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# RADIANT REALITY

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

**Editor, Printer & Publisher:**  
**Maulana Hamidullah Lone**

\*Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor.

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**Mailing Address:**

Editor In-Charge,-  
Radiant Reality  
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G.P.O. Srinagar,  
J&K, 190001,  
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**Contact:**

siteadmin@islamkashmir.org



+918491895043

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### Question.

If a man went on journey and made intention to stay at a place for 10 days but on the 7th day, he made an intention to stay for 10 more days,  $10+10=20$ , does he read full Salaah or short Salaah?

### Answer.

In the enquired situation, if after undertaking a journey of 78kms or more, a person makes an intention to stay at a destination for 10 days and then subsequently, on the 7th day, he changes his intention to stay for 10 more days (in total 20 days), he will still be considered a Shari' traveller (Musaafir) and he will perform Qasr (short) Salaah.

This is because he did not make an intention to stay for 15 days or more at any time. i.e. his first intention to stay at his destination was for 10 days and his second intention was to stay at his destination for 13 days.

*Mufti Ismaeel*

### Question.

Is it permissible to buy products which has an animate label on it?

### Answer.

There are many products available in the market today which have animate pictures printed or labelled on them. This becomes more chal-

lenging to avoid especially when buying products which are required on a daily basis e.g. milk, bread, butter etc.

Whilst the ideal would be to avoid buying such products, the purpose of buying such products is not the animate nature of the product, rather the actual product itself. Under such circumstances, it would be permissible to buy these products. (Kitaabul Fataawa 5/208/209)

*Mufti Ismaeel*

### Question.

Does nail polish have to be removed from a deceased woman when performing her Ghusal?

### Answer.

One of the prerequisites for a Ghusal to be valid is that water must reach all parts of the body. This is applicable to both the living and the dead.

If water does not reach the nails due to the non-permeable nature of the nail polish, the Ghusal will be invalid. As such, all efforts must be made to remove the nail polish so that water reaches the nails. (Ahsanul Fataawa 4/237)

*Mufti Ismaeel*

### Question.

I would like to know what dua or quran ayah or aayaat should be recited while an earthquake is occurring what to recite if a storm hurricane and high winds and rain are approaching?

Answer. We have not come across any specific Dua prescribed in the Sunnah to be recited at the time of an earthquake. Nonetheless, the following Duas have connection to earthquakes and its dangers and are appropriate to recite:

*Allaa-humma innee 'a-oo-dhu-bi-ka bi-'a-zha-ma-ti-ka an ugh-taa-la min tah-tee*

O Allah, I seek refuge with you from being swallowed by the earth (in earthquakes or other calamities). (Nasaai)

*Allaa-humma innee 'a-oo-dhu-bi-ka mi-nat-ta-raddi wal ha-da-mi wal ga-ra-qi wal ha-reeq*

O Allah, I seek refuge with you from being thrown from a high place, from being crushed under falling wall/rock from drowning or being burnt (with fire). (Nasaai)

Mufti Moosa

### Question.

I want know for a lady who has istihadha... whats the ruling if she doesnt bleed at least once in a salah period? But thereafter bleeds now and then....will she then be a mustahadha?

### Answer.

The minimum period of Haidh (menstruation) is three days and the maximum period is 10 days. The discharge that occurs for less than three days or after ten days of Haidh is regarded as Istihaadha (irregular discharge).

A woman in Istihaadha will clean herself, make Wudhu and perform Salaah unless there is a continuous discharge, which prevents her from performing Salaah, in which case she will be considered a Mazoor and all the laws of a Mazoor will apply to her. Click here for further information on the laws of a Mazoor (excused).

A woman in the state of Istihaadha is not necessarily considered a Mazoor (excused). She will only be a Mazoor if she fulfils the criteria of a Mazoor.

Accordingly, in the enquired case, if she was a Mazoor and there was no discharge between two Salaahs, she will no longer be a Mazoor. In

such a case, she will perform Salaah only if she is clean and in the state of Wudhu until she fulfils the criteria of a Mazoor again.

Mufti Ismaeel

### Question.

Is lucid dreaming permissible?

### Answer.

A lucid dream refers to a dream during which the dreamer is aware that they are dreaming. During lucid dreaming, the dreamer may be able to have some control over the dream characters, narrative, and environment.

In terms of Shariah, if during a lucid dream, one entertains impermissible or Haraam things or one fantasises over impermissible or Haraam acts, then one will be sinful. However, one will not be sinful for entertaining permissible and Halaal things.

Note: One should not waste ones time in unnecessary thoughts, rather, one should spend one's time pondering over the greatness of Allah's creation, one's mortality and the life after death.

Mufti Ismaeel

### Question.

I went waxing yesterday and tried to take out all the leftover wax before I made ghusal but a few hours after I finished I found some wax on my knee.. should I repeat ghusal and salaahs.

### Answer.

In the enquired case, it is not necessary for you to repeat your entire Ghusal performed with the wax on your body. It will suffice for you to merely remove the waxed area, wash it and continue with Salaah etc.

In the interim, if any of the Salaah were performed with the wax on your body, such that water did not reach that area in Ghusal, it will be necessary for you to repeat those Salaah performed in that state. (Al-Muheet-ul-Burhaani 1/82)

Mufti Ismaeel

**Question.**

Is PRP treatment permissible to enhance ones beauty?

**Answer.**

Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) treatment entails drawing a small amount of blood from the patient, just like a routine blood test. Once the blood is drawn, it is then placed into a centrifuge. The centrifuge is a machine that spins the blood at high speeds in order to separate the blood into red blood cells and concentrated platelets. Once the blood is separated, the red blood cells are discarded, and the concentrated platelet rich plasma (PRP) remain which is injected back into the patient. PRP is used to accelerate healing; repair tendons, ligaments and joint damage; heal diabetic ulcers; and help regrow muscle and bone amongst other benefits. In terms of Shariah, it will not be permissible to undergo PRP treatment for cosmetic reasons or for beautification purposes. This is because blood extracted from one's body is impure (Najis) and to inject an impure substance into one's body is impermissible for such purposes.

The use of PRP treatment due to medical need and necessity is an exclusion to the rule and a separate issue. (Shaami 5/228-Jadeed Fiqhi Masaail 1/216-217-218)

*Mufti Ismaeel*

**Question.**

Is it compulsory to face the Qiblah whilst slaughtering? Should the animal or should the one slaughtering face the Qiblah? How should it be done? And is this for the day of Eid only

**Answer.**

It is preferable (Mustahab) for the animal and for the one slaughtering the animal to face the Qiblah. (Badaai-us-Sanaai 5/60)

The animal should be placed on its right side (just as the deceased is placed in the grave) facing the Qiblah. The one slaughtering the animal

should face the Qibah when slaughtering the animal in this position. (Qurbani Ke Masaail Ka encyclopedia)

This is applicable for every occasion when slaughtering an animal and is not restricted to the day of Eid only.

*Mufti Ismaeel*

**Question.**

A lady passed away on the 10th of Zul-Hijjah, on eid Morning at 4AM. She purchased a Qurbani animal for Eid. The heirs slaughtered the Qurbani animal on her behalf. How do the heirs distribute the Qurbani meat?

**Answer.**

Qurbani will become Waajib (obligatory) on person who fulfils the criterion of Qurbani during days of Qurbani. The days of Qurbani commence at dawn (Subah Saadiq) of the 10th of Zul-Hijjah and terminates at dusk/sunset of the 12th of Zul-Hijjah. (Hindiyyah 5/295)

In the enquired case, the deceased passed away prior to the commencement of the days of Qurbani. Hence, Qurbani was not Waajib on the deceased at the time. The animal slaughtered by the heirs on behalf of the deceased will be an optional (Nafl) Qurbani. In this case, the heirs may distribute the meat of the Qurbani animal according to their discretion.

Note: The heirs are encouraged to distribute the meat amongst the poor and needy for the Esaal-e-Sawaab of the deceased.

*Mufti Ismaeel*

**Question.**

Do we keep the fast of the day of Arafah when the Hajis are in Arafah?

**Answer.**

The beginning and end of an Islamic lunar month is based on verified sightings of the new moon. It is not based on a particular occasion or in this instance, the day that the Hujjaaj are in Arafah. Therefore, one will not keep the fast

of Arafah on the day when the Hujjaaj are in Arafah. Rather, one will keep the fast of Arafah when it is the 9th of Zul-Hijjah at one's location.

*Mufti Ismaeel*

### Question.

May I please attain some clarification on a person who shaves his facial hair (moustache) & pubic hair while observing the Ten days of Dhul Hijjah. Would there be any sin involved if he does shave his hair or would the reward be less than the person who abstains from shaving for the 10 days?

### Answer.

There is no sin for removing hair that is generally permissible to remove, if done in the first 10 days of Zul-Hijjah though it is preferable (Mustahab) not to do so. The reward for a person who removes his hair will be less than the one who does not do so.

*Mufti Ismaeel*

### Question.

Is Hajj compulsory on minors? If they are taken for Hajj as minors, is their Hajj fulfilled? Do they have to perform a Hajj again after they become adults?

### Answer.

The compulsion to perform Hajj is upon adults and not children/minors. If children perform Hajj, it will be counted as an optional (Nafli) Hajj and they will be rewarded for it. However, it will not be counted as their compulsory (Fardh) Hajj. Once they become mature, the performance of Hajj will become compulsory upon them if they fulfil the requirements of performing Hajj. (Masaail Rifat Qaasimi 7/66)

*Mufti Ismaeel*

### Question.

A woman is in Makkah Mukarramah. She passed the Miqaat and is in the state of Ihraam. If she experiences her Haidh in the state of

Ihraam, what should she do?

### Answer.

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

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

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

*Mufti Ismaeel*

### Question.

Is Qurbani necessary for a child? Can their parents do it on their behalf?

### Answer.

Qurbani is not necessary upon a child whether they own wealth or not, nor is it necessary upon their parents/guardians to perform it on their behalf. However, if it is done on their behalf, the Qurbani will be valid and they will receive the reward for it.

### Question.

Is Qurbani necessary for a person travelling?

### Answer.

It is not necessary on a Shari' traveller to perform Qurbani. A Shar'i traveller is one who travels on a journey for 78 kms or more. In any case, if a Shari' travellers does perform Qurani despite it being not necessary, he/she will be rewarded for it.

However, if a Shari' traveller intends residing at the destination for 15 days or more then he/she will cease to be a traveller and the performance of Qurbani will be necessary.

**Question.**

What is the exact and best time to perform Qurbani?

**Answer.**

The time for Qurbani begins after the Eid Sa-laah 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.**

On behalf of how many people will a sheep, goat, ram, cow, bull, buffalo or camel be valid?

**Answer.**

A cow, bull, buffalo or camel will suffice for seven persons. A sheep, goat or ram on the other hand suffices for one person only.

**Question.**

Can one make intention for multiple people in one Qurbani for the deceased?

**Answer.**

One may make the intention of the Thawaab (reward) going to multiple people in one Qurbani animal if it is a Nafil (optional) Qurbani. When Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam performed Qurbani, he ordered two animals. He slaughtered one animal as his Wajib (necessary) Qurbani and the other as optional (Nafil) on behalf of his entire Ummah.

*Mufti Ismaeel*

**Question.**

What type of animals should one choose for Qurbani?

**Answer.**

Animals which are healthy, free from faults and defects, should be chosen for Qurbani.

**Question.**

What type of animals are not suitable for Qurbani?

**Answer.**

The following animals are not suitable for Qurbani:

- 1) An animal that is blind, one-eyed or has lost more than one-third of its eyesight.
- 2) Animals that have lost more than a third of the ear. Similarly, animals, which have no ears from birth. Animals with small ears are suitable.
- 3) Animals whose horn/s has been broken off from the root. However, an animal born without horns or if the horns are broken off but not from the root is suitable for Qurbani.
- 4) Animals, which have one, lame leg to the extent that it walks on three legs only and is unable to use the fourth leg. However, if the animal can walk to the place of slaughter on the fourth leg with a limp it will be allowed.
- 5) If an animal is injured whilst being slaughtered, e.g. its leg breaks, ear gets cut etc., the Qurbani will be valid.
- 6) If an animal was bought in a healthy and perfect state and thereafter became unfit for Qurbani then,
  - a. If the owner is not wealthy (does not possess of nisaab) it will be permissible to offer this animal for Qurbani.
  - b. If the owner is wealthy (possesses the Nisaab), then it is compulsory for him to obtain another animal.

*Mufti Ismaeel*

Lesson from  
The Qur'an



# The Sign of Time

*(I swear) by  
the Time, man  
is in a state of  
loss indeed, ex-  
cept those who  
believed and  
did righteous  
deeds, and  
exhorted each  
other to follow  
truth, and ex-  
horted each  
other to observe  
patience.  
(103:-3)*

In one of the shortest chapters or surahs of the Qur'an, we read: By Time! Verily man is in [a state of] loss; except those who believe and perform righteous deeds, and enjoin one another to [follow] the truth, and enjoin one another to patience. [103:1-3] This chapter, or-surah, is known as Surat al-'Asr.

I hope to keep my reflections fairly brief, and also hope to look at the surah from three perspectives. The first of these perspectives will be exegetical – that is, to look at what our classical commentators (mufasssirin) have said concerning it, so as to get a general sweep of its meaning and message from those qualified in textual interpretation. The second will be theological; so as to flesh out any important points of belief or doctrine embedded in the surah. Lastly there's the homiletical perspective, the one that focuses on the spiritual and moral counsels of the surah and the lessons it wishes to impart to us about how best to live the religious life.

Exegetical Perspective: Classical interpreters of the Qur'an (tracing their views back to the early religious authorities; the salaf) differ over the meaning of the opening oath: wa'l-'asr. Some say 'asr refers to the period from the declining of the sun until sunset; others, that it refers to the actual 'Asr prayer; yet others say that there is no reason to limit it to a specific period of time, or act in time. Instead, 'asr should be taken to refer to time (dahr) in general – this being the opinion of Ibn 'Abbas. In this reading, Allah swears an oath by Time, this enigmatic creation of His which we all know something about, but about which no one knows its true nature or exact significance. An appeal is made to time, for it is in its never-resting grasp that our destinies unfold, the events of our lives are played out, and where we encounter Allah's signs in the world and are asked to contemplate their meanings.

The next verse hits us like a thunderbolt: Verily man is in [a state of] loss. This no holds barred declaration, although it uses the word man (al-insan) in its singular form, refers to mankind generically (a case of wahid bi ma'na al-jami' – “employing the singular to mean the collective.”). A few commentators, however, suggest that the man

referred to here as being in loss is one of the chief disbelievers of Makkah: Abu Jahl, Walid b. al-Mughirah, or Ubayy b. Khalf. Most deemed it best to keep the term generic, given that there is nothing textually explicit to particularise it. So Allah swears By Time that all mankind are in loss.

The Qur'an, in voicing this loss, could have simply said: *al-insanu fi khusr* – 'Mankind is in [a state of] loss.' But instead it added the particle of emphasis, *inna*, as well as the word *la*: two separate words of emphasis and forcibleness. Its literal translation could then read: Verily man is truly in [a state of] loss – the double emphasis being there so as to drive home, in no uncertain terms, the gravity of the matter.

As to what such loss is, al-Suyuti glosses it as: *fi tijaratihi* – "in his [life] transactions."<sup>4</sup> That is, time is man's capital which he can invest wisely and piously, or else squander. But Man misuses his capital, and fritters it away, by turning his back on Allah and the Afterlife and plunging himself head on into worldly distractions. The Qur'an depicts life as a being like a commerce or business transaction (*tijarah*) in the following verse: O believers! Shall I show you a commerce that will save you from a painful torment? That you believe in Allah and His Messenger, and strive for the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That is better for you, if you but knew. [61:11] If life's metaphor is a series of business transactions, man, by attending solely to his material gains, shall lose. For when he comes to tally up his account at day's end, it will not show a profit; but only a spiritual loss – not so those possessed of the following four qualities:

Except those who believe with true and sincere conviction in Allah's Divinity (*ilahiyyah*) and Oneness (*wahdaniyyah*), and in what was revealed to His Final Prophet (*saws*); and perform righteous deeds, those conforming to the Sacred Law (*shari'ah*) and sincerely done seeking His good pleasure and acceptance; be they obligatory acts (*fara'id*) or recommended ones

(*mustahabbat*); or be they rights related to Allah (*huquq Allah*) or those connected with others (*huquq al-'ibad*). Some exegetists point out that these two qualities relate to an individual's piety and perfection.

The other two of the four qualities that exempt one from loss: and enjoin one another to [follow] the truth in terms of Allah's tawhid and all other revealed realities, as well as any other firmly established matter, the truth of which cannot be denied; and enjoin one another to patience, in terms of Allah's worship and obedience and, given that the majority of the commentators hold that this surah was revealed in Makkah, patience in terms of the insults, abuse and harms Muslim minorities will have to endure from hostile, offensive or unsympathetic non-Muslims. If the first two qualities speak of bettering the individual, these last two bespeak of the duty to help better others. So this surah insists we partake in the necessary salvation of our own soul, as well as the much needed healing of society's soul.

Given this surah's comprehensive message and mandate, it is no wonder that Imam al-Shafi'i said about it: *law tadabbur al-nas hadhihi'l-surah la was'athum* – 'If people were to ponder over just this surah, it would suffice them.'

Moreover, the surah's invitation to faith; action; spreading and standing up for truth; and being patient and steadfast in this, became a motto of sorts among the Prophet's Companions. One report states: 'Whenever two of the Prophet's Companions would meet, they'd not part company until one had recited to the other: By Time! Verily man is in [a state of] loss. Then they would give salams to each other [and part].'

Theological Perspective: 'Time and tide wait for no man,' said Chaucer. Shakespeare wrote in one of his Sonnets about how 'Time's fell hand' eventually brings to ruin even the hugest of buildings and boastful of monuments. We speak about taking time out, wasting time, loosing track of time, time whizzing past, time being of



the essence, or of experiencing time; and so on. We all have an idea about time. But ask someone to explain what time actually is ... well that's another matter.

We experience time as a long string of moments that flows from the past, through the present and into the future. Or wanting to be on a more secure footing, time is simply the measure of the duration for processes or events to occur, and the interval between them (measured in seconds, or any other suitable units). By the time Newton gave us the laws of gravity and motion, time was understood to be something absolute, true, universal and flowed at a constant rate, independent of all else. For a while, his laws and notion of time formed the basis for our whole understanding of the universe. But by the beginning of the 20th century, and because Newton's laws couldn't account for the peculiar nature and motion of light, a new and deeper understanding of light and time was needed. Enter Albert Einstein.

Essentially, what Einstein showed in his Theory of Relativity was that objects travelling at high speeds experience time slower than objects at rest. This is called time dilation; and it has been conclusively proven experimentally. In particle accelerators, certain subatomic particles have a longer lifespan when travelling at speeds close to the speed of light than they do when they're travelling much slower or are at rest; atomic clocks in planes run slower than their counterparts down on the ground; and GPS satellites have to be constantly recalibrated for time dilation. Time, according to the insights of Einstein, isn't constant or uniform; instead it depends on where you are and how you move relative to others.

Now when Allah swears By Time, He doesn't require us to have a scientist's take on time, or that of a philosopher's. Rather, the oath is taken to impress on us to see time unfold through the eyes of faith. In other words, to infer from the events of our lives; and from life's lessons;

and from the world in which this all takes place, Allah's power, knowledge, beauty and wisdom. Our lives, and our world, point to something beyond themselves; to the divine glory and greatness: that you may know He has power over all things and that He encompasses everything in knowledge. [65:12]

In a rather intriguing hadith, the Prophet (saws) was once occasioned to say: *la tasubb'u'l-dahr fa inna'Llaha huwa'l-dahr* – 'Do not curse time, for indeed Allah is time.' According to al-Munawi, some Arabs had a habit of cursing time whenever something disagreeable occurred or would unexpectedly go wrong. To put an end to such reviling is what occasioned the above warning. For to revile time; to implore blessings or barakah be removed from it, would be tantamount to shooting oneself in the foot ... repeatedly!

Imam al-Nawawi filled in further detail for us in his commentary to the hadith which says that Allah is time. He wrote: 'The scholars say that this is a metaphor. The reason being is that it was the custom of the Arabs to revile time whenever some misfortune occurred; such as death, senility, or loss of wealth, etc. They would say: 'woe to time!' or other phrases that cursed or inveighed against time. So the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: 'Do not curse time, for indeed Allah is time.' Meaning, do not revile He who makes these things happen. For your inveighing against time is actually cursing Allah, since He it is that brings about these misfortunes and sends them down. As for time, it is only a period of duration (*zaman*) that cannot do anything in or of itself. Rather, it is just one of so many things created by Allah, exalted is He.'

Muslim theologians are at pains to remind us that whatever else time may or may not be, it is something created by Allah and has no intrinsic power of existence: time only exists and endures (*thubut, baqa*) by Allah's will and power. Likewise, time can neither heal nor harm (in the literal sense of the term); that quality is

solely Allah's. Time, this unembodied reality, 'flows' only because of Allah's act of perpetual creativity. Time, in other words, is the unfolding of moment after moment after moment. (Interestingly, such a theology of time has resonance with certain ideas and models of time currently being discussed in quantum physics.)

**Homiletical Perspective:** This surah is a summons to the worshippers to not fall into heedlessness (ghaflah), squander their time and thus jeopardise their salvation (najat). For the seekers, it is an invitation to sanctity (wilayah) by being continuous in Allah's remembrance (dhikr), internalising works of faith, practising beautiful patience (sabr) and cultivating comportment (adab) with time. As for the people of Allah (ahlu'Llah), what it means for them is between them and Allah. For theirs are hearts that behold the contemplative vision of Allah (mushahadah) in this earthly life, whilst anticipating the Beatific Vision of Him (ru'yatu'Llah) in the eternal life to come.

Our all too fragile relationship with time comes to the fore in these following lines of poetry: 'Your life is but a few countable breaths; whenever you exhale, part of your life diminishes (hayatuka anfasun tu'addu fa kullama / mada nafasun minha intaqasta bihi juz'an).'

One of the early sages said that he truly understood the message of Surat al-'Asr when he saw a person selling ice in the market, saying to passers-by in a raised voice: 'Have mercy on those whose wealth is melting away. Have mercy on those whose capital is vanishing.' It dawned on the sage that this ice-seller must be incredibly careful about his capital (ice), or else it will literally melt away; and he'll be at loss. Similarly, man's time on earth is rapidly melting away with each priceless breath; with every passing second. If he spends his time doing futile, forbidden or faithless things, then this is man's true loss. Man's life, therefore, must never be bereft of faith, acts of obedience to Allah, sincerely helping others and tending to peoples' welfare,

and persevering in these things throughout his life. Only then will he have spent his time in a productive manner pleasing to his Lord.

In terms of making us vigilant with whatever time we have allocated to us in our lives, the Prophet (saws) said: 'Everyone starts his day and is a vendor of his own soul, either freeing it or bringing about its ruin.'

Indeed, what we do with our time here on earth is, when all is said and done, what it's about; as per the next hadith: 'The feet of the son of Adam will not move on the Day of Resurrection till he is questioned about five things: about his life and what he did in it; about his youth and how he passed it; about his wealth, from where he acquired it and on what he spent it; and about his knowledge, did he act on it.'

Another hadith states that a person once asked the Prophet (saws), who the best people were, to which he replied: 'Those who live long and whose deeds are good.' He was then asked who the worst people were, so he said: 'Those who live long but whose deeds are bad.' The longevity of life that science and modern medicine accords us seems, unquestionably, a goodly thing. But as with so many of modernity's offerings, the believer examines such things with the eye of faith. What would be the use of an increase in life expectancy if the additional years don't lead to an increasing awareness of Allah's presence? Of what worth would longevity of years be if it deflects us from our purpose of creation and our ultimate return? There is nothing inherently wrong about wanting to live a long life, provided it promotes piety and not diminish it; provided the extra time leads us to the gates of Paradise and not encourage us to stray from it. Such must be the considerations with the days of our time.

Now before lowering the curtain on my reflections, let me say a few words about our adab (comportment, propriety) with time. Our life at the present moment in time lies between two other time periods: past and future. Whatever

wrongs we committed in the past can be rectified by remorse and sincere tawbah. This doesn't require physical exertion; rather it's simply an action of the heart. This is the adab with time that has passed in other than Allah's obedience. In respect to the future, it can be made sound by resolving not to commit sins. This too isn't a physical action, it is a firm intention in the heart. Thus the past can be rectified by repentance: the future, by a determined resolve to abstain from disobedience.

As for the present, the time between two times, Ibn al-Qayyim explains that the adab here is to realise that we are always going to be in one of three states: we will either be in a state of receiving divine blessings, or be afflicted with trials and misfortunes, or be in a state of sinfulness. Ibn al-Qayyim writes that the adab with these states is to be 'among those who, when blessed, give thanks; when tried, display patience; and when sinful, seek forgiveness. For these three conditions are a token of a person's happiness and the sign of his success in this world and the next. No person is without them, but is always

shifting from one state to the other.'

Let's leave the last word about time, and the adab we should be cultivating with time, to Imam al-Ghazali:

'You should not waste your time, doing at any moment whatever chances to present itself when it presents itself. Instead, you should take stock of yourself and structure your acts of devotion during each day or night, assigning to each period of time some specific function that is kept to and is not left for something else in that time. In this way the barakah of your time will become evident. But if you leave yourself to drift, aimlessly wandering as cattle do, not knowing what to occupy yourself with at each moment, you will squander most of your time. Your time is your life; your life is your capital through which you transact [with God] and through which you reach endless bliss in the proximity of God. Every breath you take is a priceless jewel that cannot be replaced. Once it passes, it can never be retrieved.'

*by : Shaykh Abu Aaliyah Surkheel Sharif*

## Fights due to Wealth

On several occasions Hazrat Qari Siddeeq Ahmad Baandwi (ra) used to quote Hazrat Moulana Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi (ra):

"It is our first-hand experience that whenever a family starts progressing from a worldly perspective in wealth and material, this is the beginning of its collapse. They become the victims of fitnah and corruption. Too much of wealth is not suitable for us. There is 'aafiyah (safety) in poverty and simplicity."

After mentioning this, Qari Siddeeq Saheb (ra) used to say that Hazrat Moulana (ra) has spoken the truth. I have also seen this happen with my own eyes. Look at the condition of Baroli and Hatora. As long as there was poverty in Baroli, no one knew what fighting meant. Now that wealth is pouring in abundance, look at what has happened. Enmity for one another has increased. People are killing one another. Up to this day they are still killing one another. Hundreds of thousands of Rupees have been spent on court cases. (Hayaat-e-Siddeeq, pg.

40)

# Lessons from Sahih Bukhari

*Dr. Rafiq Ahmad*

## The Book of Salah

### Chapter 106 : If a small girl is carried on the shoulder during the salāh.

#### Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb

In relation to previous chapters, here it can be said that Imām Bukhāri wants convey that when carrying a girl on one's shoulder won't spoil the salāh then how can it if a woman passes in front of a musalli.

#### Hadith No. 489

#### Narrated Abu Qatāda Al-Ansari

**Allah's Apostle was praying and he was carrying Umama the daughter of Zainab, the daughter of Allah's Apostle and she was the daughter of Aas bin Rabi'a bin Abdu Shams. When he prostrated, he put her down and when he stood, he carried her (on his neck).**

#### Comments

Abu Qatāda mentions that Rasulullah (saws) used to carry his granddaughter Uma-ma bint Zainab on his shoulders during salāh. He would put her down when bowing down to prostrate and again carry her when he stood.

Umama - the daughter of Sayyida Zainab - was later married to Aas bin Rabi'a. Sayyida Zainab was the eldest daughter of Sayyida Khadijah, and Aas bin Rabi'a was the son

of Haala bint Khuwaila - the sister of Sayyida Khadijah. Aas bin Rabi'a always treated Zainab nicely. During the Makkan life of Rasulullah (saws), Aas was pressed hard by the infidels to divorce her but he rejected. He fought along with the Makkan infidels on the day of the battle of Badr and was arrested by the Muslims. To free her husband from captivity, Sayyida Zainab sent the necklace she had been given by her mother Sayyida Khadijah on her marriage day, as compensation. The Muslims returned the necklace back as per the wishes of Rasulullah (saws), and Aas bin Rabi'a was freed on the undertaking that he would allow Zainab to migrate to Madinah which he fulfilled. Later on, at one occasion while travelling to Syria on a business trip he goods were seized by the Muslims. He himself succeeded to escape to Madinah where Sayyida Zainab gave him refuge. Rasulullah (saws) asked his people to return the seized goods and to him and let him go. He returned to Makkah and embraced Islam and came back to Madinah where he died in 12th Hijrah. Sayyida Zainab had died in 8th Hijrah during the lifetime of Rasulullah (saws).

#### What is Aml al-Katheer?

A musalli is supposed to offer his salāh in a dignified manner and not resort to any unnecessary bodily movements. Actions like

setting the dress, cap or turban, taking out or keeping something in the pockets etc., are makruh (disliked). Too much involvement in such acts is called ‘aml-al-katheer’, which may invalidate the salāh.

According to this hadith, Rasulullah (saws) carried his grand daughter on his shoulders and put her on the ground during his prostration and again carried her when he stood. The learned scholars have discussed at length whether this action of Rasulullah was aml al-katheer or not. The hanafite as well as shaafite scholars concur that it does not contribute to aml al-katheer. According to them aml al-katheer is such an action which involves both hands in the act and is done repeatedly during a salāh. According to the hanafite scholars, as quoted by Allāma Ayni, if a mother takes her baby in her lap during salāh her salāh is valid, but if she breast feeds the baby during the salāh then it will become invalid.

#### **Chapter 107 : When one offers salāh towards a bed with a menstruating woman in it.**

##### **Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb**

Touching a small girl will have no effect on one’s salāh as was discussed in the earlier chapter. Here Imām Bukhāri conveys that even if the salāh is offered towards a bed occupied by a menstruating woman, and her clothes come in contact with the musalli, there is no problem.

##### **Hadith No. 490**

**Narrated Maimuna bint Al-Harith**

**My bed was beside the praying place (Musalla) of the Prophet and sometimes his garment fell on me while I used to lie in my bed.**

##### **Hadith No. 491**

**Narrated Maimuna**

**The Prophet used to pray while I used to**

**sleep beside him during my periods (menses) and in prostrations his garment used to touch me.**

##### **Comments**

Sayyida Maimuna narrates that if during her menstruation period Rasulullah (saws) had to offer salāh in her room he would do so, while she remained in her bed in front of him. As already stated that according to Imām Bukhāri it will not have any effect on the salāh as against the hadith mentioned in Abu Dawood on the authority of Ibn Abbas which says:

“Salāh will be rendered invalid if a menstruating woman or a dog passes in front (of a musalli).”

These two apparently contradictory statements have already been explained earlier.

#### **Chapter 108 : Is it permissible for a man to nudge his wife when going into prostration so that he can prostrate properly?**

##### **Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb**

Here Imām Bukhāri moves a step ahead saying even if a man touches his wife during salāh there is no problem.

##### **Hadith No. 492**

**Narrated Aishah**

**It is not good that you people have made us (women) equal to dogs and donkeys. No doubt I saw Allah’s Apostle praying while I used to lie between him and the Qibla and when he wanted to prostrate, he pushed my legs and I withdrew them.**

##### **Comments**

This hadith has already been discussed. The room of Sayyida Aishah was so small that when Rasulullah (saws) had to prostrate during salāh he would push her feet to flex her

legs and make room for him to prostrate.

### **Chapter 109 : The woman removing something harmful from a musalli.**

#### **Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb**

It is obvious that when a woman will remove a harmful thing from the body of a musalli, she will have to touch him and may have to pass in front of him. According to Imām Bukhāri it will not effect salāh in any way.

#### **Hadith No. 493**

##### **Narrated Amr bin Maimuin**

**Abdullah bin Mas'ud said, "While Allah's Apostle was praying beside the Ka'ba, there were some Quraish people sitting in a gathering. One of them said, 'Don't you see this (who does deeds just to show off)? Who amongst you can go and bring the dung, blood and the abdominal contents (intestines, etc) of the slaughtered camels of the family of so and so and then wait till he prostrates and put that in between his shoulders?' The most unfortunate amongst them ('Uqba bin Abi Mu'ait) went (and brought them) and when Allah's Apostle prostrated, he put them between his shoulders. The Prophet remained in prostration and they laughed so much so that they fell on each other. A passerby went to Fatima, who was a young girl in those days. She came running and the Prophet was still in prostration. She removed them and cursed upon the Quraish on their faces. When Allah's Apostle completed his prayer, he said, 'O Allah! Take revenge on Quraish.' He said so thrice and added, 'O Allah! take revenge on Amr bin Hisham, Utba bin Rabia, Shaiba bin Rabi'a, Al-Walid bin Utba, Umaiya bin Khalaf, Uqba bin Abi Mu'ait and Umar bin Al-Walid." Abdullah added, "By Allah! I saw all of them dead in the battle field on the day of Badr and they were dragged and thrown in the Qalib (a well) at Badr: Allah's Apostle**

**then said, Allah's curse has descended upon the people of the Qalib (well).**

#### **Comments**

Sayyidna Abdullah bin Mas'ud narrates a painful incident which took place during the early days of Islam when the Makkans were persecuting Rasulullah (saws) and his handful of followers. One day some mischievous infidels which gossiping saw Rasulullah (saws) offering salāh near Ka'ba. One of them told his associates who amongst them would go to such and such family and bring the dung, blood and the intestines, etc., of slaughtered camels along with the uterus. One of them, Uqba bin Abi Mu'ait, volunteered for the job and brought the waste material, and when Rasulullah (saws) prostrated, he dropped it on his neck between the shoulders. The other Makkan infidels laughed so much that they fell on each other enjoying the scene. The waste material that was put on Rasulullah (saws) was so heavy that he could not lift his head from sajda. Sayyida Fatima, the beloved daughter of Rasulullah (saws) who was very young at that time, on hearing about the incident came running and removed the waste material from Rasulullah's (saws) neck. Sayyida Fatima scolded and cursed the infidels on their faces. When Rasulullah (saws) finished his salāh he supplicated to Allah saying "O Allah! Take revenge on Quraysh". He said so thrice and added, "O Allah! take revenge on Amr bin Hisham (Abu Jahl), Utba bin Rabia, Shaiba bin Rabi'a, Al-Walid bin Utba, Umaiya bin Khalaf, Uqba bin Abi Mu'ait and Umar bin Al-Walid." All these pagan chiefs were killed in the battle of Badr, Sayyidna Abdullah bin Mas'ud says "By Allah! I saw all of them dead in the battle field on the day of Badr and they were dragged and thrown in the Qalib (a well) at Badr: Allah's Apostle then said, Allah's curse has descended upon the people of the Qalib.

# A Golden Heart

‘Isa bin ‘Umailah Al-Fazaari (ra) mentions that a certain person told him the following:

I noticed that when Abu Zar (ra) would milk his goats, he would give his neighbours and guests to drink before he drank himself. One night, I saw him milk his goats to the point where absolutely nothing remained in their udders. After presenting the milk to his guests, he placed a small amount of dates before them. He thereafter apologized to them saying, “If we had anything better than this, we would have definitely brought it before you.” I thereafter observed that Abu Zar (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) himself did not eat a single morsel that night as he had presented all that he possessed to his guests. (Tabaqaat Ibni Sa’d vol. 4, pg. 178)

## Lessons:

1. Islam teaches us to honour the guest and the neighbour. Hence, Abu Zar (ra) went out of his way in honouring his guests and neighbours, to the extent where he spent the night in hunger and fed his guests all that he possessed. We should also try to honour our neighbours and guests, and should take special care to ensure that we do not cause them any inconvenience or hurt them in any way.
2. Preferring others over themselves was a salient quality among the Sahaabah (raa) and was thus highlighted by Allah Himself in the Quraan Majeed. Indeed, they were blessed with ‘hearts of gold’. Regrettably, this quality is lacking today, as most people are primarily concerned with their own comfort and are not prepared to make even a small sacrifice to bring comfort to others. We should make du‘aa to Allah that He bless us with big hearts and the spirit of compassion so that we will not be self-centred, but will wish to bring comfort and happiness to others as well.
3. An easy way through which we can maintain a good relationship with our neighbours is for us to send them some small gift from time to time such as baking or food. Although it may only be a plate of biscuits, the gesture is one of love and thus brings happiness to the heart.

# The Dagger of Islam

*Straight  
Talk*



*Syed Iqbal Zaheer*

The Dagger of Islam: This is the title of a book written by John Laffin, an influential political writer and commentator, who traveled widely in the Middle-east and the Islamic world to author some 80 books, many of which are on Islam and Muslims. This book was first published in 1979.

Like Huntington (Clash of Civilizations) and their band of people placed in positions of power, wealth and influence, Laffin is trembling with fear and anxiety in his book. Warnings are issued with the help of quotations. One is from a Sufi:

“We are at war. And our battle has just begun. Our first victory will be one tract of land somewhere in the world that is under the complete rule of Islam...Islam is moving across the earth...Nothing can stop [it] spreading in Europe and America.” (‘Abdul Qadir al-Sufi al-Darqawi in Jihad – a Grand Plan, published in Britain by Diwan Press, 1978)

Another is from two of his own tribal leader,

“Islam is once again on the march out of Arabia; it is a Muslim crusade, a religious and cultural jihad or holy war...Who knows what djinna has let loose upon the world.” (Christopher Dobson and Ronald Payne, The Sunday Telegraph, London, March 25, 1979)

The book has a dozen of such predictions and warnings by Muslim (taken out of context) and by non-Muslim (very much in context), writers, thinkers, and political pundits that can give jaun-

dice to many a Western reader. The trembling then is understandable.

Like Huntington, too, and many political thinkers, Laffin and others are pleading for a plan of action – meaning: a plan of war. “Strike,” as if they are saying to their leaders, “before the new force strikes. Destroy, before the Islamic revival destroys you.”

Laffin further quotes:

“As a creed with which Europe and America has to do business, Islam has begun to make Marxism look decidedly familiar and manageable... It presents itself as a powerful third force in international affairs.” (Guardian Weekly, Editorial, London, April 14, 1979)

And,

“A wave of religious fanaticism is sweeping the Arab world – indeed the whole Muslim world – and the consequences could be revolutionary.” (Editorial in To the Point International, Antwerp, November 14, 1977)

The message and warnings were well-received. Preparations began. Saddam was encouraged to invade Kuwait. The pretext came like Newton’s legendary apple, dropping down real into the Senate and Parliamentary baskets. Iraq was struck, Kuwait was saved, a couple of billions collected!

And, with the foothold obtained, thirteen years of bombing was let loose on Iraq, until



Baghdad women were washing pots in Euphrates, until they were sure, there wouldn't be any serious resistance when their mighty and the bravest ever forces set in foot.

But the pretext of chemical weapons wasn't working out well enough. Further, the new age was predicting massive changes at the social, economic and political level in the West. Democracy was too good as a pretext, too good for others, but at home, some ugly realities were surfacing. People's power had to be curbed, they had to be kept on war footing; they must look outside for the troubles inside, a permanent enemy was needed.

Islam and Muslims was the answer. And terrorism was the immediate enemy. To deal with this new enemy, they needed to terrorize their own masses: terrorize them into submission, bring the military into the streets, create a police state within the democratic state. It was like a naughty child at home. He had to be disciplined: They said, "The ghost is right there under the dark canopy. He will snatch you away."

Terrorism was the dark enemy under the canopy.

Another plan of action was brought in. If you sent an aircraft into a high building, built entirely with wooden planks, bolts and nuts, you cannot make it collapse by striking at the top. You must strike at bottom to make it collapse. If it collapses, like a house of cards, storey after storey, in a couple of seconds, great forces must be set at work. No wonder workers heard "boom," "boom," "boom," before every storey's fall.

That done, the theater of action was shifted. There, resistance killed, imprisoned, placed out

of action, the brave forces went in to transfer power to the dark forces within Islam's house; those who believe in destruction, without following up with construction, those who lament, without ever smiling and letting the mainstream smile, who preach, without ever converting, who divide, without leaving any room for rapprochement – for, they know – you can't go back in time to re-enact historical events.

Like Israel: a dagger in the heart – bleed and die, or submit. It was a dagger, but not the dagger of Islam. The Founding Fathers rest in the grave in peace, at last; or, is there going to be more of peace and security for those who laid down their arms and sued for peace 200 years ago, for those in the grave, for those being brought closer to their graves! Most probably no. Human blood is like nicotine. Given a little, the demand grows.

Unexpectedly, the dagger has become an arrow that pierces the hearts and, as the Roman Emperor Heraclius remarked addressing Abu

Sufyan in the seventh century: "True faith is something that, when it has pierced a heart, cannot be forced out."

The fears of men like John Laffin and a million others were not ill-founded. The Devil had directly planted those fears and apprehensions in their hearts and minds; otherwise, they could not have imagined the future so accurately. Who could have told them a quarter century ago that Islam will start to capture the hearts of their common folk?

Twenty-five percent population of Hague, the Capital of European Union, is Muslim. Most street hawkers in distant and cold countries – e.g. Holland – are Muslim. Popular cafeterias in Britain have white customers flocking in

*The  
Mayors, Hun-  
tingtons, Laffins and their  
kind may be asked, "What have  
you given your masses? Nudity,  
child murderers, gay, lesbians, dan-  
gerous criminals, school shooters, porn-  
filled media, male and female prostitutes,  
pimps, drugs, homicides, drunkards,  
gamblers, mass-shooters, dailyoblit-  
erates of innocent lives in distant  
lands, psychic patients and  
the homeless in mil-  
lions?"*

from distant neighborhoods. That is a country in which seven Mayors are Muslim, including that of London. When thousands of young boys and girls were looting in London – for hours – not a single Hijabi could be spotted.

A young girl asks her mother, “Mom. Can you buy me a Hijabi dress?” The mother in shock reacts, “What?” “Mom, you know, you look so beautiful in Hijab.”

A boy turns up home late after evening games. “Where have you been?” asks the mother sternly.

“Well, I was in the mosque with my pals learning the Qur’an.”

The mother reacts, “O my God! What’s wrong with you? Come on, boy! Tell me what have you learned?”

“Not much, Mom. Just a few verses.”

“Verses of the Koran!” she is almost screaming. “Tell me what they are.”

The boy reads out,

**“All praise for God, Lord of the worlds, the Compassionate, the Merciful; the Owner of the Day of Reckoning. You do we worship, and Your help do we seek.”**

The mother is as out of breath as the boy is. Her jaws are clamped hard upon each other, as she is wondering whether time has come to move away from this Paki-infested locality.

Muslims have come, and, without slogans, without demonstrations, and without noise, Islam has begun to play its role. The Jews have been in the West for last 2000 years. Besides Banks and as billionaires, what else have they given the society? Yes. Hollywood, but, otherwise, as little as none to be remembered for. Muslims are there perhaps for half a century; and we hear Angela Merkel saying: Islam is German!

When a Mayor was asked the reason for rejecting license to a Filfilah outlet in the United States, he replied: “Today Filfilah, tomorrow Sha-

warma, day after tomorrow the Qur’an. No sir, I will have none of it.”

The Filfilah and Shawarma outlets may, or may not, be there. But day after tomorrow, the Qur’an will be there.

The Mayors, Huntingtons, Laffins and their kind may be asked, “What have you given your masses? Nudity, child murderers, gay, lesbians, dangerous criminals, school shooters, porn-filled media, male and female prostitutes, pimps, drugs, homicides, drunkards, gamblers, mass-shooters, daily obliterates of innocent lives in distant lands, psychic patients and the homeless in millions?”

You name a degradation, and look into your glorious culture for its definition. What is your legacy: crime-infested streets and neighborhoods, parks and churches? The able-bodied, proud, hardworking honest folks suffering in humility for food stamps?

Worst of all – you have taken away your people’s hope. The hope that this life, this society, this world, will ever be better, will ever stop torturing them. A fair-skinned, fair-looking, blond girl is asked: “Why? Why at all did you have to become a Muslim?” She is in tears. “Look!” She says, “I had to choose between suicide and Islam.”

Why are you angry and frustrated if a man rejected by you for his skin-color leaves you and goes into the mosque to lead in the Prayers?

It’s not the dagger. Your dishonesty is despite your assumed objectivity in writings. You know it’s the arrow – the arrow of Islam – that frets you. Or rather, not an arrow. It’s showers of mercy right from He in the heavens. You might pay attention to His voice:

**“Nay, We generously provided these people and their forefathers, until a great length of time passed over them. Do they not notice that We set upon the land, decreasing it at its borders? Then, is it they who will prevail?” (The Qur’an, 21:44)**

**“When your rulers will be the worst among you, the wealthy ones will be miserly and your important matters will be in the hands of your women, then to be in the stomach of the earth (the grave) will be better than being on the surface”. (Tirmizi)**

# Inheritance

## *Basic Principles*

*Mawlana Muhammad Saleem Dhorat*

On the occasion of the death of a person, we are reminded of the Hereafter, and to an extent, we are mindful of ensuring that our actions concerning the deceased are completed according to the Commands of Allāh and the sunnah of the Prophet (saws). Unfortunately, one area which remains largely unpractised and neglected is that of the correct distribution of inheritance.

The wealth, possessions, property, etc. that a person leaves behind are the deceased's estate. This needs to be distributed to the rightful inheritors in accordance with the laws of Shari'ah. The Prophet (saws), stressing its importance, says,

**Learn (the knowledge of) inheritance and teach it (to the people), for it is half of knowledge; and it will eventually be forgotten. It will be the first (knowledge) to be taken away from my Ummah. (Ibn Mājah)**

Nowadays, even those considered religious, who are very cautious regarding their wealth and food, ensuring that they are all from halāl sources, are neglectful regarding this part of Shari'ah. Beware of the fact that not giving someone their due right from the inheritance is just like stealing their wealth. Stated below are a few points which will, inshā'allāh, help us learn some basic principles of inheritance, together with prevailing misconceptions and incorrect

practices. Due to the delicate and complex nature of the rules of inheritance, one must consult the 'Ulamā and Muftis in all circumstances.

When distributing the deceased's estate, the following steps need to be taken in the order mentioned:

From the estate, the first right of the deceased is that of the funeral expenses. It is of course another matter if out of love one or more of the inheritors decide to personally bear the expenses. However, if the deceased be a woman survived by her husband, then her husband will bear the funeral expenses. This will be his responsibility, irrespective of whether she has left behind an estate or not. It should be remembered here that neither should one indulge in extravagance nor miserliness, but a path of moderation should be adopted.

After drawing the funeral expenses, one will need to ascertain whether the deceased had left any debts. If needed, scrutinise his records and statements to determine this. Any debts need to be paid off before any inheritor can receive any share. For example, if the deceased left behind a house valued at £100,000 and also had debts amounting to the same, then the house will be sold and the debt will be settled after deducting funeral expenses. The inheritors will, in such circumstances, receive nothing. Should the inheritors refuse to clear the debts and unjustly

claim the house for themselves, then the estate, which they will have wrongfully seized, will be deemed harām.

A person has the right to make a wasiyyah (bequest) in one third of his estate in favour of certain individuals or eligible organisations and causes. There are two principles which apply to this.

Firstly, the deceased cannot make a wasiyyah for anyone who stands to receive a share in his inheritance as defined by the Shari'ah. This is because the Prophet (saws) has said,

**“There is no wasiyyah for the inheritor.” (Abū Dāwūd)**

Secondly, wasiyyah can only apply to a maximum of one third of the estate.

For example, if a person makes a wasiyyah for £5,000 to be donated to a particular masjid, as far as the first condition is concerned, the masjid will be eligible as it is not an inheritor of the deceased. However, upon death, if after deducting the funeral expenses and debts, it is calculated that only £9,000 remains, then the masjid will not receive £5,000 as proposed in the wasiyyah. Rather, it will only receive £3,000, as wasiyyah can only apply to a maximum of one third of the estate.

Lastly all those who are eligible to receive a share of the inheritance should get their respective shares according to what has been defined in great detail in our Shari'ah. For this, an 'Alim or Mufti should be consulted.

Important note: Females who stand to inherit are often neglected. The Shari'ah, with its wisdom, has allocated shares for both males and females and it is important that these are abided by.

**For men there is a share in what the parents and the nearest of kin have left. And for women there is a share in what the parents and the nearest of kin have left, be it small or large, a determined share. (4:7)**

Unfortunately, nowadays in society it is

common that women are not given their share; rather, they are contacted by the brothers who inform them of their plans for their share of the wealth and in doing so attempt to coax them into making the same decision. In many cases, due to the position of the brother in the family, the sister, daughter, etc. will find it difficult to actually acquire her share. Therefore, the money should be physically handed over to her so that she can decide as she wishes.

Note: It should be borne in mind that in situations wherein there is a minor (non-bāligh) amongst the inheritors, and the inheritors decide to collectively spend the estate in a certain cause, the consent of the minor will not be valid until he/she reaches maturity. This is because in many cases the consent of a minor is not valid in Shari'ah. However, if other inheritors besides the minor decide to individually or collectively spend their share of the inheritance in a particular cause then this is their prerogative.

Note: Another very important matter to keep in mind is that of separate and identifiable ownership. Many people nowadays have joint bank accounts. Upon the death of a person, it becomes extremely difficult and sometimes impossible to ascertain exactly how much belonged to each person because each would deposit their money into one account. By keeping separate bank accounts it becomes easy to distribute the inheritance correctly after someone's death. Similarly, every item in the home should have an identifiable owner, so upon the death of someone there are no issues. In order to do this, records should be kept clearly identifying the owners of all items in the home.

In-shā'-Allāh, if we keep in mind the importance of consulting the 'Ulamā and Muftis regarding inheritance and start with the few basic principles mentioned above, we will be able to ensure its correct implementation upon someone's death. May Allāh grant us the tawfiq to fulfil His commandments in all facets of our lives.

# AL-YUNINI AND THE TRANSMISSION OF SAHIH AL-BUKHARI

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**Maulana Zeeshan Aftab**

The current questioning of the authenticity of the transmission of Sahih al-Bukhari, as bizarre as it is, has allowed Muslim scholars and laymen the chance to appreciate the erudition of the scholars of the past. We have always been taught of the greatness of the likes of Abu Hanifa, al-Shaf'i, al-Bukhari, etc... and their many virtues but few have been able to experience their greatness first hand. The simple reason is that the more technical a science one's expertise is in, the more difficult it is for the masses to appreciate. The transmission of books through transcribing, dictation, editing is an alien science to the average 21st century mind due to the invention of the printing press. So, when told that the original work of a figure of the past is lost and the copies of that work have differences, it is easy to understand why the average person would be sceptical. But the thinking person should ask, how many original signed copies of works do we have of historical figures? If the answer is very very few (which would be accurate), how is that scholars attribute books and statements to historical figures with such conviction? Has there been a huge conspiracy? This is not to deny that there have been false attributions made by scholars, but only that one should have a consistent and scholarly methodology.

Different aspects of the transmission of Sahih

al-Bukhari has been discussed by dear friend Mufti Muntasir Zaman and there is more to discuss which will be the aim of future articles insha'allah. The focus of the current piece is on the transmission of al-Yunini; who was he, what did he do and how did it impact later scholarship on the Sahih? Much of the content of this current piece has been taken from the exhaustive study by Dr Jumu'ah Fahmi entitled 'Riwaayat al-Jami' al-Sahih wa Nusakhuhu'. But before we enter the details of al-Yunini, we must first present the objections against his transmission. Much of the arguments against the transmission of Sahih al-Bukhari (and the content of the book) has been taken from a recently published book entitled 'Sahih al-Bukhari: Nihayat Ashurah' written by Rashid Aylal. It would be an understatement if it is said that this book is a great demonstration of poor scholarship. This assessment is not based on the fact that he is questioning the authority of Sahih al-Bukhari, but due to simple poor scholarship. There is selective quoting, a warped methodology, misunderstandings and even accusations of plagiarism! Whatever the case, Rashid Aylal fails to bring Yunini in to this mass conspiracy in adding and taking away from Sahih al-Bukhari. For him the damage was done much earlier. But recently some have attempted to cast doubt on Yunini's transmission by first

stating that Yunini's recension is lost. Hence, implying that we cannot trust it. And secondly claiming that Yunini had Ibn Malik corrected the grammatical errors in Sahih al-Bukhari, again implying that we cannot trust the transmission as it was replete with grammatical mistakes.

Regarding the first point; the absence of a handwritten manuscript from the author, then this demonstrates an ignorance of how classical books have been transmitted throughout the ages. Rashid Aylal makes it his central argument, but then also claims that there are barely any manuscripts for any of the early books dating within the first 300 years of Islam. Those using this argument and working off Aylal's book should consider then the implication of such a methodology. Most of, if not all of the early books of tarikh, hadith, sirah, jarh wa tādil etc. will become unreliable. This problem would not be restricted to early Islam, but to most of the works ascribed to historical personalities. How then were books transmitted?

The case of the Sahih al-Bukhari, as has been discussed in other articles, is a demonstrative example. Imam Bukhari penned his collection and then dictated it to multiple students. From amongst this large group, the transmission of a few grew popular due to various factors. This was down to their closeness to Imam Bukhari, their access to Imam Bukhari's original work, their competency in transmission, how long they lived (as the longer a transmitter lived, the higher number of students they would usually have) and a host of other factors. So, it turned out that his student al-Farabri became the central transmitter of the Sahih al-Bukhari because he best fulfilled those factors. This transmission of al-Farabri was passed down via multiple students consistently for centuries until our day. But as is expected from any human effort there were differences in the various transmissions, most of which were insignificant and had to do with the structure of the book, rather than the actu-

al hadith. These differences were approached in a scholarly manner via comparing the various transmissions, earlier book citations, comparison of other hadith collections etc. The vast majority of early texts face similar problems but what makes the Sahih al-Bukhari special is the great amount of scholarly effort put into every aspect of the book. This includes books on the narrators of the hadith in the collection, critically engaging with the authenticity of certain hadith, the chapter headings, attempts to decipher the methodology of Bukhari, collections of hadith based on Bukhari's conditions and generic commentaries dealing with all of the above and more. This point also refutes the notion that due to an absence of any explicit praise (tawthiq) for al-Farabri makes him unreliable. As major hadith experts relied on his transmission to not only transmit the Sahih al-Bukhari, but to write books on the Sahih. It would be ridiculous to suggest that scholars would sacrifice years of their lives to work on a book whose main transmitter is unreliable!

### **Who was Yunini?**

This now brings us to Yunini's transmission of Sahih al-Bukhari. Yunini, full name 'Ali Sharaf al-Din Abū al-Husayn, was a Hadith specialist from the Hanbali madhhab. He was born in Baalbek in the year 621. His father, as well as his brother, were famous Hanbali scholars which meant that Sharaf al-Din al-Yunini was born into a scholarly family. After completing his travels in the pursuit of knowledge he began teaching in the hadith faculty at the Madrasah al-Zahiriyyah in Damascus. He taught their multiple classics such as 'al-Muhaddith al-Fasil' of al-Ramahurmuzi and 'Musnad al-Shafi'i'. His students include the likes of Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Dhahabi.

Despite his teaching and transmitting various books, it was his effort on Sahih al-Bukhari which cemented his authority in hadith. Taqi al-Din al-Fasi describes him as the greatest to have

transmitted it. Ibn Rajab states that he narrates a lot and the Huffaz of his age took hadith from him. He did not write much in terms of his own works except for 'al-Mashyakhah' which is a list of his teachers. He died on a Friday, the 5th [13] Ramadhan 701 when a mad man attacked him. Allah have mercy on him.

### **Yunini's Transmission of the Sahih**

As for Yunini's transmission of Bukhari, then the aim of Yunini's recension has been explained by himself. The basic idea was to bring together the various transmission and provide a critical edition of the Sahih. Juma'ah has attempted to summarize Yunini's transmitted (riwayat) sources in a diagram (I have provided an English translation of that diagram at the end). As for the manuscripts that he had available to him, then he used five.

- 1) A copy of the transmission of Abū al-Waqt
- 2) A copy of the transmission of Abū Dharr al-Harawi
- 3) A copy of the transmission of al-Asili
- 4) A copy of the transmission of Ibn 'Asakir

### **A copy of the transmission of Abū Sa'd al-Sam'ani**

Gathering those different transmissions and manuscripts, Yunini clarified in which manuscript or transmission a word or sentence was found and in which there was something missing. He alerted the reader to this via formulating an elaborate key.

The original work penned by Yunini is now lost, but multiple students had transcribed his work. Ahmad ibn Muhammad I-Qastallani's (d.923) famous commentary of Sahih al-Bukhari 'Irshad al-Sari' was reliant on Yunini's transmission. When writing, he did not initially have access to the original copy of Yunini. He was most impressed by Shams al-Din al-Ghazuli's (d.777)[16]copy, such that it may have been better than the original. He had two other copies and he compared the three when writing his

commentary. Al-Qastallani mentions that later he happened to come across a volume of the original copy of Yunini, with which he compared the copies he had. The second part of Ghazuli's copy is still available Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah. Another person to have copied Yunini's work was Shihab al-Din al-Nuwayri (d.733). He himself states that he made his copy using Yunini's original work seven times. Al-Nuwayri's transmission was copied and taught by a many of the major hadith scholars after him. His fifth writing of Yunini's transmission became the central source of listening (sama') of Bukhari in Egypt. The original manuscript of al-Nuwayri can be found. Much more can be said regarding the preservation of Yunini's work and the list of scholars and manuscripts that are available right down to our time. Rather than allowing someone to doubt such a transmission, the effort to preserve and critical assess previous works allows us to appreciate the scholarly rigor of our tradition. A last point regarding this to note is that no person, Muslim or non-Muslim (to my knowledge) has ever made this claim that due to the absence of the original Yunini's handwritten manuscript, one should doubt whether we have his work preserved.

### **Ibn Malik and Yunini's Transmission**

What was Ibn Malik's role in Yunini's work? Jamal al-Din Muhammad ibn Malik was an Andalusian linguist born in the year 600. His biographers described him as being 'unique in his era' (wahid 'asrihi). In the year 666, Yunini held multiple gatherings throughout that year. The total number of gatherings ended up being seventy-one. Ibn Malik attended these sessions and himself explains his role, 'a group of notable scholars attended the transmission session. [We were] looking through the relied upon manuscripts [of Sahih al-Bukhari] and whenever a word came in which there was ambiguity (dhū ishkal), I clarified the correct usage and the accurate pronunciation was place based on my

knowledge of the Arabic language. Whatever required a lengthier elaboration, I delayed its case to a treatise in which a brought detail...’ This treatise mentioned at the end is referring to his ‘Shawahid’. The method employed by Ibn Malik was to bring the phrase or word in which there is some ambiguity or a difference of opinion, he then brings corroborating evidences (shawahid) to support the different readings. It is interesting to note that alongside the usage of Qur’anic verses and classical poetry, many of these shawahid are other hadith, demonstrating the preservation of hadith to be a source for correct Arabic[23]. At some points the hadiths found in Bukhari are used as evidences for the opinions of certain linguists. In the hadith of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar as found in the transmission of Kushmihani, Ibn Malik states that the wording

of the hadith is an evidence against the linguist al-Farra’ (d.207[24])[25]. The simple point being stressed here is that the notion that Ibn Malik had to come along and rectify Bukhari’s text due to so many grammatical errors is absurd to say the least.

To conclude, the transmission of Sahih al-Bukhari and the efforts the scholars of the past made on it is a testament to the erudition of our scholarly heritage. It was not a tradition of blind acceptance, but of critical engagement and asking the difficult questions. This is not to claim that there is no room for further investigation, rather to the contrary, we should also engage critically with our tradition but with a consistent scholarly methodology in pursuit for the truth. Not ad hoc methods to forward an agenda or world view.

## Travelling in the Same Direction

Imagine a family wishing to travel together. However, each person has a different destination. Thus the husband wants to take a turn towards the east, the wife wants him to turn towards the west and the children want to go south. Can you imagine the arguments and the tension in that vehicle? The arguments and tension could sometime even lead to an accident. The same is the case of daily life. In order to avoid the arguments and tension, everyone must have the same direction.

The only direction that leads to every success is Deen. Therefore, the husband, wife and children must all adopt one direction and have one goal, to earn the pleasure of Allah Ta‘ala. Whenever the family is confronted with the issue of whether to turn left or right, all should simply ask: “What will make Allah Ta‘ala happy?” This approach will insha-Allah make the journey of life peaceful and enjoyable.



# Truth

## Between Conviction & Delusion

Muhammad Ghilan

In his autobiography *Deliverance from Error* (*Al-Munqidh Min Adh-Dhalal*), Imam Abu Hamid Al-Ghazālī explains how he dealt with his skepticism on the path to attaining certainty regarding what beliefs he adopted. He mastered the tenets of the major intellectual movements of his time and authored books in each, garnering the praise of figures within these movements for how Imam Al-Ghazālī not only understood the core issues they were dealing with, but that he had a better grasp on them than their own scholars. Nevertheless, the intellectual activity proved to be insufficient, as it never settled his restless soul. The significance of Imam Al-Ghazālī does not lie so much in his insights about the specific deficiencies of arguments within each intellectual movement and sect during his time. Rather, it is in his realization that a discourse claiming to deal with knowledge but that cannot in turn be realized in tangible action that transforms one's being is in reality a façade – a mirage of enlightenment.

The Arabic terms for knowledge, 'ilm, and action, 'amal, differ only in the order of letters. Changing the letter order once more results in the word lama', which means brilliance. True enlightenment, which is really about having the capacity for insight, i.e., being able to see

beyond what is apparent and presented to the sight, is a result of having a purified heart. Indeed, although the Beloved (saws) had his heart physically washed, the ingredients that made up the water used in that purification process have been passed down over the past generations. For us, it is a matter of consciously mixing them and doing the washing ourselves.

A purified heart is necessarily one that is connected with God. The possessor of such a heart reflexively interprets the events of their lives as reflections of Divine Attributes in light of the Big Picture. God's mercy is not something to be judged based on a limited interaction with this world, for our presence in the world is nothing but a brief stop on the path to the Final Abode. Attachment to this temporal realm is an attachment to an illusion of the power of the self. It is the idea that I am the possessor of my destiny, and that my plans will get me to my goals. The delusion here lies in the fact that there is no I or me for there to be a my. That is not to say that one should stop contemplating the future and plan accordingly. But it is to point out that plans have a funny way of becoming an idol to be worshiped, albeit subconsciously, besides God. A man knocked on the Beloved (saws)'s door and when asked to identify himself he replied, "It's

me” as if the Beloved (saws) should recognize who it was from his voice, to which the Beloved (saws) replied with dislike, “It’s me! It’s me!”

The Beloved (saws) taught a man who asked about whether he should tie his camel or just have reliance on God that he should “tie it and rely on God.” The teaching here is that it is upon one to strive, but it is not upon one to arrive. In other words, you must carry out the means, but do not get attached to them or to their outcomes. Rather, your possession of the camel has nothing to do with your own doing in the real sense of what that would actually entail. You have no power to sustain your own contingent and temporal existence, let alone possess any power of your own to bring another’s existence to be subjugated to yours.

Among the invocations recited during the morning and evening litanies practiced and transmitted from the Beloved (saws) is one stating, “O God, I seek from you a surprise that is good, and I seek refuge with you from a surprise that is bad.” Plans are our means to create an orderly life to minimize anxiety about the unknown. Plans give us a false sense of certainty about how life will unfold. It is a feeling of being awake when in reality we have gone to sleep. This is evident in the way many of us react when things do not go according to plan. Like the one who gets suddenly awoken in the middle of the night, we become upset and lash out due to having our imagined state of comfort disrupted, even if the person we get upset with has nothing to do with the disruption aside from being the means through which we experience it.

Our perception of the quality of surprises being “good” or “bad” is limited to our experience of the world. We heedlessly wonder about how we could reconcile God’s love and mercy with circumstances that we feel are “bad”, rather than wonder about our own perception’s validity in relation to the Big Picture. Whether what we go through life happens to be good or bad is a judgment that we cannot make until we actu-

ally get through life. Aristotle viewed that happiness can only be ascertained after one reaches the conclusion of their life and assesses the sum total. The Quran states that real life where such a judgment about happiness can be made is in the Final Abode. Our existence in this world is merely a preparation.

**“No calamity befalls on the Earth nor in your own selves except that it was written before it was brought into existence; surely, that is easy for God. This is so that you may not grieve for what has escaped you, nor be exultant at what He has given you.” Quran [57:22-23]**

The Beloved (saws) gave a counsel to his young cousin Ibn Abbas RA in which he told him that nothing meant for him can be prevented from reaching him even if everyone in the universe were to gather their efforts to stop it, and nothing can afflict him with harm that was not meant to afflict him even if everyone in the universe were to conspire for it to make it happen. Having certainty in the Divine Decree is a difficult thing, if not impossible, to attain if this Prophetic counsel was restricted to the intellectual realm. The achievement of this certainty can only be attained, as Imam Al-Ghazālī realized, through the path of action.

**“And worship your Lord until certainty reaches you.” Quran [15:99]**

The certainty mentioned in the verse is traditionally interpreted to mean death. However, another layer of meaning can be extracted based on the verse that says,

**“I have not created the Jinn and Mankind except for that they worship Me.” [51:56]**

According to Ibn Abbas RA, what is meant here is that the purpose of creation that was to be realized through worship is to know God. In other words, the verse mentions the means to arrive at the objective. To know God is to know the Truth, and to know the Truth is to have certain-

ty. But none of this can be realized unless one begins with acknowledging that this can only come on God's terms, not on ours, for that,

**“He does not get questioned about what He does. Rather, it is they who get questioned.”  
Quran [21:23]**

Knowledge of God does not come through rational contemplation. One cannot claim to know what falling in love feels like simply because they have measured oxytocin and dopamine levels and looked at functional MRI brain scans of lovers as they thought of each other. The non-rational experience of love is the only way to know what love is like. Only those in love can comprehend what Jane Austen meant by saying, “If I loved you less, I might be able to talk about it more.” Or better yet, only those who are enamored in love can understand what Qays ibn Al-Mulawwah meant when he said,

*I kiss the dirt that your foot walks upon O  
Loa'yla*

*If it were not for you I would not be called the  
Afflicted One*

*My kissing of the dirt is not out of love for the  
ground*

*It is out of love for the one who stepped upon  
that dirt*

*I went insane because of her and have become  
A lover who enjoys through her the experience of  
pain*

Whoever tastes, they shall know, and whoever knows, they shall indulge. One of the past Muslim sages said, “The ignorant of God is one who wakes up wondering what they will do that day. The knower of God is one who wakes up

wondering what God will do with them.” This statement is a reflection upon a Hadith related by the Beloved (saws) in which God says in part of it, “When I love [My servant] I will be the ears with which they hear, the eyes with which they see, the hand with which they strike, and the leg with which they walk.” When one sees everything and every event as a sign meant to direct them to God, nothing will seem out of place.

Much of the spiritual crisis and doubts many experience can be attributed to the lack of personal investment and engagement in the actions prescribed by the Lawgiver. We have turned our rational powers from means to get to God into ends that everything, including God, must be subjected to. We live in a time when everything in Islam that deals with action is being explained away in a fashion that facilitates inaction. Nuance is being introduced increasingly into every aspect of Islam as it is being deconstructed to fit whatever happens to be the popular cultural movement. Instead of belief in God, we believe in ourselves, and we project a model of religion and God based on our own notions of what constitutes love, mercy, bigotry, and tolerance. There is a metaphysical effect to observing the Sacred Law that is undermined by its abandonment. Prayer is not a set of stretching exercises, the Hijab is not about men, and fasting is not about losing weight. Before one asks, “Where is God?” they must first cease from participating in this circumambulation around the ego in a collective act of self-worship. Only then will the world no longer be a veil between us the Unseen.

*“The one who eats from a utensil and cleans it completely (so that no particle of food is left), the utensil supplicates for forgiveness on his behalf”. (Tirmizi)*

# Fight Fire with Water, Not with Fire

Dawud Walid

The popular adage of “fighting fire with fire” seems to be gaining more acceptability in practice within the socio-political sphere of America. The justification of using the same or similar tactics of perceived wrongdoers to counter them is now being justified not only by columnists and pundits but even by politicians of major political parties. As people of faith guided by sacred law and the pristine model of conduct in Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace be upon him and his family), we need to constantly re-anchor ourselves in our spiritual tradition and gently remind each other that the ends do not justify all means when challenging injustices, even if those injustices are grave.

There are few crimes that stir anger within humans more than the targeting of families. Allah (Mighty and Sublime) instilled within our primordial nature to cherish the bonds of blood-kin and to preserve our offspring. Hence, it is natural for people to not only be angered when seeing their family members intimidated, injured or forcibly removed from them but also for those who possess the spiritual quality of empathy to be highly disturbed when seeing such happening to others outside of their families. But again, the natural inclination to loathe these injustices does not give Muslims license to transgress boundaries set forth by the Qur’an

and the Sunnah when pushing back against oppression.

In early history, there was no family which suffered more oppression than the family of the Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him and his family). They were cursed from the pulpits, martyred during the reign of Bani Umayyah, and incarcerated and martyred in greater numbers during the rule of Bani Abbas. This oppression led to a misguided response from one among them during the rule of Bani Abbas in which fighting fire with literal fire was committed.

One of several protests and uprisings by the descendants of Sayyiduna Ali bin Abi Talib (may Allah ennoble his face) during the Abbasi era was led by Zayd bin Musa al-Kazim bin Ja’far as-Sadiq bin Muhammad al-Baqir bin Ali as-Sajjad bin Husayn as-Sibt (may Allah’s mercy be upon them).<sup>1</sup> Zayd bin Musa became so infuriated by the targeting of his kinfolk by Bani Abbas that he and those who he organized burned down the family homes of Bani Abbas in Basrah, Iraq during the rule of Abu al-Abbas “al-Ma’mun” bin Harun.<sup>2</sup> From this extreme event, he became known as Zayd an-Nar (the Fire) for fighting the oppression of Bani Abbas against his family by targeting their families’ homes in which women and children resided.<sup>3</sup>

Zayd an-Nar's targeting of the families within Bani Abbas was an unjustifiable response according to sacred law even though he had legitimate grievances about systematic oppression against the Prophetic Household (Ahl al-Bayt) and their disciples.

Anger is a natural response within humans, for without it, people would be indifferent towards tyranny and violations of created beings' natural rights. Our spiritual direction through the Qur'an and connection with our Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him and his family) are to be like water for us to temper our anger so that it does not become a fire which serves the force of further destruction. Thus, when the Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him and his family) advised a man "Don't be angry," it was counsel not to act upon matters driven by rage.<sup>4</sup> Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (may Allah sanctify his spirit) stated in relation to this the expression that "Anger is the flame of the fire."<sup>5</sup> Fighting fire with fire makes the fire grow and spread.

In the current socio-political environment, we must consistently measure what our responses should be based upon our spiritual tradition, not what is politically in vogue among politicians, pundits and activists who are not rooted in our spiritual foundations.

It is not from our noble tradition to spew profanity at others because they institute racist government policies or call us racial slurs. It is not from our path to intimidate persons' spouses and children in public or at their homes even if they are in favor of the Muslim Ban or splitting up families through rushed deportations. Our way is to stick to our faith principles, to work in accordance with them and to patiently preserve in that work trusting that Allah (Mighty and Sublime) will grant relief when He decrees so, not when we think so. Our spirituality should be like water which tempers and properly guides our indignation. We should not expect true success or victory by reacting to injustices in ways that are against the Qur'an and Sunnah, for true success comes from Allah (Mighty and Sublime), not by means outside of what pleases Him.

1. Yahya bin al-Hasan al-'Aqiqi, *Kitab al-Mu'qibin min Walad al-Imam Abi al-Hasan Ali bin Abi Talib Amir al-Mu'minin*, Page 329

2. Fakhr ad-Din ar-Razi, *Ash-Shajarah al-Mubarakah fi Ansab at-Talibiyyah*, Page 113

3. Ibn Jarir at-Tabari, *Tarikh at-Tabari*, Volume 8, Page 535

4. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith #5765

5. Al-Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum ad-Din*, *Kitab adh-Dhamm al-Ghadab wa al-Hiqd wa al-Hasad*



# The Boy and the King

## A Different Format

This story is also referred to as the People of the Ditch or the People of the Trench. The presentation of this story is unique because the conclusion is set out in the Qu'ran (Surah Al Burooj), but the main narrative of the incidents that unfolded is contained in a Hadith.

Not much detail was given on the location and timeline, nor do we know the name of the key people involved. Allah did not give us the detail, but what is important is the message that can be extracted from these incidents.

The People of the Trench are so elevated in the Qur'an that Surah Al Burooj begins with a promise from Allah by the location of the stars. Stars are powerful and fixed, and any change in the position of the stars or their precise orbit around the galaxy will unbalance everything else in the universe. When Allah promises by the stars, the gravity of such oath is extremely high. We are alerted that the following verses will contain significant and serious information. It also shows that even though the people involved are not Messengers or Prophets, the extraordinary actions of such normal people have an impact, and can attract the blessing or curse of Allah, depending which side they champion.

Surah Al Burooj states the curse by Allah

upon the Companions of the Trench for their oppression against the believers, and the elevation of the People of the Trench for their faith and righteous deeds.

According to authentic Hadith, the story is about an anonymous boy. No specific references to his name or his village is mentioned. Allah wants us to understand that these details are not significant. The other characters are a pious hermit, a court magician (or sorcerer), a blind governor, the King and the villagers. Some Islamic historians have provided theories on their details, but we will not repeat them here because there are conflicting opinions on these. We shall instead emphasise the message and the lessons learnt from this story.

Surah Al Burooj only provides the ending of the story, and from it we understand that the believers are destined for jannah and the disbelievers are destined for jahannam:

“Indeed, those who have tortured the believing men and believing women and then have not repented will have the punishment of Hell, and they will have the punishment of the Burning Fire.” (Al Qur'an 85:10)

## A Magician's Apprentice

There was once a boy who was on his way to an apprenticeship with the King's sorcerer.

At this time, employment as the King's sorcerer was a prestigious and lucrative position, but it involved corruption, dabbling in the dark arts and other dubious aspects related to the material life.

On the way to his apprenticeship, the boy discovered a pious hermit who had escaped the worldly life and had been secluding himself in a cave for some years. The hermit, according to some, used to be the close advisor to the King, but he was a believer and a pious man. He could not bear the corruption and the amount of kufr and shirk around him. When the King commanded everyone to worship and obey him, this man decided to sacrifice his worldly life, status and family to safeguard his faith rather than to be a part of any oppression or aggression against the people.

The hermit started teaching the boy about Islam. The boy studied Islam from the hermit in secret while in parallel, continued with his apprenticeship. The more he understood Islam, the more the boy became disheartened by the corruption, greed and love of the material world he witnessed in the King's court. The contradictory forces between the beauty and purity of Islam against the enticements of the royal court, and by extension, the material world, placed the boy at a crossroads.

One day, the boy asked the old man why his teaching was the opposite of what the magician taught and the reality of what he saw. Where was the truth, and how would he know where the truth lay?

The hermit advised him: "If you are sincere seeking the truth, ask Allah to give you the truth, and you will see it. But once you see the truth, you have to follow it and be ready to do whatever it takes to support the truth."

One day, a beast obstructed the road of the village, posing great danger and causing panic to the people. The boy saw this as the opportunity to solve his moral dilemma, and decided to discover once and for all which was superior

– the knowledge of the monk or the magician.

The boy picked up a stone and made du'a to the effect that if the monk's affair was dearer to Allah than the magician's (i.e. where the truth lay), for Allah to cause the animal to die. He called the name of Allah and threw the stone, and with Allah's will, the stone killed the animal.

At this point, the boy was convinced which path he was to take. He relinquished his dun-ia and started to spread Islam to those around him.

The boy relayed this incident to the monk, and the monk warned him that the boy had become superior to him and would soon face a trial.

### **The Trial Begins**

Meanwhile, the boy began to treat the blind and began to cure various diseases amongst his people, by the name of Allah. He made sure that the people knew that Allah, and not he, was the healer, and he spread the seed of faith of Allah the Creator (the oneness of Allah).

Eventually, a blind governor from the King's court, came to know about the boy's ability, and consulted him. The boy said that if the governor were to believe in Allah, Allah would restore his eyesight. The governor confirmed his belief in Allah, and with the will of Allah, the boy supplicated for the governor and his vision was cured.

When the King asked how his eyesight was regained, the governor replied that it was from his Lord. This answer displeased the King immensely, for he rejected that there was any lord or deity apart from him. As a punishment, the governor was tortured until he revealed the details of the boy, and then later he was executed in the most brutal fashion.

The boy was summoned before the King. The boy explained that he did not cure anyone, but rather that it was Allah who did so. This explanation enraged the King, and the boy was then tortured and forced to reveal details of the hermit (who was then executed).

The King tried to kill the boy through various means, but he and his army failed repeatedly. He tried assassinating him with a sword, but the boy made du'a to Allah for the killer to be paralyzed. Allah accepted the supplication. Next, the King commanded a group of soldiers to throw the boy from the mountaintop. The boy supplicated, and Allah sent a strong wind which flung all the soldiers from the peak of the mountain, saving the boy.

Every time the King asked the boy who saved him, the boy replied "My Creator, I called Him and He saved me." The King commanded another group of people to take him to the middle of the sea, tie a big rock to him, and throw him overboard. Again, the boy made du'a, Allah saved him from drowning, but drowned the rest of the crew.

All this time, the villagers were watching one botched up assassination attempt after the next. The boy kept explaining that his Creator, Allah SWT saved him. The number of believers kept increasing.

### **A Sudden Death**

Finally the boy confronted the King and told the frustrated King that if he wanted to kill him, he should gather the people in an assembly and hang him by the trunk of a tree, and then shoot him with an arrow after saying "In the Name of Allah, the Lord of the worlds."

The King was delighted by the solution and did as the boy suggested. Before the assembly of the whole village, the King took aim, and said "In the name of Allah, the Lord of the young boy." As promised, the arrow hit its mark and the boy died.

However, this public declaration of the King convinced the spectators to believe in Allah, and they embraced Islam in droves. This was the direct opposite of what the King had intended!

The King was furious, and commanded that trenches be dug at certain points, and fires to be lit within. The believers were rounded up and

forced to jump into the flames, burning themselves alive.

Amongst the villagers was a mother, who was too terrified to throw herself into the fire. However, Allah allowed her infant child to talk and reassured her to endure the ordeal for it was the Truth. This child was one of the two or three people who were allowed by Allah to talk during infancy.

Thus all the believers met their painful and brutal ending.

The King, his elite government, his army and the disbelievers were then cursed by Allah SWT with various calamities. In some reports, the earth engulfed them and the whole kingdom vanished. Another report claimed that an earthquake destroyed them. The main point is that all of them died in disgrace and Allah SWT promised them severe torture in hellfire for infinity.

**Cursed were the companions of the trench [Containing] the fire full of fuel,**

**When they were sitting near it, and they witnessed what they were doing against the believers (i.e. burning them). (Al Qur'an 85:4 – 85:7)**

### **Lessons Learnt**

The boy had a choice to either be a magician – a person with status in the society, or to believe in the monk. He could either believe in Allah and pay for the consequences of such belief, or to be the magician, attaining all the dunia status, but denying the message. The two paths were the opposing forces the boy, and in fact, all of us, have to choose from.

Viewed from the eyes of dunia, the boy, the hermit, the blind governor and the villagers were all losers. They all died horrifically and prematurely. Yet, from an Islamic perspective, Allah had honoured them. Their deaths were their victory, because they all held fast to their belief in Allah up to the end of their lives. They



triumphed with their steadfastness, even if they paid for their faith with their lives. So immense was their glory that they are mentioned in the Qur'an, as live examples for all of us until the end of time.

This story also demonstrates the power of one boy, who transformed his whole village through his faith and by belonging to Allah alone. He did not need to organise demonstrations, riots or political coups. He overcame the odds because Allah was with him. He lived and he died for the message. He did not do it for material gain, and in fact, gave up a potential lifetime of luxury and prestige. His level of sacrifice even motivated him to voluntarily tell the King of the correct method to execute him (by invoking the name of Allah), in order for the message to spread.

The governor in the story is reminiscent of the Pharaoh's magicians. Once he distinguished the truth from falsehood, he, although a fresh Muslim, held on to his faith even though he was tortured to death because of it.

Today, we place reliance on our titles, money and connections and believe that these will give us victory. This story demonstrates that the opposite is true. The nobility in this story were cursed by Allah, as in the high ranking officials and others who were disbelievers and oppressors, and who persecuted the believers of God. How can there be victory if one's everlasting home is the tortures of jahannam?

Conversely, those who relinquished their dunia in the path of Allah received infinite and eternal victory. Their lives on earth ended in an instant, but they were so honoured by Allah Himself in the Qur'an, and their lives in the hereafter will be majestic and full of the wonders of jannah.

We should question ourselves on where we stand. If our lives are dedicated to oppression, suppressing the truth and the pursuit of dunia at all costs, then we know from the Qur'an what the future will hold for us.

However, if we want to return to the reason of our existence on earth, we will choose the alternative road. This story tells us, however, although this is the better path, it is not the easier one. It will entail the sacrifice of dunia on several levels, and can be fraught with hardship, loneliness and obstacles. However, with Allah on your side, it is not the external circumstances of dunia that matters, but rather, the ultimate prize, jannah, which is worth more than the whole earth and what it contains. The prize is high, and therefore, so is the price.

We all have the potential to be the "boy" in this story. So let us rise up, for ourselves, for our families and for our ummah, and try to follow in his footsteps, ameen. The potential change caused by one person is immense, and imagine if all of us tried to make that change, how much it would affect our entire planet, collectively.

*Source: Muslim Footsteps*

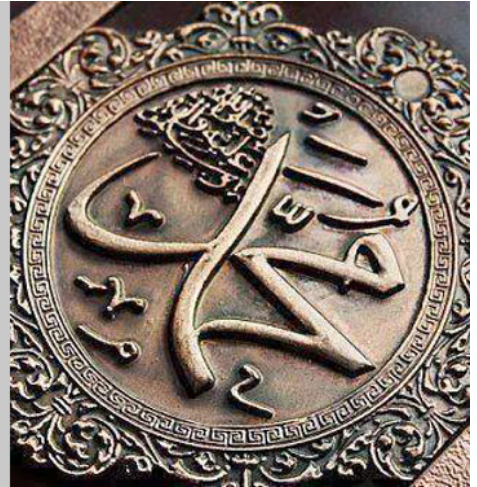
## **The Blessing of Food**

Every grain of food and every drop of water (or other halaal drink) is a great bounty of Allah. Deliberately wasting any food is indeed a severe ingratitude. Ingratitude to the favours of Allah results in the wrath of Allah descending and the snatching away of that bounty.

The practice of Rasulullah (saws) in this regard was to thoroughly clean the utensil from which he ate. He also stressed upon the Ummah to do so. Jaabir (ra) reports that Rasulullah (saws) instructed that the fingers should be licked after eating and the utensil should also be cleaned. Rasulullah (saws) then said: "You do not know in which particle of food the barakah (blessing) lies". (Muslim)

# The Trials

Muizz Rafique



Do the people think that they will be left to say, “We believe” and will not be tried? Qur’an, 29:2

**Mus’ab bin Sa’d narrated from his father that a man said: “O Messenger of Allah! Which of the people is tried most severely?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The Prophets, then those nearest to them, then those nearest to them. A man is tried according to his religion; if he is firm in his religion, then his trials are more severe, and if he is frail in his religion, then he is tried according to the strength of his religion. The servant shall continue to be tried until he is left walking upon the earth without any sins.” Tirmidhi**

*And know that when the trials of life have rendered you*

*Despairing of all hope, and of all joy bereaved,  
Then shake yourself and rouse yourself from  
heedlessness,*

*And make pure hope a meadow that you never  
leave.*

*Habib `Ali bin Muhammad bin Husayn Al-Habashi  
(d. 1915 CE)*

As I get closer to 40, it feels like more and more people I know are experiencing serious difficulties and challenges in life. I’m not talking about earning that next promotion, getting your kids into the best schools or finding a halal way

to invest your money – all of which may have some level of importance, but when compared to more serious challenges and tribulation, begin to seem trivial. I’m talking about the serious trauma that we, young and old, are silently experiencing: loss of spouses and children, debilitating diseases, domestic violence, broken families, mental illness, extreme loneliness – the list goes on. While many still find strength in God during these trials, the result of our individual and collective trauma is increasingly the opposite – distance from God and a loss of hope.

Social media is making our trials appear worse. Our friends are seemingly always at brunch or on vacation. The endless news cycle reminds us of the constant war and suffering. We are witnessing an increasing gap between the rich and the poor. Life just seems unfair. Even those raised as practicing Muslims sometimes wonder – “I did everything right, listened to my parents, didn’t date, stayed away from drugs, never drank alcohol. I gave up so much to please God, so why am I suffering?” Amidst so much pain, where do we find comfort?

Many of us were fed a mantra that if we would only “return to Islam” and “be good Muslims,” God would relieve us of our challenges and bring us the material success our once great civilization had lost. Well, there is no such

promise of success in this life. The reality is that God tests His most beloved servants more than anyone else. Of course, tests take many forms, and wealth and health can be just as much of a test as poverty and sickness. But the key to contentment is understanding that everything that comes our way is a trial. This life is the abode of trials. This life will be difficulty after difficulty, even when we experience material success. Yes, there will be unconditional pleasure and comfort, but in the life to come.

In the words of one of my teachers, "Islam is not an event. It's a process. It takes a lifetime to 'do Islam.'" We must expect struggle. When the first calamity strikes, how will we respond? When we face our mortality, how will we meet our Lord?

As in all things, we should take comfort in the example of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saws). We often overlook the serious difficulties, many of them personal, that he encountered in his mission. Yes, he was ultimately triumphant and successful, but if we are to truly take the Prophet of God as our model, we must be people who learn to persevere. No one was more tested than the Prophet (saws) and no one responded to those tests in a more beautiful way. God chose him above all creation and his tests and trials in his personal life were not a punishment, but rather a means by which he was raised. May God's peace and blessings be upon him.

The difficulties of the Prophet (saws) in his early life and during the Makkan period of his prophethood are well known. His father passed before he was born. At six, he loses his mother. At eight, his grandfather. He loses his sons in infancy. Most of his people rejected his message and ridiculed him. They boycotted his clan and forced him into exile. And, at the height of this difficulty, he lost his beloved wife and most ardent supporter, Khadijah (ra). After all of this, he was forced to leave his homeland.

But even in Madinah, amidst a flourishing

community and victory after victory, the Prophet (saws) continued to experience serious trials, many in his personal life. After the glorious victory of the Battle of Badr, he returned to the death of his daughter Ruqayyah. The next year, he lost his childhood friend and uncle Hamza at Uhud. The year after that, his wife Zaynab bint Khuzayma. Soon after, his cousin Abu Salamah. The next year he has to defend against a siege of Madinah by close to 10,000 allied enemy forces. The next year, his wife 'Aisha is victim to a terrible slander. The next year, even though there is relative peace and prosperity in Madinah after the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, his household experiences domestic discord – requiring him to spend a month in solitude. He then loses his eldest daughter, Zaynab. Then his cousin Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, who only recently returned from Abyssinia, and Zayd bin Haritha, who he raised like a son, are killed at Mu'tah. The companions had never seen such an emotional display from the Prophet, who wept as he held the children of Ja'far and Zayd. Shortly after the conquest of Makkah, he learns of the death and performs the funeral prayer for Ashamah, the Najashi of Abyssinia who granted asylum to his companions fifteen years earlier. Upon returning from Tabuk, he loses another daughter, Umm Kulthum. The next year, he loses his infant son, Ibrahim.

**Anas (ra) narrates that the Prophet held Ibrahim while Ibrahim was breathing his last breath. The eyes of the Prophet (ra) began shedding tears. Abdur-Rahman bin 'Awf (ra) said, "O Messenger of God, you too weep?" The Prophet said, "O Ibn 'Awf, it is mercy." As he wept the Prophet said, "The eyes are shedding tears and the heart is grieved, and we will not say except what pleases our Lord. O Ibrahim! Indeed we are grieved by your separation."**

At age 62, the Prophet (saws), with Ibrahim's death, had buried six of his seven children. And what is the Prophet's response? Yes, he grieved

and encouraged us to grieve in a healthy way. But does he give up? Does he lose hope? Quite the opposite. He never waivers and only increases in his certainty that God's promise is true. And perhaps the most amazing of all, despite experiencing these personal trials, his primary concern always remained his Ummah. May God's peace and blessings be upon him.

No one is saying we can't complain. We should complain. There is tremendous benefit in our healthy complaining. The Prophet's famous prayer after Ta'if, at a time of immense struggle and difficulty, is the greatest example of a servant's complaint to their Lord in a time of distress and difficulty:

*O Allah, I complain to You of my weakness, my scarcity of resources and the humiliation I have been subjected to by the people.*

*O Most Merciful of those are are merciful. O Lord of the weak and my Lord too.*

*To whom have you entrusted me? To a distant person who receives me with hostility? Or to an enemy to whom you have granted authority over my affair?*

*So as long as You are not angry with me, I do not care. Your favor is a more expansive relief to me.*

*I seek refuge in the light of Your Countenance by which all darkness is dispelled and every affair of this world and the next is set right, lest Your anger or Your displeasure descends upon me. I desire Your pleasure and satisfaction until You are pleased.*

*There is no power and no might except by You.*

As the Prophet (saws) demonstrated, we complain to God through our supplication for divine assistance. We should also be compelled to act in the face of injustice perpetrated by other people. Of course, if we are victims to abuse or violence, we should report it to the proper authorities and seek the help of qualified professionals. The point is not to simply roll over and take all trials in a resigned and helpless state. The point is to remind ourselves that this world is a place of tribulation and there is no true ever-

lasting pleasure in this transient world.

The students of the late Dr. Hassan Hathout often relate the story of his prayer after learning of the tragic death of his infant daughter. One cannot even begin to imagine the immense pain upon hearing such news, but his response exemplifies the reaction of a heart connected to God: "My Lord, You gave me my daughter, and You took away from me my daughter, give me strength to respond in a way that is most pleasing to You." What are we doing to prepare our hearts to respond to God's decree in such a beautiful way?

Yes, the Prophet's trials were more than any of us could even imagine, let alone handle. God prepared the Prophet (saws) for an extraordinary purpose. We, as believers, also have a great purpose and will be prepared accordingly. Of course, we never ask God for hardship. We ask for ease, wellness and facilitation, but it is only when we have firm belief that God is in charge, and directs all affairs, do we find comfort in whatever challenges come our way. The Prophet knew with absolute certainty that nothing happens except by the decree of God – and that is why he continued to persevere through all the personal hardship. And part of our certainty is that God has told us that none of us will be tested more than we can handle. We must have certainty that God's promise is true. We must never lose hope.

**Once Rasulullah (saws) was asked: "What is the path of salvation (from the fitnah that is engulfing us from all directions)?" He replied: "Guard your tongue, let your house be sufficient for you and cry over your sins" (Tirmizi)**

# Zuhdi

## Artist of the Prophet's Mosque

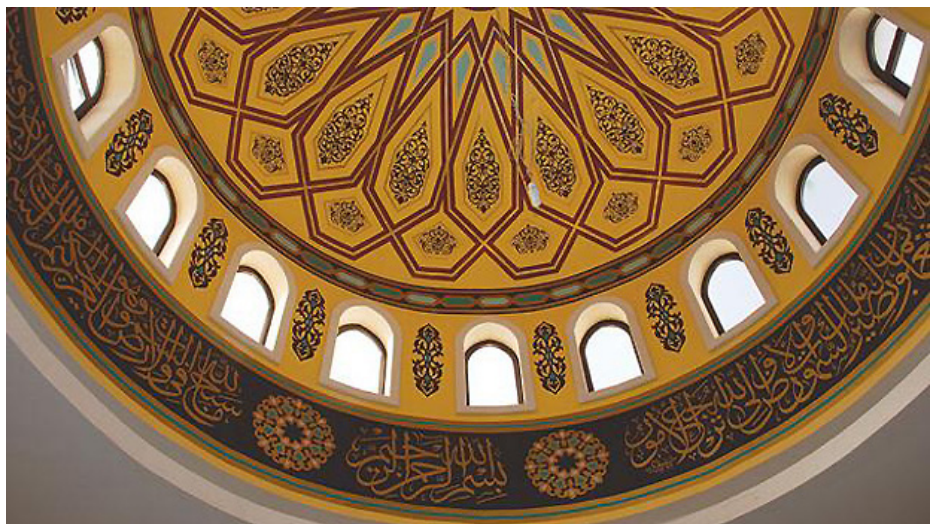
M. Atiya

The year was 1803 when a group of ideological extremists had occupied the holy city of Mecca. In their attempt to purify Islam they destroyed religious monuments and sites along their path. Having their eyes now set on Madina, resting place of the Messenger of God (saws), they started a campaign of terror by blocking the city from its main water supply. The inhabitants of Madina tried to enlist the support of the Ottomans to repel the incursion but internal strife of the Ottoman state and external preoccupations did not allow the Ottomans to turn their attention to the assault and in 1805 Madina would fall under Wahabi control.

It was not until 1812 that Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II tasked Mehmed Ali Pasa of Egypt to liberate Madina. Mehmed Ali Pasa sent a battalion of three thousand five hundred soldiers and after two weeks Madina was back in Ottoman hands. The damage done to the Prophet's Mosque and al-Baqi by the invading forces was extensive. Historians recount that

the Prophet's Mosque was looted and all religious historical markings were damaged or destroyed — with the exception of the tomb of the Messenger (saws). The dome of the Prophet's mosque was severely damaged and the decision was made to rebuild it.

In 1839 the son of Sultan Mahmud II, Abdulmajid I, ascended to the throne making it a point to set aside a large budget for the restoration of the Islamic holy sites. The new Sultan wanted to ensure that the greatest level of care and attention was given to the upkeep and beautification of Mecca, Madina and Jerusalem. Abdulmajid, himself an accomplished Islamic calligrapher,



set out to find the person to be entrusted with adorning the mosque of the Prophet Muhammad (saws) with calligraphic inscriptions.

Abdulmajid ordered his executive clerk to obtain a calligraphy piece from all the known masters in Istanbul and hang them up in a specific room in the royal palace. The Sultan himself would take the time to examine the works and decide who would be appointed with the sacred task.

At the time, Abdullah Zuhdi was a young man of twenty four years of age. Zuhdi was born in Nablus, Palestine and his lineage traced back to the companion of the Prophet Muhammad (saws, Tamim ad’Darimi. At a young age, he moved with his family and settled into Istanbul, heart of the Ottoman empire. Showing great artistic skill, Zuhdi started his calligraphy training at an early age and quickly advanced past his peers. He trained under the known masters of the time and developed his own unique style of writing the Jali Sulus script.

When news spread of the Sultan’s search, Zuhdi’s close friend encouraged him to enter one of his compositions but he refused. He greatly disliked the idea of competing against his very own teachers. Nonetheless, Zuhdi’s companion took one of his compositions without his knowledge and entered it. As soon as the Sultan laid his eyes on the work he knew he had found his man. He summoned Zuhdi to the palace and upon seeing the youthful calligrapher the Sultan was surprised. How could a young man outstrip his very own teachers? He made Abdullah take an oath by Allah that he himself actually wrote the composition and in January of 1858 an imperial decree was issued declaring Abdullah Zuhdi the calligrapher of the holy sanctuaries.

The young calligrapher would spend the next eight years of his life living in the shade of the Messenger

Muhammad (saws) while adorning the mosque of Madina with some of the most exquisite calligraphy ever written. Anyone visiting the holy sanctuary in Madina has caught sight of his beautiful work. From the long stretch of wall on route to the Prophetic tomb adorned with Qur’anic inscriptions and the blessed names of the Messenger (saws) to unique panels describing various sections of the blessed mosque, Zuhdi’s carefully crafted fingerprints are there for all to appreciate.

While studying his works of art, great attention must be paid to one particular panel which rests on the exterior wall of the Mosque facing al-Baqi. This piece has been considered a stroke of genius by master calligraphers because of the beauty of its composition and stylistic flow. “God and His angels bless the Prophet — So, you who believe, bless him too and give him greetings of peace.” Zuhdi’s sincerity and dedication to serving the Messenger of Allah (saws) resulted in the ultimate gift of penning the finest version of the verse extolling the prayers upon the Messenger.

Abdullah Zuhdi completed this most blessed of assignments and eventually resettled in Cairo adorning various mosques with his spiritual art. He lived a blessed life in the service of God and His Messenger (saws) and will forever be known as the artist of the Prophet’s Mosque.



# The Sabiqoon

Hassan Shibly

And you become [of] three kinds  
Then the companions of the right - what are the  
companions of the right?  
And the companions of the left - what are the  
companions of the left?  
And the forerunners, the forerunners —  
Those are the ones brought near [to Allah ]  
In the Gardens of Pleasure,  
A [large] company of the former peoples  
And a few of the later peoples,  
(Al-Waaqiah, 56:7-14)

When reading these verses, we might wonder, if Allah divides humanity into three ranks and includes many from the earlier generations to be closest to Allah, how can we ever hope to have an equal reward? Some might say we have not done a fraction of the work that the earlier generations did, that we haven't struggled in the ways they did. Once someone asked me, "What can I do? I have been given so much comfort and good in my life, and I'm afraid I won't have a chance to be in the group closest to Allah."

It's important to have this question in mind, but it should not make us lose hope in seeking the highest reward. Instead, we should use it to drive us to always excel in the deen and in building our relationship with Allah. There is no limit

to how much a servant can come close to Allah, know Him, and build a relationship with Him.

The more you know Him, the more you realize your shortcomings and insignificance. The more you realize your shortcoming and insignificance, the more you know Him, especially His love, mercy, graciousness and generosity.

Here are a few things you can do to be counted, inshallah, amongst those who excel for Allah:

## 1. Love

Always be sure your heart has strong love for those who strive to be near Allah. Remember the blessed Prophet Muhammad (saws) taught that a person will be with those who he loves even if he or she does not do the same deeds as his or her beloved. So the first and most important step is to ensure your heart is full of love for our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saws) the Companions, the righteous, those who strive and sacrifice for the deen, and the weak and oppressed. Through the love you have for them, God willing, you will be counted amongst them. See how simple Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) has made things for us! Allah says:

**"Whoever obeys God and the Messenger will be among those He has blessed: the messengers, the truthful, the martyrs (those who bear witness to the truth), and the righteous— what excellent companions these are! That is God's favour. No**

**one knows better than Him.” (Al-Nisaa, 4:69-70)**

So have love for the righteous and inshallah you will be with them, no doubt. That is a promise from Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). Try to stay in the hearts of those who love Allah, for their hearts are with Allah.

## 2. Dua

As we realize our shortcomings, who better to plead to than Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala)? We should engage in much dua (supplication), talking to Him, bearing witness to our shortcomings and His generosity, and mercy. Dua is the core of ibadah (worship). Everything we go through in life can be a means by which we come closer to Allah. So converse with Him, thank Him, and admit your weaknesses to Him. Ask Him to use you for his deen in whatever way that pleases Him. Through regular daily dua and conversation with Allah you can attain the highest status. It is all about having a relationship with Allah. People struggling for the deen or going through hardship who are insincere or do not make dua are neglecting spiritual reflection and often miss the lessons that life has to offer them, closing off an immense potential for blessings.

## 3. Find the path to Allah that He makes easy for you.

Strive to Him through the situation He put you in. There are countless paths to Allah, and every situation Allah puts us in is a path to Him. The Messenger (saws) said,

**“The one who eats and is grateful is like the one who fasts and is patient.” (Tirmidhi, Dar-ami)**

Subhanallah! There is so much wisdom in this. It illustrates that in every situation is a path to Allah if we respond accordingly. One path to Allah is through sabr (patience). Another is through shukr (gratefulness). One path is through giving our time for the deen, another is through giving our sweat or wealth. Some people die defending

justice. Others live to defend justice. There are many paths to Allah. Make the most of every situation that Allah places you in. Other people have a path to Allah that you do not have, while you have a path to Him that they do not have. The destination, however, is the same, inshallah.

For example, you may not have the path of sabr as refugees who have lost everything. But they may not have the path of giving charity which you have. So see what blessings Allah has given you and how you can use them for the deen. As American Muslims I think we have the unique opportunity to study the deen, practice the deen, get involved in charities, speak for justice, support Islamic education, and support and engage in dawah. Perhaps your path to Allah is through giving dawah to the poor and needy. Refugees in Syria, for example, do not have the resources you as an American Muslim have. Remember to be grateful for your blessings by utilizing the blessings given to you.

## 4. Consistency in the Struggle

Be consistent in the obligatory actions and try your best to follow the Sunnah. This includes maintaining good character and morals with ourselves and others, seeking knowledge and using our blessings for the deen and supporting Islamic work.

Overall, keep asking, reflecting and hoping on being counted from the righteous, and inshallah, your objective will be achieved!

### **TRUST**

Rasulullah (saws) is reported to have said: “The person from whom advice is sought has been entrusted with an amanah (trust). Therefore he should advise the person seeking advice to do that which he himself would have done”.

(Majma'uz Zawaa'id)



# The Hijrah, Urbanization and Human Development

S. Omer

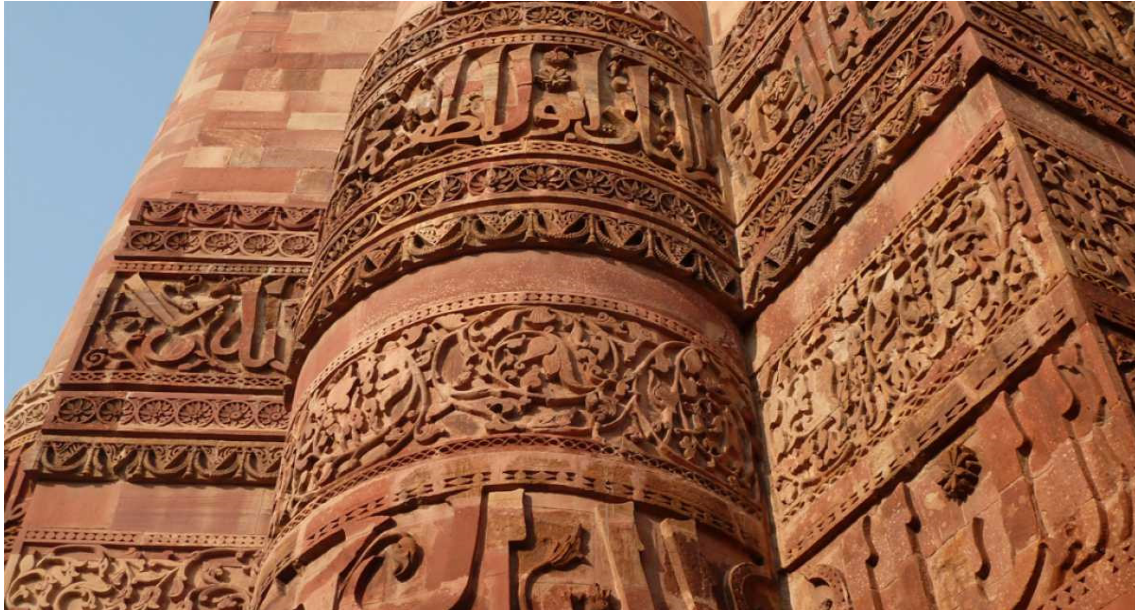
People are both the creators and demolishers of every civilizational accomplishment. They, too, are the only beneficiaries of each and every valuable civilizational upshot. Similarly, people are the creators and inhabitants of cities, a locus of civilization. They create cities and then live and work in them. They do this either commendably, thus securing and enjoying the fruits of their right acts, so long as they stick to the right schemes which led them to such a state, or appallingly with no clear purpose or direction. In the latter scenario, things are always bound to work against the inhabitants of a city, making their lives both miserable and injurious. Allah says to this effect: “Mischief has appeared on land and sea because of (the meed) that the hands of men have earned, that (Allah) may give them a taste of some of their deeds: in order that they may turn back (from evil).” (al-Rum, 30:41)

Of the essence is thus constantly and painstakingly educating, purifying, nurturing and cherishing individuals, as well as overseeing and monitoring their progress and involvements, along the lines of an adopted worldview, philosophy and vision. This is so because individuals make up groups and societies, and they are the planners, makers, beneficiaries, consumers and sustainers, or slayers, of every civ-

izational triumph. They subsist at the heart of every urbanization scheme and advancement. Indeed, human development and urbanization are intertwined. They cannot be separated. Neither of them can be treated without, or at the expense of, the other.

It goes without saying that the people are the most direct causes of their own civilizational destinies. They, by and large, are fully responsible for them. Allah says, for example, that He will change the condition of a people only when they change what lies in themselves, i.e., when they change themselves first. (al-Ra’d, 31:11) He also says that He will help a people only when they “help” Him by obeying Him and by following His religion, Islam. (Muhammad, 7) This close and causal relationship between urbanization and any sort of civilizational awakening, on the one hand, and human spiritual and moral development and enlightenment, on the other, has been emphasized as a blueprint for genuine and lasting success in both worlds since time immemorial. It in fact denoted the focal point of each and every holy prophet’s struggle and teachings, from Adam to Muhammad (peace be upon them all).

About Prophet Muhammad (saws), Allah says that he was sent in order to teach peo-



young community's undertakings. As a result, the focus of revelation was likewise widened. The religion of Islam thus began

ple that they "...should worship none but Allah" (Hud, 11:2), and that they should seek "...the forgiveness of your Lord, and turn to Him in repentance; that He may grant you enjoyment, good (and true), for a term appointed, and bestow His abounding grace on all who abound in merit! But if you turn away, then I fear for you the penalty of a great day. To Allah is your return, and He has power over all things." (Hud, 11:3-4)

Thus, in view of the developments that the Islamic message was living through in the city-state of Madinah, following the Hijrah, such a thing, i.e., nurturing and developing community members consistent with the values and beliefs of Islam, instantaneously attracted much of the Prophet's attention.

It should be noted that at the time of the Hijrah, the ongoing revelation of Islam was entering its 13th year and the Muslims were yet to set up a free and autonomous state of their own. Once the city of Madinah with most of its inhabitants wholeheartedly welcomed the new religion, so fiercely disapproved of by many where it had originated, the wait finally came to an end and the stage was set for broadening the focus of the

to assert itself as a universal code of life overlooking no segment of human existence - a momentous development indeed after having been portrayed essentially as an inclusive belief system during the precarious episode in Makkah. From the point of development, urbanization and community building, the whole Madinah period of revelation - in particular the first half, about four to five years - was, as expected, exceptionally eventful too.

The Prophet's vision of the subject of personality and community building, as a launch pad for a wholesome urban development, was well-structured and arresting. He championed that under the auspices of Islam and its unique tawhidic worldview, the Muslims are seen as brothers to each other and their similitude is like a wall whose bricks enforce and rely on each other; they are like a solid cemented structure held together in unity and strength, each part contributing strength in its own way, and the whole held together not like a mass, but like a living organism. The Muslims are furthermore related to each other in such a way that if one of them (a part of an organic and formidable formation called the Ummah) is troubled by a

problem of whatever kind, the rest of the body parts will remain disturbed and restless until the matter became solved.

Surely, for the reason of nurturing community members did the Prophet (saws) upon arriving in Madinah disclose to the assembled crowd some of the paths which invariably lead towards Jannah (Paradise) in the Hereafter, as well as towards individual and collective felicity in this world. Such paths are: implementing and spreading peace and concord wherever possible and by whatever lawful means, sharing and compassion, maintaining good relations with relatives (as well as with others), and praying at night when everybody else is asleep. The companion 'Abdullah b. Salam said that these were the first words he had heard from the Prophet (saws). Without doubt, these were among the very first advices the Prophet (saws) gave following the Hijrah, because 'Abdullah b. Salam was among the first to see, meet and hear the Prophet (saws). No sooner had he done so, than he embraced Islam, as he realized that the Prophet's face "seemed by no means like the face of a phony."

For the same reason did the content of the Prophet's sermon at the first Friday prayer (Jumu'ah) in Madinah - as well as the content of the other sermons of his at this juncture - emphasize the importance of such issues as faith (iman), taking hold of the good and leaving the evil, brotherhood, sincerity, steadfastness, gratefulness for the blessing of Islam, the significance of helping one another in righteousness and piety and not in sin and rancor, the common cause of the Muslims, and the like.

Some of the underlying societal qualities and features of Islam, such as commitment to the established cause, justice, equality, and mutual understanding and cooperation, have also been manifested as early as during the exercise of determining the site of the first urban component in the city of Madinah, i.e., the Prophet's mosque, and during the marking out of its

boundaries. At the earmarked location of the mosque there was a walled piece of land that belonged to some people from the Banu al-Najjar clan. The Prophet (saws) sent to them and asked them to suggest to him the price of the land. They replied: "No! By Allah! We do not demand its price except from Allah." The Prophet (saws) accepted the offer and the occurrence typified as well as inaugurated, so to speak, a new phase of the unreserved keenness of the first Muslims to sacrifice whatever they possessed for the cause of strengthening Islam and the Muslim community. Additionally, the mosque proper was about to expand into an area used for drying dates which belonged to two youths, both orphans, named Sahl and Suhayl. The Prophet (saws) asked them too to suggest to him the price of the place. However, when they said that they demand no price for it, the Prophet (saws) insisted that they tell the price, since they were orphans and possessed little. Eventually, he paid them ten golden dinars. The money was Abu Bakr's.

The Prophet's scheme of personality and community building, as an integral part of his urbanization paradigm, reached its climax when he legislated the system of mu'akhah (brotherly association) among the Migrants (Muhajirs) from Makkah and Helpers (Ansar) from Madinah. The mu'akhah included 90 men, 45 from either side. While some claim that the mu'akhah took place after the building of the Prophet's mosque, albeit before the battle of Badr, others contend that it in fact occurred during the process of building the mosque. The mu'akhah was accomplished in the house of Anas b. Malik. So binding was the treaty that the Migrants for sometimes were the heirs of the Helpers, and vice versa, instead of their own kindred by blood. Later, however, the verse 33 from the Qur'anic chapter al-Nisa' was revealed and the matter of the Migrants and Helpers inheriting one another was cancelled.

Shortly after arriving in Madinah, the

Prophet (saws) also organized the relationship between the various inhabitants of Madinah, including the Jews, and recorded it in a document (the Constitution of Madinah). The commitments of each group within Madinah and its rights and duties were comprehensively enshrined in the document. That the society of Madinah was founded and was set to progress on the basis of commitment, love, mutual understanding, cooperation and support, was thus demonstrated in a striking applied fashion. As was the Islamic perception of believers envisaging them in their mutual love and affection as one entity whose components depend on and complement each other.

Furthermore, nurturing and developing exemplary community members in the young and constantly evolving city-state of Madinah was dealt with by God's direct interventions as well, by means of prescribing guidelines and directives that targeted at both men's and women's steady spiritual and moral development, as well as at clearly defining their roles and standings in the community.

For example, in the night of al-Mi'raj, which occurred sometime between one and two years before the Hijrah, the institution of prayer (Salah) was prescribed to the Muslims. The prayers of those not traveling and of those traveling had both been of two rak'ahs, except the Maghrib (sunset) prayer which was of three rak'ahs from the beginning. But about a month after the arrival of the Prophet (saws) in Madinah, two rak'ahs in Zuhr (noon), 'Asr (mid afternoon) and 'Isha' (evening) prayers were added to the prayers of those who were not traveling.

Certainly, this addition which came to pass in Madinah immediately after the Hijrah had scores of benefits for the spiritual and civilizational maturity of many Muslims, some of whom had just entered the fold of the new Islamic code of living, given that the task of one's prayers is to restrain one from shameful and evil deeds (al-'Ankabut 29:45) and to foster honesty, goodness, conformity and dedication. As the Proph-

et (saws) experienced a midnight journey from the al-Masjid al-Haram to the al-Masjid al-Aqsa (al-Isra'), whence he traveled to the seven heavens (al-Mi'raj) where the prayer commandment was decreed, every human soul similarly ought to undergo a journey of its own in its religious growth in life. Praying five times a day at the divinely appointed times and as many rak'ahs as God asked us to take on - which in fact signifies conversing with our Lord and Sustainer, plus powering our soul and mind with the spirit of Truth - is the most invaluable asset that one may possess all through the long and thorny journey. Every single prayer is thus expected to elevate its executor a step or a degree off the wickedness and the confines of this world and towards a spiritual fulfillment. So, the bigger number of those who willingly and enthusiastically tread on the said spiritual journey, ever ready to better themselves and those around them, the better the prospects for their ideals to materialize and flourish become. With such people aboard, imposing a struggle for the supremacy of God's Word as the sole objective of existence will never be an impossible proposition, as plainly shown by the history of the Madinah city-state and by the history of other successful Islamic societies.

For the purpose of creating healthy and upright individuals who will constitute a healthy and virtuous society, the prescription of Adhan (calling to prayers), Siyam (fast), Zakah (the alms), Sadaqah al-fitr (charity of fast-breaking), Jihad (struggle for the holy cause), and some other legislative moves with regard to halal (lawful) and haram (forbidden) - all these came about as well during the earliest Madinah period. Although the city-state of Madinah was just about a few years old, yet some of the most crucial and decisive aspects of the individual, family and societal life have already been duly taken up. The aspect of urban development was just a dimension in a multidimensional cultural and civilizational mission undertaken by the Prophet (saws) and his followers.

# Key to Happiness

Why Are We Here?

Allah clearly says in the Quran about the purpose of the creation of mankind:

**And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me. (Quran 51:56)**

We have been created for no other purpose than to worship and obey the Creator who has given us life, eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to feel, lungs to breath.

Who is providing us with light to see, water to survive, oxygen to breath and many veins and cells that keeps us alive.

Most importantly, who gave us the faith and intellect to realize all these great blessings.

## Why He Alone Deserves Our Worship

Allah says in the Quran:

**Say it is He Who has created you, and endowed you with hearing (ears), seeing (eyes), and hearts. Little thanks you give. (67:23)**

Has He, the Creator of all things, until now deprived you of any of His blessing for your disobedience to Him? Has He decided that in one day I will provide this slave of mine with fresh air for 23 hours or give him his sight only 12 hours a day?

Alhamdulillah, we are not deprived of any of these blessings of Allah for all the disobedience

and ingratitude we show to the One who gave us all that we need, yet He is full of mercy to His slaves.

When He has not given up providing you with what you need, why do you give up invoking Him, praising Him and worshiping Him? Or is there any other way that you survive on the earth without depending on the provision and help of the Al-Mighty?

## Are We Really Fulfilling Our Purpose?

Although for many of us, we realize that we have to pray, do good deeds, worship Allah and abstain from evil, we continue to go beyond the bounds, disobey and violate the commands of Allah while knowing the consequences, yet claim that our purpose is to worship Allah.

How can it be when we spend our time attending our temporary desires, running after the wealth we gain, house we buy, food we eat, fashion we like, people we favor and fame we desire?

When it is time for prayer, we merely attend it with full heart with so many distractions that is occupying our hearts and mind. When prayer is done, we don't even remember what chapter we read.

## A Noble Duty

Purpose of our creation was not only to merely offer the prayer and fast in Ramadan and give Zakat and go for Hajj. Rather, these are our duties that we must do. Our purpose as a whole is to be conscious of our servitude, gratitude and sincere worship to the Creator, Al-Mighty God.

When we fulfill such noble duty, our hearts find tranquility and there will be no such thing as problem in our lives, no worries that occupy our minds. We will feel at ease for we have established a sincere relationship with our Creator, Who created everything that we are in need of, Who controls everything that we are so worried about, Who provides for all our needs for which we strive day and night seeking our worldly provision when it is Him who is the Owner of all these.

**Now...**

Alhamdulillah, God has favored you and me and made us realize His blessings and gave us the determination to fulfill our purpose before it's too late. Of the greatest blessings that Allah grants His slaves are opportunity and ability.

Al-Mighty God has given us the ability to know and understand only a few of His blessings and the purpose of our existence. He has also enabled us with many opportunities day in day out in which we can submit these blessings for servitude, obedience and worship only and sincerely to Him.

**Ability:**

- To read, understand and act upon His words the Quran
- Believe what we preach and what we act
- At least save our own souls from the fire of Hell by abstaining from evil
- Spreading the message of truth to many

parts of the world

**Opportunity:**

- Free time (how can we not have free time to learn about the words of our Creator?)
- Good health (more we strive, more rewards we get.)
- Life (our Creator still blesses us with these minutes and seconds which may come to an end anytime.)
- Choosing eternal bliss or eternal punishment.

**Bear in mind:**

We are merely the creation of God and thus we are not able to do anything without depending on His help. Even to worship the Creator Al-Mighty, we are in need of His guidance, His help and His power.

Alhamdulillah, if you were to ask of someone in a high position for your needs day in day out, they will sooner or later become tired of attending your needs.

However, remember that God loves you the more you ask Him, the more you rely on Him and the more you consult Him in all your affairs. The more He will turn to you for you are turning to Him.

At the same time you also have to be thankful, obedient and patient slave for He says:

**And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me — indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided. (2:186)**

O Allah make us among those who call on you constantly and who respond (obey) to your call faithfully, Ameen.

## 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 expenses 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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