

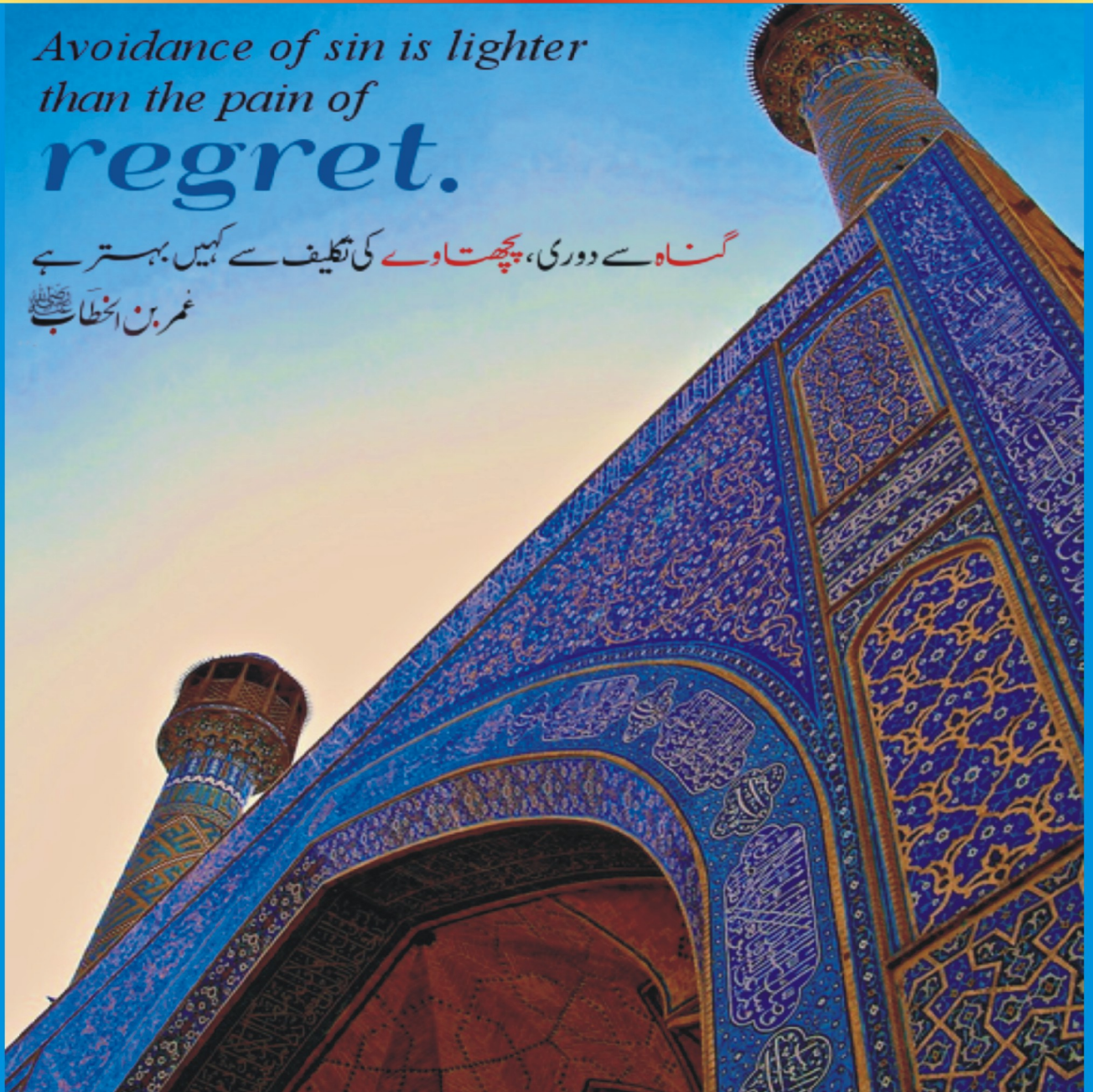
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RADIANT REALITY

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*Avoidance of sin is lighter
than the pain of
regret.*

گناہ سے دوری، پچھتاوے کی تکلیف سے کہیں بہتر ہے
عمر بن الخطابؓ



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RADIANT REALITY

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

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Mawlana Hamidullah Lone

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Question Answer

Question

1) Am I allowed to show my face to my mother's aunt's husband? (My mother's aunt is my grandmother's sister) Or in other words, my mum's maternal aunt's husband.

2) Am i allowed to show my face to my mother's blood uncle? (My mother's blood uncle is Her mother's brother. (I.e My grandmother's brother) Both of them are old and are 60-70).

Answer

1. Your grandmother's sister's husband is considered a non-Mahram (stranger) to you. Hence, you will have to observe Hijaab from him.

2. Your grandmother's brother is considered a Mahram (non-stranger) to you. Hence, it will not be necessary for you to observe Hijaab from him. (Al-Lubaab-Fi Sharhil-Kitaab 3/4)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

I need to know that a Landlord, who owns a House etc and gave it for rent. During the year they give the tenant whose renting their house etc an increase of 10% on the normal rent that they were paying. Eg. If the rent is R 3000 and after a year in December due to 10% increase by owner of building, rent goes to R 3350. I need to know, is this R 350 Riba (interest)?

Answer

It is permissible for a lessor to have a contract with the lessee to increase the rental amount according to a specific proportion after a specific period of time. Hence, it will be permissible for the lessor to have a contract with the lessee

to increase the rental amount to 10% after one year.

In this case, the increase of 10 % after one year will not be considered as Riba (interest).

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

I am in Makkah Mukarramah. I passed the Miqaat and I am in the state of Ihraam. If I experience my Haidh in the state of Ihraam, what should I do?

Answer

In the enquired situation, if you are in the state of Ihraam in Makkah Mukarramah and you experience Haidh (menstruation), you should wait until your Haidh (menstruation) terminates and then you should continue with your Umrah and Tawaaf etc as a women in Haidh (menstruation) is not allowed to perform the Tawaaf of Umrah etc. in the state Haidh (menstruation).

However, if your Haidh (menstruation) did not terminate before the completion of your Tawaf of Umrah and you performed your Tawaaf of Umrah in such a situation, then in such a case, a penalty (Damm) will be necessary (Waajib).

A penalty (Damm) refers to slaughtering an animal (sheep, goat) within the confines of Makkah Mukaaramah. (Fataawa Darul Uloom Zakariyya 3/420)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Is it permissible for a person to stand alone in a saff in Jamaat salaah? If not, then what should the person do in this situation?

Answer

The Shari ruling in this situation is that one should not stand alone in the saff, rather one should pull someone back from the saff ahead of him. However, if he fears that the person will not know the mas'ala or it will lead to confusion, then there is no problem if he stands alone in the saff.

Mufti Zakaria

Question

Does the vomit of an exclusively breast fed baby make the clothing soiled and does it have to be washed before salaah?

Answer

In the case of a breastfeeding child's vomit, if the child has vomited less than a mouthful, the vomit will be pure and it will not be necessary to wash it before performing Salaah. However, if the child has vomited a mouthful or more, the vomit will be impure and it will be necessary to wash the soiled area of the clothing before performing Salaah. (Maraaqil Falaah 1/155)

Note: In this case, it is not necessary to wash and clean the entire clothing. This should be done before performing Salaah.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

My first question is that I have not said Assalamualaikum Warehmatullah on both sides at the end of salaah. I had just finished my salaah by saying one salaam at one side and sometimes I also said one side assalamoalaikum warehmatullah and on the other side just assalamoalaim so do I have to repeat my salaahs of two to three years? As I did this mistake 2 to 3 years.

Answer

In principle, to say salam once when turning the head to the right in Salaah is Wajib (necessary). The second salam is Sunnah. Therefore, if you said salam once when you turned your head to

the right in Salaah, all your salaahs performed in such a manner will be valid. However, by leaving out the second salam, the reward of your Salaah will be decreased but it would not invalidate your Salaah. (Badaai-us-Sanaa'i 1/194)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Until what age can a woman experience Haidh for all its laws to apply to her?

Answer

According to the relied upon view (Mufta Bihi Qawl), the laws of Haidh (menstruation) will apply to a woman until the age of fifty five lunar years (approximately 53 years and 4 months according to the solar calendar). (Shaami 1/ 304) Blood flow experienced thereafter will not be considered as Haidh (menstruation) and as such, the laws of Haidh (menstruation) will not apply to her.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

If a woman's menstrual cycle lasted 3 days during her normal days of haidh and she still continues to bleed for 3 days even for 1 month after attaining her menopausal age of 55 lunar years, will this be construed as haidh or istehaaza?

Answer

The minimum period of a valid menstruation/haidh is three days. The maximum is ten days. Hence, if a woman bleeds for three days, her menstruation/haidh will be three days.

In the case of a menopausal woman bleeding, if she bleeds one Month etc. after the menopausal age of fifty five lunar years, the bleeding would be considered to be menstruation/haidh on condition that the blood colour is the same as the blood colour of menstruation/haidh experienced prior to the menopausal age of menstruation.

For e.g. the blood prior to the menopausal age

of menstruation/haidh was red and it is also red after the menopausal age of menstruation/haidh. In such a case, it would be considered menstruation/haidh. (Shaami 1/304)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Is there anything wrong for women to tie a camel hump Hijaab?

Answer

Abu Hurairah (RA) reports that Rasulullah (SAWS) said: "There are two categories of people of the fire (jahannam) which I haven't seen (non-existent at that time). Amongst them are.....women who are clothed yet they are naked, attracting (to males) and are attracted to (by males). Their heads are like that of a camel's hump which are tilted. Such women will not enter Jannah nor will they smell its fragrance although its fragrance can be smelt from a long distance." (Muslim)

In the above Hadeeth, "a camel's hump which are tilted" refers to women hairstyling their heads by tying head cloths or scarfs on them which look like the tilted hump of a camel. (Takmilah-Fathul Mulhim 5/118-119)

In different parts of the world this type of hairstyle is called "camel hump hijab", "beehive hijab", "volumanised hijab" or "khaleeji hijab" etc. Accordingly, this type of 'hairstyling' for women is not allowed as it is understood from the above Hadeeth.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

What is the procedure of burying a still born child? Is Ghusal and Janaazah Salaah necessary for a still born child? Should it be given a name?

Answer

A still born child should be washed, enshrouded in a piece of cloth and buried. There is no Janaazah Salaah for a still born child. A still born

child should also be given a name. (Ahsanul Fa-taawa 4/216)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Is there any reward for the difficulty of a woman experiencing Haidh every Month?

Answer

Yes, a woman experiencing Haidh (menstruation) will be rewarded for undergoing the difficulties of Haidh (menstruation).

It is reported from Abu Hurairah (RA) that Rasulullah (SAWS) said: "No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but Allah expiates his sins for it." (Bukhari)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Client A borrowed from Client B an X amount of money, now Client A only wants to pay back a portion of money borrowed and does not want to pay off the loan in full. Client A says that the balance he owes, he will give it out in Zakaat. There was no such arrangements made. What is the islamic ruling. ?

Answer

If A took a loan from B with an agreement to pay back the full amount of the loan, then A is liable to pay B the full amount of the loan.

In the enquired situation, as there were no arrangements of payment of Zakaat related to A and B and the loan, A is still liable to pay B the full amount of the loan.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Can a wife ask for a divorce because her husband wants to take a second wife. ps he cannot even look after the kids and family well.

Answer

It is permissible for a man to take more than

one wife on condition he maintains equality with all his wives. In the enquired situation, if the wife fears the husband's negligence in maintaining equality, she may propose he gives some responsible person/s the autonomy to divorce her if according to them he is found guilty of non-equality or neglecting his children. This right of divorce is termed as tafweez-talaq. This procedure will ensure that the husband fulfills his marital and parental obligations. It also safeguards the wife from the injustice of inequality. A tafweez-talaq document should be drawn by someone who has proper skills in Fiqh and is well aware of the practical situation on the ground.

M. Jibrán Qadir

Question

My father is a non-Muslim. Will he inherit from my estate? If not, can I give him anything from my estate after I die?

Answer

The answer to the above question is two fold:

- a) The ruling of the inheritance from a Muslim to a non-Muslim and vice-versa;
- b) The ruling of the bequests of a Muslim to a non-Muslim and vice versa;

In principle, a Muslim cannot inherit from a non-Muslim and vice versa. However, it is permissible for a Muslim to bequeath to a non-Muslim and vice versa up to one third of his estate. (Shaami 6/767)

Accordingly, you may bequeath up to one third of your estate to your non-Muslim father but he will not be entitled to inherit from your estate as an heir after your demise.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

I Have a son and a daughter. My son was born from my first marriage and my daughter was born from my second marriage. They are now Baaligh. Is my son from my first marriage a

Mahram to my daughter from my second marriage?

Answer

Uterine siblings (children from one mother), irrespective if the mother bore them through different husbands or marriages, are considered to be Mahrams (non-strangers) to one another. Accordingly, your son and daughter (uterine siblings) are Mahrams to one another.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Right now I am having a bit of a hard time. My parents are going through a divorce and I may be a little impatient.

How can I be a better daughter?

Answer.

This is indeed a great challenge. May Allah make it easy and remove every difficulty with ease.

Depending on how you handle it, a difficult situation can become much worse or despite the challenge, be something you can manage and take in the stride.

If you react in anger, or negatively to either of your parents, you will escalate the problem for yourself. Therefore totally refrain from this.

Do the following and insha-Allah you will see the difference:

1. Daily make salaatul haajah and very earnestly make du'a.
2. Deal with both parents with the best akhlaaq (good character). This is a very great 'ibaadat and the heaviest good deed in the scales on the Day of Qiyaamah.
3. Give them small gifts regularly.
4. Occasionally send some nicely worded messages of affection.
5. Give some sadaqah on their behalf whenever you can.
6. Serve both as much as you can.

Uswatul Muslimah Panel of Ulama

Question

My husband passed away and I am pregnant. Does my unborn child inherit from my husband's estate?

Answer

The unborn child is entitled to his/her share of inheritance from the estate of his/her deceased father. As such, in this case, the estate of the deceased should be distributed after the child is born in order to ascertain the gender of the child and to distribute his/her share of inheritance accordingly. (Al-Lubaab 4/199)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

I was divorced and I remarried. I have one son from my second wife. My second wife has two daughters from her previous marriage. One is 18 and the other is 22. Am I a Mahram to my second wife's two daughters?

Answer

Yes, you are a Mahram (non-stranger) to your stepdaughters. This ruling is conditional on the stepfather consummating his marriage with the mother of his stepchildren. If the marriage was not consummated, then he will not be a Mahram to his stepdaughters as per the Law of the Quran.

Allah states:

"Prohibited (in marriage) for you are...your step-daughters from women with whom you have had intercourse. If you have not had intercourse with them, there is no sin on you (your step-daughters would not be prohibited

for you). [Surah Nisa 4/24]

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

If I forget to perform my two Rakaats of Ihraam at Dubai airport or on the plane, can I perform it after arriving at the Haram?

Answer

It is Mustahab (preferable) to perform two Rakaah's of Salaatul Ihraam after donning the Ihraam and before making the intention of Ihraam. (Shaami 192/8) This should be done before passing the Miqaat (the boundaries of the Haram) and not after passing it. Hence, in the enquired situation, it cannot be done after arriving at the Haram.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

What is the time duration for making wudhu? How long should one take to perform wudhu?

Answer

It is Sunnah to perform Wudhu without pause after washing each limb so that no limb dries up before the Wudhu is completed. (Maraaqil-Falaah 1/37).

If one performs Wudhu by pausing in between such that the limbs dry up before the Wudhu is completed, the person will be performing Wudhu against the Sunnah method and will be deprived of the Sunnah reward. However, the Wudhu will still be valid.

One should endeavour to perform Wudhu with all its rules and etiquettes in order to attain the full reward of Wudhu.

Mufti Ismaeel

O Men! Here I have been assigned the job of being a ruler over you while I am not the best among you. If I do well in my job, help me. If I do wrong, redress me. Truthfulness is fidelity, and lying is treason. The weak shall be strong in my eyes until I restore to them their lost rights, and the strong shall be weak in my eyes until I have restored the rights of the weak from them. *In his first speech - Sayyidna Abu Bakr (RA)*

Injunctions on Loan

O those who believe, when you transact a debt payable at a specified time, put it in writing. And let a scribe write it between you with fairness. And no scribe should refuse to write as Allah has educated him. He, therefore, should write. And the one who owes should give the dictation, but he must fear Allah, his Lord, and should not curtail anything from it. (2:282)

An important principle of the Law of Dealings, or the Law of Contracts in modern legal terminology, has been taken up in the verse appearing above. Following this, appears a specific principle of the general rules of evidence.

These are times when writing is the rage. The written word has taken the place of human speech but think of the days of fourteen hundred years ago when almost the entire business of the world was conducted verbally. The principle of writing and retaining documents did not just exist. It was the Qur'an which first pointed out to its importance and said:

When you transact a debt payable at a specified time, put it in writing.

Two principles have been stated here. These are:

1. A written document should be prepared while concluding a transaction on deferred payment basis, so that it may be availed of in cases of error or refusal.

2. While making a transaction on deferred payment basis, it is necessary that the due date of its payment should be determined. It is not permissible to defer the payment for an indefinite period of time because this can open the

doors of dispute. This is why the Muslim Jurists have stressed that the time limit so set should not have any ambiguity at all. It should specify the exact date and month. There should be nothing vague about it, for instance, the time of the harvesting of crops cannot be fixed, because the time of harvesting may vary subject to weather conditions. Since writing was not common in those days (and even after writing has become so common, the majority of world population is the same as does not know how to write), it was possible for the scribe of the agreement to write down what was not intended, thereby causing undue loss or gain to one or the other party. Therefore, it was said:

And let a scribe write it between you with fairness.

Firstly, the instruction given here requires that the scribe should not be prejudiced in favour of one of the parties. On the contrary, he should be impartial so that there remains no scope for doubt or concern for anyone. Secondly, the scribe was instructed to write justly. Let him incur no permanent loss on himself by working for the vanishing gain of others. After that, the attention of the scribe has been drawn

to the fact that Allah Almighty has given him the ability to write, for which he can show his gratefulness by not refusing to write.

As to who should initiate the writing of the document, it was said:

And the one who owes should give the dictation.

For instance, if a person has made a purchase on credit, then he is the one who should dictate the entries of the document because this will be a written agreement on his behalf. In order to offset the possibility of any addition or deletion in the written document, it was said:

But he must fear Allah, his Lord, and should not curtail anything from it.

It some times happens that the person incurring debt is fickle-minded, or superannuated in age, or a minor, or mute, or the speaker of a language not known to the scribe. Since such a person does not have the ability to dictate a document, it was said that, in a situation like this, his wali or guardian should dictate the written agreement. The need for a guardian in respect of the insane and the minor is obvious since all their affairs are handled through a guardian. The guardian of the mute, or the speaker of the language unknown to the scribe could also do this, and should he make somebody his representative, it would still be possible. Here, the word, 'wali' in the Qur'an covers both meanings.

The rules of witnessing

Upto this point the statement was limited to the writing or dictating of documents in transaction. Later on, it is enlarged by saying that the writing of the document should not be taken as sufficient. It should rather have witnesses as well so that, in case there is a dispute, the appearance of witnesses in the court could help resolve it. This is why the Muslim jurists, may Allah's mercy be upon them, have said that simple writing of an agreement is not a conclusive proof in the sight of Islamic Shari'ah. Unless there is an oral evidence of witnesses, as approved by the

Shari'ah, on the agreement, no decision could be taken on simple writing. Common courts of today also follow the same practice when they do not take a decision unless there is a verbal evidence to prove the document.

The number of witnesses

Now follow some important rules of evidence:

1. It is necessary according to Islamic rules of evidence that there be two men, or one man and two women. One man alone, or only two women are not sufficient witnesses in common dealings.

2. The witnesses should be Muslims. The Qur'anic expression: '*from among your men*' points out in this direction.

3. The witnesses should be trustworthy and just whose word could be relied upon. They should not be sinners and liars. This injunction is contained in: '*from those witnesses you are pleased with.*'

The Spiritual Flight

You might know that of utmost importance are two things: First, corrections in beliefs following the doctrines of belief laid down by the Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'ah. Second, obtaining knowledge of Faraa'id, Waajibaat, Mustahabbat, Halaal, Haraam, Makruh and Mushtabihaat (the uncertain); coupled with practice in accordance with these Fiqh requirements. It is after the two wings of true beliefs and righteous actions (i'tiqaad wa amal) have been obtained, that, with Allah's will and grant, can a person take flight into the higher, spiritual world. Without these two wings, any flight into the spiritual world is impossible in the absolute sense.

(Mujaddid alf-Thani, in a letter to Khidr Khan Lodhi; Source: Tajalliyyat-e-Rabani, vol 1)

Lessons from Sahih Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

Chapter 11 : To offer Salaah without a Rida (cloak).

Purpose to Tarjamatul Baab

Wrapping a Rida (cloak) around one's body while having put on trousers and shirt, is a better and decent way of covering one's body.

In the earlier chapter, a statement of Sayyiduna Umar (RA) was quoted that one should show magnanimity in dressing during Salaah if he has the means to do so; this might have given the impression that it is necessary to wear good clothes during Salaah. By establishing the chapter under discussion, Imam Bukhari tries to clear this point by saying that Salaah can be offered without a Rida as well.

Hadith No. 362

Narrated Muhammad bin Al-Munkadir

I went to Jaabir bin Abdullah and he was praying wrapped in a garment and his Rida was lying beside him. When he finished the prayers, I said

“O Abdullah! You pray (in a single garment) while your Rida' is lying beside you.” He replied, “Yes, I did it intentionally so that the ignorant one's like you might see me. I saw the Prophet praying like this. “

Comments

We have seen that offering Salaah in a single garment without any genuine reason is disliked in Shariah, but here Jaabir bin Abdullah offered Salaah donning a single garment while his other clothes were hanging on a wooden peg, thereby conveying its permissibility in case of any exigency.

Chapter 12 : What is said about the thigh (whether it is included in Satr-ul-Awrah or not) .

And Abu Abdullah says that Ibn Abbas, Jarhad and Muhamad bin Jahash quotes the Prophet (SAWS) saying, “The thigh is included in Satr-ul-Awrah”. And Anas bin Maalik said, “The

Prophet (SAWS) uncovered his thigh”. The narration of Anas is dependable but it would be safer to take Jarhad's narrations into consideration in order to get rid of the difference between them. Abu Musa said, “The Prophet (SAWS) covered his keen when Uthmaan entered”. Zaid bin Thabit said, “The revelation came to Allah's Apostle (SAWS) while his thigh was on my thigh and it became so heavy that I was afraid that it might break my thigh”.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

There are two schools of thought about

the fact whether ‘thigh’ is included in Satr-ul-Awrah or not. Imam Bukhari has quoted both groups and hasn’t expressed his own opinion. According to Imam Bukhari, Ibn Abbas and Jarhad believed in the inclusion of thigh in Satr-ul-Awrah. On the other hand, Sayyiduna Anas says that he had seen Rasulullah’s (SAWS) thigh during the Khyber. Second incident narrated by Abu Musa conveys that once Rasulullah (SAWS) was sitting on the wall in an orchard with knees apart; at this juncture, Sayyiduna Abu Bakr and Sayyiduna Umar, one after the other, came towards him but he did not change his posture; they were followed by Sayyiduna Uthmaan and on seeing him Rasulullah (SAWS) quickly covered his knees. The third point quoted by Imam Bukhari is narrated by Sayyiduna Zaid bin Thaabit who says that his thigh came in contact with the thigh of Rasulullah (SAWS).

From the technical point of view as per the principles of Uloom-ul-Hadith, Imam Bukhari says that the narration of Sayyiduna Anas wherein he says that he saw Rasulullah’s (SAWS) thigh, is stronger, thus pointing towards the permissibility of keeping it uncovered. At the same time, Imam Bukhari takes a cautious path by saying that it is safer to act upon the narration of Jarhad which says that the thigh should remain covered as it is included in Satr-ul-Awrah.

Hadith No. 363

Narrated Abdul Aziz

Anas said, ‘When Allah’s Apostle invaded Khaibar, we offered the Fajr prayer there early in the morning) when it was still dark. The Prophet rode and Abu Talha rode too and I was riding behind Abu Talha. The Prophet passed through the lane of Khaibar quickly and my knee was touching the thigh of the Prophet . He uncovered his thigh and I saw the whiteness of the thigh

of the Prophet. When he entered the town, he said, Allahu Akbar! Khaibar is ruined. Whenever we approach near a (hostile) nation (to fight) then evil will be the morning of those who have been warned.’ He repeated this thrice. The people came out for their jobs and some of them said, ‘Muhammad (has come).’ (Some of our companions added, “With his army.”) We conquered Khaibar, took the captives, and the booty was collected. Dihya came and said, ‘O Allah’s Prophet! Give me a slave girl from the captives.’ The Prophet said, ‘Go and take any slave girl.’ He took Safiya bint Huyai. A man came to the Prophet and said, ‘O Allah’s Apostles! You gave Safiya bint Huyai to Dihya and she is the chief mistress of the tribes of Quraizah and An-Nadir and she befits none but you.’ So the Prophet said, ‘Bring him along with her.’ So Dihya came with her and when the Prophet saw her, he said to Dihya, ‘Take any slave girl other than her from the captives.’ Anas added: The Prophet then manumitted her and married her.”

Thabit asked Anas, “O Abu Hamza! What did the Prophet pay her (as Mahr)?” He said, “Her self was her Mahr for he manumitted her and then married her.” Anas added, “While on the way, Umm Sulaim dressed her for marriage (ceremony) and at night she sent her as a bride to the Prophet . So the Prophet was a bridegroom and he said, ‘Whoever has anything (food) should bring it.’ He spread out a leather sheet (for the food) and some brought dates and others cooking butter. (I think he (Anas) mentioned As-Sawiq). So they prepared a dish of Hais (a kind of meal). And that was Walima (the marriage banquet) of Allah’s Apostle .”

Comments

Sayyiduna Anas bin Maalik says that he accompanied Rasulullah (SAWS) in the battle of Khaibar. Khaibar in Hebrew means a fort. It was

a place on the north-east side of Madinah where the Jewish clans of Banu Quraizah and Banu an-Nazir dwelled. After returning from Hudaibiyah, Rasulullah (SAWS) went to Khaibar along with an army of Sahaaba and cordoned it off. As per Sayyiduna Anas, Rasulullah (SAWS) began early in the morning, offered Fajr Salaah when it was still dark.

Timing of Fajr Salaah

There exists a disagreement about the timing of Fajr Salaah. According to some scholars it should be offered when it is still dark i.e., ‘Galas’, while some others hold that it should be offered after darkness but before the dawn i.e., ‘Isfaar’.

This Hadith of Sayyiduna Anas is in favour of proponents of ‘Galas’ i.e., it should be offered when it is still dark. Those who oppose this opinion say that Rasulullah (SAWS) used to offer Fajr Salaah at such time only during his journeys or war. Allah knows the best.

Rasulullah (SAWS) passes through the lane of Khaibar

After offering the Fajr Salaah, Rasulullah (SAWS) passed through the lane of Khaibar. The Prophet (SAWS) rode and Abu Talha rode too and Anas bin Maalik was riding behind Abu Talha. When these blessed souls were passing through the lanes of Khaibar, the cloth on the blessed thigh of Rasulullah (SAWS) skidded and it exposed, and Sayyiduna Anas saw its whiteness. According to the learned scholars, the cloth skidded because of the overcrowding narrow streets.

The Ulema who believe that ‘thigh’ is not included in Satr-ul-Awrah present this Hadith in their support while those who believe otherwise opine that it so happened because of the overcrowding narrow streets. And Allah knows

the best.

“When he entered the town, he said, Allahu Akbar! Khaibar is ruined”

When Rasulullah (SAWS) entered Khaibar early in the morning, he recited the following verse thrice:

“So, when it will descend in their courtyard, then, evil will be the morning of those warned”
(37:177)

When the people of Khaibar came out of their houses in the morning for routine work, they were surprised to see Rasulullah (SAWS) and communicated to one another that it was Muhammad (SAWS); some other narrators have added the words “and his army” to this. Allaama Ayni has quoted Abu Umar saying that Khaibar was captured by force, whereas according to al-Munzari, the learned scholars differ in this matter. Some others are of the opinion that it was captured equally by force, peaceful agreement and also by banishing of its warriors.

Afterwards, when the prisoners of war were gathered, Dihya bin al-Kalbi came and requested Rasulullah (SAWS) for a slave girl. To mention here, Dihya was the most handsome Sahaabi and Jibra’el (AS) many a times came to Rasulullah (SAWS) in his incarnation. Accepting his request, Rasulullah (SAWS) directed him to take one. He went and took a beautiful girl namely Safiya—daughter of Huyai bin Aktab, the chief of the tribe. At this moment, a person came to Rasulullah (SAWS) and told him that Safiya was the chief mistress and daughter of Huyai bin Aktab and that she befitted none but him (i.e., Rasulullah (SAWS)). Rasulullah (SAWS) called Dihya and told him to leave Safiya and choose some other girl. After that Rasulullah manumitted her and as per another narration of Musnad Ahmad, she was given option

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The Qur'an and Music

Syed Iqbal Zaheer

It is hard for the people to digest that this life does not end here, that there is an afterlife, and that, to qualify for a goodly life there, they need to prove themselves worthy here. Today's Muslims inherit their beliefs just as Christians inherit belief in Trinity, the Jews in their being the chosen race, and others about their idols. Therefore, the power and depth of conviction of the Muslims, is of the same quality as that of others, that is, superficial.

To give an example, everybody believes that taking bribe is deplorable, and that it is demeaning to oneself to accept them. But, give them the chance, and the great majority will gladly pocket it if the likelihood of discovery is remote. Yet, by the same evening that the bribe was taken, men can sit together and discuss how demeaning it is to be taking bribes. The conviction then about bribery that they inherit from the society is as thin as the autumn wind.

The same is true of religious beliefs, and Muslims are no different in this regard. Conviction is missing. It is also true of the nature of their beliefs. That is, Muslims can be as irrational in their beliefs as others. In religious matters they do not allow logic to set its foot in. So that, when they are told that you have been driven out of Paradise because of a single error, and that you will not re-enter with a load of errors on your head, and that this life is a test to determine whether you belong to the Company on High, or the wretched in the flames, then, it does not strike them as something reasonable.

Where is Allah's mercy? They ask. They do not ask themselves where Allah's mercy was when Adam was sent out of Paradise! How little do they understand the Divine rules!

Similarly, the logic, that what their Lord has forbidden does not require any other justification for shunning it – does not appeal to some Muslims. They ask persistently, “Why this has been forbidden, why that has been forbidden?” .. and so on.

Music is one such example. It is normally thought that since its love is embedded in human nature, it is good for the humans. But how many things are not there that people love to do but which human intellect, moral sense, and societal mores do not allow? This is another question that does not occur to them. How many foods are not there that they would like to devour morning and evening but which their doctors declare forbidden? But they do not wish to extend this logic to prohibitions like music, pork, interest, etc.

Western culture is not designed and brought to existence for the comfort of the humans. It is a work-culture wheeled by “do it or die out” code of ethics. The few at the top do not think of the commoners at the bottom as any more than slaves to toil for them. It is reported that three-fourth of the population under the Roman Empire was slaves. It is as true of its modern version, the Western States; except that the slaves of this empire are allowed a little bit of more freedom than in the former empire, but

slaves of the State they do remain. They are free to do what they are told. Also, the modern masters are cleverer than their ancient counterparts that were destroyed by Islam. (The modern counterparts are as much afraid that their mastery over their slaves could also be destroyed by Islam). Therefore, the modern masters take care of the health, (some) education, and such living conditions as necessity to make the slaves available for the hard work. The scheme also demands that the slaves be made to relax after a day's work, in order to be made ready for next day's toil. This is where music comes in the system.

Whether music really allows relaxation or not, is not a matter for serious discussion. In the universities where doctorates can be obtained for thesis on why leaking taps spurt out water every now and then, in measurable frequency, there is no attempt to find out whether music does really help in making people relax. But perhaps, the lack of interest in the topic is because the masters know quite well that it does not. It is in fact realized that music works as a drug and helps to divert attention so that the realities of life (hard work for the masters) are forgotten and the miseries are taken for granted. A slight complication is that music does afford a shadow of relaxation to the mind (and not the soul), but only a shadow of it. Nevertheless, it is used as enough argument to prove that it affords true and complete relaxation of the mind, (since they assure their subjects that they have no souls). This helps them make the donkey go round the mill until it drops dead.

This Ummah is a lucky nation. It was forbidden what causes distress to the soul, and has been provided in replacement what brings tranquility to it: the Qur'an. The rhythmic tuning of the Qur'an allows for the embedded love of music to obtain its satisfaction through its recitation. It is the only Book on the planet which can be recited in a variety of tones, with each tone differing from the other, but, in its own way,

each one sweet to the ear. No poem can be sung in several ways, leave alone any prose text. But we are talking of a poetically styled whole book of prose text.

That is the Qur'an, a wonder of wonders.

Amazingly, the qualities of the Qur'anic effects are felt by non-Muslims too. In an experiment in a British hospital, in-patients were made to experience several types of soothing materials: music, Bible hymns, mantras, Qur'anic recitation, etc. The electrodes attached to the brains gave clear indications of tranquility when the Qur'an was played. The patients, who did not know what was what, confessed the soothing effect. There are many cases of non-Arab non-Muslims being deeply affected by Qur'anic recitation.

On the other hand, if one knows the language of the Qur'an, then it is light upon light. The effects of Qur'anic recitation are indescribable. Even sworn enemies of Islam, the Orientalists, have admitted the unmatched qualities of the Qur'an. John Alden Williams wrote:

"...the Arabic of the Qur'an is by turns striking, soaring, vivid, terrible, tender, and breathtaking ... It is meaningless to apply adjectives such as 'beautiful' or 'persuasive' to the Qur'an; its flashing images and inexorable measures go directly to the brain and intoxicate it.

"It is not surprising, then, that a skilled reciter of the Qur'an can reduce an Arabic-speaking audience to helpless tears." (Islam: p.2, Washington Square Press, '69).

Another Arabist, A.J. Arberry, wrote in the introduction to his own translation of the Qur'an:

"... to produce something which might be accepted as echoing however faintly the sublime rhetoric of the Arabic Koran, I have been at pains to study the intricate and richly varied rhythms which - apart from the message itself - constitute the Koran's undeniable claim to rank amongst the greatest literary masterpieces

of mankind.” (The Koran Interpreted, Intr. p.x, Oxford Univ. Press, '64).

What music is there, of the East or the West, modern or ancient, that can bestow the most infinitesimal part of what the Qur'an can? How unlucky a nation that bequeathed the Qur'an but neglected it? It is said that somewhere in Europe a woman found a piece of paper with a strange script. After much inquiry she learnt that it was a torn piece of the Qur'an. She obtained the Book to which the script belonged, studied it, and embraced Islam. How wretched those who received the Qur'an but threw it behind their backs?! Their end is predictable. For he who brought it said,

*“Whoever neglected the Qur'an out of scorn,
will be destroyed.”*

Should it surprise us that he also said,
*“He is not of us who does not sing out the
Qur'an.”*

Another statement says,

“Beautify the Qur'an with your voices.”

But of course, there are rules. They are known as “Tajweed rules.” So long as one binds himself to these rules, he is free to recite the Qur'an in a rhythm of his own invention. If he did, he would be one of the thousands who do it around the globe. They are not singers. They are reciters. We are not speaking of the professional reciters, the Qurraa; but rather of thousands who recite wholeheartedly everyday to discover in time their own tone and tune.

Many who witness hymns sung in places of worship, are familiar with those tunes and rhythms – perhaps more than familiar. That is because they have been hearing them from childhood. The rhythm doesn't change – hasn't changed over the years. Those texts do not allow for more than one tune. But not the Qur'an. Let anyone who follows Tajweed rules, recite it for a period of time in a somewhat raised voice, and he would have discovered a rhythm of his own and developed a tone of his own.

This is an amazing characteristic of the

Qur'an and only those miss it who imagine that the Qur'an is a constitutional work, a book of Law – like the Jewish Torah. When people of such beliefs recite, they recite the Qur'an as if they are reading the Constitution of the country. Yet others do the recitation infrequently. Even after the earth has gone around the sun several times, they remain reading the Qur'an on its surface without the joy, the soothing effect and the tranquility of the soul.

Music on the other hand, the Devil's own instrument for the lower self, can in no way match with the effects produced by the Qur'an. Music stirs the baser inner self and releases energy of the body. While listening to music, the limbs must vibrate, jog, tap, jig, jump and twist to find a way out for the released energy. After the spell is over, the body is tired and the mind fatigued. The victim feels weak. And, unable to bear its own load, the body must slump on the chair for a while.

In case of soft music, it is the mind that bears the burden. It stops thinking while playing or listening. As a result it goes blank for some time, not in a dream world, but in an empty world. It stays in that blank state for full few moments even after the music is over. When it recovers, it wants more of it, and louder of it; not because it relaxes the mind, but because it diverts it, allows escape from hard thinking. This is the reason why scientists, thinkers and intellectual men cannot stand music. It is the same sensation as a drunkard has, though at the somber level. And, just like drugs, the mind gets more and more used to it, until a point arrives when music has no effect upon it. What should a mind do, when music should stop having any effect upon it? How should it get back its free moments, blank time, escape from the present? Hard drugs is the answer. That explains the relationship between music and drugs. It is reported that the best Egyptian musicians, like those who worked with Umm Kulthum, Feroze or others, were under the influence of drugs when they produced

those masterpieces. This explains also that musicians have never left a record of any other achievement such as, for example, poetic, not to mention beneficial disciplines such as sciences.

The Qur'anic effect is altogether of a different nature, touching a different realm. It soothes the soul, conserves the energy of the body and cools down the cells to give vigor and strength to the limbs. After the Qur'anic recitation, the body is ready for work and the energy is ready to flow out. Even regenerative power has been experienced as enhanced after prolonged recitations. The mind does not lose itself, and hence does not demand the body to dance and whirl. (The dancing Sufis have to use litany other than the Qur'an to whirl about in excitement).

But the Qur'an has entirely sober effects, touching not merely the mind, but also the soul. This explains why Qur'anic scholars have normally accomplished other achievements. Their minds were more productive than of those who were scholars but did not allow the Qur'an its place in their scheme of study and practice. This explains why in earlier times, children were made to memorize the Qur'an first before any kind of study began, whether religious or secular. This explains the great scientific and philosophical output of the past and – in contrast – the utter failure of the Qur'an-less modern-educated Muslim class.

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to return home or marry the Prophet (SAWS). Safiya accepted the second option and married Rasulullah (SAWS).

'Waleema' of Rasulullah (SAWS)

After marrying Safiya, Rasulullah (SAWS) asked the Sahaaba to bring whatever they have. He spread out a leather sheet and some brought dates, some ghee and some grinded barley. A sweet dish was prepared and this was the Waleema of Rasulullah (SAWS).

Lessons from this Hadith

Allaama Ayni has derived following lessons from this Hadith:

- 1.If capable, more than one person can ride an animal.
- 2.To recite Takbeer and Zikr while in war.
- 3.To repeat a sentence thrice.
- 4.'Thigh' is not included in Satr-ul-Awrah. (This issue has been already discussed. Allaama Anwar Shah Kashmiri has put forward a very good explanation to solve this controversy. According to him it is more im-

portant to cover the private parts than one's thigh or knee; although, these two also fall under Satr-ul-Awrah).

5.To manumit daughter of a tribal chief and then marry her.

6.It is a usual practice to consummate one's wife during night, but in this case this took place during day, thus proving its permissibility during night as well as day.

7.It is mandatory for a bridegroom to celebrate Waleem after consummation. Allaama Ayni is of the opinion that it is Sunnah near us (i.e., Hanafites) while some others consider it Waajib.

8.It is Sunnah to accept invitation of Waleema or otherwise, however, it has been quoted from Imam Ahmad, Maalik and Shaafa'ee that it is Waajib or obligatory.

9.It is preferable for the relatives and neighbours of bridegroom to render necessary help to him on Waleema.

10.It is not necessary to server meat while holding Waleema banquet. Anything can be served to fulfill the Sunnah of Rasulullah (SAWS).

Intending Holidays...!

Maulana Muhammad Saleem Dhorat

It is a common trend in this day and age for people to take a break for recreation, including going on holiday. Undertaking leisure activities, such as travel, are regarded as promoting general wellbeing. This concept is not inconsistent with our Din, as from amongst the commands of Allah is the safeguarding of one's health, both physically and mentally. Alhamdulillah, as with all areas of life, we find guidance in our Din for this aspect too, so we can make our actions a means of acquiring the pleasure of Allah.

Be a Healthy Believer

Health and strength are from the blessings of Allah that help us to excel in Din and in this worldly life. Rasulullah (SAWS) has stated:

A strong believer is better than a weak believer.
(Muslim)

We can understand from this Hadith that a believer who looks after his health and wellbeing, will be able to perform those good actions, which a believer weaker in health will not. Health is of such importance that we find in another Hadith Rasulullah (SAWS) lamenting a sahabi (RA) 'anhu who was neglecting his health:

Verily your body has a right upon you
(Bukhari)

Rasulullah (SAWS) has encouraged us to give our bodies rest and relaxation, so that a person remains motivated and does not fall prey to boredom or exhaustion. This will enable one to maintain enthusiasm and energy to carry out the Commands of Allah and perform good deeds. It is related by Anas ibn Malik radhiyallahu 'anhu that once Nabi (SAWS) entered the masjid and found a rope hanging between two pillars. He (SAWS) asked, "What is this?" The Sahabah radhiyallahu 'anhum replied, "It is for Zaynab. When she feels tired (whilst praying), she holds onto it." Nabi (SAWS) said, "No, untie it (i.e. this is incorrect). Pray as long as you feel energetic; when you become tired, you should sit down." (Al-Bukhari)

Stay Focused

Like the need for a good balanced diet, sleep and exercise, a break from one's daily routine, if spent in line with the principles of Shari'ah, can help to enhance a person's health both physically and mentally. However, it is important to remember that in fulfilling this necessity, we do not take a break from our religious obligations, nor cross the boundaries laid down by the Shari'ah. Precautions must be undertaken to ensure that whilst engaging in any leisure activity, a person does not become heedless of the

remembrance of Allah and compromise his religious and spiritual obligations, thereby causing harm to his eternal life of the hereafter.

The following advices will insha'allah help us achieve a balance and make our 'time out' fruitful in this world and the hereafter.

1. Intention and Objective

The intention for taking a break must be correct; it should not be to merely follow the prevalent culture of the day. Our every action should be to fulfil the objective of our existence and creation, the worship of Allah. Allah states:

I did not create the Jinns and the human beings except for the purpose that they should worship me. (56:51)

In light of this, if one's objective for taking a break is to rest and refresh the body and mind, in order to return home and thereafter exert more effort to perform good deeds and fulfil the rights of the Creator and the creation, then this will be a rewarding action. Similarly, the aim to spend quality time with the family is also a worthy intention.

2. Ensure Suitability

We must ensure that the trip we are undertaking is in compliance with Shari'ah. Many are those who, without having undertaken research, book a holiday package. Only after arriving at their destination do they realise that they have arrived at an unsuitable place; an environment of irreligiousness, obscenity and nudity. On returning home, they are regretful and concede that the environment was such that they were unable to refrain from sin.

If one intends to travel abroad for a holiday, then it is not necessary to visit those places where everyone else is going. To avoid finding oneself in an unsuitable situation, thorough research should be undertaken on the proposed destination and to only proceed to such places wherein the disobedience of Allah is not taking place.

3. Shaytan's Ploy

As stated earlier, during any leisure activity or holiday we should not overlook our obligations. Shaytan places into the mind this thought, 'We have come here for rest and relaxation, there must be total freedom from every type of restriction'. Those on holiday therefore absolve themselves from tilawah of the Glorious Qur'an, dhikr, ma'mulat etc. Only salah remains and that too is of the lowest standard. In this respect, we should ask ourselves the following questions: Do I reduce the hours of my sleep while on holiday? Do I reduce the amount of food that I consume? When we do not reduce our sleep nor food intake, there is no excuse for reducing or altering one's 'ibadah.

It is therefore of paramount importance to prepare a timetable, so that one will remain punctual in all of one's a'mal. It should also be noted that, just as supplications made during travel are more accepted, similarly there is greater barakah in the dhikr and 'ibadah performed while on a journey.

4. Avoid Extravagance

We should avoid unnecessary expenses and extravagance. Allah states:

Surely, squanderers are brothers of satans, and the Satan is very ungrateful to his Lord. (27:17)

As it has become common to take a break by travelling abroad, all too often people go on holiday packages that they cannot afford by taking out loans. In their desire for a luxury holiday, they become embroiled in unnecessary extravagance. It is incorrect to believe that rest and relaxation can only be achieved by travelling abroad for a holiday. Even if one cannot afford a holiday due to financial difficulty or is unable to identify a suitable destination, then what is the harm or loss? People in the past did not go on such holidays, yet arguably had greater peace and happiness in their lives in comparison to ours.

Beneficial Guidelines

In order to safeguard one's time and a'mal, in particular during a holiday journey, some further beneficial guidelines should also be borne in mind:

1. Always remain engaged in the remembrance of Allah. Keep this thought in mind that my Allah is watching me with love.

2. Maintain modesty and be mindful about unlawful gazes, dressing appropriately in accordance with Shari'ah and injunctions relating to contact with non-mahrams.

3. Take out some time for muhasabah (taking account of one's past actions) daily. In particular, ponder over how much of life has passed and how much more remains.

4. Make firm resolutions for the future by thinking about what one needs to and what one intends to do from now to make amends for the past.

5. Refrain from the disobedience of Allah at all times. Stay away from places of sin and indecency and avoid unnecessary extravagance in spending.

6. Abstain from all non-Islamic practices.

Spend your time in such a way that when you return, it is with both a healthy body and a healthy soul. May Allah safeguard us all and grant us the correct tawfiq. Amin.

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Notable Quotes

Whoever recognizes the worldly life, the trials and tribulations (of life) become minor for him.
Sayyidna Ali (RA)

Hearts are like vessels and the best hearts are those that preserve good as much as possible.
Sayyidna Ali (RA)

Excel in what you can do now, you'll be forgiven for what has passed. The lesson is not in the tough beginning but the good end. Ibn Qayyim (ra)

Through the blessing of Taqwa in Ramadan, one will be blessed with Taqwa outside of Ramadan.
Hakim M. Akhtar (ra)

Be cautious of returning to enslavement after having been freed. Ibn Rajab (ra)

Among the signs of success at the end is turning to God in the beginning. Ibn Ata'illah (ra)

Don't be a friend of Allah publicly and His enemy in private. Bilal ibn Sa'd (ra)

People cannot beautify themselves with anything better than truthfulness & the pursuit of halal(-food+income). Fudhayl B. Iyadh (ra)

Be strong and staunch in adversities and don the garb of generosity and truthfulness.
Imam Shafi'i (ra)

CONCEPT OF FREEDOM

Dr. Muhammad Ali Hashimi

Freedom in Islam covers all aspects of life: religious, political, intellectual, civil, social, personal and all other forms of freedom, subject to the condition that this is guided by man's reason and not by his whims and desires, and that he uses it for his own good and for the good of his society, not against his own interests or to inflict harm on others.

Freedom does not mean following one's own whims and desires, satisfying animalistic urges, spreading doubts and confusion, violating that which is sacred, stirring up trouble and committing acts of aggression against others, Freedom has limits at which the wise man stops and does not go beyond that, because then he is impacting upon the freedom of another. A man's freedom always stops where another man's freedom begins.

Freedom in the Muslim society does not mean that one can attack the beliefs and basic teachings of Islam which are well known to every Muslim. That is because the state in which the Muslim society is established adheres to a belief ('aqeedah) and a system. Its 'aqeedah is the basis on which the society and the state are built, and this 'aqeedah is based on belief in Allah and submission to Him alone., and following His laws which were conveyed via the and

divinely-revealed Messages, the last of which is Islam. Hence the bond of faith is the most sublime of social bonds, on which the coherence of society is based, not on interests or on race or ethnicity.

Hence 'aqeedah in the Islamic state and the Muslim society is a part of the public system which all nations, peoples and societies respect. So it is not permissible for anyone to attack it, criticize it or rebel against it, because that is regarded as an attempt to destroy the society and state, and it is not permissible to do that in the name of freedom.

The Islamic state regards attacks or rebellion against Islamic 'aqeedah as a call to demolish the state, because 'aqeedah is the of the state. This open rebellion is called riddah and irtidad - apostasy, and the fair punishment for the apostate is the Irene as the punishment for anyone who openly calls for dismantling of the slate system and for revolution against it, namely execution. If the apostate's case is simply the matter of personal beliefs that he does not broadcast, then there is no way of punishing him, because the Islamic state does not pry into people's secrets, rather it deals with visible, outward actions that may lead to tribulation and the destruction of the state.

Freedom in the Muslim society does not mean promoting intellectual beliefs that go against the basic ‘aqeedah of Islam, because this is essentially a revolt against the ‘aqeedah of Islam and a call against ruling according to that which Allah has revealed.

Therefore this is a rebellion against the public system of the state.

Islam makes an exception in this regard for the believers in divinely revealed religions, namely the People of the Book, such as the Jews and the Christians and others who fall into the same category. They have the right to keep their religions and to practise them openly within their own environments and in their own houses of worship.

That is because these religions originally shared a belief in Allah, the Last Day and the Prophets, so none of them can be forced to believe in Islam or to enter the religion, because, [There is no compulsion in religion-(2:256)] in the Muslim society and in the Islamic state.

Islam gives man the freedom to choose his religion and his beliefs, and it lends weight to this choice and regards it as important.

That is because Islam does not allow the identity of a person, even a small child, to be erased or his freedom to be taken away, or for him to be forced to do anything of which he is not convinced. Hence it is hardin (forbidden) to force people to follow Islam, even though it is the truth concerning which there is no doubt, because such force is a violation of the sanctity, freedom and dignity of man. Moreover there is nothing good about a follower who is following you because he has been forced to do so!

How greatly Islam honours man and respects his freedom and dignity! What a wonderful view of humanity!

With this clearly-defined concept of freedom, man in the Muslim society is free, and can enjoy his freedom as prescribed in shari’ah in all aspects of life.

Divorce and Dowry

“There is no liability (of dower) on you if you divorce women when you have not yet touched them, nor fixed for them an amount. So give them mut‘ah (a gift), a rich man according to his means and a poor one according to his means. A benefit in the recognized manner, an obligation on the virtuous.” (Surah Baqarah, v236)

The person who does not consummate the marriage, nor stipulates any dowry, will owe the wife nothing when divorcing her. However as a token of good will, he should give her what is termed as “mut‘ah”. This may take the form of a set of clothing consisting of these pieces: a scarf, an upper garment and a third garment that covers the entire body from head to feet.

Lesson: Though the husband owes nothing to the wife in this instance, the Quran still encourages him to act with kindness and compassion. Divorce is a very difficult matter on both parties, especially the wife. Thus the Quran exhorts one to include some positive element when terminating this bond due to circumstances that cannot be resolved.

PEOPLE OF MODERATION

Eqram Haque

perhaps not a day goes by without something sad happening to Muslims somewhere. Nations of the world are calling us extremists and worse. We are traumatized by such pejorative labeling, knowing Muslims are supposed to be a people of moderation.

How do we reconcile our status as an ummah of moderation with the senseless violence of which we are either perpetrators or victims? The most disturbing part is that violence is committed against innocent people and in the name of Islam.

Is there a silver lining in the midst of a gloomy landscape? Yes. The extremists are a tiny minority who are finding their dogma increasingly challenged by mainstream Muslims. The current extremism among Muslims is an old vice in a new guise. In the past, Muslims faced the ultra extremism of the Kharjiites (Khawarij) and defeated it with superior religious discourse.

The Kharjiites were full of outward religiosity (their faces bearing the marks of prostrations) but due to their narrow understanding of Islam they strayed from the true path. The Kharjiites looked at other Muslims, including the fourth rightly guided caliph, Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA), as less than they. Their extremism led them to accuse other Muslims of committing innovation (bid'ah). They even legitimized killing of Mus-

lims they considered innovators. The Khawarij were a religious but misguided people, and they tried to violently impose their narrow view of Islam on others.

By no means were the Kharjiites alone in their subversion of true Islamic values.

Throughout Islamic history, various Muslim groups or sects have proposed outrageous ideas. Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), foretold us about extremism of the sects. In a hadeeth collected by Tirmithi, he, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, said:

“My Ummah will be divided into 73 sects; all of them will be in the hellfire except one.” The companions asked who the saved group will be. He said “the one who will be on my Sunnah and the sunnah of my companions.”

Then there were the Mu'tazilah, who said that a Muslim could never atone for a major sin. Such thinking went against the teachings of Islam and caused a setback to Muslims' progress.

How can we protect against an extremist ideology that is presented in the name of Islam? A potent defense against falling into misguidance and extremism is to have the correct knowledge and aqeedah (creed) about Islam.

The Qur'an says:
“Thus We have made a you (Muslims) a Wasat nation that you be witnesses over mankind, and the Messenger (Muhammad) be a witness

over you.” [2:143]

The word *wasat* could be described as being moderate, in the middle, and the best. It could also be described as justly balanced. All of these meanings complement each other. Being moderate means neither too soft, nor too hard; being in the middle means being at equal distance from both extremes; and when something is justly balanced, moderate, and free from extremes, it is the best.

The Qur’an disliked the extremes of the People of the Book and commanded the Prophet (SAWS) to tell them to give up their extremism.

Say (O Muhammad): “O people of the Scripture! Exceed not the limits in your religion.”

[4:171]

In other words, don’t go to extremes in your *deen*. A classic example of the extremism of the Jews and Christians was that they called Uzair and Eisa, *alayhes salam*, sons of God.

The Qur’an records their statement thus:

“And the Jews say: ‘Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah, and the Christians say: Messiah is the sons of Allah.’” [9: 30]

The Prophet (SAWS), therefore, always told his followers to avoid extremes. He ordered them to be moderate even in worshipping their Lord, saying that if someone worshipped too hard he will not be able to continue in that manner for very long. Imam Bukhari has reported that three companions went to the houses of the wives of the Prophet (SAWS) to inquire about his worship. When informed, they thought the amount of worship insufficient for them and said: “Where are we in comparison with the Prophet (SAWS) while Allah has, forgiven his past sins and future sins.’ One of them said: “As for me, I shall offer prayer all night long.” Another said: “I shall observe fasting continuously and shall not break it.” Another said: “I shall abstain from the woman and shall never marry.” After confirming their oath, the Prophet (SAWS) told them:

“By Allah, I fear Allah more than you do, and

I am most obedient and dutiful among you to Him, but still I fast (some days) and I don’t fast (other days), I pray at night and I also sleep (meaning he does not pray all night), and I married, and whoever does not follow my Sunnah (way of life) does not belong to me”

Imam Muslim reported that the Prophet (SAWS), warned us thrice by saying,

“Ruined are those who insist on hardship in matters of Deen.”

Moderation encompasses all facets of our life, not just worship; it is an integral part of being the *Wasat* nation. There are scores of verses in the Qur’an that exhort us to be moderate in our life,

“And offer your Salat (prayer) neither aloud nor in a low voice, but follow a way in the middle.” [17:110]

Being balanced and moderate also applies to spending:

“And those, who when they spend, are neither extravagant nor stingy, but hold a medium (way) between those (extremes).” [25: 67]

And to consuming:

“And eat and drink but do not waste extravagantly, certainly He (Allah) does not like the extravagant.” [7:311]

Unfortunately, despite ample evidence against the Qur’an and Sunnah some Muslims have justified extremism to settle political and other grievances. They denounce fellow Muslims who do not agree with them, and treat other nations as evil reincarnate, totally ignoring their good qualities. Their excessive dislike of others makes them justify killing innocent people, something Islam categorically forbids.

Allah commands us to be fair when we dislike someone, as in Surah al-Maidah (5), verse 8: *“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah and be just witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety, and fear Allah.”*

And as for killing innocent people, what

could be more profound than the statement of Allah in al-Maidah (5), verse 32:

“...and if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind.”

Imam Ibn Taymiyyah said,

“Islam as a religion is the midpoint among all other religions. The Muslims believe in the messengers of Allah in a moderate way. For example, they do not go to extremes in their beliefs about the prophets as the Christians do, nor do they put the messengers at such a low status, as do the Jews. The Muslims always stand in the middle when it comes to all matters of Deen.”

Imam Ibnul Qayyim said:

“Always encourage people to take a moderate stand, because it will rescue you from transgression. So we find the middle position between two extremes to be the most balanced and just, where a person will find all the benefits and comforts of this worldly life and the Hereafter...”

There are just too many examples of balance

and moderation in our life, including the creation of this universe. Our body has everything in the right balance; when that balance is disturbed, it malfunctions.

In the universe, the planets are swimming in their orbits that have been defined by Allah. Major disasters can occur if they get out of balance. Had Allah placed this earth closer to the sun, or much farther from it, life could not have survived.

So, being ‘ummatal wasat’ means we are the holder of that balance and moderation in this world. When things get out of alignment or go to extremes, we are supposed to help them get back to the middle way.

As we yearn for the restoration of Islam’s glory, it is imperative that we bring back moderation to our individual and collective life. Our current predicament requires a serious reappraisal. Although only a minority among Muslims is extremist, its actions are holding all of us hostage. It is time for the silent majority to stand up and be heard.

Al-Jum'ah vol 17 issue 7-10

Blow to Multiple Human Species Idea

The idea that there were several different human species walking the Earth two million years ago has been dealt a blow. Instead, scientists say early human fossils found in Africa and Eurasia may have been part of the same species. Writing in Science, the team says that Homo habilis, Homo rudolfensis and Homo erectus are all part of a single evolving lineage that led to modern humans. But others in the field reject this. A team looked at the most complete hominid skull ever found which was uncovered in Dmanisi, Georgia. It had a small braincase, large teeth and a long face, characteristics it shares with H. habilis. But many features from the braincase were also unique to H. erectus. The 1.8 million year skull comes from a site that has unveiled the biggest collections of well-preserved early human remains known anywhere in the world. (By Melissa Hogenboom, Science Reporter, BBC News)

Smart Phone

The twentieth century ushered in technological advances never previously seen. From the numerous new and technologically advanced devices that have been produced, perhaps nothing has captivated and addicted people to it to the extent that the “smart phone” has possessed its users.

The “smart phone” is a combination of every media related device. One is now able to carry, in the recesses of his pocket, a device which serves as a phone, internet browser, camera, multimedia player, radio, television and fully functional computer. Unfortunately, the day all these diverse devices were rolled into one super-device – the smart phone – was the day all the negative effects of these technologies were combined into one seemingly harmless device.

Deep Bond

What was initially viewed as a simple tool of communication has now become an integral part of people’s lives to the extent that the smart phone is, in many cases, the last thing a person sees when going to sleep and the first thing he sees when awaking in the morning. This deep bond and sense of attachment to the smart phone, however, has left its mark. This device, despite the many advantages and benefits that can be derived from its correct use, has been revealed as being one of the greatest inviters to sin of all time and has firmly gripped numerous people in its vice and evil.

At the simple gesture of a finger, one is able to load pornographic material of the filthiest nature. Hence 70% of children under the age of

18 have stumbled across pornographic material while attempting to search for homework related information on the internet. With almost every child carrying a phone in his hand, it then comes as little surprise that 90% of children under the age of 16 have watched pornographic material online. Surfing online has become the most common past-time for numerous people — but many have spiritually drowned in the massive waves of immorality and vice.

With social media platforms such as Whatsapp, Facebook, My Space, Twitter, BBM, etc., literally connecting all and sundry, mahram and non-mahram, it comes as little surprise that people are falling into zina and cannot remain contented with their spouse. These illicit relationships are facilitated by the smart phone, and the haraam communication is concealed from others simply by locking it with a password. There are countless couples who enjoyed a happy marriage for many years after which, to their dismay, they found their marriages on the rocks due to one or both of the spouses falling into zina by means of social media. In the year 2009, a UK divorce firm revealed its findings that one out of every five divorces that were filed through them were blaming Facebook as the cause of their marriage breaking. A survey of other divorce lawyers revealed that 66% of divorce cases relied on Facebook as their primary source of evidence to prove their partner’s infidelity.

Very Near — Yet Very Far

Among the major vices of the smart phone is that while it has connected people to the entire

world, it has disconnected a great number from Allah as well as from those closest to them. Often many people sitting in the same room are all engaged in conversation – yet there is pin drop silence. Each one is engrossed in chatting with someone else and oblivious of the presence of those who are nearest and dearest to them in the same room. With the “blessings” of the smart phone, spouses are sometimes as far away from each other as the east is from the west, though both are in the same room. Many people’s Tablet is NOT a pain killer — it is instead a pain instigator and a source of much heartache for their spouse. Likewise a great number of children feel forgotten and off-loaded ... because their parents are always busy downloading. And ... many children feel ignored ... because their parents are too busy playing games on their devices!!!

“De-Vice”

The only way forward is to “DE-VICE” (to detach oneself from the vice of the device). The following are some important steps towards “DE-VICING”:

- ALLAH CONSCIOUSNESS: The most important aspect is to acquire the consciousness of Allah and develop the awareness of death. The reality that ALLAH KNOWS all that one is doing or thinking, that He has the Power to take one to task at that very moment and that there is death and also a Day of Judgement when one’s deeds will be exposed to all – the conviction of this reality must be firmly rooted in one’s heart. Minus this conviction, and the consciousness of Allah, all other means of DE-VICING will not help in any way. Among the fundamental ways to attain this conviction is by accompanying people of firm imaan, daily remembering Allah by means of zikr and sacrificing one’s wealth and time for the sake of deen.

- ABSTINENCE: If the smart phone has ever gripped you in its vice, do without it. DE-VICE by doing away with the device itself. Do not take

chances. It could kill your respect, chastity, marriage and even imaan, may Allah save us.

- SIMPLER IS SMARTER: Get smarter — keep a simple phone without internet and chatting capability. This is safest.

- TRANSPARENCY: Maintain complete and unconditional transparency. Each spouse should, at all times, be able to monitor the other’s internet browsing and messages (whether over social media, e-mail, whatsapp, etc.). In this regard, it is essential that no device is locked in a way which prevents the next person from accessing it at any time and monitoring its use. In the case of gmail accounts, each person having the password of the next will enable him to remotely access his account from his own device and view his web history, bookmarks, e-mails, etc. Parents also must have unconditional access to the devices of their children.

- NO WiFi: Do not install WiFi in your home. In many homes it ignited a Wild Fire of immorality and vice. If genuinely necessary (not for entertainment and idle surfing - which often leads to drowning in sin), keep securely locked with the password only known to the parents.

- CURFEW: Agree on a device curfew in the home, from asr, or at least from maghrib, to approximately two hours after esha. There should be a strict curfew on devices during all meal times and other quality time which should be dedicated to the children. In the case of genuine necessity for homework, etc., this must be very strictly controlled and limited to the bare minimum access.

- SORRY, NO CHILDREN: Children do not need a cell-phone, let alone a smart phone. If the circumstances necessitate it, a simple phone with no internet access may be given and the usage be closely monitored.

May Allah enable us to DE-VICE and keep us safe from the vice of every device. Aameen

(source: alhaadi)



A Journey of Humility

Sultaan Mahmood once travelled to the land of Khuraasaan. On arriving there, he felt a great desire to visit the renowned Shaikh, Abul Hasan Kharqaani (ra). However, because the primary purpose for which Sultaan Mahmood had travelled to Khuraasaan was some political errand, he felt it inappropriate to visit the Shaikh on the same journey as this would imply that he was only visiting the Shaikh as he already happened to be in the area. The level of respect and honour which Sultaan Mahmood would show the pious friends of Allah was such that he felt it necessary to undertake a separate, special journey in order to visit the Shaikh. With this frame of mind, Sultaan Mahmood left Khuraasaan and returned to India where he continued his jihad and conquests and thereafter returned to Ghazni. Only after reaching Ghazni did Sultaan Mahmood make arrangements and set out on his special journey to visit Shaikh Abul Hasan Kharqaani (ra).

When he entered Kharqaan, Sultaan Mahmood decided to test the Shaikh in order to see whether he really was as great as people said he was. He therefore sent a messenger to Shaikh Abul Hasan (ra) with the following message: "The king has travelled all the way from Ghazni to visit you. Kindly leave your abode and come to receive the king." Sultaan Mahmood also instructed the messenger saying, "If he refuses to come to meet me, recite the following verse of the Quraan Majeed to him: "O you who believe!

Obey Allah, and obey the messenger, and those charged with authority among you."

The messenger accordingly went to the Shaikh and told him that Sultaan Mahmood had come all the way from Ghazni to meet him and had requested that the Shaikh come out to receive him. The Shaikh refused to come out and told the messenger to explain to the King that he could not come to receive him. The messenger, following the instructions of Sultaan Mahmood, therefore recited the above verse of the Quraan Majeed. When the Shaikh heard the verse, he said, "Tell the King that I am so involved in trying to obey Allah that, regretfully, I have been unable to obey the Rasul (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) as he ought to be obeyed. When I am still failing to adequately obey the Rasul of Allah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), how can I turn my attention to obeying the ruler whose importance is less?"

The messenger returned to Sultaan Mahmood and told him the answer of the Shaikh. Sultaan Mahmood was extremely impressed with the answer of the Shaikh as it not only showed his indifference to the king but also showed his great level of humility. Sultaan Mahmood said, "Let us ourselves go to meet the Shaikh." Before entering, however, Sultaan Mahmood switched his clothing for that of Iyaaaz and instructed Iyaaaz to wear his own clothing. He also took ten slave girls with him who he had dressed as slave boys. They thereafter entered

into the presence of the Shaikh.

When they entered and greeted the Shaikh, he replied to their salaam but did not rise in honour of the king. The Shaikh did not pay any attention to Sultaan Mahmood (who was dressed as Iyaaz) and instead turned to Iyaaz (who was dressed as Sultaan Mahmood) and began to speak to him. Noticing this, Sultaan Mahmood immediately spoke up and said, "Why have you neither stood to receive the king nor given him any attention? Has your ego trapped you into even ignoring and overlooking the king?" The Shaikh turned to Sultaan Mahmood and calmly replied, "The trap is exactly as you have described. However, you are its victim, not me. Your ego cannot tolerate that I have ignored you." Sultaan Mahmood immediately realized that the Shaikh had seen through his disguise and identified him as the king and had deliberately treated him in this manner in order to correct him. The Shaikh next indicated towards the slave girls who were dressed as boys and instructed, "Take these non-mahram girls out of here."

Sultaan Mahmood next asked the Shaikh to give him some advice. The Shaikh replied, "I advise you to hold firm to four things; abstinence, performing all salaah with jamaa'ah, generosity and compassion." Sultaan Mahmood then asked the Shaikh to make du'aa for him to which the Shaikh said, "I make du'aa for all Muslims after every salaah." Sultaan Mahmood, however, insisted that the Shaikh make a special du'aa which was exclusively for him. The Shaikh relented and made du'aa saying, "May your end be mahmood (praiseworthy)".

Sultaan Mahmood thereafter presented a bag of coins to the Shaikh as a gift. The Shaikh placed the coins aside and called for some food to be brought after which he instructed Sultaan Mahmood to eat. When Sultaan Mahmood placed the first morsel in his mouth, he found the bread to be so coarse that let alone swallow; he was unable to chew it. The Shaikh noticed

him gagging and asked him, "What is the matter? Is it sticking in your throat?" When Sultaan Mahmood answered in the affirmative, the Shaikh said, "That is exactly how your money sticks in my throat. Take it back as I have divorced wealth a long time ago."

When Sultaan Mahmood stood to leave, the Shaikh also stood and saw him out with honour. Sultaan Mahmood was surprised and asked the Shaikh, "When I arrived you did not stand to receive me. Why is it that you now stand to see me off?" The Shaikh replied, "When you arrived, you were filled with the arrogance and pride of a king and wished to test me. However, you are now returning with humility and meekness and I thus honour you."

(Taaareekh e Farishtah vol. 1 pg. 90)

Lessons

1. Despite being a king on earth, Sultaan Mahmood realized that the Shaikh was a king in the spiritual world. He thus adopted the highest levels of respect, honour and courtesy in resolving to undertake a separate journey to visit the Shaikh.
2. The Shaikh showed indifference to Sultaan Mahmood when he first arrived. One of the reasons was that Sultaan Mahmood had wished to test the Shaikh. Remember that it is always the teacher who tests the student. A person going to benefit from an 'Aalim or pious person is going as a seeker and student. He thus does not have the right to try and test the 'Aalim. Furthermore, testing the pious is an extremely disrespectful action.
3. The true pious servants of Allah will not tolerate remaining in the company of non-mahrams for any amount of time. If a person is casual with non-mahram women, we must keep our distance from him.
4. A person who wishes to benefit from the pious should realize that he is in need of them. He will then travel to see them or phone them (not ask them to come to him or ask them to phone him.)

The Figure of the Prophet

Muhammad Yusuf Ludhyanvi (ra)

The belief regarding the Prophet (SAWS) should be that he is not merely a human being, in fact, he is the best and the leader of the human species. He is not merely an offspring of the Prophet Adam (AS), he is, in fact, the best of all the children of the Prophet Adam (AS). The Prophet (SAWS) said:

"I will be the leader of the children of Adam on the day of Qiyamah"

The fact that he (SAWS) is the best of man and humankind is not only a matter of honour and pride for him, in fact, his being from amongst the human nation is a matter of envy for the angels,

Just like the Prophet (SAWS) belongs to the human species in so far as his creation is concerned, so too is he the beacon of guidance for the entire human race in so far as his quality of guidance is concerned. This is the "Noor" by which humankind will find its path to Allah. This light will remain there until the day of Qiyamah. Hence, our belief should be that Rasullullah (SAWS) is a combination of both human and Noor. It is incorrect for anyone to separate and negate any one of these two attributes from him. To negate the attribute of humanness from him will be to, God forbid, remove him from the circle of "humanity". Whereas, there are numerous places in the Qur'aan where the Prophets are mentioned as being from amongst

mankind. The Ahle Sunnah Wal Jamaat is unanimous on this fact that all the Prophets (AS) were sent from among mankind. The definition of a prophet is as stated in the famous book on belief, 'Shar'e Aqaa'id Nasafi':

"(A Prophet is) The human being, who was sent by Allaah to convey the Message and Injunctions."

It is stated in the famous book 'Fataawa Aal-Imgi', on page 363, vol.2, citing reference from 'Fusool Amaawiyah':

"The person who says that he does not know whether the Prophet (SAWS) is a human or jinn, is not a Muslim"

In short, the fact that the Prophet (SAWS) is a human being is such an irrefutable reality which no sane person can deny.

We sometimes hear people saying that the Prophet (SAWS) is a Noor from the Noor of Allaah and he is merely clothed in the façade of humanness. Some even aver that between the words "Ahmad" and "Ahad", only the letter *Meem* comes in between. Nauthubillah, this is exactly the same belief that Christians hold regarding the Prophet Isaa (AS), that he is a deity in the form of a man. There is absolutely no scope or leeway in Islaam for such spurious and wrong beliefs. What can be more nonsensical and absurd as saying that the servant and Allah are one and the same. The previous nations

spoil their Deen due to such baseless beliefs.

Our Prophet (SAWS) anticipated this fate for his Ummat and has forewarned by saying:

“Do not exceed the bounds in praising me like the Christians have done with Isaa in that they elevated him to being Allaah and Allaah’s son.

I am the servant and messenger of Allaah.

Refer to me as the servant and messenger of

Allaah Ta’ala.” [Bukhari]

Owing to this sanctified statement, the qualities, attributes and perfection of the Prophet (SAWS) over the rest of mankind supersedes them by far.

There is no human who is equal to him in status. Nevertheless, he (SAWS) was a human and not a deity. This is the teaching of Islam.

Selfitis

Among the greatest qualities of a Believer is humility. Conversely, pride and arrogance are among the worst diseases that can afflict a person. A humble person is beloved to Allah and is also loved by people, while a proud person or one who loves to “show off” falls from the grace of Allah and is disliked by people as well, though they may appear to respect him.

Pride and vanity are not detected by means of an X-ray or CT scan. Instead they are manifested in one’s utterances, reactions to situations, choices, manner and general conduct. One of the recently discovered symptoms is “selfitis”.

Inflamed Ego

The American Psychiatric Association has defined “selfitis” as being “the obsessive, compulsive urge to take photos of one’s self and upload them on social media.” In essence, the victims of this illness are major attention seekers. The APA further explained that the suffix “itis” by which the word ends generally refers to inflammation. Hence bronchitis refers to inflammation of the lungs and tonsillitis to the inflammation of the tonsils. Thus this mental disorder was named “selfitis” as the people who suffer from it are generally prone to having “inflamed egos.”

The ahaadeeth have sounded numerous warnings for people who engage in the sin of photography. Apart from these warnings, when a person is filled with such vanity and conceit that his ego tricks him into thinking that the entire world is simply dying to share every moment of his mundane life with him, and thus he cannot see past his own face, how is he supposed to see the majesty and glory of Allah?

When we will stop trying to attract the attention of people to ourselves in whichever way, including posting pictures of ourselves or our activities on social media, insha-Allah we will attract the special attention and blessings of Allah towards us. This will make our lives in this world contented and peaceful.

The Value of Human Life and its Purposes

Ali Unal

A visible but oft-neglected difference between human and other types of life is instructive here. On Earth, four classes of beings work for and serve great, comprehensive purposes:

Inanimate objects, including subatomic particles, atoms, molecules and elements. All living beings are made from these objects. They serve universal purposes in a complicated, amazing way, but do not know what they do or why they do it.

Plants. They have some degree of life and serve animals and human beings as food. Also, addressing themselves to their senses by displaying spectacular scenes, spreading pleasant scents, and playing the most touching kind of music, they satisfy human senses (in particular, those of seeing, smelling and heating) and decorate the Earth. However, they do not know what kind of universal purposes they serve or what significant results they yield.

Animals. They perform tasks based on their abilities, Although they do not know why they are doing what they do, they derive some sort of pleasure from their work. A

sheep, for example, gives milk, wool, and meat; a dog is a loyal friend; and birds are the most loveliest singers in gardens or mountains.

Humanity. Only human beings are conscious. They know what they are doing, why and for whom they are doing it, and why everybody else is working. People also can supervise and employ other people for their own advantage. However, human beings did not Create themselves. Although of the same elements and living on the same substances, each individual is unique in countenance and character. Thus, each individual can be identified correctly by even his or her fingerprints.

People have no part in determining their physical features; family, race, color, birth date or place and even their own nature. Their free will also is limited. For example, their role in producing bread is insignificant when compared with that of the One Who organizes the sun, rain, and soil; a wheat seed's germination, growth, and life; the seasons; and the mutual helping between

these elements.

Besides, people did not establish the basic conditions of life they cannot prevent hunger, thirst, and sleep. They have no authority over the cycle of day and night or their bodies; they function automatically. For example, if they had to “wind” their hearts at exactly the same hour every morning like a clock to continue living, they would certainly have forgotten to do so every day.

Another interesting fact is that from the very moment an animal is born, it seems to know what to do. As if trained in another realm, it comes (or rather is sent) into the world and acquires full possession of those functions and abilities that it needs to survive within several hours, days, or months. For example, a sparrow or a bee acquires (or rather is inspired with), in less than a month, the ability to integrate into its environment in a way that would take an individual many years.

This reveals an important fact: Animals have no obligation or responsibility to seek perfection through learning, progress through scientific knowledge, or pursue prayer and supplication by displaying their impotence. They are obliged only to act within the bounds of their innate faculties, which is the mode of worship specified for them.

In contrast, people are born completely ignorant of life and their environment; we need to learn everything. Acquiring such knowledge requires our whole lifetime. We appear to have been sent here in such a state of weakness and inability that it takes us as long as 2 years even to learn how to walk; maybe 15 years to learn how to distinguish between good and evil. By living in a society, we eventually learn how to choose between what is beneficial and harmful.

Despite these basic differences, human life is the most valuable, for whatever exists was created to produce humanity. We are the fruit of the tree of creation. Just as a tree is grown for the sake of its fruit and its whole life is directed

to yield this fruit, the whole universe serves humanity. Thus, each human being has the same value as the entire universe.

One might even say that its value is greater than the universe, for each individual is equipped with consciousness and other intellectual faculties that make it superior to all other life forms. In one instant, the human imagination can travel throughout and far beyond the universe. We can speak; experience very complicated feelings, desires, and goals; as well as learn, think, judge, reason, and employ other riving beings.

Therefore, our value lies not in our physical composition and material aspect, but in the metaphysical dimension of life.

The Hand of Power that created humanity made a great “expenditure” on each human being by attaching the greatest value to them. That is, in addition to their mental and spiritual faculties that no worldly scales can weigh, It included in their physical or biological composition almost all elements of the tree of creation. Each individual’s physical or biological composition is so marvelous and expensive that if humanity joined together and built factories to produce a single cell, they would fail. When we consider only the neurons’ structure and tasks and the thousands of cords extending from the brain to each of the more than 60 million million cells in a human body, we can get a glimpse of what an amazing and miraculous creation we really are.

Despite this miraculous mechanism and the expenditure made on it, our earthly life is very short. Many people die soon after birth. However, the cost for and value of each individual, regardless of how long he or she lives, is the same. So short a life, despite such a vast expenditure and having the same essential value as a long one, cannot have been made for the life itself. Nor can it be limited to this world. It must have far reaching aims, and there must be ways to eternalize it.

Epilepsy

Unscientific Explanation

Dr. Jamal Badawi

Host: What would you respond to those who claim that the revelation of the Quran is a psychic phenomena?

Jamal Badawi:

This is just another link in the chain of arguments which center mainly around the denial that the Quran is a divine revelation by trying to find someway or the other to impute it on Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). The main difference between the positions that we have discussed in the past few programs the deliberate fabrication and possible premeditated attempt to author the Quran and then say it came from God. To say that it was psychic is basically the same. It says that Muhammad (SAWS) was the author of the Quran but he did not deliberately falsified it but he might have psychologically thought it up. Both of these focus on the issue of the authorship of the Quran and try to deny or reject its divine origin. However nobody including a Muslim should be dogmatic about it. There is nothing wrong with being open and discussing any possibility no matter how remote it might be. People are welcome to raise questions that may help clarify questions that are already in the mind of viewers.

Host: How do you respond to the claim that the Quran is the result of epileptic seizures which Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) used to have?

Jamal Badawi:

It appears that someone made a gross misdiagnosis. In order to objectively decide whether this is a misdiagnosis or not we can refer to the state Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) was in at the time when he received the revelation. Then we can perhaps go back to what the authorities say about what epilepsy is and what the types and symptoms are. To start with the description of what he went through at the time of receiving revelation, we find an authentic saying in both Bukhari and Muslim in which the Prophet said that “The revelation sometimes comes to me as if it were the ringing of a bell.” Some people describe it as an attention grabber in order for him to be receptive to the dictation given by Gabriel. The Prophet continues “after this ring and the revelation which is hardest on me, Gabriel leaves and I fully retain in memory what he dictated to me.” It is not just an experience but is imprinted in his heart and the portion of the Quran which is revealed is fully memorized by the Prophet. Second he said “He (Gabriel) sometimes came to me in the form of a human being-he would talk to me and then I comprehend, understand and memorize what he tells me.” When he says that Gabriel came to him in the form of a human this doesn’t mean that everyone around him was able to see Gabriel. It was more of an assurance to the Prophet that he saw Gabriel so that it would be a little easier on him. That is why

we find in Bukhari that the Prophet was telling Aisha (RA) "Here is angel Gabriel sending you greetings of peace." And she said "You see things that we can not see." In Bukhari and Muslim Aisha (RA) describes his state when he received revelation and said "when a revelation comes to him, even a very cold day after the revelation is finished we find that his brows are steamed with sweat. There is some form of deep and intense concentration which results in this sweating. In Muslim there is another description "When revelation came to him he became a bit perturbed and his face changed." In one narration it says that he sometimes nodded his head and when the revelation was over he raised his head up. There are a couple of references in the Quran which describe the state of the Prophet at the time of revelation. It was narrated that whenever the Prophet received revelation he was so eager and so careful not to miss any word, realizing that this was the word of God, that he used to repeat the words quickly after Gabriel so that he would not forget anything. A passage in the Quran came down to assure him that he should not worry about forgetting the Quran in (75:16-17) "Move not thy tongue concerning the (Qur'an) to make haste therewith. It is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it." A similar reference was made in (20:114) "High above all is Allah, the King, the Truth! Be not in haste with the Qur'an before its revelation to thee is completed, but say, "O my Lord! advance me in knowledge." There were also historical narrations as we find in Zad Al Muadh by Ibn Al Qayyim that when the Prophet received the revelation if he was riding a camel his body would become so heavy that the camel would have to sit down. If his body or leg was leaning on someone it would become so heavy that the person feels this heaviness without falling. This was the phenomena that the people or animals around him felt. This is basically what has been mentioned describing his state at the time of revelation. It appears that some people might

have looked into these descriptions and came to a hasty conclusion that since revelation is unexplainable in mathematical terms and if this was his state of affairs at the time of revelation then it must have been epilepsy. This is a statement that is both bias and scientifically unsound.

Host: Why is this a bias position for an individual to take?

Jamal Badawi:

It is bias because revelation did not start with Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). This is why we find in Encyclopedia Britannica in the last addition on page 454 "It is the inherent nature of God from all eternity that He speaks to men." This was not something that was totally new. Because revelation was an extraordinary thing one can not really put it in a test tube or explain it in purely mathematical terms. However there is one thing that is widely excepted by Jews, Muslims, Christians and followers of other religions who believe in some form of revelation believe that many Prophets prior to Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) received revelation. For example when Moses saw the burning bush in Mount Sini and receiving revelation from God and Jesus receiving revelation, David and many other Prophets in the past. However it is very strange that many writers never say that Abraham, Moses, Jesus or Paul were epileptic but when it comes to Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) there is an automatic conclusion without scientific verification or thought. This is why it is bias. Either the person is atheist and rejects all forms of revelation. It doesn't make sense to accept some forms of revelation and then when it comes to Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) it becomes epilepsy. This is inconsistent and is an obvious bias.

Host: How can you scientifically substantiate that Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) was not suffering from epilepsy?

Jamal Badawi:

We have to refer to authorities in psychologists and psychiatry and for the benefit of those who wish to explore that in a very simple way I would like to refer to the last edition of Encyclopedia Britannica under the title "Epilepsy." We have to find out what epilepsy is and what types of epilepsy are there, then we will compare this to the description we gave earlier of the Prophet's state at the time of revelation. On page 644 of the Britannica it says that epilepsy is "A sudden and recurrent disturbance in the mental function or the movement of the body or both." The general symptoms of epilepsy are described as "a partial or complete loss of consciousness accompanied by muscular spasms or compulsions or by more complex behavior. It was found that about 70% of the patients suffering from epilepsy experience their first attack before the age of 20. Then it says that it tends to disappear when the person grows into adult life. There are four basic categories that epilepsy is divided into. One, is called the big sickness, two is called little sickness, third is focal seizures and the fourth is psycho motor seizures. It is interesting that when we analyze each of these and the kind of symptoms compared to the revelation we find that they simply don't match. None of the four types match what the Prophet experienced.

Host: Can we examine the symptoms of these various types of epilepsy? What are the symptoms of the first type?

Jamal Badawi:

The "big sickness" is known to psychologists as "grand mal" which is the French equivalent. The big sickness is a state of generalized convulsions characterized by complete loss of consciousness and falling to the ground. This falling to the ground is sometimes preceded by a loud scream and after the body falls to the ground it stiffens and sometimes for a few seconds respiration stops which is followed by jerky movements in all four extremities (hands and legs). Sometimes during these seizures the tongue

gets bitten because there is an involuntary contraction of the muscles of the jaw. As the person finishes going through the seizure he feels very disoriented, confused, sleepy and have a headache. The most important part of the description of these seizures is that the person would have no recollection of what happened to him. He would not remember what happened during the seizure nor would he remember what happened immediately after the seizure. We have already spoken about the revelation given to the Prophet and it is obvious that these symptoms are not applicable at all as he never lost consciousness, never fell to the ground, didn't convulse or bight his tongue. We find here that the experience of revelation is quite different. Furthermore the authorities say that the person forgets what happened during a seizure, the Prophet however remembered every single word of revelation that was dictated to him during his experience.

Host: Can we move to the little sickness or "petit mal" what can you tell us about it?

Jamal Badawi:

Petit mal occurs among children and usually does not appear for the first time after the age of twenty. It tends to disappear in the early adult life of the individual. The basic symptoms are characterized by a very brief episode of unresponsiveness. Usually it takes 15 seconds without interruption of consciousness and that is why they say it could happen many times within the same day. There is no involuntary movement as we find in the grand mal. Again if we compare that to the revelation of the Prophet we find that there is no relevance at all. As we said earlier the Prophet started to receive revelation at the age of 40. The revelation of the Quran didn't just take fifteen seconds but many times it took several minutes and thirdly it was not something that could go unnoticed like patit mal that took place among children. The revelation were an observed state of intense concentration. Again this type has no relevance to the Prophet.

Host: Could you briefly explain the two remaining types and make a similar comparison?

Jamal Badawi:

One of these two are called focal seizures which are defined as seizures which originate in a specific area of the brain and are usually related to the functional properties of that area. This kind of epilepsy may appear in the form of sustained or jerking movements of some of the extremities or the face, a subtype called the focal motor attacks. It may also appear in focal sensory attack which is usually characterized by numbness or tingling in the local parts of the body. In all types of focal seizures we find that the discharges and spreads widely throughout the brain and as such it results in a generalized state of convulsions.

The last type of seizures, psycho motor seizures, is really interesting because it starts with some type of sensory or emotional *ora*. This *ora* is an unpleasant odor, taste, illusion about size, distance or object around the person. It might involve visual hallucination which is usually associated with intense fear. It says that after this *ora* the patient may become unresponsive and may start walking out or partaking in strange behaviors like picking at his clothes or something of that sort. These seizures usually continue for one to three minutes. But again the most important description which relates to our topic of revelation is that it says that during recovery the patient would have totally forgotten what happened. There is no memory at all of the attack especially after the initial *ora* receding the attack. Again it is obvious like in the case of the first two types of epilepsy that by looking into these symptoms it becomes obvious that they are not related at all to the description that has been mentioned about the state of the Prophet as he never forgot a word of the Quran and it was not unconsciousness because he used to recite and people around him would hear him repeating the words of the Quran after Angel Ga-

riel. Again all four types and totally irrelevant.

Host: What are the causes of epilepsy? Was Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) known to have any of the causes?

Jamal Badawi:

It is very difficult in the case of epilepsy to pinpoint a specific cause because as the authorities say epilepsy is not really a specific disease but rather a syndrome made up of many symptoms. In any case whatever the variety of epilepsy is we find that authorities mention a commonality between all types of epilepsy. This is a discharge of neurons which are in a state of excessive excitability. Millions of these nerve cells release excessive electrical energy in the brain in an abnormal way. This discharge generally leads to a loss of consciousness and convulsive movements. This is what is accepted by authorities as common in all epileptic cases. With this in mind authorities also say that in about 50% of cases it is not too hard to determine a primary or contributing factor to this type of syndrome. This includes injury at birth, congenital defects such cerebral palsy, it may involve infectious diseases which involve nerve tissue like meningitis, practice infections, brain tumors and strokes are all given as primary or secondary contributing reasons for epilepsy. Sometimes these seizures may happen following withdrawal from alcohol but in many cases they can be precipitated by emotional stress and extreme fatigue.

None of these causes can be traceable to the life of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). In fact he was known to be in perfect physical and mental health throughout his life. We know that Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) went through many moments of extreme danger, stress and fatigue and he never once wavered, fainted or had any of those symptoms. He was always in complete fortitude and steadfast. The point is that if the Quran, which is available for anyone to investigate, is a product of an epileptic seizure like one Muslim psychiatrist put it "I would like to see more of these epileptic people."

The Traps of Feminism

Misbah Rafiq

It is ironical that feminism traps women but claims her liberation.

They say in arabic----- "Putting a thing at a place where it does not belong to-- is injustice"

What are the feminists essentially doing? They are trying to idealise a lifestyle for woman which is incongruent with her nature, that is, they try to put her at places where she does not belong to, which connotes injustice as per the above definition. Hang on, please do not hasten to judge. What is meant by the above definition is not that women are incapable of doing the jobs that they are doing today, but the question is whether these jobs are compatible with their nature; and if they are not, do women enjoy doing them; or is it that they are made to believe that they enjoy? Let us explore.

Even if we take the evolutionary perspective, we find women as home-makers and men as food-gatherers. This role-differentiation was way before any civilisation had set in on the mankind, so it is quite evident that these choices would have been affected by natural tendencies rather than by social dictates, as there were none of those. So the role of home-maker was not assigned to women by society, it was rather her nature which made her one.

Therefore even in the primitive society women were home-makers, and there was nothing anti-humanitarian in being so.

The problems surfaced when the world witnessed illogical classification of human beings based on gender, statuses and the like. One of the victims of this senseless division were wom-

en. Briefly commenting on the state of women during those times, it would suffice to state that they were not considered to be humans to begin with and were consequently denied the rights of dignity, respect, and freedom-- the rights which every human being is entitled to. We know from history that women were taken as slaves, they were considered to be the lesser mortals, denied the basic rights, so needless to say that they had no decisive role to play in the world.

So it is quite logical to see this feminist movement emerging to work for the liberation of the woman from the shackles of slavery, for restoration of her rights, her dignity, and her individuality. But what is surprising is that after achieving this goal to a large extent, at least in developed nations, this movement in order to stay relevant it started to exaggerate the issues, rather it would be appropriate to say that it started making non-issue an issue. It was justified that this movement fought for having an assertive woman's identity established but it is way beyond justification that this movement attempted to snatch womanhood from those of whom it claimed to be messiah.

It did not stop at questioning the unjust society for oppressing the woman, it started to question Nature for making woman less privileged, arguing that it is Nature that made woman weak and inferior. It made motherhood look like a huge burden that Nature had tortured woman with and not men. It is quite unclear

that by such acknowledgements what good they are going to bring to women, as Nature will not change its plans because feminists are not happy!! So it appears to be a futile argument and a useless activity. By saying to a woman that you are born inferior amounts to saying that you are a hopeless case. If nothing but this idea plants inferiority complex in the minds of women, and they try to overcompensate (in the words of Adler, a psychologist), to the extent of leaving their comfort zone in order to prove to the world that they are not inferior. In the process, women are really overburdened with responsibilities that they already have as women and the responsibilities that they assume to prove their mantle to the society.

One more thing that I want to clarify is that it of course seems glossy to talk about liberation of women from the shackles of tradition, culture and even religion, but in the process of celebrating this one aspect of liberal women, we forget a life long reality of an emotional aspect of woman. Feminism either neglects or belittles an emotional side of women. It assumes liberty to be answer for everything. Religion, on the other hand, provides elaborate code of conduct which seems to be encompassing a really wide range of issues relating to the women. Now this may further complicate the situation, why be governed by religious laws, we should have the liberty to decide for ourselves?--- maybe the question posed. Instead of answering I would pose a counter question which is, why do laws, governments, courts and other regulatory bodies exist, when we have intellect and much celebrated Liberty to decide for ourselves? It is definitely foolish to be carried away by these glossy slogans and deprive oneself of the lifelong emotional security provided by the religion.

Let us take the example of how much emphasis Qur'an places on the respect of parents in general and mother in particular. It reminds man of the hardships that accompanies motherhood, probably because we all undergo a child-

hood amnesia and do not remember the trials that our mothers went through, it is amazing that Allah Himself reminds us of that forgotten period and exhorts us to be grateful to our parents. Allah Commands man in the holy Qur'an to be the best (*ahsan*) he can possibly be towards his parents? I don't think that there is anything else that parents would cherish more about their children than being obedient and respectful. It is Islam which teaches these values, it even goes a bit further and explains the nuances of being gentle and humble toward parents in expressions and attitudes. I reiterate my point that it is only foolish to be deceived by this saga of independence, when the reality is that interdependence among humans is the cornerstone of society, thereby making our womenfolk to leave a lifelong beautiful, secure and cherished emotional bond with their family. Because it is usually family which is the first unfortunate victim of this journey toward unnecessary and illogical independence and liberalisation.

Feminists, amongst many arguments have this interesting argument, they argue that injustice toward women and superiority of men is reflected in language or grammar as well. For instance they question why is God referred to as 'He'. Probably they are not able to bring home the fact that more than any injustice, it reflects the poverty of the human language that does not have a gender-neutral pronoun for God.

In sum, whatever the arguments, we should see whether this ideology really brings any good on practical grounds or it merely holds to a set of principles which have become irrelevant or are exaggerations. However the intent is not to undermine the work that is done on this front as long as the genuine and practical liberation of woman is the goal, at the same time the deviations that have occurred to keep this movement relevant have proved somewhat counter-productive.

Finally it may appear that at least the

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The Sublime Kindness

Ali Zohery

The Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) taught love, kindness and compassion to his people, and was seen to be the most loving, kind, and compassionate of all of them. The Quran mentions his kind and gentle behavior in these words:

“O Messenger of Allah! It is a great Mercy of God that you are gentle and kind towards them; for, had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would all have broken away from you” (3:159).

There are many instances that show his kindness and gentleness, especially to the weak and the poor. Anas, who was his helper, said: “I served Allah’s Messenger for ten years and he never said to me, ‘Shame’ or ‘Why did you do such-and-such a thing?’ or ‘Why did you not do such-and-such a thing?’” (Bukhari).

Once he said to his wife: “O ‘Aisha! Never turn away any needy man from your door empty-handed. O Aisha! Love the poor; bring them near to you and God will bring you near to Him on the Day of Resurrection”. He also went much further on to say: “Seek me among your weak ones, for you are given provision, or you are given help only by reason of the presence of your weak ones”. (Rahman, Encyclopedia of Seerah, VOL. VIII, p. 151) God Almighty is Kind, and the Prophet imitated Allah’s example in its perfection by showing kindness to his servants and all creatures without any regard for their beliefs,

color or nationality. The Prophet (SAWS) said: “God is kind and likes kindness in all things” (Bukhari).

His heart ached within him at the corrupt state of his fellow-Meccans and their rejection of One God. The Holy Quran testifies to it in these words: “O Muhammad, you will, perhaps, consume yourself with grief because the people do not believe” (26:3). In Surah Kahf, we read: “Well, O Muhammad, it may be that you will kill yourself for their sake out of sorrow if they do not believe in this Message.” (Quran 18:6). And Surah Fatir says: “So let not your life be consumed in grief for their sake.” (35:8).

He took a great interest in the welfare of all people and had great compassion for people in trouble. The Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) imitated the attributes of God par excellence and translated them into practice in the highest form possible for man. Kindness is an attribute of Allah, which has no limits. It is extensive and encompasses all things and all beings without discrimination. Likewise was the kindness of the Prophet. He extended it to all beings, both animate and inanimate and benefited all without measure. The Quranic words for the Prophet’s kindness, *ra’oofu-ur-raheem* (9:128) are very intensive and comprehensive in meaning and convey the true nature and extent of the Prophet’s kindness to people. The Prophet said: “One of the finest acts of kindness is for a man to treat

his fathers' friends in a kindly way after he has departed" (Abu dawud)

The issue of treating friends well was also extended to include relations: "He who wishes to have his provision enlarged and his term of life prolonged should treat his relatives well" (Bukhari). He emphasized on this matter because he deeply held the view that "Only kindness prolongs life, and a person is deprived of provisions for the faults he commits" (Ibn Majah). Bahz b. Hakim, on his father's authority, said that his grandfather told him that he had asked Allah's Messenger (SAWS) to whom he should show kindness and that the Prophet had replied: "Your mother." He asked who came next and he replied: "Your mother." He asked who came next and he replied for the third time: "Your mother." He again asked who came next and he replied: "Your father, then your relatives in order of relationship" (Abu dawud). He dwelled on the issue of treating orphans humanely as he stated that "The best house among the Muslims is one which contains an orphan who is well treated, and the worst house among the Muslims is one which contains an orphan who is badly treated" (Ibn Majah). This means that the Prophet cautioned his followers against general maltreatment of anyone regardless of his status. By extending good treatment from friends to relatives and now to neighbors, Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) was intent in making all humans interdependent as he emphasized in the following words: "All creatures are Allah's dependents and those dearest to God are the ones who treat His dependents kindly" (Rahman, VOL VIII, p. 154). He emphasized the kind treatment of women again and again in his speeches:

Treat women kindly, since they are your helpers; . . . you have your rights upon your wives and they have their rights upon you. Your right is that they shall not allow anyone you dislike to enter your bed or your home, and their right is that you should treat them well. (from the Farewell Sermon of the Prophet)

Once a number of women complained to the Prophet's wives about their ill-treatment by their husbands. On hearing of this, the Prophet (SAWS) said: "Such persons among you are not good persons." (Abu Dawud). This condemnation by the Prophet himself was an indication that no one will be accepted before God who, while on earth, decided to be unkind to women. Another person said to the Prophet (SAWS): "O Messenger of Allah (SAWS)! My relatives are such that although I cooperate with them, they cut me off; I am kind to them but they ill treat me." The Prophet said this in reply: "So long as you continue as you are, God will always help you and He will protect you against their mischief" (Muslim). This was not only a way of bringing comfort to the mind of the worried person but one of the communicative techniques of the Prophet to assure who ever found himself in that situation to look up to God to be consoled and protected. So it was pointless to preach vengeance to this kind of people suffering from this similar fate. Indeed, Prophet Muhammad was nothing short of a competent counselor.

He was always counseling people to be goodhearted regardless of their sex, age or gender. Once Asma bint Abu Bakr's mother, who was still an unbeliever, came to see her in Madinah. She told this to the Prophet and said: "My mother has come to see me and she is expecting something from me. May I oblige her?" The Prophet said: "Yes, be kind to your mother" (Muslim). This attitude of the Prophet was equally extended to Zainab as-Saqafia (RA), the wife of Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (RA) and an Ansari woman. She went to see the Prophet and to inquire whether it would be a charity if they spent something on their husbands and on the orphans under their care. The Prophet (SAWS) said: "They will get a two-fold reward, one for kindness towards their relatives and the other for charity" (Bukhari).

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al-Firar

The Station of Fleeing to Allah

Allaama Ibnul Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (ra)

From among the stations of fleeing ‘*iybaka na’budu wa iybaka nast’een*’ is the station of fleeing or escape to Allah (al-firar) which follows the station of holding to Allah (*al’tisaam*).

Allah Almighty said, “flee unto Allah.” [51:50]

The meaning of the original word in Arabic, al-firar, is to hasten, flee, escape or take flight from one thing to another. The fleeing of the successful souls is towards Allah, and that of the doomed ones is away from Allah. The attitude of the special friends of Allah, His awliyaa, is to flee from Allah to Allah, which means, as Ibn Abbas said, to act in obedience to Allah, or as Sahl ibn Abdullah said, to flee from other than Allah to Allah, or as some others said, to flee from the chastisement of Allah toward His reward.

The most elementary level of this fleeing to Allah includes three aspects: fleeing from jahl (ignorance and blinding passion) towards knowledge in intention and action, from indolence towards vigilance through effort and determination, and from narrowness and constriction (of the heart, due to petty concerns) towards vastness and magnanimity by means of trust and hope in Allah.

[Jahl includes not only ignorance but also

being blinded by passion]

(i) Fleeing from ignorance (jahl) towards knowledge both in intention and action. The word jahl in Arabic has two connotations, one, lack of beneficial knowledge, and two, lack of action in accordance with that knowledge. Both of these are equally jahl, linguistically as well as by Shari’ah and by custom. [People often restrict the meaning of jahl to the first one only. To emphasize that jahl means not just ignorance of facts but also the incapacity to act upon knowledge, let us consider the following examples:] When his people insolently asked the Prophet Musa (AS) whether he was merely poking fun at them in the name of Allah, he said, “I seek Allah’s refuge from being among the jahileen (those who possess jahl).” [2:67] Obviously, the act of lying in the name of God which Moses was denying consisted not of lack of knowledge but of abusing it and failing to act upon it. Similarly, when the Prophet Yusuf (AS) prayed to God to save him from the plots of the women who wished to seduce him, he said that “and if You, O God, do not save me from their ploys, I would give in to them and become of the jahileen.” [12:33] Here again, the word jahileen

(plural of jahil, the one who possesses jahl) once again could not mean those who are ignorant of facts but those whose passion has overcome their reason and so they act as if they are. Finally, Allah says in the Qur'an: "Repentance upon God is only for those who do evil out of jahalah (in a state of jahl)," [4:17]. [In this case, jahl could mean ignorance as well as the state of passion which blinds the judgment.]

The fleeing mentioned above is therefore from both kinds of jahl, from ignorance towards seeking knowledge, by knowing, believing and developing the attendant insights, and from the blindness by passion that inhibits action towards positive action and effort.

(ii) Fleeing from indolence and laziness towards action requires two things, sincere determination of intention (azm) and sincere effort in action (jadd). Allah has commanded the prophets and the believers to "hold what We have given you (of the Book) with strength (quwwah)," [2:63] similar commandments are given to Moses, John and all the believers in [7:145] and [19:12].

(iii) Finally, the fleeing towards Allah entails escaping from the narrowness of the heart and mind due to worries, fears and regrets that ail one's soul about matters internal and external, whether concerning one's means of survival and welfare or those of his dependents and relationships--from all of these towards the infinitely vast and broad space of trust and reliance upon Allah. One of the best aphorisms they people say is, "there is no concern when with Allah."

Allah said, "Whosoever is mindful of Allah, He makes for him a way out. And gives him from where he cannot even imagine." [65:2-3] Explaining this, alRabi ibn Khuthaim remarks, "way out of whatever weighs upon the people and worries them." Abul Aliyah said, "Way out of every misery." And this includes miseries of this world and the Hereafter. Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, goes on to say, "whosoever is mindful of Allah, He is sufficient for him." [65:3]

Allah the Exalted simply never ever disappoints those who have good hopes in Allah and sincere reliance upon Him.

The Real Escape: From Appearance towards the Reality, and from Mediocrity towards Excellence

The highest form of escape is to flee from the superficialities to the essences and from mediocre pleasures of the nafs to pure and exclusive devotion (tajreed). Those determined in their journey to Allah do not remain content with carrying out the outward appearance of the acts of worship but rather seek the heart and soul of worship. But the righteous people never seek to transcend the rituals except in their spirit, that is, they do not ignore the outward acts of worship, but only seek to perform them wholeheartedly.

Those who deny the outwardly obedience are plain heretics (zanadiqah), while those who are deprived of the inwardly worship are deficient and deprived. Only those who strive for both, the outwardly and the inwardly, are the rightly guided ones. Such people are the elite among the believers and among the people of knowledge and spirituality. Such are the people who perfect their escape from the pleasures of the nafs, which has different levels for different people, towards exclusiveness (tajreed). The word hazz or hadh, literally "portion, fortune or pleasure," here means any act or state that is less than the best, anything other than what Allah desires of you in deen, which could vary from being prohibited (haram), disliked (makruh), indifferent (mubah) or recommended (mustahabb). In other words, any action or state that is not the most desired by Allah for a person at any point in time would be called hazz. People differ with respect to what they consider hazz (less than the best) based on the highest level they can reach. An action may be considered the highest possible for some people, while for other, more pious, people, it may be considered

hazz. [For example, for some people, praying five times a day at home is a great achievement, for others, it's a hazz which they run away from and strive to pray in the masjid with congregation. For some, making salah of Fajr and Isha with congregation and sleeping in between is a great achievement, while for others, merely stopping at this and not praying at night is a hazz which they regreted.

The highest level of fleeing, therefore, is to escape from the huzuz, meaning what is mediocre or less than the best, towards tajreed, which is exclusive devotion. But for most people, this level is not attainable because it is hard enough for them to worship Allah at a mediocre level.

The believer who attains tajreed is such that he, or she, is not content with anything less than Allah, not happy with any attainment other than Allah, and grieves over nothing that he loses other than Allah. He does not stop at attaining noble levels in the eyes of the people, and nothing but Allah. He does not beseech anyone besides Allah, is not pleased except when in harmony with what pleases Allah, and does not grieve except over that which he has missed from the rights of Allah. He fears nothing but falling in the eyes of Allah or being veiled from Allah. All of his being is from Allah, for Allah, and with Allah. His journey is ever towards Allah.

The mediocrities (huzuz) call him towards themselves, but he says, "I want the One Who if I have attained Him, I would have attained everything, and if I missed Him, I would have missed everything."

Some Shaikhs have made an error in understanding the nature of hazz in thinking that intending to do anything less than the best is a deficiency in intention. This is incorrect, because sometimes a less than the best option like taking a break from the prayers and worship and enjoying the beauty of Allah's creations, etc., is necessary to perform prayers in the best way. So we must understand that there are two kinds

of huzuz, one, those pleasurable things that prevent one from doing the best (even if they are not prohibited), and these could be reprehensible, and those that aid one in performing the best actions and reaching higher levels, and these are indeed quite praiseworthy.

*Translated by: Uwaymir Anjum
Al-Jum'ah vol 17 issue 7-10*

Having Good Thoughts about People

Once, when someone taking leave of him, Hazrat Moulana Maseehullah (ra) advised him as follows: "As far as possible keep good thoughts about people. If you hear something about someone and it can be interpreted in two ways, i.e. in a good way and a bad way, then choose the good interpretation. Always have good thoughts in your mind about people. On the day of Qiyaamah, Allah will not question you regarding the good thoughts you had about people but He will definitely question you regarding the bad thoughts you had about others. Bad thoughts about others create evil and corruption. It is for this reason that the share'ah strongly condemns such an act. Today this has become normal for people. No one is prepared to accept their faults. They have no concern of their own faults but keep on looking out at the faults of others. This is a great weakness in us."

*(Hazrat Moulana Maseehullah Khan Saaheb [ra]
A Brief Biography, pg. 207)*

A Peaceful Heart, A Remembering Heart

Hassan laidi

It is a sign of our age that people live in a state of continuous worry. As a result, many people lose their peace-of-mind and suffer from stress, depression, fatigue, lack of emotional balance, to name a few of the so-called modern times illnesses for which many of them consume tranquilizers. Some of us may remember that social thinkers used to call the 1960s the “Age of Anxiety” because of the quick rise in the use of tranquilizer medications. I think the same name is still applicable---and may even be truer--- to our own times.

And even though the reasons causing man to worry have always been--and still are--part of his life, it is the lack of faith and emptiness of the heart that is causing him to lose peace of mind and suffer all kinds of turmoil and disturbances. When the heart is not properly connected with its Creator, Allah the most high, man is left alone to deal with his inability, insecurity and life’s unpredictability. The truth is Allah wanted the heart to be man’s main source of strength. And it is also true that in the same manner the brain does the thinking in relation to the outside world, the heart does it for the heavenly part. But the reason that people are unaware of the powers of their hearts is that they are unfamiliar with, and heedless of, their Lord and Creator.

Scholars call such hearts sick hearts because they are unable to do their job.

Imam al-Ghazali (ra) recognized this phe-

nomenon and discussed it at length.

It is always true that people with sick hearts are much more in number than those with physical sickness because it is very hard for heart-sick people to realize that they are sick, because, in this world, the symptoms of heart sickness are very hard to appreciate, and because true scholars, who are capable of curing heart diseases, are so rare. Without a tranquil heart one would be too worried to attempt anything, too scared to risk doing something which one has never done before. Worried hearts can actually bring life to halt.

On the other hand, having a peaceful heart enables us to stand up against the darkness of doubts and fear. Peaceful hearts can help us achieve success, see the invisible and believe the incredible.

A peaceful heart is the single most important element that gives us courage to endure the present as we anticipate the future. To the rest of the people, those who have this kind of heart walk with steps that seemingly fall on void, but find rock beneath

Imam Bukhari (ra) reported that the Prophet (SAWS), explained that:

“There is a lump of flesh in the body of man which, if it is well, his entire being is well; and if it is not, his entire being is not--and that lump of flesh is the heart.”

And for this heart to function properly and

provide the guidance and tranquility man needs to lead a happy life, it needs to remain calm and peaceful. The Qur'an tells us,

"Only by the thikr of Allah is the heart made peacefully."

Thikr is remembrance-in essence, the recalling of what is already present but somehow it slipped the mind. For Muslims, remembrance

is the mentioning of Allah's Names and Attributes in praise and glorification because our hearts tend to become heedless and forgetful of Him from time to time due to life's demands and worries. The Qur'an says,

"O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance. And glorify His Praises in the morning and evening." [33:4.1.42].

Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Jabir Al-Battani

Who refined existing values for the length of the year and of the seasons.

Al-Battani, in full Abu Abdullah Muammad Ibn Jabir Ibn Sinan Al'battani Al-Harrani As-sabi, (Latinized as Albategnius, Albategni or Albatenius) (858-929 CE) was an Arab astronomer and mathematician who refined existing values for the length of the year and of the seasons, for the annual precession of the equinoxes, and for the inclination of the ecliptic. He showed that the position of the Sun's apogee, or farthest point from the Earth, is variable and that annular (central but incomplete) eclipses of the Sun are possible. He improved Ptolemy's astronomical calculations by replacing geometrical methods with trigonometry. From 877 he carried out many years of remarkably accurate observations at ar-Raqqah in Syria.

Life : Little is known about al-Battani's life beside that he was born in Harran near Urfa, in syria Upper Mesopotamia, which is now in Turkey, and his father was a famous maker of scientific instruments. Some western historians state that he is of noble origin, like an Arab prince, but traditional Arabic biographers make no mention of this. He lived and worked in ar-Raqqah, a city in north central Syria.

Works: Al-Battani's major work is Kitab az-Zij ("Book of Astronomical Tables"). It was largely based on Ptolemy's theory, and other Greco-Syriac sources, while showing little Indian or Persian influence. In his zij, he provided descriptions of a quadrant instrument. This book went through many translations to Latin and Spanish, including a Latin translation as De Motu Stellarum by Plato of Tivoli in 1116, which was later reprinted with annotations by Regiomontanus. A reprint appeared at Bologna in 1645. The original MS. is preserved at the Vatican; and the Escorial library possesses in MS. a treatise of some value by him on astronomical chronology.

Honors: The crater Albategnius on the Moon is named after him.

How UK Media Fans the Flames of Islamophobia

Miqdaad Versi

Once again, a newspaper's integrity has been found wanting as the press regulator, IPSO, judged the Daily Star Sunday's headline, "UK mosques fundraising for terror", to be "significantly misleading" following a complaint lodged by myself. The paper clarified its error on page 2, noting that UK mosques were actually "not involved in any way". This came just a week after The Sun was forced to acknowledge that its headline "1 in 5 Brit Muslims' sympathy for jihadis" was similarly misleading.

Such inaccuracies are not restricted to the tabloid press. The Times, for example, claimed Muslims were "silent on terror". This allegation has since been unequivocally rebuffed not only by Home Secretary Theresa May but also by senior counter-terror officers such as Neil Basu and Scotland Yard's former anti-terror chief Richard Walton.

It's not just misleading stories which are the problem – we also consistently see articles conflating the faith of Islam with criminality, such as the headlines "Muslim sex grooming" or "Imam beaten to death in sex grooming town" – the latter of which resulted in the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police being "appalled" and writing an open letter criticising the paper.

Sensationalism and scaremongering about the apparent threat posed by Muslims is also widespread. Just look at headlines such as: "BBC puts Muslims before you" (Daily Star); "Halal

secret of Pizza Express" (The Sun); "Muslim vote could decide 25 per cent of seats" (Daily Mail).

So what, you might say? We rightly live in a country that cherishes the freedom of the press, and it's not unreasonable for newspapers to use sensational headlines to sell papers. We know that there is an undeniable and serious threat from many groups identifying as Muslim that strike terror into the hearts of millions. But the inaccurate stories, as well as those that are re-framed to align with the far-right "othering" of Muslims, have real-world consequences.

Recent research by the University of Cambridge has shown that mainstream media reporting about Muslim communities is contributing to an atmosphere of rising hostility toward Muslims in Britain, corroborating the findings of an Islamophobia Roundtable in Stockholm two years ago. Claiming that the media has played no role in the growth in Islamophobia is no longer a tenable position.

More than half of Britons see Islam (the mainstream religion, not Islamist fundamentalist groups) as a threat to Western liberal democracy. Over 30 per cent of young children believe Muslims are 'taking over England' and hate crime against Muslims continues to rise, up by 70 per cent in the last year, according to the Metropolitan police.

Of course, the government needs to take the problem of Islamophobia seriously and we

all need to hold the media to account better, reporting mistakes and inaccuracies. However, editors of newspapers also need to own up to this problem within the media and take meaningful steps to resolve it.

According to research presented at the Muslim News' Conference on reporting Islam last year, there have been improvements in the language that is being used, but religious illiteracy remains rife within parts of our newspaper elite. Special training for journalists working in areas touching on Islamic faith and culture, and guidelines for sensitive topics, are now a must-have for any serious paper.

Research from City University in London shows a huge under-representation of Muslims in the media: less than 0.5 per cent of UK journalists are Muslim, compared to almost 5 per cent of the national population. This lack of diversity is likely to be further magnified at more senior positions. A more diverse workforce, however, is likely to improve coverage and reduce the likelihood of misreporting. I am aware of specific instances where the mere presence of Muslim journalists in editorial meetings made a real difference in ensuring more balanced reporting.

To improve diversity, there needs to be greater outreach on the part of media organisations to bring in talent from all backgrounds,

through diversity programmes, paid internships and fast-track schemes to proactively close this gap.

Finally, given the apparent inability of the press to self-regulate, there needs to be more effective regulation. Stronger deterrents would prevent stories that are just plain wrong from making into print or online. Papers should not be able to get away with "clarifications" that do not admit wrongdoing without "due prominence". A significantly misleading front page headline needs to be corrected by an equally sized front page apology as well as a financial penalty.

I expect that the independent review of IPSO currently underway would cover these ideas and hope that all those interested, feed into that review. And, among many potential improvements to the Editor's Code of Practice, incorporating Recommendation 38 from Lord Leveson's report is a key way to help tackle the abuse of minority groups by some sections of the media: "The power to intervene in cases of allegedly discriminatory reporting, and in so doing reflect the spirit of equalities legislation".

Avoiding regular smears about Islam or Muslims and the conflation of the faith of Islam with criminality is a simple request of fairness, not asking for favours. It is not too much to ask of the nation's editors.

Criminalizing Criticism: A Zionist Project

The answer to why the Israelis did not, in good faith, take up multiple historic opportunities to make peace with the Palestinians lies in the very nature of the Zionist movement. From its beginning, and certainly from the establishment of the State of Israel, Zionism has been driven by dreams of colonial expansion and religious exclusiveness. Each of these goals is seen as part of Zionism's God-given mission, and they still prevail.

Professor David Schulman of Hebrew University, writing in the New York Review of Books, describes the consequences of this situation:

"The Israeli electorate is still dominated by hyper-nationalist, in some cases proto-fascist, figures. It is no way inclined to make peace. It has given a clear mandate for policies...that will further deepen Israel's venture"

As a consequence, Israel's credibility with an increasing number of people in the West has eroded.

(Lawrence Davidson. informationclearinghouse.info)

Who are the Ash'aris?

Shaykh Muhammad 'Alawi Maliki

Many sons/daughters of Muslims are ignorant of the Ash'ari School, whom it represents, and its positions on the tenets of the Islamic faith and Theology (Aqidah), and yet some of them are not God-fearing enough to refrain from accusing it of deviance, departure from the religion of Islam, and heresy about the attributes of Allah. The ignorance of the Ash'ari school is a cause of rendering the unity of the Ahl al-Sunnah dispersing its ranks. Some have gone as far as to consider the Ash'aris among the categories of heretical sects, though it is beyond me how believers can be linked with misbelievers, or how Sunni Muslims can be considered equal with the most extreme faction of the Mu'tazilites, the Jahmites.

"Shall We deal with Muslims as We do criminals? How is it that you judge?" [68:35-36]

The Ash'aris are the Imams of the distinguished figures of guidance among the scholars of the Muslims, whose knowledge has filled the world from east to west, and whom people have unanimously concurred upon their excellence, scholarship, and religiousness. They include the first rank of Sunni scholars and the most brilliant of their luminaries, who stood in the face of the excesses committed by the Mu'tazilites, and who constitute whole sections of the foremost Imams of Hadith, Sacred Law, Quranic exegesis. Shaykh al-Islam Ahmad ibn Hajar 'Asqalani (d. 852/1449; Rahimullah), the mentor of Hadith scholars and author of the book "Fath al-Bari bi sharh Sahih al-Bukhari", which

not a single Islamic scholar can dispense with, was Ash'ari. The shaykh of the scholars of Sunni Islam, Imam Nawawi (d. 676/1277; Rahimullah), author of "Sharh Sahih Muslim" and many other famous works, was Ash'ari. The master of Qur'anic exegetes, Imam Qurtubi (d. 671/1273; Rahimullah), author of "al-Jami' li ahkan al-Qur'an", was Ash'ari. Shaykh al-Islam ibn Hajar Haytami (d. 974/1567; Rahimullah), who wrote "al-Zawajir 'an iqtiraf al-kaba'ir", was Ash'ari. The Shaykh of Sacred Law and Hadith, the conclusive definitive Zakariyya Ansari (d. 926/1520; Rahimullah), was Ash'ari. Imam Abu Bakr Baqillani (d. 403/1013; Rahimullah), Imam 'Asqalani; Imam Nasafi (d. 710/1310; Rahimullah); Imam Shirbini (d. 977/1570; Rahimullah); Abu Hayyan Tawhidi, author of the Qur'anic commentary "al-Bahr al-muhit"; Imam ibn Juzayy (d. 741/1340; Rahimullah); author of "al-Tashil fi 'ulum al-Tanzil"; and others – all of these were Imams of the Ash'aris. If we wanted to name all of the top scholars of Hadith, Qur'anic exegesis, and Sacred Law who were Imams of the Ash'aris, we would be hard put to do so and would require volumes merely to list these illustrious figures whose wisdom has filled the earth from east to west. And it is incumbent upon us to give credit where credit is due, recognising the merit of those of knowledge and virtue who have served the Sacred Law of the Greatest Messengers (SAWS). What good is to be hoped for us if we impugn our foremost scholars and righteous forbearers with charges of aberrancy

and misguidance? Or how should Allah give us the benefit of their scholarship if we believe it is deviance and departure from the way of Islam? I ask you, is there a single Islamic scholar of the present day, among all the PhD's and geniuses, who has done what Ibn Hajar 'Asqalani or Imam Nawawi have, of the service rendered by these two noble Imams (May Allah enfold them in His mercy and bliss) to the pure Prophetic Sunnah? How should we charge them and all Ash'aris with abberancy when it is we who are in need of their scholarship? Or how can we take knowledge from them if they were in error? For as Imam Zuhri (d. 124/742; rahimullah) says, "This knowledge is religion, so look well to whom you are taking your religion from."

Is it not sufficient for someone opposed to the Ash'aris to say, "Allah have mercy on them, they used reasoning (ijtihad) in figuratively interpreting the divine attributes, which it would have been fitter for them not to do"; instead of accusing them of deviance and misguidance, or displaying anger towards whoever considers them to be of the Sunni Community? If Imams Nawawi, 'Asqalani, Qurtubi, Baqillani, al-Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Haytami, Zakariyyah Ansari, and many others were not among the most brilliant scholars and illustrious geniuses, or of the Sunni Community, then who are the Sunnis?

I sincerely entreat all who call others to this religion or who work in the field of propagating Islam to fear Allah respecting the honour of the Community of Muhammad (SAWS) is possessed of goodness until the Final Hour, we are bereft of any if we fail to acknowledge the worth and excellence of our learned."

In conclusion, the Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah are the true followers of the Prophet (SAWS) and his Companions (RAA), followed by those who trod their path for the last 1400 years. It is in summary the followers

of Imam Abu'l Hasan al-Ash'ari (ra) and Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (ra) in Aqeedah, and this saved sect is represented by the adherents of one of the four schools – Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali today. This is the sect which has had the largest following throughout Islamic history as-Sawad al-Az'am) as confirmed by the Qur'anic and Ahadith based evidence and it will remain dominant until the Hour is established, inshaAllah.

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expected readers of this write-up are not influenced by exaggerated part of feminist ideology, but that does not seem to be correct. The advocates of this ideology command a really very large part of the sources of our information, be it literature, media, or other sources. What is taught as a course of our curriculum is Virginia Woolf's 'A Room of One's Own' or Simone de Bouvier not a biography of Sayyidah Fatimah (RA) so that is evident to influence our world-view in some ways. Then there is media which constantly bombards us with multitudes of information showing the grass greener than it actually is. We may not be consciously aware of it but subconsciously it plays in the background, and at one point in time or the other it influences the decisions that we make in our lives.

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There are many hadiths concerning his kindness to animals, birds and insects: "God prescribed kindness towards everything; so when you slaughter any animal, slaughter it well; when you sacrifice, make your sacrifice good. And let everyone sharpen his weapon and make it easy for his sacrificed animal" (Muslim,). He made this kind of statement to demonstrate his love for both humans and animals. In essence, Prophet Muhammad was equally showing his followers that he too is feels pain.