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EDITORIAL

All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted

Disinformation Campaign About Islam

When the Jerusalem was occupied by the Muslims, the Christian world launched a propaganda campaign against them leading to series of crusades, As is said if you want to kill a dog, call it a bad name. The European Christian started to distort the image of the Islam. They characterised the Muslims as "Uncivilized, beasts, savages and cruel who knew only to plunder, kill and to make woman folk their slaves". The aftermath of the method is attested by Watt (1972) when he writes: The image of Islam created at up-time by the Christian scholars enabled other Christians to feel that when they fought against Muslims, they were fighting for light against darkness. Through this, they were able to regain part of their territory. They latter began to manifest their deep interest in the intellectual culture of the Muslims. They studied Arabic works and translated them into many languages with the sole aim of portraying a negative picture of Islam. The orientalists, capitalizing on the ignorance of the Muslims, succeeded in depicting false image about Islam.

Nature of disinformation about Islam

Due to negligence or ignorance of the Muslims, the orientalists came out with nasty statements about Islam, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and the Muslims. Secondly, Goldziher claimed that many Hadith were fabricated and religious proto-

cols were altered after the death of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) without any serious thought. Professor N.J.Coulson erred in his comments on the notable jurist Imam Malik and his noble work, Al-Mauwttah. Professor Schacht and his disciple Fysee shared the view that many Islamic practices were borrowed from the Jews.

Thirdly, while carrying out the translation on the original works of the Islam into their languages useful information were either distorted or withheld. A case in point is that of the translation of the "Mukhtasar of Sidi Khalil by Perron and Ruxton. George Sale who translated the Qur'an into English embarked on his translation purposely to antagonize it.

Lastly, out of ignorance, many people were wrongly fed as regard some concepts in Islam which include the status of woman, polygamy, jihad and the wrong notion that Islam was spread by sword.

How disinformation campaign can be corrected

One of the ways of the correcting disinformation campaign about Islam is by discouraging Muslim youths from reading the fallacious books of the non-Muslim orientalists on Islam so as not to be wrongly informed about Islam. To achieve this objective there is the need for the museum scholars to

Cont'd on page 40

Question Answer

Question.

Will man have to account for everything that he does in this world?

Answer.

Each person is a pledge for that which he has earned (cf. al-Toor 52:21, al-Muddaththir 74:38) Whoever believes and does righteous deeds will enter Paradise and whoever disbelieves in Allah and His Messenger will enter Hell. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Surely, those who disbelieved in Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), We shall burn them in Fire. As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for other skins that they may taste the punishment. Truly, Allah is Ever Most Powerful, All-Wise.

But those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah — Islamic Monotheism) and do deeds of righteousness, We shall admit them to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), abiding therein forever. Therein they shall have Azwaajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives), and We shall admit them to shades wide and ever deepening (Paradise)” [al-Nisaa’ 4:56-57]

Righteous deeds benefit the one who does them, for Allah has no need of us. And evil deeds only harm the one who does them, for they do not harm Allah at all, Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Whosoever does righteous good deed, it is for (the benefit of) his ownself; and whoso-

ever does evil, it is against his ownself. And your Lord is not at all unjust to (His slaves)” [Fussilat 41:46]

And He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whosoever strives, he strives only for himself. Verily, Allah stands not in need of any of the ‘Aalameen (mankind, jinn, and all that exists)” [al-‘Ankaboot 29:6]

Allah is Generous and multiplies hasanaat (good deeds) as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Whoever brings a good deed (Islamic Monotheism and deeds of obedience to Allah and His Messenger) shall have ten times the like thereof to his credit, and whoever brings an evil deed (polytheism, disbelief, hypocrisy, and deeds of disobedience to Allah and His Messenger) shall have only the recompense of the like thereof, and they will not be wronged” [al-An’aam 6:160]

Righteous deeds such as prayer, zakaah, fasting, Hajj, enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil, jihaad, reading Qur’an, etc., are the symbols of Islam, and the reward for all of them is Paradise, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a (true) believer [in the Oneness of Allah (Muslim)], such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even to the size of a Naqeera (speck on the back of a date stone), will be done to them”. [al-Nisaa’ 4:124]

The punishment for all evil deeds

and sins such as oppression, shirk (associating others with Allah), murder, corruption, arrogance, and other sins is Hell, unless one repents. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad), and transgresses His limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment”. [al-Nisaa’ 4:14]

Words and deeds, whether they are good or bad, are all recorded with the Lord of the Worlds. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“This Our Record speaks about you with truth. Verily, We were recording what you used to do (i.e. Our angels used to record your deeds)” [al-Jaathiyah 45:29]

Allah does not accept any deeds except those which are done purely for Allah in accordance with the guidance of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord” [al-Kahf 18:110]

On the Day of Resurrection, each person will see what he did, acts of obedience or disobedience, good or evil, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“That Day mankind will proceed in scattered groups that they may be shown their deeds.

So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it.

And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it”. [al-Zalzalah :6-8]

On the Day of Resurrection, each person will be given his book (record of deeds) and it will be said to him:

“Read your book. You yourself are sufficient as a reckoner against you this Day” [al-Israa’ 17:14 – interpretation of the meaning]

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Whoever believed and did righteous deeds will take his book in his right hand in joy, and will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeyed Allah and His Messenger will take his book in his left hand or from behind his back, and will enter Hell. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Then as for him who will be given his Record in his right hand,

He surely, will receive an easy reckoning,

And will return to his family in joy!

But whosoever is given his Record behind his back,

He will invoke (for his) destruction,

And he shall enter a blazing Fire, and made to taste its burning”

[al-Inshiqaaq 84:7-12]

And there is a great difference between faith and disbelief, obedience and disobedience, the people of Paradise and the people of Hell:

“Is then he who is a believer like him who is a Faasiq (disbeliever and disobedient to Allah)? Not equal are they.

As for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, for them are Gardens (Paradise) as an entertainment for what they used to do.

And as for those who are Faasiqoon (disbelievers and disobedient to Allah), their abode will be the Fire, every time they wish to get away therefrom, they will be put back thereto, and it will be said to them: ‘Taste you the torment of the Fire which you used to deny’” [al-Sajdah 32:18-20 – interpretation of the meaning]

Allah states that the believers are the ones who will be the victors, and the disbelievers are the ones who will be the losers, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“By Al-‘Asr (the time).

Verily, man is in loss,

Except those who believe (in Islamic Mono-

Cont’d on page 22

Lesson From The Qur'an

*Quran text translation: Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi (RA)
Commentary compilation: Institute of Islamic Research, Darul Uloom Ilahiya.*

Surah Al-Imran

Verse 52-55

فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ ط قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ ء
وَاشْهَدْ بِنَا أَنَا مُسْلِمُونَ ٥٢ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ٥٣ وَمَكَرُوا
وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ ط وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِينَ ٥٤ إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ لِعِيسَى إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ء ثُمَّ إِنِّي مَرَجُّكُمْ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَكُمْ
فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ٥٥

*Then when Isa (AS) perceived infidelity in them, he said: Who will be my helper unto Allah?²⁸
The disciples²⁹ said: 'We are helpers of Allah, we believe in Allah, and bear you witness that
surely we are Muslims.' (3:52) Our Lord! We believe in what you have sent down and we fol-
low the messenger: write us up therefore with the witnesses³⁰. (3:53) And they plotted³¹, and
Allah plotted and Allah is the Best of plotters³². (3:54) Recall when Allah said: 'O Isa, surely I
shall make you die³³ and am lifting you to Me, and am cleansing you³⁴ from those who disbe-
lieve, and shall place those who follow you³⁵ above those who deny you till the Day of Resur-
rection; then to Me shall be the return of you all; then I shall decide between you concerning
that in which you have been differing'. (3:55)*

28. Here, the conclusion can be drawn that it is permissible to seek help from the religious scholars with regard to the religious matters and that it is not against *tawakkul* (trust), because this kind of help is being sought on

the basis that they (i.e., the scholars) are the manifestations of Allah's help. (*Bayanul Qur'an*)
29. *Hawari* (disciples) could mean 'helpers'. This is strengthened by the hadith in which the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

pulled Zubayr ibn al-Awwam (RA) to himself and said: 'Every Messenger has his Hawari. My Hawari is Zubayr. (*Ibn Kathir—ref. Ishraq al-Ma'ani*)

30. According to Atta (RA) *Shahidin* (witnesses) stands for the Prophets (AS) because every Prophet is a witness to his people. Ibn Abbas (RA) holds that it means - Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and his Ummah, for the reason that (on the day of Judgement) they will give witness with regard to the messenger-ship and missionary work (*tablig*) of the Prophets (AS). (*Tf. Mazhari*)

After declaring their faith before Isa (AS) they beseeched Allah to enlist them among the Believers so that their Iman might get registered and there remains no possibility of turning to infidelity again. (*Tf. Usmani*)

31. Refers to the evil designs of the Jews who planned to arrest Isa (AS) and to get him crucified. (*Ma'ariful Quran*)

32. *Makr* in Arabic denotes a subtle and secret move or plan. If it is for a good purpose, it is good; and if it is for a bad purpose, it is bad. That is why the restriction of *saiyy* (evil) is placed with *makr* in (35:43) (And *evil plan* *المكر السييء* besets none but its perpetrator). The ruler ordered the arrest of Isa (AS). While this was the scene on one side, the subtle and secret move made by Allah Almighty was countering their evil plans more effectively. (*Ma'ariful Quran*)

33. The prevalent opinion among the Com-

panions was that it refers to the death that Isa (AS) will meet with at the end of his second mission on earth. This is based on several hadiths. (*Ishraq al-Ma'ani*)

34. The Jews threw slanders on the parentage on Isa (AS) because of his having been born without a father. The Qur'an refuted this slander by declaring that he was born without a father because such was the power and will of Allah. And that too does not call for much of a surprise. More surprising is the birth of Adam since he was born without both a father and a mother. (*Ma'ariful Qur'an*)

35. It means that the followers of Isa (AS) will be made to overcome those who deny and oppose him. This promise was fulfilled in the sense that following here means the belief in and confession of the prophet-hood of Isa (AS). The belief in and the practice of all injunctions ascribed to him is not a precondition. Thus, the Christians and the Muslims both fall in this category as they believe in the prophet-hood and messenger-ship of Isa (AS). However, this is a different matter that holding this much of belief is not enough to bring forth salvation in the Hereafter. Instead, the salvation in the Hereafter depends on believing in all the injunctions brought by him; one of which was that his followers should believe and have faith in the last of the Prophets (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). (*Ma'ariful Qur'an*)

Verse 56-61

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَعَذَّبْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ٥٦ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ ٥٧ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥٨ ذَلِكَ نَتَلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ ٥٩ إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَى عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ ٦٠ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ٥٩ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ ٦٠ فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ آبَاءَنَا وَآبَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ٦١ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ ٦١

And as for those who disbelieved, I shall torment them with a severe torment in this world³⁶

and the Hereafter. Nor shall they have any helpers.³⁷ (3:56) And for those who believed and worked righteous works He shall repay them their wages in full, and Allah loves not the ungodly³⁸. (3:57) This We recite unto you of the signs³⁹ and of the wise admonition. (3:58) Surely the likeness of Isa with Allah is as the likeness of Adam,⁴⁰ him He created out of dust; then He said to him, 'Be' and he became. (3:59) This is the Truth from your Lord, so be you not of the doubters.⁴¹ (3:60) So those who contend with you therein after what has come to you of the knowledge say, 'Come! Let us call our children and your children and our women and your women and ourselves and yourselves, then let us humbly pray, and invoke the

36. The terrible plight of the Jews in Germany and elsewhere is only a matter of recent past. (Tf. Majidi)

37. This applies generally to all kinds of unbelievers including the Jews who have been punished with ignominy and wretchedness and subservience to the people until the Day of Judgement. This does not mean that the Muslims are not punished. They are. But it is not a result of the curse or out of anger rather, out of mercy and as a means of expiation of their sins. (M. Thanvi (RA)- ref. *Ishraq al-Ma*)

38. The condition of believers who, when struck by suffering in the mortal world, have their sins forgiven and they find the due punishment in the Hereafter lightened or warded off. For this reason, a hint to this effect has been made in - 'And Allah loves not the ungodly', i.e., believers are dear because of their belief, as such the beloved ones are always treated like that. The disbelievers are detested because of their disbelief, and those detested do not receive such a treatment. (*Bayanul Qur'an*)

39. The 'signs' here imply either the Qur'anic signs or those miracles which point towards the authenticity of the prophethood of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), for - irrespective of being unaware of these facts, he narrated them exactly as recorded by their priests. (Tf. Mazhari)

40. Adam (AS) being created without a father and a mother. This is the point of comparison and resemblance. Isa's (AS) wonderful nature

is like that of Adam (AS). He is not consubstantial with Allah. He is as much a created being as Adam (AS). The divinity of Isa (AS) has been denied by some ancient Christian sects themselves. (Tf. Majidi)

41. The truth does not necessarily come from priests, or from the superstitions of whole peoples. It come from Allah, and where there is a direct revelation, there is no room for doubt. (*Yusuf Ali*)

42. Accordingly, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) invited the members of the Najran delegation, that was then camped in Madinah and disputing with him over Isa's (AS) divinity, to participate in the mutual invocation of Allah's curse (*mubahala*). They agreed. But when he came out with Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Hussayn, they backed out, having been warned by their elders of the seriousness of the consequences, if Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) were to be a true prophet. One account has it that it was a Jew who advised them not to face the challenge. (*Ibn Jarir—ref Ishraq al-Ma'ani*)

According to a report, when the Bishop who was with them saw the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), Hasan (RA), Husayn (RA), followed by Fatimah (RA) with Ali (RA) at the rear, coming out to meet them in the *mubahala*, he said: 'By Allah I see faces that, were they to ask Allah to move a mountain, He would move it. Don't go out to meet him in this challenge.' (*Zamakhshari, A. Alusi—ref Ishraq al-Ma'ani*)

Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

The Book of Ablution

باب

Chapter 42 : Without Tarjamatul Baab

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

The Hadith of this chapter (Baab) is actually in continuation to previous chapter, So Imam Bukhari has not mentioned any word for its Baab. In some compilations even the word "Baab" is also not mentioned and this Hadith is quoted as another Hadith of previous Baab.

Hadith No. 185

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ يُونُسَ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا حَاتِمُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ عَنِ
الْجَعْدِ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ السَّائِبَ بْنَ يَزِيدَ يَقُولُ ذَهَبَتْ بِي خَالَتِي إِلَى
النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَتْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، إِنَّ ابْنَ
أُخْتِي وَجِعَ . فَمَسَحَ رَأْسِي وَدَعَا لِي بِالْبُرْكَه ، ثُمَّ تَوَضَّأَ فَشَرِبْتُ
مِنْ وَضُوئِهِ ، ثُمَّ قُمْتُ خَلْفَ ظَهْرِهِ ، فَتَنَطَّرْتُ إِلَى خَاتَمِ النَّبُوَّةِ
بَيْنَ كَتِفَيْهِ مِثْلَ زُرِّ الْحَجَلَةِ .

Narrated As-Sa'ib bin Yazid (RA)

"My aunt took me to the Prophet and said, "O Allah's Apostle! This son of my sister has got pain in his legs." So he passed his hands on my head and prayed for Allah's blessings for me; then he performed ablution and I drank

from the remaining water. I stood behind him and saw the seal of Prophethood between his shoulders, and it was like the "Zir-al-Hijla" (means the button of a small tent, but some said 'egg of a partridge.' etc.)

Comments

Sa'id bin Yazid says that his aunt took him to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and requested him to make Dua in his favour as he was suffering from pain in his legs. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) rubbed his blessed hand over his head and made Dua in his favour. Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) performed Wudu and Sa'ib bin Yazid drank the leftover water.

There are two possibilities, one is that Sa'ib bin Yazid drank the water which remained in the pot after Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) completed his Wudu, and the second is that the water used by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) for Wudu was drunk by him.

باب مَنْ مَضْمَضَ وَاسْتَنْشَقَ مِنْ عَرَفَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ .

Chapter 43 : One who rinsed his mouth and sniffed water in his nose with a single handful of water.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

There is difference of opinion between Shafa'ee and Hanafi schools of thought over the issue whether Madhmadah (to rinse the mouth) and Istinshaaq (to clean the nose) should be done with single handful of water or separately. Imam Bukhari (RA) seems to have kept this issue open by saying "who" does it with single handful of water.

Hadith No. 186

حَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا خَالِدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَمْرُو بْنُ يَحْيَى عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ زَيْدٍ أَنَّهُ أَفْرَغَ مِنَ الْإِنَاءِ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ فَغَسَلَهُمَا ، ثُمَّ غَسَلَ أَوْ مَضَمَصَ ، وَاسْتَنْشَقَ مِنْ كَفَّةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ، فَفَعَلَ ذَلِكَ ثَلَاثًا ، فَغَسَلَ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى الْمِرْفَقَيْنِ مَرَّتَيْنِ مَرَّتَيْنِ ، وَمَسَحَ بِرَأْسِهِ مَا أَمَامَ وَمَا آخَرَ ، وَغَسَلَ رِجْلَيْهِ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ ، ثُمَّ قَالَ هَكَذَا وَضُوءُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ .

Narrated 'Amr bin Yahya (RA)

"(on the authority of his father) 'Abdullah bin Zaid poured water on his hands from a utensil containing water and washed them and then with one handful of water he rinsed his mouth and cleaned his nose by putting water in it and then blowing it out. He repeated it thrice. He, then, washed his hands and fore-arms up to the elbows twice and passed wet hands over his head, both forwards and backwards, and washed his feet up to the ankles and said, "This is the ablution of Allah's Apostle (Sallallahu Alahi Wasallam)."

Comments

Imam Nawawi (RA) says that as per Shafa'ee school of thought, Madhmadah and Istinshaaq should be done with single handful of water.

The Hadith of this chapter is in their favour. The Hanafite school of thought says that these two things should be done separately and that is better and also Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). As quoted in Abu Dawood, that Hadhrat Uthmaan, Hadhrat Ali and many other Sahaaba

used to do it separately. Imam Tirmidhi has quoted that even Imam Shafa'ee preferred to do these two acts with separate handfuls of water.

باب مَسْحِ الرَّأْسِ مَرَّةً .

Chapter 44 : The passing of wet hands over the head (Masah) once only (while performing Wudu).

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Buikhari (RA) expresses his decisive opinion that Masah on head is to be done only once and that rubbing hands first from the front to back and vice versa are two action of same Masah and not to be counted as two actions. Further more, had these been two action, then for each action unused water should have been taken. The majority of Ulema like Imma Abu Haniefah (RA), Imam Maalik and Imam Ahmad are of the opinion that Masah on head is to be done only once.

Hadith No. 187

حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا وَهَيْبٌ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَمْرُو بْنُ يَحْيَى عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ شَهِدْتُ عَمْرُو بْنَ أَبِي حَسَنِ سَأَلَ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ زَيْدٍ عَنْ وَضُوءِ النَّبِيِّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - فَدَعَا بِنُورٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ ، فَتَوَضَّأَ لَهُمْ ، فَكَفَّ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ فَغَسَلَهُمَا ثَلَاثًا ، ثُمَّ أَدْخَلَ يَدَهُ فِي الْإِنَاءِ ، فَضَمَضَ وَاسْتَنْشَقَ ، وَاسْتَنْشَرَّ ثَلَاثًا بِنِثْلَاثِ عَرَفَاتٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ ، ثُمَّ أَدْخَلَ يَدَهُ فِي الْإِنَاءِ ، فَغَسَلَ وَجْهَهُ ثَلَاثًا ، ثُمَّ أَدْخَلَ يَدَهُ فِي الْإِنَاءِ ، فَغَسَلَ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى الْمِرْفَقَيْنِ مَرَّتَيْنِ مَرَّتَيْنِ ، ثُمَّ أَدْخَلَ يَدَهُ فِي الْإِنَاءِ ، فَغَسَلَ بِرَأْسِهِ فَأَقْبَلَ بِيَدَيْهِ وَأَدْبَرَ بِهِمَا ، ثُمَّ أَدْخَلَ يَدَهُ فِي الْإِنَاءِ فَغَسَلَ رِجْلَيْهِ . وَحَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا وَهَيْبٌ قَالَ مَسَحَ رَأْسَهُ مَرَّةً .

Narrated Amr bin Yahya (RA)

"My father said, "I saw Amr bin Abi Hasan asking 'Abdullah bin Zaid about the ablution of the Prophet. Abdullah bin Zaid asked for an earthenware pot containing water and performed ablution in front of them. He poured

water over his hands and washed them thrice. Then he put his (right) hand in the pot and rinsed his mouth and washed his nose by putting water in it and then blowing it out thrice with three handfuls of water. Again he put his hand in the water and washed his face thrice. After that he put his hand in the pot and washed his forearms up to the elbows twice and then again put his hand in the water and passed wet hands over his head by bringing them to the front and then to the back and once more he put his hand in the pot and washed his feet (up to the ankles.)" Narrated Wuhaib: that he (the Prophet in narration) had passed his wet hands.

بابُ وُضُوءِ الرَّجُلِ مَعَ امْرَأَتِهِ وَفَضْلِ وُضُوءِ الْمَرْأَةِ .
وَتَوَضُّأَ عُمَرُ بِالْحَمِيمِ مِنْ بَيْتِ نَصْرَانِيَّةٍ .

Chapter 45 : The performance of Wudu by a man along with his wife. The utilization of leftover water after a woman has performed her Wudu.

Hadhrat Umar (RA) performed Wudu with warm water brought from the house of a Christian woman.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

This chapter has two parts. One is that a husband and a wife can perform Wudu together with same water. There is no controversy over it and everyone agrees with this point. Second part is that if a wife has performed Wudu in absence of her husband and some water is left in the pot, can that water be used by her husband? Here only two scholars—Dawood Zahiri and Imam Ahmad say that this water is not Taahir (ritually pure)

for her husband while all others are of the opinion that this water is Taahir for him.

Hadith No. 188

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ قَالَ أَخْبَرَنَا مَالِكٌ عَنْ نَافِعٍ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ كَانَ الرَّجَالُ وَالنِّسَاءُ يَتَوَضَّئُونَ فِي زَمَانِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ جَمِيعًا .

Narrated Abdullah bin Umar (RA)

"During the lifetime of Allah's Apostle (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) men and women used to perform Wudu together".

Comments

This Hadith says that the men and women used to perform Wudu together during the days of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). The learned scholars of Hadith say that men and women here mean a husband and wife, so there arises no question of Hijaab. Some people say that if men and women are taken as general people then this Hadith must be of the period before the decree of Hijaab. But in any case, there is no problem if a husband and wife perform Wudu together with the same water.

By mentioning that Hadhrat Umar performed Wudu with warm water that he took from the house of a Christian lady, Imam Bukhari (RA) wants to eradicate all such superstitions that warm water cannot be used to perform Wudu as heat is an attribute of fire and also that the water taken from non-Muslims is not Taahir. In nutshell, pure and clean water is necessary for Wudu irrespective whether it is hot or cold and taken from a Muslim or a non-Muslim.

"Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allah) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture! Have you then no sense?" [2:44].

Distressed!

Turn to Allah

Allah loves us to turn to Him and speak the words that flow from our hearts.

By Sister. Aisha

Du'a is the weapon of the believer; therefore, there is no need to resort to despair, or anger, because sharing our grief with Allah is a way of relieving and overcoming burdens.

Du'a is the essence of worship that there is etiquette when supplicating Allah for anything, both in times of need and when we praise and thank Him so here we will look at the way the Prophets made du'a.

Role Models

As we know the Prophets (AS) throughout time always had special and close relationships with Allah. They turned to Him in times of distress and need, and they never forgot to praise and thank Him for the countless blessings in their lives. The Prophets (AS) were aware of the importance of patience and gratitude and above all their relationships with Allah were bonds formed due to their complete and utter submission to His will. However, even with such trust and love they still at times became scared or distressed, and felt alone and overwhelmed.

Consequently, the Prophets (AS)

turned to Allah and called on Him to make them patient and steadfast, they asked for help in this life and bliss in the next. They called on Allah to make their families and companions righteous and patient, and to make themselves and all around them, grateful and serene.

Although Allah loves us to turn to Him and speak the words that flow from our hearts, the words of the Prophets (AS) are more complete and submissive to Allah's will, then we could hope to be. Supplicating Allah with the du'as found in the Quran and the authentic traditions of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), is a righteous and comforting practice.

When Adam and Eve were expelled from heaven, Adam turned to Allah in repentance:

{Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers} (Al-'Araf 7:23)

Humankind continues to make mistakes and commit sins but we only harm ourselves. Our sins and mistakes do not harm

Allah. However if Allah does not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will surely be among the losers.

When Prophet Yunus (AS), awoke in the belly of the whale he thought he was dead and was lying in the darkness of his grave. He felt around him and realized that this was not a grave but the belly of the giant whale. He was afraid and raised his voice calling out to Allah:

{None has the right to be worshipped but you oh Allah, far removed are you from every imperfection and truly I have been one of the wrongdoers!} (Al-Anbiya' 21:87)

How many times has each one of us sunk to the ground or into a chair in despair? Throughout his life Prophet Ayyub (AS) was put through many trials and tests by Allah but he remained steadfast, patient and was constantly turning to Allah for forgiveness. Even when he felt at his most helpless he did not complain but turned to Allah and begged for forgiveness. He said:

{Verily distress has seized me and You are the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy} (Al-Anbiya' 21:83)

The Quran relates to us the stories of the prophets (AS) in order that we might learn from them. They are worthy role models and their lives are not so different from our own. How many times has each one of us sunk to the ground or into a chair in despair? How many times have we felt so physically or mentally exhausted that it seems we will be unable to go on for even one more second?

Prophet Musa (AS)

Prophet Musa (AS) was forced to flee Egypt and walk out into the desert to face an unknown future. After walking for more than a week across the burning sands, he came to an oasis. It was there that this man of honor helped the women at the well before flinging himself under a tree and calling out to Allah for help.

Musa knew that Allah was the only One who could deliver him from his predicament, so he turned to Allah and before his supplication was finished help was on its way. Musa (AS) was probably hoping for a slice of bread or a handful of dates but instead Allah gave him safety, provisions and a family.

{My Lord! Truly, I am in need of whatever good that You bestow on me!} (Al-Qasas 28:24)

There are lessons for humankind throughout the story of Prophet Musa (AS). When Musa (AS) was sent by Allah to confront Fir'oun, he was afraid that he would not be able to live up to Allah's demands, but instead of complaining or despairing Musa (AS) turned to Allah and made du'a.

{O my Lord! Open for me my chest (grant me self-confidence, contentment, and boldness). And ease my task for me; and make loose the knot (the defect) from my tongue, (remove the incorrectness of my speech) that they understand my speech} (Ta-Ha 20:25)

After Musa (AS) learned of the great evil his people had committed by building the golden calf, he was angry. However, even amidst such wrongdoing he called upon Allah to have mercy upon them all.

{You are our Protector, so forgive us and have Mercy on us, for You are the best of those who forgive. And ordain for us good in this world, and in the Hereafter.} (Al-A'raf 7:155-156)

Prophet Sulaiman (AS)

Putting our trust in Allah and submitting to His will allows the believer to weather any storm

King (and Prophet) Sulaiman was acutely aware of the power of Allah. He always praised Allah for any condition that he was put in. He said:

{All praise and thanks is due to Allah} (27: 15).

Sulaiman (AS) also understood that no power or strength would be his, unless he

requested it from Allah. He made du'a and asked for a kingdom that would never be surpassed. Allah granted his request and Prophet Sulaiman (AS) reigned over an empire the like of which we cannot imagine.

{He said, "My Lord! Forgive me, and bestow upon me a kingdom such as shall not belong to any other after me. Verily, You are the Bestower}{38:35}

These du'as are a small example of how the Prophets (AS) made du'a. Their stories and their du'as are found throughout the Quran. When we read the stories of Prophets Sulaiman, Yusuf, Yaqub or Ibrahim (AS) we find that they, and all of the Prophets, completely submitted to Allah. They raised their hands in supplication and requested help from Allah Alone.

As believers we must never forget that Allah hears our du'as and supplications, and answers. Sometimes the wisdom behind the answers is beyond our comprehension but Allah desires only good for us. Putting our trust in Allah and submitting to His will allows the believer to weather any storm, and to stand tall in the face of adversity. We are never alone.

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The Best Way For Sisters to Say The Supplication to Alleviate Grief, Distress & Anxiety

By Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah

Upon the authority of Ibn Mas'ud that the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"No slave is afflicted with anxiety and grief, and then says: 'O Allah, I am Your slave, son of Your male slave, son of Your female slave. My forelock is in Your hand. Your judgment upon me is assured and whatever you have decreed for me is just. I ask You by every name belonging to You which You have named Yourself with, revealed in Your Book, taught one of Your creation or which You have preserved in the knowledge of the Unseen with You that You make the Quran the spring of my heart and the light of my chest, a banisher for my grief and a reliever for my anxiety.' Except that Allah will replace his distress and grief with joy."

He was asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, should we not learn it?' He said, "Of course, whoever hears it should learn it." [Imam Ahmed, Musnad (1 / 391), and others] Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah was asked about a woman who heard the Hadith:

'O Allah, I am Your slave, son of Your male slave, son of Your slave. My forelock is in Your hand...' to the end of the Hadith. And she continuously used this wording. So she was instructed to say, "O Allah I am your female slave daughter of Your female slave - until the end of it." However, she refused to say this and persisted upon the original wording. Is she correct in this or not?

He responded:

"Rather, it is befitting for her to say, 'O Allah, I am Your female slave, daughter of Your male slave' This is more appropriate and better even though her statement, 'I am your slave, son of your slave' has a angle in the Arabic language like the word Zanj (i.e. which can be used for man or wife). And Allah knows best."

Majmu' Al-Fatawa Vol. 22, p. 488.

Change

Talha Gannam talks about the necessity of a change driven by conviction that we as born Muslims need to adopt.

Since reading Muhammad Asad's "The Road to Makkah", I have become fascinated with exploring the perspectives non-Muslims and converts have on Islam and life generally. Being born Muslim, many of us take for granted the way we think and act, rarely paying attention to the reasons why. We casually assume every person to be the same as us, unable to fathom the nuances between different perspective, the rationality behind their thought or the background with which they speak. What Asad brought to light in his book was a perspective on life which underlies all these different issues, something I had rarely ever considered before; change.

Change is a word we often hear. Though many of us understand what it is, few of us know how to actually achieve it. Ramadan has become the Muslim equivalent of a New Year's resolution; it comes and goes with promises of change but we often end up with very little to show for it. Change just seems too inconvenient.

What fascinates me with converts like Muhammad Asad is how they embody change. Every aspect of their life gradually changes over time, sacrificing the most deeply rooted of habits in order to align

themselves with their new found faith. Their conversion is encapsulated through two key dimensions: an open mindedness to address the most fundamental aspect of their humanity - their faith - and a willingness to explore other perspectives of reality which were previously considered as foreign or wrong. By changing their faith, they are not only changing an identity or set of values, they acknowledge that all their previous decisions and actions may have been wrong and concede that the perspective they disagreed with was right all along. If they can overcome these two obstacles, everything else becomes a walk in the park. These two things are the keys to their success. The resulting changes are all fruits of this change.

As Muslims, we seem to have forgotten so much of this. We fail to understand that **conviction is what drives the change**, not our own actions. We need to 'convert' ourselves back to our original disposition, ridding ourselves of our intellectual and spiritual arrogance to search for the truth ourselves and recognize it wherever we see it. We must look beyond our own culture, habits and desires and be willing to place ourselves to learn what true faith and submission

means. So many Muslims close their minds to any perspective other than their own, scarcely ever trying to understand the essence behind what they believe and practice. The process is gradual and the results take time, but this is the key which brought the fruits of change we witness in the great men and women in our history and the key to our own self reformation. I often reflect at what made the generation of the Companions (RA) of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) so great. There are so many things we can cite; their support of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) during the heydays of Islam, the transmission and preservation of the sacred tradition, their devoutness in following Islam in its entirety. But for me, there is a more fundamental role that each of these Companions (RA) played before any of these could happen; their honesty in recognizing their own misguidance and their ability to change everything in order to live in accordance with their new found faith. Imagine an entire society of individuals whose focus was on their own spiritual journey before casting judgment on others. **Abu Bakr (RA), the greatest of men to walk this earth after the prophets, was named As-Siddiq (truthful and trustworthy) for his unequivocal faith in revelation and his rush in applying it to himself.**

With this regard, converts are the modern day manifestations of the companions. Their journey is precisely what those great individuals went through in the past, and to understand them can help us to understand what the companions of the prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) went through. I recently had the privilege to discuss with a convert who only been Muslim for a few years. Here is one extract which I will never forget

"It's been almost one year to the day since I started practicing - praying five times a day, no pork/wine - although it took me a bit longer to take my shahadah (testimony of

faith) formally since I wanted to be sure of what I was doing. There's something indescribable about such a huge piece of your life you never knew you were missing coming back one day to fill that gap you didn't realize you had."

"Even after I took my shahadah, in some respects it felt like getting a driver's license but not really having a car to drive. We really need to be training our imams (religious leaders) who do the shahadas to facilitate the spiritual process and not just the 'repeat after me and sign here' process."

*"The thought of having your slate wiped completely clean is actually quite a daunting one. You would think one would feel all light and spiritually weightless knowing that everything you've done wrong before that day has been forgiven, alhamdulillah, but for me, it was quite a heavy feeling. It's the weight of sensing just a molecule of the immensity of Allah; that He can, would and does forgive you, even after a lifetime of disobedience. **It's the weight of knowing He still loves you after denying Him to His face, year after year, and that He never gave up on you. But most of all, it's the weight of knowing you don't want to let any dirt get anywhere near your now clean slate again, but the realization that you'll definitely continue to make mistakes, because you're human after all. But even then Allah will continue to forgive you until you get tired of asking. Subhanallah, it's nothing short of mind-blowing.**"*

Reading that blew me away. So much of our perception of converts is that "all your sins are forgiven" part that we often neglect the huge struggle and reconciliation the person has to go through behind the scenes. We assume the change is "rational" and "easy" with just a simple utterance of a few words, yet we forget the difficulties that come with changing bad habits and adopting new ones, difficulties which perhaps merit the forgive-

ness. Rarely do we ever empathize through our own struggles of reformation yet we expect an immediate reconciliation and change in others, something we ourselves are incapable of! How many of us know that being fat is bad for us and against the sunnah (tradition of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)) yet never put anything in place to change it? How many of us know that food should halal and Tayyib (pure) yet are content to eat the conveyor-belt meat that fills our shelves? The list can go on... Relating to their struggle is far more effective than judging it.

I remember sitting with one of my teachers in Egypt as we read the 'Letter of Imam Qushayri' (Risaalah Al-Qushairiyah), a book which describes the biographies of the great scholars during the early period of Islam. What struck me when reading the book was the number of these people who began their life as bandits, thieves and other kinds of criminals yet went on to become some of the greatest Muslims who have walked this earth. As we read through the book, I remember asking my teacher; "I know when someone converts all their sins are forgiven, but what happens if someone is already a

Muslim? Is their only route to forgiveness the penal punishment?" As I said this, my teacher looks me in the eyes, smiles and says, "Is the One who is able to forgive the greatest sin of all (shirk) at the utterance of one sentence unwilling to forgive the smaller sins in the same way? All we need is to have that same conviction they do when they make that testimony of faith."

So perhaps change is not the most difficult thing to understand or achieve after all. Most of us have not reached the level of criminality that some of the great people before us did before they began their process of reformation, so surely our journey shouldn't be as difficult. In fact, how many of us regularly demonstrate the capacity to change our lives when we hear the commandments of Allah; fasting, praying and giving zakah (charity) when asked to? In this light, the words of Allah become so much more meaningful as the significance of our own inner struggle and the tribulations of this world are cast in a new light: "Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." (Qur'an 13:11)

A Believer's Mindset at the Time of Fitnah

Sayyiduna Yusha (AS) once received revelation that one hundred thousand people from his nation will be destroyed in a punishment to befall them. The strange thing was that sixty thousand of them were sinners and transgressors, whereas the remainder forty thousand were outwardly pious people. In astonishment Yusha' (AS) asked: "O Allah, what crime did the pious ones commit?" Allah replied: "They freely associated and interacted with the evil doers and did not express any type of anger or aversion for the wrongs taking place around them."

(Al-Babrul Muheet vol. 3 pg. 533)

Lesson: Though one will not hate the sinner, one MUST hate the sin. If the situation is such that one cannot stop the wrong, one must feel the deep hate and aversion for the wrong that is taking place. He should also express this in an appropriate way – the least is to disassociate from the people involved and the place of sin.

The Ultimate Goal

Mansoor Ahmad

We live in a unique era. Our lifestyle today is not what it was for people who lived a century ago. Now, our daily lives are filled with so many preoccupations that when we complete one task we immediately are thrown into another. We have so many commitments, appointments, responsibilities, priorities and tasks that our lives are revolving around the struggle to give each commitment, each responsibility, each priority its due. We struggle to find the balance in our lives because of our work, school, family, spouses, friends and our selves pulling at us from different directions. As if this wasn't enough, due to technology such as Facebook, Twitter, and email we are constantly fed an overflow of information, some of it important, but a lot of it useless.

In such a reality, it becomes very easy for us to get caught up in a rat race and forget the reality of who we are, why we are here and what we are meant to do in our relationship with Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala (exalted is He). We are constantly moving from one stage in our life to another. We were once kids, carefree, and life was easy. We then moved on to school and eventually made it to and through college. We started our careers, we entered into marriage and eventually parenthood and so on. All of these are stages of

our lives; some we might have experienced, some we might be experiencing, and some we might have yet to enter. Allah alludes to this constant movement from stage to stage in the Qur'an: "[...] you will surely experience state after state," (84:19).

What are we doing if not experiencing one state and then another and another constantly? Our busy lives cause us to forget to take a step back and evaluate the reality of our situation and where we stand in our relationship with Allah. It is very important that in the midst of everything, we engage in self-reflection so as to evaluate ourselves and our standing with Allah through the lens of the Qur'an. This will help us to see our lives according to the Qur'anic reality and we will be able to prioritize our days by seeing through the Divine perspective given to us in the Qur'an. It is very easy for us, as flawed and imperfect human beings, to overlook the reality of our lives and incorrectly assess our situations thus leading us to give importance to secondary matters while neglecting more important ones such as our relationship with Allah, our families, our parents and our children.

In another place in the Qur'an, Allah gives a description of the life of this world: "Know that the life of this world is but amuse-

ment and diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children – like the example of a rain whose [resulting] plant growth pleases the tillers; then it dries and you see it turned yellow; then it becomes [scattered] debris. And in the Hereafter is severe punishment and forgiveness from Allah and approval. And what is the worldly life except the enjoyment of delusion?” (57:20)

This is one of the most amazing verses of the Qur’an. In it, Allah defines the human experience—from Adam (AS) to us. If we were to examine the different descriptions given to the ‘life of this world’ in the verse, we can see that each very clearly defines certain periods in our lives. We are always in one of these states no matter how old we are or how young. There was a time when we were children that our main concern was amusement—we wanted to have fun and we sought to spend our days playing with toys, games and cartoons. Eventually we grew out of that and moved into our high school and college years where we started noticing the opposite gender and were distracted by our studies. After this, we began to think about our careers and marriage and we focused completely on seeking them. We then proceeded to buy a house, move into a new place, begin our new lives and seek to build a family. We moved ahead to building our family and speaking to each other about how we secured a promotion, or bought a new car, or how our son or daughter spoke their first words. Finally we reach our final state that stays with us to the end where we begin to compete with our peers in our wealth and kids; the time when we tell our kids, “His daughter got into Harvard, you need to get into Harvard as well!” or “He just got a raise to six figures, I have to get that too!”

Allah draws a profound parallel between these states of our lives and the yearly cycle a farmer experiences. A farmer plants

the seed, waits for the rain or waters it constantly, cares for it as it grows and blossoms into a plant, reaps the benefit from it and eventually the plant grows old, turns yellow, dies and turns to dust. Is it not the case that we do this in our life? Don’t we plant the seed for something we desire so it becomes a reality? And then we tend to it and preoccupy ourselves with it so as to enjoy the blessings it offers until eventually it grows old and turns yellow and is no longer valuable—and we look forward to the next big thing. Isn’t this exactly how our lives are passing us by? We buy the latest model car or mobile and we love it until next year when the new model comes, and this model that was so new and amazing just yesterday ‘turns yellow’ and loses value.

Immediately after micro-assessing our life and eloquently summing it up for us, Allah forces us to see it in the perspective of the Hereafter, the way He sees it, and the way the Qur’an wants us to understand it. In the same verse, He says, *“And in the Hereafter is severe punishment and forgiveness from Allah and approval. And what is the worldly life except the enjoyment of delusion?” (57:20).*

There are many subtle things happening here that we can easily overlook at first glance. The first is that Allah mentions punishment first, and second His forgiveness and approval. It’s as if to say that if we were to allow ourselves to forget about the Hereafter and our relationship with Allah, then we are liable for the punishment in the Hereafter because we have strayed from the purpose of our creation. The second very profound thing is that out of His Mercy, Allah does not couple punishment with Himself but instead couples Himself with His Mercy and His Pleasure. It is as though He is telling us, that He does not desire to punish us so He does not even mention Himself with punishment in His Speech. By distancing Himself from punishment, He is asking us to do the same by taking heed of His warnings. Allah says in another place in the

Qur'an, "Allah wants to accept your repentance [...]" (4:27). Finally, the question comes in a rhetorical fashion, concluding for us the reality of this life as a deluded sense of enjoyment when compared to the Hereafter. This reminds us that the Hereafter is very close to us and that we only need to view our lives through the perspective of its relation to the Hereafter so as to understand its reality. It is narrated by Abdullah (RA) that the Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Paradise is nearer to any of you than the strap on his shoe, and so is the (Hell) Fire." (Bukhari)

Allah then changes the conversation slightly, saying: "Race toward forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden whose width is like the width of the heavens and earth, prepared for those who believed in Allah and His Messengers. That is the bounty of Allah which He gives to whom He wills, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty." (57:21)

We are told to race towards Allah's forgiveness and Paradise as opposed to running towards this life. As humans we always need something to look forward to, a goal—it gives us hope and allows us to see past difficulties and tough times. Allah knows this about us and because of this, He gives us His forgiveness and Paradise as the ultimate goal worth seeking, thereby allowing us to see our temporal problems and difficulties as just that: temporary. It does not mean that we let go of our numerous responsibilities and commitments and isolate ourselves, but it means that we see them as a means towards something greater and that we work towards Allah with moderation and establish a balance between what our lives demand from us and what Allah requires from us. We do not make this life the goal, but rather the means towards the higher objective—the forgiveness of Allah and Paradise.

Abu Hurayra (RA) narrated that the Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said,

"Do good deeds properly, sincerely and moderately, and worship Allah in the forenoon and in the afternoon and during a part of the night, and always adopt a middle, moderate, regular course whereby you will reach your target (Paradise)." (Bukhari)

We seek Paradise by utilizing our busy lives and doing good deeds sincerely and moderately as a means towards the Mercy of Allah and His pleasure. Allah asks us to see past the temporal nature of this life and see it for what it is and what it was always meant to be—a means towards Him and Paradise.

The verse goes on to give us a description of Paradise, not what is within it as in other places in the Qur'an, but rather of its size and vastness. This is interesting because firstly we cannot quantify in our minds the width that is being spoken of; and secondly, if we take a look at the previous verse—keeping in mind our context—we see a subtle comparison between the constricted nature of this life and this world to the vast expanse and pleasure of the Hereafter. Allah wants us to know that Paradise is huge, much greater and much longer lasting than anything we think is great in this life. He wants us to keep that in mind so that we don't get disillusioned and so entrenched in our daily lives that we forget of the Home that is waiting for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers (AS). This allows us to view our daily problems, challenges and responsibilities as the path towards Him and the everlasting Home. "[...] the Hereafter is better and more enduring," (87:17).

The verse concludes with a reminder that, in the end, the blessing of Paradise belongs in its entirety to Allah. He is the Owner of everything and the blessings we get are from Him. He has invited us to Paradise, so the question we need to ask ourselves is: Do we accept the invitation and work to enter the Home of Peace?

Qur'anic Sciences

Justice Maulana Taqi Usmani

Nowadays a voice is being raised that every individual should take up the task of understanding Qur'an according to his own comprehension. Though it is all more necessary to understand the Qur'an but lack of fundamental knowledge in this regard can drive a person towards unknown extremes and wrong interpretations. This is the next article in the direction of knowing some fundamental requirements for interpreting the Qur'an correctly.

CAUSES OF INACCURACIES IN EXEGESIS

While it is respectful and honourable to pursue, the science of exegesis (Tafsir), it is also dangerous to step into it. The reason for that is that if anyone makes a wrong interpretation he would attribute towards Allah a thing which He has not said, and there can be no greater deviation than that. Those who expound the Qur'an without being properly qualified fall into the wrong path in spite of labouring much in the exercise. Hence, it is essential to have a view of the causes that mislead a man in the matter of exegesis of the Qur'an.

FIRST CAUSE: INCOMPETENCE

The first and the most dangerous cause of erring off the path while engaging in the exegesis of the Qur'an is to impose one's opinion without assessing one's competence and ability. Lately, it is seen that this habit

has assumed epidemic proportions. It has become a common misconception that by being able to read Arabic one becomes a scholar on the Qur'an and can interpret the Qur'an as he understands it. It is worth observing that while there is no art or science in the world wherein a person becomes an expert only by virtue of his linguistic knowledge and ability yet this is ignored when dealing with the Qur'an. No sensible man would claim to have become a physician or surgeon simply because he has a full command on English language and play with the lives of his patients. Merely reading a book on medical science will not make anyone a doctor. Similarly, a person cannot claim to be an Engineer simply by reading books on Engineering, or lawyer merely by reading books on Law. If anybody claims to be a professional on this basis he will be termed a quack and an idiot because everyone knows that the arts and

sciences cannot be achieved simply by being acquainted with the language and by self study. It needs years of hard work and tuition under expert teachers in the field leading through several examination conducted by institutions of learning. It is followed by practical experience under supervision and company of specialists. Only then one would be entitled to be called a beginner in the science.

If this is the case with learning these arts and sciences how can anyone hope to become an expert in the science of exegesis of the Qur'an simply by knowing Arabic language? In the preceding pages, we have seen what vast a knowledge is required to be able to enter the domain of the science of Exegesis. The Qur'an is not a continuous book like other ordinary books where everything about one subject may be found at one place. Unlike all other books it has a unique and distinguished style. Hence, in order to fully understand the meaning of a verse it is necessary to keep in view its different recitals, other verses on the same subject and their related information, the revolutionary background. It is also necessary to know the sayings of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) on which depends the interpretation of many verses. We shall have to find out if there is a deed or saying of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that explains the verse, and if it stands the test of authenticity. Also one should know how the Companions understood this verse, and whether there was a consensus on it or a difference of opinion existed among them. In case of a difference of opinion how may that be solved? Further. Arabic is a rich language, its words have many meanings and several synonyms.

It is also essential to be familiar with the idiom of that era to understand the meaning of the verse. Besides, the meaning of a verse, it is not sufficient to have knowledge of only the literal meaning of a word

because in Arabic language the meanings change with the change in grammatical composition and didactical marks. Without due proficiency in Arabic literature and language, this knowledge cannot be acquired and the composition nearest to the language of that day cannot be determined. Lastly, it must be thoroughly understood that the Qur'an is Word of Allah, and Allah does not disclose the secrets and mysteries of His words to those who are disobedient to Him. Hence, obedience to Allah, close attachment with Him, piety and righteousness are essential qualities in man before he sets to interpreting the Qur'an. This discussion makes it clear that mere familiarity with Arabic is not enough to explain the Qur'an. One must study the principles governing Tafsir, science of Hadith principles governing Hadith and jurisprudence, knowledge of syntax, grammar, etymology, literature and rhetoric; coupled with purity of heart, mind and body and deep devotion to Allah (Taqwa).

To adopt the path of exegesis without meeting these conditions is to mislead oneself and qualify oneself as one of whom the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had said,

"Whosoever says anything about the Qur'an without knowledge let him make his place in the Fire (of Hell)."

SOME MISUNDERSTANDINGS

In this connection some misunderstandings must be removed.

1: Some people say that the Qur'an has itself stated:

Certainly We made the Qur'an easy to admonition but is there anyone who would be admonished. (54:17)

So when the Qur'an is an easy book there is no need for help from arts and sciences to interpret it. Every one should be able to understand it by reading its text.

This argument is a grave misunderstanding which is based on lack of intellect

and on superficial viewpoint. The fact is that the Qur'anic verses are of two types. Firstly, those which offer common advice, didactic events, and subjects that deal with taking warning and acting on sound advice. For instance there are verses that speak of morality of the world, account of Paradise and Hell, verses that inspire fear of God, concern for the Hereafter and other plain facts of life. Verses of this type are no doubt easy and anyone knowing Arabic language can benefit from them.

In fact this purpose can be achieved to some extent even after going through the recognised translations of the Qur'an. The verse under reference has pointed out to this very fact, which is apparent from the word *لذکر* (for the sake of admonition).

Contrary to this, there are verses which consist of injunctions, regulations, beliefs and scholastic subjects. It is not possible for just anyone to understand them and deduce and draw tenets from them unless a deep insight in the Islamic learning is attained first. That is why the Companions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to spend long periods of time regularly in learning the Qur'an from him even though their mother tongue was Arabic and they did not have to go anywhere to get training in Arabic. Suyuti has quoted Abdur Rahman Sulami that he was told by the Companions such as Sayyidina Uthman bin Affan and Abdullah Bin Mas'ud (RA) who had regularly learnt the Qur'an from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that they would not proceed beyond ten verses until they had obtained all the relevant knowledge and practical application of these verses. They used to say:

"We have learnt the Qur'an, knowledge and action all in one."

It is narrated in Mu'atta of Imam Malik that Abdullah ibn Umar (RA) took eight years to memorise and learn Surah Al-Baqarah alone, and in Musnad Ahmad. Sayy-

idina Anas (RA) has stated that the one among them who had learnt Surah Al-Baqarah... and Al-Imran enjoyed high esteem and status. (al-Itqaan)

It is worth observing that these Companions used to take such a long time as eight years to learn and memorise just one Surah though their mother tongue was Arabic. They had the highest degree of expertise in poetry and literature and could commit to memory lengthy odes with only a little effort. The only reason (was) that a proficiency in Arabic language was not enough for learning the Qur'an and its sciences, but they had to seek the benefit of the company and teachings of the Holy Prophet. When such was the state of affairs with the Companions who had expertise in Arabic language and were direct witnesses to revelation, how then could some one claim to be a commentator of the Qur'an with a cursory knowledge of Arabic or just by reading translations of the Qur'an. Such a claim is indeed audacious and a pitiable jest with the Qur'an. Such people should remember the Prophet's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) saying:

Whosoever says anything about the Qur'an without knowledge⁴¹ let him make his abode in the Fire (of Hell).

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theism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'roof) which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar) which Allah has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihaad)" [al-'Asr 103:1-3]

O Allah, grant us Paradise and save us from Hell. Bestow Your mercy upon us, O Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

A Hand to Hold

Sister Masumeh

As for him who gives and is dutiful (towards Allah)

And believes in goodness,

Surely We will ease his way unto a state of ease.

(Qur'an, 92:5-7)

If you have ever stood at the bedside of an intensive critical care patient, you know the power of holding an outstretched hand. It doesn't seem to matter how long you stand there, gently holding the person's pale, cold hand—they will never let go. But you must, eventually. And when you finally do slip your hand away, if you have the courage to look into the patient's face, you witness the energy and mirth, the momentary release from the edge of pain, quickly drain away. They are—when you step away to say "Salam,"—again lapped by waves of physical anguish.

Touching a shoulder, patting a hand, comforting physical gestures seem to infuse suffering persons with patience. The mental refuge we discover in each others' kindness can be just as potent as any other form of care. **Family and friendship should always be a part of treatment for illness or distress.** Yet loneliness is often the only companion to crisis.

What we can do for each other, even in a simple gesture of holding a hand, uplifts, motivates, and rejuvenates. And it's what

people remember for years afterward.

Think back on all the rough times in your own life. What do you remember most clearly? Is it the technical points, the twists and turns of fate? Or is it the people, the ones who hurt and the ones who helped?

If this introduction to community service sounds starry-eyed to you, then you would probably concur with my sophomore composition professor. After presenting my poetry reaction on individual duty to help, serve, and ameliorate, this professor sputtered, "Isn't that just a drop in the bucket?" I thought perhaps he was playing devil's advocate, asking me to defend and clarify my position. But he wasn't. He really believed that helping others simply does not change the world. "If you were that drop," I thought to myself, "you wouldn't be so indifferent."

While some people simply do not believe that help helps—when they are on the giving end—most folks just do not know where to begin. Somewhere within the depths of our souls, we would all love to save the world. But sometimes, the amount of

work to be done, the severity of suffering around the globe, is overwhelming. We are stunned by the violence in Palestine, draught in Africa, poverty in India, political upheaval in Sri Lanka, joblessness around the corner. It is too much for any one person to tackle. And yet... There is so much we can do.

The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said, "Every joint of a believer must perform a charity every day the sun rises." [Bukhari, Muslim]. He enumerated a few such acts, like removing a dangerous obstacle from the road, smiling, helping a person onto his or her riding animal. Charity—simple actions that show caring and helpfulness—is something we can all do, everyday.

There are many sayings of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) exhorting his followers to charity. In one narration, he describes charity as a proof, [Muslim] presumably a proof of one's faith. In another narration, he says a woman who gives food in charity is rewarded, as is her husband (who paid for the food), and the grocer (who sold them the parcels) [Bukhari]. Blessings spread to all involved, although the choice to give is made by only one. So start a wave!

The most logical and beneficial place to start is your own home. Family is the best institution human beings have to protect individuals from harm, exploitation, and distress. Admittedly, it does not always work that way, however. Even social reformers and missionaries sometimes neglect the most basic duty to others—their family ties. It's easy to become too busy, in our producer-consumer environment. Too busy for a family dinner. Too busy to visit just because. Too concerned with friends, work, and other personal concerns to realize a family member is in need. It's at least equally easy to drop by and say hello; to bring home a bouquet or cook a special dinner; to put the newspaper aside and let some toddling fellow ride a fan-

tastic parent/pony.

The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) confirmed this in various statements and contexts. On one such occasion, he said, "Start giving first to your dependents." [Bukhari]

Who else is deserving of charity and kindness? Everyone! We do not need assurance that a beneficiary is proper and pious, or even truly in need, requisite to offering them service. Rather, we should be kind to whoever we encounter, and give freely to those who are in need, even if their own personal flaws and past mistakes plainly produced their current distress. The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "A man said that he would give something in charity. He went out with his object of charity and unknowingly gave it to a thief. Next morning the people said that he had given his object of charity to a thief. (On hearing that) he said, "O Allah! All the praises are for you. I will give alms again." And so he again went out with his alms and (unknowingly) gave it to an adulteress. Next morning the people said that he had given his alms to an adulteress last night. The man said, "O Allah! All the praises are for you. (I gave my alms) to an adulteress. I will give alms again." So he went out with his alms again and (unknowingly) gave it to a rich person. (The people) next morning said that he had given his alms to a wealthy person. He said, "O Allah! All the praises are for you. (I had given alms) to a thief, to an adulteress and to a wealthy man." Then someone came and said to him, "The alms which you gave to the thief, might make him abstain from stealing, and that given to the adulteress might make her abstain from illegal sexual intercourse (adultery), and that given to the wealthy man might make him take a lesson from it and spend his wealth which Allah has given him, in Allah's cause." [Bukhari]

When all else fails, and the day simply

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Preparing for The Realities of Marriage

Munira Lekovic Ezzeldine

Cont'd from previous issue

Understand You- Expectations Ascertain the expectations you hold for marriage. Many couples enter a marriage with unspoken and usually unconscious expectations of what their spouse is going to provide and fulfill. Honestly examining your expectations of marriage and your potential spouse is a necessary step in preventing disappointment. Ask yourself, "What do I think marriage will be like?" "Who and what have influenced these expectations?"

"What is my parents' relationship like?" "How does this play a role in what I expect in my marriage?" "What does the term 'husband' mean to me?" The answers to these types of questions will help spotlight your expectations about marriage and the basis for those expectations. **Understanding your expectations and assessing how realistic they are is a vital step toward helping you enter into marriage with open eyes.**

Communicate

Everybody should acquire two critical skills before getting married:

Communication and conflict resolu-

tion. These are essential to making a marriage successful. You and your potential spouse will begin to understand how you each communicate as you get to know one another. Not communicating and misinterpreting communication will cause numerous problems in a marriage. This is the time to ask yourself; "Am I good at communicating my feelings and thoughts?" "How do I resolve a conflict: do I ignore it, solve it?" "Am I a

To grow spiritually in your marriage requires that you learn to be less selfish and more loving, even during times of conflict.

good listener?" Understanding your approach and identifying your weaknesses are valuable because marriage carries the responsibility to communicate your needs and frustrations with your spouse. It is equally important to understand your spouse's communication style and conflict resolution skills and how compatible they are to yours. Ultimately, the effort you and your spouse put in this area will form the backbone of your marriage.

Entering into a marriage is a time to grow as an individual and to grow interdependently with a spouse. Having the courage to discover your expectations and weak-

nesses and taking responsibility for the direction of your marriage requires a mature approach. To grow spiritually in

If Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) reminds us that marriage is "half our faith," then how can we as Muslims go into something this central with a lack of preparation and understanding?

you do not feel like it. A marriage needs love, support, tolerance, honesty, respect, humility, realistic expectations and a sense of humor to be successful.

These values will help a marriage survive conflict, disappointment and problems. Marriage is a beautiful relationship that Muslims should enter with an understanding of all of its dimensions. If Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) reminds us that marriage is "half our faith," then how can we as Muslims go into something this central with a lack of preparation and understanding? We can only be good spouses once we understand what it means to be married and mentally prepare ourselves for the amazing journey.

Munira Lekovic Ezzeldine is the author of Before the Wedding: 150 Questions for Muslims to Ask before Getting Married. Munira has also written two Islamic Studies textbooks for the Bureau of Islamic and Arabic Education.

Consideration for others

Hadbrat Moulana Maseebullah Khan Sahib (RA) mentions:

"During Hadbrat Moulana Thanwi's (RA) final illness, he suffered from severe bouts of diarrhoea and extreme weakness and thus had to remain in bed. Once, at night Hadbrat had the urge to relieve himself whilst the rest of the household was asleep. Hadbrat could not tolerate affecting the comfort of others, though they would have never minded being disturbed out of their great love and affection for Hadbrat, especially during his sickness. However, Hadbrat exercised great caution so as not to disturb any person. Hence with great difficulty and hardship he proceeded to the toilet by himself. When returning from the toilet, the weakness he was experiencing increased. Hadbrat barely took a few steps and fell in the courtyard of the house due to dizziness. After regaining consciousness he walked back to his bed and lay down. By now, Hadbrat was feeling extremely weak. He then suddenly realised that when he fell, the toilet jug had fallen in the courtyard and was still lying there. If anyone else needed to visit the toilet later during the night they will not find the jug in its normal place, thus inconveniencing them. This thought left him restless forcing him out of his bed. Notwithstanding his illness and weakness he went back to the courtyard, found the jug in the darkness, and returned it to its place." (Fadhl-ul-Baari, p. 97)

All this was done in adherence to the mubaarak Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده

(وفي رواية من سلم الناس)

A perfect Muslim is he who does not inconvenience any person through his tongue or his hand.

The Four Imams: Leaders of a Third Way

S. Salman b. Fahd al-Oudah

If we look back on the lives of the four imams – Abu Hanifah, Malik b. Anas, ash-Shafi'i, and Ahmad b. Hanbal – we find that they were extremely tolerant people. They were respectful of their contemporaries, predecessors and the earlier generations of Muslims, whether they agreed with their views or not. Indeed, they followed the example of their predecessors in being tolerant of differences.

Allah says: "And those who came (into the faith) after them say: Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who were before us in the faith, and place not in our hearts any rancour toward those who believe. Our Lord! You are full of kindness, most merciful." [Surah al-Hashr: 10]

The four imams -- the leading scholars who founded the four canonical schools of Islamic Law -- never allowed past disagreements to cause them to disparage or raise suspicions about the people of an earlier generation who held divergent views. Likewise, they never called for an inquest of their contemporaries who disagreed with them and they never got involved in their affairs except in a positive way.

The four imams certainly disagreed with one another and with other jurists of their day, but they always maintained their

calm in debate and disagreed respectfully. They never permitted others who spread their ideas to use their teachings as a source of conflict or as a means to cause division.

It could possibly be that the principle they developed of coexistence in the face of changing political and social circumstances came as a result of their engaging with the substantial societal changes they witnessed during the era in which they lived. They recognized a need to develop a clear and precise approach to respond to such changes.

It can be observed that none of the four imams ever accepted an official political post, not as judge nor magistrate nor anything else. At the same time, they also never constituted themselves as a political opposition. They never gave their support to the government's political opponents, even though all four imams at times suffered government persecution on account of accusations that they did. However, a close examination of the imams' historical circumstances shows that such accusations were baseless. Instead, they were victims of the old idea: "You are either with us or against us."

Their insistence on intellectual autonomy is what brought such suspicion upon them, along with how unscrupulous people would sometimes manipulate their

statements and interpret their juristic verdicts for various political ends.

In truth, the four imams represented a third way: neither aligning themselves with the interests of those in power nor with the political opposition. This allowed them to carry out a vital leadership role of their own in maintaining social stability in a society made up of a number of contending factions: between the ruling class and the populace, as well as between a bewildering array of ideological factions and intellectual movements, not to mention ethnic and tribal differences. After all this, we can understand how they were so good at tolerating the disagreements of their colleagues among the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence!

They all kept a measured distance from the various contending elements in society while remaining fully connected to society. This made it possible for them to be a point of stability and balance, which protected Islamic civilization from a great deal of conflict, strife, and social disintegration.

The role they played in their times is all the more needed today with our widening social and class disparity and a weakened culture of tolerance, conditions that promote conflict whenever conditions are ripe for it.

The presence of an autonomous knowledge-based mediating authority is needed to act as a source of strength for the weak and a moderating influence on the strong, to arbitrate in matters, and to impart to society the values of tolerance and mutual understanding. There is a need for those who can speak out for justice and the inalienable rights that are needed to ensure peace and security in any country, and which can prevent violent factions and extremist movements of whatever persuasion from developing.

The world contains nations where you find a strong government and an equally strong civil society. They are held together by

organizing principles and their vital, political, social, and charitable institutions. This is what makes the government strong through its people and the people strong through their government.

Most Muslim countries do not enjoy this balancing of institutional power, essential for stability and continuity, which comes from the presence of mediating institutions that are widely recognized and accepted on both an official and popular level, institutions whose role is often only appreciated when their loss leads to the erosion of society.

Ideological and partisan disagreements, religious differences, and other potential sources of division do not inevitably lead to conflict and strife. Allah says in the Qur'an: "It is He who has spread out the Earth for all His creatures." [Surah ar-Rahman: 10]

Within the sphere Islam, matters are referred back to universal principles and the legitimate life needs that Islam upholds. When such a reference becomes impracticable due to the severity of the disagreement or disparity of the parties involved and the matter cannot be brought to a resolution through dialogue, there still remains a broader circle for coexistence: the one of "knowing one another" referred to in the verse: "O humankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may come to know one another." [Surah al-Hujurat: 13] This coming to know one another, this mutual and reciprocal knowledge of the other, is the foundation for social relationships necessitating goodwill, justice, and kindness.

It is possible that through such relationships you will realize your own best interests as well as those of the people you disagree with at one and the same time. We see this in so many aspects of life: commercial dealings, in public administration, health, development, and industry.

Returning to the four imams, it needs to be pointed out that the disagreements between them in Islamic Law were nothing compared to the disagreements that existed among the Companions and Successors. Moreover, they introduced through their own juristic efforts a number of opinions that were new to their generation. Therefore, it is wrong for anyone to claim that their views abrogate the views of their predecessors and exclude all views other than theirs.

The later scholars who worked within the framework of one of the four schools of law, though they did not usually go off in an entirely independent direction, never ceased to engage in choosing between different opinions and deducing new rulings on the basis of precedent. I have studied the legal preferences of the preeminent Hanbali jurist Ibn Qudamah, and found that he sometimes adopted a position that was at variance to what was adopted by all four schools of thought. He did so after acknowledging and discussing all of their received opinions. His

judgments in these cases are often quite erudite and impressive.

We can find similar cases among the jurists of all four schools of law. This is because the views of the Companions, Successors, and other jurists are no less important than the views of the four imams. They were also from the earliest Muslim generations and theirs is a rich and valuable legacy which has been preserved for us in works like the Musannaf of Abd al-Razzaq, the Musannaf of Ibn Abi Shaybah, and the writings of Ibn Mundhir.

When we look at the magnitude of the changes taking place in the world today, we can appreciate the value of there being such a broad spectrum of opinion during the earliest days of Islam. Their contributions should not be ignored, since they enrich our understanding of Islamic Law. Though there may have been times in the history of Muslim civilization that such a plurality of opinion was unnecessary for society to function, our present age is certainly not one of those times.

I Don't Know

Once whilst Ali (radiyallahu anhu) was seated on the mimbar, someone asked him a question. Without any hesitation, he calmly replied: "I don't know." The man commented: "How can you ever say: "I don't know" when you have assumed this exalted position of sitting on the mimbar?" To this Ali (radiyallahu anhu) replied: "I've ascended this mimbar based on what I know. Had I ascended any place based on what I don't know then undoubtedly I would have reached the sky!" (Mirqaat vol.1 pg. 528)

Lesson: Besides Allah Ta'ala nobody knows everything. Then there are those who have more knowledge than others. In every field, there are experts and there are laymen. Laymen must NEVER take a chance. They must always refer to the experts, whether it be a medical problem, a financial issue or any other aspect. Most importantly, those without sound knowledge of Deen must NEVER take a chance with trying to extract laws of deen from the Quraan and Sunnah. One must ALWAYS refer to the experts – those who have acquired the detailed knowledge of the Quraan and Sunnah from experts – via an unbroken chain leading all the way up to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). Allah Ta'ala clearly commands "Ask those of knowledge if you do not know."

The Need for Consultation

Muhammad Haq

As Muslims, the best role model we have is of course, the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). About him, Allah subhanahu wa ta`ala (exalted is He) says:

And indeed, you are of a great moral character.

And as Aisha (RA) described the Prophet's character and mannerisms as a walking Qur'an, we will look at one of the ways in which the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) embodied Qur'anic values.

In the Qur'an, Allah (swt) orders the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to:

'[...] consult them [i.e. the Muslims] in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].' (Qur'an 3:159)

Allah (swt) commands the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to consult his companions despite revelation coming to him. The question is why does he do this? Imam al-Razi gives several explanations in his Tafsir al-Kabir.

Firstly, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) consulting the companions makes them feel important and respected. This in

turn, reciprocates good feelings towards him, and ensures a healthy and respectful relationship, which would ultimately benefit the Companions. Note how this is intended to benefit those who are consulted more than the one consulting. This is a good reminder for those in authority to always keep those who are in their charge involved. This is more so when it comes to the domestic realm, where husbands sometimes may not feel it necessary to consult their wives. As we know the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) consulted Khadija (ra) when he received the first revelation.

More telling is the incident of Hudaibia, when the Muslims had set out from Medina towards Mecca intending `Umrah. The polytheists of Mecca had blocked them and agreed to allow them to perform the `Umrah the following year. Now the Muslims had already assumed the ihram (a ritual state which prohibits certain things usually permissible). To come out of this state, the Muslims had to slaughter their animals, and trim or shave their head. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) commanded the Muslims three times to do this, but because they were overcome

with grief, none of them were obeying this command at first. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was worried, and came back to his tent, where his wife, Umm Salama, was. She advised him by suggesting he simply go outside, slaughter his offering, and shave his head. No sooner had the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) done this in full view of the Companions, then they too followed and thus all had come out of ihram. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) consulted his wife in such grave matters, and did not see it below himself to do so.

Secondly, even though the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had an intelligence and qualities far above any other creation, Imam Razi says it is not impossible, due to the vast nature of human knowledge, for him to overlook something which someone else may not. Moreover, others may offer different perspectives. Thus we see the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) consulted the Companions when making very important decisions. For example, the location of the battle of Uhud was decided based on the opinion of the Companions, as the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wanted to fight the battle from within Medina. In fact, Imam Razi mentions that the order to consult the Companions came after the Battle of Uhud, because the Companions may have felt the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was upset with them, as he followed their advice, and went out of Medina for the battle, which ultimately led to the Muslims' defeat. This was also the case in the battle of Badr, when, based on the advice of Hubab ibn al-Mundhir, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) changed his initial location for battle. If such is the case with the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) what of an average Muslim, living fourteen hundred years after?

Thirdly, Imam Hasan al-Basri and Sufyan ibn 'Uyayna are of the opinion that

such an order was given to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) so that consulting each other will become an established sunnah (tradition) of the this Umma (community). This consultation, even in domestic affairs, is something we can do religiously, intending reward from Allah (swt), by adhering to this sunnah. This is significant as we often do not see such actions, e.g. consultation and holding a family meeting, as something 'religious' or something that is encouraged by our faith.

Fourthly, by consulting the companions, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was able to gauge the understanding and intelligence of the Companions. Of course, this benefit is clear when a man consults his family. He will be able to keep his children involved, as well as be on the same 'wavelength' as them, ultimately leading to better communication and a more open and honest relationship.

Fifthly, by consulting the Companions, they would have ownership in what happens. This means that they would exert their utmost as they will be responsible for the outcome. This is an effective way to share responsibility with children, and give them an opportunity to mature organically under the guidance of their parents. Thus they won't be cut off, simply receiving do's and don'ts, but actually taking part in deciding what these rules are.

Lastly, after the verse encourages the Muslims to consult, it also reminds them that they should ultimately be dependent on Allah (swt):

'And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].' (Quran 3:159)

May Allah make us of those whom He describes as "their affairs are mutually decided between them" and peace and blessings be upon our master and final messenger.

Intimacy with Allah

The heart being closer and better linked to physical hearing than to sight, the effect of what is heard transmits quicker to the heart than does what is seen, and the hearing of a beautiful, melodious, and apposite sound may lead one to swoon, which is not likely to occur upon seeing beautiful sights.

Ibn All-Qayyim (RA)

The Souls of the Senses

SHAYKH AL-ISLAM IBN TAYMIYYAH, Allah have mercy on him-rendering apt judgment between opposing views on the issue-said that what the sense of hearing apprehends is more general and comprehensive, while what the sense of sight discerns is sounder and more perfect. Thus, the sense of hearing possesses generality and comprehensiveness, covering what is present and what is absent, and what is perceived and what is conceptualized, whereas the sense of sight [furnishes knowledge that] is perfect and sound.

It follows, then, that each of the five senses has a spirit and a soul, which is essentially its share of the heart. There are those whose hearts have no share of [these senses] any more than the wild beasts do. Hence, in this respect, such people and beasts are comparable. That is why Allah, the All-Powerful, compared these people to cattle-rather them

worse. He said: (Or do you really think that most of them even listen or understand? In fact, they are like nothing but cattle. Rather, they are even further astray from Allah's way!) Surat Al-Furqan, 25:44.

For this reason, Allah has attributed to the disbelievers in His Revelation a deficiency in hearing, sight, and intellect, either because they fail to take advantage of these senses-this being as good as lacking in them-or because the divine attribution of these senses pertains to the hearing, sight, and comprehension of the hearts-which will become evident to them when realities are unveiled [in the Hereafter], as [evidenced by] the statement that the dwellers of Hellfire shall make therein, as recorded in the Quran: (Moreover, they shall say: If only we had listened [to the Quran] or had used our reason [to discern its truth], we would not be among the Companions of the Flaming Fire.) Surat Al-Mulk, 67:10.

In addition, one of the interpretations of the statement of the All-High in the Quran: (Thus you [O Prophet] see them looking [blankly] at you, for they do not see.) Surat Al-A raf, 7:198 is as follows: That is, the disbelievers would look at the physical stature of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) through their outwardly senses, but fail to see his prophetic stature and its significance through the inwardly senses, which is to say, through the eye of the heart.

Another interpretation is that the pronoun [they] is referring in this verse to idols, which leaves us to understand it in one of two ways: (1) They are looking metaphorically, for they have no eyes to see; or (2) "looking" (yanzuru) means 'facing/ as the Arabs say; "Your abode looks at mine," that is, 'faces' it [which would render the meaning of the verse: Thus you [O Prophet] see [the idols] 'facing you/ but they cannot see.]

The same is true of the sense of hearing, which the disbelievers in the Quran and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) certainly possess and through which the [divine] proof is established against them. Yet they are said to be lacking it in the sense of the hearing of the heart. For they would hear the Quran with their outwardly hearing, in the sense of cattle that hear nothing of the calling of the shepherd (but mere calls and cries. Deaf, dumb, and blind [in heart]-never shall they understand.) Surat Al-Baqarah, 2:171.

Had they sincerely listened to the Quran with the true soul- that is, the soul of the sense of hearing that resides in the heart- they would surely have had a blessed life that comes from the hearing that is attached to the heart. The deafness and muteness that ails them would have been cured, and they would have saved themselves from the Flaming Fire of Hell, separating from those lacking in hearing and reason.

The Hearing of the Heart

The occurrence of true hearing is the beginning of a blessed life, a life that is the most perfect kind of life in this world. By [this spiritual hearing] the heart obtains its nourishment and its balance, gaining strength and life, and attaining its blessing and its blossom. When it lacks sound nourishment, it turns to fulfilling its need with unwholesome and corrupt nourishment. Thus it fails to attain all its blessings, like the physical body that weakens when fed unwholesome food.

The heart being closer and better linked to physical hearing than to sight, the effect of what is heard transmits quicker to the heart than does what is seen, and the hearing of a beautiful, melodious, and apposite sound may lead one to swoon, which is not likely to occur upon seeing beautiful sights. A sound might have a great effect on the heart even without one's noticing it-on account of heedlessness. But when one is alone or meditating, its effect is felt. The more a soul, or heart is isolated and cut off from the physical body, the more it is affected by what it has previously heard.

If what is heard has a noble meaning and a melodious sound he heart receives a greater share of its meaning, and delights in it to the fullest, and the soul enjoys its share of the beauty and the melody of the voice and delights in it. Thereby, the enjoyment is doubled and the delight perfected, and a state of profound bliss is attained, transcending to the physical body and perhaps even to others nearby. This does not occur in this world save upon attaining perfection; nor does it occur save upon hearing the Divine Word.

Rapture at the Quran

This transport happens only when the soul is isolated from distractions and is prepared, and the heart encounters the soul of the meaning [of the Divine Speech] and embraces with its full being what is heard,

exemplifying therein what the Quran says: (Indeed, in this [Quran] there is most surely a reminder for whomever has a [living] heart or lends [an attentive] ear, with [full] presence [of mind].) Surat Qaf, 50:37. The beauty of the voice of the reciter helps in this encounter so that it is as if one's heart departs from this world altogether and enters another, and finds delight and a state that is found in nothing else. This state is akin to the state of the people of Paradise. What wonderful nourishment! How wholesome and nurturing!

This [state of bliss] in hearing the Quran is forbidden to hearts nourished on Satanic melody. Indeed, even if such a one finds the Qur'an delightful, it is because its melody may be similar [to the music that one is used to], not because of its special meanings. There is no blessing for the people of Paradise higher than their seeing of their beloved Lord, Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, with their own eyes and hearing His speech. 'Abdul-lah the son of Imam Ahmad mentions in the book Al-Sunnah a report- concerning which I do not now recall whether it attributes to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) or not-which has it that "When people will hear the Quran on the Day of Resurrection from the All-Merciful, the Mighty and Glorious, it would be as if they had never heard it before."

When the heart is filled with something, the distinction between the outward and the inward is mitigated so that the ear transmits to the heart what it finds fitting, even if the conveyed sound or the speaker does not intend such a meaning from it. Al-Qushayri said that he heard Abu 'Abdullah Al-Sulami say: "I visited Abu Uthman Al-Maghribi. A man nearby was drawing water from a well using a pulley. -- He said to me: 'Do you know O Abu Abd Al-Rahman what this pulley says?' -- I said: 'No.' -- He said: 'It says: "Allah. Allah."'"

The examples of this are many. Once

Abu Sulayman Al-Dimashqi passed by a peddler who was saying 'Ya za'tar barri' (wild thyme), but he heard instead 'isatara birri' (Be generous. You shall see My bounty). This spiritual hearing follows the reality of the heart, union with which makes one imagine that he perceived [the very] meaning [by which his heart overwhelmed] regardless of the external sound.

The most perfect hearing, then, is that of one who hears from Allah His Speech- and it is the melody of the lovers and the Beloved. As mentioned in the hadith in Sahih Al-Bukhari that the Messenger of Allah & said, reporting from His Lord, the Blessed and the Exalted:

My servant draws near to me by nothing as much as [what] he does by fulfilling what I have required of him. And my servant continues to draw near to me by doing more than what I have required until I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing by which he hears, his sight by which he sees, his hand by which he strikes, and his leg by which he walks. By Me he strikes. By Me he sees. By Me he strikes forth. And by Me he walks. (Bukhari)

Courtesy Al-Jumuah Magazine

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does not offer a better opportunity to be helpful and kind, at least we should not forget our own souls. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said every step on the way to prayer is a charity. [Bukhari, Muslim] You can and should give charity to yourself. Restraint from doing sins is kindness to your soul. And good deeds free your conscious and improve your disposition. Indeed, any act of charity ultimately benefits the giver the most. If you give money, Allah increases your wealth. If you give time, Allah blesses your day. If you give energy, your health is improved. Don't believe me? Try it and see.

Heavenly Breeze of Hope

This a lesson for all of us to keep the hope in Allah (swt) when we suffer in relationships and in moments of separation that Allah will find an exit for us with His mercy.

Uthman Muhammad

It is a hallmark of depressed people that they give up on hope. Life for these people can seem void of color, so mundane that it is not worth living any more. Any energy spent on the face of earth seems such a waste for them. Hence, depressed people seem to care less about putting an effort to change, or to make meaning of their existence. Many of them lose track of the whole purpose of life and extinguish into demise or willfully end their lives. It is my belief that the same cascade of misery that applies to an individual also applies to a community or even a nation at large. Think about that as you read this paragraph again and think about the blessing of having hope.

We often refer to Islam as a life style (as opposed to just-a-religion). I would like to add another alteration for the way we understand Islam and say, that Islam is also an art of living. I say that, because of the ornamen-

tation Islam allows us to solicit to give meaning to life, while at the same time remaining within the scope of worship and religious rituals. One of the hallmarks of this deen (religion) that Allah asked us to practice, and has become to many of us a forgotten ibada (worship), is the ibada of hope. Yes, hope can be an ibada, and arguably, one of the noblest and most honored in the eyes of Allah. It is also no surprise that the holy Qur'an and the seerah (life) of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) have an abundance of parables and stories that are hope-enriching, I shall mention a few:

The story of Yusuf (AS) is a remarkable ode to hope that the Qur'an beautifully captures. One great verse in this chapter talks about the prophet Yaqub (AS), Yusuf's (AS) father, sending his sons back to Egypt to get back their little brother Benjamin who was captured by the Aziz whom they will get to

know as none other than Yusuf (AS). Yaqub (AS) had lost Yusuf before Benyamin some 25 years earlier and when he sends his other children to look for Benyamin, this is what he says: "O my sons, go and find out about Yusuf (AS) and his brother and despair not of relief from Allah. Indeed, no one despairs of relief from Allah except the disbelieving people." (12:87)

He kept hope in finding his son Yusuf (AS) for a quarter of a century until Allah brought them back together. This a lesson for all of us to keep the hope in Allah when we suffer in relationships and in moments of separation that Allah will find an exit for us with His mercy: "... despair not of the mercy of Allah ..."

During the battle of Al-Ahzab (also known as the battle of the trench) the tribe of Quraish had not yet embraced Islam and had formed a coalition against the Muslims in Al-Madina. The coalition included Quraish themselves, Jewish tribes near al-Madinah, and other strong Arab tribes such as the tribe of Ghatafan. The Muslims felt at loss until they decided to adopt a military strategy borrowed from Persia. They decided to dig a trench around al-Madinah so that their enemies might not get to them. It was not an easy chore, and the Muslims worked on the trench through the cold nights of the dessert and through the burning hot days. The Qur'an describes those times as times of great fear and despair. They were seeing the armies gather around Al-Madinah in camps from a distance with horses, weapons, swords and spears. These were times of great tribulation where some Muslims started questioning their own faith. One very cold night as the Muslims were digging the trench, they faced a huge white rock that they were unable to break. They turned towards the Prophet asking him for advice. He then took it upon himself to break this stone with his own blessed hands. He grabbed the sledgehammer of Sal-

man Al Farsi and hit the rock thrice, shattering it into pieces. With each strike, there was a spark and with each spark, the Prophet said Allahu Akbar and gave the Muslims glad tidings. "Bismillah." One third of the rock was broken. He said, "Allahu Akbar! I was given the keys of Damascus. I swear by Allah that I see the red manors of Damascus now!" Then, he said, "Bismillah!" again and hit the rock with the sledgehammer again. One third of the rock was broken. The Prophet said, "Allahu Akbar! I was given the keys of Persia. I swear by Allah that I see the city of Madayin of the Chosroes and his white manors!" Then, he said "Bismillah!" again and hit the rock with the sledgehammer; the remaining part of the rock was broken into pieces. The Prophet said, "Allahu Akbar! I was given the keys of Yemen. I swear by Allah that I see the gates of Sana now!" (Narrated by Imam Ahmad in his Musnad). All of these cities were given to the Muslims in conquest during the times of Omar and Othman . This is a great lesson from our Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that even during the times of difficulty where there might not seem to be any string of hope, we should not give up on the promise of Allah .

After the battle of Uhud, the Muslim were exhausted and defeated as they retreated to the mountains. They had lost some of their greatest men in this battle, including the uncle of our Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), the brave and noble man, Hamzah . He was savagely killed and mutilated, causing the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) himself to cry for him on that day. Their wounds were still open and their souls were shaken and defeated. They feared that this would be the end of their nation and that the Quraish would have the upper hand afterwards. They felt ashamed that they had made the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) go out for war when he felt that it was not wise to do so. The Prophet 's (Sallallahu

Alaihi Wasallam) life itself was endangered and he was beaten so savagely that the metallic sheaths of his helmet penetrated into his holy face. In the midst of all this turmoil, Allah revealed these blessed verses from Surat Aal-'Imran: "So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers.

If a wound should touch you - there has already touched the [opposing] people a wound similar to it. And these days [of varying conditions] We alternate among the people so that Allah may make evident those who believe and [may] take to Himself from among you martyrs - and Allah does not like the wrongdoers," (3:139-140).

The only analogy I can think of as I read the context of these touching verses is that of a mother who meets her child who has been beaten and humiliated in school. She dusts the dirt of his clothes, gives him a hug, and tells him that she loves him, and that he will always be great in her eyes. A great lesson, that despite the defeat of our ummah, if we are true believers, we should not feel demoralized and we are to hold onto the rope of hope in Allah .

In the Musnad of Imam Ahmad, there is a story that people came complaining to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that a youth was a hypocrite because he prays all night (or prays qiyam at night), and when he wakes up in the morning, steals from people. It seems that the sahaba felt uncomfortable that someone with such a great honorable deed such as qiyam, would still live a double life and would commit a kabirah (a major sin). The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) planted the seeds of hope for people like this young man when he said: "His prayer will eventually forbid him from committing this sin." In this story, there is a great lesson that we are all human and that we have our shortcomings. We sin in the day and during the night, in private and in public,

so much so that some of us have lost hope in ourselves that we will ever repent to Allah . Just like this young man, we all have hope that one day we will be granted the precious gift of repentance and steadfastness. This is a great lesson that we should never lose hope, that Allah will accept us, that His mercy is greater than our sins.

We need hope to live our spiritual life and to make sense of the challenges that face us on the road to Allah . We need hope as an Ummah when we witness what is happening in Syria and the rest of the Muslim world, we need hope as a community when we feel estranged and alienated on the road of improving or surroundings and making da'wah, we need hope as individuals to keep the energy for reformation alive, we need to learn how to instill hope in our children and in people around us, and we need hope when treating our own selves. We should never lose hope on our Ummah, never lose hope on the validity and uniqueness of our Islam or our Muslim identity. If we lose hope, we will get depressed as individuals and as a nation, and we will not be able to achieve the role that Allah has allocated to us in the Holy Qur'an, a mercy to mankind, like our Prophet was: "And thus we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you." (2:143)

"You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoy what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah ..." (3:110)

Sign of a True Believer

The sign of a true believer is that he submits himself entirely before Allah and his Rasool (sallahu alayhi wasallam) and he has absolutely no reservation with regards to any injunction of Deen though it may seem contrary to his reasoning and intellect.

Muhammad (SAW) - The Ideal Prophet

The Practicality in the Holy Prophet's Life

Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadvi (RA)

What endurance and patience is needed to demonstrate one's absolute reliance on Allah? For a practical example of it we shall have, again, to turn to Muhammad, the Prophet of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). The Lord had commanded the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

"Then have patience even as the stout of heart among the messengers (of old) had patience." [Qur'an 40:35]

And, he calmly endured all the hardships and insults heaped upon him by an unmannered and harsh people. The Makkans, among whom he was born, were uncultured and boorish, arrogant, and insolent. Unwilling to hear a word against their deities, they were always ready to kill and be killed rather than countenance disgrace to their idols. But the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) cared nothing for their wrath and always went to preach the Unity of God in the sanctuary of the Ka'bah. This was also the rendezvous of the Makkans' chieftains, but Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had made it

a point to prostrate before the Lord, within their sight, without paying any heed to their furious opposition. Then was received the divine command:

"So proclaim that which you are commanded." [15:94]

We know how Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) carried out this command by summoning the whole of Makkah from the summit of Mount Safa. The persecution of the lonely Prophet started. They manhandled him, abused and oppressed him, threw rubbish over him, tried to strangle him, sowed thorns in his way, but never did he stop from proclaiming Allah's religion. When his uncle Abu Talib hinted at abandoning him, the inspiring reply he gave to his uncle was: "O my uncle, by Allah, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left on the condition that I abandoned this course, I would not do so until Allah has made it victorious, or I perish therein." He was forced to remain confined with the vale of Shu'ab Abu Talib for three long years,

nothing reaching him and his family in the confinement. He was exhausted and the children and the old were emaciated by taking leaves of the trees to satisfy their pangs of hunger. At last, the conspiracy was hatched to kill him but he remained firm and unshaken. He took refuge in a cave where he was almost tracked down by the enemy in hot pursuit of the fugitives. His companion then mumbled in terror: "O Apostle of Allah, we are only two here." The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), however, had ample patience and faith in Allah. "Grieve not," he replied, "Lo! Allah is with us" [9:40]. Again, during the same journey when Saraqa got near the two on his horse, Abu Bakr (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) could not help crying out, "O Messenger of Allah, we have been caught." The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was even then serene and calm, chanting the Scripture with full confidence in the succor of his God.

Madinah was also not safe from danger. Threatened by surprise attack of his former enemies, he had also concealed adversaries like the Jews and hypocrites of Madinah. Guards were detailed for keeping night-long vigils but, then, the revelation was revealed; perhaps, again, to demonstrate what faith in Allah meant to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). "Allah will protect you from mankind" [Qur'an 5:67], assured the Lord, and he promptly came out to ask the guards to go away and take rest since Allah's protection was enough for him.

On his return from an expedition to Najd, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was taking rest under a tree. No companion was near him. A Bedouin came forward with an unsheathed sword in hand and demanded from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam): "Muhammad, who can now save

you from me?" The Prophet's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) sleep was disturbed, he opened his eyes and said calmly: "Allah." The reply was so reassuring, so full of trust in Allah, that the enemy put his sword back in the scabbard!

The same was the story at Badr also. One thousand well-armed Makkans were locked in battle against three hundred Muslims not all of whom were under arms. But where was the Commander of these three hundred empty-handed soldiers? Away in a corner of the battlefield he could be seen bowing and prostrating and lifting his hands in prayer. "O Allah," he was entreating, "if they are destroyed today, Thou wilt be worshipped no more."

There were also occasions when the Muslims had to suffer a defeat. They were, at times, so overwhelmed by the charging enemy that they had to run for their lives but the one who had absolute trust in Allah, stood firm at his place like a rock. At Uhud the Muslim forces were put to flight and the enemy slew many of them. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), however, stuck to his place. He was hit by a stone, fell on his side, and one of his teeth was smashed; his face was scarred, his lips were injured, and blood smeared his face. Still, he did not unsheathe his sword, for he was confident of the help of his Lord. Again, in the battle of Hunayn, when the Muslims were terrified by a sudden attack and took to their heels none heeding the other, the Apostle (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) mounted from his dromedary and called out: "Where are you going men? Come to me. I am Allah's Apostle. I am Muhammad, the son of Abd Allah."

Is there any other Commander who holds fast to his post in the battlefield even after his army takes to flight? Who neither takes to the sword nor loses his heart but re-

mains firm in his faith in Allah! Who does not forget even in such a precarious situation to beseech the help of Allah for granting him victory! Such was the heroism and the fortitude and the faith of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) since he had to set an example for those who fight solely for the sake of Allah.

You would have heard the exhortation "Love thy enemy," but would have never seen how the enemy is loved? It is not necessary to present here the hardships undergone by the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) at Makkah where he was persecuted and helpless, for it is no use making a virtue of necessity. When Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was migrating to Madinah, the pagan chiefs of Makkah had set a reward of hundred camels for capturing him alive or dead. Saraqa b. Malik b. Ju'shum took to his horse in pursuit of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi

Wasallam), thrice did he cast his divining arrows and thrice he got the reply: "Do him no harm." He refused to be put off and went ahead but, lo, thrice his horse stumbled, its forelegs went into the ground, throwing him away from the horseback. He then came to the conclusion that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was protected against him and would have the upper hand. Psychologically speaking, he had lost his nerves. He decided to turn back, but before doing so he called out to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) requesting to write him a document of safety for the day when he would gain victory over the Makkans. The document was promptly given to him. Saraqa embraced Islam after Makkah was captured. When he came to see the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), the latter did not even ask Saraqa why he had gone in pursuit of him on the behest of his enemies.

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publish pristine books on Islam in English language and make them books readily available.

Another method is to encourage young Muslims to learn Arabic as this will afford them the opportunity of reading from the sources and prevent them from being influenced by the west. The fact that Islam can only be well understood through Arabic language is stressed by the Qur'an when it reads:

"We have made it a Qur'an in Arabic, that you may be able to understand." (43:3)

Further more, Muslims should enter into a dialogue with non-Muslims in accor-

dance with the Qur'anic injunction which say: *"Invite (all) to the way of thy lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and more gracious..." (16:125).*

Da'wah programs should be organised by the Muslim bodies side by side with conferences, seminars and workshops. Mass media facilities should be made used by competent Muslim scholars to educate youth about the beauty of Islam.

Finally, the books of the orientalist should be critically studied with the aim of showing the cloven hoof on Islam. There is need to write rejoinders and refute their wrong notions on Islam.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:
"No one has given his children anything better than Aadaab (which in this context refers to Islamic knowledge)
(Tirmidhi, Baihaqi)