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This journal is dedicated to

the Greatest and the Last Prophet

Sayyiduna Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

on whom the Prophethood was sealed and ended forever.

May Allah enlighten entire humanity with

the Divine Attributes with which He sent

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

to this world.

Only way to salvation for the mankind is in

following the blessed teachings of

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

..... Let us all follow him with utmost spirit.

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EDITORIAL*All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted*

Tolerance

The cry for Muslims to be 'tolerant' are constantly heard from the West. Tragically, Western minds among the Muslims have also lent their voices to the Din. Let us examine the reality of this call.

Tolerance is the willingness to be patient towards people whose ways and opinions differ from one's own. In this regard, Islam has practically demonstrated tolerance to the world. Let alone being tolerant towards the ways of those who do not accept Islam, Islam has even prescribed that the non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic State should be given the same protection that the Muslims are given. They would only be charged the nominal jizya (tax). This was the lesson of tolerance taught and practiced fourteen centuries ago.

On the contrary, the West practiced the greatest amount of intolerance. Until the 1800's there was absolutely no religious freedom in England. Even up to this day Islam is severely suppressed in Europe and other Western countries. One recent glaring example is the banning of Muslim girls in France from wearing scarves to school. Bosnia's "ethnic cleansing," with its unprecedented savagery and barbarism, shows just how 'tolerant' the West is with Islam. So much for Western tolerance!

Why then are the Muslims being accused of intolerance? What is being demanded from Muslims in the name of 'tolerance'? The answer to these questions is simply this: Upright Muslims blankly refuse to shift a hair's breadth from any aspect of Deen. They totally reject the suggestion that they should adopt the culture of the West and abandon the Sunnah way of life, be it

even in just one aspect. Hence in the name of 'tolerance' it is now being demanded of them to COMPROMISE. Muslims are being called upon to compromise fundamental aspects of Deen so that "Islam may be compatible with the West."

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

In the name of freedom of speech, the West wants Muslims to sit back and "tolerate" the filthy language against Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), his family and his companions. Muslims must "tolerate" statements of infidels that the Qur'an should be revised (Allah forbid!).

The tragedy is that Westernised Muslims have also joined the chorus and are exploring prospects for 'tolerance.' What tolerance? Islam's tolerance has been clearly defined above. Are we then exploring ways of compromising the Deen? The calls for "rethinking" and "reinterpreting" Islam are nothing but a call for compromising the Deen for which Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) shed his blood. Muslims want to make Islam more 'palatable' and acceptable to the West. Hence fundamental aspects of the Deen of Allah Ta'ala are being sacrificed to appease those who are the avowed enemies of Islam. What is the attitude of the Qur'an towards compromising Deen?

In Surah Kafiroon we find clear guidance with regards to this matter. The disbelievers had come to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) with a proposal of compromise. According to one narration, when all their proposals were flatly refused, they asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to come and merely touch their idols once.

They in turn will worship Allah Ta'ala. Upon this Allah Ta'ala revealed Surah Kqftroon wherein a clear proclamation was made: "Unto you is your Been and for me is my Been" (Ma' artful Qur'an). The clear-cut guidance of the Quran has brightly illuminated the path for us to follow.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Aiahi Wasaiiam) also practically demonstrated that Deen can never be compromised. It is reported that a woman called Fatima Makhzumiya was caught stealing. After having established that she had committed the crime, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Aiahi Wasaiiam) ordered that her hand should be cut. Her clan asked Zaid (R.A.), the adopted son of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Aiahi Wasaiiam), to intercede on their behalf to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Aiahi Wasaiiam). When Zaid (R.A.) mentioned it to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), the Nabi of Allah Ta'ala was extremely angered and he exclaimed: "Are you interceding with regards to what Allah has decreed? If Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), had to steal, I would most certainly cut off even her hand." (uishkaat p.3i4) This is the guidance from the life of the Leader of Mankind.

It has also been narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Aiahi Wasaiiam) would tolerate the worst afflictions upon his personal self. He patiently bore all the verbal abuse and physical hardships that were inflicted upon him by his enemies. However when the bounds of Allah Ta'ala were transgressed, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Aiahi Wasaiiam) would be most angry. (Shama'u P.i5) Let alone being so deeply affected by others transgressing the bounds of Allah Ta'ala, Muslims themselves are compromising the Deen of Allah! Just how far away have we drifted?

Our salvation lies in holding fast to the Deen. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Aiahi Wasaiiam) is reported to have said: "I have left with you TWO things. You will never go astray as long as you remain firmly upon them. The Qur'an of Allah and my Sunnah. (Mishkaat v.i p.3i)

Compromising the Deen in the name of tolerance is something no true Believer would ever tolerate. Let the West say and do as they please. Provided that we are firmly practising on COMPLETE DEEN, they cannot harm us in the least. May Allah Ta'ala guide towards the right Deen.

A Hole in the Ship

Rasullullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said: "There are people who do not transgress the laws of Allah Ta'ala whilst there are also others who do so. They are like two groups who boarded a ship, one of them settled on the upper deck and the other on the lower deck of the ship. So when the people of the lower deck needed water they said: "Why should we inconvenience the people of the upper deck when we can easily have plenty of water by making a hole in our deck." Now if the people of the upper deck do not prevent this group from such foolishness, all of them will perish. But on the contrary if they stop them then all of them will be saved.

(Bukhari – vol:1, pg:339)

Lesson: Advising one another and accepting correction plays a vital role in the preservation of Islam and the Muslims at large.

Question Answer

Question:

I have read some Q&A on this topic, however I wanted to ask specifically about discussing sins with a prospective spouse, as I feel this might be different as they need to know about you. 1) Does one need to reveal their sins to a prospective spouse? What if these sins are in the past, and one has moved forward? 2) What if the sins are in the present, but one has a sincere intention to stop and become a better person? 3) What if they are related to not being married, for example masturbation or not lowering the gaze or pornography, etc. This could be a reason to get married, but does the other person need to know? 4) What if they are not related to getting married, e.g. having difficulty praying Fajr on time or something similar? Would a prospective spouse need to know about this?

Answer:

The general principle is that we don't discuss our sinful actions with others, even prospective spouses.

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "All my Community are well, except the revealers." When asked who the 'revealers' were, he replied, "Those who sinned and slept in the covering of Allah, but then tore it off and revealed their sins."

When Allah conceals a sin, it is a mercy for us. The wisdom of not discussing sins is profound. When we talk freely and openly about our past sins, it normalizes them, which is something that we definitely want to avoid.

Now in some situations, particularly when we're trying to convey a lesson to those who could benefit from our experience, then it's permissible to refer to the past in a gen-

eral way. However, you have to assess the mindset of your audience and the potential benefit or harm of sharing this type of information.

When you're talking to a prospective spouse, obviously a lot of sensitivity is required. Once again, the general principle is that you don't reveal the details of past sins. However, I would add a consideration here, and that is...if you believe that your behavior may have exposed you to any infectious diseases, then you owe it to yourself and your prospective spouse to get tested and to be honest about the results of those tests.

Other than health considerations, however, it is best to not dwell on the past and to, instead, focus on a brighter future, insha'Allah.

Now if the sins are ongoing, such as masturbation and looking at pornography, then it is up to you to put a stop to these behaviors. This is not something you need to discuss with a prospective spouse. However, if you feel that these issues might carry on into the marriage, then I do suggest you seek counseling to deal with these problems and learn ways of changing these habits. You have to put yourself in the mindset that your eyes and limbs have rights. Their primary right is to not be utilized for anything unlawful. You also want to consider the harmful effects of pornography on yourself and your view of women. One of the best preparations for marriage is to lower your gaze from nudity and indecency and look forward to the pleasure of being with a righteous woman. Likewise with the masturbation issue, it's important to understand this is a harmful, unlawful practice. Sexual desire is meant to be experienced and shared with one's spouse. So try to curb these behaviors by

fasting, lowering your gaze, and looking forward to a healthy and loving marriage.

Finally, the issue of waking up for fajr is certainly important. And it is not necessarily unrelated to marriage. I think it would be fine to mention to the sister that you would like her assistance in being punctual for prayers. Being married is all about helping your spouse to be a better Muslim. Allah Ta'ala says, "O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is Men and Stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who flinch not (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allah, but do (precisely) what they are commanded." (Al-Tahrim, 6)

Question:

My friends and I enjoy travelling and hiking. Before we set off, we agree upon who will be the Ameer, but during the travels, when an issue is raised, the Ameer is not listened to....i.e., he isn't given the final say. According to Hanafi juristic principles, is doing this haram?

Answer:

Abu Sa'id (Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) said,

If three of you set out on a journey, you should appoint one of you as the amir (leader). [Related by Abu Dawud]

The command to take an amir (leader) in one's journeys and obedience of such an amir are both recommended [Iraqi, Tarh al-Tathrib, 6.9] because of the obvious benefits of order and clarity, and its being a means to avoiding disputes and encouraging agreement.

This recommendation is deduced from the Messenger of Allah's example (Allah bless him and give him peace), because he appointed amirs for the parties he sent out. [See: the works of Prophetic biography]

The way to avoid dispute is to make agreement a goal. Before setting out, sit and discuss the adab (propriety) that the group will seek to adhere to, in a positive manner. With that, each person should hold fast to the counsel of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) that,

Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should say the good or remain silent. [Bukhari and Muslim]

They should apply this to their words and also their actions.

Question:

I have trouble controlling my laughter with things which I know are wrong. I can't help laughing at dirty jokes, name calling, etc. Please help me.

Answer:

Dealing with this requires two matters:

a) realization: one must realize the gravity and consequence of one's speech, laughter, and jest. The Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and give him peace) said, Are people dragged to Hell by their forelocks by other than what their tongues have reaped? [Tirmidhi, Ibn Maja, and Ahmad]

b) action: one should avoid that which leads to hearing the blameworthy and the sinful; when one hears such speech, one should stop it or stop listening; if one does neither, one must realize one's mistake and sincerely repent.

A Warm Welcome

Thabit Al-Bunani (RA) reports that this narration has reached us: "When a person dies, his family members and relatives who passed away before him surround him from all sides. They are delighted to see him. Likewise he is even more delighted to see them than that traveler who returns home to his family. (Ibnu Abid Dunya

Lesson From The Qur'an

Commentary: Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ ۖ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعٌ لِلنَّاسِ ۚ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِن نَّفْعِهِمَا ۗ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ ۗ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۚ ۲۱۹ ۚ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ ۗ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ ۗ وَإِن تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ ۗ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۚ ۲۲۰ ۗ وَلَا تَنكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتَّىٰ يُوْمِنُوْا ۗ وَلَا مُمْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَا أُعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَنكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتَّىٰ يُوْمِنُوْا ۗ وَلِعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَا أُعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ۚ ۲۲۱ ۚ

They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, "In both there is great sin, and some benefits for prople. And their sin is greater than their benefit." And they ask you as to what they should spend. Say, "The surplus"¹¹⁴. On this world and the Hereafter. This is how Allah makes His verses clear to you, so that you may ponder. (2:219) They ask you about the orphans. Say, "To work for their good is good"¹¹⁵. And if you live with them jointly, they are, after all, your brethren."; and Allah knows the one who makes mischief, as distinct from the one who promotes good. And if Allah had wished, He would have put you in trouble. Surely, Allah is Mighty, Wise. (2:220) Do not marry the polytheist women, unless they come to believe (in Islam); a Muslim slave-girl is better than a polytheist woman, even though she may attract you; and do not give (your women) in marriage to polytheist men, unless they come to believe; a Muslim slave is better than a polytheist, even though he may attract you. They invite to the Fire when Allah invites, by His will, to Paradise, and to forgiveness. He makes His verses clear to the people, so that they may heed the advice. (2:221)

114. When the holy Qur'an persuaded the Muslims to spend in charity, the Sahabah (RA) of the holy Prophet (S) started exceeding each other in charitable expenditure. Some of them spent all their wealth in charity, leaving nothing for themselves and for their wives and children. This verse laid down the rule that spending in charity is allowed and commendable only after fulfilling one's obligations toward his family, and they should spend only out of surplus wealth, and not from what is needed for their necessary expenses. (Ibn Jarir)

115. When the holy Qur'an warned the Muslims to be careful about the property of the orphans who are in their guardianship, they became overcautious about them to the extent that they cooked their meal separately, and did not have meal jointly with them, lest they should be held liable for eating up the property of the orphan. This behavior caused difficulties, not only for the guardians, but also for the orphans. This verse indicates that the real purpose is to safeguard the interest of the orphans, and not to create impractical difficulties by keeping them separate in all respects. So long as a guardian protects the rights of the orphan with good intention, he may live with him jointly without committing any act male fide, because it will be known to Allah, and no one can escape His punishment.

Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

The Book of Knowledge

بابِ إِسْبَاغِ الْوُضُوءِ

وَقَالَ ابْنُ عُمَرَ إِسْبَاغُ الْوُضُوءِ الْإِنْقَاءُ .

Chapter 6 : To perform complete (perfect) Wudu.

And Ibn Umar (RA) said "The complete Wudu means to clean all parts perfectly".

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

In earlier chapter curtailment in Wudu was mentioned and here Imam Bukhari wants to make it clear that Wudu is primarily meant for cleanliness and one would get cleanliness only after making perfect Wudu i.e., nicely washing and rubbing each part three times in order to clean it.

Hadith No. 137

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَسْلَمَةَ عَنْ مَالِكٍ عَنْ مُوسَى بْنِ عُقْبَةَ عَنْ كُرَيْبِ مَوْلَى ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ عَنْ أُسَامَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَهُ يَقُولُ دَفَعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صلى الله عليه وسلم - مِنْ عَرَفَةَ حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ بِالشَّعْبِ نَزَلَ قِبَالَ ، ثُمَّ تَوَضَّأَ وَلَمْ يُسَبِّغِ الْوُضُوءَ . فَقُلْتُ الصَّلَاةُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ . فَقَالَ الصَّلَاةُ أَمَامَكَ . فَرَكِبَ ، فَلَمَّا جَاءَ الْمُرْدَلِفَةَ نَزَلَ فَتَوَضَّأَ ، فَاسْبَغَ الْوُضُوءَ ، ثُمَّ أَقِيَمَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَصَلَّى الْمَغْرِبَ ، ثُمَّ أَنَاخَ كُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ بَعِيرَهُ فِي مَنْزِلِهِ ، ثُمَّ أَقِيَمَتِ الْعِشَاءُ فَصَلَّى وَلَمْ يُصَلِّ بَيْنَهُمَا .

Narrated Usama bin Zaid (RA)

Allah's Apostle proceeded from 'Arafat till he reached the mountain pass, he dismounted, urinated and then performed ablution but not a perfect one. I said to him, ("Is it the time for the prayer, O Allah's Apostle?" He said, "The (place of) prayer is ahead of you." He rode till

he reached Al-Muzdalifa, he dismounted and performed ablution and a perfect one, The (call for) Iqama was pronounced and he led the Maghrib prayer. Then everybody made his camel kneel down at its place. Then the Iqama was pronounced for the 'Isha' prayer which the Prophet led and no prayer was offered in between the two . prayers ('Isha' and Maghrib).

Comments

What is Isbaag-ul-Wudu (complete Wudu)?

It means to perform Wudu with all its pre-requisites like washing each part three times, rubbing each part nicely and doing it completely as per Sunnah. Muslim has quoted on the authority of Abu Huraira (RA) that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

أَلَا أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى مَا يَمْحُو اللَّهُ بِهِ الْخَطَايَا وَيَرْفَعُ بِهِ الدَّرَجَاتِ قَالُوا بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ إِسْبَاغُ الْوُضُوءِ عَلَى الْمَكَارَةِ

"Should I not tell you that thing by virtue of which Allah waves off the mistakes and elevates the rank". The people said "Yes, O Apostle of Allah". He (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "To perform the Wudu with perfection even if it is burdensome (e.g., during cold season or when one is too tired etc.)

Always try to keep Wudu

Wudu is basically for Salaah, but it is preferable for a Muslim to always keep Wudu as was the habit of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) which is evident from the Hadith in which Ibn Abbas (RA) says that Ra-

sulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) started his journey from Arafat (during Haj) and on the way he stopped in a valley where he got down from the camel and urinated, then performed light Wudu but did not offer Salaah, as Magrib and Isha Salaah are to be combined on 9th Zil-Hajj and are to be offered in Muzdalifah in Isha time. Why did Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) perform Wudu on his way when he was not going to offer Salaah? The answer is simple that he used to remain with Wudu all the time as he himself said that he wants to meet Allah in such a condition that he would be with Wudu.

Combining Magrib and Isha Salaah at Muzdalifah during Haj

On the day of Arafah (i.e., 9th of Zil-Hajj), the Haj pilgrims have to leave Arafat for Muzdalifah after sunset and Magrib Salaah is not to be offered at Arafat or on the way but is to be offered at Muzdalifah alongwith Isha Salaah at the Isha time with one Azaan and two Iqaamah.

As per Imam Abu Haniefah (RA), the timings of Salaah change on the day of Arafat, so the Magrib time on that day is not after sunset but is at Isha time. So, as per him, if someone offers Magrib at its usual time even in Muzdalifah, he will have to repeat it. Imam Malik permits to offer Magrib Salaah at Arafat or on the way if there is some genuine reason due to which one could not reach Muzdalifah in time.

باب غَسْلِ الْوَجْهِ بِالْيَدَيْنِ مِنْ غَرْفَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ

Chapter 7 : Washing of face using two hands with single handful of water.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

In Wudu, the mouth is rinsed with handful of water taken in one hand. Similarly for cleaning the nose, only one hand is used by taking handful of water. Here, this might have given the impression that the face is

also to be washing with only one hand, Imam Bukhari removes this doubt by clearly mentioning that the face is to be washed using two hands with single handful of water.

Hadith No. 138

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحِيمِ قَالَ أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو سَلَمَةَ الْخُرَاعِيُّ
مَنْصُورُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ قَالَ أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ بِلَالٍ - يَعْنِي سَلِيمَانَ - عَنْ زَيْدِ
بْنِ أَسْلَمَ عَنْ عَطَاءِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ أَنَّهُ تَوَضَّأَ فَعَسَلَ وَجْهَهُ
، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ غَرْفَةً مِنْ مَاءٍ ، فَمَضْمَضَ بِهَا وَاسْتَنْشَقَ ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ غَرْفَةً
مِنْ مَاءٍ ، فَجَعَلَ بِهَا هَكَذَا ، أَضَافَهَا إِلَى يَدِهِ الْأُخْرَى ، فَعَسَلَ بِهَمَا
وَجْهَهُ ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ غَرْفَةً مِنْ مَاءٍ ، فَعَسَلَ بِهَا يَدَهُ الْيُمْنَى ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ
غَرْفَةً مِنْ مَاءٍ ، فَعَسَلَ بِهَا يَدَهُ الْيُسْرَى ، ثُمَّ مَسَحَ بِرَأْسِهِ ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ
غَرْفَةً مِنْ مَاءٍ فَرَشَّ عَلَى رِجْلَيْهِ الْيُمْنَى حَتَّى غَسَلَهَا ، ثُمَّ أَخَذَ غَرْفَةً
أُخْرَى ، فَعَسَلَ بِهَا رِجْلَهُ - يَعْنِي الْيُسْرَى - ثُمَّ قَالَ هَكَذَا رَأَيْتُ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - يَتَوَضَّأُ

Narrated 'Ata' bin Yasar (RA)

Ibn 'Abbas performed ablution and washed his face (in the following way): He took out a handful of water, rinsed his mouth and washed his nose with it by putting in water and then blowing it out. He then, took another handful (of water) and did like this (gesturing) joining both hands, and washed his face, took another handful of water and washed his right forearm. He again took another handful of water and washed his left forearm, and passed wet hands over his head and took another handful of water and poured it over his right foot (up to his ankles) and washed it thoroughly and similarly took another handful of water and washed thoroughly his left foot (up to the ankles) and said, "I saw Allah's Apostle performing ablution in this way."

Comments

This Hadith teaches the method of performing Wudu as per the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Importance of Following the Sunnah

The Qur'an is the last divine book, which was revealed from Allah as a declaration and guidance to mankind. It is an explanation of all things and means for men to be rightly guided. In many verses of the Qur'an, it is commanded to obey the prophet of Allah. This is quite a significant point because understanding the Qur'an fully can only be possible with following the Sunnah of the prophet.

The Sunnah is the explanation of the Qur'an. It is the creed of ahl-i Sunnah, which has been constituted with collecting true hadiths of the prophet Muhammad (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam), and interpretation of these hadiths by great scholars in later times.

It's worth dwelling upon a point here. The Sunnah is not a concept that can be dealt with separately from the Qur'an. In the Qur'an, it has been mentioned that the prophet removes heavy burdens, makes rules, teaches the ummah (society) the open and hidden meanings of the Qur'an.

As a matter of fact, when we look at the practices of Sunnah, we see that the prophet of Allah gave His companions a lot of information about numerous subjects. This information was then interpreted by scholars of the time, continued to be practised in daily lives and has passed on to us generations to generations.

Allah has informed in the surah Al-e Imran that the Prophet had the characteristic of teaching the Qur'an and purifying mankind:

Certainly Allah conferred a benefit upon the believers when He raised among them a Mes-

senger from among themselves, reciting to them His communications and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the wisdom, although before that they were surely in manifest error. (Surah Al-e Imran, 164)

It would be useful to attract attention to the phrase "teaching the book and the wisdom". Because, it is not possible to understand the Qur'an fully and practise its commands without following the sunnah of the prophet of Allah. Our religion is a whole only with the Qur'an and the Sunnah. At that times when the Qur'an was revealed, the people around the prophet learned and practised the commands of our religion as required by looking at the examples of the prophet. Indeed, the prophet has been an important example with His life, where he practised the commands of the religion, for us to understand the Qur'an.

We can give "salat" (ritual prayers) as a clear example to understanding the commands of the religion. As well known, in Islam, performing salat 5 times a day is an obligation and there are verses giving general information about how to perform it, how to perform ablution (wash).

However, we can understand how exactly we should perform prayers only by looking at sunnah. Because there is no detailed information in the verses about the way of praying, what to say in prayer, the way of man and woman's performing the prayer, the degree of importance of the prayers, the details of ablution, what nullifies ablution. We can learn such details only by looking at Sunnah of the prophet.

As another example, we can mention the suggestions of the prophet about Friday and the things He said about Friday prayer. Beside the subjects such as speaking that which is best, cleanness, foods, modesty, there are verses in the Qur'an about obligations such as fasting, ablution and hajj (pilgrimage). However, there is no detailed information about those worships in the verses. We learn the detail information about how to perform these worships from the interpretations of the scholars about the words and habits of the prophet.

Sunnah has ected the lives of Muslims throughout the history, of all past scholars of Islam, shaping their worships. Since the era of our prophet, which has been hundreds of years, the Muslims have worshipped in compliance with the Sunnah. Worships like praying five times a day, fasting, giving charity and sacrificing have not changed until today as they have been always performed according to the Sunnah. For this reason, starting discussions upon the worships, which have been practised for hundreds of years without change, and speculating about the subjects like time of the prayers, the number of the rakaats (units) are completely unnecessary. All of them are obligatory worships, whose details are described in the Sunnah. As a matter of fact, when we look at the Qur'an, we see many verses in the Qur'an about following the Messenger. In a verse, for example, Allah commands us to obey the Messenger as follows:

Surely We have sent you as a witness and as a bearer of good news and as a warner, That you may believe in Allah and His Messenger and may aid him and revere him; and (that) you may declare His glory, morning and evening. Surely those who swear allegiance to you do but swear allegiance to Allah; the hand of Allah is above their hands. Therefore whoever breaks (his faith), he breaks it only to the injury of his own soul, and whoever

fulfils what he has covenanted with Allah, He will grant him a mighty reward. (Surah Al-Fath, 8-10)

Whoever obeys the Messenger, he indeed obeys Allah, and whoever turns back, so We have not sent you as a keeper over them. (Surah An-Nisa, 80)

The point one needs to pay attention in the verses is that they emphasise on the concept of "obeying the Messenger". This point shows us that following the Messenger, in other words following His commands and rules is a worship that Allah brought as an obligation. When we look at the verses, we again see that our prophet has the authority to enjoin and forbid things. For example, the verse "... and whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah. (Surah Al-Hashr, 7) shows that the prophet may forbid certain things for His ummah, apart from those things that are forbidden in the Qur'an. Besides, it is again informed in the verses that the believers took the matters that they did not understand to the prophet and the prophet judged for them.

Those conducts, on the other hand, such as opposing the Messenger's being a judge, or disrespecting His judgements are described in the verses as "transgression". The certainty of the judgement of our prophet and the need for obeying His judgement is stressed in another verse as follows:

It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision: if any one disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong Path. (Surah Al-Ahzab, 36)

As seen up to here, Allah commands in His verses a strict obedience to His prophet. For this reason, Islam can only be lived through practising the Sunnah along

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Harry Potter: Facts About Fiction

As expected there was much frenzy around the latest Harry Potter book. Bookstores and clubs around the world arranged special midnight parties and other events in celebration of the launching of the long-awaited fifth book in the series. A grandiose countdown was held in Times Square for the coming of the fifth book.

The book was set to break many old records. Online bookseller Amazon had already received one million pre-orders of the new book, its largest pre-order ever. Scholastic, the American publisher had ordered 8.5 million copies as the largest first printing ever. Worldwide, 13 million copies of the book had rolled off the presses in a massive print run.

The other books in the Harry Potter series have been translated into more than 55 languages, including Urdu, Persian, and Turkish. Nearly 200 million copies of the first four books have been sold in 200 countries.

What is all this craze about?

The series chronicles the growing up of a young orphan wizard named Harry Potter who attends a secret magic boarding school called Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Harry is a very unique wizard. His parents are killed while he is a baby by a wicked powerful wizard named Voldemort, but generally called "you-know-who" or "he-who-must-not-be-named". Voldemort fails in his attempt to kill Harry and instead is nearly destroyed when his magic rebounds on him. Harry is left with a lightning shaped scar on his forehead.

Harry is sent to live with his

"muggle" (non-magical people) relatives for the next ten years. He lives a miserable life, tormented by his aunt and uncle and his spoiled cousin. They attempt to keep him from knowing that he is a wizard.

Then, suddenly a letter arrives from Hogwarts on his eleventh birthday, changing his life completely. Harry finds out he is a wizard and rather famous for his encounter with the evil lord Voldemort. Despite opposition from his aunt and uncle, Harry goes to the wizard boarding school where he meets new people, including his best friends Ron and Hermione. Harry discovers that he has both admirers and enemies.

Each book details the events of one school year.

While the books are characterized by most people as innocent fantasy and entertainment, they contain many evil messages - not all of which are subtle.

The books glorify magic and sorcery. Harry and his classmates regularly cast spells, brew potions, learn to tell the future, communicate with the spirits of the dead, train magical animals, and ride brooms. They study astrology, crystal gazing, numerology, transfiguration, and divination. Darker things occur as well such as murder, human sacrifice, drinking of unicorn blood, etc. The fight between good and evil in this book is actually a conflict between "good magic" and "evil magic", both of which are evil.

The books are in effect promoters of paganism. They glorify magic and paganism while non-magical people, called Muggles, are despised and portrayed as boring, narrow-minded, and paranoid of magic.

Not surprisingly, the main characters

in the story have few noble qualities; they lie with impunity, use profanity, don't respect their elders, break rules regularly, and are unrepentant.

And for all these qualities and more, the books are popular and are having an effect. It is the "in" thing to purchase the book. And not just the book. Children have gone crazy over Harry Potter memorabilia, surrounding themselves with Harry Potter T-shirts, posters, toys, costumes, wands, hats, etc.

Welcome to the world of capitalism and paganism, where superstitions and the occult reign supreme in the hearts and minds of people, and where the twin forces have forged an "alliance of the willing" that is doing its "magic" on a global scale.

Capitalism is all about maximization of profits and if that requires appealing to the lowest instincts and the darkest recesses of human nature, so be it. Millions of dollars have been spent on advertising the latest craze on billboards, buttons, bumper stickers, and posters etc. U.S. publisher Scholastic alone has planned a \$4 million marketing budget for this single book - among the largest advertising budgets ever for a book.

The media machine --- equally adept at political, cultural, and commercial propaganda --- has been doing its part faithfully, paying a great deal of attention to the smallest events relating to the coming of the fifth book. It has been glorifying the book that glorifies sorcery.

Even if it were innocent entertainment (which it is not) the extreme devotion would be unjustified. But this culture is given to extremes and incidents of mass craziness are nothing new in it. The cabbage patch dolls craze in the 1980s was similar to current craze over the Harry Potter books. The Cabbage Patch Dolls were the fad of the 1980s. The most distinctive feature about them was that each doll looked a bit different from oth-

ers and came with its own unique name and birthday, "adoption papers," and a "birth certificate." Marketing gimmick and television coverage combined to make sales explode starting in 1983. Chartered planes were used to bring the dolls from the overseas manufacturing plants to meet the ever increasing demand. Fist fights among eager customers often broke out in retail stores when a shipment of dolls arrived. In 1985, Coleco posted record sales of \$600 million, thanks to their Cabbage Patch Kids.

When life has no higher purpose, entertainment and fun become the overriding goal in life. When there is no belief in or clear concept of God as Creator and Master of the universe, superstition, sorcery, and the occult become fascinating.

It is a reflection on the state of the society that there has been scarce opposition to this series that promises to become darker with each new release.

The Role of Muslims

In this current state of hysteria, Muslims should have played an important role in opposing this book and exposing the flaws of this culture. It is the duty of Muslims to guide the world, rather than blindly follow the ignorant masses. The Qur'an commands us in Surah Al-Kahf, "And don't obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds." [Al-Kahf 18:28]

Yet, unfortunately, we find very little opposition or reflection from Muslims, many of whom have chosen to blindly follow the pop culture. Many Muslims have assured themselves that the books are harmless fiction. Others even claim them to be beneficial because they encourage reading. Reading what? It does not occur to them to ask that question.

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The Islamic Personality

Ihsaan

Ayub A. Hamid

Ihsaan means striving to reach the best standards of performance in any circumstances or situations. It represents excellence, graciousness and benevolence. While 'Adl (fairness and justice) requires satisfactory performance of one's obligations to others and fulfilling the rights of others on oneself, Ihsaan suggests doing more than that which a person is obligated to do and giving more to others than what they are entitled to. Thus, while 'Adl ensures peace and security of human society, Ihsaan makes it loving and caring and adds beauty to it. It is the single most distinguishing feature that raises a human society above any other creations of Allah Subhaanahu wa Ta'aala and makes Allah proud of humanity. That is why Allah SWT has mentioned the following in five different verses of the Holy Qur-aan:

"Allah loves those who practice Ihsaan." (Al-Baqarah 2:195; Aali Imraan 3:134, 148; Al-Maaidah 5:13, 93)

Like 'Adl, Ihsaan is a comprehensive concept that covers all human affairs whether it is about one's relationship with Allah, interactions with people or fulfilling social obligations. When it is applied to one's relationship with Allah, it represents excellence in servitude to Allah so that a person performs his servitude to Allah as if Allah is right in front of him keenly observing his performance. Naturally, when we perform in this world with a consciousness that we are being observed by Allah SWT, our performance is going to be the most sincere and the most excellent just as people perform better when

they are being watched by those in whose good books they want to be in e.g. a supervisor or best friend.

When The Messenger of Allah, Sall Allahu `alayhi wa sallam was asked what is Ihsaan, he responded:

"You fear Allah as if you are seeing Him, because if you cannot see Him, He is watching you." (Reported by Abu Hurairah in Bukhaaree and Muslim)

When it is about people, it represents benevolence towards people and graciousness in dealings. The most important is this respect is Ihsaan towards one's parents.

"We have enjoined on man to behave with his parents with Ihsaan." (Al-Ahqaaf 46:15)

While dealing with other people, the most important aspects of Ihsaan are giving, patience and forgiveness:

"Those who spend (in the way of Allah) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress their anger and who forgive people; and Allah loves Muhsineen (those who practice Ihsaan)." (Aali Imraan 3:134)

"So, forgive them and overlook (their offensive behaviour), verily, Allah loves Muhsineen." (Al-Maaidah 5:13)

"Indeed, who maintains Taqwa and remains patient and steadfast, Allah does not let those who practice Ihsaan lose their reward." (Yousuf 12:90)

It applies to what we say as well:

"And say to my slaves that they should utter only what is the best." (Banee Israaeel 17:53)

Once the Messenger of Allah, Sall Allahu `alayhi wa sallam asked his compan-

ions:

"Should I guide you to the qualities, because of which, Allah raises people's ranks?" On affirmative response, he said, "Be patient (forbearing) with him who treats you ignorantly; forgive him who is unfair to you; give him who deprives you; and, fulfill social obligations to the relative who is delinquent in doing his part." (Reported from 'Ubaadah Ibn Saamit in Targheeb n Tarheeb With reference to At-Tabaraani)

The same message was conveyed, among other things, in the following Hadith. The Messenger of Allah said,

"My Lord has commanded me nine qualities:

1. Fearing Allah both secretly and openly;
2. Saying only the words of justice both when angry and when happy;
3. Maintaining moderation both during poverty and affluence;
4. Making up (social obligations and relationships) with a relative who shirks his obligation to me or breaks away from me;
5. Giving even to the person who deprives me;
6. Forgiving him who is unjust to me;
7. Reflecting when I am quiet; remembering Allah when I speak; and, learning lessons from what I see,
8. Enjoining good; and,
9. Forbidding evil."

(Reported by Abu Hurairah in Mishkaatul Masaabeeh)

Normally, responding to negative behaviour in the best manner and practising Ihsaan consistently as mentioned in the verses and Ahaadeeth given above, results in winning the hearts of those who are treated with Ihsaan. So much so that it has the potential of converting enemies into loving friends, as stated in the following verse:

"Good and evil are not equal. Respond in a way that is the best. Then, he between whom and you was enmity will become as if he was a close friend." (Fussilat 41:34)

Sometimes, however, a person practising Ihsaan may not individually witness the benefits of his best practices. In such situations, a sincere believer may feel discouraged, used, or broken hearted. Allah Subhaanahu wa Ta`aala assures them that:

"Verily, Allah does not let the Muhsineen (who practice Ihsaan) lose their reward." (At-Towbah 9:120, Hood 11:115, Yousuf 12:56, 12:90)

"We do not let the reward of one who performs in the most excellent manner be lost." (Al-Kahf 18:30)

He also assured:

"Allah is with those who have Taqwa and practice Ihsaan." (An-Nahl 16:128)

"Allah's Mercy is near those who practice Ihsaan." (Al-A'raaf 7:56)

"Yes indeed, who turns his face submissively toward Allah and he practices excellence (Ihsaan), his reward is with his Lord." (Al-Baqarah 2:112)

And the rewards Allah has promised to those who practice Ihsaan are also the best. For example:

"Is the reward for excellence other than excellent." (Ar-Rahmaan 55:60)

"To reward those who do their best with what is the best." (An-Najm 53:31)

"For those who perform excellently is the best (reward) and even more." (Yoonus 10:26)

Hence, Allah expects us to perform in the best possible way that we can:

"Who can be better in deen than him who turns to Allah in submission and practices Ihsaan." (An-Nisaa 4:125)

"And Practice Ihsaan, Allah loves those who practice Ihsaan." (Al-Baqarah 2:195)

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Islam prohibits both pointless entertainment (lahw) and sorcery. But countless Muslims seem to be unaware of that. And they are the ones fascinated by Harry Potter.

The Erasure of Islam

Ziauddin Sardar

What Enlightenment? It may have been good for Europe, but for the rest of the world in general, and Islam in particular, the Enlightenment was a disaster. Despite their stand for freedom and liberty, reason and liberal thought, Enlightenment thinkers saw the non-West as irrational and inferior, morally decadent and fit only for colonisation. This legacy is not only with us but is positively thriving in the guise of neo-conservative thought, dogmatic secularism and scientism.

For key Enlightenment thinkers, such as Voltaire, de Montesquieu, Volney and Pascal, Europe occupied a special place: it was to be the destiny of humanity, construed as Western man. They worked hard to provide a rational justification for colonisation. They rationalised the medieval images, anxieties and fear of Islam and its Prophet – so evident in the sections devoted to Muhammad in Pascal's *Pensees* – and presented it as evidence for the innate inferiority of Islam. They deliberately suppressed the Muslim contribution to science and learning and severed all intellectual links between Islam and Europe. Their Eurocentricism thus further locked Islam into an exclusive confrontation with the West, which continues to this day.

For thirteenth and fourteenth century thinkers of Christendom, such as Roger Bacon and John Wycliff, Islam was simply a pagan, enemy Empire. To their credit, the Enlightenment thinkers saw Islam as a civilisation. But it was a civilisation grounded in a backward society and inferior political institutions and religious beliefs at its core. In *Mohammad and Fanaticism*, Voltaire denounced Islam in harsh and hostile terms. Later, in the *Essai sur les moeurs*, he was a little more re-

strained, but the judgement did not change. He still saw Islam as an embodiment of fanaticism, antihumanism, irrationalism and the violent will to power. But despite this, Muslims did have a few positive aspects. They could move towards greater tolerance thanks largely to Islam's loose sexual standards, which made it akin to a natural religion. While Jesus was good, Christians had become intolerant. But Muslims were tolerant despite their evil Prophet. Positive development in one case, negative in another. This is how Voltaire reconciled his deep seated prejudices of Islam and Muslims with reason.

For all their sabre rattling against religion, Enlightenment thinkers saw Christianity as the standard of civilised behaviour and norm of all religion. In effect, they further naturalised the natural law theory of medieval Christianity which had always been both vague in the sense of never precisely defined yet highly specific in being a universalising of Christian norms as the standard for human behaviour. Islam remained the antithesis to Christianity. Thus, in *Les Ruines*, Volney announced that 'Mohammad succeeded in building a political and theological empire at the expense of those of Moses and Jesus' vicars'. Or, in the scene where he has an imam speaking about 'the law of Mohammad', 'God has established Mohammad as his minister on earth; he has handed over the world to him to subdue with the sabre those who refuse to believe in his law'. Volney described Muhammad as the 'apostle of a merciful God who preaches nothing but murder and carnage', the spirit of intolerance and exclusiveness that 'shocks every notion of justice'. While Christianity

might be irrational, Volney declared that it was gentle and compassionate but Islam had a contempt for science – a truly bizarre claim since Volney himself, and all his fellow Enlightenment thinkers, learnt most their science and philosophy from such names as al-Frabi, Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd.

While the Enlightenment may have been concerned with reason, its champions were not too worried about truth when it came to Islam. They not only shamelessly plagiarised philosophy, science and learning from Islam, but the very hallmark of Enlightenment, liberal humanism, has its origins in Islam. It is based on the adab movement of classical Islam, which was concerned with the etiquette of being human. Islam developed a sophisticated system of teaching law and humanism that involved not just institutions such as the university, with its faculties of law, theology, medicine and natural philosophy, but also an elaborate method of instruction including work-study courses, a curriculum that included grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, medicine, and moral philosophy, and mechanisms for the formation of a humanist culture such as academic associations, literary circles, clubs and other coterie that sustain intellectuals and the literati. The adab literature and institutions were, in fact, what enlightenment was all about in Islam. One cannot have a revolt on behalf of reason in Islam because reason is central to its world-view: reason is the other side of revelation and the Qur'an presents both as 'signs of God'. A Muslim society cannot function without either. While Muslims can hardly be exonerated for the decline of reason and learning in Muslim civilisation, it was colonialism

that as deliberate policy destroyed adab culture in Muslim societies.

But Enlightenment Europe swallowed the adab system, including text books, en masse. However, since it was a product of an inferior culture and civilisation its origins had to be shrouded. Thus, classical Arabic had to be replaced with another classical language, Latin. This was followed by a systematic expunging of all traces of the influence of Islamic thought on Europe. From the days of Voltaire right up to 1980, thanks largely to the efforts of Enlightenment scholars, it was a general western axiom that Islam had produced nothing of worth in philosophy, science and learning.

The Enlightenment legacy that Islam and Europe have nothing in common, that Islam is only a darker shadow of the West, that liberal secularism is the destiny of all human cultures, is much in evidence in our newspapers and television, literature and scholarship, as well as in our politics and foreign policies. It is the bedrock of Francis Fukuyama's 'End of History' hypothesis, Samuel Huntington's 'Clash of Civilisation' thesis, and the neo-conservative 'Project for the New American Century'. Voltaire's Bastards, to use the title of John Ralston Saul brilliant 1992 book, are busy rationalizing torture, military interventions, western supremacy and demonising Islam and Muslims. The Enlightenment may have been big on reason but it was, as Saul shows so convincingly, bereft of both meaning and morality.

Forgive me if I don't stand up and salute the Enlightenment.

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Two Doors in the Sky

Hazrat Anas (RA) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "For every person there are two doors in the Sky. One from which deeds ascend, and the other from which sustenance descends. When a Mu'min bondsman passes away then both doors weep for him." (Tirmizi)

Visiting the Raudha Mubarak

Virtues of visiting the Raudha Mubaarak:

Presenting oneself in the court of Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam is one of the greatest acts of worship, for which great rewards and virtues have been promised in the Ahaadeeth. Hereunder are a few virtues:

- ⇒ "My intercession becomes necessary for the one who visits my grave." (Daaraqutni/ Bayhaqi)
- ⇒ "Visiting me after my death is akin to visiting me during my lifetime." (Daaraqutni)
- ⇒ "The one who visits me with this being his sole intention will be in my company on the day of Qiyaamah." ('Uqayli)

One of the greatest virtues is that when a person presents himself before Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam and offers his salaam, Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam personally listens and replies to his salaam. (See Shifaaus Siqaam and Alqoulul Badee' of Shamsud Deen As-Sakhaawi r.a.)

Together with the virtues, visiting the Raudha Mubaarak has always been the practice of the Ummah since the time of the Sahaabah y.

Mulla `Ali Qari (r.a.) – the great Qari, Mufasssir, Muhaddith and Faqeeh – writes: "Visiting Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam is one of the greatest acts of worship, most virtuous of deeds, most promising means of attaining high ranks and is close to the position of the compulsory acts according to the consensus of the Muslims, regardless of those who oppose this view." (Irshaadus Saari pg. 502)

By this last statement Mulla `Ali Qari (r.a.) refers to some people who do not ascribe to any Mazhab. Under the pretext of directly following the Quraan and Hadeeth they contradict the entire Ummah and erro-

neously opine that it is impermissible to travel to Madinah Munawwarah with the intention of visiting Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam. However, this view is against the practice of the Sahaabah and Taabi`een and is the direct result of abandoning the following of the illustrious Imaams of Fiqh.

Qaadhi `Iyaadh (r.a.) says: "Visiting the Qabr of Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam is an accepted and unanimously agreed practice amongst the Muslims and an encouraged virtuous deed." (Shifaaus Siqaam pg. 53)

Etiquettes of visiting the Raudha Mubaarak:

When visiting the Raudha Mubaarak is such an important and meritorious act, then obviously it deserves utmost respect and etiquette.

There are many etiquettes of visiting the Raudha Mubaarak, the details of which are not within the scope of this article. However a few shall be listed below:

1. In principle, we should understand that during the entire journey to Madinah Munawwarah and the visit to the Raudha Mubaarak, the main element is love. If one has true love for Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam, then no one needs to instruct him how he should conduct himself in the esteemed presence of Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam. All these etiquettes would be displayed instinctively by him.
2. The intention for visiting Madinah Munawwarah should be purely to visit Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam.
3. One should not feel that he is visiting a dead person, rather it is the belief of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa`ah that Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam is alive in his

- grave. (Refer ShifaauS Siqaam, Alqoulul Badee` and other detailed books on this subject.)
4. Upon reaching Madinah Munawwarah, one should settle down as quick as possible (without rushing), take a bath, wear one's best clothes and apply `Itr (as one does on the days of Jumu`ah and `Eid).
 5. Proceed to the Musjidun Nabawi keeping in mind the sacredness of the land upon which one is walking. Be absolutely grateful to Allah Ta'ala for bestowing one with this great opportunity despite not being worthy of it.
 6. It is preferable to give some Sadqah before presenting oneself at the Raudha Mubaarak.
 7. Enter the Musjid fulfilling all the etiquettes.
 8. Read two Rakaats of Tahiyatul Musjid, preferably in the Riyaadhul Jannah if possible, otherwise in any other place in the Musjid.
 9. Engage in Du`aa, by firstly thanking Allah Ta'ala for affording one this great opportunity and secondly begging Him for His forgiveness. Thereafter, one should implore Allah Ta'ala to cleanse one's heart and make one befitting of appearing before the august presence of Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam.
 10. Proceed to the Raudha Mubaarak with utmost respect, with the heart brimming with the love of Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam and with the tongue constantly engaged in Durood.
 11. Present oneself before Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam and offer one's Salaam to him imagining him replying to the Salaam and with the full conviction that he does reply to the Salaam.
 12. Instead of reading the Salaam from a card or book in parrot-fashion, one should rather offer short forms of Salaam with full concentration, e.g. "As Salaatu was Salaamu `alaika ya Rasulallah" or "As Salaamu `alaika Ayyuhan Nabiyyu wa rahmatullahi wa Barakaatuh".
 13. Convey the Salaams of others in this manner, "As Salaatu was Salaamu `alaika ya Rasulallah min (the person's name)".
 14. Request Rasulallah salallahu alaihi wasallam for his intercession on the day of Qiyaamah.
 15. Engage in Du`aa to Allah Ta'ala for all one's needs. There is great hope of this Du`aa being accepted.
 16. Remain standing in front of the Raudha Mubaarak for as long as one remains focused.
 17. Move slightly to the right and offer Salaam to Abu Bakr radiyallahu anhu in these words, "As Salaamu `alaika ya Aba Bakr", and move further to the right and offer Salaam to `Umar radiyallahu anhu saying, "As Salaamu `alaika ya `Umar".
- If one follows these few guidelines, with concentration and the correct frame of mind, it will be a means of receiving tremendous benefit from this visit to the Raudha Mubaarak, Insha-Allah.
- May Allah Ta'ala bless us with the opportunity of presenting our impure souls and bodies in the esteemed court of Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam time and again with true love and respect, and then returning from there purified and forgiven, Aameen.

"Salaams from Allah"

Hadhrat Abdullah bin Mas`ood (RA) said: "When Allah Ta`ala intends taking the soul of a mu`min, He commands Malakul-Maut (the angel of death) thus; 'Convey My salaams to him.' When Malakul-Maut comes to take his soul he says to the person: 'Your Lord conveys salaam to you.'" (Kitaabul-Ahwaal, Sharhus-Sudoor)

Let them Forgive & Overlook

MADINAH-AL-MUNAWARRA, THE CITY OF THE PROPHET, IS ABUZZ with rumors. Ever since the Muslims returned from the battle of Bani al-Mustaliq the hypocrites have been busy spreading lies against Aisha radi-Allahu anha. These stories have become the topic of every gathering, the subject of discussion in every household in Madinah. Though most of the sincere Muslims are confident in the innocence of Aisha radi-Allahu anha, they are still quiet, waiting for this to be ascertained by the Prophet. The Prophet is also quiet, waiting for Allah to inspire him towards the truth. Thus, the hypocrites led by Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salool have advantage over the seemingly confusing situation and gear all their energies in spreading the lies. Unsuspectingly influenced by the hypocrites' rampage, a few Muslim thus begin to believe this false story. Some of these Muslims even actively help propagate it.

Among them is Mistah bin Uthatha radi-Allahu anhu, a cousin of Abu Bakr radi-Allahu anhu. He is an extremely poor man with no money except that which Abu Bakr radi-Allahu anhu regularly gives him. Mistah's endorsement of the hypocrites' story adds somewhat more weight to it, as he is a man with a fine reputation. It can be no longer said that belief in this story is limited to the circle of hypocrites.

And so a trying and gruesome month passes before Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala reveals the innocence of Aisha radi-Allahu anha. The Muslims finally exhale a sigh of relief and a sense of normalcy returns to Madinah.

Hurt and angered by Mistah's previous allegations, Abu Bakr takes an oath that

he will never spend on Mistah again. Considering Abu Bakr's perspective, this is a perfectly justifiable, even expected, position. Here is a person wholly dependant on Abu Bakr and yet is willfully spreading and endorsing wild, enormous rumors about Abu Bakr's beloved daughter. How else could Abu Bakr react in such an ironic situation? How else can he treat a person who slandered his daughter, the Mother of the Believers, with the worst of slander?

And then Allah reveals: And let not those who are good and wealthy among you swear not to help their kinsmen, those in need and those who left their homes in Allah's Cause. Let them forgive and overlook. Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? Verily! Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." (24.22)

Abu Bakr radi-Allahu anhu, despite his anguish and hurt feelings, immediately responds by exclaiming, "By Allah, I would love it that Allah forgives me!" He promptly returns to his previous habit, and swears that he will never cease spending on Mistah.

This was the mercy and forgiveness the Qur'an teaches, the mercy and ties of kinship that Allah is pleased to see in His servants.

Now let's think ... what would one of us do in the same situation? What would YOU do? Here's someone you've always helped, been good to; someone who absolutely depends on you. And now when you're going through some tough times yourself, that person, instead of being thankful for all what you've done and using this opportunity to make it up to you, gets up and stabs you in the back. Instead of telling the world of your

goodness, goes on to spread tales. Would you go on enjoying ties of kinship?

Conflicts, trivial and great, arise between friends and families all the time. But the question is: how are we supposed to react in the face of such? Should we defend ourselves to the end because we are in the right? Should we refuse to forgive the other and overlook his/her faults, because we were wronged? Should we cut off relationships, shun one another due to a petty or even great argument? How can we let go of our ego and just forgive and overlook despite the great misdeed targeted against us?

A glance at Abu Bakr radi-Allahu anhus life will tell us that no matter what the sin, no matter how grave the misdeed is, there should always remain a window leading to reconciliation and forgiveness. In the Qur'an we are time and time again reminded to forgive each other and live with each other in harmony and love. Regardless if the squabble is wholly the fault of the notorious "other" it is vital to realize that greatness is not in raising our head high and stomping off, rather it is in bending down and seeking to reconcile; in forgiving and overlooking. There is no attitude that can ever bring about the most reward and pleasure than that of unhesitant forgiveness. Being oft-forgiving is an attribute Allah uses to describe Himself, and indeed we should aspire to build this lofty description within us, even with our limited capabilities. We beg Allah to forgive our transgressions, our faults when we are entirely at fault; can we not forgive pettier mistakes directed at us!?

There will, of course, always be times when forgiving may seem the hardest pill to swallow. It may sometimes seem impossible to simply dispense with all the frustration and anger and move on. We may be more willing to move a mountain than forgive a person who has wronged us, to overlook his insults,

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Do You Know

Approximately 95% of the victims of domestic violence are women. (Department of Justice figures)

Every 9 seconds in the United States a woman is assaulted and beaten.

4,000,000 women a year are assaulted by their partners.

In the United States, a woman is more likely to be assaulted, injured, raped, or killed by a male partner than by any other type of assailant.

Every day, 4 women are murdered by boyfriends or husbands.

Prison terms for killing husbands are twice as long as for killing wives.

93% of women who killed their mates had been battered by them. 67% killed them to protect themselves and their children at the moment of murder.

25% of all crime is wife assault.

70% of men who batter their partners either sexually or physically abuse their children.

Domestic violence is the number one cause of emergency room visits by women.

73% of the battered women seeking emergency medical services have already separated from the abuser.

Women are most likely to be killed when attempting to leave the abuser. In fact, they're at a 75% higher risk than those who stay.

The number-one cause of women's injuries is abuse at home. This abuse happens more often than car accidents, mug-

ging, and rape **combined**.

Up to 37% of all women experience battering. This is an estimated 566,000 women in Minnesota alone.

Battering often occurs during pregnancy. One study found that 37% of pregnant women, across all class, race, and educational lines, were physically abused during pregnancy.

60% of all battered women are beaten while they are pregnant.

34% of the female homicide victims over age 15 are killed by their husbands, ex-husbands, or boyfriends.

2/3 of all marriages will experience domestic violence at least once.

Weapons are used in 30% of domestic violence incidents.

Approximately 1,155,600 adult American women have been victims of one or more forcible rapes by their husbands.

Over 90% of murder-suicides involving couples are perpetrated by the man. 19-26% of male spouse-murderers committed suicide.

When only spouse abuse was considered, divorced or separated men committed 79% of the assaults and husbands committed 21%.

Abusive husbands and lovers harass 74% of employed battered women at work, either in person or over the telephone, causing 20% to lose their jobs.

Physical violence in dating relationships ranges from 20-35%.

It is estimated that between 20% to 52% of high school and college age dating couples have engaged in physical abuse.

More than 50% of child abductions result from domestic violence.

Injuries that battered women receive are at least as serious as injuries suffered in **90%** of violent felony crimes.

In 1991, only 17 states kept data on

reported domestic violence offenses. These reports were limited to murder, rape, robbery, and serious bodily injury.

More than half of battered women stay with their batterer because they do not feel that they can support themselves and their children alone.

In homes where domestic violence occurs, children are abused at a rate **1,500% higher** than the national average.

Up to 64% of hospitalized female psychiatric patients have histories of being physically abused as adults.

50% of the homeless women and children in the U.S. are fleeing abuse.

The amount spent to shelter animals is three times the amount spent to provide emergency shelter to women from domestic abuse situations.

Family violence kills as many women every 5 years as the total number of Americans who died in the Vietnam War.



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to overcome our bad feelings. Abu Bakr, radi-Allahu anhu, despite being faced with attacks that were entirely unprovoked, did not hesitate to forgive once he was enlightened with the virtues of forgiveness. In his zeal, he produced the most sublime example of forgiving, in response to one of the most vicious attacks perpetrated.

As differences and conflicts arise and pollute the atmosphere, there needs to be this window present to ventilate it. The window makes it possible to blow away the charged feelings and allow fresh air in one's life. It may be hard to open it and push it back along its rusty railings. But we must remember, that this very window is the same window which has been promised to lead to the forgiveness and mercy of Allah Himself.

Sumayya bint Khalid

Muslims in the West: Challenges and Opportunities

*Interview With Maulana Khalilul Rahman
Sajjad Nomani Nadwi*

[Maulana Khalilul Rahman Sajjad Nomani Nadwi is from Lucknow, India and is a prolific scholar and thinker of Islam. He is the son of the distinguished Muslim scholar Maulana Muhammad Manzoor Nomani, Rahmatullahi Alayh. He studied at the famous educational establishments of Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama and Madinah University. He is a renowned Mufassir of the Qur'an and travels widely for the purpose of Dawah. Recently, he was invited to South Africa to visit the leading Islamic and educational establishments. Sulaiman Kazi from Batley, West Yorkshire joined him for a week and interviewed him in Cape Town on 20th October 2002. Below is a transcript of his advice for Muslims living in the West.]

Question: What advice would you give to Muslims in the West following the events of September 11, 2001?

Answer: Transforming challenges into opportunities is a Sunnah (tradition) of the Prophet Muhammad, Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam. All Islamic progress has been made when challenges have been transformed into opportunities.

One positive aspect of the global situation is that the whole world is now discussing Islam. People are more willing to understand Islam. This is therefore an ideal opportunity to promote and propagate Islam, which can be done by practical example through one's behavior. At the same time try to dispel and allay fears and misconceptions about the religion.

In order to avail of this opportunity, a balanced psyche is needed. One should avoid being reactionary and adopt a positive approach. Otherwise there is the danger of being swept aside by the tide of hatred and extremism. There are greater harms than benefits of this to Islam. If we can transform the challenges that face us into opportunities, then ultimately we are going to prevail.

Question: What advice would you give to Muslims regarding Dawah in the West?

Answer: Open up. Find opportunities and seize chances to convey the message of Islam to others. Create chances and try to invite people, whether at home or in public places. Try your best to allay fear and clarify any misunderstanding about Islam. All attempts should be made to remove doubts and misgivings about Islam.

Muslims also need to learn how to share their values, which they have been concealing for the last several decades. They had done this at the time as a precautionary measure to preserve their identity and this was considered necessary too. However, we can no longer afford to live in an isolationist manner. It is imperative to share your ideals with people. You need to discuss and explain your beliefs in schools, colleges, factories, offices etc. Wherever possible you need to promote a true understanding of Islam and Muslims. For this purpose people should take time off work if necessary. The media should be used appropriately in disseminating the true message of Islam. Proper use should also be made of the Mosques. The methodology

of Masjidun Nabi will instruct us in this matter. Non-Muslims, including women visitors, would visit the Masjid and the Prophet would welcome them earnestly. Bear in mind that those people who have not yet accepted Islam are not bound by its rules and regulations, for example the rules of purity and cleanliness do not apply to them. Of course these rules only apply once someone accepts Islam. By understanding this delicate point it will become easy to open our Mosques to non-Muslims.

We should thereby draw public opinion more favorably towards Islam. We have to make the point clear that there is some Satanic force at work which, for its own vested interest, is creating unfounded hatred and misgivings about Islam and Muslims. It is creating a mutual hostility between Muslims and the rest of the world. We must be vigilant about this, and not let them succeed.

Question: What advice would you offer to the Ulama, professionals and Muslims masses living in the West?

Answer: I would humbly request the religious scholars - as a friend and colleague - that they have so far succeeded quite admirably in preserving Islam among Muslims in the western world. Their sermons, advices and admonitions have made this achievement possible. When I visit western countries I am reminded about the Qur'anic Verse: "And lo! in the cattle there is a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies, from between the refuse and the blood, pure milk palatable to the drinkers." (Surah 14: 66). There is a parable in this verse in which Almighty Allah illustrates His signs by drawing pure milk between waste and blood. Similarly, you are living in an environment of immorality in the West yet preserving the spirit of purity and faith. This is highly commendable.

The next stage of our endeavor has begun, although somewhat belatedly. This

relates to shifting from an attitude of preserving ones faith to actually propagating it to non-Muslims. If this opportunity is lost then future generations may not be so fortunate. It is my humble request, especially to the Ulama, to use whatever means to increase efforts in this regard. Please try to avoid and overlook differences, especially finer points stemming from the teachings of different schools of thought. Our challenge at this time is not against any school of thought, but against global satanic forces. Our attention should be focused in that direction. I can say no more to the Ulama but to remind them of the approach of Shah Waliullah, Rahmatullahi Alayh (1703-1762). He was born at a time when Kufr was in the ascendancy. But we can draw valuable lessons and wisdom from his methodology and efforts in uniting people of different affiliations. He managed to unite Muslims and confront the inherent dangers posed by the forces of Kufr. This resulted in the great movement of Syed Ahmed Shahid, Rahmatullahi Alayh (1786-1831), and later Shaikhul Hind Maulana Mahmudul Hasan, Rahmatullahi Alayh.

As far as professionals are concerned, I would ask them to use their position and power not only for the advancement of their careers but also for Muslims and humanity at large.

Regarding the Muslim masses, I would request them to become true Muslims and persuade as many people as possible towards Islam. If you do this collectively then a noticeable difference can be made. Everybody should contribute in this noble effort - males and females, young and old.

Finally and very importantly, don't become despondent. Don't become irritated or vexatious by world events. Try to understand that after every difficulty there is ease. The Qur'an alludes to this by saying: "Verily then along with every hardship is ease. Verily along with every hardship is ease." (94: 5-6).

All nations have to go through these cycles. A human also goes through various phases, for example sometimes he is happy, sometimes he is sad. Nations too must go through different circumstances. If we become afraid then our recovery is hampered. It is therefore necessary to sustain ones will-power and self-confidence. May Almighty Allah grant the whole Ummah the understanding not to be despondent, irritated or vexatious but to channel their energies towards finding solutions, instead of creating problems.

Question: What involvement should Muslims have in the political process to redress injustices in the world?

Answer: Islam has been ordained to establish justice on earth. The Qur'an refers to the mission of the Prophets, Alayhis Salam, saying: "Indeed We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance (justice) that mankind may keep up justice " (Surah 57:25). All efforts should be made, bearing in mind the political situation of a particular country, to ensure full participation in the political process. This is an absolute necessity. Muslims should not be reticent about their involvement in this regard. Rather, they should make progress in this matter. Obviously they do not have the ideal political process yet, as this can only happen when injustice is totally eliminated. We can however draw valuable guidance from the life and teachings of Rasulullah, Sallaho Alayhi Wasallam. He established alliances with various non-Muslim groups and signed treaties. These alliances were made with a view to combating the major evil. Keep this in mind and, whilst exercising caution and prudence, ensure your active participation in nation-building and social work. Only then will we be able to attract positive comments about our character. Otherwise, it is unreal to expect people to understand Islam simply by visiting our Mosques and reading Islamic books.

Anarchy and Choas

This is another aspect that is being brought to your notice. Do you understand what is anarchy and chaos (bid-amani)? This anarchy and chaos is very widespread these days, not only in this country but all over, throughout the whole world. If you look at America, at China, at Japan, at Russia, at Turkey, at Iran, at Iraq – in fact, wherever you look you will see anarchy and chaos, not only in this country. If you cannot see it ask those who are aware of this.

Bid-amani is spread throughout the world. Why is bid-amani widespread? The reason is that bid-amani is rampant within you. Let me repeat what I have just said: this bid-amani, this chaos and anarchy is widespread throughout the world and this is the external manifestation of the chaos and anarchy that is rampant within you.

When this bid-amani disappears from within all of you then the bid-amani from the world will also disappear. As long as this bid-amani is within each of you in a collective manner bid-amani will be prevalent. You may try whatever other methods you wish – hold up your banners and march, have demonstrations, hold conferences and pass resolutions, have lectures galore – but bid-amani will not disappear.

Do you understand? This bid-amani will not go away. What do lectures achieve? What do demonstrations and marches achieve? With banners in your hands go around shouting "Nāre-takbīr", what will it achieve? Nothing. Aman (peace and order) will not come because bid-amani (anarchy and chaos) is in every individual

The external bid-amani that is spread all over is an offshoot of the internal bid-amani in the individual. As I have discussed just now, that the garments of the body are a manifestation of the taqwa of the heart. When the taqwa of the heart disappears the clothes from the body will also come off. The outer is a manifestation of the inner. Similarly, the aman that is inside will manifest externally. When this inner aman goes, the aman on the outside also goes and bid-amani presents itself.

The worst form of bid-amani is kufr. The most odious type of bid-amani is kufr. Kufr predominates in the world whereas Iman is scanty. The non-Muslims are in the majority in the world and the mu'minin are in the minority. Kufr is bid-amani and, therefore, the non-Muslims being in the majority, there is no question of aman becoming established. Let us go a step further: With the existence of bid-amani of kufr the imperceptible bid-amani kufri and mushriki has entered into us as well. Bid-amani has now been enhanced and given dignity! Darkness is now overpowering and overwhelming.

You brothers may not have seen that age, but we have several times seen the raging of tremendous storms, not once but several times. At times, just before Asr, while the sun is still shining, a severe storm would blow up. The whole sky would be filled with thick clouds which would cover the sun completely. It would become so dark that one could not even see one's fingers in front of one. Yet, the sun is shining beyond the clouds! However, it has become so dark that the day is darker than night itself!

Do you understand? Bid-amani has become widespread: the sun is shining – the light of aman (peace and order) is there – but the darkness of bid-amani has overpowered this light, as at the times of storms, and the whole world is covered by darkness!

In a similar way there is bid-amani

within us and this bid-amani has enveloped our entire inner being and has overpowered the light within us. So, there is no question of radiance and aman manifestation themselves.

Another aspect: there is shirk-e-khafi and shirk-e-jali (minor and major shirk). Minor shirk has joined up with major shirk, resulting in darkness existing in all the four corners of the earth. These are the effects of bid-amani, this is how it has spread. There is no question of aman prevailing.

That is why nothing will be achieved by lectures and speeches, by conferences, by demonstrations, by strikes, by banner-waving and sit-downs in front of various institutions. All these methods are completely and absolutely contrary to the Orders of Allah. Adopting these contrary methods and hoping for peace and order...? It will never happen! The reason is that the Rules laid down by Ahkamul-Hakimin (Allah) for attaining peace and order (aman) are different. So, there is no question of aman prevailing if methods are adopted contrary to these Rules. In essence, aman has to come within oneself.

Excerpt of a discourse held by Hadhrat Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib on 1st September 1986 in Jalalabad, India

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with the Qur'an. The explanations made in the verses related to this subject are certain. Therefore, putting forward a claim of turning away from the sunnah of the prophet is completely opposite to the essence of the Qur'an.

Imam Malik, one of the greatest Islam scholars, compared the Sunnah of the prophet to the ark of Noah and said : The Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammad (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) is like the Ark of Noah. Whoever embarks upon it reaches salvation and whoever refuses is drowned." The true salvation will be realised only when the creed of ahl-i Sunnah is understood by everybody and prevails in the society.

Harun Yahya

Khutbat-i-Madras

The Life of Prophet Muhammad

The Most Comprehensive and Eternal Model

Syed Sulaiman Nadvi (RA)

The comprehensiveness of a biography: For a biography to be a perfect whole and a complete model for others, it is essential that it should touch all aspects of human life. What is meant by wholeness here is that different classes or different groups of human society need an ideal example to follow. An individual too, in his various undertakings, his obligations and relations to others needs practical examples to follow. An ideal biography ought to provide that. From this perspective also, we can easily see that no other historical personality comes up to this standard except the last prophet of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him).

What is religion? It is simply the recognition of one's obligations towards Allah and towards fellow human beings. In other words, carrying out one's duties as ordained by Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of all beings. It is only logical and practical then, for the followers of every religion to find out the details of their duties and obligations in the life of their respective founders or Prophets and apply them in their daily life. If you look for man's obligations to Allah and to his fellow beings, you will find them nowhere in such great and complete detail except in the life of the Prophet of Islam (Peace be upon him).

In our world, religions are of two kinds: the ones that do not recognize the existence of God, such as Buddhism and Jainism. Therefore there is no mention of God's attributes and what the human beings owe Him. It would be futile to look for such attributes as sincerity, love of God and faith in His

Oneness in the life of the founders of these religions. The other kind is those religions that believe in God in one form or the other. However, the available records of the lives of their founders or prophets do not contain the details of their quest for God. In what attributes of God did they believe in? How devoted were they in their belief?

Such details are simply not available in their biographies to show us what our belief should be about God. Apart from the Oneness of God, His Commandments, and conditions for offering sacrifice, there is not a single sentence in the whole of Torah to show how devoted Moses was to Allah. There is no mention of the intensity of his love for God, his faith and trust in Him, the deep impression that Allah's glorious attributes left on his heart and his devotion and worship of Allah. Whereas it may be asked if Moses' religion was to be the final religion and for all time, it was the sacred duty of his followers to record all these details for the benefit of the coming generations. But they failed to do so simply because it was not Allah's intention.

The life of Jesus Christ is mirrored in the Bible. We learn from the gospels that God was the father of Jesus. But we learn nothing about the nature of the relations between the son and the father. Although we get to know that the Father had great love for the son, but it is not clear to what extent was the son's love and devotion for the Father. How did he offer his prayers to Him? Did he ever ask Him for anything other than the daily bread? Was there any night other than the

night of his arrest where he is shown to be supplicating and praying to his Lord. If the life history of such a great prophet of Allah like Jesus Christ (Peace be upon him) is so sketchy and devoid of all necessary details, what spiritual benefit can be derived from such a biography? Had the relations between God and His servant been defined and described clearly in Christ's life history, there would have been no need for the first Christian king to hold a Council, of 300 Christian scholars at Nice, some three hundred and fifty years after the death of Christ to decide the matter. Then those relations would not have remained such a riddle up to the present times.

Consider human rights and obligations towards one another. With the only exception of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) the biographies of all other prophets and founders of other religions are devoid of this basic value of human life. For instance, Buddha left his wife and immediate family alone and took to the Jungle. He never saw his loving wife and his only son ever again. Cut off from his friends and the burden of ruling his people, he thought he could find peace of mind or nirvana in solitude and that was to be the basic purpose of human life. If Buddha's life was the ideal life, what attraction is there in it for the people of this world which includes kings and their subjects, the rich and the poor, masters and servants, fathers and sons, brothers and sisters, friends and foes? Can his life become a model for the worldly traders and Buddhist monks at the same time? That is the reason his own followers never actually followed him, otherwise the flourishing industries and thriving businesses of China, Japan, Thailand, Tibet and Burma would have come to a standstill and their bustling cities would have turned into ruins.

The only outstanding feature of the life of Moses is his leadership in war. Apart from that, his followers cannot find a model

for their guidance in their worldly affairs regarding their rights and obligations towards one another. What was his attitude with respect to the family relations, like that of a husband and wife, a father and son, and with respect to brothers and friends? In what useful projects did he spend his money? How did he treat the sick, the orphans, the wayfarers, the poor and the needy? Are there any details available of his personal example touching these important aspects of human life which his followers could follow? Moses was married; he had children and had a brother and other relatives. It is our faith that being a prophet of Allah his treatment of them must have been perfect and beyond any blemish. Yet, this very important chapter is missing from any available history of his life which could become an example for us to follow.

Jesus Christ had a mother and according to the present version of the Bible he had brothers and sisters and even a physical father. But the available records of his life are silent about his treatment and dealings with them. These very relations have always been the backbone of this worldly life and so will they remain. A major part of religion is concerned with these relationships and obligations towards them. Jesus Christ (Peace be upon him) was never a ruler. Rather, he led the life of the ruled. Therefore, his life does not show any examples of a ruler's duties towards his subjects. He was never married; His life cannot become a practical example for those couples who are tied into a stronger bond than the one between parents and their children (according to the first chapter of Torah). Since most of this world's people lead a married life, they cannot find a practical example in Christ's life. The worldly aspect of this life is concerned with family relations, monetary deals, affairs of war and peace, dealing with friends and foes. One who remained aloof from all of these affairs cannot become a model for others. If the whole

world followed that kind of life today it would soon turn as silent as a graveyard. All kind of progress would stop, and particularly the Christian Europe of today would cease to exist.

Practicability: The last criterion for an ideal model is that his life example should be practical and practicable. What is meant here is that the founder of a religion or the divine law-giver should set a personal example for the discipline he has proposed for others and his personal life should explain and prove to the world that the rules he has set forth are practicable.

It is not too difficult for anyone to present a charming philosophy, an attractive theory, or a fascinating saying. But what is difficult for everyone at all times is to practise what they preach. A person's lofty and pure thoughts his innocent and noble sayings, his moral and ethical philosophies alone cannot make him an ideal and perfect model. This has to be the criterion, otherwise who would be able to tell the good from the bad, and this world would remain a place for only those who have a persuasive tongue and use beautiful words to their advantage. Will you allow me to ask a question at this point? Of the numerous law-givers and founders of different religions which one can come forward and have the practical aspect of his biography be judged by this standard?

Let us consider some very attractive and charming sayings attributed to Jesus Christ in the present day Bible:

'Love your Lord God with all your heart. Love your enemy. Offer your left cheek to the one who has hit you on the right cheek. One who takes you for forced labour for a mile without wages, go with him for two miles. One who asks you for your coat, give him your shirt too. Give all that you own in charity. Forgive your brother seventy times over. The rich will hardly enter the Kingdom of Heaven.'

These and many such sayings are

quite attractive. But if they are not accompanied by action, they remain only a combination of persuasive and charming words. How can a person set forth a practical example of forgiveness who has not actually overcome an enemy? How can one look after the poor, the needy and the orphans if he is himself penniless? How could one become a model for a husband a father or other human relations if he himself did not have a wife and children or other relatives? How can one preach the virtue of visiting the sick and the destitute if he has not done so himself? If he has never got an opportunity to overcome his anger and forgive others, his life cannot become a model for those of us who have a quick temper.

There are two sides to an act of virtue, a negative side and a positive side or we may say a passive virtue or an aggressive virtue. For instance, if you were to live like a hermit in the cave of a mountain, all that can be said about your achievement is that you managed to escape from the evil deeds. You did not do anything objectionable. But this is only a passive virtue. You did not stay back in this world to fight evil. Did you fight for the rights of the oppressed against the oppressor? Did you help the poor or feed the needy? Did you try to show the right path to those who had gone astray? Forgiveness, charity, hospitality, pity, supporting a right and a just cause, fulfilling one's obligations and duties as a human being are some of the virtues which make the human conduct truly noble. These virtues are not passive, they are practical. They cannot be achieved by remaining passive and complacent. Noble values came into being through positive action rather than inaction. What we are trying to make clear is the fact that a great human life whose practical aspect is not well known cannot become an ideal life for other human beings to follow. In order to follow a noble principle we need practical examples. We

need to have actual deeds in front of us in order to learn and make the right choice in different situations of life such as war and peace; poverty and prosperity; marriage and celibacy; our relations with our Creator and His creation; with the rulers and the ruled; our conduct in anger and tranquility, in public and in private etc. The greater part of our life, in fact our whole life, is concerned with these problems and these relationships. In order to deal with them properly we need practical examples, not just words.

I would like you to carefully consider what I have said today. It is not a piece of oratory or poetic exaggeration but a proven and verifiable fact of history that the life of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is the only life which fulfills all the conditions and standards we have set forth so far.

Please consider my point once more very carefully. What I am trying to say and prove today is that whatever model is chosen from the lives of great men of human history, it must have the following four qualities in order to be the ideal life or the ideal example to be followed by others. It must have authentic historical sources, and it must be comprehensive, perfect and practical. I do not mean to say that the lives of the other

prophets of Allah lacked these qualities in their own times. What I am trying to maintain is that whatever remnants of their life histories reached the common people after their period, or the ones existing today, lack the qualities of authenticity, comprehensiveness, perfection and practicality. And that was precisely the demand of the Divine wisdom, so that it should become evident that those prophets were sent at particular periods of time to particular nations. The Divine message given through them was not meant to be universal. Therefore there was no need to preserve it for the other nations and the times to come. Only Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was chosen to be the Prophet for all nations, till the Day of Judgment. He was to be the perfect model, to be followed by every one. That is why his life was preserved to its smallest detail, in its eternal glory and perfection for all times to come. And this fact remains the strongest practical proof of his being "the Seal of Prophets" and of his mission for all mankind. In the words of the holy Quran:

"Muhammad is not a father of any of your men, but he is a messenger of Allah and the last of the prophets....." (33:40)

Advice: Appreciating the Bounties of Allah

A renowned scholar of recent times was Hazrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Sahab (RA). Hazrat Moulana paid special attention to aspects related to etiquette and good mannerisms.

On an occasion a tailor approached Maulana and requested him for measurements in order that he may sew him a waistcoat. Maulana was seated at the time and experienced difficulty in standing up due to old age and physical ill health. Nevertheless Maulana stood up in order to hand over to the tailor the waistcoat he had on, to serve as a sample. But as he stood up he noticed his handkerchief in his waistcoat pocket. Instead of just throwing or dropping it down from that standing position, he chose to rather sit down again, remove that hankie, put it in its place and thereafter stood up and gave the tailor his waistcoat. He endured all this difficulty in spite of his extreme weakness only out of respect for the handkerchief which, though it may seem insignificant, it is nevertheless also the gift of Allah.

(Hayate Maseehul Ummat Rahmatullahi Alayh, pg. 152)

Saviours of Islamic Spirit

Khwaja Nizam ud Din Auliya (RA)

Mawlana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi (RA)

Destruction of Delhi

The fear expressed by Khwaja Nizam ud-din was not unfounded. Exactly six years after his foreboding, Muhammad Tughlaq, the son and successor of Ghiyath ud-din Tughlaq, suddenly issued a decree for vacating Delhi and migrating to Devagiri, renamed by him as Daulatabad. He enforced his order with such a haste and unreasoning obstinacy that the capital became desolate. In a city where formerly it was difficult to procure a house, no living being except wild beasts were seen. Muhammad Qasim Bijapuri writes in *Tar'ikk Firishta*: "The functionaries of the State did not allow a single inhabitant of the city, habituated to its climate, to remain there. They despatched everybody to Devagiri, and Delhi became so devastated and depopulated that no voice except that of the jackals, foxes and other wild beasts was to be heard there."

All those theologians and jurists who had arraigned themselves against the Khwaja in the Imperial Palace had to leave Delhi along with others; many of them perished in the course of the long and strenuous march towards Devagiri; those who reached the new capital were destroyed by famine and pestilence and, thus, the grim prediction of the Khwaja came true within a decade.

Daily Routine of the Khwaja

The Khwaja used to come down from his apartment for *isha* prayers. After performing the same with congregation, he

would return to his chamber again where he spent some time in the recollection of God. Thereafter he took a little rest before the attendants handed over to him his rosary. Then nobody excepting Amir Khusru was allowed to see him. Amir Khusru used to sit down near his cot relating the topic of the day or other matters. The Khwaja often nodded his head to signify his assent or asked: "Turk, what is the news." This gave an opportunity to Amir to put two and two together and make it five. The Khwaja asked about something and Amir utilized the opportunity to relate the whole story. Often the Khwaja also permitted the children or relatives to come and join the sitting at this hour.

Nocturnal Occupation

After Amir Khusru and others present at the time had taken leave to depart, the Khwaja's personal attendant Iqbal used to bring a few jugs filled with water for performing ablution. Thereafter the Khwaja used to bolt the doors from inside and then nobody knew how he occupied himself to attain the propinquity of God or to what lofty stations he was raised by the Divine grace.

Sahur

When the time came for *Sahur*, the attendant used to tap the door. He brought dishes of different cooked victuals but the Khwaja took but a little of these and instructed to keep them for the children. Khwaja Abdur Rahim, who was

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charged with this duty relates that sometimes the Khwaja ate almost nothing at *Sahur*. When he was requested to take a bit more since he had eaten very little at the time of *Iftar*, he would break out into tears and say: "How many destitute and poor would be lying hungry on the stairs and platforms of the mosques? How can I take all this when they are in such a great distress." The food brought to the Khwaja for *Sahur* had very often to be taken back untouched by him.

In the Day

Those who saw the Khwaja in the morning found his eyes reddish by the night-long vigils but his face would be lit up with heavenly grace, as if by an indescribable happiness of inner bliss, without the least trace of weariness. Nobody could say that the Khwaja would have performed four or five hundred *rak'ats* of prayer in addition to the chanting in praise of God. Besides the inward illumination of his purified soul, the only occupation that employed him was consolation of the hearts broken by the turmoil of earth, than which there is no nobler task.

The Khwaja could be seen whole day sitting on the prayer mat of his spiritual guide absorbed in the ocean of Divine presence. A stream of visitors which included saints and scholars as well as persons of rank and authority continued all day. The Khwaja conversed with them but he also kept himself inwardly absorbed in the contemplation of Divine perfection.

After the Khwaja had performed the mid-day prayer, the visitors coming from outside were called in. His kind and comfortable words consoled the wearisome hearts and instructed them in the way of salvation. But nobody, not even the savants and the saved could dare to cast their eyes on the radiant countenance of the Khwaja.

End of the Journey

The Khwaja was over 80 years of age when he had a premonition that his journey's end was drawing near. One day he told his attendants: "I saw the Prophet in the dream. He said, "Nizam, I am anxiously waiting for you!."

During his illness, the Khwaja gave out warrants of vice-gerency to several disciples. These were drafted by Fakhr ud-din Zarradi and copied by Saiyid Husain Kirman! and finally signed by the Khwaja. The date given on these documents being the 20th Zilhijja, A. H. 724, these must have been written three months and twenty-seven days before the Khwaja breathed his last.

Some of the warrants were sent out to the disciples for whom they were meant. To others, the Khwaja granted them personally. First of all Sheikh Qutb ud-din Munawwar was asked to present himself. He was granted the warrant and a habit of vice-gerency and told to offer thanksgiving prayer. In the meantime Sheikh Nasir ud-din Mahmud (*Chirag Dehli*) was also called in and awarded the robe and the warrant. Sheikh Qutb ud-din Munawwar was called again by him and both were told to congratulate and embrace each other. Then, the Khwaja said: "Both of you are brothers. Never mind who got the warrant first."

Forty days before the Khwaja shared the reward of heavenly kingdom, he attained the stage of total absorption and seemed overwhelmed by Divine light. Giving an eyewitness account of the Khwaja's condition before he passed on to his heavenly abode, Mir Khurd says: "It was Friday. The Khwaja seemed to be immersed in Divine light. In the prayer he repeatedly prostrated as if yielding to the grandeur of the Supreme Being. In the same condition, he returned to his residence from the mosque. Tears continuously rolled down from his eyes, he occasionally passed on to ecstatic trances but after

short spells he remarked: 'Today it is Friday. A friend recalls to his mind the promise made by the friend and gets engrossed in it.' In the same condition he often asked whether it was time for the prayers and whether he had performed it or not? If he was told that he has already said his prayers, he replied: 'Let me perform it again.' He continued to remain in this condition all through this period.

"Once he called for all the disciples and servants present in the monastery and said: 'All of you shall bear witness on the Day of Judgement that if Iqbal has withheld anything, he shall be responsible for it before God. Iqbal replied: 'I have kept back nothing; everything has been given away.' The man had actually done so and distributed everything to the poor excepting some grains which would have sufficed for the inmates of the monastery for a few days. My uncle Saiyid Husain informed the Khwaja accordingly who angrily demanded from Iqbal: 'Why have you kept back that rotten dust?' The Khwaja then ordered that the poor and the needy be called. When they had gathered, he said: 'Break open the store. Take away all the grain and sweep it clean.' In a few moments everything was carried away by the crowd.

"During the period of his last illness a few disciples and attendants asked the Khwaja: 'What shall be our lot after you?' He replied: 'You shall get enough to keep your body and soul together. According to another report I heard from certain reliable persons, the Khwaja was asked: 'Who would be blest with luck amongst us?' They meant who would be the Khwaja's chief" spiritual successor. 'Whosoever's luck should favour him', was the reply given by the Khwaja. Some of the friends and attendants requested my maternal grandfather Shams ud-din Damghani to tell the Khwaja that a number of his disciples who have built pala-

tial buildings are desirous to know where the Khwaja would like to have his eternal resting place. The Khwaja, however, replied that instead of having his grave in one of these houses, he would like to be buried in an open space. Accordingly he was laid to rest in an open field where Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq later built a cupola.

"Forty days before the Khwaja died, he had left taking food. During this period he hated even the smell of cooked victuals. Once he was offered a little soup of fish but he said: 'Throw it away in the running water.' My uncle Saiyid Husain once said to the Khwaja: 'Your honour has not taken anything for the last so many days. That would be harmful.' But the Khwaja replied: 'Saiyid, how could he relish food who is anxious to meet the Holy Prophet?' He not only took no food during these forty days but also spoke very little. "At last in the forenoon of the eighteenth Rab' ul-Akhir, 725 A. H. this spiritual star shed its lustre for the last time and passed on to his heavenly abode.

"The funeral prayer of the Khwaja was led by Sheikh ul-Islam Rukn ud-din, son of the renowned saint Sheikh Baha ud-din Zakariya of Multan. After the prayer Sheikh Rukn ud-din observed: "Now I know that for four long years I was detained in Delhi to have the honour of leading this funeral prayer."

The Khwaja never married and had no son but his spiritual sons in succession continued to keep alight the lamp of guidance in different parts of the country.

About Knowledge

Umar (ra) said, "Do not learn knowledge for three things and do not leave it for three things. Do not learn it to dispute over it, to show off with it, or to boast about it. Do not leave seeking it out of shyness, dislike for it, or contending with ignorance in its stead."

This journal is dedicated to the Greatest and the Last Prophet

Hadhrat Muhammad

(Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

on whom the Prophethood got ended and sealed forever.

May Allah enlighten entire humanity with

the Divine Attributes with which He sent

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

to this world.

Only way to salvation for the mankind is in

following the blessed teachings of

Hadhrat Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

..... Let us all follow him with utmost spirit.