us. Allah is the One who willed for Khadija (RA) to propose to the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). When a person puts their trust in Allah, He provides for them from means that never crossed their imagination. He was a devout believer, while everyone else around him associated partners with Allah. He was steadfast in his beliefs and had the best of character; thus Allah gave him exactly what he wanted at the moment he needed it the most. If we abide by the Prophet's example, Allah will give and take in our life accordingly, and Allah knows what is best for us. Allah says, "... We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein." [Qur'an 50:16]"And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me..." [Qur'an 2:186]

Get to know your Lord, and strive to get closer to Him. Make a sincere effort to build your relationship with Allah. We all know we cannot depend on anyone or anything in this world. And so, when your world comes falling down, and you don't have what you want, know that you will always have what you need. You need Allah, and He is always there for us no matter what. When Allah puts you through a hardship, know that every cloud has a silver lining. While in the moment we may not understand why things happen, we at least need to realize they don't happen without reason. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "Whoever Allah wants good

for him, he puts them to the test. He puts them through difficulties; like a diamond or gold that has to be burnt after which anything bad from it is removed so that what you have is the pure diamond or the pure gold." (Bukhari, Muslim)

Allah deprives us in order to give something better; something more. The longer we do not have what we want, the more we invoke upon Him in order to receive. All the while He elevates us, and brings us closer and closer to Him. He strengthens our iman to such an extent, that when we finally get what we want, we are not as excited as we would have expected. This is because, what we truly wanted all along was Allah, and our nearness to Him gives us satisfying bliss that is bigger than our wants and desires.

When some people get what they want, they immediately neglect their Lord. So, if Allah does not give you what you want, take it as a sign to strengthen your connection with him. Allah says, "But if We give him a taste of favor after hardship has touched him, he will surely say, 'Bad times have left me.' Indeed, he is exultant and boastful..."-[Qur'an 11:10]

Allah loves you so much, He wants to make sure you have such strong faith, that when He does give you what you always yearned for, you will not disregard your Lord and thus suffer with worldly gain. Allah follows that verse with, "Except for those who are patient and do righteous deeds; those will have forgiveness and great reward." [Qur'an 11:11]

Even if your sins pile up to the sky, Allah says, turn to Him and He will be there for us. His mercy is greater than any sin ever committed. Allah says "...My mercy encompasses all things." [Qur'an 7:156] Allah also says reassuringly, "I am as My servant thinks I am, and I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me to himself, I remember him to Myself; and if he remembers Me in a gather-

ing, I remember him in a gathering better than it. If he draws near to Me a hand's span, I draw near to him an arm's length; if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a fathom's length; and if he comes to Me walking, I go to him with haste." (Bukhari, Muslim)

There is no one who can love us more than Allah. Open your heart, and allow the love of the One who created you to enter where it belongs. Love Him more than you love anyone, and trust Him more than you trust anyone.

Finally, take notice that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not chase women, money, or any matter in this world. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) made

strenuous efforts to get closer to his Lord, and Allah sent to him the best of provisions. Prophet Yusuf (AS) was from the most beautiful of men, with women throwing themselves at him, yet he remained patient. He strived for Allah, and Allah honored him with countless glad tidings. When you start to seek out only for Allah, your world begins to fall into place. Know that it is possible to find true love in this life and to live a beautiful love story like the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and Khadija (RA). But heed that true love cannot exist unless it is for the sake of Allah. We love for His sake because we ultimately want to be with our Beloved, our Lord, and our Creator.

Source: SuhaibWebb

Lessons from the Lives of the Pious

The Incident of Shah Abdul Haadi Amrohi (ra)'s Contentment

Once, a yogi came to visit Shah Abdul Haadi Amrohi (RA). He found him living in abject poverty whilst many guests frequented his home. The yogi, feeling sorry for Shah Sahib, mentioned to him that he possessed the knowledge of alchemy (converting metal into gold) which he wished to impart to him. He then showed him the method by practically demonstrating it to him. When he gave Shah Sahib (RA) the formula, he asked him to place it on the shelf. The yogi placed it there and departed.

After a year, the yogi returned thinking to himself that Shah Sahib must be living in a large mansion, but to his utter surprise, he found him in exactly the same condition as before. The yogi quite surprised, asked him, "Did I not give you a copy of a formula for changing metal into gold? What happened to it?" Shah Sahib (RA) replied, "I think you left it on the shelf." The yogi went to the shelf, picked it up and handed it over to Shah Sahib (RA) who said, "I was feeling ashamed to ask Allah to transform metal into gold for me."

When the yogi heard this, he requested Shah Sahib to return the formula to which he very willingly acceded. As the yogi was leaving, Shah Sahib (RA) called him back and said, "I also have a special recipe with me and that recipe is contentment." When Shah Sahib said this, the yogi replied, "There is no formula greater than that."

(Malfoozaat of Faqeeh-ul-Ummat Vol 2 Pg 472)

The Fertile Intersection of Science and Faith

The debate over science and religion - whether they're compatible or whether they're irrevocably at odds with one another - has been waged for quite some time now. Some of the loudest voices - most recently in a Slate article by Jerry A. Coyne titled "No Faith in Science" - have been dogmatic in their adherence to the belief that there is no room in science for faith.

Such dogmatism strangely enough sounds an awful lot like religious fundamentalism - blanket assertions that leave no room for doubt or deviation from rigid doctrine.

And it's also not necessarily true or beneficial. There are plenty of people who believe strongly that science and faith aren't just compatible but that to solve some of the largest problems facing today's world they must work together.

People of faith though presently a minority have long been well represented within the natural sciences. This is true not just historically - Copernicus Galileo and Newton were all devout Christians - but in contemporary times too. Writing for the C.S. Lewis Foundation Robert C. Fay shows that Michael Faraday, James Joule, Lord Kelvin and James Clerk Maxwell for example were all devout Christian believers. In the 20th Century the astronomer Arthur Eddington Charles Towns and William Phillips Nobel laureates in physics and Francis

Collins the director of the Human Genome Project have publicly affirmed their belief in God.

Islam also has a long history of great scientists from the ancient mathematician Omer Khayyam to the modern day chemist Omar M. Yaghi.

There are many organizations exploring and developing the conciliatory "science and religion" movement. Starting in the mid-90s the Berkeley-based Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences has hosted conferences on the confluence of science and faith. Pepperdine University has hosted its Christian Scholars Conference which studies the intersections of faith and science for over thirty years. Since 2001 Calvin College has hosted lectures on "Christian Perspectives in Science" which has featured a wide range of speakers - climate scientists from the University of Washington agronomists from Purdue the leader of Christian Reformed World Relief Committee - who have discussed the ways that science and faith can work together to combat climate change hunger and poverty.

Recently in November 2013 The Fountain hosted a conference in Istanbul that brought together religious scholars and scientists - a former Boeing engineer turned rabbi; a devout Muslim who is also a rocket scientist at MIT - to discuss a similar range of issues. The

speakers elaborated on the ways that science and faith support one another instead of the ways they conflict. Ozgur Koca an adjunct professor at Claremont College explained that faith is a way of viewing the entire world as sacred and is thus an injunction to both study the world and protect it.

Why when so many people are advocating for a more unified approach are the voices opposing such co-operation given so much attention?

In some ways the question is one of context and definition. In Western science which has mostly developed in countries where the separation of church and state is a codified part of life this binary view of major systems is quite common. But in many other cultures this binary doesn't exist. It's entirely possible that scientific research which has mostly flourished in the wealthier countries in North America and Europe has been affected by this cultural tendency towards "separation."

This is not to say that there aren't major differences some of which may be irreconcilable. It also isn't fair to make false equivalencies. Natural science based on meticulous observation and rigorous examination of the material world is different than the faith that one feels when contemplating the larger meaning of the universe and the metaphysical texts that explore this meaning. But is it unrealistic to think that one could and maybe even

should support the other?

Let me put it more simply: would a believer hesitate to use an antibiotic developed by an atheist? Do scientists discount the work of the human genome project because Francis Collins said "When something new is revealed about the human genome I experience a feeling of awe at the realization that humanity now knows something only God knew before?"?

There are serious problems that we as a human species are facing: climate change and hunger on a massive scale crippling wars and crushing poverty. Many people of science and faith are motivated by the same underlying desire - to begin solving these problems and to make this world a better more humane place. Christian aid organizations can use modern agronomy to help improve crop yields in Africa. Muslims can use their faith as an impetus to study scientific means for developing more sustainable forms of energy production.

It's possible or even likely that devout scientists and devout believers won't agree on the very biggest questions of the universe - its origins and ultimate fate. In the meantime those of us in the vast middle - people who possess some kind of religious faith and also an acceptance of scientific discoveries - can utilize both to improve the very small slice of that universe we actually inhabit. Instead of a dangerously exclusive dichotomy we can practice a productive respectful unity.

Say No to Music

Hadhrat Abu Maalik Ash'ari (radhiyallahu anhu) says that he heard Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) say: "Most certainly, there will be in my Ummah people who will make lawful fornication, silk, liquor and musical instruments." (Bukhaari)

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "Most certainly, people from my Ummah will consume liquor which they will describe with some other name. Over their heads will be playing musical instruments and singing girls. Allah will cause the earth to swallow them, and from among them He will transform into apes and pigs." (Ibn Maajah)

Medina Charter and Pluralism

The Medina Charter serves as an example of finding resolve in a dispute where peace and pluralism were achieved not through military successes or ulterior motives but rather through respect, acceptance, and denunciation of war ..

Sean William White

Cont'd from previous issue

The Medina Charter is arguably the first constitution ever written incorporating religion and politics (Yildirim 2006, 109–117). And even though the politics of the region have changed since it was written – in recent times for the worst – Islam’s values have continued to spread and are lived throughout the whole Muslim world. Despite the hold of power that some governments still have over their people, the true face of Islam shines through in how people live, communicate, and approach life. I speak from personal experiences when I traveled through Iran, Turkey, and Northern Iraq in January, 2009. And despite what the media had to say about the people in those lands, my time there was spent in the houses of complete strangers, who showered me with hospitality that transcended any I had experienced before. Although the governing body has changed, the points of the Medina Charter and tenets of Islam preached by Prophet Muhammad still exist amongst the

people. My heritage was accepted with curiosity and respect – just as the Prophet implemented in Medina between the tribes. My place in the society was welcomed with honest enthusiasm, and I felt a part of a community – like the community that Prophet implemented in Medina. I was exposed to mainstream Islam, which we hear so little about in the West due to the confusion which unjustly joins Islam and extremism together. I saw tolerant Muslims who saw me as another person who wanted peace and respect – not treachery. This is what the Prophet also accomplished in Medina – a community which was not based upon religion or ethnicity but one built on unity and acceptance. One built on tolerance. One built on peace. It seems the Prophet was aware that spirituality and faith cannot be governed, and for this reason alone, he sought unity and respect as opposed to discriminating between tribes and their beliefs.

In contemporary times, an analysis of the Medina Charter can give us insight into

Islam and religious pluralism (Sachedina 2001). Medina marked the first real occurrence of coexistence between religions and groups in Islam and mirrors the Quran which “in its entirety provides ample material for extrapolating a pluralistic and inclusive theology of religions” (Sachedina 2001, 26). The Quran is the unquestionable and the absolute; therefore, it is the key to understanding religious pluralism in Islam. Clause 39 of the Medina Charter says, “The valley of Yathrib is sacred for the people of this document” (Sajoo 2009, 97). And so too is the universe, which is sacred to all of humanity. The Quran reveals that “the people are one community” (2:213), so if we are one (which we are) in the world, in the universe, then regardless of religion, it is God’s mercy and compassion which will save us. By differentiating between beliefs, we neglect that under one sun we all pray to a greater entity, a greater being. We were all created by God, so unity seems imperative and practical.

The Medina Charter is very relevant to current tensions existing between the Muslims, Jews, and Christians. Unfortunately, it seems that ignorance and fear, suspicion and disrespect plague the interaction and stereotypes that exist between these three great Abrahamic religions. In the post-September 11th era, a new wave of antagonism has arisen, and people around the Western world generally fear Islam. Sadly, people confuse the actions of nationalists and fundamentalists, who so unjustly hide behind a Holy Book claiming that their intentions are those of God, with what the actual religion promotes. As Rumi believed, the essence of all religions is the same, for they all teach love. The deep philosophical and even deeper spiritual teaching of Rumi is based on a state of mind that seeks mutual vision and dialogue, which I hope will be achieved one day, breaking down the polarized world of different religious thought.

Another verse of the Quran emphasizes this need for dialogue, unity, and tolerance: “Surely this community of yours is one community, and I am your Lord; so worship Me” (21:92).

The Prophets action’s in Medina prompt us to use reason in our approach to the wide, diverse beliefs of the world – from Europe to Asia, North, Central, and South America to Africa and everything in between. It prompts us to understand how “the spiritual space of the Quran [...] was shared by other religions” (Sachedina 2001, 23). Such an understanding reveals that Islam is a monotheistic religion that respects the rights of other faiths (Stewart 1994, 207). In a globalized world where we are connected so easily, unlike any other period in history, our mutual understanding of one another and our beliefs are the most important means to achieve peace and stability. It is in a contemporary sense, in a globalized world, that the Medina Charter is of such necessity. Inter-religious discussions took place with the Prophet in Medina, for Boase writes about a time when Christians performed their prayers in a mosque after a meeting with the Prophet during their visit (Boase 2005, 252). We can learn how in every country, a community, an ummah, is the single most effective way to produce a pluralistic state. The Medina Charter was a fusion of attributes which all world religions teach: peace, love, freedom, acceptance, and tolerance – resulting in stability.

Peace was achieved in Medina, not through the might of arms or the scale of wealth, but through the unyielding principles of Islam – tolerance, love, reason, and a belief in God – whether the God in the Bible, the Quran, or the Torah. The Medina Charter, arguably the first charter ever written, shows that Islam rejects the use of compulsion in religion and violence and that over centuries of

human existence, the most effective way to resolve conflicts comes through mediation. The Medina Charter is an example that should be discussed and referred to in current conflicts. The creation of a community, or ummah, offers pluralism to everyone. For people are not judged on their beliefs, but on their actions. Persecution is the instigator of all tensions, and reason and tolerance is the essence of all peace. Just as in the streets of Medina, through tolerance and respect, we too may one day have a world-wide ummah, where a passing Christian will say, "Peace be upon you" to a Muslim, who will reply, "Peace be upon you too."

REARING AND TRAINING CHILDREN

1. *Inculcate aversion in the child for falsehood, greed, envy, pride, hatred and all evil attributes. Monitor the child's development and constantly advise, admonish and reprimand him/ her.*
2. *Do not scream at children. Point out their wrongs and explain the evil as best as you can.*
3. *Never punish the child in a state of anger. If the child requires punishment for a misdemeanour, devise a suitable punishment and administer it after anger has subsided. Do not punish children simply to cool your anger. To do so is an act of injustice.*
4. *Discourage the child from excessive speech and loud laughter.*
5. *Whenever the child commits a misdeed or misbehaves, immediately call him/ her to attention.*
6. *Punish the child if he/ she fights with another. Do not overlook such misdeeds. Ignoring a child's perpetration of bullying tactics is tantamount to destroying your child.*
7. *Create in the child the habit of rising early.*
8. *At the age of seven ensure that the child performs Salaat regularly. By the age of ten if he/ she has not yet developed the habit of performing Salaat regularly, mete out suitable punishment. It is essential to ingrain the practice of regular and punctual Salaat in the child from an early age.*
9. *Never permit your children to read comics, picture-magazines or other similar western books and magazines which corrupt morals and character.*
10. *Encourage children to read good Islamic books.*

(The Jamiatul Ulama of South Africa)

Happenings

Qur'an Oasis among 13 cultural projects for Madinah

MADINAH Madinah Emir Prince Faisal Bin Salman has announced 13 permanent cultural and academic projects aimed at strengthening Madinah's position as the permanent capital of Islamic culture. The projects are mainly the outcome of the proposals and suggestions that came up for consideration during the ongoing year-long celebrations following Madinah's selection as the Islamic Culture Capital for 2013. Prince Faisal, who is also Chairman of the Supreme Committee to organize events to celebrate the occasion, said that the projects include the Qur'an Oasis, which will make Madinah the Islamic Cultural and Da'wa Center with a special focus on Qur'an studies. The Oasis is part of a serious attempt to regain the historic, cultural and heritage identity of Madinah.

Quba Cultural Center is another project that represents a religious, cultural and social center in Quba region. The center will house several museums, academic centers and libraries. The third project is the Madinah Welcome Center that will serve to welcome pilgrims, visitors and tourists to the Prophet's City. The other projects include developing King Abdul Aziz Library and the Haram Library, Exhibition on Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), Exhibitions on the Prophet's battles, Manuscript Heritage Center, Civil Dis-

trict showcasing the past and heritage of Madinah at King Fahd Garden, Center for Islamic architectural studies, expansion of the Hejaz Railway Station Museum, Madinah Center for Studies and Researches, Center for Translation, Center for Contemporary Islamic Art.

Saudi Gazette

Sydney women reverting to Islam

Admiring the way Islam treats women; Julia Moukhallalati, a Sydney young woman, challenged her parent's Orthodox Christian upbringing to revert to Islam. "My parents pushed me to be Orthodox but they never had answers to my questions," Moukhallalati, 22, told Australia's The Sunday Telegraph, on January 19. The young woman, who reverted to Islam four years ago when she was only 18, asserted that she has always been fascinated with Islam and the way it puts women on a pedestal. "As soon as I started studying it I knew I had to be a part of it," she said. "I loved how a woman was treated. She is treated like a rare diamond, she is honored in the family."

According to the Australian New Muslim Association, Moukhallalati is one of almost one hundred people who revert to Islam in Sydney each year. Australian Muslim Women's Association head Silma Ihram herself reverted to Islam during a trip to Indonesia in 1976 at 24. The association estimates two-thirds of the converts they see each year are female, with

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more than 60 per cent converting because of their husbands or partners. This was not the case for Moukhallalati who found Islam before meeting her Lebanese-Australian husband Raed. Seeing him for the first time while asking about halal meat in a restaurant, they married just three months later. Muslims, who have been in Australia for more than 200 years, make up 1.7 percent of its 20-million population. Islam is the country's second largest religion after Christianity. Defending her new faith, Moukhallalati believes it was her duty to spread the true word of Islam by correcting misconceptions long associated with it. "It's pretty sad. There are some Muslims who are extreme, but I believe in moderation," she said.

"It's the best thing I have done, but make sure they (converts) go to the right source. A lot of information on the internet could not really be what Islam teaches. "You want to learn the truth as Islam is, not how some people portray it to be." Moukhallalati added that she loves her Islamic headscarf, or hijab, giving her more pride and beauty. "I put in more pride and effort with the scarf on," she said. "Now that I'm scarfed I feel more beautiful." Islam sees hijab as an obligatory code of dress, not a religious symbol displaying one's affiliations.

Saudi Gazette

Dubai's Holy Qur'an park to open in 2015

Dubai's Holy Qur'an Park, with only trees and plants mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, is expected to be completed by September next year, municipal officials said on Sunday.

The AED 26 million park in Al-Khawaneej will have 13 gardens and cover 64 hectares.

Hussain Nasser Lootah, director general of Dubai Municipality said on Sunday the General Projects Department of Dubai Municipality

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has commenced the third stage of the project.

"The park is one of the prestigious projects of the civic body and not only the UAE, but also the entire tourism world is waiting to visit the park," he added. "The park has been especially designed in the Islamic perspective to introduce the miracles of the Holy Qur'an through a variety of surprises for the visitors."

The area allocated for this will feature an air-conditioned tunnel to explain miracles and related stories.

Mohamed Noor Mashroom, director of general Projects Department, said: "We will include all available plants mentioned in the Holy Qur'an along with facilities such as an attractive main entrance, an administrative bloc, Islamic gardens, children's play areas, an Umrah corner, areas showing miracles of the Qur'an, fountains, bathrooms, a glass building, a desert garden, a palm oasis, lake, a running track, a cycling track and a sandy walking track."

"The plants mentioned in the Qur'an are 54 that include fig, pomegranate, olive, corn, leek, garlic, onion, lentil, barley, wheat, ginger, pumpkin, watermelon, tamarind, banana, cucumber and basil. The planting of 31 items is already done, and the remaining items will be planted in the third stage. Three plants are not available anywhere," Mashroom added.

"A lake in the middle of the park will give a real feeling of an oasis surrounded by fascinating trees and sands for the visitors."

Arab News

Kiswa factory manager seeks modern technology

Kiswa factory manager seeks modern technology Mon, 27 Jan 2014 19:10:15 AST Saudi Gazette | HA/IINA - Makkah The historical factory that manufactures the Kiswa, the covering for

the Holy Kaaba in Makkah, is exploring the possibility of importing state-of-the-art technology from the US, Japan, Switzerland, Italy and Germany, to upgrade its facility in keeping with modern times. Mohammed Abdullah Bajada, manager of the factory, said the factory had set up a committee to study the modernization process including cladding, sewing and embroidery of the Kiswa. The move follows directives of the Presidency of the Two Holy Mosques Affairs, the manager said. "An exclusive meeting was held recently to evaluate the strategy for modernization of the plant in which various stakeholders including the Bin-ladin Group participated," he said.

On July 1, 1927, King Abdulaziz ordered the construction of a special factory to be exclusively devoted to the manufacture of the Kiswa in Ajyad district in Makkah Al-Mukarramah. This factory, which was built on an area of 1,500 square meters, was the first of its kind to be set up in Makkah. The Holy Kaaba represents the Qibla, or the direction in which Muslims all around the world face to perform their prayers. The covering of the Holy Kaaba is known as the Kiswa, and it is one of the most important signs of respect and veneration in the House of Allah. Its history is as much part of the history of the Holy Kaaba itself.

Since the Kaaba was first built by Ibrahim and his son Ismail, the Kiswa passed through many stages, and it was not always as we see it today. Throughout its long history, the form and design of the Kiswa evolved following numerous social and economic factors related to particular historical periods. In continuation of the care of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), his caliphs and Muslim rulers throughout the ages, a transition in the manufacture of the Kiswa took place during the Saudi era.

When the factory was being set up,

the Kingdom procured all the materials required to manufacture the Kiswa, including silk, dyes and looms, besides recruited the workforce. In 1962, King Saud ordered that a house to manufacture the Kiswa should be set up in Makkah. Later in 1977, the new Kiswa factory at Umm Al-Jud in Makkah was inaugurated during the reign of King Khaled, although the ground-breaking ceremony took place during the era of King Faisal.

This new factory incorporates departments devoted to various operations involved in the manufacture of the Kiswa, including dyeing and weaving the silk, embroidering the inscriptions with which the Kiswa is adorned, and putting together the different sections of the Kiswa. About 200 artisans combine their talents to manufacture the Kiswa, in addition to the factory's administrative staff, which was placed under the supervision of the General Presidency of the Two Holy Mosques in 1993. About 670 kg of pure silk is required to weave the Kiswa, which is then dyed black.

The thickness of the silk cloth should be 1.37 mm, and it is lined on the inside by strong white cotton cloth.

Various inscriptions are woven into the fabric of the Kiswa in black in a manner that they encompass its complete surface. Verses from the Holy Qur'an and expressions mentioning the date of the Kiswa are also woven onto it with gold thread. At present, the exterior Kiswa of the Kaaba is replaced once a year. The interior of the Kaaba is also adorned with a green Kiswa which is replaced only occasionally, as it is not exposed to nature's elements, which ensures its preservation for a longer period of time. Before replacing, the old Kiswa is cut into pieces and presented to leaders of Muslim countries, diplomats and major institutions around the world. One such piece was presented to the UN. Mohammed Akbar, an Indian expatriate working

Blameworthy Morals

Hirs

Maulana Maseeh-Ullah Khan (RA)

Allah says:

“Do not raise your eyes towards the glitter of the worldly life which We have granted to various groups among them (kuffaar).”

Rasulullah (saws) said:

“The son of Aadam ages while two things of his grow younger, viz., greed for wealth and greed for (longer) life.”

THE NATURE OF HIRS

The engrossment of the heart with wealth, etc. is hirs. Hirs is the root of all spiritual ailments. It is, therefore, proper to describe it as the mother of all maladies. All mischief and strife are the consequences of this lowly attribute. It is because of hirs that people plunder and usurp the rights of others. The basis of immorality is the lust for bestial pleasure. The root of all akhlaaq-e-razielah is this very hire.

All the aarifeen (Auliya of Allah) maintain that the foundation of akhlaaq-e-razielah is kibr (pride) and kibr is synonymous with the desire for fame. Thus, the basis of kibr too is hirs.

If man possesses two valleys filled

with gold and silver, by nature he will desire a third. The more the demands of greed are satisfied, the greater will be its demands. Greed is like one afflicted with rash. The more he scratches, the worse the rash becomes. Allah Ta'ala says:

“What! Is there for man everything he desires?”

In other words, it is not possible for man to fulfil all his desires. It is for this reason that the harees (the one who has greed) has no peace of mind. Nothing besides soil (i.e. the grave) can satiate his greed. Before a wish can attain fulfilment, another develops. When one is not contented with taqdeer, one is smitten by a multitude of desires and hopes, the fulfilment of which is most difficult. The result of non-fulfilment of desire is frustration and worry. The harees inspite of perhaps possessing wealth in abundance and enjoying luxury, is perpetually afflicted with frustration.

THE REMEDY

Reduce expenditure. This will diminish concern and yearning for more earnings. Forget about the future and bear in mind that the harees always is contemptible.