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RADIANT REALITY

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الليلة القدر



*Every day of Ramadan
Allah beautifies Jannah
and says:*

*Soon my righteous servants
will finish their work and
will rest in you. On the
last night of Ramadan
Allah forgives the sins of
His servants.*

*They asked, 'Is the last
night Lailatul Qadr'. He
said, 'No, but the worker
is paid when he finishes his
work'.*

(Prophet Muhammad (SAWS))

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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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Question Answer

Question.

A brother has to inhale oxygen whenever he sleeps. The oxygen has to be inhaled by him as long as he is sleeping. He cannot sleep without oxygen. This procedure is permanent. Now, does this oxygen inhaling break his fast or not? As you know oxygen is only air. He says there is no medication mixed in it. Please reply asap?

Answer.

In the above referred, we have consulted a doctor. We are advised that the oxygen contains only air and does not contain any form of medication. As such, the oxygen inhaled does not nullify ones fast. (Mabsoot 3/93)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

My daughter has been declared insane permanently by the doctors due to severe sickness and illness. As such, she has the mind of a two year old child. Does she have to fast in Ramadan? If so, do I have to give Fidyah for her missed fasts of Ramadaan?

Answer.

Sanity is among the conditions for fasting to be compulsory. Hence, the fast of Ramadaan is not compulsory on an insane person and neither does Fidyah have to be paid on his/her behalf. (Al Iktiyaar Li Ta'leelil Mukhtaar 1/125)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Can a woman perform I'tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadaan? If so, should she perform it at the Musjid or at home?

Answer.

Yes, a woman can perform I'tikaf during the last ten days of Ramadaan. A woman should perform I'tikaaf in the Masjid of her home; this refers to a place which has been designated for Salaah within the confines of the home. (Hindiyyah 1/211)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

There is a new craze of smoking the e-cigarettes, twisps etc. What is the ruling of smoking these types of electronic cigarettes etc. whilst fasting?

Answer.

The usage of an electronic cigarette whilst fasting will nullify the fast as the usage of an e-cigarette entails the inhaling of vapour that nullifies the fast. (Tahtaaawi Ala Maraql Falaah 660)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I know that if I smoke whilst fasting, my fast will be invalid. What if I apply a nicotine patch on my arm, would it break my fast?

Answer.

A nicotine patch is applied externally and there is no element of it that will nullify the fast. It is similar to a person applying oil or lotion to one's body, which is absorbed by the skin and does not nullify the fast. (Al Iktiyaar Lita'leelil Mukhtaar, 1/190)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

In the beginning of Ramadaan, I missed out on

a few nights of Taraweeh. Is there any Qadha for it?

Answer.

Taraweeh Salaah is Sunnah Muakkadah (an emphasised Sunnah). One who discards it deliberately and repeatedly becomes sinful. However, there is no Qadha (make up) for the missed Taraweeh Salaah. A concerted effort should be made to read the Taraweeh Salaah in the future. (Aap ki Masaail 3/78)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

A lot of people say that we cannot keep the shawwal fasts from the 2nd of Shawaal as Eid is for 3 days, please advise?

Answer.

It is forbidden to fast on five days in the Islamic calendar i.e. Eid-ul-Fitr (the first of Shawwal), Eid-ul-Adha (the tenth of Zul-Hijjah) and the three days of Tashreeq (three days after Eid-ul-Adha-11-12-13 of Zul-Hijjah). (Al Ikhtiyaar Li Ta'leelil Mukhtaar 1/125)

The prohibition of fasting on the three days of Tashreeq (three days after Eid ul Adha-11-12-13 of Zul-Hijjah) refers to fasting three days after Eid ul Adha (the tenth of Zul-Hijjah). It does not refer to fasting three days after Eid ul Fitr (the first of Shawwal). Hence, it is permissible to fast immediately after Eid ul Fitr (the first of Shawwal) even if it is three days after Eid ul Fitr (the first of Shawwal).

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Whilst fasting, is it okay for me to use contact lenses? Can I also apply eye drops in my eyes whilst fasting?

Answer.

The usage of contact lenses and eye drops in the eyes whilst fasting does not invalidate the fast.

Accordingly, you may make use of contact lenses and eye drops in the eyes while fasting. (Al Bahrur-Ra'iq, 2/273)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Does the time of Iftaar only commence after the completion of Azaan? I have been to some Masaajid in which Iftaar only commences after the completion of Azaan?

Answer.

The end of a fast (Iftaar) is at sunset time. (Kifaayatul Mufti 4/249)

Accordingly, a fasting person should end his fast at sunset which is generally the time that Azaan commences and should not delay it until the completion of the Azaan. Rasulullah Sallallahu Alayhi wa Sallam said:

“The people will remain on the right path as long as they hasten in breaking the fast.”

(Bukhari)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Does the use of an injection break the fast?

Answer.

The fast is not nullified. However if the injection is injected directly into the stomach or brain, the fast would break. (Ahsanul Fatawa, V: 4, P: 432). NB. Dosages of Insulin injected to the abdomen do not invalidate the fast as it is not injected directly into the stomach.

Mufti Suhail

Question.

Is it permissible to take the medication like the pill (contraceptive) throughout the month of Ramadaan to avoid getting one's period in order to keep all the fasts as I feel bad missing these fasts?

Answer.

Though it is permissible, it is not best to do so. It

could have side effects like tampering with one's cycle, etc. which leads to difficulties and problems in the future for Salaah, Umrah/Hajj etc. This is besides other long term medical harms. It is better that you allow your menstruation to continue as normal and make up for the missed fasts later on. Allah will reward you for your intention to keep all the fasts of Ramadaan and you will not miss out on any of the rewards Insha Allah.

Mufti Suhail

Question.

My daughter is in her last stages of pregnancy and will not be able to fast in ramdaan. What should we pay for this?

Answer.

Your daughter will be exempt from the obligation of fasting in Ramadaan due to her pregnancy and she may postpone the fast till after childbirth. Once she is in a position to physically make up for the missed fasts of Ramadaan, she should do so. Monetary compensation for the missed fasts is not prescribed in the situation of a person still having the physical ability to make up for the missed fasts in one's lifetime.

Mufti Suhail

Question.

Can one take a bath after Sehri, to be cleared from the state of Janaabat (requiring a Fardh Ghusal)?

Answer.

It is not advisable to unnecessarily delay the Fardh Ghusl. However if one is in the position that he wants to partake of Sehri before taking the Ghusl, it will be permissible. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had sometimes delayed the Fardh Ghusl till after Suhoor. (Fathul Mulhim, V: 5, P: 226, Darul Qalam)

Mufti Suhail

Question.

Can ear drops be used?

Answer.

If a person's eardrum is imperforated, he may use ear drops. If someone has perforated ear drums, it will not be permissible to use ear drops.

Mufti Ebrahim

Question.

Is it permissible to brush teeth and use toothpaste?

Answer.

It is not permissible to use toothpaste whilst fasting. One may brush teeth, use a miswak and a tongue scraper.

Mufti Ebrahim

Question.

What is the Kaffarah? When will Kaffarah be a binding?

Answer.

A Kaffarah is expiation for a violation. It is fasting for 60 days consecutively without any interruption for those capable of fasting. If one cannot fast, he will have to give monetary Kaffarah. Kaffarah becomes binding if one deliberately breaks his fast by eating or drinking or having intercourse.

Mufti Ebrahim

Question.

What is the significance of Sadaqatul Fitr?

Answer.

Sadaqatul Fitr is a Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) and an opportunity to ease the plight of those in need.

Mufti Ebrahim

Question.

What is the consequence for those who do not discharge Sadaqatul Fitr?

Answer.

Rasulullah (Sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam) said, 'The fast remains suspended between the heavens and the earth until Sadaqatul Fitr is discharged.' (Targhib)

Mufti Ebrahim

Question.

Does the performance of Salaah in a Musallah hold the same reward as performing Salaah in a Musjid?

Answer.

The reward for performing Salaah in a Musjid is much more rewarding than Salaah performed in a Musallah. Therefore, an endeavour should be made by all to perform Salaah in a Musjid as it is more beneficial and rewarding for a person. Note: It has come to our notice that many Muslims have established Musallahs in flats and apartments for convenience purposes to offer Salaah whereas it is possible for them to perform Salaah at a Musjid in the area. In such cases, Muslims should be motivated to perform Salaah in the Musjid and not at the Musallah.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

After a woman is divorced, the ex-husband is responsible for the ex-wife's maintenance during the Iddah period. Is it the same case when a woman's husband passes away. Will the deceased's husband wife be entitled to receive maintenance from the estate of her deceased husband during the Iddah period?

Answer.

During the Iddah period of divorce, it is the ex-husband's responsibility to maintain the ex-wife until her Iddah period terminates. However, in the case of the Iddah period of death, the wife is not entitled to maintenance from her deceased husband or his estate. She is entitled

to her share of inheritance from her deceased husband's estate. (Al Lubaab Fi Sharhil Kitaab 1/290)

As there is usually a delay in winding up the estate, the executor of the estate should ensure that funds required for the maintenance of the widow be made available to her from her share of the estate, if so required.

Note: The Iddah period of divorce is three menstrual for a menstruating woman or three months for a non-menstruating woman. The Iddah period of death is four months and ten days.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Is it permissible to give Zakaat to ones father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-laws, daughter-in-laws? Can one give Zakaat to ones brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts?

Answer.

It is permissible to give Zakaat to ones In-laws i.e. father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law's, daughter-in-law's and so on. It is also permissible to give Zakaat to ones brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts. In fact, ones close family relatives should be given preference over others in discharging Zakaat.

This is on condition that the above people are eligible recipients of Zakaat.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I am working at a fuel station as a manager and comes to my notice that we fuel trucks transporting alcohol branded on the truck should I continue to fuel them or stop?

Answer.

As a manager of a fuel station, your responsibility would primarily be the running of the fuel station. In doing so, cars, trucks etc. would use the fuel station to fill their cars, trucks etc. with fuel.

The manner in which the driver/company of the car, truck etc. conducts or uses its vehicle is not your responsibility. It is the responsibility of the driver/company. Hence, it will be permissible for you to work as a manager at the fuel station and your income will be Halaal.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

I asked a tailor to sew a Kurta for me with his own material. After he sews it, can I return it if I don't like it?

Answer.

In principle, if a person orders a manufacturer/tailor to manufacture/tailor a commodity etc., with the manufacturers/tailors own material, it is referred to as an Istisnaa' transaction.

In an Istisnaa' transaction, if a person ordered a manufacturer/tailor to manufacture/tailor a commodity according to specific descriptions and the commodity is manufactured/tailored accordingly, then a person has no right to return or refuse it. However, if the commodity was not manufactured/tailored according to specific descriptions, a person has the right to return or refuse such a transaction. (Sharhul-Majallah 1/76)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

Are girls allowed to wear synthetic headbands that look like plaited hair? JazakAllah

Answer.

It is permissible for girls to wear synthetic headbands that are not made from human and pig hair on condition it is not the custom of transgressing and immoral woman to do so. (Hindiyyah 5/385)

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

If a person missed one or more Rakaats of Salaah and he has to complete the remainder of the Salaah after the Imaam makes Salaam, should he stand up to complete it after the first or second Salaam of the Imaam? Some people do it after the first Salaam and others do it after the second Salaam? Which one is correct?

Answer.

A Masbooq (one who has missed one Rakaat or more in Salaah) should stand up to complete his missed Rakaats of Salaah after the second Salaam of the Imaam. A Masbooq should not stand up to complete his missed Rakaats of Salaah after the first Salaam of the Imaam as there is a possibility of the Imaam making Salaam to perform Sajdah-e-Sahw. (Al Bahrur-Raa'iq 2/209)

Therefore, a Masbooq should stand up to complete his missed Rakaats of Salaah after the Imaam makes the second Salaam in order to avoid confusion.

Mufti Ismaeel

Question.

People recite the Qur'an from the phone and watch YouTube or movie on the same phone. So is it right to download the Qur'an on the mobile phone?

Answer.

It is through the Qur'an that we have received the blessing of Deen and guidance. Hence, at all times utmost respect should be afforded to the Qur'an Shareef. It is not at all right to have movies stored on the phone as well as to download the Qur'an. This is showing gross ingratitude and disrespect to the the word of Allah.

Mufti Zakaria

Fasting

O those who believe, the fasts have been enjoined upon you as were enjoined upon those before you so that you be God-fearing. Days (of fasting are) few in number. However, should anyone of you be sick or on a journey, then a number from other days. And those who have the strength, on them there is a ransom: the feeding of a poor person. Then whoever does good voluntarily, that is better for him. And that you fast is better for you, if you know. (2:183-184)

Literally, Sawm means 'to abstain'. In the terminology of Islamic law, Sawm means 'to abstain from eating, drinking and sexual intercourse; with the conditions that one abstains continuously from dawn to sunset, and that there is an intention to fast'. Therefore, should one eat or drink anything even a minute before sunset, the fast will not be valid. Similarly, if one abstained from all these things throughout the day but made no intention to fast, there will be no fast here too.

Sawm or 'fasting' is an 'ibadah, an act of worship in Islam, regarded as its pillar and sign. The merits of fasting are too numerous to be taken up at this point.

The verse makes it obligatory for the Muslims to fast in a specified period, but the command in this respect has been accompanied by the statement that the obligation of fasting is not peculiar to them. The fasting had also been enjoined upon the earlier Ummahs (communities of the past prophets). The reference to the earlier Ummahs in the verse shows the importance of fasting on the one hand, and gives an encour-

agement to the Muslims on the other. It indicates that although there may be some inconvenience in fasting but the same inconvenience was also faced by the earlier communities. This brings a psychological comfort to the Muslims, because if an inconvenience is faced by a large number of people, it becomes easier to bear, (Ruh al-Ma'ani)

The words of the Qur'an 'those before you', have been used in a general sense including all religious communities from Sayyidna Adam to the last of the Prophets (A.S). This tells us that, like Salah, fasting has also been enjoined upon every Ummah of every prophet without an exception.

Commentators who interpret 'before you' to mean 'the Christians' take it just as an example, not aiming to exclude other Communities. (Ruh al-Ma'ani)

The verse simply says that fasts have been enjoined on Muslims as were enjoined on past communities. From this it does not necessarily follow that the fasts enjoined upon the earlier communities were fully identical in all respects

with the fasts enjoined upon this Ummah. There may have been differences in the number and the timings of the fasts etc. and, actually, there has been such a difference. (Ruh al Ma'ani)

By saying 'so that you be God-fearing', the text has pointed out to the inherent quality of fasting which contributes significantly to one's ability to become abstaining from the sins and

God-fearing. Fasting grows into man a power which helps him control his desires, which is really the foundation of Taqwa, the very special term of the Holy Qur'an which has been tentatively translated as fear of God, abstinence, and the warding of evil.

*Adapted from: Ma'ariful Qur'an
Mufti Muhammad Shafi (ra)*

Remove the Black Box

Zina of the eyes – can it be avoided when watching TV? Almost impossible! How often will there also be zina of the ears and several other sins. Yet ... due to the TV having become a standard part of almost every home ... most people do not regard it as a sin. People go on watching everything ... but there is no feeling of guilt. If it is not regarded as a sin ... and there is no guilt ... where is there ever going to be taubah from this combo sin box. The children then grow up in the same deception – May Allah protect us.

The television is a curse in the home. Apart from the sins, it leaves us with no family time to sit and communicate with each other. It moulds our children's dark future – a life of desire and sin. They may be our children in name but in reality they become "children" of an alien evil culture.

The best thing we can do for ourselves and our children is to remove the television from our homes. Firstly we need to acknowledge the forbidden nature of the television. We need to repent from this sin. We need to hate it and speak against it.

Let us strive to clean our lives from the sin of the television before the coming of the blessed month of Ramadan, and then enjoy peace, mercy, ease, contentment and the blessings of Ramadan.

Lessons from Sahih Bukhari

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

Chapter 13 : In how many clothes should a woman offer Salaah.

And Ikrimah said, “If she can cover all her body with a single garment, her Salaah is valid”.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Imam Bukhari is now discussing about the Satr-ul-Awrah of females. Here again, like men, the number of clothes is not important, i.e., a single garment is enough as long as it suffices to cover the Satr-ul-Awrah. Again to mention here, the Satr-ul-Awrah for men is from navel to (and including) knees, and for women, the whole body falls under it except face, hands and feet.

Hadith No. 364 Narrated Aisha

Allah's Apostle used to offer the Fajr prayer and some believing women covered with their veiling sheets used to attend the Fajr prayer with him and then they would return to their homes unrecognized .

Comments

According to Sayyida Aisha, women folk would offer Fajr Salaah in the Masjid-i-Nabavi covering themselves from head to toe with things like blankets etc., in such a way that nobody could recognize them. Rasulullah (Sal-

lallahu Alaihi Wasallam) neither objected to it nor enquired about the number of clothes they wore underneath. By quoting this Hadith, Imam Bukhari seems to convey the message that covering the body has nothing to do with the number of clothes, what is important is to cover the body nicely.

The juristic scholars have stated different preferences on the dress code of women while offering Salaah. There is a narration on the authority of Umm Salmah which says that a woman should offer Salaah while wrapping a sheet or wearing a shirt. According to Imam Abu Haneefa, Imam Maalik and Imam Shaafa'ee, a woman should offer Salaah in a shirt and a head cover. Ata recommends three garment, he adds trousers to the above mentioned two. (Umdatul Qaari)

Chapter 14 : When someone offers Salaah in a patterned garment and looks at the pattern.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Bukhari wants to convey that it is permissible to offer Salaah while donning a patterned garment (though it may not be preferable).

Hadith No. 365 Narrated Aisha

The Prophet prayed in a Khamis (a square gar-

ment) having marks. During the prayer, he looked at its marks. So when he finished the prayer he said, “Take this Khamis of mine to Abu Jahm and get me his Anmbijaniya (a woolen garment without marks) as it (the Khamis) has diverted my attention from the prayer.”

Comments

According to Sayyida Aisha, one day Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) offered Salaah in a Khamis—a black woollen blanket with patterned border. During the Salaah, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) momentarily had a look at the marks of the patterned border diverting his attention. After finishing the Salaah, he called Abu Jahm and gave away the blanket to him. It is narrated in another narration that this blanket was gifted to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) by Abu Jahm and that is why he returned it back to him. In order to avoid the possibility of hurt that Abu Jahm might feel by the return of his gift, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) asked him to bring a simple and thick blanket which the people of Anmbijaniya used to weave.

Lessons from this Hadith

1. It is permissible to offer Salaah donning clothes depicting designs or patterns.
2. It is preferable to offer Salaah donning simple and plain clothes so as not to invite one’s attention during Salaah.
3. It is discouraged to paint the Mehraab and the walls of a mosque with colourful designs as it may distract one’s attention.

Chapter 15 : If Salaah is offered in a garment bearing marks of a cross or pictures, will the Salaah be invalidated? And what has been narrated in relation to refraining from such things.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Bukhari is pointing towards three issues:

1. Is it permissible to offer Salaah donning a cloth with a cross sign (crucifixion)?
2. Is it permissible to offer Salaah donning a garment depicting pictures?
3. Is it permissible to offer Salaah at a place with pictures on the walls.

Imam Bukhari has not given any categorical reply to this but it seems that he doesn’t consider it preferable to offer Salaah in such a case; although it might be permissible.

Hadith No. 366

Narrated Anas

Aisha had a Qiram (a thin marked woolen curtain) with which she had screened one side of her home. The Prophet said, “Take away this Qiram of yours, as its pictures are still displayed in front of me during my prayer (i.e. they divert my attention from the prayer).”

Comments

Sayyiduna Anas narrates that Sayyida Aisha had hung a thin picture marked curtain screening one side of her room. Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) offered Salaah in front of it, and after finishing he told Aisha to remove it as its pictures diverted his attention. This hadith mentions that though Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) offered Salaah in front of a marked curtain still he did not repeat his Salaah, this confirms the validity of the Salaah offered. But, his command to remove the curtain indicates undesirability of having such kind of things in houses.

It has been quoted that Imam Maalik, Imam Abu Haneefa, Imam Thouri and many other scholars disapproved the presence of having pictures on walls or curtains, but did not prohibit having them on floorings or pillows. (Umdatul Qaari)

Lessons from the Hadith

1. According to al-Khattaabi, this hadith serves as a basis for the fact that it is forbidden to have pictures on clothes, walls and elsewhere.

2. to Ibn Butaal, it is impermissible to wear clothes marked with pictures.

3. It is necessary to remove such things which may distract one's concentration during Salaah.

Chapter 16 : One who offered Salaah in silk Furrooj (outer garment open at the back) and then took it off.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Although males are prohibited to wear silk garments but if someone offers Salaah wearing them his Salaah will be valid, however, the sin of wearing silk garments will take effect. This is what Imam Bukhari tries to convey by establishing this chapter.

Hadith No. 367

Narrated Uqba bin Amir

The Prophet was given a silken Farruj as a present. He wore it and then prayed. When he finished his prayer, he took it off violently as if with a strong aversion to it and said, "It is not the dress of Allah-fearing pious people."

Comments

Narrator: Uqba bin Aamir (RA) has narrated fifty five hadiths out of which eight are in Bukhari. He was appointed as the governor of Egypt during the Caliphate of Sayyiduna Mu'aaviya (RA) and died in 58 Hijri.

Uqba bin Aamir narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was presented a silk Farruj (a kind of blanket) as gift. According to Allaama Ayni, it was presented to him by Ukaidar bin Abdul Maalik known as Dhormatul Jundul. As per Abu Nuaim, Ukaidar bin Abdul Maalik sent this gift to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) when he embraced Islam, however, the most authentic statement in this regard is report-

ed by Ibn al-Atheer, according to whom Ukaidar bin Abdul Maalik sent it as gift Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) after declaring peace. (Umdatul Qaari)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wore this Farruj and offered Salaah, but soon after finishing his Salaah, he took it off with a strong aversion saying, "Such a dress does not suit the Mutaqeen".

The learned scholars associate two meanings to the word 'Mutaqeen'. If it connotes people who keep away from Kufr, then the statement will mean that 'the dress is not suitable for Muslims'. However, if it connotes people who keep away from sins, then the statement will mean that 'the pious people should not wear silk clothes'.

It is to mention here that it is only males who are forbidden to wear silk, and not females. In Islam, men are supposed to remain in a rough and tough state, and since women are delicate, therefore, soft silky clothes are suitable for them only.

Why Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wore silk garments?

According to the learned scholars one reason Why Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wore silk garments could be that they were not forbidden till that time; it is possible that the ban may have been revealed to him during that Salaah itself. The second reason given is that he had not experienced the evil effects of wearing silk, and once he wore it, the effects got manifested and he immediately took it off.

Lessons from this hadith

Allaama Ayni has derived the following lessons from this Hadith:

1. It is only men who are forbidden to wear silk.

2. It is permissible for men to wear silk during a battle, as a treatment for some skin diseases, and in severe cold if nothing is available.

Cont'd on page 13

Season of Sorrow

Syed Iqbal Zaheer

Muslims seem to receive this Ramadan with somewhat dampened spirits. A thin blanket of gloom appears to have descended upon them that mulls, if not culls, their enthusiasm. Out of sight is the fervor, the liveliness, the excitement and the emotional warmth with which they greeted Ramadan in the yesteryears. They pray, but the spiritual delight seems to hover above their heads: while they, unable to lure it down, unable to rise up to it, long, but not attain.

What could be the reason? Is it weakening of faith, irretrievable loss of spiritualism, a consequence of the battering they receive in some parts of the world, the discrimination they face at universal ports, or is it despondency concerning political and economic revival?

Perhaps all these could be traced back as the possible reasons. Each, and a few others, definitely plays its role in creating the gloom among the Muslims in this season of sorrow. Yet there is surely a central reason which accounts for it, though to which we shall return to deal with at length perhaps on another occasion. At the moment, we have another issue on hand.

Our reference to the nights and days of the modern times as the season of sorrow reflects the truth, less obvious to some, more to others, but is there, alright. Melancholy is the identification mark of the modern world, a necessary quality of today's life-style, an icon on the faces of the people.

The crowd of today is the bier-carrier of

a dead civilization that has begun to rot. Decorum demands that they display no mirth as they drag the coffin-wagon to its burial ground. They may eat, drink, celebrate and, dance along (like some bier-carriers of Africa, Asia and other parts of the world do), but they may do so like robots, like the sad-at-heart celebrities that broadly smile for the lens. They express joy, but it is on the lips with nothing touching the heart. It is a mechanical gesture of a mechanical culture, the smile of an air-hostess, a sales-girl, a receptionist. They are taught to grin, even as the heart burns; paid to smile to placate the customers' scowl. When was it last that you saw a man smile with sparkling eyes, beaming face, scattering warmth?

When was it last that you heard a hearty laugh coming down the aisle? When was it that you last heard the newest jokes down the lanes, sent across the downtown? When was it that you last read a moving poetical line, a true lyric of love, a genuine portrayal of nature's charm? When was it last that you heard a peel of laughter coming from a gathering of women five? When was it that you last heard a child's morning song?

Mark the seriousness on the face of the child. His nose displays the marks of spectacles, his eyes lusterless, and his heart invaded by the worries of a life he is yet to begin. He must achieve – now – or be damned the lifelong; work hard, or begone; tomorrow belongs to the

mug-pot, the grade-topper, the self-denier (of a run in the park). He must run, but in the rat race. His playground has been taken away from him, and a parking lot built for the homeless car-sleepers that appear, owl-like, after dark and disappear by the morn. Do you see sadness in his face and profile?

Today, every hour of the TV gives the people a fresh dose of sadness; every dramatic new turn in life ends in a new tragedy; every marriage in separation, every child in rebellion, every president – white or black – a charlatan.

Mourn then, as you push the cart of life, a wagon filled with corpses of failed promises, failed economies, failed monsoons and failed morning breeze. Futile is the senseless morning rush of the monster machines, senseless economic struggle that pays less while demanding more and more of people's time, overwhelming the Cyndy Sheehan "robber class" promising a turn around, dismaying leaders that come with 32-teeth smile, but who can only deliver missiles, sent across to wipe out unknown woman and child.

There is little to cheer the bier-carriers, little to lift the dispiriting souls, little to fill the kitchen cabinets, little to quote a fresh word of wisdom, a proverb new. The elitist curse the soldiers who exposed the national character, the common people at a loss about how ideas, things and thoughts are moving, and the intellectuals wondering whether the next regimes in their glorious lands will be communistic or fascist. Futile it is they know, to wish that after Ibn Khaldun's 3-tier 'asabiyyah' the nation and the civilization will rise again, futile it is, they realize, to fasten hope on those who are now collecting yellow autumn leaves. Never in their ancient and modern history have they accepted universal responsibility.

In has moved the season of sorrow.

Being with the crowd is to be sharing its pace, its fate. This season of spiritual drought

is a feature that the Muslims cannot escape from. Are they not in the mainstream of a life-style that in truth is hollow, unfocussed, sterile, marked by insatiable greed and dominated by ennui? Does it not, being in the mainstream, mean that they share with the crowd the good and the evil of it all?

When you are in a crowd, you are not an identifiable individual anymore. Step aside, find your own path, tread your own line, march on to your own goal, and then be noticed and treated differently by the One on High. In the crowd, you are invisible, an undistinguishable dot, a mere identify card.

Stand apart. You belong to a different caravan: those who carry the Qur'an in their one hand and feed the needy with the other as they hasten on, over a historically tested track that ends by the Splitter of the dawn.

Stand apart and don't dance with the dancers. Play not their album, sing not their song. Strike not their gong, blow not their horn. Stand apart, a figure of solemn truths, a man of message and morals, a person of profound dignity.

Stand apart, change your direction, alter your destination. Halt there not as a critic but go along with the crowd; helping the fallen ones to their feet, feeding the hungry ones, clothing the naked ones of body or soul. Offer the nectar of your life as drink to the stranger, give, ask not; serve, accept no service, seek not rewards, nor even thanks, let yours be the upper hand.

Stand apart, get out of the gloom.

Cont'd from page 11

On the authority of Zaid bin Arqam, Tahaavi and Tabaraani have quoted that Rasulullah (Salallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"Gold and silk is permissible to the women of my Ummah and forbidden to its men". (Umdatul

Qaari)

3. If someone offers Salaah wearing silk clothes, his Salaah is valid (the sin of wearing silk will be a separate act).

Interior Decor

Interior decor is an art. People spend much time, effort and money on their homes offices and businesses in order to get that special finish and make it look as impressive and appealing as possible. Great pains are taken to ensure that the furniture “blends in” with the surroundings. The carpets are made to match the curtains. Just any ordinary bulb sticking out of the ceiling is unthinkable. A variety of light fittings are positioned in the proper places so that the light may reflect in the best way. The right “tone” must be captured in the colour co-ordination. Several other trimmings and trappings are added for the final touch.

Allah has also given us a month for interior decoration – a month to decorate our hearts. The month of Ramadhaan is a time to truly make our hearts sparkle and shine and to look truly impressive in the sight of Allah. The first part of interior decoration is to remove the cobwebs, scrape the rust and do a general thorough cleanup. The cleanup of our hearts requires sincere taubah. We will have to scrape off the rust of sin, remove the filth of jealousy, sweep out the dirt of malice, scrub away the pride and generally wash away all the evil within us with the flowing tears of earnest and sincere repentance.

Simply Weep

The preferable procedure of repenting is very simple. Dedicate some time in solitude. Perform a proper wudhu (ablution). Take care to fulfil all the sunnats and etiquettes of wudhu. Thereafter get on to the musalla (prayer mat)

and perform two rakaats of nafl salaah with the intention of the salaah of taubah and then let the tears of repentance flow. If the eyes cannot cry just let the heart weep. Weep over our utter ingratitude. Beg Allah’s forgiveness by saying: “O Allah . . . You granted me a heart to fill with love for You ... but I filled it with the love of the world ... with even haraam love ... O Allah forgive me. You granted me legs and feet to walk to the masjid and to places that You love ... but I walked to the dens of vice ... please forgive me. You gave me hands to raise unto You, to hold the Quraan and to assist the needy ... but I used it to touch what You forbade to indulge in illicit “chatting” on my phone and to take away what belonged to others ... forgive me O Allah ... I ate the sustenance that You provided ... and then used the energy to disobey You ... please forgive me ...” This is just a little example. Simply weep over every sin perpetrated and wash the heart clean. However, when washing the heart with the tears of repentance the detergent that is compulsory to use is the deep regret for having transgressed the laws of Allah and the firm determination that one will not return to the sin in future.

Allah Knows

After removing the filth, rust, and dust, the internal decor must commence. The purpose of fasting is to decorate the heart with taqwa – the fear of Allah and the constant awareness that Allah is watching. While fasting one refrains from all eating and drinking even if one is very hungry and thirsty. Why? Simply because it is the

command of Allah . . . and Allah is watching . . . and Allah knows. Likewise, no more gambling, drugs, zina, illicit chatting, looking at haraam, stealing, etc., because . . . Allah is watching . . . Allah knows. Taqwa also requires the fulfilment of all the obligations of Deen, Salaah, Zakaat, Fasting, Haj, etc. The heart with Taqwa indeed is a billion times more sparkling and impressive in the sight of Allah than the most expensive decor that money can buy!!!

Ramadan is also a month to decorate the heart with various other important trimmings and accessories. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) is reported to have said that Ramadhān is a month of patience and compassion. Therefore, paint the heart in the soft shades of patience. Tint it with the colour of tolerance. Give the heart an elegant look by draping it with compassion. With patience and compassion we can change the world around us. Patience will help us to be obedient to Allah as well as to be content. Compassion will enable us to feel the suffering of millions of people around us and make us do something to reduce their pain. The millions squandered in wasteful and even forbidden things will then easily and happily be channeled to the poor and needy.

Together with the above, the beautiful trimmings of humility, generosity, forgiveness, etc. have to be included in this heart to make it truly shine. It will shine in the sight of Allah and His angels. It will sparkle on the day one passes away - that day when we will be removed from the shining car, the magnificently decorated home, the glittering jewellery and all the other trimmings and accessories. It will shine on the day of Judgement - when all our beloved possessions of this world would have long become dust.

This Ramadan let us not waste much time in acquiring glittering garments, dazzling jewellery and shining shoes to decorate ourselves for 'Eid. While cleanliness and neatness are essential on the outside, the greatest effort must be made to decorate the inside - the heart. This

nevertheless does not happen merely by reading an article. We will have to spend time in Allah-fearing company and environments of taqwa. These qualities will then insha-Allah rub off on us.

May Allah enable us to truly adorn and decorate our hearts. Aameen.

Source: alhaadi

Cont'd from page 23

of your deeds going. Here are four ways that can help.

MAKE DU'A: Constantly make du 'a to Allah, subhanahu wa ta 'ala, to make things easy for you and that you act out of sincerity. Allah tells us in the Quran: "Make du 'a to Me. I will respond to you"

JOURNAL: There may be days during Ramadan when we feel as though we have not reached any of our goals. That is why it is so important to write down and focus on what you have done during the month to look back at when you need an extra boost to keep going.

FRIEND HELP: Friends, especially in these times, are among our biggest influences when it comes to how we spend our time. This is why it is important to always surround oneself with friends who will help us reach our goals.

REINFORCEMENT: If you notice that you are reaching the goals you set, don't forget to reward yourself. This can be something simple as going out for ice cream after iftar and tarawih. By looking forward to a special treat, whatever wholesome thing it might be, this will help you get through the day.

In the end, goals are meant to help you draw nearer to Allah, glorified and exalted. The best of goals, therefore, are those acts of belief that can be done consistently and be continued throughout the year. Whatever good goals you set, may you reach them with great success.

aljumuah

Accepting Correction

There was once a woman in Kufah who hailed from the clan of Taym. She would exert herself in 'ibaadah to the extent where she would fast for three consecutive days and only spend the fourth day without fasting. Such was her attachment to worshipping Allah that she would spend all her time in the local masjid and would only emerge to attend to her basic needs.

One day, the great scholar Ebrahim Taymi (ra) advised this woman and said to her, "The salaah which you perform in your home is more virtuous and carries more reward than the salaah which you perform in the masjid."

The woman immediately accepted the advice of Ebrahim (ra) and left the masjid, proceeding to her home. She would thereafter ensure that she performed all her 'ibaadaat at home and would not leave her home without necessity. This act served to open the doors of even greater spiritual progress for her and was a means of her attaining much more reward.

(Sifat-us Safwah vol. 2 pg. 113)

Lessons:

1. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has himself told us that a woman's salaah is most virtuous when performed in her home. The advice of Ebrahim Taymi (ra) was thus in conformity with the teaching of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). The praiseworthy trait of this woman, however, was that she did not demand that Ebrahim Taymi (ra) produce proof for what he said. Rather, she understood that he was her senior and thus took his advice to heart. This led to her making much more progress than she would have otherwise made.
2. To accept correction may cause your pride and ego to be wounded for few moments. It is still infinitely preferable to spending a lifetime in ignorance which will harm you in the Hereafter.

HOW TO LIVE RAMADAN

Shaykh Mawlana Muhammad Saleem

1. We must wake up for suhur as it is a sunnah of our Rasul (SAWS). He has informed us that the food of suhur is full of barakah: “Eat suhur, because in it lie great blessings.” (Bukhari, Muslim)

We should arrange our time for suhur in such a way that we are also able to perform at least 4 to 8 raka‘at of tahajjud together with du‘a for about 15 minutes or more. Rasulullah (SAWS) has said that the du‘a in the darkness of the night (after tahajjud) is readily accepted by Allah. (At-Tirmidhi)

2. The ideal way to perform tahajjud with suhur is to wake up early and perform tahajjud and make du‘a before suhur. Everyone in the house should wake up and engage in ‘ibadah in the darkness and isolation of their own rooms. Shed tears and ask Allah for your needs just as a small child cries and gets his needs fulfilled. Rasulullah (SAWS) has encouraged his followers to cry when making du‘a.

Crying and weeping attracts mercy. Just as a mother who, upon seeing her child crying for a sweet, will succumb at the sight of the child’s crying and treat it with mercy, similarly when one sheds tears whilst beseeching his Lord, the Mercy of the Lord will enshroud him.

3. After tahajjud and suhur, we must pray

our Fajr Salah with congregation. Ladies should also perform their obligatory Salah.

4. After Fajr remain engaged in ‘ibadah till 15-20 minutes after sunrise and perform 4 raka‘at ishraq.

5. Before zawal, perform Salat-ud-Duha (chasht). Rasulullah (SAWS) said, “There is charity due upon you in lieu of every joint that exists in your body. To say sub‘hanallah is a form of charity, to say alhamdulillah is also a charity, to say la ilaha illallah is also a charity, to command goodness and forbid evil is also a charity, and two raka‘at at the time of duha (chasht) is sufficient for all this charity (i.e. to compensate the favour of every joint that Allah has given you).” (Muslim)

6. Perform Zuhr with congregation. If possible, engage in ‘ibadah for a while and have a short rest with the intention of qaylulah – a Sunnah of our beloved Prophet (SAWS).

7. Perform ‘Asr. The time between ‘Asr and Maghrib is very valuable especially for du‘a. We must make the effort to perform our ‘Asr with congregation and then remain in the masjid until Maghrib. Unfortunately, Shaytan and nafs have deceived us so much that many of us cannot do without food in the masjid at the time of iftar. My friends, we should try to change our hab-

its and keep the Akhirah in our minds. Shaytan and nafs will take us home for some food, which should only take a few minutes, and will not let us come to the masjid until just before Maghrib. This is the best part of the day, which we do not value, only because of our desire for food. Rasulullah (SAWS) said, "There are three groups of people whose du'a is not rejected; the fasting person until he breaks the fast..." (Ahmad)

When Allah has made a promise through His Prophet (SAWS), there is no doubt in the acceptance of these supplications. In spite of this, we find some people whose prayers are not answered. This does not mean that their prayers have been rejected. It is Allah's Favour upon us that should He find that granting us what we ask from Him is in our interest, He grants, otherwise not.

Another point to remember is that there are certain conditions in the absence of which they may be rejected. Among these is halal food and making du'a with attention and concentration. If our hearts and minds are not in our du'as, then they may not be answered.

My friends, we must make the habit of bringing a few dates with us at the time of 'Asr, and after 'Asr we must engage in dhikr, tilawah, tasbīh, etc. until just 10-15 minutes before Maghrib, when we should raise our hands in du'a until Adhan. In this way, everyone will be engrossed in their own 'ibadah and we will find that if some of the individuals are crying, others will also get the inclination to do the same. Therefore value this time between 'Asr and Maghrib and do not waste it in worrying about food. The saintly people are such that not even gold and silver will distract them from the Worship of Allah, let alone food. Their concentration in their du'a is not affected even if heaps of treasure were to be placed before them, whereas, we would not be able to concentrate if only a small morsel was to be put in front of us. I would request my sisters not to spend the time between 'Asr and Maghrib in the kitchen.

8. After performing Maghrib, we should perform 6 raka'at of awwabīn after the two raka'at sunnah and two raka'at nafl of Maghrib. However; those who do not feel inclined to do this, some 'ulama have said that two raka'at sunnah and two raka'at nafl of Maghrib can also become part of the 6 raka'at awwabīn. Hence, performing only two raka'at after the sunnah and nafl of Maghrib will suffice.

9. After food prepare for 'Isha Salah and go to the masjid. Perform 'Isha Salah and tarawīh. The sisters should note that 20 raka'at tarawīh is sunnah mu'akkadah for them too. They must perform tarawīh after 'Isha.

10. After tarawīh, go straight home. Do not loiter around outside the masjid wasting time. At home, remain in 'ibadah until you go to sleep. Sleep with the intention of waking up for tahajjud and suhur.

11. Apart from the above, we know that in Ramadan there are always various programmes taking place in the masajid led by our 'ulama. These are for our own benefit. There are many of us who are very sinful and during this month our hearts are softened and more receptive; by listening to the wise words of our 'ulama the chances of bringing good deeds into practice are greater. Although the month of Ramadan is solely for 'ibadah, we should try and attend these programmes in the masajid because by listening to these discourses, insha'allah, changes will come into our lives for the better. Our hearts are blackened by and full of sins and by listening to these discourses and sitting in the company of the 'ulama and the pious, change will definitely occur in our hearts, insha'allah.

Notes

• The household should sit together daily at a specified time and read from Virtues of Ramadan compiled by Shaykh-ul-Hadīth, Shaykh Mawlana Muhammad Zakariyya rahimahullah for at least 15 minutes. This will create a good atmosphere and environment in our homes and

at the same time Ramadan will pass joyfully with an abundance of barakah in the home, insha'allah.

- Whilst in the masjid engage yourself in 'ibadah. Take great care not to get involved in any worldly talk. It is very upsetting and disheartening to see people wasting their time in futile talk in the masjid, even during the month of Ramadan. Try and restrain yourself and remain engaged in 'ibadah.

- Perform i'tikaf of the last ten days in the masjid. Sisters may perform i'tikaf in their homes. Rasulullah (SAWS) used to perform i'tikaf in the final ten days of Ramadan. (Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

- Recite as much Qur'an as possible during the month of Ramadan.

- Du'a, istighfar and tawbah should be made in abundance throughout the blessed month.

- Intermingling with people should be decreased to a minimum.

- Everyone should try to take rest in order to conserve energy for the compulsory 'ibadah. There is no point in remaining in nafl 'ibadah and not getting rest, which will result in tiredness and laziness at the time of compulsory salah, etc.

Allah's Mercy is in abundance throughout the year, but especially during this month. We should yearn in our hearts for this Mercy because we need mercy, blessing and forgiveness from Allah. We are sinful and in this month we want to win Allah's Attention so that we can become His Beloved Slaves. If we are eager to perform good deeds then, insha'allah this month will become a month of great blessing for us.

May Allah accept our efforts and make every moment of this month a means of receiving His Mercy, Blessing and Forgiveness. May we all be granted a place in Jannah. Amin.

Erasing the Bad with Good

The Messenger of Allah (SAWS) said: "Be conscious of Allah wherever you are. Follow the bad deed with a good one to erase it, and engage others with beautiful character." (Tirmizi)

"Follow the bad deed with a good one to erase it"

This part of the hadith is proactive, an aspect that many Muslims fail at. Our understanding of sin should be mobilizing, not debilitating. Too often, we respond to a sin by putting ourselves in a figurative corner and abusing ourselves psychologically until we get over that sin. This is not what Allah wants from us. Yes, we should feel guilty and have a level of regret, but it should not stop us from moving forward in good deeds. People use their sins as an excuse to stay behind. Do not allow sin to stop yourself from all the other good that you could be involved in.

The response to a sin should not be to wait, but rather to race to do something good so the sin can be erased. Our attitude should be proactive and positive. We should always have hope that Allah can, and will, have mercy on us as long as we keep struggling and pushing forward.

The Month of Allah

Baihaqi reported on the authority of Salman Al-Farsi (Radhi Allah 'Anh) that Prophet (SAWS) delivered a sermon on the last day of the month of Sha'ban. In it he (SAWS) said,

“O People! The month of Allah (Ramadan) has come with its mercies, blessings and forgivenesses. Allah has decreed this month the best of all months. The days of this month are the best among the days and the nights are the best among the nights and the hours during Ramadan are the best among the hours. This is a month in which you have been invited by Him (to fast and pray). Allah has honoured you in it. In every breath you take is a reward of Allah, your sleep is worship, your good deeds are accepted and your invocations are answered.

Therefore, you must invoke your Lord in all earnestness with hearts free from sin and evil, and pray that Allah may help you to keep fast, and to recite the Holy Qur'an. Indeed!, miserable is the one who is deprived of Allah's forgiveness in this great month. While fasting remember the hunger and thirst on the Day of Judgement. Give alms to the poor and needy. Pay respect to your elders, have sympathy for your youngsters and be kind towards your relatives and kinsmen. Guard your tongue against unworthy words, and your eyes from scenes that are not worth seeing (forbidden) and your ears

from sounds that should not be heard.

Be kind to orphans so that if your children may become orphans they will also be treated with kindness. Do repent to Allah for your sins and supplicate with raised hands at the times of prayer as these are the best times, during which Allah Almighty looks at His servants with mercy. Allah Answers if they supplicate, Responds if they call, Grants if He is asked, and Accepts if they entreat. O people! you have made your conscience the slave of your desires.

Make it free by invoking Allah for forgiveness. Your back may break from the heavy load of your sins, so prostrate yourself before Allah for long intervals, and make this load lighter. Understand fully that Allah has promised in His Honour and Majesty that, people who perform salat and sajda (prostration) will be guarded from Hell-fire on the Day of Judgement.

O people!, if anyone amongst you arranges for iftar (meal at sunset) for any believer, Allah will reward him as if he had freed a slave, and Allah will forgive him his sins. A companion asked: “but not all of us have the means to do so” The Prophet (SAWS) replied: Keep yourself away from Hell-fire though it may consist of half a date or even some water if you have nothing else.

O people!, anyone who during this month

cultivates good manners, will walk over the Sirat (bridge to Paradise) on the day when feet will tend to slip. For anyone who during this month eases the workload of his servants, Allah will make easy his accounting, and for anyone who doesn't hurt others during this month, Allah will safeguard him from His Wrath on the Day of Judgement. Anyone who respects and treats an orphan with kindness during this month, Allah shall look at him with kindness on that Day. Anyone who treats his kinsmen well during this month, Allah will bestow His Mercy on him on that Day, while anyone who mistreats his kinsmen during this month, Allah will keep away from His Mercy.

Whoever offers the recommended prayers during this month, Allah will save him from Hell, and whoever observes his obligations during this month, his reward will be seventy

times the reward during other months. Whomever repeatedly invokes Allah's blessings on me, Allah will keep his scale of good deeds heavy, while the scales of others will be tending to lightness. Whomever recites during this month an ayat (verse) of the Holy Qur'an, will get the reward of reciting the whole Qur'an in other months.

O people!, the gates of Paradise remain open during this month. Pray to your Lord that they may not be closed for you. While the gates of Hell are closed, pray to your Lord that they never open for you. Satan has been chained, invoke your Lord not to let him dominate you."

Ali ibn Talib (RA) said: "I asked, 'O messenger of Allah, what are the best deeds during this month?'" He replied: 'O Abu-Hassan, the best of deeds during this month is to be far from what Allah has forbidden."

Ramadan Timetable

We all have time. What we do not have is a time-table. It is important that we draw up a programme for ourselves for the month of Ramadan, or else the blessed month will pass and our lives would not have changed. Hereunder are certain important aspects that need to be included in our timetable:

1. Our tongues should remain moist in the zikr of Allah, reciting "laa-ilaaha illallaah", "astaghfirullah", asking for Jannah and seeking protection from Jahannum. This zikr may continue even while doing our household duties.
2. Some time should be spent in du'aa, especially at the time of iftaar and sehri.
3. Abundant recitation of the Qur'an. We may recite for short durations and then continue with our work as sitting for one long duration may be difficult for us.
4. Having a short afternoon siesta will help us to perform the taraweeh.
5. Teaching the Virtues of Ramadan should be conducted in the home with the entire family. By reading these virtues we will be encouraged to exert ourselves even more.

The Making of Our Moral Fiber

Mariam Murphy

Ramadan is here, and as we move through this blessed month there are many goals we've planned to reach. Each person is unique and will have individual goals, but here are five aspects of worship that we ought to work on this Ramadan.

QURAN

Ramadan is the best time to reconnect with the Quran. The best advice I have been given is to remember to stay consistent with one's recitation and in pondering over the verses of the Quran. Try to set a minimum amount of Quran that you would like to read everyday. In this way, you will ensure that every day of Ramadan will be filled with Quran. A good way to reach your goal is by setting aside time after each salah to read the specific portion of the Quran that you planned to read for the day. But we do not want to fall into the habit of reading the Quran without understanding the beauty within it. Integrating the meaning and the background will help us understand the reasons why the Quran is a Book of Guidance.

SALAH

There are many ways we can work on im-

proving our Divine connection through salah. The first and most important is that we strive to pray all five obligatory prayers on time. By doing so, you will strengthen your connection with your Creator in the way He loves. The next way to improve our concentration in salah is by praying the Sunnah prayers before and afterward. The Prophet (SAWS) told us that "whoever prays twelve rak'ahs of prayer voluntarily in a day and night, Allah will build him a house in Paradise." Not only do you receive great reward for these extra prayers, but it also helps a person prepare for the fard, or obligatory, salah. This is especially important when it comes to the Sunnah before Salat Al-Fajr, as people are more likely to miss it out of tiredness or lateness. In a hadith narrated by Aisha, May Allah be pleased with her, and reported in the compilation of Muslim, the Prophet (SAWS) said: "The two rak'ahs before the Dawn (Fajr) prayer are better than this world and all it contains." After the Sunnah prayers, we can focus on the nawafil prayers, such as Salat Ad-Duha, which is two rakahs that can be performed anytime from about a half hour after Fajr until 15 minutes before Duhr salah. Abu Dharr (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet

(SAWS) said: “In the morning, charity is due on every joint of the body of everyone of you. Every utterance of Allah’s glorification (i.e., saying Subhan’Allah) is an act of charity, and every utterance of His Praise (i.e., saying Al-hamdu-lillah) is an act of charity, and every utterance of declaration of His greatness (i.e., saying Allahu Akbar, or saying La ilaha ill* Allah) is an act of charity; and enjoining ma ‘ruf (good) is an act of charity, and forbid-ding munkar (evil) is an act of charity, and two rak ‘ahs of the Duha salah which one performs in the forenoon is equal to all this (in reward). (Muslim)”What-ever portion of salah you would like to improve, all salah is a divinely ordained connection to Allah, Exalted and Most High.

DU’A

The Prophet (SAWS) said: “The essence of worship is du’a”. Through this hadith we learn that not only does Allah, subhanahu wa ta’ala, want us to make du’a, but also that there is a reward for those who do. “There is no person who asks Allah, subhanahu wa ta ‘ala, for anything expect that Allah gives it to him, or keeps away from him a similar evil, as long as he does not ask for something evil or for breaking the ties of kinship. At this point a man said to the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam: “In that case, we will ask for plenty!” and the Prophet (SAWS) responded: “Allah is more plentiful.” One of the most recommended times to make du ‘a is during the last third of the night, which in Ramadan encompassed suhoor time. Another time that is recommended to make du ‘a is during salah, especially in sujood. If you can, pray two rak’ahs before Fajr and make sure to make du ‘a during sujood. During the month of Ramadan, one of the best times that we are reminded of is the du’a before the fasting person breaks his or her fast. The best ways to remember things that you wanted to make du ‘a for is by writing them down as soon as you think of them during the day. So when it comes to these recommended

times for du ‘a, you will be able to use it effectively.

CHARACTER

This aspect of self-improvement receives less focus than most others, but it does not mean that it holds any less importance. In a hadith narrated by Abu Dawud, the Prophet (SAWS) guaranteed a house in the upper part of Paradise for a man who has good character. This relates to us the importance of upright character in the individual as well as the society. To inculcate good habits in the month of Ramadan is to integrate them into one’s personality.

FAMILY

One of the best ways to focus on improving our character is by interacting with our family. The Prophet (SAWS) said: “Allah created the creations, and when He finished with His creations, the rahm, that is, the womb said: “(O Allah) at this place I seek refuge with You from all those who sever me (i.e. sever the ties of lath and kin). Allah said: “Yes, and will you not be pleased that I will keep good relations with the one who will keep good relations with you, and I will sever the relation with the one who will sever the relations with you.” The womb said: ‘Yes, O my Lord.’ Allah said: ‘Then that is for you.’” Maintaining ties with ones family is one of the most important foundations of society. As Muslims, we should all make an effort to reconnect with our family, especially during the month of Ramadan. Set goals and share them as a family and even if each member has different goals they can all help each other. Make time to have iftar with your family and share your day’s experiences together. Ramadan helps us remember the true meaning of a meal as sustenance from God, and spending time with family.

How to Keep On Track

Sometimes it’s hard to keep the momentum
Cont’d on page 15

Could be Good for Your Brain

Andrea Useem

Ramadan is in its third week now, and the required dawn-to-dusk fasting often feels like a daily mini-marathon. By late afternoon, hunger and thirst have sucked me dry, leaving me sleepy, slow-minded, and sometimes short-tempered.

I know that the purpose of fasting is spiritual—God will reward us in the next life—but in this lifetime, fasting sometimes makes me an ineffective, irritable person. So I was excited to learn that Harvard psychiatrist John Ratey, MD, had spoken at a recent Renaissance Weekend event about how caloric restriction can improve brain function.

I emailed Dr. Ratey to find out if those benefits might extend to religious fasting, and he sent me a 2006 paper on the brain functioning of men during the Ramadan fast. The researchers studied a small group of healthy men during and after the holy month, looking at their brain activity via functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). They concluded that “all individual results showed consistent and significant increase of activity in the motor cortex during fasting.”

Other research shows similar results

That research builds on the work of other scientists, including Mark Mattson, PhD, who heads a neuroscience lab at the NIH’s National Institute on Aging. Mattson has done important research on how dietary restrictions can significantly protect the brain from degenerative diseases like Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s.

In a 2003 article, Mattson and others reported that rats who were deprived of food every other day, or restricted to a diet at 30% to 50% of normal calorie levels, showed not only decreased heart rates and blood pressure, but also “younger” brains, with “numerous age-related changes in gene expression.”

Mattson and his colleagues also shared data from research on humans, which shows that populations with higher caloric intakes—such as the United States and Europe—have a greater prevalence of Alzheimer’s than do populations that eat less—such as China and Japan. The authors speculate that humans may have adapted to conditions of feast and famine; the stress of having little food, they write, “may induce changes in gene expression that result in adaptive changes in cellular metabolism and the increased ability of the organism to reduce stress.”

Although this research is relatively new, with many questions left unanswered, the authors conclude that “it seems a safe bet that if people would incorporate a spartan approach to food intake into their lifestyles, this would greatly reduce the incidence of Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and stroke.” (Of course, how this recommendation translates for individual people remains almost a complete unknown; consult with your own doctor before restricting your diet in dramatic ways.)

But here’s the hard part: Although we know eating too much leads to all sorts of health problems, “it has proven very difficult to successfully implement prolonged dietary-restriction regimens,” reports Mattson and his team. Information and doctor’s orders are rarely enough motivation.

This last observation gave me hope, because it seemed the authors were overlooking the role of religion; it can inspire people in ways information or experts don’t. Would I be un-

dergoing this rigorous month of fasting unless I believed strongly it was the right thing for me to do? Probably not. And the same goes for millions of Muslims around the world.

And many other religions include fasting or dietary restrictions as part of their religious observances. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, or Mormons, for example, fast one Sunday a month. The Orthodox Church in America notes five separate fasting seasons on its website, in addition to individual fast days; during some of these fasts, all food is restricted, and during other fasts, only certain foods are off-limits. Some Roman Catholics abstain from meat on Fridays, and all do during Lent. Many types of Buddhist monks abide by a code that prohibits eating after noon each day.

Science may only now be discovering that some of these religious practices, both ancient and modern, offer nourishment not just for the soul, but for the body as well.

haqislam

When the Brakes Fail....

Every vehicle has a braking system which reduces the speed of the vehicle and allows it to come to a complete halt. This human body which is always on the move is daily faced by the fast moving sins and temptations. Modesty and shame form that much needed braking system in man. Without it, man will time and again be destroyed in head-on collisions and life threatening problems.

Music, magazines and movies have become part of a systematic effort to break down man’s braking system of modesty. When brakes fail, then that accidental glance meets up with broken homes and marriages.

We need to keep our brakes serviced with good actions and pious company.

MI. Anwar Shah Kashmiri (ra)

The Past five hundred years of Islamic history can not produce the like of Maulana Kashmiri” [Dr. Muhammad Iqbal]

Who could have explained the excellence of Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri better than the poet of the East, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal? Maulana Kashmiri was the teacher of the teachers and was the personification of Islamic knowledge. The universal message of Islam has always produced individuals that are totally devoted to the Islamic cause and spend their entire lives serving Allah’s mission on Earth. The renowned Muslim scholars have used different methods to convey the message of Islam and fight evil, disbelief, hypocrisy and oppression throughout history. The Ulama of Deoband can truly be credited with preserving the true teachings of Islam, as taught by the Quran and Hadith, and fighting evil and oppression by means of knowledge.

Through knowledge, it was believed that the Muslim heart and mind will be reactivated with the same emotions and intentions possessed by his fore fathers, the true defenders of Islam. Amidst this process of safeguarding Islam, Darul Uloom Deoband produced such lofty scholars and elite Muslim intellectuals that had been the glory and honor of the Muslim past. One of these illustrious personalities was Maulana Muhammad Anwar Shah Kashmiri.

Mufti Taqi Usmani says: “A unique kind of happiness would come over my father’s face when the name of Hadhrat Shah Sahib was

heard and he would remember him with utmost respect and love” (Akabir Deoband Kia They?, p. 41). Allama Kashmiri was a favorite of his teachers and students. His peers loved him and one and all came to him to solve those academic misunderstandings that can only be deciphered by one of the most knowledgeable scholar of the times. One remains astonished after reading the accounts of his heightened knowledge, acute memory and profound understanding of Deen. Saints like Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri witnessed his excellence and said: “Indeed Hadhrat Shah Sahib is a sign from the signs of Allah” (Akabir-e-Ulama-e-Deoband, p. 98).

The greatest Islamic scholar and reformer of the Fourteenth century Hijri, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, says: “According to me, a great proof of the truth of Islam is the presence of Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri in the Muslim Ummah. If there was any sort of crookedness or deficiency in Islam, then Maulana Anwar Shah would not have adopted it” (Akabir-e-Ulama-e-Deoband, p. 98). When Shah Sahib is considered as a great proof of Islam by none other than the prestigious Hadhrat Thanvi, what more can one say in respect of his virtues? However, the eyes that witnessed his noble personality and countenance never forgot that embodiment of light and erudition.

Those who saw him once would be full of Islamic glory and enthusiasm that they can not remain silent, some words, some sentences of

their experience must be told to the world. They must inform others that we have seen a unique and divine sign of Allah, so unique that its like can not be found in the past five hundred years of Islamic history. Accordingly, we find praise of Shah Sahib on the lips of generation after generation of Muslims, who have recognized what he is and what he did. His profound personality claims that he should be remembered and his teachings, which are nothing more than the explanation of the Quran and the Hadith, should be exhibited in actions, fortified on paper and shared in public. He was a tree from the original garden of Islam, a flower from the initial bouquet of Deen.

His academic peers belonged in the early days of Islam as Syed Ata'ullah Bukhari has said: "The caravan of the Sahaba was trekking and Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiri was left behind" (Akabir-e-Ulama-e-Deoband, p. 99) Left behind for who and to accomplish what? He was a glory from the early glories of Islam that been saved by Allah to educate the creation of Allah in Deen and defend Islam from all enemies. If anybody tries to misinterpret the Quran, his Mushkilatul Quran is there to defend the Quran. Those who misconstrue the Ahadith, his famous Arabic book Faydh al-Bari and the Urdu book Anwarul Bari, both commentaries of Saheeh Al-Bukhari, are there to shield the sayings of the Most Revered Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

His books on Islamic jurisprudence in the light of Imam Abu Hanifa's school of thought are the cause of his permanent place of respect and honor in the hearts of all Hanafis. He expressed his loyalty to the Seal of all Prophets (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) by writing Khatimun Nabî'een. He proved to all Christians of the world that the real admirers of Jesus the Son of Mary are the Muslims and rebuffed the claims of the false Messiah of Qadian by writing Aqeedatul Islam fi Hayatul Eisa Alayhis Salam and At-Tasreeh bi ma Tawattar fi Nazool al-Maseeh.

Mujaddid-e-Millat Maulana Ashraf Ali

Thanvi says: "When Hadhrat Shah Sahib would come and sit next to me, my heart would feel the pressure of the greatness of his knowledge" (Millat-e-Islam ki Muhsin Shakhshiat, p. 185). Hadhrat Shah Sahib's knowledge was of such a unique nature that it even impressed great Ulama like Hadhrat Thanvi. Maulana Habibur Rahman Azami would always refer to Allama Kashmiri as a mobile library. Mufti Taqi Usmani writes: "My respected father often said that Allah had blessed Hadhrat Shah Saheb with proficiency in all types of knowledge and skills" (Akabir Deoband Kia They?, p.44).

Hadhrat Shah Saheb was such that no Earthly power could distract him from his favorite endeavor and lifelong engagement: reading and researching. After reading accounts of his life from those who were around him, it seems that he spend majority of his life reading books and extracting knowledge from them as if he had nothing else to do. However, he was not only a teacher of Hadith sciences at Darul Uloom Deoband, but the Head of all Teachers (Sadr al-Mudarris as called in Urdu); he has authored numerous books, he actively participated in the Khatme Nubuwwat Movement, served the Islamic cause in politics by his official position at Jamiatul Ulama-e-Hind and raised a family of which his two sons, Maulana Anzar Shah Kashmiri and Maulana Azhar Shah Kashmiri, are well-know for following the footsteps of their distinguished father.

Despite all these engagements, he was always found by his students in front of a book. He would never touch a book without Wudhu (Ab-lution) and would always sit respectfully in front of religious books. Allama Kashmiri had high respect for knowledge and books, the sources of knowledge. If a book has notes on its sides, he would move himself to read the side notes rather than moving the book. What great respect he had for divine knowledge! As a result of this tremendous reverence for religious books, Allah favored him with a matchless knowledge and unparalleled understanding.

Mufti Muhammad Shafi has said: “One time, Hadhrat Shah Saheb was extremely sick and his illness had been prolonging. During this time, a false rumor of the demise of Hadhrat Shah Saheb spread at the time of Fajr Salah. It was as if lightning had struck us, and right after the Fajr prayer we all rushed to his house along with Allama Shabir Ahmad Usmaani. Upon arriving at his house, we found out that the news of his demise was false. However, his sickness had remained. When we all entered the room of Hadhrat, we found him sitting at his prayer place and in front of him lay a book on a pillow, which he was studying while bending down because of the lack of light. His students were perturbed at this scene, because studying in this posture could increase his illness. Hence, Allama Shabir Ahmad Usmani willingly said:

‘Hadhrat! We can not understand this. How can there still be an academic discourse that has not been studied by you? If there is some discourse that you are unaware of and should study it, what is the urgent need to know it right now and why can not this study be postponed until you feel better? If it is really urgent, then are not we here at your disposal? You could have told any of us and we would have read this material and informed you of the content. This academic endeavor and labor of yours in this poor health can not be tolerated by us’.

Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri looked at Allama Shabir Ahmad Usmani for some time with virtuousness and innocence and then replied: ‘Brother, you are right but books also hold a craving, what should I do about this addiction?’ Hadhrat Shah Saheb would be engaged in Islamic academic research during the day and night to such a degree as if the world had nothing to do with him. To be bothered by the affairs of the world was outside the capacity of Hadhrat Shah Saheb” (Akabir Deoband Kia They?, p.43)

Allama Kashmiri had mastered all branches of Islamic knowledge and attained a high spiritual status as well. The knowledge of Shah

Saheb was not dry, his external condition was so high only because of his lofty internal conditions. After all, he was the Khalifa (successor) of Hadhrat Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi, from whom he benefited in Hadith sciences and Tasawwuf. Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri says: “Once I went in the Sunehri Masjid of Madrasa Aminia (Delhi) and saw that Hadhrat Shah Saheb was engaged in loud Zikr in a room with closed doors. For a long time, he kept on saying: Allah! Allah! Allah! Allah! When going to a market, Hadhrat Shah Saheb would cover his eyes with a piece of cloth in order to avoid the sight of any woman” (Akabir-e-Ulama-e-Deoband, p. 101).

Those who witnessed Allama Kashmiri on Fridays when he used to walk from his home to the Masjid for Juma Salah say that this scene was the practical implementation of Allah’s command: “Fas-au ilaa Zikrillah” (meaning “Hasten towards the remembrance of Allah”).

His students have reported that the words “Hasbuna-Allah” (meaning “Allah suffices for us”) would always be on his tongue. How fortunate were people like Mufti Muhammad Shafi, Maulana Muhammad Idris Kandhlavi, Maulana Badr Alam Merathi, Maulana Syed Manazir Ahsan Gilani, Maulana Yusuf Binori, Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seuhari, Mufti Muhammad Hasan Amritsari, Maulana Ather Ali Silhati, and Qari Muhammad Tayyib Qasmi to satisfy their natural thirst for divine wisdom from this marvelous fountain of knowledge and illumination. His students saw in his practice all those teachings that were in his speeches and lessons.

The student that benefited most from the teachings of Hadhrat Shah Saheb was Allama Shabir Ahmad Usmani. Maulana Syed Ahmad Reda Saheb Bijnauri says: “During my sixteen years in the Majlise Ilmi of Dhabeel (where Allama Kashmiri for many years), I arrived at the conclusion that it was Allama Shabir Ahmad Usmani who had benefited from the knowledge and virtues of Hadhrat Maulana Kashmi-

ri. Maulana Shabir Ahmad Usmani would turn towards Shah Saheb in all academic difficulties and questions and would study and research day and night.

He has extensively drawn from Hadhrat Shah Saheb in his commentary of the Noble Quran (Tafseer-e-Usmaani) and his celebrated work Fat'h al-Mulhim (commentary of Saheeh Muslim)" (Anwarul Bari, v.2, p.234).

Maulana Anwar Shah Saheb had the utmost respect for his teachers and elders and Darul Uloom Deoband. Allama Kashmiri says: "We came here, to Hindustan, from Kashmir and saw Deen in Hadhrat Gangohi. After the demise of Hadhrat Gangohi, we learned Deen from Shaikhul Hind and Hadhrat Raipuri. And now, the practice of religion can be seen in the company of Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi" (Akabir-e-Ulama-e-Deoband, p. 101).

Maulana Muhammad Idrees Kandhlavi would call Hadhrat Allama Kashmiri the Imam Zuhri of our times. He used to say: "The memory of Hadhrat Shah Saheb was such that if he read or heard something one time, that would not be wasted and would be safeguarded and protected in his memory" (Akabir-e-Ulama-e-Deoband, p. 99). Shaikhul Islam Maulana Shabir Ahmad Usmani says: "If a native of Egypt or Syria was to ask me: 'Have you seen Hafiz Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalaani, Shaykh Taqiuddin Ibn Daqeeq Al-Eid and Shaykh Azeezuddin bin Abdus Salaam?' I would say yes because I have seen Allama Kashmiri.

The only difference is in the times, if he lived in the Sixth or Seventh Islamic centuries, accounts of his life and times, qualities and virtues would have reached us in the same manner (as the above mentioned personalities). The day Shah Saheb died, I felt as if today Hafiz Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalaani, Shaykh Taqiuddin and Shaykh Azeezuddin have demised" (Akabir-e-Ulama-e-Deoband, p. 98).

Maulana Syed Ahmad Reda Saheb Bijnauri writes: "The Dars (lesson) of Hadith by Hadhrat

Shah Saheb would be similar to that of the earlier Muhaditheen (Scholars of Hadith). His lesson would begin from explanation of the time of Rasulullah (SAWS) to the times of Sahaba and Tabi'een to the Imams of Ijtihad to the great Muhaditheen and all would include all arguments made on the subject under discussion by scholars to the very present-day" (Anwarul Bari, v.1, p.9).

Once Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi sat in a lecture of Allama Kashmiri. After hearing this lecture, Hadhrat Thanvi said: "Every sentence of Shah Saheb can be turned in to a book" (Anwarul Bari, v.2, p.235). Hadhrat Thanvi also says: "I have benefited so much from Hadhrat Shah Saheb that his respect in my heart occupies the same place the respect of my other teachers occupy, although I have not been his student" (Anwarul Bari, v.2, p.235).

This is the humility of Hadhrat Thanvi, who was called in his very lifetime Mujaddide Millat (The Great Reformer of the Muslim Nation). Hadhrat Shah Saheb certainly benefited from Hadhrat Thanvi as well, it was after reading Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi's Urdu translation of the Quran that Shah Saheb became inspired to read the great oceans of Islamic literature in the Urdu language.

After the demise of this great scholar and saint of Islam, the Ulama of Darul Uloom Deoband considered themselves as orphans. They confessed that we will answer the questions of the public, but who will answer our questions? Who will fulfill our thirst for knowledge? Allama Rasheed Reda Al-Misri called Darul Uloom Deoband the Azhar of India and regarding Hadhrat Kashmiri, he says: "I have never seen a more distinguished scholar than Hadhrat Shah Saheb" (Anwarul Bari, v.2, p. 237). The life of Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Anwar Shah Saheb Kashmiri is certainly full of examples and lessons for us. May Allah give us the ability to follow the beloved of Allah (SAWS) and those who colored themselves with his beautiful life. Ameen.

The Virtue of Taraweeh

In this belated day and age, every morning heralds a new fitna, a fitna that strikes at the very root of our Imaan and amal. For the past fourteen hundred years the Ummah has been performing twenty rakaats of taraweeh without question. However “a sect” now claims that taraweeh is ONLY eight rakaats, which implies that for fourteen hundred years the Ummah had deviated from the sunnah of Nabi (SAWS) and had performed twenty rakaats without any shari proof.

The Virtue of Taraweeh

Abdullah Bin Ammar (RA) states that Nabi (SAWS) said: “The fast and the Quraan will both plead on behalf of the bondsmen who keeps fast in the day and recites or listens attentively to the recitation of the Quraan at night standing in the presence of Allah (in taraweeh). The fast will say “O my Lord, I had held him back from food, drink and sexual gratification, accept my intercession for him today and treat him with mercy and forgiveness. The Quraan will say, “I had held him back from taking rest and sleep at night, O my Lord, accept my intercession for him today and treat him with mercy and forgiveness”. The intercession of both the fast and Quraan will be accepted and he will be treated with exceptional kindness”. (Baihaqi).

Sayyidina Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree (RA)

narrates that Sayyidina Rasulullah (SAWS) said: “When the first night of Ramadan dawns (comes), the doors of the skies are opened, and none of its doors are then closed until the last night of Ramadan.”

No mu'min servant (of Allah) performs salaah during its night (any night of Ramadan), but Allah will record for him one thousand five hundred hasanah (rewards) for every sajdah that he makes. And Allah will build a home for him in Jannah made out of red ruby, which will have sixty thousand doors, each of its doors having (interlinked to, leading to) a palace made out of gold, ornamented (beautified and decorated) with rubies.

Thus, when he (the mu'min) fasts on the first day of Ramadan, all his past sins are pardoned, and seventy thousand mala'ikah make istighfaar for him, daily, from the time of the fajr salaah, until the sun sets.

And for every sajdah that he makes during Ramadan, either by day or by night, there will be for him a tree, (in Jannah, so huge that) a person on horseback will ride in its shade for five hundred years.” (Baihaqi, Targheeb)

Salmaan (RA) reports: “On the last day of Sha'baan the Messenger of Allah addressed us and said: ‘O people, there comes over you now a great month, a most blessed month in which lies a night more greater in virtue than one thousand months. It is a month in which

Allah has made compulsory that the days should be observed by fasting. And he has made sunnah the Taraweeh by night. Whoever intends drawing nearer to Allah by performing any virtuous deed, for him shall be the reward like him who had performed a fardh in any other time. And whoever performs a fardh, for him shall be the reward of seventy faraa'idh in any other time. This is indeed the month of patience, and the reward for true patience is Jannah (paradise). It is the month of sympathy with one's fellow men. It is the month wherein a true believer's rizq is increased.

Whosoever feeds another who fasted, in order to break the fast (at sunset), for him there shall be forgiveness for his sins and emancipation from the fire of Jahannam (hell), and for him shall be the same reward as him (whom he fed) without that person's reward being decreased in the least....". From this hadeeth it is noted that the command for taraweeh prayers too comes from Allah Himself. All the authorities of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamm'ah are agreed upon the fact that taraweeh is sunnah.

Taraweeh During the Era of Nabi (SAWS) and the Sahabah (RA)

Ibn Abbass (RA) states that during the month of Ramadan, Nabi (SAWS) performed twenty rakaats (taraweeh) and thereafter performed the witr salaah. (Baihaqi and Musan-naf Ibn Abie Shaiba).

Ubay bin Ka'ab (RA) led the taraweeh prayers and offered 20 rakaats and three rakaats waajib salaah.

Umar (RA) commanded the Imaam to perform twenty rakaats Taraweeh salaah for the congregation.

Views of the Scholars

Imaan Qurtubi (RA) states: "Twenty rakaats taraweeh and three rakaats witr is the most authentic narration."

Imaam Nawawi (RA) states: "Taraweeh is a unanimously accepted sunnah of the Muslims. It is twenty rakaats".

"The pandemonium that the Ghair Muqallideen (people who do not follow any Mazhab) had started for the past hundred years was never heard of in the Islamic world before..... Similarly from the time of Umar (RA) upto the emergence of this sect there was no masjid in the world where eight rakaats of Taraweeh was performed....." (Moulana Habib ur Rahman Azmi).

A Grave Misconception

The proponents of eight rakaats taraweeh quote the following hadeeth of Ayesha radhiyallahu anha as stated in Bukhari Shareef. Ayesha radhiyallahu anha was asked about the salaah of Nabi (SAWS). She replied by saying that Nabi (SAWS) did not exceed eleven rakaats in Ramadan nor in any other month...".

This hadeeth apparently indicates that Nabi (SAWS) performed eight rakaats taraweeh and three rakaats witr. However the words 'nor in any other month' clearly indicates that this was with reference to tahajjud salaah and not taraweeh salaah. The fact that Imaam Bukhari (ra) himself has not mentioned this hadeeth under the caption of Taraweeh salaah is clear proof that the salaah in question refers to witr and not taraweeh salaah.

Hazrat Umar (RA) during his khilafat had directed that taraweeh salaah be performed collectively in the masaajid, lest the practice gradually dissipates from the Ummah. He did not introduce the number of rakaats on his own accord. To believe that the twenty rakaats is an innovation of Umar (RA) is to undermine the integrity of Umar (RA) and all the Sahabah who were present at that time!

Source: Jamiatul Ulama South Africa

Religious Illusions

Dr. Jamal Badawi

Host: Can you explain the idea of visions and how it relates to the explanation of the source of the Quran?

Jamal Badawi:

This is another attempt to reconcile admitting that the person is truthful and sincere but at the same time claiming that what he said came from himself. The basic notion is that they say that a person who is deeply religious may go through certain religious or spiritual experiences or have visions in which he may think that his own thoughts come from a different source. So they would not deliberately lying or changing a person may sincerely think that these ideas actually came to them from an outside source. The classical example that some people give is the story of Joan of Arc. It is very strange between that and the revelation of the Quran. It is just like saying that the elephant and the trees are the same because both of them have trunks.

Host: Could you tell us about John of Arc and how the connection is made in relation to the revelation of the Quran?

Jamal Badawi:

Joan of Arc as described by historians

was a pious and deeply religious young girl who was also as staunch nationalist. France at that time, fifteenth century, was under the domination and rule of the British. This girl loved her country so much that she really wanted to liberate her country from this foreign domination. she tried all means to seek all kind of help in order to mobilize and motivate her people to gain their independence, part of which was seeking the help of the government. In this kind of charged atmosphere and nationalism she began to be convinced that she is destined to lead her people towards liberation. This is why we find that she spoke about voices and visions that she claimed came to her. This claim was very enthusiastically accepted by her people who were very prone to these things. They become very staunch followers of Joan of Arch which lead to their victory in Lorraine in 1429. It is interesting to discuss the story of Joan of Arc but totally inexcusable to make an analogy between Joan of Arc and Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). We are comparing it here to a limited phenomena, visions, which could happen in many cases other than the story of Joan of Arc.

This was something that was quite limited and had to do with leading the nation for

a specific purpose as liberation at that time, an attitude which was enforced by religiosity and deep faith and piety of an individual on one hand and the revelation given to the Prophets which is a much more comprehensive reformation that was not intended for one purpose or for certain circumstances but something which is lasting with comprehensive coverage of areas of belief, moral behavior, total outline for a social system and sometimes economics and political systems like in the case of Islam. These are really things that changed the history of humanity in a very fundamental way, accompanied by stunning miracles and could not be challenged by skeptics and lead most of them to believe in those Prophets. We are talking about revelation given to the Prophets followed upon hundreds of millions of people over hundreds of years and to compare that with a limited phenomena is definitely something that is not very relevant. I was quite amused that in a new encyclopedia called the New Catholic Encyclopedia that they just make this connection automatically as if it is a matter of course between Joan of Arch and the revelation of the Quran which is lacking in substance.

Host: What is the gist of this theory and how it applies to Prophet Mohammad (SAWS)?

Jamal Badawi:

One of the proponents of this theory is a person that people view to be a much better writer about Islam, in being reasonably fair and less bias than many writers who preceded him, but again he falls into the same problem of not going far enough as to admit the divine revelation of the Quran. This writer was Emit Birmingham in his book *The Life of Muhammad*. His basic theory is that, others follow the same way of thinking, the kind of sincerity of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) might have lead

him to reject the kind of corruption, lack of belief in God or this kind of paganism that was rampant among his people because of his pure nature and sincerity through his own internal light which allowed him to see that these things were wrong. He had a pure innate nature and he did not participate in the mode of worship that his people did. He continues to say that he may have thought and contemplated about the need and hope that his people would improve and that they would come to God in their moral behavior and that they would be guided to the truth. Prophet Muhammad (SAWS)) might have heard things about the belief of the Jews and Christians and he did not accept their way of explaining the creator and divinity.

He says that you may have heard about the Prophet that was prophesied to come about that time and in some cases that the prophecies said he would come from that area. He said that these thoughts and ideas might have gone into his mind and kept jelling in his subconscious until as, Tore Andre another writer put it, he convinced himself that he would be the reformer or Prophet of that time. This kind of conviction lead him to have an illusion of voices speaking to him or visual illusions of people talking to him that he thought were angels. and whatever he thought of in his subconscious came out and he sincerely thought this was revelation from Allah which took the form of the Quran. We find Birmingham presenting this theory in a very lovely and romantic way: the Prophet used to go to the cave in the mountain, he looked at the silence of the night and the sparkling stars and soft light of the moon along with the expanse of sand. In many cases they talk about waves which were very far away, with a very romantic picture in the silence of the night thinking and contemplating the creation, destiny of mankind and the ideas

kept coming into his mind. It is a romantic and beautiful presentation but in terms of meeting scholarly rigor is another thing all together.

Host: What reasoning could you put forward that this explanation is in fact incorrect and would not stand the test of good scholarship?

Jamal Badawi:

One can say that a person is under an illusion for a specific period of time, months a couple of years and one could say that whatever the person says under this state of illusion may be a product of his own thinking and subconscious. The point that is forgotten in this theory is that Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) continued his message for a period of 23 years and consistently reported the same thing throughout this period. He uttered the Quran in front of everyone else and they kept record of that. To say that for 23 years he was convincing himself that the Quran came from an outside source given what we know about his personality and wisdom doesn't make sense. These sort of visions which are only a product of the subconscious would have to be related to the individual's own experience. If it came from his subconscious then it came basically from his knowledge, experience and environment. As such it reflects his own thinking.

When we examine the Quran we will find that there is ample evidence of things in the Quran that could have never emanated from the Prophet's mind whether conscious or subconscious. This includes the fact that certain historical things were mentioned in the Quran from the past that were not known to the Prophet or to the people around him. We cannot say that this came from the subconscious; it was specific concrete knowledge of what happened in the past. In the Quran there is information about future events that are so

clear and vivid which came to pass in the exact way that the Quran mentioned; how could that come from the subconscious. Third, there are many indications in the Quran that the nature of what is in the Quran could not have come from the mind or thoughts of the Prophet. Fourthly, from a purely scientific standpoint we will find that there are so many things in the Quran that scientists discovered hundreds of years after the Prophet and it was not known at his time. Again how could he have had that infinite knowledge? How could these things come from his subconscious, his limited experience and knowledge, let alone the fact that he was an illiterate person in an environment that was not advanced in any science?

Host: How does information about the past history in the Quran show that Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) could not have been the author of the Quran?

Jamal Badawi:

The Quran mentions many stories about things that have happened all the way from the time of creation. More particularly there are lots of stories about the Prophets that came before Prophet Muhammad. Not all of these stories are identical to what we find in previous scriptures like the Bible. It is well known that history is specific knowledge and is not something that emanates because of insight; it is specific information based on something that actually took place in the past. It can not come from the subconscious. The only way it comes is through the person learning it. Like they say one can't have their cake and eat it too. If one is assuming that he learned this history from previous sources or read it (even though he did not know how to read or write but for the sake of argument) and that he knew this information from another source and claimed that it came from God

which would delve into deliberate fabrication which we discussed amply in the previous programs. So we either assume that, or that it came from his subconscious. Again this is illogical because the subconscious doesn't tell one what happened in history.

Some might say that some of the stories of the Prophets were known in general and that he may have had them in the back of his mind. We find that there are amazing things in the Quran that show that it is very meticulous and that it did not come by way of general familiarity. For example the story of the seven sleepers, Ahl Al Kahf as described in chapter 18 in the Quran. Not only does it mention this story but it says that they stayed in the cave for 300 years plus nine. This is put in such a strange way. Why did it not say 309 years but rather 300 years which is increased by nine.

If we keep in mind that the Muslims and Arabs used the lunar calendar which is 11 days shorter than the solar year. If we multiply 11 days by 300 years and divide it by 365 we end up with nine years. This was revealed to people who did not know about calculations and as we know the Prophet said "We are illiterate people." For this meticulous expression to be mentioned in the Quran we can not say that it was just a general familiarity. This is just one example. There is stronger evidence: in the Quran a challenge was made which was not met by anyone Muslim or non Muslim. In (11:49) after the Quran describes some stories of the Prophets it says "Such are some of the stories of the unseen, which We have revealed unto you: before this, neither you nor your people knew them. So persevere patiently: for the End is for those who are righteous." If this statement in the Quran were not true then somebody no I am an Arab like you and I knew these stories, but not a single person even from those who

wanted to stop the rise of Islam couldn't raise objections and say that they knew the information. Nor could any outsiders say that they were familiar with the stories. A challenge was made and it is a fact that people in fact did not know about these stories. Where from did the Prophet (SAWS) get this information? Again the subconscious is a very poor explanation of such meticulous and detailed cases of precise information. Similar citations can be found in (12:3) and in chapter 19 about the story of Mary the Mother of Jesus where we find the mention that the information is new and neither the Prophet (SAWS) nor any of the people have any knowledge of it. This is why one scholar of the Quran ended by saying that some of the opponents of the Prophet (SAWS) were smarter than some of the contemporary critics because they were intelligent enough not to say that he got his information from his subconscious but they made another accusation found in (25:5) that they were stories he must have gotten from other sources. Again they could not reply to the question that these stories were not known to anyone in the area, so where did he get the information from?

Host: Can you give us a few examples of the Prophecies in the Quran that could not have come from the subconscious of the Prophet?

Jamal Badawi:

All of these are characterized with definitiveness. They are not things that may happen but they are things that had been decided. None of the Prophecies in the Quran proved to be false and it has been 1400 years after the Quran was revealed. Many people can say that there are astrologers and lots of people who make prophecies that come true but nobody can say that without any fault after 1400 years that there wasn't a single flaw in any of there

people's prophecies. After all the Prophet was neither an astrologer or someone who claimed any other way of obtaining information except what had been revealed to him directly from God. Some of these prophecies relate to a definite statement in the Quran that Islam would be preserved, protected, its Prophet will be protected and its Book will be protected from loss or change and all of these have proven to be correct. A statement can be found in (14:24). (15:9), (61:6) and many others. Many of these revelations came to the Prophet in the Meccan period. This is quite significant because during this period the Prophet and his companions were under severe persecution and they only had a handful of followers and mostly the weak and downtrodden people.

At that time there was no way that one could predict or prophesize that they would succeed. We know that there were many Prophets and reformers who came under circumstances where everything was in favore of their success and then something happens suddenly that stopped their message. How could anyone during the Meccan period under these very adverse conditions predict with precision and definitiveness that these things would happen. After the fact in the history of Islam there have been many tragedies, with lots of bloodshed, Muslims murdered in thousands and tens of thousands, their books were burned, copies of the Quran were burned and trampled upon, billions of dollars were spent to try to confuse the message of Islam or present it differently. Despite all of it Islam continued to grow and it is the fastest spreading religion today both among people who are illiterate and people who are highly literate. Again how could anyone from 1400 years ago make this definitive prophecy. For example in (2:24) a challenge was made that even if mankind, Jinn and sea

creatures came together to create something to imitate the Quran they won't be able to do it. We are now 1400 years later and nobody claims to have something even similar let alone identical. In (5:67) there is a definite promise that God will protect the Prophet and as we said before that was not necessarily the case with all Prophets as some were killed. It was clearly indicated in the Quran that he would be protected and that is why in Al Tirmithi and Al Hakim it says that when this verse was revealed that God would protect him from the people - the Prophet let those who were guarding him go. There were many instances during history where the Prophet's life was at stake and he was very cool and comfortable because he knew of the promise of God would be fulfilled and that no one would be able to kill him.

During the most dangerous of moments he would shout: "I am the Prophet, there is no lie about it." This is narrated in Bukhari, Muslim and Ahmad. There are prophecies about the general destiny of the believing group and the disbelieving group. For example there is the famous verse in the Quran that God has made a promise to those who believe and do good deeds that He will establish their religion for them and that he will give them power to rule on earth. When Muslims were true to their faith more than half of the world was under their rule and Muslims had a civilization which was quite unique in its humanitarian orientation as well as its great scientific progress. In Surah 48 there is mention of the treaty of Hudaibiyah which is a promise that was made under the most adverse conditions. None of the prophecies that the Quran speaks of has proven to be untrue even after the passage of 1400 years. I don't think that one can reasonably say that all of these are a result of wishful thinking or the so called subconscious.

How They Spent it

We have all been blessed with the month of Ramadan many times during the course of our lives. For some, the number will be a single figure, and for others double figures. However, for the majority of us, the month of Ramadan is just another month; it comes and goes like any other.

In relation to valuing this great month, there are many questions we need to ask ourselves. We may be well acquainted with all the virtues of the month of Ramadan; but do we take advantage of these virtues? The most important way of measuring whether we value the month of Ramadan or not is to ask the question: Have we acquired the goal of Ramadan during any of the previous months of Ramadan, which is to acquire taqwa?

If we have not yet achieved this goal, then we need to ask ourselves whether we have made it an objective in this coming Ramadan? Remember that in the famous hadith of Ka'b ibn 'Ujrah (RA), the Prophet (SAWS) and Jibra'il (AS) cursed those who fail to attract the Forgiveness of Allah during the month of Ramadan. To help us truly value the month of Ramadan, we need to take lessons from the Ramadan of those who did value this blessed month. Let us take a glimpse at how our pious predecessors spent the month of Ramadan:

- Aswad ibn Yazid (ra) would complete the Qur'an every second night in Ramadan. (Siyar-A'lam-An-Nubala')

- Sa'id ibn Jubayr (ra) would spend the time between Maghrib and 'Isha' [which normally people spend in resting] in tilawah and would recite the whole Qur'an in one sitting. (The 'Isha' salah would be delayed.) (Ibid)

- Hammad ibn Abi Sulayman (ra) would feed 500 people for iftar during Ramadan. (Ibid)

- Qatadah (ra) would complete the Qur'an every third day during the first twenty days of Ramadan and every night in the last ten days. (Ibid)

- Ibn Shihab Zuhri (ra) would say, "Ramadan is nothing but for tilawah of the Qur'an and to feed people." (Lata'if-ul-Ma'arif)

- Imam Abu Hanifah (ra) and Imam Shafi'i (ra) would complete the Qur'an twice daily in the month of Ramadan, with the latter completing the Qur'an one more time during the night of 'Id and yet again during the day.

- Imam Malik (ra) and Sufyan Thawri (ra) both would leave their everyday engagements and spend the whole time in the recitation of the Qur'an. (Lata'if-ul-Ma'arif)

- Imam Bukhari (ra) used to complete the Qur'an 41 times in the Month of Ramadan; once every day, once during the whole month in the tarawih prayer, and ten juz daily in Tahajjud salah.

- Haji Imdadullah (ra) never slept in the blessed month of Ramadan. After the Maghrib salah, two huffaz led him in nafl salah, reciting one juz each until 'Isha' salah. After 'Isha' salah, two huf-

faz would recite one after the other until half the night, and then another two huffaz would recite one after the other in Tahajjud salah. In essence, the whole night was spent in worship.

- Hadrat Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (ra), even at the age of seventy, would spend all his time in worshipping Allah, fasting - despite the heat, and performing twenty raka'at nafl after the Maghrib salah, reciting at least two juz in them. He would then also spend two and a half to three hours during the night in Tahajjud salah, amongst his many other devotions during the day.
- Shaykh-ul-Hind (ra) would spend the whole night listening to the Qur'an. It was common that he would stand in one place and the reciters would change over and take rest.
- Qari Fatah Muhammad Panipatti (ra) during his later life would spend the time after tarawih salah until subh sadiq reciting ten juz of the Qur'an, taking extra care in tajwid.
- Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani (ra) states that Mawlana Ilyas (ra) daily average of tilawah in Ramadan was 35 juz, with concentration and

understanding of the text. Moreover, the women folk in his home, together with their daily practices of dhikr and tasbeehat, at times, would complete a whole Qur'an in one day.

- It is stated about Hadrat Mawlana Yahya (ra) that, during one Ramadan which he passed in mirat, he would recite the Qur'an once daily and would complete it by the time of iftar.
- Shah Abd-ur-Rahim Raipuri (ra) used to spend the whole night reciting the Qur'an, and in twenty four hours he would rarely sleep more than an hour.
- Shaykh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Muhammad Zakariyya (ra) himself completed one Qur'an daily during the month of Ramadan, and he kept up this practice for more than forty years. Let us also value this blessed month and make the most of this great opportunity granted to us by Allah by making full use of its every moment and by using it to maximise our rewards, acquire taqwa and achieve salvation in the Hereafter. Amin.

By: Maulana Muhammad Saleem

Keep it Under Control

The husband getting angry should not be used as an excuse for the wife to also get angry. An obedient child understands that the parent needs to be respected, thus the child despite getting angry, holds back all undesirable words and actions in the parents presence. Likewise, the wife needs to realise the respect that is due to the husband and accordingly she needs to control her tongue and feelings. At times a woman may find it so easy to spend hours in zikr, du'aa, and in the recitation of the Quraan Majeed, but it is so difficult for her to control her tongue and anger in the presence of her husband. It is indeed a burden on her nafs (inner self) to suppress one's anger. Thus she should always remind herself of the virtue and reward of opposing her desire and respecting her husband. This will motivate her to remain an obedient and pleasant wife. Later, in a diplomatic and amicable manner, she may address the issue at hand.

Fair Dealings

Allaama Syed Sulaiman Nadvi (ra)

Although the Prophet (SAWS) often remained under debt due to his utmost generosity so much so that he had pawned his armour to a Jew till his death yet his dealings remained always fair. The Jews of Madinah were rich and he usually borrowed from them, They were usually ill tempered and rude, but he tolerated their harshness and misbehaviour.

The people with whom he had business relations before Prophethood always appreciated his honesty and integrity. He was, therefore, known as Amin (trustworthy) among the Arab society.

Although the Quraish became his sworn enemies still the safest place for keeping their valuable things was his house. There was a trader namely Sa'ib in Arabia. He embraced Islam and came to the Holy Prophet (SAWS). The people introduced him to the Holy Prophet (SAWS) with words full of praise. He said: I know him better than you. Sa'ib said: May my father mother be sacrificed. You were my share-holder but you always had fair dealings with me.

Once the Holy Prophet (SAWS) borrowed some dates from a person. After a few days he demanded them. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) ordered an Ansar to pay off the debt. He returned the dates but they were not of the same quality as were given by that person and he refused to take them. The Ansar said: Is it that you are refusing the dates given by Allah's Messenger (SAWS)? He said: Yes, If Allah's Messenger (SAWS) does not do justice who else would do so? When the

Holy Prophet (SAWS) heard this sentence, his eyes became wet with tears and he said, "It is absolutely true". Once a bedouin came to the Holy Prophet (SAWS) whom he (the Prophet) owed some debt. Since the bedouin are generally savage and rude, he began to talk harshly with the Holy Prophet (SAWS). The companions rebuked him for his arrogant behaviour and said: Do you know with whom are you talking? He replied: I am demanding only my right. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) said: You ought to support him as it is his right (the lender has the right to speak). Then he ordered the companions to pay his debt and pay him more than due.

Once Sayyidna Jabir b'Abdullah (RA) went on an expedition along with Allah's Messenger (SAWS). His camel had grown tired and could not walk (trot) with ease. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) bought the camel from him, and handed over the price as well as the camel back to him. This incident has been narrated thus in another hadith: The Holy Prophet (SAWS) asked him (Jabir b. 'Abdullah) if he had a stick. He drove the camel with it and it moved ahead of other camels. Then the Holy Prophet (SAWS) bought that camel from him on the condition that he may use it as a mount (to go back) to Madinah. When they reached Madinah, Sayyidna Jabir b, 'Abdullah demanded the price. Allah's Messenger (SAWS) said to Bilal to give him four dinars and some extra payment. Sayyidna Bilal gave him four dinars with an addition of a qirat of gold.

If any dead body was brought for funeral prayer, the Prophet (SAWS) would enquire whether the deceased owed anything to anyone. In case he was informed that he was under debt, he would ask one of his companions to lead the prayer and did not participate in the prayer.

Once he took a camel on loan from a person. He returned a better camel in place of it and said: The best amongst you are those who are best in paying off the debt. Once he borrowed a bowl. By chance, it was lost and he paid a compensation for it. He used to say that he never kept even a dinar with him for more than three days except that which he kept for paying off the debt.

Once a bedouin was selling the meat of a camel. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) had an idea that there were dry dates in the house and bought meat for one Wasq of dry dates. When he went to his house, he did not find any dry dates. He came to the meat-seller and told him that he had bought meat for dry dates but had found none in the house. The meat-seller made hue and cry saying, Oh, what a dishonesty! The people said to him: How can Allah's Messenger (SAWS) commit dishonesty? The Holy Prophet (SAWS) said: Leave him, he has the right to speak. Then he (the Holy Prophet) turned to the meat-seller and said the same words. The meat-seller again repeated the same remarks. The people stopped him but he Holy Prophet (SAWS) said: Let him say as he has got the right to say and he repeated these words again and again. Then he sent him to an Ansar woman to receive the dry dates as the price. When the meat-seller came back, the Holy Prophet (SAWS) was sitting in the company of his companions. He was greatly impressed by his forbearance and fairness of dealings. He met him and said: May Allah reward you well; you have paid better and full. Once a caravan encamped outside Madinah. They had a red camel. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) happened to pass by them. He asked the price of the camel and when they told him the price he did not bargain with

them and accepted the price. He took hold of the rein of the camel and set out to Madinah. Later on, the caravan people repented for their act as they thought they had done wrong by selling it to one whose whereabouts they didn't know. A woman who was also travelling with the caravan said to them: don't you worry, I have never seen a face so fair and bright meaning thereby that this person would never deceive. When it was dark (the Holy Prophet) sent them food, and dates equal to the price of the camel. On the eve of the battle of Hunain, the Holy Prophet (SAWS) was in need of some arms. Safwan had not yet embraced Islam. He had many armours and the Holy Prophet (SAWS) demanded a few of them. He said: Do you want to usurp some of them. He said: No, I want to borrow. If any of them is lost, I would pay compensation. So he lent him forty armours. On return from the battle of Hunain when the arms and other equipments of war were counted, some of the armours were found to be missing. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) said to Safwan: Some of your armours are missing, you may take the price thereof. Safwan replied: O Messenger of Allah (SAWS) my heart has since changed i.e., I have become a Muslim, and need no payment.

Seeking the Faults of Others

Nabi (SAWS) said: "O those who have accepted Islam with their tongues while imaan has not entered their hearts! Do not backbite the Muslims and do not search for their faults, for verily the one who searches for their faults, Allah will take him to task for his faults and the one who Allah takes to task, Allah will disgrace him in his (own) home." (Abi Dawood)

Satisfaction

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (ra)

Do not be dissatisfied with what destiny brings. No one can turn it back or prevent it from taking place. Everything will come to pass regardless of who is satisfied and who is not. Your involvement in this world requires the right intention, otherwise you will be hated. In all your affairs say: “There is no might or strength but by Allah, the High, the Great (la hawla wa laquwwata ilia billahial-’Aliyial-’Adhni)”. Appoint one hour for this world, one hour for the hereafter, one hour for yourself, one hour for your family, and all of the remaining hours for your Lord.

O poor ones, O you who are tested with afflictions, remember death and what is after it and then you will find that your poverty and afflictions have lost their importance to you and that detachment from this world has become easy! Accept this advice from me for I have experienced this path and have followed it. The people of Allah do not wish for anything apart from the face of Allah (mighty and glorified is He). They have given up sleep to stand in the presence of the Creator of sleep. “Their sides shun their beds” in their quest for His face and satisfaction. Their hearts have been detached from their property. The commandment of their Lord came to them, closed their shops, and made them live in the deserts and unpopulated areas, with no fixed place to settle in. Neither their night is an

ordinary night nor is their day an ordinary one: “Their sides shun their beds.” Their hearts become like grains in a hot pan, trying to pop out and run away from it. Their hearts are grains on the frying pan of the reflection on the reckoning, interrogation, and trial [of the Day of Resurrection]. They are the sensible ones; the intelligent ones; the astute ones, ones who have known this world, its people, its schemes, its bewitching, its perfidy, and its slaughter of its sons. Their hearts were called upon, so their hearts shunned their beds. Their essences heard [the call] after their bodies. The birds heard [the call] as did the cages. They heard what the True One (mighty and glorified is He) revealed in one of His utterances: “The person who claims to love Me yet goes to sleep once the night has set is a liar.” They felt a sense of embarrassment and shame in this company so they stood in His presence in the darkness of the night, lining up their feet in His presence, and letting their tears run down their cheeks. They spoke to Him through their tears, entered into His presence with the feet of their hearts, and stood in front of Him on the feet of fear and hope: fear of rejection and hope for the safety of acceptance.

O people, serve the manifest Law! Act according to the Book of Allah and the Sunna of His Messenger (SAWS). Be sincere in your deeds and then look what you will see of His

subtle favors, generosity, and the loveliness of His private conversation.

O deprived ones, O runaway slaves, O backsliders, come forward, O you escapers! Come back and do not run away from the arrows of tribulations for this is nothing other than a testing illusion. Stand firm and then you will be protected from their effect and evil. Stand steadfast for nothing that is destined for others will come your way. Their shield is the breasts of the truthful. You are not the kind of people who know how to treat them. They are not for you and you are not for them. You are people who watch the battle from a distance, without taking part in it. You are thoughtless followers. You frequent the gatherings of common people, and anyone who frequents gatherings of common people is one of them.

O You who have wishes, make every effort to come to have none! One of the people of Allah was once asked: "What do you long for?" He replied: "To long for nothing." Everything depends on being satisfied with the divine decree, giving up the very act of wanting, and casting down the heart in the hands of its Transformer. O Allah, include us among the Muslims who have thrown themselves prostrate in the hand of Your destiny and "give us good in this world and good in the hereafter and protect us from the torment of the Fire."

How little your belief in the oneness of God is! How little your satisfaction with Allah (high is He) is! There is no home, except those excluded by Allah, in which disputation and dissatisfaction do not exist. How frequent you associate the means and creatures with God! You have taken this and that as gods instead of Allah (mighty and glorified is He). You consider them the source of harm and benefit, and giving and withholding. Do not do that. Return to your Lord (mighty and glorified is He). Empty your hearts for Him, supplicate to Him, and ask Him to provide for your needs. Turn to Him in all of your serious problems. You do not have another

place [to turn to], you do not have another door [to knock at]. All doors are locked except His. Go to unpopulated places to be alone with Him and speak and talk to Him with the tongues of your faith. When the family of each of you has gone to sleep and the creatures' voices have fallen silent, let him purify himself and place his forehead on the ground, draw near [to Allah], repent, apologize, confess his sins, beg for His favor, ask Him for his needs, and complain to Him about everything that is causing him grief. It is He your Lord (mighty and glorified is He), not someone else. It is He your God, not someone else. It is He your King, not someone else. Do not escape from Him because of the arrows of His tribulations. He has treated all your predecessors with affliction, adversity, hardship, and prosperity so that they may come to know Him, thank Him, be patient with Him, and repent to Him. Punishments are for the common people; expiations for the pious believers; and the spiritual degrees for the righteous, the certain, the seekers, the truthful.

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sent to human Christians and Muslims. So they are of course addressed and asked to follow Islamic commandments but through humans.

Why Prophets Not Sent Among Jinns?

Angels are all virtue with no shadow of vice, whereas Jinns are mostly rife with vice and possess little virtue; and for prophethood, not only dominance of virtue is required but a full portion of it. Therefore, no prophet was sent among Jinns lest they fail to pass on [practicing the Shari'ah], because of the [dominance of evil within] them. Jinns were addressed indirectly through humans so that they learn how to keep away from flaws and mistakes in understanding and conduct. Therefore, they were asked to follow the prophets sent among humans.

Translated by Mohammad Javed Qasmi

Some Aspects Concerning the Jinn

Ml. Qari Muhammad Tayyib Qasmi

Rights of Jinns

Jinns too live in this world having basic rights to food, shelter and security, which nobody can deny them. The way they live in desolate and deserted places, they have right to live in our houses too. Hadiths tell us that Jinns live in every house. We do not perceive them because they mind their own business and do not interfere with ours, and when a wicked one of them creates troubles in our lives, we say that this home or person is possessed and consult an exorcist who imprisons or burns the troublesome Jinns with his exorcism. However, we are allowed to stand against and even fight with Jinns, in case they persist in their wickedness.

Various Religions of Jinns

As for the pious and Muslim Jinns, we need not to worry about driving them out of our houses; rather their strength and goodness may come helpful for us. However, wickedness and trouble making is not tolerable even of human beings let aside of Jinns.

It is a fact that Jinns include all types of individuals: good and bad; Muslims and pagans; Jews and Christians as Qur'an clearly points out.

Before the prophethood of Muhammad (SAWS), Jinns were allowed to go up near the doors of the heaven and eavesdrop on a few Diving words from angles' conversation. Then

back down on earth, they would pass on those words with lots of fabrications and concoctions to their followers, and they fooled common folk claiming that they knew the future. When after the prophethood of Muhammad (SAWS) they got banned from climbing up to heaven, they grew anxious to know the main reason which restricted their eavesdropping. Some of the Jinns undertook to find out the actual reason for the restriction. They roamed around from east to west and north to south. A few of them happened to pass by the [city of Makkah] and heard Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) reciting the Glorious Qur'an. Hearing such unique, unprecedented and impressive words, they understood that it was the guidance that restricted their transgression. They went away and informed their brethren:

"Verily, we have heard a wonderful Recitation.

It guides to the Right Path and we have believed therein (this Qur'an)" (Qur'an 72:1,2).

It shows that they [the Jinns] were disbelievers, who later accepted Islam. Thus, there emerged two categories of them: Muslims and non-Muslims. More they said:

"And we shall never join in worship anything with our Lord (Allah)" (Qur'an 72:2).

It indicates that some of them were monotheists and some polytheists.

Further it was said:

“And He, exalted is the Majesty of our Lord, has taken neither a wife nor a son (for offspring or children)” (Qur’an 72:3).

This tells that some of them were Christians, who believed that Allah Almighty has a wife and son.

More, they said:

“And that the foolish among us (i.e. Iblis or the atheists among the Jinn) used to utter against Allah that which was an enormity in falsehood” (Qur’an 72:4).

This verse clearly establishes that some of them, out of their foolishness, were habitual of attributing their false ideas to Allah and spread a set of lies [in] the name of religion and revelation.

From the above paragraphs, it has been proved that there are various sects and religions among Jinns; but still their basic rights are intact. All that could be done is to punish wrongdoers as in human cases, but their rights cannot be denied. There is even a juristic debate if humans and Jinns can intermarry.

Jurists’ Discussion

Some jurists allow intermarriage between humans and Jinns arguing with the fact that Jinns are as sensible as humans and equally governed by the Islamic Shari’ah and its commandments. Moreover they can take human appearance too.

While some others, looking at the fact that marriage is permissible only between those who are genetically similar, deny it and say that marriage between Jinns and humans is like marriage between a goat or cow and a human being, which is not allowed, as partners are genetically dissimilar.

The Prophet (SAWS) Preaching to Jinns

It is narrated in a Hadith that once a delegation of Jinns from Nasibin came to Messenger of Allah (SAWS) and requested, “O Messenger of Allah! A group of our brothers has assembled

in a place, you are cordially requested to come over there and deliver some wise words and let us know commandments related to us as well as answer some of our queries.”

The Prophet (SAWS) went there with Abdullah Ibn Masood (RA). When the Prophet (SAWS) reached the foothill where the Jinns were assembled, he drew a circle and commanded Abdullah Ibn Masood (RA) to stay within it.

Abdullah Ibn Masood (RA) reports that he saw peculiar people passing by the circle but unable to enter, though their voices were heard. The Prophet (SAWS) delivered to them words of wisdom and taught Islamic commandments, [amongst them] was that humans should avoid using bones to purify themselves after responding to [the call of nature], because bones serve as provision for Jinns. Violation of their rights to livelihood, therefore, [is] prohibited, as a Hadith says that when humans take meat off bones and throw out [the bones], Jinns get them full of meat. The Hadith also states that humans used bones for purifying themselves after attending [to the call of nature]. Jinns complained about it to Prophet (SAWS) and he prohibited its use for this purpose. All this insures the protection of Jinns’ rights and we are not allowed to interfere with them. Likewise, it is unlawful to remove them from their abode unless they cause trouble.

Nature of Address to Jinns

[...] Jinns are addressed like humans [and] not separately as they have no Shari’ah exclusively for them. They have to follow the same Shari’ah as humans. So the Jews among Jinns believe in Musa (AS) and follow the Torah that was sent to human Jews. Likewise, Jinns among Christians and Muslims do not have a book of their own, but follow Isa (AS) and Muhammad (SAWS) respectively and adhere to the books

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The Importance of Kinship

Khalid Baig

*“Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him maintain the bonds of kinship”
(Bukhari)*

The young man went to attend the weekly hadith lecture of Sayyidna Abu Huraira (RA) but the routine opening announcement stopped him. “If anyone sitting here has severed any ties of kinship (qata-ur-rahim), he should leave.” He recalled that an aunt lived in the town with whom he had not been on speaking terms. The young man quietly left the gathering and went straight to his aunt’s home. He asked for forgiveness for his past behavior and sought rapprochement. When the aunt inquired about the reason for this change of heart, he narrated the entire incident. She accepted the apology but asked him to inquire from Abu Huraira (RA), the reason for this unusual announcement. Why did he leave all the other major sins and focus only on this? What was so special about ties of kinship? Sayyidna Abu Huraira replied that he had heard from the Prophet (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wasalam) that our deeds are presented to Allah every Thursday night and anyone who has severed family ties has all his good deeds rejected. He did not want any such person sitting in his gathering, which was held on the same night, for fear that it could deprive the entire gathering of blessings. Another hadith explains further the

reason for this fear: “Allah’s mercy will not descend on people among whom there is one who severs ties of kinship.” (Baihaqi, Shuab Al-Iman)

Maintaining the bonds of kinship (silatur-rahim) indeed enjoys extraordinary importance in Islam. Conversely, severing the ties (qata-ur-rahim), is very high on the list of enormities. At two places in the Qur’an, Allah has cursed the one severing family ties.

“And those who break the covenant of Allah, after its ratification, and sever that which Allah has commanded to be joined (i.e. they sever the bond of kinship and are not good to their relatives) and work mischief in the land, on them is the curse, and for them is the unhappy home (i.e. Hell)” (Ar-Rad 13:25. See also Muhammad, 47:22-23).

A cursed person is one who is deprived of the mercy of Allah. It is an indication of this deprivation that this sin is punished in this world as well as in the Hereafter. “There is no sin more deserving of having punishment meted out by Allah to its perpetrator in advance in this world along with what He stores up for him in the next world than oppression and severing ties of family.” (Tirmidhi).

Another hadith highlights the high stakes involved here in a compelling way: “Rahim (family ties) is a word derived from Ar-Rahman

(The Compassionate One) And Allah says: ‘I shall keep connection with him who maintains you and sever connection with him who severs you.’” (Bukhari)

Silatur-rahim has been defined as politeness, kind treatment, and concern for all one’s relatives even if distantly related, corrupt, non-Muslim, or unappreciative. . While nearly every religion has emphasized good family relations, Islam has taken it to unprecedented heights. It is a duty to be discharged without an eye for reciprocity. A Muslim is required to be kind even to his non-Muslim relatives. Similarly he is required to be kind to even those relatives who are harsh to him.

The most telling example in this regard is that of Sayyidna Abu Bakr (RA). Among the many people who benefited from his generosity was a relative Mistah (RA). The latter, unfortunately became involved in the scandal about the Mother of Believers, Sayyida Aisha (RA), which was started by the leader of the hypocrites. It was a whole month of torment and torture for all involved, after which verses of Surah Noor were revealed exonerating her and prescribing punishment for those involved in the false accusation. Feeling hurt and betrayed, Sayyidna Abu Bakr (RA), vowed never to help Mistah again. Yet the Qur’an asked him to forget and forgive and continue helping his relative, which he did. Is there another society that can even come close to this standard in maintaining family ties?

Islam came to set all our relationships right. This includes our relations with Allah as well as with other human beings. Silat-ur-Rahim is a very important part of the latter.

Today, unfortunately, these teachings can mostly be found in Muslim societies in their violation. The best we do today is reciprocate; more commonly we backbite, cheat, and hurt our relatives and continue the spiral of hurt and humiliation as they respond. And we just abandon those of our relatives who are economically unfortunate.

There are three reasons for this sad situation. First is the widespread ignorance about Islamic teachings in this regard. Even in various Islamic groups the subject hardly gets the attention it deserves. Second is the rampant materialism. While materialism hurts all aspects of our life, it is especially damaging to family ties for they require sacrifice of time, money and personal comfort. The third reason has to do with recent history. It is a “gift” of the transformation of Muslim societies under colonialism.

Industrial Revolution came at a time when Muslim civilization was in the doldrums. Muslim historians point out very accurately that the genesis of European Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution was in the Golden Age of Muslim Spain. Yet it is also true that it progressed at a time of Muslim decline. And that explains the form it took and the devastation it caused to the family life. Everywhere it disrupted human relations. Poet Iqbal pointed to this when he said in his famous line: The rule of machines is death for the heart. Machine tools crush compassion. Later, under the influence of colonialism, urban centers throughout the Muslim world faithfully duplicated all of these problems. This was just what a blind following of the West promised. Relations between husband and wife, between parents and children, between workers and managers, between neighbors, between relatives, in other words between all segments of society were dealt a devastating blow.

The process continues in the post industrial, neo-colonial period. To quote one example, television is rapidly destroying what was left of human relations, cutting off even members of the same family from each other and engulfing everyone within his or her own pleasure cocoon, oblivious to the world without. It is just one, but probably the most subversive and intrusive tool of our so called postmodern global village. Village of distant neighbors without love and kinship.

Appeal

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