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RADIANT REALITY

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IS NOT ALLAH THE BEST OF JUDGES?

Qur'an 95:8




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This magazine is dedicated to the greatest and the last Prophet Sayyidna Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) on whom the succession of Prophethood ended and was sealed forever. Let us all follow him with utmost spirit.

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Due to the unfavourable conditions in Kashmir for last more than couple of months now we have not been able to deliver Radiant Reality to our esteemed readers. Even the print consignment of the August 2016 issue shipped from New Delhi to Srinagar is still lying with the transporter, and will be delivered once received. We are trying our best to keep going and request our readers to bear with us during the course.

JazakAllah Khair.

Question Answer

Question.

Is it permissible to sell or purchase cameras, or camera phones?

Answer.

In principle, it is permissible to sell or purchase an item that can be used in a permissible way.

As such, it will be permissible to sell or purchase a camera or camera phone as it can be used in a permissible way to take pictures of inanimate pictures, objects etc. which is permissible in Shariah.

However, if the seller or purchaser abuses the camera or camera phone by taking pictures of animate objects etc., he/she will be sinful. (Shaami)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Are we allowed to listen to the Tilaawat of Quran whilst cooking in the kitchen or whilst studying?

Answer.

When the Quraan is being recited, it is

Waajib (compulsory) to listen attentively to the recitation of the Quran. Attentive listening refers to the undivided attention given to the recitation of the Quran.

When one is busy in the kitchen (cooking, baking etc.) and the Quran is being recited through any medium, radio, cd etc., one should consider the attention given. If the activity does not interfere with the attention given to the Quran, then such listening is permissible.

On the other hand, if the Quran is being recited whilst studying, then attentive listening is not found, as in studying the mind is consumed in reading and understanding. In that case, one cannot give undivided attention to the reciting of the Quran and it will not be permissible to listen to Quran at that time.

Also keep in mind that it is disrespectful to listen to the Quran as simply a past time or as a background sound.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it permissible to purchase an item and hoard it with a motive of selling it later on at a higher price to maximize on profit?

Answer.

To purchase an item which is a basic need and hoard it with the intention of reselling it at a higher price is called *Idhtikhaar*. To do so is a sin. *Rasulullah Sallallahu Alahi Wasallam* said: "He who hoards has sinned." (Muslim)

The reason for this prohibition is because by hoarding ones wealth when there is a need for it, is simply causing harm to humanity which is against the temperament of *Shariah*. This prohibition is only when there is a need for such wealth in the market place. In the absence of such need, this prohibition will not apply. (Shaami)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

If a person enters the toilet in the state of *Wudhu* to fetch or fix something, does it break a person's *Wudhu*?

Answer.

The mere entrance of a toilet does not nullify ones *Wudhu*. The passing of urine or stool in the toilet will nullify ones *Wudhu*.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Why is it that the *Fajr* time on the perpetual *Salaah* timetable is different to the *Fajr* time of our local *Masjid*'s and radio stations?

Answer.

The Difference between the *Salaah* times on the *Salaah* timetable and the *Salaah* times at the *Masjid*/Radio stations is due to the fact that the purpose of the *Salaah* timetable is to show the beginning and end time of each *Salaah*.

The *Salaah* times at the *Masjid* are generally the *Mustahab* (preferred) times for performing *Salaah* within its timeframe or the time when the largest congregation can be achieved.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

A mother has passed away. The father is living and is blind. Whose responsibility is it to take care of the father? Is it the responsibility of the brother and sister-in-law or the sister and brother-in-law (son or daughter)?

Answer.

The responsibility of taking care of ones parents is the responsibility of the son and the daughter. It is not the responsibility of the son-in-law and daughter-in-law to take care of their father in law. If the son-in-law and daughter-in-law willingly do so, they will be greatly rewarded for it. Thus, the son and daughter should equally accept the responsibility of taking care of the father and should endeavour to serve him to the best of their ability.

However the primary responsibility to house the father is the responsibility of the son. As far as the daughter is concerned, the daughter's primary responsibility (after marriage) is to take care of her husband and children. She should do whatever she can for her elderly father without compromising the rights of her husband.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it permissible to under-invoice or to over-invoice on request of the customer?

Answer.

As residents of our individual countries, it is incumbent on us to follow the laws of such countries as long as they do not directly conflict with *Shari'ah*. As a person involved in business, it is best for you to refrain from committing an act registered as fraudulent behavior by the law for the sake of your business and your career as an honest businessman. The honesty and loyalty of a Muslim businessman reflects positively on Islam and Muslims.

Question.

A woman in 'iddah of divorce used pills to stimulate her menstruation. Between every cycle there were fifteen or more days of tuhr. Has the 'iddah terminated?

Answer.

The 'iddah of divorce is three menstrual cycles. The 'iddah has terminated by stimulation if there were fifteen or more days of tuhr (no blood) between the menstrual cycles.

M. Ebrahim

Question.

I have a very great illness over which I am disturbed and which I would like to put to an end. I had seen a boy about three to four years ago. I never spoke to him nor met him. I did not see him again ever since that day. But I constantly think about him. On account of this, there is no concentration in my studies, salaah, zikr, etc. I do not want to keep anyone apart from Allah in my heart. I am also greatly disturbed by fantasies and whisperings.

Answer.

Do not deliberately think of him whether in privacy or in public. Think to yourself: Who bestowed him with this beauty and handsomeness? If this heart is affected by this fleeting beauty and false love, then what can be said of Allah, the source of all beauty, Who gave this (person) an iota of beauty? The beauty of this person is fleeting, while the beauty of the Creator of beauty is eternal. Therefore, your heart ought to be attached to that eternal Being. This body that is going to die and decompose is not worthy of attachment. The appearance of this body will get worse with the passage of time (as the person gets older) and then you will not even want to look at him. On the other hand, Allah has a different status at every time, and

His beauty is eternal. It is for this reason that when the people will see Allah in Paradise, they will forget about all the damsels of Paradise and all its other bounties. Read my article on false love one time daily.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

My mother and father jointly owned a house. Half the house belonged to my mother and half the house belonged to my father. After my mother passed away, my father remarried and gave my mother's half of the house to his second wife. My father says that my mother's share of the house belongs to him because they were married to each other and he has the right to do what he wishes with it. Is this correct?

Answer.

According to the Shariah, spouses do not automatically share in each other's property by virtue of marriage. We therefore assume that your mother acquired 50% share of the house by some other valid means, and not by virtue of the marriage.

Your mother's 50 % of the house formed part of her estate upon her demise, and should be distributed amongst her rightful heirs in accordance to the Islamic Laws of Succession. You should approach the Ulama with further details in order to ascertain who her heirs were, and in what proportion.

Since your father did not own the whole of your mother's share after her demise, he could not have validly given it over to his second wife. It still remains the property of your mother's heirs.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

A friend of mine told me it is wrong to possess a Credit Card. When I pointed out that there is nothing wrong as long as I don't pay interest, he put forward the following argument: At the time of signing the contract with Credit

Card company, one is required to give an undertaking that if he is unable to pay at the specified time, then he would pay interest on the amount due. That is, one is committing to interest since one doesn't know what situation he would be in, in future, which Allah (SWT) alone knows, or since the person has the intention to pay interest on failure to pay back. Also there is a Hadith which says that deeds depend upon intentions. Therefore if one has intentions of paying interest on failure, one might actually pay in future. My question is it a sin to have a credit card?

Answer.

The contention of your friend is principally correct. It is prohibited to enter into an interest bearing loan even though one will endeavor to avoid paying interest.

In an avoidable situation, one should avoid obtaining a credit card.

In an unavoidable situation, if one obtains a credit card, then from a juridical point of view, it is a loan with a condition to pay interest. Accordingly, the condition will fall off and the loan will be regarded as interest free.

We do understand that if the credit card holder did not make timeous payment, the creditor still has a legal right to claim interest from him and the Shar'i implication of the condition falling off will have no effect.

It is important to note the fiqhi rulings set out by the Fuqaha have two dimensions; one is of a judicial nature while the other is non judicial and is an issue of personal consciousness.

If one is pressed by need to take out a credit card and there is no alternative and doing without a credit card would put a person in difficulty, then there is a leeway for him to make use of the credit card facility and make timeous payments. This relaxation is based on the fiqhi maxim:

Needs or necessities permit prohibition.

However, this is not a general ruling and many avenues are taken into consideration be-

fore acting upon such a maxim.

To illustrate this with an example and close analogy, it is a norm to pay the electricity and water bills to the municipality that bills its clients with an interest clause in it. It is difficult to arrange our individual and personal light and water sources. It would be impractical to advise people to use lanterns, dig boreholes, or bring water from the rivers to their houses.

In such a situation, the practical difficulties are considered to grant relaxation to merely enter into a contract with an impermissible clause but with the intention not to practice on the clause and maintain the contract according to Shari'ah. In this day and age, the use of credit card has become so common that at times, not having a credit card becomes very challenging, especially when dealing in a conventional and corporate world. In many instances, a deal or payment cannot be done except through a credit card. While we acknowledge that the ideal situation is to avoid using a credit card, Shariah also takes into consideration practical realities and difficulties.

It is also advisable that since the condition in a contract is a violation of a Shar'i right, if one takes out the credit card contract due to need and necessity, he should also make tawbah and istighfaar.

Most importantly, a person must take it upon himself to act upon the following when obtaining a credit card:

Try to obtain the credit card based on need and necessity.

The user of the credit card must have a firm intention and must endeavor all efforts in paying the bills within the stipulated time without fail.

To remove any possibility of a default payment in which case interest is charged, it is recommended to set up an online payment scheme which will directly debit all purchases and payments to his account. Precaution must be exercised to ensure there is sufficient cash in the account to pay the total monthly amount before it is due.

Question.

Is it necessary to change a Muslim revert's non-Muslim name to a Muslim name for a Nikah to be valid?

Answer.

Once a person accepts Islam, he/she should be given a suitable Muslim name.

If however, a person is not given a suitable Muslim name after accepting Islam and a Nikah is performed using a non-Muslim name, the Nikah will still be valid.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it permissible to wear perfumes that contain synthetic alcohol? Will Salaah be valid with it?

Answer.

In general, the alcohols in sprays and perfumes are synthetic and pure.

The Salaah performed with such sprays on the clothing and body will be valid.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I would like to know if it is permissible for a person without Wudhu to turn the pages of the Qur'an with sticky notes?

Answer.

The Qur'an is the book of Allah and demands the highest level of respect. The Qur'an should not be touched unless one is in the state of Wudhu. (Hidaayah)

In the enquired case, although it is permissible to turn the pages of the Qur'an with a sticky note, in view of the utmost respect and reverence the Noble Qur'an demands, we advise against it.

If one does not have Wudhu and wants to hold or turn the pages of the Qur'an, a fresh Wudhu should be made and one may engage in the recital and the turning of the pages of the Qur'an. And Allah knows best.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it necessary for a woman to stay at home for forty days after giving birth? Does it have any basis in Shariah?

Answer.

To consider it compulsory or necessary for woman to stay at home for forty days after giving birth, has no basis in Shariah.

If it is done for medical or health reasons etc., it may be done without considering it to be compulsory or necessary in Shariah.

In any case, a woman should not leave the home unnecessarily. And Allah knows best.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I am a Muslim businessman. Is it permissible for me to keep my business open at the time of Jumuah whilst I attend the Jumuah Khutbah and Salaah at the Musjid and my non-Muslim staff manage and take care of my business?

Answer.

It is permissible for a Muslim to keep his business open during Jumuah if it does not compromise his Jumuah attendance and the attendance of those on whom Jumuah is incumbent.

Your non-Muslim employees have no obligation towards attending the Jumuah Salaah and may therefore manage your business at this time. (Tahtaawi) And Allah knows best.

Mufti Ismaeel

Maintaining Justice

O you who believe, be upholders of justice - witnesses for Allah, even though against (the interest of) your selves or the parents, and the kinsmen. (4:135)

In these verses, it has been clearly stated that establishing, and maintaining justice and being steadfast on it is not simply the duty of governments and courts. The instruction has been given to every human being obligating him or her to fulfill the demands of justice by being personally firm about it and, at the same time, by making efforts that others too stay equally firm about seeing justice done. However, a certain level of justice does fall in the jurisdiction of government and its officials when the wicked, the rebellious and the contumacious challenge and confront the processes of justice by flouting it personally as well as by stopping others to carry out its dictates. On such occasions, penalization and punishment do become necessary. This enforcement of justice, obviously, can be done only by government which holds the reins of power in its hands.

In the world today, leave alone the illiterate millions, even fairly educated people think that the dispensing of justice is the sole duty of governments and courts and the masses of people are not responsible for it. This attitude is one of the major reasons which has made the government and the people act as two confronting parties in every country and every state. As a result, a gulf of conflict divides the rulers and

the ruled. Masses of people from every country demand and expect justice and fairness from their government but, strangely enough, are not themselves ready and eager to uphold justice. The outcome is all too visible everywhere in the World. Law stands on hold. Crime wave rides high. No doubt, we have law-making bodies in every country costing millions. When elections come, the furore created to elect representatives really shakes God's earth. Then, these elected few, being supposedly the cream of the whole country, go on to make laws with great concern and caution keeping in view the needs and sentiments of their electorate. Then, the law is put forth for public opinion. When favourable, the law is considered enforceable. Then, the whole machinery of the government with its countless departments and experienced personal goes about enforcing the law so made. Now, this is a window to the custom-ridden world we live in. We have to look afresh and aim higher. In order to do something like this, we have to shake off from the torpor of blind following, the following of self-promoting custodians of civilization, and we shall, then, realize that things are not as bright as we are being made to see.

Compare the state of affairs for a hundred years from now, say 1857-1957. The data will

confirm that with every increase in law-making, there increased the exhibition of popular will in law and a corresponding increase in the machinery of law enforcement. One kind of police sprouted out in many more kinds resulting in a more than matching increase in ever-escalating crimes causing people to remain far more deprived of justice. With this graph of conditions rising up, more disorder in the world started showing up.

Personalized Gifts

Imagine awakening one morning and opening the front door, only to be greeted by the sight of a beribboned basket packed with steaming croissants, a flask of hot coffee, a jug of freshly squeezed orange juice and other fresh breakfast delights! You wonder who your generous benefactor could possibly be as the accompanying note merely says, “Hope you enjoy”.

To your absolute delight, this early morning treat continues. Every morning without fail, the basket arrives on your doorstep, containing a different selection of tasty treats. By the time the third or fourth morning dawns, you are extremely eager to identify your well wisher so that you can, at the very least, say “Thank You”.

If the idea of a breakfast basket delivered to our door every morning, free of charge, sounds fantastic, have we ever pondered over the fact that every morning, we all wake up to enjoy another fresh basket of life filled with precious gifts, designed exclusively for us?

We have all been blessed with unique features that make us different from other people. The curve in our ears, the shade of our eyes, the slope of our nose, the tone of our voice, the shape and length of our fingers; every fine detail designed especially for you.

Best of all is the fact that we all know the identity of the One who has blessed us with these bounties – Allah. Appreciation demands that we express gratitude to our generous Creator, Allah, by utilizing these favours solely in His obedience. Let us strive to personally thank Allah every day by pleasing Him.

Lessons from Sahih Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

Chapter 23 : To prostrate on a garment in scorching heat.

Al-Hasan said, “People used to prostrate on their turbans and headgears with their hands in their sleeves (because of scorching heat).”

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

When the ground is too hot due to the heat of the sun and it becomes difficult to place one’s forehead on such a hot surface then it is permissible to prostrate on some cloth etc. One can place such a thing on the ground or cover his forehead with turban or headgear.

Hadith No. 377

Narrated Anas bin Maalik

We used to pray with the Prophet and some of us used to place the ends of their clothes at the place of prostration because of scorching heat.

Comments

Sayyiduna Anas says that they used to place the ends of their clothes at the place of prostration because of intense and scorching heat. According to Imam Abu Haneefa, Maalik, Ahmad and Ishaq it is permissible to prostrate on the ends of one’s clothing which he is wearing during Salaah. They support their argument with this Hadith. Ibn Abi Shaiba has quoted that Sayyiduna Umar once offered Friday Salaah in scorching heat and placed one end of his clothing on the ground and prostrated on it. He advised other people also to do so. (Umdatul Qa-

ari)

Chapter 24 : (To offer) Salaah in shoes.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

In earlier chapter it was said that during Salaah one can protect his forehead and hands from scorching hot ground by spreading cloth on it. Now this chapter mentions that it is permissible to offer Salaah in shoes (if clean).

Hadith No. 378

Comments

Sayyiduna Anas bin Maalik was asked if Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) offered Salaah while in shoes, he said yes, he did so. According to the learned scholars the shoes should be completely clean and also akin to the Arabic style—which is cut open in the front in such a way that the fingers touch the ground during prostration, which they say, is necessary. (Eidhahul Bukhari)

The jurists say, it is preferable to offer Salaah while having shoes on in Jewish dominated areas in order to oppose them because they consider it not permissible as per the command given by Allah to Sayyiduna Musa (AS), quoted also in Qur’an as:

“It is Me, your Lord, so remove your shoes; you are in the sacred valley of Tuwaa”. (20:12)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said in a Hadith, “Oppose the Jews”

Lessons from the Hadith

1. It is permissible to ask questions with the purpose of acquire knowledge.
2. If asked, one having knowledge should answer without any hesitation.
3. It is permissible to offer Salaah while having one's shoes on. Since ritual cleanliness is a prerequisite for Salaah, the shoes also have to be clean. According to this Hadith it is only permissible to offer Salaah while having shoes on, not that it is obligatory or recommended to do so.

Chapter 25 : (To offer) Salaah wearing Khuffs (leather socks)

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

In earlier chapter, the permissibility to have one's shoes on while offering Salaah was stated. Now, in this chapter, Imam Bukhari conveys the permissibility of offering Salaah while wearing Khuffs (leather socks). Some people like Shiites don't permit it and in order to refute their claim, Imam Bukhari has established this chapter.

The author of "al-Badhl" has penned down—"this Hadith points towards the fact that it was decreed to offer Salaah while having shoes on during those days to oppose Jews and in our times now, it is preferable to offer Salaah barefoot to oppose Christians who pray while having shoes on and don't take them off".

Hadith No. 379

Narrated Ibrahim

Hammam bin Al-Harith said, "I saw Jarir bin Abdullah urinating. Then he performed ablution and passed his (wet) hands over his Khuffs, stood up and prayed. He was asked about it. He replied that he had seen the Prophet doing the same." They approved of this narration as Jarir was one of those who embraced Islam very late.

Hadith No. 380

Narrated al-Mughira ibn Shu'ba

"I assisted the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in wudu' and he wiped

over his leather socks and prayed.

Comments

Sayyiduna Jarir bin Abdullah performed ablution, passed his (wet) hands over his Khuffs (leather socks) and then offered Salaah. He was asked about it, he replied that he had seen Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) doing so.

When the Qur'anic verse:

"And perform Masah (wiping by hands) of your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles" (5:6)

was revealed, some Sahaaba thought that the Masah on Khuffs might not be permissible now, so they asked Jarir why he performed Masah? The above quoted verse is of Sura Maida; Jarir had embraced Islam in the month of Ramadhan the 10th Hijra i.e., after the revelation of this Sura. This proves Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) performed Masah over Khuffs even after the revelation of this verse and also its continuous validation for the Ummah. Those who deny this are incorrect.

Lessons from this Hadith

1. It is permissible to perform Masah over Khuffs.
2. The verse of Sura Maida has not abrogated the decree of performing Masah over Khuffs.

Chapter 26 : If someone does not prostrate properly.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

The learned scholars of Hadith have been filled with wonder regarding the placement of these two chapters (this one and the next) by Imam Bukhari here, which apparently don't seem to have any correlation with the preceding chapters. The compilation of Sahih al-Bukhari by al-Mustamli does not contain these two chapters at this place, which has made some scholars believe that these two pages have been wrongly placed here by later compilers. Some other scholars have given a very plausible explanation about it. According to them, Imam Bukhari first stressed that one can wear socks, shoes and also cover his forehead with cloth from scorching

heat. Now, here he says that since prostration is a very important constituent of Salaah and if someone performs it halfheartedly, his Salaah will become invalid, thereby strengthening his point that one can wear socks or shoes during scorching heat, but still he should prostrate comfortably and whole heartedly.

Hadith No. 381

Narrated by Huzaifa

That he saw a person bowing and prostrating improperly. When he finished his prayer Huzaifa told him that he had not prayed. The sub-narrator added: "I think that Huzaifa also said: Were you to die, you would die on a tradition other than that of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)"

Comments

Salaah is a highly important act of worship in Islam. The executor of this act gets a chance to have direct conversation with Allah and experience His nearness and hence should be offered with extreme peace, dignity and humility and without any haste. Ruku (bowing) and Sajda (prostration) are two important constituents of Salaah which one should offer humbly with the notion that he is bowing and prostrating before Almighty Allah (the Lofty and Dignified). If someone offers Ruku and Sajda hastily it signifies that he is offering his Salaah inattentively rendering it defective in nature.

Chapter 27 : To show the axillae and separate the arms from the body during prostration.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

As stated previously, the placement of this chapter has also perplexed the Hadith scholars.

According to Sheikh-ul-Hadith Sheikh Zakariya, Imam Bukhari discussed the issues related to Satr-ul-Awrah in previous chapters and here in this chapter he conveys it is not against Satr-ul-Awrah for men to show their axillae. (Allah knows the best).

Hadith No. 382

Narrated Abdullah bin Maalik ibn Buhaima

"When the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) offered Salaah, he used to separate his arms from his body so widely that the whiteness of his axillae was seen".

Comments

Abdullah bin Maalik ibn Buhaima narrates when Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to prostrate, he would separate his arms and elbows from his body so much so that the whiteness of his axillae could be seen. Al-Haakim has quoted a Sahih Hadith on the authority of Ibn Abbas saying, he came towards Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) (when he was in prostration) from behind and saw the whiteness of his axillae. Sayyida Maimuna has been quoted as saying, when Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to prostrate he would keep his elbows so much away from his body and also above the ground that it would be possible for a small lamb to pass through. (Umdatul Qaari)

Ruling about women

Allaama Ayni says: "It is Sunnah for men to separate their arms from the body while prostrating whereas for women and eunuchs, keeping them close to body is Sunnah because they are required to observe Satr.

It has been quoted from some scholars: 'Tarabu is Sunnah for women' "

Imam Shaafa'ee writes in 'Al-Umm' "It is Sunnah for a man to keep his elbows away from the body and raise his belly away from the thighs; and it is Sunnah for a woman to converge her body parts" (Umdatul Qaari)

Should one rest his elbows on knees during prostration or not

It is preferable for one to keep his elbows above the ground and away from his knees but one rest them on his knees because of some excuse e.g., tiredness etc. Tirmidhi has quoted from Abu Huraira (RA):

"The Prophet was asked by his companions

Cont'd on page 46

The Indoctrination

Syed Iqbal Zaheer

While Napoleon – a warrior (or war-monger, whatever you call him) and a shrewd statesman – said that “History is a set of lies agreed upon,” we have a book before us whose author wrote, in all naivety,

“History indeed is the memorable record of mankind. It preserves the whole mankind. This is for man to take stock of the present in the light of the past events and improve the future by not repeating the past mistakes.”

The words are from the Preface of a book called “Glimpses of History” (Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, New Delhi).

While Western statesmen, politicians and historians treat Bonaparte’s assessment of past history as an active principle for future historical productions (with its strong links with the past), alas, the writer in question believed that,

“Unless we know the past of the nations, institutions and ourselves, our collective life would turn into a heap of deceptions and misconceptions.” (Preface).

If it is true that our collective life has turned “into a heap of deceptions and misconceptions,” then, it is not because we turned our backs to history as written by the great historians of the past, but because we ignored Napoleon’s assessment.

The book in question – a historical work – was written more than half a century ago. Orig-

inally in Urdu, under the title *Aa’ina-e-Tarikh* written by Afzal Hussain, who died in 1962. It has seven short chapters, and was apparently written for children (or grown up children). Ordinarily, we would not have paid attention to it, but for the fact that its English translation was offered by a certain religious group to a Muslim child of our family, as a reward for Islamic distinction, and because, the last chapter entitled, “Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri and the Mehdavi Movement” contains misleading material.

Actually, misleading material dominates the book. At the start of the book it has all praise for the Bhakti Movement in the chapter entitled “Ancient History.” It says:

“Though the Bhakti Movement had certain fundamental differences, but they were of single opinion about these:

1. Belief in one God.
2. Salvation can be attained by worshipping one God and not by idol-worship.
3. All human beings are brothers and equal to each other.
4. The guru is one who eliminates doubts and shows the Right Path. (shortened).” – p.18

Now, one may look into any account of the Bhakti Movement, and he will discover that none of the leaders of the movement stood for one God, without bringing back to their followers one of the idols for devotion and worship.

For example, Basava rejected the caste system, supremacy of Brahmins, and insisted on the worship of one God. That one God was Shiva.

The Bhakti Movement in Karnataka resulted in the consolidation of one Lord. That one Lord was Vishnu.

Ramananda's was another powerful Bhakti Movement in Allahabad. He focused on one God, as symbolized by Rama.

Whether it was Vallabhacharya, Surdas, Meera Bai, Kabir, Tulsidas or several other Hindu revivalists, they all stood for one God, but that one God was one of the pantheon of deities that were historically worshipped in Hinduism.

So, what was going on? Well, it was because the Muslims had arrived into India with their one God, Lord of the Worlds. This concept was having an impact on the Hindu minds. The Message was new. The messengers were new.

Hindu masses were impressed by this reasonable concept of One Deity, the Lord of all – in whose sight all humans were one. Islam had begun to penetrate into the minds and hearts, and a few had begun to embrace its message.

Fearing mass conversion, Hindu revivalists and reformers from all over India: e.g., Madhavacharya in Udupi, Kanaka Dasa and Raghavendra Swami in Karnataka, Sankaradeva in Assam, Ramprasad Sen in West Bengal, Ramananda in UP, Tulsida around Delhi, and several others in several places, sought to combat the influences of Islam, and, to a lesser degree, that of Buddhism. They were ingenious enough to divide their deities among themselves, for each one to speak on the concept of one God, but, in actual fact, a single deity which the reformer chose to re-establish (Rama, Krishna, Vishnu, Gopal, Lakshmi, and the like). So that, in congregate, all the Hindu deities were re-established, and in every geographical area, there emerged a Guru, through whom alone guidance was to be sought, and through whose deity alone salvation could be achieved. It was a brilliant move

and it worked beautifully. Islam's progress was considerably checked.

But here we have, the author of Glimpses of History (may Allah forgive him), instructing Muslim children that the Bhakti Movement restored belief in one God, and that idol-worship was discouraged.

But, perhaps influenced by a certain movement's policy of downgrading every contribution of the Ummah from the time of `Uthman b. `Affan, until the middle of the 20th century, he has unkind words for the scholars of Islam of the same period (12th to 17th century). He writes about them:

“... if only the scholars and religious leaders had realized their duties and obligations and given thought to reform the society. They were in large number and they had hold on the society. Unfortunately, they were worse than the political workers. The scholars were engaged in unnecessary and unwanted discussions and discourses involving logic, philosophy and religion. They were more interested in establishing relationship between the attributes and personality of God, and to find whether these attributes are intervoven or external.” – p.50

If you believe that (while the Bhakti Movement succeeded) the scholars of the Ummah failed in every epoch except the modern, then, you are bound to remain ignorant of your past history, not as written by the historians of Napoleon's mention, but as available in thousands of books not entitled as history books, but rather as invaluable Islamic texts that can still be used for study, if you have the brain-power.

It is amazing of some people that they are ungrateful to those who gave them Islam. Aren't the tall figures in the history of Indian Islam, like: Mujaddid alf-Thani, Sayyid Adam Binnuri, Bakthtiyar Kaki, Khawja Moinuddin Chishti, Mirza Nizamuddin, Fareeduddin Ghanj-e-Shakar, Abdullah Ghazipuri (the Muhaddith), Saleem Chishti, Sharfuddin Ahmed Minyari, Sheikh Abdul Haq (the Muhaddith), Nizamud-

din Sahalwi (the composer of the Dars-e-Nizami syllabus) – responsible for the spread of Islam far into the East? To say that they were “worse than political workers,” while their books are still taught, literary productions still referred to, and ascetic literature still benefited from, tells us something about the mind which states the following about Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri (d. 1505) the claimant to the awaited, Allah-appointed, Mahdi:

“(In contrast to the state of the scholars of Islam), at such a moment of mass degradation a movement of revival and moral values took its birth. It was Mehdavi Movement. Its torch bearers took the rulers to task, reminded the scholars and religious leaders of their obligations and duties and called the common people to shape their lives in the light of instructions from the Book of Allah and Sunnah. There were very sincere in their attempts. So they succeeded initially, but at a later stage their influence was checked by vested interests (meaning the scholars and religious leaders: ed.). The claim of Mehdi by the founder of this movement also came in the way of its progress and influence.” – p.51

So, the ‘Mehdavi Movement’ (meaning the movement headed by a person who later claimed to be the Mahdi), reminded the true scholars of their religious duties!

He further states about Jaunpuri,

Syed Muhammad... soon occupied an enviable position among the scholars... None could compete with in piety and devotion to prayer with him... Even among the sufi saints he was known as “Sayyidul Aulia”... He had an enchanting personality... His sermons were very instructive and illuminative...” – p. 51

Further down the lines:

“.. Syed Muhammad experienced ecstatic state which lasted for 12 years. For seven of these twelve years, he fasted everyday and was devoted to meditations, when he claimed as being Mehdi... This hampered the reformative movement...” – p. 52

And,

“When he came out of this state of ecstasy, and... during the tour he met many scholars and saints and invited them to take up reformative work of the community, giving up conflicts, disputes and waywardness... He invited the common people to give up superstitions, false beliefs and innovative practices and to adhere to the true principles as laid down in Qur’an and advocated by Hadith. Few persons paid attention to his words. However, the scholars and saints who had ulterior motives opposed him and tried to harm him and his cause.” P. 52-53

So, the Mahdawi call was good and blessed, (except that Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri claimed to be the Mahdi), and, the ‘scholars and saints’ who rejected his call, had ‘ulterior motives!’ Another of their crime was that they ‘tried to harm him and his cause,’ (meaning, the Muslim scholars are in the habit of rejecting Mujaddids).

Let’s move on:

“The following are the allegations against Syed Muhammad:

1. Syed Muhammad considered the Muslims as ‘Kafir’ and asked them to become ‘Momin.’

2. He did not follow the ‘Imam-e-Azam’ but directly referred to the Qur’an and Sunnah on any occasion.

3. He stopped people from studying philosophy.

4. His followers did not respect the Mas-haikh and condemned them.” – p. 53

So, the above stated points were ‘allegations.’ And the scholars of the time were not opposed to Syed Muhammad’s because of his claim to being a Mahdi, but because he condemned Mas-ha’ikh (do you see another insinuation?)

A few lines later, the author of Glimpses of History writes,

“He now proceeded to Qandahar in Afghanistan along with 360 of his disciples. He gained popularity there among the common men. This made the scholars and religious leaders of the area jealous and they started opposing him tooth and

nail.” – p. 54

We might remind that the migration to Qandahar was forced upon Jaunpuri by the scholars because he claimed to be a Mahdi. But to the ‘historian’ (of Napoleon’s description), the cause did not matter. What mattered was that he was popular among the masses, even if not among the scholars (you may note another insinuation).

The chapter ends on a positive note on the Mahdi:

“(During the conversation with a Governmental inquiry minister): The minister commended: ‘If you are a Mehdi in the sense of a guide and revival of Islamic truth... then everyone in the community should help you to carry out your mission. However if you claim to be ‘Mehdi-e-Aakhiruz-zaman’ then there should be vivid signs from Allah confirming your claim.”

The saint replied, ‘It is for Allah to show the signs. Our job is only to propagate the True Religion.’ – p. 55

After having taught the children that while those who gave them (and him) Islam were a corrupt lot, the Mahdi of Jawnpur is brought in as a ‘saint.’

The author informs us that,

“It is said that before death he had gone back on his claim of being Mehdi.” – p. 55

But also reminds us that,

“Although the claim of being ‘Mehdi’ was the main handicap of this movement, his mission was quite successful in that it generated a wave for reviving the religion, its moral values and it brought a general awakening.” – p. 55

What a, quixotic conclusion! Scholars, religious leaders and Sufis of five centuries failed miserably; but he who claimed to be a Mahdi, who established a new sect, whose followers do not believe that their Mahdi had gone back on his claim, who has been consistently rejected by the scholars as the false Mahdi, was quite successful!

To use a worn out cliché, even Napoleon must be frowning in his grave.

If the children’s literature produced by authentic publishing houses, does not meet with the needs of prize-distributors, but rather a book so blatantly filled with information that can pervert young minds and teach them to hate the scholars of the past, then, should one conclude that the effort at indoctrination of ideas rejected by the Ummah continues?

UMD-Dec-11

Passive Participation

The illustrious Sahaabi, ‘Abdullah bin Mas‘ood (RA) was once invited to a waleemah function. When he was about to enter, he heard some impermissible activity taking place, hence he returned immediately. When he was questioned about the reason for his return, he explained: “I heard Rasulullah (SAWS) saying: ‘Whosoever adds to the numbers of a people, will be counted from among them, and the one who is pleased with the wrong of a people, will be a partner in their actions.’” (Ithaaful Khairatil Maharah)

Faith & Character of Our Kids

Shaykh Abdullah Kapodravi

An impromptu speech delivered at Jumma Masjid, Batley, England.

Translated and edited by Sulaiman Kazi

All praise is due to Almighty God, Allah, and may He, the Exalted, bestow His peace and blessings upon Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), upon his good and pure family, as well as upon all of the noble companions, and upon those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment.

Friends, a very serious issue that confronts the Islamic world today is the character of our youth, which is far removed from Islamic teachings. When I read newspaper accounts about the behavior of our youth my heart cries with pain. I anguish where is the Ummah heading? Could anyone have imaged that in this Ummah a mother would have an illicit relationship with her son? Lamentably, this is happening. A Muslim youth would be drinking? A Muslim youth would be stealing? A Muslim youth and s/he has no respect towards his/her elders? Bad character is manifesting itself everywhere. And the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), was sent into the world to correct human conduct and morals. As the famous poet Shauki said: "In the world communities are raised with noble conduct, communities are obliterated with bad character."

We have become addicted to criticizing others. So and so is doing such and such. Day and

night we are accustomed to leveling accusations against others. Do we not consider what we are doing? Which direction our community is heading? The biggest responsibility that falls on the Muslim Ummah is to provide correct Islamic teachings and instill excellent morals and character in our children. No matter what education they pursue the paramount consideration must be for our children to develop a strong Islamic moral character. They must never lie, never deceive anyone, nor look towards strange women. Should they be a shopkeeper then they must not misappropriate even five pence. A community imbued with good morals always ascends. This is a universal principle that holds true in all times. And a morally bankrupt community always degenerates and becomes devoid of progress. We need to inculcate good habits in our children. This is imperative for our progress.

Pitifully our situation is such that we send children to Maktabs (supplementary religious schools) from the age of 6 or 7 but when they attain the age of 12 they leave the Maktabs but continue to pursue schooling. These children then have no contact whatsoever with the glorious Qur'an or any Islamic books. In fact between the ages of 12 and 24 a young person is

most susceptible. This point is confirmed by educationalists. During this period if a child's guidance and upbringing is overlooked or neglected then s/he will not remain steadfast on Islam.

Rasulullah (SAWS), used to discern even minor things. Once Hussain (RA) placed a piece of date in his mouth which was designated as Sadaqah (voluntary charity). Rasulallah (SAWS) placed his finger inside the mouth and made him vomit it out, saying "This item is earmarked as Sadaqah and it cannot be consumed by you." If the same scenario was before us we would allow the child to eat the date saying, "He's a kid. What's wrong with him having a date? When he grows up he will understand the difference between Halal or Haram." No, Rasulallah (SAWS) immediately stopped Hussain (RA).

Similarly, once a boy was eating with Rasulallah (SAWS). Instead of eating food which was near him he was taking food from different places. So Rasulallah (SAWS) explained to him gently, "My dear son, first recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, eat with your right hand, and eat from in front of you." This illustrates that Rasulallah (SAWS), used to sit with children and observe their eating habits. Do we ever do the same? Nowadays children are eating whilst walking, standing and on their way to school. We don't even reprimand them saying this is contrary to the lifestyle of Muslims. In the lifestyle of Rasulallah (SAWS), we have a comprehensive mode of living. Rasulallah (SAWS) has taught us an entire way of life which is distinct and supreme. We have neglected that lifestyle and become careless and as a result our children have fallen prey to an un-Islamic lifestyle.

My friends, I am sitting in the Masjid and testify to you that our society is in a state of decadence and our children and youth are going astray, totally pursuing a wayward life. For Muslim parents, the need to provide sound Islamic upbringing should take precedence over all other responsibilities they owe to their children.

Life is constituted of good morals and character. The Prophet (SAWS), was sent into the world for teaching good character to humanity. Within such a short period of time, he established such splendid character among his Companions. Today, there is no parallel to these people. The character of Abu Bakr, Umar, Osman, Ali (RAA) – who nurtured their character and made them who they were? Undoubtedly, they were taught by Sayyidina Muhammad (SAWS). Those who sat in the company of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), their character was raised to sublime heights. After departing from the Prophet's company (SAWS), they would never again speak a lie, oppress anyone. And if ever they happened to utter something wrong it would agitate and stir great remorse. Once Sayyidina Abu Bakr (RA), was seen pulling his tongue and rebuking himself: "How could I have said a harsh word to my fellow Muslim brother." Nowadays we tend to lie, gossip, and backbite whilst forgetting the heart of a Muslim will be hurt.

At this moment the most important duty that falls Muslim parents is to impart correct Islamic education to their children and inculcate sound Islamic character. Our character should be of such a high standard that humanity is drawn to Islam. What kind of bad character is this: there was a public demonstration in Lucknow, India against the publication of cartoons in Denmark depicting the Prophet (SAWS). During the demonstration evil slogans were being chanted, shop-keepers were forced to shut their shops – including shops belonging to non-Muslims, car windows smashed, cars set alight in the street. What kind of emotional and irrational response is this? To illustrate your protest at the publication of cartoons you are recklessly damaging property. Where is the sense in this?

Recently, in France a government minister made controversial comments about immigrants and Muslim youths rioted by burning around 10,000 cars in Paris. At the time of this

flare-up, I was visiting Reunion Islands. Two representatives of the French government were also there as guests to celebrate 100 years of the establishment of the mosque in St Dennis. They became aware that scholars were present from the Indian sub-continent. They approached me and one of the first things they asked me was regarding the burning of cars, how Islam viewed such acts? I replied categorically that these actions had no bearing with Islam. What is wrong must be pointed out as such. Sometimes there is a tendency to cover up the wrong doings of Muslims, justifying the actions by saying it was done by Muslims so it is acceptable to turn a blind-eye. No, what is wrong must be categorized as wrong irrespective of who has done it.

We have been taught moderation. How much injustice was perpetrated against the Prophet (SAWS), in Makkah Mukaramah? You all know that thorns were placed in his path and he was persecuted. But did he ever respond by asking his Companions to take out a demonstration? In fact, when a lady who used to lay thorns in the path of the Prophet (SAWS), fell ill, the Prophet himself went to visit her. Such was his character. He enquired "Why have you not laid any thorns in my path recently?" She enquired, "Who are you?" Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), replied: "I am the same Muhammad for whom you lay thorns." She started weeping profusely. As they say, "With character you win, with character you respond."

My dear Prophet (SAWS), exemplified the noblest character. Despite being hit with stones and bleeding profusely, so much that when angels were sent asking him to order that the mountains of Taif crush the perpetrators belonging to Banu Tha'qif, he replied, "O Allah, grant my people guidance." He did not retaliate in the least as he was sent as a mercy for mankind and to guide humanity to the truth and beauty of Islam.

Patience, steadfastness and good character are prerequisites for being a good Muslim. Mus-

lims need to create awareness and understand the challenges they are facing. It pains me to see how apathetic Muslims have become. We must always be on our guard that our wrongdoings should not blemish or tarnish the image of Islam.

May Almighty Allah grant us understanding of the challenges that face us, protect us and grant us all the Tawfiq (strength and ability) to practice the wonderful teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). Ameen.

Enter into the Mercy of Islam

A woman has been entrusted with a very delicate quality. She has been blessed with a heart that has the ability of taking an almost immediate effect from anything and anyone that she may come into contact with. She embraces the environment she is exposed to and she reflects the people she is in contact with. A single word of goodness that she may hear or read is sufficient to inspire her to lead a life of piety.

However the enemy out there uses the media, novels and fashion to try and enslave this delicate receptive creation of Allah Ta'ala. She now becomes a toy in the hands of those whose only concern is wealth and lust. It is only our compassionate Islam that provides women with a life of protection, contentment and respect. We need to free ourselves from the slavery of the enemy and enter into the mercy of Islam.

DIFFERENCE OF OPINION & HERESY

Dr. Shadee al-Masry

A valid opinion in Islam is an explanation of a piece of evidence (a verse or hadith) that does not contradict another piece of evidence (it must also adhere to the language). A simple example regards the `idda, or waiting period, of a woman after divorce. “Three qurū” can be understood as three menstrual cycles (therefore two months) or three periods of purity (therefore three months). Both match the language and neither contradicts any other piece of evidence, so here we have a valid difference of opinion. All of the differences in fiqh between the fourmadhhabs are of this nature.

An invalid opinion is an explanation of a piece of evidence that contradicts either the language or another piece of evidence. Let’s take another example: the claim that Ishāq was the son Prophet Ibrāhīm had to slaughter. This opinion exists among the Salaf and even amongst some Companions. But ultimately, it contradicts two pieces of evidence. 1) Sūrat al-Sāffāt verses 102-112, in which Allah speaks about giving Ibrāhīm his first son. The verse does not name him. The passage then speaks of the command to slaughter him and how it was lifted after he (Prophet Ibrāhīm AS) proved himself to Allah. Then in verse 112 Allah says, “We gave him glad tidings of Ishāq.” And so Ishāq gets introduced

to the picture after the slaughter incident took place. So how could he have been commanded to slaughter one who had not yet existed. 2) The hadith of “I am the son of the two slaughtered ones (intended for slaughter)” (Mustadrak al-Hākim), and we are in agreement that the Prophet’s (SAWS) father was at one point intended for slaughter, therefore the other dhabīh must be Ismā`īl. Thus, the opinion that it is Ishāq is incorrect no matter who narrates it because it has been overridden by multiple primary source texts.

We now ask, what differentiates a merely incorrect opinion from a heterodoxy or a heresy (zandaqa)? A heresy touches upon a core matter of belief (`aqīda) connected to a Divine command (amr) and threat of punishment (wa`īd). Namely, The Haqq has commanded us to believe it and threatened a punishment if we refuse to believe it. To insist that Ishāq was the dhabīh is incorrect but ultimately not contravening a Divine commandment. There is no threat (wa`īd) connected to the matter at all. Therefore, it is a mistake that has no consequence in this life or the next. Now when an amr (command) and a wa`īd (threat) are connected to a matter, then any interpretation or opinion that contravenes that command and threat becomes elevated to

the level of heresy. If one is mistaken or simply ignorant, then it is forgivable. However, once the proofs have been presented to one, then they are culpable. “You are not held accountable for mistakes, but only that which your hearts insist upon” (33:5 Ahzāb).

What is the Consequence of Heresy?

What is the situation of a Muslim who does great deeds, has great character, and ‘is a good person,’ but stubbornly refuses to submit to believe in just one verse of Quran, despite the evidence being presented to them? (Note that we said ‘believe’ not act, for “every human being does wrong actions,” and wrongs in beliefs are weightier than wrongs of action.) There are two evidences that answer this. For such a one, Allah has revealed, “Do you believe in part of the Book and reject part? Any of you who do this will have nothing but humiliation in this life and on the Day of Judgement will continuously be punished with a painful torment” (2:58 Baqara). One may retort that this verse came down for the Jews of Madina. The known reply to this is that every warning issued to the Jews, Christians, or Pagans is first and foremost a warning to the Muslims, for how can it be that Allah would scold the Jews for ‘picking and choosing’ then allow Muslims to do it? The second response would be the principle: the reason behind a revelation (sabab al-nuzūl) does not constrict the meaning of the text (ma`na al-nass).

The second evidence comes from the famous hadith of Ibn `Umar regarding the first heretics in Islam: the Qadarites, who rejected predestination (qadar). After the death of the Prophet (SAWS), two Basrans named Yahya b. Ya`mar and Humayd al-Himyarī grew concerned over Ma`bad al-Juhanī, an erudite scholar who practiced Islam and did good deeds, but had one problem: he preached that there was no qadar, that you and only you dictate the situation (al-amra unuf). So they went to the Hijāz for Hajj and approached Ibn `Umar on the mat-

ter. “Ibn `Umar, there has emerged a group of people who recite/study the Quran and go extremely deep in knowledge, but they say there is no qadar.” Ibn `Umar replied, “Tell them that if they donated a mountain of gold it would not be accepted from them and that Ibn `Umar has nothing to do with them (barī`un minhum) and that they have nothing to do with me until they return to believe in qadar.” In sum, even if a person does many many good deeds and ‘is a good person,’ their rejection of a fundamental of faith renders all their good deeds invalid. As for one’s interaction with them, one should keep a distance and not fraternize with them.

Now what if someone was to say that this is qawl Sahābī, the statement of a Companion and therefore not required law for us? We would correct such an individual’s notion of qawl Sahābī and remind them that this phrase applies to fiqh (law) and matters of human judgement, but not to unseen matters (ghaybiyyāt), for a Companion would never speak of unseen matters, in this case the acceptability of one’s deeds, except that he learned it from the Prophet (SAWS) himself. Furthermore, we would tell him that the two rulings Ibn `Umar gave were nothing more than the application of the verse: “They have in this life humiliation” (and so how can their deeds be pleasing and accepted by Allah while He has ordained upon them humiliation). As for his pronouncement of barā`a (staying away, not fraternizing), this too is nothing more than action upon the Quran: “If you see anyone speaking out of line regarding our verses (yakhūdhūna fī āyātinā) then stay away from them (fa`a`rid `anhum) until they speak about something else. And if Shaytān makes you forget (to move away from them), then do not sit, after hearing this reminder, with the doers of wrong” (6:68 al-An`ām). In sum, the consequences of heresy are grave indeed: one’s good deeds will not count anymore, and the Muslims should keep away from them. But if they were to correct their positions, then both of these would

be reversed. We ask Allah `āfiyya and salāma from falling into this.

Lastly, what does the Sacred Law say about the heretic? Denying that which is known by necessity and clear in the Quran is a capital offense. Therefore, the Shari`ah has more tolerance for People of the Book (they have the right of residency, marriage to Muslim men, and their slaughtered meats are lawful) and atheists and pagans (they have the right to visit Dār al-Islam when it existed and conduct business). Simply being a Christian, Jew, atheist, or pagan is not a crime in Islam. But to be a Muslim promoting heretical views is. It is as if to say, you can choose to embark on the train of Islam or not. But if you do, submit to it as [it is]; don't touch the steering wheel.

Why Heresy Should Not/Cannot Be Sited As 'Difference of Opinion'

Opinions are glorified by the Quran: "Those who strive in Us, We will guide them to our paths (subulanā)" (29:69 `Ankabūt). A valid reading of this is that those who strive to draw near to Allah will come to learn that there are different options and paths, madhhabs and maslaks that flow parallel to the Book and the Sunna and do not contradict them, and all will lead to Allah and His Messenger (SAWS) in the end. Now once an opinion is deemed a heresy (namely, it goes against other verses and hadiths), then admitting it into the realm of valid opinions is nothing less than folly and meaninglessness (`abath). Even speaking of a heresy in public (as a preacher or in a khutba) has been discussed as a potential sin in causing fitna or confusion (see Ibn Jawzi's Kitāb al-Qussas).

There are only two places one may refer to heresy in scholarly literature. The first is in the process of refuting it and the second is in the genre of history. The historian is not taken as a theologian or spiritual guide. The reader does not pick up a book of history to learn theological truth. Therefore, a historian may cite and

outline the beliefs of a particular individual or movement. We see this in The Muqaddima of Ibn Khaldūn, in the Beginning and End of Ibn Kathīr, and in many other works (but as practicing Muslims, they interjected phrases indicative of their belief). Tabarī's Tafsīr combines the two genres in a sense, since he gives the reader all the narrations of a particular verse, but he does not leave it at that. He informs the reader of what is weak, what is contradictory, and what is sound. In the end, he also gives his opinion of what is most correct. Therefore, when someone cites a strange story or interpretation then cites Tabarī, one should not assume that to be endorsed by Tabarī's unless he specifies it. (Likewise, the Musnad of Imām Ahmad is a collection of "all that is used by scholars of repute." He does not apply all the hadiths in his Musnad into his fiqh because he may feel there is stronger evidence.

Gratefulness

Aishah (RA) reported: The Prophet (SAWS) kept standing (in prayer) so long that the skin of his feet would crack. I asked him: "Why do you do this, while you have been forgiven of your former and latter sins?" He said, "Should I not be a grateful slave of Allah?" [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Commentary: This Hadith illustrates the practice of the Prophet (SAWS) in respect of Qiyam-ul-Lail. It tells us that:

1. The Nafī Salat should be performed with full concentration and peace of mind.
2. The more one is endowed with gifts from Allah, the greater gratitude and worship one should express for them to Allah.
3. The best time for showing one's humility before Allah and for worship is the later period of night.

Dealing with Doubtful Matters

Kamil Uddin

“The halal is clear and the haram is clear. Between the two there are doubtful matters concerning which people do not know whether they are halal or haram. One who avoids them in order to safeguard his religion and his honor is safe, while if someone engages in a part of them he may be doing something haram, like one who grazes his animals near the hima (the grounds reserved for animals belonging to the King which are out of bounds for others’ animals); it is thus quite likely that some of his animals will stray into it. Truly, every king has a hima, and the hima of Allah is what He has prohibited. So Beware, in the body there is a flesh; if it is good, the whole body is good, and if it is corrupt the whole body is corrupt, and behold, it is the heart.” [Bukhari & Muslim]

According to many scholars, this hadith formulates a fundamental principle of Islamic law: the legal principle of exercising precaution (ihtiyat) in cases of doubt. Through the hadith, it is evident that taking risks in matters related to the religion can lead to severe consequences. As the old adage states, “It’s better to be safe than sorry.”

With regard to the circumstances the hadith refers to, it can be noted that Imam Bukhari quotes the hadith in his “Book of Beliefs”, while Imam Nawawi places it in the “Book of Sharecropping and Plantation” in the Sahih of Muslim, and Imam Abu Dawud quotes it in the “Book of Sales.” You’ll notice that these three

scholars apply the hadith to three varying topics, indicating that it is not limited to any specific circumstance but rather applied to every one possible.

With regard to the specifics of the mush-tabihat (doubtful matters), they refer to matters which lack clear proofs of permissibility or impermissibility. If a mujtahid through his ijthihad (sound legal reasoning, which is the process of extracting laws from the four basic sources of Islamic law, namely: the Quran, Sunnah, legal consensus, and analogy based on explicit rulings of the Quran and Sunnah) finds it to be permissible, it is still safer to avoid that action due to the possibility of error by the mujtahid. For example, in regards to nikah performed without a wali some scholars claim the nikah is sound while other scholars claim that such a nikah never took place. In order to avoid the doubt altogether, it is recommended to perform the nikah with a wali even by those who do not mandate one. Imam Nawawi in his commentary of Sahih Muslim alludes to a point often neglected by people in these types of cases: tolerability of rulings does not mandate implementation of all of them.

As stated earlier, the hadith highlights the issue and importance of ihtiyat (exercising precaution in matters of doubt). Ihtiyat demands that one adopt the opinion that distances them farthest from sin and adopt the most cautionary approach. Often, this opinion is best recognized

by people of knowledge, and certainly Allah commands, "Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know." (Surat al-Nahl, 43). It should be noted that ihtiyat does not entail that one simply act upon a fatwa (legal ruling). Rather, it calls for one to adopt the way of taqwa and avoid a situation of doubt whenever possible. An inquisitive mind may ask, "What does adopting taqwa over fatwa mean?" It is best elucidated through an example. According to the Hanafi madhhab touching a woman does not invalidate the wudu', but in the case of a Hanafi imam of prayer whose followers are Shafi'i and consider wudu' in such cases broken, it is mustahabb (desired) for them to take into account the invalidators of wudu' according to other legal schools and to be extra careful about the particulars of salat, thus adopting taqwa over fatwa. Through this approach, the difference of opinion is avoided all in all. That being said, it is not required for imams to repeat the wudu' as long as they are following the opinion of their madhhab.

Another point to keep in mind is that there is no legal school of thought that is solely based on one scholar. Rather, schools are based and revised by numerous jurists who have reached the level of ijihad. Since no one scholar can be free from making errors, the safest method is to follow the consensual opinion and not just strictly follow one particular person. Each madhhab has consensual rulings for common issues of religion, such as 'ibadat, marriage, divorce, transactions, etc. If one comes across disagreement within these issues, they should resort to the consensual, agreed-upon ruling within the school. For contemporary issues that have not been discussed by earlier scholars, it is necessary for individuals to inspect the scholars of their time and locality, and attach themselves to the one they trust with their religion. To do otherwise would become a mockery of religious rulings, because naturally one would tend to lean towards the opinion which they think is most suitable. Even if one made an earnest ef-

fort to be fair, it should be known that it is a minority who have gained access to the knowledge of shariah to such a level that they are able to deduce new laws for current and contemporary situations in accordance to the principles laid down by the mujtahids.

Allah has not prescribed any ruling except that it has some sort of bayan (explanation). Khattabi explains in his Ma'alim al-Sunun that bayan is of two types. Bayan jali (explicit explanation) which is understood by the masses for the most part and bayan khafi (implicit explanation) which many are not acquainted with except those who immerse themselves in the knowledge of religion in order to attain the deeper meanings of the sacred texts. The mush-tabihat deals with issues that can be explained through bayan khafi. If one sticks to and practices the consensual opinions, then they absolve themselves from their shar'i responsibility and they will not be forced to live under constant scrutiny, thinking, "Maybe the ruling is wrong?" But, if one chooses to rely on their own intellect and deductive process while they are not qualified scholars of the Quran and hadith, and are not able to uncover bayan khafi, then they will held responsible for their decisions.

More often than not, the issue of taqwa versus fatwa remains unclear to the average man. After all, what is clear and what is not clear demands a level of knowledge and depth of exposure to the Islamic primary sources that not every man possesses. It becomes therefore necessary upon the laymen to attach himself to a scholar who possess such knowledge and whom he trusts with his religion. Such an approach is not only an explicit Quranic injunction, but also a rational and logistical necessity. The one, then, who is not equipped with the ability to understand the deductive process of Islamic law and relies solely on their personal opinion, preferring one verse or narration while dismissing other verses and narrations, risks falling prey to entering the hima. And Allah knows best.

When the Earth Shakes

Mawlānā Muhammad Saleem Dhorat

With earthquakes and the resulting carnage and losses, the point we need to consider is that although we may be well away from the epicenter, safe and sound, what do we need to do? Is it just another news headline and topic of conversation or does it hold deeper significance to us as Muslims? At this point it is worth pondering upon the fact that Rasūlullāh (SAWS) has mentioned that as Qiyāmah (judgment Day) nears, earthquakes will become more and more frequent.

We have seen this prophecy coming true as time has passed. In the past earthquakes were rare and therefore shocking. Nowadays, being much more common, much thought is not given towards them save when the earthquake causes a humanitarian disaster. In the past it was very difficult to imagine an era in which natural disasters would regularly hit the headlines. Yet here we are today, every so often there is news of an earthquake, tsunami or a natural disaster of some nature having struck some part of the world. There is frequent news of people dying, children becoming orphans, starvation, lack of food supplies, loss of basic amenities and homelessness.

For everything that happens in the world there is a cause. Causes are of two types: external and internal (worldly and spiritual). For example, when someone catches the flu or a cold, the external cause for this could have been stepping out in the cold inadequately dressed or

standing in the rain for a long period of time. The internal cause could have been sins which had been perpetrated. Similarly, scientists explain the external cause of an earthquake to be the movement of tectonic plates or gaseous activity beneath the earth's surface. Not refuting this, when we refer to the teachings of our Allāh and his beloved Prophet (SAWS) we find that the cause for earthquakes is the disobedience of Allāh, Most High, exceeding limits.

“Calamities have appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned, that Allāh may make them taste a part of what they have done, in order that they may turn back.” (30:41)

So, being that sins are the cause for such disasters, the primary thing we must do is repent. In such instances, when the Might and Power of Allāh, Most High, manifest themselves with such catastrophic effect, we should take heed from the warning. We should take this as a sign from Allāh, Most High, warning us of our sinful way; if we are to continue sinning then it is possible that He may also send a calamity upon us. Therefore, the first thing that we should do is accept that such catastrophes are due to my disobedience and then make tawbah (repentance) and istighfār (seeking forgiveness) with sincerity.

Remember, in this calamity others have suffered and we have been safeguarded; we should use this as a means of guidance for us. We should

think to ourselves that we are not performing salāh (prayer), paying zakāh (poor due), etc; while we indulge in evils such as drugs, alcohol, adultery, oppression, backbiting, etc. What if due to my sins the earth splits open and I fall inside?

We should also spend in the path of Allāh, Most High. Rasūlullāh (SAWS) has said: “Truly sadaqah (charity) extinguishes the anger of your Lord and protects against an evil death.” (At-Tirmidhī)

Spending in charity will not only bring reward from Allāh, Most High, for helping his creation but will also ensure that his anger, caused by our disobediences, will be cooled. Even though the earthquake may have struck in another country we must remember that the entire world is the same to Allāh, Most High. Borders and nationalities are man-made; to Allāh, Most High, we are all dwellers of the same earth. An earthquake in one part of the world is a sign of the anger of Allāh, Most High. And such anger is not necessarily confined to only those who were directly affected. So we too must do our bit to try and avert the anger by repenting and then assisting the afflicted through du‘ā and financial help.

Finally, we should also use this opportunity to ponder upon the Day of Reckoning. If an earthquake lasting around a minute can cause such devastation, then what will be the earthquake of the Last Hour be like? That earthquake will be so severe that not only will tall buildings collapse, but the sun will lose its brightness, mountains will become rubble, and this entire world will come to an end.

“O mankind, fear your Lord. Indeed, the quake of the (destined) Hour is something terrible.

The day you will see it, every suckling female will forget that which she suckles, and every female having pregnancy shall abort her foetus, and you will see people as if they are drunk, while they are not drunk, but Allāh’s torment is (so) severe.” (22:1-2)

“The Striking Event! What is the Striking Event? And what may let you know what the Striking Event is? (It will happen) on a day when people will be like scattered moths, and the mountains will be like carded wool.”

(101:1-5)

“When the earth will be jolted with a terrible jolt; and the mountains will be crumbled a thorough crumbling, until they will become dust, scattered in the air.” (56:4-6)

On the occurrence of this devastating disaster, our appeal is for everyone to repent and turn towards Allāh, Most High, spend in the path of Allāh, Most High, through charity and ponder upon the last day and make this earthquake a wake-up call for us.

THE MESSAGE

As we grow older, and hence wiser, we slowly realize that wearing a R600 or R60.00 watch, they both tell the same time...

Whether we carry a R600 or R60.00 wallet/handbag, the amount of money inside is the same;

Whether the house we live in is 60 or 600 sq. m, the loneliness is the same.

Hopefully, one day we will realize, our true inner happiness does not come from the material things of this world.

Whether we fly first or economy class, if the plane goes down, we go down with it...

Therefore.. I hope we realize, when we have mates, buddies and old friends, parents, brothers and sisters, who we chat with, laugh with, talk with, talk about north-south-east-west or heaven & earth, That is true happiness!!

The Disease of Sin

Its effects and cures

“Whoever repents after his transgression and corrects himself, then Allah shall relent towards him. Surely, Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful.” [Quran 5:39]

Devastation of sinning:

We (human beings) are spiritual beings in addition to being physical entities. Our Creator (Allah) has placed an innate desire (a homing beacon) within our souls for us to accept goodness and to feel guilty on breaching the commands of our Creator. We have to go against our natural (primordial) nature to become satisfied (or even live) with a state of disobedience. Our natural and upright nature is to accept the commands of our Creator and to be obedient as stated in the Qur’an:

“So, set your face to the Faith uprightly, this (faith) being the nature designed by Allah on which He has created the mankind. There is no change in Allah’s creation. That is the straight faith, but most of the people do not know.”

[30:30]

Whenever a sin is committed (a disobedience of the Creator) those who still have a good (uncorrupted sound) nature will become restless and won’t find peace. This is the reason why you find people repenting, crying, being remorseful and constantly reflecting upon the sin. However, the devastation of sins is not just limited to being restless its effects are multifaceted and affect many aspects of our lives. Shaykh (Imam) Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya (RA) has mentioned

up to 10 side effects of sin:

Deprivation of Knowledge:

Being deprived of knowledge for knowledge is light that Allah causes to reach the heart, and sin extinguishes that light. When Imam Al-Shafi’i (RA) sat before Imam Malik ibn Anas (RA) and read to him, he admired him because of the intelligence, alertness and understanding that he saw in him. He said: “I think that Allah has caused light to enter your heart, so do not extinguish it with the darkness of sin.”

Deprivation of Provisions:

In Musnad Ahmad it is narrated that Sayyidina Thawbaan (RA) said: “The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said: “A man is deprived of provision because of the sins that he commits.” [Ibn Majah]

Alienation from Creator

Sense of alienation that comes between a person and his Lord, and between him and other people. One of the salaf (righteous predecessors) said: “If I disobey Allah, I see that in the attitude of my riding beast and my wife.”

Life becomes difficult:

Things become difficult for him, so that he does not turn his attention towards any matter but he finds the way blocked or he finds it difficult. By the same token, for the one who fears Allah, things are made easy for him as stated in the Qur’an:

“... Whoever fears Allah, He brings forth a way

out for him, and provides him (with what he needs) from where he does not even imagine.”
[65:2-3]

Heart is darkened:

The sinner will find darkness in his heart, which he will feel just as he feels the darkness of night. So this darkness affects his heart as the physical darkness affects his vision. For obedience is light and disobedience is darkness. The stronger the darkness grows, the greater becomes his confusion, until he falls into innovation, misguidance and other things that lead to doom, without even realizing, like a blind man who goes out in the darkness of the night, walking alone. This darkness grows stronger until it covers the eyes, then it grows stronger until it covers the face, which appears dark and is seen by everyone. Sayyidina ‘Abd-Allah ibn ‘Abbaas (RA) said: “Good deeds make the face light, give light to the heart, and bring about ample provision, physical strength and love in people’s hearts. Bad deeds make the face dark, give darkness to the heart, and bring about physical weakness, a lack of provision and hatred in people’s hearts.”

Deprivation of Obedience & Worship

If sin brought no punishment other than that it prevents a person from doing an act of worship which is the opposite of sin, and cuts off access to other acts of worship, that would be bad enough. So the sin cuts off a third way and a fourth way and so on, and because of the sin he is cut off from many acts of worship, each of which would have been better for him than this world and everything in it. So he is like a man who eats food that is bound to cause a lengthy sickness, and thus he is deprived of many other foods that are better than that. And Allah is the One Whose help we seek.

Sin breeds sin:

Sin breeds sin until it dominates a person and he cannot escape from it.

Weakens willpower:

It gradually strengthens his will to commit

sin and weakens his will to repent until there is no will in his heart to repent at all... so he seeks forgiveness and expresses repentance, but it is merely words on the lips, like the repentance of the liars, whose hearts are still determined to commit sin and persist in it. This is one of the most serious diseases that are most likely to lead to doom.

Desensitization towards sin and evil:

He will become desensitized and will no longer find sin abhorrent, so it will become his habit, and he will not be bothered if people see him committing the sin or talk about him.

For the leaders of immorality, this is the ultimate shamelessness in which they find great pleasure, such that they feel proud of their sin and will speak of it to people who do not know that they have done it, saying, “O so and so, I did such and such.” Such people cannot be helped and the path to repentance is blocked for them in most cases.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “All of my ummah (followers) will be fine except for those who commit sin openly, and that includes cases where Allah conceals a person’s sin, but the following morning he exposes himself and says, ‘O So and so, I did such and such last night, so he shamelessly exposes himself when all night his Lord had concealed his sin.’ [Bukhari]

Hearts is stamped/marked:

When there are many sins they leave a mark on the heart of the person who commits them, so he becomes one of the negligent. As one of the salaf said, concerning the aayah (verse):

“No! But that which they used to commit has covered their hearts with rust.” [83:14]
this means sin after sin.

Witnesses of sinning:

There is no such thing as a “private sin” in Islam. There are multiple witnesses to every sin as follows: Earth witnesses sins and its testimony against you:

“When the earth will be trembled with its

quake, and the earth will bring forth its burdens, and man will say, 'What has happened to it?' That day it will describe all its happenings..." [99:1-4]

Limbs witness sins and their testimony against you:

"Today We will set a seal on their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their legs will bear witness about what they used to do." [36:65]

Angels witness sins and their testimony against you:

"...while (appointed) over you there are watchers, who are noble, writers (of the deeds), who know whatever you do." [82:10-12]

Sin is recorded in your book of deeds:

"...and when the scrolls (of deeds) will be unrolled..." [81:10]

I have sinned, what now?

You need to understand that Allah has created human weak and perfection is not an attribute of our creation. Our Creator knows that we are weak and He (SWT) intends to then make things easy for us when we make mistakes, Allah declares in the Qur'an:

"Allah intends to make things easy on you. And man has been created weak." [4:28]

It is understood as part of our (weak) nature that we will commit sins from time to time. It is expected from him to occasionally slip up but then we are advised to acknowledge our weakness, acknowledge our error, repent and turn to Allah. Those of us who acknowledge our weakness and errors with humility and then turn to our Creator seeking forgiveness are considered the best. Seeking forgiveness is what sets apart the humble and the haughty, the submissive from the arrogant and the modest from the proud.

Nabi (SAWS) said, "Every son of Adam sins, and the best of those who sin are those who repent." [Tirmidhi]

Allah is the Most Merciful of those who show Mercy and every ready to shower and immerse

us in Mercy. He (SWT) looks for opportunities to shower his Mercy upon those who have turned to him in sincerity seeking forgiveness.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah (RA) narrated that Nabi (SAWS) said: "Allah has one hundred parts of mercy, of which He sent down one between the jinn, mankind, the animals and the insects, by means of which they are compassionate and merciful to one another, and by means of which wild animals are kind to their offspring. And Allah has kept back ninety-nine parts of mercy with which to be merciful to His slaves of the Day of Resurrection." [Muslim]

In fact, Allah is so eager to forgive that he (SWT) has declared that if we didn't commit sins (thus for Allah to forgive) then he would replace us by those who sin so Mercy can be showered upon them!

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah (RA) narrated that Nabi (SAWS) said: "By Him in whose hand is my soul, if you did not sin Allah would replace you with people who would sin and they would seek the forgiveness of Allah and He would forgive them." [Muslim]

So what do I have to do to seek forgiveness from Allah?

In Islam, repentance has to fulfil 3 conditions and a 4th additional condition if the sin was committed towards another human, Imam Nawawi (RA) enumerates them as follows:

Disconnect and detach yourself from the sin

Feel remorseful over the sin

**Commit to not repeating the sin, permanently
Absolve yourself from the rights of another human**

But if the sin involves a human's right, it requires a fourth condition, i.e., to absolve oneself from such right. If it is a property, he should return it to its rightful owner. If it is slandering or backbiting, one should ask the pardon of the offended.

What should I do after I have repented? And what happens when I commit the sin, again?

The conditions of repentance (above) have

to be valid at the time of seeking forgiveness. A sound (firm) intention is needed. Once you have turned to Allah with sincerity and repented then don't dwell on the matter! It is part of human nature to slip up then you need to seek forgiveness again. Don't be despondent of the Mercy of Allah and don't be tricked by the Shaytaan into thinking that your repentance is futile! We must try our human best to resist and leave the sin and this doesn't mean that the person should continue to sin (willing and voluntarily) and also keep seeking repentance. There has to be a genuine effort to break the cycle of sin.

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azeez (RA) said: O people, whoever commits a sin, let him seek the forgiveness of Allah and repent, and if he repeats it, let him seek the forgiveness of Allah and repent, and if he repeats it, let him seek the forgiveness of Allah and repent, for it is like chains around the neck of man, and doom lies in persisting in it.

It was said to al-Hasan al-Basri (RA): Would not any one of us feel ashamed before his Lord to seek forgiveness from his sin then go back to it, then seek forgiveness then go back to it? He said: The shaytan would like you to feel that way; never give up seeking forgiveness.

What do you mean by perpetual repentance?

A sincere believer is someone who is full of servitude and humility. He accepts that despite his best efforts he can never fulfil the rights of Allah as they ought to be fulfilled, his best in devotion and exertion in performing acts of worship will fall short of when compared to the grandeur and rights of Allah. Importantly, he never regards his efforts to be exemplary, rather relies solely on the Mercy of Allah. Our Nabi (SAWS) despite being (the highest) of the Prophets still turned to Allah hundred times a day so where are we?

Sayyidina Al-Agharr bin Yasar Al-Muzani (RA) narrated that: The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said: "Turn you people in repentance to Allah and beg pardon of Him. I turn to Him in

repentance a hundred times a day". [Muslim]

Allah, Blessed and Exalted, says: O son of Adam, however much you call upon Me and place your hopes in Me, I will forgive you without any reservation. O son of Adam, if you have sins piling up to the clouds and then ask My forgiveness, I will forgive you without any reservation. O son of Adam, if you come to me with enough sins to fill the earth, and meet Me without associating anything as a partner with Me, I will come to you with enough forgiveness to fill the earth. [Tirmidhi]

Therefore a daily schedule should be organised and sometime set aside for Astaghfaar (daily recitation of 'astaghfiru l-lāh' i.e. "I seek forgiveness from Allah". This can be recited any number of time but for the sake of consistency and developing a perpetual habit a count of 100 should be set and this should be recited 100 times daily.

We have recorded some daily recitations in this article for anyone to benefit and formulate their own schedule and routine.

Should I tell others about my sin?

Absolutely not!

If Allah has been Merciful to you and your wrongdoing has been hidden from people then you should not disclose and publicise your sin. If you wish to ask people to make dua for you to remain steadfast then you can say in general terms that I made a mistake and I request that you make dua for Allah to prevent me from making the same (or similar) mistake again.

The disclosure of sins is strictly forbidden under normal circumstances.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra (RA) reports that the Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said, "All my Community will be excused except those who are blatant. And it is from blatancy for one to perform an act at night and to wake up and tell something that they did such-and-such, while Allah had concealed it for them. They slept under the cover of Allah, and they rended

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Characteristic of Humility

Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah Gangohi

Whoever asserts tawaadhu' (humility) for himself, is undoubtedly a man of pride because when a claim of humility is made, it is made after the perception of one's (supposed) lofty rank. This implies that one believes in one's personal elevation, hence one is a mutakabbir (proud person).

Believing oneself to be the most contemptible and lowest being is known as tawaadhu' (humility). The consideration of greatness in oneself is takabbur (pride).

The knowledge of a thing is gained from its opposite. In the absence of the opposite, the knowledge of a thing would not be possible. The knowledge of light is by virtue of darkness. If on earth there was only light and no darkness whatever, the conception of light would not have been possible. The knowledge of courage is on account of cowardice. If there was no cowardice, there would not have been the knowledge of courage. Thus, the claim of humility made by a person is tantamount to takabbur (pride). There is no doubt in him being proudful. If his nafs was fully imbued with true humility, he would not have been aware thereof because of the non-existence of its opposite, viz. kibr (pride).

Since pride exists in the man who lays claim to humility, the Shaykh (ra) says that the one who puts forth the claim that he is humble, is

in actual fact considering himself to be elevated. Thus, he is a man of pride.

The meaning of Tawaadhu' is that man views himself with all honesty to be so contemptible that the possibility of him having any rank does not even occur to his mind. He sees nothing but contemptibility in himself. When this degree of humility has been cultivated, no claims will be made, neither in regard to Tawaadhu' nor in regard to any other praiseworthy attribute.

A humble man is not a person who regards himself above the act of humility he is displaying. A humble man is a person who considers himself below the act of humility he is doing.

Generally people believe that a humble person is one who displays acts of humility, e.g. a wealthy man rendering some service with his own hands to a poor person. People gain the impression from this display that the wealthy man is very humble when in fact, he may be entirely devoid of any humility because he thinks of himself as being superior to this act. While he overtly displays humility, he covertly believes that the act of humility in which he is involved is below his dignity. He feels conscious of having adopted humility and he believes that he has practiced virtue.

True Tawaadhu' (humility) is the consequence of the perception (mushaahadah) of the

grandeur of Allah and of the tajalli (celestial illumination) of His Attributes.

While people generally think that ostensible actions or displays of humility are Tawaadhu', in reality true humility is that condition of lowliness which is accepted by Allah. When the greatness of Allah dawns on the heart of man and he vividly realizes the illumination of His Attributes, then the rebellious nafs melts away. The roots of rebellion and pride are then eradicated. The vain hopes of the nafs are annihilated. Humility then develops. This then is true humility.

A sin which humbles a man and cultivates in him dependency on Allah, is better than such worship which generates pride and arrogance in him.

The purpose of Ibaadat and Dhikr is to become humble and to feel wholly dependent on Allah, eliminating the rebellion and arrogance of the nafs. If on account of a sin committed because of the frailty of human nature, man is torn by remorse, and the humility he feels as a result, causes him to despise himself and to believe that the sin will destroy him, then these effects of the sin are better than the conceit which a man develops as a consequence of his acts of worship and piety. His conceit, self-esteem and pride constrain him to despise other Muslims.

A dim-witted person should not now understand from this explanation that it is better to abandon worship and commit sins. The evil of sin and the virtue and beauty of obedience are self-evident facts. At this juncture the Shaykh (ra) is simply pointing out that the actual method of reaching the Divine Court is by way of acquiring true humility and dependence on Allah.

Loyalty to Him Comes First

Shamsuddeen Muhammad bin Hamzah bin Muhammad Al-Fanaari (ra) was a great Mufti and Qaadhi during the reign of the Abbasid ruler, Baayazeed Khan. He was born in 751 A.H. and was the grand teacher of the great scholar, 'Allaamah Jalaaluddeen Suyooti (ra).

On one occasion, the ruler, Baayazeed Khan, entered the court of Qaadhi Shamsuddeen (ra) in order to testify in a certain case. When he tried to testify, Qaadhi Shamsuddeen (ra) rejected his testimony!

Baayazeed Khan later asked the Qaadhi, "Why did you reject my testimony?" In reply, Qaadhi Shamsuddeen (ra) said, "You are not a credible witness because you do not perform salaah with jamaat in the masjid." On hearing this, Baayazeed Khan acknowledged his error and in order to rectify it, he constructed a masjid opposite his palace. He would thereafter perform every salaah with jamaat in that masjid. (Ash-Shaqaa-iqun-Nu'maaniyyah)

Lessons:

1. When a person is sincere in his imaan, he will not look at who is correcting him. Rather, he will look at whether the correction is valid and applicable to him or not. If it is valid and applies to him, he will accept the correction with humility and consider it the means of his progress, not a means of his humiliation and disgrace.

2. When a person is loyal to Allah, he will not be prepared to compromise his deeni standards for anyone. Hence Qaadhi Shamsuddeen (ra) rejected the testimony of the ruler of the time and did not make a special concession for him. Similarly, in our own lives, we may be faced with a situation where we have to choose between making Allah happy or making someone else happy. We have to remember that our ties and loyalty to Allah come first and can under no circumstances be sacrificed.

CARELESSNESS

Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanvi

Another level of carelessness found in Muslims is such that although one maintains some degree of remembrance of Allah during worship, there is no remembrance otherwise. Those people who are considered 'devout-worshippers' are also involved in this. They should understand that just as there is a routine adopted by the tongue for worship, there is also a routine for the heart. In other words, the routine of the tongue is zikr lisaani, or verbal remembrance, and the routine of the heart is remembrance through focusing towards Allah and through thoughts about Allah. So, often worshippers remain involved in verbal remembrance of Allah but they fail to keep the heart occupied in a similar manner.

The pious are also involved in such carelessness in terms of the heart. This is why it is necessary to understand that just as zikr lisaani, verbal remembrance is necessary, remembrance in our hearts is also essential. One should keep the heart focused on Allah at all times. Upon necessity it is permissible to think about something other than Allah but without such necessity do not invite such thoughts into the heart. However, do not think that since your heart is always involved in thoughts other than Allah it is necessary to rid of all these things. If upon necessity your thought falls on a foreign matter, this is no grounds for panic. However, after the thought leaves immediately bring your attention back towards Allah. Now, after giving permission to have thoughts on other than Allah, I

have taken care of all issues that may arise. Now no one can argue that I do not have any awareness of the necessary aspects in life. Gentlemen! I also have knowledge of the necessities of life. Now look ahead to the extent the explanation of this has been done.

The detail that I am trying to convey is this; you have to understand what Zikr-Ullah actually is. If the thought of something other than Allah (ghayr) comes into the mind, it should only be out of necessity. I am further trying to convey that if this type of habit develops strength, then during the times when there is no such necessity, and at the times when there is separation and freedom from the necessities of life, one can easily keep the thought of Allah in ones mind. The affect of this InshaAllah will be that even during those times of necessity and during those times when you are involved in worldly activities, the thoughts of Allah will remain in the mind. Such a condition will also rise where the remembrance of Allah will remain firm in the heart at all times. If the thought of ghayr does creep in the mind, it will come crawling with great difficulty.

When a tenant takes residence in his house, any other individual who enters the house comes under the role of a guest. But now the opposite is happening. The house has been taken over by the guest. If the owner wants to enter, he cannot even pose his say. This is why it is necessary to free the house from the control of strangers and to absorb Allah within so that

when another enters, he enters with the proper etiquettes and with the attitude as is customary within a guest.

From my lecture you have understood that thoughts of ghayr are not entirely prohibited. Permission is given to keep relationships and partake in daily transactions, but these thoughts are only to the extent that is habitual of a guest, or to that extent that occurs with a stranger. Look, our servants also enter into our house, but they come with manners. They do not come to take over the house nor do they come to govern us. So, bring others into your heart, but bring them in that manner. I am not saying to strictly ban others from entering your heart. Allow them up to necessity, as strangers for a brief time period only.

Make Allah the permanent resident in the mansion of your heart. This fine difference is worthy of remembrance. The difference meaning that you should keep the difference of truth and fiction between Allah and those other than Allah fresh in your mind. Now look, I do not leave out the world, nor do I stop any of your work and duties. Do all types of work and duties, but keep and maintain the most important and prime duty, the remembrance of Allah prominent. Fully perform your other tasks but thereafter immediately return back to your prime duty.

Now take a minute and reflect deeply over the condition of your own heart. The difference that should exist between the remembrance of Allah and the remembrance of ghayr, is that in fact the difference present in your heart or not? Is the remembrance of Allah the type of remembrance that is associated with the prime aim, and is the remembrance of ghayr the type that is associated with remembrance of strangers? If the difference is not such, then verily nearby a time will come when you will hold your head in your hands and cry aloud. A time will come when you will be full of regret as to why you left even one moment without the remembrance of

Allah. At that time however, there will not be any chance of recovery. If I had said to leave out the worldly trades and worries completely and remain only in remembrance of Allah, then you would indeed have had an excuse, but this is not the case. And what excuse do you have now? I have not even forbidden those things which are necessary. I am merely saying to maintain the difference between the asal (genuine) and the arzee (counterfeit). Keep the remembrance of Allah prominent and the thoughts of strangers secondary.

Keep in mind the reference to the household servants. For household duties, it is necessary for the servants to enter the home. But it is not necessary for them to establish domination over the house. Servants should enter the house as servants, not to become the head of the household or to govern the house. This is a very heavy issue, memorize this stance very well. Make the master and head of your heart Allah. And allow strangers and those other than Allah to enter your heart only as servants. And all of this is well in your control. Allah knows best! Allah knows best! This is well in your control! Let no one think that this is not possible for them or that they cannot do this. It is possible, and it is possible very easily. Unfortunately we do not even give any attention to it or consider it necessary. If we did we would realize it is possible to do so very easily. Use a bit of strength; attempt to do so and you will see. Afterwards you will question; this is considered difficult? To remember all, but keep the remembrance of Allah prominent over everything and anything else.

If you still consider this to be difficult you may have the excuse that since you have not seen Allah, such an entity which you have not seen, to constantly think about Him or to absorb such an entity into the heart is very difficult. And remembrance of such a thing does not bring pleasure either. So how can the heart

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Those Who Could Not Make It

Majid Arbil

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

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

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

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

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

The Pilgrimage to Mecca is a sign of supreme significance. It was Prophet Abraham's

unconditional commitment to God that led him to leave his wife Hagar and his infant son Ishmael in this desolated desert. Prophet Abraham was reward for his unwavering submission to God, by a promise from Him to make this uninhabited land into a place of promise and plenty.

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

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

The following story reminds us of the spirit of Hajj.

The Cobbler's Hajj

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

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

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

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

Abdullah bin Mubarak had also gone for Hajj that year.

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

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

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

He had thought only so far when he heard the other angel speak: "There is a cobbler in Damascus. His name is Ali bin al-Mufiq. He could not come for Hajj, but Allah has accepted his intention of Hajj. Not only will he get the reward for Hajj, but because of him, all the Hajjis will be rewarded.

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

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

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

Ali replied: "I am a cobbler". Then Ali asked the stranger's name that had come looking for him. Abdullah bin Mubarak was a very well-known scholar of Islam, when Abdullah bin Mubarak introduced him self, the cobbler was anxious to find out why such a well known scholar was seeking him out.

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

Abdullah bin Mubarak was eager to find out how could this man's Hajj be accepted and

blessed for all the people who went for Hajj that year when he didn't go for Hajj in the first place. While talking to the cobbler he could feel a certain purity in his heart. Islam regards greatness not in wealth or in power, but in civility, in good manners and the goodness of heart.

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

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

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

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

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

God is merciful and shows mercy to those who do likewise to his creatures. This act of compassion on the part of the cobbler was so pleasing

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Reasoning Beyond Reason

V. A. Muhammad Ashrof

Bigotry in every form - religious, scientific Or social, has to be opposed and counteracted. According to materialistic point of view, there is no design or purpose in creation. Hard scientific truth interpreted peripherally denies an ultimate significance and a sense of the worth of our own actions; it subverts values by insisting upon the contingency of all that we do. On the other hand Revealed Source of Knowledge urges man to think and to decipher the Signs of God so that man may realize his potential and fulfill the mission for which he was sent to this world as a vicegerent of God. Real devotion is not mere ritual but obedience to the will of God, following the Moral Law laid by Him, identifying oneself with the purpose which He has assigned to the universe (30:30, 2:177). This unconditional submission to the will of Ood, is Islam in its literal as well as theological sense. This brings the life of man in harmony with the law of the universe, which is the law of man's own nature.

The earth with its unique combination of star (i.e., sun), distance from the sun, atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and other ingredients, seems uniquely designed as a unique abode for life. Evidence is accumulating that the entire universe is so constructed as to support life. The Anthropic Cosmological Principle builds on the fundamental constants of nature and the basic structure of matter, showing that if these were not almost exactly as they are, life could not have existed in the cosmos. It suggests

a connection between the existence of man and principles of physics that are supposed to have little bearing on biology. The cosmos is neither a self-operating, automated workshop as a group of ignorance is worth to fancy. It is a well organized, superbly ordered system which is fully under the control of its Creator (13:2). The system regulating the universe testifies to the fact that an all-pervasive power controls it and that an immense wisdom permeates it. The structure of the universe clearly indicates that it will not last forever. When that moment comes, the present world will vanish into nonexistence and will be replaced by another one (4:87, 23:16, 14:48). After contemplating the secrets of the universe and the order, precision and unity of purpose it includes, a truth-seeker feels the obligation of accepting the unicity of God (21:21-22).

A firm belief in Tawhid arms the researcher with a comprehensive view of nature and no more sees it as a bundle of isolated pieces, rather he observes this interrelations and their common origin. He sees a unity behind this multiplicity. Every cause, which is not itself primary, is traceable to some other cause and this to some other and so on. But the series of this cause and effect taking its rise in this finite world cannot be infinite. It must terminate at some point. The final cause is, therefore, the Creator of the universe (Qur'an 53:41, 57:3). The vast masses of matter rolling in space without disturbing each other's motion invoke contrivance and design.

As Werner Heisenberg expressed his awe and wonder: 'I am strongly attracted by the simplicity and beauty of the mathematical schemes which nature presents us'. John Polkinghorne, the great physicist-philosopher, points out correctly: 'The creation is not just about some initiating instant; rather, it is a continuing act of God's will which maintains the cosmos moment by moment' .

God has created this universe including this earth with all the ingredients for sustenance of all living things in general and man in particular in a planned way. Man has to use these bounties in a proper way for better life with the only objective that could serve God better. Knowledge helps a man to visualize the Signs of God in His creation and the foundation of faith becomes more stable. Because of such an importance of knowledge, the Qur'an not only praises it but acquiring knowledge has been included in its code of life as an obligatory duty (17:36, 67:23). Simply saying 'God is great' will not let one know the immensity of His greatness. To understand the greatness of God one must understand the vastness of His Kingdom, containing universes, heavenly bodies, the energy pattern, and the gravitational and repulsive forces that keeps the universe in balance by the will of God. The universe demonstrates an elegant inclination towards the improbable.

Despite overwhelming odds against it, the cosmos manifests a bias towards life, the possibility for moral and aesthetic consciousness, and the stunning powers of symbolic communication in language and culture. And most improbable of all, we human beings are able to contemplate the cosmos, to learn about nature and ourselves, and to help direct the course of our destiny. The Qur'an argues that only men of knowledge will fear God (35:28, 7:32). For such fear is akin to appreciation and love, - appreciation of all marvelous beauties of God's world, and love because of His Grace and kindness. The Qur'anic ayat (verses) decipher those cos-

mic ayat (signs) for people who otherwise were unable to read them due to their lack of orientation.

Science has removed the obscuring veil of mystery from many phenomena, much to the benefit of the human race; but it confronts us with a basic and universal mystery - mystery of existence in general and of the existence of mind in particular.

It is the ultimate Revealed source, the Qur'an, which answers the questions such as: Why is the world-stuff what it is? Why does the world exist? Why does it have mental or subjective aspects as well as material or objective ones? The Qur'an is not basically a book of natural science but a Book of Guidance and Enlightenment, and wherever there is reference to the natural phenomena, it is meant to grade human being through them. Muslims consider the laws of nature not as independent laws, which go on their own way as if the world had an ontological independence of its own. He sees these laws as reflections of the Wisdom of God and also as a result of His Will. In a profound sense one might say that the whole of nature is Muslim, meaning that it obeys totally to the Will of God. All creatures follow the nature, which God has given them. A coconut tree always bears coconuts; a fish always remains true to the nature of the fish and a bird to that of the bird. It is only man who has been given the freedom of rebellion against his own primordial nature. Therefore, the created world or the world of nature is a constant reminder to man of what it means to be a perfect Muslim in the sense of being surrendered to God's Will. Let us conclude this paper with the words of the great Islamic philosopher-theologian Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali that 'all miracles are natural and all nature is miraculous'.

Appreciate Your Spouse

Shaykh Abdul Hamid Is`haq

Generally, husbands and wives take each other for granted; to the extent of being off-hand in speech, insensitive of the other's feelings and ungrateful for whatever kindness the other does.

Sadly, today, we are so proud that we cannot even say "JazakAllah khayran" to the wife (or to the husband) – when some kindness is shown. Whilst we choose not to recognise the favours of the spouse, we are very quick to identify the shortcomings and failings of the spouse.

Often, our fights stem from pride and from both sides, there is unwillingness to acknowledge when in the wrong or seek forgiveness. Many couples behave like little children and refuse to talk to each other for days – generally, over petty or worldly matters. The good character, humility, compassion and mercy of the Muslim seem non-existent.

Long term, this attitude harms the marriage since marriage involves two hearts – and the material and composition of the heart is not rock or wood or steel or iron.

It is very important to deal with each other with mercy and patience and with appreciation.

Look at the good qualities in each other. Focus on the good.

My advice to the brothers is that we are living with our wives, so we should tolerate the little faults that they may have. We, ourselves, are not

angels who have come down from the heavens!

My advice to the sisters is that men have their faults. No one denies this – but women are also not angels.

Commonly, a wife rarely praises or thanks her husband. Of course, there are exceptions. ... However, it is a reality and also drawn from the Ahadith, that women incline towards cursing and being unthankful to their husbands. Due to these weaknesses, Rasulullah (SAWS) enjoined upon women to give charity and to seek forgiveness.

My humble observation is a wife praises her husband twice in her life. Again, there are exceptions. ... The first time she praises him is prior to marriage. She will boast that she is getting married to so and so. If he is a Hafez, Qari, Aalim, Mufti, etc. – then all these titles impress her and she thinks the world of the person she will be getting married to. After marriage, these titles no longer hold any sway over her. So whilst married to her, a person should not anticipate any praises. Perhaps, the next time she will praise the husband is when he dies and she outlives him.

Even if the people regard the person as a Waliyullah – they can express their respect for him, honour him, kiss his hands, etc. but the moment he enters the home, there is a very different scenario.

At one time, my elderly aunt from Lenasia

kept calling home to complain about my uncle. They were very, very elderly and old age comes with a different temperament and mood. Nevertheless she insisted that we resolve the issue, so we went there. Her list of complaints was not ending. ...What could I tell my uncle who was eighty years old? We consoled her and said we will make Dua. I also said that I will speak to my uncle. After two months, my uncle passed away.

When we visited for Ta'ziyat (to console the bereaved), the same aunt said: "Abdul Hamid! I was married to your uncle for sixty years and he never once troubled me!"

...So a wife will praise her husband after his demise, and perhaps when she wants him to buy something for her.

For many the loss of the spouse is that occasion that invites great regret. This is the time that a person looks back and realises that as a spouse, we did not play our part as we should have. Where we could have presented flowers, we threw pots of thorns. Where we could have offered sweetness in our words, we flung out bitterness or ingratitude.

Regret does not bring back one's spouse. So whilst they are alive, we should not delay in expressing love and appreciation and we should interact with them with mercy and compassion.

The husband leaves home to earn his living and even if he is at home, he leaves home five times a day for the Masjid ... We do not know if we will see each other again, yet we don't care to make amends or part company on a gentle and loving note. Sometimes we go to sleep angry with each other, not considering that there is no certainty that we will see each other again.

If we look at the Sunnah, Nabi (SAWS) would enter and leave the home with the most pleasant expressions, always smiling and greeting; even assisting with the chores at home. ...And his wives also did not lose out the opportunities of reciprocating his love and kindness.

Take the noble and exemplary example of Hadhrat Khadija (Radhiyallahu 'anha): Despite

being older, her love, gentleness, support and appreciation were manifest in her unrelenting and sincere Khidmat[2] to Nabi (SAWS). Despite being a wealthy, independent woman, she graciously assisted Nabi (SAWS) and sacrificed for Dien, in all ways.

Rasulullah (SAWS) said regarding this beloved wife (Radhiyallahu anha): "She believed in me when no one else did; she accepted Islam when people rejected me; and she helped and comforted me when there was no one else to lend me a helping hand."

This is the kind of wife a person should seek... someone who will support and assist us in Dien and preparation for the Aakhirah.

Many Ahadith point to the rights of the husbands – and similarly, many other Ahadith highlight and emphasize the rights of the wives. Alhamdulillah, there is a beautiful balance established by Islam and there is harmony when we follow through practically on Dien and Sunnah.

Husbands have to play their part as well. Many are plain negligent when it comes to their wives and their families. Rasulullah (SAWS) said: "The best amongst the Believers is he whose character is the best. And the best among you is the one who is best with his wife."

Allah has interceded on behalf of wives, by instructing the husbands to live with them with kindness.

"...Live with them on a footing of kindness and equity..." [Surah An-Nisaa 4 : 19]

Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (ra) set an extremely noble example of being a husband, always concerned about the well-being and comfort of Hadhrat's wife. Whenever Hadhrat Moulana (ra) visited us in South Africa, it was his habit to call his wife repeatedly during the Safr (journey), to enquire of her health, etc. And he would speak to her with great compassion.

In the latter part of his life, before suffering a stroke, Hadhrat (ra) undertook a Safr for Umrah and Ziyarah. On reaching Makkah Sharief,

the Umrah was just completed when Hadhrat received a phone call to say that his wife was admitted into hospital.

Hadhrat had only arrived in Makkah Sharief a few hours earlier, but immediately booked the next available flight to Karachi.

Since there were some hours before departure, Hadhrat (ra) took a flight to Madinatul Munawwarah, made Salaam at the Roudha Mubarak, flew back to Jeddah, boarded the flight to Karachi and within hours was besides his wife in hospital – to support, care and comfort her. Such happiness filled her heart and so much of appreciation when she saw Hadhrat (ra) at her side. Allahu Akbar!

If only we could take lesson: It is immensely rewarding to put happiness in the heart of a Muslim. The rewards would be far greater, when the husband is making his wife happy or vice versa. Of course – and it should go without saying – that this be done within the parameters of Dien, and should not entail anything Haraam and displeasing to Allah.

Hadhrat (ra) composed some loving words, in praise of his wife – when she was in her old age. The translation of which is:

‘O my dearest wife,

You are sweeter than sugar,
and beautiful like a doll...

Hadhrat (ra) was so particular about husbands fulfilling the rights of their wives and taking good care of them, that when anyone requested permission to spend time in the Khanqah, Hadhrat would first enquire about the condition of the wife and family, and the arrangements made for their comfort, ease, etc.

On one occasion, a brother, from another country, visited the Khanqah in Karachi with the intention to spend time with Hadhrat (ra). In conversation, he requested Hadhrat’s Dua for his wife, who was due to have a baby. When Hadhrat was informed that the baby was due to arrive any day, Hadhrat immediately instructed the person to return home, and offer his wife support in her

hour of need.

So husbands should also adopt this care and concern, mercy and compassion. May Allah grant us Taufeeq.

On any shortcomings, there should be patience. Rasulullah (SAWS) has said: ‘No man should bear ill-will towards a believing woman, for if he resents some trait in her, he might be pleased with some other trait in her.’

Also: One very common cause for not appreciating one’s wife – to the extent of disliking her and staying away from her – is the sin of casting lustful glances at other women.

When a person looks at other women, his own wife has no appeal for him. He sometimes cannot even stand to look at his wife, let alone spend time with her and express love to her. There is then no appreciation because the person is constantly comparing her with other women. This then pushes him further into sins. This is due to the very serious crime of evil glancing.

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (ra) had said that casting lustful gazes is the sickness and disease of fools. There is no good and no gain in this habit; rather there is great, great harm. ... Due to lustful glancing, the person activates restlessness and turmoil in his heart. ... A person can admire a girl forever but never have her. Whoever is meant for him, will be for him. Allah has already decreed her. So when the matter is decided already, it is only a fool who will waste his life looking at strange women.

... There has to be some effort made not to look at strange women; not to look at the street women and billboards with pictures of women. We will have to avoid all of that. In this manner, we keep our gazes pure and we keep our thoughts pure.

If the gaze and thoughts are kept pure and clean, then Wallaah, I guarantee that Allah will make the person’s wife look like a Hoor of Jannah. ... There will be no question of looking at other women. One’s wife will be the coolness of one’s eyes.

Surprisingly, the same weakness of evil glancing is found in many women. Women, who were once upon a time, so bashful that they would not raise their gaze to a strange man, now write that they find no attraction for their husbands. And they too acknowledge that they admire other men, interact with other men, view them on television, YouTube, at sports matches, etc. They then compare these strange men with their husbands and become dissatisfied in their marriages.

So from both sides, there is disloyalty and infidelity – and this creates a huge chasm between the husband and wife. There is no love and no mercy between the two, and there is no enjoyment in marriage. This is the direct consequence of lustful glances and our free interaction with the opposite gender. ...May Allah grant us the understanding.

The Command of lowering the gaze is directed to both men and women, married or unmarried. In this lies the protection of one's marriage, one's chastity, one's happiness and one's peace of mind.

Both husband and wife need to work together towards establishing the Sunnah of living with each other and both need to give up all sins. This invites great success and happiness in marriage.

May Allah give us true appreciation for the bounty and blessing of our spouses and the Taufeeq of good treatment to them.

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to God that it not only earned him the reward of Hajj but was extended to all the people who came for Hajj.

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

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

Sadaqah Jariyah

Abu Hurairah (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said, "When a man dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things: Sadaqah Jariyah (ceaseless charity); a knowledge which is beneficial, or a virtuous descendant who prays for him (for the deceased)." .

Commentary: "His deeds come to an end" means that he does not any longer receive the return and reward on his actions. But there are three categories of actions on which he receives reward even after his death.

First, Sadaqah Jariyah such as building a mosque, or a hospital, or digging a well. As long as people will benefit from these, he will receive a reward for them.

Second, "knowledge which is beneficial" means to impart knowledge to others or to propagate knowledge by means of one's books. As long as this medium of teaching will continue and his books will be studied and people will benefit from them, he will receive a reward for it.

Third, virtuous descendants. Training of children on the right lines is essential so that after a person's death they continue to pray for him. The prayer of children in favour of parents is highly useful.

The Prophet's Zuhd

Sheikh Aaiad al-Qarni

Zuhd is an often misunderstood term, most probably because, among certain people -- namely, certain followers of Sufi orders-- it is taken to an extreme; or, it is understood only on a superficial level. In the Arabic language, a Zahid-- one who practices Zuhd--- is someone who is abstemious, austere, and self-denying in his lifestyle. As an Islamic term, a Zahid is someone who abjures worldly pleasures and comforts for the sake of Allah, and because, through leading a self-denying existence in this life, he hopes to enjoy a comfortable and pleasure-filled life in the Hereafter.

Suffice it to say, the Prophet (SAWS) was the Imam (leader) of all Zahids. His Zuhd was based on his certain knowledge that this world is a fleeting abode: Its pleasures are few, limited, and temporary; and life passes by so quickly that all people who live to be old agree that their lives went by quickly, that it seemed only yesterday that they were children. Such a life, therefore, cannot be compared to the everlasting life of the Hereafter.

The Prophet (SAWS) kept his sight focused on the Hereafter, being very cognizant of what Allah (SAWS) has prepared for His believing slaves in terms of rewards, comfort, pleasures, and eternal bliss. As such, he refused to take from this world anything that was above and

beyond his basic needs. He understood that the more one possesses in this life, the more attached one becomes to this world.

The Prophet (SAWS) was a Zahid not by force of circumstances, but by choice. As the leader of a Nation, but moreover as a favoured and beloved Prophet of Allah, he could have had mountains of gold and silver; he could have led a luxurious and comfortable lifestyle: He only had to ask Allah, and he would have been given great wealth. But he preferred to follow the way of Zuhd, to save his share of good things for the Hereafter. As a result of that choice, he spent many nights of his life hungry; at times, at least a month would pass by without a cooking fire being ignited in his house. During such periods of hardships, he would either go hungry for days, or he and his family would survive on water and dates. As one of his wives stated, it never occurred that he ate a satisfying amount of barley bread for three consecutive nights. He would sleep not on a real mattress, but on a makeshift bed that was made of straw, one that would leave marks on the side of his body. On various occasions of his life, he would stave off the pangs of hunger by tying a rock around his stomach. His Companions (RAA), who themselves suffered frequently from want, were often saddened to see the signs of hunger on the Prophet's face.

As for the Prophet's house, it was made neither of bricks nor cement nor any other strong, resistant, and long-lasting material; it was, on the contrary, made of simple clay. It was small, and its roof was low. And rather than depend on the help of his Companions, the Prophet (SAWS) once left his armor as collateral with a Jew, so that he could borrow from him thirty Saa's of dates (a single Sa' is equal to four handfuls of something). His clothing was simple and plain, and never once did he sit at a dining table to eat. He underwent such hardships in order to discipline his soul, to preserve his Faith, and to be deserving of the promise that Allah made to him:

*And verily, your Lord will give you (all, that is good] so that you shall be well-pleased.~
(Qur'an 93: 5)*

Upon receiving wealth (such as certain kinds of war booty), the Prophet (SAWS) would distribute it among the people, without keeping a single dirham for himself. If he hoped that certain people would embrace Islam, he would, in order to encourage them, give them all of the camels, cows, and sheep he had in his possession. And he would then walk away without keeping a single camel, cow, or sheep for himself. He once Said: "If I had wealth that was equal in quantity to the trees of Tihamah (i.e., a very large sum of wealth), I would have distributed it, and you would not have found me to be a miser, a liar, or a coward (regarding the manner in which I would liberally give away all of that wealth)."

In the way he turned away from this world, without rejoicing in its treasures or enjoying its pleasures; and in the way he focused on the Hereafter, performing deeds purely for the sake of Allah -- the Prophet (SAWS) became the ideal role model for all Zahids, and, more generally, for all Muslims. Even though he had the wealth of a Nation at his disposal, and even though his Companions would have given him all of their wealth if he had only asked, he built no castle,

and saved no money. When he died, he left hardly any material possessions behind. And whatever he did leave behind was earmarked for charity, for he said: "We (we group of Prophets) are not inherited from; whatever we leave behind is charity."

I do not say for nothing that the Prophet (SAWS) could have been rich if he only wanted to be, for Allah did in fact give him a choice between being a king/Messenger and a slave (of Allah)/Messenger. The Prophet (SAWS) chose the latter option, and so he ate his fill one day, and he went hungry the very next day, a process that more or less continued until he met his Lord.

Since the Prophet (SAWS) cared so little about this world, he did not ever think twice about giving away his wealth to others, which was another reason why he was so generous. He never said 'no' to someone who asked him for help, and he never disappointed the hopes of someone who expected something from him. He said: "If, for Allah, this world was worth even the wing of a mosquito, He would not have given a disbeliever in it even a mouthful of water." According to another narration, he said, "Live in this world as if you are a stranger or a traveller who is only passing through (one place on his way to a distant destination)."

It is related that he said: "Seek little from this world, and Allah will love you; refrain from taking what people have (with them), and people will love you." He also said: "What do I have to do with this world! Verily, the example of me vis-a-vis this world is nothing more than the example of a man who takes a noon-time nap underneath the shade of a tree, and who then gets up and leaves it."

The Prophet also said: "The world is cursed, and everything in it is cursed -- except for the remembrance of Allah, for good deeds that Allah loves, for a scholar, or for a student." And according to yet another hadith, he said: "All

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Enjoying a Sense of Humour

Dr. Muhammad Ali al-Hashmi

The Muslim has a sense of humour, which makes people like him. He mixes with them and jokes with them when it is appropriate to do so, without going to extremes or saying anything hurtful. Similarly, when he is serious, he does not go to extremes of harshness and strictness. His humour is within the limits of Islamic tolerance, and does not go beyond the bounds of truth. This is the example of the Prophet (SAWS) and the Sahabah in their jokes and humour. It is reported that the Sahabah said to the Prophet (SAWS): "You are joking with us." He said, "But I never say anything but the truth." (Bukhari)

The Prophet (SAWS) used to joke, but he never said anything but the truth in his jokes. The Sahabah took the same approach to humour. There are many delightful reports about the jokes exchanged between the Prophet (SAWS) and the Sahabah. Among the stories related in the books of hadith and sirah is the report that the Prophet (SAWS) used to joke with the small child of one of the Sahabah, a boy called Abu 'Umayr, who had a small bird he used to play with. One day he saw the child looking sad, so he said, "Why do I see Abu 'Umayr looking sad?" The Sahabah told him, "The nughar [a small bird, like a sparrow - author] which he used to play with has died, O Messenger of Allah." The

Prophet (SAWS) began to gently joke with the child, saying, "O Abu Umayr, what happened to the nughayr?" [Nughayr: diminutive of nughar. - author. In Arabic, this is a play on words, because of the rhyme between the boy's name and that of the bird. - Translator. This story was reported in Hayat al-Sahabah, 3/149]

A man came to the Prophet (SAWS) to ask him to give him a beast to ride. The Prophet (SAWS) jokingly told him, "I will give you the offspring of a she-camel to ride." He said, "O Messenger of Allah (SAWS), what will I do with the offspring of a she-camel?" The Prophet (SAWS) said: "Are riding-camels born except from she-camels?" [Reported by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and al-Tirmidhi, with a sahih isnad.]

Imam Ahmad reported from Anas (RA) that there was a man from the desert people whose name was Zahir. He used to bring gifts from the desert to the Prophet (SAWS), and in return the Prophet (SAWS) would provide him with whatever he needed when he went out to fight. The Prophet (SAWS) said, "Zahir is our man of the desert, and we are his town-dwellers." The Prophet (SAWS) loved him very much, and he (Zahir) was an ugly man. One day the Prophet (SAWS) came to him whilst he was selling some goods. He embraced him from behind. The man could not see him, so he said, "Let me

go! Who is this?" Then he turned around and recognized the Prophet (SAWS), so he tried to move closer to him once he knew who it was. The Prophet (SAWS) started to say, "Who will buy this slave?" Zahir said, "O Messenger of Allah (SAWS), you will find me unsellable." The Prophet (SAWS) said, "But in the sight of Allah you are not unsellable," or he said, "But in the sight of Allah you are valuable."

An old woman came to the Prophet (SAWS) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, pray to Allah that I will enter Paradise." He said jokingly, "O Mother of So-and-so, no old women will enter Paradise." The old woman went away crying, so the Prophet (SAWS) said, "Tell her that she will not enter Paradise as an old woman, for Allah says: (We have created [their Companions] of special creation, and made them virgin-pure [and undefiled]) (Qur'an 56:35-36)." Reported by al-Tirmidhi, it is hasan because of the existence of corroborating reports.

One of the hadiths that reflects the Prophet's sense of humour and enjoyment of fun is the report that Ahmad gives from 'A'ishah who said: "I went out with the Prophet (SAWS) on a journey. At that time I was a young girl and was quite slender. The Prophet (SAWS) told the people, 'Go on ahead,' so they went ahead, then he said to me, 'Come, let us have a race.' So I raced with him, and I won. He let the matter rest until I had gained weight. Later, I accompanied him on another journey. He told the people, 'Go on ahead,' so they went ahead. He said to me, 'Come, let us have a race.' So I raced with him, and he won. He began to laugh, and said, 'This is for that.'"

The Sahabah saw nothing wrong with joking or having fun, as they saw the Prophet (SAWS), their leader and teacher, occasionally doing so. The many delightful stories about their sense of humour reflect the easy-going nature of the first Islamic society, and how far removed it was from narrow-mindedness and gloom.

In al-Adab al-Mufrad, Bukhari reports

from Bakr ibn 'Abdillah who said: "The Companions of the Prophet (sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam) used to throw melon-rinds at one another, but when the matter was serious, they were the only true men."

This is moderate, Islamically acceptable humour, which does not go beyond the bounds of truth, or lessen the gravitas or manhood of a person. Rather, it serves its purpose of refreshing hearts and minds.

An example of the Sahabah's sense of humour, which made the Prophet (SAWS) laugh, is the report given by Imam Ahmad from Umm. Salamah (RA). Abil Bakr (RA) went to do business in Busra, and with him were Nu'ayman and Suwaybit ibn Harmalah (RAma), both of whom had been present at Badr. Suwaybit was in charge of food on the journey, and Nu'ayman said to him, "Feed me!" Suwaybit said, "Not until Abu Bakr (RA) comes." Nu'ayman was a fun-loving man with a sense of humour, so he went to some people who had brought livestock with them, and said, "Will you buy a sturdy Arab slave from me?" They said, "Yes." He said, "He has a big mouth, and he may tell you that he is a free man. If that means that you do not want to take him, then forget the matter, and do not cause trouble for me with him." They said, "No problem, we will buy him." So they bought him for ten young she-camels. Nu'ayman brought the animals back, and told the people: "There he is!" Suwaybit said: "I am a free man!" They said, "He has already told us all about you," and put a rope around his neck and led him away. Then Abu Bakr came, and was told what had happened. He and his companions went and returned the animals and took Suwaybit back. They told the Prophet (SAWS) what had happened, and he and his Sahabah would laugh about the story for a year afterwards.

A Bedouin came to the Prophet (SAWS). He entered the mosque and left his camel in the courtyard. Some of his Companions said to Nu'ayman ibn 'Amr al-Ansari, who was known

as al-Nu'ayman: "If you slaughter it, we will eat it, because we want to have some meat, and the Messenger of Allah (SAWS) will pay for it." So al-Nu'ayman slaughtered it. Then the Bedouin came out and saw his saddle, so he shouted, "They have slaughtered my camel, O Muhammad!" The Prophet (SAWS) came out and asked: "Who did this?" They said, "Al-Nu'ayman." So he went looking for him, and found him at the home of Duba'ah bint al-Zubayr ibn 'Abdul Muttalib (RA), where he had hidden in a ditch and covered himself with palm branches and leaves. A man pointed to where he was and said, loudly, "I have not seen him, O Messenger of Allah." The Prophet (SAWS) brought him out of the ditch, and his face was dirty from where the leaves had fallen on him. The Prophet (SAWS) asked him, "Why did you do that?" Al-Nu'ayman said: "The ones who told you where I was, O Messenger of Allah, are the same ones who told me to do it." The Prophet (SAWS) began wiping his face and laughing, then he paid the price of the slaughtered camel. [See Hayat As Sahabah, 3/154, 155]

There is no clearer indication than these and similar reports of the lightheartedness and sense of humour that Islam wants its followers to have. These qualities will make a person good-natured and likeable, which will enable him to win people's hearts. No one needs such characteristics more than the Muslim who seeks to call others to Islam.

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about the tiredness they felt while prostrating. He advised them to take help of their knees".

Lessons from the Hadith

1. While prostrating, the axillae of men should remain visible and their arms away from their body and also from the ground.
2. The women should converge their body parts while offering Salaah.
3. One should separate his arms from his body and also raise them above the ground while prostrating.

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Allah's covering from themselves in the morning." [Bukhari]

Conclusion:

We conclude this brief treatise with the dua for Allah to give us and all Muslims the ability to repent (sincerely), routinely and perpetually (Ameen) and end this piece with this beautiful narration about the Mercy of Allah: "When a servant repents then Allah makes the Angels (Kiraman Katibeen) forget his sin and makes the limbs (which committed the sin) forget them and the Earth (where the sin was committed) forget them until he will meet Allah on the day of judgement in a state that there will be no witness upon his sin." [Jam'e As-Sagheer]

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become its devotee?

So i give the answer to even this excuse. Consider such a thing which is very tasteful and which you have seen before as well. Then make this your focus of remembrance. That thing is Jannat, your home from where you came into this world. Remember this. And the thoughts of this are indeed very pleasant. The types of blessings here you seen as well and the thoughts of such things will easily become absorbed into your heart. If one time you bring these thoughts into your heart with great stature and importance, your heart will recur upon these thoughts ten times out of pleasure.

Now, in this matter you have received significant comfort and a great methodology. If the thoughts of Allah do not absorb into the heart otherwise, then utilize the above method. Follow this, and a very high level of remembrance of Allah will follow.

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that you have from your wealth is what you eat and thus cause to be used up; what you wear and thus cause to be worn out; and what you give in charity and thus cause to remain (for your benefit)."

Appeal

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