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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

Joy Forever, Grief Forever

All through the centuries Allah sent down thousands of messengers, dozens of books, and one Message. This central Message has three components. 1) Allah is the Creator and the Master of the universe. He is the One we must worship and obey. 2) He sent down guidance through messengers and books. 3) Just as death is certain in this world, so is resurrection in the Hereafter. Then everyone will face everlasting consequences of their response to Allah's commands: joy forever or grief forever.

It is this last part that can bring immediate clarity and concentration to our minds and change the call of the messengers from "interesting" to immensely serious and urgent. The messengers do not do philosophy or present theories. They have News for us and it is extremely urgent. That is why the Qur'an refers to the messengers as *nadhir* (warners) and describes this as their primary mission: "We have sent emissaries only as heralds and warners while those who disbelieve idly argue away so they may refute the Truth by means of it. They treat My signs and what they are warned of as a joke!" [Al-Kahf 18:56]

An unimaginably huge catastrophe is about to befall the humanity. Let it be warned, so it can ward it off. You must drop everything and listen to the messenger with all seriousness. Now.

This is a life-altering message. Anyone who understands and accepts it can no longer remain the same old person who did not understand or accept it. It says that this world is not what it appears to be. This is not our destination; what happens to us here is not our ultimate destiny. Any life lived here

on the assumption that this life is all there is to it will be entirely wasted.

We know there are problems in this world. The strong can get away with murder. The weak are oppressed. We yearn for justice and don't find it. The joys of this life are also both short-lived and mixed with sorrows. We yearn for pure bliss and don't find it. This message tells us that our desires for justice and unmixed happiness are not in vain. We will get them in the eternal Afterlife. What seems to be an imperfect world is actually a perfect testing ground. The joys and sufferings here are meant to test how we behave under different circumstances in life. Those who lead a life of righteousness and obedience to Allah will taste real joy in the Hereafter. Those who lead a life of disobedience, sin, and corruption will taste real punishment. This message gives us hope when there is no hope. It gives us the strength to be steadfast in the face of the forces of evil. It liberates us from the bondage to here and now. It changes our outlook and consequently our entire life.

It is impossible for our thoughts and actions to be right and righteous in the absence of belief in the Hereafter. How many people will resist temptations if there are no consequences to be feared for doing so? And for how long? How many will engage in good even though it costs and avoid evil even though it seems to pay? Human beings are driven by rewards and punishments. But the only perfect system of reward and punishment is offered by the Hereafter. Therefore it is impossible to fix this world by ignoring the Hereafter.

There is more. The Qur'an says:

"Those who do not believe in the Hereafter, call the angels by the names of females." [An-Najm 53:27] What has the disbelief in the Hereafter to do with this act? They engage in this conjecture about the angels whom they have not seen and have no sure way of knowing about, because they are not serious. And they are not serious because of their disbelief in the Hereafter. Frivolity and vanity are a side effect of this disbelief. And when they take control of life, the entire life is destined to ruin.

While the disbelief in the Hereafter has no legs to stand on, this world does have the charm that can overcome that disadvantage! The result may be that we continue to profess belief in the Hereafter, yet live as if it does not matter. Or that we even change our beliefs too. It has happened before. Rabbi Dr. Louis Jacobs, rabbi of the New London Synagogue, writes: "Among many contemporary Jewish theologians there is a marked tendency to leave the whole question of eschatology without discussion, either because they do not believe in the Hereafter at all or because they believe that the finite mind of man is incapable of piercing the veil and it is best to leave the subject severely alone." And while Orthodox Jews still believe in resurrection, it is with a twist. They believe that when the Messiah (who they think will be a person from the family of King David) comes, the righteous dead will be brought back to life to enjoy life here again. The wicked will not be

resurrected. So the Hereafter will be here and there will be no real punishment for the wicked.

We can now appreciate the emphasis Islam places on remembering death and resurrection. As a Muslim wakes up, he says: "Praise be to Allah Who gave us life after death and unto Him is the Resurrection." When he goes to bed his prayer is: "O Allah, in Your name do I die and live." When he begins eating he says: "O Allah, bless us in what You have provided for us and protect us from the Fire." When he rides he says: "Glory be to Him Who has subjected these to our (use), for we could have never accomplished this (by ourselves). And to our Lord shall we be sent back." [Az-Zukhruf, 43: 13-14]. So our sleep reminds us of our death and all through the waking hours we keep on refreshing that remembrance. In regular prayers and while reading the Qur'an it is impossible to continue for any length of time without being reminded that this life is temporary and our permanent abode is in the Hereafter. A beautiful dua (supplication) further highlights a Muslim's concerns: "O Allah, do not make this world our greatest worry, the sum total of our knowledge, and the object of our desires."

The person who always remembers the Hereafter is like the driver who constantly keeps his eyes on the destination. He is the only one likely to successfully get there.

Portents of the Hour

Anas bin Malik (RA) said: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "There will be no land which will not be trampled by Dajjal (the Antichrist) but Makkah and Al-Madinah; and there will be no passage leading to them which will not be guarded by the angels, arranged in rows. Dajjal will appear in a barren place adjacent to Al-Madinah and the city will be shaken three times. Allah will expel from it every disbeliever and hypocrite." [Muslim].

Question Answer

Question.

Is Allah everywhere, or is He beyond the heavens and the earth?

Answer.

The issue of "Where is Allah?" is something that was never debated or made a matter of dispute among the Muslims throughout the ages and eras. In fact the Qur'an warns against delving into these issues in Surah Aali Imraan (verse #7). The Sahabah and Tabi'een also dealt very severely with those who began discussing these issues. Unfortunately, due to immense ignorance about our deen, certain Muslims forget about their real duties and responsibilities and waste their precious time arguing about these issues regarding which we have been ordered not to delve into.

Kindly see (abridged) answer of Mufti Muhammad ibn Adam Al-Kawthari below:

"The belief (aqidah) one must have regarding his Lord and Creator is that Allah Almighty is One, there is nothing like Him, there is nothing that can overwhelm Him, there is no god besides Him and He is Eternal without a beginning and Enduring without end. He will neither perish nor come to an end and nothing happens except what He wills. No imagination can conceive of Him and no understanding can comprehend Him. He is different from any created being.

Allah Most High says about Himself:

"There is nothing whatever unto like Him." (42:11).

And He says in Surah al-Ikhlâs:

"And there is none like unto Him." (112: 4).

Due to the above and other texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah, one of the major beliefs a Muslim must have regarding Allah

Most High is that there is no creation that is similar to Him. If Allah is regarded to be similar or resemble or have any qualities of His creation, then that would constitute disbelief (Kufr).

Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (May Allah have mercy on him) states:

"Whoever thinks that Allah has a body made of organs, then he is an idol-worshipper...

Whosoever worships a body is regarded a disbeliever by the consensus of all the scholars, the early scholars (salaf) and the late (muta'akhirun)" (Iljam al-Anam an Ilm al-Kalam, 6-8).

If one believes that there is nothing similar to Allah in any way, then his Aqidah is correct and there is no need for disputes and arguments. I believe that there isn't a Muslim that really believes that Allah is similar to his creation in any way, thus disputes and arguments must be avoided. Yes, if one does believe that Allah has hands, feet, face, etc... that is similar to his creation, then without doubt this person would come out of the fold of Islam.

Regarding the question, "where is Allah?" firstly, it should be remembered that this is not something that one will be asked about on the day of Qiyamah. We are in need of people really learning about the basics of Islam, rather than engaging themselves in these matters. Those that argue and cause destruction with such issues are normally ignorant about even the basics of Salah, Zakah, Hajj, etc...

Secondly, this question in itself is wrong. We ask regarding the whereabouts of a person that lives in time and space. For example, I encompass time, meaning I live in time, and I have a body that needs to fill some space.

However, Allah, Mighty and Majestic, is the creator of time and space. If we limit Him to any time or space, then this would imply that we resemble Him to his creation by giving Him a body, as space is limited. If one was to say that Allah is everywhere, then this is wrong, as 'everywhere' is limited and ends somewhere, whereas Allah is not limited.

Similarly, to say that Allah is on earth, sky, moon, sun, throne, etc... is also wrong, as all these things are limited and to limit Allah to any created thing is Kufr.

Imam al-Tahawi (Allah have mercy on him) states in his famous al-Aqida al-Tahawiyya:

"He (Allah) is beyond having limits placed on Him, or being restricted, or having parts or limbs. Nor is He contained by six directions as all created things are." (P. 9).

Imam al-Nasafi (Allah have mercy on him) states:

"He (Allah) is not a body (jism), nor an atom (jawhar), nor is He something formed (musawwar), nor a thing limited (mahdud), nor a thing numbered (ma'dud), nor a thing portioned or divided, nor a thing compounded (mutarakkab), nor does He come to end in Himself. He is not described by quiddity (al-ma'hiya), or by quality (al-kayfiyya), nor is He placed in space (al-makan), and time (al-zaman) does not affect Him. Nothing resembles Him, that is to say, nothing is like Him." (See: Sa'd al-Din al-Taftazani & Najm al-Din al-Nasafi, Sharh al-Aqa'id al-Nasafiyya, 92-97).

In conclusion, one must have the Aqidah that Allah Most High is pure from space and time. It is wrong to say that He is everywhere and it is also wrong to believe that He is on something, as all these are limited whereas Allah Almighty is limitless. However, we must believe that His knowledge encompasses everything, and he knows, sees and listens to everything. And Allah Knows

Best

Question.

Can you please explain the meaning of the following Hadith?

"He who mixes with people and endures the harm they do is better than he who does not mix and does not endure." (Tirmidhi)

Answer.

This hadith tells us that there is no such thing as monasticism in Islam. The one who mixes in the community and endures the difficulties that confront him is far better than the one who remains aloof from people and does not endure their difficulty. Perhaps the following translation of a verse of Urdu poetry may assist in understanding what is required of us by Allah Ta'ala.

دنیا کے مشغلوں میں بھی وہ باخدا رہے
سب کے ساتھ رہ کے بھی وہ سب سے جدا رہے

The friends of Allah are those who engage in worldly activity whilst still maintaining their closeness with Allah (SWT). Despite being together with people they are also away from people, in that they still maintain a very close link and relationship with Allah (SWT).

However, in times of fitna and sin, if one fears being affected with evils, and one avoids the company of people and places that may possibly influence one, then this is excluded from the scope of this Hadith, due to other Ahadith which suggest solitude by staying within one's home as far as possible, in such situations. And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best

Beware! It is recorded

"Not a word does he (or she) utter, but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it)." (50:18)

Lesson From The Qur'an

Commentary: Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib (RA)

Cont'd from previous issue

Verse 219...

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ
لِلنَّاسِ وَإِنَّهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا ...

They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, "In both there is great sin, and some benefits for people. And their sin is greater than their benefit...."

Commentary

The good and evil of wine

The 'good' in wine is popularly known as a certain taste and a feeling of well-being, professed increase of temporary energy, and a given glow on the face. Being transient, these benefits hardly stand against the array of evils it breeds. Take the human body first. Drinking causes mal-function of the stomach, reduces desire to eat, affects facial contours, inflates the waistline, hurts the liver and the kidneys and becomes a contributor to all sorts of diseases. Reason does not work under the influence of hard drinks which goes beyond the time one claims to have become sober. The hangover turns out to be as bad. Wine, a tempting stimulant and a much romanticized poison works slowly, in spite of the spirited defence put up by its users. The fact is that drinking not only harms them but affects their children as well.

Socially, drinking may become the cause of mutual malice and enmity which is a great evil in the sight of Islamic law. It is for this reason that the Holy Qur'an particularly mentions this evil in Surah al-Ma'idah:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي
الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ

The Satan only wants that hostility and hatred come to stay between you through wine and gambling. (5:91)

One of the most harmful drawbacks of drinking shows up when a person under its influence lets out his guarded secrets. It becomes much more disastrous if the culprit happens to be a state functionary in possession of vital government secrets. Passing these out to an enemy agent can cause great damage to the state through a coup, a political loss or a challenge to national defence. Clever spies are always on the look out for such opportunities.

So, the habit of drinking is not only an evil in itself but a mother of other evils as well making men ready to commit the worst possible crimes against their fellow-beings.

The physical evils of drinking are too well-known to recount here while its spiritual evils are equally obvious. Wine is harmful because the Holy Qur'an says: وَيُصْنَعُكَ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ : It prevents you from remembering Allah and from the *Salah* ! Then, the question asked by the Holy Qur'an is: 'Would you then desist?'

The forbiddance of wine: A complete view

Upto this point, we have discussed four verses of the Holy Qur'an which deal with the unlawfulness of wine, and its forbiddance. It seems appropriate that yet another mention of intoxicants made by the Holy Qur'an in Surah Al-Nahl in a different context should be brought into focus here so that we have all Qur'anic statements concerning wine and intoxicants in one complete frame of reference. The said verse is as follows:

وَمِنْ ثَمَرَاتِ النَّخِيلِ وَالْأَعْنَابِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْهُ سَكَرًا وَرَدًّا

حَسَنًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

And of the fruits of the palms and the vines, you take therefrom an intoxicant and a good provision. Surely, in that there is a sign for a people who understand. (16:67)

In verses preceding the one above, mention was made of Allah's blessings which cause production of human food through unique mechanisms. It was said:

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً لِّتُسْقُوا مِنْهَا فِي بُطُونِهِ مِنْ بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَبَنًا خَالِصًا سَائِغًا لِلشَّارِبِينَ

And surely in the cattle there is a lesson for you; We give you to drink of what is in their bellies, between filth and blood, pure milk, sweet to drinkers. (16:66)

The text uses the word, '*nusqikum*' which means 'We gave you milk to drink' implying that it needs no further human processing. Following this, it was said that man procures things to eat, as well as, makes things which benefit him. Here, the hint is that human processing plays some part in procuring what he eats and in making what he uses to his advantage. And it is as a result of the entry of the human factor that two types of things were produced. One of these is an intoxicant known as wine while the other is 'a good provision', such as the dates and the grapes which can be used fresh off the palms and vines or can be dried and stored for later use. In short, Allah Almighty, in His perfect creativity, gave man fruits such as dates and grapes and gave him the added right to use them as food. Now what he makes out of them is his choice, either make intoxicants out of them and thereby spoil his reason, or use them for food and energy. According to this explanation, this verse cannot be used to argue in support of the lawfulness of intoxicating wine. The reason is simple. Here, the purpose is to describe the gifts of nature and to point out to the different forms in which they could be used which is all part of the same Divine blessing. For instance,

consider all that man eats and things man uses to his advantage. There are many who use these in ways that are impermissible but, the incidence of someone using things wrongfully does not preclude a blessing from remaining a blessing. So, the context of the statement needs no details as to which use is permissible or impermissible, however, there is a subtle indication embedded here too. If we look at how '*sakar*: intoxicant' has been counter-poised by '*rizqan hasana*: 'a good provision', we would realize that an intoxicant is not a good provision. The majority of commentators take *sakar* to mean something that intoxicates. (Ruh al-Ma'ani, Qurtubi and Jassas)

There is a consensus of the *Ummah* that these verses are Makkan while the unlawfulness of wine was revealed later on in Madinah al-Tayyibah. Even though wine was lawful at the time these verses were revealed and Muslims used to indulge in wine generally yet, even at that stage, a hint was made in the verse that indulging in wine is not good. Later on, came the Qur'anic command which clearly and forcefully made wine unlawful.

The prohibition of Gambling

The word, *maisir* is an infinitive and lexically means 'to distribute'. One who distributes is called *yasir*. During the days of *Jahiliyyah*, several types of games of chance were common in Arabia. In one of such games, they used to slaughter a camel following which they would gamble while distributing shares from the meat. Some used to get more than one share while others remained deprived of even one. The one who thus remained deprived had to pay for the whole camel. The meat was, of course, distributed among the poor; the gamblers did not use it themselves.

The catch in this particular game of chance was that it benefited the poor while,

at the same time, it demonstrated the philanthropy of the gamblers. That is why this game was considered a matter of pride by them. Anyone who would not participate in it was chided as miserly and wretched.

It is because of the relevance of distribution that *Qimar* is given the name of *Maisir*. All Companions, and Successors to them, hold the unanimous view that the word, *Maisir* includes all forms of *Qimar* or gambling and that all of them are *haram* or unlawful. Ibn Kathir in his Tafsir and al-Jassas in Ahkam al-Qur'an report that the blessed Companions 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, Ibn 'Umar, Qatadah, Mu'awiyah ibn Salih, 'Ata and Ta'wus said: ألميسر القمار حتى الصبيان بالكعبان الجوز that is, *Qimar* (of all kinds) is *Maisir* - even the games of children with dices and walnuts.

Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas said: ألمخاطرة من القمار that is, *Mukhatarah* (to put something on stake) falls under *Qimar* (Jassas). Ibn Sirin said: 'That which involves stakes is included in *Maisir* (Ruh ai-Bayan).

Mukhatarah or 'stake' is a deal which revolves between profit and loss, that is, there may be a chance that one gets a lot, and also, that one gets nothing. This is very much like what we find in all sorts of modern lotteries. All these types are included under *Qimar* and *Maisir* or gambling, and are *haram*. Therefore, *Maisir* or *Qimar* or gambling has been defined as a deal in which the act of making a person the owner of something of value depends on a contingency the two sides of which are equal, and consequently, there are two equal possibilities of taking total profit or absorbing total loss (Shami, Kitab al-Khatar wal 'ibahah, volume 5, page 355). For instance, it is quite possible that the penalty falls on A, and it is also possible that it falls on B.

To sum up, the rule is that all kinds and forms in vogue - in the past or current today or likely to emerge in the future - shall all be called *Maisir* and *Qimar* and gambling.

Prize-awarding cross-word puzzles (in which the participants are charged a fee) and commercial lotteries, the generally known among whatever other forms they may have, are all included under gambling. However, should there be a prize offered by one side only, stipulating that it will be given to one who performs a certain feat, that would not matter subject to the condition that no fee is taken from that person. The reason is that, in this case, the deal does not hang between benefit and harm, but hangs between benefit and no-benefit.

Therefore, in authentic *ahddith*, chess and backgammon and their likes have been declared unlawful where money or property is staked in a win or lose situation. Should there be money staked in playing cards, that too will be included under *Maisir*.

In Sahih Muslim, there is a report from the blessed Companion Buraydah (RA) which states that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that one who plays backgammon is like one who dyes his hands in the flesh and blood of pork. Sayyidna 'Ali (RA) said that chess is included in *Maisir*, that is, gambling. Sayyidna 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar said that chess is much worse than backgammon. (Tafsir ibn Kathir)

During the early days of Islam, gambling was permissible like drinking. When the verses beginning غلبت الروم in Surah al-Rum were revealed where the Holy Qur'an foretold that the Byzantines have no doubt lost to their rivals - the Persians, but, after a few years, the Byzantines will prevail once again. When the disbelievers of Makkah denied the prophecy, Sayyidna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (RA) challenged them with a bet, something like *Qimar*, proposing that should the Byzantines prevail in so many years the disbelievers will have to pay a certain amount. The bet was approved. When this prophecy of the Qur'an actually came to pass, Sayyidna Abu Bakr made sure that he got the waged amount

from the disbelievers and brought it to the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), who expressed his pleasure with what had happened but asked him to give away the bet-money in charity. This is significant because Allah had kept His Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) protected from something that was permissible at that time but was going to be made impermissible later on. This is why he always kept aloof from wine and gambling, and there were particular ones among the noble Companions who also remained protected against these. It appears in a narration that the angel Jibra'il told the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that Allah Almighty likes four character-traits in Ja'far al-Tayyar. He asked Sayyidna Ja'far al-Tayyar as to what these four traits were. He said, 'Till now, I have never talked about these before anyone. Now that Allah Almighty has told you about them, I submit and relate these four to you. I saw that wine ruins reason, so I never went near it. I saw that idols cause no benefit or harm to anyone, so I never indulged in idol-worship even during the days of *Jahiliyyah*. Since I have an acute sense of honour concerning my wife and daughters, so I never committed adultery. Then, I realized that lying is unbridled meanness, and a terrible disgrace, so I never told a lie even in *Jahiliyyah*'. (Ruh al-Bayan)

Mind what you speak

Abu Abdur-Rahman Bilal bin Al-Harith Al-Muzani (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "A man speaks a good word without knowing its worth, Allah records for him His Good Pleasure till the day he will meet Him; and a man utters an evil word without realizing its importance, Allah records for him His displeasure till the day he will meet Him." [Imam Malik and At-Tirmidhi].

Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

The Book of Knowledge

باب فَضْلِ الْوُضُوءِ ، وَالْفَرُّ الْمُحْجَلُونَ مِنْ آثَارِ الْوُضُوءِ

Chapter 3 : Excellence of ablution. And "Al-Ghurr-ul Muhajjaiun" (the parts of the body of the Muslims washed in ablution will glitter on the Day of Resurrection and the angels will call them by that name) from the traces of ablution.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Bukhari (RA) wants to stress how beneficial the Wudu is. Those parts of the body which are washed regularly in Wudu will be shining on the day of Judgment.

Hadith No. 134

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ عَنْ خَالِدٍ عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي هِلَالٍ عَنْ نَعِيمِ الْمُجْمِرِ قَالَ رَقِيتُ مَعَ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَلَى ظَهْرِ الْمَسْجِدِ فَتَوَضَّأَ فَقَالَ إِنِّي سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ إِنَّ أُمَّتِي يُدْعَوْنَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ غُرًّا مُحَجَّلِينَ مِنْ آثَارِ الْوُضُوءِ فَمَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يُطِيلَ غُرَّتَهُ فَلْيَفْعَلْ

Narrated Nu'am Al-Mujmir (RA)

"Once I went up the roof of the Masjid, along with Abu Huraira. He performed ablution and said, "I heard the Prophet saying, "On the Day of Resurrection, my followers will be called "Al-Ghurr-ul-Muhajjalun" from the trace of ablution and whoever can increase the area of his radiance should do so (i.e. by performing ablution regularly and perfectly)."

Comments

Abu Huraira (RA) says that Rasulullah

(Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that his Ummah will be called "Al-Ghurr-ul-Muhajjaiun" on the day of judgment. "Al-Ghurr" means shinning forehead and face and "Muhajjaium" means (superior horses having while hands and feet). Here it means that this Ummah will be quite distinct from other people on the day of judgment. Earlier people also used to offer Salaah and perform ablution, but they have not been given this distinction. This distinction will be specifically given to this Ummah, they can be recognized from a distance due to radiance which will be emanating from their those parts of the body which are regularly washed in Wudu. So, Abu Huraira (RA) advised the narrator of this Hadith, Nu'am al-Mujmir, that those people who want to increase their area of radiance on the day of judgment should do that. The scholars of Hadith are of the opinion that the last part of this Hadith is from Abu Huraira (RA) and not from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), it does not mean that one should wash the body parts in Wudu in excess to what Shariah has defined.

باب لَا يَتَوَضَّأُ مِنَ الشُّكِّ حَتَّى يَسْتَيْقِنَ .

Chapter 4 : One should not repeat ablution if doubted until he is sure (that he has lost his ablution by passing wind)

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

In earlier chapter it was said that one should perform Wudu excessively in order to get radiance on the day of judgment. Here Imam Bukhari (RA) cautions that such thing should not be done unnecessarily.

Hadith No. 135

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا الزُّهْرِيُّ عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ الْمُسَيَّبِ وَعَنْ عَبَادِ بْنِ تَمِيمٍ عَنْ عَمِّهِ أَنَّهُ شَكَاَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - الرَّجُلَ الَّذِي يُحَيِّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَجِدُ الشَّيْءَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ . فَقَالَ لَا يَنْفَتِلْ - أَوْ لَا يَنْصَرِفْ - حَتَّى

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يَسْمَعُ صَوْتًا أَوْ يَجِدَ رِيحًا

Narrated 'Abbas bin Tamim (RA)

My uncle asked Allah's Apostle about a person who imagined to have passed wind during the prayer. Allah' Apostle replied: "He should not leave his prayers unless he hears sound or smells something."

Comments

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was asked about a person who frequently got apprehensions that probably his Wudu had become invalid due to Hadath. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) told him not to give heed to such apprehensions, one should not break Salaah because of such weak apprehensions but only when one is strongly sure that Hadath has occurred to him and that is possible by two things i.e., listening to the sound or of bad smell.

Note: Such apprehensions are usually from Shaitaan who does not want that a bondsman should get good concentration in Salaah, so he puts such apprehension in his mind and thus disturbs him. In this Hadith there is excellent remedy mentioned for such mischief of Shaitaan, i.e., the best form of punishment to Shaitaan is to ignore his tricks.

باب التَّخْفِيفِ فِي الْوُضُوءِ

Chapter 5 : Curtailment in ablution.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Imam Bukhari is pointing here towards different type of ablution, like curtailment of Wudu. Ulema have given different explanations as to what curtailment means. Some say that curtailment means washing each part of Wudu only once instead of three times.

Hadith No. 136

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ عَنْ عَمْرٍو قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي كُرَيْبٌ عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

- نَامَ حَتَّى نَفَخَ ثُمَّ صَلَّى - وَرَبِّمَا قَالَ اضْطَجَعَ حَتَّى نَفَخَ - ثُمَّ قَامَ فَصَلَّى . ثُمَّ حَدَّثَنَا بِهِ سُفْيَانُ مَرَّةً بَعْدَ مَرَّةٍ عَنْ عَمْرٍو عَنْ كُرَيْبٍ عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ بَتُّ عِنْدَ خَالَتِي مِثْمُونَةَ لَيْلَةً ، فَقَامَ النَّبِيُّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - مِنْ اللَّيْلِ ، فَلَمَّا كَانَ فِي بَعْضِ اللَّيْلِ قَامَ النَّبِيُّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - فَتَوَضَّأَ مِنْ شَنْ مَعْلَقٍ وَضَوْءًا خَفِيفًا - يُخَفِّفُهُ عَمْرٍو وَيَقْلِلُهُ - وَقَامَ يُصَلِّي فَتَوَضَّأَتْ نَحْوًا مِمَّا تَوَضَّأَ ، ثُمَّ جَنَّتْ فَقُمْتُ عَنْ بَسَارِهِ - وَرَبِّمَا قَالَ سُفْيَانُ عَنْ شِمَالِهِ - فَحَوَّلَنِي فَجَعَلَنِي عَنْ يَمِينِهِ ، ثُمَّ صَلَّى مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ، ثُمَّ اضْطَجَعَ ، فَقَامَ حَتَّى نَفَخَ ، ثُمَّ أَنَاةُ الْأَمْنَادِي فَآذَنَهُ بِالصَّلَاةِ ، فَقَامَ مَعَهُ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ . فَصَلَّى وَلَمْ يَتَوَضَّأَ . قُلْنَا لِعَمْرٍو إِنَّ نَاسًا يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - تَنَامُ عَيْنُهُ وَلَا يَنَامُ قَلْبُهُ . قَالَ عَمْرٍو سَمِعْتُ عُبَيْدَ بْنَ عُمَيْرٍ يَقُولُ رَوَى الْأَنْبِيَاءَ وَحَيٌّ ، ثُمَّ قَرَأَ (إِنِّي أَرَى فِي الْأَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ)

Narrated Kuraib (RA)

Ibn 'Abbas said, "The Prophet slept till he snored and then prayed (or probably lay till his breath sounds were heard and then got up and prayed)." Ibn 'Abbas added: "I stayed overnight in the house of my aunt, Maimuna, the Prophet slept for a part of the night, (See Fateh-al-Bari, page 249, Vol. 1), and late in the night, he got up and performed ablution from a hanging water skin, a light (perfect) ablution and stood up for the prayer. I, too, performed a similar ablution, then I went and stood on his left. He drew me to his right and prayed as much as Allah wished, and again slept till his breath sounds were heard. Later on the Mua'dhdhin (callmaker for the prayer) came to him and informed him that it was time for Prayer. The Prophet went with him for the prayer without performing a new ablution." (Sufyan said to 'Amr that some people said, "The eyes of Allah's Apostle sleep but his heart does not sleep." 'Amr replied, "I heard 'Ubaid bin 'Umar saying that the dreams of Prophets were Divine Inspiration, and then he

recited the verse: 'I (Abraham) see in a dream, (O my son) that I offer you in sacrifice (to Allah)." (37.102)

Comments

Sleep of Prophets: It is narrated in one Hadith that Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that his eyes sleep and his Qalb does not sleep. So, when Qalb does not sleep, such sleep will not break the Wudu of a prophet. It is also mentioned in narrations that the dream of prophets is also a Divine inspiration and one dreams while in sleep alone. Keeping these things in view, it can be understood as to why Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not make fresh Wudu after getting up from such deep sleep in which he also snored. At other time, as mentioned in the Hadith of this chapter, Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) made light Wudu after getting up from sleep. Learned scholars differ in their opinion regarding the issue of light Wudu as to what it really means. As already mentioned that some say that light Wudu means to wash each part only once.

Excessive Talk

Ibn Umar (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Do not indulge in excessive talk except when remembering Allah. Excessive talking without the Remembrance of Allah hardens the heart; and those who are the farthest from Allah are those whose hearts are hard." [At-Tirmidhi]

Commentary: The hardening of the heart is a condition where one neither learns any lesson from Allah's Signs nor does one accept anyone's good advice and religious preaching. If one indulges in idle talk rather than the remembrance of Allah, his heart becomes hardened, which is a sign of being far from Allah's Mercy. One should therefore occupy himself with the remembrance of Allah.

Warning Against Backbiting & Tale-Carrying

Sheikh Ibn Al-Uthaymeen

Praise be to Allah, who united the believers in a bond of brotherhood, exhorting them on cooperation, goodness, righteousness and mutual respect as regards one's property and honor. As it was put by the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), property, honor, and life are all to be held sacred among Muslims. I testify that none worthy to be worshiped but Allah Alone, with Whom there is no associate. He is the Lord of heaven and earth. I testify that Muhammad is Allah's servant and Chosen Messenger. May Allah bless him, his family, his Companions and those who will follow them, as long as this world exists.

O Muslims! Muslims now suffer two rampant diseases, though immunity from them is easy for those who are protected by Allah. These two diseases are backbiting and tale-bearing. Backbiting (Ghibah) denotes maligning a person, speaking evil about any of his characteristics or his deeds. Many of the counsels of Muslims today are not free from indulgence in backbiting people and criticizing them, despite the fact that those backbiters themselves are not free from faults and blemishes; rather they harm themselves and those who listen to their reports without denouncing them.

O Muslims! Allah presented one who backbites his fellow Muslims in the most repulsive picture, in which he is depicted as eating the flesh of the dead body of one who is backbitten.

O Muslims! Your duty when you hear others backbite your brothers is to be earnest to forbid the backbiter and to defend the honors of Muslims, just as the case when you find a man eating from the flesh of a dead

body. Allah the Almighty said what means:

"O you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: and spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?"

Nay, ye would abhor it. But fear Allah: for Allah is Oft Returning, Most Merciful" [49:12]

It is likely that a backbiter will be punished on the Day of Resurrection by ordering him to eat from the flesh of the dead bodies of those whom he backbit in the world, who will be presented as dead in front of him. It was narrated in the Hadith relating the story of Mi'raj (Ascent) that:

"The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) passed by people with copper fingernails, with which they scratch their own faces and chests. He asked: "Who are those, Jibril?" It was answered: "Those are the people who eat the flesh of other people and vilify their honor."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said in an occasion:

"O you who declared faith with your tongues, but your hearts are not imbued with faith! Do not backbite Muslims, and do not search for their faults, for if anyone searches for their faults, Allah will search for his fault, and if Allah searches for the fault of anyone, He disgraces and exposes him in his house".

O Muslims! Sometimes when backbiters are advised to give up such bad habit, they plead innocence by stating that they are telling the truth. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was asked concerning backbiting thus: "Suppose that there are actual faults in the one I am talking about?" The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied:

"If what you tell about your brother (in faith) is truth, then you will still be guilty of backbiting, but if what you say concerning him is untruth, you will be guilty of committing falsehood against him".

Thus, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) explained to his Ummah that backbiting denotes mentioning the real faults of a person. However, the worse evil is to backbite a believer by mentioning faults, which are not in him. Imam Ahmad, as well as the scholars who adopted his school, maintained that backbiting is one of the major sins. This gives a warning to Muslims to stop backbiting others and to be concerned with their own faults. Once a person finds a fault with his brother, he should advise him and guide him to eliminate such fault rather than vilifying him. This is the requisite for establishing a real bond of brotherhood based on faith, and the torch that guides to the way of Islamic methodology.

The other rampant disease is Namimah (tale-bearing, or going about with calumnies), which denotes carrying the statements made against some people and transmitting such statements to those backbitten people, with the aim of spreading corruption and sowing enmity and hatred among people. This kind of Namimah is considered the most grievous of all, and one who is guilty of it is to incur torture in the grave, as well as the torment of the Fire of Hell. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"No talebearer shall ever enter Paradise."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) once passed by two graves and said:

"They (The dwellers of these graves) are now being tortured, because of something which was not difficult to resist: One of them neglected cleansing his genitals following urination and the others was given to tale-bearing."

O Muslims! Anyone, to whom a
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Submission

The days of Haj are with us. Those who undertake this momentous journey will be constantly reminded of Sayyidina Ibrahim (AS), his wife Hazrath Hajra (AS) and his son Hazrath Ismail (AS). The Ka'ba Shareef that the Haji will perform tawaaf of was built by this illustrious father and son. The seven rounds between mount Safa and Marwa is the living reminder of the anxious running at that very pace by Hazrath Hajra (AS) in search of water for her infant son. The precious water of zam zam makes one ponder over the thirst of Hazrath Ismail (AS) and the extreme concern of his mother - until finally this miracle was granted to them. These are but just a few of the reminders of this illustrious family. Nevertheless, one tremendous lesson that shines extra-ordinarily in the lives of these great personalities is the level of their unquestioning submission to the command of Allah. In these blessed days of Haj we should be learning especially this lesson from them and enacting it in our lives.

BARREN LAND

Consider the command of Allah to Hazrath Ibrahim (AS) to leave his wife and infant child alone in a barren land. No amount of human intelligence can fathom the wisdom behind this command. A solitary innocent woman and an infant child being left alone in a desert without any apparent means of survival is something that seems senseless. Had it been one of our liberal thinkers of today, he would have readily "re-interpreted" this command of Allah. Many would have at least asked: "But why must I do this?" Hazrath Ibrahim (AS) however responded very differently. He responded by doing exactly what he was told. Without any

question he leaves his wife and child in the barren land and quietly turns to return. He lived up to his declaration which the Glorious Qur'an has preserved for eternity. Allah says: "And remember the time when your Lord said to him (Ebrahim AS) 'Submit!' He (Ebrahim AS) replied "I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds" (2:131). And indeed he submitted without any hesitation and did what many today would have termed senseless - he left his wife and child in a desert without any apparent means of survival.

COMMAND OF ALLAH TA'ALA?

As he turns to leave, his wife Hazrath Hajra (AS) asks in utter astonishment: "Are you going to leave us here?" This was the response of a normal human being. Anyone would have been perturbed at being left in a desert totally exposed to the elements. But her question is met with silence from Hazrath Ebrahim (AS) who was commanded not to say anything. His silence in this trying situation was also an act of submission. Hazrath Hajra (AS) repeated the question, but to no avail. She finally rephrases the question and asks: "Is this the command of Allah?" Hazrath Ebrahim (AS) indicates positively. That was all she needed to know. Without any further question she exclaims: "In that case He will not allow us to perish." Subhanallah. What absolute submission to the command of Allah. No cries of "discrimination" were heard from her - as many women of our times would have done. No question was raised about whether this was "democratic." There was no clamour for "equality". No sooner did she come to know that she was being left in that barren place on the command of Allah, she fully submitted to it. No "ifs" and "buts." No "I cannot understand this" or "it doesn't make sense." Nothing of the sort. Only total submission was to be seen.

SLAUGHTER SON

When Hazrath Ebrahim (AS) was

commanded to slaughter his son, he again submitted without any question and prepared himself to carry out the task. Consider this command at face value and it seems to be totally illogical. Had it been one of our enlightened modern thinkers of today, he would have certainly asked: "But what did my son do? How can I slaughter an innocent child?" Or, perhaps, he would have just gone ahead and "re-interpreted" the command. But this was Khalilullah, Hazrath Ebrahim (AS). He proceeded to carry out the command of Allah Ta'ala without any question. When his son, the young Hazrath Ismail (AS) becomes aware that he is soon to be slaughtered on the command of Allah, he immediately submits and responds: "O my father, do what you have been commanded. You will soon find me to be among the patient" (37:102). No protest. No rebellion. No question. Just total submission to the command of Allah.

MUSLIM

We also have claimed to have submitted ourselves to Allah. Islam means "submission." A "Muslim" is one who submits. The time has come for some sincere soul searching. To what extent have we submitted to the clear commands of Allah and His beloved Rasul (sallallahu alaihi wasallam)? When Allah has declared: "O you who Believe; fear Allah and forsake what is left of interest (2:278)," do we stop and submit? When the Qur'an-e-Kareem exhorts the Believing men and women to lower their gazes, how do we respond? When Allah commands the women: "And remain firmly within your homes (33:33)" do we see the example of the unquestioning submission of Hazrath Hajra (AS) being implemented? The same question should be asked about the command of Allah to the Believing women to "bring close upon them their jilbaab (hijaab)" (33:55).

MUSIC ON HOLD

When we are informed that Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) closed his ears at the sound of music and that he declared: "I have been sent to destroy musical instruments," do we submit and eradicate all music out of our lives? Or do we just ignore these Ahadith and instead promote music by playing it ourselves in our homes and businesses, by having music on hold on our telephones, by installing musical doorbells, etc? Similarly, what about the injunctions pertaining to all our ibaadat, monetary affairs and social interactions?

MAKES SENSE?

The time has come to fully submit to the commands of Allah in the manner that Ebrahim (AS) and his family have displayed. No questions about "why this?" and "why that?" No re-interpretations and no waiting to see if it "makes sense" to us. All we need to establish is what the command of Allah and His Rasul (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) is. Then we merely need to submit to His command.

May Allah make us true Muslims - those who submit totally unto Him. Aameen.

Inviolable

Abu Hurairah (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "The blood, honour and property of a Muslim is inviolable for another Muslim." [Muslim].

Commentary: This Hadith also makes it clear that a Muslim is bound to protect his blood, wealth and honour and it is not lawful for any Muslim to attack another Muslim's honour and property. Nor is it lawful for him to kill another Muslim without a valid reason.

Desire

Desires are part of human nature. If a person's desires are channelled correctly, it can become the greatest driving force towards good. For instance, if a person's most intense desire is to attain the pleasure of Allah and to acquire the everlasting abode of Jannah, this desire will become the strongest motivating factor towards righteous actions. Such a person will be most eager to fulfil all the obligations of Deen. He will be most eager to hasten towards the Musjid when the time of Salaah comes. In fact Salaah will be the coolness of his eyes, tilaawat (recitation) of the Quran will be his refreshment, zikr and dua will be his energy and living to serve Allah will be his oxygen. His adornment will be excellent akhlaaq (character, such as sincerity, humility, tolerance, forgiveness, etc), outstanding mu'aasharat (social interaction, such as kind treatment to parents, spouses, family members, neighbours, etc) and honest and upright mua'malaat (monetary dealings and transactions). Since he is driven by the desire to please Allah, he will automatically flee from everything that displeases his Creator and Sustainer. Going towards sin for him will be like going towards a blazing fire. Thus a person whose greatest desire is to please Allah will be an asset to himself, a true blessing to his family and community and a boon to humanity.

LIFE DICTATED AND CONTROLLED

On the contrary, if one's greatest desires are wealth, power, status and the leisure and pleasure of this world, the situation will be very different. His life will be dictated, controlled and directed by the desire to earn wealth, grab power, enhance his worldly position and status and chase fun and entertain-

ment. In warning against this, Allah declares in the Glorious Quran: "And do not follow your base desires, or else it will deviate you from the path of Allah". Tragically, due to the western culture having overwhelmed us, base desires have indeed become the driving force in our lives.

WEALTH

Halaal wealth is certainly a great blessing. However unbridled desire for wealth will lead to much transgression of the laws of Allah. Salaah, or performing salaah with jamaat, will be missed due to business. Honesty and fair dealings will become casualties in the quest for more profit. Akhlaaq (good character) will be discarded. Hence people who work around him will be subjected to abuse. Vulgar language will become acceptable "business talk and industrial language". Relationships will be severed purely on the basis of wealth. Hence, the damage that unrestrained desire of wealth, power, status, etc. can cause is endless. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) has encapsulated this in a very concise Hadith wherein he said: "The love (uncurbed desire) for the world is the root to every sin." Another Hadith describes it in a parable wherein Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "Two hungry wolves cannot cause as much damage to a flock of sheep as the damage that the greed for wealth and position can do to a person's Deen" (Mishkaat).

The desire for worldly position and status will destroy a person's hard earned wealth and his Akhirat (Hereafter). From paying exorbitant amounts for brand labels to squandering vast sums on lavish weddings and functions — everything will be done to enhance one's "status" in society. If the people that one is trying to impress are shameless, one will be driven by the desire to fit in with them to also adopt their shamelessness in one's ways, attire, etc. For example,

clothes will be selected on the basis of how much they expose rather than how much they cover!!!

FUN AND ENTERTAINMENT

The desire for entertainment also, once let loose, will cause havoc to one's Deen, family life, work, etc. How many marriages are being rocked due to the crave for entertainment. Many cases have been reported wherein one of the spouses was "entertaining" themselves by engaging in haraam "chats" on Mxit, Facebook, BBM and other such media. Many people complain of their spouse spending hours on the internet or playing computer games (yes, adults addicted to computer games) but they have no time for their families. When the desire for entertainment becomes a crave, one's life revolves around holidays, merry making and generally chasing fun. Once the artificial things fail to give any satisfaction, which is bound to happen, one begins to look for new ways and spends more money to entertain oneself, hence one's life and wealth is wasted in this rat race. Even worse is the situation where aged parents are abandoned in old-age homes and elsewhere because they have become an obstacle in their children having their holidays and entertainment!!! Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi raajioon.

LIFE IS PRECIOUS

Our life is very precious and very short indeed. We have no guarantee of tomorrow. In this short life we must suppress and curb all those desires that invite the wrath and displeasure of Allah. The following are some suggestions that will help us to suppress the unlawful desires and save ourselves from destruction in this world and the hereafter:

* Daily spend a few minutes remembering death. Picture the entire scene of death. Also imagine what will be the case if, Allah forbid,

your death comes while you are engaged in fulfilling a haraam desire.

* Dedicate time daily for Zikr (the remembrance of Allah). Recite at least 100 times Istighfaar and 100 times Durud Sharif.

* The recitation of the Qur'an shareef must be a part of one's daily life.

* Totally avoid all things that incite haraam desires. Misuse of the cell-phone, internet and other media is our biggest downfall.

* Engage in the effort of Deen. Invite others to make acquiring the pleasure of Allah their greatest desire in life.

* Among the most effective methods to overcome the challenges and fitnas of evil desires is to sincerely attach oneself to a spiritual guide who is on the path of Haq and who adheres to the sunnah in all aspects of life. One should commit oneself to consulting with him in all matters and then act upon his advice.

* May Allah protect us from the evil of our nafs (base desires) and fill our hearts with the desire to please Him in all that we do. Aameen.

Al-Haadi

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report is carried, telling that someone is vilifying him, should condemn such an act and forbid the tale-carrier from persisting in his sin. He should also take care of such a tale-bearer for, just as he carries tales of people to him, he most likely carries tales from him to other people. Allah the Almighty says which translates as:

"Heed not the type of despicable man, ready with oaths, a slanderer, going about with calumnies," [Noble Quran 68:10-11]

May Allah guide you and I to the best of manners and deeds and keep us away from the bad manners and deeds and guide us to His straightforward path, for He is Most Bounteous, Most Generous. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), his family and his Companions.

For those who could not make it to Hajj

Majd Arbil

The Pilgrimage to Makkah, is one of the essential elements of the Islamic faith. It is obligatory on all believers provided they have the financial capability and physical ability to endure the challenges of the pilgrimage.

According to Islamic tradition the Kaaba, a simple square cube structure in Makkah, was the first house of worship established to remind humanity of the One Supreme God. The structure was reconstructed by Prophet Abraham and his son Prophet Ishmael.

And when We made the House (at Makkah) a destination for humankind and a sanctuary, (saying): Take as your place of worship the place where Abraham stood (to pray). And We imposed a duty upon Abraham and Ishmael, (saying): Purify My house for those who go around and those who meditate therein and those who bow down and prostrate themselves (in worship). 2:125

The gathering of millions of faithful in Makkah during the days of annual pilgrimage, Hajj is a fulfillment of Prophet Abram's prayer.

And, lo, Abraham prayed: "O my Sustainer! Make this a land secure, and grant its people fruitful sustenance - such of them as believe in God and the Last Day." .. Quran 2:126

The Pilgrimage to Mecca is a sign of supreme significance. It was Prophet Abraham's unconditional commitment to God that led him to leave his wife Hagar and his infant son Ishmael in this desolated desert. Prophet

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Abraham was reward for his unwavering submission to God, by a promise from Him to make this uninviting land into a place of promise and plenty.

Muslims who visit Makkah for Hajj become part of God's promise to Prophet Abraham.

Like any other article of faith, the pilgrimage can become meaningless if it is regarded as an end in itself rather than a means for the attainment of a meaningful life.

The following story reminds us of the spirit of Hajj.

The Cobbler's Hajj

It is related that a noted Muslim scholar Abdullah bin Mubarak, had a dream while he was sleeping near the Kaaba.

Abdullah bin Mubarak saw two angels' descend from the sky, and start talking to each other.

One of the angels asked the other: "Do you know how many people have come for Hajj this year?"

The other angel replied: "Six hundred thousand have come for Hajj."

Abdullah bin Mubarak had also gone for Hajj that year.

The first angel asked: "How many people's Hajj has been accepted?"

The second replied: "I wonder if anyone's Hajj has been accepted at all."

Abdullah bin Mubarak was grieved to hear that. He thought, "So many people have come from all over the world, crossing so many obstacles like rivers, jungles, mountains, suffered so many hardships, and meeting so many expenses. Would their effort be wasted? Allah does not let anyone's effort go to waste".

He had thought only so far when he heard the other angel speak: "There is a cobbler in Damascus. His name is Ali bin al-Mufiq. He could not come for Hajj, but Allah

has accepted his intention of Hajj. Not only will he get the reward for Hajj, but because of him, all the Hajjis will be rewarded.

When Abdullah bin Mubarak woke up, he decided he would go to Damascus and meet that cobbler whose Hajj intentions carried such a lot of weight.

On reaching Damascus, Abdullah bin Mubarak inquired if anyone knew a cobbler named Ali bin al-Mufiq. The town people directed him to a house. When a man appeared from the house Abdullah bin Mubarak greeted him and asked his name. The man replied "Ali bin al-Mufiq".

Abdullah bin Mubarak asked: "What do you do for a living?"

Ali replied: "I am a cobbler". Then Ali asked the stranger's name that had come looking for him.

Abdullah bin Mubarak was a very well-known scholar of Islam, when Abdullah bin Mubarak introduced him self, the cobbler was anxious to find out why such a well known scholar was seeking him out.

When Abdullah bin Mubarak asked Ali to tell him if he had made any plans to go for Hajj. Ali replied "For thirty years I have lived in the hope of performing the Hajj. This year I had saved enough to go for Hajj, but Allah did not will it, so I couldn't make my intention translate into action.

Abdullah bin Mubarak was eager to find out how could this man's Hajj be accepted and blessed for all the people who went for Hajj that year when he didn't go for Hajj in the first place. While talking to the cobbler he could feel a certain purity in his heart. Islam regards greatness not in wealth or in power, but in civility, in good manners and the goodness of heart.

Abdullah bin Mubarak further asked: "why could you not go on Hajj?". In order not to disclose the reason, Ali again replied "it was Allah's will".

When Abdullah bin Mubarak per-

sisted, Ali revealed: "Once I went to see my neighbor's house. His family was just sitting down for dinner. Although I was not hungry I thought my neighbor would invite me to sit down for dinner out of courtesy but I could see that my neighbor was grieved about something and wanted to avoid inviting me for dinner.

After some hesitation the neighbor told me: "I am sorry I cannot invite you for food. We were without food for three days and I could not bear to see the pain of hunger of my children. I went out looking for food today and found a dead donkey. In my desperation I cut out some meat from the dead animal, and brought it home so that my wife could cook this meat. It is lawful for us because of our extreme condition of hunger, but I cannot offer it to you."

Ali continued: "On hearing this, my heart bled with tears. I got up and went home, collected the three thousand dinars I had saved for Hajj, and gave my neighbor the money. I too had to go hungry but that was to save money for Hajj, but I thought helping my neighbor during his difficult times was more important. Although I still desire to go for Hajj if Allah wills."

Abdullah bin Mubarak was greatly inspired by the cobbler's story and told the cobbler of his dream.

God is merciful and shows mercy to those who do likewise to his creatures. This act of compassion on the part of the cobbler was so pleasing to God that it not only earned him the reward of Hajj but was extended to all the people who came for Hajj.

Hajj is a journey that can ignite the soul to be reminded of the time it was created and takes it beyond the dimensions of this life to the time it will meet the creator.

The sincere performance of Hajj can transcend a person's day to day life into a spiritual awakening of highest magnitude. A successful Hajj experience connects us to our creator and greater compassion of humanity.

75,000 Miles of Travel

When it comes to globetrotting, even Marco Polo takes a back seat to this fourteenth-century voyageur Ibn Battuta.

In the year 1349 a dusty Arab horseman rode slowly toward the city of Tangier on the North African coast. For Ibn Battuta, it was the end of a long journey. When he left his home in Tangier 24 years earlier, he had not planned to travel distant roads all during the years that took him from young manhood to middle-age. From his mount, Ibn Battuta surveyed the white spires and homes of Tangier spreading in a crescent along the Atlantic Ocean. He tried to remember how the city had looked when he left it behind almost a quarter-century ago.

In 1325 Ibn Battuta had been a young man of 21, reluctantly leaving his parents to make his first hajj, or pilgrimage, to Mecca some 3,000 miles due east. He had covered those 3,000 miles and then had gone on to travel another 72,000 miles! Many Muslims made the pilgrimage to the Holy City but then returned home, for it was not an age when people were accustomed to straying from home for long periods. When Ibn Battuta began his travels, it was, in fact, more than 125 years before such renowned voyagers as Columbus, de Gama and Magellan set sail. It was no wonder, then, that Ibn Battuta returned to his native city, where his parents had died in his absence, to find himself a famous wayfarer. A contemporary described him as "the traveler of the age," adding "he who should call him the traveler of the whole body of Islam would not exceed the truth."

Ibn Battuta was indeed the traveler of his age. His wanderings took him to Spain, Russia, Turkey, Persia, India, China and all the Arab lands. His description of the religious, political and social conditions of the lands he visited-in some cases the only record-give insight into medieval Eastern civilization. Authorities who estimate Ibn Battuta's journeys at more than 75,000 miles say that the distance was not exceeded by anyone-including Marco Polo, Magellan or Columbus-until the age of steam.

Travelers have many reasons for visiting foreign lands. Marco Polo was a merchant and Columbus an adventurer. Ibn Battuta, however, was a theologian, poet and scholar, a humanitarian in an age when life was cheap. He left Tangier to visit the holy places of his faith and found himself curious about the wide world and eager to learn more about it.

Born in 1304, the son of Abdallah, a qadi, or local judge, Ibn Battuta as a young man received a future qadi's customary education, essentially a thorough study of religious literature and poetry. He is, in fact, the only great traveler to describe some of the places he visited in rhymed verse. His style (translated without rhyme) can be imagined from his description of the Cairo of 1326: "I arrived at length at Cairo, mother of cities and seat of Pharaoh the tyrant, mistress of broad regions and fruitful lands, boundless in multitude of buildings, peerless in beauty and splendour, the meeting place of comer and goer, the halting place of feeble and mighty, whose throngs surge as the waves of the sea, and can scarce be contained in her for all her size and capacity.

"On the Nile," noted the amazed traveler, "there are 36,000 boats belonging to the Sultan and his subjects."

From Cairo Ibn Battuta toured through Jerusalem, Aleppo and Damascus, where he joined a caravan of pilgrims bound

for Mecca. These caravans were a familiar sight in Islam. They consisted of Muslims, rich and poor, ignorant and educated, soldier, merchant and scholar, who were fulfilling the duty of every Muslim to visit Mecca at least once in his lifetime if possible. In the towns and cities along the way they were fed, sheltered and entertained in rest houses and hospices maintained by generous benefactors. This traditional hospitality-which in Arab countries extends to all guests-made it possible for Ibn Battuta, who was not rich, to travel with a light purse.

He made the hajj to Mecca seven times. The second time he stayed in the city three years to study with the great Muslim scholars. This pilgrimage was preceded by a tour of Persia, including a visit to the then fabled capital of Islam, Baghdad, where he found public baths that were unmatched anywhere in the world. "Each establishment," wrote the traveler, "has a large number of private bathrooms, every one of which has also a washbasin in the corner, with two taps supplying hot and cold water. Every bather is given three towels, one to wear round his waist when he goes in, another to wear round his waist when he comes out, and the third to dry himself with."

At the end of three years of study in Mecca, Ibn Battuta set out for India, where he hoped to join the court of the powerful and generous Sultan of Delhi. By this time he had made it a rule "never, so far as possible, to cover a second time any road." He went to Jiddah, Mecca's nearest port, where he turned down passage on a ship he considered unsafe. "This was an act of providence," he recalls, "for the ship sailed and foundered in the open sea, and very few escaped."

After touring through Egypt, Syria, Turkey and Russia, Ibn Battuta finally reached Delhi, where he remained in the sultan's service as qadi for eight years. At the end of this time the sultan called him. "I have sent for

you to go as my ambassador to the lung of China," he said, "for I know your love of travel." The trip was to be a memorable journey.

No sooner had Ibn Battuta left Delhi than he was taken prisoner by unfriendly Indians. They marked him for death, but one of the band, a young man, took pity on him and let him escape. After eating roots and nuts and hiding out in strange countryside for eight days, Ibn Battuta finally rejoined his entourage and proceeded to Calicut, a trading port near the tip of India from which he planned to sail to China.

"We entered the harbour in great pomp, the like of which I have never seen in those lands," he noted, "but it was a joy to be followed by distress." Then he describes the great Chinese junks that monopolized traffic to China.

The large junks had three masts and up to twelve sails, which were "never lowered, but turned according to the direction of the wind." Three smaller vessels usually accompanied the junks to tow them if they became becalmed. The junk was the fourteenth-century equivalent of the modern ocean liner. It even carried its own fresh food: "The sailors," notes Ibn Battuta, "have their children living on board ship, and they cultivate green stuffs, vegetables and ginger in wooden tanks."

In Calicut Ibn Battuta loaded his party and the presents for the Chinese emperor on a junk. His own belongings were put onto a smaller vessel called a kakam. The junk, as it made its way from the harbor, was caught by a sudden gale which whipped up the sea and dashed the ship onto shoals. All was lost. The smaller kakam then sailed away with all of Ibn Battuta's goods. He watched the kakam grow smaller in the distance with nothing to his name but ten dinars and the carpet he had slept on.

From past experience with foreign

rulers, he wisely decided not to return to Delhi, for while the sultan was a generous man, Ibn Battuta reasoned that he might not have understood why of all the treasure and envoys, only Ibn Battuta remained intact! So the stranded ambassador, with the typical resourcefulness of a seasoned traveler, attached himself to a local Muslim potentate who appointed him qadi in the nearby Maldiv Islands. Ibn Battuta's description of the customs of these islands was the first to reach the outside world.

When Ibn Battuta finally sailed again for China, he landed at Zaytœn, the storied "Shanghai" of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which may have been what is today the island of Amoy, opposite Formosa. He traveled through China as an ambassador, although he actually represented no one and was without credentials. Despite the fact that the Muslim and Chinese empires were not on the friendliest terms, Ibn Battuta journeyed from Zaytœn to Hangchow and Peking and back without any difficulty. On the contrary, he was feted in most places, a testimony to his charm and native diplomacy.

"There is no people in the world," noted Ibn Battuta, "wealthier than the Chinese." He called Hangchow "the biggest city I have ever seen on the face of the earth." This was the same city described by Marco Polo as "beyond dispute the finest and noblest in the world."

The Arab from Tangier turned homeward the way he had come, except that he avoided Delhi altogether. He passed once again through Mecca and Baghdad and, in 1348, stopped at Damascus. There he enquired about one of his sons whom he had left 20 years before. He discovered that the boy had been dead 12 years and his own father 15.

The Black Plague was then raging through the Middle East. At Cairo Ibn Battuta reported a daily death toll of 21,000, a figure

that historians confirm. Ibn Battuta passed through town after town scourged by the plague, but providentially he escaped infection for had he been stricken, his name would have been soon forgotten. He had not yet recorded his travels.

Even after he returned to Tangier in 1349, Ibn Battuta was not content to spend his remaining days at home, where he might have passed many a pleasant hour spinning stories of distant lands for his friends. His mother also had fallen victim to the plague during his absence, and with nothing to keep him in Tangier, he was soon planning a trip to Spain. After Spain, three years later, Ibn Battuta began his last journey. He traveled through west-central Africa, where he mistook the Niger for the Nile, and visited Timbuktu, a city that was considered legendary by Europeans because none of them had been there. In 1354 the great traveler was called to Fez by his sultan, who ordered him to dictate a record of his wanderings to a court scribe.

Strangely enough, Ibn Battuta's exploits were lost to the Western world for 300 years. Not until the nineteenth century, when his Rihla (Travels) was discovered in Algeria, did his extraordinary roaming come to light. In contrast, Marco Polo dictated an account of his journeys to a contemporary while they shared a prison cell in 1296, and copies had circulated all over Europe by the fifteenth century. Had Ibn Battuta's work received the same attention, his name would rank alongside Marco Polo's as a synonym for world travel.

Source: Saudi Aramco World

Remain Silent

"He who believes in Allah and the Last Day must either speak good or remain silent."

A Ten Point Programme

For The Islamic World

S. A.H. Nadvi

Cont'd from previous issue

5. The curriculum and education system in Muslim countries needs fundamental change; a reshaping of the concept and approach to education, so that it becomes compatible with the values and judgements of Islam. The education system should never be imported from a foreign land nor can it be borrowed from an alien school of thought. It can only be formulated through a deep study and correct comprehension of Islam, and its details can be worked out by Muslim scholars and educationists themselves by people who should not pay any heed to artificial distinctions of old and to new or Eastern or Western systems of education. This is, in fact, the most pressing need of the time one which cannot brook the least delay. Unless this important task is undertaken Muslim countries can neither regain their self-confidence nor can they think out the solutions to the problems they face. It is no exaggeration to claim that if they do not meet this imperative need Muslims will not be able to administer their own countries according to their genius, nor will their educational institutions, press and other means of publicity discharge their functions in accordance with the teachings of Islam, nor will they be able to meet the peculiar needs of their people.

6. It is also necessary to build up a strong and worldwide movement for study

and research in Islamic Literature so as to create a rapport between the literary creations of earlier Muslim savants and the new rising generation. Only in this way can the Islamic branches of learning be revitalised and the claim of Islamic jurisprudence to be an expanding and progressive legal system be demonstrated. Based on everlasting principles which are never antiquated, the Islamic legal system has the capacity to develop with the changing times. There is, thus, no need to take recourse to man-made laws in this presence. The step suggested here really amounts to a revivalist endeavour for Islam since it meets an urgent requirement for all Muslim countries and communities and saves them from the danger of intellectual and cultural waywardness, or rather dams the flood of westernisation which threatens to inundate the whole of Muslim world.

7. Islamic culture is drawn from the norms and values upheld by Islam. Its concept of purity and cleanliness: the moderate, upright and just behaviour demanded by it, the Qur'anic teaching and the way of life practised by the Holy Prophet, (Peace be upon him) in short, the totality of the teachings of Islam which were given practical shape by the earlier adherents of Islam are actualised in its culture. We must, therefore, take every possible step to make the Islamic culture a distinguishing feature of every Muslim society. The dichotomy of accepting only Faith and ritual observances and rejecting the culture brought forth by that Religion's comprehensive, flexible and liberal norms or values in favour of an alien culture or civilisation is nothing short of opening the gates to intellectual and cultural apostasy. There are, in fact, Muslim countries which have so completely modernised themselves under the impact of the West that their entire public and private lives— from their homes and modes of living to their hotels and public offices— have undergone a complete change.

Save for a few religious observances one can find no trace of their national identity and sometimes is hard to believe that one is not in a Western countries. The actual identity of Muslim societies is an essential factor in maintaining their rapport with the Religion they profess; for, the lives of individuals and the socio-cultural norms and institutions go to make a complete whole. It is, thus, absolutely necessary that the Islamic culture and its way of life reassert itself in these countries.

8. The world of Islam needs today an intellectual leadership which can face the challenge of the West with courage, confidence and creative thinking and which can chart out a new way in the midst of the different norms and concepts of Western civilisation—it should be a way that is neither imitative nor extremist. This new leadership has to rise above the non-essential collaterals and shallowness of the West. It has to pay attention to intrinsic truths and treat Western knowledge and learning simply as raw materials for recasting and remoulding a new cultural pattern consistent with the ideas, beliefs, philosophies, dogmas and doctrines of Islam. This would be a revolutionary achievement in the real sense since the Islamic world cannot attain complete independence in its absence.²⁵

9. The governments of Muslim majority countries which are waging a war of attrition against their own Islam-loving populations are virtually engaged in a religious genocide. The leaders of these countries who have come to hold the reins of government either through conspiracy or military takeover are frittering away their energies and resources aimlessly. Similarly, the rulers of certain Arab countries want to change the religious precepts and the rules of the Shariah in such a manner that they become helpful in achieving their own political ends or help them cover up their own personal

weaknesses, or else become instrumental in implementing programmes instigated by foreign powers inimical to Islam. It is necessary to make these leaders realise the futility of their efforts which have not only failed miserably in many a Muslim country but have also proved a hindrance in the achievement of national unity. The attention of these leaders should be invited to the ends and means which would really help them in making their countries strong and united.

The leaders of other Muslim countries who have a reverential regard for Islam should, in like manner, be persuaded to create conditions favourable to the introduction of the Islami Shariah. They have to be convinced that their endeavours in this direction attract the succour and blessings of God for their countries and their people.

Simultaneously, an all out effort should be made to re-establish a central leadership for the entire Islamic world. The central leadership should be based on the principles of mutual consultation and cooperation in goodness and God-fearingness. There should be a general feeling of remorse and sorrow over the abolition of the Caliphate which was made incumbent for the Muslims and whose absence has been the main cause for the calamities suffered by them.

10. In so far as non-Muslim countries without Muslim minority communities are concerned, the Message of Islam should be disseminated in an effective and rational manner, keeping in view the existing conditions and the psychology of each nation to which the preaching is addressed. The present state of materialistic nihilism has created a spiritual and moral void in most of these countries which, along with the explicit failure of modern civilization, has created bright prospects for galvanizing man to the Message of the One God and the unity of mankind preached by Islam.

In those countries where Muslims

exist as a minority community, they should devise ways and means to impart religious education to their children without taking recourse to any assistance from their national governments and they should also safeguard their personal laws. Muslims in these countries ought to be ever watchful of the new rules and laws promulgated in their countries, exhibit their trustworthiness, dignity and noble-mindedness and try to fill the void of moral leadership for they are best fitted to do so. They can, in this way, not only afford a proof of their usefulness for their countries but can also become the saviours of the morally decadent in these societies. This is the only way to gain love and respect for themselves as well as to enhance the regard and confidence of their countrymen which has been lost by the Muslims owing to peculiar historical circumstances in the recent past.

At the outset of this new century of the Islamic era, the Muslims or rather the whole of the human race is looking forward to those masterminds who cannot only satisfy the needs of Islam but also meet the requirements of the present age by changing the course of history through their initiative and courageous action. The scribe of time is holding its breath with an unrolled scroll of history in its hand so as to pay homage and record the brilliant achievements of such leaders of mankind.

Calumny

Ibn Mas'ud (RA) said: The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Shall I tell you what 'Al-'Adhu' (falsehood and slandering) is? It is calumny which is committed among the people." [Muslim].

Commentary: *We learn from this Hadith that calumny, lying, falsehood and slandering are major sins because they cause conflict and dissension in society. A Muslim must keep himself free from such evils.*

Khutbat-i-Madras

The Life of Prophet Muhammad

The Most Comprehensive and Eternal Model

Syed Sulaiman Nadvi (RA)

Continued from previous issues

Completeness

For a life history to become an ideal for all times, and a model for everyone to follow, it is essential that every aspect of such a person's life should be in the open. No event should be left to secrecy or the darkness of uncertainty. All the events of his life should be as clearly known as the daylight so that his life could become an ideal for the human race.

If we make this a yardstick and measure the life histories of the great men of the past, including the founders of the great religions of the world, no one comes anywhere near this standard except the last Prophet of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). We have already established that of the thousands of great prophets and reformers, just a few can be regarded 'historic' in the sense that the details of their life history can be verified through authentic historical sources. Yet even they cannot lay a claim to 'comprehensiveness' because the important details of their life history are simply not available now. It is only Prophet Muhammad's life which is completely known today, even to the minutest detail. This fact also makes it clear that he was the last Prophet of Allah (Peace be upon him).

On the other hand, let us consider the life of Buddha, one of the great men of history, whose followers constitute nearly a fourth of the world's population. Whatever we know of his life is based on conjecture or fiction. Even if we give those stories the

status of history and look for the essential details of Buddha's life we will be disappointed. All we get to know is that once upon a time there was a Raja who ruled the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal. The Raja's son had the natural inclination towards tradition and deep thinking. When he grew up, got married and became a father, he happened to notice the plight of some miserable people. Their suffering left such a deep mark on his sensitive nature that he gave up his princely life and left his home forever. His wanderlust took him to various cities of India like Banaras, Patliputra and the countryside and mountains. After a time, he is said to have found the truth while meditating under a tree in Gaya. He preached his new found truth from Banaras to Bihar for a period of time and then passed away. That is all we know about Buddha. Similarly, Zoroaster is the founder of a religion. We have established that what little is known about him is based on guesswork [Britannica].

The best known of the prophets prior to Prophet Muhammad is Moses (Peace be upon them). For the sake of argument, we may disregard the point whether the present Torah is authentic and admit that whatever it says is true. What do we get to know about Moses from the five books of Torah put together? All that we know is that he was brought up in the house of the Pharaoh. When he grew up he helped the children of Israel on an occasion or two against the oppression of the Pharaoh's men. He fled to Madayin, got married and having spent a considerable period of time there, returned

to Egypt. On his way to Egypt, he was ordained a prophet. He showed some miracles in front of the Pharaoh and asked him to let the children of Israel go with him. Eventually he left Egypt along with his people, pursued by the Pharaoh's army. By Allah's command the sea gave way to him and his people, whereas the Pharaoh and his men were drowned in the same water. He entered Arabia and then Syria and subdued a few non-believers. He lived like that for a period of time, grew old and died on a hill top. The concluding sentences of the Torah contain the following:

"So the servant of the Lord died in the valley of Moab, by the command of his Lord. His burial took place at Bethpeor but no one knows his grave to this day. He was 120 years of age when he died. And no prophet like Moses was ever born among Bani Israel."

These sentences belong to the fifth book of Torah which is ascribed to Moses. They make it clear that this book, or at least the last portion of it, cannot have been written by Moses. Who wrote them? The world does not know anything about this biographer of Moses.

The words that "no one knows his grave to this day" and "no prophet like Moses was ever born among Bani Israel" indicate that they were written long after the death of Moses (Peace be upon him), long enough for people to have forgotten a personality like Moses, and when the advent of a new prophet could have been expected.

Moses (Peace be upon him) lived to be 120. However; it will not be out of place to ask at this point an appropriate question. What events of his life do we actually know to fill a long span of a hundred and twenty years? Apart from his birth, his migration, marriage and his being ordained a prophet, what essential details of his biography are known to us? What we do know are merely the personal details of one's life which with

slight variations are repetitious and insignificant. What we need in a great biography is a way of life full of essential details to be followed as a role model of a great moral conduct. These are the very ingredients missing from the biography of Moses (Peace be upon him). Otherwise, in Torah, there is no lack of insignificant details, such as names of persons, their ancestry, names of places, official counting of the population and some legal jargon. These details might be interesting for a research scholar interested in ancient geography, chronology, ancestry and law but have no value at all as the biography of a great leader of men who could guide them through his practical example.

In point of time the nearest to Islam is the Prophet of God, Jesus Christ (Peace be upon him). His followers are known to be greater in number than those of any other religion in the world. You will be shocked to learn that biographically he is the least known of all the Prophets and founders of well-known religions. It is interesting to note that Christian scholars of modern Europe have made astounding discoveries in their chosen fields of antiquity and archaeology. They have unearthed and made known the ancient secrets of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires, of Arabia and Syria, of Egypt and Africa, of India and Turkistan of the old. They have excavated the ancient ruins and studied old books and parchments to rewrite the lost pages of human history. However, the miracle of modern research has failed to resurrect the actual events of the life of Jesus Christ, lost to the passage of time for ever. Professor Renan did all he could, but failed to produce any authentic account of Christ's life.

It might be worthwhile to quote here from an article on Jesus Christ written for the Encyclopedia Britannica by Rev Dr. Charles Anderson Scot. He says that the attempt to write a "life of Jesus" should frankly be abandoned. The material for it certainly does not

exist. He has calculated that the total number of days of the life regarding which we have any record does not exceed fifty.

According to the Bible, Jesus had a life of 33 years. Firstly, the present day Bible is historically unreliable. However, whatever we get to know from it concerns only the events of the last three years of his life. All we can learn, from the Bible is that he was born and after his birth was brought to Egypt. He showed a few miracles in his early youth and then disappeared. When we meet him next, he is 30 years of age, baptizing and giving sermons to people in the mountains and to fishermen by the riverside. He produces a few disciples, gets into discussions with the Jews. Eventually the Jews capture him and produce him in the court of the Roman governor where his case is heard and the sentence of crucifixion is passed on him. On the third day after the crucifixion his grave is found to be empty. The world will never know what happened during a period of 25 to 30 years of his life. Even the last years of the Bible's account do not contain more than his few miracles, a few sermons and finally his crucifixion.

To be concluded

Deception

Abu Hurairah (RA) said: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "He who deceives another's wife or his slave is none of us." [Abu Dawud].

Commentary: *To incite or provoke someone's wife or slave against her husband or his master or to create hatred between the two is a great crime, because a Muslim is required to create peace and accord amongst people. It is against his conduct to foment dissension and discord between them.*

Holidays

Your teenage son attends school. You pay his fees, buy his uniform, provide him with his text books and stationery, arrange for his transport and give him whatever else is necessary for his education. However your son is not truly dedicated to studying. His main purpose of attending school is to enjoy the few exciting excursions arranged by the school each year. Hence in his school life he "lives" from one excursion to the next. This is what motivates him. It is his objective. He eagerly awaits the excursion and plans for the next excursion before the first is over. If the excursion is cancelled for any reason, he is dejected and depressed.

Like any sensible father, you are very disappointed. Your son should have been dedicated to his studies. The excursions are secondary and "by the way." If no excursion was undertaken, it is not a serious issue. Studying diligently and obtaining a good pass should have been the main concern. You feel your son has "let you down."

We are also in the "school" of this world to "study" – to learn to recognize our Creator, become His true servants and gain His pleasure. This is our main focus of life. This is our motivation, objective and wherein we experience real pleasure. Everything else is secondary. Thus the "excursions" – the occasional little breaks to freshen the mind – are entirely secondary. They should not be given primary importance or become the driving factor in our lives.

TAKE A BREAK

Unfortunately with the Western culture eroding into our way of life, the "excursions" – the elaborate holidays – have become an aspect of primary focus. Generally people no more take a holiday to

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“take a break.” Instead the holiday has become the objective. Many people need to take a break after the holiday. Nevertheless, much time is spent planning one’s holidays. Budgets are allocated for it. While on holiday “where we will spend the next holiday” is discussed. Thus we generally live from holiday to holiday. Every effort is made to ensure that the next holiday is more fun-filled and exciting than the previous one. If the holiday does not materialize, the person is dejected. Alas, this is not the life that a true Mu’min leads.

Making holidays a high priority in life and generally chasing fun and entertainment are in fact the ideals of a “religion” termed “hedonism.” In Philosophy, hedonism is defined as “the doctrine that pleasure is the sole or chief good in life and that the pursuit of it is the ideal aim of conduct (Encarta Encyclopedia).” In simple terms a hedonist is one who worships his desires and makes chasing fun his object in life. This is exactly what has denounced in the Qur’an in the words: “Have you seen the one who takes his desires as his deity and (as a result) Allah caused him to deviate despite knowledge (45:23).” Indeed no Mu’min will claim to be a hedonist in belief. Yet in practice by and large we follow in the footsteps of the hedonistic West. The cornerstones of Western society are “make money” and “have fun.” Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has taught the very opposite – the crux of which is that do not chase the world but spend your life in striving for the comforts, luxuries, fun and pleasure of Jannah.

TRUE PLEASURE

Apparently it would seem that the one who follows the teachings of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and spends his life striving for the Hereafter would have no pleasure in this world. There is nothing further from the truth. In fact only those who

dedicate themselves to taste true pleasure. Hazrath Ebrahim bin Adham (R.A.) used to say: “By Allah we experience such pleasure in worship that, if the kings had known about it, they would have tried to snatch it with their swords.” It is for this very reason that they have no need to chase the artificial and superficial fun of material things, nor do they get depressed due to not having some petty material pleasures. On the contrary, the fun worshippers not only get depressed but also become suicidal. It is part of their belief that “avoidance of pain should be the main concern ... and suicide is by far the most efficacious way of avoiding pain (Encarta Encyclopedia).” Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raajioon! Allah forbid!

Just as no Muslim will claim to be a hedonist in belief, likewise he will never believe in suicide being a way of avoiding pain. A Mu’min certainly believes in life after death and knows that there is unimaginable pain and suffering for one who commits suicide. Yet, due to imitating the hedonistic lifestyle and to some degree making worldly pleasure the purpose of life, some Muslims also become depressed and even suicidal when their desired worldly pleasure is not acquired.

Indeed, Islam has given leeway for a person to occasionally “take a break” from ones normal schedule of work. The object is to take some rest and refresh the mind so that one could return to one’s primary objective (Deen) with renewed enthusiasm and vigour. Hence in taking some rest one will never compromise one’s Deen. Compromising one’s objective for some trivial fleeting pleasure will be like a person who for the pleasure of some warmth makes a bonfire with all the money that he has earned. This would be very tragic indeed.

DO NOT DEGRADE...

In order to ensure that one’s “break” does not break the back of one’s Deen or

break the morality and Imaan of one's family, the following are some guidelines which should be adhered to:

Refrain from all venues of fitna. Even being in the vicinity of the popular public beaches, parks, "shoppertainment" centres and other such venues where hordes of naked people wearing scraps of clothing prance around, is extremely detrimental to one's Imaan.

The same applies to beachfront hotels, holiday resorts and the like. Exposing oneself and one's family to all the nudity, music and other fitnas at these venues seriously damages every one's hayaa (shame and modesty) though one may not actively be a part of the fitnas taking place.

Do not degrade the Islamic garb (the beard, kurta / cloak, niqaab) by attending any such venues where drinking, nudity and other haraam activities take place. These are places which should not be attended by any Muslim, let alone a Muslim who is conscious enough to adopt the Islamic garb.

Remember that you are only taking a break from your normal daily schedule, not from Deen. Therefore, Salaah, recitation of

the Qur'an, zikr and other Deeni activities should not stop. Instead it should increase since one is free from many other daily chores.

Any place where immorality abounds attracts the wrath of . This is clearly mentioned in the Ahadith. Incidents such as tsunamis, earthquakes and other similar catastrophes in the recent past were a clear manifestation of the ahadith. A common factor was the prevalence of much immorality in the affected areas. When the punishment of descends, the innocent are also affected with the guilty, though in the Hereafter they will be separated from the criminals. Thus places where the naked hordes roam around – on the beachfront, resorts and other similar places – must be strictly avoided.

Always bear in mind that true pleasure only lies in obedience to . In disobedience lies torment and agony – even though one may be in the lap of luxury on the most "exotic holiday."

May grant us the taste and true pleasure of Deen in this world and grant us the eternal holiday of Jannah. Aameen.

Taleemudin

Not Among Us

Abu Hurairah (RA) said: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "He who takes up arms against us is none of us; and he who cheats us is none of us." [Muslim].

Another narration of Muslim is: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) happened to pass by a heap of corn. He thrust his hand in that (heap) and his fingers felt wetness. He said to the owner of that heap of corn, "What is this?" He replied: "O Messenger of Allah! These have been drenched by rainfall." He remarked, "Why did you not place this (the drenched part of the heap) over the corn so that people might see it? He who deceives is not of us."

Commentary:

1. To take arms here signifies to revolt against the Muslim community (and a Muslim government, for that matter) or draw a sword, gun, etc., to kill a Muslim - a common practice in the present-day terrorism.
2. Forgery and deceit have two different forms; one is implied and other is physical and visible. In the former, falsehood is given a veneer of truth. The latter is concealment of some defect, adulteration of some inferior quality merchandise in a superior one, addition of something to increase weight or volume or a substance by unfair means and other malpractices.
3. "He is none of us" means "He is not following the way of Muslims" or "His conduct is unlike that of Muslims." It is therefore, necessary for every Muslim to abstain from such evils.

Saviours of Islamic Spirit

Khwaja Nizam ud Din Auliya (RA)

Mawlana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi (RA)

Qutb ud din's animosity

After Ala ud-din had breathed his last, his second son Qutb ud-din Mubarak Shah ascended the throne depriving the rightful claimant and heir - apparent Khizr Khan. Since Khizr Khan had been devoted to the Khwaja, Qurb ud-din Mubarak Shah nursed a feeling of resentment against the Khwaja too which developed into hostility with the passage of time. Qutb ud-din built a new Jam'i Mosque which he named "Masjid Miri", and ordered all the theologians and divines of Delhi to perform the Friday prayers therein. Khwaja Nizam ud-din, however, refused to comply with the royal command, replying that he had a mosque near his house which had a greater claim upon him. This further enraged the King. The relations between the two were so strained that when the Khwaja once saluted the King, on coming across him in the shrine of Sheikh Zia ud-din Rumi, the latter refrained even from exchanging the greetings. Another incident, however, provided the King with an opportunity to declare his foolish intentions which he might have concealed for long in his bosom. According to the custom followed in those days, all the grandees, officers and respectable citizens were required, on the first day of every lunar month, to present themselves before the monarch for salutation and presentation of gifts to him. The Khwaja, however, never went on these occasions but used to send his servant, Iqbal, as his deputy. Feeling slighted by the proxy, the King ordered that none amongst his chiefs and officers should henceforth visit Ghiyathpur to pay respect to the

Khwaja. Amir Khusru relates that the king even said: "Whoever would bring the head of the Sheikh, he shall be rewarded one thousand Tonkas,"

The King publicly announced his intention: "If he does not turn up next time I would know how he comes." The King's intention perhaps was to have Khwaja Nizam ud-din brought to the court as a prisoner or he might have even decided to get rid of him once for all. The Khwaja was told of the King's resolve. But indifferent to the peril threatening him, the Khwaja remained quiet. One after one the days were running out, "The month began to draw to a close", says Manazir Ahsan Gilani, "and with it every well-wisher of the Khwaja began to worry himself sick. At last, the new moon was also sighted. Now everyone entitled to admittance before the King shall pre-sent himself before the monarch on the coming day. But the Khwaja is still adamant and has decided not to visit the King, who, on his part, is also firm on his declared resolve: 'I would know how he comes.' Only the night is to pass for the day, dreaded by the citizens of Delhi, when the two Sultans, one of the temporal world and the other of the spiritual realm shall clash their arms. The fateful night had still not folded up when the King's doom was sealed. Khusru Khan seized the King by the hair, the two grappled each other but Khusru Khan succeeded in thrusting a dagger in the abdomen of the King who came crashing down to the ground. Khusru Khan severed his head from the body and flung it down into the courtyard of the Imperial Palace of Thousand

Pillars."

The Mysterious Repast

During the period when Sultan Qutub ud-din had forbidden his courtiers to pay a visit to the Khwaja, spies had also been deputed by him to bring intelligence how the Khwaja managed his imperial kitchen after the cessation of all gifts and presents by the royal entourage. Sheikh Nasir ud-din Chiragh Delhvi re-lates that "when the Sheikh was apprised of the King's order, he directed his attendants to increase the quantity of victuals cooked in his kitchen. After a few days the King enquired about the matter and was told that the quantity of food-stuff had since been doubled by the Khwaja." Surprised to hear the reply, he remarked: "I was mistaken. He seems to get his sustenance from unknown sources."

Ghiyath ud-din Tughlaq

During the brief period of his despotic rule, Khusru Khan let no opportunity go by of insulting and ridiculing the faith which he hated at heart. In 721 A.H. Ghiyath ud-din Tughlaq (Malik Ghazi) marched upon the capital and established the Tughlaq dynasty after putting the usurper to sword. Ghiyath ud-din was not a scholar but he showed due deference to the Shariah and the doctors of religion. The Khwaja used to have sittings of musical recitations which had then become popular in the capital. A certain person named Hosam ud-din Farjam, who had been with the Khwaja for quite some time but had remained unenlightened despite the prayers and penance undertaken by him, was a trusted councillor of the King. Jalal ud-din, the Deputy Chief of State was also hostile to the mystics. The Qazi and few other theologians prevailed upon Hosam ud-din Farjam to bring it to the notice of the King that the Khwaja's participation in these musical rhapsodies, deemed unlawful by Imam Abu

Hanifa, provided an excuse to others to indulge in and promote a practice prohibited by the Shariah. The King being unaware of the legal position in this regard, was amazed to hear that a scholar and divine revered by all could be accused of anything impermissible by the Shariah, A number of juristic opinions declaring musical recitations unlawful were produced before the King who agreed to convene a council to examine the correct legal position in this regard. The meeting was convened and the Khwaja invited to it, which has been thus described by Mir Khurd: "The Khwaja was summoned to the Imperial Palace. He was accompanied by Qazi Muhi ud-din Kashani and Fakhr ud-din Zarradi, both of whom were erudite scholars. Qazi Jalal ud-din opened the proceedings with a sermon calling upon the Khwaja to desist from the practice. The way he addressed the Khwaja was not only unbefitting but he even proceeded to threaten him with punishment if he still persisted in looking upon it as a lawful practice. Indignant at the arrogant remarks of Qazi Jalal ud-din, the Khwaja remarked: 'You shall be dismissed from the office which makes you brag your tongue.' And twelve days thereafter the Qazi was dismissed and made to leave Delhi. In fine, all the scholars, jurists and theologians, and the King too, anxiously awaited the Khwaja to expound the correct juristic position in regard to the matter under discussion. Hosam ud-din Farjam levelled the charge that people whirled and danced and made loud excited utterances in the musical sittings held by the Khwaja. 'Dont make noise. Instead of continuing your allegations first define musical recitation', demanded the Khwaja from Hosam ud-din. Farjam admitted that he did not know what constituted a musical recitation but added that the jurists held it unlawful. 'then', replied the Khwaja, 'I need not answer the charges levelled by a man who does not know what the issue is.' Hosam ud-din Farjam was thus put

to shame. The King gave ear to the speech of the Khwaja and forbade others to speak loudly or interrupt him. Among the scholars present in the meeting Hamid ud-din and Shahab ud-din mostly kept quiet. The former, however, deposed that the description of the Khwaja's sittings of musical recitations, as given by Farjam and others were incorrect as he had himself attended these sittings as well as those held by other saints and friars.....In the meantime Alam ud-din, the grandson of Sheikh-ul-Islam, Baha ud-din Zakariya Multani arrived. The King asked him whether musical sittings were permissible or prohibited. He replied that he had discussed the matter at length in his monograph on the subject. It was law-ful for those who listened to these recitations to warm the cockles of their heart for spiritual elevation but unlawful for those who wanted to gratify their senses. In reply to a further ques-tion asked by the King he said that in Baghdad, Rum and Syria the mystics attended these recitations but nobody ever raised any objection. He added that the practice was followed by the mystics even during the times of Junaid and Shibi.

Jalal ud-din implored the King to forbid musical recitations by a royal decree in order to uphold the juristic view held by the theologians of Hanafite school. Thereupon the Khwaja asked the King not to issue any edict on the subject. The King accepted the Khwaja's recommendation and did not issue any order.

Qazi Zia ud-din Baina writes in Hasrat Namah that when the Khwaja returned from the meeting he called for Muhi ud-din Kashani and Amir Khusru. He told them that the theologians and jurists of Delhi were filled with bitterness and envy; they gave vent to their indignation when they found an opportunity but it was surprising that they gave preference to the juristic opinions of the Imams over the Traditions of the Prophet. The Khwaja was grieved to find the theologi-

ans rejecting a Tradition merely because Imam Shafe' had relied upon it while their own Imams had disagreed from him. At last the Khwaja observed: 'I had never seen a scholar who refused to give heed to an authentic Tradition of the Prophet. I do not know what is going to happen to the city? No city can flourish where a behaviour so outrageous can be tolerated. No wonder if this city goes to rack and ruin! Where the King and the nobles and the common folk hear the Qazis and the ulama asserting that they do not follow the Prophet's Traditions, how would they continue to have faith in them? I fear that the disbelief of the religious scholars of this city might invite the curse of Heaven in the shape of calamity and disaster, famine and pestilence.'

What is Ominous?

Ibn Umar (RA) said: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "There is no infection and no evil omen; but if there is anything (that may be a source of trouble) then it could be a house, a horse, and a woman." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

Commentary: This Hadith means that nothing is ominous by itself. It is, however, true that because of their certain characteristics, certain things become ominous (troublesome) for certain persons. For example, if one has a small house or bad neighbours, he does not feel happy and peaceful in it. If one's wife is sterile or rude or abusive or immoral, etc., such a woman is ominous for him, that is, she is a source of trouble and tension rather than that of happiness for him. If one has a horse which is not used for Jihad, or is so ill-natured that it neither goes well ordinarily or with whipping, nor does it behave when left to its own will, then it has an ominousness in the sense that it does not serve the purpose of the master.

The Aadaab of Things in General Use

Anything which is used by a number of persons should be replaced in its original place after use. Replace it in the same place from where you have taken it so that someone else does not have to search for it when required.

Having used an item, e.g. a chair, do not leave it in the way or in a place where it becomes an obstacle for others.

When giving someone an item, do not throw it at him from a distance. Give it in his hand.

When passing something heavy, hot or a liquid or food to another, do not pass it over someone's head. Perhaps it may slip.

If a needle becomes stuck in the cloth while sewing, do not pull it out with your teeth. It may break and hurt you.

Do not leave a needle or any sharp or dangerous item on a chair or bed. Somebody may sit or lie on it.

Do not pick your teeth with a needle or knife. This is dangerous.

Do not suddenly lift a stone which has been lying in the same spot for a while. Sometimes a scorpion, etc., may be concealed thereunder.

Do not throw peels or any other harmful objects in the pathway or road.

During winter, wear suitable garments to give warmth. Many females wear insufficient garments during winter. This causes either colds or fever

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