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EDITORIAL

All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted

Islam is not a religion of Equality, but of Justice

There are some people who speak of equality instead of justice, and this is a mistake. We should not say equality, because equality implies no differentiation between the two. Because of this unjust call for equality, they ask, "What is the difference between male and female?" So they have made men similar to women. The communists said, "What difference is there between the ruler and the subject? No one has any authority over anyone else." Not even the father over his son?! So they said the father has no authority over his son and so on. Instead, if we say justice, which means giving each one what he or she is entitled, this misunderstanding no longer applies, and the word used is correct. Allah does not say in the Quran that He enjoins equality. He said (interpretation of the meaning):

"Verily, Allah enjoins Al 'Adl (i.e. justice)" [16:90]

"And that when you judge between men, you judge with justice." [4:58]

Those who say that Islam is the religion of equality are lying against Islam. Rather Islam is the religion of justice, which means treating equally those who are equal and differentiating between those who are differ-

ent. No one who knows the religion of Islam would say that it is the religion of equality. Rather what shows you that this principle is false is the fact that most of what is mentioned in the Quran denies equality, as in the following verses:

"Say: Are those who know equal to those who know not?" [39:9]

"Say: Is the blind equal to the one who sees? Or darkness equal to light?" [13:16]

"Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the conquering (of Makkah, with those among you who did so later." [57:10]

"Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame), and those who strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives." [4:95]

Not one single letter in the Quran enjoins equality, rather it enjoins justice. You will also find that the word justice is acceptable to people, for I feel that if I am better than this man in terms of knowledge, or wealth, or piety, or in doing good, I would not like for him to be equal to me. Everyone knows that it is unacceptable if we say that the male is equal to the female.

Islam—The Religion of Justice

Justice is the end for which Allah sent the Messengers and revealed the Books; Allah the Almighty said:

“Indeed We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance (justice) that mankind may keep up justice” (al-Hadid:25)

Question Answer

Question.

A woman prays in her house, having many young children and no family members or servants to assist her. She feels that her prayers are always deficient or unacceptable as a result of her lack of concentration due to the children's constant activities. What is your advice to her?

Answer.

This woman, so long as she offers the prayer with its prescribed manner, after being purified (having Wudu), reciting (Surah Al-Fatihah), standing, bowing, raising up, prostrating, sitting, prostrating again, with Tuma'ninah (resting fully in each position), then her prayer is valid insha'Allah.

And she should feel free of any blame by offering this prayer, by Allah's Permission. She (also) gets the reward for all of her work in the house and taking care of her children.

One time the Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was leading the people in prayer in the Masjid, and he shortened the prayer. So they said, "O Messenger of Allah! You have prayed in a way that we have not seen from you before!" or a phrase similar to this.

He replied (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam): "I heard the crying of a child, and I supposed that his mother was praying with us, so I wanted to free his mother for him." [Ahmad]

So here the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), praying one of the obligatory prayers in congregation, shortened the prayer, showing concern for this child. So in this there is evidence to support that if a woman was to shorten her

(recitation in her) prayer due to her responsibilities toward her house or her child, while she has no assistance, then there is no harm in that, so long as she offered her prayer in the manner ordained in the Shari'ah. And Allah, the Mighty and Exalted, says: So fear Allah to the best of your ability. [Noble Quran 64:16]

And the Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "...And when I have ordered you with something, then do as much of it as you are able." [Al-Bukhari]

Therefore she offers the prayer to the best of her ability, fulfilling her duty and thus freeing herself from any blame. In addition, she will be rewarded by Allah, the Glorified and Exalted, for being a good wife to her husband, taking care of the family, and staying on top of all her responsibilities. By these things she reaps great rewards and obtains lofty virtues. And by these things, her reward is with Allah, the Glorified and Exalted.

She will also have a magnificent reward from Allah, the Glorified and Exalted, for all her patience and forbearance, (as Allah says): Verily those who persevere will receive their reward without measure. [Noble Quran 39:10]

Question.

If a person forbids someone from an evil, the one who is being forbidden from doing this evil says, "You do not know what is in my heart," or they say "Who are you that you judge me?" So what do you say in regards to this?

Answer.

In the name of Allah, all praises are for Allah, and may peace and salutations be

upon the one [Muhammad] sent as a mercy to all of mankind and upon his family and all of his companions.

As to proceed: So before answering this question I would like to mention one thing related to your previous statement when you said: "The Shaykh Ahmad ibn 'Umar Baazmool." I am – may Allah reward you – a student of knowledge, and I am not amongst the ranks of the major scholars. However, this is from your good thoughts (concerning me); and related to what was said, I would like that our Salafi brothers in Makkah, America and everywhere else, learn the affair of putting people in their proper places. They should not treat the students of knowledge as if they were on the level of the scholars. So I am a student of knowledge, and I ask Allah – the Mighty and Majestic – to aid me in answering that which you are asking.

So I say – may Allah bless you – this person who says this type of thing, we say to him that you are upon error, because the Prophet – (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) – said: "Whoever from amongst you sees an evil then let him change it with his hands, if he is unable then with his tongue and if he is unable then with his heart, and that is the lowest of faith." [Muslim]

The point we are referring to in this hadeeth is the statement of the Prophet – (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam): "Whoever sees." So the evil which is seen with the eyes has to be stopped with the hand, and this is if a person has an authority and he has the ability to do so. If he is not able to stop it with his hand, he does it with his tongue. So he should say to the person, "this is an error," "this is haraam," "this is in opposition to the truth," etc. This is the first thing.

The second thing is that the statement of this person "You don't know what is in my heart," we say just as Hasan al Basree – (RA) – said: "Eemaan (faith) is not outer decoration, nor mere hope. Rather it is what settles in the heart and what is affirmed by actions. Whoever spoke good and did righteous actions, it will be accepted from him. But whoever spoke good but did wicked actions, it will not be accepted from him."

So if you have within you something which is good, but your action is erroneous, it is a must that this error be spoken against.

Then, thirdly, we say to these individuals: we were not commanded to look into what is in the hearts of the people. We were not commanded to ask the people, is this or that in your heart? However, the actual error that was done is rejected and clarified.

The final matter is that we remind you of the hadeeth of the Prophet – (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) – in which he said: "Verily the most detested speech to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, is that a man says to another man 'fear Allah,' so the (other) man says: 'Leave me alone!'"

[In another narration, he says: "Worry about your own self."

That which is meant by this statement is that he is asking the person not to disapprove of what he does. So I fear that this statement (mentioned in the question) falls under this hadeeth, thus it will be trying to reject those who command the good and forbid the evil. And it is upon the Muslim who fears Allah, if an evil that he committed is refuted, that he remembers and takes admonition, and that he leaves this evil, and completely stop.

Hadhrat `Aisha (RA) reports that Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said, "Whoever seeks the pleasure of Allah (by acting on what is correct) though he may be displeasing people, Allah will save him from their trouble. And whoever looks for the pleasure of people (By doing what they want) whereas Allah is displeased with him, Allah will assign him to them"

Lesson From The Qur'an

Commentary: Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

Sura Baqarah—Verse 274-2

الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقْوَمُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي
يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ط ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا
الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا ط
فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ
وَامْرَأَةٌ إِلَى اللَّهِ ط وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ
فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ٢٧٥ يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُرْبِي الصَّدَقَاتِ ط
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ ٢٧٦

Those who take ribā (usury or interest) will not stand but as stands the one whom the demon has driven crazy by his touch. That is because they have said: "Sale is but like ribā.", while Allah has permitted sale, and prohibited ribā. So, whoever receives an advice from his Lord and desists (from indulging in ribā), then what has passed is allowed for him, and his matter is up to Allah. As for the ones who revert back, those are the people of Fire. There they will remain forever. [2:275]. Allah destroys ribā and nourishes charities, and Allah does not like any sinful disbeliever. [2:276]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ط وَلَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ٢٧٦ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ٢٧٧ فَإِنْ
لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ط وَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ

فَلَكُمْ زُرُوسٌ أَمْوَالِكُمْ ٢٧٧ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ ٢٧٨
وَإِنْ كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَى مَيْسَرَةٍ ط وَأَنْ تَصَدَّقُوا
خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ٢٨٠ وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ
فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَبَّ تَوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا
يُظْلَمُونَ ٢٨١

Surely those who believe and do good deeds, and establish Salāh (prayer) and pay Zakāh will have their reward with their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve. [2:277] O you who believe, fear Allah and give up what still remains of ribā, if you are believers. [2:278]. But if you do not (give it up), then listen to the declaration of war from Allah and His Messenger. However, if you repent, yours is your principal. Neither wrong, nor be wronged. [2:279]. If there is one in misery, then (the creditor should allow) deferment till (his) ease, and that you forgo it as alms is much better for you, if you really know. [2:280]. Be fearful of a day when you shall be returned to Allah, then every person shall be paid, in full, what he has earned, and they shall not be wronged. [2:281]

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدِينٍ إِلَى آجَلٍ مُسَمًّى
فَاكْتُبُوهُ ط وَلْيَكْتُب بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ وَلَا يَأْب
كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ ط وَلْيَمْلِكِ
الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ
شَيْئًا ط فَإِنْ كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ

لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يُبَيِّنَ لَهُ فَلَئِمِلَّ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ ط
 وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ ءَ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونَا
 رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَيْنِ مِمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ أَنْ
 تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى ط وَلَا يَأْبَ
 الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا ط وَلَا تَسْمُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ
 صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰ آجَلِهِ ط ذَلِكَمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
 وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً
 حَاضِرَةً تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا
 تَكْتُبُوهَا ط وَأَشْهِدُوا إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ ط وَلَا
 يُضَارَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ ط وَإِنْ تَفَعَّلُوا فَإِنَّهُ فُسُوقٌ
 بِكُمْ ط وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ط وَيَعْلَمُكُمْ اللَّهُ ط وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
 عَلِيمٌ ٢٨٢ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا
 فَرِهْنِ مَقْبُوضَةً ط فَإِنْ أَتَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ فَلَئِمِلَّ الَّذِي
 أُؤْتِمِنَ أَمَانَتَهُ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ ط وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا
 الشَّهَادَةَ ط وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ آثِمٌ قَلْبُهُ ط وَاللَّهُ بِمَا
 تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ٢٨٣ اللَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي
 الْأَرْضِ ط وَإِنْ تُبَدُّوهُمَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ
 يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ ط فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ
 يَشَاءُ ط وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٢٨٤

O you who believe, when you transact a debt payable at a specified time, put it in writing, and let a scribe write it between you with fairness. A scribe should not refuse to write as Allah has educated him. He, therefore, should write. The one who owes something should get it written, but he must fear Allah, his Lord, and he should not omit anything from it. If the one who owes is feeble-minded or weak or cannot dictate himself, then his guardian should dictate with fair-

ness. Have two witnesses from among your men, and if two men are not there, then one man and two women from those witnesses whom you like, so that if one of the two women errs, the other woman may remind her. The witnesses should not refuse when summoned. And do not be weary of writing it down, along with its due date, no matter whether the debt is small or large. That is more equitable in Allah's sight, and more supportive as evidence, and more likely to make you free of doubt. However, if it is a spot transaction you are effecting between yourselves, there is no sin on you, should you not write it. Have witnesses when you transact a sale. Neither a scribe should be made to suffer, nor a witness. If you do (something harmful to them), it is certainly a sin on your part, and fear Allah. Allah educates you, and Allah is All-Knowing in respect of everything.

[2:282] If you are on a journey, and find no scribe, then (you may have resort to holding something as) mortgage, taken into possession. However, if one of you trusts the other, then the one who has been trusted should fulfill his trust, and should fear Allah, his Lord. Do not conceal testimony. Whoever conceals it, his heart is surely, sinful. Allah is All-Aware of what you do. [2:283] To Allah belongs what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. If you disclose what is in your hearts or conceal it, Allah shall hold you accountable for it, then He will forgive whom He wills and punish whom He wills. Allah is powerful over everything. [2:284]

أَمَّنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ ط كُلُّ
 أَمَّنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ٢٨٤ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ
 أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ ٢٨٥ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ
 رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ٢٨٥

The Messenger has believed in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and the
 Cont'd on page 28

Lesson From Sahih al-Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

The Book of Ablution

the Prophet performing ablution like this of mine, and he said, 'If anyone performs ablution like that of mine and offers a two-rak'at prayer during which he does not think of anything else (not related to the present prayer) then his past sins will be forgiven. '

Chapter 28 : To rinse the mouth with water while performing Wudu.

Ibn Abbas and Abdullah bin Zayd (RA) have quoted it from Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Hadith No. 161

Comments

Imam Bukhari (RA) has got this chapter after the chapter of 'Istinshaaq' (cleaning of nose). From this the Ulema have inferred that Istinshaaq is more important, though 'madhmadah' (rinsing of mouth) is also important.

Chapter 29 : The washing of heels (during ablution).

Ibn Seereen used to wash the place under the ring during ablution.

Narrated Humran (RA)

"(the freed slave of 'Uthman bin 'Affan) I saw 'Uthman bin 'Affan asking (for a tumbler of water) to perform ablution (and when it was brought) he poured water from it over his hands and washed them thrice and then put his right hand in the water container and rinsed his mouth and washed his nose by putting water in it and then blowing it out. Then he washed his face thrice and (then) forearms up to the elbows thrice, then passed his wet hands over his head and then washed each foot thrice. After that 'Uthman said, "I saw

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Bukhari (RA) wants to say that not only mere washing of parts of body during Wudu is important but it is also important that not even a small portion remains dry. This is evident by the practice of Ibn Seereen who he used to make it sure that the part of the finger under the ring also gets washed with water.

Hadith No. 162

Narrated Muhammad Ibn Ziyad (RA)

"I heard Abu Huraira saying as he passed by us while the people were performing ablution from a utensil containing water, "Perform ablution perfectly and thoroughly for Abul-Qasim (the Prophet) said, 'Save your heels from the Hell-fire.' "

Comments

Abu Huraira (RA) used to stress people on the point that they should perform Wudu with perfection and also warned them against keeping their heels dry.

Chapter 30 : Washing the feet when one is putting on shoes and not to perform Masah over them.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Imam Bukhari (RA) is known for his habit to prove a thing by getting the proofs from different angles. Here he wants to prove that the feet are necessarily to be washed during Wudu irrespective of the fact whether one is having his shoes on or not.

Hadith No.163**Narrated 'Ubaid Ibn Juraij (RA)**

I asked 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, "O Abu 'Abdur-Rahman! I saw you doing four things which I never saw being done by anyone of your companions?" 'Abdullah bin 'Umar said, "What are those, O Ibn Juraij?" I said, "I never saw you touching any corner of the Ka'ba except these (two) facing south (Yemen) and I saw you wearing shoes made of tanned leather and dyeing your hair with Hinna; (a kind of dye). I also noticed that whenever you were in Makkah, the people assume Ihram on seeing the new moon crescent (1st of Dhul-Hijja) while you did not assume the Ihram)-- (Ihram is also called Ihlal which means 'Loud calling' because a Muhrim has to recite Talbiya aloud when assuming the state of Ihram)--till the 8th of Dhul-Hijja (Day of Tar-wiya). 'Abdullah replied, "Regarding the corners of Ka'ba, I never saw Allah's Apostle touching except those facing south (Yemen) and regarding the tanned leather shoes, no doubt I saw Allah's Apostle wearing non-hairy shoes and he used to perform ablution while wearing the shoes (i.e. wash his feet and then put on the shoes). So I love to wear similar shoes. And about the dyeing of hair with Hinna; no doubt I saw Allah's Apostle dyeing his hair with it and that is why I like to dye (my hair with it). Regarding Ihlal, I did not see Allah's Apostle assuming Ihlal till he set out for Hajj (on the 8th of Dhul-Hijja)."

Comments

Imam Bukhari (RA) has mentioned this Hadith in the chapters of Kitaab-ul-Libaas, Kitaab-ul-Haj etc. Here this Hadith is mentioned only for that part of it in which washing of feet by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) despite having his shoes on is quoted. Imam Bukhari (RA) has made it clear that Masah is not permissible on shoes.

Other points of this Hadith will be

discussed in their respective chapters, Insha Allah.

Chapter 31 : Starting Gusul or Wudu from right hand side.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Bukhari (RA) wants to convey that starting all the good actions from right hand side is liked by Shariah. Same is the case with Wudu and Gusul, that right hand side part should be washed first and then the left hand side.

Hadith No. 164

Narrated Um-'Atiya (RA)

that the Prophet at the time of washing his deceased daughter had said to them, "Start from the right side beginning with those parts which are washed in ablution."

Hadith No. 165

Narrated 'Aisha (RA)

"The Prophet used to like to start from the right side on wearing shoes, combing his hair and cleaning or washing himself and on doing anything else".

Comments

This Hadith is also mentioned in other chapters of Kitaab-us-Salaah, Kitaab-ul-Libaas etc.

Hadhrat Ayesha (RA) says that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) liked to start all the good actions from right hand side even putting on shoes and combing his hair etc.

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'Adi, the son of Hatim, the famous chief of the tribe of Tay, was still a Christian when he called upon the Prophet (S) in Madinah for the second time. He saw, on the one hand, the deference paid to the Prophet (S) by his devoted companions and, on the other, the preparations being made for the holy war. Unable to decide whether Muhammad (S) was a prophet or a king, he was still in two minds when he saw a slave girl coming to seek the Prophet's (S) advice in private. "Come on," he heard the Prophet (S) replying, "I'll go wherever you want." 'Adi at once saw that no king could be so modest and unassuming. He threw away the cross hanging from his neck and embraced Islam.

The instances just related are not mere fictions but actual facts. Only a character so comprehensive, so sweeping as to encompass the present and the future, the east and the west, and all the diverse situations of human life can provide light and guidance to all classes and groups of human beings. A great teacher is he who can illustrate right behavior in the fit of anger as well as on occasions demanding merciful charity; who can tell us how to be generous in adversity and brave and courageous in the state of helplessness; who can provide us with a practical example of being a man of the world as well as God-fearing; and, who can give us the glad tidings of both the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of Earth at one and the same time.

"The Salaah performed after using the Miswaak is seventy times more rewarding than the Salaah performed without using the Miswaak." (Musnad Ahmad)

Treating Depression

Islam's 1400 Years-Old Solution to Depression

Maulana Zulfiqar Ahmad Naqshbandi

Translated By: Maulana Imran Kajee

In the year 1985, a few friends organized and hosted a gathering in Washington to which many professional and talented prominent people were invited. Many ambassadors, P.HDs and medical doctors etc. were present. This humble servant delivered a lecture in English after which I, according to my common practice, made muraqabah (a form of zikr in which one remembers Allah in the heart without moving the tongue as is a common practice amongst many of the pious) for a little while and ended by making du'a

After the du'a, a man accompanied by four or five others came along to meet me. He was introduced as a Muslim doctor, a heart specialist who was one of the twenty most high-ranking doctors of the country. I was very pleased to learn that this Muslim had received such a high position in his field. After being introduced to him, he asked me, "What did you do when you lowered your head?" I replied, "Muraqabah (silent zikr)". "Where did you learn this from, Asia or Europe?" he enquired. I replied, "I have come here just recently. I learnt it from my elders and teachers in Asia". He then queried whether it was a proven practice in Islam, to which I replied in the affirmative.

Finally, after pondering for a short while, he remarked, "Islam is really a true religion!" I asked him to explain the reason for his sudden statement. He explained, "Over the last few years, there has been a huge rise in the number of people who are only able to sleep after taking sleeping pills.

As a result, the government was compelled to either permit the factories to increase the rate of production of such pills or to otherwise find a solution.

"They gathered the high-ranking heart specialists of the country, from amongst whom I was one, and formed a committee of such doctors. Our job was to research why people were falling into depression, tension, worry and anxiety in spite of being able to eat anything, drink anything, sleep anywhere, dance and sing, enjoy themselves in clubs, and fulfil every desire of theirs without any sort of restriction whatsoever. The government officially ordered all its departments to help us wherever necessary, since our work was for national benefit. All the super-computers, researches and documents belonging to different organizations as well as the national libraries were placed at our disposal.

"After extensive research and discussion, we decided to investigate and analyse which part of the human brain is connected to happiness and sadness and to discover what medically causes the difference between the two. For this we put some people who were always in a jovial mood on a brain scanning machine. The data of their brains were then digitized and fed into a super computer. We did a similar scan to some depressed patients and their brains' data was also fed to the computer. We then created a special programme on the computer which we assigned to check every brain cell of every

patient and pin-point the differences, after comparing the brain data. After testing a few thousand patients over two or three months, the computer managed to identify and pin-point the desired cell in the brain. When that cell gets heated and is charged up, a person feels tense, becomes moody and feels like not speaking to anyone, due to which we call him hot-headed. When this cell's charge cools down, is released and gets finished, the man becomes happy and begins to laugh and joke.

"After this research, we decided to do a counter-test. We put a person suffering from depression on a machine and artificially removed the charge from that tissue. He immediately began smiling and speaking as if he had no worries. We then put a person who was very jolly by nature on the machine and artificially injected the charge into his tissue at which he suddenly began fighting with us. In this manner, we carried out thousands of tests.

'When we submitted our report and research to the government, we were met with praises and congratulated for our efforts. However they reasoned that it is not feasible, nor possible to put the entire country on such machines. They thus asked us to find an alternative method by which the charge would cool down and die out. We concluded, after lengthy discussions and research on this second assignment, that a very worried and sad person feels much better after awakening from a few hours of sleep. Subsequently, we decided to find out why. We put a depressed man on the machine and, after letting him sleep for a while, noticed that the intensity of the cell's charge had decreased after sleeping when compared to its intensity before his sleeping. We realized that the charge decreases when the mind is given a chance to off-load and relax. We then looked for such an exercise whereby the mind is able to off-load and relax. A very

depressed person was brought before us, he was made to sit and was told to stop thinking and to visualize nothingness. After half an hour, we noticed that the intensity of the charge had drastically decreased. We did many tests of a similar nature and found the results quite satisfactory.

"Our research was put before the government, explaining that by doing this exercise, depression and tension disappear and a person feels good and happy. The government named this exercise 'meditation' and opened meditation clubs all over the country, which are frequented by depressed patients. An instructor is hired by the club to regulate procedures. He encourages them in a soothing voice, "Forget everything, stop thinking, etc." After a while, they all admit to feeling lighter and free from tension. However this research which was done just recently will only reach the East after some twenty years. For this reason, I enquired as to where you learnt this form of meditation from."

I then explained to him that this was not their type of meditation, but was in actual fact a type of Zikr (remembrance of Allah) which we have been encouraged to do in the Qur'an : 'Remember Allah to yourself. " He responded, "This is why I said that Islam is really the true religion, which had informed us fourteen hundred years ago that by remembering Allah, we will be relieved of our worries, depression and tension, which modern research has only managed to discover today." This is why Allah said in the Qur'an:

"Behold! It is only through the remembrance

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Global football icons have track record of supporting Palestinians

Portuguese national squad captain and Real Madrid striker Cristiano Ronaldo as well as 2011 World Footballer of the Year Lionel Messi have also pledged their support for Palestine on various occasions previously. (*Newzfirst*)

When Things Are Lost

By Hena Din

()

“O Allah! Grant me Your love, and the love of a person whom my loving him will be of benefit to me near You. O Allah! Whatever You have granted me from what I love, make it a means of strength for me to use in the way You love. O Allah! Whatever love (of things) You have removed from me then grant in its place the love (of things) that You love.” (Tirmidhi)

My aunt and I were having a conversation the other day, and this du`a' (supplication) came up. It's not uncommon when I speak with her that the conversation flows to an ayah (verse) from the Qur'an or a hadith (narration) of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that she reflected on and that her heart desired to share with me. But when she recited this du`a', she didn't realize that my heart had a connection with this prayer too and it was with these words that I often found serenity.

While discussing the du`a' with her, I learnt that for some reason, she had not been able to grasp and memorize this du`a'. At first she did not pay too much attention to this but it continued to tug at her consciousness until she decided to sit down once and for all and fully learn it.

It wasn't until then, she said, that she immersed herself in its beautiful meaning and reflected on these words the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) uttered, and it hit her. The depth of meaning and the sincerity of love that is present in this du`a' was a sudden epiphany.

My aunt's heart has experienced a lot of loss in her life. She lost her eldest son suddenly when he was only 13 years old. He was hit by a bus on his way to school and

died instantly. She has always been patient masha'Allah (by the will of God) but try as they might, neither she nor her husband were ever the same after this loss.

She lost her husband about 8 years ago after he slowly became bedridden from his illness and suffered to the point that he was barely conscious. The loss of someone so dear and who was such a support truly shook her, not to mention she was left behind as a single mother in a developing country with 4 children to raise. And if that was not enough to exhaust the tears that came from her patient eyes, her 2nd eldest son who had just completed his degree and was going to begin a new job suddenly passed away only a year or so after his father. To understand how suddenly this young man was taken, picture a healthy youth of 23 years, a recent graduate from college, a whole future ahead of him, so many plans up his sleeve, and within three days his health drops and leaves him. Three days.

Subhan Allah (glory be to God), may Allah grant them all peace and His light in their graves.

After all this it was as if Allah subhanahu wa ta`ala (exalted is He) had created the prayer and sent it especially for her. Even though she had experienced so much loss in

her life, after reading this du`a' she felt as though what she used to consider suffering and hardship may actually not have been. Rather the losses she experienced gave her space and time to fill those voids with something better—Allah.

If her children had not been taken from her, if her husband had not gone through what he had with her, the patience she had experienced might not be with her today. Instead of spending her time in the remembrance of Allah and studying His deen (religion) and guidance, she might never have fully turned to Him as she has. Instead she might have been encompassed by her dunya (life)—of a husband, of children and Allahu `Alim (God knows best) even of grandchildren. All this she may have had, she says, but she would not have had Allah like she does now. She would not have drawn closer to Him as she has.

And this is exactly what I only began

to scratch the surface of when I recited this prayer with tears in my eyes. "O Allah! Whatever love (of things) You have removed from me, then Grant in its place the love (of things) that You love."

Sometimes we cling to things because we think that they are the source of our happiness, they are what will make us happy and bring us closer to something blissful in this world. And when we feel like those things and those people are leaving us, we cling harder, we fight harder. But I am slowly starting to realize the blessing that comes when a void in my heart is created, when a void in space is present.

It can be filled with something more beautiful and more fulfilling than what we had before. Maybe this is the meaning of the losses we experience in this world.

Only Allah is our everything and only He can truly fulfill and complete everything we are.

TRAVELLING IN THE SAME DIRECTION

Imagine a family wishing to travel together. However, each person has a different destination. Thus the husband wants to take a turn towards the east, the wife wants him to turn towards the west and the children want to go south. Can you imagine the arguments and the tension in that vehicle? The arguments and tension could sometime even lead to an accident. The same is the case of daily life. In order to avoid the arguments and tension, everyone must have the same direction.

The only direction that leads to every success is Deen. Therefore, the husband, wife and children must all adopt one direction and have one goal, to earn the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Whenever the family is confronted with the issue of whether to turn left or right, all should simply ask: "What will make Allah Ta'ala happy?" This approach will Insha-Allah make the journey of life peaceful and enjoyable.

The True Cost of Globalization

Originally published in the Guardian, UK, the following article highlights the latest research that yawning inequality isn't just a moral and political question – it's an economic one. The credit bubble of the past two decades helped consumers in the US and Europe to prop up their quality of life in the face of the relentless decline in real wages; but that conjuring trick only works for a while, and the resulting legacy of debt will now take many years to work off.

The worldwide public realizes there is something deeply wrong with today's world economic system

Before the Great Crash, critics of globalization were isolated on the loony fringe: tear-gassed in Seattle and whacked with truncheons in Prague, as the west's leaders gathered to congratulate themselves on reaping the benefits of unfettered world trade.

When the Asian financial crises of the 1990s toppled governments and forced one desperate country after another into mass impoverishment and emergency bail-outs by the International Monetary Fund, the West's leaders – even many on the left – explained it away as a result of shoddy governance or poor economic management, instead of a devastating side-effect of globalization.

And even after the financial shock waves rippled out from the American housing market in 2007 and caused catastrophic collateral damage in countries across the globe, and the deepest world recession since the 1930s, many felt that a few tweaks to bank

capital rules, and sharper teeth for financial regulators, would fix the system.

Yet two things have derailed world leaders' attempts to get back to business as usual. The first is that in many countries, more than four years on from the start of the credit crisis, millions of people still wait for economic recovery to take hold. Growth is sickly or non-existent; unemployment is rising; the only people who seem to escape are a tiny, super-rich elite.

And the second reason it is still not business as usual is that there has been a growing chorus of discontent from far beyond the corridors of power. From the Indignados in Spain, who have espoused the cause of the 50% of young Spaniards now out of job, to the Occupy movements that have sprung up in New York, London and scores of other cities around the world, to the villagers in Guangdong, China, protesting against government land-grabs, many thousands of discontented citizens are making their anger felt about the way the system has failed them.

The demands of these inchoate groups may not be fully formed; but they have noisily identified the fact that there is something deeply wrong with today's world economic system, which puts unfathomable riches in the hands of an unaccountable elite, while millions are trapped in unemployment and poverty.

The focus on youth unemployment and inequality at the annual talkfest in Davos [recently] was a clear indication that the power-brokers in the global economy are

finally realizing that something has gone badly awry.

The truth is that the neo-liberal consensus, with its promise of economic "freedom", has failed to deliver. The opening-up of China and India over the past 20 years has lifted millions of people out of poverty. But inequality here and in other developing countries remains shameful, and shouldn't be left unchallenged.

At the same time, average workers in most of the major rich economies, including the UK, have seen the real value of their wages shrivel away, as they have found themselves in competition not just with their neighbors, but with workers many thousands of miles away.

Yet if the system fails the average worker in the west, it fails even in its own terms, because it undermines consumer demand, and chokes off economic growth. The rich elite who have been the big winners over the last 50 years may be big-spenders, but they still park much of their wealth in Switzerland.

A growing body of research suggests that yawning inequality isn't just a moral and political question – it's an economic one. The credit bubble of the past two decades helped consumers in the US and Europe to prop up their quality of life in the face of the relentless decline in real wages; but that conjuring trick only works for a while, and the resulting legacy of debt will now take many years to work off.

So as the plight of workers in faraway places reveals the true cost of cut-price consumer gadgets, it's also clear that workers everywhere have been losing out. It would be wrong to think that the answer is to retreat inwards, and return – even if we could – to a closed-border economy. But it must no

longer be a taboo to question whether raw globalization brings the benefits that were promised.

Domestically, a host of tax and benefit changes could help redress the balance for those who have lost out in the race towards an outsourced, privatized, winner-takes-all world economy. The OECD suggested heavier taxes on properties, pension contributions and mortgage interest payments for the rich as ways of reducing inequality while boosting growth by persuading the rich to invest their money wisely instead of parking it in Park Lane penthouses, for example. Warren Buffett, the billionaire investor and unlikely radical, has suggested that forcing rich investors like him to pay the same tax rate as his secretary might also help.

On an international scale, it should no longer be taboo to propose limits to foreign takeovers, or to the nonstop, unquestioned flow of capital around the world.

We should welcome the fact that China's workers themselves are becoming increasingly restive about their plight. Higher wages and better conditions for them might push up the price of an iPod in London or New York, but they would also help the Chinese economy towards Beijing's aim of a rising middle class and stronger consumer demand at home, instead of economic growth that depends too heavily on cheap exports.

Strong, sustainable Chinese growth, and rising labor standards, would be good for the west too: they should help to narrow Beijing's yawning trade surplus by opening up vast new markets. Apple's critics would once have been written off as naive idealists; but as we sift through the wreckage of the Great Recession, perhaps it's finally time to heed Marx's words, and stand up for workers everywhere.

www.informationclearinghouse.info/article30379.htm

Why Don't We Practice Islam?

A Salim

Most of us are fortunate enough to be born in a Muslim family. However, it is common knowledge that those who get something after working hard for it appreciate and value it so much more than those who get something automatically. It is for this reason why, most of us do not value, appreciate or even know what it means to be a Muslim.

Fornication, adultery, drinking alcohol, gang feuds, drugs, mugging, running away from home, the minimal clothing our sisters have adopted and clubbing is widespread amongst our Muslim brothers and sisters. Is this how Muslims should act?

Today Islam has been reduced to the Friday prayer now and again, avoiding our girlfriend/boyfriend in the Holy month of Ramadan, celebrating Eid, learning to read the Qur'an from the Molvi down the road and wearing an Islamic hat on Fridays. Is this what Islam is all about? Most of us know the score; we all know what we should and shouldn't be doing.

We do not live our lives rejecting the teachings of Islam out of ignorance. So why don't we practise Islam? What's stopping and holding us back? Do we have any valid excuses that will be accepted in the Court of Allah on the Day of Judgement?

Self justifications are one of the main reasons why some Muslims allow themselves to live their lives according to their own whims and desires.

We have excuses ready that we tell ourselves and others, which allows us to feel smug and contented with our present state.

"Not now, I'll change after I get married and have kids"

"I'll change in the future" is a common procrastination employed by many of us which helps us to self-justify why we aren't living our lives according to the limits ordained by Allah. After all, most of our grandparents turned to Islam in their old age after living their lives according to their own whims and desires.

We tell ourselves that we'll enjoy our life to the max, get married, go to Hajj, ask for forgiveness for our sins and then live the rest of our lives according to the teachings of Islam.

The problem with this notion is that, people die at all ages. We associate death with old age, but I'm sure we all know of young people who were killed in fatal accidents. Imagine if a boyfriend and girlfriend were killed in a car accident, would the excuse "We did intend to repent, get married and change in the future-but we died before we could do all that" be valid in the Court of Allah?

Furthermore, how can one intentionally sin and then assume that he/she will repent and change their ways in the future, aren't old habits hard to break?

When a person enters old age his needs, whims, desires and demands begin to

diminish. The things that used to bring him delight and pleasure do not appeal to him any more, so due to obvious reasons the worship of a teenager is worth more than the worship of an elderly person to Allah. This is why Allah has promised seven people His shade on the Day of Judgment, as a mark of distinction and honour. Teenagers who spend their years as devout and conscious Muslims in the face of overwhelming temptations and seductions are one of the seven people.

“It’s too hard”

It’s too hard to get up at Fajr... it’s too difficult to grow a beard when all our friends don’t have one. It’s too hard to sit through a long Islamic programme... it’s too hard to avoid gossip and backbiting when everyone’s doing it... it’s too hard to regularly attend Islamic classes... it’s too hard to wear a Hijaab when it’s hot and my friends don’t wear on... And it’s too hard to fit Islam in my busy life. The so called difficulties of practising Islam in the West is another self-justification employed by many Muslims.

It’s interesting to note that whilst it’s difficult to drag ones self out of bed for the early Fajr prayer, it isn’t difficult to set ones alarm clock for two hours before school starts to get the hair straightened/curled and the eye liner applied to perfection.

Whilst it’s difficult to regularly show ones face in the local mosque it isn’t difficult to spend hours and hours in the gym to obtain that six pack. And whilst it’s too difficult to fit Islam in ones busy life, there’s always time to drive aimlessly round the same block 50 times a day, or waste chatting on MSN to the same people that we just spent an entire day in school with.

The truth is we’re lazy and spoilt. Look at those people who lived before us, the true devotees of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) who fought against the pagan Arabs, suffered tortures, became migrants, suffered unbearable hardships, but

ultimately did raise aloft the message of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). They had rocks placed on their chest and were ruthlessly ripped apart, but refused to give up the beauty of Islam. Do we have it harder than them?

Our Muslim brothers and sisters all over the world are being raped, murdered, kidnapped and tortured. Do we have it harder than them? Is our Muslim sister in Iraq wondering whether she looks ugly in her scarf? Is she complaining about the heat?

We, living in the safe and lazy west have it very easy, but life isn’t all about chilling and acting like spoilt teenagers. If we want to get closer to Allah we should be prepared to face some difficulties and inconveniences.

“I have a clean heart”

This is a classic one. Some Muslim brother and sisters are convinced that their haraam actions are justified because Allah knows that their heart is clean and pure. Some Muslim’s who indulge in premarital relationships use this excuse, however they fail to realise that if their hearts were really pure they wouldn’t be indulging in such shameful activities. If one holds such a notion that this must mean that such an individual’s heart is most definitely NOT pure.

If ones heart was truly pure and clean then this would be seen in their actions as well. Such an individual would regularly pray, fast, keep a beard/wear Hijaab, and avoid pre-marital relationships.

The deeper one goes into Islam, the more convinced they should become that they are undoubtedly the worst sinners on the face of Earth. Imam Hanifah used to become overcome with extreme remorse for the supposed sins that he had committed that he used to lose consciousness. Abu Bakr (ra) used to wish that he was a blade of grass so that he wouldn’t have to go through the day of accountability. Did they walk around

claiming that their hearts are pure? Can any of us claim to be more righteous and pious than Imam Hanifah and Abu Bakr (ra)?

It would be also be interested to ask those who are convinced that their heart is pure, where they obtained this knowledge of the unseen from?

“At least I’m better than others”

Muslims who hold such a notion focus on the extreme sins of other Muslims, look at their own sins and feel reassured that they are better than them. There are some teenagers who get involved in pre-marital relationships but do not feel guilty about their actions because they reassure themselves by holding the notion that “at least we’re better than those who allow themselves to go all the way”. However, will the excuse “At least I was better then so and so who lives down my road.” be valid in the Court of Allah?

If we focus on the biographies of our

pious predecessors we will receive a strong insight into who and what we are-nothing. However, if we focus on those who appear misguided we will become smug, satisfied and content with our state. We will either return to square one, or become spiritually stalled and victims of the superiority complex.

To sum up, the disastrous consequence of self justifications is that, even though Muslims initially feel guilty when breaking the limits ordained by Allah, eventually the guilt wears off. This closes the door for repentance, after all how can one repent or amend their ways if they don’t even feel guilty about what they are doing?

We do ourselves no favours by making up lame excuses which will be rejected by Allah on the Day of Judgement. We should sort our priorities out, stop acting like spoilt teenagers and spend the rest of our lives living according to the limits ordained by Allah.

Keeping the Heart Clean

The exemplary life of Sayyidah `Aaisha (RA) is filled with innumerable lessons. One major lesson that she taught was to always have a clean heart. On one occasion the hypocrites slandered her. It was an extremely trying time. Rasulullah (salallahu alaihi wasallam) as well as `Aaisha’s (RA) parents were very distressed by this terrible accusation. When `Aaisha (RA) came to hear of the false rumours about her doing the rounds, she became very ill. She could not eat a morsel of food nor sleep a wink. She wept almost continuously. Eventually an entire ruku of the Qur’an was revealed which cleared her name and explained how chaste and virtuous she was. While the hypocrites were responsible for this heart-breaking incident, unwittingly, a few sincere Muslims also got caught up in this ugly accusation and defamation. Among them was Hassaan bin Thaabit (RA).

Once after the demise of Rasulullah (salallahu alaihi wasallam) he had come to the home of `Aaisha (RA). She instructed that he be treated with honour and respect. Someone commented that he was also among those who had caused her grief. `Aaisha(RA) replied: “He used to defend Rasulullah (salallahu alaihi wasallam) with his poetry” (Saheeh Bukhari). What she meant was that Hassaan (RA) had done a great service to Islam. Therefore, those are the positive aspects of his life that needs to be recorded and remembered, and not the negative incidents. Subhanallah! What a clean heart. She forgave something so serious and defended the person as well. May Allah help us also to always have a clean heart. [Aameen]

Qur'anic Sciences

Justice Maulana Taqi Usmani

Nowadays a voice is being raised that every individual should take up the task of understanding Qur'an according to his own comprehension. Though it is all more necessary to understand the Qur'an but lack of proper knowledge in this regard can drive a person towards unknown extremes and wrong interpretations. This is the next article that we have been covering some fundamental requirements for interpreting the Qur'an correctly.

SOURCES OF TAFSIR (EXEGESIS)

After the brief introduction to the Science of Tafsir (in previous issue), the most important thing to know is the sources of "Tafsir" of the Quran.

What are the available means through which Tafsir (exegesis) of a verse can be determined? The answer to this question calls for some details which are given below.

First of all it should be understood that the Quranic verses are of two types. Some verses are so clear and evident that anyone who knows the language can easily understand their meaning that is why the question of any difference of opinion in the exegesis of these verses does not arise. The source of exegesis of such verses is "Arabic lexicon". Except for an expert view of Arabic language and common sense, nothing is needed to understand them. (al-Burhan, Zarkashi V2 p171 chapter 41; al-Itqan v2 p182, chapter 78)

The other type comprises verses that are comprehensive in meaning and in which there is some ambiguity or difficulty in explanation or, in order to grasp their meaning, it is necessary to study the background in which they were revealed. Or, they deal with delicate legal questions or deep unknown facts and knowledge. Only knowledge of Arabic language is not sufficient to comprehend such verses,

but other information is needed to derive their proper exegesis. In the following lines the exegesis sources of these type of verses are described.

Keeping this in view, there are six sources of the exegesis or Tafsir of the Quran.

- They are, the
- 1: Quran itself.
 - 2: Prophetic Traditions.
 - 3: Sayings of the Companions.
 - 4: Sayings of the followers of Companions.
 - 5: Arabic Lexicon and
 - 6: Common sense.

Here, we present some details of each of these sources and their position in the science of Tafsir.

FIRST SOURCE: THE QURAN ITSELF

1: The first source of exegesis of the Quran is the Quran itself, that is, sometimes its verses explain each other. Something is left unsaid in a verse but said in detail in another verse. For example, it is said in Al-Fatihah:

Guide us Thou to the straightway, the way of those whom Thou hast blessed. (1:6-7)

It is not clear in this verse as to who are the blessed people? But at another place it is stated:

They are with those whom Allah has blessed — of the Prophets, and the truthful, and the mar-

tyrs, and the righteous. (4:69)

Similarly, it is stated in a verse:

Then "Adam received certain words (of revelation) from his Lord, and He relented towards him. (2:37)

It is not revealed what those words were? They have been identified in another verse:

They (Adam and Hawwa) said: We have wronged ourselves, and if Thou forgivest us not, and hath not mercy on us, we shall surely be among the losers. (7:23)

Further, at another place it is stated:

O you who have believed! Fear Allah, and be with the truthful ones. (9:119)

This verse does not tell us who the truthful people are. They are identified in another verse:

It is not virtue that you turn your faces to the East and to the West, but true virtue is of him who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels and the Book (Divine revelations), and the Prophets, and gives his wealth, for love of Him to the kindred, and to orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and to those who ask and to set slaves free, and (of him who) establishes the Salah and pays the Zakah, and of those who fulfil their covenant when they covenant one, and are persevering in distress and affliction, and in the time of conflict. Those are they who are the truthful, and those-they are the God-fearing. (2:177)

This verse has made it clear that by "Truthful people" are meant those who possess the foregoing virtues.

There are several other examples in the Quran but the three mentioned here may suffice.

1: The Quran is explained from the Quran itself through another recital that clarifies what is not clear from the first recital.

For example, in the verse describing the method of ablution, according to one recital it is read.

Wash your faces and your hands up to the el-

bows and wipe your heads, and (wash) your feet up to the ankles... (5:6)

According to Arabic grammar, it may also be translated wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows and wipe your heads and your feet up to the ankles.

But in another recital the word (Arjulakum) has been used instead of (Arjulikum) which can only mean "and wash your feet". Hence the second recital clarifies that the same is meant in the first recital as well and it cannot mean to wipe the feet.

Thus an exegesis of the Quran based on uninterrupted recitals shall be reliable and certain. Although authentic recitals do not provide a knowledge that is certain yet they have a great importance in exegesis, but opinions about the rare recitals are divided. Some commentators attach no importance to them while some accept them as related by an individual alone in exegesis. This question is dealt with in detail in the Books of Fiqh.

3: Another form of "Exegesis of the Quran by the Quran, is to take into consideration the context of the verse under study. In this way the complex verse is sometimes explained. For example, in Surah Al-Ahzab the Prophet's wives are addressed in these words:

And stay in your houses, and display not your adornment like the displaying of the (time of) former pagansim. (Al-Ahzab, 33:33)

Seeing that this is addressed to the wives of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) those who are ignorant of the principles of the principles of Shari'ah have claimed that the commandment for Hijab (Veil) was applicable exclusively to the wives of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), and that it did not apply to other women in general. But the context of the Quran belies this claim. There are many other commandments addressed to the wives of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in the verses that precede and follow. For example the commands are: do not be complai-

sant of speech, speak of virtue, establish Salah, pay Zakah, and obey Allah and His Messenger

No sane person can say that any of these commands is exclusively meant for the wives of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and other women are not obliged to obey them. Hence to pick out just one sentence out of the text that gives so many commands and to assert that it does not apply to other women, is contrary to the contents of the other verses and Ahadith. The fact is that all these commands have a general application for all women. The specific mention of the wives of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is meant only to reflect their greater responsibility and to express that they are under greater obligation to obey the Commands of Allah.

Similarly, it is stated in another verse:

And when you ask them (the wives of the Prophet) of any good, ask them from behind a curtain. (33:53)

Some ignorant people have said about this verse too, that it applies exclusively to the wives of the Prophet although the next phrase of this same verse clarifies that this command has a general application for all women. It says: *This is purer for your hearts and their hearts. (Al-Ahzab. 33:53)*

Obviously, to gain purity of heart is not limited to the wives of the Holy Prophet alone but all Muslim women should gain it. Hence, the command given in this verse cannot be regarded as exclusive for some particular women (There are many more explicit reasons supporting the contention that the command of Hijab is universal but we have limited ourselves here to the context of the verse).

Similarly, there is another verse of Surah Al-Ahzab, that states:

Allah only desires to take away from you all abomination, O people of the household (of Muhammad) and to purify you with a thorough purifying. (33:33)

Some people conclude from this verse

that the people of the household include the children etc of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and not his wives. But the context of the Qur'an clearly refutes this idea, because the verses preceding and following this verse throughout address the wives of the Prophet. Then how may they be excluded from the term people of the household? The next verse particularly states:

And remember that which is recited (by the Prophet) in your houses (33:34)

The word 'houses' in this verse signifies that people of the household include the holy wives primarily and they cannot be separated from the meaning of the verse.

These are only a few examples. If we ponder the Quran we will learn that many of the exegetical issues are solved through a reference to the verses of the Quran. Sometimes an exposition of a verse in this manner makes it so clear that a reasonable person will not refute it. Such an exegesis is final and certain. Sometimes, however, an exegesis made through a reference to the context is not so certain. Hence the commentators and other scholars may differ on it.

This was a short introduction to the "Exegesis of the Quran by the Quran." Some exegetics have expounded the entire Quran in this manner in which every verse has been explained with the help of some other verse of the Quran. One such exegesis is by 'Allamah Ibn Jauzi and 'Allamah Suyuti has mentioned it in his book Al-Itqan. (v2, p175)

Another valuable contribution of the same pattern is the recent effort of a scholar of Madinah, Sheikh Muhammad Amin bin Muhammad Mukhtar Shanqiti. The book is named Adwa-ul-bayan fi Idah-il-Quran bil Quran. In the Foreword of this book he has given the various forms of "Exegesis of the Quran" with great clarity and details. (v1, p7-37)

How the Qur'an Shapes the Brain

Muhammad Ghilan

"If it wasn't for their political problems and constant fighting between each other, the Muslims would have been on the moon by the 1400's" was the statement made by a non-Muslim professor in a 400-level undergraduate class on the history of science. It seems that the rate of discovery and advancement in science achieved by the Muslims was quite impressive and has yet to be replicated. What was it that they were doing that allowed for their fast progress?

The teacher in me immediately thinks about their education system, and the neuroscientist in me wants to examine the factors involved in shaping the brains of such a civilization. Interestingly, many Muslim religious scholars will say something about how the Muslims were the leaders when the Quran was the center of their education, and only when they abandoned the Quran that they lost their reign. The amazing thing about this is that while Muslim religious scholars are typically talking about spiritual and moral realities, there is actually a material reality to what they're saying, which takes place in the brain.

A quick disclaimer here: The list of all that is affected in the brain by the Quran and how that can influence other functions is quite exhaustive. But in the interest of keeping it short, I chose some major areas to present in this article.

Before getting into the brain and how the Quran changes it, one should be familiar with how traditional Muslim education took place. In case you're wondering where

I'm getting this from, it's from reading the biographies of major figures of scholarship in the traditional Muslim world such as Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina, and others. This is also based on my personal experience and what I have been told by some of my teachers.

The very first thing taught to an aspiring student was the Quran, which had to be memorized completely. Unlike anything else encountered in spoken Arabic, Quran recitation is a very specific science. Local dialects of Arabic or different ways of pronunciation are not permitted when reciting the Quran. In fact, part of learning the Quran is learning what is called in Arabic *taj'weed*, which means elocution. The very first thing the student must do is replicate exactly how the teacher is reciting the verse. This refers to where individual letter sounds are being generated in the mouth and throat and where the tongue is to be placed exactly. Once this is done, the student writes the verse on a wooden board in the Othmani script, which follows different spelling rules than regular Arabic writing. The student then takes his board and goes away to memorize the verse.

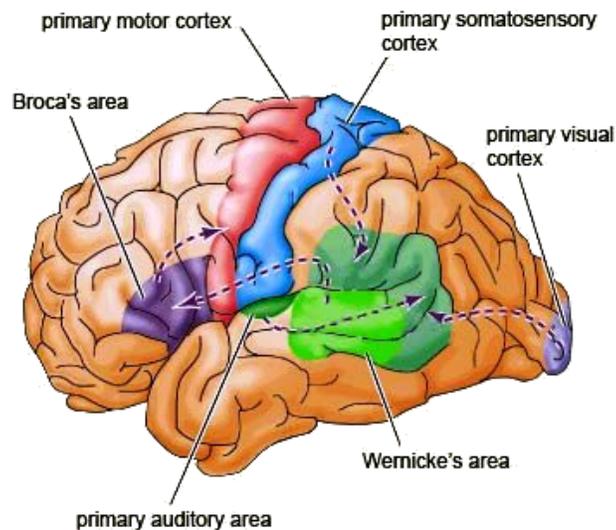
A typical memorization session for a beginner starts with repeating one verse multiple times as it is read on the board to also memorize how it is spelled using the Othmani script. The next day the student reviews the verse several times before returning to the teacher to receive the following verse. After repeating it with the teacher to ensure exact replication of sound and pronunciation, the student writes the new verse and goes away

to begin a new memorization session. The third day begins with reviewing the first verse one final time, followed by the second verse several times before going to receive the third verse. On the fourth day the first verse is not reviewed anymore as it would have taken hold in memory, and the second verse takes its place for being reviewed while the third verse is repeated several times before going to receive the fourth verse. At the end of the week is a complete review session for everything that was memorized in the previous days.

As the days pass the capacity for memorization increases and the student is able to take on several verses or even pages at a time instead of only one or two verses. The writing using Othmani spelling continues, as well as the review sessions. Eventually, the whole Quran having more than 6,200 verses is memorized word for word with their specific pronunciation and Othmani spelling. Now the hard task begins as the student works to review all the verses on a monthly basis so as to not forget them. This usually means taking the 30 parts of the Quran as it has been divided to facilitate memorization, and reviewing one part everyday until all 30 have been recited by the end of the month.

It should be mentioned here that the Quran has 10 different modes of recitation. This refers to the placement of diacritical marks on the words and how certain words are pronounced. Some students take this task on and memorize the Quran in all the different modes of recitation, which requires a very careful attention to where the pronunciations are different so they're not confused with each other given how subtle they sometimes can be.

There are a couple of important



qualities about the Quran that relates to how it sounds. Verses in the Quran rhyme and change rhythm often, which gives a pleasurable effect to the listener. Furthermore, as one recites, they're supposed to sing it rather than simply read it. In fact, the very practice of Taj'weed (elocution) forces the reciter into a singing tone as they enunciate the words of each verse.

A final note to bring up is in regards to the Arabic language and writing in Othmani script. Part of studying the different modes of recitation requires the student to write not only in an unusual spelling, but also to exclude the diacritical marks from the words. This would allow the student to learn the variations of recitation without having the diacritical marks visually interfere with their memorization of different modes of recitation. Moreover, the grammar of the Arabic requires the proper use of diacritical marks in pronunciation so as to not confuse things such as the subject and predicate. This means that the one learning the Quran must always keep track of how the words are

enunciated so as to not alter the overall meaning of the verse.

How all of this relates to the brain is quite impressive. The brain is recognized to be a malleable organ that can change its connections and even its size of certain areas based on how active they become. Understanding how involved the brain is of someone learning the Quran using the traditional Muslim method can explain how they were able to achieve such success in their knowledge endeavors.

While learning the Quran, the careful attention to listening and pronunciation of verses stimulates an area of the brain located in the temporal lobe. The temporal lobe is also where the hippocampus is located, which is the memory consolidation center. It's also the brain region activated for processing of musical sounds such as the case when the Quran is recited. Moreover, it becomes involved when the student engages in handwriting exercises similar to the ones on the wooden board. Where this matters is that this is the part of the brain whose activity levels and capacities have been correlated with a person's aptitude for learning new information. The more activation this area receives, and the more involved this activation is such as the case with the Quran, the better and more efficient it becomes in its functions for learning and memory.

The parietal lobes are also quite heavily engaged as one learns the Quran. The left parietal lobe deals with reading, writing, and functions in speech. It's also the part whose activity is important for math and logic problems. The right parietal lobe handles speech tone, which is related to elocution. It's also responsible for visuospatial relationships and understanding facial expressions. The front part is responsible for the sense of touch discrimination and recognition, which is active during handwriting. The back part plays an important role in attention. Both

lobes are also activated during skill learning tasks. Overall, having parietal lobes that have been well activated translates to better logic and math-solving skills, eloquence in general speech, better ability at reading emotional states from facial cues, improved attention, and enhanced capacity for understanding visuospatial relationships.

This last one can explain why Muslims were so good at astronomy.

Other brain regions the activity of Quran recitation strongly activate are the frontal lobes and the primary motor cortex. The frontal lobes activity deals with higher order functions, including working memory, memory retrieval, speech production and written-word recognition, sustained attention, planning, social behavior, in addition to others. For example, as the student is reading the Othamni script, his brain must quickly decide on the proper pronunciation of the word, which without the diacritical marks means it must be distinguished from other possibilities that include not only wrong words, but also wrong enunciation depending on the specific recitation he's using out of the 10 valid ones. The amazing thing about this is that the brain after practice will do these things without conscious control from the student. This trains the area of the brain responsible for inhibition, which is important for social interaction. Children with ADHD have been shown to have this area to be under-developed.

Given the Quran's content that for example includes descriptions of individuals and places, it activates the occipital lobes, which are involved in generating mental imagery. This brain region is also important in visual perception. Becoming active as a result of generating mental imagery indirectly improves visual perception capacities since the area activated is within the same region. The Quran is also rich in its content for history, parables, and logical arguments, all of which

recruit different areas that become more efficient and better connected as they are continually activated due to the consistent review sessions.

Putting all this together, it's no wonder Muslims were able to make such vast contributions to human knowledge in a relatively short amount of time, historically speaking. After the aspiring student during the height of Muslim rule has mastered the Quran, his education in other sciences began by the time he was in his early teenage years. Given the brain's malleable nature, the improved connections in one region indirectly affect and improve functions in adjacent locations. The process in studying the Quran over the previous years has trained his brain and enhanced its functions relating to visual perception, language, working memory, memory formation, processing of sounds, attention, skill learning, inhibition, as well as planning just to name a few. Now imagine what such an individual will be able to do when they tackle any subject. It makes sense how someone like Imam Al Ghazali can say he studied Greek philosophy on the side during his spare time and mastered it within 2 years.

What was the Muslims' secret for their exponential rise in scientific advancement and contribution to human knowledge? Literally, the Quran when it was the centre of their education system.

Source: messagemagazine

Laws Pertaining to the use of the Cellular Phone

Camera Phone

It is not permissible to take pictures of animate objects with a cell-phone. It is forbidden to watch videos, T.V. etc, whether on the cell-phone or any other media.

Answering the phone in the toilet

One should not answer the phone in the toilet. If necessary one may somehow make the caller aware that he is occupied at the moment.

Ring Tones

The purpose of the ring tone is to inform you that somebody wishes to speak to you. To use the Azaan, a verse of the Qur'an, any naat, etc. for the purpose of this information is inappropriate. It is disrespectful to use these sacred words in this manner. Therefore, it is incorrect to use the Azaan, naats or verses of the Qur'an as a ring tone. Furthermore, if one's phone suddenly starts ringing whilst in the toilet, this is gross disrespect to these sacred words. One should completely refrain from having such ring tones. Merely set your phone on a normal ring tone.

It is impermissible and a severe sin to have a musical ring tone on one's cellular phone. Listening to music is Haraam, whether it is from a cell-phone or from any other instrument, whether with pictures or without pictures. To set such a tone on one's phone that those who call one are forced to listen to music is totally impermissible. One is not only committing a sin, but one is also engaging others in sin.

Missed Call

It is incorrect to miss call someone whom you know will be inconvenienced by phoning you back. However if the person is aware that you are going to give him/her a missed call and he/she does not mind then it is permissible.

General

If a husband issues a divorce to his wife by sending an sms, the talaq will be valid.

To deliberately annoy someone by phoning him/her and then cutting the call is sinful and impermissible.

Downloading programs which are beneficial and within the framework of Shariah is permissible. However, Shariah does not allow the downloading of music and immoral pictures under any circumstance.

Playing games on the cell-phone is a futile act and a waste of time. Rasulallah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: "It is the dictates of one's Islam that he forsakes futile acts."

Listening to Deeni talks and permissible naats is allowed, provided it is not accompanied by pictures and musical instruments.

Teachers and the Cell Phone

It is not permissible for teachers at school to use the cell phone during teaching times as that time has been purchased from them. This time no more belongs to them. It is now the property of the school.

Mxit and Facebook

Mxit, facebook, etc. are notorious for illicit chatting and impermissible communication. Any person using these sites becomes automatically associated with the illicit happenings and is generally looked upon with contempt. We have been commanded to refrain from areas of doubt and suspicion. Therefore using such sites should be totally refrained from.

Nevertheless, if chatting with others for any permissible purpose on the mxit etc., it is not permissible to use anonymous names thereby not revealing ones identity.

Also it is haraam to befriend strange men whether on the phone or otherwise. This is the key to immorality and vice. Chatting on social media is also a means of wasting valuable time.

Surfing

Free surfing and chatting has become a means of people wasting hours of precious time. Besides affecting one's deen, family time is also eroded. Some people have become addicted to their phones due to surfing, chatting, etc. We should totally refrain from this and spend more quality time with our parents, husband, children, etc.

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in unto each other, and they have taken from you a firm and strong covenant?" [Noble Quran 4:20-21]

12- Also spending her money that she has earned from working. Some of these individuals wrong the woman and take her money. It could be her husband or father. Where he stipulates in the contract that all of her earnings are his and that he is her guardian. All of this is oppression and transgression. The money that she has earned by working belongs to her that Allah has secured for her. It is impermissible to take her money without her permission.

13- Or what some of them do by taking advantage of the women's weakness and deceiving her by taking numerous loans out for long periods of time in her name placing her in grave debt.

In ending, it is obligatory upon all the men to truly and sincerely fear Allah and cooperate upon goodness. May Allah grant us success to that which He loves and is pleased with. May Allah bless us by the Noble Quran and benefit us by that which is contained in it from signs and wise remembrances.

Translated by:
Abu Fawzan Qasim

Divine Protection

Sultan Nuruddeen (RA) was a very pious and just ruler who spent much of his time in special meditation and zikr. He was a saintly man whose nights were spent in worship. One night after performing Tahajjud Salaah he went to sleep and in his dream he saw Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), who pointed to two squint eyed persons and said: "Protect me from these two people". The sultan awoke in distress. He performed wudhu and read nafl salaah and went back to bed. He had hardly fallen asleep when he saw exactly the same dream. Once again he woke up, did the same as before and again fell asleep. He had hardly closed his eyes when he saw the same dream for the third time. Now he rose from his bed and realised that there was no time for sleep. Hastily he summoned his advisor by the name of Jama ludeen, who was also a very saintly person. After having told him the story thus far, the advisor said: "Now there is no time to lose, let us hasten to Madina Munawwarah and let no one be informed of this dream."

Preparations were made in great haste. With twenty specially selected men and fast camels loaded with goods they set forth. They travelled speedily by day and night. On the 16th day they reached Madinah Mubawwarah from Egypt. Outside Madinah Munawwarah they took ghusl and with due respect and humility they entered the Masjid and performed Salaah in the Raudhah. There the Sultan remained seated deep in thought about what to do. In the meanwhile, the Wazir was announcing that the king had come for ziyarat and to distribute gifts to the people of Madinah. He also arranged a huge

feast to which all the people of Madinah Munawwarah were invited. Everyone came to collect the gifts. While these were being distributed the king stood by eagerly scanning the faces of all those who came forward. But he did not see the two faces that were shown to him in the dream. The king asked: "Is there anyone who has not come to take a gift?" The people replied: "No! Everyone has come." He said: "Think carefully." They then said: "Yes! Yes! There are two men who have come from the west. They are two saintly and ascetic personalities who do not accept any gifts or charities from anyone yet they spend liberally on others." The king became curious and summoned them to his presence. Immediately on seeing them he realised that these two men precisely fit the description shown to him by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in the dream. He asked them: "Who are you and where do you come from?" They replied: "We are from the west and we have come to perform Haj and we wish to reside here in Madinah as neighbours of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)." The king retorted: "I instruct you to tell me the truth!" At this they were surprised and could not even utter a word. He then asked: "Where have they taken up residence?" He was told that they are residing in a house opposite the Masjid very close to the Blessed Grave of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Thereupon the king ordered that they be kept in custody whilst he himself went to investigate. On inspecting the house all he found was plenty of wealth, numerous goods and some religious books. But this investigation brought about nothing startling which could be con-

nected to the dream. This also left the king baffled. From all sides, the people of Madinah Munawwarah came to intercede on their behalf, begging their release, saying: "These are two saintly and ascetic men. They fast by day and they always engage in salaah in the Roudhah. Daily they visit the grave of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) as well as the Baqee. Every Saturday they visit the Masjid in Quba. They never refuse a beggar and they very efficiently saw to the needs of the people of Madinah during this difficult year of draught." The king, still confused, began moving around the room when suddenly he thought of lifting the mat which was spread over the floor. Underneath he found a tunnel dug out leading to the blessed grave of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). When the people saw this, they were all dumbstruck. On seeing this the king beat them up severely and said: "Give me the real story!" At last they came out with the true story that they were sent by the Christians who promised them much wealth if they bring out the Body of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to them. They were told to disguise themselves as Haajis, proceed to Madinah Madinah, take up residence as close as possible to the blessed grave of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and carry out their mission. They used to dig at night, pack the sand into bags and spread it out in Baqi.

On hearing this, the king burst into tears expressing his gratitude to Allah Ta'ala for having chosen him for this great service. Thereafter he executed the Christians. He also had deep trenches dug all around the Grave which were filled with molten lead so that no one could reach the body of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) from underneath. He then returned to Egypt. (Wafa-ul-Waf. vol:2. Pg: 648)

Lesson: The divine protection of Allah Ta'ala is all times with his beloved Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Just as Allah Ta'ala protected Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) while he was in this world, likewise he protected the Mubarak body of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in His grave. Similarly Allah Ta'ala's divine protection is with the lifestyle and Sunnat of His beloved Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). If we wish to be protected in this world and the hereafter, let us firmly adhere to the lifestyle of our beloved Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

**Cont'd from page 6
believers as well. All have believed in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers. "We make no division between any of His Messengers," and they have said: "We have listened, and obeyed. Our Lord, (we seek) Your pardon! And to You is the return." [2:285]**

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۗ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ ۗ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۗ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا ۗ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ ۗ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا ۗ وَارْحَمْنَا ۗ أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝ ٢٨٦

Allah does not obligate anyone beyond his capacity. For him is what he has earned, and on him what he has incurred.

"Our Lord, do not hold us accountable, if we forget or make a mistake, and, Our Lord, do not place on us such a burden as You have placed on those before us, and, Our Lord, do not make us bear a burden for which we have no strength. And pardon us, and grant us forgiveness, and have mercy on us. You are our Lord. So then help us against the disbelieving people." [2:286]



Have You Prepared For The Hour?

Jamaal al-Deen Zarabozo

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

All of us are familiar with the Signs of the Day of Judgement. They are mentioned in numerous hadith of the Prophet (saw). However, there is another “hour” that is, on an individual level, just as important that we must be aware of. This hour is described in the following hadith of the Prophet (saw).

Al-Bukhaari and Muslim record from A’isha (ra) that a bedouin came to the Prophet (saw) and asked him, “When is the Hour?” The Prophet (saw) pointed to a young boy and said, “If this boy lives by the time he is old and decrepit, your hour would have already taken place”.

This is the hour that each and every one of us will experience and must be aware of. This is the hour that is approaching us at every second of our lives. This will be the deciding time for us as our actions will come to an end. This is, in fact, OUR HOUR! It is the inevitable that every soul must taste. Allah says in the Qur’aan:

“Everyone shall taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception.” (al-’Imraan, 185)

This is when our deeds will come to an end. After that, we can just look towards our reckoning. Therefore, the question that

we must ask ourselves and act upon before it is too late is: What have we prepared for our hour? What have we prepared for that moment when this life comes to an end for us?

Perhaps this should lead us to ask another question: What is it that we can prepare for that Hour? In fact, the only thing that we can prepare for that Hour is true faith (iman) and good deeds. The Prophet (saw) has advised us and taught us that we must take advantage of our life before death comes. That is, we must use this life to prepare for the Hereafter before death comes to us and this life will no longer be of any avail to us. If we do not use this life to prepare for the Hereafter, then, in fact, we have simply wasted this life – no matter how much it seems that we have achieved in this worldly life. Even if we have twelve degrees, three mansions, four cars, it has all been a waste if we did not stop, think and prepare for the Hour.

At the time of that Hour, three things will follow us to the grave. However, two of those three will leave us at the grave. Our wealth, family and deeds will accompany us to the grave. However, our wealth and family will return – they won’t stay with us in the grave, we can’t take them with us into our graves to use them in the Hereafter. We will be left with only one thing, as the Prophet (saw) told us. We will be left in our graves with our deeds only. Our deeds and nothing else will remain with us.

Dear brothers and sisters, we must think about our Hour and prepare for it before it comes. We must prepare for it before the Angel of Death comes to us to take our souls.

We should realise that if we prepare for that Hour, the angels will then come to us in a pleasing form, our souls will flow easily out of our bodies and the angels will be calling us to Allah's pleasure and forgiveness.

However, if we do not prepare for that Hour – if we are heedless and we are like those who are about to go on a long trip and don't prepare anything in advance for that trip – our situation will be completely different. The angels will come to the disbeliever or the evildoer in a completely different fashion. They will come in a form that is very displeasing to the person. They will call the soul to Allah's anger and His Punishment. The soul will not want to leave the body and it will have to be dragged out of the body. The angels will have to tear the soul out of the body. Is this what we want to face? This is the result of not thinking about and preparing for our Hour.

This is how the Prophet (saw) described that horrifying event: "When an infidel (or, in some narrations, an evildoer) is about to leave the world and proceed to the next, angels with black (and harsh) faces will come down to him from heaven with a hair-cloth (of fire) and will sit away from him as far as the eye can see. Then the angel of death comes and sits at his head and says, "Wicked soul, come out to the displeasure of Allah". Then it becomes dissipated in the body, and he draws it out as spit is drawn from moistened wool. He then seizes it, and when he does so they do not leave it in his hand for an instant, but put it in that hair-cloth (of fire) and from it there comes forth a stench like the most offensive stench of a corpse found of the face of the earth." (Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Ibn Khuzaima, al-Hakim and others.

According to al-Albaani, it is sahih. See Sahih al-Jami' as-Sagheer, vol.1, p.436, hadith no. 1676)

In the Qur'aan, Allah has also described the taking of the souls of the disbelievers in the following passage: "And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve (at death), they smite their faces and their backs, (saying): "Taste the punishment of the blazing fire. This is because of that which your hands had forwarded. And verily, Allah is not unjust to His slave"". (al-Anfal, 50-51)

Why would the soul face such an evil end? Why would the soul not want to come out of its body to go toward his Lord and Creator? What would cause the soul to hesitate and want to cling to this world? I think the answers to those questions, are, for the most part, very clear to everyone. There are many reasons why a soul would not want to leave its body when the angels come to take it at its appointed Hour.

Perhaps the most important reason for such an evil end is holding false beliefs or having doubts about the truth of Islaam. Anyone who believes in something that goes against the Qur'aan or Sunnah, or has any doubt concerning the Qur'aan or Sunnah – on that day, at that hour, his soul will admit and recognise its wrong. When that Hour comes, such a person will realise what it is that he has to look forward to. Indeed, all of that person's deeds will be of no avail to him at that time if he held such beliefs or doubts that took him out of the realm of Islaam. Allah says, "Say: Shall We tell you of the greatest losers in respect of (their) deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good deeds". (al-Kahf, 103-104)

Continually performing evil deeds and procrastinating when it comes to repentance may also lead the person to an evil end. At the time of death, the soul will not be able

to think of anything, except the sins it committed and the wrong that it did. At that time, it will realise that it is too late to repent. He had his whole lifetime to repent from his evil deeds and change his ways – but he waited and waited. He waited too long. He waited until it was too late. The time of death – which no one knows except Allah – has come to him and he has not yet repented to Allah. The truth of Allah's words will be very clear to him at that time: "Allah only accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and foolishness and repent soon afterwards; it is they to whom Allah will forgive and Allah is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise. And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says, "Now I repent", nor of those who die while they are disbelievers. For them We have prepared a painful torment". (an-Nisaa, 17-18)

This is especially important for those people who consider themselves "young". Some people seem to think that being religious is for old people and that youth should be spent enjoying oneself. They think that they will have plenty of time to repent in the future. The fact is that they are not guaranteed that future. They may die in their youths and then realise that the time for repentance and doing good deeds is NOW no matter how old or young a person is. That person's soul will be very sorrowful and remiss when the angels take his soul in his youth before the time that he had set for himself for his repentance!

On the other hand, the Prophet (saw) has also described to us those people who perform the deeds of Paradise until they are only a handspan away from Paradise and then they do the deeds of the Hellfire and they end up one of the inhabitants of Hell. Such a person will be able to do nothing but regret his later actions. He will wish that he had never changed his ways. His soul will refuse to leave

from his body because it knows and recognises the good deeds that he used to perform and the bad deeds that he is now performing.

Having a weak faith and preferring this life over the Hereafter is another cause for an evil end. In this case, the person, at his death, will have to say goodbye to that thing that he loves the most – this world or some aspect of this world. In fact, his soul will not be willing or ready to leave what he loves. If he can resist meeting Allah and the Hereafter to stay here with the things he loves, he would do so.

Some scholars have written about some people who, on their deathbeds, when being encouraged to say, "There is no true god except Allah", could not respond. All they could think about or talk about was the things that they enjoyed of this world. For example, one person who was addicted to chess simply kept repeating the words, "Check, check", as the Angel of Death was coming to him. That was the real thing that was in his heart, the love of his life, what he lived his life for and that is what he could not wish to part from.

Sulaiman ibn 'Abdul-Malik asked Abu Hazm, one of the followers, "O Abu Hazm, why is it that we hate death?" He answered, "You have built up (constructed) this world and you have destroyed the Hereafter. You hate to leave the thing that you have constructed for the thing that you have ruined." Indeed, how many Muslims put all of their time and energy into getting ahead in this world and very little preparing for the Hereafter. What do you think will be their state when the Angel of Death comes to them? Do you think they will be willing to give up everything they worked for to meet their Lord?

Abu Hazm was also asked how the people will be presented to Allah on that Hour and he said, "The pious person will be like the one who was gone for a while and is returning to his family. The evildoer will be like the runaway slave returning to his master". That is

exactly how those who are disobedient to Allah will be on that Day. They disobeyed their true and real master and now they have to meet Him. However, for the pious, it will be a joyous occasion, like that of a person returning to his family.

The Prophet (saw) has clearly stated that if a person hates to meet Allah, Allah hates to meet him. That person, who has an evil end to his life, will be sitting in his grave seeing his place in the Hellfire. He will beseech Allah not to bring about the Day of Judgement. He does not want to meet Allah. However, his pleas will not be listened to. Indeed, his time for praying, pleading, beseeching and repenting is over and now he can only wait and face the results of his deeds.

Dear believers, by preparing for that Hour, by making our deeds, beliefs and intentions righteous, our Hour can be completely different from what I have just described. Instead, it can be like the Prophet (saw) described it in another part of the hadith that I referred to earlier:

“When a believer is about to leave this world and go forward to the Hereafter, angels with white faces, as if their faces were the sun, come down to him from heaven with one of the shrouds of Paradise and some of the perfume of Paradise and sit from him as far as the eye can see. Then the angel of death comes and sits at his head and says, “Good soul, come out to forgiveness and acceptance from Allah”. It then comes out like a drop flows from a waterskin and he seizes it. And when he does so, they do not leave it in his hand for an instant, but they take it and place it in that shroud and that perfume, and from it there comes a fragrance like that of the sweetest musk found on the face of the earth.”

In the Qur’aan, Allah has also described the peaceful plight of the believers at the time of their death – those that are true

to the faith, do good deeds and repent after doing evil deeds. Allah says, “Verily those who say, “Our Lord is Allah (alone)”, and then they stick to that, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): “Fear you not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised. We have been your friends in the life of this world and are (so) in the Hereafter. Therein you shall have (all) that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask for. An entertainment from (Allah), the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful” (Fussilat, 30-32)

This person will be shown his seat in Paradise while he is in his grave. He will ask Allah to bring forth the Day of Judgement. This is the meaning of the Prophet’s statement, “Whoever loves to meet Allah, Allah loves to meet him”.

This will be our situation on that Hour – our own personal Hour that we all have to face at some time. We will either be from those whose souls will be taken easily from their bodies or from those whose souls do not wish to leave their bodies and this world. From now, however, this moment on, we must do our best to work to be among those who will have a wonderful end to their lives. We can do this by correcting our beliefs, removing any doubts, repenting from evil deeds and putting the Hereafter first in our hearts.

I leave you then, with the advice of ‘Ali ibn Abu Talib, the Companion of the Prophet (saw). He said, “Go with this life behind you and go with the next life in front of you. Each life has its children so be from the children of the Hereafter and be not from the children of this world. Today are deeds without reckoning and tomorrow is reckoning without deeds”.

I pray to Allah to make us all from those people who will meet a good ending to this life. O Allah, guide us all to the straight path and keep us firm along that path. Allahu Ameen

There is Joy in giving!

By :Abdullah

Just a few weeks ago business dictated that I make a trip passing through country roads and sleepy country towns, land-marked by massive agricultural silos. It was at that time of the year the country landscape is decorated by vast green maize plantations while the road is, on either side, fringed with tall bushes of cosmos bursting forth in yellow, white and different shades of pink both announcing the imminent passing of summer with all its greenery while also heralding the coming of winter.....

Driving along such quiet, quaint and scenic routes offers an ideal opportunity for deep thought and contemplation and for one to be alone with one's self and thoughts, in spite of the odd pothole here and there.

"Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth are signs and in the alternation of night and day are signs for those who have understanding" (Ale Imraan, Verse 190)

A few years ago a motor manufacturer's advertising line read

'life's a journey, enjoy the ride'.

For many of us though it seems that

'life's a destiny, miss the ride'

Our lives have become hectic and frantic characterised by a continuous race against time. In so doing, we have opted for the 'highways' instead of the 'byways' little realising the beauty of the byways...we enjoy the selfish exhilaration of speeding down this 'highway' called life, with the wind blowing through our hair and our fancy shades, little realising that these shades have obstructed our view of the scenery the 'byways' of life

have to offer...the mountains, rivers and the colourful array of flora and fauna. Our 'speeding', our focus on racing against time - this deadline, that deal, the end result, the 'destination' - has caused us to focus only on finding the 'shortest road', the 'highway', thus preventing us to sit back and take in the beauty that the 'byways' have to offer. The irony is that our 'speeding' is in pursuit of that happiness and contentment which, strangely enough, lies in 'slowing down' and 'taking' in the scenery.

In the context of life what is this scenery?

It is the people that we come into contact with or are in contact with in our daily lives. They are those who we know, family and friends, as well as those that we do not, strangers.

Given the 'speed' at which we are travelling we often take for granted those that care for us and our well being and who go out of their way to make our lives comfortable, to make us smile and strive to make us happy. They are those whom we 'receive' from. If, for a moment, we ponder and acknowledge them, then we would appreciate their act of giving. When doing so we would realise how much joy they bring to our lives because of their 'giving'. This, would in turn, spur us on to give.

Know that the joy of giving supercedes that of receiving and accumulating because giving brings an inner contentment while accumulating only provides an apparent contentment beneath which lingers the fear of loss. Knowing that some seemingly

insignificant word or action has brought happiness and joy to the heart of someone provides more satisfaction than money and wealth can ever bring. It is, in fact, the very essence of kindness to spread goodwill and uplift the heart.

What do we give?

A starting point would be acknowledgment in word, deed (if and where possible) and in prayer (Dua) for those that make some sort of difference to our lives and give meaning. Thereafter we should strive to make a positive difference and impression in the lives of all others that we come into contact with.

More often than not we have programmed our minds to understand that only that which is 'big, substantial, financial and material' would be considered an act of giving and, in doing so deprive ourselves of the great joy and satisfaction that even a small act of kindness can provide. As a matter of fact The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) has mentioned that,

'Do not belittle any good deed, even if it be meeting your brother with a cheerful face' (Muslim)

'Every good deed is sadaqah(charity). To meet your brother with a smiling face (is sadaqah)' (Bukhari)

There is also an incident mentioned in the seerah where Sayyiduna Usama bin Zayd (RA) on one occasion, did not have any-

thing material and financial to contribute in the path of Allah. At the time of Tahajjud he awoke and beseeching and crying unto Allah (SWT) he said,

'Oh my Lord, I do not have any financial means to contribute for your sake. Instead, Oh my Lord, I forgive and overlook all those upon whom I have a right/s due'

The next morning The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) gave him glad tidings and said,

'Oh Usamah! Rejoice for verily Allah (SWT) has accepted your charity of the night'

From the above it is evident that Islam, while encouraging the giving of material, has not limited the act of 'giving' to that which is material. So start giving today, whether it is a kind word to someone, an acknowledgment of a favour to a benefactor, a little prayer (Dua) for a friend or loved one, giving a loaf of bread to a hungry one or just a smile, for it could be to some the only sunshine that they enjoy today!

There are so much positives in our lives due, directly or indirectly, to those who care and have concern for us. Let it not be that, when we start to care we realise that those who have done so all along, have stopped.

Before lamenting and complaining of having no time...make the time!

We need to decide... are we driving? or are we driven?

Stop existing and start living!

Saahibe-Tarteeb

Let us all strive to become a Saahibe-Tarteeb. A Saahibe Tarteeb is that special servant of Allah who from the day of buloogh (adulthood) to the present day, has no Qadbaa (missed Salaah). Those who may have missed some Salaah simply need to sit down, apply their minds and to the best of one's ability to calculate the number of Salaah that were missed since becoming baaligh. Thereafter on a daily basis one should make up the missed Salaah.

Once one has completed the missed Salaah, we too will Insha Allah qualify to be a "Saahibe-Tarteeb"

Different Types of Oppression Upon The Muslim Women

Sheikh 'Abdul-'Aziz bin 'Abdullah 'Aal Sheikh

The different types of oppression upon the Muslim Women are:

1- That the one who proposes to her cons her. Displaying lofty mannerisms from uprightness, good dealings, firmness upon the religion, soft speech and humility; however incidents thereafter clarify the lies of all that which were displayed. And this is from the types of oppression.

2- Mistreatment of her and dealing cruelly with her which are major errors. Our Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), said: "The best of you are those who are best to their families and I am the best of you to my family."

From amongst the slaves of Allah are those who consider cursing and humiliating the women, due to the fact that he is her maintainer, (from masculinity). However this is in opposition to the legislation of Allah. Justice, benevolence, and polite speech are all desired from the Muslim. Allah the Most High says: "And say to My slaves (i.e. the true believers of Islamic Monotheism) that they should (only) say those words that are the best. (Because) Satan verily, sows disagreements among them. Surely, Satan is to man a plain enemy." [Noble Quran 17:53]

3- Also hitting her mercilessly whether that be for a reason or not. Allah has permitted hitting the women after boycotting and admonishing them. Hitting them lightly where it will not bruise as it is suppose to discipline them and not harm. For this reason the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), forbade

hitting the women. Then 'Umar, said: "O' Messenger of Allah, the women become audacious towards their husbands. And so he permitted hitting them (lightly). Then some women came to the houses of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), complaining about their husbands so the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), said addressing the men: "Indeed some women have visited the family of Muhammad complaining about their husbands and they are not the best of you." [Abu Dawud]

And he (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "Let not a man beat his wife then be intimate with her at the end of the day."

And 'Aisha said: "The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), never hit anyone with his hands, not a woman nor servant, except when he was in war in the path of Allah."

4- That the man calls her by the most offensive and repugnant of names. The Messenger (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: "Do not vilify her nor hit her in the face."

Meaning - do not say to her; "may Allah uglify you." Speech isn't to be with obscenities. Rather it is to be polite and understandable so that the target at hand can be accomplished.

5- Likewise a lack of equity between spouses when one has multiple wives. Because when Allah allowed polygyny, He stipulated that the man must execute that which is obligatory upon him and that there be justice in that and he is capable of being equal

between them. Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says: "And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan-girls, then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three, or four but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or (the captives and the slaves) that your right hands possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice." [Noble Quran 4:3]

And in the prophetic tradition: "Whoever has two wives and favors one more than the other, he'll come on the day of Resurrection with one of his sides slanting."

6- Preventing and obstructing her from visiting her family from time to time and getting together with her parents and siblings.

7- Burdening her with more than she can bear for that is in opposition to the way of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), was the best of mankind and a pioneer for every Muslim. With that, when 'Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, was asked about his affair inside the home she said: "He was at the service of his family and when the call for prayer would be called he would leave for prayer."

8- What some of those whose faith are weak and their shyness and fear of Allah are very low do of dictating to her the adorning of herself outside the house, unveiling, mingling with men whom she is able to marry, etc.

9- What some of them do from preventing her from inheriting be it from her father, mother or even her children. All of this is sheer ignorance. Allah has given the women her right from the inheritance. He stipulated for the wife a fourth or an eighth. If she is a mother then a sixth or a third. If she is a sister then half or what remains. This is the arrangement of the inheritance as set by Allah. He says: "These are the limits (set by

Allah (or ordainments as regards laws of inheritance), and whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will be admitted to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), to abide therein, and that will be the great success. And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, and transgresses His limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment." [Noble Quran 4:13,14]

So the right of the woman must be given to her whether she is a wife, mother, daughter or sister from that which Allah has portioned for her.

10- What some of them do from restricting her expenses. Allah says: "No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, nor father on account of his child." [Noble Quran 2:233]

And He says: "Lodge them (the divorced women) where you dwell, according to your means, and do not treat them in such a harmful way that they be obliged to leave." [Noble Quran 65:6]

11- What some of them do when one of them marries a woman, then afterwards he doesn't want to be with her anymore not because of her religion or manners or the like but merely because he doesn't want her anymore, he begins to harm her so that she will give back the dowry that he paid to her. Allah has prohibited this where He said: "O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will, and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the Mahr you have given them..." [Noble Quran 4:19]

And He says: "But if you intend to replace a wife by another and you have given one of them a Qintar (of gold i.e. a great amount) as Mahr, take not the least bit of it back; would you take it wrongfully without a right and (with) a manifest sin? And how could you take it (back) while you have gone

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The Ideal Prophet

The Comprehensiveness of the Holy Prophet's Life

Maulana Syed Sylaiman Nadvi (RA)

"Say (O Muhammad to mankind): If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you." [3:31]

A cardinal principle of religion is to love God and make oneself worthy of the love and mercy of God. And, to achieve this great purpose, almost every religion teaches its votaries to follow the way shown by its founder. Islam, however, raises the whole level of religious thought and action by placing the scripture, or the *Kitab*, as well as the paradigm of its Prophet (S), or his *sunnah*, before the believers for their guidance. The *Kitab* stands for divine commandments revealed to show the Will of Allah while the *sunnah* is the practical illustration furnished by the Prophet's (S) life spent in conformity with that Will. The practice of the Prophet (S) is contained in its fullness in the traditions, or the *ahddith*, in order to direct and guide the seeker after truth on the path of religion to a deep and real spiritual experience.

No religion can have all of its followers belonging to the same class or profession. Divergence of views and leanings and differences in professions and callings are the compelling needs of our earthly life. The world has to have kings and rulers as well as serfs and subjects; the judges and the jurists for the administration of the law and commanders of armies for maintaining security of the realm; the poor and the rich, the mendicants and the warriors, the businessmen and the priests for keeping the wheels of life moving onwards. Everyone of these needs an exemplar who may show the right path to him in

his own sphere of life. But, Islam invites all of them to follow the example of its Prophet (S) life. This, in other words, means that the life presented by it as a model for all of them has a precedent for every class and a practical example of ideal life in every field of diverse callings. The claim, by itself, illustrates the comprehensiveness of its model asked to be followed by all. For no affluent person can set an example to be followed by the poor, nor the poor for the rich, nor the ruler for the ruled, nor yet the ruled for the ruler, it was necessary to have a universal model, a comprehensive and abiding exemplar like a bouquet containing flowers of every tint and hue.

Apart from the diversity of classes and callings, the life of man consists of a wide range of moods and inclinations governing his actions in different situations and circumstances. We walk and sit, we eat and sleep, we laugh and weep, we give and take, we kill and get killed, in short, we act in different ways on different occasions. Sometimes we pay homage to Allah, at others we engage in our business; we are often guests or act as hosts; and, for all these occasions we need a precedent to know the correct way of behavior suited for that occasion.

Besides the actions involving physical exertions, there are also those which relate to the head and heart of man and which we call sentiments. Our sentiments or impulses are ever-changing; often we are pleased and at times we get angry and agitated; feelings of hope and dejection, of pleasure and affliction

tion, and of success and failure are different states of mind which alternately take hold of us and influence our actions. The moderateness of these emotions holds the key to the best and correct behavior in all circumstances. Therefore, we need a model of practical morality who can show us how to exercise control over our inborn tendencies of extremism and excess. We require a practical model to discipline our emotions and feelings, and such was the emblem of moderation who once lived in the city of Madinah.

We have to be resolute, unwavering, courageous, patient, resigned, self-sacrificing, benevolent, and merciful according to different situations of life that we come across on different occasions. We need a practical example to regulate our behavior in each of these varied conditions. But, where are we to look for them except in Muhammad (S)? In Moses (S) we can see an intrepid leader but not a merciful preceptor; Jesus of Nazareth can be a model of leniency and kindness, but it lacks the ardor that warms the blood of the weak and poor. Man needs both of these and has also to learn how to keep a correct balance between the two. He can find both these qualities perfectly tempered in a harmonious manner in the life of the Prophet of Islam (S).

A model which can serve as a standard for every class of the people acting under different circumstances and states of human emotions will be found in the life of Muhammad (S). If you are rich, there is the example of the tradesman of Makkah and the master of Bahrain's treasures; if you are poor, you can follow the internee of Shuy'ba Abi Talib and the emigre of Madinah; if you are a king, watch the actions of the ruler of Arabia; if you are a vassal, look at the man enduring hardships imposed by the Quraish of Makkah; if you are a conqueror, look at the victor of Badr and Hunayn; if you have suffered a defeat, take a lesson from the one discomfited at

Uhud; if you are a teacher, learn from the holy mentor of the school of *Suffah*; if you are a student, look at the learner who sat before Gabriel (AS); if you are a sermoner, direct your eyes to the discourser delivering sermons in the mosque at Madinah; if you are charged to preach the gospel of truth and mercy to your persecutors, observe the helpless preacher explaining the message of Allah to the pagans of Makkah; if you have brought your enemy to his knees, look at the conqueror of Makkah; if you want to administer your lands and properties, discover how the lands and groves of Bani al-Nadir, Khaibar, and Fadak were managed; if you are an orphan, do not forget the child of Aminah and 'Abd Allah left to the tender mercy of Halimah; if you are young, see the character of Makkah's shepherd; if you have a traveling business, cast a glance at the leader of caravan under way to Basra; if you are a judge or arbiter, look at the umpire entering the holy sanctuary before the peep of dawn and installing Hajr-ul-Aswad in the Ka'bah, or the justice of peace in whose eyes the poor and the rich were alike; if you are a husband, study the behavior of the husband of Khadijah and 'Ayesha; if you are a father, go through the biography of Fatima's father and grandfather of Hasan and Husain (RAA); in short, whoever and whatever you may be, you would find a shining example in the life of the holy Prophet (S) to illuminate your behavior. He is the only beacon of light and guidance for every seeker after truth. If you have the life of the Prophet of Islam (S) before you, you can find the examples of all the prophets, Noah and Abraham, Job and Jonah and Moses and Jesus (AS). If the life and character of each prophet of Allah were deemed to be a shop selling the wares of one commodity, that of Muhammad (S) would verily be a variety store where goods of every description can be had to suit the tastes and needs of all.

My friend, Hasan 'All, used to bring

out a magazine named *Nur-i-Islam* from Patna some thirty or forty years back. Once he had published in his journal the views of a Hindu friend of his about Muhammad (S). In answer to the question why he held the Prophet of Islam to be the greatest and the most perfect of men ever born in the world and what opinion he held about Jesus (S), this learned friend of Hasan 'Ali had replied that Jesus (AS), in comparison to Muhammad (S), appeared to be an innocent child, articulating sweet words before a man of wisdom. Asked to elucidate the reason for considering Muhammad (S) to be the greatest man, he had replied, I find in his character such diverse and manifold qualities as it would be impossible to find in any other man whose biography has been preserved by history. He is a king having a whole country under his control but never claiming mastery over even his own self; ever taking pride in his being the serf of Allah. He is the master of camel-loads of treasure getting into his capital from far and near, yet he is ever so poor that for months no fire is lighted in his own hearth, and he goes without a full meal for days together. Like a veteran campaigner he can defeat his enemies, fully armed and exceeding his none too well armed battlers, still he is so peace-loving that he has no hesitation in signing a treaty when thousands of his followers are ready to fight till death. He is a man so dauntless that he can set the whole of the Quraish at defiance, but is also so kindhearted that he never sheds a drop of blood. He is solicitous of the welfare of his own family, of the weak and the orphan, and of every wayward soul in Arabia; he is always care-worn about the salvation of every human being, but he is also indifferent to everything save the pleasure of his Lord. He never curses those who deride him, nor does he retaliate against those who persecute him; rather, he invokes divine blessings on those who bear malice against him; nevertheless, he never forgives the ene-

mies of Allah whom he always threatens with grievous punishment in the hereafter. When we begin to see him as a militant battler, he appears before us as an ascetic in vigils and prayers and when we find him making his debut as a brilliant conqueror, we are astonished to see in him the innocent divine messenger. Just when we want to call him the King of Arabia, we find him leaning on a leather pillow filled with date leaves. The day we see the booty of war piled up in the courtyard of his Mosque, we find his own family with absolutely nothing to satisfy the pangs of hunger. When we see him distributing the prisoners of war as serfs to the inhabitants of Madinah, we also see his daughter Fatimah (RA) complaining of blisters on her hands and shoulders caused by driving the handmill and carrying water. After the half of Arabia submits to his authority, 'Umar (RA) finds him lying on a rough mattress whose weavings have left their marks on his bare body. His house then contains nothing except a handful of oats and a leather jar. His frugal living makes 'Umar (RA) burst into tears, who says "O Apostle of Allah, is it not distressing to see the *Qaisars* [Caesars, the emperors of Byzantium] and the *Kisras* [Chosroes, the emperors of Iran] rejoicing in the luxuries of the world while the Messenger of Allah has to live with these straitened means?" But he gets the reply: "'Umar, would you not like that the *Qaisar* and the *Kisra* should choose this world and I the next?"

On the day Makkah fell to the arms of the Prophet (S), Abu Sufyan, the Chief of Makkah and the greatest enemy of Islam till recently, stood watching the stepping-in Muslim troops, waves after waves, with their tribal colors flying over their heads. Abu Sufyan got overawed and said to 'Abbas standing beside him: "'Abbas, your nephew has risen to be a great King!" "No," replied 'Abbas, "not a king but a Prophet."

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Footballer's Demand

Legendary Footballer Eric Cantona writes letter demanding boycott of Israel

In a notable development, Manchester United football legend, Eric Cantona has written to the South African Minister of Sports, Comrade Fikile Mbalula slamming Israeli "racism" and questioning Israel's hosting of the 2013 UEFA U21 Championships.

Cantona's joint letter was written in support of Palestinian footballers and others who are being illegally detained, without trial, by the Israeli regime, including the 25 year old Mahmoud Sarsk. In 2009, Sarsk was on his way to play a football match when he was arrested by the Israeli army, he was just 22 years old.

He has been detained for nearly 3 years now, with no charge and no trial. Today, as South Africa commemorates Youth Day, the young Sarsk is on the 92th day of his hunger strike (for exactly 3 months he has taken no food) in protest of his illegal Israeli detention. He is routinely slipping out of consciousness and is very close to death but Israel has refused him proper medical care or a fair trial.

"Why are...[people] silent when Israel is to host the UEFA Under 21s competition in 2013? Racism, human rights abuses and gross violations of international law are daily occurrences in that country...it is time to end Israel's impunity and to insist on the same standards of equality, justice and respect for international law that we demand of other states." the letter read.

Boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel gain momentum

Following the joint letter from Manchester United football legend, Eric Cantona earlier this week, the boycott in various forms against Israel and upcoming event has gained momentum at various universities.

In a rare challenge to Israel, FIFA's President, Sepp Blatter, Tuesday, has expressed his "grave concern and worry" for Palestinian soccer players who are being held in "illegal detention" by Israel. In an official FIFA statement, Blatter said, "FIFA urgently calls on ... [Israeli authorities to ensure] the physical integrity of the concerned players as well as their right for due process."

The Arizona State University (ASU) student government in the USA voted to divest from companies involved in Israeli human rights abuses. This is not the first time that ASU has divested from companies supporting human rights abuses. In 1985 Arizona public universities supported divestment from apartheid South Africa.

The student Cafe at the prestigious American University, The Evergreen State College, has formally announced its decision to boycott all Israeli goods, becoming the most recent business to join the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement.

Cultural Boycott

This Monday, 11 June, it was announced that after being called on by fellow artists and human rights workers, Zakir Hussain, one of the world's "most influential" Indian musicians has canceled his upcoming Israeli gigs.

Gil Shohat, the Classical Music Advisor to the Israel Festival has publicly admitted that the cultural boycott of Israel is working, he said that, "there are choirs and opera companies which are not interested in coming to Israel. Even if they don't say it's because of the political issue, they prefer not to get involved in such a sticky situation."

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