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RADIANT REALITY

Published from Srinagar, Mar 2016, Volume 17, Issue 03.

**“Kindness is a mark of faith,
And whoever is not kind has no faith”**

(Muslim)

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Regd. No.: JKENG/2000/4174,

Published From Srinagar. Mar. 2016. Vol.17, No: 03.

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

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Subscription:

Yearly: Rs 240/-
+ Postage:
Rs. 60 (Normal Post)
Rs. 240 (Regd. Post)

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Question Answer

Question

My question is related to Bayah of a woman in Islam. My Wife has taken Bayah from a shaikh. She is very crazy to learn Tasawwuf. She says that to learn tasawwuf, I can meet my shaikh any time either in day or night and I shouldn't have any obligation on it. She also says that if I will resist she can demand DIVORCE even. I know the Shaikh and I have also taken Bayah from him. I have discussed this issue with Shaikh and he says that if she wants to see me alone, I should not resist and he will allow my wife to do so according to shariah. I am very disturb and don't know what to do. I am scared that if I say some hard words, our shaikh might angry on it. Please guide me in this regards.

Answer

The essence of Tasawwuf is Ihsaan, which means Allah consciousness. A person becomes ever conscious of the laws of Allah in every aspect of life. One can never achieve any heights in Tasawwuf while violating the laws of Allah. It is therefore important that the spiritual guide (Shaikh) himself strongly adheres to Shariah. If he violates the laws of Shariah, he cannot be an ideal role model for his followers. His guidance will lack spiritual light (ruhaniyyah).

According to Shariah, a woman cannot be alone with a ghair-mahram male. Rasulullah (SAWS) said,

Ibn `Abbas (RA) narrates: The Prophet

(SAWS) said, "No man should stay with a woman in seclusion except in the presence of a Mahram..." [Sahih al-Bukhari]

The Shaikh is a ghair-mahram. Your wife cannot be alone with him.

According to the above quoted Hadith, such a union is contaminated with the evils of Shaitan. How can one attain spiritual effulgence through such a meeting? In this era of moral degeneration, one should exercise extreme precaution. A mere curtain separating a ghair-mahram man and woman sitting alone too is not free from fitnah.

If a woman wishes to receive spiritual guidance and general advice, in this age of technology, that is very easy. She could email her spiritual guide rather than seeing him alone.

We have come across many incidents where Shaitan misled a 'Shaikh' with his female Mu-reeds. Furthermore, according to Shariah, the right of the husband precedes the right of the Shaikh. It is incorrect for the Shaikh to override the right of the husband and advise him against his will to let his wife see him.

The wifes attitude of wanting divorce if she cannot see the Shaikh requires reformation. Her Shaikh should advise her that Allah said, And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance... [Surah al-Ahzab:33]

Her Shaikh should advise her to obey her husband and in obeying the laws of the Shariah, she will get close to Allah. If the Shaikh facilitates her un-Islamic demands, then he is also

guilty of violating the laws of Allah. He cannot be a means of leading people close to Allah. He is actually distancing his followers from Allah.

M. Bilal

Question

Salaah is compulsory on a person from the time of maturity. But how does one determine maturity?

Answer

The maturity (Buloogh) of a male is determined by him experiencing a wet dream (Ihtilaam) or ejaculation (Inzaal).

The maturity (Buloogh) of a female is determined by her experiencing a wet dream (Ihtilaam) or menstruation (Haidh).

If a male or female does not experience the signs of maturity (Buloogh) stated above, they would automatically be classified as mature (Baaligh) at the age of fifteen lunar years (approximately 14.7 solar years). (Shaami 6/153)

Mufti Ismae

Question

I have someone very special in my life and he is everything that I have asked Allah for. I have read istikhaarah and it was positive. He has also read but hasn't got an answer. However, he feels very positive. The thing is his parents do not want to accept me. I do not want him to choose his parents over me.

Since we are happy with one another, how do we work around this situation? He does not want to go against his parents' wishes and I respect that, but I am left at the end of a bridge with nowhere to go.

Answer

1. Before all else, you need to understand

that your relationship with this boy presently, is haraam. You are making du'aa to make something halaal, but you are still remaining in haraam. Your du'aa is in one direction, but your actions are in the opposite direction. Indulgence in sins is a great obstruction for acceptance of du'aas.

You should firstly break off the illicit relationship you have with the person. In doing so, Allah will become pleased and when Allah is pleased, He will assist and guide you to what is best for you; He will accept your du'aas and make things work out most favourably for you.

2. On the one hand, this person is leading you on in an illicit relationship and on the other hand, he tells you that his parents are not happy and they do not want to accept you and he wants to please them. This is all the more reason to break off the relationship. Look at the situation realistically and rationally.

3. If and when he is sure that he does want to marry you, he should officially and formally propose by adopting the correct procedure; he should get a senior member of his family to speak to his parents, explaining the situation to them, and encourage them to accept the proposal for you, and they should thereafter present the proposal to your parents.

However, to continue in the haraam relationship is only opening the doors of many problems and a lot of misery.

May Allah guide us all and grant us the correct understanding.

M. Yunus

Question

My ex-husband wants to contact me and my husband said to me that if I call, message or contact him through social media, I am divorced. Does this effect my marriage in any way?

Answer

The statement, “if you call, message or contact him (ex-husband) through social media, you are divorced” of a husband to his wife constitutes a conditional divorce (At-Talaaqul Muallaq). Accordingly, if you call, message or contact your ex-husband through social media, one revocable divorce (At-Talaaqur-Raj’ee) will take place.

In any case, if there is a need for your ex-husband to contact you, he may do so by contacting your husband. More so, there should be no contact between you and your ex-husband as he is now a non-Mahram (stranger) to you.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

I found out that the word Samsung means ‘three stars’ referring to three star deities that were worshipped known as ‘sanxing’. They were worshipped by the Chinese. Obviously this has shirk implications. I have Samsung products, do I have to remove the logo from my phone? I have no problem in doing so because if I owned something that had for example buddha or krishna etc, I would think that we would have to remove those names too.

Answer

In Korean, the word Samsung means “three stars.” The name was chosen by Samsung founder Lee Byung-chull whose vision was for his company to become powerful and everlasting like stars in the sky.

The Korean concept derives from the Chinese deities Sanxing which are the personified ideas of Prosperity (Fu), Status (Lu), and Longevity (Shou) in the Chinese traditional religion. However, since it no longer carries any religious signification in the eyes of people but it is seen simply as the name of a global elec-

tronics brand, it would be permissible to use their products and there is no need to remove the logo.

M. Huzaifah

Question

I am a middle aged Muslim woman suffering from depression. I have lost hope in everything. I desperately need to speak to someone. Whom do I turn to?

Answer

The Quran and Ahadith are replete with advice of being positive and hopeful. We commence reciting the Quran with:

The two qualities of Allah inspire us with hope and mercy. Allah says:

“It may be that you dislike something that is good for you”. (2:216)

Firstly, pick yourself up. Know your worth and value. Start loving yourself first and be positive. A successful person is he who wakes up after falling. Falling is not a failure. It is a stage of success. We understand you require assistance. That attitude and approach is correct and a road to addressing your difficulty. You should turn to Allah and read Qur’an also called as ash-Shifa.

Mufti Ebrahim

Question

Please convey a prescription for a pleasant death.

Answer

A person asked Hakimul-Ummah Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (ra) for a successful prescription to attain a death with Imaan. Hadhrat Moulana replied, that there is a hadith in Maraaqiyul-Falaah, which is a famous and accepted book in the field of jurisprudence:

“Whoever prays the two Rakaats of fajr Salah

at home, his sustenance will be increased, he will have less conflicts with his family and he will achieve death with Imaan.”

Mufti Ahmed Khanpuri

Question

I would like to ask the ruling and Shari-ah stance on greeting Non Muslims Merry Christmas, does this amount to Kufr? Can we holding of year parties for our staff in the businesses, its more like festive party during this season.

Answer

As Muslims we are sensitive to our Aqaaid (beliefs) and tauheed (Oneness of Allah) and abstain from whatever would contaminate our Imaan.

It is strictly prohibited to wish non-Muslims “Merry Christmas” during Christmas. It is also prohibited to take part in any act that is specifically related to Christmas celebration. In doing so there is fear of one losing his Imaan. (Allah Forbid).

Consider the following narration of ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr Radiyallahu ‘Anhu:

“Whoever resides in the lands of the non-Arabs and then celebrates their religious occasions (Nairuz , Mahrajan, etc) and emulates their practices and thereafter dies in such a condition, he shall be raised with them on the day of Qiyamah.” (Baihaqi)

Our Fuqaha have taken a very harsh stance on this matter and have classified the act of granting a non-Muslim a gift during his/her religious festival as Haram and further, an act of Kufr in some circumstances.

Adopting and imitating any of the practices of the Kuffar on such occasions has also been classified as an act of Kufr. Further, the practice of wishing a ‘happy occasion’ and giving

‘seasonal greetings’ has also been prohibited. Hence, sending out ‘greeting’ cards will not be permissible. Consider the following quotations from our Fuqaha:

“If a Muslim says: ‘May you have a happy occasion’, he will have committed Kufr.” (Fatawa Baziziyah)

“Joining the Nairuz (religious Eid) of the Jews and imitating any of the actions that they carry out on that day is an act of Kufr.” (Bahrur-Ra’iq)

M .Nabeel

Question

I have a business and Zakaat recipients come to my shop to purchase items with Zakaat money. Can I give my Zakaat by selling my items to the Zakaat recipients at a discounted price? Will my discounted price be counted as Zakaat and will it be accepted in this way?

A. For ones Zakaat to be discharged, it is necessary to give full ownership of the Zakaat to an eligible recipient of Zakaat.

In the enquired case, a discount given to a Zakaat recipient it is not considered to be giving full ownership to the recipient of Zakaat as the Zakaat recipient does not have full ownership of the discount money and thus, your Zakaat will not be discharged in this way.

You may consider giving Zakaatable items to Zakaat recipients free of charge to discharge your Zakaat.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

I had given loans to family and friends over the years. They are paying me back now. Can I ask them to pay me in accordance to the rate inflation over the years?

Answer

A creditor cannot ask his debtor to pay him

back his loan in accordance to the rate of inflation over the previous years as the excess amount will be Haraam and tantamount to Riba (interest).

The exact amount of money given as a loan by a creditor to his debtor must be paid back in the same amount. The rate of inflation over the years will not effect the payment of the loan in any way. (Shaami 5/162)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

A Muslim girl eloped with a Hindu boy and she is now pregnant with his child. The Hindu boy has reverted to Islam and he now wants to marry the Muslim girl that is now pregnant with his child. Can he marry her?

Answer

The act of Zina (adultery) is an evil and major sin. A person that has committed Zina (adultery) should make sincere repentance to Allah for being involved in such an act and be remorseful to never engage in it again.

In any case, if a Muslim girl committed Zina (adultery) with a Hindu boy and she fell pregnant with his child, she can only make Nikah with him after he reverts to Islam.

Allah states in the Quran:

“Do not marry women of the idolaters until they have Imaan. A slave girl who is one of the Believers is better for you than a woman of the idolaters, even though she may attract you. And do not give your women in marriage to men of the idolaters until they have Imaan. A slave who is one of the Believers is better for

you than a man of the idolaters, even though he may attract you. Such people call you to the Fire whereas Allah calls you, with His permission, to the Garden and forgiveness. He makes His Signs clear to people so that hopefully they will pay heed.” (Surah 2, Verse 221)

The Muslim girl’s pregnancy through Zina (adultery) does not prevent the reverted Muslim from marrying her nor does the act of Zina (adultery) prevent them from marrying each other. (Al-Muheetul Burhaani 3/79)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Some people fast three days of every Month. Is there any virtue for it?

Answer

It is Mustahab (preferable) to fast three days of every lunar Month. It is also Mustahab (preferable) to keep the three days fast on the 13th, 14th and 15th of every lunar month respectively. (Maraaqil-Falaah 2/297-298)

The 13th, 14th and 15th fasts of every lunar Month is known as Sawmu Ayyaamul Beedh (the fast of the white days). It was given this name due to the moon being at its fullest and brightest on these days.

Rasulullah (SAWS) said to Sayyiduna Abu Zarr (RA):

“O Abu Zarr! When you fast three days out of a month, then fast the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth.” (Tirmidhi)

May Allah grant one and all the ability to revive this noble act into our lives, Ameen.

Mufti Ismaeel

Sayyadina Alqamah (RA) relates: “I asked Aisha (RA): ‘Did Rasulullah (SAWS) fix a day for Ibaadah? She replied: ‘The practices of Rasulullah (SAWS) was of a continuous nature. Who among you have the strength, which Rasulullah (SAWS) had?’ “ (Tirmizi)

Mutual Cooperation and Assistance

And help each other in righteousness and piety, and do not help each other in sin and aggression. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is severe at punishment. (5:2)

The above is the very principle of mutual cooperation and assistance. Being so reasonable and correct, it exhorts people to cooperate in deeds which are righteous and matters which are motivated by the fear of Allah and forbids them from extending their cooperation to anything sinful and aggressive. Just consider that the noble Qur'an has not suggested here that one should cooperate with Muslim brothers and not with non-Muslims. Instead of that, it declares that righteousness and the fear of Allah are the bases on which cooperation is to be extended for this is the real foundation on which rests any cooperation among Muslims themselves. It clearly means that no help is to be extended even to a Muslim brother if he is acting contrary to truth or is advancing towards injustice and aggression. Rather than help him in what is false and unjust, effort should be made to hold his hands against indulging in the false and the unjust for this, in reality, is helping him at its best - so that his present life as well as his life in the Hereafter is not ruined.

According to a narration from Sayyidna Anas (RA) appearing in the Sahih of al-Bukhari and Muslim, the Holy Prophet (SAWS) has been reported to have said:

'unsur a-khaa-ka zaaliman aw mazlooman'

Help your brother, just or unjust.

His Companions who were soaked in the teaching of the Qur'an were surprised. They asked: 'Ya Rasul-ul-lah (O Messenger of Allah) as for helping the oppressed brother, that we understand. But, what does 'helping the oppressor' mean?' He said: 'Stop him from doing injustice - this is helping him.'

This teaching of the Qur'an helped establish that righteousness (birr) and the fear of Allah (Taqwa) are the real criterions on which it raised the edifice of Muslim nationalism and to which it invited the peoples of the world as the common denominator of mutual cooperation and assistance. Contrary to this were sin and aggression (ithm and 'udwan) which were declared to be serious crimes and cooperation in these was prohibited. To describe the positive criterions, two separate words of Birr and Taqwa were used. According to a consensus of commentators, the word, Birr at this place means the doing of deeds which are good. This has been translated here as righteousness. The word, Taqwa means abstinence from what is evil. The word, Ithm has been used here in an absolute sense meaning sin and disobedience, whether it relates to rights or acts of worship. As for 'Udwan, it lexically means the crossing of limits, that is, injustice and aggression.

About cooperating in what is righteousness and the fear of Allah, the Holy Prophet (SAWS) said:

'ad-daal alal khayri ka-faa'ilih'

The reward of the person who shows someone the path of righteousness is very much the same as if it was taken personally.

Ibn Kathir has reported this hadith with reference to al-Bazzar. In addition to that, it appears in the Sahih of al-Bukhari that the Holy Prophet (SAWS) said that whoever invites people to true guidance and righteous conduct shall receive a reward equal to all those who would heed to the call and act right - without the least cut from the reward of such people. As for the one who invites people to the path of error or sin, he or she will be earning the same amount of sinfully equal to the sins of all those who got involved with the filth of sin because of the inviter to sin - without any decrease in the count of such sins.

Citing Tabarani, reports Ibn Kathir: The Holy Prophet said that anyone who joins up with an unjust person to assist him goes out of the fold of Islam. It is on the basis of this guidance that the righteous elders of the community have strictly abstained from accepting any office or service in the courts of unjust rulers - for this amounts to assisting them in their acts of injustice. Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani, while explaining the noble verse:

fa'lan akoona zaheeral-lil-mujrimeen

*I will never be a helper for the criminals -
(28:17)*

has reported a hadith in which the Holy Prophet (SAWS) has said that a call will go forth on the Day of Judgement citing the oppressors and the unjust and their helpers, so much so that all those who have handled chores even as insignificant as setting up the pens and ink-pots of the unjust and the oppressive will all be rammed into a steel coffin and thrown into the Hell.

This is the teaching of the Qur'an and

Sunnah which aimed at spreading the virtues of righteousness, justice, sympathy and good-mannerliness throughout the world by presenting every single individual of the community as a living herald and model of the truth. And conversely, in order to eradicate crimes, injustices and oppressions, the same teaching had converted every member of the community into a kind of soldier who was bound to do his duty under all circumstances, whether watched or unwatched - because of the fear of Allah in his heart. The whole world saw the outcome of this wise teaching and grooming during the blessed period of the noble Companions and their Successors. Even in our day, when war threatens a certain country, departments of civil defence are established which impart some level of training for all its citizens. But, nothing of the sort gets done when it comes to the eradication of crimes, to making people promoters of good and blockers of evil. It is obvious that an objective like this cannot be achieved by military parades or civil defence exercises. This is the ultimate art of living which can only be learnt and practiced in educational institutions which, unfortunately, seem to have become strangers to spiritual and social refinements. This is very much true about the great qualities of righteousness and the fear of Allah which seem to be all banned in modern day educational institutions while the admittance of sin and high-handedness is all too open. What can the police do when a whole people throw away the concerns of the lawful and the unlawful and the right and the wrong on their backs and turn crime-oriented? Today we see the graph of crime rising high - theft, robbery, sexual offences, killings and destructions are taking place everywhere. That the legal machinery can do nothing to root out these crimes is because of their failure to take advantage of the Qur'anic solution suggested above, that is, the governments are far removed from this

Qur'anic system, and that they, particularly those who hold power into their hands, demur from adopting the principle of righteousness and the fear of Allah as the aim of their life - even though they have to face a thousand other hardships as a result of such avoidance. It may be interesting if such deviationists would swallow their pride at least for once, even if this be on a trial basis. Let them, then, witness the spectacle of the power of Allah and how it blesses them and their people with good life filled with the best of peace and comfort.

On the other side, there were the masses of people who took it for granted that the eradication of crimes is the exclusive responsibility of the government. In fact, they have become used to keeping crimes covered up. The idea of coming up with true witnesses to confirm truth and eliminate crime is no more a favoured practice among them. Such people must understand that covering up the crime of the criminal and avoiding to put their witness on record is an abetment of crime which, according to the Holy Qur'an, is Haram (unlawful) and a grave sin indeed. Furthermore, it is also a flagrant disobedience of the Divine command:

(And help each other in righteousness and piety, and do not help each other in sin and aggression) (5:2).

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

Appreciating our Elders

Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal (ra) mentions: "For the last 30 years, I have not slept without first supplicating and seeking forgiveness for Imaam Shaafi'ee (ra)."

'Abdullah (ra), the son of Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal (ra) says: I asked my father, "What type of person was Imaam Shaafi'ee (ra), for I often hear you supplicating for him?" Imaam Ahmad (ra) replied, "O son! Imaam Shaafi'ee (ra) was like the sun to this world and like health to the people. Tell me, is there anything that can possibly replace the sun and health?" (Risaalatul Mustarshideen)

Lessons:

1. Showing respect and honour to the 'Ulama and our seniors is an important part of our deen. Together with respecting and revering them, we should show appreciation and gratitude for the services and sacrifices they rendered for deen. One way of showing gratitude is to regularly make du'aa for them.
2. If we cannot show adequate appreciation and respect to these eminent personalities, we should, at the very least, avoid speaking against them. After all, they are the people who paved the path for us to enjoy the deen of Islam today.
3. Just as we respect and honour the 'Ulama due to them being our spiritual deeni parents, we also respect and honour the parents who are responsible for our physical existence. In fact, the right of the parents and the honour that should be afforded to them is even more than that of the 'Ulama. We should thus serve them with devotion and faithfulness and daily set aside time to make du'aa for them.

Lessons from Sahih Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

Chapter 5 : If someone offers Salaah in a single garment he should put its ends over his shoulders.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

In the foregoing chapters as well it has been mentioned that a person offering his Salaah donning a single garment should cross its ends over his shoulders. By establishing a separate chapter on this issue, Imam Bukhari, as per Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Delhvi, wants to lay more stress on its permissibility.

Hadith No. 351

Narrated Abu Huraira

The Prophet said, "None of you should offer prayer in a single garment that does not cover the shoulders."

Hadith No. 352

Narrated Abu Huraira

Allah's Apostle said, "Whoever prays in a single garment must cross its ends (over the shoulders)."

Comments

It is mentioned in the above hadith that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) forbade to offer Salaah leaving the garment

uncrossed over one's shoulders (in case Salaah is offered in a single garment). Imam Abu Haneefa, Imam Maalik, Imam Shaafa'ee and majority of the jurists say that this command of Rasulullah is of 'Istihbaabi' nature i.e., it is preferable but not obligatory. Taking it as obligatory in nature, Imam Ahmad considers it necessary to cover at least one of the two shoulders, otherwise the Salaah in this attire, as per Habali school will not be valid. According to Shah Waliullah, Imam Bukhari concurs with the view held by the majority of learned scholars, while some believe that he supports Imam Ahmad's view.

Abu Dawood has quoted a hadith on the authority of Abu Huraira (RA, which says: "None of you should offer Salaah donning a single garment in such a way that no part of it covers his shoulder".

As already stated that this commandment is for the one who has a very wide garment and not the one having a narrow cloth.

Chapter 6 : If the cloth is narrow.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Prior to this it was said that if the garment is small and tight, it should be tied round the neck and if it is big and wide then it should be wrapped around the body with its ends

crossing the shoulders. Now, in this chapter, it is said that if the garment is too narrow then it should be used as a loincloth.

Hadith No. 353

Narrated Sa'eed bin Al-Harith

I asked Jaabir bin Abdullah about praying in a single garment. He said, "I travelled with the Prophet during some of his journeys, and I came to him at night for some purpose and I found him praying. At that time, I was wearing a single garment with which I covered my shoulders and prayed by his side. When he finished the prayer, he asked, 'O Jaabir! What has brought you here?' I told him what I wanted. When I finished, he asked, 'O Jaabir! What is this garment which I have seen and with which you covered your shoulders?' I replied, 'It is a (tight) garment.' He said, 'If the garment is large enough, wrap it round the body (covering the shoulders) and if it is tight (too short) then use it as an Izar (tie it around your waist only.)' "

Hadith No. 354

Narrated Sahl

The men used to pray with the Prophet with their Izars tied around their necks as boys used to do; therefore the Prophet told the women not to raise their heads till the men sat down straight (while praying).

Comments

Sa'eed bin al-Harith narrates that they asked Jaabir bin Abdullah about a Salaah offered in a single garment. Jaabir narrated to them that during the battle of Buwaat, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) sent him and Jaabir bin Sakhar ahead in order to arrange water. On his return he saw Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) offering night Salaah, and joined him. He was donning a single narrow garment in which he had wrapped his body by holding its ends with his chin against

his chest. After finishing the Salaah, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) asked him the reason for returning late and also about holding his garment in such a manner. Sayyiduna Jaabir, after narrating the reason of returning late, said that it was because of the unavailability of another cloth that he donned the garment in such a way. At this point, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) advised him that if the cloth is very wide it should be wrapped around the body, and in case it is narrow then it should be used only as loincloth, since the main purpose being to achieve Satr-ul-Awrah.

In the second hadith quoted under the chapter in discussion, it is said that a number of Sahaaba possessed only a single cloth which they used to tie round their necks during Salaah. Since at that time, women would also offer Salaah in congregational behind men, they were directed to raise their heads from Sajda only when men would completely sit after doing so. This was to avoid the possibility of accidental landing of women's sight at the private parts of men.

Chapter 7 : Praying wearing a Syrian cloak.

And al-Hasan said that there is no harm in wearing clothes woven by a Magus (fire worshipper). And Ma'mar said that he had seen az-Zuhri wearing Yemenite garments dyed with urine. And Ali offered Salaah in a new unwashed garment.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Bukhari says that the garments woven by non-Muslims viz., infidels, Christians, Jews, fire worshippers etc. are permissible to wear both in Salaah or otherwise. The only condition being the ritual cleanliness of the garment.

Hadith No. 355

Narrated Mughaira bin Shu'ba

Once I was traveling with the Prophet and

he said, “O Mughaira! take this container of water.” I took it and Allah’s Apostle went far away till he disappeared. He answered the call of nature and was wearing a Syrian cloak. He tried to take out his hands from its sleeve but it was very tight so he took out his hands from under it. I poured water and he performed ab-lution like that for prayers and passed his wet hands over his Khuff (leather socks) and then prayed .

Comments

Sayyiduna Mughairah narrates that he saw Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wearing a Syrian cloak (Jubbah).

At that time Syria was a non-Muslim state. By quoting this hadith, Imam Bukhari wants to prove his point that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wore a garment manufactured in a non-Muslim country and that he didn’t enquire about its origin or manufacturer.

Chapter 8 : The undesirability of being naked in the prayer and elsewhere.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

We have seen that ‘Satr-ul-Awrah’ (covering private parts) is obligatory, and it is forbidden in Islam to expose it. Islam teaches decency, and the proper dressing is one of its facets. Nudity is an animal instinct and therefore Islam forbids it irrespective whether in prayer or otherwise. The hadith quoted by Imam Bukhari here is regarding the state outside Salaah by which he wants to lay stress on the point that when nudity is disliked and forbidden altogether, how can it be permissible when offering Salaah?

Hadith No. 356

Narrated Jaabir bin Abdullah

While Allah’s Apostle was carrying stones

(along) with the people of Makkah for (the building of) the Ka’ba wearing an Izar (waist-sheet cover), his uncle al-Abbas said to him, “O my nephew! (It would be better) if you take off your Izar and put it over your shoulders underneath the stones.” So he took off his Izar and put it over his shoulders, but he fell unconscious and since then he had never been seen naked.

Comments

In this hadith an incident is quoted which took place during Rasulullah’s (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) childhood. Once the Quraish of Makkah initiated the process of reconstructing the Ka’ba, and people including Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi wasallam) took part in carrying stones for the construction. Being young in age, his uncle Sayyiduna Abbas suggested him to remove his loincloth and put that on his shoulder to avoid any injury because of stones. When Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) tried to do so, he immediately fell down unconscious, and since then he had never been seen naked. It was a divine protection for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to fall unconscious.

Allaama Ayni has quoted from Ibn Butaal and Ibn al-Mateen that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was 15 years old at that time. He further says that the widely held view is that Quraish reconstructed Ka’ba 10 years after Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) married Sayyida Khadijah which implies that he was 35 years old at that time. (Umdatul Qaari)

Lessons from the hadith

Allaama Ayni has derived the following lessons from the hadith:

1. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was divinely protected from evil instincts and pervert morals even when only a child.

Cont’d on page 15

A System that has Crumbled

Syed Iqbal Zaheer

It was the practice of the Prophet to accept bay`ah (pledge of obedience) from his Companions at the time they entered into Islam. In addition, he sought their pledge on other special occasions, (or, occasionally, without any occasion). Such bay`ah was approved by Allah who mentioned one of the pledges in a Qur`anic passage. Such bay`ah was also necessary because Islamic call was new, and the meaning of the Kalimah Shahadah was not apparent to the pre-Islamic Arabs. On the occasion of the bay`ah, the Prophet explained to them what entry into Islam meant in theoretical and practical terms, and that, pronouncement of the Kalimah was pronouncement of one's willingness to henceforth obey Allah and His Messenger.

History tells us that there had been bay`ah before the advent of Islam, and hadith literature informs us that there will be a bay`ah at the advent of the Mahdi as another (perhaps the final) at Bayt al-Maqdis, probably during the time of the closing events.

Subsequent to the Prophet, bay`ah of obedience to Allah and His Messenger was not considered necessary because of the spread of knowledge and the general understanding that without willingness to obey Allah and His Messenger, there could be no Islam. People

freshly entering into Islam, therefore, at the time of the Companions and their followers, were not asked to execute a pledge to this effect since they knew the demands of the testimony of Islam: it was shelving of one's older way of life in favor of the new one they were embracing. Islam was submission to Allah, no more and no less. Everyone lived by Islamic ordinances, the society was modeled on the Islamic pattern, the economy ran on Islamic principles, the state was guided by Islamic injunctions, and there was no question of obedience to any other, than Allah and His Messenger.

Although out of use for a while in the strict religious sense, bay`ah acquired a political character after the Prophet. Since there could be more than one claimant to Muslim leadership, meaning, political authority, it became necessary to seek the pledge of obedience from the citizens for only one nominate or claimant; and hence, he who refused to take a pledge, was thought to be refusing to be in the mainstream, parting his ways with the Jama`ah. The first bay`ah of this nature was instituted by `Umar ibn al-Khattab, who pledged his own hand to the first Khaleefah, Abu Bakr. It is in this political sense that the Prophet is reported to have said that he who

died without having entered into a pledge, died a Jaahiliyy death. It was political bay`ah that he meant, that is, bay`ah at the hands of a Khaleefah or Ameer, to obey him in political matters (and not personal), so long as he did not command a wrong. A bay`ah covering obedience to Allah and His Messenger was uncalled for because any other alternative was simply out of the question.

With weaknesses creeping in, however, after a few centuries there began to appear Muslims who failed to lead a purely Islamic life, or who did not, for a variety of reasons, possess enough knowledge to be able to lead their lives in a manner desired by Islam. Nonetheless, at a point in their lives they retreated from their life of disobedience, hoping to, thereonward, lead the life of total devotion to Allah. Yet, many had no idea what they were to do by way of reformation, repentance, penance and atonement for what they had neglected so far. There were others who were aware of their own moral shortcomings, conscious of the need to purify themselves, but did not know how to go about doing it, or control their base instincts before getting into a worse situation.

Naturally, they sought a person who was knowledgeable and devoted to Allah who could help. There were of course many who could, and the system of bay`ah with a religious character reappeared. But, since Shuyukh had no ecclesiastical power, bay`ah at their hands remained, primarily, the expression of a mere wish. It did not, and could not acquire the characteristics of a religious obligation.

The dubious nature had its implications. Experience taught the Shuyukh that mere admonition on their part, and pious intentions on the part of their followers, were not the cure for the anomalies. Those who came to them for help did not always live by what they were taught. And yet, their own names could be dragged into the misdeeds of their followers. It could be said, "So and so is of such poor

character, although he attends the assembly of such and such a Sheikh!"

The Shuyukh therefore developed a whole plan of action and techniques of reformation complete with a kind of curriculum for those who would pledge their hands to them promising to obey Allah and His Messenger. They also added obedience to themselves as a necessary ingredient of the bay`ah and the right to inquire and told what happened at the personal and private level, so as to discover the impediments to reformation. In other words, the inclusion of this last clause helped them inquire, get the information, scrutinize, analyze, discover weaknesses, and suggest the cures. They even began to guide them in their family affairs – by extending their influence to that sector – to help their followers out of social and sometimes even economic difficulties, in order to free them for training and observation of religious obligations. Through the curriculum they drew, they guided them from time to time, stage to stage, leading them – through education and application – to higher moral and spiritual states. Not surprisingly, before accepting a novice, some of the Shuyukh would not merely inquire about what kind of books the novices had read earlier, but also, whether they knew horse riding, warfare techniques and so on. So that, when the occasion for Jihad arose, these novices (murids), inspired by the Shuyukh participated in thousands.

Thus, with the passage of time, the Shuyukh became spiritual guides for the individuals and their families, sort of adopting the family, and guiding them all, not necessarily in devotional matters alone, but in all affairs of life with the spiritual ends in view. So that, affairs such as what profession to choose, whom to appoint as teachers of the children, and with whom to make marriage alliances, were all decided on the advice of the Shuyukh. In other words, the family had a moral and spiritual

head in addition to the temporal head.

This was successful so long as there were sincere Shuyukh and sincere followers of Islam. But, with insincerity towards Allah and His Revelation settling into the hearts, the system began to crumble and ultimately became corrupt. The idea became prevalent that if you were attached to a Sheikh, he would look after your affairs of the Hereafter, guiding you through to Paradise through his influence and intercession. Another, and no less serious corruption was that you get connected to an important Sheikh of the past, through allegiance to the present-day nominated representative (Khaleefah) in order to gain greater material benefits in this world, and climb to higher spiritual status in the Hereafter. It became necessary to profess this because the murids of today could clearly see that their present-day Sheikh (peer) was fatally below the moral and spiritual norms required of a man of this position, pretty poor in application of Islamic rules of life to himself and family, was in fact a gatherer of wealth, fattening himself upon the hard earned money of his followers, and thus, plainly incapable of winning salvation for himself, far from being in a position to help his followers. But, if he was below the mark, then, the implied suggestion was, the Shaykh al-Shuyukh (the chief of the Shuyukh, or the grand-master), dead by a few centuries, to whom the murids were connected through the present day Sheikh, is the all-powerful who is capable of getting your material needs granted by Allah. Thus, arose the need to include the tombs, where the Shaykh al-Shuyukh resided, yet the need to have a contemporary Sheikh, as a means, despite his questionable qualifications and suspicious activities.

But of course, the connecting line could not be stopped at the Shaykh al-Shuyukh of the 5th, 6th or 7th centuries. The murids demanded higher climbs, and hence, the chain had to be taken to the Prophet himself – peace

be upon him.

How relevant is the system today and how reliable the peers? (Many of them are honest enough to refer to themselves not as Sheikhs, but as peers: acknowledging a lower position for themselves). We might answer in short that where the Sheikh is truly a Sheikh (nobody seems to have seen one recently), the system is still valid. To make room for an honest one, we might say that if a Shaykh of today accepts the pledge at his hand, of obedience to Allah and His Messenger, and then guides his murids on, by teaching them the Qur'an and Sunnah, or the Arabic language, or, putting them on to a course of study of the core texts, or monitor their 24-hour activities, then, a Muslim might enter into his bay'ah. But, if he adds anything else to his plan of action, such as, suggest adhkaar, or claim spiritual guidance, or suggest elevating his followers to higher spiritual stations through his own spiritual power, or connect him to a Sheikh of the past, or to the Prophet himself, or chase away the devil on him, or conduct halaqas of dhikr, or claim to prevent misfortunes falling onto his murids, or help them get children, or solve their economic problems through rosary and wazaa'if, or is primarily a dispenser of ta'weez (amulets) of various functions, or worse, promises connections with a dead Sheikh, or worst of all, declares participation in tomb affairs, celebrations, and functions as necessary for spiritual progress, then, he may be advised by the would be murids to earn his living through other honest means.

Cont'd on from 12

2.He possessed highest degree of modesty (hayaa) right from his childhood.

3.It is not permissible to get naked in front of others. Sayyiduna Ali said: "When a man exposes his private parts, the angel (of mercy) leaves him".

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH

*Mufti Muhammad Taqi
Usmani*

A hadith of the Prophet (SAWS) reads:

“Every affair that does not begin with the name of Allah is deficient”. (Abu Dawood and others)

The holy Prophet (SAWS) stressed to begin every mentionable act like eating, drinking, mounting, writing etc, with Allah’s name.

Apparently it seems a small act which, taken as customary, is often neglected. However, in essence, it not a custom *per se* but a process of watering the fundamental mode of thinking. It is the affirmation of such an essence which once kept in view not only changes the very perception of looking at various aspects of life but also the whole approach of managing its affairs. It is a proclamation that - nothing, not even an atom, in this universe functions without Allah’s will. In his practical life man is decreed to opt for means but neither these means have come into existence themselves nor do they possess any intrinsic power to do a job. In essence, the creator of these means and the one who after putting effectiveness in them to bring forth the resultant effects is someone else.

A simple example of this goes: Almost all of us drink water often without any serious consideration. It is at the most that a casual observer may think about the sources from which water has reached him. But how has it reached him from these sources? How many forces Allah has put into the service of quenching man’s thirst? What kind of wonderful and impeccable system has been put in place?, only a few dwell upon it.

Allah has kept vast storage of water reserved in the shape of oceans, and in order to keep it safe from rotting - has made it saline and continuously flowing. Also, irrespective of the fact that thousands of animals etc die within these oceans every day, it never rots. Since it was impossible for man to benefit directly from oceanic water owing to its unpalatable taste, Allah, on the one hand, after extracting monsoon from it, installed within the monsoon such a self servicing plant which, in a continued process, turns the sour water sweet without any human effort or financial aid; on the

other hand, by turning monsoon into the form of clouds made a free air cargo service by which this heavy water body swims across hundreds and thousands of miles to supply sweetened water to various part of the earth.

Since, neither the all year cloudy and rainy season was bearable for a human, nor had he the power to store water for a whole year or even a few months, so Allah's wisdom and power organized to shower this water in the mountains and store it there in the form of glaciers. This heart engaging cold storage system, the real purpose of which is to quench our thirst, also looks catchy to the heart. Further, man was not put to any sort of trouble to go up to the glaciers for satisfying his needs, but the water - after melting it with the sun's heat - was made to pass through rivers and streams and also through such underground pipelines where from it could be dug out. No human thought or system is involved in this process whatsoever. The only job man has to do is to take the amount of water he needs from these streams or from under the ground almost anywhere. Though such an endeavour is limited and also small in comparison to the divine and natural system, still he has to toil hard, spend money and take help from other resources. Every single sip of water that we drink in a twinkle reaches us only after such a long process in which oceans, clouds, mountains, sun, winds, streams, earth and its hidden resources, and lastly man and his manufactured tools, have played their part.

The purpose behind the Prophet's (SAWS) teaching to utter Bismillah before drinking water is, in essence, to draw one's attention towards the fact that before taking advantage of this blessing of Allah one should contemplate about His great kindness of putting into your service innumerable universal powers so that this water reaches your lips. Accepted that man has also put into his effort and used some materialistic tools, but they

have access up to a certain limit only beyond which such a wonderful and sense striking system is on work which is not only devoid of human involvement but beyond its thought and imagination.

Further, apart from the fact that he quenched his thirst with a glass of water, man is least concerned where it goes after passing his throat and what kind of services does it render to his body? Generally nobody cares about these factors. A brief contemplation, and it will dawn upon us that each and every single part of our bodily machinery was in need or water without which it would have ceased to function. Since it was impossible for man to know when exactly the requisite water level in his body has dropped, Allah blessed him with an easily intelligible meter which informs all and sundry the need to take water. The thirsty considers it a mere requirement of his lips and throat and becomes satisfied once these two get moistened but in essence the real profit of the water lies beyond this. It was the demand of the whole body which gets irrigated once the water passes the throat helping in keeping the organs alive. This way, through the body's internal pipelines it reaches every needy part from head to toe and thus the amount of water required by the body remain stored in there and the surplus is thrown out of the body along with impurities after washing the organs inside.

It is said that once Caliph Haroon Rashid was holding a glass of water to quench his thirst and just when he was about to gulp it down Behlol asked him: O Ameer ul Mumineen, "Stop for a moment and tell me, how much wealth will you spend to have this much of water if at a time of of severe thirst you wont be having it." Haroon said, "all of it". Behlol said you may have the water now. When Haroon finished with having water, Behlol again asked, "Tell me, if the amount of water you take all through the day remains within your

body and won't come out, how much wealth will you spend to cause it leave your body?" Again Haroon said, "all of it". On this Behlol said, "Your whole wealth is not enough even for a glass of water to enter and leave your body". This may seem a funny saying, but in fact it is such a stark reality which remain obscured despite being evident.

So, when the Prophet (SAWS) has advised to say Bismillah before eating or drinking something, its purpose is to invite your attention towards the fact that the possession of a morsel of food or a gulp of water is not solely because of your human endeavor, but the giving of that Giver who has made tremendous powers to submit before you, and so, you must not forget the Giver. Though these blessings of Allah are common for all, and even animals get food and water but man - whom Allah has blessed with intellect and sensibility - is expected to behave in way different from an insensible animal. Man's sensibility and intellect demand that he stays cognizant and not unmindful of his True Benefactor particularly when profiting from His blessings.

The above is just a simple example and one can find similar sort of plan in all aspects of life. Man's physical and materialistic endeavors play up to a certain area only. Peek outside this limited area and you will notice that even the smallest of events is wonderfully bound to the Divine system of infinite wisdom involving no human endeavor, application, planning, or material support. Since man's limited vision seldom surpass the material realm, and remains occupied within it, that is why Prophets (AS) are sent to pull him free out of this narrow vision and confer him with a vision more broader, and a thought more profound.

By teaching us to begin every act in the name of Allah, the Prophet has tried to connect man with his Lord in every branch of his life. When man submits all his acts to Allah's will and design, and keeps on acknowledging

this very fact and announces his humility and helplessness, then in a gradual manner the consciousness of the fact - that he has not arrived in this world as a lord and master but a created being and a slave of his Lord - takes roots. The feeling that he is just a slave creates in him humility, submissiveness, sympathy, kindness, and protects him from pride, haughtiness, arrogance, and mean desires.

History bears witness to the fact that the events of oppression, despotism, tyranny take place only when man - while ignoring his essence - severs relation with his Creator, and reckons the blessings granted to him by Allah, marvels of his own power; and he in himself the Lord. But the person who, at each step and in every act, acknowledges his indebtedness to his Creator and Master, his heart won't even be stained by pride or arrogance, and neither will he resort to any sort of oppression or tyranny against any creation.

Bismillah (In the name of Allah) is apparently a small phrase, but hidden behind it lies - a world of essence and gnosis. The Prophet (SAWS), by instructing man to utter this phrase, has fashioned his thought to act not like a Pharaoh or Nimrod but the one who, while submitting to Allah, aspires to live a peaceful life in this world. This way the Prophet (SAWS) has revolutionized man's every deed into devotion and servitude to Allah.

Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS)

Jabir (RA) reported: Messenger of Allah (SAWS) never said 'no' to anyone who asked him for anything.

[Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Collective Intuition of Muslims

Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (ra)

Islam has been favoured by the infinite mercy and grace of the Lord, with a collective intuition which is free from all dangers inherent in taking to a new course or following the decision of any individual.

Whenever the Muslims are faced with any intricate or difficult problem or the march of time throws up a new question which cannot be solved by the ordinary process, God invariably inclines the hearts of a group among the deeply-learned, pious and sincere Muslims, who apply themselves wholeheartedly and find out the correct answer to that question. They feel so determined to get to the bottom of the problem that one might say that they have been commanded by God or driven by some force beyond them to set the matter at rest. Such is the combined endeavour of the community in the hour of every crisis to which we have given the name 'Collective Intuition' - and numerous examples of this nature can be found in the history of Islam.

But, there are also times when some of the pure elevated souls have an immediate apprehension of right course. An example of the intuition of this nature can be found in Adhan, the call to prayer, which was prescribed by the Prophet (SAWS) after Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA) and Abdullah bin Zaid (RA) were simul-

taneously communicated the words of the call heard by them in their dreams. Lailatul Qadr or the Night of Power furnishes another example of similar nature. It has been related on the authority of Abdullah bin Umar (RA) that "a few companions of the Prophet (SAWS) who had had the vision of Lailatul Qadr in the last seven nights of the month of Ramadhan in their dreams came to the Apostle of God and told him about what they had seen.

The Prophet (SAWS) thereupon said, "I find that all of you have similar visions about the last seven nights, therefore, whoever desires to find it should seek it in these seven nights."

The prayer of Tarawih, offered during Ramadhan, furnishes yet another example of somewhat analogous nature. The Prophet (SAWS) started to offer this prayer but abandoned it after three days lest it should become a burdensome obligation for his followers. The Muslims, however, continued to offer it individually until Caliph Umar (RA) decided to perform the prayer in congregation.

Obviously, the decision of Caliph Umar (RA) was guided by divine intuition, for, it proved to be immensely beneficial to the community. The prayer of Tarawih not only created the zeal for spending the nights of Rama-

dhan in vigils and adoration of God but also led to the memorising of the Qur'an. The earnestness of the Ahl-i-Sunnat in learning the Qur'an by heart and its recital as compared to the absence of similar fervour in other sects of Islam, who do not offer Tarawih prayer, is a manifest sign of Umar's right guided intuition.

And, oftentimes, this 'collective intuition' takes the shape of unanimous consent of a vast majority of Muslims on a certain issue which cannot, by any means, be treated as the result of fortuitous circumstances or conspiracy by a section amongst them. Such a consensus of opinion of the majority of learned Muslims is either advantageous to Islam and the Muslims, provides a solution to certain important problem affecting their community life and puts an end to certain menace or dangerous situation, or helps to achieve certain desired objectives.

The instances of the 'collective intuition' of this category are very many: collection of the Qur'an during the caliphate of Abu Bakr (RA), collection and critical examination of the Traditions during the first two centuries of Islamic era, deduction of laws and principles of Islamic jurisprudence by the learned doctors of religion, and the amplification and development of all those branches of learning which have helped in preserving the original text of the Qur'an and its study and propagation of Islam are befitting examples of such a collective intuition.

The system of spiritual purification which later on developed into an elaborate discipline designed to identify the machinations of the devil within man and its suppression through spiritual realisation and communion with God is the inner dimension of the Islamic Shari'ah, recognised by it as tazkiyah (spiritual purification) and ihsen (devotion). Known as tasawwuf (mysticism) to later generations, it furnished yet another manifestation of 'collective intuition'. It was refined and developed by the noble masters of spirit into the greatest act

of devotion to God and as a means for striving against the burden of one's own carnal self. God made it a medium of revivifying listless hearts and cool spirits and it was then utilised by the great saints and their disciples to spread the message of Islam in far off lands like India, Far East and Africa. Innumerable people were guided through it while many amongst them imparted faith and righteousness to the Muslim society of their times.

They were not ascetics embodying the quiescent spirit of inactivity, since, many of them fought like heroes in the battlefields. Nobody who has not closed his eyes to the history of Islam can deny the great service rendered by these travellers of the path of spirit to the cause of faith.

Another shining example of this 'collective intuition' can be found in the great endeavour made from time to time to discredit and confute the misguided sects, irreligious philosophies, skeptic patterns of thought and blasphemous movements inviting people to profanity and inaction. It was the 'collective intuition' of Islam which produced master spirits of the age, at the appropriate moment they were needed, who unravelled wickedness of these bad influences and saved the Muslims from their pernicious effects. All these are the achievements of divine inspiration granted by the Lord to a section of Muslims in every age and place, for they are not only the last of the right-guided people but also the star of hope for entire mankind. This is, undoubtedly, the sign of this Ummat being the chosen community while its 'collective intuition' is a testimony of the termination of revelation after the last Apostle of God. We do not find such a continuous and marked example of 'collective intuition' in the followers of earlier prophets who were not blessed with it because the prophethood was not to be terminated in their times.

The News Protocol

Towards an Islamic Framework

Khalid Baig

“We mortals hear only the news and know nothing at all” – Homer, *The Iliad*.

Several years ago an Indian reporter for *Time* magazine approached a prominent scholar and author in India, and interviewed him regarding the status of women in Islam. She raised the commonly asked questions and recorded each answer. A few weeks later she returned with more “follow-up” questions, which were twists on the original questions and went over his previous answers. Then a third time. When the scholar wondered about the purpose for this exercise, the reporter boasted: “Because we cannot afford to be wrong.”

The Maulana was so impressed by this answer that he narrated the story to Muslims as an example to be followed for seeking the truth and pursuing impeccable professional standards. Of course, when the article regarding women in Islam was finally published, it had all the usual accusations regarding Islam’s treatment of women; it did not contain any of the answers that *Time* reporter had painstakingly obtained from the Muslim scholar.

Time magazine may have been simply following a rule of propaganda: First get all the facts, then you can distort them as much as you can!

There is something very peculiar, very interesting about all this. *Time* is one of the most successful magazines in the world today. Although it routinely engages in anti-Islamic propaganda, it is considered reliable even in Muslim countries. Muslims may have a quarrel with a paragraph here, an article there, but they still consider the magazine as the model for what journalism is all about. What is going on?

“The News of the Day”

For answers we may have to look deeper into the evolution of journalism in the Industrial society. Modern journalism began as a result of two technological developments: the printing press and the telegraph. Together they made it possible to move and publish bits of information over vast distances at incredible speed. The first event took place in Germany, the other in the US. As Neil Postman describes in “Amusing Ourselves to Death” (1985), it was the American development (1844), which made it possible to publish the large circulation daily newspaper by moving decontextualized information from all over the world and thereby created what is called “The News of the Day.” Postman argues “telegraph gave a form of legitimacy to the idea of

context-free information; that is, to the idea that the value of information need not be tied to any function that it might serve in social and political decision-making and action, but may attach merely to its novelty, interest, and curiosity...most of our daily news is insert, consisting of information that gives us something to talk about but cannot lead to any meaningful action.”

There is a strong technological argument here about the telegraph, which generated an “abundance of irrelevant information.” What Postman ignores is the fact that the telegraph was developed and was first put to use in a society that did not put a premium on information-action ratio and did not have any built-in restraints against gossip, vain talk, scandals, and backbiting. Rather there was a huge market for these commodities waiting to be exploited. Telegraph simply facilitated what the society wanted to do any way. This market was exploited by the pioneers. One of them was Joseph Pulitzer. The Pulitzer Prize is the most prestigious prize for a journalist in the US today. Pulitzer raised the circulation of New York World from 15,000 to 250,000 in three years, the highest in the world at the time.

How did he do it? “With a series of stunts and campaigns, Pulitzer revitalized the established formulas of sensationalism and idealism,” says the Britannica. William Hearst was another pioneer and a very successful one at that. According to Britannica, he was “interested in circulation-building sensation at any price, even if it meant dressing up complete fabrication as news.” The Penny Press and the tabloids used the same formulas to achieve unprecedented commercial success. Technology has a new way of forcing its social and cultural agenda. Just like the air-hostesses that came with the aircraft and were allowed in the Muslim world without any question or resistance, the newspaper was also greeted by blind and willing followers.

Paisa Akhbar and Beyond

The Penny Press inspired the Paisa Akhbar in British India. Throughout the Muslim world, Muslims obtained not just the printing press and wire service, (and other electronic technologies as they developed), but also the names and outlooks for their newspapers from the West. What is more, they received their definition of “news” from the West. The West, it may be added, did not have much of a definition to offer beyond novelty (“man bites dog”) or curiosity (“what we know today that we did not yesterday”).

To verify these assertions one needs to take just one look at the newspapers and news magazines in the Muslim world today. Of course we find some religious articles and some political commentary added to satisfy their Muslimness. But, one only needs to consider the deeper questions about purpose and philosophy to realize the near total absence of an Islamic framework. Like, what is the soul of this institution? What makes it tick? What is the goal? What place does it have in Islamic scheme of things! What is the purpose of writing and publishing? What determines what is news! What objective criteria decide what is fit to print? What are the rights and responsibilities of journalists in a Muslim society? What about freedom of press? Etc. etc.

More than fifty years ago, Mufti Muhammad Shah, grand Mufti of Pakistan, wrote an article titled Adab-ul-Akhbar (The News Protocol). This was a rare effort to develop an Islamic framework for journalism. Commenting on the sensationalism in the Muslim press of his time he noted that there are those who “consider it haram (forbidden) to worry about halal and haram” in this profession.

The Islamic Basis

For those who do worry about these things, his article did provide some guidelines and a basis on which to build an Islamic framework

for this powerful profession. Mufti Muhammad Shafi quoted two ahadith that form the basis for journalism in Islam. The first one, an excerpt from a long hadith in Tirmidhi collection describes the daily routine of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). “I asked what was the prophet’s behavior like when he came outside the house. Hind bin Hala answered that it was his practice to keep quiet unless he had something useful and necessary to say ... And he used to inquire about the well being of his companions, and used to ask about the common occurrences among the people. Then he used to comment on these reports telling what was good and what was bad.”

The second hadith was reported by Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: “When the Prophet (SAWS) did not see a companion for three days, he used to inquire about him. Then if the companion had been on a journey, the Prophet (SAWS) used to pray for him; if he had been in town the Prophet (SAWS) used to go and visit him; if the person had been sick the Prophet (SAWS) asked about his health.”

It follows, says Mufti Shafi, that being constantly aware of the condition of the Ummah is a Sunnah. These days the press is the means for performing it. In addition the press can be used for communicating the grievances of the common people to the government, demanding the rights of Muslims, and for spreading the message of Islam. The most important thing to realize here is that the “news” here was sought for, in fact derived its meaning from, the possibilities of action. The objective was to be able to bring justice to a victim; help the weak and the needy; visit the sick. If nothing else was possible, at least one could pray for those who were in some difficulty. But there was an information-action ratio – close to one. Modern journalism changed that. It changed it under the dazzle of new technologies, so nobody even paid attention to what

was being changed.

Fundamental rule

Mufti Shafi also described a fundamental Islamic rule that should govern all discussion regarding journalism: The written word is subject to the same laws that govern the spoken word. If something is a pious act, so is writing and publishing it. If it is haram in one case, it is so in the other as well. In fact the written word has a longer life and broader reach and so it stands to produce greater good or greater evil, and so bring proportionately greater reward or punishment.

Anyhow, in Islamic Shariah there are few exemptions for a journalist from the normal rules of conduct that apply to everybody else. For example, it is not that backbiting is prohibited for a common man, but is somehow permissible for a journalist. It is to be remembered that Shariah describes in detail the rules that should govern all discourse by a Muslim. The Qur’an, for example, forbids making fun of other people. “O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: It may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let some women laugh at other: it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other. Nor call each other by offensive nicknames.” [Al-Hujarat 49:11.] This is a general requirement and it is not lifted just because the person doing it is a columnist and can display his skills in front of a much larger audience and with more polish.

Furthermore the right to privacy is a sacred human right that nobody (including the journalist) can violate. The laws of God apply to everybody whether be she a princess or a pauper, for the Qur’an tells us, “O ye who believe! Enter not the homes other than your own, until Ye have asked permission and saluted those in them: that is best for you, in order that ye may heed.” [Al-Nur, 24:27] Similarly

making a false allegation is a sin for a common man as well as for the writer. The requirement to cover up the sins of others applies as strongly to the reporter as to any other Muslim. This is generally ignored today although it has been greatly emphasized in the Shariah. One hadith says, "If a person covers up the sin of his brother Allah will cover up his sins on the Day of Judgment. If a person goes after the sins of his brother and exposes them, Allah will expose his sins, even if he hides in his own home." This one hadith destroys the basis for the entire tabloid press.

Other Guidelines

There are other guidelines in Adab-uI-Akhbar. It is not allowed to unjustly accuse anyone – Muslim or non-Muslim, period. A victim, however, has the right to publicize his grievance and accuse the aggressor. This is explicitly allowed by the Qur'an. It says: "Allah loves not the shouting of evil words in public speech, except by one who has been wronged, for Allah is He who hears and knows all things." [An-Nisa, 4:148] Thus airing grievances is permissible and if it can help the victim, it is an important job for the newspaper. A report, even if correct, should not be published if it is found that publishing it would hurt the interests of the society. No advertisement of any product or service should be published if the item in question is forbidden by the Shariah.

Regarding crime reports, which form the juiciest part of today's newspapers, Mufti Shafi declares elsewhere that such reports are simply not permissible. The details of crime promote an interest in crimes. A crime report should be published with the explicit purpose of discouraging crimes. One way to do that, says Mufti Shafi, is to publish news of crime along with the news of punishment; it will send a totally different message to the society and the net result will be that would-be criminals will be discouraged.

An Islamic Center for Journalism

The love-hate relationship of Muslims to Time or Western media may be explained by the simple fact that it is the best example of journalism as defined by the West. Muslims feel the pain when they are hurt, but they don't have their own framework for journalism, their own definition of news, their own criteria on which to judge a news publication. They have borrowed all these from the West. They feel that something is wrong somewhere but cannot pinpoint it because all the borrowed criteria they use suggest otherwise.

In this respect it is part of the larger problem of the contemporary Muslim society and we can learn something from other fields where progress is being made, for example Islamic Economics. Something similar is needed in the area of journalism. A center for Islamic Journalism established by the 'ulama and journalists who are serious about Islam. That way a framework for Islamic journalism can evolve through positive interaction between the scholars and the practitioners. Till that happens Muslims will keep on publishing newspapers and magazines. But they won't have an Islamic media. And the entire world will be the loser for that.

*Rabbanaa zalamnaa anfusanaa
wa illam taghfir lanaa
wa tarhamnaa lanakoonanna
minal khaasireen.*

Our Lord! We have wronged
our own souls: If thou forgive
us not and bestow not upon us
Thy Mercy, we shall certainly
be lost.

Love Without Illicit Relationship

Syed M Abdullah

Can people find love and intimacy without unlawful romance? For the West, it is an important question. In the mainstream America, an estimated 33 percent of the children are born out of wedlock and sex before marriage is the norm. Even some of the married people cheat on their spouses.

Of all the out-of-wedlock children, a whopping 70 percent are born to females ages 10-17. Without a supportive father most of these children end up in a cycle of poverty and despair.

Many Americans spend years in illicit relationships before settling on “that someone special,” but only a short while later their marriage founders on infidelity and lack of love. Ever wonder why?

Love is not a forbidden subject in Islam; in fact, it is something to covet. However, Islam defines love as much more than sexual appetite, above and beyond those stunning looks. Love that follows Allah’s guidance provides both physical and spiritual happiness.

Those who fall for the physical beauty but overlook the spiritual poverty of their spouses are known to regret. Pretty looks and youthfulness eventually fade away but the good character only becomes better overtime.

Khadijah (RA), the wife of Prophet Mu-

hammad (SAWS) was 15 years his senior and twice widowed, while the Prophet (SAWS) was never married, the handsomest, and noblest. Yet, their marriage was a true love story and the Prophet (SAWS) mentioned her glowingly ever after her death.

Make no mistake, the attraction for a beautiful person of the opposite sex is real. Most young people find themselves defenseless against the desire for intimacy that suddenly seizes their heart. Aware of the dangers of young age, the Prophet (SAWS) advised us to marry our children early so as to help them lower their gaze.

Unfortunately, in many Muslim cultures young men cannot be married early because of pressures from home and society. They are expected to “complete” their education and be financially “settled” first before they are cleared for marriage. These pressures are hurting our youth and pushing them toward sin. They are also delaying the marriage of the young women whom these men are destined to marry.

Islam tells us that marrying is equal to half of the religion. Allah calls the outpouring of love and affection for spouses a sign of His creation.

“And among His signs is this, that He cre-

ated for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect.” [30:21]

It is an amazing phenomenon that, in marriage, onetime-strangers overnight become intimate friends and well-wishers. Together, they raise a family and resolve to endure the tribulations of life through thick and thin.

In a stark contrast to Allah’s wrath on unlawful relationship, marriage becomes an act of worship and a righteous life among the highest forms of enjoyment. The Prophet (SAWS) said,

“The world and all things in it are enjoyment, but the most enjoyable thing in the world is a virtuous woman.” (Muslim)

While love for a girlfriend lands one in dangerous territory, the love for the wife becomes a charity; even conjugal relationship is deemed worthy of reward.

Not all marriages work well, though. Some men and women become prisoners of their marriage, living miserable lives or ultimately

divorcing.

Most marriages can survive with careful handling. Many a time, spouses do not appreciate each other and instead dwell on the negative. One of the things some women ignore is adorning themselves for their husbands. At home they live shabbily, perhaps from cultural influences, thereby alienating their husbands. They explain that their few nice dresses and perfumes are for weddings and functions, not home.

Obviously, this is just the opposite of what Islam instructs Muslim women to do.

Back to the question, can people find love and intimacy without unlawful romance? The answer is, yes, aplenty. Love within Islam is deep down, while outside of it is superficial. In the lawful relationship, long after the physical beauty fades away, spousal love, if carefully nurtured, remains vibrant and in old age transforms into mutual compassion and mercy.

To top it all off, loving, righteous spouses will be joined in an eternal companionship in the Hereafter. They will neither age nor tire of each other’s company.

Hold Fast

Irbad bin Sariyah (RA) reported: One day, Messenger of Allah (SAWS) delivered a very effective speech, as a result, eyes shed tears and hearts became softened. A man said: “O Prophet of Allah! It sounds as if this is a farewell speech, so advise us.” He (SAWS) said, “I admonish you to fear Allah, and to listen and obey even if a black slave has been appointed as your leader. For whoever among you lives after me will see much discord. So hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs who will come after me. Adhere to them and hold fast to them. Beware of Bid`ah (in religion) because every Bid`ah is a misguidance.”

[Abu Da wud and At-Tirmidhi]

Commentary: According to this Hadith, the best sermon may be defined as brief, comprehensive, appealing and beneficial.

More Paris Puzzles

Paul Craig Roberts

Some people who are not inclined to believe the official story of the Paris attack are troubled by the question why Muslim suicide bombers would blow themselves up for a false flag attack. The answer to this question is very simple. But first we should dispose of the question whether suicide bombers did blow themselves up. Is this something that we know, or is it part of the story that we are told? For example, we were told that during 9/11 passengers in hijacked airliners used their cell phones to call relatives, but experts have testified that the technology of the time did not permit cell phone calls from airliners at those altitudes.

To dispose of the question whether we have or do not have any real evidence that suicide bombers blew themselves up, I will assume that they did.

So we have suicide bombers blowing themselves up.

Now turn to the question that troubles some doubters: Why would suicide bombers blow themselves up for the sake of a false flag attack?

As I said, the answer is simple: Why assume that the suicide bombers knew who was organizing the attack? There seems to be abundant evidence that ISIL is a US creation, one that is still dependent on US active or passive support—thus the conflict between Putin and Washington over attacking ISIL. ISIL

seems to be what Washington used to overthrow the government in Libya and afterward was sent by Washington to Syria to overthrow Assad. Obviously, Washington has ISIL infiltrated. Washington has long proven its ability to use Islamic extremists. As Washington used them in Afghanistan against the Soviets and in Libya and Syria against independent governments, Washington used them in Paris. By my last count, the FBI on 150 occasions has successfully deceived people into participating into FBI orchestrated “terror plots.”

Now let us move to some bigger questions. Why do terrorists attack ordinary innocent people who have neither awareness of “their” government’s actions or control over them? The victims of 9/11 were not the neocons and members of the Washington establishment, whose policies in the Middle East justified attacks on their persons. Ditto for the Boston Marathon Bombing, and ditto for the Paris attacks. Innocents were the victims, not those who have taken Muslim lives.

Historically, terror attacks are not on the innocent but on the rulers and those who are guilty. For example, it was the Archduke of Austria/Hungary who was assassinated by the Serbian terrorist, not ordinary people blown up or shot down in a street cafe.

It is interesting that terrorists attacks attributed to Muslims only fall upon ordinary

people, not upon the political elites who oppress the Muslims. In past years on several occasions I have remarked in my columns on the total vulnerability of the neoconservatives to assassination. Yet there has been not a single attack by terrorists on a neocon life, and the neocons are the source of the violence that Washington has unleashed on the Muslim world. The neocons walk around without threat free as birds.

How believable is it that Muslim terrorists take their ire out on innocents when the President of France himself, who has sent military forces to murder Muslims, was sitting in the attacked stadium and could easily have been eliminated by a suicide bomber?

Now let us turn to questions of identification of the alleged “Paris terrorists.” Is it realistic to suppose that the millions of refugees from Washington and its European vassals’ wars in the Middle East have passports? Were these millions of refugees expecting to be driven by White Civilization’s Bombs out of their countries and thus had prepared themselves with passports in order to flee?

Did they write on their passport applications that they were going to be visiting Europe?

Was the beleaguered country, their homeland, under full military assault, able to process all these millions of passports?

What sort of dumbshit Western media goes along with the passport story — a media well paid to lie for Washington’s hegemony and crimes?

One final question for skeptics. Where are the photographs of the terrorists during their terrorizing? Surrounding the scenes of violence there were not only abundant security cameras, but also hundreds, even thousands, of people with cell phones that have cameras. With all of these photos, how is it possible that the authorities do not know if some terrorists escaped, and if so, who they are and what they

look like? Why are the authorities relying on fake passports for photos of the terrorists?

Terrorism has been unleashed in the Western World, and it is the terrorism of Western governments against Western peoples.

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“Information Clearing House”

DUA

The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said: “There is not a bondservant who recites in the morning of every day, and in the evening of every night:

Bismil-lāhil-lathee lā yadhurru ma`a`issmihi shay`un fil`ardhi wa lā fissamā`i wa huwa`as-samee`ul-`aleemu

...three times, except that nothing would harm him”.

“In the name of Allah with Whose name nothing in the Earth, nor in the Heavens can cause harm, and He is The Hearer, The Well-Knower.”

The Patient One

A'id al-Qarni

In the English language, patience is sometimes defined as the capacity for calm endurance of pain, trouble, and inconvenience. As an Islamic virtue, patience has an additional spiritual quality to it: To endure hardships for the sake of Allah, consciously making the intention that, by being patient and by not complaining, one will hopefully receive rewards from Allah in the Hereafter. After all, many hardy people in this world calmly endure pain and hardship; but relatively few people do so for the sake of Allah.

As for the Prophet (SAWS), he was a paragon of patience. For him, being chosen to be the seal of Prophets meant, not an easy life, but a life of difficulties and hardships, of trials and tribulations, of pain and suffering. In fact, no one in the history of mankind faced as many hardships as did the Prophet (SAWS). Death would have been easier than the personal tragedies the Prophet (SAWS) experienced throughout his life, and yet he never complained, but instead remained steadfast, patient, and thankful to his Lord.

In being patient, he was obeying his Lord's command:

And endure you patiently [O Muhammad], your patience is not but from Allah. (16:127)

He patiently endured being an orphan, being poor, and being hungry. He was patient when he was forced to leave his homeland, his house, and his family. He was patient when

he was being persecuted, when some of his Companions were being tortured, and when others among his family members and Companions were killed. He was patient when his enemies waged war against him, when Bedouins acted ignorantly with him, when Jews plotted against him, when hypocrites conspired to harm him; when many of his own relatives forsook him and declared war upon him.

He was patient in other ways as well. He patiently resisted the temptations of this world, the allure of riches, and the appeal of being strong and powerful. He turned away from all of the above because, instead of those worldly attractions, he longed only to please his Lord.

In every aspect of his life, and in every stage of his prophethood, the Prophet (SAWS) was patient. Patience, in fact, was his armor against everything that is harmful in this life. Every time he remembered what his enemies said, he recalled the words of Allah

So bear patiently [O Muhammad] what they say. (20:130)

Every time a difficult situation became almost too difficult to bear, he remembered the saying of Allah:

So [for me] patience is most fitting. (12:18)

And every time he faced almost certain destruction at the hands of his enemies, he remembered Allah's saying:

Therefore be patient [O Muhammad] as did the Messengers of strong will (46:35)

His was the patience of a man who is perfectly confident that Allah will help him and that Allah will reward him for his travails and for his patience. His was the patience of a man who knew that Allah was with him and that Allah was all the help he needed in life. As such, nothing -- no harsh word, no curse, no rude behavior, and no physical torture -- could shake him, faze him, perturb him, or even annoy him.

When his uncle died, he was patient. When his wife died, he was patient. When Hamzah (RA) died he was patient, even though Hamzah was killed in an especially gruesome manner.

When he was forced to leave Makkah, he was patient. When his son died, he was patient. When most of his people rejected his message, he remained patient. When pure and chaste wife was accused of doing a vile deed, he remained patient, seeking help from none save Allah. When his people labelled him a poet, a sorcerer, a madman, and a liar, he remained patient. When they cursed him, persecuted him, waged war against him, and physically assaulted him, he remained patient. In short, he was, and continues to remain, the Imam (leader) of those who practice patience, and the ideal role model of those who are thankful.

THE BALLOON THEORY

Once a group of 300 people were attending a conference on how to be happy. During one of the lectures, the speaker decided to do a group activity. He gave each person a balloon to write their name on. Then he placed all 300 balloons in a different room. Then he told the people they had five minutes to go in that room and find the balloon with their name on it. Everyone began running around, colliding and stumbling into each other in a rush to find their balloon. There was confusion and chaos.

After 5 minutes were over not a single person had their balloon.

The speaker said now we will do this activity again. Only this time asked each person, instead of finding their OWN balloon, will collect a random balloon and give it to the person whose name is on it. Within a minutes time everyone had their own balloon with them. When people worked harmoniously there was no chaos.

The speaker then said, "This very scenario is happening in our lives. Everyone is frantically looking around selfishly for their own happiness and are ending up being confused not knowing where it is.

Moral of the story: Remember! Our happiness lies in the happiness of other people. Meaning, if you give other people their happiness; and you will get your own happiness. If you help them find it, you will find your own within it.

The Amazing Rewards of Nurturing Girls

Allah willing, we will mention something about a righteous good deed which when performed according to its required conditions, will result in the one who performed it attaining three things:

First: he will be veiled from Hell and never enter it.

Second: on the Day of the Greatest Terror, (i.e. the Day of Judgment), he will be gathered in the company of the Prophet (SAWS).

Third: Paradise will be guaranteed for him, where he will be in the company of the Prophet (SAWS).

What an excellent and great reward this is! This great reward, O believers, requires that certain conditions be fulfilled perfectly.

Deed and its conditions

I say, seeking the help of Allah The Exalted, that it is to take care of girls, being in charge of them and looking after their affairs and interests. That is the position of our religion with the woman whom it honors, maintains, and guards; it encourages men to enter Paradise and receive great rewards should they take care of her and guard her.

How great the favors of Allah The Almighty are on the daughters of Eve and how sad that some people show ingratitude and deny them!

The Prophet (SAWS) said in an authentic

Hadith on the authority of the Mother of the Believers 'Aishah (RA):

“Whoever (people) are tried by any of them (girls), and he treats them kindly, they will screen him from the fire (of Hell).” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

He (SAWS) further said:

“Whoever has three girls and is patient with them and clothes them from what he has, they will veil him from the fire (of Hell).”

That is the first reward that you, O slave of Allah, would receive for that work, which is to be screened and veiled from the fire of Hell, and whoever is drawn away from the fire and admitted to Paradise has indeed attained his desire.

May Allah make us all among those who attain that reward!

Concerning the second reward, which is to be gathered in the company of the Prophet it was narrated on the authority of Anas that he said,

“The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said: ‘Whoever looks after two girls until they attain the age of maturity, would come on the Day of Judgment with me and him being (as close to each other) as these (and he joined his fingers).’”

[Muslim]

As for the third reward, then consider the following texts:

It was narrated on the authority of Jabir

that the Prophet (SAWS) said:

“Whoever has three daughters whom he gives refuge to, provides for and shows mercy to, Paradise is certainly guaranteed for him.” A man asked, “And (for) two, O Messenger of Allah?” He (SAWS) replied: “And also (for the one who has) two (daughters).” [Ahmad] [Al-Bukhari in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad]

It was narrated on the authority of Abu Sa’id that the Prophet (SAWS) said:

“No one has three or two daughters or sisters, and he fears Allah regarding them and is kind to them, except that he will enter Paradise.”

It was narrated on the authority of Anas that he said,

“The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said: ‘Whoever has two daughters or sisters to whom he is kind as long as they are with him, he and I will be in Paradise (as close to each other) as these (and then he put two of his fingers together).’”

What a great reward this is! And, what an excellent position this is!

However, such great rewards have heavy qualifications and various objectives that must be realized by great striving and patience.

What are these conditions and restrictions?

All the conditions are included in his (the Prophet’s (SAWS)) saying: “And he is kind to them.”

To be kind to girls in such a way as to befit the Sharee’ah is the all-inclusive condition and the greatest qualification. The narrations previously mentioned came to explicate and clarify in detail this general reference. The Prophet (SAWS) said: “...Whom he gives refuge to, provides for and shows mercy to.”

Al-Hafith said, “All these terms are included under the term “Ihsan” (to be kind).”

What is the meaning of giving refuge to them? What is intended by providing for them? And, how should we show mercy to them?

Giving refuge has three facets:

First: Giving her refuge with a good righteous mother, to be an example for her to follow. The first stage of giving refuge to girls is to keep them with a righteous pious chaste mother to maintain and guard them. Have you not heard the advice of the Prophet (SAWS): “Then, succeed (by choosing) the religious woman lest you would lose (good)”?

Second: Giving her refuge in her boudoir, inside her house, which is to teach her to abide in her house and not to come out unless there is a necessity, an urgent need or an act of worship. In other words: “To attend the goodness and supplications of Muslims.”

That is the significance of the statement of Allah The Almighty (which means): {And abide in your houses.} [Quran 33:33]

Allah The Almighty commands women to abide in their houses, for it is more suitable to screen them and guard their lives.

Consider, may Allah have mercy upon you, how Allah The Almighty mentions houses in relation to women in three occasions in His Book, despite the fact that these houses (in most cases) belong to their guardians. Allah The Almighty Says (what means):

{And remember what is recited in your houses of the verses of Allah and wisdom.} [Quran 33:34]

{And abide in your houses.} [Quran 33:33]
{Do not turn them out of their [husbands’] houses.} [Quran 65:1]

So, be eager to bring up your daughters to abide in the home, and adhere to firmness for it is more beneficial for their religion and more likely to bring you honor in this world and the Hereafter.

Third: Giving her shelter in a house full of Thikr (mentioning and remembering Allah), worship and righteous deeds. It is true that some women do not come out of their houses, but their houses, at the same time, are inhab-

ited by the human devils and the jinn, where women do not veil themselves from the men who are not their Mahrams (unmarriageable relatives), and their sons and those of the paternal and maternal uncles and aunts go and come and enter everywhere they like with neither a cover nor a veil.

The same is true of the driver and the servant, as if they have foster relations with them, for they enter upon the women of the house with no veil. Such a house is not fit to be a refuge, for it is a house in which honor is violated.

Also, some women do not come out of their houses, but their houses are filled with corruption-causing devices and channels of singing and adultery. The girl there thus learns, listens to and sees what is unlawful, is tempted away from her religion and strays and gets corrupted more than if she goes to markets.

Is this a refuge, O slaves of Allah?

The real refuge lies in a screening shelter that guards and maintains your honor: "Whoever has three daughters whom he gives refuge, provides for and shows mercy to, Paradise is inevitably guaranteed for him."

That was the refuge; now what is intended by providing for them?

This is explained in the narration of Muslim: "Whoever looks after two girls until they attain the age of maturity." An-Nawawi said, "It means to raise them and provide them with sustenance." It is further explained in his (the Prophet's (SAWS)) saying: "And dresses them from what he has."

Yes, O slaves of Allah! To provide the woman with what she necessarily needs of food, clothing and sustenance is among the obligatory duties and one of the greatest acts that bring men closer to Allah.

Men should provide women with these things so that they would not need to come out of the house to work and earn their living. They should provide them with these necessi-

ties so that they would not think about committing a sin or deviation.

The Prophet (SAWS) said: "To provide for them," and did not say to make them transgress by giving them what is beyond their needs as many fathers, may Allah guide them, do with their daughters. They give their daughters all that they ask for, and whenever one's daughter has a desire for a certain thing, they hasten to buy it for her to fulfill her desire, and whenever they request anything, they hurry with full power in response to her command.

This kind of indulgence destroys the girl and would shorten her marital life. Once such a girl moves to the house of her husband and is no longer pampered, she rebels against her husband because she misses what she was brought up on.

On the other extreme are other men who fall short of fulfilling the necessities of their women, shouting at them things like, "Why do you not come out and work like so-and-so who obtains her needs and what is sufficient for her?" Allah The Almighty Says (what means): {And [they are] those who, when they spend, do so not excessively or sparingly but are ever, between that, [justly] moderate.} [Quran 25:67]

The third qualification and condition included under being kind (to girls) lie in his statement: "And shows mercy to them." What is the real nature of mercy? What is intended by it?

The first thing that occurs to the mind is its apparent and general meaning; to show mercy to them is to sympathize and show pity for them, not to beat them, and everything else included in the meaning of mercy, which are, no doubt, true. However, the real mercy one should show girls lies in two things:

First: to show mercy to them by earnestly seeking and seriously working to keep them away from the Wretched Settlement that is the Fire. That is to bring them up on the rituals of

Islam, the establishment of prayers, adherence to Hijab and the maintenance of their chastity:

{O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones.} [Quran 66:6]

The man who shows sympathy towards his daughters, pampers them and is spiritually and materially kind to them, and, at the same time does not command them to perform prayers, to observe fast or to adhere to Hijab, is in fact a tyrant and plain enemy of them, for he is not sincere in advising them, and he does not help them and keep them away from the Fire of Hell.

That is the real mercy, O company of believers. The Prophet (SAWS) said:

"My parable in relation to that of my Ummah (nation) is like a man who kindled a fire and when it lit all around him, moths and insects started falling into the fire. I am there to catch hold of you (in order to save you) from the fire. But you plunge into it and overpower my efforts."

This is only one of many forms with which Allah The Almighty honored the woman and

raised her esteem. Which honor and high esteem are better than exhorting men to enter Paradise and be gathered in the company of the Prophet and kept away from the Fire of Hell, if they are kind to the girls in their care, look after their affairs and take care of them perfectly?

So, fear Allah, O slave-girl of Allah, and be proud of that honor, and remember that the final statement of the Prophet (SAWS) before he left this world was: "And I advise you to be kind and good to women."

Thus, he commanded and advised us to be good and kind to you, O woman. So, be a good helper to your guardians to achieve that great task, and bear in mind that your honor and glory lie in your adherence to your religion. And, O men, be good and kind to your girls – your daughters and sisters, and be aware of the fact that this great reward you have been told about is qualified by these heavy qualifications, which are easy for the person on whom Allah The Almighty makes it easy, and within the capacity of him who strives his utmost and is eager to do them.

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DYEING THE HAIR

Qatadah (RA) reports: I asked Anas (RA), "Did Rasulullah (SAWS) dye his hair?" He replied: "The hair of Rasulullah (SAWS) did not reach such a stage where one would use a dye. However Rasulullah (SAWS) did have a few white hair on his temples, on the other hand Abu Bakr (RA) dyed his hair with Hina and Katm." [Tirmithi]

Commentary: Katm is a type of grass, which is used for dyeing the hair. Some people say that the colour of Katm is black, and if mixed with Hina it becomes red. Others say the colour of Katm is green, and when mixed with Hina it gives a black tint. Mulla Ali Qari says: "The one that gives more colour is considered. If more Katm is used the dye becomes black and if more Hina is used, it becomes red". The use of both colours are permissible, but black should not be used. It has been forbidden in the ahaadith to use a totally black dye.

Authorship of the Prophet?

Host: You said that Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) claimed not to be the author of the Quran, how can you verify that claim?

Jamal Badawi:

Usually a person is challenged when he claims that he had authored something or invented something. It is not very usual for someone to come out and say that they are not the authors, they didn't invent it. This is a good point brought up by Dr. Jaz when he says that this alone, the testimony of the person himself would suffice to get the point across because he is not taking credit for this.

Host: How would you reply to those who say that Prophet Muhammad attributed the Quran to God for his own benefit?

Jamal Badawi:

We have to ask ourselves what kind of personal benefit the Prophet would accrue by falsely claiming that this Quran comes from God while he is the actual author of it. We know that people usually benefit when they claim something to their credit not when they disclaim it. In the case of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) he was a disclaimer rather than a

claimer. What kind of benefit would he be after from this kind of claim.

Host: Suppose someone says by attributing the Quran to God, a higher authority, it may benefit the person even more?

Jamal Badawi:

To make this assumption seems to imply that (for the sake of discussion) he was not telling the truth when he said conclusively that the Quran did not come from him and this is a sort of deliberate deception. This assumption is totally inconsistent with what we know about the Prophet in terms of character and his life. With that reservation aside one of the useful ways to objectively examine this issue would be to look at his wealth and material life before he was a Prophet and after he became one to see if he really benefited in any way materially from claiming to be a Prophet. We know that before he became Prophet at the age of 25 he married a very rich woman from the Qurishites, Khadijah, who was a very successful business woman. The Prophet was in charge of her business and he was a very successful and well liked merchant. He

lived comfortably and didn't have any financial worry whatsoever. When this is compared with what happened to him after he began his career as a Prophet we will notice immediately that he suffered a great deal materially and was worst of after he became a Prophet. At times he suffered from severe hunger. What kind of material benefit did he gain from his claim.

Host: Could you give us documentation of his relative status?

Jamal Badawi:

In both Bukhari and Muslim his wife Aisha (RA) narrated that "A month or two would go by without fire being lit in our house (for a cooked or hot meal)." When people asked her how the household of the Prophet survived she said "*Alaswadan, altamr wa alma'a*." Two things: water and dates. She also added that some of the Ansar, their neighbors, would send them some goat milk which used to be the only supplement to water and dates. We should note here that this was not just a temporary supplement for some time which was made up for when things got better. Even after his victory and the victory of Muslims and when he had lots of wealth available the same simple life, self imposed deprivation continued. In fact in the Quran in (33:28-29) describes where the household of the Prophet had unease regarding why there was so much wealth and they were living in a very difficult self imposed deprivation.

One time Hafsa (RA), his wife, was asked about the bedding of the Prophet and she said that "his bedding was simply a piece of canvas that I used to fold and put it under him to sleep on. One night I thought that I should make it a little bit more comfortable so I folded it four times. When he woke up for the early

morning prayer he said what did you do to my bedding? She replied that she simply folded it four times instead of twice. He replied that she shouldn't fold it four times and that she should keep it at two folds because "I am afraid that this much comfort may stand in my way of waking up at night and making the late night prayer." Imagine the kind of life he lived at a time when Muslims were victorious and if he wanted to live as a king he could have easily done so without any problem. One time one of his famous companions, Omar (RA), entered his room and he started crying and the Prophet (SAWS) asked him what was wrong. Omar (RA) said "When I entered the room I only saw the Prophet (SAWS) sleeping on a simple mat that left marks in his body and I looked in the room and only found a handful of barely in one corner." His reply to the Prophet (SAWS) was "O Messenger of God you see all the Persian kings and Byzantine emperors are living in all kinds of luxury with rivers flowing under them in their palaces and you the most selected of God's creatures and the last messenger are living in such dire need. Why don't you pray to God to make it a little easier and to provide a little more." When the Prophet (SAWS) heard that he sat up and said "Omar do you still have any doubt about this matter of faith? This ease and comfort is much better in the hereafter, than in this life."

Another companion by the name of, AlNuman Ibn Bashir (RA), once said "I saw the Messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), twitch because of hunger that he could not even find enough of the bad dates to fill his stomach." Narrated in Bukhari, Muslim and Ahmad a famous companion, Abu Hurira, said "The Prophet never had a full stomach of bread for three consecutive days till he died."

This is the sort of life that he lived. So what sort of benefit did he get by claiming to be a Prophet (SAWS) except in more difficult type of life.

Host: What were the Prophet's assets like when he died as apposed to when he started his Prophetic career?

Jamal Badawi:

Before he started his wife was a rich successful merchant. She was actually in charge of his trade and how she got to know about him and his skill and honesty. They both loved each other so much, she was his only wife from the age of 25 till he was 50 - during his youth and manhood - that her wealth was his wealth. After Khadijah (RA) died, and he was 50 she was 65, her wealth all became available to his disposal. In both Bukhari, Tirmithi and Muslim we are told that when the Prophet (SAWS) died his shield was held as a collateral in the hand of a Jewish citizen for some barely that the Prophet (SAWS) bought from him.

As narrated in Bukhari and Muslim Aisha (RA) said "when the Prophet died there was nothing edible in the house except some barely." This is related to what was in the household. As narrated by Amr Ibn Al Harith in Bukhari that when the Prophet (SAWS) died he didn't leave anything behind, not a dirham or denar." This means no dollar, no cent, no wealth whatsoever. He continues "he left no person in bondage, nor did he leave anything except his white ride and his arm." This was in reference to his sword. In fact there was a piece of land known as the land of Fadak which some historians mistake to have been owned by the Prophet. In fact this land was reserved by the Prophet so that the income from that would be used to support the orphans, the poor, and

after his death, to provide for the needs of his house hold.

The difference that might have risen may have had to do with the administration of the land but nobody ever made a justifiable claim that he ever owned that land but it was just put aside for the benefit of the poor. In fact this is consistent with what he said "We are not supposed to leave any material possession behind us for our heirs when we die. Whatever is left must be spent in charity." This not only reflects his deeds but it is consistent with what he taught: for Muslims not to be extravagant and for them to keep their eyes on the life hereafter. In Abu Dawood when people discussed his suffering and how he could have had anything under his disposal but chose to live like any other poor person he said "What do I have to do with this life? My similitude with this life is like someone who is traveling, then on the way he stopped under a tree so he sat down to rest a little bit under the shadow of that tree then he continued his travels." So he regarded this entire life like moments that a person spends under a tree. This was his attitude and his behavior. This then brings us back to the question of what kind of material benefit did he acquire by claiming that he is not the author of the Quran and that he is the Prophet (SAWS) sent by God to guide humanity.

Host: Skeptics may argue that there are other ways to benefit other than a material sense such as power and leadership?

Jamal Badawi:

There is no disagreement even among critics of Islam that as a leader Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) is regarded by some as the greatest leader in history. Some regard him as the most successful leader in human history. A person

with these qualities and talents could have very easily, without claiming Prophethood said that he is a leader by showing his wisdom, talents and qualities for people to follow. In fact it would be easier for him to claim power and leadership because of these qualities without claiming being a Prophet. To claim Prophet is to claim something that people can not comprehend. For one to claim receiving revelation, the word of God being dictated to you people find to be difficult to believe. But they find it very easy to believe that this person is a great leader. It is also known historically that the Quran challenged the most eloquent of the eloquent and for 1400 years not one person has claimed to imitate even a portion of the Quran. If he was that smart it could have been used as a sign of his ability in deserving leadership. He did not have to claim that it came from God. It would have been better to claim that the Quran was his which would have given him more power and respect by the people. Lets look into his character in order to see if he was an egotistical person looking for personal glory and prestige. To start with we can not separate the pursuit of power which was raised in this question with the answer to material benefit. When people seek power and prestige they also want to have fancy meals, big palaces and guards. They have to behave like kings or great people if they are looking for power. If we look at the life of the Prophet we find it to be an amazing example of humility and humbleness. He used to sit on the ground, eat from the same pot as other poor and down trodden people. He used to mix more with the poor and needy than with the rich. Whenever he was invited even by a poor person for a simple meal he graciously accepted the invitation and ate from whatever was

given to him. At one point when he entered a place where believers were sitting and they stood up for him he did not like it and said “don’t stand up to glorify each other.”

Whenever he came to a place where people were seated, he did not sit in a central place as people seeking power do, but rather he just sat wherever a place was available. No wonder how some people would come and not know who the leader was. He was a common man and behaved like a very simple person. In one incident a person hearing about the greatness of the Prophet and what he teaches came to him and somehow he was trembling and the Prophet patted him and told him to “take it easy I am only the son of a woman who used to eat dry bread.”

In one trip it was time to eat and they started preparing to cook the food and everyone started volunteering and the Prophet said he would collect the wood (they were surprised) and they said “O Prophet of God we can do that for you” and he said “I know that you can do that for me but I hate to have any distinction over you.” As is narrated in Bukhari once the Prophet (SAWS) passed by a number of young girls who were singing and making poetry for some occasion and one of them said “among us there is a Prophet who knows what will happen in the future.” He stopped her and told her “no don’t say that continue with your poetry that you were reciting before and don’t say that about me.” In his own lifetime it was reported that he consulted quite a bit with his companions about many decisions and many times he accepted their opinions (in matters that were not decided by revelation) even though in some cases it was against his own personal opinion. In all logic and from his behavior this is not the type of person who

would seek power and glory. In addition the Quran itself confirms that he never aspired for leadership or to be a prophet.

Host: Is there any evidence in the Quran that would indicate that Prophet Muhammad did not aspire to be a leader or Prophet?

Jamal Badawi:

There are several citations in the Quran. In (28:86) it says “And thou hadst not expected that the Book would be sent to thee except as a Mercy from thy Lord: Therefore lend not thou support in any way to those who reject ((Allah)’s Message).” To further indicate that he was not a person looking for power or prestige or prominence he is directed in the Quran to tell the people in (6:50) “Say: “I tell you not that with me are the treasures of Allah, nor do I know what is hidden, nor do I tell you I am an angel. I but follow what is revealed to me.” Say: “can the blind be held equal to the seeing?” Will ye then consider not?” Similarly in (7:188) “Say: “I have no power over any good or harm to myself except as Allah willeth. If I had knowledge of the unseen, I should have multiplied all good, and no evil should have touched me: I am but a warner, and a bringer of glad tidings to those who have faith.”

The Quran also indicates that the Prophet never claimed to know anything that would happen in the future except as Allah revealed to him specifically. He did not have open knowledge which would equate him with God or make him more than human. For example in (46:9) “Say: “I am no bringer of new-fangled doctrine among the apostles, nor do I know what will be done with me or with you. I follow but that which is revealed to me by inspiration; I am but a Warner open and clear.” One more example which is very explicit and

clear is in (18:110) “Say: “I am but a man like yourselves, (but) the inspiration has come to me, that your Allah is one Allah.” These are only a few of the many citations we find in the Quran. It suffices to say that he also forbade people from making his graveyard as a place of worship. He even said it clearly as we mentioned in a previous program “Don’t you over praise me as the Christians overpraise Jesus the son of Mary, I am only the servant of God and His messenger.

THE MESSAGE

Abu Qatadah (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said, “When anyone of you enters his/her place of Worship, he should perform two Rak`ah (of voluntary prayer) before sitting.”

[Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Commentary: According to Imam An-Nawawi, one who comes to the place of Worship and performs Fard Salat or Sunnah Ratibah (compulsory), he will be exempted from performing two Rak`ah. Some `Ulama’ are of the opinion that the order in this respect makes it compulsory, and for this reason they held Tahiyat-ul-Masjid as Wajib (obligatory), while others consider it as a liked act (i.e., Mandub) and thus comes in the category of Mustahabb (desirable).

Implications of Tawhid

Ali Unal

Monotheists, those who maintain tawhid, cannot be narrow-minded. Their belief in One God, Creator of the heavens and the earth, Master of the east and the west, and Sustainer of the universe, leads them to view everything as belonging to the same Lord, to Whom they belong as well. Thus they consider nothing as alien. Their sympathy, love, and service are not confined to any particular race, color, or group, and they come to understand the Prophetic saying: “O servants of God, be brothers/sisters as God orders you!” (Bukhari). Monotheism produces the highest degree of self-respect and self-esteem in people.

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

Monotheists, although humble and mild, never abase themselves by bowing before anyone or anything except God. They never aim at any worldly advantage by their worship. They seek only to please God and obtain His approval.

Monotheists, although naturally weak and powerless as human beings, become powerful enough through their Lord’s Power to resist the whole world. They are virtuous and altru-

istic, for their purpose is to gain God’s approval by working for His good pleasure. Boisterous pride in power and wealth can have no room in their hearts, for they know that whatever they possess is bestowed by God, and that God can take away as easily as He can give.

Monotheists know that the only way to success and salvation is to acquire a pure soul and righteous behavior. They have perfect faith in God, Who is above all need, related to none, absolutely just, and without partner in His exercise of Divine Power. Given this belief, they understand that they can succeed only through right living and just action, for no influence or underhanded activity can save them from ruin.

Monotheists do not become hopeless and disappointed. Their firm faith in God, Master of all treasures of the earth and the heavens, and Possessor of limitless grace and bounty and infinite power, imparts to their hearts extraordinary consolation, fills them with satisfaction, and keeps them filled with hope. In this world they might meet with rejection at all doors, nothing might serve their ends, and all means might desert them. But faith in and dependence on God, which never leave them, give them the strength to go on struggling. Such profound confidence can come only from belief in the One God. Such belief produces great determination, patient persever-

ance, and trust in God. When they decide to devote their resources to fulfilling the Divine Commands to secure God's good pleasure and approval, they are sure that they have the Lord of the Universe's support and backing.

Many polytheists and atheists, on the other hand, have small hearts and depend on limited powers. Thus their troubles and the resulting despair soon overwhelm them and, frequently, they commit suicide. Professor Joad's testimony is explicit on this point:

For the first time in history there is coming to maturity a generation of men and women [in the West of the 1950s] who have no religion, and feel no need for one. They are content to ignore it. Also they are very unhappy, the suicide rate is abnormally high. (The present and future of religion)

As opposed to this, a non-Muslim historian who is not sympathetic to Islam, writes the following about tawhid:

In this uncompromising monotheism, with its simple, enthusiastic faith in the supreme rule of a transcendental being, lies the chief strength of Islam. Its adherents enjoy a consciousness of contentment and resignation unknown among followers of most creeds. Suicide is rare in Muslim lands. (History of the Arabs)

Monotheism inspires bravery, for it defeats the two factors that make people cowards: fear of death and love of safety, and the belief that Someone other than God can somehow be bribed into forgiving their sins. Belief in the Islamic creedal statement that "there is no deity but God" purges the mind of these ideas. The first idea loses its influence when people realize that their lives, property, and everything else really belong to God, for this makes them willing to sacrifice whatever they have for God's approval. The second idea is defeated when people realize that there is no power other than God that creates, causes to die, rewards, punishes, and forgives. Also, no

one can die before his or her appointed time, even if all of the world's forces were to combine to make it so. Nothing can bring death forward or push it backward even one instant. This firm belief in One God and dependence upon Him makes monotheists the bravest of people.

Monotheism creates an attitude of peace and contentment, purges the mind of subtle passions and jealousy, envy and greed, and prevents one from resorting to base and unfair means to achieve success. Monotheists understand that God holds the wealth; that He bestows honor, power, reputation, and authority as He wills and subjects them to His Will; and that their duty is only to endeavor and struggle fairly. They know that success and failure depend upon His Grace, for no power can block His Will to give or not to give. They also know that they must strive to deserve His Grace. But many of those who do not believe in God consider success and failure to be the result of their own efforts or by the help of earthly powers, and do not take His Grace and Will into consideration. Therefore they remain slaves to cupidity and envy, and use bribery, flattery, conspiracy, and other base and unfair means to achieve success.

Monotheists know that God is aware of everything, whether hidden or open, and is nearer to them than their jugular vein. If they sin in secret even under the cover of night, God knows it. He knows our unformed thoughts and intentions, even those of which we ourselves are unaware. We can hide things from people, but not from God. We can evade everyone, but not God's grasp. The firmer our belief in this respect, the more observant we will be of His Commands. This is why the first and most important condition for being a Muslim is to have firm and sincere faith in God's Oneness.

This is also the most important and fundamental principle of the Prophet's teach-

ings, as well as Islam's bedrock and the mainspring of its power. All other beliefs, commands, and laws of Islam stand firm on this foundation. Lastly, we quote the remarks of Dr. Laura Veccia Vaglieri, a famous Italian Orientalist, concerning the universal spirit of Islamic monotheism:

The Prophet, with a voice which was inspired by a deep communion with his Maker, preached the purest monotheism to the worshippers of fetish and the followers of a corrupted Christianity and Judaism. He put himself in open conflict with those regressive tendencies of mankind which lead to the association of other beings with the Creator.

In order to lead men to a belief in one God, he did not delude them with happenings which deviate from the normal course of nature. Rather, he simply invited them, without asking them to leave the realm of reality, to consider the Universe and its laws. Being confident of the resultant belief in the one and indispensable God, he simply let men read in the book of life.

Thanks to Islam, paganism in its various forms was defeated, The concept of the Universe, the practices of religion, and the customs of social life were each liberated from all the monstrosities which had degraded them, and human minds were made free of prejudice. Man finally realized his dignity. (*An Interpretation of Islam*)

Use of Tongue

Mu'adh bin Jabal (RA) reported: I asked the Messenger of Allah (SAWS): "Inform me of an act which will cause me to enter Jannah and keep me far from Hell." He (SAWS) replied, "You have asked me about a matter of great importance, but it is easy for one for whom Allah makes it easy." He added, "Worship Allah, associate nothing with Him in worship, offer As-Salaah (the prayer), pay the Zakaah, observe Saum (fasting) during Ramadan and perform Hajj (pilgrimage) to the House of Allah, if you can afford it." He (SAWS) further said, "Shall I not guide you to the gates of goodness? Fasting is a screen (from Hell), charity extinguishes (i.e., removes) the sins as water extinguishes fire, and standing in prayers by a servant of Allah during the last third part of the night." Then he asked, "Shall I tell you of that which holds all these things?" I said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah." So he took hold of his tongue and said, "Keep this in control." I asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Shall we really be accounted for what we talk about?" He replied, "People will be thrown on their faces into the Hell on account of their tongues." (TIRMIZI)

Commentary: Besides describing Articles of Islam, this Hadith mentions the dangers which lie in the careless use of the tongue. All good actions can go waste if one does not guard his speech. One should, therefore, guard his tongue against that which Allah has made prohibited.

Know Your Rights, Set Your Limits

Bushra Zaiback

Should a woman remove her headscarf to appease society or government? Or should she keep it on to obey her Creator?

Not too long ago, a Muslim woman was refused a seat in the parliament and stripped of her citizenship in her country because she chose to wear the Islamic headscarf. Another Muslim woman, in the same country, was ridiculed and expelled from school for the same reason. In this particular country, Muslim women who wear headscarves are considered uneducated and old-fashioned. This country is not France. Nor is it America or the UK. It is Turkey--a Muslim country!

A retired Turkish army general was quoted saying, "In Turkey it is not forbidden to cover your hair or your body. But the Turkish public gets upset when this is done in the public - and in public education - and when the headscarf is used as a political symbol."

How can a country with such a rich Islamic history get to this point? The Turkish secular elite are so engrossed in "modernizing" their society that they seem to have forgotten their Islamic roots.

As my husband and I were visiting a masjid in Turkey, we overheard a tour guide telling his group that although this was a beautiful masjid, no one really prays anymore, they are "modern" now. He also said that the only place they will ever find a Muslim wearing a head-

scarf is in the farm areas where everyone is illiterate and no one goes to school. He failed to mention that the reason they do not go to school is because they are not allowed to.

This raised a myriad of questions in my mind. At what point do we start to sacrifice our religion? Who do we sacrifice for? Where do we draw the line? Should we remove our headscarves so that we may go to school? I thought of an Egyptian woman who was living in France--and decided that nothing is as precious as her faith. She interrupted her studies and went back to Egypt when the university authorities required her to remove her headscarf for an ID photo. In France, too, Muslim women are not allowed to wear headscarves. It is against the law to show "ostentatious signs of religion". The authorities' reason is: "It is not about religion; it's about lifting constraints on women",

France is infamous for making things difficult for Muslims. Two teenage sisters were expelled from their high school in a suburb of Paris for wearing the Islamic headscarf. They are now homeschooling. The new owners of a supermarket in a predominantly Muslim suburb of Paris say they are being harassed by the city authorities because they refuse to sell alcohol or pork. It is said that they are not meeting the demands of the public, although the majority of their customers are Muslim.

When should we give in and when should we draw the line? We should definitely never commit shirk to appease anyone. We can look at the example of Bilal ibn Rabah (RA). Bilal, the slave of Omayyah ibn Khalaf, was severely beaten by his master when the latter came to know of his conversion to Islam. Omayyah tortured Bilal in the blistering heat of the desert sun by placing a heavy rock on his chest and lashing him with a whip, all the while commanding him to renounce his belief in one God. Through all this torment, Bilal did nothing but raise his one finger and say, “Ahad, Ahad”, meaning one, one. MashaAllah, that took a lot of courage, strength and dedication.

What about other matters? What about removing the headscarf in order to go to school? Should a woman remove her headscarf to appease society or the government? Or should she keep it on to obey her Creator?

The headscarf is a requirement for all Muslim women. Alhamdulillah, we live in a world where there are different options to choose from. We should never give up furthering our education because of some barriers or constraints that may have been placed. If we cannot physically attend school, we can home school, like the sisters in France. We are also living in a time where everything is possible via the internet. We can still fight for our right to live our lives the way we want to. Exploring other options is not a sign of defeat, rather it is victory.

I remember my mother having a problem at the DMV every time she needed to renew her driver’s license or ID. They did not ask her to remove the entire headscarf; they just wanted her to slip it back a little. She refused

to do this and went from supervisor to supervisor every time until they gave in. Alhamdulillah, thanks to the conviction of many Muslim women, I do not think that we have this problem anymore. I have had ID’s in a couple different states and encountered no problems.

But what about removing the face veil? A Muslim woman in Florida recently refused to remove her face veil for her ID photo. She even took this matter to court. The judge, however, saw not removing the face veil as a threat to security and ruled that she may keep her headscarf on but she must remove her face veil. Is the face veil really a threat to security? It just might be. While her conviction is admirable, I tend to agree that it is hard to identify who a person is without a photo. It also would make it easy to abuse this, as could have been in the case of young Elizabeth Smart. Besides, anyone can steal or replicate an ID and claim to be the faceless person in the photo. I suppose in this case a reasonable option could be, if a sister is really persistent on not removing the lace veil, is to ask for a female photographer. At any other time she needs to present an ID, she can also ask for a female.

In life, there are rules. Islamically, as long as they do not contradict Islam, we should obey the laws in the society we live in. Sometimes it is hard to know what the right thing to do is. Most of the time, if we can not consult a scholar for a fatwa, we should follow our hearts. The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Those of you who witness wrong should change it with his hands. If he cannot, then change it with his tongue. If he cannot, then change it with his heart; and that is the weakest of faith.”(Muslim) May Allah give us the strength and inclination to do what pleases Him, Ameen.

“When Allah wishes good for someone, He bestows upon him the understanding of Deen.” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Islam, Iman, and Ihsan

Maulana Manzoor Noumani (ra)

Islam

Literally, Islam denotes self-surrender or to give oneself up to someone and accept his overlordship in the fullest sense of the term. The religion sent down by Allah and brought into the world by His Prophets has been called Islam for the simple reason that, in it, the bondsman yields completely to the power and control of the Lord and makes the rendering of whole-hearted obedience to Him the cardinal principle of his life. This is the sum and substance of the Islamic creed and this is what is required of us in the Qur'an.

And your God is One Allah, therefore surrender unto Him. (22:34)

Who is better in religion than he who surrenders his purpose to Allah? (4:125)

Further, there are some tenets that are peculiar to Islam in the Shari'ah [Ways of Law] brought by the Divine Prophets. These tenets, so to say, are the outer manifestations of the inner reality of Islam, its signs and symbols, and it, again, is sustained and nourished by them. They are purely of a devotional nature and it is by means of them that the exterior-beholding eye distinguishes between those who have opted for Islam and those who have not. Thus, in the final, complete and perfect Law brought to us by the Last of the Prophets (SAWS) the testimony of the Oneness of Allah and Messengership of Muhammad (SAWS), Salah,

Zakah, Fasting, Hajj have been prescribed as the principal tenets of Islam. In another Tradition it is candidly set forth that:

"Islam is built upon these five things."

The five things the Prophet (SAWS) has delineated in reply to a question regarding Islam are, at all events, the fundamental principles of Islam and constitute its external form.

Iman

In the literal sense, it means to believe in veracity of someone on the basis of one's faith in him but in the usage of Islam it denotes the affirmation and acceptance as true and authentic of what the Messenger of Allah (SAWS) may tell and the guidance he may bring from the Lord about the realities that are beyond one's own understanding. Dogmatic faith, in any case, is basically related to things that are invisible and about which we cannot know through the organs of physical perception (like the eyes, the ears and the nose). These include the Existence of Allah, His Commands and Attributes, the messengership of the prophets and the arrival of revelation on them, and the knowledge furnished by them governing the present world and the Hereafter: Hence, in the terminology of the Shariah, Iman signifies sincere acceptance of all the things the Prophet (SAWS) may teach or reveal (live those mentioned above) due to an absolute reliance upon his truthfulness. To

disbelieve or reject any of the Prophet's teachings, belonging to the aforementioned category, amounts to the repudiation of the Prophet (SAWS) himself and takes one out of the fold of Islam. It is, therefore, essential for being a believing man to acknowledge – "All the things brought by the Prophet from Allah", but it is not necessary to know all these things in detail; only a general affirmation is enough.

There are, however, some fundamental truths believing which is indispensable for a Muslim, Believing in Allah, His Angels, His Scriptures, His Messengers, the Last Day and the Pre-ordination of good and evil - are the basic issues one must precisely affirm in order to be a Believer. The Prophet (SAWS) has spoken of them explicitly and in the Qur'an, too, these have been set forth as the Fundamental Articles of Faith,

The Messenger believeth in that which hath been revealed unto him by His Lord and [so do] the Believers. Each one believeth in Allah and His Angels and His Scriptures and His Messengers. (2:285)

Whose disbelieveth in Allah and His Angels and His Scriptures and His Messengers and the Last Day, he verily hath wandered for astray. (4:136)

Though pre-ordination of good and evil is not included in the verses produced above, it has been mentioned specifically at another place in the Qur'an. In surah an-Nisa, the Prophet (SAWS) is commanded to say:

All is from Allah. (4:78)

Allah has also said:

When Allah wishes to guide someone, He opens their breast to Islam; when He wishes to lead them astray, He closes and constricts their breasts. (6:125)

We will, now, examine briefly the significance of belief in all these things.

Affirmation of faith in Allah means to believe that He is One and without a partner,

that He is present everywhere at once, and that He is the Lord of the worlds and the Creator of the universe, free from the blemishes and adorned with every attribute of perfection.

Belief in the angels, in the same way implies that their existence as a permanent species of created beings should be accepted as a reality, and, also, that they are virtuous and honoured creatures of Allah:

*No! They are only His honored servants.
(21:26)*

There is not a trace of mischief, sinfulness or intransigence in them. They are bound in utmost loyalty to Allah and carry out faithfully the duties that are assigned to them.

Who resist not Allah in that which He commandeth them, but do that which they are commanded. (66:6)

A Misgiving and Its Answer

The misgiving about the existence of the angles that if they were present we would be seeing them is patently absurd. How many things are there in the world that are not visible to us, though they are present? Before the invention of the microscope had anyone seen the organisms in the blood or water that are common knowledge today? Or, has anyone been able to see the soul, all the inventions notwithstanding? Just as our eye cannot see the soul, or the microbes without a microscope, so, also, we cannot observe the angles. There is, thus, no validity in the argument that what we cannot see with our eyes does not exist. Have our eyes or other faculties of perception encompassed the totality of the material world? Only a fool can make such a claim. Particularly in the modern age when new things are discoveries every day. Our intellect and other sources of knowledge, after all, are very limited and inadequate. As the Qur'an has put it:

And knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little. (17:85)

Likewise, belief in the Scriptures signifies that Allah sent down His Books of Guidance, from time to time, through His Messengers, and that the last and the terminator of the Divine Scriptures is the holy Qur'an which, also, is their Musaddiq [Testifier] and Muhaimin [Custodian], In other words, whatever was contained in the earlier Scriptures, the preaching and propagation of which is necessary in all ages, is included in the Qur'an. It is comprehensive of the essential features of all the sacred text previously revealed by Allah and makes one independent of them, and, since those Scriptures are no longer in their original form, the Qur'an, now, is the only authentic Book of Guidance for mankind. It has also taken their place and is more complete than all of them. Allah accordingly, has taken upon Himself the responsibility of its reservation till the end of the world.

We, verily, are its Guardian. (15:9)

Further, faith in the Messenger of Allah means the recognition of the truth that, from time to time, and at different places, He sent down His chosen men with His Guidance and the Law of His preference for the instruction of His bondmen and the Messengers conveyed the Divine Message faithfully to His slaves and strove to their utmost to lead them along the Straight Path. All the Prophets were, truthful and selected servants of the Lord. The names of some of them and few details about their lives are given in the Qur'an while nothing has been said in it specifically about the rest.

We have sent other messengers before you - some We have mentioned to you and some we have not. (40:78)

Anyhow, to declare all the Prophets to be true and to hold them in reverence is an essential requisite of Faith.

As it is borne out clearly by a number of verses of the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet (SAWS), the glorious line of Messengers was brought to an end with the raising up of the

Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). He is the 'Seal of Prophets' and the last of the Divine Messengers and now the salvation and felicity of all men that are going to be born till the Last Day depends on following him and adhering to his guidance.

Faith in the Last Day denotes that it should be believed in as an unalterable reality that the present world will be destroyed altogether one day, and, then, Allah will raise from death all men and women and requite each one of them for the deeds he or she may have performed during their earthly existence.

Obviously enough, when the entire structure of faith and belief is based, as such, upon the doctrine of Divine Reward and Punishment, one who does not believe in it will also find it unnecessary to believe in any religion or its teachings. Consequently, Divine Requitul constitutes a fundamental tenet of faith in all religions, whether revealed by Allah or evolved by man. In some faiths conceived by men it has been expounded in the form of dogmas like the transmigration of souls while all the religions sent down by Allah agree that the shape of things to come after death will be identical to what has been indicated by Islam and which the Qur'an has explained so logically that only an imbecile can now be skeptical about the doctrines of the Last Day and the Final Judgement and regard them as false or mythical.

Finally, belief in Predestination shows that one is convinced that whatever is happening in the world, good or evil, is at the behest of Allah and in accordance with His Will. Every event has been determined by Him beforehand. It is not that Allah may want something else and the workshop of the world may operate independently of His wish and desire. Such an idea or belief will virtually connote the utter helplessness of the Almighty Creator.

Ihsan

Like Islam and Iman, Ihsan, too, is a dis-

tinctively theological and typically Qur'anic term. In the Qur'an it is stated:

Of course, whosoever submits his face to Allah, and is good in deeds, will have his reward with his Lord, and there shall be no fear for such people, nor shall they grieve. (2:112)

and,

Who is better in religion than he who surrendered his purpose to Allah while doing good? (4:125)

The significance of Ihsan has been amply indicated by the holy Prophet (SAWS) as: to worship Allah in such a way that the Subduer and the Sublime, the Most Gracious and the All-Powerful is present before our own eyes and we, so to speak, see Him.

Take it like this. The slave carries out the commands of his master, sometimes in his presence and sometimes in his absence. Gen-

erally, there is a difference in the quality of his work in the two situations. He discharges his duties with greater efficiency and keenness under the eye of the master than when the master is away. In the absence of the master, he is apt to be negligent. The same is true to bondsmen in respect of the real Lord and Sovereign. When the bondsman will feel that the Master is present right there, watching his every act and movement, his servitude will acquire a special earnestness and dignity which cannot be possible if his heart is devoid of the awareness. Ihsan denotes nothing more than that Allah should be worshipped and His decrees and injunctions obeyed as if He is seeing us and we are seeing Him. There is nothing that He does not watch and observe. This is what is meant by the Prophet's (SAWS) above mentioned advice.

Once a Day

A common saying is: "An Apple a day keeps the doctor away." Likewise, some marriages are on the point where the following will apply: "A smile a day keeps Shaitaan away." This refers to keeping Shaitaan away from destroying the marriage. In many cases, the husband looking at his wife once in the day with love and affection, and the wife speaking even once a day in a soft and loving tone to the husband, may be enough to keep the marriage alive. Obviously, the more this happens, the better. Unfortunately, some wives will speak to strangers in sweet tones and likewise some husbands will speak with much compassion and even affection with customers, colleagues and other strange women. This is haraam. The sweet tones and affection must be directed to the spouse, not strangers. Out of need, when one has to speak to a non-mahram, then it should be direct and straight to the point, where the person addressed does not even have the courage to ask anything further. We should also lower and protect our gaze as this will help us to appreciate the beauty of our spouse.

