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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.

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Question.

Are all types of silk prohibited for men?

Answer.

Sayyiduna Abu Musa Al-Ashari (Radhiyallahu Anhu) reports that Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam said: “Gold and silk have been permitted for the females of my Ummah, and forbidden to the males.” (Musnad Ahmad)

In the above Hadith, the type of silk, which is not allowed for men, is pure silk. It does not refer to artificial silk, which is commonly and readily available in the market. Pure silk is less common and is more expensive than artificial silk.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

A friend of mine was spiked with space muffins (Cannabis cake) he consumed it without his knowledge of the cakes being spiked, he is now concerned regarding his salaah, Ibadat and Quran not being accepted for 40days ?

Answer.

In the enquired case, if your friend consumed a cake without his knowledge of its Haraam ingredients (cannabis cake/space muffin), he will be absolved of sin.

Sayyiduna Abu Zarr Al Ghifaari Radhiyallahu Anhu reports that Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam said, “Verily Allah has pardoned [or

been lenient with] my ummah: their mistakes, their forgetfulness, and that which they have been forced to do under duress.” (Ibn Majah)

The Hadith discussing one’s Salaah not being accepted for forty days due to Haraam consumption refers to one being deprived of the Noor and Barakah (light) of Salaah for forty days. It does not refer to the validity of ones Salaah.

In any case, a Muslim should be extremely cautious in matters of Halaal and Haraam consumption.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it permissible to undergo a Micro needling procedure?

Answer.

Micro needling, also called Collagen Induction Therapy (CIT), involves using a tool called a dermapen with tiny needles at the end that make little holes or needle pricks in the top layers of skin. Another method of micro needling uses a dermaroller which looks like a miniature paint roller with lots of tiny needles that is gently rolled in different directions over the surface of skin to achieve the same effect. The benefits are two-fold:

1) The little holes from the needles create “micro channels” that allow skincare products to penetrate and absorb into the deeper layers of skin to deliver more powerful results.

2) These tiny pinpricks act as a bunch of mini injuries, which kick skin into healing mode, and stimulates collagen and elastin production. This process plumps skin and improves the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles, scars, stretch marks and pores.

In terms of Shariah, it will be permissible to undergo a micro needling procedure if it does not involve the usage of impermissible substances, nor does it aim to alter one's physical features, or harm one's health.

In doing so, one should seek professional advice prior to adopting such methods.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

If A takes a loan from B and a long time goes and the loan is not paid back So B makes an intention of sadaqah or lillah or zakaat on the debt. When the money comes, what's the ruling on the intention for:

1) sadaqah 2) lillah 3) zakaat

Answer.

In terms of Zakaat, the intention made at the time of B giving money to A will be taken into consideration. If B made an intention of a loan when giving the money to A, the intention of considering it as Zakaat will be invalid. In such an instance, B cannot change his intention to Zakaat.

In terms of Lillah, B may forfeit the repayment of the loan and consider it as Lillah. The difference between the two is that Zakaat has conditions which must be adhered to for its fulfilment while the same does not apply to Lillah.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is walima allowed before Rukhsati as per shariat.

Answer.

Consummation of a Nikah is not a pre-condition for the validity of a Walim Answer. If a Nikah is not consummated and a Walima took place,

the Walima will be valid. However, it is Sunnah to consummate a Nikah before a Walima takes place.

Consummation of a Nikah refers to husband and wife being in seclusion such that there remains no barrier between them to engage in conjugal relations.

Hence, a husband and wife being in total seclusion for a few minutes without engaging in conjugal relations will count as the Nikah having being consummated. (Mabsoot 5/150)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is Dagga is considered an offence is Islam?

Answer.

In terms of Shariah, Marijuana/Dagga is an intoxicant and holds the ruling of prohibition as is the case of all other intoxicants.

Umm Salamah Radhiyallahu Anha says, "Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam prohibited every intoxicant and those (substances) which slacken a person's mind." (Abu Dawood 3/329)

Based on the above Hadith and many other Aha-dith, the usage of Marijuana in normal circumstances is prohibited. However, in the case of using Marijuana for medical or medicinal purposes, the usage of Marijuana will be considered permissible if advised by an expert Muslim doctor and if there are no permissible alternatives available. (Shaami 6/457-Fataawa Haqqaniyyah 2/394)

In terms of using certain strains of cannabis (cannabis oils etc. which have high-CBD and very low to zero levels of THC), it differs from the use of Marijuana as they are void of the elements that causes intoxication (THC). It is therefore permissible for one to use cannabis products that have zero levels of intoxication through consumption or application.

Note: The extent of permissibility to use cannabis products i.e. oils, seeds etc. for consumption or application purposes is that it must not lead

to intoxication.

The use of Marijuana for recreational purposes is unlawful.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

There are people who only keep the 10th fast of Muharram. They do not fast a day before or after. They say that the Jews Today do not fast on the 10th of Muharram so they are is no imitation of the Jews. Is this correct?

Answer.

Initially, Muslims and Jews used to follow the same lunar calendar. However, today, Muslims and Jews do not follow the same lunar calendar. Muslims follow the lunar calendar whilst Jews follow the lunisolar calendar i.e. the Hebrew calendar. Accordingly, Muslims fast on the 10th of Muharram, which is a different day on which Jews fast, which they refer to as Yaum-Kippur, “the day of atonement.”

This year, Yaum-Kippur of the Jews on which they fast for approximately 24 hours fell on the eve of Tuesday, 18th September 2018 and finished by the eve of Wednesday, 19th September 2018.

In terms of the Islamic (Lunar) calendar of 1440, the 10th of Muharram fell and commenced on the eve of Wednesday, 19th September 2018 and finished by the eve of Thursday, 20th September 2018. As it is clear, for Muslims, the 10th of Muharram is a different day and for Jews, it is a different day based on following two different calendars.

Accordingly, there are Ulama who opine and allow for fasting only on the 10th of Muharram as the Jews do not observe the fast on the same day as Muslims. Therefore, the fast of Muslims on the 10th of Muharram is distinguished from the Jews and hence there is no imitation of fasting on the same day as the Jews which was the basis for fasting a day before or after the 10th of Muharram.

Having said that, the fasting on the 10th of Muharram with a day before or after should still be adhered to according to many Ulamas this was Rasulullah’s Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam advice prior to his demise.

Question.

What does it mean to spend on ones family on the day of Aashura?

Answer.

Spending on one’s family on the day of Aashura is general and applies to spending on one’s family in terms of food, clothing and gifts as well. Therefore, it would suffice for one to spend on his/her family on the day of Aashura by giving gifts, clothing or making a special meal for the family. (Shaami 6/430)

Note: Spending on one’s family refers to one’s dependants and not one’s entire family.

Question.

What is the time limit to spend on ones family on the day of Aashura? Is it the Islamic day and night of the 10th of Muharram or is it the 9th, 10th or 11th, 10th and 11th days and nights of Muharram?

Answer.

The day of Aashura is the 10th of Muharram. The day of Aashura is not the 9th or 11th of Muharram. Yes, in keeping the fast of Aashura, a person should keep the fast of the 10th of Muharram together with a fast before or after it to avoid enacting the practice of the Jews who fasted on the 10th of Muharram only.

However, in the case of spending on ones family on the day of Aashura, the 9th or 11th is not included. As such, the Islamic day and night of the 10th of Muharram is taken into consideration. Therefore, if one wishes to spend on his/her family on the day of Aashura and earn its rewards of expansion in sustenance throughout the year, he/she may do so from the 10th evening

(Maghrib time) until the Maghrib time of the following day. (Faydul Baari 3/372)

Note: The 10th of Muharram begins at Maghrib time on the 19th of September 2018, Wednesday in South Africa and terminates on the 20th of September 2018, Thursday in South Africa at Maghrib time. The virtue of spending on one's family on the day of Aashura is applicable between these times.

Question.

It is believed that to perform a Nikah in Muharram brings about bad luck because Sayyiduna Husain Radhiyallahu Anhu was killed in this Month. Is this correct?

Answer.

To avoid holding a Nikah ceremony in the month of Muharram due to the martyrdom of Sayyiduna Husain Radhiyallahu Anhu is a misconception.

If the death of an eminent person on a particular day renders that day unlucky for all times to come, one can hardly find a day from the entire year free from this "bad luck", as each and every day has a history of the demise of some eminent person. The Quran and the Sunnah of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam have freed us from such superstitious beliefs.

Fatwa Department Jamiatul Ulama (KZN)

Question.

I would like to do Qurbani but I do not have sufficient funds. I am not a person who pays Zakaat as I do not possess the Nisaab amount. I know I cannot afford to do Qurbani but can I take a loan and do Qurbani this year?

Answer.

If you do not possess the Nisaab amount (which is R4506.96 as of 16/08/2018) during the days of Qurbani, it will not be Waajib on you to do the Qurbani. Therefore, you should desist from taking a loan for this purpose. A person upon whom

Qurbani is not necessary should not incur debts beyond one's capacity to offer the Qurbani.

Question.

I heard that Qurbani can be done on three days. I know that Eidul Adha is on the 10th of Zul Hijjah. Does this mean that Qurbani can also be done two days after Eid? And what is the earliest time for Qurbani?

Answer.

The time for Qurbani begins after the Eid Salaah on the 10th of Zul Hijjah and ends at the setting of the sun on the 12th of Zul Hijjah. It is better to make Qurbani on the first day then the second, and thereafter the third.

Question.

We live in South Africa and we have our Qurbani done in Pakistan or India. If their days of Eid are before or after us, will our Qurbani be valid?

Answer.

The Fuqahaa (jurists) have stated that it is preferable that one slaughters the Qurbani with one's own hands or at least witness his Qurbani being slaughtered in front of him. Nevertheless, if you have your Qurbani done overseas, it will be valid and permissible. If you are having your animal slaughtered overseas (e.g. in Pakistan or India) and the day of Eid is one day before or after Eid in your country, the country in which the animal is being slaughtered will be taken into consideration. Therefore, if the day of Eid falls one day in India or Pakistan before South Africa and the Qurbani animal is slaughtered on that day, the Qurbani will be valid.

Question.

We will be doing Qurbani at our home this year. My son, my wife and I. I would like to know if it is permissible for my wife to do her own Qurbani?

Answer.

It is permissible for your wife to do Qurbani by her own hands. Care should be taken to ensure that the laws of Hijab are observed and she is not exposed to non-Mahram males in the process.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

It is understood that a person could lead Salaah if he is sitting on the ground. Does this apply even if he does not make Sajdah on the ground?

Answer.

It is a pre-requisite for a person sitting on the ground and performing Salaah to make Sajdah on the ground if he intends to lead a standing congregation.

If he can only sit on the ground and perform Salaah without being able to make Sajdah on the ground, he cannot lead a standing congregation in Salaah. However, a person who is also in the condition that he cannot perform Sajdah may perform Salaah behind him. (Tahtaawi Ala Maraqqil Falaah 1/400/1)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Does ablution (wudhu) break when water comes out of the eyes due to an infection?

Answer

If there is pain in the eye which is caused by an infection, and thereafter water comes out of the eye, then in this case the water will be napaak and the wudhu will break through it coming out.

Mufti Zakaria

Question.

1. What are the best times for a woman to perform Salaah? The awwal waqt (when the time enters) or the mustahab time? Please mention the mustahab times for all the five daily Salaah.
2. Can a woman perform Esha Salaah late?

Answer.

1. It is permissible to perform the Salaah in the awwal waqt (when the time enters) or the mustahab time. However, performing the Salaah in the mustahab time is more rewarding.

The mustahab times for performing the five daily Salaah are as follows: the Fajr Salaah will be performed in Isfaar (when the darkness leaves and the horizon becomes bright). The Zuhr Salaah will be performed in summer at the time when it is cool, before the shadow of an object equals its size. In winter, the Zuhr Salaah will not be delayed. The Asr Salaah will be delayed, but it should not be delayed till the point where it is close to the makrooh time (the makrooh time commences when the colour of the sun changes before sunset). The Maghrib Salaah will be performed as soon as the time enters. During summer, the Esha Salaah will be performed as soon as the time sets in (the awwal waqt) and will be delayed in winter till approximately one third of the night has passed.

These abovementioned times, with the exception of fajr, are for both men and women. As far as Fajr Salaah is concerned, it is mustahab for men to perform the Fajr Salaah in Isfaar (when the darkness leaves and the horizon becomes bright) and it is mustahab for women to perform the Fajr Salaah when the time enters (the awwal waqt).

2. As far as the Esha Salaah is concerned, the Fuqaha have stated that it is mustahab to delay it till one third of the night has passed (except in summer). Delaying the Esha Salaah till half the night passes is permissible. However, delaying the Esha Salaah till after half the night has passed is makrooh. Hence, a woman may delay performing the Esha Salaah provided she is sure that she will perform it before half the night passes and she will not miss the Fajr.

Note: If a woman fears that in anticipation for the mustahab time, she might get engaged in work and miss the Salaah, or perform it in the makrooh time (e.g. Asr Salaah), then she should perform the Salaah when the time of the Salaah enters (the awwal waqt).

Lesson from
The Qur'an



Allah Bears Witness

*Allah bears witness that there is no god but He - and (so do) the angels and the men of knowledge - being the One who maintains equity. There is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise. Truly, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. And those who have been given the Book did not differ (among themselves) except after the knowledge had come to them, (and all this) due to envy against each other. And whoever denies the verses of Allah, then, Allah is swift at reckoning.
(3:18-19)*

The verse beginning with: 'shahidal-lahu' (Allah bears witness) has a special elegance. Imam al-Baghawi, the renowned mufassir reports that two leading Jewish scholars came to Madinah from Syria. With the township of Madinah before them, they started talking to each other about the looks of the place which matched the prophecy in Torah that the last of the prophets would be living here. Later, they came to know that someone very pious lives here and whom people refer to as the prophet. They went to see the Holy Prophet. Their very first sight of him reminded them of all attributes which Torah had predicted he would have. They presented themselves before him and said: "You are Muhammad?" He said: "Yes." Again, they said: "You are Ahmad?" He said: "Yes, I am Muhammad, and Ahmad." They said:

"We are going to ask you a question. If you answer it correctly, we shall embrace Islam." He said: "Go ahead and ask." They asked: "Which is the greatest witness in the Book of Allah?" This verse of 'shahadah' (witness) was revealed as an answer to this question. He recited it for them. Both of them embraced Islam immediately.

According to a hadith in the Musnad of Ahmad, when the Holy Prophet recited this verse in 'Arafat, he said right after that:

And to that, O my Lord, I too am a witness. (Ibn Kathir)

And a narration from Imam al-A'mash says: Whoever recites this verse and then says: (And to that, O my Lord, I too am a witness), Allah Almighty will say to the angels on the Last Day: 'My servant has made a promise while I am the Foremost to keep a promise when I make it, so let my servant be admitted into Paradise.' (Ibn Kathir)

Another hadith from Sayyidna Abu Ayyub al-Ansari narrates that the Holy Prophet said: 'Whoever recites Ayah al-Kursi (2:255) and the Ayah: Shahidal-lahu (3:18) and : Qulil-lahumma malik al-mulki upto bighairi hisab (3:26,27), Allah Almighty will forgive all his sins, admit him to Paradise and take care of seventy (i.e. plenty) of his needs, the simplest of these being his forgiveness.' (Ruh al-Ma'ani with reference to Dailami)

Din and Islam: An Explanation of the Two words:

The word, Din has more than one meaning in the Arabic language, one of them being 'the way'. In the terminology of the Qur'an, the word, Din is used to stand for principles and injunctions which are common to all prophets from Sayyidna Adam (A.S) to the last of the prophets, Sayyidna Muhammad al-Mustafa . The words, 'shari'ah' or 'al-minhaj' or the word, 'madhhab' from among the later-day terms, are used to cover subsidiary injunctions, which have been different during different ages and different communities. The Holy Qur'an says:

Allah made you follow the same religion with which He bound Nuh (and other prophets) - 42:13.

This tells us that the din of all our blessed prophets was one and the same, that is, belief in the most perfect Being and Attributes of Allah, in His being free of all shortcomings and that He alone is worthy of worship, believing in this from the depth of one's heart and confirming it verbally; belief in the Day of Judgement, in the final reckoning of deeds, the reward and the punishment and in Paradise and Hell and in every prophet and messenger sent by Him and in all commandments and injunctions brought by them, believing all this in one's heart and confirming such belief verbally as well.

Now the real meaning of the word, Islam is to submit oneself to Allah and be obedient to His commands. Given this meaning, those who believed in the prophets and messengers of their time and were obedient to the commands of Allah they brought to them, were all entitled to be called Muslims, and their religion was Islam. It was in this sense of the word that Sayyidna Nuh said: (I have been commanded that I be from among the Muslims - 10:72) and therefore, Sayyidna Ibrahim (A.S) described himself and his community as Muslims when he said: (Our Lord, make us Muslims, the submitting ones to Thee, and from our progeny a community of Muslims submitting to Thee - 2:128). And it was

in this very sense of the word that the disciples of Sayyidna 'Isa (A.S) said: (And bear witness that we are Muslims - 3:52)

Sometimes this word is applied particularly to the din and shari'ah, the religion and the law brought finally by the last among the prophets, Sayyidna Muhammad al-Mustafa . This law abrogated all previous ways in religion and this shall sustain right through the Day of Judgment. Given this meaning of the word Islam, it becomes particular to the religion brought by the prophet of Islam and to the large community of his followers. In a well-known hadith of Jibra'il, the Holy Prophet has explained Islam in this very manner.

The word, 'Al-Islam' as it appears in the verse here carries the likelihood of both meanings. If the first meaning is taken, it would mean that the only religion acceptable with Allah is Islam, that is, becoming obedient in complete submission to the commands of Allah, believing in all prophets of all times and in whatever commandments they brought, by acting accordingly. Although, the religion brought by Hadhrat Muhammad has not been specially identified here, yet, in persuance of the general rule, once the last among the line of prophets had been sent, the belief and practice of all injunctions he brought becomes binding, and inclusive under this rule. As such, the outcome will be that the religion acceptable during the period of Sayyidna Nuh was what he brought; during the period of Sayyidna Ibrahim, what he brought. Similarly, the Islam of the period of Sayyidna Musa was what came in the form of the tablets of Torah and the teachings of Moses and the Islam of the period of Sayyidna 'Isa was what came as Injil and the teachings of Jesus (A.S). At the end of this chain of prophets, the Islam of the period of Sayyidna Muhammad , the last among the prophets, shall be what took shape on the pattern given by the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Now if we take the second meaning of Islam, that is, the Shari'ah the way and law brought by

the last of the prophets, the verse would come to mean that in this period of time only that religion of Islam which is true to the teachings of the noble prophet is the one acceptable. No doubt, previous religions too, during their age of currency, were known as Islam, but they are now abrogated. So, the end-result is the same both ways, that is, during the age of every prophet, the religion acceptable in the sight of Allah is that particular Islam which conforms to the revelation and teachings credited to that prophet. No religion, other than this, even if it be a previously abrogated one, is acceptable and certainly not deserving of being called "Islam" at a later stage. The Shari'ah of Sayyidna Ibrahim was the Islam of his times. When the time of Sayyidna Musa came, the abrogated laws of that code did not remain the Islam of his time. Similarly, any laws of Moses abrogated during the time of Sayyidna 'Isa were not to be labelled as Islam any more. It is exactly like this when laws and injunctions of previous religious codes were abrogated during the time of the Last of the prophets, they no more remained valid as Islam. Therefore, whatever meaning of Islam is taken, general or particular, in relation to the community being addressed by the Holy Qur'an, the outcome of both is nothing but that, following the appearance of the noble Prophet, the only religion which shall be deserving of the name, Islam, will be the one that conforms to the Qur'an and the teachings of the blessed recipient of revelations and that alone shall be acceptable in the sight of Allah. Since no other religion is acceptable to Allah, it cannot become a source of salvation either. This subject has appeared in the Holy Qur'an in many verses separately. The exact words used in one such verse are: that is, whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him (and what is done under its dictates shall be wasted).

Even good deeds and morals from a non-Muslim are not acceptable.

These verses have very clearly hit at the root of the atheistic approach which endeavours to bracket Islam and disbelief (kufr) on the same footing in the name of tolerance preached by Islam, thereby claiming that every faith of the world - Judaism, Christianity, even paganism - can each become the source of salvation, on condition that its followers perform good deeds and observe good morals. This, in reality is a veiled attempt to demolish a principle of Islam and to prove that Islam is nothing of substance. It is something limpid and imaginary which could be moulded to fit into whatever religion one chooses, even if it is kufr or disbelief! The verses of the Holy Qur'an, those appearing here and a large number of others, have very explicitly stressed that the light and darkness cannot be the same. Similarly, it is grossly absurd and impossible that Allah would like disobedience to and rebellion against Him just as He likes obedience and submission. Whoever denies even one basic principle of Islam, he is, without any shadow of doubt, a rebel to Allah and the enemy of His Messengers, no matter how impressing he may appear in his other deeds and formal morality. Salvation in the Hereafter depends, first of all, on obedience to Allah and His Messenger. Whoever remains deprived of it, not one of his deeds is credible. The Holy Qur'an says for such people:

We shall not assign weight to their deeds on the Day of Judgement - 18:105.

In verse 19: after declaring that 'the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam', the text moves on to explain why the people of the Book went about disputing the prophethood of Sayyidna Muhammad and challenging Islam as false. They did this, not because they had any doubts in this connection for they knew the truth of the matter through their own scriptures, but because they were scared of losing their ground against Muslims. So, it was their malice towards Muslims, their love for power and influence and their

Cont'd on page 34

Lessons from Sahih Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

The Book of the Times of Salah

Chapter 1 : The timings of the salāh and its excellences.

and the statement of Allah “The prayer is prescribed for the believers at set times” (4:103).

Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb

After finishing the chapters related facing Qibla in salāh, and using ‘Sutra’, Imām Bukhāri has started the book on the timings of the salāh. The fixed timing is also a prerequisite for salāh i.e. a particular salāh becomes obligatory at a particular time only and the timing of salāh is so important that Allah has Himself fixed them up as is evident from the verse of the Holy Qur’an quoted above.

Not all but in some compilations of Sahih Bukhāri this book has also been started with ‘Tasmiya’ i.e., (Bismillah-ir-Rahman ir-Rahim).

Hadith No. 494

Narrated Ibn Shihab

Once Umar bin Abdul Aziz delayed the prayer and Urwa bin Az-Zubair went to him and said, “Once in Iraq, Al-Mughaira bin Shu’ba delayed his prayers and Abi Mas’ud Al-Ansari went to him and said, ‘O Mughira! What is this? Don’t you know that once Gabriel came and offered the prayer (Fajr prayer) and Allah’s Apostle

prayed too, then he prayed again (Zuhr prayer) and so did Allah’s Apostle and again he prayed (Asr prayers and Allah’s Apostle did the same; again he prayed (Maghrib-prayer) and so did Allah’s Apostle and again prayed (‘Isha prayer) and so did Allah’s Apostle and (Gabriel) said, ‘I was ordered to do so (to demonstrate the prayers prescribed to you)?” Umar (bin Abdul Aziz) said to Urwa, “Be sure of what you say. Did Gabriel lead Allah’s Apostle at the stated times of the prayers?” Urwa replied, “Bashir bin Abi Mas’ud narrated like this on the authority of his father.” Urwa added, “Aishah told me that Allah’s Apostle used to pray Asr prayer when the sun-shine was still inside her residence (during the early time of Asr).”

Comments

Once, when he was the governor of Madinah during the caliphate of Walid bin Abdul Mālik, Umar bin Abdul Aziz delayed his salāh. Tabrani has quoted Ibn-Shahab as saying:

“The Muazzin (the caller for salāh) called for Asr salāh and Umar bin Abdul Aziz delayed to offer it closer to sunset”

According to Allāma Ayni he did not do so right until sunset but just close to it. Urwah bin Zubair objected to it and informed

him (Umar bin Abdul Aziz) that Mugariah ibn Shuba, the governor of Iraq during the time of Sayyidna Muaawiya, once delayed his salāh and Abu Mas'ud al-Ansari raised objection on it. Sayyidna Abu Mas'ud al-Ansari further informed him about the importance of sticking to the timings of salāh by saying, Allah sent the Arch-angel Jibraeel (AS) in person to Rasulallah (saws) who not only conveyed Rasulallah (saws) the timings of salāh but practically offered salāh with Rasulallah (saws) also at the five fixed salāh times. Had not the salāh timings been so important, Allah would not have made such an elaborated arrangement for it.

Allāma Ayni quotes Ibn Ishaq saying in 'Al-Magaazi':

"It (the coming down of Jibraeel) was in the morning of the night in which salāh was made obligatory and that is the night of ascension".

Ayni further quotes Nawawi saying:

"He (Jibraeel) offered salāh and then Rasulallah (saws) offered it repeatedly five times".

According to some Ahaadith Jibraeel (AS) came to Rasulallah (saws) on two successive days for this purpose. On the first day he showed Rasulallah (saws) the starting time of every salāh and the next day he showed him their last permissible time. It seems that Umar bin Abdul Aziz had delayed it beyond the last permissible time and that is why Urwah objected, some scholars comment.

Lessons from this hadith

1. The timing of salāh is obligatory i.e. a salāh becomes obligatory only when its time enters and not before that.

2. It is better to offer salāh when its time enters, delaying it is not good.

3. The learned scholars of Shariah should warn the rulers if they go against the Sunnah.

4. The hadith whose chain of narrators is quoted up to the Companions level is more reliable than the one which is up to the Taabā'ee level only as Umar bin Abdul Aziz asked Abu

Mas'ud al-Ansari more clarification when he quoted Mugairah ibn Shuba, and resorted to silence when Urwah quoted from Bashir Ibn Abi Mas'ud who was quoting from his father and Urwah also quoted the hadith of Sayyida Aishah.

Chapter 2 : (Allah's words) "(Set your face to the Faith) turning totally towards Him, and fear Him, and establish salāh, and do not be among those who associate partners with Allah." (30:31)

Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb

In the above quoted verse the word 'Aqem-us-salāh' is used which means to establish salāh with all its prerequisites and essentials. It is to be noted here that one of the most essential prerequisites of salāh is to offer it at its stipulated time, and that is what Imām Bukhāri wants to convey. The above quoted verse precedes another verse of Sura al-Rum, the two verses are:

So, set your face to the Faith uprightly, this (faith) being the nature designed by Allah on which He has created the mankind. There is no change in Allah's creation. That is the straight faith, but most of the people do not know. (Set your face to the Faith) turning totally towards Him, and fear Him, and establish salāh, and do not be among those who associate partners with Allah. (30-30,31)

Allah commands the faithful to turn his face away from all creations and get attached to the creator in totality and complete sincerity and obey one's disposition which always point towards the oneness of the creator of the whole universe. Islam is another name of the nature of the man. A hadith says:

"A child is born on his 'Fitrah' (disposition) and it is his parents who later on make him Jew or Christian or Magus .

Allah says that while keeping your disposition pure and uncorrupted you should fear Him alone. The best way of turning towards Allah is demonstrated by offering salāh and whosoever fears Him will give up all forms of idolatry.

Hadith No. 495

Narrated Ibn Abbas

“Once a delegation of Abdul Qais came to Allah’s Apostle and said, “We belong to such and such branch of the tribe of Rab’a and we can only come to you in the sacred months. Order us to do something good so that we may (carry out) take it from you and also invite to it our people whom we have left behind (at home).” The Prophet said, “ I order you to do four things and forbid you from four things. (The first four are as follows): 1. To believe in Allah. (And then he: explained it to them i.e.) to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and I (Muhammad) am Allah’s Apostle, 2. To offer prayers perfectly (at the stated times), 3. To pay Zakaat (obligatory charity), 4. To give me Khumus.

(The other four things which are forbidden are as follows): 1. Dubba, 2. Hantam, 3. Muqaiyat, 4. Naqir (all these are utensils used for the preparation of alcoholic drinks).”

Comments

This hadith has been discussed in the book of faith (Kitab-ul-Iman). Here Rasulullah (saws) keeps the offering of salāh with all its prerequisites or essentials at the top of the list after testifying the faith in Allah and His messenger. salāh is the best form of worship and that is why it has been given such a priority in the Shariah.

Chapter 3 : The pledge of allegiance for establishing the salāh.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb

Stressing further the importance of salāh, Imām Bukhāri now says that Rasulullah (saws) used to take pledge of allegiance on his hand from his companions on the matter that they would establish salāh regularly with all its essentials. Taking a pledge of allegiance from someone after taking his hand in one’s own hand is known as Bai’at. The holy Qur’an also mentions about it in Sura al-Fateh as:

Those who pledge allegiance with you (by placing their hands in your hand)- they, in fact, pledge allegiance with Allah. Allah’s hand is over their hands. Then, whoever breaks his pledge breaks it to his own detriment, and whoever fulfils the covenant he has made with Allah, He will give him a great reward. (48:10)

Hadith No. 496

Narrated Jarir bin Abdullah

I gave the pledge of allegiance to Allah’s Apostle for to offer prayers perfectly, to pay Zakaat regularly, and to give good advice to every Muslim.

Comments

Jarir bin Abdullah says that Rasulullah (saws) took the pledge of allegiance (Bai’at) from him on three things viz.,

1. to establish salāh.
2. to pay Zakaat
3. to wish well for all Muslims.

salāh is the representative of all bodily forms of worship and Zakaat that of monetary form, that is why these two have been put together.

Well wishing for all Muslims

A hadith says:

“Religion is (the name of) well wishing”.

It is the beauty of Islam not to believe in the worship confined to one’s lip service or external behaviour only, but it transforms its believer into an ideal being from the core of

Cont’d from page 34

The Hairstyle

*Straight
Talk*



To determine as to what is by free will, and what is by Divine Decree, can be difficult to judge, but, only sometimes. Most of the times you are free to act one way or the other, and you are responsible for choosing this or that, writes SYED IQBAL ZAHEER.

Today's Indian Muslim youth is much disturbed by the question of Qada' and Qadr, in simpler words, predestination, and its role in their lives. Why does it set them thinking so hard about it and so often?

There can be several reasons. But it appears that to them the strongest is the consequence of sociology-political-economic situation in which they find themselves. They discover that jobs are denied to them. "We don't take Muslims," he is told point-blank when he meets with the employment manager of an industry or business house. His third attempt at getting into any governmental job does not even receive an acknowledgment. There is no making a breakthrough in business because the market is over-subscribed, and his file is the last when he applies for Start-up scheme. The immigration officer makes faces when he is handed over the documents by a Niqabi Muslimah. His stamping is like the judge hammering for order in the court. He casts the document back at her and signals for the next, receiving the next with a chin-to-chin smile. His friend of yesterday – who passed with a mighty third class distinction, but now an officer–gives him a dead-cold hand at the handshake. All

these things and the stories that are narrated and re-narrated, depress him. And, finding himself a victim, he looks for who he could blame.

Since the youth of today is cut off from his elders from the time he matured, who could as well be passing through the same trauma, he thinks that they cannot be blamed for his woes. After cursing his enemies, real or virtual, he is left with God alone who could take the blame. It is He, he thinks, the Glorious, who has brought him to this point, this position, this tragedy. He brought him to this situation through His weapon called Qada' and Qadr. This is the conclusion of the youth's mind. This, in part, explains why his notion of Qada' and Qadr is disturbing him.

There is some injustice involved here, he ever fails to admit. Parents need to take the blame first. After all, they did not teach their children to climb mountains, cycle through fields and valleys, to map the slum streets, to jump into cold waters, to learn Karate at home, to do a hundred sit-ups every morning, to walk up to school five kilometers away, etc. They placed them on their laps until late hours of the night watching films. They made them misfits for a difficult life, getting more difficult by the day. They did not

inform their children that their enemies – supposed and real – are gunning after them for the very characteristics that they refused to imbibe in them: Firm belief in God, step-to-step imitation of His Messenger’s manner of living and dying, and absolute abandonment of the Book he brought. They had their children’s destination in their hands but taught them inaction, yet blame pre-destination.

A healthy home economy is based on three principles: living within one’s means, desist from show-off, and self-reliance. Their parents taught by their personal example to disregard the three. And three qualities assure acceptance by those you deal with: knowledge, efficiency, and honesty. Their parents never ever said a word about them. In fact, they themselves never learned these rules of life.

As regards the concept of Qada’ and Qadr, the following might help to clear the minds a little.

Referring to the Qur’anic words: “Allah has set a seal on their hearing and on their hearts. And, on their eyes is a covering. For them is a mighty chastisement” (2: 7), common people assume that it is the ‘sealing’ and ‘covering’ which is the cause of disbelief. This is a reverse deduction. Rather, it is their refusal to believe that is the cause of the sealing and covering.

Abdul Majid Daryabadi wrote in his Tafseer: “All this is the natural and inevitable sequel to the rejecters’ obstinate refusal to open their hearts to receive, their ears to hear, and their eyes to see the good and true, and is only ascribable to God, as all acts, as such, are ultimately bound to be ascribed to Him. It is those who will not believe that are condemned to judicial blindness which portends the more awful punishment of Hell.”

And, a hadith says:

“When a believer commits a sin, it leaves a black mark on his heart. If he repents, gives up the sin, and seeks forgiveness, his heart is cleansed. But if he adds (sins), then the black

marks add up until they cover the entire heart. This is the raan that Allah, the Praiseworthy, spoke of in verse (14: 83): “No indeed; but that which they have been earning has rusted their hearts.”

Thus, what happens to a man of the spiritual blindness is brought on by himself, his own behavior and his own choices. It is not the other way around: first blindness, therefore, wrong choices. But rather, first, wrong choices, which results in blindness.

Every individual is free to make his choices and, therefore, earns the consequences: heaven or hell. At this instance, for example, you are free to browse through your mobile during the next hour, or spend the time reading say, Riyad al-Saleheen. The reward, or punishment, will follow your choice. In choosing to read Riyad al-Saleheen, you are as free as choosing to scratch your nose, or, having a glass of water, or, ringing up a friend for a chat. The force of pre-destination is not acting on your hand to scratch your nose, or, have a glass of water, etc. You can always decide not to.

This is at the individual level. It is freedom most of the time. However, you cannot browse the mobile continuously for seven days, 24 hours a day, no matter how much, and how strongly you wish to do so, because you must sleep, and attend to the affairs of life. You are bound to eat, and sleep, etc. This is predetermined. Thus, you dwell between free will and Divine Decree. In your sphere of choice, you are absolutely free, but in the sphere of Divine Decrees, you are bound. You can raise your arm and bring it down – if you so wish. But you cannot do that at the speed of 230 times a second, as the honeybee does. So, while you are bound by Qada’ and Qadr in this regard, the honeybee enjoys free will.

At the personal level then, you enjoy freedom of choice most of the times. To give an example, when Americans were slaughtering Iraqis by the millions with the help of their forces, it was by

their choice. They had been preparing for that day for 20 years. They were not bombing, for instance, because they were predestined to do so. Their political leaders and field commanders were free not to bomb, and their pilots were free to refuse to fly and not to kill the innocents. For Iraqi civilians, on the other hand, being bombed was predestination, because they were not free to choose 'not to be bombed.' Yet, those who could move out of the range of bombers were free to move out. If they stayed back, despite the ability to get out, it was by choice, and not predestination.

Not to ignore other facts, it were their choices in life that had encouraged their coward enemies to choose to kill. Had the Iraqis built a strong nation, instead of aping the West, their weaponry would have discouraged the Americans from killings. For those of the Iraqis, who had been warning their people for decades that your imitation, bordering to love, and throwing to winds the demands of Islam, could bring upon you evil days; for such of the warners, the bombing and killing was Qada' and Qadr.

To determine then, as to what is by free will, and what is by Divine Decree, can be difficult to judge, but, only sometimes. Most of the times you are free to act one way or the other, and you are responsible for choosing this or that: e.g., between getting up for Fajr, or sleeping out the time.

You are fully rewarded, or punished, for your choices. But for what befalls you by the Divine Decree, you are gracefully and magnanimously rewarded – if you are a believer – with martyrdom. Your sins are forgiven before the first drop of blood reaches the ground, and you enter Paradise, before your body is cold. To suffer a stroke, is not by your choice. It is by Divine Decree. Therefore, if you are a believer, a true one, your sins are forgiven and you are allowed entry into Paradise with death, provided you stayed patient through and through. Someone saw Abdul Majid Daryabadi, who died paralyz-

ed (in 1977), in his dream the next day of his death, and he asked him, "Aren't you dead?" He laughed and pointing to his grave said, "That's my memorial? I am alive."

Se`di wrote:

"The pagans laid blame on Allah's will for their idol-worship: a false argument. Had it been true, Allah would not have chastised them. Allah commanded them (tawhid) and prohibited them (the idols). He gave them powers to choose and act. And, this is something that every human being has a natural cognizance of: that he, indeed, has the power to do something if he wills it. There is no difference in opinion over this issue at all. So, they used the issue of 'Qada' and Qadr' only to argue..." (16: 37)

The issue requires discussion of other details. But that's not the issue for the moment. It is the fashionable habit of the youth blaming their Lord for their failures.

If you come across a man who is laying the blame on Qada' and Qadr for the failure of his business, you will discover that he opens the shop only after the market has begun to cool, that is, by noon. He sits before the television until after midnight, hits the bed close to the first call of the rooster, gets out of bed as early as 11 am, and opens the shop after 12.

If you meet another man, blaming Qada' and Qadr for failure of business, you will find that he just married off his daughter, at a small cost of 25-30 lakhs, much of which was borrowed on interest.

If you meet a third man blaming Qada' and Qadr for failure of his business, you will discover that his shop hardly holds stocks worth 10,000, while his neighboring shops would be found filled with stocks in lakhs.

If you enquire the woman at the steps of a mosque appealing for help, you discover that the husband is an auto rickshaw driver, or a street hawker, or a laborer who give one-fifth of their earning to their wives and children, spending off the rest on themselves: daily biryani, mutton

masala, lassi, paan and cigarettes. When other Muslims pass by where they live – slums, they are overtaken by grief and move on by remarking in feigned sympathy, “This is the work of Qada’ and Qadr. Yesterday, they were rulers, trying to remove slums, today they are in slums!”

So you know the role played by Qada’ and Qadr.

With reference to the youth, about 1% of them who did well, are employed in big business joints, and earn goodly salaries. They do not give credit for their success to Qada’ and Qadr. They take the credit for themselves. “You know,” he says, “I passed my electronic course with distinction, and work hard now in my job. My boss loves me.”

Below them are another 9% who managed to finish a graduation course, most of them in commerce. They can be identified as those who hate Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics; in particular Chemistry. They don’t mind arithmetic, although they need a calculator to find out how much is 8×7 is. They love only that science which can prove ‘the Qur’an is true,’ and approve of the only Islam which is theoretical, not practical, and approve of that speaker and preacher who can demonstrate that, ‘science confirms Islam;’ although they know neither science nor Islam, but a little.

Those who couldn’t make to this second level, the 90%, they blame Qada’ and Qadr for whatever situation they find themselves in. They share certain characteristics as a class. They are nominal Muslims. But for Friday, they do not enter mosques. The last time they read the Qur’an was when eight years old. If asked, they cannot define the Hadith. They think the Prophet was born in Makkah-Madinah. They believe of the rich, Muslim or non-Muslim, as the wrong men at the right time. They consider themselves as the right men at the wrong time. So the right men are waiting for the right time.

Other characteristics are: They hate hard work. If put to hard work, they mutter that there is definitely something wrong with the world. They are lethargic and love gossip. They can engage themselves in gossip for hours at any time of the day, any day of the year. Give them a task and see how they are out of sight for next few weeks. They do not want to be praised. But they do not want to be criticized either. They think that a man is judged by his hairstyle.

What could clear the issue better than Allah (swt) Himself, and set the rule? He said in the Qur’an (42: 30): “Whatever strikes you, of evil, is what your hands have wrought; although He forgives a lot.

*“Virtue is
a kind dis-
position
and vice is
what ran-
kles in your
heart and
that you
disapprove
that peo-
ple should
come to
know of it.”*

(Tirmidhi)

How We Fall into Evil

Tabassum

Human beings in today's world probably commit uglier, ghastly crimes than it was ever before in human history.

How does a young teenage boy end up hammering his parents to death, and then leaving them to rot in the house for days while enjoying a weekend with his girlfriend?

How in the world does a young girl bring herself to kill her semi-paralyzed father, her doting mother, an aunt and a driver, in order to be able to marry her boyfriend?

No one is born a murderer from his mother's womb. By default, every human being has the potential to do good. We call it the fitrah.

Every child is born on the fitrah and it is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian. (Muwatta Book 16, Hadith 53)

Probably it's the same entity we call conscience, or perhaps both have the same origin. Allah knows best. Whatever it is, we have an innate tendency to do good. That's why you'll find even the worst criminals in the world, who earned vast estates by cheating and murdering people, give away tons of money in charity.

How it Starts

But if we are inherently good, how come some of us end up going against fitrah and performing such unimaginably brutal crimes?

It happens one step at a time. Every big evil

has its opening in some small evil. When you open your heart to one evil, whatever the evil is, bigger evils sneak in even before you're aware of it.

When you read of news stories of how women are set to fire like torches by their husbands and in-laws for dowry, you wonder if these people are even human. But very few of these murdering husbands got married intending to kill their wives.

It all starts with greed. They see the scope of getting a lot of money without effort – a goose that lays golden eggs. They manifest their greed by their first demand for dowry. And when their demand is fulfilled by the girl's parents, it doesn't satiate their appetite; it only serves to give them a taste for it, and they keep asking for more, until one day they lose all sense of control and slaughter their goose.

Read: God Loves Guidance- Why Would He Misguide People?

The young girl who killed her parents didn't just one day wake up a murderer. It all started with the first exchange of look with her boyfriend, then the first spark of desire, and then the first act of fornication.

Satan kept inciting her greed, and the more she engaged in sins, the more her appetite increased. It kept growing like a balloon until it

surpassed her stretching limit and she committed the unthinkable crimes.

Take it Seriously

If you and I think that these are just examples of mental people, psychopaths, and that we're far better people than them and safe from doing such evil things, then think of what the Prophet said:

By the One in Whose Hand is my soul! One of you may do the deeds of the people of Paradise until there is no more than a forearm's length between him and it, then the decree overtakes him and he does the deeds of the people of Hell and he enters it; and one of you may do the deeds of the people of Hellfire until there is no more than a forearm's length between him and it, then the decree overtakes him and he does the deeds of the people of Paradise until he enters therein. (Ibn Majah Vol. 1, Book 1, Hadith 76)

So if any of us is engaged in a sin, he or she shouldn't take it lightly, saying to ourselves, "Allah is merciful. He will forgive me this petty sin. At least I'm not murdering someone."

Read: Why Does God Permit Evil to Exist?

Yes, Allah is merciful, but He is also the Judge, the Exactor of Revenge, and the Severe in Punishment. If we make a habit of engaging in a particular sin, however small the sin might seem to us, He might decide to stop helping us and leave us at the mercy of Satan. What will happen to us then?

The current sin we're engaged in isn't the only danger that threatens us. When we once touch evil, we're highly likely to fall into greater evil. It's a slippery slope. Right now we think we know our limits to evil. But once you're in a downward slide along a slope, there's no telling in what filthy ditch you'll finally come to a stop.

The more you engage in sin, the less evil greater sins will look in your eyes.

Satan makes evil seem less evil, until it looks

like something good.

And [We destroyed] 'Aad and Thamud, and it has become clear to you from their [ruined] dwellings. And Satan had made pleasing to them their deeds and averted them from the path, and they were endowed with perception. (Quran 29:38)

But how do we leave this slippery slope?

The key is to realize that Satan is not in control of your life; you are. All he can do is give you suggestions. It's completely your choice whether to act on these suggestions or not.

Once you fully realize that, you'll also realize that the snares of Satan are as flimsy as spiders' webs, and that you're only stuck in it because you think you're a fly and not a human being.

Forgetting the recital of the Quran

Sayyiduna Sa'd Bin Ubaadah Radhiyallahu Anhu reports that Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam said: "No person recites the Qur'an, then forgets it, but will meet Allah on the Day of Judgment in a maimed condition (or empty-handed, or with no excuse)."
(Abu Dawood)

SPIRITUAL SELF-DISCOVERY THROUGH WRITING

A. Abdullah

Why do people write? More specifically, why do some people need to write while others are not interested in writing at all? Is there a special substance in the writer's veins that makes him different from others in his or her desire to record his responses to life on paper so that they will not be forgotten? Over a thousand years ago, a Japanese novelist used a character in one of her books to describe what motivates an author:

Again and again something in one's own life or in that around one will seem so important that one cannot bear to let it pass into oblivion. There must never come a time, the writer feels, when people do not know about this [thing].

In fact, writing does not have to be shared with others in order to be of benefit. Many people use writing as a means of self-discovery and they keep diaries or personal journals to help remind themselves of meaningful events in their lives, to express emotions that don't have another outlet, and to work through the problems of life. A journal is slightly different than a diary in that the latter is simply a record of daily experiences and how one reacts to them, while a journal is concerned with tying one's observations together in order to reach conclusions about a

particular subject or issue. In short, writing in a journal (or "journaling," as it's popularly called) is writing with a goal in mind. When connected to spiritual matters, journaling can take on new significance as one seeks to relate both his joys and struggles to his faith. By keeping a daily journal and looking back through its pages every so often, one can recognize patterns in his or her thoughts and relive periods of intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth that may be otherwise missed or obscured by the passage of time. Regular features of a Muslim's journal might include:

- Remembrance of the things that happened during the day that inspire gratitude to Allah;
- Analysis of life events that are seemingly negative, but may actually be blessings in disguise;
- Efforts to understand and relate verses in the Quran to one's life circumstances and perception of the world;
- Responses to nature and the miracles of Divine Creation.

It is foresightful to get our children used to expressing themselves through writing when they are young so that this important skill is



second nature to them by the time they become adults, helping them to become articulate in all areas of language communication. Young people who write today will be the great thinkers and analyzers of tomorrow, conquering hearts and minds with the power of their eloquent, persuasive words. It has been said that the pen is mightier than the sword. Indeed. Although there are no specific rules on what one should write in his own personal journal, it makes good sense not to mention others by name nor to write about things that could cause harm to one's family or friends, if found. Unlike our ideas—which are private in every sense of the word and are known only to Allah unless and until we choose to voice them—writing is a tangible record of these ideas. Keep in mind that there is always the possibility of our journals being discovered by others, even if only after our deaths. It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah observed,

Verily, Allah forgives His servants the evil

promptings which arise within their hearts as long as they did not speak about them or did not act upon them. (Muslim)

In another narration, Abu Hurairah reported Allah's Messenger as saying,

All the people of my Ummah would get pardoned for their sins except those who publicize them... (Muslim)

So a journal is a place for exploration of the heart, mind and soul, but it is not without its limitations and should not work against the writer to become a register of his sins or a place of slander against others. In this sense, a Muslim's journal is truly a reflection of his or her faith in that he can work within the boundaries of what is allowed by it while still discovering new frontiers that are limitless in scope.

Whether public or private, writing has a special place in the lives of Muslims and can serve to educate others about Islam or to contribute to one's own spiritual blossoming.

The Meaning of Humanism

Muhammad Ghilan

The following is an excerpt from Islam Between East and West by 'Alija 'Ali Izetbegović (1925–2003), which was first published in 1984. The best remark that can be made about this book is one that I came across in a review posted on Amazon in 2011 by Julia Simpson: "This is a heady distillation of intellectual Muslim thought, demonstrating the kind of man Izetbegovic was. I once gave this book to my father (an agnostic) who said, 'He's so intelligent it's scary.' Islam Between East and West is a modern treatise on cultures and civilization which attempts to show how so many philosophies have failed to give human beings what they need." I really can't recommend this book highly enough.

Man is not tailored according to Darwin, nor is the universe tailored to Newton.

To strive for enjoyment and to flee from pain—with this lapidary sentence, two great materialistic thinkers, Epicurus in antiquity and Holbach in modern times, defined the basic principles of life, not only of human life but also than of animals. Materialism always stresses what is common to animals and humans, while religion stresses what makes them different. The meaning of some cults and religious prohibitions is only to underline these differences.

In its effort to emphasize the animal nature of human beings, materialism sometimes shows

more than a common concern for truth. A good example of this is the stubborn insistence that sexual relations were completely free during a great part of prehistory. Every woman belonged to every man and every man to every woman. Engels openly admitted that there is no direct proof that it was really so, but still he continued to insist upon it in his *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. Not scientific truth but ideological decision is the decisive factor here.

Darwin did not make man an animal, but he made him aware of his animal origin. Out of this "awareness," the others continued to draw the "appropriate conclusions," both moral and political: a human society is a flock in civilized form, and civilization is the human awakening which goes accompanied with the rejection of prohibitions, power over nature, living with the senses instead of the spirit, and so forth.

By establishing the unity (or continuation) between animal and man, evolution abolished the difference between nature and culture. Starting from a quite different point, religion reestablished this difference. Therefore, from the act of creation, man—and all culture with him—inexorably has opposed the whole development of human history. The divergence between culture and civilization began here. While Camus indi-

cated that “Man is an animal which refuses to be so,” Whitehead saw in this negation the essence of the religious attitude, “this great rejection.” Religion seems to say: look what the animals do, and do the opposite; they devour—you should fast; they mate—you should abstain; they live in flocks—you should try to live alone; they strive for enjoyment and flee from pain—you should expose yourself to difficulties. In a word, they live with their bodies, but you should live with your spirit.

Rejection of this zoological position, this “negative desire” which cannot be explained by Darwinian and rational theories, is the crucial fact of human life on this planet. This fact may be the human damnation or privilege, but is the only specific quality which makes one a human being.

In reality, there exist both a complete parallelism and an absolute incongruity between man and animal. We find conformity in the biological, constitutional—that is, the mechanical aspect, but on the other hand, there is actually no parallel since an animal is innocent, sinless, and morally neutral like a thing. Man is never so and from the moment “animal became humanized,” from the dramatic “prologue in heaven,” or from the famous “fall to earth,” man cannot choose to be an innocent animal. Man was set “free without the option to return,” and so every Freudian solution is excluded. From that moment on, he could no longer be an animal or a man; he could only be man or non-man.

If man was simply the most perfect animal, his life would be simple and without mysteries. Still, since he is not so because he is a “worm of the earth and a child of heaven” and because he was created, he is a disharmonious being, and Euclid’s harmony is not possible. Not only our fundamental truth but also our sins and vices are based on the fact of the creation.

There we find our human dignity, moral striving, and tragedies as well as our dilemmas, dissatisfaction, damnation, cruelty, and malice.

An animal knows none of them and in this lies the meaning of this epoch-making moment.

The question of creation is really the question of human freedom. If one accepts that man has no freedom, that all his actions are predetermined—either by what is inside or what is outside him—one may consider that God is not necessary for an explanation and understanding of the world. However, if one gives man freedom, if one considers him responsible, one recognizes the existence of God, tacitly or openly. Only God was able to create a free creature, and freedom could only arise by the act of creation. Freedom is not the result of product of evolution. Freedom and product are disparate ideas. God does not produce or construct. He creates. We used to say the same for artists, for the artist who constructs does not create a personality but rather a poster of man. A personality cannot be constructed. I do not know what a portrait could mean without God. Maybe, sooner or later, during this century or after a million years of continued civilization, man will succeed in constructing an imitation of himself, a kind of robot or monster, something very similar to its constructor. This human-looking monster may look very much like a man, but one thing is certain: it will not have freedom, it will be able to do only what it has been programmed to do. In this lies the greatness of God’s creation which cannot be repeated or compared with anything that has happened before or after the cosmos. In one eon of eternity, a free being started to exist. Without a divine touch, the result of evolution would not have been man, but rather a more developed animal, a super-animal, a creature with a human body and intelligence but without a heart and personality. Its intelligence without moral scruples might even be more efficient but, at the same time, more cruel. Some people imagine this type of creature as coming from a far planet; others see it as a product of our civilization on some high level of development. There is such a creature in Goethe’s *Faust*, but it is a

quasi-man—a homunculus. It should be noted that there is no analogy between this cruelly indifferent creature, homunculus, and the worst criminal. Man can choose to go against the moral laws, but he cannot, as a monster, stay out of the moral sphere, beyond good and evil. He cannot “switch off” himself.

Practical moral experience shows man’s greater inclination to sin than his striving to do good. His ability to fall deep into sin seems to be greater than to soar up into the heights of virtue. Negative personalities always seem truer than positive ones, and the poet who describes negative characters has an advantage over the one who describes heroes.

Anyhow, men are always good or bad but never innocent, and this could be the ultimate meaning of the biblical story about the fall, the original sin. From the moment of the expulsion from paradise, Adam (man) could not rid himself of his freedom, nor escape from the drama, to be as innocent as an animal or an angel. He has to choose, to use his freedom, to be good or evil; in one word, to be man. This ability to choose, regardless of result, is the highest form of existence possible in the universe.

Man has a soul, but psychology is not the science about it. There cannot exist a science about the soul. Psychology deals with some forms of apparent inner life. This is why it is possible to talk about psycho-physiology, psychometry, psycho-hygiene, and the physics of the psyche. The possibility of quantitative psychology confirms the thesis of the outer, mechanical, and quantitative, that is, the soulless nature of thought and feeling. Animal and human psychology may complement each other, for psychology has nothing to do with the soul only with the psychological manifestations. John Watson writes: “Human psychology, as understood by behaviorism, must be built upon the example of the objective and experimental psychology of animals, borrowing from its way of examining, its method, and its aim. As such, there do not

exist two types of psychology (human and animal), separated from each other; by an iron curtain, not knowing each other; having basically different objects, methods, and aims; but only one psychology which takes its place among the natural sciences.” This quotation needs no comment. If we use Islamic terms, we may say that psychology is the science of the nafs and not of the rūh, that is, a science on the biological and not on the personal level. There are three circles (the mechanical, the biological, and the personal) which correspond to the three degrees of reality (matter, life, and personality). This way of thinking leads to the application of the scientific method, which always implies an absolute causality, and this by itself means the negation of freedom which is the essence of the soul. Our attempt to “study” the soul in psychology brings us necessarily to the negation of the “subject of study.” There is no way out of the bewitched circle.

The equality and brotherhood of people is possible only if man is created by God. The equality of man is a spiritual and not a natural, physical, or intellectual fact. It exists as a moral quality of man, as the human dignity, as the equal value of the human personality. On the contrary, as physical, thinking, and social beings; as members of groups, classes, political groupings, and nations; people are always very unequal. If man’s spiritual value is not recognized—this fact of religious character—the only real base of human equality is lost. Equality, then, becomes a mere phrase without a base and content and, as such, it will soon retreat, faced with the evident facts of human inequality or with the natural human desire to rule and to obey and thus to be unequal. As soon as the religious approach is removed, the empty room is filled by different forms of inequality—racial, national, social, or political.

Man’s dignity could not be discovered by biology, psychology, or by any other science. Man’s dignity is a spiritual question. After “objective

observations,” it is easier for science to confirm the inequality of man, and so, “scientific racism” is quite possible and even logical.

Humanism is not charity, forgiveness, and tolerance, although that is the necessary result of it. Humanism is primarily the affirmation of man and his freedom, namely, of his value as a man.

Everything that debases man’s personality, that brings him down to a thing, is inhuman. For instance, it is human to state that man is responsible for his deeds and to punish him. It is not human to ask him to regret, to change his mind, to “improve,” and to be pardoned. It is more human to prosecute a man for his beliefs than to force him to renounce them, giving him the well-known chance called “taking into consideration his sincere attitude.” So, there are punishments which are human, and pardonings which are most inhuman. The inquisitors claimed that they burned the body to save the soul. Modern inquisitors do the opposite: they “burn” the soul as the compensation for the body.

To reduce a man to the function of a producer and a consumer, even if every man is give his place in production and consumption, does not signal humanism but dehumanization.

To drill people to produce correct and disciplined citizens is likewise inhuman.

Education, too, can be inhuman: if it is one-sided, directed, and indoctrinated; if it does not teach one to think independently, if it only gives ready-made answers; if it prepares people only for different functions instead of broadening their horizons and thereby their freedom.

Every manipulation of people, even if it is done in their own interest, is inhuman. To think for them and to free them from their responsibilities and obligations is also inhuman. Our quality of man obliges us. When God gave man the ability to choose and threatened him with severe punishments, He confirmed in the high-

est way the value of man as a man. We have to follow the example set by God: let us leave man to struggle for himself, instead of doing it for him.

Without religion and the concept of man’s ever-striving spirit, as stated in the “prologue in heaven,” there is no authentic belief of man as the highest value. Without it, there is no belief that man as man is at all possible and that he really exists. Atheistic humanism is a contradiction because if there is no God, then there is no man either. Also, if there is no man, humanism is a phrase without essence. The one who does not acknowledge the creation of man does not understand the real meaning of humanism. Since he has lost his basic standard, he will always reduce humanism to the production of goods and their distribution according to need. To make sure that all people are fed is of course a matter of great concern, but knowing affluent societies of today, we cannot be sure that in this way we would get a better and more humane world. It would be even less humane if the ideas of some people about general leveling, uniformity, and depersonification were put into practice. In such a world, as described by Aldous Huxley in *Brave New World*, there would be no social problems, and evenness, uniformity, and stability would reign everywhere. Nonetheless, all of us consciously or instinctively reject this vision as an example of general dehumanization.

“Man is a product of his environment”—this basic postulate of materialism served as the starting point of all subsequent inhuman human beings, which in our time reached monstrous proportions during the time of Nazism and Stalinism. All other similar seductive theories of society’s priority over individuals, of man’s obligation to serve society, and so forth, belong here as well. Man must not serve anybody; he must not be a means. Everything must serve man, and man must serve God only. This is the ultimate meaning of humanism.

Money and Parents

Naima Sheikh

Money what do we spend it on? Who has the most right over our earnings?

Generally in our teens the money is usually spent on fashionable clothes, eating out with friends, going to the movies etc. As we grow older it gets spent on getting a big house, multiple cars, clothes, jewelry, trips abroad and the list goes on. Anything left over is readily put into an investment portfolio.

But the people who get neglected are often the parents. Generally there's no money for the parents who are often trying to make ends meet with their small pension cheques or by working at low-end jobs. Not all children do that but from what I have seen majority of them fall into this category when asked for money by the parents they cite household expenses and necessary long overdue vacations.



Tafsir al-qurtubi contains a beautiful narration about a father and son it is as follows: Al-Qurtubi has reported from Sayyidna Jabir ibn Abdullah (RA) that a man came to the Holy Prophet and complained that his father was taking away what belonged to him. He said,

“Go and ask your father to come here.”

Right then, came Sayyidna Jibrail and told the Holy Prophet (saws),

“When his father comes, ask him about the words he has composed in his heart and which his own ears have not heard yet.”

When this man returned with his father, he (saws) said to the father,

“Why is it that your son complains against you? Do you wish to take away what belongs to him?”

The father said,

“You better ask him on whom do I spend other than his paternal or maternal aunts or myself”

The Holy Prophet (saws) said: (an expression which denoted that he had understood the reality and there was no need to say anything else). After that, he asked the father of the man,

“What are those words that have not yet been heard by your own ears?”

The father said, “O Rasulallah, Allah Taala increases our faith in you through everything.” Thereby he meant that he (saws) got to know what was not heard by anyone, which was a mir-

acle indeed. Then, he submitted,

“It is true that I had composed some lines of poetry within my heart, something not heard even by my own ears.”

The Holy Prophet (saws) said, “Let us hear them.” Then he recited the following lines of poetry he had composed:

I fed you in childhood and took care of you when young. You lived on my earnings alone.

When on some night, you became sick, I spent the whole night remaining awake and restless because of your sickness

As if your sickness was my own and not yours and because of which my eyes kept shedding tears throughout the night

My heart kept trembling lest something happens to you, though I knew that the time of death is fixed, being neither early nor late

So, when you reached the age and maturity that I had always been looking forward to

Then you made hard-heartedness and harshness my return as if you were the one doing me favors and giving me rewards

Alas, if it was not possible for you to fulfill my right as a father, you could have at the least done what a good neighbor would have done

So, you could have given me the least right of a neighbor and abstained from becoming miserly in my case in my own property.

After having heard these verses of poetry, the Holy Prophet (saws) held the son by his shirt and said: Go, You and your property, everything belongs to your father.

(Tafsir al-Qurtubi, p. 246, V. 10)

According to another narration parents rights supersede those of wife and children as illustrated in the following narration. Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported that the Messenger (saws) said:

“Three persons of a people before you were on a journey when they were overtaken by a storm and therefore they took shelter in a cave. A rock slipped down from the mountain and blocked the exit from cave.

One of them said: “The only way for deliver-

ance left is to beseech Allah in the name of some virtuous deed.” Thereupon one of them supplicated, “O Lord, my parents were very old, I used to offer them their nightly drink of milk before my children and the other members of the family. One day I went astray far away in search of green trees and could return only after my parent had gone to sleep. When I had milked the animals and brought their nightly drink to them, They were fast asleep, but I did not like to disturb them, nor would give any part of the milk to my children and other members of the family till after my parents had their drink. Thus, with the vessel in hand, I awaited their awakening till the flush of dawn, While the children cried out of hunger at my feet. When they woke up, they had their drink. O Lord, if I did this thing seeking only your pleasure, then do relieve us of the distress wrought upon us by this rock.” Thereupon, The rock moved a little...”

Money should be spent not only on parents but also on relatives, orphans, the helpless and travelers in need as illustrated by the following verse of the Qur’an.

“They ask you (O Muhammad) what they should spend in charity. Say: ‘Whatever you spend with a good heart, give it to parents, relatives, orphans, the helpless, and travellers in need. Whatever good you do, God is aware of it.’” - The Holy Quran, 2:215

But more than relatives and other people in need money should first and foremost be spent on parents as they are more deserving of our good treatment than anyone else. The following famous narration illustrates this point. A man came to the Prophet and said, ‘O Messenger of God! Who among the people is the most worthy of my good companionship? The Prophet said: Your mother. The man said, ‘Then who?’ The Prophet said: Then your mother. The man further asked, ‘Then who?’ The Prophet said: Then your mother. The man asked again, ‘Then who?’ The Prophet said: Then your father. (Bukhari, Muslim).

Time in The Quran

Taking A Clue From Einstein's Theory Of Relativity

Dr. Ghazi Nakashbandi

How are we to understand the Qur'anic verses wherein a day is likened to thousands of years and the events such as those of the Day of Resurrection sound like time-travel? Our physicist author takes a clue from Einstein's Theory of Relativity.

Science—And The Quran As Revelation

The Qur'an contains the words of Allah which he revealed to His Prophet, Muhammad (saws). The three holy books that were revealed to prophets before the revelation of the Quran were the Tawrat (the Hebrew Bible, or, Old Testament), the Injil (the Gospel, or, New Testament) and the Zabûr (the Psalms of David) as originally revealed to prophets Moses, Jesus and David.

The Quran does not conflict with modern science at all. Interpretation of the Quran's science-related verses is a function of the basic scientific knowledge of interpreters throughout Islamic history. The basics of scientific facts are there in the Quran, but they are beyond our layman's imagination and knowledge. With the advancement of science and the propounding of scientific theories that have enlightened our minds and increased our knowledge, we have started to realize that much of this modern scientific understanding is mentioned in the Quran. Moreover, some theories actually interpret Qur'anic verses, or vice versa.

Allah is the source of what is studied by science. The scientific particulars that we use in our daily lives as human beings are just a small part of knowledge, when set next to that of Allah:

And they ask you, (O Muhammad) about the soul. Say: The soul is of the affairs (i.e., concern) of my Lord. And you (i.e., mankind) have not been given of knowledge, except a little. *Sûrat Al-Isrâ', 17:85*

Contemporary Interpretation Of Qur'anic 'Signs' Vis-à-Vis Science

We live on our relatively small planet, which is a very small entity within the vast universe. Allah has told us about the creation of this universe in the Tawrat, Injil, as well as in the Quran—in which Almighty Allah specifically speaks about His development of the universe:

Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them and made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe? *Sûrat Al-Anbiyâ', 21:30*

These verses that were revealed to the Prophet (saws) more than 14 centuries ago are far ahead of the modern theories concerning the creation of the universe. The modern "Big Bang Theory" tells us that the whole universe was once one entity, a single point in space, and that



ing and what will happen, based on methodical and systematic physical observation.

The Quran contains words of Allah, as revealed to His Prophet (saws), and these do not contradict modern science. It is as if modern science had taken its basics from the Quran!

A Scientist's Suggestion

Our interpretation of the Qur'anic verses, when related to our physical world, is partly dependent upon the current scientific

later it was separated (burst apart), or inflated. The above-mentioned Verse 30 of Sûrat Al-Anbiyâ' tells us precisely the same thing; The Quran is telling us about the expansion of the universe:

And the heaven We constructed with strength, and indeed, We are (its) expander. Sûrat Al-Dhâriyât, 51:47

Modern scientists, too, are talking about continuous expansion of the universe!

The Quran also talks about the end of the universe: a 'death' of the universe, and its 're-creation' again:

The Day when we will fold up the heavens like the folding up of a (written) sheet for the records. As We began the first creation, so will We repeat it. (That is) a promise binding upon Us. Indeed, We will do it. Sûrat Al-Anbiyâ', 21:104

The modern scientist says exactly the same thing about a 'death' of the universe, its collapse, or, as it is called, the 'Big Crunch' (3). Accordingly, the beginning of the universe, its death, and then, its re-formation again, are events mentioned in the Quran; modern theories have been set forth to explain what has happened in our physical universe, what is happen-

ing and what will happen, based on methodical and systematic physical observation. understanding that we have. An example of that is the interpretation of the verse,

By the sky and the Târiq. And what can make you know what the Târiq is? It is the piercing star. Sûrat Al-Târiq, 86:1-3

All of the old interpretations say that the Târiq is a 'piercing star.' However, the best interpretation of the Târiq as mentioned in this verse—when based on current, scientific knowledge that we have today—is the 'black hole.' So, the Quran is saying in Arabic (al-najmu al-thâ-qib) what would mean, "the star that makes a hole."

The Quran has asked the believer to think about the significance of the creation of the universe, as observed from our earth, as a means to understanding his own existence and responsibility in life:

Indeed in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of the night and the day, are signs for those of understanding, who remember Allah while standing or sitting or (lying) on their sides and [who] give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth (say-

ing), “Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You (above such a thing); then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.” *Âl’Imrân*, 3:190-191

We as humans try to explain—with the ultimately limited science that we have—what has happened, and what is happening now in the universe. But all of our theories and explanation do not go beyond what the Quran tells us. Concurrent with the Qur’anic “signs” in the heavens is the modern scientific understanding that the whole universe was previously one entity and that then the “big bang,” or the inflation, took place. Has any single one of mankind witnessed what happened? Of course not! So, how then could a scientist expect the end of the universe and its re-formation again, unless he had specifically ‘read’ in the physical world the same as what is mentioned in the revealed Qur’anic verse, quoted above, *Sûrat Al-Anbiyâ’, 21:104!*

As a scientist believing in revealed scripture, then, couldn’t I mention the Quran as a reference in my scientific research paper or theory—as pointing the way for my pioneering exploration?! This does not mean of course, that I am denying the objective efforts of scientists in advancing the sciences. The advancement of science brings us all closer and closer to real-world facts as these are mentioned in Quran.

Qur’anic Interpretation Vis-à-Vis Earthly “Time”

In fact, we do well to look in detail to modern scientific understanding for relevance in interpretation of those Qur’anic verses regarding the physical world. Now what about the period when the human body stays buried in the ground, after its earthly death, until Allah brings its soul back again to life on Resurrection Day? This period is called in the Arabic Language *barzakh*, and its English equivalent is “barrier.” Allah is saying that, in the eyes of a human being, the *barzakh* is a very short period of time

from his earthly death until he is brought to life again.

In order that we might understand a component of what happens during the *barzakh*, let us take a clue from Albert Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity. According to the “time dilation” concept of Professor Einstein, when an object moves through space at a speed approaching that of light, its onlooker’s perception of time ebbs slower and slower. When the speed of light is reached, the onlooker’s time perception approaches zero and slows down ‘infinitely.’ At this speed, mass increases ‘infinitely’ as well. To explain the time dilation concept of his theory, Einstein offered the following example:

If a 20-year-old man is put in a rocket and propelled into outer space at the speed of light, then the time and mass of that person varies as mentioned above. Assume that he continues traveling at the speed of light for a period of what appears to him—based upon his previous experience on earth—to be 50 years, that is, until his age totals 70 earthly years, all the while he is in that rocket and traveling in space. When this person comes back to earth, he finds that the time elapsed on earth is not 50 years, but many millions of years, as Einstein has figured it mathematically. What would seem to the human space traveler in space as a mere 50 years—due to “time dilation” in space—is now re-calibrated to millions of earth years once he is back on planet earth time.

Key to comprehending this is that Einstein relates all motions to the speed of light. In this vein, note that Almighty Allah, Creator of the universe, describes himself as ‘Light’ (*nûr*) in the following verse:

**Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth.
*Sûrat Al-Nûr, 24:35***

This Qur’anic verse can be read, in our modern scientific context, to include the sense that all universal affairs are managed by Allah at the speed of light. Time on our planet is a rela-

tive thing, and is different from the time calculated by Almighty Allah, as shown in this verse:

Verily, a day—in the sight of thy Lord—is like a thousand years of your reckoning. Sûrat Al-Hajj, 22:47

Also, we read in Sûrat Al-Sajdah, 32:5:

He manages and regulates (all) affairs from the heavens to the earth; then it (all) ascends unto Him, on a Day, the measure of which is a thousand years of your reckoning.

When you calculate the outer space journey of 50 years as undertaken by the above-mentioned rocket at the speed of light—on the basis of one day in the sight of Allah as being one thousand years of our planet's time—then these 50 years in space would be equal to $50 \times 1000 \times 365 = 18,250,000$ years on our planet. So the time that would have elapsed on earth upon the return of the person who traveled in space for 50 years at a speed-of-light time dilation would be more than eighteen million years!

Time In Our Barzakh And Resurrection

Now, when a human dies and is buried, he goes through a 'barrier' and enters on the other side into what is called in the Arabic language barzakh. How long is the period we spend in the barzakh? Only Allah knows how long it will be, but after the barzakh, as we are told, Allah will raise up all dead people from their graves on Resurrection Day, apparently in a 'split second':

The Trumpet shall be sounded, when behold! From the sepulchers (people) will rush forth to their Lord! . . . It is a single Saihah, when behold! they will all be brought up before Us! Sûrat Yâ Sîn, 36: 51 and 53

On the day of Resurrection, Almighty Allah re-creates all dead and buried people:

And he (man) puts forth for Us a parable, and forgets his own creation. He says: "Who will give

life to these bones after they are rotten and have become dust?" Say: (to him, O Muhammad): "He will give life to them, (He) Who created them for the first time! And He is the All-Knower of every creation!" Sûrat Yâ Sîn, 36:78-79

On the Day of Resurrection, Almighty Allah brings back all people alive; He brings back the ruh (spirit), instantly, for every re-created person:

The Trumpet will just have been sounded, when all that is in the heavens and on earth will swoon, except him whom Allah wills. Then will a second one be sounded, when, behold, they will be standing and looking on. Sûrat Al-Zumar, 39:68

Regarding the time when Allah raises up people from their graves, the Almighty informs us in the Quran as to what people will say about the length of time they have spent in their graves:

The day when the Trumpet will be sounded: that Day, we shall gather the criminals, blear-eyed (with terror). In whispers will they consult each other: "You stayed no longer than ten (days)." We know best what they will say, when the best of them in judgment will say: "You stayed no longer than a day!" Sûrat Tâ-Hâ, 20:102-104

Also, in Sûrat Al-Isrâ', 17:52 we read:

It will be on the Day when He will call you, and you will answer (His call) with (words of) His praise, and you will think that you had stayed but a little while

Uzair's "Time-Travel"

All of us know the story of The Jewish Prophet Uzair (Ezra) in the Sacred Quran. Uzair passed by the city of Jerusalem after it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. He looked and said, "How shall Allah bring this to life after its death?" Allah wanted to show him that it is easy for Him to bring this city to life:

Allah caused his death for a hundred

years, and then brought him up again to life. When Allah asked Prophet Uzair after he had raised him up alive again, “How long did you remain dead?” He said, “A day or part of a day.” Allah said: “Nay, you have remained dead for a hundred years.” *Sûrat Al-Baqarah*, 2:259

Our “Time-Travel”

Allah tells us that on the Day when He will raise up people, they will think that they have stayed in their graves for only one hour:

And on the Day when He will gather them together: (It will be) as if they had stayed but an hour of a day. *Sûrat Yûnus*, 10:45

Also,

And be in no haste about the (Unbelievers). On the Day that they see the (Punishment) promised them, (it will be) as if they had not stayed more than an hour in a single day. *Sûrat Al-Ahqâf*, 46:35

When the Companions of the Prophet (saws) asked him about Resurrection Day and the time spent in their graves, Allah revealed His answer:

The Day they see it, (It will be) as if they had stayed but a single evening, or (at most) till the following morn. *Sûrat Al-Nâziât*, 79:46

Time—And Speed— Of The Spirit

Why will people feel on Resurrection Day that they have stayed in their graves a very short time? The explanation of that—and Allah knows best—is that when a person dies, his body will stay in the grave on one time plane, or ‘horizon,’ namely, that of earth time, but that his spirit (ruh) goes out to another plane, or ‘horizon,’ of time. Only Allah knows ‘where’ the ruh goes to, but wherever that is, Allah gives us the answer as to the speed of the ruh when it makes its final ascent to Allah on that Day:

A questioner asked about a Chastise-

ment to befall the unbelievers—a Penalty which none can avert—from Allah, Lord of the Ways of Ascent. The angels and the spirit (rûh) ascend unto Him in a Day, the measure whereof is as fifty thousand years. *Sûrat Al-Maârij*, 70:1-4

In this verse we see that the speed of the spirit, when it returns to Allah, is as if 50 times more than the speed of light—according to how it was above tentatively ‘calculated,’ on the basis of wordings in *Sûrat Al-Nûr*, 24:35, and *Sûrat Al-Sajdah*, 32:5.

Spirit Time-Travel

When the spirit travels at an exceedingly high speed outside the body of a sleeping or dead person, and then again with his re-created body travels back to Allah on the Day of Resurrection, the time element would approach zero—when understood according to Einstein’s theory as mentioned herein; accordingly, the re-created person will feel as if he has stayed in his grave a length of time approaching zero: ‘one hour,’ ‘two hours,’ or ‘part of a day.’

The Quran And Science

This article is meant to show the conformity of scientific findings to the Qur’anic language about our natural world, and especially to propose an understanding of time reckoning as presented in the Qur’anic verses bearing on coming events in the barzakh and on Resurrection Day. We suggest that Einstein’s Theory of Relativity, in particular the concept of ‘time dilation’—which comes into play for speed-of-light motion—plausibly explains what might otherwise be objected to as a mismatch of earth-experienced time versus time assessments related to the grave and to Last Day events, as meticulously worded in the Quran for us to ponder. And, Almighty Allah knows best.

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Importance of True Islamic History

Mansoor Alam

Why Islamic History Is Overlooked?

It is truly mind boggling that in spite of enormous literature on Islamic history, a vast majority of Muslims – both young and old – are ignorant of the subject. While there are more than one and a half billion Muslims in the world, it may be no exaggeration to say that very few are interested to learn the truth about Islam or its history.

The importance of history cannot be over-emphasized. History is like a long-term memory where nations' voices are preserved. It may be safe to say that people without history are people without memory. So, why have our Islamic scholars failed to attract Muslims (especially the youth) to become interested in the study of Islamic history? Has this anything to do with their overemphasis on Islam's rituals for gaining salvation in the Hereafter that the importance of its history loses its significance in their eyes?

Whatever may be the reason, the fact is that a vast majority of Muslims are probably ignorant or uninterested to find the truth about Islamic history. Sectarian beliefs and practices (and the internal divisions and bickering that go with it) have created various schools of thought. Books and articles on Islamic history (and even the translation and interpretation of the Qur'an) are consequently colored by the sectarian beliefs and thoughts of their authors. Scholars and leaders of competing schools of thought play with emotions of their followers in order to promote their

version of history as Islamic history. Nonetheless, there have been notable exceptions among Islamic scholars who did strive to find the truth about Islamic history by challenging the status quo of their times.

How to Interpret Islamic History?

What is Islamic history? Is it synonymous with Muslim history? Have Muslims been practicing Islam – the Islam delivered and practiced by the Prophet (PBUH)? Or, have they deviated from it? What happened to the Muslim world after the end of the period of the rightly guided caliphs, the Khulaafaa al-raashidoon? Is everything done in the name of Islam by Muslim kings, rulers, or politicians part of Islamic history? Is there an objective standard by which one can measure what is Islamic and what is not?

The study of history is often presented in chronological terms describing the rise and the fall of empires; but is that all to history? What about the underlying root causes of the rise and fall of nations, Islamic or non-Islamic? Is there some aspect of history that transcends space and time? In other words, is there science of history?

For a Muslim, the study of history should be like watching the laws of Allah in action, the application of the theory given in the Quran and practically demonstrated by the Prophet (PBUH). The Quran demands that Muslims reflect upon history, not merely to know it but to learn from it. By studying history, Muslims can

gain an understanding of how Allah's laws work in the world of humankind. When empires fall and new ones arise, this is not merely random nor is Allah playing dice with our world. Neither does Allah preordain the fate of nations. Rather, it is the nations themselves that cause their own downfall by not living in harmony with the laws of society that Allah has set for all.

It is hard to blame some non-Muslim nations, who are merely going through a process of trial and error without the (Quranic) solutions manual. But what can we say of Muslims who have this solutions manual but are currently the most deprived people in the world? Blaming others or making excuses for their bad state is not going to stand in the court of Allah. What caused (and continue to cause) the downfall of Muslims?

The process is very straightforward. A piece of evidence must be rejected if it is not consistent with facts or if it is against the Qur'an. For example, it is a known fact that the Sahaaba (the companions of the Prophet (PBUH)) were the best of Muslims and adhered strictly to the Qur'an. Therefore, if a piece of evidence claims that some Sahaaba used to stockpile gold and amassed huge wealth, and the Qur'an demands of Muslims that they should give the wealth they do not need for themselves, then this "evidence" must be thrown out:

They ask thee how much they are to spend; Say: "What is beyond your needs." (2:219)

Or, if some evidence claims that the Sahaaba quarreled and bickered and physically fought (and killed) each other in the quest for power, it must be immediately thrown out because it vilifies the character of those people that the Qur'an claims were unquestionably pious and tender and full of mercy towards each other:

Muhammad is the apostle of Allah. and those who are with him are strong against Unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst each other. Thou wilt see them bow and prostrate themselves (in prayer),

seeking Grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure. On their faces are their marks, (being) the traces of their prostration. This is their similitude in the Taurat; and their similitude in the Gospel is: like a seed which sends forth its blade, then makes it strong; it then becomes thick, and it stands on its own stem, (filling) the sowers with wonder and delight. As a result, it fills the Unbelievers with rage at them. Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness, and a great Reward. (48:29)

However, this process of studying history is probably more emotionally challenging than mentally, because it requires the will to cast aside beliefs and folklore that fail the above criteria, no matter how old or dear they may be to us. Being very old and dear to our hearts does not change a false fact into a true one.

Searching for Authentic Records

It is known (and even non-Muslim historians acknowledge it) that Khalifa 'Umar's reign saw the largest expansion in the history of Islam. It is also universally acknowledged that the political and economic reforms that 'Umar (R) instituted were based on justice and fairness while paying special attention to the lower rung of the society. People enjoyed basic human rights and freedoms during his period of rule, essentially unprecedented at that time. (If an old woman could question and criticize Khalifa 'Umar in public without any fear of retribution, then there could be no doubt about the freedom of expression prevailing during his time.)

Further, during his time as Khalifa many treaties were signed and several social and welfare reforms were instituted. Operation of the department of the treasury (Bait-ul-mal) was legendary during his time. He also created many other government departments and offices (e.g., census bureau and welfare) to deal with the ever-growing numbers of people coming under the

fold of Islam.

All these departments and offices were in Medina where records were kept. These were huge endeavors in record keeping and record maintenance. Written registers were maintained to efficiently run these offices, very much like the offices before the advent of computers.

What happened to those written records?

Obviously, those written documents were precious historical treasure containing Islamic history. Why are they missing from the Ummah especially since these documents would have been extremely valuable to future generations?

Were the records destroyed? If so, who could have destroyed them? Could it be that there were some who wanted to put the Islamic train on a different economic and political track and they felt they couldn't do that in the presence of those documents? Would Muslim kings have been able to rule in the name of Islam under the presence of those documents?

Let us keep in mind that no natural disaster such as flood, fire, or earthquake has ever struck Medina since the Prophet's (PBUH) time. So, no one can claim that these documents were destroyed by natural disaster. No one can also say that the enemies of Islam destroyed these documents since no non-Muslim ruler has ever conquered Medina. This city has always been under Muslim rule since the Prophet's time.

While the Qur'an exhorts Muslims to learn from history, they essentially have ignored this message. The Qur'an presents history of past nations as evidence of the efficacy and truth of its message and a warning to those who do not listen to the verdict of history:

Many were the Ways of Life that have passed away before you: travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those who rejected Truth. (3:137)

Say: "Travel through the earth and see what was the end of those who rejected Truth." (6:11) Do they not travel through the earth, and see what

was the End of those before them (who did evil)? Allah brought utter destruction on them, and similar (fates await) those who reject Allah. (47:10)

There are two ways to learn from the history of past nations: 1) learning from archives and 2) learning from archaeological discoveries. History based on oral narrations in the absence of archives may not be as reliable, especially if that history is compiled under a period ruled by kings.

Cont'd from page 9

arrogant self-image as traditional leaders which drove them to these altercations.

Finally, it was said: that is, 'whoever denies the verses of Allah (as the people of the Book did), then, Allah is swift at reckoning.' The swiftness of this reckoning can be well imagined as it starts initially soon after death when man passes into the state known as 'barzakh'. But the detailed accounting for one's deeds shall take place on the Day of Judgement when he will have to account for his doings in the minutest detail. Then, the penchant for disputing truth will be exposed. The people who denied the truth will discover their worth and the punishment it calls for shall become known to them.

Cont'd on page 12

his heart. Some people behave very nicely and show high etiquettes overtly whereas their hearts are filled with evil ulterior motives. Islam cuts the very roots of such hypocrisy. It exhorts its believer to be sincere and the real well wisher of others from the core of his heart. It does not confine the worship within the four walls of the mosque but includes all deeds of a person within the frontiers of devotion; and wishing well for others is considered the worship of Qalb (heart) - ranked as the highest form by the learned scholars of Islam. There is no religion or ism which teaches such high morals with perfection other than Islam.

Securing the Assistance of Allah

Khedive Ismail Pasha was appointed as the ruler over Egypt by the Ottoman Empire. During his reign, Egypt and Ethiopia were at war from 1874 to 1876. Due to the disunity that existed between the various commanders of the Egyptian army, Egypt suffered numerous defeats during this war, and was ultimately unsuccessful against Ethiopia.

One day, Khedive Ismail felt depressed and overcome by anxiety on account of the defeats that Egypt was suffering. He thus mounted his conveyance and set out with his minister, Shareef Pasha, hoping to find a way to relieve his anxiety and dispel his worries. While they were out, he turned to Shareef Pasha and asked him, "When you have a serious problem that you need to solve, what do you do?" Shareef Pasha answered, "It is my habit that when I have a problem, I request the pious 'Ulama to recite the kitaab, Saheeh Bukhaari, on my behalf. Through the blessings of this kitaab, Allah Ta'ala assists me to solve my problem." Khedive Ismail replied, "We will speak to the Shaikh of Al-Azhar and ask him to arrange for Saheeh Bukhaari to be recited."

Accordingly, Shaikh Aroosi, the Shaikh of Al-Azhar, gathered the pious 'Ulama who began to recite Saheeh Bukhaari. However, news of the Egyptian army's defeat continued to arrive. After some time, Khedive Ismail and Shareef Pasha went to the 'Ulama where Khedive Ismail said to them in anger, "Either the kitaab that you are reciting is not Saheeh Bukhaari, or you are

not the pious 'Ulama that we think you to be, like the pious 'Ulama of the past. Allah Ta'ala has not assisted us in any way through you and your recitation!"

On hearing this outburst, the gathering of 'Ulama remained silent. However, an old 'Aalim, seated in the last row of the gathering, spoke up and said, "It is your fault, Ismail, as Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has said, 'You will certainly command people towards righteousness and forbid them from evil, or Allah Ta'ala will allow the evil among you to rule over you. Thereafter, when the pious among you will make du'aa, it will not be accepted.'" When the old 'Aalim said this, there was pin drop silence. After a few moments, Khedive Ismail and Shareef Pasha turned and left without uttering a word.

As soon as they left, the other 'Ulama began to reproach him for speaking against the ruler as they feared that he would be punished or killed. Mere moments later, Shareef Pasha returned and informed the old 'Aalim that Khedive Ismail had summoned him. The other 'Ulama were now convinced that the old 'Aalim was departing to his death, and they thus began to bid him farewell.

The old 'Aalim accompanied Shareef Pasha to the palace of Khedive Ismail. On entering, they found Khedive Ismail in the hall with a chair before him. After seating the old 'Aalim in the chair, Khedive Ismail said, "Repeat what you said to me earlier, in Al-Azhar." When the old 'Aalim repeated the hadeeth of Rasulullah (sal-

lallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) and explained what it meant, Khedive Ismail asked, “What evils have we committed due to which this calamity has befallen us?” The old ‘Aalim replied, “Have the mixed courts (courts with jurisdiction over residents of foreign nationality) not begun to pass laws permitting interest and usury? Has adultery and fornication not been allowed? Has wine and alcohol not been legalised?” In this manner, the old ‘Aalim continued citing many more examples of evils and sins that were undeniable realities. He then concluded saying, “When this is our lamentable condition, how can we expect to receive the assistance of Allah Ta‘ala?”

After hearing him out, Khedive Ismail exclaimed, “What can we do? We cannot help it! There are non-Muslims living here with us and we need to appease them!” The old ‘Aalim responded, “In that case, what is the fault of Saheeh Bukhaari, and what can the ‘Ulama do to help you? (i.e. when you wish to compromise Deen to appease the kuffaar, then you should not blame Saheeh Bukhaari and should not expect the du‘aa of the ‘Ulama to avail you, as you have caused yourself to be deprived of the assistance of Allah Ta‘ala).”

Khedive Ismail lowered his head and pondered over the profound words of the old ‘Aalim for some time. Eventually, he raised his head and

submitted, “You are right and you have spoken the truth.” Saying this, he allowed the old ‘Aalim to return to Al-Azhar where he was received by the other ‘Ulama who were joyous over his safe return.

(Min Akhlaaqil ‘Ulama pgs. 97)

Lessons:

1. Today, everybody is looking for solutions to the problems that we face. Whether it is crime, corrupt leaders or people undergoing persecution, people from all walks of life are affected and worried. In this regard, people often say, “When will the help of Allah Ta‘ala come? Why are we undergoing these difficulties?” The answer is that we need to revive Deen and the sunnah in our lives and cease committing sins, in order to receive the assistance of Allah Ta‘ala.

2. The old ‘Aalim took the courage to address the ruler and correct him, explaining to him that what he was doing was incorrect. In a similar way, we should all strive to make a difference where possible. First of all, we will make an effort to identify and rectify our own wrongs. Thereafter, we are obligated to save our families from the fire of Jahannum. We will try to help each and every person, in whatever manner possible, to reach Jannah, together with making du‘aa for the person and all Muslims at large.

alHaadi

Serving his Teacher

The only reason that Hazrat Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani (ra) had given himself up for imprisonment in Malta was to serve his teacher, Shaikh-ul-Hind Moulana Mahmoodul Hasan (ra). Hazrat Moulana Madani (ra) rendered such service that Shaikhul Hind (ra) once mentioned to his wife, “My own son would not have been able to render the service which Molvi Husain Ahmad had made for me.”

Because Malta was extremely cold, and there was no hot water to make wudhu with, Hazrat Moulana Madani (ra) would hold the water bag to his stomach the entire night just so that it would be warm enough for his ustaaz to use at the time of Tahajjud.

Why All Muslims Should Know the Islamic Worldview

S. Umar

A worldview is a comprehensive view of the world we live in and interact with. The view is not physical, but philosophical. It encompasses all animate and inanimate, physical and meta-physical realities.

A worldview, furthermore, is about seeking, comprehending, embracing and living the truth. The world exists because of, and for, the truth. The truth, therefore, is embodied and manifested in the world, as much in the simplest and smallest as in the grandest and most sophisticated.

A person's worldview represents his most fundamental beliefs and assumptions about the universe he inhabits. It reflects how he would answer all the "big questions" of human existence: fundamental questions about who and what we are, where we came from, why we're here, where we're headed, the meaning and purpose of life, the nature of the afterlife, and what counts as a good life here and now (James Anderson).

As the existential center of gravity, man more than any other being personifies, demonstrates and, at the same time, hankers for the truth. Hence, a worldview – both as an intellectual inquiry and a pursuit of spiritual certitude – signifies a circumcentre of an ontological triangle, so to speak, whose intersection is formed by the perpendicular bisectors originating from three vertices that represent the world, man and the truth.

The Islamic Worldview: Definition and Main

Characteristics

It follows that the Islamic worldview is a philosophical view of the world rooted in the Islamic vision of life and reality. It is a fundamental cognitive orientation that provides a comprehensive Islamic framework of concepts and outlooks as regards: the Oneness of Almighty Allah (tawhid) and His relationship with the world (Creator-creation relationship), man as the vicegerent on earth (khalifah), nature, universe, life as the most consequential form of trust (amanah), death, hereafter, prophethood, angels, faith, destiny, epistemology and aesthetics. As such, it is a template, or a mold, where thought and action are cast.

The primary source of the Islamic worldview is the revelation. Harmoniously with reason, it lays down and affects each and every one of its aspects.

Man and his intellectual capabilities alone are insufficient for ascertaining and establishing the truth and its worldview, notwithstanding their remarkable capacities.

At any point of the journey, man and his relative judgmental prowess and wisdom are bound to show their true colors and fall short of fulfilling the task.

Man and his innermost cerebral strengths along with psychological and emotional alcoves signify but a tiny part of the world. As a concept and physical reality, the world by far outlives, overextends, outstrips and outdistances the

realm of man and everything he is able to offer.

In other words, man cannot be the sole source of the truth and its worldview because the truth and the world are larger and more consequential than him.

A Happy Ending is All That Matters

Similarly, man is their target and *raison d'être*. He stands at the receiving end of the processes of revealing the truth and instituting as well as authenticating its worldview.

Being part of the world, giving to and taking

ance with His absolute Will and Plan. It is on account of this that Almighty Allah's revelations to mankind are sometimes called *huda*, which means the Guidance and Direction, and *furqan*, which means the Criterion for distinguishing between good and bad, and between the truth and falsehood.

Can There Be a Doubt About God?

It is only when man is properly guided, directed, enlightened and enabled to see and comprehend, that he will be able to fully and sincerely



surrender to his Creator and worship Him. To worship Almighty Allah in all his deeds, words and thoughts – that is, to live life according to the Will and Design of the Creator of life, rather than according to the wills, methods and standards of the creation — is what man has been created for.

That connotes

from it, and being forever trapped in the dynamics of its vicissitudes, man will never be in a position to fully “view” and comprehend the world. The integrity of his insights will always be questioned and doubted. Epistemological authority and credibility will not be his forte. Man's shortcomings and outright flaws are positively reflected in his worldviews. They are conceived and patterned in his own image.

The only source of the true and authentic worldview is the Creator, Master and Sustainer of the world and man. He conceived and created them, and constantly supports them in accord-

the pinnacle of man's productive terrestrial existence whose commencement and foundation are an inclusive system of thought, ideas, beliefs and attitudes. Indeed, the greatest cultural and civilizational achievements of man start with appropriate ideas and “views” of the world.

Since man is an inquisitive being, and is a traveler, yet stranger, in this world, forming a worldview will always be high on his existential agenda. Such is done consciously or otherwise. Man is created to explore and know. Correspondingly, people are what they think, know and believe.

One thing is certain, every human being has and cherishes a worldview. That is so inasmuch as people act based on thinking, thus setting themselves apart from animals, which act on instinct. To have a worldview and act accordingly is to be a human.

To live without a worldview, and not to care, is an anomaly and denotes the lack of one's humanness. Hence, there are many worldviews worldwide: individual and collective, fractional and wide-ranging, muddled and systematic. They stand for the foundations of all religions, ideologies and structured life systems.

Like spectacles with colored lenses, worldviews affect what people see and how they see it. Depending on the "color" of the lenses, some things may be seen more easily, or conversely, they may be de-emphasized or distorted — indeed, some things may not be seen at all (James Anderson).

Nonetheless, as Almighty Allah is One, the truth, too, is only one. There can be no two or more, nor partial truths. By extension, there is only one true and authentic worldview. That is the worldview that originates from the only

extant, real and authentic revelation: the Holy Quran, and that personifies and promotes in all of its segments the ultimate truth.

That worldview is the Islamic worldview. Suggesting the source and strength of its legitimacy and purpose, it is sometimes called the Quranic worldview. The Islamic worldview is so important for the Muslims that to Prof. Dr. AbdulHamid AbuSulayman, it exemplifies a springboard for a Muslim cultural reform.

The rebirth of the Islamic identity through the Quranic worldview is the prerequisite for any future healthy and viable development of the Muslim world. No Muslim predicament or crisis will be adequately dealt with unless the Muslims develop a worldview that will provide a genuine sense of meaning, purpose and motivation for constructive action and reform (AbdulHamid AbuSulayman).

The goal of the Islamic worldview is to liberate man from the spiritual and psychological fetters of this fleeting world, and to elevate him to the higher planes of existence where higher orders of things, meaning, purpose and experiences reign.

The Key to the Compassion of Allah

Sayyiduna 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'Aas (ra) reports that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wa-sallam) said, "Those who show mercy and compassion to others, Allah the Most Merciful will show them mercy and compassion. Show mercy to those on the earth, the One in the Heavens (i.e. Allah whose control and power extends over the Heavens and the earth) will show mercy to you." (Sunan Abi Dawood)

In this blessed hadeeth, Rasulullah (saws) has taught us that if we want to be blessed with the mercy of Allah, we will have to show mercy, kindness and compassion to others – be they Muslim, non-Muslim or even animals.

If we want Allah to forgive us, we will have to have the heart to forego our grudges and forgive others. If we want Allah to overlook our shortcomings, we will have to overlook the shortcomings and mistakes of others.

When we adopt an outlook of forgiving and forgetting the wrongs that we suffer from other people, Allah Ta'ala will similarly bless us to repent for our sins. He will then readily forgive us and erase our sins.

May Allah bless us all with the quality of kindness and compassion, aameen.

A Companion Comes to Mind

When I first became interested in Islam (I mean when I actually conceived trying to live by it, understand it, when it had become clear to me that the Quran really was a Revelation, the Revelation, and that Islam really was the divine way laid down for all human beings till the end of time), I used to love to read the stories of the Prophet's Companions, may Allah be so pleased with them.

I wasn't alone in this. So many of us back then, in the 70s and 80s, in our young days as fresh—or, as in my case, refreshed—believers, were like iron shards magnetically snapping to these lodestone people, by which I mean the Companions.

It was all emotion of the best kind—that feeling of pure, utter tenderness that on a rare occasion of selfless honesty suffuses through the hard human heart.

Things were different then with Islam and Muslims in the world, especially in the West, if I can use that passé term. We were, then, to our great chagrin, “invisible” to the society around us. No one took our notice, though we longed for this, none but the people we ourselves were coming in contact with at school and at work, who were hearing us firsthand with our passion for Islam as the divine, universal promise for which man had been longing.

We felt as if we had suddenly discovered truth for the first time, lying right there, like the diamond of the world, in the sand. Can you im-

agine, to suddenly be holding the key that would unlock the perpetual societal puzzles of poverty, segregation, ennui, alienation, and international strife? To finally see it, through the blinding matrices of materialism, the numinous algorithm of Oneness that would solve for any x-factor in life?

When the Light Hits the Mirrors Just Right

It was like all your life you had seen the world as if through the dazzling, swirling, abstract color-patterns of a kaleidoscope. Then all at once the light hit the mirrors just right and the colored glass pieces abruptly fell perfectly into place. And there they were, in full relief, the leitmotifs of transcendence of the Beautiful Divinity and His beautiful human creation.

If only we could just explain it to our friends and colleagues. If we could but show it to them, then they would see it, and be at last free to embrace it, transfigure themselves, and change the world—until it became the place it was supposed to be: Not a utopia, but a planet of earth pivoting concentrically through the universe on an axis of justice, spinning into balance, circumambulating to the cadence hymned by the cosmos, labayk Allahumma labayk, ever at your service, O Allah, ever at your service.

Loss of Identity

The impulse of Muslims, it seems to me, has changed in these times. I am not saying Mus-

lims were better, or better off, thirty years ago. But I am saying the ethos and idealism has changed, and not for the better.

Muslims now may have far more numbers, visibility, and social organization (although this last point is debatable), as well as “activism” (though, truth unveiled, activism is mostly a sham to keep people within narrowly defined spaces of “protest” or within anointed traditions of “internal” reform that threaten to shift no paradigm or break no mold).

But Muslims today suffer a much greater loss of identity. Islam and Muslims are increasingly indistinct from the people around us. And if our communal organization seems to be growing, our cohesion is certainly weakened and giving way to diffusion.

The cancerous corruptions of expressed modernity’s two core values have metastasized within the Muslim body. Corporatism and capitalism, and their attendant notions of “development,” now throng in our veins.

There is also a strong and, I would say, cowardly tendency among us to baptize Islam’s values in the dirtied waters of the nationalisms and the aurocratic jingoisms in which men now frenzy. The purpose of this patriotic whirling is to draw people tight with one another in a secular sacrament calculated to conjure to the tribe a rabid power.

There is, moreover, a growing attempt by Muslims to legitimize their mottled strivings within the false histories of these chauvinisms through bankrupt borrowings of the ruined pop art forms of music, poetry, and film.

All of which, Suhayb has brought to my mind.

Suhayb

The son of Sinân ibn Mâlik of the Arab tribe of Banî Al-Nimr (Sons of the Tiger), Suhayb was not known as “the Arab,” but as “the Roman,” Al-Rûmî.

His father had been appointed by the Persians as the governor of Iraq in the generation be-

fore the advent of the Prophet (saws) and Islam. Suhayb was born there, in Mosul, three decades before the Hijrah.

The Romans invaded Iraq when Suhayb was a young boy and took him prisoner. Arab merchants later bought him as a slave, brought him back to Arabia, and sold him to Abdullah ibn Jad’ân in Makkah, who set him free.

Suhayb became a wealthy merchant, and when the Prophet (saws) began his call to Islam, Suhayb would affirm it. Said Umar ibn Al-Khattâb of Suhayb: “What a good man is Suhayb! Were he not to fear Allah, even then he would not commit a sin,” meaning he would not disobey Allah even if he did not know to fear Him, for he had a disposition to goodness and purity. But once he knew Allah and had fear of Him, one can scarcely conceive of the depth of his taqwa, his fearful reverence of God, and how the intensity of his awe and love for Allah kept him away from all sin.

Thirteen years later, the crucial migration of Islam to Madinah transpired, and Suhayb, set to leave with the other Muslims, was as good as Umar’s judgment of him.

“You came here destitute and shall not leave us wealthy,” the Makkans threatened Suhayb, to dissuade him from migrating to the Prophet (saws). Suhayb laughed, only too happy to trade his paltry riches of dunya, of this world, to the Makkans for his opulent âkhirah, forever Hereafter, to be with the Ummah gathering in Madinah. He left Makkah penniless for Madinah.

What a bargain!

“Suhayb has profited! Suhayb has profited!” exclaimed a joyous Muhammad, Messenger of God, (saws) when Suhayb arrived in Madinah.

He died 38 years later, a mujâhid of Badr, and all subsequent battles with the Prophet (saws), a top-flight archer and narrator of 307 a’adîth, reports from the Prophet (saws).

Oh for the bargain of Suhayb, O Allah! and for the blessing of his insight, his commitment, his courage, for all of us Muslims today.

Source: alJumuah

Emotional Bullying

Yasmeem Mogahed

A few weeks ago, an article was widely circulated about a woman whose husband told her he was leaving and she decided to ‘ignore’ him (and his feelings) until they magically disappeared.

As I read the article, I did something different. Instead of putting myself in *her* shoes, I put myself in his. What I discovered was disturbing at best...

What’s wrong with what she did?

The rhetoric and ‘technique’ was mocking and demeaning. Instead of showing *any* acknowledgment of her husband’s feelings, and then working from there, she *completely* ignored his feelings, likening them to a child’s temper tantrum. Next, she boasted about ‘ducking’: When he opened up about how he was feeling, her response was, “I don’t buy it!” There was no real compassion or empathy. Empathy is to recognize what someone is feeling *from their perspective*—not your own. And compassion is non-judgmental understanding of those feelings—even if you don’t particularly like them. Acknowledgment, empathy, and compassion are necessary ingredients of any successful relationship. On the contrary, emotional bullying

is to dictate to someone what is, or is not acceptable for them to feel. Perhaps the fact that she had absolutely *no* idea that there was any problem in their marriage is indicative of this lack of ability to see things, not only from your own perspective—but from your partner’s perspective, as well.

“But it worked!”

Umm, how do we know? Because he mowed the grass and gave thanks at Thanksgiving dinner? Seriously? Human psychology is just a little more complicated than that. Notice that the entire article is written from *her* perspective. Where is *his* perspective? The only thing we know of his feelings are the very feelings she writes off by saying she doesn’t “buy it.” Had the article been written from his perspective then I could say I really know how he feels. But to say that what she did was ‘successful’ just because he didn’t leave, is simplistic at best. Have we never heard of people staying together ‘for the kids’? Or what if he just suppressed his feelings because they weren’t ‘acceptable’ to her. She didn’t ‘buy it’. She used a technique of manipulation which basically dictates to the other person

which part of themselves and which feelings are 'acceptable' and which were not. Psychologists call these techniques 'tools of repression'—and they are *not* healthy, nor should they be applauded as successful relationship or communication techniques. These tools of repression help contribute to what psychologist Dr. Harville Hendrix calls 'The False Self', 'The Lost Self' or 'The Disowned Self' in his book "Getting The Love You Want". This is a technique used by many parents with their children and it's a sad day when we applaud its use on spouses!

We also need to stop measuring the success of a marriage by simply the fact that the husband stuck around to mow the lawn and say grace at Thanksgiving dinner. There is something a bit deeper to successful relationships, than just 'sticking around'. That is not the measure of success. So many people automatically applauded her for her actions just because she wasn't the one who wanted to leave. But few people tried to imagine the situation from her husband's perspective (a perspective we saw nothing of first hand). Remember,

the one who wants to leave a relationship isn't always the villain and the one who tries to stay isn't always the martyr. Relationships are a bit more sophisticated than that.

The only thing we know for sure from the article is that the wife got her desired outcome. She successfully controlled his actions (or feel-

ings)—but did not successfully understand or empathize with them. The article's wide acclaim sends a chilling message about our society: that perhaps we are more interested in just *controlling* other people's behaviours, than we are in *understanding* them.

What would have been a better way?

First, she should have acknowledged and respected how he felt, instead of denying or ignoring it. These are the basics of interpersonal communication and relationships. Likening a grown man's feelings to a child's 'temper tantrum' is the epitome of disrespect. After first acknowledging his feelings, they should have proceeded from there. Perhaps a more healthy response than ignoring, belittling, and denying her husband's



expressed emotions would have been to suggest counselling or reflect on what things she herself could change to enhance the relationship. Instead, she completely denied that there was any *real* problem with the marriage (after all he was just having an adult temper tantrum and she just needed to 'duck'). Then she put 100%

of the blame on her husband. She diagnosed the problem as being 100% outside herself, and then proceeded to just ignore it, and wait for it to go away. That is basically everything you should *not* do in a relationship or on the path of self-development.

There was absolutely no introspection or reflection on *anything* that perhaps she could change in herself to improve the relationship (starting perhaps from learning to acknowledge and respect other people's feelings, beyond our own—even when you don't particularly *like* them). Instead, she framed the entire situation as him being the irrational child and her being the selfless martyr. I don't see what she did as martyrdom. I see it as oppression and emotional bullying. And I think it says a lot about the compassion we have as a society when her actions are not only tolerated, but applauded.

Even if her husband was displacing some inner unhappiness on his wife, to believe that there was absolutely nothing she was doing to contribute to the problem or that there was absolutely nothing she could do to elevate the problem is self-righteousness at best. To think that we are ever just passive bystanders of our problems or that the problems in our lives are 100% someone else's fault, is self-centred and just plain wrong. Of course there was some part she played and of course there was something she could have changed in herself to strengthen the marriage. No one is perfect and we all have things in ourselves that we could improve to strengthen our relationships. But chalking up the entire problem to just his mid-life crisis and inner dissatisfaction, while completely exonerating her own role, is putting the blame entirely on him and implying that she herself has nothing to improve or change.

See "Marriage is For Losers" (<http://drkelly-flanagan.com/2012/03/02/marriage-is-for-losers/>) for a beautiful example of the better way to make a marriage strong. (The previous article seems like a great example of what Dr. Kelly

refers to as the 'second type' of unhealthy marriage in his piece.)

Dr. Kelly describes an entirely different approach to healthy marriages. He writes:

But there is a third kind of marriage. The third kind of marriage is not perfect, not even close. But a decision has been made, and two people have decided to love each other to the limit, and to sacrifice the most important thing of all—themselves. In these marriages, losing becomes a way of life, a competition to see who can listen to, care for, serve, forgive, and accept the other the most. The marriage becomes a competition to see who can change in ways that are most healing to the other, to see who can give of themselves in ways that most increase the dignity and strength of the other. These marriages form people who can be small and humble and merciful and loving and peaceful.

And they are revolutionary, in the purest sense of the word.

Dr. Kelly further writes: "Maybe marriage, when it's lived by two losers in a household culture of mutual surrender, is just the training we need to walk through this world—a world that wants to chew you up and spit you out—without the constant fear of getting the short end of the stick."

Until we start seeing the world through the lens of compassion—rather than judgment—we will never succeed at building a society of relationships founded on understanding, selflessness, and self-improvement.

The Prophet (saws) said:

"By the one in whose hand is my soul! The miscarried embryo/foetus will drag its mother by its umbilical cord to Paradise, if she (was patient and) sought reward (for her loss)." (Ibn Majah)

WHAT IS TRUE LOVE?

Once there was an extremely rich King. This King had four wives or rather four Queens. Out of all these four Queens he loved the youngest one the most. The Wazeers (Ministers) would often comment that because she was the youngest she received the maximum amount of the King's admiration and adoration. But the King had altogether a different reason for regarding her as his favourite.

One day the King called all his Wazeers and said to them, "I have come to know that you people think that I am being unfair to the other Queens because I give extra attention to the youngest one for the obvious reasons of her youthfulness. Tomorrow early in the morning I want you to come to my Durbar (court) where I intend to demonstrate to you why she deserves to be loved the most.

The next day the King ordered his workers to lay all his treasures wide open. Since the King was immensely wealthy the courtyard was full of his treasures that included, besides his lavish household goods and furniture, very expensive and intricately beautiful ornaments, jewellery, diamonds, rubies and pearls, clothes and plenty of cash.

He then summoned all his four Queens to come to the court. He announced to the Queens thus:

"Today you can grab whatever you want from my treasures. You will be allocated a limited period of time within which whatever you will touch with your hands will be yours. Your time starts...now."

As soon as he said the word 'NOW' all the Queens, with exception of the youngest one, got into a frenzied rush to touch the maximum numbers of things. They frantically kept running from one end to the other in a bid to touch the maximum number of items. Special guards were placed there to make a note of every single object each Queen placed her hand on.

While all this was going on the youngest Queen stood there motionless. The King noticed it and he said to her, "What's wrong with you? The time is running out and you are just standing there like a statue!"

The Queen smiled and said, "Will I get whatever I will touch?"

The King, "Of course! That's precisely what I have said. Come on, use your senses and act fast before it's too late."

On hearing this, the youngest Queen, cautiously taking her steps, moved towards the King's throne. Almost everyone thought she was going for his diamond studded crown or his lavishly adorned throne. But to the bewilderment of all the people gathered there including the Wazeers, she gently picked the King's right hand and with a tight grip she held it in both her hands. It was definitely an awe-inspiring moment and the King triumphantly looked at his band of Wazeers.

While the other three Queens tried to amass whatever they could lay their hands on, the wisest of them preferred just to have the King alone, knowing full well that if she got the King then whatever was his was automatically

going to be hers.

Related above is a parable with a very profound message! While we are all hankering after the treasures and pleasures of this world we keep on forgetting the Khaliq or the Creator of all these things. We get so busy amassing the temporary and materialistic things that we tend to forget the Mâlik al-Mulk, the Owner of all Sovereignty, the known and the unknown, the manifest and the hidden.

Coming closer to Him and winning His pleasure should be our sole purpose. We have been sent to this Duniya (temporary world) to make His 'Ibadah and 'Ibadah does not mean offering Salah, fasting, going for Hajj and giving Zakah alone. Besides performing these obligatory acts, 'Ibadah is connected with the word 'slavery'. Thus 'Ibadah means obedience with submission, humility, and devotion to Allah alone with the ultimate love for Him. It is also something that comes from the heart with Ikhlas or purity and total sincerity.

Once your heart is linked with Allah it develops the following traits:

- It is always remembering Allah
- It is always fearing Allah
- It is always humble to Allah
- It is always seeking Allah
- It is always repenting to Allah
- It develops an intense love for His Beloved Nabi Muhammad (saws) and ardently follows his Sunnah
- It is attached to His Kitaab, the Qur'an Ka-reem, reciting it as often as possible
- It does not despair whatever the conditions may be
- It is constantly aware of the impending death
- It is always concerned about the life of the Hereafter

Let us solely be interested in gaining the pleasure of Al-Khaliq (the Creator) and Al-Malik (the Owner) of everything.

Source: haqqseeker

The Blessing of Bismillah

Nabi 'Isa ('alaihi salaam) was once proceeding to a certain place for some task when he passed by a grave. On looking at the grave, Allah showed him that angels of punishment were torturing the inmate of the grave.

Sometime later, when Nabi 'Isa (AS) had completed his task and was returning, he again passed by the grave. However, Allah now showed him that instead of angels of punishment, there were angels of mercy at the grave, bearing platters of divine radiance!

Nabi 'Isa (AS) was surprised at this sudden change in condition. He thus performed salaah and engaged in du'aa, begging Allah to reveal to him what had caused the punishment of the inmate to cease and be replaced with His special mercy.

Allah sent revelation to Nabi 'Isa (AS) informing him thus:

O 'Isa (AS)! This servant led a life of disobedience and sin, and he has thus been engulfed in punishment from the time he passed away. However, when he passed away, he left a wife who was expecting a child. After the child was born, she raised him and saw to his upbringing until he grew into a young boy. She then made him over to the maktab (elementary madrasah) teachers. After entering the madrasah, the teacher made the child recite "Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem". I thus felt ashamed to punish my servant with fire within the earth while his son is taking My name above the earth.

(At-Tafseerul Kabeer vol. 1, pg. 143)

Appeal

'Radiant Reality' is the only Islamic monthly in English published from Srinagar since almost two decades now. It is only by the Grace of Almighty Allah and the blessed supplications of our esteemed readers that it continues to remain in print without fail. Apart from its regular subscribers, the magazine is distributed among the student community in and outside the state free of charge, whose cost is borne by some dedicated individuals. With unprecedented escalation in the cost of paper and printing, it is becoming somewhat difficult for us to meet the expences incurred. The esteemed readers are, therefore, requested to subscribe for the magazine and also encourage others for the purpose. Besides, those who would like to join us in spreading the message of Islam far and wide, may contribute by way of voluntary donation starting from at least Rs.100/- per month.

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