

THE TRUTH
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RADIANT REALITY

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Anarchy

Crime, anarchy, natural calamities and other difficulties prevail all around us. What is the reason for this? As Mu'mineen (Believers) we are duty bound to look for the answers of all things in the Qur'an and Hadith. From the various verses of the Qur'an and the numerous Ahadith that clearly indicate to us the reasons, hereunder one hadith is quoted:

Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) has mentioned that when immodesty will become rife, people will be hit by plagues, epidemics and strange new diseases which their forefathers had never heard of will surface. When people will cheat in weight and measure, they will be overtaken by famine, price-hikes and oppressive rulers. When zakaat will not be paid, rains will be withheld. When people will break their covenant (of being true Muslims) with Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wasallam), then Allah Ta'ala will make alien enemies dominant over them. These enemies will snatch away their belongings from them without justification. When judgement will not be passed in any matter in accordance to the book of Allah Ta'ala, Allah Ta'ala will cause mutual hatred to creep into the hearts and people will become embroiled in disputes (Ibn Majah).

This journal is dedicated to the Greatest and the Last Prophet

Hadhrat Muhammad

(Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

on whom the Prophethood got ended and sealed forever.

May Allah Ta'ala enlighten entire humanity with

the Divine Attributes with which He sent

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

to this world.

Only way to salvation for the mankind is in

following the blessed teachings of

Hadhrat Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

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

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EDITORIAL

All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted.

Business around the grave

THE calico-covered corpse is gently lowered into the grave. Loving hands of sons and brothers receive the body of their loved one and place it in the narrow pit. The strips of plank are placed firmly next to each other. The last plank is placed leaving a dark and lonely grave under it. Spades are grabbed and heaps of sand come crashing down from all directions. However, all around the grave, business goes on as usual.

While the most stark reminder of death is right in front of the eyes, the latest car on the market, the rupee/dollar exchange and other gossip continues among many of those present. While they patiently wait for the 'fatihah' to commence, the time is passed by idle gossip. Carrying the janaza on our shoulders and witnessing the deceased being lowered into the grave also does not remind us of our own death. What then will remind us of that moment (which could be extremely soon) when we will breathe our last?

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "Remember excessively that which severs all pleasures — DEATH." The best reminder of death is the graveyard itself. Hence Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has greatly encouraged that one should regularly visit the graveyard. While this Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is unfortunately rarely practised, at least we get an opportunity to visit the graveyard when attending a funeral. However, this occasion

of remembering death is also wasted gossiping.

The condition of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) when attending a funeral is clearly described in the following Hadith of Bara' (R.A.). He says: "Once we went with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to attend the funeral and burial of a person. When we reached there, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) sat by the side of a grave and wept so profusely that the ground became wet with his tears. He then said: "Prepare yourself for (your entry in) the grave." (Targheeb)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has also instructed us as to what we should be doing when attending a janazah. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) once said to the Sahaba (R.A.) when they had buried a person: "Seek forgiveness for your brother and beseech Allah Ta'ala to keep him firm for verily he will be questioned now" (Mishkaat p.26)

Thus the rare occasions when we visit the graveyard should serve as a reminder of our own death. Those few moments among the graves should not be wasted in idle gossip and worldly talk. While the burial is in progress, one should engage oneself in silently reciting whatever one is able to of the Qur'an with the intention of passing the rewards to the deceased. This would be of immense benefit to oneself as well as the deceased. May Allah Ta'ala enable us to remember our death often, especially while in the graveyard. Aameen.

Few things to do in order to abstain from sin:

- 1. To be in the company of the Ahlullah.*
- 2. Constantly remember Allah (SWT).*
- 3. To be in public the same way you are in private.*
- 4. To recite the Qur'an.*

Question Answer

Question.

A scholar expressed in his talk the view that Allah Ta'ala is not everywhere. Allah's presence according to the Qur'an is only on the Arsh which is above the heavens. Please comment on this opinion.

Answer.

This scholar happens to be a member of the deviant sect. Just as the Qur'an Majeed says that Allah Ta'ala is on the Arsh (Throne) so too does it say that Allah Ta'ala is in the east and in the west, and that He is at all times with every single person wherever he/she may be. In short, the Qur'an teaches the Omnipresence of Allah Azza Wa Jal. This is sufficient to debunk the baseless claim of the scholar.

Question.

In support of his averment, the scholar advances the argument that if Allah Ta'ala is everywhere as some Muslims believe, it would mean that He is also present at places of evil such as casinos, brothels, etc. In his opinion Allah Ta'ala is 'everywhere' in knowledge only.

What is the correct view of the Shariah? He says that according to Imaam Abu Hanifah (RA) the one who believes in the Omnipresence of Allah Ta'ala is a kaafir.

Answer.

Firstly it is false to claim that the belief of Divine Immanence is the belief of 'some' Muslims. On the contrary, the belief that Allah Ta'ala is cloistered exclusively on the Arsh is the erroneous belief of some Muslims, namely, the deviant Salafis. The vast majority - the entire Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, believes in the Divine Omnipresence.

Secondly, the negation of Omnipresence is the mere opinion of the scholar who is a blind muqallid of his deviant Salafi

imams. The personal opinion of a scholar cannot negate and abrogate the Qur'an Majeed. His opinion is the product of corrupt logic, unsubstantiated by Shariah argument.

Thirdly, the consequence of Divine Presence in evil places is ludicrous and disrespectful. The scholar has trapped himself in this absurd line of argument because he has analogized Allah Azza Wa Jal with the created human being. He understands our belief of Divine Immanence in terms of human presence. Allah Ta'ala sees and He hears. But He does not have physical eyes and ears like man. The scholar's argument is like saying that the belief that Allah Ta'ala sees and hears leads to the conclusion that Allah Ta'ala has physical eyes and ears like the human being. Warning against the commission of this dangerous blunder of comparing Allah Ta'ala with created beings, the Qur'an Majeed states: "Do not draw analogies for Allah." (Surah Nahl aayat 74).

This is the fundamental error of some scholars. Their belief envisages the attribution of anthropomorphic attributes for Allah Azza Wa Jal, The Eternal Being. With regard to 'presence' in an evil place, the scholar should understand that Allah Ta'ala is in fact, the Creator of even evil. It is He who has created the evil Iblees. It is He Who has created the evil nafs. It is He Who has created all the other evils on earth. All such creation is subject to His Wisdom which is unfathomable by the created human mind which is finite and extremely limited and deficient in relation to encompassing Divine Realities.

The perfection of man's intelligence with which Allah Ta'ala has adorned and elevated him, is in relation to himself. It is perfect and adequate for comprehending the Path termed Siraatul Mustaqeem which leads straight to Jannat and to Allah Ta'ala. The cognitive power of man's Aql is not infinite, hence he lacks the ability to transcend the limitations of his intelligence. Thus,

when the Qur'an says Allah is on the Throne, we say, 'He is on the Throne and we do not know how.' When the Qur'an says that Allah is in the east and the west, we say: 'Allah is in the east and the west, and we do not know how.' When the Qur'an says Allah is nearer to us than our jugular vein, we say: 'Allah is nearer to us than our jugular vein, and we do not know how.' When the Qur'an says that Allah Ta'ala is the third One present in the company of two persons, and the fourth in a company of four persons, we say: 'Allah is the third and the fourth One present, and we do not know how.'

The cumulative quotient of the variety of Qur'anic verses and Ahadith narration pertaining to Allah's presence is the affirmation of the attribute of Divine Omnipresence - Allah is here, there and everywhere in total rejection of the belief which leads to the kufr conclusion of anthropomorphism for Allah Ta'ala.

The Arsh is a thing created by Allah Ta'ala. It is a wondrous creation created in space which Allah Ta'ala has created. Limiting and confining Allah's presence to a created item leads to the assignment of dimensional limitations for the Eternal Being. This attribution of weakness and defect which is a quality of created beings is kufr when related to Allah Ta'ala.

The averment that the divine presence refers to divine knowledge is baseless. It is the product of the scholar's defective mind and corrupt logic. His view has no substantiation in the Shariah. The fact that this scholar and the other deviates of his ilk seek to impose the corrupt product of his rationalizing on the Ummah testifies for their deviation. While they berate the rational

interpretation of the illustrious Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen, they blindly submit to and follow their personal desires and opinions.

The scholar should not cite Imaam Abu Hanifah (RA) as a daleel in his favour. He did not understand what exactly Imaam Abu Hanifah had implied.

Question.

Is it ok to participate in these cruises which have casinos, music, dancing, bars etc?

Answer.

Although going for a cruise in itself is not haram, however, the evils and prohibited forms of entertainment that are associated with conventional modern day cruises are extremely harmful to ones Iman and spirituality.

Hence, Muslims are urged not to go on such types of cruises.

Question.

I wanted to know in the days of menses if women can read Masnoon dua's and the Durood Sharif. I know that we cannot touch or recite the Qur'an but some people say that you can recite Masnoon dua's and Durood Sharif.

Answer.

A woman in her menses is permitted to recite Masnoon dua's.

She is also permitted to recite dua's that have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, provided that she recites these dua's with the intention of making a du'a and not with the intention of tilawat. Further, a woman in her menses may recite Durood Sharif without any objection.

Symptoms of a sick heart:

- Making false gods- Love of wealth - حب المال
- Love for fame - حب الجاه
- Love of fulfilling lustful desires - حب الباه
- False love for things

Lesson From The Qur'an

Commentary: Mawlana Mufti Mohammad Shafi Sahib (RA)

Verses 154 - 157

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ
وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ () وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْخَوْفِ
وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ
الصَّابِرِينَ () الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا
إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ () أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ()

And do not say of those who are slain in the way of Allah that they are dead. Instead, they are alive, but you perceive not. And surely We will test you with a hit of fear and hunger, and loss in wealth and lives and fruits. And give good tidings to the patient who, when suffering comes to them, say: "We certainly belong to Allah, and to Him we are bound to return." Those are the ones upon whom there are blessings from their Lord, and mercy. And those are the ones who are on the right path.

Earlier, alluding to an unpleasant incident, patience and steadfastness were inculcated and the excellence of *Sabirun* (the patient people) was mentioned. The next verses mention, in some detail, other unpleasant incidents and culminate in describing the excellence of patience, and perseverance in it. Those verses give preference to the theme of war with infidels over other themes for two reasons: first, the sacrifice of life is a grand sacrifice; whoever steadfastly endures this loss will, undoubtedly, learn to be patient on losses of lesser magnitude; second, it is relevant to the situation too, as the objectionist on the orientation of Ka'bah had been facing it.

Injunctions and related considerations:

According to Islamic traditions the dead person is given some kind of a "new

life" in *Barzakh* (An intermediary stage which begins with death and stretches till the Doomsday.) which develops in him sensitivity to punishment and reward. Regardless of whether one is a believer or disbeliever, virtuous or vicious, this taste of life-in-*Barzakh* is given to everybody. However, the life there has many categories: one of them is for the general lot, while some others are for prophets and virtuous people. The later ones vary in their degree of excellence. A number of scholars have collected relevant facts to assert their points of views about the *life-in-Barzakh*. All of them cannot be summed up here. I will restrict myself here, to presenting the considered and the very balanced view of my worthy teacher Maulana Ashraf Ali of Thana Bhawan; incidentally, his view is in close conformity with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, as also, those of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

The Martyrs are not dead

One who dies in the cause of Allah is a *Shahid* (Martyr) and, although, it is correct and even allowed to call him "dead", yet we are forbidden to regard their death like ordinary deaths. For, though, life in *Barzakh* is given to everybody which gives him perception of reward and punishment but *Shahid* in the *Barzakh* life is qualitatively different from the one given to other persons. The distinction a *Shahid* has over others in *Barzakh* is that in effect, for the fullness and sensitivity of life, his perception is, keener and deeper. As, for instance, the life sensation is there in finger tips, as also, it is there in heels, but the sensitivity of finger tips is sharper than that of heels. The effect of the finer life-quality of a *Shahid* in *Barzakh* reaches his physical body as well; whereas ordinarily bodies remain unaffected. Consequently, a *Shahid's* body does not waste away, decay or mingle with dust. On the contrary it retains its freshness and a

semblance of being alive too. This is duly endorsed by *Ahadith* and observations. They are, therefore, reported as living and we are forbidden to call them dead. However, for all worldly purposes they are treated at par with the dead; their properties are divided and their wives can remarry. Lives of prophets in *Barzakh* have a further distinction. Their life-sensitivity is even finer and keener than that of *Shahids*. In *Barzakh* their bodies retain their life-quality and, in some ways, its manifestation is extended to this life as well; their properties are not divided and their wives cannot again enter into wedlock.

The most strong in the retention of this life-quality are the prophets, then are the *Shahids*, then the ordinary human beings. Nevertheless, according to some *ahadith* some of the men of Allah and virtuous people share this excellence with *Shahids*. Apparently, those who die while exercising stringent discipline against their selves (مجاهد النفس) are ranked with *Shahids*. In other words, though this verse specifically refers to *Shahids* as against the broad humanity, it does not, for that reason, exclude the virtuous and the truthful. If, therefore, the body of a *Shahid* returns to dust, as bodies of ordinary persons, generally do, the chances are that the person did not, perhaps, die in the cause of Allah which is the only criterion of martyrdom (*Shahddah*).

In case a person who fulfilled all the prerequisites of martyrdom and, beyond, any doubt, died in the cause of Allah and whose martyrdom (*Shahadah*) has been unmistakably and repeatedly demonstrated, his body must not, on the authority of a *Hadith*, return to dust. If, in spite of *Ahadith*, the body mingles with earth (what, in fact, has made the author of *Ruh al-Ma'ani* doubt is how can, in spite of *Ahadith*, the body of a *Shahid* be eaten away by earth) the explanation would be that according to *Hadith* the body would not return to dust; however, it does not deny the process of decay and decomposition caused by other factors like geo-chemical reaction, body enzymes, and bacteria. Neither does it confute the verse.

Other compound objects like weapons, medicines, food, and the 'commingling of various natural elements like water, fire and air had, undoubtedly, their effects on the bodies of prophets in this world and, obviously, the life-quality of *Shahid in Barzakh* is not superior to that of the prophets in this world; if, therefore, the other ingredients register their impact on the bodies of *Shahids* in *Barzakh* it does not confute, in any sense, the meanings of *Ahadith* which say the *Shahids'* bodies are sacred to earth.

Another answer is that the distinction which *Shahids* have over others is apparent from the fact that, comparatively, their bodies remain unspoiled for a pretty long time, although the likelihood of their disintegration in the longer run does exist. The aim of the *hadith* should, therefore, be explained by saying that the immunity from decay for such a long time is, in itself, an excess on the customary behaviour of dead bodies. Eternal preservation and preservation for a considerable long time, both are an "excess on the customary behaviour" of dead bodies.

By the words, "لا تشعرون" "you perceive not", the Holy Qur'an asserts the fact that the life in *Barzakh* transcends all sensory perceptions.

Patience in hardship: The way to make it easy

The nature and the significance of the severe test man is put to by Allah has been thoroughly discussed while explaining the verse *وإذ ابتلى إبراهيم ربه : And when his Lord put Ibrahim to a test'*.

Whatever their magnitude, accidents are unnerving. But a prior knowledge of such accidents makes it easier to bear them and be patient about them. Since the entire *Ummah* is addressed here, the *Ummah* should realize that the world is a place of hardships and labour; it is a place of ordeal. It will not, therefore, amount to impatience if one does regard such accidents as either strange or a remote chance. And as the *Ummah*, generally, displays the spirit of patience in all its deeds, the reward of

Mercy is common to everyone who strives to be patient. But as the quality and degree of patience varies from person to person, everyone will be rewarded individually according to and commensurate with his quality of patience.

A formula of peace in hardship

That the patient people used to recite: *إنا لله و إنا إليه راجعون* : 'We belong to Allah and to Him we are to return' is, in fact, an inculcation of the principle of virtue. The suggestion is that this is what the patient people should say as

Verse 158

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ
اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ()

Indeed the Safa and the Marwah are among the marks from Allah. So whoever comes to the House for Hajj or performs the 'Umrah, there is no sin for him if he makes rounds between them; whoever comes up on his own with good, so Allah is Appreciating, All-Knowing.

The subject of the Ka'bah, as we would do well to recollect, started all the way back from Verse 124 *و إذ ابتلى إبراهيم ربه* : 'And when his Lord put Ibrahim to a test', later opening with the statement that the Ka'bah was made a place for repeated convergence, a sanctuary, and a centre of divine worship as ordained (125). Then came the famous prayer of Sayyidna Ibrahim (AS) in which he requested Allah Almighty that he and his people be initiated into the correct method of performing the *manasik*, the required rites, or acts of worship (126 - 129); which is inclusive of the Hajj and 'Umrah. We can now see that the centrality of the House of Allah as the place of worship has been expressed manifestly when it was declared to be the Qiblah, the direction and orientation of all *Salah*, no matter where it is performed; while at the same time, the importance of the House of Allah

was established when it was made the objective in the performance of the Hajj and 'Umrah.

The present verse opens with the solemn declaration that the two hills, *Safa* and *Marwah* adjoining the Ka'bah in Makkah, are tangible signs from Allah. Pilgrims walk briskly between them after they have made the *tawaf* of the Holy Ka'bah. This act of walking briskly or "making rounds" between them, as the Qur'an elects to call it, is known as *Sa'y*: *سعى* a practice which was there even in the *Jahiliyyah* and which made Muslims doubt its propriety. It is exactly this doubt Allah Almighty aims to remove here.

So, there it was in the earlier treatment of the subject that Allah Almighty eliminated the objection raised by disbelievers against the instituting of the Ka'bah as the Qiblah of Muslim *Salah* and here, through a correlated assertion, the doubt of Muslims themselves as to the propriety of *Sa'y* in the Hajj and 'Umrah, of which the Ka'bah is the desired hub, has been removed.

That the text is closely bound together by this reason is not difficult to see.

Some terms and their meanings

1. The term, *Sha'a'ir* in *شعائر الله* is the plural form of *Sha'irah*: *شعره* which means a sign, mark or token. So, the "*Sha'd'ir* of Allah" signify what He has determined to be the marks of Islamic faith.
2. Lexically, Hajj means to aim, to intend; while, in the terminology of the Qur'an and *Hadith*, the act of deciding to go solely on a pilgrimage of the House of Allah and performing required rites while there, is called the Hajj.
3. Lexically, 'Umrah means *ziyarah* or pilgrimage; while, in the terminology of the Shari'ah, the visit to *al-Masjid al-Haram* and the doing of *tawafand sa'y* there is called 'Umrah.

Sa'y between Safa and Marwah is Obligatory

Details of the method that governs

the performance of the Hajj, 'Umrah and Sa'y are easily available in books of *Fiqh*. It may be noted that Sa'y is a *mustahabb* (desirable or commendable) practice of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) according to Imam Ahmad; a *fard* (absolute obligation) according to Imams Malik and Shafi'i; and a *wajib* (necessity) according to Imam Abu Hanifah, which means, one who abandons it would have to slaughter a goat in compensation.

It is advisable to guard against a possible doubt that may arise while reading the words used in the verse under study. One may think that the Qur'an simply says that making Sa'y between Safa and Marwah is 'no sin'; at the most, it proves that it is one of the many 'allowed' acts. This approach can be corrected by looking at the leading expression 'لا جناح': which has been used here in relation to a question. The question related to all those idols sitting on top of the Safa and Marwah hills and it was to show their devotion to them that the people of the *Jahiliyyah* used to do sa'y between Safa and Marwah, and in which case, this practice should be *haram* (forbidden). It is in answer to this doubt that it was declared, "there is no sin" in it. This being the real and authentic Abrahamic Tradition, there is no reason why it should be considered tainted with 'sin'? The 'malpractice' of a pagan band of people in this intervening period does not end up making a 'sin' of what is 'good' in the sight of Allah. The use of the expression 'no sin', therefore, does not go against its being *wajib* or necessary.

Roots of Humility

Hadhrat Ali (R.A) described three aspects as the roots of humility:

⇒ Making salaam first.

⇒ Being happy with an indistinguished place in a gathering (i.e. he is happy to be seated in a common place, not on any special seating or stage, etc.)

⇒ To despise *riya* (showing off) and *sum'ah* (wanting popularity).

Lesson From The Bukhari Sharief

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

باب مَا جَاءَ فِي الْعِلْمِ ، وَقَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى (وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي

عِلْمًا)

الْقِرَاءَةَ وَالْعَرْضُ عَلَى الْمُحَدِّثِ . وَرَأَى الْحَسَنُ وَالثَّوْرِيُّ
وَمَالِكُ الْقِرَاءَةَ حَائِزَةً ، وَاحْتَجَّ بَعْضُهُمْ فِي الْقِرَاءَةِ عَلَى
الْعَالِمِ بِحَدِيثِ ضِمَامِ بْنِ ثَعْلَبَةَ قَالَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ - اللَّهُ أَمَرَكَ أَنْ نُصَلِّيَ الصَّلَوَاتِ قَالَ نَعَمْ . قَالَ
فَهَذِهِ قِرَاءَةٌ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - أَخْبَرَ
ضِمَامٌ قَوْمَهُ بِذَلِكَ فَأَجَازُوهُ . وَاحْتَجَّ مَالِكُ بِالصَّكِّ يُقْرَأُ
عَلَى الْقَوْمِ فَيَقُولُونَ أَشْهَدْنَا فُلَانًا . وَيُقْرَأُ ذَلِكَ قِرَاءَةً
عَلَيْهِمْ ، وَيُقْرَأُ عَلَى الْمُفْرِيِّ فَيَقُولُ الْقَارِئُ أَقْرَأَنِي فُلَانًا .

Chapter 6 :What has come about knowledge and the saying of Allah: “My Lord! Increase me in knowledge”. (20:114)

Recitation of the teacher (Muhaddith) and recitation of the student in presence of the teacher. Hasan, Thouri and Maalik considered the recitation of the student in presence of the teacher as permissible (recitation of the student in presence of the teacher as permissible).

And some people have argued with the Hadith of Dhimmam bin Thala'ba in favour of recitation of the student to the teacher as he asked the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), if Allah had ordered him that they (people) should offer Salaah? The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, yes. This is like recitation of the student in presence of the teacher. Dhimmam then read the same to his tribal people and it was allowed and Imam Maalik argued with that document which is read on people and then they say that such and such person was made as witness. And

the student who recites the Qur'an in presence of the teacher (Muqri) and says that such and such person taught him.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

In the previous Baab Imam Bukhari stated that one method of narrating an authentic Hadith is that the teacher narrates it and the student listens *قراء القراءة الشيخ*. In this Baab Imam Bukhari says that if a student reads a Hadith along with the chain in presence of his teacher and the teacher listens and ratifies *قراء القراءة على الشيخ* that is also an authentic way of narrating Hadith.

Hadith No. 62

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ عَنْ سَعِيدِ
- هُوَ الْمُقْبِرِيُّ - عَنْ شَرِيكَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي نَمِرٍ أَنَّهُ
سَمِعَ أَنَسَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ يَقُولُ بَيْنَمَا نَحْنُ جُلُوسٌ مَعَ النَّبِيِّ -
صلى الله عليه وسلم - فِي الْمَسْجِدِ ، دَخَلَ رَجُلٌ عَلَى
جَهْلٍ فَأَنَاحَهُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ ، ثُمَّ عَقَلَهُ ، ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَيُّكُمْ
مُحَمَّدٌ وَالنَّبِيُّ - صلى الله عليه وسلم - مُتَكِيٌّ بَيْنَ
ظَهْرَانِيهِمْ . فَمَلْنَا هَذَا الرَّجُلَ الْأَبْيَضُ الْمُسْكِيَّ . فَقَالَ لَهُ
الرَّجُلُ ابْنَ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ فَقَالَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ - صلى الله عليه
وسلم - قَدْ أَجَبْتُكَ . فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ لِلنَّبِيِّ - صلى الله
عليه وسلم - إِي سَائِلُكَ فَمُشَدِّدٌ عَلَيْكَ فِي الْمَسْأَلَةِ فَلَا
يَجِدُ عَلَيَّ فِي نَفْسِكَ . فَقَالَ سَلْ عَمَّا بَدَا لَكَ فَقَالَ
أَسْأَلُكَ بِرَبِّكَ وَرَبِّ مَنْ قَبْلَكَ ، اللَّهُ أَرْسَلَكَ إِلَى النَّاسِ
كُلِّهِمْ فَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ نَعَمْ . قَالَ أَنْشُدُكَ بِاللَّهِ ، اللَّهُ أَمَرَكَ
أَنْ تُصَلِّيَ الصَّلَاةَ الْحَمْسَ فِي الْيَوْمِ وَاللَّيْلَةِ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ
نَعَمْ قَالَ أَنْشُدُكَ بِاللَّهِ ، اللَّهُ أَمَرَكَ أَنْ تَصُومَ هَذَا الشَّهْرَ
مِنَ السَّنَةِ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ نَعَمْ قَالَ أَنْشُدُكَ بِاللَّهِ ، اللَّهُ أَمَرَكَ
أَنْ تَأْخُذَ هَذِهِ الصَّدَقَةَ مِنْ أَعْيَانِنَا فَتَقْسِمَهَا عَلَيَّ فُقِرَانِنَا
فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ - صلى الله عليه وسلم - اللَّهُمَّ نَعَمْ فَقَالَ
الرَّجُلُ آمَنْتُ بِمَا جِئْتُ بِهِ ، وَأَنَا رَسُولٌ مِنْ وَرَائِي مِنْ

قَوْمِي ، وَأَنَا ضِمَامُ بْنُ ثَعْلَبَةَ أَخُو بَنِي سَعْدِ بْنِ بَكْرِ .
رَوَاهُ مُوسَى وَعَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْحَمِيدِ عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ عَنْ ثَابِتٍ
عَنْ أَنَسٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ - صلى الله عليه وسلم - بِحَدِّدَا .

Narrated Anas bin Malik (RA)

"While we were sitting with the Prophet in the Masjid, a man came riding on a camel. He made his camel kneel down in the Masjid, tied its foreleg and then said: "Who amongst you is Muhammad?" At that time the Prophet was sitting amongst us (his companions) leaning on his arm. We replied, "This white man reclining on his arm." He then addressed him, "O Son of 'Abdul Muttalib." The Prophet said, "I am here to answer your questions." The man said to the Prophet, "I want to ask you something and will be hard in questioning. So do not get angry." The Prophet said, "Ask whatever you want." The man said, "I ask you by your Lord, and the Lord of those who were before you, has Allah sent you as an Apostle to all the mankind?" The Prophet replied, "By Allah, yes." The man further said, "I ask you by Allah. Has Allah ordered you to offer five prayers in a day and night (24 hours)? He replied, "By Allah, Yes." The man further said, "I ask you by Allah! Has Allah ordered you to observe fasts during this month of the year (i.e. Ramadan)?" He replied, "By Allah, Yes." The man further said, "I ask you by Allah. Has Allah ordered you to take Zakat (obligatory charity) from our rich people and distribute it amongst our poor people?" The Prophet replied, "By Allah, yes." Thereupon that man said, "I have believed in all that with which you have been sent, and I have been sent by my people as a messenger, and I am Dhimmam bin Tha'laba from the brothers of Bani Sa'd bin Bakr."

Comments

Dhimmam bin Tha'laba, who belonged to the clan of Bani Sa'd bin Bakr, came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) riding on a camel. Ibn Sa'd has quoted from Al Waqdi that Tha'laba came during the 5th Hijra.

Qurtubi has quoted that this incident is of 6th Hijra, while some others say that it is of 8th or 9th Hijra. It seems that this incident is of later years as here Tha'laba had come as a delegate and delegations (وفود) came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) mostly during 9th Hijra. Secondly, here Tha'laba says that the delegate of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had come to them; and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) sent the delegates to different places after the peace treaty of Hudaiba, which took place in 6th Hijra. Tha'laba tied his camel at the gate of Masjid Nabwi and came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) who was in sitting posture leaning on his arm among his Sahaba in Masjid Nabwi (grand Musjid of Madina). Imam Maalik has concluded from this Hadith that the urine of the camel is pure, as regards the Salaah etc., as Tha'laba was allowed to tie his camel in the Musjid. Others differ with Imam Maalik on this as they say that the camel was tied at the gate in such a way that his body was outside the Musjid. Then Tha'laba asked the people sitting there, who is Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) amongst them. **This shows that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) lived like a common man amongst the Sahaba** as the people coming from outside didn't find him in some distinguished manner. The Sahaba replied that the white man reclining on his arm is Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). The whiteness of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was not like lime-white but was the whiteness mixed with redness that gave him extreme beauty.

Tha'laba asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that he would be asking him some questions and that he will be very hard in questioning. This was the time when the Sahaba were banned from asking the questions by the following verse of the Al-Qur'an,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنَ أَشْيَاءٍ إِن تَبَدَّ لَكُمْ
تَسْؤُوكُمْ وَإِنْ سَأَلُوا عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ الْقُرْآنُ تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ عَفَا
اللَّهُ عَنْهَا وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

O ye who believe! Ask not questions about things which, if made plain to you, may cause you trouble. But if ye ask about things when the Qur'an is being revealed, they will be made plain to you, Allah will forgive those: for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Forbearing. (5:101)

Therefore, Sahaba usually looked forward for some outsider to come and ask some questions to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Why was Tha'laba was hard in questioning?

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had sent a messenger to the people of Bani Sa'd bin Bakr inviting them to enter into the fold of Islam. Tha'laba heard the message of Islam from this messenger and then he wanted to confirm the same from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). He wanted to know the truth and thought to ask some questions to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in frank terms without any formalities. Some people say that he wanted to test the patience of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Some are of the opinion that by this he meant to ask Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) question in such a way so as to make him take oaths repeatedly.

Has Allah sent you as an apostle to whole mankind?

Imam Muslim has quoted that Tha'laba told Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that his (Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)) messenger had come to them and he informed them that he {Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)} was the apostle of Allah. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "he told the truth". Then Tha'laba asked as to who created the skies? Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Allah". Then he asked who created the earth and the mountains? Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Allah". Then he asked who placed the usefulness in them? Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Allah".

Then he told him that he was asking him by the One who created the skies and earth, fixed the mountains and placed the utilities in them, "Has Allah sent you as the apostle? Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "yes".

The man further said, "I ask you by Allah, has Allah ordered you to offer five prayers in a day and night (i.e., 24 hours)?" He replied, "By Allah, Yes". The man further said, "I ask you by Allah, has Allah ordered you to observe fasts during this month of the year (i.e., Ramadan)?" He replied, "By Allah, Yes". The man further said, "I ask you by Allah, has Allah ordered you to take Zakat (obligatory charity) from our rich people and distribute it amongst our poor people?" The Prophet replied, "By Allah, yes".

Thereupon that man said, "I have believed in all that with which you have been sent".

Imam Bukhari and Imam Haakim are of the opinion that this man had already embraced Islam when he learnt about it from the messenger of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and that he had just come to Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to authenticate what he had heard from the messenger. Ulema prove by this act of Tha'laba that **it is preferable to try to have more authentic chain (sanad) of narrators as regards the Qura'n and Hadith.** Imam Qurtubi, Imam Abu Dawood and some others are of the opinion that this man accepted Islam there only and was not a believer before.

There is no mention of Haj in this Hadith

Ulema have given different answers for this query, some say that the Haj had not become obligatory by that time, some say that the narrators have omitted it for the sake of brevity, while some others say that Haj was a routine act even among the infidels of Makkah, so there was no need to ask about it.

The Influence of Television

Mawlana Yunus Patel (DB)

One of the many sunnats of the Ambiyaa (AS) is that of Hayaa – shame and modesty : a quality which is sorely missing in the lives of the majority of Muslims today and which should otherwise be an outstanding characteristic and feature of all Muslims, whether married or un-married.

Television is such an evil that if our society only understood its reality, then they would find no excuse to watch. Its spiritual harm is that it takes away the hayaa and shame of our men, women and children.

The content of most television programmes is nothing but immodesty and indecency, which invites nothing but immodesty and indecency – into our homes, into our lives and the lives of our children.

However, this truth and reality seems to just pass over the understanding of even those Muslims who have some link with Deen. Many are regular with Salaah, they are seen in the Musjid, they are wearing the garb of the pious and yet they will be the ones to present flimsy and feeble excuses to view television programmes.

Let us consider this situation of sin from the following view – which Alhamdulillah, has been a means of many getting rid of the television.

If a person has to knock on your door and tell you: 'I would like to use your lounge to commit adultery.'

Or a group of some friends have to request you: 'We would like to use your home to gamble and enjoy our liquor.'

Or a group of youngsters have to tell you: 'We have chosen your home as a venue for our partying, dancing, drug-taking and fornicating.'

Or a Christian family has to request you: 'We would like to use your home as a venue for our church ceremony : The marriage of our daughter as well as the baptism of our grandchild. We have already ob-

tained the consent of one of our priests.'

Or some idol-worshippers have to suggest: 'We would like to carry out some of our religious rites in your home. We would like to bring our idols also. You are more than welcome to observe or participate in our rites.'

Many Muslims, on hearing such requests, will get very angry; will express disgust – if not swear and curse such suggestions.

However, these very same Muslims who will even resort to swearing and cursing such proposals, invite into their homes all of the above by the switch of the television, by hiring English and Hindi films as well as DVDs and downloading porn and unacceptable films from the Internet. There is so much of adultery, partying and other filth that we seem to just welcome into our homes – least realizing the consequences.

Just to give you one example and this is but the tip of the iceberg – and it is said with the intention of removing the blindfold that most parents wear :

A father of four children mentioned to me that he had got rid of his television and he thereafter mentioned why. He explained that late one night he heard strange noises from his children's room. On opening the door of their room, he found their television switched on. [...This is our concept of modesty: parents must have their own television, to view all kinds of filthy programmes and films in their privacy, and children must have their own television to view all kinds of indecency in their privacy (Na-uzu Billah).]

The father mentioned that there were dirty and obscene scenes of naked people on the television screen. He mentioned that it was filthy and that it shocked him; but what had him even more shaken was that his children were all undressed, engaging in the same kind of indecent acts. He said himself, that until then he had not considered the harm of television. It took this kind of incident to wake him up. ...This is just one example of so many. Do we wish to face something similar ?

...Do we care to even know what

our sons and daughters are doing in the secrecy of their rooms ? The fact that many demand that no one 'invade' their space and privacy to the extent of having 'No Entry' signs on their doors, should have parents a little more than worried... esp. if they are viewing television and are surfing the net or have free access with cell phones.

Many have written, that after watching certain films or programmes, the desire came strongly into their hearts to take drugs, drink liquor, murder their parents, indulge in homosexuality, engage in adulterous relationships, commit suicide, rape, and so much else – and many of them do so.

Moreover, with sins like television and evil, lustful glancing, Allah Ta'ala removes the love between husband and wife and even ones children become disobedient.

There are many husbands who entertain thoughts of and fantasize of other women when with their wives. Many wives are guilty of the same infidelity having seen or socialized with ghair-mahareem. Many women are so infatuated and obsessed with some soccer player or cricket player that they become dissatisfied with their husbands, and spend their time fantasizing.

Had the person not viewed all those strange women and men on the television screen and computer screen, and had lowered his gaze in real life situations, then he would not have desired that which he cannot have, and there would not have been dissatisfaction with his or her spouse.

Moreover we complain: There is no barkat in our homes; there is no barkat in our wealth; there is no barkat in our time. Our children are rebellious. The husband is having an extra-marital relationship. The daughter has accepted Christianity. The son is on drugs ... and the list of complaints does not end.

Then who is to blame except the one who brought all of this Haraam into the home by purchasing the television and exposing the family to so much of sin.

...Great 'Ulama became Bay't upon the hands of Maulana Hakeem Fakhrudeen

(RA). He mentioned that there was a time, that with the rising and setting of the sun, he saw nothing but noor in Surat. The atmosphere was one of noor. After the cinemas and television and videos flooded Surat, there was nothing but 'zulmat' – darkness.

One Wali of Allah Ta'ala, on visiting a home, mentioned that he perceived the sin of Zina (adultery) from the walls of that home. He was able to recognize this due to the purity of his heart. The residents of that home were not indulging in adultery but they were watching the sin on television.

When fire burns against a white wall, it blackens the wall. The Ahle-Dil, with their purified hearts, see the fire of sins which has burnt and blackened the white hearts of the Muslims.

With that we take lesson and take measures to protect ourselves and our children...

The Shariah, Non-Muslim Rights and the Pundits

By Khalid Baig

Islam's treatment of non-Muslims in its midst has been a favorite topic of discussion for the Orientalists and other pundits who make careers out of denigrating Islam. They have been singing essentially the same song for centuries now, but over time their tunes have changed. It is instructive to take a brief look at this change.

Towards the end of the 19th century the Reverend Malcolm MacColl wrote at length on this pet topic of his. His 1896 book "The Sultan and the Powers" was an urgent call for the Western powers to take action against the Ottoman khalifah to save the Christians in the Muslim world. Its chapter "Islam as a Ruling System" is a searing indictment of not the Sultan but Islam itself. Realizing that his extreme views and recommendations would betray his fanaticism against Islam, he claimed that he was an advocate of religious freedom. However "My toleration ceases when the religious doctrines of one man invade the aboriginal rights of another, as they do, and have ever done, in every State, without exception, where Islam ruled supreme." He claimed that under the Shariah a non-Muslim's evidence could not be received in a court of law against a Muslim; non-Muslim places of worship were in danger; their women were at the mercy of Muslim males; and they were taxed so heavily with *jizya* and *kharaj* that more than 67% of the produce of their soil was taken in special taxes, not to mention other taxes. He combined these fabrications and distortions with a crude and extremely derogatory language for Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam. And in his self-righteous rage this worthy blatantly advocated the use of force by European powers to remedy the situation.

Signs of a Sound Heart

There are five things that constitute a sound heart (Qalb Saleem):

الذي ينفق ماله في سبيل الله

"A person is able to spend his wealth in the path of Allah (SWT)." I.e. Having a giving nature

الذي يرشد اهله الى الحق

"A person is able to guide and instruct their family towards that which is the reality/the truth.
"What is 'truth'? امر بالمعروف و نهى عن المنكر "To promote virtue and prohibit vice."

الذي يكون قلبه خاليا عن غلبة الشهوات

"A person, his heart be in such a state that it is free from his carnal and base desires dominating his life." I.e. Being the slave/servant of Allah, not a slave/servant of the Nafs.

الذي يكون قلبه خاليا عن العقائد الباطلة

"A person, his heart if free from corrupted, distorted beliefs.

الذي يكون قلبه خاليا عما سواك تبارك و تعالي

"A person, his heart is free from everything else other than Allah (SWT)."

A similar article by him in the Times of London published in January 1895 so excited the Christian missionaries in India that they distributed an Urdu translation with a challenge for anyone to answer the charges. They were confident that the stunning evidence in the article would silence the Muslims for good. (A fitting response was given by Allama Shibli Nomani in two historic papers.)

No Inquisitions

A century later the language has changed. In a widely quoted article among the Western academicians, P. R. Kumaraswamy begins by admitting: "Systematic persecution of minorities was unheard of in Islamic history. There are no Islamic parallels to the Inquisition or the Holocaust. Even contemporary anti-Semitism in various Islamic countries in the region and elsewhere was primarily a contribution of the Christian missionaries who were active in the Islamic Middle East."(1)

Nice words. But they do not go very far. He then goes on to assert that, nonetheless, the Islamic treatment of non-Muslims was bad. Because dhimmis were not equal to Muslims in law or practice.

After castigating the past he moves on to declare his total dissatisfaction with the present where constitutions of Muslim countries declare that all subjects, Muslim and non-Muslim, are equal under the law. This is so because these constitutions declare Islam as the official religion and Islamic Shariah as the source of law. He complains: "Most of the Arab and Islamic states have declared Islam to be the official Religion... Furthermore, a number of countries have recognized *sharia* (Islamic religious law) as a major source of jurisprudence." He recognizes that Muslims want Shariah and to oppose it "would be authoritarian and dictatorial." Yet that is precisely what he wants to do because implementation of Shariah "evokes apprehension among non-Muslims of legalized discrimination."

So is Islam the problem after all? No. He says: "For a dhimmi or a non-

Muslim, the problem has never been what Islamic scriptures say but how they are practiced by rulers who were the followers of Islam." In his words the problem is not theology but history and not theory but practice. Yet the solution lies in disbanding the theology and overriding the Shariah.

How far one will have to go to appease him? Very far. His utopia will not be achieved until he is given the charge of deciding who is a Muslim. He demands: "It is imperative that the Alawis, Ahmadiyas, and others are recognized as Muslims. Only then could they secure any meaningful role for themselves."

Unlike MacColl, Kumaraswamy does not use any derogatory words for the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, and has even inserted a few words of praise for Islam. But what this smooth talking academic is asking for today is much more than the fanatic reverend had asked for a century ago. The language has been refined, but the goal posts have been moved much further while the blinders to Islamic Shariah and history remain constant.

Kumaraswamy admits: "Unlike Europe, the Islamic Middle East never resorted to systematic persecution of its minority population." The crucial question is why. What made the Muslims behave differently than the other powers before and after in their dealing with the other in their midst? That investigation is central to the discussion but he does not probe it at all.

What Made the Muslim Rule Different?

To get an answer we can visit the court of Harun al-Rasheed (d. 809) who was a contemporary of Charlemagne (d. 814), the father of Europe. Charlemagne had forcibly converted the Saxons to Roman Catholicism. There was no forced conversion in the powerful empire of Harun al-Rasheed, in which Christians enjoyed full freedom and even high positions in the court.

Not that there was never a temptation to do otherwise. When Byzantine emperor Nicephorous insulted Harun al-

Rasheed and repeatedly defied him, he did get irritated. As a result he felt like taking it out on his Christian subjects. So what did he do? He asked his Chief Justice, the great Imam Abu Yusuf, as to why the Churches had been left intact in lands conquered by Muslims and why Christians were allowed to take out crosses in their processions on their holidays. The query and its response have been recorded in the marvelous Kitab al-Kharaj of Imam Abu Yusuf. He wrote that Muslims had reached a treaty with the dhimmis which spelled out these protections and the treaty could not be violated. The treaty of Hira signed by Khalid ibn Waleed included these stipulations: "Churches will not be demolished. They will not be stopped from blowing their trumpets or bringing out crosses on their religious holidays." None of the Rashidun Khalifahs had objected to it so it represented *ijma* (consensus), a major source of Islamic Law or Shariah.

As the firm and unequivocal answer by the great scholar made it clear, the non-Muslim subjects were under the protection of the Shariah, which was not subject to change with the moods or calculations of the ruler (or of the manipulated masses as in modern democracies). It was this protection that made the Muslim rule different from all others --- before or since.

The Treaty of Najran

The concern for justice, which distinguishes Islamic rule from all others, can be seen in the preface to Kitab al-Kharaj where Abu Yusuf reminds the khalifah to make sure the officers he appointed displayed "justice for the dhimmis, fairness for the victim, sternness against the oppressor, and kindness for the people."

It was a result of the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, Salla-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, who warned his followers, "Whoever wronged a *mustamin* (a non-Muslim under protection of a treaty) or burdened him beyond his capacity or took anything from him without the latter's will, I will be his accuser on the Day of Judgment."

Similarly the Treaty of Najran, which the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, concluded with the Christians of Najran in 8 AH was the prototype for all subsequent treaties. It included the following terms:

- ⇒ They will be defended against enemy attack.
- ⇒ They will not be intimidated to convert to Islam.
- ⇒ They will not have to go to the tax collector to pay their jizya; he will come to them.
- ⇒ Their lives, properties, businesses, and lands will be protected.
- ⇒ Their priests and clerics will not be removed from office.
- ⇒ Their crosses and statues will not be destroyed.

Such guarantees for personal and religious freedom were unthinkable in the tribal pre-Islamic Jahiliya society. Once introduced by Islam, they were so internalized by its followers that they determined Islamic treatment of non-Muslims throughout its history as the following glimpses will show.

The Islamic Record Equality

It is one thing to make pious pronouncements about equality. It is another to really consider everyone's life to be of equal worth and take the difficult decisions that may be dictated by this principle. It is in the latter test where Islamic record rises above that of others. During the time of Sayyidna Umar ibn al-Khattab, Radi-Allahu unhu, when a Muslim from the Bakr tribe killed a Christian of Hira, his verdict was that the killer be handed over to the heir of the deceased who could either accept blood money or kill him. The heir decided to take his revenge and the Muslim was killed. Obviously because of the deterrence such incidents were rare. However when a similar incident happened in the time of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, the fate of the killer was the same. The unequivocal legal Islamic verdict was that the life of a dhimmi was equal to the life of a Muslim and so was his blood money. Sayyidna Ali spelled out this principle: "Whoever

has accepted our protection (*dhimma*) his blood is like our blood and his blood money is like our blood money." This was not a sound byte meant for the media. It was the law of the land.

The same is true about equality in the court of law, MacColl's claims notwithstanding. A Jew or a Christian could bring out a law suit against any Muslim, even the highest office in the land and his testimony was as admissible as that of anyone else. When a Jew filed a claim for the coat of mail of Sayyidna Ali, radi-Allahu unhu, who was the khalifa at that time, Sayyidna Ali, radi-Allahu unhu, appeared before the qadi as an ordinary defendant. Similarly, when a Christian filed a property claim against Hisham ibn Abdul Malik (who later became a khalifah) in the court of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, the latter ordered Hisham to appear personally in the court. Based on the evidence the case was decided against Hisham.

Property Rights

It was the same with land and property rights, which were always respected. When Abu Jafar Abdullah al-Mansur (d. 775) decided to build the new capital city of Baghdad, he did not just appropriate the land. He purchased it from the dhimmis who owned it.

Not only land, but Muslim even paid for the debris taken from non-Muslim properties. It happened during the construction of the Masjid in Kufa in the time of Umar ibn Khattab. The Masjid used debris from the long ago abandoned palaces and mansions of Hira. There was no legal heir to these palaces. Yet a compensation was credited to the account of the Christians living there.

Again the verdict of the Shariah was clear. Imam Abu Yusuf wrote: "The khalifah has no authority to appropriate the land of the dhimmis. It belongs to them. They will continue to transfer it through inheritance and sale."

Religious Rights

The guarantees for religious free-

dom were written in the treaties Muslims signed with the non-Muslims. Obviously this included rights to their places of worship. This was enforced like anything else in the Shariah. We see this in the presence of a large number of churches from old times in the Muslim world, whether Iraq or Syria or Egypt. We also see this in the restoration of the right when occasionally someone violated it. In one incident, some churches in Egypt were destroyed by khalifah al-Hadi. They were rebuilt at government expense by Musa ibn Isa, the governor of Harun al-Rasheed, following a fatwa of Laith ibn Sa'd, the leading scholar of his time.

The story of the Church of John in Damascus, next to the famous Jami Masjid is quite instructive. Successive khalifahs wanted to purchase the church to expand the Masjid. Amir Muawiya tried but the church leaders refused and he kept quiet. When Abdul Malik ibn Marwan pressured them to sell the church, the priests threatened him that anyone who destroyed the church would be afflicted with dementia or leprosy. Aggravated by that Abdul Malik did accept the challenge and the church was annexed to the Masjid. While their dire predictions did not materialize, it was nonetheless a violation of their rights as provided by the Shariah. So when Umar ibn Abdul Aziz became khalifah the Christians petitioned him and he decreed that the annexed part must be returned to them. Muslims ended up offering many properties to the Christians to win a deal that would leave the Masjid intact.

The extreme care to ensure the protection of their places of worship can be seen in the actions of Sayyidna Umar ibn Khattab. It is well known that during his trip to Jerusalem, the asr prayer time came when he was visiting a church. But he refused to pray inside the church despite the offer of the patriarch. Instead he prayed on the stairs. He was concerned that if he prayed inside it might lead some later Muslims to try to take the church. To further preempt any possibility of a future misappropriation, he on his own accord, gave the

church authorities a written proclamation that Muslims could not offer prayer in congregation even on the stairs. Nor could they call the adhan from it.

Rights and Security

An important issue in discussion of rights is how they are to be balanced against security concerns. What happened in Cyprus during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods shows us the Islamic outlook on this perennial question. After Cyprus was conquered in 29/650, the treaty called for the neutrality of its people in the wars between Muslims and the Romans. But three years later they violated the treaty and openly helped the Romans in their war on Muslims. Amir Muawiya conquered the city again and left them on renewal of the previous agreement. The pattern of signing a treaty and violating it happened a couple of times. Finally under suspicion of yet another breach of treaty, Walid ibn Yazeed expelled a group of suspects. But it was only a suspicion; there was no hard evidence. So the scholars gave a verdict that it was not permissible under Shariah to expel them and they were allowed to come back.

Things did not stop here. Their attitude of defiance and helping the enemy continued even during the Abbasid period. Ultimately governor Abdul Malik ibn Salih turned to the leading scholars of his time including Imam Malik, Laith ibn Sa'd, Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, and others to get guidance from the Shariah in dealing with them. The answers ranged from no action, to a one year notice for them to change their behavior, to expulsion after paying double the value of their possessions. Of course, in a modern Western democracy the solution would have been much easier; the people could have been vilified and tried in the media and then punished by some executive order, not to mention tortured to get intelligence to protect the homeland against the real Roman threat.

Employment

Another indication of Muslim atti-

tude about the others is seen in the makeup of their courts. Right from the beginning non-Muslims were welcome there. In the Umayyad period tax and accounting departments were headed by Christians and Zoroastrians. The katib (Chief Secretary) of Abdul Malik ibn Marwan was ibn Sarjan, the Christian. This pattern has been there throughout history. Even the much maligned Aurangzeb Alamgir had many Hindus holding leading positions in his court.

What about Jizya?

Much has been made of the jizya, a tax payable by the able-bodied men between the ages of 20 and 50 as a token of their submission to the Muslim rule and as a compensation for the military services that the Muslims provided for their protection and from which they were exempt. (That women were exempt from jizya was certainly another act of "discrimination against women" that the modern world probably would not tolerate).

The word itself is an Arabized form of the Persian gizya which was a similar tax imposed by the pre-Islamic Persian king Noshervan for the purpose of supporting the army. It was not a Muslim invention; both Persian and Byzantine empires were used to collecting it. But like anything else Muslims brought their extreme concern for justice in its administration and use.

Its purpose and nature is clear from the words of the treaty between Khalid ibn Waleed and the Christian Salooba ibn Nas-toora. "I reached a treaty with you and your people on the basis of payment of jizya and provision of security. It is your responsibility to pay the jizya as long as we are protecting you and not if we do not."

The last part of the above sentence was not meant for decoration. What it really meant was brought to life when in 15/635 Muslims faced the second battle at Ajnadeen in a last ditch effort by Heraclius (d. 641 CE) to remove the Muslims from Syria. He had gathered a very large army and in order to face it Muslims had to mobilize all their forces from Hims and Damas-

cus. This meant that they would no longer be able to provide the protection they had promised to these areas. While facing the new threat was on their minds, the Muslim commander Sayyidna Abu Ubaydah did not forget the treaty with the Christians of the area. He ordered all of the jizya that had been taken from these areas to be returned to the people, which was done before the army left. Understandably the grateful Christians noted that had it been the Romans, then instead of returning any money, they would have taken whatever they could before leaving.

That jizya was a payment for military services is further shown by the fact that when the people provided military services, jizya was waived. There are reports of such waivers during the time of Sayyidna Umar ibn Khattab (Armenia and Bab in Iran) and Sayyidna Uthman ibn Affan (Jarjimah).

The exorbitant amount of jizya is another myth that the Orientalists have created. As detailed in Kitab al-Kharaj, there were three rates of jizya based on a person's financial condition. These were 12, 24, or 48 dirhams or silver coins per year. To put these numbers in perspective, it should be noted that anyone having less than 200 dirhams was considered to be below the poverty line and was exempted from payment.

Kharaj or tax on agricultural produce was also levied on them. It was a substitute for the *ushr* (a 10% levy) that the Muslims had to pay and from which the non-Muslims were exempt.

Role of Shariah

What has been presented above are just some of the glimpses from the Muslim record in treating the other during their period of power. It is a record of justice, fairness, and religious freedom that is unmatched by anything before or since. That is why Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah who lived a life of exile in Paris (after his native Hyderabad had been taken over militarily by India) and knew first hand Europe's treatment of Muslims, said: "If Muslim residents

in non-Muslim countries receive the same treatment as dhimmis did in the Islamic system, they would be more than satisfied; they would be grateful."

And contrary to the common perceptions created by a dedicated propaganda campaign that has gone on for a very long period, the real reason for this unprecedented treatment was the Shariah.

The Shariah assured the rule of law. It could not be changed or ignored. And whenever some one showed any lapses--- and indeed there were--- it was there to provide the needed correction. When the Companion Saeed ibn Zaid saw some non-Muslims made to stand in the sun for failure to pay jizya, he immediately went to the governor of the area to admonish him against this action. He said, "I heard the Prophet of Allah say, Allah will punish those who torture the people in this world."

Their torture was nothing compared to the tortures being meted out today in torture chambers around the world. But there is no one today who can remind the torturers of this warning. This warning comes, not from the universal declarations of the UN that have no sacred value for the signatories, but from the Shariah that controlled a Muslim's thoughts and actions. It was the reason that "Unlike Europe, the Islamic Middle East never resorted to systematic persecution of its minority population."

"Not Good Enough"

The position taken by many Orientalists today is that Shariah was good for the past. We can appreciate its achievements in the dark ages. Not any more. This medicine came with an expiration date and it is no longer safe or effective. The gold standard for all human endeavors has been set by modernity and everyone must follow it. The proof: the very concept of a dhimmi is anathema to the modern mind which does not accept any division of us versus them, while it was the hallmark of the Islamic system.

It sounds great --- until you start to think about it. Have we truly achieved a

common homogenized mass where there is no division on any basis between people? Religions do certainly divide people between believers and non-believers. But so does secularism. It does not look kindly at those who question it.

The differences being there, the real question is how you handle them. There is a fundamental difference between Islamic and Western approaches to this issue. The Western solution is just to eliminate the other through a rigorous project of assimilation. When that is not possible then the Western solution has been to create apartheid states as in South Africa and Israel, or create reservations as done for the Indians in the US. Minorities in the West are constantly reminded, often by their own leaders, that unless they assimilate they will end up on reservations.

To eliminate the problem of multiple categories by removing the offending categories is one approach. That is how the West "solved" the problem of the inequities between men and women; it forced the women to enter the men's world to be treated as equal. Islam, on the other hand, gave women rights without denying their femininity. It emphasized their essential humanity and considered them equally responsible in their spheres of action. But it never forced or enticed a woman to leave her home and compete with the men to get her rights. It did not give her one right while taking back another; the right to be a woman. For that it is constantly rebuked.

In dealing with the other in the society, the same pattern has been repeated. Islam certainly did not call for assimilation of the non-Muslims; rather it assured the unique identity of each and gave them rights while maintaining that identity. It recognized their essential humanity and the equality of their life in ways that cannot be imagined in the Western societies. Here again it did not give the non-Muslim one right while taking back another; the right to be a practicing Jew or Christian or whatever, with full religious freedom even for practices that were anathema to Islam. For

that also it is being rebuked.

Do Muslims Have a Right to Live by Islam

What it all boils down to is this simple question. Do Muslims have a right to live by Islam? The answer we are hearing from the pundits is no. Not in France, not in Algeria. Not in Europe, not in the Muslim world. Muslim women have no right to wear hijab in France and no right to be governed by the Shariah in Algeria. In the former they must respect the majority because it becomes uncomfortable with the sight of hijab. In the latter they must respect the minority, because it becomes uncomfortable with the talk of Shariah.

Despite the great achievements the West has undeniably made in recognizing universal human rights, it still has a long way to go. While Muslims always gave the right to non-Muslims to be governed by their personal law (like marriage, divorce, family issues, inheritance, and so on), it is enthusiastically denied to Muslims in the West. While they let the church bells ring, the adhan or Muslim call to prayer does not enjoy that freedom here. While they decided that no action against minorities could be taken based on suspicions, the Western achievement has been in passing anti-terrorism laws and Patriot Acts.

And pundits are glad to inform us that it is the Islamic Shariah that needs to be reformed. Sure.

1. P. R. Kumaraswamy, "Islam and Minorities: Need for a Liberal Framework", *Mediterranean Quarterly* 18:3 summer 2007, 94-109, 97.

Source : Al-Balagh

Initial steps to take to attain a pure heart:

To make Taubah (repentance). There are three general requirements when repenting:

To remove yourself from the sin that you are doing.

Feel regret – Nadamat

To make a resolution to never return to that sin. If you have wronged another human then there is a fourth condition which is to clear things up with that person and ask for forgiveness.

"Let them Forgive and Overlook"

By Sumayya bint Khalid

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

telling the world of your goodness, goes on to spread tales. Would you go on enjoining ties of kinship?

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

A glance at Abu Bakr radi-Allahu anhus life will tell us that no matter what the sin, no matter how grave the misdeed is, there should always remain a window leading to reconciliation and forgiveness. In the Qur'an we are time and time again reminded to forgive each other and live with each other in harmony and love. Regardless if the squabble is wholly the fault of the notorious "other" it is vital to realize that greatness is not in raising our head high and stomping off, rather it is in bending down and seeking to reconcile; in forgiving and overlooking. There is no attitude that can ever bring about the most reward and pleasure than that of unhesitant forgiveness. Being oft-forgiving is an attribute Allah

uses to describe Himself, and indeed we should aspire to build this lofty description within us, even with our limited capabilities. We beg Allah to forgive our transgressions, our faults when we are entirely at fault; can we not forgive pettier mistakes directed at us!?

There will, of course, always be times when forgiving may seem the hardest pill to swallow. It may sometimes seem impossible to simply dispense with all the frustration and anger and move on. We may be more willing to move a mountain than forgive a person who has wronged us, to overlook his insults, to overcome our bad feelings. Abu Bakr, radi-Allahu anhu, despite being faced with attacks that were entirely unprovoked, did not hesitate to forgive once he was enlightened with the virtues of forgiveness. In his zeal, he produced the most sublime example of forgiving, in response to one of the most vicious attacks perpetrated.

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

SPECIAL VIRTUES OF SURAH YASEEN

The recitation of the Qur'an earns tremendous rewards. For every letter recited one receives a minimum of ten blessings. Hence, reciting Surah Fatiha alone earns one several thousand rewards. Moreover recitation of certain Surahs on specific occasions have extra virtues and benefits. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: "The one who recites Surah Yaseen at the beginning of the day, all his needs of the day will be fulfilled." Similarly reciting Surah Ahad, Surah Falaq, and Surah Naas (the last three Surahs) thrice every morning and evening will be a means of protection from all calamities, black magic, jinns, etc. Various other virtues have been mentioned in the ahadith for the recitation of the Qur'an.

For Children

The History of Chemistry

The earliest record of man's interest in chemistry was approximately 3,000 B.C, in the fertile crescent. At that time, chemistry was more an art than a science. Tablets record the first known chemists as women who manufactured perfumes from various substances. Ancient Egyptians produced certain compounds such as those used in mummification. By 1000 B.C, chemical arts included the smelting of metals and the making of drugs, dyes, iron, and bronze. Iron making was also introduced and refinement of lead and mercury was performed. The physical properties of some metals such as copper, zinc, silver, and gold were understood. Many groups of people contributed to these developments--among them were ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Hebrews, Chinese, and Indians.

Alchemy

It was during this time that the roots of alchemy grew. The Greeks of Egypt were regarded as the forefathers of attempts to change valueless metals into metals of greater value (e.g. iron into gold). In the fourth century B.C, Zosimos the Greek described a substance called Xerion, a metal that supposedly turned other metals into gold. One needed to add a little dab of Xerion to a pile of metal and after two hundred years, the metal would have become gold.

This was the extent of the world's knowledge on chemistry. In Europe, it remained so well into the Middle Ages (400-1500 C.E).

The Coming of Islam

Yet at that time, a new empire was forming. Islam was spreading among the people of Arabia. At 632 C.E when Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, died, nearly all of Arabia had become Mus-

lim. Islam had raised these people from ignorance and darkness into light. The Muslims started to become the most advanced civilization of that time.

Though Greeks are shown as wise people who had spectacular achievements in science, Muslims are portrayed as alchemists and transmitters of Greek "wisdom", and Western scientists are shown as the real founders of chemistry, the truth is actually the opposite. It is true that Muslims translated many books and writings of the ancients. However, Muslims soon realized that in the field of chemistry the ancients, mainly being alchemists, dealt primarily with speculation and mystery. Chemistry was not a science before the Muslims. The Muslims invented the scientific method and used it in their research tremendously. The historian Briffault's book, *Making of Humanity*, has been quoted in Dr. K Ajram's book, *The Miracle of Islam Science*: "Investigation, accumulation of positive knowledge, minute methods of science and prolonged observation were alien to Greek temperament. These were introduced to Europe by the Arabs. European science owes its existence to the Arabs." Will Durant notes that Muslims "introduced precise observation, controlled experiment, and careful records."

Work of Muslims

Muslims were not alchemists, but rather they were the world's first true chemists. They produced a variety of compounds useful for the development and advancement of science, culture, industry, and civilization. Muslims invented and/or perfected the processes of distillation, sublimation, crystallization, oxidation, and precipitation. They discovered the process of calcination, which is used to reduce substances to a powdered form.

Muslims also discovered many elements with their specific weights. Al-Jabr (d.

815?) discovered 19 elements along with their specific weights. They also were the first to accurately divide the elements. Muslims distinguished between metals and alloys, noting that alloys were only mixtures and not true elements.

They originated the synthesis of numerous crucial substances that are essential to the development of chemical sciences. The acid-base principal of chemistry was entirely their development. The pH scale was their invention. Evidence is found in the fact that the word alkali originated from the Arabic word al-kili. They invented the concept of solutions regarding the solubility or insolubility of substances.

Industrial Chemistry

As industrial chemists, Muslims used advanced techniques for extracting minerals and metals. They perfected glass making and introduced the technology for coloring it with metal oxides. They invented crystal making. They introduced and perfected steel making. They produced dyes and used them in tiles, woodworking, and clothing. They produced a variety of plasters, glazes, and other building compounds. Muslim Spain had roads paved with cement instead of stones and had the world's first street lights.

Instruments

Muslims invented and/or widely used many chemical instruments that are used until now. They used burners, water baths, bellows, crucibles, distillation apparatuses, scales and weights, beakers, filters, flasks, phials, test tubes, etc.

Production of Paper

Muslims also perfected the production of paper. This accomplishment is often attributed to the Chinese. Though it is true that the Chinese produced paper, this was done through a tedious process requiring silk. It was the Muslims who instituted chemically-aided paper production. The first paper-manufacturing plant in the Muslim World was opened in Baghdad in 794 C.E.

Millions upon millions of books were published wherever this invention arrived. In 891 C.E., Baghdad had over a hundred booksellers. Most mosques had libraries. Many cities also had public libraries. Baghdad at the time of the Mongols' invasion had thirty-six libraries. Private libraries were innumerable; it was common for rich people to have huge collections of books. Princes, according to Will Durant, "in the tenth century might own as many books as could be found in all the libraries of Europe combined."

Slowly but steadily, Europeans became accustomed to the luxury of imported paper from the Muslim world. Paper was used in Constantinople by 1100, in Sicily by 1102, in Italy by 1154, in Germany by 1228, and in England by 1309. The production of the many cheap books by Europeans was only possible after the replacement of parchment and silk paper with this new paper. The Western world slowly rose from the coffins of illiteracy in which it had been sinking.

Muslims' Writings and Books

Muslims' writings and books spurred and strongly stimulated the development of European chemistry. Translated versions of Al-Jabr's works were, according to Mathe, Lavoisier's "bible." Ar-Razi's (d. 925) booklet, *Secret of Secrets*, is said to be the first known example of a chemistry lab manual. Their books were used in many European schools for many centuries. After the Crusades, especially, as returning Western soldiers told fantastic tales of the Muslim World and all the knowledge that was there, Europeans wanted to learn more and their thirst for knowledge grew. Many books were translated into European languages. Slowly, the Western World acquired the knowledge of Muslims, and began its Renaissance.

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Veil: The View From The Inside

Nakata Khaula

When I returned to Islam, the religion of our inborn nature, a fierce debate raged about girls observing the hijab at schools in France. It still does. The majority, it seemed, thought that wearing the headscarf was contrary to the principle that public - that is state-funded - schools should be neutral with regard to religion. Even as a non-Muslim, I could not understand why there was such a fuss over such a small thing as a scarf on a Muslim student's head.

Muslims contributed a proportionate amount of tax to the state funds. In my opinion, schools could respect religious beliefs and practices of students as long as they did not disrupt the school routine, nor pose a threat to discipline. However, the French faced, apparently, increasing unemployment and they felt insecure about the immigration of Arab workers. The sight of the hijab in their towns and schools aggravated such insecurity.

More and more young people in Arab countries were (and are) wearing the hijab, despite the expectations of many Arabs and non-Arabs alike that it would disappear as Western secularism took root in Arab societies. Such a revival of Islamic practices is often regarded as an attempt by Muslims to restore their pride and identity, both undermined by colonialism. In Japan, it may be seen and understood as conservative traditionalism, or the result of anti-Western feeling, something which the Japanese themselves experienced following the first contact with Western culture during the Meiji era; they too reacted against a non-traditional lifestyle and Western dress. There is a tendency for people to be con-

servative in their ways and to react against anything new and unfamiliar without taking the time to see if it is good or bad.

The feeling still persists amongst non-Muslims that Muslim women wear the hijab simply because they are slaves to tradition, so much so that it is seen as a symbol of oppression. Women's liberation and independence is, so they believe, impossible unless they first remove the hijab.

Such naivete is shared by "Muslims" with little or no knowledge of Islam. Being so used to secularism and religious eclecticism, pick and mix, they are unable to comprehend that Islam is universal and eternal. This apart, women all over the world, non-Arabs, are embracing Islam and wearing the hijab as a religious requirement, not a misdirected sense of "tradition." I am but one example of such women. My hijab is not a part of my racial or traditional identity; it has no social or political significance; it is, purely and simply, my religious identity.

For non-Muslims, the hijab not only covers a woman's hair, but also hides something, leaving them no access. They are being excluded from something which they have taken for granted in secular society.

I have worn the hijab since embracing Islam in Paris. The exact form of the hijab varies according to the country one is in, or the degree of the individual's religious awareness. In France I wore a simple scarf which matched my dress and perched lightly on my head so that it was almost fashionable! Now, in Saudi Arabia, I wear an all-covering black cape; not even my eyes are visible. Thus, I have experienced

the hijab from its simplest to its most complete form.

What does the hijab mean to me? Although there have been many books and articles about the hijab, they always tend to be written from an outsider's point of view; I hope this will allow me to explain what I can observe from the inside, so to speak. When I decided to declare my Islam, I did not think whether I could pray five times a day or wear the hijab. Maybe I was scared that if I had given it serious thought I would have reached a negative conclusion, and that would affect my decision to become a Muslim. Until I visited the main mosque in Paris I had nothing to do with Islam; neither the prayers nor the hijab were familiar to me. In fact, both were unimaginable but my desire to be a Muslim was too strong (Alhamdulillah) for me to be overly concerned with what awaited me on the "other side" of my conversion.

The benefits of observing hijab became clear to me following a lecture at the mosque when I kept my scarf on even after leaving the building. The lecture had filled me with such a previously unknown spiritual satisfaction that I simply did not want to remove it. Because of the cold weather, I did not attract too much attention but I did feel different, somehow purified and protected; I felt as if I was in Allah's company. As a foreigner in Paris, I sometimes felt uneasy about being stared at by men. In my hijab I went unnoticed, protected from impolite stares.

My hijab made me happy; it was both a sign of my obedience to Allah and a manifestation of my faith. I did not need to utter beliefs, the hijab stated them clearly for all to see, especially fellow Muslims, and thus it helped to strengthen the bonds of sisterhood in Islam. Wearing the hijab soon became spontaneous, albeit purely voluntary. No human being could force me to wear it; if they had, perhaps I would have rebelled and rejected it. However, the first Islamic book I read used very moderate language in this respect, saying that "Allah recommends it (the hijab) strongly" and

since Islam (as the word itself indicates) means we are to obey Allah's will I accomplished my Islamic duties willingly and without difficulty, Alhamdulillah.

The hijab reminds people who see it that God exists, and it serves as a constant reminder to me that I should conduct myself as a Muslim. Just as police officers are more professionally aware while in uniform, so I had a stronger sense of being a Muslim wearing my hijab.

Two weeks after my return to Islam, I went back to Japan for a family wedding and took the decision not to return to my studies in France; French literature had lost its appeal and the desire to study Arabic had replaced it. As a new Muslim with very little knowledge of Islam it was a big test for me to live in a small town in Japan completely isolated from Muslims. However, this isolation intensified my Islamic consciousness, and I knew that I was not alone as Allah was with me. I had to abandon many of my clothes and, with some help from a friend who knew dress-making, I made some pantaloons, similar to Pakistani dress. I was not bothered by the strange looks the people gave me!

After six months in Japan, my desire to study Arabic grew so much that I decided to go to Cairo, where I knew someone. None of my host family there spoke English (or Japanese!) and the lady who took my hand to lead me into the house was covered from head to toe in black. Even her face was covered. Although this is now familiar to me here in Riyadh, I remember being surprised at the time, recalling an incident in France when I had seen such dress and thought, "there is a woman enslaved by Arabic tradition, unaware of real Islam," (which, I believed, taught that covering the face was not a necessity, but an ethnic tradition).

I wanted to tell the lady in Cairo that she was exaggerating her dress, that it was unnatural and abnormal. Instead, I was told that my self-made dress was not suitable to go out in, something I disagreed with since I understood that it satisfied the requirements

for a Muslimah. But, when in Rome . . . So I bought some cloth and made a long dress, called khimar, which covered the loins and the arms completely. I was even ready to cover my face, something most of the sisters with whom I became acquainted did. They were, though, a small minority in Cairo.

Generally-speaking, young Egyptians, more or less fully westernized, kept their distance from women wearing khimar and called them "the sisters." Men treated us with respect and special politeness. Women wearing a khimar shared a sisterhood which lived up to the Prophet's saying (Allah's blessings and peace on him) that "a Muslim gives his salaam to the person he crosses in the street, whether he knows him or not." The sisters were, it is probably true to say, more conscious of their faith than those who wear scarves for the sake of custom, rather than for the sake of Allah.

Before becoming a Muslimah, my preference was for active pants-style clothes, not the more feminine skirt, but the long dress I wore in Cairo pleased me; I felt elegant and more relaxed. In the western sense, black is a favorite color for evening wear as it accentuates the beauty of the wearer. My new sisters were truly beautiful in their black khimar, and a light akin to saintliness shone from their faces. Indeed, they are not unlike Roman Catholic nuns, something I noticed particularly when I had occasion to visit Paris soon after arriving in Saudi Arabia. I was in the same Metro carriage as a nun and I smiled at our similarity of dress. Hers was the symbol of her devotion to God, as is that of a Muslimah. I often wonder why people say nothing about the veil of the Catholic nun but criticize vehemently the veil of a Muslimah, regarding it as a symbol of "terrorism" and "oppression." I did not mind abandoning colorful clothes in favor of black; in fact, I had always had a sense of longing for the religious lifestyle of a nun even before becoming a Muslimah!

Nevertheless, I balked at the suggestion that I should wear my khimar back

in Japan. I was angry at the sister's lack of understanding: Islam commands us to cover our bodies, and as long as this is done, one may dress as desired. Every society has its own fashions and such long black clothes in Japan could make people think I am crazy, and reject Islam even before I could explain its teachings. Our argument revolved around this aspect.

After another six months in Cairo, however, I was so accustomed to my long dress that I started to think that I would wear it on my return to Japan. My concession was that I had some dresses made in light colors, and some white khimars, in the belief that they would be less shocking in Japan than the black variety.

I was right. The Japanese reacted rather well to my white khimars, and they seemed to be able to guess that I was of a religious persuasion. I heard one girl telling her friend that I was a Buddhist nun; how similar a Muslimah, a Buddhist nun and a Christian nun are! Once, on a train, the elderly man next to me asked why I was dressed in such unusual fashion. When I explained that I was a Muslimah and that Islam commands women to cover their bodies so as not to trouble men who are weak and unable to resist temptation, he seemed impressed. When he left the train he thanked me and said that he would have liked more time to speak to me about Islam.

In this instance, the hijab prompted a discussion on Islam with a Japanese man who would not normally be accustomed to talking about religion. As in Cairo, the hijab acted as a means of identification between Muslims; I found myself on the way to a study circle wondering if I was on the right route when I saw a group of sisters wearing the hijab. We greeted each other with salaam and went on to the meeting together.

My father was worried when I went out in long sleeves and a head-cover even in the hottest weather, but I found that my hijab protected me from the sun. Indeed, it was I who also felt uneasy looking at my younger sister's legs while she wore short pants. I have often been embarrassed, even

before declaring Islam, by the sight of a women's bosoms and hips clearly outlined by tight, thin clothing. I felt as if I was seeing something secret. If such a sight embarrasses me, one of the same sex, it is not difficult to imagine the effect on men. In Islam, men and women are commanded to dress modestly and not be naked in public, even in all male or all female situations.

It is clear that what is acceptable to be bared in society varies according to societal or individual understanding. For example, in Japan fifty years ago it was considered vulgar to swim in a swimming suit but now bikinis are the norm. If, however, a woman swam topless she would be regarded as shameless. To go topless on the south coast of France, however, is the norm. On some beaches in America, nudists lie as naked as the day they were born. If a nudist were to ask a "liberated" female who rejects the hijab why she still covers her bosoms and hips which are as natural as her hands and face could she give an honest answer? The definition of what part of a woman's body should remain private to her is altered to suit the whims and fancies of either men or their surrogates, the so-called feminists. But in Islam we have no such problems: Allah has defined what may and may not be bared, and we follow.

The way people walk around naked (or almost so), excreting or making love in public, robs them of the sense of shame and reduces them to the status of animals. In Japan, women only wear makeup when they go out and have little regard for how they look at home. In Islam a wife will try to look beautiful for her husband and her husband will try to look good for his wife. There is modesty even between husband and wife and this embellishes the relationship.

Muslims are accused of being oversensitive about the human body but the degree of sexual harassment which occurs these days justifies modest dress. Just as a short skirt can send the signal that the wearer is available to men, so the hijab signals, loud and clear: "I am forbidden for you."

The Prophet, Allah's blessings and peace on him, once asked his daughter Fatima, May Allah be pleased with her, "What is the best for a woman?" And she replied: "Not to see men and not to be seen by them." The Prophet, Allah's blessings and peace on him, was pleased and said: "You are truly my daughter." This shows that it is preferable for a woman to stay at home and avoid contact with male strangers as much as possible. Observing the hijab, when one goes outside, has the same effect.

Having married, I left Japan for Saudi Arabia, where it is customary for the women to cover their face outdoors. I was impatient to try the niqab (face cover), and curious to know how it felt. Of course, non-Muslim women generally wear a black cloak, rather non-chalantly thrown over their shoulders but do not cover their faces; Non-Saudi Muslim women also often keep their faces uncovered.

Once accustomed to, the niqab is certainly not inconvenient. In fact I felt like the owner of a secret masterpiece, a treasure which you can neither know about, nor see. Whereas non-Muslims may think they are life imitating caricatures when they see Muslim couples walk in the streets, the oppressed, and the oppressor, the possessed, and the possessor, the reality is that the women feel like queens being led by servants.

My first niqab left my eyes uncovered. But in winter I wore a fine eye-covering as well. All the feelings of un-ease when a man's eyes met mine disappeared. As with sun glasses, the visual intrusion of strangers was prevented.

It is an error of judgment to think that a Muslim woman covers herself because she is a private possession of her husband. In fact, she preserves her dignity and refuses to be possessed by strangers. It is non-Muslim (and "liberated" Muslim) women who are to be pitied for displaying their private self for all to see.

Observing the hijab from outside, it
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Western Civilisation and American Way of Life

Study, Appraisal, Analysis

Mawlana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi (RA)

Slave of machines

It is this distressing evolutionary process that has, today, made America a slave of the machines. The supremacy of the United States is accepted all over the world and its hand is seen in everything that happens anywhere. No country, Muslim or non-Muslim, is altogether free from its control and domination. In one form or another, its presence is felt at every place. Plans are made here and enforced in our countries and our own leaders implement them. Today, America has enslaved the world, but it has, itself, become the slave of the machines. It is a prisoner of its way of life, of material progress, of factories and laboratories, and of fancy goods and gadgets. The thing that I did not see here was man, the real man whose heart was alive and awake, and not the working part of a machine. Man, here, has got cast so completely in the technological mould of life that his ideas and emotions, too, have become mechanical. The properties of rock and iron have entered into his soul. He has become narrow and selfish, cold, unfeeling and impervious. There is no warmth in his heart-, no moisture in his eyes. This is the reality I have sadly observed during my stay in America.

Guard against the dissolution of your personality

Before I leave for home I would like to tell you one thing do not be overawed by this civilisation. You are the fruit of the tree of Apostleship. Live here, but keep away from the slavish imitation of the Western Civilisation. Derive as much benefit as you like from your stay, but do not be swayed by crude and vulgar materialism. Remember your message and be on your guard against

the dissolution of your personality. Do not feel ashamed of your Faith, way of life and culture. Do not imagine that you are the beasts and they are men. No, you are men and they are the beasts. This land is glittering with electric lights; even the night here is bright as day; but it is devoid of true effulgence of blessedness and Divine guidance. As Iqbal has said :

Dark is the Frankish country with the smoke of its machines;

This valley of Blessedness and Hope' is not worthy of Divine Splendour.

Bondmen of idols carved by themselves

These people are the slaves of their habits and of the mechanical contraptions and devices made by themselves. Hazrat Ibrahim (Abraham) had asked the idol-worshippers of his time : What are these images Onto which ye pay devotion ? (XXI : 52). What irony is it that you kneel down tomorrow before what you make today? The same is happening here. To-day a standard is laid down, a law is formulated and a machine is made, and tomorrow, the whole nation becomes a slave to them. Bondmen of the idols and images carved by their own hands!

Deputyship of Ibrahim

This country is an idol-hall in which the Azan of Ibrahim has to be given, and this you, alone, can do. You are the real descendants of Ibrahim, not the Jews who have strayed far away from his path. Not the Christians who are the followers of the Christianity of St. Paul, not of Jesus. They have been divested of true Christianity. It was a colossal conspiracy that bore fruit. No religious conspiracy has,- perhaps, been so

successful. It brought about a complete metamorphosis of Christianity. Now, whether Catholics or Protestants, they are the adherents of St. Paul. They have lost the claim to be the successors of Hazrat Ibrahim. You are his successor.

In the words of Iqbal:

*Architect of Haram, for rebuilding the world
awake;*

*Out of heavy sleep, heavy sleep arise Out
of slumber deep arise !*

Only the architects of Haram can build the new world. Today, destruction is rampant. In appearance it is constructions, in truth, destruction. It was the mission of the Apostle- you follow to deliver mankind from every kind of servility to the servility of One God. You therefore, are in America not merely- as masses of flesh and blood, nor simply as Indians, Pakistanis, Egyptians and Slvrians.

Break idols of colour and blood; lose yourselves in the Millet.

Neither the Irani should remain nor Turani nor Afghani. You are not Egyptians and Syrians, but Muslims You are one community, one brotherhood. You are Ibrahim and Mohammadi. Know yourself. You have not come here to lose your identity and get fitted into this monstrous machine -like a valueless part or to fill your bellies like the animals. No. Take the Message to the peoples of this land; wake them up; tell them how they have gone out of the right way.

If it ever occurs to the Western people how wrong and perverted is their outlook on life, they go to the other extreme. They turn towards Hippie-ism, Hindu asceticism and renunciation. A large bathing festival, called Kumbh, is held every year at Allahabad, in India. If you go to it, you will find educated Americans roaming about like stray cattle, or, rather fanatics. This civilisation has developed indigestion. They have imbibed the wine of culture so excessively that they have begun to vomit. They are seeking satisfaction by descending to the level of the beasts, by rejecting the favours and blessings of God, and by running away

from the realities of life. Would to God that our Islamic countries were capable of showing the correct path to the Americans and speaking to them in a confident, self-assured manner. But alas, not one of them is in that position. The result is that when the Americans get disgusted with their own way of life, they go to the Himalayas and use narcotics to produce an unreal feeling of peace and serenity. We, the Muslims, could tend guidance to them if we possessed the capability.

Where are Muslims ?

Brothers and sisters, you are not here merely to earn and spend. This any community can do. You are here to earn according to your need, but you must, also, know your station and present before the Americans a new design of life. You should give the Azan which may stir their minds and offer Namaz so that they may see and ponder over it. Lead a clean life in order that a revulsion is created in them for their own degenerate ways of living, practice moderation so that a realisation may dawn on them of the foulness of sensuality and excessive self-indulgence, and freeing yourselves from the ruthless domination of the machines, live in a cool, calm and collected manner in order that they may know where peace is. Rediscover the world that lies within you and develop the spirituality which might be felt by those who came into contact with you. I wish that devout bondmen of the Lord, men with an illumined heart, came to live here and told these people who are disgusted with life that Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest. (XIII : 28).

Today, only the Muslims can give this message, but where are they? Has any Muslim country or community the courage to tell the Americans that in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest? They no longer believe in it themselves. How can they convey the message of Divine Unity to others who have themselves lost faith in the power and efficacy of Namaz, in the truth and veracity of the Kalima, in the con-

trol and authority of God over gain and loss, and in the pre-ordination of good and evil, and made the Americans the great provider of the daily bread? How can they tell them that there is no Giver of Sustenance save Allah?

First, try to produce Faith within yourselves, observe Namaz and spend some time everyday in meditation; produce the warmth that has been destroyed by the smoke of the factories, refresh your soul, set right the aim of your life, read the Quran daily, study the life of the Prophet and seek light from it, and, then, convey the message of the Religion of Nature to the Americans.

Only Islam is the Religion of Nature

Islam, alone, is the religion which does not frown upon human nature, but declares it to be essentially pure and flawless.

God had given a clean state to man, a guiltless nature and an inclination towards goodness; we have debased it. Man is, by nature, upright. Left to his natural instincts, he will follow the correct path. First, realise these truths, produce them within yourselves, in your hearts as well as in your minds, and, then, place them before the Americans. You are the people of Apostleship, a community with a purpose, and the bearers of the Message. It does not become you to live like two-legged animals, filling your stomachs and procreating.

Discover man

These are some of my impressions. I have spoken to you from the heart. I have seen everything in America, but man. If I have found one here, it is among you. It is not that I am unacquainted with America or the Americans. I have met them in literature, on the T.V., and over the radio. They are not strangers to me.

Find out the man who is the Vicegerent of God and for whom the world has been created and in whose breast beats the heart which is more precious than, the entire universe. All the treasures of the world

and the achievements of science are nothing before an illumined heart. 'Produce that humanity in yourselves. You stay here is correct. It is not only justified, but also a worship and a great source of preaching and propagation of Faith. And if it is not that then I have great misgivings. As I have said on various occasions, if you do not take full care to safeguard your religious life and arrange for the religious education and upbringing of your children and make sure that your future generations remain true to Islam then your living in this country is a sin and you are in grave danger.

Lo ! As for those whom the angels take (in death) while they wrong themselves, (the angels) will ask: In what were ye engaged?

They will say : We were helpless in the land. (The angles) will say : Was not Allah's earth spacious that ye could have migrated therein ? (IV: 97).

For us it is legitimate to live only in a country where we can live with our distinctive qualities and observe our duties. If it is not possible in this environment or you feel you cannot carry out your religious obligations then it is not permissible for you to reside in this land. It is your duty to see that you lived here as Muslims, with all your characteristics. You should build your own society, and, also, assure that your children will remain Muslims after you, as Hazrat Yaqoob (Jacob) had done in regard to his progeny. It is set forth in the Quran:

or were you present when death came to Yaqoob, when he said unto his sons: What will you worship after me? They said: We shall worship thy God, the God of thy fathers, Ibrahim and Ismail (Ishmael) (II: 133).

It was then that Hazrat Yaqoob was satisfied and he departed from the world with a contented heart. It is the duty of all of us to make certain that our children grow up to be Muslims, otherwise, friends, it will be necessary to have a second look at your stay and to decide whether you should continue to live in this country or not.

You must live as Muslims

I highly appreciate the services of MSA and other institutions and individuals who strive in the cause of Faith, form study circles, circulate the Islamic literature and organise meetings. Whether they are Arabs or non-Arabs, they are a blessed lot. God will accept their services and raise them in ranks. Of foremost importance, however, is the stipulation that you made sure you would be able to live here as Muslims and not break up and lose your identity. Would you melt like wax before the heat of this civilisation? In that case, you would better go back to your native lands, no matter whether you earned only a fourth or a fiftieth part of what you do here. And if you are safe against it and there is no such danger then blessed is your stay in America. A new light may come to it through you, and the path may be opened for Islam.

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is impossible to see what it hides. The gap, between being outside and looking in, and being inside and looking out, explains in part the void in the understanding of Islam. An outsider may see Islam as restricting Muslims. In side, however, there is peace, freedom, and joy, which those who experience it have never known before. Practicing Muslims, whether those born in Muslim families or those returned to Islam, choose Islam rather than the illusory freedom of secular life. If it oppresses women, why are so many well-educated young women in Europe, America, Japan, Australia, indeed all over the world, abandoning "liberty" and "independence" and embracing Islam?

A person blinded by prejudice may not see it, but a woman in hijab is as brightly beautiful as an angle, full of self-confidence, serenity, and dignity. No signs of oppression scar her face. "For indeed it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts within the bosoms, that grow blind," says the Qur'an (Al-Hajj 22:46). How else can we explain the great gap in understanding between us and such people?

Tafweez

The Cure for Depression

by *Hazrat Moulana Yunus Patel Db*

Part 1: Introduction

Depression, it seems, has become synonymous with living in a society overrun with innumerable problems. It is an ailment which has unfortunately reached epidemic proportions. In the search for a solution, we sink deeper and deeper into the abyss of depression. Hardly a day passes, without some person complaining about his failures or of the acute depression that he is suffering, due to various factors. What I wish to discuss very briefly is Tafweez. If we learn Tafweez, then we have indeed found the antidote for depression. We have to clearly understand, that we cannot escape the decisions of Allah Ta'ala with regard to any matter in our lives. Whatever Allah Ta'ala has decided will happen, no matter how much we may wish otherwise. Our anxieties, depression and worries are all created because we first make the decisions and then expect Allah Ta'ala to conform; whereas what we plan and decide is subject to Allah Ta'ala's confirmation.

Advice of a Sheikh

One Mureed, after having spent many years in the company of Sheikh Abdul Qader Jailani (R.A.), requested some parting advice before taking leave from his Sheikh. Sheikh Abdul Qader Jailani (R.A.) told him: "Do not claim Divinity and do not claim Nabuwwat (Prophethood)." The Mureed asked: "Does Hazrat think that after all these years in Hazrat's company, I will make such a claim?"

Sheikh Abdul Qader Jailani (R.A.) then explained what he meant... It is imperative that we understand certain sayings

of the Auliya Allah, otherwise we may misunderstand and then start issuing Fatwas on the basis of our misinterpretation.

A Famous Anecdote

Once, in Delhi, a Wali of Allah was heard saying : " You are not my ALLAH and I am not your servant. So why should I listen to you; why should I obey you ?" Those who heard these statements regarded them as statements of Kufr. However, one sensible person asked the saint : "What do you mean ?". The saint answered : " My Nafs was inciting me to fulfil its desire. I thus addressed my Nafs and said : 'You are not my Allah and I am not your servant. I am a servant of Allah so why should I worship you?'"

Returning to the advice of Hazrat Abdul Qader Jilani (R.A.): He explained to his mureed that, "Do not claim to be Allah." means that do not wish that everything happens according to your will and desire. If you do so, then you are claiming to be Allah; whereas whatever Allah Ta'ala wills, will happen, for it is HE who makes the final decisions in all matters.

As far as we, human beings, are concerned, if we feel that our whims and fancies have to be fulfilled as is, then we are claiming to be Allah. "Do not claim Nabuwwat" means that no matter how much of piety and Taqwa you acquire with your Tarbiyah and Tazkia, don't make the claim that you are sinless and never in the wrong. This is the sifat (attribute) of the Ambiya (A.S.), for they are 'ma'soom' (sinless) and 'mahfooz' (protected from sin).

Therefore, no matter how much of time you have spent in the suhbat (company) and khidmat (service) of your Sheikh and no matter what high rank you attain to, do not think that you are like the Rasul of Allah and that no slip can occur in your life. Do not claim that you will never err because of the years spent with your Sheikh and because of the Wilayat conferred upon you. Being human beings we are prone to slip.

The Story of the Snake-catcher

Moulana Jalaluddin Rumi (R.A.) relates a story of a snake catcher who once went to the mountains. Due to the winter cold and heavy snow, many very big snakes lay motionless, as if they were dead. The snake-catcher picked up one of these seemingly lifeless snakes and took it to Baghdad, with the purpose of using it for a show. Showing it off, he made big claims as to how he had brilliantly captured the snake. However, when the sun began to shine and its warmth cloaked the snake, the coldness in its body disappeared. The signs of life were soon apparent and when the snake began to move, the snake-catcher and all those around, fled. Moulana Rumi (R.A.) then explains that our Nafs is like that snake. With Tazkia (purification), Mushaqqat (effort), our nafs (self) becomes frozen. It appears to be dead. But give it a little heat from the fire of sin and it will bite again. A little exposure to some past sins and the nafs swings back to life.

We should not think that we have killed our nafs and thus become unmindful. Yes, with some mujahadah (striving), suhbat (company) of the Sheikh, tilawat (recitation) of the Qur'aan Sharif, Zikrullah, following Deen and Shariah and in building up that contact and love for Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah e , the nafs can be frozen. However, a little taste of sin revives the evil nafs. Hazrat Khwaja Azizul Hasan Majzoub (R.A.) says most aptly: " Have no trust in this nafs, O devout one! Even if it becomes an angel, remain distrustful of it. Look at the snake of your nafs. As soon as you are negligent here, it bites there." The point being discussed was: "Do not claim divinity." (i.e. that you are Allah) and that everything must happen according to your will and desire.

Depression

Let us now consider the various causes of depression to be found presently in our lives. These simple, little things, which if ignored and we adopt a little Tafweez, we will find our lives free of depression. To cite an example (and there are true incidents of this nature): A woman goes to a

certain family with a proposal for her son, considering her son to be the best person in the world. If the son, himself, goes, then he believes that there is no one like him as a prospective husband. He has everything : the qualities, degrees and character. He is handsome as well. Hence, mother and son believe that the moment a proposal is put forth, the girl's family will definitely accept, without any delay or further consideration. Thus, a decision has been made: If I propose, they are going to accept it. This family rejects the proposal. Immediately there is depression and enmity. The mother starts thinking about the reason as to why the proposal was turned down : "What is wrong with us ? ... Are we bad people ? ... Is my son a drug addict ? ... What is wrong with him ?". Because Tafweez is not adopted, such thoughts surface and depression seizes the person.

Tafweez in this case would have been that the person put forward the proposal and thereafter left the decision to Allah Ta'ala. If Allah Ta'ala had willed and put an acceptance into their hearts, then they would have accepted. Since everything was done correctly there is no need to be annoyed or upset. Rather believe that there must be some good ('khair') in that. If we can only learn and understand this that behind each and every decision made by Allah Ta'ala there is goodness and wisdom. It may appear that this person is very good but we can neither predict the future, nor can we foresee into the future. How many times have we heard of a person who was in the Masjid, in Zikr, etc. etc. but after some time the person suddenly changes? (Allah forbid. Allah protect us all.)

"There were so many who were good, who later in life became bad; And there were so many who were bad, Who later in life became 'Walis'"

Thus, we do not know what is to happen in the future. The knowledge of what is to occur in the future lies only in the knowledge of Allah Ta'ala.

Istikhara

In Istikhara, as well, we must not think that whatever we have been directed towards is going to be problem free. Take for example : A girl is proposed . She makes Istikhara. The Istikhara is positive. She feels satisfied, with an inclination to accept and she follows this inclination and accepts the proposal.

After some time, problems arise and the marriage breaks down. Such persons come back to us and say : "Moulana, when I made Istikhara and related the dream (or the feeling) that I had, then you told me that it is good and that I should proceed. Now why is it that the marriage didn't last?" Istikhara does not mean that the person will have a problem-free life. It means that at that time this was much better than perhaps marrying someone else. It was "the lesser of the two evils". The problems being experienced presently could have been worse had she married another person. It could also mean that at the time of Istikhara, this was good, but then again, this is no guarantee that the marriage will be successful, if after the Istikhara, the person leads any kind of life, indulges in any Haraam he or she wishes to and displeases Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah(Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)

It does not give a license to both, husband and wife, to watch plenty of filth on Television, read any sort of literature, neglect Salaah and then ignorantly and foolishly say : " We made Istikhara, therefore it must work out." ... It does not work like that. So, perhaps, that Istikhara meant that that was 'better than', probably another person she would have married. Here again arises Tafweez : If the person made Tadbeer i.e. made use of the means that Allah Ta'ala has created, but after doing so, the marriage fails, then she adopts Tafweez; accepting that this is the will of Allah Ta'ala, and He knew before hand that this is how the marriage would end.

She knows that both, she and her husband, did not purposely do those things which were contrary to Shariah or against the normal effort that a person should put

in. They tried to the best of their ability but it failed ... now this is Tafweez : " Whatever Allah Ta'ala is happy with, then I too am happy with that." This understanding immediately brings consolation and peace to the heart. The person's depression will disappear.

Taqdeer

A person had in mind that when a certain property or building comes onto the market, or comes under his control then, because of the ideal location, etc., business will thrive and he will be successful. The person bids but someone else is successful and the property is gone. If this person has Tafweez then he will think : I did what was in my capacity to do but it was not in my Taqdeer. It was written in the Taqdeer of the other person, thus he got it. I must search for something else. Allah Ta'ala does not provide rizq (sustenance) through one business house in the world. It is not that I would have succeeded and received my sustenance and livelihood through only that. The effort, which needs to be made, must then be made. What transpires thereafter is Taqdeer. Rasulallah(sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has said : "Strive to acquire what is beneficial for you; seek the aid of Allah; do not lose courage and if a setback overtakes you, do not say : 'If I had done this then it would have happened like this (i.e. not what had happened).' Instead say : 'Allah has ordained this. Whatever He has willed, has happened.'"

Failure

If a person fails after having made the correct effort, there is no need to resort to alcohol, drugs and suicide. Many students succumb to such drastic measures. Some students work and study extremely hard but fail. Due to failure, they sink into such depression that they feel they have to take or inject themselves with drugs, tranquilizers, etc. for sleep. Why ? Because they failed. If a person did not make Tadbeer, did not make a serious and concerted effort and thereafter fails, then he must

blame himself. However, generally, we do make a reasonable effort but sometimes still meet with failure. For example : A person is fit and healthy when he started something but later becomes sick and is unable to complete what he undertook. Tafweez is handing our matters over to Allah Ta'ala, trusting Him, placing our matters before Him and believing that in whatever Allah Ta'ala has decided, there is goodness. Outwardly, it may appear as if there is some problem that we are faced with, but great wisdom lies in the decisions of Allah.

Taking Stock

Dear sincere Muslim, Dear follower and true lover of Rasulallah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam):

While the sportmania has gripped the world, sit back briefly and ask yourself the following questions:

1. Am I also overwhelmed by all the media hype about a bunch of people kicking a ball around? (If yes, it means the propaganda machine has found another victim.)

2. Have I ever missed any salaah, or missed performing it with Jama'ah in the Musjid, due to sports? (If yes, then sports is your terrible enemy since it is taking you on the path of Allah Ta'ala's wrath!)

3. Do I know more about kaafir sports stars than what I know about Rasulallah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam)? (If yes, ... no words can describe something so ghastly. Stop! For Allah's sake stop ... Stop and make amends, before your heart stops and it is too late.)

4. Since most people have been caught up in this insane frenzy, will I also blindly follow the hordes irrespective of what effect it has on my Imaan? Or do I have the courage of my convictions to say "Enough is enough!?" (Answer that with the Imaan in your heart!)

Hair Transplant Surgery

Mohammad Ashhad bin Said

Medically speaking

Hair transplantation is a surgical technique that involves moving skin containing hair follicles from one part of the body (the donor site) to bald or balding parts (the recipient site). It is primarily used to treat male pattern baldness, whereby grafts containing hair follicles that are genetically resistant to balding are transplanted to bald scalp.

Since hair naturally grows in follicles that contain groupings of 1 to 4 hairs, today's most advanced techniques transplant these natural occurring 1 – 4 hair "follicular units" in their natural groupings. Thus modern hair transplantation can achieve a natural appearance by mimicking nature hair for hair. This recent hair transplant procedure is called "Follicular Unit Transplantation."

The loss of hair is a problem that dates far back in time- as far as 3500 BC where legendary figures like Julius Caesar struggled with hair fixations.

According to studies 60-70% of men struggle with baldness and hair loss, while a much smaller proportion of women have the same problem.

Scientists are still researching and trying to find the exact causes of hair loss, but the most general (and proven) are caused by hereditary factors. Unfortunately, this does not mean that if ones parents aren't bald that baldness won't happen. According to studies, this is due to spontaneous mutation which happens when genetic information changes at conception. Other causes of hair loss can be due to any traumatic events, surgery, radiation, drugs and diseases.

The permanent hair restoration or hair loss treatment is a surgical hair transplant procedure. The latest advances in hair transplant surgery have made this procedure far more appealing thanks to the far

less artificial results which can now be anticipated.

The Micrograft Hair Transplant is the result of the latest developments in this field. This technique uses smaller hair grafts in greater numbers, resulting in an attractive natural look.

Just to give clients an idea what exactly this hair transplant process entails: A thin strip of hair, attached to the skin, is taken from the 'donor' area - usually the back or sides of the patient's own head. This is repeated until the required number of hair grafts has been harvested. In the second step of the procedure, the surgeon makes a number of tiny incisions - one per hair graft - into the bald area and transplants the grafts into these.

The length of the procedure varies depending on the size of the area to be treated - anywhere from 2 to 7 hours!

DO YOU REALLY NEED A HAIR TRANSPLANT?

Islam prohibits us from unnecessarily interfering or tampering with our bodies. This falls under the forbidden category of mutilation or distortion of Allah's creation, which has been spoken of as a project Shaytaan is committed to engaging human-kind in.

Examples of such tampering and interference are face lift, changing the colour of our skin through surgery, likewise, and adding a cluster of false hair to one's hair. The Prophet (Sallallaahu 'alayhi Wasalam):

"Allah curses women who patch up (their natural) hair with another patch of hair or women who receive such work!"

[Recorded in Sahih Bukhari]

Generally it is understood that hair transplantation is the redistribution of your naturally growing hair. Hair follicles growing in areas of greater density at the back of the

head are transplanted to areas that are bald. If balding is regarded as a defect, then this method of transplant will be permissible.

The permissibility is because this comes under the heading of restoring that which Allah has created, or correcting a fault; it does not come under the heading of cosmetic procedures or adding to what Allah Ta'ala has created, rather it is restoring something that is lacking or removing a fault.

Hair transplantation by means of one's own natural hair as well as artificial hair is considered permissible. However, this should be restricted to cases of necessity when a person suffers real psychological or social pains. We would like to stress an important point here, which is related to the fact that the door of permissibility in such area cannot be left wide open.

Having said this, however, it is important to state that Islam is not at all opposed to resorting to treatments or medications in order to enhance Allah's creation without in any way altering or mutilating it. Hair transplantation of one's own natural hair in such a way that it would grow and take roots on one's head is also considered permissible.

It is also permissible to resort to treatments or medications that help natural growth of hair just as we are allowed to take medications in order to enhance our eye sight or physical stamina, etc."

There have been reports from some patients who have not found the transplant successful. It is therefore advisable if patients consult an experienced dermatologist or hair specialist and seek out alternative methods. One such alternative method is treating the hair [including the bald areas] with some type of hair-growing cream or ointment. This would be preferred to undergoing of transplant surgery.

And Allah Ta'ala Knows Best

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Saviours of Islamic Spirit

Sheikh-ul-Islam
Hafiz Ibn Taimiyah

Muslim World in the Seventh Century

Maulana Jalal-ud-din Rumi had sought to refute the excessive rationalism of the dialecticians which was permeated with the spirit of Greek Philosophy and excessive formalism. Rumi was, in fact, founder of a new school of scholasticism which was based on a greater sense of realism and profundity of thought than its earlier counterpart, dialectics, the dominant feature of which was employment of cold logical argumentation. Rumi's thought was grounded in the personal experiences of a sublimated soul, a purified heart and an illuminated self. He was not simply an erudite scholar of religion and a teacher of dialectics, but was also blessed with a keen intellect and an enlightened heart. He was disgusted by syllogism and vain disputation of the dialectics, when he was led by a God-moved soul, through prayer and penance and the grace of God, to the lofty heights of the certitude of knowledge. He soon realised that dialectics was more of an exercise in specious reasoning, an art of confounding one's adversary than propounding the truth. He, therefore, adopted another method of expounding the mysteries of mute reality and metaphysical truths which reposed trust in the intuitive experience, intimate and personal, for that could be felt deeply in the core of one's heart.

But, something more was needed to combat the evil effects of philosophy and dialectics. Theological philosophy, too, delved into the secrets of imperceptible realities and freely discussed the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being. Islam had not left man groping in the gloom of uncertainty in so far as the postulates of faith are

concerned; instead, it had expounded these matters in a much more lucid and easy manner intelligible to all and sundry. For every ethical theory shaping the behaviour of an individual or the culture of a society must be rooted in the philosophical conception of the relationship between man and Ultimate Reality; it had of necessity to be set forth by Islam quite clearly so that no further speculative effort was needed in that direction. The prophets alone, declared Islam, were the fount of knowledge in regard to the realities beyond the ken of human perception and the unverifiable, incomprehensible Ultimate Being; and, therefore, their teachings constituted the last word on a subject which could not be adequately comprehended by man's intellect. The philosophy had, for that reason, no right, no locus standi, to intrude in a matter of which it did not possess even rudimentary knowledge—the basic premises from which it could infer the logical conclusions drawn by it. But the questions which philosophy sought to discuss did not simply admit any analysis or speculation, nor were the philosophers capable of undertaking the task; but, curiously enough, philosophy considered it prudent to meddle with them, trying to explain and elucidate and even to bring in its verdict on them. The constant aim of its endeavour was to trace every question down to its source and discover the general principles underlying every metaphysical phenomenon as if it were an organic matter capable of being analysed in a laboratory.

Dialectics came into existence to answer the questions raised by philosophy. But, it soon absorbed the spirit of its adversary and itself turned into a theological philosophy, discussing those very questions, employing the same claim of reasoning and trying, like philosophy, to ascertain the nature and attributes of the Divine Being through the speculative categories of reasoning. In fine, dialectics, too, turned a deaf ear to the teaching, of the prophets of God, and, placing reliance on limited human intellect, tried to explain the inexplicable in terms of Greek metaphysical terminology

borrowed from philosophy. All this vain effort resulted in complication and concealment of the truth behind a veil of words and phrases although the nature and attributes of Divinity could have been explained in a simple, direct and intelligible manner to the satisfaction of all minds, and capable of enkindling everyone's heart. The task could have indeed been accomplished in the light of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, but the dialecticians preferred to compile voluminous treatises on philosophic interpretation of the simple tenets of faith which betrayed how far it was influenced by Greek thought even though it claimed to refute the latter. This was a development opposed to the spirit of the teachings of the Qur'an and the Tradition, and, accordingly, a sizable section of the Muslims never agreed with the views put forth by the dialecticians. Still, a savant of religious sciences with a penetrating intellect, extensive knowledge and firm conviction in the revealed truth was needed at that time for expounding the creed and its doctrines in a faithful yet convincing manner.

Islam was, at that time, confronted with several other internal and external dangers. A new evangelical movement was taking shape amongst the Christians which sought to censure Islam and set up Christianity as the only saving principle for humanity. The incessant attacks by the Crusaders on Palestine along with the presence of a large number of Christians of European origin in Syria and Cyprus had emboldened them to criticize the prophethood of Mohammad, to compose works on the truthfulness of Christianity and to invite the Muslims to debate and argumentation.

Another danger, rather more severe and hurtful to Islam was that posed by a so-called Muslim sect known as Batinites. It had a peculiar creed interwoven from the texture of Magian dogma, Platonic concepts and dangerous political ambitions, and its followers like Israelites, Assassins, Druzes and Nusayris were always too willing to help the enemies of the Muslims. Not unoften were foreign aggressions the result of con-

spiracies hatched by the Batinites, They hid with the crusaders when the latter attacked Syria and Palestine and were awarded with offices of dignity and confidence when the Christians established themselves in Syria. Throughout the reign of Zengi and Ayyubid dynasties the Batinites continued to conspire against the then Muslim sovereigns and, when the Tartar hordes invaded the Muslim lands, they joined hands with them to make common cause against Islam. Besides this, by posing themselves as a sect of the Muslims, they could easily sow the seeds of intellectual dissension and spread irreligiousness and apostasy among the simple-minded folk, in order, therefore, to warn the Muslims from being further duped by the Batinites and also to punish them for the abominable crimes already committed by them, it was necessary to expose their nefarious activities and blasphemous beliefs.

Apart from these, free intercourse with non-Muslims, certain external influences and the indolence of the then doctors of religion had all combined to introduce among Muslims certain impious ideas running counter to the concept of Unity and over-lordship of God Almighty Like the Jews and Christians, the Muslims had begun to glorify their saints and elevated souls as those nearer to God exercising some of the Divine functions. Acting on the pagan principle—We worship them only that they may bring us near unto Allah—even the educated saw no harm in supplicating to the departed souls and martyrs or resorted to practices worshipful in manners and gestures even though the Prophet of Islam had strictly forbidden his followers to indulge in such practices. The careless and unguarded believer often yielded to the temptation of participating in feasts and festivals of the non-Muslim zimmis and adopted their manners and customs which wore the appearance of harmless pleasure or innocent entertainment. The polytheistic beliefs and customs of the non-Muslims being closely interwoven with every circumstance of their private and public life, the untutored minds

of the Muslim laity were artfully let to withdraw their adoration from the Creator to the abominable associates of divinity. In order to warn the Muslims against these impious ideas and practice which were destructive of the religious value of orthodox Islam, it was necessary to start a reformative movement which could maintain the purity of faith by uprooting irreligious, rituals and practices.

On the other side, certain indiscreet schools of mysticism in Islam had, for reasons intellectual as well as those pertaining to their development, absorbed neo-Platonic and Hindu doctrine of initiation in divine mysteries. These mystical-ascetic attitudes had been so mixed up with the Islamic beliefs and doctrines that it had become difficult to distinguish one from the other. The popular thought of the Muslim mystics showed visible traces of neo-Platonic gnosticism and Hindu pantheism, incarnation and union, cult of esoteric meanings and hidden realities and animonian practices. Although some of the eminent leaders of mystic thought had vehemently protested against these doctrines, still, a large part of the sufis insisted on them and quite a few of them even resorted to wonder-working and magic spells. A misguided sect of the Rifa'iyyah mystic order which was quite popular in the seventh and the eighth century of the Islamic era, had taken to divination, charms and wonder-working as a spiritual instrument. Thus, the sufis, with their tremendous influence on the uneducated masses, were spreading ideas completely divorced from the Qur'anic system of thought.

In the intellectual circles, too, rigidity and stagnation had overtaken the theologians who considered it a grievous sin to deviate from the corpus of their own juristic schools. In their disputes over theological differences, they tried to interpret the canon in accordance with their own cherished views instead of subordinating their interpretations to the supremacy of their Qur'an and the Sunnah. The doors of legislative process which imparts dynamism to the le-

gal system had almost been closed. The demands of the changing social problems required study of the entire corpus of legal doctrines of the earlier legists and thinkers, an insight into the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, academic research and intellectual effort in the light of accepted juristical norms but the rigidity of approach on the part of the then theologians had so numbed their intellectual capabilities that nobody dared to reinterpret the Law for keeping it abreast of the changing conditions. The legal system of Islam had thus lost its originality and dynamism, thanks to the erroneous view that nothing could now be added to the corpus juris of the Shari'ah already formulated by the earlier teachers.

These were, broadly, the disruptive forces which had to be counteracted by a systematic effort before any movement of Islamic renaissance could be started. In its conflict with the speculative reasoning applied by the dialecticians, Islam required a doctor of religion deeply versed in all the categories of philosophy and dialectics, their points of difference and their growth and development. For the polemical disputes raised by the Christians, a man of vast learning fully acquainted with Christianity as well as other religions, especially their original scriptures and the amendments and interpolations to which these had been subjected from time to time, was needed who could undertake a comparative study of the different religions. Similarly, the Batinite heresy could be combated only by a man who was fully conversant with the beliefs and dogmas of all the Batinite sects. The reform needed for eradication of external influences, rites and customs and such other un-Islamic practices as saint-worship required a doctor of faith not only animated by zeal for Islam and abhorrence of polytheistic cults but also capable of distinguishing clearly Islam from un-Islam and discerning even the faint traces of the pagan past. He had had to learn the lesson of unalloyed Tawhid directly from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and follow in the foot-steps of the companions of the holy Prophet rejecting all

those prevalent practices of his time which cut across the true concept of the Oneness of God. The revitalisation of the intellectual effort required a master-mind—a theologian, a Traditionist and a legist, all combined into one—a man who had mastered the entire theological literature, had such a command over the Qur'an and the Traditions that anything not acceptable to him could easily be rejected as untrustworthy; was deeply-versed in the lexicography, grammar and usage of the Arabic language; had an encyclopaedic knowledge of all the juristic schools; had a developed sense of interpreting the rules of the Shan'ah and drawing analogical inferences from the teachings and practices of the earlier masters; and, lastly, he had to have been endowed with an incisive intellect and prodigious retentive memory like the Traditionists of the earlier times bearing testimony to what was thus predicted by the Prophet of Islam: "The parable of my people is that of rain: nobody knows whether its beginning is better or its last."

Thus the man of the hour was to have not only mastered all the religious and secular sciences but he was also to possess all the ennobling qualities of mind and heart, a penetrating intellect, logical thinking, mental grasp, breadth of vision and encyclopedic knowledge so that he could be held in the highest esteem as an illustrious scholar and master by his contemporaries. He had also to be a man of spirits so that he could willingly put his life at stake for what he deemed to be right. If, on the one hand, religious and political opponents of Batinites were being eliminated by terrorism and murder, any effort to oppose the popular sufi orders was, on the other, likely to earn the displeasure of the masses as well as the ruling elite. Similarly, the slightest deviation from the views held by earlier legists was sure to be condemned as impious and irreligious inviting severe condemnation by the then doctors of religion. Thus, the man aiming at the reconstruction of the religious life and thought of the then Muslim society had

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Patience is Rewarded

Ma'mar ibn Taa'us narrates from his father who said, "A man who had four sons became quite ill. One of the sons said to the others, 'Either you care for our father during his illness and you will then not receive anything from his inheritance or I will care for him and I will not receive anything from his inheritance.'

They replied, "You may take care of him and you will then not receive anything from his estate."

The son then saw to the father until the father passed away. He was not given anything from the inheritance as agreed.

One night his father came to him in a dream and he was told to go to a certain place where he would find a hundred dinaars. He asked whether the money had barakah. He was told that it had no barakah. In the morning he related the dream to his wife who said, "Take the money. The barakah of the money would manifest in such a way that we would be able to use it to clothe ourselves and purchase things to allow us to live." The husband, however, did not accept her advice.

The next night he had the same dream. He was told to go to a certain place where he would find ten dinaars. Upon questioning he was again told that the money did not have barakah. In the morning he related the dream to his wife who again advised him to take the money. He again refused.

On the third night again he was told to proceed to a place where he would find one dinar. This time, however, he was told that it had barakah. In the morning he went to the place he had been directed to and took the dinar. At the market he met a man selling two fish for a dinar. He bought the fish and came home. When he cut open the fish he found a pearl in the stomach of each of the two fish. Nobody had ever seen the like of the pearls.

Now, the king of the time wanted to

purchase a pearl. The type he was looking for could only be found with this man. He sold one of the pearls to the king for thirty mule-loads of gold. When the king saw the pearl he remarked, "Search for another similar pearl as this pearl does not look right on its own. Even if you have to pay double its price, find it!"

The king's men again came to the man and asked, "Do you have another like it? We are prepared to pay you double the amount we paid you for the first one."

The man asked in amazement, "Will you really?"

"Yes, they answered."

He handed them the pearl and they paid him the agreed sum. (Hilyatul Awliya)

Lessons

1. A little bit of patience in acquiring halaal wealth goes a long way. Wise is that person who realises that little wealth that has barakah is far better than a large quantity without barakah. The philosophy of 'making a quick buck' without any consideration of the Shar'i validity is short-sighted and ruinous in the long term.

2. Taking care of parents is a fundamental teaching of Islam and brings immense rewards.

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to have the courage to set his face against the then governments and the chiefs of State, the misguided ulama and the popular opinion of the time, and be willing to fight relentlessly on all fronts for the restoration of the true faith. Such was the man needed by the world of Islam in the eighth century after Hijrah, and it did find him in the person of Sheikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah, who, by his single-minded devotion and idealism yoked with a strong practical sense, erudite scholarship and dauntless courage rescued the world of Islam from the rut of intellectual lethargy and demoralization.

The Aadaab of Eating

While eating do not mention such things which nauseate or are repugnant to others. People of delicate disposition are disgusted with such behaviour.

Do not spit or clean your nose in close proximity of people eating.

When there is the need to bring more food to the guest, do not remove the utensil, but bring it in another utensil.

Before and after eating, wash the hands.

Recite Bismillaah when commencing to eat.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَىٰ بَرَكَاتِهِ

Eat and drink with your right hand.

Eat in humility. Do not lean against something in the style of proud people when eating.

All should eat together. There is more barakah in this way. (However, it is permissible to eat alone as well.)

Eat from in front of you. However, if in the tray or utensil there is a variety of things, then you may eat from any side.

If the food is less and the people present are many, then do not eat to satiation.

When foods such as sweetmeats, grapes, dates, etc., are served, take one at a time. Do not take two at a time. Doing so displays greed and lack of culture.

Where there is no need to use all fingers, eat with three fingers.

After having eaten, lick off the food from the fingers.

If a morsel of food drops from the hand, pick it up, clean it and eat it. Do not throw it away on account of pride. Do not think that it is against your dignity to do so. Food is the bounty of Allah. Value it and appreciate it.

رأفة الباري

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