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الانابة

Turning To Allah

Soaring to great heights

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As this magazine contains verses from the Holy Qur'an, please handle it with due respect, and after reading it do pass it to others, jazakumullahu khairan.

The goal of life

It is quite obvious that the integrity of a sound intellect requires him to do everything on a purpose. The greater the degree of intellect, the more meaningful is the object, the purpose, of all his undertakings and endeavours. Then what to say regarding The One, who originated and created everything so perfect from nothingness?

The One, who designed, shaped and distinctly made, whatever is in the universe and beyond it, and positioned everything in its most, appropriate position; that a degree over or below, would bring a hazardous effect? The One, who created all the galaxies, stars, planets and their orbits without any one of them criss-crossing into the other; with every star taxing on its orbit with immaculate accuracy – dot to dot - on its laid down schedule, twenty-four hours everyday, all year round, since its creation? The One, who created and controls all the seasons, and set up all the temperatures? The One, who so magnificently created all the landscape, mountains, rivers, oceans, plains, deserts and the different vegetations; and set up the correct proportions, ratios and balances of everything necessary for life on earth? The One, who created air, and all the elements and constituents in it, and determined fixed percentages of all the different gases found in it; of different properties, staying stable at all times, in various conditions? The One, who created all the species different – their characteristic nature; habitat; ways, methods and distinctive physical nature of: self defense and protection, conversing, speech, diet and feeding habits; mating, co-habiting and attracting the opposite sex of the same species; upbringing and rearing their offspring's, and their appearance and capabilities? The One, who created man and taught him all that he knew not? The One, who created all the different races, tribes, cultures, languages and societies; and allotted different areas as homelands for each of them? And the One, who made for everything its distinctive and unique shape, colour, outer covering, taste, smell and properties? Who originated, created and planned all this and much more?

There is none, but Allah Ta'ala alone. He did all this without a purpose? Just to create and then destroy? Certainly not! He created everything for the service of man; for him to live to grasp the greatness, the power and the omnipresence of the only One True God, Allah, with total submission and humility towards Him – the sole purpose for creating man.

So as long as man fulfills the real object of his coming to this world – total submission to Allah Ta'ala and lead his life in the manner decreed by the Almighty, as practically shown by the Prophets, alayhimus salatu wassalam, the whole universe will remain in his service. And life on earth will be pleasant and a joyful one, filled with tranquility and blessings. But once man fails in his principal purpose of life on earth, all the forces of the universe turn against him, making his life miserable, without direction, finding no peace and tranquility, regardless of all material factors.

Needless to say, that the only way out of all disturbances, is to accept the supremacy and sovereignty of Allah' Ta'ala, repent for our misdeeds and turn to Allah - and soar to great heights; spiritually and morally.

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Al Inaabah الإِنَابَةُ

AbdulHafeez & Sh. Ali Duhmi

To Return to Allah

Literally, “Inaabah” means to return. Ibn Faaris says it means to habituate a place and to return to it. The root letters ب و ن reflect upon returning. Imam Raaghib, rahimahullah, says الإِنَابَةُ إِلَى اللَّهِ is to return to Allah Ta'ala repentantly and with sincerity in practice.

In technical terms, *inaabah* means to clear the heart of all dubious matters and thoughts. It is also said to mean, to return from ambiguity to awareness and consciousness; and from remoteness to closeness. Ibn Qayyim, rahimahullah, states, *inaabah* is to hasten towards pleasing Allah together with always repeating to Him and being sincere to Him in all actions.

Inaabah is of two types: - (i) *Inaabah Ruboobiyyah* – turning or retreating to Allah Ta'ala (or God) as He is the Lord, the Deity. This is common regarding all humans; Muslim or non-Muslim the pious and immoral. Allah Ta'ala says,

وَإِذَا مَسَّ النَّاسَ ضُرٌّ دَعَوْا رَبَّهُمْ مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ (الروم/33)

“And when adversity touches the people, they call upon their Lord, turning in repentance to Him” (Ar-Rum: 33). In adversities – when all hope is gone, and then all turn towards Him. And this *inaabah* is not submission, but only to overcome their distress. Once they are shown special mercy, they retract and turn to gross ingratitude, as Allah Ta'ala continues to say in the same ayah,

ثُمَّ إِذَا أَذَقَهُمْ مِنْهُ رَحْمَةً إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ (الروم/33)

“Then when He lets them test mercy from Him, at once a party of them associate others with their Lord” (Ar-Rum : 33).

(ii) The second type of *inaabah* is of those who are close to Allah Ta'ala; turning to Allah Ta'ala in worship together with affection and attachment. And this comprises of four things: (i) Love for Allah Ta'ala, (ii) Humility before Him, (iii) Total devotion towards Him and (iv) Renouncing everything other than He. So a person cannot be entitled to be attributed as “*Muneeb*” – the one who frequently turns Allah Ta'ala - until and unless he possesses these four qualities.

Inaabah as stated in the Qur'an and Sunnah

The qualities of Khaleelullah, Hadhrat Ibraheem, alaihis salaam:

“Verily Ibraheem (Abraham) was without doubt, forbearing, used to invoking Allah with humility, and was repentant to Allah all the time, again and again,” (Hud:75)

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُنِيبٌ [هود/75]

Ibraheem, alaihis salam, was grieving in supplication out of grief for people and fear of Allah. For every difficulty or trouble, he turned to Allah Ta'ala and sought Him in prayer. Being the fountain head of Prophets, he also pleaded for the sinful.

Always follow the path of those who are submissive to Allah Ta'ala:

"But if they endeavor to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them, but accompany them in (this) world with appropriate kindness and follow the way of those who turn back to Me (in repentance). Then to Me will be your return and I will inform you about what you used to do." (Luqman:15)

وَإِنْ جَاهِدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا
وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ
مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ [لقمان/15]

In any apparent conflict of duties, our standard should, by Allah's will, as declared to us by His command. That is the way of those who love Allah Ta'ala, and their motive in disobedience to parents or human authority, where disobedience is necessary by Allah's Law, is not self willed rebellion or defiance, but love of Allah Ta'ala. (Yusuf Ali)

People to be followed are those who are ever aware of the presence of Allah Ta'ala, fear Him and turn to Him every now and then, in total humility and confession.

Allah Ta'ala, being fully aware of the lapses and transgressions of the human nature, Exhorts the mankind to repent and turn to Him:

"Say, 'O My servants who have transgressed against themselves (by sinning), do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the forgiving, the Merciful.' And return (in repentance) to your Lord and submit to Him before the punishment comes upon you, then you will not be helped." (az-Zumar: 53-54)

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ (53) وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ (54)
[الزمر/53، 54]

Yusuf Ali says, Allah forgive all sins on sincere repentance and amendment of conduct. The human being is exhorted, 'Repent and work righteousness', before it becomes too late. No help will come to you when the Judgment is actually established and you stand before Allah.

The characteristic nature of those who turn to Allah Ta'ala, is to reflect and ponder on the greatness of Allah Ta'ala by cogitating on His vast and immaculate creation.

- (i) "Have they not looked at the heaven above them - how we structured it and adorned it and (how) it has no rifts? And the earth – We spread it out and cast therein firmly set mountains and made grow therein (something) of every beautiful kind. An insight and reminder for every slave who turns to Allah in repentance (i.e., the one who believes in the oneness of Allah and performs deeds of His obedience, and always begs His pardon)." (Qaf: 6-8)

أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ (6) وَالْأَرْضِ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ (7) تَبْصِرَةً وَذِكْرَىٰ لِكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُنِيبٍ (8) [ق/6-9]

All these signs are as an insight for the “Muneeb” (the servant turning to Allah), for all these things go into his heart and soul. He loves to contemplate them, to remember them for himself as evidence of Allah’s goodness and glory and to mention and proclaim them. (Yusuf Ali)

- (ii) "It is He who shows you His signs and sends down for you sustenance from the sky. But none will remember except he who turns (to Allah in obedience and repentance)." (Ghafir:13)

هُوَ الَّذِي يُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُنزِلُ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ رِزْقًا وَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُنِيبُ (13) [غافر/13]

Writes Yusuf Ali, 'Lest it should be thought that Allah’s Grace did not meet the Sinner again and again and offer Allah's Mercy again and again, it is pointed out that Allah's Signs were freely vouchsafed everywhere and continuously, and that every kind of means was provided for man’s “Sustenance” or growth and development, physical, mental and spiritual. But only those could take advantage of it who turned their attention to Allah, who submitted their will to Him.'

Good news for those who turn to Allah Ta'ala

- (i) But those who have avoided taught (*Satan or any false object of worship*) lest they worship it, and turned back to Allah – for them are good tidings. So give good tidings to my servants. Who listen to speech and follow the best of it. Those are the ones Allah has guided and those are people of understanding."

وَالَّذِينَ اجْتَنَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ أَن يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فَمِيسِرٌ وَعِبَادٌ (17) الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ (18) [الزمر/17، 18]

(az-Zumar:17, 18)

- (ii) "And Paradise will be brought near to the righteous, no more a thing distant. (It will be said,) 'This is what you were promised - for every returner (to Allah) and keeper (of His covenant). Who feared the Most Merciful Unseen and came with a heart returning (in repentance). Enter it in peace. This is the Day of Eternity.' They will have whatever they wish therein, and with Us is more." (Qaf: 31-35)

وَأَزَلَّتْ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ (31) هَذَا مَا تُوْعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ
حَفِيفٍ (32) مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُنِيبٍ (33)
ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُودِ (34) لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ
[35-31/ق]

Says Yusuf Ali, "The description of the Righteous, *the 'Muttaqeen'*, is given in four masterly clauses:

1. Those who turned away from Evil in sincere repentance – أَوَّابٍ،
2. those whose new life was good and righteous حَفِيفٍ،
3. those who in their innermost hearts and in their most secret doings were actuated by 'Allah-fearing' love, the fear that is akin to love in remembering Allah under His title of "Most Gracious" خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِالْغَيْبِ، and
4. who gave up their whole heart and being to Him قَلْبٍ مُنِيبٍ.

A manifestation of Allah Ta'ala's Mercy for those turning to Allah Ta'ala in repentance:

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudhri, radiyallahu anhu, reported Allah's Messenger, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, as saying, "There was a person before you who had killed ninety-nine persons and then made an inquiry about the learned persons of the world (who could show him the way to salvation). He was directed to a monk. He came to him and told him that he had killed ninety-nine persons and asked him whether there was any scope for his repentance to be accepted. He said, 'No'. He killed him also and thus completed one hundred. He then asked about the learned persons of the earth and he was directed to a scholar, and told him that he had killed one hundred persons and asked him whether there was any scope for his repentance to be accepted. He said, 'Yes, and what stands between you and the repentance? You better go to such and such land, there are people devoted to prayer and worship and you also worship along with them, and do not come to the land of yours

since it was an evil land (for you).' So he went away and he had hardly covered half the distance when death came to him and there was a dispute between the angels of mercy and the angles of punishment. The angles of mercy said, "This man has come as a penitiant and remorseful to Allah", and the angles of punishment said, "He has done no good at all." Then there came another angle in the form of a human being in order to decide between them. He said, "You measure the land to which he has drawn near." They measured it and found him nearer to the land where he intended to go (the land of piety), and so the angles of mercy took possession of it." (Muslim)

Look! Just ponder on the above hadith. A heinous sin is committed and an effort is made to seek Allah Ta'ala's Forgiveness and Mercy, Whose response is even faster, and the person is absolved of all his wrong doings! It has been reported by Anas, radiyallahu anhu, that the

Prophet, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, has said Allah Says, "When a slave of Mine draws near to Me a span, I draw near to him a cubit, and if he draws near to Me a cubit, I draw near to him a fathom, and if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running." (al-Bukhari)

This is the graciousness and benevolence of the Almighty! It has also been reported in another Hadith that Allah Ta'ala stretches His Hand by night so the sinners of the day would repent, and He stretches His Hand by day so the sinners of the night might repent. Those who turn to Allah and become His dear ones, are protected and their wishes are granted. Rasoolullah, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, has said, "Allah Ta'ala has said, "I will declare war against him who shows hostility to a pious worshipper of Mine. My servant could not come nearer to Me with anything more favorable to Me than with what I have enjoined on him. And My servant comes nearer to Me through performing "*Nawaafil*" -

supererogatory optional devotions - until I love him. When I love him, I will be his hearing with which he hears, his eyesight with which he sees, his hand with which he attacks, and his leg with which he walks. And if he asks (something) from Me, I give him, and if he seeks My protection (refuge), I will surely grant him protection.” (al-Bukhari).

This was the case with Hadhrat Yousuf, alaihissalam. Allah Ta'ala protected him against the temptations of the wife of al-Aziz of Egypt. As Yusuf Ali has wrote, "The credit of our being saved from sin is due, not to our weak earthly nature, but to Allah. We can only try, like Joseph (Yousuf, alaihissalam), to be true and sincere, Allah will purify us and

save us from all that is wrong tempted but true, we rise above ourselves.”

So ‘*Inaabah*’ – turning to Allah - is the only solution for a safe passage through the difficult terrain of this worldly abode, and deliverance from the adversities of the Hereafter.

The Disease and the Remedy

وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ [الزمر/54]

“And turn penitently to your Lord, and submit to Him, before there comes to you the torment “and then you shall not be succoured.” (az-Zumar: 54)

The command of Allah, Subhanahu waTaála, upon every human being as per the above verse requires us to turn back to Allah, Subhanahu waTaála, for succour and salvation together with total submission to His Will before it is too late for one to be saved from any impending chastisement. This turning to Allah, Subhanahu waTaála, comprises of several aspects: remorse, repentance, pledge and practice. The remorse is for the sins and transgressions we indulge in. It is the soul purpose of repentance and seeking forgiveness. Minus remorse the repentance is invalid. It is obligatory to feel penitence for every sin committed as is prescribed in the following Qur’an verses:

1. وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ [النور/31]

“And all of you beg Allah to forgive you all, O Believers, that you may be successful. (24:31)

2. وَأَنْ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ [هود/3]

And Seek forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him in repentance.” (11:3)

3. يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَصُوحًا [التحریم/8]

"O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance." (66:8)

Pledge is to sincerely promise Allah, Subhanahu waTaála, never again to turn to the acts of transgression and rebellion. Practice means the full implementation of the Shariah and the Sunnah. Hence transgression and rebellion are the contradicting acts of *inaabah*.

The present calamities witnessed globally befalling the Ummah, are the direct consequences of our

treachery against Allah, Subhanahu waTaála,. Our defiance of His commands is unparalleled compared to the past Ummah as our deeds epitomize the conglomeration of the animal kingdom put together. The Ummah has abandoned religious code and has substituted the Shariah with the code and culture of the western norms. Sin has been legalized, haraam made halaal, the ignorant upheld as genius while the Ulama of our time are down trodden and smeared with all the dirt. The immoral and libertine cult of the west has been adopted as our permanent way of life. The polytheistic ideologies has dominated the Shariah to the extent that vice and immorality are no longer considered acts of abhorrence in the eye of Allah, Subhanahu waTaála. These are the causes of the Ummah's fall and humiliation. The yoke of non believers' domination and punishment at the hands of western tyrants have been imposed on this rebellious Ummah by Allah, Subhanahu waTaála. This is the inescapable reality. Infact, it is an eternal Divine Decree beyond the human ability to contain.

Before one may look for a solution or way out to any problem, the root causes have to be known first and analyzed. Failure to detecting the root of any problem or correcting it with a wrong measure may render the problem in turmoil and the treatment will only aggravate the problem. The situation will therefore worsen while the future will be oblique. Hence it will sound logic and necessary to look closely at the root cause of the problem that brought the sad state of affairs.

As for the degeneration that have engulfed the present Muslim today, several measures have been adopted for arresting the rot, but unfortunately all efforts so far have only brought further frustration. Instead of improvement, despair and confusion has resulted, particularly so in the ranks of learned preachers and Ulama. The basic truth of all this is

that the root cause of the real disease has not been diagnosed.

When the Ulama truckle in subservience to the methods and ways fabricated by modernists, the so called intelligentsias, they make a mockery of themselves. In addition they heap insult on the Islamic Jurisprudence and revelation knowledge which are totally independent and different from other views. Rasulullah, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, and the preceding Prophets in general, presented a totally different view and solution in stark relief.

The Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah (ahadeeth) are replete with the solution. There is no ambiguity in the cause of the Ummah's humiliation and for the calamities and hardships which are descending on the Ummah constantly and incrementally. It is nothing but the punishment of Allah, Subhanahu waTaála. The cause is known and so is the remedy. The cause, as stated by the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, is the treachery and treason which the Ummah commits against Allah, Subhanahu waTaála. While committing such grievous sins, the Ummah is oblivious of the harm it inflicts on itself, until the reality of the Doomsday awakens it. The remedy or solution is nothing but *inaabatun ilallah*. This philosophy is expounded in the Holy Qur'an

My Lord do help me, and do not help anyone against me. Grant me victory, and do not grant victory over me. Plan on my behalf, and do not plan against me. Guide me, and make right guidance easy for me. Grant me victory over those who act wrongfully towards me. My Lord, make me remember You, grateful to Thee, mindful of Thee, full of fear towards Thee, devoted to Thy obedience, humble before Thee, devoted to You. My Lord, accept my repentance, wash away my sin, answer my supplication, clearly establish my evidence, make true my tongue, guide my heart and draw out malice in my heart.

and the Ahadeeth with such striking clarity and simplicity, that to elaborate is superfluous.

The measure adopted today by Muslim masses of street demonstrations, raucously howling epithets against most barbaric devils of our times, fulminating with curses and chanting "*Allahu Akbar*" slogans until our throats swell will not make any difference if our relation with the Sovereign Power (Allah, Subhanahu waTaála,) is at stake. Where there is no vestige of Islam or feeling of penitence for sins committed, the slogans remain hollow and the demonstrations mere walks while groping their way along dark tunnels stumbling at every step taken by the masses.

Having seen the bankruptcy of the too many street demonstrations and hollow slogans by the Muslims of today's, attributed by the blind adoration of the western cult and total emulation of kuffar ways of life, we have no choice but to turn back to Allah, Subhanahu waTaála, in earnest for the salvation of us all.

It has been reported by Abdullah bin Abbaas, radhiyallahu anhumaa, that Rasoolullah, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, used to say in his supplication,

"رَبِّ أَعْنِي وَلَا تُعِنِّ عَلَيَّ وَلَا تَنْصُرْ عَلَيَّ وَ
أَمْكُرْ لِي وَلَا تَمْكُرْ عَلَيَّ وَ اهْدِنِي وَيَسِّرْ الْهُدَى لِي وَ
انصُرْنِي عَلَى مَنْ بَغَى عَلَيَّ اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي لَكَ ذَكَارًا
لَكَ شَكَارًا لَكَ رَهَابًا لَكَ مَطْوَعًا لَكَ مُطِيعًا إِلَيْكَ
مُخَبِّطًا إِلَيْكَ أَوْهَا مُنِيًّا رَبِّ تَقَبَّلْ تَوْبَتِي وَ اغْسِلْ
حَوْبَتِي وَ أَجِبْ دَعْوَتِي وَ ثَبِّتْ حُجَّتِي وَ سَدِّدْ
لِسَابِي وَ اهْدِ قَلْبِي وَ اسأَلْ سَخِيمَةَ صَدْرِي." (ابن

ماجه)

For the Kiswahili readers, usome

AL MA'ARIF

linalotoka kutoka kituo cha

MAJLISUL MA'ARIFIL ISLAMIYYAH

USOME UELIMIKE UONGOKE

The sudden demise of Sheikh Maulana Sirajur Rahman Nadwi al-Qadhi

Abu Sa'd Muhammad Mu'adh an-Nadwi

On Sunday, 6th December, 2009 (19th Dhul Hijjah, 1430), the world lost yet another Aalim, who played a vital role in enhancing Islamic education and projects, especially in Kenya. Sheikh Sirajur Rahman died of cardiac failure in the morning of the said date, while undergoing treatment at the Farooq Hospital in Mombasa, Kenya. *إنا لله و إنا إليه راجعون*. The sudden death shocked the Muslims of East Africa, and this was attested by the huge number of Muslims ever witnessed in a funeral in the city, who jammed the Memon Villa masjid and its environs to grace the opportunity to participate in the *salatul janaza* for the Sheikh the next day, which was led by the Sheikh's old colleague and friend, Sheikh Abdul Khaliq Tariq, who is based in Uganda. Sheikh Sirajur Rahman leaves behind a widow, two sons and five daughters.

A Short Biography Of The Late Sheikh

His birth and education

Sheikh Sirajur Rahman was born in a village known as Depalpur near the city of Indor in the central province of India, in the year 1941. After completing his primary education in a government school, he joined the reputable and well known Islamic educational establishment, Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulamaa in Luckhnow, India, in 1956, and graduated in 1961. To further up his studies, in 1962 the Sheikh enrolled in the internationally renown Islamic University, Jamia Islamiyyah in Madinatul Munawwarah, Saudi Arabia, and graduated in 1965 with a Bachelor's degree from the faculty of Shari'ah, among the first batch ever to graduate from the said faculty. (In the year 1979, he was awarded a Master's degree in the field of Hadith from Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulamaa, Luckhnow, India.) On his graduation, he was employed by Darul Ifta, under the Ministry for Islamic Affairs, Saudi Arabia, and was posted to Uganda to work in the field of Da'wah and Islamic guidance, where he worked until the fall of Idi Amin Dada's regime, after

which he was transferred to Mombasa, Kenya.

His activities in Uganda and Mombasa

In Kampala, Sheikh Sirajur Rahman was entrusted with the running of the Bilal Islamic School, a position he held for eight years, until the fall of Amin's rule, after which he moved to Mombasa. Here the Sheikh worked for numerous Islamic Institutions under different capacities, and later on, in the year 1983, he was appointed the Principal of the Islamic Institute in Kisauni, Mombasa, which is run by the Islamic Foundation, the position he held until his death.

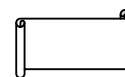
The Sheikh worked hard and tirelessly, and raised the status of the institution from the secondary level to that of a reputable higher faculty for Islamic studies, the '*Kulliyatul Diraasaatil Islamiyyah*' – the *kernel or fruit* of Jamia Islamiyyah in Mombasa.

He was also one of the founding members of Majlisul Ma'arifil Islamiyyah Society, which was established in 1985, and was the society's chairman from 1986 upto 2008, and was also the supervisor of the society's educational

institution and its main streams; 1-Dar 'Uaiy bin Ka'b, for Tahfeedhul-Qur'an, 2 – Ma'had Islamiy, for higher Islamic studies, 3 – Darul Arqam, for training new reverts to Islam, and 4 – Dar 'Urwah bin Mas'ood, for technical studies.

He set up the Darul Hannan institute for orphans on the Mkwiru Island, Shimoni, south of Mombasa, and established Markaz Ummul Mu'mineen 'Aishah for girls, Gorofani, north of Mombasa, in 2002, and was its chairman until his death. He also set up a welfare charity, the Jam'iyatul Farooq. Mombasa, Al-Farooq Centre [renamed as Sheikh Sirajur Rahman Nadwi Memorial Centre], Vipingo, Mombasa North, is among its projects.

A very notable and substantial accomplishment of the Sheikh is the building of 159 fully furnished masaajids, with water wells and setup therein maktabas, and in some, madrasas for tahfeedhul Qur'an along with Da'wah activities and propagation of Islamic education undertaken by his students.



His writings

Sheikh Sirajur Rahman, rahimahullahu Ta'ala, through his busy schedule, wrote two books, both in the Arabic language:

1. *Al-Mustafa* – a summarized biography of Rasoolullah, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, in 259 pages, and
2. *Al-Khulafaa-ur-Raashideen* – about the Righteous Caliphas after Rasoolullah, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, in 192 pages. Both the works have been acclaimed by renown Scholars and are part of the secondary level curriculum in most madrasas of East Africa.

He supervised the writings on different subjects undertaken by teachers in various educational establishments, among them:

1. *Assahaabiyaat* – written by female students of Markaz Ummul Mu'mineen 'Aishah, Gorofani.
2. *Uislam*, written by teachers at Majlisul Ma'arifil Islamiyyah, Amkeni.
3. He supervised the publishing and printing of the Kiswahili translation

of a summarized version of *Riyadus Saaliheen*.

4. He inaugurated and supervised the Al Ma'arif (in Kiswahili) and the Al Majlis (in English) magazines under the umbrella of Majlisul Ma'arifil Islamiyyah.
5. In his final years, he set up a committee of distinguished Scholars to overhaul the whole curriculum and syllabus of present-day madrasas and make the necessary changes and amendments.

His general conduct

Sheikh Sirajur Rahman, rahimahullahu Ta'ala, was a distinguished person among his colleagues, as he grew up being pious and religious and many bear witness to it, never missing his prayers, and most of the time he was in the state of ritual purity (with wudhu), very mindful of performing prayers with congregation, even though he would be on the top floors of high buildings, he would descend down for every congregational prayer. He had set for himself a day-to-day schedule and strictly adhered to it, not wasting any time.

He was respectful and dutiful to his parents as well as to his teachers, and would always mention them with respect and supplicate to Allah Ta'ala for their forgiveness and elevation in Aakhirah. Whenever he used to mention a deceased family member, he used to supplicate for him or her.

The Sheikh would not let go any opportunity to advise a gathering and he practically followed what he emphasized. He was humble and forgave who wronged him and even then, would always give due respect to them. He was kind natured and loving, and amused the little ones. He was ever mindful of the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala, and would at times supplicate aloud to remind others. One would always benefit in his company.

He has left a vacuum difficult to fill. May Allah, Subhanahu waTa'ala, forgive him, shower upon him His Blessings, accept his efforts, reward him immensely, elevate his status in Aakhirah and admit him in the lofty ranks of Jannatul Firdaus, aameen.

اللهم لا تحرمنا أجره و لا تفتنا بعده و اغفر لنا و له، يا رب العالمين

Just a touch

From  Haadi' of S. Africa

A touch on a trigger of a loaded machine gun can cause death. Likewise touching what Allah Ta'ala has forbidden can cause destruction in this world and Hereafter. Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said: "It is better that a steel nail be driven into your head than for you to touch a woman who is not permissible for you (Baihaqi)." Subhanallah! A steel nail in one's head!!! This hadith most eloquently highlights the extreme danger of touching a non-mahram (one with whom nikah is permissible). Just as a steel nail in one's head can cause death, illegitimate touches to a woman who is not legitimate for him will have a burning coal placed in his hand on the Day of Judgment.

The sheer abhorrence and revulsion that Rasullullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) wished to instill in the heart of every Believer for the act of touching a non-mahram is expressed in another Hadith, wherein he is reported to have said: "It is better for one of you to collide with a pig covered completely in mud than to rub your shoulder against the shoulder of a woman who is not permissible for you (in a crowd or elsewhere)." (Tabrani)

Cont'd on..... Pg27

The miraculous birth of Nabi (sallallahu alaihi wasallam)

By the courtesy of Madrasah Tarbiyatul Banaat, South Africa

1483 years ago on a Monday, the 12th Rabiul-Awwal in the year 571 AD at the time of true dawn, the sleeping beauty of humanity awoke, the mercy of the worlds, the saviour of humanity was born. Allah, Jalla Jalaaluhu, commanded all the angles to present themselves so as to witness this momentous and blessed occasion. They descended to the earth passing on the good news to one another. The mountains of the world stretched their peaks, the ocean swelled in excitement, the fish swam from one sea to the other to inform of the good news! All creatures, the worms, insects, and ants deep in ground were also aware of this event. Shaytaan was chained into chains and cast headlong into the depth of the green sea. All the other Shaytaan were chained. On that day the sun was bathed in an extraordinary splendour light. 70,000 hoors were placed in the air awaiting the birth. Allah, Jalla Jalaaluhu, ordered all the women who were pregnant that year to give birth to boys only to honour our Nabi, sallallahu alaihi wasallam. Every tree bore fruit when he, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, was born. The world was enveloped in noor (light) pillars of sapphires, and rubies were set up in the skies, which Nabi, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, saw on the night of Mi'raaj. He was told that Allah, Jalla Jalaaluhu, had created those pillars to welcome him into the world. Allah, Jalla Jalaaluhu, made 70,000 trees of sweet smelling musk to grow on the banks of Kawthar; its leaves became incense for the dwellers of

Jannah. All this to herald the coming of Muhammad Ahmad Mahmood Mustafa Mujtaba sallallahu alaihi wasallam.

He remained in Amina's womb for full 9 months and Amina related that she didn't experience any pain or discomfort or illness that normally afflicts pregnant women. His father passed away when he was not yet born, so angels said, "O our Sustainer! Our Master! Your Nabi, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, has become an orphan." Allah, Jalla Jalaaluhu, replied, "I will be his friend and protector and helper".

At the time of the birth of Nabi, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, Amina said, "When he came out of my stomach, the roof of the house split and a cloud appeared which covered the child. A voice was heard, "Travel with Muhammad to the east and to the west and upon the birthplaces of the Prophets and present him to all the souls from the jinn, humans, birds and animals and grant him the purity of Hadhrat Adam, alaihis salaam, the softness of Hadhrat Nuh, alaihis salaam, the qualities of Hadhrat Ibrahim, alaihis salaam, the language of Hadhrat Ismail, alaihis salaam, the glad tidings of Hadhrat Ya'qoob, alaihis salaam, the pleasure of Hadhrat Ishaq, alaihis salaam, the beauty of Hadhrat Yusuf, alaihis salaam, the eloquence of Hadhrat Saleh, alaihis salaam, the wisdom of Hadhrat Lut, alaihis salaam, the chastity of Hadhrat Yahya, alaihis salaam, the voice of Hadhrat Daud, alaihis salaam, the patience of Hadhrat Ayyub, alaihis salaam,

the obedience of Hadhrat Yunus, alaihis salaam, the honour of Hadhrat Isaa, alaihis salaam, and the character of all the Ambiyaa, alayhimus salaatu wassalaam, put together.

The cloud disappeared. I looked at the child; he was shining like the 14th moon and smelling like musk. Suddenly there was a group of three people around me. In the hand of the first was a cup of gold, the second one had a basin of green emerald, and the third had a white silk cloth which he spread out. Then he took out a seal, he washed it in the basin 7 times and placed the seal between Nabi, sallallahu alaihi wasallam's shoulders".

What was more miraculous was that our beloved Nabi, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, was born pure with no dirt, no blood, and no smell. There was not a single mark or blemish on his Mubarak body. His umbilical cord was already cut. Moreover he was born circumcised and as soon as he came out of his mother, he placed his two hands on the ground in the sajda position. At that time, the 14 pillars from the palace of white marble of the king of Iran collapsed and the fire which was burning for 1000 years which the people were worshiping and they used to see to that it always remains lit, burnt out. Crowns fell off the heads of the kings sitting in their courts, strange occurrences were taking place all over the world. And a sound was heard, "THE ONE FULL OF BARAKAT HAS COME". Fatimah bint Abdullah,

an Arab woman in Makkah said, "At the time of the birth of Nabi, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, I was in the Haram. I saw that the star had come so close to the earth that I felt they would fall down on me, it appeared to be making sajda to Nabi, sallallahu alaihi wasallam" The midwife of Amina was the mother of Abdur Rahman bin Auf whose name was Shifa. The father's name was Abdullah and

the wet nurse, Halima. Look at the selection of names Allah had chosen for the people surrounding his birth! His conception was from Abdullah (servant of Allah) for he came to teach the people to be servants of Allah, Jalla Jalaaluhu, he grew up in the womb of Amina (peace), to bring peace to the whole world, and this delivery was in the hands of Shifa (cure) for he came as a cure for

humanity, and to remedy all spiritual illnesses and he drank from the breast of Halima (good character) for he came to the world as epitome of best character. There are no words to glorify him except:

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Ref: *Khasais Kubra*

Islam and traffic

(Mufti Taqi Saheb – AL BALAAH - Vol. 40 No. 1) (Translated into English)

It is a long time back when I visited South Africa for the first time. And this was my first journey to a developed modern country. Now the country has become free from racism in a peaceful manner and the apartheid system among races is now a thing of the past. My visit was in the days when the country was governed by the whites of the Dutch descendants and the laws of apartheid were in full force, so only the whites had the right to live in the big cities. People of other races had been allocated to separate areas away from the big cities. Azaadville, which was 30 miles from Johannesburg, was one of the such habitats allocated solely for the descendants of the sub Indian continent. As our host lived in this area, so was our stay also.

The township of Azaadville was situated on a large open area consisting mainly of residential structures. It is quite obvious that when residential plots are constructed with proper planning on a vast area, the openness is easily felt. The same case was here also. The town looked very beautiful with buildings spread out with wide open areas inbetween, peaceful

and very clean. Here every individual had his/her own car, but there was no question of traffic jams on the streets. People walking on the streets were scarce. Only one or two pedestrians could be seen and those also on the footpaths only. Otherwise the streets were empty and silent.

But on these silent streets, at every corner were black lines drawn and else where, these lines were also drawn on specific points where there were no corners. While riding on a car, I noticed that whenever the driver reached these black lines, he used to stop; look left and right, then proceed forward. I was really amazed. The streets on their stretch were empty. Hardly a pedestrian could be seen, but the person driving the car, even though he was driving fast, or busy in a conversation, whenever approached such lines, he would certainly stop, and automatically his head would turn left and right before proceeding ahead, as if it was controlled by some remote device. First I thought that the driver in the course of the driving has sensed something, but when this occurred every now and then, I asked the

people the reason behind it. They said that it is a rule in their country that at every corner, and wherever this line is drawn, every driver has to stop, look right and left, then proceed. So now, by adhering to this rule, they have been so accustomed to it, that whenever they approached any corner or wherever these lines have been drawn, their foot would automatically goes on the brake pedal and once the car stops, automatically the head turns right and left. After that, in all the remaining days I stayed there, everyday I saw this pattern a number of times and I didn't see any driver violating this rule. Everyday I had to travel from my place of residence to the main road. And all the time I saw that the driver, before reaching the main road, stopped several times on the empty streets, although, in my whole stay over there, I did not find any traffic police on those streets enforcing the people to follow the rule, nor where there any speed breakers (or rather, car-breakers) as found in our country.

This I saw for the first time in South Africa, and it seemed strange after eyes being

accustomed of seeing the Pakistani unrestricted and unbridled traffic. What I saw in South Africa, I also saw it in many developed countries of the east and west to the extent that the eyes have also got used to it. But when you see the situation of the traffic in our country, not only it is the same (as before), but it seems to be heading in the opposite direction. No need to go in the details, as it is in front of everybody.

The reason behind this situation being, that together with the slackness of the government authorities and lack of proper education and training, a major reason is that we have regarded these everyday happenings as to have no attachment to religion. And we have made ourselves understood that religion and Islam is connected to only masajids and madrasas. Worldly trade, activities and all such related affairs are (May Allah forbid) outside the grasp hold of religion. So what connection is there with religion and traffic rules? The outcome of this wrong thinking is that, while breaking the traffic rules, one fails to understand that he in fact is committing a sin. Rather, breaking a traffic rule has now become a sign of being brave. The more one breaks the rules, the more he thinks himself to be brave and daring. And it is the result of this wrong belief, that also the respectable religious people, who adhere strictly to salah and saum (prayers and fasting), and pay particular attention to halal and haram, permissible and non permissible issues, boldly break traffic rules, and while doing this, feel no weight on their hearts, nor see it as a wrong doing or sin! Thus, stopping the

car in a wrong place, over speeding, driving in an opposite direction, not obeying the traffic light signals, competing with other cars in a non-overtaking zone, all this has become the order of the day, although all these actions, not only are they against traffic rules, but also, on religious grounds, **are sinful acts**:

First of all, these traffic rules have been made for the benefit of all human beings. And all those laws devised by the government for the benefit of all, **to abide by them is compulsory in the view of the Islamic Shariah also**. And to go against them is forbidden. The Holy Qur'an says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَ
أُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ (النساء : 59)

“Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.” (4:59)

Here, ‘obedience’ means that all those rules devised by the rulers for the general benefit (on the condition that these rules are not contrary to Islamic Shariah), then these rules should be adhered to. Here the command to obey those in charge (regarding all such rules as mentioned above), has been given together with the command to obey Allah Ta’ala and His beloved Rasool, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, which means that to obey such rules also becomes compulsory according to the Islamic Shariah.

Secondly, when any person takes a license to drive a car on the streets, he has in fact given an assurance- verbally, written, or at least practically, that in the course of driving a car on the streets, he/she will follow all the laid down rules and

regulations (related to driving). If, at the time of applying for a license, he/she says to the relevant authorities that he/she would not be able to follow the traffic rules and regulations, certainly he/she would never be given a license. So the license has been given to him/her on the condition that he/she will follow all the rules and regulations related to traffic. Thus, now if he/she violates the traffic rules, he/she has in fact committed a sin of breaking a promise.

Thirdly, by breaking the traffic laws, generally, someone will certainly get inconveniences, frustrations or difficulty. At times it is the cause of an accident, and some innocent person loses his/her life, or is inflicted with a physical injury, or at least it causes psychological harm or distress. And I have mentioned a number of times, that to cause trouble to someone unnecessarily is such a heinous sin that cannot be forgiven by repenting only, until and unless the afflicted person forgives.

It has been mentioned in all the books of Islamic Jurisprudence, that to walk or move a vehicle on a public path is only permissible for a person if he can give the guarantee of the safety of the other users. Meaning, he abstains from all that which he can cause any harm or difficulty to others. Without this condition, this person is not allowed to use the street, which belongs equally to all the habitants. And if any material or physical damage or loss is incurred to anyone due to the negligence of someone using the street, the whole responsibility and costs of all damage incurred will be levied,

according to the Islamic Shariah, on the person who used the street recklessly.

Now just ponder, if a person disobeys the traffic lights, and drives his car without stopping, or overtakes a car in front where it is not allowed to do so, apparently it seems to be a small irregularity, but in reality, this small action of his has led him to commit **four major sins**:-

1. Breaking a rule and going against an order of a ruler, an order which does not conflict with the Islamic Laws,
2. Going against a covenant and a promise,
3. Causing trouble, difficulty, frustration and problem to others and
4. Using the street or path in an unlawful manner.

Day and night we are committing these sins freely without any pains or difficulty, and without it even occurring to us that we are actually committing a sin.

And sometimes the irregularity of one person blocks the way for many people. For example, for some reason there is a traffic jam in one direction, some hasty people, instead of taking the trouble of waiting a bit, move forward on the side of the road reserved for the on-coming traffic, hence blocking the way for the on-coming cars, causing a traffic jam for hours. Not a single car comes or goes. In fact such types of irregularities come under the definition of 'fasaadun fil ardh' (corruption in the land). And the sin of inducing pain and difficulty to so many people is on this person who drove his car on the wrong direction bringing the people face to face.

Our noble religion has shown has shown us all this and has given us detailed guidance regarding all these matters, and has given us such teachings which are most suited, compatible and 'evergreen' for all ages. But instead of understanding, learning and

practicing these teachings, we have restricted religion to the four walls of masajids and madrassas. Other nations and people, by practicing on these principles, have at least put their outward system and arrangements in order. But we, by disregarding these teachings are spoiling our 'Aakhirah', and have put our worldly life also in difficulty and confusion. And due to our wrong deeds, we have also tarnished the beautiful name of Islam. But the solution to these problems is not only in having distant discussions. The matter will only be rectified if every person in his capacity, awakens his inner conscious, and regardless of other person's actions, at least he himself tries to abstain from sins and starts practicing on these golden Islamic Principles. Change always comes through individual personal effort. And this, slowly by slowly, shapes up as the natural disposition of a nation.



A conversation with Rasul Allah, sallallahu alaihi wasallam

Ahmad, son of Anas bin Malik narrated that Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, said "I once entered the mosque and I saw God's Messenger, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, upon whom be peace, sitting there by himself, and I went and sat next to him. God's Messenger, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, turned to me

[Extracted from: 'The Beauty of the Righteous', by Imam Abu Na'im al-Asfahani] and said, 'O Abu Tharr, one must pay respect to a mosque when he enters it, and the greeting of a mosque is done by offering therein two *rak'ats* of prayers. I immediately stood to the side and offered two *rak'ats* of prayers. When I returned and sat to his side, I asked him. 'O Messenger of Allah, you ordered me to pray, what is prayer?' He said, 'Prayers are preordained blessing whether one offers them extensively or scarcely. I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, what is the best of deeds?'

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He replied, "To believe in Almighty Allah and to strive on

I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, whose Islam (submission to God's will) is most right among the believers?' He replied, 'The submission of a man the people are safe from the inequity of his hand and tongue. I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, what is the best form of offering prayers?' He said. "To prolong one's standing in imploring and supplications (Arb. *qunut*) before God Almighty during *Salat*.' I asked, "O Messenger of Allah, what is fasting?' He replied, 'Fasting is an obligatory pillar which is most rewarding by itself, and Allah will multiply its reward in the hereafter many folds, I asked, "O Messenger of Allah, what is the best of Jihad, striving on God's path?' He replied, 'To sacrifice one's horse, and to be willing to shed one's blood in the battlefield to defend Allah's Words. I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, what is best charity?' He replied, 'To have meager means, and yet offer them to the needy. I asked, "O Messenger of Allah, which is the most glorious verse of Qur'an that Almighty Allah, revealed to you?' He said, 'The verse of the Divine Seat (*Ayat-ul Kursi - Qur'an 2:255*).' 'God's Messenger, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, upon whom be peace, further added, 'O Abu Tharr, the entire seven firmaments together with the Divine Seat (*Kursi*) are not greater in size than a tiny small ring which is cast in the floor of a vast endless desert, and superiority of the divine all-pervading, glorious, omnipotent, and all-encompassing Divine Throne (*'Arsh*), is similar to the superiority of the vastness of

His path.' I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, whose faith is most accomplished among the such a desert in size over that of the small tiny ring.'

Abu Tharr, *radhiyallahu anhu*, continued: "I further asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, how many Prophets are there?' He replied, 'One hundred and twenty four thousand Prophets.' I asked, 'How many Messengers are there?' He replied, 'A large crowd of three hundred and thirteen Messengers.' (Abu Tharr, *radhiyallahu anhu*, commented:) I said, 'Certainly, the more blessing there are, the better it is,' (and he further said), I asked again, 'O Messenger of Allah, who was the first Messenger of God Almighty?' God's Messenger of Allah, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, replied, Adam was the first Messenger.' I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, was Adam a sent Prophet?' He replied, 'Yes, indeed. Allah created him with His own Hand, and He blew a Breath from His own Soul into him. He placed him before Him, face to face, and He fashioned his form to perfection.'

Imam Ahmed, son of Anas bin Malik, added in his narration of the above Prophetic tradition that God's Messenger, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, also said: "And He spoke to him face to face." God's Messenger, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, upon whom be peace, then added, 'O Abu Tharr, there are four Messengers of Assyriac culture, and these are Adam, Seth, Enoch and Idris, who was the first to write with a pen, - and then came four Messengers of Arab culture, and these are Hud, Salih, Shu'aib, and your Prophet.' Abu Tharr,

believers?' He replied, 'The best in character and conduct.'

radhiyallahu anhu, added, 'I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, how many Books did Almighty Allah reveal?' God's Messenger, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, replied, 'One hundred and four Books. Fifty scrolls (*Arb.suhuf*) were revealed to Seth, then Enoch received thirty scrolls, Abraham received ten scrolls, and prior to the revelation of the Torah, Moses received ten scrolls, and after that, Almighty Allah revealed the Torah, the Injeel, the Zabour (the Psalms), and finally, He revealed the Qur'an.'

Abu Tharr, *radhiyallahu anhu*, continued: "I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, what did the scriptures of Abraham deal with, and what were they like?' God's Messenger, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, replied, 'They mostly contained parables and admonitions, such as when Almighty Allah addressed a king, saying, 'O tyrant king whom I have placed on his throne, and who is self-deceived and arrogant. I did not create you to amass the world, nor to bring it together. I have ordained you and sent you with a mission to answer the call of the beleaguered and the oppressed, and to be just towards him, on My behalf, for I am God, I do answer the call of the oppressed, and I hasten to his help when he calls upon Me, and that is even if he had previously denied Me.'

God's Messenger, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, upon whom be peace, continued: "Different scriptures offered parables and wisdom, such as, 'Unless a wise person is faced with barring circumstances, he should

balance his time. He should dedicate one hour to pondering his Lord, one hour to reckoning himself one hour to contemplate the work and creation of God Almighty, and one hour to satisfy his personal needs of food and drink. A wise person must not allow himself to be distracted from his primal objectives, except for three reasons: 1) To gather the needed provision for a journey, 2) To go to work and earn his livelihood, and 3) To solicit personal pleasure solely in what is made permissible. A wise person must recognize the era in which he lives, he must be vigilant of his surroundings, he must mind his own business, and he must guard his tongue. Hence, should one reckon his words as part of his deeds, he would speak little, except in reference to his personal needs."

Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, continued: "I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, then what did the other scrolls which Moses received speak of?' He replied, 'They were admonitions as well, such as, 'It makes Me wonder to see someone who recognizes death, and yet finds a way to rejoice! It makes Me wonder to see someone who acknowledges the existence of hell-fire, and yet, finds a way to laugh! It makes Me wonder to see someone who recognizes fate, and yet, attempts to defy! It makes Me wonder to see someone who witnesses how the world treats its children and turns them upside down, and yet, feels comfortable to relax therein! It makes Me wonder to see someone who claims to believe in the Day of

Reckoning, and yet, he does nothing towards it!"

Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, then asked: "O Messenger of Allah, advise me." He, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied: "I advise you to uphold piety towards God Almighty and make that your main focus." Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, added: "O Messenger of Allah, advise me more!" He, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied: "Read the Qur'an regularly, for it is your light on earth, and it promotes your name in the heavens" Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, further asked: "O Messenger of Allah, tell me more." He, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied: "Beware of laughing excessively, for excessive laughter kills the heart and darkens the face"

Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, asked again: "Tell me more, O Messenger of Allah, tell me more." He, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied: "Refrain from unnecessary talking, except when it fosters common benefit. This will protect you against satanic assaults, and it will rightly guide your religious endeavors." Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, said: "Tell me more, O Messenger of Allah." He, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied "Striving on God's path is the monasticism of my followers." Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, further said: "Tell me more, O Messenger of Allah." He, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied: "Always look at those who are less privileged than you, and do not look at those who are more privileged than you, for this will protect you against belittling

and despising God's favor upon you." Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, asked, "Tell me more, O Messenger of Allah. He, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied, "Keep in touch with your relatives even if they cut off their ties with you." Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, asked again: "Tell me more, O Messenger of Allah." He, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied: "Fear no blame or censure by others when it comes to the truth of Almighty Allah."

Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, kept on asking: "Tells me more, O Messenger of Allah." He, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied: "Speak the truth even when it is bitter." Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, further inquired, and God's Messenger, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, replied: "Knowing your own faults should prevent you from looking at others' faults. Do not criticize others for faults you still commit. In fact, it is most shameful, and it is a defect in his character for a man to know about others' faults more than he should know about his own, or to admonish them and not heed his own admonition."

Abu Tharr, radhiyallahu anhu, continued: "God's Messenger, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, upon whom be peace, then placed the palm of his hand over my chest and said, "O Abu Tharr, know that there is no wisdom better than the proper management of one's life, there is no piety better than abstaining from wrongdoing, and there is no lineage better than having good character and conduct."

Scientific miracle in the Qur'an

The Description of the Barrier between Two Seas

[Extracted with slight variations from "SIGNS & MERICLES" by AbdulMajeed Al-Zandani

Oceanographers, in the wake of the scientific progress in this age, have discovered the barrier between two seas. They have found that a barrier separates two neighboring seas. The barrier moves between them, and it is called by scientists "a front" compared to the front between two armies. By virtue of this barrier each sea retains its own characteristics, which Allah, Subhanahu waTa'ala, has assigned to it and which are suitable for the organisms living in that environment.

Because of this barrier, the two neighboring seas mingle so slowly that the amount of water that passes from one sea to the other acquires the characteristics of the other sea while crossing the barrier which overturns the waters crossing from one sea to the other, keeping each sea with its own characteristics.

The gradual progress of human knowledge about the fact of the difference between seawater masses and the existence of barriers between them:

Oceanographers discovered that there were certain differences between water samples taken from various seas in 1284

AH/1873 AD, by the British Marine

Scientific Expedition of the Challenger Voyage. It was discovered that masses of seawater vary in their composition, in respect of salinity, water temperature, density and types of marine organisms. The data were obtained from 362 oceanographic stations. The report of the expedition filled 29,500 pages in 50 volumes and took 23 years to complete. One of the great achievements of scientific exploration, the expedition also showed how little man knew about the sea.

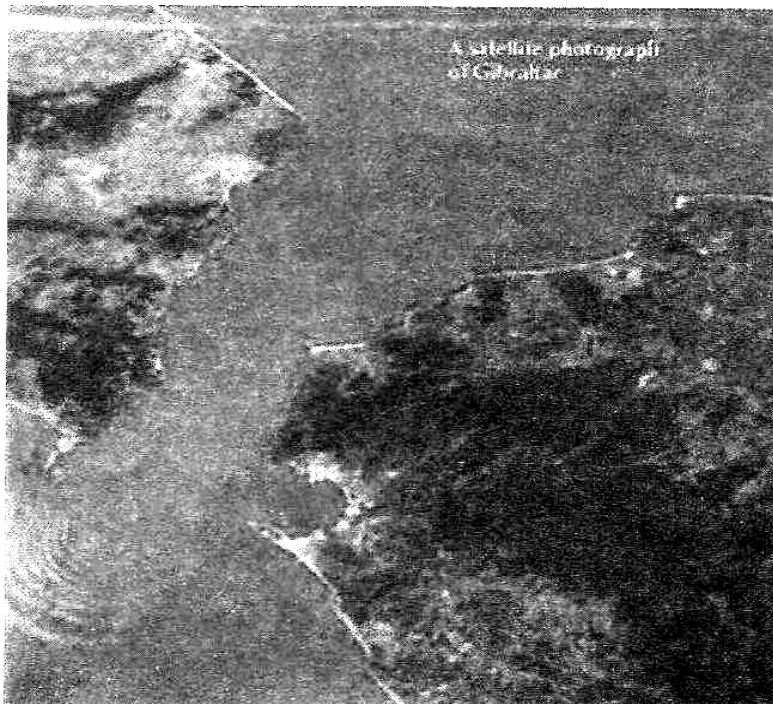
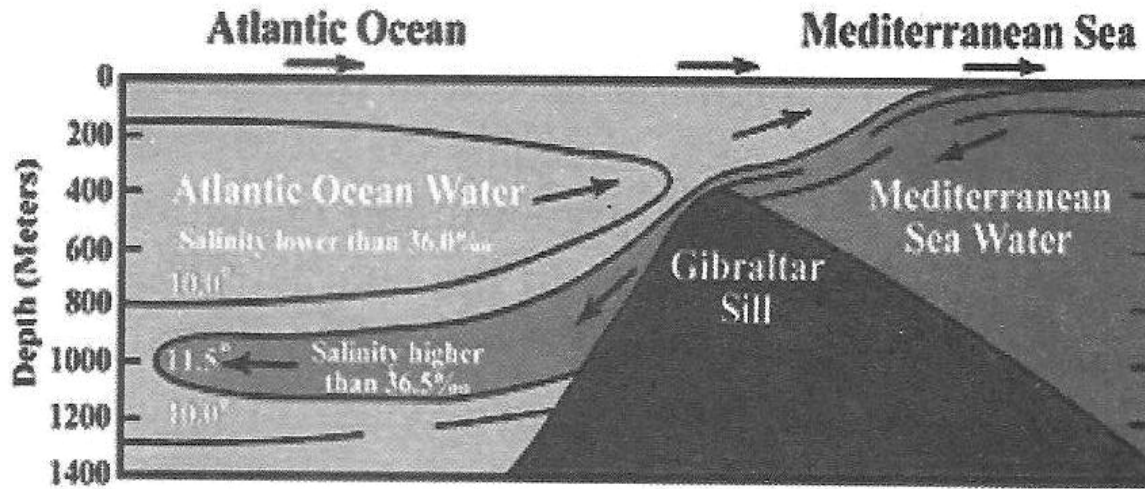
After 1933 AD another American expedition set out in the Mexican Gulf and installed hundreds of sea stations to study the characteristics of seas. It found out that a large number of stations in a certain area gave similar information about the characteristics of the water in that area, whether in respect of salinity, density, temperature, marine organisms or solubility of oxygen in water, while another group of stations in another area gave a different set of data about that area. So, oceanographers concluded that there were two distinctive seas with different characteristics, and not just limited samples as

the Expedition of Challenger showed. Man installed hundreds of marine stations to study the characteristics of various seas. Scientists have found out that the differences in these characteristics distinguished one sea from another. But why do these seas not mix and become homogeneous in spite of the effect of tide and ebb that moves sea water twice a day, and causes seas to move forward and backward turbulently, besides other factors that cause sea water to be in continuous movement and turbulence, such as surface and internal waves and sea currents?

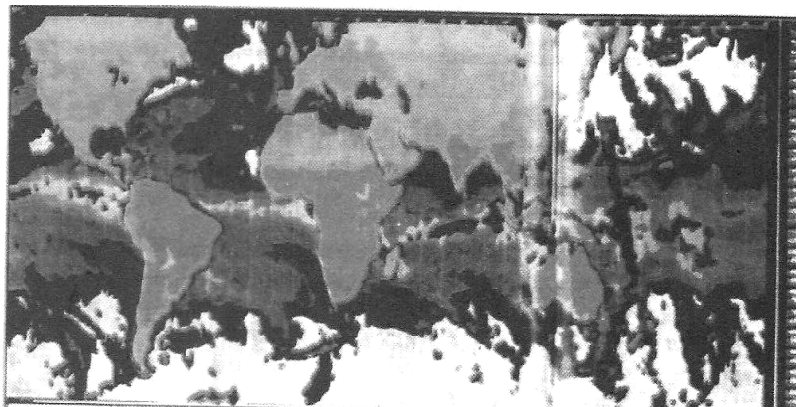
The answer appeared for the first time in scientific books in 1361 AH/1942 AD. Extensive studies of marine characteristics revealed that there are water barriers separating neighboring seas and maintaining the distinctive properties of each sea with respect to density, salinity, marine life, temperature and solubility of oxygen in water.

After 1962 AD there was known the role of sea barriers in modifying the properties of the water masses that pass from one sea to another, to prevent one sea from overwhelming the other. So salty seas retain their own properties and boundaries by virtue of these barriers.

The following figure shows the boundaries of the Mediterranean warm salt waters on entering the Atlantic Sea, the waters of which are cold and less salty.

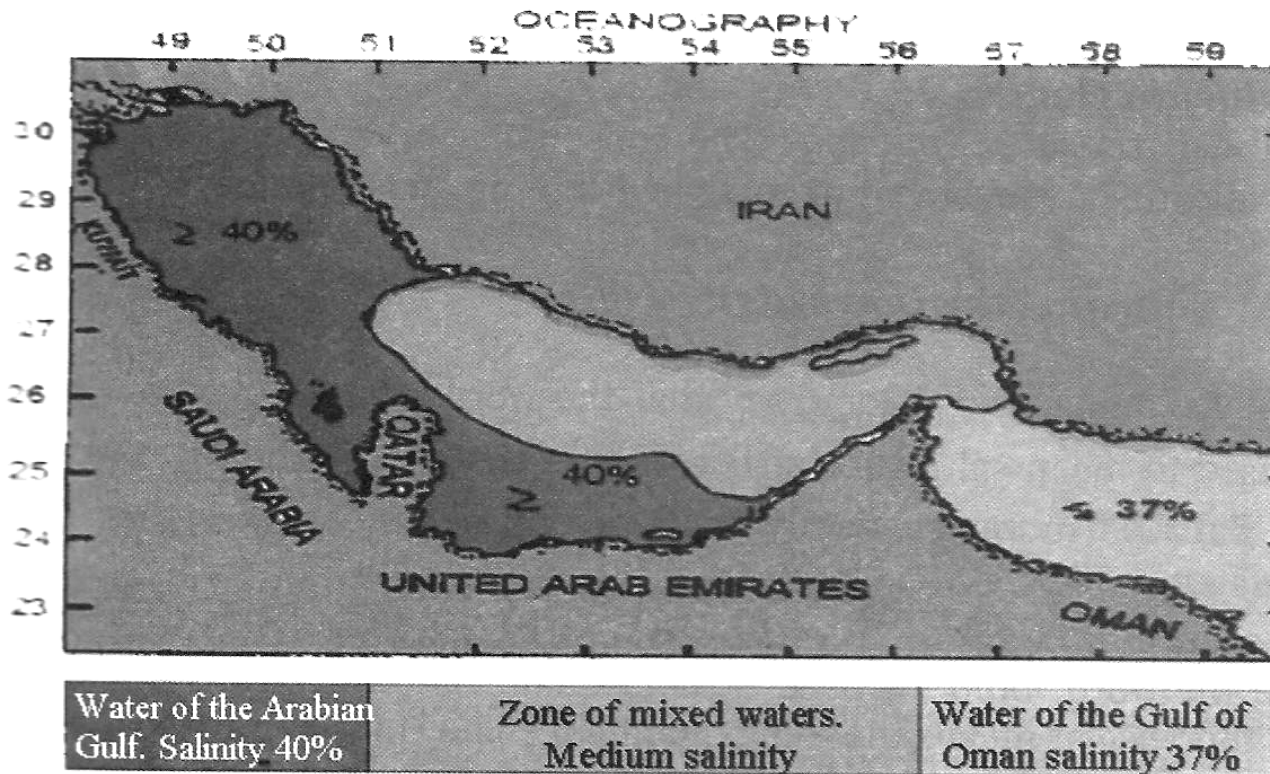


The Mediterranean sea water as it enters the Atlantic over the Gibraltar sill with its own warm, saline, and less dense characteristics, because of the barrier that distinguishes between them. Temperatures are in degree Celsius (C°).
(*Marine Geology*, Kuenene, p. 43, with a slight enhancement.)



Finally man managed to photograph these wavy moving barriers between salt seas through a special technology of thermal photography by satellites, which shows that seawaters, though appearing as one mass, are in reality different masses as reflected by different colors according to thermal differences.

A field study comparing the waters of Oman Gulf and those of the Arabian Gulf has shown the difference between them regarding their chemical properties, the prevalent vegetation and the barrier separating them.



A horizontal map of the Arabian Gulf and a vertical section showing the barrier between the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, the salinity of the three zones being different.

About a hundred years of research and study has been required to discover the fact of existence of barriers between seawater masses and their role in making each sea retain its own properties. Hundreds of researchers took part and numerous precise scientific instruments and equipment were used to achieve that

Fourteen centuries ago the Holy Qur'an revealed this fact. Allah, Subhanahu waTa'ala, Says: "He has let free (*MARAJA*) the two sees meeting together. Between them is a barrier that they do not transgress. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (Jinn and men) deny? Out of them both come out pearls and coral." (LV: 19-22). Allah, Subhanahu

waTa'ala, also Says: "And He made a barrier between the two seas."

Linguistic meanings and the commentators' sayings:

Maraja (let free):

Ibn Faris said: "*MARAJA*": The consonants m, r and j form a root indicating a movement of going and coming and turbulence."

Al-Bahrain (the two seas):

Al- Asfahani said: "Some say that the word "*bahr*" (sea) is usually used to mean salt water rather than fresh water." Ibn Manzur said "*Bahr*" is more frequently used to describe salt water than fresh water."

If the word "*bahr*" is used without qualification it means salt water otherwise, it means the thing

qualified." The Holy Qur'an uses "*nahr*" (river) to indicate abundant running fresh water, while it uses "*bahr*" (sea) to indicate salt water. Allah, Subhanahu waTa'ala, Says: "And He has made the ships to be of service to you that they may sail through the sea by His Command; and He has made rivers (also) to be of service to you." (XIV: 32)

In the hadith, "*bahr*" (sea) is also used to mean salt water. Allah's Messenger, sallallahu alahi wasallam, was asked by a man who said: "O Allah's Messenger! We travel by sea and carry with us a little fresh water. If we should use it for wudu' (ablution) we would get thirsty. May we use seawater for wudu? Allah'

Messenger, sallallahu alahi wasallam, said: "Its water is pure and its dead (animals) are lawful (to eat)."

AL-Barzakh: It is the barrier. Most commentators suggest that it is invisible.

Al-baghi: Ibn Manzur said: "AL-Baghi" means transgression, exceeding the limits." Al-Jawhari and al-Asfahani said the same.

Al-Marjan: Ibn al-Jawzi said: Al-Qadi Abu Ya'li says that *al-Marjan* is a kind of bar-like pearls. Al-Zajaj said: "Al-Marjan is white, very white." Ibn Mas'ud said: "Al-Marjan is red beads." Abu Hayyan said that to some people *Al-Marjan* is red stone. Al-Qurtubi said: "it is said that *al-Marjan* is the big pearls. The same is also said by Ali and Ibn 'Abbas (May Allah bestow His Mercy on them both). The small pieces of *Marjan* are the small pearls. It is also reported on their authority the opposite: the big pieces are called pearls and the smaller are called *Marjan*. Al-Dahhak and Qatadah said the same."

Al-Alusi said: "If we take into consideration the connotation of brilliance and glitter which the Arabic word "pearls" carries, and the connotation of movement and mixing that the word "*Marjan*" carries, we can say that "pearls" is used for big pieces and "*Marjan*" for small ones."

Anyhow, *Marjan* is a kind of ornament that is found in various colors white and red. It may be in big or small pieces. It is bar-like stone. In the Verse it is something other than pearls, for the conjunction "and" implies talking about two different things. *Marjan* (carol), however, is found in salt sea only.

The Verse shows us the minute secrets which oceanography has revealed only recently. They describe the meeting between salt seas. Following is the evidence to that:

First: the Verse uses the word "*bahrain*" (two seas) without any qualification. This means that salt seas are intended here.

Second: The Verses in *Surat al-Rahman* show that the two seas yield pearls and "*Marjan*" (carol). It has become evident that *Marjan* is found in salt seas only. This indicates that the Verse is referring to two salt seas. Allah, Subhanahu waTa'ala, say: "Out of them both come out pearls and carol." i.e., out of each of them.

Who knew in the past that salt seas differ in many respects in spite of their apparent similarity to the observer? (They all test salt, look blue, have waves, contain fish, etc.) How can they differ although they meet each other? We know that when two amounts of water are mixed in a container, they get homogenous. How can seas remain differentiated even in the presence of the factors of mixing, such as the ebb and flow of the sea, currents and storms?

The Verse mentions the meeting of two salt seas that differ from one another. If the two seas were similar to one another, they would be one sea. However, differentiating between them in the Qur'anic utterance implies the difference between them although they are both salt.

"He has let free (*Maraja*) the two seas meeting together" means that the two seas are mixed; they are in the state of backward and forward movements, of mixing and turbulences at the site of the meeting, as is understood from the

literal meaning of "*Maraja*". This is the fact that science has discovered, that is to say, the barrier is described as being zigzag or wavy and shifting in position during the various seasons because of the tide and winds.

This Verse by itself implies the presence of so much mixing and merging between these seas as would deprive them of their distinctive properties. But Allah, Subhanahu waTa'ala, the All-Knower, Shows in the following Verse that "between them is a barrier which they do not transgress", i.e., in spite of this state of merging and turbulence that characterizes the seas, there is a barrier between them preventing them from transgressing or exceeding their limits.

This is what man has discovered as a result of advances achieved in his sciences and instruments. It has been found that a third water mass separates the two seas and it has such properties as are different from those of each of the two seas separated by it.

Yet, in spite of the presence of the barrier, the waters of the two adjacent seas mix very slowly without one sea encroaching upon the other through carrying over its own properties to it, for the barrier zone is a region for changing the water crossing from one sea to the other so that it gradually acquires the properties of the sea that is going to enter and loses the properties of the sea it has come from. Thus neither of the two seas transgresses by carrying its own properties to the other, although they mix during the process of meeting. How truthful is Allah's Saying: "He has let free (*maraja*) the seas meeting together. Between them is a barrier which they do not transgress".

Most commentators suggest that the barrier that separates the two seas referred to here is an invisible barrier created by Allah. Some commentators find it difficult to reconcile the idea of the seas being merging and the presence of a barrier at the same time, for the presence of a barrier entails the prevention of merging. So the mention of merging (*maraja*) entails the absence of a barrier. This apparent contradiction has been resolved by discovering the secrets of the seas.

The Miraculous Aspects of the Previous Verses:

We can conclude from the discussion above:

- 1) The Holy Qur'an, which was revealed more than 14 centuries ago, includes very precise pieces of information and knowledge about marine phenomena that have been discovered only recently by means of very sophisticated equipment. An instance in this respect is the existence of water barriers between seas. Allah, Subhanahu waTa'ala, Says: "He has let free (*maraja*) the two seas meeting together. Between them is a barrier which they do not transgress".
- 2) The historical development of Oceanography shows that no precise information had been available on seas before Challenger Expedition (in 1873 AD), let alone at the time when the Holy Qur'an was being revealed 14 centuries ago to an illiterate Prophet who lived in a desert environment and never travelled by sea.

- 3) Oceanography has witnessed no advances except in the last two centuries, particularly in the later half of the twentieth century. Prior to that, a sea was considered as something fearful and mysterious. Myths and superstitions were fabricated about it. Sea voyagers were only interested in their own safety and how to find the correct routes during their long journeys. Man discovered that salt seas are different only in the thirties of the twentieth century after thousands of marine stations had been established by researchers to analyze samples of sea water to measure the differences between the degrees of temperature, salinity, density and oxygen dissolubility in the sea water recorded at all those stations, and then realized that salt waters are different.
- 4) Man did not know anything about the barrier that separates salt seas till the establishment of the aforesaid stations, and after spending a long time tracing these wavy moving barriers that change their geographical locations with the change of seasons.
- 5) Man did not know that water masses of the two seas are separated by a water barrier and are mixed at the same time till he started studying with his ships and equipment, the water movement in the meeting region of the seas and analyzing the water masses in those regions.
- 6) Man did not apply this rule to all seas that meet together, except after vast scientific

surveying, investigation and verification of this phenomenon, which occurs between each pair of adjacent seas in the world.

Now then, did Allah's Messenger, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, own stations and equipment for analyzing water and the ability to trace the movement of various water masses? Did he carry out a comprehensive surveying process, although he never sailed the sea and lived at a time when superstitions were prevalent, particularly in the field of seas? Were, at the time of Allah's Messenger, sallallahu alaihi wasallam, such researches, instruments and studies available as they are for the oceanographers of today that have discovered all these secrets by means of research and study?

This knowledge which the Qur'an came with, included a precise description of the subtlest secrets at a time when humanity could have never have known them, which indicates that its source is Divine, as Allah, Subhanahu waTa'ala, Says: "Say: The (Qur'an) was sent down by Him Who Knows the secret (that is) in the heavens and the earth: Verily He is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful". (XXV:6)

It also indicates that the one to whom the Book was sent down was a Messenger inspired. Allah, Subhanahu waTa'ala, but Says the Truth in the Verse: "Soon will We show Our Signs in the Universe and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth. Is it not sufficient that your Lord does witness all things?" (LXI: 53)

A surprise from Allah

Allah sometimes surprises us with gifts. In my case one of them happened thus:

I was traveling from Hartford, CT to Los Angeles. I was traveling Northwest Airlines which has a hub in Detroit, so the plane stopped there. To my great disgust I had a middle seat. Imagine a middle seat in economy on a trans-America flight of more than 6 hours!! It was Friday and I was dressed in my usual get up of long white thobe, white turban and black mishlah (over robe).

In Hartford airport a woman came up to me and said, 'Excuse me, are you a Sultan?' I replied, 'No Madam. Not yet.'

Then we boarded the flight and off to Detroit. In Detroit the person who was in the window seat got off and a white American lady got on.

When the flight took off, I pulled out my Qur'an and started to read Sura Al Kahf which is the Sunnah to read on Friday. I could see the woman in the window seat looking at me sideways and trying to see what I was doing. After a few minutes she said to me, 'Excuse me, what are you reading?' 'I am reading the Qur'an, Madam.' 'What language is it?' 'Arabic.'

Then she bent down and pulled out her handbag from under the front seat and from it she took out a pendant and showed it to me. 'Can you read this?' It was a silver pendant on which was written 'SubhanAllah' on one side and 'Alhamdulillah' on the other. I was intrigued especially at where she could have obtained this from.

I pointed to it and said, 'This means 'Glory be to Allah' and this means 'All praise and thanks be to Allah'. 'Where did you get this?' I asked her. She smiled and told me a wonderful story which I shall narrate here as best as I can recall.

She said, 'This pendant was given to me by my grandmother. It was given to her by an Iranian friend who said to her that it would bring her luck. I had no idea what was written on it. When I saw you I thought maybe you could tell me so I showed it to you.' Then she said, 'You know, our meeting here is not accidental. I live in LA and came to Detroit for a conference. My conference ended

[From the internet]

yesterday and I was to leave for LA. I travel Delta. I am a frequent flyer on Delta. But something told me to stay back another day. I cancelled my ticket and got this ticket on Northwest Airlines. I never travel Northwest.' She showed me her cancelled ticket as proof of her statement.

She continued, 'Last evening, I was sitting alone watching TV in my hotel room wondering what I was doing in Detroit. Why had I paid for an extra night? Why had I changed my flight? All my friends and colleagues had gone. Then this morning, when I boarded this flight, I met you and you told me what this means. Now can you please read aloud what you were reading just now? I want to hear what it sounds like.'

I read Sura Al Kahf aloud. When I finished and closed the Qur'an she exclaimed, 'That was beautiful. Is it finished? I thought you would read to the end of the book.'

I had tears in my eyes. Here was a woman who did not understand a single word of what she heard of the Word of Allah. Yet she was moved enough to want to listen to more and more. I made dua and said, 'Ya Rabbi, open her heart to your message. I don't know how to present Islam to her. Please let her ask me questions.'

So she asked me, 'Can you tell me about Islam?' I said, 'Islam is the worship of our Creator and Sustainer, alone without ascribing any partners or relatives to Him because He is alone in His Power, Majesty and Glory. Because He created everything without anyone's help and sustains it without anyone's help and will end it all one day without anyone's help and to Him is our return. Islam is to accept Muhammad as the last and final messenger of Allah in a long and glorious continuum of messengers. Islam is to believe in those messengers without distinguishing between them as to who is more important and who is less. Islam is to accept them all as the messengers of Allah, who did what they were sent to do which is to invite people to the worship of Allah without ascribing partners or shareholders. We Muslims believe in Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus (May peace be on them all) and all other messengers of Allah. We believe that

Allah sent not only these messengers but that He sent messengers to every place on the earth and to all people of all time. Some He mentioned in the Qur'an and others He did not mention. Islam is to believe in life after death and a Day of Judgment when we will be called to account for our deeds and will be assigned Heaven (Al Jannah) or Hell (Jahannam) depending on the results.'

She listened carefully and nodded her head as if in agreement. 'What do you say about Jesus?' she asked.

'We say what the Book of Allah says.' I replied. 'We say that Jesus was the son of Mary who was a virgin. That he was a sign of Allah. That Allah sent Jibraeel (Gabriel) to his mother Maryam (Mary) who was a pious virgin and announced the birth of a son. Maryam said, 'How can I have a son when no man has touched me?' Jibraeel said, 'For your Rabb (Lord) that is easy.' So Jesus was born to a virgin mother. He was a Messenger of Allah who spoke in the cradle. He was sent with many miracles; he healed the leper, gave sight to the blind and raised the dead. He did these things by the Will of Allah and not on his own. He came to bring the People of Israel back to the Law of Moses and to warn them against spreading corruption in the land. They attempted to kill him but were not successful. Allah saved him and raised him alive unto Himself. We believe that Jesus will return towards the end of time and his coming will be a sign of the approach of the Day of Judgment. He will fight the Dajjal (Antichrist) and kill him and that the Muslims will fight for and alongside Jesus. We believe that Jesus will live a normal life, marry and die and will be buried.'

She nodded in agreement and said, 'That makes a lot of sense. What do you say about Jesus dying on the cross for the sins of mankind.'

'We say that Allah is not unjust. It would be gross injustice to condemn an innocent man to a horrific death because other people committed sins. Also Allah is not bound to kill someone to forgive someone else. If Allah wants to forgive, He can forgive because He is All-Powerful. All that one needs to do is to be genuinely repentant and ask forgiveness and Allah will forgive. That's all there's to it.'

She nodded once again and said, 'I agree. God can't punish an innocent man for the sake of others? So how does one become Muslim?'

I said, 'By saying: Ash-hadu al-laa ilaha ill-Allahu wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadar Rasoolullahi (I bear witness that there's nobody worthy of worship other than Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Messenger). And by believing this in your heart. By cleansing your heart of all false beliefs including that Jesus is the son of god or that there is anyone else, man, spirit, angel or other who is worthy of worship or can help or harm in any way.'

'That's all? If I simply say this and believe it in my heart, I become Muslim?'

'That's right,' I said. 'You say this and believe it and you are a Muslim.'

'What more do I need to do?' she asked. I replied, 'Pray in the prescribed manner 5 times a day; give in charity of 2.5% of your savings annually and fast in the month of Ramadan. And make pilgrimage to the house of Allah if you can, at least once in your lifetime. Respect the food laws (don't eat pork or drink alcohol or take any drugs), live a pious, ethical, moral and responsible life with the consciousness always that you will be called to account for every action of yours.'

'Can I become a Muslim now?' she asked.

In my heart I said, 'Ya Allah you are her Rabb and mine. You are showing me how you give guidance to who you wish without anyone's help. Ya Rabbi I have no words to thank you. I thank you with whatever words are worthy of the Majesty of your Grace.'

Then I said to her, 'Yes you can become Muslim now if you wish.'

'Then tell me what to do.'

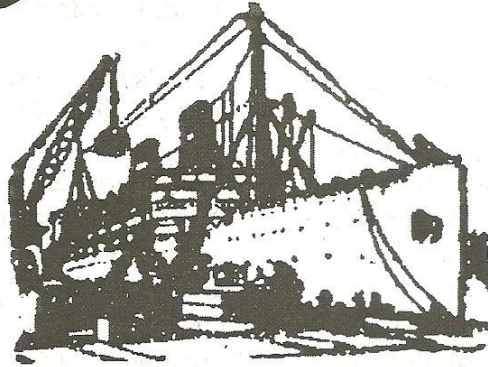
'Repeat after me, Ash-hadu al-laa ilaha ill-Allahu wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadar Rasoolullahi.'

She did and entered Islam 35,000 feet in the air, travelling at 900 miles an hour flying west across America. Such is the Grace of my Rabb.

I don't know where this sister of mine now is. I hope that one day she will read this account and remember that great day.

MA'ASLAAM, BARAKALLAHU LAK, LILLAHI TA'ALLAH.

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Israeli mother addresses European Parliament

Dear Friends,

Dr. Nurit Peled-Elhanan is the mother of Smadar Elhanan, 13 years old when killed by a suicide bomber in Jerusalem in September 1997. Below is Nurit's speech made on International Women's Day in Strasbourg earlier this month. Please listen to the words of a bereaved mother, whose daughter fell victim to a vicious, indiscriminating terrorist attack. I wish her words will enter the hearts of all peace seekers in our troubled and divided world.

For better days,
Professor Avraham Oz
Department of Hebrew and Comparative
Literature
University of Haifa
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WOMEN - by Nurit Peled-Elhanan

Thank you for inviting me to this today. It is always an honour and a pleasure to be here, among you (at the European Parliament).

However, I must admit I believe you should have invited a Palestinian woman at my stead, because the women who suffer most from violence in my county are the Palestinian women. And I would like to edicate my speech to Miriam R`aban and her husband Kamal, from Bet Lahiya in the Gaza strip, whose five small children were killed by Israeli soldiers while picking strawberries at the family`s strawberry field. No one will ever stand trial for this murder.

When I asked the people who invited me here why didn't they invite a Palestinian woman, the answer was that it would make the discussion too localized.

I don't know what is non-localized violence. Racism and discrimination may be theoretical concepts and universal phenomena but their

impact is always local, and real. Pain is local, humiliation, sexual abuse, torture and death, are all very local, and so are the scars.

It is true, unfortunately, that the local violence inflicted on Palestinian women by the government of Israel and the Israeli army, has expanded around the globe, In fact, state violence and army violence, individual and collective violence, are the lot of Muslim women today, not only in Palestine but wherever the enlightened western world is setting its big imperialistic foot. It is violence which is hardly ever addressed and which is halfheartedly condoned by most people in Europe and in the USA.

This is because the so-called free world is afraid of the Muslim womb.

Great France of "la liberte egalite et la fraternite" is scared of little girls with head scarves. Great Jewish Israel is afraid of the Muslim womb which its ministers call a demographic threat.

Almighty America and Great Britain are infecting their respective citizens with blind fear of the Muslims, who are depicted as vile, primitive and blood-thirsty, apart from their being non-democratic, chauvinistic and mass producers of future terrorists. This in spite of the fact that the people who are destroying the world today are not Muslim. One of them is a devout Christian, one is Anglican and one is a non-devout Jew.

I have never experienced the suffering Palestinian women undergo every day, every hour, I don't know the kind of violence that turns a woman's life into constant hell. This daily physical and mental torture of women who are deprived of their basic human rights and needs of privacy and dignity, women whose homes are broken into at any moment of day and night, who are ordered at a gun-point to strip naked in front of strangers and their own children, whose houses are demolished, who are deprived of their

livelihood and of any normal family life. This is not part of my personal ordeal.

But I am a victim of violence against women insofar as violence against children is actually violence against mothers. Palestinian, Iraqi, Afghan women are my sisters because we are all at the grip of the same unscrupulous criminals who call themselves leaders of the free enlightened world and in the name of this freedom and enlightenment rob us of our children.

Furthermore, Israeli, American, Italian and British mothers have been for the most part violently blinded and brainwashed to such a degree that they cannot realize their only sisters, their only allies in the world are the Muslim Palestinian, Iraqi or Afghani mothers, whose children are killed by our children or who blow themselves to pieces with our sons and daughters. They are all mind-infected by the same viruses engendered by politicians. And the viruses, though they may have various illustrious names - such as Democracy, Patriotism, God, Homeland--are all the same. They are all part of false and fake ideologies that are meant to enrich the rich and to empower the powerful.

We are all the victims of mental, psychological and cultural violence that turn us to one homogenic group of bereaved or potentially bereaved mothers. Western mothers who are taught to believe their uterus is a national asset just like they are taught to believe that the Muslim uterus is an international threat. They are educated not to cry out: `I gave him birth, I breast fed him, he is mine, and I will not let him be the one whose life is cheaper than oil, whose future is less worth than a piece of land.`

All of us are terrorized by mind-infecting education to believe all we can do is either pray for our sons to come back home or be proud of their dead bodies.

And all of us were brought up to bear all this silently, to contain our fear and frustration, to take Prozac for anxiety, but never hail Mama Courage in public. Never be real Jewish or Italian or Irish mothers.

I am a victim of state violence. My natural and civil rights as a mother have been violated and

are violated because I have to fear the day my son would reach his 18th birthday and be taken away from me to be the game tool of criminals such as Sharon, Bush, Blair and their clan of blood-thirsty, oil-thirsty, land thirsty generals.

Living in the world I live in, in the state I live in, in the regime I live in, I don't dare to offer Muslim women any ideas how to change their lives. I don't want them to take off their scarves, or educate their children differently, and I will not urge them to constitute Democracies in the image of Western democracies that despise them and their kind. I just want to ask them humbly to be my sisters, to express my admiration for their perseverance and for their courage to carry on, to have children and to maintain a dignified family life in spite of the impossible conditions my world is putting them in. I want to tell them we are all bonded by the same pain, we all the victims of the same sort of violence even though they suffer much more, for they are the ones who are mistreated by my government and its army, sponsored by my taxes.

Islam in itself, like Judaism in itself and Christianity in itself, is not a threat to me or to anyone. American imperialism is, European indifference and co-operation is and Israeli racism and its cruel regime of occupation is. It is racism, educational propaganda and inculcated xenophobia that convince Israeli soldiers to order Palestinian women at gun-point, to strip in front of their children for security reasons, it is the deepest disrespect for the other that allow American soldiers to rape Iraqi women, that give license to Israeli jailers to keep young women in inhuman conditions, without necessary hygienic aids, without electricity in the winter, without clean water or clean mattresses and to separate them from their breast-fed babies and toddlers. To bar their way to hospitals, to block their way to education, to confiscate their lands, to uproot their trees and prevent them from cultivating their fields.

I cannot completely understand Palestinian women or their suffering. I don't know how I would have survived such humiliation, such disrespect from the whole world. All I know is that the voice of mothers has been suffocated for too long in this war-stricken planet. Mothers` cry is not heard because mothers are not invited to international forums such as this one. This I

know and it is very little. But it is enough for me to remember these women are my sisters, and that they deserve that I should cry for them, and fight for them. And when they lose their children in strawberry fields or on filthy roads by the checkpoints, when their children are shot on their way to school by Israeli children who were educated to believe that love and compassion are race and religion dependent, the only thing I can do is stand by them and their betrayed babies,

and ask what Anna Akhmatova--another mother who lived in a regime of violence against women and children--asked:

Why does that streak of blood, rip the petal of your cheek?

Ask a Muslim doctor

DR. RAFĀQAT RASHID

By courtesy of AL-MU'MIN Magazine – 118 Manningham Lane • Bradford • West Yorkshire • BD8 7JF • UK

Sterilisation

Q Dear Dr. Sahib, Alhamdulillah, I have just had my 7th child and my GP has advised me to have my 'tubes tied' (sterilised). I am finding it very difficult to cope with the kids and my health is not what it used to be and I don't think I will be able to manage if I have any more kids. What should I do?

A There are a couple of things that need to be addressed regarding your situation. Primarily, what are your husband's thoughts regarding this? It is important that this is discussed with your husband as he has a right to decide, with mutual agreement, what would be the best option.

Raising seven children is not an easy affair and is physically, mentally and psychologically demanding. The Ulama are agreed upon the view that the Islamic upbringing of children is an Islamic obligation, and taking out time to nurture is essential. For this reason, using contraception is permissible with the intention that one wishes to focus on the children's upbringing.

Sterilisation is an irreversible form of contraception through which one is unlikely ever to be fertile again, therefore sterilisation is unanimously agreed to be impermissible (Haram). Reversible contraception is permissible in such a situation. My advice to you would be to opt for either the contraceptive injection or the implant. The reasons for this is that they are both longer acting and do not require you to take daily tablets, which can be difficult for a busy mother who has a lot on her mind. The usual contraceptive pill, the combined pill, contains two hormones, oestrogen and progesterone. Taken together in the pill they prevent egg production in women's ovaries. The implants and injections that are available in the UK contain only one hormone, progesterone. This makes them safer for some women who can't take oestrogen. Like the pill they prevent egg production and so are very effective as contraceptives.

If you opt for the contraceptive injection, the doctor or a nurse will administer the injection in the muscles of your upper arm, buttocks or thigh. The injection lasts for 10 to 13 weeks

(approximately 3 months) after which time you must have another injection to maintain the contraceptive benefits. Some of the possible side effects of this form of contraception are slight weight gain and irregular vaginal bleeding in a few women, which has the potential of interfering with ones salah. One will also need to make regular 3 monthly scheduled appointments for repeated injections. It will also take several months before you have a normal menstrual cycle (periods) and become fertile again if stopped.

The other option is the implant. This works in the same manner as the injection and is the same hormone. It is a very small flexible rod that is placed just under your skin in your upper arm. It is a very effective, long-term hormonal method of contraception which protects you from pregnancy for up to 3-5 years. Like the injection, it can cause irregular menstruation in some women and slight change in the weight which varies with individuals, if the implant is taken out it is likely the person will resume normal periods within a few months.

Another option, which may be mentioned is the Intrauterine Device (IUD) or the coil. The Islamic perspective is that this

should ideally be avoided, as its permissibility is doubtful, because it can stop a fertilized egg from implanting in the womb, which is

considered an early abortion and therefore Haram.

Caesarean

Q I have had 3 Caesarean Sections. I have heard it is dangerous for me to have any more children. Is this true?

A Some of the common questions I am asked regarding Caesarean Sections (CS) are usually the one you have asked and whether it is safe to have a normal vaginal birth if one has had a previous CS.

To answer your question, there is concern that multiple caesareans lead to a weaker womb scar and that risk of this scar rupturing is therefore increased. Fortunately, there is very little research evidence to support this theory and an article appearing in the British Medical Journal in 1991, concluded this fact (Roberts, Lawrence W; British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, December 1991, vol. 98, pg 1199-1202).

The truth is, there is no set limit on the number of caesarean that can be carried out on individual woman. The first caesarean is generally quit straightforward but as the number of caesarean increase the more complicated the operation can become because of adhesions (scar tissue) from previous procedures. The issue here is not the womb rupturing during pregnancy or whilst giving birth, rather, how complicated the caesarean procedure may become with multiple operations. Many women have found themselves put under pressure to be

sterilised because they have had several caesareans. This is not permissible from an Islamic perspective and unethical from the western ethical viewpoint.

Many women are told that if they have already had two or more caesareans, that any future babies will need to be delivered by repeat caesarean. Evidence suggests that after one caesarean section, normal virginal birth is widely accepted as safe. However, after two or more cesareans, it is normal protocol for a mother to be listed for an elective (planned) caesarean, since it is believed that the risks of caesarean scar rupture increase with the number of caesarean operations. Again, there is lack of evidence to support this view and for reason more researchers and obstetricians are questioning the basis for this protocol. (Enkin, M, Keirse, MJ NC, Renfrew, M and Neilson, 1995: "The Guide to Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth" 2nd Edition. Oxford University Press, Pg. 41, 288).

In summary, if you have had 3 caesareans already and wish to have children there is no significant danger in you having more children. If you wish to have a normal vaginal birth after 3 caesarean, then there is no significant evidence to suggest that this could be dangerous, but unfortunately this is not the commonly accepted protocol by most obstetricians and therefore chances are, you will be discourage from this.



If you would like to ask Dr. Sahib any questions regarding medical issues, write to: Al Mu'min Ask A Muslim Doctor or email: almumin_magazine@jkn.org.uk

Cont'd frompg9

While a chaste and Allah-fearing person will not deliberately touch a non-mahram, often due to negligence this crime is committed. Among the more common occasions that this occurs are:

- When giving or receiving money at till points, road tolls, etc.
- In the work place when giving or taking something from a non-mahram
- At social functions, bazaars and other gatherings where intermingling of males and females take place.

Hence one should not venture near any mixed gathering if it is not absolutely necessary to go there (such as going to one's job). If going to such a place is completely unavoidable, one must be extremely careful. Also, respectfully ask for money, items or documents which are being passed over to be kept on the counter, desk, etc., from where one can pick it up without risking an illegitimate touch. May Allah Ta'ala protect us from every haraam, even it be the slightest touch. Aameen.

Your child: A commercial target

(Courtesy of IslamiCity - AL-ISLAAH PUBLICATIONS – www.everymuslim.com)

What is most striking about consumer culture, aside from its unprecedented ubiquity, is its celebration of consumption. The economy is our religious faith, consumption our orthodoxy. This becomes even more frightening when we discover that the targets are innocent children. This article attempts to reclaim our kids from a toxic commercial culture that has spun completely out of control. Children are innately innocent regardless of their belief system. Muslim children have a dual challenge - to knowingly miss the bandwagon of their peers and also to uphold their Islamic values.

Children remind us that the world is full of wonder and possibility. They make us laugh, exhaust us with their endless questions and needs, and evoke indescribable feelings of love. We dedicate ourselves to their well being, and we try to instill within them wholesome values and a dedication to pursue establishing good for all.

It goes without saying that raising kids in today's noisy, fast-paced culture is difficult. For good or ill, kids today are exposed to a wider world. The voices of home and community have been joined by a chorus of voices from around the globe, clamoring for our children's attention. Unfortunately, an increasing number of those voices are trying to sell them something. A new generation of hyper-consumers is growing up right in front of our eyes. Most children spend the bulk of their time in one of two places - parked in front of a TV or in a classroom.

- Children watch between 50 and 100 TV commercials per day. That's 20,000 to 40,000 TV ads annually. (Marketing Madness, Westview Press, 1995)
- Coke recently signed a 10 year exclusive contract with a Colorado Springs School District, with school officials promising to heavily promote Coke products in return for small cash grants. Hundreds of school districts across the country are negotiating similar arrangements. (District's Coke Problem, Harper Magazine 2/99)

Advertising targets children creating cravings that are hard to ignore but impossible to satisfy. Neither the parents nor the School teachers are really aware of all that is being pummeled into the little minds today. There is a need to wage a battle against the forces of Hollywood and Nintendo Corporation with full force. **Muslims rightfully deserve to be ashamed of themselves as they too are contributing to the problems and not the solutions.** Our homes are filled with all sorts of electronic gadgetry in all versions. In most homes, we can find Barbie's and Barney's but not children books on Islam. We spend on everything except on Islamic educational material.

It is a natural instinct to see your children happy and protect them from harm or pain. But that instinct, if not tempered, also comes with a cost. Parenthood, like childhood, is a journey of discovery. We set off from our own memories of being a kid, all the blessings, all the scars. In those memories, we must find the answers to the excessiveness of everything in today's consumer culture. Kids mainly need time and attention and love, none of which takes American Express!

The author of this article knows of a family with few little ones who never owned a Television and whose California born children never visited the perverted fantasy land, a.k.a. Disneyland. And guess what, their kids are normal, healthy and sane! We like to share some of their ideas that you may find useful.

- Sell your Television, VCR and the Nintendo but if you cannot, don't just turn off the TV, but instead suggest them something meaningful to do.
- Buy Islamic books and software for children. Allocate a monthly budget and build their Islamic library.
- Buy a big box of crayons, rolls of shelf paper and sewing supplies for arts and crafts.
- Read with them bedtime stories and discuss the stories.
- Invent ways to help needy and wayfarers. Help them know children who are shot in the alleys of West Bank and Gaza.

- Remove the logos from clothes (theirs and yours). Talk with kids about why you are doing this.
- Go for walks, kick the ball around the yard, garden, do crafts, wrestle around on the living room floor.
- Pray together at least once a day and initiate to help a brother/sister drive by saving a penny a day.

We pray as taught to all of us by Allah "Our Lord! Grant unto us spouses and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous." (25:74)

Ten thoughts to ponder

1. Remember that your Lord forgives those who ask Him for forgiveness, and He accepts the repentance of those who repent, and He accepts those who come back to him.
2. Show mercy to the weak and you will be happy; give to the needy and you will be wealthy; do not bear grudges and you will be healthy.
3. Be optimistic, for Allah Ta'aala is with you, and the angels are praying for forgiveness for you, and Paradise awaits you.
4. Wipe away your tears, think well of your Lord, and chase away your worries by remembering the blessing that Allah Ta'aala has bestowed upon you.
5. Do not think that this world is ever perfect for anyone. There is no one on the face of the earth who gets all that he wants or is free from all kinds of distress.
6. Be like a tall tree with high aims; if a stone is thrown at it , it simply lets its fruits drop.
7. Have you ever heard that grief brings back what has been lost, or that worry corrects mistakes? So why grieve and worry then?
8. Do not ask for trials and calamities, rather ask for peace, safety and good health, if Allah Ta'aala wills.
9. Extinguish the flames of hatred from your heart by forgiving everyone who has ever hurt you.
10. Ghusl, Whudhu, Miswak and being organized are effective medicines for all kinds of distress and worry.

By the courtesy of Al-Mu'min magazine

5 darkness and their 5 lamps

There are 5 dark matters and 5 lamps to illuminate them – or in some cases, counteract them:

1. Love of this world is darkness and At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness, the fear of Allah is its lamp.
2. Sin is Darkness and its lamp is repentance.
3. The grave is darkness and its lamps is (the phrase) none is worshipped but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.
4. Hereafter is the darkness and its lamps is the good deed.
5. The Siraat (the bridge over Hellfire - everyone shall have to cross in the Aakhirah) is darkness and its lamps is the certainty of faith.

On improving the cooperation among Muslims

On Disagreements And Their Resultant Problems

- last chapter from: Modern Salafism & Its Effect On Muslim Disunity [*]

by Sh. Sa'id `Abd Al - Latif Foudah [title and notes by OmarKN]

By courtesy of Livingislam.com

There is no doubt that the science of theology [knowledge of Allah; His message; *ilm*] is the most appropriate science for researching the disputes between the various Islamic sects and attempting to know which of them is correct and incorrect, or which of them is more correct than the others. It is legally encouraged for the Muslims to argue about the affairs of their religion, contrary to those who believe that it is unlawful. This is because disagreements do in fact exist, and working to either remove or diminish differences is obligatory as much as humanly possible. It is impossible to remove these disagreements or even attempt to remove them without recourse to theology and arguing in a way that is best. There is no doubt that speaking about matters related to the fundamentals of the religion – what is conventionally known as creed – is sought after and desired.

Neglecting disagreements and attempting to forget them or sweep them under the rug will never be a viable alternative to attempting to reach what is closest and reach the truth and what is correct. The fact that it is impossible to reach an agreement that is inclusive of all of the Muslims cannot justify sweeping disagreements under the rug. The fundamentals of theological rhetoric indicate that differences do in fact exist. It is also established in the upright religion that it is obligatory for Muslims to work together. So here we have two basic premises:

- A.** Disagreements exist and will continue
- B.** Cooperation between the Muslims is obligatory

So, if we say that it is impossible for us to work together as Muslims until we are all in complete agreement in doctrine – both in its fundamentals and subsidiary branch issues – then this implies that cooperation is impossible, which is a false conclusion.

If we say that cooperation is obligatory and that it is conditional upon agreement, that means we must forget our disagreements and sweep them under the rug. Now of course this is also incorrect because it entails neglecting that which is real and ignoring that which cannot be ignored. Every sect claims that it is correct and on the truth; how then can each sect be commanded to ignore that in which they claim they are right?

The sound view based upon the fundamentals of theological rhetoric calls for everyone – with a certain

degree of investigation – to gather between the two premises. The first premise is taken from the sensory world and sense perception, and it is regarding the means of knowledge. The second premise is taken from the unequivocal texts of the religion. It is incorrect to neglect or ignore either of them.

The logical conclusion is that it is obligatory to work together while maintaining one's disagreement with the other, and that it is obligatory to adopt practical measures in which these two premises and realities are kept. In sum, it is obligatory to work together with others while taking note of disagreements. In this circumstance, one must either base cooperation on that in which there is disagreement or that in which there is agreement, and obviously constructive work can only be based on that in which there is agreement.

Obligatory actions that must be carried out need to be based on the points in which there is agreement between the Muslims, while at the same time not neglecting the unique features of each Islamic sect and making sure to continue arguing in a way that is best.

Some people look to the disagreements among the Muslims as impending threats and dangers that must be eradicated, and that they are harms that lead the Umma to its own destruction. We hold a dissenting viewpoint and say that even though the existence of well-considered disagreements between the major sects results in some harms, it results in greater benefits overall. The most important of these benefits is constant investigation and continual research into these fundamentals. This in turn results in competition in refuting the obfuscations of the external opponents who do not belong to the religion – as Imam al-Ghazali said when he argued with the philosophers: “I am not addressing you with the tongue of the Ash'aris alone; I am addressing you with the tongue of all the Islamic sects entire: all of them are united against you.”

And Allah grants all success
Sa'id Foudah

*This is the last chapter and conclusion from a paper about:
MODERN SALAFISM & ITS EFFECT ON MUSLIM DISUNITY
PAPER SUBMITTED TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF MALAYSIA
Shaykh Sa'id `Abd al-Latif Foudah
Read the complete text (pdf) here: <http://www.marifah.net> (with permission)

In a Mufti's company

Islamic guidance on some miscellaneous issues

{From An-Nasihah By the courtesy of Madrasah Arabia Islamia – Azaadville S.Africa

What is the status of a person's Salah whose lower back becomes exposed during Sajdah?

At the outset it should be understood that a person should be adequately dressed when performing Salah. One should avoid wearing such clothing which either reveals the shape of the body or which allows the body parts to become exposed during the course of Salah. In fact, the Fuqaha (Jurists) mention that it is Makruh (detestable) to perform Salah in such clothing that a person does not wear in front of respectable people. Nevertheless, the 'awrah (satar – part of the body which is compulsory to conceal) of a man is from the navel up to and including the knees. If a quarter (1/4) or more of the 'awrah becomes exposed for the duration of one complete Rukn (i.e. the time taken to say Subhana Rabbiyal Aa'la thrice), then the Salah will become nullified, otherwise not. The Fuqaha have classified the area from below the navel up to the pubic region from the front as well as the back as one portion. Therefore if a quarter or more of that portion is exposed in the above scenario it will render the Salah null and void. (*Shami v.1p. 408; Ahsanul Fatawa v.3 p.399*)

After the second Sajdah of the first raka'at, a person erroneously sat down for Tashahhud thinking it to be the second rak'at. Upon realizing his error, he stood up and completed his Salah. In this instance, was it necessary for him to make a Sajda Sahw?

If he sat for the duration of one complete rukn (time taken to recite Subhana Rabbiyal A'la thrice) and then stood up, Sajdah Sahw will be Wajib (compulsory) upon him. It was not necessary to make Sajdah Sahw if he sat for less than this

duration. (*Fatawa Mahmudiyya v.2 p. 144, Ahsanul Fatawa v.4 p.34*)

What are the rewards mentioned in the Hadith for a woman who loses her child in infancy?

Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam says that Allah Ta'aala Says, "There is no reward except Jannah for that believing slave of mine who hopes for reward when I take away his beloved and dear one." (*Sahih Bukhari*). Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam also says: "The person whose two minor children pass away, Allah Ta'aala will admit him/her along with these children to Jannah. Hadrat Aisha radiyallahu anha asked: "What about a person who only loses one minor child?" Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam replied, "Even a person whose one child passes away (in infancy) will enter Jannah." (*Tirmidhi*)

Are we permitted to play recordings of the Qur'an on the telephone line for customers who call in while on hold?

Allah Ta'aala commands that when the Qur'an is recited, listen attentively to it and remain silent. (7:204). Thus, it will not be permissible to recite the Qur'an audibly in places where people are occupied in work as they will not be able to respect the recitation of the Qur'an. The reciter of the Qur'an at such places will be sinful. Therefore to play a recitation of the Qur'an over the telephone whilst the listener is on hold will not be permissible as one is not aware of the condition of the person and where or not due respect would be given to the recitation.

Allah Ta'aala knows best

You may forward all your Dini questions and queries to:

Darul Ifta – Madrasah Arabia Islamia
P O Box 9786, Azaadville 1750, South Africa
Tel: (011) 413 2786

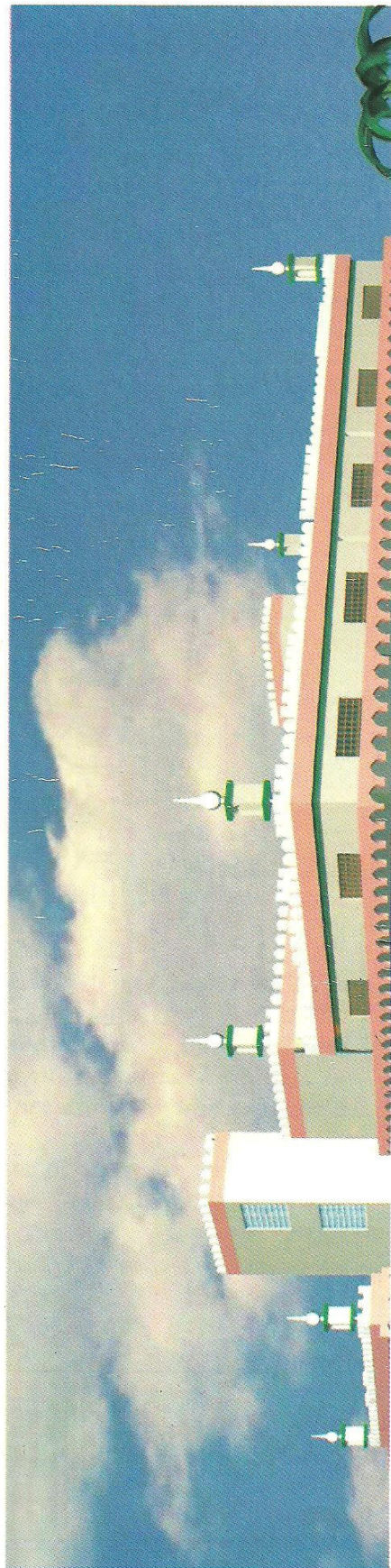
Fax: (011) 413 2787/0866 938 703

E Mail: mufti@webmail.co.za.

OR visit

www.askimam.com

An artist's impression of the proposed masjid at Majlisul Ma'arif el-Islamiyyah after extentions



The estimated costs of the extensions is KShs. 20 million (\$ 270,270). Rasoolullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam is reported to have said, "A Mu'min will never be satisfied in his quest for good until it ends in Jannah". So, O Mu'mineen! O Mu'mineen! Make for yourself an abode in Jannah by helping in constructing a masjid, especially where innocent young children are reciting the Holy Qur'an day and night. You can deposit your contributions directly to A/C No. 0000337168 - HABIB BANK ZURICH, Mombasa branch, or contact Maulana Yaseen Ali on (+254)0733560109. For more information on the institution please visit our website: www.mmislamiiyyah.com. E-mail address: mmislamiiyya@yahoo.com. Jazakumullahu khairan.