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RADIANT REALITY

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OH ALLAH, DO NOT ATTACH MY
HEART TO
WHAT'S NOT WRITTEN TO BE
MINE

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RADIANT REALITY

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

Editor, Printer & Publisher:

Mawlana Hamidullah Lone

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Mailing Address:

Editor In-Charge,-
Radiant Reality
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J&K, 190001,
India.

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Contact:

siteadmin@islamkashmir.org



+918491895043

Contents

1. Question Answer	2
2. Lesson from the Qur'an: The Power of Allah	7
3. Lesson from Sahih al-Bukhari	9
4. Evolution and its Adversaries - III	12
5. Lost Hope in Allah	17
6. Journey of Mua'dh bin Jabal (ra)	20
7. The Sunnah of Good Health	23
8. Guilting Victims	27
9. Al-Aqsa: Through the Ages	30
10. Lowering the Gaze	36
11. Zaid bin Al-Khattab	39
12. Are We Guilty of Racializing Islam?	42
13. Seerah: Treating Wives	45

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Question Answer

Question

I have had a weight issue all my life and after having 2 kids find it even more difficult to lose the weight. I eat healthy and exercise when I can but still can't seem to lose the belly fat and have a slimmer tummy. It seems to bother my husband as he is always referring to how fat I am, and if I happen to eat a chocolate on the odd day or drink coke he mentions how much more fatter I will be and I shouldn't be doing that.

My question is: is it permissible for me to have help in losing the weight and getting a flatter tummy. Can I go for liposuction or laser lipo as I have read alot about it but unsure if it is permissible in islam.

Answer

There are two aspects of consideration in answering your query. One being our perception of belly fat and the other the permissibility of liposuction.

The first thing of note is that a level of belly fat is the normal position of the human body. The pictures that the media bombards us with every day of lean and sculpted bodies is not the norm. People with these types of bodies have generally made it their life's goal to achieve this look and spend hours a day working out and a lot of money in supplements to maintain that look. Over and above that, most models are photoshopped as their naturally fit bodies are not "good" enough. The effect of not lowering the gaze and looking at what Islam has prohibited us from seeing is the dissatisfaction that we feel over our own bodies and our spouse's bodies. Thus, we think that something is wrong

with us because we have not achieved the false standard of the human physique that the media portrays. It is this mindset that needs to change before anything else.

Secondly, Islam does not condone obesity or an unhealthy lifestyle. Living a healthy lifestyle and being physically fit are highly encouraged in Islam. These should be part of every Muslim's lifestyle but done in a way that conforms to Islamic principles.

Thirdly, we find many husbands who complain about the state of their spouses' bodies but their own bodies leave much to be desired. Even if a husband is physically in good shape, he has not been through what his wife's body goes through especially during pregnancy. Instead of passing negative comments, husbands should rather be supportive and encouraging of their wives becoming fitter.

However, more important than that is the need to undo the brainwashing of what a normal female's body looks like. If we chase the media's standard of beauty we will be chasing our entire lives and we still not be good enough. We should rather change our view from within regarding the meaning of beauty and shield our eyes from looking at the bodies of other women. If we do not do this, then no matter how much we may change we will still not be good enough as there will always be someone more beautiful and more attractive than us. We should, therefore, address this perception first before considering liposuction and other similar treatments.

With regards to the permissibility of liposuction and similar treatments, any invasive/surgical treatment performed for cosmetic reasons that requires an incision of the body is

prohibited. Procedures that are non-invasive/non-surgical and do not require an incision are permitted on condition that they are considered safe to perform.

Mufti Moosa

Question

Is it permissible to wear stitched Hajj/Umrah Sandals in the Ihraam of Hajj and Umrah?

Answer

The general restriction of wearing stitched clothing in the state of Ihraam (Hajj and Umrah) does not apply to wearing stitched footwear in the state of Ihraam. Hence, it will be permissible for males and females to wear stitched footwear in the state of Ihraam.

In the case of a male, both ankles and cuneiform bones (protruding bones at the top of the feet) must be exposed, whilst there is no restriction for a female to expose any part of the feet in the state of Ihraam.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

I require assistance on how to distribute my provident fund to my beneficiaries. What percentage goes to each one. The provident fund is compulsory and is Shariah compliant. 50/50 and admin cost is paid by the company.

Answer

In the case of compulsory provident funds, you are not obligated to distribute or appoint beneficiaries according to the Islamic Law of Succession and Inheritance as it does not form part of your estate. It is regarded as a gift from the company to the beneficiaries.

Hence, you may distribute and appoint the beneficiaries at your own discretion.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

My birth parents gave me up for adoption to a relative. Lately my biological father passed away, am I eligible to inherit from his estate.

Answer

In the case of adoption, an adopted child is not eligible to inherit from his/her adoptive parents. An adopted child may only receive a bequest up to one third of the estate from his/her adoptive parents if the adoptive parents made a bequest in favour of the adopted child.

In any event, an adopted child's biological parents remain his/her biological parents even after adoption. Hence, in the case of an adopted child's biological parents passing away, an adopted child will still inherit from his/her biological parents according to Islamic Law. Accordingly, as an adopted child, you are eligible to inherit from your biological father's estate.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

I ordered a watch for my wife online. After the payment but before the delivery, she abandoned the marital home in defiance of my wish for her to remain. In her absence, the watch was delivered to me. The marriage ended in divorce without the wife returning. Must the watch be given to her or can I retain it?

Answer

The general conditions of a valid gift entail offer by the donor, acceptance by the donee and transferral of ownership to the donee.

In the enquired situation, neither of the above conditions were found, as there was no offer made by the donor of the watch to the donee, nor was there an acceptance by the donee, or transferral of ownership to the donee.

Hence, the watch belongs to you and you have the full right of ownership over it. Therefore, you may do as you wish with it.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Can a Mutamatti' perform more than one Umrah before Hajj? Some say that only one Umrah can be performed during Hajj days.

Answer

A Mutamatti' refers to one who has donned the Ihraam for Umrah and Hajj with two separate Ihraams during the days of Hajj. After a Mutamatti' performs Umrah and exits the Ihraam of Umrah, he/she may perform as many Umrahs as possible prior to the days of Hajj.

There is no restriction to limiting a Mutamatti' in performing one Umrah only during the days of Hajj. A Mutamatti' should take advantage of valuable time and opportunity and perform as many Umrahs as possible prior to Hajj.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Kindly note that my husband has issued me with a Talaak e Raji. Can you please explain what type of a divorce this constitutes, the period of iddat and the do's and don'ts during this period.

Answer

Talaaq-Raji is another word for a normal TalaaQuestion Upon its issuance, the wife goes into Iddat. The length of Iddat is three menstrual cycles or if the woman is expecting, then until the delivery of the child. During the Iddat period, the couple may reconcile the marriage without requiring to perform Nikah again. Additionally the husband holds the right to take his wife back into Nikah unilaterally.

During the iddat of Talaaq-Raji, the wife will remain in her marital home unless circumstances compel her to leave. She must not leave the marital home during this time unless for an urgent need. She may apply make-up and beautify herself during this Iddat, as it is also a time given for reconciling the marriage. If no reconciliation takes place and the Iddat completes its term, the marriage ends completely and the woman may get married according to her choosing.

Mufti Moosa

Question

Please clarify.

She may apply make-up and beautify herself during this Iddat, as it is also a time given for reconciling the marriage. (in above question's answer)

If a reconciliation takes place, how does the marriage get re-instated as Talaaq has been issued.

Answer

When one or two Talaafs have been issued, there is scope of reconciliation. Though the Talaaf issued has the effect of divorce, it is not fully effective until the end of the Iddah period. Upon the termination of the Iddah, the full effect of the divorced is now realised and the wife is free to marry another if she chooses to do so.

If within the Iddah period, the husband tells his wife, "I take you back in my Nikah" or if he is physically intimate with her, then the Talaaf is considered revoked and the Nikah comes into effect once again.

It should be noted that though the Talaaf is revoked, it is still counted. Hence, if one Talaaf was given, only two remain and if two Talaafs were given, only one remains.

In the case where three Talaafs are given, there is no scope of reconciliation and the marriage is completely ended. The laws of Iddah will nonetheless apply and in this case the wife is not allowed to beautify herself as reconciliation is not possible.

Important Note: It is impermissible to issue Three Talaafs at once and it is extremely important for a husband to exercise the utmost restraint in matters of Talaaf irrespective of how angry or upset he may be. The effect of Three Talaafs issued together or separately would be a complete termination of the marriage without scope of reconciliation. We cannot stress enough on how destructive it is to issue Three Talaafs. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam was once informed of a person issuing Three Ta-

laaqs and he became so angered by this that a Sahaabi stood up and asked whether he should execute this person. (Nasaai)

Mufti Moosa

Question

Someone who smokes about 4 cigarettes a day wants to quit smoking very badly but lacks will power. What advice is there besides the clear Quran text and Ahadith.

Answer

The main ingredient in kicking any addiction is WILLPOWER. It is difficult and it is a struggle, but it is a struggle that can be overcome. In his situation, he should gradually wean himself off smoking. Work on extending the hours between smoking until he can manage with 3 cigarettes, then two, then one. Thereafter working on extending days. Each step is a milestone and a victory which he should celebrate. This will give him extra motivation and make him feel good about quitting. Even if it takes time to do, it's fine. The main thing is that we must move forward and not backward.

Nicotine patches and gum will help. As the body gets accustomed to doing without nicotine, the cravings will subside. With patience and perseverance, he will be able to quit completely.

Added note: Being around people who smoke will make it harder to quit. Being around who don't smoke and who encourage you to give it up will make it easier.

Mufti Moosa

Question

A man passed away leaving behind a wife and four children. In his lifetime he had written a record of gifts that he had allotted for each child. However, he passed away before giving the gifts to them. Do the children first get the gifts allotted to them before the estate is wound up or do the gifts form part of the estate?

Answer

Gifts and donations (termed Hibah in Arabic) are legal transactions as they effect transfer of ownership. As such there are legal conditions that are required for a gifting to be deemed as valid.

There are three essential conditions for a gift (Hibah) to be valid in Islam:

- An offer of the gift by the donor
- Acceptance of the gift by the beneficiary/donee
- Possession or control of the gifted item by the beneficiary

If any of these conditions are not found, the gifting will be considered incomplete and the gift will remain the property of the donor.

In the scenario described in the question, the required conditions are not found as the beneficiaries did not receive the gifts from their father. The necessary requirement of possession/control was not found. An intended future gift is not legally binding in Islam and with death this intention falls away. Upon death, a Muslim's wealth is regulated by the Islamic laws of inheritance and not by their personal wishes.

Thus, according to Islamic Law, the said "gifts" will form part of the estate and will be distributed accordingly.

Should the heirs of the estate (provided they are not minors) choose to honour their father's wishes and award the gifts, they may enter into a redistribution agreement to do so. However, it must be noted that this is their individual choice and no pressure may be exerted on them to fulfil the same.

Mufti Moosa

Question

Zayn gave Ashraf his Zakaat to give to Jamaal but Ashraf gave Zayn's Zakaat to Ali. Is Zayn's Zakaat valid?

Answer

If Zayn appointed Ashraf as his represent-

ative to discharge his Zakaat to Jamaal but instead, Ashraf discharged it to Ali, Zayn's Zakaat will not be discharged and Ashraf will be responsible in discharging Zayn's Zakaat to Jamaal. (Fataawa Mahmoodiyyah 9/494/495)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question

Is zakaat waajib on redundant stock?

Answer

If redundant stock refers to that stock which one is unable to sell quickly but is kept with the intention of resale, then zakaat is waajib on such goods. And if redundant stock refers to that stock which one no longer intends to sell, then this wealth no longer remains stock of trade. Hence, zakaat will not be compulsory upon it.

Mufti Zakaria

Question

Nowadays it has become a fashion to wear the "half niqaabs" and in this case the whole forehead is left open. So is it permissible for a woman that wears the niqaab, to show her eyebrows?

Answer

This is incorrect. The purpose of the niqaab is to cover the entire face. Just as the entire face being open is a means of fithna, similarly the upper portion of the face being exposed is also a means of fithn. Answer All the Aaimmah are unanimous that on account of fithna it is compulsory upon a woman to cover her face before strangers. Therefore, the full niqaab should be worn.

Mufti Zakaria

Question

If a woman has the means to perform Hajj but does not have a mahram to accompany her, will Hajj be compulsory upon her?

Answer

It will not be compulsory upon her to go

for Hajj. She should perform her Hajj when she has a mahram. However it is necessary for her to make a bequest that if she passes away without performing Hajj then Hajj-e-badl should be done on her behalf from one-third of her wealth.

Mufti Zakaria

Question

If the Imam does not perform the prostration of forgetfulness despite making a mistake does this require that prayer to be made up?

The mistake was sitting in the third cycle instead of standing. A follower said Allahuakbar to remind him to stand.

Answer

In the case that the imam does something necessitating the prostrations of forgetfulness (sajda al-sahw), yet he does not proceed to prostrate, it would seem that the prayer is to be repeated.

The general principle is that every prayer which is prayed in a deficient manner is to be repeated to correct the error. The specific ruling of the repetition, however, depends upon the circumstance at hand.

[Ibn 'Abidin, Radd al-Muhtar 'ala al-Durr al-Mukhtar (1.307/498)]

Please also see: Reader on prostrations of forgetfulness and: Must I Repeat Prayers Behind an Imam With a Short Beard or Bare Head?

M. Tabraze Azam

Question

Is it permissible to make Qurbaani during the night?

Answer

If the Qurbaani is carried out in a place which is well lit and there is no fear of one making a mistake while slaughtering, the Qurbaani will be permissible.

Mufti Zakaria

THE POWER OF ALLAH

And he said, "Embark it. With the name of Allah it sails and anchors. Surely, my Lord is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful." And it was sailing with them amidst the waves like mountains. And Nuh called out to his son, who was at an isolated place, "O my child, come on board with us, and do not be in the company of the disbelievers." He said, "I shall take shelter on a mountain which will save me from the water." He said, "There is no savior today from the command of Allah, except the one to whom He shows mercy." And the waves rose high between the two, and he was among the drowned. And it was said, "O earth, suck in your water, and O heaven, stop." And water subsided, and the matter was over. And it (the Ark) came to rest on the Judiyy, and it was said, "Curse be upon the wrongdoers." (11:41-44)

Even a little thought would show that no conveyance, a boat or any other mode of transport that moves on land (or flies in the air) is really within one's own power, neither its creating and making, nor its moving and stopping. A shallow view of things leads man to assume that he is the one who has manufactured it and made it move. The reality lies elsewhere. It does not take much to realize that man has not created iron, wood, brass, aluminium etc. which serve as raw material that go into the making of these modes of conveyance. And it is also clear that it does not lie in his control to create on his own a gram of iron or a foot of wood. Then, who gave them the intelligence to design and produce all sorts of mechanical parts and instruments? How did he do that? Did he create his own intelligence? Had it been within the power of man, no one in this wide world would have remained dumb. Everyone would have been a Plato and Aristotle in his field. So, man puts together wood and iron and mechanical support from all sides, makes the body and frame for the conveyance. Now he needs to haul tons of weight easily

and quickly on the land or in the air. He needs power to do that. It may come through petrol, gas or hydro-electricity. Has man created any of these? Did he create the petrol or gas, or water, or oxygen, or hydrogen?

If we were to look at things impartially, we will realize that even in this age of great scientific advancement, the helplessness of man is still visible and it is true that the moving and stopping of every conveyance rests within the ultimate control of the creator of this universe.

The process of inventing things and making them work makes inventors self-centered. They start living in a hall of mirrors. They congratulate themselves to the limit that they lose touch with the reality of things on a canvass larger than what they invent. Allah tells them through his prophets that there is more to their making that they fail to see: (With the name of Allah it sails and anchors). This is the reality. A brief statement, but very comprehensive. In fact, it is a key to a door. Once he enters it, he lives in this mortal world but turns into a citizen of the spiritual universe - seeing the beauty of the Lord

everywhere in it.

From here unfolds the difference between the world of a believer and the world of a disbeliever. Both ride. But, when a believer steps in there, the conveyance does not simply shorten his travel distances on the land, it introduces him to the one higher, more sublime.

As stated in the second (42) and third (43) verse, when the whole family of Sayyidna Nuh (A.S) had boarded the ark, a son whose name has been reported as Kin'an (Canaan) was left out. Out of his paternal compassion, Sayyidna Nuh (A.S) called out to him asking him to come on board and warning him not to stay in the company of disbelievers otherwise he would drown with them. This young man was already in league with those disbelieving enemies, in fact, was himself a disbeliever. But, in all likelihood, Sayyidna Nuh (A.S) did not know that he was a disbeliever. And even if he did know that, the good counsel he gave to his son to board the boat and leave the company of the disbelievers was in the spirit of asking him to repent from disbelief and enter the fold of faith. But, the unfortunate son still took the flood to be something that will pass away and told him not to worry about him for he would be safe from the flood by climbing a mountain. Sayyidna Nuh (A.S) warned him again that nothing was going to save anyone, not even a mountain, from the punishment of Allah on that day and that there was no way one could remain safe from it unless Allah Himself were to show mercy to him. This father-son dialogue was on from a distance when rose a wave of the flood and took him down and away. Historical reports say that the level of the Flood was fifteen yards above the highest mountain peak and according to some other reports, it was forty yards high.

In the fourth verse (44), the recession of the flood and the return of things to normal conditions has been described in a particular manner. Addressing the earth, Allah commanded: (O earth, suck in your water). The sense was that

the amount of water which had bulged out from the earth was to be taken back in by the earth. The sky was commanded to stop raining. The water from rains that had already accumulated on the earth, nature channelled it into rivers and streams for human beings to benefit by it. (Tafsir Qurtubi, Mazhari)

In this verse, Allah has given His commands by addressing the heaven and the earth, although these are no sensate entities, at least outwardly. Therefore, some commentators have taken it in a figurative sense. But, the fact of the matter is that, in terms of our perception, things in the world which appear non-conscious, insensate, and lifeless are, in all reality, live and conscious. Yes, their consciousness and perception are not of a level as given to humankind and others, therefore, by declaring them to be inanimate, they were not obligated with the percepts and injunctions of the Shari'ah. Many verses of the Holy Qur'an confirm it, such as: (and there is no such thing which does not glorify Him with praises - 17:44). And it is obvious that the glorification of Allah depends on knowing Him, and knowing, on reason and consciousness. This tells us that everything has reason and consciousness according to its respective capacity. From it, it recognizes its creator and whatever it has been assigned to do by Him. Everything knows it fully well and keeps doing it staunchly as due. The verse of the Qur'an: (gave each thing its form then guided [it] - Taha, 20:50) means exactly this. Therefore, in this verse, if the address to the heaven and the earth is taken in the real sense, it does not matter. Sage Rumi said:

*Dust, air, water and fire are all 'servants'
For you and me, dead, but with Him, live.*

At the end of the fourth verse (44), it was said that the heaven and the earth obeyed the orders and the matter of the flood was all over. The Ark of Sayyidna Nuh (A.S) came to rest on the Mount Judiyy and it was declared that the unjust people have been cast far 'away from the mercy of Allah' - (which is what curse is).

Lessons from Sahih Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

Chapter 58 : The sleeping of a man in the Masjid.

Abu Qilaba said that Anas said, "A group of people from Ukl came to the Prophet (saw) and stayed in the Suffa." Abdu'r-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr said, "The people of the Suffa were the poor people."

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Scholars differ in their opinion whether people should be allowed to sleep in mosque or not. There is a hadith narrated by Sayyiduna Jaabir which goes like this:

"Stand up; do not sleep in the mosque".

According to Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas, one who is waiting for salaah in mosque can sleep there, otherwise it is not permitted. Imam Maalik says that the people who have their own resting places should avoid sleeping in mosque, however, majority of the scholars hold the opinion that it is permissible for men to sleep there; the view also supported by Imam Bukhari. (*Eidhahul Bukhari*)

Hadith No. 428

Narrated Naf'ae

Abdullah (ibn Umar) used to sleep in the mosque of the Prophet (saw) when he was young and unmarried, without any family.

Hadith No. 429

Narrated Sahl ibn Sa'id

"The Messenger of Allah (saw) went to Fatima's house and did not find Ali at home. He said, 'Where is your cousin?' She said, 'We had a difference of opinion and he got angry with me and went out. He did not take his mid-day nap here with me.' The Messenger of Allah (saw) said to someone, 'See where he is.' He came back and said, 'Messenger of Allah, he is sleeping in the Masjid.' The Messenger of Allah (saw) went and found Ali lying there. His cloak had fallen from on top of him and had become covered with dust. The Messenger of Allah (saw) began to dust it off, saying, 'Get up, Abu Turab (Dusty one)! Get up, Abu Turab!"

Hadith No. 430

Narrated Abu Huraira

"I saw seventy of the people of the Suffa and not a man among them had a cloak. They either had a waist wrapper or a sheet (kisa') which they tied round their necks, some reaching to the middle of their legs and some reaching to the ankles. They would gather them in their hands, not wanting their private parts to be seen."

Comments

Imam Bukhari has first mentioned two narrations as 'Taleeqaat' in the Tarjamatul Baab. The first mentioning that some people of Ukl

tribe came to Madinah and after accepting Islam stayed in Masjid-i-Nabawi. This shows that travellers can be allowed to stay in a mosque. Later on, when they complained Rasulallah (saw) about their inability to adapt the climatic conditions of Madinah, they were asked to stay in a camel yard, where they killed the shepherd and ran away with the camels. They were chased, arrested, and subjected to severe punishment.

The second narration mentions that the people staying at Suffa were very poor to the extent that they had no house to live in, and therefore stayed in the mosque.

The first hadith of this chapter mentions that Abdullah bin Umar, when young and unmarried, used to sleep in the mosque of the Prophet (saw). This indicates that one can sleep in a mosque even if there is apprehension or possibility of night ejaculation.

The second hadith mentions that once Rasulallah (saw) went to Fatima's house and did not find Ali there. He asked her, "Where is your cousin?". She said that they had a difference of opinion and he got angry with her and went out. He also did not take his midday nap there with her. Rasulallah (saw) told someone to look for Sayyiduna Ali. The person came back and reported that he (i.e., Sayyiduna Ali (RA)) was sleeping in the mosque. Rasulallah (saw) left for the mosque and found Ali lying in there. His cloak had fallen on top of him and his body was covered with dust. Rasulallah (saw) began to dust it off and said, "Get up, Abu Turab (dusty one)! Get up, Abu Turab". Here, by quoting this hadith, Imam Bukhari wants to convey the permissibility of sleeping in the mosque for those people also who have their own resting places.

In the third hadith, Abu Huraira describes the pathetic condition of seventy such individuals who were staying at Suffa in the Masjid-i-Nabawi. These people, because of their poverty, did not have had enough clothes to cover their bodies. They would hold their loin-cloths with their hands lest it might fall down.

The learned scholars consider it improper to make sleeping a routine habit in mosque, which otherwise has been permitted only on need basis.

Chapter 59: (To offer) Salaah on returning from a journey

Ka'b ibn Maalik said, "Whenever the Prophet (saw) returned from a journey, he would first go to the mosque and offer salaah there."

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

It is recommended for a believer to offer salaah in his local home town mosque on returning from a journey as a token of thanksgiving for safe return.

Hadith No. 431

Narrated Jaabir ibn Abdullah

"I arrived finding the Prophet (saw) in the mosque. (Mis'ar said that he thought that he said in the forenoon) He said, 'Pray two rak'at.' He owed me something and he repaid me giving me some extra."

Comments

Imam Bukhari has quoted a narration related by Sayyiduna Ka'b bin Maalik as 'Ta'leeq' in the Tarjamatul Baab. It is a part of a lengthy narration in which Sayyiduna Ka'b bin Maalik narrates the incident of deprivation and frustration he felt for not participating in the battle of Tabuk. This incident is also quoted in the Holy Qur'an as well. In the same narration Sayyiduna Ka'b bin Maalik also narrates the practice of Rasulallah (saw) to offer salaah in the mosque on his return from a journey.

In the hadith under discussion, Sayyiduna Jaabir bin Abdullah narrates that when he arrived from a journey and went to see Rasulallah (saw), who was in the mosque, he was advised to offer salaah first as he had returned from a journey. It is also a part of a lengthy hadith in which it is mentioned that after returning from an expedition Ra-

Rasulullah (saw) saw Sayyiduna Jaabir's camel had sat down because of weakness and tiredness, and due to which Sayyiduna Jaabir had remained behind the rest of his companions. Rasulullah (saw) stroked Sayyiduna Jaabir's camel with his stick which induced freshness in it and it got up and started to run faster than others. Rasulullah (saw) asked Sayyiduna Jaabir to sell the camel to him, which he refused initially but finally agreed when Rasulullah (saw) insisted. On reaching Madinah, Rasulullah (saw), as per his routine, straight away went to the mosque to offer salaah. Sayyiduna Jaabir, on reaching Madinah, also went inside the mosque in order to get payment of the camel from Rasulullah (saw). Rasulullah (saw) told him to offer salaah first as he had also returned from a journey. This proves that offering this particular salaah was not specific to Rasulullah (saw) but recommended to one and all. Afterwards Rasulullah (saw) paid the money to Sayyiduna Jaabir, and also returned the camel to him. (*Eidhahul Bukhari*)

Chapter 60 : On entering a mosque you should pray two rak'ats.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

This chapter is about the salaah called "Taheeyatul Masjid". It is a welcome salaah of two rak'ats which is offered immediately on entering a mosque.

Hadith No. 432

Narrated Abu Qatada as-Salami

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "Whenever one of you enters a Masjid, he should pray two rak'ats before sitting down."

Comments

There is difference of opinion amongst the jurists about the status of this salaah. The majority of them consider it 'Mustahab - preferable', however, Ibn Butaal has quoted an insignificant group of scholar who consider it 'waajib - obligatory'.

Is it permissible to offer "Taheeyatul Masjid" at prohibited times?

There is a narration quoted on the authority of Uqba bin Aamir which goes as:

"Rasulullah (saw) forbade us from offering salaah or burying our dead during three times viz., at sunrise till it rises a little, at noon till it descends a little, and just before the sun sets down".

In view of this hadith, the Hanafite scholars hold that even "Taheeyatul Masjid" should not be offered at such times, whereas the Shafaite scholars consider it permissible in accordance with the hadith of this chapter narrated by Abu Qatadah.

Cont'd from page 17

meaningful, though the whole does not yet make a meaningful statement. But if spaces are intelligently introduced, it could read:

ROMANCEMENT TO GET HER NOWHERE, which makes sense (though not to her).

(We regret we cannot recall where we took the unromantic example from, to assign the credit. At all events, it is not our making, but from a biology book).

In any case, how does the system know where to start reading in the chain of the DNA strand, and where to end? In the above illustration, the useless stretch is in pink and the useless stretch is in blue. But inside the cell, there are no colors. So, how do the operators recognize which areas to read and which not?

Well, care has been taken. A complete gene will usually have signs. To illustrate: the coded segment would have signs saying, "START READING HERE" and "STOP READING HERE."

If amazement follows amazement, which will be followed by a greater amazement, and the best minds wonder and confess how it could have come to be at all, then we might remind ourselves of a simple statement from the Qur'an: "Allah has power over all things."

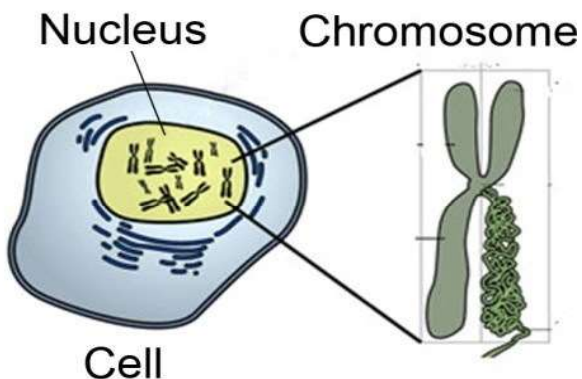
Evolution and its Adversaries - III

For readers to comprehend better, we are going back a few lines and illustrations. We may state at this point that, at the first read, some aspects might appear tough to grasp. But a second and third read will ease it up. After all, for some, it might be the first time they are exposed to information over which scores of scientists have won Nobel Prizes.

SYED IQBAL ZAHEER

The 23 pairs of the DNA molecule

There are 46 chromosomes (23 pairs) in the nucleus of every one of the 70 trillion cells of a human body. But the sperm (of the male) and egg cells (of the female), have only 23 chromosomes. They combine to, once again, become 23 pairs (46 in all) at the time of fertilization. How these combine at the moment of fertilization, within virtually seconds, to produce a unique individual, is a fascinating story.



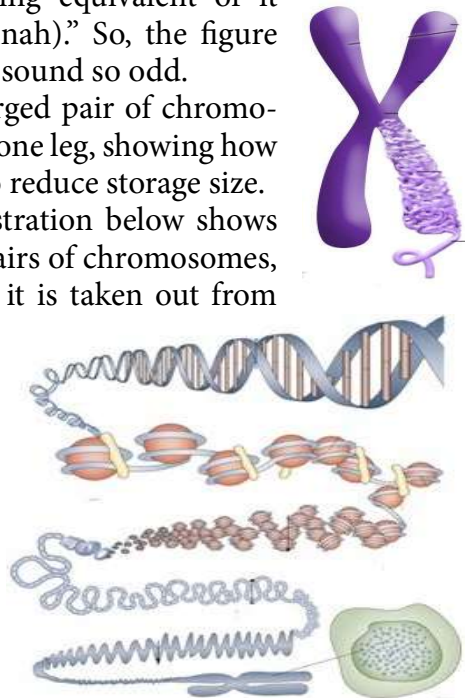
Above: A pair of chromosomes: one out of the 23 pairs stored in the nucleus of every cell.

The figure 23 sounds odd; but, remember that the Qur'an was revealed in 23 years. And the Prophet said, "I have been given the Qur'an, and something equivalent of it (i.e. the Sunnah)." So, the figure 23 shouldn't sound so odd.

An enlarged pair of chromosomes, with one leg, showing how it is coiled to reduce storage size.

The illustration below shows one of the pairs of chromosomes, uncoiled, as it is taken out from the cell's nucleus.

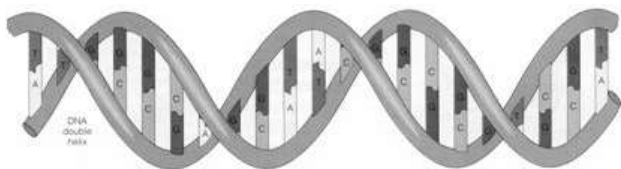
The cell is shown at bottom-right, while the uppermost right corner shows the inner construction



of the chromosome. Those (vertical) rods connecting the two arms of the ladder-like coiled strand are named 'nucleotides.'

When the coil is unrolled, the chromosomes (or call them "DNA strands") are themselves found to be twisted, like a ladder, or perhaps, like a rope, in which each strand (made of molecules) is a true copy of the other strand. So, we have not only the coded information of a whole body, on a single (chemical) strand, but a true copy of it on the other strand also, and the two are twisted together to become a rope. In other words, if you cut through the center of the chain (or the ladder), you will get two strands, each of which has the coded information in full for the entire human body.

Here is an illustration showing a small segment of the twisted ladder, in which the information is stored:



The figure above shows a segment of the chromosome. The step-like areas (the vertical rods) are made of smaller molecules (called nucleotides) joined together (in a chemical bond); and roughly, (not exactly), each twist as above carries information about one amino acid.

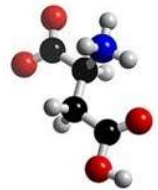
So, what are amino acids? Well, all proteins (there are some 100,000 kinds or types of them in a cell) are made from smaller molecules called amino acids. There are 20 different kinds of these amino acids. Unless various kinds of them are joined together, within the cell, say a 1000 of them, in a specific arrangement, the amino acids are, by themselves of no use. The source of these amino acids is the food we take. Our digestive system breaks food into several parts. Amino acids are one of the products. They are sent across from the intestine through blood circulation to the cells, throughout the body. They are allowed into the cell and are free-

ly floating within it (the cytoplasm) until picked up by the ribosomes to be assembled into proteins. These proteins have a variety of functions within the cell.

To repeat: when amino acids are bonded together, in a very specific order (by a machiner called ribosome), they become a protein. There is no other way to make a protein. Of amino acids, there are 20 kinds, no more. The number of amino acid molecules that make up a protein varies from hundreds to thousands of units.

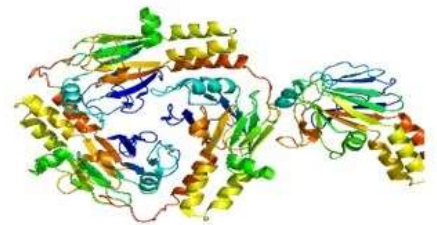
An Amino Acid

In the right, each ball represents an atom. The number of atoms in an amino acid is 15-20. There are 20 different kinds of amino acids. These amino acids, when linked together, in a specific way, (which only the cell can do), make proteins.



Proteins

A protein consists of hundreds to thousands of amino acids. There are a



100,000 of different type of proteins in a human cell. Each of them has very specific shape and size, and only the cell can make it – with the help of ribosomes – from the free-floating amino acids inside the cell. Each of the protein performs a specific function. The information to manufacture the proteins comes from the DNA residing in the strong room called the nucleus. Sometime later, we might discuss this process of protein-making, Allah willing.

Who issues the command to make proteins? This is not known. It is not the DNA (or their sub-units called genes) which issue the command. The DNA only supplies the information, or details of the chemical combinations, that would make a specific protein.

The DNA

Back to the DNA; remember there are 23 pairs of them. They are in the form of a ladder (which is twisted), which, in turn, is made of tiny molecules (known as nucleotides), which carry information. Out of 23+23 DNA strings, each string contains the entire blueprint for the making of an organism (a biological body). So, the information is there on 23 strings, plus an entire copy of it.

There are some three billion pairs of nucleotide in each of the 23 pairs of the DNA. In their chemical arrangement, they are just the same in every one of the 70 trillion cells of a human body, because each cell is a true copy of the previous cell (biologists call the duplicated cell as the daughter cell). Thus, if we have a single cell, the information in the DNA alone is enough to build the entire body. This, however, is a text-book account. Research results obtained during last 20 years are saying something else. An account of this follows later. At the moment, we shall proceed with the above assumption, because most biology books, written even by serious scientists, are saying (incorrectly) that the entire information for building a body is in the DNA.

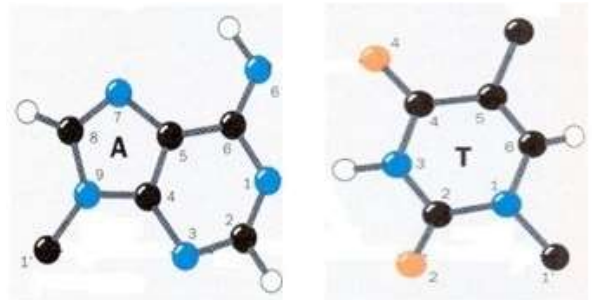
To recap: DNA is a large molecule. It is made from smaller molecules joined together in linear arrangement. Those smaller molecules are known as the nucleotides. There are four kinds of nucleotides. It is these which carry the information. Just like the English language being made of 26 letters, nucleotides are the four letters with which words are made. Those four letters are: A, C, T, and G. These four are the letters of the genetic language. Any three of them, let us say, ACT, or GTC, makes a word and carries, in code, the message for one of the 20 amino acids. Amino acids, you will remember, make a protein when joined together in a specific way. This happens inside the cell.

Thus, first, we have atoms. Then we have group of atoms in a particular order. They are

called nucleotides. There are four kinds of these nucleotides, called A, C, T, and G. Three of these nucleotides placed together make the message for a specific amino acid. (There are 20 kinds of amino acids). These amino acids, when placed together in a specific order, make a specific protein, and all cellular machinery are called proteins.

So, from atoms to nucleotides to amino acids to proteins, to cells, to parts and limbs, to the body – that's the whole story of every biological body.

Nucleotides



The following chain in the DNA has 27 letters (nucleotides): TACTTCAGCTAGGATC-TACCGGAACGT. It could be said that it has the information for nine amino acids, since every three of them codes for an amino acid. Let us assume the chain is 300 nucleotides long (since nine amino acids will make nothing). The 300 nucleotides would make 100 words. When these 100 words, each of which stands for a specific amino acid, are placed together, one linked to the other, then, it might be carrying in code the message for a certain protein. That is, assembled together, the 100 amino acids will result in a protein of a particular shape and size to perform a specific function within the cell. The sequence of the 100 amino acids, as coded by the DNA, must be strictly adhered to. If a single amino acid is misplaced in the chain which is 100 amino acids long, we will not get any protein, but merely a blob, good for nothing. The cell has a machinery (a specific protein) to destroy such

blobs. This machinery is known as Lysosome. It degenerates all useless material floating around within the cell.

To Clarify

To explain a little: In how many different ways can 100 links of 20 amino acids can be joined together to get a protein? The answer is: in 10130 different sequences. In other words, 1 followed by 130 zeroes.

Now, keeping in mind that 20 amino acids, in a chain consisting of 100 links, can join up, hand-in-hand, in 10130 different ways, one can ask: How many of these 10130 different sequences are correct to produce a specific protein, useful in the cell (which will not be destroyed by Lysosome)? The answer is: "only one." If you made a single mistake of misplacing one amino acid, anywhere in the chain you will not get the protein of your desire, but end up with a little molecular ball that is either useless to the body or even dangerous.

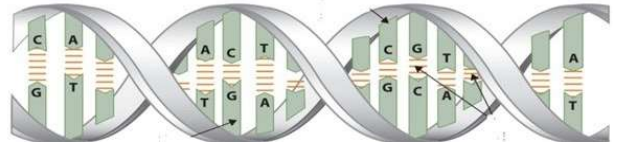
As an instance, the well-known sickle-cell disease (also known as Mongolism) is caused by the substitution of just one of the 146 amino acids in the protein known as hemoglobin. So, a single error can be fatal to the body. (Lifelines, p. 41)

What if we try to manufacture a protein in a laboratory, consisting of say 2000 links, which is common in human body? How many trials will have to be made before we hit at one – and only one – which will succeed in giving us a useful protein? Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe have worked it out as 102600 trials. (Our Place in the Cosmos, p. 151). In other words, out of a total of a figure 1 followed by 2600 zeroes, of different ways of joining together 20 amino acids of length 2000 links, only one will succeed if we tried our luck without knowing how to do it.

To some – not used to such figures as 10 followed by 2600 zeroes might not mean very much. It may be pointed out that the entire universe, including all galaxies and everything in

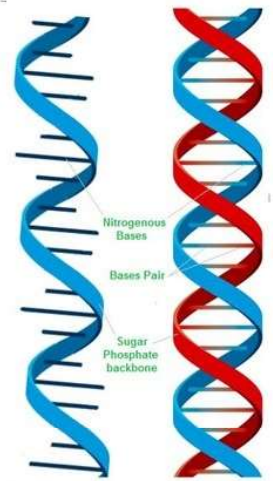
it, is calculated to have 1080 atoms. That is, 10 followed by 80 zeroes. India's mammoth population is 109 souls. So, 102600 is no mean figure.

But the cell assembles millions of amino acids, to make tens of thousands of proteins, every minute, all in one shot, without making a single error.



The above is a segment of the DNA. The whole – i.e., the complete strand – can be a meter long. Within it, as visible above, each of the three words "CGT" or "GCA" (see arrows) codes for an amino acid. The whole strand is nothing more than these ACT, TGA, CGT, GCA, etc. and no more.

Right: A segment of the coiled, ladder shaped DNA strand. It is also referred to as the 'Double Helix'. The rods in between the two strands are nucleotides, one on each side. They are chemically, but weakly joined to each other, and can be easily separated. The whole can be a meter long. There are 23 of them in human cell. In the nucleus, where they are stored, they are in the double helix form.



At left of the illustration above, one strand is separated out. It is an exact copy of the other. Thus, there are 46 of these single strands; out of which every 23 contains all the data required to build a man.

The foregoing details should make it obvious the way Allah has concealed the information about a human being with regard to how his body works at the cellular level: first the body, then the organs, then the cell, then the nucleus, then the chromosome (DNA), then the

genes (a segment of the DNA) – the last place where information is stored. This makes it hard for the humans, though not impossible, to tamper with themselves. What makes it further complicated is that genes alone do not always work independently.

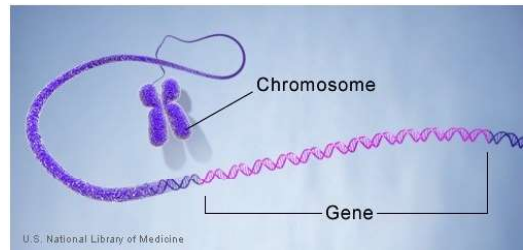
But this is not all. Although the information coded with the help of ACT, CGT, etc. is on the DNA, stored with the help of three billion pieces of data, not all of it has meaning for the construction of a body. The truly useful information is further concealed in segments of the chromosome strands. These meaningful segments are called genes. There are some 21,000 of these genes, distributed over the 23 pairs of chromosomes, within every one of human cell. This (the gene) amounts to about 10% of the entire DNA. The rest has been, for long, considered junk (until the beginning of this century), though this is now proving untrue.

At all events, it can be said that, if we can read out 21,000 of these segments (genes) from the DNA strands, the whole body can be constructed, although of course, this is a theoretical statement. In actual fact, nothing of this sort can be achieved, because the data is useful within the cell. That is, the molecules (and so the message) that they code are useless outside the cell. Only the cell can read the information; not humans in, say, a laboratory. They can only read bits and pieces and learn by trial and error, sometimes as a result of thousands of experiments.

So, to make sure, genes are the useful data. The rest was called, and is still referred to by many scientists, as junk DNA. But research is now showing that the rest is not junk. This will become clear as we advance into details. For the moment, we shall move forward with the figure of 21,000 as the useful segments, i.e., the genes. Here is an illustration:

In the right above, the chromosome strand, (the DNA), has been uncoiled. Although every rung of the ladder is coded for amino acids, it is only the pinked stretch that carries the message

for a useful protein. The function of the rest [in blue] is not yet clear.



That is, when this stretch (in pink) is copied from the master chromosome (the copy known as mRNA), and sent out by the operators from within the nucleus, into the outer area (known as cytoplasm, within the cell), it is taken up by a machinery called ribosome. This machinery reads the message, (step by step, rung by rung, word by word), and learning in sequence what the mRNA (the gene) is coded for, picks up free-floating amino acids around it in the cytoplasm, assembles them in the order it reads the coded message, to finally produce the intended protein. Two thousand proteins are thus manufactured every second, by every cell in the body, round the clock, whether one is awake or sleeping. (Schroeder, [https:// books. google.com.sa/ books?id](https://books.google.com.sa/books?id))

The above is a simple illustration. In actual fact, genes do not come in one long or short stretch, but rather, in the DNA strand as above; after the pink area, there may be useless stretch, and then again, another pink area, and then maybe a very long stretch of useless chain, and then again, another pink area; so that the three pink areas put together will make up for a gene, that codes for a single protein.

Now, every language needs comas, gaps, punctuation marks, full stops etc. to make a sortie of words meaningful. For example, if no spaces are given, the following means nothing:

ROMANCEMENTTOGETHERNOWHERE

With spaces introduced, it could read:
ROMAN CEMENT TOGETHER NOWHERE,
where , at least all the four words are

Lost Hope in Allah

Dina Muhammad

There is this one sin that you keep falling in again and again...and again.

You repent and you repent.

But you fall into it again.

You give up.

You submit to doing more sins.

You think you're hopeless.

You fill your heart and mind with dark/desperate/hopeless thoughts.

You think you're worthless.

You drown in negativity and desperation...

If this is you, then Stop This Now!

Never buy into this! Never.

The battle is not over. You didn't lose. You have the power to come back stronger and more triumphant than you ever were.

Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness are there for You! Yes for you!

The only loser is the one who whispers to you thoughts of hopelessness and desperation.

If you are reading this, then think of it as a message from The Most Merciful!

Listen to Him as He says:

Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (Qur'an 39: 53)

Listen to Him as He says:

"And when those come to you who believe in

Our verses, say, "Peace be upon you. Your Lord has decreed upon Himself mercy: that any of you who does wrong out of ignorance and then repents after that and corrects himself – indeed, He is Forgiving and Merciful." (Qur'an 6: 54)

And listen to Him as He says:

"O son of Adam, so long as you call upon Me and ask of Me, I shall forgive you for what you have done, and I shall not mind. O son of Adam, were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you then to ask forgiveness of Me, I would forgive you. O son of Adam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as it. [Tirmidh]

How can you give up after that!

Remember this: we all sin, and the Prophet (SAWS) said:

"All the sons of Adam are sinners, but the best of sinners are those who repent often." [Tirmidhi]

Now, there is something VERY important that you need to remember always.

Shaytan (the accursed devil) has 2 major techniques:

1- To make the sin seem appealing, ap-

proachable and easy to do.

2- Once the sin is committed, he makes asking for forgiveness and repentance seem impossible/fake/useless so that the person feels worthless and give up.

So don't give him that. Be conscious of his techniques, immune and empower yourself.

Allah says: "[...] and despair not of relief from Allah. Indeed, no one despairs of relief from Allah except the disbelieving people" (Qur'an 12: 87)

Giving up and falling in despair is equal to disbelief because if you do that, aren't you aware that Allah's Name is The Continuously Merciful, The Forgiver, The Acceptor of repentance..? These are His Names and these are His attributes and actions, who are we to deny His Names or deny the mercy and forgiveness that He wants to give His slaves! Denying His Names and Attributes is like denying Him.

This sort of desperation is from the shaytan. As Allah says:

"Satan threatens you with poverty and orders you to immorality, while Allah promises you forgiveness from Him and bounty. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing." (Qur'an 2: 268)

Shaytan makes people focus on the downside (the sin, fear, poverty, hopelessness, failure) so they would overlook the immense hope that is there of Allah's Help, Support and Mercy.

So don't give him that.

Yes you've sinned and you feel sad and ugly. But do you know that despite all of that, you're actually in a position to be loved by Allah!

Yes, loved!

Allah says:

"[...] Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves." (Qur'an 2: 222)

So, not only will Allah forgive, but He will also show His Love and Mercy upon those who repent and sincerely seek Him and seek the

right course.

The action points here are in two folds:

1- Immune yourself against sin and against being an easy prey to Shaytan. How?

- Maintain all obligatory prayers on time.
 - Make sure to recite the morning and evening adhkar regularly every day. They keep a lot of harm away and protect the person inwardly and outwardly.
 - Engage with the Qur'an. Must read and/or listen to the words of Allah everyday. They keep one in check. Listen to or attend lectures of tafseer of Qur'an (exegesis and commentary). Try to also study and memorize Qur'an to the best of your ability.
 - Have righteous friends. Have righteous friends. Have righteous friends and keep their company as much as possible. They remind you of Allah, encourage you for goodness and take your mind off sins.
 - Recite Surat Al Baqarah whenever you feel weak. It shields and protects you against the Shaytan.
 - Get busy. Occupy yourself with useful activities because if you're not engaged in useful activities, shaytan will engage you in harmful ones.
- 2- If you do sin, just come back again! How?
- Stop the sin.
 - Acknowledge and regret the sin wholeheartedly
 - Make sincere and heartfelt repentance to Allah.
 - Sincerely decide to not go back to it again
 - Follow the bad deed with a good deed so it wipes it out.

"And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember." (Qur'an 11: 114)

So, if you did sin, then get back up and repeat the above steps.

Remember, if you are sincerely trying and you are doing your best to remain on the right course and you do not wish to keep doing or to insist on the sin, then you're on the right track.

But.... if you take Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness as a means to carry on doing sins and neglect or delay repentance, then you should be worried.

Remember the continuation of the verse we mentioned earlier...

"Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful."

And return [in repentance] to your Lord and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you; then you will not be helped."
(Qur'an 39: 53-54)

Allah says that His Forgiveness is granted if...

"But indeed, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and believes and does righteousness and then continues in guidance."
(Qur'an 20: 82)

So this is the path. It doesn't matter how many times you have fallen. It doesn't matter. What matters is that you repent immediately, do righteous deeds and keep going on the straight path.

Remember this beautiful hadith:

Ibn 'Umar (RA) reported:
I heard Messenger of Allah (SAWS) saying, "A believer will be brought close to his Lord on the Day of Resurrection and enveloping him in His Mercy, He (SWT) will make him confess his sins by saying: 'Do you remember (doing) this sin and this sin?' He will reply: 'My Lord, I remember.' Then He (SWT) will say: 'I covered it up for you in the life of world, and I forgive it for you today.' Then the record of his good deeds will be handed to him". [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

So don't give up when this is our Lord and this is His Mercy. Just remember this day, and start working...

Start now, start today. The power is yours, beat your shitan. The doors of goodness are all around you.

Get up and make wudu, pray 2 rak'aas.... good deeds wipe out bad deeds.

Give some money to charity, help someone in need, call your parents...the doors of goodness are endless and wide open for you. Seize them. Turn the table around. If you are still breathing, then you're still in The Mercy of Allah and He is giving you more opportunities.

And if you fall, come back again

Allah never gets bored of accepting your repentance.

So long as you're trying and you're working hard and you're doing your best...then the Mercy of Allah will be upon you and His aid will be with you. He called Himself the Continuously Merciful, The Forgiver and Hider of Faults and The Acceptor of Repentance... for you!



20. Acupuncture:

This method was mentioned in the authenticated hadith as an effective treatment of several disease. Research work is being carried out in China and other parts of the world to use acupuncture as a method of treatment.

There are other aspects of medicine which have been dealt with in Islam for example:

1. Quacks should not treat patients.
2. Treatment and prevention of diseases have been recommended and practiced by the Prophet.
3. When you visit a patient do not stay long.

There are many priceless gems of knowledge in the Qur'an and hadith from which man can benefit immensely. These are but brief facts of medicine which have been mentioned before in Qur'an and hadith and there is a lot more to be discovered and studied.

Journey of Mu'adh bin Jabal (RA)

Abu Amina Ilyas

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

The Prophet (saw) sent Mu'adh ibn Jabal to Yemen in order to call the people to Islam and teach them the practices of the religion. There are a number of lessons we can learn from the instructions the Prophet gave to him.

Ibn Abbas reported: When the Messenger of Allah (saw) sent Mu'adh to Yemen, he said to him:

Verily, you are coming to a people among the people of the Book, so call them to testify there is no God but Allah and I am the Messenger of Allah. If they accept that, then teach them that Allah has obligated five prayers in each day and night. If they accept that, then teach them that Allah has obligated charity to be taken from the rich and given to the poor. If they accept that, beware not to take from the best of their wealth. Be on guard from the supplication of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between it and Allah. (Muslim)

In this tradition, the Prophet instructed Mu'adh to introduce Islam to the people in gradual steps, starting with the most important beliefs, the testimony of faith and monotheism (tawheed), and moving onto the next pillars of prayer and charity.

As such, when calling people to Islam, we should call people to Islam in steps, starting with

the most important beliefs and subsequently introducing the most important practices. Many people find it difficult to apply everything in Islam at once, so counselling them to begin applying Islam gradually will make it easier for them to enter into Islam fully.

Making the transition to Islam easier for people was an important part of the Prophet's instructions. Abu Burda reported: The Messenger of Allah (saw) sent Mu'adh to Yemen and he said:

Make things easy and do not make things difficult. Give glad tidings and do not repel people. Cooperate with each other and do not become divided. (Bukhari)

The Prophet instructed Mu'adh to cooperate with the people and not to be a dictator over them, for being too hard on them would cause division. The Quran was revealed gradually over twenty three years, so people and society should be given the duties of Islam gradually.

An-Nawawi comments on this tradition, saying:

In this tradition is the command to give glad tidings of the favor of Allah, his great reward, his plentiful gifts, and his vast mercy. And in this is the prohibition of alienating people by mentioning the fear of Allah and types of warning alone without including glad tidings. And in this is bringing hearts together of those who are close to

Islam and to avoid harshness with them, likewise with whoever among children near or at the age of maturity and who has repented from sin. All of them should be treated with kindness and gradually encouraged to perform acts of obedience little by little. Responsibility for the affairs of Islam should be done gradually. (Muslim)

The Prophet warned us that overburdening ourselves and others in the religion will ultimately cause us to fail. Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah (saw) said:

Verily, the religion is ease, and no one burdens himself in religion except that it overcomes him. So be moderate, seek closeness to Allah, give glad tidings, and gain strength for worship in the morning and the night. (Bukhari)

The Prophet warned Mu'adh not to wrong or oppress anyone, even if they are not Muslims, because Allah always responds to the supplication of the oppressed. Anas ibn Malik reported: The Messenger of Allah (saw) said:

Beware of the supplication of the oppressed, even if he is an unbeliever, for there is no screen between it and Allah. (Musnad Ahmad)

The Prophet warned Mu'adh not to use his position of authority to live extravagantly, but rather he should practice temperance (zuhd), spending his wealth in charity and renouncing the vanities of worldly life.

Mu'adh ibn Jabal reported: The Messenger of Allah (saw) sent me to Yemen and he said:

Beware of luxury. Verily, the servants of Allah do not live luxuriously. (Musnad Ahmad)

The Prophet gave Mu'adh instructions for properly applying Islamic guidance and principles if nothing explicit can be found in the Quran and Sunnah.

Harith ibn Amr reported: Some men among the companions of Mu'adh said the Messenger of Allah (saw) sent him to Yemen and the Prophet said:

How will you judge?

Mu'adh said, "I will judge according to what is

in the Book of Allah." The Prophet said:

What if it is not in the Book of Allah?

Mu'adh said, "Then with the tradition (sunnah) of the Messenger of Allah." The Prophet said:

What if it is not in the tradition of the Messenger of Allah?

Mu'adh said, "Then I will strive to form an opinion (ijtihad)." The Prophet said:

All praise is due to Allah who has made suitable the messenger of the Messenger of Allah.

(Sunan At-Tirmidhi)

This narration demonstrates the proper procedure for applying Islamic guidance that would eventually develop into the discipline of the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (usul al-fiqh).

First, Muslim scholars should judge according to the explicit texts of the Quran and Sunnah and the consensus of the companions. If a clear answer is not found in these texts, then the scholars should apply rational principles such as analogy (qiyas), equity (istihsan), public interest (maslahah mursalah), and consideration of custom ('urf). The use of these rational principles is called the practice of independent legal reasoning (ijtihad).

Scholars would later extract the purposes and objectives of Islamic law as a guiding philosophy when applying rational principles to new situations, a discipline known as the objectives of the Law (maqasid ash-sharia). These objectives include the protection of life, religion, property, family, and intellect, as well as the pursuit of mercy, justice, and welfare. Al-Ghazali wrote:

Welfare which we mean here is the protection of the objectives of the law (sharia). Namely, the objectives of the law are five in creation: the protection of religion, life, intellect, family relations, and property. Everything that advances the protection of these five fundamentals is considered benefit, and everything which fails to protect these five fundamentals is considered corruption.

(Al-Mustasfa min Ilm al-Usul)

Ibn Al-Qayyim wrote:

Indeed, the law is founded upon wisdom and welfare for the servants in this life and the afterlife. In its entirety it is justice, mercy, benefit, and wisdom. Every matter which abandons justice for tyranny, mercy for cruelty, benefit for corruption, and wisdom for foolishness is not a part of the law even if it was introduced therein by an interpretation. (I'lam Al-Muwaqqi'in 'an Rabb Al-Alamin)

Ibn Al-Qayyim also wrote:

Allah the Exalted has made clear in his law that the objective is the establishment of justice between His servants and fairness among the people, so whichever path leads to justice and fairness is part of the religion and can never oppose it. (Turuq Al-Hukmiyyah)

Finally, the last advice the Prophet gave to Mu'adh was to behave with good character, as it is the character of a Muslim which can most strongly impart a good impression of Islam to those being called.

Mu'adh ibn Jabal reported: The last advice the Messenger of Allah (saw) gave to me when I put my foot in the stirrup was that he said:

Make your character excellent for the people, O Mu'adh ibn Jabal. (Muwatta)

Allah has commanded the believers to preach Islam in a beautiful manner. If we preach Islam in an ugly and harsh way, we will be a cause of misguidance for the people. But if we preach Islam in a beautiful way with good character, the people will be more receptive to the message. Allah said:

Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Verily, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way and He is most knowing of who is guided. (An-Nahl 16:125)

These are some of the lessons we learn from journey of Mu'adh ibn Jabal to Yemen. Likewise, we should apply this guidance when calling others to Islam in our time.

Success comes from Allah, and Allah knows best

TURN TO ALLAH

The best cure for all ills and suffering today, is that we should turn to Allah and express our sincere regret and apology for our misdeeds. We should pledge to keep away from His disobedience in future, and begin to offer our Five daily Salah regularly. Even children should be taught to cultivate a habit for 'Salah. Allah has emphasized in the Quran as follows: "Oh, ye who believe! Seek help with patient perseverance and prayer for Allah is with those who observe patience." (2:153)

Sayyadina Mu'adh ibn Jabal (ra) narrates that he once heard Rasulullah (saw) saying, "A person who does not go for Sala-hafter hearing the Adhan is committing a great wrong and is doing an act of blasphemy and hypocrisy."

The renowned saint Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (ra) has said: "You people have been totally negligent and careless about Allah. It is high time that you wake up and connect yourselves to the Masjid and the path of the righteous ones. Make sending Salawaat upon Rasulullah (saw) a regular habit and binding upon yourselves."

The Sunna of Good health

Hasan Ghaznawi

Islam is the religion of all times and places. It is a perfect system of temporal values. By practicing its laws Muslims all over the world not only attain spirituality but the pinnacle of all other glories and gain the wealth of health.

There is a great inter-relationship between modern medicine and some of our Islamic teachings.

Every word of Qur'an is in fact an experience of great reality and science is just an effort made towards this reality. Knowledge is limitless and its horizons are constantly expanding with every strike of progress disclosing fresh information and according to Qur'anic knowledge is a comprehensive text and it involves all branches of sciences, religion, technology, agriculture, engineering and medicine. It is definitely a miracle of our sacred religion that it expands on all branches of human knowledge. This is known from the following quotation from Qur'an:

“We have revealed to you the Scripture so that it might be a clear evidence for every thing.”

In the following article I have tried to elucidate that the guidelines given in the Quran and Sunnah concerned with the promotion of physical health of humans have been duly proved by years of modern medical scientific research all over the world. Some of them which I am going to deal with in this article.

1. Prayers:

In Sura Moon “God deprecates those who are careless in their prayers offer them only for show.” Although the real purpose of prayers is to worship Allah, yet there is a large number of additional benefits also.

2. Exercise:

As we eat three times daily we need exercises to lessen the cholesterol in the body which increases in the blood after meals, thickens it and leads to the deposition of slit in the arteries.

In addition to saving us from the sins and elevating us to the heights of spirituality, prayers are great help in maintaining our physical health. They keep our body active, help digestion and save us from muscle and joint diseases through regular balanced exercise. They help the circulation of blood and also mitigate the bad effect of cholesterol. Prayers play a vital role in acting as a preventive measure against heart attack, paralysis, premature senility, dementia, loss of control on sphincters, diabetes mellitus etc.

Collateral circulation plays a major role in decreasing the danger of heart attack in patients. Patients above 55 years of age in which this type of circulation is developed have less severe attacks. It is possible to speed up the development of collateral circulation by regular and balanced exercises which is present in the prayers are not

only potent, preventive measure against coronary heart diseases but also help in the development of collateral circulation in those people who have already suffered from a heart attack or are prone to it.

Heart patients should offer the five obligatory prayers regularly as they get the permission from their doctor to leave bed.

The arrangement of prayers is such that those at the time of empty stomach are brief but those after meals are longer and give more exercise to the body.

During the month of Fast (Ramadan) the additional twenty Rakaat (Tarawih) are added to the late evening prayers because more than normal food is usually consumed after breaking fast.

The performance of prayers put almost all muscles of the body in action. Different groups of muscles are activated while performing prayers. During Sajda blood supply to the brain is improved. One of the useful methods to strengthen the muscles of the knee joints to mitigate the strain on knees in osteo arthritis is the regular exercise of these muscles during prayers.

3. Heart:

This vital organ of the body has to be always healthy and efficient as it is responsible for the circulation of blood. Diseased heart results in deterioration of the healthy body. This knowledge we obtained after centuries of scientific research yet it was simply told to us fourteen hundred years ago by our great Prophet (saws). *“Verily in the body there is such a piece of flesh that if it remains alright the whole body keeps well but if this piece of flesh develops some defect the whole body becomes unhealthy. Behold, - this piece of flesh - it is heart.”* (Bukhari, Muslim ...)

4. Siesta:

It was the habit of our blessed Prophet to sleep for a while after lunch, his companions also followed this practice. This short nap gives

relief to the vital organs of the body like heart and brain.

5. Moderation in Food:

Both Qur'an and hadith have touched this topic, Qur'an tells us in Ayah 30 of Sura Al Airaf: *“O children of Adam, look to your adornment of every place of worship and eat and drink but not prodigal Lo! He loveth not the prodigals.”*

Strengthening this order, the Prophet has strictly forbidden over eating in the following hadith:

“It is enough to eat few morsels of food to keep one's back straight.”

“If you must eat more, be sure that only one third of your stomach is filled with food, one third is left for water and the remaining one third for air.”

“A Muslim eats in one intestine (stomach) whereas a non believer eats in seven intestine.”

It has been proved beyond doubt that over eating is the root of many diseases and also responsible for premature senility. It produces obesity, predisposes to dangerous diseases like diabetes, menitus, hypertension, coronary heart disease and paralysis.

6. Diabetes Mellitus:

This is due to insulin deficiency. Overeating gets the special cells of the pancreas (islets of Langerhans) over worked so it cannot meet the increased demand for insulin. Those cells may get tired, atrophy and causes deficiency of insulin.

7. Paralysis, Coronary Heart Disease & Premature Senility:

Their basic course is the narrowing of the coronary arteries. Paralysis is the natural result of blocking of an artery in the brain, should this happen in the heart Myocardial infection results. Premature senility is installed when majority of the arteries in the body get narrowed.

Slit in the form of cholesterol and triglycerides is deposited in the arteries. Over eating increases blood cholesterol levels. Pork and beef

contain high cholesterol values while on the other hand birds have the least amount. Qur'an mentioned that birds meat is one of the specialties of Paradise.

Olive has been repeatedly mentioned in Qur'an, and statistics shows that heart attacks occur more in Northern Italy where they use butter and margarine for cooking than in Southern Italy where olive oil is generally used.

Patients suffering from narrowing of the coronary artery usually develop the heart attack after a heavy meal.

8. Forbidden Articles of Food:

Blood

Ingested blood on reaching the intestine is acted upon by various bacteria normally present there resulting in poisonous products like ammonia which is toxic to the liver. Therefore, God has forbidden us to eat or drink blood and has prescribed such a method for slaughtering animals that most of their blood is shed.

Pork

There are two harmful worms harbored by pigs, one is "TAENIASOLIUM" which on ingestion passes to the brain and causes epilepsy. The other one is "TRICHINELLASPIRALIS" which passes to the muscles and brain causing muscular swelling and pain and also epilepsy. Pork has more fat and cholesterol than any other meat.

Alcohol

Numerous diseases have been attributed to alcohol like dyspeptic trouble, peptic ulceration, cancer stomach, pancreatitis, cirrhosis liver, vitamin deficiency and coronary heart disease.

9. Islamic Medicine- Circumcision:

One of the criteria of Islam is that every Muslim should be circumcised. This is medically suggested nowadays as a toxic substance called Smegma may collect under the redundant skin causing cancer of the genitalia in both man and his wife, inflammation of the penis, phthisis, sticking of the redundant skin over the urethral opening leading to difficulty in urination.

10. Washing after Defecation:

This beneficial habit saves us from Pilonidal sinus which is an abscess with hair inside occurring near anal opening.

Pylonephritis: This is more in women due to the proximity of the urethral opening to the anus so toilet paper while being used may bring germs like E. coli to the urethra.

11. Ablution:

A prerequisite of prayers yet one of the most hygienic procedure as it usually keeps the exposed parts of our body clean and also the parts of entry like mouth and nose thus avoiding infection.

Prevention of Infection:

Infection may be transmitted through dirty hands or dirty food. Hands: It is essential to wash our hands before and after meals. Our blessed Prophet told us:

"It is a blessing to wash your hands before and after meals." (Abu Daud & Tirmizi)

He has also advised us not to clean our hands with a towel before meals as they may convey infection from one person to the other particularly viral diseases like infective hepatitis or bacterial infection like Typhoid dysenteries and cholera. Or Prophet said:

"Whosoever gets up from slumber should not dip his hand in any utensil unless he washes them three times, who knows what things he has been touching during sleep." (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood, Nisai)

Articles of Beverages:

These articles should be handled with great care. If the food is in open utensil they should be covered to avoid contamination. Stressing this our Prophet said "Cover up the utensils and tie the mouth of the water skins." He said, "Why did you not cover the utensil carrying the milk even if – it was with a piece of wood." (Bukhari, Muslim)

12. Dental Hygiene:

Particular stress has been laid by our Prophet on this as it is very important in the prevention of disease. He attached great importance

to "Miswak" a twig of a tree used for brushing teeth. "If I had not thought this to be an unbearable hardship for my followers I would have prescribed the use of Miswak before every prayers." (Bukhari, Muslim)

According to modern dentistry the best method of using a Miswak or a tooth brush is up and down the length of the teeth and this exactly the way our Prophet used his Miswak.

13. Islamic Medicine- Khillala:

The blessed Prophet said "Whosoever eats should pick bits and pieces from in between his teeth." It is beneficial act so that those do not rot and produce disease.

14. Heatstroke:

Covering the head and neck as our Prophet used to do, mitigate the danger of hyperpyrexia which is due to imbalance of the heat control centre situated in the hind brain, which may lead to death.

15. Islamic Medicine: Treatment of Fever:

Death occurs if the temperature of the body exceeds 106 degrees irrespective of the cause. Medically speaking the first line of treatment is to lower the temperature by cold water, ice sponging or even immersing the patient in cold water. On this Prophet said:

"The fever is related to the Hell. Application of cold water keeps it away." (Ibne Maja)

16. Islamic Medicine- Constipation:

The blessed Prophet advised that while defaecating keep pressure on the left foot (Tibrani). In squatting position this maneuvers will cause pressure on the descending colon. Medically this helps evacuation of feaces from the descending colon thus relieving constipation, particularly when muscles of the abdomen are weak.

17. Disease of Digestion:

Several hadiths pertaining to this were said:

"It is unbecoming to eat in the Bazar (Market)."

"Whosoever eats earth aid his death." (Tibrani)

"Use curry with food even if it is in the form of

water." (Tibrani).

"Vinegear is a very good curry."

"The best curry is common salt."

Salt depletion through perspiration during summer is increased thus it is obligatory to use common salt during this period.

Our Prophet liked pumpkin (one of the vegetables) as it is easily digested and less likely to produce flatulence. Our Prophet said.

"It is not right to eat your food quickly, besides this one should eat from what lies nearest to one." (Bukhari, Muslim)

18. Epidemic Prevention:

Hygiene is very important. Cleanliness prevent infection entering the citadel of human body and this guards us against ill health and epidemics- God ordered our Prophet in Sura Al-Muddassir:

"O, Prophet keep your apparel clean and meticulously avoid filth and rubbish." Our Prophet said, "God Almighty is himself pure and likes purity, God himself is clean and likes cleanliness." (Tirmizi)

"God Almighty dislikes dust, dirt and disheveled hair." "Avoid three things which are cursed. To urinate at the source of water, in the shade, in the pathways." (Ibn Maja)

"No one should pass water in standing water." (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood)

"If any one of you yawns, cover your mouth with hands." (Muslim, Abu Dawood)

One should avoid coughing, sneezing, yawning or laughing with fully open mouth near other persons as the breathed out bacteria may spread in the atmosphere and be conveyed to other persons.

19. Islamic Medicine: Street and Roads:

Town planning is based on broad and airy roads so that there is no obstruction to the flow of traffic and to avoid congestion which helps in spreading diseases. Our blessed Prophet fourteen hundred years ago said "keep the breadth of the streets seven arms length".

Guilting Victims

Umm Zakiyyah'

Guilting Victims Is Disobeying God: The Abuse of Forgiveness

It is undeniable that God loves forgiveness. It is also undeniable that God views forgiveness as exponentially more superior than blame, punishment, and retaliation. Personally, I highly doubt that there is in existence a single survivor, even one trapped in toxic anger and bitterness, who would deny this fact. So the question here isn't really about God loving forgiveness. Rather, the question is about whether or not we—the judgmental outsiders (even if we happen to be survivors)—accept that God also loves justice.

The question is also about whether or not we sincerely accept that God supports whatever decision victims of wrongdoing make in addressing what happened to them, so long as they don't violate anyone's rights in the process.

In forced forgiveness culture, the answer is no to both of these questions: No, we don't accept that God loves justice, and no, we don't accept that God supports victims' right to choice. Yes, many of us give lip service to acknowledging this. But the words are like a dismissive wave of the hand before we get right back to guilting survivors of abuse into doing what we say they must, God's teachings be damned.

Ironically, in this forced forgiveness approach, it is we ourselves who are in danger of falling into sin and wrongdoing. And this danger is much more imminent than the hypothetical possibility of a survivor's heart being filled

with anger and bitterness if they don't forgive. However, we are too busy imagining that we know better than everyone else, God included, to even perceive the looming harm hanging over our own hearts and souls.

In Islamic tradition, there are many places in the Qur'an in which God describes the traits of sincere believers. In one part, He prefaces this description with a reminder of the nature of the things humans enjoy in this worldly life. He says what has been translated to mean:

“So whatever you have been given is but a passing enjoyment for this worldly life, but that which is with Allah (i.e. Paradise) is better and more lasting for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord” (Ash-Shooraa, 42:36).

Given that several verses that follow address both forgiveness and wrongdoing, this introduction is quite profound in that it reminds every person, regardless of circumstance, the nature of this transient world and how we should understand our experiences in it. This allows the reader to put his or her mind in the right place before even processing the traits of the sincere believers who will be in Paradise. God goes on to list several traits of these believers:

“And those who avoid the greater sins and immoralities, and when they are angry, they forgive. And those who have responded to

[the call of] their Lord and establish the Salaah (obligatory prayer), and who [conduct] their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend out of what We have bestowed on them” (Ash-Shooraa, 42:37-38).

For those involved in forced forgiveness, they would read this description and immediately think, See! This is what I’m talking about. God says that true believers forgive wrongs! So what’s going on with all these angry, bitter people refusing to forgive those who wronged them? However, in this description of those who forgive, God didn’t mention wrongdoing at all. He mentioned only that they are angry. He doesn’t even mention why they are angry. Yes, wrongdoing is certainly implied in the verse, but it is not mentioned specifically. This is no small point.

Some people might say that this wording is merely a technicality, and that I’m being nit-picky in even pointing it out. Thus, they argue that this wording has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that everyone should forgive, no matter what abuse, oppression, or wrongdoing they suffered. However, when we say this, what we fail to realize is that not only is the emphasis on anger quite significant; it is also the point, as the verses that follow make undeniably clear.

Before quoting the verses about wrongdoing, I think it is important to mention how we should understand the wording of things in the Qur’an, especially when the same topic is addressed more than once in the same context. Generally, whenever a topic is discussed more than once and in some detail, what is and is not mentioned in each context points to important traits we are to focus on in understanding them. In some cases, these important traits are found in contexts outside the Qur’an, such as in the reason for revelation and in the prophetic example. However, in this case, the important traits are mentioned quite clearly in the verses themselves.

In the above context, when forgiveness is

mentioned as the immediate response, the emphasis is on the fact that the person is angry, not that he or she has been wronged. The profound wisdom in this emphasis cannot be overstated.

In our daily lives, there are many things that anger us: A friend refuses to speak to us, and we have no idea why. Someone is late picking us up to an important appointment. A business partner agreed to do something then dropped out at the last minute. A person cuts us off in traffic or quickly steals our parking space. Our husband or wife is focused more on their smartphone or career than on us. And the list goes on.

One lesson we can glean is this: When facing day-to-day things that incite anger, for the sincere believer, the default response is that of forgiveness. By praising this trait in His servants, God lets us know that our daily behavior should foster environments of peace, understanding, and empathy instead of hostility and retaliation. No one is perfect. Thus, from time to time, we’ll all be insensitive, unreliable, and even flat out wrong, thereby inciting justifiable anger in others. However, as a general rule, it is in everyone’s best interests to be forgiving and merciful in these circumstances. Otherwise, the world would be full of quarrelsome, vengeful people who feel justified in avenging even the slightest offense.

This is not to say that none of the scenarios I listed are sometimes more serious than they initially appear, or even that we have to forgive these scenarios every single time. I give these examples only to make the point that what is being described in the Qur’an is the fact that sincere believers—those endowed with authentic spirituality—have a forgiving nature. And this nature is manifested most when they are justifiably angry yet still choose to forgive.

However, when an egregious wrongdoing has occurred, the emphasis is no longer on forgiveness; it is on justice. In this case, the sincere believers are described as follows: “And those who, when an oppressive wrong is done to them,

they help and defend themselves” (Ash-Shooraa, 42:39).

In the verse that follows, it is only after it is explained that the retribution should fit the crime that the option to forgive is mentioned:

“The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto [in degree]. But if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah. Verily, He loves not the wrongdoers” (42:40).

Interestingly, God does not stop here in discussing the rights of those who have been wronged. He goes on to let victims know that not only do they have full right to not forgive, but also, should they exercise that right, no one has the right to blame them in any way. He says: *“But if any do help and defend themselves after a wrong [done] to them, against such there is no cause of blame. The blame is only against those who oppress people and insolently transgress beyond bounds through the land, defying right and justice. For such there will be a penalty grievous” (42:41-42).*

Here is where seeing and understanding the original Arabic would be tremendously helpful in comprehending the powerful message being conveyed here. However, to get a glimpse of the deeper meaning, I offer this explanation: What is being translated as “there is no cause of blame” (i.e. against the victim who decides to not forgive), a more literal translation would be “there is no path, road, or means [that can be taken] against them.” By using the Arabic word *sabeel*—which is translated as cause above but has the literal meaning of way, path, or road—God is shutting down every possible justifica-

tion anyone can use to criticize, blame, or harm a victim who chooses to not forgive.

In other words, it doesn’t matter whether this justification of blame, criticism, or harm is rooted in good intentions or not, if it is directed at the victim of wrongdoing, God simply does not allow it. If we do take this pathway of blame, then we are the ones who are wrong.

Even if we are simply perplexed or sincerely disappointed at their choice to not forgive, once they make their decision, we have no right to express disappointment or criticism, as this expression itself can be a *sabeel* (a pathway of blame) against them—no matter how harmless, innocent, or well meaning it appears to us.

After God makes this point crystal clear, He then effectively tells us: If you still feel in your heart or mind any inclination to criticize, blame, or express disappointment toward anyone as a result of this circumstance [which resulted in the victim not forgiving], then shift all of your attention back to the one who started this whole problem in the first place: the abuser, wrongdoer, or oppressor: “...The blame is only against those who oppress people and insolently transgress beyond bounds through the land, defying right and justice.”

Only after God establishes beyond a shadow of a doubt the victim’s full right to choice—and the prohibition of any form of blame or harm against them as a result of their choice—does He return to the topic of forgiveness:

“But indeed, if any show patience and forgive, that would truly be an exercise of courageous will and resolution in the conduct of affairs” (42:43).

“He who gives respite to someone who is in straitened circumstances, or grants him remission, Allah will shelter him in the shade of His Throne, on the Day of Resurrection, when there will be no shade except its shade.”

[At-Tirmidhi]

Al-Aqsa: Through the Ages

When Prophet Muhammad (saws) received the command from God to lead the Muslim community in five daily prayers, their prayers were directed towards the holy city of Jerusalem. For Muslims, the city of Jerusalem is an important site. As the home of numerous prophets of Islam such as Dawud (David), Sulayman (Solomon), and 'Isa (Jesus), the city was a symbol of Islam's past prophets. When Prophet Muhammad (saws) made the miraculous Night Journey from Makkah to Jerusalem and the Ascent into Heaven that night (known as the Isra' wal-Mi'raj), it acquired an added importance as the place where the Prophet (saws) led all the earlier prophets in prayer and then ascended to Heaven.

For Muslims, however, Jerusalem would remain a far-off symbol during the life of the Prophet (saws) and the years immediately after his death. As Muslims came to control Iraq and then Syria in the 630s, however, Jerusalem would become a Muslim city, and the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem would become one of the most important pieces of land in the Muslim empire. Throughout the complex and war-torn history of this city, the Mosque has been a center-piece of the struggle for Jerusalem. With Muslims, Christians, and Jews all considering the land under the Mosque as especially holy, the importance of understanding the history of this land is of utmost importance.

Before and After Prophet Muhammad (saws)

For Muslims, Islam was not a new religion in the 600s when Prophet Muhammad (saws) began preaching in Makkah. Instead, it is seen as a continuation and capstone of the traditions of earlier prophets that are revered by all three monotheistic faiths. The message of Muhammad (saws) only continues and perfects the messages of Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), and 'Isa, which had been corrupted over time. Thus, for Muslims, the Temple of Solomon that was built Jerusalem's Temple Mount in ancient times was in fact part of their own religious history.

With this mindset, when Muslims conquered the city of Jerusalem in 637 during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, they sought to resurrect Jerusalem as a place of worship. The ancient temple of Jerusalem had been rebuilt numerous times, most recently by Herod around 20 BCE. By 70 CE, however, the Romans destroyed the temple after a Jewish revolt in Palestine. Jews were forbidden from entering the city and Judaism all but died in Jerusalem.

The area where the temple stood remained as a wasteland for the next few hundred years. The Romans used the area as a garbage dump, so when 'Umar entered the city and went to see where his religious forefathers such as Dawud and Sulayman had worshiped (which was also the place where Muhammad (saws) had wor-

shipped during the Isra' wal-Mi'raj) he found the area filthy and unusable as a mosque. Nevertheless, he decided to clean the area and built the al-Aqsa Mosque. As was his custom, he worked alongside average Muslims in cleaning and purifying the area. They erected a basic mosque that could fit about 3000 people at the southern end of the Temple Mount, now known by the Muslims as the Haram al-Sharif, the Noble Sanctuary. A contemporary Christian pilgrim described the mosque as a large wooden structure built upon earlier ruins.

For the Muslims, they did not see this as trampling on the holy sites of other religions. Since the same prophets that are mentioned in the Old Testament of the Bible are accepted as Muslim prophets, the new mosque was seen as a continuation of those earlier places of worship. This went in line with one of the central themes of Islam – that it was the perfection of earlier monotheistic faiths.

The Haram al-Sharif

For decades, this simple structure built by 'Umar remained the main building on the Haram. In 690, however, the caliph 'Abd al-Malik of the Umayyad Dynasty rebuilt the al-Aqsa Mosque, much larger and more stable than the mosque that 'Umar had built. The basic plan of the current mosque dates from this reconstruction. 'Abd al-Malik's real architectural achievement however, was what was constructed about 200 meters to the north.

Above the rock from which some Muslims believed Prophet Muhammad (saws) ascended to Heaven from, 'Abd al-Malik built the magnificent Dome of the Rock. As part of the al-Aqsa Mosque, it was not a separate house of worship, nor was it meant to compete with the al-Aqsa Mosque, but was meant as a complement to it. Using the architectural traditions and mosaics that the Umayyads had learned from the Byzantines who ruled the area before them, the Dome immediately became one of the focal points of Islamic architecture in the 600s.

The Dome of the Rock was built at the very summit of the Haram complex, and is thus one of the most impressive and notable buildings of the city. It has an octagonal footprint, from which rises a 20 meter dome that was originally covered in lead sheets. Calligraphy adorned both the inside and outside of the building, with some of the oldest existing Quranic inscriptions being inside the dome of the building. Given the magnificence of the building, some modern historians have argued that 'Abd al-Malik intended the building to be a rival to the Ka'bah in Makkah. Had he intended to do so, Muslim scholars of the time would have no doubt expressed outrage and recorded his blasphemous intentions in books written during that time. However, there exists no contemporary account of him having such an intention, and the earliest mention of this idea was written 200 years later, by someone with a strong anti-Umayyad bias.

After the fall of the Umayyads in 750, Jerusalem came under the control of the 'Abbasid Dynasty. The new 'Abbasid caliphs had their capital in the Iraqi city of Baghdad, and did not put as much emphasis on Jerusalem as the Umayyads had. As such, the Haram did not receive the attention and money it had during the Umayyad period. Nevertheless, despite the neglect it received from the caliphs, Jerusalem continued to be an important place of pilgrimage, and the al-Aqsa Mosque itself remained as the center of Islamic life in the city from the 600s through the 900s, despite many earthquakes during this period which required numerous renovations.

Decline Under the Fatimids

Jerusalem and the Haram al-Sharif began a tumultuous few centuries in the late 900s. The Fatimid Empire, which was based in Egypt, took control of Jerusalem in 970, after defeating 'Abbasid troops in nearby Ramla. The Fatimids belonged to the Ismaili sect of Shi'ism, which many Islamic scholars historically have classified as outside of the fold of Islam itself. Periods of Fatimid rule had catastrophic repercussions

for the al-Aqsa Mosque.

Since the beginning of Muslim rule over Jerusalem, the mosque and the Haram in general had been centers of Islamic knowledge. Scholars regularly established schools in the mosque to educate students from the basics of Arabic grammar to advanced topics in Islamic law and theology. During the Fatimid period, these educational endeavors were curtailed by the Fatimid governors and replaced with official Shi'a establishments. The geographer al-Muqaddasi wrote in 985 that in Jerusalem, "jurists remain unvisited, pious men have no renown, and the schools are unattended for there are no lectures."¹ He goes on to lament the lack of Islamic education in the city that had been frequented by scholars such as al-Shafi'i in the past.

The worst period of Fatimid rule ended up being the reign of al-Hakim, which began in 996. He went far beyond previous Fatimid rulers in his oppression of orthodox Islam. He declared himself divine, demanding that his name replace the name of God in Friday sermons, outlawed the Muslim fast of Ramadan, and prevented Muslims from going to Makkah for pilgrimage. By the end of his rule in 1021, the city of Jerusalem had all but lost its status as a center of Islamic scholarship. Beyond that, he also oppressed Christians and Jews in Jerusalem, and destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in direct conflict with Islamic law and the promises of 'Umar in 637.

After the disastrous reign of al-Hakim came some more moderate Fatimid leaders, who were more accommodating the mosque itself and its Islamic history. In the 1030s, after a disastrous earthquake, the al-Aqsa Mosque was renovated by the Fatimids. The resulting structure had a central nave and 7 grand arches on its facade that supported the massive roof. This was down from the massive 14 arches that were originally built by the Umayyads. Today's mosque is more or less unchanged from the Fatimid construction.

In 1073, Jerusalem was conquered by the Seljuk Turks, who were recent converts to mainstream Sunni Islam from Central Asia. From an Islamic perspective, al-Aqsa was now back in the capable hands of a powerful Sunni state, which brought back Islamic scholarship to the city. Schools were established in the Haram area teaching the Shafi'i and Hanafi schools of Islamic law, and intellectual life in the city began to flourish again. Scholars began to emigrate to the city to learn as well as to teach from across the Muslim world. Notably, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali moved to the city in 1095. He lived in the Haram along the eastern wall of the city, and spent the next few years in prayer and seclusion in the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa Mosque. During this time, he wrote the incredibly influential *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*, which revolutionized the way Muslims approached topics such as spirituality, philosophy, and Sufism.

The revival of intellectual Muslim life around the al-Aqsa Mosque would not last, however. The Haram's Islamic nature itself would soon be erased in 1099 with the coming of the Crusaders.

Crusaders

In 1095, the Byzantine emperor Alexios requested help from Pope Urban II in Rome in his perpetual war against the Seljuk Turks in the Anatolian Peninsula. The Pope's response was the First Crusade, whose purpose was not to fight the Seljuks, but instead to conquer Jerusalem from the Muslims and establish a Catholic kingdom in the Holy Land.

Despite being in the heart of the Muslim world, Jerusalem was vulnerable to the Crusaders. Disunity was king in the Middle East among Muslim governors and generals. As the Crusaders pressed on towards Jerusalem, most cities refused to fight the Crusaders and allowed them to continue on their way to the holy city.

In 1099, the Crusaders reached Jerusalem, which had recently been recaptured by the Fa-

timids from the Seljuks. Because of the back and forth warfare between the Fatimids and the Seljuks, neither side was in a position to defend the city effectively. On July 15th, 1099, the Crusaders managed to fight their way over the walls and into the city.

When the Crusaders entered, one of the most horrific events in the history of the al-Aqsa Mosque was perpetrated. Since the Crusaders made clear that they would be taking no prisoners, a large portion of the Muslim population of the city fled to the mosque and sought safety there. Holy site or not, the Crusaders were determined to be done with every Muslim in the city. They entered the mosque with weapons drawn, determined to kill everyone in the mosque.

The subsequent massacre killed thousands of Muslims in the mosque. For the Crusaders, this was a necessary cleansing of the holy place. Numerous Crusaders wrote braggingly about the massacre. One even wrote about how wonderful of a site it was to see the Crusaders “up to their knees in blood” in the mosque. For the Muslims, this was the worst tragedy to befall the mosque in its history.

For the Crusaders, the elimination of Jerusalem’s Muslims allowed them to go about transforming the Haram in their own vision. The first ruler of the new Kingdom of Jerusalem, Godfrey, took up residence in the al-Aqsa Mosque. The interior of the masjid was completely renovated to turn it into a palace with new internal walls, rooms, and gardens. Of course, all signs of its Muslim past were covered up. Calligraphy in the mosque was covered up, prayer rugs discarded, and the mihrab (prayer niche) was walled up with bricks.

As for the Dome of the Rock a few hundred meters to the north, the Crusaders also planned to allocate the building for their own purposes. They were mostly ignorant of the history of the building. Some even believed that it was the original temple built by Solomon [Prophet Suleyman] in ancient times. In any case,

they turned the building into a church known as the Temple of the Lord. Like in the al-Aqsa Mosque, the Islamic calligraphy was covered up and all signs of its Islamic past were erased. The rock under the dome was covered in marble and made into an altar for prayers.

Since Muslims were officially barred from entering the city, there were no congregational prayers in the mosque. There are limited examples of Muslim diplomats that came to Jerusalem who were allowed to pray there individually, but examples of this are few and far between.

Salah al-Din and the Mamluks

In the 1180s, the Kurdish sultan Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi managed to unite the various feuding Muslim states that surrounded Jerusalem. With his united Muslim army, he managed to liberate the city of Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 1187. Unlike the Crusaders 88 years earlier, Salah al-Din did not allow a massacre of civilians or soldiers. He did however, order the Crusaders out of the city and retook control of the Haram for Muslims.

Salah al-Din vowed to clean up the al-Aqsa Mosque within a week of the city’s liberation, in time for the next Friday prayer. Like the second caliph, ‘Umar 550 years before him, Salah al-Din worked with his soldiers and followers to manually clean the mosque. The Crusader structures inside the mosque were torn down. The bathrooms and Crusader furniture were cleaned out of the mosque which was then sprinkled with rosewater by Salah al-Din personally. The mihrab was uncovered as was the Islamic calligraphy that had been covered up by the Crusaders. Salah al-Din even brought along a minbar (pulpit) that was constructed in Damascus in preparation for the liberation of Jerusalem. Besides just the mosque itself, Salah al-Din founded numerous educational institutes that took up residence inside the Haram, as he attempted to bring back the Islamic character of the city.

Despite a new Crusade that was launched

in response to the Muslim conquest of the city, Salah al-Din was able to defend the city from Crusader attacks. After his death in 1193, the Ayyubid Dynasty of his descendants continued to rule over Jerusalem and take charge of its defense from Crusader attacks. In the late 1200s and early 1300s, the Ayyubid Dynasty gradually gave way to the new Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt, which was ruled by Turkish slave soldiers who would rise to power in Cairo.

During the Mamluk Sultanate, the European zeal for Crusading slowly abated, and Jerusalem was more secure from attack. Thus, the Mamluks were able to place much more emphasis on the construction of Islamic buildings in the city, particularly in and near the Haram. A new colonnaded porch was constructed on the western side of the Haram, bordering the markets of the city. The Dome of the Rock itself was renovated and the numerous fountains and domes were built in the Haram for use by worshipers.

Numerous schools of Islamic law were built on the borders of the Haram. Scholars considered it a special blessing to be in the city, and to be able to study Islam with the al-Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock within view was especially prized. Muslims from North Africa, Persia, and even as far away as India and China flocked to the mosque to study and worship. The great scholar of the 1300s, Ibn Taymiyyah even wrote a short treatise about the benefits of visiting the al-Aqsa Mosque and the correct etiquette and prayers to practice while there.

The Ottomans

According to Ibn Khaldun, empires are forever destined to rise and fall every few hundred years. And such was the case for the Mamluks. By the early 1500s, the new mega-power of the Muslim world was the Ottoman Empire, based in the historic city of Istanbul. In 1513, the Ottoman Sultan Selim I went to war against the Mamluks, and in 1516, he appeared outside the walls of Jerusalem with his Ottoman Turkish army and was given the keys to the city peace-

fully by its local government.

As part of the world's most powerful empire in the 1500s, Jerusalem experienced a new resurgence. It was made the capital of the sanjak of Jerusalem, an administrative district of the province of Syria. The Ottomans sent governors, soldiers, and administrators to the city to help manage it.

For the mosque, Ottoman control meant a new era of construction and beautification. Selim's son, Suleyman al-Kanuni, came to power in 1520. During his reign, the Dome of the Rock was completely renovated magnificently. The exterior of the building was covered in marble, colored tiles, and calligraphy. Verses from the Quran's 36th chapter (Surat Yasin) adorned the top of the walls which still can be seen today. Suleyman also commissioned a fountain near the main entrance of the al-Aqsa Mosque, which is still used by worshipers to do wudu (ritual purification). For the city itself, Suleyman ordered his head architect, Mimar Sinan, to rebuild the walls around the city, which also survive today.

The British and the Israelis

For centuries under Ottoman rule, Jerusalem and the al-Aqsa Mosque maintained a healthy status quo. While Muslims were in charge of the administration of the city, Jews and Christians were given religious freedom in accordance with Islamic law and the Ottoman millet. That balance was disrupted by the emergence of the Zionist movement in Europe, which sought to turn Jerusalem and the surrounding area into an exclusively Jewish state.

When their requests were denied by Sultan Abdülhamid II in the late 1800s, the Zionists turned to the British in WWI. The Ottomans had entered the war against the British in 1914, and the British rapidly advanced through the Sinai Peninsula and Palestine from 1915 to 1918. In 1917, the British captured the city of Jerusalem. For the first time since the Crusades, the city was in non-Muslim hands. However, unlike the Crusades, a massacre did not follow. The

Muslim community of Jerusalem was allowed to continue to control the Haram area, although with British oversight.

For the Zionists, British control over Jerusalem meant increased Jewish immigration from Europe. Hundreds of thousands of Jews emigrated to Palestine, with many of them settling in Jerusalem. By the time the British pulled out of Palestine in 1948, the Zionists were able to establish a state called Israel and in the subsequent war, conquered a majority of Palestine. Half of Jerusalem, including the al-Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock, however, escaped Israeli control. Instead, neighboring Jordan took control of East Jerusalem and the Haram.

On June 7th, 1967, the third day of the Six Day War, the Israeli troops managed to conquer Jerusalem, along with the rest of the West Bank, due to a massive troop withdrawal by the Jordanian government. Israeli troops entered the Haram with relative ease and flew an Israeli flag from the top of the Dome of the Rock. For Muslims, this was an epic catastrophe that marked a turning point in the history of the mosque. Adding to the tension, a large part of the al-Aqsa

Mosque was damaged by a fire in 1967 that was started by an Australian extremist who hoped that the mosque's destruction would pave the way for the second coming of Jesus. Much of the ancient calligraphy was destroyed, along with the minbar of Salah al-Din.

With Israeli occupation of the city, any Muslim entrance into Jerusalem became strictly controlled. Even today, most Muslims not from Jerusalem itself are strictly prohibited from entering Jerusalem and praying in the al-Aqsa Mosque. A Muslim controlled waqf (religious endowment) officially controls the Haram area itself, but entrance into the Haram is managed by Israeli police, who reserve the right to prohibit people from entering.

As it has been throughout its long history, the al-Aqsa Mosque is once again the center of Muslim religious life in the city as well as tension with other groups. With Israeli encroachment and the Muslim world's division and infighting, the future of the al-Aqsa Mosque is once again uncertain.

*Reprinted from: Lost Islamic History
by Firas alKhateeb*

Invitation

Abu Hurairah (ra) reported: Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "When any of you is invited to a meal, he should accept the invitation. If he is observing Saum (fasting), he should supplicate for the betterment of the host and if he is not fasting, he should eat."

Commentary: Shari`ah permits a person to break a voluntary fasting. The example of Messenger of Allah (saw) clearly shows that it is not binding on him to keep it again as a redeeming step. A man is, therefore, free to break his voluntary fasting and participate in the feast to which he is invited. However, if somebody is reluctant to break the fast, he should pray for the good and welfare of the host. But we should refuse to attend such treats which are flagrantly masked by extravagance and frivolous un-Islamic rites to the disobedience of Allah.

Lowering the Gaze

Allaama ibn al-Qayyim

Summarized by: Ali Hasan

Allah, the Exalted said:

“Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts; that will make for greater purity for them. Indeed Allah is well acquainted with all that they do.” [an-Nur (24):30]

So Allah made purification and spiritual growth to be the outcome of lowering the gaze and guarding the private parts. It is for this reason that lowering ones gaze from (seeing) the prohibited things necessarily leads to three benefits that carry tremendous value and are of great significance.

The First: experiencing the delight and sweetness of faith.

This delight and sweetness is far greater and more desirable than that which might have been attained from the object that one lowered his gaze from for the sake of Allah. Indeed, “whosoever leaves something for the sake of Allah then Allah, the Mighty and Magnificent, will replace it with something better than it.”

The soul is a temptress and loves to look at beautiful forms and the eye is the guide of the heart. The heart commissions its guide to go and look to see what is there and when the eye informs it of a beautiful image it shudders out of love and desire for it. Frequently such inter-rela-

tions tire and wear down both the heart and the eye as is said:

*When you sent your eye as a guide
for your heart one day, the object of sight fa-
tigated you,
For you saw one over whom you had no power,
Neither a portion or in totality; instead you had
to be patient.*

Therefore when the sight is prevented from looking and investigating the heart finds relief from having to go through the arduous task of (vainly) seeking and desiring.

Whosoever lets his sight roam free will find that he is in a perpetual state of loss and anguish for sight gives birth to love (mahabbah) the starting point of which is the heart being devoted and dependant upon that which it beholds. This then intensifies to become fervent longing (sababah) whereby the heart becomes totally dependant and devoted to the (object of its desire). Then this further intensifies and becomes infatuation (gharamah) which clings to the heart like the one seeking repayment of a debt clings firmly to the one who has to pay the debt. Then this intensifies and becomes passionate love (ishk) and this is a love that transgresses all bounds. Then this further intensifies and becomes crazed passion (shaghafa) and this a love that encompasses every tiny part of the heart.

Then this intensifies and becomes worshipful love (tatayyuma). Tatayyum means (to seek in) worship and it is said: tayyama Allah i.e. he worshipped Allah.

Hence the heart begins to worship that which is not correct for it to worship and the reason behind all of this was an illegal glance. The heart is now bound in chains whereas before it used to be the master, it is now imprisoned whereas before it was free. It has been oppressed by the eye and it complains to it upon which the eye replies: I am your guide and messenger and it was you who sent me in the first place!

All that has been mentioned applies to the heart that has relinquished the love of Allah and being sincere to Him for indeed the heart must have an object of love that it devotes itself to. Therefore when the heart does not love Allah Alone and does not take Him as its God then it must worship something else. Allah said concerning Yusuf as-Siddeeq (AS):

“Thus (did We order) so that We might turn away from him all evil and indecent actions for he was one of Our sincere servants.” [Yusuf (12): 24]

It was because the wife of al-Azeez was a polytheist that (the passionate love) entered her heart despite her being married. It was because Yusuf (AS) was sincere to Allah that he was saved from it despite his being a young man, unmarried and a servant.

The Second: the illumination of the heart, clear perception and penetrating insight.

Ibn Shuja` al-Kirmanee said, “whosoever builds his outward form upon following the Sunnah, his internal form upon perpetual contemplation and awareness of Allah, he restrains his soul from following desires, he lowers his gaze from the forbidden things and he always eats the lawful things then his perception and insight shall never be wrong.”

Allah mentioned the people of Lut and what they were afflicted with and then He went

on to say,

“Indeed in this are signs for the Mutawassimeen.” [al-Hijr (15): 75]

The Mutawassimeen are those who have clear perception and penetrating insight, those who are secure from looking at the unlawful and performing indecent acts.

Allah said after mentioning the verse concerning lowering the gaze:

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth.” [an-Nur (24): 35]

The reason behind this is that the reward is of the same type as the action. So whosoever lowers his gaze from the unlawful for the sake of Allah, the Mighty and Magnificent, He will replace it with something better than it of the same type. So just as the servant restrained the light of his eye from falling upon the unlawful, Allah blesses the light of his sight and heart thereby making him perceive what he would not have seen and understood had he not lowered his gaze.

This is a matter that the person can physically sense in himself for the heart is like a mirror and the base desires are like rust upon it. When the mirror is polished and cleaned of the rust then it will reflect the realities (haqa`iq) as they actually are. However if it remains rusty then it will not reflect properly and therefore its knowledge and speech will arise from conjecture and doubt.

The Third: the heart becoming strong, firm and courageous.

Allah will give it the might of aid for its strength just as He gave it the might of clear proofs for its light. Hence the heart shall combine both of these factors and as a result, Shaytan shall flee from it. It is mentioned in the narration, “whosoever opposes his base desires, the Shaytan shall flee in terror from his shade.”

This is why the one who follows his base desires shall find in himself the ignominy of the soul, its being weak, feeble and contemptible.

Indeed Allah places nobility for the one who obeys Him and disgrace for the one who disobeys Him:

“So do not lose heart nor fall into despair; for you must gain mastery if you are true in faith.” [ali Imran(3): 139]

“If any do seek for nobility and power then to Allah belongs all nobility and power.” [Fatir(35): 10]

Meaning that whosoever seeks after disobedience and sin then Allah, the Might and Magnificent, will humiliate the one who disobeys Him.

Some of the salaf (first three generations of Muslims) said, “the people seek nobility and power at the door of the Kings and they will not find it except through the obedience of Allah.”

This is because the one who who obeys Allah has taken Allah as his friend and protector and Allah will never humiliate the one who takes his Lord as friend and patron. In the Du`a Qunut their occurs, “the one who You take as a friend is not humiliated and the one who You take as an enemy is not ennobled.”

Taken from ibn al-Qayyim's al-Muntaqa min Ighathatul Lu'fhan fee Masayid ash-Shaytan. [pp's 102-105]

Boundaries in the Bedroom

Imagine a person who hires a security guard to protect his home and family, only for the very same guard to later on become the greatest danger and threat to their safety! Imagine a person who daily takes a multi-vitamin supplement in order to improve his health, only for the very same supplement to later on become the cause of his health deteriorating, leading to his death! In a similar vein, the hadeeth teaches us that one of the main purposes and benefits of nikaah is that it safeguards a person from falling into the sin of zina and other sins related to lust. However, this purpose will be defeated if a person fails to realize that even life within the bedroom has limits. A person's bedroom life need not be 'dry'. But on the same token, it is not necessary to resort to bedroom activities that are either outright haraam or totally unnatural and filthy in order to gain satisfaction. We are all aware that the husband may only seek satisfaction in his wife, and the wife may only seek satisfaction in her husband. But, this does not mean that they may satisfy themselves in any and every manner they please!

If we trespass the boundaries of Deen with our spouse within the bedroom, we will be defeating one of the primary purposes of marriage – remaining pure and chaste. Then, instead of marriage strengthening our relationship with Allah, it will become a means of us falling into sin and taking our spouses with us. May Allah bless us all to remain content and satisfied with that which is halaal and pure.

Zaid ibn al-Khattab

One day the Prophet (saws) sat with a group of Muslims, and while they were talking, the Messenger paused, then spoke to those who were sitting around him saying, “Among you there is a man whose molar in He is greater than Mount Uhud.”

Fright and terror appeared upon the faces of all those present because each one of them was afraid lest he should be the person about whom the Prophet (saws) prophesied a dreadful end.

Years passed and all those Companions met their ends as martyrs except Abu Hurairah and Ar-Rajjaal Ibn Unfuwah, who were still alive. Abu Hurairah was extremely terrified by that prophecy and did not feel comfortable until fate revealed the secret of the unfortunate man: Ar-Rajjaal Ibn Unfuwah, who apostatised from Islam and joined Musailamah the Liar, and thus witnessed the fulfilment of prophecy upon him.

One day, Ar-Rajjaal Ibn Unfuwah went to the Messenger of Allah (saws) and acknowledged him and learned the teachings of Islam. Then he went to his people and did not return to Medina till the death of the Prophet and the choice of As-Siddiq as the Caliph of the Muslims. Ar-Rajjaal told Abu Bakr the news of the inhabitants of Al-Yamaamah and their support for Musailamah and proposed that he be sent to Al-Yamaamah as an envoy in order to confirm Islam among them! The Caliph gave him

permission. Ar-Rajjaal went to Al-Yamaamah, and when he saw the numerous supporters of Musailamah, he believed that they would be the victors. His perfidious nature caused him to reserve a place in the prospective state of Musailamah. Consequently, he apostatized from Islam and joined Musailamah, who promised him a prosperous future.

Ar-Rajjaal was more dangerous to Islam than Musailamah himself because he exploited his previous association with Islam and the period he had lived with the Messenger in Medina, memorizing many verses of the Holy Qur’an, and his intercession to Abu Bakr, the Caliph of the Muslims. Ar-Rajjaal exploited all those things for evil purposes and cunningly supported and confirmed the sovereignty of Musailamah and his false prophethood.

He walked among people saying that he heard the Messenger of Allah say that he had taken Musailamah into partnership and when the Messenger (saws) died, he was worthy of carrying the banner of prophethood and revelation after him.

The number of Musailamah’s supporters increased to a great extent because of the lies of Ar-Rajjaal and his cunning exploitation of his previous relationships with Islam and the Messenger (saws). When the news of Ar-Rajjaal reached Medina, the Muslims were exceedingly

angry because of the lies of this dangerous apostate who used to mislead people. His evil words and deeds expanded the range of the war and intensified the conflict the Muslims had with their enemies and adversaries. The most anxious and the most eager to meet Ar-Rajjaal was Zaid Ibn Al-Khattab, whose heroism and fame was outstanding in the biographies and books of Islamic history.

I am sure that you have heard about Zaid Ibn Al-Khattab. He was the brother of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab. Yes, he was his elder brother. He was older than Umar Ibn Al-Khattab and he embraced Islam and gained the honour of martyrdom before him.

He was the ideal hero whose motto was 'Actions speak louder than words.' His faith in Allah and His Messenger and His religion was strong and firm. He never stayed away from the Messenger in any setting, and in every battle he sought martyrdom more than he sought victory.

On the Day of Uhud, when the fight between the believers and the polytheists was very fierce, Zaid was fighting boldly. His brother Umar Ibn Al-Khattab saw him as his shield fell down and he was within reach of the enemies. Umar cried, "O Zaid, take my shield and fight with it!" Zaid replied, "I want martyrdom as you want it." He continued fighting without his shield with astonishing heroism.

As we mentioned before, Zaid was longing to meet Ar-Rajjaal, wishing to put an end to his devilish life.

In Zaid's opinion, Ar-Rajjaal was not only an apostate but also a hypocrite and self-seeker. Zaid was like his brother Umar Ibn Al-Khattab in his abhorrence of hypocrisy and lying, especially when hypocrisy aimed at selfish gain and mean purposes. For those mean purposes Ar-Rajjaal committed his atrocious acts, resulting in the numbers of Musailamah's supporters greatly increasing and causing great numbers of deaths in the Apostate Battles. First he deceived them, and finally he led them to their deaths for

the sake of his devilish hopes.

Zaid prepared himself to conclude his faithful life by annihilating that impiety not only in Musailamah's person but also in Ar-Rajjaal Ibn Unfuwah, who was more dangerous and more cunning.

The Day of Al-Yamaamah began gloomy and dim. Khalid Ibn Al-Walid gathered the Army of Islam and directed it to its positions and left the leadership of the army to Zaid Ibn Al-Khattab, who fought Bani Hanifah, the followers of Musailamah, boldly and fiercely. At the beginning, the battle was leaning towards the side of the polytheists, and many of the Muslims fell as martyrs. Zaid saw the feelings of horror in the hearts of some Muslims, so he climbed a hill and cried, "O people! Grit your teeth, fight your enemy and go straight By Allah, I'll never speak till Allah beats them or I meet Him and then I give my evidence." Then he descended, gritting his teeth, pressing his lips, never moving his tongue with even a whisper.

His only hope was to kill Ar-Rajjaal, so he began to penetrate the enemy army like an arrow searching for its target, until he saw him.

Then he began to attack him from right and left. Whenever the deluge of the battle swallowed Ar-Rajjaal and hid him, Zaid dived towards him until the waves pushed him to the surface again. Zaid approached him and stretched out his sword towards him, but the furious human waves swallowed Ar-Rajjaal again. Then Zaid followed and dived after him so as not to allow him to escape.

At last, Zaid held him by his neck and with the sword, he cut off his head which was full of vanity, lies, and villainy. By the death of the great liar, the ranks of its whole army began to fall. Musailamah and Al-Mahkam Ibn At-Tufail were filled with horror. The killing of Ar-Rajjaal spread in Musailamah's army like a fire on a stormy day.

Musailamah used to promise them inevitable victory and that he, Ar-Rajjaal, and Al-Mah-

kam Ibn At-Tufail would promulgate their new religion and establish their state on the day following their victory! Now that Ar-Rajjaal was killed, the whole prophecy of Musailamah was seen as a lie, and tomorrow Al-Mahkam and Musailamah would meet the same fate. Thus the fatal blow of Zaid Ibn Al-Khattab caused all that destruction in the lines of Musailamah.

No sooner did the Muslims hear the news than they were filled with pride and dignity. The wounded men rose again holding their swords, taking no interest in their wounds.

Even for those who were about to die, nothing connected them with life except that very faint light caused by hearing the good news which was like a very beautiful and rosy dream. They wished, if they had any strength to fight with, they would be able to witness the triumph of the battle in its glorious conclusion. But how could that be? Since the doors of Paradise had opened to welcome them, they were now hearing their names while they were being called to immortality!

Zaid raised his hands towards Heaven supplicating Allah and thanking Him for His blessings. Then he returned to his sword and his silence, as he had sworn by Allah not to utter a word until he had completed the victory or gained the honour of martyrdom.

The battle began to lean to the side of the Muslims and their inevitable victory began to approach rapidly. At that moment Zaid did not desire a better conclusion to his life than praying to Allah to grant him martyrdom on that Day of Yamaamah! The wind of Paradise blew to fill his soul with longing, his eyes with tears, and his determination with firmness. He began to fight as if he were searching for his glorious destiny, and the hero fell. So he died a martyr, magnanimously, gracefully and happily. The Army of Islam returned to Medina victorious.

While Umar and the Caliph Abu Bakr were welcoming those who were returning triumphantly, Umar began to search for his home-

coming brother with longing eyes.

Zaid was so tall that he could be easily recognized. But before Umar had strained his eyes, one of the returning Muslims approached and consoled him. Umar said, "May Allah have mercy upon Zaid, he preceded me in two instances. He embraced Islam before me and gained martyrdom before me, too."

In spite of the victories that Islam won and enjoyed, Umar 'Al Farooq' (Umar) never forgot his brother Zaid, and he always said, "Whenever the east wind blows, I smell the scent of Zaid."

Yes! The east wind carries the perfume of Zaid. But if the caliph gives me permission to add these words to his great expression so as to complete the meaning of his saying, these are the words. "Whenever the winds of triumph blow on Islam since the Day of Al-Yamaamah, I am finds the scent, the struggles, the heroism, and the greatness of Zaid in these winds!" Blessings be upon Al-Khattab under the flag of the Messenger (saws). Blessed be they the moment they embraced Islam. Blessed be they when they fought and were martyred. And blessings be upon them in the hereafter.

Source: Men Around the Messenger, Khalid Muhammad, Islamic Book Service, 2004

Simplicity

Abu Umamah bin Tha'labah (ra) reported: The Companions of Messenger of Allah (saw) mentioned the life of the world before him. He (saw) said, "Do you not hear? Do you not hear? Simplicity (in life) is part of Faith, simplicity is part of Faith."

Are We Guilty of Racializing Islam?

Theresa Corbin

You will never be like them, no matter how hard you try. So a relative told me soon after I converted to Islam, thinking my conversion was an attempt to become an Arab.

You know you won't go to heaven. So a heritage Muslim wrote in an email to me, saying that because I am white that Jannah is not open to me.

Go back to your country. So a passerby shouts as I cross a street which generations of my family have crossed before me. Memes splashed across the internet extol the “hilarious differences” between Muslims and white people.

You are a trader [i.e., traitor] to your race – Anonymous. So the Twitter troll tweets at me. (“Anonymous” reads “coward,” by the way.)

The message is clear. I can't be Muslim because I am White.

Why Don't We Know Better?

It's strange, though, how I have been reading Quran, praying, fasting Ramadan, saving for Hajj, and saying the shahadah daily since 2001. But I am precluded from Muslim-ness because I have French and English ancestors. It's strange indeed.

But in truth, racializing Islam is a gross forgery. The Prophet said in his final speech, a sermon in which he emphasized something which he knew his nation, a nation based on faith,

would lose sight of:

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also, a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. (Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah)

Islam is a brotherhood based on shared faith. It is a nation and an identity which teaches that we are all from the same source, that we are one race of people, from One God. The first Muslim community —men, women, and children; Roman, African, and Arab; converts from paganism, Christianity, and Judaism— when they fled their homes only for freedom of religion, to have the freedom to say that they believe in One God, then they became brothers and sisters to one another.

One God, one humanity, this is Islam. This is the revolution that Islam brought and continues to insist on. These are beliefs which all who call themselves Muslims should hold.

And yet many in our society, non-Muslims and even Muslims, still hold the false notion that Islam is a faith defined by ethnic, racial, and cultural barriers. This begs the question: Where did

we get this kind of thinking, and why can't we think bigger than borders, dialect, and melanin?

The "Racism" of Islamophobia was the theme of a lecture I attended at an Islamophobia conference in Australia. [i] I sat quietly and took notes hoping the activist speaking at that particular time could give me some clarity on the issue of why Western people tend to think Islam is about race or culture.

The lecture ended and I was still not enlightened as to how hate and fear of Islam — a religion practiced in every country by indigenous peoples— could be considered a form of racism, and by extension how can Muslims be considered a race.

I approached the speaker after she concluded. *Why racialize Islam? I asked. As a white, American Muslim who does not intend on disappearing her identity or heritage, how is it that I can experience the Islamophobia that I do and also be white if Islamophobia is just about racism? Obviously, most Islamophobes are white Westerners. So, why would they hate me if it were just about race?* I continued to press the issue.

The activist answered, *Because those who are Islamophobes see Muslims as a monolith, as dark people, as the "other" from strange and dangerous cultures. It's because those who do hate Islam and Muslims see Muslims as being from a single race or ethnicity and inherently violent or culturally backward.*

I understood: Those who hate always come from a place of ignorance. But Arabs are not inherently violent or backward. People of color are not "other" or inherently dangerous. What constitutes a "normal" culture is subjective. I protested: But we are one humanity from The One source.

Here's where I really insisted: We do not and cannot let ignorance tell us who we are. Islam is not a race or ethnicity just because those who don't know any better have defined it as such.

This conversation shed some light for me on the root of the issue. I realized that it is through

the Islamophobes' mistaken definition of Islam that so many hold the false notion that a European/white identity cannot coexist with a Muslim identity. Thus the false notion that Muslim means Arab or African and cannot also mean European, Asian, Hispanic, or American; or the false notion that Islam is about culture and place rather than about a global and diverse religion.

How, Islamophobia?

UC Berkley's Center for Race and Gender [ii] characterizes Islamophobia as:

A contrived fear or prejudice fomented by the existing Eurocentric and Orientalist global power structure. It is directed at a perceived or real Muslim threat through the maintenance and extension of existing disparities in economic, political, social and cultural relations, while rationalizing the necessity to deploy violence as a tool to achieve 'civilizational rehab' of the target communities (Muslim or otherwise). Islamophobia reintroduces and reaffirms a global racial structure through which resource distribution disparities are maintained and extended.

Plainly put, Islamophobia is based on an imaginary Islam that Orientalism [iii] invented to rationalize European colonization, oppression, and the theft of resources from the Middle East, Africa, and beyond. Islamophobia is based on a deception that racializes and demonizes Muslims and then is sold to the Western citizen in order to manufacture consent to colonize, oppress, and steal resources from innocent, defenseless peoples.

If you tell a lie long enough, you begin to believe it.

Islamophobes, Orientalists, and colonizers say that Islam and its adherents are always other, foreign, different, violent —in contrast to the white, Western, familiar, normal, benevolent Christianity and its adherents. Islamophobia, Orientalism, and Imperialism limit Islam to a place, a culture, and an ethnicity and then they distort and demonize its adherents and

everything related.

Know the Real Score

Now here's the worst thing: This poison has manifested itself in the form of bigotry on both sides. If you are a targeted community, it is only natural to distance yourself from those who steal from you and tell you that you are inferior. If you are a typical Westerner, the widespread propaganda obscures your view of reality and may appeal to you because it tells you that you are superior.

All the while, those at the top get richer as they distract populations with hate.

As a person of European descent, a human being—and, yes, a Muslim—I am not responsible for the sins of my forefathers, just as humanity is not responsible for the sin of Adam and Eve. I cannot be held responsible for a system that does not hear my voice and is entrenched in corruption. I am utterly disgusted by the poisonous bigotry with which Imperialism has infected the world. I stand with those who reject the notion that any superiority is born into any one group of people. And I resent the notion that oppressors and bigots could be my teachers.

The Bottom Line

And why does it even matter if we—Muslims or non-Muslims—preclude people of European descent from Islam? After all, white people have benefited from the privilege this system has given them, right? It matters, not because it hurts anyone's feelings, but because it affirms the mendacity of Islamophobia, Imperialism, and Orientalism.

If we, as Muslims, begin to think that certain peoples cannot be Muslim because of whiteness or Western-ness or any other inborn identifier

—even if we refuse to say that Islam is different, foreign, violent, or whatever—we have still let the version of Islam imagined by Orientalists, Colonizers, and Oppressors inform the public perception of our actual Islam. We have let the ignorant tell the public—and us—who we are.

Moreover, by continuing to allow this, we perpetuate the lie that has convinced generations of people, — in both the East and West, whether Christian, Jew, Muslim, or other — that the other is dangerous, that we will never do anything but clash.

But, for our part, we know better. God has explained very clearly:

O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is all-knowing and all-aware. [Surat Al-Hujarat, 49:13]

When we say Muslims are like this and white people are like that, we affirm a false dichotomy set up only to propagate division and oppression. And when we do this as Muslims, we are guilty of affirming a lie about Islam! We misrepresent Islam itself, leading many to believe that Islam is not for all people and all times, that Islam is what the Islamophobes, Orientalists, and colonizers claim: foreign, hedonistic, unfamiliar. When in fact Islam is open to all, native, a middle path, and so utterly familiar to every soul.

[i]<http://www.ausconfislam.net/site/user-assets/docs/Conference%20Program.pdf>

[ii]<http://crg.berkeley.edu/content/islamophobia/defining-islamophobia>

[iii] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Said

“Do not feel lonely on the road of righteousness
Because of the fewness of the walkers on it.” Ali Ibn Abi Talib (RA)

Treating Wives

Have you ever wondered how our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw) treated his wives? How he talked to them? Or how he managed to maintain healthy relationships with them? Well here is your chance to find out exactly how, the example of all mankind, treated and loved his wives.

It has been derived from many sources that he was very kind and tolerant towards his wives. They could not live let alone envisage life without him. They could not live away from him.

Each of his wives, because of his generosity and kindness, thought that she was his most beloved. The idea that any man could show equality and complete fairness in a relationship with nine women seems impossible. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah asked Allah for forgiveness for any unintentional leanings. He would make this prayer:

I may have unintentionally shown more love to one of them than the others and this would have been injustice. So, O Allah I take refuge in your grace for those things which are beyond my power. Bukhari

The messenger (saw) regarded his wives as his other half and always consulted them when making decisions and took their advice into consideration. Men today should take lesson from this and also try to involve their women in their affairs instead of regarding them as lowly who do not have any worthy opinions to give.

Our Prophet (saw) encouraged us through his enlightening words to behave kindly to women. He declared:

The most perfect of believers is the best of them in character and the best of you is the kindest to his family. Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi

These sayings 'hadiths' demonstrate how Prophet Muhammad (saw) cared for his wives and how well he treated them. The Prophet (saw) said:

"Whatever you spend is considered charity even the mouthful that you put in your wife's mouth."

Even the food that one feeds his wife with his hands is considered an act of charity that is rewarded by Allah the Almighty and not only an action that guarantees her love and cooperation.

Cuddling and being kind to one's wife has a tremendous emotional effect on her. This action of following the example of Prophet Muhammad (saw) costs a man nothing and grants him Allah's reward, his wife's love and happiness. Therefore a man should make efforts to treat his wife kindly, and be emotionally caring.

The Prophet (saw) has indeed overcome the negative trait in the nature of men. He used to express his love and passion verbally for his wives, he treated them kindly, pampered them and listened to what they had to say. These things are extremely important in a relationship.

Ibn Assaker narrated that Hazrat Aisha R.A. said that the Prophet (saw) told her:

"Won't you be pleased to be my wife in this life and in the Hereafter?, I said: "Yes," he said:

"You are my wife in this life and the Hereafter." Imagine Hazrat Aisha's emotions having heard the words that guaranteed her security, love,

and peace in this life and in the Hereafter.

There is another account where Muhammad (saw) ran a race with Hazrat Aisha R.A. where she won. Sometime later they raced again. This time Muhammad (saw) won, he jokingly teased her that she had gone fat and therefore lost this time.

He used to read Qur'an with his wives head in his lap, eat from the same plate as them, drank from the same vessel as them and embraced them once in a while. This was the love of our beloved (saw), he avoided quarrels and preferred to live a peaceful life.

His gentleness must have penetrated the souls of his wives so deeply that his departure led to what they must have felt like an unceasing separation. They did not commit suicide as Islam forbids it. However, life became an endless sorrow and followed with ceaseless tears.

If spouses treated each other in such a way, a marriage would definitely be beautiful. We desperately need to learn through the life of the Prophet (saw) and the Islamic history to discover the most beautiful theories in the art of marriage. A person can go on and on writing about how Muhammad (saw) interacted and loved his wives however, it is upto us to take heed and act upon the example of the Prophet (saw).

May Allah give us the ability to maintain a healthy and loving relationship and a mutual understanding with our spouse.

Source: nour-dv.org.uk

“When night fell, the Prophet (saw) would walk with ‘Aishah (RA) and converse with her..” (Bukhari and Muslim)

“When one of you gets up from his spot, then comes back, he has more right to it.” (Bin Majah)

“The maternal aunt holds the same status as the mother.” (Tirmidhi)

“Man is deprived of sustenance and provision on account of committing sin and disobedience willfully.” (Musnad-e-Ahmad)

“My heart is at ease knowing that what was meant for me will never miss me, and that what misses me was never meant for me.” (Imam Al-Shafi'i)

“Eat what you wish and wear what you wish, as long as you avoid two things: extravagance and arrogance.” (Ibn Abbas)

“A righteous deed is that you perform an action seeking no praise except from Allah.” (Ali ibn Abi Taalib)

“Nothing causes me more grief and sadness, than a day passing in my life without my virtue increasing.” (Abdullah Ibne Masood)

“I never saw anybody suffering so much from sickness as Allah's Messenger (saw).” (Bukhari)

“The best of the deeds or deed is the (observance of) prayer at its proper time and kindness to the parents.” (Muslim)

“Love the poor and let them come to you and Allah will draw you near to Himself.” (Bukhari)

Shubayl ibn 'Awf said, “It is said, ‘Whoever hears something indecent and then spreads it is like the one who originated it.’” (Al-Adab)

Appeal

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

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