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RADIANT REALITY

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فَلْيَسِّرْ لَنَا
عَلَى سَبِيلِ
وَلَهُ رِجَالٌ

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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 Prophethood got ended and sealed forever.
Let us all follow him with utmost spirit.*

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EDITORIAL

All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted

Neatness, Organization and Order

The Prophet Muhammad, Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam, said:

"You are going to meet some brothers of yours, so reform your saddles, and be well dressed until you become a shining star in the sight of the other people because Allah dislikes vice and using viciousness." (Abu Dawud)

Notice when the Prophet, Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam, said:

"You are going to meet some brothers of yours, so reform your saddles, and be well dressed until you become a shining star in the sight of the other people."

Reforming the saddle in those days corresponds to car today, as it is the outdoor home of the Muslim. Moreover, making the clothes tidy is included amongst those things which make the Muslim appear nice in the eyes of other people. This is the duty that a Muslim should perform towards his brothers and kinship, inside and outside his house. Consequently, whoever enters his house should see a pleasing house. This will never happen unless he shows great care to the neatness of the house and himself. So the housewife should be a leading example to her husband and children. In fact, all the members of the household should be adapted to that; except for some casual occasions where one may look shabby.

We used to see some of our teachers looking smart and very neat whether we visited them in the day or night. Not only that, but we used to see everything

in their houses very well organized. So they were like the soldier who has to be alert in doing his job and performing his duty.

Unfortunately, many people live in extreme chaos and neglect their houses, and whenever you visit them you find disorganized tables and shelves, and scattered clothes everywhere. So wherever you look, you see chaos and disorganization. Furthermore, the housewife sometimes stays wearing her nightgown after she wakes up and you see her children dirty and neglected. Certainly, all of these things are against the morals of the Muslims and against the Shari`ah.

The Messenger of Allah, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, cleaned Osama (bin Zaid) once when he was a child because he saw him dirty, `Aa'ishah advised a woman to make herself look attractive for her husband, and Ibn `Abbas ordered a man to look handsome in the eyes of his wife the way she does for him.

To sum up, the Muslims should be clean and neat whether inside or outside his house and this should be a habit.

To maintain good order of the house and make it clean and organized, the following should be noticed by the members of the household.

First: Everything at home should be organized, and if it is used, it should be returned to its place after use.

Second: Members of the house should adapt themselves not to spread

Cont'd on page 23

Question Answer

Question.

During the Month of Ramadaan, I had collected a reasonable amount of Islamic literature; Islamic books; newspapers; magazines etc. How do I dispose of it?

Answer.

The most suitable way of disposing of Islamic literature is to wrap it up and bury it in a secure place (a place that is not commonly walked upon). However, if it is not possible to bury it in a secure place, then one may resort to burning them. (Shaami 1/320)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

There are shoes that are imported into South Africa from America, Canada, Australia, China and many other countries. Some of these imported shoes are manufactured using pigskin. Are Muslim allowed to wear these shoes that are manufactured with pig skin?

Answer.

It not permissible to sell, purchase, wear or use clothing and items that are made from a pig as a pig is considered to be impure. Therefore, it will not be permissible to wear shoes that are manufactured with pig skin. (al-Asl 1/202)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Does the breastfeeding of a child break the Wudhu of a Mother? After a mother breastfeeds the child, does she have to make Wudhu each time to perform Salaah?

Answer.

The breastfeeding/nursing/suckling of a child does not nullify the Wudhu. As such, it is not necessary for a breastfeeding mother to renew her Wudhu to perform Salaah after breastfeeding her child if she is already in the state of Wudhu.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I have seen Musallees in the Masjid perform their Sunnahs of Zuhr before the Azaan of Zuhr is called out. Is their Sunnahs valid. If so, is it correct to do it in this manner?

Answer.

If a person performs the Sunnahs of Zuhr before the Azaan of Zuhr is called out, the Salaah will be valid on condition that the time of Zuhr has entered. However, it is better to perform the Sunnahs of Zuhr after the Azaan of Zuhr is called out. (Shaami 2/14)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

How long can a husband be away from his wife if he is travelling on busi-

ness etc.? Are there any limitations in this regard?

Answer.

If a husband intends to be away from his wife due to travelling for business etc. for any period of time less than four months, then it is advisable that he mutually agrees with his wife on the amount of time that he will be away.

In the case where he intends to be away for the period of four months or more, then he may only do so if his wife agrees to it. (Shaami 3/203)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

A woman is divorced with a daughter. She has remarried a divorced man who has a son. Can the (previously) divorced man's son marry the (previously) divorced woman's daughter?

Answer.

Step children are non-Mahrams to one another. Hence, it is permissible for the stepfather's son to marry the stepmother's daughter. (Hindiyyah 6/472)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Many men abuse their wives sometimes physically and sometimes emotionally. What is the status of physical and emotional abuse within marriages in Islam?

Answer.

It is important to note that marriage is a relationship that is based on mutual love and respect. A couple should honour and respect the rights of each other and should never abuse each other physically or emotionally. In doing so, the marriage will become unstable and would be devoid of blessings.

In Islam, physical and emotional abuse is totally condemned.

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam said, "A Muslim is he, who others are saved from the abuse of his tongue (emotional) and hand (physical)."

(Musnad Ahmad)

Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam also said, "A person whose neighbour is not safe from his evil, will never enter Jannah." (Musnad Ahmad)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

My wife and I have tried to have children for many years but unfortunately, we could not have children. Now, Allah has blessed us with a wonderful child that we have adopted. We would like to know about the inheritance of this wonderful adopted child of ours. Would she inherit for us after our demise?

Answer.

An adopted child does not inherit from the adoptive parents automatically. However, the adoptive parents are allowed to make a Wasiyyah (bequest) up to one-third of their estate (after discharging funeral expenses and debts) to the adopted child if they wish to do so.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

A woman is in Nikah with one man whilst she is also in 'Nikah' with another man. She is also causing many problems for the other man's first wife. Can you please advise which man is Halal to the woman?

Answer.

Polyandry (a woman having more than one husband) is not permissible in Islam. A married woman cannot marry another man until the marriage ends either by divorce or the husband's demise.

Thus, in the enquired case, if the

woman's first marriage is still intact, then the woman's second 'marriage' is not valid.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

As a muslim male, the hair of my eyebrows reached a stage where they were virtually connecting (also known as a monobrow). I wanted to find out if it is permissible for me to remove the hair between my eyebrows?

Answer.

Yes, it is permissible to remove the excess hair between the two eyebrows (unibrow /monobrow). (Shaami 6/373)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I am keeping my Qadha fasts of Ramadaan and Today my fast broke as I experienced my Haidh whilst fasting? Now, do I have to keep another Qadha fast for breaking Today's Qadha fast of Ramadaan? What is the ruling of a Qadha fast being broken?

Answer.

A Qadha fast is only a substitute for the original fast. Hence, you would only have to make one Qadha fast. An additional fast is not required for breaking the Qadha fast. (Shaami 2/560)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I am making Nikah soon Inshallah. Can I request someone else to make Istikharah for me?

Answer.

Ideally, Istikharah should be done by a person striving to make the best decisions themselves. However, it is permissible for a person to request another person to make Istikharah on

their behalf.

If a person requests another person to make Istikharah on their behalf, that person should be a trustable person who knows the person requesting Istikharah as well the considerations related to his/her's circumstances.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I have a habit of backbiting others and I very quickly tend to have ill thoughts about people. This malady is continuously on the ever increase in me.

Answer.

We will generally speak ill of a person or harbour ill thoughts about him when we consider him a bad person or an opponent. By engaging in backbiting other we transfer our good deeds into their deed books. Reflect for a moment as to how foolish this is that we backbite about the one we are angry with and hand over our good deeds to him! Are we prepared to give him our worldly wealth and riches? Never! Then how are we prepared to give him our good deeds on the day of judgement while we ourselves will remain as paupers? Ponder over this aspect and bear it in mind. May Allah give you and I the ability to do so.

Mufti Mahmood-ul-Hasan (ra)

Question.

How must greed be eliminated?

Answer.

Every person must have the conviction that whatever Allah has destined for him, he shall certainly receive it and nobody can stop it. And what is not destined for him, he shall never get it. Sustenance pursues a person just as death pursues him. If a person hides inside a strong fortress his death will find him at the stipulated time. In the very same

way a person's sustenance will reach him wherever he may be. As long as a person has not received all of his sustenance, death will not come to him. Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has said, "Behold, verily no soul shall ever die until it has received all its sustenance."

Mufti Mahmood-ul-Hasan (ra)

Question.

Each day shaytaan seems to be overpowering me even more. I have been troubled for one entire year. When I sit to recite Quraan or when I commence my salaah, then too shaytaan overpowers me. If a beautiful woman has to pass, then I cannot help but to look at her. I am helpless when it comes to falling into arguments, lies, backbiting and enmity. Due to all these issues, I do not get a peaceful sleep and I am always distressed and troubled. Please show me a remedy through which Allah will relieve me of my troubles.

Answer.

Sit in solitude with your eyes closed and ponder for some time that Allah fully aware of every move you make. He is even aware of the intentions in your heart and the glance of the eye.

"He (Allah) knows the deceit of the eyes and all that which the heart conceals." (Ghafir:19)

Continue to practise on this to the extent that this remains present in front of you at all times. Furthermore, whichever sin you have a desire to commit, keep in mind the punishment for that sin and insha-Allah this will protect you from committing that evil.

Mufti Mahmood-ul-Hasan (ra)

Question.

I have a lot of anger in me. At

times if a student does not carry out the work given to him, I become very angry. My nafs (innerself) pacifies me that I am doing this for the reformation of the student. Sometimes when angry, I focus on my own faults and weaknesses, yet my anger does not subside.

Answer.

At the time of anger when the thought comes to mind that you are angry for the reformation of the student, then ponder over the following:

Hadhrat Anas (RA) served Nabi (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) for almost ten years. He says: "At times Nabi (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) instructed me to do some work but I would reply that I will not do it.

Mufti Mahmood-ul-Hasan (ra)

Question.

The writer apparently requested advice on how to protect one's self from pride, when people praise us?

Answer.

When someone praises us and we feel that pride is building within us, then we should immediately divert our minds towards our sins and remind that we have committed such and such sins which Allah has concealed. If the person who is praising us only knew the sins we have committed then he would never have praised us. In fact he would consider us worse than a donkey or a dog.

Insha-Allah this should prevent pride from settling in our hearts.

Mufti Mahmood-ul-Hasan (ra)

Question.

Please advice on how to remedy inclination towards strange women?

Answer.

We should sit in solitude and pon-

der over the origin, end and even the present condition of the strange women whom one is inclined towards. She was created from an impure drop of fluid. When this drop of fluid was transferred from her father to her mother, shariah declared that both her parents were in a state of impurity due to which they could not perform salaah or recite Quran.

Question.

Even though I meet others with good character, there are those who intentionally treat me and my family unjustly, without any valid reason. I cannot understand why it is happening and this is causing me much grief. Please advise.

Answer.

If people oppose us for no reason due to which we begin to have ill-feelings towards them, combat these feelings by treating the same people with good conduct.

Mufti Mahmood-ul-Hasan (ra)

Question.

Please advice with regards to how to protect oneself from committing sins?

Answer.

Merely recalling one's sins is not sufficient, since at times this may unknowingly incite us to commit that sin again. May Allah protect us all. Rather, we should picture ourselves on the plains of resurrection, when all our deeds will be presented. What embarrassment it will be for us in front of everyone! Each and every action will be recorded in our book of deeds, and we ourselves will have to read it out. The action which we committed while hiding from mankind and which we considered to be a source of shame had it been disclosed, how will we now read out the record of that action

before our Allah who is All Knowing and All Seeing. If we wish to protect ourselves from this, then let us concern ourselves with doing good deeds and erasing our evil deeds from our book of deeds.

Mufti Mahmood-ul-Hasan (ra)

Question.

My parents force me to do everything I don't want to and don't let me do anything I want. They do not even want to let me do a single thing that I want, and then they act like they just took a bullet for me. And then they always brag about other people's success, making me feel like crap. They already made it clear that I will never be the ideal son they wanted. What more can they do? When will they stop dictating what I do? And every time I ask for something, they say they can't give it to me because they are protecting me from shaytaan. I know that they are right but I know how to handle some things, and I know not to go down the wrong alley, but they don't understand that and neither do I believe they will in the next 20 years of my dictated life.

They are forcing me into Alim course and now I will be doing it with no such desire to do it. Had they waited for me to finish my schooling, I would've happily and enthusiastically done Alim course. But they don't want me to that. I really don't understand the harm in waiting a few years (3 years to be exact), but it's really pissing me off. I plan to move out and stay somewhere else when I turn 18. But I need money to support myself. So I was thinking about getting a job when I was 16 or 17. But they won't let me do that either. I really don't understand why they're so stubborn or when they will stop.

They crushed my dreams of pursuing any profession at all when they took me out of school. And now they think I have a chance to become a doctor, which I find hilarious because I doubt I'll even get accepted into any community college at the way my life is going.

What should I do besides making Du'aa and all that other fun stuff? Oh' and please don't take 5 months to reply. My life is on the line here.

Answer:

It is not possible for me to comment on your wants and your parents wants as I do not know the details of the wants you refer to. However, what is clear and apparent to me is that you have responsible parents who are concerned about your Deen.

They deny you some of your wants to protect you from Shaytan. They want you to become an Aalim. They are also not opposed to circular education as they state you have a chance to become a doctor. All these issues clearly indicate you have parents who are responsible and are exerting their energies behind your success. Had they been irresponsible, they would never care whatever you do. They would give into your demand of a mobile phone for example and get you entrapped with the fitnah contained in it. That should suit them fine as you get busy and they could be free from exerting themselves behind you. However, they decided to keep you away from wrong engagements and shape your life with proper education and protect you from evil.

You state you know how to handle things. While I appreciate that, we should also appreciate we have our Nafs and Shaytan with us. The Nafs will make us believe we can control ourselves

but when the challenge comes, we find ourselves weak and give in to our Nafs. Your parents are adults and are aware of the tricks of the Nafs and the challenges of adolescence. You are too dear and beloved to them to be allowed to listen to your Nafs and Shaytan and be destroyed. Do we not witness the lives of neglected youth around us? Are they not addicted to drugs? Are they not addicted to pornography? Have they not engaged in immoral activities? What guarantee do you have that you would not go down such a narrow path?

Dear Beloved, you are at an age that your feelings and emotions cloud your rationale. That is besides your rationale not being mature enough to make wise and conclusive decisions. Ask yourself one critical question - Do my parents hate me? In doing so, be objective and honest. Remove all emotions of anger from you to arrive at the correct decision. You state your parents won't let you take a job and earn an income. Is this not their love for you? They want to provide for you and keep you free from responsibilities.

Dear, believe in the love of your parents and know that whatever they do is motivated by their love for you. Yes, they are human beings who are prone to error. You may dislike their attitude and the way they do certain things. However, value their love for you. Is your past situation as a baby and child not a proof of their love for you? Did they abandon you to some welfare organization where you would have been take care of by some missionaries? Did they starve you and not clothe you? How then can you not value your parents or even doubt their love for you. Now that you have an inde-

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Lesson From The Qur'an

“O you who believe! When you meet a host in battle, stand firm and remember and mention God much, that you may triumph.” (Al-Anfāl 8:45)

“Remembering and mentioning God” in the above verse can be understood as follows:

Firstly, it is emphasized that there should be no place for heedlessness in a believer’s heart in their everyday life and especially during a battle. Everyone who is oblivious to God should be reminded of this. Believers should be warned against heedlessness, especially during a “battle,” and encouraged to “remember and mention God” both by heart and tongue so that even the fields of fighting should be places of worship.

Secondly, remembrance of God at the battlefield is also a resounding proclamation of God’s Name—Allah, Allah, Allah. This behavior is very important particularly in dissuading the enemy side and encouraging the Muslims. If uttering “Allah, Allah” in the normal course of events even with the tip of the tongue inspires spiritual tension in us and fear in the enemy—it definitely does—then we should think about how much one may gain through the remembrance of God (dhikr) done enthusiastically and in awareness.

Thirdly, as for the relationship between “triumph” and persistence in

“remembering and mentioning God,” this is a separate subject which needs to be elaborated on later.

In the verse above there are two important and complementary points for believers who meet an enemy:

First, when believers meet an enemy in battle, regardless of how powerful or weak the enemy is, they should be encouraged to have patience and perseverance, and the morale of the enemy should be destroyed through courage and vigilance.

Second, believers should be high-spirited, spiritually powerful, and determined through “remembering and mentioning God” and acting in unity. They should be so fearless and energetic that the enemy should be shocked and discouraged.

These are the important keys to success. One cannot be successful without patience and steadfastness according to the Divine laws of life. Likewise, believers cannot attain victory by fighting heedless of God. Even if they are victorious, such a victory does not bring reward with respect to the Hereafter.

Thus, Muslim warriors or those who strive in God’s cause, no matter

what the circumstances are, should be determined and eager on one hand, and always turn to God in remembrance of Him on the other. Even at times when believers are at the zenith of their power and strength, they should never rely on their power; instead, they should always

seek refuge in Him and rely on His Power. They should continue to repeat the following supplication: "O God, we admit that we have no power and strength, and we seek refuge in Your Power and Strength."

Test of Loyalty

The king of Sindh, Mirza Husain gave his daughter in marriage to Kamran Mirza, the son of the first Mughal emperor, Babar. When Babar passed away, Kamran tried to overthrow his brother Humayun. Eventually Humayun conquered Kamran and had him blinded.

Before leaving for Hijaz to live in exile, Kamran Mirza went to Sindh by his father in law Shah Husain. Shah Husain discouraged him from undertaking such a journey. However, Kamran replied that him remaining behind would be difficult and of no use. Shah Husain's daughter also got ready to travel with her husband to Hijaz. Her father and other relatives tried very hard to explain to her that she was ruining her life by accompanying her husband, but she did not listen and remained firm on her decision, until she finally boarded the ship.

The father tried for the last time by sending someone to persuade her but she refused. Eventually he himself went up to her. The loyal wife told her father: "When Mirza was a king and in prosperity, you gave me over to him. Now when he is broken down, blind and afflicted with calamities to the extent that there is no one to console his broken heart, you wish to separate me from him, whereas he is my husband. Which country's constitution and which nation's loyalty is this?"

The father's heart was overwhelmed with his daughter's words of loyalty and his eyes swelled with tears. He gave them lots of wealth and riches and bid farewell to his daughter with a lot of grief and sorrow. (Baland Hoslah Khawaateen pg. 50)

Lesson: Loyalty in a relationship is not to be seen when everything is smooth sailing, rather true loyalty is when a wife remains with her husband even when he loses all his wealth and health, as was the case with the wife of Sayyiduna Ayyoob ('alaihissalaam) as well.

Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

The Book of Tayammum

Chapter 7 : When (Junub) a person, on whom Gusul is obligatory, fears that if he take a bath his sickness will increase or he will die or fears that if he uses the little water he has for the bath he will die due to thirst, then Tayammum is permissible to him.

And it is said that once Gusul became obligatory on Amr Ibn al-Aas on a very cold night and he performed Tayammum and recited the verse.

“Nor kill (or destroy) yourselves: for verily Allah hath been to you Most Merciful!”

Then same thing was mentioned to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi

Wasallam) and he did not object to it.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

The purpose of establishing this chapter is obvious from the wording of the chapter. There is consensus amongst the jurists on this issue that under such circumstances Tayammum is permissible even if water is available.

Hadith No. 337

Narrated Abu Wail (RA)

Abu Musa said to 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, "If one does not find water (for ablution) can he give up the prayer?" Abdullah re-

plied, "If you give the permission to perform Tayammum they will perform Tayammum even if water was available if one of them found it cold." Abu Musa said, "What about the statement of 'Ammar to 'Umar?" 'Abdullah replied, "Umar was not satisfied by his statement."

Hadith No. 338

Narrated Shaqiq bin Salama (RA)

I was with 'Abdullah and Abu Musa; the latter asked the former, "O Abu Abdur Rahman! What is your opinion if somebody becomes Junub and no water is available?" 'Abdullah replied, "Do not pray till water is found." Abu Musa said, "What do you say about the statement of 'Ammar (who was ordered by the Prophet to perform Tayammum). The Prophet said to him: "Perform Tayammum and that would be sufficient." 'Abdullah replied, "Don't you see that 'Umar was not satisfied by 'Ammar's statement?" Abu-Musa said, "All right, leave 'Ammar's statement, but what will you say about this verse (of Tayammum)?" 'Abdullah kept quiet and then said, "If we allowed it, then they would probably perform Tayammum even if water was available, if one of them found it (water) cold." The

narrator added, "I said to Shaqriq, "Then did 'Abdullah dislike to perform Tayammum because of this?" He replied, "Yes."

Comments

Imam Bukhari (RA) has quoted here a discussion which took place between Abu Musa Asha'ri and Abdullah bin Mas'ood. Abu Musa Asha'ri was saying that Tayammum can be performed for 'Janaabat' where as Abdullah bin Masood was saying no to it. Abu Musa Ash'ari referred to the incident of Hadhrat Umar (RA) and Hadhrat Ammar bin Yasir, already quoted in which Ammar bin Yasir had dusted his body by turning sides on the ground to perform Tayammum for Janaabat and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had told him that he could have done Tayammum for that. Abdullah bin Masood replied that Hadhrat Umar (RA) was not satisfied with the answer of Ammar.

It is mentioned in narrations that Abdullah bin Masood had changed his opinion in this issue and had accepted that Tayammum could be done for Janaabat. (Inaam-ul-Baari)

Chapter 8 : Striking hands on earth in Tayammum once only.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Delhi (RA) says:

"His purpose is to prove what some Ulama say (i.e., striking hands once only) as against the majority (who believe that hands should be struck twice on earth for Tayammum)".

Imam Ahmad bin Hambal (RA) also favours striking hands once only.

Imam Abu Haniefah (RA), Imam Maalik (RA), Imam Shafa'ee (RA) and Imam Sufiyan Thouri (RA) are in favour of striking of hands twice on the earth for Tayammum.

Hadith No. 339

Narrated Al-A'mash (RA)

Shaqiq said, "While I was sitting with 'Abdullah and Abu Musa Al-Ash-'ari, the latter asked the former, 'If a person becomes Junub and does not find water for one month, can he perform Tayammum and offer his prayer?' (He replied in the negative). Abu Musa said, 'What do you say about this verse from Surat "Al-Ma'ida": When you do not find water then perform Tayammum with clean earth? 'Abdullah replied, 'If we allowed it then they would probably perform Tayammum with clean earth even if water were available but cold.' I said to Shaqiq, 'You then disliked to perform Tayammum because of this?' Shaqiq said, 'Yes.' (Shaqiq added), "Abu Musa said, 'Haven't you heard the statement of 'Ammar to 'Umar? He said: I was sent out by Allah's Apostle for some job and I became Junub and could not find water so I rolled myself over the dust (clean earth) like an animal does, and when I told the Prophet of that he said, 'Like this would have been sufficient.' The Prophet (saying so) lightly stroked the earth with his hand once and blew it off, then passed his (left) hand over the back of his right hand or his (right) hand over the back of his left hand and then passed them over his face.' So 'Abdullah said to Abu-Musa, 'Don't you know that 'Umar was not satisfied with 'Ammar's statement?' "

Narrated Shaqiq: While I was with 'Abdullah and Abu Musa, the latter said

to the former, "Haven't you heard the statement of 'Ammar to 'Umar? He said, "Allah's Apostle sent you and me out and I became Junub and rolled myself in the dust (clean earth) (for Tayammum). When we came to Allah's Apostle I told him about it and he said, 'This would have been sufficient,' passing his hands over his face and the backs of his hands once only.' "

Chapter 9 : (Without Tarjamatul Baab).

Hadith No. 340

Narrated 'Imran bin Husain Al-Khuza'i (RA)

Allah's Apostle saw a person sitting aloof and not praying with the people. He asked him, "O so and so! What prevented

you from offering the prayer with the people?" He replied, "O Allah's Apostle! I am Junub and there is no water." The Prophet said, "Perform Tayammum with clean earth and that will be sufficient for you."

Comments

Shah Waliullah Delhvi (RA) says that in many copies of Sahih Bukhari (RA), the word 'Baab' is not there before this Hadith, so in that event this Hadith will be part of previous chapter.

Hafiz Ibn Hajr Asqalaani (RA) says that Imam Bukhari gets such narration at the end of book which refers to its completion and in this narration the word *فإنه يكفيك* (and that is sufficient for you) points towards it.

This completes 'The Book of Tayammum'

Business Woman or Housewife?

Khawlah bintu Hakeem (radhiyallahu 'anha) says that after Khadeejah (radhiyallahu 'anha) passed away, I said to Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam): "I notice a vacuum in your life. It seems that you are missing Khadeejah (radhiyallahu 'anha)." Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) replied: "Indeed I find a vacuum, she was the mother of my children and the one who took care of the entire home." (Al-Isaabah vol. 8, pg. 102)

Lesson: This clearly outlines the role that a woman plays in the marriage. Her role is not to be the bread winner; rather it is to see to the home, to take care of the children and give them the correct upbringing, thereby producing the leaders of tomorrow.

Often the argument is tended that Khadeejah (radhiyallahu 'anha) was a business woman, hence women are justified to work and take a career or profession. Apart from the fact that her business engagements were poles apart from the corporate world of today, this narration explains that once she entered into the marriage of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), she was a 'house-wife' and not a business woman.

The Personal Experience of Sin

Feisal Abdul Rauf

Being on the "straight path" is analogous to driving on a highway. One cannot hold the steering wheel fixed, but continually makes minor corrections left and right. The actual path we trace is therefore a zigzag, or sinusoidal wave, along a certain "straight path." That portion of our veering away from the straight line is our sin, and the moment of correction corresponds to our personal realization of sin. If at that moment we just give up and say we are useless sinners, we will veer out of our lane and careen off the highway. The importance of self-correction in this example is quite evident, but self-correction is much more important when we commit this very mistake *vis-a-vis* our relationship with God. If we do self-correct, we will stay in our lane. More importantly, we *know* that we are in our lane. When we are on track, we *know* it just like we know that the light is on in one of our rooms; it is something plainly seen. If we do not self-correct, we will self-destruct.

And so it works when we seek God's forgiveness for a sin committed; we usually know when we have been pardoned; it is something we plainly see. But the pardoning process leaves us changed; it transforms a part of us to being wiser, humbler, and not as confident as we were before. We become more aware of our fragility, of the tenuous relationship between

right action and wrong. And we learn to be more forgiving of the faults of others; knowing that we sin teaches us to forgive. And if the proverb "to err is human, to forgive Divine" has any merit, then sin, by teaching us to be more forgiving of others, helps us to become more Divine, which is, after all, not only part of our very definition—our containing a breath of the Divine—but also the objective of our existence.

Every sin leaves a trace; some sins more than others. And not all traces are easily erasable. Some we live with for the rest of our lives. But they do not always have to be a cause of pain. When we repent, and ask God for forgiveness, and God forgives us, the trace of our sin can become a cause of increased intimacy and closeness with God, a bridge between us and God, a telephone line through which we privately converse with God. It humbles us before God. It makes us realize our imperfection, erases any undue arrogance, and enhances our acts of worship. Knowing that we sin, we become more sensitive to the weaknesses observed in other human beings when we see them slip, and hopefully more helpful towards them in transforming their sin. By understanding both the psychological processes that impel us to sin and the process by which we move towards forgiveness, we learn how to better help other

sinner.

When others sin against us, we generally feel impelled to respond in one of three ways:

1. Retaliate in a punitive way.
2. Detach from the offender.
3. Encounter the offender in a personally transformative way.

The third option works when the offender feels remorse and wants to improve the relationship, when he repents and seeks forgiveness. If after numerous tries we realize that such * scenario is not forthcoming, then we choose the second option.

This only works, though, when the miscreant no longer is capable of offense. Otherwise, the first option applies.

Going through these interactions in real life teaches us to appreciate God's position and, among other things, the justice and need for Hell for resolute criminals. But it also teaches us that the hardest thing to do is to truly effect the third option; part of the dynamics of forgiving is precisely to engage with the offender in a way that would positively transform our relationship for the better. If erring is human and forgiveness Divine, then learning to forgive is perhaps the foremost lesson in acquiring a taste of divinity. For this, one has to suffer the torment of having been sinned against yet being able to truly forgive.

To forgive is not to justify the sin, to excuse it, but to forgive what is unjustifiable and inexcusable. An "excusable sin" is not a sin any more than a paralyzed person sins by not standing. Neither does forgiveness entail pretending that the sin never happened. Forgiveness is a process of engagement, whereby we either deliberately cover and ignore the unimportant peccadillo of someone we love, or work with

them to eliminate the personality trait and tendency that gives rise to the sinful behavior. The problems we have in perceiving our sin occur because most of our sins are blends of the inexcusable and excusable. I am hungry, but rather than eat the spinach and potatoes in front of me, I eat the proverbial apple from the forbidden tree. The spinach and potatoes would satisfy my hunger, but the objective becomes to satisfy my covetousness, and not my hunger. Rather than satisfy my hunger from what is allowed, I eat from the disallowed; *therein* lies the sin.

The task in discerning sin is not to focus on the excusable part of an action, as in the example of hunger and the desire to eat. There is no sin in that. It is to recognize when we are approaching the "forbidden tree" of actions. This in turn requires a continuous and increasing clarity of thought. Then we need strength of will to withstand the temptation of succumbing to what is recognized as forbidden.

Naturally there exist tensions within us, between our minds and hearts, or between our hearts and bodies with their physical urges. It takes a while before even our thoughts about these distinctions become clear, for we tend to attribute one to another. For instance, we often discover that our physical urges are rather simple. If hungry, and we eat simple good food, we would be physically satisfied, but perhaps aesthetically dissatisfied. We complain as if still hungry, not realizing that our hunger at that point is not a physical hunger, but a hunger of a non physical appetite that perhaps may be (though not necessarily) of the nature of covetousness. There may be a feeling that the food was not good enough for us, or thoughts to that effect.

Part of what makes it difficult to discern this is that our physical natures do

sometimes desire different foods based on their needs. For example, we sometimes feel a physical urge for—or against—eating red meat, or green vegetables, or something sweet. But sometimes we feel we shouldn't eat red meat not because of a physical sense, but because our minds says we should cut down our cholesterol intake, or we desire dessert "to complete the meal" rather than because we have a sugar craving due to low blood sugar levels. Learning to eat well can take years, and a concerted effort, to learn to listen to all the inner voices, to distinguish among them, and to summon the will power so as not to inflict (thus sin) upon our bodies urges that are not compatible with their own needs. This principle is to be applied in the other areas of our lives and work.

An important development occurs with the realization that some things acceptable for others to do are forbidden to us. An enlarged concept of personal sin now includes not only what is generally forbidden, but expands and differentiates itself to include sins that are "our sins." Just as eating sugar would be a sin against my body if I were a diabetic, yet not a sin if I were not a diabetic, there are sins that are a function of our particular spiritual state, or health, that may not be sins for others.

Spiritual practice teaches us to perceive our beings as divided into various components, among them the physical being (body); the emotional, sentimental, passionate being (heart); the intellectual being (mind); and finally what is called the *inner being*. The inner being, though hard to define, would be approximately, though not necessarily exclusively, rendered as one's soul and life force. An urge could originate from any one of these four components; thus, I could move my hand as a

reflex action (a "body" movement), or because my mind decided, or because my inner being moved it. The desired objective is to live one's life as much as possible by one's inner being.

Our inner being superimposes itself completely on all other aspects of our being. It is convenient to image our inner being as what we are in dream states. While dreaming, we see ourselves possessed of body, mind and feeling, although we are "out" of our coarser body as we know it while awake. Thus we have an "outer hand" and an "inner hand," an "outer emotion" and an "inner emotion," an "outer thought" and an "inner thought." The desired objective then becomes to live one's life prompted physically, emotionally and intellectually by one's inner being.

First our inner being has to be awakened, then fully awakened. Some parts of our inner being are more or less awakened than others. For example, we may see just with our outer (physical) eyes or with our inner eyes; we may hear just with our outer (physical) ears or with our inner ears, and perhaps more with one organ than the other.

The Sufi exercises and training are meant to awaken and then exercise the various inner organs of perception and action, so as to maximally enhance their effectiveness.

Our inner being is in fact a repository of wisdom, connected to God in an essential and submitted fashion. Our inner being knows God in the same way that we know ourselves, internally and intuitively. It knows what is right and wrong for us at every given moment.

A dramatic illustration occurs when the inner urge conflicts with an outer urge; for instance, when my outer hand wants to do something and my inner hand refuses; or

when I want to utter something and my tongue will not move. Although we can override the inner urge, we then feel that the act is "pushed," resulting in a feeling akin to dishonesty, as results when we do something without our heart being in it; except here the inner being is not in it. We experience this as a sin against our inner being. This dichotomy of feeling becomes for us the experiential proof of when we are sinning against God.

It is this conflict which makes many leave the various spiritual or Sufi practices; for this type of conflict between the inner urges that impel us towards our spiritual growth and our freedom to violate our selves, is often more than we can bear. We tend to value too highly our freedom, our mistaken cultural norms and thoughts, and mistakenly judge the required discipline as being excessive. We cannot desire a job for the purpose of getting a paycheck and expect to be free to not work any day we please, or to clock in and out any eight working hours we please. Within the spiritual domain, we are not forced. But if we do not put in the hours on the job, we will not receive the paycheck.

The aspiration of the perfect Sufi practitioner is to live a life wherein all the components of one's self grow to live in harmony with one another; the body not transgressing against the heart, the heart not transgressing against the mind, and the mind not transgressing against the inner being, etc., and not letting any component sin against another. The inner being does not sin, although it can be sinned against. Sin in this picture crystallizes its definition to include a violation of the inner being. This is a very personal definition of sin. It is no longer just the actions prohibited under Islamic law, but additionally includes the sins against oneself on which the law

may be silent.

In time, the spiritual practitioner gradually sees all sin as being primarily a transgression against his self, something that hurts him, for the result of sin, no matter how exciting or thrilling to the covetous or passionate natures, is a heaviness and an opacity that encumbers the inner being and holds it back from its deeper realization and progress. Good action, on the other hand, results in feelings of lightness, transparency and radiance within the inner being.

Sin 's corollary, good action, is a stimulus to action that originates with the guided inner being. There are moments when cultural norms may view as improper. We disobey our inner's urgings to our regret, for in hearkening to them, we realize rapid progress on our spiritual path.

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nursing it. The Prophet then told the Companions, "Do you think that this woman would throw her child in the fire?" We said, "No, By Allah she would not, if she is able not to." He then said, "Allah the Exalted is more merciful with His slave than this woman with her child." (Al-Bukhari)

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or a fictional "International Community". We can just forget all this and move on to some other subject. Or we can stand up before Allah and pray for His help, who alone can help. The dua can change our life, our outlook, and our fate. It is the most potent weapon. But it works only for those who try sincerely and seriously to use it.

Sacrifices of the Sahaaba

Mr. M. Yousuf Kandhlavi (ra)

Sayyiduna Ammaar (RA) and His Parents

Sayyiduna Ammaar (RA) and his parents were also subjected to the severest afflictions. They were tormented on the scorching sands of Makkah. Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) while passing by them would ask them to be patient, giving them glad tidings about Jannat. Ammaar's father Yasir (RA) died after prolonged suffering at the hands of the persecutors. His mother Sumayya (RA) was killed by Abu Jahl, who put his spear through the most private part of her body, causing her death. She had refused to leave Islam despite terrible torture in her old age. The blessed lady was the first to meet shahaadat in the cause of Islam. The first Masjid in Islam was built by Ammaar (RA).

When Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) emigrated to Madinah, Ammaar (RA) offered to build a structure for him where he could sit, take rest in the afternoon, and say his Salaah under its roof. He first collected the stones and then built the Masjid in Quba. He fought against the enemies of Islam with great zeal and courage. Once he was fighting in a battle when he said rejoicingly: "I am to meet my friends very soon, I am to meet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and his

companions."

He then asked for water. He was offered some milk. He took it and said: "I heard Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) saying to me, 'Milk shall be the last drink of your worldly life.'" He then fought till he met his noble end. He was then aged about ninety-four.

Sayyiduna Sohaib's (RA) coming into Islam

Sayyiduna Sohaib (RA) and Sayyiduna Ammaar (RA) became Muslims at the same time. Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was staying at Arqam's (RA) place, when they both came separately with the same intention of embracing Islam and met each other at the door of the house. Like other poor Muslims of that time, Sohaib (RA) also suffered very much at the hands of his persecutors. At last he decided to emigrate to Madinah. The Quraish would not tolerate this, and soon after his departure, a party went in pursuit to bring him back to Makkah. As the party drew near, he shouted to them: "You know that I am a better archer than all of you. So long as I have a single arrow left with me, you will not be able to approach me, and when I finish all my arrows, I shall fight you with my sword, as long as it is in my hand. If you like, you can get my money which I have left

in Makkah and my two women slaves, in lieu of me."

When they agreed, he told them the whereabouts of his money, and they allowed him to proceed to Madinah. At this, Allah revealed the following verse of the Qur'aan to Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

"And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah, and Allah has compassion on His bondsmen."

Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was at that time at Quba. When he saw Sayyiduna Sohaib (RA) coming, he remarked: "A good bargain, Sohaib!"

Sohaib (RA) narrates: "Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was eating dates at that time. I also joined him in eating. One of my eyes was sore. He said, 'Sohaib! You are eating dates when your eye is sore'. But I am taking them by the side of the other eye, which is not sore, O, Nabi of Allah, I replied. Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was much amused with my reply."

Sayyiduna Sohaib (RA) was very generous and he spent his money on others most lavishly. 'Umar (RA) once told him that he was rather extravagant. He replied: "But I spend only where it is right."

When Sayyiduna 'Umar (RA) was about to die, he expressed the wish that his janaaza Salaah be led by Sayyiduna Sohaib (RA).

Sayyiduna 'Umar's (RA) coming into Islam

Sayyiduna 'Umar (RA), of whom all the Muslims are justly proud, and the disbelievers still dread, was most adamant in opposing Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and very prominent in perse-

cuting the Muslims before he embraced Islam. One day, the Quraish in a meeting called for somebody to volunteer himself for the assassination of Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). 'Umar (RA) offered himself for this job, at which everybody exclaimed: "Surely, you can do it, 'Umar!"

With sword hanging from his neck, he set out straight away on his evil mission. On his way he met Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas of the Zuhrah clan. "Where are you going to, Umar?" inquired Sa'ad (RA).

Umar replied: "I am going to finish Muhammad."

Sa'ad (RA) warns Umar: "But don't you see that Banu Hashim, Banu Zuhrah and Banu Abde Munaf are likely to kill you in retaliation?"

'Umar (gets upset with the warning): "It seems that you also have renounced the religion of your forefathers. Let me settle with you first."

So saying, Umar drew out his sword. Sa'ad (RA), announcing his Islam, also took out his sword. They were about to start a fight when Sa'ad (RA) said: "You had better first set your own house in order. Both your sister and brother-in-law have accepted Islam."

Hearing this, Umar (RA) flew into a towering rage and turned his steps towards his sister's house. The door of the house was locked from inside and both husband and wife were receiving lessons in the Qur'aan from Sayyiduna Khabbab (RA). 'Umar knocked at the door and shouted for his sister to open it. Hearing the voice of 'Umar, Sayyiduna Khabbab (RA) hid himself in some inner room forgetting to take the pages of the Holy Qur'an with him. When the sister opened the door, 'Umar (RA) hit her on the head,

saying: "O, enemy of yourself, have you also forsaken your religion."

Her head began to bleed. Umar (RA) then went inside and inquired, "What were you doing and who was the stranger I heard from outside?" His brother-in-law replied, "We were talking to each other." 'Umar said to him, "Have you also forsaken the faith of your forefathers and gone over to the new religion?" The brother-in-law replied, "But what if the new religion be the better and the true one?" 'Umar became furious and pounced on him, pulling his beard and beating him mercilessly. When the sister intervened, he smote her face so violently, that it bled most profusely.

She was, after all, 'Umar's sister, she burst out: "'Umar! We are beaten only because we have become Muslims. Listen! We are determined to die as Muslims. You are free to do whatever you like."

When 'Umar (RA) had cooled down and felt a bit ashamed over his sister's bleeding, his eyes fell on the pages of the Qur'an left behind by Sayyiduna Khabbab (RA). He said, "Alright show me, what are these?" "No," said the sister, "you are unclean and no unclean person can touch the Qur'an." He insisted, but the sister was not prepared to allow him to touch the Qur'an unless he washed his body. 'Umar at last gave in. He washed his body and then began to read the Qur'an. It was Surah "Taha".

He started from the beginning of the Surah, and he was a changed man altogether when he came to the verse:

"Lo! I, indeed I am Allah. There is none worthy of worship save Me.

So serve me and establish Salaah for My remembrance."

He said: "Alright, take me to Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)."

On hearing this, Sayyiduna Khabbab (RA) came out from inside and said: "O, 'Umar! Glad tidings for you. Yesterday (on Thursday night) Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) prayed to Allah, O, Allah strengthen Islam with either 'Umar or Abu Jahl, whomsoever You like'. It seems that his prayer has been answered in your favour."

'Umar then went to Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and embraced Islam on Friday morning. 'Umar's Islam was a terrible blow to the morale of the unbelievers, but still the Muslims were few in number and the whole country was against them. The disbelievers increased their efforts to completely wipe out the Muslims and Islam. With Umar (RA) now on their side, the Muslims started to say their Salaah in the Haram.

Sayyiduna Abdullah bin Mas'ood (RA) says: "'Umar's (RA) Islam was a big victory, his emigration to Madinah a tremendous reinforcement, and his appointment as Khalifa, a great blessing for the Muslims."

Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has mentioned that there are two favours which most people take lightly; good health and free time. (Bukhari)
Looking after one's health is an essential part of a Muslim's life. We have been repeatedly taught in the hadiths to make du'aa for good health and seek Allah's protection from dreadful diseases.

I was Forced to Accept Islam

Danielle LoDuca

I never aspired to be a Muslim.
I didn't even want to be a Christian.

The whole concept of 'organized religion' was distasteful. I sought to use my mind, not resort to some ancient book for assistance in living my life.

If you had offered me millions of dollars to join one faith or another, I would have declined.

One of my preferred authors was Bertrand Russell, who maintained that religion is little more than superstition and generally harmful to people, despite any positive effects that it might have. He believed that religion and the religious outlook serve to inhibit knowledge and promote fear and dependency, in addition to being accountable for much of our world's wars, persecution, and misery.

I remember laughing out loud while reading "Hey, Is That You God?" By Dr. Pasqual Schievella, in which he derided the concept of God through satirical dialogue. It all seemed so logical. Thinkers like us were surely above religious devotees, I thought smugly.

But, for me, it wasn't enough to just think I was better off without religion. I wanted to systematically prove religions were no more than a hoax. I purposefully set out to do just that. Yet, here I am. Muslim.

Sure, I made the declaration of faith, but the choice I had was really no choice at all. Essentially, I was compelled – forced to accept Islam.

Interestingly, in my talks with followers of religions, especially those other than Islam, I have often noticed that they clearly desire to believe. As if, no matter how many contradictions or errors are pointed out in their scriptures, they brush them aside and maintain their unquestioning faith.

Rarely do I ever find that the scriptures themselves convinced them, but rather they decided to have faith, and then the studies began after that decision, if at all. They knew what they believed, either by having been raised upon it, or like a friend of mine told me, "Islam seems foreign, so I never looked into it. Christianity is more familiar and convenient, because most of the people around me are Christian. So when I was seeking God, I chose Christianity."

Personally, I never considered myself to be seeking God, but if I had, the last place I think I would have looked would have been in an old book, or a building, or a person.

Some people, who decide to believe in something at the outset, may then develop selective vision when it comes to learning the faith they've cho-

sen. I had also decided to believe something; I chose to believe that religions were simply fabricated delusions of grandeur.

In actuality this notion was not built on hard facts, it was an assumption. I had no evidence. When I undertook reading the religious books, I was not biased towards them, but my intentions were to look for flaws. This approach helped me manage to maintain a fair amount of objectivity.

My paperback translation of the Quran had been acquired for free. I didn't even stop to chat with the MSA students standing at the table stacked with books. I curtly asked, "Is it free?" When they replied in the affirmative, I grabbed one and continued on my way. I had no interest in them, only the free book to assist me in accomplishing my goal of debasing religions once and for all. But, as I read that Quran; as its cover became worn and its pages tattered, I became more and more subdued. It was distinct from the other religious books I had also collected. I could understand it easily. It was clear.

A friend of mine once began ranting about how God in Islam is angry and vengeful. I came to its defense without even realizing it, opening it up and easily flipping to one of the many pages that said, "Surely, Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

It was if the Quran was speaking to me directly – responding to my life. It was an "old book" but somehow, it was entirely relevant. Something about its cadence and imagery and the way it communicated to me intimately; It was exquisite beauty I hadn't really felt before, reminiscent only of the moments I had spent out west, staring out over a seem-

ingly endless desert landscape. I found it exhilarating; comparable to the way it felt running barefoot in the sand under the stars with powerful waves crashing at my side.

The Quran was appealing to my intellect. Offering me signs and then telling me to think, to ponder and consider. It rejected the notion of blind faith, but encouraged reason and intelligence. It directed humanity towards goodness, recognition of the Creator, plus moderation, kindness, and humility.

After some time, and life-changing experiences my interest intensified. I began reading other books about Islam. I found that the Quran contained prophecies, as did many of the hadiths. I found that the prophet Muhammad was corrected several times in the Quran. This seemed strange if he had in fact, been its author.

I had begun walking down a new path. Led by the amazing Quran, paired with the beautiful paradigm of devotion; the Prophet Muhammad. This man showed no signs of being a liar. Praying through the nights, asking forgiveness of his oppressors, encouraging kindness. Refusing wealth and power and persevering with the pure message of devotion to God alone, he endured unfathomable hardship.

It was all so uncomplicated, easy to understand. We've been created; all this intricacy and diversity could not pop out of nothing. So follow the One who created us – Simple.

I remember the warm artificial lighting in my apartment and the weight of the air on the night I read this verse:

{Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We split them asun-

der and made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe?}

(Quran 21:30)

My mind was split asunder when I read this. It was the Big Bang – suddenly not just a theory... And every living thing from water... wasn't that what scientists had just discovered? I was astonished. It was the most exciting and yet frightening time of my life.

I read and studied and double-checked book after book until one night I sat in my library at Pratt Institute, staring wide-eyed at the piles of open books. My mouth must have been dropped open slightly. I couldn't believe what was happening. I realized I had in front of me,

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their things, but rather they should be put in their usual places.

Third: Every room, the guestroom, the bedroom, the library room, or the kitchen should be cleaned so that it would not be untidy after being used.

Fourth: All books and papers that are put on the table should be returned to their place.

Fifth: After they have woken up, members of the household should put on their usual clothes. Moreover, children have to be cared for and taught how to be clean and neat throughout the day.

Notice that the scholars of Islam gave organizing its importance through all their instructions.

Furthermore, it is important to know that organizing the sleeping schedule is necessary, especially for children. It should be in accordance with the religious and non-religious duties such as the requirement to separate the children in bed, i.e. boys from girls.

the truth. The truth I had been so sure did not exist.

Now what?

There were only two choices and one was no choice at all. I could not deny what I had discovered, ignoring it and going on with my life as before, though I did consider it briefly. That left only one option.

I knew I had to accept it, because the only alternative was denying truth.

Danielle LoDuca is a third generation American, raised in a homogeneous, white, suburban community. Although raised as a Catholic, she considered herself agnostic and was disdainful of religion in general until she chose Islam in 2002. She is an artist with a BFA from Pratt Institute, as well as a wife and mother of five. Her views are her own.

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pendent brain which was nurtured by your parents, do you feel it is just to use that same brains against your loving parents? You yourself state that you know they are right.

My humble advice to you is calm down. Put emotions aside and consider the advises of your parents in a positive light. Advice from parents are only motivated by love and concern for success. If Allah wants to someone His special and close slave, Allah puts all the systems in place for that. That is not far fetched in your case.

It is my fervent Dua that Allah make you an Aalim of Deen and make you shine for the guidance of the Ummah. There is nothing more superior than that. It will be your good fortune to be that chosen person. Condition your mind for that and work towards that by yourself. You would be spared of the pressure from your parents. You will feel peaceful within yourself and be the coolness of your parents eyes Insha'Allah.

Mufti Ebrahim

(Vol.16, Issue: 09) 23.

The Boy and The King

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

Among the people who came before you, there was a king who had a sorcerer, and when that sorcerer became old, he said to the king:

“I have become old and my time is nearly over, so please send me a boy whom I can teach magic.”

So, he sent him a boy and the sorcerer taught him magic. Whenever the boy went to the sorcerer, he sat with a monk who was on the way and listened to his speech and admired them.

So, when he went to the sorcerer, he passed by the monk and sat there with him; and on visiting the sorcerer the latter would thrash him. So, the boy complained about this to the monk. The monk said to him, “Whenever you are afraid of the sorcerer, say to him: ‘My people kept me busy.’ And whenever you are afraid of your people, say to them: ‘The sorcerer kept me busy.’”

So the boy carried on like that (for some time). Then a huge terrible creature appeared on the road and the people were unable to pass by. The boy said: “Today I shall know whether the sorcerer is better or the monk is better.”

So, he took a stone and said, “O Allah! If the deeds and actions of the monk are liked by You better than those of the sorcerer, then kill this creature so that the people can cross (the road).” Then he

struck it with a stone killing it and the people passed by on the road.

The boy came to the monk and informed him about it. The monk said to him, “O my son! Today you are better than I, and you have achieved what I see! You will be put to trial. And in case you are put to trial, do not inform (them) about me.”

Curing the Blind

It is only Allah who cures people. If you believe in Allah and supplicate to Him, He will cure you.

The boy used to treat the people suffering from congenital blindness, leprosy, and other diseases. There was a courtier of the king who had become blind and he heard about the boy. He came and brought a number of gifts for the boy and said, “All these gifts are for you on the condition that you cure me.”

The boy said, “I do not cure anybody; it is only Allah who cures people. So, if you believe in Allah and supplicate to Him, He will cure you.”

So, he believed in and supplicated to Allah, and Allah cured him.

Later, the courtier came to the king and sat at the place where he used to sit before. The king said,

“Who gave you back your sight?”

The courtier replied, “My Lord.”

The king then said, “I did”

The courtier said, “No, my Lord and your Lord – Allah”

The king said, "Do you have another Lord beside me?"

The courtier said, "Yes, your Lord and my Lord is Allah."

The king tortured him and did not stop until he told him about the boy. So, the boy was brought to the king and he said to him, "O boy! Has your magic reached to the extent that you cure congenital blindness, leprosy and other diseases?"

He said, "I do not cure anyone. Only Allah can cure."

The king said, "Me?"

The boy replied, "No."

The king asked, "Do you have another Lord besides me?"

The boy answered, "My Lord and your Lord is Allah."

So, he tortured him also until he told about the monk. Then the monk was brought to him and the king said to him, "Abandon your religion." The monk refused and so the king ordered a saw to be brought which was placed in the middle of his head and he fell, sawn in two.

Then it was said to the man who used to be blind, "Abandon your religion." He refused to do so, and so a saw was brought and placed in the middle of his head and he fell, sawn in two.

Guarded by God

Then the boy was brought and it was said to him, "Abandon your religion."

He refused and so the king sent him to the top of such and such mountain with some people. He told the people, "Ascend up the mountain with him till you reach its peak, then see if he abandons his religion; otherwise throw him from the top."

They took him and when they ascended to the top, he said: "O Allah! Save me from them by any means that You wish." So, the mountain shook and they all fell

down and the boy came back walking to the king.

The king said, "What did your companions (the people I sent with you) do?"

The boy said: "Allah saved me from them."

So, the king ordered some people to take the boy on a boat to the middle of the sea, saying: "If he renounces his religion (well and good), but if he refuses, drown him." So, they took him out to sea and he said: "O Allah! Save me from them by any means that you wish." So they were all drowned in the sea.

Then the boy returned to the king and the king said, "What did your companions do?"

The boy replied, "Allah, saved me from them."

Then he said to the king, "You will not be able to kill me until you do as I order you. And if you do as I order you, you will be able to kill me."

The king asked: "And what is that?"

The boy said: "Gather the people in one elevated place and tie me to the trunk of a tree; then take an arrow from my quiver and say: 'In the Name of Allah, the Lord of the boy.' If you do this, you will be able to kill me."

So he did this, and placing an arrow in the bow, he shot it, saying, "In the Name of Allah, the Lord of the boy." The arrow hit the boy in the temple, and the boy placed his hand over the arrow wound and died.

The people proclaimed, "We believe in the Lord of the boy!" Then it was said to the king, "Do you see what has happened that which you feared has taken place. By Allah, all the people have believed (in the Lord of the boy)." So the king ordered that ditches be dug at the entrances to the roads and it was done, and fires were

kindled in them. Then the king said: "Whoever abandons his religion, let him go, and whoever does not, throw him into the fire."

The people were struggling and scuffling in the fire, until a woman and her baby whom she was breast-feeding came and it was as if she was being somewhat hesitant of falling into the fire, so her baby said to her: "Be patient mother! For verily, you are following the truth!" (Ahmad)

The People of the Ditch

Imam Muslim also recorded this hadith. Muhammad ibn Ishaq bin Yasar related this story in his Book of Sirah in another way that has some differences from that which has just been related. Then, after Ibn Ishaq explained that the people of Najran began following the religion of the boy after his murder, which was the religion of Christianity, he said: "Then (the king) Dhu Nuwas came to them with his army and called them to Judaism. He gave them a choice to either accept Judaism or be killed, so they chose death. Thus, he had a ditch dug and burned (some of them) in the fire (in the ditch), while others he killed with the sword. He made an example of them (by slaughtering them) until he had killed almost twenty thousand of them. It was about Dhu Nuwas and his army that God revealed to His Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

{Cursed were the People of the Ditch. Of fire fed with fuel. When they sat by it. And they witnessed what they were doing against the believers. And they had no fault except that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, Worthy of all praise! To Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth! And Allah is Witness

over everything.} (Al-Buruj 85: 4-9)

This is what Muhammad ibn Ishaq said in his Book of Sirah that the one who killed the People of the Ditch was Dhu Nuwas, and his name was Zur`ah. In the time of his kingdom he was called Yusuf. He was the son of Tuban As`ad Abi Karib, who was the Tubba` who invaded Al-Madinah and put the covering over the Ka`bah. He kept two rabbis with him from the Jews of Al-Madinah. After this, some of the people of Yemen accepted Judaism at the hands of these two rabbis, as Ibn Ishaq mentions at length. So Dhu Nuwas killed twenty thousand people in one morning in the Ditch. Only one man among them escaped. He was known as Daws Dhu Tha`laban. He escaped on a horse and they set out after him, but they were unable to catch him. He went to Caesar, the emperor of Ash-Sham.

Caesar wrote to An-Najashi, the King of Abyssinia. So, he sent with him an army of Abyssinian Christians, who were lead by Aryat and Abrahah. They rescued Yemen from the hands of the Jews. Dhu Nuwas tried to flee but eventually fell into the sea and drowned. After this, the kingdom of Abyssinia remained under Christian power for seventy years. Then the power was divested from the Christians by Sayf ibn Dhi Yazin Al-Himyari when Kisra, the king of Persia sent an army there (to Yemen). He (the king) sent with him (Sayf Al-Himyari) those people who were in the prisons, and they were close to seven hundred in number. So, he (Sayf Al-Himyari) conquered Yemen with them and returned the kingdom back to the people of Himyar (Yemenis).

Our Spiritual Orphans

Syed Iqbal Zaheer

There have been among the Muslims, throughout their history, people – the more away in time from the origin of Islam, more their numbers – to whom Islam is a burden and a shackle. But since its creeds are beyond questioning, (Tawheed, Prophethood, etc.), it is the Shari`ah that is targeted for indirect criticism. This strategy helps the skeptics and antagonists remain (until they can manage to flee to kufrdom), within Muslims as Muslims enjoying the social benefits; and if they cannot flee, then remain within the polity but as belonging to the intelligentsia, although most of their gray stuff remains locked throughout their lives. For them, a single active principle does away with the need to use their own minds, namely, follow the Western Gurus.

An orphan's share in his grandfather's inheritance has been, for the last hundred years, a rallying point for this class. It is renewed for criticism at least once in a decade, in order to reduce people's trust in Islam, weaken their relationship with the `Ulama, help them know their own strength in the society, and to distinguish between the potential foe and friend. When a selection committee in a Muslim country takes position for interviewing candidates for high governmental posts, a list of hopefuls is already there in its mind: the skeptics and antagonists.

This particular issue (of the orphan's share) is raised – (as has been

done by one of our readers, perhaps provoked by their propaganda machinery), in tones as if a high-priority attention is required in correcting the Shari`ah error – if catastrophe is to be avoided. Although in reality it happens so rarely that sometimes a man passes out his life without having come across a case where the following conditions are met:

- (1) a person died,
- (2) he was poor
- (3) his wife was also poor,
- (4) the children's grandfather was alive
- (5) he was rich,
- (6) he refused to look after his grandchildren
- (7) he too died,
- (8) he had marked no part of his wealth during his life-time for his orphaned grandchildren
- (9) his rich wife (grandmother of the orphans) also refused to do anything for the orphans, and so
- (10) the orphans suffered a poverty-stricken life.

Conclusions: (1) The Shari`ah committed a faux pas. (2) It is incomplete. (3) The skeptics and antagonists are intelligent (4) They are concerned with the people's welfare, (5) They deserve reverence and admiration, and therefore, (6) if peace, welfare, prosperity and justice to all, is the goal, then Islamic system will need some dressing at their hands such as, for example, removal of hijab, liberation of women, curbing the institutions teaching Qur'an and Sunnah,

and so on.

Looking back at the list of conditions drawn by us, it must be obvious that there being so many of them, a case almost never occurs. One might note: It is not being said that the case of a poor orphan in the presence of a grandfather never occurs, but rather, a case where all the above conditions are met, is hardly ever observed. With so many conditions, it is like throwing a ten-sided dice. What are the chances you will call a number and win, not once, but ten times in an unbroken sequence?

All the same, we might as well offer a few points by way of clarification and removal of doubts. Firstly, the rule in question is entirely Islamic. It is not, nor ever was, an Arab custom to deprive an orphan of his grandfather's inheritance. The Arab custom was to deprive the sons and daughters of their share in their father's inheritance. Far from grandchildren, even sons got nothing: thanks to elders of the family. The Qur'an said:

"But rather, you do not honor the orphan; nor encourage one another to feed the poor; and devour (other's) inheritance with great relish." (89: 19-21)

This was the pre-Islamic pagan custom pertaining to inheritance, and this is the neo-Jahiliyy social law of our times.

Therefore, we can legitimately ask, why does the rule worry some people to paleness? They ask about a grandson's share in his grandfather's property! What about an orphan's share in his own father's property? Does he get any? Hardly ever. Adults around grab the best part of a man's wealth after his death, if he happens to leave behind children of such little age as who cannot stand up, resist

and fight: literally with their fists. In fact, what we see today is that the property a woman inherits from her husband is quite often devoured, by her own brothers, uncles and other kindly people (who have a business plan on mind, as soon a widow has money on hand). The business fails, the money disappears, and, after a while the dear woman is left to starve along with her little ones. Yet, we hear, what about a grandson's share in his grandfather's property!? (We may ask: Any business plans?).

Jewish law should be of interest to the energetic women NGOs: "And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying, 'If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter. And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren. And, if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren. And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsmen that is next of him of his family, and he shall possess it.'" (The Bible, Numbers, 27: 8-11).

So, daughters get a share in their father's wealth only if he left no sons; and, in the absence of daughters, the male line alone (above and not below) bags all that's there.

In Christianity, the first son takes all. By presenting the worst scenario possible, the Bible makes it so difficult that only a non-believer would dare break the rule: "If a man have two wives one beloved, and another hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be hers that was hated. Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of

the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn.” (Deuteronomy, 21: 15, 16).

In simpler words, even if the firstborn is a son of a hateful wife, and a corrupt one, as the text that follows leads to believe, it is he who gets all. What about other sons and daughters of the deceased, (brothers and sisters of the one who takes all), or the mother of the orphans, (wife of the deceased)? They get a sad face. Capitalism, the socialists who criticize the ancient law say, issues forth from the Scriptures. Down the line – the grandchildren? Quiet you better be. Such are the laws in Christianity, the religion of love, now being offered by priests hiding behind soldiers in Iraq. The soldier holds the gun. The priest holds the Bible. Christianity spread through love. Islam on the other hand is an incomplete religion, and needs some dressing as suggested by the Orientalists and their drummers.

To come back to the issue, a simple look at the situation that actually prevails is enough to convince that no problem exists where it is assumed to be a major shortcoming. Imagine. A man dies. He left a few minor children. The grandfather is alive. Assume that he is rich. At this point we might ask, are grandfathers rich? In majority of cases by the time a man becomes a grandfather, he would have spent off his life-time of savings on his children’s education and marriages. In that age, he is desperately in need of charity from his own children, rather than provide charity, dead or alive, to his grandchildren. In fact, most of those who have reached grandfather status are considered a burden on their sons (since they can’t earn for themselves), and in advanced, developed, and

enlightened societies of the West, they are pushed into the arms of charitable organizations or stuffed into old-people’s homes. So, the case we are studying is entirely a stupid story.

In any case, to proceed, a man dies, leaving behind little children, and a grandfather who is rich or rich enough. What will he do with his grandchildren? We all know what he actually does in a Muslim society. He treats them like his own children, showering greater love upon them than he showered upon their father. [We know of a case where a grandfather wouldn’t eat without the orphan grandson joining him on the table].

What about the grandmother? She loves her grandchildren so much that the daughter-in-law blames her for spoiling them through excessive doting. Will she abandon her grandchildren after her son died? Will she allow her husband, the children’s grandfather, to abandon them? We do not think even in the West, a world of highly selfish people, a grandmother will abandon her grandchildren. (She belongs to a saner generation of old). So, the actual fact is, grandchildren are well taken care of by the grandparents.

But, stop. Grandchildren have another set of grandparents: from the mother’s side. Does it ever happen that none of the four grandparents has any love for the orphaned grandchildren? A law is required, they say. Will a law provide any relief if there are such heartless people in a society?

Next, what happens when a grandfather is about to die? He knows he is one in ten thousand cases where his grandchildren are under his care? Will he read out to them a page from a Fiqh books informing them that they will get no share from his wealth after him? Or,

will he set apart a part of his wealth and let his family members know that it is for them, which will not be divided by the inheritors between themselves? So, where is the problem concerning a grandson not getting any share from his grandfather's property? We are talking of Islam and Muslims. In our society (we mean the society of the committed Muslims) there are grandfathers who live for the sake of their orphaned grandchildren.

But the objection, the antagonist might say, is to the rule and not to its practice, which is a failure of common nature and not specific to orphans. Our answer: that's where he has erred. The issue is not legal. It is social. And in social matters, no amount of legislation will ever solve any problem. The Qur'an, therefore, dealt with the issue in this light. As against all other Scriptures (which make it a point not to mention the orphan once) the Qur'an spoke pronouncemently about the rights of the orphans no less than 23 times. (Is it one for every twenty three years of the Prophetic mission – once an orphan himself?) The Qur'an and the Sunnah have spoken so much about the rights of parents, wayfarers, slaves, the poor, women, and orphans that these classes have the right to claim that the Prophet was raised for no other reason but to rescue them.

The greatest need of an orphan is not material, as these spiritual orphans – the shallow critics of Islamic law – would have us believe. It is psychological. His need of a compassionate guardian is greater than any other need. One might provide an orphan with every material need, but without a caressing hand on his head, without a loving person taking interest in his simple affairs .. why, with-

out it even one with a father feels like an orphan. In contrast, give an orphan the barest minimum, but give him someone who will give him love and tenderness and watch how in seconds his troubled face sparkles with a blissful smile. The Prophet said, "I and the caretaker of an orphan will be like this in Paradise." He pointed with his two fingers to demonstrate closeness.

The criterion of the division of inheritance in Islam (as pointed out by Mufti Shafi` Deobandi) is not the "needs of the people". If need had been the basis the wealth of every dying person should have been ordered divided among the fakirs of the town. Islam has another system at work for the poor and the needy. It is that of Zakawaat, Sadaqaat, `Aqeeqah, Zakaat al-Fitr, animal sacrifices, expiation for unfulfilled vows, obligations, and so on. But rather, the criterion is relationship. And, if relationship is the basis, who should share the wealth left, but the closest of the deceased? Hence it is the wife and children who get before others, then parents, then brothers and sisters, then uncles, and so on; but not the grandchildren because they are far too distant in relationship.

Let us take a case for study. We assume a man who dies leaving behind say half a million Rupees, or five lakhs (which is quite unlikely in India, where the average income is \$60 a month). That works to 10,000 dollars. First, all his debts should be cleared starting with the Mahr of his wife. Perhaps we will be left with \$7000/= after the debts are cleared. Next, debit the cost of funeral etc. Then let us assume he left four children. Let us also assume each of his children has 3-4 children. That means around 12-16 grandchildren (to whom we have decided

to grant share in his inheritance). What's the amount we designate, since the Sha-ri'ah has not allotted them any share? We are sure those who disagree with Islamic inheritance laws would like to designate a good amount. But the sons may cry out injustice. So, for the moment let us allow 10% of the total he leaves to be distributed among the grandchildren.

Now, according to law, the wife (widow) takes away one sixth of \$7000, roughly \$1200. We are left with \$5800. Let us remove 10% for grandsons (i.e. \$700). Now we are left with $(5800-700=)$ \$5100. This is to be divided among the three children, who, for ease, we assume are all males. Each one of them gets about $\$1700/=$ That is, around IRs. 85000. Remember, this is out of Rs. 500,000 that the man left. Now, let us find out how much the grandchildren get. It is $(700 \text{ divided by } 12=)$ \$58, or Rs. 3000 each. What will this do to orphans?

But the critics might suggest, "Let us give share only to the orphaned grandchildren, and not every grandchild." A clever idea; but only seemingly so, for, there is a hitch. Food, housing, clothing and education of orphans are, by Islamic law, legal responsibility of the uncles (brothers of the deceased). They have a right to say that if grandchildren are to receive a share from their father's property, then, the financial burden of bringing up the orphans be taken off their shoulders. Why should they spend on those who get share at their cost? Is there a point in it?

Nonetheless, let us assume a man dies leaving behind him three sons out of

four, one having died; and the son who died left four sons behind him. The 10% we have allotted above may be divided not among 12 but merely four grandchildren. The share that these orphans get is Rs.12,000, or \$240! What financial problem does the change in inheritance law will solve?

We have, however, considered the Indian situation in the above example. Consider the case with Egypt, Indonesia, Palestine, Sudan, Yemen, or dozens of other countries in mind where a man leaves 10-12 children, and around 40-50 grandchildren.

We will leave the skeptics and the antagonists to do the division. And they'd love to do it. Because, in their own lives, every penny counts, especially the pennies they can spare for the orphans.

Finally, and here is a surprise for many: grandchildren do get a share in wealth left by their grandparents. This happens when a grandparent has no sons or daughters alive. In that situation, grandchildren inherit their grandfather. And, since we are talking of four grandparents, and just one condition (of one of them not having any immediate progeny alive), the chances of grandchildren receiving inheritance are not as remote in Islam, as in the religion of the Western Gurus of our spiritual orphans.

Islamic system is the only one which has a thorough-going set of laws pertaining to inheritance. It has no rival, neither in its thoroughness nor in its justice for all. It is well laid down in the Fiqh books. Its application awaits renewal of faith.

"If you want to know where you stand with God, look where God stands with you."

Ibn Ata'illah

The Station of the Sought-II

Allaama Ibn Al-Qayyim al-Jawziyah (ra)

The author of Al-Manâzil [Shaykh Abdullâh Al-Ansari Al-Harawi, d. 482/1089] said [therein]: “The third level of the Station of the Sought is the Allah’s selection (*ijtiba*) of His servant exclusively, as prophet Moses, having gone out to fetch fire, was chosen by Allah for Himself, allowing there to remain [of Moses] only a borrowed form [of his previous self].”

I [Ibn Al-Qayyim] say: *ijtiba* means ‘selection,’ ‘preference,’ and ‘exclusiveness.’ It is the *iftiçâl* form of [the Arabic trilateral root] *jîm bâ’ yâ’*. [One says in Arabic:] *jabaytu al-shay’*, “I selected such and such a thing” when you collect and guard it, as with the collection of wealth, and the like. Similarly, *al-istina* is also selection and choosing.

What [Shaykh Al-Harawi] means by this is that Allah “chose” Moses and “elected” him exclusively for Himself, for no cause within Moses himself, nor by virtue of any attempt on Moses’ part. Moses set out to fetch fire but returned as the one spoken to by the One, the Irresistible, and thus Moses became of the noblest of Allah’s creation. This occurred on the initiative of the Glorious Lord, with no prior qualification or means. Thus goes the [Arab] proverb: “O servant [of Allah]! Be more hopeful of the bounty you do not hope for than the one you do

hope for.”

For, the truth is, Moses came but to fetch fire from the light he saw in the dark night, but returned with Allah having spoken to him in secrecy—and Allah is the very best of confidants.

The Meaning of Moses Remaining as a ‘Form’

It is possible that in Harawi’s statement that in selecting Moses for Himself, Allah thereby was “allowing there to remain only a borrowed form” of Moses, that the word ‘form’ refers to the enduring essence with which Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was raised above [Moses] by many levels, owing to the “form’s” subsistence [in Moses].

It may also mean, and this is more likely, that Allah took [Moses] and selected him for Himself from among all the worlds and elected him to [directly receive] His Divine Speech, such that there remained nothing of Moses, thereafter, except a mere form by which he dwelt among men and could be categorized as being one of them, as a perfection of Allah’s wisdom and as a display of Allah’s power.

Thus when Moses’ death came, it was merely that form that returned to his Lord. Thereby his status of election

was perfected, outwardly and inwardly, in essence and form, and the loaned form returned to its true Owner—to whom all matters return.

What Prophets: Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) Manifest

Moses was a manifestation of divine might, which is why his Law (Shariah) was one of might and severity. Hence, his people were commanded to kill [the wrongdoing among] themselves, prohibited from eating fat, animals with uncloven hoof [see The Quran, 6:146] and other pure foods. Further, they were prohibited also from taking the spoils of war. Their punishment was hastened in many cases. And they were made to bear burdens and shackles that no others were made to bear [the removal of these burdens is indicated in Sûrat Al-A'râf, 7:157].

Moses was the most awe-inspiring and dignified of Allah's creation, the most severe in anger and courage for the sake of Allah, and the one who struck the most fear among the enemies of Allah, so much so that one could not look him in the eye.

In contrast, Jesus was a manifest sign of Allah's beauty, and his Law (Shariah) was one of charity and benevolence. He neither fought nor engaged in war. In his Law, there was no fighting at all. The religious among Christians prohibit fighting for them, for by engaging in it they are in fact disobeying the divine legislation (shari) of Jesus, for the Gospel commands them thus: "Whosoever smiteth thy right cheek, turn to him the left; and whosoever taketh away thy coat, give him thy cloak. And whoever shall compel you to go a

mile, go with him two" and the like (Bible, Matthew 5:39-41). Their Law has no hardship, shackles, or burdens. Indeed, Christians invented monasticism on their own, without having been obliged to do so [Quran 57:27].

As for our Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), he was a manifestation of perfection, combining strength, justice, and severity for the sake of Allah; and with this gentleness, compassion, and mercy, came his Law (Shariah) being the most perfect of laws, and his Community being the most perfect of all communities, the same being true of their [spiritual] states and stations.

That is why his Law has brought justice as an obligation and duty, but also charity and benevolence [above and beyond justice] by way of recommendation and preference; severity upon an occasion of severity and gentleness upon an occasion of gentleness; the sword in its place, and magnanimity in its place. [Allah] thus mentions injustice and prohibits it, and mentions justice and requires it, and mentions charity and recommends it in some verses.

Thus, His words—the recompense of evil is evil in like measure—this is justice; and whosoever forgives and makes peace, his reward is upon Allah [Sûrat Al-Shûra, 42:40]—this is charity. He loves not the wrongdoers is a prohibition of injustice, while His words—If you punish, then punish with the like of that wherewith you were afflicted—this is an obligation of justice, and a prohibition of injustice. But if you endure patiently, verily it is better for the patient [Sûrat Al-Nahl, 16:126], this is a recommendation for charity. His words: And if you repent, then you have your principal (without interest); Wrong not, and you

shall not be wronged, this is also the prohibition of injustice. And if the debtor is in straitened circumstances, then (let there be) postponement [of payment] to (the time of) ease—this is justice. And that you remit the debt as almsgiving would be better for you if ye did but know [Sûrat Al-Baqarah, 2:279-80]—this is charity.

Similarly, whatever Allah has prohibited for His Community is for their protection and safety: prohibiting for them everything that is corrupt and harmful and permitting to them all that is good and beneficial. Thus His prohibition for them is mercy, whereas for those before them prohibition was not devoid of chastisement.

Moreover, Allah guided [the Muslim Community] to what communities before them had lost, and granted them of His knowledge and forbearance, making them the best Community ever brought forth for humankind, thereby

perfecting for them the virtues that had been scattered among previous communities, just as He perfected their Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) with virtues that had been scattered among prophets before him, and perfected in His Scripture [the Quran] the virtues that had been scattered in all the scriptures before it.

The same is true of His Law [for this Community]. They are the ‘elect’ and they are the chosen ones, as the Almighty said: He has chosen you and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship [Sûrat Al-Mu’minûn, 22:78]. Moreover, he made them witnesses unto humankind, thus granting them the status of prophets who are witnesses unto their communities. The details of the superiority of this Community and its special virtues call for a tome in itself, indeed, many tomes. And that is the bounty of Allah, which He gives to whomever He wills—and Allah is Most Munificent.

Shhh! It's Azaan Time

Once, a person saw Zubaidah, the wife of Haroon Ar-Rasheed in a dream sitting on a beautifully decorated throne. He asked her, "How did you achieve such a high rank?" She replied, "Once while I was seated with my friends and associates, relaxing and chatting away, I suddenly heard the muazzin call out the azaan. As soon as I heard the azaan, out of respect and honour for Allah, I told the ladies around me to be quiet until the azaan is called out. It was due to this act that Allah blessed me with such a lofty rank." (Al-Ishaaraat fi Tilmil Tbaraat – Salaf Saaliheen ke Imaan afroq Waaqi'at pg. 61)

Lesson: Showing respect to the symbols of Allah is an extremely important aspect of our deen. Many people earned their Jannah on account of respecting such aspects. Let us give due respect to the azaan, the Quraan and anything relating to deen. It would be tragic if the azaan is being called out, the Quraan is being recited, or some talk of deen is being delivered and we disregard it.

The same applies if it is played on a radio or a recording. Instead of leaving it switched on without paying full attention, we should rather listen for a little while with full attention, then switch it off and continue with our tasks.

Only Those Who Follow It Reflect On It - I

S. Abd Al-Latif al-Tuwayjiri (ra)

Firm in their belief that the Gracious Quran was a communication from God to His slaves on earth, our righteous ancestors (salaf) gave the Book of our Lord their utmost care (memorizing it, understanding it, and acting upon it). In this, they were emulating the example of our Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), whose life revolved around the Quran and whose character was patterned after it.

Governing the salaf's reflection (tadabbur) on the Quran was a practical approach: Heeding the admonitions of the Quran and acting upon them.

Who are the 'Companions of the Quran?'

Generations of scholars have stressed the importance of the approach of our pious salaf toward the Quran and that it was, in fact, an obligation.

- The renowned Ta'baie, al'Hasan al-Basri said: Only the true followers of the Quran reflect on its verses (Musannaf Abd Al-Râziq, 5984).

- The noted mufasssir (Quran commentator), Imam al-Tabari, said: Tadabbur of the Quran is to reflect on the arguments and prescriptions of Allah included therein with a mind to take heed of their warnings and to act upon them (Jâmia al-Bayân fî Ta'wîl al-Qur'ân, 23:153).

- Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim quoted one of the salafas saying: The Quran was sent down to regulate the conduct of Allah's servants, so make your recitation of it an avenue to acting upon it, for the real companions of the Quran are those who act upon it, even if they do not commit it to memory. As for those who memorize the Quran but comprehend it not and so do not heed its admonitions, they are not of the companions of the Quran, no matter how good they are at its recitation. (Zâd Al-Ma'âd, 1:323)

Tadabbur – Making It Happen

As the foregoing pronouncements of our Ulama' suggest, the one principal corollary of tadabbur of the Quran is the submission of the heart and the body of the contemplator to the Quran's admonitions. Any tadabbur of the Quran that is not conducive to this state is meaningless. This is substantiated by Allah's statement censuring the hypocrites and disbelievers for their failure to take heed of the Quran's forewarnings:

Then do they not reflect on the word of Allah? Or are they in denial only because there has come to them from Allah what did not come to their forefathers of old?

[Sûrat A-Mu'minûn, 23:68]

and also His statement:

Will they not, then, reflect upon the ad-

monitions of the Quran? Or is it rather that on some hearts there are locks of their own [making]? [Sûrat Mu^ammad, 47:24].

Tadabbur – Path to Islamic Character

Submission to the Will of the Divine as manifested in the verses of the Quran, then, is the paramount prerequisite of tadabbur. This is what sets the term ‘tadabbur’ apart from other related Quranic terms, such as ‘nadhâr’ (t h i n k i n g), ‘fahm’ (understanding), and others.

Although these terms may at times be synonymous with the term ‘tadabbur’ in either a linguistic or general sense, when allusion is made to tadabbur in the Quran, it almost always denotes a tadabbur that leads to heeding the Quran’s admonitions and aligning one’s thought and conduct with its guidance.

This nature of tadabbur is perfectly mirrored in the practical approach our salaf took toward the Quran. It is reported from a number of the Prophet’s Companions, including  Uthmân ibn  Affân,  Abdullah ibn Mas ud, and  Ubay ibn Ka b, that they would take ten ayât of the Quran and study them intensely, with the goal of trying their best to bring their conduct in line with whatever dictates those ayât might contain. Then, and only then, would they move to the following ten ayât.

This graduated, piece-by-piece approach to the study of the Quran enabled these Companions, as they themselves put it, to:

Learn  ilm (religious knowledge) and  amal (action) concurrently (A^mad).

Commenting on this report, Imam Ibn Taymiyyah remarks: *Reflection (tadabbur) becomes fruitful when it leads to the understanding of the Quran. Allah said: We have made it an Arabic Quran, so that you may understand [its prolific meaning] [Sûrat Al-Zukhruf, 43:3].*

It is incumbent upon Allah’s messengers to convey, as plainly as possible, the Heavenly revelation which they receive from their Lord.

The messengers’ audiences, on the other hand, are obliged to accept and understand the divine message passed on to them by Allah’s messengers.

Understanding, however, comprises both knowledge and action. It therefore, follows that if one has knowledge of good and evil but this knowledge does not influence one’s thought and conduct, then one is unworthy of being labeled wise or a man of understanding (Majmû  Al-Fatâwa, 15:108).

The Sahaba, the Tabi’in, and the Quran

The following illustrative and instructive examples underscore this practical approach to the Quran on the part of our righteous predecessors.

Nâfi  narrated that  Abdullah Ibn  Umar said: “It took  Umar (Ibn Al-Kha  ab) twelve years to learn Sûrat Al-Baqarah. When he had concluded his lengthy study of the surah,  Umar celebrated with a gathering for which a number of camels were slaughtered” (Al-Bay^aqî in his Shu ab Al-Imân, 3:346. See also: Tafsîr Al-Tabarî, 1:40).

Bukhâri narrates that a man once entered the majlis(consultative assembly) of  Umar and addressed him

thus: “O ʿUmar! By Allah! You neither spend on your subjects liberally nor judge between them fairly!” This riled ʿUmar, and he was about to punish the man, but then the Companion Al-ʿur ibn Qays, then present, addressed ʿUmar, saying: “O Commander of the Faithful! Allah has said to His Messenger: Take the course of pardoning others, O Prophet, and enjoin what is right. Yet turn away from the ignorant and belligerent, [Sûrat Al-Aʿrâf, 7:199] and this man is certainly one of the ignorant and belligerent.” Ibn ʿAbbâs, who also witnessed the incident, remarked: “By Allah! ʿUmar’s anger dissipated the instant he heard this ayah, for, indeed, he was renowned for his unqualified submission to the dictates of the Book of Allah.”

ʿUmar’s conduct is a practical example of the salaf’s profound deference to, and reverence for, the injunctions of the Quran, which, again, is the fruit of their profound tadabbur of the Quran.

This methodical, solemn, and unhurried study of the Quran was not limited to ʿUmar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭab. It was common to most of the celebrated Companions of the Prophet.

ʿAbdullah Ibn ʿUmar remarked:

Most of the well known Companions of the Prophet memorized no more than a surah or two of the Quran. They were busy acting upon the teachings contained in the surahs. Yet shall a time come when countless Muslims will commit the whole Quran to memory, but they shall heed not its guidance (Al-Ājurī, Akhlâq Ahl Al-Qurʾân, p.10).

Our Ummah’s Modern Plague

The following hadith explains this

slack, unprincipled approach to the Quran that Ibn ʿUmar reported would plague later generations of Muslims.

The Companion Ibn ʿAbbâs said: Once when a man from the outlands called upon ʿUmar, ʿUmar inquired after the welfare of his people. “O Commander of the Faithful! Many of them have learned the Quran by heart,” he said.

To this, I [Ibn ʿAbbâs] retorted: “By Allah! I do not like that they learn the Quran with such haste!” My comment irked ʿUmar, who chastised me, saying: “What is it that you dislike about the man’s statement?”

Shaken by ʿUmar’s stern rebuke, I replied: “I am sorry, and I seek Allah’s forgiveness and repent to Him if I have made a mistake or been inconsiderate!”

“Yet I insist that you tell me what you think is wrong with the man’s statement,” ʿUmar said. I said: “O Commander of the Faithful! I fear that this hurried manner of studying the Quran on the part of this man’s people might cause them to make mistakes. And if they make mistakes, they will engage in disputation. And disputation is bound to fill their hearts with mutual rancor, which will provoke them to fight one another.”

Whereupon ʿUmar said: “What a man! By Allah I have entertained the same thought, but I have suppressed it and hid it from the people until you have now made it public!” (Musannaf ʿAbd Al-Râziq, Chapter of Disputation Over the Quran, No. 20368).

To be continued, Inshâ’ Allah

Turning to God in Tough Times

Abd-us-Sattar

Many of us have experienced, are experiencing or will experience difficult moments that make us wonder whether there is any hope for our future. These moments rock the foundations of our inner selves. They can throw us into abysses of doubt and devastate our self-esteem, nearly obliterating our sense of hope for a life that we dreamed of.

These moments are often full of anger, sadness, regret, or a combination of all. They show up in our lives as the death of our child, emotionally painful marital strife or divorce, through difficult living situations, or health problems that wage war upon our physical bodies which leave us in constant pain. They can materialize through financial losses, physical assault, or sexual abuse and victimization.

How does one recover from these traumatic times? How does one trudge through them and come out of the other side still capable of functioning and finding some semblance of joy in life? And how does one deal with the realities of these problems, and find the strength to develop optimism and happiness again?

Seek help from professionals

Before we discuss how to turn towards God to withstand tribulations and heal the rifts in our hearts, I want to

mention that if you are being hurt physically in any way, you should not hesitate for a single moment in seeking help from the authorities. Contact a friend, a school counselor, a teacher, or the police. Many people hold off on doing so, thinking that their situation will get better or that reporting their victimization will somehow bring dishonor on their family; they think their abuser will one day stop. This only makes bringing an end to the abuse more difficult. You need empowering to end the situation immediately, and then we can begin to discuss your healing process. The same goes for anyone thinking about hurting themselves or have already self-harmed. Before any progress can begin spiritually, this physical complication needs to end.

Islam values the roles of expertise and professionalism, as the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "Verily Allah has prescribed proficiency (إحسان) in all things" (Muslim). We should remember that religion alone is not a 'cure all' – but that each subject field has its own set of professionals and licensed workers who can help us through various issues. Thus, if victimized, we should always seek to protect ourselves through the professionals in law enforcement, and sound medical advice – in addition to prayer and faith.

The Trap We Fall Into—

“When my situation is better, I will be able turn to God and practice my religion better.”

One of the reasons for Islam’s revelation, along with improving the human condition and pointing the way towards Allah’s worship and love, is to give us the spiritual sustenance we need to navigate through life’s tribulations.

As Muslims we can make the mistake of idealizing Islam as being some kind of perfect lifestyle that if implemented ‘we will have the perfect life, without the trials and difficulties we face today’. We may think that Islam is a set of teachings, rules, and acts that we can only incorporate fully when our lives aren’t so messed up. What happens when we think this?

Firstly, we may suffer withdrawal symptoms of finding sweetness in our prayers and pray just to get salat out of the way, if we pray at all. We break our relationship with the Qur’an. We might start to withdraw emotionally and spiritually from engaging with Islam as an active path to allow God’s Light to burn away the impurities, the anger, the sadness, the depression, and the burden in our hearts. Finally we may completely stop thinking about Islam altogether, learning about it, and conversing with it. We instead believe that before we can engage with Islam and partake in strengthening an ongoing relationship with God – we need to lick our wounds and heal from the calamity that has befallen us.

This thinking is a fatal mistake that first and foremost is one of Shaitan’s (Satan) best tricks: to push us away from engaging Islam and pursuing a relationship with God, precisely when our

hearts are bursting with negative emotions and sadness. Shaitan dupes us precisely when we NEED GOD THE MOST. This in turn misplaces the reason why Islam came with a form of worship to God and functional way of life. Islam came to strengthen us, heal us, and ultimately guide us to salvation from these trials of life. Whether those trials are spiritual, material, emotional, or all of the above, we must maintain that Allah (swt) is our Friend. The One Who will never leave His worshipper alone. The One God Who will never forsake His slave. He is Allah. And His names tell us about His true attributes:

As-Salam – The Source of Peace

Al-Muhaymin – The Guardian

Al-Qahhaar – The One Who Subdues with Strength

Ar-Razzaaq – The Provider

Al-Fattah – The Giver of Victory

Al-Latif – The Gentle

Al-Nur – the Light

Al-Mu’eed – The Restorer

So, we come to the main question. If we are going through a tribulation and we are stressed with what no-one in the world understands, why would we not want the Source of Peace on our side? Why wouldn’t we want to engage with Ar-Razzaaq, The Provider to strengthen us? Why do we shy away from studying and delving into life’s trials that the Giver of Victory has sent down to us?

It is time to ask the only One Who Subdues with Strength to subdue our sorrow, and ask God to shine His light into our lives and Restore our joy. This is why Muslims use du`a’ (supplication) for anxiety as taught to us by the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

*“O Allah, I am Your servant, son/
daughter of Your servant, son/ daughter*

of Your maidservant, my forelock is in Your hand, Your command over me is forever executed and Your decree over me is just. I ask You by every name belonging to You, which You name Yourself with, or revealed in Your Book, or You taught to any of Your creation, or You have preserved in the knowledge of the unseen with You, that You make the Qur'an the life of my heart and the light of my breast, and a departure for my sorrow and a release for my anxiety."

Just look at this beautiful du'a' taught to us by our Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Here, we are reminded of Allah's (swt) Overwhelming Dominance over everything and over ourselves. We are also reminded of His Names, so that we can feel connected to His unlimited abilities that help us understand His roles in our lives. And finally, we are reminded of the Book – the Qur'an – that He sent, and through the Qur'an, the religion that is outlined for us.

But how can the Qur'an be our heart's light and a release for our sorrows if we never read it? How, if we did not drown ourselves in it and in learning its secrets?

The Test?

We know from Surat-al-Mulk that Allah (swt) has created life and death in order to try us and test us. We also know that Allah (swt) tries those whom He loves. However, there is more to life than simply passing a test of difficulty.

The test is not only whether or not we will bear the burden we are given, with patience. The test is also accepting that for our patience, at the end of the road is a guaranteed reward. It is

accepting that a child we lost will insha`Allah (God willing) play with Prophet Ibrahim (as) in Paradise. That through patience a broken marriage devoid of love will be replaced by one that is better in this world or in the Hereafter. And that a painful sickness endured with remembrance of God, only results with each ounce of pain forgiving a sin clean.

The test is not simply to remember these things either, though they are the key to being patient. The ultimate test is whether the calamity pushes us towards Allah (swt). Whether we are able to take our difficult situation, and rather than relying on ourselves alone, recognize our dependency on and rely on God. From this we can then pursue a stronger relationship with God Who can bring peace to our hearts, and we can seek knowledge of how the deen (way of life) He revealed can in fact ease our pain.

It may be easy to worship Allah and engage with His deen when our lives are perfect. But that is exactly the wrong point. Our lives are not perfect, and will never be. So will we worship Him by participating fully in His Religion, even when things fall apart around us? Will we accept that the Sovereign King has the power and the mercy to bring us what we so desperately need? We must begin turning back to Allah, today, because He loves us unconditionally every day. And how does Allah love His servants? This story from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) should give us the answer:

"...Suddenly, a woman saw an infant in the midst of the captives. She took hold of it, brought it into her bosom, and started

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Mental Health Awareness

Working Towards a Stigma Free Ummah

Hannah Morris

1 in 4 is the amount of people we are told have, or will have, a mental health problem at some point in their lifetime. In fact, recent research puts this figure higher, at 1 in 3. Is it any wonder when we are constantly bombarded with images of suffering and destruction worldwide or faced with the effects of discrimination? This figure does not exclude us as Muslims. We should not regard this with some form of arrogance that we are immune to mental health problems just because we are Muslims. The only thing that does make us different is that we have Islam to guide us through such problems, alhamdulillah.

These figures actually suggest that it is highly likely that you know at least one person who is currently facing a mental health problem, even if they have not divulged such information. Unfortunately, despite such a high prevalence, there still exists stigma around the issue, particularly in some Muslim cultures.

Despite the Islamic solutions to coping with and curing mental health problems, social stigma around mental health can cancel such positive effects, considerably decreasing the quality of life for the one fighting a mental health problem. It's high time that we as Mus-

lims, face up to the facts – mental health problems do exist, and yes, they are present in members of our Ummah (1 in 3 or 4).

Sitting back and ignoring this issue will not help our Ummah in any way. In fact, it will only hold us back from moving forward by not supporting our own brothers and sisters that are in need, that are right on our doorstep, in our own communities. In the Prophet's SAW time, stigma did not exist, so why do we allow it to happen today? People in his SAW time were not afraid to come forward and ask for his advice and help when faced with mental health issues and they were not discriminated against for doing so. If we are truly following the Sunnah of our Prophet SAW, we wouldn't allow it to happen today. ICS Ad- blog

People are often afraid to approach the topic due to misconceptions about mental illness: that people with mental illness are dangerous and are not able to maintain social relationships, when the truth is that they are already going through enough trying to manage their mental health problem to have to face such stigma and discrimination. Put yourself in their shoes. Imagine a time when you felt discriminated against. Perhaps you were discriminated against for being a Muslim (or anything

else: the color of your skin, your nationality, age or gender, etc.), as many of us are at some point. You might have felt like going into hiding. You might have felt like retaliating. You might have even pitied the discriminator for their lack of tolerance for something they do not understand, for basing their opinion of you on misconceptions about Islam. Remember how this made you feel. The person who is being discriminated against for having mental health problems is possibly feeling one of these things as well. These kind of feelings are what will prevent them from seeking help for their problem which can have devastating knock on effects. They might have a hard time going forward to seek the necessary treatment for their illness, whether it be through Islamic or medical means. This will lead their illness to get even worse.

Stigma is not the problem of the one with the mental health problem, but the problem of the misunderstanding community. This is something that must be addressed if we are to move forward successfully as a united Ummah.¹ Often, you might not feel like you are treating someone differently or stigmatizing a

person because they have mental health problems. However, stigma can often be manifested in more discrete, covert ways. It might be in the way you look at them, or the way you fail to include them in conversation that has more of an impact on them. It may also be overt when you abuse them verbally or physically.

People with mental health problems need support, to know that people care, not to be discriminated against. It is not Islamic to treat anyone this way, Muslim or non-Muslim. All of us have a responsibility to make the issue of mental health one that can be discussed freely without fear of discrimination so that our brothers and sisters who are silently battling with such problems can feel comfortable to come forward and talk about their problems and seek the necessary assistance to help them get through their illness, insha Allah.

May Allah Allah Subhanahu-wa-Taala make it easy for us to make mental health a topic that is embraced fearlessly and may He Allah Subhanahu-wa-Taala help our brothers and sisters with mental health problems to overcome their illness successfully.

In the Dark of the Night

When Zainul 'Aabideen (rahimabullah) passed away, the people carrying out his ghusal saw that he had scars all over his back. They enquired as to what was the reason for that. They were told that he used to fill bags of flour, load it on his back at night, and personally hand it out to the poor residents of Madeenah Munawwarah. (Hilyatul Awliyaa vol. 3, pg. 160)

Lesson:

- 1. While the sinners wait anxiously for the night so that they may go ahead in fulfilling their evil desires and filthy aspirations, the pious servants of Allah make the maximum of this 'cover' in doing good actions only for His pleasure.*
- 2. Bringing ease and happiness to the servants of Allah is an extremely meritorious act. After one's demise, these very people continuously remember one and make du'aa in his favor.*
- 3. Actions receive their value in the sight of Allah in proportion to the level of sincerity with which they were carried out. It is not the quantity of the optional actions, rather the quality which counts.*

The Power of Dua

Khalid Baig

The dua can change our life, our outlook, and our fate. It is the most potent weapon of a believer.

Once Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) passed by a people who were suffering from some affliction. "Why don't they make dua (pray) to Allah for protection," he said. With all the suffering and disasters Muslims are facing in various parts of the world, the question can be directed to all of us today.

It is not that we have forgotten dua completely; we refer to it regularly. But, our ideas and practice regarding dua have become distorted. Often it is reduced to the level of a ritual. Generally it is considered when all our efforts have failed --- an act of last resort. It is belittled through actions and sometimes even with words. Is it any wonder that today mostly a mention of dua is meant to indicate the hopelessness of a situation.

What a tragedy, for dua is the most potent weapon of a believer. It can change fate, while no action of ours ever can. It is the essence of ibadah or worship. With it we can never fail; without it we can never succeed. In the proper scheme of things, dua should be the first and the last resort of the believer, with all his plans and actions coming in between.

Dua is conversation with Allah, our Creator, our Lord and Master, the All Knowing, the All Powerful. This act in itself is of extraordinary significance.

It is the most uplifting, liberating, empowering, and transforming conversation a person can ever have. We turn to Him because we know that He alone can lift our sufferings and solve our problems. We feel relieved after describing our difficulties to our Creator. We feel empowered after having communicated with the All Mighty. We sense His mercy all around us after talking to the Most Merciful. We get a new commitment to follow His path for that is the only path for success. We feel blessed with each such commitment

In every difficulty our first action is dua, as is our last. We ask Allah to show us the way to handle that difficulty; we seek His help in following the path He shows to us; we seek His aid in making our efforts successful. When we fall sick, we know that we cannot find the right doctor without His Will; that the best doctor may not be able to diagnose our condition without His Command; that the best treatment plan will not succeed without His Permission. We make dua for all of these. We make dua before we seek medical help, while we are receiving it and after it has been delivered. The same is true of all other difficulties we may encounter.

Dua is the essence of ibadah. A person engaged in dua affirms his belief in Tawheed (monotheism) and shuns belief in all false gods. With each dua his belief in Allah grows. He beseeches Him, affirming his own powerlessness. A per-

son seriously and sincerely engaged in dua understands exactly the relationship between himself and the Creator and affirms it through his actions. That is the essence of worship! Additionally, such a person can never become arrogant or proud, a logical result of true worship.

Dua is our most potent weapon in all struggles of life as well as in jihad in the battlefield. During the battle of Badr, the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) stood up all night in prayer seeking Allah's help in the battle between unequal armies that would follow the next day. In the decisive battles against the crusaders, Sultan Salatuiddin Ayyubi was busy day and night. His days were devoted to Jihad. His nights were spent making dua, crying, seeking Allah's help. This has been the practice of all true mujahideen.

We should make it a point to make dua for all things big and small. It is the beginning of wisdom to realize that big and small are arbitrary labels that are totally irrelevant in this context. Nothing is too big for Whom we are asking from; nothing is too small for the one who is asking. That is why we have been taught to ask Allah when we need something as small as shoelaces. We should ask as a beggar, as a destitute person, for that is what we in reality are in relationship to Allah. At the same time we should ask with great hope and conviction that we shall be granted our prayers. We should remember the Hadith: "There is nothing more dear to Allah than a servant making dua to Him." On the other hand, a prayer lacking concentration and conviction is no prayer at all.

We should make dua at all times, not only during times of distress. The Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi

Wasallam) said: "Whosoever desires that Allah answers his duas in unfavorable and difficult conditions, he should make plentiful dua in days of ease and comfort." Also he said: "The person who does not ask from Allah, Allah becomes angry with him."

We should ask for all of our needs: those related to this world as well as those related to the Hereafter. Those who only concentrate on the former are, in effect, announcing that they don't care for their life in the permanent abode. They should blame no body but themselves for the total ruin in that world that Qur'an assures us awaits them. Those who only concentrate on the later are also showing lack of balance, for we need Allah's help to lead a good life here as well.

We should make dua not only for ourselves but also for our parents, brothers and sisters, spouses and children, relatives and friends, teachers and other benefactors, and destitute and struggling Muslims everywhere. We should pray for them for the good in this world as well as in the Hereafter. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "The dua of a Muslim for his brother (in Islam) in his absence is readily accepted. An angel is appointed to his side. Whenever he makes a beneficial dua for his brother the appointed angel says, 'Aameen. And may you also be blessed with the same.'" [Sahih Muslim]

In the dark ages that we are living in today, everyday brings fresh news about atrocities committed against our brothers in different parts of the world. And what do we do? We can continue to just feel frustrated and depressed. We can petition the determined perpetrators

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A Wakeup Call!!!

Umme Ammarah

Life is a journey with important lessons that are learned along the way. It's full of surprises encompassing moments of happiness and sadness. During this journey we need to be mindful of our ultimate destination.

Often in pursuit of our material objectives, we are so absorbed and obsessed that we become oblivious about those important people that are near and dear to us and forget about our greater and real purpose in life.

There was a very successful executive, Abdullah, traveling down a busy neighbourhood street. He was speeding in his sleek, black, two month old BMW Coupe. A brick sailed out and – Baaangg! – it smashed into the BMW's shiny black side door! SCREECH..!!!! Brakes slammed! Gears ground into reverse, and tires madly spun the car back to the spot from where the brick had been thrown. Abdullah jumped out of the car, grabbed the kid and pushed him up against a parked car. He shouted at the kid, "What was that all about and who are you? Just what the heck are you doing?!" Building up a head of steam, he went on. "That's my new BMW, that brick you threw is going to cost you a lot of money. Why did you throw it?"

"Please, mister, please. . . I'm sorry! I didn't know what else to do", pleaded the youngster. "I threw the brick because no one else would stop!" Tears were dripping down the boy's chin as he

pointed around the parked car. "It's my brother, mister," he said. "He rolled off the curb and fell out of his wheelchair and I can't lift him up." Sobbing, the boy asked the executive, "Would you please help me get him back into his wheelchair? He's really hurt and he's too heavy for me."

Moved beyond words, the young executive tried desperately to swallow the rapidly swelling lump in his throat. Straining, he lifted the young man back into the wheelchair and took out his handkerchief and wiped the scrapes and cuts, checking to see that everything was going to be OK. He then watched the younger brother push him down the sidewalk towards their home.

It was a long walk back to the sleek, black, shining, BMW -a long and slow walk. Mike never fixed the side door of his car. He kept the dent to remind him not to go through life so fast that someone has to throw a brick at him to get his attention. It was indeed a real wake-up call!

A brick thrown at us is not always a tragedy and could be blessing in disguise as it brings a deep realization within us that we need to do some serious introspection and to become more conscious about our greater purpose and objectives in life. Allah says:

'...and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows

but you do not know.' (2:216)

In life there is always another dimension to a tragedy and in all situations one can find goodness and reward from Allah provided one endures patiently. Sure it is not easy to undergo a difficulty and remain unhurt, but know in your mind and believe in your heart that it is indeed better for you.

We need to be positive as traverse this journey of life and each difficulty or problem that we encounter can be medication for our soul and a preparation for the onward journey. Allah says:

"Verily, with hardship there is relief" (94:6).

We have absolutely no control over what happens to us in life but what we have vital control over is how we respond to those events. How we respond to them defines our character and the quality of our life. We can choose to sit in perpetual sadness, immobilized by the gravity of the loss, or we can choose to rise from the pain and treasure the most precious gift we have – life itself!

A crisis creates the opportunity to dip deep into the reservoirs of our very being, to rise to levels of confidence, strength, and resolve that otherwise we didn't think we possessed. No matter what challenges or obstacles we experience, we make a CHOICE to become better or bitter because of it.

So the next time a brick is flung at us...remember it may just be that Wake-Up Call!

May Allah grant us strength in adversity...Ameen

Quotable Quotes

The Prophet (SAW) said "The cure for ignorance is asking" (Abu Dawud)

"It is also charity to utter a good word." (Bukhari and Muslim)

Righteousness is good character, and sin is what causes uneasiness in your heart and what you dislike others to become aware of (Muslim).

One who is mild rather than forceful has greater capacity for outreach. Ali ibn Abu Talib (RA)

The Quran is only beneficial when it reaches the heart & is firmly planted in it. Ibn Masud

Wisdom is a tree which sprouts in the heart and fruits on the tongue. Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA)

Be not unmindful of Eternity and set not your heart upon the transient goods of this world. Khwaja Fariduddin Attar (ra)

Knowledge is that which benefits (by practising on it) not that which is memorized. Imam Shafi (ra)

Astonishing is that a person knows his Lord then disobeys Him & knows the shaytan then obeys him!" Ibn Rajab (ra)

Whoever does not find happiness in the dhikr of Allah, prayer, and reciting the Quran, will not find it anywhere else. Hasan al-Basri (ra)

Everyday one does not disobey Allah is his Eid. Hasan al-Basri

Whoever does not experience the taste of humility for an hour will spend eternity humiliated. Imam Nawawi (ra)

The dominator [qabhar] among men is one who subdues his enemies. The greatest enemy of man is his soul, which is with him. Imam al-Ghazali (ra)

Enough as a punishment for sins is that it prevents you from worshipping Allah, even if you wanted to. Ibn al-Qayyim (ra)

Being vulgar and foul-mouthed is a sign of being deprived of Allah's grace. Sh. Masibullah Khan (ra)

Appeal

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