

Price Rs: 15/=

Regd. No. JKENG/2000/4147

THE TRUTH
www.islaminkashmir.org
RADIANT REALITY

Published from Srinagar, October 2007, Vol. 8. No. 10.

Perfect Muslim

*Everyone who professes Tauhid and acknowledges the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH), is a Muslim, but a perfect Muslim is one who has attained that high level where he does not harm any Muslim with his hand and tongue (*speech*). Similarly, an Emigrant is the one who abandons his homeland and relatives and goes to a place where he can easily practise the religion of Allah. But such a person is also an Emigrant who renounces all such things which are forbidden by Allah, because emigration means abandoning, whether it is abandoning of homeland or sins.*

*e-mail : editor-radiantreality@islaminkashmir.org
P.O.Box:- 974, GPO, Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir. India.*

This journal is dedicated to the Greatest and the Last Prophet

Hadhrat Muhammad

(Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

on whom the Prophethood got ended and sealed forever.

May Allah Ta'ala enlighten entire humanity with

the Divine Attributes with which He sent

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

to this world.

Only way to salvation for the mankind is in

following the blessed teachings of

Hadhrat Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

..... Let us all follow him with utmost spirit.

Editor, Printer & Publisher:
Mawlânâ Hamidullah Lone

Printed at:
Aafâq Printing Press.
Jamia Masjid, Srinagar.

Mailing Address:
The Editor In-Charge
“Radiant Reality”
P.O. Box 974
G.P.O. Srinagar,
Kashmir, 190001, India.

**Letters should be addressed to the Editor-in-chief.
editor-radiantreality@islaminkashmir.org*

**The Editor reserves the right to abridge the letters and material received for publication.*

**Published articles do not necessarily reflect views of Radiant Reality.*

**Articles may be reproduced free of charge with due acknowledgement.*

Subscription Fee:

Yearly :- Rs 180/-

Half Yearly :- Rs. 90/-

+Postage Rs. 40/- within country.

Note:

The Red Cross in the circle means your subscription fee has ended. To continue renew your subscription.



Advertisement Tariff :

Outer cover Full Page	: Rs. 3000/
Cover Inner Full Page	: Rs. 2500/
Inner Page Full	: Rs. 2000/
" " Half	: Rs. 1000/
" " Quarter	: Rs. 500/

www.islaminkashmir.org
RADIANT REALITY

Regd. No.: JKENG/2000/4174

Published From Srinagar.

October 2007. VOL.08, No: 10.

Contents

1. Editorial	4
2. Question and Answer	6
3. Lesson from the Qur'an	7
4. Lesson from the Bukhari Shareef	10
5. The Last Ten Days of Ramadhan	13
6. What After Ramadhan	18
7. The True Spirit of Eid	20
8. Peace Until Fajr	22
9. Life After Ramadhan	23
10. Sabr and Shukr	25
11. Rape and Incest	29
12. Statistics About Domestic Abuse	33
13 The Muslim Condition	35
14. Saviours of Islamic Spirit	38

www.islaminkashmir.org
RADIANT REALITY

P.O. Box 974 G.P.O.
Srinagar, Kashmir, 190 001 India.

Subscription Form

Name:

.....

Address:

.....

EDITORIAL

All thanks for Almighty, the most Merciful and Exalted.

The Message of Ramadhan

We observe Ramadan every year. Do we also *listen* to it?

Ramadan is the most important month of our calendar. It is a tremendous gift from Allah in so many ways. In our current state of being down and out, it can uplift us, empower us, and turn around our situation individually and collectively. It is the spring season for the garden of Islam when dry grass can come back to life and flowers bloom. But these benefits are not promised for lifeless and thoughtless rituals alone. They will be ours if our actions are informed by the message of Ramadan.

Today the message of Ramadan tends to get drowned out by much louder voices of the pop culture that have an opposite message. We have become so accustomed to them that many of us remain enslaved to them even during Ramadan.

The most important message of Ramadan is that we are not just body. We are body *and* soul. And that what makes us human beings and that determines our value as human beings is the soul and not the body. During Ramadan we deprive the body to uplift the soul. This is all simple and familiar. But we can understand its significance if we remember that the message of the materialistic hedonistic global pop culture that has engulfed every Muslim land today --- just like the rest of the world--- is exactly the opposite. It says that body is everything. That the materialistic world is all that counts. That the greatest happiness -- if not virtue-- is in filling the appetites of the body. This message produces endless appetites and consequently endless wars to fill those endless appetites through endless exploitation. It produces endless frustrations since the gap between desires and achievements can never be filled. It produces endless chaos and endless oppression. Yet this trash comes in such beautiful and enticing packages that we can hardly resist it. We

equate this slavery with freedom. We consider this march to disaster as progress. And with every movement, we get further and deeper into the mire.

Ramadan is here to liberate us from all this. Here is a powerful message that it is soul over body. Take a break from the pop culture. Turn off the music and TV. Say goodbye to the endless and futile pursuit of happiness in sensory pleasures. Rediscover your inner self that has been buried deep under it. Reorient yourself. Devote your time to the reading of the Qur'an, to voluntary worship, to prayers and conversations with Allah. Reflect on the direction of your life and your priorities. Reflect on and strengthen your relationship with your Creator.

On the last day of one Sha'ban, Prophet Muhammad (S), gave a Khutbah about the upcoming month of Ramadan. It is a very important Khutbah that we should carefully read before every Ramadan to prepare ourselves mentally for the sacred month. It begins: "Oh people! A great month is coming to you. A blessed month. A month in which there is one night that is better than a thousand months. A month in which Allah has made it compulsory upon you to fast by day, and voluntary to pray by night. Whoever draws nearer to Allah by performing any of the voluntary good deeds in this month shall receive the same reward as is there for performing an obligatory deed at any other time. And whoever discharges an obligatory deed in this month shall receive the reward of performing seventy obligations at any other time. It is the month of Sabr (patience), and the reward for sabr is Heaven. It is the month of kindness and charity. It is a month in which a believer's sustenance is increased. Whoever gives food to a fasting person to break his fast, shall have his sins forgiven, and he will be saved from the Fire of Hell, and he shall

have the same reward as the fasting person, without the latter's reward being diminished at all."

The hadith continues and contains many other very important messages. However let us take the time to highlight two of the statements contained above. First, that Ramadan is the month of sabr. The English translation is patience but that word has a very narrow meaning compared to sabr. Sabr means not only patience and perseverance in the face of difficulties, it also means being steadfast in avoiding sin in the face of temptations and being persistent in performing virtues when that is not easy. Overcoming hunger and thirst during fasting is part of it. But protecting our eyes, ears, minds, tongues, and hands, etc. from all sins is also part of it. So is being persistent in doing good deeds as much as possible despite external or internal obstacles. Ramadan requires sabr in its fullest sense and provides a training ground for that very important quality to be developed and nurtured. Here is a recipe for the complete overhaul of our life, not just a small adjustment in meal times.

The highest point of Ramadan is *itikaf*, an act of worship in which a person secludes himself in a masjid to devote his time entirely to worshipping and remembering Allah. Some in every Muslim community must take a break and go to the masjid for the entire last ten days of Ramadan. Others should imbibe the spirit and do whatever they can.

But we must differentiate between worldly pleasures and worldly responsibilities. We take a break from the former and not the latter. Syedna Abdullah ibn Abbas, Radi-Allahu unhu, was performing itikaf, when a person came and sat down silently. Sensing his distressed condition Ibn Abbas enquired about his situation, learnt that he needed help, and proceeded to leave the masjid to go out and help him. Now this action does nullify the itikaf, making a makeup obligatory. So the person, though grateful, was curious. Explaining his action, Ibn Abbas related a hadith that when a person makes efforts to help his brother, he earns the reward for performing itikaf for ten years.

This brings us to the second statement to consider: that Ramadan is the month of kindness and charity. With those in distress in the millions in the world today, the need for remembering this message of Ramadan cannot be overstated.

Unfortunately, today another scene seems to be dominant in some parts of the Muslim world. Here Ramadan is the month of celebrations, shopping, fancy iftars at posh restaurants, entertainment and gossip. People stay up at night but not for worship; they while away that time watching TV or wandering in the bazaar. Ramadan here is more a month of feasting than fasting.

No one can take away our Ramadan from us; we just give it away ourselves. And if we realize the utter blunder we have made, we can take it back.

Hadith

Narrated Mu'adh ibn Jabal: Two men reviled each other in the presence of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and one of them became excessively angry so much so that I thought that his nose will break up on account of excess of anger. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: I know a phrase which, if he repeated, he could get rid of this angry feeling. They asked: What is it, Apostle of Allah? He replied: He should say: I seek refuge in Thee from the accursed devil. Mu'adh then began to ask him to do so, but he refused and persisted in quarrelling, and began to enhance his anger.

Question & Answer

Question : Kindly let me know the about the Lailatul Qadr.

Answer:

Crowning Glory

Laylatul Qadr is the crowning glory of the holy month of Ramadhan. It is associated with the sending down of the Qur'an Majeed, the last Book of Allah on His last Prophet Muhammad (Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam), for the guidance of mankind. The Qur'an Majeed describes this Night.

"We have indeed revealed this (message) in the Night of Power: And what will explain to you what the Night of Power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. Therein come down the Angels and the Spirit (Jibrael) by Allah's permission, on every errand: Peace! This until the rise of Morn!" (Surah 97)

The Night of Power is the night of spiritual bliss. Our Nabi (Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam) is reported to have said concerning Ramadhan:

"Verily this month has come to you; and therein is a night which is better than a thousand Months. Whosoever is deprived of it, is deprived of all good; and none is deprived of its good except a totally unfortunate person". (Ibn Majah)

"Whosoever stands up (in prayer) at the Night of Power out of faith and hopeful of reward, all his past sins will be forgiven." (Targhib)

Better than a thousand months

A thousand months are equivalent to 83 years and 4 months. Fortunate is the person who spends this night in prayer. The man or woman, who prays for the whole night during this Night, will deserve blessings and reward for the period as if he or she had been praying for eighty three years and four months consecutively. Since the Night of Power is better than one thousand months no one can actually measure the

extent as to how much better it is.

Exclusive

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Laylatul Qadr has been bestowed by Allah to my Ummah (People). It was not given to any people before this." (Dur-Mansoor).

How manifest and replete the special bounties and mercies of Allah Ta'ala are upon this Ummah is quite really beyond imagination. It will therefore be extremely foolish to allow ourselves to be deprived of these great blessings at the expense of sheer laziness and a few hours of extra sleep.

Which Night is it?

Although there are different reports in different traditions regarding the exact night, it is almost unanimous that the blessed night occurs in one of the last ten nights of Ramadhan and more probably in one of the last ten odd nights i.e. 21st, 23rd, 25th 27th or 29th night.

The popular opinion is, however, in favour of the 27th Night of Ramadhan but that is not absolutely certain. The traditions indicate that it is to be sought in one of the last ten nights and preferably in the last three odd nights. It was therefore the practice of the Holy Prophet (Sallallaahu Alayhi Wasallam) and his companions to make I'tikaaf in the Mosque for the whole time offering Divine service during the last ten days of Ramadhan.

Hazrath Aisha (Radhiallaahu Anha) reported that the Apostle of Allah said: **"Search for the Blessed Night in the odd (nights) from the last ten (nights) of Ramadhan"** (Bukhari).

Hazrath Aisha has narrated another saying: *"I asked: O Messenger of Allah! Tell me if I were to find a Night of Power, what should I recite therein?"* Holy Prophet

Cont'd on page 19

Lesson From The Qur'an

Commentary: Mawlânâ Mufti Mohammad Shafî Sahib (RA)

Verse 108

Verses 109 - 110

()

Or, do you rather want to ask your Prophet as Musa was asked earlier? And whoever takes to infidelity in exchanges of faith has certainly missed the straight path.

Hostility to the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had become so habitual to the Jews that they were always making insolent demands. Once they asked him to bring before them whole of the Qur'an all at once just as the Torah had been revealed. In reprimanding them for making such improper demands on the prophets of their time, the verse reminds them how their forefathers too had done the same -- for example, they had asked Sayyidna Musa (Moses AS) to help them to see Allah openly with their physical eyes. In such cases, the intention of the Jews had never been to seek guidance or to satisfy their doubts or to strengthen their faith, but only to cast aspersions on a prophet, or to question the wisdom of Allah. The verse indicts this behavior as *Kufr* (infidelity). Such demands are improper, because there is a *raison d'etre* for everything Allah does, but divine wisdom alone knows what that is, and the creature has no right to determine the precise mode of his Creator's acts -- he should not even ask the why and wherefore of a divine action, but accept it and submit himself to the Divine Will.

If one takes this verse as having been addressed to the Muslims, it would mean that they are being warned against making improper demands on the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

()

()

Many among the people of the Book desire to turn you, after your accepting the faith, back into disbelievers --all out of envy generating from their hearts, even after the truth has become clear to them. So, forgive and overlook till Allah brings out His command. Certainly, Allah is powerful over everything. And be steadfast in Salah, and give Zakah. And whatever good you send forth for yourselves, you will find it with Allah. Certainly, Allah is watchful of what you do.

Some of the Jews, pretending to be the well-wishers of the Muslims, were always inventing new stratagems to make them turn away from Islam, and, in spite of repeated failure in this effort, did not refrain from it. The verse warns the Muslims against their intentions, which are motivated, not by sincerity and friendship, but by envy — which in its turn arises not from anything the Muslims do, but spontaneously from within themselves even after they have come to understand clearly what the truth is. The verse also asks the Muslims not to give way to their justifiable anger at such misconduct, but to forgive the Jews, and wait till Allah sends a new commandment with regard to such matters. Thus, the verse gives an indication that Allah is soon going to lay down a law for the preservation of peace and order on the earth which would guide the Muslims in dealing with mischief-

makers -- the law, of course, being the permission to go to war against the enemies of Islam. The Muslims were actually conscious of their own weakness and the strength of their foe, and could have wondered how they would be able to act upon the new law. So, the verse reminds them that Allah's power extends over everything, small or big, ordinary or extraordinary.

The next verse asks the Muslims to continue offering their prayers and paying *Zakah* and when the new law comes down, they can add the participation in a *Jihad* to these good deeds which they have already been performing. Nor should the Muslims suppose that until they can take part in a *Jihad*, mere prayers and fasting will not bring them the spiritual merit they desire; in fact, they shall receive a full reward in the other world for each and every good deed they perform, for Allah knows what people do, and not a particle of one's good deeds shall be lost.

This command to show forbearance towards the Jews was proper to the situations of the Muslims at that time. Later on, Allah fulfilled the promise made in verse 109, and sent down the injunction with regard to *Jihad*. Then, this new law was applied to the Jews as well as to other miscreants - in order to prevent disorder and to make peace and order prevail on the earth, Muslims went to war against them, and the mischief-makers were either killed, or forced into exile, or made to pay *Jizyah* (*Which is a special levy on non-Muslims who live under the protection of the Islamic state and which absolves them from military service.*).

Verses 111-113

()

()

()

And they say that no one shall ever enter Paradise unless he is a Jew, or a Christian. These are their fancies. Say, "Bring your proof, if you are truthful." Of course, whosoever submits his self to Allah and is good in deeds has his reward with his Lord, and there shall be no fear for such men, nor shall they grieve. And the Jews say: "The Christians stand on nothing" and the Christians say, "The Jews stand on nothing" -- and they both read the Book! Similarly, those who do not know say as they (the Jews and the Christians) do. So Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection in what they used to dispute.

The Jews and the Christians were hostile not only to the Muslims, but also to each other. They had forgotten the essence of religion — that is, adherence to the true and authentic doctrines, and performance of good deeds as laid down by the Shari'ah -- and had identified it with a mere affiliation to a racial or social community. Each of the two groups claimed that it had the exclusive right to go to the Paradise, without having any argument to substantiate the claim. The Jews read the Torah, while the Christians read the Evangel, and they could have easily seen that the two Books confirm each other. Each party used to assert, in its malice, that the religion of the other was baseless. This gave an excuse to the *mushrikin* (associators) who, in spite of their ignorance, began to say the same of both the religions.

The Holy Qur'an dismisses these pretensions as mere fancy and self-delusion. It declares that other people too will go to Paradise who have, in their time, been following the Shari'ah of their own prophet, and who, now that the Holy Qur'an also has abrogated all the earlier Divine Books, follow the Islamic Shari'ah. Verse

112 lays down the general principle in this respect, which is accepted by the followers of all the Divine Books. The essence of religion, whether it be Islam or Christianity or Judaism, lies in two things. (1) One should obey Allah in one's belief as well as in one's actions. (2) This obedience should not arise from expediency, but one should surrender oneself to divine commandments in all sincerity. Moreover, it is not enough to be worthy of Paradise merely to have a sincere intention to obey Allah, and then to invent, according to one's own fancy, the modes and forms of obedience, for it is absolutely essential that the forms of worship and the modes of obedience should be no other than those which Allah Himself has appointed through the agency of His prophets — it goes without saying that since the revelation of the Holy Qur'an this can only mean accepting and following the Islamic Shari'ah. We may add that in connection with the first of these two principles, the Holy Qur'an employs the Arabic word :

Aslama which signifies total submission to Allah, and in connection with the second word *Muhsin*, which signifies : "وهو محسن" : "one who performs good deeds" according to the Shari'ah.

The differences between the Jews and the Christians

In so far as these verses deal with the claims of the Jews and the Christians, the point of the argument is this:- Having laid down the two principles the acceptance of which makes one worthy of Paradise, the Holy Qur'an suggests that they should now try to find out who is really acting upon them. Obviously, one who keeps following an injunction even after it has been abrogated cannot be described as obedient, and hence the Jews and the Christians no longer deserve this title. After the abrogation of an injunction, obedience consists in acting upon the new injunction which has replaced the earlier one. This condition is now being fulfilled only by the Muslims who have accepted the latest and the last Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and

his Shari'ah. Hence, they alone shall now be considered worthy of Paradise. The condition of one's being sincere in one's obedience excludes the hypocrites too, for the Shari'ah counts them among the infidels, and thus assigns them to Hell.

Verse 112 also announces the reward of those who act upon these principles - on the Day of Judgment, they shall have nothing to fear, nor shall they grieve, as angels will give them good tidings. As for the debates among the Jews, the Christians and the associators, Verse 113 declares that Allah will Himself decide the question finally on the Day of Judgment. In fact, the question has already been settled on the basis of what Allah has revealed in His Books as well as on the basis of rational argument; the final decision on the Day of Judgment will be of the visible kind — those who follow the Truth will be sent to Paradise, while those who go after falsehood will be cast down in Hell.

These verses provide a warning to the Muslims as well, lest they too should delude themselves like the Jews and the Christians, and suppose that merely because they belong to the social community of Muslims and can, as such, claim to be Muslims, whereby they can dispense with the need to obey Allah and to follow the Shari'ah, and yet receive the rewards Allah has promised to give to true Muslims. Even Muslims have no right to hope for these rewards until and unless they submit themselves totally, in thought and deed both, to the commandments of Allah and His Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Hadith

Narrated Abu Dharr: The Apostle of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said to us: When one of you becomes angry while standing, he should sit down. If the anger leaves him, well and good; otherwise he should lie down. (Abu Dawood)

Lesson From The Bukhari Sharief

Dr. Rafiq Ahmad

Chapter 11 : Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to look for a suitable time to advice and teach Sahaaba lest they might not get bored.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

By this title Imam Bukhari wants to convey that one should not bore the students: while teaching, one should advise others when they are ready to listen and show eagerness and zeal.

Hadith No. 67

Narrated Ibn Mas'ud (RA)

The Prophet used to take care of us in preaching by selecting a suitable time, so that we might not get bored. (He abstained from pestering us with sermons and knowledge all the time).

Comments

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'an,

"Therefore give admonition in case the admonition profits (the hearer)". (87:9)

It was a habit of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to take care of his companions in all respects. Even while teaching them about *Deen*, he would not bore them by constant preaching. He would select a

suitable time when the Sahaaba would be free and fresh to listen. It is not appropriate to teach for long time at a stretch. Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to give them break of some days in a week.

"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and have disputations with them in the best manner".

Hadith No. 68

Narrated Anas bin Malik (RA)

The Prophet said, "Facilitate things to people (concerning religious matters), and do not make it hard for them and give them good tidings and do not make them run away (from Islam)."

Comments

This is a wonderful piece of teaching for all those who want to preach Islam. There are preachers who usually present the Islam to people in quite horrifying way with the result the people usually run away from Islam. These people only warn the people about Hellfire and scold them too much for their bad deeds. In this Hadith Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) gives the golden advice to the preachers of Islam that they should not make things related to Islam hard for people but should try to make it easy for them and also give them the glad

tidings. It does not mean that we should not warn people against doing the bad deeds but at the same time we should pat them and motivate them for shunning away the bad deeds. This Hadith also is a guideline for the jurists (*Fuqaha*) of Islam that they should try to keep easiness in mind while issuing the *Fataawa* (legal opinion).

Chapter 12 : One who fixes special days to teach the students.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Bukhari wants to convey that it is better to fix up a known schedule for teaching so that it becomes convenient to both the teacher as well as the students. He proves this point with the proof from the deeds of the Sahaaba. It is also said that some people consider this type of time table Bid'at, Imam Bukhari wants to disprove their point.

Hadith No. 69

Narrated Abu Wail (RA)

'Abdullah used to give a religious talk to the people on every Thursday. Once a man said, "O Aba 'Abdur-Rahman! (By Allah) I wish if you could preach us daily." He replied, "The only thing which prevents me from doing so, is that I hate to bore you, and no doubt I take care of you in preaching by selecting a suitable time just as the Prophet used to do with us, for fear of making us bored."

Comments

Hadhrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood used to preach on Thursdays. Someone, probably Yazid bin Mu'awiya Nakha'ee, asked him as to why he did not preach them daily. He told them that he did so because it was the practice of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) not to preach daily. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not like to bore the people with daily religious talks, he would see their eagerness and convenience first and then deliver his sermons.

Chapter 13 : If Allah wishes good to a person, He bestows him with the understanding of Deen.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

After mentioning the etiquettes of a student and the teacher, Imam Bukhari says that to understand the religion of Islam in its proper context is a great favour of Allah and this understanding of Islam is not a self achieved thing but a gift given by Allah. Secondly it also shows the excellence of Ulema (learned scholars) over others.

Hadith No. 70

Narrated Hadhrat Muawiya (RA)

I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "If Allah wants to do good to a person, He makes him comprehend the religion. I am just a distributor, but the grant is from Allah. (And remember) that this nation (true Mus-

lims) will keep on following Allah's teachings strictly and they will not be harmed by any one going on a different path till Allah's order (Day of Judgment) is established."

Comments

Ibn Hajr says that there are three aspects in this Hadith, viz:

- 1.The Excellence of *Tafaquh fi Deen* (understanding of Islam).
- 2.Allah is the Real Giver.
- 3.One group of righteous people will always remain .

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) in this Hadith says that the real good in this world is the understanding of Islam. If any body is given this understanding it means that that person is in the good books of Allah. It is said that someone saw Imam Muhammad , the famous student of Imam Abu Haniefa , in the dream after his death and asked him as to what was done with him in the grave . He said that he was told by Allah , " Oh Muhammad , why are you so much afraid ? , if I had to give you punishment then I would have not given you the *Fiqh* ,the understanding of Islam." From this one can understand the significance of this treasure i.e., the *Fahm-e-Deen* or the understanding of Islam.

Second part of this Hadith says that Allah is the real giver of whatever bounty there is and that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is just the distributor . It can also mean that the real owner of good is Allah and he had given it to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and he was just the distributor. It can also mean that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) says the words of wisdom to one and all equally but the people understand it differently as per the intelligence given to them by Allah.

Third part of the Hadith says that there will always remain one group of people who will be at the right path. This world will be never without these pious people till the day of judgment. It is said in another Hadith that the day of judgment will not commence till there is even a single person on earth saying "Allah, Allah".

Imam Bukhari says that these people are scholars (أهل العلم).

Imam Ahmad says that these people are Sunnites (أهل السنة).

Some people say that these people are Mujahideen (مجاهدين).

Imam Nawwawi says that this group includes all people like the Ascetics , Jurists , Mujahideen , Muhadditheen and those who persuade people for right deeds .

This Hadith also tells us the importance of Ulema.

Chapter 14 : Comprehension of knowledge.

Purpose of Tarjamatul Baab

Here Imam Bukhari wants to convey that the people differ in the level of their intelligence and that not only knowledge but the power of understanding is also important.

Hadith No. 71

Narrated by Mujahid (RA)

I travelled with Ibn Umar towards Madina and I didn't hear from him any Hadith except one. He said:

"We were with the Prophet and a spadix of date-palm tree was brought to him. On that he said, "Amongst the trees, there is a tree which resembles a Muslim." I wanted to say that it was the date-palm tree but as I was

*the youngest of all (of them) I kept quiet.
And then the Prophet said, "It is the date-
palm tree."*

Comments

Sahaaba were very cautious in narrating Hadith

In this Hadith a famous Taaba'ee namely Mujahid, says that he traveled with Ibn Umar and the latter did not narrate any Hadith. This was the usual practice of Sahaaba like Hadhrat Abu Bakr and Hadhrat Umar, Ibn Umar was also from them. This was because they feared that lest they might not attribute anything towards Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) which he did not mean in his sayings. Ibn Umar usually would quote a Hadith when asked to do so.

Every body does not understand the same meaning from Qur'an and Hadith

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) asked a question to the Sahaaba and only a young boy namely Ibn Umar could guess the right answer whereas the senior Sahaaba could not do so.

Tafaqquh fi Deen is a great gift of Allah

Tafaqquh fi Deen is a great blessing of Allah. In another narration it is mentioned that when Ibn Umar told his father—Hadhrat Umar that he was the only person knowing the answer but he, being young, did not open his mouth due to humility. Hadhrat Umar told him that he would have felt very happy if he (i.e., Ibn Umar) would have given the answer which others were not knowing. This happiness of Hadhrat Umar shows that *Tafaqquh fi Deen* is a great blessing.

Hadith

Narrated Abdullah ibn Abbas: The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said: Good way, dignified good bearing and moderation are the twenty-fifth part of Prophecy. (Abu Dawood)

The last ten days of Ramadan

How to take full advantage and benefit from the last part of Ramadan ?

Though all parts of Ramadan are full of blessings and rewards, its last ten days hold a special status reflected in the recommendations and practices of the Messenger of Allah, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, and his companions. I will focus here on three major practices of the Prophet, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, and his companions during these days.

1-Praying in the last ten nights of Ramadan

Al-Bukhari and Muslim record from 'Aishah that during the last ten days of Ramadan, the Messenger of Allah would wake his wives up during the night and then remain apart from them (that is, being busy in acts of worship). A narration in Muslim states: "He would strive [to do acts of worship] during the last ten days of Ramadan more than he would at any other time."

Aisha reported that With the start of the last ten days of Ramadan, the Prophet used to tighten his waist belt (i.e. work hard) and used to pray all the night, and used to keep his family awake for the prayers. [Bukhari]

2-Performing I'tikaf in the Masjid (seclusion in the Mosque)

Before going to the essential of this last section, let us stop by one of the great Imam of ahl Assunnah wal jama`ah, one of the greatest revivers of the Da`wah and the methodology of the Salaf, Shaikhul-Islam Shamsuddeen Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah who will give us a brain storming admonition.

He says (rahimahu Allah) in *Zaad al Ma`aad fi hadyi khairi al `ibaab* :

"Since the hearts' rectitude and firmness upon the path towards Allah the

Most High, rests upon directing it solely upon Allaah and causing it to turn and give all its attention to Allaah the Most High. Since the disorder of the heart cannot be rectified except by turning to Allaah the Most High, and its disorder will be increased by eating and drinking too much, mixing with the people excessively, speaking profusely and sleeping too much. These will cause it to wander into every valley, and cut it off from its path to Allah, weaken it, divert it or put a halt to it. "

From the Mercy of the Mighty and Most Merciful is that He has prescribed for them fasting, which will cut off the excesses of eating and drinking, and empties the heart of its desires which divert it on its journey to Allah the Most High. He prescribed it in due proportion as will be appropriate and will benefit the servant, with regard to this world and the Hereafter, and does not harm him, nor damage what is beneficial for him.

He also prescribed i'tikaf for them, by which is intended that the heart is fully occupied with Allah, the Most High, concentrated upon Him alone, and cut off from pre-occupation with the creation. Rather it is engrossed with Him alone, the One free of all defects, such that remembering Him, loving Him and turning to Him takes the place of all anxieties of the heart and its suggestions, such that he is able to overcome them. Thus all his concerns are for Him. His thoughts are all of remembrance of Him, and thinking of how to attain His Pleasure and what will cause nearness to Him. This leads him to feel contented with Allah instead of the people, so that prepares him for being at peace with Him alone on the day of loneliness in the grave, when there is no one else to give comfort, nor anyone to grant solace except Him. So this is the greater goal of i'tikaf"

The book *Zaad al Ma'ad* as well as all other books of Ibn al-Qayyim are just peaces of art that every Muslim should read. Al-hamdu liLLAH there is a great effort among the followers and revivers of the methodology of the Salaf in translating

these books into English. Some of them or part of them are already available. You may want to contact the bookstore of al-Qur'an was-Sunnah Society of North America [USA] or al-Hidaya Publishing in UK.

I'tikaf is the seclusion and staying in the mosque with the intention of becoming closer to Allah. This was the practise of the Prophet, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, during the last ten days of Ramadan especially. He would do it during other months as well.

'Aisha reported that the Messenger of Allah, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, used to practice i'tikaf in the last ten nights of Ramadan and used to say, "Look for the Night of Qadr in the last ten nights of the month of Ramadan" [Bukhari]

Abu Hurairah, *radiyallahu 'anhu* said: "Allah's Messenger, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, used to perform i'tikaf for ten days every Ramadan, then when it was the year in which he was taken (died), he performed i'tikaf for twenty days. [Bukhari]

'Aisha reported that the Prophet, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, used to practice i'tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan till he died and then his wives used to practice i'tikaf after him. [Bukhari]

'Aishah *radhiya Allahu `anha* also reported that the Prophet, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, "Used to perform i'tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan until Allah the Mighty and Majestic, took him. [Bukhari and Muslim]

Al-Bukhari records from Abu Said that the Prophet (S) said: "Whoever makes i'tikaf with me is to make i'tikaf during the last ten [nights]."

This Sunnah of the Prophet, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, has been abandoned by many Muslims and it is worth reviving it in this era.

Sayyid Sabiq says in *Fiqhus-Sunnah* :

The sunnah or preferred i'tikaf has no specific time limit. It can be fulfilled by staying in the mosque with the intention of making i'tikaf for a long or short time. The reward will be according to how long one

stays in the mosque. If one leaves the mosque and then returns, he should renew his intention to perform itikaf.

Ya'la ibn Umayyah said: "I secluded myself in the mosque for some time for l'tikaf." 'Ata told him: "That is l'tikaf, as long as you secluded yourself there."

One who is performing Sunnah (like in Ramadan) i'tikaf (i.e. not the obligatory one that is made after a vow) may end his i'tikaf at any time, even if it is before the period he intended to stay.

'Aishah related that if the Prophet intended to make itikaf, he would pray the morning prayer and begin it. One time he wanted to make i'tikaf during the last ten nights of Ramadan, and he ordered his tent to be set up. Aishah reported: "When I saw that, I ordered my tent to be set up, and some of the Prophet's wives followed suit. When he [the Prophet] prayed the morning prayer, he saw all of the tents, and said: "What is this?" They said: "We are seeking obedience [to Allah and His Messenger]." Then he ordered his tent and those of his wives to be taken down, and he delayed his i'tikaf to the first ten days [of Shawwal]."[Bukhari]

The fact that the Messenger of Allah ordered [his and] his wives' tents to be struck down and [he himself left and] asked them to leave the i'tikaf after they have made the intention for it shows that they discarded the i'tikaf after they had begun it. ([in this small paragraph are some additional comments to clarify things).

It is preferred for the one who is making l'tikaf to perform many supererogatory acts of worship and to occupy himself with prayers, reciting the Qur'an, glorifying and praising Allah, extolling His oneness and His greatness, asking His forgiveness, sending salutations on the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and supplicating Allah - that is, all actions that bring one closer to Allah. Included among these actions is studying and reading books of tafsir and hadith, books on the lives of the Prophets, upon whom be peace, books of fiqh, and so on. It is also preferred to set up a small tent

in the courtyard of the mosque as the Prophet did.

Permissible Acts for the Mu'takif (the person performing l'tikaf)

The following acts are permissible for one who is making l'tikaf

(1) The Person may leave his place of l'tikaf to bid farewell to his wife and a Woman can visit her husband who is in l'tikaf}

Safiyah, radhiya Allahu `anha said : The prophet salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam, was making i'tikaf [in the last ten nights of Ramadan], so I came to visit him at night [and his wives were with him and then departed]. I talked with him for a while, then I stood up to leave, [so he said:"Do not hurry for I will accompany you",. He stood along with me to accompany me back -and her dwelling was in the house of Usaamah Ibn Zayd [until when he came to the door of the mosque near the door of Umm Salamah], two men of the Ansaar were passing by, when they saw the Prophet, salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam, they hastened by, so the Prophet, salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam, said : "Be at your ease for she is Safiyah bintu Huyayy." So they said:"SubhanAllah, O Messenger of Allah! [we did not have any doubt about you].' He said: "Indeed Shaytan circulates in the son of Adam just as blood circulates, and I feared that he would insert an evil thought" -or he said : "something - into your hearts" [Bukhari and Muslim, in] are additional narrations from Abu Dawud]

(2) Combing and cutting one's hair, clipping one's nails, cleaning one's body, wearing nice clothes or wearing perfume are all permissible. 'Aishah reported: "The Prophet was Performing itikaf and he would put his head out through the opening to my room and I would clean [or comb in one narration] his hair. I was menstruating at the time." [al-Bukhari, Muslim, and Abu Dawud].

(3) The person may go out for some need that he must perform. 'Aishah reported: "When the Prophet Performed l'tikaf, he brought his head close to me so I

could comb his hair, and he would not enter the house except to fulfill the needs a person has." [al-Bukhari, and Muslim].

Ibn al-Mundhir says: "The scholars agree that the one who performs itikaf may leave the mosque in order to answer the call of nature, for this is something that he personally must perform, and he cannot do it in the mosque. Also, if he needs to eat or drink and there is no one to bring him his food, he may leave to get it. If one needs to vomit, he may leave the mosque to do so. For anything that he must do but cannot do in the mosque, he can leave it, and such acts will not void his itikaf, even if they take a long time. Examples of these types of acts would include washing one's self from sexual defilement and cleaning his body or clothes from impurities."

(4) The person may eat, drink, and sleep in the mosque, and he should also keep it clean.

Actions that Nullify the I'tikaf

If a person performs one of the following acts, his I'tikaf will be nullified:

(1) Intentionally leaving the mosque without any need to do so, even if it is for just a short time. In such a case, one would not be staying in the mosque, which is one of the principles of I'tikaf.

(2) Abandoning belief in Islam, as this would nullify all acts of worship. If you ascribe a partner to Allah, your work will fail and you will be among the losers.

(3) Losing one's reason due to insanity or drunkenness, or the onset of menstruation or post-childbirth bleeding, all of which disqualifies a person for itikaf.

(4) Sexual intercourse. Allah says [in meaning]: "But do not associate with your wives while you are in seclusion (I'tikaf) in the mosques. Those are Limits (set by) Allah. Approach not nigh thereto. Thus does Allah make clear His Signs to men: that they may learn self-restraint. [al-Baqara; 2:187]

I'tikaf is not restricted to men only, women also can do it :

'Aisha (the wife of the Prophet) reported that the Prophet, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, used to practice I'tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan till he died and then his wives used to practice I'tikaf after him. [Bukhari]

Dear Sister! when reading this do not forget the modesty and the Hijab of the wife of the Prophet (S) that you should observe if you intend to perform I'tikaf.

Seeking Laylatul-Qadr (the Night of Decree)

It is the greatest night of the year like the Day of `Arafah is the greatest day of the year. It is a night about which Allah revealed a full Surah, *Suratul-Qadr* [97:1-5] and the 3rd to the 6th verses of *Surat ad-Dukhan* [44:3-6]

It is the night when the Qur'an was revealed.

It is the night when the Message (the Final and seal of all messages) sent to Mohammad, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, started

It is the night when the light, that would illuminate mankind to the end of life, started

It is the night when every matter of ordainment is decreed

Allah says in what can be translated as :

"Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'aan) down in the Night of Decree (*Lailatul-Qadr*). And what will make you know what the Night of Decree is? The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months. Therein descend the angels and the *RooH* (ie. *Jibreel* [*Gabriel*]) by Allaah's Permission with all Decrees, Peace! until the appearance of dawn." [97:1-5] and in *Surat ad-Dukhan* :

"We sent it (this Qur'aan) down on a blessed Night. Verily, We are ever warning (mankind of Our Torment). Therein (that Night) is decreed every matter of ordainment. *Amran* (i.e. a command or this Qur'aan or His Decree of every matter) from Us. Verily, We are ever sending (the Messenger). (As) a Mercy from your Lord. Ver-

ily! He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. [44:3-6]

A person who misses Laylatul-Qadr is really a deprived person!

Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, said "The blessed month has come to you. Allah has made fasting during it obligatory upon you. During it the gates to Paradise are opened and the gates of Hellfire are locked, and the devils are chained. There is a night [during this month] which is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its good is really deprived [of something great]. [Ahmad, an-Nisa'i and al-Bayhaqi]

One who misses this blessed night then he has missed much good for no one misses it except one from whom it is withheld. Therefore it is recommended that the Muslim who is eager to be obedient to Allaah should stand in Prayer during this night out of Eemaan and hoping for the great reward, since if he does this, Allaah will forgive his previous sins (1).

What happens to the person who witnesses Laylatul-Qadr? and what should one do?

Abu Hurairah Radhiya Allahu `anha reported that the Messenger of Allah, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, said : "Whoever stands (in prayer) in Lailatul-Qadr out of Eemaan (faith and sincerity) and seeking reward then his previous sins are forgiven". [Bukhari]

It is recommended to supplicate a lot during this night, it is reported from our mother 'Aishah radhiya Allahu `anha, that she said: "O Messenger of Allah! What if I knew which night Lailatul-Qadr was, then what should I say in it?" He said.- "Say.- (Allahumma innaka 'affuwun tuhibbul 'afwa fa'fu 'annee.)

"O Allaah You are The One Who pardons greatly, and loves to pardon, so pardon me.". [at-Tirmithi and Ibn Majah with a Sahih Isnad]

When is Laylatul-Qadr ?

It is preferred to seek this night during the last ten odd nights of Ramadan, as the Prophet *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, strove his best in seeking it during that time. We have already mentioned that the Prophet would stay up during the last ten nights, would wake his wives, and then would remain apart from them to worship.

Ibn Abbas reported that the Prophet, *salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*, said, "Look for the Night of Qadr in the last ten nights of Ramadan , ' on the night when nine or seven or five nights remain out of the last ten nights of Ramadan (i.e. 21, 23, 25, respectively)." [Bukhari]

'Aishah radhiya Allahu `anha said: "Allah's Messenger used to practice l'itikaf in the last ten nights and say: 'Seek out Lailatul-Qadr in the (odd nights) of the last ten of Ramadan.'" [Bukhari and Muslim]

However if the servant is too weak or unable, then he should at least not let the last seven pass him by, due to what is reported from Ibn 'Umar, who said: Allah's Messenger said: "Seek it in the last ten, and if one of you is too weak or unable then let him not allow that to make him miss the final seven." [Bukhari and Muslim]

This explains his saying: "I see that your dreams are in agreement (that it is in the last seven) so he who wishes to seek it out then let him seek it in the last seven." [Bukhari and Muslim]

It is known from the Sunnah, that knowledge of the exact night upon which Lailatul-Qadr falls was taken up because the people argued, 'Ubaadah ibn as-Saamit, radiyalloahu 'anhu, said: The Prophet came out intending to tell us about Lailatul-Qadr, however two men were arguing and he said: "I come out to inform you about Lailatul-Qadr but so and so, and, so and so were arguing, so it was raised up, and perhaps that is better for you, so seek it on the (twenty) ninth and the (twenty) seventh and the (twenty) fifth." [Bukhari]

Some of the ahadeeth indicate that Lailatul-Qadr is in the last ten nights, while others indicate that it is in the odd nights of the last ten, so the first are general and the

second more particular, and the particular has to be given priority over the general. Other ahadeeth state that it is in the last seven - and these are restricted by mention of one who is too weak or unable. So there is no confusion, all the ahadeeth agree and are not contradictory.

In conclusion: The Muslim should seek out Lailatul-Qadr in the odd nights of the last ten: the night of the twenty-first, the twenty-third, the twenty-fifth, the twenty-seventh and the twenty-ninth. If he is too weak or unable to seek it out in all the odd nights, then let him seek it out in the odd nights of the of seven: the night of the twenty-fifth, the twenty-seventh and the twenty-ninth And Allah knows best. (1)

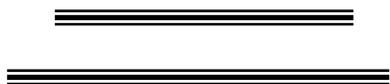
What are the signs of laylatul-Qadr?

Allaah's Messenger , salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam, described the morning after Lailatul-Qadr, so that the Muslim may know which day it is. From Ubayy, radihiya Allahu 'anhu, who said: that he, salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam, said: "On the morning following Lailatul-Qadr the sun rises not having any rays, as if it were a brass dish, until it rises up." [Muslim, Abu Dawud, Tirmithi and Ibn Majah]

Abu Hurairah, radihiya Allahu 'anhu, said : "We were discussing Lailatul-Qadr in the presence of Allah's Messenger so he said : 'Which of you remembers [the night] when the moon arose and was like half a plate?... [Muslim]

Ibn 'Abbaas, radihiya Allahu 'anhuma, said: Allaah's Messenger, salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam, said: "Lailatul-Qadr is calm and pleasant, neither hot nor cold, the sun arises on its morning being feeble and red." [at-Tayaalisee, Ibn Khuzaimah and al-Bazaar with a Hasan Isnad]

We pray to Allah All Mighty Most Merciful to bless us this Ramadan by witnessing Laylatul-Qadr



What After Ramadhan?

AlHamdulillahi wa kafa, was-Salatu was-salamu `alaa `ibaadihi-lladheena Stafaa

We leave the blessed month of Ramadan, its beautiful days and its fragrant nights. We leave the month of the Qur'an, taqwa, patience, jihad, mercy, forgiveness and freedom from hellfire...

Have we fulfilled the requirements of taqwa and graduated from the Ramadan school with the diploma of the God-fearing? Have we fought our souls and desires and defeated them, or have we been overtaken by our customs and blind imitations? Have we performed our actions in a way that fulfills the conditions for receiving mercy, forgiveness and release from the Fire?

Many questions and numerous thoughts come to the heart of the sincere Muslim, who asks and answers with truthfulness.

What Have We Gained From Ramadan?

Ramadan is a school of iman and a 'stop to recharge one's spiritual batteries' - to acquire one's provision for the rest of the year. For when will one take a lesson and change for better if not in the month of Ramadan?

The noble month is a true school of transformation in which we change our actions, habits and manners that are in variance with the Law of Allah 'azza wa jall. "Verily, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." [Ar-Ra`d, 11]

If you are from those who benefited from Ramadan, fulfilled the requirements of taqwa, truly fasted the month, prayed in it with truthfulness, and strove against your soul, then praise and thank Allah, and ask Him for steadfastness upon it until you meet your death.

Be not like one who has sewn a

shirt and then destroyed it... Have you seen one who sewed a shirt or thawb, so when she looked at it, she liked it. Then she destroyed it pulling a thread by thread for no reason. What would people say about such a person?! Or have you seen one who earns a fortune trading throughout the day, then when the night comes, he throws away all that he earned, dirham by dirham. What would people say about such a person?!

This is the condition of one who returns to sinning and evildoing after Ramadan and leaves obedience and righteous actions. So after he was favored with the blessing of obedience and enjoyment of communicating with Allah he returned to the blaze of sins and evil actions. How evil are the people who know Allah only in Ramadan!

My dear ones, falling short in one's commitment to Islam after Ramadan is manifested in many ways, including:

- Men leaving the five prayers in congregation, after they filled mosques for Taraweeh prayers, thus going to the masjid for recommended prayers and leaving obligatory ones.
- Return to musical entertainment, forbidden films, women displaying their adornment beyond that which ordinarily appears thereof, free mixing etc.

This is not thankfulness for blessings and favors, nor is it the sign of acceptance of one's actions, rather this is opposition to favors and absence of thankfulness.

These are from signs of one's deeds not being accepted – and Allah's refuge is sought – for one who truly fasts rejoices on the occasion of `eid, praises his Lord for helping him complete the fast, and remains fearful that Allah may not accept his fasting, just as the Salaf would continue asking for acceptance of their actions in Ramadan for six months after it.

From signs that one's deeds are accepted is that he or she has improved in his or her obedience to Allah `azza wa jall. "And remember when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]...' [Ibrahim, 7] Increase you in

good, faith and righteous actions. So if the servant is truly thankful to his Lord, you will see him guided to more obedience and distanced from sinfulness. Thankfulness is leaving sins, as the early Muslims said.

"And worship your Lord until there comes you to the certainty [i.e. death]." [al-Hijr, 99]

The Muslim must continuously be in the state of obedience of Allah, firm upon His Sharee`ah, steadfast upon His Deen, so that he or she is not of those who worship Allah only during one month or only in one place. Rather, the believer knows that the Lord of Ramadan is also the Lord of other months, and that He is the Lord of all times and places, so he is steadfast upon the Sharee`ah of Allah until he meets Him while He is pleased with him. Allah ta`ala said, "So remain on a right course as you have been commanded, [you] and those who have turned back with you [to Allah]." [Hud, 112] And, "So take a straight course to Him and seek His forgiveness." [Fussilat, 6] And the Prophet, sallallahu `alayhi wa sallam, said, "Say 'I believe in Allah', then be steadfast." [Muslim]

-- If the fasting in Ramadan has ended, then there remains voluntary fasting, such as fasting six days in Shawwal, on Mondays and Thursdays, the three days in the middle of the month, the days of `Aashoora and `Arafat, and others.

-- If standing in prayer at night during Ramadan has ended, then there remains voluntary night prayer throughout the year. "They used to sleep but little of the night." [Adh-Dhaariyaat, 17]

-- If the charity in Ramadan and zakat ul-fitr have ended, then there is the obligatory Zakat, and also there are many other open doors to charity, voluntary actions and jihad.

-- Reading of the Qur'an and contemplating it is not only for Ramadan, rather it is for all times.

Righteous actions are for all times and all places, so strive, O my brother and sister, and beware of laziness. And remember that it is not allowed for us to leave the

obligatory actions or delay them, such as the five daily prayers on time, in congregation etc.

And do not fall into forbidden actions, such as forbidden sayings, food and drinks, or by looking at or listening to what is forbidden.

Be steadfast and upright upon the Deen of Allah at all times, for you do not know when you'll meet the Angel of Death. Beware of him taking you while you are in a state of sin. **"O Allah, Who turns the hearts, keep our hearts steadfast upon Your Deen."**

I ask Allah to accept from us and you our fasting, our prayers and other righteous actions, that our condition after Ramadan be a better one, that the state of our Ummah improves, that we are granted honour and that we truly turn to our Lord...Ameen

Hadith

Yahya related to me from Malik from Abdullah ibn Abi Bakr ibn Hazm that in a letter that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), sent to Amr ibn Hazm it said that no-one should touch the Qur'an unless he was pure.

Malik said, "No-one should carry the Qur'an by its strap, or on a cushion, unless he is pure. If it were permissible to do so, it would also have been permissible to carry it in its cover. This is not because there is something on the hands of the one who carries it by which the Qur'an will be soiled, but because it is disapproved of for someone to carry the Qur'an without being pure out of respect for the Qur'an, and in order to honour it."

Malik said, "The best thing that I have heard about this is the ayat 'None touch it except the purified.' (Sura 56 ayat 79) It ranks with the ayat in Surat Abasa (Sura 80), where Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says, 'No, it is a reminder, and whoever wishes will remember it. Upon honoured pages, exalted and purified, by the hands of scribes, noble and obedient.' " (Maalik)

The True Spirit of Eid

Every Muslim loves the day of Eid. It is a day of happiness and joy. Whether it is the atmosphere of the Eidgaah, the Eid treats or the family coming together, Eid means something special to young and old. For one moment let us stop and ponder what is the true meaning of Eid from an Islamic point of view.

1. Sadaqatul Fitr

Muslims are commanded to spend on the less fortunate prior to the Eid Salaah as a token of gratitude to Allah for all that He provides. Sadaqatul Fitr is a special gift to the poor allowing them to enjoy Eid as well. It seeks to build a community by breaking the barriers between rich and poor.

2. Eid Salaah

Allah has prescribed a special prayer on the day of Eid which is characterized by a number of unique features. There is no Azaan and Iqaamah. There are a number of extra takbeers which are recited. A khutbah follows the Salaah.

This uniqueness serves to remind Muslims that Eid is a unique day. The fact that the day begins with a prayer teaches the Muslims an important lesson :

Even the days of celebration in Islam are linked to worship.

Unlike other nations and people Islam does not celebrate with music, dancing, liquor and entertainment. The spirit of Islamic celebration is filled with love, serenity and spirituality.

Eid Salaah is a reminder to Muslims that although the compulsory fasting has ended but the relationship with Allah can never end. This is a link and bond which must be inseparable.

3. Laylatul Jaaizah

The righteous Muslim stands in prayer on the night preceding the day of Eid in emulation of the Prophet Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam who used to stay awake the entire night. On this night Allah bestows his rewards on those who spent the month of Ramadhaan abiding to Islamic teachings.

A hadith states : One who stands in worship in the nights preceding the two Eids expecting reward his heart will not die when other hearts will die. (Ibn Majah)

Even though Eid is a day of joy a true Muslim will be sad at the thought of the departure of a beloved guest whose arrival was anticipated for eleven months.

4. A few thoughts on the Day of Eid

When you and your children wear new clothes and shoes on Eid morning, think of the thousands of Muslim children who are wearing filthy and torn rags.

When you are enjoying the tasty treats and delicacies of Eid, spare a thought for the millions of Muslims who will have bread crumbs.

While you are free and happy with your children and family, spare a thought for the thousands of Muslims languishing under unspeakable conditions in prisons or battle-fronts all over the world.

Spare a few quiet moments on this Eid Day to make Dua for our innocent brothers and sisters who are being tortured all over the world for no crime other than the fact that they are bearers of the kalimah Laa Ilaaha illallaah Muhammadur Rasoolullah.

When we have such important thoughts and duas to make can we really justify going to places like the Lake and the Waterfront on Eid. Besides the un-Islamic dressing, fashion parading, intermingling of the sexes, music and pride which comes with this there is a serious misrepresentation of the auspicious day of Eid to the non-Muslims. May Allah grant us the ability of using the day profitably.

5. Sunnats of Eid

- Make this a checklist for Eid Morning
- Awake very early in the morning
- Use a miswaak

- Have a bath
- Dress in one's best available clothes ensuring that it conforms with Shariah
- Use itr
- Eat a sweet dish (preferably dates before the Eid Salaah)
- Go early to the Eid Salaah
- Discharge Sadaqatul Fitr before going to the Eid Salaah
- Offer the Eid Salaah at the Eidgaah / Musallah
- To return from the Eid Salaah taking a route that is different from the one that was taken when going.
- To go to the Eid Salaah on foot. However, there is no harm in using any means of conveyance if the Eid Musallah is a distance away.
- To recite the takbeer in a low voice while proceeding for the Eid prayer :

Allaahu Akbar Allaahu Akbar. Laa ilaaha illallahu Wallaahu Akbar Allaahu Akbar Wallaahil Hamd

May Allah grant us all the true spirit of Eid. Aameen!

Cont'd from page 4

Muhammad (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) advised her to recite:

Al-laa-hum-ma in-na-ka 'afoow-wan tu-hib-bul-'af wa fa-fu 'an-ni. O Allah! You are Forgiving, You love forgiveness, so forgive me. (Bukhari).

Special attention should therefore be given to the excessive recitation of this dua on the blessed night. Furthermore one may engage in lengthy rakaats of Tahajjud salaah, Tilaawat of the Qur'an Dua, Zikr, etc.

The worship and the vigil of the Night of Power are a treat to the soul. The heart tends to melt into tears of heartfelt gratitude. The body is in a state of angelic ecstasy The soul strives to reach nearer to Almighty Allah. In this holy month of Ramadhaan let us strive to seek the Night of Power and its bliss. May Allah reward us with His bountiful blessings. Aameen.

Peace until Fajr

Excerpted from Manaar As-sabeel

In each of the daily prayer we offer, we solemnly declare to Allah, “Iyyaka na’budu” (You alone do we worship). While the intelligent and committed believer realizes that his very lifestyle spells worship, he knows, remembering the words of our Prophet (pbuh) that “Du’aa’ (supplication) is worship” [Tirmidhi, Abu Daud] Allah, the Most Merciful, has encouraged the believers to take advantage of certain times during the year to make du’aa’. Such an occasion presents itself annually during Ramadan — especially on the Lailatul Qadr, the Night of Power. On this night, the single most important event in human history unfolded as, after the Glorious Quran was preserved in the Protected Tablet, Jibril descended with the blessed book to reveal it, upon Allah’s command, to His Messenger (pbuh). Accentuating its significance, Allah says “and how would you know (the value of the) Night of Qadr [97:2] So valuable is this Night of Qadr that the Quran devotes a special surah to it. “Lailatul Qadr is better than a thousand months” [97:3] This one night surpasses the value of 30,000 nights. The most authentic account of the occurrence of the Night indicates that it can occur on any one of the last ten, odd-numbered nights of Ramadan. The fact that the exact night is unknown reflects Allah’s will in keeping it hidden. Indeed, the Prophet (pbuh) was prevented from telling us its precise time. One day, he came out to tell the companions the exact night. On the way he saw two men arguing with each other. By the will of Allah, he (pbuh) forgot and subsequently remembered it. Afterwards the Prophet (pbuh) was instructed not to divulge this information. “Had I been allowed,” he (pbuh) remarked once, “I would have told you (of its exact time).” [Ahmad] The Almighty in His wisdom kept this hidden from us for many reasons. Perhaps He wants us to strive hard in our worship during the last

ten days of Ramadan so that we don’t become lazy, worshipping hard on just that one night and denying ourselves the benefit of doing the same on the other nights. “Had people not left their salah except for that (one) night, I would have informed you (of its exact date).” [Al-Tabarani] The sincere believer who worries day and night about his sins and phases of neglect in his life patiently awaits the onset of Ramadan. During it he hopes to be forgiven by Allah for past sins, knowing that the Prophet (pbuh) promised that all who bear down during the last ten days shall have all their sins forgiven. To achieve this, he remembers the Prophet’s (pbuh) advice in different sayings wherein he used words like “seek”, “pursue”, “search”, and “look hard” for Lailatul Qadr. Moreover, Allah and His Prophet (pbuh) provided us some signs of its occurrence. Allah (swt) describes the night as “.peace until the rise of the morn.” [97:5] In various sayings, the Prophet (pbuh) described the night as serene, tranquil, and peaceful. The sun at sunrise would appear reddish and without its normal blazing and sharp rays. The Prophet (pbuh) added that “the angel of earth on that night of Qadr will be more numerous than all the pebbles of the earth.”

What should one do during the last ten days in pursuit of Lailatul Qadr? The devoted servant of Allah makes these nights alive with prayer, reading and reflecting on Quran. He makes du’aa’ to Allah, penitently beseeching Him for His forgiveness. He is inspired by the Prophet’s (pbuh) words “Our Lord, most Exalted, Most high comes down to the lowest heaven during the last third of each night and announces (reassuringly): Whoever makes du’aa’, I shall answer it. Whoever asks (for something halal) I shall grant it; and whoever seeks forgiveness, I shall forgive him.” [Bukhari] The believer, conscious of

Allah and their sins, will continue to beseech Allah, in and out of prayer, during his prostration. For a time, the only concern will be cleansing oneself of the forgetfulness that this life propagates in one's heart, the sins that accumulate, darkening the heart, making it insensitive to disobeying Allah. He begs Allah to keep him away from misfortunes in this world, the punishment of the grave, and the torment of Hell. He asks Allah to make him patient and steadfast in struggling to maintain his Islam in this world and asks Him to overlook his shortcomings, periods of laziness and neglect. Sincere devotion on that night will render the believer forgetful of the time, until he is surprised by the Adhan of Fajr. After Fajr, as the sun creeps above the horizon, reddish and weak in its appearance, without any rays, the effort at night will have been worthwhile. The believer rejoices, knowing that this was quite possibly Lailatul Qadr and "whoever stays up (in prayer and remembrance of Allah) on the Night of Qadr fully believing (in Allah's promise of reward for that night) and hoping to seek reward (from Allah alone and not from people), he shall be forgiven for his past sins." [Bukhari, Muslim]

Hadith

Abu Umamah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "The superiority of the learned over the devout worshipper is like my superiority over the most inferior amongst you (in good deeds)." He went on to say, "Allah, His angels, the dwellers of the heaven and the earth, and even the ant in its hole and the fish (in water) supplicate in favour of those who teach people knowledge." [At-Tirmidhi].

Life After Ramadan

Sheikh `Abdul Muhsin al-Qasim

All praise is due to Allah. We thank Him, we seek His help and forgiveness. We also seek His refuge against the evil within ourselves and that of our deeds. Whoever Allah guides, nobody can mislead him, and whoever He misleads will never be guided. I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger. May Allah bestow peace and blessing upon the noble Prophet, his family and companions.

Dear Muslims! Months, days and years are made to determine the lifespan of humans and to afford them the opportunity to perform good deeds. Furthermore, death patrols day and night to take the souls of those whose time is due and everyone will be addressed on the Day of Resurrection to account for his/her deeds. In one of the Qudsi hadiths, Allah says: "These are only your deeds; I record them and for which I am going to reward you. So, whoever gets a good reward should be thankful to Allah and whoever gets otherwise should only blame himself."

Dear brothers and sisters! Your month of Ramadan has now gone with your deeds. Let those who have committed wrong among you quickly repent and mend their ways before the door of Repentance is closed and let those who have done good continue on the same track for the best of all acts of obedience are those followed by their like. Be concerned more over the acceptance of your deeds than over the deeds themselves for Allah does not accept deeds except from the pious ones. Also, beware of following good deeds with bad ones because if we say that good deeds eradicate bad ones, it is also possible that bad deeds destroy good ones.

Brothers and sisters in faith! During the past month, you were fasting during the

day, praying during the night, and doing different kinds of sacrificial acts in order to obtain a reward and be saved from Hellfire. With the departure of this month, a stage of your life has passed. This is how we pass the days of this life in stages on our way to the everlasting abode. Indeed, continuation of good deeds at all times is a characteristic of righteous people. Acts of obedience do not have a specific time. However, the month of Ramadan is an opportunity for the believers to race with one another towards good deeds and is an opportunity to direct one's soul towards meritorious acts and keep it from vices; yet, it is incumbent on Muslims to remain on the path of righteousness even after Ramadan.

Worshipping Allah should not be restricted to Ramadan alone for there is no end to the Muslim's worship except when he dies. What evil people are those who worship in only one month and do not know Allah except in Ramadan!

Dear Muslims! Certainly, there are signs for the acceptance and rejection of deeds in this month. Among the signs of acceptance of good deeds is to follow them with more good deeds. Likewise, it is a sign of rejection to follow one's good deeds with evil ones. Allah says: [Establish Prayer at the two ends of the day and in some watches of the night. Lo! good deeds annul ill deeds. This is a reminder for the mindful.] (Hud 11: 114)

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) also said: "Fear Allah wherever you are, follow the evil deed with a good one to erase it, and treat people with good manners." (At-Tirmidhi)

Let those who are determined to go back to sins after Ramadan know that Allah is always pleased with those who obey Him irrespective of time, and is angry with those who disobey Him irrespective of the month in which the disobedience takes place. The person's continuation of good deeds without restricting it to a certain period, particular month, or special place is a sign of one's righteousness and acceptance of his good deeds.

Fellow Muslims! Though the Ramadan season is now gone, yet, fasting is still recommended in other months. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) has recommended fasting on Mondays and Thursdays. Imam At-Tirmidhi reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Deeds are presented (to Allah) on Monday and Thursday and I would like that my deeds be presented while I am fasting."

It is also reported that he (peace and blessings be upon him) told Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that fasting for three days in every month is equal to fasting forever.

In another Hadith, the Prophet is reported to have said, "He who observed the fast of Ramadan and then followed it with six (fasts) of Shawwal; it would be as if he fasted perpetually." (Muslim)

Even though night prayer during Ramadan might have gone, night prayer throughout the year is also recommended. It has been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) that Allah comes every night down on the nearest Heaven to us when the last third of the night remains, saying: "Is there anyone to invoke Me, so that I may respond to his invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him his request? Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness, so that I may forgive him?"

Fellow Muslims! While there are a some youths, who during the noble month of Ramadan, were busy passing their time in lustful things, sins, and acts of obedience, there are others who were busy doing deeds of righteousness such as *i'tikaf* (spiritual retreat) in the houses of Allah. They gave obedience to their Lord preference over their own desires. You would see them bowing, prostrating, and reciting the Glorious Qur'an. Such youths are the hope and pride of this Ummah.

Dear Muslims! Fear Allah for fear of Allah is the head of all matters. Obey Allah and keep away from His restrictions, so that you receive His pleasure and are saved

from His torment. Do not return to sinning and disobedience so as not to be entitled to His punishment.

Dear brothers and sisters, thank your Lord for enabling you to complete the fasting of this month. Enjoy your `Eid by remaining consistent in doing good deeds and keep away from undesirable things that would lead to removing Allah's favors from you. One of our righteous predecessors said, "Each day in which no act of disobedience to Allah is committed is `Eid, and each day a believer spent in acts of obedience to his Lord is `Eid".

Zikrullah

Abu Hurairah (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "The world, with all that it contains, is accursed except for the remembrance of Allah that which pleases Allah; and the religious scholars and seekers of knowledge." [At-Tirmidhi].

Commentary: *This Hadith has already been mentioned. It does not mean that this world, and whatever is in it, is really cursed. What it in fact means is that such things of this world are cursed which make a person negligent of the remembrance of Allah; or it is cursed for those who in their whole life do not remember Allah. This Hadith has been mentioned in the present chapter, which relates to knowledge for the reason that acquisition of knowledge is essential to know that such and such work will be a source of winning the Pleasure of Allah and such and such act will incur His displeasure. This is the reason the teacher and the learner have been included in the exemptions from the curse.*

Sabr and Shukr

Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (RA)

Among the attributes essential for man's spiritual as well as worldly progress and prosperity are Sabr (patience) and Shukr (gratitude).

The conditions and circumstances which occur to man, be these voluntary or involuntary are of two types: pleasing or displeasing. If the circumstances occurring to man are pleasing, he should consider these as favours from Allah Ta'ala and offer his heartfelt appreciation and gratitude. He should consider such bounties more than what he actually deserved and verbally he should recite the praises of Allah Ta'ala. Furthermore, he must not employ such bounties of Allah Ta'ala in sinful avenues, e.g. spending wealth in un-Islamic customs; using one's strength influence and knowledge in ways deprecated by the Shariah. This is the meaning of Shukr.

On the otherhand, the circumstances arising may be displeasing, causing anxiety and difficulty to one. When man is confronted with such conditions, he should consider that in these untoward condition Allah Ta'ala has placed some benefit which is not discernable ordinarily. Such conditions are subject to Allah's wisdom and they are for the betterment of the one involved in the displeasing condition. The attitude of the Mu'min in such circumstances should be one of resignation. He should not complain nor display impatience. If the displeasing occurrence is a command of the Shariah, he should adhere to it firmly and not permit frustration and worry to overtake him. If the condition is some calamity which has befallen him, he must bear it with firmness and not be overwhelmed by despondency. This is the meaning of Sabr.

Of the two attributes, Sabr is the more difficult. This attribute is more in demand since man is confronted more with circumstances which are displeasing and difficult to him. As examples, some condi-

tions of displeasure will be cited here.

* The nafs of man becomes agitated and perplexed at the imposition of Deeni duties which have to be rendered. It thus attempts to escape such acts which are commanded by Allah Ta'ala. It desires the commission of haraam and seeks a release from the obligations of Salaat, Saum, etc. It becomes displeased when an unlawful source of income has to be banished. It feels a great burden in discharging the rights of others. In such cases man has to adopt courage and suppress the baneful urges and dictates of the nafs. He has necessarily to overcome his urges of the nafs and proceed undaunted with the execution of the commands of Allah Ta'ala, irrespective of the displeasure the nafs suffers. Such displeasure and apparent difficulty will be short-lived. Firmness and harnessing the nafs into obedience will very quickly produce comfort and peace. The initial displeasure will be transformed into pleasure.

* The calamities of poverty, sickness, death, persecution by enemies, loss of property, etc. When confronted by such misfortunes, reflect on the possible wisdoms underlying these calamities. The greatest benefit to be achieved from such displeasing conditions is thawaab from Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala has promised great reward for the Believer overtaken by calamities.

When such calamities befall man, he should not unnecessarily publicize them nor should he meditate on these misfortunes. He should not make these misfortunes the occupation of his mind. Adoption of this attitude will create peace in the heart. However, if there are lawful ways and means of combating the calamity, these should be adopted.

* An oppressor creating obstacles in the way of the Deen. One is thwarted by an unjust person in the execution of one's Islamic duties or attempts are made to bring disrepute and insult on the Deen. When confronted by such opposition, The Mu'min holds life cheap. Do not consider life to be of any importance in the endeavour to elevate the Word of Allah Ta'ala. But, this does not mean the creation of anarchy based on de-

sire. Even in the endeavour to uphold the Shariah, the Shariah-the Law of Allah must not be violated.

The above are some examples of conditions in which Sabr has to be adopted. Some narrations in this regard will now be cited.

1. Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan "Seek aid with Sabr and Salaat." (Surah Baqarah)

If love of wealth and love of fame over whelm man and impede the development of his Imaan-as it will most certainly do-he should engage in Sabr and abundance of Salaat, for this will most assuredly fortify him against the onslaught of this nafs. The form of Sabr advocate in this aayat is abstention from the desires and dictates of the nafs.

2. "We shall certainly test you by means of some fear, poverty, loss of wealth and life. And, give glad tidings (of thawaab) to those who adopt Sabr (in the face of these calamities). (Surah Baqarah)

3. Regarding the Preserverance and fortitude of some nations of the past, Allah Ta'ala says:

"They lost not courage because of the hardships which confronted them in the Path of Allah. They were not weakened nor were they awed by the enemy. Allah Ta'ala loves such Saabireen (those who are steadfast and have patience)." (Sura Aale Imraan)

Men of Allah are steadfast in the face of the enemy. Hardships and obstacles confronting them in their journey towards Allah Ta'ala do not deter them. Their fortitude and steadfastness-their Sabr-are such that they do not descend to flattering the enemies of Allah Ta'ala. Their gaze is focused on Allah Ta'ala and they know that victory is theirs.

4. Allah Ta'ala says:

"Those who are patient (have Sabr in their Deeni activities), we will most certainly reward them for their good acts." (Surah Nahl)

"..... the men who have Sabr and the women who have Sabr for them all, Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward (Surah Ahzaab)

All forms of Sabr are included in this aayat. Sabr in regard to ibaadat, Sabr in regard to sin and Sabr in regard to calamities are within the purview of this aayat which promises great reward and forgiveness for the Saabireen.

5. Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Shall I inform you of something by means of which Allah eliminates sin and elevates ranks? Performing a perfect wudhu when making wudhu is displeasing (to the nafs), walking much to the Masjid, and waiting anxiously for the arrival of another salaah after having performed one Salaah.....” (Muslim, Tirmizi)

6. Hadhrat Abu Darda (radiallahu anhu) narrates:

“My Beloved (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) made wasiyyat to me that I should not commit shirk with Allah Ta’ala even if my flesh is cut up and even if I am cast into a fire....” (Ibn majah)

Preservence on such occasions is a high rank of Sabr. However, in cases of brutality and torture, the Qur’aan hakeem grants permission to make a verbal declaration of even kufr provided that the heart does not deny Imaan. The extraction of anti-Imaan statements from a person under torture does not come within the Islamic definition of kufr and shirk.

7. Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) once appointed Hadhrat Abu Musa (radiallahu anhu) as commander of an army which was dispatched on an expedition by sea. In the darkness of the night while the ship was sailing, a caller from above the ship exclaimed:

“O occupants of the ship! Let me inform you of something which Allah Ta’ala has undertaken as His responsibility.”

Hadhrat Abu Musa (radiallahu anhu) answered:

“If you have something to tell us then speak up.”

The Caller called out:

“Allah Ta’ala has undertaken the

responsibility of quenching the thirst on the Day of Qiyaamah of those who remained thirsty during fasting on hot days.” (Targheeb)

8. Hadhrat Aishah (radiallahu anha) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“A person who struggles in the recitation of the Qur’aan (on account of his inability to recite properly), will gain a double reward from Allah.” (Bukhari, Muslim)

9. Hadhrat Aishah (radiallahu anha) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The most beloved deed to Allah is such a deed on which there is constancy even if the deed is little.” (Bukhari, Muslim)

It is quite evident that Sabr is required in being constant in practicing a deed.

10. Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Jahannum is veiled in pleasures and delights while Jannat is veiled in difficulties and hardships. (Muslim)

11. Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“A Muslim’s sins are forgiven whenever he is overtaken by hardship and difficulty even if it be a thorn which pricks him.” (Bukhari, Muslim)

12. Hadhrat Aishah (radiallahu anha) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“A man who remains with Sabr and with the niyyat of thawaab at a place overtaken by an epidemic and believing that only what Allah has decreed will happen, will attain the thawaab which a shaheed (martyr) obtains.” (Bukhari, Muslim)

13. Hadhrat Anas (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Allah Ta’ala will give Jannat in return for the two eyes on which patience was exercised.” (Bukhari)

This hadith refers to a man losing his sight. Blindness is indeed a great hardship. Sabr in this difficulty will be rewarded

with Jannat.

14. Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: that Allah Ta'ala said:

"There is nothing but Jannat for the one who is patient and hopes for thawaab when I take away someone beloved to him." (Bukhari)

Sabri is of great merit especially on occasions of death of near and dear ones.

16. Hadhrat Abu Musa Ash'ari (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that Allah Ta'ala orders the Malaikah to erect a special mansion in Jannat for the one who had exercised patience and praised Allah Ta'ala when an infant had passed away. The name given to such a special place in Jannat is 'Baitul Hamd'. (Ahmad, Tirmizi)

17. Hadhrat Abu Darda (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Allah Ta'ala loves three persons to whom He directs His special Gaze of Mercy (Among the three, one is) a man who is prepared to sacrifice his life in the Path of Allah, whether he actually loses his life or Allah Ta'ala grants him victory (over the enemy). In regard to such a person, Allah Ta'ala says: 'Look at this servant of Mine! How he has dedicated his life to My cause! (Targheeb)

Sufficient narrations have been cited to indicate the significance and importance of Sabr.

Shukr will now be explained.

Shukr is an ibaadat. A characteristic of Shukr is that it simplifies the ibaadat of Sabr. A man who has adopted Shukr will take calamity and hardship in his stride. Since he realizes the tremendous bounties of Allah Ta'ala on him, hence his gratitude, he will understand that the hardship has been imposed on him by his Benefactor, Allah Ta'ala, in his own interests. His mind in thus conditioned to accept all hardships with resignations and without complaint. For the sake of gaining thawaab he will bear the hardships without being overwhelmed by

frustration. On the contrary he will derive pleasure from the realization that the hardship has been imposed on him by his Benefactor, Allah Ta'ala.

A man of Shukr (gratitude) reflects on the ni'mats bestowed on him by Allah Ta'ala. Such reflection strengthens the bond of love between man and his Benefactor. He cannot, therefore, become despondent and break down in the face of difficulties which he realizes are trials from the side of his Creator and benefactor Who has always showered him with His numerous blessings and Bounties. Thus, Sabr, based on the attitude of Shukr becomes a simple matter for the one overcome by calamities and hardships.

Some narrations regarding Shukr will now be cited.

1. Allah Ta'ala says:

"Remember Me and I will remember you. Be grateful to Me and be not ungrateful. (Surah Baqarah)

2. "If you are grateful for My bounties, I will increase (these) for you. If you are ungrateful, then My punishment is severe." (Surah Ibraheem)

3. Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Whoever has attained four things has attained the goodness of this world and the Akhirah. These are: A heart which makes Shukr; a tongue which makes Thikr; a body which adopts Sabr when overtaken by trials and tribulations; and, a wife who is chaste and does not abuse the wealth of her husband." (Baihaqi)

It is a fact that the life of man is always confronted by some condition or the other. He may be involved in pleasing or displeasing circumstances. When enjoying pleasing conditions, man has to be grateful. He has to show Shukr. When apprehended by displeasing conditions, he has to adopt Sabr. Thus Shukr and Sabr are attributes which are to be applied at all times. Remember this well and you will live a life of peace and comfort.

Rape & Incest: Islamic Perspective

Uzma Mazhar

Incest and rape are not new in this day and age; these problems have always existed and will continue to exist if not confronted face on. If you have ever worked with an incest, sexual abuse or rape survivor you will never be able to forget the devastating impact it has on all aspects of their life, nor will you be able to sit back and do nothing about this issue. These are serious crimes that corrode the fabric of family and society and cannot go un-addressed, since these problems do exist in Muslim families it is about time that we address it openly and take action to put an end to it.

To fully understand this issue we need to examine what Islâm teaches us about the value of human life.

Islâm views human life as a sacred gift from God. The Qur'ân repeatedly stresses the sanctity of life (hurmat al hayat). The life of every single individual regardless of gender, age, nationality or religion is worthy of respect. In verses referring to the sanctity of life, the term used is 'nafs' (soul, life); and there is no distinction made in that soul being young or old, male or female, Muslim or non-muslim.

Sûrah al An'am 6.151: "Do not take any human being's life, (the life) which God has declared to be sacred - otherwise than in (the pursuit of) justice: this has He enjoined upon you so that you might use your reason." (Also check: Sûrah al Isra 17.33 & Sûrah al Ma'idah 5.32)

Qur'anic teachings encompass every aspect of life; hence it does not limit the definition of life to the physical body only, but includes the mental, emotional and spiritual aspects as well. There are about 150 verses that define the term 'nafs' in various ways making it clear that the concept of 'life' is not limited to mere physical existence.

Historically, Islam has addressed serious issues openly and sought to correct actions that constitute harm or 'zulm' (ie:

cruelty and abuse) to the dignity of humankind. Human life and respect for it has been stressed unstintingly, regardless of age or gender. As a general rule, Islâm forbids all 'zulm', be it physical, mental, emotional or spiritual:

Sûrah al An'am 6.120 "Abandon all harm (ithm), whether committed openly or in secret." (Check Sûrah al A'raf 7:33)

Sûrah al 49:11-12 points out categorically that emotionally abusive language and behavior is not acceptable. "You who believe do not let one (set of) people make fun of another set. Do not defame one another. Do not insult by using nicknames. And do not backbite or speak ill of one another."

In the last address to his community, the Prophet (saw) said: "Your lives and properties are forbidden to one another till you meet your Lord on the Day of Resurrection... Regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust... Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you... You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity." The Prophet (saw) did not prohibit only the unlawful encroachment of one another's life and property, but also honor and respect.

Considering that human life is to be valued and cruelty is forbidden, what is the Islamic perspective on incest and rape?

According to Islâm, a woman has to be respected and protected under all circumstances, whether she belongs to your own nation or to the nation of an enemy, whether she follows your religion or belongs to some other religion or has no religion at all. A Muslim cannot outrage her under any circumstances. All promiscuous relationships have been forbidden to him, irrespective of the status or position of the woman, whether the woman is a willing or an unwilling partner to the act. The words of the Holy Qur'ân in this respect are: "Do not approach (the bounds of) adultery" (17:32). Heavy punishment has been prescribed for this

crime, and the order has not been qualified by any conditions. Since the violation of chastity of a woman is forbidden in Islam, a Muslim who perpetrates this crime cannot escape punishment.

The Quran has, in various ways and in different contexts; impressed on men that they must observe the limits set by God (Hudūd Allah) in respect to women and must not encroach upon their rights in either marriage or divorce. In all situations it is the men who are reminded, corrected and reprimanded, over and over again, to be generous to women and to be kind, compassionate, fair and just in their dealings with women. Even in divorce, when the chances of anger and vindictiveness are high, it is stressed that men are to separate with grace, equity and generosity.

Forbidding cruelty against children and women is apparent from rulings against female infanticide and rights of inheritance given even to an unborn child; and the kindness mandated even when divorcing your wife. There are numerous ahādīth about the rights of children to respect and dignity. The same holds true for respect and the unprecedented rights given to women.

Relevant verses from the Quran: Sūrah an Nās 4.119 'O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will...' Sūrah an Nūr 24.33 '... And do not, in order to gain some of the fleeting pleasures of this worldly life, coerce your slave women into whoredom if they are desirous of marriage, and if anyone should coerce them, then, verily, after they have been compelled (to submit in their helplessness), God will be much forgiving, a dispenser of grace (to them).

During the time of the Prophet (saw) punishment was inflicted on the rapist on the solitary evidence of the woman who was raped by him. Wa'il ibn Hujr reports of an incident when a woman was raped. Later, when some people came by, she identified and accused the man of raping her. They seized him and brought him to Allah's messenger, who said to the woman, "Go away, for Allāh has forgiven you," but of

the man who had raped her, he said, "Stone him to death." (Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud)

During the time when Umar (raa) was the Khalifah, a woman accused his son Abu Shahmah of raping her; she brought the infant borne of this incident with her to the mosque and publicly spoke about what had happened. Umar (raa) asked his son who acknowledged committing the crime and was duly punished right there and then. There was no punishment given to the woman. (Rauf)

Islamic legal scholars interpret rape as a crime in the category of Hiraba. In 'Fiqh-us-Sunnah', hiraba is described as: 'a single person or group of people causing public disruption, killing, forcibly taking property or money, attacking or raping women (hatk al 'arad), killing cattle, or disrupting agriculture.'

The famous jurist, Ibn Hazm, had the widest definition of hiraba, defining a hiraba offender as: 'One who puts people in fear on the road, whether or not with a weapon, at night or day, in urban areas or in open spaces, in the palace of a caliph or a mosque, with or without accomplices, in the desert or in the village, in a large or small city, with one or more people... making people fear that they'll be killed, or have money taken, or be raped (hatk al 'arad)... whether the attackers are one or many.'

Al-Dasuqi held that if a person forced a woman to have sex, his actions would be deemed as committing hiraba. In addition, the Maliki judge Ibn 'Arabi, relates a story in which a group was attacked and a woman in their party was raped. Responding to the argument that the crime did not constitute hiraba because no money was taken and no weapons used, Ibn 'Arabi replied indignantly that "hiraba with the private parts" is much worse than hiraba involving the taking of money, and that anyone would rather be subjected to the latter than the former.

The crime of rape is classified not as a subcategory of 'zina' (consensual adultery), but rather as a separate crime of violence under hiraba. This classification is

logical, as the "taking" is of the victim's property (the rape victim's sexual autonomy) by force. In Islam, sexual autonomy and pleasure is a fundamental right for both women and men (Ghazâlî); taking by force someone's right to control the sexual activity of one's body is thus a form of hiraba.

Rape as hiraba is a violent crime that uses sexual intercourse as a weapon. The focus in a hiraba prosecution is the accused rapist and his intent and physical actions, and not second-guessing the consent of the rape victim. Hiraba does not require four witnesses to prove the offense, circumstantial evidence, medical data and expert testimony form the evidence used to prosecute such crimes.

Islamic legal responses to rape are not limited to a criminal prosecution for hiraba. Islamic jurisprudence also provides an avenue for civil redress for a rape survivor in its law of "jirah" (wounds). Islamic law designates ownership rights to each part of one's body, and a right to corresponding compensation for any harm done unlawfully to any of those parts. Islamic law calls this the 'law of jirah' (wounds). Harm to a sexual organ, therefore, entitles the person harmed to appropriate financial compensation under classical Islamic jirah jurisprudence. Each school of Islamic law has held that where a woman is harmed through sexual intercourse (some include marital intercourse), she is entitled to financial compensation for the harm. Further, where this intercourse was without the consent of the woman, the perpetrator must pay the woman both the basic compensation for the harm, as well as an additional amount based on the 'diyya' (financial compensation for murder, akin to a wrongful death payment).

Islamic law, with its radical introduction of a woman's right to own property as a fundamental right, employs a gender-egalitarian attitude in this area of jurisprudence. In fact, there is a hadith specifically directed to transforming the early Muslim population out of this patriarchal attitude of male financial compensation for female sexual activity. During the time of Prophet Mu-

hammad, a young man committed zina with his employer's wife. The father of the young man gave one hundred goats and a maid as compensation to the employer, who accepted it. When the case was reported to the Prophet, he ordered the return of the goats and the maid to the young man's father and prosecuted the adulterer for zina (Abu Daud 1990, 3: Bk. 33, No. 4430; Bukhârî 1985, 8:Bk. 81, Nos. 815, 821, 826).

Early Islam thus established that there should be no tolerance of the attitude that a woman's sexual activity is something to be bartered, pawned, gossiped about, or owned by the men in her life. Personal responsibility of every human being for their own actions is a fundamental principle in Islamic thought.

Marital Rape

The Quran is very clear that the basis of a marital relationship is love and affection between the spouses, not power or control. Rape is unacceptable in such a relationship.

Sûrah al Baqarah 2.223 'Your wives are your tilth; go then unto your tilth as you may desire, but first provide something for your souls*, and remain conscious of God, and know that your are destined to meet Him...'. * Note in Muhammad Asad's translation: 'a spiritual relationship between man and woman is postulated as the indispensable basis of sexual relations.'

Sûrah ar Rum 30.21 "And among His wonders is this: He creates for you mates out of your own kind, so that your might incline towards them, and He engenders love and tenderness between you: in this, behold, there are messages indeed for people who think!

Sûrah al Baqarah 2.187 "... They are as a garment for you, and you are as a garment for them."

Sûrah al Nisa 4.19 "... And consort with your wives in a goodly manner, for if you dislike them, it may well be that you dislike something which God might yet make a source of abundant good."

"Is there recognition of marital rape

in Islam? In the context of jirah, it would appear so: where there is any physical harm or disease caused to a spouse, there may be a claim for jirah compensation. The law of jirah provides for compensation for physical harm between spouses, and supports Islamic legislation against domestic abuse. Even in these discussions of appropriate jirah compensation, the question of the injured party's consent plays a central role. Some Islamic jurists considered consent to be presumed by virtue of the marital relationship, while others maintain that where harm occurs, it is an assault, regardless of the consent, and therefore compensation is due. In our modern era, one might take these precedents and their premium focus on consent and apply the Islamic principle of sexual autonomy to conclude that any sex without consent is harmful, as a dishonoring of the unwilling party's sexual autonomy. Thus, modern Islamic jurists and legislators, taking a gender-egalitarian perspective, might conclude that Islamic law does recognize marital rape, and assign the appropriate injunctions and compensation for this personally devastating harm." (Qureshi)

An often misquoted and abused hadith that is used to tyrannize women is that women cannot and should not say no to their husband when he approaches them. Women are advised not to turn away from their husbands except if they have their period or any other reasonable excuse. So much so that she is to break her voluntary fast if her husband approaches her. And if they do angels will curse them. However, this hadith is not quoted with the complementary one that advises men of the same consideration.

In the same manner men are advised that meeting the needs of their wives takes precedence over voluntary worship. Narrated Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-As: "Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, "O Abdullah! I have been informed that you fast all the day and stand in prayer all night?" I said, 'Yes, O Allah's Apostle!' He said, "Do not do that! Observe the fast sometimes

and also leave them at other times, stand up for the prayer at night and also sleep at night. Your body has a right over you and your wife has a right over you." (Bukhâri)

To a certain degree these ahâdîth are used to confuse and distract from the issue, since rape does not have anything to do with permission or lack of permission. In a marriage abusive or forced sexual activity cannot be justified by abusing this hadith. Rape is defined as unwanted, violent and forced sex, whether this occurs in a marital context or outside it. The definition of rape does not change because of the relationship.

It is important to not confuse the issue of mutual rights that a couple has on each other with the misguided, distorted and misogynist assumption that women become a husband's property. Islam does not allow for or tolerate ownership of human beings. Human dignity does not allow that any one person has the right to own, mind/body/soul, another human being... and Islam demands that all human beings respect the humanity of everyone.

Incest & Child Abuse

The Quran clearly outlines those with whom marriage is not permitted, we can extrapolate from it that any sexual relation with these would be unacceptable.

Sûrah an Nisa 4:23: Prohibited for you (in marriage) are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, the sisters of your fathers, the sisters of your mothers, the daughters of your brother, the daughters of your sister, your nursing mothers, the girls who nursed from the same woman as you, the mothers of your wives, the daughters of your wives with whom you have consummated the marriage - if the marriage has not been consummated, you may marry the daughter. Also prohibited for you are the women who were married to your genetic sons. Also, you shall not be married to two sisters at the same time - but do not break up existing marriages. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

This includes your foster parents,

siblings and children.

Al Hasan reports: 'If somebody commits illegal intercourse with his sister, his punishment is the same as for any other person who commits such a crime'. (Bukhâri Vol. 8 pp 526)

Thus, these same laws mentioned above in cases of rape would be equally applicable, and incest can be prosecuted as a crime within the bounds of Islamic law.

According to Islam, all aspects of life, ie: the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual, are sacred and must be respected. No gender or relationship has been given the power or right to hurt or harm the other. Domestic violence, rape and incest are all violent and criminal abuses that are outside the bounds of what is permitted in Islam and there is absolutely no justification for it whatsoever.

Hadith

Yahya related to me from Malik from Sumayy, the mawla of Abu Bakr, from Abu Salih as-Samman from Abu Hurayra that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Whoever says 'There is no god but Allah, alone, without any partner. The Kingdom and praise belong to Him and He has power over everything' (La ilaha illa'llah, wahdahu la sharika lah, lahu'l mulku wa lahu'l hamd, wa huwa ala kulli shay'in qadir) one hundred times a day, it is the same for him as freeing ten slaves. One hundred good actions are written for him and one hundred wrong actions are erased from him, and it is a protection from Shaytan for that day until the night. No-one does anything more excellent than what he does except someone who does more than that." (Mota Imam Maalik)

Statistics About Domestic Abuse

Muhammad ash-Shareef

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

Approximately 95% of the victims of domestic violence are women. (Department of Justice figures)

Every 9 seconds in the United States a woman is assaulted and beaten.

4,000,000 women a year are assaulted by their partners.

In the United States, a woman is more likely to be assaulted, injured, raped, or killed by a male partner than by any other type of assailant.

Every day, 4 women are murdered by boyfriends or husbands.

Prison terms for killing husbands are twice as long as for killing wives.

93% of women who killed their mates had been battered by them. 67% killed them to protect themselves and their children at the moment of murder.

25% of all crime is wife assault.

70% of men who batter their partners either sexually or physically abuse their children.

Domestic violence is the number one cause of emergency room visits by women.

73% of the battered women seeking emergency medical services have already separated from the abuser.

Women are most likely to be killed when attempting to leave the abuser. In fact, they're at a 75% higher risk than those who stay.

The number-one cause of women's

injuries is abuse at home. This abuse happens more often than car accidents, mugging, and rape **combined**.

Up to 37% of all women experience battering. This is an estimated 566,000 women in Minnesota alone.

Battering often occurs during pregnancy. One study found that 37% of pregnant women, across all class, race, and educational lines, were physically abused during pregnancy.

60% of all battered women are beaten while they are pregnant.

34% of the female homicide victims over age 15 are killed by their husbands, ex-husbands, or boyfriends.

2/3 of all marriages will experience domestic violence at least once.

Weapons are used in 30% of domestic violence incidents.

Approximately 1,155,600 adult American women have been victims of one or more forcible rapes by their husbands.

Over 90% of murder-suicides involving couples are perpetrated by the man. 19-26% of male spouse-murderers committed suicide.

When only spouse abuse was considered, divorced or separated men committed 79% of the assaults and husbands committed 21%.

Abusive husbands and lovers harass 74% of employed battered women at work, either in person or over the telephone, causing 20% to lose their jobs.

Physical violence in dating relationships ranges from 20-35%.

It is estimated that between 20% to 52% of high school and college age dating couples have engaged in physical abuse.

More than 50% of child abductions result from domestic violence.

Injuries that battered women receive are at least as serious as injuries suf-

fered in **90%** of violent felony crimes.

In 1991, only 17 states kept data on reported domestic violence offenses. These reports were limited to murder, rape, robbery, and serious bodily injury.

More than half of battered women stay with their batterer because they do not feel that they can support themselves and their children alone.

In homes where domestic violence occurs, children are abused at a rate **1,500% higher** than the national average.

Up to 64% of hospitalized female psychiatric patients have histories of being physically abused as adults.

50% of the homeless women and children in the U.S. are fleeing abuse.

The amount spent to shelter animals is three times the amount spent to provide emergency shelter to women from domestic abuse situations.

Family violence kills as many women every 5 years as the total number of Americans who died in the Vietnam War.

Istigfaar

Ibn Mas`ud (RA) said: The Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "He who says: `Astaghfir ullah-alladhi la ilaha illa Huwal-Haiyul-Qayyumu, wa atubu ilaihi (I seek the forgiveness of Allah, there is no true god except Allah, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, and I turn to Him in repentance), his sins will be forgiven even if he should have run away from the battlefield (while he was engaged in fighting for the Cause of Allah)."[Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and Al-Hakim].

Commentary: *When we say that this narration fulfills the conditions of Al-Bukhari and Muslim; it means that its narrators are the narrators of Al-Bukhari and Muslim. Secondly, in this selection those conditions have also been kept in view, which are the landmark of Al-Bukhari and Muslim.*

The Muslim Condition

Majid Nawaz

Allah (swt) has decreed: "*InnAllaha laa yoghayyiru maa bi Qawmin hattaa yoghayyiroo maa bi anfusihim*" [Ar-Ra'ad: 11].

"Allah will not change what is in any nation, until they all collectively make a change occur in what is in themselves" [TMQ Ar-Ra'ad: 11].

Many from amongst the sincere and insincere Muslims utilise this Ayah in an attempt to justify not working for the Khilafah by reviving the Ummah in a collective way. Instead, they claim, that one should perfect what is within oneself first, and only then can they look to the ills of society. Thus, they emphasise the perfection of the individual, as Allah (swt) has said that He (swt) will not change the situation of the people until they first change what is within their own selves.

Without de-emphasising the importance of tazkiyyat un-naafs (purification of oneself), it is necessary to eradicate the above false understanding, especially the idea that through tazkiyyah alone, one can revive the Ummah. In fact, such a twisted interpretation of the glorious words of Allah (swt) cannot be further from the truth. The following Tafseer of this ayah will explain its true meaning by breaking down the Arabic word by word with the aim of elucidating the collective nature of the Islamic Da'wa. At the same time, the Tafseer will refute the secular interpretation of those smitten by western individualism.

The nature of the ayah

The ayah in question is ikhbariyyah (informative), therefore it informs about when Allah (swt) will change the situation of a people. It does not provide a detailed method for revival and should not be used for such an understanding, just as no scholar has used this ayah for this purpose before. Imam ul-Qurtubi said in his Tafseer entitled 'Al-Jaami'u li Ahkam il-Qur'an' that "akhbara Al-lahu" (meaning, 'Allah informs') necessitates

that it is an informative ayah (akhbara being the verb from which the adjective ikhbariyyah is derived) since it informs us on Allah's (swt) law regarding change.

Upon who does the change occur (maf'ool ul-fi'l)?

The verb (fi'l) under discussion is the change, and the instigator (faa'il) of this change is Allah (swt). So what is the object of the verb (al-maf'ool)? That is to ask, who is Allah (swt) going to change?

Allah (swt) stated, "...*maa bi Qawmin...*" meaning, '(Allah will not change) whatever is in any Qawm.'

It is clear that the change will occur upon the Qawm. What is the meaning of this word Qawm, and what is the nature of this change? The maa here is 'Aam (maa al-'Umoom), thus it applies to whatever is in the Qawm. Furthermore, the word Qawm is in the Mutlaq (unrestricted) form, and thus, it even applies to the Kafir Qawms. Therefore, the meaning is that Allah (swt) will not change whatever is in any Qawm.'

Please note that the word Qawm has been used, which means that the subject matter is the issue of collective change in society, not individual change. Qawm, in the Arabic language, means nation or sha'ab (people), and it can also mean Ummah. It does not however, mean an individual or even a collection of individuals. Fard or shakhs refers to an individual or a person respectively, and afraad or shakhsiyyaat are the plurals, meaning a collection of individuals or people. These words may be used to denote the work that treads the path of individual reform.

Allah (swt), however, used none of those words in this ayah; instead, He (swt) used 'Qawm,' which means nation, or Ummah. Nation has a specific connotation. It means a group or collective of people, but more than that because this is merely afraad.

The difference is that this collective, known as a Qawm is bonded by a common identity, having some form of common unifying force, which is why it can also be used to describe a nation unified by race, hence the noun qawmiyyah (nationalism). However, here it is not restricted to ethnic groups, as the Muslims are included in its meaning. Also, it is not restricted to ideological societies. The word Ummah would be better to use here, as ethnic groupings are not necessarily ideological, yet they are also known as a Qawm. Thus, in this ayah the word Qawm is used loosely, denoting any nation, not necessarily along racial or ideological lines; thus, it is Mutlaq (unrestricted) and applies to all collective groupings of people.

This is what the word Qawm means in Arabic and even in the English language. So, from this it is clear that the meaning taken by some people that Allah (swt) will never change the situation of individuals until each one changes what is in his own self, is in fact a twisted meaning, rather than Allah's (swt) meaning. Shakhs (person) has not been mentioned, nor has people or afraad (individuals). If it had been, then the protagonists of such a fallacy might have had a case, as merely a collection of individuals does not denote a collective work. Thus, they may have been able to argue that each person should correct himself first and foremost, then convince another to change, until they become large in number and can go about individually changing others. Indeed, this fits the description of afraad or shakhsiyyaat, but it does not fit the description of Qawm. So clearly, in this ayah Allah (swt) is addressing change in the collective.

The final meaning, therefore, refers to everything in general in any Qawm (nation), whether Muslim or Kafir. The fact that it can be applied to Kuffar as well, is relevant.

What must the Qawm do?

Allah (swt) stipulates, "...hattaa yughayyiroo..." means 'until they all change...'

These words are in the form of a conditional clause (seeghat us-shart), due to the use of the shart (condition) 'hattaa' (until). This

renders the meaning, 'Allah will not change... (them)...until they all change.' The usage of the shart here means that the mafhoom ul-mukhalafah (opposite understanding) of this ayah can be taken. Thus, rendering the meaning that if the Qawm does not collectively change together, then Allah (swt) will not change their situation. So, a condition for change is that action must occur from the Qawm, and that means doing, not passively waiting for Allah (swt) to provide the change. Allah (swt) used the active verb 'yughayyiroo,' so, in response, the Qawm must actively do something to be eligible for the change, without which they will not get it.

What is expected from this Qawm in order that they qualify for Allah's (swt) change to occur? Is it that each and every individual changes himself alone and then asks every other individual to change? No, Allah (swt) addressed the Qawm with the verb 'yughayyiroo,' which means 'until they change...' So, the nation must 'yuhaghayyiroo' or act accordingly. This word is an active verb (fil) in the plural (jam'a) third person (ghaa'ib) masculine (mudhakkir), and it is in the present tense (mudaari). Because it is an active verb, in order to qualify for the said condition, the Qawm must do something, not wait for something to be done to them. Thus, the fatalistic concept prevalent nowadays that encourages people to practice patience without action, whilst Allah (swt) brings change, is blatantly flawed. It being masculine means that it includes both male and female, as the masculine plural in Arabic means a mixed group unless indicated. In this case there is no indication, therefore it applies to male and female. The fact that it is in the plural form means that all individuals within the Qawm must do something, and it also reinforces the point that the Qawm, or a collective, is being addressed. Therefore, the plural masculine verb renders the meaning 'until they all, male and female, collectively make a change occur...' Thus, is it 'Aam, and all people are required to make a change.

What do they have to change?

"... M a a b i a n f u s i h i m "

“...Whatever is in themselves...”

In this portion of the ayah, Allah (swt) informs us about the target for the change, which is “...Maa bi Anfusihim.” The maa here is maa al-'umoom, so again, it means everything must be changed in the specified target. Also, the ism (noun) 'nafs' is used. This means oneself, not what is inside a person in any spiritual or mystic way. Rather, it simply means oneself, similar to the English usage of the noun 'himself' when saying, “Zayd went by himself (alone).” This would be rendered in Arabic as “Jaa'a Zayd bi nafsihi.” Anfus is the plural for nafs. Therefore, Allah (swt) has decreed that He (swt) will not change the situation of any Qawm until they all collectively change all that is within themselves, as a nation, not as individuals, because they are addressed as a 'Qawm,' rather than 'afraad.' The verb came in the plural form, and so it is not addressing each individual alone, in fact it is addressing every individual in the nation, that Allah (swt) will not change their nation until they all make a change occur in themselves and in others.

What is the nature of this change?

The word Qawm being in the Mutlaq (unrestricted) form means that this khabar (news) that Allah (swt) has graced us with about the wisdom of how He (swt) makes change in societies is universal. In other words, it applies to any nation or group of people. This is the Sunnah of Allah (swt). Thus, my dear brothers, it cannot be taken from this that the Muslims must simply pray, fast and encourage one another, and then revival will come. This is because the Kuffar are also addressed by this ayah, and despite the fact that they do not pray and fast, their nations have progressed and revived (albeit incorrectly). Thus, the nature of the change needed cannot be restricted to ibadat, morals, clothing, Taqwa or even being Muslims. The word Qawm is Mutlaq, and it applies to the Kafir nations, or anything that can be described loosely as a nation. Indeed, we have witnessed that the Kuffar have progressed beyond us to the extent that they dominate us. This was despite the fact that these nations

took the rebellion from religion as the cornerstone of their ideals, adopted immoral practice as their constitutional rights and have never ceased oppressing those who Allah (swt) loves: the Muslims. Indeed, they progressed despite all this. Therefore, the change mentioned cannot be moralistic, religious or ritualistic, despite what some may preach; for, the Kuffar of today are of the most immoral, atheistic hedonists that the world has ever witnessed.

So what change is being addressed here? It must be some form of change that is available for the Kuffar too. This change is the ideological change, the change that occurs in a nation when they unify around one common ideology (something Muslims or Kuffar can do). It is about altering the way in which they view life, the basis of their relationships and their ruling system. Thus, when the communists unified around Communism, they progressed. Allah (swt) changed their affairs, despite the fact that he despises those who deny him and reject his signs. Also, when the Europeans before them adopted secularism as their ideology, as did the Americans when they rebelled from the Europeans, they all progressed beyond bounds. Allah (swt) altered their affairs and they dominated us, even though He (swt) loves us and despises the arrogant deniers of his haakimiyyah (right to rule), the secularists. This was all done in accordance with the Sunnah of Allah (swt). That is why whenever any nation alters itself and bonds around a common basis, she progresses.

Alas, the Islamic Ummah has the best ideology, Islam; yet, she does not unify around it, nor does she make it her basis for solving all of life's problems. She does not change her Qawm (the Islamic Ummah) to bond upon it. She has the best ruling system, the Khilafah, yet she does not work for it. Thus, Allah (swt) will not change her affairs until she does. The result of understanding the ayah in this manner, means that when the Ummah returns to her ideology as a whole, basing her relationships upon its 'Aqeedah alone, and governing her interests by its ruling system, only then will Allah (swt) revive her. This is just like when

the Kuffar adopted a complete ideology, and Allah (swt) allowed them to revive, albeit on a false basis. Likewise, if she abandons the ideology, then she will decline, just as she did and just as the communists did when they dropped their ideology.

Imam al-Qurtubi, in his Tafseer entitled 'Jami'u li Ahkam il-Qur'an,' is careful in explaining the ayah, as he knew that a twisted meaning would distort it:

"Allah informed in this ayah that he does not change what is in a Qawm until change takes place from them, whether it be from them, or from their supervisor (of their affairs - leaders), or from he who is (appointed) from them... So the meaning of this ayah is not that it was only revealed for individual punishment and to address nothing but progress from a sin. Instead, it has been revealed for the correction of others sins too. As he said (in the hadith), "...It was asked, 'will we be destroyed whilst the righteous are amongst us?' He (saw) said, 'Yes, if the corruption increases (beyond bounds)' [Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Zaynab bint Jahsh about the Ya'jooj]."

So you see, dear Muslims, al-Qurtubi demonstrates in his Tafseer of this ayah that it is not simply for the individual focus. His quotation on the hadith provides an admonishment, in the form of complete destruction, for the whole community if they leave others alone to practice corruption without addressing it, despite the fact that the righteous may live amongst them. Therefore, this ayah reinforces the correctness of the work of those brothers who work to alter society collectively, via their political work, to bring back the Khilafah. After this lengthy explanation, we may now revisit the final meaning of the ayah. It may be correctly rendered as, 'Allah will not change what is in any nation, until they all collectively make a change occur in what is in themselves.' Please, dear Muslims, do not ever again use it to mean perfection of the individual alone, or Allah (swt) will ask you concerning this on al-Qiyaamah. Wa Barak Allahu Feekum.

Saviours of Islamic Spirit

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi (RA)

Tartars—The Scourge of Allah

The Causes of Tartar Invasion

Islam was confronted with another danger in the seventh century, unparalleled in the annals of the world, which was about to wipe it out of existence. This was the invasion of the wild and savage hordes of the Tartars who issued forth from the Mongolian steppes and over-powered almost the whole of the Islamic world with a lightning speed.

The immediate cause of the Mongol invasion can be attributed to a grievous mistake of Ala ud-din Muhammad, the Shah of Khwarism. A body of traders who had arrived from Mongolia was put to death, and when Chengiz Khan deputed an embassy to enquire into the reasons for it, Muhammad replied by killing the envoy too. On receiving the news of this outrage upon international courtesy, the Mongol Khakan Chengiz Khan un-loosened the whirlwind of savagery upon the world of Islam.

However, if one were to look into the moral behaviour and attitudes of ancient nations, particularly those relating to the Bani Israel as well as their destruction and massacre, demolition and sacrilege of Jerusalem, and the reasons therefor described in the Qur'an, one can clearly see with the insight provided by the Scripture into the nature of historical process, that the reason for converting the Islamic world into a vast charnel-house was not a solitary act of cruelty on the part of a reckless and haughty sovereign. As the Quran tells us, it was certainly not due to the mistake of a single individual that the storm of death and destruction burst forth on the entire world of Islam.

If we were to cast a glance over the religious, moral, social and political conditions of the Muslim peoples in those days, there would be no difficulty in finding out the reason for this calamity. Such a survey would amply bear out that the carnage did not take place all of a sudden. It had deeper and far-reaching reasons than those narrated hitherto by the historians. We shall have to look for these reasons into the political situation and the social condition of Muslim society over a century or more prior to the Mongol invasion.

After the death of Salah ud-din in 589 A. H., the vast empire carved out by him split up into several independent principalities and kingdoms headed by his sons or other successors. Like many other founders of the Empires his successors did not possess the talent of their progenitor, and, what was more, they continued to fight each other for a fairly long time. Some of these even did not hesitate to seek the assistance of the Crusaders against their own brethren, an instance of which has already been cited in the previous section. The whole of Islamic world was, in fact, in a state of chaos ; nowhere was to be found peace and tranquillity ; a moral and social disintegration was at work which was clearly visible in the rapidly deteriorating political situation. The Crusaders were again making inroads into the Muslim territories and had recaptured the lands emancipated from their clutches by Salah ud-din. All those factors had already contributed to the repeated famines and epidemics. A fertile country like Egypt was so devastated by the fratricidal warfare between al-Malik al-Adil and his nephew al-Malik al-Afzal that when the floods in Nile failed in 597 A.H., the country was overtaken by such a severe famine that the people had to take resort to cannibalism. Death stalked over the land killing the people in such large numbers that the dead had to be buried without shrouds. The annalist Abu Shama relates that Sultan al-Malik al-Adil provided shrouds for two hundred and twenty thousand dead bodies in a single month. People began to take the

dogs and human flesh without any feeling of revulsion; innumerable children were eaten away. Ibn Kathir writes that a stage came when the children and youth offender age were all eaten up and people began to kill one another to satisfy their hunger.' These were grim reminders of God calling people to a sincere penitence for their sins and mending their ways. The ravages of famine and pestilence were followed by a severe and widespread earthquake which hit the region covering Syria, Asia Minor and Iraq, The devastation and destruction wrought by the earthquake can be judged from the fact that in the town of Nablus and its surrounding district 20,000 people were crushed under the fallen houses. Another historian writes in Mir at al-Zaman that eleven hundred thousand people died as a result of this earthquake. On the one hand, these natural calamities were visiting the Islamic world with unwelcome regularity, and, on the other, fratricidal feuds and forays were continuing unabated. In 601 A.M. the two chiefs belonging to the same family, Qatadah Husaini of Mecca and Salim Husaini of Madina were locked up in a hotly contested battle. In 603 A.H. the deadly feuds between the Ghorids of Afghanistan and the ruler of Khwarizm flared up which encouraged the Muslims to waste their energy and power by shedding each others' blood. This was the state of affairs on the one side, while the Christendom had inflamed another Crusade, on the other, barely two years after the death of Salah it-din, and landed its forces on the Syrian coast in 604 A.H. The rulers of al-Jazirah were secretly in league with the Franks in 607 A.H. while Damietta in Egypt, a city of considerable military importance, had fallen to the Crusaders in 616 A.H.

In the metropolis of Islam, Baghdad, the magnificence and splendour of the Caliph's court, copied from the etiquettes and ceremonials observed by the Iranian and Byzantine Emperors, had touched the summit of extravagance. It is difficult to imagine the wealth amassed by such personal servants of the Caliphs as pages,

cupbearers, intendants of wardrobe, who normally entered the service merely as slaves. The annual income from the property acquired by Ala ud-din al-Tabrasi al-Zahri, a slave purchased by the Caliph al-Zahir, is reported to have been as much as three hundred thousand Dinars. The house built by him in Baghdad was conspicuous for its size and beauty. Similar was the case with other state officials—Mujahid ud-din Aibek, al-Salah Abdul Ghani, to name only a few. The former had an annual income of live lakh Dinars while the latter, although an illiterate man, lived like a prince. Annalists have left staggering accounts of their lavish expenditure on the marriages of their sons and daughters. On the other hand, the teachers of the celebrated Madarsa al-Mustansaryah were doled out such paltry sums which bore no comparison to the wages paid to the meanest of the slate officials. The most erudite scholars and professors did not get more than twelve Dinars a month while the servant of al-Sharabi, a grandee of the Abba"sids regime, could spend four thousand Dinars on a marriage and pay another three thousand as the price of a bird brought for him from Mosul.

The royal processions of the Caliphs on the occasion of Id and to mark the anniversary of their succession to throne were seized as an opportunity for ostentatious display of royal pomp and pageantry. The whole of Baghdad came out to witness these pro-cessions in a mood, free and easy, amusing and entertaining itself and oblivious of even obligatory congregational prayers. In 640 A.H. the royal procession taken out on the occasion of Id terminated after the night-fall with the result that most of the people witness-ing the procession performed the Id prayers just before midnight. Again in 644 A.H. a large number of people missed the prayers on the occasion of Id al-Ad' ha and performed the same at the time of sunset.

The usual mode of making obeisance to the Caliph was to bow almost to the ground, or touch the ground with one's nose, but nobody even felt in it anything

opposed to the teachings of the Shari ah or degrading to his independent and manly character. Confiscation of private property had become a common affair ; illegal gratification by officials was widely prevalent; immodesty and grossness of conduct was on the increase; the Batinites, charlatans and swindlers were basking in sunshine; everyone seemed to be after wealth; love of music had grown almost into a craze; in short, the common pursuits of the people and the social and moral disintegration of the society threw a lurid light on the state of chaos then prevailing in the Muslim world.

This was the time when the Mongols were devastating Turkistan and Iran and were casting a covetous glance over Baghdad. "The year 626 A.H. began" writes Ibn Kathir, "with the indecisive yet sanguinary battles between the monarchs of the house of Ayyubids." Such a state of chaos prevailed in Baghdad, the centre of Caliphate, that from 640 A.H. to 643 A.H. no arrangements could be made by the Caliph for sending out Hajj parties nor was the covering for Kaba sent by the Caliph. For 21 days the walls of the holy shrine remained without a cover, which was taken as an ill-omen by the people.

Ahmad Abul Abbas succeeded his father, Caliph al-Mustadhi, in 575 A.H. under the title of Al-Nasir li' Din-Allah. He had had an opportunity to rule for forty-six years. His reign was the longest one ever enjoyed by any Abbasid Caliph yet, perhaps, it was also the darkest of all the regimes of the house of Abba"sids. Historians have severely criticised his regime for tyranny and mal-administration. Writes Ibn al-Athir :

"He was a tyrant who ill-treated the populace. Iraq was a devastated land during his regime ; its population mig-rated to neighbouring countries, and their possessions were confiscated by the Caliph. He gave contradictory orders ; rescinded the orders given by him a day earlier Being too much interested in sports and pastime, he had prescribed a special uniform which could be put on only by those per-mitted to take part in gymnastics and athletic sports.

His orders so severely curtailed the sports that these activities practically came to an end in Iraq. His interest in the entertainments had grown almost into a craze Iranians accuse him of inviting the Mongols to attack the Muslim territories and hatching a conspiracy for the same."

Al-Nasir li'Din-Allah died in 622 A.H. and Mustansir b'Allah (623-640) ascended the throne. He was a just, mild, benevolent and pious ruler, recalling the right-guided Caliphs but unfortunately he did not get enough time to reform the administration. He was succeeded by his son Mustasim b'Allah in 640 A.H. He too was a pious and just sovereign who never touched wine nor indulged in immodest acts. He had committed the Qur'an to memory and observed fast on the Mondays and Thursdays in addition to those during the months of Ramadhan and Rajab. He is reported to be punctual in the performance of prayers but, according to Ibn al-Athir, he was too mild and miserly and also lacked foresight.

In 642 A.H., a man by the name of Muwayyid ud-din Muhammad Ibn 'Alqami was appointed as Prime Minister by the Caliph Mustasim. Disorders and disturbances were a source of constant trouble in Baghdad specially when the Sunnis and Shi'ahs quarrelled in 655 A.H. It is reported that in these riots the Shi'ah quarters including those of the relatives of Ibn Alqami were plundered which led him to seek revenge from the Sunnis. Although the danger of the Mongol invasion was hovering over Baghdad, a great reduction was made in the armed forces on the advice of Ibn Alqami. The number of cavalry was reduced to mere 10,000, their allowances and promotions were withheld; the disbanded soldiers were directed to take to trade and husbandry with the result that many of them were later on seen begging alms in the bazaars and in front of the mosques. Islam was reduced to the state of imbecility which led many poets to compose elegies to lament the helplessness of the Muslim peoples.

Al-Mustasim was personally a man of unimpeachable character. He also

wanted to reform administration and bring peace and prosperity in his realm but unfortunately he lacked the courage, zeal and ability of the founders of empires which alone could have saved the situation by infusing a breath of new life in the then tottering society and the administration. It has happened more than once that the last monarch of any ruling dynasty was just and wise, virtuous and humane but the degeneration of social and political order had reached the point in his time where its only natural outcome was final decay and crumbling down of that dynasty. This was the case with Mustasim too whom Providence had chosen for the badge of infamy, although he was better than most of his predecessors and had also a desire to set right the fastly deteriorating situation.

It is undoubtedly true that a group of people, pure in spirit and righteous in conduct, were there teaching and preaching in the mosques and seminaries of Baghdad but the affluent and those in authority, had become so corrupt that an annalist of that age, Abul Hasan Khazraji had to describe the conditions prevailing in his time in these words:

"The desire to acquire estates and effects has become a craze with these people who never think of the community's welfare. They are so engrossed in feathering their own nests that it can never be deemed as a rightful course. The officials of the government are all tyrants who are obsessed with the idea of amassing as much wealth as possible This is the most dangerous state of affairs for the government can co-exist with apostasy but never with tyranny." In the eastern part of the Islamic world, the kingdom of Khwarism, raised towards the end of the fifth century of the Muslim era on the ruins of Saljukid Empire, held sway over almost the entire Islamic territories excluding the principalities of Saljukid Sultans over parts of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Hejaz and Asia Minor and that of the Ghorids in Afghanistan. Sultan Ala ud-din Muhammad Khwarism Shah (596-617) was one of the most powerful Muslim monarchs or perhaps

the greatest sovereign of his day. Harold Lamb writes in his famous book *Chenghiz Khan* : "In the centre of Islam, Mohammed Shah of Kharesm had enthroned himself as war lord. His domain extended from India to Baghdad, and from the sea of Aral to the Persian Gulf. Except for the Seljuk Turks, victors over the crusaders, and the rising Memluk dynasty in Egypt, his authority was supreme. He was the emperor, and the Kalif who quarrelled with him but might not deny him was restricted to the spiritual authority of a pope."-

Muslim historians have not mentioned any noticeable personal laxity in the character or moral behaviour of Khwarism Shah. On the other hand, they speak of him as a brave and chivalrous ruler, just and pious, but there is no denying the fact that he spent his prowess and capabilities in subjugating the Muslim Kingdoms around his dominions. In the north-west of his territory he forced the Saljukids to retreat to the farthest end while he restrained the westward ambitions of the Ghorids by subjugating Khorasan, Mazandran, Rinnan, Ghazni and Transoxiana. These unending wars of Khwarism Shah had, nevertheless, worn out his troops who had to strain every nerve in achieving the conquests they had had so far. Apart from the war-phobia normally created by the continuous warfare over a long period of time, the conquest of the most fertile and industrially developed areas had brought to the capital of Khwarism Shah all that toil and labour could produce, along with the attendant vices of opulence and luxury, it is difficult to find any detailed account of these social ills in the annals of the time which are mostly concerned with the descriptions of kings and emperors. Unfortunately, however, the treatises and sermons, monographs and discourses of the saints and preachers, which would have thrown a lurid light on the subject, were all destroyed by the Mongolian avalanche. There is hardly any reason for attributing the following statement of Harold Lamb to his religious prejudice or exaggeration :

"It was a martial world, appreciative

of song, with an ear not unmusical. A world beset by inward throes, slave-ridden, wealth gathering, and more than a little addicted to vice and intrigue. It left the management of its affairs to extortioners and its women to the custody of eunuchs, and its conscience to the keeping of Allah."

The Sultans of Khwarism made the same fatal mistake which was committed by the Moors in Spain—an unpardonable blunder under the Divine Law of Retribution governing the historical process. They set about, body and soul, to extend and strengthen the bounds of their domain and subjugate their enemies but they never tried to diffuse the message of God and enlist adherents to it from the neighbouring lands which constituted a world different from their own. Quite apart from the religious fervour which should have diverted their energies towards this imperative task, commonsense as well as political foresight too dictated the same course which would have won over a vast but hostile population to their side and thus saved themselves as well as other Muslims from the tragic fate which was soon to engulf all of them.

Such were the conditions when the Mongols issued forth from the steppes of Mongolia under Chenghiz Khan and swooped down upon Iran and Turkistan, the eastern part of the Islamic world, like the scourge of God. By 656 A. H. the Mongols had reached the centre of Islam, Baghdad, converting it into a shamble fulfilling the Qur'anic dictum: And guard yourselves against a chastisement which cannot fall exclusively on those of you who are wrongdoers, and know that Allah is severe in punishment."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said "If anyone constantly seeks pardon (from Allah), Allah will appoint for him a way out of every distress and a relief from every anxiety, and will provide sustenance for him from where he expects not." [Abu Dawud].

Be Thankful

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire,
If you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you don't know something
For it gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times.
During those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations
Because they give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for each new challenge
Because it will build your strength and character.

Be thankful for your mistakes
They will teach you valuable lessons.

Be thankful when you're tired and weary
Because it means you've made a difference.

It is easy to be thankful for the good things.
A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also
thankful for the setbacks.

GRATITUDE can turn a negative into a positive.
Find a way to be thankful for your troubles and they
can become your blessings.

The Aadaab Of The Host

The host should not insist that the guest eats. This is contrary to the well-being of the guest.

If there is need to serve more food, do not remove the utensil (**in which there is still some food**) from the presence of the host. Bring more food in another utensil.

If the intention is to invite some of the associates of one's **Buzrug (Shaykh, Ustaaz , etc.)** along with the Buzrug, then do not ask the Buzrug to bring them along. It is disrespectful to extract service from him. Take permission from him and do the inviting yourself. The associate should also seek permission from the Buzrug before accepting the invitation.

Be hospitable to the guest and tend to his needs and comfort. Feed him a sumptuous meal (within one's means) at least on one occasion. The guest has a right of three days.

When sending food to the guest, ensure that it is covered.

When the guest is departing, see him off until the door. This is Sunnah.

The host should not overwhelm the guest with his continuous presence. He should leave the guest free. The guest should be left to eat as he pleases.

People sometimes stare at the guest while he is eating, taking note of what and how much he is eating. The guest is irked by this behaviour.

When the guest arrives, show him the toilets so that he is not inconvenienced if he suddenly has to answer the call of nature.

As soon as the guest arrives, make arrangements for his eating. Whatever is easily available and could be prepared quickly should be arranged. **If by the means, more sumptuous meals may be arranged later.**

Do not go out of your way in acquiring things for the guest. Whatever good things are easily available, make do with them. Do not be unnecessarily formal.

The host should not merely deliver the food to the guest and leave thereafter. He should remain to see to the further needs of the guest. While keeping a watchful eye on the guest, the host should not stare at the guest nor make him aware of his attention. He should merely cast an occasional glance to ascertain whether the guest requires anything more.

When there are two guests, treat them with equality.