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## EDITORIAL

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

# Is it About Saving Lives?

The promoters of nude body scanners have used one argument that they consider to be bullet-proof. It is all about saving lives, they assure us. The news reports that accompanied the announcement of their sudden and universal installation reported passengers accepting the scanners because what they gave up in modesty they got back in added security.

### Or did they?

What exactly is the gain in security as a result of mandating these legal obscenities? How big is the current risk and how much will it be reduced by the new measures?

These are the questions that have not been explored. And here is the big news. For even the best case analysis shows that the gain is so small as to be totally insignificant.

Available data indicates that flying is a very safe mode of travel and the further increase in safety with the new measures will be very marginal. Based on historic official data currently the probability of a passenger dying in an air carrier accident is 1 out of 2,067,000 (much smaller than the one for motor vehicles, which is 1 out of 7,700). With the drastic measures now being implemented, in the best case scenario, this will only be reduced to 1 out of 2,271,428.

The expected improvement can be calculated by looking at the historic data for causes of aircraft fatal accidents. Available records for the past sixty years show that sabotage has been a very small and decreasing contributor to the overall aircraft fatal

accident probability. Planecrashinfo.com analyzed data for all aircraft fatal incidents that occurred from 1950-2008. Only 9% of these were caused by sabotage, which includes use of explosives, shoot downs, and hijackings. In other words 91% of all commercial aircraft accidents causing fatalities were caused by other factors. Of these 50% were caused by pilot error, 22% by mechanical failure and 12% by weather. The contribution to fatal accidents by sabotage was the highest in the 1980s and has been decreasing ever since. It stood at the 58-year average of 9% for the 2000s.

It does not take a genius to figure out that much bigger gains in saving lives can be made by addressing the factors that contribute to the 91% of the problem. That there is room for improvement there is indicated by a six-month USA TODAY investigation that found that during the past six years, millions of passengers have been on at least 65,000 U.S. airline flights that shouldn't have taken off because planes weren't properly maintained. According to the report, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which oversees airlines, levied \$28.2 million in fines and proposed fines against 25 U.S. passenger airlines for maintenance violations that occurred during the past six years. This only represents a small fraction of the actual problem, because "about 90% of maintenance violations don't result in fines but warning letters or other reprimands by the FAA."

Even if we make the drastic and false assumption that the new policies will com-

*Cont'd on page 14*

# Question Answer

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## Question:

I was wondering why it is prohibited to worship Allah while you are going through the menses? I appreciate that there is an issue about cleanliness. What if you really want to connect with God and want to do du`aa`?! Why is the worshiping in Islam so ritualized? Why do we have to pray five times a day? Sometimes I want to connect with God and I want to pray more than that and other times I don't and I am happy with three times?! Isn't the actual act of worshiping more important than how often you do it? Why is something like worshiping God embedded in a system when the worshiping should come from inside and represent a spiritual bond rather than just the act of ticking a box? Thank you for answering my question. It seems to be throwing off a number of issues.

## Answer:

Although there are many, I feel that your main concern is why you are not free to worship Allah when and how you please. Perhaps the following example will shed some light on this matter.

Imagine that Queen Elizabeth herself has invited you for a personal visit in her palace. There is no doubt that you would be very excited by this very special invitation and would do your utmost to appear before her in the best possible state. Of course, you would meet the queen at the time and place of her choosing. You would be required to

greet the queen in a specific way that she has deemed acceptable and you would not be allowed to come and go as you please. Your behavior would be monitored closely while in her presence. You would enter upon her in a certain way and would leave the meeting at a specific time and in a specific way. Does this sound reasonable?

Why, then, do we feel that we can stand before Allah, the King of Kings, at the time, place, and in the manner we please? Does He not deserve our utmost respect? Does He not have the right to dictate how, when, and where we will come near to Him? Who are we to impose our will on Him? Allah decides how and when He will accept visitors, not us.

Let me also add that Prayer (salah) in Islam is not a ritual. A ritual is an act or behavior that is representative of something more spiritual. **As for salah, it is the actual bond with Allah** you have mentioned, in the way that pleases Him. It is not a meaningless tick in a box. When we stand in Prayer, we are literally standing before Allah and His full attention is directed toward us. If we do not direct our full attention to Him during this special meeting, if we treat it as a trivial ritual, He will not be pleased at all with our presence.

Having said that, it is important to remember that—still—we can worship Allah at any time and in many ways. The formal worship, salah, is structured because this is

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what pleases Allah, but we can make every-day activities a form of worship. The only criteria we have to follow is that the activity is recognized as being good according to the Shari`ah, that we do it in Allah's name, and we do it in a way that pleases Allah.

For example, something as simple as eating and drinking can be a form of worship. Of course, we cannot drink alcohol saying "bismillah" and expect to be rewarded! If we eat and drink what is acceptable according to Shari`ah and we do it in Allah's name, then we will be rewarded for performing a simple, everyday act. We recognize that Allah has created the food for us, we eat it to sustain our bodies, and we thank Him for it saying "al-hamdu lillah" when we are done.

And we can also make du`aa' (supplication) or dhikr (remembering Allah) at any time. There is no need to be ritually pure while performing those forms of prayer, so that you can still connect to Allah even when you have your menses.

**Question:**

Despite being married for fifteen years, I do not yet have children but I have an intense desire for a child. In the light of these issues, how can I acquire the sweetness of imaan? I am becoming extremely uneasy due to this.

**Answer:**

The reason for this trembling and uneasiness is that we have decided we should certainly receive a certain thing or be

blessed with children, etc. There is nothing wrong in making du`aa for something. However it is compulsory to be pleased with the decree of Allah just as it is compulsory to offer salaah and keep fast. Make du`aa and resolve to remain pleased with whatever condition Allah keeps you in. By handing yourself over to the decree of Allah, your heart will remain at ease. Then you will not experience any anxiety and stress. You will experience the condition that has been explained in this couplet (translation):

*"The Master does as He wills. Why, then, should there be any worry? I am sitting peacefully with this belief that You are the Sovereign, and the all-wise as well."*

**Question:**

How should I deal with my husband when he is angry?

**Answer:**

If the husband becomes angry and abusive, never react in the same way. If both husband and wife end up exchanging harsh words, then this results in a very bitter end. When both vent their anger and become abusive, pride and stubbornness overcomes them. Neither of them is then prepared to accept their fault and ask for forgiveness. However if the wife replies to the husband's anger with sweetness and kindness, then most definitely when he does cool down, he will realise his mistake and he will ask for forgiveness. Sweetness invites sweetness, whereas anger adds fuel to the fire of anger.

*Doing Good Becomes Easy*

*We should never become obedient to and follow our nafs (carnal desire), or else with time we will become such slaves of our nafs that it will be very difficult to do any action contrary to the dictates of the nafs. On the other hand if we anger our nafs only for the pleasure of Allah and continue to place it under little difficulties (by abstaining from wrong), then it will automatically become accustomed to it. Then to carry out good deeds becomes very easy. For the friends of Allah, doing good actions is a total pleasure, whereas we find it very difficult. This is due to us always obeying our nafs, hence we desire to have ease and comfort at all times.*

# Lesson From The Qur'an

Commentary: Tafsir Division, Darul Uloom Ilahiya.

## Surah Al-Imran - Verse 72-76

### Hypocritical and Jealous People of the Book

**And a section of the people of the Book says (among themselves): 'believe (only verbally) at day-break in what has been sent down to those who believe (in Muhammad and Qur'an) and deny at day-end<sup>1</sup> (i.e., renounce your belief in the evening); perhaps they (the Muslims) may turn away<sup>2</sup> (from Islam by this trick saying: these (Jews) are knowledgeable and they could only have turned away from it after accepting it because they know it to be false). (3:72) (They also said) And believe not (wholeheartedly) save one who follows your religion<sup>3</sup>. Say (to the Jews, O Prophet): 'Surely the true guidance (and not your concoctions) is the guidance of Allah<sup>4</sup> (i.e., Islam).' Do you (O children of Israel) envy that any one (who is not of your race or tribe) should be given (the gift of prophesy - Divine revelation) the like of what was given to you, or do you fear that those other might overcome you in argument before your Lord (on the Day of Resurrection)? Say (O Prophet!): 'Surely the grace (i.e., the gift of prophethood) is in the hand of Allah. He bestows it on whom He will<sup>5</sup> and Allah is Bountiful,<sup>6</sup> Knowing.'<sup>7</sup> (73) He singles out for His mercy (religion) whom He will (Muhammad and his companions), and Allah is the Owner of mighty grace (generous towards Muhammad by bestowing upon him prophethood and Islam). (74)**

1. In order to weaken the message of Islam the Jewish elders across the adjoining areas of Madina orchestrated some people to proclaim Islam and then withdraw, and later publicize to have found such and such kind of 'evils' in Islam and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). (Ruh-ul-Qur'an)

Modern European biographers of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), with huge pretensions to learning and impartiality who begin by admiring his earnestness, his sincerity of purpose and the depth of his convictions, and end by denouncing him as a deluded visionary and a false prophet, are almost playing the same old game with modern variants. (Majidi)

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2. This verse conveys that the basic ignorance of Ahl-e-Kitab (People of the Book) is that they consider 'the Truth and Reality' an inheritance exclusive to themselves and their community. It is totally impossible that a person possessing the true creed and values is somebody other than us or a nation with a religion better than we, they claim. We have received whatever was to be given and the mercy and blessings of the Lord have been sealed. However, the Qur'an completely refutes their claims. (*Kamalain*).

3. I.e., don't believe that anybody else has a religion like yours or people of other faith have received a true book as yours, or that people of some other religion may turn as witness against you on the day of Judgement. (*Jawahir-ul-Qur'an*) It is among the components of Faith to believe in all the revealed books and messenger of Allah as Muslims do, but the people of the Book categorically reject such a demand and 'guide' their associates not to follow anyone other than their own religion. (*DUI*)

4. They, who receive guidance, receive it from Allah; none is able to mislead them. He guides whom He will to the right faith and establishes him therein. (*Majidi*)

Here, Allah directs the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to declare that true guidance is that provided by Him, and that unless people accept and abide by it they will never find the real guidance by any other method or way of life. (*In the Shade of the Qur'an*)

5. There is no correlation between the Truth and short-sightedness. Diversion from the Truth brought narrowness of vision and thought to the People of the Book. Owing to their misdeeds they were driven away from the stature of the *Imamat*. Instead of self-introspecting why the status that they owned has been bestowed to others, they fell prey to malice. (*Ruh-ul-Qur'an*)

6. Unstinting in conferment of His grace, He can bestow the gift of His prophecy on anyone. (*Majidi*). 'Al-Waasi' - bountiful' is an attribute Allah that by itself is so boundless, so vast that this attribute has no limit. This word in Arabic means something that has no limits. Too wide and too big even to be thought. Allah has no limits to any attributes, His mercy is limitless, His knowledge is limitless, His giving is limitless, His seeing is limitless- Allah is Al-Waasi'. There are no limits. Our mind truly can never grasp it. (*DUI*)

7. It is Allah, Who knows well when and on whom to confer His grace. He makes the recipient of His grace only him who is fitted to receive it. (*Majidi*) 'Al-Alim – Knowing' is another attribute of Allah. The perfection of it lies in the fact that He fully comprehends the knowledge of everything, the manifest and the hidden, that of both little and great importance, the first and the last, the end and the beginning. This (comprehensive knowledge) in terms of both clarity and disclosure is the most perfect (knowledge) possible in view of the fact that observing and disclosing one more manifest that it is inconceivable. Furthermore, (His knowledge) cannot be derived from the objects-of knowledge. To the contrary, the objects-of-knowledge are derived from him. (*I.Ghazali - DUI*)

## Treacherous People of the Book

***And among the People of the Book there is one who, if you entrust him with a heap (of gold and silver), will give it back you ;<sup>1</sup> (without ever thinking to keep it for himself by declaring it lawful for him to take) and among them there is one who, if you entrust him with a single dinar (a coin of gold), he will not give it back to you (and will declare it lawful for him to take) unless you keep standing over him<sup>2</sup> (vigorously demanding it of him by litigation, appeals and production of evidence). This (i.e., the refusal to pay) is because they have said (in justification***

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of this attitude of theirs), **'There is no way we can be blamed** (i.e., there is no reproach attaching to us in the matter of those who are not of our race and faith; we owe no duty to them).<sup>3</sup>

**in the matter of the unlettered<sup>4</sup>** (i.e., these ignorant pagans of Arabia)'. **And they tell lies about Allah** (by promulgating a false religious principle) **knowingly<sup>5</sup>** (that they are enunciating a false doctrine). **(75) Why** (will they) **not** (be blamed)? **Whoever fulfils his pledge** (whether that pledge is with Allah or with his fellow-creatures) **and fears Allah** (in breaking his pledge), **then, Allah loves the God-fearing.<sup>6</sup> (76)**

1. This statement makes it clear that Islam does not resort to prejudice and short sightedness. On the contrary, it shows open-hearted appreciation of the excellence of even its adversary in respect of his achievements. (*Ma'ariful Qur'an - M.Shafi.*)
2. The nature of some Jews and Christians is further examined here, together with their ethical standards and their commitment to agreements and covenants. There is no doubting the honesty and integrity of many of them, but some are not to be trusted or relied on to honour an agreement or respect a pledge. These find religious justification for their greed and deceit, but their religions are not to be blamed for such behaviour. (*In the Shade of the Qur'an*)
3. This sums up the attitude of the Jew to the Gentile. 'Israel's attitude towards other nations, never marked by much cordiality underwent most important modifications in the post-exilic period. (*DB.II. p.149*) (*Majidi*)
4. Every race imbued with race arrogance resorts to this kind of moral or religious subterfuge. Even if its members are usually honest or just among themselves, they are contemptuous of those outside their circle, and cheat and deceive them without any qualms of conscience. This is a 'lie against Allah'. (*Yusuf Ali*)
5. Trust and blood-relations (*rahm*) both are of prime importance in Islam. They'll be, according to a hadith in Muslim – at the two sides of the gate to Paradise, so that no one who had wasted them will be able to make through. (*Qurtubi – q.f. Ishraq al-Ma'ani*)
6. This verse outlines an aspect of Islam's ethical outlook, its basis and direct link to fear of Allah (*In the Shade of the Qur'an*). Fear of Allah thus ought to be the mainspring of our conduct. That alone can lead us to a life of all-round righteousness and virtue. (*Majidi*)

The beloved and favorite slave of Allah is the one who, as demanded by *taqwa*, fulfils his covenant with Allah and His bondsmen. Allah only loves the God-fearing and how is it possible for the one not loved by Him, going to find his hereafter any better? (*Dawat-ul-Quran*)

### *Tasbeehaat*

- *Istighfaar (Astaghfirullah)*

- *Third Kalimah (Subhaanallahi walhamdulillaahi walaailaaha illallahu wallahu akbar)*

- *Durood Shareef*

*Recite these Tasbeehaat daily 100 times each. If presently reciting any tasbeehaat is not part of your daily practices, start off by daily only reciting 20 times each. Be regular and steadfast upon it.*

*NEVER miss a single day. Every two to three weeks increase the number you are reciting by 10.*

*Insba-Allah in a few months you will be reciting 100 times daily with constancy. This live wire will certainly light up your life.*

# Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

*Dr. Rafiq Ahmad*

## *The Book of Ablution*

**Chapter 50 : To pass wet hands (Masah) over the two scuffs (leather socks covering up to the ankles).**

### **Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab**

Masah over leather socks is unanimously agreed upon by all the learned scholars of Islam except the Shia sect. The narrations about the Masah over leather socks have reached the status of "Tawaatur" (to have followed in succession), that is why Imam Abu Haniefah (RA) has called it as one of the signs of Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat.

Some people have wrongly attributed to Imam Maalik that he was not in favour of Masah over leather socks, but Qurtubi has quoted from Imam Maalik that he was in agreement on Masah over leather socks as is reported by Allaama Ainy. He says: *"And author of Al-Bidayah said that Masah over leather socks is permissible near all jurists and Sahaaba"*

Hasan-i-Bisri (RA) said that he knew seventy Sahaaba who had participated in the battle of Badr and who believed on Masah over leather socks. (Umdatul Qari).

### **Hadith No. 197**

**Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (RA)**

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Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas (RA) said, "The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) passed wet hands over his Khuffs." 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (RA) asked Umar (RA) about it. 'Umar (RA) replied in the affirmative and added, "Whenever Sa'd narrates a Hadith from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), there is no need to ask anyone else about it."

### **Comments**

Hadhrat Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas (RA) was the governor of Kufa. Once Ibn Umar went there and he saw Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas (RA) performing Masah over leather socks. Ibn Umar (RA) asked Hadhrat Sa'd (RA) about it and Sa'd told him that he had seen Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) performing Masah over leather socks. Ibn Umar (RA) wanted to confirm it from his father Hadhrat Umar (RA). Hadhrat Umar (RA) advised his son that Hadhrat Sa'd is so reliable that if he says something, there is no need to confirm it from others. Hadhrat Umar (RA) not only confirmed what Sa'd had said about Masah over leather socks but also testified the authenticity of Hadhrat Sa'd (RA). From this statement of Hadhrat Umar (RA), the learned scholars have derived the conclusion that it is permissible for a common person to follow



the instructions of a scholar blindly (i.e., Taqleed) if he is reliable and authentic.

#### Why was Ibn Umar (RA) surprised?

Ibn Umar (RA) had seen Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) performing Masah over leather socks during journey. Here he saw Hadhrat Sa'd doing the same act but while at home. He was of the opinion that probably Masah is permissible for a Musafir (traveller) only, then he was informed that Masah over leather socks is permissible both for a resident as well as a traveller.

#### Hadith No. 198

##### Narrated Al-Mughlra bin Shu'ba (RA)

*Once Allah's Apostle (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) went out to answer the call of nature and I followed him with a tumbler containing water, and when he finished, I poured water and he performed ablution and passed wet hands over his Khuffs.*

#### Comments

This is an incident of 9th Hijrah during the battle of Tabuk. Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) went to attend the call of nature and Hadhrat Mugairah (RA) provided the water which had been taken from a leather bag of a village woman. She was asked whether the bag was tanned or not and she replied in affirmation. From this the learned scholars have inferred that the skin of Najas (ritually impure) animals becomes Taahir only after tanning.

#### Hadith No. 199

##### Narrated Ja'far bin 'Amr bin Umaiya ad-Damri (RA)

*My father said, "I saw the Prophet passing wet hands over his Khuffs."*

#### Hadith No. 200

##### Narrated Ja'far bin 'Amr (RA)

*My father said, "I saw the Prophet passing*

*wet hands over his turban."*

#### Comments

##### Masah over turban

The majority of Ulema are of the opinion that Masah over turban is not permissible. If it is done partly over head and partly over turban, then it is permissible. Imam Ahmad is of the opinion that if the turban is wound firmly in such a way that it cannot be lifted easily from the head, like the Arabs use it, then Masah over it is also permissible. Since Imam Bukhari (RA) has not established any chapter on 'Masah over turban', it is obvious that he seems to be of the opinion that it is not permissible.

#### Chapter 51 : If the feet are put into the scuffs when they are Taahir (clean).

##### Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

In order to perform Masah over leather socks it is a must that the feet should be ritually clean at the time of wearing the socks. As per majority of Ulema one has to perform complete Wudu including washing of the feet before he puts on leather socks and then he can perform Masah over them for twenty four hours if he is a resident and for three days if he is a traveller.

#### Hadith No. 201

##### Narrated 'Urwa bin Al-Mughira (RA)

*My father said, "Once I was in the company of the Prophet on a journey and I dashed to take off his Khuffs. He ordered me to leave them as he had put them after performing ablution. So he passed wet hands over them."*

#### Chapter 52: One who did not repeat Wudu after eating mutton and Sawiq (an Arab dish—grinded wheat).

And Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman ate such food but did not repeat Wudu.

##### Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Imam Bukhari (RA) wants to convey

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that to eat boiled or cooked food does not effect one's Wudu.

#### Hadith No. 202

##### Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas (RA)

*Allah's Apostle ate a piece of cooked mutton from the shoulder region and prayed without repeating ablution.*

#### Hadith No. 203

##### Narrated Ja'far bin 'Amr bin Umaiya (RA)

*My father said, "I saw Allah's Apostle taking a piece of (cooked) mutton from the shoulder region and then he was called for prayer. He put his knife down and prayed without repeating ablution."*

#### Comments

There are some Ahaadith in Muslim, Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi on the authority of Hadhrat Ayesha and Hadhrat Abu Huraira which say:

*"Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that the Wudu becomes mandatory after eating such things which have been boiled or cooked on fire".*

Ulema say that this was decreed dur-

ing the early period of Islam and was later on abrogated. The Ahaadith of the present chapter also abrogate it.

#### Chapter 53 : One who (only) rinsed his mouth after eating Sawiq without repeating Wudu.

#### Hadith No. 204

##### Narrated Suwaid bin Al-Nu'man

*"In the year of the conquest of Khaibar I went with Allah's Apostle till we reached Sahba,' a place near Khaibar, where Allah's Apostle offered the 'Asr prayer and asked for food. Nothing but Sawrq was brought. He ordered it to be moistened with water. He and all of us ate it and the Prophet got up for the evening prayer (Maghrib prayer), rinsed his mouth with water and we did the same, and he then prayed without repeating the ablution".*

#### Hadith No. 205

##### Narrated Maimuna (RA)

*The Prophet ate (a piece of) mutton from the shoulder region and then prayed without repeating the ablution.*

### *Gaining the True Love of Allah*

*Mahabbat is not something that you have to be tutored about, regarding how to go about conducting yourself. Your love for a person will illustrate to you what has to be done. You love a woman and she gave you a chocolate. With every piece of chocolate that goes down your throat, you will take it with those thoughts of her love and you will relish it with those thoughts. Now shift it to the divine hand that has blessed you with that morsel and think about the amount of love that Allah has for you that He has blessed you with that morsel though you do not deserve it.*

*Moulana Thanwi (RA) speaks of true devotion. It means that you do not need to do too many actions, but do it with the true love of Allah. The parting advice of Haji Imdaadullah (RA) to Hadhrat Thanwi (RA) was that when you drink water, drink it chilled and cooled. In this way, shukr will be expressed from the bottom of the heart and this is one of the methods of enhancing one's love for Allah which is a duty.*

*Mufti Ebrahim Salejee*

# Time is Life

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***“By the time. Verily Man is in a state of loss. Except such as have Faith and do righteous deeds and exhort one another to Truth and exhort one another to endurance.” [al-Asr, 103].***

***Khalid Baig***

Time is money. So goes the most used metaphor for time in the English language. There is some truth in it as time can be used to produce wealth and wasting time may also mean losing opportunities to produce wealth. Yet this metaphor also implies something about the purpose of life itself that we should examine carefully. If a child says that money is candy, he'll be right in the sense that money can be used to buy candy. But adults will laugh at him because the statement implies that candy is the most important object that money can buy. Similarly "Time is money" implies that money is the most important object in life: One must value time as he or she values money.

Historically this has been one of the key metaphors driving the engine of industrial revolution and technological development in the past few centuries. A lot of inventions and new technique have aimed at saving time and therefore money. And certainly the list of such inventions and their achievements in speed are mind-boggling. Today men, materials, and ideas can be moved from one place to another

at an astonishing speed. The tasks that used to take months and years can be finished in minutes. And yet there is something ironic about all this development. Despite the tremendous explosion in timesaving gadgets, life has become busier than ever before. Overall we can't show much for all the time that has been saved.

We are very busy, but at the end of the day we can't tell what we have been busy doing. Where all the saved time has gone? In what way our lives have become more productive? Just imagine how Internet has made it possible for information to move all over the world in seconds. And then see how the same medium is being used to waste countless hours in frivolous discussions in chat rooms or meaningless net surfing! The juxtaposition of the time saving and time wasting nature of the same tool brings in full focus the basic problem with the prevalent ideas of time itself.

One may think that the metaphor is not to be blamed for this waste. After all "Time is money" would seem to suggest that no time should be wasted. Actually belittling time by

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equating it with money allows whiling it away when one has made the money he needs! So people talk about “killing time” and the need for the gadgets that let them kill time. One has to consider time to be much more important than money not to waste it like this!

To put things in perspective a quick historic comparison is in order. Consider the period of early Muslims when none of these technological marvels were available. There is a common notion that people then leisurely lived in sleepy little towns and had little to do. Actually that was a period of unprecedented activity in all aspects of life! There was a period of intense military and political activity during which nearly half the known world came under the banner of Islam. Coming from a most backward part of the world, they introduced a new civilization to the world that was proud of its civilization and its military might. In personal life they used to spend a lot more time in worship than we do, most of them spending big parts of their nights in individual prayers. This would seem to leave a lot less time for other pursuits in life. We also know that means of communications were so poor then, that sometimes they had to travel on horseback for weeks or months to go to another area, say, to collect a report of a hadith from someone who had heard it directly from the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam. Yet during this period and despite all the logistics problems, together they collected the hundreds of thousands of ahadith that have been compiled into various collections and are available today! And this is just one aspect of their work! How in the world did they find time for that?

The answer is simple. They were driven by a different metaphor for time. They valued it as the gift whose proper or improper use would determine the outcome for the eternity. They had listened to the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, when he said: “There are two blessings that most people are de-

luded by. Health and available time.” [Bukhari]. They took his advice very seriously when he said: “Value five things before five other things: Youth before old age; health before sickness; affluence before poverty; leisure before becoming too busy; and life before death.” [Tirmidhi]. Abdullah bin Hasn (Radi-Allahu unhu) reports that whenever two companions met they would not depart till they had recited sura al-Asr to each other reminding themselves of the eternal loss that everyone faces if we waste away our time in foolish pursuits. They did not waste any moment of their life in gossips, useless talks, or meaningless pursuits.

The difference is clear. We may have a fast car, but if we are riding it for the joy of speed driving, not because we want to get there, we’ll never get there. The success of our elders or salaf lies in their overriding sense of purpose and accountability and their concern with using their time very carefully.

Coming closer to our own period we find other examples of a similar nature. Consider the case of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, who died about sixty years ago. On the surface he just ran a small monastery and a religious school and was given to spending long periods of time in individual worship. But he also authored about 1200 publications ranging from small booklets to encyclopedic works like “Bahishti Zevar”, which has seen millions of copies in print. He also used to answer all his mail everyday, which consisted of dozens and sometimes hundreds of pieces. And he taught many generations of scholars! His secret? A strict discipline born of a deep concern about accountability for time.

We are becoming older every day. One day our time will be up and we’ll leave this world forever. What happens afterwards will depend solely on how we used all the moments available to us before that certain but unknown moment comes. Time is life. What is at stake is the entire eternity

# My Mother's Day!

**Abdur Rahman Umar**

"I love you, mom," whispered Yusuf as he wrapped the soft pashmina shawl around his mother's shoulders. The vibrant peach contrasted with the dark rings that had grown under her eyes lately, but their brightness had not faded.

Her eyes lit up as she stroked the delicate embroidery on the edge of the shawl, "And this...Yusuf?"

Yusuf looked at her with the excitement of a young boy unpacking his first bicycle, "Wait ma...there's more," he cried, as he removed a burgundy jewellery box. Presenting it in front of his mother, like they were the crown jewels, he gingerly lifted the lid to reveal a string of exquisite cultured pearls, delicately strung together with small black pearls breaking the shimmer of the white pearls.

"Yusuf!" exclaimed his mother, her eyes brimming, "What's all this?"

Yusuf stepped back and looked at his mother holding the pearl necklace close to her chest, admiring it, "Mom, always wanted a pearl necklace...."

"But it must have cost you a small

fortune," said Saffiyah as she held the pearls up to the light, studying the delicate changes of colour as she turned the necklace, "Why now...what's special?"

"It's my mother's day!" he beamed.

"Er..." began Saffiyah as she craned her neck to look at the calendar behind her, "But it's not mother's day. Not for a while, yet?" a puzzled look settling on her face.

"I didn't say it was Mother's day," replied Yusuf, "I said it was MY mother's day. But let me explain...."

"You remember I told you about Nasser who recently moved here from the coast?"

Saffiyah nodded in acknowledgement.

"Last night I met him at Sheikh's program and asked him why he always begged sheikh for duas. I just found it strange that he would always insist that Sheikh make dua for him. He gave me an odd reply – he asked me if my mother was alive, and if I had fifteen minutes. I confirmed that I had both. We sat at the back of the masjid and he told me his story."

Yusuf paused to pour some tea, add-

ing a sugar to each cup, handing one to his mother he continued, "Nasser told me that since his door of dua (supplication) had closed a long time ago, he had to seek another door for dua. Not understanding, I asked him what he meant. He was silent for a long time, and I thought perhaps I said something wrong, but he just looked at me and smiled. Wiping a tear from his eye he told me that his mother passed away when he was only five years old. He said that he could still remember the smell of her hair after she washed it, but remembered little else."

Yusuf watched his mother sipping her tea and noticed just how wrinkled her hands had become, the gold wedding ring still sat gracefully on her ring finger. She always took pride in grooming her nails, buffing them to a perfect shine.

"After Nasser's mother passed away he lived in the care of his aunts. They were good to him and cared for him as one of their

own. They bought him what he needed and he had much of what he needed. Then he told me "You know, Joe, no one can replace the embrace of a mother. And no one can replace the dua (prayer) of a mother. I lost that dua a long time ago." Then I thought of all the duas you make for me - how often when I rush out of the house you always say, "Yusuf, slow down, Allah be with you!" "Allah Hafiz." "Yusuf, may Allah make your children the coolness of your eye."

"Ma...I never really cherished those duas until I heard Nasser's story," said Yusuf, dabbing his eye with a tissue, "I never knew that those were treasures beyond measure. And then it made some sense to me of what Sheikh said when he quoted Abdulla Ibn 'Abbas (RA), "If any Muslim obeys Allah regarding his parents, Allah will open two gates

of the Garden for him. If there is only one parent, then one gate will be opened. If one of them is angry, then Allah will not be pleased with him until that parent is pleased with him."

"And when Nasser told me – 'Joe (as Yusuf was referred to by his friends), you know, I will never be able to call anyone in this world Mum, and I will never know the embrace of a mother. You still have it, Joe, value it, treasure it,' I realised that what Allah had favoured me with was something so special that I couldn't just celebrate it once a year and call it mother's day. I decided that

from now MY Mother's day will be Every Day! - Yesterday, today and tomorrow will all be mother's day. I can never repay you, but I know the heart of a mother asks for no repayment. And...if I can do nothing else for my mother's day then I will at least thank Allah that he allowed my door of dua to be open for one more day."

"Forgive me ma...." Yusuf choked, "I need to do so much more for you...."

Saffiyah clasped his hands and stroked his face, "You are a good son, Yusuf, Allah will grant you lots of goodness in this world and the next."

*"If any Muslim obeys Allah regarding his parents, Allah will open two gates of the Garden for him. If there is only one of them, then one gate will be opened for him. If either of them is angry, Allah will not be pleased with him until he pleases him."*

*Cont'd from page 2*

pletely eliminate all possibility of sabotage, it will only improve the overall picture by 9%. In other words, the odds of a passenger dying in an air carrier accident will be changed from 1 out of 2.067 million to 1 out of 2.271 million. It is for this "gain" in security that they are asking every traveler to submit to the digital strip search. The molehill of added security has been used to create the mountain of the new security procedures that trample human dignity, modesty, and privacy.

# The Man We Love and Follow

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*A. Mohiuddin*

The more one reflects on Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam), the more one is bound to marvel at this noble Messenger of Allah and to grasp the truth of these words in the Qur'an: "Surely you have been created in an exalted stature." (Al-qalam, 68:4) Let us consider just five aspects of our beloved Prophet's character.

First, we see in Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) a perfect integration of words and deeds, of all aspects of his inner and outer life. He practiced what he preached. There was no discord in his character. His speech and actions perfectly reflected his true nature. This is why his keenly observant and sensitive wife Ayesha (RA), when asked years later what he had been like, could say without a moment's hesitation that the character of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was the Qur'an itself.

Muhammad's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) life was a seamless and rounded whole. His entire life was one of worship. Yet this life of intense worship never stood in the way of his everyday life. He had a unique capacity to transform the minutest mundane activity into an act of worship. He saw every

activity of life in its proper perspective, as part of a divinely ordained scheme. With perfect ease and grace he fulfilled all his roles as a man as well as those of his divine destiny. Thus his life was one of unimaginable beauty and harmony.

In real life we see people who are painfully fragmented and full of irreconcilable contradictions. Our beliefs clash with our actions. Our emotions and desires are in conflict with each other and repeatedly overthrow our best instincts. We make solemn pledges to ourselves only to break them. We are a hodgepodge of ideas, impulses and actions that make very little or no sense. We hardly know what we want and where we are heading. Nothing in us is in its place. Inside us is a huge boiling cauldron endlessly cooking strange broths.

A second feature of the character of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the combination of tenderness and firmness. Many direct and personal accounts testify that he was a very gentle and shy person. At the same time he was a man of resolve, never lacking in courage and will. Time after time he demonstrated this; take Hudaibiyah,

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for example. What is hard to fathom is how his tender heartedness could never shake that resolve or weaken the call of duty. While making hard decisions and taking firm action he was never harsh or vindictive. He felt no joy in the pain and suffering of even his fiercest opponent. His tenderness always tempered and mitigated the hardness the situation imposed on him. The rareness of such a blend of softness and firmness can be gauged if we look around us. On the one hand we find people who are gentle and kind but who lack strength of will, and on the other, people who are resolute but show no tenderness or sympathy.

Thirdly, Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) presents the unique sight of a man of both contemplation and action. The tumult and bustle of action could not prevent him from reflection. His contemplative nature was never put on hold. In our world this is hardly ever the case. While men of contemplation are found deficient in action, the men of action are seldom given to much reflection. Even if we can recall a few rare cases in history of men with both qualities, exercising those qualities simultaneously in any given moment, as Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did, is unheard of.

A fourth quality worth noticing is how unobtrusively and gracefully Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wielded his authority. He had unparalleled power and influence over his followers; they would have given their leader anything to earn his satisfaction. Yet he was never aloof, overbearing or impatient with his followers, and never imposed himself or encroached on their rights. Without any of the well known trimmings of power he led men and women in every kind of situation. To the end he remained one of them, absolutely humble, approachable and affectionate. His care and concern for their welfare, his love and sympathy for them never diminished. He was ever

ready to serve them and attend to their multifarious needs and demands. At times he was even indistinguishable in the company of his followers. Any child could take him by the hand in the streets of Madinah. Great leader though he was, he treaded Allah's earth softly and humbly, ever as His most obedient servant.

Finally, let us consider Muhammad's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) use of language. He was always brief, clear and to the point; anyone could understand him. He expressed the weightiest of matters in the simplest of words. Yet nothing of substance was ever lost. His words were the most appropriate and appeared in their most fitting order. Not a single word could be replaced or rearranged. On his tongue words followed smoothly in natural succession. He never tried to be witty or attempted to impress. Yet he was marvelously eloquent, expressive and deeply moving. One needs just to take a look at some of his du'a to see how high language can soar and what feelings it can arouse. The most consummate of writers have not yet been able to attain what this 'unlettered' man of seventh century Arabia did with language.

These five qualities are by no means the only features of Muhammad's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) character. But they unmistakably show how unparalleled he was as a human being, how he climbed the summit of human perfection. Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was guided and shaped by Allah in such a way that he could function as the best model for human beings. Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was like perfect yielding clay that Allah moulded and shaped to fulfill His design for mankind.

Allah has given mankind three signs through which we can recognize His power and glory and accept Him as the only one worthy of worship. The physical world of

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# No Haya, No Life

*Khalid Baig*

Imam Shu'bah ibn Hajjaj was riding his horse when Abdullah intercepted him. Abdullah was a known street urchin. Not only he was given to a life of sin, he was also unabashed about it. Imam Shu'bah knew that trouble was ahead when Abdullah stopped him.

Shu'bah (d. 100 A.H) is known as the "Amirul Momineen fil hadith." He is one of the foremost scholars of the science of Hadith Criticism. Abdullah knew his stature as a great hadith scholar, but he was bent on having some fun. "Shu'bah! Tell me a hadith," he said with mischief in his eyes. "This is not the way to learn hadith," Imam Shu'bah replied. "You are going to tell me a hadith or else..." Abdullah threatened. When Shu'bah realized that he could not talk his way out of this he said: "OK, I'll tell you a hadith." He then narrated the isnad (a chain of narrators) and then the hadith: "Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "If you have lost haya then do whatever you feel like."

Abdullah's demeanor changed suddenly. It was as if the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), had himself caught him in his mischief and was speaking to him: "Abdullah, if you have lost haya then do

whatever you feel like." He was totally shaken. "I just wanted to cause trouble for you," he admitted, "but please extend your hand. I want to repent."

This hadith turned a life around. Abdullah, the street urchin, became a student and then a great scholar of hadith. Today he is known as Abdullah ibn Maslamah Qan'awi. His name can be found repeatedly in Sihah Sitta or the six most authentic collections of hadith, especially in the collection of Imam Abu Dawud who was his disciple.

What is haya? It is normally translated as modesty or inhibition but neither word conveys the same idea as haya. Modesty suggests shunning indecent behavior but it also implies bashfulness based on timidity. That is why the adjective based on its opposite, immodest, is sometimes also used as a compliment suggesting courage. Inhibition is defined as: "Conscious or unconscious mechanism whereby unacceptable impulses are suppressed." This is a very neutral definition with no reference to right or wrong. So one finds psychiatrist "helping" their patients overcome inhibitions.

In contrast to the moral ambiguity of these words, haya refers to an extremely de-

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sirable quality that protects us from all evil. It is a natural feeling that brings us pain at the very idea of committing a wrong.

Along with its unique connotation comes the unique value of haya in Islam. Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasalam) said: "Every religion has a distinct call. For Islam it is haya." [Ibn Majah]. Another famous hadith says: "There are more than 70 branches of Iman (Faith). The foremost is the declaration that there is no Allah except Allah and the least of it is removing harmful things from the path. And haya is a branch of Iman." [Bukhari, Muslim]. As some Mu-haditheen point out, the number 70 is a figure of speech. What the hadith tells us is that the declaration of faith is the most important part of Iman but that is not all. Iman also has to reflect itself in all kinds of actions in real life. Moreover, haya is a centerpiece of most of the actions that Iman calls for. It is the basic building block of Islamic morality. When it is lost everything is lost.

Based on such teachings, Islam brought about a moral revolution of unprecedented dimensions with haya as its cornerstone. The pre-Islamic Jahilya society of Arabia knew the word but did not understand its meaning. Nudity, the antithesis of haya, was not only common in every day life, it was even part of the most important religious ritual of tawaf (circumbulation of Ka'bah). So were all the other evils that flow from it. Islam exterminated all of those evils and changed the society in such a way that haya became one of its most cherished values. To this day in Friday Khutbahs around the world, the third Khalifah Hazrat Usman (RA) is mentioned as the person with perfect haya and perfect Iman (Kamil lil-haya wal Iman). Is there any other religion that celebrates haya like that?

Islam's laws about hijab, its ban against free mixing of men and women, its teachings about gender-relations --- all of

these reflect a deep concern for haya.

For men and women who have not lost their haya, these come naturally. There is a moving story from the earlier Islamic period about a woman who learnt that her young son had been lost in a battle. She ran in a panic to confirm the news, but before that she took time to make sure that she covered herself fully in accordance with the newly revealed laws of hijab. She was asked how did she manage to do that in a time of great personal tragedy. She replied: "I have lost my son, but I did not lose my haya."

And for centuries afterwards Muslim societies did not lose their haya. When Muslim lands came under the western colonial rule about three centuries ago, they were faced with a civilization that was no different than the pre-Islamic Jahilya on the issue of haya. While it did not have better morality, it did have better guns. At the gunpoint of military and political domination, Muslim societies were made to loose their grip on haya on the collective scale. The powerful and attractive media became an important instrument in this war. First it was books, magazines and newspapers. Then radio. Now it is television. Together they projected ideas and images detrimental to haya. They made indecency attractive. The pace was increased tremendously by television, which has shown more firepower than all the previous media combined.

When historians write about the moral decline in Muslim societies in the twentieth century, they will probably underscore television in subverting the moral fabric of society. We can get a sense of the rapidity of our fall by realizing that what was unthinkable just a decade ago has become routinely accepted today. In some cases, we seem to have lost all control. Isn't it shocking that while contraceptive ads cannot be shown on TV in the U.S. or U.K for moral reasons, they

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# Do you SEE Allah?

*Sadaf Farooqi*

Who doesn't enjoy beholding something beautiful? So much of our time is spent in beautifying things, places and our bodies, that it must indeed be worth the extra effort to incorporate beauty into any endeavor. Whether it is a bunch of cilantro leaves adorning a dish, a long-stemmed rose in a vase accentuating a dining table, a scenic watercolor painting giving life to a bland room, or blooming flowers livening up a lush green garden during spring, a thing of beauty, as they say, is "a joy forever." So much so that, one of the best traits of a believing Muslim wife is that when her husband beholds her, he is pleased.

This point - beauty in people - invites us to ponder on what really beautifies a human being? Apart from physical appearance and inherent qualities of character and etiquette, it is Ihsan, as our Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) explained in the Hadith of Jibreel:

*"(Ihsan) is that you should serve Allah as though you see Him, for though you cannot see Him, yet He sees you." (Sahih Muslim)*

The root of the Arabic word "ihsan" comprises of the letters 'ha-seen-noon', which also forms the root of the word "husn",

or 'beauty.' Allah says in the Qur'an, that "He loves those who do ihsan." (Qur'an, 2:195). Ihsan is, therefore, the epitome of good Islamic behavior and action. If a believer were to truly incorporate ihsan in himself, the first and foremost requirement of that would be, to live as though they "see" Allah.

The obvious question that crops up is, "But Allah can never be seen in this life?!" True. Since Allah cannot be seen by anyone in this world, a believer's actions reach the lofty state of ihsan when he worships Allah at such a high level of consciousness that it is as if he sees Allah.

Our behavior is affected by what we witness. When a mother sees her child laughing, she is tearfully overwhelmed with joy; when someone rich sees a miskeen (poor person) sleeping on the pavement, he or she is motivated to give in charity; when we meet our relatives after a long time, we hug them. Examples are many, but the bottom-line is, seeing something has a great impact on our action.

Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) defined ihsan to be that behavior or action of a believer - whether in worship or in dealings with people - which he

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does as though he was seeing Allah. Such a person, without doubt, will be very careful not only in how he deals with people in public, but also in what he does in private. Ihsan is a very high level of beautified action, one that can be achieved only with a similar high level of faith (iman).

A doer of ihsan has such strong conviction that Allah overshadows his thoughts, his feelings, and his heart at all times. Such a person will always strive to do what Allah likes. That is what is mentioned in the second part of the hadith: "...for though you can not see Him, yet Allah sees you".

The believer acts as if Allah is there before his eyes always, enraptured in the knowledge that Allah is seeing him. Thus, the worshipper leaves everything out of his exclusive relationship with His Lord. Every other relationship becomes subservient and a means to strengthen his bond with Allah. A child, who has been warned by his mother not to eat any more sweets, will abstain till the mother is physically in front of him.

As soon as she goes out of sight, he

will hurriedly pop another one into his mouth and chew it hastily to swallow it before she returns. Had the mother been present, the child would have never disobeyed her.

Allah is never absent. He is ever-seeing, hearing and watchful of our actions. A Muslim, therefore, does not "yo-yo" between obedience and transgression, depending on whose company he is in, or which place he is at. His actions are consistently in accordance with Allah's Pleasure, with any human slips wiped out by immediate repentance. You will not find a person who has reached ihsan sitting in a gathering that ridicules Allah's signs or prolonging his prayers when being seen by people or hastily donning the hijab in Islamic gatherings and throwing it off in other "social" gatherings. You will not find doers of ihsan being affected by people's lavish praise or scathing criticism, because their actions only seek the transcendental pleasure of the One they obey.

Incorporating husn to such an extent in one's life will automatically make him serenely beautiful when beheld by others.

### *Assigning to Allah after Adopting the Means*

*(Highlights of Mufti Ebrahim Salejee's majlis - Saturday 1st June)*

*A great lesson that we learn from the lives of the pious of the past was that they would adopt the necessary means for their work and thereafter assign their affairs to Allah. On the other hand, we adopt all the procedures and try to go the extra mile, but in the process we do not entrust our affairs to Allah. In so doing, Allah then places the entire burden on the individual and this is the beginning to all problems and agony. Eventually, this leads to depression, for one has placed all his trust on the means and procedures and not on Allah.*

*We all depend on the grace and mercy of Allah. Without it, we will not be able to live with ease. There is no harm in asking Allah to grant one an abundance of material. However, together with that, ask Him for His grace and barmat. In this way, that wealth will be a means of blessings. Otherwise, just an abundance of wealth can become a source of punishment for a person.*

# What a Perfect Match!

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What a perfectly matched couple....This marriage was indeed prepared in Jannah (Heaven)...It's like a page from a fairytale...These were just a few of the comments made after Yusuf and Fatima's nikaah (wedding) ceremony.

A few years later and two beautiful kids in their spacious home, "the sea was no longer so clam"...Like many other marriages, Yusuf and Fatima's marriage seemed to be experiencing some turmoil. Both were sincere and not a night passed when they would go to bed without making peace and amends.

Fatima comes to her husband Yusuf with a proposal: "I read in a magazine, a while ago, about how we can strengthen our marriage." She smilingly and lovingly offered.

"Each of us will write a list of the things that we find a bit annoying with the other person. Then, we can talk about how we can fix them together and make our lives happier together."

The husband agreed. So each of them went to a separate room in the house and thought of the things that annoyed them about the other. They thought about this question for the rest of the day and wrote down what they came up with.

The next morning, at the breakfast table, they decided that they would go over their lists.

"I'll start," offered Fatima. She took out her list. It had many items on it. Enough to fill 3 pages, in fact. As she started reading the list of the little annoyances, she noticed that tears flowing from Yusuf's eyes.

"What's wrong?" she asked. "Nothing" Yusuf replied, "keep reading your list."

Fatima continued to read and tears flowed now more profusely from Yusuf's eyes and began to wet his beard. Fatima somewhat nervous read all three pages to her husband. She neatly placed her list on the table and folded her hands over the top of it.

"Now, you read your list and then we'll talk about the things on both of our lists." She said happily.

Quietly Yusuf stated, "I don't have anything on my list. I think that you are perfect the way that you are. I don't want you to change anything for me. You are lovely and wonderful and I wouldn't want to try and change anything about you."

The wife, touched by his honesty and the depth of his love for her and his accep-

tance of her, turned her head and wept.

This is not to say that you must overlook every fault in your partner. If a marriage partner is abusive, or is an alcoholic or drug addict, or is unfaithful, or something of that nature then yes of course there must be changes.

But when it comes to the little things, remember that we are all imperfect beings, struggling to worship our Creator Allah as best we can, pursue our dreams in an Islamic way, raise our families, put food on the table, and balance all of the above fairly. We all have faults. We all make mistakes.

If every marriage there are times of compromise. If you go looking for faults in your partner you will find plenty and that is for sure! You will find many mistakes, bad habits, and imperfections.

But you know what? If you look honestly in the mirror you will see the same things in yourself.

If you focus on your partner's imperfections you will never be happy. You will always be dissatisfied, wanting more, feeling deprived, feeling frustrated. And you will end up making your partner miserable, and pushing your marriage into misery.

Instead, look for what is good in your partner. See his or her beauty, good habits, loving or kind gestures, relationship with the Creator Allah, hidden potential, and Islamic aspirations. If you look for beauty you will find it. Nurture that beauty by appreciating it, and it will grow. The love between you will deepen like a strong river, becoming more and more powerful over time. And those little things that used to bother you so much will seem not very important at all.

Allah is pleased with those who are thankful to Him. He increases His favours which become the means of comfort and respect in your marital home. If one fails to offer gratitude and reconcile our "petty" differences, then such an attitude surely amounts to disregard for the so many favours Allah has blessed us with.

Allah says: "If you give thanks, I will give you more: but if you are thankless, lo! my punishment is severe." (14:7).

Source: E-Islam

## *Having a Muslim Mind*

*There are many Muslims in the world with Muslim names. However there are very few amongst them with Muslim minds. The education system designed by the disbelievers as well as the various forms of media which are controlled by them are all structured to mould and shape our minds and to control our way of thinking. It is imperative that we break out of this slavery of mankind and enter into the service of one Allah Ta'ala. Listen to the talks of our pious Ulama and read their books. Choose the company of pious women. Hearts will move hearts.*

*Life will give life. Words from a living heart or mind will bring life to our hearts and minds. Piety is the live wire in a person. Without piety there will only be empty words and lifeless actions. Learn to walk the pathway of piety through the inspiring words and actions of those whose hearts are filled with the love of Allah.*



# Dealing with Grief : II

*J. Hashmi*

Another good that comes out of suffering is that the soul is purified through it. Prophet Muhammad declared:

*“By the One in Whose Hand is my soul (i.e. Allah), no believer is stricken with fatigue, exhaustion, worry, or grief, but Allah will forgive him for some of his sins thereby—even a thorn which pricks him.” (Musnad Ahmad)*

Some people describe a feeling of heartburn when they grieve. On a physical level, that may just be gastro-esophageal reflux disease brought on by stress and anxiety, but on a symbolic level, it represents the spiritual heart burning away sins like a powerful furnace. When a believer is struck with suffering, then Allah expiates some of that person’s sins as a mercy. As a consequence, that person will not be punished for those sins in the Hereafter and thereby will be pushed towards Paradise.

Perhaps a skeptic may wonder why Allah does not merely forgive His servants without afflicting them with suffering on this earth or in the Hereafter. The response to this is that Allah does in fact forgive any and all sins, so long as His servant comes to Him penitent and seeking His Grace and Forgiveness. Such a man that comes to Allah seeking

forgiveness, Allah will forgive him without any penalty punishment, nor any retribution whatsoever. Allah will wipe away his sins as if they never occurred. According to Prophet Muhammad, whoever turns to Allah asking for penitence will be forgiven “even if they (his sins) are (numerous) like the flecks of foam upon the ocean, as numerous as all the grains of sand, as heavy as the mountains, and as many as the drops of rain and the leaves on all the trees.”

Allah forgives those who seek His Forgiveness, and this is because He loves those believers who humble themselves before Him, those who seek penitence from Him, and those whose hearts cry because they disobeyed Him. The Quran says:

*“Truly, Allah loves those who repent.” (2:222)*

But what of the one who sins and never seeks Allah’s Forgiveness? What about the one who continues to sin without any plans to stop? Allah does not let all sins go unpunished because this would lead people to become negligent and wicked. The enforcement of punishment on these sinners is for their own benefit, just as a father’s enforcement of punishment on his son is for the child’s own benefit. For example, a six year

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old boy sticks his fingers in an electric socket. His father, fearful that the boy may electrocute himself, punishes him for that. A parent threatens to punish his child only as a benefit for the child, even though the recalcitrant child might be too immature to realize that the punishment stems from his father's love and concern. If the child puts his fingers into the electric socket, it will be he himself—not his father—who will be electrocuted. Likewise, if we sin, we do this to our own detriment, and the Glory of Allah is unaffected. The worldly punishment therefore is a means, not the ends; the goal of the punishment is not to punish, but rather to serve as a strong deterrent.

If a father is too lenient with his son and does not say anything when the child puts his fingers in the socket, then the boy will not realize the gravity of what he is doing. He will then keep sticking his finger in the socket until one day he will get electrocuted and die. Likewise, if Allah does not send affliction down upon His servants, they might not ever realize the error in their ungodly ways until they reach spiritual death. For example, the philandering husband may never realize that his indiscretions will one day lead to the breakdown of his family unit, the compulsive gambler might not realize that his addiction will lead to bankruptcy, and the alcoholic might not realize that his drinking will lead to a life of misery and emptiness. So Allah sends down upon these people punishments, in order not only to expiate them of their sins, but also to alert and awaken them to their detrimental ways.

Imagine the child who knows that his parents won't do anything if he is caught doing drugs. This would be parental negligence, and it would lead to the child harming himself without any fear of repercussions. Therefore, a responsible parent will establish certain guidelines so that the child knows that if he takes drugs, then he will be

grounded. This causes the child to stay away from drugs for fear of being punished. Similarly, the creation of Hellfire—though it is a punishment—is also a mercy to mankind; through the threat of it, Allah creates much good. Hell-Fire is a punishment that Allah threatens upon His servants, so that they may fear Allah and thereby obey Him; such people will then become spiritual, righteous, and rightly guided. This will not benefit Allah, but rather it will only benefit themselves. Allah has no need for them, but they have a need for Allah in their lives.

But Allah gives His servants many chances and warnings before He condemns them to Hellfire. An analogy of this is of a police officer, who catches a speeding motorist. The first time the motorist is caught speeding, the police officer gives him a warning. The second time, the police officer fines him. The third time, he gives him a hefty fine. The fourth time, he receives community service hours, and the next time his license will be suspended, etc. Again, the police officer does not stop the motorist for his own good; rather, it is for the motorist's own good, so that he does not get into a traffic accident and harm himself. This is like Allah's methodology: He afflicts people with minor punishments in this worldly life, so that they might realize the error in their ways. In other words, Allah allows bad things to happen to good people so as to punish them for their sins; this punishment serves as a warning in order that they may correct themselves in this lifetime and thereby avoid punishment in the Hereafter. Surely a motorist would rather be fined as opposed to being locked up in jail. Likewise, a believer would rather be punished in this lifetime as opposed to being thrown into Hell-Fire in the next life.

What this means is that when a believer is struck with some sort of calamity, he should take comfort in the fact that his sins are being forgiven by Allah. He should know

that Allah will compensate him for every woe and grievance, and Allah is Most Just! Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasalam) told us that Allah will compensate His servants for even the minor hurt that comes from a thorn which pricks the skin. A believer who is going through a difficult time should never be ungrateful to Allah, nor should he

question Allah's justice, because Allah will compensate everyone in the next life. This is Allah's Promise to humanity. A believer who is aggrieved by trials and tribulations should take heart in the fact that he is one of Allah's chosen ones, whom Allah loves enough not to punish in Hell but rather whom He wishes to purify in this life.

### *‘Food for the Soul’ - Respecting Elders*

*Allah, The Most Exalted, says:*

*“Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents. If one or both of them reach old age with you, do not say to them a word of disrespect, or scold them, but say a generous word to them. And act humbly to them in mercy, and say, ‘My Lord, have mercy on them, since they cared for me when I was small.’ (Qur’aan-17: 23-24)*

*The Noble Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasaqlam) is reported to have said:*

*"He is not of us who does not have mercy on young children, nor honour the elderly" (Hadith-Al-Tirmidhi)*

**Note:** *The duty of caring for one's parents and elderly in our society, in this most difficult time of their lives, is considered an honour and a blessing and an opportunity for great spiritual growth. In Islam, it is not enough that we only pray for our elders especially our parents, but we should act with limitless compassion, remembering that when we were helpless children, they preferred us to themselves.*

*When people reach old age, they should be treated mercifully, with kindness and selflessness. In Islam, serving elderly, in particular one's parents is a duty second to prayer, and it is their right to expect it. It is considered despicable to express any irritation when, through no fault of their own, the old become weak and vulnerable and need our special attention and care.*

# In the Name of Allah

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*Bediuzzaman Nursi*

Bismillah, "In the Name of Allah," is the start of all things good. We too shall start with it. Know, O my soul! Just as this blessed phrase is a mark of Islam, so too it is constantly recited by all beings through their tongues of disposition. If you want to know what an inexhaustible strength, what an unending source of bounty is Bismillah, listen to the following story which is in the form of a comparison. It goes like this:

Someone who makes a journey through the deserts of Arabia has to travel in the name of a tribal chief and enter under his protection, for in this way he may be saved from the assaults of bandits and secure his needs. On his own he will perish in the face of innumerable enemies and needs. And so, two men went on such a journey and entered the desert. One of them was modest and humble, the other proud and conceited. The humble man assumed the name of a tribal chief, while the proud man did not. The first travelled safely wherever he went. If he encountered bandits, he said: "I am travelling in the name of such-and-such tribal leader," and they did not molest him. If he came to some tents, he was treated respectfully due to the

name. But the proud man suffered indescribable calamities throughout his journey. He both trembled before everything and begged from everything. He was abased and became an object of scorn.

My proud soul! You are the traveller, and this world is a desert. Your impotence and poverty have no limit, and your enemies and needs are endless. Since it is thus, take the name of the Pre-Eternal Ruler and Post-Eternal Lord of the desert and be saved from begging before the whole universe and trembling before every event.

Yes, this phrase is a treasury so blessed that your infinite impotence and poverty bind you to an infinite power and mercy; it makes your impotence and poverty a most acceptable intercessor at the Court of One All-Powerful and Compassionate. The person who acts saying, "In the Name of Allah," resembles someone who enrolls in the army. He acts in the name of the government; he has fear of no one; he speaks, performs every matter, and withstands everything in the name of the law and the name of the government.

At the beginning we said that all be-

ings say “In the Name of Allah” through the tongue of disposition. Is that so?

Indeed, it is so. If you were to see that a single person had come and had driven all the inhabitants of a town to a place by force and compelled them to work, you would be certain that he had not acted in his own name and through his own power, but was a soldier, acting in the name of the government and relying on the power of the king.

In the same way, all things act in the name of Almighty Allah, for minute things like seeds and grains bear huge trees on their heads; they raise loads like mountains. That means all trees say: “In the Name of Allah,” fill their hands from the treasury of mercy, and offer them to us. All gardens say: “In the Name of Allah,” and become cauldrons from the kitchens of Divine power in which are cooked numerous varieties of different foods. All blessed animals like cows, camels, sheep, and goats, say: “In the Name of Allah,” and produce springs of milk from the abundance of mercy, offering us a most delicate and pure food like the water of life in the name of the Provider. The roots and rootlets, soft as silk, of plants, trees, and grasses say: “In the Name of Allah,” and pierce and pass through hard rock and earth. Mentioning the name of Allah, the name of the Most Merciful, everything becomes subjected to them.

The roots spreading through hard rock and earth and producing fruits as easily as the branches spread through the air and produce fruits, and the delicate green leaves retaining their moisture for months in the face of extreme heat, deal a slap in the mouths of Naturalists and jab a finger in their blind eyes, saying: “Even heat and hardness, in which you most trust, are under a command. For like the Staff of Moses, each of those silken rootlets conform to the command of, And We said, O Moses, strike the rock with your staff, and split the rock (2:60). And the delicate leaves fine as cigarette pa-

per recite the verse, O fire be coolness and peace against the heat of the fire, each like the members of Abraham (21:69).

Since all things say: “In the Name of Allah,” and bearing Allah’s bounties in Allah’s name, give them to us, we too should say: “In the Name of Allah.” We should give in the name of Allah, and take in the name of Allah. And we should not take from heedless people who neglect to give in Allah’s name.

**Question:** We give a price to people, who are like tray-bearers. So what price does Allah want, Who is the true owner?

**Answer:** Yes, the price the True Bestower of Bounties wants in return for those valuable bounties and goods is three things: one is remembrance, another is thanks, and the other is reflection. Saying, “In the Name of Allah” at the start is remembrance, and, “All praise be to Allah” at the end is thanks. And perceiving and thinking of those bounties, which are priceless wonders of art, being miracles of power of the Unique and Eternally Besought One and gifts of His mercy, is reflection. However foolish it is to kiss the foot of a lowly man who conveys to you the precious gift of a king and not to recognize the gift’s owner, it is a thousand times more foolish to praise and love the apparent source of bounties and forget the True Bestower of Bounties.

O my soul! If you do not wish to be foolish in that way, give in Allah’s name, take in Allah’s name, begin in Allah’s name, and act in Allah’s name. And that’s the matter in a nutshell!

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*Cont’d from page 18*  
are freely shown in the Islamic countries?

We can get out of the morass by making haya as our number one concern in both individual as well as public lives. There is no Islamic life without Islamic morality. There is no Islamic morality without haya.

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# Consult Your Heart

*Abu'l-Faraj ibn al-Jawzi*

I was able to acquire a worldly effect as result of following a legal concession but each time I acquired more of it, something was lost from my heart; each time an avenue to acquire more lit up before me, the darkness in my heart grew. I cried out, 'Oh evil soul! Sinfulness is the sore of hearts, and he [SAW] said, "Consult your heart."

There is no good in this entire world if acquiring it leads to a turbid heart. There would be no true pleasure in a garden acquired through something that is religiously blameworthy or a dishonest transaction; to sleep on rubbish heaps with a heart free of this grime is more delightful than (reclining on) kings' couches.'

I continued in this vein: sometimes I would overcome my soul and sometimes it overcame me; then circumstances would dictate the acquisition of what I needed to meet a need. [My soul] would make its case, 'I am not overstepping the apparent bounds of the permissible.' I countered, 'Does not scrupulousness (wara') prohibit you from this?' It replied, 'Yes.' I then asked, 'Does it not lead to hardness of the heart?' It replied, 'It does.' I said, 'If this is the fruit, there is no good for you in it!'

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One day I took my soul to the side, saying, 'Woe to you, let me speak to you and listen well! Assume that you have gathered something of this world in which there is doubt, are you certain that you will spend it?' It replied, 'No.' I said, 'So the tragedy is that it could only be of benefit to someone else, while all you get from it is an uneasy heart in the short-term, and a burden which you may or may not have to bear. 'Woe to you! For the sake of Allah, leave what bars you from scrupulousness. Deal with it by leaving it. It seems that you only want to leave what is proscribed, or what is, on the face of it, wrong. Have you not heard, "Whoever leaves something for Allah's sake, He will replace it with something better"?'

'Is there not a lesson for you in people who hoarded things only for others to acquire them? They craved and coveted but never realised their ambitions. 'How many a scholar has gathered scores of books only to benefit from none! How many there are who do actually benefit, yet may not have as much as ten volumes? How many are those who live a blissful life, yet do not possess two dinars? How many are those with tremendous wealth yet are beset with anxiety and stress? 'Do you not have



the sharpness of insight that makes clear to you the state of those who [may gain a benefit from] legal concessions on the one hand, but suffer many losses on the other. Perhaps the owner of a house, or one of its residents, is struck with illness and spends therein many times more than what he earned through those concessions; but the person mindful of Allah is spared of this.'

My soul rose up to rebuke me, exclaiming, 'I am not overstepping the bounds of the law, what more do you want of me?!' I said, 'I will refrain from cheating you, and you know your inner self better.' It said, 'Tell me what I should do.' I counseled it, 'Be mindful of the One watching you. Imagine how you would be before someone of status in this world, and apprehend the truth that you are in fact before the greatest Master – He sees of your inner self what those of status do not see of your exterior. Choose the safer course; be wary of selling certainty for concession and taqwa for a short-term desire.

'If you find this advice hard to bear, say, "Patience for a while!" The time for you to see the fruits [of your patience] has not yet come to an end. May Allah guide you to its realisation and aid you through His divine accord.'

### The value of worship done in youth

*May Allah bless you with an auspicious life! Giving you happiness and goodness, He makes you forget about the tragedies that befell on you! My child! When a person is young, the desires of the nafs surround him. The time of youth, however, is the most profitable time for learning knowledge and worshipping. During this time, which is the time when lust and fury invade a person, to carry out one commandment of the Shariat is much more valuable than the same worship which is done when one is old. [Especially if other obstacles join them, the worship which is done by overcoming them will increase the blessings so much that only Allah knows how much.] For the difficulty and trouble in doing a worship against obstacles will exalt the honor of a worship to the skies. Acts of worship that are done easily and without any obstacles to prevent them will remain lower. It is for this reason that the higher ones among men have become higher than the highest ones of angels. This is because man worships among obstacles. But angels obey the commandments without any obstacles. During the time of war, the value of a soldier increases and his one insignificant deed done in combat become more valuable than all his efforts done in the time of peace. The desires of youth are things which the nafs and the Devil like, but they are the enemies of Allah. The things that conform with the Shariat are the things which Allah likes. It is not worthy of wise and intelligent people to please the enemies of Allah, while, by doing so, angering the real owner who gives all blessings. May Allah bless us with doing reasonable actions and protect us against being deceived by the nafs, by the Devil, or by the sayings and writings of the enemies of religion! [Especially at a time when the irreligious, those who ridicule Muslims, are on the increase, and when propaganda causing Muslim children to deviate from the religion is spreading, little worship will be given much greater rewards, provided that it is correct. Our Prophet (sall-Allahu 'alaibi wa sallam) declared: "O my Ashab! You have come at such a time that you will be destroyed, you will go to Hell, if you do not do one-tenth of Allah's commands, though you do nine-tenths of them! However, there will come such a time that at that time, Muslims will be saved from Hell, if they do one-tenth of the commands and cease from doing nine-tenths of them. How lucky for those with iman at that time."]*

*Imam Rabbani Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi (RA)*



# The Miracle of Positive Thinking

*Shahnaaz Bemath*

Thinking positive can work miracles. You may have been told to “guard your thoughts”, but felt the advice to be pointless. After all, your thoughts are private. How can they possibly affect someone else? The fact is, thoughts do seem to boomerang in some mysterious ways. Science has not found a way to measure them as they have invisible sound waves. In order to understand how positive thinking works, and how to use it efficiently, it is important to understand the power of negative thinking.

*“Negative thoughts and tensions are like birds. We cannot stop them from flying near us but, we can certainly stop them from making a nest in our mind.”*

The mind can be directed towards positive thinking or negative thinking. The power of thought is a neutral power. The way one thinks determines whether the results are positive and beneficial or negative and harmful. It is the same of energy acting in different ways. Persistent inner work can change habits of thoughts. You must be willing to put energy and time to avoid negative thinking and pursue positive thinking, in order to change your mental attitude. Think of those things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, in other words, to fill your mind with

noble, good thoughts, leaving no room for negative ones to take root.

The Noble Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has reported that Allah, The Most Wise, said: “I treat my servant as how he thinks of Me” (Bukhari/ Muslim). In other words, Allah treats His servant in the way how he thinks of Allah, what he hopes from and how he sets his hopes on Allah. So, those who come positive and with a great hope to the door of Mercy of the Almighty Creator will Insha Allah not return empty-handed.

The most powerful weapon you have at your disposal is Du'a (prayer). Use it and use it often. The basis of prayer is to lift us and situations to Almighty Allah -- an inner act of visualisation. A further step is to contemplate on our beautiful teachings of Islam -- this involves controlling and directing out thoughts. A simple way to think of this is to imagine your mind to be like a garden. That garden can be spoiled and overrun by negative, destructive thoughts (weeds), or it can become a place of peace and harmony by the cultivation of flowers (uplifting thoughts).

*“Your mind is a garden. Your thoughts are the seeds. You can grow flowers. Or you can grow weeds.”*

Are you prone to depression? Do you

see your life as a hopeless mess... consider yourself a failure? If you do, then you will close your mind, see no opportunities, and behave and react in such ways, as to repel people and opportunities. You let the power of negative thinking rule your life. Try replacing such negative thoughts with positive ones. Talk to your beloved Allah, Allah does not create a lock without a key, and Allah doesn't give you problems without its solutions. Trust Him! While recognising these problems, picture yourself as mastering each one. Visualise yourself handling each situation creatively; being a success; gradually allowing your given potential to blossom.

The beloved Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) advised us if you look forward to good things, it will happen In'Shaa'Allah. Thinking positive is a very important element of Islam. Always think that Allah has a plan for you, if something goes wrong, it will probably lead you to something good. HE is working things out for you, even if you don't feel it. Have faith and be thankful. Where faith and hope grows, miracles blossoms, Allahu Akbr!

At first, this kind of thought control may seem like an inner game -- but you'll be surprised at how, slowly but surely, your outer circumstances begin to change. For thought precedes action, and the right thoughts precede a chain of good actions. Destructive thoughts, on the other hand, act as poisoning agents. They embitter and limit the thinker, preventing him or her from developing good relationships, because others sense the wrong thoughts telepathically, and shy away instinctively.

Conversely, if you greet people with the thought that they'll probably be nice to know, such a positive thought will affect their response. If you're afraid of someone, replace that fear with a thought which recognises that the person's given potential "core" is probably hidden under layers of unhappiness and

wrong thinking. Silently bless that person, and ask that his or her true self be given a chance to manifest.

A friend was once terribly upset because someone was spreading false rumours about her. She could not deny the rumour publicly. All she could do was pray for the woman, try to think about her charitably and visualise her acting differently. She did this consistently for some weeks. One day, unexpectedly, the woman phoned her to apologise and say she'd been mistaken, Subhaan-Allah! It seemed like a miracle! But right thinking can work miracles... Life has many different chapters for us. One bad chapter doesn't mean the end of the book. Be positive and keep your faith in Allah. Once we function in harmony with Allah'S beautiful laws of love and forgiveness -- and this includes spreading good, true and beautiful thoughts -- our lives will flower as they were meant to.

*"Think positive, Think different. Don't waste your precious energy on negative thoughts."*

Decide that from today, from this very moment, you are leaving negative thinking behind, and starting on the way towards positive thinking and behaviour. It is never too late. Soon your life will turn into a fascinating, wonderful journey. Wake up every morning with the thought that something beautiful is about to happen. Let's welcome each day with a smile and bid farewell with a smile. We thank Allah for HIS blessings. Take advantage of our positive energy and employ them in doing well in this life. Let's learn, read and after that, we will find the entire universe will extend to us it's heart and the whole world will hug us with its beauty... Subhaan-Allah!

There is something beautiful in life. You just have to find it....be positive and it will find you!

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# Leading With Wisdom

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*Mohsen Hareedy*

Human resources experts say that successfully leading a small group of people is not an easy task.

Imagine for a moment the challenge Prophet Muhammad (SAW) faced when he established the foundations of the first Muslim community first in Makkah, then in Madinah.

When Islam started to gain publicity, the few people who had embraced it in Makkah formed the nucleus of the first Muslim community. This small community was put to persecution at the hands of the people of Quraysh.

The Prophet (SAW) had to do something about this challenging situation. When the persecution intensified, he asked some of them to leave Makkah and migrate to Abyssinia where its king, Negus, gave them protection and welcomed them in his country. As a responsible leader, the Prophet (SAW) had a serious concern for his followers' safety and he took wise measures to ensure that at least some of them were safe, far away from dan-

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ger.

After the death of the Prophet's wife - Khadijah, and his uncle - Abu Talib, the persecution of the Prophet (SAW) and his companions in Makkah increased, and his personal safety was at risk as the tribes joined hands to kill him. At that point, God commanded the Prophet to leave Makkah and migrate to Madinah where he started a new phase in establishing the new Muslim state.

In Madinah, the Prophet (SAW) declared that both the migrants (Al-Muhajirun) and the helpers (Al-Ansar) were brothers, and that they formed one community. The Prophet's (SAW) main goal in building this community was to strengthen their bonds of brotherhood in Islam.

He also wanted to ease the pain of the migrants and wanted the helpers to extend their hands to the new members of the community who had left their houses and properties behind in Makkah for the sake of Islam. This healthy and positive atmosphere was an important factor that led to the long-

term success of the new Muslim community in Madinah.

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) loved his companions and cared for them a lot. His care and concern covered even those who had died, as he was very keen for example to pay off their debts. When God made the Prophet (SAW) wealthy through conquests, he said: "I am more rightful than other believers to be the guardian of the believers, so if a Muslim dies while in debt, I am responsible for the repayment of his debt, and whoever leaves wealth (after his death) it will belong to his heirs." (Al-Bukhari)

In what follows, I will shed more light on some other aspects of the Prophet's wise leadership.

### Recognizing His Companions' Skills

A good leader is one who sees the positive traits of his team members and invests in them. This is exactly what the Prophet did with his companions. There are many examples that show how the Prophet (SAW) discovered where his companions excelled and how he utilized their potentials and wisely invested in them.

One of the famous companions, Bilal ibn Rabah (RA), had a very beautiful voice, and the Prophet (SAW) being aware of this gift declared Bilal to be his official mu'adhin (one who calls Muslims to prayer). On the other hand, the Prophet refused to offer another distinguished companion, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (RA), an administrative responsibility because he lacked the required skills.

Out of appreciation and motivation, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) conferred some titles to his companions. For example, he told Abu `Ubayhdah ibn al-Jarrah (RA): "You are the protector of this nation." He said to Khalid ibn al-Walid:

"You are one of the swords of Allah."

In a third occasion, he told Mu`adh ibn Jabal: "By God, I love you O Mu`adh." (Abu Dawud)

After embracing Islam, the family of Yasir (RA) was put to persecution and torture. In recognition of their sacrifice, the Prophet (SAW) used to comfort them, and he promised them that their final abode will be in Paradise.

The Prophet (SAW) remained faithful and thankful to those who helped him at the beginning of his mission. The Prophet is reported to have said: "There is no one who had done more favor to me with life and property than Abu Bakr." (Al-Bukhari)

### Seeking His Companions' Opinions

In line with the divine command: {... and consult with them in the matter...} (Al `Imran, 3: 159), Prophet Muhammad (SAW) used to consult with his companions before taking any decision. The Prophet's counseling with his companions were so common that Abu Hurairah (RA) is reported to have said: "I never saw anyone consult his companions more often than the Messenger of Allah." (Ahmad)

The consultations had to do with matters on which there was no divine guidance in the Quran or the Sunnah. The Prophet (SAW) did not go to the battle of Badr and the battle of Uhud for example without consulting his companions.

In some cases, the Prophet (SAW) sought his companions' opinions as what happened in the aforementioned example and this is called "positive consultation". In some other cases, the companions took the initiative and expressed their views on certain issues and this is called "negative consultation". For example, the location of the battlefield of Badr was decided after Al-Habbab ibn

al-Mundhir proposed it. The usual term used by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in these cases is: "Give me your opinion, O people." This practice became a key characteristic of the nascent Muslim community for which they are praised in the Quran: {...and whose affairs are a matter of counsel...} (Ash-Shura, 42: 39)

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) consulted his companions even regarding personal issues, like what happened when the news of the slander against his wife Aisha spread in Madinah: "O people, give me your opinion regarding those people who made a forged story against my wife..." (Al-Bukhari)

### Dealing Gently with His Companions

Gentleness is a key quality of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). When he wanted to teach his companions, he used a very wise method which entailed both respect for the recipient of such knowledge without embarrassing him. One day a Bedouin urinated in the mosque, and the people ran to beat him. The Prophet (SAW) said: "Do not interrupt his urination (i.e. let him finish). Then the Prophet (SAW) asked for a tumbler of water and poured the water over the place of urine." (Al-Bukhari)

In another version, the Prophet (SAW) called the man and explained to him that the mosques are not places for urine, but they are for offering prayer and worshipping God. This example takes us to the following point.

### Correcting His Companions' Mistakes

Correcting people's mistakes is a Quranic guidance. The Quran has many references to situations in which a certain conduct is blamed and corrected. These situations apply to Muslims in general and to the Prophet himself. (see 80: 1-10; 33: 37; 8: 67;

3: 128; 60: 1; 3: 152; 4: 97)

Let us first clarify that because we are human it is normal that we make mistakes. What is more important is learning from our mistakes and not repeating them. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) confirmed this meaning in his famous hadith which reads: "Every son of Adam makes mistakes, and the best of those who make mistakes are those who repent." (At Tirmidhi)

Following the Quranic guidance, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) applied the same methodology when correcting his companions' mistakes because he felt that it is his duty to do so, being the chosen Prophet to guide people to God.

While correcting his companions' mistakes, the Prophet (SAW) considered different factors. The approach differed from one situation to another and from one person to another. Dealing with someone who often makes mistakes is different from dealing with one who makes a mistake for the first time. The kind of mistake is also determinant in the kind of treatment. Priority is given to mistakes which have to do with peoples' belief. Situations which involve everyday life or etiquette come in second place.

When the Prophet (SAW) wanted to teach his companions something, he used to introduce the topic by telling them that: "I am like a father to you." (Abu Dawud)

Here is an example of how the Prophet (SAW) corrected his companions. Umar ibn Abi Salamah (RA) said: I was a boy under the care of the Prophet and my hand used to go around the dish while I was eating. So the Prophet said to me: "O boy! Mention the Name of Allah and eat with your right hand, and eat of the dish what is nearer to you". Since then I have applied those instructions when eating." (Al-Bukhari)

Persuasion was a fundamental tool that the Prophet used to correct his companions' mistakes. It is reported that a man from Banu Fazarah came to the Prophet and said: 'My wife has given birth to a black boy' - and he wanted to disown him. He said: 'Do you have camels?'

He said: 'Yes.'

He said: 'What color are they?'

He said: 'Red.'

He said: 'Are there any gray ones among them?'

He said: 'There are some gray camels among them.'

He said: 'Why is that do you think?'

He said: 'Perhaps it is hereditary.'

He said: 'Perhaps this is hereditary.' And he did not permit him to disown him. (An-Nasa'i)

### **Respecting the Feelings of His Companions**

He did not want to hurt the man's feeling because of his poor condition.

The Prophet (SAW) was aware of the details of every single companion's social status and managed to deal with every one according to his circumstances. Once a poor man invited the Prophet (SAW) and served him vinegar. The Prophet comforted him and said: "The best condiment is vinegar." (Muslim)

This reaction reflects the Prophet's (SAW) wisdom. He did not want to hurt the man's feeling because of his poor condition.

### **Muslims' Duty Today**

It is because of this wisdom and these refined skills that the Prophet (SAW) managed to gain this large number of followers, and to successfully convey God's message to the world. And because of his refined manners and wise leadership, the companions deeply loved the Prophet (SAW) and

were ready to sacrifice their lives to save him.

Once a man asked the Prophet (SAW) about the timing of the Day of Judgment. In response, the Prophet (SAW) asked the man about the good deeds that he had prepared for that day. The man said: "I have not prepared much prayer or fasting or zakah, but I love God and His Messenger." The Prophet (SAW) said: "You will be with those you love." (Al-Bukhari)

Now, it's our turn. Muslims are told in the Quran that they have in the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) the most beautiful pattern of conduct: {Verily there is for you a good example in the Messenger of God for whoever hopes for [the encounter with] God and the Last Day, and remembers God often.} (Al-Azhab 33:21)

It is now the Muslims' turn to re-live the conduct of the Prophet and embrace it in their daily lives. If Muslims claim that they love their Prophet, they have to demonstrate this love by following the Prophet's (SAW) footsteps and his guidance in all walks of life; at home, at work, with their families, with relatives, with friends, with neighbors regardless of their race, faith, color or status.

If we sincerely love the Prophet (SAW) and follow his guidance, Almighty God will love us, and we will be with him in the Hereafter, and the closer to him in Paradise will be those who follow his example and are best in manners.

*Cont'd from page 16*

nature around us, with its beauty and harmony, is the earliest sign. The two other signs came together: the Qur'an, His glorious Book, and the Messenger who received, followed and taught it, Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Like the other two signs, nature and the Qur'an, Muhammad's character is also a wonder and a sign. Thus as Muslims we admire, love and follow him.

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# Revelation

## *A Panacea for Social Problems*

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*Imran Sabir*

This world is the abode of the human being, and it is a place in which we face many problems throughout our life. The problems that we face may be of diverse natures and of variant types, but all can be classified into three broader categories: (I) problems related to humans and their outer-world; (II) the problems of the inner world of human beings; (III) and problems related to the inter-relationship of human beings. Human beings are bestowed with the faculties of intellect and wisdom. Human history is nothing more or less than the tale of our efforts to ascertain the solution to these problems. The experimental method is the route followed by the intellect. The intellect assumes one route on an experimental basis to judge the appropriateness of a solution. Occasionally, we are successful, but sometimes the experiment proves to be faulty and human intellect has to search for another route. In this way, human intellect gradually steps forward, on an experimental basis, to discover the realities of life and the solutions to problems.

In this scenario, according to one school of thought, as there is no source of knowledge but intellect for human beings, then there is no alternative with which we

can identify the solutions of human problems. We have to go along life's journey under the guidance of the intellect, bearing the distress of each abortive effort.

A second school of thought opposes this view. It states that intellect alone is not enough to reveal the truths of life and/or to solve the problems. Rather, knowledge is also a source; one can differentiate between right and wrong. Moreover, humans should be able to reach the destination safely and save themselves from the fruitless and exhaustive efforts of the intellect. But unlike animals, knowledge is not an instinctive characteristic of all human beings. Humanity has been given such knowledge through selected persons; this knowledge is called revelation.

Revelation does not exclude human intellect; rather, it respects it and claims that just as the human eye needs light to see, so too does the intellect depend on the light of revelation to be able to view the world correctly.

After having looked at these two different points of views, it is time to compare them.

Today, if human intellect (even after thousands of failures) has discovered the true



solution to all problems, then there is no need for human beings to take on revelation as a panacea. The intention of revelation was to solve the problems of life. If such problems have been solved without the assistance of revelation, then it is useless to discuss intellect or revelation.

But what if human intellect is yet to discover the true solution of the problems of life and is yet entangled in the whirlpool of its experiments? Then, it is worth investigating whether humans should continue pursuing these answers with the intellect or whether they should verify the claim of the revelation by adopting its approach for dealing with problematic situations.

Today's world carries the burden of diverse problems-social unrest, political instability, wide-spread poverty and destitution, prostitution, homicide, drug addiction, alcoholism, the disintegration of the family, juvenile delinquency, terrorism, suicides and AIDS. The figures and forecasts of this virulent disease are intimidating, bearing in mind that prostitution and pornography are not only permitted in many countries worldwide, but are becoming money-spinning sources of living, particularly in the West. This is aggravated by the actuality that there is at present an ever-increasing rise in the international trafficking of children for these purposes. Moreover, infidelity is also on the rise, along with soaring crime rates in leading democratic and formerly communist countries. Undeniable facts illustrate that man-made systems that are devoid of Divine guidance have done more damage than good to humanity. It appears that the ambitions of knowledge and contentment have not been realized.

In philosophy and contemporary sciences-natural, behavioral, and social-the source of knowledge is limited to the human intellect and its five senses. Revelation is dismissed out of hand, and is not considered to be a source of knowledge; it is renounced as

being nothing more than a parable or a superstition. This refusal to accept revelation as a source of knowledge is a phenomenon that has both historical and philosophical antecedents.

It is the natural attribute of human intelligence to identify and strive to destroy disorders that exist in and near it; this is part of the "quest for truth." Astoundingly, regardless of humanity's efforts to bring order by abolishing these disorders, they are in fact increasing the world over. It is the same intelligence that causes the disorders and the attempts to correct them; the only difference is the level of perception. Intelligence, if it is improved, or not disturbed, believes that it can alter the situation of the world by evangelizing good behavior. Any amount of teaching or intimidation will only bring about a provisional alteration in behavior; yet it is only a fundamental or basic change in humanity's frame of mind that can change the world.

If we are not able to elucidate "why things are the way they are" by means of principles that are the results of the intellect, then the only alternative, other than abandoning our pursuit, is to search for the true principles as the source. So, one might be led to inquire, where do we turn for an appropriate understanding of reality and the purpose of life itself then? If we cannot rely on the knowledge or findings of any human source, then where can we discover a dependable source of knowledge?

Moreover, knowledge that is gained through the endeavor of the intellect does not exist in isolation, but rather is linked with the economics and politics of the culture from which it arises, as well as all the rest of that culture. The thoughts, attitudes, feelings, values, motives, purposes, goals, modes of action and organization, rituals, and institutions of a society are all interrelated and all affect one another. The attention to nature,

the idea that there are causes for things, that there is an underlying harmony and something constant behind change and diversity, and that the Universe is regulated by laws are attitudes that result from religion. These are pre-requisites that must be fulfilled before science can begin.

In fact, the Qur'an attaches great worth to human intellect. It appeals to the intellect of its addressees in order to persuade them about its legitimacy as the word of God. It denounces those who fail to employ their intellects as being undeserving of God's blessings, and being no better than animals. Furthermore, those who do not have the appropriate mental ability-for example, children before they reach the age of puberty and the mentally ill-are not expected to fulfill the requirements imbedded in the message of Islam according to the Prophet.

Nevertheless, these facts about the intellect do not signify that human intellect does not have its limitations. It can be swayed to believe, for instance, what opposes its own instincts. Unrestrained eagerness for a definite model, equally, can cause the intellect to be prejudiced to what is undeserving of endorsement. There are, likewise, some intriguing problems which are beyond its grasp. All these limitations restrain the efficiency of human intellect if used without restrictions. It appears to yearn-given these restrictions-for external guidance. Divine

Revelation in the form of the messages of the prophets (peace and blessings be upon them) is this very guidance. The Qur'an and Sunna (way of life of the Prophet) represent the final version of this guidance. The Qur'an has given an account of the connection between Divine Revelation and human intellect as being light upon light (Qur'an 24:35); that is, the guidance of human intellect is principally a light, although with defects (and therefore not bright), while the Divine revelation in the form of the Qur'an is a brighter light to compensate for the imperfections of the intellect. Hence, a brighter light (the Divine revelation) exhibits the path to a less bright light (the human intellect).

Islam, being the final source of revealed knowledge in the modern world, also equips us with the techniques to differentiate between good and evil. It does not base our knowledge of wickedness and virtue on mere intellect, desire, intuition, or experience that are derived through the senses; these frequently experience changes and alterations and therefore fail to offer explicit and unchanging ethical norms. As an alternative, Islam provides us with an unbiased source, the Divine revelation, as is obvious in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet. This source recommends a standard of moral conduct that is lasting and universal, holding true in every age and under all circumstances.

### Alhamdulillah

*Abu Hurairah (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaichi Wasallam) said, "Any matter of importance which is not begun with Al-hamdu lillah (praise be to Allah) remains defective." [Abu Dawud].*

*Commentary: There is another Hadith to the effect that every important work which is not started with the invocation "Bismillah" is devoid of Allah's Grace. Sheikh Al-Albani's opinion about these two Ahadith is that their text is confused and its authority is weak. He has, however, regarded it as acceptable "Mursal" (Ahadith narrated by a student of a Companion deleting the Companion's name). (For details please see Irwa-ul-Ghalil, vol. I, 1,2). In any case, it is desirable to begin every good work with the Glorious Name of Allah and His Praise.*

## *Praiseworthy Morals*

# KhauF

*Maulana Maseeh-Ullah Khan (RA)*

Allah commands in the Qur'an :  
*"And Fear Me."*

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:  
*"He who fears, sets off (on the journey) at night; he who sets off at night, reaches the destination; Hark! The merchandise of Allah is expensive. Hark! The merchandise of Allah is Jannat."*

### **Nature of Khauf**

Khauf is the painful condition of the heart, which arises as a result of thinking of something reprehensible and the fear of it materializing.

The nature of khauf consists of the possibility of athab (punishment). This possibility extends to every person, for he may be overtaken by athab. This is the extent of khauf which has been commanded and imposed upon the servant. This extent, viz. fearing the possibility of athab, is a compulsory condition (shart) of Imaan. It is also known as khaufe-e-aqli (intellectual fear). At the behest of sin this faculty (khauf-e-aqli) has to be put into operation. The warnings and punishments of Allah should be recalled and ruminated over so as to be saved from sin. This degree of khauf is Fardh (compulsory). Its non-existence induces and involves one in

sin. It is the medium of exhorting towards virtue and steering one away from sin.

Allah has combined the noble attributes of hidayat guidance from Allah), rahmat (mercy), ilm (knowledge) and ridha (contentment) for those who are imbued with the khauf of Allah Ta'ala. All beings fear the one who fears Allah. Allah has stated that in the servant, two fears will not combine. This means that the servant of Allah, who on earth entertains the khauf of Allah, will be fearless in the Akhirat; and, he who had no khauf of Allah on earth, will be overtaken by fear and calamity. In this regard, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

*"On the Day of Qiyaamat every eye will be crying excepting the eye which refrained from gazing at that which Allah had forbidden, and the eye which stood guard in the Path of Allah, and the eye from which emerged a tear-drop equal in size to the head of a fly, in fear of Allah."*

In a Hadith of Mishkat it is said that Allah will make haraam (unlawful) the fire of Jahannam for such a person. In the hadith it is also stated that on the Day of Qiyamat, Allah will proclaim to the malaikah to remove from the Fire anyone who had at any time or occasion feared Allah.

Fear is thus incumbent for every

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Mu'min. There are two reasons for this need.  
**One. The possibility of one committing voluntarily an act of disobedience in the future.**

**Two. The possibility of some act of disobedience having been voluntarily committed, but due to negligence one's attention has been diverted therefrom. Such diversion is also a voluntary act of disobedience.**

It is a fact that the robber because of the fear of being apprehended abstains from

robbery; the child because of the fear of punishment abstains from mischief; because of the fear of being fined people refrain from violation of law. When fear is effaced, anarchy is the consequence in the land. Khauf severs the roots of all evil while at the same time it is the medium of all obedience.

The manner in which to acquire the khauf of Allah is to meditate on his Wrath and Azaab.

### Had I Lived

*Had I lived among An-Nabi's time*

*When people's hearts awoke*

*And animal's spoke*

*Had I lived among Ar-Rasool's waqt*

*When death was near*

*And Allah was feared*

*Had I lived*

*And Al-Habeeb not died*

*Weeping Eyes and humble state, cried and cried*

*I would kiss between his brow on his forehead*

*And wait*

*For one who Allah created with behavior which*

*was great*

*Had I lived and he not died*

*Inna Lil Labi wa inna Ilhe Rajeroon*

*by Amwar Abdelsalam*