

The Intellect

IS THIS BACK BITING?

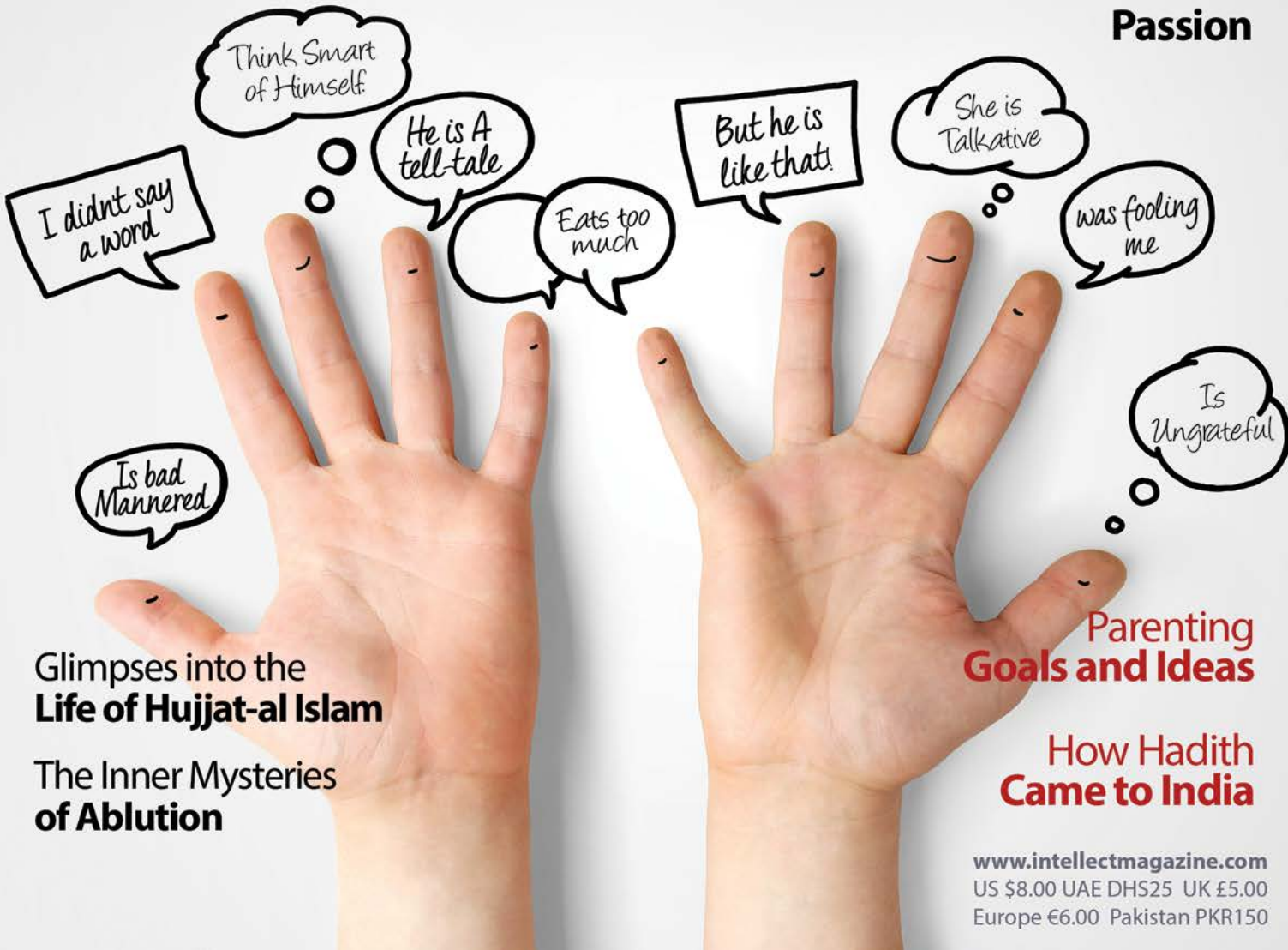
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by Mufti Taqi Usmani مدظلہ

The Education
of an Economist

The **Screen**

Judge With **Wisdom**

Passion



Glimpses into the
Life of Hujjat-al Islam

The Inner Mysteries
of Ablution

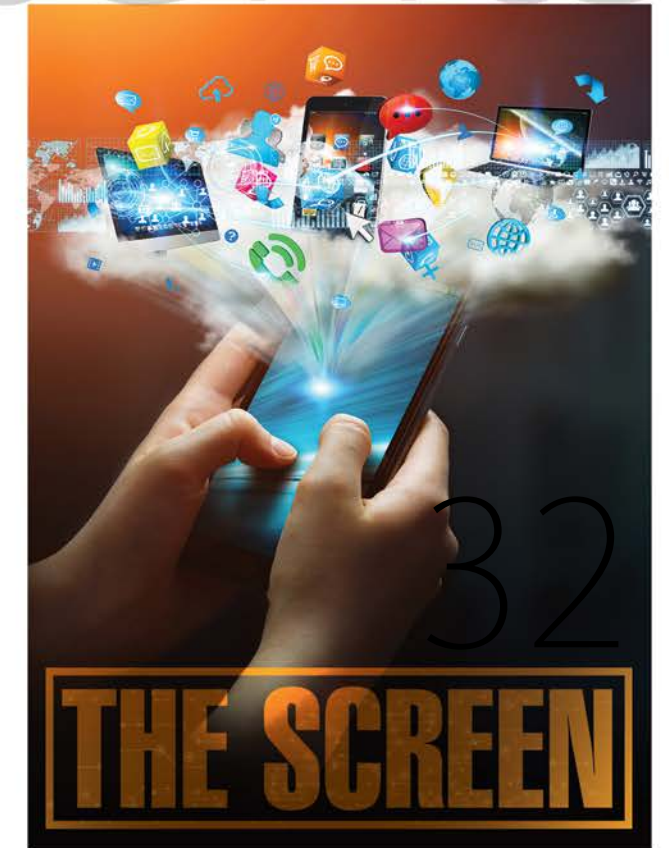
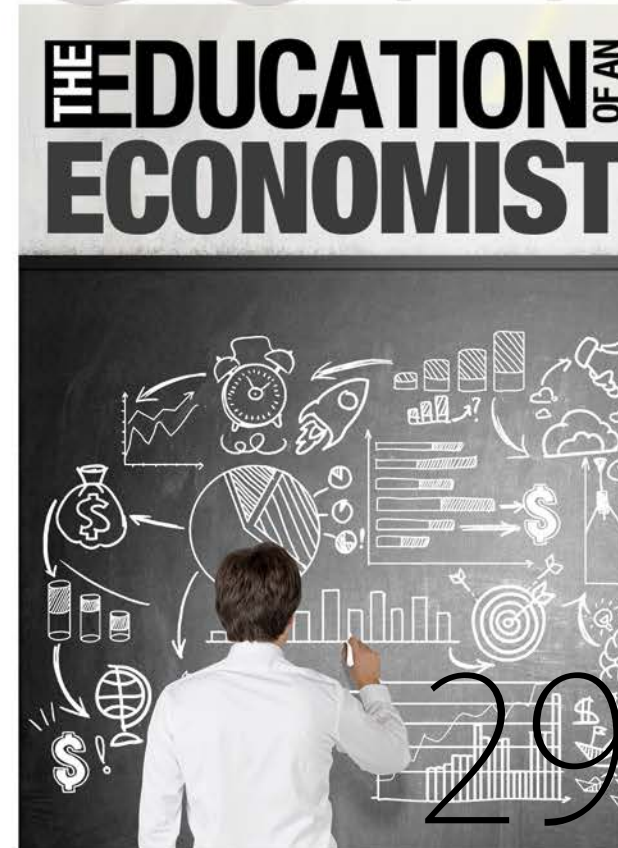
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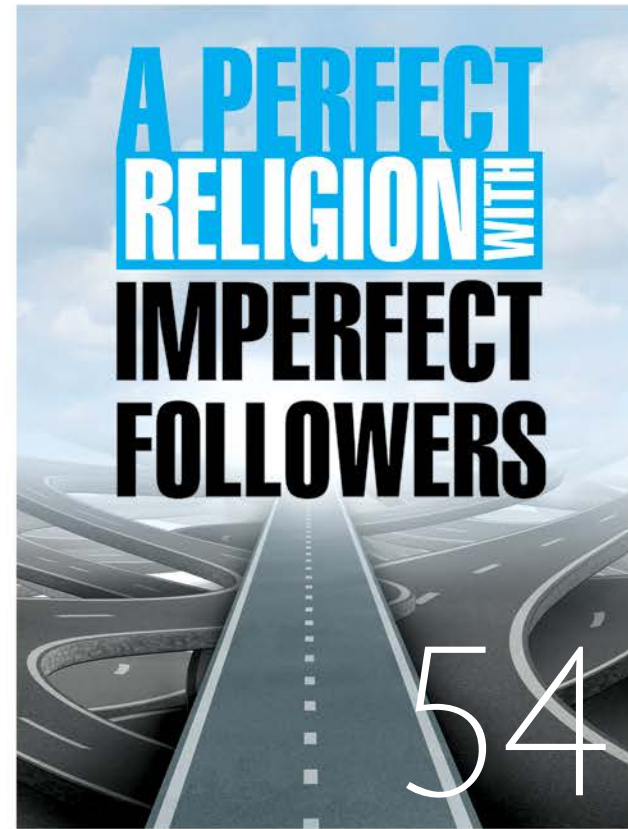
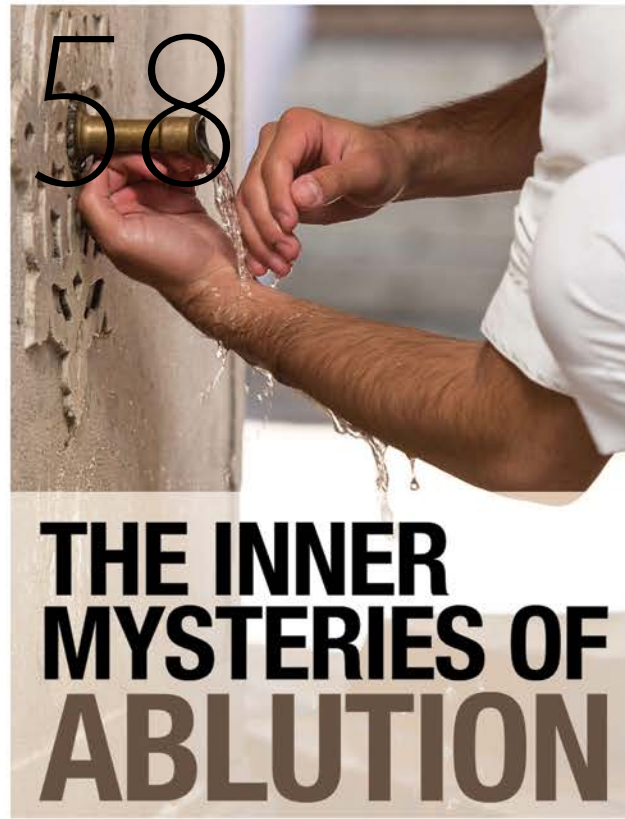
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Editorial

Dear Readers,

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

The month of Rabi'ul-Awwal is significant in the Islamic calendar in that it gifted us with the birth of the most blessed one ﷺ. Had there been any allowance for celebrations on the birth of people in Islam, this month would have witnessed the most elaborate festivities. But Islam's focus is on practical aspects of life rather than formal, impractical celebrations.

Even the two festive occasions in the Islamic year, *Eid ul Fitr* and *Eid ul Adha*, are to be marked by prayer congregations and informal visits to close ones instead of loud processions and ostentatious displays of merriment. It is also worth noting that the celebration on the two *Eids* is not person-specific; rather, it reflects the gratitude and happiness Muslims feel on successful completion of 'forms of worship' - the first occasion marking the fulfillment of the obligatory fasts of Ramadan and the second highlighting the conclusion of Hajj, a pillar of Islam.

We know quite well that the most esteemed persons amongst humanity are without doubt the Prophets ﷺ of Allah ﷻ, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ or his blessed Companions رضي الله عنهم not only never observed their births and deaths but also, the Holy Prophet's ﷺ own birthday was never celebrated either in his life time or after his passing away. In fact, no religion attributing itself to divine revelation has prescribed the celebration of birthdays; rather, this innovation took root much later, many a times due to pagan influences.

What the Muslims must learn to focus on thus, and which should become an essential part of any gathering on *Seerah* during any part of the year, is 'how to follow *Sunnah* and make it an integral and indispensable part of our lives'.

In the month of Rabi'ul Thani too, some people observe the 11th as the anniversary of *Shaikh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani* رحمته الله عليه by cooking special meals and distributing them amongst acquaintances. Again, this practice has no origins in the teachings of Islam.

We often assume *du'a* (supplication) to be a very formal affair, and mostly associate it with sitting for a few minutes at the conclusion of prayers, where we repeat certain requests that we've memorized or internalized. The concluding part of *How to beg Allah ﷻ* in *The Awakening* elucidates that supplications can be made at any time. As soon as a need arises,

and even otherwise, and in addition to prescribed *du'a* occasions, one must make time for a few moments of seclusion with one's *Rabb* ﷻ and ask pleadingly, without losing hope. One must not stop asking, as that does not befit our condition of complete dependence on Allah ﷻ, and the more one supplicates, the more one realizes that a consistent 'beggar' is always compensated by his Lord ﷻ in one way or the other, *insha'Allah*.

The *Cover Story* of this issue discusses the disease of backbiting - an affliction that has the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterate, all, in its firm grip. It engulfs us from within like a raging fire and manifests itself through our vitriolic, malicious and hurtful speech.

The issue of backbiting would have been easier to tackle had we even considered it to be a problem - as they say, diagnosis is half the cure. But the difficulty is that leave alone identifying it as a sin, a major and grave transgression, we consider it our birthright to indulge in it blatantly and incessantly!

The subject article, with the aim of initiating serious thought and introspection, elaborates on the pitfalls and issues related to backbiting and the teachings of our *deen* regarding it.

On the path of *deen*, the *saalik* (traveler), especially the *mubtadi* (beginner), stumbles and falls; he gets up and trips, and gets up again. The focus has to be on not to give up. Even when one has passed the beginner's phase and crossed over into a state where it is easier to shun sins and adopt virtue, the struggle continues. In fact, our elders in *tasawwuf* opine that the fight is a life-long one; because, though the influence of the *nafs* weakens with persistent *mujahiddah* (effort), it still needs to be safeguarded vigilantly - just like the abstinence of a sick person versus the carefulness of one who has just recovered from disease.

At a more fundamental level, one has to be conscious of one's main purpose and object in this transitory existence. *Passion in Reflections* talks about an individual's personal voyage in coming to terms with the effort needed to achieve that objective.

Reading about the lives of our pious predecessors ignites a refreshing spirit of hope in one. It also provides us with an impetus to emulate them. With this end in view, *A Beautiful Life* features a refreshing piece on the life of *Maulana Qasim Nanautvi* رحمته الله عليه, a scholar par excellence, a guide and a reformer of the pre-Partition era. Hope you benefit from reading it!

Wassalam,

Zawjah Farid

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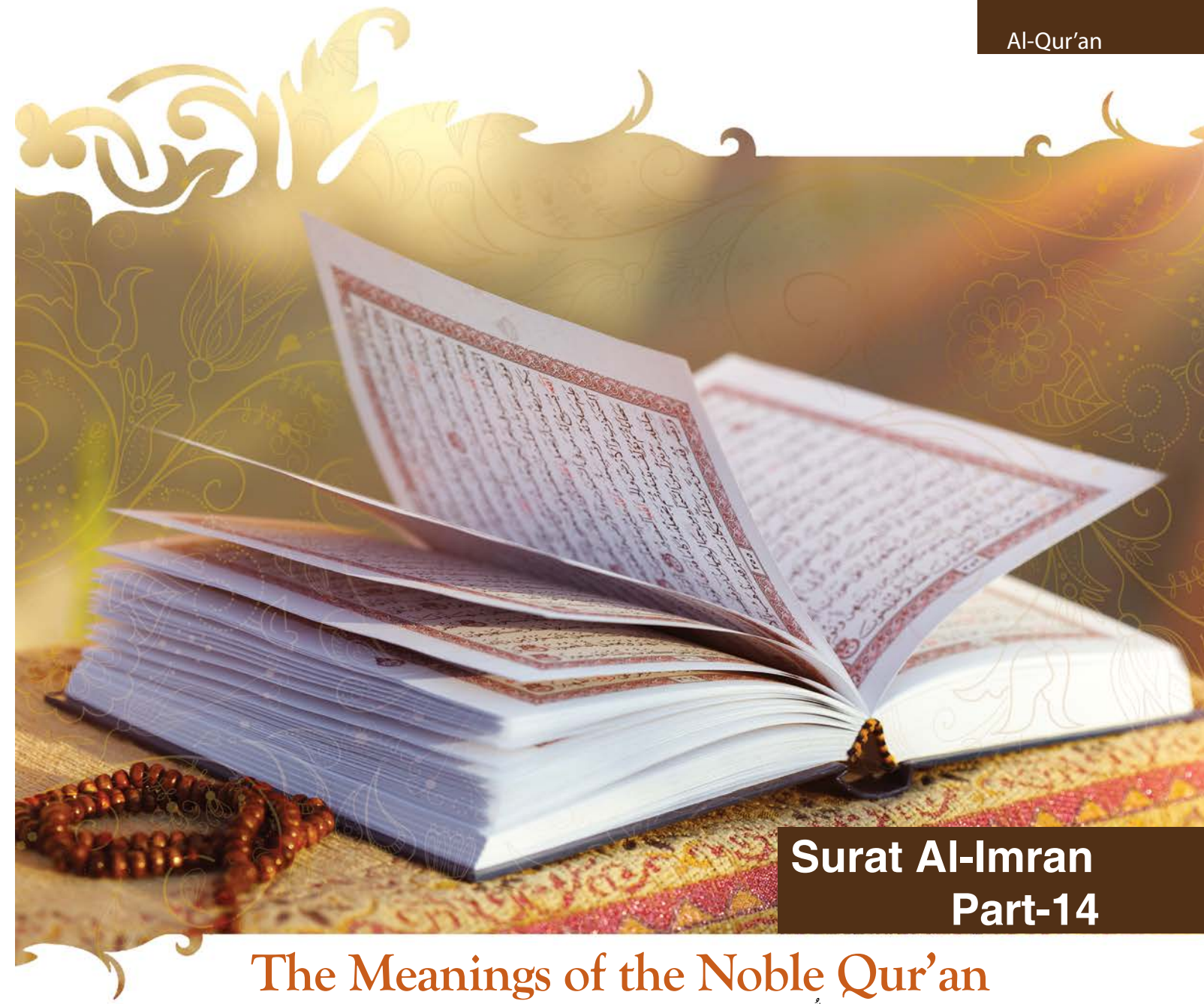
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This magazine contains the sacred name of Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ. Please maintain their due sanctity as well as do not throw in trash. Either circulate, share, keep, recycle or dispose in proper Islamic manner.

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Surat Al-Imran Part-14

The Meanings of the Noble Qur'an

By Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani مدظلهم

Translation with Arabic Text

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٠﴾

190) Surely, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are signs for the people of wisdom,

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا تُسَبِّحُكَ قَوَّامًا عَدَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

191) who remember Allah standing and sitting, and (lying) on their sides, and ponder on the creation of the heavens and the earth (and say) "Our Lord, You have not created all this in vain. We proclaim Your purity. So, save us from the punishment of Fire.

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْرَجْتَهُ، وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن أَنصَارٍ ﴿١٩٢﴾

192) Our Lord, whomsoever You admit into the Fire, he is disgraced by You indeed, and for the unjust there are no supporters.

رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَسْمَعُكَ مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَقَّنَا مَعَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٩٣﴾

193) Our Lord, we heard a herald calling towards Faith: 'Believe in your Lord.' So we believed. Our Lord, forgive us, then, our sins, and write off our evil deeds, and make us die only when we have joined the righteous.

رَبَّنَا وَمَا آتَيْنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا نَحْزَنُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْوَعْدَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

194) Our Lord, give us what You have promised us through Your

messengers, and do not put us to disgrace on the Day of Judgement. Surely you do not go back on Your promise.”

فَأَسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَمَلٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقُتِلُوا أَوْ كَفَرُوا عَنْهُمْ سَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ وَأَلَدٌ جَلَنَّهُمْ بَغْتًا يُخْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ تَوَابًا مِمَّنْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ﴿١١٥﴾

195) So, their Lord answered their prayer: “I do not allow the labour of any worker from among you, male or female, to go to waste. You are similar to one another.

49 So, those who emigrated, and were expelled from their homes, and were tortured in My way, and fought, and were killed, I shall certainly write off their evil deeds, and shall certainly admit them into gardens beneath which rivers flow, as a reward from Allah. It is Allah with Whom lies the beauty of the reward.

لَا يَغُرُّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿١١٦﴾

196) The strutting of the disbelievers about the land should not deceive you.

مَتَّعْتُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿١١٧﴾

197) It is just a little enjoyment. After that, their resort is Hell; and it is an evil abode.

لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِمَّنْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْآبِرَارِ ﴿١١٨﴾

198) But those who fear their Lord, for them there are gardens beneath which rivers flow, where they will live forever - as hospital-

ity from Allah. What is with Allah is best for the righteous.

وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خَشِيعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَاقِبَتِ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا أَوْلَئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿١١٩﴾

199) Surely, among the people of the Book there are those who believe in Allah, and in what has been sent down to you and what has been sent down to them, humbling themselves for Allah. They do not barter away the verses of Allah for paltry (worldly) gains. They have their reward with their Lord. Surely, Allah is swift at reckoning.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٢٠﴾ آل عمران: ١ - ٢٠٠

200) O you who believe, be patient, 50 compete with each other in patience, 51 and guard your frontiers, 52 and fear Allah 53, so that you may be successful.

Explanation

49) This means that all human beings are treated by Allah Ta’ala equally, and that everyone will be awarded or punished according to his or her deeds. No one will be discriminated against on the basis of his sex, race or financial or social status.

50) ‘Patience’ (Sabr) means ‘to keep oneself firm’, and in Qur’anic terminology, it means to remain firm in Allah’s obedience, against the temptation of selfish desires and to steadfastly endure the hardships of worldly life. Thus it

combines all the good qualities expected of a true Muslim.

51) The competition in patience means that everybody should try to be more patient than others, particularly when one is fighting his enemy, he should observe more patience than his opponent.

52) It includes geographical frontiers as well as ideological frontiers. In the former case, guarding the frontiers means to defend them against the enemy, and in the latter case, it implies to protect the faith and its requirements.

53) ‘To fear Allah’ is the translation of an expression frequently used by the Holy Qur’an, the original word being *taqwa*. In the absence of any other exact word in other languages, it is translated as ‘fear of Allah’, but the sense carried out by the original word is much wider. It denotes ‘being conscious of one’s being watched by Allah, and total appreciation to Him under full appreciation of His glory and His favours conferred on His servants, and under apprehension of His displeasure and punishment.’ The ‘fear’ referred to in the term is the awe created by love and respect towards one’s Creator and affectionate Guardian, lest any of one’s actions should displease Him, and should amount to ungratefulness towards the favours bestowed by Him. In this sense of the word, it implies to abide by all the rules of conduct prescribed by Him.

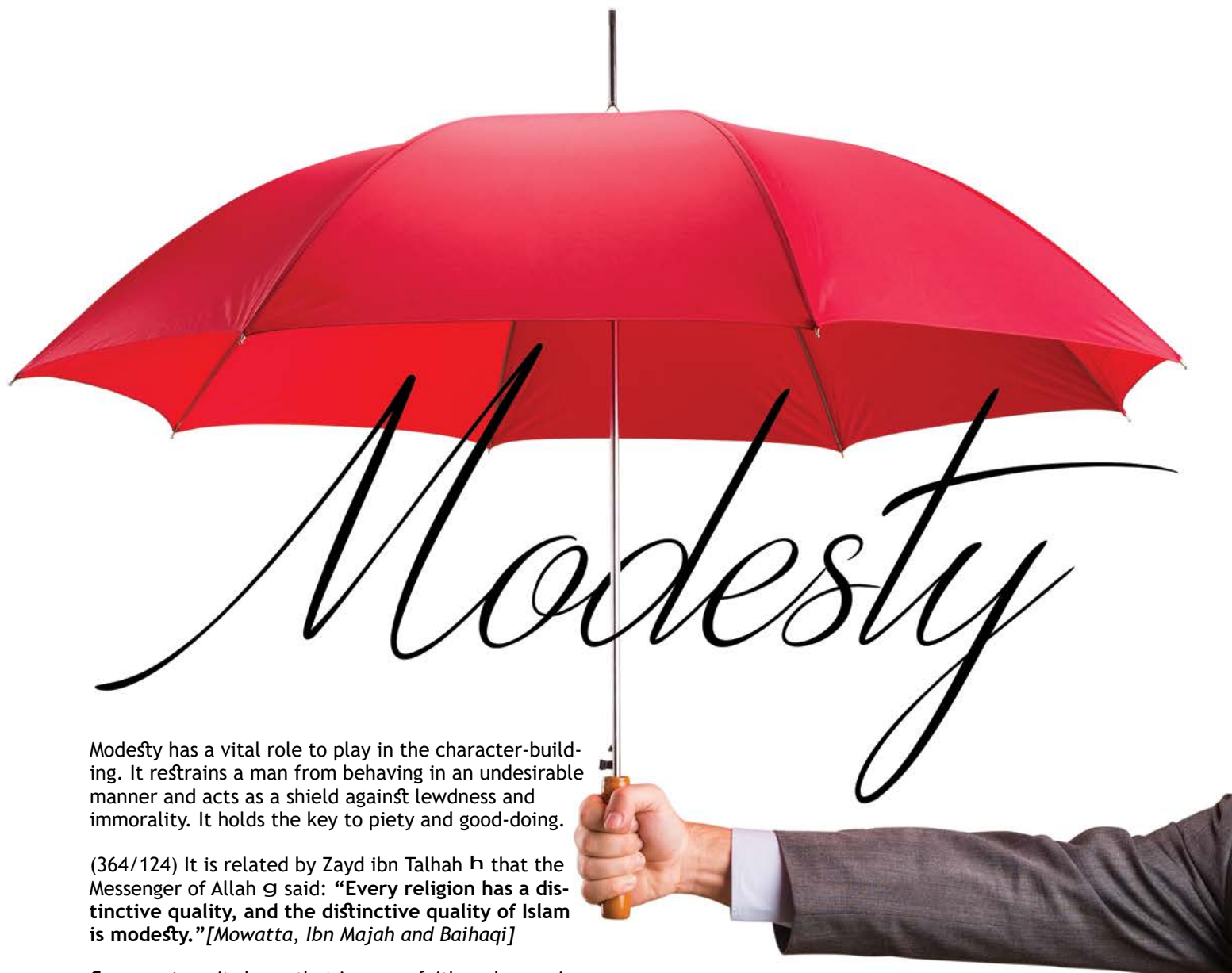
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The Pens have been Lifted and The Pages Have Dried



On the authority of Abdullah bin Abbas, who said : One day I was behind the prophet ﷺ and he said to me: “Young man, I shall teach you some words [of advice] : Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful

of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask of Allah; if you seek help, seek help of Allah. Know that if the Nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, it would benefit you only with something that Allah had already prescribed for you, and that if they gather together to harm you with anything, they would harm you only with something Allah had already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.”- Tirmidhi



Modesty has a vital role to play in the character-building. It restrains a man from behaving in an undesirable manner and acts as a shield against lewdness and immorality. It holds the key to piety and good-doing.

(364/124) It is related by Zayd ibn Talhah h that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Every religion has a distinctive quality, and the distinctive quality of Islam is modesty.” [Mowatta, Ibn Majah and Baihaqi]

Commentary: it shows that in every faith and canonic law, some particular aspect of moral behavior receives paramount attention and an extraordinary emphasis is laid on it. Thus, compassion and forbearance form the cardinal point of the teachings of Jesus. In Islam, in the same way, modesty is of fundamental significance.

It needs, however, be emphasized that the word ‘modesty’ is used in a very wide sense in the special terminology of Qur’an and the Traditions; in the common usage, what it signifies simply is that a man avoided lewdness and kept away from the lustful and indecent acts. But in Islam, it appears that it stands for a state of feeling which is intolerant of everything that is not desirable and produces a reaction of disgust and agony within anyone who knowingly or unknowingly, falls into an error or behaves in a manner of having a semblance of sinfulness.

We learn further from the Qur’an and Traditions that modesty is not in relation merely to our species, but the greatest claim on it is of the Supreme Being Who created man and is sustaining him from moment to

moment, and from Whom nothing is hidden. Or let us take it this way. A modest man is generally inclined to feel shy in the presence of his parents and other elders and benefactors. And Allah ﷻ being the King of kings and Benefactor of benefactors, the bondsman should, naturally, be modest and humble in the greatest degree, in respect of Him, the primary requirement of which will be that he feels pain and repugnance at everything that is displeasing to Allah ﷻ and, therefore, abstain from it.

(365/125) It is related by Abdullah ibn Umar h that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed by an Ansar who (at that time) was advising his brother about modesty and admonishing him in that regard. The Prophet ﷺ, thereupon, said to him: “Leave him to his state for modesty is a part of faith.” [Bukhari and Muslim]

Commentary: It relates that among the Ansars, there was a man whom Allah ﷻ had particularly blessed with the virtue of modesty owing to which he was

very mild and lenient in his dealings with others. He avoided severity in the realization of dues and did not like to be outspoken even when it seemed necessary. A brother of his who did not approve of it was one day reproaching him and telling him that it was not so good to be timid and diffident that the sacred Prophet ﷺ happened to pass that way and on hearing the conversation, told the Ansar to leave his brother alone. His was a highly blessed condition. Modesty was a branch or fruit of Faith, and even if it was not profitable from the point of view of worldly interests, it would surely lead to elevation in ranks in the Hereafter.

(366/126) Sayyedina abu Hurayrah h has said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Modesty is a part of faith, and faith is in Paradise. But obscenity is a part of hardness of heart and hardness of heart is in Hell.” [Ahmed and Tirmidhi]

Commentary: This hadith and the preceding one tell us that modesty is a branch of faith or its fruit. In a hadith in *Bukhari* and *Muslim* which we have reproduced in *Kitab al-Iman*, we are told: ‘Modesty is a branch of faith.’

Anyway, there is a close relationship between modesty and faith. There are different ways to describe it and the next hadith does that too.

(367/127) It is related by Abdullah ibn Umar h that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Modesty and faith exist together, and when one of them is removed, the other too, is removed.” [Baihaqi]

Commentary: It shows that faith and modesty are so closely related to each other that either both will be present in an individual or community or none of them.

(368/128) It is related by Imran ibn Hussain h that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Modesty brings nothing but good.” [Bukhari and Muslim]

Commentary: On superficial view, modesty may appear to act to one’s disadvantage, but the above Tradition insists that it invariably does good and leads to beneficial results, and even when seen from a nar-

row, materialistic angle, it seems to be a drawback, there is nothing but gain in it from the larger Islamic view point.

Some people argue that modesty prevents some people from discharging their Islamic duties. This is not correct. Those people are prevented from their own timid nature to do so and ignorant people call it modesty.

(369/129) It is related by Abdullah ibn Mas’ud h that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “A familiar saying that has reached us from the former Prophets is that when there is no modesty in you, do as you like.” [Bukhari]

Commentary: Though the complete teachings of the earlier Prophets could not remain intact, some of the sayings and precepts have withstood the ravages of time and become proverbial, one of which is what has been referred to by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the above Tradition: “When there is no modesty in you, do as you like.” which is translated in Persian as “Be shameless, and do what you like.”

(370/130) It is reported by Abdullah ibn Mas’ud h that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said; “Show modesty to Allah as it should be shown.” Someone asked, “Al-Hamdulillah! We observe modesty with Him.” He said, “It is not that (limited), but to show modesty to Allah demands that you be careful of your head and what it thinks, of your belly and what you fill it with, and that you remember death and what will happen in the grave. He who makes the Hereafter his objective will be free of the world and its luxuries and he will prefer for him success in the life to come to the luxury of this short life. He who does all that shows modesty before Allah.” [Tirmidhi]

Commentary: This hadith expands on the meaning of modesty as given in the previous hadith. It also tells us that only he shows modesty who gives up the luxury of this world for success in the Hereafter. But he who does not do so is not modest no matter how he pretends to be.

(Excerpted from ‘Ma’ariful Hadith’, Maulana Muhammad Manzoor No’mani r, published by Darul-Isha’at)

Truly in the heart there is a void that cannot be removed except with the company of Allah. And in it there is a sadness that cannot be removed except with the happiness of knowing Allah and being true to Him. And in it there is an emptiness that cannot be filled except with love for Him and by turning to Him and always remembering Him. And if a person were given all of the world and what is in it, it would not fill this emptiness.”

-Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya

The Reality of Heart





Fatwa Forum

By **Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani** حفظه الله

Congregational Prayers of Women

Q. Are women allowed to participate in congregational prayer led by a male? If it is allowed where they should stand? Similarly is it allowed for women to arrange their own congregational prayer led by a female and participated by women exclusively? If it is allowed, what shall be the arrangement of the rows? Please also mention whether such type of congregational prayer can be held in the mosque or in the home. If it is possible for women to participate in a congregational prayer held in a mosque, how should the woman observe the injunctions relating to *Hijab*?

(Muhammad Hassan Chand, Karachi)

A. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has clarified in a number of *ahadith* that it is not preferable for a woman to perform prayer outside her home. The congregational prayer has been intended for male Muslims only and they are not only instructed to perform their prayers in a congregation but it has been made almost obligatory on them that they should perform the prayer in a mosque and should not abandon the congregational prayer except in case of necessity. On the contrary, the females are always advised by the Holy Prophets ﷺ to perform their prayers in their home so much so that the performance of prayer in an inner room has been made more rewardable for a woman than in the outside room, and performing the prayer in the outside room has been more rewardable for her than in a courtyard of her own house. However, in the days of the Holy

Prophet ﷺ a large number of women used to come to the Mosque to perform prayer behind the Holy Prophet ﷺ, an unparalleled merit. Since the women of those days used to observe all the requirements of *Shariah* including those of *Hijab* in the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, they were not forbidden from attending the congregational prayers. However, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has made it clear that it is more advisable for them to pray in their homes.

But Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه felt it in his days that the concession given to the women is sometimes misused and it was apprehended that it would be misused in the future even more. He was also aware of the fact that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not like the women leaving their homes for the sake of prayers. Keeping all this in view he issued a directive that the women should no longer attend the congregational prayer. This directive was completely confirmed by all the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ available at that time. Sayyida Ai'sha رضي الله عنها opined that had the Holy prophet ﷺ been alive in those days he would have certainly stopped the women from attending the mosque for prayers.

It is in this context that the Muslim jurists have been unanimous on the point that it is not advisable for women to attend the congregational prayers in a mosque, rather most of them have taken it as a prohibited act.

At the same time it should be kept in mind that even though the participation of women in a congregational prayer is not advisable according to the *Shariah*, yet, if they join a congregation at some occasion, the prayer will be valid. In this case, they have to stand behind the rows of the males and the Imam should have the intention that he is leading both males and females in prayer.

Similarly, the congregation of females only is held to be 'Makrooh' by the Muslim jurists. However, if at some occasion, the women elect to arrange their own congregation led by a woman, the female Imam should stand in the centre of the first row and not in front of the followers as the male Imam is supposed to do. As mentioned earlier, it is not advisable for women to pray in the mosques. However, if they elect to do so, their prayers will be valid according to the *Shariah*. In any case, the observance of *Hijab* while joining

a male congregation is mandatory which cannot be dispensed with anyway.

I hope that this will satisfy your question. I would like to emphasize once again that the basic purpose of a Muslim, male or female, should be to follow the dictates of *Shariah* and to seek the pleasure of Allah and not to satisfy one's own desire. The congregation of the male Muslims has been held as a meritorious act for the simple reason that Allah Almighty has declared it meritorious for the males but the case of women is totally different. Here, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has expressly mentioned that it is more meritorious for a woman to perform prayers in her home. Therefore, Muslim women should not insist on going to the mosque for joining the congregational prayer because the reward promised for a congregational prayer shall be available for them in their homes and not in the mosque.

SEEK ALLAH

“Let not the people come to know except of your happiness, and let them not see except your smile. If life becomes constricted upon you, then within the Qur’an is your orchard. If you feel curtailed and restricted, then to the heavens raise your call. And if they ask you of your affairs, then praise Allah and smile.

If you see an ant on the path, then do not crush it, and seek the Face of Allah thereby, so that He will have mercy on you like you had mercy on it, and remember that it glorifies Allah, so do not halt this glorification by killing it.

And if you pass by a bird drinking from the blessing of water, then do not pass close to it in case you startle it, and seek the Face of Allah thereby, so that He grants you safety on the Day when hearts shall reach the throat.

And if you come across a cat in the middle of the road, then avoid hitting it, and seek the Face of Allah thereby, so that He protects you from an evil death.

And if you want to throw out food, then make it your intention that animals can eat from it and seek the Face of Allah thereby, so that He provides you from whence you do not expect.

Do good, no matter how small it seems to you, because you do not know which good deed will enter you into Paradise.

And if you wish to spread this, then intend good, so that Allah may relieve you of a trial from the trials of this world and the Hereafter.”

- Shaykh Abu Ishaq al-Huwayni

Translation Series of Hazrat Mawlana Abdus
Sattars رحمته الله Spiritual Discourses



HOW TO BEG ALLAH

Translated by Asra Ahmed

Supplication is a Constant form of Worship

It must be understood that *du'a* isn't a fixed part of any specific act of worship, that is, there's no particular time or place where it has to be performed, for example, right after offering Salah. It is a constant form of worship, much like reciting the Qur'an, offer-

ing *Nafil* (voluntary) prayers, performing Hajj, fasting and giving charity. Whenever one gets a chance to, he should supplicate to his Lord. Give it a try, practice doing this for a week, and you will notice a change in yourself, and will also establish a closer relationship with Allah ﷻ. Therefore, we should perform

du'a with the kind of discipline that has already been established previously, while keeping in mind that no one except Allah ﷻ can solve our problems and forgive our sins.

Someone very aptly said,

"We should make *du'a* to Allah ﷻ with complete dedication, and then we shall watch Him shower us with blessings."

The One who supplicates is Successful

The one who has established a relationship with Allah ﷻ by constantly supplicating to Him, will never feel lonely or deprived, which is a state we all should strive for achieving. While supplicating to Him, we should also keep in mind that He is the All-Knowing, so even if we spend our entire lives asking Him for something which He doesn't give us right away, we should still consider ourselves successful. An example of this is when the Prophet Musa ﷺ prayed to Allah ﷻ to destroy the Pharaoh, the signs of this happening did not become apparent until forty years later, despite him being a Prophet. This is why we should not give up hope, and should continue to beg Allah ﷻ.

In our times, in particular, special importance needs to be given to *du'a*, because practically every person we find is facing some difficulty or the other, and seems to be on the verge of giving up hope. It is rare, or impossible, to find a person in our society who says that he is leading a peaceful life, devoid of any difficulties or worries. Hence we must use the prescribed cure, which is *du'a*, and, *insha'Allah*, both this world, and the Hereafter will become free of all worries.

The Teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ, along with his innumerable favors, has also left us with a plan to make us accustomed to supplicating to Allah ﷻ, as there is no situation for which he did not teach us some *du'a*. For example, the prayers for eating and drinking, the *du'a* before sleeping, and the one to be made after waking up in the morning, etc., have all been taught to us by the Messenger ﷺ of Allah ﷻ. There is no situation for which we do not have a *du'a* to recite. We have been instructed to ask Allah ﷻ for big things, as well as small. Even if something as trivial as a shoelace breaks, we should ask Allah ﷻ for a replacement. This will not only improve our relationship with Allah ﷻ, but will also increase His love for us.

When someone shares a relationship with another person, they tell them about their likes and dislikes; share with them their happiest moments and greatest of sorrows. If we attempt to establish such a relationship with Allah ﷻ by disclosing to Him our worries and hopes, He will respond to us by bringing us closer to Him!

Supplicate Like a Beggar

Have you ever seen a beggar? He is an embodiment of desperation and hopelessness. Just his voice gives

away his struggles and problems, and he spreads his hand in such a way that one can tell that he is begging for something. If a worshipper also supplicates in such a manner that reflects that he is asking someone for something, then his *du'a* will definitely be accepted. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique رضي الله عنه would often say:

"Crying intentionally is not something that one can necessarily make him or herself do. However, one can at least be sober and mimic the crying state."

Your state should be such as if you are a beggar before Allah ﷻ. Try to gradually increase the length of time that you spend immersed in supplication: ten minutes, then fifteen, then twenty, and then half an hour. In this way, you will also improve your relationship with Allah ﷻ.

Not Praying to Allah ﷻ is a sign of Arrogance

We should keep in mind that Allah ﷻ gets upset with those who don't supplicate to Him, as He sees this as a sign of arrogance. A lot of people never even raise their hands before him, and this attitude severely displeases Him. This is why we should always be in a state of desperation and humility before Allah ﷻ, who says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

-(Surah Fatir: Verse 15)

Translation: "O people it is you who stand in need of Allah: Allah is Self-Sufficient and Self-Praiseworthy"

We should make this our habit, we should teach our sons, daughters and wives to supplicate to Allah ﷻ, and then sit back and witness the countless blessings that make their way into our lives, as well as the various difficulties that automatically get resolved.

The Responsibility of Women

Something that I would like to point out to all my female readers is that if a woman wishes for her husband and her children to earn their income in a *Halal* (permissible as per *Shari'ah*) way, it can certainly happen. She should be willing to live a simple life, rather than letting the *Haram* (the impermissible) enter her household. She will be willing to forgo the luxuries of life, so that her children are not fed through *Haram* sources. She would prefer sending her daughter to a house built on *Halal* income, even if it's just a small hut. A woman can only do this if she's sincerely willing to go as far as adopting a simple lifestyle, free from unnecessary luxuries. She can only accomplish this if she is determined not to let any food earned through *haram* means become a part of her children's bodies. Such an attitude will relieve her husband too, as the only reason a man blurs the lines between *Halal* and *Haram* earning, is because he's worried about not being able to provide enough for his family. Therefore, if he has the reassurance that whatever he earns will be good enough, he will not be tempted to earn through impermissible sources.

Pray for all Mankind

In moments of solitude, devote your full concentration to praying to Allah ﷻ. First ask for yourself and your parents, then for your relatives, then for your teachers and acquaintances and finally, for all the Muslims around the world. In the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ has taught us certain du'as to recite for both ourselves and our Muslim brothers and sisters, such as this:

“رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ”

(Surah Al Hashr: Verse 10)

Translation: “O our Sustainer! Forgive us our sins, as well as those of our brethren who preceded us in faith,”

At another point, He states,

“رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ”

(Surah Ibrahim: Verse 41)

Translation: “Grant Thy forgiveness unto me, and my parents, and all the believers, on the Day on which the [last] reckoning will come to pass!”

Ask for yourself first, because you are completely dependent on Allah ﷻ, and then ask for the rest of mankind because that is it's right on you.

May Allah ﷻ help us apply all these teachings in our lives, and may these not remain mere words that we superficially read. *Aameen*

Concluded

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The year-end brings a host of temptations and invitations to the unbridled embrace of our evil desires. Our approach to these invitations could easily decide our fate as dwellers of Paradise or denizens of Hell. Our Imaan and faith demands that at this critical juncture we contemplate the following:

Who are we? Are we those who follow every base desire and break the commands of the one who has created us and blessed us with life, health and wealth? Or are we Muslims who are obedient to Allah and our beloved Rasool Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam?

Being conscientious and upholding our Islamic principles is not only key to our salvation in the hereafter, but will also save us from much trauma and grief in our lives.

The amount of abuse perpetrated at such venues is only on the increase. There are many who attend as predators and with malicious intent. Spiked drinks and the abuse that follows seem to be the norm at such events.

Our humble plea is that for Allah's sake, all plans for such parties should be cancelled with immediate effect. Every individual should ponder over death and its unpredictability. Would it not be the ultimate disgrace and failure if we had to pass away in such environments of sin and evil?

[Source: www.jamiat.org.za]

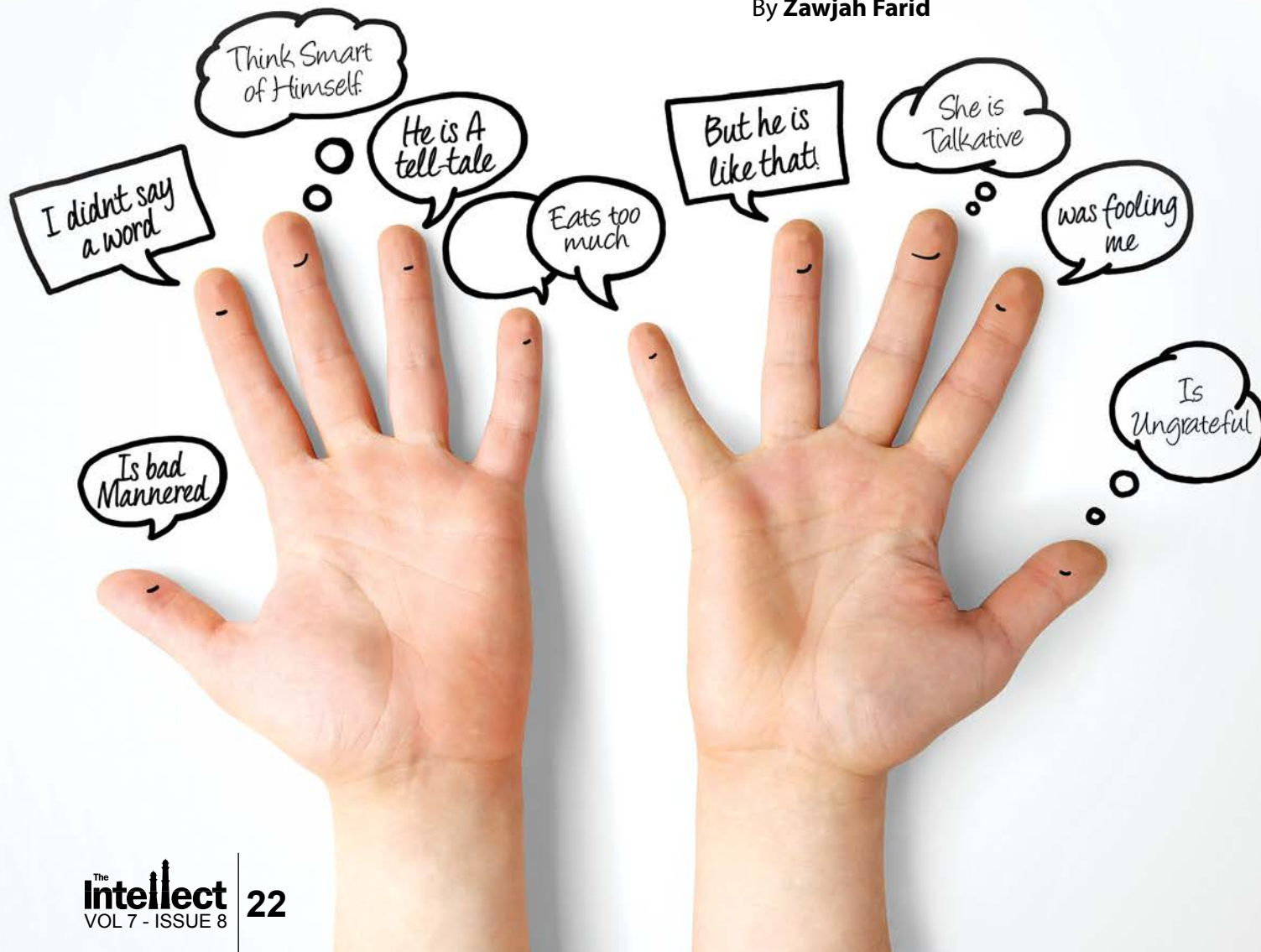
YEAR END PARTIES



When does sharing a problem with someone cross the boundary into the sin of backbiting? Will Taubah suffice in washing out the sin of Gheebah (backbiting)? What's wrong in talking about another person's bad habits if he or she actually has them? Is there any situation in which 'backbiting' is allowed? If we are just discussing a person in a light, fun manner, and mean no 'real' harm, would it still incur the wrath of Allah ﷻ? How about if I don't say a single bad word about the other person, but my eyes say it all? If most of our conversations fall into backbiting, then what is there to talk about when we sit together?

IS THIS BACKBITING?

By Zawjah Farid



These and other questions along similar lines frequently quiz our minds and the conscience of those whose hearts yearn for self reformation. Let us explore the answers through the words of two reformers, Maulana Mufti Taqi Usmani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (Islahi Khutbaat, Vol.17) and Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ (Basair-e-Hakeem ul Ummat).

What exactly counts as backbiting?

We all know the definition of backbiting: talking ill of another person in his absence such that if he finds out, he will be upset about it. The enormity of the sin is also common knowledge, as explicit in the following well-known verse of the Holy Qur'an:

"...and do not backbite one another. Does one of you like that he eats the flesh of his dead brother? You would abhor it....." (Al-Hujraat:12)

And the *Hadith*:

"Backbiting is graver than adultery" (*Mishkatul Masa-beeh, Baihaqi; 4874*)

Thus, we do know it's a big sin, a *gunnah-e-kabeerah*. But what about the finer details? And what about the excuses that flood our minds regarding it?

"But he is like that!"

Expanding upon the basic definition of backbiting is this *Hadith* that clarifies one very important issue - what if the person **does** have the bad habit being mentioned by others behind his back?

Once the Prophet ﷺ asked his Companions j: "Do you know what backbiting is?" They said, "Allah and His Messenger know best." He then said, "It is to say something about your brother that he would dislike." Someone asked him, "But what if what I say is true?" The Messenger of Allah said, "If what you say about him is true, you are backbiting him, but if it is not true, then you have slandered him." (*Sahih Muslim - Hadith no. 2589*)

So anything that a person would hate to hear about himself, stated in his absence, even though the things being mentioned **do** exist in him, falls very much under backbiting; but if they don't exist in him, then an even graver sin, slandering (*buhta'an*), has been committed!

Also, speaking ill includes not just matters related to his character / personality but also things related to his outlook / physical appearance and his worldly affairs etc.

"I can say it on his face!"

The easiest and commonest excuse for backbiting is: "we can say this on his face as well". Granted. Say it on his face then. But that is only allowed if you mean well; if your intention is that of a well-wisher; not to degrade and dishonor him, which is *haram*, or to gloat on your superiority over him. Also, the point has to be made in a decent and caring manner. So we need to constantly remind ourselves that having the nerve to say something to someone directly does not justify our saying it behind his back.

"I didn't say a word"

Backbiting isn't restricted to words. It also includes behavior and deeds by gesturing with one's hand, head or eyes.

Once *Sayyidah Ayesha* رضی اللہ عنہا referred to another lady in front of the Prophet ﷺ by gesturing in a manner that indicated her being short in height. The Prophet ﷺ told *Sayyidah Ayesha* رضی اللہ عنہا that the Angels had run away from the sour smell of the action. This, even though she hadn't said a word!

Further, imitating others, be it a copy of the way they walk, sit or act, to make others laugh and otherwise, is also a part of backbiting. In fact, making fun of others to exhibit one's sense of humour and comic ability in imitating others, leads to double the sin: that of backbiting and also of making fun, the latter being counted as a separate sin in Islam.

[*"O you who believe, no men should ever scoff at other men. Maybe, the latter are better than the former. Nor should women (ever scoff) at other women. Maybe the latter women are better than the former ones. And do no find fault with one another, nor call another with bad nicknames. Bad is the name of sinfulness after embracing Faith. If anyone does not repent, then such people are the wrongdoers"*. (Al-Hujraat: 11)]

What isn't backbiting?

The following cases however don't fall under the purview of backbiting:

When a person is committing a sin openly and people talk about it in his absence. For example, a person drinks openly and unashamedly in front of others; if someone else thus mentions behind his back that "so and so drinks", it won't fall under backbiting. The person didn't take any pains to hide his act nor did he have any intention of doing so, therefore he won't be hurt or upset if he gets to know that people mentioned his drinking.

If there is fear that a person might inflict loss upon another then it becomes incumbent upon one to warn the other and this won't fall into backbiting e.g. You get to know that a person is a swindler and might transact with someone you know; then you must inform your acquaintance about his duplicitous past. Or, for example, you overhear of a plan being made by thieves; you must inform the intended victim in advance of the harm that might come his way.

In case of advice sought for matrimonial proposals. Say, you are aware of some very bad habits in a person that may prove to be harmful for the spouse in the long run, then you must tell the truth while advising. In this case, it won't be counted as backbiting; in fact, since you spoke up for the welfare of another Muslim, you will get reward for it.

The main principle in the two preceding points is that if your purpose in speaking ill of a person is to save another from material / other harm, then it won't be considered backbiting. We can take the example of an incident in the Prophet's ﷺ life to further explain this: once the Prophet ﷺ was sitting with *Sayyidah Ayesha* رضی اللہ عنہا and they saw a man approaching them from afar. The Prophet ﷺ mentioned that the person is a bad one from amongst his tribe; but upon his arrival, he ﷺ met him cordially. Once the man departed, *Sayyidah Ayesha* رضی اللہ عنہا asked the Prophet ﷺ why he met him nicely after his earlier comment and

the Prophet ﷺ replied that has she ever found him to behave ungraciously with anyone? Thereafter, he explained that the comment made was to warn her; lest she or others fall into transacting with him in the future.

Another area exempt from falling under the purview of backbiting is *Asma'ur-Rija'al* - the subject of the descriptions of narrators of *Ahadith*. Since Allah ﷻ wanted the words of His beloved ﷺ to be safe from all sorts of distortions, this subject took form, whereby, the backgrounds, lives, habits and traits of each and every narrator of *Hadith* were recorded so as to cast a light upon the efficacy of their pronouncements. So though the entire study talks about the good and questionable traits of all narrators, it doesn't fall under backbiting as the purpose of the research was to safeguard the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ.

Finally, if someone has been wronged and he approaches a person with authority who will help redress his grievance, then it is allowed to mention the wrong that has been committed e.g. a person's valuables have been snatched and he approaches a policeman and relates the incident and points out the dacoit, then this won't fall under backbiting.

Also, in a society like ours where people are fearful of approaching the police or courts even though they are the victims of cruelty, if a person shares his distress with someone whereby he mentions that he has been deprived of his valuables by such and such person, without exaggerating or adding falsifications to the account, and where the other tries to console him by uttering a few words of sympathy, even though he does not have the authority to redress his grievance, then too, it won't fall under backbiting.

What to do in instances like these?

Here are some examples from daily life with answers provided by *Mufti sahibaan*

Case 1

A woman has been wronged by her mother in law, husband, another family member or a friend. Should she share her problem with a close friend to unburden herself or to take advice?

Answer: if she only wishes to unburden herself and needs a shoulder to cry on, she can share the incident **only** if she takes no names or gives no indication whatsoever, implicit or explicit, of the person(s) in question. One way to go about it is by explaining the incident ("such and such happened...") but not naming or indicating the perpetrator.
(*Writer's comment: the best One to unburden oneself with is Allah ﷻ - the Most High, the Most Sincere and the One who can give one all the help and solace that's needed*).

Secondly, if she is seeking advice, then a problem which entails describing other people negatively can

only be discussed with those who can practically help solve the problem; not anyone else who doesn't have the ability, power or intention of taking practical action to resolve the issue. (In this case, the concerned people can be named because the listener is one who will definitely be intervening and discussing the issue with them to help smoothen it out).

Case 2

A father calls his son to relate to him his latest contentious argument with the boy's mother. ("This is what your mother said to meI really don't know what to do with her?!") What can the son do when his father is "backbiting" against his mother?

Answer: If the son will respectfully intervene to resolve their differences, and the main purpose of the phone call was the same expectation at the father's end, then he must proceed in resolving the issue. But if he has no say or ability to change the conduct of his mother towards her husband, he must courteously decline from further listening or discussing a matter in which he can be of no use. (The best way to do so is to subtly change the topic).

Case 3

You are conscious of the fact that you have decided to refrain from backbiting, a major sin. Then, one day, you are invited to a gathering of family or friends where everyone is in a jovial mood and the topic of discussion is gradually moving towards making fun of one or the other person....what do you do? Leave? Intervene and ask them to stop backbiting? Stay quiet, as they are elders and you have no say over them?

Answer: The most preferred thing to do in such a situation is to point out with courtesy and respect that "we are indulging in sin by mentioning others negatively. So let us not spoil our *dunya* and *aakhirah* with this despicable sin." If you find yourself unable to do this then change the topic of discussion so as to lead everyone away from backbiting. If even that seems difficult, then simply leave or go to another room or area.

Though you may not be participating in backbiting yourself, even so, just sitting there, half-listening, half-cursing-yourself-for-coming isn't allowed. Do something about it, practically.

Question

Is it allowed to backbite against politicians (if they are involved in loot, plunder and injustices)?

Answer: The following incident answers this query: Once a person started talking and backbiting against Hajjaj bin Yusuf in front of *Sayyidina* Abdullah Bin Umar h. He stopped him forthwith and told him that just like Allah ﷻ will ask Hajjaj bin Yusuf about his atrocities in the Hereafter, similarly, he will ask you about backbiting against him or slandering him!

Expiation of Past Gheebah

Suppose that a person realizes his mistake and feels repentant about his habit of backbiting against others; he also makes sincere *tauba*. Is that enough to expiate the sin?

No. The sin of backbiting is not purged until he seeks forgiveness from the individual who got hurt as a result of it; a tall order indeed! This goes on to prove that prevention is better than cure.

But, how can we remember and contact all the people we have hurt through backbiting on countless occasions in the past?

First up, apologize to those who you do remember hurting through *gheebah*. As for those people or occasions you aren't sure of, *ulema* opine that the least a person can do in this regard is to ask all his relatives, friends, acquaintances, colleagues etc. to forgive any and all of his transgressions towards them in the past. This serves as an umbrella apology but it must be made with sincerity and a promise with oneself not to repeat the sin.

Also, it can be a verbal apology or one through a standard letter / email sent to all one's contacts.

In earlier times, when Muslims parted from each other after a gathering or meeting, they used to say the words "*Kaha sunna ma'af*"; literally: "forgive whatever's been said and heard". It proved as an immediate expiation of any inadvertent sins of the tongue committed during the gathering.

The Way Ahead

Backbiting is fun. For corrupted hearts like ours, it holds supreme enjoyment: character assassination, dissecting the words of others, laughing at others' expense, copying the others' style to take home the title of the best conversationalist, the most 'fun person'. And since much of what we talk about in our gatherings falls under the ambit of backbiting, is there really any hope for those who wish to stop? If we completely stop backbiting, what would we talk about? Do we even consider it a sin; a very grave one, for that matter?

First things first, we have to admit to ourselves that yes, it is a major sin and we are committing it on a daily basis. And just because it has become endemic in our society, does not make it lighter than other 'presumably' graver sins. So the first step is to admit to oneself the serious wrong one is committing in one's conversations. And the best way to drive this point home is by repeating to oneself the atrociousness of backbiting.

Internalizing the Enormity of the Sin

Three things should *insha'Allah* suffice in instilling the seriousness and terrible manifestations of backbiting in our hearts:

Imagine you sit down to eat and are served the flesh of a dead being; not a *halal* animal, a human being! Now imagine that the flesh is that of your own,

deceased brother! Sounds horrifying and disgusting. No person with a *sa'alim*, uncorrupted, heart would relish such a meal. Yet, we partake of it on a daily basis, with not so much as the batting of an eye. (There are narrations to the effect that at the time of the Prophet ﷺ some people actually spat or vomited out flesh after indulging in backbiting!)

One of the most despicable sins in any *momin's* eye is adultery. Backbiting is worse than adultery! We have the Prophet's ﷺ word for it. An adulterer can seek true forgiveness from his Lord ﷻ and expect to be forgiven; but the one who backbites will need to first apologize to the person he has spoken against. If he does not repent and seek forgiveness from the victim, his good deeds would be passed on to the affected person on Doomsday. What a manifest loss.

No Muslim can stand by and watch the Holy Ka'aba being dishonored in any way; rather, a Muslim would sacrifice his life to uphold the sanctity of the Ka'aba. Yet, once while doing *tawaf*, the Prophet ﷺ said that the sanctity of a believer's blood and property in the sight of Allah ﷻ is greater than that of the Ka'aba! This includes the believer's honor and respect. It is thus extremely important to internalize that by backbiting every single day, we are constantly engaged in an act more heinous than dishonoring the Ka'aba.

The losses of backbiting are two-fold: 1) **worldly loss** - in that it negatively impacts religious and societal brotherhood by becoming a social crime that causes enmity, disunity, ignominy, distrust, strife and hostilities between relatives, friends, neighbors, community members and coworkers. And whereas Islam reinforces fraternity and mutual amicability, backbiting is an evil from the promptings of Satan that rips up the social fabric. ["*Tell My servants that they should speak that which is best. Surely Satan creates discord among them. Indeed, Satan is an open enemy to mankind.*"] (Bani Israel: 53); & 2) **eternal loss** - the perpetrator's good deeds will be passed on to the sufferer.

Put Yourself in the Other's Shoes

When a sin becomes rife in a society, the fear and horror of committing it gradually diminishes and fades out of people's hearts. Since it is so common, no one considers it to be a big deal. In fact, people frequently comment that if backbiting is banned from conversations, would there be anything interesting left to talk about? Would there even be any fun in *gupshup* (chit chat)?

Granted that by backbiting you are having fun in your conversations but the fun is at someone else's expense. Just stop for a moment and reflect: how would the mocked person feel? Do you think *he* is having fun? And what if *you* were the victim of this 'fun'? Would you have liked to be scoffed at? Would you have enjoyed it? So if you feel that you would've been hurt by such behavior, think the same for your Muslim brother/sister. ["*None of you truly believes until he loves*

for his brother what he loves for himself” (Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim)]

With regards, ‘what is left to talk about?’, there are a hundred and one useful and engaging topics one can converse about and they prop up effortlessly in our minds once we rid our hearts of this sordid disease.

Taqwa

No law or rule in the world can be completely enforced by sheer force or the strength of numbers unless the fear of God is instilled in people’s hearts. Without *taqwa*, people will break laws in the dead of the night, when alone or even in the presence of law enforcers. It is only fear of standing before one’s Lord  , answerable and accountable for one’s deeds, that makes people adhere to righteousness. Otherwise, Satan’s tricks are numerous - you would begin my saying “so and so is such a nice person, **but....**” And this “but” would be your descent into *gheebah*. If your fear Allah  , you would know that each and every word that you utter is recorded and each utterance will be judged. This would automatically chain your tongue, and you won’t be able to say one further negative word, despite the whisperings of Satan.

Other Practical Steps

Think before you speak. Prior to saying anything, stop for a few seconds and consider whether what I am about to say has any *deeni* or worldly use? Initially, you will forget to weigh your words in advance, but with mindful practice, it will *insha’Allah* become a habit.

Make *du’a* and ask Allah   for *taufeeq* to help you get rid of this disease. (Also, make *du’a* for those who have suffered your backbiting).

You know that you will have to ask for forgiveness from the people you’ve hurt through backbiting. If this apology is made multiple times, you would automatically refrain from backbiting in the future because of the embarrassment and awkwardness involved in repeated admissions of guilt. Hence, it would act as a deterrent for future involvement in the sin. While talking, if you realize you are treading into backbiting, stop immediately; change the topic right away, but much better than that is to stop talking in mid-sentence! This serves two purposes: it impacts the *nafs*, which needed a dire admonition, and secondly, it serves as a useful forewarning for others.

In conclusion, though refraining from backbiting may not seem easy at the onset, but piety can lead our way - a conscious effort to protect oneself from sin through life’s journey and passing into the other realm pure and unscathed, *insha’Allah*.

Sayyidina Umar   once asked Sayyidina Ibn Ka’ab   the definition of *taqwa*. In reply Sayyidina Ibn Ka’ab   asked, *Oh Chief of the Believers, have you ever traversed a narrow path which is covered with thorny bushes on either side?* Sayyidina Umar   replied in the affirmative and Sayyidina Ka’ab continued, *How did you walk on this path?* Sayyidina Umar   said that *I gathered together all my clothes very tightly around myself and walked very carefully.* Sayyidina Ka’ab   said, *This is taqwa.*

Eva Oil
pg27

THE EDUCATION OF AN ECONOMIST

By Dr Asad Zaman

In our PhD Economics program at Stanford, we learnt nothing about the history of major economic events of the Twentieth Century. Instead, we were taught the rather arcane and difficult skill of building models. In order to analyse what would happen in an economy, we learnt that you have to construct an artificial economy, populated by rational robots called homo economicus, who behave according to strict mathematical laws. At no point in our studies were we asked to match what happens in our models with any events in the real world; it was assumed that the two always matched. This process of economic modelling permits us to provide exact mathematical answers to a vast range of questions one might ask about the economy. This is undoubtedly a powerful technique, which has earned economics the name 'Queen of the Social Sciences'. Our poor cousins in Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Geography, and so on, have to

study the more complex real world, and cannot offer anything comparable. Nonetheless, the power of mathematical modelling derives from the extremely unrealistic assumption that real world events and human behaviour can be predicted by mathematical formulae. Thus, the precise predictions of economists are often dramatically contradicted by real world outcomes. As Nobel Laureate Paul Krugman remarked after the global financial crisis took economists by surprise: "the economics profession went astray because economists, as a group, mistook beauty, clad in impressive-looking mathematics, for truth."

My own education in economics began many years after graduate school, when I chanced across a copy of *Economics and World History: Myths*

and *Paradoxes* by Paul Bairoch. Bairoch's book challenged one of the holy cows of economic theory, that free trade is always a superior policy for all parties. Believing in free trade is a hallmark of economists – a recent survey showed that 90 per cent of economists believe in it, while only 20 per cent of the general public believes that free trade is always optimal. So it came as a shock to me when Bairoch discussed many historical episodes to show that free trade had caused harm to the less developed nations, by preventing development of industries, and also by creating unemployment. Many nations with strong industries had built them up under the umbrella of protection, contrary to free trade principles. This historical evidence was strongly in conflict with the mathematical demonstrations of superiority of free trade that I had learnt in graduate school. In bewilderment, I asked several of my mentors, very senior and respected economists, about this. I was even more surprised by the responses I received. None of them were familiar with the historical evidence, and furthermore, they did not find it relevant. They argued that if protection provided good results, then free trade would have provided even better results. The mathematical proofs were impervious to empirical evidence.

Economists do not study history because it is a record of particular events, while they search for universal scientific laws, which would be equally valid among the Aztecs and the Zulu, in the nineteenth century and in the twenty-first. I realised that the laws of economics hold only in an imaginary world populated by robots, and that to learn real economics, it was necessary to study history, which I had bypassed in graduate school. It was only after many years of detailed historical studies of real world economic events that I came to realise that nearly everything I had been taught in graduate school was wrong.

Recent historical events have shaken the faith of many true believers in free market economics. A landmark study in 2013 by authors, Dorn and Hanson, found that competition from China has destroyed jobs and lowered wages in many US industries, especially manufacturing. Contrary to economic theory, which states that the displaced labourers will find better jobs in different sectors, workers displaced by Chinese competition often went on the government dole. A large group of heterodox economists, students and laymen are becoming increasingly aware of the lack of realism, ideological bias, and lack of concern with poverty and inequality, which are hallmarks of modern economic theory. However, dissent is weak and disunited, while orthodoxy is firmly entrenched in the halls of power. The task of creating a new economics remains as essential as it is undone.





By Bint Akram

THE SCREEN

“Listen, it’s my turn to play the game. Why aren’t you giving me the tab?” The four-year-old, Ali, shouted at his elder sister, Sarah, who was completely engrossed in watching some cartoon videos on YouTube. I knew a fight was about to break between the two as now little Ali was all set to snatch the tablet from his elder sister, whose given time to use their mother’s tablet was now ‘up’. The eight-year-old Sarah, however, was not ready to even bat an eyelid while watching one of her favourite videos. When Ali finally tried to snatch the tablet from her, hell broke loose. There was screaming and fighting all over. Their mother finally stepped into the room and tried to settle the dispute. Both got a good amount of scolding and the tablet

was also confiscated for two hours. In the evening, the parents were found wondering if they should consider buying Ali his separate tablet to get rid of these daily altercations between the siblings ...

Sounds familiar, right? Such scenes are a common sight in our households these days. Contemporary culture, they say. You cannot help it, goes the famous argument. To some extent this is true, but there are many other truths that we fail to see as a society being constantly drugged by the use of technology.

This scribe is not anti-technology. In fact, I strongly believe that keeping oneself abreast with the knowl-

edge and the use of latest technology is important, especially when it is also impacting our kids. What we, however, see today is a mindless use of technology in our lives. It appears as if we are being constantly programmed to adapt to every new gadget that comes our way without displaying any sort of resistance to it.

I remember when we were growing up, our parents always worried about the ‘well-being’ of our eyes. Too much of television time ruined your eyesight. The screen had to be watched from a significant distance and failing to do so resulted in being harshly lectured about the ill effects of screen on our eyes. Times have changed. Screen is now hand-held, and our perception of it has changed significantly. I will not go into the scientific details of how screens control and rewire our brains; internet is full of such information. What terrifies me as an adult, who spent an almost screen-free childhood, is how our kids are getting addicted to it and how difficult it is becoming for us to help them steer clear of the toxic effects of the screen. Sand and water do not interest them anymore as forms of play. They do not wish to climb trees anymore. As hyper adults, when we are unable to bear with the noise children make while playing and in order to tame them, we give them the screen to amuse themselves. Crudely put, we drug them. They can spend hours and hours with their smartphones or tablets without making any noise, but we fail to see that these hours end up in significantly altering their patterns of growing up - making them lack in traditional manifestations of childhood.

It is not just children we should take note of. Frequent a marketplace or a hospital, or travel in some public bus, and you will find it full of people who are engrossed in looking down at the screens of their smartphones. People are no more interested in interacting with each other. When Facebook feeds and Twitter tweets are so interesting, who needs to give time to real people around? Lunch with family on a cozy weekend can wait, but the WhatsApp messages must be replied to without any delay. Our priorities

are changing. Our values have altered. Me-time, in contemporary culture, does not refer to sparing time for contemplation in solitude, but the time in which one can freely engage with one’s beloved screen. Playing games on your phone, Facebooking and tweeting, posting pictures on Instagram, etcetera, have now become those ‘personal’ tasks, which people nowadays love to indulge in.

The biggest problem is that we do not seem to mind anything about these changes that have occurred in our society, our homes and our ways of living. We have not only embraced them but have gladly let them become a part of us. Life without a smartphone is almost unacceptable for most of us. Again, it is all right to keep a smart phone, only if we know how to use it smartly! Countless hours and minutes of our precious life are wasted in the mindless use of tablets and smartphones. Those who strictly keep their ‘online’ social activities in check are very few. This is precisely because these online platforms are designed in such a way so as to keep people hooked to screen. Unplugging, in this day and age, is one of the most difficult tasks that one can ever encounter.

Our prime responsibility, I feel, is to read and understand the dynamics of all the screen-related activities we indulge in. We cannot keep away, but we can surely educate ourselves about the physical and spiritual harms of too much screen time. We can bring about significant changes in our lifestyle only if we first realise and convince ourselves that there is actually something going wrong around us, and there is a need to show, at least, some sort of resistance to it. Accepting anything and everything without realizing its pros and cons is just not acceptable. Our kids get addicted to screen because we let them, and primarily because they see us, elders, doing the same. When I say ‘we’, I mean the whole society. It is not just enough to educate only ourselves and cleanse our individual homes of the toxic effects of screen, but we need to educate others and encourage them to do the same. Only then can we hope for some real change to come about.



Restraint

Ibn-i-Abbas relates that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said to Ashajj, leader of the tribe of Abd al Qays, There are two habits of yours that are pleasing to Allah: one is forbearance i.e. not to be overcome with anger and the other is not to act in a hurry. “ (Muslim)

Commentary: Once a deputation of the tribe of Abd Al-Qays had come to meet the Holy Prophet (SAW) in Madinah and it so happened that all the members of it jumped down from their mounts and rushed to the place where the Prophet (SAW) was sitting except their leader, Munzir, who was also known as Ashajj. Instead of showing impatience, Ashajj calmly collected his luggage and put it at a place and then took a bath and changed his clothes before going to meet the Prophet (SAW). The Prophet (SAW) appreciated his cool and dignified way of doing things and showed it by making the remark we have seen above.

(Excerpted from Ma’arif Hadith by Mawlana Muhammad Manzoor No’mani (RH)

There was an old man who had four sons. He wanted his sons to learn how not to judge things too quickly. He sent them each on a quest, in turn, to go and look at a pear tree that was a great distance away.

The first son went in the winter, the second in the spring, the third in summer, and the youngest son in the fall. When they had all gone and come back, he called them together to describe what they had seen.

The first son said that the tree was ugly, bent, and twisted.

The second son said that such was not the case, as it was covered with green buds and seemed full of promise.

The third son disagreed with the two; he said it was

laden with blossoms that smelled so sweet and looked so beautiful, it was the most graceful thing he had ever seen.

The last son disagreed with all of them; he said it was ripe and drooping with fruit, full of life and fulfillment.

The old man then explained to his sons that they were all right, because they had each seen but only one season in the tree's life. He told them that one cannot judge a tree or a person, by only one season, and that the essence of everything in this life can only be measured at the end, when all the seasons are up.

If you give up when it's winter, you will miss the promise of your spring, the beauty of your summer, fulfillment of your fall.

Judge with Wisdom

Contributed by **Mehwish Abdul Wahid**

Haseen
Habib
pg 33

HE SAID: LA TAHZAN!

In the tunnel,
I tread,
Strong and up,
Bold and confident,
The darkness that unfolds
Its mysteries to me,
Toiling hard,
Labouring still,
The bats running ...
All the time,
Past me,
Dangling us to the monsters and fears,
Of our past,
In the present,
Hovering on the future.
I see the light,
At the end
Why it seems so far?
Why cannot I see it...
From the top?
O Rabb!
Where be thee?
Look inside
Says He,
Here I am
For always, I am...
With the believers!
La tahzan!
Said the archangel,
I merrily,
Looked at him,
He said; "worry not,"
O Nafsul mutmainna! O peaceful soul!
Enter in the kingdom of thy Lord's mercy!
How happy I feel!
For travelling in the tunnel,
Does not matter now!
I see the light,
From the top,
I look inside,
And find Him,
All the time,
With me.



Honesty **and** **Truthfulness**

By **Hakeem Shamim Ahmad**
Translation by **Syeda Samar Mubashir**

One of the letters written to a daughter by her loving father...

My dearest daughter! Thousands of warm wishes for you!

I intend to remind you about a forgotten lesson through this letter, so that you can also raise your daughter according to the principles upon which you were raised and also inspire in her the qualities that you were imbued with.

My dear, truthfulness is such a foundation upon which stands the tall building of good character, and lie is the root of all evil.

Allah (SWT) says,

"O you who believe, fear Allah, and speak in straight-

forward words. (If you do so,) Allah will correct your deeds for your benefit, and forgive your sins for you" (Surah Al-Ahzab, Verse 70-71).

The Prophet (SAW) said, (meaning) "Hold on fast unto truthfulness as truthfulness guides you towards goodness and goodness paves way for the Heaven, and a man keeps speaking the truth and watches himself strictly to speak only truth until Allah draws him close to Himself and regards him as truthful person."

At another occasion the Prophet (SAW) said, (meaning) "Avoid lie as lie leads one towards sins, and a man keeps lying and watches himself to lie recurrently and finds ways to lie again and again, until Allah regards him as a great liar" (Bukhari and Muslim).

A man faces insult in both this world as well as in the hereafter because of lying. Often people habitually lie, while others lie out of joking, and many others just lie to cover up something. Some people lie just for fun; for no reason. Someone praised a woman's

purse, and asked its price upon which this woman quoted the price two hundred rupees more than its actual or real price. Now if the woman who asked the price gets to know the real price, do you think she would still respect the woman with the purse? And it would be of no use.

Yes, there are certain things which cannot be told to everyone, because mentioning them may dishearten someone, or lead to fighting or quarrels or leaking of certain secrets. In such a situation it is better to remain quiet rather than giving untrue statements. It is often said that one has to speak several lies to cover up just one. So it is better to stay away from lying as much as possible. My dear daughter, remember, there is prosperity, peace and respect in speaking the truth.

You must have heard, "Honesty is the best policy." It is not just a saying but a reality, which, if you adopt in all the aspects of life then you would succeed both in this world and in the hereafter. I often say, "Hard work and loyalty never go in vain." I don't just say it, but it has been my belief and experience. I have seen so many people who prospered and attained high standards of life because of working hard and working loyally. Even though, they would face a lot of resistance and challenges in the beginning, and negative and corrupt factors will not let them stand ahead of others, they must never feel let down because of their negative behavior. Eventually they will be looked up to by the people in the society, and they will also prosper in the hereafter.

For this, it is very important that a man is honest with himself, and he does not have illusions about his own self. Plus, he should be honest in fulfilling his responsibilities, in his studies and in his dealings with the people. This is what honesty means. Honesty refers to the fact that you keep the property of someone safely and return it to them just as received. Allah (SWT) says,

"Surely, Allah commands you to deliver trusts to those entitled to them," (Surah Al-Nisa, Verse no. 58).

The Prophet (SAW) said, (meaning) "A hypocrite has three traits: 1. whenever he speaks, he lies. 2. whenever he promises, he does not keep it. 3. whenever he is conferred a trust upon, he breaks that trust."

So my dear daughter, honesty is an important part in sporting a good character. Remember, if someone trusts you with a secret, then this is also a kind of possession, and letting it out to someone would mean dishonesty with the possession of that person. Often we have seen that people use others' possessions when they have been trusted with those things, like clothing or jewelry without their permission. This is also against the rules of honesty. One should first ask permission from the owner of those possessions, as telling them after using the things is also improper. Dear, it is very important to remember these things in the phases of one's personality development.

Your well-wisher,

Your father!



By Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi r

THE INNER MYSTERIES OF ABLUTION

EXCERPTED FROM *THE WISDOM BEHIND THE COMMANDS OF ISLAM*

There are four stages of *taharah* (purity).

1. To remove the visible impurities and filth
2. To restrain the parts of the body from disobedience to Allah c and from sins.
3. To cleanse the heart of everything vile and contemptuous.
4. To rid oneself of all false deities and worship Allah c alone.

Thus, unless a man does not shed away immoral and corrupt beliefs from his heart it cannot be said he lives according to the *Hadith: Purity is half of faith.*

Faith is connected with the heart so that until the

heart is purged of evil thoughts, purity is imperfect. These are the stations of faith and each station has a stage. He who does not pass through the lowest stage cannot reach the highest stage. One cannot attain the secret of purity unless one purifies one's heart of everything blameworthy and fills it with praiseworthy nature; and a man cannot reach this rank unless he rids his body parts of sin and disobedience to Allah c and accustoms them to worship and obedience to Allah c.

He who spends his valuable time in cleaning impurities, washing his hands and feet, clothes and outward cleanliness, and seeking water but does not pay attention to purifying his soul and his hidden side then he is

prone to the tempting of the devil and to melancholia disease. In fact, apparent purity is stressed upon merely to obtain inner purity. Washing the face, hands and feet is for the heart. All our evident words and deeds, actions and inaction do influence our heart. Whatever is hidden in our unseen is reflected in our visible actions. However, this philosophy does not imply that it is not necessary to pay heed to the obvious but it means that along with the 'outside' and 'seen', we must pay attention to our inside and unseen.

Why are there many reasons and objectives for the Commands of Allah ﷻ?

It is a fact that the medicines created by Allah ﷻ have many uses and curing powers. In the same way, His commands have innumerable secrets and reasons behind them. He has given hundreds of qualities and peculiarities to each of the medicinal herbs, so much so that a single medicine is prescribed for many illnesses. So, in discussing ablution, not only the wisdom that we point out behind every act is truly there but there are also many more insights in each act of washing. Our knowledge has not encompassed them so far.

We now write in sequence the wisdom behind each act of ablution. These are drawn from the Quran, *Ahadith* and books of knowledge and presented as a summary.

1st Wisdom – Negligence is avoided:

A man who performs ablution is inclined to give up the apparent sins and the unseen ones and to fight negligence. If it was allowed to observe prayer without ablution, then man would remain in a negligent state and offer prayer in that very state and he would be in a condition of worry and worldly activity like an intoxicated person. Thus, ablution has been made compulsory that man may fight negligence and be attentive and aware when he prays.

2nd Wisdom – Hygiene:

It is known to the science of medicine that poisonous matter is discharged from the pores of a man's body and remains suspended on his hands, feet, head or face. This causes contagious boils and blisters on the body; washing the body removes the suspended poisonous matter before they grow into boils and blisters. Washing with water either cools the poisonous matter before it oozes out or washes it away from the body.

3rd Wisdom – Secures Allah's ﷻ Love:

One who purifies himself from the visible and unseen impurities with the spirit of obedience to Allah ﷻ, he becomes the beloved of Allah ﷻ. Therefore Allah ﷻ says: *"Surely Allah loves those who turn to Him in repentance, and He loves those who keep themselves clean"*. (Al-Baqarah, 2:222)

4th Wisdom – Angelic Glow:

When the importance of purity is established on anyone, he is blessed forever by an angelic brightness and

the beastly darkness vanishes from him.

5th Wisdom – Increased Intelligence:

Purity increases the power of intelligence in man. As intelligence is perfected, nearness to Allah ﷻ is also perfected.

6th Wisdom – Return of Glow and Happiness:

The spiritual light and happiness that stand confiscated because of sins and lethargy return to the parts of a man's body when he begins to perform ablution. It is this spiritual glow that will shine distinctively on the Day of Resurrection on a man's body. In this regard, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: *My ummah will be brought forward on the Day of Resurrection in a manner that from the effects of ablution their hands, feet and faces will glow. So, whoso of you can augment his glow let him do it.* The words of another Hadith are: *Adornments in a believer will reach the places where (water of) ablution reaches.*

7th Wisdom – Nearness to the Angels:

A man attains nearness to the angels because of purity. He thus becomes entitled to the honour of being presented before Allah ﷻ. Purity distances the devil from man.

8th Wisdom – Ablution gains admission into the Signs of Allah ﷻ:

Prayer is a great sign of Allah ﷻ. To gain admittance to it, it is necessary to perform ablution. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said: *Ablution is the key to prayer.*

9th Wisdom – Ablution means to present one's case:

In order to submit their petition and to learn of the Royal Commands, the subjects have to present themselves before the King. To do this they have to be careful of the etiquettes and respect due before the audience in the great court. They also need the tongue and ears to submit and listen. In the same way, it is necessary to wash the hands, face and the feet and keep the dress tidy. Thus, when we go to the rulers and kings we observe these etiquettes and wash these parts of the body that are more prone to gather dust because of their being uncovered.

10th Wisdom – Strength and Awareness:

It is known from experience that washing hands and feet and sprinkling water on the face and head has a great influence on the soul. The main organs gain strength and activity. Negligence, sleepiness and extreme unconsciousness are cured by this action. Confirmation of this statement may be obtained from experienced doctors because they suggest that water should be sprinkled on the related organs of those who faint, suffer from diarrhoea or have a vein bled. *Allamah Qurayshi* has stated so in his book *Mujiz*, as also other doctors of medicine: *Sprinkling water on hands and feet activates the heat of the main parts and strengthens them. It is helpful to those who swoon because of difficulty in digestion etc.*

This is why man has been instructed to fight indolence, decay, dejection, laziness and impurity through ablution so that he is worthy of standing before Allah ﷻ, Who is always Awake and Alert. He has said: *"Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep"*. (Al-Baqarah, 2:255).

Therefore those who are negligent and lazy are not worthy of standing before Him. This is why it is not allowed to observe prayer in a state of intoxication or frenzy. Allah ﷻ has said: *"Draw not near Salah (prayer) while you are intoxicated."* (An-Nisa, 4:43).

An intoxicated person is never allowed to see a ruler

or a king. So when such is the case with worldly rulers and sovereigns, how can a person who is intoxicated and unaware be allowed to go to the King of all the kings. An intoxicated person is not allowed to offer prayers because he does not know what he says with his mouth and what he feels. Allah ﷻ has said: *"until you know what you are saying"*. (Al-Baqarah, 2:43).

Your heart should know what you are saying. It is necessary that your heart is conscious of the words your mouth utters, while you recite in your prayer.

(Translated by Rafiq Abdur Rehman, Darul Ishaat publications)

WHEN LEFT WITH A DEAD MAN

Mutarraf (Radi Allah Anhu) reported on the authority of his father: I came to Allah's Apostle (sal-allahu-alleihi-wasallam) as he was reciting: "Abundance diverts you" He said (sal-allahu-alleihi-wasallam): "The son of Adam claims: My wealth, my wealth. And he (the Holy Prophet) said: O son of Adam, is there anything as your belonging except that which you consumed, which you utilized, or which you wore and then it was worn out or you gave as charity and sent it forward?"

[Sahih Muslim: Book 42 "Kitab Al-Zuhdwa Al-Raqa'iq", Number 7061]

Abu Huraira (Radi Allah Anhu) reported Allah's Messenger (sal-allahu-alleihi-wasallam) as saying: "A servant says, My wealth, my wealth, but out of his wealth three things are only his: whatever he eats and makes use of or by means of which he dresses himself and it wears out or he gives as charity, and this is what he stored for himself (as a reward for the Hereafter), and what is beyond this (it is of no use to you) because you are to depart and leave it for other people. This hadith has been narrated on the authority of al-'Ala' b. 'Abd al-Rahman with the same chain of transmitters."

[Sahih Muslim: Book 42 "Kitab Al-Zuhdwa Al-Raqa'iq", Number 7063]

Anas b. Malik (Radi Allah Anhu) reported Allah's Messenger (sal-allahu-alleihi-wasallam) as saying: "Three things follow the bier of a dead man. two of them come back and one is left with him: the members of his family, wealth and his-good deeds. The members of his family and wealth come back and the deeds alone are left with him."

[Sahih Muslim: Book 42 "Kitab Al-Zuhdwa Al-Raqa'iq", Number 7064]

A PERFECT RELIGION WITH IMPERFECT FOLLOWERS

By Mehwish Abdul Wahid

Having finished the grocery shopping, I was returning home when I saw a crowd gathered around two cars and two men fighting over what apparently looked like a minor car accident. All sorts of abusive words were being used in the heat of anger by the two drivers involved, while the entire traffic was blocked. Finally, the road was cleared after about twenty minutes of heated arguments, and I was able to reach home. After taking some rest, I started placing grocery in my kitchen cupboards, but noticed that most of the spices, pulses, and lentils were adulterated, and a lot of other substances were added to them to increase the quantity of each item. Meanwhile, my father returned home from the mosque, telling that somebody had stolen his shoes while he was praying. This served as the final straw in making me think and

ponder as to what kind of Muslims we are. Such a perfect religion followed by such imperfect followers.

Islam is a religion that provides us with a complete code of life by giving us examples of ways in which right deeds can be done in this world. It clearly articulates what is right and what is wrong in every aspect of life and what constitutes the path of righteousness. Islam is a beautiful religion of peace, brotherhood, and devotion. From spiritual aspect to providing a way to follow the moral compass, guidance is provided on the ways of interaction in all kinds of social scenarios that can be imagined. There is no instance where this religion and the Holy Quran sent down for us cease to provide answers to the questions and issues that we are faced with in

this worldly life. Yet, with such a perfect code of life available to us, Muslims continue to lead a life that cannot be termed as being righteous.

So the events of the day left me wondering and reflecting on the actions of these people. The two men fighting and using abusive language over a minor accident that had not even harmed anyone in any way, or the shopkeeper who sold adulterated food were all Muslims. Their actions, however, had nothing to show that they belonged to a religion that provided the perfect code of life. Where did the teachings of Islam and of our Holy Prophet ﷺ go for the two men who were fighting and abusing each other? It is clearly stated in the Holy Quran that "Those who spend (in God's Cause) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon the people; verily, God loves the good-doers" (Quran 3:133-134). The Prophet ﷺ also said: "Reviling a Muslim is an act of outrage (moral depravity) and fighting against him is an act of disbelief (*Kufr*)"

and our beloved Prophet ﷺ provided instructions regarding controlling our anger, prohibited us from stealing, and warned us of the consequences of adulteration, Muslims of today can be seen indulging in all these evil acts that are clearly prohibited in Islam.

The acts of the Muslims are reflective of their religion. Therefore, the perception regarding Muslims as being the oppressors of women, terrorists, violent, and ethically and morally corrupt people is largely because of our own actions. Islam, unfortunately, is blamed for all the unrighteous and morally corrupt things that we as Muslims do. While some may blame the media for such projection of Muslims, there is also an underlying problem that needs to be addressed and should not be ignored. Most of the non-Muslims have not read the Quran or do not know about the teachings of Islam, and hence, their perception of Muslims and Islam largely comes from the observation of Muslims and their actions and from their interactions with the



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(Bukhaari & Muslim). Holy Prophet ﷺ has also asked his followers to control anger and it is narrated by Abu Huraira h that Allah's Messenger Muhammad ﷺ said: "The strong is not the one who overcomes the people by his strength, But the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger." Hence, Islam provides complete guidance in the case of a dispute arising between two people, but the two men did not consider the teaching of Islam as they continued to use obscene and vulgar language making the dispute more difficult to settle.

Similarly, for the shopkeeper selling adulterated goods, there was no consideration of the teachings of Islam. There is a clear and strong condemnation by the Holy Prophet ﷺ on the adulteration of goods. He said that the "One who gives us adulterated goods is not from us."

He repeated this sentence thrice and then said, "And Allah will remove *barakah* from the livelihood of the Muslim brothers. (Allah) will destroy his economy and leave him upon his own condition." However, despite of this saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Muslims can be seen selling adulterated goods, water, milk and various other edible items. Contaminated foods and drinks are very much common these days. In the same way, stealing is also prohibited in Islam, but there are not just common snatching and burglary incidents happening every now and then, even shoes are stolen from outside mosques. Hence, even though Islam

followers of this religion. The instant we step out of our house, we become representatives of the religion at all times, and hence, people consider our actions to be in accordance with the teachings of our religion, and blame Islam for what actually its followers do, who have digressed from the right path.

It is not just about the perceptions of non-Muslims or the impression that we give to others, it is about how far we are from following this perfect religion and from pleasing Allah Almighty. Lying, backbiting, cheating, slandering, teasing parents, etc. have become so common these days in our society that many people have even lost sense of how major and serious sins they are. Despite the fact that Islam is the 'perfect' and 'only right' way of life, the followers have much to learn. The followers can be seen doing things that cannot in any way be regarded as righteous.

It is needed that we understand the teachings of Islam and align our daily actions according to those teachings. This can happen only when we reflect on our daily routine and identify the things we do and the sins we commit every day, without even realizing; only then can our lives be perfected and get aligned with the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. It is only when our lives are in accordance with the teachings of Islam and we are on the righteous path that Allah Almighty will be pleased with us and will grant us a place in *Jannah*.

— A LETTER TO —
 The
Beasts
 of the
Jungle
 Contributed by **G.M.Surriya**

When *Sayyidina* Salman Farsi h became the Governor of Madayan, he noticed that there were raids and robberies throughout the city at night. People were being robbed on a large scale. He, therefore, took corrective steps to remedy the situation but to no avail. Thereafter, he offered two *Rak'at Salah* to seek the help of Allah c, and then wrote a letter ordering the beasts of the jungle to kill all those who loiter on the streets after a certain time from today onwards. This letter was hung in a street. At the same time, the public was also warned not to come out of their houses after the time specified in the letter and the guards of the city were asked to keep its gates open for these beasts to enter the city.

The general public was stunned and excited to see the efficacy of the governor's action. There were, however, some robbers who took it very lightly and believed that it was just meant to threaten and frighten them. Disregarding the letter, these robbers were out on the streets to conduct their nasty business. Many people were watching the outcome of the letter from indoors. The clock struck the time set by the governor and people saw lions rushing up towards the streets, growling and roaring. They came so fast that the robbers could not find a way to escape and the lions tore them into pieces!

(*Nidwat-ul-Uloom* - November 2014)

Parus
 pg 43



Parenting Goals and Ideas

By Khalid Baig

“O Believers! Save Yourself and Your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones.” [At-Tahreem, 66:6]

This verse points to the goal as well as the required seriousness of our efforts in bringing up our children. The central goal of their education and upbringing must be to prepare them for the future --- the Ultimate and Everlasting Future. One path leads to success there. It is the path of obedience to our Creator. We must protect them from taking any other path for all other paths lead to the blazing Hellfire. Our efforts must have the urgency they would have if we saw flames engulfing our children here.

While this is a universal command to believing parents everywhere, it assumes special importance for those living in non-Muslim societies for two principal reasons:

1. The pressures to assimilate from all societal organizations are just overwhelming. While schools and television remain the two most potent instruments for corrupting both the intellectual as well as the emotional space of the young minds, the popular culture and secular ideas invade from all possible directions.
2. The institutions that have been built so far to counter this tremendous force miss the target by a huge margin in numbers as well as quality. In the U.S., for example, there are 400 full time Islamic schools. While this looks like a big number, these schools can only accommodate about five percent of the Muslim student population. More than 95% will go to the government run secular schools. Moreover, even those going to the Islamic Schools are taught the same secular-humanist values and ideas that are dispensed by the public school system as no integrated Islamic

curriculum exists today. The Islamic schools merely add Islamic studies, Arabic, and Qur'an to a secular curriculum that remains intact.

The results are devastating. Despite all the noise about Islam being the fastest growing religion (in the U.S./West/World), the Muslim children in Western countries are succumbing to the pressures at an alarming rate. Some openly renounce Islam. A large number develop doubts and misunderstandings about their religion. They seek compromises between Islam and un-Islam, or quietly develop those compromises in their lives without telling their parents. The result is an epidemic of confusion, split personalities, arguments with parents, or rebellion.

While that should be the impetus for developing better Islamic Schools and other institutions, we should never lose sight of the fact that the biggest role in the upbringing of the children belongs to the parents. This verse says clearly that the responsibility for proper education and upbringing of the children lies squarely with the parents. This is a duty assigned to them by Allah and they will be held accountable for it.

As parents are we up to the task? Are we even clear about where we want to go and how to get there? Do we understand Islamic teachings about parenting and our responsibilities according to the Shariah? Sadly,

Too much discipline can certainly cause rebellion. So can too little. Muslim homes should be loving, caring homes where persuasion works most of the time. But when there is need for discipline, shying away from it can only exacerbate the problem.



the answer is no. Our goals as well as ideas about parenting show the same confusions that we are finding in the next generation about Islam. Here is a deeper look at some commonly held ideas and “truths” about parenting.

“Too much discipline will cause rebellion.”

Too much discipline can certainly cause rebellion. So can too little. Muslim homes should be loving, caring homes where persuasion works most of the time. But when there is need for discipline, shying away from it can only exacerbate the problem. In the U.S., spanking a child by the parents is a no-no. Yet laws allow a thirteen year old to be treated as an adult (and held with adult criminals) in violent crime cases. Islam asks us to avoid both extremes. For example, we are asked to encourage the children to offer prayers from the age of seven. But they should be disciplined if they refuse to pray after age ten. Insufficient parental control can be as damaging as too much parental control.

“Outside influences do not matter if the home is good.”

A good home is essential to proper upbringing. At the

same time, we cannot be complacent about outside influences. Children, like budding plants, have to be protected from the harmful environment, whether it is friends, media, books, or whatever. It is not healthy to let the children be pulled in all different directions in the fallacious hopes that they will ultimately sort out things for themselves. That is a prescription for raising a “post-modern” person for whom, “Everything is O.K.”

“It makes no difference if the mother stays home or works outside.”

Children everywhere need the loving, nurturing presence of the mother. But, in immigrant Muslim communities, where other support facilities are often missing or woefully inadequate, it makes a huge difference. Unfortunately, most mothers are reluctant to step up to their responsibility here. First, their own education did not prepare them for it, physically or psychologically. Second, there is a lot of self-generated economic pressure forcing women into the work force. Third, and most distressing, in many Muslim communities the working women enjoy a higher social status than the “mere housewives.” Mothers should remember the hadith, that the wife is responsible for the children of her husband and will be held accountable for them. Those who belittle the task of homemaking are put-

ting our next generations at extreme risk.

“Good scores mean good upbringing.”

Good scores only mean that the student has absorbed the material that he was tested on very well. Whether that is good or bad depends upon the material itself. If a student obtained top grades in the seventh grade History in the U.S., for example, it does indicate a very high probability that he also swallowed --- hook, line and sinker --- all the lies and distortions in World history and History of Islam. Do not be surprised then, when he grows up a living question mark about Islam. As long as they are not being taught from an integrated Islamic curriculum, our blind emphasis on high scores in all subjects may be misplaced.

“Daughters and Sons: Islam demands equality.”

Most certainly, Islam strictly forbids preferential treatment of boys or girls. But it is a gross misinterpretation of this command that Islam favors a unisex world. Men and women have different roles in life and our sons and daughters must be prepared for their respective roles.

LOVING

The Prophet

Sall-Allahu Alayhi wa Sallam

By Khalid Baig

On the twelfth of Rabi-ul-Awwal, Muslims all over the world hold special gatherings to commemorate and celebrate the birthday of Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam. The special programs attract huge numbers of Muslims. There can be no two opinions among the believers that remembering the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, and learning about his life example are highly meritorious acts. The *milad* celebrations show the deep love and devotion that all the believers have for the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad ibn Abdullah, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam. This love and devotion remains a distinct characteristic of Muslims throughout the centuries.

However, while the fact of this love has not changed, its nature has. It has taken different forms than what we find in the early generations. The

Companions were the special people who came in direct contact with Allah's Messenger, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, learned from him, joined his struggle, gave the most sacrifices for it, devoted their lives for his mission, and earned the credentials for being the model disciples, followers, and devotees.

Among them was Sayyidna Mus'ab ibn Umayr, Radi-Allahu anhu. As a young pagan in Makkah, he was the best dressed, the best cared for youth. Clad in the most expensive silk and wearing the best perfumes, he would leave a trail of fragrance wherever he passed by. Then something happened. He met the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, and his message penetrated the depth of his heart. Life changed drastically. His pagan mother, who used to love him before, now despised him and began to punish him severely. His was a transformation from riches to rags. Once the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, saw him covering his body with a patched up old hide and showing the signs of rough life that he had embraced. He said, "I saw this young man some years ago in Makkah. There was none at that time who was more handsome, was living a more luxurious life, or was better dressed than him. But today he has sacrificed all the comforts of this life for the love of Allah and his Prophet." He was the first teacher of the Ansar in Madinah and the standard bearer of the Muhajireen in Badr. When he was martyred in Uhud, there was not enough cloth to cover his body completely; grass was used to supplement the small burial cloth. According to some reports, the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, stood by his body and recited the verse: "From among the believers there are some men who fulfilled their pledge with Allah."

Among them was Sayyidna Sa'd ibn Mu'az, Radi-Allahu anhu, the leader of the Ansar. The Ansar had provided hospitality and protection to the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam and the Makkan Muslims, but soon they faced a bigger challenge. Would they be ready to fight against the much larger and better equipped Makkan army? His powerful words in the meeting before Badr captured the spirit of their commitment. "O Rasulallah, we have believed in you, affirmed your Prophethood, and pledged obedience. By Allah, who has sent you as a Messenger, if you were to command us to jump into the ocean we will do that. Not one soul among us will remain behind. Insha-Allah you will find us steadfast in the battle."

Among them was Sayyidna Jareer ibn Abdullah, Radi-Allahu anhu. Once he sent his servant for buying a horse. The servant made a deal for three hundred dirhams and brought the seller with him so he could be paid. Sayyidna Jareer ibn Abdullah, Radi-Allahu anhu,

looked at the horse and realized that the seller had undervalued it. "Would you sell it for four hundred?" he asked. The seller agreed. "How about five hundred?" he continued his unusual "bargaining" and finally bought the horse for eight hundred dirhams. He was later asked why he did so. "The seller was not aware of the true value of this horse," he explained. "I have simply given him a fair price because I had promised to Prophet Muhammad, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, to always be sincere and well-wisher for every Muslim."

Among them was the unnamed person who was wearing a gold ring. It is prohibited for Muslim men to wear gold. The Prophet, Sall-Allahu Alayhi wa sallam, took his ring and threw it on the ground, saying it was like wearing burning charcoal from Hell. Later on people suggested to him to pick up the ring as it could be used for other legitimate purposes. But he refused saying: "No, by Allah, I will never take it, when it has been thrown away by the Messenger of Allah."

These are just some random glimpses into the lives and minds of the great Companions. Their life accounts are full of such examples. They accepted his Prophethood from the bottom of their hearts, knowing fully what that means. From that point on, their lives revolved entirely around this belief. They loved the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam more than anybody else in the world. They intently observed his actions and listened to his words. They remembered him all the time. They obeyed each and every one of his commands. They never said, "This is only a Sunnah," meaning it can be ignored. They never asked why a command was given. They never sought excuses. Within the home and outside it, in business or on the battlefield, in their private gatherings or in the courts of kings and emperors, everywhere they were the most obedient servants of Allah and the most obedient followers of the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam.

None of them ever celebrated Prophet's birthday. They did not need to have a day or a month devoted to the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, because they had devoted their entire lives to him.

Today our lives and our outlooks bear little resemblance to theirs. We praise but do not listen to him; we claim to love, but refuse to follow; we claim to believe but lead lives like those who don't. We emphasize what the Companions ignored and ignore what they emphasized.

They loved the Prophet, Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam, and had their lives to show for it. And we? Can we honestly say that we love the Prophet as he should be loved?

Glimpses into The Life Of Hujjat-Ul-Islam Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautvi

By Umm-e-Tahir

The soldiers dressed in British Indian Army uniform came rummaging inside the mosque. They accosted a seemingly peasant-looking man in the courtyard. 'Where is the *Maulana*?' they enquired gruffly, 'Where is Qasim Nanautvi?'

The man paused for a moment then taking a few steps to one side, pointed to his original position and replied calmly, "He was here some time ago."

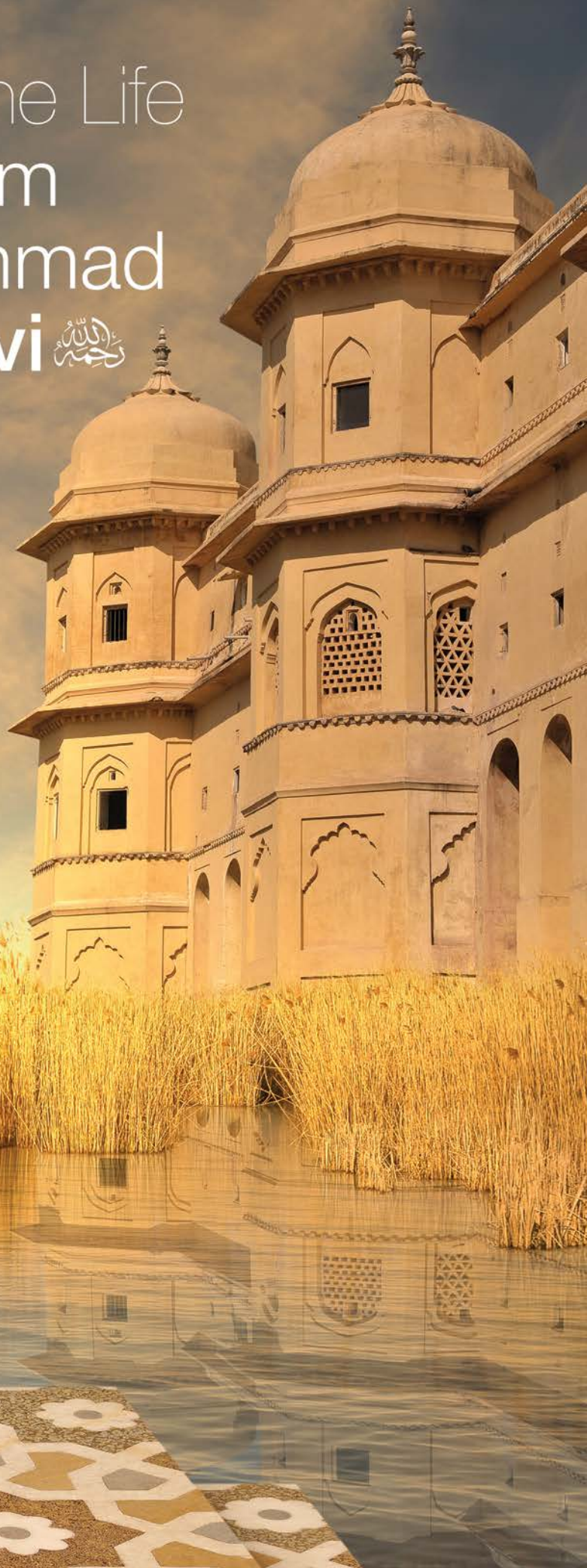
The soldiers searched inside the mosque, then not finding the one they were looking for, left exasperated. This simple looking person was none other than one of the most illustrious scholars of the day, the brilliant *Shaykh* Muhammad Qasim Nanautvi r himself!

The soldiers were misled by his simple *tehbund* and shirt, the attire of a common villager; they had expected the great scholar to be wearing a big turban and an elaborate, flowing gown; they could never have thought, even for a moment, that the person they took for a peasant was, in fact, none other than the great scholar himself - *Al-Shaikh, Al-Arif, Al-Muhadith* Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautvi r.

As a child Maulana Qasim Nanautvi r had a dream, that he was sitting on the rooftop of the Ka'ba and streams of water were flowing from his hands in all directions; this dream was later interpreted by Maulana Mamluk Ali r as forecasting his rise to eminence as a theologian through whose teachings the Hanafi *madhab* would spread to all corners of Hindustan.

Born in 1248 H/1832, in a small village Nanauta near Saharanpur, his lineage traces back to Abu Bakr Siddique h. He received his early education in his native village. Later on, his maternal grandfather took him to Saharanpur, where he mastered Arabic grammar and Syntax under Maulvi Nawaz.

His early training was at the hands of masters such as Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanautvi *Ustad-Ul-Asatza*, who was one of the propagators of the Shah Waliullah movement in India. Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanautvi was a student of Maulana Rasheed-uddin, and later taught at *Madrassa Ghaziuddin Khan*.



Maulawi Mamluk Ali took Maulana Qasim to Delhi and he joined the *Delhi College*. Then he studied *Hadith* from Shaykh 'Abd al-Ghani ibn Abi Sa'id al-Dehlvi, and he remained in his company for a period. He took *ba'it* at the hands of Shaykh Imdad Allah *Muhajir Makki, al-'Umari al-Thanavi*, the Gnostic, from whom he received immense spiritual guidance.

Prior to his enrollment at *Madrassa Ghaziuddin Khan* (later on known as *Delhi College*), he had studied logic, philosophy, and scholastic theology. Maulana Qasim Nanautvi's brilliance and astuteness were notable even at that time. Having mastered the principles of Arabic grammar, Persian and Hadith, he astounded his teachers with his mastery over Euclid. However he left the college without appearing in the final exam.

He joined a study circle, under Mamluk Ali at his house which had gained eminence with regards to the exegesis of the Qur'an and Hadith and gave lessons in Hadith in the evenings. His method of imparting the traditions was so unique that it is followed by the

Shaykh Ahmed was annotating Sahih Bukhari in those days, and aware of Maulana's depth of perception and analytic ability he delegated five sections from the end chapters to him. These were the most difficult ones where Imam Sahab had made some objections relating to Imam Abu Hanifa's work. Maulana Qasim r commented on these with such dexterity that Shaykh Ahmed admitted the greatness of his work.

Maulana r was an excellent debater too and put forward his assertions with such dexterity that left his opponent speechless. In 1876, in Chandapur village near Shahjahanpur (U.P) he debated with the Christian Padres and Hindu scholars and left them speechless.

Following the failure of the War of Independence (1857), the *ulema* of Hindustan realized that there was an urgent need to revive the spirit of Islamic teachings and practices in order to guard against western influence in the educational spheres. They concentrated on the establishment of religious

He was an extremely conscientious person; though one of the pioneers of the *Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband*, he refused to accept a salary from the treasury. Although he worked day and night for the betterment of the madrasa, he would not use anything that belonged to it.



Madaris of Hindustan to this day.

Maulana Qasim Nanautvi r went for Hajj and *ziarah*, and on the journey memorized the Holy Qur'an so perfectly that people used to assume that he was an old *haafiz*.

Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of Qasim Nanautvi r was his extreme contentedness (*istaghna*) and humility. He never delivered sermons or gave *fatwas*, so much so that he would not sign his name on any fatwa (religious verdict). He preferred to be called by his name rather than the title "*Maulvi Sahab*". He used to say, "Were it not for this stain of being a Maulvi, no one would have heard of Qasim Nanautavi!"

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Maulana Qasim r worked in the printing house of Shaykh Ahmed Ali Ibn Lutfallah Al-Saharanpuri and continued giving lessons in hadith in the evenings.

madaris. The *Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband* was established in 1867. Shaykh al-Hajj 'Abid Husayn al-Deobani, Maulana Qasim Nanautavi, Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi and Maulana Abd-ur Rahman Uthman were amongst the founders of this institute.

Following the establishment of the *Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband*, other institutions were also founded by the *ulema* of Deoband e.g., *Mazahir-e-Uloom* at Saharanpur and the madrasa at Muradabad.

Maulana Nanautavi r passed away on Thursday, 4th Jamadil awal, 1297/1880, aged 49. Although he did not reach old age, yet his work far superseded many who lived much longer than him. His grave is located to the north of the *Dar-ul-Uloom*, Deoband, in *Qabristan-e-Qasimi* and he lies adjacent to Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani r and Qari Muhammad Tayeb r.

Maulana Fazl-ur-Rahman Usmani r wrote the following words of grief upon his death:

"Such is the sorrow caused by the passing away of the Qasim of the assembly of guidance that every heart (lit., interior) is sipping the draught of grief. Such is the sorrow that thereby the cup of the assembly of spiritual knowledge is inverted like the cask of the sky. Not only is the earth pallid due to this sorrow; the attire of the sky too is bluish in this mourning..."

Letter to My Friend: **Trusting Allah**

By Namra Khurshid



Dear Friend,
“And He found you lost and guided [you],” (Surat ad-Dhuhaa: 7).

“I watched you as you wiped out your flowing tears. I don’t know what have caused these, I hope that I can be of some help to you. I know how you are carrying the weight of the baggage of life. It hurts me and I pray for you. We all are linked someway in the most common essence like a pendulum motion swaying to and fro. Being happy when we move towards one side and getting sad as we move to the other.

I know showing patience like you do is remarkable, but, my dear, in these dark nights the morning rays promise to shine each day. We just have to keep our faith intact. Hard bound faith as Prophet Yaqub (AS) showed when Prophet Yusuf (AS) was away from him. Do we have those kinds of griefs? I don’t know. I just hope that you stay strong in the face of the world; that you be the representation of the character of our Prophet Muhammad (SAW) when he endured the hardships inflicted upon him in the valley of Taif. I know this life irritates you too much...

But I can state what Allah (SWT) states in His divine book:

“Your Lord has not taken leave of you, [O Muhammad], nor has He detested [you]” (Surat ad-Dhuhaa: 3).

It consoles me a great deal and it should to you, as well. I listen to you silently as you heave long sighs but believe me when darkness sheds, only light peeps in. It’s going to be better if it cannot be excellent.

As a novice writer, Asma Hussein, writes:

“Better because God doesn’t leave the believers to themselves even for the blink of an eye. Better because He is the Wali, close friend and protector, of the believers. Better because everything He plans for us is to strengthen us and push us to stand up and walk forward with faith confidence.”

Because He says:

“And the Hereafter is better for you than the first [life]” (Surat ad-Dhuhaa: 4).

And Because,

“And your Lord is going to give you, and you will be satisfied” (Surat ad-Dhuhaa: 5).

O our *Wali* and Omnipotent, shed away the darkness of our sins from us and subject us to true serenity of your love and mercy. *Allahumma ameen.*

Power Ce-
ment
pg 51

PASSION

By Ayesha Mangel

I want to be in a constantly awakened state: a state where I am aware and high with the purpose of achieving my dream. I don't want to sleep or rest. I want to be saturated with purpose and direction. Everything that I do I want to direct it towards that goal. Towards that dream. Towards the end. But there are so many breaks. So many gaps and trenches that every time I succeed in lighting a fire, just one night of sleep extinguishes it. Why is my dream so weak in awakening in me that passion, that fire. I want that the moment I open my eyes, I should know what I have to do. I want to jump out of my bed and every act to be filled with purpose. I want to create a difference.

Instead I sit here writing this and brushing the tears that fill my tears as the difference I want to wreck upon the world is so far away from me, so unreal at the moment that the despair is unbearable. I cannot even discipline my own self or bring a

change in 'me'. How will I ever be able to do anything worthwhile? Life is so futile without purpose and so worthless without achieving that purpose. One never knows when he will depart and every time I look at a dead person, or attend a funeral, the fact that it is over so suddenly and the finality of it is so disturbing. It is not possible to just come here and then not to do anything with this life. No, it's not possible! How can I just let my life trickle into nothing like that? I want to mar the world. I want to brand it. Whether they know I am the perpetrator or not, I care not. It's the change that eats me from inside out. The fact that I am so docile, so calm, so content and spending such an ordinary life while all around the earth screams for me to spill myself and mark it. The opportunities pile away while I am engrossed in such mundane things that I embody the very meaning of petty. I don't want to be petty. But I am at the moment. Why can't I



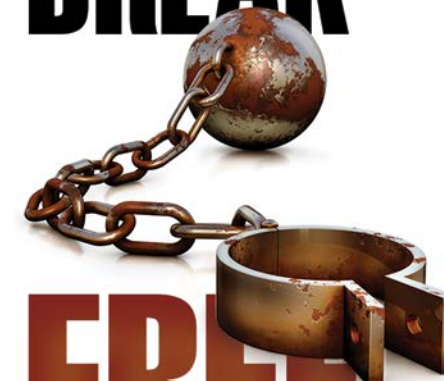
just do it? Why do I remain thinking and embroil myself in nothing? Oh, the futility of my life! The worthlessness of my being! I am just another face strolling calmly, looking out at all the storms and shaking my head. Why am I not standing right there in the thick of those storms, stopping them and getting torn in the process! I want to feel in every cell of my body and soul that burning passion; that this is my purpose and this is what I am here for. Why am I still worried about what I have to wear and eat. Why hasn't my dream made me mad yet. I want to be mad so that when there is an obstacle in my path I just smile and charge head on. No obstacle can stop me.

Alas! The despair, the pain, the tearing anguish! I am the very obstacle! I want to waste myself in achieving my dream. To be breathless and on my knees, panting from all that I have had to do. But to know that I have achieved it. Now I can die peacefully. My existence is justified. I can present myself. I can show myself. Every wound, every bruise, is a pass into deeper peace. That deep sigh that travels from the very depth of one's soul after one has taken stock of all that has transpired. All that has happened and the dawning realization that I didn't throw it away. The sigh that follows the thought that I have succeeded.

I am throwing it away at the moment. When will I wake up? When will I burn? When will I lash and roar? Oh the despair! The futility of my life. So much wasted. As time passes, the pressure to do something increases and the nature of this something has to be greater to justify that wasting away before it.

I am everything opposite to my dream. Oh the futility! I am killing my dream. Bit by bit and for sure. I am a killer. I am marring and branding. But I am doing it to my inner world. I have extinguished the flame that was ignited when I was given my dream. My dream is a memory only. A dream can only be a memory if it doesn't stir you to madness. If it keeps you docile, it is something that you wanted to do and didn't and it is something you have kept on your mental shelf. At least you had a dream, you can fool yourself.

BREAK



FREE

"Get yourself out of this limited world of diseases to the wide world of the hereafter, which has what the eyes have never seen. Nothing is impossible there, and love is not lost. O you who sold yourself for the sake of something that will cause you suffering and pain, and which will also lose its beauty, you sold the most precious item for the cheapest price, as if you neither knew the value of the goods nor the meanness of the price. Wait until you come on the Day of mutual loss and gain and you will discover the injustice of this contract. "There is no God but Allah" is something that Allah is buying. Its price is Paradise, and the Messenger is its agent, and you will be pleased to part with a small part of this worldly life to obtain it. The part you lose is a small part of something that as a whole is not worth a mosquito's wing."

Ibn ul Qayyim al Jawziyyah

Fahme- deen Pub- lications pg 54

In continuation of the previous part, Part 4 of the article, "Is Development Accumulation of Wealth?" dispels further conventional 'myths' in explaining the reasons behind real development and advancement, by replacing these with alternative, eye-opening "truths"...

Myth #6: Secrets of European Conquest

Granted that global conquest was not achieved via surgical strikes which precisely and accurately eliminated evil, without affecting the good. Admit-

tedly, there was a lot of collateral damage; millions of innocents lost their lives in the "savage wars of peace" meant to bring enlightenment to the planet. Nonetheless, we must admit that the Europeans did conquer the world. This is not a small feat. They must be superior in many ways in order to achieve it.

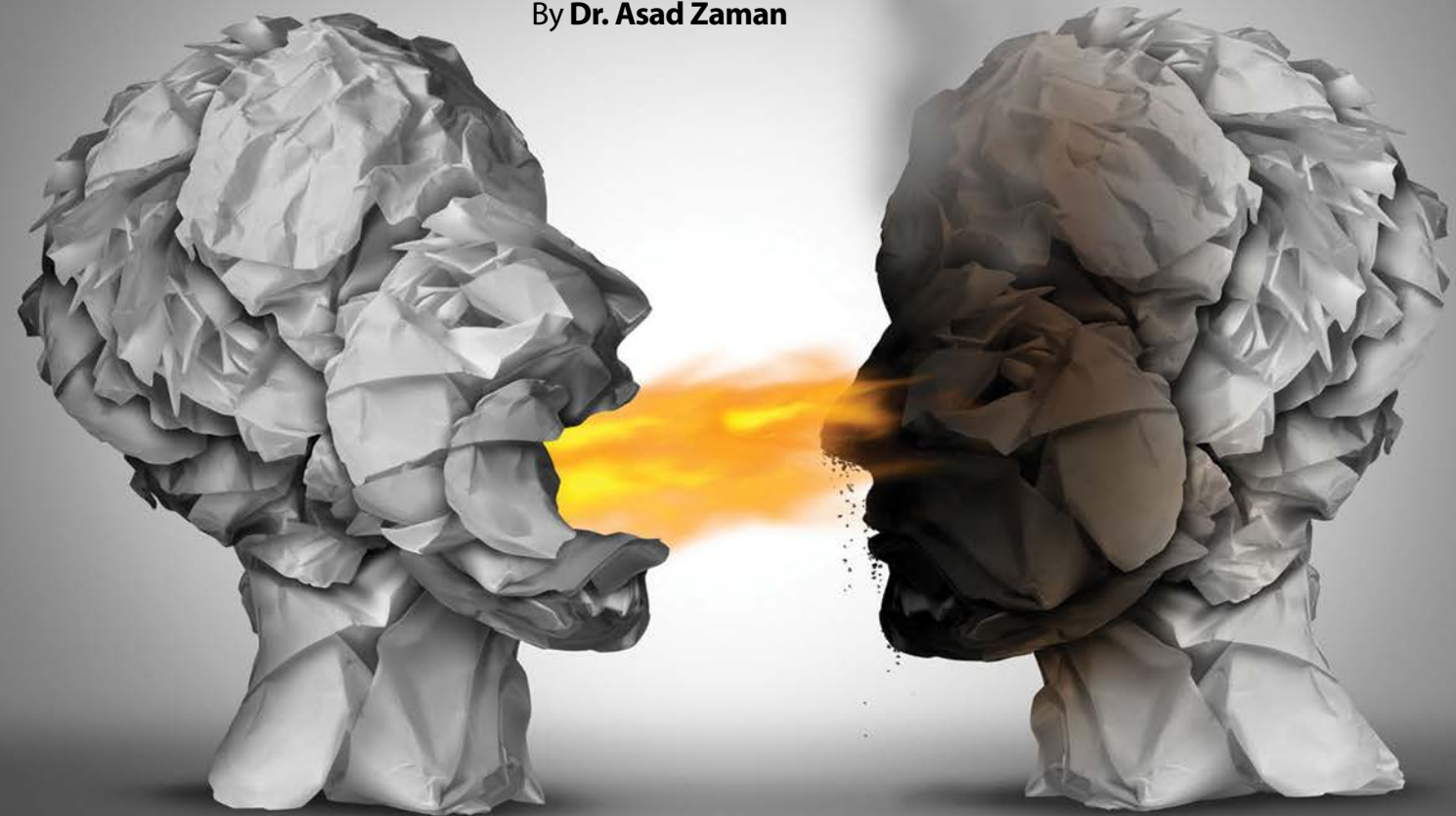
Many have searched for reasons and explanations for this European superiority. To the early writers, it was obvious that the White race was superior to others, and this was the reason why they conquered the world. Blaut (2000) has listed thirty Eurocentric explanations for the rise of Europe to global dominance. Even though he has debunked them all, these explanations are offered by very respectable and influential academics, whose views continue to be cited and to shape mainstream views of history. As an illustration, we list five of these thirty reasons below, many of which have popular books devoted to amplification and justification.

1. People of the white race have an inherited

THE SECRETS OF EUROPEAN & VICTORIES

THE DECLINE OF THE EAST

By Dr. Asad Zaman



superiority over the people of other races.

2. Europeans were uniquely rational, innovative and progressive.

3. Europeans were uniquely capable of creative and scientific thought.

4. Europeans uniquely, in ancient and/or medieval times, developed the concept and institution of private property and/or that of markets.

5. Europeans were uniquely venturesome, uniquely given to exploration and overseas expansion.

Several authors have debunked these myths, showing that Europeans were not unique in the ways imagined above. That still leaves us a puzzle: how to explain the rise of the West? We offer a simple alternative to the dominant theories listed above. Throughout history, advanced civilizations become decadent, and are defeated and destroyed by youthful, energetic barbarian tribes. Ibn-e-Khaldun (2004) noted this as a regular cycle in his history. The defeat of Muslims at the hand of Europeans has striking similarities to the earlier destruction of the Muslim civilization by the Mongols. More specific evidence is provided below.

Truth #6: A Comparative Advantage in Violence

An amazingly large number of different ideas have been presented as causes of the Rise of Europe, and new theories continue to come up. The vast majority of these are materialistic explanations, based on the superiority of European lands, or resources, or humans. We would like to propose an idealistic explanation. Certain unique European ideas, different from those prevailing among the rest of humanity, led to the global conquest. We list three European inventions which eventually led to the conquest of the globe by Europe.

(a) Glorification of War

Hoffman (2012) provides an explanation of the European comparative advantage in violence in the following terms:

In Europe, the kings and princes had been raised to fight one another, with toy soldiers, pikes, and firearms as children and actual training in their youth. Advisers like Machiavelli might tell them that princes “ought to have no object, thought, or profession but war.” Their own fathers would teach them that war was a path to glory, a means to “distinguish [kings] . . . and to fulfill the great expectations . . . inspired in the public,” in the words of Louis XIV’s instructions for his son. They took the lesson to heart and once enthroned often surrounded themselves with images exalting their role as military leaders or glorifying the martial exploits of their reigns, as Louis XIV himself did at Versailles. And they pursued war with gusto, at least if they ruled over a major power. Fighting

had gone beyond the needs of defense and become, in the words of Galileo, a “royal sport.”

The glorification of war, and its acceptance as a natural state, led to the Military Revolution of early modern Europe, discussed by Geoffrey Parker (1996). This was a product of the intense rivalries between the nascent nation-states that led them to make significant innovations in strategy and tactics, armament, and logistics. This was done efficiently by the use of gunpowder, which was substantially advanced in the West. Nearly three centuries of continuous warfare in Europe gave them a “comparative advantage in violence,” as Hoffman (2012) puts it. The trend continues to this day, where leaders of US and UK find the most effective boost to lagging popularity to be good fortunes in a war. For instance, victory in Falklands brought popularity to Thatcher, and victory over Russians made Reagan popular. D’Ambrosio (2011) has documented the dramatic difference between the Hollywood glorification of war in *Sands of Iwo Jima*, and the tragedy of it in the real life of the war hero Ira Hayes. In contrast, the vast majority of the rest of humanity enjoyed and preferred peace to war. For example, Hoffman (2012) writes that the Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci, who died in Peking in 1610 after spending 28 years in China, noted that although China could easily conquer neighboring states neither the emperors nor Chinese officials had any interest in doing so. “Certainly, this is very different from our own countries [in Europe],” he noted, for European kings are “driven by the insatiable desire to extend their dominions.”

Children learn from the popular computer game “Civilization” that the goal is to achieve global dominance by destroying other civilizations. Among societies which have experienced it, civilization has an entirely different meaning. As Gandhi put it: “Western civilization? I think it would be a good idea.”

(b) Insularity, Intolerance, and Racism

For reasons too complex to describe here, Europeans never managed to develop the cosmopolitan culture of the Ottomans or of Islamic Spain. There is some truth in the lyrics to a popular song, “...The French hate the Germans. The Germans hate the Poles. Italians hate Yugoslavs. ...” It is hard to tell if the perpetual warfare in Europe was a cause or an effect of this; it seems likely that there was mutual reinforcement of inherent tendencies. One of the driving forces behind the development of the European Union was the hope that tying the countries into interlocking economic relationships would be a way to prevent the warfare which has characterized European history.

This warfare eventually led to the development of “nationalism,” perhaps the most deadly philosophy invented by man. Millions died for their countries in the two conflagrations named as world wars in the twentieth century. The idea that perpetual warfare is the natural state of being between different nations

has become deeply ingrained in the European psyche. Countless fictional works (like the War of the Worlds) as well as academics assume that encounter between different nations must necessarily be on hostile terms. The most recent example is the “Clash of Civilizations” by Samuel P. Huntington (1996). The idea that two civilizations can meet, learn from each other, trade, enjoy benefits of mutual friendship simply does not occur to Huntington and similar scholars in the European tradition. It is assumed that war, conflict and attempts by one to dominate the other must inevitably result from contact as this is the lesson of European history.

Racism was rampant, and there was near consensus that non-white races were not fully human. Thus Europeans had no compunctions in hunting Australian aborigines like animals, and in shooting and killing the inferior races. In the US Supreme Court decision *Dred Scott v. Sandford* issued on March 6, 1857, Chief Justice Roger Taney declared negroes to be “beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with

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the white race, either in social or political relations, and so far inferior that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.” Lord Cecil Rhodes (1902) declared that “I contend that we are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race. Just fancy those parts that are at present inhabited by the most despicable specimens of human beings; what an alteration there would be if they were brought under Anglo-Saxon influence, ...” The millions of pounds transferred from the colonies of inferior beings to the white colonizers led to Lord Cecil Rhodes becoming the richest man on the planet. Western academics have argued that these transfers were just and equitable payments for the good governance provided to the colonies. The same process continues today, using different mechanisms. Shah (2005) provides the following statistics regarding money transfers from the poorest countries to the rich: For the poorest countries (approximately 60), \$550 billion has been paid in both principal and interest over the last three decades, on \$540bn of loans, and yet there is still a \$523 billion dollar debt burden.

(c) All is Fair in Love and War

Since warfare in Europe was often justified on religious grounds, European intellectuals sought a secular political philosophy as an alternative to religion. The “social contract” became the secular basis of morality. Hegel noted that the social contract was by consensus within a nation-state. If the state lost a war,

then the conquerors would re-write the social contract and thereby re-write morality. To defend themselves, states could act in ways that went beyond any moral codes - states create morality and therefore are not bound by it. This creates a justification for any atrocity “for reasons of the state.” Glover (2012) has noted the dark record of the many atrocities committed in the twentieth century. For example, continuation of British blockade of food to Germans after the surrender of Germany, led to death by starvation of about 800,000 Germans. Bauman (1989) has analyzed the Holocaust, in which millions of civilian Jews - men, women and children - were scientifically exterminated in specially designed ovens. Baumann argues that the rational philosophy that ends justify means, which continues to be taught at leading universities, was, in the final analysis the cause of the holocaust. That is, lack of absolute moral codes have caused, and will continue to cause human disasters.

Another unique European invention is the philosophy of social Darwinism. The advent of British colonization

of Africa coincided with the era of scientific racism as represented by social Darwinism (survival of the fittest). The British believed that because they had superior weaponry and were therefore more technologically advanced than the Africans, that they had a right to colonize and exploit the resources of the Africans in the name of promoting civilization. It is, of course, inherently contradictory for an invading force to usher in “civilization.”

Similarly, no other civilization can offer a parallel to Machiavelli, whose wisdom continues to guide Western leaders. He advised princes to be cunning and duplicitous, to command by fear, rather than love, to deceive by making and breaking promises, and to be ruthless in treatment of enemies. This was taken to heart and made the base of western politics; political scientist Ludlow (2005) has documented how faithfully US Politicians follow Machiavellian prescriptions. The western conquest of the globe was accompanied by unmatched ruthlessness and treachery, as has been documented in numerous “subaltern” accounts that have emerged - for a moving example of the native American perspective on the English-American conquest of the continent, see Brown (1991). As Machiavelli had correctly foreseen, the vast majority of people are simple and honest, and hence easily deceived.

Lesson #6: Finding Other Pathways

The primary lesson of “modernization theories” is that

Europeans have reached the apex of civilization, and we must imitate them to achieve their success. There are two fundamental difficulties with this idea. Firstly, it is not possible for us to conquer the globe and the loot the wealth of other civilizations, in order to imitate the European formula for success. Secondly, even if it was possible, it would not be desirable for us, as human beings, to achieve the comparative advantage in violence, ruthlessness, and treachery that led to the European conquest of the globe. Simplicity and honesty are precious human qualities, to be prized over cunning and ruthlessness.

It is true that the so-called “underdeveloped” world is in very bad shape. We were living peacefully, when alien invaders came and destroyed local institutions and cultures. All natural resources were captured as raw material to feed capitalist production processes. All of the population was turned into cogs of a capitalist machine designed to maximize production and wealth at the center. Instead of developing human potential, an educational system was designed to teach students that the goal of life is to sell their labor for money. Those who did not cooperate were ruthlessly eliminated as being obstacles to progress. Our best minds have absorbed these lessons of a western education, and sell their services to the west for high salaries, depriving the *Ummah* of precious manpower. The ideals that service to mankind and *Ummah* takes precedence over a life of personal luxury have been forgotten. It will be very difficult to recover from this damage. Creative strategies are required. The first step is to liberate ourselves from the narratives of Eurocentric history, which prevent us from looking in the directions required for progress. This essay provides the foundations for an alternative sketch of history.

Decline and Fall of the East

Corresponding to myths of European superiority, we have myths of Eastern inferiority. After all, it was necessary to come up with some justification for the ruthless exploitation of human and natural resources of the entire planet. Although the myth of racial superiority has lost intellectual respectability, it still survives in covert forms. It is worth stating and rebutting since swallowing the myth leads to despair about the possibilities of change and improvement. This despair is itself one of the biggest obstacles to change.

Myth #7: Superiority of the White Races

There was an intense debate in the 1980s about the Eurocentric bias of a course at Stanford which taught the Great Books of the Western Civilization. While some advocated including books from other traditions and civilizations, there was a minority which publicly expressed the view of Lord Macaulay (1958) that “a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.” Perhaps the majority was in agreement, but remained neutral due to pressures to be politically correct. Similarly, the issue of whether or not the Muslims can “self-govern” has been debated at the highest levels in USA.

Harvard professors Herrnstein & Murray (2010) have published the “The Bell Curve” which suggests that Blacks are genetically inferior to Whites in intelligence.

Some years ago, in the process of researching education in Pakistan, the World Bank administered some intelligence tests via a large, expensive, and time-consuming survey to a target population. Dr. Ali Khan of Johns Hopkins was assigned to review the project. He noted that the particular tests administered were designed for people of subnormal intelligence. It had been well established in the psychological literature that these tests had no validity for people of normal intelligence. As another observer remarked, the World Bank experts consider the people of Pakistan to be ‘morons’ (learnt through personal conversations with Dr. Ali Khan of Johns Hopkins, in which he discussed this event).

The idea of racial superiority of the whites has played a far greater role in history than has been recognized. Entire peoples were exterminated and enslaved in Latin America, Africa and Asia in order to capture their natural resources. This would not have been possible if these “miserable specimens” of inferior beings had been regarded as human beings equal to the Whites. What accounts for the difference between the development trajectories of Australia, USA and India, all former colonies of England? Racism allowed ruthless exploitation of one, and prohibited equally ruthless exploitation of the others. Even today, the

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same lessons are being applied. The destruction of the entire nation of Iraq in order to capture its oil resources is only possible because Arabs are not fully human. It would not have been possible to carry out this war if Iraq had been part of Europe or peopled by whites.

Truth #7: Brotherhood

Against this myth, there is strong evidence that all human beings belong to a common genetic pool, and hence are genetically equivalently endowed. The idea that only Europeans have accomplished great things is based mainly on ignorance - Macaulay (1958) acknowledged that he did not know a word of Arabic or Sanskrit, in the same tract in which he condemns the entire literature. When Australian aborigines were being hunted as animals, they had the knowledge to

live off the land which Australian immigrants lacked and hence had to face frequent famines in a land of plenty; see Hughes (2010). Similarly, all civilizations have made original contributions and achieved excellence in ways that others have not.

Lesson #7: The Courage to Make a Difference

The Holy Quran asserts that man can only get what he strives for. The false idea of racial inferiority, and the false idea that our ancestors never accomplished anything worthwhile, limits the range of our ambitions. Once the lesson of brotherhood of all human beings is absorbed, it becomes possible to strive for the highest goals that humans have tried for. These highest goals are NOT, contrary to dominant myths suitable for looters of the world, the maximization of wealth. Rather, every man has been given the potential to become superior to the angels, and also the capability to be worse than the beasts. Depending on the environment and the efforts made, men can develop to a great-

er or lesser extent. Those who remain undeveloped spiritually can, like Machiavelli, prefer to rule by fear, because they cannot sense the warmth in the hearts of fellow men. They can drop fire bombs on cities, frying human beings on hot pavements, without feeling any compassion. Spiritual development leads to an awareness of the linkages between all human beings. The most developed of all human beings was our Prophet Mohammed ﷺ who was sent as a mercy for all mankind. His heart was so full of compassion that Allah T’aala counsels him in the Holy Quran not to kill himself with sorrow on the behalf of those who would not believe and thereby condemn themselves to eternal suffering. Our goal in life is to try and emulate this excellence, to the extent possible for us. This does not involve maximizing happiness, as the utilitarians believe. Rather, it involves the opening of our hearts to all of the creation of God, which may result in increased suffering, because we are able to feel the pain of others. (Continued...)

SUFISM AND ITS INTERPRETATION

“I would warn the younger Muslim generation about the wrong interpretation of Sufism.

It has been widely propagated in the Western world by non-Muslims. They coined the term Sufism. They praise Sufism. They preach Sufism. They propagate Sufism. One may think that they do this in service to Islam. However, the reality is that the Sufism propagated by Western writers is quite contradictory to the Shariah. It is quite contradictory to the real essence of Tasawwuf and tariqat.

A high ranking western official visited the Darul Uloom, Karachi. After having a detailed tour observing the teaching activities he commented that he did not see anything about Sufism being taught.

It was inquired that what did he mean by Sufism.

He replied that Sufism is something related to one’s soul and what pleases one’s soul. For example, playing music, dancing, having ecstasy (wajd) and, etc...

The poor individual restricted Sufism to these kinds of activities.

The real problem is that when Western world speaks of soul as against the physical life they assume that they are speaking of the spirit or spiritual things. There is a big difference between soul and spirit.

In fact soul is what is called the nafs in Tasawwuf. That is the (lower) desires of the heart. Tasawwuf does not have relation to soul in that meaning.

Tasawwuf relates to the spiritual qualities- the human instincts (reformation of the moral characteristics - thus becoming a better human being & Real Muslim).” - Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani



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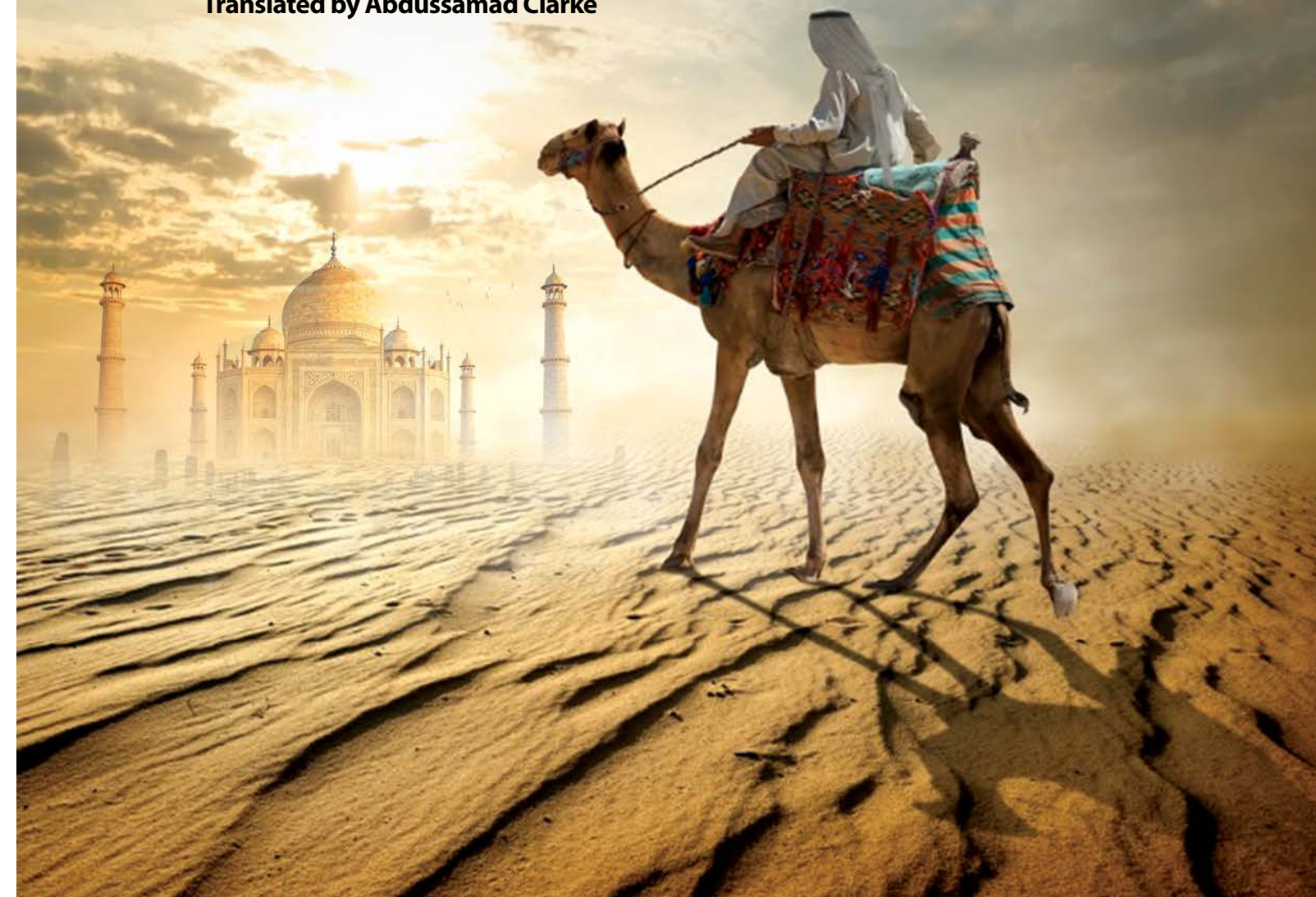
How Hadith Came to India

By **Shaykh Abu'l-Hasan Ali al-Hasani Nadwi**
Translated by **Abdussamad Clarke**

Taken from his foreword to Shaykh al-Hadith Mawlana Muhammad Zakariyya's Awjaz al-Masalik, the acclaimed multi-voluminous commentary of Mu'watta Imam Malik.

Praise belongs to Allah c Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace on the master of the Messengers and Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad, the leader of the people whose extremities are whitened [from *wudu*] and on his Companions the guardians of the Book and the Sunnah, and carriers of the standard of the *deen*, and on whoever follows them with *ihsan* of the firmly established people of knowledge who remove from Islam the alterations of the over-rigorous, and the arrogation of the falsifiers and the false interpretations of the ignorant.

The science of hadith is one of the sciences with which Allah c has inspired this *Ummah* - right at the beginning and immediately after the death of its Prophet (peace and blessings upon him) - He inspired them to be concerned about it, and to struggle in the path of memorising them, recording, transmitting and publishing them, labouring to receive them and gather them together, competing with each other in being exact and precise about them, concerned about all the sciences and arts connected with them. That



inspiration was strong and clear and in it there was manifest the wisdom of Allah ﷻ and His concern for the purity of this deen and for bringing it to completion, so much so that that was a psychological impulse whose source the ummah did not recognise and was unable to overcome or repel it, and it was a driving force which apparently drove it towards this goal strongly and violently, so that it was unable to oppose it. Inwardly it was a gracious companion so it did not perceive its heaviness and its pressure, and it found in its being carried towards it and in responding to it an incomparable sweetness, and an incomparable ease and joy, so that because of that tiring matters and hardships seemed little to it, and long distances and journeys seemed short when undertaken on its behalf, and it rushes against its seeker from the places it is expected, and its memorisation and narration from its people and its transmission from place to place floods and armies of people who are of the most intelligent of the nations and peoples.

The science of hadith entered India in the very beginnings of the Islamic opening of it to Islam. Among the *Mujahidun* who went there travelling in the way of Allah ﷻ there was al-Rabi ibn al-Subayh as-Sadi about whom al-Jalbi said in *Kashf al-Zunun*. "He was

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the first to make a compilation in Islam." There is no doubt that he was one of the first authors in the science of hadith even if he was not absolutely the first of them. He died and was buried in India in 120 AH.

The science of hadith accompanied the Arabs who made military expeditions into these lands, mixed with their flesh and blood, and so they carried this noble science with them. People of knowledge who were narrators of hadith were present on every military expedition. Some of them took up residence in India and died there. The science of hadith spread in the *dawlah* of the Arabs and under their governance. When the *dawlah* of the Arabs became extinct in the lands of Sind and the Ghaznavid and Ghawrid kings conquered it, and people came successively from Khurasan and Transoxiana then hadith became as unusual there as red sulphur, and as extinct as the Phoenix of the West, and people were overcome by poetry, astronomy, the mathematical sciences and of the sciences of the deen, the *fiqh* and *usul*. Many centuries passed like that until the craft of the people of India had become the Greek wisdom and desertion of the sciences of the Sunnah and the Qurān except

for a little of what we mentioned of *fiqh*. The limit of their knowledge of hadith was *Mashariq al-Anwar* by al-Saghani, and then if anyone was raised to *Masabih al-Sunnah* by al-Baghawi or *Mishkat al-Masabih* he would think that he had reached the degree of a hadith scholar only because of his ignorance of hadith.

The state continued like that and the situation became desperate so much so that the connection of Indian Muslims with this pure and original source of the deen almost ceased, and India was withdrawn from the movement of authorship and the teaching in the Arabic lands and lagged behind the party of Islamic sciences, becoming an independent and separate world. When Shaykh Shams al-Din al-Misri visited these lands at the time of Alaad-Din al-Khalji in the Eighth Century *hijrah*, that pained and scared him, and so he wrote a letter to the Sultan taking the *fuqaha* of these lands to task for the little concern they had for hadith, however, the ulama of the country by trickery managed to keep the letter from reaching the Sultan.

However, Providence took care of India, and Allah ﷻ made a present to these lands of noble travelling hadith scholars from Hijaz, Hadramawt, Egypt, Iraq and Iran. That was in the tenth century *hijrah*. However, most of them preferred to reside in Gujarat

because of the existence there of Islamic governance which protected the sciences and cared for the people of knowledge. Its kings were distinguished by their attainments in the science of hadith and their infatuation with it. Most of these travellers died and were buried in Ahmadabad, the capital of governance for Gujarat.

Then divine providence drove some of the ulama of India, who are too many to mention here, to the noble Haramayn, the source and sanctuary of this knowledge, the most famous of whom was Shaykh Husam ad-Din Ali al-Muttaqi the author of *Kanz al-Ummal* (died in 975 AH), and his pupil Shaykh Muhammad ibn Tahir al-Fatini (Patni) writer of *Majma' al-Bihar* (died in 986 AH). These two gave noted service to the science of hadith and composed tremendous works on it. Then it was the turn of Shaykh Allāmah Abd al-Haqq ibn Sayf al-Din al-Bukhari al-Dihlawi (died 1052 AH) who took the science of hadith from the ulama of the Hijaz and transmitted it to India and made the home of the king, Delhi, its centre. He set to work seriously and in earnest spreading the science of hadith and serving it by teaching and writing commentaries; so

the ulama turned towards the science of hadith and the Sahih spread widely, and the market was brisk with this science after trade had previously been slack because of lack of goods and the abstinence of the ulama towards it. His son and his grandchildren succeeded him in it, and they studied and wrote on it, and great ulama arose from every corner of India, and men sprang up among them acknowledged for their merit and their skill in the craft.

Then it was the turn of Shaykh al-Islam, Shaykh Ahmad ibn Abd al-Rahim al-Dihlawi better known as Shah Wali Allah ﷻ (died in 1176 AH). He travelled to the Hijaz and learnt hadith from Shaykh Abu Tahir Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Kurdi al-Madani. He then returned and confined his zeal to the project of spreading hadith, and so the State of hadith was established in India and its gentle breeze blew east and west, north and south, and fell upon its students, the seekers of the science of hadith, from the remotest corners of India. Knowledge of the science of hadith became a precondition for complete knowledge, and the outward sign of the people of right action and correct *aqidah* so much so that an alim would not be reckoned an alim until he excelled in it. Study of the six Sahih works became established in every circle of study, and its students and their students in turn became widespread the

Because of the merit of these sincerely devoted people who gave their lives for spreading hadith and teaching it, composing works on its arts and on its derivative rulings, India became a centre for this science and a refuge for the leaders in this art.

length and breadth of India, just like the tree of Tuba whose branches are found in every place but whose roots and trunk are unknown. There is no *isnad*, no lecture, no authorship, no reform movement, and no revival movement but that its lineage of scholarship returns to this blessed genealogical tree and its lofty branches. It is true what is said:

Whoever visits Your door then his limbs continue to narrate hadith as long as You display graces. For the eye is from Qurrah, the palm from Silah, the heart is from Jabir and the hearing is from Hasan.

Shah Wali Allah's intelligent son and righteous pupil Shah Abd al-Aziz ibn Wali Allah (died 1239 AH) succeeded him, and Allah ﷻ blessed his teaching, and notable ulama and great scholars of hadith were educated by him, the most famous of whom and the most successful of them in spreading hadith and in educating scholars and teachers was his grandson Shaykh Muhammad Ishaq ibn Muhammad Afdal al-'Umari (died 1262 AH), who succeeded to the leadership in hadith in the last epoch, and who became the authority and

the ultimate resort in tuition and training. People made great efforts to travel to him from distant lands. Allah ﷻ decreed that success and acceptance for him which He did not decree for any of his contemporaries in India, or in most of the Islamic lands. That is the bounty of Allah ﷻ which He gives to whomever He wishes. From him there originate and at him there meet all of the schools of thought of understanding hadith and explaining and interpreting them. To whatever movement they belong and whatever the disparity of their schools, their scholarly lineage reverts to him and they all wind up in their chain of transmissions with him. He is the support of India, the means of the contract, and the uttermost limit of the people of narration in this later epoch.

One of the most intelligent and well known of his pupils was Shaykh Abd al-Ghani ibn Abi Said al-Mujaddidi al-Dihlawi (died 1296 AH) who emigrated to Madinah Munawwarah. Many people in India and in the two Noble Sanctuaries benefitted from his lessons, and at his hands many sincere people [turned] towards Allah ﷻ and people of knowledge devoted to Allah ﷻ were trained, people who gave their lives to teaching the noble hadith, spreading and serving them.

Because of the merit of these sincerely devoted people who gave their lives for spreading hadith and teaching it, composing works on its arts and on its derivative rulings, India became a centre for this science and a refuge for the leaders in this art. After having been an uninvited guest at the table of the Arabic countries for centuries, they after some time were taking this science from them, and rekindling its lamp, after its oil had run out, from one of the lamps of this science in lands of the Arabs, and India was illuminated by the light of this knowledge and the lamps were spread in all its corners like pearly stars, and there arose at one instant in many towns in these lands and in some of its village circles devoted to study of the knowledge of hadith, and scholars who had completed their studies in the other sciences exerted themselves to travel there and would devote themselves totally to seeking the prophetic hadith for a year or more, and they would devote themselves totally to it, no other aim diverting them and no other knowledge competing with it, and their zeal undivided, their thoughts unconfused. They would confine themselves in the main to one shaykh and to one science and to one goal so that they could emerge from these circles as teaching masters, and guiding instructors. So the intelligent students and those educated in the madrasahs revolved around them whose business was to be with their masters and their shaykhs. The matter continued and the light was transmitted and the circle expanded as much as Allah ﷻ willed.

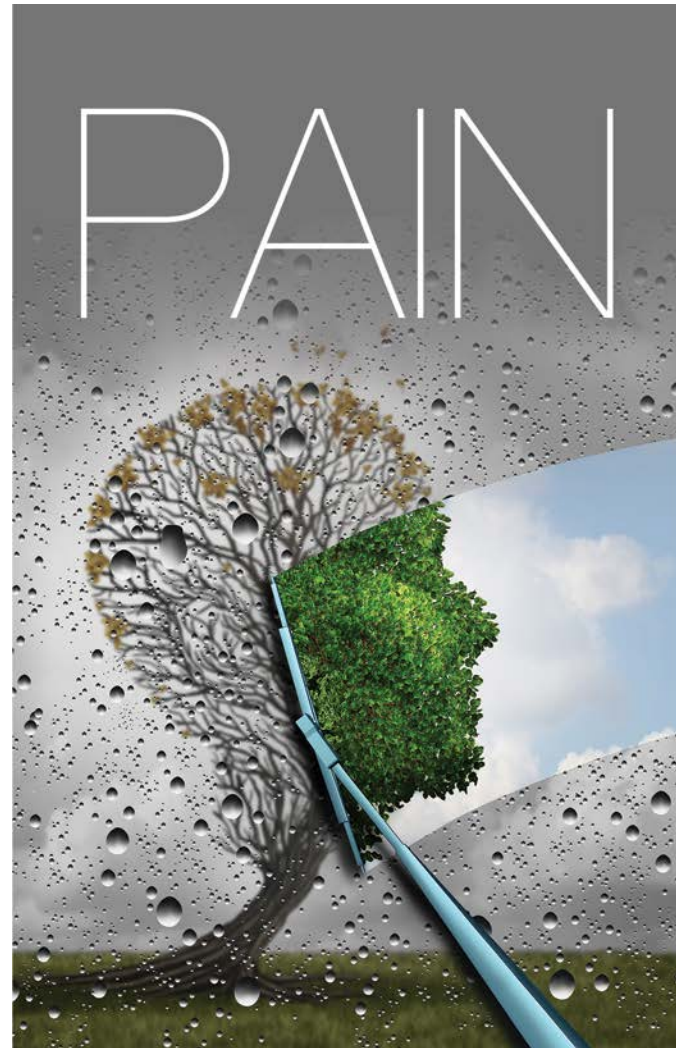
These circles which sprang up from a solitary individual and which revolved around him were established in most of the major cities and well-known towns such as Delhi, Lucknow, Saharanpur, Panipat, Deoband, Muradabad, Bhopal, and towns such as Gangoh, Ganj

Muradabad and others.

Gangoh was the centre of Shaykh Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (died 1323 AH) the pupil of Shaykh Abd al-Ghani ibn Abi Said al-Mujaddidi. He united the talents of instruction, spiritual guidance, teaching and the issuing of fatwas. He used to teach a variety of sciences and then he turned to teaching the noble hadith and confined himself to it apart from all other sciences. Students and scholars turned in his direction from every direction, and they would stay with him for a year reading the Six Sound Books to him, benefiting by his company and his instruction, taking him as a model in qualities of character and ordinary transactions, in deeds and acts of worship, in following the Sunnah and fleeing from innovations and recently introduced matters. They tasted the science of hadith both in practice and in study, and became strong in love of it, firmly resolved to serve it and spread it, and to prefer it to all other sciences and occupations, because of what they had seen of their shaykh's self-sacrifice in being occupied with it and that it had mixed with his flesh and blood, and become manifest in his life, his movement and his stillness. The author of Al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyyah fi'l-Hind - Islamic Culture in India - mentioned him and he said, 'He learnt from the afore-

mentioned shaykh Abd al-Ghani. He studied for thirty years. His teaching the Six Sound books occupied one complete year involving reflection and thoroughness, exactitude and precision. None of his contemporaries equalled him in that.'

One of his leading pupils who was most loyal to his knowledges and his scholarly heritage, and most careful to spread it and transmit it was the shaykh Muhammad Yahya ibn Muhammad Isma'il al-Kandahlawi (died 1334 AH) who had a firmly established scholarly aptitude and whose intelligence and acumen were ignited. His shaykh loved and preferred him a great deal, and had taken him as his personal companion, the narrator of his knowledge, and the writer of his letters and treatises. He recorded his shaykh's lessons, and his dictation, and then he revised and edited them. He gathered what he had heard from him on the study of the Sunan al-Tirmidhi in a collection which he called al-Kawkab al-Durri - The Pearly Star - and he gathered what he had heard from him on the study of al-Jami' al-Sahih by al-Bukhari in another book. By that he preserved a great portion of his knowledge and his revisions, thus making them as words which would endure in his posterity.



Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding.

Even as the stone of the fruit must break, that its heart may stand in the sun, so must you know pain.

And could you keep your heart in wonder at the daily miracles of your life, your pain would not seem less wondrous than your joy;

And you would accept the seasons of your heart, even as you have always accepted the seasons that pass over your fields.

And you would watch with serenity through the winters of your grief.

Much of your pain is self-chosen.

It is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self.

Therefore trust the physician, and drink his remedy in silence and tranquillity:

For his hand, though heavy and hard, is guided by the tender hand of the Unseen,

And the cup he brings, though it burn your lips, has been fashioned of the clay which the Potter has moistened with His own sacred tears.

- Khalil Gibran

Burger Shack

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