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RADIANT REALITY

RNI Regd. No: JKENG2000/04174,
Published From Srinagar. Jan 2019. Vol.20, No: 01.

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

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Press:
Khidmat Offset Press,
The Bund, Srinagar.

Mailing Address:
Editor In-Charge,-
Radiant Reality
P.O. Box 974
G.P.O. Srinagar,
J&K, 190001,
India.

Subscription:
Yearly: Rs 300/-
Postage: 240/- Regd.
30/- Normal

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Question.

Alhamdulillah we are expecting a child. As a result my wife has decided to stop working to take care of our child which I am very happy with. My worry is that we are currently struggling to make ends meet currently and any additional salary increases or promotions are looking far off. Its giving me a lot of stress. What should I do or read?

Answer.

You should not be unduly concerned about your financial situation. When Allah blesses a couple with children, then He also provides the means to look after the children.

Nonetheless, the following are effective remedies for increase in sustenance, and more importantly, for success in the hereafter:

1. Seeking Istighfar and repentance from Allah
 “Saying ‘Ask forgiveness from your Lord; for He is Oft- Forgiving; He will send rain to you in abundance; And give you increase in wealth and sons; and bestow on you gardens and bestow on you rivers (of flowing water).’” (Surah Nuh V.10-12)

2. Maintaining family relations

Sayyiduna Anas (ra) narrates that Rasulullah (saws) said,

“Whoever would like to see his provision expanded and his life extended, let him maintain

his ties of kinship.” (Bukhari)

3. Reciting Surah Waqiah (Chapter 56)

Ibn Kathir narrates from Ibn Asakir that Sayyiduna Ibn Masud (ra) heard Rasulullah (saws) say, “Whoever recites Surah Waqiah every night will never suffer from poverty.” (Shuabul Imaan)

Mufti Moosa

Question.

Kindly advise rules of separation in Islam. Can the husband and wife be separated and still meet with each other, can intercourse between the two be halaal/haram while separated.

Answer.

A separation and a divorce are two distinctly different things. A separation is when the spouses or either of them choose to live separately while remaining married, whereas a divorce is the termination of a marriage.

In a separation, the marriage is intact and therefore the couple remain husband and wife. All things that are permissible between husband wife including intercourse are permissible for a separated but married couple.

Mufti Moosa

Question.

At what age is it farz for a child to perform wuzu before touching the Holy Qur’an. I mean is it permissible for a 7 year old child to touch and recite his or her Quran lesson by simply wash-

ing hands?

Answer.

It becomes compulsory to have Wudhu to touch the Quran once a child becomes Baaligh. Hence, a 7 year old touching the Quran without Wudhu is permissible. (Shaami vol. 1 pg. 174)

It is nonetheless recommended that children be instructed to perform Wudhu before touching the Quran once it becomes manageable for them to do so to inculcate the respect of the Quran within them.

Mufti Moosa

Question.

Can I do a Nafil Tawaaf after the Tawaaf of Umrah and before the Sae' of Umrah?

Answer.

It is Sunnah to follow-up the Tawwaf of Umrah with the Sae' of Umrah without any delay. To delay the Sae' of Umrah by performing a Nafil Tawaaf after the Tawaaf of Umrah will be Makrooh. (Muallimul Hujjaaj 149)

Hence, you will have to postpone the Nafil Tawaaf for a later stage and continue with the Sae' of Umrah.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I am a businessman and have recently heard that when I sell an item, I should recite La Khalaba. Reciting this will protect me from a bad business deal. Kindly advise if this is correct and if yes, can you please provide the evidence so that I can forward to others as well. JazakAllah.

Answer.

The words "Laa Khilaabah" taught by Rasulallah Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam to a Sahaabi who was mentally challenged and was thus easily led to paying more for an item than its actual worth. It means "No deception" or "it is not permissible to deceive me".

It is not a Dua for protection from a bad deal but

rather to make the seller aware that the buyer is mentally challenged and thus be fair in trading with him and not take advantage of him. (Mirqaat ul Mafaateeh)

Mufti Moosa

Question.

I would like to inquire where is the closest miqat in makkah. If it is my last day for my menstrual cycle and I have a tiny bit of discharge and I may become pure when I reach. Therefore, I have to make ghusl and go to a miqat. Is this permissible, if so which miqat is closest in makkah. The traveling to makkah is by plane and the rest of the family is in ihram.

Answer.

A woman in the state of menses (Haidh), passing the Miqaat of Makkah Mukarram on the plane will do the following:

a) She will enter the state of Ihram in menses on the plane before passing the Miqaat by making her intention and reciting the Talbiyah of Ihraam on the plane. The two Rakaats of Salaat-ul-Ihram will be omitted as she is in menses.

b) She will remain in the state of Ihraam and she must adhere to all the laws of Ihraam until the termination of her menses and the performance of her Umrah is complete.

c) Upon the termination of her menses, she will make ghusl and perform her Umrah. Once her Umrah is complete, she will exit the state of Ihram.

Therefore, in the enquired situation, it will not be necessary for you to return to the Miqaat in order for you to perform your Umrah after the termination of your menses. You will simply proceed from your location within the Miqaat to perform your Umrah after making Ghusal.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Can a female attend the Masjid/Haramain on Jumuah during her menses only to listen to the

khutbah?

Answer.

It is not permissible for a woman in the state of menstruation (Haidh) to enter any Masjid including Masjid-ul-Haram (Makkah) and Masjid Nabawi (Madinah).

However, a woman in the state of menstruation may enter the Safa and Marwa area of Masjid-ul-Haram as it does not form part of the Masjid.

A woman may listen to the khutba through the various platforms provided without going to the Masjid.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it compulsory to cover the head whilst reading Quran?

Answer.

Whilst it is not a requirement to cover the head whilst reading the Qur'an, to do so is a mark of respect. Allāh Ta'ālā says:

“Whosoever venerates the symbols of Allah, then it is truly from the piety of the hearts.” (Qur'an, 22:32)

When reciting the Qur'an, one should bear in mind that one is communicating with Allāh Ta'ālā and should observe the utmost etiquette.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

My father has two wives. He has separated from his second wife and his children from his second wife. If my father passes away, does his second wife and her children from him inherit from my father?

Answer.

As long as a husband is married to his wife/wives i.e. they were not divorced from him when he passed away, all his wives will inherit from him upon his demise, irrespective if he had separat-

ed from them during his lifetime.

As for his children, all of them will inherit from him even if he had divorced any of his wives.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Can I give my Zakaat by giving a discount to my Zakaat eligible customers?

Answer.

The prerequisite of discharging Zakaat is transferral of ownership (Tamleek). By giving a discount to an eligible recipient of Zakaat, the prerequisite of transferral of ownership is not fulfilled. Hence, the discharging of ones Zakaat in such a manner will not be valid.

Alternatively, you may charge an eligible recipient of Zakaat the full amount of the product, for e.g. R50 and discharge your Zakaat by returning for e.g. R20 to the eligible recipient of Zakaat. In this manner, your Zakaat will be discharged. (Fataawa Mahmoodiyyah 14/401)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I am a chicken breeder. Once my chickens lay eggs, I wait for them to hatch. After they hatch, I sell them. Do I pay Zakaat on the chickens I breed or the chickens which I sell after they hatch? I do not sell the chickens I use to breed.

Answer.

There is no Zakaat due on chickens used for breeding purposes or chickens bred for sale purposes until the chickens are actually sold. Upon the sale of the chickens, Zakaat will be payable on the proceeds of the sale if the proceeds are saved and are available on the date of one's Zakaat calculation. Zakaat will not be payable prior to the sale of the chickens. (Masaail Rifat Qaasimi 5/121)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Can a Muslim inherit or accept a bequest from

a non-Muslim?

Answer.

In principle, if a non-Muslim passes away and is survived by Muslims heirs, it will not be permissible for the deceased's (non-Muslim) Muslim heirs to inherit from his/her estate. This ruling is applicable to an Islamic State.

In a secular state, like South Africa, the above ruling does not apply. Hence, if a non-Muslim passes away and is survived by Muslims heirs, it will be permissible for the deceased's Muslim heirs to inherit from his/her estate.

In the case of a non-Muslim bequeathing from his/her estate to his/her Muslim heirs or any Muslim, it will be permissible for Muslim heirs or Muslims to accept a non-Muslims bequest without any limitation to the value of one third of the estate. A Muslim can accept a bequest from a non-Muslim over and above the one-third value of the estate.

Note: The above ruling is primarily based on the premise that Islamic Laws are not binding on non-Muslims in a non-Muslim/secular state. (Shaami 6/655/Imadaadul Ahkaam 4/627-628)

In terms of non-Muslims inheriting from Muslims or Muslims making bequests in favour of non-Muslims, it is binding upon Muslims to adhere to the Islamic Laws and Principles of Shariah. Therefore, a Muslim cannot make a non-Muslim an heir and neither can a Muslim bequeath more than one third of his/her estate to a non-Muslim. Bequests up to the value of one third of the estate are permitted.

It is necessary (Waajib) upon Muslims living in non-Muslim/secular states to sign an Islamic-compliant Will ensuring that the distribution of their estates are according to the Islamic Laws of Succession and Inheritance.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

In some masjids, Muazzins call out the Fajr Azaan over the loudspeaker, which disturbs the

non-Muslim neighbours who complain of Muslims being inconsiderate. What is the status of calling out the Azaan especially the Fajr Azaan over the loudspeaker? Is it compulsory to call out the Azaan over the loudspeaker?

Answer.

Giving Azaan on a loudspeaker is considered a permissible act. At most, it can be said that it is a good act (Mustahsan) as it allows for the Azaan to reach further and thereby alert more Musallis for Salaah. The use of the loudspeaker is neither compulsory nor Sunnah. This is because the actual practice of the Azaan as prescribed by Rasulullah (saws) is to proclaim it by the voice alone. (Khairul Fataawa Vo. 5 pg. 205)

To cause disturbance and inconvenience to others especially those of one's neighbourhood is not allowed in Islam.

Rasulullah (saws) has stated,

“The best Islam belongs to those from whose tongue and hand people are safe.” (Musnad Ahmad)

“Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him not harm his neighbour.” (Bukhari)

The time of the Fajr Salaah is a time when most non-Muslims are asleep. It is a great inconvenience to a person to unnecessarily disturb their sleep. While the use of the loudspeaker may be considered as a good act, that goodness falls away if it becomes a means of disturbance and inconvenience to others.

As Muslims, it is our duty to be sensitive to the feelings of our non-Muslim neighbours within the limits set by Islam. Islam has not commanded the use of the loudspeaker. Hence, in areas where the use of the loudspeaker for the Fajr Azaan will be a means of disturbance, then its usage should be discontinued.

Mufti Moosa

Question.

Is it permissible to wear glasses whilst in the state of Ihraam? I cannot make Umrah without

my glasses on my face.

Answer.

The general rule is that it is not permissible to cover ones face in the state of Ihraam. In doing so, an expiation for a violation in Ihraam will be necessary.

However, the wearing of glasses/spectacles in the state of Ihraam is an exception to the general rule. The purpose of wearing the glasses is not to cover ones face. Glasses are worn due to need and necessity.

Hence, it will be permissible for one to wear glasses in the state of Ihraam in which case there will be no violation to the state of Ihraam. (Badaai-us-Sanaai 2/185-Fataawa Fareediyah 4/338)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it permissible to recite Quran by the deceased when he/she is being given Ghusal in the Ghusal Khaana?

Answer.

It will be disliked (Makrooh) to recite Quran, make Zikr or Dua besides the body of the deceased if the body of the deceased is in a room or cubicle like the Ghusal Khaana, which is specifically meant for the cleaning of impurities of the deceased body.

One may recite Quran, make Zikr or Dua outside the Ghusal Khaana or after the Ghusal of the body. (Shaami 2/193/194-Fataawa Darul Uloom Zakariyya 1/660/661-2/782/783)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

If a person recites Surah Fatihah mistakenly in place of reciting Tashahhudd, will the Salaah be valid and does it have to be repeated?

Answer.

If one mistakenly recites Surah Fatiha in place of reciting Tashahhud whilst in the sitting posture (Qadah), it will be necessary to perform a Sajdah-e-Sahw to compensate for it. In doing so, the Salaah will remain valid and it will not have to be repeated. (Hindiyyah 1/127)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

When reciting Surah Saad in Salaah, does one make Sajdah Tilaawat after reciting the 24th verse or after reciting the 25th verse? On Anaab or Ma-aab? Some Quran copies have the Sajdah Tilaawat marked on the 24th verse but verse 25 is indicated as the verse of Sajdah . Please clarify. Answer. The performance of Sajdah Tilaawat becomes necessary (Waajib) upon the recital of any of the verses of Sajdah Tilaawat in the Quran. In total, there are fourteen (14) verses of Sajdah Tilaawat in the Quran. Verse 24 of Surah Saad is a verse of Sajdah Tilaawat. Upon its recital, the performance of Sajdah Tilaawat becomes necessary.

Therefore, a Sajdah Tilaawat should be made upon the recital of verse 24 instead of at the end of verse 25 of Surah Saad. However, if Sajdah Tilaawat is made upon the recital of verse 25 of Surah Saad, the performance of Sajdah Tilaawat will still be valid. (Fataawa Mahmoodiyah 7/471)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Can a woman travel with her sister's son-in-law as her Mahram for Umrah or Hajj?

Answer.

It is not permissible for a woman to travel with her sister's son-in-law as a Mahram for Umrah or Hajj. He is a non-Mahram (stranger) to her. (Surah Nisa Verse 23)

Mufti Ismaeel

Lesson from
The Qur'an



Knowledge of the Unseen

Say, "I am not something unprecedented among the messengers, and I do not know what will be done to me or to you. I do not follow anything but what is revealed to me, and I am only a clear warner. [9] Say, "Tell me, If it (the Qur'an) is from Allah and you reject it, and a witness from the children of Isra'il testifies about something similar to it and comes to believe (in it), while you persist in your arrogance, (then, how unjust you are!) Surely, Allah does not give guidance to the unjust people. [10]

And I do not know what will be done to me or to you. I do not follow anything but what is revealed to me - 46:9) The sentence, "I do not follow anything but what is revealed to me," has been used here as an 'exception' to the previous sentence, meaning thereby that I do not know anything except what is revealed to me through wahy. The gist of the explanation given to this verse by Imam Dahhak, is that the knowledge of some unseen things can be obtained by the Holy Prophet only through wahy, and he does not have any knowledge about those unseen things which were not revealed to him through wahy, be they about his own self, about the believers and disbelievers among his people, or about matters pertaining to this world or to the Hereafter. Whatever the Holy Prophet has said about the unseen things is obtained through wahy. The noble Qur'an has declared that the Holy Prophet was blessed by the knowledge of innumerable things from the Unseen (ghaib), but all this knowledge was given to him by the divine revelation. This is exactly what the Holy Qur'an means by saying,

"These are some reports from the unseen (events) which We reveal to you." (11:49)

Details of matters relating to the Hereafter, Hell, Paradise, accountability, reward and punishment are given in the Holy Qur'an itself, and many details of certain future events that had to take place in this world are given in authentic ahadith reported from the Holy Prophet. Thus the substance of the present verse is simply that the knowledge of the Holy Prophet about the Unseen is not all-encompassing as is that of Allah Almighty, nor is it independently obtained; he simply reproduces whatever Allah Almighty tells him through wahy.

After having reproduced this explanation, the author of Ruh-ul-Ma'ani says,

"It is my belief that the Holy Prophet did not leave this world until he was blessed by wahy with such a knowledge about Allah, His attributes and about all those things the knowledge of which could be meritorious

that no other in the whole universe has ever been blessed with. But I do not believe that unawareness about trivial worldly affairs like the acts of some particular individuals and what they do at their homes and what happens to them one day or the other can in any way reduce his excellence.”

Dictate of Etiquette Regarding the Knowledge of the Holy Prophet About Unseen Matters

Respect for the Holy Prophet demands that one should not say that he did not know the Unseen; rather one should say that Allah had given such vast knowledge of unseen matters to him as was not given to any other prophet.

The explanation given by some exegetes that the negation in this verse is only about the unseen affairs pertaining to this world, and not about the Hereafter (as stated by Qurtubi) is probably because they have not taken the words, “I do not follow anything but what is revealed to me,” in the sense of an exception to the previous sentence; hence the negation of the knowledge of unseen things has been made specific to the affairs of this world, because the Holy Prophet has told very clearly about the Hereafter that the Mu’min would go to Paradise, and the ‘kafir’ would go to Hell.

And a witness from the children of Isra’il testifies about something similar to it and comes to believe in it while you persist in your arrogance, [then, how unjust you are!]....- 46:10) The subject of this verse is almost the same as of the verse of the last chapter of Surah As-Shu’ara’

Is it not a proof for them that the knowledgeable of the children of Isra’il recognize him (the Prophet)? (26:197)

The gist is that these ignorant Jews and Christians who deny the messengership of the Holy Prophet and disbelieve the Qur’an are ignorant of their own books, because many scholars of Bani Isra’il having found the prophethood of the Holy Prophet and its signs mentioned in their books and having witnessed those signs,

have come to believe in him. Even the testimony of their own scholars is not enough for these ignorant people.

Verse 10 of this Surah states that their falsification of the Holy Prophet and their claim about the Qur’an that it is a forgery, is baseless firstly because, as mentioned in verse 8, if anyone lays a false claim to prophethood, he has to be eliminated by the divine punishment right in this world, so that the common people may be saved from his fraudulent claims, Secondly, if they do not accept this argument, they should, at least, not overlook the possibility that if his claim is correct, and this book is actually from Allah, and they continue to persist in their arrogance, denial and disbelief, specially when one of their own learned scholar from Bani Isra’il testifies the Book to be from Allah, and comes to believe in it, then what will be their end and how severe a punishment will they deserve?

This verse does not name any particular scholar of Bani Isra’il, nor does it specify whether the testimony had already been given before this verse was revealed, or it would come afterwards. It, in effect, sounds a warning that should such a situation have already arisen or if it should arise in future, one should worry about saving one’s skin. Therefore, understanding this verse is not dependent upon the determination of a particular testifier; rather all the Jews and Christians who embraced Islam, of which Sayyidna ‘Abdullah Ibn Salam is more prominent, are included herein, although he embraced Islam in Madinah, while this verse was revealed in Makkah. (Ibn Kathir)

The statement by Sayyidna Sa’d reported in some narrations of Bukhari, Muslim and Nasa’i, that this verse was revealed about Sayyidna ‘Abdullah Ibn Salam and the same statement from Ibn ‘Abbas, Mujahid, Dahhak, Qatadah (R.A) etc. is not against this verse being Makki, as in this case, it will be a prophecy for the future. (Ibn Kathir)

*Adapted from: Ma’ariful Qur’an
Mufti Muhammad Shafi (ra)*

Lessons from Sahih Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

The Book of the Times of Salah

Chapter 6: The five time prayers are expiation.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb

Previous chapters made it clear that salāh expiates sins. In this chapter under discussion Imām Bukhāri wants to convey that the five time obligatory or Fardh prayers when offered in their proper times are highly effective in this expiating sins. The obligatory salāh in congregation is highly rewarding but if one misses the congregation due to any problem still it is highly rewarding to offer the obligatory salāh offered in its proper time.

Hadith No. 500

Narrated Abu Huraira

I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "If there is a river at the door of anyone of you and he takes a bath in it five times a day would you notice any dirt on him?" They said, "Not a trace of dirt would be left." The Prophet added, "That is the example of the five prayers with which Allah blots out (annuls) evil deeds."

Comments

The Holy Qur'an and hadiths have extensively used the methodology of explaining things giving simple examples understandable to a common man.

A man with ordinary intellect can easily appreciate the fact that no dirt will remain on a person's body if he takes a bath five times a day. By giving this simple example Rasulullah (saws) made it easy to understand that a person's sins get waved off if he offers obligatory prayers five times a day. Salāh is the best form of worship wherein a bondsman shows extreme humility and submission to his Creator and Master both physically as well as spiritually. He starts admitting His greatness by saying 'Allahu Akbar' - Allah is the greatest of all. Standing hand folded before Him with extreme devotion and humility, he gets absorbed in His attributes, glory and majesty, and finds in Him the real Sustainer and Cherisher. He gets immersed in His limitless mercy; and when overwhelmed by His majesty, he bows before Him in 'Ruku' where he again express His glory and greatness. Getting further absorbed in His attributes, he prostrates before Him by putting his forehead on the ground where He experiences His inexpressible and unimaginable nearness. Each and every word recited in salāh engulfs tremendous spiritual meaning and value for those whom Allah blesses with His mercy. When a bondsman finally sits in tashshahud, he gets so much elevated that he feels in the company of Allah and in direct conversation with Him. Here when he

supplicates to Allah, it is unlikely that he will return empty handed. These things are experienced and known to those who have cherished them. May Allah bless us all with these blessings. There is no doubt in the fact that when a bondsman repeats this process five times a day his exterior as well interior self gets purified.

Chapter 7 : To waste (the benefits of) salāh by delaying it beyond its proper time.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb

In the preceding chapters Imām Bukhārī repeatedly stressed on offering salāh at its proper time, and now in this chapter under discussion he is conversely conveying the same message.

Hadith No. 501

Narrated Geelaan

Anas said, “I do not find (nowadays) things as they were (practiced) at the time of the Prophet.” Somebody said “The prayer (is as it was.)” Anas said, “Have you not done to the prayer what you have done to it?”

Hadith No. 502

Narrated Anas

The Prophet said, “Whenever anyone of you offers his prayer he is speaking in private to his Lord. So he should not spit to his right but under his left foot.” Qatada said, “He should not spit in front of him but to his left or under his feet.” And Shu’ba said, “He should not spit in front of him, nor to his right but to his left or under his foot.” Anas said: The Prophet said, “He should neither spit in the direction of his Qibla nor to his right but to his left or under his foot.”

Comments

Rasulullah (saws) said:

“Best period is my period.”

The time Rasulallah (saws) was amidst his companions, was spirituality at its highest. It was during this time when Archangel Jibra’eel would descend with the revelation to the Prophet (saws). The Companions had their hearts illuminated to its peak.

An incident is narrated that once a Companion started to recite the Holy Qur’an while having his horse was tied nearby. It so happened that his horse would start jumping on his recitation and calm down if he suspended reading. On narrating this incident to Rasulallah (saws) he was told that the horse reacted in such a way because he could decipher the angels descending and coming near to you when you recited the Qur’an.

The Holy Qur’an describes the condition of Companions:

“And those who pass the night prostrating themselves and standing before their Lord” (25:64)

Knowing the significance of salāh, the companions of Rasulallah (saws) would extract maximum benefits out of it. Later people became negligent about its significance, and witnessing such negligence would reduce Sayyidna Anas to tears. Once, when Zuhri asked him the reason behind his constant anxiety, he told him that the condition of the people was deteriorating in every aspect of Islam and what worried him most was the wasting of the most important worship i.e., salāh.

Abu Rafia is quoted in Musnad Ahmad to have said:

“I heard Anas saying that he couldn’t see anything intact what he witnessed during the period of Rasulallah (saws)” Abu Rafia asked Anas, “O Abu Hamza, not even salāh”, he said “Don’t you know what Hajjaj did with the salāh” (Musnad Ahmed)

It is quoted in Tabaqaat Ibn Sa’d that Hajjaj delivered a Friday sermon so lengthy that the time of Salah ended. It is at this occasion Sayyidna Anas made this statement (Ei-

dhahul-Bukhāri)

Chapter 8 : The Musalli is in close conversation with his Lord, the Mighty and Exalted.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb

Allah is Samee' (the all-Hearing) and Baseer (the all-Seeing) but He pays a special attention full of mercy and compassion to the bondsman who offer salāh. The fixed timings of different prayers are not incidental but have a definite basis. By establishing this chapter Imām Bukhāri wants to convey that if a bondsman yearns for such special attention he should offer salāh in its proper time because it is these timings which Allah has specified to shower His special blessings upon His bondsmen.

Hadith No. 503

Narrated Anas

The Prophet said, "Whenever anyone of you offers his prayer he is speaking in private to his Lord. So he should not spit to his right but under his left foot." Qatada said, "He should not spit in front of him but to his left or under his feet." And Shu'ba said, "He should not spit in front of him, nor to his right but to his left or under his foot." Anas said: The Prophet said, "He should neither spit in the direction of his Qibla nor to his right but to his left or under his foot."

Hadith No. 504

Narrated Anas

The Prophet said, "Do the prostration properly and do not put your fore-arms flat with elbows touching the ground like a dog. And if you want to spit, do not spit in front, nor to the right for the person in prayer is speaking in private to his Lord."

Chapter 9 : Waiting until it is cooler to offer

Zuhr during intense heat.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Bāb

Imām Bukhāri now discusses the timing of individual prayers. The learned scholars have been at loss to know why Imām Bukhāri started it with Zuhr salāh and not with Fajr. According to some scholars he was discussing about the invocations to Allah in the previous chapter; and the time when Allah's wrath is getting manifested, it is not the proper time for invocation. The intensity of heat at mid-noon is due to the intensity of the heat of Jahannum, which in turn is the manifestation of Allah's wrath. So, according to some scholars it is better to delay Zuhr until the mid-noon heat has subsided a little.

Hadith No. 505

Narrated Abu Huraira and Abdullah bin Umar

Allah's Apostle said, "If it is very hot, then pray the Zuhr prayer when it becomes (a bit) cooler, as the severity of the heat is from the raging of the Hell-fire."

Hadith No. 506

Narrated Abu Dhar

The Muadhhdhin (call-maker) of the Prophet pronounced the Azaan (call) for the Zuhr prayer but the Prophet said, "Let it be cooler, let it be cooler." Or said, "Wait, wait, because the severity of heat is from the raging of the Hell-fire. In severe hot weather, pray when it becomes (a bit) cooler and the shadows of hills appear."

Hadith No. 507

Narrated Abu Huraira

The Prophet said, "In very hot weather delay the Zuhr prayer till it becomes (a bit) cooler because the severity of heat is from the raging of Hell-fire. The Hell-fire of Hell complained

to its Lord saying: O Lord! My parts are eating (destroying) one another. So Allah allowed it to take two breaths, one in the winter and the other in the summer. The breath in the summer is at the time when you feel the severest heat and the breath in the winter is at the time when you feel the severest cold.”

Hadith No. 508

Narrated Abu Sa’id

that Allah’s Apostle said, “Pray Zuhr prayer when it becomes (a bit) cooler as the severity of heat is from the raging of the Hell-fire.”

Comments

Rasulullah (saws) instructed his Companions to offer Zuhr salāh when it is relatively cooler during the hot season. According to Sayyidna Abu Zar once Sayyidna Bilal wanted to pronounce the Azaan for Zuhr salāh, Rasulullah (saws) instructed him to wait till it cools down a little. Khatabi says:

“Coolness (here) means diminution in the intensity of mid-day heat”

The learned scholars have given two reasons for it, viz.,

“To avoid inconvenience caused by the intensity of heat which results in the loss of concentration in salāh”.

Salāh, as we have seen, is the time when a bondsman holds secret conversation with his Lord wherein extreme humility and presence of mind is needed. When there is intense heat, it makes a person extremely uncomfortable due to which the above mentioned objectives become unattainable. Therefore, it is better to delay the time of salāh so that the intensity of heat subsides a little. But at the same time, the delay should not be too much to elapse the proper time of salāh. Secondly, the delay is recommended only during the hot season and not otherwise. The learned scholars have debated the point whether delaying the salāh is obligatory (wajib) or just preferable (mussta-

hab), and the majority of them say it is only preferable.

According to a narration the Companions used to drag their clothes towards the point where they would prostrate during salāh in hot season to save their foreheads from the hot ground.

The second reason given is

“Because at that time the fire of Hell is being intensified.”

There is consensus amongst the learned scholars of Ummah that Jahannum is already existing and these hadiths ratify this opinion. Rasulullah (saws) said that Jahannum breaths out two breath one during summer and the other during winter; the breaths in the summer is at the time when you feel the severest heat and the breath in the winter is at the time when you feel the severest cold. How it actually happens, Allah knows the best. It is a well accepted fact that major portion of the universe is yet to be explored by science, and same is the case with different physical phenomena taking place in it.

It is to be understood here that one cannot ignore the existence of a particular thing on the basis that he hasn’t seen it or doesn’t know it. It is for this reason the Holy Qur’an challenges the non-believers.

“Bring your proof, if you are truthful.” (2:111)

In the same way, to deny the effect of Jahannum on earth due to its breath is illogical and unscientific because no logical explanation or scientific proof has been put forward to refute it.

**There is nothing on Earth
that needs to be imprisoned
more than the tongue.**

Ibn al-Qayyim

Reason, logic, and science in Islam

*Straight
Talk*



A. A. Elias.

Reason (al-'aql), the God-given ability to acquire knowledge and recognize truth, has been assigned an exalted status in Islam. Rational thought and the resultant disciplines of logic and science are essential for understanding the divine revelation and its relationship to the natural world. In contrast, indulgence in irrationality and unreasonable thinking is a means of disgrace, violence, and destruction.

It is by reason that we may know with certainty that Allah created the world and has subjected its nature to universal laws.

Allah said:

Verily, in the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the ships which sail through the sea with benefits for people, and what Allah has sent down from the heavens of rain, giving life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and dispersing therein every creature, and in His directing of the winds and the clouds controlled between the heaven and the earth are signs for a people who use reason. Surat Al-Baqarah 2:164

And Allah said:

He has subjected for you the night and day and the sun and moon, and the stars are subjected

by His command. Verily, in that are signs for people who reason. Surat An-Nahl 16:12

It is by reason that we may know the truth of divine revelation and the teachings of all of the prophets.

Allah said:

We have certainly revealed to you a Book in which is your mention. Then will you not reason? Surat Al-Anbiya 21:20

It is by reason that we may recognize right and wrong as it is presented in the scripture and as it is known to the innate instinct (fitrah) that Allah embedded within the human soul.

An-Nawwas ibn Sam'an reported: I asked the Messenger of Allah about righteousness and sin. The Prophet (saws) said:

Righteousness is good character and sin is what waivers in your heart and you hate for people to find out about it. Source: Sahih Muslim

In another narration, the Prophet said:

Consult your soul, consult your heart. Sunan Ad-Darimi

Sufyan ibn Uyaina (ra) said:

The reasonable person is not one who merely recognizes good and evil. Rather, the reasona-

ble person is only one who follows good when he sees it, and who avoids evil when he sees it. Hilyat al-Awliya

Reason is, in fact, the foundation of a righteous Muslim's character and the pillar upon which the soundness of his or her religion rests.

Umar ibn Al-Khattab (ra) said:

The foundation of a man is his intellect, his honor is in his religion, and his chivalry is in his character. Adab al-Dunyā wal-Dīn

And Al-Ghazali writes:

Reason is the source and fountainhead of knowledge, as well as its foundation. Knowledge sprouts from it as the fruit does from a tree, as light comes from the sun, and as vision comes from the eye. How then could that which is the means of happiness in this life and the Hereafter not be considered the most honored? Or how could it be doubted? Ihya Ulūm al-Dīn

The use of reason extends beyond religion to the study of creation and its natural sciences. It was the Prophet Idrees who was the first human to write script and to study the movement of the stars, which led to the development of mathematics and astronomy. Muslims who study science today and intend to benefit humanity by them are actually following the footsteps of the prophets.

Mua'wiya ibn Al-Hakam reported: I said, "O Messenger of Allah, among us are men who write script." The Messenger of Allah (saws) said:

There was a prophet among the prophets who wrote script, so whoever writes according to his way is right. Sahih Muslim

Al-Qurtubi elaborates on the identity of this prophet, saying:

Idrees, upon him be peace, was the first to write with the pen, the first to sew and stitch his clothing, and the first to study knowledge of the stars, their calculations, and their movements. al-Jāmi'a li-Ahkām al-Qurān

For this reason, many classical scholars accepted the validity of natural sciences and encouraged their study for the benefit of the com-

munity and humanity.

Al-Ghazali writes:

As for natural sciences, they consist of examining the world of the heavens and the stars and the distinct substances that lie beneath them such as water, air, dirt, and fire, and the contingent substances such as animals, vegetation, and minerals, and the causes that alter them, transform them, and blend them. That is like the doctor's examination of the human body, its primary and secondary parts, and the causes of change in its disposition. Just as it is not a condition of faith to reject medicine, neither is it a condition of faith to reject this knowledge. al-Munqidh min al-Dalāl

Muslim scholars throughout history have undertaken the challenge of reconciling reason (aql) and revelation (naql), the divine scripture with the findings of natural law and science. The health and well-being of Muslim societies depends upon the proper balance of religion and science such that these two great bodies of knowledge and truth perform their necessary social functions in harmony with each other.

Ibn Taymiyyah writes:

Reason is a requirement for acquiring knowledge and performing righteous deeds, through which knowledge and deeds are perfected, but it is not enough on its own. Rather, it is a faculty of the soul and an ability like the ability within the eye to see. If it is connected with the light of faith and the Quran, then it is like the eye receiving the light of the sun and torch. If it is left to itself, it cannot gain insight into matters that it cannot know alone... Thus, the circumstances resulting from the denial of reason are defective, and ideas that contradict reason are false. Majmū'a al-Fatāwā

And he also writes:

Every reliable narration from the Prophet is the truth and confirms one another. It agrees with the natural instinct of creatures, sound reason that has been placed within them, and noble purposes. It cannot contradict sound reason, nor

a noble purpose, nor an upright instinct, nor an authentic and established revelation from the Prophet. Majmūa al-Fatāwá

Indeed, one of the trustworthy methods by which a narration falsely or mistakenly ascribed to the Prophet can be recognized is whether or not it contradicts sound reason.

Ibn Al-Jawzi writes:

If you find a prophetic narration disagreeing with sound reason, contradicting established revelation, or conflicting with the principles, then know that it is inauthentic. Tadrīb al-Rāwī

Conversely, Allah has blamed those who forsake the use of their God-given reason. Irrationality is the characteristic of unbelief, idolatry, and hypocrisy, as the betrayal of reason hinders the ability of people to recognize the value of religion or causes them to cynically abuse religion for some worldly purpose.

Allah said:

When you call to prayer, they take it in ridicule and amusement. That is because they are people who will not reason. Surat Al-Ma'idah

And Allah said:

Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason? Surat Al-Baqarah 2:44

The betrayal of reason opens the door to sin and leads people down the paths of destruction. The worst people are those who forgo logic and facts when the truth opposes their desires.

Allah said:

It is not for a soul to believe except by permission of Allah, and He will disgrace those who will not reason. Surat Yunus 10:100

And Allah said:

Verily, the worst of living creatures in the sight of Allah are the deaf and dumb who will not reason. Surat Al-Anfal 8:22

And Allah said:

They will say: If only we had been listening or reasoning, we would not be among the companions of the Blaze. Surat Al-Mulk 67:10

In its most evil manifestations, the betrayal of reason leads to violence, bloodshed, and crimes against humanity.

Allah said:

Do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden except by right of justice. This He has enjoined upon you that perhaps you will reason. Surat Al-An'am 6:151

The enemies of Islam in the time of the Prophet not only persecuted and killed practicing Muslims, but they also persecuted their own people. The cause of their oppression was their abandonment of reason.

And Allah said:

Their violence among themselves is severe. You imagine they are united, but their hearts are divided. That is because they are people who do not reason. Surat Al-Hashr 59:14

Hence, the Prophet warned us of a time that would come in which violence and bloodshed would be widespread because people would no longer apply their ability to reason.

Abu Musa reported: The Messenger of Allah (saws) said:

Verily, before the Hour will come an upheaval and killing.

Some of the people said, "O Messenger of Allah, will we be reasonable on that day?" The Prophet said:

No, reason will be removed from most of the people in that era and the remaining people will not have their ability to reason. Sunan Ibn Majah

Therefore, Muslims should never be blind followers of a nation, a movement, or a charismatic leader who invokes vulgar prejudice, bigotry, and demagoguery. We should always examine the good and evil of every situation in

The Tongue of Gratitude

Abu Qilaabah (ra) was an illustrious Taabi'ee from Basrah who passed away in the year 104 A.H.

Imaam Awzaa'ee (ra) narrates the following incident from 'Abdullah bin Muhammad (ra), explaining the manner in which Abu Qilaabah (ra) passed away. 'Abdullah bin Muhammad (ra) says:

I once went to the coast to engage in 'riibaat' (guarding the borders of the Islamic lands). At that time, I was posted to the border which was near the city of Arish (a city in Egypt). As I arrived at the coast, I came to an open plain in which a tent was pitched. In the tent, I found a man who had lost the use of both his hands and feet. Furthermore, he was hard of hearing and could barely see, and he did not have any servant to attend to him. However, his tongue was moving and saying:

O Allah! Enable me to praise You in such a manner that my praise will suffice as gratitude for Your favours which You have showered upon me, and indeed You have favoured me immensely over many of Your creation.

Hearing the man recite this du'aa, I said to myself, "By Allah! I must go to this man and ask him regarding these words!" I thus approached him, greeted him with salaam and said, "I heard you making du'aa, asking Allah to enable you to praise Him in such a manner that your praise

will suffice as gratitude for His favours upon you. (When you seem to be undergoing so much of hardship and difficulty, then) which favour from the favours of Allah are you praising Him for, and which virtue over others has He given you for which you are thanking Him?"

The man replied, "Do you not behold how kindly Allah has dealt with me? By Allah! Even if Allah commanded the sky to rain fire on me and it reduced me to ashes, and He commanded the mountains to crush me and they reduced me to smithereens, and He commanded the oceans to drown me and they suffocated me with water, and He commanded the earth to swallow me and it pulled me into its depths, I would only increase my praise of Allah on account of this tongue with which He has blessed me!"

He then said to me, "Now that you have come, I have a need to ask of you. You can see the condition that I am in, where I can neither benefit nor harm myself (as I am helpless). I had a young son with me who would care for me and look after me. At the time of salaah, he would assist me to make wudhu, when I would be hungry, he would feed me, and when I would feel thirsty, he would help me to drink. However, I have not seen my son for the last three days. Please find him for me – may Allah have mercy on you." I replied, "By Allah! No creation of Allah, who set out to fulfil the need of another cre-

ation of Allah, will gain a greater reward from Allah than the one who sets out to fulfil your need (as you are absolutely helpless and unable to fend for yourself).”

I then set out in search of the young boy. I had gone just a short distance when I found myself between some sand dunes and suddenly discovered the boy. He had been killed by wild animals that had fed on the flesh of his body. Seeing this pitiful sight, I immediately recited, “Innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji’oon”. I then began to ponder over the gentlest possible way in which I could break the news to the man that his son was no more, and had been killed and eaten by wild animals.

As I returned, the story of Nabi Ayyoob (‘alaihi salaam) came to mind. On arriving back at the tent, I greeted him with salaam. He replied to the salaam and asked (as he could barely see), “Are you the same person with whom I was speaking earlier?” “Yes,” I replied.

He asked, “Did you manage to fulfil my need?”

In response, I asked him, “Are you more beloved to Allah, or was Nabi Ayyoob (‘alaihi salaam) more beloved to Allah?” “Nabi Ayyoob (‘alaihi salaam),” he replied. I then asked, “Do you know how Allah tested him? Did Allah not test him with the loss of his wealth, family and children?” The man replied, “Certainly!” I next asked, “How did he respond to this test from

Allah?” The man replied, “Allah found him patient, grateful and hymning His praise.” In this manner, I continued to ask him regarding different tests which Nabi Ayyoob (‘alaihi salaam) underwent, asking him, each time “How did he respond to this test from Allah?” Eventually, the man said, “May Allah have mercy on you, get to the point!”

I then said, “I found the boy that you sent me to search for between some sand dunes. Wild animals had attacked him and consumed his



flesh. May Allah grant you a great reward and enable you to be patient.” Hearing this, the man exclaimed, “All praise is due to Allah who did not create from my progeny one who would disobey Him and be punished by Him in the fire!” He then recited “Innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji’oon”, emitted a shriek and breathed his last!

I recited “Innaa lillaahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji’oon” once again and said, “What a problem

this is! If I leave his body as it is, the animals will consume it, and if I remain here, I will not be able to do anything (as I cannot bury him on my own)." I thus covered him with the cloak which was on his body and remained seated at his head side, weeping in sadness.

While I was seated there, a group of four men suddenly came by. Seeing me, they stopped and asked, "O 'Abdullah! What is your situation and what has transpired?" I thus related the entire incident to them. On hearing the incident, they requested, "Reveal his face to us so that we may look at him, for it is possible that we may recognize him." I acceded to their request, and as soon as their gaze fell on his face, they began to kiss his eyes and hands exclaiming, "What a lengthy period passed with this eye lowered, not gazing at haraam! What a lengthy period passed with this body in sajdah every night while people were fast asleep!"

Seeing the reverence that they showed to this man, I asked, "May Allah have mercy on you! Who is this man?" They answered, "This is Abu Qilaabah (ra), the student of Ibnu 'Abbaas (radhiyallahu 'anhuma). He had intense love for Allah and His Rasul (sallallahu 'alaihi wasalam)." We then carried out the ghusl, enshrouded his body, performed the janaazah salaah and buried him. Thereafter, the group resumed their journey while I proceeded to the border.

That night, when I placed my head down and went to sleep, I had a dream. In the dream, I saw Abu Qilaabah (ra) in an orchard of Jannah, clad in two splendid garments from the garments of Jannah. He was reciting the verse of the Quraan Majeed:

Peace be upon you for what you patiently endured. How excellent is the final home!

I asked him, "How did you receive this rank and reward?" He replied, "Allah has certain high ranks that can only be achieved through exercising patience over calamities and expressing gratitude in times of ease, together with constantly fearing Allah, both in one's public life

and in one's private life."

(Kitaabuth Thiqaat libni Hibbaan vol. 2, pg. 252)

Lessons:

1. Despite all the difficulties that Abu Qilaabah (ra) was undergoing, he remained grateful for the bounty of his tongue. Out of gratitude, he kept his tongue engaged in the praise of Allah. Hence, in order to express gratitude to Allah for the innumerable bounties which we enjoy, we should use these bounties to please Allah (perform 'ibaadah, assist others, etc), together with verbally expressing our gratitude.

2. Every person faces difficulties and challenges in his life. Instead of looking at what we don't have, let us look at what we are enjoying.

3. When 'Abdullah (ra) discovered the body of Abu Qilaabah's (ra) son, his concern was over how he could break the news to the father in the gentlest manner possible. Hence, together with monitoring what we say, we should ensure that we monitor how we say it, so that no pain or inconvenience is caused to any person.

4. On receiving the news of his son's demise, the spontaneous response of Abu Qilaabah (ra) was to thank Allah that his son had not passed away in sin and disobedience. This is indeed one of the greatest bounties – the bounty of a pious child.

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approved manner and method of its repayment began to unfold. The City of the Prophet signified the Place where true din was enacted under his authority and jurisdiction. We may further see that the City became, for the Community, the epitome of the socio-political order of Islam; and for the individual Believer it became, by analogy, the symbol of the Believer's body and physical being in which the rational soul, in emulation of him who may God bless and give Peace!, exercises authority and just government. For further relevant interpretations.

A Return to *Honor*

By Kamillah Khan

Our brothers and sisters amongst the Muslims of old used to carry a precious belonging with them, protecting and safeguarding it to the best of their ability, ever fearful that someone might try to harm it. Their homes were filled with it. They would be seen carrying it into the places of worship, bringing it to work, and displaying it in the streets. When they interacted with each other they would be fully conscious of it. If this belonging of theirs was hurt in any way, then they would truly feel pain and sorrow. Such a precious belonging bestowed upon a blessed nation, a possession by the name of honor.

Abu Huraira reported that Allah's Messenger said, 'All things of a Muslim are inviolable for his brother in faith; his blood, his wealth and his honor.' (Muslim)

Abu Barzah said, 'Verily Allah has made you self sufficient or honored you with Islam and Muhammad.' (Bukhaari)

The companions sought honor 'with Islam' and Allah adorned them with honor 'through Islam.' Seeking honor through lineage, trib-

al affiliation, color of skin, language of origin, wealth, copying the ways of the disbelievers were all shunned and looked down upon as aspects of the days gone by when ignorance was prevailing. Honor came with having Taqwa of Allah by adhering to The Book of Allah and the Sunna of His Messenger. Honor would not be sought by anything other than Islam. Truly that was a time with all its strength and glory when the sun was scorching with firmness at its zenith; a time when the Muslims were known for their honor.

Today, we are living in a time of humiliation with the honor of the Muslims ever being violated. Amongst this Ummah there are those who are violating their own honor, others are having their honor violated by fellow Muslims, and yet others through the hands of Non-Muslims. The Ummah as a whole is bearing the brunt of this widespread humiliation with the more knowledgeable ones fleeing from the Fit-an in search of places of refuge. There is much talk about the reasons for this humiliation, with some pointing fingers at Muslim organizations

and sects, others blaming Muslim governments and others implicating Non-Muslim nations as the cause for all our problems. Fiery sermons full of emotions are being delivered to the vulnerable masses and the hearts of the people are being affected. Minds are being manipulated through the presentation of isolated texts from the Quran and Ahaadeeh to the exclusion of others which when combined together and used as one point of reference collectively do nothing but bring guidance, clarity and a solution to our problems. With the numerous methods of reform ever failing, the Fitans are increasing leaving us with a growing environment of humiliation and religious decay. This is our today.

However Allah has bestowed knowledge to this Ummah and has not left us in darkness. Peace, honor, goodness and justice comes with following the Book of Allah and the Sunna of Muhammad. The reasons for our problems and their solutions can also be found in the Quran and Sunna. Numerous reform seeking organizations and movements are attributing our humiliation to fighting between the different sects of this Ummah, emergence of corrupt Muslim governments and oppressive Non Muslim nations. Although the Fitnah and Fasaad are increasing due to these reasons, this is not the cause of our humiliation. Let us return to the evidences found in the Book of Allah and Sunna of Muhammad and shed light on the 'cause' of our lost honor, teasing it out from the numerous observed 'effects' we see today.

Fighting amongst Muslim Sects: Not the cause of our humiliation, merely an Effect

Say, He is able to send upon you torment from above you or beneath your feet or cover you with confusion in sectarianism, and make you taste the violence of one another. (Quran 6:65)

Thauban narrated that Allah's Messenger said that Allah said,

'O Muhammad! When I ordain something

then verily it is not reversed. I will not destroy your people by a common disaster, and I will not send an enemy from outside to wipe them out, even if all the surrounding nations are gathered against them. But Muslims will fight each other and take one another prisoner.' (Muslim)

The Ummah has split, sects have emerged, and fighting between them is rampant, with some even killing others. This is a disaster, a humiliation and a great evil. But this is not the cause of our humiliation. This is merely an effect and a form of humiliation. In the above verse Ar-Rahmaan, Whose Mercy encompasses His entire creation, mentions some of His punishments that He inflicts on whomsoever He wills. These torments may come from above such as tornadoes and hurricanes or they may come from below such as earthquakes. They may also come from within the Ummah by splitting, dividing and fighting amongst different sects. So the fighting amongst the sects is nothing but a punishment from Allah just like tornadoes and earthquakes are torments from Him. Something very grave has occurred within the Ummah of Muhammad in order for Allah to send torment and humiliation as justice and revenge from Him. We do not seek after the effect; we seek after the cause which has led to this effect. In the above verse Allah informs us that He makes us taste the violence of one another only after the people themselves have differed and divided. So the cause is the people themselves. They are the ones who disputed, differed, divided and split. And as a result Allah sent confusion amongst them and allowed them to fight each other. Had the people held fast to the Sunna and referred their disputes to The Book of Allah and the Sunna of Muhammad, how could they possibly split? The people themselves chose to abandon the Sunna, split from the Jamaa'ah, leave the Sa-beel Al Mu'minoon, and release their grips from the rope of Allah. Yet the Ummah expects unity and peace. Ajeeb!

Emergence of corrupt Muslim leaders: Not the cause of our humiliation, merely an Effect

Abdullah bin Umar narrated that the Messenger of Allah said:

'If people should begin to cheat in weighing out goods, you should realize that this has never happened without a drought and famine befalling the people and their rulers oppressing them...(Ibn maajah)

The Khilaafat has gone, numerous Muslim rulers have emerged, and the differing and dividing continues between them. They have allowed mischief to spread within the lands and caused oppression, upsetting the Mezaan and betraying the Amaanah. As a result we have waves of Fitnah upon Fitnah together with Fasaad. However this is not the cause of our humiliation. This is merely an effect and a form of humiliation. In the above hadeeth our Prophet makes an extremely important point which is greatly overlooked. He links the act of cheating in weighing out goods with the emergence of drought, famine and oppressive rulers. Just like drought and famine are punishments from Allah so is the establishment of oppressive rule. So something has happened within the Ummah of Muhammad in order for Allah's punishment to descend in the form of corrupt rulers. Again, we do not seek after the effect; we seek the cause which has led to this effect. Never would Allah allow the righteous masses to be ruled by corrupt rulers unless the masses themselves became corrupt such as by cheating in sales and trade which is rampant today. Such an evil act would only occur if the people lose their Taqwa of Allah and chase the life of this world, preferring the fleeting Aajillah to the eternal Aakhirah.

Hudhayfah narrated that the messenger of Allah said,

'By He in Whose Hand my soul is, you will enjoin Ma'roof and forbid Munkar, or else Allah will send a punishment upon you from him, (Musnaad of Ahmad)

Hudhayfah said,

'Surely you will enjoin Ma'roof, forbid Munkar, and encourage each other to do good, or Allah will surround you with torment, or make the wicked amongst you become your leaders.' (Musnaad of Ahmad)

Furthermore when the people begin to abandon enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, then Allah will punish them by placing corrupt rulers over them. The people should not expect the enjoining of good and forbiddance of evil by their ruler when they themselves are not engaged in this activity. Again we have cause-effect. The cause is not the corrupt rulers, they are merely an effect. The cause comes from the individuals amongst the Ummah themselves. So today numerous Muslim parents, employers and Imaams are neglecting the enjoining of good and forbiddance of evil, while they have 'the capacity' to enforce it within their 'domain,' such as the house, the place of work or houses of worship respectively. Yet the Ummah expects righteous leaders and peace. Ajeeb!

Invasion of Muslim lands by Non-Muslim Nations: Not the cause of our humiliation, merely an Effect

Thauban narrated that Allah's Messenger said that Allah said,

'O Muhammad! When I ordain something then verily it is not reversed. I will not destroy your people by a common disaster, and I will not send an enemy from outside to wipe them out, even if all the surrounding nations are gathered against them. But Muslims will fight each other and take one another prisoner.' (saheeh of muslim)

Thaubaan narrated that the Messenger of Allah said,

'Soon the nations will call one another to attack you, as diners call one another to the platter.' Someone asked, 'Will that be because we will be few in number in those days?' He re-

plied, 'No, in those days you will be many but you will be like foam, like foam in the sea. Allah will remove fear and respect from the hearts of your enemies and He will fill your hearts with Wahn.' Someone inquired, 'O Messenger of Allah, what is Wahn?' He said, 'Love of this world and hatred for death.' (Abu Dawood)

The hadeeth of Thauban in the saheeh of Muslim is better studied along with the hadeeth of Thauban in the sunan of Abu Dawood. When we study the two hadeeth together the situation becomes clear. Firstly, Allah will never permit the disbelievers to wipe out the Muslims. This will never happen. Islam is not something which can be destroyed by those who disbelieve. However Allah can send the disbelievers sporadically to invade our lands and take our resources as a punishment from Him. These points need to be understood and the above ahaadeeth should suffice us. So the invasion and corruption caused by non Muslim nations is a punishment from Allah and one of the effects of our humiliation but it is not the cause. Never will it be the cause. In the hadeeth of Al-Wahn our Prophet mentions how his Ummah will be like foam in the sea. The people will be large in quantity but worthless in quality. As a result Allah will fill the hearts of the people with Wahn and thereafter the non Muslim nations will invade and steal our resources with no fear in their hearts. This hadeeth has come to life in our time with the quality of the Ummah ever fading and widespread invasions within Muslim lands ever mounting. Again we seek after the cause, and again the cause rests on the shoulders of the Muslims within the Ummah who will be like 'foam in the sea,' chasing the worldly pleasures and fearing death. Only after the Muslims chase the dunya will those who live for the dunya steal their resources as a befitting punishment from Allah. How many Muslims we see today who are chasing after the dunya at the expense of their religion, ever abandoning their religious commitments and covenants! Yet the Ummah

expects Allah to keep the disbelievers out of our lands. Ajeeb!

So let those who oppose his commandment beware lest a Fitnah should befall them or a painful torment should befall them. (Quran 24:63)

In all summation, the root cause for all our problems is beautifully summarized in the above verse. Although fighting amongst the sects, establishment of the corrupt leaders and invasion by disbelievers are grave evils that lead to further Fitnah and Fasaad, they are not the cause of our humiliation. All our problems together with the humiliation which has plagued us and the honor which has been lost is nothing but a direct result of abandoning the religion of Allah as found in the Quran and Sunna. The people chose to abandon the teachings wilfully, individuals along with individuals, masses upon masses, generations after generations. The term was prolonged for them and their hearts became hardened to the point that The Speech of Allah no longer moved them, with Taqwa, Khowf, Rahbah, and Khashya ever diminishing. The guidance of Muhammad no longer appealed to them despite emotional displays of love. The world appeared sweet and a pleasurable place of abode while the eternal life amidst gardens beneath which rivers flow became a fading reality. O Ummah of Muhammad! You are the cause of your own humiliation. What has deluded you from the promise of your Lord? What has distracted you from seeking His pleasure and avoiding His Wrath? Do not point fingers and engage yourselves in trying to solve the numerous effects of your actions. Align yourselves with the Haq, return to your religion and humiliation will be uplifted bringing a return to your glorious lost honor. No doubt, this is a time for staying away from the numerous sects; a time for escaping the trials and tribulations; a time for giving the rulers their rights and asking Allah for ours. But at the same time it is a time for

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Really, It's a Wonderful Life

Mohammed Saleem

In the short story, “The Greatest Gift” (the basis for the film “It’s a Wonderful Life”), the main character George sacrifices his dreams to help others, taking on the burdens of responsibility while others live more free, exciting lives. This leaves him regretful, and in a moment of crisis he becomes depressed, wishing that he’d never been born—a wish that is granted. As he sees how life is like without him, to his horror he now finds his loved ones suffering and his entire society corrupt. He finally realizes that his life, as unfulfilling as he thought it to be, was in fact critical to the uprightness of the world.

Many of us can have regrets, frustrated that we haven’t met our goals, especially in terms of Islamic knowledge and spiritual practice, because we feel burdened by the daily grind. The cyclical barrage of family, work, social engagements, and even volunteer duties leave us so busy working on their immediate logistical needs that we feel we never get a chance to improve ourselves spiritually. It’s that feeling of just barely treading water, fighting for each breath as the waves of life’s responsibilities constantly crash down on us. That constant sense of fighting can breed resentment and frustration.

What’s the common denominator in all of this frustration? I can’t do what I want to do. Overcoming that sentiment is in realizing that

Allah, in His infinite wisdom, has put each of us in our current state for a reason. That doesn’t mean we need to give up our long-term dreams, but it does mean that we have to learn to work within the limitations of our current condition for our goals, rather than always pining to be magically transported out of it. Life is not about always choosing the path that we think is the best, but about accepting the wisdom of the path Allah has put us on.

Our frustration in our “unfulfilled” state is only because we fail to see what Allah knows—that our current state fulfills a unique role in benefiting the world. It’s the sacrifices we make, and the lives we affect (knowingly or unknowingly) in the midst of our menial work, that can have a profound effect on the entire society. Remembering several key points can help us make that effect positive.

1. Don’t belittle the “little” things

So whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it (Surah Zalzalah, 99:7). When Aisha (ra) once gave a single grape in charity, others laughed at this. She reminded them of its worth, saying, “How many atoms’ weights do you see in this grape?”¹ As the Prophet (saws) said,

“Do not underrate any good act, even if it is offering drinking water from your bucket to the

thirsty, or meeting your brother with a cheerful face.”²

The smallest things can be the most important. A small act of kindness, a smile, a brief supplication you made for someone you saw in the corner of your eye as you went about your busy day—that could be worth more than all those “big” acts you aspire for.

2. It’s not drudgery, it’s dhikr

Our daily lives only become dull or dispiriting when we devalue or disregard the lessons and benefits Allah has put in them for us. When Ali and Fatimah (ra) asked the Prophet for a servant to help in the house, the Prophet (saws) instead instructed them to say a litany of dhikr (remembrance and invocation of God) at night, saying it was better than what they had asked for.³

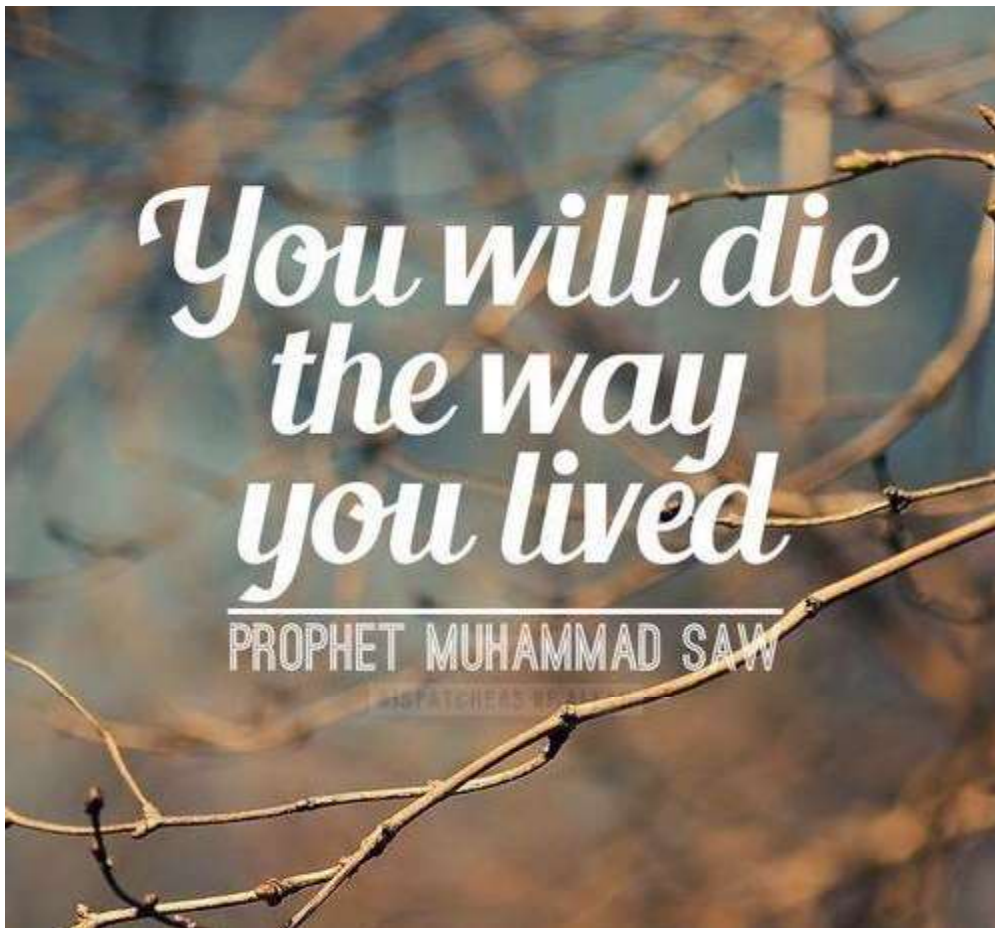
One of the lessons from this is that the Prophet (saws) was teaching them and us that we need to spiritually anchor ourselves in everything we do. The physical struggle, when coupled with a spiritual presence in it, with reliance on God, may refine ourselves more than the act of worship alone.

There’s a story of one righteous worshiper of the past who once told her husband, “Eat! For with every morsel of food I have prepared, in it there is the glorification of God.” She was in constant dhikr (remembrance of God) as she cooked, and recognized there was blessing in it for herself, and her family.

Everything can be worship if it is elevated with the dhikr of the tongue and heart. Maintain that God-consciousness throughout, and if you forget, use the cues of any frustration or stress that you feel as a reminder to return to the remembrance of God.

3. Have a good opinion about God

In the well-known Hadith Qudsi, Allah says, “I am as My servant thinks of Me.”⁴ Amongst many other meanings, this teaches us that our emotional and spiritual well-being is tied to how we really think how Allah is. If we truly believe He is the Merciful and the Wise, we cannot have anything but a positive outlook on our life. To think otherwise would



only show a lack of trust in God and that we don't believe God is putting us in the best place for our specific spiritual and psychosocial situation. Ibn al-Qayyim warned of this when he said:

Most people –in fact, all of them except those protected by Allah – assume other than the truth and assume the worst. Most people believe that they are deprived of their rights, have bad luck, deserve more than what Allah gave them, and it is as if they are saying: My Lord has wronged me and deprived me of what I deserve,'

It's important for us to constantly remind ourselves that God truly wants what is best for us. When we have a good opinion of Him, our lives will never disappoint us because He will never disappoint us.

4. It's all for you, to show you it's all for Him

One of the miracles of our lives is that everything around us is specifically orchestrated for each one of us to take benefit from. For example, when we see a disabled vehicle on the road, even though we are not physically affected by it, just observing it teaches us many things. For one driver, it may remind them that they need to slow down. For the other, that they need to finally make those delayed repairs on their own car. For another, it's gratitude for the blessings they have.

All of these are different lessons, from the same incident, for different people, all with their own benefit. Our lives are interconnected—everything is done for a reason. In all of the events that we observe, Allah is challenging us to look beyond the creation and see the Creator.

Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created this without purpose, glory to You! Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire." (Al-Imran, 3:192)

Allah has created everything in this world purposefully for each of us, to show us that all

of it is for Him. Throughout our stress and success, we recognize the Divine in every moment that makes up the rich tapestry of the world. Our current position may be in worship, seeking knowledge, contemplation, serving others and the religion (khidmah), or the station of patience when we can do nothing else. Each uniquely enriches our soul, and the world, to truly foster a wonderful life.

1. *Yahya related that Malik said, "I heard that a beggar asked for food from 'A'isha, Umm al-Muminin, while she had some grapes. She told someone to take him one grape. He began to look in amazement. 'A'isha said, "Are you amazed? How many atoms' weights do you see in this grape?" (Reported in al-Muwatta of Imam Malik)*

2. *Reported in Muslim.*

3. *Ali told Fatimah, "Go to your father, he has many servants so go and obtain one." Then they went together and she asked, "O Messenger of Allah, I grind until my hands become fatigued. Allah has sent you the capacity so serve us." He said, "I swear by Allah I cannot whilst the stomachs of people of the platform (ahl-us-suffah) are bent double with hunger." Then he said, "Shall I not inform you of what is better than what you ask of me?" They said, "Yes." He replied, "These are words that Jibril taught me: when you retire to your beds recite the Verse of the Throne, say Subhanallah thirty three times, Al-hamdulillah thirty three times and Allahu Akbar thirty four times." (Reported by Imam Ahmad in Al-Musnad)*

4. *Allah the Most High said, 'I am as My servant thinks (expects) I am. I am with him when he mentions Me. If he mentions Me to himself, I mention him to Myself; and if he mentions Me in an assembly, I mention him in an assembly greater than it. If he draws near to Me a hand's length, I draw near to him an arm's length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed.'" (Reported in Bukhari)*

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Those, who when any affliction smites them, they say: "Verily, we belong to Allah, and it is to Him we shall return."

Upon them will be the blessings of their Lord, and it is they who are rightly guided.} (2:155-157)

Being Mindful

An Islamic Perspective

Habib Siddiqui

Wandering Minds

Today we live in a hyper-connected world where we are continuously distracted by our thoughts and technological comforts. It is rare for one to have their mind in the present 100% of the time. In fact, on average we spend 41% of our time with our mind lost in our thoughts – thinking about the future and the past – but rarely the current moment. Additionally, the social-feed gadgets we have – from our cell phones and computers to the television(s) we keep in our living rooms and bedrooms add to distract us from focusing on the present. Do you know that a single distraction can take more than 21 minutes to delink its effect from the immediate task at hand? This continuous bombardment of information or distraction hinders us from being productive and getting the most out of each moment.

How can we be more in control over our wandering minds and be focused? How can we become more mindful in all aspects of our lives - spiritual and temporal? That is where the practice of exercising mindfulness (or in the Islamic context - muraqabah) can help train our minds to become more disciplined and can thereby enhance our productivity whether it is with daily worship or other activities.

Mindfulness linguistically means “the quality or state of being conscious or aware of some-

thing,” and more specifically, “a mental state achieved by focusing one’s awareness on the present moment.”

According to the American Psychological Association, numerous peer-reviewed studies show that mindfulness practices (such as relaxation or meditation) help to reduce stress, boost memory, enhance focus and concentration, decrease emotional reactivity, and improve personal relationships. Mindfulness practices also promote empathy and compassion [Justin Parrott, *An Exercise in Islamic Meditation*, Nov. 2017].

In Islam, the five compulsory daily prayers are meant for taking the time out from busy schedules, thus freeing the mind from worldliness and all its worries and concerns, thereby putting the trust in Allah (God) as the Rabb (Lord) that He would take care of his/her needs and problems. A Muslim in a state of muraqabah knows that Allah is Aware of him or her, both inwardly and outwardly. It is a complete state of vigilant self-awareness in one’s relationship with Allah in heart, mind, and body. The basis of muraqabah is our knowledge that Allah is always watching us at all time and, as a consequence, we develop greater attention and care for our own actions, thoughts, feelings, and inner states of being. As Allah says, “Remember that God knows what is in your souls, so be

mindful of Him.” [Qur’an 2:235]

Imams Ibn Al-Qayyim and Al-Ghazali both have chapters in their books about the merits and realities of muraqabah, which is the realization of the supreme character trait, spiritual excellence (al-ihsan). As the Prophet (S) defined in the famous hadith of Gabriel, spiritual excellence “is to worship Allah as if you see Him, for if you do not see Him, He certainly sees you.” [Bukhari]

The fruit of muraqabah, aside from the reward of eternal Paradise in the Hereafter, is a state of tranquil calm (al-sakinah) leading to contentment in this life.

The Virtue of Silence and Seclusion

A famous proverb says, “Silence is golden.” Silence (al-samt) is the preferred default state of being, according to the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (S),

“Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak goodness or remain silent.”
[Bukhari]

Silence has an important effect on our hearts and character.

Silence is related to muraqabah in that observing silence in seclusion for a regular period of time cultivates presence, the mind’s quiet awareness of here and now. Abu Bakr al-Farisi was asked about the silence of one’s innermost being (samt al-sirr) and he said, “It is to abandon preoccupation with the past and the future.” [Al-Risalah Al-Qushayriyah, 1:247.] Only during silent reflection or mindfulness exercise can one be present in the moment without worrying about what is past or future or elsewhere in creation. It is an opportunity to nourish presence before Allah the same way we are required to be in ritual prayer. There is an appropriate time to think about the past or the future—to learn from our mistakes, to plan action, to live daily life, and to reflect on our fate. However, the point of learning to be present in silence is to limit our thoughts on the past or future only to

what is necessary and beneficial – otherwise we risk living excessively in a time other than the now.

In this regard, let us be reminded by some wise sayings:

The Messenger of Allah (S) advised Abdullah ibn Abbas (RA),

“Young boy, let me teach you a few words and Allah, the Most Exalted, will bless you if you would live up to them. (1) Constantly be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him Omnipresent. (2) Recognize Allah’s blessings when you are in comfort, and He will provide for you when you face hardships. (3) If you were to ask for anything, then ask only of Allah. (4) If you needed a helper, seek only the help of Allah. (5) The divine pen of destiny has already dried up after it has written the divine decree confirming the divine primordial knowledge of what will happen. The world is an abode of affliction and trial, not a place of rest and repose. Hence, even if the entire creation assembles to give you something that Allah did not allot for you, they cannot give it to you. (6) Similarly, even if the entire creation assembles to prevent you from receiving something that Allah has allotted for you they cannot withhold it from you. (7) Therefore, devote your deeds solely to Allah and offer them with contentment, full conformity and conviction. (8) Understand that there are ample benefits if you can exercise patience towards what you dislike. (9) Victory comes with perseverance in patience. (10) The gateway to safety and comfort is wide open during adversities. (11) And finally, realize that ample access to happiness is present even during most difficulties. [Hilyat’ul Awliya Wa Tabaqat’ul Asfiya: Al-Zuhri (R)]

“Where is the room here for joy and gladness?”

To be mindful of God in every condition is then the key to salvation.”

- Khwajah ‘Abdallah Ansari (R) [Intimate



Conversations with God (Munajat), tr. Wheeler M. Thackston, Paulist Press, NY (1978)]

Seclusion for worship is the close companion of silence. Seclusion, properly practiced, is ultimately a cure for bad feelings in the heart, as Ibn al-Qayyim said, “In the heart are disorders that cannot be remedied but by responding to Allah, in it is a desolate feeling that cannot be removed but by intimacy with Him in solitude (khalwah).” [Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah, Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr. *Madarij Al-Salikin Bayna Manazil Iyaka Na'budu Wa Iyaka Nasta'in*]

Meditation in Islam

Meditation can be done in many ways and for many purposes. For some, it is simply a means of calming relaxation and stress relief, a way of slowing down their thoughts. Others meditate by intensely contemplating an idea or focusing their attention on God or something else.

Ibn Al-Qayyim has provided one of the best and most concise explanations of the many meanings of “meditation” in Islam. He states that an integral part of our preparation for the Hereafter is by “reflecting (tafakkur), remem-

bering (tadhakkur), examining (nathr), meditating (ta'amul), contemplating (i'tibar), deliberating (tadabbur), and pondering (istibsar).” Each of these words represent different shades of mental activity that can be considered forms of meditation. There is considerable overlap in meaning among all of them, but there are subtle differences as well. Ibn Al-Qayyim continues:

It is called ‘reflection’ because in that is the utilization of thought and its procurement during it. It is called ‘remembrance’ because it is the fetching of knowledge which must be considered after being distracted or absent from it... It is called ‘meditation’ because it is repeatedly examining again and again until it becomes evident and uncovered in one’s heart. It is called ‘contemplation’—taking lessons—because one takes a lesson from it to apply elsewhere... It is called ‘deliberation’ because it is examining the conclusion of matters, their endings and consequences, and deliberating on them. [Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah, *Miftah Dar Al-Sadah*, 1:182]

All of these types of Islamic meditation involve some form of remembering or awareness of Allah, the purpose of which is to purify the heart of evil feelings and the mind from evil

thoughts. Every human soul is like a mirror that is polished by mindfulness or tarnished by being unmindful. A person cannot think about Allah and the world at the same time; it is one or the other. Too much unnecessary thought upon the world weakens our overall mindfulness.

Accordingly, we should make a quiet time for reflection upon Allah and the Hereafter every day, as a means of increasing our mindfulness of His presence, gratitude for His many favors, and to prepare for the life to come.

Reading the Qur'an itself, which has been named "the Remembrance" (Al-Dhikr), is one of the most powerful and rewarding forms of meditation. Imam Al-Ghazali recommends for us to engage in four distinct daily spiritual practices (al-watha'if al-arba'ah): supplication (dua'), remembrance (dhikr), recitation of the Qur'an (qira'at), and contemplation (fikir). [al-Ghazzali, *Ihya' 'Ulum Al-Din*, 1:337]

Dhikr is certainly genuine mindfulness, because it is mindfulness of the Divine (Allah), who is the One, the True Reality. It is through the struggle for abundant and plentiful dhikr that that heart or qalb gradually becomes fully involved in dhikr. Allah says: Truly, it is with Allah's remembrance that hearts find their tranquility (13:28)

As to dhikr, Imam Ghazzali advises that the worshiper should sit in seclusion, empty his/her heart of all concerns, and "not scatter his thoughts with the recitation of the Qur'an, nor pondering over its explanation, nor with books of hadith, nor anything else; rather, he/she strives to let no thought enter his mind besides Allah the Exalted." The worshiper does so to instill "presence of the heart" until "his heart is diligent in remembrance."

Allah said,

"We created man—We know what his soul whispers to him." [Surat Qaf 50:16]

Thoughts also originate from an external source, the whispering (al-waswasah) of a devil or an

angel.

The Prophet (S) recited the verse,

"Satan threatens you with the prospect of poverty and commands you to do foul deeds; God promises you His forgiveness and abundance." [Surat al-Baqarah 2:268]

Ali (RA) said,

"I have selected twelve teachings from the Book of Allah, and I remind myself with these thrice every day. These are: Allah says, 'O men:

(i) You should never fear either Satan or any ruler, as long as you live under My dominion.

(ii) You should never worry about your rizk (provisions) as long as you find My world full of such provisions. And truly My provisions never end.

(iii) Whenever you are in need, you will always find Me, because it is I who provide everything, material and spiritual.

(iv) I have befriended you. So befriend Me.

(v) Do not be unmindful of Me as long as you have not crossed the bridge..."

[For the entire quotation, read this author's book: *Wisdom of Mankind*]

Justin Parrott suggests the steps below that one can follow towards 'Mindfulness Exercise in Islam.'

1. To begin, choose a time of the day when you can be in a quiet place alone. Some Muslims prefer the time before the dawn prayer (fajr) or another prayer, before or after work, at lunch break, or even before bed.

2. Next, choose a posture that you find comfortable.

3. Now, begin by focusing awareness on your natural breathing. Progressively relax the muscle tension throughout your body: your arms, your legs, your core, your jaw. You can close your eyes or simply lower them. As you start with relaxed breathing, feel for a sense of your state of heart and mind in this moment. What are you feeling? What are you thinking? Is your mind racing or calm? Try to settle your mind by bringing awareness to your natural, relaxed

breathing, simply feeling the life and energy Allah gave you throughout your body. Feel a deep sense of gratitude to Allah for your breath, your living and being in this moment.

4. As you settle into stillness within your inner space, begin to perceive the feeling of *muraqabah* with Allah. Know and feel that He is watching you, “He is with you wherever you are. (57:4)” He knows everything going on inside you right now and at all times. Focus on the feeling of *muraqabah* in this state of inner silence (*samt al-sirr*). Try to stop talking to yourself (*hadith al-nafs*) or pursuing trains of thought. Silence your inner dialogue as much as you can and simply focus on being present with Allah in the moment.

5. When your mind starts to wander off—and it surely will—you want to bring your awareness back to the center of your being, and to your presence in this moment before Allah, by quietly reciting remembrances of Allah. “Two words are beloved to the Most Merciful, light on the tongue but heavy on the scale: Glory and praise to Allah (*subhan Allahi wa bi hamdih*), and glory to Allah Almighty (*subhan Allahi al-‘Athim*).” [Bukhari] And again, “The best remembrance is to declare there is no God but Allah (*la ilhaha illa Allah*), and the best supplication is to declare all praise is due to Allah (*al-hamdulillah*).” [Sunan al-Tirmizi] Seeking the forgiveness of Allah (*al-istighfar*) was one of the Prophet’s (S) anchors, so nothing could be better. Your anchor could also be just one of the beautiful names of Allah that elicit remembrance and awareness in your heart, or you could use all of the above in combination.

6. The best mindfulness exercise session is the one you completed, period. No matter how long your mind spent in being unmindful, every time you brought it back to *muraqabah*, it became stronger and stronger.

Fruits of Mindfulness Exercise

If you make this simple practice a regular

habit, you will see positive results that accumulate over time. You will notice that having presence in prayer becomes easier and more natural than before. You will be able to better relieve stress and attain calming relaxation, better focus your attention when needed, have an easier time dealing with life’s difficult moments, and experience more compassion with others. Your anchor (remembrance or supplication) in the exercise can be used at any time to bring you back into a state of *muraqabah*, wherever you are and whatever you are doing.

One of the most important results of the practice will be in the way we gain a measure of control over our thoughts and emotions. As we become more aware of our feelings, we become more aware of our negative triggers in order to avoid them, as well as putting a buffer zone between us and our feelings that gives us time to react in the right manner, such as remembering to seek refuge in Allah when angry, instead of reflexively shouting at others or doing something rash that we will regret later.

Furthermore, we will inevitably experience desires and urges to commit sins. But the more mindful we become of our inner states, the better we will become at disassociating ourselves from our lower desires and instead acting upon our virtuous, higher desires. The habit of referring back to our anchor (remembrance or supplication) gives us just enough breathing room to confidently say “no” to the self’s or the devil’s evil suggestions.

Conclusion

Mindfulness in Islam (*al-muraqabah*) is a conscious state of comprehensive awareness of Allah and our inner states in relation to Him. In its complete form, it is the highest spiritual state attainable—the perfect realization of excellence in faith (*al-ihsan*). Modern science has demonstrated the efficacy of mindfulness exercises in procuring several health and wellness benefits, even in a non-religious context.

The Station of

Adab-I

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim Jawziyah (ra)

Al-Adab is to be wary of the extremities of exaggeration (ghuluww) and neglect (jafâ'), realizing the harm of transgression.

This is one of the best definitions, for transgressing to either extremity is lack of adab. Al-Adab is to stand in between the two extremities, neither falling short of observing the limits of the Shariah to perfection, nor transgressing what have been their limits, for both acts are transgression and Allah loves not the transgressors [Sûrat Al-Baqarah, 2:190]. Hence, transgression is nothing but bad adab.

One of the salaf has said:

The religion of Allah is midway between the one who exaggerates in it and the one who neglects it.

The loss of adab by neglect is exemplified by someone who does not completely wash the limbs in ablution and fails to offer Salawât with the etiquette that the Messenger of Allah has established and practiced. The behaviors of this etiquette number to nearly a hundred, including obligatory and recommended elements.



The loss of adab by exaggeration may be exemplified by obsessive doubt about whether one did proper intention (nyya), or raising one's voice in doing it, or raising one's voice in supplications and Salawât that have been legislated to be said silently, or prolonging what the Sunnah requires to be short or omitted, such as the first tashahhud and salâm, which it is Sunnah to omit, or to prolong this over and against the practice of the Messenger of Allah.

It is not wrong to] prolong it compared to what the salah thieves nowadays do, those who peck –like birds in sujud, instead of praying with tranquility and presence. [The reference is to the ahâdîth where the Prophet (saws) lik-

ens those who pray hastily to “the worst kind of thieves,” in Al-Mustadrak, Musnad, and elsewhere, and “peckers” in Bukhâri 757, 793; Muslim 397, and others].

The Prophet (saws) did not command a thing and then oppose it. Allah protected him from such conduct –contrary to what many people who make their salawât extremely short think. [It was not the Prophet’s salawât that were too long but rather such people’s salawât that are too brief]. He would command them to be light in their salawât.

And, by way of exemplifying what “light” means here, he himself used to lead them with Sûrat Al-Sâffât –which takes about 15-20 minutes to recite. Again, he would command them to be light in their salawât and pray salât Al-Zuhr in such a way that one could go to Al-Baqî [the Muslim cemetery about half a kilometer (or a third of mile) from Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi] to [pay respects] to his family, complete ablution, and return to join the Prophet still in the first cycle (rak’ah) of the prayer. This is the lightening of salah that he commanded as opposed to ‘stealing’ and ‘pecking’ [by making the salawât extremely short, as people nowadays do], for the latter amounts to stopping short of actually praying, and being content with its name [i.e., calling it Prayer].

Someone who is really hungry would never stop at one or two bites, for this would do him little good. Only someone who eats for formality will take a couple bites and be content. But if one is truly hungry, one does not stop eating until one has eaten enough, if he can. But alas! The hearts of people are now already filled with other things, and there is little hunger for the Prayer.

Another example of [adab] is moderation in regard to the prophets, peace be upon them, and to avoid exaggerating when it comes to them—as the Christians have done in regard to the Christ –nor to neglect the prophets, as

the Jews have done. For whereas the Christians worshipped the prophets, the Jews killed and denied them. The Ummah of moderation, in contrast, believed, supported, and helped them and followed what they brought.

The example of [adab] with respect to the rights of Allah’s creatures is to neither fall short of them nor to be so involved with them as to forget the rights of Allah –or to neglect to fulfill Allah’s rights with perfection, thus neglecting the interests of one’s religion and the spiritual needs of one’s heart. Neither should one neglect the rights of others. Both sides of transgression are harmful. By this definition, then, the essence of adab is justice. And Allah knows best.

#

[Al-Harawi] states:

It [adab] has three levels:

- (1) Restraining fear from turning into despair;
- (2) Preventing hope from becoming complacency;
- (3) Stopping bliss from provoking audacity.

By the first he means that [adab] does not allow fear to grow to a point where it becomes hopelessness and despair from Allah’s mercy, for that is blameworthy fear. I have heard to say Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, Allah have mercy on him: “The proper limit of fear is that which prevents you from acts of disobedience to Allah. What goes beyond that is unnecessary.” The fear that falls to despair is bad etiquette toward –and ignorance of– the mercy of Allah, the Exalted, which has predominated over His wrath.

As for the second, the prevention of hope from becoming complacency is that one’s hope should not reach the point where one feels security from chastisement, for None feels secure from Allah’s plan except the losers [Sûrat Al-Arâf, 7:99], and such is another extreme. The definition of hope is “what makes worship pleasant to you and prompts you toward the

journey,” which is like the wind that pushes the sailboat. If it stops, so does the boat. If it turns violent, it capsizes the boat. If it blows in proper measure, however, it sails the boat to its destination.

As for the third, “stopping bliss from encouraging audacity,” it is something only the strong and strong-willed can accomplish, those who are not so overwhelmed with happiness as to forget gratitude, nor with grief as to neglect patience. As it has been said by a poet:

Joy does not outdo their thanks
Nay, nor affliction their patience

The human self (nafs) is a companion of Satan and resembles him. The gifts of Allah descend into the heart and the soul. The self (nafs) ever lies in ambush for these gifts and is bent on taking its share of them, turning them into its own conquest. Whosoever is lenient with the self and ignorant of it allows it to fulfill its designs. Thus, what is supposed to be a divine gift to the heart and the soul –and a strength for it– turns into the conquest of the self, as well as an instrument of that conquest. And the self therefore rebels, for it sees itself as self-sufficient.

[As Allah says,] The human being is indeed rebellious, for he sees himself self-sufficient. So then –when one acquires some wealth– how much more rebellious would the nafs be if it thinks that it has attained much higher things, such as knowledge, the state [of ecstatic presence before Allah], inner awareness (ma’rifah), or divine disclosure? When these things become the attainments of the self (rather than of the heart and soul, as they are intended to be), the servant deviates from the path inevitably to a blameworthy extreme and displays audacity, or ecstatic utterances (shadh), or other such signs.

By Allah, how many souls have been spiritually murdered, looted, and wounded in this way and are left wondering: “Where did you

come from? How did you attack?” The least that occurs as a result of this is that the door of any further bliss is closed. That is why it has been the way of those with inner knowledge and insight, when they are given such divine gifts, to err on the side of humility, self-criticism, and investigation of their shortcomings. They look to the one closer to Allah and nobler than themselves in His eyes –who, when he entered Makkah on the Day of the Opening, his head was bowed, so much so that it touched the back of his camel at a time when it is the wont of the human being that his happiness, victory, and triumph own him and raise him to the heights of the sky.

The real man is thus one whose adab protects his [spiritual] openings and his provision that is sent by Allah from being stolen by his nafs; and helpless is the one who is generous to his nafs. And what an unseemly generosity, and what a foolhardy charity!

And from Allah alone help is sought.

Translation: Dr. Ovamir Anjum

Cont’d from page 22

our own personal cleansing and rectification; a time for seeking and acting upon knowledge; a time when spouses should be close and supportive of their religious affairs; a time when the religious education of the children should not be neglected. It is a time for cleansing ourselves and reaching out to fellow Muslims desiring a return to our lost honor through implementation of the Quran and Sunna. Has the time not approached when every one of us should desire nothing but Islam?

O Allah! Forgive us. Restore our honor and lift our humiliation by guiding us back to the straight path. O Allah! Fill our hearts with desire for seeking honor through Islam. Join us with those who would never seek honor by anything other than Islam. Blessed be thy Name, Exalted be thy Majesty. O Allah! Forgive us.

Why is The **Qur'an** *in* **Arabic?**

Part -1

Tariq Jalal

“An Arabic Quran”

NON-ARABS—MUSLIMS and non-Muslim alike—are hardly equipped to verify the truth of this claim till they have a good command of Arabic. The truth is yes, the intricacies of Arabic’s highly developed grammatical derivativeness, its intense grammatical functionality, the dynamic inter-lexical (i.e., between words) dialogue, and the legion of linguistic features that have no exact equivalents in other languages—all these elements work together to impart a miraculously crafted message that is beyond the human capacity of even a literary giant—one of which Muhammad (saws) famously was not.

According to Arabic rhetorician Al-Zurqâni in his book, *Manâhil Al-Irfân fi Ulûm Al-Qur’ân*, pages 2, 143:

The nuances of meaning which may seem as secondary in analysis are actually indispensable enhancements of the main objectives of the Quran as a Book of Guidance. They all converge to convey a miraculous and divinely eloquent Message that is far too lofty to fully encompass, let alone to reproduce or translate into another language.

The Quran itself states this unequivocally:

Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran

that you might understand. [Sûrat Yûsuf, 12:2]

Had it been in a language other than Arabic, they would have said: “Why are its verses not explained in detail? What! (A book) not in Arabic? And (a Messenger) an Arab?” Say: “It is a guide and a healing to those who believe...” [Sûrat Fussilat, 41:44]

Implied in these verses is the idea that Arabic was chosen for its ability to pack in more details than other languages could have done—or at least, the vital details appropriate to the full sense with all its connotations.

Lost in Translation

When translated, The Quran loses much of its imposing pithiness and dwindles into a linear narrative of events, an exposition of the doctrines, and a rebuttal of the arguments of non-believers, without many of the stately paraphernalia of stylistics of the Arabic original text.

Translators understandably decide to discard features which target languages cannot accommodate. Therefore, no matter what language the Quran is rendered into, it is no longer to be

called a Quran proper, and becomes a human interpretation of the meaning; hence the plethora of annotations and footnotes in which some translations are rich.

Such “readers’ helps” quite often attempt to retrieve messages which the original text has but which had to be overlooked in the actual word for word translation.

The Nominal Sentence of Arabic

An outstanding feature of the uniqueness of Arabic which speakers of English can fortunately grasp and appreciate is how the Nominal Sentence—one of the types basic to Arabic—is utilized so as to imbue sentences with particular meaning boosters.

So what is a Nominal Sentence essentially? It is a sentence that starts off with a noun, either a real noun or an implied one[i]—exampled below—and it ends with a Predicate that completes the meaning.

Does this not sound like a sentence in any language? Well, no, actually. Here is how Arabic differs:

– An Arabic Nominal Sentence has no verb whatsoever. Thus, it is natural and idiomatic for Arabic to say:

The tree – green.

(without a connecting word meaning “is”)

– The basic meaning of this type of verb-less sentences is to indicate permanence and un-changeability of the meaning content which is expressed—and this content is aided and modified by the context.[ii]

Recovering Lost Meaning

The following example shows how much of the meaning is lost when a verse that has this Nominal Sentence structure is translated into English. Sûrat Al-Fâtiḥah, 1:2 reads:

al-hamdu li-(a)llâhi rabbi (a)l-âlamîn...

Muslim commentators and rhetoricians state that this Nominal Sentence structure imparts the following messages for this particular verse:

– To begin with, al-hamdu—which is unanimously translated into English as “praise”—means devotionally and exhaustively “enumerating the Attributes of Perfection of the Praised One, done with utmost love, glorification and elevation.” [iii]

The word “al-” is roughly equivalent to the English word the and it implies all kinds of [praise].

This glorification—as expressed in an Arabic [verb-less] Nominal Sentence—transcends time. Such glorification has always been attributable to Him (Allah); it is true for him now and will always be so for Him.

The essential message of permanence and un-changeability entailed here is:

– that God does not need a doer of this glorification, and

– that His Greatness bypasses all limits of time known to us

These components of meaning are stated in a style succinctly in the Arabic Quran; the sentence has no verb, hence no grammatical Subject or “doer” is needed.

– The sentence is not simply informative—that all praise is due to God—in keeping with the way that Nominal Sentences normally function. It has understood in it, additionally, the supplicatory undertone of:

May all praise be to Allah.[iv]

How Well Have Our English Translations Succeeded?

Compare the above entailed components of meaning of Sûrat Al-Fâtiḥah, 1:2 with the following examples of how some commonly used translations have rendered this verse into English:

All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists). [Muhsin Khan]

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, [Pickthall]

Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustain-

er of the worlds; [Yusuf Ali]

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. [Shakir]

Praise be to Allah, The Lord of the worlds. [Dr. Ghali]

[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds. [Sahih International]

The following can be observed about these translations:

– Brevity and pithiness have disappeared, and the four-word long Arabic verse has been drawn out in English translation with many more words—and paradoxically to the detriment of the original meaning;

– Some translations have added a Present Tense verb like Shakir’s All praise is due to Allah—and this has made the sentence lose its sense of permanence informed by its verblessness in Arabic. The verb is indispensable to an English sentence, but using it has spoiled the Arabic meaning and restricted the extent of praise to the present time only.

– Translations that have bound the meaning to the present-only have lost the meaning component of supplication, as well as that of permanence. Furthermore, those who used the timeless verb “be” on the model of Pickthall’s Praise be to Allah have opted for the supplication component of meaning but in so doing have discarded the meaning of informing us that praise is due to Allah. They simply cannot keep both.

– The exhaustive sense of praise implied by al- in al-hamdu is missing in some translations, and is only expressed through annotations adding extra words like “all” in others. This loss is in contrast to the Arabic verse, where this sense of ‘fullness’ is expressed concisely through the definite article that comes naturally before nouns. Arabic al- is roughly equivalent to the English the—but if one says in English: “The praise is to Allah” it does not mean the fullness of praise, and it is not good English, either.

And, by the way, it is not to be assumed that the economy of syntax and the abundance of

meaning as explained above are the only features that set Arabic apart as unique, nor are they the only traits that translators cannot include in their target languages. These are only examples among countless others that work together to impart to us God’s message.

[i] [i] A. Abu Al-Makarim, Nominal Sentences, 2007, 17

[ii] Abu Al-Baqa’ Al-Kafawi, Al-Kulliyat, 1998, 814

[iii] Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah, Badai’ Al-Fawa’id (Al-Shamila Version)

[iv] Al-Tahir Ibn ‘Ashur, Al-Tahrir wa Al-Tanwir. 1, 154-156 (Al Shamila electronic version)

**Narrated `Aisha (RA) The Prophet (saws) said,
The most hated person in the sight of Allah is the most quarrelsome person.**

(Bukhari)

leaving Mecca

Yasmin Mujahid

When I was 17 years old, I had a dream. I dreamt that I was sitting inside a masjid and a little girl walked up to ask me a question. She asked me: “Why do people have to leave each other?”

Ultimately, the question was about the nature of the dunya as a place of fleeting moments and temporary attachments...as a place where people are with you today, and leave or die tomorrow. But this reality hurts our very being because it goes against our nature. We, as humans, are made to seek, love, and strive for what is perfect and what is permanent. We are made to seek what's eternal. We seek this because we were not made for this life. Our first and true home was Paradise: a land that is both perfect and eternal. So the yearning for that type of life is a part of our very being.

That's why leaving hurts. It goes against everything we are made to yearn for. Allah put a yearning in us that can only be fulfilled by what is eternal and perfect. Yet he gives us samples. Everything in this life is just a sample of the hereafter. We have samples of jahanam, wa authu billah. We see fire here; we know what it feels like to burn. We know what puss or boiling water is like.

But we also have samples of jannah on this earth. And there is no closer sample on this earth than Mecca and Medina. What closer land could there be to jannah then the point directly below al bayt al ma'moor in the heavens? And yet it's just a sample. We had to leave. Just as Adam and his children had to leave jenn-

nah for a while—we too had to leave. We had to leave the jannah of this earth.

And that is exactly the nature of dunya. It is a string of moments. Some moments are full of peace. Some moments are full of pain. But it's all just moments. Fleeting. Our separation from the awe, peace, and majesty of being in the presence of the kabaa, is symbolic of our separation from jannah. Leaving Mecca for me is just part of the greater sunnah of this life: a place where we must eventually leave the people and things we love most.

But there is one thing that we never have to leave. One thing that never passes away. Only one thing: Allah. Allah tells us:

“Everyone upon the earth will perish, And there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor.” (55:26-27)

Allah says:

“And do not invoke with Allah another deity. There is no deity except Him. Everything will be destroyed except His Face. His is the judgment, and to Him you will be returned.” (28:88)

And he is closer than our jugular vein.

Allah says:

“It was We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein.” (50:16)

So often we look for Allah out there. And so the separation from somewhere like mecca



becomes paralyzing. But our connection with Allah isn't out there. It's in here.

Yes, Adam (AS) had to leave jannah for a while, but what did Allah also promise Adam when he was leaving?

“We said: ‘Get ye down all from here; and if, as is sure, there comes to you Guidance from me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.’” (2:38)

We had to leave the Kabaa. And it hurt. So much. But we never have to leave Allah. Unless we choose to. Unless WE choose to turn our backs on Him. But He is always there. It's we who chose to turn away. And what happens when we do? Allah says:

“But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment.” (20:124)

“He will say, ‘My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?’” (20:125)

“[Allah] will say, ‘Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten.’” (20:126)

Brothers and sisters, there is one way to never leave that closeness, that awe, that peace that we felt there. There is one way to protect ourselves from the fear and grief of leaving: Thikr. Remembrance.

Allah says:

“Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah. for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction.” (13:28)

There is a jannah of the hereafter. We yearn to enter it. And perhaps the physical jannah of this life is in front of the kabaa. But like Adam who had to leave jannah for a while, we too had to leave the kabaa. But Allah does not leave us. He has given us another jannah of this life. Allah told Adam:

“We said, ‘Go down from it, all of you. And when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance — on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.’” (2:38)

The jannah of this life is in the remembrance of Allah. It is in the obedience to His guidance. The one who holds tight to that guidance, has truly entered jannah here.

Ibn ul Qayyim said:

“He who does not enter the jannah of this life, does not enter the jannah of the next.

Beating Difficult Times



Dr. W. Hamza

We read the Prophet's story hundreds of years after it was over. It is a successful story that contains one victory after another with a very positive final outcome. This positive experience masked all the difficult times in his life and we tend to overlook them when reading or relating the story, especially in the absence of deep analysis.

The fact of the matter is that the Prophet (saws) went through a lot of challenges and difficult times throughout his whole life. In one year, his uncle and his wife, who both supported him emotionally and physically, died. In the very same year, he was subjected to physical abuse from the people of Makkah.

The following story, as narrated by one of the Prophet's companions, Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, tells you how he was treated during this very tough year:

Seven from the leaders of Makkah were gathering next to Al-Ka'bah while the Prophet (saws) was praying. He elongated his prostration. Abu Jahl, one of those leaders, said,

"Who would bring the innards of the camel so-and-so family just slaughtered? We can put it on top of Muhammad while prostrating!"

'Uqbah Ibn Abi Mu'ait, the most idiot amongst them, brought it and put it on the back

of the Prophet while prostrating. The Prophet did not move and I ('Abdullah is talking) could not dare to do anything, for I have no clan to protect me.

Fatimah, the Prophet's young daughter, came and removed the dirt and insulted all of them. The Prophet then raised his head and started supplicating to Allah against them all.

He was also challenged as a messenger tasked by Allah to convey His message. He was called a liar, a sorcerer, a poet, and a fortuneteller, and people started calling him Mudthamam (dispraise worthy) while his name is Muhammad (praise worthy).

His reputation was attacked, and his companions were tortured to the extent that people stopped listening to him. For two consecutive years before he migrated to Medina, only four people believed in him, two of whom died shortly after.

His trip to the neighboring city of Ta'if was just another example of those tough times. He traveled, walking, for over fifty miles to deliver his message to the people of Ta'if and ask for their support. Not only did they mock him, disbelieve in him, and let him down, but also asked their slaves and youngsters to throw stones at him for a few miles until his sandals turned red

from his bleeding.

Even after migration to Madinah, his life wasn't easy. He suffered the curses and the disrespect of the hypocrites in Madina. His noble wife `Aishah was subject to an ugly rumor spread in the society for days.

Madinah under his leadership was challenged by war from almost every single tribe in Arabia. He witnessed the killing of seventy of his companions among whom was his dear uncle Hamzah.

He faced a siege of ten thousand soldiers, an attack on which his whole city, where all the believers lived, was about to be destroyed.

He faced treason from Jewish tribes in Madinah: some plotted to kill him and others betrayed him to side with an attacking army.

Many of the messengers he sent to teach people Islam were killed in cold blood and he grieved for them for months, seventy of them in one incident and twelve in another.

Learning from our Messenger (saws)

How did the Prophet manage to face all these challenges?

How was he able to come out of them stronger and with even more influence?

How did he develop such a community that was able to be steadfast in the face of difficult times during his life and after he died?

Below are a few simple, yet very effective, concepts that the Prophet embraced and taught his Companions.

These concepts are extremely important for us to understand and embrace. While going through the ideas below, you will realize that they are a mix of:

- Personal qualities the Prophet and his Companions displayed
- Ideas taught by the Qur'an and the words of the Prophet
- Practical actions taken by the Prophet to face difficult times.

1. Know! Difficulties are inevitable tests

This is the first and the most important concept one should believe in: going through difficult times is almost inevitable.

{Do people think they will be left alone and they will not be tried? ...} (29:3)

When you claim to believe in Allah, stand for what is right, oppose what is wrong, support justice, or fight oppression, these claims will all be tested. Allah will show who is truthful and who is lying.

This is the tradition of those on the straight path at all times. The Prophet and his companions were asked in the Qur'an, a question that is also asked to all of us,

{Do you suppose that you will enter Paradise untouched by the suffering endured by the people who passed before you?

They were afflicted by the misery and hardship and they were so convulsed that the Messenger and the believers with him cried out: "When will Allah's help arrive?"} (2: 214)

2. Know! Difficulties happen by the Will of Allah

It is very important to know and believe that nothing will happen to you except what Allah has decreed for you. The Prophet was asked to say,

{Nothing will befall us except what Allah has decreed for us } (9:51)

He taught one of his young cousins, `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas, "Know that what hits you would not have missed you"

This belief gives you comfort and prevents fear from future difficulty, but more importantly, helps you overcome any difficulty you are already going through. Allah said,

{No misfortune ever befalls unless it be by Allah. And whosoever has faith in Allah, Allah guides his heart ...} (64:11)

3. Flee to Allah

“O Allah I display before you my weakness ...” This phrase was part of the prayer of the Prophet while coming back from his trip to Al Ta’if. Taking refuge in Allah and asking for His help and support is a very important action we should do during the time of difficulty. This is a trial by Allah, it happened with His permission, and it is only He who can alleviate it.

4. Examine your actions

“If you are not angry with me, I do not care ...” was also part of the Prophet’s prayer returning from Al Ta’if. During times of difficulty, we should examine our actions. This difficulty may very well be a warning from Allah that we are doing something wrong. It may be because of our sins and mistakes:

{Whatever misfortune befalls you is a consequence of your own deeds ...} (42:30).

It may be because we strayed and Allah sent this difficulty to us as a reminder to bring us back. Malek Ibn Deenar, one of the great scholars of Islam, transformed from being an alcoholic person to the great person we know as a result of the death of his own two-year old daughter.

5. Be optimistic

Having hope and being optimistic were two important attitudes the Prophet embraced when facing difficulty.

“By Allah, Allah will perfect this matter until the traveler can travel from Sana’a to Hadhramaut fearing no one but Allah and the wolf that may eat his sheep”, The Prophet told Khabbab when he complained to him about the severity of torture he and other Muslims in Makkah were going through. (Al-Bukhari)

It was this hope in Allah, and confidence that there will be ease after difficulty, that kept them going.

This hope was not only kept in the hearts but was also spread through words and attitude. The

Prophet mastered optimism and looked for optimism: “Evil omen is false! And I like Al-fa’l (good omen)” the prophet told his companions. They asked, “What is Al-Fa’l?” He responded, “A good word.” (Muslim)

6. Do not get distracted

One of the very bad consequences of going through difficult times is the amount of distraction the difficulty creates. Ibn Al-Qayim says,

“It is a complete fiasco to be distracted by the blessing away from the One who blesses, and by the trial away from the One who tries.”

Sometimes the difficulty itself scares us away from the good we are doing. Allah says,

{And let it never happen that they might turn you away from the revelations of Allah after they have been revealed to you...} (28-87)

The prophet never stopped delivering his message because of a personal difficulty he went through or because of a threat or torture he received from his enemies.

7. Expect reward

This was one of the teachings the Qur’an instilled in the hearts of Muslims. Whether the calamity happens naturally, or whether it is due to the harm of others, being patient and perseverant results in a lot of reward. The calamity will eventually be over,

{Indeed with the difficulty there is an ease. Indeed with the difficulty there is an ease.} (94:5-6)

And when the ease comes, the pain will go away and will be forgotten. What remains and will never go away is the tremendous reward one would get,

{We shall certainly test you by afflicting you with fear, hunger, loss of properties and lives and fruits. Give glad tidings, then, to those who remain patient.

Cont’d on page 25

Information and Knowledge

What is achieved and adapted

Monique Hassan

Those Muslims who had not categorically learnt and understood Islam should be aware of what they say and comment. We, the ignorant Muslims, often cause much more harm to the society and Ummah than those outside the fold of Islam.

Immaturely knowledgeable Muslims pose questions and often air own feelings or personal opinions randomly and awkwardly without considering the place, person and time. This is not only due to the acute lack of knowledge but also due to over excitement and emotion. May whatever be the way they do it, no doubt, it is a violation; an unqualified person should inquire it to an expert, but cannot express his opinion and/ argument by possessing a vague understanding about a topic. Such violation is an offense. Every Muslim would agree that if such violation is related to Qur'an and Sunnah, it is the most severe one.

In this digital society today, unfortunately we believe, every one of us has to say something about every thing and every thing demands that all people talk about all matters. Therefore, whatever is NOT rocket-science to someone, he starts talking and commenting on it. The physi-

cians are now Muftis. However, the Muftis are paid no value and respect because they dare not to become physicians(!) But interestingly, if suddenly a Mufti starts practicing medical science without being qualified on the field, probably every quarter will be criticizing and stopping him.

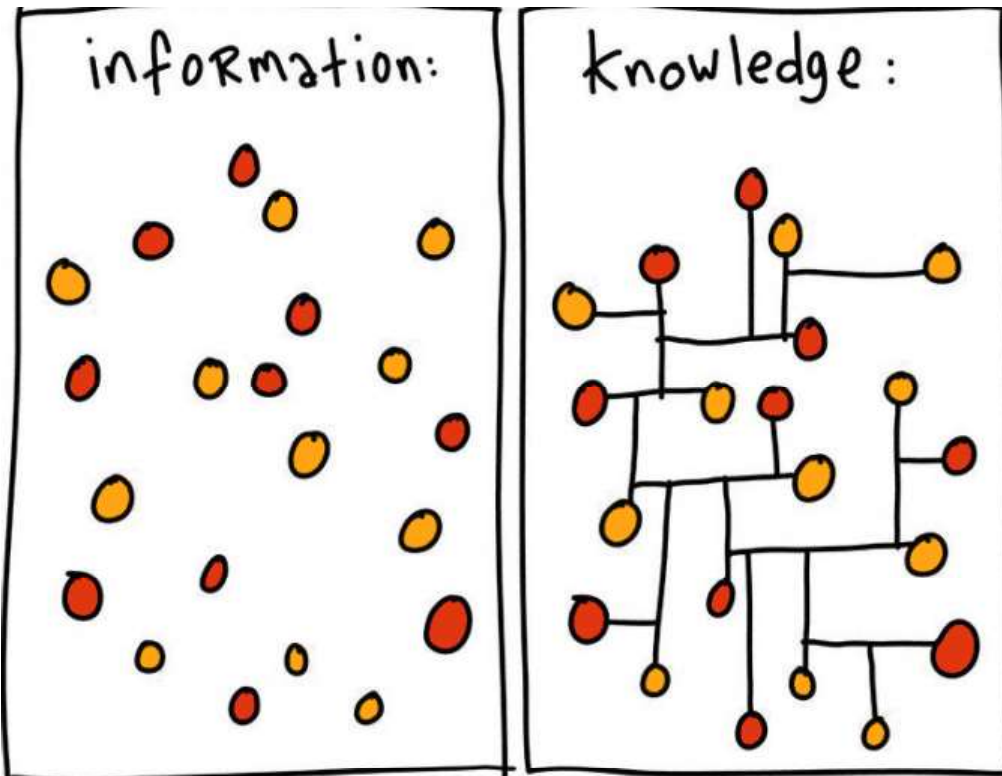
A Muslim's lack of proper knowledge on Qur'an, Hadith would misguide him in all spheres life. He will apply irrational roles while judging things. There is of course a difference between his distortion and a non-believer's. However, a matter of grave concern today is, for how long?! When the person – one who was born in a Muslim family and did not attain any knowledge of his religion, but accelerated highly on secular education, took up any profession and without any fundamental knowledge of Islam – what acts and concepts flow out from him at an age from 20-30 and so on?! The ironic fact is, this child today after growing up as a full man, has taken a bold(!) stance against the teachings of Islam – of many he himself is completely unaware of. Let not hastily blame someone in this regard, but point figure to ourselves, each of us individually, what am I doing to solve this?

Because, Allaah Taala, our Creator and Lord has given each responsibilities, rights over others (not only to individuals, but to families, societies, country and above all to the whole Muslim nation – depending on the individual's capability of course).

At large, we have made ourselves carefree for information and knowledge, but depriving

ourselves completely of that information and knowledge which should have been valued and learnt with lots of care and zeal. Whereas, the latter not only makes our worldly affairs upright, but saves us from the torment of graves and afterlife*. We have cared of and adapted to many unwanted affairs under the banner of information, knowledge and development, and completely abandoned or detached from what in reality are of importance. That shocking example has just been given how we turned our Muslim child into a model for the world (in the last paragraph). Final note in today's part is, the genuine information and knowledge did not lose their status or identity – it is we, the unconcerned and irresponsible Muslims – the imprudent ones, who misused the information and knowledge, have lost our status and identity! (to be continued inshaAllah)

A Muslim's life is invaluable. His life is to immerse in the love and remembrance of Allaah; all tasks of a Muslim abounds the same objec-



tive. He cannot childishly use information and knowledge! He cannot spare his moments by senselessly getting through superfluous information, such as, who is the wealthiest person in the world, who went to space today, how did your friend spend last morning, what is your neighbor cooking tonight! Let alone these... unfortunately, today one snaps his own photo and makes a comment, publicizes it via "facebook" and tools alike(!) Did we ever turn rationally towards ourselves at least once in lifetime and asked, "Is this the reason for which I have been created and should this be the reason for which we exist?!" Friends will give me a thousands "like" – oh yes! But the question is, how is my Lord, Master and Creator liking all these matters we are getting captivated in? Have we ever considered and deliberated on it? Through these acts, whom are we following, whom are we making friendship and increasing our relationship?

If we look very closely into our (referring to us, the general Muslims) daily thoughts and

conversations, besides others, we get two major aspects in them: one, personal matters; two, discussion pertaining to others life (could be called gossip too). The first aspect covers several personal problems, among which, some are labelled “very big”. However, at the same time, through the second aspect, we are engrossed in others’ praise, fault-finding, commenting on their lifestyle and so on; these are all done through massive networking. Most of these activities are “exchange of ideas, thoughts and information” communicated via Internet, which has become the marketplace of expressing and showing oneself and continually commenting on others’ feelings and photographs. Did you ever think that the consequences of the second aspect (engaging in applause, criticisms, chats, sharing pics) aggravates our personal problems? Well, it does give a sense of relief at the first place, but eventually they overwhelm and scatter all our thoughts into hundreds of pieces and convert our ideas and thoughts into innumerable bundles of brainstorming topics! Therefore, the 2nd aspect negatively influences the 1st one, but we initiate the 2nd one to get relieved from the first! Did we ever calmly and rationally thought of such a backfire? Likewise sharing of any information cannot provide a mental rest, forget peace of heart! The consequences of over-talkativeness, prolific interactions, maintaining friendship with too many people add destruction of mind and heart. The activities which we believe is relieving us is indeed stemming more unrest and calamities of heart and soul.

Indeed, these issues being discussed are being addressed to none other, but the general Muslim, to a believer, to a person who believes in Allaah, His Messengers – above all the final Messenger (saws). Being a Muslim, how can we become so wasteful in time?! Moreover, how can we spend so much of time in backbiting, vulgar issues, obscene, music and futile acts, which are most of our major aims while engaging in these communication means? Super-

fluous admirations are only waste of time and energy even. What are we doing exactly in the name of networking? Aren’t many of our activities downright haraam?! At least, being truthful and confessional regarding the matter can open the slightest way of Tawba – sincere repentance. This repentance can then change our life positively. If we read the meaning of Sura Al-Asr and deliberate very sincerely, we get the whole guidance in a nutshell (Meaning):

(I swear) by the Time, (1) Man is in a state of loss indeed, I (2) Except those who believed and did righteous deeds, and exhorted each other to follow truth, and exhorted each other to observe patience. (3)

Allaa, Our Creator and Lord have warned people of the severe consequences of devaluing such a precious life. What will happen to each of us, our destiny, if this precious life is left in the evil hands of nafs and shaytan?! Allaah states (Meaning):

Then for the one who had rebelled, (37) And preferred the worldly life (to the Hereafter), (38) The Hell will be the abode, (39) Whereas for the one who feared to stand before his Lord, and restrained his self from the (evil) desire, (40) The Paradise will be the abode. (41) Sura Naziyat: 37-41

Those who will not believe Allaah, they never count, but what about us, who bear faith in Him? The above mentioned verses are from Qur’an. This is also a piece of information. This is also knowledge. This information and knowledge is from the Creator, Lord and Master. This is therefore the absolute information and knowledge! We cannot sit and relax after this absolute information reach us. We cannot have any time to indulge and involve ourselves in aimless, worthless and unnecessary matters after such rigorous warning is threatened, threatened by the Lord of the Universe!

The Concept of Religion

Naquib al-Attas

“The concept couched in the term *din*, which is generally understood to mean religion, is not the same as the concept religion as interpreted and understood throughout Western religious history. When we speak of Islam and refer to it in English as a ‘religion’, we mean and understand by it the *din*¹ in which all the basic connotations inherent in the term *din* are conceived as gathered into a single unity of coherent meaning as reflected in the Holy Qur’an and in the Arabic language to which it belongs.

The word *din* derived from the Arabic root DYN has many primary significations which although seemingly contrary to one another are yet all conceptually interconnected, so that the ultimate meaning derived from them all presents itself as a clarified unity of the whole. By ‘the whole’ I mean that which is described as the Religion of Islam, which contains within itself all the relevant possibilities of meaning inherent in the concept of *din*. Since we are dealing with an Islamic concept which is translated into a living reality intimately and profoundly lived in human experience, the apparent contrariness in its basic meanings is indeed not due to vagueness; it is, rather, due to the contrariness inherent in human nature itself, which they faithfully reflect. And their power to reflect human nature

faithfully is itself clear demonstration of their lucidity and veracity and authenticity in conveying truth.

The primary signification of the term *din* can be reduced to four: (1) indebtedness; (2) submissiveness; (3) judicious power; (4) natural inclination or tendency. In what presently follows, I shall attempt to explain them briefly and place them in their relevant contexts, drawing forth the coherent ultimate meaning intended, which denotes the faith, beliefs and practices and teachings adhered to by the Muslims individually and collectively as a Community and manifesting itself altogether as an objective whole as the Religion called Islam.

The verb *dana* which derives from *din* conveys the meaning of being indebted, including various other meanings connected with debts, some of them contraries. In the state in which one finds oneself being in debt – that is to say, a *da’in* – it follows that one subjects oneself, in the sense of yielding and obeying, to law and ordinances governing debts, and also, in a way, to the creditor, who is likewise designated as a *da’in*². There is also conveyed in the situation described the fact that one in debt is under obligation, or *dayn*. Being in debt and under obligation naturally involves judgement: day-

nunah, and conviction: idanah, as the case may be. All the above significations including their contraries inherent in dana are practicable possibilities only in organized societies involved in commercial life in towns and cities, denoted by mudun or mada'in. A town or city, a madinah, has a judge, ruler, or governor – a dayyan. Thus already here, in the various applications of the verb dana alone, we see rising before our mind's eye a picture of civilized life; of societal life of law and order and justice and authority⁴². It is, conceptually at least, connected intimately with another verb maddana³ which means: to build or to found cities: to civilize, to refine and to humanize; from which is derived another term: tamaddun, meaning civilization and refinement in social culture. Thus we derive from the primary signification of being in a state of debt other correlated significations, such as: to abase oneself, to serve (a master), to become enslaved; and from another such signification of judge, ruler, and governor is derived meanings which denote the becoming mighty, powerful and strong; a master, one elevated in rank, and glorious; and yet further, the meanings: judgement, requital or reckoning (at some appointed time). Now the very notion of law and order and justice and authority and social cultural refinement inherent in all these significations derived from the concept din must surely presuppose the existence of a mode or manner of acting consistent with what is reflected in the law, the order, the justice, the authority and social cultural refinement – a mode or manner of acting, or a state of being considered as normal in relation to them; so that this state of being is a state that is customary or habitual. From here, then, we can see the logic behind the derivation of the other primary signification of the concept din as custom, habit, disposition, or natural tendency. At this juncture it becomes increasingly clear that the concept of din in its most basic form indeed reflects in true testimony the natural tendency of man to form societies and obey laws and seek

just government. The idea of a kingdom, a cosmopolis, inherent in the concept din that rises before our vision is most important in helping us attain a more profound understanding of it, and needs to be reiterated here, for we shall have recourse to it again when we deal with the religious and spiritual aspects of man's existential experience.”

1. In this chapter my interpretation of the basic connotations inherent in the term din is based on Ibn Manzur's standard classic, the *Lisan al-'Arab* (Beyrouth, 1968, 15V.), hereafter cited as LA. For what is stated in this page and the next, see vol. 13:166, col. 2-171, col.2.

2. Da'in refers both to debtor as well as creditor, and this apparent contrariness in meaning can indeed be resolved if we transpose both these meanings to refer to the two natures of man, that is, the rational soul and the animal or carnal soul.

3. It is I think extremely important to discern both the intimate and profoundly significant connection between the concept of din and that of madinah which derives from it, and the role of the Believers individually in relation to the former and collectively in relation to the latter. Considerable relevance must be seen in the significance of the change of the name of the town once known as Yathrib to al-Madinah: the City – or more precisely, Madinatu'l -Nabi: the City of the Prophet – which occurred soon after the Holy Prophet (saws) made his historic Flight (hijrah) and settled there. The first Community of Believers was formed there at the time, and it was that Flight that marked the New Era in the history of mankind. We must see the fact that al- Madinah was so called and named because it was there that true din became realized for mankind. There the Believers enslaved themselves under the authority and jurisdiction of the Holy Prophet (saws), its dayyan; there the realization of the debt to God took definite form, and the

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Publisher:
Radiant Reality
P.O. Box 974
G.P.O. Srinagar,
J&K, 190001, India.

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